HUNG-UP

FADE IN:

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

FRANKIE, a young, unkempt man in a bowling league shirt, fishes feverishly in the coin return of a pay phone.

Upset when he comes up empty, he begins hustling down the sidewalk looking over his shoulder at the cars shooting past.

When he finally spots the yellow cab to his liking, there is only time for the CAB DRIVER and PASSENGER to scream before he dives in front of it.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - DAY

A disoriented Frankie wakes on a gurney in the hallway of a busy emergency room. His eyes first focus on AIDA, the heavy set West Indian nurse wheeling his bed towards an empty room.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

He tries to get up but it is too painful. This is when he first notices the fresh cast on his leg.

AIDA
Can’t get up, sugar? You can lay here a little while longer but I’m going to need the bed in a second.

She signs off on his charts.

FRANKIE
I’m not dead. Where’s my wallet?

AIDA
You were lucky. You have a thick, strong head. You should have seen you when they first brought you in. You looked like a big white pretzel.

FRANKIE
My throat is dry.

Aida fills a small plastic cup with water and hands it to him.

(CONTINUED)
FRANKIE
I hear the doctors here are real butchers.

AIDA
Nonsense. Your doctor is one of the best in the state.

FRANKIE
I really don’t care.

AIDA
Well, I care and I wouldn’t let anybody hurt you.

Frankie’s eyes widen at this statement. He wonders if she’s trying to suggest something.

The DOCTOR walks in. He is free-spirited and pony-tailed. Aida hands him the charts and waddles onto other duties.

DOCTOR D
Hello, Frankie, I’m Dr. D., I want to talk to you a bit.

Frankie’s eyes follow Aida around the room. Her obese booty looks like two midgets wrestling under her uniform as she vanishes into the hall.

FRANKIE
Who was that? She was so... pleasant.

DOCTOR D.

Frankie’s eyes scan the hall.

FRANKIE
It’s like she walks in and lights up the whole room.

He spots her chatting with another nurse. He manages to pick himself up, despite the pain, and hobbles out the door towards her.

The Doctor is stunned for a second before he is grabbed by the arm by a nurse and pulled towards an impending emergency.

(CONTINUED)
Frankie takes a few stunted steps before he is distracted by the faint sound of someone calling his name. He looks but sees only an inanimate pay phone.

PAY PHONE
Frrrankieeeeee.

He is compelled to check it for quarters. None. He looks up in time to see he has missed his opportunity as Aida vanishes into a closing elevator.

INT. FRANKIE’S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Using a cane to support himself, Frankie is dutifully tearing down the dozens of photographs that plaster his dingy walls.

It is a shrine to a frumpy, unnamed WAITRESS captured in various stages of work (pouring coffee, carrying plates). In all of the pictures she looks unaware of the camera.

Frankie talks on the phone with his mother.

FRANKIE
Hey, mom. Good, you? How’s Pop..? Well, stop giving him sausage before bed, and he’ll stop doing that... Listen, are you sitting down? I met someone. Yep, she’s great. The best. Her smile lights up the whole room like a Christmas tree ...

He eyes his waitress pictures one last time.

FRANKIE
Olga? She’s old news, Ma. She says I’m crowding her personal space. Fine. Now she has all the space in the world. Me and Aida will be just fine. In fact, I have plans to see her again tomorrow.

EXT. BOWLING ALLEY - NIGHT

Frankie and his bowling league buddies, “The Rolling Wonders,” wear shirts with their logos splashed across the back in neon. They are every bit as odd and disheveled as Frankie including HOLYFIELD, the wiry, tall man, SPAZ and CUCCI. Together they resemble a gang of circus freaks.

Dragging his broken leg behind him, he lets the ball go, knocking down only three of the pins. Oddly, he raises his arm and yells triumphantly as if he has just bowled a perfect game. Holyfield is most appreciative as he drops to his knees before Frankie and bows in a “we’re not worthy”-style.

(CONTINUED)
His buddies, caught up in the moment, hoist him over their heads like a hero then collapse under his weight. The completely normal-looking opposing team looks on in bewilderment as they walk off with the trophy.

**EXT. BUS STOP - DAY**

Frankie hobble a few yards away from the three men at the bus stop: a black guy in a BUSINESS SUIT, a black guy in brightly colored HIP HOP clothing, and a black guy in traditional MUSLIM dress. They barely notice him.

**FRANKIE**
(to men)
Hey, guys.

A beat.

**FRANKIE**
(nonchalantly)
What time is the nigger-mobile coming?

No one believes what he just heard. They look at each other hoping for some sort of confirmation, but it is really too crazy to consider.

He inches closer, leans against the pay phone, and checks it for quarters. None.

**FRANKIE**
Look at you, boys.

**HIP HOP**
We ain't got no drugs, officer.

**FRANKIE**
I ain’t got no badge, lawn-jockey. If I did I'd spray you with a fire-hose and plant a broomstick in your rear-end.

The Muslim man rises to his feet revealing a 'Black Power' T-shirt.

**MUSLIM**
What did you say, caucazoid?

**FRANKIE**
I said I would have been your father, but the monkey beat me upstairs.

Incensed, the men are forced to administer a beating of epic proportions on Frankie.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

He hits the ground and just lies there absorbing the kicks and punches with a sick, appreciative smile.

INT. HOSPITAL BEDROOM – DAY

Frankie sits at the edge of his bed impatiently scanning the doorway. His broken jaw is wired shut, his neck is braced and one of his arms is in a cast, making him look like some sort of Frankenstein. Still, he sings a happy song through his metal grill and swings his one good leg.

FRANKIE
(singing)
Loooooving you is easy cause you’re beautifullilll, you brighten up my dayyyyy.

He slurs and drools all over himself then quickly freezes when he sees Aida pass by his room.

The best he can come up with is to roll out of bed, dramatically, causing her to rush to his aid.

AIDA
Are you okay?

FRANKIE
Oh yeah, it’s just my upper body, head, neck and arms.

AIDA
Do I know you, Sugar?

FRANKIE
Yeah, I was here yesterday, remember? I was hit by a car. We talked a little. I just wanted to come by and tell you I got the hint. Say no more.

By now he has drooled all over the front of his gown.

AIDA
Your face is turning red. It must hurt to talk.

She carefully helps him up. He tries not to express the pain shooting through his body. As he talks, the drooling becomes worse.

FRANKIE
I'm glad we could meet like this today. Away from all the craziness. There's so much I want to tell you.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

AIDA
Me? Well, make it fast, honey, my shift ends ... five minutes ago.

The doctor arrives.

AIDA
Doctor, he needs more pain killers. He just had some sort of spasm.

Aida exits the room to Frankie’s disappointment.

DOCTOR
You’ve been here twice in as many days, Frankie. You’re running out of bones to break.

FRANKIE
Yeah.

Fueled by maniacal determination, he pulls himself into the wheelchair next to his bed. With his one good arm, he pushes after her.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - DAY
Frankie gets as far as the corridor but is again beckoned by the hypnotic Pay Phone.

PAY PHONE
Frrrankieeee.

FRANKIE
(under his breath)
Shut up.

PAY PHONE
Boy am I full.

He really wants to chase her, but is compelled to again check for quarters. None.

PAY PHONE
Sucker.

He looks up in time to see Aida board the elevator. He tries to call for her but cannot manage more than a sick wet gurgle.

Frankie is angry with himself for missing his opportunity but brightens when he sees Aida’s Polaroid-picture on the wall with a brass frame labeled “Employee of the Month.”

(CONTINUED)
He snatches it quickly and tucks it safely away under his arm, where no one could see.

INT. FRANKIE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Frankie sits extended in his recliner with the phone to his ear. He gushes like a school girl.

FRANKIE
I sound different? I don’t feel any different. I never felt better. I’m walking on air here....

Frankie picks up a Scientology book still in the shrink-wrap.

FRANKIE
I flipped through it, Ma. But it's not for me.

He puts the book down. We see it is addressed to "occupant."

FRANKIE
I told you, I'm done with the therapy. I haven't been this focused in months.

We go down farther to see the phone isn’t plugged into the jack.

FRANKIE
I'm seeing my new girl and I tell ya’, I hear wedding bells.

On the wall where the frumpy waitress was previously showcased sits Aida’ Polaroid, labeled “Employee of the Month”, and a brand-new box of bullets.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HOSPITAL GARAGE - NIGHT

Frankie and Holyfield lurk in the shadows between parked cars. They are both wearing their bowling shirts. In addition, Holyfield is wearing a ski mask rolled up over his brow.

HOLYFIELD
Don't worry about a freakin’ thing, bro. I've seen this type of thing a million times.

FRANKIE
This kind of thing?
CONTINUED:

HOLYFIELD
Sure.

FRANKIE
A million times?

HOLYFIELD
At Least.

A beat

FRANKIE
Okay, so, she's coming out of the elevator in about thirty seconds—she may be late, she's a talker. You jump out with the mask, pretend to mug her, give her a good scare. Then I spring into action and save the day. Here, you’ll need this.

He reaches in his jacket and pulls out a large caliber pistol.

HOLYFIELD
Cool! Is it real?

FRANKIE
She’s a nurse, Holyfield, I’m sure she knows a fake gun when she sees one. I had to go all out.

He hands it to Holyfield.

FRANKIE
Careful, it’s loaded.

The elevator doors open, Aida steps out with a MAN of comparable age.

FRANKIE
That’s her. Go, go, go. Wait, how’s my hair?

HOLYFIELD
Like a young Scipowitz. Remember, I get to be the best man AND the godfather.

FRANKIE
Uh, I already told Cucci he could be the best man.

Holyfield snorts in disbelief than accepts it with a shrug before heading toward the pair.
INT. HOSPITAL GARAGE - NIGHT

Aida and the man stroll under the glow of the fluorescent lights. Holyfield walks backwards towards them, pulling down his ski mask.

The man’s hands swing as he walks. He is a casual looking portly guy holding a rented movie.

    MAN
    (to Aida)
    The story is okay, but I just don’t buy Tom Cruise as a gay vampire.

Holyfield spins towards them with his gun drawn.

    HOLYFIELD
    Freeze, mother-suckers!!

    AIDA
    Oh, my!

    HOLYFIELD
    Nobody move a freakin’ muscle.

    MAN
    (frightened)
    Don’t shoot. Just take the money!

    HOLYFIELD
    Uh, yeah, gimme your money and your jewelry too.

    AIDA
    Not my ...

She covers the ring on her finger.

    HOLYFIELD
    Hurry up, pumpkin-ass! I’m not playing games. Give it up!

Frankie lunges into action from the shadows, swinging his cane with his one good arm to bat away the gun. Holyfield feigns surprise.

The portly man seizes the moment, landing a solid right hook to Holyfield’s eye. He hits the ground as Frankie pick up the discarded gun.

    HOLYFIELD
    He hit me, Frankie! I’m leaving.
FRANKIE
You’re not going anywhere until the police arrive, scum-bag.

AIDA
Frankie!? I know you ... you’re the guy from the other day. And the time before that. The guy who jumped in front of the car.

He doesn’t know if he should keep up the charade at this point.

AIDA
You set this up?!

FRANKIE
(proudly)
Yes. I guess I did.

AIDA
You’ve been stalking me.

FRANKIE
I’ve been visiting you. The fact is I can’t keep away from you, Aida. Ever since I first saw you in the ER. The way your gold teeth light up the room. Walking around like your hot stuff. I haven’t even thought about what’s her name, since I met you. I thought I was in love before, but this ... I was hoping we could ... 

AIDA
Get together?

HOLYFIELD
Yahtzee.

AIDA
This is my husband, Mervin.

FRANKIE
Husband?

HOLYFIELD
Slut!

Frankie’s eyes begin to well up with tears, his arms shake. The pistol dangles in his hand like a fish on a hook.

(CONTINUED)
FRANKIE
What about what we had? What about what you said?

AIDA
What did I say?
(to Mervin)
I didn’t say anything.

Frankie stammers, unable to find a clear thought. Everyone grows more apprehensive the more scrambled he seems.

FRANKIE
B-but you see other people.

The air is heavy with apprehension.

MERVIN
You haven’t committed a crime yet, buddy, we could still walk away from this.

FRANKIE
I ain’t your “buddy!” And I can’t walk away from this, “Buddy!” I broke my friggin’ leg. This ain’t a leg warmer!!

Frankie raises the gun with the intention of taking Mervin out of the picture.

AIDA
NO!

MERVIN
Wait.
(He fishes for an excuse)
Don’t ... take away your only chance to make Aida happy.

He reaches for his wallet causing Frankie to cock back the hammer. Mervin shows him it is just his wallet.

MERVIN
It’s me, Aida and our two sons. That’s Oscar and that’s my Mervin Jr.

Frankie studies the picture without lowering his gun.

MERVIN
We took that at Colonial Williamsburg. Do you see the smiles on everyone’s face?

(CONTINUED)
FRANKIE
You don’t look so happy. Well, maybe that little guy with the big teeth.

AIDA
We are very happy together, Frankie, and so will you be when you find that special someone.

FRANKIE
But I did ... Mervin, get on the ground.

AIDA
Oh, no.

FRANKIE
Get on your knees and hold still.

He puts the gun to Mervin’s forehead. Sweat beads on everyone. Mervin closes his eyes and begins praying to himself. Frankie struggles to pull the trigger but is interrupted by a familiar voice calling from a dark corner.

PAY PHONE
Frrrankie.

Without lowering his gun, he steps away to the phone on the wall. Everyone watches him, unaware of what to think.

He gets to the phone and jiggles the coin return. Upon reaching inside, he discovers a shiny quarter. A calm sense of relief comes over him.

He uncocks the gun, wipes the tears from his eyes and rejoins his hostages.

FRANKIE
Look, I just wanted to ... Merv, get up. I don’t know what’s wrong with me, I get... I did it again. (he slaps himself in the head repeatedly) I’m so embarrassed. I just hope we could all be friends after this.

AIDA
S-sure.

FRANKIE
I’m really very sorry about all of this. I feel so silly. Holyfield, are we still Wonder Brothers?

(CONTINUED)
HOLYFIELD
(panicked)
Whatever you want.

Frankie strolls out of the parking garage towards the street. He examines the quarter in his palm then squeezes it tight. We get the feeling Frankie has seen the error of his ways. He throws the gun in a trash can.

As he approaches the street outside the hospital an ambulance screeches to a halt, almost running him down. Two medics step out of the ambulance and begin unloading their cargo.

FRANKIE
Hey, I’m walking here!

The medics pay him no mind as they pull out the collapsible stretcher and scurry into the side entrance.

Within moments they re-emerge with an occupied body bag.

He finds himself facing the female medic. She is muscular, and a good 4 inches taller than him.

FEMALE MEDIC
Can I help you, sir?

FRANKIE
Yeah, you could ... hi.

FEMALE MEDIC
Well, spit it out, pal, this guys starting to ferment.

He notices the back of the female medic’s jacket reads “City Morgue.” He has got that twinkle in his eye again.

EXT. FRANKIE’S BATHROOM – NIGHT

Frankie is primping in the mirror as he chats on his unplugged phone.

FRANKIE

He slams the phone down, pauses for a second, than picks it up again and listens. After a second ...

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

FRANKIE
Hang up the phone!!

He slams it down again.

He climbs into the filled tub fully dressed. With a happy-go-lucky smile on his face, he pushes down the plunger on the toaster plugged in next to the tub, then holds it aloft over the water.

FRANKIE
Loooving youuuuu, is easy cause your beautiful.

FADE TO BLACK.