

Crash: The Not Quite Unreal Sequel

Deleted Scene – “The Kiss”

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Michelle Lim and Astrud Quinton almost bumped each other’s head as they peered closer to the screen. Mitch’s new netbook’s screen was only 9 inches diagonally, and her mother got it for her when she went to Seoul for a fashion show last week.

“Do you think he’ll take his shirt off?” Mitch whispered.

Astrud shrugged. “Let’s make him,” she said. She typed: “R U going 2 take it off or not?”

The boy on the screen grinned. His eyes were not looking directly towards the webcam, he was obviously reading the girls’ message.

“I can’t believe we’re chatting with Jack Avernon,” Mitch gushed.

“I know!” Astrud agreed. “No one will believe us tomorrow when we tell them THE Jack Avernon is on video conference with us.”

A sharp note buzzed through from the netbook.

“Look, he replied! He replied!” Mitch said.

They both shrieked.

“Keep your cool, keep your cool. He can see us through our webcam,” Astrud said, more to remind herself than her friend. “Let’s see what he wrote.”

I’ll take my shirt off, but... the message read.

“...but you girls have to make out for me,” Mitch read out loud.

Astrud raised an eyebrow challengingly. “White boys are so hot,” she said.

“Like black men,” Mitch agreed.

“What do you mean?” Astrud said, reading out loud what she was writing back to the boy. *Wat U mean???* she wrote.

The answer came faster this time. “You girls kiss each other for 10 seconds, and I’ll be your cam slave for 10 minutes,” Mitch read out loud. “Tell him: we didn’t know Whimsey popstars are into crazy sex stuff.”

“Oh, please,” Astrud said. “Whimsey popstars are so into crazy sex stuff. Haven’t you been reading PerezHilton.com?” But she obliged, and wrote back to Jack what Mitch told her.

If you think that’s crazy, wait till you hear what Marissa Nguyen likes doing with her Chihuahua, Jack wrote back.

The girls burst out laughing.

“Marissa’s a fucking slut,” Mitch said. “They should have killed her character before they did *Underage Rehab Musical 2*.”

“I know!” Astrud said. “I totally agree. And now she’s like dating one of the Jason Brothers. What a fucking whore.”

“White boys are so hot,” Mitch said, looking at the video stream of Jack Avernon.

“I wish we have more white boys in school,” Astrud said.

“Isn’t Olivia’s brother white?” Mitch said.

“He’s *part*-white,” Astrud corrected her. “That’s like, just 30% as hot.”

“You know, my friend Ava said there’s a Brazilian boy in her school, and they text each other,” Mitch said.

“Your friend’s a total slut,” Astrud said matter-of-factly.

"I know," Mitch said. "She's like the Queen Whore of St. Bridgette, and she acts like she's, like, I don't know, like, super hot. But she's not."

"I'd rather be a common bitch than a Queen Whore," Astrud said with pride and indignation in her tone. "Bitches rule."

"Absolutely," Mitch said.

Another sharp note rang from the netbook.

WTF's takin you girls so long? Get the show going, Jack Avernon wrote.

Astrud rolled her eyes. "Lizzie said Jack Avernon has the attention span of a puppy," she explained to her friend. "Everytime they're on their set, Lizzie had to run around looking for him seconds before the cameras start rolling." Lizzie was Astrud's cousin Elizabeth who gave her Jack Avernon's online messenger contact details.

"Wait. We're thinking," Astrud wrote and read out loud their reply before sending it through with a push of the ENTER key.

"OMFG, A.!" Mitch shrieked. "You're not *seriously* considering it, are you?"

Astrud just bit her lip. After a while, she said, "Well... this IS Jack Avernon we're talking about here. And he did say he'll be our cam slave."

"Gross!"

"Shut up, bitch. Of course it's gross. That's why he wants us to do it," Astrud said. "But..."

Astrud forgot what she was about to say when she noticed Jack's video. Mitch was equally mesmerized as well. On the tiny video screen, Jack Avernon, star of the Whimsey Channel's successful *Underage Rehab Musical* series was staring straight into the webcam and at the two girls.

Check this out, asian chicks, he wrote.

Jack Avernon raised an arm, and flexed his biceps. He grinned at the webcam challengingly, his deep, dreamy eyes melting whatever defenses the two girls had around their hearts. Astrud and Mitch sighed audibly, and almost at the same time. Jack kept flexing his biceps like a peacock preening. His shirt clung tighter as he puffed his chest out. He pouted, puckered his lips into an expression of haughty naughtiness.

"Friend," Mitch said without taking her eyes off the screen. "Do you know how many girls around the world would kill us for this?"

"My mother said homos go to hell," Astrud said, similarly entranced. "But I can go to hell for kissing a girl and THAT," she said, referring to the show Jack Avernon was putting for them, "would still taste like heaven."

"Do you think we should..."

"Shhh... he's not done yet."

On the little screen, Jack Avernon held his gaze, his eyes turning into hypnotic orbs that pull everything around it into the blackhole that was Jack's pupils. Astrud imagined him sparkling, like a vampire in a trashy novel she has read recently. Mitch felt all warm and tingling inside. She was about to place a hand on her belly when she remembered she wasn't alone in the room.

Jack slowly reached for the bottom ends of his shirt, and teasingly pulled it higher a bit, exposing his smooth, well sculpted abdomen. Mitch and Astrud both felt weak in the knees, and shared the only chair in front of the netbook on Mitch's desk. The pretty boy, seeing his

desired effect on the expressions of the two girls, continued to pull his shirt higher, now exposing half of his excruciatingly waxed chest. His right nipple stared at the girls, challenging them with its pinky perkiness.

"The Lord is my shepherd, there is nothing that I shall want," Astrud whispered, randomly quoting one of the verses she often hear from her parents.

"It's like a cute button," Mitch said, her voice drifting like soft smoke all around her head. She craned her neck for a different angle. "It's like a cute, pink button I can flick with my tongue."

"Push to eject," Astrud mumbled. She reached for Jack's nipple with a finger, and was shocked back to earth when she touched nothing but the netbook screen.

The boy dropped his hold on his shirt, and resumed typing.

So, how's it gonna be, asian chicks? I gave you a sampler.

Astrud's jaw dropped. She had momentarily forgotten about Jack Avernon's condition, and the sudden reminder forced her to make a quick decision.

"It's just a kiss," she said, partly to her friend, mostly to convince herself. "We've done worse things, Mitch."

Mitch was silent.

"I've seen your boobies, you've seen mine, right? Hell, we even touch each other's boobies when we have to," Astrud said.

Mitch was hesitant. "Yeah... but that's only because we have to go for breast symmetry when we're dressing fancy."

"Just imagine your kissing a boy. I don't mind. Fantasize about Ordiz for all I care," Astrud said. "We need to turn that Jack Avernon into our cam bitch."

"Uhm," Mitch said. "I think I'd rather not think of a boy. I might enjoy it too much if I fantasize about a boy while doing it."

"Fine. Just keep in mind it's just a kiss. Two parts of our bodies touching," Astrud said nervously.

"Like a high-five!"

"Yes! Like a high-five! Except with saliva."

"Ewww," the both said.

GO 4 IT, Jack Avernon wrote impatiently, followed by another sharp, ringing tone that buzzed at the netbook in front of the girls.

The girls faced each other and closed their eyes.

Downstairs, Mei Lan Lim finished her cup of tea, and decided it was time for bed.

Mei Lan Lim, renowned fashion designer, enjoy a cup of tea every night, shortly before slinking to bed. Tonight, with her boyfriend out of town, she decided to catch up on her reading. She bought a paperback novel in the airport bookstore in Incheon when she was flying back to Manila from her show in Seoul. The book was a story of the supernatural involving a witch hunting down vampires, and she was surprised to find out that it was written by a Filipino author named *J.C. Marvel*. The name sounded familiar to Mei Lan, but she couldn't quite put her finger on why. It impressed her to find the work of a Filipino prominently displayed on foreign soil, and she felt an immediate solidarity with the author, her being an internationally renowned fashion icon herself.

She placed the empty teacup on the tray with a flat, china-on-metal clank. She carried the tray back to the kitchen, leaving her paperback by the couch where she was reading. The clock on top of the TV tick-tocked distinctly, making her notice how awfully quiet the house was.

Mei Lan Lim left her used cup on the kitchen sink, and paused by the foot of the stairs leading to the second floor of their house. Her daughter's friend was spending the night over, and the two girls were usually hogging the widescreen TV whenever they would have sleepovers.

Something was unusual, and Mei Lan Lim couldn't shake the feeling that she must pry a bit.

Astrud Quinton closed her eyes, and waited. She could feel her friend breathing on her face. It was warm. She could smell the sweet, delicate smell of the night cream they both applied on their faces earlier.

It felt like eternity, but she knew it couldn't have been more than a few seconds. Neither of them were moving closer, both passively waiting for the moment.

Astrud just wanted to get it over with. The sooner they do it, the sooner it would be over.

She leaned closer.

Mei Lan Lim's slippers sunk comfortably into the staircase carpet without a sound. She wasn't sneaking up on her own daughter, of course not; but she was making no particular effort to have her presence felt before hand. With an ear cocked towards her daughter's door, Mei Lan listened for any particular noise that would give her a clue as to what's going on behind her daughter's closed door.

Mitch tensed as she felt Astrud leaning closer. Well, she thought, a kiss is just a kiss. She knew Jack Avernon was enjoying every moment, and she wanted to risk a peek, see what the popstar could be doing, but she didn't want to break the tension. She knew she would laugh at how silly they must look if she opened her eyes, even just a bit. It was hard not to laugh just thinking about it even.

Their lips met, and the first thing they both noticed was how soft the other's lips are. Not rough, and they don't have that plump firmness that boy lips have. Mitch could taste a bit of the toothpaste they used on Astrud's mouth, and she could hear the steady whirring of her netbook's internal gears cooling themselves.

Mei Lan stood outside her daughter's room. She glanced at her Cartier watch, the one she liked to think of as her daily wear Cartier. It was a gift from Mei Lan's former lover, an older man who had his money mostly in a lot of varied investments. Mei Lan could afford to buy much expensive watches now, occasionally, a Cartier or a Patek to get on her good favors would be sent in by someone influential.

When she was done appreciating her expensive daily wear Cartier, Mei Lan Lim checked the time and realized it was too early for the girls to be sleeping. Well, ordinary girls would have gone to bed ages ago, but Mei Lan considered her daughter and her friends far from ordinary.

She reached for the door knob.

Astrud felt Mitch's lips on hers, and felt a great sense of relief wash over her body. She had been worrying about nothing all along, she realized. It wasn't gross at all. It wasn't exciting, sure, not like when she was kissing boys, but kissing her best friend felt... pleasantly safe.

Astrud ventured some more, and started to move her lips. It felt awkward to have Mitch's lips dead pressing onto her. At first, she felt no resistance, like she was munching on Jell-O. Then, her friend got on with her groove and started kissing her back.

Mei Lan hesitated. She eased her grip on the cold doorknob. She remembered once, as a young girl, her stepmother had walked into her and her best friend Gail kissing the poster of David Hasselhoff from *Knight Rider*. It was embarrassing, and she could have either died at that moment or killed her stepmother.

Yes, Mei Lan thought. Girls tend to do silly things. Harmless, yes, harmless silly things. All the more reason why she pulled the door open.

Astrud pulled back. She looked at her friend, stared deep into her eyes. They both erupted into giggles.

"What are you girls giggling about?" Mei Lan asked. "Isn't that boy in your laptop a celebrity or something?"

Crash: The Not Quite Unreal Sequel by [Carlos Malvar](#) is hitting shelves in bookstores everywhere on October 20, 2009!

For updates and more information, visit <http://www.visprint.net> regularly.

Not Quite Unreal is a series of novels for young adult written and developed by Carlos Malvar. It chronicles the lives of the young, the rich, and the screwed-up as they try to survive high school and each other. Look for it in your favorite bookstores.

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