

EXT. THE RINKY DINK TAVERN - BACKYARD - DAY

BILLY BONES (30s) a bona-fide basement dweller - seriously, you can tell by the dandruff - sits at a wooden table.

Three empty cans sit in front of him. It's way too early in the morning for there to be three empties in front of him.

He stares at a beat-up laptop. There are grease stains on the keys from the ghosts of hundreds of potato chips.

He has a few browser windows open. Most of them are POP CULTURE MEDIA SITES. He's a registered user at every one.

He types comments on several articles at once. From time to time he deletes a sentence and writes a new one.

He laughs way too loud when the new ones amuse him. A few key phrases leap out at the eye in most of the entries.

"SJW" (social justice warrior) "VIRTUE SIGNALING" (google it) "GAMERGATE" (don't google it - crazy depressing.)

One window is open on a record auction site. Another on a film collectibles auction site. There's a third visible.

It's a YouTube channel of GIRLS JUMPING ON TRAMPOLINES. Hell of juvenile stuff. Hell. Of.

He has the time of his life. A TATTOOED BARTENDER in a torn, punk tank top, drifts in to his line of sight.

He tries to get her attention. It doesn't work. He checks his beer. It's half full. He has time.

He dives back into the sordid world of internet trolling. The pale glow from the screen sallows his face even more.

A WOMAN'S LAUGH sounds from inside the bar. His eyes shoot up. The Tattooed Bartender flirts with CASSAVETES (25).

He's a lean Latino man in a crisp white tank top, smooth jeans, and Doc Marten boots. Right out of The Outsiders.

The Tattooed Bartender flirts with him mercilessly. There's more than a friendly amount of physical contact.

Billy stares. Hands on waists. Hair pushed behind the ear. Her line of cleavage. His face close to her lips.

Cassavetes looks over the Tattooed Bartender's shoulder. He waves when he see's Billy.

EXT. THE RINKY DINK TAVERN - TABLE - DAY

Cassavetes sits with one leg up on the bench. He slides a pint over to Billy. Cassavetes glances at the Bartender.

BILLY BONES

How do you do that, man?

CASSAVETES

Do what?

BILLY BONES

Get chicks to flirt with you like that. Whenever I try it comes off creepy.

CASSAVETES

I dunno. I talk to people.

BILLY BONES

Chicks like her never go for nice guys. It's an epidemic.

Cassavetes slides his glance over to Billy. He's puffy. Slovenly. Sausage fingers. No one's idea of a good time.

CASSAVETES

You ever get that shipment of Tropicalia you were bragging about?

BILLY BONES

I wasn't bragging. It took me months to track down that old dude. He had no idea what he had. It was awesome.

CASSAVETES

So you got it?

BILLY BONES

Kind of. My mom was home when it got delivered so she's sort of holding it hostage. She can be a major dick sometimes.

CASSAVETES

You still living with her?

BILLY BONES

Oh hell no. We had words over funding our current transaction. She didn't want to float me the dough. I thought she should. So now I'm crashing on my friend Jake's couch. Over in K-Town.

CASSAVETES

You have the money, though?

BILLY BONES

Come on, man. This is me we're talking about.

He slides a cash-fat envelope out of his laptop bag and dangles it in the air in front of Cassavetes.

BILLY BONES

You got the can?

Without changing his position much Cassavetes slips and old 16mm film can out of his messenger bag.

BILLY BONES

Gimme gimme.

The title "Velvet Lips 1916" is taped on the side. Billy grabs for it. Cass slides it back and reaches for the money.

They nod at each other for a three count and exchange their items at the same time. Billy holds the can in both hands.

Cassavetes folds open the envelope and eyeballs the money. It's five thousand bucks. He moves to stand.

BILLY BONES

Come on, dude. Celebrate our good fortune with another drink.

Cassavetes eyes the Bartender. She leans on the bar with a bored expression. He shrugs.

CASSAVETES

Sure, I'll crack in to a frosty coldish or two.

BILLY BONES

Awesome.

Billy runs his fingers over the can. He moves to crack it open. Cassavetes shakes his head.

CASSAVETES

Don't open that outside, man. It's old as fuck. I'd wait until you get home and do it in low light.

BILLY BONES

Good point.

He slides the can into his laptop bag.

BILLY BONES

You're sure it's legit? We've been trading for years, so I trust the shit out of you. But this is kind of a Holy Grail type situation. The stills you sent were kind of fuzzy.

CASSAVETES

It's legit. I did mad research. Production reports. Camera logs. Rental receipts. Unless you burn the film, it's next to impossible to get rid of something completely. Plus my Great Grandfather was in the business. He had some papers that pointed me in the right direction.

BILLY BONES

Whoah, dude. That's awesome. I didn't know they let Mexicans work in the film biz back then.

Cassavetes sips from his beer. Billy stares past him at the Tattooed Bartender with something of a leer.

CASSAVETES

So spill. Why were you willing to pay so much for it?

BILLY BONES

Are you kidding me? Joan Crawford's porn? Do you know what a smack in the face this will be to the social justice warriors and their agenda?

CASSAVETES

What agenda? She's been dead forever.

Billy gets animated. He's chomping at the bit to splash his reasoning all over the table, like a spilled beer.

BILLY BONES

Come on, man. She's a huge feminist icon. The "baddest bitch" of old Hollywood. The crazy left uses her as an example of how to get ahead by being a "bad bitch" which is just so fucked up. Once I upload this I'll show everyone that she did it on her back, like every other "bitch."

CASSAVETES

Sounds progressive, bro.

BILLY BONES

Oh fuck that, dude. I can use the word bitch to describe someone that's a bitch. Some women are bitches, right? It's just true.

CASSAVETES

I'm not sure guys like us get to make that distinction.

BILLY BONES

Look, you're a stand up guy, so I can really get in to this with you. I'm not doing it because I hate women. I love women. I think about women all the time. But I'm a guy. That means I want to fuck women too. Am I supposed to pretend I don't? I'm a guy, so I'm physically stronger than a woman. Am I supposed to pretend I'm not? Where's the equality in that?

CASSAVETES

Beats me, hombre. I just like old movies, is all.

BILLY BONES

But so many people that like old movies put their own slant on them. Putting something like this online will level the playing field. That's what equality is all about. This "bad bitch" fucked her way to the top. How is that something to admire?

CASSAVETES

You sure got some thoughts up your noggin, don't you buddy?

BILLY BONES

I know you're more liberal than me, but you feel me, right? It's like right now I'm being persecuted for being a straight white male. How the hell is that fair?

The Tattooed Bartender breezes by their table. She drops two fresh beers and winks at Cassavetes before returning inside.

Billy stares directly at her breasts the whole time she's in view. Cassavetes watches him do it.

BILLY BONES

She has no idea how good I'd treat her. Like a princess.

Cassavetes bursts out laughing. Billy looks confused.

CASSAVETES

You know anything about Joan Crawford's life?

BILLY BONES

I know her vintage posters sell like hot cakes and most of her movies were the same song over and over again. Whatever Happened to Baby Jane? is pretty dope. I like that one.

CASSAVETES

She was raised pretty poor and had to work in a laundry when she was a kid. By the time she got to Hollywood she was down to fuck and wanted to be a star. So she became one. She made a few silent films that were hits. F. Scott Fitzgerald called her the "ultimate flapper." She was big time. She even married into Hollywood Royalty when she married Douglas Fairbanks Junior. His folks didn't like her at first, so she wasn't invited to their own, personal Shangri La for a while.

BILLY BONES

PickFair, yeah. I know all about it.

CASSAVETES

Right. Anyway, when she finally got invited over to watch movies that hadn't come out yet and shit, she would look at the other actresses hands. Their smooth, lily-white, dainty little hands. Then she'd look at her own hands. Course, hard working hands, that she used in the laundry when she was a kid. Blue collar hands, you know? It made her super self conscious.

BILLY BONES

Thanks for the history lesson, bro.
I'll make sure to update her Wiki
entry as soon as possible.

CASSAVETES

I'm not done. To hide how insecure
she was she took up knitting so
people couldn't see her hands. It
became an on-set habit for the rest
of her life.

He stops talking and swigs his beer. He's done.

BILLY BONES

Um. OK. Is there a point in there?

Cassavetes sets down his beer and jolts across the table. A
switchblade appears in his hand.

He presses it into Billy's beck.

CASSAVETES

My point is no one gives fuck what
you think about women . You're a
fucking potato chip stain on a
keyboard the next person will wipe
away. Maybe Joan Crawford made a
porn. Maybe she didn't. Who fucking
cares? She was awesome. I know what
she did with her hands at a party at
her in laws house almost a hundred
years ago. That's a life, man. That's
her life she lived.

BILLY BONES

Dude. Dude. What the fuck?

Cassavetes pulls him forward by the back of his neck.

CASSAVETES

I know you doxed my girlfriend,
"BillyBonesTripleX." And for what?
Because she told you to fuck off when
you posted some rant on her friends
review of the new Ghostbusters?

Billy's eyes bulge. He can't deny it. Cassavetes stares hard
at him. Billy trembles.

Cassavetes closes the switchblade. After an even breath he
shoves Billy away and stands.

CASSAVETES

I see one more post from you anywhere I fart around on the internet, I'm coming for you. Discogs. Bad Ass. Shit. I even suspect you've clicked on a YouTube channel I follow.

He FLICKS the switchblade open and closes it in one move. Billy sits stock still.

Cassavetes walks off like he's taking an evening stroll. He stops to talk to the Tattooed Bartender.

They look back at Billy. Cassavetes walks on. As soon as he's out of sight Billy grabs the film can.

He screws it open. A small spool of film sits in the center. He holds a strip up to the light.

It's nature footage of a LEOPARD. Not silent-era porn. The Tattooed Bartender approaches.

She stands there impatiently until Billy looks up.

BILLY BONES

Hey. Hi. What's up?

She slaps the bill on the table.

BILLY BONES

Oh. Um. My buddy was gonna settle up. Did he leave without paying?

She folds her arms over her chest.

BILLY BONES

Shit. Look. I don't have any cash on me. Or my wallet, so I don't have any plastic either.

She eyes his laptop.

EXT. HIGHLAND PARK STREET - DAY

Billy walks to a bus stop, sans laptop and bag. He watches a bus approach. He checks his pockets. Empty.

He clenches his hands into fists and starts walking.

EXT. KOREATOWN APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

Billy, exhausted and sweaty, approaches a metal door that enters directly into an apartment from the street.

He slides the key in the SHINY LOCK. It won't fit. He tries again. Nope. It's a new lock.

He BANGS on the metal door. MUSIC flows down the single flight of stairs. BANG. BANG. BANG. Nothing.

BILLY BONES

Fuck, Jake. Come on, bro. I've had a bullshit day. I need to crash.

The music GETS LOUDER. A car door opens and closes behind him. FOOTSTEPS approach.

He turns. DETECTIVE TOM CHASE stands in front of him, badge out. He looks irritated.

TOM CHASE

You William Bart?

BILLY BONES

Yeah. Yeah, that's me.

TOM CHASE

You know a Beulah Bart?

BILLY BONES

Yeah. That's my mom.

TOM CHASE

Great, awesome.

He takes out a pair of handcuffs. Billy takes a step backwards. Tom grabs him by the arm.

TOM CHASE

Come on, kid. Don't fuck around. I've been waiting here all day.

BILLY BONES

What's this all about?

Tom puts a cuff around Billy's wrist.

TOM CHASE

You transfer five grand out of your moms account into your own?

BILLY BONES

What? No. That's ridiculous. I mean.
Yeah, technically. But she said I
could do it.

TOM CHASE

That why'd she file a report?

BILLY BONES

She's my mom. She wouldn't do that.
She would never do that.

CLICK. Tom cuffs the other wrist behind Billy's back.

TOM CHASE

Come on, shitbird.

EXT. KOREATOWN STREET - NIGHT

A pigeon sits on a roof across the street from Jake's
apartment. The music floats dimly through an open window.

The pigeon flies off as Tom shoves Billy into the back seat
of an unmarked cop car.

CUT TO BLACK: