



HIGHLANDER

The Series

#96517

LORD BYRON & THE UNDEAD

Written by
James Thorpe

Highlander

"THE MODERN PROMETHEUS"

(PLEASE NOTE TITLE CHANGE)

Written by

James Thorpe

Production #96517

January 7, 1997 Final Shooting Script

Filmline International Highlander

HIGHLANDER

"The Modern Prometheus"

Production #96517

CAST LIST

DUNCAN MACLEOD
JOE DAWSON
METHOS
MAURICE

LORD BYRON

JERRY
MIKE PALADINO
CLAIRE CLAIRMONT
MARY SHELLEY
PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY
HANS KERSHNER

TWO GROUPIES
TWO YOUNG GIRLS

HIGHLANDER

"The Modern Prometheus"

Production #96517

SET LIST**INTERIORS**

BLUES CLUB
VILLA DIODATI - 1816
 /DRAWING ROOM
 /BEDROOM
 /HALLWAY
BYRON'S PENTHOUSE LOFT
STADIUM
 /DRESSING ROOM
 /TUNNEL
 /BACKSTAGE

EXTERIORS

STADIUM
 /STAGE DOOR

ROOFTOPS
ALLEY
COUNTRY ROAD - SWITZERLAND - 1816
VILLA DIODATI - SWITZERLAND - 1816
 /PATIO
BLUES CLUB
BYRON'S BALCONY
STREET
BYRON'S ROOFTOP

HIGHLANDER

"The Modern Prometheus"

TEASER

FADE IN.

1701 EXT. STADIUM - STAGE DOOR - NIGHT

1701

A crowd of rock FANS mill impatiently outside the stage door. Some of them wear tour t-shirts with "LORD BYRON AND THE UNDEAD" emblazoned in blood red.

The stage door opens, the fans surge forward. Two SECURITY GUYS move them back as

LORD BYRON emerges, primed to brave the gauntlet. Early 30's, he carries a gold-handled CANE to ease his lame right foot. His brooding eyes blaze with adrenalin, his slim body glistens with sweat. TWO GROUPIES, rabid with excitement, shriek his name...

GROUPIES

Byron! Byron!

He whirls, stares right at them -- they GASP, awe-struck by his presence. More than a man, he's a force of nature.

Suddenly, one young man, JERRY, breaks through the security cordon. He rushes up to Byron, breathless with excitement. He holds a cassette tape in his hands.

JERRY

Did you get my tape?
(beat)

I'm Jerry. Jerry Garrity.

Two muscled Security Guards quickly step in and pull Jerry back.

JERRY (CONT'D)

(as he's pulled away)

"End your confusion, love a man, not
an illusion."

BYRON

(finishing the lyric)

"I could never be all that you dream."

(to the Guards)

It's okay.

They release Jerry.

(CONTINUED)

1701 CONTINUED:

1701

JERRY
You listened to it.

BYRON
I thought it was great.

His voice is deep-throated, hypnotic. His arm wraps around Jerry's shoulder, draws him closer.

BYRON (CONT'D)
C'mon, Jerry. Let's go for a ride.

JERRY
This is for real.

Byron guides him to his limo. One of the Security guys opens the door.

BYRON
As real as it, gets.

They get in the limo, pull out into the Paris night.

1702 EXT. PARIS ROOFTOPS - NIGHT

1702

Silhouetted against the deep blue-black sky, a FIGURE balances tightrope-style along a rain-slicked rooftop.

It's Lord Byron. The wind whips his hair around like an angry demented thing. He raises a whiskey bottle, tips his head back, drenches his face in alcohol.

BYRON
The pause that refreshes.

He turns, offers the bottle to

JERRY

clutching white-knuckled onto a chimney top behind him. Jerry's had a few and tries to focus.

BYRON
Come and get it.

Jerry gulps.

JERRY
(beat)
Okay.

He pushes off, teeters slowly towards Byron.

WHOOSH! A startled flock of pigeons swoop across the roof. Jerry slips, loses his balance, slides towards the edge.

(CONTINUED)

A HAND shoots out, grabs him by the arm. Byron pulls him back up to safety. Jerry's shaken, grateful, hanging on to Byron for dear life.

JERRY (CONT'D)

You saved my life.

They sit down on the roof ledge, legs dangling over the edge. Jerry looks down into the abyss... five stories to the ground. Byron hands him the whiskey.

BYRON

That's what it's about. Living close to the edge.

(beat)

Drink.

Jerry does as ordered.

BYRON (CONT'D)

Better?

JERRY

Sure. Great. Can we talk about the music?

BYRON

(not hearing him)

You ready?

JERRY

Huh?

A dark gleam in his eyes, Byron points across the alley to another rooftop, several yards away.

BYRON

Let's jump. Then we'll go lay down some tracks.

(beat)

You and me. Damon and Pythias.

(Jerry doesn't get it)

Batman and Robin.

Jerry gets it, but hesitates. Looks across, gauging the distance, then looks back to Byron, who sighs his disappointment. He stands up.

BYRON (CONT'D)

If you're not living, you're dying.

Jerry looks up at Byron, then over the edge again.

JERRY

I'm cool. Really.

(CONTINUED)

Byron extends his hand. Jerry slowly reaches out and takes it.

Next thing he knows, he's on his feet looking up at the man he so desperately admires. Byron's eyes, his wicked smile, they blast through his fear, through his doubt.

Jerry swallows hard. He nods, almost imperceptibly -- an acknowledgment of Byron's power, and a surrender of his own. Byron saw it.

BYRON (CONT'D)

Good.

JERRY

Batman and Robin.

BYRON

No guts, no glory.

Byron leads him a few steps back. Then with a running start, they...

JUMP.

BYRON (CONT'D)

Geronimo!

Jerry SCREAMS as they fly through the night air...

LEGS KICKING, searching for a foothold,

HANDS FLAILING, desperate for purchase,

FINGERS REACHING OUT, straining for something solid to grab hold of...

Something please God something anything...

Nothing. They both fall short, plummeting to the pavement five stories below.

1703 EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

1703

THWUNK. Two crumpled bodies kiss the concrete.

After a moment, Byron COUGHS back to life. He gets up, dusts himself off. He looks down at Jerry's lifeless body like a child looks at a broken toy.

BYRON

That was a very good try.

Byron picks up his cane and disappears into the evening mist.

(CONTINUED)

1703 CONTINUED:

1703

BYRON (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Grown aged in this world of woe. In
deeds not in years piercing the depths
of life so that no wonder waits him.

FADE OUT.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

1704 INT. BLUES CLUB - NIGHT

1704

Dim lights struggle against the blue haze of Gitanes. On stage, MIKE PALADINO, early twenties, plays guitar with Dawson's bass and drum player to a small after hours crowd. Mike's eyes are closed, his fingers dance over the frets in a reverie that is a cross between magic and a religious experience.

At a table not far from the stage, METHOS, DAWSON and MACLEOD.

MACLEOD

This kid's great.

DAWSON

We picked him up in London. He came to every show, every night.

METHOS

No accounting for taste.

DAWSON

This is the first time he's been onstage. He was with us for/two weeks hauling amps for a bus ticket before we even found out he played.

MACLEOD

He plays.
(beat)
Just look at him.

DAWSON

Never gets tight or nervous. Just lays it out.

MACLEOD

Nervous? He's already forgotten anybody else is here.
(beat; to Methos)
Remember what that's like?

METHOS

I never played guitar.

MACLEOD

That's not what I mean.
(beat)
To be so lost in what you're doing that there's no time, no space.

(CONTINUED)

Methos takes a drink of beer, plays it cool.

METHOS

There's a greeting card in there
somewhere.

(off MacLeod's look)

I don't remember, but I wish I did.

MAURICE stops by MacLeod's table. He's the Manager of the club.

MACLEOD

What do you think, Maurice?

MAURICE

Your friend plays well.

MACLEOD

C'mon, Maurice, book him for a night
or two as an opening act.

DAWSON

The kid's got chops.

Maurice nods, listens to something in the music.

MAURICE

He has more. He has passion. It's
a gift.

(knowing eyebrow)

And a curse, n'est-ce pas?

BUZZ. MacLeod and Methos look toward the doors. Byron enters with two beautiful GIRLS, one hanging on each arm. A murmur of recognition ripples through the crowd.

Methos reacts. A little smile. Byron spots him and heads their way.

METHOS

Well, well. Look who's here.

MACLEOD

Who's that?

DAWSON

Byron.

MACLEOD

So that's Lord Byron.

Byron reaches their table, grabs Methos' hand warmly.

BYRON

Doc! It's been ages.

(CONTINUED)

METHOS

You've become quite famous again.

Byron brushes it aside.

BYRON

Can't seem to shake it.

Methos handles the introductions.

METHOS

Duncan MacLeod. Joe Dawson.

Byron and MacLeod shake.

BYRON

Any friend of Doc's...

MacLeod takes in Byron -- dressed in black leather, a cape, sporting a cane -- and his spandex-clad entourage. He's not impressed.

MACLEOD

Charmed.

But Dawson beams...

DAWSON

My pleasure! Been a big fan of yours for a long time.

BYRON

In that case, let me buy you a drink.
(to Maurice)
Champagne. For everyone.

Maurice moves off.

Byron smiles a twisted smile. He maneuvers the two Girls into chairs and takes a seat at the table.

ON STAGE

Mike finishes to wild applause.

BYRON

(re: Mike)
Who's the kid?
(without waiting for
an answer)
He's not bad.

Mike comes bouncing back to their table, pumped.

(CONTINUED)

MACLEOD

Nice job, Mike.

MIKE

Oh, man, what a rush!

DAWSON

(re the happy crowd)
You did great.

MIKE

Thanks, Joe, I --

His eyes land on Byron, widen in recognition. Byron smiles expansively.

BYRON

Great chops, kid.

Mike's in heaven.

MIKE

Are you... who I think you are?
(overwhelmed)
I've got all your CDs, man. Even
the imports.

It's a love-fest. Dawson grins, punches Methos in the shoulder.

DAWSON

(re: Byron)
All this time, you knew this guy...
you didn't tell me?

MACLEOD

(to Methos)
Yeah... Doc...

TRANSITION TO:

1705 EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - SWITZERLAND - 1816 - DAY

1705

Byron rides along in an open carriage with his lover, CLAIRE CLAIRMONT. They kiss deeply, lustily.

Methos (known then as DOCTOR BENJAMIN ADAMS) YAWNS ostentatiously. Claire GIGGLES. Byron comes up for air.

BYRON

I fear the good Doctor grows weary
of our entertainments.

(CONTINUED)

METHOS

As spectator, surely. As participant,
never.

Claire SQUEALS with mock horror, swats Methos playfully with
her fan.

CLAIRE

Doctor Adams! Your effrontery shocks
me.

BYRON

Shocked, are you? You would be more
so if you saw him at his labors.

Byron snuggles up to Claire again, breathes down her neck.

BYRON (CONT'D)

Cutting open corpses, up to his elbows
in rotting flesh and maggoty entrails.

CLAIRE

(recoils)
No! Truly!?

Methos nods matter of factly.

METHOS

There are certain questions about
life only the dead can answer.

BYRON

Only the dead... and poets!

METHOS

Then I shall have my answers when
the Shelleys arrive.

BYRON

Rather, Percy Shelley and that woman-
child, Mary, he calls wife that you
seem so interested in seducing.

They pass a couple of YOUNG GIRLS walking on the road. The
Young Girls recognize Byron, call out his name.

YOUNG GIRLS

Byron! Lord Byron!

Byron rises to the occasion, takes the reins in one hand,
rips off his cravat with the other, shouts...

(CONTINUED)

BYRON

(quoting himself)

"This Band, which bound thy yellow
hair, Is mine, sweet girl! Thy pledge
of love; It claims my warmest, dearest
care, Like relics left of saints
above."

He flings the cravat to the excited Girls and WHIPS the horses
to a canter.

BYRON (CONT'D)

Hah!

Suddenly, Methos and Byron get the BUZZ as

ANOTHER COACH

races up behind them.

HANS KERSHNER

a tall, powerful Immortal, is at the reins.

METHOS

(to Byron)

You know him?

BYRON

Hans Kershner. He thinks I slept
with his wife.

CLAIRE

Did you?

BYRON

(with laughter)

of course!

Byron looks to Methos. He smiles wickedly.

METHOS

(to Claire)

Hold on.

Byron whips his horses. They take off. Meanwhile, in the
other carriage

KERSHNER

takes the challenge and WHIPS his team up to match Byron's
speed. The race is on!

Claire SCREAMS in delight, holding fast to her bonnet as the
carriages buck and sway dangerously.

(CONTINUED)

1705 CONTINUED: (3)

1705

BYRON

is clearly thrilled by the chase as

KERSHNER

races up along side him, scowling.

BYRON

slows just a little, then drives his carriage into Kershner's.

WHEEL HUBS knock and GRIND against each other on the narrow lane. Kirshner desperately tries to hold his ground, but fails. His carriage is driven off the road and crashes. Kershner jumps at the last minute to safety.

As Byron's carriage madly races in the distance, his mad laughter echoes.

1705A EXT. VILLA DIODATI - SWITZERLAND - DAY

1705A

The carriage races up at a gallop. Claire's voice screams its excitement. Finally, the carriage halts.

Byron, Claire and Methos tumble out of the carriage, shaken, breathless -- and pumped with excitement.

BYRON

Am I as dangerous as my reputation,
Doctor?

METHOS

(laughing)
You are mad.
(a significant glance
at Claire)
Are you trying to get us killed?

Byron's eyes sparkle, his body quivering in a kind of exquisite ecstasy. A mad, brilliant smile.

BYRON

You speak of death.

He taps the head of his cane on Methos' chest.

BYRON (CONT'D)

Yet note how quickly your heart beats.
You seem more alive than ever!

Byron draws the delighted Claire to him, kisses her roughly. He pulls Claire into a passionate embrace, then they run laughing into the villa.

1706 OMITTED

1706

1707 EXT. VILLA DIODATI - SWITZERLAND - PATIO - 1816 - DAY

1707

A dramatic sky overhangs the stone cornices of the old villa.
A storm is approaching, bringing distant thunder.

BYRON

(dramatic reading)

The bloated mass of flesh that was
his body stumbled toward me. His
shrill and piercing voice screaming
my name. I ran in terror until my
legs were leaden.

Scattered about on various chaises, Lord Byron, Claire
Clairmont, and Methos are joined by PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY,
small, delicate of frame, with a consumptive complexion, and
beautiful MARY SHELLEY, listening intently, her intelligent
eyes darting excitedly around, recording every detail.

BYRON (CONT'D)

And I could run no more. I turned
and looked into the lifeless eyes
and the bloodless face that was my
own. I screamed. I was already
dead.

Claire applauds happily; Byron shoots her a disgusted look.

BYRON (CONT'D)

What drivel.
(beat)
God, I bore even myself!

Byron tosses the handwritten sheets aside.

SHELLEY

I thought it was wonderful. And for
the evening's entertainment...

Shelley starts to pass Byron a pipe filled with opium. Byron
waves it away.

BYRON

It will take more than Morpheus'
smoke to quiet me tonight.

Mary turns to Methos in an attempt to change the subject.

MARY

I trust you had a pleasant journey
this afternoon, sir.

(CONTINUED)

1707 CONTINUED:

1707

METHOS

Only if one like to dance near the
halls of death.

Claire stands and pirouettes.

CLAIRE

I love to dance.

BYRON

(to Shelley)

What have you to cure a troubled
spirit? For mine has been wounded
in life's battles.

Claire giggles.

CLAIRE

You cannot wound a spirit.

Byron pulls a pistol from a desk. In a flash he's across
the patio, the barrel of the pistol pressed against Claire.

BYRON

Shall we test your theory, my little
nymph? Shall I kill you here and
now?

Claire gasps. Methos jumps to his feet.

METHOS

I think we've taken this game a little
far.

BYRON

(to Claire)

Shall I see your spirit rise up before
me? And pluck it from the air?

METHOS

Enough!

CLAIRE

I only meant... I only...

Under Methos' glare, Byron relents and lowers the pistol.
Claire breaks down, sobbing. Mary rushes to her side, holds
her.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

I do not know what I meant.

BYRON

Shelley, the laudunum.

(CONTINUED)

1707 CONTINUED: (2)

1707

Shelley produces a vial of laudanum, passes it to Claire who sips delicately. Her sobbing quiets. Byron is manic with energy.

BYRON (CONT'D)

Next time, preserve your ignorance
for one more deserving than I.

He raises his pistol and fires. A small statue SHATTERS.

1707A EXT. VILLA DIODATI - 1816 - NIGHT - ESTABLISHING

1707A

Lightning clashes. Wind howls. The old Villa looks like a castle against the stormy sky.

BYRON (O.S.)

Every one, come! Come!

1708 INT. VILLA DIODATI - DRAWNIG ROOM - NIGHT

1708

A roaring fire casts the room in an eerie light. Byron stands by the fireplace, book in hand. Methos, entering, looks at Byron with amused suspicion. The others straggle in behind him.

METHOS

What are you up to now?

BYRON

It is time for more stories.

He dramatically throws the book into the fire.

BYRON (CONT'D)

Let us call forth the armies of the
night and do them battle, soul to
soul, until they or we call hold,
enough, and give over the field.

SHELLEY

Sounds thrilling.

Mary reacts, exchanging a look with Methos -- less thrilled.

METHOS

Sounds morbid.

SHELLEY

Let us bring forth our own ghosts
from deep within us. From those
dead humors rattling round the
midnight of our souls.

Byron turns his gaze directly on Mary.

(CONTINUED)

BYRON

Who's next? The quiet "Mrs. Shelley?"

MARY

You mock me, sir, but I have known death. I have held it in my arms.

(beat)

I hope never to feel the like again.

BYRON

But feel you did. In tasting grief, in tasting fear, is that not the time we truly live?

(a challenge)

So, fair muse, what ghosts have you to share tonight?

Mary's confidence wilts in the blinding spotlight of Byron's attention. She turns her eyes away.

MARY

I'm afraid my imagination fails me at present.

BYRON

But look, dear lady. Your neighbor greedily gulps the nectar of creativity itself.

He takes the vial of laudanum from Claire and offers it to Mary. Conscious all eyes are on her, Mary seizes it boldly. She takes a quick sniff, then drinks deeply.

Almost immediately, her eyes glaze over, she begins to tremble violently. Byron glares at her suspiciously.

BYRON (CONT'D)

What melodrama is this?

Shelley giggles in a drunken stupor. Claire dances to music only she can hear.

But Methos sits up, concerned. Mary begins to CHOKE uncontrollably. He rushes to her side and supports her as her breathing eases.

METHOS

(to Shelley)

I think your wife has had enough, sir.

Shelley, too drunk to help, waves a languid hand.

(CONTINUED)

1708 CONTINUED: (2)

1708

SHELLEY

Carry on, dear doctor. Into your
hands I commend her spirit.

With a snort of disgust, Methos turns his back on Shelley
and scoops the swooning Mary into his arms.

1708A DREAM SEQUENCE

1708A

Flash cut in EXISTING FOOTAGE (STOCK) of surreal beasts,
talons and fangs, processed for DREAM EFFECT. Then CUT TO:

1709 INT. VILLA DIODATI - BEDROOM - LATER - 1816

1709

A barely conscious Mary tosses in her bed. Confused, blinking
through her laudanum haze, she looks up at Methos, who stands
over her.

MARY

Am I dead?

Methos smiles.

METHOS

If you are, then I must be an angel,
and that's the one thing I'm not.

MARY

All this talk of death and ghosts.

She begins to get drowsy again.

MARY (CONT'D)

I had a baby once. Clara.

(beat)

I dreamt she came back to life.

(through labored
breaths.)

With a beak for a mouth, snarling
teeth and claws for hands.

METHOS

It was only a dream.

MARY

Sometimes...

(she swallows)

Sometimes I wonder who is more
unhappy... those who die? Or those
who live.

She shivers. He softly strokes her hair, comforting her.

METHOS

You are wiser than you know.

(CONTINUED)

1709 CONTINUED:

1709

He pulls the covers up, tenderly tucking her in.

METHOS (CONT'D)

Perhaps, dear Mary... death is not truly journey's end, but merely another bend in the road.

(beat)

If we truly believe that, we can live without fear.

Her eyes closer she drops off into sleep.

BYRON (O.S.)

Bravo! Bravo!

Byron stands in the doorway, applauding and smirking at Methos.

METHOS

(a whispered hiss)

Be still!

Byron sits on the bed beside the barely conscious Mary. He fondles her hair.

BYRON

Still. So quiet. Almost like death.

His hand slips along her side, drifts down to her leg. Mary stirs in response.

BYRON (CONT'D)

Yet look! She stirs. Is she not beautiful?

METHOS

That she is.

Byron places Methos' hand on Mary's breast. Methos lets it stay for a moment, his eyes going from Byron's face to Mary's. Finally he takes the hand away.

METHOS (CONT'D)

Let her rest.

Byron's fingers trace the line of her leg up to her inner thigh. Mary MOANS softly.

BYRON

But would she want to sleep? I say we take her, and push the bounds of our rapture to heaven itself.

Methos is tempted, but resists.

(CONTINUED)

METHOS

I think we should leave before we
push the bounds of decency.

Byron laughs, and starts to unbutton Mary's gown.

BYRON

Decency means nothing. All that
matters is this moment, the three of
us here, in this room.

(with passion)

Look at her, feel her hunger.

(beat)

What's the point in living if we
don't taste what life offers us?

He kisses Mary, deeply.

METHOS

Enough!

Methos tears him away from Mary.

BYRON

How dare you!

(beat)

This is my home. My life. I will
do with it as I choose.

(with a smile)

Unless you choose to stop me.

With catlike grace, Byron draws his sword from his cane,
holds it at the ready. Methos shakes his head, does not
answer the challenge.

METHOS

Put it away and leave her be. I'd
rather have your poetry than your
head.

There's an edge of steel. Something in the voice. There's
no sword in his hand, but Byron sees the tip of the iceberg
of something he doesn't want to mess with. He petulantly
sheathes his sword.

BYRON

Very well. As a favor to you.

TRANSITION TO:

1710 EXT. BLUES CLUB - THE PRESENT - NIGHT

1710

The place is closing down, everyone's coming out. Mike tags
along with Dawson, Methos and MacLeod, still brimming with
excitement.

(CONTINUED)

1710 CONTINUED:

1710

MIKE

When I was up there, it was like
Clapton was in my head and I was
playing along.

DAWSON

Listen, you wanna open for us tomorrow
night? It's okay with Maurice.

MIKE

Are you kidding? I'd do anything.
Whatever it takes.

MACLEOD

(a smile)

I think you already did what it takes.

DAWSON

Come on by in the morning, we'll run
some tunes, see how it feels.

Mike's enthusiastic response is cut off as the club door
opens again and Byron and the Girls emerge, heading for their
waiting limo.

BYRON

Hey, Mike... Wanna come jam?

MIKE

You're serious?!

BYRON

I'm only asking once.

MIKE

Sure!

As Mike moves to follow Byron --

DAWSON

See you in the morning.

MIKE

I'll be there.
(head spinning)
I can't believe this is all happening.

DAWSON

(a little concerned)

One thing at a time, okay? Don't
get crazy.

MIKE

Sure, yeah.

(CONTINUED)

1710 CONTINUED: (2)

1710

Byron starts to leave.

BYRON
Now or never, Mike.

MIKE
(to Dawson)
I gotta go.

He hurries off after Byron, gets in the limo. MacLeod looks to Methos.

MACLEOD
Arrogant son-of-a-bitch.

METHOS
Most geniuses are.
(a shrug)
He's connected. He could make Mike's
career with one phone call.

Dawson watches the limo pull out into traffic, unable to conceal a touch of concern.

DAWSON
Yeah, kid's in the big time now.

1711 EXT. BYRON'S PENTHOUSE BALCONY - NIGHT

1711

Byron and Mike balance along a slippery railing.

The Girls stand nearby, champagne in hand.

BYRON;
How do you like it?

Wide-eyed Mike looks down.

MIKE
I'm too scared to tell.

BYRON
Hah! Of course you are! Scared...
to... DEATH!

He flings his arms wide like some giant leather bird of prey.

BYRON (CONT'D)
Suck it in, man! Savor the fear!

Mike hesitates.

BYRON (CONT'D)
You can do this.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

1711 CONTINUED:

1711

BYRON (CONT'D)

(beat)

Look deep. Let it fly.

Mike gets caught up in the moment. He mimics Byron, arms outstretched, head thrown back. The wind whips his hair.

BYRON (CONT'D)

That's it.

(beat)

Death! Life! Fear! Swirl it around in your mouth... and spit it out!

Mike lives a moment of sweet ecstasy...

BYRON (CONT'D)

Feel it.

Then, Mike slips. Loses his footing, topples off the rail --

Byron catches him by his belt, pulls him back to safety. He spins Mike around, grips his face, locks on with those tractor beam eyes of his. A voice like dark thunder...

BYRON (CONT'D)

You were there.

Mike nods excitedly.

MIKE

What a rush! What's next?

BYRON

Now you are alive. Now we play!

1712 INT. BYRON'S PENTHOUSE LOFT - NIGHT

1712

Decorated in eclectic Punk-Gothic. Oversized windows show the lights of Paris. Giant modernistic CANDELABRAS throw molten half-light on twisted shapes of furniture. Bizarre works of ART dot the walls (Monet meets Kandinsky), interspersed with various rock and movie POSTERS. One of them is an oversized poster of "Frankenstein." The overall effect is sensual, exciting... but also unsettling.

An UNEARTHLY WAIL rips through the air.

Mike riffs drunkenly on his guitar. A near-empty glass of whiskey sits at his elbow.

Something moves across the room. A dark, squirming mass of human limbs. A MOAN. A SHRIEK. Pleasure? Pain?

The shadows shift.

(CONTINUED)

1712 CONTINUED:

1712

It's Byron and the Girls playing Kama Sutra - The Home Game.
Byron unravels himself, applauds Mike's playing.

BYRON

Bravo! You are the man.

Mike's got whiskey tongue.

MIKE

Uh... thanks. You really think so?

BYRON

I said so.

(to one of the Girls)

Didn't I say so?

She nods. The Girls float over, snuggle up to Mike, now
duly baptized by the Master.

BYRON (CONT'D)

(back to Mike)

You're coming by the studio tomorrow,
right? Sit in on some tracks. Meet
some people.

MIKE

(going for cool)

You know it.

Byron pulls out a small packet, raises it high above his
head.

BYRON

Nightcap, anyone?

He snorts a pinch of white powder, offers it next to Mike.
Mike shakes his head.

MIKE

Thanks, but... I don't think so. I,
uh, I oughta get going.

Byron's eyes turn to ice.

BYRON

That's cool.

MIKE

So... what time tomorrow?

BYRON

(cool)

Actually, tomorrow's a little busy.
But my manager'll send you a coupla
tickets for the show.

(CONTINUED)

1712 CONTINUED: (2)

1712

He turns his back on Mike. A silent signal. The Girls drift back to Byron, sidestepping Mike like fresh roadkill.

Disappointed, Mike grabs his guitar, weaves toward the door.

BYRON (CONT'D)

Don't know what you're missing.

Mike turns around. Byron's smiling face floats an inch away. His eyes flash like Fourth of July fireworks. Inside, Mike feels himself slipping off that railing again. Slipping and falling. Into Byron's eyes, Byron's smile... how bad could it be?

He puts out his hand, takes the packet of white powder.

BYRON (CONT'D)

You're the man.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

1713 INT. BLUES CLUB - DAY

1713

It's early in the day, the club is empty. Except for Dawson and his band practicing on stage for an audience of MacLeod and Methos. Maurice putters around behind the bar.

Mike enters, high as a kite. He heads for the stage, starts taking out his guitar. Everyone stops playing and looks at him.

DAWSON

You're late.

MIKE

Sorry.

DAWSON

You don't want to do this, just say so.

MIKE

No, man, I'm ready.

He runs a couple of chords. With a shrug, Joe signals his guys and they start playing. Mike joins in, but he's sloppy, fighting to keep up, squinting at his instrument. Yesterday's magic is nowhere in sight.

MacLeod and Methos exchange a look, realizing, just as

DAWSON

stops playing and puts a hand on Mike's arm, stopping him.

MIKE

What?

DAWSON

Maybe you should get some sleep. We'll do this later.

MACLEOD

Tough night?

MIKE

It was hot. You should've heard me. Byron said I was awesome. I was flying.

MACLEOD

I think you still are.

(CONTINUED)

1713 CONTINUED:

1713

MacLeod and Dawson share a look.

DAWSON

(beat)

He give you something to help you
along?

MIKE

What do you mean, man?

DAWSON

Look...

Dawson takes a deep breath, decides to take the plunge.

DAWSON (CONT'D)

Maybe this is none of my business.

Mike sees it coming, starts to squirm.

MIKE

Maybe it isn't. You should have
heard me. I was never better.

DAWSON

Getting high doesn't help your
playing. You just think it does.

MIKE

You accusing me of something?

DAWSON,

Nothing I haven't done myself. And
paid for. Words of wisdom... take
'em or leave 'em.

Mike gets his back up.

MIKE

Look, man. We're talking about
Byron. You should be happy for me,
not bitching at me.

He storms off, almost knocking Maurice down as he exits.
Dawson looks after him in frustration.

DAWSON

Screwed that up, didn't I?

MACLEOD

Somebody did.

He looks over at Methos, waiting. With a sigh, Methos stands
up.

(CONTINUED)

METHOS

I'll go talk to Byron.

MACLEOD

I'll join you.

(off Methos' reaction)

Just to make sure he listens.

DAWSON

Thanks, guys.

They exit. Dawson picks up his guitar, but his heart's not in it, he doesn't play.

Maurice, wiping a nearby table, looks up at Dawson.

MAURICE

You are worried.

DAWSON

Damn right. Kid's in a tough place.

MAURICE

To play the great music, one must embrace life, yes?

DAWSON

The good and the bad, hallelujah.

MAURICE

I was a young man, working in my Uncle's club, the first time I heard Charlie Parker.

(beat)

Sometimes the man is not as strong as the music.

Maurice shrugs his world weary shoulders, moves off, leaving a troubled Dawson on stage.

1714 INT. BYRON'S PENTHOUSE LOFT - DAY

1714

Lord Byron lays down the law to his MANAGER, who scribbles notes furiously on a pad as Byron is lambasting him.

BYRON

Life, my friend, is in the details.
I like almonds, not cashews.

MacLeod and Methos enter mid-harangue. Byron stabs the air with his cane for emphasis. It's clear he's just busting the guy's chops.

BYRON (CONT'D)

Shelled, roasted, unsalted.

(CONTINUED)

1714 CONTINUED:

1714

Methos watches this display with bemusement, but MacLeod registers a scowl of distaste. Byron plays up the moment for their benefit.

BYRON (CONT'D)

And fed to me by women... Tall women... With long black hair...

(beat)

I know you want to make me happy.

The Manager scampers off. Byron relaxes, all calm and grace, turns to MacLeod and Methos.

BYRON (CONT'D)

Afternoon, boys.

METHOS

Still lacerating the help, I see.

BYRON

Ahhh, it's good to be the Star.

MACLEOD

You and Mike had quite a session last night.

BYRON

Kid's got a good shot.

MACLEOD

That's why we're here.

Byron ignores MacLeod, pulls out another packet of white powder and offers it to his guests.

METHOS

Pass.

BYRON

Got to rev the motor or you're just idling.

(beat)

Don't know how you guys live without it.

MACLEOD

Just fine, thanks. And so did Mike. At least until last night.

Byron snorts some coke, reacts.

BYRON

Whoa! That's better. Immortality gets pretty damn dull after the first couple centuries, doesn't it?

(CONTINUED)

1714 CONTINUED: (2)

1714

He sniffs, wipes his nose, refocuses on Methos.

BYRON (CONT'D)

What's the secret, Doc? What do you do when there's nothing left but the deep, cold emptiness that stretches for centuries behind us... when you look in the mirror and all you see is the abomination that you are.

Methos doesn't answer.

TRANSITION TO:

1715 INT. VILLA DIODATI - HALLWAY - 1816 - ANOTHER NIGHT

1715

Mary stands by the door to the drawing room. She appears tentative, unsure of entering.

Footsteps behind her. She turns. It's Methos. He offers her his arm.

METHOS

Shall we?

MARY

I confess, I'm afraid to go in.

METHOS

It's just his way of being entertaining.

(beat)

They're only ghost stories.

MARY

Told by master wordsmiths. Lord Byron's words are things that will live forever. What have I to offer in such company?

METHOS

Your heart. Your dreams.

(beat)

Your nightmares.

Mary turns sharply. Something in his voice. A confession?

MARY

Is that where you found your story?

Methos nods slowly.

MARY (CONT'D)

Pray, tell me.

(CONTINUED)

1715 CONTINUED:

1715

He shakes his head.

METHOS

Not now.

He gently takes her hand and pulls her toward the drawing room.

METHOS (CONT'D)

Come, let us show Byron and Shelley
that they do not have the only
creative minds of the day.

1716 INT. VILLA DIODATI - DRAWING ROOM - 1816 - NIGHT

1716

Claire, stoned and drunk, dress falling off her shoulders, plays the piano for Shelley, Byron and Dr. Polidori. As Methos and Mary enter, Byron stands, aims his cane in their direction.

BYRON

We began to despair of your company.

He bends over Shelley's ear, whispers loudly so all can hear.

BYRON (CONT'D)

Hark, Percy! The good Doctor is in
love with your Mary. What say you
to that?

Shelley raises a glass of claret in a drunken toast.

SHELLEY

I say run! And fleet be thy feet.
Fly from love, that horned beast
that impales all men!

Mary looks stricken, but says nothing -- this isn't the first wound she's received at Shelley's hand.

Methos is about to retort when he gets the BUZZ. His eyes meet Byron's -- another Immortal. Byron moves to him.

BYRON

(sotto)

It seems my destiny awaits.

(to the assembled
company)

With your permission, my friends.

He takes Methos by the arm and they leave the drawing room together, Mary's eyes following them out.

1717 INT. VILLA DIODATI - HALLWAY - 1816 - CONTINUOUS

1717

Methos and Byron move toward the front door.

METHOS

The jealous husband?

They reach the door. Someone is pounding on it from outside. Byron pulls it open to reveal Hans Kershner, soaked to the skin from the storm outside.

BYRON

Hans, good friend! Come, man. Warm thy sodden self by my fire.

WHAM!

Kershner lets loose with a roundhouse punch. Knocks Byron on his ass.

KERSHNER

That is for my wife!

Kershner draws his sword.

KERSHNER (CONT'D)

Defend yourself!

Byron makes a show of standing shakily, leaning heavily on his cane, favoring his lame foot.

BYRON

Alas, my good man, I am a poet, not a warrior.

KERSHNER

What you are is a cuckolding cripple.

Byron whips his sword out suddenly, coming erect, putting paid to the image of a man too lame to fight.

BYRON

Try me, and you shall see the poet's mettle.

Methos hastily tries to intervene.

METHOS

(to Byron)

You're not ready for this. Give way.

(to Kershner)

Think, man, who this is. Would you be Lord Byron's murderer?

(CONTINUED)

1717 CONTINUED:

1717

BYRON

(brash)

He shall be Lord Byron's first
conquest.

Kershner draws his own sword.

KERSHNER

Try me then, boy.

Methos is forced to dodge out from between the two combatants
as

BYRON

makes the first lunge, driving Kershner through the door and
out onto

1718 EXT. VILLA DIODATI - PATIO - 1816 - CONTINUOUS

1718

The patio stones are slippery under the falling rain. Byron
and Kershner struggle for footing as they dodge and parry.
Methos watches from the front steps.

ANGLE ON THE FRENCH DOORS

where MARY watches secretly.

BACK TO SCENE

as Byron presses Kershner to his knees. He struggles to get
up, loses his balance...

BYRON

knocks KERSHNER'S SWORD from his hands and presses the point
of his sword to Kershner's throat.

ANGLE ON THE FRENCH DOORS

Mary GASPS in wide-eyed horror.

METHOS

hears her, sees her watching. He calls to Byron:

METHOS (CONT'D)

My Lord!

Byron looks up, sees Mary, potential witness.

A BEAT. Then, through clenched teeth, to Kershner...

(CONTINUED)

1718 CONTINUED:

1718

BYRON

I give you your head. Leave now,
and live.

Byron relaxes his stance, turns his back on Kershner and heads for the patio doors. But Kershner's no man of honor. He scrambles over to where his SWORD lies...

Mary watches Byron approach. Over his shoulder, she sees something FLASH in the moonlight. Steel. Suddenly, her hand flies to her mouth as...

KERSHNER (O.S.)

Arggggghhhhhh!

Byron arches his back as Kershner's SWORD strikes a mortal wound.

Mary makes as though to run forward. Methos grabs her, holds her back.

Kershner withdraws his sword. Raises it for the killing blow.

BYRON

using every last ounce of life left, swivels around, brings his sword up with both hands,

WHOOSH!

and takes KERSHNER'S HEAD.

BYRON falls dead.

ANGLE ON

a horrified MARY, struggling to pull away from Methos as he tries to drag her away

ZAP!

A LIGHTNING FLASH freezes her in her tracks. Another FLASH illuminates the carnage before her as the awesome power of the QUICKENING twists and contorts Byron's lifeless body like a dancing dead thing.

And then, it's over. The lightning ends. The thunder stops. Only the wind and the rain remain.

Mary stands stunned, having seen it all, Methos still holding her.

(CONTINUED)

1718 CONTINUED: (2)

1718

Byron lies dead next to his fallen foe.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

1719 EXT. VILLA DIODATI - 1816 - NIGHT

1719

Methos kneels by Byron. Mary's blanched face, stares at them, stunned beyond belief.

MARY

How...

Byron stirs weakly. Mary stares at the wound in his chest, now healed.

Methos takes her hand. She recoils from his touch.

MARY (CONT'D)

He lives. Yet I saw...

METHOS

A trick of the storm.

MARY

I am not Claire! Do not speak to me like a fool!

He nods his acknowledgment. No lies.

MARY (CONT'D)

I saw him die, and live again. While my little Clara lies buried in her grave.

(beat)

How can he live! While my flesh and blood turns to dust! Explain this!

Methos grabs her hands, speaks earnestly.

METHOS

There is no explanation.

(the best he can do)

He is not governed by the laws of mortal flesh. His kind is different.

MARY

How do you know this? How can you know this?

He looks in her eyes, cannot deny her the truth.

METHOS

Because I am like him.

(beat)

Immortal.

(CONTINUED)

1719 CONTINUED:

1719

Mary looks from the recovering Byron to Methos. Sees the truth in his eyes. Her anger gives way to tentative wonder.

METHOS (CONT'D)

I beseech you, tell no one. We must live in secret.

MARY

(understanding)
Or you would be hunted.

METHOS

For the perversion of nature that we are.

MARY

How many years have you walked this earth?

METHOS

Centuries.
(beat)
Too many centuries.

Mary meets his gaze.

MARY

Poor, tormented creature. The sad hero of a never ending story. Resurrected by lightning to eternal life and eternal loneliness.

She reaches out to touch his face, to comfort him.

Before Methos can speak, Byron coughs back to life, interrupting the moment. He sits up, taking in the scene.

BYRON

An interesting bit of entertainment this was, I wager.

He rises, does his best to brush off his sodden clothes.

BYRON (CONT'D)

Come, there is a fire inside, and stories to tell.

(to Mary)
If you have one.

MARY

I do. Mine will be about the anguish of immortality.

(CONTINUED)

1719 CONTINUED: (2)

1719

METHOS

(looking at Byron)
And what, Mary Shelley, will you
call your story?

MARY

"The Modern Prometheus"... a man
born of fire.

TRANSITION TO:

1720 INT. BYRON'S PENTHOUSE LOFT - THE PRESENT

1720

Byron stands in front of the giant "Frankenstein" poster.
He reads to MacLeod and Methos from a book...

BYRON

"Light, feeling, and sense will pass
away; and in this condition must I
find my happiness."

He snaps the book shut.

BYRON (CONT'D)

"Frankenstein," gentlemen.
(beat)
Mary Shelley's greatest work.

MacLeod's getting restless.

MACLEOD

Get to the point.

BYRON

The point is we're all Frankenstein's
monster. Doomed to walk the frozen
tundra for eternity.

(gestures to MacLeod
and Methos)

Or the streets of Paris. What's the
difference?

(picks up cocaine)

At least this gives us the illusion
of life.

He holds it out to MacLeod. MacLeod SMACKS it out of his
hand, scattering white powder everywhere.

MACLEOD

If that's your idea of life, you
might as well be dead.

BYRON

So speaks the hero.

(CONTINUED)

1720 CONTINUED:

1720

MACLEOD

I want you to listen to me. No
poetry... No illusions... no lies.
This is real, and it's a warning.

(beat)

Leave the kid alone.

Byron raises his hands in mock surrender. MacLeod turns on his heel, storms out with Methos on his tail.

Byron stands alone with the giant poster of the monster he has come to despise as himself.

1721 EXT. STREET - DAY

1721

MacLeod and Methos buy a couple of crepes from a street corner vendor, walk and talk.

METHOS

Didn't think you two would hit it
off. Matter and anti-matter. Put
'em in the same room... kaboom!

MACLEOD

Your friend is a mess.

METHOS

(mild)

He's a genius.

MACLEOD

He's pathetic.

METHOS

It would be easy to think so.

(beat)

Do you remember what it's like to be
so hungry it hurts?

(off MacLeod's nod)

Byron feels like that all the time.
Twenty thousand people screaming his
name, and it's not enough to fill
that hole inside him.

(beat; you'd almost

think he'd been there)

Always wanting more. Always needing
more.

(beat)

Try it sometime.

MACLEOD

No thanks.

Methos pauses, searches his memory quickly, recites...

(CONTINUED)

1721 CONTINUED:

1721

METHOS

"She walks in beauty, like the night
Of cloudless climes and starry skies."

MACLEOD

"And all that's best of dark and
bright Meet in her aspect and her
eyes."

(beat)

I know the poem.

METHOS

Point is, how can you think like
that, write like that... without
being larger than life? Mozart.
Van Gogh. Charlie Parker. Messed
up guys.

MACLEOD

DaVinci. Bach. Nice, normal guys.
And great artists.

METHOS

C'mon... you can't deny the world
needs its Jim Morrisons, its Kurt
Cobains... and yes, its Lord Byrons.

(beat)

He's given the world great poetry.
And he will again.

MACLEOD

At what price?

1722 EXT. BYRON'S ROOFTOP - DAY

1722

Pouring RAIN. Booming THUNDER. Dazzling FLASHES of
lightning. But the most dramatics element of all is

LORD BYRON

naked to the waist, hugging a lightning rod anchored to the
roof. Byron tosses his head back, lets out a PRIMAL HOWL
like a wolf from hell.

BYRON

Ahhhhhhhh! C'mon, old man! Come
get me! Are you there?!

Another FLASH of lightning streaks across the sky. Over the
noise of the rain and thunder Byron SHRIEKS to the heavens...

BYRON (CONT'D)

Coward!

He runs his TONGUE along the wet lightning rod.

(CONTINUED)

BYRON (CONT'D)

(to someone O.S.)

That's the difference between you
and me

(hugs the rod)

I embrace life. You run from it.

He turns his scowling face to

MIKE

standing off to one side, drenched and miserable.

BYRON

"Daddy" doesn't like you playing in
my sandbox.

MIKE

I didn't tell them to come. I swear.

BYRON

Details, kid. I don't need the
aggravation, know what I mean?

MIKE

But they don't understand.

BYRON

Of course they don't. They never
will. Because they're dead and they
don't even know it.

(beat)

The world is full of small men with
small dreams.

(pulling him close)

What do you want, Mike?

(beat)

Are you ready to grab onto life with
both hands and squeeze it 'til it
screams for mercy?

MIKE

I'm ready!

Byron lets go of him, shoves him away.

BYRON

I don't think so. You want to play
in the big time, gotta be a big boy.

(beat)

Go home, kid.

A brilliant FLASH of lightning directly overhead. Byron
SCREAMS to the thunder, to the heavens.

(CONTINUED)

1722 CONTINUED: (2)

1722

BYRON (CONT'D)

C'mon, I dare you!

Mike watches for a moment, then leaves.

1723 EXT. BLUES CLUB - DAY

1723

MacLeod and Dawson are approaching the club together. As they reach it, Mike Paladino peels out of the doorway. He's pissed.

MIKE

Thanks for nothing, you guys.

MacLeod knows Dawson doesn't deserve that tone of voice.

MACLEOD

You have a problem?

MIKE

Did I ask you to mind my business?

(beat)

Just stay the hell out of my life.

(re Dawson)

If he wants to spend the rest of his life playing in dives like this, that's fine. But I don't.

He turns to storm away. A HAND reaches out, grabs him roughly by the arm, spins him around. It's MacLeod.

MACLEOD

Who the hell do you think you're talking to?

MIKE

Let go.

MACLEOD

Call a cop.

(stares him down)

All we're doing is looking out for you.

(beat)

And Joe could be the best friend you'll ever have.

MIKE

(sarcastic)

Right. He's gonna make me a star.

MACLEOD

You think Byron gives a damn about you? You think he cares whether you live or die?

(CONTINUED)

1723 CONTINUED:

1723

MIKE

He's my shot.

DAWSON

Maybe.

His face conflicted, Mike doesn't answer. He turns and walks off. Dawson calls after him.

DAWSON (CONT'D)

Hey.

Mike looks back.

DAWSON (CONT'D)

You're still opening tonight.

Mike hesitates, then keeps on walking.

1724 INT. BYRON'S PENTHOUSE LOFT - DAY

1724

Byron sits alone in his loft, a half empty bottle of Jack Daniels in one hand, "Frankenstein" looming over his shoulder.

BYRON

(quoting Byron's
"Prometheus")

"Titan! to whose immortal eyes The
sufferings of mortality; Seen in
their sad reality. Were not as things
that gods despise..."

A KNOCK at the door. Byron twitches -- the spider sensing the fly. He's his old arrogant, sneering self as he opens the door on Mike.

BYRON (CONT'D)

Mommy say you could come out and
play?

Mike struts past him forcefully.

MIKE

I don't need anybody's permission to
do anything.

BYRON

By George, I think he's got it.
(clapping his hands)
Bravo! Let's celebrate.

He moves to a table, opens a drawer, and takes out a silver case containing a syringe.

(CONTINUED)

1724 CONTINUED:

1724

BYRON (CONT'D)
Name your poison.

Mike hesitates.

BYRON (CONT'D)
Mike, are you going to disappoint
me?

1725 EXT. BLUES CLUB - NIGHT

1725

Mid-scene, Dawson talks to MacLeod.

MACLEOD
Mike never showed up?

Dawson shakes his head.

DAWSON
What the hell. Maybe I shoulda
figured. Who'd choose my life over
Byron's?

MACLEOD
You would.

DAWSON
(sadly)
He wouldn't be here if it wasn't for
me.

MACLEOD
Don't hold yourself responsible for
him, Joe.

DAWSON
You would.
(beat)
The kid's got a whole life in front
of him.

MACLEOD
Yeah.
(beat)
I'll see you later.

MacLeod starts to head down the street.

DAWSON
Where are you going?

MacLeod calls back over his shoulder.

MACLEOD
Where do you think?

1726 INT. BYRON'S PENTHOUSE LOFT - NIGHT

1726

The loft is dark, still, quiet.

BANG BANG!

Someone pounds on the door.

A BEAT.

THWACK! The door flies open, SPLINTERS the frame.

MACLEOD bursts in. He quickly scans the room... it appears to be empty.

He turns to leave, notices something...

something white...

a HAND...

trailing out from behind the sofa.

He dashes over looks down.

MACLEOD'S POV

MIKE lies in a contorted heap, his dead white face staring glassy-eyed at the ceiling.

MACLEOD knows in his heart it's hopeless, but he drops to his knees, feels for a pulse. The kid is cold.

MACLEOD

Damn him!

He grabs the nearest thing that isn't nailed down -- a lamp, an empty whiskey tumbler, maybe a chair -- and hurls it across the room at the gloomy Frankenstein poster, shattering the glass.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

1727 EXT. STADIUM - NIGHT 1727

Establishing.

1728 INT. STADIUM - DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT 1728

A couple of tall women with long black hair are leaving Byron's dressing room. They pass Methos on his way in.

BYRON

Hey, Doc!

Byron's dressed in his concert costume -- a gothic burlesque of studded leather and Renaissance frills.

BYRON (CONT'D)

Gonna be a killer show tonight.

METHOS

I'm not here for the show.

BYRON

Well...

He gestures to a buffet table laden with liquor and food.

BYRON (CONT'D)

Party doesn't start 'til later, but hey... make yourself at home.

METHOS

Leave town.

BYRON

Say what?

Distant CROWD NOISE begins to swell in b.g.

METHOS

MacLeod will be coming here.

(beat)

As an old friend, I'm telling you now would be a good time to go on tour.

(beat)

In another country.

BYRON

And disappoint my fans? I've got a show to do. Tonight.

(CONTINUED)

METHOS

It used to be more than a show.

(beat)

You were reaching for the heavens.

BYRON

(with passion)

There is no heaven. It's an illusion
for fools and innocents.

(beat)

I have no dreams, no hopes, no poetry
left. I feel nothing but this gnawing
hunger and hear nothing but my own
voice, screaming my failure.

(beat)

You know what I am.

METHOS

(with sympathy)

Yes. I know.

Byron can't take pity. He comes up close to Methos, slinks
an arm around his shoulder. Covering up his moment of pain
with a mocking tone:

BYRON

But do you know who you are? You're
the guy in the audience, Doc. And
I'm the guy on the flying trapeze.

(the old smugness)

Who's having more fun?

METHOS

But who lives longest?

BYRON

Who cares!

METHOS

I do.

BYRON

Do you want a tombstone that says,
"He lived for centuries." Or one
that says, "For centuries, he was
ALIVE!"

METHOS

You haven't been listening. I don't
want a tombstone.

The b.g. noise gets louder as the CROWD begins to CHANT...

CROWD (O.S.)

By-ron! By-ron! By-ron!

(CONTINUED)

1728 CONTINUED: (2)

1728

Byron cocks an ear.

BYRON

Hear that!? They're playing my song.

Byron picks up his guitar and heads for the door.

1729 INT. STADIUM - TUNNEL - MOMENTS LATER

1729

Methos walks down the tunnel that leads from the dressing rooms to the stage.

Byron's band can be heard as MUFFLED ROCK in b.g.

Methos gets the BUZZ. He turns.

MACLEOD

strides purposefully forward.

MACLEOD

Mike Paladino's dead. O.D.ed.

Methos puts himself in his path, tries to slow him down.

METHOS

I don't suppose a discussion about personal responsibility would interest you right now.

MACLEOD

Sure it would. I hold Byron personally responsible.

METHOS

He didn't force Mike to do anything.

MACLEOD

That's a load of crap and you know it. Mike is dead because of Byron.

METHOS

Mike is dead because of Mike.

MACLEOD

That boy idolized him, and Byron put the gun in his hand and dared him to pull the trigger.

(with passion)

"To live like me you have to be like me."

(beat)

Except Mike couldn't. He wasn't Immortal.

(CONTINUED)

1729 CONTINUED:

1729

METHOS

And that's Byron's fault?

He pushes past. Methos runs to catch up.

METHOS (CONT'D)

Mac, wait! Think about the poetry
he's written, the music he's made.
The music he has yet to make. Are
you prepared to kill all that?

MacLeod comes up short, gets in Methos' face.

MACLEOD

And what about Mike? What music
could he have made?

Methos is quiet. No answer.

Eyes hard, jaw set, MacLeod moves off down the tunnel, the
CROWD CHEERING in b.g. Methos lets him go.

1730 INT. STADIUM - BACKSTAGE - CONTINUOUS

1730

Byron's band has finished their set. Manic CHEERS and
WHISTLES continue b.g. as Byron bounces backstage.

Drenched in sweat, eyes blazing, panting like he's just run
the Boston Marathon...

He gets the BUZZ. A tall FIGURE storms down the dark tunnel.
It passes under an overhead light --

MACLEOD

bears down on him like a freight train from hell.

BYRON

Lemme guess? You want an autograph.

MACLEOD

No thanks.

MacLeod pulls his sword.

Byron flicks his cane and out comes his sword, and then with
his freehand, pulls a larger blade.

In the B.G., the crowd is chanting.

BYRON

Listen to that! They love me!

(CONTINUED)

1730 CONTINUED:

1730

MACLEOD

But it doesn't help, does it?

(beat)

Tell me, is there anything you despise
more than yourself?

BYRON

(stung)

You.

Byron lashes out. MacLeod meets the challenge. They duel
down the corridor and out into --

1731 EXT. STADIUM - STAGE DOOR - CONTINUOUS

1731

They circle each other.

BYRON

You think all this is about right
and wrong. It's not nearly that
significant.

(beat)

In the end, this --

(pointing his sword
at MacLeod)

Is all that matters.

Byron lunges, MacLeod deflects the blow, knocks Byron a bit
off balance. But years of compensating for his lame right
foot have made Byron extremely dexterous. He twists in the
air, comes back ready to attack.

MacLeod puts his back into it, goes at him with a series of
rapid swings. CLANG!

Byron's SWORD is knocked out of his hands, goes flying through
a car window. Glass SHATTERS.

MacLeod swings, takes Byron's head.

The QUICKENING begins.

LIGHTNING dances overhead.

FLOODLIGHTS Pop And EXPLODE in the electrical storm.

B.g., the excited crowd CHEERS at the spectacular LIGHT SHOW
high in the sky above the stadium.

Back on the ground,

MACLEOD convulses in a paroxysm of ecstasy as he receives
the strange wild sacrament that was Byron's essence.

(CONTINUED)

1731 CONTINUED:

1731

All the brooding, flamboyant intensity of one of the world's great artists... and all the despair and melancholy inherent within.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT : TAG

FADE IN:

1732 INT. BLUES CLUB - NIGHT

1732

Quiet. After hours. Empty tables. The late night crowd is gone.

On the dim stage, Dawson and his guitar play a sad, meandering melody.

Methos sits at a nearby table nursing a beer.

MacLeod enters. Methos looks up, their eyes meet. And hold for a BEAT.

MACLEOD

Byron's dead.

Methos goes back to his beer.

MacLeod glances toward Dawson. No reaction. Did he hear him? He takes a step toward the stage.

DAWSON

I heard you.

He looks at MacLeod with empty eyes. He shakes his head, goes back to his guitar.

MacLeod moves over to Methos' table. An awkward BEAT -- MacLeod has nothing to apologize for, but after all... Byron was his friend.

Methos speaks to the table.

METHOS

I told you this was inevitable.

Close enough for MacLeod. He takes a seat. Methos looks up, shrugs.

METHOS (CONT'D)

Matter and anti-matter. I think Byron knew it, too.

MACLEOD

It didn't have to be that way. He could have stopped it. Before Mike got hurt.

METHOS

Byron? Back off? No way.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

1732 CONTINUED:

1732

METHOS (CONT'D)

(beat)

Not after all the years that led up
to this moment. His life had become
one long tragedy.

He takes a sip of beer.

METHOS (CONT'D)

And we all know how those end, don't
we?

But MacLeod doesn't answer.

He just nods, listening to the lonely wail of Dawson's guitar.

FADE OUT.

THE END