



OVER DARKNESS

We hear the ocean.

1 INT. CAMPER VAN - NIGHT

1

In a cramped space, a SLEEPING FIGURE, headphones on. Then dimly, a dull echo. BAM-BAM-BAM. An anxious young ENGINEER bangs on a window: signaling five fingers. The OCEAN SOUNDS stop.

A pair of legs swing from the bed, revealing two MISMATCHED SOCKS and a DRIVER'S JUMPSUIT unzipped to the waist...as a classic rock drumbeat kicks in.

A BAG OF ICE is dumped in a bucket. Seen from behind, the Driver dunks his face. He grabs a PB&J SANDWICH off a stack, does a dozen pull-ups on a ceiling bar. Wearing a rusted MEDALLION, he fastens his racing kit--

--and removes a vintage WATCH to leave behind...beside a DECK OF CARDS and a small framed PHOTO. He shuffles the deck, does a one-handed cut, takes the top CARD to tuck into a pocket, grabs his HELMET and exits--

2 EXT. PIT LANE - DAYTONA INTERNATIONAL SPEEDWAY

2

--into ABSOLUTE CHAOS, as we meet SONNY HAYES (54): rugged, fit, determined. Passing MECHANICS hauling bodywork, ENGINEERS with data tablets, ASSISTANTS bringing news--

He splits more MECHANICS rolling TIRE CARRIERS, and is approached by a PRETTY FAN, MOLLY in a BMW CAP--

MOLLY

Hey Sonny. BMW guys are bitchin' about brake trouble.

She hands back the cap.

SONNY

You're a rock star, Molly. Thanks.

He heads on, throws the cap onto a pile of hats with FIVE RIVAL LOGOS, as he crosses into--

3 INT. PIT TENT

3

--where a MECHANIC TEAM sleeps in chairs. Sonny grabs a cup of coffee, focused on pit lane beyond.

A sweat-stained Team Boss, CHIP HART, (55, Orlando beer gut) sits at a bank of monitors and argues with his STRATEGY DIRECTOR (40)--

4

EXT. PIT LANE - 24 HOURS OF DAYTONA ENDURANCE RACE

4

--as Sonny joins them, revealing the edge of a lit-up RACE TRACK.

Sonny looks out at the track. Reads the situation in an instant. Shakes his head, and sighs -- (mock) gravely.

SONNY

(To himself)

Turn my back for one minute...

CHIP HART

IT'S ALL GONE TO SHIT, SONNY, FOG'S
HIT THE TRACK, PAT HAD TO EASE OFF,
NOW WE'RE DROPPED DOWN TO SEVENTH. IF
YOU CAN HOLD POSITION OVERNIGHT,
HOPING SUNRISE CATCHES US A BREAK...

SUDDENLY -- TWELVE MECHANICS swarm, taking up positions as a PORSCHE GT3R decelerates, stopping RIGHT ON MARKS--

--as Sonny jumps the wall, meeting exhausted PATRICK LONG (45) who climbs out and sheds helmet--

SONNY

How's the gearbox?

PATRICK LONG

Holding up.

Sonny straps on his helmet, kneels next to the car for a moment -- like a ritual. He climbs in, locks his safety harness and BLASTS FROM PIT LANE, accelerating the parallel road as it joins the track--

5

EXT. DAYTONA INTERNATIONAL SPEEDWAY

5

--to immediately join the fray of battle, VEERING through an IMPOSSIBLE GAP between a cluster of RACE CARS. Stuck there mid-pack, the first WIDE TURN is coming--

--and while two cars BRAKE, Sonny holds his speed, as he shoots the gap between them with only a paint job to spare.

RACE BROADCAST (V.O.)

*Sonny Hayes, back in the Porsche for
Peak-Geico Chip Hart Racing! Stint
three, the graveyard shift. We know
Hayes likes to light up the night, but
with traffic stacked up, he's got a
massive job ahead of him...*

IN SONNY'S CAR: OIL from a car ahead SPLATTERS his windscreen as he careens the banked curve, G-forces SHUDDERING.

INTO THE INTERNATIONAL HORSESHOE: Where Sonny's Porsche SLIDES on slick pavement, but he manages to recover just in time to duck past the LEXUS just ahead--

ENTERING THE DOGLEG: Where Sonny SLINGSHOTS past a pair of cars on the outside, SLIDING once more as he barely gets by--

IN PIT LANE: Team reacts to the near-collision on SCREENS:

LEAD ENGINEER (INTO RADIO)
Sonny, maybe pass on the straights?

SONNY (OVER RADIO)
Too far to go. Too little time.

SCREAMING AROUND THE WEST HORSESHOE: Sonny sees two CARS touch, BOUNCE wide apart -- and he ACCELERATES to SPLIT THEM--

LEAD ENGINEER
Sweet Baby Jesus...! We got ten more hours!

Engineer grimaces, watches the Porsche CLIMB a position on the GTD-class Leaderboard, from 3rd up to 2nd...

CHIP HART
Let Sonny do his thing.

ON THE BACK SUPERSTRETCH: Sonny guns it FULL THROTTLE, WHIZZING by lower-competition-class cars right and left.

RACE BROADCAST (V.O.)
Well near as I can tell from that first lap, Sonny may have left his brake pedal at home.

BLASTING THE FRONT STRETCH: Where a BMW M4 GT3 WEAVES to block his pursuit, so Sonny ACCELERATES right onto its rear--

FOR A BUMP-AND-GRIND: His Porsche makes CONTACT, nudging the BMW forward as if they're joined. Sonny FIGHTS to hang on, gently pushing it wider--

--and as it MOVES FURTHER WIDE, Sonny PULLS ALONGSIDE, BODYWORK SCRAPING, wheel to wheel as they pass pit lane.

Chip Hart watches with the third driver, CALE KELSO (22).

CHIP HART
Gawd-dang! Boys, when you two get back in that car--

CALE KELSO

What car? Just hope something's left
for me.

APPROACHING FIRST BANK as FIREWORKS SUDDENLY EXPLODE over the track: Sonny GUNS it, unfazed by the distraction, holding position as the BMW DRIVER fights -- and Sonny turns to stare him down, not even watching the road, just feeling the cars grinding. BMW Driver DIGS IN--

--and now for the first time, Sonny BRAKES -- baiting his opponent into heading TOO FAST into the turn -- forced to overcorrect, SPIN OUT and PINWHEEL into infield grass!

Sonny BLASTS BY camped-out FANS who go crazy, including a trio of shirtless YAHOOOS with their oil drum bonfire, raising triumphant beers and rebel yells as FIREWORKS CLIMAX...

IN SONNY'S CAR: Locked in, still hungry, looking for more.

RACE BROADCAST (V.O.)

*Typical Sonny Hayes making a deal with
the devil -- another lap ticked off!
That's Endurance Racing, folks. You
want to win, every once in awhile you
gotta roll the dice.*

6

EXT. PIT LANE - DAWN

6

First rays glow orange off the steaming asphalt, as the GT3 decelerates in, completely battered. Mechanics swarm...

Sonny staggers out, exhausted from combat.

RACE BROADCAST (V.O.)

*...and in GTD class, Hayes brings it
on to pit lane, after his epic third
shift has put Chip Hart Racing out in
front. A four hour war of attrition,
and I don't think he backed down for
one single turn. Now it's up to Cale
Kelso to hang on to that lead...*

Cale Kelso claps Sonny's shoulder:

CALE KELSO

Thanks for the headstart, old man.

He climbs behind the wheel. Sonny pulls off his helmet, leans down to Cale's level with a smile:

SONNY

Lose that lead, I'll kill you.

CHIP HART

Clear 2, Clear 2, Clear 2!

VROOM! Cale hits the gas, back in the race...we follow Sonny back to the garage. Chip claps him on the back--

-- Sonny signals an ASSISTANT for a water bottle. As he downs the whole thing, the angry BMW DRIVER comes charging down pit lane, chased by his own Mechanics--

RIVAL DRIVER

Gonna run me off the track, Hayes?
Think I don't know where to find you?!

-- Sonny grabs a wrench off a tool cart, spins with it, still hydrating...only to see Mechanics bearhug the other Driver and walk him out of harm's way.

Sonny drops the wrench back in the cart, keeps walking, takes his headphones back from the Assistant:

SONNY

Don't wake me if we lose.

He dons the headphones, hits "Ocean Slumber". As calming WAVES drown out the race track, Sonny disappears down the corridor, back towards his van, and he's gone.

CUT TO:

7 EXT. WINNER'S PODIUM - DAYTONA SPEEDWAY - DAY 7

BANG! Confetti cannons go crazy. Cale Kelso and Patrick Long celebrate with Chip Hart. The entire team dances on the podium, until Chip surveys...

8 INT. DAYTONA GARAGE - DAY 8

O.S. sounds of celebration. Chip rounds back in with a driver's TROPHY, to see Sonny in street clothes, packing up his gear bag.

CHIP HART

Hayes. You forgot something.

Sonny stuffs his helmet in. Zips it.

SONNY

Bag's full, Chip.

CHIP HART

Seriously. Your first win at Daytona!?

SONNY

Doesn't sound like something I'll forget.

Chip holds out the trophy but Sonny demurs.

CHIP HART

Don't you even want to touch it?

SONNY

Bad luck.

CHIP HART

Says who?

Sonny just shrugs.

SONNY

I will take that bonus check, though.

9

EXT. DAYTONA GARAGE - MOMENTS LATER

9

Sonny exits the garage complex, an envelope in his hand, with Chip hustling after:

CHIP HART

I want you on board, Sonny. You're CHR family now. Right here, next year: let's run it back.

SONNY

Deal's a deal, man. We did it.

CHIP HART

That's it? One and done?

SONNY

Thanks for giving me the seat, Chip. Take care.

Sonny heads out, leaving Chip with his consolation prize.

10

INT. LAUNDROMAT - DAY

10

Sonny unfolds a tattered paper US MAP across his table and traces a route to MEXICO. Clipped to the map is an ad for an open driver position in the BAJA 1000. He adds notes with a pen.

RUBEN (O.S.)

Excuse me, can I borrow your phone?

A hangdog bear of a Spaniard appears standing next to him: tailored suit, no tie. This is RUBEN CERVANTES (55).

SONNY

Ah...no.

(then)

You know...you remind me of this friend I used to have.

RUBEN

What friend?

SONNY

Friend that dressed better.

RUBEN

(tugs his suit)

This is a Gucci suit.

SONNY

(tugs his t-shirt)

So's this.

RUBEN

What'd your friend do?

SONNY

Drove cars.

RUBEN

Was he fast?

SONNY

Wasn't slow.

RUBEN

Did he win?

SONNY

Sure did.

RUBEN

C'mere, you sonofabitch...

Ruben gives him a bear hug.

SONNY (O.S.)

How'd you find me?

RUBEN (O.S.)

I was told to look for a shitty van no one would steal.

11 INT. TRUCK STOP LAUNDROMAT - DAY

11

Sonny plays a game of pinball while he and other patrons wait for their laundry. Ruben stands next to him, not enjoying the seedy environs.

SONNY

What are you doing stateside?

RUBEN

Scouting for talent.

SONNY

Bullshit. Any American kid with promise you'd have known about for years.

RUBEN

So you're thinking Baja?

SONNY

New day, new challenge.

RUBEN

That's what I said when I bought Apex GP.

Sonny scores a bonus.

SONNY

How's that working out for ya?

RUBEN

Owning an F1 Team? It's like taking every buck you had and setting it on fire.

SONNY

How deep in the hole are you?

RUBEN

I'll tell you but you have to promise not to laugh?

SONNY

Shoot.

RUBEN

350 million dollars.

SONNY

Been fun?

RUBEN

Absolutely. (Fuck yeah.)

SONNY

So what's the problem?

RUBEN

It's a disaster hermano. Two and a half seasons -- zero points. My best driver left for another team -- said the car was a "shit box". Number two's a rookie, and the season's half over.

SONNY

How many races left?

RUBEN

Nine. If we don't turn it around, I lose the team.

SONNY

What? You own it.

RUBEN

No race wins in our first three seasons, the board can force a sale.

SONNY

Sounds like you need a new board.

RUBEN

I need a new driver.

Sonny stops, looks at Ruben and bursts out laughing (you're outta your mind).

12

INT. TRUCK STOP SHOWER STALL - LATER

12

Sonny showers in a stall. Ruben stands outside, still pitching him:

RUBEN

Louis Chiron was fifty seven when he won the Monaco Grand Prix.

SONNY

Louis Who?

RUBEN

Phillip Entacillian? Fifty six. Arthur Legat? Fifty four. Luigi Fagioli. Fifty three.

SONNY

You just Googled those names didn't you?

RUBEN

Some people look at Sonny Hayes they see a guy lives in a van. A gambling junkie who missed his shot. The best that never was...

SONNY

Wow, Ruben. You're really selling this.

RUBEN

...But I see a guy who makes teams better. I see experience. I see "Know How".

SONNY

Come on, you've got F2, F3...an entire assembly line of teenagers raised in the simulator.

RUBEN

I don't have time for some kid to learn how to come in tenth!

SONNY

You can't just walk off the street and pilot a rocket.

RUBEN

You can if you've done it before. My rookie's a phenomenal talent. But you know what he lacks? Maturity. You plus him. I got a team!

13

INT. TRUCK STOP - DINER

13

Sonny and Ruben finish up their dinner.

SONNY

OK. Let's say I was the next Louis-

RUBEN

Chiron.

SONNY

(him)

The problem is it's not just the driver. It's the car. And I've followed your season, Ruben. "Shit box" is being kind.

RUBEN

I KNEW YOU WERE WATCHING. What if I told you we get an upgrade package this weekend. Six months in development.

SONNY

Ruben...

RUBEN

I just need one of my cars across the finish line first...

SONNY

...I'm not going back.

RUBEN

Look if it's the losing you're afraid of...

SONNY

It's the time Ruben. The time. [ALT: Ruben I had my shot. I've made my peace.]

*
*
*

Ruben puts down an AIRLINE TICKET and an old MAGAZINE on the counter: on the cover, a 24-year-old Sonny, in 90s racing gear. A 26-year-old Ruben, in the same team kit, right beside him. Brothers in arms. Photo caption: "The Rising Stars of F1."

RUBEN

What would he want you to do?

Sonny looks at the photo of himself. Smiling out of the past.

SONNY

Keep the mullet?

RUBEN

Seriously.

SONNY

Seriously...I'd ask him what he's smiling about.

RUBEN

He's smiling at the possibility.

This lands with Sonny.

*

SONNY

And we both know how that ended...

*
*

RUBEN

That's a first class ticket to London.
I have an open seat in Formula One.
(MORE)

RUBEN (CONT'D)

The only place you can say - for one day - you are the absolute best in the world.

Ruben gets up to leave.

SONNY

Ruben. Ever seen a miracle?

RUBEN

Not yet.

SONNY

Neither have I. Great to see you, amigo.

Ruben heads towards the door then turns and points at Sonny.

RUBEN

Louis Chiron!

And with a smile he's out the door.

Sonny looks at the magazine and ticket Ruben gave him.

WAITRESS (O.S.)

Alright sugar, here you go.

A WAITRESS (45) sets down A SLICE OF CHERRY PIE.

She heads off. Sonny digs in, takes a first bite...

SONNY

May I ask you a question?

She comes back over.

SONNY (CONT'D)

If someone came along - an old friend, say - and made you an offer that's one hundred percent, flat-out, too good to be true, what would you do?

WAITRESS

How much are we talking?

SONNY

It's not about money.

WAITRESS

So what's it about?

He sits there.. Slowly, he smiles. A roaring. -GROWING INTO-

15 EXT. SILVERSTONE RACE COMPLEX - AERIAL - DAY 15

SOARING OVER a lush green landscape, picking up a ribbon of asphalt as a black-and-gold F1 RACE CAR WHIPS INTO FRAME...

ZZZAM! ZZZAM! It CORNERS like a demon, suctioned to the track, SPITTING SPARKS as it comes out of a turn. ANGLE ROCKETS alongside as it accelerates a straight--

RACE ENGINEER (OVER RADIO)
Tire temps look good, 85 front 75
rear. You are good to push...

DRIVER (OVER RADIO)
Copy. Going for a lap.

The car GOES FLYING toward a chicane, riding the G-forces one way, then the other, then ERUPTING from the exit--

RACE ENGINEER (RADIO)
Battery pack is full, you're good for
Strat 2...

DRIVER (OVER RADIO)
Copy.

The Driver adjusts dial on steering wheel to Strat 2, the car blasting by a PIT LANE that's empty except for two RACE BAYS--

16 INT. RACE BAY - ENGINEERS STATION 16

QUICK HITS: BANKS OF MONITORS track telemetry, timing data, and ten thousand sensors on the car like it's a NASA project. A DOZEN ENGINEERS with headsets on, each focused on a specific component: Power Unit, Battery, Tires, Brakes, Suspension, Wings, Floor, Airflow, Fuel.

RACE ENGINEER (RADIO)
Purple Sector 1. Your best one yet.

17 EXT. RACE TRACK - SECOND SECTOR 17

ZZAM! ZZAM! The car WHIPS around two turns, SPARKS FLYING. It GUNS it for a long sweeping turn--

DRIVER (RADIO)
Car feels good--

As the car enters Maggots and Becketts, the car's aero setup betrays it, WOBBLING with an OVERSTEER that takes the car toward the barrier. Its driver desperately CORRECTS, which fishtails it the other way. SMOKE spits from locking tires.

DRIVER (RADIO) (CONT'D)
Damn. Big snap at 13. Flat-spot front
left.

IN THE RACE BAY: MONITOR DATA goes RED in a cascade, noting the underperformance. The Technical Director, KATE MCKENNA (40), Irish, removes her headset and sighs:

KATE
Bring him in.

FAZIO
Go to Strat 1, box this lap.

Behind her stands her boss, Team Principal KASPAR SMOLINSKI (50), a pragmatic Polish wet blanket.

KASPAR
It's better though, Ja? Progress?

KATE
Compared to Red Bull...or us?

18 INT. RACE BAY/EXT. PIT LANE - MOMENTS LATER

18

A squadron of MECHANICS dolly the car backwards into a space-age garage, labeled "**APX GP, a Division of Cervantes Capital Group.**" The driver emerges, sheds his helmet, to meet JOSHUA PEARCE (25). Kaspar CLAPS hands--

KASPAR
Now let's just find those gremlins!

As Joshua turns for Engineering, he has to tangle with a cord which a shy mechanic JODIE (25) has attached-- she fixes, backpedals -- but collides with another MECHANIC carrying a TOOL TRAY. Joshua dodges falling wrenches.

JODIE
Whoops, my bad -- sorry Joshua--

JOSHUA
You're killing me Jodie...

DODGE
Don't kill our top driver love.

Jodie wants to dissolve.

Joshua greets Chief Mechanic KARIMU "DODGE" DAUDA (43, Ghanaian) as he heads to Kate's console to study DATA SCREENS, clearly frustrated.

KATE

So...? What's the verdict?

JOSHUA

I don't know what keeps happening.
It's feeling good, I try to push --
but then it understeers in slow
corners and oversteers the fast.

KATE

Consistent, at least.

JOSHUA

And then sometimes it's the opposite.

Kate has to take that on the chin.

KATE

Entries or exits?

JOSHUA

Either. Both.

KATE

("shit")
Tremendous.

JOSHUA

Ten thousand sensors on that dragon,
and you still can't tell me when it's
gonna bite.

KATE

I'm not out there Joshua. I need your
help to.

Joshua exhales in frustration.

KASPAR (O.S.)

Kinder, willkommen! Princessa!

They turn to see Kaspar has brightened: at the sight of an
Austrian blonde ex-model, LIESL (39), entering the garage
with two blonde YOUNG KIDS.

KASPAR (CONT'D)

OK, garage! Ten minute break!

The kids run straight for Joshua's car. Kaspar raises his
DAUGHTER in the air with pride, then places her in the
cockpit like it's a coin-op machine. Joshua and Kate look
guttled:

KATE

A hundred-fifty-million-dollar jungle gym...

JOSHUA

(walking off)

Just let her drive, can't get any worse.

Kaspar leans over Dodge.

KASPAR

We're trying one more time to patch things up. Nein, kinder -- NOT A TOY! Liesl, let's get one of us both...

APEX PUBLICIST, LISBETH BAMPTON (30s) approaches Joshua.

LISBETH

Joshua? For the press conference. We want to steer round tech issues and focus on the super strong bond with your new teammate Luca Cortez.

JOSHUA

Luca, who I've known a week. Who when he was third banana on the left at Red Bull told the press he thought Joshua Pearce was over-rated. That Luca Cortez?

Joshua's Manager and childhood friend, JACOB "CASH" HUDSON (30), pulls Joshua aside.

CASH

Yo you're right. Ruben's in trouble, he might have to sell the team.

*
*

JOSHUA

What does it mean?

CASH

New buyers are gonna clean house, you're basically on notice. [ALT: New buyers will be looking to clean house, so you need to show them you're the #1 driver now.]

This dawns on him. A moment.

JOSHUA

What the hell do I do?

CASHMAN

Let it keep you up at night.

Across the room, the blond girl bounces in the cockpit, while her brother climbs on the front tire. Liesl's doing a private photo shoot:

LIESL

Kinder! Alles sagen tro-PHEEEEE!

As the kids climb all over the car -- Ruben steps into the garage. Spotting the boss, Kaspar shoos his guests out:

KASPAR

OK Princessa, break time over! Bisou-bisou, wiedersehen! Let's take the first thirteen races and erase them from our minds. Someone says, "Kaspar, what happened this season?" I swear, on the lives of my children, I do not focking know. There is only this car. There is only our future.

(gazes out, brow furrows)

Who's that asshole?

All follow...to see SONNY HAYES hop the fence into the pit lane.

He's got his gearbag and helmet. Raises a hand in a casual wave. Mechanics and engineers turn...to see Ruben smiling.

RUBEN

He's with me.

19

EXT. PIT LANE - SILVERSTONE - CONTINUOUS

19

Ruben dashes out to meet Sonny:

SONNY

Guy said back gate. Might've thought I was maintenance...

RUBEN

Hermano, you've never let me down.

SONNY

Well, now I have the chance.

Ruben wraps an arm around, walks him back to his team:

RUBEN

Apex GP, meet Sonny Hayes. He raced with me back in the day.

SONNY

You mean against you.

Ruben brushes over the tension - continues introductions:

RUBEN

Kate McKenna, our Technical Director.
"Dodge" Dauda, our Chief Mechanic. And
Kaspar Smolinski, Team Principal,
perhaps you know by reputation.

KASPAR

Five-time constructor's champion, with
Ferrari.

(everyone waits)

As a rear jack man.

SONNY

Can't win 'em without. My pop was pit
crew.

RUBEN

And our talented rookie-

JOSHUA

Why does he have a helmet?

And there's tension immediately...

SONNY

(beat)

I wear mine on my head, how 'bout you?

RUBEN

Relax Joshua. Your seat is safe.

Looks of surprise...

JOSHUA

When's the last race you won?

SONNY

Daytona. Sunday.

JOSHUA

Oh, I'm sorry I meant Formula One?

SONNY

Oh, I'm sorry I meant fuck you.
(ALT: Oh, I'm sorry -- same as you
then.)

It takes a beat for that to land on Joshua. Then,

JOSHUA

I genuinely never thought I'd say
this.

(MORE)

JOSHUA (CONT'D)
(He turns. And calls-)
WHERE'S LUCA?

Kaspar takes Ruben aside.

KASPAR
Bitte Ruben, sidebar, please. Not
wishing to blitzkrieg with negative
energy but when I interviewed with you
-- MANY veteran drivers--

KATE
Who all turned you down.

SONNY
How many?

KATE
Seven.

JOSHUA
That's a lot.

SONNY
I'm seven?

KATE
You're eight.

JOSHUA
This is a disaster.

Sonny casts Ruben a look.

SONNY
Feel more like a 9.

KASPAR
Technically there's one whom I have
not heard from YET--

SONNY
Wait so I'm 9?

KATE
You know how numbers work right?

RUBEN
I often find, in business, my most
inspired ideas come late.

JOSHUA
Yeah the best things usually arrive
ninth.

KASPAR

With respect...I cannot condone we
spend our only test day giving your
long-lost teammate an "audition"!

RUBEN

Kaspar, you misunderstand. We're not
auditioning him. He's auditioning us.

THUMP. Sonny plants his helmet on the center console and
steps to inspect the black-and-gold prototype. Kate trails:

SONNY

New wings. Side pods. And what I
sincerely hope is chocolate on the
halo. Any other tricks up your sleeve?

KATE

Nothing that the 8 other people
wouldn't have figured out.

SONNY

That's why they call me lucky number
9.

RUBEN

(motions)
Dodge?

Dodge brings out a pre-fabricated seat.

JOSHUA

Bruv, it's been a minute since you've
driven here. The balance on these cars
are tricky. Watch out for Turn One and
Nine. Scary. Wouldn't want you to get
hurt--

Sonny ignores him.

SONNY

Let's set a reasonable target. I want
same setup as him. If I can't post a
lap time within a second of JP's I'll
see myself out and you can take a shot
on lucky number 10.

(to Kate)
10?

KATE

10.

He grabs his helmet and heads to prep. Ruben's beaming.
Kaspar stews beside Joshua and Kate.

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JOSHUA

Who's JP?

20 INT. RACE BAY - GARAGE PREP 20

Jodie and MECHANICS surround the car, making final adjustments, venting exhaust, holding tire blankets in place.

21 INT. RACE BAY - ON COCKPIT 21

Now in full race kit, Sonny ties his shoe revealing ODD SOCKS. Kate notices. Sonny sees Kate looking at his socks. *

Sonny LOWERS into frame. Gets strapped in by Mechanics. His hands grip the high-tech steering wheel...deep breath...and nods-- *

Dodge points at various buttons on a complex steering wheel. Dodge takes Sonny through a map of the track on a screen. *

DODGE
Clutch, Break Bias, Engine Strategy,
Neutral.

SONNY
Got it.

Sonny and Ruben share a look. *

Tire blankets whip off. Cables detach. Car lowers off jacks to touch floor.

Dodge points "go" fingers at Sonny and gives the "all-clear". VROOOOOM! Like a dragon from a cave, Sonny accelerates onto the track...

Joshua joins Dodge, watching the car depart:

DODGE
If he drove with Ruben...he drove with
Schumacher. Senna.

JOSHUA
"...and other drivers I've actually
heard of."

22 EXT. PIT WALL 22

Kate takes her seat at the trackside monitors, alongside Kaspar and two Engineers, the clean-cut, very British HUGH NICKLEBY (30) and tough, brusque Mexican RICO FAZIO (45).

KATE
Pull up Joshua's sector times.

KASPAR

In Poland, we have a saying: "Hope is
the mother of the stupid."

Nickleby pulls up a TRACK MAP split into three sectors: ONE (33.14), TWO (35.08) and THREE (32.12). He impishly sets a 20-pound note on the console.

NICKLEBY

Twenty quid says he stacks it. Anyone?

FAZIO

Make it Fifty.

SONNY (OVER RADIO)

Make it a hundred and you're on.

Nickleby looks down to see his elbow on the "TALK" button.

NICKLEBY

(mortified)

Hugh Nickleby, your race engineer here.

IN SONNY'S CAR: Sonny's focused on finding his brake points, getting a feel for the car on his warm-up laps.

SONNY

Morning, Hugh. How're my tire temps looking?

NICKLEBY (OVER RADIO)

Almost warm. End of the lap, you should be good to push.

IN SONNY'S CAR: Getting comfortable now. He ACCELERATES the back stretch, ZIPS final chicane, rounding for main straight--

ON FINAL EXIT: --where he OVERSTEERS, SLIDES, CORRECTS, SLIDES AGAIN...and ends up SPUN to a halt facing backwards.

IN SONNY'S CAR: He winces. Takes a moment.

SONNY

Hugh?

NICKLEBY

Yes sir.

SONNY

Shoulda taken that bet.

ON TRACK: ...and FAST-PIVOTS the car back in the right direction, instantly ACCELERATING main straight, full throttle, like a THUNDERING STORM--

ON PIT WALL: --and BLASTS under the gantry past the team, as the TIMER starts clocking, digits in THOUSANDTHS flying by--

EXT. TRACK - FIRST SECTOR

TURN ONE: --as Sonny BRAKES as late as he can, WHIPS a sharp opening corner into a tricky CHICANE--

ECU DETAILS: FRONT WING gills vibrate from AERO FORCES buffeting through. A REAR SOFT TIRE takes G's in a CORNER, spitting MARBLES OF RUBBER as it quickly degrades.

IN THE COCKPIT: Sonny strains as he fights the G's, either full on the throttle or brake. There's no coasting. The next turn upon him just as he's clear of the last. And just as it seems he's found an opening groove...

TURN SEVEN: He ZIPS a high-speed sweeping exit, and his front tires LOCK UP. A PUFF OF SMOKE as they drag -- the rear end wobbles -- he corrects and saves it--

ON PIT WALL: --but the Engineers react like it's fatal--

KASPAR

He's dead.

END OF SECTOR STRAIGHT: --as Sonny's car BLASTS BY a MARKER--

ON PIT WALL: the TIMER shows PRC 28.542. Sector 1 HYS 28.735 (+0.2s) on monitor LIGHTS UP RED. He's two-tenths slow.

EXT. TRACK - SECOND SECTOR

IN THE COCKPIT: Sonny grimaces, knowing that cost him. Grips the wheel as the next chicane comes--

ECU DETAILS: METAL FLOOR GUARD spits SPARKS as Sonny cuts a corner, STRIKING BUMPS marking roadway's edge. REAR WING VIBRATES as he cuts the other way.

ON PIT WALL: Ruben's gripped, watching ONBOARD CAMERA POV:

RUBEN

Wait... wait...

IN THE COCKPIT: Sonny focuses on the SHARP TURN ahead, brow perspiring, empty bleachers RIPPING BY in reflection--

SONNY'S POV: --as the CORNER'S upon him, about to collide--

ON PIT WALL: Under his breath...

RUBEN (CONT'D)

Now!

IN THE COCKPIT: --as Sonny BRAKES with full force, his MEDALLION snaps forward...as does his forehead perspiration -- to smack his visor, suddenly blurring his view--

ON MIDDLE CHICANE: --just as he navigates another tricky "S", UNDERSTEERS and runs off-track, SNAP-TURNS to avoid a gravel pit, sending him into another LOCK-UP -- a long one -- as he SLIDES, battles the skid, just barely regains control--

ON PIT WALL: Where Engineers react -- disaster--

KASPAR
Dead and buried.

The timer shows PRC 37.059. Sector 2 HYS 37.448 (+0.4s) on monitor LIGHTS UP RED. Four-tenths too slow.

IN GARAGE: Joshua nudges Dodge, with a small smile.

EXT. TRACK - FINAL SECTOR

ON HIGH-SPEED TURN: Sonny HUGS THE APEX of a full throttle left-hand sweeper, fighting the crush of sideways G's--

ECU DETAILS: REAR WING FLEXES with the massive pressure. Hot air ROARS from the DIFFUSER exhaust. Tire rubber SIZZLES--

ON PIT WALL: Kate leans in, her creation under fire--

KATE
The car's there...

INTO FINAL CHICANE: --as Sonny WHIPSAWS the car left and right through curves, shaving corners for precious hundredths, perfectly suctioned to the track--

IN GARAGE: Watching the lap timer, Joshua's smile fades...

DODGE
He's gaining...

IN THE COCKPIT: Sonny's gaze locks on the final turns--

ON FINAL SLALOM: --as he RIDES a RIGHT-HAND SWEEPER into the FINAL STRAIGHT -- just as he crosses the timing line, Sonny goes wide onto the left curb, bottoms out, then snaps to the right, SMASHING into the barrier at the PIT WALL! Carbon SHRAPNEL flies through the fencing! SHEARING wings and sending tires BOUNCING...

ON PIT WALL: Ruben, Kate, Kaspar, Nickleby and Fazio LEAP UP.

RUBEN
Sonny, check in! You OK?

Sonny groans in pain, *shit that hurt*. He takes a beat before pushing the radio button.

*
*

SONNY

I'm good.

*

23

EXT. CRASH SITE - FIRST CHICANE - MOMENTS LATER

23

Sonny climbs from the wreckage, unsteady but marveling. Mechanics come running as he clutches his back -- but gives a thumbs-up to signal OK...as Ruben and the Pit Wall group arrives.

SONNY

She's got something.

KATE

You mean HAD something.

SONNY

But definitely snappy in the high speed corners and unpredictable in the low. Had trouble with the rears turns 14 and 16.

Joshua and Kate react, he knows what he's talking about.

KASPAR

Yah, and final turn maybe?

SONNY

Exactly.

RUBEN

What was his lap time?

KATE

He passed his entirely self-imposed test by five hundredths of a second.

Sonny looks at her.

SONNY

Huh. (ALT: Well, it's a start.)

He smiles, as if genuinely surprised. He walks off. Impressed, they watch him go. Dodge elbows Joshua, *see, I told you*.

24

EXT. ROAD LEAVING SILVERSTONE - DAY

24

Burna Boy plays as Joshua drifts onto the road in his AMG sports car. Cash rides in the passenger seat.

CASH

We got nine races to catch the eye of another team. Which means hitting the socials, sponsor events, marketing and publicity. You need more engagement, more followers.

This isn't a fundamental concern of Joshua's he has something heavier on his mind.

CASH (CONT'D)

(checking his watch)

You want to go out? It's early?

JOSHUA

(doesn't want to go out)

...Let me drop you, I'm meeting someone.

CASH

(surprised Joshua is meeting someone, into it)

Okay. Take pictures. Post that shit. That's what I'm talking about.

JOSHUA

It's my mum.

CASH

Okay...Don't post that shit.

JOSHUA

(smiling)

Okay.

24A EXT. JOSHUA'S HOME - LATER DUSK

24A

To establish.

25 INT. JOSHUA'S HOME - LATER - DUSK

25

Joshua tucks into the freshly fried plantain like he's never eaten before. His mother, BERNADETTE, wipes the stove with a towel. Josh's phone dings, he checks it to see an F1 NEWS ALERT: "APX GP's Future in Question". He shakes his head, puts down the phone.

*
*
*

BERNADETTE

You okay baby?

JOSHUA

I'm just tired.

He finishes cleaning, they lean against the counter.

BERNADETTE

Bad tyres or...engine?

Joshua laughs.

JOSHUA

Please mum you don't know about the cars.

BERNADETTE

I know a little bit about cars, I know a lot bit about you. Go.

JOSHUA

I might lose my seat. If the team doesn't win a race--any race--

He's destroyed. Quiet.

BERNADETTE

There's other teams.

JOSHUA

There's twenty seats, all filled. Plus there's a new guy. He's old.

BERNADETTE

How old?

JOSHUA

Like really old, like 80.

They smile at each other.

JOSHUA (CONT'D)

This guy is an asshole. He's quick, though.

BERNADETTE

Focus on you. You're gonna have a long life of worrying about other people. Your time is right now.

(then)

You still love it?

JOSHUA

I still love it.

BERNADETTE

Remember what your father used to say...Then put your head down and drive.

*
*

JOSHUA

Yes, m'am.

26 EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - DAY

26

AERIAL finds a vintage MERCEDES GALANDERWAGEN speeding down a winding road, quite a bit faster than it probably should...

...as Sonny slams the truck to a STOP at a rural intersection, blocked by a DOZEN COWS. An old FARMER tries to coax them down the narrow road.

A bell's RING-RING turns him...as a CYCLIST comes cruising on a road bike at a speedy clip. Windbreaker, backpack. As she gets closer, Sonny realizes it's Kate.

She gives a nod, slows only slightly as she weaves around the cows and rides off in the distance. Sonny remains.

SONNY

You're kidding me.

27 EXT. APEX RACING - PARKING LOT - DAY

27

Sonny finally pulls in...beside Kate locking up her bike.

SONNY

So your job is to build the fastest car on the planet?

KATE

My job is wind. It helps to feel it.

28 INT. APEX FACTORY - DAY - BEGIN MONTAGE

28

DOORS SLIDE OPEN on a gleaming FACTORY FLOOR, where a hundred EMPLOYEES are busy working on car fabrication...

WILL BUXTON (V.O.)

*More mysterious moves at Apex GP,
which has finally named the driver who
will fill its second seat...*

Entering with Ruben, Kaspar and Kate, Sonny shakes hands with Lisbeth.

LISBETH

Lisbeth Bampton, Public Relations.

SONNY

Nice to meet you, Elizabeth.

Sonny moves on.

LISBETH

Lisbeth...it's Lisbeth, actually.

28A INT. PHOTO STUDIOS VARIOUS

28A

Sonny's in a promotional photo shoot in his APX GP race suit. He is slightly bemused by the process, Lisbeth and the photographer give instructions but Sonny refuses when asked to do any of the F1 driver "poses".

29 INT. RACE SUPPORT ROOM - APEX HQ - DAY

29

Sixteen DATA ANALYSTS stand at tiered workstations, in a room of high-tech screens. Sonny greets RACE STRATEGIST, PIPPA LEGUIN (24), a friendly face with glasses and bangs.

WILL BUXTON (V.O.)

...and quite incredibly it's American Sonny Hayes, who last raced F1 in the 1990's, until a disastrous crash in the Spanish Grand Prix ended his Formula One career at its very start.

30

INT./EXT. SPORTS TV PACKAGE - CONTINUE MONTAGE

30

IN DOCU-FOOTAGE SHOTS: Young Sonny in a 90's Lotus F1 uniform with Ruben, shots of them on the track, then recent footage of Sonny on vastly-different circuits across the globe...

WILL BUXTON (V.O.)

From Reno, Nevada, the son of an IndyCar mechanic, he was considered a reckless young phenomenon: "the greatest that never was" whose tactics courted controversy, both on track and off. After his horrifying F1 accident he disappeared for a decade, then suddenly resurfaced -- in championships as varied as Super Trucks and Swamp Buggy, and even a brief stint as a New York City taxi driver. Thanks to his former teammate and Apex GP owner Ruben Cervantes, he'll now return to F1 as the oldest driver since 1975, to the only team in the sport to never score a top ten race result and therefore has never scored a point...

31

INT. APEX FACTORY HQ - LOBBY - DAY

31

A BANNER displays a brand-new PROMO IMAGE of Sonny and Joshua in Apex gear next to a full size Apex car.

WILL BUXTON (V.O.)

...which won't do much to dispel the rumors that without one race win, Cervantes will be forced to sell the team at season's end. Which would likely end the F1 career of rookie Joshua Pearce as well...Desperate times, they say, call for desperate measures...but have we ever seen a hire more desperate than this?

*
*

Joshua arrives with Bernadette and Cash. They all stop to take in Sonny's promo image now dueling his. Bernadette can't help but marvel at Sonny -- he sure knows how to hang his Apex jumpsuit.

BERNADETTE

That's the other driver? [ALT: That's
Sonny?]

JOSHUA

Pfff!

BERNADETTE

He could sell me motor oil. [ALTS: But
wait, you said he was old. He's not
that old. / He's not that old. /
He could sell me a happy meal. /
He sure knows how to wear a jumpsuit.]

JOSHUA

Okay--

CASH

You want a next shot anywhere...nine
races means nine times you gotta beat
Chuck Norris. Now, let's start by
winning over the press.

Cash's words land hard on Joshua. He steels himself for
what's to come.

BERNADETTE

That's a handsome man.

JOSHUA

You've mentioned that, mum.

32

INT. APEX RACING MEDIA ROOM - CONTINUE MONTAGE

32

REPORTERS are gathered for an intro PRESS CONFERENCE. Sonny
and Joshua sit at a table of microphones.

WILL BUXTON

Joshua, it's been a messy start to the
season -- no wins, car troubles and
now, a another new teammate. What do
you make of it?

JOSHUA

A messy start doesn't mean you can't
finish neat. Apex has a fya crew of
engineers so I'm confident that we'll
come back fighting.

(glancing at Sonny)

And in terms of new teammates, I think
it's really wonderful that Apex is
giving second chances to the elderly.

Sonny laughs, the crowd is charmed, and Cash is loving it in the wings. An energetic Englishman, DON CAVENDISH (65) addresses Sonny.

DON CAVENDISH

Mr Hayes...Don Cavendish. Welcome back to the UK. The last time you raced at Silverstone, the Internet had just gone live, Bill Clinton was your President, and we were all dancing the Macarena. It must be surreal to be back.

SONNY

Yup.

DON CAVENDISH

During that decade you gave up racing, and gambled professionally.

SONNY

Yup.

DON CAVENDISH

Then declared personal bankruptcy.

SONNY

Yup.

DON CAVENDISH

Had a marriage annulled and two more end in divorce.

SONNY

Yup.

DON CAVENDISH

Anything you wish you'd done differently?

SONNY

Nope. (ALT: Nothing I can think of.)

Much amusement. At back of the audience, Kate, Ruben and Kaspar trade looks. Sonny turns to exit. Lisbeth hustles up to him.

LISBETH

Sonny! This way for the meet and greet with the sponsors--

SONNY

Okay then, I'm gonna go this way.

Sonny exits, leaves by herself -- pulling her hair out in frustration.

33 INT. APEX GYM/APEX FACTORY - SERIES OF SHOTS 33

Sonny and Joshua are put through the paces of a BRUTAL THREE-WEEK TRAINING REGIMEN. But they take different approaches:

In the gym, Joshua does a VO2 Max Test, running on a high tech treadmill with an oxygen mask, as blood is drawn.

Outside, Sonny, wearing his HEADPHONES, runs the road that rings the factory.

Joshua faces an onslaught of SPONSOR EVENTS, PHOTOSHOOTS, FASHION SHOWS etc. Selfies with fans, etc.

Joshua battles a wall-mounted FLASH REFLEX TRAINER, slapping illuminated discs...while Sonny hangs upside-down, bouncing TENNIS BALLS off a wall to himself.

Joshua battles a state-of-the-art SIMULATOR, facing a giant CYCLORAMA SCREEN...while Sonny sits in a nighttime office, munching popcorn, watching RECENT F1 RACES, taking notes...

33A INT. SONNY'S ROOM - NIGHT 33A

Sonny stares at the digital clock. 2:33am. He's wide awake. Quick cuts of Sonny doing his F1 workout, studying his race prep materials, and flipping cards -- his personal meditation.

*
*
*
*

33B INT. JOSHUA'S ROOM - NIGHT 33B

He's wide awake too.

34 EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAWN 34

Silence. Morning mist hugs the green English landscape...as over a rise comes a COLUMN OF FANS, trudging with rucksacks, dressed in colors of Red Bull, Ferrari, Mercedes...

...RACE SUPPORT TRUCKS approach, RUMBLING the road beside them. A TRAVELING CONVOY arriving on Grand Prix Load-In Day.

35 EXT. SILVERSTONE RACE TRACK 35

The SUPPORT TRUCKS enter Track Complex, passing a sign: "RAF SILVERSTONE, Birthplace of the Formula 1 World Championship."

36 EXT. BACK STRAIGHT GRANDSTAND 36

The TRUCKS arrive at the paddock, as various MECHANIC TEAMS disembark and begin the long day's load-in...

...while a lone figure sits atop the grandstand, in sweats, shorts and sneakers. Sonny reverently takes in the scene.

37 EXT. BACK STRAIGHT 37

Sonny laces up his SNEAKERS. He puts hand to pavement. Rubs marbled rubber between fingers. Then begins a morning run.

38 EXT. SILVERSTONE Paddock - MORNING - LATER 38

Midway through load-in, EQUIPMENT CRATES moving to and fro. Joshua arrives in street clothes with Bernadette and Cash.

39 INT. APEX GARAGE/EXT. PIT WALL 39

They enter to greet Dodge and Mechanics -- just as Sonny runs past down pit lane, drenched in sweat.

JOSHUA

What time was he here?

DODGE

Before me.

(Joshua walks off.

Quietly, to himself)

..And you...

40 EXT. SILVERSTONE RACE TRACK - DAY 40

ZAM-ZAM-ZAM! F1 RACE CARS fly past in a DEAFENING BARRAGE. FANS fill stands. GRAPHIC: **BRITISH GRAND PRIX - SILVERSTONE.**

TELECAST (V.O.)

Welcome to Silverstone -- the circuit where F1 began, to kick off the final nine races of this thrilling Championship season...here at the 77th British Grand Prix!

41 INT. APEX RACE BAY - DAY 41

ON VIDEO SCREEN: three CARS stop at Parc Fermé posts labeled P1, P2, P3. Three legacy team DRIVERS emerge and wave...

TELECAST (V.O.)

As always eleven teams will take the grid, fielding two drivers each, with race order determined by the Qualifying times set yesterday. Red Bull will start on pole, followed by the two McLarens and two Ferraris. And an interesting tale...

ANGLE BACK FROM TV, to find Dodge, Jodie and Mechanics working on Sonny's car...while Sonny SITS INSIDE IT, in street clothes, practicing "finger drop" paddle starts, HEADPHONES on, GLOVES on.

TELECAST (V.O.)

*...at the very back, starting P22,
where Expensify Apex GP has enlisted a
driver who, in his youth, was known as
the greatest risk taker of them all.*

42

OMITTED

42

*

*

43 INT. DRIVER'S PREP ROOM - DAY - PRE-RACE MONTAGE 43

MUSIC RISES. Sonny takes the VINTAGE WATCH off his wrist, sets it beside the (unseen) photo frame. He pulls off his shirt, revealing a long-faded SURGICAL SCAR down his back...

QUICK CUTS: Two MISMATCHED SOCKS. The Apex JUMPSUIT snapped in place over his medallion. The top PLAYING CARD taken off the deck and tucked into a pocket.

RUBEN (O.S.)
How you feeling?

Sonny turns to find Ruben in a business suit and smile.

SONNY
Totally fine.

RUBEN
Totally?

SONNY
Totally.

RUBEN
Good, my business isn't riding on this.

SONNY
No pressure.

RUBEN
None.

SONNY
Great.

RUBEN
Great.

44 INT. JOSHUA'S PREP ROOM. 44

Joshua sits facing a mirror, going through a lap in his head. Cash plays an F1 racing game, Bernadette sits on a couch.

BERNADETTE
Ok. Here he comes. Apologize.

We take notice of Sonny, still a distance away, but drawing nearer.

JOSHUA
Can't do that. Yeah. No.

BERNADETTE
Why not?

JOSHUA
Sign of weakness.

BERNADETTE
Sign of strength.

JOSHUA
Sign of weakness.

BERNADETTE
Do it.

JOSHUA
I can't.

BERNADETTE
You can. You will.

Sonny's right there now, heading past.

JOSHUA
...Hey, man...I'm um...that wasn't cool...when I said that stuff at the press conference...

Bernadette elbows Joshua - meaning "actually apologize".

JOSHUA (CONT'D)
...yeah, I'm sorry, man.

SONNY
It's all good. You just revealed that you're worried about me and lacking some confidence. So...
(introducing himself to Bernadette)
Sonny.

BERNADETTE
Bernadette Pearce.

SONNY
See you out there.

Sonny's a ways off now.

JOSHUA
(frustrated)
See, Mum.

45 EXT. STARTING GRID - AT GANTRY

45

ANGLE TRACKS the row of DRIVERS, all standing for "God Save the King." At the end of the line, Joshua and Sonny stand side by side. Steely-eyed and focused, Joshua faces straight ahead...as JETS SOAR OVERHEAD, trailing red white and blue smoke...Ruben walks and talks with LAWRENCE STROLL. [ALT: Ruben and Banning walk and talk with LAWRENCE STROLL.]

45A EXT. PIT WALL - DAY

45A

Kate, Kaspar, Nickleby and Fazio take command post seats. Kaspar looks up high to the Paddock Club, waving to his kids and Liesl (who barely notices). Then he unpeels a raw ONION and takes a bite. His colleagues are appalled:

KATE
What's with the onion?

KASPAR
Virility.

45B EXT. STARTING GRID - AT BACK

45B

Don Cavendish scuttles by.

DON CAVENDISH
Lads. I can't imagine the feeling.
Half a million fans and...no sign of
any black-and-gold.

He chortles past. Joshua surveys the stands. The bastard's right.

46 EXT. BACK OF STARTING GRID - MOMENTS LATER

46

The Apex cars are side by side (P21 and P22). GRID-PASS VIPS are departing as Sonny heads over to find Ruben with PETER BANNING (38), an Oxford VC type.

Sonny reads the situation before Ruben has time to expand.

SONNY
Don't make me talk to the money.

RUBEN
It's two minutes. Just smile and shake
hands. He's harmless.

SONNY

Ruben-

RUBEN

Sonny, this is Peter Banning, one of my investors. He knows absolutely nothing about racing but he's my eyes and ears on the Board.

Sonny duly shakes hands. Part of the gig he doesn't miss.

BANNING

Great to meet you. So you're Ruben's Hail Mary. That's an American football term, right?

SONNY

I think it's a religious term, originally.

BANNING

Well, I'm praying to them all. I'm the one guy on the Board who wants to keep the team, the rest of them call it "Ruben's Inferno".

RUBEN

An I-N-F-I-E-R-N-O, *el infierno de Ruben*...very funny, an absolute exaggeration.

BANNING

I gotta say man, I'm hooked. I've never known so much about tyres. I binged "Drive to Survive".

SONNY

Love to talk shop sometime.

Sonny moves away.

BANNING

Great. Hey, we're counting on you. Good luck.

Ruben mouths "*thank you*" as he leads Banning away. Sonny puts on his helmet and kneels next to the car, closing his eyes for a moment. Jodie notices from her position next to the right front tire.

Joshua puts on his balaclava, glancing at the remaining celebs and media being cleared off the grid, when a WOMAN (20s) catches his eye. Stylishly dressed, intelligent eyes, she corrals a group of executives towards the exit. For one moment, she looks his way, smiles, and then she's gone. Joshua's eyes focus back ahead.

47

EXT. STARTING GRID

47

Sonny sits in his car, taking it all in. He shakes his head.

*

SONNY

*

(to himself)

*

What the hell are you doing Sonny?

*

You're out of your mind.

*

A CLOCK advances to "12:00," triggering FIVE GREEN LIGHTS...

TELECAST (V.O.)

*And we're ready to race at
Silverstone, as the field sets out on
the Formation Lap -- one tour around
the track for them to warm their
tires...*

ON TRACK: The twenty two cars begin their lap, pulling away like a daisy chain...except for Sonny, whose car hasn't budged.

TELEPARTNER (V.O.)

*Uh-oh, and there's a problem for Apex -
- P22. That's Hayes, his car hasn't
moved.*

IN SONNY'S CAR: No panic. He adjusts settings on his wheel.

SONNY (INTO RADIO)

Hang on, got power trouble...

ON PIT WALL: Kate, Kaspar, Nickleby -- incredulous.

NICKLEBY

Strat 1, Sonny. Start mode enabled.

INT. APEX HOSPITALITY SUITE - SAME

A luxury paddock home base for the team. VIP GUESTS watch TV:
CLOSE-UP on Sonny, PUTTERING off in jerky fits and starts.

TELECAST (V.O.)

*Yes, a lesson for everyone at home:
new car, do read the manual.*

Banning winces. Ruben's heart sinks.

RUBEN

Dios mio.

ON TRACK: Just as Sonny SPUTTERS off the starting grid heading towards Turn One, the jerking finally stops. The crowd mockingly ROARS to see the final car in motion...

ON PIT WALL: Kate pinches a migraine. Kaspar shrugs.

KASPAR

Biggest cheer all year.

ON TRACK: Sonny sets off WARMING HIS TIRES in a slow slalom, working the full width of the track...though he now trails the field by half the circuit...

TELECAST (V.O.)

Big trouble for Apex GP. If he falls too far behind on the Formation Lap, he'll be at risk of a penalty before the race even starts. That's because he'll be forcing every other car to wait...

IN JOSHUA'S CAR: He SLOW-SLALOMS his #9, checking mirrors.

JOSHUA (INTO RADIO)

Where's Sonny? He's holding us up.

FAZIO

Checking.

IN SONNY'S CAR: He prowls, herky-jerky, all fits and starts.

SONNY (INTO RADIO)

Gear's sticking...is everything okay?

ON PIT WALL: Kate and Nickleby scan data, confused.

KASPAR

What's wrong with his car?!

Kate studies her monitors.

KATE

Nothing!

TELEPARTNER (V.O.)

Yes, when you're left idling on the grid, your brakes start to overheat and your tires start cooling down giving you less grip for the start. So if you're the leaders, this is literally the last thing you want.

KATE

Cheeky shit. It's on purpose.

ON STARTING GRID: The field returns to re-take their START MARKS, P1 to P21...all waiting interminably...

TELECAST (V.O.)

That's a massive delay, a record I'm sure. He might take a penalty and may well not care, because he alone is on warm ready tires right in time for--

ON GANTRY: Red lights GO DARK, from five to one...

TELECAST (V.O.)
...LIGHTS OUT AND AWAY WE GO!

48

EXT. BRITISH GRAND PRIX - RACE ONE

48

Cars BLAZE zero to 180 in an instant -- with several leaders' wheels smoking as COLD TIRES lose grip. The MIDFIELD CARS BOB and WEAVE, looking for a safe path through the chaos--

--while Sonny TRIGGER-SHIFTS fast through his perfect-working gears, gunning FULL THROTTLE for a far outside line. As Joshua's tires struggle, Sonny zips the long way around--

JOSHUA
Bastard--! (ALT: Asshole)

The Midfield DIVES LOW toward Turn One as a cautious pack, while Sonny BARELY SQUEEZES PAST two cars--

--which leaves him well-positioned for Turn Two, DIVING LOW to pass two more, and another two on a quick STRAIGHT--

--at Turn Three, two cars WHEEL-TO-WHEEL separate, opening up a gap for Sonny to brazenly SHOOT -- and with the field fanning out after four turns, Sonny finds himself FLYING AT 180 in the thick of the action!

IN RACE BAY: Dodge leads Mechanics in fist pump cheers!

ON PIT WALL: Kaspar turns to Kate, like he just woke up:

KASPAR
Hoping for P15? He's already there.

IN APEX SUITE: VIPS CHEER in surprise. Delighted, Banning hands Ruben a glass of champagne.

BANNING
Did Sonny just pull a fast one?

RUBEN
He stole it, it's an old trick.
Belgium '93.

BANNING
Who was the driver?

RUBEN
Me.

TELECAST (V.O.)

Norris leads Verstappen, Piastri and LeClerc...but it's Hayes with the big leap, in a manner that won't make him many friends.

IN JOSHUA'S CAR: Now in P22 -- last -- he BRAKES for two SKIDDING CARS ahead, forced to retreat from harm's way.

FAZIO (ON RADIO)

Joshua, patience, wait on your tires.

JOSHUA

Yeah, skating on ice thanks to him.

IN SONNY'S CAR: He BATTLES for control, RIDING a chicane on the P13 car's wing, picking up VIOLENT VIBRATIONS...

SONNY (INTO RADIO)

Getting bounced around in this dirty air. I can't position to attack.

NICKLEBY (OVER RADIO)

Sonny, gap is point-nine to Sainz. DRS range: you can take him next straight.

ON TRACK: A tone sounds in Sonny's ear and he hits the DRS button on his wheel. His rear wing FLARES OPEN, giving him a boost of acceleration as he SLINGSHOTS past the Perez's P13 Red Bull--

IN APEX RACE BAY: Mechanics applaud with each overtake.

TELECAST (V.O.)

...Hayes holding at P13, as he duels the Red Bull! When's the last time we saw Apex GP up in the midfield?

IN SONNY'S CAR: Sonny's battling, grim, sotto:

SONNY

Won't be able to hold him off for long.

ON TRACK: Chased by the Ferrari now, Sonny BARRELS into next turn, but can't get separation...which allows the Red Bull to return the favor next straight: DRS open and passing Sonny.

TELEPARTNER (V.O.)

Oh, too much pace from the Red Bull. Perez just wins the place right back.

IN SONNY'S POV: Sonny CHASES through the next chicane, picking up more VIBRATIONS in the car. They're bone-rattling.

SONNY (INTO RADIO)
Can't chase through turns. Keep losing
the rears. Tell me if you see a fix.

ON PIT WALL: Kate slams console, seeing Sonny's pace drop.

KATE
He's overdriving. Tell him pull back
the entry to get a better exit. He
thinks it's the setup. It's not!

NICKLEBY
We suggest pull back on the entry.

TIME CUT TO LAP 20: Joshua is in last place, chasing the P21
car ahead to no avail...

JOSHUA (INTO RADIO)
Guys! Get me off these tires! I'm
going backwards!

FAZIO (OVER RADIO)
Copy. Lap twenty. Box, box.

IN PIT LANE: Joshua DECELERATES in. Mechanic Jodie braces:

JODIE
(a mantra, to herself)
Target, engage, gun off, release.
Target engage, gun on, clear--

Mechanics expertly swarm. Two JACK MEN lift the car, Jodie
and fellow WHEEL GUNNERS loosen nuts, but Jodie's
malfunctions.

JODIE (CONT'D)
Ahh-- I'm jammed! BACKUP!

She drops the gun and grabs her backup to finish the job.
JACK MEN drop, Dodge signals "release" -- clocked at "7.06
seconds" until Joshua's right tire RUNS OVER Jodie's dropped
WHEEL GUN on exit--

JOSHUA (OVER RADIO)
The hell was that?

FAZIO
Everything looks good. Focus Josh.

Dodge glares. Jodie winces.

ON TRACK: Sonny WHIPS a chicane but an Alpine PASSES him...

SONNY (INTO RADIO)
No grip, lost the rears.

NICKLEBY (OVER RADIO)
Go to Plan B. Box, box.

Sonny rounds onto main straight and DIVERTS for pit lane...

TELECAST (V.O.)
*Only 20 laps down and both Apex GP
cars struggling. Not sure starting on
Softs was the right strategy...*

IN PIT LANE: Sonny DECELERATES in. Mechanics ready to swarm--

JODIE
Target, catch, spin, release--

--and they do! But the FRONT JACK fails! She can't get the
wheel off. Her two tire men wait--

Pit Timer scrolls past 3 seconds, 4, 5. Kaspar instinctively
BARKS at them in Polish.

TELECAST (V.O.)
*Oh no, a disastrous stop for Hayes
leaves his exhilarating start wasted!*

Poor Jodie locks eyes with Sonny -- ZZZT! ZZZT!-- tires
finally get switched -- and crew gets it done. Car drops,
Sonny ZIPS AWAY. Pit clock hits "9.22". Kaspar ROARS. Jodie
puts head in hands.

ON TRACK: Sonny ACCELERATES from pit lane, merging back onto
the track with Joshua just behind and GAINING fast--

TELECAST (V.O.)
*Poor Apex GP, at the back of the pack
again...*

IN JOSHUA'S CAR: He FIGHTS G-FORCES into the first chicane.
The DRS tone sounds in his ear.

JOSHUA
I'm coming for you old man.

ON TRACK: REAR WING FLARES OPEN on his #9 as he activates
DRS, chasing down Sonny...who VEERS SLIGHTLY WIDE, impeding
Joshua's path, surprising him into a lift -- REAR WING FLARES
SHUT. At next corner, Sonny's still leading--

JOSHUA (OVER RADIO) (CONT'D)
I've got the pace. Let me pass.

ON PIT WALL: Kate and Engineers look to Kaspar:

FAZIO (INTO RADIO)
Copy. Hold position, stand by.

KATE
(to Kaspar)
Joshua's faster. Sonny's on cold
tires.

Kaspar agrees, nods.

NICKLEBY (INTO RADIO)
Sonny, no fighting. Let him through.

IN SONNY'S CAR: Flying at 180, Sonny merely checks mirrors.

ON PIT WALL: The Engineers react. Kaspar commandeers RADIO:

KASPAR
Sonny: no fighting!

SONNY (OVER RADIO)
I'm not fighting. I'm racing.

ON TRACK: Sonny ROCKETS a corner, HOLDING Joshua off...

IN JOSHUA'S CAR: Joshua locks in, grips wheel, defiant:

FAZIO (OVER RADIO)
Joshua, you'll have to fight for
position. You are racing Sonny. Go get
him.

JOSHUA
A-ffirm.

ON TRACK: Sonny slashes out of a corner, SPARKS flying.
Joshua tries to pass wide, but Sonny keeps him at bay -- till
Joshua FLARES REAR WING, riding DRS up alongside--

--leaving them WHEEL-TO-WHEEL as they round a high-speed
turn, causing a back grandstand FAN SECTION to ROAR!

TELECAST (V.O.)
*Apex and Apex, wheel to wheel! The
crowd's loving this brawl for last
place as teammates go head to head!*

They dart a chicane -- only millimeters separating their cars--
- Joshua trying to pass Sonny on the outside --

-- but the tires make contact -- sending both cars SPINNING
into a wide GRAVEL RUN-OFF, SHOWERS OF PEBBLES sent high!

TELECAST (V.O.)
*Contact! Catastrophe! Hayes and Pearce
 take each other out!*

ON PIT WALL: Engineers despair. Kaspar rips off his headset.

TELEPARTNER (V.O.)
*The cardinal sin of racing, a double
 DNF. Just when it couldn't get worse
 for the black-and-gold...*

IN GARAGE: Mechanics react, groan in dismay, heads drop.

DODGE
 (to Jodie)
 There goes our bonus.

OUTSIDE APEX SUITE: Ruben bursts out onto the balcony to see the two Apex cars sitting in a cloud of dust trackside.

BANNING
 That's a tough one man.

Ruben mumbles in Spanish before he turns back to the track, staring grimly at the debacle before him.

IN THE GRAVEL: Sonny sits in his beached #7. He rubs his neck.

SONNY
 Ow.

Grounded nearby, Joshua clambers out in fury, helmet on. He eyeballs Sonny. And storms back to --

49 INT. APEX RACE BAY - DAY - MINUTES LATER

49

BAM! Joshua's helmet upends a tool tray as he chucks it, storming in from pit lane. The race goes on without them.

Kate, Kaspar, Nickleby and Fazio cross from pit lane. Sonny ambles in too.

JOSHUA
 So we can't corner. We're bouncing and sliding like we're on the Tube, and we think it's cool to leave wheel guns in the pit box?

Jodie wishes she could disappear.

JODIE
 That was me.

JOSHUA

Of course.

(to SONNY)

Now it seems our radios don't work.
Losing your hearing? What the hell
happened bro? Bit muttun are we?

Sonny looks at everybody.

SONNY

You want to discuss this here?

JOSHUA

Yes. I want to discuss this *now*. In
front of the team. That you're
apparently part of.

Sonny looks at Joshua.

SONNY

OK. You made a mistake.

Joshua balks.

JOSHUA

A mistake?! I LOVE THIS GUY!

SONNY

It's OK. It happens.

(a glance to Jodie)

All good, Jodie. First one's a gift.
Second's the crime.

JOSHUA

Yo you listening to me??

SONNY

Not really.

Joshua charges Sonny, who doesn't back down. Kasper steps in
between putting hands on both.

*
*

KASPAR

Joshua is right. An order is an order.
May I remind you that you report to
ME!

SONNY

Cool.

Sonny turns and makes for the paddock corridor. Everyone
looks at each other. Not Joshua. He goes after him.

50 INT. CORRIDOR TO PADDOCK - CONTINUOUS

50

--to get him alone.

JOSHUA

Hold up!

Joshua grabs him by the shoulder.

JOSHUA (CONT'D)

You swan into our garage like some entitled prick--

SONNY

I swan?

JOSHUA

Calling us piss poor and then you drive like that--

SONNY

What's "swan"?

JOSHUA

Huh?

SONNY

You said "I swan". What does that mean?

JOSHUA

You're an asshole, you come in like an asshole. You "swan".

SONNY

Are swans assholes?

JOSHUA

YOU are making the mistake of thinking that I'm just some grateful kid who'll bend the knee to an old-timer. I climbed a mountain to get here, bra. Formula One. I won't let you blow it.

SONNY

We call that a participation trophy.

SUDDENLY-- From corridor's end, out in the paddock, flashbulbs.. Photographers filming them.

Sonny turns to Joshua. An unspoken battle flashes between them. Joshua's seething anger vs Sonny's amused indifference.

But then, Joshua eases into a smile and claps a glad hand on Sonny's back. The camera's flash. Sonny turns his back to the press.

SONNY (CONT'D)

You haven't won anything. So what are you smiling about? There's ten teams out there -- twenty drivers still racing. Think they respect us? No respect until there's fear. What they all need to learn is no one gets past us without a fight.

Sonny walks off.

Alone, Joshua waves to the cameras. Sonny's words swirling in his mind.

51 INT. APEX STORAGE ROOM - DAY

51

A BAG OF ICE gets dumped in a giant plastic waste bin as a hose line fills it from a faucet. Sonny grimaces from the pain, BACK SCAR prominent, headphones on...

*
*

Looking beat to shit, he lowers himself into the makeshift ICY PLUNGE POOL...until Jodie BACKS in, carrying tire blankets --

JODIE

Sorry, didn't see you!

SONNY

That's alright.

JODIE

Thanks for what you said in there.

SONNY

Sure.

JODIE

Don't do it again, okay? It makes me look like I need help.

SONNY

Got it.

And JODIE slams her fists down on a table in frustration. SONNY doesn't look up...

SONNY (CONT'D)

Still beating yourself up?

JODIE

Yeah.

SONNY

Don't know if it's helpful...but when I've made a mistake, I try to visualize the situation going the way I wanted it to. Then I just let it go. Maybe the next time...it goes my way. Make sense?

Jodie thinks about it.

JODIE

Yeah...

She leaves. Sonny puts on his headphones and closes his eyes to OCEAN SOUNDS soaking his pain.

RUBEN

"I'm sorry Ruben. For demolishing - not one..."

Ruben enters through the doorway.

RUBEN (CONT'D)

- but both of your lovely cars. For coming back into your life only to destroy it."

SONNY

Should I scooch over?

RUBEN

Is this your revenge for Monaco?

SONNY

First of all, that was my line into the chicane. Plus it was thirty years ago. Now I know you've had a lot of therapy. It's time to let go.

RUBEN

You think I brought you in to make my other driver quit?

SONNY

JP's a good kid, but he's cocky, he's arrogant and he's got a lot to learn.

RUBEN

You were cocky, you were arrogant, you had a lot to learn. Can you coach him up?

SONNY

I'm here to race Ruben.

RUBEN

No you're not. You're here to give me a heart attack. The board's up my ass with a tree stump. I have to decide whether to continue this fiasco or pull the plug now.

SONNY

[I didn't come all the way here to embarrass myself.] We've got til the end of the season.

RUBEN

..BY WHICH TIME APEX WILL BE WORTH LESS THAN MY FUCKING SHOES!!!

SONNY

So what's the story with Kate?

180 hairpin.. But Ruben's ready..

RUBEN

Let's stick to one car crash per day, shall we?

SONNY

The car. I want to talk to her about her car. She's the first female Tech Director of an F1 team? Must take balls.

RUBEN

Is that your line? Because she'll see right through it.

SONNY

Not a line.

RUBEN

Sorry.

SONNY

Is she married?

RUBEN

Okay. Do me a favor. Stay right there, in that tub of ice, til Budapest. That's a team order.

He turns to leave.

SONNY

Ruben.

RUBEN

Yes.

SONNY

We can't get there in this car.

Ruben exits. Sonny sinks in, eyes shut, shivering, recovering. OCEAN SOUNDS grow to a ROAR...

52 INT. WIND TUNNEL - APEX FACTORY - DAY

52

...of AERO FURY. A half-size RACE CAR MODEL is lowered onto a conveyor, WHEELS spinning, while a robotic PROBE takes measurements around it.

53 INT. WIND TUNNEL CONTROL ROOM

53

Kate and two AERO ENGINEERS track airflow and drag. A KNOCK on the door. Sonny surveys the expensive tech.

SONNY

Hi. Are you busy?

She looks at him. Seriously?!

SONNY (CONT'D)

Sorry. I meant.. what are you doing..?

KATE

Working out a new front wing. Trying to pick you up a tenth or so.

SONNY

Nice.

(He watches.)

And you can replicate turns -- with the lateral airflow?

KATE

No. Just straight-line drag, but we can calculate from there.

SONNY

Got it.

(He watches.)

How 'bout dirty air turbulence from the cars we're chasing?

KATE

(bristling)

Well, no. Not exactly -- with this--

SONNY

And track conditions: surface quality, weather, ambient temps?

KATE
(Patience fraying)
I'm sorry. Is there something you
wanted to discuss?

SONNY
Kate, you read my mind.

KATE
Is it urgent?

54 INT. PUB - DAY

54

Two pints hit the bar. Kate sits with Sonny.

SONNY
So how do you get to be the world's
first female Tech Director of an F1
team? Must take b-
(Stops)
- lots of hard work, and dedication.

She looks at him.

KATE
That's your urgent question.

SONNY
What? No-

KATE
Plenty of people think I don't belong
here. I'm happy to add you to the
list. If you're implying what I think-

SONNY
I wasn't implying anything. See.. As a
rule, I don't imply stuff. I tried it
once or twice. Didn't work.

KATE
So you like straight talk?

SONNY
Straight as an arrow. No sugar.

KATE
Good. Everyone thinks Ruben's lost it.
He's clutching at straws.
(Sonny stops)
They're saying maybe he lost a bet.
Ran over your dog.
(MORE)

KATE (CONT'D)

You were both in a plane crash on a desert island and there was no food and you let him eat your leg. They're saying Sonny Hayes isn't a Has Been. He's a Never Was.

Sonny nods slowly.

SONNY

So when I said I like straight talk I meant me.

He waves his finger from her to him.

SONNY (CONT'D)

From others.. I mostly prefer praise, flattery, hero worship, and - at a push - straight up bullshit.

KATE

Is that what Ruben's for?

SONNY

Ruben? Love the guy. The most solid, steadfast-

KATE

He said you asked if I was married.

SONNY

-Disloyal, mean, twisted, bitter husk of a man.

KATE

He also told me about the string of ex-wives. Girlfriends. He said to avoid you "like the plague".

ON SONNY -- Completely snookered. He smiles.

SONNY

Let me explain something, Kate. When you're going 200MPH into Eau Rouge, it's good to know who's got your back. Also, in all my years of racing I have never - ever - hit on the team technical director.

KATE

Well that's a huge weight off my mind.
(Then)
So what's this urgent question?

SONNY

Good. So.

(He leans in.)

Red Bull, Aston, Mercedes, they've got us beat on straight-line speed. Our shot is battling in the turns. But we still can't overtake there. [The car picks up vibrations from the turbulence, loses downforce on the rear in the low speed and just shakes me up.] I need a way to chase through the dirty air.

KATE

You want me to re-design so you can follow closer?

SONNY

We need to build our car for combat.

KATE

How am I supposed to make that safe?

SONNY

Who said anything about safe?

KATE

That's your question.

SONNY

Yeah. And like I said, it's urgent.

She nods.

KATE

You know, I bet when you look in the mirror you see a rough-and-tumble, old-school, devil-may care, stick-it-to-The-Man, no bullshit Cowboy. Doesn't take orders. Goes his own way. A Lone Wolf. Well I have news for you. Formula One is a Team Sport. It always was. Perhaps that's why you failed at it.

(She holds his gaze..)

The only question here is "why did Sonny Hayes come back to F1?". And that question.. is extremely fucking urgent.

(She gets up.)

I'll start listening to you when you finish a race.

She walks off. Sonny sits there. *For the first time, he looks like he just lost..*

54A INT. SONNY'S ROOM - NIGHT/EXT. RUBEN'S BALCONY - NIGHT 54A *

Sonny sits on the floor, flinging playing cards into a bowl, deep in thought.

Sonny pulls up a video on his ipad/phone. It's race footage where Joshua does an astounding move. Sonny looks impressed. *

Sonny reaches for his phone, dials. *

SONNY

Ok...tell me about the kid. *

RUBEN

What do you want to know? He did it the hard way, like you. Built his own karts, hauled them all over Europe, trying to get a junior team to give him a chance. He lost his dad along the way; he felt cheated. And he managed to turn that into fire. He's fearless raw potential, Sonny, but it's him against the world. It's his gift and his curse and I can't break through that. Now tell me why you're asking. To help this team... or just to find your edge against him? *

55 OMITTED 55

55A EXT. JOSHUA'S HOME - NIGHT 55A

To establish.

56 INT. LIVING ROOM 56

Joshua sits in the darkness, watching a YouTube VIDEO. Grainy footage from the 1990 Spanish Grand Prix, a yellow Lotus chases the iconic red and white McLaren of Ayrton Senna...

VINTAGE BROADCAST (V.O.)

...absolutely relentless, this attack: from P15, Sonny Hayes now up to second in the Lotus. What a gamble to stay out on those tires, hunting down Senna for the lead!

BROADCAST PARTNER (V.O.)

He's getting very greedy: the rookie chasing the champion -- he wants his first win, Hayes won't back down--

On screen, the two cars battle it out, neck and neck--

VINTAGE BROADCAST (V.O.)
*He can't attack into 6...but he does!
 And he overtakes Senna! Rookie Sonny
 Hayes, just fearless, leading the
 Spanish Grand Prix!*

Suddenly, the Lotus kicks out and snaps, CAREENING into a wall and SPLITS IN TWO, tossing Sonny onto the tarmac, still attached to his seat.

VINTAGE BROADCAST (V.O.)
*Oh no, a massive crash! That is
 horrible, that is absolutely awful!*

His body settles in the middle of the track like a mangled puppet.

BROADCAST PARTNER (V.O.)
*Red flags! Race understandably
 suspended. A crash the likes of which
 I've not witnessed...*

Joshua SHUTS his laptop. CLOSE ON his troubled gaze...

42 (MOVED) INT. MEETING ROOM - PADDOCK HQ - DAY

42 (MOVED)

*

Twenty Apex ENGINEERS at the PRE-RACE BRIEFING, linked by headsets, studying laptops. Joshua studies a laptop too.

*

*

KATE
 Our models predict all teams are going to be targeting a one-stop race. Plan A is to switch from Mediums to Hards between Lap 27 and 33. Plan B will be Medium-Hard-Medium. First window 16 to 21. Second 45 to 51. Plan C for softs doesn't make sense. At this temp, the tire deg will be too high.
 (surveys room)
 Anything else?

*

*

*

*

*

*

*

*

*

*

*

JOSHUA
 Yep.

*

*

KATE
 Yeah, Joshua?

*

*

JOSHUA
 So we've just gotta drive our race, right? Let's not try to be heroes, let's make it through those first turns clean.

*

*

*

*

*

(MORE)

JOSHUA (CONT'D)

Can't win at lap one, starting at the back, so. We've just got to hope for some lucky breaks later on, right?

FAZIO

Yeah.

JOSHUA

Yeah!

SONNY

Create your own breaks.

JOSHUA

Umm, hello. Hi. I just said that.

SONNY

Hope is not a strategy.

KATE

Anything else, Professor?

SONNY

Drive fast.

56AA INT. SONNY'S PREP ROOM - DAY

56AA

VERSION 1:

Sonny pulls up his suit, An ACHE in his back, he stretches, breathes through it. He grabs a BOTTLE of WATER, starts drinking. Joshua storms in. Sonny keeps drinking--

JOSHUA

I don't like having a new teammate out of nowhere. Especially one that flamed out twenty years ago. This isn't Daytona. This isn't Rally. And this sure as shit ain't Nascar. This world isn't what it was thirty years ago, Sonny.

Sonny finishes the bottle of water.

SONNY

Can you hold this for a second?

He passes it to Joshua, Joshua holds it. Sonny pats him on the shoulder.

SONNY (CONT'D)

Thanks.

Sonny exits. Joshua stands for a moment alone, holds the water bottle for second before he throws it a garbage can.

VERSION 2:

INT. SONNY'S PREP ROOM - DAY

Sonny pulls up his suit. A painful ACHE in his back -- he stretches, breathes through it. Joshua's seen from the door:

JOSHUA
Spanish Grand Prix. Turn 11. You
must think about it all the time.

Sonny shrugs, grabs a bottle of water to hydrate.

JOSHUA (CONT'D)
They say once you hit the wall--

Sonny hands him bottle.

SONNY
Hold this for a second.

JOSHUA
--you're never as fast again.
Is that what it's been like for
you?

Joshua looks at the bottle, confused. Sonny walks by him.

SONNY
Thanks.

Left alone, Joshua chucks the bottle in the trash.

56A INT. GARAGE HUNGARORING - BUDAPEST, HUNGARY

56A

Sonny goes through his pre-race routing, kneeling next to his car before climbing in. Joshua watches from his side of the garage, the horrific image from Sonny's accident still fresh in his mind.

57

EXT. HUNGARORING - BUDAPEST, HUNGARY - RACE TWO

57

FIVE RED LIGHTS GO OUT. A MERCEDES car BLASTS off pole, fighting for the Turn One horseshoe with RED BULL and FERRARI. GRAPHIC: **HUNGARIAN GRAND PRIX - HUNGARORING.**

TELECAST (V.O.)

*...and it's lights out in Hungary!
Hamilton battling Verstappen and
Norris off the line, followed by
Piastrri, Zhou, LeClerc...*

IN THE MIDFIELD: Sonny and Joshua are in the thick of it (P16 and 17). An Alpine squeezes both Apex cars to the wall, giving Sonny nowhere to go, the second Alpine just ahead.

TELECAST (V.O.)

*And in the midfield, Gasly shuts
the door, leaving Apex cars nowhere
to go...*

IN SONNY'S CAR: Sonny and Joshua trade desperate looks.

TELECAST (V.O.)

*...as the pack bunches up and --
look out!*

ON TRACK: On Turn 1 the two Alpines make contact, debris scatters across the track. Sonny picks up a PUNCTURE in his right rear tire, irrevocably damaged as Joshua SPEEDS past!

SONNY (INTO RADIO)

Hit debris. How bad's it look?

ON PIT WALL: Nickleby spots it.

NICKLEBY

You've got a puncture right rear. Box.
Box.

KASPAR

First goddamn turn. A ruined race.

IN SONNY'S CAR: He slams his wheel, as two more CARS pass--

SONNY (INTO RADIO)

Coming in. Let's go Plan C.

ON PIT WALL: Kate, Kaspar and Nickleby look concerned...

KATE

Plan C is for soft tyres. They won't
last ten laps in this heat.

KASPAR

Not his call. Tell him "A." As in asshole.

NICKLEBY (INTO RADIO)

Negative, Sonny. Plan A. Plan A.

IN SONNY'S CAR: Sonny seethes, passed by yet another CAR--

SONNY (INTO RADIO)

Plan A is called Plan A 'cause it's when shit is going right. You see anything going right? Me either.

IN PIT LANE: Sonny's #7 DIVERTS into pit lane. Dodge looks to pit wall unclear what the plan is as Jodie and the rest of the pit crew race into position--

TELECAST (V.O.)

Another setback for Hayes, taking substantial damage. However his teammate Joshua Pearce moves up to P14.

IN SONNY'S CAR: Sonny scowls to see them swarm with (hard) tires rimmed with WHITE STRIPES--

SONNY (INTO RADIO)

Not the Hards! Go C! PLAN C!

And this time it's PERFECT PRECISION: JACKS raised, WHEELGUNS whirl -- even Jodie nails it!

JACKS drop -- RELEASE LIGHT -- Dodge gives Sonny the GO! Except Sonny's car doesn't move. Jodie gasps. Behind his helmet, Sonny stares down Engineers. Kate scans data:

KASPAR

What is wrong with the CAR?!

KATE

The guy sitting in it.

The Pit Timer is FLYING: 7 seconds, 8, 9. Kaspar spins:

KASPAR

ARE YOU INSANE? We need hard tires! Everybody we're racing is on a one-stop race!

SONNY (INTO RADIO)

We do what everyone does, we lose.

KASPAR
MAKE HIM GO!

KATE
How?

IN APEX SUITE: Ruben and Banning watch the TV with dismay:

TELECAST (V.O.)
*Some kind of standoff in the Apex
pits, between Hayes and Smolinski. I
can't recall ever witnessing anything
like this. And while they debate,
Hayes remains in last place...*

IN PIT LANE: Pit Timer hits 00:15. Kaspar's a raving madman.

KASPAR
IS THIS WHAT YOU WANT, TO MAKE ME
CRAZY? YOU THINK I DON'T KNOW MY
TIRES? I WAS A MECHANIC! FIVE
CHAMPIONSHIP TITLES! WITH MY BARE
FOCKING HANDS! WHAT POINT ARE YOU
TRYING TO MAKE?!

Sonny just sits there, staring forward. Kaspar's spent, drops
his head.

KASPAR (CONT'D)
Give him his tires.

Dodge signals the crew: they JACK UP the car, WHEEL GUNS
whirl, white-stripe tires come off, red-stripe tires go on.

SONNY (INTO RADIO)
Be ready.

ON PIT WALL:

NICKLEBY
(to Kate)
Ready for what?

IN PIT LANE: Sonny ROCKETS off. Pit Timer mercifully stops at
00:22. Jodie sighs, pressure off, to a colleague:

JODIE
Damn. That was one of my (our)best.

LAP 3: SONNY P20 now - Sonny comes out mid-pack, a lap down
and a few seconds behind Magnussen in the Haas.

ON TRACK: Sonny chases down Magnussen in the Haas - hard
racing over the next few laps.

TELECAST (V.O.)

*...those Soft tires won't last long
in this heat but he will be able to
attack...*

TIME CUT: LAP 10: ON TRACK:

Sonny is right on Magnussen's tail. He CHARGES to chase the Haas. As they slow for a corner, Sonny makes a LATE LUNGE but the Haas shuts the door on him -- shearing off his front wing! Shrapnel SKITTERS into the road.

MARTIN BRUNDLE (V.O.)

*Hayes with a late lunge! And there
goes his front wing!*

DAVID CROFT (V.O.)

*Nothing going right for him today.
Any driver knows Magnussen will
shut the door on a clumsy move like
that.*

MARTIN BRUNDLE (V.O.)

*Reckless, maybe. Impatient, yes.
Thirty years later...and he has not
changed.*

AT PIT WALL: Kate looks anxiously to Nickleby:

KATE

Plan C for chaos.

KASPAR

I can think of another word. Rhymes
with sock.

KATE

We get it!

AHEAD OF THE LEADERS: A SAFETY CAR pulls out from pit lane, forcing the leaders to reduce speed for a couple laps...

DAVID CROFT (V.O.)

*That'll bring out a safety car...which
always shakes up a race. Slows down
the leaders, leaves the field bunched
together, and gives teams the chance
for a quick pit stop, which only costs
half the usual time...*

IN PIT LANE: The LEAD CARS -- Mercedes, Red Bull, Ferrari -- all divert for fresh tires, while MIDFIELD cars don't.

JOSHUA (OVER RADIO)
We're boxing, right?

FAZIO
The safety car window is open.
[Shouldn't we take advantage while
we have it?]

KATE
It's early. We gain track position
if we stay out.

FAZIO (INTO RADIO)
Stay out. We want you out, Joshua.

IN JOSHUA'S CAR: He stays out, right in the thick of things.

TELECAST (V.O.)
*So while the leaders pit, the
midfield moves up for the
moment...including Joshua Pearce to
P12...*

IN PIT LANE: Sonny brings his WING-LESS CAR back in.

KASPAR
Oh, look who's back.

Dodge and Mechanics swarm. They ATTACH new FRONT WING and
SWITCH OUT a new set of SOFT TIRES.

SONNY
Where's JP sitting?

NICKLEBY (OVER RADIO)
P12.

ON PIT WALL: As he blasts away, Kate's gobsmacked:

SONNY
Plan C. Be ready!

KATE
He's gonna do it again.

Kaspar blinks in disbelief. Down pit lane, GUNTHER STEINER
leans way back in his seat. Kaspar meets his stern gaze with
a helpless shrug.

ON TRACK: Sonny exits pit lane.

TIME CUT: ON TRACK: Safety car ends. We see it come back in.

Sonny is mid pack but one lap down. He's in front of an Alfa Romeo, creating a BLUE FLAG.

TELECAST (V.O.)

*Backmarker Hayes is now down a lap.
He has to let the Alfa Romeo pass
or face a 5 second penalty...*

But Sonny briefly defends into a chicane, making it hard.

He braces for the Alfa's pass, but in an awkward spot on Turn 6/7. CONTACT! Sonny splinters his new front wing.

DAVID CROFT

*Hayes makes it very difficult for
the Alfa Romeo! And that's his
front wing again! That'll bring out
another Safety Car!*

ON PIT WALL: Kaspar chucks his half-eaten ONION into the garage. Mechanics duck. Then drops his head on the console.

MARTIN BRUNDLE (V.O.)

*With each wing costing two hundred
thousand pounds his team may ask
Sonny to start chipping in...*

IN APEX SUITE: Ruben laments. Banning's on his third beer:

RUBEN

Joder! Now we are on fire. Literally.

BANNING

*El Infierno de Ruben. Hey, I'll
just throw it out there -- maybe
you should drive?*

IN JOSHUA'S CAR: He sees a second SAFETY CAR come out...

JOSHUA

Fazio! What am I doing here, mate?

Engineers are uncharacteristically frozen...

FAZIO

*(to Kate, off-radio)
He has to stop at least once...*

Kate's locked on the screen.

FAZIO (CONT'D)

*(on-radio)
We are checking...*

Kate makes a call on instinct.

KATE
Keep him out.

FAZIO
Stay out. Stay out.

EXT. PIT LANE - MOMENTS LATER

VROOM! Sonny's car hits DEAD STOP. JACKED UP, GUNS WHIRL, NEW TIRES, FRONT WING re-replaced. Dodge sighs.

DODGE
I know, I know. "Be ready."

Sonny nods, exits pits. Zooms onto track behind a Williams.

NICKLEBY
What's he doing?

It dawns on Kate.

KATE
(off-radio)
[I think] he's trying to score us a point.

IN JOSHUA'S CAR: Other cars box ahead of him but he stays out. He's frustrated but racing hard...

TELECAST (V.O.)
More drivers come in to take fresh tires, but still Joshua Pearce remains on track and cycles up to P10 putting APX GP in the points for now...

PADDOCK CLUB: Cheers for Joshua's move!

FAZIO (OVER RADIO)
Joshua, stay out. Try to make these tires last.

JOSHUA
(sotto)
"Last." No shit. I will be.

EXT. TRACK - TIME DISSOLVE FROM LAP 17 TO 66

Camera pans from Joshua's chewed up tires to his face, struggling to hold his position on track.

TELECAST (V.O.)

*Four laps left in this stop-and-go
scrum, where the driver helped most
has been Pearce, still in P10.
However, by rule, he still has to
stop once. So all that could save
his race now -- oh, I'm afraid to
say it --*

JOSHUA (INTO RADIO)

Fazio, bring me in! My tires are
gone! What are you waiting for?

ON PIT WALL: They watch screens, rapt, sensing it...

FAZIO

We gotta call it. He's losing over
a second a lap.

KATE

Standby...

IN SONNY'S CAR: He races main straight chasing Sargent. He
looks up to the monitor to see Joshua in P10 followed by
Stroll's Aston Martin 13 seconds behind. He's preparing...

ON PIT WALL: Kaspar's gone beyond morose. He's lost it. He
sits giving AN IMAGINARY INTERVIEW to his own reflection in
the screen. [like Herbert Lom in the Pink Panther..]

KASPAR

Being an F1 Team Principal, yes, it's
the best job in the world. You have
total control over every detail.

ON TRACK: Side by side, Sonny makes his move. Sargent defends
into Turn 2. Sonny goes to the inside at Turn 2 and then the
outside of Turn 3.

KASPAR (CONT'D)

You plan everything down to the
last piece, and then some asshole
comes along-

FAZIO

What are we waiting for?

Sonny hangs on around the outside but goes off track BLOWING
THROUGH the polystyrene markers and through the grass strip.
More debris on the track.

KATE

Plan C.

ANOTHER YELLOW FLAG. ANOTHER SAFETY CAR.

KASPAR

But it's OK 'cause it's a pretty
laid back sport. Not much
pressure...

TELECAST (V.O.)

*And that's the third Safety Car
involving Hayes, still in last place,
bringing the Hungarian Grand Prix to
an absolute crawl.*

IN JOSHUA'S CAR: Joshua alerts, diving toward the inside--

FAZIO (OVER RADIO)

Box, Joshua, box-box-box!

ON PIT WALL: Kate leaps up.

KATE

A sub three second stop and he'll keep
P10!

Kaspar stops his "interview". Turns to Kate...

KASPAR

What did you say?

IN PIT LANE: Dodge, Jodie and the crew are poised for battle--

IN PIT LANE: As the Mechanics brace for action, Jodie closes
her eyes, imagining the perfect pit stop. Dodge catches a
glance before her eyes snap open, her wheel gun at the ready--

as Joshua DECELERATES in -- and they swarm -- JACKS, WHEEL
GUNS, TIRES -- TIRES, WHEEL GUNS, JACKS -- and gone...in 2.9.

ON MERGE LANE TO TRACK: Joshua ACCELERATES back onto track,
with Stroll's ASTON CHARGING -- to merge paths at the same
instant -- Joshua uses his fresh tires to accelerate getting
just barely ahead...

TELECAST (V.O.)

*With yellow flags out, all cars are
forced to hold track position...
meaning thanks to Sonny Hayes, this
race will end under a safety car...*

IN PADDOCK CLUB: VIPs erupt in astonished CHEERS, seeing
"Pearce - P10 - 1 point" blinking on the FINAL LEADERBOARD.

Elated, Banning grips Ruben who shakes his head in disbelief.

RUBEN

That one, he did not learn from me.

TELEPARTNER (V.O.)

*...and in very controversial fashion,
Apex GP earns its first point ever!*

58

INT. PARC FERME - DAY

58

Joshua's #9 car DECELERATES in

to a "P10" post, as the crowd cheers. The real celebration is far up ahead, but for Apex, this is gigantic...

Sonny's battered #7 car pulls to the back of the grid. The mechanics rush to cool the car. Sonny motions for help and the mechanics help pull him out, battered from the race.

Joshua marvels, just shakes his head:

JOSHUA
You're straight up crazy, Bruh!

SONNY
It's just a point - what are you
smiling about?

Weary, Sonny turns and heads over to Kate--

SONNY (CONT'D)
A deal's a deal. Right? I finished.

KATE
In last place.

He smiles.

SONNY
Sounds great when you say it like
that.

He turns and walks away. She watches him leave. Nickleby
saunters over. He was eavesdropping.

NICKLEBY
Aye aye.. What was all that about?

KATE
Nothing.

She slowly tunes in from Sonny, to Nickleby, standing next to
her.

KATE (CONT'D)
I said if he finished a race, I'd bang
him.

She walks off, leaving Nickleby dumbstruck.

58A OMITTEDMOVED TO 65A IN MONZA 58A

59 EXT. MEDIA PEN - HUNGARY Paddock - DUSK 59

BRIGHT LIGHTS. FLASHBULBS. SHOUTED QUESTIONS. Microphones in
Sonny's face. He blinks. Overwhelmed? It's been awhile.
LIZBETH stands by his side, at the ready.

F1 REPORTER

Three safety cars in one race! I know you've got to see the stewards later. What do you think they'll have to say about your race today?

Fernando Alonzo gives a Sonny a nudge and a smile as he walks by.

SONNY

As always, you guys have got this absolutely right. I'm just rusty.

DON CAVENDISH

A rope-a-dope at Silverstone. A demolition derby in Hungary. You have been banned from casinos. Are you trying to get banned from F1? Take the whole team down with you?

SONNY

What say we make a bet, Don? Your ten pounds. Against my ten grand. We place at Monza, I win your ten. If we don't. You win mine.

Huge reaction.. Over The laughter..

SONNY (CONT'D)

C'mon Don. Put your money where your mouth is.

Huge cheers. Applause.

DON CAVENDISH

WHAT THE HELL? I'LL TAKE IT!

60

INT. RUBEN'S OFFICE - APEX HQ - DAY

60

Sonny walks into a meeting between Ruben and Banning.

SONNY

No more press.

RUBEN

Hermano, you don't want to make the media your enemy. You'll be fined.

SONNY

Take it out of my paycheck.

RUBEN

We don't pay you enough.

Sonny exits.

BANNING

I have to say I kinda love it, it's
very punk rock for the brand.

[ALT ENDING: Sonny grabs a chair and sits down --
something's on his mind.]

SONNY

Ok...tell me about the kid.]

60A

INT. LONDON MUSIC CLUB

60A

Joshua's downtown dancing, celebrating the race. He sees a
TRIO OF CLUB GIRLS talking about him, as if they're working
out who'll first approach...

...but suddenly a DRUNK BRO's in his face.

BRO FAN

Hey, Apex GP! Great race yesterday!

JOSHUA

Thanks--

BRO FAN

Hilarious you [guys] got your first
point off your teammate's total
incompetence.

JOSHUA

Actually, I--

BRO FAN

What a joke.

The drunk guy moves on. Joshua sees the Trio of Girls have
turned their backs, chatting with other guys now. Cash
arrives, hands a drink, checking alerts on his PHONE...

JOSHUA

My fans be talking?

CASH

(nods, grim)
All 'bout him.

Off Joshua's look...

61 INT. SIMULATOR COMPLEX - NIGHT

61

POV slaloms a Monza chicane on screen...as Sonny pivots in the Sim. He's locked in, pushing it, furious. One level above, Joshua reaches the window, watching...

SONNY (OVER SPEAKER)
Let's run it again.

JOSHUA
How long's he been in there?

PIPPA
All day. Playing with different tire pressures, ride heights.

JOSHUA
How are his times?

PIPPA
He found a half a second.

Joshua takes that in.

JOSHUA
Give me the same setup as him.

62 EXT. APEX FACTORY - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

62

Late. Sonny exits, headed home...till he notes Kate's BIKE. Looks to her office above him. LIGHTS still on.

63 INT. CFD LABORATORY - NIGHT

63

CFD SCREENS track AIRFLOW PATTERNS over a virtual Apex car trailing a second MODEL. Like their Apex car is "chasing."

Kate sips tea, studies a new "rippled" floor edge below the side-pod intakes.

SONNY (O.S.)
Must be late. I'm seeing double.

Kate doesn't look up from her work..

KATE
A deal's a deal. We're building the car for combat. You'll be entering the Tarzan Corner at 322 kilometers per hour. Faster than Mercedes, Ferrari and Red Bull.

Sonny watches the air-flow patterns...

SONNY

Is it too late to change my mind?

Still Kate doesn't look up.

KATE

To answer your question: I was in aerospace at Lockheed, Ruben came in, liked my work, attitude, and sold me on the thrill of fighting to the death for a tenth of a second. Traveling the world to the roar of a crowd. So I ran the idea past my husband. Who swiftly became my ex husband.

(now looks at him)

Goodnight.

She walks out. On Sonny --- his mind processing. 0-100MPH in 3 seconds.

64 EXT. OLD MONZA BANKED TRACK

64

Sonny runs in workout sweats and sneaker; the abandoned banked track now overgrown with weeds. Camera reveals a small group of MECHANICS trail behind him.

SONNY

One more lap. Let's go.

JODIE

Just one? C'mon now. Is that all?

DODGE

Never live with myself, Mr. 1990s, if I can't keep up with you.

65 EXT. PADDOCK - MONZA - DAY - LATER

65

Lovely FERRARI FANS scream after two CHARLES LECLERC and CARLOS SAINZ, eager for a photo. Sonny crosses the other way, not in uniform yet, mostly undisturbed...until he hears:

NEW APEX FAN

Señor Apex! Te quiero, Señor Apex!

A crazed Spanish fan is screaming from above, face painted black-and-gold.

Sonny gives their first fan a half-hearted wave.

65A EXT. PADDOCK - MONZA - DAY

65A

Joshua is ushered through the crowded paddock as Lisbeth rapid-fires through his press schedule.

LISBETH

So after the pen [ALT:this] we've got
the Sky stage, then F1 TV.

Joshua spots the STYLISH WOMAN from Silverstone chatting to
her friend as she moves in the opposite direction.

His eyes come alive in recognition but she doesn't see him.
And just as quickly, the crowd has moved on and she's gone.

65B INT. PRESS ROOM - DAY

65B *

Kaspar sits for his press grilling, flanked by two rival team
reps, McLaren's ZAK BROWN and Ferrari's FRED VASSEUR. *

TOM CLARKSON (O.S.) *

...Sonny's got your team skirting
the line of penalties and
violations. Is this your *only*
strategy? Have you got enough parts
in the factory left? *

KASPAR *

We compete as top teams do. Race
models change. We must adapt. *

TOM CLARKSON *

Zak, you've faced Hayes before --
in Endurance and Rally. You're used
to this "gray area" he lives in. *

ZAK BROWN *

Well obviously, it's grayer now.
We keep tabs on where he is. Back
there. Behind us. *

TOM CLARKSON *

And Fred, concerns from you? What
does Ferrari think about Apex? *

FRED VASSEUR *

We don't. *

66

INT. APEX MEETING ROOM - PADDOCK HQ - DAY

66

Another PRE-RACE BRIEFING, with all the Apex engineers.
Headsets, laptops, a Keynote layout of the race strategy.

KATE

A better qualifying yesterday gets us
in the thick of things P10 and 15.
Conditions look prime for a two-stop:
Medium, Hard, Medium -- that's Plan A.
Final stint we go Hards for Plan B.
(to Kaspar)
Unless you've any track concerns...

KASPAR

Hey, don't look at me, look at him.

He directs a sullen shrug Sonny's way.

SONNY

It's a good plan. For JP. But I want
you to start me on Hards.

NICKLEBY

Track's cooled down. You won't have
any grip.

SONNY

Exactly. [ALT: I know.]

Joshua, Kate, Engineers all trade concerned looks...

SONNY (CONT'D)

For three weeks, all the talk's been
how reckless I am. They're wondering
if I'm gonna push 'em off track. Which
means they won't be watching you.

He turns to Joshua...who couldn't be more surprised.

SONNY (CONT'D)

Today you win us this race.

And as the sound of TWENTY-TWO ENGINES RISE...

67

EXT. AUTODROMO NATIONALE MONZA - **RACE THREE**

67

ZZZZOOM! Cars FLY BY at 200mph, with Joshua chasing the top
nine. GRAPHIC: **ITALIAN GRAND PRIX - MONZA.**

TELECAST (V.O.)

*Twenty laps down, and the pack's been
split. The leaders are pulling away,
with Pearce P10.*

(MORE)

TELECAST (V.O.) (CONT'D)
*His teammate Hayes is holding up the
 rest of the pack. They're all stuck in
 a DRS train--*

--as ANGLE FLIES BY BARRIERS, to pick up the rest of the
 field, half a lap behind, with Sonny LEADING this group.

TELEPARTNER (V.O.)
*Yes, after his reckless first two
 races, midfield's wary of a tangle
 with Hayes. Looks like he's put his
 teammate in position for a single
 point again.*

TELECAST 2 (V.O.)
*Pearce is doing a great job out there.
 This is working out well for the team.*

ON PIT WALL: Kate, Kaspar, Engineers track data:

SONNY (OVER RADIO)
 Tires are gone. Coming in. Box. Box.

DODGE
 Alright lads, he's coming in.

Jodie and the Mechanics RUSH OUT to pit stop positions--

TELECAST (V.O.)
*APX GP is prepping a set of fresh
 tires for Hayes and that's gonna bring
 in all the other teams to avoid the
 undercut.*

ON TRACK: Various teams get ready for a pit stop.

ON TRACK: --as Sonny SKIDS around final corner, almost no
 grip left, heads toward pit road...and then diverts--

TELECAST (V.O.)
*Hayes feints a stop -- but no! -- he's
 staying out with the cars behind him
 scrambling to get on fresh
 tires...that apparently he doesn't
 think he needs anymore.*

ON PIT WALL: Kate cranes her neck to see Sonny ZOOM BY.

KATE
 Should we just do the opposite of what
 he tells us to do?

IN SONNY'S CAR: On the main straight, Sonny checks his
 mirrors, sees cars behind him DIVERT TO PIT LANE.

KASPAR (OVER RADIO)
What plan are we on? Is this G? Z?

SONNY (INTO RADIO)
Don't box JP till I lose my tires.

ON PIT WALL: Kate, Nickleby, Fazio trade confounded looks:

NICKLEBY
He has lost his tires.

KATE
I think he means literally.

ON TRACK: The TIRES on Sonny's #7 look nearly worn through. POCKMARKED, smoking strips of rubber FLECKING OFF.

IN SONNY'S CAR: Sonny is BUFFETTED by erratic vibrations...

TELECAST (V.O.)
Now I have heard it all. Over open radio, it sounds like Hayes's directing strategy for Pearce. Who's running that team over there?

IN APEX SUITE: Ruben grimaces, watching TV, to see a CLOSE-UP of Kaspar as he flips the camera off. Banning tries to cheer him up.

TELEPARTNER (V.O.)
Ooh sorry, Apex. Looks like there's more fines coming.

ON TRACK: Sonny approaches Turn Four where he runs WIDE running his tires through the gravel, kicking stones across the track. Sonny struggles as one of his tires punctures.

TELECAST (V.O.)
And there go Hayes's tires! Look out!

But two pursuing CARS DODGE the gravel, nearly making brief CONTACT. More debris!

TELEPARTNER (V.O.)
That's quite a mess. Gravel on the track. Which'll bring a Virtual Safety Car for a quick sweep...

IN JOSHUA'S CAR: He sees the "VSC" LIGHTS, reduces speed:

JOSHUA (INTO RADIO)
I need new tires. Am I coming in?

ON PIT WALL: Kate watches RACE MODELS re-calibrate:

FAZIO (INTO RADIO)
Yes, box, box--

KATE
NO!
(she sees something)
Tell him wait on Sonny.

FAZIO (INTO RADIO)
Cancel box. You are staying out.

Sonny's BATTERED #7 comes trundling down pit lane. Mechanics swarm as it hits its marks.

IN JOSHUA'S CAR: Joshua rounds main straight, watching six of the nine cars ahead of him head for pit lane--

IN PIT LANE: Kate can't help but grin.

KATE
Up is down, down is up.

Sonny's car drops from jacks. Dodge signals release. Sonny checks his mirrors and pauses before he ACCELERATES hard -- pulling alongside the P1 car but the pit lane narrows so the other car has to slow and follow behind him--

P1 DRIVER
Is this guy blind?!

TELECAST (V.O.)
Hayes pulled out right in front of the leaders and slowed a bit. This'll cost them precious time and more importantly help his teammate Joshua Pearce.

IN JOSHUA'S CAR: He GUNS IT for the three cars left ahead--

FAZIO (OVER RADIO)
Push, Joshua, push. You are now P4.

Joshua registers the words. Briefly stunned, he locks in...

IN PIT LANE: Kate grabs Kaspar, now realizing:

KATE
He's the decoy.

IN APEX SUITE: Guests CHEER to see "Pearce" leap up the leaderboard. Ruben shakes his head. Banning's more reserved.

RUBEN
Do you believe this is happening?

BANNING
Honestly? No.

67A EXT. RACE TRACK - TIME CUT - 10 LAPS LEFT

67A

ZZZAM! Four cars FLY BY, with Joshua's #9 keeping pace... while ANGLE CROSSES a BARRIER to find the rest of the field, and bringing up the rear, Sonny's BLAZING #7.

TELEPARTNER (V.O.)
*They call him wild, greedy, selfish.
But maybe it's all part of Hayes's
game. Has there ever been a Grand Prix
where you can't take your eyes off the
last-place car? But there's nothing he
can do to help Pearce now. I mean...is
there?*

IN SONNY'S CAR: Sonny CHECKS the leaderboard pole as he HURTLES main straight...and then notes DARK CLOUDS beyond.

SONNY (INTO RADIO)
Is weather coming?

ON PIT WALL: Among many screens, one tracks WEATHER RADAR:

NICKLEBY (INTO RADIO)
Hard to say. Light rain might miss, or
it might brush Sector Three. We'll
have the wet tires ready.

SONNY (OVER RADIO)
How far is JP off the lead?

NICKLEBY (INTO RADIO)
Twelve seconds. Just a second behind
P3, but drops a tenth every lap.

IN SONNY'S CAR: Sonny battles, frustrated by the situation:

SONNY (INTO RADIO)
P3's no good. Tell him.

NICKLEBY (OVER RADIO)
Ah, Sonny, you're on open radio...

SONNY (INTO RADIO)
Yeah. I want 'em all to know we're
coming.

IN JOSHUA'S CAR: Joshua CHASES the P3 car expertly, but he's unable to get any closer...as SMALL DROPLETS hit his visor.

TELECAST (V.O.)

Endgame drama at Monza: as the skies threaten, we'll see who risks staying out on slicks and who might take the gamble on the intermediate tire.

IN SONNY'S CAR: He watches two CARS ahead SKID on a final turn, DIVERTING into the pits...

IN JOSHUA'S CAR: Joshua SKIDS on a wet section, recovers:

JOSHUA (INTO RADIO)

Getting tricky out here, guys! What's the plan?

FAZIO (OVER RADIO)

You're running P4. P2 and P3 are switching to inters for safety. P1's staying out. What do you want to do?

The cars ahead now kick up SPRAY. Getting hard to see.

JOSHUA

What's Sonny gonna do...

FAZIO (OVER RADIO)

Take a wild guess.

JOSHUA

I'm staying out.

ON TRACK: The P2 and P3 cars WOBBLE a turn and DIVERT into the pits...while Joshua WOBBLES too, but stays out.

IN APEX SUITE: Ruben and Apex guests ERUPT to see him claim "P2." Banning's at the bar. He passes an EXPENSIFY CARD to the bartender, marveling:

BANNING

You want to know something interesting? See that guy right there? A P1 finish saves his team...and costs his company tens of millions of dollars. That's a helluva sport.

IN SONNY'S CAR: Sonny HURTLES through the decreasing visibility, feeling every hundred-mile-an-hour slip of grip.

NICKLEBY (OVER RADIO)

Joshua's staying out on slicks. If he can hold on and stay on track, he'll finish second!

SONNY (INTO RADIO)
Second's not enough!

IN JOSHUA'S CAR: Joshua FIGHTS to maintain track feel too, seeing the P1 car far ahead...but now in sight...

ON MAIN STRAIGHT: Sonny SKIDS the final turn, RECOVERS, and DIVERTS into pit lane!

IN PIT LANE: Engineers and Mechanics scramble. Pure panic.

DODGE
What's he doing? WHICH TIRES?!

--but no one knows the plan. Sonny DECELERATES onto his mark.

SONNY (OVER RADIO)
Coming in for Inter's.

Jodie and mechanics scramble for the green Intermediates.

TELECAST (V.O.)
*Hayes's in the pits, making a late
call for intermediate tires...*

ON TRACK: Joshua GUNS the back straight, through spitting mist. The P1 car remains a turn ahead, barely visible.

IN SONNY'S CAR: Sonny looks up to the leaderboard, sees "Pearce P2". 3 LAPS TO GO. The light mist continues to fall.

SONNY
How far are they behind me?

NICKLEBY
Thirty seconds.

ON PIT WALL: Kate spins to screens, realizing what he's up to. "P1" and "P2" icons round Sector Three.

KATE
Oh my God. He's going to take
Verstappen out.

Nickleby and Fazio look alarmed. Kaspar waves Sonny off:

KASPAR
Sonny, no!

IN SONNY'S CAR: Sonny stares dead ahead at pit lane exit:

SONNY (INTO RADIO)
Tell me when they hit the main
straight.

ON PIT WALL: Nickleby's tense. Kaspar warns him and Kate:

KASPAR
NO! They'll penalize both cars!
They'll take the win away!

IN SONNY'S CAR: Sonny remains locked in and calm...

SONNY
Just... Trust me.

Kate and Nickleby trade a look.

ON TRACK: Joshua's #9 CHASES the Leader toward final turn, as AERIAL rises to take in the main straight and pit lane...

ON PIT WALL:

KASPAR
DO NOT TELL HIM! ANYBODY TELLS HIM I
WILL KILL YOU!! I WILL COME TO YOUR
HOUSE AND SHIT ON YOUR DOORSTEP!! YOU
WILL BE FIRED!!! IS THAT CLEAR!?!?!?

KATE
(watching race models)
Now.

NICKLEBY (INTO RADIO)
Now.

IN SONNY'S CAR: Sonny ACCELERATES off his pit lane marks.
Kaspar screams in vain.

ON TRACK - HIGH ANGLE: Sonny picks up speed, as the P1 car and Joshua ZOOM down the main straight -- their paths about to converge...perhaps collide...

...as Sonny reaches full throttle and DARTS onto the track just barely wheels ahead of the P1 car!

TELECAST (V.O.)
*Hayes back out, just in front of
Verstappen, and he will get a blue
flag to let them through! Until then
Verstappen's caught in Hayes's dirty
air!*

ON TRACK: Sonny ZIPS around Turn One, oversteering intentionally to WOBBLE off his line. Under the conditions, the P1 car has to lift off the throttle for safety--

TELEPARTNER (V.O.)

*With every turn he hangs on, he slows
Verstappen a fraction of a second...
providing Joshua Pearce one last
chance to catch up!*

IN JOSHUA'S CAR: Joshua sees the FIGHT ahead closing...

IN SONNY'S CAR: Sonny BARELY HOLDS OFF the leader through
Turn Two, UNDERSTEERS to make him back off through Three--

TELECAST (V.O.)

*...except Verstappen has the straight-
line speed, and there's the blue flag!
Hayes must let him pass!*

ON TRACK: The P1 car finally gets a straight, opens DRS and
BLOWS PAST Sonny. But now Joshua's right behind--

IN SONNY'S CAR: --and Sonny sees him in WET MIRRORS--

SONNY (INTO RADIO)

Tell JP to follow me.

ON PIT WALL: Engineers follow raptly, on edge of seats:

FAZIO (INTO RADIO)

Push, Joshua! Sonny's your tow!

ON TRACK: The three-car CHASE reaches the back straight,
where Sonny opens DRS in pursuit of the leader, and Joshua
opens DRS in pursuit of Sonny, close enough to touch--

IN JOSHUA'S CAR: All Joshua can see is Sonny's REAR WING--

TELECAST (V.O.)

*Pearce picks up an aero tow from
Hayes! Gaining time...but driving
blind...*

IN SONNY'S CAR: Sonny's locked on the P1 car's line--

SONNY (INTO RADIO)

Not yet...hold it...now.

IN JOSHUA'S CAR: Still chasing Sonny's line on pure faith--

FAZIO (OVER RADIO)

OVERTAKE, OVERTAKE!

ON TRACK: Joshua SLINGSHOTS out from behind Sonny, SPEEDING
BY, right on the Leader's REAR WING, into a turn--

IN JOSHUA'S CAR: Joshua's on the Leader, never closer to P1--

IN SONNY'S CAR: --as he sees the lead cars disappear ahead--

SONNY (INTO RADIO)
Tell him to wait for the straight
going into Turn 1. Don't pass on 11.

FAZIO
Sonny says don't pass on 11. Wait for
Turn 1.

JOSHUA
I've got an opening -- going for it.

ON TRACK: Full of adrenaline, Joshua goes full throttle into
Turn 11 on the outside -- and into the lead!

TELECAST (V.O.)
Pearce attacks on Eleven --

IN APEX SUITE: Ruben watches on screen.

RUBEN
No-no-no!

TELECAST (V.O.)
*-- and goes wheels ahead! For the
first time ever, APX GP leads a --*

ON TRACK: Joshua drifts wide off the track, striking a
DIAMOND CURB WHICH FLINGS HIM AIRBORNE -- aero forces
whipping him like a spun kite -- SOARING OVER the barrier,
SMASHING INTO THE TREES as it BURSTS INTO FLAMES!

IN SONNY'S CAR: His tense focus snaps, seeing the FIREBALL
ahead and the instant RED FLAG warnings to stop the race--

68

EXT. TRACK - CRASH SITE - DAY - RAIN

68

--as he rounds from Turn 11, SLAMS his car to full stop at
track's edge and SNAPS FREE of his cockpit--

--sprinting to the WRECKAGE where Joshua's trapped inside,
obscured by FLAMES. Sonny can't get close -- it's too hot--

--as finally TRACK MARSHALS come running with EXTINGUISHERS
and a MEDICAL CAR arrives on-scene with a Track PHYSICIAN.

SONNY
GET HIM OUT OF THERE!

He grabs an extinguisher off the safety car, joining the
battle to knock down the flames-- a gap in the inferno--

IN JOSHUA'S CAR: --where Joshua slowly stirs, but is unable to free himself from the cockpit, his suit and helmet blackening--

OUTSIDE: --so Sonny LUNGES into the breach, letting his fireproof suit take the punishment. He manages to grab Joshua and pull -- dragging him from the mangled half-chassis--

Marshals turn the SPRAY on the drivers as Sonny gets Joshua clear. The Track MD descends with an oxygen mask. Joshua's not moving. Sonny stands helpless as SIRENS cry.

69 INT. MILAN HOSPITAL ROOM - DUSK 69

Joshua sleeps in a recovery bed, bandaged and bruised. NURSES check his vitals, switch out his IV. Bernadette sits at his bedside, holding his hand.

70 INT. WAITING AREA - HOSPITAL - DUSK 70

Sonny, Kate, Kaspar, Cash, and Ruben sit, quietly anxious. A TV plays clips of the accident and the trophy ceremony...

KASPAR
For God's sake!

He marches to the TV. It takes him three tries to pull the wires out. The TV dies.

Bernadette comes out of the corridor. Kaspar stands, nervously...

RUBEN
Bernadette... How's he doing?

BERNADETTE
He's stable. He's resting.

RUBEN
Gracias a Dios! Very happy to hear so..I'm so sorry for what was--

She looks straight at Sonny, interrupting.

BERNADETTE
Sonny.

SONNY
Yes ma'am.

BERNADETTE
Over here.

She walks to the corridor.

71 INT. OUTSIDE JOSHUA'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DUSK

71

SONNY

I just wanna say, your son has got talent---

BERNADETTE

Excuse my language, but Joshua says you're an asshole.

SONNY

That tracks.

BERNADETTE

I think you're a dangerous asshole.

SONNY

Mrs. Pearce-

BERNADETTE

[You're team-mates. You are supposed to look out for each other. It's just] I can't help notice [after listening to you] my boy's in a hospital bed while you're out here standing around.

SONNY

OK, listen-

She steps in, close to Sonny, eyeballing him.

BERNADETTE

No you listen to me. If anything, *anything* else happens to my son, I'm coming after you. And when I do, you're gonna be in the next bed to Joshua. For a very, very long time. Clear?

SONNY

Sure.

Inside the hospital room, Joshua has heard it all.

72 INT. WAITING AREA - HOSPITAL - DUSK

72

Sonny looks back towards the Apex team in the waiting room and then heads out alone.

Like a gathering storm, PRE-LAP the fury of the PRESS...

73

INT. MEDIA ROOM - PRE-DUTCH GRAND PRIX - DAY

73

QUICK CUTS: REPORTER after REPORTER shouts questions--

NATALIE PINKHAM

Does Joshua blame you for the
accident, Sonny?

*

WILL BUXTON

Come on Sonny, it was you who kept him
out on slick tires in dangerous
conditions. Even if you told him not
to pass, wasn't an accident
inevitable?

*
*
*
*
*

REVERSE to see Sonny beside Ruben and Kaspar on stage, mics
in hand. Sonny seems to be considering the debate.

DON CAVENDISH

Sonny, you do know by rule you must
answer our questions.

SONNY

Yep.

DON CAVENDISH

Do you intend to?

SONNY

I just did, didn't I?

RUBEN

If I might contribute, Joshua's back
home recovering, and we expect his
return in a few weeks. Until then, our
reserve driver Luca Cortez will drive.
Next man up.

DON CAVENDISH

This one's for Ruben and Kaspar. Since
Hayes's signed on, it seems you've
lost all semblance of authority.
Ruben, have you simply given up?
Running out your contract, Kaspar? Is
anyone in charge at Apex GP?

Kaspar and Ruben sour.

SONNY

See what I mean?

74

INT. JOSHUA'S APARTMENT - LONDON - DAY

74

The same Press Conference is on TV, while Joshua sits in bed.
Bernadette gently finishes changing the bandage on his hand.

WILL BUXTON (V.O.)

*A chaotic week for Expensify Apex GP
team, and again it's Sonny Hayes at
the center.*

(MORE)

WILL BUXTON (V.O.) (CONT'D)
*Many are blaming him for his
teammate's horrific accident at Monza.
His high-stakes gambling style of
racing has the whole grid on edge.
But he's about all out of aces,
because if he stacks up any more
penalties, he's in danger of a one-
race ban...*

Bernadette shakes her head at the report -- Joshua notices
but says nothing.

75 INT. APEX RACE BAY - DUTCH GRAND PRIX - DAY 75

Kate opens a box to reveal the NEW RIPPLED FLOOR EDGE Kate's
been developing. She supervises as Sonny and Dodge watch
Jodie bolt it onto the car. *

KATE (V.O.)
Today we're going with our "combat"
upgrade, see if it carves us a dirty
air advantage. Means we've gotta keep
the field close at all times...

76 INT. APEX MEETING ROOM - NETHERLANDS - NIGHT 76

Sonny's deep in thought, doing a one-hand shuffle, as Kate
runs the race simulation/strategy brief meeting.

KATE
As for this week's "Plan C"...

Sonny looks up to see them waiting for a scheme.

SONNY
They've docked us to the back of the
grid because they don't like the way
we drive. But if we can pick up a
tenth of a second from you, and you,
and you -- and me...if everybody in
this room can make one critical
contribution, that's a second every
lap. And over seventy-two laps, that's
the difference between last and first.
Plan C...Plan C is for combat.

A silence...until Nickleby pounds the desk, slowly, in a
drumbeat rhythm. Fazio joins him, then the other Engineers,
Reserve Driver Luca, Kate, finally Kaspar...

ALL ENGINEERS
Combat! Combat! Combat! (ALT: Apex...)

77

INT. RACE STRATEGY ROOM - APEX HQ - SAME

77

The Strategy meeting is being Internet SIMULCAST on the main RSR screen. Pippa LeGuin and analysts join the DRUMBEAT...

RSR ANALYSTS
 Combat! Combat! Combat!

...except for Joshua, sitting in, at an analyst's desk in the back row. His hand still bandaged, he's unable to join in.

78 EXT. DUTCH GRAND PRIX - DAY - **BEGIN RACE 4 TO 6 MONTAGE** 78

ON TRACK: ZZZAM! GRAPHIC: **DUTCH GRAND PRIX**. FIELD blasts by main straight, with Sonny's #7 opening his DRS wing, and overtaking Reserve Luca Cortez in the #9, moving up to P21.

IN SONNY'S CAR: He battles G's, chasing into first corner...

TELECAST (V.O.)
*And that's Hayes in the upgraded Apex.
 The team were penalized back to last
 place after Monza, but here he is,
 coming from the cellar, passing his
 new teammate Luca Cortez!*

IN APEX GYM: Joshua's working on the REFLEX TRAINER, trying to "tag" the chaser light discs. Cash paces while scrolling on his phone.

Race board shows Sonny at P15 and then P13.

ON TRACK: SPARKS fly as Sonny OVERTAKES a McLaren on a high-speed corner, wheel-to-wheel, but giving no ground...

TELECAST (V.O.)
*Now P11! If he can just get through a
 Grand Prix without penalties, there is
 performance in that upgrade...*

ON TRACK: Sonny OVERTAKES an Alpine on the final chicane...

TELECAST (V.O.)
*With a fantastic last-lap finish,
 Hayes gets Apex GP into the points!*

78A INT. PADDOCK CLUB - ZANDVOORT 78A

Ruben pumps his fist with Banning. First points for Apex GP. *

78B INT. GARAGE - DAY 78B *

Sonny takes off his gear and turns to see Kate: *

SONNY
 It's working. *

Sonny spins her around in the air and she laughs. *

79 INT. APEX STORAGE ROOM - DAY 79

Secretly the walking wounded, Sonny lowers into another ICY-WATER WASTE BIN. GRAPHIC OVERLAYS NETHERLANDS RACE RESULTS: "Cortez" Q19 to **P19**, but "Hayes" climbs from Q21 to **P11**.

79A INT. RUBEN'S OFFICE 79A

Ruben sits at his desk writing checks, with Kaspar and Banning. Lisbeth pops her head in.

79B EXT. APEX FACTORY PATH

79B

Joshua RUNS while Cash rides an e-scooter.

CASH

So was he helping you in Monza? Or
just taking you out as his
competition?

80 INT. SONNY'S PREP ROOM - JAPAN - CONTINUE MONTAGE

80

CLOSE ON a DECK OF CARDS shuffled and cut. TOP CARD put in a
pocket. MISMATCHED SOCKS pulled up.

80A EXT. PIT WALL - JAPAN - DAY

80A

Kaspar, Nickleby and Fazio settle into stations. From Paddock
Club above, Liesl waves with the kids:

LIESL

Pookie, we want to see the cars! Die
kinder want to play and ride!

KASPAR

Princessa, if any part of you still
loves me...you will someday realize
that YOUR POOKIE IS WORKING!

She huffs, but blows a kiss and goes. Kaspar sits, unpeels an
onion. Fazio and Nickleby unpeel ONIONS too. Kate arrives:

KATE

What the hell is this?

81 EXT. JAPANESE GRAND PRIX - DAY

81

ZZZZOOOWWWW! Sonny's Apex #7 SHOWERS SPARKS, cornering tight.
GRAPHIC: **JAPANESE GRAND PRIX - SUZUKA.**

TELECAST (V.O.)

*Another fearless attack from Hayes,
and here's where Apex GP has found
strength. Three-tenths gained every
lap, and in the corners alone...*

IN APEX GYM: Joshua unwraps the bandage from his arm, starts
working on the REFLEX TRAINER, still falling behind.
Frustrated, he looks across the room...to the PULL-UP BAR.

IN SONNY'S CAR: Sonny BATTLES the G's on another turn, with
BARRIERS whipping by, meters away, at 150 miles an hour...

Sonny has contact with Magnussen sending him into a spin.

TELECAST (V.O.)
Sonny Hayes pays back Magnussen for Hungary!

ON PIT WALL: Engineers cheer. Kaspar grabs Kate:

KASPAR
 Combat. I love it.

IN APEX GYM: Joshua hangs upside-down from the pull-up bar, throwing TENNIS BALLS to himself. (Like we saw Sonny do.)

IN SONNY'S CAR: Sonny fights a Mercedes, wheel-to-wheel, coming down the final straight, where it just pulls away...

TELECAST (V.O.)
A battle for seventh...and Mercedes wins it! Russell takes P7, holding off Hayes, who gives Apex GP its best-ever finish with a valiant P8!

Sonny's physically spent at the checkered flag...

GRAPHIC OVERLAYS JAPAN RACE RESULTS: "Cortez" goes from Q17 to P15. "Hayes" climbs from Q14 to P8.

81AB	INT. GARAGE - DAY	81AB	*
	Sonny walks in after a drive, gives Ruben a celebratory fist bump as he walks to the back. (The upgrade works.)		* *

A81	INT. RUBEN'S OFFICE	A81
	Lisbeth pops her head in to talk about Sonny. Ruben stares off, braces for what's coming.	

81A	INT. CFD LABORATORY	81A
	Kate works a late night.	

81B	EXT. APEX FACTORY PATH	81B
	Joshua RUNS while Cash rides an e-scooter.	

CASH
 Every race you miss, the fans forget you. And this Hayes guy's always a chess move ahead.

81C	INT. SONNY'S PREP ROOM	81C
-----	------------------------	-----

LISBETH
 Hey Sonny could you please make the parade bus this time?

SONNY

Absolutely.

LISBETH

Oh my god. Thank you. Thank you so much!

81D EXT. PARADE BUS 81D

Drivers wave to fans as they're driven around the track. For ApxGP, Sonny drives while Luca Cortez waves to the fans.

82 INT. GARAGE - MEXICO CITY - CONTINUE MONTAGE 82

A TEAM ENGINEER tests fuel in the Aramco fuel analyzer.

Sonny preps and gets into the car.

83 EXT. MEXICO CITY GRAND PRIX - DAY 83

A wild ROAR from a CLUSTER of newfound Apex fans, faces painted black-and-gold, waving flags.

VROOM! Twenty cars BLAST BY, charging off the grid. GRAPHIC: **MEXICO CITY GRAND PRIX**. Sonny's #7 is in a scrum--

TELECAST (V.O.)

Right off the line, Hayes's on the attack! Showing tremendous faith in that car to hold on!

--as he EVADES another car's lockup with a late-braking dodge, then CHASES another car into Turn Two and Three...

IN APEX GYM: With the Mexico race on the gym TV, Joshua takes notes on other drivers (as we saw Sonny do).

TELEPARTNER (V.O.)

Hayes making the most of his upgrade package...

IN SONNY'S CAR: Sonny CHASES an Aston into a tricky chicane, only centimeters off its rear wing. Focused, determined...

TELECAST

Adlib: Gutsy move by Hayes.

IN APEX SIMULATOR: Joshua's at the wheel, BATTLING a Simulation. He spins out, slams his wheel...

JOSHUA

Run it again.

ON SONNY'S CAR

TELECAST (V.O.)

Look at how close he can follow, scything through the field! Give the design team a bonus because the upgrade has completely changed that car.

ON PIT WALL: Kaspar gives Kate an encouraging nudge.

IN PIT LANE: With #7 on approach, Jodie's first to leap up:

JODIE
Hit your marks boys!

The Mechanics hustle, following her leadership role...

IN SONNY'S CAR: Sonny's full sweat, taking physical punishment.

IN SIMULATOR: Joshua GUNS IT for the checkered flag too, glancing to the corner of the screen for his final time. But "Pearce" clocks in right behind six times for "Hayes."

83A	INT. APEX SIMULATOR - NIGHT (ALT TO SC83)	83A	*
	CLOSE ON JOSHUA, settling into the sim car.		*
	JOSHUA (TO ENGINEER)		*
	Monza. Last ten laps. Just like it		*
	happened -- in the rain.		*
	IN APEX SIM - #1: Joshua battles a RAINY TRACK on screen,		*
	fighting Verstappen into the corner.		*
	We're in his POV AS HE REPLAYS HIS MONZA MOVE:		*
	MEMORY TELECAST (FILTER)		*
	<i>And Pearce attacks on Turn Eleven--</i>		*
	--as SCREEN POV drifts wide and goes airborne, just like it		*
	happened. RESULT reads "Pearce - Final Lap DNF."		*
	JOSHUA		*
	Run it again.		*
	IN APEX SIMULATOR -		*
	JOSHUA TRIES A DIFFERENT TACTIC. He feigns to the outside,		*
	then cuts in to overtake on the inside. He loses grip and		*
	slides into Verstappen taking them both out. Another DNF.		*
	JOSHUA (CONT'D)		*
	Run it again.		*
	IN APEX SIM: ...Joshua battles but hearing Sonny's voice this		*
	time:		*
	MEMORY FAZIO (FILTER)		*
	<i>Sonny says <u>wait</u> for the straight</i>		*
	<i>into 1...</i>		*

This time, Joshua follows Max thru the turn, gets DNS on the straight -- and passes the Redbull just before he crosses the line with a CHECKERED FLAG. *

RESULT flashes: "Pearce - Italian GP - P1." *

Joshua pauses. Takes his hands off the wheel. *

CU on Joshua's face - he understands. *

84 EXT. PARC FERME - MEXICO CITY GRAND PRIX - DAY 84

Sonny climbs out of his P5 car, completely exhausted, pulling off his helmet...as GRAPHIC OVERLAYS MEXICO CITY RACE RESULTS: "Cortez" from Q15 to **P12**. "Hayes" from Q9 to **P5**.

TELECAST (V.O.)

*And if Joshua Pearce is watching, he
must be thinking "What might've been."*

Sonny spots a small cluster of FANS in black-and-gold, gives a weary wave, as Mechanics converge to congratulate...

IN APEX SUITE: Ruben watches the fans celebrate, bittersweet: *

RUBEN

They forget...it's first or nothing. *

BANNING

Hey man, look how far we've come. *
We've got three more races, anything's *
possible... *

Ruben considers Banning's encouraging words. *

RUBEN

Let's hear it for fifth place! *

Banning joins him in his toast.

85 EXT. APEX FACTORY PATH 85

Joshua sprints the last hundred meters of his run, outruns Cash on his e-scooter. A fire lit from within.

86 INT. SONNY'S PREP ROOM - LATER - **END MONTAGE** 86

...as Sonny staggers in, stiff-legged, hand to his spine, and SLIDES down his door as he shuts it.

TELECAST (V.O.)

*Who'd have believed it weeks ago?
Expensify Apex GP has the racing world
on notice. Someone call the 1990s.
Sonny Hayes, if you missed him...he's
back.*

On the floor, in quiet agony, he seems anything but.

DISSOLVE TO:

87 EXT. SPA-FRANCORCHAMPS - MORNING - ONE WEEK LATER 87

The Ardennes forest looms beyond a glorious hill. We hear the sound of FOOTFALLS on asphalt, BREATHING--

SONNY (O.S.)

One more time up the hill, here we go!

Sonny jogs up Eau Rouge, glancing back with a smile... now followed by his entire mechanic crew. All 20 teammates in a jogging pack. GRAPHIC: **BELGIAN GRAND PRIX - SPA.**

ANGLE FROM GRANDSTAND: In the distance, they make the challenging climb. A united cluster in black-and-gold.

From a mezzanine, Joshua watches...

88 INT. APEX MEETING ROOM - MORNING 88

Engineers applaud as Joshua enters, making his return -- with Bernadette and Cash. Kaspar, Fazio, Kate all embrace him.

F1 REPORTER (V.O.)

*With only three races left in the
season, the stakes couldn't be higher
at the Belgian Grand Prix. And at the
surprisingly competitive Apex GP team,
Joshua Pearce will make his return...*

Sonny offers a handshake and smile.

SONNY

Missed you, JP. Welcome back.

JOSHUA

(without emotion)

Thank you.

They find seats for the Pre-Practice 1 Strategy meeting.

89 EXT. STARTING GRID - BELGIAN GRAND PRIX - **RACE SEVEN** 89

The Apex #9 rolls to a P14 start position. Joshua's inside.

IN JOSHUA'S CAR: His gaze is locked diagonal...at Sonny's #7 up ahead, starting P11. Race gloves flex, grip the wheel...

GRANDSTAND FANS (O.S.)
A-pex! A-pex! A-pex!

Sonny locks in on the gantry lights... as they blink on from ONE TO FIVE--

ON STARTING GRID: --then out! Twenty-two CARS leap off the line, accelerating up the short blast to La Source and Turn One--

IN JOSHUA'S CAR: Joshua DIVES for the inside, getting past the P13 car as it LOCKS UP leaving the grid. His gaze remains locked on Sonny two places ahead--

ON TRACK: Sonny FIGHTS around Turn One's hairpin, wheel-to-wheel, forced to relent...while Joshua DUCKS dangerously low, ducking past the P12 car and gaining on Sonny--

IN SONNY'S CAR: Sonny sees Joshua gaining in his mirrors, edges to the middle of the track at Turn 2 to give him room--

ON TRACK: --and as they both arc into Turn 3, with Joshua CHASING HARD, he veers closer Sonny's way...and STEERS RIGHT INTO HIM, with an intentional tap of his left rear wheel--

--which SPINS Sonny wide, losing control, sent PIROUETTING off into gravel. Wheels DIG hard. Dead stop. Race over.

ON PIT WALL: Kate, Kaspar, Engineers react in dismay.

IN APEX SUITE: Ruben and guests throw hands skyward. Banning is distant, lost in his own thoughts.

RUBEN
NO! YOU ASSHOLES...!

IN SONNY'S CAR: Sonny sits, facing backwards, as the last cars FLY PAST HIM down Eau Rouge and on through Lap One.

IN JOSHUA'S CAR: Joshua speeds onward, confidence renewed...

90

EXT. APEX RACE BAY - SPA - DAY

90

Distant CHEERS. Mechanics mill, cleaning up. Sonny sits in the back of the garage...

TELECAST (V.O.)
*A one-two finish for Red Bull,
Mercedes P3, and the good news for
Apex GP, another points finish, with
Joshua Pearce P8 on his return...*

*

Joshua strides into the garage, getting congrats from Dodge and his Mechanics...until he spots Sonny.

Sonny silently walks by Joshua grazing him with his helmet.

Joshua explodes, shoves Sonny. Sonny explodes, shoves Joshua hard against the wall. The Apex crew fan out.

JOSHUA

No one gets past us without a fight...right?

SONNY

You push me off the track again, I will knock your (fucking) teeth out. You don't even know what you're doing. You take me out of the race, there's even less of a chance you're gonna have a seat next year. You know what? I don't give a shit, I've seen a hundred guys like you.

JOSHUA

You flamed out. Why should I listen to you?

SONNY

Because I flamed out. That's why. You want to throw it all away. Go ahead. I don't give a crap about you. What I care about is that you're screwing over Ruben. This is his team. He gave you a shot. And you pull this shit. You're gonna destroy your own career and take the whole team down with you. Don't do it.

91 INT. HALLWAY TO PREP ROOMS - DAY

91

Sonny heads for his prep room, passing by the open door to Joshua's. Inside, Bernadette sits, TV on. Joshua's on screen in the Media Pen being interviewed by F1 press.

JOSHUA (FROM TV)

Car felt really good, team's done a great job with the upgrade. Shame about the contact with Sonny, you hate to see that happen...

This stops him, in her doorway.

BERNADETTE

I've never really understood it. The same man you call teammate...that's your greatest enemy.

SONNY

It's not for everyone.

Bernadette considers.

91A INT. JOSHUA'S PREP ROOM 91A *

Joshua sits alone, wrestling with his actions. Bitter regret sets in. *

92 EXT. LAS VEGAS STRIP - DUSK - ONE WEEK LATER 92

Close on feet jogging. Wider to reveal Sonny runs down the old Las Vegas Strip. Overlap with the weekly F! PODCAST: *

TOM CLARKSON (V.O.) *

And the stage is set, here in Sin City, with only two races to go -- and we have to talk about APX GP. What is happening with this team? They finally get a car that is capable of competing... *

NATALIE PINKHAM (V.O.) *

...and two drivers who can't share the same track! The future of the team is on the line and time is quickly running out. My question is: Can they pull it together before it's too late? *

93 INT. ENCORE HOTEL SUITE - LAS VEGAS - NIGHT 93

An "APX GP" envelope waits for Sonny on the table. He grabs it and walks towards the large window overlooking the Wynn hotel and Las Vegas Strip.

Opening the envelope he sees Kate's handwriting: "Team Dinner 9PM."

94 INT. VEGAS SUPPER CLUB - NIGHT

94

A lush and sexy restaurant in a luxury hotel on the Strip. Sonny arrives at the host's stand, with the envelope, in one of the few collared shirts he owns. Joshua arrives. Holding an envelope too.

JOSHUA
(instantly suspicious)
Where's the team?

As PATRONS part...they glimpse Kate, in a cocktail dress. Waiting at a leather booth for three.

95 INT. VEGAS SUPPER CLUB - AT BOOTH - MOMENTS LATER

95

Sonny and Joshua take seats at either end of the booth. Kate sits in the middle like a referee.

KATE
Brilliant, you made it. Sonny, you know Joshua. Joshua, Sonny.
(smiles)
I'm sure you both have heard the rumors. We all lose our jobs if you can't pull off a miracle. Starting with staying on the bloody track.

SONNY
(shrugs, playful)
We were looking good while JP was out.

JOSHUA
I was "out" cause I listened to you.

SONNY
...ish.

JOSHUA
And would you stop calling me "JP"?

SONNY
You don't choose your own nickname. That's not how it works.

JOSHUA
Your name doesn't even make sense. Is it sunny? Is it hazy? Which is it!?

KATE

Gentlemen...boys! Have I not delivered
you a car? Then you can do one thing
for me.

(to Sonny)

Cards.

She holds out a hand. Sonny narrows a look.

KATE (CONT'D)

C'mon, I know you have 'em with you.

Sonny leans back, folds his arms.

KATE (CONT'D)

It's my team meeting and we'll do it my way. We're playing poker. Whoever wins will be our Number One driver tomorrow. And if I win, I get to choose.

JOSHUA

(suspicious)

Didn't he gamble for a living?

KATE

Yup. And now he's living in a van.

SONNY

Texas Hold 'em?

Joshua's not about to back down. So Sonny pulls out his deck.

96

INT. VEGAS SUPPER CLUB - NIGHT - BEGIN POKER MONTAGE

96

MUSIC UP as cards are dealt around the table. Hands are played. Chips pass back and forth...

Drinks and dinner arrive. All the while, the poker game grows playful, but intense. Kate sips a Heineken 00. Sonny, Joshua and Kate make bets, focus locked in...

As GAME CONTINUES, Kate's stack of chips dwindles until it's down to Sonny vs. Joshua now...

KATE

So Sonny here likes straight talk.
Isn't that right, Sonny?

SONNY

So I've heard.

KATE

Good. Who wants to go first?

SONNY

I'll go first.

JOSHUA

I'll go first.

KATE

I'll go first. What's the difference
between Joshua Pearce and Sonny Hayes?

JOSHUA
A couple of decades?

SONNY
...Of hard won experience..

JOSHUA
...Of living in a van.

SONNY
...Total freedom.

JOSHUA
...Total failure.

SONNY
Says the guy still living with his
mom.

Joshua lays his cards.

JOSHUA
Says the guy with two pair.

Sonny lays his cards.

SONNY
Says the guy with trips.

She flops her cards.

KATE
Says the guy with a Full House...girl.

She rakes in the chips..

KATE (CONT'D)
If you had any constructive
criticism for each other, what
would it be?

SONNY
Don't be such a dick.

JOSHUA
Don't be such an asshole.

SONNY
(off Kate's look)
That's constructive...no?
Alright...you have a frontal cortex
deficiency.

JOSHUA
A whaaaa?

SONNY

You can't analyze risk. It's not entirely your fault. It's not completely formed yet. But the day you learn patience, to wait to pounce, you will be formidable.

KATE

Okay...patience...good. Joshua?

JOSHUA

You don't care what anyone else has to say. You just impose your will on the rest of us without even a discussion. You don't listen.

A silence.

KATE

Sonny?

SONNY

Huh?

Sonny does a cool shuffle.

JOSHUA

Who taught you the game?

SONNY

My old man liked to gamble.

JOSHUA

Did he make big bets too?

SONNY

Put one on me.

KATE

How old were you when your fathers died?

Awkward pause. Even Sonny seems wrong-footed.

KATE (CONT'D)
Sorry. I shouldn't drink Tequila.
[ALT: Sorry (tipsy)]

JOSHUA
I was thirteen.

SONNY
I was thirteen.

This makes them both pause.

JOSHUA
Heart attack. When he died...that's
when I started winning.

Four cards face up. One remains face down. Sonny checks his hole card. Sonny pushes his chips to the middle. Joshua studies Sonny's face.

KATE
Why do you race?

JOSHUA
Sponsorships, money, press, fame--

SONNY
--Social media "likes"? What do you
care what they say about you?

JOSHUA
Easy for you to say. Everyone hates
you.

A tense moment.

SONNY
It's just noise. Just drive the car
- you're really good at it. Maybe
even great.

That lands on Joshua. He pushes all his chips in.

JOSHUA
(showing his cards)
Pair of fives.

SONNY tosses in his cards, defeated.

Just then, Cash claps Joshua's shoulder:

CASH
Hey JP, we're due at Omnia. That
sponsor party. You gotta show that
smile.

(MORE)

CASH (CONT'D)
(being polite)
I mean, Hayes, you're welcome too.

SONNY
No, you guys have at it. I've got a
race tomorrow.

Joshua gets up, extends a handshake. Sonny takes it.

Joshua exits the restaurant with a spring in his step --
posing for pictures with young FANGIRLS at the door...

Kate and Sonny, now alone. Kate looks at Sonny. She holds the
look. He seems unsure. Until, eyes flare.

KATE

Let's get something straight. I don't mess around during the season. And never with a member of my team. Plus, what I'm attracted to is winning. And you just lost to a pair of fives.

SONNY turns his "losing" cards over--it's three kings.

A loaded beat...and Sonny smiles.

97 INT. HOTEL ELEVATOR - LAS VEGAS - NIGHT

97

As GUESTS depart, Sonny and Kate stumble-crash in, her lips meeting his. He hits buttons.

SONNY

Y'know, I say it all the time. The best things in life happen in a split-second.

KATE

Oh for God's sake, Sonny. Hush.

98 INT. OMNIA NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

98

Dancing bodies, pulsing music. Joshua sits in a VIP booth, with a few other drivers, overlooking the dance floor crowd.

A FUN-LOVING WOMAN (27) in the booth next to him, leans in close:

WOMAN

You're a driver, aren't you?

JOSHUA

Yeah.

WOMAN

Which team?

[ALT: Can you introduce me to Charles Leclerc?

Joshua reacts, gets up and leaves.]

*
*
*
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JOSHUA

Apex GP.

WOMAN

Oh... I'm sorry.

She gives a playful smile and turns away. Joshua surveys the party -- "the noise" -- Sonny's words hang in his mind. It's lost all its appeal. He gets up to go.

As he makes his way out, Cash saddles up next to him, double-fisting Dark and Stormies.

CASH
They said Vegas was weird, but...I'm into it.

JOSHUA
Be safe. I'm heading out.

Cash holds his gaze, picking up on...something.

CASH
What? You just got here.

But Joshua's eye is caught elsewhere. It's the STYLISH WOMAN with a group of friends on the dance floor. He beelines towards her.

CASH (CONT'D)
Come on Bro. There's people I need you to meet.

Cash looks frustrated.

98A INT. OMNIA NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

98A

Joshua approaches and taps the STYLISH WOMAN on the shoulder, she turns. They both smile, aware of the wild attraction between them.

JOSHUA
Hello.

STYLISH WOMAN
Hi.

JOSHUA
I'd really like to spend some time chatting with you but I have to go. I--

She takes his phone and puts her number in.

JOSHUA (CONT'D)
--have a race tomorrow.

STYLISH WOMAN
If you'd have stayed, I wouldn't be giving you my number.

She hands the phone back to him. Joshua takes that in and smiles. He turns and walks away.

He looks down at his phone and sees she hasn't entered her name. He looks back...

JOSHUA

Hey, what's your...?

But she's disappeared into the dancing crowd.

CUT TO BLACK:

99

INT./EXT RACETRACK

99

Over darkness, the distant sound of a screaming V-12 engine, it gets closer...

SMASH CUT to a first person POV in the cockpit of a 1990 Lotus-Lamborghini ripping down a straight at over 200mph. The camera shakes violently as the driver wrestles with the steering wheel, chasing down a red and white McLaren ahead.

BLACK.

SMASH CUT to the POV as the car enters a sharp curve. The tires screaming as they lose grip, hurtling us towards a metal guardrail.

BLACK.

ANOTHER SMASH CUT as the POV explodes out of the car like a piece of shrapnel, legs and arms flail at the spinning world before settling at a canted angle on the asphalt, an ankle twisted the wrong way like a rag doll dropped on the floor. Off the sound of an approaching siren...

100 INT. KATE'S HOTEL ROOM - PRE-DAWN 100

Sonny's eyes snap open. He exhales, releasing himself from the grip of this familiar nightmare. The pulsing lights of the city softly illuminate the luxurious hotel suite. He looks over to see Kate, sleeping peacefully.

101 EXT. HOTEL BALCONY 101

Sonny steps out onto the balcony overlooking the Las Vegas Strip. He ponders the circuit's main strait as it slices it's way through the heart of the city.

He turns to see Kate as she joins him at the railing. The city's just starting to stir.

KATE

Like I said. I shouldn't drink
Tequila.

Sonny smiles.

SONNY

Good morning to you too.

She stands next to him. Looking out at the view.

SONNY (CONT'D)

So last night was Ruben's idea..

KATE

The first part. Not the second.

She traces a finger lightly along the SCAR ON HIS SPINE.

KATE (CONT'D)

You asked Joshua why he drives. But
you kept your cards pretty close.

SONNY

Not much of a story.

KATE

Really. You're not gonna tell me. And
here I thought we were a -- I don't
know -- "team."

Playful, she pulls him to face her. Sonny smiles but stalls.

KATE (CONT'D)

I'm here to prove everyone wrong. My
ex, my previous boss, my first-year
uni physics professor.

(MORE)

KATE (CONT'D)

And until we win, I haven't.
Unfortunately, I now rely on you.

SONNY

I was gonna be champion, best in the world. I was battling my idols: Senna, Mansel, Prost...Man, I was fearless, I was the guy. But in one split second it was all taken away. I lost my seat, my income, my sanity, my dream. And so I banged around for years...bitter, angry. Not a time I'm particularly proud of. Until one day, I realized what I'd really lost. Wasn't the trophies or the titles. It was my love for racing. So I went and got it back. Doesn't matter the car or the circuit. I don't need anyone to watch. Just get me behind the wheel. There's this place, this rare moment in the car where everything quiets down. My heartbeat slows. It's peaceful. And I can see everything, every line, every apex. No one can touch me. I'm at peace. I'm chasing that feeling every time I climb in the car. I don't know if I'll find that feeling ever again...but I want to. Life is messy and complicated, but in that moment I'm flying.

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She looks at him, moved by this.

...when there's KNOCKING at the door. A doorbell RINGS. They trade looks. It's not even dawn.

102 INT. KATE'S HOTEL ROOM

102

Kate pulls on a robe as she answers the door...to find Ruben.

RUBEN

Kate.

KATE

Ruben.

RUBEN

Where is he?

KATE

Where's who?

He glares at her.

KATE (CONT'D)

What are you talking about?

(Glare.)

Oh my God. Ruben! I can't -
Seriously?!

(Glare.)

Number one, how dare you? Two, I
respect professional boundaries. And
three-

(Glare.)

..He's on the balcony.

Ruben heads in. Finds Sonny coming in from the balcony.

SONNY

You're up early.

RUBEN
Get dressed.

KATE
What's going on?

RUBEN
They're coming for our car.

103 EXT. APEX RACE BAY - LAS VEGAS - DAY

103

FIA SCRUTINEERS surround the car for forensic checks in the now-cordoned-off garage. On pit lane, Mechanics fret. Sonny, Joshua, Kate, Ruben and Kaspar confront an FIA RACE DIRECTOR.

RACE DIRECTOR
We've received an anonymous tip that your upgrade floor's in violation--

RUBEN
From who? Whom? Sorry. Look. We submitted the drawings! You approved them all!

RACE DIRECTOR
It's whether the parts you're racing with were developed outside of your facility.

JOSHUA
What? That's insane.

He gives Kaspar a clipboard of DOCUMENTS featuring the RIPPLED FLOOR.

RACE DIRECTOR
Based on the paperwork we've received, there are concerns.

KATE
Where did you get those? Those are internal documents--

RUBEN
This team doesn't break rules!

RACE DIRECTOR
(looks askance at Sonny)
I'll take that with a pinch of salt. No offense.

SONNY
None taken.

KASPAR

Someone can fabricate documents --

RACE DIRECTOR

Your car's under review. You know the procedure. You cannot race unless you substitute the previously approved components.

*
*

KATE

You mean our old design...

RUBEN

The shit-box!

He walks in a circle of fast Spanish expletives.. Stops.. Apoplectic.

RUBEN (CONT'D)

WHERE WERE THEY FOR THE LAST TWO YEARS? WHY NOW? BECAUSE WE MIGHT ACTUALLY WIN!?!

*

He charges the FIA Director, but Sonny bear-hugs him away...

*

RUBEN (CONT'D)

THIS ISN'T RACING! THIS IS CHEAP CORPORATE ESPIONAGE!

Still hot, he wrestles free. Storms off after the FIA Man:

RUBEN (CONT'D)

I'm not finished! Amigo! I am TALKING to you!

He blows by Kate and Kaspar. They face Sonny, shaken:

KATE

Without the upgrade...we're screwed.

This lands on Sonny.

104 INT. SONNY'S PREP ROOM - NIGHT 104

Sonny SLAMS in, privately hot. He grabs his deck of cards and throws it scattering across the room.

105 EXT. LAS VEGAS GRAND PRIX - NIGHT - **RACE EIGHT** 105

AERIAL DOWN THE PACKED AND GLIMMERING STRIP...AS 22 CARS WRAP UP THE FORMATION LAP, TOWARD DESTINIES AHEAD...

TELECAST (V.O.)

*The lights are bright, the heat is on,
and the tension is high for a showdown
on the Strip...For the leaders today,
a season title at stake. Meanwhile,
for upstart Apex GP, it looks like
dreams deferred...*

ON PIT WALL: Kate, Kaspar, Nickleby, Fazio take stations.

TELECAST (V.O.)

*...as we're hearing their vaunted
upgrade package is being investigated
by the FIA, which will force them to
run with the old version here. And
that's assuming Pearce and Hayes can
avoid any further self-sabotage.*

*

IN SONNY'S CAR: Sonny SLALOMS his car, warming tires around the final turn as he takes his P5 slot, only four cars back of pole. He sees Joshua arrive in his mirrors, at a diagonal -
- P6.

INTERCUT PIT WALL/BOTH CARS: Engineers watch take shape...

KASPAR (INTO RADIO)

P5 and 6, we're in solid position.
Focus on a clean start.

SONNY (INTO RADIO)

We'll never win clean.

FAZIO (INTO RADIO)

Let's not break any rules.

JOSHUA (INTO RADIO)

Rules are always against us.

The team trades tense looks. Sonny and Joshua lock gazes.

KATE

Get them safe through Lap One.

NICKLEBY (INTO RADIO)
Sonny, we just need to keep it in one
piece for the end. Sonny?

*

SONNY (INTO RADIO)
We need what we always need...
(to himself)
Combat.
[ALT: I hear ya...]

*

*

ON PIT WALL: Kate, Kaspar, Nickleby, Fazio. Nervous now..

IN SONNY'S CAR: Locked on the gantry.

Sonny narrows his eyes. Suddenly puts a glove in his pocket,
feels the flap. No card inside.

SONNY (CONT'D)
Damn.

A sinking feeling as LIGHT ONE BLINKS RED -- TWO -- THREE --
FOUR -- FIFTH RED and LIGHTS GO OUT--

ON TRACK: Cars BLAST OFF THE LINE! The McLaren on pole duels
a P2 Ferrari. A P3 Red Bull CUTS THE ANGLE toward first
corner, as a P4 Mercedes tries to get past outside--

--so Sonny DIVES TO THE INSIDE OF TURN ONE way too fast,
locking up his tires and forcing the P4 Mercedes straight
into Joshua's path--

IN JOSHUA'S CAR: Forced to hit the brakes, dodging the car in
front, battling his wheel--

JOSHUA
WHAT THE HELL?!

ON TRACK: SONNY REVS out of the turn, right on the P3 Red
Bull's rear wing as both pursue the two leaders -- now with a
burst of distance from the field--

ON PIT WALL: They exhale the near-miss.

IN GARAGE: Ruben stands with the Mechanics in front of the
monitors.

JOSHUA (OVER RADIO) (CONT'D)
WHAT'S HE DOING!

RUBEN
He's driving angry. This is not good.

IN SONNY'S CAR: Right on the rear wing of the P3 Red Bull--

NICKLEBY (OVER RADIO)

Sonny you need to make these tires
last, take care please.

ON TRACK: Sonny blasts down the Las Vegas Strip, turns the
ENGINE STRATEGY KNOB on the steering wheel then GUNS AFTER
the Red Bull--

ON PIT WALL: Kate shakes her head, looking at data:

KATE

He's put the car in Qualify mode;
He'll run the battery down -- tell him
to put it back--

ON TRACK: Sonny makes a bold move, CHARGING FAST around the
final corner, a fast blind left hander, trying to pass the
Red Bull on the outside. He pushes into a gap that barely
exists--

TELECAST (V.O.)

Hayes's attacks on the outside!

ON TRACK: --and COLLIDES HARD with the Red Bull's rear tire
vaulting Sonny and his car into the fence!

IN SONNY'S CAR: His body takes a COLOSSAL IMPACT, helmet
snapped sideways, striking his headrest--

ON TRACK: Carbon SHARDS scatter as he RICOCHETS back, popping
tires. The P5 Mercedes and P6 Joshua narrowly avoid the
shrapnel -- Joshua coming to a stop just past Sonny's smoking
wreck--

TELECAST (V.O.)

Red flag! Red flag!

IN SONNY'S CAR: Sonny sits sideways at track's edge, in a
strange state of shock. His vision BLURS as he climbs out...

106 EXT. TRACK - CRASH SITE - BACK STRAIGHT

106

Sonny staggers from his car, pulls helmet free. The stands seem distant now. He sees Joshua, race ruined too...

SONNY

What are you doing...

His VISION BLURS further...something's not right...as he WANDERS into the track.

SONNY (CONT'D)

Don't stop the race...

JOSHUA

Sonny, GET OFF THE TRACK!

...as his VISION BLURS at oncoming lights...then a SAFETY CAR warping...looks like it's coming right at him.

SONNY

Don't stop.

The world BLURS WILDLY as he collapses.

CUT TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

107 EXT. LAS VEGAS SKYLINE / INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

107

A fantasyland, out a window, in the distance.

Reveal Sonny's in bed, three days unshaven. He wears hospital trousers and a t-shirt, but otherwise seems a prisoner.

RUBEN (O.S.)

I know that we are all insane.

I mean...Why do we do it?

He turns to the doorway. Sees a wistful lament. Ruben steps in and walks to the window.

RUBEN (CONT'D)

What's wrong with tennis?! Golf?

A tennis player serves the ball at 140MPH. That thing hits you it's gonna sting..

(MORE)

*

RUBEN (CONT'D)

(He looks at Sonny.)

In F1 we're not the player. We're the ball. Moving 220. And if that ball goes over the line...there's no second serve. Now, I don't know how you managed to hide this...from all of us. Why didn't you tell me?

107A INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - DAY

107A

Outside the room Joshua arrives with a GIFT for Sonny. He stops before going in when he hears Ruben's voice.

107B INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

107B

Ruben lifts Sonny's chart from the foot of his bed, flips to back pages:

RUBEN

C5 neck fracture, spinal contusion, thoracic vertebrae compressed. Further blunt force impact trauma likely to result in vision loss, paralysis, death.

SONNY

They really lead with the good news, don't they.

RUBEN

That's the report from THIRTY YEARS AGO. Why didn't you tell me? [You should never have raced again.] How do you think I would feel if you die on that track...knowing I'd killed my brother.

*
*

Sonny knows it's serious. Still he offers a half-hearted..

SONNY

Revenge for Monaco?

RUBEN

THIS IS NOT A JOKE! It's me who's liable. And I don't just lose everything. I go to jail!

SONNY

Come on Ruben. We're racers.

RUBEN

And don't think there's some bullshit
loophole to get you out of this. We're
not racers. Not anymore. We're losers!
A PAIR OF DUMB, SENTIMENTAL, BROKE
LOSERS!

(Ruben glares. Then --)
You're off the team.

107C INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - DAY

107C

Joshua takes this in...

107D INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

107D

Ruben hands Sonny an envelope.

RUBEN

Your last paycheck. Van's in the
garage. Your stuff is in it. I never
should have pulled you into this. I'm
sorry.

*
*
*

Sonny meets Ruben's eyes.

SONNY

Ruben wait. I need this.

*

Ruben leaves. Sonny turns to the window.

107E INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY DAY

107E

The gift is by the door as Ruben exits. But Joshua is gone.

108 EXT. PARKING GARAGE - LAS VEGAS HOSPITAL - DAY

108

Sonny's camper van with dirt bike and surfboard sits parked
as promised. He limps gingerly over, about to climb in--

BANNING (O.S.)

Sonny!

Banning approaches, in a suit and a smile...

*

SONNY

You're not at the race?

BANNING

I fly out tonight. I wanted to catch
up with you.

Intrigued, Sonny waits at the van.

BANNING (CONT'D)

Look, we both know the Board's wanted to unload Apex from the start. But then you rode into town, raised our whole profile -- now I've got buyers lining up!

SONNY

Uh-huh.

BANNING

And what I've been telling 'em, I mean this is no secret, but Ruben's a long-leash guy, he's loyal, and it left him with a bunch of losers. And I'll level with you man, I thought you were going to be the final nail in the coffin. But now I see the play. And I want you to be part of the package.

SONNY

What package is that?

BANNING

I've set up a sale where I run the team, and keep you on for Strategy. Maybe even as Team Principal. But you're out of harm's way, and at ten times the salary.

(Beat. Lets it sink in)

With the changing regulations, new Mercedes power unit, Kate's aero, and two new drivers -- I believe we have a real shot at the championship next year.

SONNY

What about Ruben?

BANNING

Don't worry, we won't embarrass him. Keep him on with a title. "Brand Ambassador" or something.

[ALT:

Sonny puts the pieces together.

SONNY

You forged those documents, sent them to the FIA...

END ALT]

*
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Banning smiles - all's fair in love and war.

SONNY (CONT'D)

I'd get final say?

BANNING

Whatever you want.

SONNY

All strategy. Car design. Driver choice.

BANNING

Do what you do, man, don't change a thing. That's the irony here. The Board originally approved your hire 'cause we thought you'd help us lose.

SONNY

Sorry to make you sweat.

BANNING

It's all good. (He flashes a smile)
You know, as soon as I met you, I had a feeling...(hands him his card)
Look, here's my number. Talk to your people. But right after the race, I want to lock down the deal.

SONNY

So, by Sunday?

BANNING

Perfect. This thing can be your legacy, Sonny. An F1 Champion. What you always wanted.

*
*

SONNY

You're a killer, man, aren't you.

BANNING

I'm a winner, aren't you?

Banning thumps his arm, heads to leave--

BANNING (CONT'D)

Oh hey, how's the back?

SONNY

Better.

BANNING

I've got an amazing guy...I'll hook you up.

Banning gives a thumbs-up. Sonny gets in his van -- a little wince from a back twinge -- shuts the door. He sits there, thinking. Starts his engine.

CUT TO:

109 EXT. ABU DHABI - ESTABLISHING - DAWN 109

AERIAL over Abu Dhabi... GRAPHIC: **ABU DHABI GRAND PRIX.**

110 EXT. YAS MARINA CIRCUIT - MORNING 110

An epic track course fills with FANS. Teams prepare garages.

TELECAST (V.O.)

*Race day for the 15th Abu Dhabi Grand
Prix! With the Championship decided,
the endgame awaits for the rest of the
field. It's one last chance for the
younger drivers to prove they deserve
a seat next season, and in the case of
Apex GP, if you believe the rumors,
one final ride.*

In the stands, a wave of black-and-gold FANS arrive...

TELEPARTNER (V.O.)

*...although I have to say, all year,
I've never seen such black and gold.*

111 INT. JOSHUA'S PREP ROOM - DAY 111

Same FANS on TV. Joshua watches with Mom. He turns, serious.

JOSHUA

Mum, I've got to tell you something.

Bernadettes looks at him.

JOSHUA (CONT'D)

In Monza...it was my decision to pass
on 11. Sonny told me to wait.

Bernadette nods, takes this in. Just then, Cash bursts in:

CASH

I've been working the phones with
IndyCar, I think we can get you a test
drive. They're trying to pull in a new
demographic. Girls love that smile...

JOSHUA

Hey Cash, you can go. I don't need you
today.

CASH

But you've got media next.

JOSHUA

I don't care. They can fine me.

His manager stops. Bernadette looks up.

JOSHUA (CONT'D)
That's not what I'm doing it for.

CASH
Bro, starting tomorrow, we're not
doing it anywhere.

JOSHUA
It's all just noise man, I gotta focus
on the race.

Cash can't fathom it at first, he looks to Bernadette.

BERNADETTE
You heard the man.

Cash understands this is the way things are now. He nods.

CASH
Deal.

112 INT. APEX RACE BAY - ABU DHABI - MORNING

112

Dodge, Jodie and the mechanics, still morose. Joshua enters.
Drops his gear-bag.

JOSHUA
No work, guys?

DODGE
Parc fermé. Waiting for FIA to cut the
seals.

Joshua nods, unzips his gear bag..

JOSHUA
Good. We've got time..

JODIE
For what?

113 INT. PADDOCK CLUB - ABU DHABI - DAY

113

Banning leads NINA BEHRENDT (50s), SATYA BANGA (40s) and a
group of CORPORATE EXECS on a tour. *

BANNING
...and this is the Paddock Club, for
our most valued guests. Please, have a
drink, make yourselves at home..

114 INT. APEX RACE BAY - ABU DHABI - DAY

114

Empty, as Ruben wanders in watching the cars arrive.. He takes a seat at center console...taking it all in one last time.

RUBEN

Where is everybody?

He looks out at the track and sees...

115 EXT. TRACK - FIRST SECTOR - DAY

115

Joshua leads the team in their jog around the track. Coming from a chicane...

ON RUBEN -- He smiles.

116 INT. PADDOCK CLUB - ABU DHABI - DAY

116

As Banning glad-hands the great and the good, the exec Satya Banga peers over the balcony.

SATYA

What's that lot doing?

Banning comes over. They're watching the Apex Mechanics jogging Main Straight as a group...led by Joshua. Apex fans CHEER as they pass.

SATYA (CONT'D)

Is that some tradition?

BANNING

Yes. Yes it is.

117 EXT. TRACK - FIRST SECTOR - DAY

117

Joshua leads the team from a chicane...to see a FIGURE in street clothes walking their way, on track, with a gear bag and helmet. They all stop jogging...like it's some mirage.

Sonny gives a wave, arriving. Joshua marvels with a grin.

118 INT. APEX RACE BAY - ABU DHABI - DAY

118

Seals cut and car covers removed as Joshua and the Mechanics return...with Sonny now among them. Ruben stands sharply. So do Kate, Kaspar, Engineers.

RUBEN

How'd you get here?

SONNY

Coach. (ALT: Premium Economy.)

Sonny hands Ruben PAPERWORK.

RUBEN

What's this?

SONNY

My bullshit loophole.

RUBEN

Forget it. I'm not even going to read it.

SONNY

That's a real legal document from a Tijuana lawyer, waiving all liability for your company vis-a-vis this race, my life and me.

RUBEN

Give me that.

Ruben snatches the paperwork and starts reading it.

SONNY

If I die, it's my fault. And since you still owe me my last paycheck...

He pulls the ENVELOPE out that Ruben gave him. Rips it in half.

SONNY (CONT'D)

I'm still technically on this team.

He notes the cars. Sees the UPGRADED FLOOR is there.

SONNY (CONT'D)

Kate. Where's the Shitbox?

KATE

FIA confirmed documents were forged. And sent by someone from Apex.

SONNY

(he already knows)
Wonder who. (ALT: Huh.)

RUBEN

I don't care about your loophole. It's my car and you're not racing it.
(pauses)
Brother, I can't let you do it.

SONNY

If the last thing I do is drive this car, I'll take that life a thousand times.

RUBEN

We can't win.

SONNY

Not if we don't try.

Ruben sees something in Sonny's look that moves him...

119 OMITTED 119 *

120 INT. SONNY'S PREP ROOM - DAY / INT. JOSHUA'S PREP ROOM 120 *

QUICK SHOTS: Sonny's gear bag hits. Watch gets placed beside the deck of cards. Mismatched socks go on. Racing kit zipped up. *

Sonny sits with private anxiety and nerves. Joshua sits with private anxiety and nerves. *

Sonny has a dizzy spell, steadies himself against the wall. Joshua's in his doorway, now dressed too. A look of concern. *

JOSHUA

You good? *

SONNY

Yep. *

Sonny cuts the deck, takes top card and slips it into his pocket. *

JOSHUA

How come you don't look at the card?

SONNY

It's whatever I need it to be. *

[ALT: What card?] *

121 INT. APEX RACE BAY - DAY 121 *

Engines HUMMING. Fans CHEERING in anticipation. Sonny drops into his cockpit, wincing as he settles in. Joshua drops into his own, making last checks. Mechanics start to disperse--

--as Sonny looks to pit lane, sees Kate at pit wall. A wary nod. He nods back, closes his VISOR. Dodge signals "release"--

122 EXT. PIT LANE - DAY 122

--and Sonny ROARS his #7 into the arena. A moment later, Joshua's #9 joins too. A procession of rival CARS follow.

123 INT. PADDOCK CLUB - DAY 123

Banning still entertains his future Corporate Colleagues, as a BUZZ starts to sweep through the room:

TELECAST (ON TV)

*...and we're hearing that the Apex GP
team has made a late-stage driver
switch.*

(MORE)

TELECAST (ON TV) (CONT'D)

Reserve Luca Cortez, after a tough Qualifying, will be replaced by Sonny Hayes, who, last we heard, didn't even make the trip to Abu Dhabi. However, the rules require he start at the back of the pack, P22...

*
*

Banning spins full around, nearly tipping his sushi plate.

NINA

Oh good, Peter! That's your guy!

*

Alarmed, Banning pushes through to the pit lane overlook--

124 EXT. STARTING GRID - SAME

124

--to see the cars assembling on the pre-race grid, as Mechanics converge. Sonny climbs out at P22. Dodge is there:

SONNY

You still got my phone?

Dodge hands it to him. Sonny looks to the Paddock Club.

125 EXT. PADDOCK CLUB BALCONY

125

Banning's phone BUZZES. He finds it, reads the incoming TEXT:

>>>**FUCK YOU.** (ALT: Middle finger emoji)

Banning snaps his head up. Amidst the massing crowds on the grid, Sonny's a statue, staring his way--

126 EXT. STARTING GRID

126

--and then heads for the gantry with Joshua, where drivers gather for pageantry. Don Cavendish comes running with a mic:

DON CAVENDISH

And here's Sonny Hayes, ooh, a bit worse for wear. Sonny, I know we've had our differences, but it's your final F1 race. Anything, thoughts?

*

Sonny motions to an Apex crew member and walks towards his car. The crew member hands Don an envelope. Don opens it to reveal 10 grand in cash.

127 EXT. YAS MARINA CIRCUIT - DAY - RACE NINE

127

As the UAE national anthem finishes, JETS are on approach overhead. The stands are ROARING...as at the end of the row of drivers...Sonny and Joshua take it in, side by side.

SONNY

Ready?

JOSHUA

Ready.

[ALT:

SONNY

Helluva race.

JOSHUA

Helluva crowd.

SONNY

You know what I was just thinking?

JOSHUA

What's that.

SONNY

How 'bout we win this thing?

JOSHUA

How 'bout it.

END ALT:]

SONNY

Elbows out?

*
*

JOSHUA

Elbows out.

*
*

128 EXT. RACE TRACK - LATE DAY - RAPID-FIRE MONTAGE

128

Red gantry lights BLINK DARK. Engines SCREAM--

TELECAST (V.O.)

Lights out and away we go!

Pedals HIT floor. Clutch paddles DROP. Wheels SPIN from dead stop. Steering units LIGHT UP with revs.

IN SONNY'S P22 CAR: He BLASTS off the line, barely avoiding the bad start of the P20 McLaren ahead cutting to the left--

--but the P21 Alfa Romeo gives him nowhere to go, so he's forced even wider, the long way around -- as P19 cuts into the P20 gap, which gives Sonny an opening for Turn One--

IN JOSHUA'S P11 CAR: -- the P9 and P10 go to the inside (left), so he goes to the outside of Turn 1.

ON TRACK: --as the three cars are wheel-to-wheel-to-wheel, no one giving ground -- but Joshua anticipates and brakes early, cutting down the inside as the others continue, picking up two places to P9--

P9 and P10 tangle and push wide missing the apex, go over the curb and off the track rejoining at Turn 2--

TELECAST (V.O.)

A close call for Joshua Pearce! But he keeps his cool and picks up two places.

TELECAST 2 (V.O.)

Pearce showing some real maturity there. He saw a bad situation before it happened and he's off to a great start.

IN SONNY'S (NOW P19) CAR: he battles with an Alpine down towards Turn 6 and dives to the inside with a clean overtake-- but the Alpine comes back at him as they head into the fast Turn 9 --

SONNY

Don't even--

ON TRACK: --but the Alpine on the inside washes wide CLIPPING Sonny's left rear -- he's headed off track --

IN SONNY'S CAR: -- he cuts a curb, wheels come off ground, he bottoms out, and SPIDERWEBS his right side mirror! An ominous omen.

ON PIT WALL: Kate exhales. They both survived Lap One--

KATE

Gained places. We're alive.

129

INT. RACE BAY - TIME CUT - SUNSET - LAP 11

129

Mechanics watch LEADERBOARD shift, Apex cars on the hunt: JOSHUA P7, SONNY P14...

TELEPARTNER (V.O.)

The APX GP cars are climbing with their upgrade back. But the pure speed of Red Bull, Mercedes and Ferrari have always proven too much before...

IN SONNY'S CAR: Sonny battles VIBRATIONS from degraded tires. In his POV, the shaky horizon line is maddening...

SONNY (INTO RADIO)

Gap to leader?

NICKLEBY

Fifteen seconds.

SONNY

Need to keep JP plus twenty-two seconds.

ON PIT WALL: Kate and Engineers trade knowing looks--

NICKLEBY

Length of a pit stop.

KATE

You know why.

IN SONNY'S CAR: Sonny keeps locking up, tires SMOKING, as he sees a Haas car gaining in his mirrors--

ON TRACK: --and as he rounds TURN 9, MAGNUSSEN'S HAAS follows very close and dives late into TURN 11 on the inside. SONNY moves to block and MAGNUSSEN clips his right rear wheel. The Haas's whole left front wing SPLINTERS, scattering carbon DEBRIS across the entire track -- YELLOW FLAGS blink on -- just as he comes into view of the pit lane entry:

SONNY (INTO RADIO)
Puncture, puncture! New softs!

IN PIT LANE: Mechanics rush to position. Jodie fine-tunes:

JODIE
Ben, you're off your mark. Nate, get higher with that jack! [ALT: Slow is smooth, smooth is fast.] Here we go, boys! It's our day!

Perfect stop. Sonny REVS from the pits, back into action...

TELECAST (V.O.)
A good stop by APX GP. Hayes is lucky to get away with just a puncture and no apparent floor damage.

IN JOSHUA'S P6 CAR: As he rounds the last turn under VIRTUAL SAFETY CAR (VSC) LIGHTS, he watches the cars ahead all SWERVE into the pits--

JOSHUA (INTO RADIO)
Am I boxing? What's the plan?

FAZIO (OVER RADIO)
Plan C, Plan C! Stay out.

JOSHUA
(sotto, satisfied)
Chaos.

ON PIT WALL: Kate watches the screens play out...

KATE
Joshua slows down the leaders for Sonny, then Sonny does the same for him. It's the only way we keep this close.

KASPAR
And then we'll need luck.

KATE
Way ahead of you.

She lifts up her pant cuffs, revealing one BLACK sock and one GOLD. Kaspar raises an eyebrow.

130 EXT. RACE TRACK - TIME CUT - LAP 25 - DUSK

130

GREEN FLAGS now, and the concertina pack of cars PULLS AWAY, back to full speed -- with Joshua temporarily in front. He fights hard, attacking every corner--

IN SONNY'S CAR: On fresh tires in the midfield in P16, he ATTACKS--

SONNY (INTO RADIO)
How's JP doing up there?

NICKLEBY (OVER RADIO)
Keeping the leaders at bay. DRS will be active on the next straight--

*

SONNY
Got it.

ON TRACK: Sonny BLASTS past the P15 car into Turn 6, gets the P14 in sights...and on the next straight between 7 and 9, he ROARS past that too into P14--

NICKLEBY (OVER RADIO)
Four cars ahead. Keep pushing.

IN JOSHUA'S CAR: Two CARS finally get past him...

JOSHUA (INTO RADIO)
My rear tires are shot!

FAZIO (OVER RADIO)
Box, JP, box. What a fight.

IN PIT LANE: Mechanics RUSH out for Joshua's pit stop. Joshua zooms in, jacked up, tires switch then locks in as car's dropped. He looks to the garage and spots Bernadette before he zooms off. Leaderboard drops Joshua back to P8, now on Lap 25.

*

*

TELECAST (V.O.)
*Incredible teamwork from Apex GP!
Leapfrogging each other with their pit
stops, preventing Mercedes, Red Bull
and Ferrari from pulling away...*

IN SONNY'S CAR: Perfectly sticking every apex...

NICKLEBY (OVER RADIO)
Three cars ahead are still on softs,
they'll have to stop once more.

SONNY

Someone's gonna try the undercut. I
need to be there when they do.

ON TRACK: Coming around main straight, once a Red Bull and Mercedes stay out, a Ferrari SWERVES into the pits--

ON PIT WALL: Kate springs up:

KATE

P3 Ferrari! Can he beat it to One?

IN RACE SUPPORT ROOM: Pippa and Analysts watch MODELS change--

PIPPA

Depends on their stop...five point
eight! He needs to pick up half a
second!

IN SONNY'S CAR: He sees the Ferrari leaving pit lane ahead--

NICKLEBY (RADIO)

Push, Sonny, give it everything!

ON TRACK: Sonny pushes harder, even with the ACCELERATING Ferrari as it exits pit lane -- and he edges just ahead at Turn Three--forcing it to GO WIDE -- the Ferrari comes back on track aggressively right behind Sonny and dives to inside into Turn 5 -- he locks up and goes deep damaging a SMOKING tire--

TELECAST (V.O.)

*Hayes negates Ferrari's fresh tire
advantage with a perfectly timed fight
at Turn Five. Two APX GP cars in the
Top 7, and still half a race to go...*

IN PADDOCK CLUB: Banning watches Apex climbing.

NINA

Peter! This is amazing! How are they
staying so close to the lead?

*

BANNING

(feigned smile)

They're working together...

IN THE RACE BAY: Bernadette's so excited that she takes Ruben's hand, all nerves, double fingers-crossed.

131 EXT. RACE TRACK - TIME CUT - NIGHT - LAP 38

131

On fresh tires, Joshua's climbing positions, due to cars between him and the leaders making final pits...

TELECAST (V.O.)

*Just twenty laps left, here at the
end of the final pit stop window.*

(MORE)

TELECAST (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Race leaders will surely come in now -- and they do! Let's see if the APX GP drivers, sitting third and fourth, will be able to beat them out...

Down into Turn 3, Joshua sees the lead Mercedes and Red Bull COMING OUT of the pit lane -- and this time he GUNS it -- beating them both and taking the temporary lead!

TELECAST (V.O.)

Ahead by a hair! Pearce is able to get there! For the first lap since Monza, he leads an F1 race!

TELEPARTNER (V.O.)

Well it won't last long -- not with both APX GPs on old tires, He'll have to defend for his life as many laps as he can...

IN SONNY'S CAR: Only a few seconds back in P4, Sonny sees the Mercedes and Red Bull far ahead -- but he's too busy defending the Ferrari on his rear wing. High deg for both.

TELECAST (V.O.)

Meanwhile, Hayes stuck five seconds back, in a battle for P4. No chance he can gain ground now...

132

EXT. RACE TRACK - TIME CUT - LAP 54 - NIGHT

132

ON PIT WALL: This five-way duel takes shape toward Lap 54...

KATE

Nobody has to stop again. And our tires are nine laps older.

ON TRACK: Joshua's tires SKID, they've lost too much grip. The Mercedes and Red Bull overtake and drop him to P3...

JOSHUA (INTO RADIO)

Sorry, guys. Got nothing left...

IN PADDOCK CLUB: Most Apex guests MOAN to see Joshua fall back, but not Banning, who sighs with secret relief...

TELECAST (V.O.)

It's just been the APX GP story all year. Risks and tricks and grit... but only talent crowns a champion.

IN SONNY'S CAR: Sonny's BATTLING hard...VISION BLURRING...

TELEPARTNER (V.O.)
*Yes, the deck's been stacked
 against them. And now they're out
 of cards to play.*

IN APEX BAY: Ruben pushes up from his seat, throws off his headset in a burst of despair. It startles Bernadette.

BERNADETTE
 It isn't over--

RUBEN
 Nothing can change.
 (beat)
 There is no worse feeling in the world.

ON TRACK: Sonny is battling with Russell's Mercedes (P4). As they come in the final complex around the hotel, the Merc has a slide and bad exit, which allows Sonny to have a run on the outside in the awkward Turn 14--

*

TELECAST (V.O.)
*Shaping up for a Mercedes-Ferrari
 finish, with Russell eyeing P3.
 He'll surely overtake Pearce once
 he can dispatch Hayes.*

*

Russell takes the line with no compromise and squeezes Sonny to the wall: light contact made but they both get away with it.

TELEPARTNER (V.O.)
*Looks like Hayes intends to make
 his life difficult...*

IN SONNY'S CAR: Sonny is angry for falling short, for getting squeezed, as he tucks in behind dangerously close...

TELEPARTNER (V.O.)
*After all, that's what Sonny does
 best.*

ON TRACK: On the exit of the final corner, Sonny can only go to the outside along the straight and gets alongside for turn 1. They are side by side approaching the fast turn 2.

ON PIT WALL: Kaspar sees he's driving hell-bent...

KASPAR
 Sonny, no contact -- we can't win --
 at least let us finish the race!

*

But just as Sonny gets his nose ahead, Russell's front right tire MAKES CONTACT with Sonny's back left sending Sonny's cars spinning off with lots of smoke--

TELECAST (V.O.)
Contact in Turn Two! Disaster!

Sonny spins and his car smashes into the barrier SHATTERING THE REAR WING, sending shrapnel across the track--

IN PADDOCK CLUB: Fans GASP. Banning bolts up, arms raised--

BANNING
 YES!
 (down just as fast)
 Oh! No!

IN SONNY'S CAR: Recovering from spin, Sonny's disoriented--

TELECAST (V.O.)
A massive collision for Hayes and Russell! Debris all over the track!

He's still moving, but slowly, seeing CARS coming behind him--

TELEPARTNER (V.O.)
Stewards have no choice but to red-flag this race...

*

ON TRACK: As other cars attempt to maneuver through the debris, RED FLAGS wave.

*

*

TELECAST (V.O.)
And there it is! With only three laps to go, the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix has been stopped. Cars will return to the pits, and we'll have a grid restart once the track can be cleared for safe conditions.

IN APEX BAY: Ruben head in his hands, suddenly perks up...

RUBEN
 (whispers)
 Miracle.

IN SONNY'S CAR: Sonny coaxes his machine, REAR WING dragging, TIRES BLOWN, as he tries to find a way forward...

TELEPARTNER (V.O.)
Yes, but you can only join the restart if you can get back to pit lane. Doesn't look like that APX GP wreck can get there...

IN APEX BAY: While Mechanics despair, Ruben sees only hope. He grabs Dodge, watching Sonny's tortoise-pace on monitors:

RUBEN

C'mon, you bastard! Easy, gentle --
she's your girlfriend, you like her
-- careful -- SLOW!

DODGE

It's a miracle...

RUBEN

I know.

DODGE

Never seen one until now.

IN JOSHUA'S CAR: He sees RED FLAGS. The SAFETY CAR appears ahead of the Mercedes and Ferrari in front of him. *

FAZIO (OVER RADIO)

Red Flag JP! Come in, stay in the
fast lane and switch off. We're
still alive!

IN PIT LANE: Dodge and Mechanics race out. A flurry of activity up and down pit lane as all crews CHARGE OUT:

TELECAST (V.O.)

*Red Flag rules: during a stoppage
like this, teams can make repairs,
but only out in the pit lane. APX
GP will have their work cut out...*

KATE

New softs, both cars. Raise the tire
pressure for 3 quick laps! *

DODGE

Everybody get out here! Time to build
a NEW CAR!

ON TRACK: Rounding final turn, Sonny fits-and-starts his mangled car into pit lane...

TELEPARTNER (V.O.)

*Also, all cars can put on new tires
for what will be a final three lap
sprint.*

(MORE)

TELEPARTNER (V.O.) (CONT'D)

And here's the irony: because they failed to make the top 10 in qualifying, APX has a pair of new soft tires in reserve which gives them a slight speed advantage over the used soft tires on the cars ahead of them. For them, this Red Flag is a lifeline. You'd almost have to wonder if Sonny was trying to engineer it.

TELECAST (V.O.)

Well he'll be disqualified if he did.

IN PIT LANE: As Mechanics swarm,

Kaspar sees a mechanic struggle to get the rear jack under the damaged car, he abandons his headset and runs to the car...

KASPAR

I've got it...

Kaspar sees what the problem is--

KASPAR (CONT'D)

Lift the right rear corner.

The mechanics lift the car and Kaspar manages to get the jack under it. He looks at Jodie.

KASPAR (CONT'D)

Get my tools!

Kaspar glances up to the stands to see LIESL, hands clasped nervously, admiring him from above. She blows him a kiss -- Kaspar smiles broadly.

Sonny speaks to Kate on the radio--

SONNY (INTO RADIO)

I didn't do it! Not this time!

KATE (OVER RADIO)

"Not this time." Tell that to the stewards...

A mechanic goes to help Sonny out of the car, but he shakes his head: he's going to stay in.

Sir Lewis Hamilton paces nearby, watching the car being fixed.

Joshua goes up to Sonny.

JOSHUA

You good?

SONNY

Yeah I'm good.

Sonny points at the replay of the contact with Russell on grandstand screens--

JOSHUA

You had wheels ahead! You won the
line!/It was your corner!
P3 and 4! LET'S GO!

*
*

He hustles off to oversee the crew's work on his car. Sonny
looks to Kate on pit wall. She looks grim.

*

SONNY (INTO RADIO)

*

You believe me...

KATE (OVER RADIO)

*

(winces)

Well your tone doesn't help.

SONNY

*

That was my corner!

*

TELECAST (V.O.)

*Hold on stewards are having a look
at that incident. We'll see if they
penalize Sonny for that pass on the
very edge of the track. That is, if
his team can even reconstruct the
car in time...*

*
*

*

133 EXT. PIT LANE - MOMENTS LATER

133

*

A FLURRY of action: new REAR WING flies in. New SOFT TIRES
put on. Dodge leads Jodie and Mechanics in an emergency
repair master class, like trying open heart surgery on a
battlefield patient.

TELECAST (V.O.)

*Race to resume in ten minutes,
stewards have announced. Not much
time to get major work done...*

134 INT. PADDOCK CLUB

134

Banning orders yet another drink, watching incident replays:

TELEPARTNER (V.O.)

*And still no decision on Sonny
Hayes...*

BANNING

C'mon, clearly a penalty, not that
we want that, but objectively, I
mean, that's the guy...

135 INT. APEX RACE BAY

135

Ruben comes in close to Sonny and leans in, nothing to do but
watch the crews work:

SONNY

We can't end like this.

RUBEN

Ehh, it's just a timeout. Like the
last thirty years.

He's grateful for the ride.

RUBEN (CONT'D)

It's in the hands of the racing
gods. You gotta believe!

Sonny looks around.

SONNY

How are we doing back there? Are we
gonna make it? Dodge?!

DODGE

We're on it.

136 EXT. PIT LANE

136

Kaspar is flat to the asphalt, grease-spattered, wrench in
hand, as his crew re-assembles the car's rear around him.

New SOFT TIRES go on Joshua's car. As other DRIVERS climb
into their cars, Sonny--

SONNY

JP! JP! Three laps is a lifetime...

*

JOSHUA

Patience!

*

*

*

Joshua nods, puts his helmet on, climbs into his car.

JODIE (O.S.)
Hey Sonny, got a minute?

He looks up. Jodie, Dodge, Kaspar stand proud:

JODIE
We've got you a ride.

137

EXT. RACE TRACK - NIGHT

137

CARS finish a warm-up formation lap, returning to the grid...

TELECAST (V.O.)
*Once those red lights go out,
this'll be an absolute sprint to
the finish. Position advantage to
Mercedes and Ferrari, tire
advantage to APX GP. Stronger car,
stronger driver? We'll just have to
see...*

IN JOSHUA'S CAR: He settles into P3 on the grid, second row.
Glances to mirrors to see Sonny's car coming.

IN SONNY'S CAR: He pulls up diagonally just back of
Joshua...as the grid fills in behind him...

NICKLEBY (RADIO)
Sonny, we've just heard from the
stewards...

SONNY
Goddammit...now?

NICKLEBY (RADIO)
We're debating whether to tell you.

SONNY
You're not gonna TELL me?!

NICKLEBY (RADIO)
Kaspar says yes but Kate says no.
Says you're fast when you're angry.

SONNY
Tell her job well done!

IN PADDOCK CLUB: Banning's pacing, as news comes on TVs:

TELECAST (V.O.)
*Stewards have made their decision:
the Lap 55 collision between Hayes
and Russell is ruled a racing
incident. No further investigation.*

The VIPs cheer. Banning's look turns sour.

IN SONNY'S CAR:

NICKLEBY (RADIO)
You had the line. Finish your race.

IN JOSHUA'S CAR: Joshua gets the news over his radio...

FAZIO (RADIO)
Still have two cars in the mix.

JOSHUA
Then we've got a team.

IN APEX RACE BAY: Ruben sits beside Bernadette, emboldened:

BERNADETTE
We're the only cars on fresh
tires...because we sucked in
qualifying yesterday?

*

RUBEN
Never got the chance to use them.
Sometimes when you lose, you win.

BERNADETTE
That makes no sense.

RUBEN
It's a Sonny thing.

138 EXT. RACE TRACK - NIGHT - FINAL THREE LAPS

138

LIGHTS OUT. Sonny and Joshua's cars ROAR BACK ONTO THE TRACK--

--and FIGHT to hold position, with the whole pack
accordioning tight into Turn One -- where they emerge still
P3 (Joshua) and P4 (Sonny)...

TELECAST (V.O.)
*...and it's Hamilton, Leclerc, Pearce,
Hayes all surviving the gauntlet as
they escape turn one!*

ON TRACK: Sonny and Joshua give chase on the two leaders: a Mercedes (P1), a Ferrari (P2). The two Apex cars on fresher tires, conserving their power, no fighting here--

IN SONNY'S CAR: Sonny's trailing Joshua, VISION BLURRING.

SONNY (INTO RADIO)
Tell JP to follow my lead.

IN JOSHUA'S CAR:

FAZIO (OVER RADIO)
Joshua, Sonny says follow him.

JOSHUA
Follow? He's behind me!

But as Joshua's forced to slow into Turn 5 behind the Ferrari, Sonny slips inside for a narrow PASS. Joshua can't help but smile at the fearless gambit:

FAZIO (RADIO)
He's giving you a tow! Take it!

JOSHUA
All the way.

ON TRACK: Sonny provides an aero boost to Joshua into the 5-6 straight, approaching the chicane--

TELECAST (V.O.)
Hayes gets by Pearce, but Pearce is right on his wing...he'll get an aerodynamic tow...it's like they're trading a baton...

IN SONNY'S CAR: Sonny struggles to keep track of Joshua in his FRACTURED side mirror -- flashes of DOUBLE VISION too--

INTO TURN 8: Where Sonny and Joshua hunt down the P2 Ferrari now, not waiting for the next straight, but attacking on the turns--

IN SONNY'S CAR: --as the extreme force now CHIPS OFF pieces of Sonny's mirror. Bit by bit, he's losing his view--

SONNY
C'mon kid...c'mon...

Sonny BRAKES LATE into the high-speed TURN 9, OVERTAKING on the outside line -- tires barely gripping track as he gets by and with the Ferrari getting a bad exit, it's unprepared for Joshua cutting past the other way on TURN 10.

TELECAST (V.O.)
*And with Hayes working the diversion,
 Pearce rockets by Leclerc -- into P2!*

INTO THIRD SECTOR: Leaving them just P1 Mercedes to catch--

*

TELEPARTNER (V.O.)
*Look at this teamwork! Just a
 racing ballet. Have you ever seen
 drivers work together like this?*

IN JOSHUA'S CAR: Joshua's eyes gleam to see the leader--

JOSHUA
 Yeah, baby. Remember us?

IN SONNY'S CAR: Sonny exits a turn, takes it full throttle.
 Body getting BATTERED, but he no longer feels a thing...

ON TRACK: Joshua blasts through the 2-3-4 chicane. So does
 Sonny right behind. Mere centimeters apart, with precision
 speed.

IN RACE BAY: Bernadette's clutching Ruben now, a bundle of
 nerves. Mechanics jump and yell, urging them on--

RUBEN
 Two more laps...

DODGE
 Come on lads! Send it!

INTO TURN FIVE: Joshua is right on the Mercedes's rear wing,
 and Sonny on Joshua's--

*

ONTO 5-6 STRAIGHT: --as they round the bend, flying past the
 grandstand, with the crowd going wild -- as Sonny and Joshua
 fan out on the leader's flanks again, DRS open--

IN SONNY/JOSHUA'S CARS: Pulling even, catching eyes--

INTO TURN 6: --as the Mercedes holds them off again, DRS
 wings shut, unable to overtake in time--

ON PIT WALL: Kate and Engineers are alarmed--

FAZIO
 Why didn't they overtake?

KATE

Only time for one move. Hamilton'll
defend whichever car attacks first.
Advantage goes to the other.

KASPAR

But they both can't wait!

INTO SECOND SECTOR: Sonny and Joshua chase the P1 Mercedes,
HURTLING fearlessly side-by-side -- through visors, meet
eyes, knowing whoever attacks first advantages the other...

ON PIT WALL: Suddenly fearing neither of them will do it...

KATE

Someone has to sacrifice...

IN SONNY'S CAR: Sonny grips his wheel one final time...

SONNY

(sotto)
Go win it, kid.

INTO BACK STRAIGHT: Last chance to overtake, as Hamilton GUNS
IT and Sonny and Joshua FAN OUT FLANKING again, DRS open--

--and this time Sonny GUNS IT too, creeping up on the right--

TELECAST

Hayes makes the first move!

IN JOSHUA'S CAR: Reacts instantly, instinct sending him left

ON TRACK: --as the Mercedes veers right to cut off Sonny, his
first attacker -- which allows Joshua a path to ZOOM PAST on
his left-- *

--as the Merc squeezes Joshua toward edge of track -- which
allows Sonny a path forward, able to overtake on his right --
with the tight TURN 10 coming up-- *

--where the Merc's front tire clips Sonny-- *

--which sends Sonny's car into a FATAL WILD SKID, spinning
like a top as all three exit the turn--

TELECAST (V.O.)

*Oh no, heartbreak! Déjà vu for Hayes!
But it puts his teammate wheels ahead!*

--as Joshua and the Mercedes BLAST BY, neck and neck.
Joshua's eyes dart to his mirror, as Sonny spins from sight--

IN RACE BAY/PIT WALL: Everyone gasps -- the end for Sonny--

ON TRACK: --as he somehow gets control back, avoids a smash.

IN SONNY'S CAR: On pure instinct, he re-orientes the car, now three fatal seconds back--

IN JOSHUA'S CAR: Now has the lead, fending off the Mercedes-- *

TELECAST (V.O.)

Pearce has P1! Apex leads the race!

JOSHUA (INTO RADIO)

Where's Sonny? Can he finish?

FAZIO (OVER RADIO)

One more lap! Hamilton is never gonna
back down! *

JOSHUA

CAN SONNY FINISH?!

FAZIO (OVER RADIO)

He's on track, yes. Just watch Lewis
when he fights! No more risks! No more
risks! *

ON TRACK: The Mercedes pulls even into the front straight,
chasing, wild -- precariously close to the barrier--

IN JOSHUA'S CAR: --as Joshua anticipates what's coming--

JOSHUA

(sotto)

No such thing.

ON TRACK: --while the Merc threatens to touch, wheel-to-wheel
with the next TURN 1 approaching, running out of track --
Joshua can only feel him -- doesn't lift -- holds position--

TELECAST (V.O.)

*The rookie holds his line! He won't
back down! He's here to FIGHT the
seven time World Champion!* *

--Hamilton doesn't back down either and -- BANG! -- both cars
collide and are spun off-track into the run-off...

...leaving the Mercedes and Joshua knocked out of the race.

ON PIT WALL: Kate and Engineers leap up, stunned.

IN SONNY'S CAR: A full three seconds back, still gutting it out...he hears it on radio...

NICKLEBY (OVER RADIO)
Push, Sonny, push.

His eyes widen in confusion...but seeing Le Clerc's Ferrari and Russell's Mercedes growing in his mirror, he GUNS it for the final lap!

TELECAST (V.O.)
*Joshua Pearce's gamble puts his
teammate in the lead! What a heroic
move! Sacrificing his own podium
finish in exchange for a potential
team victory!*

IN GARAGE: Nobody can breathe...

TELECAST (V.O.)
*Sonny Hayes has only **one** lap to go.
APX GP needs this victory to survive.
The question is: do they have the car?*

RUBEN
(sotto)
We have the driver.

ON FIRST SECTOR: Sonny's car still REVS strong, passing the double spinout safely off-track in the infield--

IN JOSHUA'S CAR: --as Joshua roots him on--

JOSHUA
Show 'em, old man.

ON TRACK: --as Sonny PUNCHES IT down the straight and through the curves, with the **duo** of new RIVALS on his heels--all sound drops away. All we hear is his breath.

Sonny CARVES through the turns hitting every apex. He is one with his machine--where he belongs.

ON PIT WALL: All watch screens, incredulous, breathless:

NICKLEBY
What is happening...?

Kate smiles.

KATE
He's flying.

139 EXT. RACE BAY/PIT LANE - NIGHT

139

Mechanics, Engineers, Kate, Ruben, even Bernadette...all race
across pit lane for the finish--

--as the CHECKERED FLAG waves...and three CARS fly around the final turn, onto main straight, DRS opening up for every car but one...Sonny's battered Apex #7--

--the crazy black-and-gold beast they'll never catch--

--and Sonny calmly shuts his eyes...until he hears:

NICKLEBY (OVER RADIO)
P-ONE! P-ONE!!!

ON THIRD SECTOR: Joshua sees a section of black-and-gold fans erupt in a ROAR -- and thrusts his arms skyward.

IN SONNY'S CAR: Sonny takes it all in, overcome. A profound sense of peace...as cannons lining the finish shoot VICTORY FLARES...

140 INT. PADDOCK CLUB - NIGHT - SAME

140

There's celebration all around for Apex VIPs...except for ashen Banning, and his Corporate Guests:

*

NINA
Fun party, Peter. Means three more years for Ruben, right? Guess we'll check back about that deal.
(drops the smile)
Presuming you're still on the Board.

*

They depart. Banning stares at fireworks. A SERVER offers him a champagne flute.

141 EXT. WINNER'S AREA - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

141

Sonny's battered car comes to a stop at the P1 marker. He staggers out...into the embraces of his gathered Mechanics, with Jodie first to greet him. Kaspar is overcome, WEeping.

JOSHUA (O.S.)
What are you smiling about?

Sonny turns to see Joshua...strolling the final turn on foot, much like Sonny himself has appeared before...

JOSHUA (CONT'D)
I'm gonna win a million, mate. You should have at least one.

Sonny wraps him in a powerful hug.

JOSHUA (CONT'D)
We did it.

SONNY

Yeah we did.

142 EXT. PODIUM PLATFORM - LATER - NIGHT

142

Grandstand full of FANS, winning TEAMS on pit lane, as Sonny's PROMO VIDEO appears on the GIANT PODIUM SCREEN...

TRACK ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

*And the winner of the 15th Abu Dhabi
Grand Prix, from Apex GP...Sonny
Hayes!*

Crowd ROARS as Sonny takes the top step of the podium. A PRESENTER removes the Trophy from a Louis Vuitton case and offers Sonny his Trophy, but he declines...

TROPHY PRESENTER

You have to take it. Please take it.
Hold it--

SONNY

Didn't they tell you?

He spots Ruben in the wings.

SONNY (CONT'D)

Give it to him.

The confused Presenter shrugs to her bosses, and hands the trophy to Ruben instead. Laughing, he graciously takes it. Sonny steps off the podium and Ruben steps to intercept.

RUBEN

You get one day to say it, Sonny.
Today you are the best in the world.
[ALT: I love the way you...Never
change!]

*
*
*
*
*

Ruben hugs him, buoyant.

Joshua continues walking and gets a pat on the back from TOTO WOLFF.

TOTO WOLFF

Hey Joshua, if you're ever looking
around.

JOSHUA

Thanks Toto, but I'm happy where I am.

Together, Ruben and Sonny survey the scene...

DOWN BELOW: Mechanics carry Joshua on their shoulders. Fazio and Nickleby celebrate with Kate. Kaspar hugs Liesl as she lavishes him with kisses. Bernadette meets Sonny's eyes and smiles. Lisbeth is there too...

Joshua gets back on the ground and runs to hug Bernadette and Cashman.

Behind them, some celebrating crew move to reveal the STYLISH WOMAN amidst the crowd. She smiles at Joshua and comes closer.

FLORENCE

I'm Florence.

She puts out her hand and he takes it.

JOSHUA

Joshua.

ON STAGE: As the P2 AND 3 WINNERS spray champagne, Ruben grabs a bottle too...but Sonny surveys the FIREWORKS and FANS, and strangely looks a little lost.

DOWN BELOW: Ruben sends a SPRAY into the crowd. Kate ducks and dries her eyes, then looks back up. Amidst the wild celebration, she's the first to notice...Sonny's gone.

IN THE PIT LANE: Close on Sonny as he pushes his way, head down, through the celebratory mob.

BENEATH THE PODIUM: Kate looks for Sonny. She runs into Ruben and they hug and celebrate, before Kate continues on. *

143 INT. DRIVER'S PREP ROOM - NIGHT 143

Sonny enters and quickly slams the door behind him.

He collapses to his knees, letting a wave of emotion pour out of him.

144 INT. HALLWAY TO PREP ROOMS - NIGHT 144

O.S. celebration continues, as Kate searches the halls--

145 INT. DRIVER'S PREP ROOM - NIGHT 145

--to find Sonny's room empty -- all of his stuff gone. She processes for a moment, turns to go and sees Sonny in street clothes, bags at his side, waiting for her...

KATE
Another race I don't know about? *

SONNY
Somewhere. *

KATE
That beats this? *

Sonny gives her a look. *

KATE (CONT'D)
You can't keep moving forever. *

SONNY
I'm going this way, you're going that way. How about we meet in the middle? *

He allows a smile. She steps to him...for a kiss. *

KATE
Hold onto that until then. *

SONNY
Anything else? *

KATE
Drive fast.

*
*

146 EXT. TEAM PARKING LOT - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

146 *

Sonny crosses to his airport van, with his gearbag and helmet, watch on. A long ways behind, Joshua comes running, still in race gear and wet from champagne:

JOSHUA

Where you going?!

Sonny turns, has to shout across the distance:

SONNY

Don't worry about me! Go celebrate!

JOSHUA

But, wait, you're off to where--

SONNY

It's your team now!

JOSHUA

It was always my team!

Sonny nods, smiles.

SONNY

I'll be watching.

He raises a farewell wave. Joshua blinks, a little stunned. But lifts a goodbye hand too. Sonny gets in his airport van.

147 INT. AIRPORT VAN - NIGHT

147

Alone, Sonny pulls the playing card from his pocket. For the first time ever, he turns it over, but we don't see what it is. He muses, then puts it back in his pocket. Keeps it there.

148 EXT. ABU DHABI AIRPORT RESTAURANT - NIGHT

148

AIRPLANES taxiing on the runway...as ANGLE FINDS Sonny through the window at a booth in street clothes, with his gear-bag, unfolding a map like he did months ago...as a WAITRESS arrives with an ice cream sundae. She sets it down at his table...with a napkin and spoon.

He regards for a long, satisfied moment. Then tucks into his ice cream, sketching a route on his map...

DISSOLVE TO:

149 EXT. BAJA MEXICO - DAY 149

Sonny's van THUNDERS a remote road, headed for the coast.
Draped in desert dust from an arduous journey...

150 EXT. OCEANSIDE DUNES GARAGE - DAY 150

Two custom off-road CLASS 1 BUGGIES go hurtling over dunes on
a makeshift loop course. A ramshackle garage has been built,
labeled "Cruzado & Sons Baja Racing."

Three Mexican MECHANICS surround a third Buggy: an OLD-TIMER
(70), his SON (40) and a GRANDSON (16). The three generations
gather, seeing Sonny emerge...

SONNY

I hear you're looking for a driver.

MECHANIC SON

What's your name?

SONNY

Sonny Hayes.

The guys trade a look. Haven't heard of him.

MECHANIC SON

You ever driven Baja?

SONNY

Nope.

OLD-TIMER

We can't pay much.

SONNY

It's not about the money.

OLD-TIMER

So what's it about?

Off Sonny's smile, and the wild ROAR of engines...

...as the classic rock KICKS IN and we--

CUT TO BLACK.