

CHASING THE APEX

by

Evan Drennan

CONTACT VIA:
Ted Drennan
757.774-3169
ted.drennan@gmail.com

-Or-

Hollie Bruce
858-888-3787
hollz9000@gmail.com

OFFSCREEN Two Engines SCREAM in syncopation, slicing through gears with UPSHIFTS and DOWNSHIFTS, all at or near redline.

FADE IN:

EXT. LAGUNA SECA RACETRACK - DAY (CONTINUOUS ACTION)

CLOSE UP on the vivid IRIS/LENS of a green eye, there is a DISTINCT REFLECTION: The back of a RACECAR with its massive spoiler and the red and white stripes of KERBING as it flashes by in the turn.

BOB (VO)

Iler is simply **attacking!** This is gonna come down to the **last few laps** in a come-from-behind season in a career where he's actually having meteoric success!

JAKE ILER, a late twenties handsome rogue of a driver, pursues a racing liveried Huracan in an AMG GT-R during a GT3 race. He is mere feet behind at harrowing speeds and the two cars exude a CACAPHONY OF NOISE as Jake stalks his prey around the track.

JEFF (VO)

As they head into the final lap it feels like fate that Iler gets past Goodwin in the #74 Lamborghini. He's come up **six positions** in this final push for the championship--Don't forget, Bob, that he **has** to get first place here to secure the title!

FROM A HIGH VANTAGE

JESS MARSTEN, a mid twenties stunner, is standing in a VIP spot where she has a premier view of the track. She is anxious for her man to pass, trying to impart the energy he needs to execute the move.

TRACK'S PRESS BOOTH

Two announcers, BOB and JEFF, call the race.

BOB

(covers mic) My money's on Iler--
(uncovers) --Jake Iler is doing his darndest to frustrate and wear down Goodwin. He has a ton of experience from a diverse background; motorcycles, rally-cross, desert trophy

(MORE)

BOB (CONT'D)
trucks, open wheel---

ON TRACK

Jake continues to harry the Lambo.

JEFF (VO)
--You're right, we've been covering him for years at this network and it's great to see Jake doing so well in a race he shouldn't be doing **this** well in. Especially considering his team at Marsten Racing doesn't usually place near the top at all in the standings, and now Jake's **one pass away** from giving them a championship!!

PIT ROW

Team owner MIKE MARSTEN, a graying yet commanding gent in his fifties, and his CREW CHIEF watch the action from the pit wall amongst the other "Team Marsten" CREW MEMBERS.

MIKE
I don't know whether I feel like kissing him or strangling him.

CHIEF
If we'd gone with a three-stop strategy, he damn sure wouldn't be where he's at--

MIKE
--yeah, yeah. I don't pay ya to tell me what I can clearly see! Just didn't think he'd be able to get these lap times on a two-pit!

CHIEF
Been surprising me all season...

Mike grins and nods with delayed acquiescence.

ON TRACK

Jake goes for the inside line and the two cars tap, both getting squirrely. Jake makes micro-corrections with GLOVED HANDS.

In the Lambo, GOODWIN, a handsome young lad himself, taps his brakes as retributution for the contact.

In the GT-R, Jake's eyes gleam with the thrill of the chase.

IN BOOTH

BOB

Whoa--! A bit of contact and then a
brake-check by Goodwin! (covers mic)
--I'm tellin ya!

JEFF

(covers mic) Wouldn't catch me
bettin' **against** him! (uncovers)
Iler **should** be getting slower lap
times considering how long he's
been on those tires--

ON TRACK

Jake slips slightly and oversteers through a turn and the
Huracan surges ahead.

Jake buries the THROTTLE and tightens his grip on the
steering wheel.

PIT/PADDOCK

Team Marsten watches the leaders duke it out on a MONITOR.

MIKE

Argh!! Cmoncmoncmonnnnn...!

VIP

JESS

Let's go! You got this!!!!

ON TRACK

Jake closes gap with Goodwin by braking later and trying
for inside line again, nearly colliding as they flick
left/right through the CORKSCREW (Turn).

GOODWIN

Freakin madman--!! That's **my** line!

Jake is holding tight with the side of Goodwin like a remora.
Through the final esses, Jake is on the outside as they
approach the final turn, a left.

JEFF (VO)

We've seen Iler do this all season;
he forces others to make a mistake.
(MORE)

JEFF (VO) (CONT'D)
 And that means Goodwin has to drive
defensively--

The crowd go to their feet in anticipation, eagerly watching
 the last few relevant moments of the race.

BOB (VO)
 --You can sense it even from up here
 in the booth that Goodwin is just
barely hanging onto that lead!
 Here comes Iler's virtually last
 chance to pass..!

Jake inserts himself in the innermost part of the entrypoint,
 intending to brake later and when the Huracan is going
 to collide with him, Jake goes high around the turn, allowing
 Goodwin to make a perfect race line and Jake can only
 follow him lamely into the last straightaway.

IN VIP

Jess crumples into a squat, defeatedly.

JESS
 Ughhhh---

PIT WALL

Entire "Team Marsten" puts their hands on their heads in col-
 lective dismay, watching Jake go by they know for certain
 he's going to take 2nd place instead of the coveted win.

The CREW next to them in Goodwin's TEAM COLORS jumps in
 elation, antithetic to Team Marsten's reaction.

Jake follows Goodwin through the CHECKERED FLAG, just a
 few meters behind.

BOOTH

BOB
 And Brian Goodwin gets the victory!
 I wasn't expecting Iler to try pass-
 ing on the **outside** in the GT-R--
 Especially this late in the race!

Rendered speechless, Jeff looks equally mystified.

OUTER PADDOCKS WALL

Several FEDERAL AGENTS in tactical gear and marked windbreak-
 (MORE)

ers are hovering just out of eyeshot from Team Marsten and adjacent teams; holding PISTOLS and ASSAULT RIFLES at port. They look about each other with nervous energy.

LEAD AGENT (into RADIO)
We're all set--go ahead and take em'

Agents approach Mike Marsten and another team of them simultaneously move into another paddock as they go to their own targets.

LEAD AGENT (cont'd)
Michael Marsten! You're under arrest.
You have the right to--(zip ties him)

MIKE
(starting a scuffle)--What the hell?! Is this somebody's idea of a joke?!

JESS' VANTAGE

Agents swarm into specific areas of the pit/paddocks area, anyone witnessing is visibly and audibly STUNNED.

JESS
Oh God, no...

Equally quick to react are the CAMERA OPERATORS close by, who were busy shooting the race, divert and are now capturing the arrests.

Several scuffles break out as PERPS resist or flee ineffectually. There are small pockets of pandemonium.

IN BOOTH

BOB
Jeff, what the heck is **this**!?!?

OVER THE PADDOCKS

Onlookers over-react and scatter hysterically as agents make arrests.

JEFF (VO)
If you're watching this at home, we are just as shocked as you are! This is **beyond** bizarre for a racing event to be raided...

PIT LANE ENTRANCE

Jake pulls in obliviously and sees the bruhaha of the arrests, along with the cameras competing for the best shots--

Then he sees Mike being thrown to the ground, two agents kneel over him as he continues to buck and revolt.

Jake creeps in at a snail's crawl before the LEAD AGENT points at him.

LEAD AGENT
That's him!! That's Iler!!

Several agents point AR's and yell histrionically.

AGENT 1	AGENT 2	AGENT 3
Don't make a	Get outta the	Don't even
move!!	car!!	think about it!

ON JESS

She descends the raised viewing area then abruptly stops to watch the confrontation.

JESS (to herself)
Don't do anything stupid Jake...

IN THE GT-R

Jake's foot hovers over the throttle and his right hand jiggles involuntarily as he taunts the shifter knob. Will he bolt?

No. He unlatches the door.

LEAD AGENT
Kill the motor!!

Jake flips a SWITCH and the car dies. He unclips his harness and gets out cautiously.

He's rushed by agents and gets pushed against the roof-bracing of the car. He notices Jess who is horrified; her hands cover her mouth in shock.

JAKE
Call a lawyer!! Don't say a **word**
to these motherfuckers!!

An agent punches Jake in the kidney for the jibe (oof!) and yanks his zip-stripped wrists, telegraphing through his shoulders.

ASSORTED SHOTS OF THE ARRESTS (FOOTAGE)

VARIOUS SHOTS of the agents putting men into custody.

BOB (VO)
 Again, if you're watching at home
 or later on YouTube, you're as
 shocked as we are in person.
 What a black-eye to the racing
 world.

Tactically dressed agents frisk an upstanding looking man,
 removing his ROLEX.

JEFF (VO)
 This is **wildly** inappropriate--
 and it'll be remembered simply as
 an embarrassment.

CUT TO:

INT. INTAKE / HOLDING ROOM - DAY

Jake and his LAWYER confer, with Jake handcuffed to the table.

LAWYER
 They have a really solid case against
 you...
 (flips through INDICTMENT)
 "Conspiracy to distribute cocaine",
 "Conspiracy to commit money laun-
 dering"... each one's ten years.

Jake has a vacant stare as he processes this, the color
 draining from his face.

LAWYER (cont'd)
 You're number one on the indictment
 so they think you're the ringleader.
 Ergo, there's twenty people under
 you that are gonna cooperate--
 We can't even **dream** of taking this
 to trial.

JAKE
 There's no physical evidence!!
 What about 'habeus corpus' and all
 that...? They didn't catch me doing
 anything **remotely** illegal.

LAWYER
 "Ghost Dope". They don't **need** phy-
 sical evidence to make a case.
 Just a few of the people under you
 has to corroborate their narrative--

JAKE

--I only know **four** of the names
even on that fuckin' list!!

LAWYER

(shakes head) Even **one** person who
talks first and takes the best deal
is gonna be all they need.

JAKE

So: No trial.

LAWYER

Absolutely no chance. You'd get
thirty years if you took it to
the box and lost.

JAKE

(beat/reels incredulous at that figure)
--Why did they make the arrests
at the **race**...?!

LAWYER

My friend at the US Attorney's
office said they wanted to make
a statement--even affluent racing
types aren't above "justice".
(makes air quotes cynically)
Even the DEA had you picked to win
and they wanted to pluck you at
your crescendo.

JAKE

Hm. Ironically, I get some small
pleasure in **their** disappointment.

(beat)

Alright, what do we do?

LAWYER

We take a deal. In doing so I can
probably get them to drop one of
the counts.

JAKE

So a hundred grand to you gets me
a plea deal...

LAWYER

(shrugs) They have all the cards.
The game is rigged...

INT. JAIL VISITING ROOM - DAY

Jake's in a different outfit and Jess is sitting across from him, about a meter apart. They extend their bodies to hold hands, a stentorian voice from a PA blares, "NO CONTACT OR WE'LL TERMINATE THE VISIT". They sit ramrod straight and then after a breath, relax.

JAKE

My lawyer says ten years...
So, I'm really looking at seven
and a half with good time.

JESS

(mouth agape) Jesus...

JAKE

Look, I don't expect you to have
to do this time, too.

JESS

Oh, fuck off. Are you kidding..?

Jake only stares wide-eyed, unsure how to respond.

JESS (cont'd)

Look--I'm gonna be there for you.
(her eyes shimmer)
I love you.

JAKE

Well! (hugely relieved)
You've never said **that** before.

JESS

...Do you love me?

JAKE

Of course I love you. I kinda figured I was gonna spend the rest of my life with you.

JESS

Jake, I still want to...
Whether you have to go to prison
or not. (wipes tear duct)

JAKE

(beat)

What about your Dad? How's he
holding up..?

JESS

Oh god, he's so stressed out. He's
hoping to get less than five years
for money laundering (rolls eyes)
(MORE)

JESS (CONT'D)

--That's the best his lawyers can do...

JAKE

I'm so sorry. If I'd kn--

Jess cuts him off with an abrupt HAND SIGNAL and points to the ceiling; "they're listening". Jake sighs and leans in.

JAKE (cont'd)

I really wish I could hold your hand.

JESS

Just tell me you love me again?

JAKE

Jessica, I loved you from the moment I met you.

JESS

I know.

(beat)

I just needed to hear it.

INT. FEDERAL COURTROOM - DAY

Jake stands in front of a very serious, very imposing JUDGE.

Jess is in the BG, looking like a ray of sunshine in the gloom, the only colorful thing in the room.

JUDGE

I'm sentencing you to 120 months...

GRADUAL DISSOLVE INTO:

Jake goes through a TRANSITION where he's standing in the drab courtroom and then his face changes along with the background.

He becomes more tan and sprouts a beard, his hairline recedes and his arms are now covered in tattoos.

EXT. PARKING LOT OUTSIDE A PRISON - DAY (7 YEARS LATER)

LONG DISSOLVE ENDS and Jake steps past the prison gate into a bright, sunny parking area where Jess is waiting for him.

Her hair is longer, she's slightly older too but more attractive than ever.

They embrace for some time, slowly rocking and basking in each other's love, alone in their own world.

INT. "CUSTOM DUNES" FABRICATION WORKSHOP - DAY

Car parts, engines, and frames of high end dune buggies surround Jake, where he is busy lathing, making a din of RACKET.

His weathered looking BOSS peeks out from his side office.

BOSS

Ey, yo!

(no response due to NOISE)

ANDRETTI!!

Jake flips the machine off and turns to face him.

JAKE

Ha! Yeah, boss?

BOSS

I'm gonna split. You want overtime?

Jake's conscience fights between work ethic and going home to Jess.

JAKE

um...

(beat)

Yeah. Yeah, sure.

His boss senses his trepidation, then nods and departs.

Jake reactivates the machine.

TIME LAPSE of Jake's SAND RAIL he's working on coming together. He welds, connects, and fastens in a blúr as the buggy becomes realized.

NORMAL TIME he's adding a special touch as the PHONE RINGS.

He picks it up after some hesitation.

JAKE

Custom Dunes.

REPORTER (VO)

Hey, I'm looking for Jake Iler.

JAKE

(scowls)

....speaking.

REPORTER (VO)
You're a tough guy to track down!

JAKE
Apparently not...

INT. JAKE & JESS' APARTMENT - NIGHT

Jess is cutting veggies while food sizzles in BG.

JAKE
I probably shouldn't have even
picked up the phone...

JESS
So why did you?

JAKE
...a feeling?

JESS
Ooooo, (teasing) You make it sound
ominous--!
So who was it/what was it about..?

JAKE
This reporter from ESPN. He's act-
ually a producer on that "30 for 30"
show...

(beat)
He's talking about doing a document-
ary about me. It'd be an hour or 90
minutes or thereabouts, depending
on how much I'd be willing to com-
mit to--

JESS
--So are you gonna do it...?

JAKE
(rubs his chin, detached)
I dunno. The media pretty much
crucified me already.

JESS
But this is different!

JAKE
(jerks head skeptically)
...How?

JESS
This is a chance to tell **your** side
of the story!

JAKE

What, how I got some of my best friends sent to prison for "conspiracy to sell cocaine"...?

JESS

No... you were just doing it so you could keep the team afloat!

JAKE

Ah, yes! (faux magnanimously)
--The **benevolent** drug dealer!

JESS

(scoffs) I'm serious. You only kept doing it so you could keep my dad from going bankrupt--

JAKE

--No one's ever gonna see it that way darlin. The truth is bad enough. I took a huge gamble doing that for so long and lost everything.

JESS

(beat)

You didn't lose me...

JAKE

(looks at her on a tilted head)
You're right...

JESS

(beat)

I think you should do it.

JAKE

...Yeah?

JESS

What have you got to lose..?

JAKE

Certainly not you!!

He approaches her from behind and wraps his arms around her, kissing her neck. She responds by nestling into him.

JESS

Mmmmm... not even if you tried.

MONTAGE - JAKE'S "DOCUMENTARY"

Set to UPBEAT MUSIC.

EXT. LAGUNA SECA RACETRACK- DAY

Jake stands on the perimeter of the vacant track and points to where the raid happened, while a FILM CREW and a reporter/producer in his mid-forties, STEVE, capture him.

JAKE

...and they just **swarmed** like insects...! Like, outta nowhere.

STEVE

What was your initial reaction?

JAKE

--My stomach fell in my asshole!

INT. CUSTOM DUNES' WORKSHOP - DAY

The Cameraman and SoundGuy on the crew snake around Jake's work area walk backwards, allowing Jake and Steve to converse while they're being filmed.

JAKE

It's humbling, but th--

The SoundGuy trips and the MIC BOOM fully enters their shot. Jake and Steve halt abruptly.

STEVE

--You ok?

The SoundGuy chuckles heartily and gets himself up.

JAKE

Take two!

INT. JAKE & JESS' GARAGE - NIGHT

~~Jake has the hood open to a 427 Cobra. The crew, apparently off the clock, listens to Jake yarn.~~

JAKE

So he gives me **ether---**

The crew GROAN in mirthful anticipation. At that moment, Jess enters the garage carrying drinks for everyone, pleased to be hostessing.

Jake acknowledges her and she makes an expression indicating for him not to stop the story.

JAKE (Cont'd)
 --And I'm like, "you sure this is
 safe?"
 "Uh-huh" (gruff stage voice)
 WOOOOOOOSH!!!
 Bye eyebrows!!

Everyone laughs enthusiastically.

EXT. ESPN BUILDING, LOS ANGELES - DAY

Steve holds the FRONT DOOR under the MARQUEE open for Jake to enter.

STEVE
 --Between the lighting and sound
 capture, it's just more ideal.

Jake shrugs nonchalantly and enters.

MONTAGE and SONG ENDS

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM / ESPN BUILDING, LOS ANGELES - DAY

HANS RICHTER, an urbane German in his mid-sixties, sits at the head of a large table as the focal point of several well-suited ADVERTISING EXECUTIVES.

There is a POWER POINT PRESENTATION of ESPN and RedBull advertising figures in progress.

SUIT 1 (holding PP REMOTE)
 (glibly) So--these are the figures
 last year, and we project **at least**
 the next three quarters to go....
 (clicks remote) **even better.**

HANS
 (steepling fingers patiently)
 It seems as if we have the ultimate
 first world problem!

He looks out the windows and then back at the execs.

HANS (cont'd)
 Too much money, and we just need to
 find a way to spend it!

Everyone in the room chuckles nervously and looks at each other dodgingly.

HANS (cont'd)
Let's take a recess--

More awkward glances around the room because clearly Hans and his staff are underwhelmed.

MOVING. Hans and his AIDE wander into the connecting hallway.

INT. ESPN BUILDING CORRIDOR - DAY (CONTINUED ACTION)

HANS (in GERMAN)
Another disappointment!! They want
to do more mermaid cartoons?!
(scoffs)
All these amazing minds for advertising and you would think they
could come up with something better.

As they walk discreetly down the DARKENED corridor they come upon a recessed, WELL-LIT STUDIO where Jake is being interviewed behind a GLASS PARTITION. They stop to watch and listen.

JAKE (in progress)
...Really you're missing the mark
by not effectively showing (ticks
off points on fingers) acceleration,
braking, and G-forces. Your audience
can't understand how absurdly **fast**
the cars are. They don't understand
how talented the drivers are and
they're just on the razor's **edge**
of control.

STEVE (OS)
I remember you calling it more of
an "international sport"--

JAKE
--Right; so it's hard to identify
with the drivers since none of them
are American. So, that makes it hard
to sell the **story**. More than anything,
people--not just Americans,
even--want to see the story unfold;
characters we either love or hate,
the **human drama** that makes it exciting.
It's not just the cars going
around the track--it's the people
in them that we're fascinated with.

A few of the wandering execs from the meeting have heard the monologue like a siren call and also listen, rapt.

HANS
(to his cohorts/spellbound)
Who is that...?

The others shrug and look dejectedly at each other.

HANS (cont'd)
It's too bad **he's** not a driver!!

AIDE (in GERMAN)
That's Jake Iler. He's the one who
caused the big drug bust at the
race-track a few years ago.

HANS
(beat/turns to SUIT 2)
..Can I get a copy of that tape?

CLOSE SHOT of Hans, mesmerized as he plots and brainstorms.

SUIT 2 (OS)
Uhhh... sure! I'll see what I can do!

TIME CUT

Jake is wrapping up his interview, removing his mic and
handing it over to a producer.

Steveshakes his hand and Jake turns to leave, and then al-
most collides with Hans, waiting in the hallway.

JAKE
Uh, excuse me.

HANS
Actually, pardon **me**. I'd like to
introduce myself. (puts hand out)
Hans Richter. (they shake)
Couldn't help but catch some of
your conversation.

JAKE
~~Oh! I, uh... didn't think anyone~~
was really listening...

HANS
It would seem that **many** people will
be listening, soon enough. (Indi-
cates to cameras behind partition)

JAKE
(beat)
...Very true.

HANS

I was wondering if I might take you to dinner, where we can discuss some ideas I have...

JAKE

Uhhhh, my **girl** is uh, waiting for me.

HANS

(chuckles) Ja, ja! She's invited, too!

INT. BUSY RESTAURANT - NIGHT

The trio sit in a booth, the table is filled with almost-finished plates and they appear content and amiable.

HANS

...and so I'm at the twilight of my career, and it feels like I've put **myself** out to pasture-- my current assignment is taking an exorbitant budget and relating it to an over-saturated and apathetic US market.

(beat)

But there was something you said about getting Americans to **watch** Formula One--which we've already invested untold fortunes in-- it seems the best payoff would be to get the audience **emotionally** invested...

JAKE

(beat)

The best way would be to put an American **in** the cockpit.

HANS

(nods) We Germans went nuts over Schumacher, the Brazilians are **still** fanatical about Senna, but Americans have _____ (pantomimes "nothing")

JAKE

The greatest moments for the sport are when the drivers win in their native country. But that's impossible with no US driver--

HANS

--What if I brought you on as a...
(MORE)

HANS (CONT'D)
consultant to RedBull racing. You
have... all this insider knowledge.
We could...cultivate a search...--

JESS
--You guys are amazing! It's so
obvious; the answer's right in
front of you!

Jake and Hans look at each other for a moment and then back
at Jess.

JESS (cont'd)
(pointing at each, respectively)
You **need** a driver, you **are** a driver.

HANS
(very skeptical)
But... Formula One? It is the
pinncale... It is--

JAKE
--I can drive **anything**.

JESS
(overlapping)--he can drive anything.

Hans is not convinced. He looks disappointed to kill their
nascent enthusiasm.

JAKE
I've been out of the saddle for a
while, but put me in something with
a motor and I'll make that thing go.

JESS
It's true. **Whatever** he's in--

HANS
--ok, kids! You can stop hitting me
over the head with your... subtle
innuendo...

JAKE
Hans, I can tell you have clout at
your company.
(Hans nods grudgingly)
And you're clearly a racing fan--
you know the sport.
(beat)
So you know it's 90 percent mental.
I might be a tad older than when I
went away in my prime, but I
(MORE)

JAKE (CONT'D)
 haven't lost a step--
 (starts to kid)
 --I might even be sharper than ever...

Hans keeps his expression equivocal.

JAKE (cont'd)
 In the beginning we just do this
 low-key: no publicity, no cameras.
 (beat)
 No face to lose.

This strikes a special chord with Hans.

JAKE (cont'd)
 You put me in an RB17...
 and I'll show you fast.

Hans holds Jake's assured gaze for a prolonged moment. Then he looks away and nods thoughtfully.

DISSOLVE INTO:

EXT. REDBULL RING/TEST TRACK, AUSTRIA - DAY

Sweeping views of the stunning backdrop, the picturesque and verdant Austrian hills contrast the asphalt of the track and its billiard-smooth surface.

A low cloud moves over the land as early morning becomes mid.

Jake is standing over the RB17 and admiring it for the work of art that it is. He puts a hand on it and lets the car's organic energy flow into him.

The group of accompanying ENGINEERS do not look pleased to be letting this outsider lay even a hand on their treasured creation. Folded arms and scowls convey their feelings known but Jake smiles hugely despite them.

Jess is equally happy for him, sensing his eagerness.

A tall, imposing Swede in his mid-fifties, AXEL BLAUKAMP (the TEAM PRINCIPAL), walks into the paddock/garage.

HANS
 Jake, this is Axel Blaukamp.
 Axel, Jake Iler.

JAKE
 Really fantastic meeting you--
 (extends hand) I've followed your
 (MORE)

JAKE (CONT'D)
 career, especially your rally back-
 ground--

Axel doesn't extend his own hand. He stands a meter away from Jake, looking at his physique. Then he looks Jake in the eye.

AXEL
 You are far too heavy. There is no
 way I can make a ballast adjustment
 this late.

Axel shoots a pointed look at Hans who is shocked.

JAKE
 Wait, this is just a test-run so
 that's kind of a non-issue, and
 at some point I can shed some KG's
 if need be. But as long as there's
 enough legroom, I really need to
 get into that car.

Axel glances at the car and then back at Jake. His glare
 would cause anyone to relent, but Jake makes himself an
 inch taller by standing more erect.

JAKE
 (Congenially) We're already here...
 Let's do this.

HANS
 (beat/narrows eyes slightly)
 Get him suited!!

Jess stifles an applause. She, Jake and Hans share a conspir-
 atorial smile while everyone else remains cold and irritated.

MECHANICS and engineers start bustling to get the car ready.

AXEL
 Herr Iler! Once you're in the car
 and it's started, it's quite tricky
 to get it moving. I assume you've
 read about it.

JAKE
 I have.

AXEL
 Good, it won't be an issue then.
 --But if you can't do it quickly it
 becomes an issue because the engine
 and components have to stay in a very
 narrow temperature band, so everything
 (MORE)

AXEL (CONT'D)
has to be perfect, or the auxilliary
fans have to come out.

JAKE
It won't be an issue.

AXEL
...We'll see.

TIME CUT:

Racing-suited Jake climbs into the car and it's visbly uncomfortable. The STEERING WHEEL gets put on and now it's doubly restrictive. Jake gulps with effort.

JAKE'S POV as the "HALO" is placed and we see through Jake's aspect of how constricted his/our world has become.

He gives a thumbs-up to an ENGINEER, who taps a keyboard and the engine ROARS to life.

The NOISE is staggering. Jess mouths "oh my god" as she dons a pair of huge EARPIECES.

REVERSE ANGLE of Jake leaving the garage, and then creeping along pit lane. He smokes the tires for a moment.

JAKE (VO) [Radio`throughout]
Just putting some heat in 'em.

The crew is irritated further, exchanging grimaced glances, while Hans and Jess are an island of joviality.

ON CAR

Jake is doing hard side-to-side driving, warming everything up, intermittently hitting the BRAKES and keeping engine REVS high.

AXEL (VO) [also`via radio]
That's great Iler, but also be mindful of the brakes because if they're cold they will lock up and you'll have flat spots on your tires in moments. Get the brakes hot way before you hit corners hard or this session will be a short one.

JAKE (VO)
Yeah, don't forget I've read alllll about it!

JAKE'S POV as he enters Remus (Turn 2) and rockets away. Our first taste of the incredible speed.

JAKE (VO)
Oh my god!!!

GARAGE

Some of the engineers can't help but grin as his excitement is contagious over their radios.

ON TRACK

AERIAL SHOT of Jake going through Turns 5/6/7, owning the race line.

PIT WALL

Jake flies by and Jess waves excitedly.

JAKE (VO)
Hi Jess!!

Her subsequent giggles are drowned out by the engine's ROAR.

QUICK CUTS of Jess and Hans watching him go by several more times as the sun rises imperceptibly.

ON TRACK (CONTINUOUS ACTION):

JAKE'S POV as he goes by Jess and Hans at a blurring speed. He accelerates to 190 MPH and then brakes hard into Turn 1.

GARAGE

AXEL
OK, you are running decently through the checkpoints for your power handicap.

JAKE (VO)
(stunned) --Handicap?!?!?

TRACK

AXEL (VO)
Ja, you are running at 75 percent power...

JAKE (VO)
(beat)
...You mean it goes even faster?!

GARAGE

AXEL
Ja---substantially.

JAKE (VO)
(beat)
Well.... add some of that juice ya
salty Swede!!

Hans laughs openly and Jess turns beet red.

AXEL
...You have to bring her into the
garage to do so, Herr Iler.

TIME CUT:

Jake is pushed by the crew/reversed into the bay and he
pops off the Halo and gets out of the car in a flourish.

JAKE
WOOOOO!!! Almost better than sex!!

Jess glares at him admonishingly.

JAKE (cont'd)
---almost!

Hans is the only one to laugh.

AXEL
Herr Iler, may I speak with you a
moment?

Jake follows Axel to an open area in the pit lane where
Axel lights up a cigarette.

JAKE
(breathlessly) Before you say any-
thing, I'd like to apologize for
what I said; I got caught up in
the moment and was having a bit too
much fun. You gotta understand this
is the opportunity of a lifetime
and if things go well, we could be
working together. What do you say
we start off on a better foot?

Axel puffs and exhales, really contemplating the proposition.

It's a stare down with diminished hostility as Axel really studies him.

Axel flicks the cig and offers his hand to shake. Jake takes it.

AXEL
We can try this again.
(louder) Put the power to 85 percent!

JAKE
75 to 85?

AXEL
It's a big jump, Iler--you'll see.

CUT TO:

ON TRACK (CONTINUOUS ACTION)

Jake approaches Turn 2/Remus again and gets after it,
ANOTHER ANGLE rocketing away.

JAKE (VO)
Sweet Mother Mary and Jo!!
This is only at 85?!?!?

GARAGE

AXEL
Ja Iler, we're feeding you gradually.
That's quite the pricey machine you
pilot.

TRACK

JAKE (VO)
(ECU on his EYES) I can tell.

Jake enters Turn 3 and gyrates through with the new power,
almost losing it but a quick flick of his hands maintains
control and he barrels toward Turn 4.

JAKE (non-radio voice)
Quite the machine, indeed.

PIT WALL

He flies past Jess and the garage again, she watches intently.

ON TRACK

Jake brakes absurdly late into Turn 1

AXEL (VO)

Once again Iler, your checkpoint times aren't terrible. Come in for more... juice, if you please.

JAKE (VO)

Ooo, I love it when you talk like that.

GARAGE

The engineers snicker and are coming around to him.

TIME CUT:

Jake comes into the bay again, pops out and is awash in sweat and is now far more demure, visibly worn-out.

AXEL

Put the ECU at 95.

JAKE

(privately to Axel) Let's put it to 100 so I can really feel how it's gonna be.

AXEL

(beat)

...Negative. 95 for now.

Despite their discretion, everyone saw the interaction and the engineers input the new (95%) command into LAPTOPS.

Jake looks around and Jess saunters up to him.

JESS

How is it?

JAKE

....indescribably fast.

JESS

"Better than sex"...?

JAKE

Ummm... it's...(stifling a grin) ...different.

JESS

(scowls amused) Mm-Hmmm....

CUT TO:

ON TRACK

Jake is shooting out of the pit lane, on the charge up the hill before Turn 2.

JAKE (VO)
I'm still not at full power?!

He takes Turn 2 really fast, almost losing it like how he forced a correction on the last power increase, gyrating and having to make overt adjustments just to stay on track.

He plunges ahead into the different race lines of Turns 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7, where the corresponding tire is in the very apex of each turn, riding the kerbs aggressively.

AXEL (VO)
Timing sector two is looking great.

Jake enters Turn 8/Rindt and brakes heavy, locks up for the briefest moment, throttles out and goes into a spin and ends up in the run-off area.

The car stalls and the SOUNDS OF NATURE envelope Jake as he hits the steering wheel.

JAKE
Shit!!!

GARAGE

Jess sees the laptops are reading erratically and looks concerned. She glances at Hans who shares the same affect.

AXEL
Iler! You ok?Iler!!

JAKE (VO)
Yeah, I'm fine -- it's stalled out.
You're gonna have to give me a start.

Axel looks amused as he glances towards Hans and Jess. Their disappointment is transparent and his look becomes one of empathy.

CUT TO:

TRACK

The AMG Wagon comes up to the stranded car and the crew pops out to plug in the STARTING DEVICE.

Jake looks toward the distance and sees Jess atop a building, blowing him a kiss, making him smile, his black cloud lifted.

TIME CUT:

Jake's back in the RB17, approaching the pit lane entrance.

AXEL (VO)

Come back in and we'll call it a day.

JAKE (VO)

One more lap, just to put some heat in the tires..

Axel is on the pit wall flexing his jaw angrily, watching Jake fly by at speed and shakes his head.

CUT TO:

GARAGE

Jake gets pushed back into the garage again and he jumps out of the car with child-like excitement.

JAKE

Let's put it at 100 percent!!
I'm cooking with FIRE!!!

AXEL

Nej, that's it for today. You lost control and it wasn't even at the power ceiling.

JAKE

(beat)

...Hey Axel, when the horse throws you, you get back on.

Axel shakes his head "no", then heads over to the low wall to lean on. Jake follows him over.

The garage is tense and the crew busies themselves.

JAKE (cont'd)

Ax, you said yourself that I was nailing the times. Let me prove to you I'm more than 'capable'. Come on, the fuel's low-- just a few more laps and then I'll be outta your hair.

Axel stares into Jake, not giving an indication of his thoughts.

JAKE (cont'd)

...because we both know there's no more second chances. **This** isn't
(MORE)

JAKE (CONT'D)
gonna happen tomorrow (indicating
the crew)--so there's only today.
(softly) Just one more chance...

Axel looks into the distance and shakes his head almost imperceptibly. Then--

AXEL
(softly to match) Ja, OK.
(louder) Put the engine at the
limit! No packing up yet!!

Axel walks away and Jake has to stifle his excitement. He acknowledges a look from Hans and Jess and then silently clutches.

CUT TO:

TRACK (CONTINUOUS ACTION)

The car leaves pit lane a hair LOUDER with fresh SLICKS.

LOWER POV shows the vehicle covering distance faster than ever.

Jake's hands deftly fiddle with the steering wheel controls as he goes along the back straight before the quick Turn 3-7 sequence.

JAKE (VO)
OK, great balance and contact coming
out of Worth Kurve, virtually no
understeer, which I'm loving--
this thing's on rails.

GARAGE

Axel glances at an ENGINEER, taps his watch and the engineer nods subtly with an appraising gleam.

Jess watches Jake fly by the usual finish line/timing sector and a DIGITAL DISPLAY reads "1:23.267"

The whole garage makes an impressed "Oooo" sound, quite audibly.

JESS
Is that good...?

Several engineers glance at her and then at each other incredulously.

Axel beckons Hans over to speak privately.

AXEL (in GERMAN)
 You are right. The kid is fast.
 Have you spoken to him about a
 contract?

TIME CUT:

Jess is looking on as Jake passes again and the sun is low.
 In the diminishing light her smile is dazzling, love radiating
 from her. The car's ROAR crescendos and then fades.

FADE OUT

FADE IN:

INT. REDBULL RACING HQ (MILTON KEYNES) - DAY

Hans stands outside a glass partition watching Jake in a
 driving simulator.

Jake gives untelligible/AD LIB feedback to the TECHNICIANS
 in the room.

The session halts and Jake removes his helmet, showing sev-
 eral months of BEARD GROWTH. He sees Hans and goes to him
 and they embrace like old comrades.

HANS
 How goes the sim life?

JAKE
 Ehhh... it's not quite what I
 thought driving in Formula One
 would entail, but it's not the
 worst way to make a living.

HANS
 Well as that Americanism goes,
 I must tell you: "be careful what
 you wish for"

Jake screws up his face quizzically.

HANS (cont'd)
 Oh, so I'm the first to tell you?
 Lucky me! Not so lucky for Martin
 Allenby who broke **both** legs rally-
 ing in Turkey.

Jake looks embarassingly hopeful for a flash and then stifles
 it.

JAKE
 Sooo.. who's the vacancy going to?

HANS
It's yours, if you want it.

JAKE
(beat)
...You're serious?

HANS
Axel was actually the one who suggested I break it to you--
Sorry! Bad pun...
(beat)
What do you say?

JAKE
I think you know the answer--

HANS
Welcome to the big leagues, kiddo!!

Jake has to sit down in the darkened VR seat to absorb the news. A mix of elation and disbelief register on his mien.

His face is LIT by a Mediterranean sun as he DISSOLVES INTO:

EXT. MONACO - DAY

Jake is leaning over the balcony of his hotel. The harbor is rife with mega-yachts, and the passing cars under him are nothing less than Rolls-Royce and Bentleys, resplendent in the sunlight.

The boutique stores are Gucci, Versace, Prada, et.al.--
The exteriors are marble or chrome. A luxuriant energy pervades.

Jess puts her hand on his shoulder and his arm goes around her waist. They digest and inhale the splendour and opulence.

JESS
I'm so happy for you...

Jake looks at her for a long moment and shakes his head "no" lightly, and it makes her squirm under his gaze.

JAKE
Be happy for us.

Jess loves this and squeezes Jake tighter. Jake casts his glance to a block over where he sees his swarthy, Italian team-mate NINO GRAZZANO being hounded by paparazzi and their eyes meet for a flash. Jake recedes from the balcony, pushed suggestively by Jess with a devious chuckle.

Nino narrows his eyes with enmity even after Jake's vanished.
 OFFSCREEN an F1 engine SCREAMS as it UPSHIFTS.

SMASH CUT TO:

MONACO RACTRACK

Jake's RB17 is coming out of the tunnel, into the light,
 continually accelerating.

MARK (VO)
 ..the kind of **shockwaves** Jake Iler
 is causing as Allenby's replacement,
 looking tremendous, coming out **swin-**
ging in practice and the first
 qualifier.

PAT (VO)
 Is it a testament to Red Bull making
 successful mid-season changes to the
 car to remain competitive, or is
 Iler the real deal?

MARK (VO)
 --or both? Here's his time--

Q2 time ends according to a DISPLAY in BG.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. MONACO COMMENTATOR'S BOOTH - DAY

MARK, an Englishman and PAT, a ruddy Scotsman, both in a
 state of constant excitement and journalistic wonder, react.

MARK
OH HHHHHH!!!

PAT
Wooooow!!!

The visible crowd reacts likewise.

MARK
 Iler finishes **faster** than Grazzano
 in Q2!!

PAT
 Well, Axel Blaukamp's job just
 became **much** more interesting.

CUT TO:

INT/EXT - REDBULL'S RACING PADDOCK/GARAGE - DAY

Jake gets out of the car and is thronged by attentive media,
 (MORE)

crew, engineers, and Jess off to the side.

Nino starts CLAPPING and draws attention.

NINO

Let's hear it for the great US import!
(clapping stops)
Butttt, I think you're better suited
for stock cars, eh Iler?

JAKE

Clearly not, since I've got a faster
time than you..

A rivalry is born and everyone watches, mesmerized.

NINO

Nah.. maybe there's a **dirt** track
that's a better place for you...
--**That** seems like your kind of
environment.

JAKE

What's crazy, Nino: everyone **says**
you're an asshole--(glances at watch)
--but it took me **record time** to
find out!!

Everyone snickers and the tension ratchets. Nino becomes
apoplectic--

NINO

Hey Iler!! This is my team!!!
--After the next qualifier you'll
get used to being behind me. And
then you can take your (sputtering)
pathetic ass to some... **Prison**
league--

Jake bullrushes up to Nino, getting right in his face, tow-
ering over him. A MIC BOOM is hovering just over them.

JAKE

You wanna talk about prison..?
That's where I **fucked** prettier men
than you for running their mouths,
and since you can't seem to shut
your trap, I'm gonna take **extra**
special care making you my bitch--

Jess yanks Jake's arm and pulls him away. Jake is looking
maniacally sadistic and Nino is terrified. The onlookers
are now in an uproar and Jake finally notices them.

JESS
(in a yell-whisper) Jesus Christ Jake!!

JAKE
---What?!?!?

JESS
So now you've got a thing for
brunettes...??!

JAKE
(beat)
You heard that..!?

JESS
(through clenched teeth)
..Everyone heard that!!!

INT. REDBULL VIP AREA - DAY

Hans and other BIGWIGS are schmoozing in the festive atmosphere.

Hans' aide approaches him, urgently.

AIDE
Your presence is needed--

Hans' look changes to puzzled concern.

AIDE (cont'd)
--damage control.

INT. RECESSED PADDOCK - MOMENTS LATER

Hans with Jake as Jess looks on.

HANS
This is bigger than your ego now,
we have co-sponsors and companies
that are on that car. Their names
and reputations that they have paid
to put on there, and the way you
act reflects on **them!!**

JAKE
Ya know, Hans--if I'da known you
were gonna lecture me like this I
wouldn't have said annnnything to
the guy insulting me in front of...
literally **everyone!!!**

HANS

There are better ways of handling--

JAKE

--I thought this was all about publicity! Ya know: 'No such thing as bad publicity!' (mocking)

Hans exhales theatrically, refusing to be baited.

HANS

You're not just a driver anymore.
You're the **face** of a **brand**!
I need you at your best--your **most**
professional--all. ze. time.

JAKE

(grunts)

HANS

I need you to be that charismatic
gentleman I met in the studio in
California....
We value you for your personality
as much as your driving abilities.
But I need you to be humble.

JAKE

(beat)

Ok Hans.

HANS

There will be fallout from this
for quite some time.

Jake looks at Jess, at last with real concern.

HANS (cont'd)

I'm not mad. I'm just disappointed.

JESS

That's **way** worse!!

All three fall into easy laughter as levity is restored.

INT. REDBULL GARAGE - DAY

Axel is in an out-of-the-way area and beckons Jake to him while crewmembers hustle and bustle with the car.

AXEL

For Q3 you're going to be on softs
and Grazzano's on super-soft.

JAKE

(beat)

...for any particular reason..?
That's gonna make it way harder to
get a good spot on the grid.
--I was thinking I'd be running on
super or even **hyper**-soft.

AXEL

This isn't **my** first day, Iler.
I'm the one responsible for deciding
these things.

JAKE

But the tires I run in Q3 are the
same ones I start the race with!!
Do Nino and I have different pit
strategies or something...?

AXEL

You're catching on kvick...!
The situation will be very fluid
once the race begins tomorrow.
Do you have to piss?

JAKE

No.

AXEL

Then get ready. We're on deck.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Jake and Jess are in comfort/relax wear. Jake is making
scrambled eggs.

JAKE

Argghhhhhh!!! Of course he gets a
better time when he got better
tires!!

(beat)

--Sixth place!!

Impetuously, Jake flings the skillet/spatula/eggs at the wall.

JESS

Jeez, honey--(moves to get up)
--You're taking that whole 'break
some eggs to make an omelet' thing
to a whoooole new level.

JAKE
(rubbing his face/garbled)
Fuck, I'm sorry--

JESS
--I got it, I got it.

JAKE
(beat)
Now I feel like an ass...

JESS
Well, yeah.

She smiles ironically and he can't help but do the same.

JESS (cont'd)
What's so bad about starting in
sixth? Can't you make up for it
throughout the race..?

JAKE
(beat)
This is just a **really** difficult
course to pass. There's only one
DRS zone and it's really short com-
pared to other tracks--

JESS
--wait: DRS is...?

JAKE
(flatly) Drag reduction system.

JESS
Oh, like when the spoiler drops!

JAKE
(teasing) Ah, someone was paying
attention..!

JESS
Duh! (playing along)
...But explain it, anyway.

JAKE
Naturally (amused)-- In the qual-
ifiers I was using it pretty much
at will, but **during** the race there's
only one spot on the front straight
where it comes on automatically.

He uses two sugar packets to make a mini-DEMONSTRATION.

JAKE (cont'd)

But you have to be less than a second away from the car in front of you for it to activate--

JESS

--Does the guy in front get it, also?

JAKE

Good question. (uses a 3rd packet)
--Only if there's someone within a second ahead of him.

JESS

So:it makes passing easier.

JAKE

Precisely! --But at Monaco the area is so short and the leader is allowed to block once, so it virtually renders it obsolete. Vroom! Screech! (simulates block w/sugar)..Then the rest of the course is really narrow and tight--

JESS

--Oooo, we like that.

JAKE

Ha, we do. (Grins and then gets serious)
..It's just a huge setback from where I **shoulda** started.

JESS

Jake, you can't think like that. You gotta think positive. Don't defeat yourself before you've even **started** the race.. Think about how fortunate you are--we are.(smiles)
Remember where you were this time last year?

JAKE

You have a wonderful way of giving me perspective, my dear.

JESS

That's not all I'm good for, I'm also a better cook than you!! Let **me** make it this time and we'll see how it turns out. You relax. Shoo!

He sits on the barstool opposite her and admires her.

JAKE

Love you.

She winks and cracks an egg.

JESS

See? It doesn't have to be so violent!

CUT TO:

EXT. MONACO STARTING GRID - DAY (CONTINUOUS ACTION)

Jess is watching from Turn 1 (St. Devote) as the race begins. The engines' DOPPLER EFFECT make an impending wall of sound as the cars come towards her, condensing, as if many collisions are imminent.

JESS

Holy shit!!!

The cars in P4&P5 touch tires directly in front of Jess and careen across Jake's trajectory and go into the inside runoff-area as he narrowly misses them.

JAKE'S POV as he's now P4, the incapacitated cars blur by and he charges up Beau Rivage (Turn 2) into Massenet (Turn 3).

ANOTHER ANGLE of P1 (Nino) and P2 (SCHUSTER) are dead even and have a .75 sec lead over the rest of the pack.

WITH JAKE as he follows P3 closely into Mirabeau (Turn 5).

GRAND HOTEL HAIRPIN (Turn 6) seems to narrow before them, Jake takes the inside line and brakes later than P3, forcing P3 to the outside line.

Jake over-throttles and intentionally makes the car step-out in a brilliant overtake. Rubberized DEBRIS is shot onto P3's visor.

ON NINO and P2 as they are in Turns 7&8, P2 frustrates Nino as they go into the tunnel for the first time.

P2 rides in Nino's slipstream and advances, almost touching.

JAKE'S POV as he comes out of the tunnel to see Nino and P2 braking before weaving through Nouvelle Chicane (Turn 11).

COMMENTATOR'S BOOTH

MARK

Well, that had all the thrills that
one could want from an opening lap!

PAT

What jumped off the page for me,
Mark, was how RedBull-rookie Iler
has gone from P6 to third!!

CUT TO:

JESS' VANTAGE

She watches Nino and P2 go around Turn 1 and Jake's just
over a second behind them, cheering with the throng of fans.

AXEL/PADDOCK

Axel taps an engineer on the shoulder, cueing him to switch
a MONITOR to another type of display.

AXEL

Iler, how's the car?

JAKE'S POV as he takes on Beau Rivage, cycling up the gears,
manipulating controls on the steering wheel, very busy--

JAKE (VO)

A lot different than VR!!

AXEL (VO)

How's that, Iler?

JAKE (VO)

I'm fine! Kinda busy!

Jake tackles Massenet and Casino (Turns 3&4), continually
losing sight of P1 and P2 who are still over a second delta
out front.

AXEL/PADDOCK

AXEL

Ja, ja--great start... lots of
laps to go!

A small sardonic smile plays on his lips from getting to be
the antagonist for a moment.

TRACK

Jake enters into the tunnel, then bursts out into the daylight in a QUICK SERIES OF SHOTS/OVERLAPS, where P1 and P2 get continually closer as he closes the delta on them.

TIME CUT:

AT TURNS 5-8

Jake is now less than .25 second behind P2 as they enter the technical section.

MARK (VO)

Iler in P3 is almost able to reach out and **touch** Schuster's brake light in the Mercedes!!

PAT (VO)

I love how Iler's been able to advance on the leading pair; both of them on super-softs and because of their inability to get away from each other, we've got the rookie in his maiden race come to badger them as well!

Jake brakes extremely late into Nouvelle Chicane after the tunnel, deftly sliding through the quick left/right and forces P2 Mercedes into the Kerbing, overtaking.

MARK (VO)

Iler is directly behind the veteran Grazzano--!

PAT (VO)

If this is an extension of their heated exchange in the paddock, then they are **both** driving with something to prove!

Jake's DRS activates for him after Turn 19 and he goes for an overtake on Nino's left, to which Nino blocks successfully as he takes a wide race line into Turn 1.

The crowd is roaring as the two RedBull cars head into the technical section and we have QUICK CUTS from a balcony at Turn 3, then:

STREET LEVEL at Turn 4.

The duo gyrates below Turn 5.

REVERSE ANGLE as the two cars plunge into Turn 6.

JAKE'S POV as he is heart-stoppingly close to Nino into Turns 7&8.

Jake gets into Nino's slipstream in the tunnel.

CLOSE UP on Nino's RIGHT MIRROR and when they blaze into the light Nino loses him for a flash as Jake's shifted to his left.

END QUICK CUTS

TRACK

It's 180 MPH chicken as they approach Nouvelle Chicane and Jake is wheel-to-wheel from Nino, just inches apart.

They have to brake to 40 MPH and Jake hangs on Nino's left rear like a tick.

They are dead even approaching Tabac (Turn 12) which is very tight but Jake has a better line and forces Nino to outside.

Jake now has a $\frac{1}{2}$ car length's lead as he heads into Piscine I (Turns 13/14).

ANOTHER ANGLE on front AERO which allows Jake to complete the takeover throughout the dynamic turn at 125 MPH and climbing.

HIGHEST VANTAGE of the crowd shows the ecstatic multitude as Jake cements his pass through Piscine II (Turns 15/16).

IN THE PADDOCK Axel puts a hand on his chest and takes a deep breath, relieved there wasn't a crash.

ON TRACK

Jake passes by Jess in the front straightaway, she has both arms up in celebration and everyone in sight is equally enthralled.

Nino gets DRS and attempts to pass Jake on inside but Jake blocks as they head into Turn 1, thwarting Nino.

PAT (VO)

Iler seems to hold the lead for now!!

COMMENTATOR'S BOOTH

MARK

What an incredible feat if he came from sixth to **win** at Monaco in his debut race!!

PAT

Unheard of!! Unfathomable!!

MARK

Well--start 'fathoming', because this
veritable newcomer's leading!!

Pat acknowledges Mark with an overt look: "touche"

TRACK

Nino follows Jake through the technical section of Turns 5-8
and the delta increases minutely with each turn.

NINO (VO)

Axel. I'm gonna box for fresh shoes.

PADDOCK

Axel makes a gesture to the team, already prepping.

AXEL

Confirm. See you in a moment.

TRACK

Jake sees Nino pull off after Turn 18 as he takes Turn 19,
CLOSE UP on his eyes emit relief. He's alone with the lead
for a moment.

PIT LANE

Nino gets fresh tires in a blistering sub two second change.

TRACK

Jake flies past Massenet/Turn 3.

JAKE (VO)

I'm looking for some new rubber, boss.

PADDOCK

Axel makes "get ready" gesture again.

AXEL

Ja, you read my mind. Box this pass.

A MECHANIC close to Axel is rubbing his wrist tenderly and
makes a pained expression, but no one notices.

TRACK

Jake rockets through Turn 17 and brakes hard through 18,

then intentionally steps out the rear as he goes into the pit lane.

His speed seems like a crawl as he has to stay under the 80 KPH LIMIT, he gets to the waiting crew and swerves to them.

They attack the car with blurring alacrity--but the ailing mechanic boggles up the front left tire and Jake's eyes panic.

After a few precious seconds the wheel goes on and Jake mashes the throttle to get back to the Pit Lane exit just in time to see Nino zoom by.

AXEL

AXEL (in SWEDISH)
GOD DAMN IT!!!

He confronts the Mechanic who erred--

AXEL (in ENGLISH)
WHAT THE FUCK WAS THAT?!?!?

The faulty Mechanic quails under his wrath. His comrades shake their heads in shame.

TRACK

Jake now has a huge four-second delta and watches Nino disappear around Massenet (Turn 3) when he's barely at the incline of Beau Rivage (Turn 2).

PAT (VO)
Oh, what a turn of events as Iler's crew surely flubbed his stop!!

MARK (VO)
Reminds me of a man saying it would be "unfathomable" to think he could pull off such a stunt.

COMMENTATOR'S BOOTH

Pat fills with mock hubris.

PAT
A very... **perceptive** man said that.

MARK
(rolls eyes) We've really got to get your adjectives under control!!

JESS

In her viewing area, Hans approaches her.

She glances at the STANDINGS TOWER and it reads "LAP 42/78,
P1 GRAZ--, ILER +4.32"

JESS

Jake's got an uphill battle.

HANS

True enough...

He should be able to keep pace,
and second place in his first time
out is nothing to be ashamed of.

JAKE'S POV as he assaults the Technical Section, making adjustments on the steering wheel as he careens forth.

JESS (OS)

He won't be happy with second...
It's really amazing to see him racing
again, it's so good for him. But he
didn't make it this far just to fall
short--

Jake pops out of the tunnel into the daylight, he sees Nino going through the Chicane 4 sec ahead. CLOSE UP on his eyes narrow.

JESS

JESS

--Ya know?

Hans simply nods and smiles enigmatically.

JESS

(more to herself) Definitely not over.

She glances again at the STANDINGS TOWER as it reads
"LAP 42/78, P1 GRAZ--, ILER +4.11"

DISSOLVE/TIME CUT:

It now reads "LAP 70/78, P1 GRAZ--, ILER +1.02" and then
"LAP 71/78..." as Nino goes through the START/FINISH LINE
and Jake is a literal second behind him. Jess' hair blows
from the air wash as she watches vigilantly.

TRACK

The two continue their duel around Turn 1 and up the incline.

MARK (VO)

Credit Axel Blaukamp's foresight of
(MORE)

MARK (VO) (CONT'D)
 putting his P1 and 2 drivers onto an
 opposed tire strategy, allowing Iler
 and Grazzano to get comfortably in
 front of the rest of the field as
 we near the end of this race!

PAT (VO)
 I hate to beat you over the head with
 my own unfathomables--

COMMENTATOR'S BOOTH

Mark visibly cringes.

MARK
 ..I thought you'd let that die!!

PAT
 Y'r not getting off that easy, old
 boy--!!

TRACK

The duo head into the tunnel and Jake closes delta perceptibly in Nino's slipstream.

MARK (VO)
 --And neither is Grazzano as Jake Iler
 is looking to keep sparring!!

Jake brakes far later than Nino into the Nouvelle Chicane, on Nino's left, interrupting Nino's race line or a collision is imminent, Nino accedes him the space and Jake takes over.

PAT (VO)
 It's the same move he pulled on Schuster!
 Grazzano is simply being **bullied** by
 his own team-mate!!

JESS

She sees the takeover completed on a huge MONITOR and jumps in celebration with the rest of the crowd.

Axel looks at the same monitor impassively. He glances over at Jess and they lock eyes. Her smile is infectious and even Axel smiles back at her.

TRACK

The two drivers enter Piscine I (Turns 13/14) and they're virtually occupying the same space. Jake slides ever so slightly through Piscine II (15/16), and he has to hold
 (MORE)

a perfect line to defend Nino. They go around "Anthony Noghes" (Turn 19) and into the main straightaway.

MARK (VO)

Grazzano will have DRS because he's easily within a second of Iler--

Jake holds the middle line, Nino's spoiler/DRS DROPS and he begins to surge ahead of Jake on his left.

PAT (VO)

--Iler's allowed one defensive move!!

Jake swings well into Nino's path forcing him onto his brakes and killing his velocity as Jake now holds the outer line into Turn 1 with far more momentum than Nino.

COMMENTATOR'S BOOTH

MARK

What an absolute savage!--! That was beyond aggressive and teetering on the edge of legality--!

PAT

Iler has to hope he doesn't get penalized!

VIP AREA

Hans gets slapped on the back by drunk colleagues. He glances at the STANDINGS TOWER which reads:

"LAP 72/78, P1 ILER--, GRAZ +1.33"

HANS (in GERMAN)

That's it, boy...

DIETRICH MATESCHITZ (RedBull owner) shares a look with him and raises his eyebrows in acknowledgement.

CUT TO:

INT. FIA JUDGES' ROOM - DAY

Two gentlemen and one lady JUDGES are watching a REPLAY of Jake's questionable pass on a MONITOR.

JUDGE 1 (FRENCH ACCENT)

By the **exact** wording of our rules, it was not illegal.

JUDGE 2 (ITALIAN ACCENT)

He cannot-a do that! Especially to a team-mate! It's a bad--

LADY JUDGE (BRITISH ACCENT)
 (raises hand imperiously, interrupting)
 --There is no penalty. You're being
 hyperbolic and frankly rather preposterous.

Judge 2 glares at her while an AIDE reaches for the door,
 opens it and announces to a TV production crew:

FIA AIDE
 No penalty!!

CUT TO:

TRACK

JAKE'S POV as he glances in the mirrors as he heads into
 Nouvelle Chicane and Nino is barely exiting the tunnel.

JESS

She glances at the STANDINGS TOWER and it reads:
 "LAP 75/78, P1 ILER--, GRAZ +2.11" and that changes to "2.36"
 before her eyes. She clutches a fist triumphantly.

JESS
 Yes!! Let's go babe!!!

TRACK

Jake heads up Beau Rivage, CYCLING THROUGH THE GEARS (3rd
 through 7th) and then DOWNSHIFTING rapidly as he brakes at
 Massenet (Turn 3).

MARK (VO)
 Iler extending his lead on super-softs,
 really pushing them to the limit and
 he keeps setting 'fastest lap' markers
 as the car's weight diminishes.

PIT

Axel watches Jake's car's SPECS and DATA on a MONITOR.

AXEL
 Iler, no need to keep burying the
 throttle--you've got less than three
 laps to go and your lead isn't being
 cut into.

TRACK

Jake goes through Grand Hotel Hairpin, sliding through the
 turn and gyrating dramatically as his tires find purchase.

JAKE (VO)
What's my lead over Nino?

AXEL (VO)
Two point five seconds and widening.
The race is damn near over and there's
a lot of season to go. No need to
kill the motor unnecessarily--

Jake drives through the tunnel, into the daylight.

JAKE (VO)
Just a few more laps, Ax.

He brakes hard into Nouvelle Chicane, flicks left and then right and as he does he BLOWS his LEFT REAR TIRE, spinning the car around. It was a low speed chicane so he comes to rest going the wrong way, and gets to watch Nino go by.

JESS

She watches on a GIANT MONITOR, utterly dismayed, clutching her hair--

JESS
Nooo!!!

TRACK

Jake watches car after car pass as the YELLOW FLAG comes out and everyone goes under caution.

AERIAL SHOT of Jake stranded in front of the racing world.

PIT

Axel kicks a stool over, then goes back to crossing his arms and watching a MONITOR, his icy anger blazing. He watches the last car close to Jake go by.

AXEL
Bring it in.

TRACK

Jake turns the car around and drives it extremely slowly (20 MPH) as he approaches Tabac (Turn 12).

Watchers "Woooo" from the YACHTS as he passes by glacially.

CLOSE UP of Jake's EYES vacantly staring ahead where the car and helmet DISAPPEAR /

DISSOLVES INTO:

EXT. MONACO WINNER'S CIRCLE - DAY

DISSOLVE ENDS as Jake's now flanked by Hans and Jess, and part of the audience.

Nino is shaking champagne and spraying it all over the other top two FINISHERS.

Jess takes Jake's hand and squeezes it but he doesn't respond.

Jake locks eyes with Nino. Nino meets his gaze and his smirk becomes a gloating sneer.

Hans says something INAUDIBLE to Jake but he is totally hypnotized by hatred. Jess tugs hard on his hand to break the spell and finally the trio walks away, dejectedly.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOTEL BALCONY - NIGHT

The city pulses with festivity as Jake lounges on a deck chair, looking defeated. He smokes on a VAPOR PEN and lazily exhales into the starry sky.

Jess comes over with her drink and sits on the edge of his chair and touches his feet, rubbing his shins.

JESS

Wanna get in the hot tub?

JAKE

(beat)

Nah.

Jess takes a sip and waits for Jake to elaborate.

JAKE (cont'd)

Not right now, anyway.

JESS

Babe, you were **amazing** today.

JAKE

(grunts)...But I didn't win.

JESS

That doesn't matter, everyone knows you **should** have won.

JAKE
(very perturbed) But I **didn't** win.
I came in nearly last. History doesn't
remember the "almost won" drivers--
(takes a big chief of vape and ex-
hales)

JESS
Look, I was just trying to be nice--

JAKE
--Well I don't need your fuckin' pity!

Jess stands up immediately and Jake knows he overdid it.

Jess has her back to him, and then turns back to look over
her shoulder--

JESS
(quietly) Do you wanna be alone or
something?

Jake stands and touches her on the hip intimately.

JAKE
No--of course not. I'm genuinely
sorry for saying that.

She faces him and looks beautiful in the moonlight.

JAKE (cont'd)
Especially when you're just trying
to make me feel better.

JESS
I know what you're going through.
(puts hand on his face) --I know how
hard you fought...
But there'll be **other** races.

JAKE
(beat)
...Not like this.

She looks tense, as if she made a mistake forgiving him so
quickly. Jake senses it too and remains contrite--

JAKE (cont'd)
--but it'll be ok... Everything'll
be fine as long as I have you.

She grabs him tight and lovingly nuzzles into his neck.

JESS
 (almost inaudibly)..you'll always
 have me, Jake.

They embrace roughly and then kiss, the VANTAGE ASCENDS to the FLAGPOLE of the Hotel.

The Flag of MONACO DISSOLVES

BEGIN MONTAGE - "JAKE'S SEASON" (MOS THROUGHOUT)

Into the CANADIAN FLAG, Volbeat's "Last Day Under the Sun" plays throughout.

-Brief TIME LAPSE of the TEAM TRUCKS filling up the paddock area of Jacques Villeneuve Circuit in MONTREAL.

-Axel is making driving gestures to Jake, while Jake's mocking/mimicking him. Jess does "The Robot" behind Axel and Hans has to cover his laughter.

-On the track, Jake gets into a jam on Lap 1/Turn 1 (Virage Senna/Island Hairpin) mid-pack.

The cluster is SUPERIMPOSED with RESULTS displayed on a DISPLAY TOWER, "ILER: 4th PLACE"

-A FRENCH FLAG on display DISSOLVES into Jake and Jess at the top of the EIFFEL TOWER, laughing together.

Jake points to the ARC DE TRIOMPHE and the LOUVRE, and they appear to be totally in love. He begins a spontaneous Tango dance and spins her in a pirouette while she laughs gaily.

-The RED and BLUE LINES of PAUL RICARD CIRCUIT are SUPERIMPOSED over a throng of fans, vying to take pictures with Jake.

He holds someone's baby, looks at Jess expectantly, to which she makes an "eek" face and he feigns surprise.

A public relations HANDLER taps his watch at Jake: "time to go"

-Jake races around the track next to the same dizzying Red and Blue lines, he locks up all four wheels when he almost collides with a Ferrari, and goes sliding into a runoff area.

-An AUSTRIAN FLAG waves and DISSOLVES as we return to the
 (MORE)

REDBULL RING. RedBull is everywhere here, so the fans are legion and manic, ergo Jake gets mobbed.

He is lost in a veritable sea of fans, visibly struggling to find Jess and when their eyes meet she telegraphs to do his duty with a glance. When he turns his back to her she is disappointed.

-On the track Jake makes a slippery pass by a McLaren around Turn 2 (Remus), now directly behind his rival Nino.

His eyes narrow as he's set to engage, but then he gets passed in an alarmingly rapid succession. It's clearly a power failure and Jake's anger is evident.

-DISSOLVE a UK FLAG over FISH & CHIPS, where Jess takes one and teases Jake by waving it under his nose, while he looks miserable and paradoxically amused as she takes a monster bite.

Jake shoves the food aside and pins Jess down while she continues to laugh and chew.

ANOTHER ANGLE of the bed they're on while he continues to go down on her, while she swallows her bite and looks down quite agreeably and then her breathing hitches.

-DISSOLVE the SILVERSTONE CROWD madness at a publicity shoot where Jake and Nino glare at each other.

Hans watches from a premier spot and surreptitiously glances at Axel who appears displeased.

-A GREEN FLAG is SUPERIMPOSED over the fans where Jake is on the track.

QUICK CUTS of Jake getting passed over and over and over.

Jess covers her eyes in anguish, while Jake finished 10th according to SUPERIMPOSED RESULTS on a DISPLAY.

-DISSOLVE into a GERMAN FLAG and the imposing grandstand of HOCKENHEIM, and a THREE DAY TIME LAPSE of MERCURIAL WEATHER.

-The race is in play, Axel barks an order over the radio, and Jake drives past the pit entrance.

The rain hits the track in a torrent and causes Jake to
(MORE)

spin out of the long arcing straight of Spitzkehre (Turn 5), hydroplaning into a gravel trap.

Once at a stop he flips up his visor and looks up at the rain, and at the same moment another car slides uncannily close to him, almost colliding, and his reaction is jarring.

-A GERMAN FLAG in eyeshot turns SIDEWAYS and DISSOLVES into a BELGIAN FLAG at SPA-FRANCORCHAMPS. An AERIAL SHOT of EAU ROUGE highlights a few of the cars taking the hill at full speed.

Axel barks again over the radio, to which Jake pits and puts on RAIN TIRES with CU on the GROOVES.

-ANOTHER ANGLE/MOVING SHOT of Jake executing a brilliant and daring overtake at Eau Rouge while it rains lightly.

-Jake overtakes a Mercedes at Bus Stop I and a Renault in the next instant, meters away from the FINISH LINE for P3.

-Jake and Nino are both on the PODIUM with the first place finisher, Schuster, from Team-Mercedes between them.

-Jess is blowing Jake fervent kisses from the audience as he returns them likewise.

-A stray ITALIAN FLAG is being waved and it SUPERIMPOSE/DISSOLVE over a plate of colorful Red and Green GOURMET FOOD, where Jess digs into it and taunts Jake who's having a salad.

She animatedly enjoys the food while he pretends to ignore her. She picks up a newspaper intentionally upside down and looks over the top flirtatiously--but Jake is transfixed on the TABLOID COVER: "Iler v Grazzano!!", causing him to grimace.

-AERIAL SHOT over MONZA, Jake and Nino coming out of Variante Ascari (Turn 9/10) in a dead heat as they approach Curva Parabolica (Turn 11) with Jake on the outside line.

Neither will relent and Nino forces Jake off the track, going into the gravel runoff at 180 MPH, sliding all the way and bonking into the ARMCO WALL.

-Axel throws off his headset in a rage while the sea of
(MORE)

ITALIAN FLAGS in the PG wave in jubilation.

-One of the flags DISSOLVES into a RUSSIAN FLAG fluttering at night, where Jake and Jess are in RED SQUARE. They hold hands, playing tug-of-hands/tug-of-wills going opposite directions as they sightsee.

Jake is recognized by fans and out come the iPhones. He implores her to indulge the fans, but her arms are crossed in obvious irritation. She bides impatiently while he takes selfies with them.

-On the track at SOCHI the whole field leaps forward from the grid at the start and at Turn 2 they bottleneck.

Jake locks up by braking too late and a dozen cars collide.

The unscathed cars zip away into the arcing and picturesque 180°+ Turn 3, highlighted by flagpoles as we CLOSE UP on:

-FLAG OF SINGAPORE and DISSOLVE/SUPERIMPOSE a SUNSET of the massive grandstand and the Ferris Wheel there.

Jake is going around Turn 22, and is passed easily, and then it happens again quickly.

Axel puts his fist on his forehead, dejectedly. A STANDINGS TOWER while Jake comes into the pit reads, "ILER-DNF"

In the pit, Jake removes his RED HELMET, and he's shell-shocked at the retirement.

DISSOLVE the HELMET into the RED SUN of the JAPANESE FLAG.

END MONTAGE.

INT. NAGOYA, JAPAN. REDBULL PROMO TENT - DAY

A weary Jake is flanked by JAPANESE REDBULL PROMO GIRLS at an impromptu photo shoot. A spirited PHOTOGRAPHER spurs them along, while many fans are looking-on.

PHOTOGRAPHER
Kiss his cheeks!!
(beat)
Big smile, Jake, **big** smile!!

Jake is noticeably making an effort to be positive.

JAKE
 (strained) This is as big a smile
 as I can make....
 It's not like I'm faking it!!

All onlookers/fans laugh, except for Jess.

The photographer checks the back of his camera, satisfied.

PHOTOGRAPHER
 Wow, great shots!!

MODEL 1
 Can I have your autograph?

She hands him a SHARPIE, then pops her boobs up, prompting him: 'SIGN HERE'

JAKE
 Ummmmmm...

MODEL 2
 (grabs Jake's arm)
 No--hee hee! We just playing trick!
 I dared her, we just kidding!

Jake looks unsure for a breath and then impulsively signs--

JAKE
 Nah, too late!!

PHOTOGRAPHER
 Like, whoa--!!
 (starts snapping pics)
 Ha! Great shots, Jake!!

Jake glances at Jess who is now thoroughly pissed.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY, NAGOYA - NIGHT

Jake and Jess walk with their baggage through the opulent, open area, and she's following.

JAKE
 Come on Jess, it was kinda funny...

JESS
 I can't even believe the audacity
 of these... **bitches!!**
 Are they shamelessly gonna hit on
 you--in front of me--for the rest
 of our lives..? Like, this is **Japan**.
 What are they gonna be like in Brazil?!!

JAKE
(beat)
I think you're over-reacting...

JESS
Oh, do you? You're not helping to
defuse things by **actually signing**
her tits!! "I dare her, I dare her!!"
(mocking model's accent)

JAKE
--Can we just drop this?

A peppy Dutch PR GUY from RedBull runs up on them.

PR GUY
Hey--! Like, super glad you're back!
I'm having them set up in your room
now.

Jake drops his bag and Jess exhales angrily. Seeing Jess' reaction, Jake's frustration doubles.

JAKE
Yr fuckin' kidding, right?
All I wanted to do is go to my room
...and decompress.

PR GUY
(nervously) Uhhh, it's a really
important piece? The segment is all
about you, and it's like... Japanese
"60 Minutes" --but for sports.

Jake glances at a fuming Jess and then picks his bag up.

JAKE
Let's just get this over with...

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Jake enters the room and sees KIKU OTANI, gorgeous sports reporter. Their look connotes instant chemistry while her CREW sets up the filming equipment.

KIKU
Jake Iler--
(small bow)
--Very pleased to meet you. Kiku Otani.

JAKE
(rushed smaller bow)
Nice meeting you. Uhh, this is Jess.

Jess doesn't bother with formalities. She sidles Jake and chucks her bag on a dresser.

KIKU
Your assistant...?

JAKE
Ha!! (doesn't bother correcting her)

Jess glowers at Jake indignantly, hand on hip.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - LATER

Their interview is beginning with Jake and Kiku sitting opposed with Jess behind Jake, out of their shot. Jake has been made-up and is in better attire than moments before.

KIKU
A little over a year ago, you were getting out of prison; a sentence where you were incarcerated for a little more than seven years. What has surprised you the **most** in the past year?

JAKE
(struck by question/beat)
Just... the response of people, around the world... I never in a million years thought I'd get an opportunity to do this--(he snatches a PROP REDBULL CAN next to him)
--but thanks to RedBull Racing, heeeeere we are!! (very cheesy)

KIKU
(cute giggling) Hee hee!!
(beat/puts on serious face)
Tell me about your time in prison.

JAKE
Wow, that took a dark turn!
(they both chuckle)
I mean... (shrugs) it's not like it is in the movies--

KIKU
--did you really sodomize other men?

JAKE
Haaaa!! (scoffs)
(beat)
..no, haha. I just said that to

JAKE (CONT'D)
 scare Nino.
 --Did it work?

KIKU
 Hee-hee. I don't know... (diffident)

JAKE
 When you get a chance, ask him.

KIKU
 Since I have **you** at the moment--
 (looks at her notes)
 You were saying, "it's not like
 the movies"...
 So what was it really like?

JAKE
 (long beat/drawn out breath)
 Depressing. Because you feel like
 you've wasted your life.
 A good chunk of it, anyway.

KIKU
 Did you think you would race again?

JAKE
 (quickly) --No.

KIKU
 Why not, Jake? (Jess is alert in BG)

JAKE
 (beat)
 I kinda thought the... collective
 racing community would turn their
 back on me.

KIKU
 So, what happened?

JAKE
 Someone took a chance on me.
 My friend Hans took a chance on me.
 (takes stoic pause/beat)
 Well, **everyone** at RedBull did,
 and thankfully they still are...

KIKU
 What was it like running off the
 track at Monza?

Jake has to fight laughing at the change of tact in questions.

JAKE
(groans) Ughh, probably the low
point of the season...?

KIKU
What about when you caused the pile-
up at Sochi?

JAKE
Correction: **that** was the low point
of the season! (humorously)

KIKU
(giggles)
In all seriousness, going back to
Monza when you left the track at
260 KPH--were you scared?

JAKE
That's what? 160 miles an hour..?
Nah, wasn't scared. (grinning)

KIKU
Is that sarcasm..? (coy)

Jake merely raises his eyebrows flirtatiously.

KIKU (cont'd)
..What about your loved ones?

ANGLE ON JESS.

JAKE (OS)
What about them?

KIKU
You don't worry about your safety?
(concerned)--Even for their sake?

JAKE
I can't "worry"--or I have no business
in that car to begin with.

KIKU
Are you saying it would affect your
focus..?

JAKE
(nods subtly)...most certainly.

KIKU
(intimately) What do you focus on?

CLOSE UP on the visual exchange between them.

JAKE

You... just have to be in the moment.

Jake smiles at her disarmingly and she returns it. Then she notices Jess behind him and flushes guiltily.

JAKE (cont'd)

..but, ah--it's probably not the
"made for TV" answer you want--
but I just concentrate on following
the race line and zone out.

KIKU

In Japan, we have a word for that:
Rezafokasu. It's like, 'intense focus'
...You can borrow that word, ok?
My gift to you.

JAKE

Ah, arigato--(Kiku smiles unabashedly)
--Rezafokasu. It's--(somber)
It's like I'm alone out there.
Except for my teammates! Thanks Axel!
(obnoxious wink)

KIKU

(giggles)

INT. HOTEL ROOM, POST INTERVIEW - NIGHT

Jake is sprawled on the bed reading a Clavell. Jess is squaring up the room and intentionally SLAMS a drawer.

JAKE

What are you so upset about?

JESS

(whips the shirt she's tidying)
I'm kinda..."upset" by the way you
did that interview.

JAKE

(closes book) What about it?

JESS

Ohhh, I guess because I get zero
acknowledgement as your girlfriend;
the one who stuck it out with you
while you were in prison all those
years.

JAKE

Would you like me to...
(MORE)

JAKE (CONT'D)
 "acknowledge" it more?

JESS
 (scoffs)
 --No, actions speak louder than words, Jake.

JAKE
 I'm not even gonna **attempt** to decipher that...

JESS
 It's the way you shamelessly flirt with her right in front of me!!

JAKE
 Look--I'm sorry you missed out on all the attention and male companionship while I was gone--

JESS
 --It's not that!! It's how you said you're "alone out there"!! How could you be alone when I've always been here for you??

JAKE
 You've always been here for me..?
 Thank goodness I have this **naggy** girlfriend to have my back..!

Jess reacts like she's been struck. Incipient tears form.

JESS
 That's so not fair...

JAKE
 (Standing up) Don't you think I have enough to stress about..?
 This season's a fuckin disaster and we're probably gonna get screwed outta practice tomorrow...

JESS
 Oh, I'm sorry everything in your life where you drive **race cars** for a living isn't perfect.

JAKE
 (shakes head/beat)
 I don't need this shit.

JESS
Would you rather be "alone"?

JAKE
Than have to deal with **this**...?
...Absolutely.

JESS
(beat/draws up dignity)
I don't have to be here.

JAKE
(reaches for door handle)
I'm gonna get some air.
If you're not here when I get back..
(beat)
..it's not the end of the world.

He opens the door, glances at her for another moment and then leaves.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY BAR - NIGHT

Jess sits at the bar lackadaisically finishing a drink.

Her empty glass is replaced by an obsequious BARTENDER, while Nino approaches her from behind.

NINO
Surely a lady as gorgeous as you
wouldn't be drinking alone!!

JESS
Surely she would, especially since
she'd like to be **left** alone right
now.

NINO
Aw, come on-a! That's no way to be.
If you **really** wanted to be by your-
self, there is a mini-bar in the room.

JESS
That's a good point!

She hails the bartender who attends instantly. Nino inter-
jects, and out-projects her, bodily.

NINO
We need a bottle of Dom!! On Ice!!
(snaps fingers) **Pronto!!**
We're celebrating, after all.

The bartender turns to do his bidding

JESS

I'm not celebrating anything--

NINO

--Bella, there does not have to be
...**bad-a blood** between us!

JESS

No...? Despite the fact you're a
total prick?

NINO

Tsk, tsk, no... I'm actually...
glad I ran into you! --Because I
was a-thinking: maybe you can be
a.... emissary between me and your
husband?

JESS

(beat)

He's not my husband.

NINO

Ah yes! And now I see there is no
ring on your finger. What a fool..
--And yet you travel the world with
him as his mistress. (pours Dom)
Then a-maybe champagne is fitting,
because that is quite French of you!
(Titters at himself)

JESS

I'm not. His "**mistress**". (sharply)

NINO

Eh, titles are not important.
What I'd like to propose to you
is a toast: your...Jake and myself,
to getting off on a better foot.
Let's call it, (raises glass)
"To a fresh start-a!!"

EXT. SUZUKA RACETRACK GROUNDS - NIGHT

Jake is staring at the Ferris Wheel abstractly.

His gaze follows the actions of a CUTE COUPLE on a date,
laughing as they go around.

A sentimental smile plays on his lips and his eyes gleam
fondly.

His phone BUZZES and he checks it. A SUPERIMPOSED text message
reads, "Jake Iler?" and another following that says, "I want

(MORE)

you to have my number". And then Kiku's CONTACT INFO comes through along with her PHOTO.

He replies, "Got it" and with a wistful smile, puts the phone back in his pocket and goes back to watching the Ferris Wheel.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY / OUTER BAR AREA - NIGHT

Jake strides through the busy area on the way to the elevators but stops abruptly when he spies Jess and Nino drinking together.

NINO (to Jess)
Would you like some more?

Jess nods eagerly and Nino obliges. Jake's face is latent fury.

He's moving to confront them and his phone rings and he answers it automatically.

JAKE
Hello?

KIKU (VO)
Any chance I can meet with you?

JAKE
(stops walking and glances at phone)
...Kiku?

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. KIKU'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Kiku stands on her balcony in a sheer Kimono with a plunging neckline, phone in hand.

KIKU
Yes, I have some... follow-up questions. Can I see you?

LOBBY

Jake watches Jess and Nino surreptitiously.

JAKE (into phone)
Where are you?

NINO (to Jess)
To building relationships!

Jess clinks glasses, looking swept-away.

KIKU (VO)
I'm staying in your hotel. Room 1607.

JAKE
(mumbling) Perfect timing--
(clearly)-I'll be right there.

Jess takes a heady swallow, Jake turns for the elevator.

As he gets in he sees Jess laugh at a Nino witticism. At the exact moment the doors close, Jess looks in Jake's direction.

Nino sees she's distracted and goes for a kiss. Jess jerks away violently; stunned.

JESS
What are you doing?!

Nino grins wickedly and Jess SLAPS him hard enough to make everyone within earshot come to a halt.

JESS (cont'd)
Is this some kind of game to you?

Nino touches his own face lovingly and smiles despite her.

JESS (cont'd)
I wouldn't make Jake your enemy.
He won't just fuck you up, you greasy
little worm--he'll kill you.
He'll **actually** kill you.

She stands up and snatches her purse, Nino has a flicker of fear go over him.

JESS (cont'd)
I'd hate to be in your shoes when he
finds out. Feel free to pay for my
drink since you ruined my evening.

She walks for the elevator, ANGLE ON a RedBull Engineer, MIKAEL, who is close enough to have heard and seen it all.

He goes back to his AD LIB conversation.

CUT TO:

INT. KIKU'S HOTEL ROOM- NIGHT

Jake pauses at the door which is latched to stay open in anticipation. He enters and Kiku turns to engage. As soon as he lays eyes upon her, his ambivalence is evident.

KIKU
I know you don't drink alcohol,
but I made some green tea...

Jake stands at the threshold rather awkwardly.

KIKU (cont'd)
Close the door. Would you like some?
(indicating the tea)

JAKE
If you're having some, yes.

KIKU
(softly) Of course.

She nods for him to sit and pours, serving.

She then sits very close to him. They sip and glance at each other.

JAKE
It's good. (smiles nervously)
(beat)
You said you had some follow-up
questions for me?

KIKU
(blushes and looks down)
Now I'm feeling shy...

JAKE
You're not shy--(scoffs playfully)
You're a reporter!

KIKU
Hee-hee. That's true.
I guess I have an... irregular
question.....

Jake merely prompts her with a look. She dismisses her giddiness and steels herself, penetrating him with a new affect.

KIKU
Did you feel that connection...?
(beat)
When we met?

Jake nods slightly and puts his hand on her leg which is all gooseprickles, it reacts as if applied with an electrical charge.

He then commits to lean in, and so does she. They kiss, lightly at first and then passionately.

Then she breaks away, panting.

KIKU

--I have something to tell you.

JAKE

(amused) Uh-oh.

KIKU

No, (grinning) it's not bad...
Well, it's not "good", either.

JAKE

(makes humored croaking noise)

KIKU

(light chuckle)--I want to do some
coke. Do you mind if I do a line?

JAKE

(beat/a bit surprised)
Ummmm... no. Not at all.
(then inhales deeply)

KIKU

--But there is a caveat.

JAKE

A "caveat"...?

KIKU

I think that is the right word.

JAKE

Well--I won't know unless you tell
me.

KIKU

I want to do a line... off of....
you. (looks down at his crotch)

JAKE

(feigns surprise) I don't know if
that's a 'caveat'... but it's...
definitely interesting.

Kiku giggle and pulls out a small vial. She pulls the knot
on her kimono and looks at him with sultry eyes, expectantly.

KIKU

Do some off me, first?

Jake bites his lip with the last of his unease and then
(MORE)

nods eagerly. He makes a noise of assent. Kiku puts a sprinkle on her nipple, obscured by Jake's head.

Jake sniffs and audibly SUCK/KISSES it, Kiku inhales sharply and moans almost imperceptibly.

In a flourish, Jake stands up and undoes his pants. Kiku kneels in front of him.

Jake sees his REFLECTION in the balcony's sliding glass door, but he can't bear to look at himself.

Then Kiku SNIFFS loudly and Jake's eyes glaze over in pleasure.

FADE OUT

FADE IN:

INT. KIKU'S HOTEL ROOM - MORNING

The blinds are drawn but some light peeks through.

Rocks glasses with remnants of ice and whiskey catch the refraction.

Jake opens a bloodshot eye and glances at his watch.

JAKE

Ah, Fuck!!!

Jake scrambles into his clothes, apathetic of disturbing a still-sleeping Kiku.

He careens out the door, still dressing in flight.

INT. JAKE & JESS' HOTEL ROOM - MORNING

Jess is putting the finishing touches on packing her bag.

Jake barrels in, startled to see her.

JAKE

--What are you doing?

JESS

(coldly) You went out to get some air and I was up all night waiting for you.

(beat)

And now I'm leaving.

JAKE
You're leaving me?

JESS
Jake... you'll be **fine** without me.

JAKE
Wait: so you're leaving me, for **him**?!

JESS
(dumbstruck)--Who?!

JAKE
Nino!!

JESS
(repulsed) Oh, god. Never!
What--
(beat)
--that **pig** made a move on me at the
bar, but I stood up for you.

JAKE
Yeah... I saw you standing up for me.

JESS
Oh!! So you didn't see me **smack** him
in the face?!

JAKE
(lamely)....no...

JESS
So where were **you** last night?

JAKE
---I-I don't have time for this--
(makes for shower)

JESS
Oh, Hell no!! Come back here!

JAKE
I gotta get ready, Jessica...

JESS
(blocking him) Let me find out you
were with that little news-bitch.

JAKE
(gulps helplessly)
--You were with Nino!!

JESS
 (now irate) I was having a drink
 by myself, and Nino showed up!!
 And then he tried to kiss me and
 I slapped him in front of
everyone at the bar!!!

Jake looks away from her, catches another REFLECTION of
 himself in a VANITY MIRROR and can't stand that either.

JESS (cont'd)
 (calmly) Did you fuck her?

Jake looks at her but can't answer. Her eyes well with tears.

JESS (cont'd)
 Did you honestly believe in your
heart that I was gonna fuck Nino?

JAKE
 (beat)
 I wasn't thinking about that.

She blinks the tears away and composes herself with dignity.

JESS
 I'm going home.

She walks past him and then zips her bag in a fluid motion.

JESS (cont'd)
 Skip a shower. You've got nothing to
 hide. You're gonna be late enough as
 it is.

She opens and closes the door softly.

Jake walks out on the balcony. His phone BUZZES but he si-
 lences it without even a glance.

EXT. SUZUKA RACING PADDOCKS - MORNING

Jake strides into the bustle of race prep and Axel confronts
 him dead on.

AXEL
 Where the **hell** have you been?!?
 We've been ready for hours and are
 about to forfeit the session!!

Jake steps into his race suit and doesn't deign to reply.
 Hans storms over and joins the fracas.

HANS
Jesus Christ!! Is your phone broken?!
Where have you been..!?

JAKE
I'm here--!! What are **you** doing here?!
Don't you have someone's ass to kiss??

All action in the garage has ceased to focus on the trio.
Hans grabs Jake by the arm.

HANS
We need to talk **right now--**

JAKE
(shakes his grip off)
--Get the fuck offa me!!

AXEL
GET BACK TO WORK!!!

Everyone else resumes "looking" busy. Axel and Hans share a look over overt concern.

HANS
(privately) What's going on with
you and Jess..?

JAKE
(beat/surprised)
She left--it's nothing.
Lets get on the track.

CUT TO:

EXT. SUZUKA RACETRACK - MIDDAY (CONTINUOUS ACTION)

POV of Jake tearing around the long loping Turn 1 at 195 MPH under ominous skies.

AXEL (VO)
How's downforce on corner entry?

JAKE (VO)
(tersely) The setup's fine.

Jake enters the slightly uphill S-curves (Turns 3-7) and absolutely nails them.

INTERCUT WITH

INT. SUZUKA ANNOUNCER'S BOOTH - MIDDAY

An ANNOUNCER and his COLLEAGUE watch the action, broadcasting in JAPANESE.

JAPANESE ANNCR

This is going to be a fast lap!!
That section was perfect!!

TRACK

Jake leaves Spoon Curve and accelerates faster, faster, faster.

REVERSE ANGLE as he blasts under the Tunnel.

POV as he waits until the last possible moment to brake at Casio Triangle (Turns 16/17).

AXEL (VO)

Iler keep in mind this is **practice**.
No need to eviscerate the tires
before the damn qualifier.

PADDOCK

Jake blazes by. Axel turns to an ENGINEER with a cockney accent.

AXEL

How's Iler's times?

ENGNR

Fastest we've ever run 'ere.
Ee's a polesitter f'r cert'n,
'e keeps this paice.
(leans in / more quietly now)
Wha'eva bee ee's got in 'is bonnet--
Oy don' think Nino c'n keep up.

Axel is tight lipped with apprehension but can only nod.

TIME CUT:

Jake climbs out of the car, goes to shed his suit and he's drenched in sweat. The garage is swarming with activity.

NINO

Great times, Iler! Those will be
a-very hard to beat.

JAKE
(scoffs and looks around)
...Riiiiight.

NINO
Ey, Jake! You can not-a take a
compliment?!

Jake posts up confrontationally with three meters separating them. Everyone is transfixed watching.

NINO (cont'd)
Like, I never got the chance to tell
you this: (snaps finger)
--But you got a **really** good girl.

Jake takes three quick steps, lowers his shoulder and spears Nino right in the chest. The crew swarms immediately and its total calamity. Jake raises his fist to pummel Nino but he's pulled off with an inch to spare.

AXEL
STOP!!! STOP!!!

Jake is pulled off, wriggles out of the crew's grasp and storms out of the garage through the bay doors.

Nino remains on the ground and no one bothers to help him up.

NINO
That guy is an animal!! We were just
talking and did you see what he did
to me..!?!
The crew and Axel leer at Nino disgustedly.

INT. SUZUKA CONFERENCE ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

Jake, sitting with his arms crossed petulantly, is flanked by Hans and Axel.

Opposite them sits MAX BECKETT, the patrician FIA Pres. and DOLPH, his main associate. They are flanked by other FIA BIGWIGS.

JAKE
He started it.

Hans and Axel groan while Max's peers look veritably amused.

MAX
It's good you didn't hurt him--truly.
(MORE)

MAX (CONT'D)

But there will be consequences.
Immediately, there will be a two-
race suspension.

Hans and Axel interject to protest but Max forestalls them with a gesture.

MAX (cont'd)

--And there **will** be a further investigation, with possible **further** repercussions. Lucky for you there were no cameras filming in the paddock at that precise moment, or it would be an abject dismissal from the sport, entirely.

Max lets the words sink in and Jake shifts uncomfortably.

MAX (cont'd)

Even luckier for you, there is a particular Italian that I positively loathe. Because if I find out that Grazzano provoked you by saying something un-gentlemanly, there may be consequences for him, also.

Hans glances at Axel whose frown deepens.

MAX (cont'd)

Either way, you **are** in the wrong for now and the suspension **will** stand.
(glares at Axel pointedly)
So you are by no means off the hook.

JAKE

Yes sir.

MAX

When I'm finished speaking with Nino, you two will shake hands--

Max pauses for Jake to acquiesce to which Jake nods dispassionately.

MAX (cont'd)

--At a press conference
(taps Dolph who leaves quickly)
where you will elucidate the press on what a **privilege** it is to be part of something so majestic. You will **not** discuss any details of the suspension, but you **will** acknowledge the sport is bigger

(MORE)

MAX (CONT'D)
 than the petty differences of you
 and you rival (sneers).
 You may leave. Send Nino in.

INT. SUZUKA MEDIA ROOM - LATER

Jake shakes hands with Nino.

JAKE (privately/only to Nino)
 This ain't over--

Nino moves his lips to reply but Jake breaks contact and turns to a podium, standing before an assortment of reporters.

JAKE (cont'd)
 Ahem (clears throat) --
 I've uh...
 Embarrassed myself, forgetting my
 responsibility that I have to
 everyone on my team. And, equally
 as important, the fans.
 (beat)
 I have to remember that I can't
 act on impulse.
 I now realize that I can't beat my
 enemies in public...
 Because of laws.
 (draws some light laughter)
 --So instead, I'll do it on the
 track.

He turns to leave and there are a hail of questions fired at him, but he goes out a side door alone.

Max Beckett watches him leave from a side vantage, standing with Dolph.

MAX
 Something of a ratings wet dream.

Dolph raises his eyebrows appraisingly and nods.

INT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE MEDIA ROOM - A MOMENT LATER

Kiku and her CAMERA OPERATOR in tow catch up to Jake.

KIKU
 Jake! ...Jake!!

JAKE
(surprised) ...Hey.

KIKU
I'm glad I could get you alone.

Jake overtly glances at her cameraman staying barely out of earshot, seeming proactively disinterested.

KIKU (cont'd)
I was wondering if you'd give me an exclusive.

JAKE
(beat/he hesitates)
--Kiku, I can't

KIKU
(near whisper) Even after last night?

JAKE
Listen: Last night was amazing...
But it was a mistake, and I shouldn't have even come to your room--
(Kiku is mortified)
--and... look, this is off the record-- I can't talk about what happened--(lowers voice)
But if you wanna break the story that it's a two-race suspension, that's the best I can do.

KIKU
So... that's all you can tell me?

JAKE
(hesitates and then small nod)
Yeah.

KIKU
Then I didn't hear it from you.
(beat)
Thanks for everything, Iler.

She smiles sadly and walks away.

INT. REDBULL PADDOCK / GARAGE - EVENING

The area is now mostly vacant. Jake looks in the cockpit of the RB17 as if he's forgotten something.

Mikael, the mousy engineer from the bar, approaches Jake.

MIKAEL

The irony is, he was paying you a compliment.

Jake turns and furrows his brow for him to elaborate.

MIKAEL (cont'd)

When Nino said, "you got a really good girl" (mocks accent)--it's true. I watched the whole thing and could hear them, too. He was making it seem like he'd had a change of heart ...and wanted to be your friend. Which lowered her defenses.

(beat)

And then he tried to kiss her...

JAKE

Did she really hit him?

MIKAEL

POW!!! (slaps air)
--Right in the kisser, haha!!
She slapped the taste out of his mouth! (very Germanic enunciation)

Jake chuckles with him and exhales, relieved. At that moment, another CREWMEMBER runs into the garage, panting.

CREWMEMBER

Jake!! You need to come quick, it's Hans!!

EXT. END OF PIT LANE - EVENING

Hans is getting pushed toward the back of an ambulance. Jake intercepts him while other RB CREW hover anxiously.

HANS

Looks like I'm getting too old for all this...

JAKE

What the hell happened..?!

HANS

I think it's a heart issue--

Jake looks at the HEAD PARAMEDIC who nods gravely.

JAKE

Oh god, this is my fault--

HANS

--Nein, nein...! This is from sixty-six years of sausage and heavy bier! I've survived three terrible marriages to three terrible women!! --I'll survive this!!

They both laugh and bonhomie resumes for a moment.

Hans beckons Jake closer and indicates to the RB crew surrounding them.

HANS

You're a leader, Jake.
(Jake shakes head 'no' but Hans persists)
Zey need you--
Just like **you** need **zem**!!

Jake looks as if he's gonna crack so Hans brings him in for a tight bro-hug.

Jake nods for the paramedics to put Hans into the ambulance.

It drives away and Jake turns to look at the team solemnly. He can't muster any words so he looks down and they begin to dissemble.

EXT. PALACIAL ESTATE - MIDDAY (9 YEARS AGO)

Jake walks up a gravel pathway dressed formally toward a reception hall opening.

He bounds up some steps with youthful energy.

INT. WEDDING RECEPTION - A MOMENT LATER

Jake takes in the festive wedding atmosphere of Mike Marsten's other daughter, NIKKI. Jake is one of hundreds of classy looking guests.

Mike spots Jake and strides over to greet him and show him around--

MIKE

There ya are! C'mon, I want you to meet some of my friends!

SHERRI, a horny cougar-chick in her early fifties, pulls the duo into her group, looking at Jake solicitously.

SHERRI

Who you got with you, Mike?

MIKE
He's my new driver!

SHERRI
Driver...?

MIKE
From my race team!! He's my "secret
weapon" this season, haha.
Jake, this is my cousin Sherri.

SHERRI
Ohhh, **that** kinda driver.
Hi, Jake--(arches eyebrow)

JAKE
(extends hand) Um, hi cousin Sherri.

Two of Mike's PEERS amble over. One pumps his hand.

PEER 1	PEER 2
What a beautiful day for	Hey Mike, congratulations!
Nikki to get married, huh?	Nice ceremony!!

All in the large group seem to chatter amiably amongst
themselves and Jake taps Mike on the shoulder.

JAKE
(privately) I can't thank you enough
for inviting me, Mr. Marsten--

MIKE
--It's just 'Mike'!!
And you're part of the family now,
too!

Jake spots a glimpse of Jess across the room and she's
radiant. His world just changed.

She sees his stunned look and stops the conversation she
was in and they're both spellbound, enchanted.

MIKE (OS)
Jess, come meet someone!

Never breaking their gaze, Jess walks over until her little
Niece, who's four years old, runs into her leg.

NIECE
Aunt Jess, Aunt Jess! Pick me up!!

Jess picks her up and sets her on her hip.

NIECE (cont'd)

Aunt Jess, when are **you** getting married?

A few people close by chuckle at the cutesie.

JESS

Well kiddo, I gotta find an eligible bachelor first. (looks subtly at Jake)

JAKE

Do you wanna dance?

JESS

(smiles, surprised)
Ummm... Dad?

MIKE

You haven't asked permission for anything since you were **her** age!
--What are you starting for now?

JAKE

Do you mind, Mr. Marsten?

MIKE

I told you not to call me that--!
It's "Mike"!!

Jess puts her niece down and Jake takes her arm.

MIKE (cont'd)

Wait a couple weeks before **you** start calling me 'Dad', though!
(draws laughs)

INT. WEDDING DANCE FLOOR - MIDDAY (9 YEARS AGO)

SERIES OF SHOTS:

Jake spins Jess onto the dancefloor with graceful ease. Their chemistry is immediately in sync. They waltz, utterly captivated.

They're grinding and singing together, "from the windowwww/ to the wall!" and laughing at their natural candor.

They're doing the "Macarena", both really popping from the turn and laughing riotously.

END SERIES OF SHOTS.

INT. SUSHI RESTAURANT - NIGHT (9 YEARS AGO)

Jake and Jess sit at the bar, sushi is presently being served as they split chopsticks and mix wasabi, etc.

JESS
So what do you do for a living--
besides drive?

Jake picks up a sushi roll, deliberately stalling.

JAKE
...Would you consider yourself fairly... socially progressive?
--Or more conservative?

JESS
Wait--are you a lawyer?!

JAKE
Ugh, **yuck!!** No!!

JESS
(off his reaction) Hahaha!!
--Whew! (faux wipes brow)

They appraise each other fondly.

JESS (cont'd)
Well, I've been told you shouldn't
talk politics on dates.
--Especially first dates.

JAKE
Technically this is our second.
(holds up two fingers)

JESS
(amused) How's that?

JAKE
That wedding was **definitely** a date.
That was like four hours.
It was actually more like **two** dates!

JESS
Ohhhh, so this is our **third** date?

JAKE
(smugly) Exactly.

JESS
Look at you: Mr. Thinks-He's-Gonna
(MORE)

JESS (CONT'D)

-Get-Some...

JAKE

(almost chokes on food)
--I'm just being optimistic.

JESS

(beat)

I'd say you're being realistic.

JAKE

Ok...

(beat)

You're not a square.

JESS

So: what do you do for a living?

JAKE

(raises piece to eat then halts)
...Maybe I'll tell you next time.

JESS

You assume there'll be a next time!

JAKE

(grinning devilishly)
There will be...

INT. JAKE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT (9 YEARS AGO)

Jake and Jess cuddle in bed, being spoons.

JESS

You don't care if I spend the night,
right?

JAKE

You always ask, and I never mind.
I like having you here.

JESS

Mmmmm, good.

She rolls over to kiss him and then looks at him intently.

JAKE

Yeeeee..? (very cute)

JESS

(beat)

I just... think about you sometimes.
(MORE)

JESS (CONT'D)
 Like, I wonder how you got started...
 selling **drugs**! --You seem so...
 wholesome!

JAKE
 (mock offended) I **am** wholesome!!

She settles deeper into the pillow and nudges her chin to prompt him into further explanation.

JAKE (cont'd)
 I grew up near the beach and it was
 always around. Everyone I knew did
 it, so it just made sense to sell
 'em. Then I got into racing and it
 paid for all my cars and whatnot--
 It's almost like how I paid for
 an education.
 (beat)
 It's allowed me to get this far in
 my driving career--my **real** career--
 and I really only have like...
 Three customers. So the risk is low.

JESS
 Three customers...?
 Is that even lucrative..?

JAKE
 (neutrally) Ummm... Yeah.

EXT. JAKE'S BACKYARD - DAY (9 YEARS AGO)

Jake and Jess are eating BBQ they've prepared.

JESS
 Remember I was asking you about
 money...?

JAKE
 (beat)
 Not really...

JESS
 Well, I was thinking...
 (beat/Jake raises eyebrows)
 ...I heard my Dad talking on the
 phone. I think he needs help.
 Like, financially. Maybe you...
 know someone?

Jake smacks his chops and leisurely drinks from a cup.

JAKE

How much does he need?

INT. MIKE'S OFFICE - DAY (9 YEARS AGO)

Jake sits across from Mike with a large desk between them.

MIKE

I can't believe Jess would mention that! God, this is embarrassing...! I feel like I've boxed myself in, and if that other contracting firm underbids me on the next job I'm finished. (Starts mumbling) If I over-extend a line of credit, the banks'll call everything in. I'd have to sell everything--

JAKE

--Including the race team.

Mike shrugs through a tight lipped grimace and then nods.

JAKE (cont'd)

How much do you need?

MIKE

One point five million.

Jake merely raises his eyebrows and looks concerned.

MIKE (cont'd)

I'd just need it for ninety days and then I get a check stroked when the other deal's finalized in Omaha... (glazes over)

JAKE

--I can get it. I just need a promissary note drawn up saying you'll have it back to me within six months. That'll give you some cushion.

MIKE

How are you gonna do that?

JAKE

I've got some family money... Only thing is, it's in cash-- (Mike looks puzzled) --So you can't make a huge deposit into one account or the FBI's gonna be all over it.

MIKE

I see...

(beat)

What percent interest do you want
it back at?

JAKE

No interest--

MIKE

--Jake!

JAKE

Look, you've been like family to me.
And I lov-- (stops abruptly)
I'm crazy about your daughter.

(beat)

Plus, I'd be out of a job if I don't
help you out. (both chuckle)

MIKE

(beat)

Uhhh, Jake... I don't know what to
say--

JAKE

--Just "thank you" is enough.
Now call your attorney and get that
note drawn up. I'll be back in an
hour.

INT. JAKE'S LIVING ROOM - DAY (9 YEARS AGO)

Jess is on her laptop while Jake is fiddling with a car part.

JESS

I googled you...

JAKE

(playfully) Ohhh... this can't be
good.

JESS

(scoffs, ignoring him)
I found this article that said you're
a quote 'great driver on a mediocre
team'.

JAKE

Ha, I'd say that's a bit of an
embellishment...

JESS

Is it...?

Jake pries at the part but it's not budging.

JAKE

...I wouldn't refer to myself as a
"great driver"--

JESS

--You're on a run for the champion-
ship!!
(Jake just shrugs)
Is Marsten Racing really "mediocre"?

JAKE

That's a harsh word, but we're not
the best. There're factory teams
that are way better.

JESS

How come you don't drive for them?

JAKE

Because--(gets very close to her face)
--they don't have the "world's
hottest daughter" as a perk..
(kisses her sumptuously)

JESS

Mmmm, you're sweet...
But seriously, why?

Jake fiddles with the part with more success, freeing it some.

JAKE

Because racing is full of politics,
and there's a lot of people that...
basically help each other.
And if you're not **born** into the club
--or down to seriously kiss their
ass--they're not trying to help you.

She cants her head and sees him in a new light.

JESS

Well, good thing you helped yourself.

JAKE

Yeah--(grunts with exertion)
--We'll see how it goes at Laguna
this weekend.

The part now rolls smoothly and he looks pleased.

INT. FEDERAL PRISON PHONE BANK - EVENING (3 YEARS AGO)

Jake is trying to make a call amongst dozens of shoulder-to-shoulder inmates.

JAKE

Am I gonna see you this weekend..?
(the receiver transmits scratchiness
and then is silent)
...You there?

JESS (VO)

(scratch)--Sorry! The cat made me
drop the phone..
Of **course** I'm coming this weekend.

Jake looks supremely relieved and exhales his stress.

JAKE

I miss you...

EXT. FEDERAL PRISON VISITING AREA - MORNING (3 YEARS AGO)

Jake and Jess sit across from each other with other families and inmates in close proximity. Jess looks stricken, her eyes are puffy.

JAKE

Why didn't you tell me over the phone?
...When did you find out?

JESS

On the way here.

JAKE

Jeeeeesus. (looks as stricken)
--Your sister tell you?

JESS

Yeah.

JAKE

An aneurysm... That's...
(beat)
He was 58?

JESS

59.
(beat)
The last time we talked on the phone
he was so excited to get out.
He always asked about you.
(MORE)

JESS (CONT'D)
 (beat)
 He was like a big kid---
 (her voice chokes)

JAKE
 (beat)
 I'm sorry honey.

JESS
 (her tears flow down)
 I just wish you could hug me...
 (beat/tries to smile)
 When will this be over?

EXT. PRISON PARKING LOT - DAY (1.5 YEARS AGO)

ANOTHER ANGLE of Jake and Jess in their first post-release embrace. They're mid kiss and Jess breaks away--

JESS
 I took the back seat out.

JAKE
 Oh yeah....?

JESS
 Yeah, you need to get inside me,
now.

JAKE
 Mmmmm, Grrrr (smacks her ass)

INT. JAKE & JESS' APARTMENT - DAY (1.5 YEARS AGO)

She leads him into the kitchen on the end of an apparent tour and he's quite pleased.

JESS
 And I figured you wouldn't wanna
 go out....?

JAKE
 (deliberates and then shakes 'no')
 --Not right now, anyway.

JESS
 (pleased) So! I brought all your
 favorites... **to you!!** Da da da
 da daaaa (singing)...!

She presents several COVERED DISHES and makes a big
 (MORE)

production over them.

JESS
(unveils)--Pizza!!!
Just the way you like it!!

JAKE
Oh my god!! Pizza!!
Look at that, all charred and crispy..

JESS
(unveils) Shrimp and scallop ceviche!

JAKE
Little skrimpos!! Is that...?
(inhales sharply)
Cilantro, I see?
(sniffs) --And smell?

JESS
(chuckles) Annnnnd, to finish you
off--

JAKE
--You already did that!

JESS
(huskily) And I'm gonna do it again.

They kiss, delicately, never closing their eyes. She lifts
the last cover.

JESS
--Chocolate...cake!!

JAKE
(Jaw ajar) Fuuuuuuck...!

EXT. JOSHUA TREE NATIONAL PARK - NIGHT (1.5 YEARS AGO)

Jake and Jess lay atop an RV, stargazing. The Milky Way
is on vivid display for them.

JAKE
You're not cold..?

JESS
(kisses him on cheek)
I'm perfect...

OFFSCREEN their moment of serenity is interrupted by an
escalating HORN which builds and mixes with CITY NOISES.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. NAGOYA CENTRAIR AIRPORT - NIGHT (PRESENT)

Jake is arriving at the airport in the back of a cab, jerked out of his reverie as the cab halts and CITY NOISES persist.

CAB DRIVER
2600 Yen, Please.

Jake looks like he's astonished to be back in the real world. He reaches for his wallet and hands the driver the fare.

INT. PLANE OVER THE PACIFIC OCEAN - DAY

Jake looks out of his window at the endless expanse of water.

A very attractive/look-alike-to-Kiku STEWARDESS interrupts his thinking.

STEWARDESS
Mr. Iler..? (he looks, eyes wide)
May I have your autograph?

He nods, takes a pad from her and signs.

She leans in to take the pad.

STEWARDESS (cont'd)
(licentiously) If you desire **anything**
...Please let me know.

Jake can only manage a wan smile and shakes his head 'no'.

EXT. SANTA MONICA - LATE DAY

Jake gets out of a Towncar in front of an opulent house, looking rumpled and tired. He has flowers in one hand and a travel bag in the other.

OFFSCREEN he hears FEMALE VOICES from a block away and turns to them.

Jess is walking a couple corgi dogs with her similar-looking sister Nikki and her niece from the wedding, who's now 13 years old instead of 4.

NIKKI
(from far off)...Speak of the devil.

Jess stops in her tracks and stares.

CLOSE SHOT of her mien, ambiguous and moderately suprised.

NIECE (OS)
Is that Uncle Jake..?

EXT. SANTA MONICA BEACH - TWILIGHT

Jake and Jess walk in stride, he's still holding the flowers.

JESS
So what are you doing here?

JAKE
(beat)
I gotta sort things out with us,
Jess.

JESS
I think you've gotta be by yourself
for a while, Jake...

JAKE
Is that what **you** want..?
You want me to just leave you alone?

JESS
(beat)
I'm flattered you showed up;
but I have a feeling that if we do
this again you'll just resent me.

JAKE
I think if I don't at least **try**
to get you back--right now--
I'll regret any moment we'll be
apart, until the next time I see
you...
I'm not leaving here empty-handed.

JESS
(challenging) Oh yeah? (stops walking)

JAKE
Yeah. I've decided.
(beat)
I'll give up racing if that makes
us work--nothing is worth the price
of losing you.

JESS
(shakes head)
You are so stupid.
(beat/Jake is perplexed)
(MORE)

JESS (CONT'D)

How could you ever think I'd want
you to give up the thing you love
most?

JAKE

--Second most.

JESS

Cute. (still serious)
--But I'd never ask you to make
that sacrifice...
I love you too much for that.

JAKE

So you **do** love me.. (coy/playful)

JESS

I've always loved you, dummy.
(grabs flowers and smells them)

JAKE

Jess, I could have it all and it
means nothing if I can't share it
with you. And....
I'll never be whole unless I have
my better half with me...

(beat)

You're the best thing that ever
happened to me. I wanna spend the
rest of my life being as good to
you as you've been to me.

JESS

You'd really give up that other
life for me?

JAKE

In a second.

JESS

You mean that. (declarative)

JAKE

(beat)

There is no other life without you.

JESS

(long beat)

.....Don't ever forget it.

They get very close and look intensely at each other.

JESS (cont'd)
 Let's get you a shower.
 (Jake chuckles)
 --And then make up officially.

JAKE
 Hahaha!! I love you..!
 (they kiss, sparsely)

JESS
 I'm serious!! (tosses flowers)
 --Let's go! (yanks his arm)

The sun sets in a TIME LAPSE, the stars arc across the sky toward the eastern horizon.

DISSOLVE INTO:

EXT. CIRCUIT OF THE AMERICA'S, AUSTIN, TX - DAY

SERIES OF SHOTS:

The sun RISING with COTA's VIP Tower silhouetted.

The Racing Teams' semi-truck "Circus" enters their respective areas in the paddocks in the morning daybreak.

An RB17 is unloaded off the back of a trailer.

Tires are distributed by a giant PIRELLI bigrig.

WIDE ANGLE of a practice session in progress, with the cars zipping around.

END SERIES OF SHOTS.

INT. COTA BROADCAST BOOTH - DAY

Announcers Mark (from the Monaco Seq.) and TED, a mid-forties Oklahoman, are commentating on the Friday practice session.

MARK
 With Jake Iler having finished his suspension and this being the last race of the season, these Stateside fans are showing up in **huge** numbers, even for a practice day that is normally nowhere **near** such a draw.

TED
 Yeah, Mark: Iler-Mania---
 or, as I like to call it --
 (MORE)

TED (CONT'D)
 "Iler-Rama", is in full swing!!

MULTIPLE SHOTS of the different cars and UNIQUE SIGHTS and
 UNIQUE PEOPLE from around the track.

MARK (VO)
 "Iler-Rama"...? Did you really make
 that up?

TED (VO)
 I'm more than just a pretty face,
 Mark.

MARK (VO)
 You are indeed--some would even go
 as far as calling you a 'talking
 head'.

TED (VO)
 Heck, I'll take that as a compliment!

BOOTH

MARK
 It wasn't--but Iler-Mania is looking
 good here today, Ted!

INT. REDBULL'S GARAGE - DAY

Jake's car is pushed in by some crew and he pops out.

Axel and some engineers huddle to listen--

JAKE
 We always say there's no "perfect"
 setup, but **damn** the car feels great!
 That new wing is giving huge gains
 in Turn 1 and 12--

MIKAEL
 --What about 19?

JAKE
 Yeah, all the low speed corners--
 It feels awesome..!
 (pretends to sob theatrically)
 --Man, I missed you guys!!

AXEL
 Ja, ja--we missed you too. (rolls eyes)
 Now go and relax while we run some
 (MORE)

AXEL (CONT'D)
analytics... but don't get lost.

Jake goes to leave but Axel looks like he's had an after-thought.

AXEL (cont'd)
Hey Iler! Hold on-- quick chat.

They go into a smaller, private office within the garage. Axel leans against a wall and lights a cigarette.

AXEL (cont'd)
As you know, we need to do what's best for the team.
(blows smoke, Jake furrows brow)
...Nino has to get first place to lock up the championship over Schuster.
(beat)
This is probably going to be his swan song--if he wins, he's most likely going to retire...
And if he doesn't win, he's most likely going to push for another year. He's obsessed with a third title and feels like this is his last shot.

JAKE
So... (scratches eyebrow)
Where does that leave me?

AXEL
Well. You haven't won a single race. Let alone a championship--
whereas, Nino has two.

JAKE
You still haven't answered my question.

AXEL
(taking a big drag)
I'm not the one who makes those decisions.

JAKE
So--"they" want me to help Nino win, obviously.

AXEL
(scoffs) Naturally! He's your teammate.

JAKE

I hesitate to agree with that term,
when it pertains to **him**, but...
Ok.

AXEL

No one expects you to do more than
you've already been **doing**.

JAKE

Which is racing my ass off.

AXEL

Your words. (inhales to cover a smile)

JAKE

Where am I with RedBull next season?

AXEL

(shrugs)
At this point they're optimistic
on how you place from week to week.
(beat)
You might be too.... seasoned...
for them to make a long term commitment.

JAKE

Too old. Even though I **clearly** have
the ability.

AXEL

(deep drag)
"Ability"... and "Potential"...
those are just words--
(the smoke bellows)
What matters is **results**.

JAKE

So help Nino win, and fuck Jake.

AXEL

That is your interpretation...

JAKE

You want me to... best-case scenario
hover upper/mid-field and block for
Nino.

AXEL

Nej, I want you to do your best.
As long as someone from our team
places well, we win the Constructor's
Title. (rare smile)
Then my season will have a cherry on it.

JAKE
(skeptically) Do my best--

AXEL
--Myself and the team believe in you,
but greater minds than mine think
Nino winning a third title is best
for RedBull.

JAKE
(beat)
What if I won?

AXEL
(another drag/smaller smile)
I don't think that possibility was
discussed. You are the number two
driver and have been behind him all
season.

JAKE
Well--(grimly)--I guess we're
week-to-week, then.

Axel drops the butt and grounds it out with his shoe.

EXT. COTA RACETRACK - DAY

CLOSE SHOT of Jake's same grim and determined look as he
drives around the track with the ENGINE SCREAMING.

He heads into the last few turns of the latter technical
section (Turns 12-19)

TED (VO)
Iler made it look like it was **too**
easy in the first and second qual-
ifier--

MARK (VO)
--True enough, he knows where the
higher stakes are, Ted--and he's
looking quite solid out there.
He's setting a **blistering** pace
as Q3 is set to wrap!

Jake comes into Turn 20 on a perfect race line and bombs
into the straighaway with max momentum. He tightens his
grip on the steering wheel as if to squeeze more juice out
of her, hitting extreme REV LIMITS on upshifts.

He crosses the finish line / timing sector and it reads:
"P1 ILER - 1:36.744, P2 GRAZ - 1:37.212".

(MORE)

The crowd responds with a ROAR.

Jake keeps it floored even though he's on pole, the engine BLOWS with a FLASH and SMOKE pours from the exhaust, the elated crowd immediately responds with COLLECTIVE DISMAY.

EXT. OUTER PADDOCKS - DAY

Jake, sweaty and rung out, is sitting with Jess on a make-shift bench. The hustle-bustle of the paddocks flows around them but they are a mini-island in the stream.

JAKE

I utterly **smash** the pole--
and the engine blows the **instant**
I cross the finish line.
(shakes head sullenly)
Is the universe mad at me or
something...?

JESS

Have you been on your best behavior
lately...? (arches eyebrow)

JAKE

Hmmmm... (amused)

JESS

I know this isn't just another race
to you, babe.

JAKE

Yeah. I was literally first place
and now I start at the back of the
grid... (grits teeth) because of a
penalty.

(beat)

Because of a penalty, my racing
career's pretty much over.

Jess scowls to comprehend but then decides to let him elaborate.

JAKE (cont'd)

This just **felt** different...
There was so much momentum and I
knew it was my last chance.

JESS

So go out there and give it your
best. Go out and win.
No one can stop you.

JAKE
(shaking head) I wish it were that
simple... it's virtually impossible
to--

JESS
--Is it "Impossible"?

JAKE
Well, no...

JESS
Look, no one would **ever** think you'd
make it this far.
--Did you?

JAKE
Well, no--

JESS
--"Well, no" (mimicking him)
(They both laugh,
long beat/they grow serious)
...Only **you** can beat you.

Jake seems to be struck by the simplicity of it.

He pulls her head into his chest and strokes her hair,
kissing it.

JAKE
...Ok.

INT. REDBULL'S GARAGE - NIGHT

The whole team/crew except Nino is gathered around a
LARGE TV.

MIKAEL
I got it!! We're live streaming!!

The TV SEGMENT that Kiku put together is on, in JAPANESE.

JAKE
How on earth are we watching this?!

MIKAEL
It's streaming from my laptop!

KIKU (ON TV)
JAKE ILER: The comeback man, on the
eve of the biggest race of his career--

The whole team YELLS raucously and drowns out the narration while Jake grimaces, disbelieving his image onscreen.

On TV, it's OLD FOOTAGE of Jake in his late teens getting into a rally car.

JAKE

Where did they get this footage?!

On TV, the rally car is now tearing around a corner at suicidal speeds, coming in far too fast, the car flips once and then when it lazily settles on its wheels, it incredibly takes off again. The watchers double their cheering at the manouvre.

JAKE (cont'd)

That was just luck!!

--Anyone coulda pulled that off!!

Everyone laughs at that.

TIME CUT:

The lights have DIMMED and the team is super-attuned watching the segment, now more sedate.

On TV the segment is quick cuts from the Jake/Nino rivalry--

JAKE (ON TV)

Definitely makes the racing more fun to watch... (grins sinfully)

NINO (ON TV)

He's not a threat. He's the number two driver. (shrugs) A... **distant** second, really--(the team teases, "Oooo")

REPORTER (ON TV/O.S.)

He said you're "not a threat".

JAKE (ON TV)

Well, I get consistently faster lap times than him, so...
Only history will decide that--
(the team goes, "OOOOOO" even louder)

Jess enters into the back entrance, unnoticed. She has a big smile on her face and then sees what they're watching--

Kiku's face flashes on TV from her interview with Jake.

KIKU (ON TV)

Rezafokasu--it's like 'intense focus'

JAKE (ON TV)
 (edit jumps) It's... like I'm alone
 out there.

Jess glowers with enmity.

The video ends and the team mulls disapprovingly.

The lights COME BACK UP and the team exits and shuffles past Jake disconsolately without looking at him, while Jake looks as if he's been cheated.

JAKE
 (to himself) That's--
 That's not how it went...

AXEL
 Get some rest. Big day tomorrow.

Axel leaves last and Jake notices Jess, finally.

JAKE
 Hey! (guiltily) --We were just...
 Watching a program...

JESS
 You know what pisses me off?

JAKE
 Ummm, hopefully not anything that I
 did--Recently, anyway.

JESS
 Hm. No--she totally took that part
 out of context! That's not how the
 interview went.

JAKE
 That's what I said! (walks to her)

JESS
 And now the team's pissed with you--

JAKE
 --You could sense that, huh?

JESS
 Obviously! They think you dissed em!

JAKE
 (shrugs placatingly)
 ...What can I really do..?

JESS
 (beat)
 Let's go get some air.
 --We gotta get outta that head of
 yours.

JAKE
 Nah, I should try to go to bed soon...

JESS
 Come onnnn--(tugs his hand)
 --there's something you should see!

EXT. COTA TAILGATING AREA - NIGHT

Jess pulls a willing Jake through an area where Fl fans are
 BBQ'ing and drinking from kegs.

Immediately there's a hubbub when people recognize him and
 come over to seek an autograph or take a picture.

CRANE SHOT of word spreading like a ripple effect of his
 presence; a continual wave of fans surge toward him.

SERIES OF SHOTS

An enraptured OLDER COUPLE grabs one of Jake's hands each--

OLDER GENT
 We came to see you!!

OLDER LADY
 We drove from Maine to
 watch you win!

Star struck FRAT GUYS yelling incoherently embrace Jake.

A massive BIKER-DUDE with a raspy voice places a bear-paw
 on Jake's shoulder, pointing at him with his other hand--

BIKER DUDE
 (insistently) Kick some ass out there!!

END SERIES OF SHOTS

INT. RACING PADDOCK / JAKE & JESS' ROOM - NIGHT

Jess is wearing Jake's shirt from a moment ago. He seems to
 be dozing, head cuddled on her lap while she rubs him
 adoringly.

JAKE
 Thanks for taking me out there
 (MORE)

JAKE (CONT'D)
 tonight, Honey...
 (she groans a loving assent)
 ..somehow I needed that.

JESS
 Awww.... of course.

JAKE
 Thanks for always being there for
 me, Jess.

JESS
 (softly)...of course.

He turns over and nuzzles into her.

JAKE
 I love you.

She squeezes him and exhales, at the apogee of contentment.

JESS
 (whispers) I love you, too.

She smooths his hair maternally and then glances at his
 PHONE within easy reach.

His BREATHING becomes long and even. She puts a nail in
 her mouth, contemplating.

She hesitantly picks up the phone and then looks back and
 forth as if searching her conscience.

Relenting, she types in a PASSWORD and her face becomes
 alit in the gloom from the brightened screen.

She stops rubbing Jake with her "free" hand to use both of
 them for the phone.

OFFSCREEN there is a knocking/BOOM BOOM BOOM on the door.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. JAKE & JESS' ROOM - MORNING (TIME CUT)

Jake pops up, irritably startled--

JAKE
 Who knocks like that?!?!?

HANS (OS)
IT'S THE POLICE!!! OPEN UP!!!

Jake looks at Jess who appears impossibly guilty.
He dashes for the door and flings it open--

JAKE
Ahhhhhh---
You ain't the fuzz!!

HANS
Ahhhhhh---!

HANS
Ja, I figured I'd give **you** a heart
attack--! ...So you could see what
it's like!!

JAKE
(groans amused/rolls eyes)
Shouldn't you be resting...?!

HANS
I've **been** resting!! I've had it with
resting; I had to come see you--
(sees Jess in BG/pauses to smile)
I wanted to wish you good luck,
but I'm thinking you won't need it.

JAKE
You **do** know I'm starting from the
back of the grid...?

HANS
(scoffs) Listen to you!!
(smacks him with scarf playfully)
--Have you learned nothing?!
(taps Jake's forehead)
The race is won up here--!!
Now get dressed! I'm certain Axel
wants to see you...

JAKE
Yeah, Axel....

HANS
(quick concern) --What? What is it?

JESS
--Nothing!!
(wraps Jake around shoulders)
...Everything's fine.

Jake looks at her skeptically.

INT. JAKE & JESS' ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Jake is dressed and finishes putting on his second shoe.

JAKE
Have you seen my phone?

JESS
No, but you better get to the garage.
I'll look for it and be right behind
you.

JAKE
(beat)
...I kinda wanna find it--

JESS
--What is so important about it?!?!
I'll find it! Go!!

JAKE
(beat/baffled at her)
....Ok....

He takes another look at her from the threshold and she seems all sorts of guilty. Then he leaves.

The moment he's out of eyeshot, she puts on a hat and follows him, slipping his phone in her pocket.

EXT/INT. REDBULL GARAGE - MORNING

Jake walks up and stops short at the large bay entrance.

A few crew members are working but no one notices him--

AXEL
Iler!! In here!

Jake walks into the little office towards the back. The crew look at him with perceptive hostility, staring.

Jake stands at the doorway to the office, nervous to commit.

Axel sits at a makeshift desk, beckoning Jake in. His main ASSISTANT leaves without being asked and conspicuously doesn't make eye contact with Jake.

AXEL (cont'd)
I'm fairly impressed with you, Iler.

Axel takes a long drag of a cigarette and gestures for Jake to close the door.

JAKE
Like.... in a bad way?

AXEL

Eh---(exhales/grunt)
Most drivers are egomaniacs and
narcissists who don't really care
what their team thinks of them.
(snuffs cig in ashtray)

JAKE

(gulps/tries to smile)
Whereas... I'm an egomaniac that
does care what my team thinks.

AXEL

I'm glad you got the team back on
your side. At the very least, it
was the smart thing to do.

JAKE

(beat)

I'm lost---
What did I do that was smart...?

Jake spots Jess through a SMALL WINDOW in the door, and she
has an impish grin, hands behind her back, rocking playfully.

AXEL

Your unedited interview--!
--I don't know if it couldn't have
waited til **after** 4:15 in the morning,
but it seems like everyone on the
team has seen it, and once again
you're.... Mr. Congeniality around
here.

Jake keeps glancing at Jess distractedly as her smile widens.

JAKE

I.. I didn't--

AXEL

--I liked the part where you wink
at me: "Thanks Axel" (winks mockingly)

JAKE

Ummm... hold that thought--

Jake exits the small office and walks over to Jess.

JESS

Found your phone--(jiggling it)

JAKE

Ya know... you amaze me.

JESS

Because I'm amazing...? (ultra coy)

JAKE

That's... you, in a word.
(he takes off her hat/they get close)

JESS

You told me in Monaco, "everything'll
be fine as long as I have you."

(beat)

--Baby, you'll **always** have me.
(they kiss lightly, smiling)
Get ready, I'll be watching...
(she winks and then turns away)

Jake shakes his head as if he's just had Deja Vu.

EXT. COTA RACETRACK - DAY (CONTINUOUS ACTION)

Nino leading the field at the GRID is established in a
QUICK SUCCESSION OF SHOTS.

Jake is dead last (20th place).

REVERSE ANGLE of the field from behind Jake, the incline he
has to literally climb in the front straight/before Turn 1
is reinforced by the depth of his starting position.

The STARTING LIGHTS go out (the race begins), then the
tires find purchase and the whole field surges forward.

Jake immediately shoots inside and takes P19, then takes
two more spots with his better takeoff as he becomes P17.

Before the end of the first straightway he bounces to out-
side and is virtually touching P16 (an Alfa-Romeo) as they
turn shraply into Turn 1. Jake is wide and again they almost
collide as they vie for the same racing line.

Jake and the Alfa are dead even and accelerating rapidly
to Turn 2, but Jake has the better line now and forces the
Alfa to brake earlier.

FROM THE VIP VIEWING TOWER

Jess watches, enthralled. A tall, clutured TEXAN watches
next to her.

JESS

Hell yes!! Go baby, gooo!!

TEXAN

You got a horse in this here race?

JESS

Yep, that's my man down there!

TEXAN

Yer kiddin'!! Which one?

JESS

Jake Iler!

The Texan gawks dumbfounded over his aviators, incredulous. Jess laughs and nods, and looks back at the progress--

JESS

---Wooooo!!

ON THE TRACK

Jake comes around Turn 20, directly behind P15.

MARK (VO)

Into our third lap and DRS is available now, so we're going to see Iler attempt a pass around Rugerio--

Jake executes pass around P15 on outside thru front straight.

TED (VO)

The field's spread out and Grazzano's got a nice lead over Martin Schuster, his only **real** threat for the title-- and right now he's not even **close** to being able to make a pass.

AERIAL SHOT of a wide (4 sec) delta between P1 and P2.

ANOTHER ANGLE of Jake beginning his chase for P14.

MARK (VO)

Weather will almost certainly be a factor later in the race, but Iler and his teammate are having **great** lap times respectively, while it's dry!

TED (VO)

Oh you're right---!

IN BOOTH

Ted glances at a MONITOR which displays stats.

TED
They're both getting...
"respectable" times--!

Mark glances at Ted disbelievingly. Ted smiles back blithely.
Mark exhales--

MARK
--Lots of race left.

ON TRACK

Jake outbrakes P14 into Turn 11 and overtakes, forcing P14 to outer line.

The whole back straight has traffic, so each car activates DRS.

IN VIP TOWER

Jess looks up from the race to RAINCLOUDS in the distance, moving perceptibly closer as her hair blows in the same direction they're coming from.

Jake passes under her at Turn 17, just meters behind P13.

JESS
Yes, get 'em babe!

The Texan taps her on the shoulder and points--

TEXAN
Rain's a comin--!

Jake is riding on the transom of P13 going into Turn 20, who yields to the clearly faster car and they both rocket up the straightaway wheel to wheel and both have DRS.

JESS
One thing at a time, right?

The Texan juts out his lower lip at the apt aphorism.

ON TRACK

Jake rounds Turn 1, completing takeover and becoming P13 according to the STANDINGS TOWER, also indicating "LAP 9"

DISSOLVE/TIME CUT:

The same tower readings now read "LAP 24" and Jake is P10.

PIT

Axel looks at the sky which now beyond gloomy.

AXEL (into HEADSET)
Box for wets.

NINO'S CAR

He goes under VIP Tower with an empty backfield behind him.
ECU as Nino hits the 'ACK' button on the steering wheel.

VIP TOWER

Jess watches several drivers enter pit lane to change tires.

PIT LANE

Nino's WETS are slapped on and he leaves in a flash.

AXEL (into HEADSET)
Alright Iler, box for wets.

VIP TOWER

Jake passes the pit entrance and rockets onto the straightaway.

JESS
--What are you **doing**?!?!?

The sky is extremely grey and angry all around her.

JAKE (VO)
How long til it **actually** starts
raining..?

IN PIT

Axel glares at a monitor displaying the race.

AXEL
If I knew that I'd be a damned....
Meteorologist!!!

ON TRACK

Jake drives into Turn 1, and from his cockpit we see him
fiddling with steering wheel controls adroitly as he speaks
and engages the technical section of Turns 2-10.

JAKE (VO)
 Well, it's a good thing you're not,
 or we never woulda met and then we
 wouldn't be **such. good. friends!!**
 --So how long, Ax?

IN PIT

AXEL glances at his assistant who flashes two and then three
 fingers and then makes a throat chop meaning: "MAX"

AXEL
 --Two minutes.

JAKE (VO)
 Great! I can squeeze out a few more
 laps--!

AXEL
 Damn it Iler!! You're cutting it
 too close!! You're gonna hydroplane
 and then you're skitprat!

ON TRACK

Jake stomps on his brakes hard into Turn 12 from maximum
 velocity and is just behind P9.

JAKE (VO)
 See you in two laps.

Jake closes the delta between himself and P9 through the
 back technical section. (Turns 12-19)

TED (VO)
 Jake Iler's the **only** driver out there
 who hasn't gotten rain tires on yet!

MARK (VO)
 Yes, and he's really gambling here
 because those slicks are absolutely
useless on a wet surface--

Jake is .5 second behind P9 into Turn 20 and then his DRS
 activates as he goes for a pass on the front straightway.

TED (VO)
 Looks like his gambling's paying off!

Jake heads into Turn 1 with P8 very far ahead.

JAKE (VO)
 What's Nino running on tires?

IN PIT

AXEL
Wets--

JAKE (VO)
--OK: I need intermediates.

Axel glances at a MONITOR with a storm tracker, and the localized shot looks angry, coming right over them.

AXEL
Negative, Iler. It's going to come down hard.

ON TRACK

Jake rounds Turn 11 and gets perspective on the imminent RAINCLOUD lurking just behind the grandstand, exactly where he's heading.

JAKE (VO)
I'm gonna get in the groove the wets make and stay competing in this pack!

AXEL (VO)
You need wets. (insistent)

Jake dives into Turn 12.

AERIAL SHOT

A huge RAINCLOUD engulfs Turn 1/Grandstand/Latter half of Front Straightaway. The cars look like specks from this height.

JAKE (VO)
I'm fixing to box now but I need the intermediates or nothing at all!!!!

IN PIT

The crew look desperately at Axel for an order. Which tires?

AXEL
Come get your forsaken tires you overgrown child!!

Jake becomes visible as the first drops of rain come down.

When he goes to stop he locks up on the barely wet ground, sliding a half car length too far forward. The team adjusts quickly.

The team slaps intermediates on. Jake gets back onto the pit lane at a stately speed (80 KPH).

AXEL (VO)
You're four seconds over P10 and
twenty-two behind P8.

ON TRACK

Jake gets into the RAIN GROOVES and keeps that exact line. It's as if there's a dry path blazed on the newly wet parts of the track.

JAKE (VO)
Just keep that glass-half-full-
mentality, skipper!

IN PIT

Axel covers his HEADSET MIC.

AXEL (in SWEDISH)
Take your infernal wine glass
analogy and shove it!!!

TIME CUT:

ON TRACK

A McLaren and Renault (P7 and P8) fight for position far in front of Jake as the rain has diminished.

They pass the STANDINGS TOWER and it denotes it is "LAP 37"

MARK (VO)
Now that the weather has abated,
Marco Zeiss is really making Went-
forth in the Renault work for this
attempt to pass--I say "attempt"
because he's successfully blocked
him a number of times!

TED (VO)
Between the battling and the rain,
it's really slowed their lap times!

MARK (VO)
Ah yes! I wonder--who would have
guessed the **rain** would slow them..?

The two cars COLLIDE at Turn 18, spinning and leaving DEBRIS on the track.

Jake is at Turn 13 when a YELLOW FLAG appears.

The SAFETY CAR comes out, narrowly catching Nino and forcing the front of field to slow.

Jake hits the DEBRIS at Turn 18, smashing his front/left wing.

JAKE (VO)

Box, Box!! I need a front wing!!
Rain's almost passed--let's throw
on softs while I'm in.

IN PIT

Axel glances at the sky. Sunlight is trying to peek from behind the diminishing grey mass, as it's only misty now.

AXEL

Let's wait on tires. Still raining.

Jake becomes visible at the end of pit lane.

JAKE (VO)

It's barely a fuckin' drizzle, Ax!!
I'm only coming in once, throw softs on!!

Axel makes hand instructions and the wing is ready instantly, just as Jake is pulling up.

The total pit time is 4.2 seconds including wing change.

ON TRACK

Jake pulls back into the field under safety. In BG we see other cars come in for their own changes.

TIME CUT:

AERIAL SHOT of the cloud system having moved away from the track.

FROM VIP

The sun is bright and has cooked off the track nicely.

A PANORAMA reveals the whole field is spaced somewhat evenly behind the safety car.

TED (VO)

Well that Texas sun did its job!

MARK (VO)

The sun and the debris crew who al-
(MORE)

MARK (VO) (CONT'D)
 lowed only two laps to pass under
 caution. It looks like we're ready
 again as the entire field has made
 tire changes--

IN BOOTH

MARK (cont'd)
 --and the shunt between Zeiss and
 Wentforth couldn't have happened at
 a more fortuitous moment for the
 back of the field--

TED
 --Yeah, it happened at a really
 good time, too!

Mark can only gawk at him, head askance.

TED (cont'd)
 --Because of the weather!

MARK
 Ah.

ON TRACK

The SAFETY CAR goes in at Turn 20 and GREEN FLAGS wave.

In the lead, Nino is off like a gun.

Jake is in P6 and the entire field is quite bunched as they
 go into Turn 1.

Into Turn 2 a Mercedes and Ferrari (P4&P5) battling touch
 tires which puts them into a spin and they go into the area
 just before the gravel run-off, getting passed.

MARK (VO)
 Oh!! There's no debris, so no need
 for a yellow flag but that's a heart-
 breaker for Giles Melnic in the
 Ferrari!! Top three is now Grazzano,
 Schuster and Trais!

TED (VO)
 This re-start is gonna make things
 real close once DRS comes back on
 after two laps...

The STANDINGS TOWER reads "LAP 42/56"

TIME CUT/DISSOLVE:

The same DISPLAY now reads "LAP 48/56"

P1-P4 go through the front tech section (Turns 3-9) where Nino leads, P2 is .25 sec behind, then there's a 1.5 sec delta between them and P3/P4 who are also .25 sec apart.

They go into the back straight and P2 goes for a pass with DRS but Nino is canny and defends effectively.

In the next duo behind them, Jake gets DRS and goes for a pass on the right, P3 defends but Jake swoops inside/left and overtakes.

TED (VO)

Ooooo-WEEE!! Iler smells blood!

MARK (VO)

--And now he's got clean air; he should be able to up his pace at least marginally...!!

FROM VIP

Hans comes up behind Jess and puts a hand on the small of her back.

HANS

Is this where you've been hiding?

TEXAN

--Hey buddy! She's **got** a boyfriend!!

Hans puts his hands up in mock surrender.

ON TRACK

Nino leads P2/Schuster and Jake around Turn 11 and they are all .4 sec apart.

On back straight Nino takes outside line and when P2 gets DRS he dives for inside.

Nino blocks, Jake is on outside and he slips by P2.

P2 continues charge, then trying to block Jake from completing overtake and in doing so locks front brakes which allows Jake to fully pass and pull away into Turn 12.

Nino and Jake (now P1 & P2) keep up the departure from P3 through back technical section (Turns 13-19)

MARK (VO)
Red Bull's now 1-2!!!!

TED (VO)
And that flat spot Schuster just got
is gonna make it dang hard to keep
in serious time with 'em!!

The leaders continue around the track, Jake close behind
Nino through Turn 20.

AXEL (VO)
Wow, that was a brilliant move,
Jake---

IN PIT

AXEL (cont'd)
--That was exactly what a number
two driver would do...

Axel views the race on a MONITOR and the crew of onlookers
study Axel for a clue what he meant, but he's impassive.

ON TRACK

Jake continues to follow behind Nino into Turn 1.

JAKE (VO)
(his uncertainty evident) Yeah,
just...uh, being a good team-mate.

IN PIT

AXEL
Remember what I said: I want what's
best for you...

IN BOOTH

MARK
(covering mic) That was a rather
cryptic exchange between Iler and
his principal.

TED
(covers mic as he squints, perplexed)
...Cryptic?

MARK
Whatever your salary is, I am
certain it's not enough.

Ted positively glows.

MARK (cont'd)
 (uncovers mic) RedBull truly put
 an amazing car on the track this year--

FROM VIP

The trio of Jess, Hans, and the Texan watches Nino lead around Turn 20 and Lap 51 becomes Lap 52, and Nino has just slightly over a one-second lead.

ON TRACK

Nino's eyes radiate smugness as he checks his mirrors.

NINO (VO)
 Tell Jake "thanks for the great
 season"...

IN PIT

AXEL
 I'm not conveying that message. It's
 bad sportsmanship coming from you.

NINO (VO)
 Axel, I'm three laps away from being
 a three time champion--
Just do what the hell I tell you!!

Others listening are shocked at Nino's audacity and direct their gaze to Axel.

AXEL
 As you please--(flips dial)
 --Jake, your team-mate says...
 "Thanks for the great season"

ON TRACK

JAKE (VO)
 What the hell..!? Is he being
 sarcastic or sincere..?

AXEL (VO)
 I won't begin to speculate.

IN PIT

Axel watches a MONITOR while the whole team watches Axel.

JAKE (VO)
 ...Alright--We're going to plan Z.

AXEL

...Nej nej nej Iler!!! Vaat en hel-
vete is 'Plan Z'?!?!?

ON TRACK

Jake's eyes radiate predation.

JAKE (VO)

We'll both figure it out when this
is over--

They go down the front straight and Jake is still trailing
by over a second as they approach Turn 1.

TED (VO)

It's just a couple laps away from
a Red Bull 1-2 finish and they're
for sure got the constructor's title--

The STANDINGS TOWER reads "LAP 53/54, GRAZ--, ILER +1.04"

They both begin to assault the front tech section (Turns
3-10) with Jake imperceptibly closing the gap.

MARK (VO)

Whether you agree with team orders
or not--and that it was just "too
little, too late" from the American
--it's history we're witnessing as
Nino Grazzano **imminently** closes on
his third title! What a career!

BOOTH

TED

Seems Iler should be happy with
second place from dead last!

MARK

Quite so--it was a vaunted effort,
indeed.(very sincere)

TRACK

Jake is on the outside of Nino into Turn 11, Nino dives to
defend and locks his front brakes.

MARK (VO)

But what's this--?! Maybe Iler isn't
ready to toss in the towel just yet!

Jake carries momentum and DRS comes on, he dives inside and
surges ahead which Nino can't defend.

FROM VIP

Jess, Hans, and the Texan and everyone in eyeshot puts up their arms and yells victoriously.

Under them, Jake navigates Turns 12-19 with Nino less than .25 sec behind.

ON TRACK

Jake locks his own brakes briefly into Turn 20 and Nino deftly shoots around. Then he feints Jake like he's going inside, Jake moves to block and then Nino finishes pass on the outside.

The STANDINGS TOWER and the WHITE FLAG indicate it's the LAST LAP.

FROM VIP

Everyone lets out a proportionate groan of collective disappointment, particularly Jess tugging on her hair.

ON TRACK

Nino has a .25 sec lead over Jake into Turn 1.

REVERSE ANGLE as the duo assails Turns 3-6 Esses.

VIP

CLOSE ON Jess, clutching her fists to her mouth with anxiety.

IN PIT

Axel and the team watch the Duo on MONITORS, high strung as piano wire.

GRANDSTANDS AT TURNS 9 & 10

Fans watch Nino and Jake fly past with an assault of NOISE.

ON TRACK

At the approach to Turn 11, Nino has the outside race line to defend.

Jake brakes harder, later, and dives inside to pass Nino.

They are wheel-to-wheel on the back straight and Nino's DRS activates, so Jake takes the middle line.

Nino sweeps to outside and is 3/4 past Jake--

Jake holds the middle line with a slight favoritism of the right, ever so slightly keeping Nino at bay, and then he arrives at Turn 12 with the proper race line into the apex.

Jake has only a 1/2 car length lead over Nino into Turns 12-19.

FROM VIP

CLOSE UP on Jess watching Jake hold a razor thin lead under her.

ON TRACK

The race SLOWS DOWN as Jake takes Turn 19 with Nino's nose within inches of Jake's diffuser, jockeying for any advantage.

JAKE'S POV as they approach Turn 20, Nino looms large in mirrors.

SUPER SLO-MO and TRIPLE SUPERIMPOSITION/MELD of Jake's ragged front-left TIRE kissing the KERB perfectly, his EYE "seeing" the APEX/exit, and the view from behind both RB17s sliding through the turn with his infinitesimal lead over Nino.

NORMAL TIME as they both complete exit and Nino's DRS activates. Jake holds the middle line. Nino goes for outside/right pass, so Jake blocks for a 1/4 second.

Nino hesitates and dives inside and is coming around Jake on left.

They cross the finish line almost making contact but Jake beats him by a 1/2 car length and it's enough, the CHECKERED FLAG is waving excitedly.

FROM VIP

From their astounding view, the whole place erupts.

Jess and Hans embrace, yelling triumphantly, but Jess breaks off quickly--

JESS
--I gotta go!!

Hans and the Texan look at each other, stunned. Then they jump and embrace, yelling.

ON TRACK

Jake intentionally slows by the STANDINGS TOWER, taking in his NAME at the top of the leaderboard.

He closes his eyes for a moment in respite, finally sated.

IN PIT

The entire RedBull team including Axel is jumping all over each other, generally going crazy.

FROM TURNS 3-6 ESSES GRANDSTAND

Jake goes by with an index finger raised #1 as fans roar riotously.

TIME CUT:

TRACK

Jake approaches the PARC FERME area but first rips some donuts on his deteriorating tires. A cloud of smoke enshrouds the car.

He deftly guides the car into the 1st place spot. He quickly takes off the Halo, the HANS, gets out, takes off his helmet and puts both arms up, reveling in celebration atop the car.

Schuster is already out of his Merc and celebrating his world championship, while Nino is in BG gesturing petulantly to a Camera Man.

Amongst the crowd Jake spots Jess and goes to her, embracing her over the wall. They have to scream to hear each other.

JESS
I knew it! Baby, I **knew** you could do it!!

JAKE
I did too! Ever since you told me--

JESS
--so what took you so long?!?!?

Jake cocks his head back, incredulous, and then realizes he's being teased. He smiles and plays along--

JAKE

Ah, ya know.. these **other** cars kept getting in the way..!

JESS

Well, you kept everyone in suspense!

JAKE

Even you..!?

JESS

Nah, I told ya--I knew all along!
(smug/cute)

JAKE

Yeah? You know that I love you?

JESS

Yeah, I knew that, too--(laughs)

They kiss and the cheering CROWD NOISE somehow doubles.

Jake is yanked away from her embrace by his team as they hoist him up and toss him around in celebration.

Jess watches it all sentimentally and then closes her eyes and takes a long deep breath, sharing in his exultation--

She opens her eyes and is totally at peace, smiling.

DISSOLVE INTO

EXT. ROUTE 33, OJAI, CA - LATE AFTERNOON

Jake's Shelby Cobra ascends up a long series of switchbacks and tight turns, the RUMBLING MOTOR growing clearer.

They come into a panoramic viewing area/turnout. The car SNAPS and SNARLS as he downshifts into the gravel and dust.

Jake cuts off the engine and Jess takes down her ponytail, ruffles her hair and looks at Jake lovingly. A DIAMOND RING on her finger catches a glint of light.

JAKE

So did I tell you that Steve from ESPN called, wants to do a follow-up?

JESS
 (beat)
 Sounds a bit like Deja Vu...
 What are you gonna tell him?

JAKE
 Ah, I think I'd be messing with
 fate if I **didn't** do it.

Jess cues him to elaborate.

JAKE (cont'd)
 I feel like this whole thing kinda
 started when he called...
 and then you convinced me to go
 for it--

JESS
 --This all started way before that.

Jake arches an eyebrow inquiringly.

JESS (cont'd)
 This was all supposed to happen.
 (beat)
 You were meant to be in that car
 last Sunday.

JAKE
 (beat)
 ...I could... see where you're
 coming from. (mulling)

JESS
 So, you wouldn't be "messing" with
 fate. It **was** your fate.
 --Just like we're supposed to be
 here... now.--Together.

He takes her hand and they look at each other, both supremely
 content.

JESS (cont'd)
 Has Hans said anything about a new
 contract?

JAKE
 Yeah... (pauses dramatically)
 --They wanna do a three-year
 extension.

Jess inhales sharply and lights up.

JAKE (cont'd)
 --And make me number one driver,
 because Nino's signing with Ferrari.
 (beat)
 I knew he wasn't gonna retire...
 --Especially like that.

JESS
 Oh my gosh! That's amazing!!
 --You're gonna stay with them, then?

JAKE
 Yeah, they've been good to me and
 I wanna be loyal to them...
 (Jess beams at this)
 ...And it's not even about money,
 I think I'm just the perfect fit there.

JESS
 Ahhh! I'm so happy for you--

JAKE
 --For us! (they chuckle)

JESS
 I'm so happy for us--!
 (more laughs and her eyes gleam with
 happy tears)
 ...Who's the other driver gonna be?

JAKE
 The #2?

JESS
 Yeah--

JAKE
 Some kid that's been in development;
 F3000... his name's Mattias Verboten.

JESS
 Is that... his **legal** name?

JAKE
 I dunno--(scoffs)--why?

JESS
 I think it's German for something--

JAKE
 --Yeah, seems like a good enough kid,
 though, Good pedigree and all.

Jake looks at the sky and the sun is sinking quickly.

JAKE (cont'd)
 You wanna go back to the hotel?
 Gonna be dark soon.

Jess glances in the direction they came from and thinks.

JESS
 Nah. Let's keep going...
 Find someplace private to pull
 off... (very coy)

JAKE
 Yeah? (equally flirty)

JESS
 Yeah, I packed a blanket.
 --Go stargazing?
 (raises eyebrows suggestively)

JAKE
 (play-skeptically) Stargazing, huh?

JESS
 Stargazing... et cetera--

JAKE
 --Et cetera... Ok, I like that.
 Find a pullout and we'll go star-
 gazing, et cetera--

JESS
 --I said "pull off", not "pull-out"

JAKE
 Hahaha!! Aye-aye, cap...!

He starts the car which rumbles loudly.

JESS
 Hey--

She leans forward and they kiss.

Jake REVS the Cobra, she giggles and they get settled in.

She's re-doing her ponytail as he takes off fishtailing,
 and they disappear around a corner but the sound pervades
 and then diminishes....

FADE OUT

THE END