

# *REDLINE*

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an original screenplay

by

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FADE IN:

EXT. DESERTED EMPTY STREET - NIGHT

Dim street lights flickering. Red crosswalk lights flashing hypnotically. The wind blows a rave flyer off the curb, while in the distance we hear sirens. TWO GHOSTLY SHAPES RIP PAST with an unearthly scream. We CHASE, but catch only trails of light blue misting smoke. They SLICE the centers of empty streets so fast they don't seem to be creatures of this earth. The light blue misting smoke is all we know of them...

EXT. FRONT OF MUSE'S NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

Under the neon sign a line of ethnic mix club partiers stretches the length of a city block. Import model-type GIRLS try to cut in line, working on the huge bouncer. A beautiful LONG-HAIRED GIRL, exotic and bitchy, stands at the back of the line. SMOKE snakes up from her cigarette. Suddenly the writhing smoke is swept by a mini dancing hurricane that also brushes the girl's long hair.

IN THE BLINK OF AN EYE WE SNAP BACKWARDS ACROSS THE STREET AS WE TIME RAMP-SLOW--

Our TWO GHOSTLY SHAPES are revealed. A Blue White Suzuki GSXR (Gixxer)1000 and a Yellow Black Honda CBR 954. The Gixxer WHEELIES IN slightly ahead of the CBR, both bikes equipped sick with street defeat-prevention gear.

RELEASE SLOW MOTION RAMP AS THE BIKES COME ABREAST THE LONGHAIR

GIRL-- THE GIRLS whip around to follow the receding taillights and blue smoke. Their skirts and hair take flight in the wake.

EXT. COLORADO BLVD., PASADENA - NIGHT

The 2 racers speed-shoot between the crawling traffic on the happening boulevard. Both riders are incredibly skilled, but the Gixxer pilot, ALEX, is faster. Through Alex's helmet face shield, we see his eyes crinkle in a smile as he glances in the rearview mirror to see the CBR; far enough behind. Alex squeezes the front brake lever with his Alpinestars racing-gloved right hand. His brake light pops on.

OTHER RIDER  
(Muted scream)  
SHIT!

Alex's rear wheel slowly starts to leave the ground as he feathers his front brake lever.

OTHER RIDER tears his throttle wide open. He rushes towards Alex who's now in a full-on ROLLING STOPPIE. Both bikes are flying toward several vehicles facing each other on both sides of the road, their headlights illuminating the finish line. Alex rolls into the headlights in his signature winning form, on the front wheel; the other bike screams across a beat too late. The other rider slides his rear end out, slewing his bike around and stopping ahead of Alex as the Gixxer drops back onto both wheels. Furiously, the Loser flings a wad of bills onto the ground and screams off, back wheel smoking. Alex dismounts, walks to the wad of bills, squats down and proceeds to collect his winnings for the night. An IMPORT RACER CHICK runs to congratulate him; Alex tilts his head back to acknowledge her, wearing an enigmatic smile. Rising up from Alex, we climb higher and higher into the night sky revealing surrounding streets, other BIKES flying around other corners until the entire city is laid out before us, its darkness carved up by bike headlights and the screams of engines being wrung to redline.

INT. NATALIE AND JULIAN'S APARTMENT - MORNING

A pair of bare female feet on a cheap yellow linoleum floor in front of a white toilet, a pair of white cotton panties around her ankles. Young hands slide down and pull the panties up. Toilet flushes. We follow the feet to the sink, then up her legs and past the white cotton T-shirt which hangs loosely on her slender body. She cups water with her hands as we see her face in the mirror. NATALIE, 24, not classically beautiful but still very easy on the eyes, doesn't bother to look at herself in the mirror - more from a lack of vanity than a lack of self confidence. She squeezes toothpaste on her toothbrush, then without looking squeezes toothpaste onto an awaiting toothbrush to her side, which in turn goes into the mouth of a similarly ruffled and not-quite-awake young man.

JULIAN, 26, sleepwalks over to the toilet and Walter Paytons against the wall while continuing to brush his teeth. Shower water turns on. Natalie gingerly steps into the shower. Steam billows around her slender, unconsciously sensual body. Julian stops mid-stroke as he notices Natalie's sensuality. Toothbrush clamped upwards, a smug smile chasing a carnal urge across his face, he steps toward the shower.

INT. NATALIE AND JULIAN'S KITCHEN/DINING ROOM - DAY

Obviously later than usual, they're choking down coffee and a rudimentary breakfast.

NATALIE  
See you at lunch?

JULIAN  
Definitely.

NATALIE  
I'll call you first.

Julian zips up his "ROADRUNNER COURIER" windbreaker and picks up a bulging backpack.

JULIAN  
Ready?

Natalie, in typical student-type clothes, glides towards Julian and the door. She takes the backpack and gives him a quick peck which he turns into a bit more of a kiss as they EXIT, lips locked and laughing.

EXT. APARTMENT COMPLEX - MORNING

Julian locks the door as Natalie scurries down the stairs. She calls over her shoulder.

NATALIE  
Any special requests?

JULIAN  
A Boba be cool.

NATALIE  
Green tea by itself or...

JULIAN  
With milk...?

NATALIE  
Anything for my little baby.

JULIAN  
Buaaaa!!!!

They got chemistry. Something about the way they play, taking pot-shots at each other, sharp but sweet.

EXT. GARAGE - MOMENTS LATER

Julian comes around the bend, wearing his "here we go again" look. Stares for a second before climbing into his battered rust bucket. With a shrill protest the ancient sedan finally starts. Julian chugs off.

INT. JULIAN'S CAR - DAY

An expensive stereo, pumping out a HOT TECHNO beat, looks ridiculous in the sun-bleached chewed-up dash.

Julian swelters in his no-a/c-piece-of-shit car, stuck in a jam and hating it. A noise over the thumping music makes his head snap up.

EXT. FREEWAY TRAFFIC JAM - DAY

Julian struggles for a clear look through his side mirror. Approaching engine whine, then a MOTORCYCLE shoots past. Suddenly a whole crew screams past, cutting and weaving between the stationary traffic. Aerial view of the motorcycle weaving off through the seemingly endless sea of shimmering metal. Julian eagle-eyes the receding bikes. His desire and frustration are almost palpable.

INT. WOO PENG'S - DAY

Neighborhood Chinese restaurant. A cute young ASIAN GIRL is helping Natalie pack food and Boba drinks into her backpack.

EXT. SMALL PARK - DAY

Julian and Natalie are finishing their picnic lunch. Natalie pulls a wet washcloth from a Ziplock and hands it to him. He presses his sweaty face into the cool cloth.

NATALIE

Almost there, baby.

JULIAN

At this rate it's gonna take us, what? 36 years? By the time we make it we're going to be too old to enjoy it.

NATALIE

Aren't you enjoying it?

JULIAN

I'm just sick of being hot and tired all the time.

NATALIE

Just cool down.

JULIAN

Wouldn't you like to be able to go have omelettes in Paris...freedom, man. To come and go... Money. Money is freedom.

NATALIE

(gently)

If I thought money was freedom, I wouldn't be with you, would I?

JULIAN

And if I wanted to be a loser I  
would have stayed in Arizona,  
wouldn't I?

He smiles and they stare at the hostile city which surrounds them. Natalie gives Julian a loving look and reaches out to brush his hair out of his face. Just then, a gorgeous Yamaha R-1 thunders by and growls to a stop at a light. Julian whips away from Natalie's outstretched hand and drools over the -R rated bike. Natalie follows Julian's look to the bike, then back to the abject longing on his face.

NATALIE

I wish I could make you happy--

He smiles but is slightly uncomfortable at her motherly attitude.

EXT. JULIAN AND NATALIE'S APARTMENT COMPLEX - DAY

Music from a portable sound system. Tons of bass. Natalie gets off of the bus, folded Razor scooter in hand, and walks up the driveway.

Natalie's POV of a gorgeous black man sweating it up in the heat, working on his delivery motorcycle. Tight flashes of DD; muscular abs rolling, chest rippling, sweat dripping onto jeans, triceps and biceps flexing and relaxing. Designer shades glistening in the sun. Natalie walks up, then takes a Boba from her backpack.

NATALIE

Hey.

DD turns. He is, unexpectedly, flaming gay.

DD

Girlfriend, let me tell you honey,  
it's so hot I can see myself  
tanning.

NATALIE

(hands DD the Boba)  
You could use this then.

DD

Mmph, this good, thanx girl.

NATALIE

What're you doing here?

In DD'S open garage we see his PINK FURRY CBR propped on its rear stand.

DD

Bitch got a sunk float, and OF COURSE it just HAD to be one of the inboards so I hadta pull the whole nasty bank out and now...God! I just can't get it to slide back in.

NATALIE

Oh, yeah, I hate when that happens...

DD raises an eyebrow at Natalie.

NATALIE (CONT'D)

Hey DD, what does one of these go for?

DD shoots her a WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN SMOKING look.

INT. NATALIE AND JULIAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Lying on their futon together, bathed by moonlight, Julian and Natalie pillow talk. Natalie holds up her hand and looks at her RING.

Julian reaches up to Natalie's outstretched hand and thumbs their ring.

NATALIE

Tell me.

JULIAN

Baby, I've told you one every night for the past...

NATALIE

Not every night.

JULIAN

(playfully whining)  
I'm all storied out.

She can whine, too.

NATALIE

C'mon, please...

JULIAN

Oh, all right. This ring...

Natalie snuggles against Julian's chest. MEOW-MEOW the CAT watches them and purrs.

JULIAN (CONT'D)

This ring once belonged to one of the most powerful women in Europe, and was the secret symbol of her forbidden love.

NATALIE

Forbidden love, ooh...

JULIAN

It was made for one of the Hapsburg Queens...

NATALIE

I thought Hapsburgs were tomatoes--

JULIAN

You want a story or not? Now this queen, Queen Natalia...

Natalie smiles against his chest.

JULIAN (CONT'D)

...was wife to the King of, um,

NATALIE

(sweetly)  
Bullcrappia?

JULIAN

OK, I quit.

NATALIE

No, no, sweetie, I'm sorry, I'll be a good girl, I promise...

JULIAN

Alright...the King of A Small Kingdom Whose Name Has Been Lost In The Mists Of Time.

Natalie stifles a laugh.

JULIAN (CONT'D)

Anyway, the King gave this ring to Queen Natalia on her Coronation Day, which was also their wedding day and her fifteenth birthday.

NATALIE

It was an arranged marriage?

JULIAN

They all were back then. And of course, he was a brute and she couldn't love him, but that didn't stop her from being a good Queen and her subjects all loved her. Her heart, however, belonged to a young man, Julius. He was the son of one of the stablehands, and although she had been permitted to play with him when she was young, when she was twelve he was sent away because her parents knew she loved him too much.

Natalie's eyes are closed, peaceful.

JULIAN (CONT'D)

But Natalia had a handmaiden who knew how deeply she loved Julius, and knew he had been sent away to be the apprentice of a jeweler. As the years passed, the jeweler became more and more famous, and Julius became more and more skilled, and when Princess Natalia's betrothal to the King was announced, she had her handmaiden deliver a secret message to Julius, pledging her eternal love to him although she was to be Queen. In return, he created this Ring, which was presented to the King to bestow upon his young bride. And until she died, Natalia never removed it and never stopped loving the young man who had made it. And the King never knew it symbolized a love he could never have.

INT. NATALIE AND JULIAN'S KITCHEN/DINING ROOM - MORNING

At their cheap all-purpose table, Natalie sips coffee as Julian flaps around in his usual rush. He notices Natalie is unusually calm.

JULIAN

What, your professor out of town or something?

NATALIE

No, I just have to stay home and write this paper about economy in 18th century Europe.

JULIAN  
 (fake yawning)  
 Very interesting...

NATALIE  
 So no picnic today--

JULIAN  
 Aww...

NATALIE  
 Don't sound so brokenhearted.

JULIAN  
 Maybe we could meet on Melrose, see  
 a little action.

NATALIE  
 I'll make us lunch here, a little  
 late but...is that OK?

JULIAN  
 (let down)  
 Friday traffic, so even if you want  
 it earlier, it'll be later.

Natalie throws Julian her slightly-hurt-but-still-happy look. He gives her a puckered-up smack as he walks out the door. Natalie opens her mouth to muster "love you" but before she gets it out, Julian's gone. As he closes the door, she sighs--

NATALIE  
 ...Love you.

Natalie picks up the cordless and starts pacing about the room. She fumbles with her ring, stubs her toe and hops over to her chair while letting a long breath through her teeth.

NATALIE (CONT'D)  
 Here we go...

She grabs the phone and dials--

SPLIT SCREEN, NATALIE / PATRICIA.

PATRICIA, Natalie's mom, is having breakfast in a greenhouse. She picks up a gaudy gold and ivory telephone receiver. It's a wonder she can lift her hand at all what with the rocks she has strapped on her fingers.

PATRICIA  
 Hello?

NATALIE  
Hi Mom. Good news.

PATRICIA  
Let me guess, you've finally come  
to your senses and moving back home  
to help me with the fund raiser--

NATALIE  
I'm calling to see if you can come  
to our wedding in Vegas tomorrow  
night.

PATRICIA  
(taking a beat)  
As I was saying, I'm busier than  
ever with the fund raiser and...

NATALIE  
I missed you too Mommy.

PATRICIA  
Besides, Vegas is too hot this time  
of the year.

Uncomfortable silence. Broken by both at the same time--

NATALIE  
Well it's just....

PATRICIA  
So what do I....

NATALIE  
Just that....

PATRICIA  
And you're not really....  
More silence.

NATALIE  
It's nothing really....

PATRICIA  
And you know I wouldn't....

NATALIE  
I...I was just wondering if you  
could advance me the money for next  
semester's tuition.

PATRICIA  
Do you need money? Are you in some  
kind of trouble? What did that boy  
do to you?

NATALIE  
Mommy, I'm fine, the boy's name is  
Julian and he's sweeter than ever  
to me.

PATRICIA  
(missing half a beat)  
You're not really going to Vegas,  
are you?

NATALIE  
Mom!

PATRICIA  
Just checking.

NATALIE  
Everything is fine. I... we are  
doing fine, it's just that yeah,  
times are tough, but Julian and I,  
we're tougher.

PATRICIA  
So what do you need my money for?

NATALIE  
Don't you trust me?

PATRICIA  
I don't trust him.

NATALIE  
OK Mommy, I'm happy to know that  
you're doing well.

PATRICIA  
Did I say that? I didn't say I was  
doing well. I've got my health, but  
I have a daughter that--

NATALIE  
Mom, I'm going to be late for  
class, I got to go.

PATRICIA  
When are you coming to the spa with  
me?

NATALIE  
I'll call you tomorrow Mommy, maybe  
next Wednesday. But I gotta go,  
talk to you later. Love you. Bye.

INT. PATRICIA AND OLIVER'S MANSION - MORNING

Natalie's parent's overly pretentious mansion. Patricia puts  
the phone down. OLIVER, Patricia's patrician husband, sits  
nearby.

PATRICIA  
Love you too...

OLIVER  
How is she?

PATRICIA  
Needs money but wouldn't say for  
what. Her usual stubborn self.

OLIVER  
Like Mother like daughter.

PATRICIA  
Don't you start with me.

OLIVER  
I wouldn't dare.

PATRICIA  
Don't patronize me, either.

OLIVER  
Would you like me to speak with  
Natalie?

PATRICIA  
I want her to come to me on her  
own.

OLIVER  
She's growing up, you know. She's  
making her own decisions.  
Personally, I kind of like this  
Julian boy, and I really don't see  
anything wrong with....

PATRICIA  
(stuffs a croissant into  
his mouth)  
Are you trying to upset me,  
Poodles?

OLIVER  
(chewing most happily)  
I wouldn't dare, my dearest.

EXT. APARTMENT COMPLEX - MORNING

Natalie scurries down the stairs and knocks on DD's door.

NATALIE  
He's gone, let's go.

INT. DD'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Natalie steps inside the gaudy extravaganza of DD's apartment.

DD

He said we can pick it up by 10.  
What time is it?

NATALIE

Are you sure you can have it ready  
in time?

DD pulls on a very tight pink muscle shirt.

DD

Girl, when have you seen me put my  
hands on something that I have not  
made look pretty like me?

NATALIE

It's 9:30 already and girl, I know  
you're pretty, but I need my  
baby's....

DD

Child, Lord have mercy, go on and  
quit your achin' I'll have that  
bitch spankin'. Let's roll.

They depart.

EXT. JULIAN AND NATALIE'S APARTMENT COMPLEX - LATER

JULIAN's old rattletrap clatters to a stop at the curb. He exits and gives the car a SERIOUS-WORRY-TO-COME look. Walking past DD's garage he hears familiar voices. He back-tracks. Suddenly, from around the corner, Natalie appears right in front of him, breathless and radiant.

NATALIE

You're early!

JULIAN

I'm starving.

His slight coldness slows her a little. DD's garage door flings open.

DD

Damn I'm sorry girl, it's just too  
plain hot up in here to have this  
door closed.

(MORE)

DD (cont'd)  
 Christ Almighty, this kind of heat  
 is bad for my 'do, you know.

Julian catches a glimpse of the bikes in DD's garage. Next to DD's pink furry CBR is parked a pretty old GSX-R.

DD Surprise!!!! NATALIE Surprise!!!!

Julian's speechless--

NATALIE  
 Happy Pre-Birthday, Baby!!

DD  
 (fanning himself)  
 I think I'm going to cry. This is  
 so sweet, girl you're so sweet.

DD nearly does. He covers his mouth. Julian still seems lost but reality is sinking in--

JULIAN  
 You're not being, I mean you can't  
 be, you're trying to say that...

Natalie nods. Julian stutters. DD almost doesn't cry.

NATALIE  
 I'm not trying to say. I'm saying.  
 That's your new bike.

Julian points to himself, MINE?

DD  
 Yeah you heard her right this is  
 yours now. Oh I just can't hold it  
 in no mo'. Gorgeous, this wonderful  
 girl here loves you so much. You  
 should've seen the way this girl be  
 handling business, she be rocking  
 it. Shoot, if I can bargain like  
 her, I'd be doing business with  
 Bill Gates or somebody. And ooh  
 boy, I had no idea she can move  
 half that fast, I mean when she  
 heard you pull up, it was like OK,  
 shoop, woop, zoom. I mean just like  
 that.

All through DD's speech, Julian's look whips back and forth between Natalie and HIS bike.

JULIAN

You mean you can ride that thing?

She shrugs it off like nothing.

JULIAN (CONT'D)

How did you, I mean how did we afford this?

NATALIE

Don't you want to try it out?

JULIAN

Can I?

NATALIE

It's yours!

DD

Now you go on and give her a big thank you kiss first while I pull it out for you, massa.

DD drops the stand and rolls the aging but still lethal GSX-R out of his garage. Natalie's thank-you kiss is cut short by the quick arrival of the bike, which Julian cannot take his eyes off of. She pushes Julian to the bike. He carefully cowboys onto the seat.

DD (CONT'D)

OK. Basics are basics. Throttle you know, it's that thing you turn over-

-

JULIAN

I know, I know--

DD pierces him with a look--

DD

You twist her tail too hard  
Sunshine an' she gon' bite, so hush  
up and look here close.

Julian shuts up.

DD (CONT'D)

OK, basics are basics. Throttle everyone knows, it's that thing you turn over there, but contrary to what you wanna do, you don't go twisting it all hard.

(MORE)

DD (CONT'D)

And this is the front brake,  
seventy percent of your stopping  
power is here, and this is your  
clutch, something you're going to  
have to befriend real quick because  
it's what puts all this power to  
the ground. Your left foot is your  
gears, first is down, the rest up,  
and your right is the rear brake,  
don't go using that too often.

He flexes the front brake.

DD (CONT'D)

You don't stop like anybody else.  
You like a slingshot in reverse.  
Goin' forward, too, like a  
slingshot.

JULIAN

How fast can she go?

DD

She a rocket. And not yet in your  
pocket. So slow is the keyword  
here.

JULIAN

I just wanna know...

DD

S-L-O-W. Be sweet to her first. Be  
her daddy, nice and gentle.  
Alright? Are you ready?

JULIAN

Oh yeah--

DD

Wrong, where's your helmet?

JULIAN

Oh yeah, I don't have a helmet.

DD produces an older helmet with a flourish.

DD

You do now, this is **my** pre-birthday  
gift for you, might save your life  
one day.

JULIAN

Thank you.

DD

Go on, take it nice and easy around the block. I won't be too far behind you. Julian looks just like a little kid with a brand new toy.

JULIAN

Right.

DD

I even know where we can go to get you some fur for that kitty cat--

JULIAN

Uhh....fur, Uhh thanx, but....

DD laughs that big laugh of his.

DD

Every kitty wants his own fur.

NATALIE

Take it easy baby.

Julian inserts key in ignition and turns. Clutch in. Starts. He takes off steadily down the driveway...as if he'd been riding for years. He makes a perfect right turn.

DD

Humph, and I stalled twice when I got on my first ride.

DD blasts off after Julian on his furry pink CBR. Natalie watches them from down the driveway. She's so happy...but little worries are beginning to creep in too...

EXT. JULIAN AND NATALIE'S APARTMENT COMPLEX - LATER

Natalie puts out a simple lunch. Through the kitchen window she sees Julian pull up followed by DD. Julian whips off his helmet, a grin splitting his face ear to ear. With unconcealed adoration he looks at HIS machine.

INT. APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

DD comes right in--

DD

Thought you told me he's never ridden before.

NATALIE  
 (eyes on Julian)  
 He hasn't, not that he's told me  
 about.

Natalie's happiness edges into concern when she sees the  
 puzzled look on DD's face.

NATALIE (CONT'D)  
 What's the matter? Why do you ask?

DD  
 I have never in my life seen any  
 squid ride like that. Hell, I've  
 never even seen some pros ride the  
 way he just did.

Julian walks in, throws his helmet on the couch. He kisses  
 Natalie grandly and can't conceal his excitement.

JULIAN  
 It's...wow. Beyond. Thank you  
 soooooo much.

He kisses her hand repeatedly--

JULIAN (CONT'D)  
 Thankyouthankyouthankyouthankyou--

DD  
 Girl you got major points. He owes  
 you large.

NATALIE  
 (to Julian)  
 Baby, you told me you'd never  
 ridden a motorcycle before.

JULIAN  
 (still afterglowing)  
 It's so cool. I haven't. Not since  
 I was little. I used to ride dirt  
 bikes with my dad. We had fun...  
 since then, you know, I've sat on a  
 few, but...

DD  
 Honey, I told Nat you look like the  
 type to take to riding pretty  
 easily. But never had I thought you  
 were going to ride like you were  
 born on a bike going buck thirty  
 with one wheel off the ground.

NATALIE  
Was he dangerous?

DD  
Not exactly. Fast, but calculated.  
But really fast.

NATALIE  
Baby, you're gonna be careful,  
right?

JULIAN  
Time! Damn, I gotta get back to  
work.

DD  
Yes you do, but not just yet.

JULIAN  
Yeah I'm so late.

DD  
Not today you're not. Girlfriend  
has hooked you up.

Julian looks at Natalie.

DD (CONT'D)  
I talked to Clint. He said he'd  
shoot you some runs, since you know  
the streets and all, but you gots  
to show him papers.

NATALIE  
License, registration and proof of  
insurance.

DD  
I can get us in at the DMV. My  
Uncle LaQuisha works there.

JULIAN  
Uncle LaQuisha?

EXT. DMV - DAY

The testing lot. UNCLE LAQUISHA'S resplendent in a pink tiger striped scarf. He returns Julian's written test. Perfect score. Julian makes the mistake of giving Laquisha a hard look; Laquisha is more than a bit put off by Julian's insouciance.

LAQUISHA

Well Julian, let's see if your riding justifies your attitude.

The three of them walk towards the exit, Julian and DD with their helmets in hand. DD whispers roughly to Julian.

DD

Did you have to go there with him?

JULIAN

I just prefer to be called Jay, I hate Julian, it's too, too... feminine.

DD raises an eyebrow.

DD

Just chill J, be nice, remember, he can still fail your shittitude ass.

EXT. DMV - DAY

Julian rides nonchalantly through the DMV testing course like he's done it a million times. Laquisha from behind his oversized white sunglasses, watches in blatant disbelief.

LAQUISHA

(to DD)

Delicious.

DD chuckles. They both admire Julian. Julian comes gliding in and stops. While he's still smiling at them suddenly the bike leans. Julian tries to hold it between his legs but there's no way and the bike just topples over right there on the spot. DD and Laquisha try not to laugh while Julian struggles to pick it back up and can't.

Lowers sunglasses at each other.

DD

Squid.

LAQUISHA

Squid

EXT. DMV - DAY

Julian and DD are walking out--

DD

Alright. Technically this is a training day, right?

JULIAN

Right.

DD

C'mon then, let's do some training.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Julian and DD ride through some local streets, then onto the FREEWAYS. From news chopper angles we see their riding grow increasingly radical. Through their Chatter-Boxes we hear them screaming back and forth as they rip it up every which way. Adrenaline ecstasy...

INT. NATALIE AND JULIAN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Julian sits antsy at their table chugging a big glass of cola while Natalie tries to listen. He lets fly a a loud burp and picks up the thread of his story.

JULIAN

--And that's when the Beemer cuts me off, that idiot comes screaming out of nowhere and I swear I never thought DD could ever be capable of picking his leg up that high. But sure enough, man...

Natalie walks over to the bathroom. Julian follows.

JULIAN (CONT'D)

It was like boom, and it was gone. Man, DD kicked the side view mirror right off of the moron's car. Then-

She turns on the shower--

JULIAN (CONT'D)

--as if he didn't have enough, the idiot tried to actually move over to DD, flipping him off. Hilarious.

Natalie strips his clothes off and puts him in the shower. He can't stop talking.

JULIAN (CONT'D)

So then this jerk still hasn't had enough, so DD does this,

Mimes a move--

JULIAN (CONT'D)

-and all this smoke just shoots up from his back tire, right in the idiot's windshield.

Natalie sits on the toilet contentedly listening to Julian's ramblings. Off of Natalie's thin smile, we let the steam carry the couple onto their futon.

INT. NATALIE AND JULIAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Julian's ramblings are slowing. Natalie holds up her hand and looks at her ring.

JULIAN

Yeah,... I can't wait... beach...  
DD said... show me... all...  
tricks...

NATALIE

(whisper)  
Could you please tell me our story  
again?...Baby?

Silence. Julian snores, louder and louder. Natalie smiles and kisses him.

INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

Light streams through the blinds. Natalie wakes. The cat's snoozing on Julian's pillow, a note tucked under his collar:

You look so peaceful sleeping. I'm out with DD at the beach. Back around lunch. Meow Meow loves you too. She pets Meow Meow behind the ears and smiles. She glances over at her alarm clock; 10:45 a.m.

EXT. PACIFIC COAST HIGHWAY PARKING LOT - DAY

4 riders rip it up cutting and weaving, boys having fun. DD's so good he makes even furry pink look cool. Two other couriers CHUCK AND CHUCKY join in on their very fast rides. Julian tries everything they show him, testing all the limits... As if we had our own Chatter-Box wireless helmet radios we listen in.

CHUCK

Jay's pretty pro already.

CHUCKY

Already riding better 'n you.

CHUCK

Which means he's been riding your  
momma last night too--

CHUCKY

See, that's why no one likes you.  
Always wanting to talk about  
everybody's moms cuz you can't get  
none.

DD

Chucky, your mom is pretty fine  
though.

JULIAN

Really, Chucky, can I meet your  
momma?

CHUCKY

Y'all know something? Kiss my ass.

CHUCK

How about your mama's ass--

Chucky rips down PCH ahead of everyone else. The guys catch up to Chucky, stopped at a TRAFFIC LIGHT. He's parked next to a TOYOTA SUPRA with VIN DIESEL and PAUL WALKER LOOK-ALIKES. Bikes flank both sides of the Supra as Chucky leans over.

CHUCKY

Yo, phat setup, what that set you  
back?

PAUL WALKER LOOK-ALIKE

(snobby as hell)  
More than all your scooters put  
together.

VIN DIESEL LOOK-ALIKE

Smoke 'em.

Light turns green and the SUPRA'S back tires spin up and the Supra smokes off the line.

DD

(to Julian)  
Sweetie, it's time you found out  
how much power you're carrying  
between your legs.

CHUCKY

(dropping his visor)  
Just keep up.

The four bikes take off in a thundering cloud. DD's pink fur swims in the wind as he picks up his front end in a perfectly poised wheelie. He shoots abreast the Supra. Followed by Chucky.

INT. SUPRA - DAY

Look-Alikes' eyes bulge when they see the four bikers ripping past. Walker Look-Alike frantically stabs the NOS buttons. We see the tach redline. Speedo reads over 100MPH. Diesel Look-Alike furiously pumps old-style NOS juicer.

PAUL WALKER LOOK-ALIKE  
(screaming frantically)  
I need NOS, I need NOS!

VIN DIESEL LOOK-ALIKE  
I'm giving you all I got!

The boys blow the Supra away, leaving the furious look-alikes behind--

CHUCK  
They thought they were fast!

CHUCKY  
More like the last, and that's why  
they're furious.

Laughter all around.

DD  
How you doing Jay?

CHUCKY  
Feel like your ass is on fire yet?

JULIAN  
(pure excitement)  
Whoa damn!! Bad-ass--

CHUCK  
Yo, it's my ears you're screaming  
into!

CHUCKY  
What? I can't hear a thing!

DD  
Hey Jay, we're here, feast your  
eyes.

EXT. BEACH PARKING STRIP - DAY

They roll in. The parking strip has been taken over by hot import cars, blasting music, and bikes. Girls bounce around everywhere wearing band-aid and eye-patch bikinis. Screaming bikes stunt it up: ripping wheelies, rolling stoppies, burnouts... Adrenaline's high, incredibly fun.

DD and the boys join the crowd of parked bikes. Someone notices the boys. It's ALEX, the cocky racer from the opening scene. He watches the foursome mix with the crowd. Hanging on Alex's arm is Phebe, incredibly gorgeous biker Goddess. She takes a good look at Julian. Alex shoots one of his cronies, a look as if to say, SO?

INT. NATALIE AND JULIAN'S APARTMENT

Natalie bustles around the house, cleaning up and getting the laundry together. As usual, she talks to the cat.

NATALIE

You'll always listen to me, right?  
Be careful when you go outside.  
Don't jump railings that are too  
high. And don't forget to watch out  
for the wild kitties out there.  
You're listening, right?

CAT

Meow.

NATALIE

Right, 'cause you love me.

The cat stretches out on the counter.

NATALIE (CONT'D)

But since you wanted to hear it,  
I'll tell you, OK? Anyways, once  
upon a time...

EXT. BEACH PARKING STRIP - DAY

Down the center line DD, Chuck, & Chucky do wheelies and burnouts, etc. But no matter how good they are, Alex is better. More finesse, more control. Julian looks on in awe. A couple of hotties stand by Julian. He gives them his best smile. The girls look at Julian's older bike and helmet and giggle. He's not even sure why they're giggling, but he's embarrassed.

INT. NATALIE AND JULIAN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

In bed with Natalie, Julian's drifting off--

NATALIE

And the money really should be put  
back into the account. At this  
point we can even use the 3% bank  
interest.

JULIAN  
 (getting drowsier)  
 Mmm.

NATALIE  
 Are you sure you can earn what DD  
 does and be safe? I mean, he's been  
 assuring me, and I know you're a  
 good rider, I know this isn't the  
 best time to bring it up, but I  
 can't help being worried, you  
 know...a little.

Julian beginning to saw some logs. Natalie plays with her  
 ring as she watches him sleep. She needs reassurance but  
 she's not gonna get it tonight. She kisses him and snuggles  
 up against his chest.

INT. NATALIE AND JULIAN'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Natalie is heading for Julian's old piece-o-shit sedan.  
 Julian locks the front door and runs down the stairs pulling  
 his bike keys out.

NATALIE  
 Have a great day, sweetie.

JULIAN  
 Thanx baby. Any special requests?

NATALIE  
 Given the fact that you remembered  
 despite facing your first day on  
 the job, I'll let you off the hook.  
 Do you have any special requests  
 today?

JULIAN  
 You're awesome.

NATALIE  
 I know.

JULIAN  
 Boba, milk tea.

NATALIE (CONT'D)  
 Boba, milk tea.

JULIAN  
 You also know me too well.

NATALIE  
 That's why I'm your favorite.

JULIAN  
 (sincere)  
 Thanks again, babe.

NATALIE  
 Don't thank me, I did it for us.  
 Have a safe day. I'll call around  
 noon. But if you're too far out and  
 can't make it in time, it'll be  
 fine.

JULIAN  
 I'll make it.

NATALIE  
 You have a new job, and I have a  
 lab today, remember?

JULIAN  
 You're right.

NATALIE  
 (very playfully)  
 I know, I always am. Now go bring  
 me my money, bitch.

They both get on and in their rides and take off.

EXT. ROADRUNNER/LIGHTNING - MORNING

Julian parks his bike and walks in. He's nervous.

INT. ROADRUNNER/LIGHTNING - MORNING

A large open area with a couple of battered desks for phone operators and beat-up lounging furniture for the couriers. Julian sees DD, who is munching a Krispy Kreme Donut.

DD  
 Ready to give 'em hell J?

JULIAN  
 Ready as I'll ever be.

DD  
 Don't be nervous, you've been doing  
 this for--?

JULIAN  
 Forever it seems.

CHUCK  
 Hey check it out.

CHUCKY  
It's Super Squid.

JULIAN  
Good morning to you too.

CHUCK  
Clint should be around in a sec.  
Don't trip, he always grumpy.

CHUCKY  
I think he's been sleeping with  
Chuck's Mom, too.

CHUCK  
More like your girlfriend.

CHUCKY  
Don't have a girlfriend.

CHUCK  
Yeah, see, that's because no one  
likes you. Early in the morning,  
and you already smell bad.

CHUCKY  
(To Julian)  
Don't worry about it man, no one  
likes Clint neither.

CHUCK  
Yeah, some serious B.O.

DD  
He'll just go over the drills. He's  
going to tell you it's a test day,  
but don't worry, he's got a real  
soft spot for true ride-or-die  
heads like you honey.

DD looks over and sees CLINT, late 50's, old school, seen it  
all, no B.S. rider. Clint strides toward his office from the  
desk of one of the dispatchers.

DD (CONT'D)  
Got you papers straight?

JULIAN  
Right here in my pocket.

DD  
Go on and get a jump on the man and  
say good morning.

Julian starts toward Clint just as Clint sees him and motions for Julian to join him.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Clint flops into his chair as Julian stands in front of the desk, nervously trying to be nonchalant.

CLINT

You been here how long, Juli--

JULIAN

Jay, J-A-Y, everyone calls me Jay. I haven't been here that long but I know the streets pretty good.

CLINT

OK, J-A-Y, F-Y-I, over on this side of the universe I am G-O-D, any problems with that? Siddown--

Julian goes to sit--

CLINT (CONT'D)

Stand up. I changed my mind. Listen J-A-Y, here you get half what you got before, but you're paid per delivery so the faster and further you get around, the fatter your wallet gets. Weekly pay here against every two--

Through the office window behind Clint's back, Chuck and Chucky are mimicking Clint. They gesture for Julian to sit. He goes to sit--

CLINT (CONT'D)

Did I say sit? Since this is still J-A-Y's trial period, don't expect a big fat check. And one other thing. You bite it out there, you're on your own. Car couriers bond their people, not us. Most senders don't bond small delivery, so buy the best paper that's willing to carry you. Everything sound right? Good, siddown.

Julian sits--

CLINT (CONT'D)

Now go tell Dumb and Dumber behind me to quit clowning around and take you to pickup. Now.

Julian exits as Clint walks to a closet and grabs a radio. Chuck and Chucky are having too much fun.

DD

(as call comes in for him)  
See, bark's way worse than the bite. He's a fair cat, give you a fair shake. Seen pretty much everything. I've got to trot over to Monterey, should be back within three hours.

JULIAN

Three hours?

DD

It's 200 miles away, what do you expect? Let's meet back here for lunch. Radio you in later.

JULIAN

OK, and thanks again DD.

DD winks at Julian and leaves.

CAMERA REVOLVING EFFECT STAYING ON DD.

INT. ROADRUNNER/LIGHTNING - LATER

DD walks through the door while taking off his helmet. He's about to say something, but he's taken aback. Everyone's crowded around Clint's desk listening to radio reports from the different messengers. They are detailing Julian's movements. It's as if they were listening to a horse race and they all have money on it.

DD

What's going on?

CHUCK

Got twenty Super Squid crosses 3rd street in the next...

EXT. DOWNTOWN - DAY

Julian shoots through traffic at blinding speed passing a MESSENGER with a radio.

INT. ROADRUNNER/LIGHTNING - DAY

RADIO

Just crossed 3rd.

Everyone erupts.

CHUCK  
 (to another messenger.)  
 I'll be taking that, thank you.

OTHER MESSENGER  
 Jesus, this kid's fast.

Clint leans back in his chair, deep in thought.

CLINT  
 (to DD)  
 You sure this kid just got on a  
 bike last week?

DD  
 Yeah, why?

CLINT  
 He made 10 drops before noon.

DD  
 So? It's been at least three hours.

CLINT  
 Valencia to Downtown.

CHUCKY  
 Dude, the fastest I can do Valencia  
 to Downtown is 30 minutes.

CHUCK  
 Super Squid has been banging 30  
 both ways!

CLINT  
 That's 10 minutes off of my time.

DD, like everyone else, is impressed.

EXT. CITY AND SUBURBIA - DAY

Julian's riding every where, cutting traffic, in the city, on  
 the freeways, cutting corners.

INT. ROADRUNNER/LIGHTNING - DAY

Julian walks through the door and sees everyone crowded  
 around the dispatch desk. One of the messengers sees him  
 coming in.

MESSENGER  
 Hi!

Everyone turns their head to look. Then all at once, some rush towards him while others turn and walk away in disgust.

OTHER MESSENGERS 1  
When'd you get in?

OTHER MESSENGERS 2  
When'd you drop the package?

OTHER MESSENGERS 3  
What time was your drop?

OTHER MESSENGERS 4  
How long did you take to get to the office from your last drop?

JULIAN  
Whoa, what's going on?

CHUCKY  
Before we tell you anything, just tell us what time you made your last drop!

JULIAN  
I don't know, how long does it take to get here from Pasadena?

DD slips in the office, no one really takes notice.

OTHER MESSENGERS 1  
Takes me about 20 minutes.

OTHER MESSENGERS 2  
Around 20.

OTHER MESSENGERS 3  
That's about right.

OTHER MESSENGERS 4  
Yeah, 20's good.

JULIAN  
OK, about 20 minutes ago.

Messengers start to collect, pay, diss, and argue with one another. Julian's confused but intrigued.

CLINT  
HOLD IT! It takes you bucket-heads about 20 minutes. I say shave that in half and that's what Jay here probably pulled.

Messengers go back arguing with one another with Clint attempting to mediate.

DD  
(To Julian)  
C'mon let's get a cuppa Joe.

CLINT  
Hang on, I'll join you.

Chuck grabs Chucky from the arguments and heads out with them.

EXT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Sitting outside. Julian's both stunned and proud listening to the crew.

JULIAN

Really?

DD/CLINT/CHUCK/CHUCKY

(Matter-of-factly)

Really.

JULIAN

(chuckling)

I guess I'm just one bad motherfu--

CHUCKY

For sure you've lost your official Super Squid title with all the money you've won me.

DD

I always knew you were a natural, but damn son, you really were born going 100 miles an hour.

CLINT

Now take my advice kid, I've seen the best go down, don't be thinking you're invincible. Kid, there's only 2 types of riders out there. Those who have gone down--

Everyone except Julian in unison--

CLINT/DD/CHUCK/CHUCKY

And those who will go down.

Uncomfortable moment--

JULIAN

(apologetically)

I wear a helmet.

CLINT

Worst time I seen was at the end of a Redline.

DD

Oh, hearing this story gives me the Willie Chillies.

CHUCK

I don't think given our line of work, these mental images help too much.

CHUCKY

Yeah man, too much information, man. Too much--

CLINT

Could you all let me talk?

JULIAN

What's a red line?

CLINT

Street racing, nothing you'd want a part of. Anyway, I arrived at the finish line late, and--

CHUCK

Lots o' money ridin'.

JULIAN

Money? How much?

CHUCK

You bet on yourself, or ride on someone else's bet on you.

CLINT

...Like I was sayin', I got to the finish line and it was mayhem. Everyone's scrambling like the fuzz is crackin' down. Then I see the other bike down, and the biker down. His helmet's been knocked off and he's lying way over there, everyone around him. So I go to get the helmet. Code of conduct says you help the guy who's down, because someday that guy's gonna be you.

CHUCKY

(aside to Chuck)

Dude, could make some serious green on Jay.

CHUCK

Make our winnins' at the office look like change.

DD

Would you stop already! You better not be going there with him!

JULIAN

At a track?

CHUCKY

Track's for rich weak sauce snobs that's afraid of the real world.

CHUCK

(to Julian)

Street racing, man, point a to point b, only one rule.

CHUCKY

Cross the line first.

DD

Cops show and you likely lose your license, your bike, jail.

CHUCK

With that kind of money, who cares?

CLINT

If you cross first or at all.

(to Julian)

Do you know what I saw when I went to get that helmet?

DD

Oh, there goes the hair on the back of my neck standing up.

CLINT

His eyes. Looking right back at me. I'm never gonna forget that look.

Uncomfortable silence for a few beats.

CHUCKY

Back to work, I still need to....

CLINT

(glaring)

Hey Dumber, what have you not dropped yet?

CHUCKY

Nothing, just feel like a call is coming in for me that's all.

Radio crackles.

CHUCKY (CONT'D)  
See, there it is, got to go, bye.

Chuck gets up to follow--

CLINT  
You, Dumb? There something you  
haven't dropped?

CHUCK  
My helmet, dude.

Everyone gets up and heads back to the station.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Julian and Chuck are walking back to the station.

CHUCK  
So...you down?

JULIAN  
When?

CHUCK  
After work, man.

JULIAN  
Tonight? I don't have money to  
race.

CHUCK  
Scared? It's OK. You don't have to.  
You never have to see Redline in  
your life.

JULIAN  
No no--

Julian makes a decision--

JULIAN (CONT'D)  
Where?

EXT. REDLINE STARTING GROUND 1 - NIGHT

A sweet scene. Hot cars, fine ladies, thumpin' bass and souped up bikes pulling in and out constantly. Riders and drivers mix and mingle. Chuck, Chucky and Julian pull up.

JULIAN  
 (in awe)  
 Woah...

CHUCKY  
 Welcome to Redline.

In the center of the crowds, Alex and crew dominate the scene. Hanging on Alex's arm is PHEBE, the hottest, bitchiest looking honey in the whole place. She notices Julian and whispers something in Alex's ear. Alex checks the newcomer out.

CHUCK  
 (to Jay)  
 Ready to take some of these boys to school?

Chuck, Chucky and Julian join a crowd of riders. A veteran rider recognizes Chuck and Chucky--

DALE  
 Hey Chuck up and Up Chuck, what's up?

CHUCK  
 Getting ready to take some of your money, that's what.

OTHER RIDER KEN  
 Didn't your Mom tell you drinking and riding is a no-no?

DALE  
 Or did you just plain land on your head today?

CHUCKY  
 Damn, we startin' early tonight. Money to the mouth, man, let's see who's talkin' shit tonight.

KEN  
 On who?

CHUCK  
 (thumbing Julian)  
 A 'G' on him.

Dale and Ken give Julian and his aged GSX-R a brief glance.

JULIAN  
 What's up, I'm Jay.

KEN  
(chuckling)  
Two.

DALE  
(flashing cash)  
I got four right now, dog.

CHUCK  
That's six between the both of you,  
who's riding?

Dale and Ken exchange looks and huddle quickly.

JULIAN  
Hey Chuck...

CHUCKY  
Just chill, dog.

JULIAN  
(whispering)  
I don't have that kinda money.

Chucky throws Julian an ugly look.

DALE  
Make it even, I'll ride for the  
six, spread our winnings six four  
out.

CHUCK  
(flashing cash)  
Whatever is clever, pick your  
losses.

KEN  
(thoroughly checking out  
Julian's bike)  
Stock, not even carbs or 207's.

DALE  
Let's do this.

Chuck and Chucky walk with Julian who's pushing his bike down to the starting line as everyone is scrambling for the first race. Phebe keeps a close eye on Julian.

CHUCKY  
No sweat Jay-Dog. He ain't nothing.

CHUCK  
He's a trickster who thinks he can  
go fast.

JULIAN  
But if I lose--

CHUCK  
Just ride how you ride at work.

CHUCKY  
Ev'yday thing, J-man.

CHUCK (CONT'D)  
No doubt, how much you think you  
made today delivering?

JULIAN  
Hundred fifty?

CHUCK  
Flip you five cool tonight.

Julian looks at Chuck as if he's kidding.

CHUCKY  
No pressure baby, but don't lose.

CHUCK  
You can do it, bro, listen. You  
need money, don't you?

Julian nods.

CHUCKY  
You can get it here. Eazy.

Dale and Julian line up along the starting line. Dale, looking nervous, glances at Julian, who's even more nervous. A crowd starts gathering, some laughing, some intrigued. A HOT IMPORT MODEL steps out from the crowd. She takes off her loose linen shirt, swings it a few times above her head then slams it onto the ground. Both BIKES blast off leaving a thin cloud of smoke and dust.

Dales's two bike lengths ahead of Julian as they blast right past and come to the first bend. Both bike brake lights pop on even though Julian's behind. As Dale's knee touches down, Julian's lights already went off as he's riding the outer edge of his tire coming up fast on Dale's left. As they come out of the intense lean, Dale's monster horse power clearly shows it's advantage over the aging Gixxer. But this is not a drag shoot-out. This is a balls out twisted narrowing shoot. Through three consecutive S turns, Julian's got a small lead on Dale. Coming up on a long straight through bustling Mission Ave, Julian proceeds to cut right through the cars without ever once hitting his brakes. Dale coming up tight behind him, slows to every vehicle's movement.



INT. NATALIE AND JULIAN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Natalie is surprised at the intensity underneath Julian's show of calm--

JULIAN

Hi.

NATALIE

Did you hear that?

JULIAN

What?

NATALIE

Sounded like some poor animal got run over.

JULIAN

Didn't hear anything.

NATALIE

(beat)

OK. Hi! You alright? I was beginning to worry.

JULIAN

Ran some overtime, and...

Julian takes out \$300 cash.

JULIAN (CONT'D)

This is on top of my daily.

NATALIE

Wow...Cash?

JULIAN

Well yeah, night jobs are... The clients pay differently.

NATALIE

I wonder if this is what DD did to get his new car.

JULIAN

I don't know, and I don't care. All I know is at the end of this week I could put in that a/c! And buy you something nice.

NATALIE

Baby it's OK, I don't spend that much time driving, not like you did. Let's save it for a rainy day.

JULIAN

No more rainy days, baby, we're gonna have money flowing in, I'm telling you, with these jobs--

NATALIE

Baby, I missed you.

JULIAN

Everything's gonna be great, babe, from now on.

He leans over and gives her a kiss, then grabs her in a big happy hug.

EXT. CITY AND SUBURBIA - DAY

Julian's working, shooting between lines of slow traffic on the freeway, scraping footpegs on city streets, picking up, dropping off. Wardrobes, backgrounds and time of day keep changing every second. On the freeway, the radio crackles with an order but Julian ignores it because an import racer is looking at him the wrong way. They race on the freeway. Julian spansks him hard, then just plain toys with him as they hit traffic.

EXT. CITY AND SUBURBIA - NIGHT

MONTAGE - Julian's racing every night. He goes home more and more tired each night.

INT. NATALIE AND JULIAN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Julian is tiredly slumped over a carton of take-out noodles. Natalie's in her pajamas.

NATALIE

Are you sure you can handle all this overtime?

JULIAN

(snaps up)  
Without breaking a sweat.

NATALIE

(tenderly)  
You need sleep, baby.

INT. JULIAN AND NATALIE'S APARTMENT - MORNING

In an echo of the first time we saw her, Natalie puts toothpaste on her toothbrush and reaches over to do the same for Julian but the paste plops onto the floor. Natalie goes to the bedroom and sees Julian still gacked out on the futon. She's engulfed by concern and an overwhelming love for him. She exits quietly.

INT. ROADRUNNER/LIGHTNING - DAY

Julian storms into the office while everyone crowds around the desk and lets out disappointing "Oh".

JULIAN  
Damn I'm good. Got my money?

CHUCK  
Two hundred.

JULIAN  
That's all?

CHUCKY  
That's all anyone's willing to put up.

JULIAN  
Let's make it up tonight.

DD and Clint exchange disapproving looks.

INT. NATALIE AND JULIAN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Julian answers his cell-phone.

JULIAN  
Yo.

Looks grudgingly at Natalie, very bad acting.

JULIAN (CONT'D)  
Yeah, OK, I'll take it, be there in ten.

He takes a beat, looks down at the dinner plate Natalie has prepared for him.

NATALIE  
Well try not to....

JULIAN  
I gotta....

Uncomfortable silence.

NATALIE

Try not to be too long.

JULIAN

Shouldn't be, depending on where the drop is. You know how it is.

NATALIE

Yeah, it's another Friday night. I haven't seen you for an hour this week, combined time.

JULIAN

Hey, check this out, forgot to give this to you last night.

Julian pulls out about \$500.00 in crinkled hundreds. Natalie glances dismissively at it.

NATALIE

Last night I didn't see you at all. First I saw of you was ten minutes ago.

JULIAN

I'm sorry baby, look, I really can't talk right now, we'll talk tomorrow, picnic, OK?

With that Julian heads out the door without waiting for Natalie's response.

EXT. REDLINE GROUNDS 2 - NIGHT

Starting point. Julian pulls up to the group. Some seriously decked out girls ooze over to flirt with him. Chuck and Chucky push their way through the crowds to Julian.

CHUCK

Pickings is thick tonight yo.

Lots of new hot bikes everywhere; some new meat sporting brand new un-scuffed leathers. A couple of SQUIDS approach Julian and Chuck.

SQUID 1

You must be kidding me, how you expect to floss with that thing?

CHUCK

We don't expect to floss, we just expect to take some money from you boys tonight.

JULIAN  
(holding a hand out)  
It's cool, I can handle my own  
business.

CHUCKY  
You're the man.

SQUID 2  
Take our money?

JULIAN  
Yup, and what-ever else you're  
willing to put up.

SQUID 1  
Think you're rolling that fat??

JULIAN  
Knowing.

SQUID 2  
What you got in mind?

JULIAN  
Between my boys and myself, ten  
easy.

SQUID 2  
We ain't got that much on us.

CHUCKY  
It's cool, we can always go to your  
place to pick up.

CHUCK  
We're wasting our time with these  
squids.

SQUID 1  
Hold up, who you calling a squid?

CHUCKY  
Yo, ain't no one comes to Redline  
just flossin', come right, bro.  
Pinks.

SQUID 1  
(nasty)  
Alright, you're on.

JULIAN  
And door-to-door delivery by noon.

SQUID 1  
 Noon we're gonna be at the bar  
 enjoying your money.

JULIAN  
 Let's roll.

The two squids roll up to the line behind Julian, whispering--

SQUID 1  
 I hate getting called squid.

SQUID 2  
 What's a squid?

SQUID 1  
 I dunno.

EXT. REDLINE GROUNDS 2 - NIGHT

Import car headlights illuminating the FINISH LINE as Julian flies through, skidding to a stop. The other rider isn't even in sight yet. Chuck and Chucky no longer bothering to run up to Julian to congratulate him, collect their winnings from the squids. While everyone else is congratulating Julian, the face, that face, suddenly appears. Phebe blows a kiss into his ear and walks away. She gives him a wink and continues towards Alex, who's watching and measuring.

INT. NATALIE AND JULIAN'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Steam clears, revealing a boiling pot with the lid clattering. A hand lifts the lid and we follow the steam to Natalie's face. Through the dissipating steam she sees Julian, sleeping in the futon. She finishes stuffing assorted goodies into their picnic basket and goes into the bedroom.

She leans down and kisses Julian on his forehead, attempting to wake him gently. Annoyed, he rolls over and covers his eyes.

JULIAN  
 Few more minutes.

NATALIE  
 It's already 12:30.

JULIAN  
 So?

Natalie's taken aback and sharply disappointed. LOUD VOICES from outside suddenly echo in the apartment complex.

LOUD VOICE  
Yo, luck turd, you here?

Natalie draws the curtains aside. The boorish squids from last night are shouting in all directions.

SQUID 2  
We have the right place?

SQUID 1  
Can't believe we gotta deliver the damn thing...

SQUID 2  
Dude just quit bitchin' and get it over with! Yo, Jay!

Hearing this Julian instantly jumps out of bed and runs to the window.

JULIAN  
Yo! I'll be right down!

Julian blasts past Natalie. He grabs a pair of jeans and T-shirt. Half dressing and hopping he runs out the door, talking to himself more than to Natalie.

JULIAN (CONT'D)  
It's here, it's here! Damn, these guys are early.

NATALIE  
Good morning...

JULIAN  
C'mon, you gotta see this.

Julian runs downstairs, Natalie reluctantly trails behind.

EXT. JULIAN AND NATALIE'S APARTMENT COMPLEX - MORNING

Julian comes down the stairs; a big grin spreads as he checks out his new R1.

JULIAN  
Ah, there's my new baby.

After relinquishing the pink to the R1, the squids take off. Julian happily sits on his new R1 as DD steps outside joining them.

JULIAN (CONT'D)  
Isn't she beautiful? The most beautiful thing you've ever seen!

Natalie's blank face says she's not so enthralled.

DD

Yamaha YZF R1. Barely 900 miles.  
Bitch isn't even broken in yet.  
(sees Natalie)  
Must've set you back some. What'd  
it do ya?

NATALIE

I have no idea. Julian, what'd it  
set you back?

JULIAN

So beautiful. Huh? Oh, zero, didn't  
set us back anything.

As if something hit DD, he fully understands.

NATALIE

I'm sorry, I don't understand.

JULIAN

I'm just a bad-ass, lightning fast,  
baby. And now I can do buck thirty  
looking pretty.

DD

Well either way, now you got a  
weekend bike to strut it up with  
the boys now.

JULIAN

Oh, that reminds me, c'mon DD, give  
me a hand, let's put the geezer up.

Julian walks over to his old GSX-R and starts to push it  
towards DD's garage. Natalie, tears close, turns away and  
goes back upstairs. The old Gixxer looks somewhat forlorn  
back in the shadows as Julian and DD walk out, slam and lock  
the door.

INT. NATALIE AND JULIAN'S APARTMENT - DAY

Julian walks into the apartment to see Natalie silently  
making the bed. Julian gets his wallet and walks towards her  
while pulling out some bills.

JULIAN

I'm going for a quick ride with  
Chuck and Chucky.

Natalie doesn't even look at Julian, and goes about putting  
things away.

JULIAN (CONT'D)

This was from last night's runs.

He gives her some bills.

She ignores them.

JULIAN (CONT'D)

What's wrong? Why are you acting like this?

Natalie beams a disappointed look at him--

NATALIE

I don't know what's going on but if you don't want to see me anymore, you could at least tell me straight out.

JULIAN

What?

NATALIE

I don't want to keep you from coming back to your own home.

JULIAN

What are you talking about? I need to get better so I can make more deliveries so I can make more money so we can--

NATALIE

So we can what?! How can we do anything if we're never together! This is your hotel! And me, I'm not your girlfriend anymore, I'm your maid.

JULIAN

I'm working all the time! You don't believe me?

NATALIE

That bike cost thousands! You think I'm stupid?

JULIAN

Is that what this is about?! That I got a new bike?!?! Has it ever dawned on you with a new bike, I can get around town faster AND safer AND make more money!

NATALIE

It's not about money! If I wanted money all I have to do is leave you. Money means shit.

JULIAN

That's easy for you to say.

NATALIE

What's that supposed to mean.

JULIAN

Some of us don't have the luxury of running back to Mommy anytime something goes wrong.

Tears well up--

NATALIE

That's not fair.

JULIAN

Then why are you doing this now? Just when things are picking up? I mean we're finally on track. After this summer you'll be one semester away from graduating and by then I'll have made enough--

NATALIE

No, **you're** on track, **you'll** have money. I will not be a semester away from graduating because I'm not taking classes this summer.

JULIAN

Why not?

NATALIE

Where do you think your birthday gift came from?

JULIAN

I'll sell the bike! You know I want nothing to do with your mother's money.

NATALIE

I can't believe what I'm hearing.

JULIAN

I make enough money now, who the hell cares?

NATALIE

I bought you that bike because I love you, the same reason you bought me this ring, I thought.

JULIAN

OK, so I got a new bike, I'll get you a new ring.

NATALIE

I don't want a new one! There's nothing wrong with this one! I don't want things, I don't want money, I want you!

JULIAN

I'm right here.

NATALIE

No you're not!

JULIAN

Well then where am I?

NATALIE

I wish I knew.

Their eyes lock. The moment stretches, each waiting for the other to give in. It's Julian who can't hold--

JULIAN

I don't have time for this now. I need to meet up with Chuck and Chucky five minutes ago. We'll finish this when I get back.

Uncomfortable beat as Julian stands straight just looking at Natalie.

NATALIE

I won't be here when you get back.

Another, more uncomfortable beat.

JULIAN

(laughs humorlessly)  
Right, whatever.

Julian takes off. We hear the sleek R1 roar to life and become distant. Natalie stands sniffing, wipes a tear from her cheek. Without a word DD comes over and wraps his arms around her. She tries to hold them back, but she can't. The sobs come out, wrenching and deep.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Natalie pulls the ring off her finger and puts it on the Chinese chest.

INT. NATALIE AND JULIAN'S APARTMENT - EVENING

The upper dead-bolt lever flips over. Julian opens the door and flips on the lights. Walks to the kitchen. There's food prepared both in the fridge and on the stove. A bottle of champagne rests in the picnic basket on the table. Julian grabs some food and sits down. He notices a note neatly resting in the middle of the table. He roughly unfolds it and begins to read. After the first page, he flings the papers against the wall. Frustrated and pissed, he picks up the champagne and drinks from the bottle. His mobile phone rings.

JULIAN

Yo, where you guys at?

Listening to the response.

JULIAN (CONT'D)

Let's meet up. I need to get off tonight.

EXT. REDLINE GROUNDS 3 - NIGHT

Julian's on top of the world. Crowds part when he walks up.

CHUCKY

Yo life's good, huh fly-boy?

He gestures all around big--

CHUCKY (CONT'D)

The ladies love you. The other racers respect you. You makin' good money. What else could you ask for?

A pretty voice--

VOICE (O.S.)

How about a kiss?

Julian looks up. Phebe's standing there looking at him with big green eyes. Her pink glossy lips slightly agape. High heels, thigh-highs, clingy little miniskirt.

PHEBE

Alex and I have a bet. He says he's faster than you. I don't think so.

JULIAN

What are we betting for?

PHEBE

Me.

Julian looks at Alex who's defiantly standing by his bike. Phebe bends over and gives Julian a peck on the cheek. Alex lets his bike roar.

JULIAN

Let's do it.

Alex and Julian are at the starting line, measuring each other up.

ALEX

I'm racing to lose her. If I lose,  
I win. If you win... you lose.

Alex laughs with his head thrown back, then smashes his visor down and guns it-- Julian looks back to Phebe. With a lithe cat-like movement she slips out of her pink panties and holds 'em way up high.

PHEBE

For pink.

She drops 'em. On touchdown the bikes go, screaming. Round the first and second corner we see Alex flexing the mighty horse power between his legs. Julian hasn't quite learned the how the new ponies he's got responds when pushed to the limit.

Alex pulls in front of Julian out of every turn. Their brake lights almost in sync. Every time Julian throws his bike upright from touchdown, raw horse power creeps up on him and forces him to ease off. Last turn towards home stretch, very tight and narrow. Alex pulls ahead too far, a distance Julian can't catch up-- Doesn't quite understand why he sees brake lights, until Alex is right next to him. Alex flips his visor up and gives Julian a knowing look... Then skids sharp and sweet to a stop. Looking back Julian can see the solo figure standing still, with the snaky blue trails misting around him... He crosses the line and gets no more than a moment to ask himself Why? before the crowd engulfs him. He takes his helmet off, kicks back, and rides the glory. Phebe makes her way through the crowd and straddles Julian facing him. They smile.

INT. JULIAN AND NATALIE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Music's loud and Julian mixes it up with all his fly-looking people.

Already hammered, everyone's partying down, busting and dropping all over the place. As Julian is playing with a particularly stacked blonde, we hear;

CHUCK (O.S.)

(mocking)

...and I never told you, but I love you because you gave me a home--

Julian jumps up raging and makes the kitchen in two strides--

JULIAN

What's that!

CHUCK

--more than just a boyfriend, you're my fami--

Julian slams him against the wall--

JULIAN

Don't you ever stick your nose where it doesn't belong again.

Julian tears the letter away from him--

CHUCKY

Hey fly-boy, what kind of mushy ying yang bull is that?

JULIAN

Shut the hell up and get out. Everybody! Get out!

Phoebe appears in the doorway--

PHEBE

Good plan.

CHUCK

(eyeing her)

Looks like Lightning-boy Jay here needs some quality time to drown his sorrows.

CHUCKY

He'll be drowning more than just his sorrows.

Julian uses her hips to push them out--

CHUCK  
 (pushing Chucky)  
 Alright, everybody, let's go rile  
 DD downstairs.

JULIAN  
 He's with his boyfriend.

CHUCK  
 So? More reason to goose his  
 feather.

CHUCKY  
 He likes it when we mess with him.

JULIAN  
 Just leave.

CHUCK  
 (to everyone)  
 Ahhight, let's go, c'mon!

Everyone starts stepping outside as Julian takes the letter  
 out to reread--

PHEBE  
 Bad news baby?

She starts rubbing on him, purring...

PHEBE (CONT'D)  
 I can make you feel better.

JULIAN  
 (distracted)  
 Yeah...

With her hand she pulls his face away from the letter. She  
 steps back and pulls up her shirt. Then she bounces her  
 perfect tits for him.

JULIAN (CONT'D)  
 Ouch.

PHEBE  
 Baby still hurts. Let me try  
 something else--

There's a knock at the door.

JULIAN  
 Party's at the Fag's pad!

VOICE (O.S.)  
It is the fag.

PHEBE  
(Almost a whisper)  
You know, I never liked...niggers,  
much.

JULIAN  
Niggers? Blacky and Fagy, but....

Julian opens the door--

DD turns back from walking away and hurt look in his eyes.  
Then over Julian's shoulder DD suddenly sees Phebe--

DD  
Oh I see. You're a total asshole  
now.

Disgusted, DD whips around and leaves.

INT. BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Julian walks into his bedroom to find Phebe wearing only his  
racing leather jacket, her pink thong, stocking and heels.  
She models for him. Julian grabs her and roughly kisses her  
as he clumsily takes her down--

PHEBE  
Ow!

JULIAN  
What?

PHEBE  
What's this bed made of--

JULIAN  
Sorry.

PHEBE  
Out of practice?

JULIAN  
No.

PHEBE  
Not very sure of your own strength.

JULIAN  
I'm plenty sure.

PHEBE  
On your back.

She pushes him down.

EXT. FURNITURE STORE - DAY

Ikea furniture warehouse.

CHUCK  
So why am I here again?

JULIAN  
A bed.

CHUCK  
Yeah but why am I here?

JULIAN  
To help me get it home.

CHUCKY  
Damn yo, look at that price. If you  
paid me to sleep in this I'd still  
be having nightmares.

JULIAN  
I wouldn't.

CHUCK  
That's a big chunk dude.

JULIAN  
I'll make it up later this week.

CHUCKY  
Over a skank?

JULIAN  
Over the fact that I'm changing my  
life for good. I'll take that table  
there, with those lamps.

Walking through the store writing down the things he wants.

JULIAN (CONT'D)  
With as much money as you been  
making off me, you should be buying  
some changes too.

Chuck and Chucky exchange looks.

CHUCK

Dude, you're hot right now, but believe you me and I don't mean to put you down or nuthin', but it ain't gonna last forever.

JULIAN

That table.

CHUCKY

Seen a lot come and go. Look at Chuck, yo.

CHUCK

Look at Chucky, he rode his streak almost 2 months.

JULIAN

This ain't no "streak". I been winning three months straight and no-one's even been close.

Chuck and Chucky exchange raised eyebrows as Julian--

JULIAN (CONT'D)

There, that big mirror over there.

EXT. CITY STREETS - NIGHT

Julian racing, wardrobes and backgrounds changing in an echo of earlier sequences. He's dangerous now, taking chances, cocksure, arrogant.

INT. SALON - DAY

Julian is sitting in the barber chair as Phebe plays with him and teases him with her nails. A bib drops down over his head. Moments later the bib is lifted and we see Julian with a new haircut--and color. He brushes Phebe aside to stroke his own ego in the mirror. She kisses him.

INT. NATALIE AND JULIAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Julian is lying on his fancy new bed. Sitting on top of him is Phebe, wearing garter belts and a cowboy hat.

PHEBE

You can't do it.

JULIAN

You're a psycho bitch.

PHEBE

That's why they call me Phebe. Love it or get lost.

JULIAN

But this is my place.

PHEBE

There's nothing like a speedgasm. I've done it before, but you can't keep it up if you're scared.

JULIAN

Who's scared.

PHEBE

Whatever.

He gets up, and grabbing her by the arm, walks out the room.

EXT. EMPTY STREET - NIGHT

Julian's riding the bike and Phebe is riding Julian. Nothing like vibration to turn a girl on...

INT. MALL - DAY

Julian and Phebe visit different stores, shopping for clothes and fancy goodies. With every store their bags multiply.

INT. SMALL GROCERY STORE - DAY

Julian is frustrated and embarrassed, trying too hard to look good for Phebe.

JULIAN

You think I can't afford it?

GROCERY STORE OWNER

No sir, but for a case of Dom Perignon, I need a deposit first.

JULIAN

I been buying here for 10 years, you don't remember me?

GROCERY STORE OWNER

No sir, I can't say I do.

Phebe cracks up, even though it's not funny.

JULIAN

How much do you need?

GROCERY STORE OWNER  
Twenty percent. Two hundred.

JULIAN  
I'll get it to you tonight. Order  
the case.

Julian stomps out of the store with Phebe in tow. She hisses at the grocery owner. Julian and Phebe climb on the R1 and strap on their helmets. Through the Chatterboxes--

PHEBE  
I have something that'll make you  
feel much better than champagne.

She slides her hands into Julian's crotch, then turns palm up a BAG OF WHITE POWDER.

JULIAN  
OK...

The couple jams in the proverbial cloud of dust.

EXT. REDLINE GROUNDS - NIGHT

Julian smack talks the OTHER RIDERS.

JULIAN  
C'mon man, ain't you got any balls  
at all?

RED RACER  
Whatever dude, I ain't about to  
ride with you.

JULIAN  
What's the matter, am I too good  
for you?

RED RACER  
You good, no doubt. But you  
dangerous, that's why. Stupid  
dangerous.

JULIAN  
I'm giving odds, man. Whatever your  
pussy ass wants. Even head starts.

No takers.

BLACK RACER  
Shut up and go home.

Julian jumps off his bike and has to be restrained from attacking Black Racer.

INT. ROADRUNNER/LIGHTNING - DAY

In Clint's office Julian continues being out of control--

JULIAN

But I can make twice the deliveries than your best rider!

CLINT

You appear brain-damaged. Maybe this is a temporary condition. I hope so, for your sake.

JULIAN

But I'm the best--

CLINT

Wrong, your not the best. Not even close. You disappear with no notice, three weeks later you walk in demanding gigs? Funny. Stupid funny.

JULIAN

I'm the fastest you got!

Clint laughs his ass off.

CLINT

You're just another Redline loser.

JULIAN

I make more in a night there than I do here in a week.

CLINT

So I ask you again, what are you doing here? You don't need me. And I don't need you. Looks like we have us a relationship.

Julian's not rolling well at all with these punches--

JULIAN

I don't need this bullshit.

He storms out, slamming the door behind him. DD watches from the coffee station.

INT. JULIAN AND NATALIE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Phebe's walking out the door--

PHEBE  
No money, no honey.

JULIAN  
But-

PHEBE  
I'm sure you'll figure something  
out.

She slams the door behind her. Julian is left alone in his newly furnished apartment. As his leg starts to bounce, he looks around. He stares at the futon, now in the living room folded up for a couch.

We follow him into the BATHROOM where he splashes some water on his face. He looks up at the mirror. He can barely recognize himself. Opens the cabinet, takes out some pills and swallows a handful.

JULIAN  
Fuck it.

He stomps into the bedroom at the Chinese chest. Julian rifles through the drawers, takes out the last of his cash and the pink to the R1 and puts them in his pocket. He closes the chest doors and turns away. He stops. Turns back. Opens the chest again and stares at Natalie's ring.

EXT. REDLINE GROUNDS 4 - NIGHT

Julian pulls up and dismounts. Immediately he throws down challenges on all sides, but gets no takers. The Redliners' attitudes are a mixture of respect and contempt.

JULIAN  
Ain't anyone here got balls at all?  
A bunch of losers. That's all you  
guys are, losers.

CHUCK  
Yo bro. Chill a sec.

JULIAN  
What about you! You must have  
plenty stashed from your winnings  
off me!

CHUCKY

Hey Jay, this ain't the way to go  
about things man.

JULIAN

If you can take me then I'll chill,  
and not before.

Chuck and Chucky shrug and turn to go--

JULIAN (CONT'D)

What's up? Crawling back into your  
hole? Well then let me get you out  
of it.

Julian tries to kick over Chucky's bike as Chuck attempts to stop him. Julian continues kicking as Chuck blasts one across his face. Julian wrestles with Chucky who's trying to hold him from behind. Chuck comes charging at him and head-rams Julian in the stomach as all three of them go toppling over a bike.

RACERDUDE

Hey asswipe, that's my ride!

RacerDude and his crew jump in the fight as all hell breaks loose.

Julian is getting his butt seriously served up to him by a few racers. Then as if God spoke, Alex's voice comes booming over the melee.

ALEX

Enough! This is a great way for  
everyone to spend the night in  
County.

Fight peters out as Racers give respect to Alex.

ALEX (CONT'D)

See what your fat mouth gets you?

Julian wipes blood from his lips.

JULIAN

I don't need you telling me what to  
do neither.

ALEX

I don't give a shit what you do  
moron. I just don't want you  
dirtying up my loot in your pocket.  
It ain't sporting to take from the  
dead.

JULIAN  
Ain't nothing on me belongs to you.

ALEX  
Then what's your big mouth flailing about? You're just another squid trying to floss at Redline. Sit your ass down and keep your mouth shut Junior. You're disturbing the big boys.

JULIAN  
(Pulls out the pink)  
I got my bike.

ALEX  
Ooh. A stock R1.

JULIAN  
That bike beat you.

Alex laughs.

ALEX  
That bike won you the bitch who sucked you dry and left you for dead.

Phebe appears at Alex's side, hanging on his arm, bitchy and bored.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
Come back when you make it up off your knees. Then after you bring me a full tank of gas, I'll consider wasting it on your exhaust sucking ass.

Alex turns and starts to disappear into the crowd as Julian reaches into his pocket and pulls out the ring.

JULIAN  
What about this?

Alex steps back. Studies the ring for a sec.

ALEX  
Means something to you, don't it?

JULIAN  
It's worth ten Gs.

ALEX

(chuckling)

I like it, it's got sentimental value and you're willing to throw it away. Three Gs for the bike, and nothing for the ring, minus a hundred up front right now to pay for my gas and tuition fees.

JULIAN

My ride and this ring should be...

ALEX

Get out of my sight squid, you're wasting my time.

Desperation hits Julian hard in the pit of his stomach.

JULIAN

I don't have a hundred.

Alex laughs again, enjoying the spectacle.

ALEX

I'll race you because it'll be such a pleasure to stick you. This is about dignity and you're about to lose the very last thing you got.

JULIAN

Let's do it.

At the STARTING LINE Alex and Julian line up. An IMPORT MODEL GIRL struts out between the bikes, takes off her top and starts the race. It is a wild race. Julian's reckless, trying too hard to keep the power in check this time. Neck and neck, lead changing every second. The exhibition of skill is breathtaking. Extreme angles of lean, pegs, knees and elbows touching down in the turns, rear ends stepping out, suspensions pushed to the limit. Alex attempts to play with Julian. He slows down just to cut Julian off, then as the bikes pitch, he purposely delays his shoot time to break Julian down. Alex knows Julian has problems handling the raw horse power. Alex then shoots off way ahead of Julian... Then slows down again to let Julian catch up-- But Julian catches Alex by surprise every time as he sticks a little too close for comfort to Alex.

EXT. REDLINE GROUNDS 4 - NIGHT

FINISH LINE. Head to head they scream down the final stretch. Alex keeps Julian from passing by locking him up outside. He lets Julian inch ahead; then he drops a gear, dumps the throttle.

His left hand darts over and hits Julian's kill switch, shutting Julian down just a few yards from the finish. It's enough. Alex flies across the finish line and hits his notorious signature front-wheel rolling stoppie. Julian rolls across the line a bike length behind, stunned. Both racers dismount and face off as everyone crowds around--

JULIAN

You cheated.

ALEX

One, I was just playing with you,  
and two--

Alex blasts a right hook across Julian's already swelling cheeks--

ALEX (CONT'D)

Let me remind you Junior, the only  
rule at Redline is to finish first.

JULIAN

You hit my kill!

UNKNOWN RACER

Yo, whatever, man, Alex crossed  
first.

Crowd agrees.

JULIAN

It's not right.

ALEX

The only thing that's not right  
about this is my pink and her ring,  
which is still in your pocket.

Julian stands up and looks around at everyone and defeat settles in. He pulls out R1 pink and the ring. The pink drops into Alex's open palm; half a second later, the ring joins it there.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Enjoy your walk home.

Alex watches as Julian turns and walks away. After a moment to gloat, Alex melts into the crowd. Chuck and Chucky watch Julian shrinking in the distance, then turn and follow Alex.

EXT. CITY STREETS - NIGHT

Julian limps home, motorcycle boots definitely are not made for walking. His fists balled up, hair lank and blowing, face streaked with dirt and rage.

INT. JULIAN AND NATALIE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The door swings open. We see Julian silhouetted against the streetlights. He wills his aching body to step inside and close the door, then collapses on the floor face up, arms flung out wide, eyes open but unfocused. His emotional strength is tapped out. He is alone, beaten down, bottomed out.

INT. JULIAN AND NATALIE'S APARTMENT - MORNING

POV: upside-down living room from carpet level. It takes a beat to register, then the room starts to ROLL OVER. We see Julian trying hard to get on his feet. He tucks his knee up as he rolls over, grunting with effort. Julian's face is not quite visible as he drags himself more or less upright and hobbles into the bathroom. Julian's cupped hands raise water to the battered face reflected in the mirror. His cuts have scabbed over. One of his eyes is crusty and swollen nearly shut, one of his nostrils above his split lip is caked with dried blood. He is appalled by the face looking back at him, but he can't stop glancing at himself as he gently excavates the encrusted blood. The water in the sink grows pinker.

Finally he puts a bloody hand on the mirror so he doesn't have to look at himself any more, then reaches over and grabs a towel, pressing it hard onto his face. He turns toward the shower and drops the towel into the sink.

INT. JULIAN AND NATALIE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Julian hobbles about the apartment picking up garbage, putting things away, cleaning up. Trash bags starts to pile up. He answers the phone.

JULIAN

Yes ma'am. Lamps, \$20.00 apiece or \$50.00 for three... \$75 less than a month ago... yeah, have the receipt... OBO, right. Today if you're interested in taking a look... Negotiable on everything... Yes, Jay... I mean Julian. Thank you, yes, bye.

He gets up and heads out with the trash.

EXT. JULIAN AND NATALIE'S APARTMENT COMPLEX - DAY

Julian is putting the bags in the dumpster when DD pushes his bike out of the garage. Their eyes meet for a brief second. DD turns and starts putting his helmet on. Julian struggles with himself for a moment too long; just as he makes up his mind and steps forward, DD's off.

JULIAN  
(mouths to himself)  
Shit.

EXT. JULIAN AND NATALIE'S APARTMENT COMPLEX - NIGHT

Lenny and DD walk up past a truck in the driveway. Julian's lamps, end tables, etc are in the back. As they are reaching DD's door, they notice a CHUBBY MAN and HIS SON coming down the stairs with Julian's last Ikea lamp and an OLDER WOMAN handing some money to Julian standing in his doorway. Julian notices DD and Lenny, who then exchange a look. DD turns, quickly unlocks his door and goes inside. Julian locks eyes with Lenny, who then follows DD inside.

INT. DD'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

DD is disturbed.

LENNY  
Alright, I know, I know, but don't  
you...

DD  
No I don't, after all I did for  
him.

LENNY  
Right, but obviously he is more  
than just a neighbor to you.

DD shoots a look.

LENNY (CONT'D)  
Well, don't you at least want to  
hear what he has to say? I know I  
do.

DD sits. Moody half light. No response. Lenny sits down next to DD and strokes his back.

LENNY (CONT'D)  
This man is a friend of yours. Not  
'boyfriend', friend. He's hurting,  
and he wants to apologize.

DD  
A simple "I'm sorry" won't fix anything.

LENNY  
How do you know that's all that he's going to tell you?

DD is silent, seething.

LENNY (CONT'D)  
He's young and obviously feeling bad for what he's done. Give him a chance, at least hear him out.

Lenny stands up. DD nods, giving in.

DD  
You always get your way with me.

LENNY  
No, not for me. You have to let him ask forgiveness for the good of his own soul.

Lenny kisses DD on top of his head.

EXT. JULIAN AND NATALIE'S APARTMENT COMPLEX - NIGHT

DD steps outside to find Julian sitting on the bottom step, head in hands. DD's shadow prompts Julian to look up. As Julian turns his face into the light DD notices the cuts and bruises. Julian wants to say something, but can't get it through his teeth. DD looks toward his own front door. Lenny is eavesdropping, as DD knew he would.

DD gives a quick "what the hell?" shrug. Lenny makes a rolling motion with his hand. DD turns back to Julian and continues his pacing.

DD  
I have been... I've been hearing about you. I don't know exactly what happened to you last night and I don't really care.

DD peeks at Julian's face again.

DD (CONT'D)  
You and I have never been "close." And ever since you, you...left, you haven't even... And now I just feel stupid for trying to help you in the first place.

DD looking straight on at Julian now.

DD (CONT'D)

I'm not saying you owe me anything, or you should even feel like you do. But you should feel sorry. You hurt that girl. And if you want to apologize to me for being such a jerk in general, you damn well better be sure you mean it.

Julian looks up, so much behind his eyes. DD with all the patient he can muster, waits. Julian feels the enormity of his screw-ups encircling him.

Small squeaks emerge from his throat, tears have started and he can not stop them. DD feels his own compassion start to well up but fights it. Julian tries repeatedly to force words from his constricted throat. Finally DD steps forward and touches Julian's shoulder. The ice breaks. Julian shoots up and grabs a surprised DD, who envelops him in a compassionate and forgiving embrace.

DD (CONT'D)

There, there, OK now, it'll be alright.

Julian's crying gets deeper, more heart rending. DD, unable to stand it any longer, starts bawling too.

DD (CONT'D)

OK, now you got me going too. Damn it, it'll be alright. Everything will be alright.

JULIAN

I...am...so...sorry...

Julian continues bawling on DD's shoulder. Lenny rushes out and puts his arms around both of them.

LENNY

Now see, didn't I tell you this would be worth it.

DD

Don't you ever get tired of being right? Now c'mon Jay, everything will be alright. Everything'll be fine.

LENNY

Yeah, you keep this up, DD and I will really start liking you.

DD  
Now c'mon Jay.

Julian's crying subsides into a whimper. Wiping his eyes, Julian chuckles a slight bit.

JULIAN  
My name's Julian.

Lenny and DD exchange astonished looks.

DD  
Uh-uh, child, not with that hair you ain't. Let's get you into your form.

Julian throws a smile as DD starts up the stairs.

LENNY  
Don't you think we ought to fix the rest of him up first? I mean this cut here is looking a bit chartreuse....

DD  
Oh shoot, you're right, c'mon child, let's take care of you here.

The three bunched up sniffing males head into DD's apartment.

INT. DD'S APARTMENT - MORNING

POV: DD's living room, sideways. Tastefully painted wall, a corner of an impressionist painting.

Julian bolts up, having just awakened, a dusty rose crocheted blanket draped across his naked shoulder. His ribs are bandaged, his hair is back to its natural color and nicely cut. Lenny breezes past in a caftan on his way to the kitchen, settling at the dinner table with the morning papers. Julian's eyes grow wider with the possibilities of what may have occurred last night.

LENNY  
(nonchalantly)  
Don't flatter yourself. And I wore gloves when I patched up your little body.

JULIAN  
Th..Th..Thank you?

LENNY

Don't mention it. You might want to step outside and see what DD's up to.

JULIAN

OK....

Julian starts outside and notices his hair in the reflection of the window. Stops and stares for a second. Surprised and happy, smiles. We see the same on Lenny's face.

EXT. JULIAN AND NATALIE'S APARTMENT COMPLEX - MORNING

DD's working away at Julian's '86 GSX-R. Upon seeing his old bike, Julian is taken fully aback.

JULIAN

Wow....

DD

Hey, there you are, was wondering how long before you got out here.

JULIAN

I totally forgot about this...

DD

Huh...well anyway, it's here, it's running, and it's yours.

Julian hugs him again, fast and big--

JULIAN

You're too nice. It's weird.

Julian walks over and notices something's different.

DD

Yeah, forty mil flat-slide Keihins, had 'em laying around, don't need 'em, just thought you having got used to the speed of a new bike and all....

JULIAN

DD, thank you, but honestly I don't think I'll need them, I'm done with Redlining. And I don't have any money--

DD

I told you, I had them laying around, and it's a waste just letting them sit there. Get some use out of them. And as far as money goes, I talked to Clint a while ago and he's agreed to see you, in about oh, 10 minutes?

JULIAN

Ten minutes?! I got to get showered, dressed, what am I going to say to him?

DD

You got a sponge bath last night, your shoes, shirt, leather and helmet are inside, and just be honest. Key word is "I'm a fuck-up".

Julian looks at DD for a second and starts jumping into his clothing.

JULIAN

DD, I don't know how I can ever--

DD

I'll figure something out, don't worry.

Julian mounts up and fires up his GSX-R.

JULIAN

Whoa...

DD

She got quite a few more ponies in there now.

JULIAN

...Did you say sponge bath?

DD

You're late!

JULIAN

Right!

Julian blasts off.

INT. ROADRUNNER/LIGHTNING - DAY

Clint's frankly skeptical. Julian meets his hard gaze for a flying second.

CLINT

And you really expect me to believe this?

JULIAN

I don't know what else I can say to make you believe me. Everything I've told you has been the absolute truth. Please Clint, just one more chance.

CLINT

I got five hundred on you if you can make Arcadia in ten.

Julian looks blankly at Clint.

CLINT (CONT'D)

Alright, you're right, that's too stupid. Off of DD's word, and what I'm seeing, I'll give you one more shot at it. But hear me kid, screw up this time, don't ever show up in front of me again, got it?

JULIAN

Yes sir. Thank you very much, I really appreciate this.

CLINT

Now go get your Nextel, pick up this package in Arcadia and check in as soon as you get there. I'll let you know where the drop is. And tell DD I never said he could have today off.

JULIAN

(big smile)  
Yes sir.

EXT. CITY AND SUBURBIA - DAY

MONTAGE - Julian's back in the saddle, but he's taking fewer risks. In various hair-raising situations which echo earlier, he now lays back and takes it easy. A different, saner, Julian.

INT. JULIAN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

A used-looking blond comes to his door with a bottle of wine. He gets rid of her, fast.

INT. ROADRUNNER/LIGHTNING - DAY

Julian picks up a dispatch slip, then bumps into Chuck.

CHUCK

Yo, Irvine... how long, Jay?

JULIAN

(not rising to it)  
Couple hours maybe.

EXT. BEACH PARKING STRIP - DAY

Julian's ripping it up with the boys. This time he's stunting it up as well.

INT. JULIAN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Julian sits at the dining table, paying the bills. The place is quiet and empty. He looks over at the futon where he used to sleep with Natalie. He smiles and pulls it out into bed form. Julian lays down on one side and pulls out Natalie's farewell note. He reads.

INT. CHASE BUILDING PARKING STRUCTURE - DAY

HIGH HEELS stride towards a Mercedes. Nice legs in sheer stockings swing into the car. Nicely manicured hand inserts keys into the ignition. The Mercedes backs up and brake lights blink as it slides out of the space. Natalie's behind the wheel, looking great, more mature and worldly. Her cell phone rings, complete with radically blinking lights. It's the only suggestion left of her fun side.

NATALIE

Hey, I'm around the corner. OK, see you in a few minutes.

She pulls out and drives off.

INT. PATRICIA AND OLIVER'S HOME - AFTERNOON

Patricia hangs up her gaudy phone. She holds a contemplative expression that's interrupted by a loud knock at the door.

PATRICIA

Poodles, would you see who's there?

Oliver goes to the door.

OLIVER  
Oh, hi... Welcome, good to see--

PATRICIA  
Who's there?

OLIVER  
Julian.

PATRICIA  
What?! How dare you, you--

In the blink of an eye Patricia's taken Oliver's place and Julian is forced to stick his foot in the door to keep her from slamming it in his face--

JULIAN  
Look, Patricia, I know you don't like me and you know what, I don't blame you at all. But I need to see Natalie.

PATRICIA  
Do you really think I'm going to let you ruin her life again?

JULIAN  
It's important. Please...

PATRICIA  
I knew as soon as you heard the news you were going to show up and ruin everything.

JULIAN  
What news?

PATRICIA  
The wedding. First she dropped school for you, then you broke her heart, and now you want to rob her future. But guess what? This time I won't sit and watch. You better get your dirty little feet off my property before I call the police.

Patricia leaves Julian at the door while she goes to the phone. She gives Oliver, who's still standing uncomfortably by the door, a DON'T JUST STAND THERE look. Oliver goes to close the door, but before he does that he has a few words for Julian under his breath--

OLIVER  
She works at Chase Manhattan, on  
Wilshire.

Julian thanks him with a nod. Oliver jerks his thumb behind--

OLIVER (CONT'D)  
Get out of here before--

PATRICIA  
Yes, I have an assault happening at  
27 Terra Cotta Lane...of course  
Beverly Hills. White male, 24, how  
long till they get here...

Julian's gone. Oliver closes the door and quickly thinks up a  
diversion--

OLIVER  
Sweetheart, the next door boy is  
peeing in the pool again--

PATRICIA  
What, now?

OLIVER  
Yes, now.

Patricia hangs up 911 without a second thought. Becoming  
furious seems to make her grow visibly larger.

PATRICIA  
I'm going to fry him.

INT. LA DOLCE VITA RESTAURANT - DAY

Natalie enters the fancy establishment. Even though she's  
dressed the part, she's uncomfortable in this environment.  
She joins JAMES, a prosperous yuppie-type, at his table. He  
rises, pulls out her chair and pecks her on the cheek.

JAMES  
How's your day?

NATALIE  
Can't wait to get out of these  
clothes.

JAMES  
Why? You look superb, ready to take  
on the world.

NATALIE

I feel like a duck in a Marathon in these.

James laughs, a bit too much.

JAMES

Well, that's silly. Let's get you a new pair then.

NATALIE

These are almost broken in.

WAITER

May I take your order?

JAMES

Yes. The lady will have...

NATALIE

One more minute.

WAITER

As you wish madam.

James nods at the waiter.

JAMES

Give us a minute.

(to Natalie)

Just thought I'd order for you. You know how big decisions kill your appetite.

Natalie grows increasingly uncomfortable.

NATALIE

Why don't we get it to go and have a picnic?

JAMES

Now?

NATALIE

There's a park not too far, or better yet the beach. I know a shortcut that'll get us to the pier in twelve minutes.

JAMES

I'm in my Brioni!

James shoots her an appraising look.

JAMES (CONT'D)  
You don't like this place?

NATALIE  
It's just such a beautiful day, I  
thought if we--

JAMES  
I know a great Italian place that  
has a great al fresco patio. Let me  
talk to Kevin, I'm sure we can get  
in. What do you say?

NATALIE  
Whatever.

JAMES  
What do you want?

NATALIE  
I'm fine here.

JAMES  
Oh good, here comes our waiter, do  
you know what you're getting?

NATALIE  
You order for me.

She stares out the window while James starts ordering.

INT. CHASE OFFICE BUILDING PARKING STRUCTURE - DAY

Natalie yawns as she looks for a parking spot in the crowded lot. There's one. She drops into reverse, throws a quick look in the rear view and starts to back out. She doesn't see the bike rounding the corner on its way up and her bumper clips the back wheel, whack!

NATALIE  
Oh my God--

The BIKE seriously wobbles as the rider struggles to keep from going down. He stops and gets off to inspect. Natalie rushes up.

NATALIE (CONT'D)  
Oh, my God, oh my God, I'm so  
sorry, are you OK?

The rider doesn't respond.

NATALIE (CONT'D)  
 Are you hurt? Do you need an  
 ambulance? Would you like...

He takes off helmet. The recognition shocks them both into a  
 frozen moment--

NATALIE (CONT'D)  
 Oh...My...God...

JULIAN  
 Hi...

NATALIE  
 Hi...

EXT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

NATALIE  
 At this rate, six more months and  
 I'll be home free, no more debts.

JULIAN  
 So, this James, he's really done a  
 lot for you. He's gonna make a good  
 husband huh?

NATALIE  
 He's really great. I'm really  
 happy. I mean, any girl would be  
 happy...

Awkward moment.

NATALIE (CONT'D)  
 It's just... He's too perfect you  
 know? Like everything's gotta be  
 planned out, organized, notified in  
 advance.

JULIAN  
 Do you have to call his secretary  
 if you want to have sex?

NATALIE  
 (ignoring him)  
 I guess that's the key to success,  
 having a plan and sticking to it...  
 I just wish we could forget the  
 plan sometimes and just go, and  
 where we end up we end up. Won't  
 matter if the food sucks or the  
 wine's not the right year or--

JULIAN  
I never drink Chateau Briand '96.  
Too fruity.

He manages to eek a smile out of her.

JULIAN (CONT'D)  
He ever make you laugh?

NATALIE  
He makes me feel secure.

JULIAN  
So you were right all along.

NATALIE  
About what?

JULIAN  
Money's not happiness.

She regards him.

JULIAN (CONT'D)  
And you know what. Even freedom is  
not happiness...

He's saying all the right things. Natalie's getting confused--

NATALIE  
What do you mean?

JULIAN  
I mean it can be empty, it's just  
that...god, how do I say this... No  
matter what I do or how I do it, it  
doesn't seem... My life doesn't  
work without you. Please, come back  
to me?

NATALIE  
I can't, I mean, James is...

JULIAN  
James is a dweeb.

NATALIE  
That dweeb stood by me when I  
needed him. That dweeb loves me.

JULIAN

That dweeb is smart. I wasn't. I chased away the most valuable thing in my life. It was stupid. I was stupid...

Julian catches himself, looks down then up at her again.

JULIAN (CONT'D)

Don't give me an answer now, please just think about it. I'll be at our place tonight. If you don't think we're worth it, then stay home with Mr. Rogers. But if you think we are we deserve a chance...

NATALIE

You're a jerk.

JULIAN

But a much smarter jerk. Please... Just tell me you'll think about it.

INT. NATALIE'S MERCEDES - AFTERNOON

Natalie drives with the bare requisite attention, her mind is focused on the naked ring finger of her left hand. Where is the ring...? She is fighting it, but she has already committed.

EXT. NATALIE AND JULIAN'S APARTMENT COMPLEX - NIGHT

DD's face sharply twists.

DD

Ooooooooo...you mean you talked to her looking like that?

JULIAN

Yeah I'm...

DD

We gots to get you cleaned up.

JULIAN

I showered this morning!

DD

Oh Lord please help me, you needs to go win this girl back. You in a war here boy! You need armor, you need weapons!

JULIAN

Weapons?

DD

You need to show her you're serious. You need...soap and water to begin with, c'mon now.

INT. JAMES' CONDO - NIGHT

Natalie enters and puts down her briefcase. Opera floats through the air. James lies on the couch smoking and seriously emptying a glass of bourbon.

NATALIE

What's wrong?

JAMES

They got me good.

NATALIE

You mean binding arbitration?

JAMES

Just means we'll have to cut down on things a bit.

NATALIE

I can help, I'm getting my bonus soon.

JAMES

Silly girl, all this means is no new Benz, but I think we can still afford Il Anello, next, ah year... maybe...

She begins to rub his shoulders, wearing a very blank face.

NATALIE

Tell me about it...

INT. JULIAN'S APARTMENT - DAY

DD and Lenny are having fun giving Julian and the apartment a make over. Jay is too nervous to fight back.

DD

What about flowers?

JULIAN

I can get flowers.

LENNY

You need something to remind her of the old times. Too bad that cat ran away.

JULIAN

She's gonna hate that.

DD

You need something more like a...a...what do you got around here? Where's that painting?

Julian shrugs.

DD (CONT'D)

CDs? Books? Where's your couch?

JULIAN

Lost it all.

DD

What about the ring?

LENNY

Now we're talking!

JULIAN

Alex has it.

DD

Damn, your no-caring sorry-ass gonna get dumped. Again.

Julian makes another decision--

JULIAN

I'm going to go get it.

DD

No you're not.

JULIAN

(rushing out the door)  
I'll be right back, if anything happens, tell her I went for flowers.

DD

(calling after)  
What about your hair!

EXT. REDLINE AREA 1 - NIGHT

In the parking lot, bikes, import cars and trucks... Julian parts the crowd down the center, right to the heart, where Alex hangs with crew and ladies.

He pulls up, turns off, takes off his helmet, and waits. His eyes meet Phebe's...he looks at her hand and there's the ring. Everybody's chill, just waiting for him to--

JULIAN  
I want that ring back.

ALEX  
What do you have?

JULIAN  
I have my bike...

DROOGIE 1  
Damn yo, did you steal that piece out of a museum of something?

DROOGIE 2  
Yeah, the museum of shit--

Alex's droogies all snicker--

JULIAN  
I can beat you even on this piece of shit.

DROOGIE 1  
(To Alex)  
Waste o' time, yo. Unless you want another piece-o-shit. People laugh.

JULIAN  
At least now you wouldn't have to cheat to win.

Oooohs and Aaaahs from the group.

ALEX  
Again, Junior?

JULIAN  
I just want the ring. Looks bad on her anyway, it's a classy ring.

More Oooohs and Aaahs, Phebe hisses at him--

ALEX

You in no position to be talking smack, punk. I'll give you some fumes to suck on. The ring against your moped.

JULIAN

Let's go.

Phebe hisses at Alex as he takes the ring.

INT. BUCKETHEAD'S IMPORT TRUCK - NIGHT

BUCKETHEAD youngster pushes "end" on his cell phone.

BUCKETHEAD #1

Yo, you won't believe this, Jay is racing Alex again tonight.

BUCKETHEAD #2

For real?! Where at?

BUCKETHEAD #1

Same route as last time. Yo, pull in. We need some forties.

The Import Truck pulls into a nearby convenience store.

EXT. REDLINE GROUNDS 4 - NIGHT

Julian pulls up next to Alex at the line up. Crowd is going crazy at this point. Import cars and other racers are taking off to go to the finish line.

ALEX

You sure you want to do this?  
That's your last ride.

Julian squints and throws Alex a questioning look.

ALEX (CONT'D)

I like you. You got talent. But it's not enough. You ain't got the right gear to play the game. Tell you what, drop your stand and walk away. Save yourself the humiliation.

JULIAN

I want my ring.

Crowd roars as a BIMBO runs over to Alex and Julian. Both of them step out of their panties and the one closest to Alex ties hers onto his arm.

BIMBO

Win for me.

RACERS around Alex and Julian start up with their talk--

REDLINE RACER 1

Alright gentlemen, same route, and same race.

ALEX'S CRONIES

Got you down for five across the board, even odds.

ALEX

Even odds!?

REDLINE RACER 2

Yeah man, that's what everyone's giving out.

Alex throws a look of determination at Julian.

ALEX

Let's do this.

Julian dumps his delivery box and pulls his helmet on.

INT. JAMES' CONDO - NIGHT

Natalie can't stop fidgeting with her hands. Next to her, in his Barca Lounger, James has finally passed out, face red and drooling. Natalie suddenly makes a decision. Quietly she grabs her keys and heads out. Before closing the door behind her, she takes a last, apologetic look at James.

EXT. CONVENIENCE STORE - NIGHT

The two Bucketheads come out of the store carrying beer and cigarettes. BIKES AND IMPORT CARS go shooting past. Knowing where they're going, the Bucketheads jam to their truck, narrowly missing another car entering the lot.

INT. BUCKETHEAD'S IMPORT TRUCK/CAR - NIGHT

Obviously already loaded, the driver stomps the gas and spills beer onto the other moron's lap.

BUCKETHEAD #2

Yo, dude, watch it!

Buckethead #1 laughs, jerks the wheel to spill more.

INT. NATALIE'S MERCEDES - NIGHT

NATALIE still wrestling with herself. She opens the door and starts to get out, then slams the door close again. She reaches for the door lever again, but hesitates...her face tightens. With her right hand, she turns the ignition.

EXT. REDLINE STARTING GROUND - NIGHT

Bimbo's shirt hits the ground as Alex and Julian blast off on either side. Smoke blows hard out the oversized chrome exhaust.

EXT. CITY AND SUBURBIA STREETS - NIGHT

While the previous races have been exciting, this one's terrifying. The two riders are pushing it beyond any sane limits. But while Alex's bike is up to the challenge, Julian's aging Gixxer clearly isn't and only his superior skill saves him from disaster again and again.

INT. NATALIE AND JULIAN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Natalie knocks at the door but there's no answer. She grabs the doorknob and turns. It's open. She walks in to find an impeccable romantic setting. A smile of expectation grows on her face.

NATALIE

Julian?...

No response. She walks into the bedroom. The apartment is empty. When she comes back to the living room, DD's standing by the door with a worried look. Natalie drops her smile.

EXT. NATALIE AND JULIAN'S APARTMENT COMPLEX - NIGHT

Natalie busts out followed by DD and Lenny--

NATALIE

Are you sure?

DD

No, but that's--

Natalie is already inside her car.

LENNY

This is not a good idea.

Natalie screeches away.

EXT. CITY AND SUBURBIA STREETS - NIGHT

The two bikes thrust and parry. It's hard to distinguish who's who until the two blast past us around a bend. Alex's knee is dragging. Julian's knee, pegs, and exhaust are all dragging on the ground, SPARKS FLYING. Julian almost loses control as he tries to catch up with Alex in a corner, but as they straighten out, Alex's massive horsepower shoots him past the aged Gixxer.

INT. BUCKETHEAD'S IMPORT TRUCK/CAR - NIGHT

The two morons are drinking and belching, having themselves a good old time--

                  BUCKETHEAD #1  
                  (hanging up his cell)  
                  Dude, they won't take our bet--

                  BUCKETHEAD #2  
                  They already started.

INT. NATALIE'S MERCEDES - NIGHT

HEADLIGHTS sweeps across Natalie's face, making her squint before moving past.

EXT. CITY AND SUBURBIA - NIGHT

We track alongside Alex and Julian as they race through some light traffic in a dead heat.

INT. BUCKETHEAD'S IMPORT TRUCK - NIGHT

One of them farts, they both crack up.

INT. NATALIE'S MERCEDES - NIGHT

She's lost. She looks left, then right. She turns left.

EXT. CITY AND SUBURBIA - NIGHT

The race is hot. Clutch dumps, gear up and down shifts, knees and bike parts drag...a sphincter-clenching race.

INT. NATALIE'S MERCEDES - NIGHT

She's confused, doesn't know where the hell she is. Left turns, right turns.

## INT. BUCKETHEAD'S IMPORT TRUCK - NIGHT

We're in the back seat, absolutely steady and silent. In the front seat, the two Bucketheads are laughing and sipping their drinks when with no forewarning, the passenger door SMASHES INWARD. Flying glass, shrieking metal, screams-- Buckethead #1 is flung sideways-- In the blink of an eye, we BULLET-TIME right to OUTSIDE. A MOTORCYCLE is sunk up to the belly pan in the side of the truck. An UNIDENTIFIABLE BODY IN LEATHERS is half crushed against the vehicle. A SECOND MOTORCYCLE has slid up under the other and a pair of LEGS IN LEATHERS are protruding from beneath the tangle of bikes. In a frozen moment we absorb the horror. We swing back inside, time freeze is released. In REAL TIME we see GLASS and TORN METAL spray directly at us. We are outside the driver's seat, looking in. It's only a fraction of a horrifying second.

OVER BLACK

We hear the last bits of glass and tinkling metal, then hot engines seizing.

## INT. NATALIE'S MERCEDES - NIGHT

Natalie's face is illuminated by flashing red and blue lights. The sirens are going off. She slowly rolls past the accident. She's about to move on when she recognizes Julian's bike lying mangled in the road. She sees a departing ambulance and immediately pulls out of the line of traffic, whipping a U-turn. Natalie's own driving skills are put to the test as she attempts to catch up to the speeding ambulance. Natalie's car screams into the EMERGENCY ENTRANCE.

## EXT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Natalie whips her car into the first space she sees. Through her rear window she can see the Ambulance Crew hauling the doors open. She's getting out of her car when a SECURITY GUARD runs up--

SECURITY GUARD

This is ER staff only. You gotta park in the visitor's lot.

Natalie throws a look over to the Ambulance; the paramedics are pushing one gurney into the ER and pulling another out of the ambulance. Natalie hops back into her car and drives toward the visitor's lot, but her path is blocked by a huge car inching toward a berth. Natalie checks the rearview; the second gurney is out of the first ambulance and another crew is hauling another victim out of the second ambulance. Natalie seethes with frustration, throws her car into park where it sits and jumps out.

SECURITY GUARD (CONT'D)  
Hey, you can't park there!

Well beyond frustration, Natalie gets back in the car. She drives further down and comes around in a big circle. She ends up near where she had originally attempted to park. Once again the security guard rushes calling out--

SECURITY GUARD (CONT'D)  
Hey! I said move that car!

But she's out and running for the ER.

NATALIE  
YOU MOVE IT!

She runs through the entrance.

INT. HOSPITAL - MOMENTS LATER

We pivot 360 around Natalie. The ER is a clamorous cauldron of noise and chaos. A YOUNG DOCTOR brushes past her pulling off bloody gloves and drape as an ER NURSE hustles alongside briefing him.

NURSE  
...late twenties, motorcycle  
accident, BP 63 over 30 and  
falling, massive head trauma,  
abdomen distended...

Natalie follows them through triage.

DOCTOR  
Where's Dr. Lynn?

NURSE  
We've got multiple accident  
victims. They all came in at the  
same time.

DOCTOR  
Dr. Lynn?!

NURSE  
He's in 4!

They burst through a doorway where paramedics are preparing to transfer a blood-soaked body from gurney to surgical bed. The young doctor rushes over and pushes the gurney out of the way, directly toward Natalie.

SLOW MOTION as gurney flies through privacy drapes, stopping close to Natalie.

Natalie stares at the ER staff intently working on the victim. Then she looks at the objects on the gurney: bloody leathers, pieces of clothing, some flecks of metal and paint. Natalie fixes on the ring peeking out from under a bloody piece of something. She reaches slowly down and picks up the ring- her ring. She looks back at the body. Mouth open, knees buckle, Natalie drops to the floor. All sound around Natalie becomes indistinguishable noise.

EFFECT: THE WORLD SPEEDS AROUND NATALIE IN SUPER HIGH SPEED, NURSES, DOCTORS, ORDERLIES RUSHING IN AND OUT OF EVERYWHERE AS NATALIE IS STUCK IN REAL TIME.

ANOTHER ANGLE: RELEASE EFFECT

Natalie from the ground looks up. She sees Julian looking through the observation glass at Alex. Through the reflection, Julian sees Natalie. He turns, their eyes lock. The next moment he's there next to her. She throws her arms around him. The fierceness of her embrace says it all. Peace spreads over her features.

NATALIE

Promise me you'll never race again.

Julian eyes are fixed on the bloody victim. A long beat.

JULIAN

(sincerely)

Promise.

EXT. PCH - DAY

Julian waits nervously off to the side while all his buddies stunt it up and smack talk amongst themselves. After a moment DD pulls into the parking lot with a BABE in leathers on the back. They dismount and Julian can't help noticing, y'know, serious babe. She takes off her helmet and her hair falls all around her pretty face. It's Natalie. Julian is knocked out. She's dressed to kill and appears to have copped an attitude as well. She walks over to him like it's an ever'day thang--

NATALIE

Who's gonna take me for a ride. A dozen guys all jump forward--

GUYS

Me!/Right here, baby!

EXT. PCH - MOMENTS LATER

Julian and Natalie on his Gixxer. They look good together, and by the way she's got her arms around him, they feel good, too. It's a beautiful day.

THROUGH CHATTERBOX:

JULIAN  
(chuckles loudly)  
Hee hee!

NATALIE  
Oh my GOD!!!

They zoom past us.

EXT. BEACH PARKING STRIP - AFTERNOON

Julian and Natalie dismount. As soon as she sets foot on land, she starts hitting him--

NATALIE  
I said slow!

JULIAN  
That was slow!

NATALIE  
(happy)  
You're a jerk!

He grabs her around the waist and pulls her in--

JULIAN  
And you're a sweetheart.

NATALIE  
A match made in heaven...

She gives him a big fat kiss as they head towards the sand.

JULIAN  
Once upon a time, there was a ring,  
they called it the Racing Ring.

NATALIE  
The racing ring?

JULIAN  
Yea, you see there was this guy,  
this jerk, who had this horrible  
day job...

NATALIE

He was really a horrible person,  
wasn't he?

JULIAN

He was actually a nice guy, just a  
little confused is all--

NATALIE

Uh-huh. This is gonna be a good  
one, I can tell already.

He puts his arm around her and continues the story...

FADE TO BLACK.