

ROAD TO NOWHERE

By  
Juan A Mas

Purple Crayon Pictures  
434 west 26th Ave  
Spokane WA 99203  
509-370-3449

1.3.2026

INT. LA APARTMENT- NIGHT

\*

A white sheet of paper slides horizontally onto the desk.

A pair of eyes focuses hard on the white piece of paper.

A ruler straightens up as a black Sharpie draws six stages of the story diagram.

The black letter word EXPOSITION.

EXT. STREETS OF LOS ANGELES - PRE-DAWN

MONTAGE -

Time-lapse shots of icons of LA as sunrises become day. Each image moves us deeper into the Hollywood streets.

We move along at normal speed in the AVENUE OF THE STARS, a low POV.

A dog's snout pops into frame as we pull back to see eight dogs of different sizes being walked by ARTIE VERCLER, mid-20s. It's more like the dogs are walking him. He wears a bright green shirt with the logo that reads "PUPWALKER". The logo is a rip-off of Star Wars and Luke Skywalker.

EXT. APARTMENT COURTYARD - DAY

Artie, now dog-less, walks into the courtyard of a rundown Hollywood apartment complex.

He walks past the pool. It's empty. A BEARDED OLD MAN lounging on a floaty sunbathes on the floor of the empty pool.

INT. ARTIE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Artie drops his mail on a small table in his apartment. On top: a letter inviting him to get a new credit card.

INT. ARTIE'S APARTMENT - LATER

A dark computer screen. In the reflection we see Artie. He stares at the screen. The screen stares back.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD - DUSK

Time-lapse of the sunset falling on Hollywood Blvd. Then, LA traffic moves across the Chinese Theater. Darkness falling on the Hollywood sign.

INT. ARTIE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

ARTIE eats ramen soup from a dollar store Styrofoam container as he intently reads a book. "Don't Let One Bad Movie Stop You: Hints to Write a Better Screenplay."

INT. HONEY BUCKET PORTA POTTY - DAY

Artie, in a hazmat suit, slowly sticks a long cleaning brush into the toilet. He is trying not to gag. He slips and drops the brush. There is a loud splash. Brown chunks hit his face.

EXT. HONEY BUCKET PORTA POTTY - DAY

The door flies open. Artie rushes out. He rips off the mask - he's going to throw up. He bends over, hacks a few times, but nothing. He looks down the row of honey buckets. It seems endless.

INT. ARTIE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

On a laptop screen, he writes a title, "Road to Redemption." He stares at the screen. The screen stares back.

INT. SUNSET BLVD - DAWN

Three different time-lapse shots of iconic corners of Sunset Blvd.

INT. PLASMA CENTER - DAY

Artie reads his book, lying on his back. He's halfway done. We pull back to reveal that he is on a table at a plasma center.

EXT. BUS STOP - DAY

Static wide shot of a bus stop. On the bench, a sleeping homeless woman and her small grocery cart full of her belongings. Nearby, a very animated doomsday prophet is wearing a sandwich board. It reads End of the World.

Revelations 12:6. He yells through a megaphone. Artie walks into the frame and takes a seat. Artie reacts to how loud the prophet. Then the prophet points to the megaphone towards him. He slides closer to the homeless woman. He waits impatiently for his bus. Slowly, the homeless woman begins to slip closer to Artie. Finally, her head lands on his shoulder. Artie is unsure what to do.

She is beginning to drool. Artie decides to wait for his bus.

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

On a laptop with a nighttime screen, the title "Road to Redemption is deleted, and a new one appears: "Road to Attainment."

At the bottom of the screen, a Google type-ad for a credit card pops up.

He stares at the screen. The screen stares back.

Two quick clicks and a credit card application pops up. He starts to fill it out.

EXT. SANTA MONICA - DAWN

A series of time-lapse shots as the day begins in the Santa Monica beach area.

EXT. SANTA MONICA STREET- DAY

Artie is deep in thought. He concentrates hard on something off-screen.

1ST AD (OS)

Places everybody. Okay, let's roll sound.

BOOM (OS)

Speed.

AC

Scene 42 take 7.

ARTIE

And Action.

MAN (OS)

Who are you?

We pop out wider to see Artie on a film set. He is looking over the real DIRECTOR's shoulder at a monitor. He wears a lime shirt that reads "Clean Street Team" and an orange work vest over it. He looks at the director speechless.

DIRECTOR

Can someone get this guy off my set?

Two security guards pick up Artie and carry him off.

DIRECTOR (CONT'D)

Oh, sweet Jesus, I'm never going to make my day.

INT. BUS - DAY

Artie is riding the bus, focusing deeply as he writes his name on a pad. Artie Vercler. He glances around at the other passengers.

Someone is reading a tabloid with the headline, "Religious Leader claims celestial alignment means end of the world."

Artie goes back to his pad. He writes:

Arthur Vallone. Artus Valentine. Arnie Vandross. Arturo Vespucci. At this one, he pauses. Admires.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

He sits on the toilet as he reads the last few pages of his book. He finishes the last page of the book. Close the book, and he reaches over for toilet paper. There is only one sheet left. He looks under the sink, nothing but empty plastic wrap that held once a six-pack of toilet paper rolls. He thinks for a moment. Grabs the book and tears a few pages from it.

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

Artie in dirty paint overalls. He opens an envelope.

A CREDIT CARD, with his name on it, lands on top of the four other credit cards already on the small table.

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

On a laptop nighttime screen, the title, "Road to Attainment," is deleted and then a new one appears: "Road to."

He stares at the screen. The screen stares back.

Angrily, he types. "ROAD TO NOWHERE".

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

An empty mirror. Artie's reflection rises into view. He looks at himself. Stares deeply into his reflection. Takes a deep breath.

ARTIE

My whole life, I've been an  
afterthought. That person whose  
name you can't remember three times  
after you've heard it.

Artie takes in what he just said. Turns to look off camera

MATCH CUT

INT. GYM - DAY

Same profile shot.

ARTIE

Well, that all changes from here on  
out.

Artie runs on a treadmill next to KODY DAWSON, 25-year-old, smoldering, heartthrob---the next big thing. Kody runs without problems. Artie is a little winded.

ARTIE (CONT'D)

When I go to sleep, this is what I  
dream. It's such a big idea, and  
I'm the only one who can tell it  
right. I feel like Michelangelo.  
Everyone else looked up at the  
Sistine Chapel and they just saw a  
ceiling. This is my ceiling.

Artie slips and falls out of frame. Kody looks back.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Artie is trying to figure out how to pick up this huge dog poop with a small plastic bag. A little toy dog watches him.

ARTIE

Now more than ever it's important  
to be honest.

It's a small thing, but it means the entire world. Truth has become fluid.

He's kneeling in front of GLORIA GLORY, faded former starlet in her late 70s, dressed way too glam to just be walking her dog.

ARTIE (CONT'D)

There are no facts, there's no science, and emotions are easily manipulated on all sides.

He starts to rise up...

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. YOGA STUDIO - DAY

... Artie rises up, dripping with sweat, into a Warrior pose. Next to him is BIRDY, early 20s, a social media influencer wanna be actress and big-time new-age believer. She listens closely as he whispers.

ARTIE

We live in a time where cinema has made the impossible possible, but the audience knows it.

As they finish the hot yoga class, she grabs a towel and a water bottle. With her free hand, she takes a quick selfie.

ARTIE (CONT'D)

They're jaded. You can destroy the world a thousand times over digitally, and no one will blink. Everything's a post-apocalyptic landscape.

As they walk towards the door, Artie uses all his energy to spin in front of her. He continues to walk backwards while speaking while she types a post to go with the new picture.

ARTIE (CONT'D)

When was the last time you lost yourself in a movie?

He reaches for the door and starts to open it. He steps through the doorway...

WIPE CUT:

INT. STEAM ROOM - DAY

...as Artie steps in, still walking backwards, followed by CHARLES HARDY, late 70s, a lion past his prime but with one great roar remaining. They wear nothing but their towels.

ARTIE

Better yet, when was the last time you found yourself in a movie, gasping because you've been shown the truth?

They sit in the steam room.

ARTIE (CONT'D)

I want reality, not something manufactured to tug at heartstrings. I want truth, a story that treats its characters with dignity, relishes in the art of storytelling, starts a new conversation on the human condition- something raw, provocative ... pure.

Charles gets up to add more water to the rocks. Artie looks up for inspiration.

ARTIE (CONT'D)

All this with reverent respect for the craft, never losing sight of the fact that the audience is dying of starvation...

Charles spins around to look at Artie and his towel falls off.

ARTIE (CONT'D)

forced to feed upon sequels and prequels, remakes of remakes.

Artie looks at Charles to drive home the point, only to see Charles in all his splendor. Artie covers his eyes in shock.

MATCH CUT TO ON  
THE ACTION:

EXT. MILLIE'S HOUSE- NIGHT

Artie's hand covers his eyes. He lowers it in frustration.

ARTIE

I have waited my whole life to tell this story. It's now or never. Will you join me?

MILLIE, 26, more model than actress, stands at her doorway, high-end house somewhere in the Hollywood hills. Her arms are crossed. She looks skeptical.

MILLIE

I don't know, Artie. It sounds really good. But then, so did BIKINI SLAUGHTER HOUSE, and look how that turned out.

ARTIE

This is different, Millie. This is a passion project!

MILLIE

So will there be no strippers but real actors?

ARTIE

Correct.

MILLIE

And nudity?

ARTIE

The nudity will be much more tasteful this time.

(more to himself)

Well, if there is nudity.

MILLIE

No.

ARTIE

You've got to be in the movie! It was literally made for you.

MILLIE

We broke up and I don't even think of you as friend so why would I do this?

ARTIE

Please, Millie. This is my last chance to tell a story I'm proud of.

MILLIE

Oh, please.

ARTIE

I mean it. If this doesn't work,  
I'm done. I'm out.

MILLIE

What do you mean?

ARTIE

I'll sell tires at my uncle's  
garage.

MILLIE

You hate your uncle.

ARTIE

I know!

MILLIE

Artie...

ARTIE

I want to know I did something  
worthwhile. I want my Terrence  
Malick picture. I want my Thin Red  
Line. I want my Citizen Kane, my  
Easy Rider, my Apocalypse Now, my  
Goodfellas, my Shawshank  
Redemption, my Memento. My  
Hamilton.

MILLIE

The musical?

ARTIE

That's a musical? Anyway, I want  
you there, by my side. I'm tired of  
being the guy who's easy to leave.

MILLIE

If this is all a trick to get me  
back ...

ARTIE

It's not.

MILLIE

Because I'm seeing someone.

Long pause.

ARTIE

Is it serious?

She closes the door in his face. His head drops in disappointment. He sadly walks towards camera.

The sound of scraping...

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. DINER - NIGHT

ECU of a butter knife spreading butter on rye toast.

ECU on the tip of shoot gun mic. A tinkling sound

ECU of teaspoon stirring coffee.

CU of the mic as the bell ding continues. As the camera moves along the shaft of the mic, it reveals SLAV, African American, 30s. He wears some AirPods and sits at a four-top table near the large diner window.

Artie invades the seat next to him. Slav takes his AirPods out and begins wrapping up his gear.

ARTIE

I know what you're going to say. I'm never, ever supposed to talk to you again. And I get it. I took you for granted. I was a terrible director. I was a horrible friend. When you said, "I'm never making another movie with you," you meant it.

Slav just looks at him.

ARTIE (CONT'D)

I'm making another movie.

Slav gets up and leaves the booth.

ARTIE (CONT'D)

It's a script you always wanted to be part of.

Slav hates himself, but he pauses.

ARTIE (CONT'D)

If this doesn't go, I'm selling tires.

The expression on Slav's face clearly means, "but you hate your uncle!"

ARTIE (CONT'D)

I know!

Slav sits back down.

ARTIE (CONT'D)

I think the problem with all the other movies, I settled. I didn't stay true to my vision. I let outside influences take over.

Slav gets up to walk again.

ARTIE (CONT'D)

I let my ego take over. Please, don't say anything. Just give me five minutes and then, if ...

Slav begrudgingly sits down.

Artie looks around the diner.

ARTIE ( (CONT'D)

Look at 'em all. If they only knew a sound genius is in their midst. A tech guru. They're gonna teach your stuff in classes one day.

He turns back to Slav.

ARTIE (CONT'D)

It'll be different this time. Small crew. Me. You, if you're willing. I got Charles Hardy and Gloria Glory to say yes.

Slav arches an eyebrow.

ARTIE (CONT'D)

Millie? She said no but we got Birdy Blue.

Slav gives him a look, saying, "Who?"

ARTIE (CONT'D)

She is a social media influencer. Astro expert or somethin' but wants to be an actress and has over 250k followers.

Slav is impressed.

ARTIE (CONT'D)

And we got Kody Dawson.

This surprises Slav.

ARTIE (CONT'D)  
He's all done with the Spielberg thing, so that's like, built-in street cred. He's working cheap. His grandmother owes me after hitting me with her car.

Slav shakes his head.

ARTIE (CONT'D)  
This is going to be amazing.

Slav waits.

ARTIE (CONT'D)  
And we need your van.

Slav gets up.

ARTIE (CONT'D)  
Please? When I picture doing this in my head, there's no one else beside me but you. I need you. No one works tech like you. I'll pay for gas money!

Slav stops. Apparently, for Artie, this is progress. He returns to the table, sits down.

ARTIE (CONT'D)  
Thank you.  
(pause)  
I might need to borrow some money for the bus.

Slav nods: Good old Artie. He hands him two dollars.

ARTIE (CONT'D)  
How's the vow of silence going?

Slav gives a thumb's up.

EXT. DINER - DAWN

Charles stands, waiting, looking dashing. He has a fancy old school bag for the excursion.

Gloria sneaks up behind him. She also has a bag.

GLORIA  
Boo!

CHARLES

Ah! How now, dear friend? Ready for another adventure with Artie - I mean, Arturo?

GLORIA

It's sure to be exciting.

CHARLES

I don't suppose you've seen the script yet.

GLORIA

Of course not. But the passion ...

CHARLES

That boy ...

GLORIA

Plus, when was the last time you worked?

CHARLES

Let's see, uh, at least one strike ago, and now AI is replacing my voice-over work. You?

GLORIA

Too many new wrinkles ago.

A town car pulls up. Charles and Gloria exchange a glance. Surely this isn't Artie -

KODY

Are we in the right place?

Gloria and Charles both react to Kody's handsomeness.

CHARLES

Oh my ...

Kody looks at the two of them and gets giddy like a big fan. He hops out of the car as the driver gets his bag from the trunk, then drives off.

KODY

Oh, I know who you both are! My whole family loves "Count Fang's Last Sunrise."

Charles gives a little bow.

KODY (CONT'D)

And I had such a crush on you after seeing the one you did together, "The Cook's Daughter."

GLORIA/CHARLES

Why, thank you.

Kody is a little confused by this response.

KODY

Anyway...thank god, if you're in this, I am less worried. I mean, I haven't worked with this Arturo Vespucci. Is he any good? My people couldn't find any of his other movies ... and they looked.

GLORIA

He has been flying under the radar for a while. Very particular. But very giving.

Charles catches on that she is doing a sales pitch.

CHARLES

He is an actor's director.

KODY

So you've worked with him before?

GLORIA

Darling, that's something a good actor just smells.

KODY

Ahhh.

CHARLES

So my dear new young friend, you have us at a disadvantage?

Kody looks at him, confused

GLORIA

Your name, darling. Charles, I'm surprised you don't know him. This is Kody Dawson. He just finished a film with Spielberg.

CHARLES

Well done, Artie.

KODY

Wow, I can't believe I get to work  
with Charles Hardy and Gloria  
Glory! Can we take a selfie?

He pops out his cell phone before they can even answer. This takes a moment because they all are busy primping.

ON THE PHONE'S SCREEN: Finally done, he is about to take the picture when their eyes divert to the background as they are photo bombed by Birdy. A LOUD, OBNOXIOUS HORN HONK!

They lower the phone to see Slav and Artie pull up in a crappy van, loaded with film equipment.

ARTIE

There are my actors!

Artie gets out and greets his cast warmly. He kisses Gloria on the cheek and slaps Charles on the shoulders. Charles slaps back.

CHARLES

Once more unto the breach, dear  
friend!

Artie gives a hug to Birdy. A long tight hug. She giggles, and he extends his hand out to Kody, all the while hugging Birdy.

KODY

Is this our ride?

Finally releasing Birdy, he escorts them both to the van.

ARTIE

Yep, isn't she a beaut!

Birdy points her phone at Kody.

BIRDY

Do you mind air-dropping that snap?

Kody points his phone towards Birdy's as he sits on the floor of the van.

KODY

Spielberg doesn't work like this.

The van door slams shut. The van engine starts but sputters, then dies.

INT. VAN - DAWN

All the actors look at Artie. Artie glares at Slav.

EXT. DINER - DAWN

The exhaust pipe explodes to life. The van roars off.

EXT. STREETS OF LOS ANGELES - MOMENTS LATER

The van speeds through various streets and LA traffic, making its way to the 101 to 118 Interstate. Finally heading north on the 5 Interstate towards the Grapevine.

EXT. 5 INTERSTATE - DAY

Aerial shot of the van, making its way out to more remote areas outside of LA.

INT. VAN - DAY

ARTIE

Thanks again for doing this,  
everybody!

Slav nods in agreement.

GLORIA

It'll be good to be in front of a  
camera again.

CHARLES

Here, here.

KODY

And after this, you'll drop the  
lawsuit against my Nana?

ARTIE

All in good time, Kody, all in good  
time.

KODY

She's on a fixed income.

ARTIE

Once the world sees our movie, your  
nana will be on two fixed incomes.

Kody doesn't know what that means. Neither does anyone else in the van.

CHARLES

How is the script, dear boy?

ARTIE

It's amazing.

KODY

When do we get to take a look at it? I don't even know who I'm playing!

GLORIA

(Looks at Kody)

Tell me there's a love scene.

BIRDY

Yeah... I hope it celebrates a sacramental oneness.

Slav looks at Birdy in the rearview mirror.

ARTIE

I'm keeping it pretty under wraps. Don't want it getting out too early. I want to make sure it flows.

CHARLES

You know best, fearless leader!

ARTIE

(He looks at each person to drive home the message)

Thank you, Charles. Anybody can write dialogue. I want to capture an emotion. A feeling. Honesty. Washington, here we come.

Slav looks at Artie: WHAT?

ARTIE (CONT'D)

What? My cousin has a huge house just outside of Spokane. Free place to stay.

Slav looks at him: Really?

ARTIE (CONT'D)

Don't judge, just drive.

EXT. 5 INTERSTATE- DAY

Drives off into the distance.

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

ECU of a gas cap. The sound of gas releasing as the cap is open.

SLAV sticks in the gas nozzle.

The van and our crew sit in a small station off the Highway. There is an outdoor bathroom.

-On Birdy's Phone-

-We see Birdy is doing a social media post video.

BIRDY

Hey lovelies. I'm on a new adventure, and you are coming with me. All I'm going to say for now is meet my fellow cast members.

She includes the rest of the actors in the frame. Charles and Gloria stand near the van's side doors. Kody sits in the doorway. The cast smiles.

BIRDY (CONT'D)

Blessings on your paths. \*

She lowers the phone and posts.

KODY

Okay, I think, as an actor, I should be looking at my lines and trying to understand my character.

BIRDY

Or getting an idea of what I'll be wearing.

GLORIA

Darling, so true ... it is the essence of the character.

Slav overhears all this as he goes to put the nozzle back. He sees Artie coming with a bag full of gas station junk food. Slav nods to Artie, trying to warn him.

CHARLES

Okay, everyone, calm down. Maybe we can get Arturo to give us the first few pages so we can get an idea of our characters...

BIRDY

Oooh! Snacks!

ARTIE

Yes! Snacks! Exactly.

CHARLES

We were wondering if...

ARTIE

One second, Charles.

He begins to pace around. The actors watch him closely as they reach into the bag, pulling out the fried heat lamp food.

KODY

What is this?

BIRDY

Are any of these organic?

GLORIA

Just be glad we are being fed, darlings.

KODY

Spielberg doesn't work like this.

Artie puts his fingers up, making a frame, looking over the scene.

ARTIE

Yesss. This will work. Kody, you are 100 percent correct but we are going to Mike Leigh this.

Slav finishes gassing and rolls his eyes, reacting to Artie.

ARTIE (CONT'D)

I want you to be part of the process. I want you to help build these characters with me. So I want to improv a scene here. Film it and then use the dialogue later in the script. It will be raw. It will be real.

CHARLES

Would it not help us to get an idea of what you're thinking by reading a few pages of the scene?

ARTIE

That's a great idea, Charles, but I am afraid it would taint your natural instincts. I don't want to dictate to you what your character should do or say. Slav, come on.

Artie and Slav head towards the Gas Station store.

GLORIA

Like you said: An actor's director. How wonderful!

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY

A Man spins around from the whiteboard. On the board, an explosion of diagrams and scientific equations that back up his theory.

MAN ON VIDEO

So you see the sun, the moon, and Jupiter will line up in the constellation Virgo. This alignment will mark the arrival of Nibiru!

The man leans into a close-up.

INT. GAS STATION - DAY

TESSA, early to mid-20s. She is the clerk, destined to grow old in this gas station with a flourish. She watches the video on her cell phone.

MAN ON VIDEO (O.S.)

Bringing with it a biblical disaster to our planet. End of the World People!

Artie and Slav walk in.

MAN ON VIDEO (O.S.) (CONT'D)

It is time to prepare. The foolish science world now turned greedy corporate will tell you different. The media will tell you that all these are conspiracies.

ARTIE

Hello, again. I was wondering if...

She pauses the video and looks up from her phone.

ARTIE (CONT'D)

So, uh .. Tessa is it? Have you ever done any acting?

TESSA

(bored)

No.

Tessa sees Kody outside the window.

TESSA (CONT'D)

Oh my god. Isn't that -?

ARTIE

Right. Would you like to meet him?

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

Gloria and Charles do theater vocal warm-ups. Kody is stretching. Birdy is meditating near the van door. Kody looks around the station, at the other customers. Cowboy type filling up his Ford 150. A pregnant woman who looks like she is in her ninth month and probably should not be driving.

KODY

I'm really going to miss this.

GLORIA

Miss what?

KODY

None of those people are paying any attention to me. This is probably the last time I'll be able to be out in public before the Spielberg movie comes out. Then I'm going to be super famous. Won't be able to go anywhere without getting mobbed by fans.

CHARLES

It can be hard to suddenly be thrust into the spotlight.

Kody looks through the window, sees Tessa and Artie staring at him. She smiles and awkwardly waves.

KODY  
I'd better enjoy it while it lasts.  
Got to go 10-1.

He heads into the gas station.

CHARLES  
Ah, to be young again.

GLORIA  
To have a young man again.

CHARLES  
But I repeat myself.

Charles and Gloria grin.

INT. GAS STATION - DAY

ARTIE  
So we're all cool. We'll just start  
setting up outside. Come on, Slav.

Slav looks at him.

ARTIE (CONT'D)  
Oh, shut up.

As Kody enters through the door.

KODY  
Looking for the head?

ARTIE  
Oh, Tessa will take care of you.

TESSA  
I'm sure you hear this all the time  
but I'm like the biggest fan.

KODY  
Really

He smiles at her.

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

Artie and Slav come out of the store. Slav gives him another  
look.

ARTIE  
Seriously, man. Work with me here.

Over Slav's shoulder Artie can see Tessa flirting with Kody and Kody soaking it in.

ARTIE (CONT'D)  
See? It's working.

They walk towards the van.

Near the van Gloria and Charles watch Tessa flirt with Kody as she reaches for a key with a big pvc pipe tied to it.

GLORIA  
What do you say, a hundred bucks to whoever gets him first?

CHARLES  
I do like a challenge.

GLORIA  
He's just waiting to be corrupted.

CHARLES  
I think that generation knows far more about being corrupt than you or I could ever -

ARTIE  
Okay, my people! Let's do this.

CHARLES  
Duty calls. And you're on.

They shake hands. A proper wager.

EXT. GAS STATION - LATER

Artie has the camera in hand, and Slav is doing his one-man band sound department. He walks around the backside of the gas station.

ARTIE  
Here is the premise of the scene:  
You're the boy's grandfather figure. Maybe his actual grandfather. No, wait! Better if he's an orphan.

BIRDY  
Where is Kody?

CHARLES  
Enjoying anonymity.

EXT. GAS STATION RESTROOM - DAY

Slav bangs on the bathroom door. After a moment, Kody and Tessa both step out. They tidy themselves up but neither one is particularly ashamed. Kody rushes back to join the rest of the cast. Slav asks thumbs up. Tessa gives a so-so hand gestures then walks back inside the store.

ARTIE (O.S.)

Slav!!!!

Slav comes around to where the rest of the crew is. Charles and Gloria share a glance.

KODY

How are we supposed to act without a script?

ARTIE

We're gonna improv this a little.

Artie raises the camera and starts recording.

KODY

I don't even know what we're playing.

ARTIE

We're gonna let it develop naturally. I see you as kind of the young, um, virginal hero. And Charles -

CHARLES

Do I cure him of his virginity?

ARTIE

Ha ha, but seriously. You want him out of this dump. You want him away from this dead-end life. You want him to go on a quest.

CHARLES

Voodoo doctor or vampire?

KODY

Huh?

ARTIE

More ... tired gas station owner. And you two ladies are the sirens that make him want to stay.

Artie whips around to his cast.

ARTIE (CONT'D)  
Be real people. And Action!

EXT. HIGHWAY - DUSK

The headlights of the Van shine on the road ahead as they enter Oregon.

INT. VAN - DUSK

Slav looks at Artie.

ARTIE  
Sometimes your words don't help the situation.