

A BETTER TOMORROW

WRITTEN BY  
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**SAMPLE**

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FADE UP:

EXT. ESTABLISHING SKY - NIGHT

The sky caliginous and dead with air, no clouds yet lightning CRACKS off in the distance.

TITLES OVER

EXT. ESTABLISHING MOTEL - NIGHT

MOVING OFF the sky; a sign erect behind a Motel FLICKERS in neon lights "THE HELP MOTEL". Lightning CRACKS off again this time with THUNDER behind it causing the motel sign to FLICKER it's real name "THE PHELPS MOTEL".

OFF the sign and DOWN to the Motel reveals not a family vacation spot more like a runaway or hideaway for wanderers and drug addicts. The exterior lights BUZZ and RATTLE as we PASS each drab motel door. We STOP at room ELEVEN. It begins to RAIN.

INT. MOTEL ROOM 11 - NIGHT

Lightning breaks up the darkness that surrounds the room. Debris guises the already torn floor. The PITTER PATTER of rain drops echo through the room.

THE SMOKE ALARM BELL RINGS -

Slowly we begin our movement FORWARD.

ABOVE: A FLICKERING ceiling light reveals the SHAPE of a small body that lies face down on the floor. Blood covers the GOLDEN BROWN HEAD of a LITTLE GIRL (11 years old).

CLOSER; through the flickering light we see speckled with BLOOD the SHOES of a man. We RISE UP from his shoes to his blood covered LEGS to the BODY of a man broken and bloody.

LAWRENCE SAWEDOFF (40 years old) lies dead in a chair shot full of bullets, five to be exact. Underneath the blood he appears good-looking, even handsome. His "interview" clothes are stained with blood, blue button up, tan pants and a bloody coat draped over the chairs arm.

BLOOD runs down Lawrence's arm forming droplets that fall from his FINGER TIPS.

INSERT CALENDAR

TODAY IS, DECEMBER 8, 2004

BACK TO SCENE

In the b.g. STEAM begins to rise from the kitchen, a burner still on overcooks dinner made for tonight.

CLOSE ON; Lawrence's blood covered FACE. His EYES begin to SHUTTER.

The smoke alarm is now MUFFLED, as if we're hearing it from inside Lawrence's head.

Lawrence's EYES SNAP open as a sea of memories FLOOD his brain. His chest in pain, he tries to BREATHE. He can't breathe! THUMP! He FALLS to the floor.

INSERT - LAWRENCE'S POV

The smoke alarm gradually becomes DEAFENING. He sees his daughter dead on the floor, he reaches for her. A wet shadow the doorway catching his attention; BANG BANG BANG. The door to the motel room SWINGS open. SHINY BLACK SHOES of many men run into the room. COPS.

COP 1  
(Leaning over Lawrence)  
Get an ambulance in here, this guy  
is alive!

BACK TO SCENE

Cops surround the room.

COP 3  
Jesus, what happened here?

COP 2  
Oh my god, this is horrible...

COP 1  
What's his name?

COP 3  
Bathroom's clear!

COP 2  
...She's dead.

MOTEL OWNER  
(ethnic)  
Ah, Ah... Lawrence.

COP 1  
Lawrence. Lawrence. Can you hear  
me?

Lawrence's eyes well up as Cop 2 rolls his daughters lifeless  
blood covered body over. Lawrence reaches for her. He can't  
speak, the pain is too much.

COP 1  
Let's get him out of here!

A stretcher is rolled into the room. Lawrence struggles with  
the PARAMEDICS as they pick him off the ground and place him  
on the stretcher. They inject him with a sedative and place  
an oxygen mask over his face. He calms and is wheeled out of  
the room.

Two PATROLMEN stand around the dead little girl. Patrolman 1  
grabs his stomach, covers his mouth and runs outside the room  
and throws up.

PATROLMAN 1  
Rookies.

Patrolman 2 grabs his walkie on his shoulder.

PATROLMAN 2 (ON WALKIE)  
Dispatch get a DB, young,  
possible age, eight, seven.

DISPATCH (V.O.)  
Copy Ad Twelve, Detective is  
already on his way.

PATROLMAN 2  
Copy out.

The red BLINKS the blue and red colors of the patrol car  
outside.

Quiet again. Something must happen.

SMASH TO BLACK:

TITLE: WHITE BOLD LETTERS OVER A BLACK BACKGROUND "A BETTER  
TOMORROW"

FADE UP:

EXT. ORWAN'S PUB - NIGHT

SUPER: LOS ANGELES, CA

Orwan's Pub is a local place set within the city. A HOMELESS MAN sleeps at the edge of the building. A few DRUNKS stumble out of the bar, last call is over.

INT. ORWAN'S PUB - NIGHT

The bar is just about empty. The bartender, JOE, is cleaning up for the night.

DETECTIVE SAMMY BLACKWOOD (40's) sits drunk at the bar. He's milking a beer while smoking a cigarette. Empty stools are turned over in front of him. Off to his right sits a PROSTITUTE watching the NEWS on TV.

PROSTITUTE

Hey ain't you that cop who saved them kids?

SAMMY

(looking at the TV)  
Yeah thanks me.

PROSTITUTE

Big thing you did.

The Prostitute gets up and moves next to Sammy.

PROSTITUTE

You want to take me out for the night?

She reaches in her purse and takes out a cigarette. Sammy lights it for her.

PROSTITUTE

A little dancing maybe? A little Benny Goodman?

SAMMY

What do you know about The King of Swing?

PROSTITUTE

Nothin' too much, my father used to play him all night long. Used to say it made him come alive.

(MORE)

PROSTITUTE (CONT'D)

It took to me. Well what do you say? My place is just around the block.

SAMMY

Where's that, the alley?

PROSTITUTE

Asshole.

The Prostitute gets up and walks past him. Sammy grabs her arm.

SAMMY

I didn't say you could leave.

PROSTITUTE

Buddy, this ass is worth one hundred for a Cop. I don't do freebees, not even to heroes.

BARTENDER JOE

Hey Sammy, let her go, have another on me.

SAMMY

Well I don't fuck whores.

Sammy releases the prostitute.

PROSTITUTE

Dick.

She runs out of the bar. Joe walks behind the bar, he grabs one last beer for Sammy.

BARTENDER JOE

Here.

SAMMY

They just keep getting younger.

BARTENDER JOE

Keep it in your pants Sammy.

Joe wipes the bar down.

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

The cold night air pushes trash across the alley. Two UNKNOWN MEN make a trade.

UNKNOWN 1

Yeah I said I'd give you three thousand but after seeing it I'm saying more like two.

UNKNOWN 2

(down trodden)

Fine just give me the money.

An exchange of money is made. He begins to turn but...

UNKNOWN 1

Hey man, the KEYS.

The Unknown Man stops and turns around, Lawrence Sawedoff, for the second time around. Alive and still wearing his blood covered bullet holed suite he died in. His face is worn, he hasn't shaved or showered in days. Behind his dark eyes an anger has grown from a life of loss.

Lawrence reaches into his coat pocket and pulls out the KEYS. The last of his former life. He TUMBLES them to the Unknown Man.

Lawrence walks around the corner out of the alley.

EXT. SIDEWALK - CONTINUOUS

The MOONLIGHT breaks the land of darkness yet something inside Lawrence steps him on his toes. In the b.g. his car PEALS off away from him.

He walks up the street a few blocks. His head down, hands in his pants pockets, collar up, unsure of what to do next. He stops in front of a Porno establishment, the sign in the window reads: XXX ALL NIGHT LONG. He catches a glimpse of himself in the window. A fraction of his former life visible. Below him --

A HALF SMOKED CIGARETTE--

Lays on the street, untouched of the watery filth next to it.

Lawrence bends down and picks up the cigarette, he holds it up to his face, staring at it. He turns around to see if anyone notices. He puts the cigarette in his mouth, reaches inside his pants pocket and pulls out his LIGHTER, FLICKS it and lights the cigarette.

He turns to walk up the street; BAM! A PROSTITUTE, young (no older than 16), wearing black vinyl boots a leopard skirt, shag coat and a bleach blonde wig bumps into him.

PROSTITUTE  
HEY! Watch where you're going  
mister.

LAWRENCE  
Sorry.

Lawrence stares at her for a moment too long.

PROSTITUTE  
What? You like what you see?  
It'll cost ya.

Lawrence takes a drag of his cigarette, ignores her and turns away.

PROSTITUTE  
Perv!

The Prostitute walks off.

Lawrence continues to walk down the street. He gets about a half a block and stops. He stares through a store window.

The painted on sign reads "RAY'S PAWN SHOP". It's closed.

Lawrence turns away from the shop warming his hands with his breath. He's got no place to go. Lawrence goes into his jacket for something, checking each pocket; it's not there.

His eyes widen. He looks down the street from where he came.

Lawrence takes a step running down the street stopping at the alley he just came from. He looks down the alley and sees nobody. Dumpster, trash bags, that's it.

LAWRENCE  
Shit!

Movement echoes through the alley. Lawrence cautiously investigates.

A HEAVYSET MAN is perched upright leaning against the side of the building. He's getting a blowjob from the same Prostitute that ran into Lawrence.

The Heavysset Man sees Lawrence.

HEAVYSET MAN  
What the fuck!

The Prostitute stands up.

LAWRENCE  
You have something of mine.

PROSTITUTE  
You are a perv.

HEAVYSET MAN  
Who the fuck are you?  
(to the Prostitute)  
Hey, I wasn't finished get back  
down there.

LAWRENCE  
You're done. Get the hell out of  
here.

HEAVYSET MAN  
Awe fuck man I spent fifty bucks on  
her.

LAWRENCE  
Get the hell out of here!

The Heavyset man ZIPS up his pants and slides around the  
dumpster trying to avoid Lawrence. He runs out of the alley.

LAWRENCE  
Give me my wallet.

PROSTITUTE  
On what?

The prostitute goes into her purse and takes out a pack of  
gum. She opens the pack and eats a piece.

PROSTITUTE  
What are you going to do beat me?

LAWRENCE  
I don't want any trouble, just give  
me back my wallet.

PROSTITUTE  
Come get it from me.

The Prostitute slowly back peddles as Lawrence walks closer.

PROSTITUTE  
Fuck you, you asshole!

LAWRENCE  
What?

She takes the gum out of her mouth, grins and points to someone behind him.

Lawrence turns around. SMASH! He's hit with a trash can lid to the head, sending him to the ground and knocking him out cold.

SCREEN TO BLACK:

OVER BLACK-- THE SOUNDS OF LIFE FADE AWAY. BEEP BEEP, BEEP BEEP, BEEP BEEP, BEEP, BEEP, BEEP, BEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEP.

FLASH TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Lawrence lies dead in the hospital bed.

A NURSE quickly pushes a defibrillation machine into the room. She places gel on the paddles. SECOND NURSE runs in to help her.

NURSE

Doctor!

The paddles are placed on Lawrence's chest. SHOCK! Nothing.

NURSE

Again.

The nurse re-sets and SHOCK!

NURSE 1

Still nothing, one more time.

NURSE 2

Doctor!

Again the gel is placed on the paddles.

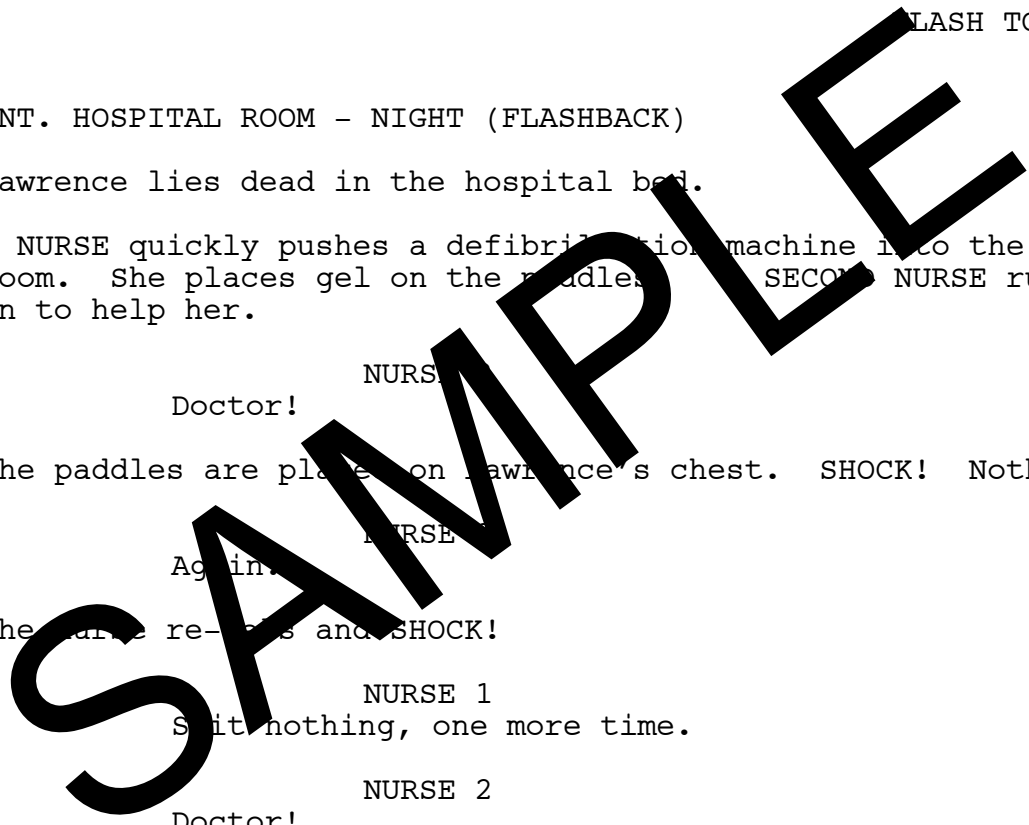
NURSE 1

Come on.

She shocks him again. Lawrence's eyes POP open and he gasps for air. He grabs the nurse and pulls her close.

LAWRENCE

Where am I? Where's my daughter?  
My daughter, where is she?



Nurse 2 sticks Lawrence with a sedative needle, he releases the Nurse and falls back into his bed mumbling to himself.

FLASH TO:

EXT. ALLEY - MORNING

The sky is a beautiful blue, the sun's rays reflect off the inner alley walls of buildings.

Lawrence lies in a pile of trash, his head bruised. He begins to wake, pulling himself back together he rests on the dumpster. His head throbs as he slowly remembers last night. He notices a cigarette underneath the dumpster.

Just across from him a voice calls out.

PROSTITUTE

You want a fresh one?

Lawrence looks over and sees the Prostitute from last night. She looks a little different with a shine over her left eye. She pulls out a fresh cigarette and offers it to him.

Lawrence slowly stands up, his aches and pains are clear but aren't just from the previous night's exploits.

He walks over to her and takes the CIGARETTE. He reaches into his pocket and takes out his lighter and SPARKS the wick. He lights his cigarette and pulls a long drag from it.

PROSTITUTE (CONT'D)

Can you, please?

He lights her cigarette.

PROSTITUTE (CONT'D)

(Plucky)

You hungry? Cause I'm hungry.  
Oh don't worry nobody's around but  
you and me.

(beat)

What? Oh.

She reaches into a trash bag next to her and pulls out his wallet.

PROSTITUTE

Here.