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# “EXPEDITION EXPEDITIONS”

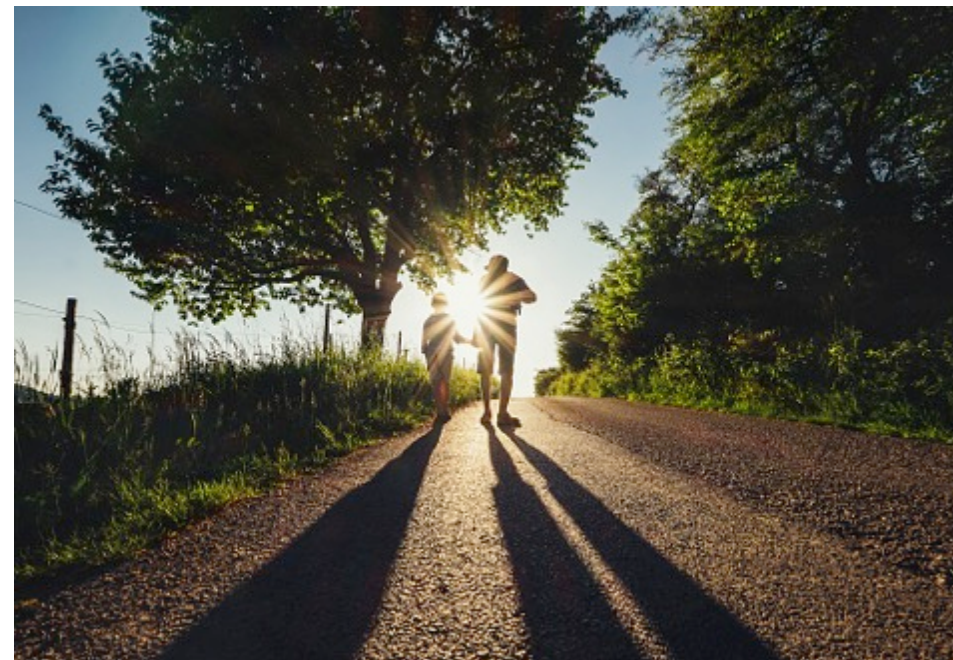
Director’s Treatment by John Bonito



# HELLO

Let's be honest: we all dream about winning big. And it's pretty common to fantasize about what we'd do with our earnings. Maybe you'd pay off debt, get braces, or buy that industrial sized deep fryer you always dreamed of. Because, onion rings. But what if you won a prize that opened the door to *adventure itself*? Thanks to the Virginia Lottery, you can win a prize that keeps giving – a Ford Expedition Platinum Edition. Plus a hundred thousand dollars. It's truly the best way to kick off your own unique life adventure... however fun, freaky, weird or mundane as that may be.

I love these spots. All three are genius representations of how much “further” an Expedition adventure can take you. Even though the spots play with the concept of absurdity, I would want to *ground them in reality*. We don't need to make them slapstick or play them too big because they're already just super funny as they are. In fact, the more dry and understated the performances are, the more powerfully the humor of the situations comes alive.





## CINEMATOGRAPHY + TONE

Overall, I want to keep the worlds feeling very *naturally observed and authentic*. We don't need to be overly stylish or too slick in terms of our camera work. I want to step back and take in these moments in a way that allows us to focus on the action in frame. At times, we can push in tighter for emotional shots – for instance, we could push close on our guy in “Eagle Rescue” when he tries to set free the eagle at the end. In a really funny way, we feel all his hope and optimism. But we'll also pull back to wider shots to establish where we are in each moment.

We'll rely on natural light for most of these spots. Let's aim to shoot daytime or even magic hour to get the best possible, available light. We can enhance the lights with our own setups for interior shots (like the warehouse where the clowns wrestle.) I imagine that space to be a bit darker, but it could even be a warehouse that's flooded with afternoon light.

In terms of tone, I want to keep the spirit and atmosphere very bright and positive. The spirit of the Virginia Lottery seems to be one of *optimism* – the fun is in playing, not only winning, so we want to feel that here. I also think that keeping things bright and natural adds to the overall “funny” quality of our stories. Sure, some of these visuals are silly, but they're set in our own very real world.





## CASTING + PERFORMANCES

I want to look for actors with interesting, expressive faces. They're not obvious actors or models. These are people that could be our coworkers, our neighbors, or parents at our kid's school. Having said that, they do have something special about them. Certain people just have compelling faces – we want to watch them because they have this warm sense of intelligence. I want our people here to have that quality.

I'd want to cast actors with a great sense of comic timing – even if it is an understated quality. Their actions should feel genuine and sincere. Think of actors like Jason Sudekis, Will Forte, Leslie Mann and Ellie Kemper. They don't have to reach for the humor or overplay it. It just naturally flows.

For me, working with actors is always about guiding them to natural, honest performances. Overall, I would want to keep the performances really subtle throughout these films. Never too broad or cartoony. Even though these somewhat outrageous things are happening (an eagle in a helmet, a clown fight club, a fountain of youth) the people are acting as if they're *not impossible* occurrences. Yes, these things are wildly out of the ordinary, but the people are simply dealing with them.





## INTRO MOMENT

The intro moment at the start of each spot is a great device to unify and tie together the campaign. I want to come up with a consistent PUSH IN that we use to get into each story.

We'll open each spot on the TITLE CARD that says "EXPEDITION EXPEDITIONS." Maybe we hear a sting of music to accompany the singing hook, "*Expedition Expeditions by the Virginia Lottery.*" This should sound like a choir of super energetic people singing our theme. It may even have the vibe of a TV show theme. Something classic like *The Greatest American Hero* or *Wonder Woman* comes to mind, but with a modern edge.

In each of the spots, we'll ZOOM IN fast on one of the letters. Maybe we push into the "O" of the word LOTTERY. The O shape gives us this little "tunnel" to move into and transition us to the road where we discover the Expedition on a map.

We'll continue the ZOOM IN until we are on top of or next to the Expedition. Then, we'll reveal the Expedition in situation, wherever it is within each spot.



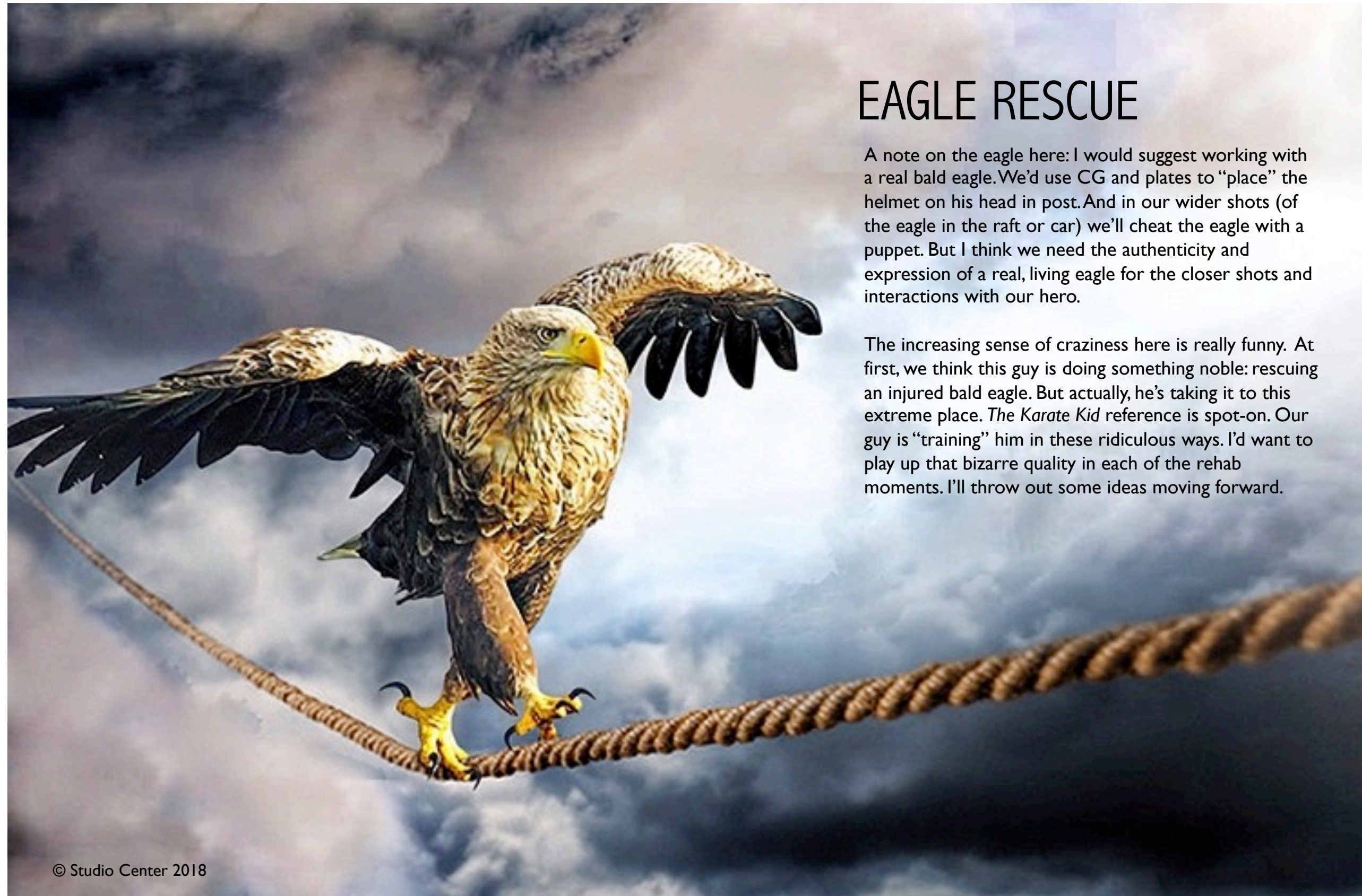


# EXPEDITION

The Expedition itself should look totally luminous, sleek and powerful. Every time we see the vehicle, it should have a heroic presence. It's tied to each story in an innate way so it's not as if we're just "cutting away" to shots of it. I would want to find ways to see the vehicle in frame, whenever possible, so that we always feel like it's the vehicle that's allowing the heroes to "take the adventure further".







## EAGLE RESCUE

A note on the eagle here: I would suggest working with a real bald eagle. We'd use CG and plates to "place" the helmet on his head in post. And in our wider shots (of the eagle in the raft or car) we'll cheat the eagle with a puppet. But I think we need the authenticity and expression of a real, living eagle for the closer shots and interactions with our hero.

The increasing sense of craziness here is really funny. At first, we think this guy is doing something noble: rescuing an injured bald eagle. But actually, he's taking it to this extreme place. *The Karate Kid* reference is spot-on. Our guy is "training" him in these ridiculous ways. I'd want to play up that bizarre quality in each of the rehab moments. I'll throw out some ideas moving forward.





We'll open on the EXPEDITION INTRO, taking us into map...

**VO: With a Ford Expedition Platinum Edition plus one hundred thousand dollars, you can take your adventures further.**

We then cut to find the Expedition parked next to a beautiful river.

**VO: from white water rafting...**

At this point, we PAN from the vehicle to a MAN in a white water raft. He's rushing forward on the foamy rapids, pumping his paddles in the air like, "LET'S DO THIS!" Will Forte would be a great reference for this guy. He's got a lot of sincerity and is funny in a way that feels natural and unforced.

**VO: to zip-lining**

Now we see our guy soaring over a vibrantly green Virginia forest. You can almost smell the pine and fresh air. He screams with delight as he glides forward.

**VO: where you find an injured bald eagle.**

It could be funny if he suddenly STOPS on the zip-line. Maybe he's hanging here, thousands of feet in the air. He glances to the side, and THIS is where he sees the bald eagle.

Maybe the eagle is in a nest and it makes a sad little noise. Or, standing on a limb, it limps a bit.

**VO: that you take in.**



Now we cut into this great MONTAGE, *The Karate Kid* style, of our man and eagle going through rehab.

If we really want to take it to the next level, we could explore an alternate option of seeing the guy and eagle in a rehab room: this would be a simple space, with floor mats and workout equipment. OR we could set these moments out in the woods.

The eagle, with a bandage/cast on its wing, just looks at our guy while our guy make this vigorous WING FLAP gesture. He looks like a damn fool, but he doesn't care! He's gotta fix his little buddy.

What if we see the eagle trying to "walk" on the parallel bars that are used in rehab? It's just resting its wings on the bars, deadpan staring at the guy, who encourages him to walk forward. If we shot this in the woods (and not a room) the parallel bars could be "logs", set up like parallel bars, that the eagle balances on....Again, like that *Karate Kid* moment when Daniel-san does a crane pose on a log.

Maybe there's even a slow motion "training" shot where the guy encourages the bird to limp forward on an outdoor track. The guy is really passionate, pumping his fist and cheering eagle on. It's shot in slow-mo, so it feels like a scene from *Rocky* or some inspirational film... but it's actually a ridiculous sight.







**VO: after weeks of rehabilitation...**

We see a shot of the guy driving the Expedition UP a steep mountain road. The eagle sits in the passenger seat. We move closer on the eagle's face as he looks out the window introspectively. The passing landscape reflects on the window, layered over the eagle's face.

**VO: you drive him home.**







Now, we're at the mountaintop. It's a cinematic, majestic sight. Our man holds the eagle upwards, almost *Lion King* style. A flare of light cuts across their figures, and our camera circles them, as the man bombastically announces:

**Man: BE FREE!**

(\*Note, he says this with the flare and pomp of a Shakespeare performer. He's taking this all very seriously.)

BUT the eagle doesn't leave. Like most eagles, it stares ahead with a total NON-EXPRESSION.

He could repeat himself.

**Man: TAKE TO THE SKIES!**

A beat of silence. The eagle SIDE EYES HIM.

**VO: but the eagle has grown loyal, and now goes where you go.**

Now we cut to this gorgeous shot of the man white water rafting with eagle. They're FLOWING in the beautifully rushing waters – one with nature. The eagle rocks a little helmet and life jacket and sits in the back of the raft, like a boss.

**VO: all because you took the adventure further.**

We cut to the Expedition Scratcher as it rises over this heroic image.







## CLOWN WRESTLING

We open on our establishing INTRO.

**VO: With a Ford Expedition Platinum Edition plus one hundred thousand dollars, you can take your adventures further.**

We zoom in further and find our Expedition pulled off to the side of the road.

**VO: like helping a car in need.**

Our MAN gets out of the shimmering Expedition and walks ahead...

\*Note, he could also just pull up next to the car. Let's discuss what works best.

**VO: a clown car.**

We pan to reveal that the other car is no ordinary car. It's a tiny 1980s' European car. As you said, much like Mister Bean's car. But even weirder, there are three CLOWNS standing around. Maybe a cloud of smoke coughs out of the car's exhaust pipe.

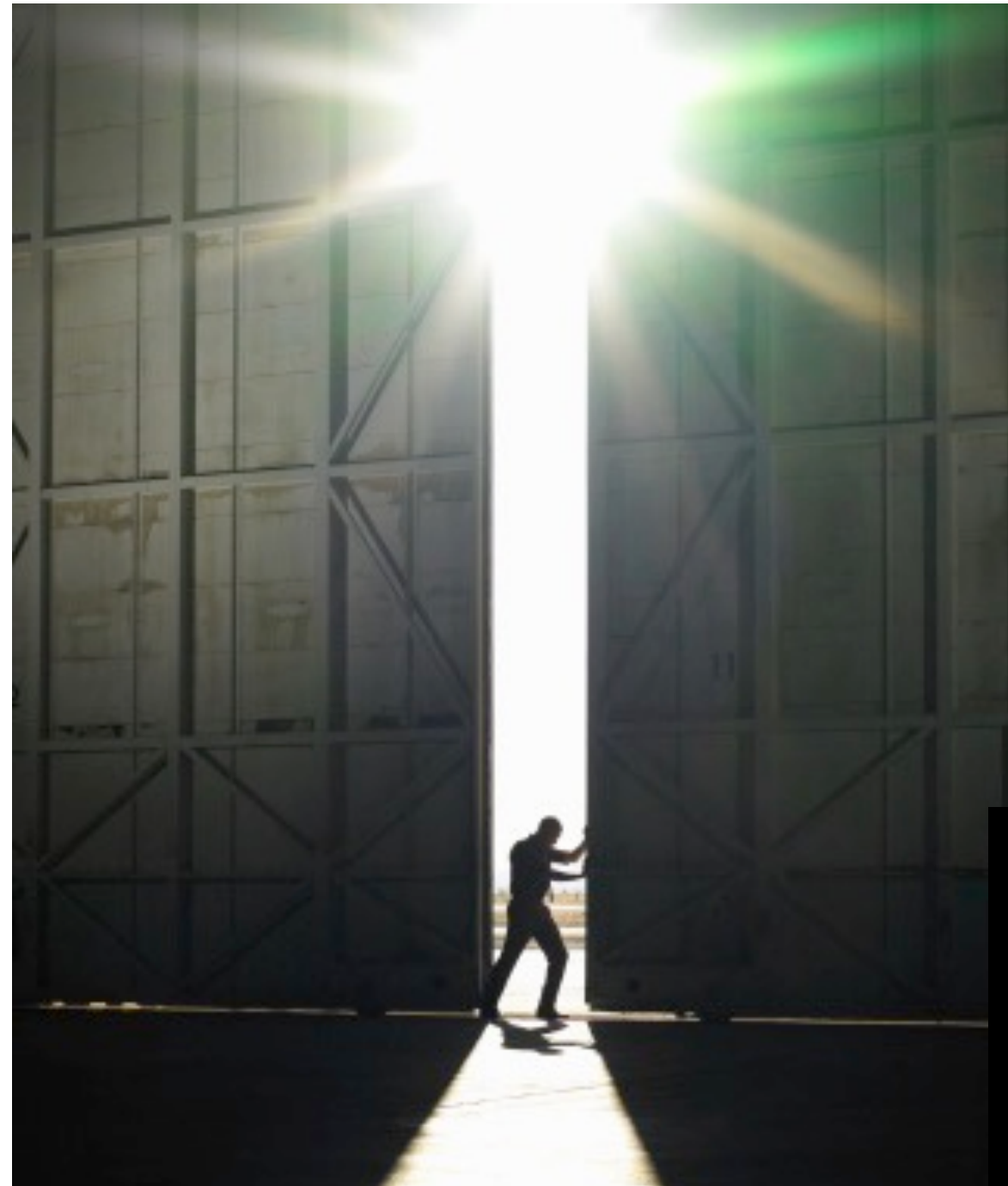
The clowns have that classic *Barnum and Bailey* look: they're colorful and all about bringing joy to the kids. Our guy smiles and offers his help to the clowns.

Maybe as they pile into the Expedition, one of the clowns offers a handshake to the main guy... but when he shakes, he gets an electric shock and, surprised, pulls his hand back. They both laugh.

We cut to a wide shot of the Expedition TOWING the little clown car. Maybe a BUNCH OF BALLOONS flaps out the Expedition's back window.

**VO: with clowns who are late for a show.**





The Expedition pulls up at this weirdly sparse warehouse. It's in the middle of nowhere. Maybe the Expedition is the only vehicle in this giant parking lot.

The clowns step out of the Expedition. Maybe the guy helps one take a giant HULA HOOP and some bowling pins out of the backseat.

Or maybe one accidentally leaves a giant red nosed HORN in the backseat.

**VO: the "show" being clown wrestling.**







On this line, we SMASH CUT into the club and RIGHT INTO THE RING where the CLOWNS begin to wrestle. The main clown breaks the rules down, a la Brad Pitt in *Fight Club*. One clown may roll up his ruffled sleeves, like a badass fighter.

**Clown:** *the first rule of clown wrestling is...*

**VO:** *which, apparently, is not a joke.*

We should cut to our guy here, totally SHOCKED that this is what these friendly clowns are up to. His jaw just slightly drops...

...but then he grins... he's getting into this adventure even though it is weird as heck.

Now we cut back to our guy and the clowns. They're back in the parking lot, just before sunset. Our guy is super charged and psyched!





As each clown hops in the vehicle, our guy high fives and fist bumps them... and, he now rocks a clown bow tie.

***VO: and now you're an honorary clown.***

The last clown hands him a big fake flower.... but as he reaches for it... it wilts. They both laugh. This could be a good place to bring it all full circle. Maybe our guy SQUIRTS water from his bow tie at this clown, proving that he's now part of the team.

***VO: all because you took the adventure further.***

**We move to the Expedition Scratchers over the top of our image.**







## FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH

I like the idea of this spot focusing on two women. Maybe they're sisters, taking this epic hiking trip through the trails of a lush Virginia forest. Let's imagine that they're very different in their style and look, yet still best friends. As a reference, think of actresses like Aubrey Plaza and Leslie Mann. One is darker and more sarcastic, while the other is a bit more optimistic and bright.

We'll open on the Expedition INTRO. That takes us onto the map and moving Expedition icon...

***VO: With a Ford Expedition Platinum Edition plus one hundred thousand dollars, you can take your adventures further.***

We continue to ZOOM in until we find the Expedition at the opening of a hiking trail. The afternoon sun glows warmly over the scene.

***VO: like going hiking.***





We cut to the two women on the trail. They're having an amazing day of exploration and discovery. They breathe in the fresh air and glance to one another with smiles.

**VO: and discovering the fountain of youth.**

The first woman stops at this (clearly man-made) fountain of youth. It's an old school water bubbler mounted into a tree. Maybe some ivy has slightly grown over it so it feels more integrated into the scene. The sign says FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH.

Maybe the more cynical sister rolls her eyes slightly to her sister. The other sister could study it in a more open minded way.

**Woman: I thought it'd be bigger.**

Her sister looks at her like, "it's not real, girl." The woman tests it, but no water comes out. She gives it a bang while her sister watches her, arms folded and ready to move on..





BUT out of the blue, we see these adorable WOLF PUPPIES come ambling out of the brush and up to our sisters.

Even the cynical sister is amazed and charmed. They both squat down making baby noises and playing with the pups.

**VO: a pack of wolves has drained the fountain.**

We hear this insanely loud ANIMAL GROWL, too close for comfort, in the woods nearby. The women grab up the puppies and RUN.

The sisters look at each other like, WHAT?!

**VO: and now they're in danger.**







We cut to this shot of the calm, still woods. SUDDENLY the two women BURST through the shrubbery and RACE toward lens. Still holding the puppies, they run to their Expedition.

**VO: you take the puppies, I mean, wolves, to the Expedition.**

It may be fun to shoot this with a little bit of a horror movie spirit: one sister could look over her shoulder as the other FUMBLES to find her car key. The camera could PUSH toward the sister's face, like whatever is pursuing them is gaining on them.

They finally LEAP into the Expedition. They tear out of the parking lot – at safe speeds, or course.

Now, we see this shot of them in the car, driving away. The sister in the passenger seat is covered with wolf puppies. It's super cute, but way more than they bargained for.

**VO: they'll be safe here.**

A puppy nips the woman's finger. Ouch! Still, she smiles over at her sister.

**VO: all because you took the adventure further.**

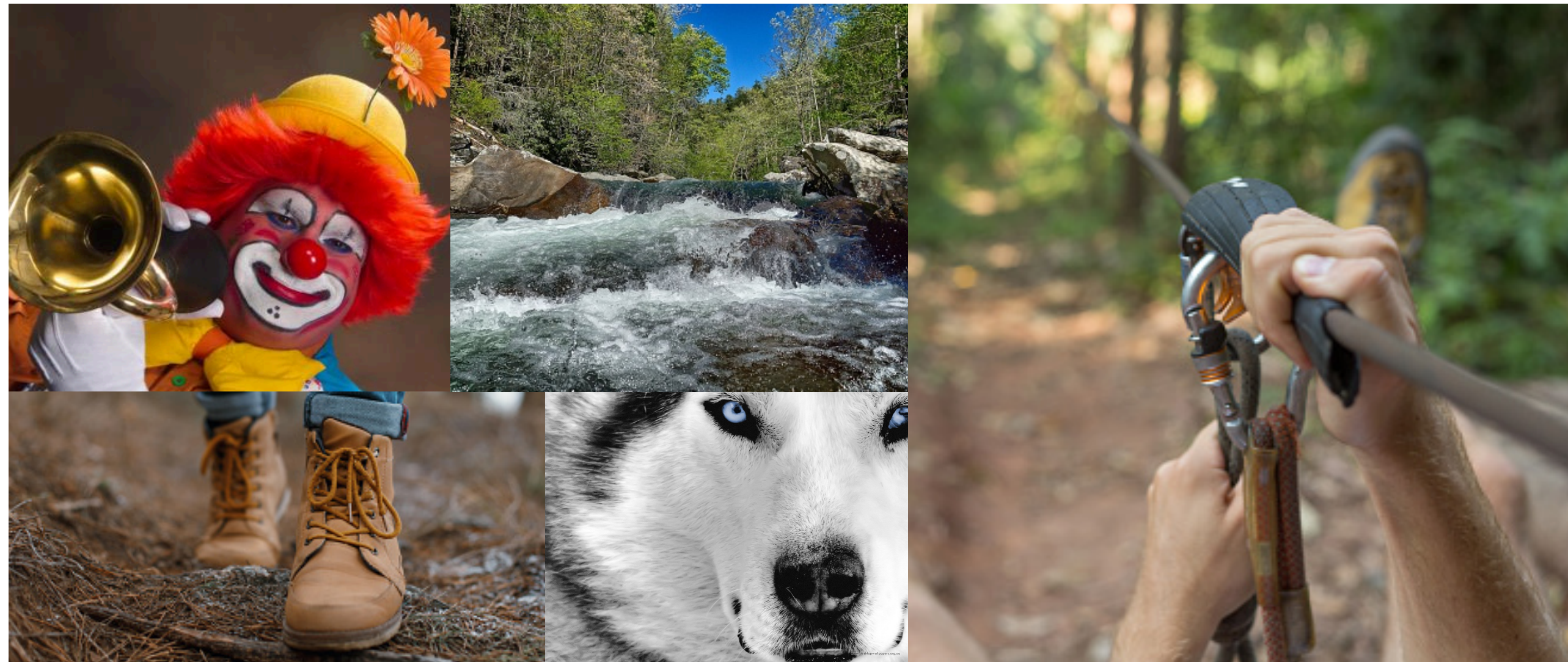
**The Expedition Scratcher comes up over our image.**





## SOUND DESIGN

I want the VO to be the focus of the sound design here. It drives our story forward and helps explain what specifically is happening in each moment. However, I think that punctuating the stories with sound design elements would help to establish the atmosphere of that moment. It can be something subtle: maybe the way the wind rustles through the trees in “Fountain of Youth,” or sound of the eagle’s wing flapping in “Eagle Rescue.” We can record sound on the day, or just keep the sound design as a very muted, almost nondescript layer.







## THANK YOU

Thanks for thinking of me for this awesome campaign – it’s right up my alley. I love the idea of these three Expedition inspired “adventures” and the strange turns they each take. But I especially like how character driven each story is. It’s a funny, smart way to show how unique each Virginia Lottery player is. I’d love to be a part of bringing it to life.

I’d like to say a few words about the type of director I am. I’m a storyteller, one that loves working within the confines of the 30-second format. I’m judicious and economical about my shot selection. I’m also a perfectionist. I keep trying to come up with new ideas, wrinkles and funnier lines and beats, until that clock in my head tells me I’m simply out of time. I don’t rest until I’ve got it right.

I know we haven’t met yet so it’s important that you know I pride myself on being collaborative and a listener. I understand my role as a director and respect the authorship of the agency.

And finally, I don’t like the agency sitting in a village somewhere removed from me so that we have to run back and forth, or send carrier pigeons for approval. I want you at my side – filming is, after all, a collaborative business. My sets are always fun. The food is always good. For me it’s about creating a wonderful environment, because that’s what it takes to get the best spot. I thank you for the opportunity to work on this great creative. You can count on me to make it everything and more than you originally visualized. I’d love to discuss it with you further.