

SCRIPT TITLE

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INT: BERNIE DIVINE'S LUXURY APARTMENT

A pod of POLICE OFFICERS and FORENSIC INVESTIGATORS stood scattered among a trashed penthouse. Glass is broken across the hardwood floors, and in the center of the conversation pit stood CLIDE McMAHON and his best friend, MARLOWE SANCHEZ. Their eyes fixated on a piece of stained and crumpled paper on the floor.

Clide introduces us to the scene.

CLIDE(V.O.)
For all we knew, they might as well
have been donezo.

QUICK CUT TO:

EXT: BERNIE DIVINE'S LUXURY APARTMENT, MAIN STREET

A crowd has formed on the sidewalk, loud cries of anxiety and confusion becoming the rhythm of the morning. A portion of the police officers are attempting to settle the crowd.

CLIDE(V.O.)
"The entire city was in shambles
over their lost love. Disappeared
into the night. Not even the police
had a lead. All they knew is that
the city needed their beam of
talent and pure unadulterated
perfection."

BEGIN MONTAGE

A blindingly gorgeous individual is shown performing on tour as Clide continues, their dark skin glistening in the spotlight. They have a certain humble confidence to their groove, still somehow damn near untouchable. Their voice is auditory heaven, silky and smooth as they dance across stage. This is five-time Billboard chart topper, BERNIE DIVINE.

CLIDE(V.O.)
"Everyone loved Bernie Divine.
Their music defined a generation.
Their style created ripples in
culture. They were the flyest bird
out there."

QUICK CUT TO:

INT: HARBOR-HAMPTON STUDIO, RECORDING BOOTH

Bernie Divine is shown singing in the recording booth, two or three others in the studio with them. A middle aged man handling the mixing and tech. He is bespectacled and in a loose-fitted button up shirt. His hair is receding and thin at the top, WARNER TURNER is Bernie Divine's manager.

CLIDE(V.O.)

"They were the biggest up and coming artist on the scene, every song getting bigger and bigger. Bernie practically owned the word "funk"...

END MONTAGE

QUICK CUT TO

INT: BERNIE DIVINE'S LUXURY APARTMENT

CLIDE, V.O

"...so you can imagine our surprise when they went AWOL."

Marlowe stands with her hands fixed on her hips, staring down at the ransom note that lied on the ground. Clide stands next to her, arms folded in frustrated confusion.

MARLOWE

"I just don't get it. Who the hell coulda swiped up *Bernie Divine*?"

CLIDE

"I dunno, but no way we're gonna let it slide. They're much too perfect to be gone for long."

MARLOWE

"All the glass is shattered, all their clothes and shoes are everywhere, this scene feels premeditated."

CLIDE

"Yeah, but who could've gotten in? Hotshots usually keep their residences under wraps."

Marlowe leans down to read the ransom note, pieced together with magazine cutouts and written letters.

It's stained with ink and a dark, circular coffee stain on the corner. Marlowe reads the note.

MARLOWE

"The Divine has fallen, never to be seen again."

CLIDE

"Marlowe?"

MARLOWE

"Yeah?"

CLIDE

"That's corny, Like, real bad."

*

Marlowe and Clide stand up again, examining the destroyed room around them.

CLIDE (CONT'D)

"Looks like a job for us, huh Marlowe?"

MARLOWE

"You sure? It's a big job, and no one has a lead yet, let alone finished analyzing the scene."

CLIDE

"Chill out, no worries! The chief will definitely let us on the case."

CUT TO:

INT: VERNONSVILLE POLICE STATION

A rather rotund man stands at his desk, flailing his hands in annoyance and anger. He holds a donut in one hand and his notepad in the other. There's a light glisten of sweat on his forehead. This is CHIEF BENSON HAMM.

CHIEF HAMM

"THERE IS NO WAY IN HELL I'M LETTING YOU ON THIS CASE! YOU'RE OUTTA YER EVER-LOVIN' MIND IF YOU THINK I'M GONNA LET A COUPLE OF KIDS--"

*

*

CLIDE

"C'mon, chiiiiieeff! You gotta let us on the field at some point!"

MARLOWE

"We've been doing field work for ages now, you can't--"

CHIEF HAMM

"No way, no no no way."

Marlowe and Clide exchange an anxious glance.

CLIDE, V.O

"Someone would have to take this case. All the other coppers took other cases, and this is the one fresh off the record."

*
*
*

INT: VERNONSVILLE POLICE STATION

*

MARLOWE

Chief Hamm, you have to understand, I--

CLIDE

She's Bernie Divine's biggest fan!

Marlowe's face heats up as Clide speaks, avoiding eye contact with the chief.

CHIEF HAMM

Listen. I don't know what you kids may find out there. You gotta keep your safety up front.

MARLOWE

Who knows how long they've been missing? Someone's gotta be on deck at some point.

CLIDE

C'mon, Chief. Let us prove ourselves.

Chief Hamm rubs his stubbled chin and sighs. He tosses a manila folder on his desk, and it slides to the duo.

CHIEF HAMM

Fine. Fine, fine, fine, *fine*. Four days, no more, no less. Screw this up and I'll call the real guys.

*

CUT TO

*

EXT. CLUBBIE CLUBSTER'S

Clide and Marlowe arrive on a motorcycle and park in front of a dance club, the usual neon-lit building made unfamiliar by the sunlight. They walk to the entrance, Clide holding his camera tight, and Marlowe opening her bag to pull out the a yellow manila folder inside. *

MARLOWE

Okay, here's the lowdown; we'll hit every spot where we know Bernie would be, and we'll wing it from there with leads.

CLIDE

Ten-four, Mar.

The two begin to walk in, but Clide stops her.

MARLOWE

What, what's wrong?

CLIDE

Gotta make sure I don't look suspicious. Can't let civilians know where I go at night.

Marlow grumbles and tugs him by the arm to go indoors.

INT: CLUBBIE CLUBSTER'S

The once packed dance floor is empty, a man sweeping up trash and dirt around it. A security guard is wiping down the leather chairs. The guard is in a large shirt and baggy pants, his wavy hair tied back in a ponytail. This is IAN VAN PELT. *

IAN

Hey, Clide and Marlowe, the dynamic duo. You two hear about poor Mx. Divine?

MARLOWE

That's why we're here. We know they comes here to perform on trivia nights, we figured you cats may have seen them last.

CLIDE

Usually y'all are pretty packed when they come around. When's the last time you saw 'em?

Clide briefly looks away from Ian, at the man sweeping the floor. He has a slight grimace on his face, but continues to sweep. This is OZZY. He speaks up above Marlowe and Ian.

OZZY

They ain't been 'round here, for sure.

CLIDE

Yeah? What makes you so sure?
You're usually never here.

Marlowe jabs Clide in the stomach before speaking up.

MARLOWE

Of course they haven't, they're *missing*, Mr. Ozzy. When's the last time you saw them?

Ozzy approaches with a scowl. There's a certain vibe in the room, and it doesn't feel so good. *

OZZY

Don't know, don't care. All that kid does is bring hooligans into my club.

IAN

Mr. Ozzy, there's always "hooligans" in here. It's a dance club. *

OZZY

Pipe down, I can dock your pay.

Marlowe takes out a pen and pad to write down the interactions thus far. Clide peers closely at Ozzy, as if he were trying to read him.

CLIDE (V.O.)

I knew Ozzy was always a square, but there was something real different about him this time. His squareness had an anger.

OZZY

Listen kids. If you want anything to do with that Bernie--

CLIDE AND MARLOWE

Bernie.

OZZY

Whatever. You ain't gonna find 'em here.

Ozzy turns to leave, Marlowe noticing a small lanyard in his back pocket. Her eyes light up as she calls for Ozzy again.

MARLOWE

Doesn't Bernie use the dressing rooms in the back?

OZZY

Ian, you told them? You must be insane thinking you can--

Ian's gaze locks on Ozzy. He seems confused.

IAN

Told 'em what? They're detectives, they're supposed to know stuff. Duh.

*
*
*

CLIDE

Actually, yeah! You always have it blocked off when it's trivia night.

Ozzy grumbles and starts to turn away.

OZZY

Don't you go back there. It's a safety hazard, we gotta clean up some...some broken glass back there. I hope you don't find that weirdo-freak.

*
*

CLIDE

Love you too, Mr. Ozzy. Ozzball. Ozzykins.

*
*

Ozzy turns away to sweep some more.

MARLOWE

Ian. You gotta get us back there.

Ian pulls out some keys and shakes them gently.

IAN

Way ahead a' youse.

The three dart away to the back. Ozzy's face gets red as he yells back at the detectives.

OZZY

Are y'all talkin about me? YOU KIDS
CAN GET OUTTA HERE IF YOU'LL
DISRESPECT ME! IF YOU WANNA LEAVE,
THERE'S THE--

QUICK CUT TO

EXT: DRESSING ROOM

Ian, Marlowe and Clide are all standing by the door,
attempting to unlock it.

CLIDE

Mar, I know we gotta search high
and low, but what'll we find in
here?

MARLOWE

We gotta be a little patient.
Hopefully everything in here's
intact since last trivia ni-

*

The door creaks open, revealing a trashed dressing room. A
few of Bernie's clothes are strewn about the chairs and
floor, leaving Ian a shocked mess. Clide immediately snaps a
picture.

CLIDE

Ian..

IAN

I..I didn't know it was like this.
It was perfectly fine the other
day!

Marlowe turns to face Ian and leans on the doorway, gesturing
to the mess before them.

MARLOWE

This is what you call fine?

IAN

No! N-no, I really couldn't tell
youse what..um.

CLIDE (V.O.)

If there's one thing Ian isn't
gonna do, it's snitch. He *hates* a
snitch.

MARLOWE

Ian, you gotta tell us something,
or we gotta take you in.

She leans in and takes Ian's trembling hand, his eyes riddled with anxiety.

MARLOWE (CONT'D)

We believe you, man. Just tell us.

Ian lets out a heavy sigh. Marlowe once again begins to write.

*

IAN

It happened last Thursday. Bernie had just left after a surprise visit just an hour before closing time.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

EXT: CLUBBIE CLUBSTER'S, 4:13 AM

Ian stands guard outside the club, gently ushering out tired dancers and drunken groovesters to go home. After a while, a man approaches in a dark hoodie and sunglasses. He's carrying a small plastic bag, too grey to see through.

IAN (V.O.)

I always make sure to keep the dressing room perfect just in case Bernie showed up.

Some putz with a nasally voice came up lookin' for Ozzy. I kinda bugged at first, but Ozzy came before I could say anything.

The man and Ozzy are seen walking inside to the back room, talking and laughing with their arms around each other's shoulders.

IAN (V.O.)

I couldn't make out what they were sayin', but I knew Ozzy was really diggin that loser. They didn't come out for ages, but when they did, Ozzy seemed..different, He held one hand in pocket when he walked, only pullin' it out to admire that wad o' cash he had. I didn't know where it came from. He never carried any more than ten bucks, ever.

END FLASHBACK

EXT: DRESSING ROOM

CLIDE

Yeah, but why's the room like this?
Didn't you clean it?

IAN

Yes, but--

MARLOWE

What is *that*.

With one hand, Marlowe grips Clide's arm, and the other lifts a finger at the vanity, on it sitting a cup of very cold coffee. *

CLIDE (V.O.)

Marlowe never let her confusion
show. She just wasn't the type. But
this seemed to rock her world. *

IAN

Oh, yeah. When Ozzy came back out,
he mentioned that he got Bernie
some coffee before they sang a
couple songs.

MARLOWE

No, Ian. That's the *thing*. *

CLIDE

Bernie doesn't drink coffee. It's a
known fact to fans they don't. They
hate coffee.

Clide approaches the cup and looks inside, taking a whiff. *

CLIDE (CONT'D)

This coffee is black, all black. *

Much too strong for Bernie's taste.

IAN

Wait, Ozzy doesn't drink coffee
either.

Footsteps approach from behind them, and they all turn to see a very angry Ozzy. *

OZZY

Kids nowadays. You're all so
stubborn.

MARLOWE

Listen Ozzy, seems like you've got
yourself some evidence in your
establishme--

Before she could finish, Ozzy sweep kicks Marlowe, causing
her to tumble into the scene.

MARLOWE (CONT'D)

Oh, didn't think the ancient relic
had the funk.

OZZY

I've been around a few times.

Marlowe leaps to her feet, Clide rushing to her assistance.
With a silent nod, the two rear up their fists and make aim
for Ozzy. Before they land the blow, their fists explode into
jazz hands as they twirl around him, their dance moves doing
all of the talking. Ozzy seems unfazed by the two's ultimate
groove, almost scoffing at the sight. Ian holds a deep
anxiety in his look.

*
*

IAN

You two be careful, Ozzy's..he..h-
he's...

OZZY

Classically trained.

With that, Ozzy performs a perfect assemble, managing to kick
Clide away. Our detectives are stunned; ballet was such a
pristine form of dance for such a scrawny old man. Even Clide
was floored by his grace.

*
*
*

CLIDE

(Strained.) Mar, go git em! Cut a
rug already!

Marlowe barely sees this coming, attempting to dance her way
around his blows. She finally manages to get her eye on the
prize, busting out what looks like a modified version of the
Hustle. She manages to hit Ozzy where it counts, watching him
topple over once she finally gives a swift hit on Ozzy's
head.

With Ozzy on the floor, Marlowe can finally get to talking.
She looks around and notices a blob of yellow in the corner
of her eye.

CLIDE (V.O.)

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Marlowe may be a professionally trained member of the police
force, but a girl's gotta do what a girl's gotta do.

*
*

*

OZZY

Ian, I thought I told you to get
rid of that stupid--OW!

Marlowe has discovered a very dirty RUBBER CHICKEN. She hits
his shiny head with it, mercilessly and without hesitation.

*

MARLOWE

Who do you work for, you CHICKEN?

OZZY

I WORK FOR MYSELF! THIS IS AN
INDEPENDENT BUSINESS!

MARLOWE

LIAR!

Marlowe hits him once again with the chicken. Ian leans down
to cover Clide's eyes.

MARLOWE (CONT'D)

I'LL MAKE YOU HONK EVENTUALLY,
OZBORNE, START TALKIN'!

Ozzy is driven to tears. He has an unnatural fear of
comically large yellow chickens.

OZZY

OKAY! PLEASE! I'M SORRY, JUST PUT
DOWN THAT GOD FORSAKEN CHICKEN!

Marlowe casts it aside, her hand remaining extended to catch
a pair of handcuffs thrown from Clide. She promptly cuffs him
and lifts him into a nearby metal chair.

OZZY (CONT'D)

You kids sure got the gall alright.

Clide walks up to him, arms folded and eyes focused. Marlowe
begins writing as Clide begins his interrogation.

CLIDE

Alright, buddy. Let's hear the
whole story.

OZZY

That's the thing, kid, I
don't have the whole
story.

CLIDE

Great, the old man was a waste of a groove.

MARLOWE

Let him finish.

OZZY

The guy who paid me to get in here didn't even tell me his name. He just shoved money in my hand after I let him stay alone in the room for a while.

MARLOWE

Bad business move on your part.

CLIDE

You tryna fake us out, old man?

OZZY

No! I mean, no, well, he just...that's it. He asked to see the room after Bernie performed, and I left him to it...

*

Marlowe scratched her head with her pencil. Something just wasn't adding up.

CLIDE

Did he at least tell you why?

OZZY

I just assumed he was some sort'a creep! He said he was "real close to Bernie" and needed to get a load of their space.

Ozzy takes a peek into the room nearby. His eyebrows furrow at the sight, his gaze lowering to the floor.

OZZY (CONT'D)

Those clothes all over? He bought those in.

*

MARLOWE

Hey, Ian, what spot is that coffee cup from?

Ian looks close at the cup without tainting the scene.

IAN

Looks like...Kooky Koffee. The one on 17th and 3rd.

Marlowe and Clide look at each other and back at Ozzy.

CLIDE

Well, Ozzy, looks like you're gonna
have to skip workin' till this
investigation is over with. For
now..

INT: KOOKY KOFFEE

CLIDE

One hot chocolate, please!

Marlowe and Clide are at the counter of a very busy coffee
shop, people chatting up a storm and chilling by the jukebox.
Marlowe looks particularly uninterested.

MARLOWE

Clide, you're usually full of great
ideas.

CLIDE

Yeah. I am.

MARLOWE

Usually.

CLIDE (V.O.)

I'll admit, not even I trusted
myself on this one. But something
just nagged at me about that coffee
cup.

The barista approaches with two hot chocolates, leaving one
in front of the uninterested Marlowe.

BARISTA

Hey. Here's your cocoa.

*

MARLOWE

Hey, thanks! Sick cocoa, lady.

*

CLIDE

Yeah, what's the secret?

BARISTA

I couldn't tell ya. Our cocoa's
more popular than our coffee.
There's only one guy who orders
coffee, and he's the only reason
why we still have it. He'd throw a
fit if we didn't.

MARLOWE

Only one guy, huh? Bet he's a doozy.

BARISTA

Yeah, he is. He's boring too, always just orders a black coffee with his infernal voice. Sounds like he's always congested.

CLIDE

Probably sounds like a dying duck.

BARISTA

Almost funny how nasally his voice is.

Marlowe and Clide chuckle before taking another sip of their cocoa, but quickly choke when they realize what the barista said.

CLIDE (V.O.)

It's the little things that always show the most.

CLIDE AND MARLOWE

Nasally?

BARISTA

Yeah. Super annoying. Always in a rush.

Clide leans over the counter and Marlowe makes herself comfortable at the bar. The barista looks confused and slightly intimidated.

BARISTA (CONT'D)

Am-am I in, uh, trouble? You gonna cuff me?

MARLOWE

No, but your problem may be our solution here.

CLIDE

When's the last time he came to get coffee?

BARISTA

Y'know what? I haven't seen him in a couple days. He usually always comes in, even on weekends. I think I might'a seen him right before closing time last--

CLIDE AND MARLOWE

Thursday?

BARISTA

Yeah, what are you guys, the feds
or--oh.

CLIDE (V.O.)

We got two witnesses of the same
perp. But where was he before he
got coffee and before he trashed
the room?

Across the room, one of the jukebox hoppers puts in a
quarter. *Lavish* by Bernie Divine begins playing, putting a
small smile on Marlowe's face.

*

CLIDE

Fitting, huh?

MARLOWE

Best song on the album, honestly.
Can't get enough of it.

BARISTA

Not Mr. Nose Voice, I tell ya what.
He always gets mad at people when
they play any of Bernie's songs.
Always going on about how they're
mixed and recorded. He's just a
bummer to have in here. He's always
goin', "Ooouuughh, this kid can't
conduct for shit, the bassist is an
asshole and never plays loud enough
for the mic to pick up, I can't
deal with this spoiled brat of a
kid," yadda yadda.

Marlowe's smile fades, immediately replaced with a shocked
one.

CLIDE

Mar? What's the matter?

MARLOWE

No one knows how the mixing works
on this album. Not even their
recording process. Bernie doesn't
let anyone know and the only other
person who would know would be--

Clide and Marlowe's gaze catch a little business card on the wooden floor. It reads; "WARNER TURNER, HARBOR-HAMPTON MGMT"

CUT TO:

INT: HARBOR-HAMPTON RECORDS, LOBBY

Clide and Marlowe walk slowly into the studio's lobby, fascinated by it's big and modern architecture. They approach the desk in the center of the grand room, a SECRETARY scribbling down words into a journal. There's something very Jersey-ish about the way she composes herself. *

CLIDE (V.O.)

Harbor-Hampton Records, the biggest music label in the country, and where Bernie Divine spends a good chunk of their time. It's this building that may have a fair amount of leads. We may even be able to get a hold of her manager.

SECRETARY

Welcome to Harbor-Hampton, why are the feds at my desk? *

MARLOWE

We're looking for a..Mr., uh,-

SECRETARY

Mistah' Reaves isn't here, he's in Aruba with his girlfriend again, y'know his wife isn't too happy about that.

CLIDE

No, ma'am, we're looking for--

SECRETARY

Mistah Tomlin isn't here eitha', he's on his lunch break with Mistah Ulrich, they're always yappin and yappin and--

MARLOWE

MA'AM. We're looking for Mr. Warner Turner.

The secretary stops scribbling and finally looks up at the two detectives.

SECRETARY

Well, uh, who wants ta know?

CLIDE

Ma'am, please just work with us,
we're trying to find Bernie Divine.

SECRETARY

Really?

The secretary leans toward the detectives, her face laced with inquisition. One arm sits holding her head, and the other sits beneath the surface of the desk. Her finger trembled over a button beneath the desk, her long nails frozen with hesitance. The secretary's finger quickly pressed the button, no noises or alarms blaring.

*

*

MARLOWE

Yes ma'am. We're just on the hunt for our Mx. Bernie Divine. I'm sure you're a fan of theirs as well.

SECRETARY

Yes, yes yes yes, that Bernie sure does have the funk!

CLIDE

So, where's Mr. Turner? We'd love to speak with him, he may be able to point us in the right direction.

WARNER TURNER

Here I am, my boy!

A very, very annoying and nasally voice echoed through the lobby from the top one of the staircases. Warner Turner walks toward the detectives.

*

MARLOWE

Mr. Turner! Marlowe Sanchez. This is my partner Clide McMahon. Pleasure to meet you, sir.

Marlowe and Clide shake the man's hand.

CLIDE

How y'doin'?

*

WARNER TURNER

The pleasure is mine, detectives! I heard about the case, I haven't seen Bernie in days! I've been so worried.

CLIDE

Yes sir, that's just what we wanted to talk to you about, is it okay if we go to your --

CUT TO:

INT: WARNER TURNER'S OFFICE

The three enter a rather large office, warmly lit and astonishingly cozy for a workspace. Warner gestures for the two to sit in front of his desk.

WARNER TURNER

Miss Sanchez, Mr. McMahon, thank you two for coming, but aren't you two a bit...inexperienced?

Marlowe and Clide share a glance. This bozo couldn't be serious.

MARLOWE

Sir, I'm afraid that's confidential.

WARNER TURNER

No, really! Chief Hamm and I are great friends, I'm surprised he let you kids on the case. You graduated at the top of the police academy, right?

CLIDE

Yes, but--

WARNER TURNER

No one thought you'd even get a case this year, let alone in a couple years. I'm just glad you're doing whatcha love. Gettin' on the field, y'know? *Provin'* yourselves.

CLIDE (V.O.)

This guy is definitely toying with us. He knew something we didn't.

*

MARLOWE

Right. Well. We just need to ask you a couple questions about Mx. Divine, sir.

WARNER TURNER

Ask away, dollface.

Marlowe opened her notebook, hand gripping her pen with annoyance.

*

CLIDE

When's the last time you saw Mx.
Divine?

WARNER TURNER

Last Thursday night. I took them
out to dinner to ease their mind
about the new album. At Lino's.
7:30.

*

*

MARLOWE

I'll bet it was nice spending time
with a funk icon.

WARNER TURNER

Sure was. I bought them this funny
lookin' gizmo that night, we saw
this..this toy on the street.
Comically large rubber chicken.
Loved that thing.

Clide instinctively reaches over to take Marlowe's hand, but
she gently bats it away. She knew.

*

CLIDE

Yeah? Do you still have it?

WARNER TURNER

Oh! Forgive me.

Warner stands and opens a wall cabinet, revealing a plethora
of wine and martini glasses. He takes out three, and opens a
drawer full of various flavors of espresso. Chocolate syrup,
caramel espresso, caramel syrup, whipped cream, and a single
shot of white rum. He gives the two the mixed drink.

*

WARNER TURNER (CONT'D)

Coffeetini. To help y'all relax.

*

Marlowe looks into her coffeetini glass. It smelled heavenly,
the perfect blend of sweet and savory. Warner sits down with
a regular hot mug of steaming hot coffee.

MARLOWE

So, Mr. Turner. What's in that mug?

WARNER TURNER

Oh, why dollface, go on and drink
your coffeetini? Bernie loves when
I whip these up.

CLIDE

No, they don't.

Warner stops mid-sip and presses his gaze firmly onto Clide.
His eye twitches.

*

WARNER TURNER

Sure they do. They always drink it
all.

CLIDE

Forgive me for being forward, but
as manager, you should know things
about who you represent, correct?

*

WARNER TURNER

I know Bernie like the back of my
hand. What are you asking, Mr.
McMahon?

CLIDE

I'm asking if you know how Mx.
Divine takes their tea.

WARNER TURNER

Lemongrass, with a single cube of
sugar.

Marlowe looks away from the men. He was right.

CLIDE

How do they like their coffee, sir?

WARNER TURNER

They don't drink coffee...

CLIDE

Then why did you say--

WARNER TURNER

...often.

Clide held his breath, leaning back and taking a sip of his
coffeetini.

*

WARNER TURNER (CONT'D)

They don't, really. When we do, we
usually take it--

MARLOWE

Black.

WARNER TURNER

Bingo. You really are a big fan,
aren't you, dollface?

CLIDE

That's *Miss Sanchez*, sir. Also,
that would imply you're drinking--

*
*

WARNER TURNER

Black coffee, my boy. The best and
only way to take it.

*
*

Warner stands and walks over to the window with his mug,
looking out onto the city with pride.

WARNER TURNER (CONT'D)

Detectives, I hate to say that I
don't quite know how to help. After
I took Bernie to dinner, we walked
back to their apartment, and that
was that. Nothing more, nothing
less.

CLIDE (V.O.)

Managers tend to be bad at
everything except managing people.
Lying was no exception.

MARLOWE

Mr. Turner, do you know of anyone
who may not particularly like Mx.
Divine?

WARNER TURNER

No one other than their usual
haters and anti-funksters.

MARLOWE

No one who'd trash their apartment,
sir?

Warner whipped around, choking on his mystery liquid.

WARNER TURNER

Trashed? No one even knows where
they live!

CLIDE

Sir, you said you walked Mx. Divine
home last Thursday. You know wherer
they live. They were missing the
next day. Are you sure you weren't
followed?

*
*

WARNER TURNER

Absolutely sure. We keep this stuff
under tight wraps. I hope you
aren't implying that I could've
done it. Bernie is my best friend.

*
*
*

Marlowe quickly stood up, grabbing the attention of the two men.

CLIDE

Mar? What's wrong?

MARLOWE

Uh. I. Um. Uh..
Gotta..gotta piss.

She quickly runs out of the room, leaving Clide and Warner alone.

CUT TO:

INT: HARBOR-HAMPTON STUDIO (HALLWAY)

Marlowe looks around, standing at the side of the office door. She steps to make it sound like she walked away to the left, tiptoeing to the right when she feels it's safe.

The halls are littered with pictures of famed singers and bands, their platinum records hung on the walls with pride.

MARLOWE

Okay, Bernie, where are you?

The detective passes by an air vent, where faint clicking can be heard. The clicks have a certain percussive element to them, almost a rhythm. Marlowe presses her ear against it, listening intently.

*

MARLOWE (CONT'D)

Is..is that "Stayin' Alive" by the
Bee Gees?

Faint humming could also be heard, perfect in tone and melody. There's only one person that can sing that good.

MARLOWE (CONT'D)

There you are.

The detective looks around one more time before trying to pry the air vent open. She quickly saves the grill from clattering on the marble floor as she crawls inside.

*

She immediately falls down from a height that could kill, but thankfully..

CUT TO:

INT: WARNER TURNER'S OFFICE

WARNER TURNER
Mr. McMahon, where do you think
Bernie's gone?

CLIDE
I'm not sure, Mr. Turner. I was
hoping you'd tell me.

Clide looks around the room and notices a bright colored sock tucked beneath the curtain. He peers closer, but Warner turns to face him.

WARNER TURNER
All I know is, Bernie has a lot of
enemies. Y'know, they aren't like
anyone else. They're different.

INT: BASEMENT

...Marlowe lands on a old, ratty couch in a cold basement. She quickly gets up and dusts herself off, grossed out by the dust and odd texture.

MARLOWE
Ew. Ew. Ew ew ew ew ew.

Marlowe looks up to see a dark, webby basement, filled with boxes and old records.

INT: WARNER TURNER'S OFFICE

CLIDE
No one's the same, sir. Our
differences make us human.

Clide puts down his coffeetini, making eye contact with Warner.

WARNER TURNER
Searchin' high and low must be
tiring, Clide--can I call you
Clide?

Clide lifts his finger to speak, but Warner interrupts.

WARNER TURNER (CONT'D)
Look at the bright side, Clide..

INT: BASEMENT

Marlowe keeps walking, peering closely at box after box.
Poster, empty bag, old radios, Christmas decorations...

WARNER TURNER (V.O.)
...Bernie could be *right* under our
noses.

...and for some reason, a tied up Bernie Divine.

Wait.

MARLOWE
(Whisper-yelling.) MX. DIVINE!

BERNIE DIVINE
MMMF!

Bernie's usual beauty was tainted by sweat and tears, their eyes glazed with anxiety and exhaustion. Their voluminous hair has shrunk from the sweat and heat, and they were surrounded by empty bottles of water. They practically sob at the sight of Marlowe.

MARLOWE
Oh my God. Oh dear God.

Marlowe lifts her pant leg to reveal a knife holster garter, quickly cutting Bernie out.

BERNIE DIVINE
Mmmf! N-MMMF!

MARLOWE
Don't worry, I'll get you o-

Marlowe is thrown backward, tumbling into a pile of boxes.
The Secretary has found her.

INT: WARNER TURNER'S OFFICE

CLIDE
Mr. Turner?

WARNER TURNER
Clide?

CLIDE

Where's the chicken?

Warner is now seated again, propping his legs up onto the table.

WARNER TURNER

What chicken?

CLIDE

The chicken you said you bought for Bernie.

WARNER TURNER

Lost it. No clue where it went, but I think they had it when they went into that Clubbie Clubster's for trivia night that night.

CLIDE

Odd. Coulda sworn you walked them right home after dinner.

WARNER TURNER

Well, I'm sure that--

CLIDE

Lino's always closes at 9:00 on Thursday's.

INT: BASEMENT

Marlowe and The Secretary are grooving with intent, dodging and fighting with dignity. Bernie also attempts to groove the Secretary away, hands and mouth still bound.

INT: WARNER TURNER'S OFFICE

Clide has managed to slam Warner onto his desk, pinning his head to the surface.

*

CLIDE

Now, Mr. Turner, I know damn sure that you just might know where Mx. Divine is.

Warner sounds near insane, trembling beneath Clide.

*

WARNER TURNER

C'mon, kid, I really don't know!

CLIDE

Have it your way.

Clide slams his head into the desk again, punching him into the wall.

WARNER TURNER

Y'know, Ozzy told me Miss Dollface
could throw down, but I didn't
expect it from you.

The two have a dance fight of their own, leaping over chairs
and knocking over shelves. Warner somehow dances poorer
despite being surrounded by music, getting absolutely creamed
by Clide.

*
*
*

INT: BASEMENT

Marlowe managed to tie up the Secretary with the leftover
rope, leaving her on the nasty couch.

SECRETARY

YOU'LL PAY FOR THIS! I COULD GET
YOU FIRED!

MARLOWE

Stay there, I gotta arrest you
later.

Marlowe quickly cuts Bernie free and removes the tape off
their face.

BERNIE DIVINE

Thank God you showed up, Miss
Marlowe. I was down here much too
long, it's dark and scary, and--

MARLOWE

You know my name.

*

BERNIE DIVINE

It's on your badge, Miss Marlowe.

*

MARLOWE

They know my name.

*
*

INT: WARNER TURNER'S OFFICE

Clide had Warner at paperweight-point, cornering him in the
back of the office. Marlowe and Bernie burst through the
door, Bernie pointing an accusatory finger.

BERNIE DIVINE
TURNER. YOU'RE FIRED.

WARNER TURNER
BERNIE! C'maaaannn, Bernster!
Bernbles! Bern Bern!

BERNIE DIVINE
FIRED!

Warner raised his hands in fear and shame, immediately
feeling the cold metal of handcuffs. He began
hyperventilating as he sobbed.

*
*

WARNER TURNER
IT'S NOT FAIR! YOU WERE IN MY WAY!

*
*

MARLOWE
You know the drill, Turner.

CLIDE
Wait, Mar. Why'd you even take
Bernie? What did they ever do to
you?

BERNIE DIVINE
He wants to be famous.

*

CLIDE AND MARLOWE
Famous?

*

BEGIN FLASHBACK

INT: HARBOR-HAMPTON STUDIO, RECORDING BOOTH

Bernie sits writing in their notebook, jamming along with
some bandmates. Warner sits in a corner, staring at them with
envy.

BERNIE DIVINE
Warner wouldn't ever talk to us
during recording. He'd always get
mad at me for just spending time
doing what I loved.

Warner eventually storms over and captures the attention of
the group, leaving Bernie confused.

EXT: RED CARPET, DAY

Bernie is exceptionally well dressed, and Warner stands
scowling with a cigarette.

BERNIE DIVINE

He never looked happy around me, or
even for me, no matter what. For
him, our wins should've been just
for him. My spotlight just made him
look burnin' mad. I tried to
include him, but he never felt like
doing anything.

*
*

Bernie extended their hand to Warner, but he stomps his
cigarette and walks away.

BERNIE DIVINE (CONT'D)

So, when he kidnapped me..

INT: BASEMENT

Bernie and Warner are arguing, and Bernie is shoved into the
dark basement and tied to a pole, unintelligible yelling
coming from a tearful Warner.

BERNIE DIVINE

...I felt like I failed.

END FLASHBACK

WARNER TURNER

(Sobbing.) IT'S TRUE! IT'S
TRUUUEEEEE!

Marlowe and Clide lift Warner to his feet and start to drag
him out amidst his tantrum.

WARNER TURNER (CONT'D)

I WAS THE ONE WHO GOT YOU FAMOUS! I
WAS THE ONE WHO DID EVERYTHING!
THIS STUDIO SHOULD BE MINE!! MINE
MINE MINE MINE MINE!!

MARLOWE

Take a chill pill, Turner!

*
*

WARNER TURNER

I WAS SUPPOSED TO HAVE CHRISTMAS
ALBUMS! I CAN SING! I CAN DANCE!

*
*
*

CLIDE

You aren't helpin' your case here,
bud.

*
*
*

WARNER TURNER

I had to make sure NO ONE would
come looking.

*
*
*

(MORE)

WARNER TURNER (CONT'D)

Everyone was supposed to think that
you just up and left from stress or
something but NO, these..t-these--

*
*
*

CLIDE

If you're gonna say something along
the lines of "meddling kids",
don't. The producers don't have the
rights to that one.

*
*
*
*
*

EXT: HARBOR-HAMPTON STUDIOS

Police cars and spectators gathered around the entrance,
watching as Marlowe and Clide carry out a sobbing Warner
Turner, along with two other officers escorting the (still
bound) secretary. They approach a cop car to put Warner
inside.

MARLOWE

You have the right to remain
silent, anything you say can and
will be held against you in the --

*

WARNER TURNER

Oh, *shut up*.

The car door slams and speeds away, the crowd of people
cheering and clapping for Marlowe and Clide. They wear proud
smiles.

Another officer approaches them and gestures to the ambulance
that was parked nearby. They walk over to it. Bernie sits in
the back of it, wrapped in a trauma blanket.

BERNIE DIVINE

I can't thank y'all enough for
saving me. I was worried I'd be
down there forever.

CLIDE

Just doin' our job, Mx. Divine. We
couldn't let you stay missing.

MARLOWE

I'm sorry he spooked you so bad.
He'll be goin' away for a long
while.

BERNIE DIVINE

You must be Clide, then? Marlowe
and Clide. You two are gonna do
great things someday.

MARLOWE

Um. May I just say, your new album
is just *breathtaking*. I-I mean,
your composition skills are amazing
and I just love the way you--

Clide jabs Marlowe softly, watching her go bright red as
Bernie laughs at her.

BERNIE DIVINE

That album is for the observant
ones, and I know you're a sleuth
for a good tune, Miss Marlowe. All
I know is I won't be workin' for a
hot minute after this one.

*
*

Chief Hamm approaches and pats the two detectives on the back

CHIEF HAMM

Sanchez! McMahon! You really did
get it done did, didn't you? With
such little evidence!

CLIDE

Marlowe here knew exactly what to
do.

MARLOWE

Don't give me all the credit, you
practically smooth talked all our
leads!

Nearby, a cop radio blares through their conversation.

COP RADIO:

"MISSY THORNTON, REPORTED MISSING
AS OF 6:45PM. BACKUP REQUESTED
IMMEDIATELY."

*

Marlowe and Clide share a quick glance and smile
mischievously.

CLIDE (V.O.)

We may have been tired, but crime
doesn't sleep..

CUT TO:

EXT. HIGHWAY

Marlowe and Clide are riding on their motorcycle once more,
the summer sun shining against their helmets.

CLIDE (V.O.)
...and the funk just don't stop.

CUT TO:

TITLE CARD

FADE TO BLACK.