

The Survivalist outline

by [Matthew Temple](#)

Use Grand Hotel as the music++

a story about survival..the most elemental of all stories..think Apollo 13, Gravity, The Edge..someone who survives [society] against all odds..an artist, maybe, surviving the oppression of the civilized world..about survival of the mind/spirit..about holding onto that spark when everyone and every force wants to extinguish it..a poet, maybe..or maybe someone whose art evolves from poet to novelist to screenwriter to director or something like that..so the challenges are ever greater

imagines she/he goes on oprah or whatever show, as a teenager, being interviewed, practicing for the interview when you're famous, as a kid, like Ashley did

the person gets jaded..he's had sex with the tightest prostitutes, had six women at once, done every drug, and the world no longer seems the same way to you once you've had exotic pleasures at your fingertips..but of course he/she finds a simple love, a simple person, who can excite her

he/she with a young lover..the artist is doing this weird half whistling thing she does with her lips and her lover says are you going to do that the whole time and she says I'm a freak, Michael, this is one of the freaky things I do..preface it with the artist on set doing that whistle thing while Michael is in the picture
director to actor: strip down to your panties. I'm not wearing any panties. Well strip down then. ..a very hands-on director, requiring actors to undulate and play out fucking scenes during auditions
..I learned her cunt.

(in his/her early career) "It's not that I'm going to keep doing it until I get successful. It's that I'm going to keep doing it forever, regardless of success."

"You think that just because you're famous and I'm famous I'm going to give you a break?"

the artist goes to court and on the stand maintains all integrity and says "you can all fuck yourselves"

the director, talking to an actor who came to him/her about whether some drug use would be ok on set..the director says my concern is twofold: one, that you do your very best work on my project, and two, your health..so do whatever you need to do to do your best work, while maintaining your health, and we'll both be happy

"You know I like pussy right?" She laughs, looks in my eyes. "You want to go in that room over there and let me eat your pussy for you?"

"I think we should fuck." (an introduction)

someone who pimps out her/his daughter/son as a gift to the superstar artist..the artist fucks parent and child

Are you wild? Of course I'm wild. I'm bipolar. I'm as wild as they get.

She can tell you everything you need to know about a movie from watching the first five minutes. She can tell the mood on the set where it was filmed. She can tell you what the director said to an actor right before a take.

~~I thought you were from Portland. I thought you were a waitress. So?~~

~~What are you doing in LA directing movies?~~

~~Let me tell you something, son. A waitress in Portland knows as much about directing movies as a movie director does in LA. That's how cool Portland is.~~

~~Portland's really that cool, huh?~~

~~No, it just rains a lot so there's nothing to do but watch movies and work.~~

~~She can tell you the gender of the director just by watching his film. Same with the screenwriter. Knows every actor by voice alone. Every movie ever made and who was in it and who worked on it and what studio made it and who worked on it. Can tell the number of stars rating by the length of the opening credits (how do~~

~~you know this is a one star rating? Because the credits run too long. A five star director would have fixed it.)~~

~~She's out with her gay guy friend and he says try the same thing with a stranger's virginity so they laughingly play that with the staff and customers at the diner they're at.~~

~~Bondage photos all over her apartment.~~

~~Breaking into a historically male profession.~~

~~She has a thing for girls in bandages and slings, on crutches.~~

Woman director is always telling rape jokes—what? I'm a woman, I'm allowed to tell rape jokes! It's hilarious to her..her power..no one can stand up to her.

One rape joke per chapter, 40 chapters?

A student comes to her and they're talking about the student's work (writing or film) and it comes out that the student is plagued with constant pain. The teacher stops. Looks at the student. Says: "Look. Your work is important. *You* are important. I am also in constant pain." "I didn't know that." "Yes. My shaking? It's tardive dyskinesia, a result of some psych medicine I took a long time ago. Every day, every night I am in pain. I can't lie on my side at night because my arms." "I'm sorry!" "No. This is about you. Are you in pain now?" {nods} "Listen. You get the best doctor you can to get you the best medicine possible and you take it." "But what about NA {establish this earlier}?" "You take the medicine. You lie to your NA group. Lie to your sponsor. Don't tell them what you're taking. Go to them for the company, get your community there. But you take your medicine, and you find a way to organize your psyche so that you can do your work. Helen Keller was blind and *deaf* and she wrote *books*. So can you." {student cries into hands} "You can do better, you can do more, you can do more amazing. Hear me?" "Yeah." "Hear me?" "Yeah." "Ok, now go out there and change the world." {hug} "Thank you, {teacher nickname}." "You got it, {student nickname}."

A young man comes to her, the female director, for advice. What

should I do? What do you love the most? Writing. Then start writing. Pull up a chair. Today you'll write with me.

~~I don't want to have pets for the same reason I don't want to have children: I don't want to spend time taking care of them. For most people, there's pretty much an equal chance that their kid will be a dud as there is that he'll be Mozart. But with me, and I suspect with you, there's not much chance that I'm going to have a kid who contributes more to the world than me. I bet having a kid is one of the most rewarding things an intelligent being can do. But then again...so is making a movie. (smile)~~

she, the director, overcame a drug past and has gotten to a point where even when she sees it in a movie, it doesn't bother her, even though her closest friend or sister died from it

~~A young talent who comes to the main char director and says she did a commercial..but it was just a Golden Corral commercial she says..the mentor views the commercial (or, has viewed it) and says yeah, but look who they featured..you! You were the cutest one in your family and they showed you in the two main shots! You're it, girl.~~

About how her friend and lover died..or maybe sister or brother..and how someone asks her if that's hard for her..she says look at how his life has impacted hers and others..lays out how exactly his example has affected her as an artist, artistically and career-wise..he truly lives on in her and others.

..

~~She goes celibate..thinks that it's just nature's way of making us reproduce and it's all vapid and mechanistic and meaningless—this story or use this somewhere else?~~

~~a girl takes off her pants and her panties say "the love goes here" in a narrowing diamond shape, with an arrow pointing at her cunt.
a person who at the beginning says he'll never do drugs or even smoke or drink coffee or anything..who ends up using and saying yes but I'll never do such and such drug, those are off limits..but, as per talk with the survivor, says ultimately you did them all, didn't you? Yeah. Says the boy. I did too, says the survivor, and pats him on the shoulder and says: Don't pay another second' of your life~~

~~thinking about that shit. Look at me. It's beyond you. Just don't pick up ever and move on with your life. You're amazing. Now go. ..and the survivor falls into using drugs again and when this boy hears about it he comes to her, barricaded in her apartment, and gives her the advice she gave him long ago..only her own advice can save her.~~

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~~—A lot of them just wanted to fuck me 'cause they thought I was a genius. They wait till afterward to tell you this.—So is it worth it to them, to fuck a genius?—Oh yes, they're very satisfied. Like standing next to a Picasso. And geniuses are often crazy. And crazy people are great fucks.~~

make drug use so prevalent..it's a world where just about *everyone* uses..everyone is constantly buying, selling, using, inventing his/her (the artist's) idea of paying attention to *process* while making things, coming from the eleventh grade on a chance to not take a science class but instead to take a photo class that had the girl she liked in it and it wouldn't count toward her GPA..so she could do *anything*

"My story begins in the 80s, when I was five. I saw Raiders of the Lost Arc on VHS and though I could barely read, I could read the credits of that movie and I read that it was directed by Steven

~~Spielberg. I loved that movie with all my heart and soul and I didn't even know what directing was, but if Steven Spielberg had directed Raiders of the Lost Arc, I knew, at five years old, that that's what I wanted to do.~~

~~"Back then directors were me—but that didn't bother me. If I had to have a penis to become a director, then I was gonna get one." A girl asks her for sex. She says no. The girl apologizes, hoping she didn't offend the director's moral code. The director says she has no moral objection to fucking your brains out, I just don't want to do it because I think it would complicate our relationship. I like you as my little Suzy, just the way you are. Things are simple between us: I tell you to do things, you do them. If I was relying on you for my next orgasm you might not be as willing to follow my orders, to handle my every whim. I love you, Suzy, but let's just keep it like it is.~~

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~~..~~

~~"I love you permanently."~~

~~"i love you for the rest of my life."~~

~~"Mmm."~~

~~"Yours was better."~~

~~(Laugh)~~

~~"No it wasn't.."~~

Actor (I'm imagining Bridget Fonda) who disappears from the screen even though she's in demand because she doesn't want to be remembered as old..like a cat crawling under the porch to die, except when the actress is forty. And she says she's not a real actress's anyway. Every movie I've been in was an accident, and I've only had one good performance and that was in [Single White Female] and that was only good because I was playing myself. That wasn't acting—my performance in that movie was just me, being myself on camera.

Couple in a Sleepnumber (check spelling) bed and they're trying to have sex (the artist and someone else) but one back is propped up and the other is leaned back and they awkwardly fight over the remote control to get the bed flat enough so they can fuck..in the end it's too difficult and the artist gives up, leaving, saying just fuck yourself on Level 5 (research an appropriate Sleep Number), if that's what you prefer.

(the main character, who's been clean for a long time) If there was a line of coke right here in front of me, would I do it? The answer changes day to day. Sometimes I just have a smell for it, you know, and yeah, on those days I would do it. Without a thought. With no hesitation. And maybe I'd do that line and it'd be enough. Maybe after all this time I would know what trouble I could get myself into by seeking out that second line, and I'd just do the line, sit back, and enjoy. But I doubt it.

She gets tardive dyskinesia and survives and recovers miraculously, but we get a peek inside her mind about how she views the world as compared to how her world looks to others from the outside:

Her doctor asks: "How are you doing?"

"Great!"

"How's your clenching?"

"Well, it's pretty bad. I'm lying down about twenty-three hours a day—I lie on my back to sleep, and in the day I lie on my stomach with pillows propped up under my chest and I can type that way because—as you know—the clenching lessens when I lie down. So, I mean, I guess I'm not doing all *that* well, since I can't sit up for more than half an hour at a time, and if I'm standing, like when I'm brushing my teeth, my arm clenching is just..it's almost unbearable. But I can write—I'm working on my script. And that's what I love to do, so, on the whole, things are going wonderfully."

The doctor looked at me skeptically. He doubled my dose of Klonopin. The thing is, though, about this world..you're gonna die anyway. So..these minor things, like being deaf-mute or using a wheelchair or having a mental disorder..you just gotta work *around* that shit and get as much done as you can before you die. And this

dying event..it's usually a lot sooner than people think.

Use someone like that Lamborghini/bookshelf fag as someone the director meets to illustrate that the only reason most of these Hollywood people figured out how to make all that money is so they can have the hot girl standing next to you in the pool. You "invest in modeling" just so skinny blond girls will come over to your house and be near you for a while, like people who came to see Jesus and touch his robe because they thought the proximity would cure their ills. That bookshelf faggot doesn't even know what his ills are—how can he cure them. And she (the director) critiques him: "You read five-thousand books and visited fifty-one {check the numbers} countries, and the most your mind stretched was to wanting a Lamborghini?" {he says something that indicates he doesn't get it} "Lamborghinis are beautiful, every eight-year-old who sees one on the internet wants a Lamborghini. But it's just a status symbol. It's just like a woman who wants a fat engagement ring. It means nothing. Which five-thousand books did you read? Were they all about how to make money and buy expensive cars? A bunch of self-help books from the fifties? Look. Look at yourself. You're here: you have a house with fifty-three doors {check the number}. You realize that's how you introduce this house to people..that's how you described it to me when I got here tonight. You waves your arms around and said, 'I used to live on a bus. Now I have a house with fifty-three doors.' I'm telling you *so what?* What does having a house have to do with anything? And it astounds me that any human being could read five-thousand books and come away thinking that having a house with fifty-three doors is an indication of any real kind of success. It astounds me." "I'm glad I astound you." "Yeah. Well. Have fun with your rented blond girls. And you: sixteen: if you have sex with this guy then you're as dumb as he looks. Do you go to high school?" This super-skinny red-bikini-wearing bleach-blonde looks over at me and is obviously stoned. "Yes." "What book is your English teacher making you read?" "Right now? Right now we're reading *Of Mice and Men*." "Was that one of your five-thousand books?" "No." "Well there's your problem. Jerking off to a picture of

Warren Buffett ain't gonna make you a billionaire. Girls you pay to hang out by your pool..they just want your fucking money. I heard some of your little fifteen, sixteen, *fourteen*-year-old models talking in the bathroom that lies behind one of your fifty-three doors. Know what they were saying? How great and wise and accomplished Tai {Davis} is?" I wait for him to respond but he doesn't. "Which Muppet you most look like. The consensus was Grover, which I think is a fucking insult to Grover, but anyway, thanks for the party, it was the worst three hours of my week. Aren't you going to give me a hug goodbye? Or am I nothing to you now that you think there's no chance you'll ever get into my pussy. Fucking asshole fag. If you read five-thousand books and you're still this shallow then that's all you will ever be: a Grover-looking fucking asshole fag." And with that I said goodnight. "You know what hurt me so much..or made me so lonely? I had a career prior to this—a technical career. Yeah. I act like I know nothing about computers and cameras and electronics but that's just because I don't want people to think I know a lot about computers because if they *do*, then every time anyone has a computer question they'll come to me. Like someone on set is going to ask me to *install a printer* on some *Windows* system and I'm going to be like: I don't install printers. I'm a film director. And when I was a computer person, I didn't install printers *then*. I did software. Very precise, high-performance software that I taught myself how to do. And I—this is my sick psychology—I want some credit for that. Actually, that's not true—I want *respect*. From my family. Which is silly. I mean, what creative person or inventive person—what brilliant person—has a family that knows *jack* about what they do, who they are, what's inside their mind. I made strides in a field called one-dimensional cellular automata—I was high on coke most of the time with a laptop on my belly and an old fuck buddy with a *nice fat cock* fucking the shit out of my pussy—have you ever seen my pussy? You wanna see? Anyway, you couldn't find someone within *a hundred miles* who has even *heard* of cellular automata. And I did things for companies, big companies like LexisNexis and Anthem Blue Cross/Blue Shield..the stuff I did

for them, maybe *one* other person in the company understood what I was doing. Sometimes I was the only one who knew what I was doing—all these people knew is that when they ran my shit, it did something that what previously impossible, that was now possible, because of me. I take pride in that work. And to do it, I had to go places, in my mind, that no one I know has ever gone to..will ever go to. I know we all have special places in our minds that no one else can touch. My sister is a dancer, among other things. She can give you a one-hour lecture on *walking* that will blow you away—you wouldn't believe how much there is *to think about* walking. I guess I just don't like being treated *like an idiot* by those who have less pudding than me—as in: *The proof is in the pudding*. So I'm crazy, yeah, I am. So I'm a drug addict, yeah, I am. But I can *do* things." I laugh, a bit maniacally. "I can *get shit done* in multiple domains and I've done so much that to any logical person *there is nothing left to prove!* And I am a logical person. I am not doing anything I'm doing now to prove something to me or to anyone else. So why now, at this point in my third or fourth career in which I have proven so much, are people with less skill than me and less ability than me and less general smarts and knowledge than me, *questioning me, disrespecting me, insulting me, putting me down*. And don't say it's 'cause I'm a woman—that's only half of it. It's because—one—(and this will sound egotistical) these people are clueless about the relative pedestals on which we stand and—two—(and this is going to sound accusative) *they are trying to take me down* because they know that I am greater than them. Like climbing a mountain or throwing rocks at a statue, it's just because *I'm bigger than them and they want to take me down.*"

"Are you suicidal?"

"No."

"You sound suicidal."

"Don't worry, I'm not about to off myself. I have three more movies I'm going to finish and then I'll kill myself. This one we're working on. Then two more after that that I have planned out. Then I'll kill myself."

"You realize how that might not sound rational to people out here."

~~“Out here like *outside my head*? Of course I do. And you realize how it might sound very rational from in here, inside my head, where this world is a horrible place to live, an inhospitable place, a profoundly lonely place, and I feel like I am of no value to my family. When I say, ‘I love you very much,’ my mother doesn’t say anything back. My dad is still alive but has no interest in having a relationship with me. How do you have kids and then just stop giving a shit about them when they turn eighteen? So..I feel like the only value I provide to this world is my films. And that is why I’m going to finish this one we’re working on. Then do two more I have planned out. Then I’m going to kill myself. Because I’ll be done. Do you understand that concept? Everyone understands the concept of nebulously pressing the flesh, spending their lives playing out their sex roles—as if that was the most important part of the identity of a human being—but very few people understand the concept of *being done*.”~~

..

~~“I just remember saying, ‘I love you very much,’ to my mom, and she didn’t say anything back—she ignored me. She wouldn’t respond to anything nice I said. If I said, ‘Fuck your mother,’ she’d have some calm reply—totally respectful. But if she did something nice for me and I said, ‘Thank you,’—nothing. She was specifically ignoring everything nice I said, as if to prove—to someone—that I was of no value to her. *She* was the caregiver—I had nothing to offer. And she would never hug, not even as a child. The only way she would touch me was with a high five. The only way she would let me touch her was on her shoulder, and she didn’t even like that. I could feel her cringe every time she did it. Jesus, I’m sorry, I should be telling this to my therapist.”~~

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~~{boss, producer or former boss of some sort, or some superior (producer probably) after she does an amazing script edit, in a room, in a meeting with others, in two hours, which is also the length of the script. everyone else clears out of the room and it’s just those two. he gives her what she perceives as a backhanded compliment:} “{Name}, what you just did there was amazing. If I~~

live to be ninety and I'm still doing this job I'll probably never come across someone like you."

"Cut the crap, George. If you live to be infinity you'll never come across anyone like me. Ever. Now shake my hand."

"Why."

"Because I quit. And since you'll never meet anyone like me again, I'm giving you the chance to shake my hand. Fuck you. Don't even touch me or I'll sue you for that being your actual face, and your actual brain, you little package of asshole. Shake my fucking hand. Shake it. There. Now that's goodbye."

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"Most people in this life are just fucking around—"

"And that's ok."

"No. It *would* be ok if their fucking around didn't get in other people's way. I want to yell at people sometimes, shake them by the fucking head and say: I'M TRYING TO DO SOMETHING HERE. CAN'T YOU SEE THAT? Like, I'm making movies—I'm directing films. I'm not sitting in the back room like my mom watching Fox News twenty-four hours a day *while she's eighty-five*. I guess if that's what you want to do with the last few years of your life, *get mad* at stuff you have no control over—"

"Stuff that's not even true."

"Right! Faux News, you're right—*it isn't even true*. What did they find, that like eighty percent of what they said was straight-out lies?"

"Yeah, something like that."

"Ugh. But she's not hurting anyone. Except for passing along the hate. And you know what?—That counts. That counts as getting in other people's way. I mean you and me, we're making a fucking movie. This is hard work. Who else do you know who dedicates *years of their life* to a single project? People do it, but not many. And the ones that do, you've heard of their names. Then you get a guy like {name Mack? =)}—he's a fucking *producer*—what is that? I know you've seen these previews where it's like, 'From the Producer of Paranormal Activity 10.' And I see that shit and I know it works. I imagine all these people all over America and all

over the world and they're like, shit, I loved the fuck out of Paranormal Activity (even though they're film idiots and they don't even know what it means to be scared in a movie theater—they've never seen *Alien*, you know what I'm saying?) and they're like, 'Wow, this new movie is *from the producer* of some other movie I liked..I'm guaranteed to like all movies produced by this same asshole who has about as much to do with the quality of 'his' movies as I do with making sure the astronauts on Mir have enough oxygen!"

"Are they doing a Paranormal Activity 11?"

"They'll do a fuckin' Paranormal Activity *One hundred* as long as people keep raising teenagers who don't know what a fucking scary movie is. Seriously, I don't know—I have no inside information on that franchise. Anyway my point is—"

"Also there is no more Mir."

"*Anyway*, my point is..there's no more Mir? As of when?"

"As of like fifteen or twenty years ago. They de-orbited it."

"*What the fuck does that mean, they de-orbited it?* It doesn't matter. My point is that you and I are trying to *make* something. And on set sometimes I just want to scream, 'You *motherfuckers*. If you're not here because you *love* this script then get the fuck out of my face because *that's what it takes*. Love. Not a thing less. Nothing less than love will get you from the farm in Oklahoma to Hollywood and then from your shitty student films to real films. Unless of course you're Dorothy, then all you need is a hurricane and some ruby slippers."

"It's a tornado, but I know what you mean."

"What did I say? They don't have hurricanes in Kansas?"

"No." (laughs)

"Ahh, fuck. Thanks for listening, {name}."

"Anytime, boss."

"Call me boss one more time and you'll be looking for a new one."

"Ok, {Kathryn whatever name}."

"We're friendly, ok, because you have half a brain. I have half a brain too, that wasn't an insult. But you're not just my assistant."

"But I *am* your assistant."

~~“But you’re not *just* my assistant. You’re gonna move up. I’m gonna see to that, ok? This is the last film you’re gonna be my assistant for, then you’re getting a promotion. I’m serious. Think about what you want to do and, together, we’re gonna make that happen.”~~

~~“Ok, boss.”~~

~~“You fucking animal. You *animal*. You know what I need?”~~

~~“What?”~~

~~“A fucking mocha.”~~

~~“Ok, I’ll be right back boss.”~~

~~“Haha. Glad you’re enjoying yourself. We only have seven-thousand more mochas to go before this motherfucker wraps.”~~

~~..~~

~~(watch what you say) (her mother) (after she says something mind-twistingly illegally wrong) “Don’t you know that your words are affecting other people’s emotions?”~~

~~“Well..yeah..that’s the whole point.”~~

~~..~~

~~Her idea that for producers, cinematographers, sound people, production designers..those people can go to film school if they want to and they can afford it! But for a director? For a writer? They should turn them away at the door, refund their tuition, and tell them to take a road trip.~~

~~Ha.~~

~~I’m serious. Film school is of absolutely no use to a writer or a director. Only life can teach you those things—only living life and observing it. Yours and others. That’s the only way you’ll ever have anything to say!~~

~~..~~

~~(Another of her many theories she espouses)~~

~~(Her assistant says) I heard the head of the Los Angeles Film School say, If you watch enough movies you don’t have to go to film school.~~

~~I didn’t know you went to LAFS!~~

~~I didn’t. I was working there as a receptionist and after work was over I would sneak down into the theater and listen to the night~~

classes.

Kristi, you amaze me. I will be sad to lose you.

Lose me?

You're not going to be my assistant forever.

Well, currently I don't have another job, so.

So?

So I have to pay my rent.

Don't worry about your rent. I'm serious. Reorder your thoughts.

Think about the highest, most beautiful thing you can and keep that in your mind at every moment.

Ok.

Promise me?

Yes.

Say, I promise you.

I promise you.

What?

That I will keep the highest most beautiful thing in mind at all times.

At all times.

At all times.

I have a certain love for you, Kristi.

I know.

Does it bother you?

No.

Well it isn't sexual if that scares you—

What do you think he meant?

Who?

Joe Byron.

Who is Joe Byron?

He's the head of the Los Angeles Film School.

Oh, right. If you watch enough movies you don't have to go to film school. Is that actually what he said?

Yeah.

That's pretty progressive, don't you think—for the head of a film school to tell you, once you've paid your zillion-dollar tuition and you're captive in his auditorium, that you never had to come here if

you had just watched enough films?

Hahaha.

Yeah, that's pretty fucked up of Joe Byron. Must be kind of a subversive guy.

I don't know. I want to know what you think about his comment. I don't know why you think I have the corner on everything, just because I spout my mouth off at roughly the speed my brain runs, but if you really give a shit what a middle-aged woman think of that *gem* of a statement by the head of a film school—

You're not middle aged.

I'm thirty seven. Based on life expectancy that's middle aged.

Ok fuck I'm not gonna argue with you.

Are you mad?

No.

Thank you for the compliment. And yes, I suppose in the common sense of the world I'm not middle aged so points to you on that one. Watching a lot of films will teach you everything *technical* you need to know about making a film, yes—so in that sense if you watch enough films you don't need to go to film school. I mean most of the things you learn are trial and error, wouldn't you agree?

How so?

Well take a lighting person for example. If they place the light *here*, and the shot doesn't look right, then everyone gets together and they place the light *there*. Eventually the light gets put in the right place and next time you get to perfect a little quicker from everything you've learned in the past. So if you've seen enough films to know what looks good, then figuring out where to put the lights is easy. Ditto everything else technical about a film. Editing? Editing is an *emotional* exercise. The software is nothing, anyone can use it. But to be a good editor, you have to be able to look at a cut, and *feel* what that cut makes you feel, so that you can make cuts that make the audience feel what the director wants the audience to feel. A production designer is more like a painter. A costume person—fuck, if you think I know shit about clothes..you see how I dress! I don't know shit about costume designers I just hire 'em and tell 'em to do their thing. But—fuck—can you hand

me a cigarette? I'm out. Thanks. But where Joe Byron's statement falls apart is that it's incestual.

(Kristi shakes her head.)

Incestuous? Am I using the wrong word?

I have no idea.

Incestuous. It's incestuous. If *all you ever do* is watch Hollywood movies and you grew up in Hollywood with Hollywood people doing Hollywood drugs and having Hollywood discussions driving Hollywood cars drinking at Hollywood bars and learning that the world everywhere is like the world you live in: rich parents, house in the hills, every other car is a Porsche—but a cheap-ass Porsche, the cheapest Porsche you can buy, just so you can have a Porsche—a Porsche in Hollywood is like a *Subaru* in the rest of the country, you know what I'm saying? A Porsche is *nothing* in this town—you might as well drive a Honda. In *this* town, a Porsche is a car for *fags*.

We don't say fags anymore.

Thank you Kristen. A Porsche..in this town..is a car for every wannabe faggot producer fuckstick shit-eating Peter Jackson motherfuckin' green screen faggoty-ass *fatherfucking* ass-eating David Yates effects fest hack fest fuck. Did I say faggot?

Yes.

Did it offend you?

Honestly, deep in my heart, it didn't offend me at all.

Sweet. Where was I? I'm lost in some sort of bipolar drone flyby but it might be just flies or possibly fireflies I'm not sure.

You hallucinating?

Yeah but where was I?

Incestual Hollywood.

Haha. Very funny. Incestuous Hollywood makes incestuous Hollywood movies. These are kids who grow up watching the same old shit and so when they derive what they think *matters* and what they think is *true* about—not *movies*, but—*life*, they make movies with the emotional content of a Bret Easton Ellis book.

You don't like Ellis?

I *love* Ellis. *Some* Ellis. But people out here have no fucking

emotion. Kids from Ohio move here to get famous. The boys want to direct and the girls want to act and what happens is the boys end up waiting tables and the girls end up tending bar and the really pretty girls go to clubs and flag down guys driving Ferraris and Lamborghinis and Maseratis—

What's a Maserati?

It's a sports car.

Oh.

For fags.

Oh.

So the really pretty girls, they go home with guys who drive the *real* cars and they get opportunities—they'll never be a *movie star*—but they'll get to sing in a girl band or be in a couple episodes of CSI. They'll sit by the pool and become a glorified sex slave for the guy with the Maserati—sucking his dick cheese is the price she pays to sit by that pool, do endless amounts of coke, and live in the Hollywood hills.

So what are you saying?

All I'm *saying* is that motherfuckers who grow up in Los Angeles metaphorically sucking each other's *cultural* dicks, learn to watch filmmaking by watching films by P.T. Anderson—

You don't like *P.T. Anderson*?

I *love* P.T. Anderson. All I'm saying is these kids are trying to *be* P.T. Anderson. They wanna be the next Spike Jonze or—I don't even want to say this name but Danny Boyle. They don't have their own style because you don't *learn your own style* by *watching someone else's style*. So these inbred, incest, faggot motherfuckers make hack films and throw hack parties and have hack sex with their girlfriends. They don't even know how to eat cunt. *They don't even know how to properly eat cunt*. A *real* filmmaker—this is a true story—Terrence Malick's producer calls him and he's like: *Terrence, we're in the production office where are you?* Terrence is like: *I'm walking across the US, following the migration of the such-and-such finch*—or some kind of bird, I don't know what it was, but *this* motherfucker was *walking* across the southern states of the US following some kind of bird he was interested in. *That's* what a real filmmaker

~~does. Have you seen *The New World*? That's a *fine* film. He started writing it in the seventies, it came out in two thousand and *five*. Shot it in sixty five millimeter—except for the visual effect shots, of course. Same thing happened with Coppola and *Apocalypse Now*—he tried to get that film made for *twenty years* before he could get a yes. Francis Ford *Coppola* couldn't get a yes. But he waited for that yes. And he got it. And now we're blessed.~~

~~Where did Coppola grow up?~~

~~I don't know. Might have been LA for all I know. But real films aren't about other films—they're about life. Real life. Like *Hotel Rwanda*.~~

~~Or *Schindler's List*?~~

~~Don't ever mention Steven Spielberg again or I'll shoot you in the head.~~

~~You mean you'll fire me?~~

~~Did you hear what I said? I said I'll *shoot you in the head!*~~

~~You don't even own a gun.~~

~~Yes I fucking do. It's in my purse.~~

~~You don't *own* a purse.~~

~~If you take one thing from this conversation, take this: no great movie was made without a great script. Story is everything. Special effects are nothing. You can't write without a soul. You can't grow a soul if you grow up snorting coke poolside talking to yourself in the third person sucking dick cheese being a subpar singer in a mid-level girl band—that girl is never gonna grow a soul. She's never gonna write a screenplay—not one that makes you *feel* anything. I'm not even sure it's possible to *grow* a soul in California. Maybe northern California. Don't look at me like that. Give me another cigarette and let's go over the shot list for tomorrow.~~

~~..~~

~~and in the end, somehow, the assistant Kristi makes the next step, wins an award, writes something with soul that makes the protagonist director cry when she reads it and even stop drinking once she realizes it's good..and sobers up for the duration of the read. she tells Kristi it's great and we're gonna make it..abc..then~~

Kristi asks the protagonist if she stopped drinking? You mean for good? Fuck no. I had a gin martini as soon as I was done reading your script. It wasn't *that* good. I'm kidding. Kristi. This script is a rock, it's wave. Marcus Aurelius would be proud. And if you ask me who Marcus Aurelius is, I'll fucking punch you in the face.

..

Obsession, *obsession!* Every little thing to me is a piece of art. A wire isn't just a wire, it's a sculpture! When I set my earbuds down, for example, I roll them up in my fingers, then I set them down on top of a surface, then I let go. And when I let go, they become a little sculpture, unique every time—this loop going this way and that loop going that way, and I nudge it and prod it and re-lay the loose ends of the wire until the sculpture pleases me. *That's* what I mean by obsession. Some people might call it preoccupied, in the sense that it's *paying attention to things that don't matter!* But they matter to me, every little dot, every strand of hair, every angle, every cut, right down to the fucking *frame*.

And that's why you're a director.

And that's why I'm a director.

..

We're sitting on a studio wall watching YouTube. Kristi asks me if I'm going to fave the one we're watching.

"No."

"You just said you loved it."

"It's a people video."

Kristi's like *huh?*

"It's just about the girl. It's just: here's a pretty girl, let me put her on camera. You can tell a guy made this."

"Or a lesbo."

"I'm sorry. Excuse me for me heterocentric assumptions. I was born a decade before you. I love cock."

K laughs.

"It doesn't matter, guy or girl, the person who made this video was looking at her cute friend and she said to herself: *Self, let me put this sexy little bitch on film. The whole video is about how cute she is. This shouldn't be a video—this should be a snapshot.*"

"So you're not gonna fave it."

"Fuck no. If they showed her nipples I'd fave it."

"Like if she was naked?"

"No! Like if she wasn't wearing a bra. I want to see some nipple if I'm going to favorite a people vid."

..

(she teaches a class on directing)

But before we even get into that, let's be clear on one thing: a director is nothing without a script. Part of being a director means you have to be able to find, buy, or write a great script. No script, no movie. Although far too many movies are greenlighted without a script—most movies, actually. It's one of the flaws in our current system: movies get made that never should have got made. Think of it: a shitty movie costs millions of dollars to make, and these head-in-the-sand producers who don't know the difference between a film script and toilet paper, will greenlight a movie with a director who is *so desperate* to become a director that she will do *anything* to become one, even direct a shitty movie. But there's a difference between making *a beginner's movie* and making a shitty movie. *Hard Eight* is a beginner's movie—but it's a great movie and it shows people who matter that this is a director worth rolling the dice on. If you make *Hard Eight*, the chances are *huge* that your next movie will be even bigger. Smart people see that. Your two million dollar horror flick that your shithole film school buddy wrote and that your girlfriend financed and that your own friends *can't even sit through* without laughing—that's going to be the last movie you direct, my friend. It's like Eminem says, you've got one shot. Right? So, a little bit of striving is a good thing in this business. A lot of striving can kill you—but a lot of striving is even better. If you never shoot for the moon, you'll never hit it. She believes that without a great script you'll never have a great movie. Exceptions: *Titanic*. Great story, horrible dialogue, great acting..equals..maybe not a great movie, but..well..yes..a great movie. Because it pulls your heartstrings. Because it's enthusiastic. Because it presents optimism and pessimism or really survival and demise in tight juxtaposition to one another. But the casting is

spotty..I mean all the main actors are perfect, but then James Cameron casts Bill Paxton?? Bill Paxton is a terrible actor. But a terrible actor, or a mediocre actor, can be great under certain circumstances...typically the circumstance of a great director. Bill Paxton in *A Simple Plan*. Tom Cruise directed by P.T. Anderson or Stanley Kubrick..see..it's not so simple as saying someone's a terrible actor. You know the best definition I've ever heard of *intelligence*? It has nothing to do with IQ. It's *a person places in a situation in which their particular skills are useful*. Right? My plumber is fucking brilliant when the toilet's backed up! So don't think of intelligence as the quality of an individual. It's a quality of a team, or the marriage of a particular person to a particular project. Was Ernest Hemingway brilliant? When he was writing books he was. With a fifth of vodka in one hand and a shotgun in the other..well..you decide.

"And one more thing: there will be no grades in this class. Unfortunately, when I presented this idea to the unfortunate college you have decided to attend and which I have unfortunately decided to teach at, these *geniuses* who run this house of education said that you can't have a class without grades and I said *You fucking fools. You fucking Morons*. I'm pretty sure I quoted something from Mamet whose curse-to-word ratio was maybe a point nine. So this committee of elders who a) do not attend college and b) do not teach college told me—I mean, I'm sorry, but forgive the ego—these motherfuckers *told me* that I have to give you each a grade. We discussed this for *minutes*. *Minutes!* Minutes I could have spent drinking a venti mocha or having my clitoris licked by Martin Scorsese—*god, I wish that man could grow a moustache*. fz What do you think is Scorsese's greatest film?"

"Taxi Driver."

"The Departed."

"Fuck you The Departed. *The Departed?* It's Raging Bull, no question. Everyone says *Goodfellas*, and yes, in terms of shot logic, *Goodfellas* is great—I mean truly great. One of the best camera-movement directors of the Americans. Who is the greatest camera movement director of all time?"

"Spike Lee."

"That's a great answer. The park shot in *Malcolm X*—one of the greatest shots in film history. I've seen that shot *at least* a hundred times. You—you think I'm exaggerating? Don't you do that? Order fucking mad subs and pizza and cartons of Kamel Reds and pop in a bit of the old Orville Redenbacher and just sit in the living room with all your film friends watching a movie *shot by shot* or watching the same shot a hundred times and everyone shouts out everything they notice about it? That's what you've got to do, Padawan learners. Obsession is a good trait in this business. The shot that establishes the club segment of *25th Hour*..a steadicam operator on a crane, the crane arcs around the club building and the steadicam operator steps off the crane *and the shot continues!* *That's* a shot. I don't care how much pot he smokes, Spike Lee will always be a great director."

"Have you ever met him?"

"Of course."

"How many times?"

"*A lot.* Come on, who's the greatest camera-movement director of all time?"

"Fellini."

"Who said that?"

"I did."

"What's your name, 'I did'?"

"Claire."

"Well, Claire, I happen to agree with you. You can learn ninety percent of what there is to know about camera movement by watching *8 ½*. You learn the other ten percent from watching *Goodfellas*. And you catch a glimpse of what the future holds by watching *Enter the Void*. Who's seen it?"

Clair half-raises her hand, keeping her armpit protected.

"My little overachiever! Anyone else? No? Well give it a look sometime. *Enter the Void* doesn't even fit most people's definition of what a movie is. The acting is horrible—or you can think of it as realistic. Every single shot in that movie is a visual effects shot. *Every single shot is technocrane!* And Gaspar Noé, the

director, the camera operator—it's like god built Gaspar Noé *specifically* to operate a technocrane. It's a view into the future, my friends. It's not my favorite film by far. But in some ways, there is *Enter the Void*..and then there is every other film."

"So how are you going to grade us?"

"Well, since your remedial school would not budge on the antiquated idea that grades are what is required to motivate young people to *do anything*, I suggested a number of alternatives to them—none of which they liked."

"Who exactly was on this committee?"

"Ah ha. Wouldn't you like to know. You're John Amp, right, student body president?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"Well, believe me, I respect your desire to punish those in power for being stupid—I share that desire with you—but if you'll allow a humbly offered piece of advice..don't worry about it. I mean, fuck 'em. What's your major?"

"Film directing."

"Then direct. I know you've gotta do your political stuff and I will support you in any way I can, in your political goals within this school. But: forget about it. Decide what's most important to you. If it's film directing, then stick with me and we'll direct some films. If it's fighting the administration on how they approve and disapprove of your behavior in my classroom, or any classroom, then quit film directing and focus on that. Ok?"

Mr. Amp nods.

"Great. So here's how we're going to grade you—"

"Is that the royal we?"

"No, smartass. You see that woman sitting over there? Looks too old to be a student, yet too young to be me? That's Kristi, she's my assistant. We work on films together and she is my assistant in that context as well as in the context of this class. One of the options I presented to your precious administration is that *I* teach, and we leave the grading to Kristi. That way I can forget about the absurdity of grading and yet Kristi, who will be present for every class, every exercise, will be in a position to give you a

pass/fail grade in a fair and informed manner—”

“This class is pass/fail?”

“Just hold on *one second*, ok, John Boy. Is your concern about this possibly being a pass/fail class based on some misguided effort to maximize your GPA and use that meaningless number to catapult yourself into some other, more prestigious, film school?”

“I just wanted to know.”

“Alright. I’ll give you the benefit of the doubt, but I strongly encourage you to listen to what I am about to say. I am not a wise person. I don’t believe in absolutes. But what I’m about to say is one of the wise absolutes that I have come across walking this beach of a life, and among all the syringes and broken glass, somewhere in this metaphorical sand, I have discovered that *if you work primarily for the approval of others, your life will be unfulfilled and your art will be shit*. And I do mean *unfulfilled*, not *unfulfilling*, because *unfulfilling* is bad, yes, but that’s just you being unhappy. *Unfulfilled*, however, indicates what I want to indicate, which is that—not some theological idea about your life having a predetermined *purpose*—I don’t believe god put you here to do *shit*. But the fact is that each one of you is capable of doing something, and *seeking others’ approval* is a losing strategy if your mission is to do the greatest possible thing that you can do in the incredibly short time you will be alive. End of soapbox. So I’m sitting there with the most boring people I have ever encountered on the face of the Earth—your school administrators—and they tell me I have to give grades in order to teach here and you know what I said to those motherfuckers? I said: *You asked me to teach this class. I’m not a fucking college professor. I’m a film director and my films make money and therefore, Sherlock, I don’t need to teach this class*. So I’m going to do whatever the fuck I want in the grades department or else I’m walking out this door and you’ll never see my self-righteous ass again. Then your boring school administrator start explaining to me that grades are a requirement of accreditation and if they fail to fulfill the requirements of the accreditation committee then they could lose their *blah blah blah blah blah*. If I had had a shotgun with me I would have blown my head off rather than listen to a bunch of

legalistic mumbo jumbo so I stopped them and I said, *Ok, I'll give grades. And they said, Not pass/fail, all worried, like they were going to have to live in a smaller house if I graded this class pass/fail. So I said: No, not pass/fail. Film Directing 421—*"

"It's Film Directing 401."

"What. Ever. I said: Film Directing 401 will have normal grades. Are you happy? And they said: Yes. So here's how the grade situation is going to work in here—Kristen, close the door."

Kristen closes both doors to the classroom.

"Ok," I say. "You all have A's."

There are all kinds of confused and magical looks from around the room.

"But there's a catch."

Everyone groans.

"The catch is this: if you tell anyone—your Mom, anyone who runs this fucking school, another teacher, your guidance counselor..anyone..guys, if you're getting your first piece of ass and in the moment of glory you scream out, 'Professor {her name, the director's last name} is giving us all A's!!..women, if you're getting that first good fucking or your girlfriend makes you cum for the the first time with her mouth and those two or three fingers rubbing you on the inside..when you fucking cum, if you shout, 'Professor {name} is giving us all A's!!' as your fucking brain is going wild with serotonin..if you mention this to anyone..your fucking imaginary friend..if you talk in your sleep and your roommate hears it..then I'm giving you an F. I'm not taking any questions on this subject so just pretend that you're Joe Pesci and I'm the big fat mob boss and if you talk, I'm gonna have Kristen whack you. Now, 'first things fucking last,' to quote a movie you all should have seen, let's get down to the business of how you make a film."

That was the first session of the first class I ever taught in film directing. That semester will probably end up being the only time I ever taught a class—but who knows. I did it because I was bored. Too much space between films. My expectations were low. But by the end of that semester, through the experiences I endured with those students—some exceptional, most not—but I loved

~~those people something like you love the people you work with on a film crew, like I imagine you love the people you fight a war with. You come together for a moment, for a purpose, you take your clothes off, you fuck, and through a process of days and weeks, semesters, campaigns, everyone puts their clothes on, the last class is held, and everyone disperses. We do our own work. Most of never see each other again.~~

..

Add *Breathless* to the discussion on camera movement.

..

(a producer, critic, or viewer complains about her film, says it's damaging to children, trash, degeneracy)

"So don't watch it!" I said. I turn to {my assistant}. "People act like it's their right not to be offended. It's not your *right* to never be offended!"

..

~~When she reveals to her assistant that she's going to buy her film, after she sets up the expectation that something special's about to happen ("You'll never believe what I'm about to say."), her assistant says, "You're going to marry me?" Haha. No, silly, I'm going to buy your movie. Really? Yes. .. Then at the end the director says, "Why, did you want to marry me?"~~

..

~~"Well, {director}, not everything has to be art." — Yes it does.~~

..

~~"There are only two settings: shit, and brilliance. And if something is ninety-nine percent brilliance, one percent shit..?"~~

~~"Then it's shit?"~~

~~"That's right."~~

..

~~"Ask me to tell you later why I hate sequels."~~

..

~~"Why do you hate sequels?"~~

~~"Huh?"~~

~~"You said earlier to ask you later why you hate sequels."~~

~~"I hate sequels, prequels, spin-offs, and all other revisitations and~~

derivatives because *if you have a story to tell* then that story is *one thing*—one thing. And your book is complete, or your movie is complete, when it does that one thing. That's the end! If you had something more to say that necessitates a sequel, then you should have said that shit *the first time.*"

"What about a series, like *Harry Potter*?"

"Look, don't ask me about *Harry Potter* because J. K. Rowling is such a cool motherfucker than I would never say anything bad about her writing."

"But you hate it."

"I've never read it. I heard a few *paragraphs* my mom played for me from an audiobook from the original *Harry Potter* and it was something that interested me. J. K. Rowling can do whatever she wants. Did you see her Harvard commencement speech? You should see that. That's prob'ly better than all her *Harry Potter* books combined. I mean, come on, the Horcruxes...!!?? *Obviously* one of them was stuck in Harry Potter's head—I knew that the minute I saw the scar! What the fuck?? Everyone's all gaga over this ending and they're like *It's so surprising!* and *You'll never guess!!* I had to go out and get more popcorn to keep myself interested."

"You saw it in the theater, though?" (my assistant) laughs.

"Actually, no. I lied. I saw it at home and I wasn't eating popcorn. Martin Scorsese was sitting next to me on the couch and when the *big reveal* about Harry Potter being one of the Horcruxes came on I was like:

"Marty, will you eat my pussy because this shit is fucking stupid."

"You are kidding me."

"No, I'm not."

"You and Martin Scorsese watched *Harry Potter* together."

"Well, I was watching, he was eating my pussy out, which I just told you in case you forgot."

"Does he eat good pussy?"

"*Hell* no!! He *would* eat good pussy if he would stop lecturing a girl on film for a second and lick a motherfucker's clit!! *Fuck!!* The whole time he was eating me out he was espousing the virtues of this—whatever, the *eighth?*—fucking *Harry Potter* movie! He was

telling me all the things he liked about it and I was using both hands, pushing that motherfucker's face right onto my clit, right where I wanted it. And I was like:

"You know this is a shitty movie, right? You know this movie is shit?"

And he looks up from his job, with a string of saliva running from his dentures to my cunt, and he says:

"{director's name}, there's something to be learned from every film."

"Then he goes back to eating my cunt."

"Did he make you cum?"

"Look, don't worry about whether he made me cum. The point is that motherfucker likes *every* film. One of the greatest directors of all time and if you showed him *Shrooms*, he'd be like, 'Actually, this is pretty good photography.'"

∴

"So what's your problem with series..not like *Harry Potter*..but any other series."

"Come on, you know this: series are just a way to make more money. They're anti-art. *Transformers*? I mean I used to respect Michael Bay—now he's just bought into doing the big money shit for the sake of getting the big money. I'll still watch *The Rock* but that's it."

I shake my head.

"But if they ever make a sequel to *The Rock*, I'll never watch *The Rock* again."

∴

"So why don't you use zooms?"

"I had this friend way back in film school. Name was Michael Sandow. And he was a cinematography student who always used to read Bukowski and one day I said I would never make a movie that had a zoom in it. He was totally offended. He threw out a couple movies with great zooms in them: *Barry Lyndon*, *The Royal Tenenbaums*. He said—as a cinematography student at the time—that he considered zooms just one of the tools in the cinematographer's toolbox and he could never make a statement

like I just did, *excluding* one of the tools without ever knowing what kind of movies he might ultimately make that might require a zoom. And I was like, Right, as a *cinematographer* you can't make that decision now, but as a *director* I already know the effect zooms have on the audience and I don't ever want *to create* that effect. They draw attention to the camera and even when I was..twenty-six?..I knew that I would never have a zoom in my films because that's not the kind of films I want to make. I want neither the comedy of the *Royal Tenenbaum* zooms nor the subtle drama of the *Barry Lyndon* zooms, nor do I want the *stupidity* of the zooms from the nineteen-eighties and before, where they really should have had a push but they didn't have the equipment or the time or the discipline to *do* a push, so they just did a zoom instead. And it looks terrible. You can look at every single one of those shots and say, Yep, that shoulda been push, or a pull, but they cheaped out and did a zoom. I fucking hate those shots, I hate zooms, and this topic is making me angry so can we please move on?"

"Sorry boss."

"No problem."

"So what did Mike say?"

"My cinematographer friend from film school? He thought I was crazy. But the funny thing is, he writes me an email a few years back and tells me he's become a *writer*—all that Bukowski payed off—and he published his first book and he tells me he thinks about *punctuation* a lot now."

"Right."

"*And he says: {director's name}, I understand what you said way back when about zooms, because I found myself thinking the other day: I would never use a semicolon in one of my books.*"

I laugh.

"So he gets it now and he's explaining how he understands where I was coming from because *the type of book he's writing* would never use a semicolon, because it's outdated and this and that and he goes into all this writer-speak I don't understand—a fifteen-minute *lecture* on the connotations of a semicolon—but..yeah..it took us half a lifetime but we finally understood each other on the zoom thing."

~~“Wow.”~~

~~“Yeah. And that, my friend, is why I don’t use zooms. I’m more into the *cut*. That’s old-fashioned in this town. How old am I?”~~

~~“I..don’t..know.”~~

~~“Well, however old I am, I’m old enough to be one of the only directors in this town who doesn’t shoot everything on a technocrane. So I must be pretty old.”~~

~~..~~

~~“This husband I used to have—yes, I used to have a husband; no, I’m not bi, if you were wondering—I used to write silly ingredients on the grocery list whiteboard on the refrigerator and he couldn’t handle it. Like I’d write, ‘international zebras,’ or, ‘pig carcass with glue.’ He couldn’t take it. Sometimes he’d ask me questions about what I wrote, acting, playing along, like he wanted to prove he could be weird, too. But he hated it—it messed with his sense of order. As soon as I wasn’t looking he’d erase those items, leaving the rest of the grocery list up there. Like he couldn’t stand to have a little nonsense sitting around, he controlled everything at his job and he controlled everything at our house, including the fucking grocery list whiteboard! It was like I wasn’t allowed to have any ownership to write what I wanted to write, even if it was, ‘international zebras.’ I think *every* house could use some international zebras. He didn’t. So I had to give him a divorce.”~~

~~..~~

~~“So this guy is fucking me and it was really good so instead of saying the usual *Oh..yes..yes* that women say so delicately in their ear, I was looking at this guy and scrunching my face and I was like *God..fucking..DAMN!* and this guy—while we’re still fucking—is like, ‘You fuck like a man,’ and I was like, ‘Is that a good thing?’ and he was like, ‘*Yeah!*’”~~

~~..~~

~~“Nah I don’t go in for jewelry.”~~

~~“Why not?”~~

~~“A guy gives a girl something shiny to look at and she’s supposed to open her legs? Fuck that.”~~

~~..~~

~~“Everybody feels like they're still a little kid. Don't you know that? Everybody feels like they're still a little kid.”~~

..

“Let's be *professional*, people. Half the people on the *planet* would kill to have your job.”

And one of the grips says, “You mean those Ethiopians who would kill for a Pink's hot dog?”

“No, I mean those kids in Indiana trying to make the next *Godfather* with the camera on their iPhone. I happen to know Ethiopians in this industry and you'd have to pay *them* a hundred bucks to eat a Pink's hot dog. Have you ever *had* Ethiopian food?”

“No.”

“Well take your girlfriend somewhere other than In-N-Out Burger and maybe you'll finally get that rimjob you've been looking for.”

The crew snickers and *ooohs*.

“Uh..is Ethiopian food spicy 'cause I don't know if I'm ready for a spicy rimjob.”

“Brock, shut the fuck up. We're about to do a take.”

..

The book is primarily about her relationship with her long-time assistant. And secondarily about her projects they work on together. Book starts when they meet, ends when they go their separate ways. But it's *really* about the process of artistic and intellectual survival.

..

~~{the assistant goes off on some big speech about the magic of the director's films, how she's seen the magic in the reception of children, in the product put on screen, even the magic in the electricity on her sets, the most collaborative sets she's ever seen}~~

~~“Well I suspect there were more collaborative sets in history.”~~

~~“I'm trying to give you a compliment.”~~

~~“I'm gonna thank you for your compliment. Thank you for your compliment. Now I'm gonna tell you something that I've never told anyone. Mostly because no one's ever asked, and you have the curiosity or the desire to flatter me that is one of the threads in what's becoming a high tensile climbing rope—”~~

~~"You told me to stop you if you were getting poetic."~~

~~"When did I tell you that?"~~

~~"You say it all the time." {make this true, make her say a few times, at the end of a rant, "Stop me if I'm getting poetic."}~~

~~"Ok, so, basically, there is no magic. I'm sure that's not what you wanted to hear."~~

~~"I wanted to hear the truth."~~

~~"Well there's no magic! You want to know what there is?"~~

~~"What."~~

~~"You really want to know? 'Cause this'll shatter your little fifth-grade mind watching *The Wonderful World of Disney* every Sunday night getting ready to go back to school."~~

~~"Then shatter it."~~

~~"Ok. There's no magic. There's only honesty."~~

~~..~~

~~"I heard these two models talking yesterday, ok? They're talking about how to make the perfect facial expression for a pose—I don't know, I'm not a model, I don't know model speak but that was the gist. So the one girl says to the other, 'Just make your face like you're looking at a guy right at the moment he sticks it in.'"~~

~~"His dick?"~~

~~"Yeah, his dick! Make a face like you would make right at the moment a guy sticks his dick into you, and if you can show that to the camera, you've got the perfect cover photo for a magazine or an album cover or whatever."~~

~~..~~

She sacrifices her physical survival for a far more important one..her intellectual survival..her film is short on funds and the execs tell her they're shutting down the film..she says I'll get the money..she sells her house, her boat, everything she owns and gets down to a backpack sleeping on her friend's couch, just to keep the film going..willing to do anything to survive

..

—What's the number one rule of survival?

—I don't know.

—Never give up. Until you are /dead/, you keep fighting for your

life.

..

You need money to get anything done. Especially in Hollywood. When my husband died, he left me close to X dollars. I didn't mourn. I didn't even go to the funeral. I packed one bag and went to LA to interview assistants for my production company, to make my movie—because ever since I was a little girl I wanted to make a movie.

I didn't even have a script.

..

~~She's interviewing potential assistants in Borders' cafe, she says the first thing is to know what's good. Then she like pulls two objects out of her purse and asks which one is good. They all fail till she gets to her future assistant, who is super imaginative.~~

..

~~(She's telling her friend this story)~~

~~My dad says, "What're you doing?"~~

~~And I say, "Thinking."~~

~~And he says, "I hate it when you say that. Thinking. 'Cause what that means is, 'I'm thinking about things so complex or esoteric that there's no reason for me to even tell you what I'm thinking about.'~~

~~So you just say, "Thinking.' But I know what you mean. By the fact that you just say, "Thinking.' I know what you mean."~~

~~"Damn. Then what'd you say?"~~

~~"Nothing."~~

~~"Why not?"~~

~~"'Cause he's right. It's an insult, it's a chasm, it's whatever it is but he's right. I can't tell him what I'm thinking 'cause he wouldn't understand. Also, he wouldn't be interested. That's just an assumption on my part. I've never been able to talk to my family."~~

..

~~In the end, she/I doesn't get paid a dime for the movie, as she sacrificed her salary and points to keep production going..but she gets her reward..going around to theaters, watching and listening to the reactions of audiences, she sees a little girl cry, and that's worth all the money—and security—in the world. {ending~~

sentence?) (and that girl is her) Maybe the end is her wondering what that girl's dreams are and hoping they come true. (that's pretty fucking powerful..just stated simply, almost exactly like that)

..

She meets a man, an eccentric old movie exec who says look up so and so producer on wikipedia and tell me how many movies he made..she does..62..you know how many of them made money? none. so don't think this business is filled to the brim with producers like your XYZ..most of the people who came out here to make movies..to act, direct, write, produce..we came out here why? why, my favorite Idaho director? (they've already established that she's the only director he's ever met from Idaho..and he has an encyclopedic memory of people and places) Because we love movies? she says. *Of course*, he says. Because we fucking *love* movies. We'd be making movies back home in our garages and back yards if we couldn't make it to LA. This business is filled to the brim with *people who love movies*..and some people who love movies *so much* that they keep producing over and over and over even when movie number 62 is the 62nd movie that's lost money. And he can still get people to invest in making the next one! [He] slaps me on the knee. Now *that's* producing!!

..he's a homeless guy..she first sees him as the old man pimp looking dude in the gold trimmed white suit with the pimp hat and the gold elvis glasses..then she becomes homeless and she sees him and he tells her he used to work for Paramount..she thinks it's bullshit at first but then he starts to make sense..he's one of the sages of hollywood

the oracle of hollywood

the guy dressed as batman skateboarding around with only his underwear, mask, and a cape..fucking hollywood =)

..

I explain to my assistant that I don't drink, when they're out together

why not

have you ever been to an AA meeting?

no

well, as they say in AA, I'm allergic to alcohol.

Allergic?

..yeah it makes me break out in handcuffs.

..

on the street Paramount producer dude offers her a drink

no, I don't drink

he offers her a crack pipe

no thanks, I don't smoke crack either

well have you ever done lsd?

[laughs] no!

you call yourself a director and you've never done lsd?

I suck, right?

I don't know, I haven't seen your film.

..

she invites Pimp Daddy Producer to the opening of her film, a special seat for him right in the front row and he asks a brilliant question of her, after a bunch of dumb ones from the high-society people

..

I must survive artistically or I will not survive at all

Because if your vision is killed, as an artist, then you are killed..just like getting killed in the matrix!!!

..I must survive artistically or I will not survive at all.

..

I want to eat your pussy.

Huh?

I want to get into all the ins and outs. Take those panties off..

You're aware you work for me, right?

We don't even have to fuck.

Ha. Would you please get back to work.

I put my head in my hand.

'We don't even have to fuck.'

I thought that was pretty good!

That's the oldest line in the book, kid.

..

The gold man tells her of a turtle or dragon or some animal that

~~bites down and never lets go, even if not letting go means its death.
And that is you, heir director, that is you.
And is that brilliant or is it stupid, I ask.
And he says, oh it's both, and he laughs.~~

..

We never know what her movie is about..whenever she starts to explain it to someone, a producer or actor or someone, she begins, then it trails off with an ellipsis

..

~~When my landlord is kicking me out of my stylish 1920s Hollywood apartment, I offer to sell her my couch, my bed, some lamps to let me stay there another month. She agrees to take them. And gives me another six days to stay. Can I get a month? With these items, no. These items are worth six days.~~

..

She sacrifices her salary
They're on the fence
She gives up her points
They're on the fence
She puts up \$800,000 in cash, donates it to the production
They agree
She leaves Warner Bros and calls her bank as she walks along next to the manicured lawn. She has \$817,000 left of her inheritance and she hasn't paid taxes on it yet

..

~~Her assistant asks her where she's sleeping. I went by your apartment/loft and saw you'd been evicted. Uh-- she says. Don't tell me any stories. You're staying with me now. Uh-- Don't argue. You're my friend and a friend helps a friend when a friend needs help. Ok? That's all there is to it. Here's a key. I'll email you the address. Couch is yours. My bedroom is mine. Everything else is shared space from now on. Eat what's in the refrigerator. Don't say thank you. This is the last time we will speak of this.~~

~~Anita.~~

~~What <name/title/nickname>? (Boss?)~~

~~Thank you.~~

~~White woman, I told you not to say thank you.~~

~~I won't say it again.~~

~~Good or else I'll kick you back on the street. I don't believe you didn't come from me. Pride..pride will kill you in this city. You listen to that.~~

..

~~No one wants to hear what I have to say..but what I have to say is of the utmost importance.~~

..

~~[we're gonna have you smoking in this scene]~~

~~"I won't smoke on screen. It's a conscience thing. Bad role model for kids."~~

~~"You know what, Amber—good call. We'll go your way on this one."~~

~~"That's it?"~~

~~"That's it. Done deal."~~

~~I shake her hand.~~

~~"No argument?" she says.~~

~~And I say, "Do I seem like a person who likes to argue?"~~

~~[but then after that, Amber does everything I say, including let me take panty shots of her struggling with the police and strip naked in front of our entire crew for a shower scene..you win people's allegiance that way: show 'em you respect 'em and after that..they'll follow you over a cliff]~~

..

~~A more enlightened person would—~~

~~Yeah, well—news flash—I'm not enlightened.~~

..

~~Micah, let me tell you something. The truest path and the hardest path and the most rewarding path..are always the same thing.~~

~~(I say this to someone seeking advice on whether to deal with his mental illness and potentially destroy his life or to keep on going with business as usual)~~

..

~~[I'm always leaving the set and having my assistant call action]~~

~~"But what do we do for lines?"~~

~~“Make some up.”~~

~~“But—”~~

~~“Look, [actor’s name], why did I hire you? Because you’re the best actor in the business. [Cinematographer’s name], why did I hire you? Because you’re the best cinematographer in the biz. I don’t have to be present for every little thing we do here. This is a *we* thing, not a *me* thing. You’re professionals. So do some pro shit.”~~

~~“Will you at least look at it when you come back?”~~

~~“No. When I come back we’re moving onto the next shot. If you need someone called a *director* sitting in that chair to do this shot *by this time* in our professional relationship, that means I already fucked up my job. We *prepare* so that when the time comes, *we don’t have to think*. We *can just do*. Now do your jobs. I’ve got a tampon stuck in my cooch and I’ve got to get it out of there before it dries in place forever and becomes part of my fossilized body. [Assistant’s name] runs things while I’m gone. Action in 15 seconds—got it?”~~
~~[assistant] “Yes.”~~

~~“I’ll be back in five. Then we’re moving on to shot seventeen oh-five in your binder. Be ready ‘cause if not I’m gonna throw my dried fucking bloody tampon all over your faces. Are we clear?”~~

~~..~~

[keep this going throughout..she’s/I’m a real high-energy maniac..to the point of insanity..like those old school stories of directors’ questionable tactics to elicit performances and shots from their people]

~~..~~

~~You have made a critical mistake with me.~~

~~What is that?~~

~~To assume that I’m afraid.~~

~~..~~

~~You’re not that into sex, are you?~~

~~Why would you say that?~~

~~The story you just told.~~

~~Sex is overrated. Guys..have an extra flap of skin between their legs. Women..we basically have an open wound. I like it when I’m doing it but when I think about it too much..the technicalities..it’s~~

just disgusting.

(Assistant laughs)

That funny to you? Most people spend their entire lives playing out their sex role. What a waste. We're so much more than that.

But people are content with attracting a mate..over and over and over. It's subhuman, in my opinion.

But you do like to fuck, don't you?

I /love/ to fuck. I mean, yeah, I'm a dumb fucking animal like the rest of us. Put a nice fat cock in my puss and I cease to be a

philosopher and turn into a little fucking panty-dropping freak.

Desperate for some guy to make me cum. But some women spend their whole life doing that. Don't you think there's something more?

(Assistant shrugs)

Trust me, there's something more.

..

(me) The body is just a metaphor.

I wanna play with your metaphors.

..

What did you do before you came here? Let me guess.

Community college professor.

That is such an insult. If you're gonna guess, guess *college professor* —which I was not. I'm a forty-year-old woman who worked in a coffeehouse for 20 years.

Then how'd you learn all this stuff?

You haven't spent much time in coffeehouses, have you? Kid, a barista picks up more wisdom than any college professor in the world.

I thought you said you were a barista.

I was, Kristi. Two jobs. Two jobs.

..

I don't know.

(me) Yes you do.

I just..don't..know!

Yes. You. Do. (..) Let's shoot it!

..

(prosecutor):.

~~Excuse me! Do not interrupt me when I'm speaking to you!~~

(judge) (my name), Just answer his questions as briefly as possible.

Judge X—

(judge) We'll proceed now.

~~Judge X, I am politely and properly asking you if, when this man asks me a question, I am to endure interruptions by him *as*, if his goal is to get me to answer a question, then it doesn't make much sense for him to *interrupt me* while I'm giving him the answer, does it?~~

~~Just answer with a yes or no.~~

~~With all due respect, Judge, politely and properly, I swore to tell *the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth* and a yes or no does not always allow me to do the second. Some questions cannot be answered giving *the whole truth* with a simple yes or no. Some questions, if answered by *either* a simple yes or a simple no, will be answered untruthfully, and I am to keep my oath here today.~~

~~The papers picked up on that one. Oh yeah. That was all over southern California like a fucking orange.~~

~~(Public/moral decency case against my film)~~

~~Against a film that's not even out yet? Can you file this complaint against a *production*? What's the precedent for that?~~

~~(Someone leaks some footage onto the Internet)~~

~~(When I return from court, everyone wants me to berate them for leaking the footage, but I don't. I just stand on the catwalk and say, "Let's get to work.")~~

..

~~I scrap it in everything..sneaking into a Hollywood party and meeting the producer I want to meet in the bathroom while s/he's in the stall..I've got nothing to lose..describe what was in my Honda when I drove to California..mix tapes..literally cassette tapes from my cousin Kristi..paperclips and a bunch of Taco Bell wrappers..I drove with my shoes off and the windows down 'cause the air conditioner didn't work..~~

..

~~Look I've got a fat purse and I want you to make me look like I~~

belong at a party with a bunch of Hollywood big timers.

Do you belong at a party with a bunch of Hollywood big timers?

Ah-ha. No. The closest I belong to Hollywood is in a dive bar with a young Drew Barrymore but I wanna see if you can help me step it up a bit. So how far can you step me up?

From Drew Barrymore in her grunge days? Well—

[Lauren? Rachel? Eden? Jane? (Plain Jane)]

—Lauren. With a fat purse we can step you up as far as you want to go.

..

me and my assistant are going shopping after the party crash and my assistant sees we're buying heavy-hitting quantities of alcohol and she's like, look, I understand if you can't pay me, I'm sorry things didn't work out..but I wanted to say..I'll work for you for free..hold this, I say, handing her a bottle of Jack Daniel's..and she says why not buy Evan Williams, it's cheaper, and I say because this isn't a drown-your-sorrows party. It's not. Nope. This is a we-got-the-call party. We're celebrating. You're coming over to my place. So the movie..are we? Yep, I say, we're making the motherfucker. (that night I explain that we don't actually have a yes, we just have a meeting and she's like *oh* and I'm like Jenny, I broke into an A-list party in a thousand-dollar dress and met [producer name] while he was *taking a shit*. I think I can handle a meeting on the Warner Bros lot.) You went into the men's bathroom? Fuckin' A right I did.

..

How did I get reported?

Excuse me, Miss X?

I mean does someone file a report and then a trial just automatically begins?

This isn't a *trial*, Miss X, this is a hearing. And here in the Great State of California, we protect our citizens' privacy. When someone working on a theatrical production such as yours wants to alert the government of possible indecency, we honor their anonymity, for their own protection against employers such as yourself.

Like..the employers they're trying to shut down?

..

I wear adult diapers. There. I just had to get that out of the way. They're not really diapers anymore—you know—they're super-absorbent panties. And I'm only 40 years old.

It's not really awkward for me. They're comfy, they're snug—you get right used to them. The tricky part comes in when you're about to get laid and some guy is looking at your panties and you're like: "Yes, those are adult diapers."

(Play out the scene)

(Book opening?)

But when I'm by myself—when I'm not about to fuck some guy—I hardly notice them. On my car trip from Eugene to Los Angeles it just meant I had to stop fewer times to go to the bathroom.

I was going to LA because I inherited some money..

(of course then the adult diapers have to be a running element of her success and failure..buying them while she's homeless..the person she's begging money wanting to know what the money is for..she doesn't want to say..the person says I'll just go with you to buy whatever it is, I don't want to give you money for drugs..it's for adult diapers..seriously?..yes..cut to her buying the diapers with the money she's gotten..movie execs are always complimenting her panty line and she tells them straight out that's because they're adult diapers..really?..yeah, I piss myself, I mean, it's just one of those things, you know, life, I mean, it's always got that little..*quirk*)

..

But then I realized..now that we don't work together..it'd be ok.

What'd be ok?

Just let me eat your pussy.

But we don't have to have sex, right?

Oh no, we're gonna have sex.

Wow. A real man in Hollywood. Look, thanks for the offer, but I thought you were crazy when we did work together—that's why I fired you—and I don't see that anything's changed. So I have to politely decline your offer and..oh fuck meet me in the PA stalls in three minutes and *have your dick hard*. I'll give you three additional minutes to cum and bonus points if you cum in two.

I look at him like *go*.
I have things to do, you know?

..

maybe she has a disease which is definitely going to kill her..we find this out in shades..but by the end we know that even though she championed her artistic vision—brought it through to survival—she is definitely near death herself..but she gets to see the look on the little girl's face as the girl watches [my] movie, before I ~~walked myself to Kaiser Permanente for the last time~~. [ending sentence] [and make it something really bad, like brain cancer or a set of brain tumors or something] [that might be the element I was missing—it provides the ironic dance around the survival theme—perfect] [~~and she never tells anyone..even her assistant..when we talk last, I tell her my production company has found its new script..hers..and to go in and speak with Mr. X on Monday to find a re-writer..won't you be there? no, [Mandy], this is goodbye and I need you not to ask me any question about it, ok? [after I've told her of my secretive nature (based on Suzanne not telling anyone she's had boyfriends, etc) and my own secret moves to cities not telling anyone I know where I am for six months] fz this is one of those things you have to do on your own? [dying] yeah. (we kiss)]~~

..

in the beginning, make a point about me getting new health insurance, needing an exception made because I'd moved states then just ever so tenderly insinuate that I make a trip to the hospital..maybe my assistant asks if everything's ok and I say, yeah, just checking out the facilities, meeting the new doctor, that sort of thing

then a scene where I meet with the doctor I've been transferred to and we review the latest brain scans (start out the scene in side the MRI or whatever machine)..and in this scene finally reveal that I have multiple brain tumors (what are we up to now? seven?) and that they are going to kill me in 16-20 months..after that we know what I'm up against..the time clock of physical survival and also the ironic juxtaposition of failing at physical survival while refusing to fail at the survival of artistic expression of my vision

..

I go off on a (Killing Me Softly-inspired) rant about how it's a rape / rape fantasy scene and the costume is no more revealing than granny panties..the whole point of the scene is *vulnerability*..she's tied to a table with fucking *ropes*..and yet the *costume* runs counter to this idea of vulnerability by doing the opposite..*protecting her, covering her*..she should be wearing a pair of white panties and *maybe* a white bra *but that's it!* The whole idea is *helplessness, exposure*, and did I mention goddamn motherfucking *vulnerability??!!* Get her in a pair of white panties. We shoot in five.

(costume) We don't *have* a pair of white panties.

There are 300 people in this room. *Somebody* is wearing a pair of white panties!! Find them and get them on Miss X *right away* because *we're shooting the scene in five minutes*.

..

whoever I inherited the money from..my dad..he died of brain tumors

..

~~It's a myth about women directors that we don't like erotic elements. In fact most erotic films are directed by women. My film wasn't erotic, but it had erotic elements. Basically, since I was eight, I always wanted to make films about white panties, violence, and blood.~~

..

Boldness isn't brilliance..but it'll get you halfway there.

..

(to my leading actor) You blow the least stopped up side first. It's the stopped-up side that I'm interested in clearing. It's an illusion—it's one of life's many illusions. If you blow the side that seems least stopped up, you'll clear more of the obstruction.

Do you know *everything*, [Lauren]?

I'm just a student of the world, Kate.

..

No. We need this shot. They have the boring conversation on the

bed, made bearable by the fact that she's undressing and feeling his cock, while he is *exposition, exposition, exposition*—a bunch of details the audience isn't going to remember anyway. Then if you just cut away from the scene, the scene doesn't have an *ending*—there's no *button!* So we need this shot so that at the end of the scene we can cut to a single view of her face, in orgasm, shot from above, over his back. Boom! *That's* the end of the scene. You're right—it's not a sex scene. Not a real one anyway. But, literally, it *is* a sex scene because that's what the characters are really doing. Do you think, in the world of the characters, he went up to her apartment to give the audience exposition? No! He went up there to fuck! So even while *to us* the scene is about exposition and explaining a few details and that is really why the scene is in the movie, *to them* it's about a quickie at her apartment and without this quick little shot at the end..they never actually fucked in the scene. It gives it *umph*, it gives it pump, and you can't *set up* her undressing without seeing her cum so we're gonna *do* this boring exposition scene but at the end we're going to give it one and one half seconds of lasciviousness that *jumps* the action forward. Do you see how it jumps the action forward? Have you seen *Cape Fear*, the remake? Fuck it, just set up an overhead shot of that bitch cumming. I light a Kamel.

You smoke?

Since I was 12. Overhead shot. Bitch cumming. Body double of [make star] over top of said bitch. Go.

..

You gotta give me a little more context. See, I got a lot of things in my head so to remember things, I need more than just *one or two words*.

Why you got so many things in your head?

Because I'm paying attention.

..and..it's not a little girl she sees at the end, watching her movie, it's a 16 year old girl, in the throes of her sexuality..who sees the movie and rubs her legs together and wipes a tear from her eye..something more along those lines..but still someone I relate to as a younger self..some of our first sexual experiences were in films

..

yeah, ok, this is key..this is a lesson I've been learning the last 20 books: write her to sound nothing "like a female", make her mannerisms nothing "like a female" but make her undeniably female in [gross/detailed/body] ways..~~she's adjusting her boobs, scratching her crotch, flushing bloody tampons down movie studio toilets, talking about and thinking about her clit and vag..but she talks like a man/like a sailor/like me, direct, bossy, judgmental, self-assured, genius..~~we want to not just play with people's idiotic boxed-in ideas of how woman talk and act, we want to blow those motherfuckers apart

..

~~(the actors are playing the scene, exchanging numbers)~~

~~Who wrote this?~~

~~We're still rolling.~~

~~Well fucking cut then! Who put this in here? I didn't write this?~~

~~I did.~~

~~Why. The script is locked.~~

~~If they don't exchange numbers it doesn't make any sense.~~

~~And how is that?~~

~~They won't know how to meet each other.~~

~~Listen to me. There's no 555 in my screenplay. Watch old movies.~~

~~People meet each other all the time, like in churches..like two guys~~

~~meet in a church and then one says to the other, 'Let me know if you find anything,' then the other guy says, 'Ok.'~~ Then they both

~~get up and leave. They don't have each other's telephone number!~~

~~They don't know what hotel each other is staying at! It's doesn't matter!~~

~~But it's unrealistic. They wouldn't be able to get back in touch.~~

~~I look at [x] shocked.~~

~~Will you please tell me the last movie you watched that was~~

~~realistic? Movies aren't realistic!! That's why people love them so~~

~~much! Because they're free from the business of deciding when to meet and telling each other their phone numbers! Exchanging~~

~~contact information is for real life, [x], not for my movie!~~

~~Ok, Miss X.~~

~~Also, *locked script*—do you know what that means? It doesn't *mean* the script is perfect, ok? It doesn't mean that. It means we've decided to stop working on it and we're moving on. Anyone else makes any changes to that script..I'll..I'm not really sure *what* I'll do but whatever it is, it'll make Hannibal Lecter jealous.~~

..

~~You had to have your cum shot.~~

~~That's not a cum shot. This isn't a porno. There's no cum shot.~~

~~What exactly is it that make *that* not a cum shot?~~

~~Well, first of all, because there's no cum.~~

..

~~It's a detective story.~~

~~Yes.~~

~~You said you hated detective stories.~~

~~Yes, detective stories, courtroom dramas..all shit.~~

~~Is yours shit?~~

~~No, mine's good.~~

~~What's the difference between a good detective story and a bad one?~~

~~*The degree to which the detective is in danger, naturally.*~~

..

~~My pussy was getting very, very angry. And boys, you don't want to be around when a woman's pussy gets angry.~~

..

~~It's exploitation of women.~~

~~Of course it's exploitation of women. Women's bodies. That's half of film and 75% of culture at large. Maybe 80%. You think just 'cause I'm a women I'm not gonna have this 17-year-old strip naked in front of this 45-year-old man? I'm here exploiting the same shit men directors are and as soon as you understand that, you'll understand that you're working on *a real film*, not *a film directed by a woman*. We're here to manipulate people and if you don't think that women can manipulate people as well as *or better* than men, then you've never been in a relationship, a bar, or a boardroom. [actresses's name], why is [character's name] stripping for this old man?~~

She doesn't even look up. "Because it gives her power over him." I look at [the person questioning me]. "Bingo. Even little [Hayden Panitierre] up there knows that and let me let you in on a little secret: she prob'ly knew it since she was 14. Did I ever tell you my theory on dog training?"

No.

Well let me tell you sometime. It's real interesting. But here's the hint: it revolved around *who's training who*. Ya get me?

Yeah.

I thought you would.

..

Does the concept of a virgin losing her innocence have some kind of special meaning to you?

What is this? Do I get—honestly. (I stand up.) Since when does a director get morality quizzed by her crew??!! Listen up. I'm 40 years old. The concept of virginity stopped being interesting to me a couple *decades* ago, plus a couple years. You think I'm making this movie 'cause it excites *me*? We—you and I—are making this movie 'cause it excited other people. We're here *for them* and *their* sick fantasies, ok? If we wanted to get ourselves off I'd take you in the restroom, sit on your cock, and fuck the shit out of you. (I grab his cheek.) You'd like that wouldn't you. (I slap his face to the side.) Get it straight. We're here to get other people off—not ourselves. This isn't a whorehouse—it's an arthouse. My panties—well, my panties are another story—it's the panties of every 16-year-old girl who watches this flick that we're interested in. And we're gonna have those little bitches squirming in their theater seats and we're going to show them something—not that's gonna blow their little pussy lips off—but that's gonna blow their minds. When they get home and jill off to this shit, their minds are gonna be as big as if alien disclosure just happened, ok? That's *your* job. That's *my* job. Personally the idea of a virgin doesn't excite me any more than a Twix wrapper.

..

(movie exec at end of meeting, after everyone else has left the room) [Lauren], you seem like a jaded person.

There's a reason for that.

Mind if I ask what?

Goddamn life, I say, and leave his office.

..

~~So how'd you get Warner Bros to fund a porno?~~

~~Kid, did you read the script?~~

~~I have my copy right here.~~

~~Well, the reason we give press people scripts—under lock and key—is so you can read them *before* the interview.~~

~~I just wonder—~~

~~No. The interview is over. Don't get up. I said *the interview* was over. The lecture has just begun. Now. Did you see the scene we just shot?~~

~~Yes.~~

~~Have you ever seen a woman die like that in a porno?~~

~~It depends on what you mean by a porno—~~

~~You were born after the invention of the internet so you'd prob'ly jack off to a money tied to a tree but there is actually a genre of film called pornography and it follows its own set of rules just like every other genre of film and I wanna know if you're gonna look at the scene we just shot and tell your magazine that what we're shooting here is a *porno*.~~

~~I guess we'll have to invent another word—~~

~~You don't have to *invent another word*. The word is *thriller*. *Erotic thriller* if you want to help me sell some tickets. Now get off my stage.~~

~~But [my name]—~~

~~You know my father is connected to the mafia?~~

~~Is that a threat?~~

~~No, but this is.~~

~~I open my Swiss Army Knife—the one MacGyver inspired me to carry—to the largest blade.~~

~~What? Are you threatening to hurt me with your *Swiss Army Knife*?! the kid laughs.~~

~~No. I'm not threatening you. I'm informing you that if you don't get the fuck off my stage I'm going Contra on your ass with my~~

~~Swiss Army Knife, yes.~~

~~Contra? Isn't that a video game from like the 80s?~~

~~You don't even know what a fucking Contra is.~~

~~I lunge at him with the knife.~~

~~What the fuck?! Security!~~

~~No, this is my stage. I call security. Security! Get this Pee-wee the fuck out of here!~~

~~I'm going to write about this!!~~

~~News flash, greenhorn: I know that.~~

~~As security was dragging his ass away, [my assistant's name] took his script away from him and bopped him on the head with it.~~

~~THEY ALWAYS SAID DIRECTORS WERE CRAZY, he said.~~

~~No shit, I said under my breath.~~

~~I folded my knife and put it in my front pocket.~~

~~Come back again I'll kill your ignorant ass.~~

~~I HEARD THAT!~~

~~GOOD!! PUT IT IN YOUR BLOG THAT NO ONE READS!!~~

~~WE HAVE 12 MILLION READERS!!~~

~~YOU'RE JUST SELLING ME TICKETS!! WHEN YOU TAKE A PISS, YOU'RE SELLING ME TICKETS. AND HAVE FUN JERKING OFF TO THAT MONKEY.~~

~~They pulled him out kicking and screaming and I never saw him again. My security people knew better. If he had ever made it back on that stage I would have gone Zodiac on that motherfucker. And everyone knew it.~~

~~..~~

~~You're such a poet..such a lover..why don't you make a love story?~~

~~The erotic thriller is the love story of this generation, [assistant's name].~~

~~It is?~~

~~Yes.~~

~~Why?~~

~~Because..what we call a love story is not believable by the current age. They consider it corny. This is a much more dangerous world than ours of only 10..20 years ago. These people..that sounds awful..the lovely people of this generation are excited by violence~~

~~much more than people our age..or..my age. There's no more cuddly little teddy bear..it's not something they can place their faith in after so many government lies have worn thin. My parents..they could trust the government..they thought they could trust the guy they were on a date with. They couldn't..but they thought they could. This generation..they know they can't. So you can't sell them a straight love story (*that isn't corny as hell*) but you *can* sell them something that scares the shit out of them and excites them sexually at the same time. That's as close as they're gonna get to love. Or that's the only way you're going to get them to *back into* true love. I'm not saying the love story doesn't exist. *Blue is the Warmest Color*..that's a love story. But a story like that comes along once every ten years.~~

..

~~It's like David O. Russell. He made that one great movie, then he makes that shitty one, then he goes back to something that worked for him.~~

~~What? Strong female leads?~~

~~No. Jennifer Lawrence.~~

..

~~Isn't this degrading for women?~~

~~Marco. We've been shooting for one hundred eighty one days.~~

~~Have you seen a woman degraded on this set?~~

~~No, ma'am.~~

~~I'm not a ma'am I'm a miss.~~

~~No, Miss [Lauren].~~

~~And this prefix, you just used before my name, does it indicate you're talking to a woman or a man?~~

~~A woman, of course, Miss [Lauren].~~

~~Well. Mr. [x], rest assured that *all* the women in my movie are badassess and they will continue to *be* badassess until the last frame of digital film where a trigger is pulled *by a woman's finger*. I don't want you to worry about this, Mr. [X] so are we clear about women's roles in my film?~~

~~Yes, Miss [Lauren].~~

~~Are you going to lose any sleep over this issue tonight?~~

No, Miss [Lauren].

Any other night?

No, not at all, Miss [Lauren].

You got daughters, Mr. [X]?

I have two.

Well now you have three tickets to the opening. See what they think and if they're not satisfied with the portrayal of women *I will re-cut the film to their satisfaction.*

I have a wife, too, Miss [Lauren].

Is she the same age as you?

Yes, Miss [Lauren].

Then I doubt she would like the film. Bring your daughters. I'll add your name to the list.

Thank you, Miss [Lauren].

Thank me after you see the film.

..

Alternate opening:

The most important things to know about me are: ..[just a medium-sized paragraph about her, her age, the things she travels with in her car, and the inheritance she received from a dad she hadn't spoken to in 22 years after he died of brain tumors].. [..who died of brain tumors. I'm 40 years old. The last time we talked I was 18.]

..

Prepare for the worst.

Hahaha! (I laugh my head off.)

What?

Prepare for the worst? That's the thing. You prepare for the worst..but you don't know what the worst is.

What do you mean?

Guy goes running. Trail in the woods. Takes a cell phone, backup battery, first aid kit, Army food rations. What's the worst thing that could happen—right? He breaks his leg? He gets lost? So he's running along and fucking *bigfoot* snatches his ass up, carries him up the mountain, rapes him, eats him.

Bigfoot isn't real.

But say he was. The point is you can't prepare for the worst because

~~you have no idea what the fucking worst is. You're better off preparing for nothing..because the worst thing you can imagine is nothing compared to the worst thing that's out there.~~

..

I think people peak at around five years old and, uh, it's pretty much downhill from there for most people.

..

Aren't you scared?

The only things to be scared of—I touch my heart—are in here.

I say that first to a coworker, then to a rapist when I'm homeless when he asks if I'm scared of him..it freaks him it so much he runs off..I gotta keep using that line! I yell at him as he runs down Sunset.

..

~~Every journey, my friend, is a journey within.~~

..

Make her like the grown-up Gene..advice to leave behind comparing and needing to know..advice about how you feel right now is *how you wanted to feel*, etc..with like 20 years clean at 40 years old..except no kids..never wanted to have kids?

..

I give my production start speech to the whole cast and crew saying I want us to treat each other well..you may get to make many movies in your life but as a director I may only get to make one..a humanistic pep talk

..

(my assistant) ~~It's going to be ok, right?~~

(me) ~~No.~~

(my assistant looks at me like I just took away her candy cane)

~~Today? Maybe. Yeah, it's going to be ok today. But in general—long term—it's not going to be ok. I know it. Deep in your heart you know it. This entire culture knows it. You can feel it in every system, every event, every organization. No, [name], we are not going to be ok.~~

..

When you look around and no one else is bringing light..that

means you're the light bringer. And a light bringer lives in darkness—make no mistake—there isn't any other way.

..

A young man comes to her, the female director, for advice. What should I do? What do you love the most? Writing. Then start writing. Pull up a chair. Today you'll write with me.

..

I don't want to have pets for the same reason I don't want to have children: I don't want to spend time taking care of them. For most people, there's pretty much an equal chance that their kid will be a dud as there is that he'll be Mozart. But with me, and I suspect with you, there's not much chance that I'm going to have a kid who contributes more to the world than me. I bet having a kid is one of the most rewarding things an intelligent being can do. But then again..so is making a movie. (smile)

she, the director, overcame a drug past and has gotten to a point where even when she sees it in a movie, it doesn't bother her, even though her closest friend or sister died from it

~~A young talent who comes to the main char director and says she did a commercial..but it was just a Golden Corral commercial she says..the mentor views the commercial (or, has viewed it) and says yeah, but look who they featured..you! You were the cutest one in your family and they showed you in the two main shots! You're it, girl.~~

About how her friend and lover died..or maybe sister or brother..and how someone asks her if that's hard for her..she says look at how his life has impacted hers and others..lays out how exactly his example has affected her as an artist, artistically and career-wise..he truly lives on in her and others.

She goes celibate..thinks that it's just nature's way of making us reproduce and it's all vapid and mechanistic and meaningless—this story or use this somewhere else?

a girl takes off her pants and her panties say "the love goes here" in a narrowing diamond shape, with an arrow pointing at her cunt.

a person who at the beginning says he'll never do drugs or even smoke or drink coffee or anything..who ends up using and saying yes but I'll never do such and such drug, those are off limits..but, as per talk with the survivor, says ultimately you did them all, didn't you? Yeah. Says the boy. I did too, says the survivor, and pats him on the shoulder and says: Don't pay another second' of your life thinking about that shit. Look at me. It's beyond you. Just don't pick up ever and move on with your life. You're amazing. Now go. ..and the survivor falls into using drugs again and when this boy hears about it he comes to her, barricaded in her apartment, and gives her the advice she gave him long ago..only her own advice can save her.

make drug use so prevalent..it's a world where just about everyone uses..everyone is constantly buying, selling, using, inventing his/her (the artist's) idea of paying attention to process while making things, coming from the eleventh grade on a chance to not take a science class but instead to take a photo class that had the girl she liked in it and it wouldn't count toward her GPA..so she could do anything

"My story begins in the 80s, when I was five. I saw Raiders of the Lost Arc on VHS and though I could barely read, I could read the credits of that movie and I read that it was directed by Steven Spielberg. I loved that movie with all my heart and soul and I didn't even know what directing was, but if Steven Spielberg had directed Raiders of the Lost Arc, I knew, at five years old, that that's what I wanted to do.

"Back then directors were men—but that didn't bother me. If I had to have a penis to become a director, then I was gonna get one."

A girl asks her for sex. She says no. The girl apologizes, hoping she didn't offend the director's moral code. The director says she has no moral obligation to fucking your brains out, I just don't want to do it because I think it would complicate our relationship. I like you as my little Suzy, just the way you are. Things are simple between us: I tell you to do things, you do them. If I was relying on you for my next orgasm you might not be as willing to follow my orders, to handle my every whim. I love you, Suzy, but let's just keep it like it is.

—A lot of them just wanted to fuck me 'cause they thought I was a genius. They wait till afterward to tell you this. —So is it worth it to them, to fuck a genius? —Oh yes, they're very satisfied. Like standing next to a Picasso. And geniuses are often crazy. And crazy people are great fucks.

"I love you permanently."

"i love you for the rest of my life."

"Mmm."

"Yours was better."

(Laugh)

"No it wasn't.."

..

a celebrity who, when nude photos come about her, makes a public statement where she deflates the issue by saying she doesn't give a fuck and she hopes millions of people see them and jerk off to them. she says it is the greatest moment of her career and then a politician, a la Rob Ford, who comes out in a press conference, inspired by the actress, listing all the drugs he took that day and saying that he is proud to be a drug addict and he has no plans to change his diet of substances and he will continue to hold office and serve the people who elected him.

..

~~Day one on set, my cinematographer brings up the fact that there aren't many women directors.~~

~~I tell him a rape joke.~~

~~He says, "That's disgusting."~~

But I let him *know*: don't anticipate *me*, motherfucker.

..

I order Chinese to my apartment one night. Eat by myself. My fortune is: *[look it up]* "Time is important, but truth is more important than time."

..

~~If you bow to a child, they will bow back—a child who has ever bowed before. If you say hi to a child, they will say hi back. But some adults, if you say hi, won't say anything. I contend that that is what is flawed about our world.~~

..

End of the first paragraph: my father wrote. But at some point he chose his career over writing. He said, "Is writing worth the trouble?" And he decided the answer was no. So he gave it up. I'll never understand that decision.

..

"No, I can't do another hit. I'm already having a religious experience on this pot."

..

~~Two friends sitting in the party mess and they have the deepest conversation of their lives punctuated by picking up the remainder of someone's glass and drinking that person's drink as their new drink..and never eating the food but talking miles about it..and every glass being different..a beer, champagne, a red, something like Hpnotiq or blue Kool-Aid they're never exactly sure~~

..

I go to the bath. I plan my attack. [refrain]

..

Little spark sentences everywhere..that say a million in a few words then disappear.

..

~~My father used to punch the walls so there were holes all over the house. But no, I wouldn't say he had emotional problems.~~

..

~~After that bitch bought me an espresso, I bought her a cell phone, a network tablet, and asked her what the fuck was up with this Oracle of Hollywood.~~

~~“Do I ask her my fates or something?”~~

~~“No. You just rent a PO box and she’ll tell you.”~~

..

~~I’m scared. The Oracle of Hollywood said great tragedy would befall you.~~

~~The Chinese woman at the FezEx store.~~

~~Yes.~~

~~The Chinese woman at the FedEx store said great tragedy would befall me and you took her seriously.~~

~~She /is/ an Oracle.~~

~~Maybe so and what do /all/ oracles tell you?~~

~~Tell me. What do they tell you.~~

~~They tell you /exactly what you need to hear./~~

..

~~All you need to know is this production is back on—~~

~~But—~~

~~Eh—! I said all you need to know is this production is back in. Get in place. We’re shooting scene 37.~~

..

~~Check the Walk the Line quote with the actual movie.~~

..

~~[end of chapter]~~

~~I tell Kristi what Shelly told me about the one thing a director needs to know before they make their movie~~

~~[headache, I ask Kristi to leave..migraine?..no]~~

..

~~[next chapter]~~

~~Kristi calls six hours later to check on me.~~

~~Do I want her to come over?~~

~~No, it’s something I have to go through by myself.~~

..

~~Day one on set, my cinematographer brings up the fact that there aren’t many women directors.~~

I tell him a rape joke.

He says, "That's disgusting."

But I let him ~~know~~: don't anticipate ~~me~~, motherfucker.

..

"Thank you universe. Thank you. For this life."

"Why thank you?"

"Because it shames the devil."

..

~~I think you're the coolest motherfucker / on the planet/. I'm trying
to think of someone else but I can't.~~

~~Well if you do, I don't want to know.~~

..

~~Anna Hanna sees me paying for craft services with my credit card
she says shouldn't the production cover that~~

~~And I say we're playing by house rules now, kiddo~~

..

I took my last walk to Kaiser Permanente, alone.

..