



Fall Away

1 Last Chance at Paradise

Julian Grant's wildly uneven story about the painfully conflicted singer/songwriter of a dysfunctional Americana band has its moments, but most of them come when the musicians are singing instead of exchanging dialogue. In **Fall Away**, Grant Stokes gives an annoyingly stylized portrayal of "Handsome Jake," another one of those archetypal rock/country fuck-ups who represent Nashville in the movies. No sooner does the band 65 Home catch the break it's been struggling to get than Jake's prima donna side come to the fore. A male lover re-enters his life, while a recently thrown-aside girlfriend breaks the news that she's pregnant. Other members of the band question his authority and sudden decisions about writer's credit and personnel. It's enough to drive an *artiste* to drink, which he does. His comeuppance comes in the ugliest way possible, but not before he sings some very decent songs. Grant's moody cinematography nicely captures the grime and grit of Chicago and Nashville's smoke-filled clubs and dank alleyways.

In Jason Impey's exceedingly talky **1 Last Chance at Paradise**, two young lovers, Kai and Tobi, share intimate memories of a wonderful weekend away from Tobi's aggressively homophobic mother, before their world crashes in on them. The overall tone shifts from romantic to sad, poignant to confrontational. The narrative experiment is based on an original concept by co-star Wade Radford. It was filmed in one day, live, ad lib and with no script. It repeats the same style employed by Radford and Impey for **Boys Behind Bars**. 1980s' punk goddess, Honey Bane, plays the mother as if she were medieval gargoyle.

- Gary Dretzka

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