

(Printed with the demonstration version of Fade In)

CRUCIFIED

"Pilot"

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(Printed with the demonstration version of Fade In)

The sound of an ethereal ORCHESTRA rises...

FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE - FX SHOT

Infinite BLACK, speckles of distant STARS.

VOYAGER 1 drifts across this abyss, signals into NOTHING.

EXT. SOLAR SYSTEM - FX SHOT

The SUN ignites a PLANET'S CREST in FIERY LIGHT. The planet moves along its orbit --

To reveal EARTH.

Orchestra BUILDS.

Earth travels CLOSER -- through its atmosphere, a LAND MASS emerges into VIEW:

THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND.

Orchestra CRESCENDOS.

INT. COMEDY CLUB - STAGE - NIGHT

Dark and small. CHRISTOPHER (late-20s, adrift) stands on stage with a microphone, to a half-drunk AUDIENCE.

CHRISTOPHER

--And *that's* why you should never take your blindfold off in Thailand.

Hearty LAUGHTER fills the room.

Christopher loves it. He paces as it dies off -- straightens up and looks into the CROWD.

CHRISTOPHER (cont'd)

I wanna finish tonight on something that's quite dear to me, and to give you -- the good people of East Croydon -- something to think about.

In the FRONT ROW, an OVERLY-PISSED WOMAN (40s) sits and texts, her EQUALLY-TIRED BOYFRIEND (40s) at her side.

Christopher notices her but keeps going.

CHRISTOPHER (cont'd)
So, last year, my mum died.

AUDIENCE MEMBER (O.S.)
Boo!

CHRISTOPHER
Thanks. What made it even harder, was that it was cancer. Chronic myeloid leukemia. Very rare, and very fatal. And, let's just say, she wasn't ready.

Grimaces and uncomfortable SILENCE creeps across the crowd.

CHRISTOPHER (cont'd)
No, no -- listen, I promise this'll get funny. See, I've been through *all* the therapy. I've done all the yoga, the meditation, the primal screaming. I've "healed my inner child" and made the switch to green tea -- and I'm out. I'm clean. I am healed. I stand before you an enlightened man, ladies and gentlemen. Now, I only do ketamine on the weekends.

That ekes out some CHUCKLES.

CHRISTOPHER (cont'd)
But, seriously -- what I *can* say about doing all that is I can now see the humour in things much more. See, the funny thing, about, you know, my mother's death... Were her last words. I was by her bedside, right, *knowing* that this was it--

Christopher pivots to the Overly-Pissed Woman.

CHRISTOPHER (cont'd)
Are you seriously *STILL* texting during a routine about my dead mum?

LAUGHTER. The Overly-Pissed Woman looks up at him.

CHRISTOPHER (cont'd)
Look, I'm sure whatever it is, it's important--

OVERLY-PISSED WOMAN
Are you havin' a go at me?

THE AUDIENCE

Oooh!

CHRISTOPHER

No, I'm not havin' a "go at you",
it's just--

OVERLY-PISSED WOMAN

It sounds like you are. *Really* sounds
like you are. You don't know me. You
don't know my story.

Her Equally-Tired Boyfriend tries to calm her down.

CHRISTOPHER

I'm in the *middle* of a thing here,
about a deceased parent. You're
texting on your phone, not a care in
the world. You know, it -- it seems a
little inappropriate--

OVERLY-PISSED WOMAN

How *dare* you. My mother died when I
was twelve years old.

All energy SUCKS out of the room. Audience MEMBERS look at
each other as the whole place TENSES.

OVERLY-PISSED WOMAN (cont'd)

Twelve years old. I watched her jet-
ski blow up off the Amalfi coast. Is
that what you do? Is that what this
is? Takin' the piss out of people
with dead mothers?

EQUALLY-TIRED BOYFRIEND

Honey, maybe we should--

OVERLY-PISSED WOMAN

No, Derek, let him *finish*.
(to Christopher)

Tell me. Do you find catastrophic
failure of personal watercraft funny?

CHRISTOPHER

I'm not taking the piss, alright? And
I certainly don't find water-based
fatalities amusing. If I've offended
you -- then I'm sorry. Okay?
Genuinely, I'm sorry. I'll carry on.

She simmers. Christopher paces, pauses -- hardens.

CHRISTOPHER (cont'd)
But get off your *fucking phone*.

The audience UPROARS -- the Overly-Pissed Woman breaks down in TEARS.

Christopher, ashen, listens to the LAUGHTER as he watches her be escorted out by her Equally-Tired Boyfriend.

EXT. BLOCK OF FLATS - NIGHT

Ex-council housing, dodgy area. Christopher approaches the STAIRWELL with a CRATE OF BEER, that he can barely hold.

INT. BLOCK OF FLATS - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Narrow. A BULB flickers from the CEILING.

Christopher walks down, places the crate by his DOOR -- 23A. He fumbles around for his keys, when the door to 23B opens.

PAUL (50s, gaunt and intense) walks out, chews on a stick of CELERY, which he smacks around his mouth.

PAUL
Y'alright, Chris?

CHRISTOPHER
(without turning)
Oh, I'm great. My career's at a dead-end and I made a woman cry. What about you?

PAUL
Not good, mate. Not good. Been rewiring my flat.

Christopher stops, looks at him.

CHRISTOPHER
What do you mean?

PAUL
Done all new wiring. Wanted to get away from all that electrical infetterance. The Five-G's.

CHRISTOPHER
I see... Yeah. Yeah, that doesn't sound right.

PAUL
Oh, it can kill ya, Chris. Want me to
do it to yours?

Christopher looks up at the flickering bulb.

CHRISTOPHER
(polite)
Think I'm gonna pass.

PAUL
Alright. Well, if ya change ya
mind --

CHRISTOPHER
You'll be my first port of call.

Desperate to leave, Christopher rattles his keys into his
lock. Paul notices the crate of beer.

PAUL
Got people comin' round?

CHRISTOPHER
Nah, mate. Just... Just me.

PAUL
Huh. D'ya want some company?

CHRISTOPHER
Honestly, Paul, I'd rather keep my
organs, so I'm good.

Christopher opens the door and escapes inside.

Paul gulps down a chunk of celery, nods to himself -- slinks
back into his flat.

INT. CHRISTOPHER'S FLAT - NIGHT

Unkempt, with VIDEO GAME POSTERS on the walls.

Christopher paces, with his PHONE in one hand and a BEER in
the other.

ROBOTIC VOICE (V.O.)
Thank you for calling X-Lux. Your
call is very important to us.

He takes a swig.

ROBOTIC VOICE (V.O.) (cont'd)
Thank you for calling X-Lux. Your
call is very important to us.

LATER:

Christopher sits on his sofa, cracks open another BEER. His
phone rests by him, on-call with a CUSTOMER SERVICE WORKER
on speaker.

CHRISTOPHER
I received the package, the *product*
isn't working. I just wanna know what
your returns policy is.

CUSTOMER SERVICE WORKER (V.O.)
What's the nature of the defect?

CHRISTOPHER
Um. Well, the, uh, the "suction" mode
isn't working. It kind of just...
Pulls.

CUSTOMER SERVICE WORKER (V.O.)
Mhm, okay -- and what was the model
name, sir?

CHRISTOPHER
You... You want the name of it?

CUSTOMER SERVICE WORKER (V.O.)
Yes, sir.

CHRISTOPHER
Can't I just give you the serial
number?

CUSTOMER SERVICE WORKER (V.O.)
I'm afraid we need the name, sir.
It's policy.

With a deep sigh, Christopher braces himself.

He picks up a FLESHLIGHT by his side and reads the label.

CHRISTOPHER
It's... Uh. It's the "Pussy Pounder
Nine-thousand". Special edition.

CUSTOMER SERVICE WORKER (V.O.)
Sorry?

CHRISTOPHER
(enunciates)
Puss-y -- Pound-er -- Nine-thous-
and --

CUSTOMER SERVICE WORKER (V.O.)
Nine-thousand?

CHRISTOPHER
Yep. That's the one. Limited special
edition.

There's a KNOCK at the door.

CHRISTOPHER (cont'd)
Sorry, gonna have to call you back.

Christopher ends the call, gets up and walks to the door --
he grabs a CRICKET BAT from the wall and looks through the
PEEP-HOLE. Looks at the floor.

CHRISTOPHER (cont'd)
Fuck.

He puts the bat back, opens the door. HANNAH (late-20s,
sharp) stands in the HALLWAY.

HANNAH
Hiya.

CHRISTOPHER
(stiff)
Hey.

Uneasy silence.

HANNAH
I -- I should have called--

CHRISTOPHER
No, no, it's, uh... It's fine.

Hannah nods.

HANNAH
Can I come in?

Christopher moves away from the door, grabs a BEER. Hannah
enters. He offers the bottle to her.

HANNAH (cont'd)
Cheers, but I'm good. Me and Sam have
plans, so...

CHRISTOPHER

Ah. How is Mister "Just A Friend"?

HANNAH

Chrissy. Please don't start.

A beat. Christopher simmers.

CHRISTOPHER

It's nice to see you, um. But, *why* are you here?

HANNAH

I left my tongue scraper in your bathroom.

CHRISTOPHER

That's yours?

HANNAH

Have you been using it?

CHRISTOPHER

Maybe. Want me to get it?

HANNAH

You can keep it. Call it a gift.

Awkward, they smile at each other -- faintly laugh, but not because anything is funny.

HANNAH (cont'd)

Uhhh, well...

CHRISTOPHER

Yeah... Okay.

Both go still. Hannah lights up:

HANNAH

Oh! How's that comedy-pilot-thingy going at the Beeb? Are we finally gonna get to see you on telly soon?

CHRISTOPHER

Oh, that? It's going, well, yeah, it, uh... It got cancelled due to something called "internal restructuring".

Hannah's face falls.

HANNAH

Oh. I'm sorry.

CHRISTOPHER

Nah, it's fine. I'm doing good, life is good, meeting lots of women, having lots of freaky, casual, no-strings sex -- WAY dirtier than anything we did -- selling out stadiums, new horizons... All good.

She laughs. Christopher smirks to himself.

CHRISTOPHER (cont'd)

I miss you.

A beat.

HANNAH

(soft)

I know.

CHRISTOPHER

I just... Sometimes I just don't know what I did wrong.

Hannah's eyes drift to the sofa -- they squint -- WIDEN.

She recoils.

Off her face, Christopher looks too. The FLESHLIGHT sits on a cushion, out in the open. He looks back at Hannah.

CHRISTOPHER (cont'd)

No -- no no no --

HANNAH

Uh, I think I better go.

Hannah turns and leaves through the door -- Christopher hurries after her, leans out the DOORWAY.

CHRISTOPHER

Hannah! Please! It's not what you think! It's DEFECTIVE!

She's gone. Christopher steps back inside, shuts the door.

He hangs his head. He goes over to the sofa, grabs the fleshlight, and puts it in his BACKPACK.

INT. TUBE CARRIAGE - MOVING - DAY

COMMUTERS pack a tight carriage as it rattles through the UNDERGROUND. Christopher sits, sad.

Opposite him, a PREACHER (60s, ancient) sits with a cardboard SIGN that reads: "JESUS SHALL COMETH AGAIN". He stares at Christopher, intensely.

Christopher notices, stares back -- furrows his brow.

The Preacher raises a hand and POINTS at Christopher. He shakes, violent, like he's seeing a ghost.

Christopher shrugs.

CHRISTOPHER

(mouths)

What?

The Preacher moves his finger to his own cheek and taps.

Christopher wipes his cheek -- MUSTARD smears over his fingers. He looks at it, gives a thumbs up to the Preacher.

The Preacher nods, looks away.

INT. SPIRO'S CAFE - DAY

Cozy and clean. Christopher buries his head in his phone behind the counter. At the till, his COLLEAGUE (19) takes an order from CUSTOMER 1 -- who has a phone to her ear.

COLLEAGUE

So that's a small, de-caf espresso with a gluten-free brownie... Okay, that'll be fifteen-ninety-eight.

Customer 1 scans their card.

COLLEAGUE (cont'd)

Great, we'll get that ready for you.
(to Christopher)
Chris?

Christopher picks his lip -- looks up.

COLLEAGUE (cont'd)

De-caf espresso, please.

With a sigh, he sets about to make it. Customer 1 takes a SEAT. She gets a PHONE CALL, answers it.

CUSTOMER 1

Hi, Diane. Thanks for getting back to me -- but I do warn ya, this is very time-sensitive so you've gotta be fast.

Christopher stops making the coffee, listens -- CUSTOMER 2 enters, goes to the till.

COLLEAGUE

Hi, welcome to Spiro's Cafe! What can I get for you?

CUSTOMER 1

Well, Diane, there's a certain national broadcaster auditioning stand-ups for some sketch-show nonsense--

CUSTOMER 2

Can I get a... Uhhh... Do you heat up the sani's? And is the chicken organic or is it GMO--

Christopher cranes his neck, tries to hear better:

CUSTOMER 1

--and your client, the, uh, the gangly one with the speech impediment? Would be perfect for it. Do you want the deets? Got a pen?

COLLEAGUE

Oh, no, all of our meat is ethically sourced by diverse third-world labourers. Everything we sell is organic.

Quick, Christopher grabs a NOTEPAD and PEN. He edges closer to where Customer 1 sits and writes --

CUSTOMER 1

--Great! It's Sunday at two o'clock, Manley Building -- Room O-Eight. Open call, he's just gotta show up.

CUSTOMER 2

Gimme a chicken sandwich then, with a, uh.... Cappucino, oat milk.

He tears the note, folds it and puts it in his pocket.

The door to the BACK OFFICE opens -- SPIRO (50s, rotund) exits, looks at Christopher.

SPIRO

Christopher? A word?

INT. SPIRO'S CAFE - BACK OFFICE - DAY

Tight, filled with STOCK. Christopher sits in a small schoolchair, as Spiro paces -- then looms over his DESK.

Behind Spiro, a LARGE FRAMED PHOTO -- which depicts an ELDERLY GREEK MAN with a SACK OF COFFEE BEANS.

SPIRO

Christopher. When I look at you, I see young man not dissimilar to myself. A man who, who take *pride* in work.

CHRISTOPHER

Thanks. Am I getting a raise?

Spiro laughs.

SPIRO

You get one-pound raise, plus more responsibility! I am promoting you to Assistant Manager. Congratulation.

A beat. Christopher exhales.

SPIRO (cont'd)

Not like?

CHRISTOPHER

Spiro, look -- I'm good. I like where I'm at.

SPIRO

What? You like being barista?

CHRISTOPHER

I'm honoured, but, I told you when you hired me -- this is a side-gig for me. Okay? I'm a comedian.

SPIRO

Ah, yes, I remember you say... Three year ago.

Christopher winces. Spiro points at the picture behind him.

SPIRO (cont'd)

Christopher, my boy. Do you know who this is?

CHRISTOPHER

Should I?

SPIRO

(impassioned)

This, this here is my grandfather. Minos Maragakos. He knew something that most men forgot. This world is balanced on tiny thing -- the coffee bean. Columbus wouldn't have found America, without the coffee bean. Martin King wouldn't have had dream, without the coffee bean.

(MORE)

SPIRO (cont'd)

My grandfather would not have walked two-thousand mile, through two world war, with two broken leg, and severe oral gonorrhoea WITHOUT the coffee bean! He dedicated his *life* to coffee bean, until the day his sit-down water-scooter tragically burst in flame in Caribbean. Coffee *means* something, Christopher. This is your chance, my gift to you, to make a difference.

Christopher looks at the picture. He sighs.

From a drawer, Spiro pulls a CONTRACT and a PEN. He hands them both to Christopher, who reads.

SPIRO (cont'd)

All you have do is sign.

Unsure, Christopher hovers the pen over the DOTTED LINE -- his hand shakes, SWEAT beads from his forehead.

His eyes dart from the contract to the photo, back and forth, back and forth -- Christopher puts the contract down.

CHRISTOPHER

Thank you, Spiro. But... I quit.

Christopher gets up, takes his apron off -- gently rests it on Spiro's desk.

SPIRO

What? Just like that? You throw away?

CHRISTOPHER

(sincere)

Coffee is pretty okay, I guess. But I have a nobler calling in life, Spiro. I'm going to dedicate myself to making strangers laugh for personal validation.

With that, Christopher leaves.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Urban jungle. Christopher walks with his phone to his ear, his BACKPACK on his shoulders.

CHRISTOPHER

Yeah, I would still like to return it. Got it with me now, actually.

(MORE)

CHRISTOPHER (cont'd)
It was very expensive and I basically
just quit having rent this month.

SIRENS build in the distance.

CUSTOMER SERVICE WORKER (V.O.)
Okay, well, Pussy Pounder Nine-
thousand Special Edition, you need to
post it back to us by noon tomorrow.

CHRISTOPHER
Noon? Why noon? What if I don't make
it?

CUSTOMER SERVICE WORKER (V.O.)
If the package isn't sent by noon
tomorrow, we can't accept it back.

CHRISTOPHER
What? For what reason?

A POLICE CAR whizzes by Christopher.

CUSTOMER SERVICE WORKER (V.O.)
Company policy.

CHRISTOPHER
Wow. Okay. Looks like the only thing
getting fucked here is me.

Christopher hangs up.

He turns a corner --

EXT. BLOCK OF FLATS - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Christopher stops in his tracks -- mouth agape.

A FIRE ENGINE, AMBULANCES and POLICE crowd outside the
block, as FIREFIGHTERS walk around the BURNT REMAINS of the
FOURTH FLOOR. FAMILIES stand outside, upset.

CHRISTOPHER
Oh, my God!

Christopher approaches a POLICE OFFICER.

CHRISTOPHER (cont'd)
Excuse me, I live here. What's going
on?

The Police Officer checks his CLIPBOARD.

POLICE OFFICER
Is your apartment twenty-three A,
sir?

CHRISTOPHER
Yes!

POLICE OFFICER
'Fraid you don't live here anymore
then, sir.

A beat. Christopher looks at the block of flats, in shock.

CHRISTOPHER
Oh, *fuck*. What happened?

POLICE OFFICER
Electrical fire, seems like. Some
silly bastard was rewirin' his flat.

Christopher massages his forehead, sits on the pavement.

TWO PARAMEDICS carry a burned Paul on a STRETCHER toward an
AMBULANCE. They pass Christopher.

Paul reaches out, wheezes --

PAUL
Chris! Chris! It was the
infetterance, Chris! You've got to
tell them--TELL THEM! CHRIS!

The Paramedics load him into the back and shut the door.

Christopher is about to cry.

POLICE OFFICER
I know, I know... It's a bugger. Do
you have anywhere to sleep tonight,
sir?

CHRISTOPHER
My bed's been cremated, so, no.

POLICE OFFICER
Any family? Friends? Girlfriends?

Christopher groans, looks at the Police Officer.

POLICE OFFICER (cont'd)
Boyfriends?

Christopher gets up, calls someone on his phone.

INT. HANNAH'S APARTMENT BUILDING - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Modern, upmarket. Christopher stands at the door -- it opens to reveal Hannah. Christopher flashes a smile at her.

CHRISTOPHER

Hi. Me again.

They hug.

HANNAH

Are you alright? Was anyone hurt?

CHRISTOPHER

No one sane.

They enter.

INT. HANNAH'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - DAY

Sleek and wide. Christopher sits at the kitchen TABLE. His backpack is on another chair.

Hannah pulls two bottles of beer from the fridge, hands one to Christopher.

Hannah sits opposite him. They drink in silence.

Christopher looks at her.

CHRISTOPHER

Thank you. For letting me stay.

HANNAH

Don't mention it.

CHRISTOPHER

I was worried it was going to be weird.

HANNAH

It is. But, y'know -- weird is better than homeless.

Christopher puts his elbows on the table, massages his temples. He lets out a long sigh.

CHRISTOPHER

What am I gonna do, Han? Seriously? That flat was my fucking *life*. All those Smashmouth CDs... Gone forever. It's not like I can even afford a new place. I quit on Spiro today.

HANNAH

You were *still* there?

CHRISTOPHER

There was a lotta downtime!

HANNAH

Well, uh -- you've still got *something*! What about the comedy stuff?

CHRISTOPHER

My agent dropped me.

A lull. Hannah softens.

CHRISTOPHER (cont'd)

Yeah. Last month. I've been booking myself for gigs, pretending I'm a middle-aged divorcee with kids to every casting director in London. Everything's gone to shit. I don't travel, I don't do yoga -- I stole a story about Thailand from a guy I met in a pub. If I can't do this as me, then what's the point?

HANNAH

Chris. Calm down. You'll get back on your feet. I know you will. I know *you*.

Christopher lingers on the sight of her, looks to the floor. Takes a swig.

Hannah gets up, walks over to Christopher's backpack. She puts it down on the table.

Christopher looks at a SHOE RACK by the door. Men's and women's pairs.

CHRISTOPHER

So. Mr. Darcy's cool with me sleeping on your sofa?

HANNAH

You wouldn't be if he wasn't. Let's get you unpacked.

-- Hannah UNZIPS the backpack -- Christopher stands --

CHRISTOPHER

Wait!

Hannah's face drops at the sight of the flashlight.

HANNAH

What the fuck! You brought this *with* you?

CHRISTOPHER

No -- no, I can explain!

HANNAH

Did you go into the raging inferno to save it? Do you carry this *around* with you?

CHRISTOPHER

It's not even been used -- a lot! I'm returning it!

HANNAH

Christopher! Why do you even *have* this?!

CHRISTOPHER

(shouts)

Because I still love you!

A beat. Hannah falters.

CHRISTOPHER (cont'd)

(calmer)

I still love you. And if I can't have you, then I have to settle for a bit of anatomically-correct, silicone-based muff instead!

HANNAH

Jeeee-sus *Christ!* Nothing you just said was normal! You really wanna know why it didn't work out with us?

CHRISTOPHER

Ohhh, please! Let's have *that* conversation!

HANNAH

You *never* change. Three years, three years of having the same fucking argument with you, and, somehow, we're **STILL** having it! Wake up, Chris. Smell the coffee like the rest of us did. You are *not* going to be a successful comedian. You're not going to make it. And I'm *sorry*.

(MORE)

HANNAH (cont'd)
But that isn't my fault. The only
person who's forcing you do this, is
YOU.

Christopher sits down. Hannah breathes heavily. She cools
off, leans against the wall.

CHRISTOPHER
I'll call Spiro tomorrow.

Heavy silence falls.

HANNAH
I... We've had a long day, and--

CHRISTOPHER
It's okay. I gotta wake up early,
anyway... Gotta return this. Worth
about as much as a deposit.

Christopher picks up the flashlight, looks at it.

Hannah shakes her head, leaves.

INT. HANNAH'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

EMPTY BEER BOTTLES litter the rug.

Christopher splays across the SOFA, snores... He wakes.

JOLTS UP. Christopher pats himself down -- finds his phone.
He turns it on --

It's 11:46!

Christopher SPRINGS up -- he RIPS a TISSUE from a box, RUNS
over to the flashlight on the sofa, rubs it down, grabs it,
and SPRINTS out of the apartment!

EXT. MAIN ROAD - DAY

HEAVY TRAFFIC, bustling PEDESTRIANS. Christopher DASHES
through, sweats and strains as he holds the flashlight.

He DODGES a FOOD STALL, keeps going --

Down the road -- a POST OFFICE.

Christopher grins in manic glee, he's about to make it! He
DARTS across the asphalt --

A CAR SMACKS into him!

Christopher FLIES -- SMASHES into the asphalt.

CARS stop, PEOPLE get out -- crowd around Christopher. Some call 999 on their phones.

He lies on the floor, unconscious.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. WHITE VOID - N/A

An expanse of PURE WHITE LIGHT.

Christopher gets up from the floor. He looks around.

CHRISTOPHER

Hello?

His voice ECHOES around him.

CHRISTOPHER (cont'd)

Am I dead?

From above, a DIVINE VOICE booms:

DIVINE VOICE (O.S.)

You are between life and death.

CHRISTOPHER

Is that... Are you God?

DIVINE VOICE (O.S.)

I am the Alpha and the Omega. The beginning, the end, and all that is in between -- all that was, is, and will be, for eternity.

Christopher realises.

CHRISTOPHER

Fuck. Is it past noon?

DIVINE VOICE (O.S.)

ARE YOU LISTENING TO ME!?

The very ground shakes -- Christopher stumbles, regains his balance. He looks up in horror and awe.

CHRISTOPHER

Yes, yes! I am, I'm sorry!

DIVINE VOICE (O.S.)
THEN CAST THE VULGAR, THE VENAL, THE
VICIOUS AND THE VICE FROM THY MIND!
THOU HAST BEEN A DISAPPOINTMENT, SON!

CHRISTOPHER
Son!? How dare you! My dad got
trapped in a water-slide and drowned.
I don't know who the FUCK you are!

DIVINE VOICE (O.S.)
I AM THE FATHER OF ALL -- THE BIRTHE
OF TIME, THE SOURCE OF THE WHOLE. AND
I HAVE BEEN WATCHING YOU, CHILD. I
HAST SEEN THOU "CHOKING THE CHICKEN",
"BEATING THY MEAT", "BASHING THE
BISHOP", "BURPING THY WORM", "FLYING
SOLO", "CRANKING OUT A STIFF ONE" --
"HAVING A WANK"! BUT WORST OF ALL,
SON, THOU HAST NOT BEEN LIVING UP TO
THY *POTENTIAL*!

THUNDER sounds off in the distance. Christopher panics.

DIVINE VOICE (O.S.) (cont'd)
THY DAYS OF PORNOGRAPHY AND
AUTOEROTIC ASPHYXIATION ARE *OVER*!

CHRISTOPHER
That was one time--

DIVINE VOICE (O.S.)
SIIIIILENCE!

Christopher drops to his knees:

CHRISTOPHER
I'm sorry! I'm sorry! I'm just a
fuck-up, I didn't mean it!

DIVINE VOICE (O.S.)
THOU IS NOT A SO-CALLED "FUCK-UP".
THOU ART ME, THE DIVINE MADE FLESH,
BROUGHT BACK TO THIS EARTH TO SAVE IT
FROM ITSEEEEEELF!

More thunder.

Christopher hyperventilates, tries to calm down.

CHRISTOPHER
W-W-What do you mean? Like I'm...
Like I'm--

DIVINE VOICE (O.S.)
YOUUUUU ARE THE SECOND COMING OF
JESUS CHRIST *HIMSELF!* BUT THY CURRENT
INCARNATION IS BEASTLY AND UNWISE!

CHRISTOPHER
That's impossible! I never believed
in any of this bollocks to begin
with!

DIVINE VOICE (O.S.)
CAST THY MIND BACK, YOUNG MESSIAH.
THOU HAST ALWAYS HAD GIFTS BEYOND
THAT OF ORDINARY MAN.

CHRISTOPHER
... I got a B in woodwork?

DIVINE VOICE (O.S.)
NO! THOU ERRANT FOOL! THOU HOLY
TONGUE IS IMBUED WITH A HEAVENLY
HUMOUR!

CHRISTOPHER
The... The stand-up shit!? *That's*
what this is about?!

DIVINE VOICE (O.S.)
THROUGH THY OBSERVATIONAL JOKES AND
WRY WIT ON TOPICAL MATTERS, THOU HATH
BEEN CHANNELING THE HOLY WORD! THE
VOICE OF GOD! AND NOW THOU TURN THY
BACK TO IT!?

CHRISTOPHER
The world runs on coffee!

DIVINE VOICE (O.S.)
THE WORLD RUNS ON SIN! AND THOU ART
NO DIFFERENT. THOU MUST RETURN, AND
BRING THE MASSES FROM THE BRINK!

Christopher shakes his head.

CHRISTOPHER
No. No! What if I refuse? What if I'm
NOT Jesus? What if I AM Christopher
Bobberson, and my calling in life IS
smoking weed, spanking my monkey and
making overpriced coffee for
pretentious twats!? What happens
then?

DIVINE VOICE (O.S.)
IF THOU DOES NOT HEED MY WORD, THEN
THE MARCH OF SATAN'S LEGION GOES
UNOPPOSED! THIS WORLD WILL BE
DESTROYED BY NUCLEAR HELL-FIRE, AND
WITH IT, *EVERYTHING* WILL TURN TO
DUST! THY ASHES WILL BE IRRADIATED,
AS MUTANT RAT-MONSTERS RISE FROM THE
RUINS OF THY APE-RACE, KNOWN ONLY IN
LEGEND AND RUMOUR FOR HAVING CHOKED
ON THEIR OWN GREED AND GLUTTONY!

CHRISTOPHER
A third world war?

DIVINE VOICE (O.S.)
THE THIRD, AND THE LAST!

A beat. This is all very heavy for Christopher.

CHRISTOPHER
So, if I *don't* become a successful
comedian, all life on Earth *ends*?
What do I need to do? "Live at the
Apollo"? "Would I Lie To You"? An
instantly dated Netflix special?
What? Is it the audition tomorrow?

A HEART MONITOR beeps.

CHRISTOPHER (cont'd)
Where is that coming from?
(looks up)
What do I need to do? You can't leave
me hanging like this, you fucker!
What do I need to do!?

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Sterile, with a CURTAIN DIVIDER. Christopher lies in a
hospital bed, with bandages around his head and palms.

A heart monitor beeps -- its tempo increases.

Christopher's eyes open -- he BOLTS upright.

A NURSE (30s) enters.

NURSE
Easy, easy!

The Nurse tries to make Christopher lie down -- he struggles
against them.

NURSE (cont'd)
Relax! It's okay!

CHRISTOPHER
No! You don't understand!

NURSE
Mister Bobberson, please. Calm down.

Christopher relents -- he calms, lowers back into bed.

NURSE (cont'd)
Thank you. You were in a car
accident. You're okay. But, fact is,
we need to keep you here, run some
tests--

CHRISTOPHER
What day is it?

A pause. The Nurse furrows their brow.

CHRISTOPHER (cont'd)
The day! What time is it?

NURSE
Sunday.
(checks watch)
One'o'clock.

CHRISTOPHER
Oh, no. The audition.

NURSE
Sir, you aren't in *any* condition to
go to an audition.

CHRISTOPHER
No, no, no -- you don't understand!
If I don't go the world will *end*.

NURSE
I get that kind of anxiety, Mister
Bobberson, but I find it highly
unlikely.

CHRISTOPHER
Listen. If you do not release me,
there will be grave consequences for
the human species. Got it? Total
extinction. I need to go!

NURSE
I'm going to find a doctor.

The Nurse leaves.

Once the door closes, Christopher RIPS the IV out of him, swings his legs out of bed -- the monitor FLATLINES.

The curtain divider pulls -- Christopher screams --

Paul stands before him, in a hospital gown.

PAUL

Christopher? Is that you? Did you tell them? Did you tell them, Chris?

CHRISTOPHER

Paul, there are bigger things to worry about. I need you to--

PAUL

I don't take no orders, Chris. *That's* called principle.

CHRISTOPHER

Paul, I am the second coming of your Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ HIMSELF. And I COMMAND thee to, uh, help me.

THUNDER crackles off in the distance.

Paul's eyes widen.

PAUL

I knew it... I knew you had come.

CHRISTOPHER

I need you to make a diversion so I can escape, okay?

PAUL

As you wish, Lord Jesus!

Paul grabs a pen off a nearby table, STABS himself in the neck OVER and OVER again as he SCREECHES:

PAUL (cont'd)

HE IS RISEN! HE IS RISEN! HE IS RISEN!

Paul hits a main artery -- BLOOD SPRAYS across the room, splatters against the walls, continues to squirt out as he carries on stabbing his neck.

PAUL (cont'd)
(in pain, but in tune)
BY THE RIVERS OF BABYLON!

Christopher stares in what can only be described as pant-shitting terror.

The Nurse BARGES in, with a DOCTOR and TWO POLICE OFFICERS. They all wrestle to restrain Paul, who SCREAMS at them.

In the CHAOS, Christopher SPEEDS to a cabinet -- grabs his CLOTHES, DARTS out.

INT. HOSPITAL - HALLWAY - DAY

Long and clinical -- Christopher rushes down, throws his clothes behind him until he reaches his JEANS. He pulls the NOTE from the pack -- reads:

CHRISTOPHER
Manley Building... Two'o'clock...

He turns a corner and SHOOTS down a STAIRWELL.

EXT. HOSPITAL - CAR PARK - DAY

Christopher BURSTS through two FIRE DOORS -- an ALARM blares in the hospital as he CHARGES across the car park.

EXT. STREET MARKET - DAY

A labyrinth of STALLS, HEAVES of PEOPLE.

Christopher BOULDERS through, PUSHES OTHERS out of his way.

He sprints through a CLOTHES stall -- grabs a BROWN SLEEPING ROBE on the way.

As he continues, Christopher throws the robe on.

EXT. MANLEY BUILDING - DAY

Stately. Christopher RUNS toward it.

INT. MANLEY BUILDING - LOBBY - DAY

Ornate and professional. Christopher barges in.

A RECEPTIONIST looks at him -- with slight worry.

Almost manic, Christopher rips the note from his pocket, reads it --

CHRISTOPHER
Manley Building, two'o'clock, room...

He shuts his eyes, sighs.

CHRISTOPHER (cont'd)
Room "oat milk".

He opens them, looks at the Receptionist.

CHRISTOPHER (cont'd)
You there! Where are the auditions
for the sketch-show comedy nonsense?

RECEPTIONIST
You're here to audition for Stand-Up
Monopoly? Y-You're a stand-up?

CHRISTOPHER
Sure -- yes! Which room?

RECEPTIONIST
And who are you represented by?

CHRISTOPHER
By an authority high and beyond the
realm of human comprehension.

A LIGHTNING FLASH outside -- THUNDER booms.

The Receptionist flinches. Christopher stares.

CHRISTOPHER (cont'd)
The room?

INT. MANLEY BUILDING - ROOM 0-8 - DAY

CASTING DIRECTOR 1 & 2 sit at a DESK, sip on coffee.

A CAMERA at their side faces a STAND-UP COMEDIAN -- mid-audition. In the room is a P.A. (20s) and SIMON TROUT, (40s, crude), an agent.

STAND-UP COMEDIAN
--And what do they mean, "assigned
female at birth"? What? Did the
doctor who delivered you just *slap* a
pussy on? Call it a day? I mean,
c'mon!

CASTING DIRECTOR 1
Thaaaank you, that's all we need.
Bye-bye.

The Stand-Up Comedian stops, nods, leaves.

CASTING DIRECTOR 1 (cont'd)
We'll be in touch.

The door closes.

CASTING DIRECTOR 2
Why are they all so weird?

CASTING DIRECTOR 1
(to P.A.)
Can I get a water?

The P.A. nods, walks over to a WATER-COOLER that is literally one foot away from Casting Director 1. They fill a PAPER CUP with water, place it on the table.

Christopher BURSTS through the doors. All eyes turn on him.

Looking like an escaped asylum patient, Christopher struts into the CENTRE of the room, in front of the Casting Directors' desk.

CHRISTOPHER
Before you say anything. Yes, I *am*
Jesus Christ.

A beat.

Everyone breaks down into LAUGHTER, apart from Christopher, who flares in concern.

CHRISTOPHER (cont'd)
No, no, you need to listen! I am
really him! I have risen!

Their laughter heightens.

CASTING DIRECTOR 2
(through tears)
Derivative, but that was good.

CASTING DIRECTOR 1
What else have you got? Any other
characters?

Casting Director 1 raises their water to their mouth --

Christopher points at the cup --

Casting Director 1 takes a sip -- SPITS WINE all down their front. They get up, wipe themselves down.

CASTING DIRECTOR 1 (cont'd)
What -- what the fuck is this?
(to P.A.)
What is this?

CHRISTOPHER
Malbec. Twenty-seventeen.

The P.A. rushes over to Casting Director 1 with tissues.

Simon stands, his interest high.

SIMON
How did you do that?

Casting Director 2 waves their hands.

CASTING DIRECTOR 2
Okay, look, this isn't what we're looking for, either. Thank you, but we'll pass.

CHRISTOPHER
No -- I beg you! You have to give me a chance!

CASTING DIRECTOR 2
Oh, *please*. Jesus jokes and magic tricks? Only hacks write that stuff.

CHRISTOPHER
Listen to me! You **HAVE** to cast me!
Your salvation *depends* on it!

CASTING DIRECTOR 2
Not interested. Thank youuuu! NEXT!

In defeat, Christopher leaves.

EXT. MANLEY BUILDING - DAY

With his head low, Christopher walks away from the Manley Building -- which Simon exits.

Simon runs up to Christopher.

SIMON
Wait, excuse me!

Christopher stops, turns.

Simon slows, doubles-over -- out of breath.

SIMON (cont'd)
My name is Simon Trout, I like to
canvas these things so I can rob
clients. Tell me -- how did you do
that? With the wine?

CHRISTOPHER
I just... Did it.

SIMON
I know, but, I mean -- the trick. The
trick, how did you do it?

CHRISTOPHER
It was no trick.

SIMON
Method? I like it!

Simon sticks his hand out.

SIMON (cont'd)
I'm a talent agent. And when I look
at you, I think "diversified brand
potential". Performance art sells
these days, and divorce don't come
cheap. So, since I want to keep my
kids, I have to ask -- are you in
need of representation?

Christopher looks at Simon's hand -- then his eyes.

CHRISTOPHER
I am.

With a smile, he takes Simon's hand -- they shake.

SIMON
Let me buy you a coffee.

CHRISTOPHER
... Okay. I think I know a place.

Together, they walk away from the Manley Building, off into
the distance.

FADE OUT