

THE SPIKE

Written by

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Bad Bunny Pictures/Roxy Pictures Inc

FADE IN:

A TITLE: "A FEW YEARS FROM NOW."

INT. ABANDONED SUBWAY STATION - NIGHT

JAGGED, JARRING IMAGES appear.

HUNDREDS of RATS attack a wounded CAT.

A DOLL'S HEAD stares blankly atop an empty WHISKY BOTTLE.

DRIED BLOOD mars broken ceramic tiles around a GREY STEEL DOOR. Graffiti reads "End of the line". Behind the door...

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
(screams)
NO! NOOOOOOOOO!!!

INT. ABANDONED SUBWAY STATION, STORAGE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

DARK. A hanging CHINA HAT struggles to illuminate the room.

A MAN drapes in a chair (back to CAMERA). DUCT TAPE binds his neck, hands and feet. His head dangles limply.

A HUGE FIGURE approaches. Face in shadows. Tattered clothes suggest years on the streets. The huge figure slaps the man's cheek. Nothing. The Figure stares into the man's lifeless face.

A SMALLER FIGURE appears. Also in the shadows.

SMALLER FIGURE
He's gone. Let's go.

The huge figure reaches down. The dead man's head lifts as if something is being pulled from his forehead. Then... it drops again.

INT. ABANDONED SUBWAY STATION - MOMENTS LATER

BLOOD trickles onto a grimy OVERCOAT as the huge figure carries the dead man up trash-strewn stairs. An oozing HOLE about the size of a dime in the man's forehead...

INT. RADIO STATION - DAWN

A WALL CLOCK flips to 5:59 AM. MICK BELLO (32) a good-looking, long-haired, radio talk show host, looks bored as RUTH, a caller, drones on.

RUTH (ON PHONE)

...what do we expect? These kids have nowhere to go now. Back when I was in school, we had fully-funded after school programs. Now with all these budget cuts...

MICK

(interrupts)
Ruth, how old you are?

RUTH (ON PHONE)

I'm 65.

MICK

Then you're old enough to know better. Policies like what you suggest have one history; failure. Sixties died a long time ago, Ruth. It was in the papers.

RUTH (ON PHONE)

I'm not suggesting we go back to the sixties.

MICK

No, you're just suggesting the ancient policy of throwing money at a problem.

RUTH (ON PHONE)

What I'm suggesting is...

MICK

(interrupts)
You want to spend some tax dollars Ruth? OK, here's my thought. Take all your precious education funds and funnel that into building new prisons. Put one on every block. Start teaching kids this lesson early... an individual's actions bring on an individual's consequences. That's how you change a sick collective mind-set. And maybe you and I will finally get a little bang for our tax buck.

RUTH (ON PHONE)
I hardly see how...

MICK
Ruth, I'm up against a break. My suggestion to you... pack a bowl. Put on your best tye-die skirt and birkenstocks. Grab your dog-eared copy of the Manifesto. And stay the hell out of the way. Leave the social discourse to those of us not yet extinct. (Beat) It's 6AM in the city. You're on WNKR. I'm Mick Bello. The voice of the streets.

EXT. CITY STREET - EARLY EVENING

Rain lashes. Steam billows into a SLATE SKY. CARS line bumper-to-bumper. Nothing moves...

MICK'S VOICE (O.C.)
We're gonna be late.

A TOWN CAR bounds up and over the curb.

INT. TOWN CAR - CONTINUOUS

A burly DRIVER deftly maneuvers the Lincoln through a sea of BEGGARS, JUNKIES and other of society's THROWAWAYS.

In the backseat, Mick scribbles notes. His agent DANTE NIXX (45) drinks from a FLASK as he nervously cranes to see.

DANTE
What is that?

Mick doesn't answer.

DANTE (CONT'D)
Mick, they're serious. If we go off script, they'll shut us down.

MICK
Creative license. "Voice of the Streets", remember?

DANTE
(looking out the window)
As your agent, I don't want you to get fired forcing me to actually have to live on them.

Just then... a TATTERED WOMAN darts out of an alley. BRAKES squeal! Alcohol spills! The woman bounces off the car!

DANTE (CONT'D)
 (re: his spilled drink)
 God damn it!

A split second later, a TATTERED MAN runs over, lifts the woman, slams her down on the Lincoln's hood, and starts to strangle her. Mick peers up from his notes.

MICK
 (nonchalant, to driver)
 Can you handle that?

The driver pulls a .45 from the door, lowers the window and fires into the air!

DRIVER
 Off the car, fucko!

The tattered man drags the woman back into the alley.

MICK
 (right back to his notes)
 Thank you.

EXT. CITY STREET - CONTINUOUS

The town car drops back to the street, zips through a red light and disappears into the steam. The camera drifts up and lands on a WNKR BILLBOARD. Mick's face smiles at us.

GRAFFITI mars the billboard. An outline of A FLAME. Below are these words... "THE FLAME IS COMING... BURN BABY BURN"

INT. CITY CONVENTION CENTER, AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

A BANNER reading "MAYORAL DEBATE" drapes above a ROWDY CROWD. FLASHBULBS pop. MAYOR WALT WENCHEL (60) glares at Mick, who sits at the press table with a MODERATOR and THREE OTHER JOURNALISTS. At the opposite podium, mayoral hopeful ALDO ROGERS (50) smiles.

MICK
 (to Mayor Wenchel)
 We have "The Flame", a domestic terror organization operating in the city and your administration's done nothing to stop it!

MODERATOR

You're out of order, Mr. Bello!

MICK

Sorry, I retract the statement.

MAYOR WENCHEL

There was a list of questions both parties agreed to...

ALDO ROGERS

I don't mind some free-form discourse.

MAYOR WENCHEL

Oh, I'm sure you don't.

MICK

No Mayor, you're absolutely right. That was uncalled for. Give me a moment to switch gears, will you?

Mick reaches into a BRIEFCASE...

INT. CITY CONVENTION CENTER, GREEN ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Dante nervously watches on a backstage TV. Takes a swig from his flask. TOMMY CARLSON (35), Aldo Roger's Deputy Mayor nominee and Mick's best friend, ENTERS.

DANTE

(to the TV)

Don't, Mick.

TOMMY

What? He's doing great.

DANTE

For your candidate, maybe. For his career, maybe not so much.

TOMMY

He's making his career.

MICK (ON TV)

Mayor, something else uncalled for...

BACK TO CONVENTION CENTER AUDITORIUM

MICK (CONT'D)

...is this.

Mick holds up DOZENS of PHOTOS. MURDER VICTIMS. All have a single, DIME-SIZE HOLE in their foreheads.

MAYOR WENCHEL

Those are evidence from a continuing investigation! Where did you get them!?

MICK

Little birdie...

MODERATOR

Mr. Bello, this is your last warning.

MAYOR WENCHEL

(to Moderator)

He's making a mockery of this debate.

MICK

And you've made a mockery of the office you've been charged to hold!

MODERATOR

Mr. Bello!

MAYOR WENCHEL

I've heard enough.

MICK

Well that sucks because I'm just getting started!

CHEERS rise from the AUDIENCE.

MICK (CONT'D)

You have a terrorist organization threatening violence on this city. You have a serial killer who's taken 17 lives in the last six months. But you, Mr. Mayor, vetoed CR 131 that would have put more cops on the streets.

MODERATOR

(calling backstage)

Can we get security in here?

MAYOR WENCHEL

That bill was loaded with pork and the people of this city...

MICK
 (yells over him)
 And THAT'S exactly how the people
 of this city are being killed!

Mick holds the photos up to the cameras.

MICK (CONT'D)
 First he binds them. Then, a sharp
 object is driven through their
 foreheads deep into the brain.
 Almost immediately, it's yanked
 out. Not unlike how pigs are
 slaughtered. So, you see Mr.
 Mayor, pork is a very good analogy.

MAYOR WENCHEL
 (to moderator, re: Mick)
 I'm not going to continue until
 this man is gone.

MICK
 And the people of this city are not
 going to rest until you're gone
 from office, you son of a bitch!

The CROWD roars their approval.

MODERATOR
 That's it! Get him out of here!

SECURITY GUARDS surround Mick. Grab him.

MICK
 (to guards)
 Get your hands off me!

GREEN ROOM

Dante and Tommy continue to stare into the monitor. Dante
 downs what's left of the flask in one gulp.

DANTE
 Jesus H...

TOMMY
 Don't sweat it, Dante. The voice
 of the streets just became the
 voice of a nation.

AUDITORIUM

Amidst cheers of support, Mick is dragged from the stage.

MICK
You're complicit in killing your
own people, Mr. Mayor! Complicit!

At the back of the auditorium, an grizzled MAN (70) watches. Long, tattered overcoat. Split shoes. Wild grey hair. This is GARRICK. No last name needed. No last name known.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

The Town Car pulls up in front of a RESTAURANT. THRONGS of ADMIRERS line the sidewalk. They explode in applause as Mick EXITS. Dante EXITS after him, phone to his ear.

INT. FANCY RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

Inside, MORE FANS approach. Mick smiles disingenuously.

MICK
(aside to Dante)
Get me out of here.

DANTE
(into phone)
Ok, I'll tell him. Thanks Paul.

Dante ends his call. FANS hand Mick COCKTAIL NAPKINS and CARDBOARD COASTERS... anything that will hold an autograph.

MICK
(aside to Dante)
I can get another agent.

DANTE
Not like me, you can't.
(to the admirers)
Excuse us, will you?

Dante pushes people out of the way. Leads Mick through the restaurant.

MICK
You gonna tell me who that was?

DANTE
Just Paul Wilson.

MICK
 (impressed)
 Wait... Paul Wilson Paul Wilson?

DANTE
 Wow. Don't think I've ever seen
 you impressed before. Yes, Paul
 Wilson. Global News Watch.

MICK
 What did he want?

DANTE
 Oh, not much. Just if you'd be
 interested in hosting a televised
 call-in show. Five nights a week.

MICK
 What did you say?

DANTE
 I told him CNN called an hour ago.
 Beat their price and we're golden.

Mick can't believe what he's hearing. Dante pushes open the
 door to the BACK ROOM. DOZENS of PARTIERS scream...

PARTIERS
 Surprise!!!

An auburn-haired beauty appears in the doorway, huge smile on
 her face. This is EMMA NAUGHTON (28). Mick's fiance. She
 throws herself into his arms.

EMMA
 Congratulations, baby.

DANTE
 (to Mick)
 Hope you don't mind. I made some
 calls.

Mick can barely speak... all his dreams coming true. He
 turns from Emma to Dante.

MICK
 My God, Dante. We did it.

DANTE
 You did it Mick. Until tonight, I
 never fully believed.