**A Treatment for a Documentary**

**THE BOUNCER**

***For six-year Armin was the arbiter of admittance at the city’s most decadent, celeb-packed club. Every night till 4 a.m. he was the most powerful man in New York. Until someone decided he should not be anymore.***

***The amazing story of an Iranian immigrant who came to the States cheating death while dreaming to be a movie star.***

*“I created the door. I put a lot of ingredients in it, and I improvised it, so people wanted to see it. And people who couldn’t get in came back more and more, asking for more.”*

*(Armin Amiri)*

**THE STORY**

The man has a nervous smile constantly plastered on his face. His gaze works like a scanner in the radius of two hundred meters. Like every night, in front of the door of the club a noisy crowd has gathered, dozens of human beings excited a little above average.

There are the Wall Street brokers brandishing their fat credit cards, the aspiring models almost naked despite the three degrees Celsius, the wannabes who dream of meeting someone who will change their life, but at most they will change club so as not to ruin their life. And then there are the usual shady faces to keep an eye on.

The man speaks little, he addresses those who ask to enter the club with dry, peremptory sentences. Those in line approach him with a certain reverence, almost awe. Their fate depends on him. His name is Armin, a gesture of his hand is enough for him to give happiness to dozens of girls and boys who squeeze the New York night every day hoping to get something out of it. No one could say what.

That same hand, when used to push away a guy who is too insistent, can send someone into a rage.

But Armin is unperturbed, nothing seems to touch him in the slightest. From 11 pm to 4 am in New York he counts more than Rudy Giuliani. Armin is the man who can get you into Bungalow 8, or sanction your mediocrity.

It's early in the 21st century in New York, the soul of the city has risen from the ashes of September 11th louder and more exaggerated than ever. Reconstruction money is raining down on Manhattan, condos that offer exclusively "luxury living" are popping up like mushrooms, the Meat Packing District is transformed into a sort of Las Vegas where we've gone from street prostitutes costing 20 dollars to those who travel in 2000 dollar Manolo Blahniks, ready to ambush the star of the moment. The night serves to sweep away all the insecurities of a city that must rediscover its identity.

Bungalow 8 represents the most coveted prey, the place to be seen to consecrate one's existence in the “New York that matters”, the small temple of the ephemeral in which people's egos take massive doses of steroids. The problem is that it is a small temple, just a 175 people legal capacity. And outside the door at least 1000 people every night who wait as if it were the Ark of Salvation. Their fate depends exclusively on him, Armin Amiri. The god of 27th Street.

Nobody knows much about Armin. During the day he is rarely seen, every now and then he appears at Chelsea Piers with his posse to try their hand at fiery basketball pick-up games that often end in brawls. It is said that he wants to be an actor, someone met him at castings, but it’s just a rumor. For the rest, few know who he really is and where he comes from.

Bungalow 8 owner Amy Sacco had noticed him around because he was the smartest of all. When he worked at Lotus he had made 1800 cocktails in one night, while the average of her colleagues reached a thousand. A tireless worker. But also someone with a personality. Amy had taken him on her team, but with that slightly tormented and shadowy face, Amy knew that Armin would be needed for something more important than making cocktails.

And here is Armin, the most powerful bouncer in all of New York, managing the flow in front of the legendary Bungalow 8.

When Fashion Week comes around, all hell breaks loose in front of Bungalow 8. But Armin doesn't back down an inch, relentlessly managing the crowd with firmness.

"You come in, you don't, you come in, you please go somewhere else tonight".

A guy arrives, he is accompanied by two very flashy girls, he makes his way through the crowd, he “absolutely” has to get in, Armin stops him, the guy flutters up a thousand dollars in bills right in front of Armin’s nose.

Nobody buys Armin. With a decisive gesture he pushes the guy and the two beauties away without batting an eyelid.

That’s Mark Cuban, the owner of the Dallas Mavericks, one of the richest men in America. Someone point it out to him.

“I don’t give a shit,” Armin replies.

***When asked if there are any celebrities he’s yet to encounter, Armin says, in all seriousness, “Jesus Christ is the only one I haven’t met.”***

The tabloids are looking for him, that arrogant and scheming boy he’s making a name for himself. The *New York Post* dedicates a page to him with an interview.

“To get into a door is not that important,” Armin says. “It’s not. People are dying in Iraq left and right! But it’s amazing how it attacks people’s egos.”

Armin feels almost invincible, like the night he turns Paris Hilton from Bungalow’s MTV Video Music Awards after-party and made her cry.

“I don’t care for Paris altogether,” Armin says.

”I just think she’s a monster creation of our society. I couldn’t consider her to be a talented person in any way. And not very gracious.”

He became a New York character because, he says, he was a benevolent dictator, often letting in patrons he had originally turned away simply because they handled his rejection with class.

***He’s not just the “door guy”, he’s the man in charge to determine if you are cool or beautiful or glamorous or stylish or whatever enough to get in.***

Armin becomes friend with Mickey Rourke, another talented outcast like him. Sienna Miller introduces him to Hotel Rwanda screenwriter Terry George. The people close to him see the kindness in Armin beyond his proverbial cockiness. Nevertheless, one of Armin’s greatest talent as Bungalow 8’s bouncer, is his ability to piss people off. The kind of people you don’t want to piss off.

A few nights after rejecting some fellow with connections to the Genovese’s family, Armin receives an unexpected visit from John, and old friend from Coney Island.

Suddenly the days of Armin at Bungalow 8 seems numbered. Some bad guy he is after him, they want to give him a lesson. Armin is broken, he feels everything he has built in New York could be gone forever. He doesn’t feel invincible anymore, but he has not lost the fight yet. After all, this is not the first time his life is in great danger.

**BACKGROUND**

Armin was around 13 when he was put on detention for the first time. His charge? He was pursuing freedom. Born in Iran under harsh Khomeini’s ruling, Armin was raised watching Japanese movies (American’s were off limits, apart from glimpses of Brando and Pacino he watched through forbidden tv channels)) while dreaming to become the next Michael Jackson. Then his beloved mother Dibba decided to give Armin a chance to have a future. With 72 hours left for legally being able to cross the border (at 14 no Iranian male can leave the country), Armin was put on a car directed toward Turkey. He did not make it the first time and spent a few days in prison. Then, to finally cross the border, he took 18 days, on foot and donkey, traveling over the mountains into Turkey, where his mother eventually joined him for eight months. Dibba, a former actress, paid men who specialized in black-market transport to get the young Amiri out of the country. Then she gave his son money, got him a fake passport, and Amiri fled, alone, first to Bulgaria, and then to Vienna, where he lived with other teenage refugees, went to school, and worked any available job, making his debut in the nightlife business, acting as an adult to build his characters and defend himself from street toughs. At 14 Armin managed to survive robberies, beating, cheating, but was never defeated. At 15 in Vienna, Armin was dating a 32 years old woman who kind of saved him. When Michael Jackson came to town for a concert, Armin had no money to get in so, he found the way to sneak in. It was the inspiration Armin was looking for. When Armin met a young American girl from Michigan and fell in love, the stars seemed aligned. Armin moved to the US, he married the girl, who was 18, and six months later he moved in with her and her parents to Grosse Pointe Woods. After three months he couldn’t take it anymore (“Macaroni and cheese over milk every night was a nightmare”).

Armin ran away to San Francisco where he reconnected with a fellow refugee. He spent sometimes there playing with fire – and ending in jail – again – for dealing drugs, and then he finally decided to save himself landing to New York. Armin tried to pursue acting, working as a janitor at the Actors Studio*,* he got a bartending job at Barolothen Lotus, and then Amy Sacco heard about him and hired him. For the first time in ages, Armin believed he had found his place in the world. Eighteen years later he was also able to reconnect with his mom Dibba, with whom he had kept contact by writing her long letters. She came to New York to visit and Armin felt safe probably for the first time.

When John from Coney Island paid Armin a visit, warning him about the hit ordered on him, Armin realized how that feeling was just an illusion.

**THE MOVIE**

“The Bouncer” represents a stark picture of an era during which New York sold its soul to the devil. Armin Amiri is just the ideal eyewitness who recorded that spectacle from a privileged position, the door of the most desirable club in the five boroughs. An Iranian immigrant who went from being a bouncer to a burgeoning night-life impresario, represent the perfect narrator for a unique time for the New York lifestyle, an era that with the arrival of social media and smartphones will shortly end forever.

The movie will also solve some intriguing dilemma. How did Armin was able to escape the threat posed on him by the Italian Mafia? How was Armin able to avoid the score of civil suits launched by scorned customers?

How was able to survive the crash of his most ambitious and fascinating project, his own club, *Socialista*, a cozy, Cuban-inspired space with dishabille décor,financed by Harvey Weinstein, Giuseppe Cipriani, Damon Dash and Ben Silverman?

“The Bouncer” is the story of man who – as New York – has the inspiring talent to reinvent himself constantly. When first casted in Mickey Rourke’s “The Wrestler” in a small supporting role, Armin realized the door at Bungalow 8 represented his Actor’s Studio graduation. When meeting Al Pacino for a casting, along with unknown Bradley Cooper, Armin finally felt the troubled journey started 25 years earlier at the border of Turkey, was coming to an end.

Now that Armin is a working actor based in Los Angeles, the whole trajectory seems like a miracle.

***“I always picture Armin as Rick’s best friend in ‘Casablanca.’ Real strong moral character. The kind of friend you’d want with you in the trenches.***

***“This is a business where you don’t always know who your friends are. When you’re drunk at Bungalow 8, people make promises when they’re soused, and everybody’s your best friend.”***

*(George Hickenlooper, movie director and Armin’s friend).*

**THE CAST**

The cast present in “The Bouncer” will include

Armin Amiri

Mickey Rourke

Armin’s refugee friends

Heide Jager, Armin’s first wife

Binn Jakuoi, producer, former colleague at Bungalow 8

Oliver Stone

Sienna Miller

Maureen Callahan, former New York Post columnist

Damon Dash

Ben Silverman

Giuseppe Cipriani

Mark Cuban