

THE HIGH LIFE

1X01

"Exordium"

Written by  
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THE HIGH LIFE

"Exordium"

TEASER

FADE IN:

1

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

1

We slowly fade in on an entirely unfurnished apartment. Barren, white walls and scratched, hard wood floors are virtually the only things available to catch one's eye.

To our far right, we can make out the initial forthcoming of, what is most presumably, the kitchen as a counter top is scarcely within view.

As we stare blankly at the empty apartment, a JINGLING of keys warns us of someone's approaching and moments later, a tall, casually dressed man in his mid-twenties bursts in through the door, a bit of sweat running through his short, brown hair.

LEE walks excitedly around the apartment's bare innards as he runs his hand along the walls on his way to the kitchen. A joyous, deep breath precedes a thick, English accent.

LEE

(to himself)

It's perfect.

(beat; giggling)

Sublimely perfect.

He disappears into the kitchen for a moment's time and reappears, smiling back into the kitchen.

LEE (cont'd)

And though I walk through the  
valley of the shadow of death, I  
will fear not the lack of  
refrigeration within.

He laughs at his own joke for a moment then turns around and walks into the living room.

Before he can get very far into the room, however, he's interrupted by an approaching voice with a, likewise, English accent.

IAN (O.S)

Hello?

CONTINUED:

Lee turns ecstatically from the living room and hurries to the door. In through the very same door, IAN, 20, enters.

He's a moderately sized man with thick, brown hair and a pair of oversized eyeglasses. He drops a bag from underneath each arm and stares inquisitively at Lee.

LEE  
(curiously)  
Ian?

IAN  
Lee?

Both men nod their heads with a laugh.

Ian (cont'd)  
I don't know whether to go for the full fledged and possibly border breaching hug or stick within the comfortable confines of a manly handshake.

LEE  
I say we start with a handshake and see where it goes from there.

They shake hands for a moment before Ian pulls Lee closer and embraces him in a tight HUG for a matter of moments.

IAN  
I've known you nearly as long as I have most of my family...and like you better than any of them. I think that constitutes a hug.

LEE  
(laughing)  
Alright, but just the once. God knows how Americans take to two men hugging...especially in Los Angeles.  
(beat)  
But look at this place! Isn't it amazing?

Ian stares apathetically at his surroundings for moment before he walks lazily past Lee and throughout the apartment. He quickly pops his head into the two doorways on this side of the apartment.

He then look curiously across the apartment to another doorway on the other side of the room.

CONTINUED: (2)

IAN  
(confused)  
These are bedrooms.

LEE  
I'm sure they'll come in handy,  
then!

Ian stops and points toward a door on the other side of the room.

IAN  
Then what the hell is that?

Lee looks back to the closed door for a moment and then back to Ian.

LEE  
How should I know? I walked  
through the door no more than a  
few moments before you did!

IAN  
I think it's safe to assume that  
it's a bathroom.

LEE  
Good to see the plane ride across  
the pond didn't compromise your  
unparalleled sense of pointing out  
the obvious.

Ian stops and looks around for a moment before looking back to Lee again.

IAN  
(beat)  
I don't see anymore doorways.

LEE  
I'm trying desperately to find a  
point to this, Ian, I really am.  
Maybe it's hearing you speak  
instead of reading a blunt message  
over the internet, but you may  
have to help me out a little bit  
here.

IAN  
This is only a two bedroom  
apartment!

CONTINUED: (3)

LEE

Relax. Everything is going to be fine.

IAN

Fine?! You told me on the phone that you got a three bedroom flat!

LEE

Yeah, well...as it turns out, they rented all the three bedroom apartments in this building so this is the best we can do, short of living rent free in the alley out back.

(beat)

Can't you just be thankful we're here? This is LA, man! We're going to be famous in a matter of days...probably hours!

Ian stares apathetically for a moment.

Lee (cont'd)

Come on. Cheer up! We've got celebrating to do. It's all coming together! This is the result of a collective effort that we've both been building toward our entire lives and we're finally here...in LA! We are the gods of our destiny, my friend...

Lee grabs Ian and throws his arm around his shoulder as he lays out his vision with a series of hand gestures in front of them.

LEE (cont'd)

...and these deities are bound for far greater things than destitution.

Ian's apathetic look turns to a frown before becoming a smirk and then slowly working its way into a realizing smile. Lee smiles back and pats him on the shoulder.

Lee (cont'd)

Am I right or am I right?

IAN

(reluctantly)

Wow.

CONTINUED: (4) IAN(cont'd)

I don't know that I've ever heard  
a speech that screamed bullshit  
half as loudly as the words that  
just came out of your mouth...but,  
as strange as it sounds, those  
words actually made a degree of  
sense. I think --

Ian stops short as he glances to the kitchen.

LEE

What?

IAN

There's no refrigerator!

LEE

(nonchalantly)

Don't worry about that. We'll get  
a tub and some dry ice.

BLACK OUT.

END OF TEASER

CONTINUED: (5)

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

2 INT. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

2

As we slowly come back in on the vastly empty apartment, we see a few things have sporadically started popping into place. A bag here, a box there, and Ian and Lee busily unpacking things.

LEE

(restless)

Don't you think this could wait?

IAN

What good is it going to do us having an apartment with nothing in it?

LEE

It'll have things in it. They'll just be scattered about the floor.

IAN

You know as well as I do that the various talent agencies and production companies are going to be there tomorrow. I don't really see us getting signed to a multimillion dollar deal our first day in LA.

LEE

We're damn sure not going to if we're sitting around the apartment, unpacking boxes.

IAN

Hey, I've never considered myself to be the voice of reason, but right now, I'm sounding like the Pope on Sunday mornings. If you don't settle down a bit, you're head's going to start doing that exorcist thing...and then I'll have to kill you.

LEE

Fine! We'll unpack.  
(sarcastically)

CONTINUED:

LEE(cont'd)

Fame and fortune be damned, but at least we'll have the words 'tidy abode' chiseled on our headstones.

Ian shakes his head at Lee's impatience for a moment before the sound of approaching footsteps scarcely make their way into the apartment.

Ian and Lee smile to each other, jump to their feet, and run to the door.

3

INT. APARTMENT - DOORWAY - CONTINUOUS

3

Lee RIPS the door open to find a startled CLAIRE, 26, nearly dropping the single piece of luggage that she's carrying with the door's unexpected abruptness.

Her long, brown hair is drawn up into a pony tail and a pair of glasses rest firmly upon her face. A pair of comfortable jeans and a T-shirt cover her body and she quickly catches her breath.

LEE

Claire!

CLAIRE

I guess I'm in the right place, then.

The guys share a quick laugh and step out of the doorway, Lee taking the bag from her hand as she awkwardly ENTERS the apartment.

LEE

How was your flight?

CLAIRE

They were fine. Believe it or not, they didn't offer a direct flight from South Africa to Los Angeles. I had three layovers.

IAN

That happens a lot to the little guys over here. I think they call it the long arm of 'the man.'

CLAIRE

(uneasily)

Okay, I can't do it anymore.

CONTINUED:

CLAIRE(cont'd)

I thought I might figure it out within a few moments time and avoid any awkward situations from the beginning, but you've both got accents and you're saying extremely bland things. I know I've seen both of your pictures, but which one's which?

Without answering, both guys lunge for a GROUP HUG, leaving a comforted smile on her face.

Claire (cont'd)

Is this how everyone greets one another in LA?

LEE

Apparently so.

The guys pull back from the hug and Lee steps aside with an inviting arm into the apartment's innards.

Lee (cont'd)

Isn't this place great?!

IAN

(apathetically)

It's only got two bedrooms.

LEE

Don't mind him. He's just crabby.

IAN

There's no refrigerator either.

Claire stares quizzically at Lee for a moment.

LEE

It's not that big of a deal! I'm sure we can find one at the corner market.

CLAIRE

(beat)

Seriously, which one is which?

LEE

For Christ sake, woman. I've only spoken to you every day for the past year. You can't tell by my speech patterns?

CLAIRE

Lee?

CONTINUED: (2)

He nods along.

Claire (cont'd)  
Reading a message and listening to  
you speak are two entirely  
different things.  
(beat; thinking)  
Your accent is thicker than I  
might have thought.

LEE  
I get that all the time.

CLAIRE  
(whispering)  
Is that Ian?

Before Lee can even get a word out, another woman rushes into the door.

EMMA, 18, is a short, blonde girl of medium build, attired in your typical skater girl clothing.

A small tattoo encircles her right wrist and she, like the majority of the people, speaks with an English accent upon opening her mouth.

EMMA  
Claire!

Emma quickly HUGS Claire and moves onto Lee.

Emma (cont'd)  
You're taller than I thought!

LEE  
The internet takes inches away  
from your height.

Without acknowledging Lee's words, she moves on to Ian.

EMMA  
Ian!

Emma HUGS him just as she had the others. Claire watches for a moment before she looks back to Lee.

CLAIRE  
How did she know who everyone was?

CHRIS (O.S)  
She knew that neither of them were  
me.

CONTINUED: (3)

Claire turns back around to see CHRIS, 18, struggling to make it through the door with an assortment of luggage draped unevenly around his neck and arms.

His casual clothing is damped with sweat as he works to slowly unload the bags upon the floor.

LEE

Chris?

CHRIS

(agreeing)

Chris.

LEE

Good god, man! Did you bring enough stuff?

CHRIS

(rolling his eyes)

This is all Emma's. My stuff is still downstairs in the crack fiend infested lobby...probably on its way to the pawn shop by now.

CLAIRE

How did-

LEE

Ran into her at the airport. Saw a girl with an English accent raising hell with an airport employee about how her bags were handled and took a chance.

(beat)

It was her.

EMMA (O.S)

This place is great!

LEE

That's what I've been saying!

Lee takes off in Emma's direction, leaving Chris and Claire to stand alongside one another as Chris drops the finale few bags to the floor.

CHRIS

(motioning to Emma)

She's got a lot of energy to be such a small person.

ANGLE ON: EMMA

CONTINUED: (4)

Back with Emma and Lee, the two of them run to each room of the small apartment, exclaiming wonderment.

CLAIRE (O.S)  
I can tell.

ON SCENE

Ian walks back into view to stand with Chris and Claire, staring back at Lee and Emma.

IAN  
Does anybody else think they're taking this whole deficient apartment situation' too lightly or did someone slip some downers into my drink on the plane?

CLAIRE  
This place isn't that bad.

CHRIS  
Besides, from short time that I've known her, I've come to realize that Emma tends to bring the excitement out of people.

LEE (O.S)  
Alright, guys...I was going to wait until later to do this, but the excitement is getting the best of me.

CHRIS  
Told you.  
(beat)  
Don't worry. Lee will be laid out on the floor in a few minutes. No one can keep up with that girl.

4 INT. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

4

Everyone walks into the center of the living room to find Lee reaching happily into one of his bags.

ANGLE ON: LEE

CONTINUED:

LEE

I stopped at the corner store on the way up because, not only do we need to christen our new home, but I also plan on making a toast that would rival the sentiment of a Shakespearian play.

With that, Lee begins pulling out 24 oz. cans of beer from his bag and handing them out.

The tops start popping as soon as Lee hands them out.

LEE (cont'd)

When something as miraculous as all of us coming together from three different continents in a combined effort to satisfy our dreams of making it in this business of entertainment, it's nothing short of the word itself...miraculous. But what does that word even mean? It's been my finding that-

EMMA (O.S)

I need another one.

LEE

Another what?

ON SCENE

Emma is holding her empty can upside down, shaking it symbolically at Lee's bemused expression.

LEE (cont'd)

I..didn't get anymore.

(beat)

Anyway, miraculous --

Ian drops his empty can on the floor.

IAN

Why the hell not?

LEE

There are five of us. Five beers seemed like a feasible number. Besides, the toast is a symbolic gesture, one that you're supposed to wait for me to finish the toast itself to start your beer bonging.

CONTINUED: (2)

LEE(cont'd)

(beat; collecting himself)  
Anyhow, like I was saying --

EMMA

Seriously, that's all you bought?

LEE

To hell with it!  
(apathetically)  
Yay, we're here.

He pops the top of his beer and takes a drink as he walks angrily off screen.

5 INT. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

5

The entirety of the apartment is busily unpacking and arranging, leaving them to look like a flock of Santa's little helpers.

Chris and Lee are sitting in the floor, having acquired the job of putting together an entertainment center.

As they work, Lee occasionally loses sight of the project at hand and glances over in Emma and Claire's direction as they're tidying up the kitchen.

LEE

Do you think she really is?

Chris curiously looks around for a moment and then back to Lee.

CHRIS

Do I think who is what? We're in the real world now, Lee. The pronoun game doesn't work as well as it does when typing. I can't read the post above to find context.

LEE

A pole dancer?

CHRIS

Emma?

LEE

(quietly)  
Hell yes Emma! Who else am I going to be talking about?

CONTINUED:

CHRIS

Claire's standing right beside her.

LEE

Has Claire ever made mention of herself as being a pole dancing princess...or a dancer of any kind for that matter?

CHRIS

Not that --

LEE

Go ask her.

CHRIS

Claire?

LEE

Emma!

CHRIS

You go ask her!

LEE

Look me in the eyes and tell me that you wouldn't like a lap dance to commemorate the evening.

CHRIS

Not as much as I'd like to not get slapped for my troubles. I'm pretty sure that Emma just says that as a joke. I know this is our first 'face to face' with her, but isn't it obvious that she's a bit of a tease when it comes to stuff like that? I think we'd be making a huge mistake if we took any of it to heart and I would most likely have the bruise to prove it.

(beat)

And thus concludes my rejection of your proposal.

LEE

I know you're young and still a bit shy, but this is going to end one of two ways.

CONTINUED: (2)

LEE(cont'd)

Either she gives us both a lap dance or she doesn't. Either way, it's going to be a result of your asking.

CHRIS

(quietly)

Hey, you're not the boss anymore!

LEE

Since when?!

CHRIS

Since we all agreed that you weren't the boss anymore, that we were all equals in this little writing venture.

LEE

(beat; sighing)

I knew bloody well that I shouldn't have agreed to that.

Ian walks into the apartment from the hall, looking strangely back to the hall as he ENTERS the living room.

IAN

Okay, apparently the person that we need to talk to is called 'the super'.

CHRIS

The super what?

IAN

I'm not sure. I think the lady that told me that might have been under the influence of something or another, though, if that helps.

EMMA

(excitedly)

Did she have any more?

IAN

(beat)

Any more what?

EMMA

Really doesn't matter at this point. I'm five past sober.

CONTINUED: (3)

IAN

She did make mention of a neighborhood pub just around the corner.

LEE

Really? A pub? That's great. It'll be just like home!

IAN

Well, she called it a bar, but I'm guessing the same basic principles apply.

LEE

What the hell are we waiting for, then?

EMMA

Do you promise not to use the word miraculous once we get around the alcohol?

Lee shoots her an apathetic look.

LEE

I promise that I'll refrain from any motivational speeches until we all sober up properly and I give a fair warning.

CHRIS

I'm game.

LEE

Then it's settled!

EMMA

It's so exciting. Our first time in an American bar!

CLAIRE

Wait, guys. Tell me I'm not hearing this right. We come all the way out here in hopes of striking it rich and we're going to a bar?

LEE

Either that or we could spend our first night in the states unpacking.

CONTINUED: (4)

The group exchanged mischievous looks as we...

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF ACT ONE

CONTINUED: (5)

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

6 EXT. STREETS - EVENING

6

The gang is walking down the street, casually inspecting the buildings as they pass.

EMMA

(angrily)

What the hell kind of dictatorship is this?!

CHRIS

This country sucks.

LEE

I had entirely forgotten that you have to be twenty-one to drink here.

IAN

(apathetically)

Oh, just shut up.

LEE

What?

IAN

Like you or Claire have to worry. You're both 'of age'.

LEE

Excuse the shit out of me for being born in '78, you daft prick! Why don't I just go back and slap my mother for having been a married woman and engaging in the act of procreation with her husband?

EMMA

There's just a law against buying beer, right? I wonder if we can drink it, just not buy it?

CHRIS

I think they go hand in hand.

CONTINUED:

EMMA

Well, what's to stop Lee from buying up mass quantities and taking it back to the apartment, then?

Chris looks over to Emma with a nod of approval and then back to Lee.

LEE

(adamantly)

No. My first day in America, I am not breaking the law.

CHRIS

I think you already did when you gave beer to us in the apartment earlier today. I'm not political scientist, but there's got to be a law against giving alcohol to people who can't buy it in the store. Wouldn't make much sense otherwise.

LEE

Well that's where the paper trail stops!

EMMA

Lee...?

LEE

No!

IAN

Lee...?

LEE

Pout all you want, you wanker bastards because it's not going to happen.

EMMA

But Lee...?

LEE

Bollocks to the lot of you. I'm going home.

Lee turns around and looks at their surroundings before turning back to them and using the same adamant voice.

CONTINUED: (2)

Lee (cont'd)  
(beat)  
Where is home?

Off of Lee's bemused expression, we CUT TO:

7 EXT. STREETS - LATER

7

Establishing.

LEE (O.S)  
You lot are lucky that I couldn't  
find my way home!

Once more, we find the group walking down the, verging on familiar, streets of LA. Only this time, Lee is pulling a wheeled ice chest behind him.

Emma is walking alongside Lee, admiring the ice chest.

EMMA  
The ice chest has wheels!

CHRIS  
(laughing)  
You are so easily amused.

EMMA  
Hey! Wheeled ice chests may be the next big thing in Canada, but in England, we're still man enough to carry our ice chests...the men are anyway.

CHRIS  
For the sake of peace and due to the fact that three fifths of us here are British, I'm going to let that slide.

EMMA  
(playfully)  
Damn right you are.

LEE  
Do settle down, children. Don't make me take the beer back to the store.

IAN  
You'd never find your way home.

CONTINUED:

LEE

I could take a cab.

IAN

Just pull the damn ice chest,  
grandpa.

LEE

Why the hell am I the one pulling  
the ice chest, anyhow?! I bought  
the damn beer.

CHRIS

If it's illegal for us to purchase  
the beer, it's only logical to  
assume that we're not allowed to  
pull a tub of it down the street.

CLAIRE

You want me to pull it for a  
while?

LEE

That would cap off my less than  
stellar first day state side,  
wouldn't it? Breaking the law on  
multiple occasions and making a  
woman bear the fruits of my  
nefarious labor. I'm already well  
on my way to becoming Tony  
Montana, but I think I'll hold off  
on the sexist angle until my  
cocaine addiction really kicks in  
and I have an excuse.

EMMA

Plus, where would be the fun in  
that?

Lee shakes his head as he stares vengefully at a smiling  
Chris. Off of his less than happy smile, we CUT TO:

8

INT. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

8

The entire gang is busy once again, unpacking, cleaning, and  
going on about getting things set up, but this time, the  
presence of alcohol has helped to create a much more enjoyable  
experience.

Chris and Lee are still trying to put together the  
entertainment center and are now accompanied by Ian, but don't  
appear that they're making headway.

CONTINUED:

LEE

This is ridiculous!

IAN

(apathetically)

I know. You would think that the presence of alcohol would have gotten this thing assembled already...at least into a makeshift chair or beer dispenser.

(beat)

I give up!

LEE

You've been here for like three seconds.

IAN

And those three seconds were well spent, but it's giving me a headache, just looking at this thing. I'm going to make the most of my daily estrogen rush and help the women in the kitchen.

Ian walks away from the area and into the kitchen.

CHRIS

Are we even sure that this is an entertainment center?

LEE

Of course it is. Look at the picture on the box.

CHRIS

There's got to be some parts missing.

LEE

Screw it. Ian's right. This is pointless while we're drinking. We may as well just unpack.

(beat)

Hey, or you could ask Emma to give us lap dances.

CHRIS

You're relentless as hell, has anyone every told you that?

CONTINUED: (2)

LEE

Who finished three Buffy eps in a single day and maintained quality on all three of said episodes? Could it be? I think it was me.

CHRIS

Who asked several hundred times in one day to get a guy to ask for his lap dance and still didn't get his way? Oh wait...that was you too.

LEE

I'm going to break you down, young padawan. Your resistance is futile.

CHRIS

Seriously, why the hell can't you do it?

LEE

I'm nearly twenty-six years old! I'd be considered a dirty old pervert. Whereas if you asked and she agreed, I'd just be along for the ride.

9

INT. APARTMENT - KITCHEN

9

We pick up in the kitchen, in the middle of a conversation with the girls as Ian carries a large box back toward the living room.

IAN

Can one of you give me a hand with this?

EMMA

Did you miss my ice chest speech earlier?

Ian scoffs as he disappears around the corner, wobbling to each side a bit.

Emma, watching him go, looks mischievously back to Claire.

EMMA (cont'd)

Come on! Which one?

CONTINUED:

CLAIRE

I don't know.  
(beat; uneasily)  
They're our friends!

EMMA

Exactly. What are friends for, but to help you out of a bind? There's no shame in talking hypothetical possibilities, Claire. We could all very well take a Hawaiian vacation one day and it would be best if we had these things planned out beforehand. You saw how messy things were on Gilligan's Island.

CLAIRE

(beat; reluctantly)  
From talking to everyone online, I would have always said Lee...  
(sheepishly smiling)  
...and I still would.

EMMA

Really?

Claire nods along.

Emma (cont'd)

So if we were marooned on an island, which we had to repopulate with future generations, you would choose Lee to impregnate you?

CLAIRE

Why? Which one would you sleep with?

EMMA

All three of them...and let them fight over who was the child's father.

Claire's mouth drops with those words, leaving Emma laughing hysterically.

Emma (cont'd)

Claire, I'm only kidding! I'm not a raging slut.  
(beat)  
You're going to have to lighten up!

CONTINUED: (2)

CLAIRE

Hey, I am...light!

EMMA

Sweetie, if nerves were clothing, you'd be shopping in the maternity ward and taking hand-me-downs from your grandmother.

CLAIRE

That's not...entirely true.

EMMA

You need to let your hair down, both figuratively and literally speaking.

CLAIRE

But I don't --

EMMA

Don't worry. We're going to be roommates now. When I'm done with you, you won't even own a scrunchy.

CLAIRE

(uneasily)

Thanks.

(beat; confused)

We're going to be roommates?

EMMA

Unless you were planning on bedding down with Lee.

Claire quickly looks back over to Emma with a uncertain expression as we CUT TO:

10 INT. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM

10

Lee and Chris are still unpacking boxes in the living room when Chris pulls forth a pair of lacy panties from within a box.

He admires them for a moment and when he turns them around, the phrase "EAT ME" is written across the front.

CHRIS

(promiscuously)

This isn't my box.

CONTINUED:

LEE

Do it.

IAN (O.S)

Do what?

Ian walks into view and admires the panties.

CHRIS

Lee's trying to get me to --

LEE

(interrupting)

Trying to get him to try on the  
panties.

IAN

Nice.

(beat)

Emma's?

LEE

Pardon the ill advised and yet  
unavoidable rhyming, but I think  
Claire lacks the flare to pull off  
those panties.

Ian looks back to the kitchen to see Claire and Emma still  
going on about something.

IAN

I don't know. Take off the glasses  
and put on a little red lipstick  
and I think those panties have  
Claire written all over them.

Ian picks up a box and carries it off screen, leaving Chris to  
stare unknowingly at Lee.

CHRIS

It's okay for me to know that  
you're a dirty, old bastard, but  
not Ian?

LEE

We can't tell Ian! It'll screw  
things up. She's never going to  
give all three of us lap dances!

CHRIS

But she'll have no problem with  
the other two?

CONTINUED: (2)

LEE

Better chances, at least.

CHRIS

I'm going to do you a favor, Lee,  
and stop speaking to you from this  
point on out. It's going to be for  
your own good so try not to take  
offense.

LEE

But --

Chris

I tell you what, you go tell Ian  
and he can ask her. Then there  
will be only two of you, my jaw  
won't be sore from the right hook,  
and life will be well in Los  
Angeles.

LEE

You are such a scared, little  
person.

CHRIS

...said the man too afraid to ask  
for his own lap dance.

EMMA (O.S)

Guys?

Lee quickly stands up from the ground and takes a step away,  
leaving Chris standing at Emma's box, holding her panties.

Emma (cont'd)

If you're trying to seduce me,  
you're going about it entirely the  
wrong way.

CHRIS

Huh? No. I was --

Chris looks down at the panties before he quickly throws them  
back into the box.

Chris (cont'd)

I just..got the wrong box..by  
mistake.

CONTINUED: (3)

EMMA

(playfully)

Even with it saying Emma in big,  
bold letters across the top?

CHRIS

This just --

EMMA

Chill out, loverboy. You get a  
free pass this time.

(beat)

But I better not catch you nosing  
around my underwear drawer any  
time soon.

(thinking)

True, I don't have an underwear  
drawer, or any other type of  
drawer at the moment, but when I  
get one --

CHRIS

Point taken.

EMMA

Good.

(beat)

Now, something has come to mine  
and Claire's attention.

11 INT. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

11

The entire group is sitting in the living room floor, looking  
as though they're deep in thought.

LEE

I guess it would be illogical to  
try and fit three people in that  
room. It's hardly big enough.

CLAIRE

What are we going to do?

CHRIS

We need to come up with some sort  
of committee to decide who gets a  
room.

IAN

Committee? Let's just all have it  
out in the middle of the room.

CONTINUED:

IAN(cont'd)

Last person standing gets first pick of rooms...the first one out gets the couch.

LEE

I couldn't have possibly thought of a worse idea.

IAN

Fine. What was your idea again? Oh, wait. Did you have one?

LEE

Matter of fact, I do, Mr. Prissy Pants. The girls can have one room and the rest of us will have to find a contest of sorts to determine what poor soul is going to sleep on the couch.

IAN

Fine, but I'm not sleeping on the couch.

EMMA

I like this plan.

CLAIRE

It is pretty good, as far as plans go.

CHRIS

That's because there's no possible way that either of you are going to end up sleeping on that thing. You know they dragged it up here from the corner. There are probably roaches and crack tubes sewn into every fabric of its being.

We pan over at the old, yellow couch that sits mockingly in the corner of the room.

Chris (cont'd)

It's going to be me. I can already tell.

IAN

So how are we going to settle this?

LEE

The old fashioned way.

CONTINUED: (2)

With that being said, Lee jumps up from the floor and runs into the other room.

Everyone exchanges curious looks for a moment before Lee comes running back into the room with a long, slender box. He smiles boldly as he holds up MONOPOLY.

IAN

Monopoly is your great, unbiased plan?

LEE

What's more fair than a board game?

IAN

(matter of fact)  
A wrestling match.

LEE

A wrestling match isn't fair. It's all about physical prowess, which despite what these manly arms suggest, I don't have. A board game comes down to luck of the roll and that's precisely the best course of action that we could choose.

CHRIS

Let's just get it over with. I already know that I'm somehow going to end up being the apartment bitch, whether it be board game or physical violence.

IAN

You want to go ahead and concede then?

CHRIS

Hell no! Break it out.

EMMA

(to Claire)  
They're so cute when they're desperate.

The girls exchange a small round of laughter as the guys look back and forth to one another.

CONTINUED: (3)

LEE

Alright then. It's Monopoly or  
die.

IAN

Win or lose, I'll commit murder  
before I sleep on the couch.

LEE

Real showing of sportsmanship,  
Ian. Kudos.

CHRIS

How do we decide who gets to go  
first?

The others all look to each other with suspicious expressions  
for a moment before we...

FADE TO BLACK.

END ACT TWO

CONTINUED: (4)

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

12 INT. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

12

As we fade into the apartment, something seems strange. There is no one within sight. As we curiously take in the absent scene, however, a HOWL feels the room, followed by:

IAN (O.S)

You are going to be the apartment  
bitch!

We finally sweep across the room and behind the couch, everyone has taken a seat on the floor, huddled around the board game with the trademarked colored money lying in front of everyone alongside their beers.

CHRIS

This is bullshit! How is this  
fair, letting the girls play?  
(beat)  
I've lost more money to Claire  
than I have to either of you!

EMMA

What are we supposed to do?!  
(beat)  
I know we're in America now, but  
I'll be damned if I'm going to  
spend my days barefoot and in the  
kitchen!

LEE

(apathetically)  
Oh, just drop your Southern  
euphemisms with your not so subtle  
undertones of sexist implications.  
You're starting to sound like  
Waylon.

The group goes quite for a moment with the mention of the name.

Chris

Does anyone else feel bad about  
not inviting him?

LEE

No.

CONTINUED:

IAN

No.

EMMA

Hell no.

CLAIRE

(beat; thinking)

Kind of.

LEE

Look, we all agreed that Waylon shouldn't be dragged into this. Not only is it going to be an elongated conversation that makes...well, two of us feel guilty, but it's already been decided.

(beat)

God knows he's a good writer, but -

-

EMMA

He's an asshole.

LEE

I was going to say he's different, but asshole works just as well.

IAN

Where the hell would we put him up, anyway? Here we are playing a bloody board game to decide who has to sleep on the sofa.

CHRIS

I don't think that thing can be classified as a sofa. I think instrument of Satan is more adequate.

LEE

Look, all faulty furniture aside, when we get the internet turned on here, Waylon can still help out with the project. He just won't know that we're all only four states over from him.

IAN

Let's finish this damn game so I can go sleep in my bedroom!

CONTINUED: (2)

LEE

The game isn't over yet, wise ass.  
I've Big Ben and am in  
negotiations with Claire to  
purchase Westminster Abby!

CHRIS

Those are where Boardwalk and Park  
Place should be, right?

LEE

What the hell are you going on  
about?

CHRIS

The real monopoly game...?

Lee stares at Chris for a moment, not quite sure what he's  
getting at before he's interrupted:

IAN

(beat)

I think Chris is right. The girls  
shouldn't be allowed to play in a  
competition that doesn't concern  
them.

EMMA

Wait just a minute --

LEE

This is getting out of control!  
Everyone needs to take a step back  
and --

Before he can get another word out, Lee takes a pillow to the  
face.

LEE (cont'd)

That's it. You've unleashed the  
jedi pimp within. This game is  
about to get ugly, my --

Another PILLOW hits him in the face.

LEE (cont'd)

You rife bastards.

13 INT. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - LATER

13

We pull back into the game to find only the guys sitting around the board now with Lee paying close attention as Chris explains something to him.

CHRIS

So Boardwalk and Park Place are the two crown jewels of the game and are, in fact, where Big Ben and Westminster Abby are on your strange little European Edition.

LEE

(disbelief)  
Really?

CHRIS

Yep.

LEE

I never knew that there was another version of Monopoly.

CHRIS

It's a really good thing that you got out of England while you're still...relatively young. Well, not elderly anyhow.

LEE

Hey! I'll not --

Meanwhile, Ian appears as though he's going out of his mind and running his hands down the front of his face before finally losing his cool.

IAN

(shouting)  
This is absurd! We've been playing this game for over two hours and no one has been eliminated!

LEE

Do you have to scream? I'm certain that we've got neighbors on at least one side of us.

IAN

We came to LA to get rich, not to whither away playing board games!

CONTINUED:

LEE

As I recall, I proposed a similar argument this morning, only to be told something to the effect of a, 'we live to fight another day' speech!

IAN

Piss off. I'm going to get another beer.

Ian gets up and leaves for the kitchen.

CHRIS

(sarcastically)

He seems happy.

LEE

He'll get over it. I've always known Ian was a bit foul tempered, but as it turns out, meeting him face to face, he's a lot foul tempered.

As Lee finishes his observation, the front door opens as Claire and Emma enter with more beer.

EMMA

Did you know that they stop selling alcohol at two o' clock here?

CLAIRE

It's true.

Emma and Claire make their way to the kitchen to meet Ian as we catch back up with Lee and Chris.

Lee watches the girls walk back into the kitchen, Chris taking note of his noticing.

LEE

You know...

CHRIS

No.

LEE

What?!

CHRIS

I already know what you're going to say and the answer is no.

CONTINUED: (2)

LEE

(offended)

No! I wasn't going to suggest that you ask Emma for a lap dance, you one track git!

CHRIS

Oh, finally. What is it, then?

LEE

(beat)

Okay. I was.

CHRIS

(laughing)

At least you're a terrible liar...

LEE

Just one time is all I'm asking. If she slaps you, I'll never ask again.

CHRIS

...and noble.

LEE

(beat)

Maybe we should have invited Waylon! He would do it.

CHRIS

That's because Waylon has no morals and probably a high tolerance to pain with as many tattoos as he claims to have gotten.

LEE

This is such a small request. I can't believe that you're putting up such a fight to something that's so clearly a petty thing!

CHRIS

Fine!

LEE

(surprised)

What?

CONTINUED: (3)

CHRIS

If you'll just shut the shit up about it, I'll ask her, but the harder she slaps me is the more diabolical my plan for your death is going to be!

LEE

(beat; happily)  
Fair enough.

Chris sighs and stands up from the floor as Lee watches on with a bold smile across his face.

Ian and Claire both walk back into the room, leaving Emma alone in the kitchen and Chris prime opportunity.

IAN (O.S)

Are we going to finish this game or what?

Chris shakes his head as he looks back to Lee who is giving an enthusiastic thumbs up.

14

INT. APARTMENT - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

14

Chris pops his head around the corner and into the kitchen, seeing Emma going about making a drink.

CHRIS

What are you making?

Emma nearly jumps out of her clothing as she spins around to see Chris standing there.

EMMA

(deep breath)  
Okay, these living arrangements are not going to work out if you're going to pull an 'Angel' and pop out from behind corners all hours of the night! What's next, brooding in the dark?

CHRIS

(apathetically)  
Please...excuse the ignorance. I'll try tying something around my neck or start whistling when I walk harmlessly around a corner.

CONTINUED:

EMMA

No sarcasm either.  
(beat)  
Oh..and it's a bloody marry.

CHRIS

Like the queen.

EMMA

(smiling)  
Just because you're living with  
three of them, doesn't mean that  
you have to try and act like you  
know British history.

CHRIS

I'll keep that in mind.  
(beat; uneasily)  
Can I ask you a question?

EMMA

It doesn't pertain to the phrase  
on the front of my panties, does  
it?

CHRIS

No.

EMMA

(thinking)  
Alright, then shoot.

CHRIS

Why did you come here with the  
rest of us?

EMMA

(curiously)  
What do you mean?

CHRIS

I mean, out of all of us, you  
don't seem like you belong here.

EMMA

I do hope that you're going  
somewhere with this. Because,  
otherwise, I may have to ninja  
kick you in the face.

CONTINUED: (2)

CHRIS

The rest of us are kind  
downtrodden and bitter losers -  
when I say the rest of us, I, of  
course, mean Lee.

EMMA

Of course.

CHRIS

We're just out to try and do the  
one and only thing we can, but  
you, on the other hand, seem that  
you could actually make something  
of yourself if you put your mind  
to it.

EMMA

I have. That's why I'm here.

(beat)

I don't want to slave away at some  
hell hole for thirty years and  
draw a pension. You may not have  
caught on yet, but I'm somewhat of  
a free spirit. I'm my own boss.  
This writing gig is the only shot  
I've got at making a real, honest  
to God, successful life for  
myself..and I intend to follow  
through with it.

CHRIS

Wow.

EMMA

What?

CHRIS

That was beautiful. Here I am,  
just to get away from my parents,  
and you've actually got  
aspirations.

EMMA

I know..kind of crazy, huh? Me  
with aspirations. Who knew?

(beat)

So I guess we should go this game  
over with before Ian implodes.

(smiling)

CONTINUED: (3) EMMA(cont'd)

Plus, I am just the slightest bit curious to find out which of you will get to wear the 'Apartment Bitch' sash.

CHRIS  
(quickly)  
Wait, there was one more thing.

15 INT. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM

15

Ian, Claire, and Lee are still sitting around the board. Lee and Claire are talking quietly amongst themselves with Ian, once again, appearing to be close to the breaking point.

LEE  
(to Claire)  
I really don't see it taking that long, do you? We're all smart, motivated people. What's standing in our way?

CLAIRE  
The million other people that are trying to break into the same industry that we are.

LEE  
Things are going to work out. You know why?

IAN  
This is starting to get really annoying.

CLAIRE  
(ignoring him)  
Why?

LEE  
Because it's our destiny.

IAN  
I mean, seriously, this game never ends!

CLAIRE  
I really hate to take you down a notch, but I'm not the biggest believer when it comes to fate.

CONTINUED:

LEE

That's the great thing about it.  
You don't have to believe in it  
for it take effect.

IAN

And if we keep taking breaks, how  
the hell are we going to finish it  
in time for me to sleep in my bed?

CLAIRE

I'll believe in fate when it hands  
me a nice, crisp check. Until  
then, I'll stick to my 'life bites  
the big one' routine.

LEE

Little pessimistic, isn't it?

CLAIRE

Life sucks, Lee. Get a helmet.

IAN

And I just realized that I don't  
have a bed. When I win my side of  
the room, I'm still going to have  
to sleep on the floor.

LEE

I'll make you a bit of a wager.  
When we make it rich and famous,  
you admit that it was fate.

CLAIRE

And...?

LEE

Okay, I didn't really think that  
one through as well as I could  
have, but my main argument is  
still in tact. We're going to make  
it because we're supposed to.

CLAIRE

Until then, you might want to go  
ahead and strap on that  
helmet...just in case.

Finally, after a few a more moments, Ian quickly stands up  
from the floor and kicks the board game across the room,  
spilling its pieces across the whole of the room.

CONTINUED: (2)

IAN

Fair play be damned! We've tried  
democracy, but now I'm leaving it  
up to nature. Survival of the  
fittest!

Ian runs from the living room, leaving Claire and Lee  
exchanging bemused expressions.

16

INT. APARTMENT - KITCHEN

16

Chris is still nervously chatting up Emma in the kitchen.

CHRIS

You see..Lee and I were wondering -  
- Actually, not so much me as it  
is Lee. I just kind of got dragged  
into the entire situation by  
default.

EMMA

Is your tactful inquisition, in  
any way, an attempt to bore me to  
death?

CLAIRE

(sighing)

You see, the thing is --

IAN (O.S)

No time for love, Doctor Jones!

With that, Ian pops around the corner, grabs Chris by the  
neck, and drags him into the living room.

CHRIS

What the hell are you doing?!

IAN

Claiming my territory by means of  
brute force.

CHRIS

Dude, let me go!

Chris tries to fight Ian back, but gets dragged from the  
kitchen and toward the living room.

17 INT. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

17

As we watch Ian drag Chris into the living room, he accidentally trips over the couch and the two go tumbling over the back of it.

Lee and Claire begin laughing maniacally for a few moments before a hand reaches out and grabs Lee by the collar of the shirt.

We watch Lee's panicked face be drawn away before we...

BLACK OUT.

END ACT THREE

CONTINUED:

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

18 INT. APARTMENT - KITCHEN - NIGHT

18

Claire and Emma are sitting atop the kitchen counter, both sipping slowly from their drinks.

CLAIRE

You think it's safe to go back out there?

EMMA

I'm not taking any chances, especially after the thimble incident.

CLAIRE

(beat)

You know, I know we moved in with a bunch of guys for roommates, but they're writers. You think that they would be remotely bereft of this kind of macho bullshit. Aren't artistic people supposed to be refined? Well more so than average people, anyhow.

EMMA

All men, even your artistically savant variety, can be as refined as they want, but as long as they've still got the penis attached firmly to the body, they're going to have wrestling matches...and pissing contests and any other version of a testosterone fueled game that they can think of to flaunt their masculinity.

(beat)

Don't think that I'm jaded either! I'm just a realist.

CLAIRE

(uneasily)

Never crossed my mind.

(beat)

God, do you think any of them will ever just give up?

CONTINUED:

EMMA

My money's on Lee.

19 INT. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM

19

As we come to rest in the middle of the floor once more, we find that the wrestling match has come to a stalemate.

All three men have each other pinned to the ground, but are not particularly holding each other there, mostly just leaning.

After a few moments, Ian tries to flip over and grab Lee, but is quickly stopped short when Chris throws his arm around his neck and slams him back the floor.

IAN

That was just uncalled for.

CHRIS

You dragged me in here by my neck!

IAN

It was a brotherly kind of thing...showed compassion.

LEE

I'm about done with compassion. If one of you don't let me up...

(beat; thinking)

...you're both fired from our future production company!

CHRIS

You're not the boss anymore!

IAN

You're not the boss anymore!

Lee (cont'd)

Damn! Do the two of you remember everything?!

IAN

This is pointless! One of us is going to have to give up. Nobody is going to win. We've been in the same position for well over twenty minutes and I believe my back is beginning to spasm. Anyone care to do the right thing here and walk away?

CONTINUED:

LEE

Monopoly isn't sounding like such a bad idea now, is it?

IAN

Lee, just do the chivalrous thing and concede defeat. I want to go to sleep.

LEE

Me?!

IAN

You're easily the most callow of us all.

LEE

Like hell I am! You concede!

CHRIS

You know what?! Screw it. I'll take the couch.

LEE

(surprised)

You will?

IAN

Seriously?

CHRIS

If it will get the two of you to shut up and get Lee off of my back, I'll do it. I'll do anything.

IAN

Nice.

The guys start getting up from the floor, one at a time, and begin to stretch themselves out.

Ian (cont'd)

Oh, by the way, you might want to check that couch out before you set up camp. I found a needle in it earlier.

20

INT. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - LATER

20

Everyone is gathered in the living room again, all sitting stoically in the floor, some still sipping on a beer.

CONTINUED:

All three guys still look to be worn out from the skirmish and the girls look to be just tired.

Chris is rubbing a spot on his leg as he looks back to everyone else.

CHRIS

You guys realize that it's nearly three in the morning.

LEE

Yeah, but it's almost noon back home. I'm good.

CHRIS

It's nearly five back home, for me...I'm not. And I don't know if you guys have forgotten already or just being extremely unreasonable, but you guys are still in my bedroom.

EMMA

Deal with it.

CHRIS

And I thought living with my parents was bad.

EMMA

Bad, Mr. 'My parents sent me on a five week vacation to Ireland last year?' If any of the five of us were comparable to a 'Friends' character, you would easily be the 'Rachel' of the group!

CHRIS

Hey, don't blame me because my parents were somewhat successful. What was I going to do, turn it down?

EMMA

The point is that you're a little rich kid and living here, in what most would consider to be the 'ghetto,' is going to do you some good. Hell, who knows, it may well make a man out of you.

CONTINUED: (2)

LEE

(apathetically)

Children, you're raising your voices again. What did I say about that?

EMMA

(rolling her eyes)

If we can't speak in a normal and courteous tone with one another, we shouldn't speak at all.

LEE

Music to my ears.

IAN

And here I was thinking that I wasn't living with my father.

LEE

Mock me all you want 'young 'un,' but there will be peace in this house under my watch.

CLAIRE

(beat)

I still can't believe that we're actually here. It's almost surreal.

CHRIS

I know. They've got 'Starbucks' open twenty-four hours a day here.

IAN

(beat)

Do you guys think that we'll actually make it?

LEE

What?!

EMMA

Of course, we will. It's not a question of if. It's a question of when. To quote Lee from one of his less annoying speeches, the five of us are destined for great things. Well, greater than playing Monopoly and sponsoring living room wrestling matches anyhow.

CONTINUED: (3)

LEE

I, for one, concur. This isn't something that we just decided to do one day. This is what we were born to do. What the hell else are we going to do with our lives? Work a bullshit job that's got us living off of cigarettes and anti-depressants? My ass! We're going to get this series of ours off the ground, start our production company, and live the life that each and every one of us full well deserves.

IAN

(beat)

Am I just really drunk or does anyone else feel a tad bit inspired after that?

EMMA

Part inspired...part hungry.

CLAIRE

I could really go for something to eat too. It feels like it's about lunch time.

LEE

It is lunchtime. Think there's anything open at three o' clock in the morning?

CHRIS

You are all insane.

CLAIRE

I saw a flyer today for a Chinese place that delivers all hours of the night.

IAN

Seriously?

CLAIRE

I cannot tell a lie.

IAN

I'm going to love this city.

CONTINUED: (4)

LEE

(happily)

What the hell are we waiting on then, people? Someone grab the phone!

EMMA

Uh..we don't...have a phone yet.

LEE

Right. I'll just throw my slippers on then and head down to that pay phone downstairs.

CLAIRE

(quickly)

I'll go.

Lee stands up from the ground and walks to a box across the room, pulling forth a pair of furry slippers, followed shortly thereafter by Claire standing up to put her shoes on too.

IAN

Screw it! I'll go. It should be fun to see if I can make it up and down the stairs after all the beer.

Ian stands up from the floor too.

EMMA

I never have fancied myself as much of a follower, but if all the cool kids are doing it, then I might as well jump off the bridge too.

(beat; to Chris)

You coming?

CHRIS

No. I'm not really that hungry. More tired than anything. Since I pulled living room duty, I'd better not hear a peep when you come back through my bedroom!

The others are already starting out the door as Emma runs to her new room.

LEE

(to Emma)

You coming?!

CONTINUED: (5)

EMMA

Go ahead...I'll meet you guys down there in a second. I think something has eaten my shoes.

Everyone else piles out of the apartment, leaving Chris to quickly look around to stand up from the ground.

He stands uneasily for several moments before Emma comes back out of the room and heads toward the door.

CHRIS

Emma...

Emma stops and turns around.

EMMA

Yeah?

CHRIS

(nervously)

Earlier...when we were talking, I didn't get to finish what I was saying.

EMMA

(eyeing the door)

Well, either make it quick or make it wait.

CHRIS

I was just trying to inquire - as I said before, for Lee's sake - as to the extent of the accuracy of your previous comments...about being...a...

(muttering)

...pole dancing princess.

EMMA

Oh, aren't you just the cutest little thing? It's like you're in fifth grade, trying to ask your first school girl crush for a lap dance.

CHRIS

It was really more Lee wondering than me. I mean, I just --

Chris stops talking as Emma slowly makes her way over to him and comes to stand seductively before him.

CONTINUED: (6)

EMMA

(slowly)

All in good time.

(beat; quickly)

Now I've got to hurry downstairs  
before they get me some kind of  
breaded rat and forget my saki!

With those words, Emma turns and runs for the door, leaving it to slam closed upon her exit. Chris stands for several moments, trying to figure out what just happened.

CHRIS

(beat)

She really is a tease!

Off of Chris' bemused expression, we...

BLACK OUT.

END OF SHOW