

INT. REN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

A tiny, crumbling room. Moonlight spills through a crooked window, illuminating **REN**, (short for Lorenzo (5)) – small, fragile, and quietly determined. He sits on a makeshift bed, finishing a charcoal drawing of a perfect family he's never known: himself, his late mother, and his towering father, all smiling in front of a grand Italian villa.

The figures in the drawing are warm, elegant, and proud. Ren, in the drawing, wears an artist's smock and holds an oversized palette – a dream version of himself that's the opposite of his reality.

A drunken roar shatters the quiet. It is the voice of **GRASSO**, the brutal and abusive father of Ren. As he is most times, he's DRUNK.

GRASSO (O.S.)

Don't make me come in there!!

Ren freezes. The door shudders under heavy blows.

GRASSO (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Blow out that candle, boy!

Ren draws one last hopeful line –

The door **BLASTS** open. Grasso fills the doorway – massive, backlit, monstrous.

INT. REN'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Ren shrinks back. Grasso steps in, his shadow swallowing the room.

GRASSO

I said blow out that candle and go to sleep!

He reaches as if to strike. Ren recoils.

Grasso snatches the drawing, glances at it –

GRASSO (CONT'D)

What a fool. Such a waste of time.

He **CRUSHES** it in his fists, **DROPS** it, and **GRINDS** it under his boot. Then **SLAMS** the door on his way out, nearly extinguishing the candle.

Ren blows out the flame. Moonlight becomes his only comfort.

He retrieves the ruined drawing, tries to smooth it, then finally CRUMPLES it and THROWS it at the door.

He curls up under his thin blanket.

REN

Someday... I'll show him.

Ren looks out the window at a distant villa glowing on a hill — the one from his drawing. The CAMERA DRIFTS out the window toward it, rising into the moonlit sky.

AERIAL TRANSITION - OPENING CREDITS

Clouds part. Dawn breaks. Renaissance Italy unfolds beneath us.

EXT. FLORENCE - DAY (SEVEN YEARS LATER)

We swoop down toward **REN** (12) — now lanky, fast, and carrying an impossible load of canvases and supplies as he sprints through bustling streets.

A massive bird-shaped shadow glides overhead. Ren shields his eyes against the sun.

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - CONTINUOUS

Citizens look up and point.

CITIZEN #1

Look! A bird!

CITIZEN #2

No — a dragon!

CITIZEN #3

(Disappointed)

Oh... it's only Da Vinci.

(NOTE: The **UNSEEN HECKLER** character is always unseen, but appears throughout the script, making loud, critical, and unsolicited commentary)

UNSEEN HECKLER (O.S.)

(hidden within the crowd)

He's a NUT!

EXT. FLORENCE STREETS - CONTINUOUS

Ren spots the "bird" — it is **LEONARDO DA VINCI**, elderly and brilliant, wobbling through the sky in a rickety flying machine, one of his many inventions.

Ren PANICS. He knows what's coming.

He SPRINTS harder.

EXT. ALLEY - CONTINUOUS

Benedetto Vendova, tall, elegant, venomous, blocks Ren's path with his mousy, sniveling manservant **SCHIAVO**.

SCHIAVO

Look, boss! It's that scrawny assistant to that fool Da Vinci!

Benedetto SMILES — a predator's smile — and casually extends his ornate cane into Ren's path.

Ren trips, faceplants, supplies exploding everywhere.

BENEDETTO

(with false concern)
Careful, boy. Florence is no place for clumsy children.

He gestures to Schiavo.

BENEDETTO (CONT'D)

Help him, Schiavo.

Schiavo "helps" by stomping through Ren's canvases.

SCHIAVO

Here ya go, kid. Good as new.

Ren gathers what he can and bolts.

EXT. DA VINCI'S WORKSHOP - MOMENTS LATER

Ren bursts into the workshop, throws the supplies aside, and YANKS a rope and shoves a large lever. A bizarre system of pulleys snaps a collection of ropes into place — forming a giant cargo net.

He FLINGS open every window and door, and looks skyward.

EXT. SKY - CONTINUOUS

Da Vinci spirals downward, shouting gleefully in his flying machine.

DA VINCI

Like a bird on the wing!

INT. DA VINCI'S WORKSHOP - CONTINUOUS**CRASH!**

The flying machine BLASTS through a window, wings ripping off. Da Vinci shoots across the room and lands upside-down in the cargo net – inches from disaster.

Ren rushes to him.

In the midst of the chaos, **MRS. MANGIA**, the unflappable housekeeper, enters with a tray of breakfast.

MRS. MANGIA

Señor Da Vinci, I have your breakfast.

DA VINCI

(hanging upside down)

Ooooh, what is on the menu for this morning, Mrs. Mangia?

Ren frees him. Da Vinci immediately dances a happy little jig.

REN

But, sir...your flying machine is in pieces.

DA VINCI

Just wood, canvas, and string, boy.

Da Vinci hurries to his cluttered desk and hastily scribbles some notes into a huge book.

DA VINCI (CONT'D)

It's the knowledge that's the most valuable thing!

Da Vinci sings the song "Wood, Canvas, and String"

Da Vinci moves around his workshop, singing, while showing off experimental models of some of his inventions.

DA VINCI (CONT'D)

(singing)

Just some wood, canvas, and string,
And add a little imagination,
And the mind can often bring about
The most fabulous creations.
Just some wood, canvas, and string,
And who knows what wonders they
will bring.
If your mind can conceive it
And you simply believe it.

(Da Vinci grabs a model of his Flying machine, similar to the one he just crashed)

To fly like a bird,
To soar and be free,
Imagine seeing the world
Above the tops of the trees.
A whole new perspective
The world seems so small.
It's so carefree and wondrous
With no worries at all.
Just apply some wood, canvas, and
string —
Who knows what wonders they will
bring.

(He examines his Machine Gun model)

When enemies are at the gate
And they're threatening to get
rough,
Just assemble the proper materials
And they'll soon have had enough.
With just one gun they're
overpowered,
And their fighting mood has soured
Just apply some wood, canvas, and
string —
Who knows what wonders they will
bring.

(He fidgets with his Catapult model)

And should they linger far away,
At a distance much too great,
Just apply some tension of your own
And soon they'll dissipate.
It'll launch a ton a thousand feet
And cause them all to flee.
They'll scatter quickly, like the
wind
A wonderful sight to see.

(MORE)

DA VINCI (CONT'D)

Just apply some wood, canvas, and
string —
Who knows what wonders they will
bring.

(He examines his Parachute model)

When the situation's looking bad
Because of the pull of gravity,
Be creative with wood, canvas, and
string,
And you'll land safe by using your
savvy.
A fall from such great heights can
mean a horrifying end.
But my parachute device is
something upon which you can
depend.
Just apply some wood, canvas, and
string —
Who knows what wonders they will
bring.

The song ends with Da Vinci enthusiastically beaming.

DA VINCI (CONT'D)

Do I make myself clear, Ren?

REN

Absolutely, sir.

DA VINCI

Excellent. Never forget, it's all
about applying yourself. The
possibilities are limitless. The
only error is not trying at all.

Da Vinci grabs toast from the tray, scribbles some notes,
uses calipers to measure his pet bat **PEPE**'s wingspan, and
adds a few drops of liquid to an already bubbling flask
heated by a candle.

Da Vinci checks a tiny hourglass strapped to his wrist.

DA VINCI (CONT'D)

Oh, my! Look at the time. We've got
to get to the town square for the
annual art show.

As the two turn to leave, the flask contents begin to BUBBLE
and SMOKE uncontrollably. It's about to BLOW!

EXT. DA VINCI'S WORKSHOP - CONTINUOUS

Da Vinci and Ren step out onto the street and casually walk away when -

KA-BOOM!

Soot BLASTS from every window and doorway. Da Vinci doesn't break stride.

DA VINCI

(to Ren, matter-of-factly)
Remind me to use less sulfur next time.

EXT. STREETS OF FLORENCE - CONTINUOUS

We follow them through various streets and alleyways headed to the town square and the art show.

EXT. AERIAL SHOT - CONTINUOUS

We FLY OVER and AHEAD of them and SWOOP down into the town square, past an announcement banner that reads:

"ANNUAL FLORENCE FESTIVAL & ART SHOW - XI A.M. TODAY"

OPENING SONG SEQUENCE - "WHO'S GONNA WIN TODAY?"

A **FIRST GROUP OF ASSORTED TOWNSPEOPLE** moves into the square beneath the banner, smiling as they begin to sing.

FIRST GROUP OF ASSORTED TOWNSPEOPLE

(singing)
The new morning brings about the
art show and the fair,

And everyone who's anyone is going to be there.

A **SECOND GROUP OF TOWNSPEOPLE** crosses the square, waving and greeting one another.

SECOND GROUP OF TOWNSPEOPLE

(singing)
What a beautiful day in Florence,
It's just gorgeous, wouldn't you
say?
So let's all eat, drink and be
merry,
And then see who's gonna win today.

The second group disperses into the festivities.

We FOLLOW **ONE TOWNSMAN** past the ALE VENDOR'S stand.

ALE VENDOR
(singing, slurred)
I hope the lines are long for folks
Who want to get their whistles wet,
'Cuz I've sampled all my ales today
And it's by far my best batch yet!
(hiccups!)

The Ale Vendor CHUGS a foamy mug and passes out, falling backward, stiff as a plank. A **CROWD OF THIRSTY TOWNSPEOPLE** swarms the stand, grabbing 'free' ale. Moments later, the stand is stripped and barren.

EXT. SAUSAGE VENDOR'S STAND - CONTINUOUS

A **FAT MAN** sits at a table in front of a SAUSAGE VENDOR'S STAND, fork and knife in hand.

FAT MAN
(singing)
I plan on eating everything
Until I get my fill,
And maybe just a wee tad more -
I hope I don't get ill.

He tucks a napkin into his collar. A **WAITRESS** drops a mountain of steaming sausages on his plate. He DEVOURS them.

FAT MAN (CONT'D)
BURP!
(singing)
Then I'll politely excuse myself,
And if I feel okay,
I'll waddle to the art show, just
to see
Who's gonna win today.

CUT TO:

TWO CITIZENS stand nearby, chatting as the crowd flows past.

CITIZEN #1
(singing)
How 'bout the art show? After all,
It is the main event.
I'd like to see where Donatelli
Will have his money spent.

PATRON DONATELLI, the wealthiest man in Florence and organizer of the art show, strides by with his **BODYGUARDS** and **ENTOURAGE**.

CITIZEN #2
(singing)
The patron's really loaded
And he sure knows how to pay.
I've gotta' be there just to see
Who's gonna win today.

EXT. CHEESE VENDOR'S BOOTH - CONTINUOUS

A **WOMAN CHEESE VENDOR** beckons from her booth.

WOMAN CHEESE VENDOR
(singing)
If tasty satisfaction
Is what your palette pleases,
Why not come right here up to my
booth
And buy some aromatic cheeses?

A **CUSTOMER** grabs a slab of cheese, inhales deeply, and nearly swoons.

PAN TO:

EXT. BAKER'S BOOTH - CONTINUOUS

A **BAKER** in the adjacent booth leans toward the **CHEESE VENDOR**.

BAKER
(singing, to Cheese Vendor)
I'll slice some bread - you cut the
cheese -
They'll go together grand.
How 'bout we share our goods
And open up a sandwich stand?

EXT. ALLEY ADJACENT TO TOWN SQUARE - CONTINUOUS

A **SHIFTY-LOOKING MAN** lurks in shadow, like an early Italian mobster.

SHIFTY-LOOKING MAN
(singing, to us)
Would you like to make a wager?
How about a little bet?
I heard this year the competition
(MORE)

SHIFTY-LOOKING MAN (CONT'D)
 Is the toughest contest yet.
 He fans a wad of money.

SHIFTY-LOOKING MAN (CONT'D)
 (singing)
 I'll give you odds of three to one
 And I'm guaranteed to pay,
 'Cuz he's the Florence favorite
 And odds say he's gonna win today!
 The smart money is on Da Vinci
 There's no way he can lose.
 I had a meeting with the judges
 And made them an offer they can't
 refuse.

He smiles wide, gold teeth glinting.

EXT. CENTER OF THE TOWN SQUARE - CONTINUOUS

An **ATTRACTIVE YOUNG GIRL**, about Ren's age, stands waist-deep in a burlap sack with other racers. She spots Ren as he and Da Vinci pass.

ATTRACTIVE YOUNG GIRL
 (singing, flirtatious)
 Hello there, Ren! - Where are you
 headed?
 Off to your art show space?
 Won't you stay here? - C'mon and be
 My partner in the next sack race?

Ren slows, tempted. Da Vinci keeps walking.

REN
 (singing)
 Sorry but I've got to run -
 I wish that I could stay,
 But the art show starts in just a
 while,
 And I must be on my way,
 To help Da Vinci as he needs,
 Regardless - come what may,
 So that he can be the artist
 Who will win first prize today!

EXT. MICHELANGELO'S ART DISPLAY AREA - CONTINUOUS

The renowned **MICHELANGELO** stands with chisel and hammer before his work.

MICHELANGELO

(singing)

When it comes to Sistine ceilings,
I found it quite a rush,
But I could have done it in a
weekend,
If I'd only used a bigger brush.

He gestures to a partially chiseled block of granite, an early PIETA.

MICHELANGELO (CONT'D)

(singling)

So now I've changed my medium
And am chiseling stone away.
I'm feeling so rock solid
'Cuz I'm who's gonna win today!

SWISH PAN TO:

EXT. BENEDETTO'S ELEVATED ART DISPLAY AREA - CONTINUOUS

BENEDETTO VENDOVA, Da Vinci's arrogant, sinister, and talentless rival, stands on an elevated platform, surveying the crowd. **SCHIAVO** hovers beside him.

BENEDETTO

(singing, dismissive)

Look at all these peasants -
Just so much riff and raff.
They don't deserve the likes of me,
Oh, please, don't make me laugh!
I'm the greatest force to be
reckoned with,
So stay out of Benedetto's way.
The whole town will cheer, and
rightly so...

He pauses, eyes Schiavo, and gives him a light smack with his walking stick.

SCHIAVO

Hey!... Oh, sorry.

SCHIAVO (CONT'D)

(singing, operatic)

'Cuz you're gonna win today!

Schiavo kisses Benedetto's extended hand as Benedetto continues.

BENEDETTO
 (singing)
 Yes, everyone will cheer for me,
 'Cuz I'm gonna win today!

SCHIAVO & BENEDETTO
 (singing, in fractured
 harmony)
 Yes, Benedetto's gonna win today!

SCHIAVO
 (to himself)
 I sure hope so...
 (shrugs)
 ...but I doubt it.

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - AERIAL VIEW - ESTABLISHING

The square now bustles with citizens and vendors while artists set up for judging.

EXT. THE TOWN SQUARE - CONTINUOUS

We pass several display areas and arrive at a raised platform with a banner:

"THE AMAZING Benedetto!"

EXT. BENEDETTO'S PLATFORM - CONTINUOUS

Curtains cover the front of the platform. Benedetto's silhouette PACES behind them as he rehearses.

BENEDETTO (O.S.)
 (in silhouette,
 practicing)
 And now, the Amazing Benedetto!

A spritz from an atomizer.

BENEDETTO (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 (in silhouette, still
 practicing)
 And now, the Amazing Benedetto!

A throat-clear, and another spray.

BENEDETTO (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 (in silhouette, one final
 practice)
 And now, the AMAZING Benedetto!!

INT. BEHIND CURTAIN - CONTINUOUS

Schiavo gives Benedetto a final spray – straight into his eyes.

BENEDETTO

Watch it, you fool!

SCHIAVO

Sorry, boss.

BENEDETTO

Get out of the way, idiot!

Benedetto SHOVES Schiavo to the floor.

BENEDETTO (CONT'D)

The adoring masses are longing to see me. And I refuse to disappoint them!

EXT. BENEDETTO'S PLATFORM - CONTINUOUS

Benedetto FLINGS the curtains open with a flourish and steps out, grand and ready.

BENEDETTO

And now, the Amazing Benedet...

He STOPS.

Instead of a huge crowd, a single **THREE-YEAR-OLD GIRL (THE LOLLIPOP GIRL)** with a GIGANTIC PINK LOLLIPOP stares up at him.

BENEDETTO (CONT'D)

(humbled)

...Oh.

POV - Benedetto

The doe-eyed **LOLLIPOP GIRL** gazes up at him, unimpressed, then slowly LICKS her lollipop.

BACK TO SCENE

EXT. BENEDETTO'S PLATFORM - CONTINUOUS

Benedetto's face shifts from PRIDE, to utter DISAPPOINTMENT, on to ANGER.

He points his bony finger down at her and gestures.

BENEDETTO

Get out of here, you rotten little
BRAT!

POV - Benedetto

THE LOLLIPOP GIRL STARES unflinchingly up at Benedetto, sticks her tongue out at him and **SKIPS** merrily away.

PATRON DONATELLI, followed by his **AIDES**, **BODYGUARDS**, and **ENTOURAGE** enter foreground and **STROLL** lazily past the seething Benedetto, without so much as a glance in his direction.

Sensing an opportunity, Benedetto tries to charm **PATRON DONATELLI**.

Benedetto bows dramatically

BENEDETTO (CONT'D)

I am humbled, your highness...

NO RESPONSE

BENEDETTO (CONT'D)

(clearing throat)

Ahem! Ahem!!

Getting no response, Benedetto **WHISTLES** loudly.

NO RESPONSE.

He rapidly **CLANGS** a brass gong, but still **NO RESPONSE**.

Patron Donatelli and his Entourage don't even glance up. They simply **STROLL** walk out of frame.

EXT. DA VINCI'S DISPLAY TENT - CONTINUOUS

PATRON DONATELLI and his entourage arrive at Da Vinci's display area, where Ren busies himself arranging art.

PATRON DONATELLI

(to Da Vinci)

Ah, my dear Leonardo. And what wonderful surprises do you have in store for us this year?

PATRON DONATELLI tries to sneak a peek under a cloth covering a painting. Da Vinci gently **SLAPS** his hand away.

PATRON DONATELLI **GIGGLES** like he's been caught with his hand in a cookie jar.

PATRON DONATELLI (CONT'D)

Oh, Leonardo. Don't be cruel to a heart that's true.

A **TROUBADOUR** (who looks and dresses suspiciously like an Elvis-style impersonator) LEAPS into frame, STRUMMING A LUTE.

TROUBADOUR

(in an Elvis-like voice)

Thank you.....Thank you very much!

Everyone freezes, staring.

The Troubadour STRIKES A QUICK KARATE POSE and exits as fast as he entered.

They all watch him go, then turn back.

PATRON DONATELLI

What harm can a small peek do, Leonardo?

He leans closer, conspiratorial.

PATRON DONATELLI (CONT'D)

After all, we're all expecting another victory again this year for the fabulous Leonardo Da Vinci.

A Donatelli AIDE steps up with a giant MEGAPHONE.

AIDE

(through the megaphone)

Your attention please.... Your attention please. The Annual Florence Art Show judging, generously underwritten by the fabulously wealthy PATRON DONATELLI, will begin in approximately "XV" minutes.

The entire entourage gives PATRON DONATELLI a brief, polite GOLF CLAP.

AIDE (CONT'D)

(still using the megaphone)

Oh... and Elvis has left the town square!

They all move on, leaving Ren and Da Vinci alone at the tent.

INT. DA VINCI'S DISPLAY TENT - CONTINUOUS

Ren continues setting up as Da Vinci turns to him.

DA VINCI

So here we are again, Ren. Another art show. Speaking of which, I've noticed great improvement in your own artwork lately.

REN

No, not really. I'll never become a master artist like you, sir.

DA VINCI

Nonsense, lad. You have the raw talent; you just lack a bit of confidence right now. It will come.

REN

I'm not so sure.

DA VINCI

Of course it will. You see, heart can carry you a long way, but something is holding you back.

REN

Holding me back?

DA VINCI

Consider art, Ren.
Art has life...

(beat)

Art IS life!

REN

I'm not sure I understand.

DA VINCI

All art, great or otherwise, already exists somewhere in the vast span of time.

(beat)

It exists in the world we live in – in our past, in the present, and even in the future.

(beat)

It already exists somewhere in the minds of men...or even young boys like you.

REN

Even like me?

Da Vinci steps closer, hands on Ren's shoulders.

DA VINCI

Of course! But wait – Here is the most important part.

Da Vinci grabs Ren by the shoulders and gets face-to-face with him.

He looks Ren in the eyes.

DA VINCI (CONT'D)

It takes an artist like you, one who is pure in heart, to bring it to life on the canvas.

Ren looks at him, puzzled but intrigued.

DA VINCI (CONT'D)

You see, a true master paints not only with his hands, but just as much with his heart...his very soul.

REN

I think I get it.

DA VINCI

Without heart in your creation, there can be no life to it. Just learn to follow what your heart tells you when you paint. Together, combined with your talent, you can do anything.

Da Vinci PATS Ren's shoulders.

Ren turns to adjust his only painting: a half-finished portrait of a beautiful young girl.

DA VINCI (CONT'D)

(quizzically)

A friend of yours, Ren?

REN

No, sir. Just something... someone I made up. That's all.

DA VINCI

She's very beautiful. What do you call her?

REN

I don't call her anything. She's not even real.

DA VINCI

Oh, but that's where you're wrong, son. She's as real as the canvas she's painted on, and she'll become even more real to you once you give her a name.

Da Vinci NUDGES him and winks.

DA VINCI (CONT'D)

That's what all art masters do.

REN

Really?

DA VINCI

Of course. But take your time, and think of a really good name. Something that fits her beauty. After all...the proper name can help make it a masterpiece.

REN

Thank you, sir. I will.

The mood shifts, more serious.

DA VINCI

Tell me. How are things at home, son?

REN

They're fine.

DA VINCI

And your father?

Ren hangs his head.

REN

Uh, fine, as well.

DISSOLVE TO:

BEGIN FLASHBACK

INT. REN'S HOUSE - FLASHBACK - NIGHT

Ren and his father, Grasso, sit across from each other at a small wooden table, lit by a few candles. Ren pokes at watery stew; Grasso drinks heavily and berates him.

GRASSO

(drunk and sarcastic)
Well, well. There he sits.
My little baby boy, growing into
such a "big, strong" man.

Ren keeps his eyes on the bowl, avoiding eye contact.

GRASSO (CONT'D)

What's the matter, baby boy? No
tender conversation for your sweet
Papa?

He laughs, amused at his own sarcasm.

Grasso GULPS down his wine, then abruptly KNOCKS the fork
from Ren's hand.

He angrily GRABS Ren's hands, DRAGGING them across the table
and into the candlelight, palms up.

The size difference is striking.

GRASSO (CONT'D)

Look at these hands!... These are
not workers' hands...a man's hands!
They're like little girl's hands –
weak, soft,... artist hands.

He SHOVES Ren's hands back and drains the wine bottle, wiping
his mouth on his sleeve.

GRASSO (CONT'D)

Yessir. My big, strong man – the
artist. The son of Grasso. He makes
his papa so proud.

Grasso SMASHES the empty bottle against the table, holding
the jagged neck like a weapon, SLASHING it mockingly through
the air near Ren's face.

Ren is frozen.

GRASSO (CONT'D)

What are you going to do, big,
strong man? Fight back?

Grasso holds the jagged edge close to Ren for a tense beat, then grows bored and FLINGS the bottle remnant into a corner among several others.

Ren BOLTS for the door and ESCAPES into the darkness.

GRASSO (CONT'D)
Run away like you always do! Scared
little rabbit!
(guzzling more wine)
And give my "best" to Da Vinci!

He CACKLES.

GRASSO (CONT'D)
My best to Da Vinci!
Ha... ha... ha... ha!

END FLASHBACK

INT. DA VINCI'S DISPLAY TENT - PRESENT DAY

DA VINCI
I imagine things have gotten
difficult since your mother died.

REN
(hanging his head)
You have no idea.

Tears form in Ren's eyes.

DA VINCI
I'm sure she would be very proud of
you.

Da Vinci puts an arm around Ren.

DA VINCI (CONT'D)
I know I certainly am.

Ren quickly wipes a tear, then turns back to the art display.

REN
I'll finish setting up now.

EXT. FLORENCE ART SHOW - MICHELANGELO'S AREA - CONTINUOUS

PATRON DONATELLI and a **GROUP OF TOWNSPEOPLE** and **AIDES**
approach **MICHELANGELO**, who stands beside a large statue
covered by a cloth.

PATRON DONATELLI
 Greetings to you, Michelangelo.
 And what might we have here?

Michelangelo WHISKS away the cloth, revealing his famous statue: DAVID.

PATRON DONATELLI (CONT'D)
 Oh, my. And what do you call it?

MICHELANGELO
 I call it "Michelangelo's Big,
 Tall, Handsome Guy with a Sling on
 His Shoulder!"

The CROWD MOANS.

CROWD
 (in unison)
 Ahhhhhhh...

From the back, the UNSEEN HECKLER calls out:

UNSEEN HECKLER (O.S.)
 Where are his clothes!?

Patron Donatelli leans in to inspect the statue. A large feather in his hat conveniently blocks the statue's private area.

PATRON DONATELLI
 It's good, Mike. Unfortunately, it
 has its shortcomings. Not quite a
 winner this year, I'm afraid.

An **ARISTOCRATIC GENTLEMAN** passes.

PATRON DONATELLI (CONT'D)
 (to the gentleman)
 Oh, David! A word with you, please?

Patron Donatelli and the crowd follow the gentleman off, leaving Michelangelo alone.

MICHELANGELO
 Hmmm... "David."
 (beat)
 I rather like the sound of that.

He grabs a hammer and chisel and, in a FLURRY OF DUST, engraves the name "David" into the statue's base.

EXT. BENEDETTO'S ART PLATFORM - CONTINUOUS

The crowd and PATRON DONATELLI arrive at BENEDETTO'S PLATFORM. Curtains are closed. Benedetto basks in the attention.

BENEDETTO
And now, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, BOYS
AND GIRLS, and MISERABLE PEASANTS
of all ages, as well as all of you
CULTURED DEVOTEES and CONNOISSEURS
of astonishingly beautiful and
classic artwork...

EXT. VIEWING AREA - BENEDETTO'S DISPLAY - CONTINUOUS

Two DISHEVELED, DRUNKEN BUMS stand in the crowd, bottles in hand.

BUM #1
(slurred, to Bum #2)
Hey, he's talkin' about us!

BUM #2
And why shouldn't he be?
(takes a swig)
After all, we live down near the
"sewers"...
(another swig)
...but who is this Connie-sewer
fellow he's yammering about?

BUM #1
Search me... but I'll drink to
that!

BUM #2
Me, too!

They "CLINK" their bottles together and both SWIG heavily.

EXT. ATOP BENEDETTO'S ELEVATED PLATFORM - CONTINUOUS

BENEDETTO
Welcome to the unveiling of the
most incredible, stupendous
artistic talent this side of the
canals of Venice!
(beat)
I give you the work of the AMAZING
Benedetto Vendova!

He FLINGS the curtains open.

Behind him: a gallery of wild, chaotic "modern" paintings – bold splatters and streaks, more mess than masterpiece.

EXT. VIEWING AREA - BENEDETTO'S DISPLAY - CONTINUOUS

BUM #1
I think I'm gonna be sick.

He drinks.

BUM #2
Yikes! That's bad enough to make me
start drinking.

He looks at his bottle.

BUM #2 (CONT'D)
Ooops... too late!

He takes another swig as we PAN across SHOCKED and CONFUSED faces; a few parents cover their children's eyes.

From the back, the UNSEEN HECKLER yells:

UNSEEN HECKLER (O.S.)
That's AWFUL! What a DISASTER!
That's got all the charm of a BAD
RASH!

A TOMATO FLIES.

SPLAT!

It hits a canvas.

Another tomato.

SPLAT!

Soon, a barrage rains toward the platform.

EXT. ATOP BENEDETTO'S PLATFORM - CONTINUOUS

Tomatoes EXPLODE across the paintings. Schiavo DIVES behind a large canvas. Benedetto grabs another painting and uses it as a shield.

SPLAT! SPLAT!

Red pulp runs down.

BENEDETTO
Where are they getting tomatoes
this time of year?!

SWISH PAN TO:

EXT. TOMATO VENDOR'S SMALL STAND - CONTINUOUS

A TOMATO VENDOR frantically sells from an overflowing cart as townspeople grab tomatoes as fast as he can hand them out. He pauses, looks to us, and SHRUGS.

TOMATO VENDOR
Hey. It's a living.

SWISH PAN BACK
TO:

EXT. ATOP BENEDETTO'S PLATFORM - CONTINUOUS

SPLAT!

A tomato nails Benedetto in the face. He peels off the skin, stunned.

EXT. VIEWING AREA - BENEDETTO'S DISPLAY - CONTINUOUS

The crowd ROARS with laughter.

CROWD MEMBER #1
Maybe he'll ketchup later!

CROWD MEMBER #2
I would relish that!

PATRON DONATELLI, not to be left out, FEEBLY TOSSES a tomato.

PATRON DONATELLI
(chuckling)
My, that was fun!

He and his bodyguards lead the crowd away, still chuckling.

EXT. ATOP BENEDETTO'S PLATFORM - CONTINUOUS

Benedetto stands alone, humiliated, dripping tomato. Schiavo peeks out and offers a handkerchief.

SCHIAVO

Here.

(pointing)

You've got a little something on your face.

Benedetto's eye TWITCHES. He SNATCHES the handkerchief, winds it, and SNAPS it across Schiavo's forehead.

SCHIAVO (CONT'D)

Yeow! That stings!

Schiavo rubs the red mark as Benedetto seethes, watching the distant DA VINCI CROWD celebrate. His humiliation hardens into rage.

BENEDETTO

(under his breath)

I'll get that rotten Da Vinci...

Two more tomatoes WHIZ IN.

SPLAT! SPLAT!

One hits Benedetto again; the other splatters a canvas.

UNSEEN HECKLER (O.S.)

It's still awful... but it looks better now! Ha!

Benedetto TREMBLES, fists clenched.

BENEDETTO

...if it's—

SPLAT!

One last tomato lands squarely. Pulp drips down his face as he finishes, teeth clenched:

BENEDETTO

...the last thing I do.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

EXT. DA VINCI'S WORKSHOP - DUSK

Ren and Da Vinci return from the art show. Ren staggers through the doorway under the weight of a massive sack of prize money.

INT. DA VINCI'S WORKSHOP - CONTINUOUS

Ren DROPS the sack with a THUD. Da Vinci reaches in, scoops out a handful of coins, and offers them to Ren.

DA VINCI
To the victors belong the spoils.

REN
Oh, no. I couldn't accept it. It's so much!

DA VINCI
Nonsense, my boy. I couldn't have done it without you.

Ren stares at the coins like treasure, then accepts them.

DA VINCI (CONT'D)
You'd best be getting home, Ren.
It'll be dark soon.

REN
Yes, sir. And thank you, sir!

Ren runs out into the street, clutching his prize.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ALLEYWAY OUTSIDE REN'S HOME - NIGHT

A grim, cluttered alley. VAGRANTS loiter and drink. GRASSO, drunk and dangerous, fills the doorway.

Ren approaches cautiously as Grasso takes a long swig.

GRASSO
You're late!!

Ren edges toward the doorway, eyes down.

REN
Sorry, father.

GRASSO
And where have you been this fine
day? Wasting your time with that
"crazy man" Da Vinci again?

Ren tries to slip past. Grasso lets him—then SHOVES him hard.
Ren hits the stone floor. Coins scatter.

INT. REN'S HOME - CONTINUOUS

Grasso's tone turns sickly sweet.

GRASSO
What's all this, now? My beloved
son holding out on his dear Papa?

The sweetness vanishes.

GRASSO (CONT'D)
The coins!! Give 'em to me! NOW!

Ren scrambles after the coins.

REN
But, father! I need them to buy my
art supplies! I earned them!

Grasso's eyes flare. He grabs a nearby painting Ren has been
working on—and SMASHES it.

GRASSO
Problem solved. No more art, so no
need for supplies.

Ren's fist tightens around the remaining coins.

Grasso raises his hand to strike. Terrified, Ren drops the
coins into his father's massive palm.

As Grasso counts his winnings, Ren BOLTS out into the night.

GRASSO'S LAUGHTER echoes after him.

GRASSO (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Ha... ha... ha... ha... ha!

He admires the coins.

GRASSO (CONT'D)
An artist! Don't make me laugh!
Ha... ha... ha... ha... ha!

He pockets the money.

GRASSO (CONT'D)
Tonight, everyone drinks on Grasso!

EXT. NARROW STREETS OF FLORENCE - CONTINUOUS

Ren flees through dim, seedy alleys. Shadows, drunks, and danger press in.

He finally collapses among a jumble of old crates and debris, sinking down, alone.

REN (SINGING)
"JUST ONE CHANCE TO BELIEVE IN ME"

REN (CONT'D)
(singing)
Why so full of venom?
Why is he so cruel?
After all I am his flesh and blood,
Not some illegitimate fool
Who deserves this type of hate.
I need a welcome doorway,
I need an open gate
To have just one chance to believe
in me,
Just one small moment to believe in
me.

Weak as an artist,
Even weaker as a son.
Just once in my life,
I'd love to be the chosen one
Who finishes on top,
Who wins the golden prize.
Oh, what a joy to once
See victory through my eyes;
To have just one chance to believe
in me,
Just one small moment to believe in
me.

To be a master artist
Is my one true heart's desire.
Where does this deep urge come
from, this passion's fire,
To take brush in hand
And create some wondrous art?
Why is my dream so elusive?
Why can't I get my start,
And have just one chance to believe
in me,

(MORE)

REN (CONT'D)
 Just a single moment to believe in
 me.

As the song ends, Ren CURLS UP against the crates, small
 against the vast, uncaring city.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

EXT. BENEDETTO'S ART STUDIO - NIGHT - ESTABLISHING

We GLIDE through the window of BENEDETTO'S LAVISH STUDIO.
 Hideous "modern" paintings cover the walls.

INT. BENEDETTO'S STUDIO - CONTINUOUS

Benedetto paces, drowning in self-pity. Melodramatic GUITAR
 MUSIC plays softly, building.

BENEDETTO
 (to himself)
 Each year comes and goes, and still
 the prize I seek slips like an
 elusive eel through my incredibly
 talented fingers.

SCHIAVO (O.S.)
 (monotone, parroting)
 Incredibly talented fingers.

BENEDETTO
 Oh, the agony of seeing that old
 fool Da Vinci walk away with what
 is truly due me.

SCHIAVO (O.S.)
 (monotone)
 Oh, the agony.

The music swells as Benedetto picks up a framed portrait of
 himself as a child with his mother – a formidable, mustached,
 multi-chinned woman with a wart and chin hairs.

BENEDETTO
 And the sheer humiliation of facing
 the disappointment of my dear,
 sweet Mama.

He studies the portrait as the music crescendos.

BENEDETTO (CONT'D)
Oh, Mama! What did your beautiful,
talented, incredibly gifted boy
ever do to deserve such treatment!?

He HURLS the portrait offscreen.

It SMACKS SCHIAVO in the head – revealing he was the one
playing the dramatic guitar. The music cuts off.

Schiavo stares at the portrait, recoils, then BEATS it with
his guitar.

WHACK! WHACK! WHACK!

BENEDETTO
Oh, Schiavo. How many years must I
suffer the torment of finishing
second to that old, talentless fool
Da Vinci?

Schiavo starts counting on his fingers, quickly runs out, and
hides his hands behind his back.

BENEDETTO (CONT'D)
I must find a way to do away with
that cursed thorn in my flesh...
the "great" Leonardo Da Vinci.

He clenches his fists dramatically, then admires his hands.

BENEDETTO (CONT'D)
But surely these perfect artist's
hands cannot be soiled by foul
play.
(he kisses his hands)
I need confederates of the highest
caliber to do my dirty work.

SCHIAVO
Yeah. Confederates.
(pauses, thinking)
But what are you gonna do with a
bunch of fake money?

Benedetto GRABS him by the throat and fires off a rapid
series of light SLAPS.

BENEDETTO
Not COUNTERFEITS, you idiot!
Confederates! CONFEDERATES!

He DROPS Schiavo with a THUD.

BENEDETTO (CONT'D)
Schiavo, I want you to find me a
pair of ruthless assassins to help
do away with Da Vinci.

SCHIAVO
What do you mean, "do away with"?

BENEDETTO
Do away with! You know... make sure
he... disappears.

SCHIAVO
Disappears?

BENEDETTO
Ceases to exist.

SCHIAVO
Ceases?

BENEDETTO
Acquires room temperature.

SCHIAVO
Room temperature?

BENEDETTO
Takes a well-deserved dirt nap!

SCHIAVO
Dirt nap?

BENEDETTO
In other words... KILL HIM!

SCHIAVO
All of those? In that order?

BENEDETTO
No, you pea brain.
(erupts)
I want Da Vinci DEAD!

SCHIAVO
Oh! I get it. DEAD!
Why didn't you say so?

Benedetto yanks Schiavo back to his feet.

BENEDETTO
Just get me two assassins to do
what they do best.

SCHIAVO

But, boss... where can I find a
couple of assassins at this hour?

Benedetto SNAPS. He GRABS Schiavo by the lapels and LIFTS him
off the ground. Schiavo's feet DANGLE helplessly.

BENEDETTO

That's not my problem, you pathetic
little dust mite! Just have them
here by midnight!

He DROPS Schiavo. Schiavo lands hard, then scrambles for the
door. He grabs his cape, attempts a dramatic swirl – and
steps on it, faceplanting.

He pops back up, pretending nothing happened, and slips out
into the night.

Benedetto, alone, revels in his villainy.

BENEDETTO (CONT'D)

(to himself)

Finally, I, the Great Benedetto,
will be the premier artist in all
of Florence...

(beat)

...and perhaps, THE WORLD!

He laughs maniacally.

BENEDETTO (CONT'D)

Ha... ha... ha... ha... ha!

DISSOLVE TO:

FADE IN:

EXT. THE FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE TAVERN - LATER THAT NIGHT

A wooden sign hangs above the door:

*"The Florence Nightingale Tavern –
Come Nurse an Ale with Us!"*

INT. THE FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE TAVERN - CONTINUOUS

The tavern is a hive of THUGS, DRUNKS, and LOWLIFES. Bottles
fly. Fights break out. Laughter and curses fill the air.

SCHIAVO steps inside – and immediately DUCKS as a bottle WHIZZES past his head and SHATTERS behind him. He forces a nervous smile.

SCHIAVO
This must be the place.

He weaves through the chaos and spots two men alone at a table: DRAGO and CORNELIUS.

Cornelius is short, squat, and rough – the “brains,” though that’s generous. Drago is enormous, muscular, and profoundly dim – the “brawn.”

SCHIAVO (CONT'D)
Gentlemen.

They both turn and look behind them, then back at Schiavo.

CORNELIUS
(to Drago)
I think he means us.

SCHIAVO
Oh, I do! I certainly do! May I
join you?

DRAGO
No, pal. We work alone.

CORNELIUS
No, idiot – he means can he sit
down with us.

DRAGO
Oh.

CORNELIUS
(to Schiavo)
What's the harm? But it's gonna
cost ya.

Cornelius flips his empty stein upside down, grinning. Drago flips his half-full stein and spills beer everywhere.

SCHIAVO
Please, allow me.

He signals the **BARKEEP** for three fresh steins, sits, and leans in.

SCHIAVO (CONT'D)
(whispering)
I am looking for two “special men.”

Drago mishears.

DRAGO
 Sorry, pal. I went about an hour ago. I ain't got no specimen to give you.

He spreads his arms.

DRAGO (CONT'D)
 Dry as a bone.

CORNELIUS
 Idiot! He said "special men," you fool - not "specimen."

He gestures at Drago.

CORNELIUS (CONT'D)
 Sorry. This one's about as "special" as they come.

DRAGO
 Likewise, I'm sure.

Cornelius rolls his eyes.

CORNELIUS
 (to Schiavo)
 I've got three questions for you:
 "A"... who are you?
 (holds up one finger)
 "TWO"... what d'you need?
 (holds up two fingers)
 and "D"... what's it pay?

The **BARMAID** arrives with three fresh steins. Schiavo pays her. They lean in again.

SCHIAVO
 My employer is looking to hire the services of two men with special talents...

He glances around. They all do, shiftily.

SCHIAVO (CONT'D)
 ...but more importantly, men who know how to keep their mouths shut.

Drago clamps his mouth shut and tries to "talk" through sealed lips.

DRAGO
 (muffled)
 Mmmmm... mmmmm!

Cornelius POKES him in the eye.

DRAGO (CONT'D)
 Owwww! That hurt!
 (then)
 I mean — MOWWWW! MAT MURT!

CORNELIUS
 (rolling his eyes)
 I told you he was special.

SCHIAVO
 Quite impressive... but not what I
 had in mind. I need two ruthless
 thugs.

CORNELIUS
 That's us.

DRAGO
 Yep. That's us, all right!
 RUTHLESS!

He pauses, thinking.

DRAGO (CONT'D)
 By the way... who's this Ruth lady?

Cornelius just stares at him.

CORNELIUS
 So what d'you need? Robbery? Arson?
 Pillaging? Maybe some general
 mayhem?

He leans closer to Schiavo.

CORNELIUS (CONT'D)
 We got a special this week on
 mayhem — buy one, get one.

SCHIAVO
 Good to know. Let's go elsewhere to
 discuss the details. There is
 someone I need you to meet.

They CHUG their beers. Schiavo attempts a dramatic cape swirl
 — and immediately faceplants.

Drago sighs, hoists Schiavo like a sack of flour, and exits with Cornelius.

EXT. STREET LEADING TO BENEDETTO'S STUDIO - MIDNIGHT

The town clock STRIKES MIDNIGHT as the trio approaches Benedetto's studio – two small silhouettes and one giant slip along the wall.

They enter.

INT. BENEDETTO'S STUDIO - CONTINUOUS

Benedetto sits at a table, waiting.

BENEDETTO
Gentlemen. Please, have a seat.
Oh dear – where are my manners?
May I offer you both a libation?

CORNELIUS
No, I think I'm "lergik" to
libations... but some wine sure would
be nice.

DRAGO
Yep. Some wine would be nice.

BENEDETTO
Of course. Schiavo! Quickly – wine
for our distinguished guests.

Schiavo pours four goblets. Drago leans toward Cornelius.

DRAGO
(whispering)
Beside, I heard those "libations"
taste like chicken.

Drago and Cornelius each grab two goblets and start guzzling.

CORNELIUS
Hey, this is great swill. Ain't you
guys havin' any?

Benedetto just stares as they drink.

BENEDETTO
While you are savoring the fruit of
the vine, I'd like to discuss a
proposal with you two.

DRAGO
Proposal? Who's gettin' married?

Drago grabs Cornelius' hands, gazing into his eyes and batting his eyelashes.

DRAGO (CONT'D)
I just love a good wedding!

CORNELIUS
Not that kind of proposal, you moron! He means a job.

He smacks Drago's forehead with a classic "I could've had a V-8 slap.

BENEDETTO
(clearing his throat)
Harrumph. If I may continue...

DRAGO
Please do, your libationship.

Drinking sloppily, they look on as:

Benedetto SINGS: "The Thorn In My Side"

Oh, the burden of being a genius
Is something that can't be denied,
But I'll never find rest
'Til I've done my very best
To remove the thorn in my side.

How can I explain to you cretins
All the nights that I have laid
down and cried
And devised such a plan
To do away with the man
Who's been the constant thorn in my
side

Every year my success has escaped
me,
Surely it's not that I haven't
tried,
But I've been put to the test
To be much better than best -
I must somehow pluck the thorn from
my side.

Your assistance will be my
 salvation,
 Say you'll help me in turning the
 tide.
 They think he's the best artist,
 But I'll show them who's the
 smartest –
 Help me pull out the thorn from my
 side.

So, my friends, do I state my wish
 clearly?
 Oh, what joy to hear Da Vinci has
 died.
 I will pay you most gladly,
 And I will act oh so sadly,
 After I bury that thorn in my side
 Oh, just to bury that thorn in my
 side.

So it's a deal, it's agreed, do not
 tarry,
 Time is fleeting – go find the one
 we must bury.
 There's not a moment to lose,
 It's time for his eternal snooze.
 Do it now, please abide,
 Return to tell me he's died,
 The frustration is never-ending.
 To eternal damnation, please send
 him.
 How it's done doesn't matter.
 Just produce his cadaver,
 Use brute force if you must,
 To turn his flesh into dust,
 There will be no one to blame,
 Just extinguish his mortal flame,
 And do away with Leonardo Da Vinci
 That cursed thorn in my side.

The song ends with Benedetto in a triumphant pose. Drago and
 Cornelius clap enthusiastically, slightly offbeat.

BENEDETTO

Do I make myself clear, gentlemen?

CORNELIUS

Oh, crystal clear, your royal
 "thorniness." You want us to kill
 the old inventor, Da Vinci, and you
 don't care how we does it – just so
 long as we does it... right?

BENEDETTO

Absolutely. You have a total – and dare I say, unexpected – grasp of the obvious, my friend.

CORNELIUS

Why, that'll be a piece of cake!

Drago's ears perk up at "cake."

DRAGO

(excited)

CAKE?... I'd like a piece of cake!

SCHIAVO

(also excited)

Me too!

(beat; to Drago)

What kinda' cake do you like?

DRAGO

(impervious)

Big, round... and FREE ones!

BENEDETTO

Gentlemen... finish this assignment, and you'll be able to afford a whole bakery full of cakes.

Drago giggles like a little kid.

DRAGO

(giggling)

Hee... hee... hee... hee... heee!

Cornelius STOMPS on his foot.

DRAGO (CONT'D)

(in pain)

Owwwwwww!

Drago hops on one leg, clutching his foot. Cornelius turns to Benedetto.

CORNELIUS

Just give us the details and we'll take care of the rest, your royal "viciousness."

Benedetto grabs charcoal and parchment, sketching rapidly.

BENEDETTO

(dramatically)

Now, the plan is afoot!

Drago inspects the bottom of his foot, then the other.

DRAGO
I don't see nothin' here.

Cornelius RAPS his knuckles on Drago's forehead like knocking on a door.

CORNELIUS
Nothin' here either!

Schiavo drops a large sack of coins in front of their chairs.

BENEDETTO
This is simply a down payment – and
there is plenty more when the job
is done.

As we PULL BACK toward the window, the four men continue to conspire. Evil laughter rises. More wine is poured.

ALL
(evilly)
Ha... ha... ha... ha... ha.

They CLINK their goblets as we slowly FADE TO BLACK.

DRAGO (O.S.)
(excited)
I'm gettin' CAKE!

INT. DA VINCI'S WORKSHOP - MORNING

Da Vinci paints at his easel while Ren cleans and organizes.

DA VINCI
Well, Ren, it looks like another
beautiful day. Just look at that
morning light.

EXT. ACROSS THE STREET FROM DA VINCI'S WORKSHOP - CONTINUOUS

DRAGO and CORNELIUS crouch behind barrels and crates opposite the workshop. Drago holds a crossbow; Cornelius peers through a battered telescope.

Through the TELESCOPE POV we see Da Vinci and Ren at work.

Drago whispers something. Both assassins GIGGLE like schoolgirls.

DRAGO & CORNELIUS
 (giggling)
 Hee...hee...hee...hee...hee!

Drago COCKS the crossbow and takes aim at Da Vinci's back.

INT. DA VINCI'S WORKSHOP - CONTINUOUS

DA VINCI
 Ren, can you please bring me a long-
 handled brush?

He drops his brush and bends to pick it up.

An arrow WHIPS over his head—

SFX: THWACK! (ARROW STRIKES CANVAS STAND)

It embeds in the wooden stand. Da Vinci looks up, unfazed.

DA VINCI
 My, my, that certainly was quick.
 Thank you, Ren.

He plucks the arrow from the stand and casually uses the feathered end to mix paint on his palette.

Ren notices, then peers out the window. He spots Drago and Cornelius. They spot him. They stare at each other, stunned.

EXT. BUILDING ACROSS FROM DA VINCI'S WORKSHOP - CONTINUOUS

On the third floor above the assassins, a LARGE ITALIAN WOMAN FLINGS open her shutters and, without looking, DUMPS a pot of sewage straight down.

It splashes over Drago and Cornelius.

They look at each other, deadpan. The LOLLIPOP GIRL skips past without slowing.

LOLLIPOP GIRL
 (with a lisp)
 PEW! You guyth sthink like dirty
 diaperth.

EXT. BACK COURTYARD - DA VINCI'S WORKSHOP - THAT NIGHT

Drago and Cornelius slip into the courtyard where Da Vinci stores prototype flying machines.

In the shadows, they sabotage his "helicopter" – loosening fittings, cutting ropes.

CORNELIUS

(whispering)

I can't wait to see that old coot
come crashing down in a million
pieces.

DRAGO

(loudly)

Yeah, I can't wait either—
(beat)
for what?

CORNELIUS

Quiet, you fool! You'll wake Da
Vinci!

He yanks Drago down to his level.

CORNELIUS (CONT'D)

Don't let me hear another peep out
of you!

Cornelius turns back to the machine.

DRAGO

(to himself)

Peeeeeeeeep.
(chuckles)
Heee... heee... heee.

Cornelius does a slow burn, then SLUGS Drago in the mouth.
Drago spits out a few teeth. Cornelius finishes the sabotage.

CORNELIUS

There... that should do it.

DRAGO

(mumbling, toothless)

Mare... mat mude moo mit.

They tiptoe off into the night.

EXT. BACK COURTYARD - DA VINCI'S WORKSHOP - NEXT MORNING

Drago and Cornelius hide nearby as Da Vinci and Ren wheel the "helicopter" into the courtyard.

Da Vinci straps on a crude backpack – a prototype parachute – then climbs into the machine and starts PEDALING. The blades WHIR; the contraption SHAKES, then slowly LIFTS OFF.

EXT. AERIAL POV - CONTINUOUS

From Da Vinci's POV, the courtyard and assassins fall away below. As he rises, the sabotaged ropes and fittings START TO GIVE WAY. The machine BEGINS TO COME APART in mid-air.

EXT. ROCKY HILLSIDE BEHIND THE WORKSHOP - CONTINUOUS

Watching from a nearby hillside, Drago and Cornelius see the "helicopter" failing and Da Vinci in apparent peril. They hug and hop in giddy celebration.

Ren sees the disaster unfolding.

EXT. DA VINCI'S COURTYARD - CONTINUOUS

REN
(shouting)
Mr. Da Vinci! Use your parachute!

EXT. THE HELICOPTER - CONTINUOUS

DA VINCI
(to himself)
Sure hope it works!
(then, calling out)
LOOK OUT BELOW!

He BAILS OUT, the parachute opening. He glides safely toward the ground.

EXT. ROCKY HILLSIDE - CONTINUOUS

The disintegrating "helicopter" crashes down right on top of Drago and Cornelius.

After a beat, they crawl out of the wreckage, battered.

DRAGO
(dazed)
Looks like I'm not gettin' cake.

Cornelius SLUGS Drago in the eye.

EXT. THE TOWN MARKETPLACE - NEXT DAY - EARLY MORNING

The marketplace bustles with BUYERS and SELLERS. Da Vinci and Ren move from stall to stall. Ren struggles under an almost unbearable load of new purchases.

EXT. ANIMAL VENDOR'S STALL - CONTINUOUS

Da Vinci steps up to an **ANIMAL VENDOR** surrounded by cages of every kind.

ANIMAL VENDOR
And how are you this beautiful day,
Señor Da Vinci?

DA VINCI
Fine... just fine. My usual, please.
I'll take them all!

ANIMAL VENDOR
Absolutely! Gift wrap, or will you
be releasing them here?

DA VINCI
No need to go to any trouble. Here
will be fine.

Da Vinci hands over several gold coins. The vendor tips his hat, clearly used to this. Da Vinci opens cage doors, releasing pairs of doves.

DA VINCI (CONT'D)
Animals should not be caged by man.

EXT. ACROSS THE COURTYARD - CONTINUOUS

DRAGO, now sporting a black eye, and CORNELIUS spot Da Vinci.

Drago draws a menacing dagger. They TIPTOE through the crowd toward Da Vinci and Ren.

Overhead, the newly freed DOVES swoop past—and promptly POOP on both assassins. They laugh at each other, then realize they're both splattered.

They press on anyway.

EXT. ANIMAL VENDOR'S STALL - CONTINUOUS

At the stall, Da Vinci opens the cage of a docile-looking **FEMALE BADGER — AMICA**.

Just as Drago closes in to stab Da Vinci, Leonardo sets the badger free. In an instant, she EXPLODES into action, savaging Drago and Cornelius like a Tasmanian Devil blur of claws and fur.

Drago drops the dagger, screaming.

DRAGO
(screaming)
Nice kitty!! Nice kitty!!

He bends over--bad idea. Amica charges up his pant leg for a second round. With her claws buried in his back, Drago careens through the crowd, shrieking and gyrating.

Finally, the fury subsides. Drago drops to the ground, rigid. Amica calmly pads away and falls in step behind Da Vinci and Ren as they move on, unnoticed. She has adopted them.

Drago, a bloody heap, staggers up and turns to an equally shredded Cornelius.

DRAGO (CONT'D)
(moaning)
That was one bad kitty.

Cornelius SLUGS him in the unbruised eye.

Da Vinci, Ren, Amica, and Pepe continue to the next stall, oblivious to the carnage.

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE DA VINCI'S WORKSHOP - LATER THAT DAY

Da Vinci, Ren, Amica, and Pepe head toward the workshop. Ren is again loaded down with packages.

Farther back, Cornelius and Drago try to be "covert," ducking behind barrels and carts as they follow.

Da Vinci and company enter the workshop.

INT. DA VINCI'S WORKSHOP - CONTINUOUS

Ren drops his heavy load in a heap. Da Vinci slips on a work apron and immediately begins tinkering with a GIANT CROSSBOW. Ren joins him.

EXT. ACROSS THE STREET FROM DA VINCI'S WORKSHOP - CONTINUOUS

Once more, Drago and Cornelius set up across the street, now armed with a BOMB. Drago sports two black eyes.

CORNELIUS
(holding the bomb)
This'll blow that old man into a
million pieces.

DRAGO
Yeah, a million and one pieces!

He counts on his fingers.

DRAGO (CONT'D)
That's a lot, right?

CORNELIUS
(shaking his head)
Boy... nothing gets past you.

INT. DA VINCI'S WORKSHOP - CONTINUOUS

Da Vinci and Ren adjust and tune the giant crossbow.

EXT. ACROSS THE STREET - CONTINUOUS

The bomb—about the size of a bowling ball with a long fuse—sits in Cornelius' hands.

Drago squints through a small magnifying glass, trying to light the fuse. He aim is off, focusing light on Cornelius' hand until it starts to SMOLDER.

DRAGO
(sniffing)
Do you smell that?
(licks lips)
YUM! Somebody's having a barbecue!

They both sniff.

CORNELIUS
As a matter of fact I— YEOW!

He snuffs his burning hand. They try again. Finally, the FUSE CATCHES.

Cornelius thrusts the bomb into Drago's hands. Drago freezes.

CORNELIUS (CONT'D)
Well?

DRAGO
Well what?

CORNELIUS
(starting to panic)
Throw it!!!

DRAGO
In the "well"?

He looks around, searching for a non-existent well.

DRAGO (CONT'D)
Well? What well?

CORNELIUS
Not in a well! There is NO well!
(now fully panicked)
THROW IT!

DRAGO
Where?

CORNELIUS
(even more panicked)
INTO DA VINCI'S WORKSHOP, YOU
IDIOT!

Drago finally HURLS the bomb. It BOUNCES across the cobblestones toward the workshop.

INT. DA VINCI'S WORKSHOP - CONTINUOUS

The bomb bounces up and comes to rest atop the COCKED CROSSBOW MECHANISM. The FUSE BURNS DOWN.

Da Vinci and Ren are oblivious, still focused on their adjustments. AMICA, however, spots the danger. She tugs urgently at Ren's pant leg.

REN
(to Amica)
Not now, girl. I'll play with you
later.

The fuse burns shorter.

EXT. ACROSS THE STREET - CONTINUOUS

The assassins watch, delighted.

They GIGGLE and perform a little TIPPYTOE DANCE OF GLEE, then sprint away down the street and over the horizon.

INT. DA VINCI'S WORKSHOP - CONTINUOUS

Amica tries to ROLL the bomb off the mechanism but it's too heavy. At the last second, Ren sees her struggle and the burning fuse. He SLAMS his hand down, TRIPPING the release.

SPRANG!!!

The crossbow launches the bomb with enormous force. It whistles past Pepe in the rafters and PUNCHES through the roof.

EXT. DA VINCI'S WORKSHOP / STREET - CONTINUOUS

The bomb arcs through the air and disappears over the horizon where Drago and Cornelius fled.

A long beat of silence.

Then a HUGE EXPLOSION and a RISING CLOUD OF SMOKE on the horizon.

EXT. LARGE CRATER - CONTINUOUS

Smoke clears to reveal Drago and Cornelius standing in a massive smoking crater, covered head-to-toe in ash.

DRAGO
(deadpan, dazed)
Great big bomb go boom!
(beat)
DRAGO (CONT'D)
(resigned)
I know... no cake.

Cornelius SLUGS him. Drago collapses into a pile of cinders. Cornelius passes out backward into the soot.

EXT. ROOFTOP OF DA VINCI'S WORKSHOP - DUSK

Ren hammers the last shingle into the repaired section of roof.

REN
That should just about do it, sir!

DA VINCI (O.S.)
Good job, lad... and great timing.
Mrs. Mangia has got some dinner
ready for us all!

REN
Great! I'm starved!

He scurries down the ladder.

INT. DA VINCI'S WORKSHOP - CONTINUOUS

The table is set. Ren joins Da Vinci, Amica, and Pepe, digging into bread and soup.

MRS. MANGIA
Eat up, everyone. You've got to
keep your strength up.

DA VINCI
Yes... by all means, eat up! I have a
lot planned for tomorrow and
everyone will have to do their
part.

He SLURPS his soup and tears into bread.

DA VINCI (CONT'D)
(confidently)
Tomorrow's going to be a fantastic
day... I can just feel it!

INT. DA VINCI'S WORKSHOP - NEXT DAY - MIDDAY

Drago and Cornelius, battered, burned, and out of patience, decide to storm the workshop directly.

They BUST THROUGH THE DOOR and find themselves face-to-face with Ren, Pepe, and Amica. Da Vinci, back turned, paints serenely, unaware.

Ren takes them on, fending them off in a whirlwind of slapstick – flung paint, flying tools, splashes of chemicals, and coordinated attacks from bat and badger – turning the workshop into chaos.

DRAGO
(to Da Vinci)
I'm gonna' kill you!

Da Vinci mishears.

DA VINCI
(pensively)
Yes... it could stand a touch of
blue.

He adds a few blue strokes to his painting.

CORNELIUS
(to Drago; loudly)
Hit him with a stick!

Drago grabs a plank and swings blindly at Da Vinci. Pepe swoops in and covers Drago's face. Drago spins and knocks Cornelius flat instead.

Da Vinci mishears again.

DA VINCI
(to himself)
Yes... you're right... the paint here
looks a bit thick.

DRAGO
(to Cornelius; loudly)
Bash him in the head!

DA VINCI
(again, to himself)
Yes... perhaps a splash of red.

Ren slices through a thick rope holding back a large flying machine model. It swings like a battering ram, SMASHING into Drago and Cornelius and BLASTING them out the door.

EXT. ACROSS THE STREET - CONTINUOUS

They crash into a heap, tangled in broken wood, canvas, and ropes.

EXT. THIRD-FLOOR WINDOW - OPPOSITE - CONTINUOUS

Once again, the LARGE ITALIAN WOMAN FLINGS open her shutters and DUMPS a pot of sewage straight down.

SPLAT.

The assassins are drenched in poo. They trade a deadpan look.

The LITTLE LOLLIPOP GIRL SKIPS past.

LOLLIPOP GIRL
(with a lisp)
WOW! You guyth STHILL sthink like
dirty diaperth.

INT. DA VINCI'S WORKSHOP - CONTINUOUS

Hearing the crash, Da Vinci finally turns. He sees the wrecked workshop and assumes only one culprit.

DA VINCI

(to Ren)

Looks like you've let things get a bit out of control there, young master Ren.

REN

(incredulous)

But, sir...

DA VINCI

No excuses, lad. Hop to it.

Let's get this mess cleaned up.

EXT. BENEDETTO'S STUDIO - THAT EVENING

A KNOCK at the door.

Benedetto opens it to find Drago and Cornelius - bruised, broken, tooth¹short, and filthy.

DRAGO

(to Benedetto)

This job...

CORNELIUS

(to Benedetto)

...STINKS!

They topple backward like planks.

Benedetto SLAMS the door.

DRAGO (O.S.)

OWWWWW!...

Can I still have some cake?

INT. BENEDETTO'S STUDIO - CONTINUOUS

BENEDETTO

Those blasted buffoons. It just goes to prove - if you want something done right, it must be done by the Great Benedetto!

He grabs his cape. Schiavo dusts nearby.

SCHIAVO
Where you going, boss?

BENEDETTO
OUT!... To take care of things, you
imbecile!

Benedetto yanks open the door, STEPS directly onto the semi-conscious assassins, and SLAMS it behind him.

DRAGO (O.S.)
OWWWW! Again!

Benedetto disappears into the darkness.

EXT. GYPSY WAGON - NIGHT

A crooked wagon sits at the edge of Florence, lit by lanterns and surrounded by odd trinkets, masks, and painted signs that read things like:

- *"FORTUNES TOLD"*
- *"CURSES SOLD"*
- *"NO REFUNDS"*

Wind RUSTLES the hanging charms. A **RAVEN** CAWS, then FLIES OFF.

EXT. THE GYPSY CAMP - NIGHT

Under cover of darkness at the Gypsy camp on the outskirts of town, Benedetto moves among the shadows so as not to be seen.

He sees a RAMSHACKLE GYPSY CART with candle lights aglow inside. He approaches and knocks cautiously on the door.

A voice inside seductively beckons him to enter.

ZINGARA O.S.
(seductively...like honey)
Come on in, tall, pale and
gruesome.

Benedetto looks around to be sure he has not been seen, then tentatively opens the door and slinks into the wagon.

We meet **ZINGARA**, the Gypsy Mystic woman. (She is a amalgam of Mad Madam Mim, from *"The Sword in the Stone"*, the Sea Witch Ursula from *"The Little Mermaid"*, with just a smidgeon of Hannibal Lecter thrown in from *"The Silence of the Lambs"*.)

INT. ZINGARA'S WAGON -NIGHT

Zingara is seated at a table upon which sits a crystal ball that glows an eerie green, some Tarot cards, and other fortune-teller bric-a-brac.

Her wagon is also a cluttered mess of many bizarre items and strange decorations. It has not been cleaned in ages.

BENEDETTO

(with an arrogant tone)
Madame, you have the honor of being
in the presence of master artist
Benedetto Vendova.

ZINGARA

Ooooooh... It's my lucky night.
I've been expecting you!

BENEDETTO

(sarcastically; looking
around)
May I say... I love what you've
done with the place. "Early
Pandemonium" if I'm not mistaken.

Zingara smiles with pride.

ZINGARA

(with pride)
Thanks. . .it's a gift!

Benedetto starts to explain why he is there.

BENEDETTO

I have come to...

Zingara interrupts him..

ZINGARA

(confidently)
Zingara knows why you have come to
see her, Senor 'Bend-over'!

BENEDETTO

(indignantly)
That's Vendova... Benedetto "Ven-Doh-
Vah!"

ZINGARA

Gotcha, loud and clear, Vendetta!

She moves her hands over and around a large crystal ball on the center of her table. She stares intently into the crystal ball.

ZINGARA (CONT'D)

You come seeking a cure for your pesky, chronic, bed-wetting! Right!?

BENEDETTO

(offended)

That is hardly my problem, Madam!

ZINGARA

(under her breath)

Yeah, right! I'm seeing nothing but damp jammies for this dude.

Zingara re-focuses upon the crystal ball.

ZINGARA (CONT'D)

(not quite as confident)

Er...the heartbreak of psoriasis?

BENEDETTO

Strike two! Care to try again?

ZINGARA

(still not quite as confident)

Um...I'm just gonna' throw this out there...the painful itch of hemorrhoids?

BENEDETTO

(Exasperated)

Not even close!

ZINGARA

(frustrated)

Perhaps it would be bed-wetter, er...

I mean 'better' if you had a seat

(to herself)

so long as its not hemorrhoids...

(to Benedetto)

...and allow the power of the crystal ball to tell us why you're here?

Benedetto removes a handkerchief, uses it to dust off a chair and has a seat opposite of Zingara. He begins to stare into the crystal ball. The ball begins to glow more actively and wispy images appear inside.

BENEDETTO

(captivated)

Wow... high def!

Suddenly, the crystal ball goes completely dark. Benedetto looks up at Zingara.

BENEDETTO (CONT'D)

What the...?

Zingara shrugs her shoulders as if this is a common occurrence.

ZINGARA

(apologetically)

Sorry... cable's been on the fritz!

Zingara "hits" the crystal ball a few times, whereupon the ball regains its glow.

ZINGARA (CONT'D)

There are several driving forces in the universe. Love and hate are but two.

She leans closer, gazing deeply into the crystal ball. Benedetto does the same.

ZINGARA (CONT'D)

You, my friend, suffer from one of the most powerful and destructive... the jealousy of another.

BENEDETTO

(looking up at Zingara,
face-to-face)

Me? Jealous? Don't be ridiculous.

ZINGARA

There is much "jealousy" in your heart; great trouble in your soul...

Zingara waves her hand several times in front of her face as if to wave away some offensive odor.

ZINGARA (CONT'D)

... and much garlic on your breath!

(beat)

...Care for a mint?

She opens and extends a small tin of mints to Benedetto.

BENEDETTO

You're talking like a fool!

Zingara gazes intently into the crystal ball. The ball's glow intensity increases.

ZINGARA

Am I? . . . Who is this man with whom you compete?

BENEDETTO

Who said anything about a man?

ZINGARA

There is a man... and a problem... and you want them both to disappear.

BENEDETTO

(intrigued))

Go on.

ZINGARA

Zingara is in the problem business, my friend. For the right price, I can either "cause" a problem or make any problem "vanish."

BENEDETTO

I have one that I would like to "vanish."

Zingara leans in to Benedetto closely and cradles her head in her hands while listening intently.

ZINGARA

Good. . .good. Now we are getting somewhere. The first step is simply admitting that you have a problem. So you do have a bed-wetting problem? Tell Zingara more.

BENEDETTO

(Irate)

No, you idiot woman!!!

ZINGARA

Settle down, Walnetto. No need to get 'pissed off' at me! 'Urine' big trouble if you do!

She sits up quickly, cups one of her hands to her ear, and says

ZINGARA (CONT'D)

What was that? Did you hear it? I believe it was a "little tinkle"

Zingara throws her head back and laughs heartily.

ZINGARA (CONT'D)

Ha ha ha ha ha!

Zingara looks toward the camera and continues with a smile as we see that she is missing several teeth.

ZINGARA (CONT'D)

(quietly to camera)

I just love good 'potty' humor! And this guy's a treasure trove of material!

Zingara turns back to address Benedetto

ZINGARA (CONT'D)

Okay, Skippy. Lay it on me!

BENEDETTO

You know the man called Da Vinci?

ZINGARA

You mean the crazy old inventor geezer? What about him?

BENEDETTO

I want him gone! And gone, FAST!

ZINGARA

Gone? . . .Fast? ...As in gone like a 'fart-in-a-whirlwind" kind of "FAST"!?

BENEDETTO

Yes! That old fool has been a thorn in my side long enough.

ZINGARA

I can do "GONE"; but every 'FAST' costs extra and this one won't come cheap.

Zingara pauses briefly and then the lights go out except for the illumination of some lightning and her crystal ball. She begins a maniacal laugh, tossing her head back.

ZINGARA (CONT'D)

(maniacally))

Ha...ha...ha...ha...ha!

She pauses and comes back to reality.

ZINGARA (CONT'D)
(matter of factly) But, I don't
kill. . . (a beat ever since the
incident!

SFX: (O.S.) DRAMATIC MUSIC STING (DUNT, DUNT, DAH!)

Zingara's eyes glaze over into a semi-hypnotic state as she seems to be recalling some dramatic event from her past. After a beat or two she comes back to the here and now.

ZINGARA (CONT'D)
Where was I? Oh, yeah. You'd
better get ready to pay through the
nose, Velveeta!

Again, Zingara turns her attention to the camera and places her hand aside her mouth to address the audience.

ZINGARA (CONT'D)
And with a 'howling hooter' like
his, he can afford it!

Turning back to Benedetto

ZINGARA (CONT'D)
But when it comes down to it, money
talks... because a girl has got to
pay the rent!

Zingara rises to her feet and begins to move about the wagon, singing to Benedetto. She is totally in control of the situation.

Zingara sings a song (Pay The Rent) during which she casts a spell over a paint brush she takes out of Benedetto's breast pocket during the song.

ZINGARA SINGS: "A GIRL HAS GOT TO PAY THE RENT"

ZINGARA (CONT'D)
(singing)
Hold onto your gluteus, mister,
While I tell you a twisted tale
About a beauteous, gypsy sister
Who really should be in jail.

The gypsy life is dulls-ville.
For me, it's just a scam;
A con, a dodge, a clever thrill
To be the girl I really am.

You see the gypsy life's a poor
 one;
 It barely makes a cent.
 So I do a little extra work for
 fun;
 A girl has got to pay the rent.

Don't get me wrong, you dirty mind;
 There's nothing physical involved.
 But you still think it's "trade in
 kind,"
 So let's get one important thing
 resolved.

Zingara PULLS a large lever, whereupon the table, chairs,
 Zingara, and Benedetto "DROP" into a cavernous opening
 leading into the sewer below. It is here that Zingara
 continues singing while she "MIXES" strange and peculiar
 ingredients in a large, bubbling cauldron for the magic spell
 on the paint brush.

INT. THE DARK & DANK SEWER SYSTEM -- DARK

ZINGARA

I cast a spell, or maybe two,
 And a third one on the side;
 A hex, a vex, some voodoo too;
 My calling cannot be denied.

Zingara STOPS SINGING for a moment, and makes a large, dusty
 owner's manual appear. She opens the manual and reads from
 it.

ZINGARA (CONT'D)

(like a television
 disclaimer)

Some mystical hexes have not yet
 been tested or certified by the
 FDA, (the Federal Department of
 Alchemy), and the Mystic makes no
 claims regarding their overall
 effectiveness... excessive
 application of the hex may cause
 convulsions, dizziness, diarrhea
 and vomiting. If you experience a
 voodoo-like tingling sensation that
 lasts more than 4 hours, consult
 your physician, as death may occur.
 Offer not good in Alaska, Hawaii
 and Puerto Rico.

(MORE)

ZINGARA (CONT'D)

Void where prohibited by law and
discount coupons may not be
combined with any other spells,
voodoo, or hexes. Users are advised
to read and follow all operating
instructions for the brush.

She SLAMS the book shut in Benedetto's face, causing some
dust to irritate his nose

BENEDETTO

(sneezes))
Achoooo!

ZINGARA

(singing)
My clients pay most handsomely;
The extra cash is heaven-sent.
It feels so swell to take their
fees,
'Cuz a girl has got to pay the
rent.

I've tried to be a good gypsy, see...
By giving witchcraft up for lent;
But the mystic life got the best of
me;
A girl has got to pay the rent.

Such beauty, charm and elegance
Doesn't come without a cost.
Without my mystic moonlight
circumstance,
I'm near destitute...I'm lost.

Still, at the end of every week
My checkbook's overspent.
It's steady cash flow that I seek,
So that I can pay the rent;

Zingara "DIPS" the paint brush into the vat of bubbling
ingredients in the cauldron and places it on the table near
Benedetto. The brush now EMANATES WITH A GREENISH GLOW.

ZINGARA (CONT'D)

It's yours to take, so here you go;
Guaranteed, one hundred per cent.
Just leave a great big pile of
dough,
So that I can pay the rent...
a girl has got to pay her rent!

BENEDETTO

(skeptical)

So, what's the deal with the brush?

ZINGARA

Okay... Pay attention, "Benihana",
'cuz I'm only gonna' tell you once.
Anything this brush touches can be
pulled from or pushed into the
Realm Between... where all
unfinished works wait...unfinished.

BENEDETTO

(bewildered)

The Realm Between? A dimension of
unfinished art?

ZINGARA

You just don't get it, do you,
fancy pants? This brush now holds
amazing powers.

Benedetto does not pay close attention to her explanation. He is distracted by items like rats, cockroaches, and other critters moving around in the sewer; flicking a cockroach from his shoulder.

BENEDETTO

(skeptical)

Amazing powers. . . right.

Zingara PUSHES the same lever forward, and the two "spring up" and are back inside the Gypsy wagon.

ZINGARA

(frustrated)

Hey chump... we're talking GONE...
like out-of-this-world GONE!

BENEDETTO

(Matter-of-factly)

Gone is good! ...Not as good as
"dead"... but gone is good.

Benedetto pays her with a bundle of coins that he tosses on the table before her. He strats to get up from his chair.

ZINGARA

(business-like)

Oh, hold your britches, fancy
pants!

Zingara SHOVES him back into his seat.

ZINGARA (CONT'D)

Before you leave, I'll need you to sign a "receipt" for the spell on the brush.

BENEDETTO

(incredulous)

You must be kidding!

She quickly makes a document appear along with a pen.

Suddenly, the shutters on the wagon windows SLAM shut, the entire wagon is filled with a dark, greenish glow and a mist begins to encircle the table. Zingara takes on an "evil" look about her face. Benedetto sees the changes in environment and in Zingara and begins to worry a bit.

BENEDETTO (CONT'D)

(nervously)

Is this the part where I must sign away my soul?

His hand shaking, he wipes his brow with his handkerchief

ZINGARA

(intensely)

I take my "receipts" very seriously.

BENEDETTO

(swallowing hard)

Gulp... How seriously?

Benedetto hastily scribbles his signature to the bottom of the "receipt". As soon as the signature is completed, the entire wagon instantly goes "back to normal"

The "receipt" rolls up by itself and "vanishes" in the twinkle of an eye.

ZINGARA

(matter of factly)

Hey...business is business!

Zingara looks around, cautiously, to the left and then the right, making sure no one can hear her. She leans in close as if to tell Benedetto a secret.

ZINGARA (CONT'D)

(in hushed tone)

And, trust me... those IRS audits can be BROOO - TULLL!

BENEDETTO

Anything to get rid of that old
fool Da Vinci!

ZINGARA

That's the spirit!
Ha...ha...ha...ha...haaaa!

Benedetto WRAPS the paint brush in the handkerchief to avoid touching it and places it in his pocket. He begins to exit the wagon, however Zingara calls out to him.

ZINGARA (CONT'D)

(urgently)

WAIT JUST A MINUTE!!!

Benedetto stops dead in his tracks and turns back toward Zingara. Like a "magician", she makes a business card appear between her fingers. The card reads:

'MADAME ZINGARA, SPELLS, INCANTATIONS & HIGH COLONICS'

She hands the card to Benedetto.

ZINGARA (CONT'D)

Tell all your friends. A little
networking never hurts!

EXT. ZINGARA'S WAGON IN THE GYPSY CAMP - CONTINUOUS

Benedetto departs among the shadows from the Gypsy Camp. As he leaves, we hear Zingara laugh and sing from inside the wagon.

ZINGARA (O.S.)

(from inside the wagon)

Ha ha ha ha ha!

(singing)

My clients pay most handsomely;
The extra money is heaven-sent.
It feels so good take their fees,
'cuz a girl has got to pay the
rent.
This girl has got to pay the rent.

The candle lights go out in her wagon, leaving only the same eerie glow emanating from the wagon windows. The camera pulls back to reveal the entire Gypsy Camp as Zingara continues her laugh.

ZINGARA (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 (in the distance, with
 echo)
 Ha...ha...ha...ha...ha

We see Benedetto continuing out of the Gypsy Camp under cover of moonlight as we

EXT. DA VINCI'S WORKSHOP - LATER THAT SAME EVENING

Two SINISTER SHADOWS move toward the front door. The shorter figure trips on his cape, faceplants, then pops back up. It's BENEDETTO and SCHIAVO, returning from the gypsy camp. They listen at the door and hear Da Vinci SNORING inside.

DA VINCI (O.S.)
 (snoring)
 ZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZ

INT. DA VINCI'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Da Vinci sleeps in a bed surrounded by drawings and models on walls and ceiling - organized chaos.

DA VINCI
 (still snoring)
 ZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZ

INT. DA VINCI'S WORKSHOP - CONTINUOUS

AMICA sleeps by the fireplace. PEPE hangs upside-down in the rafters, also asleep.

EXT. DA VINCI'S WORKSHOP - CONTINUOUS

BENEDETTO
 (quietly)
 Do you remember what I told you?

SCHIAVO
 Put the magical paint brush in the
 jar... and get out, stupid.

BENEDETTO
 Excellent. Now get to it.

He SHOVES Schiavo through the doorway.

INT. DA VINCI'S WORKSHOP - CONTINUOUS

Schiavo tiptoes inside.

SCHIAVO
(to himself)
Put the magical paint brush in the
jar... and get out, stupid.
(beat)
Put the magical paint brush in the
jar... and get out, stupid.

Using a handkerchief, he carefully carries the enchanted brush to the workbench and slips it into a jar of brushes, making sure not to touch it.

EXT. DA VINCI'S WORKSHOP - CONTINUOUS

From deeper in the studio, a DOOR CREAKS.

SFX (O.S.)
CREAKING DOOR

BENEDETTO
(loud whisper)
Get out NOW, you fool!

INT. DA VINCI'S WORKSHOP - CONTINUOUS

Schiavo jumps, trips on his cape, and eats floor again. He scrambles up and hurries for the door, muttering:

SCHIAVO
(whispering to himself)
Get out NOW, you fool... get out NOW,
you fool!

He reaches the door.

EXT. DA VINCI'S WORKSHOP - CONTINUOUS

Benedetto and Schiavo FLEE into the night, unseen.

EXT. BACK DOOR / COURTYARD - DA VINCI'S WORKSHOP - LATER

REN slips quietly in the back door, cold and exhausted. He eases it shut so as not to wake Da Vinci.

INT. DA VINCI'S WORKSHOP - CONTINUOUS

Ren curls up near the hearth, pulling a LARGE PIECE OF CANVAS over himself. It's a discarded early sketch of the Mona Lisa, folded so the head is out of view. When he pulls it to his chin, it appears his head sits on the painted body.

Pepe stirs, glides down, and fans the fire with his wings, boosting the flames. Amica shuffles over and snuggles against Ren.

INT. DA VINCI'S WORKSHOP - NEXT MORNING

Ren and Amica stir awake to the sound of Da Vinci tossing a small flying machine model. It crashes beside Ren.

DA VINCI

Good morning, Ren. Slept well, I hope?

REN

Not well enough, I'm afraid...
(under his breath)
Or long enough either.

DA VINCI

Rise and shine, lad. Time's a-wasting. What a glorious new day to create something spectacular!

Ren, Pepe, and Amica stretch. Ren gathers the broken model pieces and hands them back to Da Vinci.

DA VINCI (CONT'D)

Was it your father again?

Ren gives a small, embarrassed nod.

DA VINCI (CONT'D)

(tenderly)

Ren... you know you are always welcome here.

Amica rubs against Ren's leg. He pats her, sharing a quiet moment with Da Vinci – then work resumes.

DA VINCI (CONT'D)

(to Ren)

Hand me that what-cha-ma-call-it.
It's next to that doo-hickie.

Ren passes over an odd-shaped tool. Da Vinci tinkers, but the model disintegrates further.

DA VINCI (CONT'D)
 (frustrated)
 Oh, blast! Enough of this fool
 contraption for one day.

He grabs his palette and heads to his easel. From the brush jar – the same one holding the enchanted brush – he selects a normal one, narrowly missing the cursed bristle.

He turns to a work-in-progress: a half-finished portrait of THE MEDUSA, and starts painting.

DA VINCI (CONT'D)
 Nothing relaxes the soul more than
 painting, eh, Ren?

REN
 Absolutely, sir.

Ren cleans up the workbench. Amica uses her tail like a brush; Pepe's wings serve as dustpans. Pepe inhales a cloud of dust—

PEPE
 (sneezing)
 Achoo! Achoo!

DA VINCI
 (to Ren)
 Ren, could you bring me a thicker
 brush, please?

Ren sorts through the brushes and unknowingly takes the ENCHANTED ONE. It begins to GLOW, the same light as Zingara's crystal. The glow reflects in Ren's eyes as he's drawn in.

Da Vinci, back turned, keeps painting, unaware.

Pepe senses danger and swoops down, tugging at the brush. Amica clamps onto Ren's leg, frightened.

Ren starts to GLOW. The color drains from him, then from Amica and Pepe. Their bodies MELT into sketchy outlines and then vanish entirely.

Da Vinci finally turns.

DA VINCI (CONT'D)
 Ren? Ren?

He sees that Ren, the badger, and the bat are gone.

DA VINCI (CONT'D)
 (to himself)
 These kids today... so impetuous.
 I guess the poor boy had other
 things to do.

He shrugs, goes back to his painting.

DA VINCI (CONT'D)
 (to himself)
 I wonder where he is?

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. INTERDIMENSIONAL GALLERY - CONTINUOUS

Ren, Pepe, and Amica TUMBLE through an impossibly long gallery corridor. Both walls are lined with PARTIALLY FINISHED PAINTINGS and SKETCHES of every style and size. Just when it seems endless, they SLAM into a canvas:

THE NEARLY COMPLETED MEDUSA.

INT. MEDUSA'S CAVE - DIM TORCHLIGHT

They're now inside the painting — a vast, damp cave. Water DRIPS and ECHOES. Pepe perches upside-down overhead; Ren and Amica explore nervously.

SFX (THROUGHOUT) DRIPPING WATER WITH ECHOES

REN
 (bewildered)
 What's all this? Where are we?

Something SLITHERS in the shadows, ahead and behind. A raspy voice echoes.

MEDUSA (O.S.)
 (sinister)
 I smell intruders!

A towering MEDUSA emerges — human torso on a serpent body, hair a nest of snakes, but her painting is still incomplete. Ren, being fully "finished," stands out.

MEDUSA (CONT'D)
 (deep, echoing)
 Who dares to trespass upon the home
 of the Medusa?

Her voice seems to come from everywhere. She circles in shadow, toying with them.

Ren bolts. In the scramble, he DROPS the enchanted brush. He, Amica, and Pepe race down a tunnel and burst out of the canvas—

EXT. HALF-FINISHED LAKE PAINTING - CONTINUOUS

They SPLASH into the painted half of a tranquil lake. Ren surfaces, choking.

REN
(coughing, spitting)
He fights his way to the edge where the water stops and blank canvas begins. Amica paddles after him. A FISH stuck in his pant leg flops free and wriggles back toward the painted water. Amica lunges but misses.

Ren collapses on dry "canvas," eyes closed, catching his breath.

A GIRL'S GIGGLE drifts in.

He opens his eyes to see LISA, a beautiful girl about his age. Her face, upper body, and one arm are fully painted; the rest of her is only charcoal sketch. Her smile is pure Mona Lisa.

LISA
(playfully, giggling)
A pretty sloppy way to catch a fish, if you ask me.

REN
Where am I?

LISA
(teasing)
Oh... about ten feet from shore, I would guess.

REN
No, seriously. What is this place?

LISA
You mean you really don't know?

Ren shakes his head.

REN
I wouldn't be asking if I did.

LISA
This is the realm of unfinished
art.

REN
Unfinished art?

LISA
Yep. You see, all art there ever
will be already exists somewhere in
the minds and hearts of men—
(beat)
—and women! It just hasn't been
finished yet. Once it is complete,
it leaves this realm and has its
impact on the world.

REN
Sounds pretty stupid, to me.

LISA
You're here, aren't you?

REN
Well, if you're so smart, then how
did I get here?

LISA
That's the mystery. You don't look
like the rest of us here.

She studies him, noticing his solid form and full color, and
touches his arm.

REN
What do you think you're doing?

LISA
Just checking out the details.

Give me your hand, fish boy.

She helps him up. Amica circles, eyeing Lisa. Ren wrings out
his hat.

REN
You said you recognized my voice.
How can that be? You don't know me.

LISA

I know more than you'd expect. If the conditions are right, you can hear things outside your painting.

REN

Hear things? What things?

LISA

I hear you and Da Vinci all the time.

(beat)

The real question is: how did you, that four-legged fuzz ball, and the weird bird get in here?

REN

I don't have any idea. The last thing I remember was grabbing a paint brush for Mr. Da Vinci and suddenly... here we are.

LISA

Paint brush?

She thinks.

LISA (CONT'D)

I heard a voice the other night I'd never heard before. Mumbling about a magical paint brush... and something about being stupid. It was like—

She imitates Schiavo.

LISA (CONT'D)

(imitating Schiavo)

"Put the magical paint brush in the jar... and get out, stupid."

She snorts.

LISA (CONT'D)

He sounded really dumb... and really short too. Not a great combination.

REN

Oh no. That was probably Benedetto's assistant, Schiavo. And that brush was probably meant for Mr. Da Vinci.

Ren grabs Lisa's shoulders.

REN (CONT'D)
Lisa, I have got to get out of
here!

LISA
(interrupting)
How do you know my name?

REN
That's not important!

Da Vinci could be in trouble! Can you get me back home?

LISA
(with false bravado)
It should be pretty simple, really.
I've been here for a while and know
my way around.

REN
That's all well and fine, but I've
got to get back to Mr. Da Vinci... he
needs my help.

LISA
I think I can help you, but you'll
have to trust me.

REN
Trust you!? Why should I do that?

LISA
'Cuz this can be a dangerous place
and, quite frankly, aside from this
big piece of lint—

She points at Amica—

LISA (CONT'D)
—and bird brain here!

She gestures at Pepe. Both animals bristle.

LISA (CONT'D)
I'm the only friend you've got.

REN
So what do I have to do?

LISA
First of all, don't be a typical
boy and try to take the lead.
(MORE)

LISA (CONT'D)

There are some pretty dangerous things in progress here. You never know what you're going to stumble into.

REN

Go on.

LISA

Second, you need to keep moving. If you stay too long in any one picture, you can get stuck there permanently.

REN

(sarcastic)

Ooooh. Sounds scary. Let's just get going. I've got to find a way back.

LISA

Okay, tough guy. But don't say I didn't warn you.

They head off, moving through an assortment of PARTIALLY COMPLETED PICTURES as Lisa sings.

LISA SINGS: "THE ART OF LIFE"

LISA

(singing)

Oh, what power they have, these
artistic masters;
That, with the delicate stroke
of a hand,
They can manipulate their inks,
paints and plasters,
To create venues and scenes oh so
grand.

Perhaps, someday, the master's
brush will fulfill me.
One day, my dreams will all come
true.
Oh, what a fun day to experience my
completion.
Just imagine all I'll be able to
do.

Lisa pulls Ren into a new painting as she sings; the visuals match her lyrics.

LISA (CONT'D)

(singing)

Adventures onboard a pirate galleon
or swimming in a moonlit bay.
Riding with a herd of galloping
stallions.
Eating ice cream on a hot summer's
day.
It's the art of life.
It's the art of life.

Sunrise in exotic lands that takes
your breath away.
The whimsy of a child's first try
to draw his mom and dad.
The sounding of the rooster to
announce another day,
Or the breaking of a romance that
leaves your heart so sad.
It's the art of life.
It's the art of life.

You may think that my world is
idyllic,
Living care free where life is so
sweet.
But I feel it is quite imbecilic;
handicapped here; unfinished;
incomplete.

So I remain here, a prisoner,
without strife,
Just as I have from the very start,
Because it is all just the art of
my life
To be a part of where my life is
art.

She yanks Ren's hand and JUMPS out of the current painting.

Instead of ground, they DROP.

REN & LISA

(screaming)

Awwwwwwwwwwww!

REN

(screaming)

What have you done?

LISA
 (defensive)
 I was just trying to live "in the
 moment!"

[Note: The following paintings are all incomplete – missing elements, backgrounds, or details.]

They slam into the raging sea of **"THE GREAT WAVE OFF KANAGAWA."** Surf tosses them apart.

REN
 (shouting)
 LISA!!

He glimpses her and Amica struggling in the waves. A massive wave rises behind him, sweeps him toward them, and hurls all three toward jagged rocks—

CUT TO:

EXT. OIL PAINTING - BUFFALO GRAZING ON THE PRAIRIE - DAY

They land amid HUGE BUFFALO. A massive bull SNORTS, paws the ground, lowers its head to charge.

Lisa and Ren don't wait. They RUN, diving into the next canvas.

EXT. BACKGROUND OF "THE SCREAM" - DUSK

They pop into a dim street under a bruised sky.

LISA
 (unnerved)
 Ren, I get the feeling that we're
 not alone.

SMASH CUT:

THE FIGURE FROM "THE SCREAM" fills the frame, hands to face.

THE SCREAM FIGURE
 (screaming)
 AAAAAAAHHHH!

Ren and Lisa mirror the expression.

REN AND LISA
 (panicked)
 Aaaaaaaaah!!!

Amica's fur FRIZZES. They bolt.

THE SCREAM FIGURE
(calling after them)
Come back... I can't find my contact
lens!

INT. "DOGS PLAYING POKER" DEN - NIGHT

Several DOGS of various breeds sit around a lit poker table, smoking cigars and nursing drinks.

As Ren, Lisa, and Amica slip through, some dogs glance over.

SFX: a low GROWL somewhere in the room.

DOG #1
(nonplussed)
I'll see your ten and raise you
five.

He tosses bills into the pot.

DOG #2
That's a bit RRRRUFF... but I'll
call.

As our trio disappears into the shadows, the argument erupts.

DOG #2 (O.S.) (CONT'D)
(angry)
You cheated... you dirty cur!

DOG #1 (O.S.)
Did not!!

IN DARKNESS: vicious DOG FIGHT sounds explode as we—

CUT TO:

EXT. "AMERICAN GOTHIC" - DAY

The **FARMER** and his **WIFE** pose stoically before their farmhouse. He grips a pitchfork.

Ren, Lisa, and Amica approach carefully.

REN
Excuse me, please. Could you give
us directions out of here?

The farmer WHIRLS the pitchfork like a martial arts staff, striking dramatic poses, then finally points it offscreen.

FARMER
(emotionless; matter-of-fact)
Thatta' way.

His wife doesn't react.

FARMER (CONT'D)
(monotone)
Gosh dern tourists.

SFX: LONG, DRAWN-OUT FART.

FARMER
(to Wife)
MOTHER!!!

The Wife blushes, rolling her eyes.

WIFE
(nonplussed)
It was one of the cows, I tell you!

Ren, Lisa, and Amica keep moving into the next frame.

INT. NORMAN ROCKWELL "FREEDOM FROM WANT" - DAY

The **THANKSGIVING FAMILY** crowds into the dining room, bickering as they take their seats. The table is piled with holiday food.

A **PHOTOGRAPHER** at the end of the table raises his camera.

PHOTOGRAPHER
(to family)
All right, everyone...

They keep arguing.

PHOTOGRAPHER (CONT'D)
All right, everyone...

Still bickering.

PHOTOGRAPHER (CONT'D)
(shouting)
HEY!!! I'm getting paid by the hour! Everybody smile and say "cheese"!

Instantly, everyone FREEZES into the classic, happy pose.

FLASH.

As soon as the shot's taken, they dive for the turkey in a frenzied scrum. When they resurface, only a picked-clean TURKEY SKELETON remains. Every plate is piled high; the family eats like it's their last meal.

LISA
No leftovers, I guess.

REN
Let's get out of here before they
eat us too!

They slip out of the painting.

INT. STILL-LIFE OF BREAD, FRUIT, AND CHEESE - CONTINUOUS

They land amid GIANT food — bread loaves like boulders, fruit the size of barrels.

SFX: Ren's stomach GROWLING.

LISA
What was that?

REN
My stomach is growling. I'm
starving!

LISA
Well, take a look around you,
pinhead! Why not have something to
eat?

They tear into the spread. Classical music swells as Ren, Lisa, Amica, and Pepe run, eat, and frolic in SLOW MOTION. Amica disappears with her entire head inside a single massive grape.

When they're finally full, they exit. The once pristine still-life now looks ravaged. Ren stuffs a few pieces of cheese and bread into his jacket.

INT. CHILD'S CRAYON DRAWING - T-REX - DAY

They arrive in a five-year-old's crayon drawing of a **T-REX** on construction paper. The dinosaur springs to life and charges, ROARING.

DINOSAUR
 (roaring)
 ROAR... ROAR!!

Ren quickly pulls cheese from his pocket, waves it, then FLINGS it out of the drawing.

The T-Rex abruptly veers after it.

WE TRACK the dinosaur as it exits into another painting.

INT. FRANCISCAN MONKS' ABBEY - DAY

The cheese skids to a stop on the stone floor of an abbey. MONKS sit at desks, SCRIBING with quills.

The T-Rex bursts in, towering over them – ignored.

After a beat, it lets out a DEAFENING ROAR.

DINOSAUR
 (roaring)
 ROAR!!!!!!

The monks all pause, lift their fingers to their lips, and in perfect unison:

MONKS
 Shhhhhhhhhhh!!

The dinosaur instantly falls silent, head hanging. The monks calmly return to their work.

INT. PENNSYLVANIA STATE HOUSE (AKA: INDEPENDENCE HALL)- DAY

It is the signing of the Declaration of Independence. The founding fathers have just finished signing the document and the whole place ERUPTS in a PARTY-LIKE ATMOSPHERE.

THOMAS JEFFERSON sees the "new arrivals" and welcomes them as the other delegates CELEBRATE AND REVEL in the background.

THOMAS JEFFERSON
 Welcome citizens, welcome. And
 which state do you all represent?

Lisa gestures toward Ren.

LISA
 (sighing; about Ren)
 In his case, the State of
 "Confusion."

THOMAS JEFFERSON

I am not familiar with that State,
but you are certainly welcome to
join us for the celebration.

REN

Celebration?

BEN FRANKLIN

Why, yes. We have just declared
our independence from the tyranny
of King George and England. There
will be much celebrating in the
streets of Philadelphia today!

LISA

(quizzical)

PHILA-what?

Suddenly the doors to the meeting hall BURST OPEN and several
servants wheel in carts of food and beverages of all kind.

JOHN HANCOCK rushes over to direct their course after
conferring with **BEN FRANKLIN**.

JOHN HANCOCK

(Yelling)

Hey, Ben? Where do you want the
caterers to set up the nosh?

BEN FRANKLIN

(pointing)

How 'bout up front near the
Federalists?

Franklin pulls out his coin purse and looks inside. It is
empty. He looks back toward John Hancock.

BEN FRANKLIN (CONT'D)

(embarrassed))

Sorry, John. I seem to be a
little short.

JOHN HANCOCK

Don't worry, I'll sign for it!

CUT TO:

Close up of a bill for the food and drink. John Hancock
SCRIBBLES his famous, VERY LARGE, SIGNATURE across the bill.

Thomas Jefferson calls out to Ben Franklin.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

(loudly)

Okay, Ben! Hit it!

Franklin, now dressed like a "Rapper DJ, gold chains and all, puts on a pair of dark glasses, as a large "candle powered" mirrored "disco ball" emerges from the ceiling. Franklin begins to a 'funky' beat on an electronic harpsichord. As the music riff begins, all chaos breaks loose. It is the party of all parties! The Founding Fathers are up on desks, dancing and reveling like there is no tomorrow.

All of the Founding Fathers put on dark glasses, grab tankards of ale, and begin to sway and rap to the music.

THOMAS JEFFERSON (CONT'D)

(singing / rapping)

*Listen up brothers... to what I have
to say. Pay attention to the words
of Grandmaster Jay!*

*It is time for all men, hail
and hearty,
To come and join our festive
party,
And celebrate the bond that we
have forged,
To defeat that tyrant; old
King George.
So, down with the British!
And down with King George!*

CHORUS

(entire crowd; rapping)

*Down with the British!
Down with King George!*

JOHN HANCOCK

(rapping)

*On succession we have now all
voted,
And General Washington has been
promoted.
So prepare for battle one and all.
And come respond right now to the
clarion call.
Down with the British!
Down with King George!*

CHORUS

(rapping)

*Down with the British!
Down with King George!*

BEN FRANKLIN

(rapping)

*The Brits have treated us all like
cattle,
But soon they shall feel the sting
of battle.
So pour some grog and raise your
glasses
We're about to kick king some
British...*

SFX: (O.S.) CHAMPAGNE CORK POPPING

A DONKEY passes by in the foreground carrying kegs of ale on its sides.

DONKEY

(to camera, with a wink)

HEE HAW!!

BEN FRANKLIN

(rapping)

*Down with the British!
Down with King George!*

CHORUS

(rapping)

*Down with the British!
Down with King George!*

JEFFERSON, HANCOCK AND FRANKLIN

(rapping together))

*The declaration has been signed and
sealed.
Our document shall not be repealed.
Life, liberty, and happiness are
our sacred rights,
So let's all get down and party all
night!
Come on men, now don't you be
skittish;
Let's all sing out loud,
"Down with the British!"*

ENTIRE ENSEMBLE

(rapping)

*Down with the British!
Down with King George!
Try as you may, we won't be
ignored!
We say "Down with the British!"
And "Down with King George!"
Yes, "Down with the British!"
And "Down with King George!"*

They all do a "MIKE DROP" and walk off in separate directions
 Lisa is having a great time with the Founding Fathers but Ren
 decides it is time to go.

REN

(to Lisa)

Come on. We need to go.

LISA finishes off a tankard of ale.

LISA

(tipsy)

Okay. Bye, gentlemen. It's been
 "revolutionary" and really improved
 my "constitution."

Ren PULLS Lisa by the hand through the portrait wall into
 another portrait.

EXT. OIL PAINTING OF THE LAIR OF A GRIFFIN - DUSK

They find themselves atop a precipice in front of a cave in
 the side of a mountain. Unbeknownst to them, it is the cave
 of a **GRIFFIN**.

*(Note: A Griffin is a legendary hybrid creature with the
 body, tail, and hind legs of a lion, and the head, wings,
 and front talons of an eagle. They are known for guarding
 gold, treasures, and sacred sites).*

Lisa is still feeling the effects of the Founding Father's
 party grog and is still HUMMING AND DANCING ABOUT. It is
 obvious Lisa is a bit "tipsy" from all of the celebration.

LISA

(giggling, to Ren)

Get it? My "constitution"

REN

(sternly to Lisa)

Listen. I really need you to
 concentrate and help me get out of
 here.

LISA

(playfully & slurred)

Don't be such a "poopie party",
 Ren. We'll get there.

(hiccups)

You just don't have very much faith
 in me, do you?

REN

(sarcastically)
Does it show?

LISA

(still a bit tipsy)
Listen mister, I am the princess of
portraits; the queen of color; the
aristocrat of artwork and I know
this realm like the back of my
hand.

Lisa lifts her "transparent" hand to her face and studies it briefly. Realizing her hand is only a sketch, she quickly exchanges it for her other "complete", painted hand.

LISA (CONT'D)

So, don't you tell me-

Ren quickly covers Lisa's mouth with his hand and points in the direction of the cave behind them. There, in the mouth of the cave lays a huge GRIFFIN, half asleep, lazily chewing on a large bone. Amica slowly approaches the bone from only a few feet away.

Both Ren and Lisa's EYES WIDEN IN HORROR; they know that the badger will be no match for the huge, fierce Griffin.

Amica continues to stealthily approach the bone and carefully places her mouth on the exposed end of it. Amica immediately finds herself looking directly into the angry eyes of the Griffin.

After a beat, the Griffin rears back, towering over everyone, flaring out its wings and emitting a ferocious roar.

GRIFFIN

ROAR!!!!

Amica tries to take the bone and run in the direction of Ren and Lisa, however she finds it difficult to do so due to the size and weight of the bone.

REN

(to Amica)
Hey...get out of there!

Pepe SWOOPS IN and grabs the front of the bone and attempts to fly away with it while, at the same time, Amica is at the rear end of the bone, pushing it with all her might. Between the two of them, they make very slow progress in moving the bone away from the Griffin.

Amica and Pepe struggle, but make it back to where Lisa and Ren are standing. Lisa and Ren pick up the bone from Amica and Pepe.

The Griffin LUNGES at the group. They use the bone to ward off the attacks by the Griffin, but find themselves losing ground; slowly being forced back to the edge of the cliff overlooking what appears to be a dark, bottomless, misty abyss.

It's literally a 'cliffhanger' situation.

CUT TO:

INT. DA VINCI'S WORKSHOP - NIGHT

Da Vinci finds a note slipped under his workshop door. The note tells him the PATRON DONATELLI needs to see him immediately.

Da Vinci CALLS OUT to Ren.

DA VINCI

(calling to Ren)

Ren, I will be back soon!

Not getting a response, Da Vinci pins the note on Ren's easel, turns and begins to exit the workshop and says:

DA VINCI (CONT'D)

I wonder where Ren is.

(he chuckles)

Probably getting some rest.

EXT. THE GRIFFIN'S LAIR - DUSK

Ren and Lisa are still holding the bone and fending off the Griffin. The Griffin roars and is so close to Ren that he can feel the Griffin's fiery breath.

GRIFFIN

ROAR!... ROAR!

REN

(screaming in terror)

Aaaaaaagh! I can't hold him off!

The group of four now find themselves right at the edge of the cliff, and just feet away from the deadly flames of the Griffin's breath.

LISA

Okay, ladies and gentlemen, fasten
your seat belts! FOLLOW ME!

Lisa TURNS and JUMPS off the cliff, vanishing into the foggy darkness. Ren is still holding the bone, loses his grip on it and is soon standing defenseless in front of the angry Griffin.

The Griffin prepares to make one final and fatal lunge at Ren and Amica.

REN

(angrily)
What is Lisa doing?...
Oh, well...I can't stay here.

Ren turns at the last moment and follows Lisa's example, PLUNGING off the cliff and down into the foggy, dark abyss, followed closely by Amica, and Pepe.

The camera TRACKS with them as they drop into Van Gogh's "Starry Night" portrait.

EXT. VAN GOGH'S PAINTING OF "STARRY NIGHT" - NIGHT

Landing with a THUD, Ren, Lisa and Amica find themselves inside of Van Gogh's partially completed STARRY NIGHT painting.

REN

(to Lisa; enraged)
You almost got us killed back
there! What were you thinking?

LISA

I was just having a little fun.
Don't be such a baby.
(to herself)
Now, where are we?

REN

(exasperated)
You don't even know where we are,
do you?

LISA

(tongue in cheek)
Of course, I do... We're next to
this big, pointy thing!

REN

Lisa, I don't have time for your stupid jokes. I need to get out of here. I have to make sure that Da Vinci is safe. I can't let anything happen to him.

LISA

Why do you even care about that dumb, old man anyway?

REN

Because...he believes in me.

LISA

Well, if he is so great, why did he leave me like THIS!?

LISA turns around to show her lack of a completed image.

LISA (CONT'D)

You may think he's the greatest person alive, but I will never forgive him for not completing me. He abandoned me... I HATE HIM!

REN

Stop it! You don't know what you are talking about.

Lisa walks a few steps away and sits on the ground. Ren stays where he is and reflects upon what she has just said.

LISA

If you want to find a way out of here and go help Da Vinci, then be my guest...because the truth is that I don't know how to get out of here.

REN

WHAT!? Why didn't you just say so?

LISA

Because all I've ever done is wander around from painting to painting because mine is so empty and I felt so alone.

REN

(interrupting)
But...

LISA

Let me finish! And then I ran into
 you, and you seemed so alive, so...
 complete. And I wanted to
 give you a reason to stay by my
 side so I could feel that way too.

(LISA SINGS): "SOMEDAY I'LL BE COMPLETE"

LISA (CONT'D)

(singing)

I start every day the same old way
 In the same cold and blank
 surroundings.

No different than my yesterdays,
 I feel as if I'm slowly drowning
 In a sea of virtual reality
 With no one to relate to
 And my body split in grotesque
 duality.

Not just one whole girl; But half
 of two.

Perhaps someday I'll be complete.
 Perhaps someday I'll be complete.

Oh, please don't get me wrong;
 My world is not so bad.
 It's just that days are long
 And I can feel so sad
 Lacking that human touch
 Or better yet, a kiss.
 That's what makes it all so rough,
 Being without things that I miss.
 Perhaps someday I'll be complete.
 Perhaps someday I'll be complete.

But today's a brand new day and
 Full of so much potential.
 Maybe, just maybe, if I pray
 And act, oh, so reverential,
 My artistic master will complete my
 art,
 And I'll go from disaster
 to a whole, new start.
 Maybe today's the day I'll be
 complete.
 Could today be the day I'll finally
 be complete?

REN

(sensitively)

Lisa? I had no idea.

LISA

That's why I hate Da Vinci so much.
He left me like this. It's because
of him that I feel so alone; so
incomplete, even when I am around
others.

REN

But, Lisa, Da Vinci isn't your
artist.... I am.

Lisa slowly gets to her feet.

LISA

(incredulous)
What?!

Lisa approaches Ren as she continues to speak

LISA (CONT'D)

(mystified; angry)
How...how could you do this to me?
What is wrong with you? Why haven't
you completed me?

REN

Because I didn't think I was good
enough... a good enough artist!

LISA

What?! Are you saying I'm not good
enough?

REN

Well, no...I just-

LISA

(very angry)
Save it!!! You didn't complete me
because you are a coward and that
is all you will ever be!
(beat)
You abandoned me and you are a
terrible artist! I mean, look at
me...I'm hideous!

Lisa places her "solid" hand on Ren's chest and begins to
shove him every time she says "I hate you".

LISA (CONT'D)

I hate you!
(a shove)
I hate you!
(a shove)

(MORE)

LISA (CONT'D)

I hate you!

(a final shove)

REN

(pleading)

Lisa, please-

LISA

(starting to cry)

No...leave me alone!

Lisa runs off crying, followed by Pepe. She wanders through the Starry Night environment, singing her song and leaving Ren, Amica, and Pepe behind.

LISA SINGS: "I NEED SOMEONE TO BELIEVE IN ME"

LISA (CONT'D)

(Singing)

I need someone to believe in me.

I feel it all, down deep in my
soul.

But look at me, I'm simply half,
not whole.

My emotions are way beyond my
control.

I need someone to believe in me.

Why won't someone have faith in me?

Could it be I don't show I care
enough?

Do I come across simply as being
too tough?

Or maybe they think I don't have
the right stuff.

Why won't someone have faith in me?

These desires of the heart make me
feel so alone.

What can I do to make somebody see
That the gift of showing belief
in someone,

Creates a transformation from just
"me" to "we."

I need someone to believe in me

From this day forward 'til forever.

Without question, no, not ever.

I need someone to believe in me.

I just need one person to believe
in me.

Lisa STOPS SINGING suddenly. Lisa has lost her bearings and accidentally wandered back into Medusa's painting. She is immediately GRABBED by Medusa and held as bait for Ren.

MEDUSA

Welcome back, Missy!

Meanwhile, Ren, with Amica, "pops" into another unfinished picture. It is a parody version of Edward Hopper's **Nighthawks**.

EXT. NIGHTHAWKS PARODY PAINTING – LATE NIGHT

Ren and Amica step into an Edward Hopper-style diner scene – but the counter is occupied by **HARRISON FORD as INDIANA JONES, DENZEL WASHINGTON as THE EQUALIZER, CHRIS PRATT as STAR-LORD, and JENNIFER COOLIDGE as PAULETTE PARCELLE**, all in their iconic film wardrobes.

INT. NIGHTHAWKS PARODY PAINTING – CONTINUOUS

They clock Ren's odd clothes, assuming it's just another Hollywood look.

HARRISON FORD/INDIANA JONES

Hi'ya, kid. Pull up a stool. Take a load off.

JENNIFER COOLIDGE/PAULETTE PARCELLE

I like your costume, sweetie. You and your dog in a school play or something?

She looks him over.

JENNIFER COOLIDGE/PAULETTE PARCELLE (CONT'D)

(excitedly)

Oh, my God! You look like the Fourth of July! It makes me wanna hot dog, real bad!

WAITER

(loudly, from behind the counter)

One hot dog, coming right up!

CHRIS PRATT/STAR-LORD

(to Ren)

Little late to be out on a school night, isn't it, sport?

DENZEL WASHINGTON/THE EQUALIZER
(quiet, matter-of-fact)
This is the time I usually give
someone the opportunity to do
what's right.

Exhausted and dazed, Ren climbs onto a stool. The WAITER
steps up.

WAITER
What'll it be, short stuff?

REN
(confused)
I'm not sure. What will what be?

WAITER
You messin' with me, kid?

He raises a fist, right in Ren's face.

WAITER (CONT'D)
'Cuz if you're messin' with me,
I'll serve you up a knuckle
sandwich!... Now, whaddaya wanna eat?

REN
Oh, no thanks. I've still got a
little bread and cheese on me.
(thinks)
I guess what I really need is some
advice.

The waiter softens immediately.

WAITER
Advice!? You're in luck. That's
somethin' I got plenty of, and it
don't cost nothin'. What seems to
be the problem?

The FOUR ICONS lean in.

REN
I never realized that not believing
in myself could hurt the people
around me.

WAITER
Geez, kid! Believing in yourself
can make all the difference in the
world — especially when others are
depending on you.

REN

That's just it. I never thought anyone would ever depend on me.

(pauses)

I never felt like I was good enough for anyone. Not my family, my friends, or even my creations.

WAITER

(quizzical)

Creations?

CHRIS PRATT/STAR-LORD

(to the waiter)

Hey, man. Will ya let the kid speak!?

(to Ren)

Go ahead, kid... you were saying...

REN

It's just that now they're all suffering because of me.

WAITER

Listen, kid. Sometimes it ain't about what you did or didn't do, but about what you still can do.

REN

I don't understand.

CHRIS PRATT/STAR-LORD

What he's tryin' to say is — why don't you get off your duff and get out there and fix your mistakes? It can open up an entire universe of possibilities.

REN

Huh?

JENNIFER COOLIDGE/PAULETTE PARCELLE

Gosh. Believing in yourself is what it's all about. It gives you the courage to face your mistakes.

DENZEL WASHINGTON/THE EQUALIZER

Exactly. You're getting a second chance to do the right thing. Take advantage of it.

Suddenly PEPE BURSTS IN, frantic. He loops the diner, tries to land on the counter, SLIPS, and CRASHES into a sugar jar. Sugar erupts.

PEPE
Cough! Cough!

HARRISON FORD/INDIANA JONES
(to himself)
Bats! Why did it have to be a bat?

Amica HOPS onto the counter, knocking over a coffee cup that splashes Pepe clean.

Taking remnants from a leftover meal, Pepe launches into a wild pantomime: noodles on his head like snakes, a breadstick clutched like a captive.

JENNIFER COOLIDGE/PAULETTE PARCELLE
Looks like a dust mop to me.

CHRIS PRATT/STAR^WLORD
Weirdest lookin' dust mop I've ever
seen - in this galaxy or any other.

Pepe shakes the "snakes" furiously. Ren suddenly gets it.

REN
It's the Medusa! - and I'll bet
she's got Lisa! What'll I do!?

WAITER
As my old man used to say, "The
same thing that got you into a mess
can sometimes get you out!"

He scratches his head.

WAITER (CONT'D)
But come to think of it, I never
did understand what he meant by
that.

Ren BOLTS for the door. Amica and Pepe race after him.

The waiter casually tops off celebrity coffee cups.

WAITER (CONT'D)
No wonder the kid's so screwed up.
Did you get a look at that get^{up}
his folks make him wear?

HARRISON FORD/INDIANA JONES
Yep. You sure meet all kinds here
in Holly-Weird!

DENZEL WASHINGTON/THE EQUALIZER
 (to the waiter)
 Excuse me. You got any Equal?

JENNIFER COOLIDGE/PAULETTE PARCELLE
 And how 'bout that hotdog?

INT. PAINTING - "SWORD OF DAMOCLES" - DAY

Ren slips into the unfinished painting, creeps behind the curtain, and quietly lifts the sword hanging "magically" in mid-air.

DAMOCLES
 (exasperated)
 Aw, really? Come on!

Ren bolts out of the frame with the sword.

INT. PORTRAIT - "THE SPARTAN 300" - DAY

A stylized battlefield of 300 SPARTANS. Over an unseen P.A.:

PUBLIC ADDRESS VOICE (O.S.)
 (magnified, with reverb)
 Okay, fellows. Take a ten-minute break!

The Spartans relax, some gathering around crude water jugs, spears grounded, shields at their sides.

Ren and AMICA BURST into the painting. Ren SPRINTS through, still gripping the SWORD OF DAMOCLES, SNATCHES an unattended SPARTAN SHIELD from beside one warrior, and vanishes off-frame before they can react.

Amica SKIDS to a stop, SNIFFS a Spartan's sandal, lifts her leg and TINKLES on it, then DASHES after Ren. Nearby Spartans point and laugh.

SPARTANS
 (laughing)
 Ha... ha... ha... ha...

A huge SPARTAN CAPTAIN steps forward. The laughter dies. He looks at the wet sandal, then at the mortified Spartan, shakes his head, and silently POINTS offscreen.

The embarrassed Spartan hangs his head and trudges away. The others shrug, refill their water, and resume their break.

EXT. UNFINISHED WRIGHT BROTHERS "FIRST FLIGHT" PAINTING - DAY

A sandy KITTY HAWK beach under a half-painted sky. ORVILLE guides the fragile plane to a landing as WILBUR cheers.

From behind a dune, Ren, Amica, and Pepe watch.

REN
(to himself)
I've got to get my hands on this
contraption... It's the only way.

As the brothers celebrate, Ren slips forward, climbs into the pilot's spot, and grabs the controls.

Amica and Pepe cling to the struts as the Flyer sputters to life, bumping along the painted sand. It gains speed; Ren pulls back on the stick, and they LIFT OFF.

ORVILLE
(yelling)
Hey! Come back here!

WILBUR
(yelling)
That's our only prototype!

Ren banks over them.

REN
(yelling down)
SORRY! JUST BORROWING IT!

ORVILLE
(to Wilbur)
I TOLD YOU we should have invented
Flight Insurance!

The plane SMASHES through the edge of the painting, now flying free in an open painted sky.

BEGIN MONTAGE

**- OVER A PARTIALLY FINISHED LAYOUT OF THE ORIGINAL
DISNEYLAND.**

REN
(pointing down)
Wow! That looks like fun!

- PAST MOUNT RUSHMORE - THE CARVED EYES SUBTLY TRACK THE PLANE.

- Through WASHINGTON CROSSING THE DELAWARE - Washington pauses his mid-hero pose to point skyward.

GEORGE WASHINGTON
(pointing)
I cannot tell a lie... that kid looks
really familiar.

- OVER THE TREETOPS OF "SUNDAY AFTERNOON ON THE ISLAND OF LA GRANDE JATTE"

- figures tilt their heads to follow the sound, then snap back into position.

- A LOOP AROUND A PAINTED EIFFEL TOWER AT DUSK.

- ACROSS THE CLOUDY BACKGROUND OF "THE SON OF MAN"

- the suited man remains still as the plane zips past behind him.

- PAST WHISTLER'S MOTHER

- a WHOOSH flips her bonnet off. She stares ahead.

WHISTLER'S MOTHER
Oh, bother.

END MONTAGE

Ren scans the painted world ahead.

REN
(mutters)
Medusa... where are you?

He spots a dark, cave-like painting below - a swirling, ominous entrance. He tips the plane and dives toward it-

INT. MEDUSA'S CAVE - CONTINUOUS

The Flyer BLASTS through the MEDUSA painting and CRASH-lands on the rocky floor, collapsing around them. Ren, Amica, and Pepe crawl free, shaken but unharmed.

From deeper in the cave:

LISA (O.S.)
(with echo)
Help me, Ren! She has me!

Ren's head snaps up.

REN
Lisa!

He and Amica race down a twisting corridor; Pepe flutters above. They round a corner, SKID to a stop—

LISA is bound in MEDUSA's massive coils, gagged by Medusa's hand. Dim greenish torchlight and the glow of Medusa's eyes light the cave.

MEDUSA
(in Lisa's voice, mocking)
Help me, Ren! She has me!

She LAUGHS in her own husky tone.

MEDUSA (CONT'D)
Ha... ha... ha... ha...

She inhales deeply; her nostrils FLARE as the snakes in her hair WRITHE.

MEDUSA (CONT'D)
Oh, there is nothing better than
the smell of a fresh outsider.
Real flesh and blood...

LISA
(muffled, desperate)
Ren, don't look her in the eyes!

MEDUSA
(to Ren)
I knew there was something
different about you when we first
met.

Ren hefts the SWORD OF DAMOCLES and the SPARTAN SHIELD, circling for an opening.

Medusa uncurls her tail, revealing the ENCHANTED PAINTBRUSH wrapped in its coils.

MEDUSA (CONT'D)
Looking for this?

REN
(under his breath)
The paintbrush...

MEDUSA
Oh, I am going to enjoy this.

Her tail WHIPS down at him. Ren rolls clear; the sword flies from his hand into the darkness.

He scrambles up a rocky incline toward Lisa as Medusa strikes again, dislodging rocks. Ren dodges falling debris and reaches a ledge opposite her.

Medusa fixes her gaze on him. HER EYES BLAZE; a beam of light blasts out.

Ren snaps the shield up. The beam SLAMS into it and ricochets—partially back into Medusa's own eyes.

She recoils, shrieking; coils loosen around Lisa.

MEDUSA (CONT'D)
(in pain)
MY EYES! ...I'll get you for that!

Ren seizes the moment. He GRABS her tail, hauls himself higher, and reaches for Lisa.

REN
(looking into Lisa's eyes)
No one should ever feel alone.
Take my hand!

Lisa manages a small, hopeful smile as he yanks her free. They drop to a lower ledge and scramble for cover together.

Medusa blinks away the pain, refocusing on them, furious.

MEDUSA
(enraged)
Two with one blow... how
delightful.

She rears back, fangs extending — when a PIERCING SCREAM:

MEDUSA (CONT'D)
(in agony)
Aaaaaah!

Her tail convulses; the paintbrush slips free and CLATTERS to the ground.

Reveal Amica clamped onto her tail, teeth sunk in deep. Medusa thrashes, finally flinging the badger off. Amica slams against the cave wall and slumps, dazed but alive.

Medusa turns toward the fallen badger.

Pepe SWOOPS in, dive-bombing her face, dodging snapping snakes and pulling her away.

REN
(to Lisa)
Go help Amica. I've got to get that brush!

Lisa nods, rushes to Amica. Ren sprints for the brush.

Pepe makes one last strafing run, misjudges, skids across the floor, and ends in a heap.

Medusa swings back toward Lisa and Amica. She strikes; they barely dodge behind rocks.

LISA
(breathless, dry)
I'm guessing she's not an animal lover.

They split up, hurling stones and shouting, drawing Medusa's focus while Ren reaches the brush.

He grabs it, staring, unsure.

REN
Come on, come on...

He points it at Medusa. Nothing. He SHAKES it, then whacks it against his palm.

A MASSIVE BLAST OF COLOR erupts from the tip, slamming into the ceiling. Blinding light fills the chamber; rocks cascade down, pinning Medusa in several places.

REN (CONT'D)
(stunned)
Okay... that works.

LISA
(from across the cave)
What did you do?

REN
(with a half-grin)
It's all in the wrist.

He fires again – the backlash LAUNCHES him into the wall. He slides down, dazed.

LISA
(wry)
That's some wrist you've got.

Ren shakes it off, looks from the brush to the cave walls, thinking.

LISA (CONT'D)
I hope you have a plan.

REN
I do!

With big, sweeping strokes, he PAINTS tall reflective PANELS all around the cave. Each stroke creates a shimmering MIRROR surface, encircling them.

Now the chamber bristles with reflections of Ren, Lisa, Amica, Pepe... and Medusa.

Medusa rises, disoriented and enraged.

LISA
What are you doing?

REN
Just trust me.
When I say so, get down – and don't look up.

Medusa slithers toward one "Ren," then another, confused by the duplicates.

REN (CONT'D)
(taunting)
Hey, snake head... I'm over here!
Give me your best shot!

He plants himself in front of a mirror, directly across from her.

Medusa locks on, eyes glowing.

REN (CONT'D)
(low, to Lisa)
NOW!!

He and Lisa drop flat, covering their heads.

Medusa fires. The beam HITS the first mirror, ricochets to the next, then the next – ping-pong around the circle like a wild laser.

MEDUSA
(realizing)
Oh, no—

The beam converges back onto her. It hits her full in the eyes.

Change ripples over her. In seconds, she becomes solid stone. Her upper body's weight makes the statue topple; her head breaks off and ROLLS, stopping inches from where Ren and Lisa peek up.

They find themselves nose-to-nose with Medusa's petrified face.

LISA
(coolly)
That'll teach her to mess with me.

AMICA staggers over, still woozy. Lisa scoops her up.

LISA (CONT'D)
I could just kiss you, you brave little beast.

REN
(incredulous)
You'd really kiss a badger?

LISA
(to Ren)
I was talking to YOU.

She plants a quick kiss on his cheek.

REN
(a bit dazed, proud)
Yeah... I guess I did do all the hard work.

LISA
(teasing)
Well, it took you long enough.
I wasn't sure you'd ever come back for me.

REN
(soft)
Me neither.

They share a small smile, then both look at the glowing brush.

LISA
So that's the thing that's gonna
get you out of here?

REN
I think so. Da Vinci still needs
me. But I promise, when I get back...

He takes her hands.

REN (CONT'D)
I'll paint you a place where you'll
never feel alone again. You'll be
happy – and complete.

Her eyes shine. She hugs him tight.

LISA
Thank you.

She wipes her eyes.

LISA (CONT'D)
If I keep crying, I'll smudge all
my colors.

She meets his gaze.

LISA (CONT'D)
Go on. Save Da Vinci.

REN
I want to. I'm just not sure how to
use this to get out of here.

He studies the brush.

LISA
Why don't you pull that little tab
near the end of the handle?

Ren finds a tiny TAB, gives it a tug. A parchment scroll
unrolls from the handle, covered in cramped text.

ZINGARA (V.O.)
Congratulations on your purchase of
the Model Z-28 mystical art brush.
If you are hearing this, you are
probably somewhere in the Realm of
Unfinished Art. This is normal.

Ren scans frantically.

ZINGARA (V.O.)
Available functions of the Z-28
include: escape from mythical
creatures, undoing bad hair days,
repairing poor color choices, and –
ah, here it is – “Unable to find
exit to reality.”

REN
This is silly.

LISA
What do you have to lose?

He runs his finger down the writing.

REN
(reading)
“To create an exit from the world
of unfinished art, draw an arch and
write the word ‘egress’ over the
doorway.”

Ren lifts the brush and paints a glowing ARCH on the cave
wall, then carefully prints E-G-R-E-S-S above it.

The arch FLARES, opening a shimmering PORTAL.

REN (CONT'D)
I did it!

Lisa steps closer.

LISA
Ren... before you go...

I'm sorry for all the things I said. You really are a great
artist.

Ren hugs her.

REN
I'll never forget you, Lisa.
Always remember that I believe in
you.

She holds him a heartbeat longer – then abruptly SHOVES him
through.

LISA
Please don't forget me.
Now go!

Amica and Pepe leap after him.

The portal SNAPS SHUT with a flash.

INT. DA VINCI'S WORKSHOP - NIGHT

Ren SPRAWLS onto the workshop floor as a glowing arch fades behind him. Amica and Pepe tumble beside him and skid to a stop. The portal vanishes. The workshop is dark, lit only by moonlight.

REN
I'm home!

He looks around.

REN (CONT'D)
Mr. Da Vinci? Sir? Are you here?

He spots a NOTE pinned to the easel, grabs it, and reads - a message that appears to be from Donatelli but is actually Benedetto's summons to the town square.

REN (CONT'D)
No!

He BOLTS for the door. Amica and Pepe race after him.

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE DA VINCI'S WORKSHOP - CONTINUOUS

Ren SPRINTS through the streets, Amica and Pepe at his heels, weaving through alleys and narrow lanes-

A massive hand SNATCHES Ren by the collar, yanking him back into the shadows.

GRASSO
(drunk, looming)
Well, well, well. Who do we have here?

Ren finds himself face-to-face with Grasso's furious glare.

REN
(struggling)
Let me go!

GRASSO
And where might you be headed in such a hurry, baby boy?

REN
That's none of your business. I
have to go!

GRASSO
I'm making it my business.

He SHAKES Ren, raising his free hand to strike.

Ren STOMPS Grasso's foot. At the same instant, Amica CLAMPS
onto Grasso's ankle.

GRASSO (CONT'D)
Yeow! Why you little—

Ren RIPS free and runs. Grasso lurches after him like a
drunken bull, knocking over baskets and a small cart.

Ren whips around a corner — DEAD END.

Grasso's shadow falls over him. Ren turns, plants his feet,
fists clenched, trembling but unmoving.

GRASSO (CONT'D)
You never learn, do you, boy?
I'll make you pay for that.

He reaches toward Ren—

WHACK!

A club slams into Grasso's shoulder from off-screen. He
staggers.

A second club CRACKS against his head from the other side. He
drops to his knees, then face-plants.

Reveal **TWO POLICE OFFICERS**: one tall and thin, one short and
stocky, both gripping heavy clubs.

OFFICER #1
Oooh! That's gonna leave a bruise.

OFFICER #2
Nice work. We've been looking for
this one for a while.

They hoist Grasso up under the arms.

GRASSO
(groggy, protesting)
Let me go! I haven't done anything
wrong!

OFFICER #2
The warrants say otherwise, Grasso.

OFFICER #1
Destruction of property, assault,
drunk and disorderly...
You're a one-man crime wave.

OFFICER #2
You have the right to remain
silent. We strongly recommend you
use it.

They cuff him and drag him to a waiting horse-drawn paddy wagon, shove him inside, and SLAM the door.

Ren, Amica, and Pepe trade a quick, relieved look – then sprint off.

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - NIGHT

The square lies empty, washed in moonlight and a few lanterns.

Da Vinci crosses the cobblestones alone.

DA VINCI
(calling out)
Hello? Signor Donatelli? Are you
here?

From the shadows, DRAGO and CORNELIUS LUNGE, grabbing his arms. He struggles but they pin him easily.

Benedetto steps into the moonlight, savoring it.

BENEDETTO
(gloating)
Ha... ha... ha... Look what we have here.

DA VINCI
Benedetto?

Benedetto strolls closer, smug.

BENEDETTO
Oh, my dear Da Vinci.

How ironic that the scene of so many of your "victories" will be the place of your undoing.

DA VINCI
What are you talking about?

BENEDETTO
 I'm talking about all the years
 I've watched you take what was
 rightfully mine.

He leans in, eyes blazing.

BENEDETTO (CONT'D)
 Somehow you convinced them that
 your little doodles are art... while
 my masterpieces are mocked.

He produces a slim DAGGER, lifting the point beneath Da Vinci's chin, threatening but not cutting.

BENEDETTO (CONT'D)
 That ends tonight.

DA VINCI
 You don't have to do this.

BENEDETTO
 Oh, but I do. For years, they've
 ignored my genius—

He turns outward, addressing an imaginary audience, slipping into performance.

BENEDETTO (CONT'D)
 (with braggadocio)
 —and now, with the great Da Vinci
 gone, the cheers and prize money
 will finally be where they belong.

With me... the Amazing Benedetto!

He spreads his arms and bows grandly to the empty square.

BENEDETTO (CONT'D)
 It will be GLORIOUS!

His voice echoes around the silent plaza.

CORNELIUS
 (low, to Drago)
 He really likes hearing himself,
 huh?

DRAGO
 Yeah, that's for sure... I wonder if
 he brought cake?

Benedetto turns back, dagger returning to Da Vinci's throat.

BENEDETTO
 So, goodbye, Leonardo Da Vinci.
 You will not be missed.

He raises the dagger high—

Amica DARTS IN and BITES Drago's ankle. Drago YELPS and stumbles, loosening his grip.

Pepe DIVE-BOMBS Cornelius, flapping and pecking. Cornelius flails.

CORNELIUS
 It's that bird again!

BENEDETTO
 What the—?

Ren BURSTS into the square, TACKLES Benedetto, and knocks him off balance. They hit the ground. Ren grabs Da Vinci and hauls him away.

A streak of colored lightning BLASTS past them, hitting a wall. It erupts into a curtain of hardened paint, sealing their escape route.

Ren and Da Vinci spin to see Benedetto now holding a GLOWING MAGIC BRUSH like a weapon.

BENEDETTO (CONT'D)
 Why do you look so surprised?

He admires it.

BENEDETTO (CONT'D)
 When I saw what your little toy could do, I simply had to order something of my own... upgraded, of course.

He tosses it lightly and catches it with flair.

BENEDETTO (CONT'D)
 Mine is a bit more... user-friendly.

He aims at them.

Ren steps in front of Da Vinci, lifting his own brush. They stand off like gunfighters.

REN
 Getting rid of Da Vinci won't fix anything, Benedetto. There will always be other artists.
 (MORE)

REN (CONT'D)
(beat)
And better ones than you.

BENEDETTO
And who might that be?

REN
Me, for example.

Benedetto's smile dies.

BENEDETTO
Shut up, you insolent fool.

He FIRES. Ren COUNTERS.

A WIZARD'S DUEL erupts - streaks of color cross the square, splashing across carts and stone, turning parts of the plaza into wild, shifting patterns.

Da Vinci DIVES under a vendor cart.

Pepe and Amica leap in front of Ren. A stray blast hits them - they vanish in a puff of swirling color.

REN
(shocked, screaming)
Oh, no! Pepe! Amica!

EXT. ADJACENT SIDE STREET - CONTINUOUS

ZINGARA strolls along, humming and singing.

ZINGARA
(singing softly)
I cast a spell, or maybe two...

She notices the bursts of color lighting the sky.

ZINGARA (CONT'D)
Ooooh! Fireworks. They're a hoot!

She heads toward the square.

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - CONTINUOUS

Ren and Benedetto trade blasts. Neither can push the other back.

Zingara arrives, sees Benedetto firing at Ren, and GASPS.

She digs into her purse, yanking out a rolled SCROLL.

ZINGARA
 Hey, Uncle Ben! What do you think
 you're doing?!

She unrolls it, scanning.

ZINGARA (CONT'D)
 Aha! Section 7G of the brush user's
 agreement – "no attacking
 children."

She thrusts it under his nose.

ZINGARA (CONT'D)
 And YOU signed it!

His glowing signature appears on the parchment.

BENEDETTO
 So what? You're too late to stop
 me.

Zingara SNAPS the scroll; it morphs into a CAST-IRON SKILLET
 in her hand.

ZINGARA
 Then I am officially not
 responsible for what happens next.

She HAMMERS Benedetto with a rapid CLANG-CLANG-CLANG.

BENEDETTO
 (dazed)
 Get away from me, you maniac!

He blasts her. A paint bolt sends her flying into the vendor
 cart, crashing into Da Vinci. They tumble together in a heap.

ZINGARA
 (frazzled)
 Ooooh... he is so NOT getting a
 refund.

The duel intensifies.

Ren quickly paints a floating SHIELD outline and fills it. It
 solidifies in midair. He GRABS it.

Benedetto's next blast ricochets off the shield and nails
 Drago and Cornelius.

When the smoke clears, both are in absurdly fancy BALL GOWNS
 and giant HATS, straight out of *"Gone With the Wind."* They
 totter off, tripping over heels as they flee.

Benedetto and Ren FIRE at the same time. The beams collide, explode—

COLOR ENGULFS THEM BOTH.

They disappear.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. REALM OF UNFINISHED ART - MEDIEVAL FIELD - DUSK

Ren is spat out of a rainbow portal, SLAMMING into tall grass. He groans, pushing himself up.

A vast, half-finished MEDIEVAL LANDSCAPE stretches out: sketched hills, a looming CASTLE whose upper towers fade into line art, storm clouds roiling above.

REN
(to himself)
Where... am I?

The castle drawbridge GROANS open.

A DARK FIGURE steps out — Benedetto.

As he walks, he sweeps his enchanted brush along his body; each stroke conjures BLACK METAL ARMOR — chest plate, gauntlets, helmet — absorbing light.

BENEDETTO
Welcome to the Realm of Unfinished Art, you impudent, insignificant boy. The perfect place to erase an annoyance.

Ren raises his own brush.

BENEDETTO (CONT'D)
What do you think you can do to me with that little toy?

He CHARGES, armor CLANKING.

BENEDETTO (CONT'D)
Whatever you send my way, I'll absorb. And it will only make me stronger!

Ren fires several blasts. Each one sinks into Benedetto's armor, making it darker and thicker.

REN
 (to himself)
 It's not working...

Benedetto reaches him and swings his armored fists like hammers. Ren dives and dodges; each missed blow cracks the ground.

Between attacks, Ren paints on the dirt – the rough outline of a DA VINCI-STYLE CATAPULT.

As Benedetto stomps closer, Ren finishes the last stroke. The CATAPULT snaps into solid form.

Ren dives to the release lever and yanks it just as Benedetto steps into its path.

A giant stone projectile SLAMS into Benedetto's chest, blasting him backward and stripping off most of the armor. He hurtles into a GROVE OF TREES near a cliff.

He lands hard, snarling.

Benedetto sweeps his brush in a wide arc. Color splashes over the trees; they twist into dark, spiked horrors, branches sharpening into spears. Thorny trunks surge, forming a bristling barrier along the cliff base. WOLVES howl from within.

Ren looks from the razor forest to the towering cliff.

REN (CONT'D)
 Fine. We go up.

He paints again, quickly: a compact DA VINCI GLIDER. It solidifies.

Ren grabs it, sprints, and leaps from a rise. The glider catches wind and carries him toward the cliff top.

EXT. CLIFFTOP - CONTINUOUS

Ren touches down on the cliff's edge, winded. Below, the twisted forest and wolves churn.

He calls down.

REN
 If you want me – then come up and
 get me!

Benedetto snarls and begins to climb, painting STONE FOOTHOLDS into the cliff as he goes.

Above, the storm thickens; lightning flickers.

At the top, they face off again. Benedetto, in partial armor, raises his brush. Ren raises his.

Another WIZARD'S DUEL erupts – color beams gouge the rock, leaving patches of reality half finished.

Below, wolves and spiked trees crowd the cliff base.

Benedetto scores a hit – a sickly beam strikes Ren's RIGHT ARM. Color drains from his fingers to his elbow; the arm becomes pale line art. His brush slips from his grip, tumbling over the edge into the spikes and wolves below.

REN (CONT'D)

No!

His right arm hangs limp and numb.

Benedetto drives him back toward the brink.

BENEDETTO

Take a good last look, boy.
After you're gone, that old fool Da Vinci will be the last thing
between me and the fame I deserve.

His brush MORPHS into a BLACK SWORD.

BENEDETTO (CONT'D)

And he won't last long either.

He raises the sword for the kill–

A LIGHTNING BOLT forks from the storm, striking the sword tip. The charge rips down into his remaining armor, blowing off the last pieces and knocking him to his knees.

Ren staggers away.

Battle cries SOUND from behind him.

Ren turns to see LISA cresting the rise – flanked by an ARMY of familiar figures: **SPARTANS, DOGS from the poker table, THE SCREAM figure, GEORGE WASHINGTON, BEN FRANKLIN, ZINGARA, and more.**

At the cliff base, the corrupted forest and wolves pivot toward this new enemy and surge forward.

LISA

(calling)

Ren!

She spots his brush glinting down among the spikes.

LISA (CONT'D)
There!

She races along the slope toward it.

The trees and wolves converge, cutting her off. She skids to a halt — outnumbered.

A BLINDING BURST OF COLOR erupts in front of her.

When it clears, ZINGARA stands there with her skillet, eyes blazing.

ZINGARA
You go save your friend, sweetie.
I'll deal with the twigs and
puppies.

She charges the wolves, swinging. Wolves and trees are smacked aside, opening a path.

ZINGARA (CONT'D)
Bad doggies! BAD doggies!

Lisa DARTS through and opening and sprints toward the brush.

QUICK CUTS - BATTLEFIELD

-Spartans lock shields and shove back thorny trunks, slashing at wolves.

-Poker DOGS tackle a wolf that lunges at a tossed bone, cards flying.

-THE SCREAM figure pops up behind two trees and SCREAMS; they FAINT and topple.

-BEN FRANKLIN uses a kite, key, and bone to lure a wolf into a lightning strike, leaving it comically singed.

Back to—

EXT. BASE OF CLIFF - CONTINUOUS

Lisa reaches the edge of the spike forest where the brush teeters. Twisted trees and wolves rush to cut her off. No way through—

With a POP, the GRIFFIN appears behind her.

It unleashes a sheet of FIRE, incinerating the front line of trees into smoking ash.

Lisa nods in thanks, vaults the smoldering remains, and grabs the magic brush.

She looks up to see Ren struggling above.

LISA
Ren! Hold on!

She scrambles up the slope.

EXT. CLIFFTOP - CONTINUOUS

Ren lies on the ground, gasping, right arm still sketchy. Benedetto, armor mostly gone but still clutching his brush-sword, hauls himself upright and looms over him.

BENEDETTO
You're finished.

He lifts the sword—

A bright color blast KNOCKS it from his hand.

Reveal LISA at the cliff's edge, holding Ren's brush, chest heaving.

LISA
You keep your stinking hands off MY
artist!

She unleashes a flurry of blasts. Benedetto absorbs what he can, staggered, then hurls a massive counterstrike.

The blast SLAMS Lisa. She's thrown back, colors flickering. Her body fades toward sketch, lying motionless on the rock.

Benedetto stalks toward her.

BENEDETTO
From the moment I saw you in that
half-finished portrait, I knew you
were just an incomplete and
insignificant piece of junk art.

He grinds his heel into her fading outline, smearing it.

Ren sees this; something in him snaps.

REN
No!

He lunges, snatches the brush from where it fell, and unleashes a furious barrage at Benedetto.

Blow after blow strips away whatever protection remains. Benedetto's brush flies from his grasp, tumbling into the spikes below.

Armorless and terrified, Benedetto drops to his knees at the edge.

BENEDETTO
(panicked)
Please don't kill me. Have you no
mercy?

Ren stands over him, paintbrush raised, shaking with rage... then stops. Breathes.

REN
I'm not going to kill you.

But I am going to put you somewhere you can't hurt anyone ever again.

He steps back and draws a glowing RECTANGLE in the air. It opens onto a grand gallery hall, an empty wall space labeled **"Benedetto - SELF PORTRAIT."**

Ren flicks the brush. A beam hits Benedetto's chest and pulls him backward into the opening.

He vanishes. The window flattens into a single ornate frame with an image of Benedetto frozen mid-tantrum. It drops and embeds upright in the earth like a tombstone.

The clouds begin to break. Light spills in.

Ren turns away from the cliff edge.

EXT. CLIFFTOP - LISA'S RESTORATION - CONTINUOUS

Ren drops to his knees where Lisa's broken outline lies.

REN
Lisa. I'm so sorry I couldn't save
you.

Only fragments of her sketch remain. Tears form.

Then a tiny sketched HAND pushes up, reaching for him.

LISA
(soft, faint)
Master artists don't cry.

Ren's eyes widen. He lifts the brush.

REN
You're not gone.
You're just... unfinished.

He gently touches the sketched hand. A warm glow spreads along the faint lines. Color flows back in:

– Fingers
– Arms
– Face, hair, dress

In moments, LISA stands before him, whole and radiant.

He pulls her into a hug. Amica and Pepe rush in, jumping and flapping around them.

Lisa pulls back, flexing her fingers.

LISA
Not too bad.

REN
Does it work for you?

LISA
I'm not sure...

She playfully "SMACKS" the back of his head.

LISA (CONT'D)
...Perfect!

They laugh, finally releasing the tension.

Lisa grows a little serious.

LISA (CONT'D)
So... this is really goodbye, isn't it?

REN
Not really. I can create a whole world for you, with plenty of friends and unlimited adventures.

They hug again.

REN (CONT'D)
I'll never forget you, Lisa.
Always remember that I believe in
you.

He steps back, lifts the brush, and draws a glowing DOORWAY – a portal back to Da Vinci's world.

He stands at the threshold, looks back. Lisa meets his gaze, smiling through tears. Amica and Pepe move to his side.

Ren smiles, then leaps through with them.

The portal flashes and disappears.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

INT. DA VINCI'S WORKSHOP - THREE DAYS LATER

Ren stands at an easel, adding careful strokes to a large portrait of Lisa. She stands at the center, surrounded by the "friendly" characters from their adventures – Spartans, dogs, Founding Fathers, The Scream figure, even Zingara – all happily gathered around her. Lisa is fully complete, smiling, clearly at home in this painted world.

The door BURSTS open. DA VINCI hurries in, breathless, clutching several official-looking papers with gold seals.

DA VINCI
(excited)
Well, Ren, it's official!
You are now Lorenzo Da Vinci.

REN
What?

DA VINCI
Yes! As of today, you are my son!

Ren freezes, then breaks into a huge grin. They rush together and hug tightly. Amica and Pepe hop around them, ecstatic.

Da Vinci pulls back, barely containing his joy.

DA VINCI (CONT'D)
And look!

He hurries to a large tarp-covered object and YANKS the tarp away, revealing a strange, crudely constructed bed – wooden frame, canvas hammock, ropes everywhere.

DA VINCI (CONT'D)
I've even designed this special bed
for your room.

He tosses Ren's small satchel onto the bed.

The bed instantly COLLAPSES into a messy heap of wood,
canvas, and string.

They stare for a beat... then burst into laughter.

REN
(grinning, mimicking Da
Vinci)
Just wood, canvas and string,
Father. Just wood, canvas and
string... It's family that's the
valuable thing.

Da Vinci's eyes soften. He pulls Ren into another hug as
Amica and Pepe look on.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. DA VINCI'S WORKSHOP - THE NEXT MORNING

Morning light fills the workshop.

Ren adds the final touches to the life-sized portrait of
Lisa. She stands at the center of a joyful crowd of all their
friends from the Realm of Unfinished Art – everyone vibrant
and alive. Lisa is whole, radiant, clearly happy.

Nearby, Da Vinci works on his own canvas: a partially
completed portrait of a seated woman – the future **Mona Lisa**.

DA VINCI
(frustrated)
Drat! I just can't seem to get the
smile right on her... And she still
needs a name... I was thinking of
Mona something. Mona Debbie?...Mona
Blanche?...Mona Ethyl?

Ren glances over, amused.

REN
How 'bout Mona "Lisa"?

SWISH PAN TO:

The UNSEEN HECKLER at the workshop window (**NOW VISIBLE**, same
voice as earlier), leaning in.

UNSEEN HECKLER
I LOVE IT! It'll be a CLASSIC!

SWISH PAN BACK:

Da Vinci and Ren spin toward the window – but the UNSEEN HECKLER is already gone.

Ren walks to Da Vinci's side, studying the unfinished Mona.

REN
As a wise man once told me...
Sometimes it just takes a bit of
confidence.

He gently takes the brush from Da Vinci's hand.

With a single, confident stroke, he shapes the woman's smile – mirroring the warmth and subtlety of Lisa's smile in his own portrait.

Da Vinci studies it.

DA VINCI
(soft, awed)
Perfect. Thank you, my young Da
Vinci.

They stand side by side, looking from Ren's Lisa portrait to Da Vinci's Mona Lisa, both paintings gleaming in the morning light.

The CAMERA SLOWLY PULLS BACK, framing Ren, Da Vinci, Amica, and Pepe together in the workshop – Lisa's portrait watching over them, her painted eyes bright.

FADE TO BLACK.

CLOSING CREDITS

FADE IN:

INT. BENEDETTO'S STUDIO - NIGHT

We DOLLY IN SLOWLY on a half-finished, full-size portrait of Benedetto on an easel, posing with a mystical brush in his hand.

BENEDETTO (V.O.)
(sinister laugh, with
echo)
Ha... ha... ha... ha!

His laugh trails off into silence. A beat of quiet – then:

DRAGO (V.O.)
What!? NO CAKE!?

CUT TO BLACK.

THE END