

THE HIGH LIFE

"00 Five And A Half"

by
Chris Kelly

TEASER

FADE IN:

EXT. BERKELEY - DOWNTOWN - NIGHT

A huge city is before us. Stores ranging from an all year Christmas Store, to a bakery advertising Obama cookies are around the court yard.

Lights shine throughout, even though no one is present. It's almost spooky. A fountain is in the middle, elegantly spewing water forth back into its ocean of pennies and spare change. A few trees and hedges are all around and consequently signify that this is a well to do area.

A YOUNG MAN (23, casual attire, looks like a musician) runs into frame, He occasionally glances behind him as he runs, panting for breath.

He takes another look behind him and spots nothing. He ducks behind a hedge and starts to gather his breath.

MR. BARBARY (O.S.)

What is it with heroes and always
trying to not die?

MR. BARBARY (Early forties, in a suit, and almost looks human if it weren't for the green horns sticking out of his shoulders) casually walks into frame and surveys the downtown area.

The Young Man quiets himself, pulls out his cell phone and begins to text.

MR. BARBARY (cont'd)

You pick this career path, you know
it's bound to end only one way. Yet
still you nag and try and pull
these kamikaze stunts, and when
actual demise stares you in the
face... you run?

(tsking)

Ethan, Ethan, Ethan. Have you
learned nothing from television?

Mr. Barbary chuckles to himself as he starts to walk around the fountain, getting closer to whom we presume is ETHAN with each step.

Ethan starts to slowly back away, visibly sweating.

MR. BARBARY (cont'd)

Plus...

Mr. Barbary snaps his fingers and Ethan and the fountain water freeze. The clock's second hand stops.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MR. BARBARY (cont'd)
You know I can stop time.

Mr. Barbary glances around again; taking in his handiwork.

MR. BARBARY (cont'd)
I love doing that.

He continues to walk forward and finally spots Ethan frozen. Mr. Barbary is about to speak, when he too freezes with the rest of the scene.

LEE (V.O.)
This is great! Mr. Barbary is a genius!

CHRIS (V.O.)
That was kind of the point.

LEE (V.O.)
I know! But still - excellent stuff if I do say so myself.

CLAIRE (V.O.)
You haven't even gotten to the best part yet!

LEE (V.O.)
Right, right, hang on...

The scene resumes. Everything is frozen except for our villain.

MR. BARBARY
What was I saying?
(off Ethan's frozen state)
I suppose being truly evil while your ear drums are frozen is rather redundant.

Mr. Barbary nods to himself and snaps his fingers. Everything resumes its natural order. The fountain water is flowing, the clock is ticking, and Ethan double takes as he realizes he is cornered.

MR. BARBARY (cont'd)
Mr. Kane, I believe you had the failure of trying to sabotage me earlier.

Ethan is looking around, clearly alone and trapped.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MR. BARBARY

This is the part where you say
something cliché ridden like,
'you'll never get away with this,'
or -

ETHAN

(defiant)
You won't.

MR. BARBARY

(offended)
Don't interrupt me while I'm being
evil. It's why I killed most of
your friends.

Ethan looks like he's formulating a plan, while Mr. Barbary sticks his hands into his pocket and casually pulls out a gun.

Ethan spots it and BAM! A bullet goes straight between his eyes and he collapses. Instantly dead.

MR. BARBARY (cont'd)

(off gun)
Useful things.

Mr. Barbary takes one last look at Ethan's dead body and looks a little sad, as he pockets the gun and starts to walk away.

MR. BARBARY (cont'd)

Maybe now they'll see. The truth,
like Lee, was out.

The scene freezes.

LEE (PRE-LAP)

What the hell?

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

LEE stares at the script he's reading in utter horror, as IAN WAYLON, and CHRIS burst out laughing.

Lee clenches the script in his hands as CLAIRE tries to suppress a smirk and EMMA rolls her eyes.

EMMA

Finally!

CLAIRE

Did you like it?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LEE

Did... I...

Lee's eyes flick over the script again as Chris tries to stop laughing and hits Ian and Waylon to simmer down.

CHRIS

He's gonna say it! He's gonna say it!

LEE

Was there a bloody gay joke thrown in at my expense?

Chris proudly nods, as Waylon starts to laugh again.

CLAIRE

Guess whose idea it was.

Lee looks between them all as Waylon raises his hand.

WAYLON

I'm a comedic genius.

EMMA

Initially we had you in the script, and you professed your love for Ethan, and then our villain killed you both.

CHRIS

But then we thought the critics and other groups wouldn't appreciate it and think we were being hateful.

Emma and Chris share a look as if what they're saying is perfectly reasonable.

IAN

Which wasn't the case. We were just going for the joke.

EMMA

But tell that to America and you get some human rights complaint, and then we're sued. Unless we're South Park. Then we can get away with anything.

WAYLON

There was another version where the joke was something like "And I didn't kill Lee because he was your boyfriend, I killed him because I'm evil.'

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CLAIRE

But they thought that joke would demean Mr. Barbary's character, while if we have him say something about the truth at the end of the Teaser, it raises curiosity towards his motives and what his evil plan actually entails... aside from 'evil.'

Lee looks deeply confused and scratches his head.

IAN

The line was also once a simple 'Lee was a flamer even the fire department couldn't quench' but Claire insisted that lacked taste and felt we could do better.

LEE

You've all spent way too much time on this.

Lee tosses the script on the coffee table and is clearly agitated, as everyone else except for Claire can't hide the fact that they think they're brilliant.

CHRIS

So we each gave the teaser a polish and edit to get it just right.

WAYLON

So... did you like it?

LEE

(begrudgingly)

Yes. Aside from the part where my sexuality was called into question it was...

(beat)

Well done.

Claire mouths 'sorry' to Lee, but he doesn't see it as he picks up his guitar case beside the couch.

LEE (cont'd)

Be happy I'm strumming for money and not using it as a weapon to beat all your heads in.

As Lee exits with guitar in hand, we:

BLACK OUT:

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

INT. APARTMENT - KITCHEN - DAY

Ian is in the midst of making a meal that looks like a disaster. Ingredients are everywhere, and he appears quite busy as he twists an oven knob and waffles jump out of the toaster with a DING!

Waylon sits at the table, apathetic as ever.

WAYLON

I don't even want to know what you're making.

IAN

It's a process.

WAYLON

I'll bet.

(beat)

So... do you know where the girls are?

IAN

Bored of me already? Dude, if I can see through your ulterior motives you know your subtlety needs work.

Ian starts to use a can opener on a can of beans.

IAN (cont'd)

I believe Claire's out. Probably with Brian. And Emma's home, I think. Why?

WAYLON

Just curious.

Waylon nods as Ian sets the can on the counter covered with flour.

WAYLON (cont'd)

Alright. I'm going to go jam with Lee on the boardwalk, then.

Waylon finally pushes himself up and starts to walk out of the kitchen.

WAYLON (cont'd)

Try not to burn the place down.

Ian turns around his attention back on his masterpiece as he starts to roll dough.

INT. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NEXT

Chris is typing away on the computer as Waylon enters.

WAYLON
Writing the great American novel?

CHRIS
Something like that.

Waylon grins as he sticks his hand under the couch and pulls out a guitar case.

CHRIS (cont'd)
Off to perform a mugging?

WAYLON
Nope. Me and Kara are gonna go jam with the Leemeister. Want to come?

CHRIS
Me? The only instrument I can play is the radio.
(off look)
I'll pass. But have fun.

WAYLON
Will do.

Waylon leaves the apartment and as the door shuts Chris starts to type away on the computer.

There's a long beat. Chris tilts his head, as if thinking, before resuming his typing. Three KNOCKS on the door are heard. Chris spins around in his chair, and begrudgingly gets up and makes his way over.

CHRIS
You know that's not the secret knock, man. Come on! We practiced this. Two knocks high, one knock low, wait a beat, insult Lee, and then knock three more times.
(beat)
Besides, it was your idea!

Chris opens the door with a grin which immediately drops as he spots JOSH (waiter from 1x10, attractive male) holding a nicely wrapped box of chocolates.

JOSH
I'll keep that in mind for next time. But who's 'Lee'?

Chris quirks an eyebrow, as Josh flashes a million dollar grin.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHRIS

I think you have the wrong address.

JOSH

God, I hope not. That would be awkward.

Josh pulls out a piece of paper and checks the scribbled on directions.

JOSH (cont'd)

(confidently)

Nope, this is the place. Is Emma home?

CHRIS

(suspiciously)

Why?

JOSH

Because I'm taking her on a date. And you're a little young to be her father, but do I need your permission?

Chris simply nods, ignoring the question as he looks the guy up and down.

CHRIS

You seem really familiar...

JOSH

I work at O'Grady's.

CHRIS

That's it!

Chris nods again for a beat, as Josh simply stands there.

JOSH

Do you want to tell Emma I'm here?

CHRIS

Not parti-

(catching himself)

Yeah, hang on.

He starts to head towards the bedroom and as if on cue, the girls' bedroom door opens and Emma steps out in a nice outfit with a denim jacket. Make up has been applied, earrings have been put on, and hair has been done.

CHRIS (cont'd)

Were your ears burning?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

EMMA

The nerve endings are dead I'm
talked about so much.

She elegantly walks over, as if in SLOW MOTION. Hair billowing in the non-existent wind. Chris and Josh both realize how gorgeous she is at that moment.

EMMA (cont'd)

(to Josh)

Hey.

JOSH

Hey yourself.

They're looking into each other's eyes, completely oblivious to Chris' presence as Josh hands over the chocolates to Emma.

CHRIS

(to josh)

You keep your "hey's" away from
her.

(beat)

Metaphorically and literally.

Emma jabs Chris' ribs and smiles.

EMMA

Ignore Chris. He's kind of a
douche.

CHRIS

A douche who drinks with you
whenever no-one else will.

EMMA

Well, that's true.

(pats Chris' shoulder)

At least you're good for something.

CHRIS

See! Have that in the back of your
mind the next time I'm carrying
your drunken self up the stairs.

EMMA

(dry)

My knight in casual attire.

CHRIS

Better believe it.

The two share a grin, forgetting Josh is there as he awkwardly coughs and points between the two of them.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

JOSH
Did you two used to date?

CHRIS
(laughing)
God no.

EMMA
Not even in an alternate
dimension.

They swap a look. Josh simply nods.

JOSH (cont'd)
O-kay then... shall we go?

EMMA
Yep! I'm all yours.

She passes the chocolates to Chris.

EMMA (cont'd)
Guard these with your life,
Christoph.

JOSH
(to Chris)
I'll take good care of her.

Emma winks, before linking arms with Josh and exiting. Chris raises his eyebrows as he shuts the door and walks back into the living room. He tosses the chocolates on the coffee table.

CHRIS
What a douche...

CUT TO:

INT. CAFFEINE OASIS - SAME TIME

Claire and BRIAN are sitting at a small two-person table, each with a beverage before them. It's awkward.

BRIAN
So...

Claire innocently takes a sip of her drink.

CLAIRE
Yes?

BRIAN
Anything you wish to discuss? Or
do?

CLAIRE
Weird questions. But no. Why?
Something on your mind?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Brian looks at her and extends an arm, as if it's completely obvious why they're both there.

BRIAN
I believe this is where we have
"the talk."

CLAIRE
(confused)
'The talk'?

BRIAN
The whole "You're a great person...
but I'm looking for something less
serious," or my favourite is "just
let this happen."
(off look)
One of my exes told me that right
after sex, and -

CLAIRE
Are you breaking up with me?

Claire lowers her drink, as Brian looks equally confused.

BRIAN
I thought you were breaking up with
me.
(beat)
The lack of phone calls, or dates
for that matter in the last few
weeks... what other explanation is
there?

CLAIRE
(pointedly)
I've been busy. Which you would
know if you listened to me.
(beat)
Why would you think me being busy
is code for breaking up with you?

Claire raises her eyebrows. A couple a few feet away watches
with open interest.

BRIAN
Come on... you take me to a place
where one of your roommates works
so you can let me down easy...
(casually)
While having a safety net of
support a few feet away so things
aren't that awkward for you. You've
clearly been looking for a reason
to dump me for a while. Project or
no project.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CLAIRE

No, I haven't!

(beat)

And Chris isn't working today.

(surprised)

Did you... want me to break up with you?

BRIAN

No! Why would I want you to break up with me?

CLAIRE

I don't know. But apparently you've been running hypothetical scenarios in your mind. Did I use cliches in some of them, like the "it's not you, it's me"? Because I hate that.

(beat; smiling)

Why are we having this conversation? If neither one of us wants to break up...

Brian sighs. Claire looks over at the couple watching them, and they instantly look away yet fail to be inconspicuous.

BRIAN

Do you just want to get out of here and pretend the last few minutes didn't happen?

CLAIRE

Agreed.

Brian gets up and extends his hand. Claire takes it and grabs her coffee as Brian helps her up and they start to exit the coffee place.

CLAIRE (cont'd)

So she just broke up with you right after sex?

BRIAN

Put her hand on my face as I questioned the matter and said, "Just let this happen."

(reflective)

What a bitch.

Brian shakes his head as we CUT TO:

EXT. BOARDWALK - SAME TIME

People mill about; Shopping, walking dogs, pushing strollers, taking pictures, etc. Enjoying the sunny weather. Musicians play, and artists paint and try and sell their work.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Waylon walks around, holding his guitar case and looking for Lee. He holds a hand over his eye and squints.

WAYLON'S POV:

Dozens of people flash past us, each not recognizable. Several musicians yet none of them Lee.

WAYLON

That's weird. Lee's not one for a sudden change in location.

He walks around for a bit and keeps scanning the crowd.

WAYLON (cont'd)

Come on, Chrimesey! I want us to reel in some all American groupies.

He continues to walk and look as he fishes in his pocket and pulls out his cell phone. He dials the number and it starts to ring.

LEE

(filtered; through phone)
Hello?

WAYLON

Hey dude, where you at?

LEE

Down by the boardwalk, where I always am. Trying to rake in some money. The key is to aim for the gold diggers who were successful in their seduction tactics and are just throwing the money away.

(beat)

Why?

Waylon looks around again. Lee clearly nowhere in sight.

WAYLON

(suspicious)

No reason. Just bored. I take it you're in your usual spot?

LEE

That's what I said. Dude, I'm a creature of habit. You know me.

(beat)

Thinking of coming to visit me? I wouldn't. It's boiling outside. Plus, I'll be home soon enough.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WAYLON

Are you sure? Cause I was thinking maybe we could jam. Maybe find some tourists...

LEE

Next time, dude, for sure. We'll plan it. Anyway I gotta go, the people have requested I return to the skills God gave me.

WAYLON

O-kay. See you, then.

Waylon hangs up, and looks around yet again. Lee is definitely not there.

WAYLON (cont'd)

Interesting...

FADE TO:

INT. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - LATER

Chris is sitting on the couch reading a book, as Waylon enters.

CHRIS

How was guitar-ing it up?
(confused)
Where's Lee?

Waylon looks peeved as he puts his guitar down beside a couch and takes a seat.

WAYLON

That's the question. I went to the boardwalk and spent a solid two hours looking for a man who we can occasionally see bits of the sun reflecting off of his eternally receding forehead... and he was a no show.

CHRIS

Interesting. Did you give him a call?

WAYLON

Yes. I'm not functionally retarded. I used technology. And he insists he was there.

CHRIS

More interesting.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WAYLON

I know, right? Why would Lee lie to us?

CHRIS

(beat)

You thinking bossman has a secret he doesn't want us to know?

WAYLON

I knew I could get your insatiable curiosity piqued.

Chris leans forward and rests his head on his fist.

WAYLON (cont'd)

What are you thinking?

CHRIS

That technology can only get us so far.

The apartment door opens and Lee enters with a guitar case in hand. (Note: skin as white as ever)

LEE

Hey!

CHRIS

How was the boardwalk?

LEE

Great! Some woman today actually made a request for me to play The Eagles. So I obliged.

Chris and Waylon swap a look, which Lee does not pick up on.

WAYLON

How kind of you.

LEE

Yeah. I do it for the fans, really.

WAYLON

I'll bet.

CHRIS

You don't look like you were in the sun.

Lee lowers his guitar case and isn't fazed in the slightest.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

LEE

It's called sunscreen, Chris. I guess coming from the great white north it's a new concept to you, but I bathe in the stuff before I play.

(beat)

Otherwise I'd burn to a crisp.

Lee shrugs his shoulders and heads into his bedroom. Waylon and Chris watch him close the door with interest.

INT. MALL - SAME TIME

A typical mall. Plenty of shops, and plenty of people. Claire and Brian are walking down beside a technology store, holding hands.

BRIAN

If I had a better salary and no self control, I would definitely purchase myself a new laptop.

CLAIRE

I know! But you know even if you get a new model it'll be considered vintage a year or two down the line.

Brian grins, as they continue walking past other stores.

BRIAN

Still, in an ideal world...

CLAIRE

We'd all have the ability to fly or turn invisible when someone we dislike is present?

BRIAN

That too. But you can't put a price on super powers.

(beat; pondering)

Or I guess in a capitalist society, you can...

Claire shakes her head and they continue walking in silence for a long beat. Happily enjoying each other's company.

CLAIRE

They wouldn't be a western government if they couldn't find a way to screw you out of money.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRIAN

I think every government tries to
manipulate and extract wealth
though.

Claire nods, seeing his point as a severely attractive male, let's call him GARY, stands before them. He's a typical surfer dude, with the tan, in swimming shorts. Claire makes eye contact, and is clearly taken by him. Gary just winks.

CLAIRE

He's cute.

They walk past Gary, and Brian looks him up and down.

BRIAN

(seriously)

Eh... I'd definitely give him a
seven.

Brian looks back to Claire and smiles. Claire returns it. Yet as soon as Brian looks away, her expression falters. Did she just hear him correctly?

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

INT. APARTMENT - BALCONY - LATER

The sun is slowly starting to set, as we find Chris and Waylon in two chairs, deep in the midst of chatter. Waylon holds a pen, and has a notebook before him entitled "Things Lee's Not Doing." It looks like they've been at this for a while.

WAYLON

But what could Lee be hiding from us?

CHRIS

Maybe he's a prostitute.
(off look)
Do you have a better idea?

WAYLON

I was thinking maybe he's a sperm donor. It would explain the amount of money he brings in.

CHRIS

(disgusted)
You mean to tell me when it's his turn to buy groceries he's using sperm money?!?

WAYLON

It's just a theory.
(shrugging)
Besides, who would pay to sleep with -

The balcony door slides open and Ian steps out, a look of curiosity on his face. He shuts the door and notes the instant silence of Chris and Waylon.

IAN

You guys aren't plotting on egging people again, are you?

CHRIS

Nope! All vendettas have been taken care of.

Ian nods. He pulls up a seat, clearly not going anywhere soon.

IAN

Are you guys going to resume your conversation? Or was it about me?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WAYLON

Nah, you're not as important as the rest of us.

(beat)

We're discussing what Lee could be doing instead of busking down on the boardwalk.

IAN

Why?

CHRIS

We have a theory. You sitting out here with us is also a social contract that you will not tell Lee that we're hypothesizing about his activities.

IAN

Why don't you ask him?

WAYLON

We tried that approach.

Waylon shakes his head and Ian looks thoughtful.

IAN

Maybe he's participating in vigilante justice?

(laughing)

Nah, he's not that cool.

CHRIS

Or wealthy enough to pull off such an escapade.

Waylon adds "Vigilante Hero" to his ever growing list.

IAN

Maybe he's reading to sick children.

WAYLON

(smiling)

Or molesting sick children.

CHRIS

Dude! Not cool...

Waylon merely shrugs, and adds it to the list.

WAYLON

I just don't get how none of us have picked up on the fact that Lee has been lying masterfully to us!

(beat)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WAYLON (cont'd)
Who taught him that skill? How have
I not already figured this out?

CHRIS
We're all really self involved. In
case you didn't notice.

As if to prove his point, Ian and Waylon clearly aren't listening to him and are in their own worlds.

EXT. LA - BEACH - SAME TIME

Water comes in across the sand as we find Emma and Josh walking in what could be considered a romantic atmosphere. The sun is slowly setting, the waves are making lovely noises.

JOSH
Deep thoughts, Miss Platt?

EMMA
I feel like I should say something
well thought out and deep... but I
got nothing.

JOSH
I'm glad you didn't.

The two share a look, the date clearly going well.

EMMA
I think I'm ready for the part
where you make a move on me.

JOSH
Oh, really?

Josh leans in. It looks like they're about to kiss when DING! Emma pulls away and clearly has a text as she pulls out her cell.

EMMA
(to Josh)
Hold that thought.

JOSH
Will do.

His shoulders slump defeated, as we pan down to Emma's flipped open cell and read a message from Claire: "I think my boyfriend is a bisexual! What should I do?"

We pan back up to Emma whom "huh's" as she reads this. Josh looks ready to go in for a kiss again but Emma's arm pushes him away.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EMMA

Sorry.

Emma starts to dial and puts the phone to her ear.

EMMA (cont'd)

(to Josh)

This will just take a second.

Josh nods, as we hear the phone ringing and we:

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. RESTAURENT - TABLE - SAME TIME

Brian and Claire are in the midst of eating their meals, when Claire's phone starts to ring.

CLAIRE

Do you mind if I get that?

BRIAN

By all means.

Brian bites into his pasta, as Claire picks up the phone.

EMMA

(filtered; through cell)

How bad is it?

CLAIRE

(beat; acting casual)

Hmm... interesting subject to raise, I'll admit. But I'd have to side with the fact that lack of... gravity would stop ninjas from being effective in space missions.

Brian looks up at her and quirks an eyebrow.

EMMA

What the hell are you talking about? I'm talking about the fact that Brian is a bi-

CLAIRE

(quickly)

No, no. I see your point. I do. But martial arts training or not... they're not trained for battle off of Earth.

EMMA

He's right beside you, isn't he?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CLAIRE

Exactly.

Brian raises his other eyebrow at Claire and she smiles as she takes a drink.

EMMA

So are you going to keep the cheese? Or admit that you're lactose intolerant?

(beat)

Which is okay. Some people just can't have... dairy.

CLAIRE

(filtered; through cell)

I don't know. I mean, I like cheese. I really do.

EMMA

(nods)

Oh, I know you do. We all love cheese. You know that.

CLAIRE

I know.

(beat)

I thought it was a problem at first but cheese and I are good.

EMMA

Now are you sure your cheese... likes other... cheese?

CLAIRE

(beat)

I think so. There was a... moment. I don't know for sure, though.

EMMA

I wouldn't invest in the stockmarket until I had done proper research. For example.

CLAIRE

You're switching analogies?

EMMA

I'm just saying. I would see a professional or do some research. Cheese might like butter... or bread.

(beat)

Do you know what I'm saying?

END INTERCUT:

INT. RESTAURENT - TABLE - CONTINUED

Claire nibbles on her meal, and nods. Brian is done with his dinner.

CLAIRE
Yes, I do. Thanks.

Claire hangs up her cell phone, and takes a drink. Brian sits back, deeply confused.

BRIAN
I didn't know cheese was so important to you.

CLAIRE
(awkwardly)
Oh... you know... it's a good source of calcium.

BRIAN
Nutrition is important.

Claire nods along as a waiter comes over and takes away Brian's plate and glass. Brian simply smiles at the man.

BRIAN (cont'd)
Thank you.

Claire takes a bite out of her burger watching the exchange with interest:

The waiter nods and leaves. Brian turns his attention back to Claire, who's busy chewing and staring intently at Brian for any facial reaction.

BRIAN (cont'd)
You alright?

CLAIRE
(mouthful)
Yeah... I really... like your eyes.

She swallows her meal.

BRIAN
Even eating you're still attractive.

Claire slumps her shoulders in defeat, as she turns her attention back on her food.

INT. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - LATER

Waylon's on the computer as Chris sits watching TV. Each of them not appearing particularly busy as the apartment door opens and Emma enters - alone - yet looking happy.

EMMA

The Prodigal Princess has returned!
Please, no bowing or worship until
later.

She plops herself down on a couch and takes off her shoes.

CHRIS

How'd the date go?

EMMA

Good. Definitely not a future
candidate for America's Most Wanted
like my last date.

CHRIS

Good to hear.

Emma reaches over the table and opens up her chocolates.

EMMA

Plus, any man who brings me
chocolate knows the way to my
heart.

CHRIS

I don't know. Seems like he's
trying too hard.

WAYLON

It is a little much for the first
date. It's like he's trying to show
off.

EMMA

Guys, he only brought me chocolate.

CHRIS

Evil chocolate.

WAYLON

I did read an article like that in
the Onion the other day.
(sarcastically)
Chocolate plans to outsmart
machines and humanity.

CHRIS

I'm telling you. It'll happen.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Emma shakes her head as she pops a chocolate into her mouth. Waylon snickers. The guys' bedroom door opens and Lee steps out.

LEE

'Lo.

Everyone nods or waves as Lee heads towards the door and picks up his guitar.

WAYLON

(suspiciously)

Where are you going?

LEE

Out to play again.

(matter-of-factly)

I figure, why can't the LA
nightlife also turn in some cash?

(beat)

I'm not tired. The people out
drinking and walking from place to
place clearly aren't tired... it'll
work out. I hope.

EMMA

Your productiveness makes the rest
of us look severely lazy.

LEE

I'm well aware.

There's a rustling of keys at the apartment door. It swings open and Claire enters alone, and looking tired.

LEE (cont'd)

Hey. Long day?

CLAIRE

Yep.

EMMA

Cheese was code for Brian, right?

All eyes are on Claire as she takes off her coat.

CLAIRE

Yeah, that's what I got from the
conversation.

LEE

So Brian is... cheese?

CLAIRE

Or bisexual.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

LEE

Oh.

CLAIRE

Yeah.

Claire heads over to one of the couches.

CHRIS

He does have a vibe.

(off looks)

I'm just saying. He does. Plus,
he's too nice.

EMMA

So nice people are bisexual? That's
your theory?

CHRIS

Moreso than cynical or finicky
people, yeah. If you're nice, it's
more likely. I think.

(off looks)

It makes sense!

WAYLON

Has cheese always been code for
bisexualism and I didn't know?
Cause I definitely had a friend in
high school who would always talk
about cheese with me.

CHRIS

Was he really nice?

LEE

And on that note I'm going to take
my leave.

Lee waves and exits.

EMMA

Bye!

As the door shuts, the apartment gets quite as Claire sighs.
Waylon looks to Chris.

WAYLON

Aren't you going to follow him?

CHRIS

Yes. But I have to give him a few
minutes' head start.

(beat)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

CHRIS (cont'd)

Plus, Ian is downstairs pretending to check for mail so he'll keep tabs until I catch up.

WAYLON

Look, I know this is your plan, and we are manipulative bastards, I'll give us that.

(proudly)

That stunt with swapping Ian's acceptance letter a few months ago took skill. So we're more than prepared. But I still think you should follow that lying bastard now.

(beat)

I would, but you blend in better. And Ian will definitely say something.

Chris looks contemplative as the girls exchange a look.

EMMA

Wait... do I want to know why you're stalking Lee or am I going to want to call the cops?

CHRIS

We don't know why we're stalking. We're just taking an interest.

(reflective)

So I think we're growing as people.

Chris gets up and mock salutes.

CHRIS (cont'd)

Alright team, I'm off.

(beat)

If I'm not back in twelve hours, send Waylon to avenge my death.

With that Chris exits, as Claire and Emma appear deeply confused and Waylon rubs his hands together.

WAYLON

If Lee asks, you're both our alibis. And Chris was here the entire time.

Emma and Claire look uncertain, and Emma pops another chocolate into her mouth as we:

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

EXT. LA - STREET - SHORTLY AFTERWARDS

A typical LA city street. Plenty of shops and restaurants on either side of the street, as dozens of people walk about. We spot Lee walking with guitar in hand among the crowds.

Twenty feet behind him we spot a hot dog stand where Ian pokes his head out only to have a hand pull him back behind the vendor's cart. It's Chris there with him, giving Ian a "What the hell are you doing?" look.

IAN

What? He's getting away.

CHRIS

No, he isn't.

IAN

Yes, Sherlock, he is!

(beat)

Can we go now?

Chris looks like he's counting in his head for a beat, before he nods. He and Ian merge themselves among the crowd as they walk forward. Lee is still seen in the distance.

CHRIS

Where the hell is he going?

IAN

He's become addicted to drugs, it's the only explanation.

(beat; horrified)

Or he's become an active member of society.

Chris shakes his head as they continue their walk. Chris looks around, clearly unsure of where they are. Lee turns a corner up ahead.

IAN (cont'd)

Did you see that?

CHRIS

Run!

Chris bolts through the crowds, as Ian is flustered.

IAN

What?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHRIS
(shouting)
If we don't run we could lose him!

Ian shakes his head and starts to run as well, apologizing to people as he bumps into them.

IAN
Had we listened to me earlier we
wouldn't have run that risk!

CHRIS
Ian?

Chris jumps over a dog as Ian sidesteps a couple holding hands.

IAN
Yeah?

CHRIS
Shut up.

As they continue racing on and make it to the corner where Lee was last seen we CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT - GIRLS' ROOM - SAME TIME

Claire lies on her bed, while Emma sits on her own and has her laptop open.

EMMA
Need another 'pro'?
(beat)
If he is a bisexual... you'll have
no problem convincing him to have
another guy present in a threesome.

CLAIRE
Emma!

EMMA
What? I'm just saying. You have the
option.

Emma smirks, as Claire adjusts herself on the bed, trying to get comfortable.

CLAIRE
Read me the 'con' list again...

EMMA
(reading)
Our one and only negative aspect...
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EMMA (cont'd)
 you'll have to be insanely jealous
 when your boyfriend is around both
 sexes.

(beat)
 Which is just a lot of work and
 extra bitchiness.

(beat)
 But another pro: you can both admit
 what you hate about dating the male
 population.

Claire finally sits up, unamused at Emma's joyful tone. Emma closes her laptop.

EMMA (cont'd)
 Are you sure he's a bisexual? Or
 you just hoping he is?

CLAIRE
 Why would I hope my boyfriend is a
 bisexual?

Emma shrugs and stands up, sliding her hands into her pockets.

EMMA
 I don't know. My line of thinking
 is simply...

She lets it hang as Claire locks eyes with her.

CLAIRE
 (stern)
 Simply...?

EMMA
 That maybe him being a bisexual...
 is a reason for you to break up
 with him.
 (off look)
 Oh, come off it! I'm not saying
 it's a good reason to end what you
 have. Just insinuating that some
 people, like yourself, wouldn't be
 comfortable in that situation.
 Which is fine.

Emma turns away and heads over to her closet. She starts examining her clothing selection.

CLAIRE
 Why does everyone think I want to
 break up with Brian?

The back of Emma merely shrugs, as she pulls out a few of her dresses and places them on the bed.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

EMMA

Look. If you want to stay with him,
then it's that simple. But if
you're making things overly
complicated and looking for
excuses... well, you're going to
find them. No-one's perfect.

(beat)

Except me.

Emma starts looking at her dresses in detail as Claire bites her lip and leans back onto her bed.

CLAIRE

You know... everything you said
just made sense until that last
part.

EMMA

Hey!

Emma tosses one her dresses at Claire, and laughs. The mood clearly lightening.

EXT. LA - DOWNTOWN - LATER

Lee is about fifteen feet away on the other side of the road walking with determination. Ian and Chris trail him, and try and fail to be inconspicuous on the other side of the road.

IAN

I'm starting to think Lee's lost.
And by association, so are we.

CHRIS

We're not lost.

The duo duck behind a newspaper stand that only manages to cover up to their necks as they watch Lee.

IAN

Do you know where we are?

CHRIS

We're...
(looking around)
... in Los Angeles.

Ian grits his teeth as Chris gets up and starts to walk again.

IAN

So we're lost.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHRIS

Sadly. But Lee know's where he's going.

Ian doesn't look like he buys it as the guys continue to walk. Chris' cell phone starts to ring. He answers.

CHRIS (cont'd)

Hello?

WAYLON

(filtered; through cell)
What's the status?

CHRIS

Nothing to report on our end. We think we're lost, though.

Ian glares at Chris as they continue to trail Lee.

CHRIS (cont'd)

(ignoring glare)
What about you? Has he made contact?

WAYLON

Nope. The girls tried his cell and offered to visit and then end the night at the bar, but he turned us down.

CHRIS

Weird.

WAYLON

I know. That's the first time any of us has turned down the bar! Anyway, the girls finally went to bed, which my testosterone is thankful for because Emma would not shut up about her date with Josh.

CHRIS

(spiteful)
Josh? She's still talking about that walking waste of particles?

Lee turns a corner, and the guys follow shortly afterwards.

WAYLON

He seems like a nice enough guy, dude. I was just sick of Emma and Claire speaking girl about the date and the signals.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CHRIS

I'm telling you, he has a rapist's eyes.

WAYLON

You think so?

CHRIS

I'm just saying I got a bad vibe. I mean, the way he was looking Emma up and down like she was a cannibalistic treat? I'm ashamed she fell for it.

WAYLON

In that case, let's hope he doesn't call her.

CHRIS

Yeah. Anyway, dude, Ian and I gotta boogie, but we'll check back later.

WAYLON

Cool.

Chris hangs up and he and Ian try to act casual in the crowd with Lee a few meters ahead of them.

EXT. LA - DOWNTOWN

Lee walks down another city street talking on the phone. Chris and Ian are only ten feet behind him.

Lee starts to turn around and Chris jumps into the nearest doorway and drags an unwilling Ian with him.

Lee finally looks down the city street, not spotting them in time. He merely shrugs and turns back around.

While we find Chris and Ian uncomfortably close in front of an Adult Movie Theatre. The door opens and an OLD GUY walks out and spots them.

He simply winks and continues on as Ian and Chris simultaneously SHUDDER... then realize how close they are and jump apart!

EXT. LA - BAD PART OF TOWN - LATER

Police sirens go off and several buildings are condemned or abandoned. Lee is very comfortable with himself - while Chris and Ian are two blocks away and are freaking out at their surroundings.

IAN

Oh, my God... Lee's joined a gang!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHRIS

We're going to die. We're going to die and gangsters are going to take the credit for our future corpses.

Ian solemnly nods as Chris gulps and jumps as a random car drives past... paying the guys no attention. Yet they still look scared shitless.

EXT. LA - GHETTO - LATER

Still in a bad neighbourhood. Lee turns a corner up ahead as Chris and Ian walk. A van rolls up to the curb beside them. Inside are a LATINO FAMILY. The husband rolls down the window.

CHRIS

(shrieks)
He's got a gun!

Chris dashes to the corner and doesn't look back. Ian isn't far behind. The LATINO DAD looks to his wife and shrugs.

LATINO DAD

(yelling)
Do you guys know how to get to the Hollywood Hills?

EXT. LA - MORE GHETTO - LATER THAT NIGHT

Lee whistles a happy tune, completely comfortable as he walks. His cell goes off and he answers.

LEE

Hello?
(beat)
Yeah, no worries Big D, I'm coming.
(beat)
Yes, I know how important tonight is for you, okay? Relax.

Off of Lee's assuredness we PULL BACK a few dozen feet and spot Chris and Ian trying to act tough and imposing whenever they walk past someone.

CHRIS

Alright, if it comes down to it and we meet a murderer... you'll die.
(off look)
Which will be sad. But amidst your bloody screams I'll make my escape.

IAN

Why the hell am I the scapegoat?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHRIS

You're older than me!

IAN

Um... have we met? I don't care about trivial facts. I'll go to your wake, though.

CHRIS

That'll be a trick, considering you're dying first.

Ian shakes his head as he marches ahead of Chris, unaware that Chris is now walking behind him as if Ian is a human shield.

EXT. LA - GOOD PART OF TOWN - LATER

We're in a nice busy area again. Lots of lighting from street lamps and businesses. It looks like we're in an entertainment district. The theatres and other venues have big signs flashing the names of various plays and seemingly great deals on food.

Chris and Ian look relieved to be alive as they take the sight of civilization in.

IAN

We're alive!

CHRIS

Or we've died a painless death and gone to Heaven!

Ian nods as they walk forward. They're a safe distance from Lee.

CHRIS (cont'd)

Why couldn't Lee have just commuted here like a sane person?

Ian simply shrugs as they watch Lee finally enter a building with flashing lights up ahead.

IAN

Are you as nervous as I am to see where the hell Lee has dragged us?

CHRIS

I'm a mix between undeniable curiosity and the "What if we never return, who's going to write our memoirs?" school of thought.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They walk forward for a long beat until they finally arrive outside the giant two storey building. Dozens of yellow lightbulbs flash consistently on either side of the building.

Ian blinks a few times as Chris takes a step forward and reads the sign with green lettering: "THE SIREN'S ODYSSEY."

Other red and blue lights flash above this in a series of computer generated designs, depicting males and females.

CHRIS (cont'd)
I don't think I've heard of this
play before...

Ian just shakes his head and they start to walk in...

INT. THE SIREN'S ODYSSEY - MINUTES LATER

Dimmed lights, poles, and MISTY (attractive girl in Nurse' outfit) dances before us to a terrible techno beat as Chris and Ian enter.

CHRIS
(matter-of-factly)
So... we're in a strip club.

IAN
Yep.

Crowds of people of either sex sit at various tables. Some cat calling, others smoking, but everyone has a drink before them. We spot the back of Lee's head at a table up front, sitting alone.

IAN (cont'd)
Should we sit down?

CHRIS
And wait for Lee to finish his
whatever... why not?
(off Lee)
God, I hope he's not touching
himself.

Ian laughs as him as Chris takes a seat, and a COCKTAIL WAITRESS immediately come comes over.

CHRIS (cont'd)
We're going to make fun of him a
lot for this.

IAN
(gleeful)
Yep!

CUT TO:

INT. THE SIREN'S ODYSSEY - LATER

Chris and Ian sit alone, enjoying the current stripper... well, stripping is the only real way to put it and still be a gentlemen. The guys are enjoying their pints as Chris stares at the back of Lee.

CHRIS

You know I'm kind of scared to ask... but Lee's been sitting there an awfully long time.

IAN

Maybe it's his first time here.
(off drink)
It worked out for us, though!

He and Chris cheers and each take a drink as Chris looks around.

CHRIS

That would make sense... but why wouldn't he tell us?

Chris leans back in his chair, letting the matter drop as lights suddenly FLASH on and the nameless stripper exits with a wink and an air kiss blow to the crowd.

Fake red and blue sirens start to go off, as Ian looks over to Chris who just shrugs.

CHRIS (cont'd)

(sly)
I'm thinking someone's been naughty...

Ian chuckles, as they hear an announcement made:

ANNOUNCER

Now, ladies... you all love this officer of the law. So the question on his mind... who does he need to give a ticket to?

Girls in the audience SHRIEK with excitement, some start to get their money ready.

CHRIS

(cringing)
That dialogue is bad.

IAN

We're in a strip club, Chris. Just let it be.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHRIS

You realize we're about to see a male stripper.

IAN

(gasps)

Oh, my God - Lee's gay!

The Pussycat Doll's "When I Grow Up" starts to pump through the loudspeakers. As smoke billows out on the stage as a shadow of a male figure appears, holding a baton.

ANNOUNCER

Please enjoy... Mister Sandman!

Chris mouths "Sandman" and looks puzzled as the stripper casually walks out of the shadows and Chris' eyes pop!

Mr. Sandman bounces his body along to the terrible rhythm as he raises his police hat over his eyes and smiles.

It's Lee!

In an outfit way too tight for him. Chris looks at the guy a few tables in front and finally notes that it's NOT LEE.

A woman whistles. If Ian were a character in an anime, he would have turned to stone by now as he doesn't move.

CHRIS

(excited)

Stripping Lee! Stripping Lee!

(horrified)

Stripping... Lee.

Lee pops back his shoulders and starts to unbutton his shirt. He's walking backwards now, as the police coat starts to fall off. He tosses it into the crowd.

Dancing to the beat, he's giving Carmen Electra justice as he goes over to a pole and begins his routine.

IAN

I want to look away but I can't!

Chris sips his pint and nods, as Ian grips the table, fascinated at Lee's gyrating movements.

CHRIS

(laughing)

This is way better than anything we could have come up with.

IAN

I would have put money on the gay thing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Lee takes off his shirt now, revealing a pasty bare chest! He drops to his knees and rolls his head around to the beat. He starts to crawl towards the audience like a dog. He BARKS!

The Cocktail waitress comes over to Chris and Ian's table.

COCKTAIL WAITRESS
More alcohol, gentlemen?

IAN
Hell, yes!

The Waitress nods and delivers two pints on the table as Ian shells out the cash. She starts to leave, but Chris taps her arm.

CHRIS
Excuse me? But how long has Mr. Sandman been working here?

COCKTAIL WAITRESS
Oh, I'd say just a little over two months now.

CHRIS
(fascinated)
Really?

COCKTAIL WAITRESS
Yeah. He's really popular with our female clients. One of the most reputable. A lot of executive women come down here on their lunches for his daily show.

IAN
Lee!
(off look)
Mr. Sandman! Wow.

COCKTAIL WAITRESS
Yeah. They really like his exotic movements. I've never seen a stripper like him.

Lee is on his knees now and unbuttoning his pants as he swivels his head from side to side while boxbeating. Some COUGARS place various bills in his boxers.

CHRIS
So that's where all the money's been coming from.

COCKTAIL WAITRESS
Excuse me?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

CHRIS

Oh! Nothing. Just having an inner monologue... on the outside.

COCKTAIL WAITRESS

Don't worry about it. You two are actually his first gay fans!

IAN

What? We're not -

Chris kicks Ian under the table as the Waitress smiles at them.

COCKTAIL WAITRESS

You guys should go on up there! I'm sure he'd be fine with a little petting.

Chris and Ian each cringe.

IAN

Um... I'm gonna pass.

COCKTAIL WAITRESS

Come on! He doesn't bite.

CHRIS

No, see... we're... still in the closet.

The waitress double takes, but puts on an understanding face and smiles before walking away.

COCKTAIL WAITRESS

Enjoy the show.

Ian gives Chris a dirty look.

CHRIS

What did you want me to do? I'm not taking advantage of my roommate, dude.

(off area)

Here, it just wouldn't be right.

IAN

Yeah. I really didn't want Lee to know we're here.

(raised eyebrows)

It makes what happens later more fun.

CHRIS

Exactly.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

Lee is now pantless and is stepping off the stage to dance for a table of cougars. If he wasn't stripping, you'd think he was playing with an invisible hula hoop.

Chris just "tsks" and pulls out his cell phone.

IAN

Don't call the gang! Their facial reactions are going to be way better than any oral response they could give.

CHRIS

I know.

Chris flips open the phone and takes a few PICTURES of Lee doing his thing with a smile on the face.

CHRIS (cont'd)

We are never going to let him forget this.

IAN

(off Lee)

I'm not sure who's taking advantage of who.

The woman are all laughing, as they place more money near Lee's privates.

CHRIS

It's always the stripper with the heart of gold.

Lee himself is grinning, as a woman pets his head like a dog.

CHRIS (cont'd)

You know, I know we all think Lee is a man whore for work. But now that he's an actual man whore...

IAN

It's way better.

CHRIS

I couldn't have put it better myself.

Off Lee dancing what now appears to be Cuban style in the way in which he composes his hips and arm rhythms, we:

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

INT. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

Waylon is fast asleep on the couch and all of the lights in the apartment are off as the main door opens. Chris and Ian enter.

CHRIS
(singing)
It's the most wonderful time of the
year...

The song is cut short as Chris flicks on the lights.

IAN
We don't know the rest of the song,
but happiness is near.

Chris smirks as he goes over to Waylon and pats him.

CHRIS
Dude, we bring news!
(calling)
Claire, Emma! Come out now!
Apartment meeting!

Waylon finally stirs and opens his eyes.

WAYLON
You just interrupted a dream with
Kristen Bell and Sarah Chalke. This
better be good. They had pillows.

IAN
It's better than good.

Waylon sits up as Ian knocks on the girls' bedroom door.

IAN (cont'd)
Up and at 'em, guys!

EMMA (O.S.)
Ian and Chris, do neither of you
value your testicles?

CHRIS
(happily)
They're awake.

WAYLON
Your sing song voice might have
something to do with it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The bedroom door opens and Emma steps out in her PJ's and rubs her eyes. She glares at the light and everyone in the room.

EMMA

Not a word on my lack of make up or the state of my hair.

CHRIS

Wouldn't even if I was intoxicated.

Chris holds out his hand as if making a silent pledge. Emma is clearly too tired to retaliate and goes and lies on one of the couches.

Claire steps out in a nightgown and YAWNS.

CLAIRE

Why is it necessary for us to be awoken at one in the morning?

WAYLON

Yeah! I'm all for knowing what Lee's been hiding from us, but it's Lee - it can't be that interesting.

Chris and Ian exchange a look, each of them dying to tell them. While three separate angry looks from everyone else signals that they are not amused.

IAN

(beat)

On second thought... maybe we don't want to tell them.

WAYLON

Oh, come on!

IAN

I mean, once they know... our knowledge of what transpires no longer becomes special. You know? I mean, all the fun will shortly cease to be.

CHRIS

You raise a good point.

Emma looks between Chris and Ian with murder in her eyes.

EMMA

You really don't value your lives, do you?

CHRIS

Have some evil chocolate.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

It's clearly no time for chocolate, based on Emma's look of revulsion at the notion.

CLAIRE

Start talking. Before I go back to bed.

Chris and Ian swap another look, silently agreeing that it's time.

CHRIS

I've always thought that actions speak louder than words.

Chris pulls out his cell and passes it off to Emma. She grabs it and looks. She instantly jumps up and SHRIEKS!

ON THE PICTURE: Lee is shirtless and smiling and looks to almost be in the nude but a crowd of women block his lower regions from being seen.

EMMA

Naked Lee! Naked Lee!

WAYLON

Did you guys end up in a brothel?

IAN

Not naked! Just in front of a sea of cougars... almost in the nude.

Emma is wide awake now and passes the phone over to Waylon. He flicks through the photos:

ON SCREEN: Lee beating his chest in what looks to be a cave man pose as he straddles a woman in her late twenties.

THEN: Lee licking his hand like a cat and winking at an unknown individual.

FINALLY: Lee on stage with a leg over a pole... apparently teasing at the idea of taking off his final article of clothing.

WAYLON

(grinning)

I think I've just found my faith in God, and he definitely has a sense of humour.

Waylon snickers to himself as he examines some of the photos.

CLAIRE

I don't want to know what's on the phone, do I?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

WAYLON

It's Lee in a whole new light.

(beat)

The lights, of course, being that of a poorly lit strip club, but what I assume is an efficient enterprise in spite of that fact.

CLAIRE

Wait... I must be dreaming. I thought you just said -

CHRIS

Nope. Lee is definitely a stripper.

CLAIRE

He's a what?!?

WAYLON

This is better than porn!

Waylon looks to the guys for support but they shake their heads.

WAYLON (cont'd)

You're both right. Lee doing porn would have been better... if not believable.

Claire grabs the phone from Waylon and starts looking at the photos. Her look in a word is: priceless.

EMMA

If you told me, I'd definitely have thought you were pulling my leg. But you have proof.

CHRIS

Yep. I told you all this was worth being woken up for.

WAYLON

Death threats retracted.

Claire finally grabs a seat on the couch, head in her hands.

CLAIRE

I'm going to have recurring nightmares now...

EMMA

How did he keep this a secret for so long?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

WAYLON

I'm betting busking was an awesome cover. He's been like a spy.

(off looks)

Only without the higher purpose or saving the world.

CLAIRE

But he was at the boardwalk a few times when we were...

CHRIS

Doesn't mean he never played the guitar there. Just means he was working two day jobs.

Claire opens her mouth to say something... but has nothing.

IAN

Exactly, Claire. Exactly.

Ian takes a seat beside her and pats her knee, as Emma looks to Chris.

EMMA

So what are we going to do now?

CHRIS

We're not going to tell him we know, since he clearly didn't want us to be aware of his other life.

IAN

(nodding)

It's only fair to respect his privacy.

CHRIS

(evilly)

So we're going to have a little fun with him.

(yawning)

Starting tomorrow, when I've had time to think of good jokes to make at his expense.

Chris looks to Ian, Claire, and Emma on the couch.

CHRIS (cont'd)

Now please get off my bed.

EMMA

Like we can go to sleep now after what you told us!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

Chris just shakes his head and Emma HUFFS as she stands up. Claire finally puts down the cell phone, looking a little physically scarred before we DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BOARDWALK - THE NEXT DAY

A new day. New people, same old entertainers line up the boardwalk as we find Claire and Brian holding hands and walking past some mimes and artists.

BRIAN

I forget how beautiful LA is sometimes.

(joking)

Maybe because I deal with its temperamental youth.

CLAIRE

I know the feeling.

They share a smile.

BRIAN

But then I also remember that LA has you, and the order of the world aligns itself whenever I'm having a bad day.

CLAIRE

(touched)

That's sweet.

BRIAN

So, I was thinking -

CLAIRE

(blurting)

Are you a bisexual?

BRIAN

What?

They stop walking their hands noticeably fall apart. There's a long beat as Claire and Brian examine each other's faces for a few seconds.

BRIAN (cont'd)

(beat)

Wow. I've never heard a conversation flatline in under ten seconds.

Brian looks away and starts to walk, Claire takes a second before joining him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CLAIRE
 (innocently)
 Are you?
 (quickly)
 It's okay if you are. You probably
 know that. I'm just curious.
 (beat)
 No pun intended!

Claire awkwardly laughs and tries to hold Brian's hand but he pulls away.

BRIAN
 Just 'curious,' or looking for a
 reason to break up with me?

CLAIRE
 For the last time, I'm not breaking
 up with you! Okay?

Claire steps in front of him and forces him to stop walking.

CLAIRE (cont'd)
 I just want to know. The other day
 you commented that a guy was
 attractive, and I don't know... I
 thought maybe you were. So... are
 you?

BRIAN
 (laughing)
 That's what you're basing this on?
 I can realize that a member of the
 same sex is attractive or not, and
 you instantly have this theory?

CLAIRE
 You seem to be taking this rather
 personally...

BRIAN
 (angry)
 Well, Claire, it's not every day
 your girlfriend calls your
 sexuality into question.

Claire looks around, noting the looks their getting from various people.

CLAIRE
 (sighs)
 Right.

BRIAN
 So why do you want to know?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CLAIRE

What?

BRIAN

Why does my answer matter to you?

CLAIRE

Look, it doesn't, and -

BRIAN

(happily)

If that's the case, you'll be indifferent to the fact that I'm not.

CLAIRE

You're not?

BRIAN

(smiling)

That's what I said.

Brian links arms with Claire and they start to walk again. He doesn't notice Claire's posture falling as she bites her lip and looks at everyone else who's seemingly enjoying the world.

INT. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - LATER

Lee steps in through the apartment door with his usual guitar case in hand. A radio station is playing music as we spot Chris, Ian, and Waylon writing on the couches.

Emma comes out of the kitchen and waves.

IAN

Long day?

LEE

Brutal. This one girl just would not let me go.

WAYLON

(whispering)

I'll bet.

Lee cocks his head as Waylon smirks and Ian hides his reaction with a notebook. Lee lets it slide as he lowers his case onto the ground.

LEE

I mean I know I'm a musician but still! It's not like I'm Keith Richards!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EMMA

At least your groupies pay you.

LEE

True.

Lee walks into the living room and takes a seat beside Waylon.

CHRIS

So how much money did you make today?

LEE

(acting like it takes
thought)

Hmm... six or seven hundred, I'd say.

CHRIS

Wow. If only homeless people knew how easy it was to just pick up a guitar.

IAN

Still! Raking in that much money Lee, it's like you're a prostitute.

EMMA

At least he's up front about it.

Everyone but Lee laughs. Lee looks to them all like they've lost it, but shakes it off.

LEE

So what are you guys working on?

CHRIS

You'll be happy to know - the project.

(off Emma)

It was basically a gentlemen's club until this one showed up after work.

EMMA

Please, you need a feminine eye to help capture the voice of our female heroine.

WAYLON

Which, by the way, can we kill her yet? She's annoying me.

IAN

Dude, it's the pilot!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WAYLON

Still! I want her written out.

CHRIS

No.

Chris adjusts some paperwork as Emma stands over the table examining what work they've done.

WAYLON

Can we at least make her a more interesting character? I mean, bartender is just so... cliché.

IAN

What do you suggest?

WAYLON

Exotic dancer! You all know sex sells.

The group look like they're trying to compose themselves, but just come across as deeply weird. Ian turns red and bites his fingers to keep from laughing.

LEE

What's so funny?

CHRIS

You know the network would go for it. But the actress would hate us.

(beat)

We had this talk earlier, but Waylon brings it up whenever someone else joins the group.

The group have collected themselves now.

LEE

Ah... well, exotic dancer isn't a feasible career path for a heroine. It would be hard for the audience to respect her.

EMMA

Solid argument. So have we made any more progress on our series bible?

WAYLON

I was hoping you guys would do all that boring stuff.

Emma jabs him, as Lee takes a seat on the couch.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

RADIO HOST

(filtered; Radio)

Now, this next song goes out to Georgina Selig. Your friends really care about you, Georgie, and they want you to sleep on what you're doing. Okay? Hopefully Mr. Sandman helps sprinkle some of his magic dust over your eyelids tonight.

The Chordette's "Mr. Sandman" starts to play through the radio. There's a long beat, as everyone but Lee avoids eye contact. Lee double-takes as he hears it.

IAN

Man, I haven't heard this song in forever.

EMMA

It's a classic!

CHRIS

Guys! Back to the project!

Chris, Ian, Waylon, and Emma each are composed as they manage to look busy but each have a slight smirk or facial tick.

WAYLON

Stop channeling Lee.

CHRIS

Sorry. My inner douche just feels like being productive today.

IAN

(beat)

My inner douche wants a beer.

Ian gets up and heads into the kitchen.

Emma is lip-synching to the song. Particularly the "bom, bom, bom, bom's." Lee looks weirded out and stands up as Chris laughs at the blonde's antics.

EMMA

What?

CHRIS

Nothing. Just...

EMMA

(curious)

Just what?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

CHRIS

(beat)

Forget about it...

Emma shrugs her shoulders, disinterested. She starts to sing along to the lyrics as she stands up. Chris watches her with a grin as she heads over to the balcony window.

EMMA

I could never pole dance to this
though.

She continues singing and Chris shakes his head as he turns his attention back to their papers.

Lee looks between Chris, Waylon, and Emma with a raised eyebrow. No one is looking at him as he takes a step back. He looks worried. His look almost translates to: Do they know something?

He shakes his head to himself as the song continues to "Bom, Bom, Bom" before we:

BLACK OUT:

ON BLACK: TO BE CONTINUED...

END OF SHOW