

Cineplex 10
an original screenplay by

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FADE IN:

EXT. PARK - NIGHT

LEO, a mid-20's smartly dressed man, sits on a park bench, texting on his phone. SANDRINE, an early-20's woman wearing bohemian clothes, slowly approaches from a distance.

SANDRINE

I thought I might find you here.

Sandrine sits down on the bench, awkwardly close to Leo.

LEO

I'm sorry?

SANDRINE

I kept thinking, god, he must've left his phone at home, or maybe his battery died, but no, your phone's sitting in your lap, and I'm the fool you just ignore.

Leo looks around him, as if hoping Sandrine might be talking to someone else on the bench.

LEO

Wrong person, lady.

Sandrine throws her arm around Leo, pressing her body into his.

SANDRINE

It's okay baby, I forgive you.

As Sandrine forces herself on Leo, wrapping her body around him, Leo freaks and tries to twist away. Leo frees himself and leaps off the bench. Sandrine grabs at him, but only succeeds in catching Leo's phone.

LEO

What the hell? Get off of me, you creep. I don't know how you could confuse me with *anyone* who would date you.

Sandrine ignores Leo while she begins to investigate his phone.

LEO

Just give me back my phone please, so I can leave.

SANDRINE

NO!

She scoots to the furthest end of the bench.

Leo futilely looks for someone to help him.

SANDRINE

Missed call: Brittany, Voicemail:
Brittany, Text Message: Brittany!

Leo makes an attempt to snatch his phone away, but misses.

SANDRINE

We had a 99% match on Singles.com.
99%, Leo! You're just going to throw
that all away on this Brittany?

LEO

Wait...PrincessGURL89?

SANDRINE

Did my morning love IM'S mean nothing
to you?

LEO

How did you find me?

SANDRINE

99%, Leo. Sagittarius Labradoodle-
lovers don't friend request you
everyday!

Thin vertical lines begin to appear all over Sandrine's face
and body. Neither her nor Leo seem to notice.

A WOMAN walks towards them, unaware of the fight.

SANDRINE

Is that the tramp now? Hey Brittany!

The vertical lines have spread across this other woman now,
they're infiltrating the whole screen. The dialogue cuts in
and out.

SANDRINE

Don't mess with the 99%!

Sandrine chucks the phone at the woman. Suddenly the scene
freezes.

Sandrine has frozen crazy eyes and outstretched arms towards
Leo.

CUT TO:

INT. THEATER #6 - DAY

A crowd of moviegoers groans loudly, staring at the frozen screen of Sandrine.

CU on GARY, a 53-year-old man, sitting in the front row, brushing his brilliant white hair away from his face. Gary stares in rapture at the screen. His lips move as if he's counting the scratch lines.

INT. CONCESSION STAND - DAY

Two LADIES stand at the concession stand. ALEX, a 23-year-old male with messy hair appears to be the only concession worker on duty. He holds a walkie-talkie in one hand and a popcorn scooper in the other. Alex speaks into the walkie-talkie.

ALEX

Projection?

LADY #1

These lines were running down the whole screen--

LADY #2

We couldn't see or hear the characters--

ALEX

I'm sorry ladies, I'll get projection to fix the problem, if you'd please just return to your theater.

INT. PROJECTION BOOTH - DAY

A spool of 35mm film spins wildly on the floor, having fallen from the nearby projector. We see fragments of Leo and Sandrine on the screen through the tiny projection window.

JADE MACKENDRICK, a 24-year-old male, sits at a desk several projectors down, unaware of the situation.

INT. PROJECTION DESK - DAY

Jade has headphones on and appears immersed in his computer, watching images of customers ordering popcorn, finding their seats, etc.

Jade's walkie-talkie sits unnoticed on his desk.

ALEX (O.S.)

(on the walkie-talkie)

Projection? We have a problem in Theater 6 with Cyber-Gurlfriend.

Jade continues to play on his computer.

INT. CONCESSION STAND - DAY

A bigger crowd gathers at the concession stand. Alex keeps radioing Jade.

LADY #1

Can't we at least rewind the movie?

LADY #2

We paid good money to see this movie,
I certainly expect to see it in its
entirety.

People nod in agreement, an angry murmur begins to rise amongst the crowd. STANLEY, the theater manager, rushes to the concession stand.

ALEX

(under his breath)
\$5.25 for a senior matinee ticket,
lady.

STANLEY

Okay folks! Everyone gets a free
Child Popcorn for the delay and Alex
will run up to the booth to help
expedite the solution!

Alex walks away from the crowd, just as everyone hurriedly pushes to the counter to get their free popcorn.

INT. PROJECTION DESK - DAY

Alex interrupts Jade's computer work, and points to projector #6, which by now has amassed a mess of film on the ground.

Jade jumps into action to fix the problem.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Stanley and Jade sit across from each other. Stanley loudly slurps an Icee, coloring his teeth progressively more red.

STANLEY

Jade there were 43 paying customers
in theater 6 and only 12 in theater
4. Prioritize your theaters in
alignment with your customer-base
and you'll be a better businessman.

JADE

But I'm a projectionist.

STANLEY

Everyone starts somewhere. I started as a mere usher at the Paramount. Jade, there's five golden rules of the movie business. Number one: Hollywood is your boss. Not the customer, not me, not corporate. Hollywood makes the movies and if you don't abide by their rules, they'll shut you out of this business. Rule number two....

Bored, Jade tunes out Stanley's lecture.

An upbeat soundtrack begins to play. Jade looks around at the comedic movie posters on the wall: *The Hangover*, *Bridesmaids*, *White Chicks*.

Jade pictures himself in each poster. His name shinily embossed on the bottom.

The office door bursts open. TIFFANY, the 18-year-old new-hire, enters. She's self-tailored her cinema uniform to create a lower neckline. Her body glitter draws attention to her cleavage: classy.

Stanley immediately becomes a bumbling idiot when Tiffany enters.

TIFFANY

(not seeing Jade)
Hey hon--

STANLEY

Tif, I'm in a meeting right now.

TIFFANY

(seeing Jade)
Oh! I'm so sorry, I--I finished your Nacho chip project.

Stanley cannot contain a grin, exposing his red teeth.

STANLEY

You cupped the salsa and jalapenos too?

TIFFANY

(laughing)
Yes, such a tight fit in those small cups.

Their friendly banter leaves Jade staring uncomfortably at his shoes.

TIFFANY

Stan, your teeth.

Tiffany walks over and grabs Stanley's Icee away from him.

Stanley, embarrassed, runs his tongue over his teeth.

Tiffany exits the office sucking down the Icee remains.

STANLEY

Jade, It's either make it or break it time. So I'm promoting you to Assistant Manager.

JADE

What?

STANLEY

I'm leaving for the Las Vegas Cinemacon Convention tomorrow. I'll need you to run the theater while I'm gone. If you can handle that you've got a future with the company.

JADE

Sir, I don't know if I'm ready for that kind of--

STANLEY

It comes with a raise and keys to the theater.

JADE

Done.

STANLEY

And I'll be taking Tiffany with me to help.

(Beat)

In an official note-taking and organizing capacity of course.

INT. PROJECTION BOOTH - DAY

Jade and Alex lounge comfortably in two adjoined cinema chairs. They eat popcorn out of small plastic bags.

ALEX

I thought you were getting fired, or quitting!

JADE

Dude, I was just crowned king of this kingdom.

Jade gestures through a small window overlooking the entire concession stand area.

JADE

This is all mine. Let my minions work. And I shall be brought food and drink at hour intervals.

ALEX

(snorting)
Yes your highness.

Alex bows his head

ALEX

As soon as Stan leaves, you shall have your heart's desire.

They munch their popcorn and watch their co-workers working far down below them.

INT. CONCESSION STAND - DAY

Alex and Jade help customers at the stand. A long line begins to form.

A FRAZZLED MOM stands with her two KIDS ordering food. She looks like she quit smoking and her nicotine patch isn't working--she could explode at any minute.

Alex and Jade exchange glances. Jade pulls out his cell phone and sets it in front of the register, discreetly filming.

ALEX

Would you like butter topping on your popcorn?

FRAZZLED MOM

Drench it.

Alex scoops popcorn and begins pumping butter onto the kernels.

JADE

Can I get you anything else with that today?

Frazzled Mom turns to her kids, who currently have their faces smashed against the candy case.

FRAZZLED MOM

One thing! To share.

Frazzled Mom notices Alex has stopped pumping butter and has set the bag down on the counter. She eats some popcorn.

The kids begin in the upper left corner of the candy case and slowly move through each candy.

KID #1
Whoppers!

KID #2
Raisinets!

KID #1
Twizzlers!

FRAZZLED MOM
Large Diet Coke.

As Alex turns his back to fill the soda, Frazzled Mom quickly reaches over the counter and frantically pumps more butter onto her popcorn.

Butter ricochets off the bag splashing her coat and the counter. She acts like nothing happened.

The kids reach the last two candies in the bottom right of the case.

KID #1
I want Sour Patch Kids!

KID #2
I want Sour Patch Watermelon!

Frazzled Mom looks anxiously behind her at the growing line of customers.

She tweaks both kids' ears.

FRAZZLED MOM
One! I'm not made of money. Now hurry up.

KID #2
Watermelon!

KID #1
Kids!

FRAZZLED MOM
What the hell is the difference?

JADE

Well Ma'am, one has an assorted sour
flavoring and one has watermelon
sour flavoring.

FRAZZLED MOM

Give me the kids.

Kid #1 smirks self-importantly at Kid #2, he won. Frazzled
Mom begins paying for her order.

Kid #2 bursts out into racking sobs.

Customers in line start to exchange looks.

FRAZZLED MOM

Honey, what is the matter?

KID #2

Watermelon were Grammie's favorite!

FRAZZLED MOM

You'll like the sour kids, they're
yummy.

KID #2

(sobbing)

N-now she's g-gone and I forget what
they taste like.

FRAZZLED MOM

That was a year ago sweetie.

Customers murmur in disapproval behind her.

FRAZZLED MOM

Fine. Kids *and* Watermelon.

Frazzled Mom hands Kid #2 his Sour Watermelons. Kid #2
clutches the bag to his chest and slightly grins through his
tears.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

Jade and Stanley stuff suitcases into a taxicab.

Tiffany sits in the cab laughing as the taxi driver flirts
with her.

Stanley hands Jade a ring of keys.

STANLEY

The master key is the long silver
one.

(MORE)

STANLEY (CONT'D)

Don't lose it or give it to anyone else. If you need anything, call me.

In the cab Tiffany pulls a joint out of her purse and covertly passes it to the driver.

JADE

Yes sir.

STANLEY

I can't wait to explore new business avenues at Cinemacon.

The driver passes money to Tiffany who shoves it into her cleavage. Jade grimaces awkwardly.

STANLEY

I trust you, Jade. You're going to love your new career here at the cineplex.

Stanley embraces Jade, and hops into the cab. The cab drives away as Jade half-heartedly waves goodbye.

Jade stands alone under the large Cineplex 10 sign, keys in hand.

INT. PROJECTION DESK - NIGHT

Jade and Alex sit at a desk. Video footage from the earlier Frazzled Mom scene appears on the computer screen.

ALEX

I could've sworn she was going to hit that kid.

JADE

I mean Watermelon are totally better, so I can't exactly blame him.

A blog appears on the computer screen titled, "Concession Confessions." The subtitle "by Jade Mackendrick" underscores it with a small photo of Jade.

ALEX

How many views do you think this one'll bring?

JADE

I'm hoping to break the thousand mark. It's been hovering around 800 for the past few weeks.

Jade types the heading, "A Sour Divide". He hits the upload button.

The video of Frazzled Mom begins to play on the computer screen. Both Jade and Alex start laughing hysterically.

MONTAGE - JADE MANAGING CINEPLEX 10

-- Jade orders around the staff.

-- Alex chucks popcorn kernels at audience members from the projection booth.

-- Jade falls asleep at his desk while another projector breaks down, film spooling on the floor.

-- Jade kicks two teenagers out of a theater, confiscating their open beer cans and relishing their embarrassed faces. He unabashedly chugs a can.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Jade has removed Stanley's office supplies and turned the desk into a candy replica of the final scenes of *Titanic*.

Non-pareil icebergs float around drowning Gummi Bears and Sour Patch Kids. A Snickers and Resses's Cups *Titanic* half sinks into the table.

Jade toys with a "Rose" Gummi Bear.

JADE

(as Rose)

Jack! Jack?

Jade makes breathy drowning noises. Gummi Rose becomes surrounded by a patch of Nerd candies.

JADE

(as Rose)

Out of my way you Nerds!

Jade pops a few Nerds into his mouth. Gummi Rose finds Sour Patch Kid "Jack".

JADE

(as Jack)

Rose!

Jade makes awkward smooching noises as Jack and Rose kiss. Jade places Rose on a huge floating Hershey's bar.

JADE

(as Jack)

Get on the door baby.

JADE

(as Rose)

Oh Jack, get on with me!

JADE

(as Jack)

No! I'll stay in the water, you eat the extra chocolate for warmth.

Jade makes dramatic gestures with Jack and Rose. He raises Sour Patch Jack to his mouth.

JADE

You sucker!

NICK, a nerdy adolescent, bursts into the office just as Jade chomps the head off of Sour Patch Jack.

NICK

(out of breath)

Jade, there's this guy out there complaining about waiting in line for Twilight, but the theater isn't clean yet and his daughter looks like she's about to cry and there's only like 5 minutes before the next show is supposed to start and--

JADE

Breathe, Nick, go back to tearing tickets and tell them it'll be two minutes until the theater's ready. Then come in and help me clean.

Jade pops Gummi Bear Rose into his mouth and follows Nick into the hallway.

INT. THEATER #5 - DAY

Alex sits in the messy theater watching the credits rather than cleaning.

Jade walks in with a broom and butler.

ALEX

Oh Edward, kiss me, bite me.

Alex makes sex noises. Jade, unamused, throws Alex a big broom.

JADE

Ha, ha, ha. Get cleaning mister.

Alex begins to walk down the rows sweeping the garbage to the ends of the aisles.

Jade sweeps up the piles at the end of each row.

Nick comes in, flustered, and begins running down the rows brushing off the popcorn kernels from the seats.

JADE

Easy tiger.

The credits end and a loud buzzing is heard somewhere in the theater.

ALEX

Is that your phone?

JADE

No.

ALEX

Maybe someone forgot their cell phone.

Another buzzing starts up louder than the first one.

JADE

Okay, *that's* my phone. Shit, it's Stanley calling.

Nicks stops and looks panicky.

NICK

Oh my god, if it's about that guy in the lobby, I told him he wouldn't have to wait much longer. He said he knew Stanley's number and--

JADE

(trying to sound
authoritative)

Just keep cleaning! Alex don't forget to sweep under the seats.

Alex rolls his eyes. Jade picks up his phone.

JADE

Hello?

INT. CINEMACON - DAY

Stanley talks to Jade on his cell phone. A little kid in a Nemo costume runs by chased by another kid brandishing a stuffed shark. Tiffany talks to a scruffy man wearing a *Big Lebowski* shirt, it looks like he's giving her directions.

Lindsay Lohan walks by clutching a poster for *Mean Girls 7: Back to Africa*.

STANLEY

I just got off the phone with our corporate office Jade. They want Cineplex 10 to be the highest grossing theater in Vermont for the release of *Avatar 2* on Friday.

INTERCUT - TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

JADE

Absolutely sir, we always have a good turn-out.

The loud buzzing in the theater continues, Jade makes shushing noises, his demeanor has become oddly professional.

STANLEY

We're going to convert our projectors from 35mm to digital. That way we'll be Vermont's only all digital theater for *Avatar's* release. Mr. Feldman thinks that will be enough to cut into Sunny Cinema's business.

Nick has reached the top of the stadium seating, and has found the source of the buzzing. He bends down, reaching between the seats to grab the item.

STANLEY

I'm sending in a team of digital technicians to install the hardware tomorrow morning. Do you need me to fly back or do you think you can handle this?

JADE

No, no stay in Vegas!

Nick resurfaces from the seats and finds that he's clutching a bright pink vibrator!

ALEX

WHAT THE FUCK?

NICK

Weird phone.

Jade, not paying attention to the commotion, shushes them.

STANLEY

What was that? Jade I can be on a redeye tonight, why don't I--

ALEX

That's a fucking VIBRATOR! Some chick was getting her jollies off to a 30-foot teenage vampire!

Nick screams and throws the vibrator out into the stadium.

Jade sees the movement and instinctively puts out his hand to catch the flying object. He catches the vibrator with a resounding squish, and realizes what he's holding.

Jade tries to stay composed.

JADE

Don't worry sir, I've got a grip on things.

Jade hangs up the phone. Alex laughs hysterically. Nick retches into a popcorn bag.

A MOTHER and DAUGHTER enter the theater. The Mother sees Jade holding a vibrator and her mouth opens.

JADE

Ma'am, this theater isn't clean yet, please return to the lobby until further notice.

EXT. PARKING LOT - MORNING

Jade drives into the Cineplex 10 parking lot, before the theater is open. The lot is empty except for a pristine green Volkswagen Beetle. Jade parks next to the Beetle, suspiciously eyeing it. He walks to the theater entrance where Alex sits looking somewhat disheveled.

JADE

(Re: Beetle)
New car?

ALEX

No, Kayla dropped me off. That was here when I got here.

Jade punches the key code into the doors and he and Alex enter the theater.

INT. LOBBY - DAY

Jade and Alex open the theater for the day. Jade flicks on a panel of lights and Alex walks over to the concession stand to warm up the popper.

Jade glances up at the high window looking into the projection booth and notices a movement--someone's up there!

Jade and Alex sprint out of the lobby and up the stairs to the projection booth.

INT. PROJECTION BOOTH - DAY

Jade and Alex burst into the projection booth to find ten huge cardboard boxes lined up next to each projector. An entangled mesh of cords runs down the hallway.

In the middle of the hallway, a dark curly-haired woman, MONICA, kneels in front of projector #5. Monica wears a form-fitted blazer and pencil skirt. Her outfit looks more appropriate for a lawyer than a digital technician.

Monica whips around as she hears Jade and Alex approaching.

MONICA

Jade, Alex, nice of you to show up.
Alex bring me that screwdriver on
your way by please.

She points authoritatively to the screwdriver on the desk. Alex, bewildered, picks it up. Jade and Alex reach Monica and Alex hands her the screwdriver.

Jade opens his mouth as if to speak.

MONICA

I'm Monica. I called Stanley this morning and got the key code. So I let myself and my assistant Todd into the theater.

JADE

You're from the digital projector company?

MONICA

Christie Digital Systems. Each projector takes about 6 hours to install. You have 10 projectors and a deadline of Friday. Therefore my early start was quite necessary, excuse the intrusion.

JADE

It's fine.

MONICA

Now, I don't know where Todd went, but I need help unscrewing the baseboards to projector #5. Jade can you--

JADE

Uh I've got to go open the theater,
Alex can help you.

Alex, still too disoriented to object, bends down to help Monica unscrew the old 35mm projector.

Jade continues walking down the projection booth hallway. He glances at all the boxed up new projectors.

Jade spies a piece of 35mm film on the floor and stoops to pick it up. He holds the film up to the light and runs the frames through his fingers.

Suddenly smoke obscures his vision. Jade pockets the film strip and notices smoke curling out from under the bathroom door.

He runs over and yanks the door open--as if expecting to find a fire.

INT. PROJECTION BATHROOM - DAY

Instead, TODD, a 30-year-old flannel-clad man, stands smoking a joint and holding a Red Bull.

JADE

Todd?

TODD

Yah baby.

JADE

What? Put that out! The sprinklers
are going to go off.

Todd pulls Jade into the bathroom and shuts the door behind him.

TODD

Iss-cool, dawg. I'm not a techie
for nothing!

Todd points to the smoke detector above him, the wires have been methodically pulled out and the light still shines green.

TODD

You dow-wit?

JADE

What?

TODD

You know, you dow-wit?
You...down..with..it....dude?

Todd holds the joint loosely in the corner of his mouth and simultaneously downs the can of Red Bull.

JADE
You cannot smoke in here! I'd get
in so much trouble if--

TODD
Wait a min. You just met Mon, didn't
ya? Du-ude, you really hafta drag
now.

Todd pries the joint from his lips and offers it to Jade.

TODD
Mon's a real clench-case.

The pot fumes in the small enclosed bathroom have started to affect Jade. His body has slowly relaxed.

JADE
What the heck.

Jade accepts the joint from Todd and takes a long drag on it. Satisfied, he exhales a long plume of smoke.

JADE
Is there more where this came from?

TODD
You betcha bud.

JADE
You're totally invited to game night.

INT. JADE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Jade, Alex, and Todd lounge around Jade's apartment playing *Call of Duty*.

Remnants of beer, fast food and pot lie strewn around. They shout at each other.

ALEX
AHHH die!

JADE
Come on....come on!

TODD
Fire away boys!

The game continues for a few tense moments. Finally a red screen of death flashes on Alex's screen. He throws his remote to the floor in frustration.

ALEX

Whatever.

The red screen of death flashes on Jade's screen. Todd salutes the TV in a victorious gesture.

TODD

Mission completed soldier. Over and out.

ALEX

Well I was on the left side. Jade's stupid TV is dying. I could barely even see myself fighting.

JADE

Oh sure Alex, that hasn't seemed to stop you before. I think we've got ourselves a new General here.

TODD

Round two?

ALEX

(sulkily)

Nah man, let's just pop in a movie or something.

TODD

Nemesis Alex, I challenge you to a rematch on a screen where you cannot use image size to account for your pathetic crushing.

ALEX

Well, this is the biggest TV Jade has, so unless you're hiding a widescreen up your ass, I say we watch a movie.

Todd gets up off the couch and systematically collects his things: he's preparing to lead his troops.

Todd begins to deftly unplug the Xbox from Jade's TV.

JADE

Ah come on.

TODD

I know a 60-foot screen we can make our battleground boys.

Jade and Alex look at each other with dawning realization. Then Jade begins to shake his head.

JADE
Impossible.

ALEX
You can do that?

Todd holds the unplugged Xbox in one hand and begins to grin.

TODD
Try me.

INT. JADE'S CAR - NIGHT

Alex, Jade and Todd drive excitedly to Cineplex 10. Jade looks almost like a taxi driver, alone in the front of the car, while Alex and Todd excitedly bounce around in the back seat.

ALEX
Why did we even go to Jade's tiny apartment. Have you done this before Todd?

TODD
I'm not an amateur.

JADE
So you can hook up the Xbox to the 60-foot screen projector *and* surround sound?

TODD
Affirmative.

JADE
I can't believe Monica didn't even mention this to us this morning.

TODD
(sarcastic)
Mon doesn't and won't know about my little tricks. Like any good General, I've got the security access to these digital projection secrets. She does not have clearance.

Alex looks at Todd, mouth agape.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

They drive into the empty Cineplex 10 parking lot, not a car in sight. The theater has been closed for several hours and only the glowing street lights inhabit the night.

Jade parks in the fire lane directly in front of the entrance. Everyone piles out of the car and rushes to the door.

Jade punches in the security code and they enter the theater.

INT. LOBBY - NIGHT

Alex starts to turn on the lights, as if he were regularly opening up the theater.

JADE

Leave those off! I don't want anyone
to know we're here.

They run to the stairs leading up to the projection booth.

EXT. THEATER - NIGHT

The Cineplex 10 sign looms dark and foreboding over the parking lot. Jade's car sits alone. A streetlight flickers out, deepening the darkness.

INT. PROJECTION BOOTH - NIGHT

Todd kneels beneath projector #1, with Jade curiously leaning over him. Alex is nowhere to be seen. Todd finishes attaching a few wires and then bangs on the side of the projector in a dramatic fashion.

TODD

She's ready to rock'em roll'em.

Todd leans into the window space in front of the projector and begins to shout.

TODD

Alright soldier fire away!

INT. THEATER #1 - NIGHT

Alex stands in the center of the stadium seating, his wireless controller aggressively outstretched before him.

Jade runs into the theater, breathless from sprinting from the projection booth. He pulls out a small video camera and starts filming.

Sounds of war fill the theater: gunshots, artillery fire and shouts for help.

Alex moves his soldier through the battleground, running over dead bodies. He's in the zone.

Todd saunters into the theater with a satisfied smirk on his face, observing his technical marvel.

Jade backs up to film the entire screen. He whispers softly to his camera.

JADE
Behold, the 60-foot virtual
playground. Screw Hollywood, it's
time to start a screen-volution.

Alex lets out an attack-scream and opens fire on his virtual opponent. Blood sprays the screen, looking as if it might leap out and hit Alex. The enemy soldier's head blows off, and victory music sounds.

Alex stands, controller raised in the center of the stadium: victory is sweet.

INT. JADE'S CAR - NIGHT

Jade drives with Alex excitedly bouncing in the passenger seat. Todd sleeps soundly curled up in the backseat.

ALEX
We have to post this on Concessions
tonight. The footage is pure viral
gold.

JADE
What? No, we can't, Stan or Mon
might see.

ALEX
People need to know the truth! We
gotta infect them with the truth!

Jade playfully hits Alex and turns up the radio to drown him out.

INT. JADE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Todd and Alex sit on the couch passing a joint back and forth. Jade sleeps in a chair with his laptop still open in his arms.

Todd and Alex chat in serious life-changing tones.

ALEX
Like, most people don't even know
this possibility exists! I was,
like, a most person until tonight.
Todd! I don't wanna be a most person.

TODD
Amen!

ALEX

I feel brainwashed by Hollywood and
the Educators of America!

TODD

Amen!

ALEX

They were the ones who taught me
that projectors were only good for
movies and powerpoints.

TODD

Amen!

ALEX

Screw it. The people need to know!

TODD

Hallelujah!

Alex jumps off the couch and grabs Jade's computer. He brings up Concession Confessions, and then hits the upload button. The video footage appears on the main site.

ALEX

Let the infection spread!

Alex and Todd hug for a prolonged period, perhaps a tear or two streams down their faces.

INT. GROCERY STORE - DAY

Jade strolls down the aisles putting mostly pre-made boxed foods into his cart.

He's lost in his own world until a GEEKY KID, 14 years old, starts to stare at him from the cereal aisle.

Jade picks up a box of cereal and pretends to read the label, sizing up the GEEKY KID.

GEEKY KID

Mr. Mackendrick?

Jade, surprised, puts the cereal box back on the shelf.

JADE

Yah...?

GEEKY KID

I'm a huge fan!

Jade still looks confused.

JADE

Of...?

GEEKY KID

Concession Confessions! Only my favorite internet vlog out there.

JADE

Seriously! Oh my god, I'm flattered. I've been recognized.

Jade tousles his hair as if expecting a horde of paparazzi to emerge from the dog food aisle.

GEEKY KID

I saw your post this morning, and freaked out. Is it really possible to hook up game consoles to the theater projector?

JADE

What post? At the Cineplex? Oh no, you must be--

The Geeky Kid pulls out a wad of cash.

GEEKY KID

My parents just gave me my allowance, and I was wondering if I could play Halo on the big screen?

Jade eyes the cash, then sizes up the kid again. Jade dramatically flips his hair and grins.

JADE

Well, kid, dreams come true...dreams come true.

Jade grabs the cash and then covertly stuffs it into his pocket.

JADE

Meet me in front of the cinema at 1:00 tonight. Bring your own game console.

Geeky Kid's eyes light up and he looks star-struck as Jade brushes past him.

INT. JADE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Jade stands in front of Alex and Todd giving a presentation. Behind him stands a poster board with a few pie charts and profit margin equations. Jade points to Alex and Todd.

JADE

I would be killing you both right now for posting that video if I didn't have the most genius plan.

Jade points to the charts behind him.

JADE

So I figure we have 7 days until Stanley returns from Vegas. That's 6 nights of open availability, with the potential to rent out ten different theaters.

Todd raises his hand.

JADE

If we charge \$50 per 10 feet of screen, and rotate clients every two hours, that gives us a profit of about--

TODD

I call dibs on theater #1.

JADE

No the whole point is we relinquish our playtime, in order to make some cash.

ALEX

So we split everything three-ways?

Jade nods in agreement. Todd still looks semi-confused.

JADE

Six nights. We'll spread the word through Concession Confessions. Don't say anything to anyone else. If they're not a potential client, they don't need to know what's going on. And Todd--DO NOT tell Monica.

Jade outstretches his hand, Alex follows his lead, Todd still wears a vacant expression.

ALEX

Todd, you in?

Todd comes back to the present, and adds his hand to the mix. They all nod to each other in a solemn vow.

JADE

Let's get to it.

Jade and Alex break away, crowding around the computer to spread the word.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

A diverse crowd of kids gathers in front of Cineplex 10, the doors are locked and the "Closed" sign hangs in the window.

Todd stands among the crowd, not blending in--everyone stands a few feet away from him, so he's somewhat alone.

Todd shuffles over to three boys, who look almost middle-school aged. He pulls out a bag of weed, and tries to sell it to them. Scared, the boys pretend not to see the bag and scuttle away.

Jade and Alex unlock the cinema doors and walk out onto the curb in front of the assembled crowd. Jade acts with more authority than he's ever shown in managing the theater.

JADE

Thank you all for coming. Before I open these doors, I just want to outline the rules.

Todd still stands with his bag of weed exposed, half-heartedly offering it to people around him.

JADE

You may rent out a theater for a maximum of two hours. You can project whatever your heart desires within those two hours. If you need equipment connected or have technical issues you can coordinate with our technician Todd.

Jade gestures at Todd, who quickly stuffs the weed into his jacket and waves at Jade's acknowledgement.

JADE

We have limited digital theaters at our disposal so please break up into your separate groups. Alex will be taking your cash and admitting you into the theater. See you on the other side.

Jade exits back into the theater. He flips the window sign to "Open".

The crowd breaks up into their groups and eagerly fights to be the first admitted. Alex makes a show of organizing the crowd, and slowly begins to usher people into the theater.

INT. THEATER #1 - NIGHT

Three TEENAGE BOYS yell at the screen while playing *Call of Duty*.

INT. THEATER #4 - NIGHT

The GIRLS' DANCE TEAM watches a music video on the big screen. In the open space between the seats and the screen, they've erected dance mats.

The DANCE TEAM LEADER struts in between the girls, correcting their movements.

DANCE TEAM LEADER

Come on Sheryl arms straight. Cindy, maybe if you paid attention to the forty foot instructional video in front of you instead of how your ass looks, you'd be getting these moves right!

The dance team leader stops the girls and stands in front of the screen. She demonstrates the choreography in perfect unison with the music video behind her.

INT. THEATER #8 - NIGHT

Two MIDDLE-SCHOOL BOYS play a gigantic game of "Angry Birds". One boy holds an iPad, controlling the bird. The other boy is dressed in a red costume and he runs the length of the screen with the flying bird.

The tower of pigs explodes and both boys raise their arms in victory. The one with the costume throws a squishy ball at the screen and chirps maniacally like a bird.

INT. PROJECTION DESK - NIGHT

Jade and Alex count the money on the desk. They separate it into three separate piles. Jade picks up one pile and kisses it: success.

INT. PROJECTION BOOTH - DAY

Jade, looking exhausted, fiddles with a projector. Behind him Todd snoozes on the desk.

Monica strides up and down the projection booth, iPad in one hand and an unidentifiable tool in the other.

MONICA

I don't understand.

(MORE)

MONICA (CONT'D)

I had everything wired perfectly yesterday and now 4 and 6 aren't projecting video properly.

Monica bends down under the projector #4, she pulls out several wires and re-plugs them in. Suddenly she yanks out an Xbox controller.

MONICA

Do you want to explain this?

Jade is still absorbed in working on his projector.

JADE

Hey, I'm not the expert on these projectors here.

MONICA

No...but I assume you're an expert gamer.

Jade snaps his head around and quickly tries to conceal his guilty expression.

Jade rushes to grab the controller from Monica.

JADE

Oh yah that is probably Alex's.

Monica keeps the controller out of Jade's reach and walks over to where Todd sleeps. She bangs the controller down on the desk.

MONICA

TODD! Do you want to explain yourself?

Todd refuses to open his eyelids and bats away Monica's hand.

Monica twists his ear and Todd jerks awake. Todd glances at the controller and shrugs.

TODD

We gamed a bit.

MONICA

Didn't I make myself clear after Cutler-Majestic that brand new digital projectors are for MOVIES only?

JADE

Monica, it's fine. Todd just showed Alex and me a few tricks.

MONICA

We don't play 'tricks' with machines
worth tens of thousands of dollars.

Jade manages to finally snatch the controller from Monica.

JADE

I promise, it was a one time thing.
Can you please just help me rewire
the projectors for the morning shows?

Monica turns with a huff and marches down the booth, furiously scrolling through diagrams on her iPad.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

An even bigger crowd stands outside the theater after it has closed for the night. This crowd looks rougher than the previous night's. The crowd is older and scruffier, more college-aged kids than high-school.

Todd once again peddles his pot, and this time several guys take an interest--some start inspecting the leaves and others pull out wads of cash.

Jade opens the doors and Alex assumes his bouncer position. The crowd filters inside.

INT. PROJECTION BOOTH - NIGHT

Jade and Alex walk along the row of projectors peeking in at each theater to make sure things are under control.

JADE

Have you seen Todd tonight?

ALEX

Not since we opened. He's probably stoned out of his mind somewhere.

JADE

Okay, well we're gonna need to find him before the 2:00 change-over. Some dude wants to connect his video camera to the projector and I have no idea how to do it.

ALEX

What a narcissist.

JADE

Yup.

They continue to walk down the booth, looking at glimpses of games and streaming internet through the square projection windows.

Suddenly Jade catches sight of a few naked bodies through the windows.

JADE

Alex! Someone is watching porn!

ALEX

Um, yah, they requested it. It isn't against the rules.

Jade peers through the window, unsure if he's attracted or repulsed by what's going on.

JADE

There's like 10 guys in there!

ALEX

I'm never watching a movie in there again!

Jade sees one of the guys pull out a wad of cash. Another opens his jacket to reveal a few plastic bags full of drugs.

JADE

We've got a problem.

INT. THEATER #4 - NIGHT

Jade bursts into the theater, Alex has paused the porno from the projection booth. The screen shows the frozen image of a naked woman sitting on a desk holding a three-hole punch in front of her breasts.

The MEN angrily stand dispersed around the theater.

MAN #1

We gonna get a refund for this pausing shit?

JADE

I'm sorry guys you're going to have to leave the theater. No drugs are allowed after hours.

The men start to walk down the stadium steps towards Jade.

MAN #2

Todd said we were cool man.

MAN #3

Yah, Todd's our homeboy.

Jade starts to fidget uncomfortably.

JADE

I'm sorry but I run this theater and not Todd. Alex is waiting in the lobby if you guys want a refund.

The guys shrug and start to exit the theater. The LAST MAN starts to pass Jade. He grabs a hold of Jade's hand and awkwardly hi-five/fist-pounds Jade. He nods like they're bros now.

JADE

Uh, bro, do you know where Todd went?

LAST MAN

Yah man.

The last man motions with his thumb to the top of the stadium seating.

LAST MAN

Up.

The last man exits the theater as Jade stares at the top of the stadium.

Jade begins to walk up the stairs and he begins to hear hushed giggles and kissing noises.

JADE

Todd?

Jade reaches the middle of the stadium seating and pauses-- the noises have momentarily stopped.

TODD

(giggling)

Shit.

Jade sprints up the last few rows of seating and finds Todd on the floor in the middle of the last row--on top of some girl, passionately making out.

JADE

Todd! Get up, what're you doing inviting all those guys here? We DO NOT need a drug operation going on here.

Todd attempts to get up, but the girl pulls him back down.

JADE

Todd!

Todd finally gets up and dusts himself off. He zips up his pants and looks around.

TODD
Hey where'd my homeboys go?

JADE
Todd, this is unacceptable--

Jade gets his first look at the girl who stands up behind Todd.

JADE
Tiffany?

Tiffany, fixes one of her earrings, and flashes an innocent smile at Jade.

TIFFANY
Oh hi Jade.

JADE
What--I don't--maybe--does Stanley know you're here?

TIFFANY
So nice to see you too.

JADE
You're supposed to be in Vegas.

TIFFANY
Oh don't worry, I begged Stan to send me back for the big conversion!

Tiffany looks at the naked woman on the big screen.

TIFFANY
I'd say you're handling it just fine without my help.

Tiffany grabs Todd's hand and leads him quickly down the steps past a still stunned Jade.

JADE
Tiffany--

TIFFANY
Don't worry honey, we'll chat tomorrow.

Todd and Tiffany exit the theater. The porno starts to play again. Jade looks up towards the projection booth, bewildered.

JADE

Alex?

EXT. CINEPLEX 10 - NIGHT

The lobby lights shut off. Satisfied customers trickle out into the dark parking lot.

Jade exits last, securing the door. He stands for a moment, resting his head against the door. He takes a deep breath and walks away towards his car. Alex is nowhere to be seen.

EXT. CINEPLEX 10 - DAY

Monica speeds up to the curb in her Beetle, bouncing out of the car. She unloads a heavy looking piece of equipment, but easily carries it to the door. She punches in the keycode and purposefully enters the Cineplex.

Moments later Todd casually appears and saunters through the Cineplex doors.

EXT. CINEPLEX 10 - DAY

The open sign lights up, regular customers stream into the Cineplex for the day.

INT. THEATER #2 - DAY

Todd and Monica observe the first digital projection in Theater #2. The lights are dimmed but not completely off.

MONICA

The middle looks pixely, and the frame runs off into the curtain on the left side.

Monica puts up her hands to visually frame the screen. Todd reaches over and tickles her sides.

MONICA

Todd! Professionalism!

Todd acts clownish and smiles big, pointing to his teeth.

MONICA

Go up and tweak the frame size.

TODD

Not till I see you smile.

Monica gives him a death look.

TODD

Y'know you just need to be a little more Elle Woods and a little less Patty Hewes. You're the boss both ways, but at least Elle knows a good time.

Todd winks, gives Monica a peck on the cheek and exits.

EXT. CINEPLEX 10 - DAY

Just as the sun begins to fade Jade runs into the Cineplex, looking tired and panicky.

EXT. CINEPLEX 10 - NIGHT

Alex, looking like death, painstakingly trudges through the doors of the Cineplex. The exiting stream of moviegoers irritates him and he half-heartedly punches his way through them.

INT. PROJECTION BOOTH - NIGHT

Monica, Todd and Jade cluster around projector #10 at the far end of the projection hallway. Jade holds the piece of equipment Monica unloaded earlier in the morning--he sags under the weight, sweating profusely.

MONICA

Todd, connect speaker wire 7 and then fire up the sound board.

Monica is bent down in front of the black projector box, she yanks open the front paneling and rearranges several wires. To the right of Monica, Todd plays with the vertical audio system, a silver console about six feet tall.

Jade rearranges his hold on the equipment and almost drops it.

JADE

Mon, you about ready for this?

MONICA

Just hold it tight hon.

Alex appears from the stairwell, he acts nonchalant, as if he's showing up right on time.

TODD

Heyo.

Jade gives Alex a "where the hell have you been" look.

Alex nods.

ALEX
What's going on?

JADE
We're *working*.

Monica still bent on her knees motions one arm towards Jade.

MONICA
Ready!

Jade hands off the piece of equipment to Monica who takes it in one hand and then lowers it to the floor. She carefully begins to wire it into the open paneling.

Jade still trying to get answers from Alex, continues to shoot him awkward looks. Alex ignores Jade and becomes really interested in what Monica and Todd are doing.

TODD
Presto bingo.

Todd steps back from the audio console just as Monica closes the front paneling on the projector. Monica stands and they both admire projector #10.

MONICA
Et voila, mes amis. Nous avons fini!

ALEX
Huh?

MONICA
That's it! We're done and digital.

Monica quickly gathers up all her things and begins walking to the stairwell with Todd. She talks over her shoulder barely looking at Jade.

MONICA
Alright, Everything's done. I'll be back in tomorrow for the final checkup. DO NOT do anything but play the regular movies. I've loaded each film into the hard drive, and until I show you how to properly execute everything, there's a risk of deletion.

JADE
Why do you have to come back tomorrow, can't you just show us now?

MONICA

Some of us have been here all day.
I'm going to dinner. Call me if you
have any issues.

Monica breezes out of the projection hallway and down into the adjacent stairwell. Todd follows slowly behind her. He turns to wink and wave at the boys.

When both Monica and Todd are out of sight, Jade smacks Alex.

JADE

Dude, where the hell have you been?
What happened last night?

ALEX

Once you kicked all the druggies out
of the theater, I had to scoot.
Something, uh, came up.

JADE

Whatever man. You're not going to
believe who I saw last night.

ALEX

Listen we should prep for tonight.
Now that Monica finally got all the
projectors up and running, we're
gonna make a killing.

JADE

Just listen for--

Alex starts fake coughing and puts a hand to his head.

ALEX

Man, I gotta grab a drink, I feel
shitty.

Alex sprints down the stairs and leaves Jade standing alone in the projection booth.

Jade's phone starts ringing, he looks down to see "Tiffany" lighting up his screen.

JADE

Where are you?

TIFFANY

Baby, what's up? Did you get my
message?

JADE

I don't know what game you're playing
but I need to talk to you. Stanley
isn't returning my calls.

TIFFANY

Honey, he sent me back here to help.

JADE

With what?

TIFFANY

Listen, I gotta run, I think I left
my purse in the bathroom, can you
grab it for me? Thanks.

Jade hears the dial tone as Tiffany disconnects. He stares
at his phone a moment before walking down the projection
hallway to the bathroom. He opens the door.

INT. PROJECTION BATHROOM - NIGHT

Inside the bathroom, a glittery golden purse sits on the
toilet. Jade picks it up and a photograph falls out. He
looks at the photograph and sees a picture of himself walking
up the stadium seating with the seedy porno prominently
displayed on the screen behind him.

Jade spots a message on the mirror written in red lipstick:
"See you tonight, baby, reserve me a theater <3 Tif"

Jade, bewildered, stuffs the photograph in his pocket and
shuts off the bathroom lights.

INT. LOBBY - NIGHT

Jade deals with a few customers when Tiffany suddenly blows
through the door with the same druggie men in tow from the
night before.

TIFFANY

Hey, what's our number tonight?

Jade looks nervously at the rough men behind her.

JADE

I don't think we can accommodate
your needs tonight. We've got a pretty
packed theater.

Tiffany leans into Jade to whisper in his ear.

TIFFANY

(whispering)

You get us a theater or that nice snapshot of you might get leaked to Stanley.

Jade purses his lips and points down the hallway to theater #4.

TIFFANY

Thanks a mil. Come on fellas.

Tiffany pecks Jade on the cheek as she walks by, the men looked pleased and nod to Jade as they follow Tiffany.

INT. PROJECTION BOOTH - NIGHT

Jade paces in front of projector #4, peering in and out of the tiny window where flashes of porn can be seen. Alex sits in an office chair, munching on some popcorn.

ALEX

Let 'em be tonight, we're gonna wrap this shenanigan up in a few days anyway.

JADE

Why is she back? Did you know she was coming?

Alex averts his eyes, embarrassed. He starts to teeter in his chair.

ALEX

I didn't know, but honestly she hasn't been that bad.

JADE

She is blackmailing me! That doesn't seem innocent to me.

ALEX

(laughing)

Nah I never said she was innocent.

JADE

Wait, where were you really last night? Were you with Tiffany?

Alex loses his balance in his chair and has to clutch the projector to keep from crashing to the floor.

ALEX

Uh...

Suddenly the stairwell door bangs open and an irate Monica storms into the projection booth.

MONICA
WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON HERE?

JADE
What are you doing here?

Monica marches over to Jade and Alex.

MONICA
Some girl called me and said Cineplex 10 was having technical issues. I thought it couldn't be true since the last show time was hours ago. Can you tell me why there's so many people here?

Jade glances nervously at the porno playing through the window behind him. He tries to block the window with his back so Monica doesn't see.

JADE
We're just having a few late showings tonight, no biggie.

ALEX
Yah, standard movie theater business.

Monica catches sight of something through the window and pushes Jade aside. Through the tiny window she sees the porno and notices the thugs passing some drugs back and forth.

MONICA
Oh my god. Oh my god. This is so illegal. I will not be an accomplice to this filth.

Monica picks up her cell phone and starts dialing.

Alex hops out of his chair and tries to grab the phone away.

JADE
Whoa, Mon, what're you doing?

MONICA
(on the phone)
Yes, hello? I'd like to report a crime at Cineplex 10.

Monica looks through the window again and sees a woman bent over before disgustedly turning away.

MONICA

Yes she's being violated. Get here quickly please.

All three stand in silence, Jade and Alex are still shocked. Slowly sirens are heard in the distance.

Monica hangs up the phone and walks past Jade and Alex giving them a withering look. The projection stairwell door slams behind her.

Jade looks at Alex: Panic.

JADE

Get everyone the fuck out of here!

Jade runs down the hallway flicking off all the projectors one by one. Shouts of anger are heard from the theaters.

INT. THEATER #1 - NIGHT

Alex rushes into the theater. Three teenage boys mope about holding their game controllers.

TEENAGE BOY #1

I totally beat level 51. The console better have saved my game.

ALEX

Get out of here! The cops are coming.

The teens pause, then scramble to get their things.

TEENAGE BOY #2

My mom said I'm toast if I get arrested again.

INT. THEATER #4 - NIGHT

Tiffany stands among a group of druggies. The druggies are passing around a huge stash of drugs, what looks to be a mix of pot, coke and shrooms.

Jade bursts into the theater out of breath. Tiffany points at the blank screen and gives a few disapproving clucks.

TIFFANY

I thought we had an agreement Jade?

She pulls out her phone.

TIFFANY

One quick text to Stanley and it's all over.

(MORE)

TIFFANY (CONT'D)

So why don't you run back up to that booth and put the goodies back on. We've got a business to run here.

JADE

Monica called the police and they're on their way. You need to get out of here now!

Tiffany arches her eyebrows--her surprised expression looks somewhat manufactured.

The other men, however, jump out of their seats swearing. They bump into each other, clearly in a haze and start falling down the stadium steps.

Tiffany lingers in the stadium seats. Jade tries to motion her down, but then gives up, frustrated.

JADE

Uh, whatever. If you're going to stay keep your mouth shut.

INT. LOBBY - NIGHT

TWO COPS stand in the lobby chatting with Alex. The police slowly walk forward and Alex walks backwards, trying to slow their progress into the theater.

ALEX

--just an employee showing. No one was breaking and entering.

COP #1

We do have permissible suspicion to search the property. We received a phone call from a distressed young woman. Is she here?

ALEX

Monica? Well being distressed is a daily habit for her.

COP #2

Does she work here as well?

ALEX

Today was her last official day. Honestly, I think she was just upset she wasn't invited to the employee showing.

The cops continue walking through the lobby and Alex throws his arms out to try and slow them down.

ALEX

Oh hey wait! Do you guys need light?
I can turn on these lobby lights, if
you just wait here and give me a
sec.

COP #2

No thanks. Our flashlights are fine.

They both pull out industrial flashlights and click them on. Cop #1 accidentally shines it into Alex's eyes. Alex, still walking backwards, reacts and trips over his feet.

Just as Alex falls backwards Jade rushes into the lobby and slams into Alex. They both topple forward and smush Cop #2.

Cop #1 knees Alex in the chest, sending him sprawling off of Cop #2. Cop #1 pulls his gun on Jade. Cop #2 rolls Jade off of him and then also pulls out his gun. The cops, eager to save face, adopt a rough edge.

COP #1

Both of you stay on the ground!

COP #2

Spread your hands out in front of
you, don't make any sudden movements.

Alex looks unconscious, and doesn't move, still crumpled on the floor. Jade slowly stretches out his hands, lying face down on the ground.

COP #2

You have the right to remain silent,
anything you say or do--

COP #1

Um, we're not arresting them.

COP #2

--Can and will be held against--Yes
we are! They tackled me. That's
assaulting an officer, a felony.

COP #1

I think it was more of an accident.

Cop #2 starts to pull out handcuffs.

INT. THEATER #4 - EVENING

Tiffany still stands in the middle of the stadium seating. She fixes her hair and fiddles with her clothes. She stoops down as if to pick something up. The seats, however, obscure our view.

INT. LOBBY - EVENING

Monica now stands with the cops, gleeful over Jade and Alex's pitiful situation.

MONICA
Nothing like firsthand justice.

COP #1
So what exactly was going on here?

ALEX
AN EMPLOYEE SHOWING!

MONICA
Officers, when I showed up, it was practically a sex club in here. Porn, drugs, what have you.

The cops look around. The theater is quiet. Cop #2 motions to Jade and Alex.

COP #2
Alright get up you two. Let's search the premises.

INT. THEATER #1 - EVENING

Cops, Monica, Jade and Alex enter the theater. Some smushed popcorn kernels litter the floor, but otherwise there's no trace of anyone.

INT. THEATER #4 - EVENING

Cops, Monica, Jade and Alex enter the theater. Jade glances nervously at the screen, but there's no signs of the porno that was playing on it earlier.

Tiffany, as well, seems to have vanished.

MONICA
Officers, it was here in this theater that there was a whole bunch of thugs and drugs.

COP #1
I'm sorry ma'am, but without concrete evidence, we can't do anything further.

COP #2
Given that this man here is in fact the acting manager of Cineplex 10, I have no choice but to allow him to carry on with his "employee showing".

Jade gives Monica a smirk behind her back.

Cop #1 turns to Jade and gives him an ominous look.

COP #1

But be warned, buddy, you're on our
radar now.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Jade conducts business as normal. He looks somewhat deflated from his previous bossy demeanor.

Nick bursts into the office in a panic, clutching a toddler with chocolate stains around his lips. Jade sighs and takes the toddler by the hand, leading him back into the lobby.

EXT. CINEPLEX 10 - EVENING

Cineplex 10 looms darkly in the night. Jade exits the door and turns around to lock up. He hears footsteps behind him and jumps.

A ragtag team of his former clients (dance team, middle schoolers, etc.) slowly advance out of the shadows towards the theater.

DANCE TEAM LEADER

What are you doing? My girls need
to practice on the big screen tonight.
We've got regionals this weekend.

JADE

Guys, the POLICE came last night, is
there something you don't understand
about that? We're done here. Rental
hour is over.

Teenage Boy #1 steps out of the crowd.

TEENAGE BOY #1

You have to let me in! I frickin'
beat level 51, and none of these
chumps believe me!

He points to his two friends standing behind him.

TEENAGE BOY #1

I bet \$100 I could do it again
tonight.

JADE

(exasperated)
Why don't you just go home and play
it on your own TV?

TEENAGE BOY #1

The whole key to the level is being able to distinguish the morel mushroom from the green russula mushroom. It's about seeing, immersion, detail. I can't see a damn thing on my 20-inch TV at home.

JADE

Go home. I'm not risking jail time so you can better distinguish mushroom species.

The teenage boys break into a little scuffle. Jade makes sure the doors are secure and then walks past them to his car.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Jade reaches his car door, just when he spies something glittery on the ground. He bends down to inspect it and a sparkled high heel comes into view: Tiffany.

TIFFANY

Hiya baby. Thought we told you not to close up shop.

Two thugs from last night appear beside Tiffany, one of them crosses his arms and the other spreads his legs into a fighting stance.

JADE

I can't open the theater for you tonight, or else we're both going to get arrested.

Tiffany puts her arm around KEV, the thug with his arms crossed.

TIFFANY

Did I introduce you to my homie Kev last night?

Kev bobs his head on cue, Jade remains still.

TIFFANY

Kev's sort of like a Costco around here. If Costco sold grass and dope instead of 5 pound Snickers boxes. Kev brings the goodies in from Canada and then kindly disperses it amongst us. Kev, why don't you tell Jade what happened last night.

KEV

I lost about \$7,000 worth of drugs last night. And I want to know, where is it?

Jade looks baffled.

JADE

Why would I know where it is?

KEV

Well you're not in jail, so the cops didn't find it. But you're looking kinda smug. So I'm thinking you stole it.

Tiffany nods along innocently.

JADE

I didn't steal anything! Why don't you go look for it.

INT. THEATER #4 - EVENING

Kev searches the rows of seats, trying to find the drugs-- nothing.

Tiffany, bored, sits picking at her nails. Jade gets out a flashlight and helps Kev look under the rows of seats.

The flashlight illuminates crushed popcorn kernels, half-chewed candy, a five-dollar bill. Jade pockets the money and continues looking. Under another row of seats we see: lipgloss, movie ticket stubs, and a tray of half-eaten nachos. The underworld of theater seats seems sticky, repulsive and unpleasant. Jade wrinkles his nose. Jade looks up at Kev.

JADE

Find anything?

Kev stands up munching on a bag of Chewy Spree.

KEV

I found some sweet poppers. But these only cost a buck a bag. While mine run about twenty a pill.

JADE

Actually \$4.25 a bag.

Kev gives Jade a withering look.

JADE

Look I can't be held responsible.
(MORE)

JADE (CONT'D)

I told you drugs weren't allowed in the theater and it's not my fault you lost them.

Tiffany coughs.

TIFFANY

Jade, honey, our businesses are really one in the same. We both astronomically inflate the prices of our goodie bags.

JADE

Yes but my customers only get a sugar rush and clogged arteries. Your customers get--

TIFFANY

They get transported to another world, just like yours do.

KEV

Yes, but our people rely on constant access to our product. If I can't supply them, then I'm gonna be in big trouble.

Tiffany nods sympathetically.

KEV

Here's the deal. Find the drugs within 48 hours or else you're paying us \$7,000.

JADE

Come on, I don't have \$7,000.

KEV

Not my problem. No money or drugs and my buddies will be stopping by.

TIFFANY

And that snapshot of you will go straight to Stanley.

Jade stares in disbelief. Tiffany grabs Kev's arm and begins to march him out of the theater.

TIFFANY

Later sweetie. I'll call you tomorrow to see how you're doing.

Tiffany and Kev exit the theater. Jade slumps down into a chair and puts his head in his hands.

INT. CONCESSION STAND - DAY

Jade and Alex stand alone at a concession station. Alex has his camera out and films Jade for another episode of "Concession Confessions". Jade takes a large cup and holds it up to the camera.

JADE

Have you ever faced a crisis of indecision? When you finally reach the front of the line and then you can't decide whether you want a large Sprite, Rootbeer or Pepsi? You feel the heated pressure of the customers behind you who're thinking, 'This jerk couldn't decide what he wanted while he was in line for 20 minutes?' You know Sprite will taste better with your pretzel, but the Pepsi will give you the caffeine to stay awake during the late movie.

Jade puts the cup under the soda fountain and begins to squirt a little bit of each flavor into the cup.

JADE

Well, next time order a Graveyard. A Graveyard is not for the light of heart and consists of every single flavor on the fountain. You'll get your caffeine, your bubbles and your citrusy taste all blended into one concoction.

Jade reaches the last flavor on the soda fountain and then stares down into the bubbling gray/greenish fluid. He raises the cup to the camera in a toast.

JADE

A Graveyard: where soda indecision goes to die.

Jade takes a huge gulp and then waves goodbye to the camera. Alex stops filming and Jade chokes on the soda, spitting out most of it back into the cup.

ALEX

Gross, dude.

JADE

You owe me \$20 for the next person who orders a Graveyard here.

Jade dumps out the remains of his Graveyard drink.

ALEX

Deal. You're gonna need that money to repay Kev and Tif, hah.

Jade chucks his empty cup at Alex.

JADE

Shut up! Maybe the drugs are still here. As soon as we close up, you're going to look for the drugs and I'm going to brainstorm ideas to get us out of this mess. I just hope the drugs are still on the premises.

ALEX

Why do I have to look for them?

JADE

Because I searched all last night. Now I'm going to take a break in projection. Only radio me if this place is burning down.

ALEX

Or if someone turns in the drugs.

JADE

Or if they order a Graveyard.

Jade takes the camera from Alex and leaves the concession stand. Alex plays around with the soda fountain, squirting a few different flavors into the cup. He takes a swig and makes a horrified face. After swallowing he reconsiders, the aftertaste isn't so bad after all.

INT. PROJECTION DESK - DAY

Jade sits down at his desk and begins uploading the soda footage from his camera. Jade puts on his headphones.

Suddenly whimpering sobs emerge from the end of the projection booth. Jade takes out an earbud and listens carefully, unsure he heard correctly. Another exasperated sob drifts from the end of the hallway.

Jade gets up from his desk and slowly walks to the end of the hallway.

INT. PROJECTION BOOTH - DAY

Jade can only see several of the old 35mm projectors and pile of discarded 35mm celluloid.

The celluloid has begun to unravel and lies in a semi-tangled mess on the floor. A sob emerges from the pile of celluloid.

JADE

Hello?

The pile of celluloid begins to heave and then a scruffy face emerges: Gary.

JADE

What are you doing in my projection booth?

GARY

Y-your projection booth?

Gary breaks down into sobs, clutching the celluloid closer to him like a blanket.

JADE

I'm sorry who are you?

GARY

I'm Gary!

Gary looks at Jade, expecting a flash of recognition. Jade scratches his head, the name seems only vaguely familiar.

JADE

Oh, Gary from Christie Digital?

GARY

Christie Digital! No, not those monsters. I'm Gary, I ran this projection booth for twenty-five years.

JADE

Oh right, I think Stanley had mentioned a Gary working up here before.

Gary struggles to untangle himself from the celluloid and he staggers to his feet.

JADE

So what're you doing up here Gary?

GARY

I just heard about the conversion and I got here as fast as I could. Clearly not soon enough to stop the massacre.

Gary points to the abandoned projectors and film reels. He acts unstable as if he's had some sort of psychotic break. Jade takes a step backward, unsure if this guy is for real.

JADE

Digital's the wave of the future
man.

Gary grabs a few feet of film and shoves it in Jade's face.

GARY

1's and 0's can never replace
photographs. You can't feel a
computer code, you can touch
celluloid. Look come here!

Gary lays out the film strip against a projector. He reaches
into his pocket and pulls out a switchblade. Jade jumps.

JADE

Whoa, man, hey!

GARY

Relax. We used to do this back in
the day. Sometimes if a movie sucked
enough we'd fool around with the
frames, try and make it funny. Or
else if the film ran at the Cineplex
long enough we'd leave our own unique
projector stamp in the frame. The
audience would never know, only the
sharpest cinephile detected it.

Gary carefully begins scratching the film frames with his
switchblade. He displays real finesse with the knife, despite
its large blade.

GARY

You just can't do this with digital.
You can't mold the frames or cut it
apart. Shouldn't art be tactile?
To feel it between your fingers,
like a painting.

Gary sets down his switchblade.

GARY

Or to hear it whirring through the
projector.

Gary loads the film into one of the projectors that he clearly
had set up before Jade arrived. The film begins clicking
through the machine and it projects a small picture frame
onto the opposite wall.

GARY

Frame by frame, by frame, by frame.

On the wall the New York City skyline is displayed, clearly the opening sequence of a business drama/comedy. Gary's knife scratches run through the frame, making the footage seem older, grittier. Some frames Gary has completely blacked parts to showcase particular buildings. The images are arty and arresting. On the final frame, Gary grabs the celluloid to pause it. The man on the image has a small G etched into his shirt pocket. Gary smiles, completely absorbed in his little movie projection.

GARY

See? Magic.

Jade doesn't seem quite convinced.

JADE

Why don't you just take the remaining film reels home with you?

GARY

I don't have a projector at home.

JADE

Well, I'm sure we'll be keeping these for another few days. If you want to do a little more of your...art...then I'll let you use a projector.

Gary breaks into a huge smile.

GARY

Thank you! Thank you! I know exactly what I have to do.

Gary reaches behind one of the projectors and pulls out a huge duffel bag. It already has some film peeking out of the zipper. He begins stuffing it with the remaining film reels.

JADE

Slow down dude. Trust me, no one else is going to want those now.

GARY

This is going to be the new vinyl some day kid. Everyone in your generation's going crazy to get back to music on vinyl. Well give it a few years and 35mm will be the new vinyl.

Gary struggles to close the zipper on his duffel bag, stretched to the max with film. When he finally gets it closed, he shoulders the bag.

GARY
I'll be back tomorrow night.

Gary starts to sprint down the projection booth.

JADE
What? Take your time.

GARY
(yelling)
I'll be here to rent out a theater
after hours!

Gary reaches the end of the hallway and runs out, the door slamming behind him.

JADE
No, no, that shit's over with!

Jade's comment echoes to an empty projection booth. He sighs and notices a scrap of 35mm on the ground. He picks it up and examines it, shrugging, he stuffs it into his pocket.

EXT. MONICA'S APARTMENT - DAY

Monica exits her apartment carrying her purse and a large blue Pepsi-Cola cup with no lid. She takes a sip of her soda and marches importantly to her car.

INT. MONICA'S CAR - DAY

Monica gets into her car. She methodically places her Pepsi cup in the cupholder and her purse on the passenger's seat. She unzips her purse to dig out her cellphone. She dials in a number and begins to drive out of the parking lot.

INT. PROJECTION DESK - DAY

Jade sits at his desk again, editing the soda footage, and his cellphone rings. He notices Monica's name on the screen and picks up the phone, his finger hovering over the "Ignore" button. He takes a breath and clicks "Answer".

JADE
And I thought you'd never apologize.

INTERCUT - CELLPHONE CONVERSATION

MONICA
I'm headed to the theater for the final check up and to organize the old equipment to be shipped out.

JADE

Fine.

MONICA

Make sure none of your party remnants
are still there.

Monica takes a sharp turn with her car and her purse falls off the passenger seat, spilling its contents all over the floor.

MONICA

Remember Jade, you're supposed to be
running a respectable business. The
movies have always been a family
affair.

Monica reaches over to the passenger seat trying to reorganize all her things. She stuffs things back in her purse haphazardly.

JADE

Yes nothing beats a Sunday matinee
with Grandma.

Monica, without looking, picks up a bag of unidentifiable pills and some herbs: the missing drug stash!

MONICA

Now when I get to the theater don't
let me forget to give you the password--

Monica takes another sharp turn and the bag bursts open. She realizes what she's holding and screams.

MONICA

SHIT!

JADE

Is that the new password?

Without Monica noticing one of the pills falls into her Pepsi cup and quickly dissolves.

MONICA

Oh my god, oh my god, oh my god.

JADE

Calm down, trust me no one would
suspect you of that.

Monica frantically scoops the drugs back into the bag, ducking below her windshield as if someone might catch her.

MONICA

Suspect me?! This is all your fault,
Jade I can't even--

JADE

Whoa, calm down there, it's just a
password.

MONICA

I'll be there in five.

Monica angrily hangs up her phone and stuffs the drugs back into her purse. She nervously begins to gulp soda from her Pepsi cup.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

Jade sits on the curb in front of the Cineplex entrance. It's a sunny day outside and customers lazily stream into the theater. He nods his head to a few regulars, and then closes his eyes to soak up the sun.

Monica's Beetle careens into the parking lot, barely staying on all four wheels. The Beetle crashes into the curb almost hitting Jade. Jade falls backward onto the sidewalk in surprise.

The Beetle's door pops open and Monica falls out onto the sidewalk on top of Jade. Monica is clearly feeling the effects of the drug. She acts like a high-schooler encountering wine coolers for the first time.

MONICA

(giggling)
Are they here?

Jade pushes Monica off him and stands up.

JADE

What the hell are you doing?

MONICA

(slurring)
Don't call them! Don't call them,
just because I called them!

Jade helps Monica stand up, and she wobbles about unsteadily.

Jade opens his mouth to speak.

MONICA

SHHH!

Monica covers Jade's mouth, as if expecting the cops to show up. Jade looks around, then opens his mouth again.

MONICA
SHHH! You fool. Come.

Monica drags Jade to the theater entrance, barreling past a FAMILY WITH KIDS.

INT. LOBBY - DAY

Her purse catches in the door frame and the drug bag spills onto the ground, a few multi-colored pills escape.

Jade, realizing these are the missing drugs, stares accusatorily at Monica.

The family with kids stare in bewilderment. The FATHER clutches his DAUGHTER closer to him. The YOUNG SON grabs one of the multi-colored pills and holds it up to Monica.

Monica tries to quickly pick up the dropped pills, but in her befuddled state it takes her an exceedingly long time. She sees the kid with a pill and snatches it from him.

MONICA
Those are my skittles kiddo.

Jade apologetically smiles at the family and shoves a few free passes into their hands. He takes Monica by the shoulder and escorts her through the lobby.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Jade forces Monica into the office and sits her down in the desk chair. He closes the door behind him and then waves the bag of drugs in Monica's face.

JADE
Do you think you're funny stealing these drugs? I was literally going to get murdered by thugs for these.

Monica begins spinning around in the desk chair.

MONICA
(giggling)
I literally hate it when people literally can't use the word literally in a literal grammatic sentence.

JADE
Shut up. Why did you steal those drugs?

MONICA
I didn't steal those drugs.
(MORE)

MONICA (CONT'D)

You planted them in my purse so I'd get arrested.

JADE

I don't care about you, Tiffany needs those drugs or else I'm going to have to pay her \$7,000.

A realization suddenly dawns on Jade. He kicks out his foot and abruptly stops Monica mid-chairspin.

JADE

Tiffany!

INT. ALEX'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Tiffany lays in bed with Alex. She rests her head on his chest, making odd cooing noises. Alex has fallen asleep, his head sunk back into the pillow, softly snoring.

Tiffany looks up at Alex then slowly slips out of bed. She puts her clothes back on and reapplies lipstick in the mirror.

She sits down at Alex's desk and opens up his laptop. She searches for "Concessions Confessions" in the web browser. She takes out a pad of sticky notes from her purse and writes down the username and password. She rips it off and tucks it into her pocket.

Tiffany takes another sticky note and writes "Thanks, honey". She kisses it with her fresh lipstick and then sticks it to Alex's forehead. Tiffany closes the laptop lid and then silently makes her escape. Alex still sleeps cluelessly in his bed.

INT. OFFICE - EVENING

Jade sits on the desk and Monica sits in the swivel chair. Monica holds a bag of popcorn, stuffing her face.

JADE

You okay?

MONICA

Salty...snowflakes!

She throws up a few kernels and catches them in her mouth.

A knock sounds on the office door. Jade walks around the desk to open the door. Nick stands on the other side.

NICK

Hey, Alex is on the phone for you.

Nick catches sight of Monica, who by now spins recklessly in the chair, popcorn going everywhere. She swirls her finger in the bag.

MONICA

Nick! Bring me some Goobers, let's get some trail mix action going on in here.

JADE

(whispering)
She's fine, go.

Jade slams the door in Nick's face and picks up the telephone.

JADE

Where have you been?

INT. ALEX'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Alex sits up in bed, Tiffany's sticky note has migrated from his forehead to his cheek. He hugs the covers tightly.

ALEX

Oh hey. Um, I just woke up.

INTERCUT - TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

JADE

Get to the theater, I found the drug stash.

Alex sits up, smushing the sticky note into the covers.

ALEX

What, where?

JADE

Monica had them.

ALEX

Monica?

As if on cue, Monica stops spinning. She sinks into the chair, falling asleep.

JADE

Yes get over here now.

Jade slams down the phone.

INT. TIFFANY'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Kev, and other cronies lounge around the apartment. Tiffany sits at a table, addressing the guys.

TIFFANY

Not only do we need to retrieve the drugs and money from Jade, we can't forget what a huge business opportunity this is. Tomorrow night, I want all you guys out there selling product. If we get enough capital we can launch into more profitable things like pills and poppers.

SONNY a middle aged tattooed hippie lifts his head up.

SONNY

Don't you think Vermont's more of a weed market? The granolas like their grass, but pills, really?

TIFFANY

We just need direct access to wealthy naive tweens. And I know just where to find them.

Tiffany opens up her laptop and types. "Concessions Confessions" flashes up on her screen and she smiles as she logs into the blog account.

INT. THEATER #1 - EVENING

The theater has closed for the night and Jade, Alex, Todd and Monica lounge in the theater seats. They all have large Pepsi cups in their cupholders and the bag of drugs sits on the armrest in between Alex and Jade.

ALEX

So it's over.

JADE

That's it.

MONICA

Thank God.

JADE

I thought we had a pretty cool thing going for a bit.

MONICA

Stanley will be back in a few days and you'll be knocked off your roost.

Alex stands up and retrieves an X-Box controller from the seat next to him.

ALEX

I think we owe ourselves one last hurrah.

Alex dramatically punches the controller and the movie screen glows to life. The *Call of Duty* menu appears. Alex hands Jade a controller, and then picks up the bag of drugs.

ALEX

You know, they aren't gonna miss one or two of these babies.

Todd reaches out his hand. Jade looks nervously over at Monica, anticipating a negative reaction.

MONICA

Oh what the hell. It's just us tonight, let's do it.

Jade coughs in surprise. Todd makes the sign of the cross.

TODD

Thank you, Jesus.

JADE

Geez, one trip and this gal's a whole new person.

Alex extracts four purple pills from the bag and then dissolves them into everyone's Pepsi cup. Jade, Todd and Monica stand up, clinking cups with Alex.

JADE

To the last night of freedom and exploration. To the last night of utter fantastical immersion.

MONICA

Cheers.

ALEX

Cheers.

TODD

Cheers.

All four raise their cups and chug the remainder of their soda/pill cocktail.

INT. THEATER #1 - MOMENTS LATER

The lights seemed to have dimmed and the atmosphere has darkened. Jade holds his controller up to the screen and the *Call of Duty* Menu vanishes, replaced by the words: "Engaging Fame Quest".

The screen brightens, displaying psychedelic colors, and then transforms into an old black and white grainy image of a film clapboard. The screen reads: "Action?", with a blinking cursor.

ALEX

Dude, what is this game?

Jade hits the action button and the screen launches into a rapid montage of black and white films.

MONICA

It comes preprogrammed on all Christie Digital equipment.

The black and white film montage continues, showing iconic early movie film clips like *A Trip to the Moon*, *Goldrush*, and *Birth of a Nation*. A feminine narrator voice emanates from the screen.

NARRATOR

Welcome to Fame Quest. Objective number one: attract an audience.

Jade holds up his controller and presses a button. Monica, Todd and Alex hold Jade's arms, and then all four are transported into the movie screen.

MONTAGE - FAME QUEST GAME

-- They enter a Buster Keaton film, and have to climb a building. Applause is heard in the background.

-- They enter a Charlie Chaplin film. Jade puts on a dirt moustache and starts fondling Monica, she slaps him.

NARRATOR

Be careful stars, hot film spins a hot fire.

The celluloid edges of the film are seen on the edge of the screen, running through the projector. The friction ignites a fire onscreen.

-- They run from the fire, escaping into *The Jazz Singer*, the first sound film. Monica belts out singing, Jade, Alex and Todd remain mute, angry that they can't talk yet, they're still stuck in their tramp persona from Chaplin.

-- The fire burns away the edges, leaving darkness all around the four of them. It threatens to consume them, when Jade takes out a pair of scissors and cuts them out of the frame.

-- Motion stops, they're just a single film frame drifting into darkness.

NARRATOR

Objective number two: shine bright
my little stars, don't fade to gray.

-- The trio flies through the first color film, *Flowers and Trees*, then later films like the *Wizard of Oz*. Monica marvels at her bright red lips, Alex chases down a flower and pins it to his chest. Todd cuddles with a smiling bird.

-- The scenes begin blurring together, everything becomes fuzzy, the outlines of Jade, Alex, Todd and Monica are vaguely identifiable.

NARRATOR

Hunt down your glasses!

-- All four fight through an army, much like something out of Avatar fantasyland, and rescues three pairs of 3D glasses.

-- They put on the 3D glasses and immediately begin to drift spatially away from each other. They try to desperately cling to each other.

NARRATOR

Be careful to number the stars.

-- The scenery turns into a series of 1's and 0's, becoming meaningless. Jade rescues Monica from a 0, by stabbing it with a 1.

-- Flashes of the Internet, video games, TV, etc. fly by them.

-- Jade, Alex, Todd and Monica become breathless, tiring, their world fading in and out.

-- A series of bright flashes illuminates the screen. Four computers appear before each of them, the webcams turned on, so they can see their images onscreen.

NARRATOR

Welcome to THE FAME, my stars.

-- The screen goes completely black.

END MONTAGE.

INT. THEATER # 1 - MORNING

Jade and Monica sit slumped in the theater seats, Monica's hair obscures her face. Alex and Todd lie passed out on the floor.

The bag of drugs lies scattered across the floor, mixed in with large soda puddles and remnants of food.

The movie screen remains black.

Slowly Jade and Monica awake, looking around in confusion. Jade spots the empty bag that held the drugs and bolts out of his seat. He wildly looks around for the drugs.

JADE
(whispering)
No...

Jade picks up a clump of herbs from the floor, trying to knock off the dirt and dust. He stuffs it in the bag, running around the seats picking up as many loose pills as he can find.

Monica gets up and kicks Alex, rousing him from his stupor. Alex jerks awake and pumps his fist in the air.

ALEX
(shouting)
Winner!

He acts as if he's still playing the video game, then opens his eyes, confused.

MONICA
Loser. Todd!

Todd doesn't stir.

JADE
(mumbling)
What? No. Shit, shit, shit.

Jade drops to his knees in front of a large soda puddle. A handful of colorful pills are half dissolved in the liquid. As Jade tries to rescue them, they crumble and completely dissolve in the soda.

Monica begins to rub Jade's shoulders, trying to comfort him. Alex struggles to his feet, finally aware of his surroundings. He notices the puddle of dissolved pills.

ALEX
Why'd you do that?

Jade's sadness turns to instant anger. He shrugs off Monica and then pulls Alex down to the ground with him, shoving his face into the puddle.

JADE
Do you think I did this on purpose?
That I planned to completely fuck
myself over.

ALEX

Get off of me.

Jade and Alex wrestle on the floor. Neither one can get the upperhand, and they both end up simply rolling around in the soda puddles, drenching their t-shirt and jeans. They bump into sleeping Todd, who angrily awakens. Todd shrugs them off then climbs into a chair to fall back asleep.

Monica rolls her eyes at their antics, and succeeds in kicking them apart.

Jade and Alex stare at each other for a moment and then Jade leaps to his feet and angrily walks towards the emergency exit to the left of the movie screen. He exits the theater, letting in a burst of sunlight and then the door slams closed behind him.

Alex remains slightly stunned on the floor. Monica runs to catch up with Jade. Todd remains sleeping in the theater.

EXT. PLAYGROUND - DAY

Behind the cineplex sits a slightly rundown playground from the next door daycare center. Jade strips off his soda-soaked shirt and collapses onto the slide. He closes his eyes trying to block out the world and just enjoy the sunshine.

Jade hears the emergency exit door slam again and Monica walks out, plopping herself down into a swing.

The door slams for the third time and Alex comes and sits on the tiny rocking seahorse. He leaves his shirt on, but attempts to wring out the soda. All three sit in silence for a few moments.

A cellphone begins to ring. Monica and Alex check their pockets, but Jade doesn't move. The ringing continues.

MONICA

Jade, I think that's yours.

Jade keeps his eyes closed, and the ringing stops. Moments later the cellphone begins to ring again.

ALEX

Jade?

Jade reaches into his pocket and throws his phone onto the playground woodchips. It continues ringing. Alex picks up the phone.

ALEX

Hello?

(MORE)

ALEX (CONT'D)

Um, no, it's Alex...thanks...what!...
No, no, that's fine, yes 10 tickets
are still available...uh huh, tonight
at midnight? Come early, it's gonna
be a packed house.

Alex hangs up the phone.

ALEX

You little shit, you had a plan all
along and you still acted like we
were fucked.

Jade opens his eyes.

JADE

We are fucked. No drugs, no money.

ALEX

Well why did you just get a call
asking for 10 tickets to the early
premiere of *Avatar 2* tonight?

Jade sits up.

JADE

What?

ALEX

Stop acting dumb. You planned on
holding a special *Avatar* screening
to make up that \$7,000. Genius.

The phone starts ringing again.

ALEX

Answer away.

Alex tosses the phone to Jade.

JADE

Hello?

TIFFANY (O.S.)

You're welcome, honey. I knew you'd
be panicking right about now. So
out of the goodness of my heart, I
found a way to extort all your little
groupies.

JADE

Tiffany, what did you do?

TIFFANY (O.S.)
I just posted a Concessions
Confessions ad for tonight's *Avatar*
showing. You're welcome.

JADE
And you would do this for me why?

TIFFANY (O.S.)
I'm just looking out for your safety
Jade. I'll see you tonight.

Jade hangs up the phone.

JADE
Tiffany planned tonight's *Avatar*
showing, not me.

ALEX
What, why would she do that?

JADE
Certainly not because she wants to
help me, we have to cancel it.

MONICA
Tiffany might be onto something. If
we show *Avatar* in Theater #1, that's
360 seats. If we charge \$20 a seat,
that's \$7,000 right there. We'd be
free and clear.

JADE
So we're actually going to trust the
person who got us into this mess in
the first place?

ALEX
She's not that bad, Jade.

MONICA
How else are we gonna get \$7,000?

Jade sighs and stands up at the top of the slide. He jumps
and slides on his sneakers down the slide.

JADE
Alright, let's get to work. There's
a lot to do before tonight.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

CU on Nick's petrified face.

JADE

You're in charge for the remainder of today. I've got some work to do, but I'll be back later tonight right before we close. Here's a walkie-talkie, a copy of the master key and the safe key.

Jade thrusts all these things into Nick's hands.

JADE

If anyone comes in here asking about a special showing of *Avatar 2*, tell them it starts at midnight. Call me in an emergency.

NICK

Wait, *Avatar* doesn't open until Friday, we can't have a midnight showing on a Wednesday.

Jade stops, and puts his arm around Nick's shoulder.

JADE

Nick, sometimes things are better left unquestioned. If a seat checker comes in or Karl from 20th Century Fox, just forget I ever mentioned an early *Avatar* showing.

Nick opens his mouth to protest, but Jade leans in closer to Nick staring him down. Nick shuts his mouth.

JADE

Thank you. Bye.

Jade runs out the door.

INT. MONICA'S CAR - DAY

Monica and Alex sit in the Beetle in front of Cineplex 10.

Monica sits in the driver's seat nervously tapping the steering wheel.

MONICA

We need publicity, ads, posters, maybe a viral video. Alex make a Concession Confessions post right now.

ALEX

Tiffany already did.

Jade gets into the front seat of the Beetle, before he can even buckle up Monica speeds out of the parking lot.

MONICA

We're going to Staples to get posterboards, markers and colored paper.

ALEX

We're planning an underground movie premiere, not a 7th grade science fair project.

JADE

We can't advertise this too heavily. If Hollywood finds out that we're showing *Avatar* early, Cineplex 10 could lose its distribution rights. And if Stanley finds out we're definitely fired.

Monica abruptly stops the Beetle at a red light.

MONICA

So what's the game plan?

INT. THEATER #1 - DAY

Todd continues to sleep in the theater. Customers begin to enter the theater and the previews/ads begin to play. Todd doesn't stir.

INT. TIFFANY'S APARTMENT - DAY

CU: Long glittery nails wrap themselves around a rhinestoned cell phone.

Tiffany raises the cell phone up to her lipglossed lips.

TIFFANY

Call Karl.

PHONE

Calling Karl, mobile.

KARL (O.S.)

Hello?

TIFFANY

Darling, I'm in desperate need of an escort to this fantastic party tonight. You in?

KARL

Always.

TIFFANY
Cineplex 10, midnight.

KARL
Perfect.

TIFFANY
Ciao, darling.

Tiffany hangs up, smiling. She pauses to light a cigarette, then raises the phone to her lips again.

TIFFANY
Call Stanley.

PHONE
Calling Stanley, mobile.

INT. JADE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Jade sits at his desk, frantically typing away at the keyboard. Alex stands on the couch while Monica measures him with a measuring tape.

On the computer screen we see Jade scrolling through several geeky blog sites. He types comments like: "DL Avatar 2 premiere tonight at Cineplex 10".

Monica holds up large pieces of posterboard, comparing the size to Alex's body. She then puts the posterboard on the table and begins doodling on it.

Alex hops down from the couch and fixes himself a snack in the kitchen. A knock sounds at the door.

JADE
Alex?

Alex has bread in one hand and deli meat in the other.

ALEX
Kinda busy here.

Jade gets up and opens the door. Kev and Sonny burst into the apartment, knocking Jade out of the way.

KEV
You got my money?

JADE
It hasn't been 48 hours.

Kev and Sonny stumble around the apartment. It is unclear whether they are high or just trying to be intimidating.

KEV

It's been two days. Business is lacking, I need that stash or I need payment.

JADE

I'm getting the money tonight at midnight, I just--

Kev gives a nod to Sonny and Sonny grabs Jade by his neck. Monica screams, Alex freezes.

KEV

I'm not here to play games.

Monica looks over to Alex for help.

MONICA

Alex do something!

Alex throws the deli meat and it slaps Kev across the side of the face. Kev reacts by pulling out a hand pistol. He points it first at Alex and then rests it on Jade.

KEV

You're not gonna play me for no fool, it's time your friend paid his debt.

MONICA

You moron.

Monica walks in between Jade and Kev, blocking the pistol.

MONICA

(authoratively)
Listen Kev and--

SONNY

Sonny, ma'am.

MONICA

Sonny. Come to the Cinplex tonight at midnight. We'll have your \$7,000 and we'll supply you with some rich suburban kid clients. You're getting a two for one deal there.

Kev's pistol begins to waver and Sonny releases Jade from his chokehold.

SONNY

Yah we know.

Kev lowers the pistol and then emphatically points at Monica.

KEV
Midnight tonight.

Kev points the pistol at Alex who ducks under the kitchen counter.

Kev lowers the pistol and he and Sonny walk out of the apartment. Just before Kev closes the door he fires one shot directly in front of Jade's feet. Jade collapses over in shock.

Monica and Alex rush over to see if Jade's okay.

MONICA
Listen, Alex and I are going to finish promoting tonight's show. Stay here and relax, we're gonna be fine.

Alex points to Jade's computer, which has the Concession Confessions homepage showing.

ALEX
Why don't you work on a little pre-film entertainment for our audience tonight? Nothing like a little promotion.

INT. JADE'S APARTMENT - LATER

Jade sits alone in his apartment, editing various Concession Confessions videos.

EXT. CINEPLEX 10 - DAY

Alex stands outside Cineplex 10 with two large posterboards hung around his neck. He wears large 3D glasses and a baseball cap that says "RealD 3D". His sign says in large letters: "Carrot Sticks w/Ranch Now Available!!". He paces back and forth as a few families walk by him into the theater.

Alex monitors the approach of some teenagers. He quickly flips the first posterboard over his head to reveal another sign that reads: "Special Avatar 2 Premier Tonight @ Midnight. Invite-Only."

The teenagers stop and Alex whispers into their ears. They nod excitedly and then enter the theater.

Another family starts to approach and Alex flips the first sign back over his chest, grinning stupidly and giving a thumbs up as they pass him.

MONTAGE - MONICA SPREADS THE WORD

-- Monica enters a high school gymnasium where the Dance Team is practicing. She hands them an Avatar flier.

-- Monica knocks on a suburban home door. The two teenage gamers from earlier answer, checking Monica out. She hands them a flier.

-- Monica waits at a school bus stop. The middle schoolers who were playing Angry Birds get off the bus. Monica hands them some fliers and candy.

-- Monica stalks the gaming demo section of Best Buy. She hits up all the nerdy kids she can find.

EXT. PLAYGROUND - DAY

Todd smokes a joint on the swing set. He plays in the wood chips.

INT. TIFFANY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Tiffany gets ready in front of a mirror. She applies globs of makeup and some light body glitter.

Tiffany sifts through her wardrobe, selects an over-the-top dress with ruffles and a train. It looks like it was pulled off an Academy Award's Worst Dressed list.

INT. JADE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Jade finishes his editing and shuts down his computer.

Alex enters the apartment and takes off his posterboard sign. Monica follows, throwing some extra fliers on the coffee table.

Monica hugs Jade.

MONICA

Ready?

JADE

As I'll ever be.

EXT. CINEPLEX 10 - NIGHT

A huge crowd of people line up outside the Cineplex. The crowd is by far larger than any of the previous after hours events. Nick is at the head of crowd, meekly trying to act as bouncer.

Jade, Alex and Monica pull up to the Cineplex curb in Monica's Beetle.

They emerge and fight their way through the crowd to Nick.

JADE

Hey buddy, hanging in there?

NICK

I wasn't sure if I was supposed to let people into the theater or not and I didn't know when you'd get here, but I've got everyone lined up and I guess they're all ready for--

JADE

Relax. You did good. We'll take it from here.

Jade nods to Alex. Alex assumes the bouncer position from Nick and raises his hands to the crowd.

ALEX

Ladies and gentlemen thank you very much for coming. Admission is \$20, exact change only please.

The crowd pushes forward towards the doors. In the very back a few thugs from Tiffany's apartment can be seen hocking drugs.

Jade grins at the crowd then pulls Monica with him into the Cineplex.

ALEX

One at a time! One at a time!

Alex pulls out a sharpie and begins taking money from people. He marks their hand with an X, then lets them pass through the doors.

ALEX

Nick, make yourself useful and go direct everyone to Theater #1.

Nick nods and hurries into the theater.

INT. PROJECTION BOOTH - NIGHT

Jade stands at the tiny window in front of projector #1, watching people file slowly into the theater.

Monica stands behind Jade fiddling with the projector's computer.

JADE

Looks like we might just pull this shenenigan off.

MONICA

What's Avatar's passcode?

JADE

What?

MONICA

We have Avatar's digital file ingested into the projector's harddrive, but there's a passcode blocking us from actually playing the film.

JADE

Didn't Fox send us the code already?

MONICA

I don't have it, do you?

JADE

No.

Nick enters the projection booth.

NICK

Hey, I've had some requests for popcorn, should I fire up the kettle?

JADE

Duh, we want to make MONEY. Cover for Alex and send him up here, we need Avatar's passcode.

NICK

We don't have it.

MONICA

How do you know?

NICK

I called Fox this afternoon, because I thought it was a mistake. They said they're not sending out the passcodes until the premiere date, something about unauthorized employee showings.

JADE

Shit. Monica, can you bypass this?

Monica begins to tap furiously on the keyboard.

MONICA

If I rename the Avatar file and trick the computer into thinking the

(MORE)

MONICA (CONT'D)
 passcode applies to a different film,
 I just might be able to play it.
 I'm gonna need time. You're going
 to have to stall for me Jade.

INT. THEATER # 1 - NIGHT

The theater has filled almost to capacity. We can see familiar faces from before like the Dance Team and the geeky boys as well as many unfamiliar faces.

Dance Team Leader impatiently checks her watch, it reads 12:05. She turns to her fellow dancers.

DANCE TEAM LEADER
 Girls we've got class tomorrow, if
 the show doesn't start in five
 minutes, we're getting a refund and
 leaving.

The crowd grows restless.

EXT. CINEPLEX 10 - NIGHT

The crowd has largely emptied, Alex counts and organizes the bills in his hands. A black sports car pulls up to the curb and Tiffany and Karl step out. They're both dressed as if they're attending a red carpet event. Karl wears a suit and tie, with his pantlegs rolled slightly up to show off his luxury sneakers. Tiffany wears the hideous dress we saw before and some blinged out accessories.

Alex looks up from his money and tries to stifle a laugh. Tiffany and Karl strut towards the entrance and Alex recognizes Tiffany.

ALEX
 Tif, uh, hi, uh, you came?

TIFFANY
 Hi Alex, let me introduce you to my
 date for the night, Karl.

ALEX
 Hi.

Alex and Karl awkwardly shake hands.

TIFFANY
 Jade's expecting us. And I assume
 we're exempt from the admissions
 fee?

Tiffany arches her eyebrows.

ALEX

Uh, yah, I suppose.

Karl opens the door for Tiffany and she gives Alex a peck on the cheek.

TIFFANY

Thanks, honey.

Karl and Tiffany waltz into the Cineplex.

INT. PROJECTION BOOTH - NIGHT

Monica furiously types away at the projector keyboard. A series of error messages appear. She types something else and the screen goes black.

MONICA

What?!

Monica bangs the computer screen. Nothing. She gets on her hands and knees and fiddles with the electrical cords. The computer makes another error sound.

INT. THEATER #1 - NIGHT

People are now munching on popcorn, but they're even more restless than before.

Jade stands in front of the stadium, addressing the audience.

JADE

We're just experiencing some technical difficulties.

A few boos are heard amongst the crowd.

JADE

I promise the show will be under way as soon as possible.

Dance Team Leader raises her hand in the audience. Jade tries to ignore it.

JADE

In the meantime fill up on some more popcorn and snacks.

Dance Team Leader coughs and stretches her hand even higher, several other people in the crowd notice her.

JADE

Yes?

DANCE TEAM LEADER
Is it possible to get a refund?

JADE
Um--

Several audience members nod in agreement. Jade awkwardly fumbles for words.

EXT. CINEPLEX 10 - NIGHT

Alex begins to lock the Cineplex doors from the inside. He turns to walk away and jumps at the sound of something large hitting the door. Alex turns back to see Gary pressing his face against the window.

Gary holds several stacks of film reels and pushes a cart covered in a satin black sheet.

GARY
Open up, let's go.

ALEX
Um, sorry sir, we're closed.

GARY
I'm Gary.

Gary pushes the cart against the door, but it doesn't budge.

ALEX
Nice to meet you Gary, but we're closed for the day.

GARY
I'm Jade's salvation.

Alex hesitates.

ALEX
You know Jade?

GARY
Of course, he's my beloved successor.

Nick runs into view, looking panicked as usual.

NICK
Alex, stop fooling around, Jade needs help.

ALEX
Okay Gary, let's see what you're made of.

Alex opens the door to let Gary in.

INT. PROJECTION BOOTH - NIGHT

Monica shrieks in triumph. She hits a few more buttons on the computer, and the word "Unencrypting" appears on the screen along with a loading icon. The estimated loading time reads: 7 minutes.

INT. THEATER #1 - NIGHT

Jade continues to awkwardly stall in front of the crowd.

JADE

Refunds really don't apply to special showings, and if everyone just sits tight for a few minutes, I'm sure the show will be starting.

A few people in the audience stand up and angrily start to walk down the aisle.

JADE

Please just remain seated.

Gary bursts into the theater, wheeling his cart at breakneck speed.

GARY

Ladies and gentlemen, please excuse my novice mentee, the show has begun!

Jade jumps out of the way and Gary now occupies center stage.

GARY

(whispering)
Go turn off the theater lights.

JADE

Gary, what the hell are you doing?

GARY

Do you trust me?

Jade looks at the restless crowd.

JADE

I have no choice.

GARY

Go.

Gary hands Jade a CD with the words "G's Beats" on the cover. Jade takes it and exits.

GARY

Now, lest anyone be confused, what you're about to see is not the newest fanciest smanshiest digital technology of *Avatar*. But rather a reinterpretation of classic 35mm.

Gary sets down his handful of film reels and then dramatically pulls off the satin sheet from his cart. On his cart sits what looks like two film projectors and a DJ turntable. Gary takes off the two projectors and sets them up behind him, so that they're facing the large movie screen.

Gary takes two film reels and places them on top of his DJ turntable, as if they were records.

The crowd begins to murmur loudly, skeptical of Gary's show.

Gary runs celluloid from the turntable reels into the two separate projectors. He begins to run extension cords to all his equipment.

INT. PROJECTION BOOTH - NIGHT

Jade walks over and flicks a switch in front of projector #1, we see through the tiny window the lights go out in theater #1.

Monica still stands in front of the computer.

MONICA

We've got about 5 minutes until I can re-upload the *Avatar* files into a playable, non-password protected version.

Jade peers through the window, trying to get a look at Gary.

JADE

I think we've got enough of a distraction 'til then.

INT. THEATER #1 - NIGHT

The theater is pitch black and we only hear the grumble of the crowd.

MAN IN CROWD

Avatar!

Applause.

Gary successfully hooks up his equipment to a power source and the DJ turntable glows green.

In the low greenish light we see Tiffany and Karl sneak into the theater. They barrel through the front row, making somewhat of a commotion to find two seats together.

GARY

Cue the music!

Gary dramatically raises his hands, a few images begin to flicker on the screen behind him, but then the power dies to his turntable and the theater is once again plunged into darkness.

INT. PROJECTION BOOTH - NIGHT

JADE

Okay, Monica play that music track.

Monica hits the start button, and the low rumble of music is heard through the projection window. The theater remains pitch dark.

INT. THEATER #1 - NIGHT

Gary fumbles around on the floor with a tiny flashlight, attempting to reconnect some power cords that came loose.

The loud pulse of the music overpowers anything else, a few of members of the crowd boo loudly.

INT. PROJECTION BOOTH - NIGHT

Through the window Jade sees the turntable light up again, but the projectors remain dark. Jade squints to try and make out what's happening.

INT. THEATER #1 - NIGHT

Gary stands up behind the turntable, waving his hands towards the projection window. He sticks his face in the greenish light of the table and makes a "kill it" motion with his hand.

INT. PROJECTION BOOTH - NIGHT

JADE

Monica, kill the music.

Monica stops the music. Through the window Gary sighs, fiddles with rewinding his film reels, and then straightens up as if he's about to make a presidential speech.

Through the window Jade sees Gary emphatically nod his head.

JADE
(to himself)
What're you up to Gary?
(to Monica)
Play it again.

INT. THEATER #1 - NIGHT

The same music pulses through the theater. It's a mix of electronic dance and dubstep.

Gary raises his hands above his head, and then slams the turntable. It changes from green to blue light. He slams it again, it changes to red, then yellow, then the light begins to pulse with the music.

For a second Gary looks a lot like a DJ, moving to the music, and working the crowd. The light show is typical of a B-rate DJ, nothing special or expensive.

The music suddenly cuts into a frenetic dubstep beat, the lights go wild, Gary starts jumping up and down. Then the music cuts off, completely silent.

Gary raises his hands to the ceiling, a soft heavenly tone sounds and Gary slowly drops his hands onto the two reels of films positioned on his turntable.

He begins spinning one of the reels and black and white images appear on the right side of the movie screen. A young woman runs through the forest. The music turns into a vocal chorus. The woman seems like she's looking for someone, then the screen goes black.

Gary spins the other film reel and a man appears on the left side of the screen. He's in full color, shirtless and dripping wet from swimming. He begins to walk cockily towards the right side of the frame, as if he's walking towards the woman who was there previously.

INT. PROJECTION BOOTH - NIGHT

Jade presses his face against the window, completely mesmerized by Gary's show.

Monica, remains working on the computer, occasionally glancing at the window.

INT. THEATER #1 - NIGHT

Gary spins both reels now and the woman reappears, she's running backwards (Gary's spinning the reel backwards) and she's running away from the advancing man.

Now both sides are in full blown color, daisies blooming from a nature documentary.

Now the right side explodes into a black and white horror scene, black blood fills the screen. Gary has scratched the celluloid so the whole frame becomes black. The left side explodes into a deep red murder scene, like something from *American Psycho*.

The images proceed in this fashion, working together, complementing and challenging each other.

The music works itself into a frenzy, the lights on the turntable become flickering, like a strobe light. The crowd begins to cheer. People cheer for certain scenes.

MAN IN CROWD

Again!

Gary rewinds the reel, the same scene replays.

Finally the music and images climax, and the final images spell out "Gary", scratched into the celluloid. The crowd cheers.

The lights and the projectors go dark once again plunging the theater into blackness.

INT. PROJECTION BOOTH - NIGHT

Jade looks up from the window at Monica, "Wow" written across his face.

MONICA

Done.

Jade composes himself.

MONICA

I'm ready to play *Avatar* whenever you are.

JADE

Okay. This is it.

Jade turns on the dimmer in Theater #1, so it's softly lit. He pulls out his phone and shoots a text to Alex.

INT. THEATER #1 - NIGHT

Alex reads the text from Jade and then walks down to the front of the theater. Gary pants for breath, looking proud.

ALEX

Ladies and gentlemen, as soon as Gary here cleans up his equipment, Avatar will be starting. Thanks for your patience.

Alex turns around to help Gary unplug his equipment.

INT. PROJECTION BOOTH - NIGHT

MONICA

You still want me to open with Concession Confessions?

JADE

Heck yah, I wanna drum up some publicity.

Monica types a little more on the computer, and then closes the lid.

MONICA

Done. Everything's set to go in two minutes.

Jade takes a deep breath.

JADE

Phew. Alright, then, our work is done.

Gary suddenly appears.

JADE

Brilliant performance!

Gary hurriedly shoves a bunch of celluloid into Jade's hands.

GARY

Remember the importance of 35mm, Jade. Promise me you'll put these to good use?

Jade looks at the film skeptically.

JADE

I promise.

Gary embraces Jade.

GARY

Thanks for tonight. I finally got to rock out.

Gary exits as quickly as he appeared.

JADE

Um, alright, let's go enjoy the show then.

Jade stuffs the celluloid into his coat pocket.

EXT. THEATER - NIGHT

Stanley bangs on the front door, trying to get it open. He peers through the windows.

STANLEY

Hello?

Stanley gets out his keys, surveying the full parking lot behind him with skepticism.

INT. CONCESSION STAND - NIGHT

Jade and Monica stand in front of the popper, Monica scoops a bag of popcorn for herself.

JADE

You're gonna eat that?

MONICA

Well, it's the freshest isn't it?

The popper kettle begins to overflow and hot kernels flow down the kettle into the bin.

Jade leans in over the bin and starts to catch kernels in his mouth as they fall from the kettle. Monica slaps him.

MONICA

Gross.

JADE

Those are the freshest. Mhmm.

Jade takes a bag and holds it to edge of the kettle, catching all the newly popped kernels.

JADE

Don't tell anyone else that, otherwise customers will never eat the cardboard from the concession bins.

(mimicking a customer)

Large, *fresh* popcorn, oh catch those kernels, quickly. Now drown it in the yummy buttery topping that has no expiration date and no real butter in the ingredients.

Jade acts stupidly like he's serving a customer, dramatically trying to catch all the falling kernels. Unbeknownst to Jade and Monica, Stanley quietly approaches this spectacle. Jade turns around.

JADE
Fresh popcorn for you sir?

Jade fumbles with the bag in surprise, spraying its contents everywhere.

JADE
Stanley? Hi, uh, what're doing here?

STANLEY
Tiffany called me and said you've been horsing around with my theater at night. Monica, is this true?

MONICA
Um, no, I mean "horsing" isn't the right term.

STANLEY
No?

Stanley gets progressively angrier the longer he talks, his words begin to run together.

STANLEY
Not horsing around, maybe hosing. Turning on the great big hose to just spray away, no, piss away all our money.

JADE
I'd say something more like innovating new business practices.

STANLEY
Oh really?

Jade looks at Monica for help.

MONICA
Yes, we've turned to original programming in your absence.

JADE
Yah, you know we've decided to just cut out Hollywood from the picture. I mean look at the percetange they're taking from our ticket sales!

MONICA

We know you're a fan of vertical integration.

JADE

Vertical integration! I mean come on Netflix and Hulu are making their own programming why can't Cineplex 10? I tell you it's the future, Stanley. And I'm surprised that you're so quick to reprimand us about all this.

Stanley looks unconvinced.

STANLEY

So you're telling me that you're showing original programming tonight?

MONICA

Yes!

Jade shoots Monica a dirty look.

JADE

Um, yah, let's go to theater #1 really quickly and I'll show you.

Jade grabs Stanley's arm and escorts him away.

INT. THEATER #1 - NIGHT

Gary's equipment is gone and the lights have dimmed completely again. On the screen plays highlights from Concession Confessions. We've already seen most of the footage, the gummi incident, the graveyard shoot, etc. The crowd laughs loudly just as Jade, Stanley and Monica enter.

Stanley watches the screen for a few tense moments, then chuckles at one of the jokes. Jade looks relieved.

STANLEY

(whispering)

This is actually pretty good Jade.

JADE

Okay, well we should head back to the lobby and I can fill you in on what else you missed.

Stanley, not eager to leave, scans the audience for a vacant seat.

STANLEY

Wow, you packed the whole theater on a Thursday night, very impressive Jade.

Stanley sees Tiffany and Karl, he waves.

STANLEY

Oh, Karl's here. Now I know you can't be doing anything bad. Otherwise we'd both be screwed.

Jade's head snaps up, he recognizes Karl, and Tiffany waves conceitedly, pointing to the screen in anticipation of *Avatar*. Jade turns to Monica and mouths the word "Shit".

STANLEY

I think I'm gonna go say hi really quick.

JADE

Um, okay, I gotta run up to the booth to check on the projector.

Jade starts to run down the hallway out of the theater.

MONICA

He might need help those new buttons are pretty complicated.

Monica sprints off after Jade.

Stanley walks up the steps and starts whispering to Karl and Tiffany. Concession Confessions continues to play, but the promotion reel is clearly wrapping up. *Avatar* should start playing any second now.

Alex, seated in the crowd, notices Jade and Monica's abrupt exit and gets up to follow them.

INT. PROJECTION BOOTH STAIRWELL - NIGHT

Jade and Monica run up the stairs to the projection booth, only to find the door locked. Jade bangs on it.

JADE

Hello? Shit!

Smoke slowly begins to creep out of the door. Monica breaks into hysterics, this is the angriest she's been.

MONICA

TODD! Where the FUCK have you been. Open this door right now.

(MORE)

MONICA (CONT'D)

I swear to God, you've ruined enough things already.

The door lazily swings open. Todd stands there in a cloud of pot smoke.

TODD

Oh heyo peeps. Where you been?

Jade makes a move to run past Todd, but as the smoke clears Kev and Sonny appear behind Todd.

KEV

You got my money?

Jade makes another attempt to run up the stairs.

JADE

Yes, it's just up by the projector.

Kev flicks out a switchblade.

KEV

Stop playing games.

Alex catches up to Monica at the stairs, gasping for breath.

ALEX

What's going on? Guys, Stanley's here, we gotta stop Avatar. Oh hey Todd, where you been man?

JADE

Alex, I need the cash from tonight.

Alex takes a wad of cash from his jacket and hands it to Jade.

JADE

Here.

Jade shoves the cash into Kev's hands, but neither Kev nor Sonny will let him pass.

JADE

Move, you got your money.

KEV

Gotta make sure it's all here.

Kev starts counting each bill slowly in front of Jade. Todd continues to smoke. Monica looks at her watch.

MONICA

(whispering)

Jade, Concession Confessions is over,
Avatar's gonna start any second.

Jade looks for an opening between Kev and Sonny, but can't find one.

KEV

One thousand, phew. One thousand
and twenty, one thousand and forty.

Jade eyes Todd's joint, his eyes light up. He whispers over his shoulder to Monica and Alex.

JADE

(whispering)

Get ready to run.

Jade whips out the old celluloid that Gary gave him from his pocket, and thrusts it into Todd's joint. It instantly catches on fire. Jade thrusts the celluloid into Kev's hands. The wad of cash catches on fire and Kev screams.

Jade runs up the stairs into the projection booth with Monica and Alex close behind him.

INT. PROJECTION BOOTH - NIGHT

Kev throws half the stack of bills to Sonny and they both try to quench the flames. Jade and Alex are able to push Kev and Sonny out the door, and they lock it tightly behind them.

Smoke now trickles under the door from the stairwell. The crackling of the fire and shouts from Kev and Sonny are muffled.

Jade, Alex and Monica sprint down the booth to projector #1. Through the window, the opening credits, "Avatar 2" are displayed across the screen. Jade hits the pause button and the words are frozen.

JADE

Monica, what do we do?

MONICA

Let me handle this. You and Alex
better find something else to play
or else we're gonna have a rioting
theater on our hands.

Jade and Alex run down to the computer. Monica opens the computer, and then edits the film image, she begins typing in a text box.

CU: Movie screen through the projection window. We see "Avatar 2", then the phrase "Showing Tomorrow Night @ Cineplex 10."

The audience groans, breaks into shouting.

Jade and Alex huddle around the projection desk.

JADE

We've got nothing left to show.

ALEX

And no money to refund people's tickets.

Todd slowly saunters over to the desk, curious about all the commotion.

Jade slumps down on the desk.

TODD

Why don't you just play the video that's in your "secret" folder?

JADE

You watched that?

Todd gets onto the computer and opens up a video file. A clip of Jade addressing the camera plays.

ALEX

You've never shown me this before, what is this?

Jade looks up, and then quickly exits out the video screen.

JADE

Hey don't look at that!

ALEX

Sorry, what was it?

JADE

Well, it's a feature video I've been working on. Sort of a mix of Concession Confessions and my life. But it's personal, you know, not something I want to share with the world.

MONICA (O.S.)

Find anything? Any minute before the masses start storming the booth.

Todd goes to the computer and reopens the video file.

TODD
Sometimes, you gotta just take a
chance man.

ALEX
Gary did.

Jade sits up.

JADE
Alright.

Jade clicks the cursor on the video file, an uploading icon
appears.

JADE
(shouting)
Monica, I'm sending a video file to
projector #1, play it as soon as it
uploads.

Everyone walks back over to projector #1 as it finishes
uploading and Monica hits the play button.

INT. THEATER #1 - NIGHT

The movie screen glows to life, the opening credits read:
"Cineplex 10". Jade appears, filling the entire screen, he
swivels around and around in a desk chair. The background
looks like the projection booth. Jade looks at the camera.

JADE
Work. Day 2,132. A Nicolas Cage
movie opened this weekend.
Predictably box office sales
plummeted.

Jade picks up the camera and walks down the projection booth,
showing glimpses of movies playing through the windows.

JADE
This may seem like paradise to some,
but to me I'm a prisoner, forced to
watched someone else's life ploy out
through a twelve by eight inch window.

INT. CONCESSION STAND - DAY

Jade eats candy, popcorn, drinks soda.

JADE (V.O.)
Don't get me wrong, the benefits are
sweet.

INT. PROJECTION BOOTH - DAY

JADE

But clientele leaves something to be desired.

CUT TO:

INT. LOBBY - DAY

Two kids pummel a few blow-up minions from a "Despicable Me" standee. Every time the kids hit the minion it cackles. A third kid runs around the standee screaming.

THIRD KID

It's so fluffy!!!

One of the kid body slams the minion. An automated cackle sounds.

INT. MOVIE NAME MONTAGE - DAY

-- CUSTOMER A stands at the concession stand ordering a ticket.

CUSTOMER A

One adult for *Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close*.

--Customer B orders a ticket.

CUSTOMER B

One for *Extremely Close & Incredibly Loud*.

--Customer C orders a ticket.

CUSTOMER C

Loud and Close please.

--Customer D orders a ticket.

CUSTOMER D

Whatever that movie is with Miss Congeniality and Tom Hanks.

--Customer E orders a ticket.

CUSTOMER E

One for 9/11 please.

JADE

Would you prefer the North or South Tower ma'am?

End Montage.

INT. PROJECTION BOOTH - DAY

Jade looks directly into the camera.

JADE

I mean no offense to you fine folks
of course. But here's my life so
far, maybe it'll change soon.

A Concessions Confessions video begins airing.

INT. PROJECTION BOOTH - NIGHT

Jade watches through the window as the crowd begins to laugh
at his video. He breaks into a smile.

INT. LOBBY - LATER

The movie has finished and the audience exits through the
lobby. Jade, Alex, Monica and Todd all linger, enjoying the
crowd's murmurs of satisfaction.

Kev and Sonny hold the singed ashes of their money. They
wait for Tiffany to exit and then corner her.

KEV

Your little plan didn't work, so
we've got some business to settle.

Kev and Sonny each grab one of Tiffany's arms and escort her
through the lobby.

Karl passes by.

KARL

Here's my card, Jade, if you ever
want to talk about a production or
distribution deal, I could set you
up.

Karl and Jade shake hands.

JADE

Thanks.

Stanley is the last person to walk through the lobby.

STANLEY

Well that certainly was an innovative
business practice, I'll give you
that.

Jade and Alex grin.

STANLEY

But regardless, you know you're both
fired right?

JADE

I figured as much. But Stanley,
would you be able to forgive me if I
ever came back to screen a film at
Cineplex 10?

STANLEY

Forgive you? Well I might be able
to hold a special late night
screening, but no guarantees.

Stanley awkwardly hugs Jade and Alex and then exits.

Jade, Alex, Monica and Todd stand around, taking in their
last look of the cineplex for a while.

They walk over to the concession stand.

INT. CONCESSION STAND - NIGHT

Jade pats the popper, scooping a few kernels into his mouth.

JADE

Guess this is it, old fella.

A straggling LITTLE BOY comes up to the concession stand.

LITTLE BOY

Large graveyard please.

Jade turns to Alex.

JADE

Hah! \$20, pay up!

FADE OUT.