

CHEERWINE
Pilot

Written by
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EXT. CALABASAS - OFFICE PARK - DAY

Blocks and blocks of generic office space.

A nondescript sign on one of the doors reads:

J.F. PHARMACEUTICALS

INT. J.F. PHARMACEUTICALS - CONTINUOUS

SOIL. SEEDS. FERTILIZER. GROW LIGHTS. IRRIGATION
EQUIPMENT.

Behind stacked bags of soil, a young man with a rednecky/gothy mess of black hair and a threadbare BLACK T-SHIRT works methodically and meticulously. He plants seeds, sets up sprinklers, measures pH levels, etc...

This is COLE (23).

He's accompanied by NICK (21) -- clean cut and collegiate looking in his VANS, SHORTS and WHITE T-SHIRT.

These two look like they could be brothers, but we'll soon learn this is not the case...

Also, we may or may not notice but Cole appears to be the true "green thumb" of the duo.

INT. NEW AGE YOGA STUDIO - DAY

Pristine -- white walls, white floor, white ceiling -- large CRYSTALS and GEODES throughout.

A bearded guru (60s, immaculate WHITE ROBE) sits at the front of the room presiding over a couple dozen MEN and WOMEN wearing white outfits and sitting lotus style. The guru's name is JOHN FUEGO.

FOLLOWER

John Fuego?

JOHN FUEGO

Yes?

FOLLOWER

Can you tell us about mantras?

The followers anticipate his response. Things look sort of cult-like.

JOHN FUEGO
Mantras are tools...

INT. J.F. PHARMACEUTICALS - DAY

Cole and Nick continue working, plant seeds in soil.

COLE
Tight as hell.

NICK
Tight as hell.

INT. NEW AGE YOGA STUDIO - DAY

JOHN FUEGO
...Tools that liberate the mind
through repetition...

INT. J.F. PHARMACEUTICALS - DAY

COLE
Tight as hell.

Cole hauls over a bag of fertilizer.

NICK
Tight as hell.

INT. NEW AGE YOGA STUDIO - DAY

JOHN FUEGO
They can be used alone, or as
building blocks for longer, more
powerful mantras.

INT. J.F. PHARMACEUTICALS - DAY

Nick turns on the irrigation system. Mist sprays down on the soil.

COLE
Tight as hell. Fuck yeah.

NICK
Fuck yeah. Fuck yeah.

INT. NEW AGE YOGA STUDIO - DAY

John Fuego strikes a CRYSTAL BOWL with a WOODEN Mallet producing a long ringing TONE.

INT. J.F. PHARMACEUTICALS - DAY

Rows and rows of MARIJUANA PLANTS in a seemingly infinite warehouse space.

This can't all belong to Cole and Nick? Can it?

EXT. J.F. PHARMACEUTICALS - NIGHT

The front door closes and Cole gives the door a tug -- all locked up.

As Cole slings his BACKPACK over his shoulder, a white KEYCARD falls from an unzipped pocket.

The Keycard lays unnoticed on the sidewalk as Nick and Cole walk away.

CUT TO:

TITLE: CHEERWINE

["STARTING OVER" BY BLACK LIPS PLAYS AS "CHEERWINE" COMES UP]

EXT. LOS ANGELES - VARIOUS LOCATIONS

Establish the right version of Los Angeles with a series of iconic and tone setting images.

EXT. GREYHOUND STATION - ONE WEEK EARLIER

Cole steps off a GREYHOUND BUS wearing the black T-shirt we've already seen. However, his hair is a bit longer and shaggier.

His BACKPACK hangs on his shoulder and he carries a twelve-pack of CHEERWINE SODA in one hand.

EXT. GLENDALE - NOLAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD.

A small HOUSE at the base of the Glendale Mountains -- one of those wood and stone fairy-tale-looking places.

Cole's at the front door.

He knocks...

INT. NOLAN'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Barber Supplies -- COMBS, CLIPPERS, NECK DUSTER, etc. -- neatly organized atop a HAND TOWEL on the kitchen counter.

Cole sits in a folding CHAIR with a TOWEL tied around his neck while his brother, NOLAN (41), gives him a haircut.

Nolan's a barber with his own shop. He looks pretty straightlaced in BROWN PANTS and a BLUE OXFORD. Most markers of his Southern upbringing have been diluted by years of L.A. living.

NOLAN

Cole, Cole, Cole... You seriously bus three-thousand miles cross country with just a backpack and a case a Cheerwine?

COLE

Spur a the moment departure, Nolan.

Cole cracks open a can of Cheerwine, takes a sip.

COLE (CONT'D)

Keep it wild on top, but fade the back. Not a skin fade or a Boosie fade. Like a two to a three.

Nolan grabs clippers, snaps on a guard.

NOLAN

Pretty particular about your shitty hair style, huh?

COLE

No need screwin' with what's workin'.

Nolan works Cole's head with the clippers.

NOLAN

Trouble back in North Carolina's what it takes to get a brotherly visit? First time in the, I dunno, *fourteen* years I've been here.

COLE

First time further than Myrtle Beach. Never even been to Florida... You weren't jettin' back east every three months either.

Cole has a point.

Nolan takes the clippers to the back of Cole's head. Pauses -
- UH OH. He switches the guard and gets back to it.

NOLAN

Right when I started cutting hair, if I made a mistake, I got, like, really stressed out. Now it's like, take a deep breath, recenter, whatever.

COLE

That a slick way a telling me you just fucked up?

NOLAN

A little bit, but it's fixed.

COLE

Better be.

NOLAN

Hand me those scissors...

Nolan notices Cole's thickly CALLUSED HANDS.

NOLAN (CONT'D)

Those're some real working man's hands.

COLE

Workin' Memaw's tobacco harvest. Every year, come August. Hope to be back for this year's...

NOLAN

You might like it out here.

Nolan snips away at Cole's hair.

COLE

It's weird...

NOLAN

We got Chick-Fil-A now.

COLE
No Cheerwine though.

He takes a long pull of soda.

NOLAN
You can get it.

COLE
For real!?!

NOLAN
Gotta go to, like, a boutique soda shop but the nectar has reached this coast.

COLE
Yeah, I can't truck with that. Oughta just be on the low shelf down at the Food Lion.

NOLAN
Trim your sideburns?

COLE
Bring 'em all the way up. Wanna try that zero sideburn look.

Nolan grabs the sideburn trimmer.

NOLAN
You're kin and all... But this isn't some halfway house for troubled youth. If you wanna stay here... Rent's due next week.

COLE
I'll ante up. Start work tomorrow.

NOLAN
Down at the mall?

COLE
Something like that.

Nolan grabs the neck duster, brushes hair clippings from Cole's neck and face.

NOLAN
Nick's back at school soon, so the room'll be all yours.

COLE

How the hell you end up with a kid
pretty much my age? Still rattles
the mind.

NOLAN

Impregnated a female.

COLE

Suppose that's how it works...

NOLAN

Hot towel?

COLE

Gimmie that royal treatment.

Nolan pops open the MICROWAVE -- pulls out a rolled up TOWEL.

NOLAN

Swing by the shop. I'll give you a
razor shave.

COLE

You won't slit my throat?

NOLAN

Probably not.

Nolan wraps the towel around Cole's face.

COLE

(muffled by the towel)
Smells like a menthol Kool... I
like it.

INT. NICK'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Cole lays in a SLEEPING BAG on the floor and stares at the
ceiling.

NICK (O.S.)

Only real way to see the world is
by foot, so last summer I walked
back to school.

COLE

You hoofed it? From here?

Nick lays in a bed. He also stares at the ceiling.

NICK

Yeah. Three hundred fifty-three miles. Glendale to Stanford.

COLE

That take, like, a year?

NICK

Two weeks. Did ten hours a day. Most days...

COLE

Gain any sacred knowledge, from the walkabout experience?

NICK

Just that I'm prone to gnarly blisters on my tootsies.

COLE

Gnarly? You a surfer-dude-hang-ten-kowabunga-kinda guy?

NICK

Nah.

COLE

Dang. I wanna surf. Prolly be good at it...

NICK

Lotta sharks.

COLE

Fuck those shits.

A BONG sits on Nick's nightstand.

COLE (CONT'D)

I like this marijuana.

NICK

I grew it.

COLE

For real?

NICK

Yeah. In my closet. Sellin' it keeps me above water at school. There's more in the desk. So... Help yourself.

COLE

Cool.

NICK

No problem, Uncle Cole...

COLE

Uh...

NICK

What?

COLE

Uncle... just sounds too weird...
Is this -- like, what we're doing
right now -- what dorm life's like?

NICK

I'm sharing my room with a complete
stranger, so yes. But you'd have,
like, a bed.

Nick turns off the light.

COLE

Your dad shaves men for a living
and he named you Nick...

INT./EXT. UBER POOL CAR - DAY

Cole's in the backseat scrunched up against the driver's side
door. He cedes as much space as he can to a girl and dude
(both 20s) sharing the PRIUS. The girl's all #COACHELLA
VIBES and the dude has a HANDLEBAR MUSTACHE.

Self-consciously sterile and robotic pop music, maybe Hannah
Diamond's "Hi", plays on the radio. The DRIVER turns it up.

COACHELLA VIBES

I bank a grand for a sponsored
photo and, like, 5K for a video.
Is that good?

HANDLEBAR MUSTACHE

Instagram or Snapchat?

COACHELLA VIBES

'Gram, obvs.

HANDLEBAR MUSTACHE

Kylie gets 10K.

COACHELLA VIBES
 (sighs)
 Of course she does...

HANDLEBAR MUSTACHE
 She's the gold standard.

COACHELLA VIBES
Straight hoe's not my brand. Just
 need more followers fuckin' with
 me.

HANDLEBAR MUSTACHE
 We can make your feed more
 aesthetic, elevate your content,
 hopefully get you verified...

Coachella Vibes shows Handlebar her Instagram feed -- an
 endless string of swimsuit pics taken in exotic locales.

COACHELLA VIBES
 They don't even let me keep the
 swimsuits. Straight exploitation.

Cole looks out the window -- sees a HOMELESS ENCAMPMENT under
 an OVERPASS.

COACHELLA VIBES (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 It's literally the worst. Deadass.

He's had enough.

COLE
 (to Driver)
 I can just hop out here.

EXT. THE AMERICANA MALL - COURTYARD - DAY

The whole place is done up with elaborate HOLIDAY
 DECORATIONS. A huge CHRISTMAS TREE stands tall in the middle
 of the courtyard.

Cole and NINA (22) hold CLIPBOARDS and wear BLUE VESTS
 ornamented with a BUTTON that says, "FREE MOVIE SCREENINGS."

Nearby, a GUY in a slick suit (mid-30s) snaps cell phone pics
 of a stylishly dressed WOMAN (late-20s).

Cole and Nina watch this go down. They're transfixed.

NINA
 Poor dude. Eternally friendzoned.

The Guy stands on a bench. Snaps several pics.

COLE
You think so?

The Guy crouches to one knee. Snaps some more.

NINA
Totally. Would you do shit like
that if you weren't hoping to enter
the bone zone?

The Guy lays on his stomach in the grass. More pics.

COLE
Guess not...

The Woman checks out the photos, shakes her head. She's not
satisfied, so the dude's back at it. She directs him to
shoot from more complex angles.

COLE (CONT'D)
Round two...

NINA
Bet he's giving her a ride to the
airport at like five AM tomorrow.

COLE
...So she can visit her fiancé.

NINA
Dude's gonna lease an Audi so she
can ride in style.

COLE
In dark times hope's the only light
keeping us going....

A shopper rushes past Cole.

COLE (CONT'D)
Pardon me, sir. Would you like to
see a free movie?

SHOPPER
Hell no.

COLE
Merry Christmas!

Cole steps back, rejoins Neha.

COLE (CONT'D)

The sword's dangling above my head... My brother wants rent. I need money...

NINA

Find yourself the lady version of him.

The Woman is walking away. The Guy picks up several SHOPPING BAGS and follows.

EXT. THE AMERICANA MALL - SERVICE CORRIDOR - EVENING

Cole and Nina huddle in the corridor and smoke weed from a CERAMIC BOWL.

They look into the courtyard, which is lit by Christmas lights. ARTIFICIAL SNOW rains down.

COLE

Sure do bring the pain for Christmas...

NINA

The decorations are they only way I ever know what time of year it is.

COLE

Snow's melting before it even hits the ground...

NINA

Yeah. Fake winter... I like this weed.

COLE

My nephew grew it.

NINA

You get weed from your nephew?

COLE

I guess so...

NINA

You're, like, a *BAD* uncle!

COLE

What? No. He's my age.

NINA

He got it in any dispensaries?

COLE

Huh?

NINA

The dispensaries... Where they
SELL marijuana?

COLE

What?

NINA

Shit's legal. You know that,
right?

COLE

Wait, what? Legal like, walk in a
store all, "yes, sir I'd like to
purchase some marijuana?"

NINA

I mean, yeah. Pretty much. Still
gotta have a card to buy it, but
anyone can carry it around. He
should get his stuff in the shops.

Cole stares at the falling snow. Gears turn. Some dude runs
across the courtyard, hits a patch of snow and busts his ass.

COLE

Looks like some a that snow
stuck...

EXT. MALIBU - DAY

A modern, single story building with a 40 million dollar
ocean view near the edge of a cliff.

INT. NEW AGE YOGA STUDIO - CONTINUOUS

John Fuego's followers zone out to a soothing NEW AGE DRONE,
originating at the front of the room where...

John Fuego sits behind a row of CRYSTAL BOWLS filled with
varying levels of water. He plays the bowls with a WOODEN
MALLET.

The drone intensifies.

A DOOR on one side of the room. We get closer and closer
until, we're on the other side and in...

INT. STORAGE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The room is jam packed with pallets of MARIJUANA stacked floor to ceiling and packaged for distribution.

INT. NOLAN'S BARBER SHOP - NIGHT

After-hours in a small three-chair barber shop.

Cole restocks supply shelves while Nolan fumbles around with a BLUETOOTH SPEAKER and LAPTOP.

NOLAN

The hell... Enable Discoverable mode? What's that even mean?

COLE

Hold down the button on the speaker.

NOLAN

OK.

COLE

That little light flashing? On the speaker?

NOLAN

Yeah.

COLE

Go to system preferences... Then Bluetooth... Should be able to click on the speaker in there.

NOLAN

Eureka...

A couple clicks on the computer and Harry Nilsson's "*Jump Into The Fire*" plays from the speaker.

Cole grabs a bundle of towels from a table and notices a BILL, which says:

DELINQUENCY NOTICE: PAST DUE.

COLE

Business good?

NOLAN

Seven cuts today. Still slow, but it's getting there.

(MORE)

NOLAN (CONT'D)
 Averaging five a couple weeks ago.
 Need to get to twenty a day.

Nolan joins Cole at the shelves.

NOLAN (CONT'D)
 Fifteen months and nine days since
 my last day off. Grinding. Every
 day.

Nolan places a bundle of towels on the shelf.

NOLAN (CONT'D)
 So ready to hire a second barber.
 Once the shop's over the hump...

COLE
 Finally take that siesta down in
 Mexico?

NOLAN
 Someday...

Cole slides a large box under the sink.

NOLAN (CONT'D)
 Appreciate the help with this crap.
 How 'bout we knock a few bucks off
 rent?

COLE
 Nah man, this is just a "helpin' my
 big brother out" kinda thing.

Curious, coming from Nolan's *broke* brother... Does Cole know
 something about his finances?

NOLAN
 Right... Outta the kindness of
 your heart?

COLE
 (covering)
 Exactly.

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

Cole and Nolan drag TRASH BAGS towards a DUMPSTER.

NOLAN
 Bet I can toss this closer to the
 dumpster than you.

COLE

Lemme hear the stakes of this
wager.

NOLAN

You win: fifty bucks off rent.
This month only. I win: four cans
of your Cheerwine.

COLE

I accept your terms.

Nolan swings his bag then releases. The bag arcs towards the
dumpster. Lands pretty close.

COLE (CONT'D)

Not a bad showing from the ancient
one.

Cole's turn. He winds up... Tosses... His bag lands in the
EXACT same spot as Nolan's.

COLE (CONT'D)

A wash. We're stuck with a draw...

A pack of RATS scurry from under the dumpster and scamper
towards Cole and Nolan.

With a YELP, Cole clutches his brother's arm.

NOLAN

Need some fresh drawers?

COLE

Nah, I'm good. Friggin' rats...

The rats continue down the alley.

COLE (CONT'D)

You got Nick's phone number?

NOLAN

He's my son.

Cole stares blankly.

NOLAN (CONT'D)

YES. I know his number.

COLE

Pass it my way? I gotta holler at
him.

INT./EXT. SUNSET STRIP - UBER - NIGHT

Cole stares out the window. As he checks out the sights of Sunset Boulevard his thoughts drift back to...

EXT. ALAMANCE COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA - DAY [FLASHBACK]

Rolling TOBACCO FIELDS.

Small HOUSES with tin roofs and peeling paint.

Rusted out CARS and PICKUP TRUCKS entombed in front yards.

Ratty COUCHES on front porches.

A distant plume of PITCH BLACK SMOKE extends skyward.

INT. MEMAW'S HOUSE - DAY [FLASHBACK, CONT'D]

Cole slumps in a chair. He wears oversized Carhartt work clothes covered in dirt and grime and leather work gloves. SOOT streaks his face like sweaty mascara, and his hair is matted to his forehead.

Cole's head hangs low. He's found a world of trouble and knows it.

MEMAW (late-70s) paces in front of him.

MEMAW

Pack yer duffle, Cole. You're on the next Greyhound to California. Bunk with your brother a spell and perhaps this'll pass.

COLE

Memaw-

MEMAW

(interrupting)

Bestn't profess your sins. I ain't even wanna know.

Through a window behind Cole, a CAR engulfed in flames -- the source of the earlier smoke plume.

MEMAW (CONT'D)

Stirred up a mighty feud with them Mebanesville Boys. And I *can't* know no more. That business is your business, not mine.

Cole's eyes remain locked on the floor.

COLE
(mumbling)
I can right this. Honest to God.

MEMAW
Ain't nothing Memaw can do and
ain't nothing Memaw gunna do 'cept
get your ass outta town.

COLE
I'm not running. I'm not leaving
you.

MEMAW
You brought the devil to my front
stoop and he ain't getting nearer
than that. Bus leaves the depot in
an hour. You're in my sights 'til
them doors close and that bad boy
rolls west.

INT. BOUTIQUE HOTEL - BAR - NIGHT [BACK TO PRESENT]

Douchebag fancy. Meticulously lit. Helmet Newton-style nude
photos on the walls. And the real kicker...

A WOMAN IN A BIKINI (20s) inside a 10 foot GLASS BOX behind
the bar. Some MAGAZINES and a LAPTOP are in there too, but
she just lays on her side propped up on one arm -- gazing
over the crowd with a detached million-mile stare.

It's supposed to be alluring, but the box situation is really
just depressing and gross.

Nick's at the bar where a BARTENDER (30s) squeezes a
RACQUETBALL in his left hand -- a grip strength exercise.

NICK
You got an outlet in here?

BARTENDER
(looking past Nick)
For what?

NICK
Phone needs some juice.

BARTENDER
Get in line, guy.

The Bartender motions towards the entrance where about half-a-dozen WOMEN in COCKTAIL DRESSES lay on the carpet and charge their phones at some WALL OUTLETS.

Cole enters and stumbles over one of the women's legs while making his way towards Nick.

COLE
What is this place?

NICK
The worst.

A look from the Bartender.

Cole takes the place in -- sees people playing SHUFFLEBOARD.

COLE
Bars I tend to frequent don't have that fancy shuffleboard. Just slap ass and darts.
(to Bartender re: girl in box)
She for sale or something?

BARTENDER
It's a living sculpture tapping into the fantasy of staring at a woman trapped like a caged animal.

COLE
Super-fucked up. Ever stick a dude in there?

BARTENDER
(still squeezing the ball)
Why would we do that?

Nothing from Cole.

BARTENDER (CONT'D)
Racquetball?

Still nothing from Cole.

BARTENDER (CONT'D)
Do you play racquetball?

COLE
Uh, no.

BARTENDER
The fuck good are you?

COLE
Y'all got Miller High Life?

The Bartender ignores Cole. Walks away.

COLE (CONT'D)
(to Nick)
So... No need beatin' 'round the
bush.

NICK
Huh?

Cole takes a deep breath...

COLE
That weed you grew...

NICK
Yeah.

COLE
It's real good.

NICK
I know.

COLE
Lemme help you get it in the shops.

NICK
The *shops*?

COLE
Yeah. Weed's legal now.

Nick laughs.

NICK
I'm aware.

COLE
Lotta money up for grabs...

NICK
"Pothead" is, like, a character
trait not an indicator of
professional aptitude. I don't
know shit about the Cannabis
Industry.

COLE
Well...

Cole unloads a rehearsed pitch...

COLE (CONT'D)

I know agriculture. Eleven years on Memaw's tobacco farm. Soil preparation. Irrigation. Fertilization. Plot rotation. Harvesting. Curing. My own personal Ag School. That's gotta count for something... Memaw also has this little marijuana patch -- down at the Charlotte Motor Speedway, under the stands. Tended that bad boy too.

NICK

You practice that?

COLE

Thought it through in my head a couple times...

NICK

You really looking to help or is this just about easy money?

COLE

I mean, a little bit a both... I wanna help you. And we can both take that easy money.

NICK

Look, man. You're my dad's brother... Er, uncle... or whatever... But, like, all I know about you is you got in trouble and sent out here...

COLE

You don't know what happened...

A shift change at the glass box and a new girl slides in.

NICK

We'd need space and equipment to make things legit... Anyway, I'm back at school next week.

COLE

Yeah, you'd need to take some time off.

NICK

You're crazy as hell.

The Bartender sets a bill down in front of Cole. Cole checks it out...

COLE
 (to Bartender)
 I didn't drink anything.

Nothing from the Bartender.

COLE (CONT'D)
 (to Nick)
 Chance to maybe make something for ourselves.

A HUGE BOUNCER in a BLACK SUIT stomps up and towers over Cole.

BOUNCER
 You gotta go.

COLE
 What?

The Bartender glares at Cole.

BOUNCER
 We don't want you here.

The Bouncer grabs Cole by the arm, jerks him out of his seat.

COLE
 (over his shoulder; to Nick)
 I can get us those facilities and equipment!

The girl we originally saw inside the box takes a seat beside Nick. She's now in street clothes. Her name is BRITNEY.

BRITNEY
 (to Nick)
 Who's that?

NICK
 My uncle... He wants me to drop out of school to grow weed...

BRITNEY
 Your weed is pretty good...

Nick's thinking about it.

BRITNEY (CONT'D)
 Would be nice keeping you 'round...

EXT. VENICE BEACH - DAY

Cole walks down the boardwalk, through the crowd of Venice Beach Weirdos -- magicians, rappers hawking CDs, dancers, sand sculptors, etc...

He reaches a NEON GREEN STORE FRONT where...

A WOMAN in NEON GREEN SCRUBS emblazoned with a huge MARIJUANA LEAF holds a sign that says, "\$40 MEDICAL MARIJUANA EVALUATION."

COLE

Pardon me ma'am-

The southern politeness is not appreciated.

SCRUBS

Did you just "ma'am" me?

COLE

Uh... Is this the Kush Doctor?

Of course this is the Kush Doctor, like 20 SIGNS say just that. And in case it's not obvious enough, one of those inflatable wavey arm balloon things covered in pot leaves dances beside Scrubs.

SCRUBS

Nah. This is a sober-living halfway house.

COLE

Well, sorry to bother.

Cole turns to walk away. Scrubs shakes her head, "who is this fool?"

SCRUBS

Hold up, dude...

INT. KUSH DOCTOR - EXAMINATION ROOM - DAY

A typical examination room... If your doctor's a blissed out pothead. In addition to the EXAMINATION TABLE and life-sized SKELETON MODEL, we see a collection of BONGS and walls covered with new age fractal and chakra POSTERS.

Cole sits on the examination table while DOCTOR KUSH takes a monster bong rip.

DOCTOR KUSH
 (on exhale)
 You're definitely not lying. I'm
 enjoying this.

COLE
 I know, right...

DOCTOR KUSH
 So what are you looking for?

COLE
 My nephew grew it and-

DOCTOR KUSH
Nephew? You one a those bad
 uncles?

COLE
 No... Folks keep saying that...
 No. He's my age. We wanna get it
 in some dispensaries.

DOCTOR KUSH
 Wish I could help, but I don't buy,
 like, quarter bags off corner boys.

COLE
 That's what I'm sayin'. We need
 space to grow, like, legitimately.

DOCTOR KUSH
 My grower's licensed by the state.
 Takes beaucoup cash to get started.
 Beaucoup.

Doctor Kush rubs her fingers together.

DOCTOR KUSH (CONT'D)
 A real deep pockets endeavor. You
 got deep pockets?

COLE
 I mean, no. We just need space.

DOCTOR KUSH
 Look. This stuff is *technically*
 legal, but still fucked up. You
 don't wanna wade these waters.
 Lotta sharks. Here's what I can
 do. You're new in town?

COLE
 I guess so...

DOCTOR KUSH
 Usually'll set ya back forty bucks,
 but I'll write up a recommendation,
 get you that weed card. On the
 house.

Doctor Kush grabs a clipboard and a pen.

Cole glances around -- sees a sign on the wall. It says:

**CALIFORNIA ID REQUIRED BY LAW FOR MEDICAL MARIJUANA
 RECOMMENDATION.**

DOCTOR KUSH (CONT'D)
 Anxiety and trouble sleeping?

COLE
 What? No.

Doctor Kush stares at him. Asks again, more deliberately.

DOCTOR KUSH
 You're dealing with anxiety. And
 you have trouble sleeping.

Cole gets what she's doing...

COLE
 Uh... Yes.

DOCTOR KUSH
 Perfect.

The Doctor scribbles on her clipboard, hands Cole a slip of paper.

DOCTOR KUSH (CONT'D)
 Grab a cookie or something on the
 way out. My treat.

EXT. VENICE BEACH SKATE PARK - DAY

Cole sits on a BENCH, watches skaters tool around, but his thoughts are elsewhere. He bites into a COOKIE.

ANGELYNE (age unknown, tight pink mini-dress), L.A.'s original "famous for being famous" starlet, walks up and takes a seat next to him.

ANGELYNE
 World weighing you down?

COLE

I think so.

ANGELYNE

Spill it.

Angelyne puts her purse on the ground. A small WHITE DOG pokes its head out the top.

COLE

The fates have it in for me. I know the tasks and milestones that'll right my ship, but I just can't do it... Got exiled out here. Don't even wanna be here.

ANGELYNE

We create and define our realities. The world's out to get you if that's what you believe. And it's on your side, ready to help if you let it. Fight against defeat. Always. And don't resist change. Many moons ago, every dang time I got on the freeway, I ended up right behind a Little Caesar's Pizza truck -- a big rig. Things like that are significant, hot, and ready.

Silence as they watch the skaters. Angelyne removes the dog from her purse.

COLE

Who are you?

Angelyne laughs knowingly.

ANGELYNE

Whoever you need me to be.

Angelyne holds her dog out towards Cole.

ANGELYNE (CONT'D)

Give her some of your cookie.

COLE

Oh, it's an edible.

ANGELYNE

That's OK. This is California. Best believe Princess Caviar has her weed card.

INT. NOLAN'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Nolan and Nick decorate a CHRISTMAS TREE.

Nick digs through a BOX OF ORNAMENTS, pulls one out -- a figurine of SANTA IN A YELLOW JOGGING SUIT.

NICK

This one's my favorite.

NOLAN

Memaw sent that your first Christmas.

Nick hangs it on the tree. Steps back for a look then moves it to a better spot.

NICK

What would you think about me taking next semester off...

NOLAN

Your last semester?

NICK

Yeah...

NOLAN

You asking me to decide for you?

Nick stares at his Dad.

NOLAN (CONT'D)

If you want me to go and tell you you're outta your goddamn mind, I can go and tell you you're outta your goddamn mind.

NICK

That's not it... Might try some stuff with Cole...

NOLAN

You gotta make that decision. It's about what you think, not what I think.

NICK

What's his deal?

NOLAN

A fuck up got him here, but I don't think he's a fuck up. He's my brother.

Nolan strings some lights on the tree.

NOLAN (CONT'D)
Think the trees like getting all
dressed up?

Nick shoots his dad a "you crazy" look.

NOLAN (CONT'D)
Like, they're outta the cold, in a
nice house, wearing a festive
outfit.

NICK
But once that new year rolls around
it's straight to the woodchipper.

NOLAN
Mister Fir Tree doesn't know that.

Nolan hands Nick an ANGEL TREE TOPPER then crouches down.

NOLAN (CONT'D)
Hop on my shoulders.

NICK
For real?

NOLAN
Hop on up. He wants his hat.

Nick climbs on his Dad's shoulders. Nolan stands.

NICK
(laughing)
This might not end well...

INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Neon lights and smoke machine haze -- an updated take on Michael Mann's stylized neon hellscapes. It's over the top, but also pretty cool.

A party's going down in the cavernous warehouse and Gucci Mane's "Hell Yes" blasts from a P.A. system.

Through the haze, Cole observes the crowd.

He's kinda drunk and as the lyrics "*Woke up in a mansion,
grew up in apartments*" play, a slight smile crosses his face.

This is the first time we've seen him *maybe* enjoying himself.

INT. NICK'S ROOM - NIGHT

Nick digs through Cole's BACKPACK, looking for clues.

He doesn't find much -- a couple pair of pants, some black T-shirts... Then, in the front pocket, he finds...

An OLD PHOTO of Cole and Nolan. The brothers look happy.

INT. KUSH DOCTOR - EXAMINATION ROOM - DAY

A DOCUMENTARY on sensory deprivation tanks plays on a wall-mounted FLATSCREEN.

Doctor Kush watches from her desk, completely enthralled.

Cole walks in.

DOCTOR KUSH
My amigo! How'd that edible treat
ya? Back for more?

COLE
Nah, that's not why I'm--

DOCTOR KUSH
You float?

COLE
What?

The Doctor points to the psychedelic images on the screen.

DOCTOR KUSH
Sensory depravation tanks. Ever
been in one?

COLE
Uh, no...

DOCTOR KUSH
Ahhh, you're missing out! Puttin'
one in at the casa.

COLE
Alright. But--

DOCTOR KUSH
Gonna dive off that cliff and right
into the inner mindscape.

COLE
Look Ms. Kush, er, Dr. Kush...

Cole tosses a wad of cash on the desk.

COLE (CONT'D)

It's not much, but it's everything
I got.

DOCTOR KUSH

Not trying to spiral our patients
into financial ruin. That's just
bad business, but I'll hook you up.
Work something out.

COLE

I'm not here to buy.

DOCTOR KUSH

So...

COLE

You're gonna hook me up with your
supply guy. Get me that space and
equipment to grow.

The Doctor laughs.

DOCTOR KUSH

Look, kid...

She slides the money back to Cole.

DOCTOR KUSH (CONT'D)

...this is *NOT* beaucoup enough.
Nowhere near.

COLE

I know. Figure you can make up the
difference.

DOCTOR KUSH

Goin' for the gusto. I like that,
but I'm not putting up thousands so
some hillbilly can "get his foot in
the door."

COLE

Yeah. I believe you are.

Cole tosses his NORTH CAROLINA DRIVERS LICENSE down next to
the cash.

DOCTOR KUSH

Fuck's this?

COLE
My ID.

DOCTOR KUSH
So?

COLE
Issued by the great state of North
Carolina. Ain't got no California
ID.

Concern on the Doctor's face.

COLE (CONT'D)
Like the law says: No Cali ID, no
weed card.

Doctor Kush looks to the sign on his wall proclaiming just
that.

COLE (CONT'D)
I reckon that recommendation you
wrote up's straight illegal. You
can pitch in or...

DOCTOR KUSH
You really wanna go down this road?

COLE
I believe so.

DOCTOR KUSH
Got me cornered. So I've really
got no choice, huh?

COLE
Suppose that's true.

DOCTOR KUSH
I'll set you up with my guy. Seems
I pretty much have to. But here's
the thing: I WILL get my money
back. QUICKLY. If not, I'll fuck
you up. Tremendously. Told ya
there's a lotta sharks in these
waters and you're face to face with
a hammerhead.

COLE
I hear what you're sayin'.

A psychedelic sequence plays on the flatscreen.

NARRATOR

(on T.V.)

The ego dissolves, freeing floaters
for a journey towards oblivion.

EXT. CALABASAS - OFFICE PARK - DAY

And we've caught back up to where we started...

Generic office space and the sign for J.F. Pharmaceuticals.

INT. J.F. PHARMACEUTICALS - CONTINUOUS

In the back, past the rows of marijuana plants, a TECHNICIAN
(30s, white coveralls) gives Cole and Nick the rundown...

TECHNICIAN

This is your space. Everything
should be here already.

Nick stands by as Cole gives the setup a thorough once over.
He's satisfied.

The Technician hands Cole and Nick KEYCARDS.

TECHNICIAN (CONT'D)

These'll get you in whenever.
Twenty-four/seven access.

EXT. J.F. PHARMACEUTICALS - NIGHT

Cole and Nick walk across the parking lot, away from the
building.

Cole's Keycard lays on the sidewalk by the door.

NOLAN'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

CHRISTMAS MORNING.

NOLAN wears a SANTA HAT and Cole and Nick have CROWNS made of
shiny gold paper. Spirits are festive.

NOLAN

Santa treat you boys right this
year?

COLE

I think so...

NICK
 Coulda used some more underwear.

NOLAN
 Says the responsible college drop
 out.

The TV's on in the background. A breaking news update cuts in.

TV
 In the early morning hours, a fire
 broke out at J.F. Pharmaceuticals,
 a Calabasas based marijuana growing
 facility...

This catches Cole and Nick's attention. They turn to each other. Shit...

TV (CONT'D)
 An investigation is underway, but
 reports suggest the fire was
 intentional.

EXT. NOLAN'S HOUSE - BACKYARD - DAY

Cole paces while Nick sits in the grass staring at the ground.

COLE
 Debt's still hanging over our
 heads, but we can still settle with
 the good Doctor. Just gotta get
 more seeds in the dirt--

NICK
 (interrupting)
 So... Um... Uncle Cole.

COLE
 Come on, man. Don't call me that.

NICK
 I gotta address you proper,
 considering the circumstances. I
 think... We planted all the seeds.

COLE
 No worries. Timeline's shifted.

NICK

And... I gotta come clean... Those seeds -- just bought 'em from this guy up north. I didn't cultivate the strain...

Cole's face says it all -- *"We're fucked."*

INT. J.F. PHARMACEUTICALS - DAY

The building is a charred shell.

Smoldering plants fill the place with smoke. Water drips from overhead sprinklers. Everything's burned up. Nothing was spared.

John Fuego wanders the ruins, pissed off and inspecting the damage. He wears his white robe and a Santa hat. Something catches his eye...

Cole's White Keycard on the warehouse floor.

John Fuego crouches and picks it up. Examines it. As he does this, his grip tightens on the PISTOL in his other hand.

INT. NOLAN'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Cole sits on the couch. Stares blankly into the distance.

NOLAN

Oh yeah... Need that rent tomorrow... Cole?

CUT TO BLACK.