

FESTIVAL

written by

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INT. SCHOOL. HALLWAY - AFTERNOON

There's a poster pinned up on a large bulletin board. It reads:

"THE GREAT MEDIA ARTS FILM FESTIVAL, PRESENTED BY MR. WILLIAMS"

Other pertinent details (dates, deadlines, prizes, etc.) appear in much smaller print underneath the main heading.

The poster is very gaudy-- too colourful, too many graphics, etc. Nevertheless, it appears to have caught the attention of MARTY BATES. He's wearing formal clothing and a large satchel across his chest. Though he seems too young to be a teacher, he's definitely not young enough to be a student. Whoever he is, he seems out of place at this school.

Marty studies the poster top to bottom. As he does, the school bell rings-- it's the end of the day.

Marty walks out as the hallway fills with students.

EXT. SCHOOL. PORTABLE CLASSROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Marty makes his way toward the portable classroom all the way at the corner of the lot.

He spots a TEACHER and STUDENT conversing on the top steps, just in front of the door. From a distance, we hear:

TEACHER

Have a good weekend. Don't party too hard.

STUDENT

No, I've got too much work to do. Thanks to you.

The teacher and student share a laugh together before exchanging polite farewells. They separate. The teacher then returns to his classroom. He leaves the door open.

INT. PORTABLE CLASSROOM - CONTINUOUS

The teacher is MR. WILLIAMS; he's middle-aged, well-groomed, good-looking. Judging from the previous encounter with his student, he seems very charming and charismatic.

Mr. Williams makes his way toward a large stack of papers located on top of his desk. He takes a seat and begins rummaging through.

Mr. Williams becomes very involved in his work very quickly; that is, until a large, foreboding shadow is cast over him. The shadow belongs to Marty-- he's standing in the doorway.

MARTY
Mr. Williams?

MR. WILLIAMS
Yes?

MARTY
Hey. How are you?

Marty steps into the classroom.

MR. WILLIAMS
I'm good, thanks. How're you doing?

MARTY
I'm very well. Thank you, sir.

MR. WILLIAMS
Something I can do for you?

MARTY
I guess you don't remember me?

Mr. Williams stares curiously at Marty; clearly there's no recognition taking place.

MARTY (CONT'D)
It's all right, I wouldn't expect you to. The last time you saw me was Grade 4. I was your student.

MR. WILLIAMS
Back at St. Bergstrom's?

MARTY
St. Bergstrom's. That's right.

MR. WILLIAMS
And now you're at this school?

MARTY
No, I'm not at this school. I'm just a visitor here. See?

Marty holds up the "Visitor" pass hanging around his neck.

MR. WILLIAMS
You came here to visit me?

MARTY

No, I just-- I heard about this Film Festival thing that you're doing, and I just thought that maybe I could ask you about it.

MR. WILLIAMS

Well, if you're interested in volunteering, there's a sign-up sheet at the office--

MARTY

No, no, no-- you misunderstand me. I don't want to volunteer for it; I want to submit my film.

MR. WILLIAMS

You want to submit your film to the Film Festival?

MARTY

Yes, sir.

MR. WILLIAMS

Why?

MARTY

Well, I'm looking for an opportunity to showcase my film.

MR. WILLIAMS

You want to showcase your film?

MARTY

Yes, sir.

MR. WILLIAMS

Listen-- sorry, what did you say your name was? Charlie?

MARTY

No, I didn't mention my name. My name's Marty.

MR. WILLIAMS

I'm gonna be honest with you, Marty; this whole Film Festival thing is just something small that I'm doing for my Media Arts class. It's not really anything special.

MARTY

The winner gets to have his or her film screened for the entire school. That's what the poster says.

Mr. Williams stares vacantly.

MARTY (CONT'D)

And they get a hundred dollars.

MR. WILLIAMS

Yeah. And they also get good grades. Because it's a Film Festival for students. My students.

MARTY

I am a former student, though. I figure that that might qualify me.

MR. WILLIAMS

I'm sorry, but I just don't think it'd be appropriate to have you competing against my Grade 10 students. Especially since there is money involved.

MARTY

Absolutely. I understand how that might be a problem.

MR. WILLIAMS

Yeah, it's just-- you know, some of the kids might be offended by it.

MARTY

How about this? How about, if my film wins, I don't collect the hundred dollars, but I can still say that I won the Festival?

Mr. Williams appears to be growing slightly agitated.

MR. WILLIAMS

You know, Marty, there are probably other local Film Festivals-- ones that aren't part of any school curriculum-- that'd be happy to accept your film.

MARTY

You're saying that you won't accept my film?

MR. WILLIAMS

I can't accept your film, Marty.
I'm sorry.

Marty appears completely disheartened.

MR. WILLIAMS (CONT'D)

But I'll tell you what I can do; I
can let you come in here during
class and we can watch your film.

MARTY

I don't understand. Why would I...
I don't understand.

MR. WILLIAMS

You said you wanted an opportunity
to showcase your film; I can give
you an audience of 26 film
students. You can show your film,
and they can ask you questions--

MARTY

I don't understand.

MR. WILLIAMS

What don't you understand?

MARTY

Why would I want to screen my film
out of competition?

MR. WILLIAMS

Look, I'm just trying to be as
helpful to you as possible.

MARTY

Well, you could start by accepting
my film into the Festival. If you
want to be helpful...

MR. WILLIAMS

Actually, you know what I want,
Marty? I really just want to get
back to marking these papers so
that I can finish up and go home.
And I want you to go home, and I
want the both of us to pretend like
this very awkward conversation
never even took place.

MARTY

How about we pretend like I came here today and, instead of being discouraging, you said "yes" to accepting my film? As a favour.

MR. WILLIAMS

Listen, Marty-- I'll tell you something-- I don't give a shit whether you're a former student of mine or not-- you can't just walk in here and expect me to start pulling favours for you for no reason. It doesn't work that way.

MARTY

You see, now-- now you're using bad language at me. And I don't think that that's appropriate. Do you?

MR. WILLIAMS

I think I'd like for you to leave now, Marty. If you don't mind.

MARTY

Okay. Wait. I'm sorry. I'm sorry if I upset you. I mean, maybe you were a little cranky to begin with, but that's fine. I understand that. And if you just want to be left alone now, that's fine also.

Marty reaches into his satchel and retrieves a DVD.

MARTY (CONT'D)

I'll just put this here for you.
You can watch it at your leisure.

Marty places the DVD onto Mr. Williams' desk.

MR. WILLIAMS

What is that?

MARTY

Well, if we're gonna show my film to the students, you'll probably wanna watch it beforehand to make sure there isn't anything unsavory on there. Like swearing.

MR. WILLIAMS

We're not gonna show your film, Marty. That offer's been revoked.

MARTY

But you just said that you'd let me come in here during class--

MR. WILLIAMS

You were very rude, Marty. And presumptuous. And I'm not gonna stand for that. Sorry.

Mr. Williams grabs the DVD as he rises from his seat.

MARTY

I was rude to you? You're the one that said "shit." You can't say "shit" inside a school.

MR. WILLIAMS

I'd like for you to leave, please.

Mr. Williams starts escorting Marty toward the door.

MARTY

And I don't think the principal would take too kindly to know that a teacher was swearing at one of his former students--

Mr. Williams continues to guide Marty forward while also trying to force him to take back the DVD.

MR. WILLIAMS

All right. Listen, Marty, I need you to take this shit here and get out of my classroom. Seriously.

MARTY

But you-- why won't you just watch it? I don't understand.

Marty holds his palms open, reluctant to take back the DVD. Mr. Williams jams it into the pocket of his satchel instead.

MR. WILLIAMS

I'll see ya, Marty. Take care of yourself.

MARTY

But I don't understand, though. I don't understand how I was rude to you. How was I rude?

Mr. Williams finally gets Marty out of the portable and onto the front steps. He then slams the door in his face.

Marty stares at the door, dumbfounded.

EXT. SCHOOL PARKING LOT - ONE MINUTE LATER

Marty walks shamefully toward his shitbox of a car.

INT. MARTY'S SHITBOX - CONTINUOUS

Marty enters the car. He sits in the driver's seat while placing the satchel in the seat next to him.

His cell phone begins to ring.

Marty retrieves the phone from his pants pocket, takes one look at the caller I.D., then tosses it next to the satchel. (It's revealed to us that "Mom" is calling.)

As the phone continues to ring, Marty's attention is caught by something in the distance...

MARTY'S POV

We see the elderly school JANITOR sweeping up various pieces of trash on the pavement floor.

Marty watches closely, appearing angered by what he sees.

Eventually, Marty jumps out of the car and approaches the backseat where a cardboard box is resting prominently. He retrieves a gun from the box.

It is very startling to see Marty flaunting a gun on school property-- that is, until the word "Props" is revealed to be written on the side of the box.

Back in the front seat, Marty starts fidgeting with the gun while shifting his focus between the Janitor sweeping on his right, and the door to Mr. Williams' portable on his left.

Also, his Mom keeps calling.

INT. MARTY'S SHITBOX - LATER

Marty continues to sit patiently. The amount of parked cars in the parking lot has lessened; the Janitor is no longer anywhere to be seen, and the sky is noticeably darker.

It's dead silent. And then Marty's cell phone rings.

The phone has been ringing ad nauseam. Marty finally decides to answer the phone:

MARTY
 (into phone)
 Hello?

Muffled yelling can be heard on the other end of the phone.

MARTY (CONT'D)
 (into phone)
 Sorry, I was busy.

More muffled yelling.

MARTY (CONT'D)
 (into phone)
 I'm not gonna be home for dinner.
 I'm sorry.

Mom's angered response.

MARTY (CONT'D)
 (into phone)
 I'm sorry, mom. The crew needs me
 to stick around. They need my help.

Marty appears deathly bored by his Mom's ranting; then, suddenly, he perks up...

MARTY'S POV

We see Mr. Williams exit the portable. He's wearing a coat and holding a black leather satchel of his own as he locks the door. He then heads down the steps and toward his car.

Marty shuts off his phone mid-conversation. He appears completely transfixed by Mr. Williams.

MARTY'S POV

We see Mr. Williams enter his car, start up the engine, and drive off the lot.

Marty starts up his own car and follows.

INT. MARTY'S SHITBOX - FIVE MINUTES LATER

Marty continues to cautiously follow Mr. Williams.

EXT. MR. WILLIAMS' HOUSE - FIFTEEN MINUTES LATER

Mr. Williams pulls into the driveway while Marty keeps his shitbox at a distance.

INT. MARTY'S SHITBOX - CONTINUOUS

Marty watches as Mr. Williams exits the car, satchel in hand. He then walks up his driveway and into his beautiful home.

INT. MR. WILLIAMS' HOUSE. FOYER/HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Mr. Williams drops his satchel to the floor, removes his coat and shoes, and proceeds down the hallway.

KITCHEN

Mr. Williams retrieves a note from atop the kitchen counter. We're not privy to what's written but, based on Mr. Williams' big smile, we can assume it was something pleasant.

Mr. Williams places the note back onto the counter. He then quickly rinses his hands in the sink. After that, he takes a glass from the cupboard, an ice tray from the freezer, and a bottle of soda from the fridge...

And just as Mr. Williams drops a handful of ice cubes into his glass, Marty appears.

MR. WILLIAMS

Marty?

Marty fondles the gun as he stands at the edge of the kitchen, staring menacingly at Mr. Williams.

MR. WILLIAMS (CONT'D)

Marty, what are you doing?

MARTY

Look, sorry-- I know-- I know this is something you don't wanna be dealing with right now-- I know you had a long day, but if you'll just hear me out...

MR. WILLIAMS

Marty, what are you doing here?

MARTY (CONT'D)

I just wanted to talk to you to see if I could-- maybe, you know-- maybe you'd change your mind about letting my film into the Festival.

MR. WILLIAMS

Yeah. That's-- that's no problem at all, Marty. I can do that for you. Consider it done.

MARTY

I think you're just saying that.

MR. WILLIAMS

No, I'm being straight with you. If you want your film in the Festival, it's in. Okay? You can fucking win the thing for all I care.

MARTY

No, I just want my film in the Festival. If it wins, it wins. If not, then that's okay.

MR. WILLIAMS

Okay. Understood.

Marty appears stupefied, almost as if he weren't expecting Mr. Williams to be so agreeable.

MR. WILLIAMS (CONT'D)

So you can leave the DVD here with me... I'll submit it.

MARTY

Are you gonna watch it?

MR. WILLIAMS

Of course.

MARTY

When?

MR. WILLIAMS

As soon as I have some free time.

MARTY

Today?

MR. WILLIAMS

Sure, if that's what you want-- I'll watch it today.

Marty retrieves the DVD from his coat pocket and places it gently onto the counter.

MARTY

I wanna watch it with you.

MR. WILLIAMS

Okay. Why don't you come by class tomorrow, and we'll have everybody watch it? And it'll still be eligible to win the Festival.

MARTY

I'm happy to do that... but I think I'd prefer it if we watched it now.

MR. WILLIAMS

No, Marty. We're not watching it now. My wife's on her way home.

Marty stares sternly.

MR. WILLIAMS (CONT'D)

Okay?

MARTY

Let's just watch it. It's not long. I'll be out of here in forty-five minutes.

A beat.

MR. WILLIAMS

Come to the school tomorrow afternoon, and we'll watch it then. Right now's not a good time for me.

MARTY

I think it's better if we just watch it now. Get it over with.

MR. WILLIAMS

Marty, listen to me--

MARTY

No, you can listen to me for once. Okay? You're gonna listen to me, and I'm telling you-- okay? We're watching the movie. That's it.

Marty waves the gun around as he speaks.

MARTY (CONT'D)

I'm not getting angry. I just-- I'm not leaving here until you watch it, so...

Mr. Williams appears disgusted as he listens to Marty ramble.

MARTY (CONT'D)

Now I don't think I'm asking for too much, really. I just want you to please watch my film... and then I'll go.

Marty stares earnestly at Mr. Williams.

MARTY (CONT'D)

If we start it now, it might even be over by the time your wife gets here. It's a short film.

Mr. Williams exhales sharply, shaking his head in disbelief.

INT. MR. WILLIAMS' HOUSE. LIVING ROOM - TWO MINUTES LATER

Mr. Williams plops down onto his lazyboy. Marty continues to hold the gun on him.

MR. WILLIAMS

Okay. We're gonna watch this, and then you're gonna get the fuck out of here, right?

MARTY

Absolutely. I promise.

Mr. Williams points toward the TV, as if to say "Go ahead." Marty, though, heads back into the kitchen.

MR. WILLIAMS

Will you just put it on already?

MARTY

Yeah, hold on. I need tape. Where's your tape?

MR. WILLIAMS

What?

Marty starts rummaging through the counter drawers.

MR. WILLIAMS (CONT'D)

It's in the second drawer there. The second one from the top.

Mr. Williams' directions prove accurate-- Marty retrieves a roll of duct tape, then re-approaches just as Mr. Williams rises from the lazyboy.

MR. WILLIAMS (CONT'D)
Look, Marty, I'm not sure what--

MARTY
Hey, sit down. Sit down!

Mr. Williams shoots Marty a very dirty look before obliging.

MR. WILLIAMS
I feel like I'm being very cooperative here. I don't see why you have to tie my hands.

Mr. Williams holds his hands out toward Marty-- Marty doesn't tie them, though. Instead, he nudges Mr. Williams back against the lazyboy.

MARTY
Sit back.

Marty unrolls the tape-- he places the end of it against Mr. Williams' chest.

MR. WILLIAMS
Marty, what--

MARTY
Just hold still.

MR. WILLIAMS
I'm not gonna do anything-- I'm just gonna sit here, Marty.

MARTY
Yeah. I'm making sure of that.

Marty begins to tape Mr. Williams against the lazyboy...

After circling the lazyboy three times, Marty cuts the tape with his teeth and secures the last strand on the chest of a completely incapacitated Mr. Williams.

MARTY (CONT'D)
You know, none of this would've happened if you just let me into the Festival in the first place.

Mr. Williams stares daggers.

MARTY (CONT'D)
I'm really sorry that it had to
come to this--

MR. WILLIAMS
Will you just put it on?

Marty retrieves the remote control from atop the coffee table. He fidgets with it, trying to turn on the TV.

MR. WILLIAMS (CONT'D)
That's the control for the DVD
player.

MARTY
Right.

Marty picks up the second remote control from the table. He tries again to turn on the TV, but he can't do it.

MR. WILLIAMS
Hand it to me. I'll turn it on.

MARTY
No, it's all right.

Marty approaches the TV. He hits the "on" button-- still, the TV doesn't come on.

MARTY (CONT'D)
Yes? Is that it?

MR. WILLIAMS
Give it a second.

Marty watches anxiously as the TV finally comes on.

MARTY
There. Okay.

Marty then starts to fidget with the TV remote control.

MARTY (CONT'D)
What input is it for the DVD?

MR. WILLIAMS
Just hit the "source" button. It's
"DVD/AV."

Marty continues to inspect the remote control.

MARTY
Right. Okay. Here we go...

Mr. Williams appears to be trying his best to remain calm while Marty slowly sets up the DVD player.

A moment passes. Marty finally appears to have things set up.

MARTY

Okay. Are we ready?

Mr. Williams has no response other than another dirty look.

Marty takes a seat on the couch next to the lazyboy, presses "play" on the remote control, and begins to watch in anticipation as the film begins...

ANGLE ON TV

The opening credits of Marty's film play out one at a time, in white lettering and over a black screen; they're also accompanied by a suspenseful musical score:

"Martin Bates Pro. Presents"
"A Film by Martin Bates"
"Strictly Business"

Mr. Williams watches unenthusiastically while Marty appears to be experiencing pure euphoria.

ANGLE ON TV

A black screen. The film fades into a medium tracking shot of a MAN walking down a residential street.

Marty continues beaming and smirking as he watches Mr. Williams watch his film.

MARTY

This shot's a little shaky, but I think it's okay. It still works.

Mr. Williams watches the film without acknowledging Marty.

MARTY (CONT'D)

That's Freddie Mancuso. He's my cousin. He's a good actor.

Mr. Williams continues to watch, annoyed.

ANGLE ON TV

The Man (Freddie Mancuso) enters a home; more specifically, he enters a kitchen where he's greeted by Marty's character.

The scene plays out with both characters sitting at a kitchen table, speaking corny, melodramatic dialogue.

Marty continues to add needless tidbits:

MARTY

We shot this scene in my kitchen--
my mom's kitchen, actually. Yeah.

Mr. Williams continues to watch in silence...

BACK IN THE KITCHEN

We're privy to a view of the ice tray still sitting atop the kitchen counter. We see that the ice has almost completely melted. In the b.g., we see Marty and Mr. Williams continuing to watch the film.

ANGLE ON TV

Some kind of a violent altercation is taking place on screen between Marty's character and Mancuso's character.

The film's audio is the only thing we hear as Mr. Williams and Marty remain silently watching...

We then hear a CAR PULLING INTO THE DRIVEWAY, followed by DOORS OPENING AND CLOSING-- the sounds are unmistakable.

MR. WILLIAMS

Oh, Jesus. That's them.

MARTY

Who?

MR. WILLIAMS

Who do you think?

Marty stares, dumbfounded, while Mr. Williams starts to squirm in his seat.

MR. WILLIAMS (CONT'D)

Listen, Marty, you have to promise
me that you're not gonna do
anything stupid.

MARTY

What are you talking about? I'm not gonna do anything stupid. I just wanna finish watching the film. The best part's coming up.

MR. WILLIAMS

Okay. That's fine, Marty. We'll finish watching it later. Untie me.

MARTY

What? No. I-- I can't untie you.

MR. WILLIAMS

What do you think my wife's gonna say, Marty, if she walks in here and sees me tied up like this?

Marty, again, appears completely dumbfounded.

MR. WILLIAMS (CONT'D)

If she sees me like this, she's gonna know that something's wrong, and that's gonna mean big fucking trouble for everybody. Do you understand that?

MARTY

If I untie you, how do I know you're not gonna try to get out of this somehow?

MR. WILLIAMS

Marty, please-- for God's sakes-- I'm not gonna try anything--

MARTY

How do I know that you won't do anything stupid?

MR. WILLIAMS

I just want to get her out of here so that me and you can finish watching the rest of your film.

We hear MRS. WILLIAMS and SARA approaching the back porch.

MR. WILLIAMS

Okay?

Marty hesitates.

MARTY

You're gonna finish watching it?

MR. WILLIAMS

Yes. I will sit back down here and watch the rest of it with you. I promise.

MARTY

Fine. Okay.

Marty steps behind Mr. Williams' chair.

MARTY (CONT'D)

What do you want me to do here?

MR. WILLIAMS

Just untie me. Hurry the fuck up.

MARTY

Okay. Hold on. There's a lot of layers.

Marty attempts to pull the tape off-- he can't do it.

MR. WILLIAMS

There's scissors in the kitchen.

MARTY

Hold on. No-- I can get it.

MR. WILLIAMS

Marty? Just-- will you get the scissors? Marty? Marty?

MARTY

Ah. I can't get it.

MR. WILLIAMS

Marty--

MARTY

Where do you keep the scissors? Are they with the tape?

Mrs. Williams and Sara are just outside the back door now--

MR. WILLIAMS

Forget it. Just cover me. Cover the tape.

MARTY

Cover it with what?

MR. WILLIAMS

Put that blanket on me.

MARTY
Blanket? What, this?

Marty grabs the blanket from atop the sofa.

MR. WILLIAMS
Put it on me. Cover the tape.

EXT. BACK PORCH

Sara is waiting at the door. Her hands are full with grocery bags. Mrs. Williams is walking up the steps.

MRS. WILLIAMS
What?

SARA
I can't really get the door now.

MRS. WILLIAMS
You can put them down, you know?

SARA
Yeah. That's true.

Mrs. Williams approaches the door.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Marty is unfolding the blanket, trying to get it on Mr. Williams-- as he does, he drops the gun to the floor.

MARTY
Oh. Wait a second.

Marty drops the blanket on top of Mr. Williams' face as he retrieves the gun.

MR. WILLIAMS
(muffled)
Marty, can you please put the gun
away?

MARTY
Yeah. One second.

Marty hesitates for a moment, then shoves the gun into the sofa cushions.

MR. WILLIAMS
Marty?

MARTY

Yeah. I got it.

Marty begins to readjust the blanket.

KITCHEN

Mrs. Williams and Sara enter. Sara brings the grocery bags into the kitchen.

SARA

Hey, dad.

MR. WILLIAMS (O.S.)

Hey, sweetie.

Mrs. Williams puts her bags atop the counter. She then spots her husband seated in the living room. She approaches.

MR. WILLIAMS (O.S.)

Hey, hon.

MRS. WILLIAMS

Hey.

We see that Mr. Williams is awkwardly wrapped in a blanket while Marty sits on the sofa next to him.

MRS. WILLIAMS

What are you doing?

MR. WILLIAMS

Just watching a movie. Actually-- wait, would you mind pausing it?

Marty obliges as Mr. Williams stares earnestly at his wife.

MR. WILLIAMS (CONT'D)

How are you? Everything all right?

MRS. WILLIAMS

Who is this?

MR. WILLIAMS

This is Marty. He's a student.

MARTY

Former student.

MR. WILLIAMS

He's a former student and he wanted to show me this film that he made.

Mrs. Williams stares, bewildered.

MR. WILLIAMS (CONT'D)
It's for the school Festival. We're just watching it quick to make sure there's no inappropriate content.

MRS. WILLIAMS
Okay.

MR. WILLIAMS
It's school-related, so... it's important I get this done.

MRS. WILLIAMS
Guess you didn't get started on dinner?

MR. WILLIAMS
No, but I will. This shouldn't take much longer. Right, Marty?

MARTY
It'll be over in six minutes.

MR. WILLIAMS
About six more minutes, hon. Okay?

MRS. WILLIAMS
Okay.

Mrs. Williams returns to the kitchen.

MR. WILLIAMS
Hon, why don't you go upstairs for a bit? Relax for a little bit?

Mrs. Williams takes notice of the ice melting all over her kitchen counter.

MRS. WILLIAMS
You left the ice out.

MR. WILLIAMS
Yeah. Sorry, hon. Why don't you go relax?

Mrs. Williams ignores her husband's suggestion. She begins tidying up the kitchen.

Sara, meanwhile, enters the living room from the opposite side.

SARA
Hey. What are you doing?

MR. WILLIAMS
Hey, sweetheart. How are you?

SARA
(to Marty)
Hi.

MARTY
Hello.

Sara approaches the sofa and takes a seat.

MR. WILLIAMS
Sweetheart, listen, we're just in
the middle of something--

SARA
What are you watching?

MARTY
This is my film.

SARA
You made it?

MARTY
Yes.

SARA
What's it about?

MARTY
Umm, well, essentially, it's the
story of these career criminals--

MR. WILLIAMS
Sara? Sara, listen to me-- you need
to go upstairs.

SARA
Why?

MR. WILLIAMS
Don't ask me that. Just go.

MARTY
I think it's okay if she watches it
with us.

MR. WILLIAMS

That's good. Thanks for your opinion.

(to Sara)

Honey, go upstairs and do your schoolwork. Please and thank you.

SARA

I don't have schoolwork.

Mr. Williams' expression turns deadly serious.

MR. WILLIAMS

Will you please just go upstairs?

SARA

Why can't I watch it with you guys?

MARTY

It's okay with me.

MR. WILLIAMS

Honey, are you still back there!?

MRS. WILLIAMS

Yes. What is it?

Mrs. Williams re-enters the living room.

MR. WILLIAMS

I need you and Sara to go upstairs for ten minutes. Okay?

MRS. WILLIAMS

Why?

MR. WILLIAMS

Just do it, please.

MRS. WILLIAMS

It's already past seven. If I don't get started on dinner--

MR. WILLIAMS

Will you please just take Sara and go upstairs!?! For Christ's sake! How many times do I gotta ask you?

The room turns silent.

MR. WILLIAMS (CONT'D)

I will get started on dinner. I said that already. I just need ten minutes here.

Sara stares at her father, frightened.

MR. WILLIAMS (CONT'D)
All right? Please.

MRS. WILLIAMS
Come on, Sara.

MR. WILLIAMS
Thank you.

Mrs. Williams and Sara exit the living room.

MR. WILLIAMS (CONT'D)
Okay, Marty. Let's go.

MARTY
Right.

Marty clicks the remote; the film resumes.

ANGLE ON TV

Marty's character is walking along a sidewalk, next to a chain link fence. He's narrating some hokey dialogue.

MARTY (ON FILM)
... And I never really knew what
true friendship meant to me...

Mr. Williams, for the first time, appears slightly amused.

MR. WILLIAMS
That's a good shot.

Marty appears caught off-guard by the sudden compliment. His only response is to smile, wider now than before.

ANGLE ON TV

The camera pushes into a close-up of Marty's character. The film then fades to black, the music swells, and the end credits appear:

"Written, Produced, Directed &
Edited by Marty Bates"

Marty stares anxiously at Mr. Williams, as if waiting for some kind of praise or approval.

MR. WILLIAMS

Okay. Are we done?

MARTY

What'd you think?

MR. WILLIAMS

I think it was good. It was a good story.

MARTY

Is there anything you didn't like?

MR. WILLIAMS

No, it was good. I enjoyed it. It was nicely done.

MARTY

You thought it was good?

MR. WILLIAMS

Yeah.

MARTY

Well, all right...

Marty clicks the remote; the film turns off.

MARTY (CONT'D)

But if you had to offer criticisms?

Mr. Williams stares blankly at Marty.

MARTY (CONT'D)

Honestly, I wanna hear what you have to say. I value your opinion.

MR. WILLIAMS

The technical stuff; the lighting, maybe-- it was a little bit dark at times. I think the audio for your outdoor scenes could've been a bit better, but that's just me nitpicking. I think, overall-- I mean, the acting was good. And I think, yeah, the story was... really well thought out.

MARTY

What was your favourite part?

MR. WILLIAMS

My favourite part was, uh... probably when...

(struggling to remember)
When Jack? What was your character?

MARTY
Yeah. Jack Hanson.

MR. WILLIAMS
When Jack meets up with his old roommate, and the roommate says that he can't pay the money that he owes him... I thought that was interesting.

MARTY
Did you notice the similarities in the dialogue between Jack and Gary and Jack and his father?

MR. WILLIAMS
No, I didn't notice that.

MARTY
It's supposed to be parallel.

MR. WILLIAMS
Yeah, well, that's what I mean when I say the story was well thought out. You must've spent a lot of time writing it.

MARTY
Sort of.

MR. WILLIAMS
Yeah.

Mr. Williams and Marty exchange smiles for the first time.

MR. WILLIAMS (CONT'D)
So, yeah, I think your film is more than deserving to win the Festival. I have the money here. I can give it to you.

MARTY
I don't care about the hundred dollars. I just want you to accept the film, and I want you to consider it like you would all the other films that've been submitted.

MR. WILLIAMS
I can do that.

MARTY

I want *Strictly Business*-- I mean, if it succeeds, I don't want it to be because of this.

MR. WILLIAMS

Okay, Marty.

Marty nods appreciatively.

MARTY

And I am sorry about this.

MR. WILLIAMS

It's all right, Marty.

MARTY

Okay. I just want you to know.

MR. WILLIAMS

Yeah, well, I'm sorry, too. I could've just said "yes" to you in the first place, so... it's my own fault.

MARTY

I guess I'll just leave the DVD here with you? You'll let me know when you start screening the films?

MR. WILLIAMS

March 4th.

MARTY

Well, this is all very much appreciated. Hope you know that.

Marty rises to his feet and proceeds to leave.

MARTY (CONT'D)

I guess we'll be in touch...

MR. WILLIAMS

You going to untie me?

MARTY

Well, your wife will come down and untie you.

MR. WILLIAMS

If my wife finds me like this, she's gonna call the police.

Marty appears unsettled by this, almost as if the seriousness of the situation hadn't occurred to him until now.

MR. WILLIAMS (CONT'D)

If you untie me now, we can pretend like none of this happened the way it did. We'll just forget it. If you don't untie me, then we can't just forget it. Do you understand?

MARTY

You're gonna beat the shit out of me?

MR. WILLIAMS

I'm not gonna do anything to you. I just want you out of here. I need to get started on dinner.

Marty hesitates to make a move. He and Mr. Williams just stare at one another in silence. And then:

MARTY

I'll take the tape off, but you can't get out of the chair until I'm out the door. Okay?

MR. WILLIAMS

Okay.

MARTY

Okay.

Marty starts loosening the tape.

MARTY (CONT'D)

Remember, I still have a gun...

MR. WILLIAMS

I know.

Marty begins circling the lazyboy, removing the tape in the same way he strapped it on.

MARTY

All right. Hold on.

Marty comes around from behind the lazyboy just as Mr. Williams is able to extricate his right arm. As Marty steps directly in front of him, Mr. Williams lays a heavy jab squarely on his jaw.

Marty drops.

Mr. Williams lurches forward while his left side remains strapped to the chair. He manages to get to his feet and keep his fighting stance-- still ready to throw another punch...

This proves unnecessary, though, as Marty lays motionless.

INT. POLICE STATION. INTERROGATION ROOM - HOURS LATER

A very sad, pathetic-looking Marty is seated at a table. He has a harsh light shining on him from just above his head, making visible a nasty-looking bruise along his jawline.

Marty's Mom's LAWYER enters; he's tall, well-dressed and intimidating. He holds a briefcase.

LAWYER

Okay.

The Lawyer unbuttons his blazer as he sits across from Marty. He then opens the briefcase and removes some of the papers.

LAWYER (CONT'D)

I need you to sign this.

The Lawyer hands a document and a pen to Marty.

MARTY

What is it?

The Lawyer says nothing. Marty stares at him, confused.

MARTY (CONT'D)

Okay.

Marty reluctantly signs the document. He then hands it back to the Lawyer. The Lawyer takes the document and places it back into the briefcase.

The Lawyer rises and re-buttons his blazer--

MARTY

Wait a second.

The Lawyer unbuttons his blazer and sits back down.

LAWYER

Yes?

MARTY

Is my mom outside?

LAWYER

Yes, she is.

MARTY
Does she want to see me?

LAWYER
No.

MARTY
Is she upset?

LAWYER
What do you think?

MARTY
You think maybe you could ask her
to come in here? I wanna see her.

LAWYER
Your mother doesn't wanna see you
right now. She's ashamed of you.

MARTY
She's ashamed?

LAWYER
Yes.

MARTY
Did she really say that?

LAWYER
Can you blame her, Marty?

Marty appears totally devastated.

LAWYER (CONT'D)
You break into somebody's house;
you hold them at gun point...

MARTY
I told you, I didn't know the gun
was real. I thought it was a toy.

LAWYER
You brought a gun to school, Marty.

MARTY
I didn't know it was real.

LAWYER
This is all just killing your
mother. I hope you realize that.

These words seem to hit particularly hard for Marty.

MARTY

I'm sorry.

LAWYER

You're killing your mother, Marty.
You're fucking killing her.

Marty appears baffled by the Lawyer's sudden use of profanity. He stares silently, and then:

MARTY

I just wanted to be in the
Festival. I just wanted people to
watch my movie.

LAWYER

Fuck your movie.

Again, the Lawyer's needless swearing seems to perplex Marty.

MARTY

What?

LAWYER

Listen to me, Marty... it's time
for you to give up on all this
nonsense.

MARTY

What do you mean?

LAWYER

You know.

Marty stares, confused.

LAWYER (CONT'D)

Just stop it, all right?

Marty nods in agreement, though he still seems confused.

MARTY

Okay.

The Lawyer stares at Marty for a long, awkward moment.

LAWYER

Can I have my pen back?

MARTY

Sure.

LAWYER

Thank you.

The Lawyer gives Marty a wink and smile. He then rises from his seat, buttons up his blazer, grabs ahold of his briefcase, and walks out.

Marty remains seated, still anxious.

THE END.