

# PRETTY BOY

a short film  
written + directed by  
Matthew Cromwell

This is a work of fiction.

All of the characters and incidents - except for incidental references to products, places, or services - are imaginary and are not intended to refer to any living persons or to disparage any company's products or services.

"And if you gaze long enough into an abyss,  
the abyss will gaze back into you."

- *Nietzsche*

*Look how black the sky is,  
the writer said.*

*I made it that way.*

- *Ellis*

**EXT. DARKENED STREET - OVERTOWN - NIGHT**

Damp and misty; a stark, moonless Miami night. Orbs of raindrops languish beneath the glowing street lamps.

Impeccably groomed, dressed in a full-length tan trench coat, is MILES NORTON (mid-20s, black).

He cuts down the sidewalk like a shark in open water.

An ambulance and two cop cars ROAR past him--

**LATER**

Graffiti. Scrawled in blood-red lettering, the words:

**FUCK LOVE STORIES**

**EXT. HOT SPOT ADULT SHOP - NORTH MIAMI - DUSK**

The FLICKERING sign of a seedy-looking porn rental place.

Miles crosses the parking lot in his trench coat, collar up, shielding his face and neck--

**EXT. RESTAURANT EQUIPMENT STORE - OVERTOWN - AFTERNOON**

Miles closely examines a window display of cooking equipment. Knives of all sizes.

We slowly ZOOM IN on his unblinking eyes--

**INT. METROMOVER (MOVING) - NIGHT**

Dressed in an unbuttoned chef coat and checkered chef pants, Miles leans against one of the windows.

The passing cityscape BLURS behind him--

**INT. BLACKBIRD ORDINARY - BRICKELL - NIGHT**

Miles flirts with NIKKI (20s), a gorgeous brunette. He introduces himself. Orders her a drink. They CLINK glasses.

He motions for her to leave with him. She smiles. Looks away. Brushes her hair behind her ear.

**INT. CONDO - BEDROOM - NIGHT**

We PUSH IN on a pair of discarded red stilettos--

**INT. HOT SPOT ADULT SHOP - NORTH MIAMI - DUSK**

Miles scours the selection of adult videos, books, sex toys. Rents a DVD from the **HARDCORE** section.

We FOLLOW Miles as he walks toward

**THE VIEWING ROOMS**

where he opens a door to see a **BLINKING** blue television screen and a tattered chair. Miles sits. Locks the door.

**INT. CONDO - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

**ON TV:** *Animal Planet*. Something about predators.

Miles stares blankly at the screen, drained of emotion, his face **PARTIALLY ILLUMINATED** by the **FLASHING** images.

**EXT. BANK - NIGHT**

**AT THE ATM**

Miles withdraws \$400 in cash. Quickly rifles through the bills. Pockets the cash. Walks away.

**INT. BENIHANA - NIGHT**

Chunks of raw meat cook atop a **SIZZLING** teppanyaki table.

Miles and **ALLISON** - late-20s, thin, redhead - watch as a **JAPANESE CHEF** chops and prepares their meal in front of them.

Beneath the table, Miles's **HAND** carefully caresses Allison's thigh. His fingers playfully dance up her mini-skirt.

**INT. HOT SPOT ADULT SHOP - NORTH MIAMI - DUSK**

A **PORNOGRAPHY VIDEO** begins playing on the **BLINKING** blue screen.

Miles watches, his face **BATHED** in a variety of colors.

He jabs the fast-forward button with his thumb.

**INT. MASSAGE PARLOR - DAY**

Miles receives a back massage from a petite ASIAN MASSEUSE. The Masseur's hands KNEAD his taut muscles.

**INT. HOTEL - BANQUET KITCHEN - DAY**

A cookbook cluttered with laminated recipes.

Miles quickly flips through the pages. We catch glimpses of some of the ingredients.

*Eggplants. Cremini mushrooms. Goat cheese.*

**INT. CONDO - KITCHEN - NIGHT**

Sleek and stylish. Stainless steel everything.

Miles discreetly CRUSHES a sleeping pill into one of two champagne glasses. The BUBBLES.

**IN THE LIVING ROOM**

Miles delivers the laced drink to Nikki. She greedily gulps it down. Wipes her mouth.

Miles watches - patiently - slowly sips his champagne, a playful smile creeping across his face.

**EXT. SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD - DUSK - FLASHBACK**

*Nostalgia. A YOUNG MILES (8-10) hurries home. Happily hops over a pile of leaves. Sprints down the sidewalk. Crosses an unkempt lawn. Leaps up onto the porch.*

**EXT. LIQUORE STORE - OVERTOWN - NIGHT**

PANHANDLERS crowd the curb, swig from brown paper bags.

Miles emerges from the store, his arms loaded with liquor. He struggles to wipe his nose.

**INT. CONDO - KITCHEN - NIGHT**

A VODKA BOTTLE being cracked open--

**IN THE LIVING ROOM**

Thick lines of COCAINE being snorted--

**INT. CONDO BUILDING - FITNESS CENTER - DAY**

Miles exercises in solitude.

He fleetingly admires his reflection in the bank of mirrors.

Notices a petite Latina on the nearby StairMaster.

This is MICHELLE, mid-20s.

**EXT. STREET - NIGHT**

A group of feral BLACK CAT prowls the pavement. Pairs of amber EYES glisten beneath the street lamps and full moon.

**INT. CONDO - BATHROOM - MORNING**

Miles showers in silence, his body enveloped in steam.

**IN THE KITCHEN**

Miles sits alone on a stool at the far right of his breakfast bar.

**INT. METROMOVER (MOVING) - NIGHT**

An attractive COLLEGE STUDENT grinds one of the handrails like it's a stripper pole.

Miles watches.

**EXT. CONDO - BALCONY - NIGHT**

From the 46th floor, Miles overlooks the glittering lights of Miami's Financial District: the buildings, the yachts, the illuminated pools. The world.

His face grows sour with disappointment--

**INT. CONDO - BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Nikki lays unconscious on a neatly-made, white linen bed.

A SHADOW hovers over her sleeping body--

**INT. HOTEL - BANQUET KITCHEN - DAY**

Miles swiftly extracts a laminated page from the cookbook.

**INT. PUBLIX - AFTERNOON**

Pushing an empty cart, Miles browses the produce section--

**INT. CONDO - BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Miles calmly strokes Nikki's sedated face.

He stands over her. Clutches a large knife.

The blade gently travels down Nikki's torso--

**INT. SUBURBAN HOME - DUSK - FLASHBACK**

*We FOLLOW Young Miles as he runs into his childhood home. It's dark, sparsely furnished, tiger-striped with shadows. Young Miles trots into*

**THE KITCHEN**

*where he finds his mother, GLORIA, black, late-30s. She's clad in a dingy, fringed bathrobe. Her face is placid. Hair's a mess. She's standing over the sink. Eating something.*

**EXT. DARKENED STREET - OVERTOWN - NIGHT**

Miles walks down the sidewalk. CLAPS his hands together--

**INT. CONDO - BATHROOM - MORNING**

Miles kneels over his toilet. Violently vomits blood--

**EXT. CONDO - POOL AREA - DAY**

Miles stews in the hot tub, shielded by designer frames, his body consumed by bubbles.

Michelle passes wearing a tiny bikini.

Miles can't help but notice.

**INT. CONDO - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

We PUSH IN on Miles slicing out recipes from a magazine using an X-Acto blade.

**EXT. EMPTY FIELD - DAY**

Gray skies. Land dissected by train tracks. Miles swiftly walks into frame. Carries a pillowcase.

**INT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY**

*Alone in his room, Young Miles dismembers a baby doll.*

**INT. CONDO - BATHROOM - NIGHT**

Wearing a gore-splattered rubber apron, Miles hunched over his tub, smoking a cigarette with blood-stained fingers.

We PUSH IN on Nikki's severed hand hanging from the bathtub, the THUMB and FOREFINGER missing.

**EXT. BANK - NIGHT****AT THE ATM**

Miles impatiently waits for his money. The machine BEEPS and the screen flashes "Insufficient Funds".

**INT. CONDO - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

Miles quickly attempts to crush a sleeping pill into one of two cocktail glasses. His hand is trembling. He's losing it.

Allison appears from around the corner. She looks at Miles.

A tense beat. His face says it all. She turns to run.

Miles viciously ATTACKS Allison, lunging for her throat--

**EXT. EMPTY FIELD - DAY**

Miles approaches a desolate set of train tracks. Empties the contents of the pillowcase.

Inside: a collection of HUMAN BONES.

From his jacket, he reveals a small hammer--

**INT. CONDO - BEDROOM - NIGHT**

A large tin container with Sir Henry Raeburn's painting on the cover: "A Boy with a Rabbit".



Miles removes the dented lid to find a variety of calcified  
BODY PARTS: bones, fingers, vaginas.

Souvenirs from his victims.

**EXT. STREET - OVERTOWN - DUSK**

Miles window-shops for knives and cooking equipment.

**INT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - BABY'S ROOM - DUSK - FLASHBACK**

*Gloria stands over a hand-me-down cradle, gently rocking it--*

**INT. CONDO - BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Miles stares out of his floor-to-ceiling windows. Admires the view. Sips cheap scotch from a brandy snifter.

**INT. CONDO - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

We're HANDHELD as Miles chaotically chases Allison throughout the condo. She STUMBLES toward the door.

But just before she can escape, Miles TACKLES her to the floor.

He drags her back into his condo by her ankles--

**INT. CONDO - KITCHEN - EVEVING**

The stainless steel stove-top.

Mile preheats his oven to 400 degrees. Chops the eggplant. Coats the slices with olive oil.

Seasons them with salt and pepper. Arranges the eggplant slices on a sheet pan. Shoves the sheet pant into the oven.

**EXT. MIAMI-DADE COLLEGE - WOLFSON CAMPUS - DUSK**

Cloaked in his trench coat, Miles briskly passes a sign made of gold lettering that spells out the word "WOLFSON"--

**INT. CONDO BUILDING - MAIL ROOM - DAY**

Miles, in post-workout attire, check his mailbox. Pulls out a few catalogues, flyers. Sifts through his mail.

Michelle enters. Checks her mailbox.

Miles discreetly studies her. They inadvertently make eye contact. She forces a smile. He does the same.

Mile notices the number of her mailbox. 506.

**EXT. DARKENED STREET - OVERTOWN - DUSK**

With his head lowered, collar popped, Miles carries his groceries home--

**INT. CONDO - KITCHEN - EVENING**

Using a medium-sized skillet, Miles sautes the cremini mushrooms in a puddle of olive oil.

Adds a handful of minced garlic. A dash of chopped thyme.

**INT. METROMOVER (MOVING) - DUSK**

Dressed in a soiled chef's uniform, Miles examines other PASSENGERS on the train:

A WOMAN with scars on her forearms; a LITTLE GIRL tightly holding the handrail with both hands; a HOMELESS MAN violently shaking his head.

And, finally, a well-dressed, handsome YOUNG MAN - *competition* - who smiles politely and nods at Miles.

Miles narrows his eyes.

**INT. CONDO - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

Miles - feral and disheveled - crouches on the tile floor, savagely eating Allison's intestines with his bare hands--

**INT. CONDO - KITCHEN - EVENING**

Miles feverishly combines a variety of ingredients into a large mixing bowl: clumps of goat cheese, eggs, Parmesan, chopped oregano. He seasons the ingredients with salt and pepper. Adds the sauteed mushrooms.

He briskly peels apart rectangular pasta sheets.

We PUSH IN on a boiling saucepan filled with BUBBLING BLOOD--

**EXT. EMPTY FIELD - DAY**

Miles begins CRUSHING the pillowcase of bones. He scatters the remains across the rocks. Peers over his shoulder--

MATCH CUT TO:

**INT. CONDO - KITCHEN - EVENING**

Hovering over the stove, Miles glares over his shoulder like a wild animal; his lips, chin, mouth stained with blood.

**OVER THE STOVE**

Flanks of Nikki's FLESH and BRAIN sizzle in a large skillet.

We quickly PUSH IN on an industrial-sized pot boiling Nikki's hairless SKULL--

**INT. HOTEL - BANQUET KITCHEN - DAY**

Miles hastily flips through the cookbook. Finds a laminated recipe for "**Blood Sausage with Saute Chard and Polenta**".

Miles stares at the ingredients. A thin, wicked smile creeps across his face--

**INT. CONDO - KITCHEN - EVENING**

Miles eats dinner alone. Looks down at his meal.

A plate of HUMAN FLESH, molded into "sophisticated" dish - some sort of crudely-crafted eggplant lasagna.

With elegance and grace, Miles begins cutting and eating--

**INT. CONDO - KITCHEN - DAY**

Wearing only his slacks and suspenders, Miles sweats profusely as he struggles to cook Allison's intestines in a large cast iron skillet.

On an adjacent burner, a large pot of polenta begins to boil and overflow. Miles struggles to clean up the mess. Continues to cook the intestines.

He's still sweating.

He takes a much-needed swig from a nearby handle of Jim Beam. Wipes his mouth--

**INT. CONDO - KITCHEN - NIGHT**

Miles opens his freezer for ice. Inside: Allison's head.

**EXT. STREET - NORTH MIAMI AVENUE - DUSK**

Miles silently moves up the sidewalk. Notices swarms of FLIES hovering over discarded food.

**INT. CONDO BUILDING - ELEVATOR BANK - DAY**

Miles waits, post-workout. The elevator DINGS. Doors open.

He's almost taken aback to see Michelle standing there, thumbing her phone. She looks up at him.

He smiles - charmed.

**INT. ELEVATOR (GOING DOWN) - DAY**

Miles and Michelle ride together in silence.

Awkward beat. Miles extends his hand, introduced himself. Says something to make her laugh/smile. *Progress.*

**INT. CONDO - DINING ROOM - NIGHT**

Miles lights two candles.

**LATER**

Miles serves Michelle the same sloppy eggplant lasagna he created using cooked pieces of Nikki's brain.

Michelle forces a smile. Quizzically pokes the lasagna with her fork.

From across the table, Mile shovels the meal into his mouth with a twisted grin--

**INT. CONDO - KITCHEN - NIGHT**

Miles discreetly laces one of two champagne glasses. The sleeping pill FIZZES in the flute.

Miles looks away - something catches his eye.

He notices that his oven clock is flashing **6:66**.

Without looking, visibly shaken, Miles takes a sip from the still FIZZING champagne flute. Wipes his mouth.

CUT TO:

**BLACK FRAME**

Title appears:

**later**

**INT. CONDO - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

Drowsy, Miles wakes up. He's partially nude. Sprawled out across a white animal-skin rug. Dazed, he waddles through his condo.

To his surprise, his front door is *wide the fuck open*--

**INT. CONDO - BEDROOM - NIGHT**

**ON TV:** "Wheel of Fortune. The applause sounds like STATIC.

We PUSH IN on three DEAD BODIES, all propped up in chairs, covered in sheets.

**INT. CONDO - KITCHEN - DAWN**

A white two-gallon bucket of canola oil - spiced with cinnamon sticks and slices of tangerines - glisten in the morning sun.

Severed BODY PARTS marinate in the liquid, submerged in the translucent oil.

**INT. CONDO - BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Miles stumbles toward his bed. He notices something...

His tin can of souvenirs has been opened and ransacked.

HUMAN BONES are scattered across the white tile floor.

We can see Mile mentally putting the pieces together.

A look of panic quickly spreads across his face--

**INT. CONDO - NIGHT**

We FOLLOW a portly SECURITY GUARD as he cautiously enters Miles's dimly-lit condo.

The only illumination is from the TV static in the b.g.

The Security Guard immediately covers his nose. Reaches for his walkie.

But as he tries to press the buttons, a WIRE LOOPS OVER HIS HEAD and QUICKLY TIGHTENS AROUND HIS NECK.

Miles - knee pressed against the Guard's back - WHISPERS maliciously in his ear.

The Guard reacts.

Miles quickly TIGHTENS the wire.

The Guard's eyes POP.

They both stumble... fall to the ground.

Miles is still on the Guard's back, pulling the wire.

ON MILES

Teeth clenched. Chanting quietly. The wire slicing his hands.

The Guard finally lays still. Miles breathes heavily. Rises to his feet. Stares down maniacally at the Guard.

A few beats.

Miles grabs the Guard's ankles and drags him toward the bathroom--

**INT. CONDO - BATHROOM - NIGHT**

Blood-spotted NEWSPAPER spread out across the bathroom floor--

**INT. CONDO - BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Miles creeps toward the bodies.

He pulls off one of the sheets, revealing a DECOMPOSED CORPSE being devoured by WRITHING MAGGOTS--

**INT. CONDO - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

**ON TV:** *The Exorcist III*. Muted.

**INT. CONDO BUILDING - LOBBY - DAY**

Michelle crosses, consumed by her cell phone. She approaches

**THE ELEVATOR BANK**

but it's too late - the door is already closing.

She looks up to see Miles in the elevator, smirking. Taunting her.

Off Michelle's confused reaction--

**INT. CONDO - LIVING ROOM - DAWN**

Dressed in his trench coat, no shirt, Miles stare blankly at framed family photographs from his past.

He becomes overwhelmed with grief, emotion. Tears form and then disappear.

He looks around.

His condo is a mess. Body parts are scattered across the tile floor. He's surrounded by rotten food and garbage.

Miles forced a grateful smile. Close his eyes.

CUT TO:

**THE END**

