

EXPOSURE

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FEB 8, DRAFT
2026

Logline: A photographer schemes to expose his best friend as an alien, in an effort to win back his ex.

FADE IN:

1 INT. PETE'S BAR - DAY (FLASHBACK) 1

Three teenagers dance by the pool table. One of them wears a gray suit-jacket. We don't see their faces. The light is nostalgic.

The TV is on. There's a funny looking man who uses a lot of hairspray.

TV NARRATOR

It started in 1959. The headlines shouted...

2 INT. STUDIO B - CONTINUOUS 2

A TV NARRATOR (Zig-zag hair, bitten nails) sits at a wood desk. Wears a faded pink suit. He stares directly at the camera for his entire segment.

TV NARRATOR

...Life! Outside our blue world, had come to infect our soils.

The narrator hacks into a handkerchief.

TV NARRATOR (CONT'D)

That's right. Photosynthesizing aliens that could take any shape, even the likeness of God, the Human Form!

The *Hollow Bodies* quickly assimilated into the population, our government protecting their anonymity, wanting to use them as assets for their espionage program, and declaring us terrorists for our efforts to purify the world!!

But we do not stand down! We do not retreat! There is a world out there that is just and is good, and is like it was before the serpents came to our garden, and if radicals we are called then radical we will be. We will burn the world with the flame of our hearts, and resow it with the seeds of our divine eyes.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED: 2. 2

TV NARRATOR (CONT'D)
If we are to die, we will watch
from Heaven, as our soldiers kill
and kill and mutilate until the
world is transformed by our
ritual!!!

The narrator wipes his sweat. He raises both his hands.

TV NARRATOR
Marlo Steen is now OFF THE AIR!

CUT TO BLACK.

3 IN DARK: 3

LANCE THORPE (O.S.)
We'll do it by the book. You can't
go gouging their eyes out anymore
to see the hollow underneath.
(pause)
You seem to like cameras.

CHUCK (O.S.)
I do.

FADE IN:

4 INT. CROSSROADS BAR AND GRILL - MORNING 4

We don't see the other guest yet. LANCE THORPE (Older,
Sturdy face, seen lots, can't blink):

LANCE THORPE
We'll use cameras then. Truer than
microphones with all those...

Lance Thorpe taps his ear.

LANCE THORPE (CONT'D)
Negative frequencies.

Lance's eyes bounce. Then he gets serious. He taps his
knife.

LANCE THORPE (CONT'D)
You can tell an alien's an alien
by if they don't bleed. They come
up with all kinds of things to
fool you, biochemically. But the
plasma in our blood destroys their
insides. Because they only eat the
sun.

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED:

4

CHUCK LIMERENCE (20s, gray Suit, big cold eyes, always trying to be restrained) looks up. He has a pentax camera around his neck.

LANCE THORPE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

That's why their world got dark
and they come to ours.

Chuck swallows. Lance nudges his steak-knife toward Chuck.

LANCE THORPE (CONT'D)

Now if you're gonna snap photos
for me. You're gonna have to show
me you bleed.

Shutter clicks.

5 EXT. STREET - DAY

5

Atop a parking Garage. Camera Viewfinder, Bird's Eye View:

Camera follows people walking. Catches NOLA (20s, knows how to juggle), who's wearing a backpack. Shutter clicks.

She's talking to someone and pointing them toward another street. Shutter clicks.

She's pulling the margins from a leaf so it's just the veins. The person leaves. Shutter clicks.

A car door slams.

6 INT. PARKED CAR - PARKING GARAGE - DAY

6

INSERT: There's a dash cam on the windshield.

TO SCENE.

Chuck plops his camera in the passenger seat. He buckles. Stops.

There's a cut between his knuckles. He reaches into his glove compartment. There's a gun in there. He pulls out an envelope. There's a pocket watch and one photo, a letter on the back.

In the photo: his arm's around JUDE LEDGER (20s, wearing hat, plays with kinetic sand) on a bench. Spilt wine is on the corner.

(CONTINUED)

Chuck puts the photo back. He squeezes the watch, feels it tick, puts it in his pocket.

He glares at his dash-cam, an idea forms.

He fumbles around with the radio. Drives off very fast, shouting the lyrics to "Getcha Back" by the Beach Boys:

CHUCK

Ooo waaa ooowa ooo wa oooo!!!

INT. PETE'S BAR - DAY

Jude is mopping the floor behind the bar. Toilet Flush! Lance Thorpe exits the bathroom holding a newspaper.

LANCE THORPE

You guys have one hell of a toilet.

He gives Jude two crisp thumbs up. Jude looks at him quizzically. Lance exits the bar. Passing by:

The TV Narrator, who enters with an impish grin.

TV NARRATOR

Mr. Bartender, your shack's being shut down for staffing an alien.

Jude's face jumps. He grabs the phone from beneath the bar. The narrator stops him.

TV NARRATOR (CONT'D)

So how's your bedroom ceiling? Is it still pretty rough?

SID (20s, nonchalant, unbothered) walks out of the kitchen, listening but not looking anybody's way.

JUDE

There's nothing wrong with my ceiling. I painted over it.

Sid's searching over and beneath the bar for something.

The TV narrator gets tense.

TV NARRATOR

So can I get a drink?

Jude rubs his eyes. Places a glass.

Sid finds his cigarettes. Goes outside.

(CONTINUED)

JUDE

What will it be?

The TV narrator puts his hand over the glass. Sid lights a cigarette in the window.

TV NARRATOR (CONT'D)

(A woman's voice)

I didn't know Sid was working today.

JUDE

Ohhhhhhhh.

TV NARRATOR

I'm gonna change.

The TV Narrator dashes to the bathroom. Jude rushes to close the blinds.

A yellow glow rises beneath the bathroom door. It vanishes.

Jude looks over.

The bathroom door swings open. NOLA raises her arms.

NOLA

Alright I'm there I'm ready.

INT. PETE'S BAR - NIGHT

It's busy. Nola and Jude are juggling drinks behind the bar. Chuck walks in with his hands stuffed in his pockets.

Jude looks at him, Chuck doesn't meet his eyes. He trucks forward.

NOLA

Chuck?!

Nola places a drink on the bar.

Chuck's walking to the bathroom. Keeping his head down.

CHUCK

(under breath)

Have to pee.

Nola stares at the drink.

9 INT. PETE'S BAR - BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS 9

POV: The Soap Dispenser. Room's foggy.

Chuck pulls a flash-drive out of the soap dispenser. Pockets it. Exhales. He punches the wall a couple times.

He takes a gift-box out of his jacket pocket. Looks inside.

He leaves.

10 INT. PETE'S BAR - CONTINUOUS 10

He opens the door and there's Nola. She hands him the drink.

NOLA
You forgot this.

NOLA (CONT'D)
You wanna play a game? Catch up?

Chuck flicks his eyes toward Jude:

CHUCK
No I should get going.

NOLA
C'mon I haven't seen you in forever.

Chuck sips.

NOLA (CONT'D)
I mean like we know who would win.

Chuck takes a moment. He tries to resist.

CHUCK
You don't always win.

11 INT. PETE'S BAR - POOL TABLE - NIGHT 11

Nola breaks. Chuck slurps his drink.

NOLA
How're you holding up?

CHUCK
Well.

(CONTINUED)

Nola shrugs. Hits a shot. Chuck Lines up. Nola giggles to herself. Shares:

NOLA (CONT'D)

Do you remember that one time, we
all went to that farm?

Chuck scoffs.

CHUCK

Yeah I remember. Jude had that--
was running after that chicken.

NOLA

(Jude impression)

Doc you're gonna have to invent a
new STD for what I'm about to do
to this chicken!

Chuck laughs very hard and for a bit too long. He locks
back in:

CHUCK

I haven't thought about that in a
while.

NOLA

Me and Jude went to the
supermarket yesterday. He dropped
a carton of eggs and just left it
in the parking lot.

Nola smiles. Chuck's face drops.

CHUCK

Yeah I guess he would do that.

Chuck takes a shot. Nola walks next to him.

NOLA

So you gonna come around more
often?

CHUCK

(instinct)

No.

Chuck rubs his face.

CHUCK (CONT'D)

I mean maybe I'll run into you.

Nola nods.

NOLA

Cool.

She puts the pool cue back.

CHUCK

I have to develop photos. I should do that.

Chuck starts to leave. He stops. Holds out the gift-box.

CHUCK (CONT'D)

Just give him this. You can say it's from you.

Nola takes it. Doesn't know what to do with her hands. Chuck holds in vomit:

CHUCK (CONT'D)

You two seem happy together.

Nola watches Chuck walk out. She looks at the gift-box.

INT. PETE'S BAR - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Nola enters the bathroom. Sits on the toilet seat. She uncrumples an old recruitment form for NOLA HARGRAVE, United States Advanced Espionage Program. Exhales. Shakes her head. Pockets it. Rinses her face. Stares.

Her fingers brush some gum beneath the sink. She Gags. Pumps the soap dispenser. Nothing. She opens it up. Pushes the bag down. Eyebrows raise.

Nola fishes out a small device. Mini Camera. She recognizes it. Chuck's old dash cam.

NOLA

Jude!

HARD CUT:

INT. JUDE'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

The gift-box sits on the night stand. Nola and Jude are smiling, sitting on the floor. Art supplies, red thread, and photos are scattered all around them.

On the floor: There is a poster board with thumbtacks and red string strung around all possible leads and connections. There's photos of Chuck. Titled: "What is Chuck up to?"

(CONTINUED)

Nola's holding the mini-camera out. Putting her finger on a port.

NOLA

We're looking for what was inside this.

JUDE

Probably like.. Soap bubbles?

NOLA

Whatever it is. I'm going to sneak in here.

She flicks a long stick toward a blueprint of Chuck's apartment.

NOLA

Could you keep him occupied tomorrow? 4:00 to 6:00?--

JUDE

No. No. I'm not talking to him.

NOLA

Think about it?

Jude looks around.

JUDE

What's the box about? What's in that?

NOLA

I don't know he said it was for you-- Oh! The coffee's probably getting cold.

Nola sprints out of the room. Jude stands up. Looks inside the box. It's a gold watch. He processes. Drops it in the trash.

He sits on the bed. Grabs the nightstand clock. Runs his fingers along the edges of it.

Door swings open. Jude drops the clock. Nola jumps. Some coffee spills.

NOLA

It's fine I'll mop it up.

She takes a seat next to him.

JUDE

No it's fine, I got it.

Jude goes into the hallway. Nola stares at the two mugs of coffee in her hands.

Jude starts mopping the floor. She goes up to him, gently grabs the mop.

NOLA

No you don't have to.

They're staring at each other. Jude leans in. Nola backs away.

Jude stares at the mess on the floor. Takes a seat.

JUDE

I interviewed for another job I don't think I'll get it.

Nola calculates.

NOLA

Did you dress up?

JUDE

I took off my hat when I walked in.

NOLA

I know they appreciated that.

JUDE

It was like a journalism thing for that conspiracy paper. No experience necessary you know?

NOLA

The less the better.

JUDE

Yeah, yeah I figured I could steer them in the wrong direction or something. Mostly I just want money. I wanna get out of here.

Nola finishes mopping. Sits next to him.

NOLA

I like it here. I won't imagine leaving. I walk around and I remember the stuff we did.

(CONTINUED)

Jude looks at her.

NOLA (CONT'D)

Do you remember when Chuck found
that cow?

Jude looks at the floor.

JUDE

No I don't.

Jude laughs a little.

JUDE (CONT'D)

But you can tell it. You have to
tell it how he would though.

Nola rolls her eyes.

NOLA

(Chuck impression)

Ok I was stumbling around. And I
was with Hal, you know Hal right?

(I do not know Hal)

Well we played with a cow.

I'm dropping the voice it's
stupid. Anyway he found like a two-
headed baby cow like a siamese
twin baby cow outside of Bo's
dad's farm. Really monstrous
looking thing. And he,

He read it a book, because it
seemed lonely. Like it was hanging
out in the grass outside because
no-one wanted it.

But he was like no Bo's dad
doesn't get it. Like if I was a
hollow body I would transform into
that. Because no-one would bother
me and I could see twice as many
stars.

I felt like he was telling me it
was ok without saying it. Because
I couldn't, you know?

Jude thinks on this.

JUDE

No he just likes cows.

(CONTINUED)

Nola's a bit taken back.

NOLA

Yeah. Yeah. Sure does. I'm going to sleep.

Nola rolls over. Jude's a little frantic to get them back on track:

JUDE

But what about making a plan? Finding out what he's up to?

NOLA

We'll figure it out. I can pick a lock.

Nola shuts off the lamp.

CUT TO BLACK.

CHUCK (same actor, different wardrobe) speed-walks down the street in a blue-gray blazer. Checking his shoulder constantly.

Jude picks up the salt shaker. We don't see the other guest yet.

CHUCK (O.S.)

Did you catch the crossword today? I got stuck on a six-letter word for a single-celled protist.

JUDE

You remember I do those?

It's Chuck. He's wearing a blue tie.

CHUCK

Mhmm.

JUDE

No I didn't get to it this morning.

Jude stares at the salt shaker.

14 CONTINUED: 13. 14

JUDE (CONT'D)
If you pick it back up, try amoeba.

15 INT. ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS 15

Chuck (Nola) enters the elevator. There's a man. Jumpscare:

LANCE THORPE
Did you get cold feet?

Chuck tries to process who this is. Lance squeezes his shoulder.

LANCE THORPE (CONT'D)
They've tapped my phone Chuck. The governments full of aliens. They want to protect her, I think recruit her. You've found a big large fish. Nobody else gets it. 'Cept for you. I need you to do this for me.

Chuck (really Nola) locks in.

CHUCK (NOLA)
I'll come through.

LANCE THORPE
One last hurrah! For the world we know can still be true.

Chuck (Nola) looks ahead.

16 INT. CROSSROADS BAR AND GRILL - CONTINUOUS !!!! 16

Chuck shifts in his chair. Reaching into his pocket. Chuck puts the original pocket watch on the table.

CHUCK
Why'd you give me this?

Jude takes a moment. Tries to be a stone wall:

JUDE
I was clearing out my grandfather's old stuff. I figured you'd want it more than I did.

CHUCK
I thought it meant more.

(CONTINUED)

JUDE

There's no point in discussing this.

CHUCK

But it did though?

JUDE

No Chuck. I don't care about it. It's junk.

Chuck glares at his plate. He tries to get a handle on himself.

CHUCK

You remember when we sat next to each other in math class?

Jude rolls his eyes. He's losing interest, Chuck figures he's really telling this:

CHUCK (CONT'D)

I just couldn't stop thinking about what you thought of me and it made me nervous. My leg would twitch under the desk. We had a mutual friend, it seemed like a lot in common. Then you switched seats. Started talking to Gavin Denton, first row. He couldn't see the board that well or something. I thought you felt sorry for him and then I thought maybe you got nervous around him too.

Chuck scrapes the table with his fork.

CHUCK (CONT'D)

I really wanted to hit him in the face with a shovel. In a boiler room or something.

Jude sets down the salt-shaker.

JUDE

Okay.

Lance is tied up, duct taped, squirming on the floor. Elevator doors shut.

18 INT. CHUCK'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS 18

There's newspapers and cardboard on the windows. Chuck (Nola) drops a hairpin in her pocket and opens up the drawers in the apartment.

She knows her way around. Opens up the top cabinet. Copies of INCHES magazine flop onto the floor. And then a red flash-drive.

19 INT. CROSSROADS BAR AND GRILL - CONTINUOUS 19

Jude looks at his food. Chuck looks at Jude looking at his food.

JUDE

I'm not sure what you mean. Do you feel the same way still? Or often?

CHUCK

(blatant lie)
No No I got over you.

20 INT. CHUCK'S APARTMENT - DUSK 20

Laptop is on. FaceID unlocked. Flash-drive plugged in. Chuck (Nola) sits on the floor. It's footage of the narrator entering the bathroom.

Colored light rises on Chuck (Nola)'s face. Eyes widen.

It's Nola leaving the bathroom.

Her hand starts to shake.

She rips the drive out of the computer. Slams the laptop.

21 INT. CROSSROADS BAR AND GRILL - DUSK 21

The watch is still on the table.

JUDE

Good. Yeah that's good.

Jude checks the time on his digital. 5:30.

CHUCK

Yeah. Yeah. I don't want to keep you anymore.

(CONTINUED)

JUDE

It's fine.

Chuck stands.

JUDE (CONT'D)

Please stay.

Chuck reseats himself. Jude stumbles to say something. Grasping at straws:

JUDE (CONT'D)

I do think about you. Sometimes. I go to that bench. You know the one. I've seen you drive by me a couple times. What do you think I'm thinking about when I'm sitting there? Obviously you meant something.

Chuck sits up straight. Starts to smile.

JUDE (CONT'D)

I'm just with Nola now and she's better in every way. I feel less like there's something wrong with me.

Chuck goes cold. He stands up. He slides the pocket-watch to Jude.

CHUCK

You can have that back if you want.

Jude looks at it for a bit. Doesn't move his body.

JUDE

I don't want it.

Car passes Lance Thorpe walking jankily with his hands tied behind his back.

PAN TO:

Chuck, sneering, a little bit shocked, a little bit confused. He drives further up the road.

23 INT. CHUCK'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - NIGHT 23

Chuck (Nola), sits on the couch, thinking. She's looking at the crumpled recruitment form. Hears a car outside. She opens the back window. Climbs out to the fire-escape. Her fingers close the window shut as: Real Chuck opens the door.

He throws his tie at the wall and starts smashing his fist against the wall. His knuckles bleed.

He sits on the floor. His phone starts ringing. He lets it.

Something catches his eye: His magazines on the floor. He raises his eyebrows. Throws his hand around the top cabinet, doesn't feel the flash-drive.

His eyes light up. He runs up to the window. His phone is still ringing.

He grabs his Pentax.

INSERT:

He pops some film into his camera.

24 INT. CAR - NIGHT 24

Chuck drives. Red light on his face. Camera around his neck.

25 EXT. NOLA'S STREET - NIGHT 25

Camera view. Chuck (blue-gray suit, really Nola) paces down the street. Shutter clicks.

26 EXT. JUDE'S HOUSE - NIGHT 26

POV: The Bedroom window.

Chuck (Nola) walks through the bedroom door and gives Jude a big hug.

The light glows. It fades.

Now Nola's hugging Jude.

Camera drops. TO SCENE.

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED: 18. 26
Chuck removes his eye from the viewfinder. He raises his camera. The shutter clicks.

27 INT. DEVELOPING ROOM - DAY 27
Chuck lays on the floor. Red light hits his face. He's staring at the photos, hanging on close-pins.
Three of them up there. The sequence is: Chuck and Jude hugging, Overexposed window, Nola and Jude hugging.
Chuck rolls over. Dials his phone.
Ring, Ring, Ri-

CHUCK
I want my flash-drive back.

28 INT. JUDE'S CAR - NIGHT 28
POV: Car middle seat. Lights glare on the windshield.
Jude drives Nola around the block.

JUDE
Why can't we just get out of here?

NOLA
Just wait around the corner.

Car stops.

JUDE
I don't want to.

NOLA
When the three of us were kids. I felt alive. Now I just feel empty. I wish we could get back to that. Hangout until the night ends and sleep where we wind up. But I don't know. I wish it was plausible.

Nola kisses Jude's forehead a little bit.

NOLA (CONT'D)
I'm just stepping out for a second.

Nola steps out of the car. Jude takes something out of his pocket.

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED: 19. 28
He stares at the face of his grandfather's pocket watch.

29 EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS 29
Chuck's waiting at the door.

NOLA
Sorry I'm late. I hit nearly every
stoplight on the way over.

CHUCK
They gotta turn red at some point.

30 INT. PETE'S BAR - CONTINUOUS 30
Nola unlocks the door. They sit in a booth. Nola skids a
yellow envelope across the table.

NOLA
There'll be a knock at your door
tomorrow. It'll be the police.

Chuck looks down.

NOLA (CONT'D)
I gave them everything they need
on you and whoever that guy was. I
don't know how long they'll put
you away for. They didn't tell me.

Chuck's hands are beneath the table. He's working the gun
out of his pocket.

NOLA (CONT'D)
You can run if you want.

CHUCK
I'm not fast.

Chuck winces.

BANG BANG. Gun flashes in the window.

Nola looks at him stilly. Her eyes twitch.

CHUCK
(flustered)
Your stomach is empty

NOLA
Yeah I don't bleed.

(CONTINUED)

Chuck sits next to her in the booth. Nola's eyes are glazed.

NOLA (CONT'D)

We should dance in that corner.
The way we used to.

CHUCK

Jude's not here.

NOLA

Yeah I told him to wait in the
car.

Chuck's face goes red.

CHUCK

I'll make sure he's ok.

Nola puts her forehead on the table.

NOLA

Sure Chuck. Sure.

Chuck opens the envelope. It's photos of them. He sniffles. Doesn't cry.

NOLA (CONT'D)

Would you really turn into that
cow if you were like me?

Chuck takes a moment.

NOLA (CONT'D)

The one outside Bo's dad's farm.

He remembers. His eyes have never left the photos.

CHUCK

Yeah. I like looking at stars.
There's nothing wrong with them.

Nola puts her head on his shoulder. Chuck is frozen.
Music Cue.

DISSOLVE TO BLACK.

EXT. JUDE'S HOUSE - DAY

Jude walks to his mailbox. There's a parcel of about 40 letters from Chuck via the penitentiary. One from "ELLA SNOW."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOLA (V.O.)

I went to the supermarket today. Just bought a few things. Eggs, butter, brown sugar... I looked up at a security camera when I was checking out. It made me feel nauseous. I looked nothing like me.

I think someday I'm gonna go somewhere and feel alright in my skin again. It's just not gonna be here, doing this. I'm making friends though. They teach us all kinds of ways to do that, to eventually gain information, steal things, kill people.

I'm not gonna last long doing this, but for now I'm safe. I have people that love me, or seem to want to. And I have my life ahead of me, which I'll make into something. Let me know how you're doing. Don't move without telling me your new address.

I'll see you in the stars, Jude.

Intercut B-Roll. Lights on faces.

31 INT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

31

Height board behind him. Chuck holds a mugshot placard. Bulb flash. Bulb flash. Shutter clicks.

FADE OUT.