KEN & BOBBY

Screenplay by

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Based on the novel by

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FADE IN:

EXT. MARS - JUST BEFORE DAWN

Light breaks over the red planet's surface. Something in the vein of "ALSO SPRACH ZARATHUSTRA" PLAYS.

BOBBY (V.O.)
They say money can't buy happiness, but I used to have both, and trust me, they go together like black jeans with a chocolate brown jacket and boots. I may have even used the word perfect.

An astronaut in a pink NASA-like space suit, with a rainbow flag/pole in tow, turns to see the coming dawn.

BOBBY (V.O.)
But then I learned, there is no such thing as perfect. Not in life, not in relationships -- not even in the most seemingly perfect outfit.

Our spaceman with a flawless smile is BOBBY (22).

BOBBY (V.O.)
Even with a fabular jacket-jeans-boots combo, the wrong belt could throw the whole ensemble right out the window. Where was I going with this? Oh! What should we strive for if not perfection? Well, that depends.

Bobby looks pridefully at the flag and erects it.

BOBBY (V.O.)
All I've ever wanted in life was to meet my soul mate, and live happily ever after, like in a fairy tale.

Bobby pulls out a pink cell phone and snaps a Mars selfie.

BOBBY (V.O.)
But I learned that we can't really find our soul mate until we find ourselves. And sadly, sometimes we can't know who we are until we know who we're not. So, who am I?

SHAWNATHAN (V.O.)
Bobby?

INT. WERK PHOTOGRAPHY STUDIO - DAY

CAMERA FLASH. A QUEER ANTHEM PLAYS.

Bobby, in a high-fashion outfit that accents his toned figure, poses in front of a white backdrop. He gives a fierce stare and flips his flowing blond hair for fashion photographer, MIKKEL MONTEFUSCO (36). Another FLASH.

Just out of earshot, three gabby gays quietly observe: ZHONG CHEW (23), a rich, haughty fashionista and socialite. If you have a flaw, he'll find it -- he sees everything.

GULLIVER (21) -- socially awkward in that anxious desperate sorority pledge sort of way -- is the trio's "yes man".

GULLIVER (O.S.)
Yeah. He's, like, so beautiful. Don't you think?

SHAWNATHAN QUINN (29), a seasoned scene queen, local celebrity, and the trio's alpha, crosses his arms.

SHAWNATHAN
He's okay, I guess.

GULLIVER
(cool)
Yeah, I mean, if you're into that.

ZHONG
Hopeless.

SHAWNATHAN
A pretty face is fine for a mid-card attraction, but you need some real talent to be the main event in this scene.

GULLIVER
But... aren't there usually two people in a main event? Like, in boxing --

SHAWNATHAN
Gulliver, don't get it twisted. There's only room for one queen in this scene. And once you fight your way to the top, you gotta fight to stay there. You can't trust nobody.

ZHONG
And, if you're not at the top, you are nobody.

Bobby hugs Mikkel and smiles.

SHAWNATHAN
People are either followers or threats. There are no equals. Remember that, new boy.

GULLIVER
Oh...kay?

Bobby joins the trio. Shawnathan's scowl morphs into a welcoming smile. He takes Bobby's hands.

SHAWNATHAN
Bobby, honey, welcome back! You look gorge!

Gulliver gapes, befuddled. Bobby hugs Shawnathan.

BOBBY
Awww. Thank you! You think so?

Mikkel approaches.

MIKKEL
Everyone thinks so. That's why I've decided to nominate both of you for Lit Vodka's Ultimate Pride Superstar Competition this year!

BOBBY
Oh-em-gee, are you serial?

Bobby squeals and jumps for joy.

SHAWNATHAN
Yeah, Mikkel! Are you serial?

MIKKEL
I am, and Lit's holding auditions to select their top ten finalists at The Abbey in two days at four o'clock, so don't be late.

ZHONG
But, you can't have two nominees! Rule sixty-six, article five says --

MIKKEL
Yes, yes, I know, they typically only let businesses nominate one person per year, but I begged, pleaded, threatened, and demanded they make an exception this year, so do not make me look like a fool. Understand?

Bobby and Shawnathan nod.

GULLIVER
What's a Lit Vodka Pride competition?

ZHONG
It's like you were born yestergay. Every year, Lit Vodka chooses ten members of the queer community to compete for twenty-five hundred dollars and a contract to be the face of their summer ad campaign. They've only done it every pride since Adam and Steve.

GULLIVER
Oooh! I wanna play!

Shawnathan and Zhong scoff.

SHAWNATHAN
It's not a lottery ticket, Gulliver. It's a competition held to recognize community members who exude passion, resilience, integrity, determination, and empowerment.

GULLIVER
Oh.

Gulliver frowns. Bobby sees his disappointment.

BOBBY
I think he means that all of the entrants have to be sponsored by local gay businesses, but since you're still really new to the scene, nobody's really had a chance to see you shine.

Gulliver perks up.

ZHONG
It'll be a while. Shawnathan Quinn is a talented model, actor, singer, and drag queen tour de force, not to mention our reigning Lit Vodka Champion five years running.

Shawnathan puts his hands on his hips, cocky.

MIKKEL
Yes. It will be interesting to see who comes out on top. Shawnathan is a legend, but Bobby is taking the scene by storm. It will be a battle for the gay-ges for sure.

BOBBY
I'm so honored!
(to Shawnathan)
You don't mind that I compete, do you?

SHAWNATHAN
No, of course not! We're all friends here. May the ultimate pride superstar win.

Shawnathan extends his hand for a gentlemanly handshake.

BOBBY
Fabular!

Bobby bypasses the hand and throws his arms around Shawnathan, who exchanges a raised eyebrow with Zhong.

EXT. L.A. NORTH HOLLYWOOD STREETS - DAY

A pink convertible Ferrari (with the top down) merges into traffic. Bobby drives, Shawnathan is beside him, and Zhong and Gulliver chill in the back. They're all in beach attire.

BOBBY
Is it possible we could tie? I'd feel bad if I won and you didn't.

SHAWNATHAN
We're getting a little ahead of ourselves, aren't we? We haven't even qualified yet.

BOBBY
Oh -- you're right. I'm just so excited. Pride is my favorite time of year.

Zhong paws through a large cardboard box beside him.

ZHONG
We hadn't noticed.

Bobby glances back -- Zhong picks out a pride flag.

BOBBY
(laughing)
Oh -- those are for the Pride afterparty at my beach house. Crumbs! I need to start decorating! It's next week already! Wanna help?

GULLIVER
Sure.

ZHONG
No.

BOBBY
Fabular.

Bobby pulls up to a red light and stops.

MR. ELLIS
Bobby?

Bobby sees MR. ELLIS (60s), in a suit, driving a Lexus beside him. Bobby's smile droops.

BOBBY
(under his breath)
Oh, shit! Zhong, put the flag down!

ZHONG
Huh?

BOBBY
(under his breath)
Put it down! Everyone, just be straight for a second.

Zhong and Gulliver exchange "as if" looks and hide the flag.

BOBBY
Hi, Mister Ellis!

MR. ELLIS
Hello! New car?

BOBBY
Yeah! You like?

MR. ELLIS
It’s very... pink.

The light turns green.

BOBBY
Uh-huh. Well, bye, Mister Ellis!

Bobby speeds ahead like a maniac and turns off. His companions brace themselves. Cars HONK at the Ferrari.

BOBBY
Sorry everybody!

SHAWNATHAN
Okay, what the hell was that about?

BOBBY
Daddy’s planning to run for mayor. That was his campaign manager!

SHAWNATHAN
Your dad doesn’t know you’re gay?

ZHONG
(looking him over)
How?

BOBBY
No! His supporters are hardcore conservatives. Plus, I come from a long line of masculine, womanizing Vanderpools. If he knew either of his sons were queer, he’d kill us! Or worse -- he’d cut us off!

GULLIVER
Wait -- Bobby Vanderpool, as in Robert Vanderpool?
(pointing)
That Robert Vanderpool? The real estate mogul?

Bobby follows his stare to a billboard featuring ROBERT VANDERPOOL II (50s), with a million dollar smile, beside the words “Vanderpool Realty: your L.A., your home.“

SHAWNATHAN
That’s right. Our little Bobby comes from old money.

GULLIVER
Dude -- No way! I figured you came from money or something, but you're like a fricking celebrity!

BOBBY
(blushing)
Nooo. Well, maybe a little.

Shawnathan casts him an icy stare.

EXT. VENICE BEACH - DAY - MONTAGE

A POPULAR PRIDE ANTHEM FADES IN.

- Beautiful women in bikinis walk along the boardwalk.

- Street performers blow and spin fire.

- Skaters rip and grind the skate park.

- Artists spray paint a mural.

- A surfer wipes out in the Pacific.

END MONTAGE.

ON THE BEACH

Bobby, in zebra print Speedos and a matching backpack, leads the way. Shawnathan and Zhong wear Asymmetric Man-Thongs while the pale Gulliver rocks baggy, over-sized cargo shorts. Males and females watch in awe as Bobby passes them. He smiles at his admirers.

SHAWNATHAN
Ugh. Remind me again why you live in Malibu but hang out in Venice?

BOBBY
I like the people. They're unique. They're never what you expect --

Bobby stops and gasps at the sight of KEN WALKER (21) near the Pacific. The tall, dark, masculine jock catches a football and launches it back to HUNTER (20), a cocky surfer with a shredded physique. Ken's muscles contract, in SLOW MOTION. A guitar pick, dangling from his modest gold chain, dances with his every move.

QUICK FLASH MONTAGE - FANTASY SEQUENCE

- Ken, dressed as a charming Prince, kisses Bobby who, dressed as a male Snow White, awakens on an altar and smiles.

- Ken, as Prince Charming, slides a designer boot onto Bobby's foot. Bobby squeals and squirms, tickled.

- Ken and Bobby, dressed as Philip and a male Aurora (from Sleeping Beauty), dance in the clouds while gay "fairies" (Shawnathan, Zhong, and Gulliver) fly about with magic wands.

BACK TO SCENE

Ken returns to NORMAL SPEED, catches Bobby's "love at first sight" stare and returns it -- instant attraction. Bobby's MOTION SLOWS as he shows his perfect pearly smile.

Life RETURNS TO NORMAL SPEED.

Shawnathan squints at Ken and Bobby's apparent chemistry.

SHAWNATHAN
No. He's straight.

BOBBY
How do you know?

SHAWNATHAN
(shouting)
Is that Lady Gaga?

Many effeminate men jump up and look for Gaga. They shuffle about the beach in anticipation. Ken is not one of them.

SHAWNATHAN
See? He didn't even flinch.

BOBBY
That doesn't mean anything --

Shawnathan snaps his fingers.

SHAWNATHAN
Vamos!

Shawnathan resumes his stroll. Bobby and company follow.

NEAR THE SURF

Hunter takes a bottle of sunscreen from his back pocket.

KEN
Hey, I should probably get going.

HUNTER
I thought you were gonna tan, bro.

KEN
Not today. Gotta study.

Hunter makes a “jacking off“ motion with the lotion and squirts it into his palm.

HUNTER
(mocking)
Gotta study.

He applies lotion to his arms and torso. Ken avoids staring.

HUNTER
What are you up to tomorrow?

KEN
Band practice.

HUNTER
Ah, right. You’re tryin’ to get all famous and shit.

KEN
Nah, man. It ain’t even about that.

HUNTER
Uh-huh. Get my back?

Hunter tosses Ken the sunscreen. Hunter turns around, showing off his glistening back. Ken swallows and squeezes lotion into his shaking palm and inches toward Hunter’s shoulder.

HUNTER
(squirming away)
You were totally gonna do it! Fag!

Ken spikes the bottle at Hunter, who laughs hysterically. They walk toward a beach umbrella with two lawn chairs.

KEN
You wish. Anyway, see you in class.

Ken stops cold and gapes. Dog tracks lead away from them.

KEN
Ah, shit.

ON THE BEACH NEAR THE BOARDWALK

Bobby, Shawnathan, Zhong, and Gulliver lick ice cream cones. Six gays pass them on the way to a food truck and slow their stroll to look them over. Gulliver smiles politely.

ZHONG
(to the gaggle of gays)
No. Not you. Go. Nuh-uh, go.

GULLIVER
Why'd you do that?

Zhong points at them in succession.

ZHONG
Too fat, too skinny, too skinny-fat, too hairy, too old, and the one with the combover is wearing a knock-off Cartier.

GULLIVER
Oh. Well, they looked nice to me.

ZHONG
You're free to join them, Gulliver.

Gulliver looks back at them and sulks.

Bobby licks his strawberry scoop and glances to the Pacific.

SHAWNATHAN
Stop it.

BOBBY
Stop what?

SHAWNATHAN
You're looking for that breeder.

BOBBY
He was cute. But there was something different about him. Also, breeder's not a politically correct term --

SHAWNATHAN
Bobby, what happened the last time you fell for a straight guy?

Bobby's eyes drop -- ouch.

SHAWNATHAN
Fate doesn't just bring star-crossed lovers together like in a sappy Meg Ryan movie from the nineties. Especially when one of them's straight!

Bobby opens his mouth to speak -- Shawnathan clamps his lips.

SHAWNATHAN
Life's no fairy tale, so drop this bibbidi-bobbidi-bullshit and get it together before your heart gets --

Suddenly, BUJU (3), an energetic chocolate lab, tackles Bobby and devours his ice cream. Bobby yelps.

Ken and Hunter race up to retrieve the pup.

KEN
Buju!

Buju licks Bobby's face.

BOBBY
(jovial, to Buju)
Well, hello, cutie.

KEN
Hey. Are you okay?

BOBBY
Fabular.

Ken pulls Buju away and offers Bobby a hand. The sun forms a halo around Ken's head. Bobby smiles and takes the assist.

KEN
Sorry about that. He's usually a saint. Ice cream's his weakness.

BOBBY
Mine, too. Hi. I'm --

SHAWNATHAN
(extending hand)
Hi, I'm Shawnathan.

HUNTER
Shawnathan? That's the gayest thing I've ever heard in my life.

Hunter laughs. Ken winces. Shawnathan scowls.

Two bikini-clad women pass them. Hunter slides his sunglasses down for a glance and bites his bottom lip.

HUNTER
Damn. You see that? Forget the ice cream, I just want that cake!
(to Ken)
Come on, bro. We got the look-back.

Hunter slaps Ken on the chest and hurries after the girls.

SHAWNATHAN
I hope those bitches like shrinkage!
(to Bobby)
Come on. We're going.

Shawnathan stomps away. Zhong and Gulliver follow.

KEN
Sorry about my buddy --

BOBBY
I'm so sorry about that --

They laugh, nervously, as though never flirting before.

KEN
I'm Ken.

BOBBY
(sotto)
I'm Meg Ryan.

SHAWNATHAN (O.S.)
Bobby!

BOBBY
Bobby! I'm Bobby. I should, uh...

KEN
Yeah. Me, too.

They're speechless, lost in each other's eyes.

BOBBY
See ya around.

KEN
Will you?

BOBBY
(running off)
Yeah. You owe me a cone.

KEN
I'm always around.

Bobby hurries after his clique.

KEN
I'm always around? You're supposed to be watching me, Buju. Come on.

Buju licks ice cream off his nose and barks.

EXT. VENICE BEACH - BOARDWALK - DAY

Bobby catches up to his frenemies and twirls.

BOBBY
Did you see that? I'm in a fairy tale, and magic is real. This has to be fate!

SHAWNATHAN
No, bitch. There ain't no such thing as fate. I done told you already --

GULLIVER
Look!

Gulliver points to a velvet tent labeled with a cardboard sign that reads: "PSYCHIC - KNOW YOUR FATE AND DESTINY!"

Bobby squeals and skips to the tent. Shawnathan glares.

Zhong slaps Gulliver in the back of the head. Gulliver winces as they chase after Bobby.

INT. VADOMA'S TENT - DAY

Shawnathan, Zhong, and Gulliver enter. VADOMA GRIGORE (60s) flips tarot cards at her table without paying them a glance.

VADOMA
(North Indian accent)
I've been expecting you.

Bobby's eyes go wide, he grins at Shawnathan.

SHAWNATHAN
Puh-leeze. The only thing this bitch be expecting is her social security check. I'm outta here.

VADOMA
Do not underestimate my abilities, Chauv. I am true Romani. I see all, and I am not to be trifled with.

GULLIVER
Oh, cool! Can you talk to the dead?

ZHONG
Oh! Ask Fred Phelps what hell is like!

VADOMA
You think this is joke? I am world renowned medium.

SHAWNATHAN
Medium? You look like a large from where I'm standing, honey. We out.

BOBBY
Wait! I have to know, is there such thing as soul mates and destiny?

Vadoma stacks her cards and slams them on the table.

VADOMA
You have the goolis to insult the great Vadoma Grigore, and then ask for help! Ha! Get out of my tent, girly boys!

Vadoma picks up her crystal ball and turns to put it away. Bobby grabs hold of it -- it becomes a tug of war.

BOBBY
Please! I have so many questions! Do I have a soul mate? Did I meet him on the beach today?

VADOMA
Let go and get out of my tent!

Bobby pulls the crystal ball free. Shawnathan slides his foot behind him. Bobby trips and crashes to the ground. The bauble slips loose and shatters to pieces. Vadoma shrieks in horror.

ZHONG
So graceful.

BOBBY
Oh no! I'm so sorry!