

RAMPAGING WILD HORSES

Written By  
John Panozzo

John Panozzo  
Johpan123@gmail.com

FADE IN:

INT. HOSPITAL (1980) - DAY

An unattended nurses station. A vacant corridor. A stillness.

Eventually, the STUTTERING of an incoming fax at the nurses station breaks the silence.

A NURSE approaches. She slips into a room and the door slowly almost-shuts behind her.

Gradually MOANS and GROANS are heard from within the room.

The SOUND of another incoming fax, then momentary silence-- before a LONG MOAN comes from the room, followed by-

WOMAN'S VOICE

Oh, Frank, Frank.

(long beat)

Ohhhhh, Frank.

It all sounds quite sexual, until-

MATERNITY WARD

The woman is MARCIA TUCCI, 30, Italian, sweaty. She's propped up on a gurney, giving birth.

A DOCTOR and the nurse are on hand.

NURSE

Breath.

MARCIA

Oh, Frank, oh fuck.

NURSE

Almost there-- push.

MARCIA

Frank, fuck. I'm gonna kill you.

NURSE

Here it comes now.

MARCIA

I will... fucking...

(quick shallow breaths)

Kill...

(long drawn out gasp)

Vasectomy, vasectomy, VASECTOMY!

The CRY of a newborn.

DOCTOR  
It's a boy.

Marcia smiles-- then collapses onto her pillow.

EXT. STREET CORNER/PUBLIC PHONE BOOTH - DAY

FRANK TUCCI, early 30s, laborer and quintessential hairy dude of his time, waits impatiently for a garrulous WOMAN to finish her phone conversation.

His pudgy, day-dreamer son, ARLO, 6, aimlessly circles a large tree nearby.

The woman finally leaves. Frank ushers Arlo into the booth.

INT. PHONE BOOTH - DAY

Frank dials a phone number scrawled on his newspaper.

INT. HOSPITAL/PATIENTS ROOM - DAY

Marcia, now refreshed, sits in her bed lovingly nursing her new bundle of joy, TONY TUCCI.

MID 30S MAN (V.O.)  
That's my Mom, with me, back in the  
day.

An ORDERLY wheels in a bassinet with a wobbly wheel. She gives it a kick to correct it. Accepts Tony from Marcia.

CORRIDOR

She wheels Tony and the wheel goes wobbly again. She sighs, ignores it and keeps pushing. A loud CRY is heard from another room.

WOMAN'S VOICE  
My sweet lord!

MATERNITY WARD #2

A DOCTOR raises a bloodied, umbilical-corded, NEWBORN BOY.

TONY (V.O.)  
And this is my childhood nemesis...  
ERIC MCHALE.

## NURSERY

An ORDERLY wheels in Eric along a row of bassinets and parks him next to a sleeping Tony.

## MARCIA'S ROOM

Marcia looks up as Arlo dashes in. Frank arrives, beaming and armed with roses and a child-sized blue teddy.

## NURSERY

Eric sleeps. Tony dribbles. They are, oh, so cute.

We see Frank through the nursery's viewing window. He proudly puffs on a cigar and waves excitedly at Tony.

## CORRIDOR/NURSERY VIEWING WINDOW

Arlo's by Frank's side. He's dressed in stone wash denim just like his Dad and is stooped over his classic 80s hand-held SUB CHASE electronic game.

THE SUB CHASE SCREEN. A SUBMARINE IS BLASTED TO ARCHAIC ELECTRONIC SONAR BEEPING SOUNDS.

Frank wrestles Sub Chase from Arlo and then lifts his reluctant son to point out Tony.

FRANK

See, your baby brother?

(off Arlo's blank expression)

He's going to look up to you, Arlo.

And follow you everywhere.

ARLO

(greater interest)

Oh.

LARRY MCHALE, a mid 30s, accident-prone businessman, limps in discomfort as he reaches the viewing area.

In seeing Larry, Frank lowers Arlo and he and Larry happily embrace.

FRANK

(glances at Larry's leg)

What goes?

LARRY

It's not important. Look, Frank.

Look what we've created.

They both beam with pride as they peer into the nursery at their respective baby boys.

NURSERY

Eric sleeps contently. Tony screws his face.

TONY (V.O.)  
While Eric and I grew up virtually  
joined at the hip-

The BABY on the other side of Tony starts BAWLING.

TONY (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
We also had Rhett.

CORRIDOR

A straight faced POLICEMAN, arrives and the three men introduce each other.

The policeman points out Rhett, and then shakes his head at the sight of Rhett's crying.

MARCIA'S ROOM

Marcia and fellow new Mom, AFRIDITA MCHALE, mid 30s, sweet as pie, share a moment from their respective beds as RHETT'S MOM is wheeled into the room.

She's seemingly still on the laughing gas, as she gives them an over-cheery wave. Marcia and Afridita respond with warm-hearted affection.

TONY (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
While our families bonded-

NURSERY

A NURSE hastily carries Rhett, still crying, from the room.

TONY (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
We argued, fought-

Tony and Eric both stir in response.

TONY (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
Played tricks on one another-

A pacifier flies from Eric's bassinet and it hits Tony's bassinet.

TONY (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
 Accused each other of cheating,  
 lying, liking girls, eating worms.

Tony's hand slowly appears from his bassinet and gives the middle finger.

TONY (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
 I remember a combined birthday  
 party, just before Rhett left for  
 boarding school.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET (LATE 1980S) - DAY

Mature blood-plum trees line the street laden with fruit.

TONY (V.O.)  
 And the biggest blood-plum fight  
 Garnetti Avenue had ever seen.

Children's hands rush about the ground gathering fallen plums. Little legs sprint, stop suddenly, then scamper back.

A barrage of blood-plums flies through the sky accompanied by the sound of SEMI-AUTOMATIC MACHINE GUN-FIRE.

This is met by CROSSFIRE, and throughout there's excitable YELLING heard from young boys.

TONY (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
 Call it war. No prisoners.  
 (beat)  
 Until Mom blew up and pulled us all  
 inside... and cancelled our  
 birthday party.

Ext. DUPLEX HOUSE/FRONT YARD/STREET - DAY

Marcia chases Tony, 8, into the house with a broom.

Behind them, Afridita drags Eric, 8, by his ear.

Other disappointed boys follow, dragging their feet, while in the b.g., Rhett's Mom peers up into a blood-plum tree.

INT. DUPLEX HOUSE/KITCHEN - DAY

Three birthday cakes each with eight unlighted candles sit unloved to one side.

EXT. APARTMENT BLOCK - DAY

A trailer packed with furniture and luggage is hitched to a police car.

As the car departs, Rhett half-heartedly waves from the back seat. Tony, Eric and their families wave back.

TONY (V.O.)  
I thought I'd seen the last of  
Rhett.

INT. PARTY HOUSE/POOL ROOM (MID 1990S) - NIGHT

The party's in full swing in the next room. Tony, now 14, plays pool with four TEENAGE PARTY-GOERS watching on.

When Tony finishes his shot, he's surprised to see the others are all suddenly leaving.

He sees why-- Rhett, now a spotty teen with a permanent snarl, has just entered the room.

Tony and Rhett front each-other, complete with matching curtained haircuts.

YOUNG RHETT  
I remember you.

YOUNG TONY  
I thought you'd left. What are you  
doin' here?

YOUNG RHETT  
Cindy's my cousin, derr.  
(beat)  
You play?

They play pool.

TONY (V.O.)  
We won a game each, and then, the  
decider-

Tony pockets ball after ball in quick succession. He's left with a long shot on the 8 ball to win.

Rhett sweats on the shot.

Tony's shot is long and slow-- and the 8 ball drops into the corner pocket. He jubilantly fires his finger guns.

YOUNG TONY  
Come on then.

Rhett reluctantly follows through on a bet.

He drops his pants to his feet, which reveals his big white briefs, and starts shuffling around the pool table.

Tony revels in Rhett's humiliation. He does a joyful dance, swinging his pool cue around in a reckless manner... and accidentally smashes a water-polo trophy from atop a shelf.

The trophy flies through the air...

--Rhett lunges and catches it...

--And then braces for his fall...

--Into a drinks trolley.

He CRASHES, bottles fall and crystal glasses SHATTER everywhere.

Meanwhile, the trophy's water-polo ball has dislodged and lands on the pool table, where it splits open to reveal its dual function as an urn. Ash spreads across the table.

Tony escapes through a back door as CINDY, in her white confirmation dress, spills into the room-- closely followed by her anxious MOM.

There's Rhett, sprawled on the floor in his underwear with the trophy in his hand and broken glass all around him.

CINDY

Rhett, what is going on?

Cindy's Mom's eyes boggle as she spots the urn and the scattered ash.

CINDY'S MOM

Oh, Poppa Gene!

EXT. RIVER/SWIMMING HOLE (MID 1990S) - DAY

Boys swim and gaze up to watch Tony and Eric wrestle each other for keeps on a fallen tree perched over the river.

TONY (V.O.)

That was it for Rhett, but Eric and I remained stuck... together...

Neither wins. They part only as they tumble from the tree and into the water-- to a mighty SPLASH.

TONY (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
 Until, finally, we outgrew the  
 family commitments... and our paths  
 seldom crossed.  
 (long beat)  
 That was until-

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SUBURBAN HOUSE/KITCHEN (2008) - DAWN

Last night's leftovers and pots and pans are scattered on the kitchen bench. Nearby, an empty bottle of red and a sole used wine glass lie in the sink.

A neatly written note lays on the kitchen table: "Tony, for Claudia, 2/3 Campbell St, thanks heaps, K xx."

SUPERIMPOSE: "Spring 2008"

A fancy-dress costume hangs from the back door knob.

BATHROOM - LATER

Tony, now 28, lean and classically Italian, enters. Like his hair, his usual bounce and bravado is flattened by a morning hangover. He is unshaven and wears only his boxers.

He fronts the mirror staring at his half asleep, sorry reflection. Yawns.

He finds his shaver in a jumble of women's beauty products.

HALLWAY

He enters from the bathroom showered, clean-shaven and more alive. Raps on a door as he passes.

TONY  
 Shower's free.

There's a delayed indiscernible female MUMBLING in response.

KITCHEN

Now in office wear, Tony enters, having lost much of his brief energy after his shower. He trudges straight past the note on the table and over to the kitchen sink.

He fills the wine glass with tap water, ignoring the sediment left in it, and guzzles the water down his throat.

Tony loads a toaster and then stops abruptly on seeing the note left for him.

Then the costume. It dawns on him.

TONY

Shit.

(checks his wristwatch)

Shit-- shit.

The toast pops. Tony and the costume are no longer there.

EXT. MAIN ROAD - DAY

A ROCK-ANTHEM blares as Tony's MODIFIED '95 CHEVY CAVALIER COUPE weaves through traffic.

INT. TONY'S CAR (CRUISING) - DAY

Tony drives aggressively. He undertakes a series of slick gear changes to skillfully navigate the traffic.

EXT. INTERSECTING ROAD - DAY

A Toyota Corolla slows to a stop as traffic lights turn red.

INT. TOYOTA COROLLA - DAY

Eric, now 28, geekish yet acceptably clothed, waits in silence. A quick check on his cell-phone has him in a wicked grin; a variant of the stupified grin he usually relies on in awkward social situations.

Eric is oblivious to Tony's car, which now zooms by.

Eric adjusts his mirror and leans forward to inspect his nostrils. The car behind HONKS as the lights turn green. Eric stalls his car. Then finally, he's off.

EXT. APARTMENT BLOCK - DAY

Tony's car SKIDS to a halt in a parking lot.

APARTMENT NO.2

Tony clutches the costume and waits eagerly. The door finally opens and he exchanges the costume for cash.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Tony's car decelerates on reaching a 25mph speed sign.

EXT. POLICE STATION - DAY

POLICEMEN chat near a parked police car and motorbike as Tony passes at about the speed limit.

EXT. OFFICE PARK/PARKING LOT - DAY

A van searches for a car space. Tony's car approaches.

Tony accelerates suddenly, surprising the van driver, then does a 180-DEGREE HAND BRAKE TURN to score a park in the sole unoccupied space on the other side of the road.

The van driver is visibly annoyed as he slowly passes.

INT. TONY'S CAR - DAY

Tony is now enlivened. His hand slowly comes off the hand-break. He switches off the ignition. Song stops.

EXT. "ENVIRONMENT AND CITY PLANNING CORPORATION" - DAY

Establishing office building sign and a picture logo of harmonious smiling trees and houses.

INT. OFFICE/RECEPTION - DAY

Overly cheerful reception staff attend to customers.

BACK OFFICE

Office workers shuffling papers, tapping keyboards. RENEE, a sour-faced, mid 20s woman, works on a spreadsheet.

Nearby, Tony now sits upright with house plans spread over his desk. He has his work phone to his ear-

TONY

Yep, I'll get these two reports done then I'm off to Bella's.

(listens)

Been a week. Hopefully we can sort things out.

(listens)

Thanks, Arlo, catch you tomorrow.

Tony busily types-- stops. TAPS at his desk, preoccupied. He types again. TAPS over and over. Renee is distracted.

Also close by, outside the boss's office, is MARY-MAREE, a rotund, impressionable young receptionist.

She slowly writes a message amongst other hand-written messages in a large novelty farewell-card.

She takes her work phone and carefully presses four numbers. The phone RINGS in the boss's office.

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Email: [Johpan123@gmail.com](mailto:Johpan123@gmail.com)