

Snake Person!

By Daniel Uhlenberg

BLACK SCREEN

The words, "11:48 AM, Culver City"

CALVIN (V.O.)

You think you have me *trapped*, Doctor Crime? Your laser cage is nothing but an inconvenience! Nothing can confine a hero when there's justice to be made!

INT. AUDITION - DAY

Our protagonist CALVIN SLITHERMAN -- a mildly overweight man in his early 30s whose head is that of a snake -- is mid-audition. He has a heavily marked script in hand and a cape around his neck. He's visibly nervous. Facing him is a table, behind which are three muck-a-mucks -- ambiguous, auspicious, unimpressed. One of whom is the CASTING DIRECTOR, tight-lipped and always late for something or other.

CALVIN

After all, Los Angeles needs a hero now more than ever, and-- oh, shoot, there was a line before that.

Calvin shuffles through his script.

CALVIN (CONT'D)

Sorry, hold on, lemme just--

CASTING DIRECTOR

Uh, that's okay, we can stop there, uh... Supper Slurpin--

CALVIN

--Super Serpent. Can I just -- it gets really good around the--

CASTING DIRECTOR

No, that's alright, I think we got what we needed. Right, Emily?

The muck-a-muck to his right, presumably named EMILY -- blonde, curt, doesn't want to be here, snaps back to reality. She hadn't been paying attention.

EMILY

Yeah, sorry, I don't get it -- so you're supposed to be some kind of... lizard?

CALVIN
I'm a snake.

EMILY
Right. Is there any way you could
change that to, like, a cat? People
like cats.

CASTING DIRECTOR
Yeah, could you do a cat instead?

CALVIN
This is... my face.

Beat.

EMILY
Or maybe, like, could you do a horse?

CASTING DIRECTOR
Ooh, yeah, a horse would be good!

EXT. AUDITION ROOM -- SHORTLY

Calvin storms out of the audition, crumpling his script into a ball and tossing it in the trash. BRIE, "HOT ROD" RODMAN -- Calvin's childhood best friend of markedly diminutive stature -- jogs to catch up with him, chugging the last of her massive iced coffee.

BRIE
I'm your ride, idiot!

CALVIN
Oh, sorry, I didn't see you there
because... because you're so short...
and... stupid? Sorry, my creative
juices are totally drained, I don't
have it in me to--

BRIE
That bad, huh? What did they say?

CALVIN
Same as last time.

BRIE
I'm telling you -- bring a horse mask!
Be Horse Person!

CALVIN

I have the head of a snake! My last
name is Slitherman! My brand was
defined by my genes!

Calvin produces a car key-fob from his pocket. Brie's eyes
widen.

BRIE

Wait, how did you get tha--

Calvin clicks a button on the key-fob. Brie transforms into a
car. Her clothes are shredded, but she's a car. Calvin hops
inside. Brie drives off.

INT. BRIE -- SOON

Calvin, driving Brie, turns the radio on.

BRIE (O.S.)

I JUST GOT THOSE PANTS!

Calvin switches the radio off. His phone rings.

CALVIN

(As he answers his phone)

Brie, can you take the wheel for a
sec?

(into phone)

Hello?

TOM (O.S.)

Uh, yeah, hi -- Calvin? This is Tom
Waterbury from Waterbury Super Agency.

CALVIN

WHAT? Um, wow, nice to speak with you,
sir!

TOM (O.S.)

Yeah, so we've reviewed your tape and
want to bring you on.

CALVIN

You WHAT? Really?

TOM (O.S.)

Yeah, we want to represent you.
Congratulations.

CALVIN

I'm so excited to be a part of the team -- I've been auditioning f--

TOM (O.S.)

You'll be our first reptilian villain. We're all about representation here, so we're looking to include people of all colors. And now I guess green is a color of person. Whaddya gonna do?

Beat.

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

This isn't a race thing, I'm not a racist--

CALVIN

I'm sorry, did you say a villain?

TOM (O.S.)

Well yeah, you have the head of a snake.

CALVIN

I'm aware.

TOM (O.S.)

So anyway, we're gonna send some forms your way, be sure to give 'em the old lookie-lookie-signie-signie, yeah? Great, talk to you soon. You're gonna be a star, bud!

Tom hangs up. Calvin, stunned, turns the radio on. The car is immediately filled with horse noises.

BRIE (O.S.)

SHOULDA BEEN A HORSE, YOU FAT, GREEN IDIOT! HAAAAHA

CALVIN

AH! JESUS!

EXT. ROOF OF SKYSCRAPER -- INDETERMINABLE TIME

PERFECTO, a hero dressed head to toe in the gaudiest of spandex suits, stands near the roof's edge, his hands bound in sci-fi-looking handcuffs. Across from him, presumably victorious in some capacity, is PROFESSOR INSANITY, clad in an exaggerated lab coat and sunglasses!

PERFECTO

You'll never get away with this,
Professor Insanity! When I get out of
these electrium handcuffs, I'm gonna--

PROFESSOR INSANITY

Oh, but I already *have*! You're in no
position to make threats, are you? In
fact, I'd recommend you watch your
tone! Who knows when I might go...
insane?!

Professor Insanity begins laughing maniacally.

PERFECTO

Ugh! Shut your filthy trap, Professor.
Where's Barbara?!

PROFESSOR INSANITY

Barbara? Oh she's back at my lair. I
forget, did I put her in the laser
chair or the hungry bear gazebo? Maybe
that hamster wheel with razor blades
on it? Hm, I should probably check on
her, we don't want her to die alone,
do we?

Professor Insanity approaches Perfecto and holds him by the
collar even nearer the edge of the roof.

PROFESSOR INSANITY

But first, I must deal with you,
Perfecto! Now tell me, where--

Professor Insanity sneezes, instinctively releasing Perfecto
who falls off of the roof.

PERFECTO

OH FUCK

Beat. Professor Insanity is frozen in shock. He scrambles to
the ledge, peers over it, and stands -- his face is pale,
everything is silent. A distant thud, screaming from below.
The shot now wider, we see that this is a set. A crew of
appx. 15 people all stand in disbelief. Professor Insanity
sprints away.

CREW 1

That wasn't in the script.

DIRECTOR

Cut. Dave, is Perfecto one of the flying heroes?

CREW 2

Uh... no. I think he just talks to animals.

Beat.

CREW 2 (CONT'D)

Talked... to animals.

CREW 3

So, like, are we wrapping?

DIRECTOR

Get some B-roll first.

(Director picks a doughnut out of a box)

Is this really all we have for crafty?

INT. CALVIN'S HOUSE -- DAY

Calvin is signing papers, he's got a whole stack of them next to his laptop. Brie is lounging on the couch watching some sport and drinking a beer. Next to her is RODRIGO SANTOYO, Calvin and Brie's third Musketeer -- he's actually really attractive.

BRIE

I mean, it's still Waterbury Super.

CALVIN

Waterbury Supervillain, though.

BRIE

Still Waterbury. Have you thought of a cool villain name yet?

CALVIN

Oh, shoot, no... What about--

TITLE CARD: SNAKE PERSON, THEME MUSIC

CALVIN (CONT'D)

I just -- how could I be a villain? I let flies land on my food because they're probably hungry. I feel bad when I put the remote down too hard.

BRIE
I know, you're a massive bitch.

RODRIGO
A *massive* bitch.

CALVIN
No, I know! That's the problem!

Calvin's laptop chimes. Calvin checks it.

CALVIN (CONT'D)
Oh! And I've been assigned a nemesis!

Brie and Rodrigo perk up.

RODRIGO
Hey! Look at that! What does it say?

CALVIN
(Reading off of computer)
Dear Mr. Slitherman, blah blah blah,
mm mm mm, introduce you to your arch
nemesis, The Auteur.

BRIE
The Auteur?

CALVIN
Yeah, The Auteur. Attached is his
profile.

Brie and Rodrigo scramble to Calvin's side.

RODRIGO
I have to see this.

CALVIN
My dearest Calvin Slitherman, my name
is The Auteur, but friends call me
Andy. I noticed that you haven't
penned a pseudonym as of yet. 'Tis
this an artistique choice? Tre
magnifique!

BRIE
Holy shit.

EXT. MOUNTAINTOP -- DAY

Everything is in black and white. Standing triumphant is THE

AUTEUR, visually dripping with a smug superiority. When he speaks, his words appear as French subtitles.

AUTEUR

I was born with a love of cinéma in my monochromatic heart, a heart of art, the silver screen was both my parent and my lover.

INT. CALVIN'S HOUSE -- IMMEDIATELY

RODRIGO

Ew.

EXT. MOUNTAINTOP -- DAY

AUTEUR

I feel my person itself was crafted in the womb of Kubrick's eye, in Tarantino's brazen brain. I aim to liberate the world with not my brawn, but my art. I wish to defeat you with my intelligence and taste--

INT. CALVIN'S HOUSE -- IMMEDIATELY

CALVIN

--and not with my fists or my feet. I yearn to--

BRIE

How much longer is this?

Beat. Calvin scrolls.

CALVIN

I think it's a feature.

Brie spits her drink out. Rodrigo begins laughing hysterically.

INT. MOVIE THEATER -- NIGHT

Calvin, a manager at this movie theater, patrols its paths and passageways with one of those orange flashlight things you see ushers and airport people using. With him is his fellow manager, PAIGE, an imposing woman with an even larger personality. He's showing her his phone.

CALVIN

It's this guy.

PAIGE

Yeah, I've seen him. Whenever we show anything in black and white, his condescending ass finds its way out of the woodwork. Asks the ushers questions he knows they can't answer, loves to scoff -- film school type.

Calvin shudders.

PAIGE (CONT'D)

How do you know him?

CALVIN

He's my nemesis -- at least, he's the one they assigned to me.

PAIGE

You got the job? You're a real life hero now? Damn, Calvin! Makes sense, your nemesis makes me wanna burn this whole place down. People like him ruin movies for everybody, talking about how Transformers is a, "love letter to the Japanese mecha genre which arose post WWII as a response to--"

CALVIN

Oh, no, he's the hero. I'm the villain.

PAIGE

You're the what now?

CALVIN

Apparently snakes don't make marketable heroes. Show business is a business, *baby*.

PAIGE

And you tried the horse thing?

Calvin shines the flashlight in her eyes briefly.

PAIGE (CONT'D)

At least you're flashy. My power's dumb as shit.

CALVIN

Well let me know when you finally decide to tell me what it is. I told

myself I'd stop asking you.

PAIGE

Shit, I'll show ya. Watch.

Two kids run almost past Paige and Calvin. Paige turns toward them.

PAIGE (CONT'D)

SLOW DOWN, YA STICKY-FINGERED SUGAR-
DEMONS!

The kids slow to a walking pace.

CALVIN

Jesus -- *mind control*?!

PAIGE

Mm, I wish. I just make people slow to
a walking pace when I yell at 'em. I
was an amazing lifeguard.

CALVIN

Yeah, that's pretty terrible, no
offense.

PAIGE

Omar can make his fingers get a little
longer, Stephanie can whistle outta
her eyeballs, Sebastian's just got a
whole lotta teeth.

CALVIN

Yeah, I noticed Sebastian.

PAIGE

Baby, everybody's noticed Sebastian.
He's got a *whole lotta teeth*.

Sebastian walks by with a broom and butler. Boy does in fact
have a **whole lotta teeth**. He shoots them a look indicating
that he knows they've been talking about him.

CALVIN

(To Sebastian)

We were talking about... someone else.

They stop inside the front door.

PAIGE

Anyway, I say lean into it. You're not

the first person to be typecast. They want you to be a villain? Damn, be a villain. Yeah, it's not your dream, but maybe it's a stepping stone. Lots of heroes have made the anti-hero transition.

CALVIN
Like Moral Ambiguity Man and his sidekick, Gray Area!

PAIGE
Yeah, I guess if you're going for the most on-the-nose example.

Through the door walks Perfecto, dressed casually.

CALVIN
Was that... Perfecto?

PAIGE
Let me check. Hey womanhood, was that Perfecto?

Paige shuffles in place.

PAIGE (CONT'D)
Oh, that was Perfecto, alright. I'm gonna go do my job and provide some hospitality.

CALVIN
Do you think of those on the spot?

INT. BOX OFFICE -- SOON

Calvin enters the box office, it's pretty dead. There's one cashier in a chair positioned behind the central register -- LYDIA, 19, VERY goth.

CALVIN
Hey, Lydia -- we're closing up early, it's dead.

LYDIA
I can go home?

CALVIN
Yup, don't forget to clock out.

Lydia quickly collects her stuff and heads out.

LYDIA
Gotcha -- later!

CALVIN
See ya.

The door closes, Calvin turns the lights off, the box office is lit by the faint glow of the parking lot. A shadow eclipses Calvin's person. He looks up. It's The Auteur.

CALVIN
Oh, goddamn it.

AUTEUR
Calvin! Closed, I see. Even for le paying customeur?

CALVIN
Yep. Are you following me?

AUTEUR
'Tis always best to know thy enemy, non?

Calvin pauses to maintain composure.

CALVIN
How did you know where I work?

AUTEUR
When the sun does rise above the amber fields of--

CALVIN
ANDY, JESUS CHRIST.

AUTEUR
Temper, temper! I may have perused your profile a la Facebook. I wanted to stop by to notify you that we have an event scheduled for this coming Saturday.

CALVIN
An event? Already?

AUTEUR
Mhm. You'll be hearing from your agent shortly, but I wanted to see le fear in your eyes for myself.

CALVIN

Cool, man.

AUTEUR

I'd also like one ticket to Un Vie du
Femme. I have a student ID for
discount, here's my rewards card.

CALVIN

Are you serious?

AUTEUR

I'm as serious as the finale of the
classic film--

CALVIN

Alrightalrightalright

INT. SKYSCRAPER -- INDETERMINABLE TIME

Professor Insanity, reeling from events prior, speed-walks
down the skyscraper's stairwell. His phone rings, he answers
it. It's Diana, his agent.

DIANA (O.S.)

Trevor--

PROFESSOR INSANITY

Hey, what's up?

DIANA (O.S.)

Trevor, can you explain to me what the
fuck just happened? Can you explain
why I got a call saying that--

Professor Insanity chucks his phone offscreen. His phone
rockets back onscreen, landing in his hand as if by
telekinesis.

PROFESSOR INSANITY

GOD, what a convenient power for an
agent!

DIANA (O.S.)

Trevor, tell me you didn't *kill*
Perfecto -- *THE* Perfecto.

PROFESSOR INSANITY

Not on purpose! I sneezed! I have
allergies! It's Spring!

DIANA (O.S.)
Jesus Christ! Trevor, it's all over
the news!

Professor Insanity reaches the bottom floor. He opens the door.

EXT. SKYSCRAPER -- IMMEDIATELY

Professor Insanity stops as he sees a swarm of police and paparazzi who had been apparently awaiting his arrival. After a moment, camera flashes and sirens fill the scene with stimulus. Professor Insanity darts to his car, parked conveniently nearby.

COP
Hey! Wait!

INT. PROFESSOR INSANITY'S CAR -- IMMEDIATELY

Professor Insanity straps in, turns the car on, and -- visibly distraught and panicked -- tears away from the scene.

EXT. ALLEY -- DAY

Calvin, Brie, and Rodrigo lounge around the dirty alley. Rodrigo and Brie are on their phones, Calvin appears to be waiting for something or someone.

RODRIGO
Alright, it's noon. "*Hiiiiigh noon*",
as he called it.

CALVIN
I don't get it, where is he?

A mother and her daughter appear. The mother, TONI -- essentially Toni Collette's portrayal of T in United States of Tara if T dressed as Tara did -- removes a cigarette from a pack and sticks it into her mouth, where it hangs lazily. She gives one to her Abigail Breslin-ish daughter CARRIE, as well. She lights them.

TONI
Aight, where do you want us?

CALVIN
Uh, hi -- sorry, who are you?

CARRIE
We're the damsels. The damsels in

distress. Ya know, "Help! Help!"

TONI

(Coughing)

Can't ya tell from our frail,
vulnerable aesthetic?

CALVIN

...Yeah, sure--

TONI

You might recognize us from when Laser
Lizard blasted a hole in a bank in
West Covina last year.

CARRIE

We were the second and third hostages
to run out screaming.

(In character)

"Help! Help! It's Laser Lizard!"

TONI

Ya know, you kinda look like him!

CALVIN

Yeah, I get that a lot.

TONI

So, what, you a raper or a murderer?

CALVIN

God, uh, I guess I'll be... can I be,
like, robbing you or something? I
don't know, I don't like having to
choose between child-rape and anybody-
murder.

TONI

It doesn't have to be the kid.

CALVIN

I am deeply uncomfortable with the
position I am currently in. We'll do a
robbery.

TONI

Hey, it's your career, pal.

AUTEUR

Alright, dolls and dollfaces--

CALVIN

Oh god.

AUTEUR

Let's get this show on the road!

CALVIN

(To Brie and Rodrigo)

Alright, well... showtime.

RODRIGO

Break a leg. Preferably his.

EXT. ALLEY -- SOON

Shot on what appears to be a mobile phone camera, Calvin stands menacingly, yet artificially, over Toni and Carrie who cower in theatrical terror beneath him. The Auteur jumps into frame as if he'd imagined himself flying in.

CALVIN

(Simultaneously)

I'm robbing these--

AUTEUR

(Simultaneously)

Well well well, what d--

Beat.

CALVIN

...You go.

AUTEUR

Well well well, what do we have here?
A criminal? Doing *le crime*?!

CALVIN

Yes! It is I! Snake Person! I am
robbing these two nice women!

TONI

And he said something about a rape
and/or murder, maybe!

CALVIN

I DEFINITELY SAID NOTHING ABOUT EITHER
OF THOSE THINGS. THIS IS STRICTLY A
ROBBERY.

AUTEUR

Well this will not do! I will defend
you, young ladies -- with the power of
art and taste, I will protect you from
this serpentine scoundrel, this
herpetological hellhound, this--

The Auteur continues his speech in the background accompanied
by a man with a cell phone, presumably the source of the
prior footage. Medium shot on Calvin, Toni, and Carrie as
they wait for the auteur to finish monologuing.

CALVIN

(Quietly, to Toni and Carrie)
Are you guys hungry? I brought some
fruit snacks just in case.

TONI

Nah, I'm good.

CARRIE

Ooh! Yes, please!

CALVIN

For sure, for sure.

Calvin removes from his hoodie a small pack of fruit snacks
and hands it to Carrie, who promptly opens it. Calvin resumes
his robbing pose. He is promptly struck in the face by the
fist of The Auteur and falls offscreen.

CALVIN

Ow! Fuck! Dude, what the hell?

AUTEUR

Crime doesn't pay, Snake person, and
neither do I!

The Auteur runs away, flapping his cape behind him.

CALVIN

(Calling after him)
WHAT DOES THAT EVEN MEAN?

Carrie offers Calvin her hand, she helps him get up.

TONI

God, how can you stand that guy?

CALVIN

I can't. I... I really can't.

INT. BRIE -- SOON

Rodrigo drives Brie as Calvin sulks in the passenger seat.
The radio turns on, it's Brie.

BRIE (O.S.)

Do you wanna talk about it? Or...

CALVIN

No, thanks, it's okay. I mean, it's gonna be really easy for me to hate my nemesis, so I guess that's a plus. Ya know, for... character development or motivation or whatever.

RODRIGO

Did you see him flapping his cape when he ran off?

BRIE (O.S.)

Yeah, oh my god!

RODRIGO

"Crime doesn't pay and neither do I!"

Brie and Rodrigo laugh, Calvin manages a chuckle.

BRIE (O.S.)

Oh! Hey! Guys, check this out!

Radio static as the channel changes.

NEWSCASTER (O.S.)

--down Ventura Boulevard, and he seems to be... taking a right on Balboa. Again, if you're just joining us, police are in hot pursuit of Trevor Watkins, more commonly known as Professor Insanity. The A-list supervillain drew immense scrutiny from the media today when he threw Perfecto to his death from the top of the Hernandez building nearly half an hour ago.

RODRIGO

Wait, is he coming north on Balboa?
WAIT, HE WAS JUST ON VENTURA?

Rodrigo checks the rear view mirror, Professor Insanity's car is visible as a dot in the distance, being pursued by blue

and red lights.

BRIE (O.S.)
Get out of me.

CALVIN
What?! Brie, you're not--

BRIE (O.S.)
OUT! NOW!

EXT. BALBOA, NORTH OF VENTURA -- LATER

A newscast. In the background is Professor Insanity bound by normal handcuffs as he's arrested by police. In the foreground, being interviewed by the sharply dressed, metropolitan NEWSCASTER is Brie, in human form, wrapped in a towel and with disheveled hair.

NEWSCASTER
I'm here with Brie, "Hot Rod" Rodman, local superhero responsible for thwarting the escape of Professor Insanity after his cold-blooded murder of beloved superhero Perfecto. Brie, firstly, it's an honor to interview you -- what was it like seeing Insanity speeding down the boulevard that fateful moment?

BRIE
Oh, uh, well, I mean, I heard the radio and it said that he was coming, and... I don't know, I guess I just figured, like... *I'm a car*. A car can stop a car. I don't know, honestly, it was just instinct, I guess.

NEWSCASTER
Fantastic. Truly the epitome of bravery and courage. You're a real hero, Brie, both on and off the screen.

BRIE
Oh, no, actually I haven't landed an audition yet, so--

NEWSCASTER
No? Well with heroics like that, I give it negative five minutes before

you become Hollywood's next big thing.
You're about to have a very busy
agent!

BRIE

Oh, I don't know about that--

NEWSCASTER

And are these your friends here?

Camera pans to show Rodrigo and Calvin standing, eyes wide.

RODRIGO

Hi, uh, I'm Rodrigo Santoyo.

NEWSCASTER

Are you a hero too, Rodrigo?

RODRIGO

No, but I can do this--

Rodrigo does that trick where he makes it look like he's
removing his finger and reattaching it. He's *actually*
removing his finger and reattaching it.

RODRIGO (CONT'D)

It's that trick where you make it look
like you're removing your finger and
reattaching it, except I'm *actually*
removing my finger and reattaching it!

NEWSCASTER

Yeah, great. And what about your
equine friend over here?

CALVIN

...Me? Oh, I'm--

TITLE CARD: "SNAKE PERSON", THEME MUSIC

FADE OUT