

ACT I Scene 1

LIGHTS UP

VICTOR HOLDEN is sitting in an enormous bathtub among mountains of bubbles, being fed grapes by TINA, talking on the phone with RICK SAX, whose voice we hear through speakers.

VICTOR

So what's the word on "Dance or Die?"

RICK

You read my mind, Victor baby, you read my mind.

VICTOR

Did I get the part?

RICK

Better!

VICTOR

What do you mean?

RICK

You got the teacher.

VICTOR

What!? I was made for that lead!

RICK

Vicky, Vicky, Vicky, the pay is the same!

VICTOR

Money? You think this is about money? It's always about money with you people.

RICK

You people? What's that supposed to mean?

VICTOR

I'm an artist, Rick. I can't just play any role. I have to feel the role, I have to live it. I have to be it. I've played this role since I was twenty-three.

RICK

And you're fif- not twenty-three, Vic. You can't play sixteen year olds anymore.

VICTOR

Who'd they give the part to?

RICK

Timmy Cooper

VICTOR

Timmy who? The oatmeal kid?

RICK

That was ten years ago Vic.

VICTOR

That's not the point. He's a hack, he's a sellout. I can act circles around --

RICK

Victor, Victor, Victor . . . We both know you're a legend. Humphrey Bogart, Jimmy Stewart, Victor Holden. But let's face it, all the talent in the world can't buy youth. I think it could be really good for your career if -

Victor throws his phone in the bathwater.

VICTOR

Can't buy youth? Can't buy
youth. Do you believe that?

Tina puts down the bowl of grapes and runs her fingers
through Victor's hair.

VICTOR
Not now – get me the
classifieds. Let's see what
youth is going for these days.

LIGHTS DOWN

ACT I Scene 2

LIGHTS UP

Victor is speaking with TOFER in a parking lot. Tofer is
smoking a joint and looking around nervously.

VICTOR
So this stuff will make me
look like I'm a kid again?

TOFER
Yeah, yeah, yeah, of course.

VICTOR
How do I know you're legit?

Tofer takes a drag and offers the joint to Victor who waves
it away. Tofer leans in and whispers to Victor.

TOFER
You know Chip Slater?

VICTOR
From "Driving 2 Fast?" Of
course. That little runt
stole my –

TOFER
Well how old do you think he
is?

VICTOR

Twenty-five, twenty-eight?

TOFER

Haha. Double that, then add a bunch. He used to be known as Paul Newman.

VICTOR

But—

TOFER

Ever notice when the old man stopped acting? Who was on the cover of seventeen the next week?

Victor looks it up on his cell phone.

VICTOR

Well I'll be damned. Give me all you've got of that stuff.

TOFER

Woah woah, one bottle should be plenty — it can have some serious side effects.

VICTOR

Can the lecture for the junkies, just give me everything you've got.

TOFER

You don't understand man, dry-mouth, facial paralysis —

Victor pulls out a wad of cash. Tofer takes the money and hands Victor a carton of pills.

LIGHTS DOWN

ACT 1 Scene 3

Hospital sounds are heard as the stage is still black. Heavy breathing, machines, heartbeats, blips of heart meters.

LIGHTS UP

Victor is in a hospital bed, covered in casts. Rick enters with THE DOCTOR.

DOCTOR

The police report said he was reaching in the back of his car for a water bottle on the freeway on his way to an audition when he lost control of the vehicle. You were the most recent call in his phone so we figured we'd leave the decision up to you.

The doctor exits.

RICK

Hey Victor baby. Can you hear me? . . . I guess not. They want to know if we should pull the plug on you, Victor babe. I guess they gotta make room around here, and it's been almost a week already. . . Okay, Vic, I don't want to off you if you're in there somewhere, so I came up with a system. I saw it in a movie or something. Just blink once if you can hear me, and twice if you cant.

Rick stares at the eyes inside the cast. They do not move.

RICK

Come on Vic, don't make this any harder than it has to be. Just let me know if you're in there. . .

Rick takes the cast off Victor's face to better see him. Victor looks very youthful.

RICK

Holy Hell! You look great!
We can definitely work with
this. . . I heard there is
some real artsy flick up for
bid about some vegetable who
defies the odds to climb
mount Everest in a hospital
bed pulled by Sherpas. . .
Yeah, "Frozen Veggies,"
something like that. Yes,
this is beautiful. Vic,
we're back on top!

Rick kisses Vic and walks out, already dialing his phone.
He walks past the doctor who is walking in.

DOCTOR

So have you made a decis—

RICK

Doc, this is a human life.
What kind of monster are you?
Of course we're not going to
pull the plug!

LIGHTS DOWN