

EXT. CHRIS' CAR- 3 AM SATURDAY MORNING

James Jones, 23, Chris Foley, 23, and Ryan Granger, 24, are three young men who work for a news station. By now it's super late, but the three are full of nervous energy. They've never done anything like this before. Ryan drives as James holds the gasoline in the passenger seat. Chris is practicing lighting matches in the back. They're driving around Chris' neighborhood looking for a good spot.

JAMES

Oh! Oh! What about here!

Ryan pulls up slowly behind a row of five cars on a side street of the suburban neighborhood they're driving through. They're all high end cars (BMW, Lexus, Cadillac). The car comes to a full stop about 15 yards away from the row of cars.

JAMES

We can get this whole row. You guys ready?

Chris and Ryan nod.

Title screen: For the Broadcast

INT. BULLPEN- FRIDAY NIGHT

Two young news producers are sitting bored in the bullpen of a news station, each in their own cubicle. It's Friday night and while they should be out having a good time, they're stuck trying to put together a broadcast. Chris and James are sitting in office chairs, crumpling up old scripts and shooting them into the garbage like in basketball.

CHRIS

Look at this garbage Ryan's gotta pull...

The guys look over at the monitor and see their buddy RYAN GRANGER, 24, lead anchor, voted most handsome young reporter in Illinois. He is currently anchoring the 11 PM news. Ryan begins to read his final story.

(CONTINUED)

RYAN

And we close tonight with a little dog with a lot of spirit. We know kids play video games, but a dog? Meet Buddy the Beagle who's owners have taught him to play Call of Duty.

We cut back to the guys in the bullpen.

JAMES

Poor Ryan, kid's never gonna get that big break he's looking for reading fluff pieces.

CHRIS

He's gonna get there, and we'll get there with him.

The audio of the story cuts into their conversation. We go back to the TV where there is B-roll of a dog pushing buttons poorly on a controller are shown. How we get this footage, Lord Knows.

RYAN (V.O)

Buddy was first introduced to Call of Duty when one of his owner's Benny Johnson, popped a blood vessel during his winter break.

Back to the guys.

JAMES

Boooooooooo. Boooooo. (voice trails off)

CHRIS

I dunno man, just gotta keep grinding. It'll pay off.

They keep shooting crumpled paper for a moment, then Ryan walks in after the broadcast and begins to loosen his tie, he looks agitated.

RYAN

For fuck's sake, a dog playing Call of Duty? What happened to real

(MORE)

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RYAN (cont'd)
news? This shit gets old man.

JAMES
Michelle Obama's arms are thinner,
wanna run that?

A beat and then Executive Producer ARNOLD BALMER, 67, comes rushing into the bullpen. He is an older man who is balding and doesn't care about people's feelings. Like Peter Parker's boss in 'Spider-Man' except way less good looking.

ARNOLD
JONES, FOLEY, GRANGER, MY OFFICE.
NOW.

The three scurry into his office because they don't know what will happen if he gets there first.

INT. ARNOLD'S OFFICE

The three are sitting in office chairs facing Arnold who has an angry look on his face. He pulls out a cigarette and shoves it in his mouth. He knows he can't light it, but he's so angry if he did no one would tell him otherwise.

ARNOLD
What the hell happened out there?

CHRIS
I know boss, we're just tight on stories.

ARNOLD
You can make excuses like my ex-wife or you can give me results. If you guys don't get it together by the end of next week, I'm looking for a new weekend news team.

INT. CHRIS' APARTMENT- NIGHT

It's 1:30 AM and the guys are watching the end a west coast basketball game back at Chris' apartment. The TV is low and they all are sitting on a hand me down couch and have their feet up on the cheap ottoman. The entire apartment reeks of "starving college graduate." They're exhausted.

(CONTINUED)

CHRIS

We have to do something, you heard
Arnie in there.

RYAN

I can't carry this broadcast on
looks alone, we need real stories.

Chris looks at the copy of one of his old stories and
contemplates.. He has an idea.

CHRIS

Well, what if we made up our own
stories?

James and Ryan give him a "you're crazy" look.

CHRIS

No I'm serious, what if we made the
news up, only everyone else would
think its real.

RYAN

That's indecent. We can't stoop to
that level.. I can't stoop to that
level.

JAMES

Let's hear him out, what if girls
are involved?

CHRIS

If it's little stuff, say a busted
window or a broken in car, who's
gonna notice.

RYAN

If its little stuff we're fired.

JAMES

Then what, you're asking us to
commit arson, bank robberies...
murder?

CHRIS

Well..

JAMES

I'm down.

CHRIS

What.

JAMES

Yea let's do it. I wanna be a super villain, I'm in.

RYAN

You were in on this so quickly.

JAMES

You guys never think about being a super villain? Did you not have childhoods?

CHRIS

We did, we just wanted to be the hero.. you know, like the rest of society.

JAMES

That's so 2000 and late.

RYAN

James aside, I'm not doing this. If we get caught we're in jail. Even worse, it's career suicide.

CHRIS

Our backs are against the wall Ryan. What if it was something simple but we made it bigger, like messing up a bunch of mailboxes?

JAMES

(Sarcastically) It'll be like high school!

CHRIS

Ok fine James, what would you do.

JAMES

Let's go full "Punisher" on this. Let's light some cars on fire.

(CONTINUED)

Chris begins to nervously pace back and forth in the living room. He is uneasy. He collects himself and turns to the guys.

CHRIS

That doesn't sound so bad, right?
Just blow up a few cars and we can
go home.

RYAN

How did you get into this so
quickly?...

(pauses) Fine, but I'm not actually
doing the fire stuff.

JAMES

You can be our designated driver,
get it? Because we're about to set
cars on fire?

CHRIS

Wow, that's your worst one yet.

EXT. CHRIS' DRIVEWAY

The classic disco hit, "Disco Inferno" begins to play. This is all a slow-motion shot for emphasis. The three men are standing in the driveway of Chris' apartment complex. They are each holding their own ingredient of this plan. James is wielding a tank of gasoline. Chris is holding a box of matches, and Ryan is holding the keys to his car. They all walk over and get into the car. As they get to the car, the chorus "Burn, baby, burn" will begin to play. Music will fade out as they drive over to the scene.

INT. CAR- NIGHT 3 AM

By now it's super late, but the three are full of nervous energy. They've never done anything like this before. Ryan drives as James holds the gasoline in the passenger seat. Chris is practicing lighting matches in the back. They're driving around Chris' neighborhood looking for a good spot.

JAMES

Oh! Oh! What about here!

(CONTINUED)

Ryan pulls up slowly behind a row of five cars on a side street of the suburban neighborhood they're driving through. They're all high end cars (BMW, Lexus, Cadillac). The car comes to a full stop about 15 yards away from the row of cars.

JAMES

We can get this whole row. You guys ready?

Chris and Ryan slowly nod.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET- NIGHT

James heads over with the tank of gasoline and looks both ways as if he was crossing the street. He opens the canister of gasoline and begins to pour it on the last of the five cars. Then he begins to pour it on the ground to create a trail in order to light it from a distance. All of a sudden he hears lights go on from across the street. James sprints back to the car and jumps in.

INT. CAR- NIGHT

JAMES

Someone's out there, go, go, go!

Ryan pulls away and we hear the echoes of the car skidding out as they pull away.

RYAN

Shit, shit, shit what do we do?

CHRIS

Circle the block and come back around, we have to finish the job.

Ryan drives the car around the block as he mumbles curse words to himself. Chris keeps a stern demeanor in an attempt to control the situation. James is looking around in the passenger seat to see if anyone else is around.

JAMES

Did it at least look cool?

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET- NIGHT

Ryan pulls back to the block but stops 30 feet shorter than the last time he pulled up. The three watch a man start to leave the house wearing all black clothing. It is far away but they see something in his hand.

RYAN

(whispering) Oh my god, he's got a gun.

He in fact is holding a gun and standing at the front of the house on the welcome mat. He turns back to fire one more gun shot into the house. He fires and begins a light jog back to his car. He swiftly gets into the car and turns it on, too fast to look around or notice his surroundings. As soon as he turns it on it bursts into flames.

INT. CAR- NIGHT

CHRIS

Holy shit!!!

RYAN

What do we do?

JAMES

Get out of here!

Ryan peels out again and pulls away, the guys continue to freak out in the car.

EXT. CHRIS' DRIVEWAY-NIGHT

Ryan pulls the car into Chris' driveway. The three get

CHRIS

We go back to work, we don't talk to anyone about this. We forget this ever happened, deal?

JAMES

When did we get so soft, I'm going back out there to finish what we started.

(CONTINUED)

RYAN

You're nuts.

JAMES

Am I? We've been doing the same shit for two years at the same shitty news station and we're about to get canned. We can either do something impactful or we can get fired and have to look for shitty jobs again.

CHRIS

James, you're not thinking clearly, we can move up doing the right thing, if we put the work in..

JAMES

We've said this for two years now, I'm fed up, either you're with me or you're against me.

James rips the keys out of Ryan's hands and gets in the car, gasoline in hand. Before anyone can say anything, he pulls away. Chris and Ryan are stunned.

CHRIS

We have to go after him.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET- NIGHT

James pulls up around the same spot he was at just minutes ago. He gets out of the car and begins to charge over to the cars. He douses each in gasoline and shuffles through his pockets to find his lighter. Meanwhile..

INT. SECOND CAR- NIGHT

The man who was shooting into the house is Ernie Donalds, 44. He is on the phone.

ERNIE

Yeah, yeah, I took care of it...
Alright, call me when you have another job for me.

(CONTINUED)

He hangs up. All of a sudden he sees his car being doused in gasoline. He starts to freak out. He starts talking to himself.

ERNIE

What the fuck is going on out here?

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET- NIGHT

James takes his lighter and without hesitation throws it onto the last of the five cars. All of a sudden the row goes up in flames with Ernie in it. As this is happening, Ryan and Chris begin to pull up to the scene and see the flames.

RYAN

No way. NO way.

The guys pull up and see James standing besides his creation, he looks at it like you would if you were staring at the night sky, in awe.

CHRIS

James, why are you doing this?

JAMES

We needed a headline, right boys?

RYAN

This is fucking insane, we need to get out of here.

JAMES

Hold on, I just wanna look at it for a little longer.

CHRIS

James cut the shit, we need to go now.

James continues to stare at the flames, a few moments pass and all of a sudden sirens are heard in the background. Three police cars pull up to the scene. OFFICER DOUG HARMON, 46, is the first to get out of his car.

(CONTINUED)

OFFICER HARMON

Freeze nobody move! Put your hands where I can see em.

RYAN

Fuck me.. I mean, us.

The three are put in handcuffs and taken to the group of police cars

INT. POLICE INTERROGATION ROOM- SAME NIGHT

The three guys are in the interrogation room of the local station. They nervously await questioning from a policeman. A beat, and then Officer Harmon enters.

OFFICER HARMON

Here's the deal. You're looking at arson charges as well as homicide.

CHRIS

I'm sorry did you say homicide?

OFFICER HARMON

Yep. A man by the name of Ernie Donald was in the second car.

CHRIS

So, what you're saying is we're screwed.

OFFICER HARMON

Not necessarily, as you probably did not know, Donald was on the run from the police in three different states, was wanted for three separate murders. So what we can do is work out a deal.

RYAN

What sort of deal?

OFFICER HARMON

What we can do is we can take one of you in, and the other two are let go. Someone has to take the rap for the murder, but we are willing

(MORE)

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OFFICER HARMON (cont'd)
to pin it on one guy.

CHRIS
Can you give us a minute?

Officer Harmon steps out.

CHRIS
What do we want to do here?

JAMES
I'll take the hit. I got us into
this mess in the first place, you
guys don't deserve this stuff.

RYAN
Alright sweet thanks James we'll
see you around promise we'll visit
ok!

CHRIS
Shut up Ryan, this was all of our
faults. We all need to take the
hit.

RYAN
No way dude, James lit the cars on
fire, he should do the time.

JAMES
Thanks Ryan.

RYAN
No I'm serious, why should we all
sacrifice for one stupid mistake?

No one talks for a few moments. Then Chris steps in.

CHRIS
Ryan, we all were complicit, we all
wanted to make the news. We all go
down.

JAMES
You don't have t--

RYAN

Yes we do. Chris is right. But
whatever happens, no one touches
the hair.

CHRIS

Yes, that and we stay together.
Deal?

RYAN, JAMES

Deal.

Ryan mutters "Fuck me" under his breath. The three guys look
at each other nervously, but with subtle optimism. Officer
Harmon re-enters the room, as the door closes we...

FADE TO BLACK.