

dish

"pilot"

written by

Jack Savige

FADE IN:

EXT. LOS ANGELES - NIGHT

A CHYRON READS: LOS ANGELES, 2005.

Establishing shot. MUSIC THROBS as we DRONE through the city's skyline. You can basically smell the Juicy Couture.

EXT. A CLUB - NIGHT

We land on SEBASTIAN RIVERA, 15. Scrappy. Ambitious. Wants everything too much. He's surrounded by his fellow PAPARAZZI crew. Their masculinity? It's toxic. Sebastian takes out his flip phone and AUDIBLY GASPS at the SMS he's just received.

SEBASTIAN

Paris.

Almost on cue, a beat up Mazda Protégé SCREECHES to the curb. All the windows down. The driver? NAOMI MATSUOKA, 16, Sebastian's bestie. She's his ride or die. Fearless. Takes no shit. She shouts out to him.

NAOMI

Get in!

He doesn't think twice and bounces the fuck in.

I/E. NAOMI'S CAR/STREETS OF LA - MOVING - NIGHT

QUICK CUTS: Sebastian slams his door shut. Naomi cracks open the Black Eyed Peas' Monkey Business and inserts the CD. Track one, "Pump It", STARTS PUMPING.

SEBASTIAN

Let's go!

NAOMI

Let's go!

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

Wow, did we both just say that at the same time? It's like we're in a movie.

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

I'm the lead!

NAOMI

I'm the lead!

Sebastian and Naomi instantly compete in a stare-off to determine who is the *true* lead. HENRY SCHWARTZ, 16, Sebastian's other bestie, leans in from the backseat.

HENRY

Um, Naomi, maybe one of those eyes should be on the road.

Henry carries the worry load for both of his friends. He acts like he hates their friendship shenanigans, but deep down, he loves it. He lives for it.

NAOMI
I'm still the lead.

Naomi breaks and gets her eyes back on the road.

HENRY
You said we were getting
McFlurries.

SEBASTIAN
And we're still getting McFlurries
after we go to Paris.

NAOMI
And Henry, I swear, if you make one
Tokyo Drift joke about me driving,
I'll total us.

SEBASTIAN
You know she will.

HENRY
But popping cultural references is
how I express myself.

NAOMI
Not tonight.

SEBASTIAN
Yes, tonight's all about Paris.

HENRY
Oh, is that her?

SEBASTIAN
No, that's just one of those robot
blonde mannequins they put outside
car dealerships to lure in rich
pervs.

REVEAL one of those robot blonde mannequins they put outside
car dealerships to lure in rich pervs.

HENRY
Noted.

I/E. NAOMI'S CAR/STREETS OF LA - MOVING - A SHORT WHILE LATER

The hunt is still on, but the enthusiasm's curbed. Shoutout
to Larry.

SEBASTIAN

Shit, where is she? We're gonna miss the start of *Nip/Tuck*!

(whips to Naomi)

You sure you really saw her? It wasn't just one of those robot blonde mannequins they put outside car dealerships to lure in rich pervs?

NAOMI

No. It was her. It was like spotting a unicorn with a Louis Vuitton bag and a show on FOX.

SEBASTIAN

(re: "Pump It")

Can we just skip to Fergie's verse?

NAOMI

Of course.

Sebastian SKIMS to her solo. Fergie's voice has heightened their senses. All eyes are on the Paris prize and suddenly...

HENRY

There!

NAOMI

Okay, let me work it. Oh my god, I'm doing it. I'm Tokyo drifting!

(a beat, then)

It's okay if I say it.

And bam, PARIS "THAT'S HOT" FUCKING HILTON is inches away from our iconic trio. Sebastian readies his camera.

SEBASTIAN

Paris, we love you!

Paris Hilton turns to Sebastian's camera.

PARIS HILTON

Loves it.

She "smizes" for the camera as we...

FLASH TO TITLES.

INT. SEBASTIAN & REBECCA'S CRIB - FRONT ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Sebastian sneaks in with his empty McFlurry cup. He's an Oreo McFlurry guy, if you must know. He tries to trash it, but...

REBECCA HOLLAND, 40, Sebastian's foster mom, steps in from the living room. She's real. The realest. Sees through any bullshit. Any!

REBECCA

Going somewhere? Or should I say,
gone somewhere?

SEBASTIAN

Why aren't you watching *Nip/Tuck*?

REBECCA

There's some gross surgery scene on
with squirty blood. Why aren't you
in bed like you said you were?

SEBASTIAN

We got Paris.

REBECCA

Again with the papping? What did I
say about this? It's dangerous!

SEBASTIAN

I know, but, I wanna help out.

REBECCA

You wanna help out? Get a job at
California Pizza Kitchen, like a
regular teen.

SEBASTIAN

Okay.

REBECCA

No. Not okay. You know what you
are? Grounded.

SEBASTIAN

Grounded?! For how long?

REBECCA

I don't know, I've never had to
ground someone before.

Rebecca holds for suspense, then.

REBECCA (CONT'D)

Four weeks! No, too much. Three
weeks? I'm trying to get a read off
how raised in shock your eyebrows
are.

REVEAL Sebastian's eyebrows fully raised in abject terror.

REBECCA (CONT'D)
Two weeks... and one day.

Sebastian's eyebrows lower a little.

REBECCA (CONT'D)
Okay, that's the sweet spot right there. School. Here. Nowhere else. Okay, the coffee shop around the corner too, but nowhere else!

Rebecca picks up a bowl of Cheetos and walks back in to *Nip/Tuck*. We hear DRILLING then, SQUIRTY BLOOD SOUNDS.

REBECCA (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Ah, it's still on!

EXT. WHITMAN SCHOOL - MORNING

The student body is as white as the page you're reading this on. It's Good Charlotte's *Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous* brought to life... in a high school.

Rebecca and Sebastian get out of her Honda Accord.

SEBASTIAN
Sorry about last night.

REBECCA
Just don't do it again. Simple. Okay, I've gotta bounce for a staff meeting, and stop looking around like that. You belong here.

Rebecca gives Sebastian a reassuring shoulder squeeze and she heads off.

SEBASTIAN (V.O.)
Do I though? I don't belong here. I don't think I even belong at a fast casual dining establishment. What? I'm really gonna get a job at California Pizza Kitchen?

WHIP TO:

INT. CALIFORNIA PIZZA KITCHEN - DAY (FANTASY)

Sebastian stands behind the register. A CUSTOMER walks up.

SEBASTIAN
Okay, can't do this. I'm out.

BACK TO:

EXT. WHITMAN SCHOOL - RESUME

SEBASTIAN (V.O.)

No. Not for me. The pap life chose me. Actually, that's a lie. I chose it. How else are we meant to make tuition here? I mean, Rebecca's a teacher here and helped get me in --

NAOMI

Hey bitch!

Naomi rushes over to Sebastian.

SEBASTIAN

Hey slut!

Some COOLER KIDS not at all subtly judge their salutations as they head for the front steps.

SEBASTIAN (V.O.)

That's my Naomi. We bonded over not being white and loving *The OC*. We even made this online petition to make Chrismukkah a national holiday. Didn't work.

Henry creeps up on the duo.

HENRY

Okay, I'll admit it. Last night was worth it.

SEBASTIAN

We know. It's never not worth it.

SEBASTIAN (V.O.)

Oh Henry. Legend has it he was really named after the Oh Henry! candy bar.

WHIP TO:

INT. HENRY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

HENRY'S MOM, with a personality fit for an infomercial or doomsday cult, holds up an Oh Henry! candy bar to CAMERA.

HENRY'S MOM

It's true. I love 'em!

She takes a joyous bite.

BACK TO:

INT. WHITMAN SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

SEBASTIAN (V.O.)

But my theory is, and I don't know
for sure, but I think his parents
are truly Nickelodeon and Curly
Sue. We'd have to go on *Maury* to be
sure, but that's just what I feel.

A POLYPHONIC RINGTONE set to Britney Spears' "Toxic" throws
Sebastian off.

SEBASTIAN (V.O.)

Ugh. Who is this? Don't they know
I'm trying to voice-over?

Sebastian flips open his flip phone and we INTERCUT WITH:

INT. FLASH PHOTO AGENCY - SAME

STEWART WHITTLE, 38. He really puts the ew in Stewart. He's
not at all impressed with whatever's on his monitor.

SEBASTIAN

You got my photo?

STEWART

Not buying it this week.

SEBASTIAN

What do you mean? We got Paris.

STEWART

It's blurry.

SEBASTIAN

Yeah, I was kind of hoping you
wouldn't notice that.

STEWART

It's my job to notice. For all I
know, this could be Nicky Hilton,
maybe even a Simpson.

SEBASTIAN

Okay, to be fair, we were a little
distracted. We had just heard
Fergie's verse in *Pump It*, which
always takes you to another
dimension.

Naomi and Henry nod in agreement.

STEWART

And what's this stuff around her body?

SEBASTIAN

Oh, that. I opened up Paint on my foster mom's laptop and added in some sprinkles. You like?

STEWART

Hate it.

SEBASTIAN

But it's like a rainbow colored snow-globe with her in the middle.

STEWART

Ditch it or we'll ditch you. And get a better camera.

Stewart HANGS UP. Sebastian snaps his flip phone shut and turns to his crew.

SEBASTIAN

Good guy.

(then)

Okay, what's the dish? What have we got on today before we split like Bennifer?

HENRY

Building a website in computer class.

SEBASTIAN

Sounds boring, but fun for you. Naomi?

NAOMI

An oral in English. Ugh, gross.

SEBASTIAN

And I've got my interview for The Whitty, plus other boring classes that I'm skipping over like we're in a teen drama. Why do we never see Seth Cohen in math class?

NAOMI

I know. I'd watch him do anything. Anything.

HENRY

Wait. You're interviewing for The Whitty? How come?

SEBASTIAN

Because I have something to say.

HENRY

But Jessica, she doesn't even like you.

SEBASTIAN

And I don't even like her. What's your point?

Naomi drives Henry's point home.

NAOMI

I mean, she's editor-in-chief, she has to like you a little.

SEBASTIAN

No. She just has to like my writing.

Sebastian nods to his pals, convinced.

INT. THE WHITTY OFFICE - DAY

CLOSE on JESSICA CHAMBERS, 17. She's Type A and that A stands for awful.

JESSICA

I don't like your writing.

REVEAL Sebastian, who takes a step back, tries to reset the vibe.

SEBASTIAN

Hi, my name's Sebastian Rivera --

JESSICA

Hi, Sebastian Rivera. I don't like your writing.

SEBASTIAN

Okay, do it. Rip the Band-Aid. What's wrong with it?

JESSICA

Well, to begin with, you use "literally" and "stuff". That's way too casual. I felt like I was at a Chili's.

SEBASTIAN
But that's my voice.

JESSICA
Okay, well, your "voice" doesn't match the in-house style of The Whitty. We use big words, we use metaphors, we use diaereses, just like The New Yorker! So if you want to coöperate --

Sebastian starts LAUGHING. Hard. Jessica's mouth hits pause.

SEBASTIAN
I get it now. You think this is a game. Look Jessica, if this was a game, I'd be Princess Peach, in a Mario Kart, in eighth place.

Jessica reacts. Oddly specific.

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)
Did I not mention that I'm also the founding member of the school's Lindsay Lohan fan club? Did you have to watch *Herbie: Fully Loaded*? Because I did. Twice!

JESSICA
What are you even talking about? Already I know that you're a lot. A lot a lot. And already I know that if I don't put you on the paper, it's going to be a nightmare, more of a nightmare than whatever this is.

SEBASTIAN
It's true. I won't let up. Like Herbie in the final race.

JESSICA
Okay, but what can you give me? Because you're not giving me that.

Sebastian thinks for a beat, then it sparks.

SEBASTIAN
A celebrity. Snapple cap "Real Fact", I'm a pap on the side. Helps me with tuition. You want Nicole Richie? I can get her. Nelly Furtado? Like that. Gwen Stefani? No doubt.

(MORE)

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

But for you, I'll give you the A-
est of A-Listers...

(wait for it)

Sadie. Silver.

JESSICA

And why would I want her?

SEBASTIAN

For the front page.

WHIP TO:

INT. HALLWAY - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Sebastian stands before The Whitty's paper booth thingy.

SEBASTIAN (V.O.)

Yesterday at lunch, I stood by The
Whitty's paper booth thingy, for
research. You know how many people
I saw take a copy? Three. Two goths
who were probably just wanting to
cut up the letters for kidnapping
purposes --

Said GOTHS pick up their copies and CACKLE.

SEBASTIAN (V.O.)

-- and some guy from the lacrosse
team, just so he could roll it up
and hit me on the ass with it.

SOME GUY FROM THE LACROSSE TEAM hits Sebastian on the ass.

BACK TO:

INT. THE WHITTY OFFICE - RESUME

SEBASTIAN

Didn't mind it. Now, your
readership? I think it's in free-
fall.

Jessica's eyes dart. He's not not wrong. Sebastian takes a
step closer. Going in for the kill.

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

You put Sadie Silver on the front
page and an article on her by me
which must run with it, and the
student body will 100% start
actually reading The Whitty. We'll
even get the huffers!

Jessica admits defeat, walks over to a glass cabinet and unlocks it. She takes out a Nikon D50. Sorry, THE Nikon D50.

JESSICA

Guess you'll be needing the camera.

Jessica holds it out to Sebastian, then pulls it back in.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

Don't. Break it.

SEBASTIAN

Absolutely not.

JESSICA

Wait, hold on. How did you become the one in control here?

SEBASTIAN

I'm a triple Scorpio.

Jessica swipes up a laminated page off her desk.

JESSICA

Oh, and The Whitty style guide. You'll need it.

Sebastian nods and deuces out with his goodies.

INT. LUNCHROOM - DAY

Sebastian places his tray down before Henry and Naomi at their loser table on the outskirts of the lunchroom. Sebastian has no meal on his tray, just the fancy ass camera.

HENRY

You want fries with that?

SEBASTIAN

Fries? Don't need 'em.

NAOMI

At least have some of my Apple Jacks.

SEBASTIAN

Fine.

Naomi passes Sebastian a Ziploc full of loose Apple Jacks cereal. Sebastian grabs a bunch, then:

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

No milk? Doesn't matter. This matters.

Sebastian puts his camera tray down again for extra emphasis.

HENRY

Okay, we get it. You have a camera.

SEBASTIAN

Not just any camera. Read the strap.

Naomi and Henry wriggle in for a closer inspection.

NAOMI

"Property of The Whitty." You got on The Whitty?!

SEBASTIAN

Uh-huh. Convinced them real good. They want me. Well, they want Sadie Silver. On the front page. Which we're gonna get!

NAOMI

Oh, okay, get this. You know I take English with her sister.

WHIP TO:

INT. ENGLISH CLASSROOM - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Naomi sits a few rows back from AMBER SILVER, 17. She's your dream frenemy. She'd stab you in the back and you would say thank you and that the blood was already there.

AMBER

...so that's why I bought the taser!

NAOMI (V.O.)

She said she was going to Okra tonight with Sadie. We can snap her tonight. Easy.

BACK TO:

INT. LUNCHROOM - RESUME

HENRY

Too easy.

SEBASTIAN

No, it's not "too easy", it's lucky. You want to know the definition of lucky?

(MORE)

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

Opportunity meets preparation and that's exactly what this is.

HENRY

Who said that?

SEBASTIAN

A t-shirt at Target.

(then)

It's all falling into place, like Herbie falling into first pla --

HENRY

We know.

NAOMI

We were there.

SEBASTIAN

Okay, yeesh. And Hen Dog, we can get in using the fake IDs you made us for *House of Wax*. Paris' movie death won't be vain, unlike her photo from last night. May it rest in sprinkles.

HENRY

Whoa, "get in?" Can't you just snap her going in?

SEBASTIAN

Ah, this is my debut article for The Whitty. It's the New York Times of high school papers, according to the New York Times! I'm about to have my words published in a school paper that keeps their archives in a hermitically sealed vault, just like Walt Disney. No, we have to go all out. Like Herbie --

HENRY

Don't bring it up again.

NAOMI

Twice was enough.

SEBASTIAN

We're doing this. Tonight.

RACK TO Amber, who stares stiletto heels at our trio from her primo center table. Henry notices.

HENRY

I think she's onto us.

SEBASTIAN

Pssh. She doesn't even know who we are. Racist bitch.

HENRY
(motioning to Naomi)
Also, we have marching band on.

SEBASTIAN
Great, me too.
(off their blank looks)
I'm grounded, that can be my cover.
Okra. 8pm. After marching band. Any
questions?

HENRY
Yes. What would happen if you made
nachos, but with some Lay's
Originals instead of Doritos?

NAOMI
Should we both just stand up and
leave?

SEBASTIAN
Yes.

Naomi and Sebastian both just stand up leave.

EXT. OKRA - NIGHT

Sebastian waits in line. Giddy. Naomi and Henry roll up.

SEBASTIAN
How was marching band? Did you
march... and band?

NAOMI
Most definitely. We're learning
Hollaback Girl. That shit was
bananas.

SEBASTIAN
Good. I can use all that in my lie
material to Rebecca tonight.

HENRY
Oh, I don't like lying to Miss
Holland. What if she fails me?

SEBASTIAN
Relax. I can easily upgrade you. I
know where she keeps her files.
What do you want, an A?

HENRY
I think a B minus. Keep me
grounded.

SEBASTIAN

Ugh. This line is taking forever.
Don't they know who we are?

NAOMI

No. Not at all.

SEBASTIAN

Oh, right. We can't all be Amber
Silver.

NAOMI

Shh! She'll hear you.

They finally reach the front, where a SECURITY GUARD awaits.
He likes to have fun, particularly in the mind-game
department. They show their fake IDs.

SECURITY GUARD

Okay and what's that?

SEBASTIAN

The Nikon D50.

SECURITY GUARD

You really just thought you could
walk in with that?

SEBASTIAN

Yes?

SECURITY GUARD

What happens in Okra, stays in...
our security camera tape vault --
which we'll sell to the tabloids.

HENRY

Okay, that is a good business
model.

(off Sebastian and Naomi's
looks)

What? It is.

SECURITY GUARD

So who's going wait outside to
babysit little Nikon?

Our trio share looks. Torn.

INT. OKRA - MOMENTS LATER

Sebastian and Naomi roll in, minus Henry. D4L'S "Laffy Taffy"
IS PLAYING. The club is bumping, jumping and in the corner of
one bathroom stall, humping.

SEBASTIAN
I mean, we are the leads.

NAOMI
Okay, true that.

SEBASTIAN (V.O.)
I'm the true lead, don't tell
Naomi. I'll know if you did.

NAOMI
How are we going to take a photo of
Sadie? We don't have a camera.

SEBASTIAN
Um, we have cell phones.

NAOMI
Yeah, cell phones with bad cameras.

SEBASTIAN
I'll tell Jessica it's an artistic
statement.

Sebastian and Naomi nod, then wade further into the club.

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)
Oh my god.

Whomp, there she is. SADIE SILVER, 22. Possibly going through
her career peak and definitely going through her coke phase.
She's in the VIP, with HUMAN LEECHES and Amber.

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)
So how are we going to work this?

NAOMI
We circle around the velvet rope
like Jaws or Sharkboy minus
Lavagirl would.

SEBASTIAN
Okay, easy Henry.

The pair flip their phones open and do one VIP rotation
before meeting in the middle. They show their rotation pics.

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)
Damn this low level lighting. What
is this? A sex tape?! I'm gonna
have to go flash on. It's the only
way.

NAOMI

No way. You go flash on and we get caught.

SEBASTIAN

And we get the pic! Focus on that.

Sebastian turns on the flash, just as Amber jumps in front of Sadie.

AMBER

Pack it up!

Amber breaks from the velvet rope and down to our meddling kids.

AMBER (CONT'D)

Naomi, well done. That was a test to see who I could trust in English class. You failed.

SEBASTIAN

I think she won in spirit.

AMBER

No one was talking to you, gay boy.

Ouch.

AMBER (CONT'D)

But hey, thanks for buying all my sister's songs. Keeps me in VIP.

SEBASTIAN

That's where you lose, because I use LimeWire. We all use LimeWire!

EXT. OKRA - MOMENTS LATER

TWO SECURITY GUARDS escort Sebastian and Naomi out, with Amber third-wheeling it.

AMBER

Assholes.

Well, shit. Amber and the Security Guards retreat back inside.

SEBASTIAN

I blame LimeWire.

Off this sheer helplessness, we --

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

EXT. OKRA - NIGHT

Sebastian and Naomi dust themselves off. Not at all cute.
Henry spots them.

SEBASTIAN

We have to get back in. I *need* that
picture. That unlocks everything
for me.

HENRY

No. We have to get home. All our
parents still think we're at
marching band and --

NAOMI

Shut all the way up!

Naomi spots a cutie patootie from across the street. So does
Sebastian.

SEBASTIAN (V.O.)

Call me Christmas.

Meet COOPER CAMPBELL, 16. Future pop-star. Canadian, of
course. He's totes adorbz. Full of wonder.

NAOMI

I know him!

SEBASTIAN

You know him? Who is that?

NAOMI

Cooper Campbell. He's only been my
profile song on MySpace since like
May. He's my number one MySpace
boy.

HENRY

So he's a celebrity.

NAOMI

Yeah and if we got married, my name
would be Naomi Campbell.

HENRY

Why don't we just get him? He's
right there.

SEBASTIAN (V.O.)

I'd love to get him. What? Huh?

NAOMI

Henry's right. We're not getting back in the club, we're not getting anywhere near Sadie again.

SEBASTIAN

I guess his eyes are twinkly and that could only come from future star wattage. The Whitty's going to discover him through me! That's history.

Sebastian holds up the Nikon, gets ready to pap. Naomi moves up close to the viewfinder.

NAOMI

Let me see. I'd watch him do anything. Anything.

Cooper skitters a little from the attention.

SEBASTIAN

Quit it. You're spooking him.

NAOMI

No, you're spooking him.

COOPER

Hello?

Cooper walks closer.

COOPER (CONT'D)

Should I pretend I'm not here? Or?

He spins away, KNOCKING the camera to the ground. Oh shit.

COOPER (CONT'D)

I am so sorry! I have never had paparazzi before.

Sebastian and Cooper's hands touch briefly.

COOPER (CONT'D)

Is it broken?

SEBASTIAN

That's for the courts to decide.

Cooper LAUGHS. Sebastian smiles -- that felt good.

HENRY

If you're desperate, I have got some Bubble Tape. Sour Green Apple.

NAOMI
Cooper. Hi. Don't know if you know
me. We're MySpace friends.

COOPER
No, I know you. Naomi, right?

NAOMI
Right!

Cooper takes a beat to absorb our trio. They are a lot.

COOPER
You guys seem... fun.

SEBASTIAN
Oh, we are. Trust. Let's get
coffee. I know a place.

NAOMI
Okay, already know we're going to
Cawfee.

COOPER
Coffee?

NAOMI
No, *Cawfee*. Ya gotta say it like a
native New Yorker!

COOPER
I'm from Ontario.

Naomi and Cooper take the lead. Henry hangs back with
Sebastian.

HENRY
What about getting home?

SEBASTIAN
What about Cooper's right here?

Sebastian watches him go with Naomi. What is smitten?

INT. CAWFEE - NIGHT

Our crew feat. Cooper are booth-ed up.

HENRY
Mom keeps calling me.

SEBASTIAN
Why? How? Your battery's dead.

HENRY

What? No it --

Sebastian immediately takes the battery out of Henry's phone.

SEBASTIAN

Oops. It's dead. Naomi? Your battery need some dead-ing?

NAOMI

I'll do it myself.

SEBASTIAN

That's my girl.

COOPER

You seem highly illegal.

SEBASTIAN

I am. Can we call you Coop? That's what Summer calls Marissa on *The OC*.

COOPER

It feels like you're already going to.

SEBASTIAN

Thanks Coop.

NAOMI

Can I just say, I know all your songs.

COOPER

I only have one song.

NAOMI

And I know all of it. Is that why you're out here? Getting signed to a label?

COOPER

I mean, I do have a meeting with Hollywood Records tomorrow.

SEBASTIAN

Wow, okay. I'm already seeing you with a Teen Choice surfboard. That's so Raven of me.

COOPER

If anything does happen, it's all thanks to MySpace.

NAOMI
Then where's my cut?

SEBASTIAN
Yeah man, where's her cut?

COOPER
How about this? Naomi Underscore
Fun Stuff, if I ever go on tour,
I'll always get you VIP.

HENRY
I have to go panic pee.

COOPER
Same. Without the panic.

Henry and Cooper get up. Then, out of earshot...

NAOMI
I think he likes me. *Likes* me.

Uh-oh. If that isn't a multi-episode and/or season arc, I
don't know what is!

EXT. CAWFEE - NIGHT

Cooper and our crew head out, predating #squadgoals by a full
decade.

COOPER
Hey, sorry about the camera. You
know it might still work. Might.
Turn it on.

Sebastian fires it up. The cracked LCD monitor glows in
victory.

SEBASTIAN
Still works! It's just a little
cracked out. Like me.

COOPER
I better get back to my hotel.
Dad's gonna be worried.

NAOMI
Bye Cooper!

SEBASTIAN
It's Coop!

HENRY

Bye Coop! You make my existential
dread feel less existential!

COOPER

I get that a lot.
(a beat, then)
No I don't.
(to Sebastian)
Hey, add me on MySpace.

SEBASTIAN

No. You add *me* on MySpace.

COOPER

Okay, jeez.

Sebastian and Cooper share a playful look. Hmm! Cooper throws up a peace sign and deuces out on our trio. Sebastian SNAPS a picture of Cooper as he rounds the corner. It's flawless.

INT. SEBASTIAN & REBECCA'S CRIB - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Sebastian walks in to Rebecca chilling out with *Will & Grace*.

REBECCA

Hey, how was marching band? Did you
march and band?

SEBASTIAN

Yep. We're doing *Rich Girl*, I mean
Hollaback Girl. Gwen Stefani. Real
fun.

REBECCA

Huh. That's interesting, because
marching band wrapped at 7:30. It's
11:30. This is what us in the
parent and detective community call
a gap in the timeline.

SEBASTIAN

Then we went and got coffee at
Cawfee. You said I could still go
there! Plus we met Cooper. Gonna be
my new lead story for *The Whitty*.

REBECCA

Yeah, we were meant to celebrate
that tonight. I bought you a cake
and everything.

SEBASTIAN

We can still cake.

REBECCA

No. I can still cake. Who is this
Cooper guy anyway?

SEBASTIAN

A singer. He's about to be a really
big deal. I know it.

Sebastian shows Rebecca the Cooper candid off the LCD
monitor.

REBECCA

Oh, he's super cute. Be careful.

INT. SEBASTIAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Sebastian opens Rebecca's laptop, turns on the Nikon for his
Cooper muse pic, props The Whitty style guide up and he's
off!

SEBASTIAN

Okay, no distractions.

The MySpace notification sound *DINGS*.

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

Oh, MySpace.

Sebastian opens up his profile. INSERT: Cooper's friend
request is sitting there. He clicks add. No time for games. A
Cooper's chat square pops up.

COOPER (V.O.)

Tonight was so fun!

SEBASTIAN (V.O.)

Just tell him.

Sebastian lets it all out in the chat.

SEBASTIAN (V.O.)

*FYI. I'm writing a story. For the
school paper. All about you.*

SEBASTIAN (V.O.)

Oh crap. He's gonna think I'm some
creepo stalker. And here comes the
unfriend. In three, two...

DING! Cooper has re-entered the chat.

COOPER (V.O.)

*I love it! You make me feel like
I'm famous.*

SEBASTIAN (V.O.)
You're going to be. I know it.

COOPER (V.O.)
Check my top eight.

INSERT: Sebastian is sitting pretty as Cooper's number one.

SEBASTIAN (V.O.)
Check my top eight.

INSERT: Sebastian's MySpace page. He hesitates, then bumps Cooper to the top spot -- ahead of Naomi and Henry. *DING!* A new pop-up chat from Cooper.

COOPER (V.O.)
Okay, G2G. Chat tomorrow? Send me the story!

SEBASTIAN (V.O.)
I will!

INT. SEBASTIAN & REBECCA'S CRIB - KITCHEN - MORNING

Sebastian bounces around Rebecca as she reads the Cooper story, hot off the HP Inkjet.

SEBASTIAN
 An iTunes gift-card for your thoughts?

REBECCA
 Question. Why are you using diaereses?

SEBASTIAN
 To impress Jessica and the highly esteemed editorial staff of The Whitty. It's in the style guide.

REBECCA
 I don't know, a lot of this doesn't sound like you.

SEBASTIAN
 But it *sounds* like The Whitty. They're gonna love it.

Off Rebecca, not convinced.

INT. THE WHITTY OFFICE - DAY

Sebastian watches on as Jessica glances over his story.

SEBASTIAN

Now I know he's not Sadie Silver,
but he's on MySpace.

JESSICA

I'm on MySpace!

SEBASTIAN

Okay, but he's about to be *off*
MySpace and signed to a big label.

JESSICA

But not right now. No, right now,
he's just some nobody, that no one
cares about.

Jessica rises from her desk, gets her storm on.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

A broken camera and a broken front
page. I don't know what's worse!

SEBASTIAN

Probably the camera.

JESSICA

Trust you'll be paying for it.
That'll be \$1,150 and I'll be
needing it before next issue.

SEBASTIAN

Okay, you can say that, but you
won't be getting it.

JESSICA

Oh, I'm gonna get it, just like
you're gonna get your hacky,
celebrity obsessed, trash takes out
of this office.

SEBASTIAN

You got any space for me next week?
Because I have this --

Jessica starts LAUGHING. Hard. Sebastian's mouth hits pause.

JESSICA

Next week? You're never getting on
this paper. Ever. You're done.

Off Sebastian, fully resigned to his fate, we --

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Sebastian is getting his wallow on. Can't blame him.

SEBASTIAN (V.O.)

You know who I am? I'm Ashlee Simpson. This is my Ashlee Simpson on *Saturday Night Live* moment. But I don't have a stage to run off. No, I'm stuck on this stage for three more years. Three more years of walking past The Whitty office every day and never knowing what would've happened if they published me.

REBECCA (O.S.)

Sebastian?

INT. REBECCA'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Rebecca sees Sebastian from her desk. She beckons him in.

REBECCA

Hang on, it's fifth period. Shouldn't you be in class? You have Drama on.

SEBASTIAN

I mean, I do have it "on", but I also have a lot emotions "on" that I need to work through.

REBECCA

Sebastian, you can't just not go to class, because you want to walk around the halls and work through feelings! Go to class.

SEBASTIAN

It's just like I've been waiting so long to feel safe and share my voice and now I can't. Ever.

REBECCA

What are you talking about?

SEBASTIAN

The Whitty cut me.

Oh. Rebecca moves in closer to Sebastian.

REBECCA

I'm gonna let you in on a little secret. This school is bullshit.

SEBASTIAN

Um, you teach here.

REBECCA

That's how I know it's bullshit.

SEBASTIAN

I don't get it. Did I not use enough diaereses?

REBECCA

No, you used diaereses! That's the problem. That's not the Sebastian I know.

SEBASTIAN

And I have to somehow pay for the camera I broke by next week. You're right, I'm just going to get a job at California Pizza Kitchen, like a regular teen.

REBECCA

Here's the thing. You're not a regular teen. What did I say the first day I met you?

WHIP TO:

INT. LOS ANGELES LGBT CENTER - YOUTH CENTER - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Rebecca sits with Sebastian near some bunks. Right now, he's a scared little boy. She holds a handwritten essay by Sebastian.

REBECCA

Your hair would look great with a swoop bang.

REBECCA (V.O.)

After that.

We hit that FAST-FORWARD button to:

REBECCA

I only like Crispy M&M's.

REBECCA (V.O.)

After that.

We FAST-FORWARD a teensy bit more to:

A charged beat, then Rebecca moves in closer to Sebastian, holding his essay.

REBECCA
You have potential.

Sebastian smiles for the first time in forever.

BACK TO:

INT. REBECCA'S OFFICE - RESUME

Sebastian's eyes well with emotion, childhood trauma be damned.

REBECCA
That essay you wrote at my writing workshop? That's Sebastian. That's what brought us together. Your words did that. That's how powerful they are.

SEBASTIAN
But I can't even get published, so what's the point?

REBECCA
I know you're good, you know you're good. So what are you waiting for? Somebody else to say you're good? Find somewhere else. Somebody else.

SEBASTIAN
Okay.

REBECCA
All you have to do now is do the only thing you can do. Be Sebastian. Go back to you and write it again. Write it for you and nobody else. But first, go to class.

INT. SEBASTIAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Sebastian types away on Rebecca's laptop. He's fully wired in until... the MySpace DING. It's Cooper.

COOPER (V.O.)
Hey. How'd the story go? I want to share it to my page!

SEBASTIAN (V.O.)
Hold up. Working on a remix.

COOPER (V.O.)
Okay, work this in. Hollywood! Records!

SEBASTIAN (V.O.)
What? I knew that would happen! I could tell. You have... "it."

COOPER (V.O.)
You have "it" too.

SEBASTIAN (V.O.)
Okay, G2G. Really need to finish your story now. Our story!

Sebastian becomes that GIF of Kermit the Frog furiously typing on a typewriter.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Sebastian practically floats down the hallway. He's arrived.

SEBASTIAN (V.O.)
You know who I am? Who I really am? Hilary Duff. I'm her album, Metamorphosis.

The instrumental from the album's titular track BLASTS IN over this voice-iest of voice overs.

SEBASTIAN (V.O.)
I'm metamorphosing. I'm shedding everything that was holding me back. The Whitty? More like, The Shitty. Selling my photos to In Touch? Out of touch. Please. I don't need them. Rebecca reminded me who I am. Sebastian. Rivera. I've got my voice back now and I'll never let it go.

Sebastian pushes open a door and steps into daylight.

EXT. FOOTBALL FIELD - DAY

The MARCHING BAND is going full tilt in their rendition of Gwen Stefani's "Hollaback Girl". This shit really is bananas. B-A-N-A-N-A-S!

Naomi breaks from formation and rushes over to Sebastian, who has walked onto the field.

NAOMI

Sebastian, what are you doing here?
Are you okay?

SEBASTIAN

I'm better than okay.

Sebastian holds up a CD or a floppy disk or a flash drive.
Whatever was the technologically accurate storage device in
September, 2005. Google didn't help.

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

Got my Cooper story, the Sebastian
Cut -- with some Hollywood Records
scoop!

NAOMI

But I thought Jessica and The
Whitty rejected it.

SEBASTIAN

I don't need Jessica or The Whitty.
Got something better. So much
better.

NAOMI

So, are you gonna tell me or leave
me hanging?

SEBASTIAN

Maybe this will answer your
question.

Sebastian turns to leave. Naomi shouts out.

NAOMI

Hey! Have you seen Henry? He's
never missed a practice.

Sebastian turns back around.

SEBASTIAN

All part of the plan.

NAOMI

Has he been kidnapped? Because I
saw those dodge goth girls making a
ransom note with cut up letters.

SEBASTIAN

Relax, go back and band march.
March band? Go back and make Gwen
proud.

Naomi chills a little and runs back to the formation.
Marching band "Hollaback Girl" CONTINUES as...

INT. HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Sebastian works his flip phone.

SEBASTIAN
I'm just calling to say, I quit.

SPLIT SCREEN WITH:

INT. FLASH PHOTO AGENCY - SAME

Stewart is barely handling Sebastian's level of extra.

STEWART
Okay, well, you work freelance, so
you haven't quit. We don't employ
you.

SEBASTIAN
I know it's hard. Your star
employee tells you --

STEWART
Not an employee.

SEBASTIAN
Yes, that's right, I'm not an
employee anymore, because I'm
quitting. I'm keeping my photos and
I'mma put them on a place that's
for legends only -- with the
sprinkles!

Sebastian HANGS UP. He rounds a corner, spots --

INT. RECEPTION - CONTINUOUS

-- Henry sitting anxiously. Granted, that's how he usually
sits, but more so.

HENRY
Is my --

SEBASTIAN
No, just had to get you out of
marching band to help me.

HENRY
You could've just asked.

SEBASTIAN
This was more fun.

INT. HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Sebastian and Henry make their way towards the computer lab.

SEBASTIAN
Here I've been, busting my ass for other people and for what? For them to tell me no? No's don't stop me. They start me. Don't they know where I'm from?

HENRY
But where are you from?

SEBASTIAN
Hmm?

HENRY
You just kind of showed up here one day with a swoop bang and a mysterious past.

SEBASTIAN
And that's the way it's staying.

Sebastian adjusts his bangs, to make sure they're still swooping.

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)
What do I love? Celebrities. Gossip. A third thing. I don't need The Whitty for that. You know what I have? The internet. It destroyed my life forever. It owes me one. I'm making my own website and I'm going to write about *exactly* what I want to write about. I know what you're thinking, how can I get the stories?

HENRY
Okay, I wasn't thinking that.

SEBASTIAN
They're all right here. In this school. Look around. Everyone besides you, me, and Naomi is either the child a celebrity or is like one degree of Kevin Bacon away from a celebrity.

HENRY

Yeah, nepotism isn't that bad.
Without it, we wouldn't have Drew
Barrymore or *Son of the Mask*.

SEBASTIAN

Oh, and this website? You're gonna
help me build it.

HENRY

Wait. You remembered how I built a
website in computer class?

SEBASTIAN

Yuh-huh.

HENRY

I thought it was just incidental
dialogue that you weren't really
paying attention to.

SEBASTIAN

Never. Also, I can help. I mean,
MySpace has taught us to code. And
it's all going to start right here.

Sebastian stops walking in the middle of the hallway. Henry
looks around, lost. Then:

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

In my head this speech ended right
when we walked into the computer
lab.

HENRY

You're about 30 seconds off.

SEBASTIAN

Oh.

An awkward beat, then they keep walking.

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

Did you ever make your Lay's
nachos?

HENRY

They exploded in the microwave.
Still ate it.

INT. COMPUTER LAB - MOMENTS LATER

Sebastian "take twos" his speech.

SEBASTIAN

And it's all going to start right here.

Sebastian and Henry step in to REVEAL a CLASS in session.

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

Also in my head there wasn't a class now.

INT. COMPUTER LAB - A LITTLE LATER

Sebastian and Henry wait for the last of the STRAGGLERS to exit. Henry picks up where Sebastian left off.

HENRY

And it's all going to start right here.

SEBASTIAN

Thank you.

Sebastian leads Henry over to a corner iMac. He enters his student login. Password is OreomcFlurry, if you must know. He inserts the CD or floppy disk or flash drive.

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

How long will this take? Five hours, five days?

HENRY

Five minutes.

TITLE CARD OVER BLACK: FIVE MINUTES LATER

SEBASTIAN

Okay, creepily accurate.

HENRY

I'm nothing if not consistent.

INSERT: The Word Doc of the Sebastian-ed Cooper story is sitting pretty on the iMac desktop, next to a build your own website -- filled with template boxes.

Sebastian UPLOADS his candid Sebastian picture -- now with a technicolor dreamcoat of sprinkles around him.

HENRY (CONT'D)

What're you gonna call it?

Sebastian types in the name of his site: THE DISH. He looks back and does some deleting, until it's cleaner: DISH. Henry takes the mouse, clicks a button.

HENRY (CONT'D)
And we're published.

SEBASTIAN
Let me send it to Cooper.

Sebastian gets his copy and paste on.

HENRY
Can I go to marching band?

SEBASTIAN
That's still on?

INT. COMPUTER LAB - LATER

Naomi and Henry, in their marching band threads, sit either side of Sebastian.

NAOMI
It looks so perfect! You did it!

SEBASTIAN
Wait. Hold on.

INSERT: The visitor count on the bottom of Dish.com is racking them numbers up!

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)
Look at the visitor count. It's getting its freak on. Is it broken? Is it off?

HENRY
It's not off, it's going off.

NAOMI
You've got a hit.

INSERT: The visitor count continues climbing.

Sebastian accepts the visitor count into his body like numerical Gatorade.

Shit.

Yes.

FlyBoyFu's "Laffy Taffy (Remix)" STARTS PLAYING as we --

SMASH TO BLACK.

END PILOT