

G String Budget

by

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PEREGRINE'S OFFICE - INT. DAY

JACK (22, magnanimous) and CHARLIE (22, fidgety) sit in a small office. A sign on the door reads "talent interviews (fully clothed)". Shot of their hands with writing.

CHARLIE

I really hope we get this one. Maybe Natalie's right, I just need to be more realistic.

JACK

The dealership man? Really?

PEREGRINE (60s, full of moxy) walks in while on the phone, but stops short when he sees Charlie and Jack.

PEREGRINE

Oh, you're here! Good, just give me a second. Have a seat!

He gestures towards the two chairs in front of his desk, which he goes and sits behind.

PEREGRINE (CONT.)

(into phone)

What do mean the IRS doesn't accept furniture as collateral?! Well you tell him th-

Peregrine stops and looks at his phone. The call timer reads 27 seconds.

PEREGRINE

Got to go.

He hangs up.

PEREGRINE

Never stay on the line more than 30 seconds boys.

(Beat)

JACK

We're very excited about this opportunity Mr. Falcon.

PEREGRINE

Please, call me Peregrine. You're the directors, right?

CHARLIE
Yep. Degrees and all.

PEREGRINE
And how's that working out for you?

JACK
(simultaneously with Charlie)

Great/Bad

JACK
Well maybe it's not going great yet-

CHARLIE
We got rejected at all the big studios...

INT. PARAMOUNT OFFICE. DAY.

Jack and Charlie in Paramount interview.

CHARLIE
I have strong soft skills?

INT. PEREGRINE'S OFFICE DAY

JACK
So we had to enter the service industry.

INT. HEB. DAY.

Jack and Charlie scan items in the HEB checkout line.

JACK
(to customer)
What do you mean you've never seen *Blade Runner*?

INT. PEREGRINE'S OFFICE. DAY.

PEREGRINE
So that's why you want to do porn huh?

CHARLIE
What?

JACK
I want to direct. It's all I've ever wanted to do.

CHARLIE

(To Jack)

PORN?! You told me he was just "kind of out of the mainstream"!

Charlie stands up to go. Jack gets up to stop him.

PEREGRINE

Oh trust me my boy, I am VERY much out of the mainstream.

Peregrine hands them his phone playing a sample of his work. Charlie's eyes bulge. The moaning is continuous and incessant.

JACK

I mean it's no secret that porn could use a little vision. Look at this. The set's just a couch. There's precious little sense of Mise-en-scene. That's what we've got to offer.

PEREGRINE

You don't approve of our production value?

JACK

It's the story too. I mean this woman just wanted to fix her sink. She doesn't have time for this. She's got to go to work.

Charlie turns to leave. Jack pursues.

Remember when you used to talk about how one day, we were gonna make something so beautiful, so visionary, so utterly artistic that it would blow people's minds?

CHARLIE

Minds, not loads.

JACK

Why not both? I'm serious Charlie. I know plan A didn't really work out like we thought it would, but this is a good plan B. Billions of people watch porn. Once they see what we can do, Hollywood will be coming to us.

Charlie meets Jack's eyes. Peregrine looks back and forth between the two.

CHARLIE

What am I gonna tell Natalie.

JACK

She'll understand. Porn's mainstream now, Mia Khalifa does sports commentary.

PEREGRINE

I like her commentary.

JACK

She's very talented.

Charlie sighs.

CHARLIE

Fine.

Jack puts his arms on Charlie's shoulders.

JACK

I love you.

Peregrine Stands.

PEREGRINE

Should I get a camera?

INT. FILM STUDIO. DAY.

Peregrine enters leading Jack and Charlie through big double doors. He's smoking a cigar.

PEREGRINE

Boys, I'm really excited to have you on board today. I may have only hired you because you were cheap, but I think what you're doing here could be the start of a new era. I can see it now, our name up in lights "Jizzers, the internet's home for art".

(gesturing to Jim)

You've met my grandson Jim.

Jim turns around from spying on people's conversations.

He's been doing sound on my sets since

he was 8 years old!

Peregrine leads Jack and Charlie over to the camera where the cast and crew is assembled.

PEREGRINE

And this is CAT, your cinematographer.

Cat, is smoking a hand-rolled cigarette, she has cropped bleach hair and black lipstick.

JACK

Pleasure to meet you Cat! I've got a lot of ideas about the cinemato-

Cat flicks the butt of her cig and snaps.

CAT

With my camera I bring the female gaze to pornography. It won't be chained to the phallic tripod, nor shall I.

JACK

I love handheld.

CAT

I was thinking cranes and wires. Do you know Orson Welles?

JACK

I love you.

PEREGRINE

We're still waiting on our stars.

CHARLIE

(pointing at a few girls on set)
Is that not them?

PEREGRINE

Those are just extras.

Cat gives Peregrine a look.

The extras are hanging out eating peanut butter sandwiches. Jim cranes his boom pole over at them, listening raptly to their conversation and smacking lips. He turns away quickly when they notice him. The girls mutter "you just don't find good men in this industry".

CHARLIE

So who are the leads?

PEREGRINE

Well we've got our man but there's been a problem with our leading lady.

JACK

Problem?

PEREGRINE

She's got what's called in our trade a prolapse of the anus.

Charlie spots NATALIE (23, spunky) giving him a gentle wave through the windows in the studio door.

JACK

(background)

We'll just have to find a replacement.

CHARLIE

Excuse me a second.

Charlie walks over to the door and opens it.

CHARLIE

Hey... what are you doing here?

NATALIE

I'm on my lunch break! I wanted to come see you on your first day, I'm so proud of you.

They see Jack shouting about needing a female lead. Peregrine spots Natalie.

NATALIE

So what kind of project is this anyway? Tv or film?

CHARLIE

Well it's more of a web base-

Natalie sees a giant paper-mache penis being brought in.

NATALIE

On what kind of website Charlie?

PEREGRINE

Hello there young lady it's a pleasure

to meet you, did you happen to bring a headshot with you?

CHARLIE
This is my girlfriend, Natalie.

PEGRINE
So you're not here to audition for porn.

NATALIE
No.

PEREGRINE
My mistake.

Peregrine walks away.

NATALIE
PORN Charlie?!

CHARLIE
You just told me to follow my dreams!

NATALIE
Is it your dream to exploit vulnerable young women?

CHARLIE
Oh come Nat, it's not like that anymore. It's the 21st century, Mia Khalifa does sports commentary.

Natalie stares at him, dumbfounded

NATALIE
Alright then, goodbye Charlie.

Natalie brushes past him.

CHARLIE
Wait! I was just trying to make you proud!

Charlie sits down in shock, looking off into the middle distance. Behind him Natalie storms over to Peregrine and Jack. She talks to them animatedly. Jim approaches Charlie.

JIM
You know that girl?

Charlie nods in a daze.

JIM
Ever talked to her?

Peregrine takes out a contract and hands it to Natalie.

CHARLIE
Uh huh.

JIM
I bet that was nice.

Peregrine and Jack cheer and shake hands with Natalie.

JACK
We're cast!

Charlie whips around to see Natalie with Jack and Peregrine.
DOLLY ZOOM of awful realization.

JACK
May I introduce you to the next queen
of erotic film,-

CHARLIE
Natalie!?

NATALIE
Oh come Charlie, it's no big deal.
It's the 21st century, Mia Khalifa
does sports commentary.

Cat walks over to her and shakes her hand.

PEREGRINE
(gets call on phone)
Our dashing hero has arrived!

The door opens, and in walks a striking man with a mustache
and long flowing hair.

PEREGRINE
May I introduce the rugged veteran of
a thousand and one money shots, Ron
Longfellow.

Ron sees Natalie. He's transfixed.

RON
Namaste.

Ron bows to Natalie and kisses her hand. Natalie smiles.

CHARLIE

You've got to be kidding me.

INT. FILM STUDIO. DAY.

16mm film. A Renaissance prince and a mountain shepherdess stand on a hilltop in the Italian alps.

NATALIE

Oh Prince Francesco, take me back with you to the Castillo Caravanegeli. Let me and my sheep flock through its ancient halls, and live forever in your arms.

Ron and Natalie start to glide, umbrellas of Cherbourg style across the set into an elaborate bedroom. Charlie suffers near Peregrine at video village, unable to bear it.

RON

Oh shepherd Francesca, would that I could, but alas, the halls of undeath are too long for a mortal like you.

NATALIE

Then tell me, my love, what is the price of immortality?

RON

A noble life, in which one realizes their full potential, giving freely unto the world, from all their gifts and all their labor, something valuable. Something that improves the lives of others, and those others won't forget Francesca, no, no. They'll carry your works within them, and you'll live on long after the color has drained from your hair, and the blush from your cheeks, and the light from your eyes. Even when your fields are fallow and your house built over, even when all the people you ever touched have blown away. Even then, you shall not die.

(Beat)

NATALIE

Well that sounds awfully hard, isn't there a quicker way?

RON
Only by obtaining my sweet elixir.

NATALIE
That sounds like more fun.

Heavy bass funk starts to play.

CHARLIE
Cut! Cut!

Charlie runs into the frame.

JACK
(emerging from the fish cam)
What the hell Charlie, would you stop
yelling cut on every take!

Cast and crew groan, return to waiting. Ron goes back to a poem entitled "ode to Natalie".

CHARLIE
I can't believe you cast Natalie you
asshole. This is not worth plan B.

JACK
You better not be fucking reason you
called cut.

CHARLIE
The scene... wasn't working.

JACK
And why's that?

Cat gets out of the "vulva cam" and walks over to Natalie and the extras.

CHARLIE
Not enough... camera angles.

JACK
(beat) damn, I knew it. That's why I
keep you around Charlie you keep me
honest.

Peregrine rushes over still on the phone.

PEREGRINE
No no no the money was just *resting* in
my account.

(re: Jack)
 I want a word with you.
 (to extras)
 Extras! Take 5! Scram ya sluts.

Cat shoots him a poisonous look. Extras move off set. Phone keeps blaring loudly. Peregrine sees its reached 29 seconds.

PEREGRINE (CONT.)
 Goddammit!

He pegs the phone into the ground, it explodes.

PEREGRINE
 Now Jack, you know I like this whole
 artsy direction you're taking.

JACK
 who doesn--

PEREGRINE
But we've been here for 6 hours and
 there hasn't been any porn yet.

JACK
 Didn't you see the obelisks.

PEREGRINE
 I saw the obelisks.

JACK
 And the pomegranates?

PEREGRINE
 Plenty of pomegranates.

JACK
 Then what are you talking about?

CUT TO:

PEREGRINE
 There's no porn Jack no non-symbolic
 Porn. Penis and vagina porn, (jack
 opens mouth) human penis and vagina
 porn. and every time we get close,
 this idiot
 (points at Charlie)
 yells cut. It's like you're

deliberately trying to keep Ron and
Natalie from fucking.

JACK

But what is porn really?

Peregrine grabs Jack's collar.

CUT TO:

PEREGRINE

Listen to me you little afterbirth.
I've put my last cent into this
production and no one is going to pay
to see 90 minutes of unedited
Pomegranate footage shot from the
perspective of a fish! I need to see
Rod do some drilling.

Rod Approaches Charlie

ROD (DRUNK)

I'd like a word with you two.

CHARLIE

Yes?

RON

I think we might have a problem.

CHARLIE

In what way?

ROD

I mean if you need me to perform.

CHARLIE

You're a performer, so...

RON

I mean sexually.

CHARLIE

Oh good.

ROD

(Pulls Charlie in, whispers)
It's just I'm a little nervous
Charlie, I mean in front of Natalie.

CHARLIE

Haven't you done this literally thousands of times.

ROD

This is different, she's...so kind. I've never felt this way before. Sort of tingly inside. I think I'm in love.

CHARLIE

Listen Rod, Natalie is my girlfriend and you will not connect with her physically or emotionally.

ROD

I'm sorry Charlie, but Natalie is the woman of my dreams, and you've gotta follow your dreams no matter what.

Peregrine drops Jack and walks away talking on the phone. Jack tries to play it cool, walks over to Charlie and Rod.

JACK

What's going on here?

ROD

I've been trying to calm my nerves.

He holds up a flask.

CHARLIE

Rod's drunk. And impotent.

ROD

All the blood hath flowed to my heart.

JACK

Oh my god! ok ok, come here go to the dressing room and try and fix this situation. Where's Jim. Jim!

CUT TO:

INT. BATHROOM. DAY.

Jim is trying to fluff Rod.

ROD
This has never happened before I
swear.

JIM
It's not working.

ROD
What am I gonna do?

JIM
Grandpa says these work great for him.

Jim produces a bottle of VIAGRA.

ROD
How many should I take?

JIM
How hard do you wanna get?

CUT TO:

INT. STUDIO. DAY.

Close up of Rod's bulging crotch. Zoom out to reveal him in costume on the stage. Everyone's getting ready. Rod is out of it.

JACK
Great job Jim, great job. Let's finish
this thing.

CHARLIE
(whispering to Rod)
Please don't do this.

JACK
Sound!

JIM
Speeding.

JACK
Camera.

CAT
Rolling.

JACK
Action!

ROD

(Starting to stammer, mess up his words)

Even when your fields are flowers and your hoose-hose built over, even when all the one night stands and people who paid to fuck you blow away. Even then, you shall not die. oh Natalie
(Beat)

NATALIE

(put off but continuing the scene)
Well that sounds awfully hard, isn't there a quicker way?

ROD

Only by obtaining my... sweaty excalibur. Wait...

NATALIE

That sounds like more fun.

Heavy bass funk starts to play.

Natalie starts undoing Rod's pants. The bulge is massive. Peregrine leans in, eating it up. Jim winces. Charlie closes his eyes. She moves to "whip it out", Rod pulls away.

ROD

No Natalie, not like this.

Rod pukes.

JACK

Cut! Cut! What the *fuck* Rod?! You have one fucking job, and it's to fuck!, how fucking hard is that?

ROD

I'm more than my penis.

JACK

Rod, even your name means penis.

RON

I'm an actor...

JACK

No.

Jack rips down Ron's pants exposing Ron's erect penis.

JACK
This is an actor! you're an amateur!

Jack slaps the erect penis.

JACK
Use it! Use it! This is your destiny!
It's your one fucking purpose on
earth!

NATALIE
Stop that Jack! Leave him alone!

CHARLIE
Oh of course, take Rod's side.

Charlie and Natalie start to argue.

ROD
I feel faint.

Rod Collapses. Jack takes VIAGRA BOTTLE from his shirt pocket.

JACK
How many of those pills did you give
him Jim!

JIM
Just one... bottle.

JACK
Oh my god. Peregrine, call an
ambulance!

Peregrine calls the ambulance.

PEREGRINE
Hello, 911 I need an ambulance.
(beat)
And how much is this going to cost
perchance? What!

JACK
Jesus Christ Peregrine he's dying!

PEREGRINE
Well would you take an IOU? I don't
have a bank account.

CAT

Don't waste your breath Jack, he doesn't care about Rod, he doesn't care about you and he doesn't care about us. Too long have my sisters and I been oppressed by this agent of the patriarchy.

PEREGRINE

(to phone)

Can you hold for a sec.

CAT

The Patriarchy is cold and uncaring, it will exploit us all in worship of that prophet named profit. No longer! The revolution has come!

Cat throws a box of tampons at Peregrine, knocking the phone from his hand. It slides across the floor. The extras throw bras and boxes of tampons at the men. A melee breaks out between the men and women crew & cast.

Ron sees Natalie hitting Charlie with a box of menstrual pads. He staggers up and walks over, trying to hand her "Ode to Natalie".

JACK

Jesus Peregrine how long have you been on the phone!

PEREGRINE

(Fighting off Cat)

On the phone...

Peregrine looks over to the phone in horror, the call is still going. The time ticks up 0:30...0:31. On the stroke of 0:31 police sirens start up.

CRASH ZOOM

PEREGRINE

They finally found me.

Chaos ensues. Rod collapses and falls into one of the obelisks it topples over, knocking over the set like dominoes. Fish Bowl breaks.

JACK

Not the fucking fish!

Cops run through the hallways.

Peregrine takes out a revolver from his bag, loads it.

PEREGRINE

It's been a pleasure boys, finish the movie.

Peregrine runs out the doors, cops chase.

PEREGRINE

Taxation is theft!

Peregrine fires at them. Runs out.

NATALIE

Rod's dead.

Jack, Charlie, and Cat turn around to find Ron indeed dead, flat on his back, the set in shambles around him, a huge and throbbing erection bulging through his costume. Natalie cries. Charlie looks at Rod and Natalie thoughtfully, he makes his choice.

Jack looks at the ruin of his production utterly defeated. Charlie moves toward Jack and puts an arm around his shoulder.

CHARLIE

Do you have a plan C?