

RAW MASCULINITY

Written by

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Logline: When a Death Valley drag race ends in a deadly crash, the three survivors must navigate a tense love triangle and their way back home in the unforgiving desert.

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BLACK SCREEN

SYDNEY (V.O.)
"The harsh desert road..."

FADE IN:

INT. SYDNEY'S CAR - DAY

TIGHT on SYDNEY'S EYES -- wild, euphoric. Hard rap music BLARES. Her head THUMPS against the headrest.

SYDNEY
WHOOOOO!

A trembling speedometer. Wind rips through open windows. Two red cars RACE down the empty road -- dangerous speeds.

SYDNEY (V.O.)
*"The freedom that comes with
it...like a high."*

We NEVER see the full car move. Only pieces. Only impact. Only sound.

The cars get faster. Giggles leak from both vehicles. Until --
SKREEE! Laughter becomes SCREAMING.

CRASH! Sydney's smile fades.

SYDNEY (V.O.)
*"And from that high comes a violent
fucking crash."*

WHITE FLASH.

EXT. DEATH VALLEY - DESERT OFF-ROAD - DAY

Exiting the driver's seat: SYDNEY (20), blonde-haired, blue-eyed, dumb white bitch. Cheerleader, obnoxious, mean-girl type.

Exiting the passenger's seat: Sydney's boyfriend, MATEO (20), a self-proclaimed "nice guy," engineering student in the robotics club, a little overweight, and not the best-looking.

Exiting from the back: VIN (22), a douchebag college football player and the epitome of cool. Ripped. Tatted up to his neck. Currently has his shirt off.

Left behind in the back: a LARGE COSTCO TEDDY BEAR -- Ted.

VIN
 (horrified)
 Are you fucking kidding me?

The three slowly approach the others' car -- panicked, shaken. It lies wrecked, upside-down, engine procuring steam.

MATEO
 Babe, I-I said we should've slowed down!

SYDNEY
 (voice-cracking)
 Mateo -- not now!

Mateo winces. Sydney cautiously approaches the car, then kneels by it. All three of their friends lie upside-down -- all bleeding, none breathing.

VIN
 FUUUCCCCCK!

Mateo collapses. Breaks down, traumatized, sobbing his eyes out. Sydney hyperventilates.

SYDNEY
 Vin? W-w-what should we do??? Call for help...?!

VIN
 I DON'T KNOW. WHAT THE FUCKK!!!!!!

Vin nearly rips his hair out. Sydney whips out her phone.

SYDNEY
 (frantic)
 No fucking service, of course there's no fucking service!

VIN
 Jesus!
 (composing himself)
 OK, ok, Syd... Let's think through this.

Vin sensually comforts Sydney's shoulders from behind. Mateo, still crying, notices his gesture. Glares.

INT. SYDNEY'S CAR - LATER

Sydney drives down the road, still shaken.

SYDNEY (V.O.)

The boys and I decided to keep going until we reached town for help. There was no use staying.

Mateo, next to her, stares at her with a reassuring look.

SYDNEY (V.O.)

But the farther we drove from our dead friends, the heavier the guilt became.

Sydney double-takes at Mateo.

SYDNEY

What?

MATEO

Nothing, just, it'll be okay. We'll get some help and --

SYDNEY

Can you shut up? Crying like you knew them as much as we do.

Vin looks away awkwardly.

MATEO

Babe, I--I told you to slow down so none of us would get hurt, but you don't take anything I say seriously.

Sydney's mouth drops like a queen whose servant just talked back to her.

SYDNEY

Take you seriously? Hmm, well, maybe I'd take you more seriously if you took *yourself* more seriously...

Sydney's eyes pierce through Mateo's paunch.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

...Instead of just eating whatever you feel like and doing whatever you feel like as if it doesn't affect *me* too.

VIN

Woah-hoah now...

Sydney stops the car. She reaches for a tissue and storms out.

VIN (CONT'D)

Yo? Sydney? Where're you going?

Sydney continues walking away from the car.

VIN (CONT'D)

(to Mateo)

Where's she...?

MATEO

I'm gonna go talk to her.

EXT. DEATH VALLEY - DESERT OFF-ROAD - CONTINUOUS

Mateo exits the car and approaches Sydney, who is half-naked and squatting near a shrub.

SYDNEY

God -- Mateo -- what? I'm *peeing*.
Can I *pee*? Can't I have some *peace*?

MATEO

What was THAT about?

SYDNEY

(peeing)
Just saying how it is.

MATEO

What? How come you've never talked to me about it? Why here and now, and with Vin there?

SYDNEY

Why? Who cares if he hears.

MATEO

Me. I do. It's embarrassing. And I don't like when you're mean to me around him.

SYDNEY

What, you think he's your competition don't you? You are so fucking *jealous* of him.

MATEO

Babe...It's *our anniversary*. Why would you bring him and his friends?

SYDNEY

He's wanted to go to Death Valley
for forever, was I supposed to say
"no" when I said I was going?

MATEO

...Yeah. Precisely, actually. I
mean--c'mon! Our five year!

VIN (O.S.)

GUYS!!!

Sydney and Mateo look over to see Vin running and jumping
around incessantly. They look up -- A HELICOPTER flies
distantly overhead. They join Vin in trying to wave it down.

VIN (CONT'D)

HEY!!! HEY!!!

Unfruitful. Everyone stops jumping as its buzzing fades away.

VIN (CONT'D)

God DAMN it.

Vin reaches into the car and THROWS Ted in the air at the
direction of the helicopter.

VIN (CONT'D)

FUCK YOU!

With a determined and crazed look, Sydney races to the car.

VIN (CONT'D)

Bae--mm--Syd?

Mateo jolts his head. "Bae--"?

SYDNEY

I'm catching that bitch!

She bolts into the driver's seat and speeds off down the
road, leaving Vin and Mateo. The boys stand in silence.

VIN

What's wrong with her?

Mateo exhales. They start walking down the road together. Vin
picks up Ted, looking at it.

VIN (CONT'D)

At this point I'm just gonna eat
it.

Mateo smiles at Vin. Then frowns.

MATEO

I think this is the first time he's
been out of the car since I gave
him to her.

Vin looks at Mateo softly, somewhat pitifully.

VIN

And she's just wasting gas.

EXT. DEATH VALLEY - DESERT OFF-ROAD - THAT NIGHT

Sydney's car is stopped on the road. Vin and Mateo hang out
at the trunk. Sydney stands on the ground, gazing into the
desert void.

SYDNEY (V.O)

*Our friends. Dead. The desert.
Hopeless. This had to be rock
bottom.*

A raw, feral meltdown ensues, Sydney's screams echoing across
the dunes. The boys hold a thick silence. Then --

MATEO

Why'd you even have to come, dude?
This was our five-year anniversary.

VIN

(shrugs)
She didn't say it was a date.

Mateo laughs wryly. Deranged. Then turns.

MATEO

Okay, y'know what! I know there's
something going on with you two!
I'm done pretending I'm just
"paranoid," "insecure," or whatever
the *fuck* she wants to call me.

Vin finally looks at Mateo, shocked -- almost impressed.

VIN

Fine. You want the truth...I *fucked*
her.

Mateo turns stone. Sydney's distant sobs echo.

VIN (CONT'D)

I fucked the fucking shit outta
her.

(taunting)

(MORE)

VIN (CONT'D)

That pussy was so good -- mhm -- I
fucked her so hard she fucking
creamed all over my shit --

WHAM!

Mateo punches THE FUCK out of Vin, square in the jaw. Blood splatters from Vin's lip as he stumbles back. Vin stares in awe. He smirks. Silence. Tension. Then --

Vin GRABS Mateo's face and KISSES him. Hard. He pulls back. Mateo freezes. Wide-eyed. Then... he violently KISSES HIM BACK. They tumble off the trunk -- grappling, rolling, ripping at each other, a tornado of confused rage, sexual awakening, and masculinity. *Mateo on top.*

Sydney stops screaming. Catches her breath. Frenzied. She heads back to the car, then HEARS the noises.

SYDNEY

Hello??

She makes her way to the back... And FREEZES.

SYDNEY (V.O.)

*But the rock got more bottom. And
so did Vin.*

The two guys are having aggressive sex on the bumper.

Sydney lets out her most thunderous SCREECH yet.

SYDNEY

WHAT.THE.ACTUAL.FUCK??!

The guys scramble apart. *But not before Mateo finishes.* Vin buckles his pants up.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

Y-y-y-you FUCKED VIN?!?

MATEO

YOU FUCKED HIM FIRST! And HE was
able to tell me. What other shit
have you hidden all this time? This
whole relationship you've been
WALKING OVER ME.

Sydney gasps like she's the victim of a hate crime.

MATEO (CONT'D)

And EVERYONE kept saying you were
out of my league!

(MORE)

MATEO (CONT'D)

So you just HAD to prove you could
do better. Well lookie here -- I
CAN TOO.

SYDNEY

WELL SORRY FOR *TRYING* TO MAKE IT
WORK DESPITE YOU BEING UGLY!

Vin shoves past them as they argue. Gets in the driver's seat
and pulls the car around.

VIN

Mateo. GET IN.

Mateo races into the passenger seat. It begins speeding off.
Sydney's face crumples as she realizes.

SYDNEY

OH NO! YOU ARE NOT LEAVING ME OUT
HERE!

The car accelerates. Sydney *SPRINTS* alongside the car and
LATCHES through an open window.

Mateo grabs Ted, *BANGING* him across Sydney's head. Sydney
grips onto Ted, tugging for his custody with Mateo, feet
scrapping in gravel.

MATEO

FIND YOUR OWN WAY BACK.

Mateo *LETS GO* of Ted. Sydney *SLAMS* onto the asphalt with Ted.

The car speeds into darkness.

Sydney lies twisted, bleeding, arm bent at a harrowing angle.
Ted is torn, stuffing leaking like guts.

EXT. DEATH VALLEY - DESERT ROAD - DAWN

Sydney drags Ted along the road. Her skin sunburned, cracked,
bleeding. Her breathing is shallow.

SYDNEY (V.O.)

(delusional)

*And here I am. Left with this bear.
This horrid reminder.*

(weak laugh)

All that I loved is gone.

She collapses. Ted flops beside her. We close on it.

FADE TO BLACK.