

**JEAN-CLAUDE VAN JOHNSON**

PILOT EPISODE: 'THE ONE WITH THE BULGARIAN DRUG CARTEL'

Written by

Dave Callahan

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UP ON:

AN EXTREME CLOSE-UP OF JEAN-CLAUDE VAN DAMME'S FACE. He has a BLACK EYE but is otherwise impassive. Stoic.

JCVD (V.O.)

My name is Jean-Claude Van Damme. But you already know that, because I am extremely famous. I have starred in dozens of hit movies that have grossed over a billion dollars worldwide. Perhaps you remember my first starring role, in 'Bloodsport.' 'Bloodsport' is on television all of the time. Or maybe you have seen 'TimeCop,' which is like 'Looper,' but like a million times better. In 'Double Impact' I played twins. So if you have seen 'Double Impact,' I am even more famous to you.

(beat)

But this is not makeup on my eye.

PULL BACK TO REVEAL: JCVD is standing in a

DANK, DARK HALLWAY...

JCVD (V.O.)

This is not a movie set.

... where a steel pipe wielding THUG is racing toward him in SUPER SLO-MO. Bad intentions all over his face.

JCVD (V.O.)

And that man... is not an actor.

As the Thug nears...

JCVD (V.O.)

I know what he is going to do before he does. He is going to swing at my head.

Right on cue, the Thug rears back, starts his slo-mo swing.

JCVD (V.O.)

He must not know who I am. Because if he knew who I am, he would know: my head is a Hard Target. That is the name of one of my hit films. But it is also a fact. And it is a fact because... I have a move.

JCVD's stance begins to widen, his legs sliding out to his sides. FUCK YES, IT'S GONNA HAPPEN.

JCVD (V.O.)  
Not just a move. A gift.

As his legs slide ever outward, JCVD's trunk begins to lower. The heavy pipe comes around...

JCVD (V.O.)  
My gift...

JCVD trails off as his legs LOCK UP, frozen well shy of the position we all know he was going for. In fact, he's barely dropped a foot. JCVD stares at his faulty legs, heartbroken. Then he looks up at the steel pipe... which SMASHES HIM IN THE FACE.

CUT TO:

TOP-DOWN ANGLE ON JCVD

Lying on the ground, staring up at us. Blood gushing from his nose and lip.

JCVD (V.O.)  
My gift... has abandoned me.  
Betrayed me when I needed her most.  
(then, pensive)  
How did this happen? How did I get here?

SMASH TO TITLES:

JEAN-CLAUDE VAN JOHNSON

INT. JCVD'S MANSION - BEDROOM - MORNING

A completely absurd bedroom. All white. Panoramic windows with a 180 degree view of LA. 3000 thread count sheets that only the wealthy know exist. JCVD splayed among them.

TITLE: **THREE DAYS EARLIER**

A LEGGY MODEL enters. Naked.

LEGGY MODEL  
I used your shower. Now I'm all sticky.

JCVD  
It's coconut water.

LEGGY MODEL

Your shower... uses coconut water?

JCVD

All of the plumbing uses coconut water.

LEGGY MODEL

I don't understand.

ON JCVD, staring up at the gilded ceiling. An intense sadness in his eyes.

JCVD

Of course not. You never do.

LEGGY MODEL

This is the first time I've been here.

JCVD forces a RESIGNED SMILE, swings up out of bed.

JCVD

(kind)

Let me help you get dressed.

INT. JCVD'S MANSION - MORNING

'All by Myself' by Eric Carmen plays over JCVD going about his morning:

- JCVD takes a steaming coconut water shower. His shower is the size of your living room. He looks tiny in it.

- JCVD eats breakfast at the head of a formal banquet table. This thing is so big it wouldn't even fit in his shower.

- JCVD opens a HOLIDAY CARD. It's from Dolph Lundgren. JCVD gazes wistfully at the cover photo of Dolph's happy family, then walks it over to his mantle... which is covered in similar cards.

- JCVD finishes a movie (almost certainly LOOPER), deletes it from his Netflix Queue, and returns to the menu. His queue is now EMPTY. JCVD takes a deep breath, looks around...

INT. URTH CAFE - MORNING

JCVD waits with the hippies.

URTH BARISTA

(reading ticket)

'Jean-Claude Van Damme, star of Universal Soldier 1, 4, 5 and 6?'

JCVD steps forward, hand raised.

MOMENTS LATER

JCVD heads for the door, coffee in hand... but STOPS DEAD at the sight of VANESSA (early 40's). Strong, confident, beautiful. She's STUNNING...

JCVD  
Vanessa?

... and also she's trying really really hard to pretend she doesn't see JCVD. Finally:

VANESSA  
Oh, JC. Hi.

JCVD  
(wounded)  
How long have you been in town?

VANESSA  
Just a day or two. A layover, basically.

URTH HOST  
Next.

JCVD turns toward the waiting host.

JCVD  
Large vanilla latte, two extra shot  
of espresso, almond milk please.  
(then, to Vanessa)  
Yes?

Vanessa smiles softly, nods. There is history here.

URTH HOST  
For here or to go?

JCVD  
For here.

VANESSA  
To go.

EXT. URTH CAFE - MORNING

JCVD and Vanessa exit the cafe. JCVD slows.

JCVD  
Vanessa. Please.

Vanessa turns back toward him, pitying.

JCVD (CONT'D)

I've missed you. I've tried calling...

VANESSA

I know, JC. And I can appreciate that. But there's a reason I haven't called back.

JCVD

I know I messed up...

VANESSA

It's ancient history.

JCVD

It doesn't have to be.

Vanessa offers a kind smile.

VANESSA

Yes. It does.

(then, soft)

I leave for a gig in Bulgaria tomorrow. I haven't even started recon yet.

(earnest beat)

I gotta go. It was nice to see you, JC.

JCVD watches, helpless, as Vanessa walks out of his life (again, it would seem). His heart shattering into a million little...

*Wait, NO.* Fuck his heart: JCVD JUST THOUGHT OF A PLAN...

INT. JCVD'S CONVERTIBLE - MORNING

JCVD sits in his absurd sports car, phone pressed to his ear. A look of dogged determination in his eyes.

JCVD

It's your number one client.

(then, dramatic)

I'm back.

INT. UNITED MORRIS AGENCY - JANE'S OFFICE - DAY

JCVD sits on a leather couch in an insane office decorated with foreign film posters and a Banksy piece painted right onto the wall. There's also a pillar lamp shaped like a dick and a monitor lizard living inside the glass coffee table. The lizard is wearing a gold cuban link necklace.

A woman sits opposite JCVD. JANE HARDY has the face of a (print) model, the confidence of a (runway) model, and the wardrobe of Kanye West (the one who uses his wife as a Givenchy mannequin, not the one who wears stunna shades to awards shows).

Also worth noting: SHE'S SIXTY-FOUR YEARS OLD.

JANE

Goddamn, I got such a fucking hard-on when I heard your voice. You ready to pop the trunk on this shit?

As she starts rifling through a STACK OF SCRIPTS:

JCVD

Jane --

JANE

OK. First up. Action re-imagining of 'Rikki-Tikki-Tavi.' Channing Tatum is playing the mongoose, you'd be one of the cobras. That's set up at Paramount.

(next)

This is an action re-imagining of 'Anne of Green Gables.' It was on the Black List last year; kid who wrote it is a garbage man in Fresno. I like this for you; I'm gonna set it aside. That's also at Paramount.

(next)

Action re-imagining of Uncle Remus, I'd steer clear of that one. That's at Paramount.

(next)

OK this is at Paramount; it's --

JCVD

(bored)

An action re-imagining?

JANE

Don't be glib.

(then)

And no. Origin story. Of the restaurant PF Chang's.... but imagined as an action movie. You'd be Richard Shaw, sidekick to Phineas Fogg Chang. Channing Tatum is attached; Jackie Chan is playing General Tso.

JCVD

Jane.

(leans in)

When I told you I was back, I did not mean Jean-Claude Van Damme.

(dramatic beat)

I meant Jean-Claude Van Johnson.

Jane goes STONE-FACED.

JANE

Blinds.

The room's curtains close automatically. The room is suddenly much, much darker. OMINOUS, even. The tenor of the conversation changes accordingly.

JANE (CONT'D)

Johnson's been retired for two years. That's an eternity in this line of work.

JCVD shrugs.

JCVD

I stay active. I have Wii Fit.

JANE

Wii Fit? This isn't a game, Jean-Claude; this is black ops.

(then)

Real black ops, not the game. I send you back out there before you're ready... people die.

JCVD

No one is going to die.

(beat)

Except for all the people I'm going to kill.

Jane considers for a long moment. Finally:

JANE

I'll put out feelers. See if there's any low-risk assignments...

JCVD

I want Bulgaria.

And now it all becomes clear.

JANE

The job Vanessa's working.  
 (then, pitying)  
 Honey. That ship has sailed. You  
 had your chance...

JCVD shakes his head, anguished. He can't accept that. Jane sighs.

JANE (CONT'D)

The job's booked. My guy's already  
 on the ground.

JCVD

Who is it? Smith?  
 (no)  
 Thompson.  
 (no)

JCVD's face falls.

JCVD (CONT'D)

(venomous)

Brown.

JANE

What do you want me to say? He's  
 my number two guy. And when number  
 one's retired...

JCVD

Call the client. Tell him number  
 one is un-retired. So now he can  
 choose. Does he want the number  
 two private contractor in the  
 world? Or does he want...  
 (dramatic)  
 Johnson?

JANE

I'll call. For you, I'll call.  
 But it's not just about the client,  
 you know that. You need a cover.  
 A reason to be in country. And  
 that doesn't go through the client;  
 that's a completely different piece  
 of the puzzle that I have to solve.  
 I have to find a production that  
 fits the bill... then call the  
 studio... then talk the client into  
 a role. Maybe even show some tit.  
 All stuff I've already done -- for  
Brown -- for a movie that starts  
 shooting in two days.

(MORE)

JANE (CONT'D)

(then)

So yes, I can call the client. But that's just a whale who wants you to kill hundreds of drug dealers. But a movie studio?

(hushed)

Jean-Claude. These people are monsters.

JCVD stands to exit. Nothing more to discuss here.

JCVD

I'm going home to pack.

Jane hangs his head as JCVD heads for the door. Worried.

JANE

This is a Tier One Operation; complete takedown of a massive, hyper-violent drug cartel. If you're not ready; if you get made... it all comes down: What you were really doing while you shot that Dennis Rodman movie. Why you said yes to fucking 'Street Fighter.' Bin Laden. It will all come back to you eventually.

(beat)

So please. Tell me you're ready for this. Tell me that it's not just about Vanessa.

Off JCVD...

INT. JCVD'S MANSION - GYM - AFTERNOON

JCVD enters a state-of-the-art HOME GYM. There is a year's worth of dust on everything.

JCVD (VOICEMAIL)

Hello, this is Jean-Claude Van Damme. Just kidding it is a robot that answers my telephone. Leave me a message and the robot will play it to me later. Thank you.

JANE (VOICEMAIL)

Well, old friend? Good news.

LATER

JCVD, now wearing a spandex singlet, warms up with a quick round of jump-rope. He trips. A lot.

JANE (VOICEMAIL) (CONT'D)  
 Bulgaria's yours. I pitched it to  
 the client and you were right:  
 given the choice between Brown and  
 Johnson... he wanted Johnson.

LATER

JCVD struggles against the weight of his Bowflex Machine.  
Like, REALLY struggles.

JANE (VOICEMAIL) (CONT'D)  
 Better news? Cover job's yours as  
 well. Turned out you were more in  
 line with what the studio was  
 picturing anyway.

LATER

JCVD hops around in front of a heavy bag. Preparing to  
 strike...

JANE (VOICEMAIL) (CONT'D)  
 So just like that: Gun's out of the  
 holster.

JCVD fires off a ROUNDHOUSE KICK at the bag. Totally misses.

JANE (VOICEMAIL) (CONT'D)  
 Terrorists, drug dealers, scumbags  
 of the world, get ready...

JCVD stands, gazes at his sweaty, winded form in the WALL-  
 LENGTH MIRRORS that line the room. The mirrors are etched  
 with pictures of him at his fittest, doing all sorts of  
 insane poses... which puts into even starker contrast his  
 current (lack of) condition.

JANE (VOICEMAIL) (CONT'D)  
 ... JOHNSON IS BACK.

JCVD frowns. Crap.

EXT. GULFSTREAM V PRIVATE AIRCRAFT - NIGHT - ESTABLISHING

A sleek jet descends toward Sofia, Bulgaria.

INT. LUXURY HOTEL - HALLWAY - NIGHT

A weary JCVD wheels his bag up to the door to his suite. He  
 slides his keycard, steps...

INTO HIS SUITE

... and PAUSES. SOMETHING'S OFF.

He HITS THE DECK only a split second before THE TOMAHAWK SLICES THROUGH THE AIR, MISSING HIM BY INCHES BEFORE IMPLANTING IN THE FAR WALL.

A SLOW CLAP from the darkness draws JCVD's attention. He stands, steps just far enough into the room to identify THE OUTLINE OF A MAN SITTING IN THE SUITE'S LONE ARMCHAIR.

JCVD

Brown.

BROWN (STILL OBSCURED)

Oh come on, Jean-Claude, we're all friends here.

DAVID SCHWIMMER (48, DAVID SCHWIMMER) sits forward, smiles maniacally.

SCHWIMMER

Call me David.

Schwimmer stands, strolls to the large PICTURE WINDOW that frames the suite. There's a BAR CART in front it. Schwimmer peruses it with bemused disdain.

SCHWIMMER (CONT'D)

Japanese Whiskey? Really, Jean-Claude? What is this, last week? In New York we're drinking artisanal toilet wine smuggled out of Rikers Island. Four thousand dollars a bottle.

JCVD

(re: bottle)

Take a closer look.

(that's right:)

Small batch Japanese toilet wine. Brewed in a World War Two POW Camp, aged seventy-five years. Thirty thousand dollars a bottle.

(then)

This isn't a competition, Schwimmer.

SCHWIMMER

Oh no? You stole my job. That feels pretty competitive to me.

JCVD

No one stole anything. The client simply wanted the best.

SCHWIMMER

Is that what you think you are?

(then)

You were the best; I'll give you that. But that was two years ago... and a lot can change in two years. Reflexes... strength... speed...

JCVD BLANCHES.

SCHWIMMER (CONT'D)

That's what I thought. Word on the street is Johnson's back...

(looking JCVD up and down)

... but this isn't Johnson, is it?

JCVD clenches his teeth.

SCHWIMMER (CONT'D)

You're not what you used to be, Jean-Claude. You're gonna slip up. And when you do, I'm gonna be there, ready to pick up the pieces. And any time you need a reminder?

Schwimmer extends his arm, prompting a SMALL BLACK OBJECT to slide out of his sleeve and into his waiting palm. He points the object at the suite's ENORMOUS FLATSCREEN TV.

The TV clicks to life, slowly revealing itself to be airing... yup, an episode of 'Friends.' In Bulgarian. As the unmistakable theme song kicks into its chorus:

SCHWIMMER (CONT'D)

(whisper soft)

*I'll be there for you.*

Nonplussed, JCVD turns back toward Schwimmer... who HAS VANISHED. The curtains of the window wave in the night breeze.

EXT. JCVD'S TRAILER - EARLY MORNING

JCVD sits on the steps of an enormous trailer labelled 'Lead Hair & Makeup.' Vanessa approaches, a large kit bag in hand. JCVD smiles at her; she doesn't reciprocate.

VANESSA

I can't believe you pulled this.

JCVD

When I know what I want... nothing can stop me.

VANESSA

I didn't mean it as a compliment.

(then)

Come on, we have work to do.

INT. JCVD'S TRAILER - EARLY MORNING

JCVD sits in front of a large, lightbulb-encircled MAKEUP MIRROR. Vanessa drops a BLACK FILE FOLDER in his lap, then steps around behind him, starts doing his hair.

JCVD opens the folder, studies the PHOTOGRAPHS inside: VIALS FULL OF FLOURESCENT ORANGE LIQUID. DIRTY SYRINGES. DEAD BODIES -- most of them either MURDERED or OD'ed in horrific fashion. Vanessa narrates:

VANESSA

They call it Mimosa. It's coming from somewhere in the city and spreading across Eastern Europe like the plague... only deadlier. Your job is to find out who's making it and take the whole operation down...

(re: photos)

... without ending up in there.

JCVD's intimidated, but tries not to show it. He hurriedly moves on to the next photo, which is of a

VANESSA (CONT'D)

'Steel' factory just outside of town. My early intel says that this may be the source of the Mimosa; I'm going to get a closer look this morning while you're doing fight choreography. If it checks out, I'll have you in by the end of the week.

JCVD nods, closes the folder.

JCVD

Have dinner with me tonight.

Vanessa smiles slightly despite herself. She's still got a soft spot for JC. JCVD swoops:

JCVD (CONT'D)

For old times' sake?

VANESSA

That sounds nice.

JCVD smiles...

VANESSA (CONT'D)

But I've moved on, JC... and you should too.

(then)

I don't want you to get hurt.

JCVD looks up, meets Vanessa's eyes in the mirror. Searching...

The trailer door SWINGS OPEN -- shattering whatever developing moment may have been -- and in walks LUIS, a YOUNG LATINO MAN covered head-to-toe in tattoos -- face, neck, hands, you name it (don't name it).

He's as surprised to see JCVD as JCVD is to see him.

LUIS

Where's Brown?

VANESSA

Last-minute personnel change. This is... Johnson.

Luis nods. Star-struck, but he's a professional; he'll roll with it. JCVD, on the other hand:

JCVD

Where is Marcus?

VANESSA

He wanted to transition into something more stable; he runs nuclear material in and out of South Korea now.

JCVD looks Luis up and down. Kid can't be more than twenty-three.

JCVD

He is qualified?

LUIS

I spent nine years as a child soldier with the Zeta Cartel.

JCVD

And after that?

LUIS

Top of my class at the Paul Mitchell Academy. Plus a Beacon Award at PBA Beauty Week 2012.

JCVD nods. Impressed.

VANESSA

Show him.

Luis wheels an ENORMOUS ROLLING CASE from the back wall to JCVD's side. He then lifts the heavy lid, revealing THE MOST IMPRESSIVE MAKEUP KIT EVER ASSEMBLED. Seriously, there's a fucking Sephora up in this thing.

JCVD whistles. Luis holds up a single finger -- *there's more*. A simple twist of the lipstick (not a euphemism, he's actually twisting a tube of lipstick here), and a SECRET COMPARTMENT IS REVEALED. And inside that compartment?

*What the fuck do you think?* GUNS. TONS OF FUCKING GUNS. THE COOLEST GUNS YOU'VE EVER SEEN.

JCVD looks back up at Luis, a WIDE SMILE on his face.

JCVD

A pleasure to meet you, Luis.

LUIS

The pleasure's all mine, Mr...

PA (O.S.)

(overlapping)

Mr. Van Damme?

ANGLE ON THE FAR END OF THE ROOM

Where a young PA leans into the trailer. From this angle she can only see the back side of Luis' weapons crate, which he casually closes as:

PA (CONT'D)

They're ready for you now.

EXT. JCVD'S TRAILER - MORNING

JCVD emerges from his trailer, now in full costume: he's wearing A PAIR OF DIRTY OVERALLS, rolled up at the calves. No shirt underneath. A rat's nest of hair pokes out from beneath his STRAW HAT; a STEM OF WHEAT from between his teeth.

He looks insane, but that doesn't seem to matter here: he's met with a CACOPHONY OF APPLAUSE from the assembled crew. The film's director, A (early 30's, looks exactly how you think a guy who goes by a single letter looks) stands front and center, barks into a megaphone:

A  
Ladies and gentlemen, the star of  
our film: The Muscles From Brussels  
himself, Jean! Claude! Van! Damme!

JCVD smiles, waves, shakes a few hands. A approaches,  
initiates an elaborate bro-hug that JCVD botches at every  
possible juncture.

A (CONT'D)  
A.

JCVD  
Hey.

A  
No, A. Like the letter.

JCVD  
Oh yes, of course. I really like  
your Kia ads with the hamsters.  
You're obviously a very skilled  
action director.

A  
That means a lot coming from you.  
Words for the crew?

JCVD considers for a thoughtful moment before taking the  
megaphone, addressing the crowd:

JCVD  
Who's ready to put the 'adventure'  
in 'The Adventures of Huckleberry  
Finn?!'

CUT TO:

JCVD ON TOP OF A LOG RAFT, FIGHTING A BUNCH OF ZOMBIES

The raft 'floats' atop a HUGE GREEN CRASH PAD which is  
surrounded on all sides by LIGHTS, CAMERAS, and ACTION!

Ha ha just kidding not action GREEN-SCREEN PANELS. Also,  
there's an ANIMATRONIC SWORDFISH nearby.

The action on the raft is messy: There's too much going on at  
once, too much choreography. JCVD's having a hard time  
keeping up, mentally and physically. Zombies are bumping  
into each other, falling off the raft at the wrong times...

CHAZ, The film's fight coordinator, bounds onto the crash  
pad. Chaz is in his late 20's, all fast-twitch everything.  
He has an orange belt in Krav Maga.

CHAZ

Van Dammage, how's it going? How you feeling with the sequencing? Too complicated, too fast? I can pull a few zombies...

JCVD

(proud)

Of course not, it's no problem.

(then, trying to cover)

It's just... I'm thinking maybe the choreography isn't quite right for the situation, you know? Like maybe the zombies should attack me one at a time...

Chaz smiles to himself, nods. He knows what this is.

CHAZ

I'm gonna be straight with you. First time I saw 'Kickboxer?' I got a boner. I was five. Never forget it; first one I ever had. So you know I'm feelin' the Van Dammage, right? I am feelin' the Van Dammage. But look. Martial Artist to Martial Artist? That 80's stuff? One guy at a time, jumping, spinning, all that flashy shit? No one wants to see that shit anymore. It's just not realistic.

JCVD frowns.

ON LUIS sitting at a picnic table nearby, watching as a downtrodden JCVD returns to the raft. Vanessa joins.

VANESSA

How's he looking out there?

LUIS

Not great.

Vanessa watches as JCVD continues to struggle with the close-quarters choreography. She exhales deeply -- it pains her to see him performing below his potential. Luis notices.

LUIS (CONT'D)

What's the story? With you two?

The two watch JCVD for another long moment, before:

VANESSA

We were a team. For years and years. I did hair and recon, he... did what he does. And eventually, like an idiot, I fell in love with him. And I told him.

(this next part hurts)

He said he didn't want to jeopardize the team dynamic. But I couldn't keep working with him after that -- it hurt too much. So I quit. Couple months later, when he finally realized he wasn't going to find someone else as good as me, he retired.

LUIS

And now he's back...

Vanessa nods, eyes still locked on JCVD.

VANESSA

... claiming to have loved me all along.

(then, changing the subject)

What's your story?

LUIS

It's too long. I'll tell you next week.

(then)

How did things look at the steel factory?

Vanessa exhales deeply.

VANESSA

Not great.

EXT. 'HUCK' SET - JCVD'S TRAILER - DAY

JCVD sits in a director's chair with title **HUCK** stenciled across the back. He's eating lunch -- three granola bars and a pile of red vines on a paper plate. He looks depressed as fuck. Vanessa approaches.

VANESSA

We have a problem.

JCVD

It will be fine; I just need to limber up a bit more --

VANESSA

Not you, the steel factory.  
They're emptying it out as we  
speak, moving the entire operation.  
Almost like they got tipped off...

JCVD

(seething)

Schwimmer.

(then)

How long do we have?

VANESSA

It'll be gone by tonight.

JCVD

I don't wrap until after midnight.

VANESSA

You're going to have to find a way  
to change the schedule.

JCVD nods, focused. A approaches.

A

JC! I just wanted to introduce you  
to one of your co-stars.

A waves VICTOR (30's) forward. Victor is painfully handsome,  
staggeringly enormous, and awesomely black.

A (CONT'D)

Victor's playing N-Word Jim.

VICTOR

Huge fan, Mr. Van Damme. Really  
excited to work with you.

JCVD

You can call me JC.

VICTOR

Awesome. JC.

A

OK, well. I'll let you finish up  
lunch. Just wanted to make sure  
you two had met...

JCVD

(lightbulb)

Actually, A, if you have a minute?

A lingers. Victor peels off.

JCVD (CONT'D)

It's actually, uh... the character he's playing. I feel a little uncomfortable with it.

A

N-Word Jim? What about the character makes you uncomfortable?

JCVD

His name.

A

Jim?

JCVD

No, the other part.

A

Oh, well... obviously we couldn't call him *N-Word Jim*.

JCVD

No, I know, but... I'm not sure that changing *N-Word Jim* to *N-Word Jim* is the answer.

A

What else could we change it to?

JCVD

Jim?

A

But then you're undermining his entire experience as a black man in pre-Civil War America.

JCVD

I'm just saying... maybe we need to take half a day to work on the script. Just really make sure everything is working, you know. I also have concerns about the nuclear bomb.

A

I know what you're thinking. But it's a steampunk nuclear bomb. You know, with gears and shit. It's period-appropriate, I promise.

JCVD deflates. This is fucking hopeless. These people are crazier than the drug dealers he's tracking.

A (CONT'D)

Look, I understand your concerns.  
I do. But I'm asking you to please  
trust in the process right now.  
Will you do that for me?

JCVD

(defeated)

Yes. OK.

A

Great. Because the process paid  
John Landis' idiot kid two million  
dollars to write this script, and  
now we don't have another penny to  
spend. But hey. Roll with the  
punches, right?

JCVD's eyes go wide, an epiphany playing out...

JCVD

Right. Roll with the punches.

EXT. 'HUCK' SET - RIVER SETUP - AFTERNOON

They're now shooting the raft fight. A directs from a crane.  
All eyes, of course, are on the center of the raft...

... where JCVD, despite earlier concerns, IS GETTING IT DONE.  
He's still a step slow, a tad stiff... but he's hitting the  
marks, making it work. It doesn't look great -- it's still  
Huck Finn fighting a bunch of zombies (worth mentioning: the  
zombies are all doing *jeet kune do*) -- but it doesn't look  
terrible either. Relatively speaking.

ON LUIS AND VANESSA

Watching from afar. They share a look: *not bad*.

ON JCVD

The action coming at him fast and furious. The zombies are  
helping, though, telegraphing their moves, overselling his.  
It's a dance, and they're leading. Making sure JCVD DODGES  
one zombie, TRIPS another. KICKS a third off the raft, which  
clears the way for...

THE BIG ZOMBIE. The only one left on the raft with him. The  
Big Zombie rears back wildly -- *here comes my big punch* --

CLOSE ON JCVD

Exhaling deeply -- *here comes his big punch*. CRACK!

MOMENTS LATER

Luis and JCVD walk back toward Vanessa, who waits beside the trailer. JCVD ices his eye. All three share a SLY GRIN.

A (BACKGROUND)

OK everyone, JCVD's wrapped for the day, but let's make use of the light, get some pickups together...

KRISZTINA (O.S.)

Jean-Claude?

Jean-Claude turns toward a STUNNING, RAVEN-HAIRED BEAUTY. KRISZTINA. Holy shit, this woman.

KRISZTINA (CONT'D)

(heavy Eastern European accent)

I'm sorry, I know this is bad time. You are OK, I hope? I just want to say hi. I play your love interest.

JCVD raises his one good eyebrow.

JCVD

Huckleberry Finn had a love interest?

KRISZTINA

Tom Sawyer. Tomasina.

JCVD SMILES WIDE. VANESSA FROWNS.

INT. JCVD'S TRAILER - AFTERNOON

Vanessa and Luis work frantically on JCVD's face and hair, enshrouding him in some sort of PROFESSIONAL-LEVEL DISGUISE. There's a SMALL ELECTRICAL DEVICE atop the vanity table.

VANESSA

All you need to do is get one of those on one of the shipments. Wherever it goes... that's our new target.

JCVD

Seems like a waste. To get so close... only to toss a bug on a truck and run away? I have an entire night free now, I should --

VANESSA

Take me to dinner?

Confused, JCVD looks to the mirror. Finds Vanessa smiling back at him.

VANESSA (CONT'D)  
For old time's sake?

EXT. BULGARIAN HIGHWAY - NIGHT

WIDE SHOT. A stranded motorcyclist squats beside his bike, working on a repair, until...

An 18-WHEELER wipes across the screen, "KSL Steel" emblazoned across its massive trailer. When, moments later, it exits screen, the cyclist is GONE.

JCVD (PRE-LAP)  
Flea is on the dog.

INT. VANESSA'S HOTEL SUITE - LIVING AREA - NIGHT

Vanessa sits on her couch wearing only a SILK BATHROBE and a nearly invisible IN-EAR BONE CONDUCTION HEADSET. She has several laptops up and running on the coffee table before her, one of which is running GPS TRACKING SOFTWARE.

VANESSA  
I have you. You're about four minutes out from the factory.

EXT. 18-WHEELER - NIGHT

Under the 18-Wheeler, JCVD -- also wearing a bone conduction headset -- CLINGS TO THE UNDERBELLY OF THE TRUCK.

JCVD  
What are you wearing to dinner?

INT. VANESSA'S HOTEL SUITE - LIVING AREA - NIGHT

VANESSA  
Come back in one piece and you'll find out.

EXT. BULGARIAN HIGHWAY - NIGHT - ESTABLISHING

Wide. The 18-wheeler tears down the empty highway, the sprawl of the steel factory now looming in the distance.

EXT. STEEL FACTORY - NIGHT

Clear of the Security Checkpoint, the 18-Wheeler rumbles toward the Factory, unknowingly depositing a BARREL-ROLLING JCVD along the way.

JCVD stands and brushes himself off, revealing for the first time his disguise: He looks like Jean Claude Van Damme with a patchy beard and Hulk Hogan hair. Utterly ridiculous.

He glances around, spots a factory worker in a KSL JUMPSUIT taking a smoke break...

EXT. STEEL FACTORY - LOADING DOCKS - NIGHT

JCVD zips up his newly acquired KSL JUMPSUIT as he sneaks around a corner, takes in the scene at the loading dock: HUNDREDS OF WORKERS hurriedly load DOZENS OF 18-WHEELERS with what looks like HEAVY MACHINERY. No Mimosa in sight.

JCVD spins back around the corner, back to the wall.

JCVD  
They're loading machine parts. I  
don't see any sign of --

A worker walks RIGHT PAST JCVD.

KSL WORKER 1  
Hey Filip.

Beat. JCVD stays rooted in place, completely frozen.

INT. STEEL FACTORY - NIGHT

JCVD sneaks around inside the massive facility. Despite his disguise, he takes every precaution to avoid detecti --

KSL WORKER 2  
Filip, how's it going?

JCVD -- currently squatting behind a palette of machine parts -- looks up at the WORKER standing over him. After a beat:

JCVD  
Good.

KSL WORKER 2  
Good, good. Well. Don't want to  
keep you.

The Worker moves off. JCVD stands, mind racing.

MOMENTS LATER

JCVD strolls down a wide hallway, completely exposed to the DOZENS OF BUSY KSL WORKERS HURRYING PAST. They all smile or nod at him as they rush by, many offering terse salutations (to Filip) as they go. JCVD nods back at all of them, dumbfounded.

JCVD  
 (quiet)  
 What is this? What's happening?

INT. VANESSA'S SUITE - LIVING AREA - NIGHT

Vanessa is monitoring JCVD's progress via the GPS tracker and her in-ear audio. As she pulls up DIGITAL BLUEPRINTS of the KSL Steel facility:

VANESSA  
 Whatever it is, roll with it. It's working.  
 (then, off blueprints)  
 OK you're coming up on the largest storeroom in the facility; if this building is really the source of Mimosa, that's gotta be where it's coming from.

INT. STEEL FACTORY - HALLWAY - NIGHT

JCVD nods, turns down a tributary hallway, and heads for a set of heavy double doors. A SINGLE KSL WORKER guards the doors, his back turned.

JCVD  
 Hey, it's just me...

The Guard turns, revealing himself to be...

JCVD (CONT'D)  
 ... Filip.

Yup, it's him. FILIP. The KSL worker that JCVD has accidentally disguised himself as. And it's not just a passing resemblance, either -- JCVD looks exactly like this dude (Because JCVD is playing Filip, obviously).

FILIP  
 Who are you?

Scrambling:

JCVD  
 I'm... you.  
 (then)  
 From the future.  
 (then)  
 I'm here to warn you: Something bad is going to happen at this factory. You should leave.

INT. VANESSA'S SUITE - LIVING AREA - NIGHT

Vanessa collapses forward, exasperated.

INT. STEEL FACTORY - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Filip eyeballs JCVD suspiciously.

FILIP

You're me. From the future.

JCVD reaches out, GRASPS Filip by the shoulder. A sign not of aggression... but SOLIDARITY.

JCVD

Trust me. I'm you. Me. Us.  
(then, confident)  
We're we.

Filip considers for a moment... then eyeballs JCVD's hand.

FILIP

You're not me from the future.

JCVD

What?

FILIP

Like matter cannot occupy like space. 'TimeCop.'

Beat.

JCVD

'TimeCop'... the Jean-Claude Van Damme film? One hundred and one million dollars worldwide gross?

FILIP

Have you seen it?

JCVD

Have you?

FILIP

Yes.

JCVD

Then obviously... so have I.

FILIP

So you know the rule.

As the conversation continues, Filip ever-so-slightly eases his free hand around his own back, grasping for a WALKIE-TALKIE hidden from JCVD's view.

JCVD

In 'Looper' Bruce Willis and Joseph Gordon-Levitt touch. Many times.

FILIP

Do you think 'Looper' is better than 'Timecop?'

JCVD swallows hard. It takes much longer than it should to finally respond:

JCVD

Yes.

FILIP

False! I think 'TimeCop' is way better than 'Looper!'

Filip's almost got his walkie-talkie in hand...

JCVD

You do now. But you will come to realize... *in the future...* that 'Looper' is the superior film.  
(pained)  
It has so much more... *gravitas*.

Filip TENSES.

FILIP

I don't know that word.  
(then, re: JCVD's hand)  
And I'm left-handed.

As the words escape Filip's mouth, his free hand finally GRABS HOLD OF THE WALKIE-TALKIE. JCVD FEELS THE SHIFT IN BODY WEIGHT, SPINS FILIP, and, in one fluid motion, SNAGS THE WALKIE TALKIE WITH ONE ARM and WRAPS THE OTHER ONE TIGHTLY AROUND FILIP'S THROAT. As Filip's eyes begin to flutter, JCVD leans into his ear, whispers:

JCVD

You have excellent taste in films.

And then... ZZZZZZZZZZ. Filip's asleep. JCVD acts quickly: He CRACKS THE DOUBLE DOOR, makes sure no one is inside the storeroom. Once he knows the coast is clear, he drags Filip's unconscious body

INTO THE STOREROOM

Where he buries the man's form under a pile of wooden palettes in the corner... before turning his attention to the LARGE, MINIVAN-SIZED CASE OF MIMOSA in the center of the room. JCVD unzips his jumpsuit slightly, revealing a TACTICAL VEST brimming with high-end equipment, and withdraws a GPS tracker. As he affixes it to the bottom of the case:

JCVD (CONT'D)  
Tracker should be live.

INT. VANESSA'S SUITE - LIVING AREA - NIGHT

VANESSA  
(off laptops)  
Good to go. Now get the hell out of there.

INT. STEEL FACTORY - STOREROOM - NIGHT

JCVD nods, heads for the exit...

EXT. STEEL FACTORY - NIGHT

An 18-WHEELER rumbles away from the factory, once again deposits a BARREL-ROLLING JCVD along the side of the darkened road. JCVD (still in costume) stands, smiles.

JCVD  
Now will you tell me what you're wearing to dinner?

INT. VANESSA'S SUITE - LIVING AREA - NIGHT

Vanessa sees on her GPS map that JCVD is clear of the facility. She starts shutting down her laptops...

VANESSA  
And spoil the surprise?

Vanessa stands, shrugs off her robe. She's NAKED underneath. Shoot this classy, though, you pervert.

VANESSA (CONT'D)  
I'll meet you in the hotel restaurant in thirty.

And with that, Vanessa WITHDRAWS HER IN-EAR MIC, DROPS IT TO THE TABLE, and heads for the shower.

EXT. STEEL FACTORY - NIGHT

JCVD smiles to himself, starts into a SLOW JOG back toward the highway... when Filip's walkie-talkie, still clipped to JCVD's belt, begins chirping:

WALKIE VOICE ONE

What should we do with the guy from  
'Friends?'

JCVD STOPS DEAD, listens with dread as the response comes:

WALKIE VOICE TWO

Take a selfie with him... then kill  
him.

Off JCVD...

INT. VANESSA'S SUITE - LIVING AREA - NIGHT

The discarded in-ear mic CHIRPS on the coffee table as, in the BG, Vanessa's naked form steams up the shower.

JCVD (V.O.)

(in mic)

Vanessa. If you can still hear me.  
They have Schwimmer. I have to go  
back. I'm sorry. I know you  
understand.

EXT. STEEL FACTORY - NIGHT

JCVD races back toward the factory. He doesn't even bother trying to obscure himself as he runs right through the open guard gate...

INT. STEEL FACTORY - NIGHT

JCVD EXPLODES into the factory's main storeroom... to find himself face-to-face with SEVERAL DOZEN KSL WORKERS. Which wouldn't be a problem... if FILIP WASN'T AMONG THEM. Filip points at JCVD (who still looks just like him):

FILIP

That's him! That's the guy  
impersonating me!

JCVD considers for a moment... THEN POINTS BACK.

JCVD

No! That's the guy impersonating  
me! Filip!

One of the workers withdraws a PISTOL from his coveralls. He looks back and forth between the two Filips, confused.

FILIP

He's the impostor! Shoot him!

JCVD  
He's the impostor! Shoot him!

ANDREI  
 Maybe just shoot them both.

Filip turns toward one of his co-workers (ANDREI), wounded.

FILIP  
 Andrei! I was your --

BLAM! Filip stares down at the GAPING HOLE in his chest -- the Gunman shot him in the back. As he crumples to the floor, life seeping out of him:

FILIP (CONT'D)  
 ... best... man.

Beat.

ANDREI  
 Shit.

JCVD  
 Shit.

JCVD BOLTS FOR THE NEAREST DOOR.

INT. STEEL FACTORY - HALLWAY - A SHORT TIME LATER

JCVD hurries down a dim hallway, chest heaving. He seems to have shaken his pursuers -- their voices echo somewhere in the distance -- and so, finally given a moment to breathe, he DITCHES HIS DISGUISE, casually turns down another hallway...

... to find a single PIPE-WIELDING THUG RACING TOWARD HIM.

TIME SLOWS. The attacker rushes forward...

INT. VANESSA'S SUITE - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Vanessa pulls a slinky fishnet up her endless leg...

INT. STEEL FACTORY - HALLWAY - NIGHT

The attacker begins his deadly swing...

INT. VANESSA'S SUITE - LIVING AREA - NIGHT

Vanessa drapes a pearl necklace around her lithe neck...

INT. STEEL FACTORY - HALLWAY - NIGHT

JCVD begins his descent into the splits...

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - NIGHT

Vanessa struts across the open lobby, a vision in a black cocktail dress...

INT. STEEL FACTORY - HALLWAY - NIGHT

JCVD's legs fail him. He looks at his faulty appendages, crestfallen... then looks up at the steel pipe.

RESUME NORMAL SPEED.

The Steel pipe CRACKS JCVD IN THE FACE.

CUT TO:

TOP-DOWN ANGLE ON JCVD

Lying on the ground, staring up at us. Blood gushing from his nose and lip.

JCVD's POV:

His vision blurry. Senses dulled. His attacker steps into frame, leans forward over us... and MORPHS, BEFORE OUR VERY EYES, INTO VANESSA. Wearing her slinky black dress.

VANESSA

(distant, echoed)

JC. I believe in you. Even if you don't. I'm waiting. Like I always have been.

TOP-DOWN ANGLE ON JCVD

JCVD (V.O.)

My gift... is not my splits.

JCVD'S POV

Vanessa leans close, lovingly strokes JCVD's bruised face.

JCVD (V.O.)

My gift is her. It always has been. And she would never abandon me... so I will not abandon her.

BACK ON SCENE

JCVD's assailant squats above him, PUNCHING HIM IN THE FACE. This is apparently the motion that JCVD was hallucinating as Vanessa's tender face-stroking.

JCVD reaches up, strokes dude's face right back. Confusing his attacker... just long enough to HEADBUTT MOTHERFUCKER'S NOSE RIGHT OFF HIS GODDAMN FACE! JCVD KIPS UP, seals the deal with a ROUNDHOUSE KICK TO THE HEAD, and then takes a single deep breath. A new fire burning.

FOOTFALLS FILL THE HALLS. Dozens of adversaries surrounding JCVD from every angle.

ANDREI

Jean-Claude Van Damme!?

JCVD

No. Jean-Claude Van...  
(serious as cancer)  
... JOHNSON.

And then: *PIANO FROM ON HIGH:*

"Home Sweet Home," by Mötley Crüe.

This is the music that will play as the first surge comes; several dozen men crashing down on JCVD simultaneousl--

ANDREI

No, no! One at a time! You'll run into each other otherwise! It will be very confusing!

A BEAT as the men pause -- along with our soundtrack -- and then the attack resumes, ONE AT A TIME NOW, and with it our music, which carries over the melee and into...

INT. HOTEL RESTAURANT - NIGHT

... where Vanessa sits, resplendent in her dinner dress... but alone. She checks her watch...

VINCE NEIL (V.O.)

*You know I'm a dreamer/  
But my heart's of gold...*

INT. STEEL FACTORY - HALLWAY - NIGHT

JCVD BEATS THE EVER-LIVING SHIT OUT OF THE ENTIRE KSL CREW. SPINNING, JUMPING... WHATEVER IT TAKES. Fuck your rolled up magazine, Jason Bourne.

VINCE NEIL (V.O.)

*I'm on my way/  
I'm on my way/  
Home sweet home...*

And still they keep coming...

INT. HOTEL RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Vanessa's wine glass is empty. So is most of the restaurant.

VINCE NEIL (V.O.)  
*Just take this song, and you'll  
 never feel/ Left all alone...*

INT. STEEL FACTORY - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Complete and total Van Dammage as far as the eye can see.

VINCE NEIL (V.O.)  
*I'm on my way/  
 I'm on my way/  
 Home sweet home/  
 Tonight, tonight!*

INT. HOTEL RESTAURANT - NIGHT

The wait staff clears the restaurant. Vanessa's only company now is her BROKEN HEART.

VINCE NEIL (V.O.)  
*You know that I've seen/  
 Too many romantic dreams/  
 Up in lights, fallin' off/  
 The silver screen...*

INT. STEEL FACTORY - HALLWAY - NIGHT

The final remaining baddie (Andrei) rushes at JCVD. Like the first thug, he has a STEEL PIPE in his hands, which he swings directly At JCVD's face...

VINCE NEIL (V.O.)  
*I'm on my way/  
 Just set me free...*

JCVD DROPS INTO THE PERFECT SPLITS.

VINCE NEIL (V.O.)  
*Home sweet home.*

... AND PUNCHES ANDREI IN THE DICK. Andrei collapses, unconscious. JCVD -- Johnson, now, truly -- stands, and, as Tommy Lee plays us out, VANISHES INTO THE FACTORY.

INT. HOTEL RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Vanessa sits alone at the table, despondent. The rest of the facility is ENTIRELY SHUT DOWN. A SHADOW falls over her.

VICTOR (O.C.)  
It's Vanessa, right?

Vanessa looks up at VICTOR, JCVD's co-star...

INT. STEEL FACTORY - NIGHT

JCVD half-runs through the factory, unsure of how to find Schwimmer. He checks several random doors, his heart sinking with every failed attempt.

Eventually, his shoulders sag; his head hangs. The factory is too large; Schwimmer too small. He's a needle in a haystack. Unless...

JCVD closes his eyes. Takes a deep breath. AND THEN, LIKE AN ANGEL, HE SINGS:

JCVD  
*I'll be there for you.*

Silence. And then, from the distant bowels of the factory:

SCHWIMMER (V.O.)  
*When the rain starts to pour.*

MOMENTS LATER

JCVD hurries through another portion of the factory.

JCVD  
*I'll be there for you.*

Closer now:

SCHWIMMER (V.O.)  
*Like I've been there before.*

MOMENTS LATER

JCVD THROWS OPEN A HEAVY STEEL DOOR...

JCVD  
*I'll be there for you.*

... to reveal DAVID SCHWIMMER, BADLY BEATEN AND TIED TO A CHAIR. He looks JCVD directly in the eyes.

SCHWIMMER  
(soft)  
*'Cuz you're there for me too.*

JCVD  
 (realizing now)  
 You didn't tip them off... you  
 tried to beat me to the punch. And  
 got caught.

SCHWIMMER  
 Congratulations on your fancy World  
 War Two toilet wine, Jean-Claude.  
 I guess it really is the best after  
 all.

JCVD shakes his head, starts loosing Schwimmer's bonds.

SCHWIMMER (CONT'D)  
 Jean-Claude.

Schwimmer sticks his tongue out, revealing a MICROCHIP. As  
 JCVD (somewhat reluctantly) retrieves it...

SCHWIMMER (CONT'D)  
 I found it in one of the empty  
 storerooms.

JCVD  
 (stunned)  
 A microchip...

SCHWIMMER  
 We both know there's only one thing  
 a microchip can be used for...

JCVD  
Missile Guidance Systems.

SCHWIMMER (CONT'D)  
Missile Guidance Systems.

SCHWIMMER (CONT'D)  
 (grave)  
 It's not about the drugs.  
 Whoever's behind this is using the  
 Mimosa to fund something bigger.  
 (ominous beat)  
 Much, much bigger.

JCVD nods: Understood. As he finishes freeing Schwimmer:

SCHWIMMER (CONT'D)  
 Were you made?  
 (off JCVD)  
 Me too. You know the rule, Jean-  
 Claude: This can't get traced back  
 to either of us -- if it does, the  
 whole thing comes crashing down...

JCVD  
Nothing is coming crashing down...

JCVD steps back and unzips his jumpsuit... revealing SEVERAL ENORMOUS BRICKS OF C-4 clipped to his tactical vest.

JCVD (CONT'D)  
(WAY dramatic)  
... except for this factory.

EXT. FACTORY - NIGHT

JCVD SPRINTS AWAY FROM THE FACTORY, a lame Schwimmer clinging to his back. THE ENTIRE FACILITY EXPLODES IN A FOUR HUNDRED FOOT BALL OF FLAME BEHIND THEM. Neither looks back.

(at the green screen)

EXT. BULGARIAN HIGHWAY - NIGHT

JCVD straddles the motorcycle he left hidden at the side of the highway. Turns to Schwimmer, who sits in the bushes nearby with a sour look on his face.

JCVD  
I haven't seen the last of you,  
have I?

Schwimmer shakes his head.

SCHWIMMER  
I was on the number one sitcom on  
television for ten straight years;  
I just don't know how to be number  
two. I'll go home, lick my wounds.  
But I'll be back.

JCVD nods to himself. He expected as much.

JCVD  
Then I guess I'll see you around...  
Brown.

SCHWIMMER  
Kill you later... Johnson.

JCVD nods, revs up, and VANISHES INTO THE NIGHT.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - NIGHT

JCVD speed-walks across the hotel lobby, finds the restaurant doors locked. Shut down for the night. Shit.

INT. LUXURY HOTEL - HALLWAY - NIGHT

JCVD leans against Vanessa's door, knocking softly. Head lolled against the door.

JCVD  
Vanessa. Please. I can explain.

The door OPENS, prompting JCVD to JUMP TO ATTENTION. But it's not Vanessa who's opened the door. It's Victor.

VICTOR  
JC, hey man. Look... Vanessa wanted me to tell you... it's, um. Not a good time.  
(then, meek)  
Sorry.

JCVD nods, devastated, and heads down the hallway.

INT. VANESSA'S SUITE - LIVING AREA - NIGHT

Victor closes the door, turns back to Vanessa... who's sitting on the couch, still fully dressed. Tears rolling down her face.

INT. JCVD'S SUITE - LIVING AREA - NIGHT

JCVD enters his suite, pours himself a tumbler of toilet wine. Crashes onto the couch, pulls Schwimmer's microchip from his pocket. And just STARES AT IT.

... for so long, in fact, that we start to get the feeling that it's not just the microchip that he's staring into... *but his own soul.*

He digs his phone out of his pocket, dials. After a moment:

JCVD  
(into phone)  
Jane.

JANE (V.O.)  
(phone)  
Oh no, Honey. You don't sound good. Is it the job? Or Vanessa?

JCVD exhales deeply.

JCVD  
(into phone)  
Yes.  
(then)  
The assignment is a smokescreen.  
(MORE)

JCVD (CONT'D)

(and?)

The movie is a piece of shit.

(and?)

David Schwimmer is intent on  
killing me.

(and?)

JCVD hangs his head. And... ?

JCVD (CONT'D)

And the woman I love is fucking N-  
Word Jim.

When JCVD looks up again, it's DIRECTLY INTO THE CAMERA.

JCVD (CONT'D)

I should never have come back.

**END OF PILOT**