

THE HIGH LIFE

"The Boot"

by
Chris Kelly

TEASER

FADE IN:

1 INT. APARTMENT - KITCHEN - EARLY MORNING 1

LEE leans on the counter, head in his hands. Staring into the space of the white toaster before him. Unblinking. Dressed in a suit.

EMMA sits at the table with some eggs on her plate and a mug of coffee beside her. She pokes at the egg with her fork and slowly blinks, still groggy in her business casual attire. She yawns.

DING! Two slices of toast pop up out of the white toaster. CHRIS races into view half dressed, in just his work pants.

CHRIS

Mine!

Chris grabs the toast, sticking one piece in his mouth and with the other piece in his hand runs back out of the kitchen. Lee just blinks, still staring at the toaster. A long beat.

Chris walks back in, still nibbling on the toast. He looks between the two of them. Focusing on Lee.

CHRIS (cont'd)

No reprimanding my vulgar actions of food stealing?

LEE

No.

CHRIS

O-kay... not going to press my luck any further.

Chris starts to walk out of the room when:

LEE

Are my eyebrows the same size?

Chris double takes as he turns around.

CHRIS

Did someone spike your juice?

LEE

Seriously! Come have a look.

Lee leans closer into the white toaster, gazing at his reflection, he points at his left eyebrow.

(CONTINUED)

LEE (cont'd)

This one here is all fuzzy and majestic... while this one looks a tad bit lonesome and like half a tumbleweed.

Chris makes a face of confusion, and takes a step forward to examine Lee's toaster reflection.

LEE (cont'd)

Well?

CHRIS

Um... all I see is a middle aged man scowling. And me dodging a smack.

Lee scowls on cue and swings an arm out to whack Chris, but Chris is too quick and jumps back. He smugly takes another bite of his toast.

CHRIS (cont'd)

Do you see it now? I knew I wasn't crazy.

Chris spots the time on the oven and drops one slice of toast on the floor.

CHRIS (cont'd)

Crap, I'm late! I'll see you both later! Gotta boogie!

Chris waves to Lee, who's still checking himself out in the toaster and adjusting his hair. Chris stops by Emma, kissing her on the forehead before rushing out.

CLAIRE walks in dressed and with a towel around her shoulders. Her hair visibly quite wet.

CLAIRE

Morning!

LEE

Claire! Just the person I was looking to see. What do you think of my eyebrows?

EMMA

I think my breakfast food is mocking me.

CLAIRE

Your... eyebrows?

LEE

Just answer the question, woman!

Lee fidgets with his eyebrows as if he can magically reposition them. Claire shrugs her shoulders.

CLAIRE
(confused)
They're... eyebrow-like.

LEE
Do you really think so?

Emma takes a bite out of her eggs again.

CLAIRE
Oh, today's your big job interview day, isn't it? That explains why you're about to have an ulcer with your breakfast.

Lee looks scornful for a beat. He finally leans away from the counter and toaster, starting to straighten out the suit he's wearing. Claire comes up and gives his arm a comforting squeeze.

CLAIRE (cont'd)
Relax, Lee. You're going to be fine.

LEE
You can't know that!

CLAIRE
You've been hired here before. Just don't bring the boss back to our place this time.
(shrugging)
Or go to an interview with the flu.
(beat)
Sorry. Just, in case you didn't learn from the last Lee Fiasco.

EMMA
There's definitely something suspicious about this egg.

LEE
(offhandedly)
You forgot to check the expiration date.

EMMA
What? And you didn't tell me? You just let me cook it!

LEE
Hang on here, am I expected to do everything around here?

EMMA

Yes! Now I'm going to go to work with food poisoning and God knows what else! If I almost die I'll have to tell my boss one of roommates knowingly tried to kill me.

(beat)

I think I've had this dream before.

Emma shakes her head, irritated. IAN and WAYLON enter the kitchen both dressed and cleanly shaven.

IAN

Morning!

EMMA

Unfortunately.

IAN

Late night, I take it?

CLAIRE

She came home from her work party at four am, I believe.

EMMA

Hey, I thought you were asleep!

CLAIRE

I was. Until you walked into the wall. Then I just ignored your attempts at starting conversations with me. It was for the best.

Ian starts to root around the cupboards, while Waylon takes a seat at the table opposite Emma, looking to everyone expectantly.

WAYLON

Alright, who wants to cook me breakfast?

No one responds. Lee grabs Emma's plate from the table.

LEE

Want to finish off the rest of Emma's eggs?

Waylon grins and takes the plate. Emma and Lee share a smirk.

LEE (cont'd)

Happy now?

EMMA

Kinda.

(CONTINUED)

WAYLON

Thanks, Lee! You know, I knew there was a reason we kept you under this roof.

LEE

I live to serve. Now have a good day, one and all! The father figure of this rag tag group of orphans is off to not one but four job interviews. Fingers crossed one of them goes well.

Lee crosses his fingers and begins to walk out.

IAN

Just think of the first three as practice! That way if you screw up you won't feel bad.

CLAIRE

I think in Ian that translates as 'good luck.'

LEE

Cheers.

Lee exits the kitchen and Waylon digs into the eggs despite Emma's look of revulsion as we DISSOLVE TO:

2 INT. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - FIVE MINUTES LATER

2

A hive of activity. Everyone is making a mad dash around the living room. Ian races from the kitchen into the guys' bedroom. Emma struggles to put on a pair of heels, hopping in front of the apartment door.

The girls' bedroom door opens and Claire emerges tying her hair in a ponytail, looking hurried.

CLAIRE

Have you seen my teacher's badge?

EMMA

Have you checked under the bed, where you normally keep it?

CLAIRE

I wouldn't have asked you had I not.

EMMA

Hmm... maybe Waylon was playing with it again.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

EMMA (cont'd)

Trying to permanently confiscate video games from the kids at St. Bernards again.

CLAIRE

I was hoping it wouldn't come to that.

SIGHING Claire heads towards the kitchen as Emma finally gets her heels on right. There's a KNOCK at the door.

CHRIS (O.S.)

Anybody there?

Emma unlocks the door with a smile. Chris stands their shirtless, with his red and yellow work shirt in hand. He starts putting on the shirt as he walks in.

EMMA

Forgot your keys again?

CHRIS

Yep! And my shirt, which I forgot I left in the laundry machines downstairs in the basement. And didn't realize until I was two blocks away, on my way to work. Getting looks and compliments from the wrong sorts of people, if you know what I mean.

("And then...")

Plus, I had to wait outside our apartment just to get in! So on top of all of the above, I'm pretty sure a tenant or two now think I'm casing the joint... or stalking someone.

EMMA

Better you than me.

Chris rushes over to the couch we know as his bed and pulls up the middle cushion. Underneath lies a set of silver keys, which he grabs.

CHRIS

I disagree. You shirtless is always acceptable.

Chris swings the keys victoriously and starts to walk over to Emma.

EMMA

Yes, well, you're late.

CHRIS

Also a contributing factor to the fact that I'm about to run seven kilometers.

EMMA

(teasing)

So you're not going to walk with me?

CHRIS

Rain check?

Chris and Emma share a quick kiss before Chris bolts out the door. Emma laughs as she too exits the apartment.

Claire steps out of the kitchen as the apartment door shuts, heading over to the washroom. She KNOCKS.

WAYLON (O.S.)

What do you want?

CLAIRE

(awkwardly)

Sorry to disturb you, Waylon, but have you seen my teacher's badge?

WAYLON (O.S.)

Claire, Claire, Claire -

CLAIRE

Waylon! Can you please not say my name while you're on the toilet.

A flushing sound is heard.

WAYLON (O.S.)

Not a problem. And no, I haven't seen it.

CLAIRE

Are you lying?

WAYLON (O.S.)

I swear on Lee's life!

The sounds of a tap running water is heard for a few seconds as Claire leans against the wall. The tap stops and the door opens. Waylon steps out, drying his hands on his jeans. Claire shoots him a serious look.

CLAIRE

So you could be lying, then?

WAYLON

Most times, yes. This time, Hell
no.

CLAIRE

Well, will you keep an eye out for
it? I can't stick around here any
more or else I'm going to be late
for work.

WAYLON

Would if I was here, but I'm out
today.

CLAIRE

(surprised)

Oh.

(beat)

Really?

Claire grabs her purse off the desk with the computer as her
and Waylon start walking towards the door.

WAYLON

Yeah! I can't sit around and wait
for you guys to come home every
day!

IAN (O.S.)

We don't ask you to.

Ian exits from his bedroom, wearing a backpack and ready for
work.

WAYLON

Also true. But I gotta get out of
this place and -

IAN

(raised eyebrows)

Look for a job?

WAYLON

Nope. I'm off to find myself. Maybe
write a soliloquy? A man can only
stay in a four walled room watching
TV for so long before he starts to
go crazy.

IAN

Wouldn't have stopped you from
trying. Anyways, I'm off.

Ian waves to both Claire and Waylon and walks out the front
door. Claire slips on her shoes.

(CONTINUED)

CLAIRE

So I take it you're going to play video games at internet cafe's and throw rocks in the ocean?

WAYLON

You know me too well.

CLAIRE

Sadly. Now lock the door, will you?

Waylon nods and Claire exits, shutting the door behind herself. Waylon looks around at the empty apartment. The couches, TV, and computer all vacant. The bedroom doors open.

A flicker of boredom flashes across his face, as he takes a step closer into the living room.

WAYLON

Damn it, I always am the last one in this place.

Waylon looks outside the balcony window though, it's a sunny, cloudless day outside. He smirks that Waylon smirk.

WAYLON (cont'd)

Video games and not having to work though? That's the dream.

Waylon turns around and opens the apartment door. He takes one last look before turning back and exiting. The door lightly creaking to a close as we:

BLACK OUT:

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

INT. O'GRADY'S - AFTERNOON

Emma walks through the front door, looking like she's had a bad day. She spots Ian, Lee, and Claire at a booth and brightens up as she heads over.

The table itself has drinks and appetizers on it already.

EMMA

I had a feeling I'd find you lot here.

IAN

We did send out a text.

EMMA

Yes, but either way I was coming here.

Emma slips off her jacket and slips into the booth, finding a seat beside Claire.

CLAIRE

Aren't you supposed to be at work still?

EMMA

They let me off early! Besides, better I drink here than on the job.

IAN

You clearly haven't seen life through the eyes of an inebriated librarian. It's something else.

(beat)

Plus, afterwards I always find I smell of knowledge. Which is a better smell than one would think.

LEE

That's because you drunkenly Wikipedia instead of actually opening up some hardcover texts.

IAN

(matter-of-factly)

The books get dust all over my hands. And something tells me a drunk Ian with dust all over his hands is a formula for chaos. I'd probably think I could fly after thinking about some happy thoughts.

(CONTINUED)

Claire takes a sip of her drink and nonchalantly looks to Ian.

CLAIRE

Probably best to just stay on the net, then. Though I can picture you knocking over some shelves already.

EMMA

So...

Emma gestures to the garlic bread and nachos in front of her, looking at Lee.

EMMA (cont'd)

Are these celebratory appetizers?

LEE

(beaming)

They are indeed! Now help yourself.

EMMA

Congrats.

IAN

You missed his speech on what a hardened life he's led up until this point.

Emma grabs some nachos.

LEE

I'm not employed yet. I still have to confirm with my answer.

EMMA

Say 'yes' to not being a sad unemployed denizen of LA. It's not that hard. Though the hours often suck.

CLAIRE

See that's not the problem, Em. The problem is which one he says yes to.

LEE

Hey! This is my news! They were my offers.

CLAIRE

Which Ian and I have heard in detail for the last hour. You even made pros and cons lists on the napkins.

Claire points at the scribbled on napkins below them as proof. Lee rolls his eyes.

LEE
(sarcastic)
I'm sorry I'm so full of good news lately.

EMMA
So, offers? As in plural? How many did you get?

LEE
(proudly)
Three!

Lee picks up the napkins and passes them over to her. She starts to read them as Chris arrives, still in work attire.

CHRIS
Hey!

Chris pulls up a chair from an empty table beside them and brings it to the end of the table, taking a seat.

CHRIS (cont'd)
Congratulations on getting the job.

EMMA
How did you know already?

CHRIS
I got Lee an interview at my work. I figured, desperate times...

LEE
Thanks again, by the way.

CHRIS
Not a problem. Apparently you aced the interview. Although my boss might be hiring you based on the accent. He wants the place to feel international for the next month.
(off looks)
Don't ask. He has weird monthly goals. Last month was Hippy month. In which several of the newly attracted clientele complained that there was no special mix in our brownies.

IAN
Lucky for you, I don't think Lee is that interest -

Lee KICKS Ian under the table, his knee also hitting the table. The table SHAKES. Lee quickly grabs the drinks to stop them from spilling. The nacho dish goes flying, but Emma drops the napkins, catching the nachos.

EMMA

Sweet Tom Cruise, Lee!

Lee plays dumb as Ian rubs his knee and glares in Lee's direction.

LEE

(beat)

California. Earthquakes o'plenty.

IAN

What I meant to say...

(smiling)

Was Lee already called back and is just waiting for his schedule.

CHRIS

That's awesome!

Chris grabs a piece of garlic bread and signals the barman for a drink. Lee looks like he wants to kill Ian, who gleefully sips his pint.

LEE

(to no one in particular)

Yep! It's... great... alright.

Lee looks at the scribbled napkins beside Emma longingly as the waiter arrives with Chris' drink. Chris takes it, and turning to face the rest of the table does not pick up on the awkward tone.

CHRIS

I can't believe we're going to be working together now! How great is that? Not as great as beer, but close enough.

Chris starts to drink his beer and we FADE TO:

Everyone is still present, though Waylon has joined the gang now, sitting beside Ian and Lee. The awkward vibe from earlier has also faded everyone seems quite merry.

CLAIRE

You realize what this means, right?

IAN

That we're in the same position as every wannabee writer who's written a spec script, entered a competition, or met with an agent?

CLAIRE

From the pessimist perspective, I suppose. But having done phase one of the project, it just...

LEE

Finally feels like we're getting somewhere?

CLAIRE

(beat)

Yeah. After everything, I thought we wouldn't get here. But -

LEE

We have.

Lee and Claire share an understanding look. It's like no one else is in the room for a beat.

WAYLON

Sorry to break up the hallmark moment here, you two.

Waylon leans in between them as he ganders over the table at the different meals. He grabs some french fries. Lee looks over to Claire again, but she's not looking any more and is chatting with Emma, the moment gone.

Lee shakes his head to himself as if confused, while Waylon continues to stuff his face.

WAYLON (cont'd)

Now that's what I'm talking about! These fries, fucking delicious. I think we should pay the chef here to move in with us. Or get a line cook.

CHRIS

Maybe when we make it and get good salaries.

(beat)

What else are we going to spend the money on?

IAN

I'd like a mansion with an outdoor and indoor pool, personally.

CLAIRE

I think you're on the wrong career path.

WAYLON

As long as we get midget butlers, and give them numbers instead of names.

LEE

Some idealistic groups and good samaritans might frown upon that.

WAYLON

Are there any good samaritans here?

Waylon looks around for an answer as he inhales a french fry, everyone just shrugs.

WAYLON (cont'd)

(smug)

Case in point.

EMMA

I think I want four German shepherds. The midgets can ride them around to get between the different wings if they want.

IAN

As long as we have a secret passage way or two. How wicked would that be?

CHRIS

What book would we rig up, though?

WAYLON

I'm thinking something by Dickens. Maybe Mr. Poe, that's unsuspecting.

CHRIS

And ominous.

IAN

There will be candle lit torches in the passageways. So you have to account for some slight tremors of terror. That's the only classy way to do it.

CLAIRE

You really think we're going to be able to afford all that with just the one pilot done and a little bit of publicity?

CHRIS

Lee may have to work overtime.

LEE

But I do that already!

Waylon SMACKS the table, getting everyone's attention. The table still shakes for a bit and some of Chris' beverage spills onto the table.

WAYLON

A little bit of publicity? Claire,
 Claire, Claire -

(off look)

I'm not on the toilet!

(proudly)

Do you not recall they also
 featured it during a segment of
 Entertainment Tonight a week later?

IAN

(begrudging)

It was... kind of cool.

EMMA

They didn't mention us by name,
 though.

CHRIS

Still, they do say all publicity is
 good publicity.

Chris picks up the napkins beside Emma and begins to wipe the small puddle off the table.

CLAIRE

They do say that, don't they?

IAN

What if it's a critic bashing you?

CHRIS

Than at least you know you're being
 read.

WAYLON

Said work also may have been so
 horrendous that it inspired someone
 to finish reading it, and
 furthermore write about it with a
 little passionate hatred. That's
 inspirational.

LEE

You did turn a screw up with that reality stint into a positive, I'll give you that much.

CHRIS

Hey! Why does this napkin have "Working with Chris" under a 'Con' section?

Chris tosses the damp napkin to Lee who awkwardly shrugs his shoulders. The rest of the napkins are soaked in Chris' hands and from the looks of it, the alcohol has made the writing illegible.

CLAIRE

It was here when we got here.

CHRIS

(surprised)
Oh. That's really coincidental.

EMMA

It is. Now are we done commemorating Waylon for the article? If we do any more ass kissing I'm afraid I'll lose my appetite.

WAYLON

Praise away!

LEE

Yes, we have driven the subject into the ground, haven't we?

CLAIRE

I think we just need extra-curricular activities and less exploits.

LEE

We just need to go and meet with some agents now while the article is still semi-fresh in the world of the media.

CLAIRE

Finding an agent is phase two right? So we're right on track.

CHRIS

It's true. Although if we wait another month a millennium has passed in media time.

EMMA

As long as they're not just interested in Waylon, I'm game. Though they'll probably try to get him to write a book about his three day excursion with reality television.

IAN

Or an autobiography. Which I don't think anyone but his family will read.

LEE

The ones that are literate, anyway.

Everyone laughs, except for Waylon who looks like he's about to rebut but is interrupted by a loud BING!

Chris quirks his eyebrows and pulls out his cell phone. His eyes flick over it for a second, before passing the cell phone to Claire.

CHRIS

I think this is for you.

CLAIRE

(surprised)

What?

(reading)

"Baby, when am I going to see your hot ass again?"

Claire shuts Chris' cell phone, shooting Chris a dirty look.

CLAIRE (cont'd)

I'm sorry. Was this supposed to be funny?

IAN

Emma, are you jealous your boyfriend gets texts from male suitors? Or at least I hope they're male.

CHRIS

No. I'm not joking Claire. This message is for you.

(beat)

I mean, at first I just thought I had a really weird admirer. Then I learned it was a guy.

(MORE)

3 CONTINUED: (6)

3

CHRIS (cont'd)
 And remembered that a certain
 someone got herself drunk out of
 her mind a few weeks ago and gave
 out my number in the process. Do
 you recall said events transpiring?

Chris grabs his cell back as Claire goes red. Sitting back in
 her chair.

CLAIRE
 Oh...

CUT TO:

4 INT. O'GRADY'S - A FEW WEEKS EARLIER

4

At the bar: Ian, Claire, and Lee are present. Pint glasses
 empty, but Claire is looking quite merry already. She stands
 up, almost falling! She grabs onto Lee's shoulder.

LEE
 (drunkenly)
 Have your balance?

CLAIRE
 (pouts)
 Stupid gravity. Always getting in
 my way.

Ian laughs hysterically. Claire lets go of Lee and happily
 signals the barman over.

CLAIRE (cont'd)
 (slurring)
 Hello good sir. More beers for me
 and my bitches, please.

The barman nods and Claire hops on her seat again.

IAN
 Attagirl. See? I told you this
 would be fun.

Claire isn't listening. She's curiously staring at the neon
 signs behind the bar. Tilting her head this way and that.

CLAIRE
 Shiny...

The barman brings over three new drinks and passes them out.
 Ian starts to drink.

LEE
 Deep thoughts?

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED:

4

CLAIRE

I think if I was ever a spy, my code name would be Nocturnal Emissions.

Ian SPITS out his drink as Claire nods to herself and Lee simply laughs, and we DISSOLVE BACK TO:

5 INT. O'GRADY'S - PRESENT

5

Still with sober Claire, whose now cringing. She sits forward again, and her face goes neutral.

CLAIRE

Nope. I do not recall said events transpiring.

CHRIS

My cell phone says otherwise!

LEE

That was over a month ago. Why would the guy still be texting after all this time? If you haven't been responding to the texts, that is.

IAN

You haven't been responding to the texts... right?

Everyone turns to focus on Chris now.

CHRIS

Well... I haven't.

Chris looks to Waylon, who giggles to himself.

WAYLON

What? You all would have done it had the opportunity presented itself. Chris was just going to ignore it and hope they went away. So I stole his cell and sent a replying text. Now it's turned into a great little game as we message each other back and forth. And I toy with his emotions.

LEE

You're a horrible person.

WAYLON

D'uh! And is it my fault our Claire Bear made such an impression?

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED:

5

Lee looks to Claire, who's trying to hide herself behind her drink and Waylon starts to chuckle to himself again.

TARA (Waitress, mid twenties, attractive) walks forward with her tray.

TARA

Hey guys. Anything else?

Lee looks around the table. Everyone shaking their heads.

LEE

I think we're good. Just the bill, thanks.

TARA

Alright! And Waylon, are you and Lee on the same receipt again?

Lee looks shocked, everyone else is not. Waylon simply scratches the back of his head.

WAYLON

Nah, he's not drunk enough this time.

LEE

Or at all for that matter!

WAYLON

I'll pay my own way!

Tara nods, and as the gang start pulling out their wallets and purses, looking for cash we CUT TO:

6 INT. APARTMENT - 7TH FLOOR - HALLWAY - LATER

6

Lee walks ahead of everyone, as they come through the door from the stairwell. Ian, Claire, and Waylon are behind him. Chris and Emma at the back.

Everyone's chatting away in their own little worlds of conversation as Lee comes to the door marked "755" and pulls out his key. He inserts it in the lock... but the door instantly creaks open.

LEE

That's funny.

He pushes the door open, ignoring his key in the lock. He GASPS.

7 INT. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUED

7

Lee enters slowly looking around. The couches are there, as is the coffee table. But the TV is gone.

(CONTINUED)

So are the computer and printer and desk in the corner between the bathroom and balcony.

LEE

Someone! Please tell me I'm dreaming.

Everyone else enters the apartment and their expressions drop. Ian pinches Lee. Lee "oi!'s" but nothing else happens.

IAN

Sadly not.

LEE

Alright, don't panic. Don't panic...

CHRIS

Are you kidding me? Now is an excellent time to panic, we've been robbed! And they didn't take the couches from hell!

(reflective)

Probably knew they were evil. Or they were a bitch to try get through the door. But either way we've been ransacked.

CLAIRE

Chris, check the kitchen. Emma, check our room. Ian, go look in yours. Now! Maybe this is just the worst of it.

Chris, Emma, and Ian nod simultaneously and head off into the different rooms. Lee starts to pace back and forth, muttering to himself. Claire chews on her nails, surveying the interior.

WAYLON

Is anyone else noticing Lee is having a mental breakdown?

LEE

(muttering)

I'm a good person. I don't deserve this! So why does shit like this always always happen to me?

Emma stands in the girls' bedroom door as Claire looks to her, hopeful.

EMMA

It's not just the worse of it. Our laptops are gone. And well, everything except for clothes and the beds.

LEE
(muttering)
All of our work. All of it on those
electronic vessels...

Ian pops out of the Guys' bedroom looking pissed.

IAN
Ours too! And the bastard behind
this stole my X-Files DVDS!

Chris enters through the kitchen.

CHRIS
Actually, I borrowed them. Sorry.
Which means they got taken with my
stuff.
(off looks/positively)
The fridge and the food are still
here!

CLAIRE
Alright, this is officially bad.

IAN
It's been official since we walked
in the door.

CLAIRE
Yes, but on a scale of one to ten -

IAN
The scale broke! We are immensely
screwed here! Yes, we saved our
project and sent it to our e-mails.
But what about all of our
individual work we had on the
computers?

Lee gulps and is visibly sweating. He inhales and exhales
deeply.

IAN (cont'd)
(pissed)
It's gone! First drafts, second
drafts, all of it that wasn't done
by hand. Gone.

Ian steps back into his bedroom and SLAMS the door. Everyone
exchanges a look of worry and at the noticeable lack of stuff
in their apartment, and we:

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

8

INT. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - A LITTLE BIT LATER

8

Lee and Chris are looking at the front door, which is open in the apartment (so we can see the hallway), as Emma walks in from the kitchen with a beer in hand.

EMMA

At least they didn't take the alcohol.

CHRIS

You're still shockingly positive.

EMMA

I don't think the damage has fully hit me yet.

Emma starts to drink when:

IAN (O.S.)

What the fuck? They even stole our toilet paper!

Ian slams open the bathroom door and looks at the others expectantly.

WAYLON

Are you sure that we didn't just run out?

IAN

Of course I'm sure! I picked up a tonne yesterday! Those fascist thieves.

CHRIS

It could have just been one really lame one. I mean stealing toilet paper, that's just...

EMMA

Insanely weird?

WAYLON

Maybe it's a signature?

CHRIS

Also insanely weird.

Chris and Lee turn their attention back to the front door and examine it.

(CONTINUED)

EMMA

(dismal)

Any luck, CSI'S?

CHRIS

In spite of my inexperience with this sort of thing, my judgement says the door was not kicked in. Lee?

LEE

There's no markings of any sort. So I'm going to side with your analysis.

Lee bends down on one knee and starts to check the doorway again as Claire walks in from the hallway, looking grim.

CLAIRE

None of our neighbors know anything. They didn't even see anything suspicious all day. Except for Mrs. Harris who insists it's "The shirtless bandit."

WAYLON

Now that's a signature.

LEE

At least it's something to mention when we call the police. Which we should probably do soon.

CHRIS

"The shirtless bandit"? That's lame.

(realizing)

Oh, that was me this morning.

LEE

Guess we can rule that out, then.

IAN

Great! Our one lead was Chris.

Ian walks over towards the doorway and looks like he's playing the bad cop from a B movie. He looks Chris up and down.

IAN (cont'd)

Where were you between the hours of nine and five?

CHRIS

Out.

IAN

Just answer the question! No funny business.

CHRIS

("O-kay...")

At work. And then at the bar with you guys. You know this. You were there.

LEE

We all were at the bar, so that rules all of us out.

EMMA

I doubt one of us would rob the rest, to be fair. Whenever I want something any of you guys have, I just take it.

Waylon pats her shoulder like a proud parent.

WAYLON

She learned from the best.

LEE

I know. I'm just pointing out to Ian that we all clearly have each other as alibi's, so he doesn't interrogate every one of us.

(off door)

But the door wasn't broken into. Which means one of us left it unlocked. I left first, so clearly I'm not to blame.

EMMA

It wasn't me or Chris.

IAN

Don't look at me! I left right before Claire and Waylon.

Lee, Chris, Emma, and Ian all turn their attention to Claire and Waylon. Until Claire turns to Waylon as well.

CLAIRE

And I left, after reminding someone to lock up.

WAYLON

What? Why are you all looking at me like I rallied up your childhood imaginary friends and shot them?

(off looks)

(MORE)

WAYLON (cont'd)

I might have made a mistake! I'm
sorry.

EMMA

Might?

Emma takes a step forward, crossing her arms. Lee's eyebrows
furrow.

IAN

Un-fucking-believable. I should
have known this would all lead back
to you. Everything bad that happens
to us does!

LEE

(dumfounded)
You're "sorry"?

IAN

Don't listen to him, Lee. He'll
hypnotize you into thinking he's
likeable.

Lee shuts the apartment door slowly. It's menacing in a way.
He locks eyes with Waylon and takes a step forward.

LEE

You're sorry that all our hard work
over the past few months together
and individually has been swiped?
That mementos and other personal
belongings have also disappeared in
the process? Oh, well, that just
makes it all better then, doesn't
it?

(yelling)

'Sorry' doesn't fucking cut it, or
make up for the fact that our shit
has been taken, now, does it?

CLAIRE

Lee, maybe we shouldn't be yelling?

LEE

(still yelling)

I'll yell if I bloody want! Unless
you happen to magically also have
an exact duplicate of my guitar?

Claire takes a step back, hurt.

LEE (cont'd)

(still yelling)

And I've realized I'm not mad at
you! Sorry!

(exhales; normally)

(MORE)

CONTINUED: (4)

LEE (cont'd)
 So I can talk like this.
 (to Waylon)
 As for you! You're "sorry"?

No one in the room looks like they're buying it as Waylon raises his hands defensively.

WAYLON
 What? I am! I apologize. It sucks that our stuff was taken. It does. But it's done now. What good are we going to do fighting over it? It could have just as easily been any one of you who left the door unlocked.

CLAIRE
 But we didn't.

Waylon looks at Claire, shocked.

CLAIRE (cont'd)
 "But" you can say anything you like really... as long as you're talking hypothetically. But the truth still grounds us in reality.

WAYLON
 Claire, that's a fair point, but what do you want me to do? Really? It's over with. Are you really all going to blame me for a crime someone else committed?

CHRIS
 (angry)
 It might not have happened had you not left the door unlocked.

WAYLON
 If they really wanted to they could just kick the door in.

CHRIS
 That's not the point.

WAYLON
 So, what? Everyone teams up on Waylon now? Is that how we're going to do this?

EMMA
 Maybe if you thought about one of us for a change, we wouldn't be here!

(CONTINUED)

Emma refuses to look at him, as the others all stand around, Lee starts to pace.

LEE

Yes, saying you're an asshole as an excuse all the time has worn thin.

WAYLON

But I am! This isn't news. How is this different than any other time that I've pissed one of you guys off?

CHRIS

Because this time someone permanently borrowed our belongings.

Claire takes a seat on the couch.

CLAIRE

(sad)

We've lost almost everything.

A long beat as everyone takes this in. Everyone clearly angry. Ian's expression lights up though as he takes a step towards Waylon.

IAN

(realizing)

There's also a chance this wouldn't have happened if you hadn't mentioned our address in the bloody paper!

CHRIS

That's... a possible contributing factor.

EMMA

It was basically painting a target on the door to the six of us.

Ian steps towards Waylon, whose trying to keep his eyes on everyone, but they all shoot menacing glares.

IAN

Wasn't it? You wanted it to attract attention and I guess it did. It just brought the wrong kind.

LEE

So now some two bit crime underlord took our belongings because he reads the shagging paper!

(MORE)

LEE (cont'd)

He probably reads the obituaries
too for when he goes grave robbing!

WAYLON

And the good! What happened to the
celebrating the victory of my
genius?

(beat)

We're going to get past this, guys,
so just chill out.

Waylon takes a seat on the couch beside Claire. She looks
absolutely disgusted and gets up.

CLAIRE

The thing that baffles me most,
Waylon, is how you don't really
think that you're in the wrong for
any of this. You're just saying
what you think we want to hear or
will get us to change the subject.

IAN

He's a verbal connoisseur. As he so
eloquently mentions in the article.

EMMA

Which the whole state of California
reads.

WAYLON

Hold on, two stud horses. What
happened to "We're going to
remember this moment" and "All
publicity is good" and the
showering of compliments! You can't
just take all of that back and turn
it into the reason we're here.

CLAIRE

No. You're right.

Waylon nods. Looking a little more sure of himself until Lee
looks regretful.

LEE

(beat)

We're here because you're here.

IAN

This is exactly why you weren't
invited to LA with us in the first
place.

WAYLON

You always have to throw that back
in my face. So...

(MORE)

WAYLON (cont'd)
 since Ian casually brings up the
 subject to spite me, how about the
 issue of the fact that I wasn't
 invited, hmm?

(looking around; beat)
 Bet we all feel guilty now?

Everyone ponders it over, before looking like they don't
 really care.

CHRIS
 The guilt card is not going to help
 your case.

LEE
 And considering I helped organize
 the endeavor... from where I'm
 standing I have to agree with Past
 Lee's actions.

Waylon is gobsmacked for a second, but as he looks up he
 locks eyes with Lee.

WAYLON
 Look at you! Finally growing a
 pair! Good on you. Now stop
 pretending anyone here actually
 respects you and start taking your
 estrogen pills.

LEE
 Pissing me off? Not a good idea
 right now.

Waylon raises his eyebrows. He sits up and cracks his
 knuckles.

WAYLON
 What are you going to do?

IAN
 If he doesn't fight you, I'm dying
 for a go.

Ian takes a step forward, and Waylon cocks his head.

WAYLON
 So we'll settle this like men. No
 more of this digesting your
 feelings garbage?

CLAIRE
 There has to be an easier solution
 than that.

Waylon looks around at the guys who look ready to go if they have to. Ian keeps his fists in the air. Emma steps in between them though. She locks eyes with Waylon.

EMMA

(beat)

I want you to leave.

All heads look to Emma. The guys fists unclenching.

WAYLON

(shocked)

What?

EMMA

(matter-of-factly)

I don't think I want to see you ever again right now. That might seem a bit overdramatic. Or it could stem from the fact that I physically want to cause damage to you myself right now. So I think it's best that you leave.

WAYLON

Emma... you can't just ask a friend to leave.

EMMA

'Friends'?

(laughs coldly)

Is that what you call your behavior towards us? Honestly? Treating me and Chris like we've wronged you because we started dating? Making demands and criticisms of everyone else when you do nothing and exclaim about it like you're brilliant?

(beat)

We're not friends. We're roommates. Or we were.

CLAIRE

But we can't just kick him out, Em!

Emma turns to Claire, all eyes are still on Emma.

EMMA

Why not?

WAYLON

Because I live here, damn it! This is my home! You guys are my... guys!

LEE
 (nodding)
 Maybe... we should discuss the
 matter. Or think about its
 implications.

IAN
 I'm on board with Emma's plan.

WAYLON
 Of course you are, but Chris?

Waylon turns to Chris. Chris doesn't make eye contact, he's
 staring at the floor. Lee looks grave.

LEE
 I was hoping it wouldn't have to
 come to this but... emergency
 apartment meeting.

Off of everyone looking at Lee, his attention is unanimous as
 we DISSOLVE TO:

Everyone's in the kitchen now. Lee, Claire, Ian, and Waylon
 are sitting at the table. Emma stands and Chris sits upon the
 countertop across from them.

IAN
 Why the hell did we move to the
 kitchen? We were all in there
 anyway.

LEE
 Because I said so, and that's the
 end of it!
 (calmly)
 Now, this is going to be a forum
 where we are not to raise our
 voices any further. No shouting or
 yelling of any sort, as the
 neighbors already know we were
 robbed. They don't need to know
 every aspect of our lives. Are we
 clear?

Everyone nods, understanding,

LEE (cont'd)
 Good. Now we're here to discuss the
 matter of -

IAN

Kicking Waylon out, we know. Now let's get to throwing his stuff out the window or burning it.

CLAIRE

(stern)

Ian.

WAYLON

Claire's on my side. Good old Claire.

CLAIRE

Actually, I'm liking Ian's plan. But I'm trying to find my reason.

LEE

And so we vote. Once to see where everyone's at. Then later to confirm our decision, whatever that may be.

(off looks)

So I guess I'm up first. I'm for it.

Waylon smacks the table and locks eyes with Lee.

WAYLON

What? Lee, you've got to be kidding me! You're not even going to let me argue my side? After all the adventures we've been through -

LEE

We've been through enough, I'd say.

WAYLON

But... what would you guys do without me?

EMMA

(ignoring Waylon)

You guys know where I stand.

CLAIRE

I need some time to think.

IAN

I've had the same idea since day one and it hasn't changed.

WAYLON

Come on, guys! I live here and have just as much a right to stay as anyone else.

IAN

Here's the thing. What you just said is complete bullshit. Because the thing is, you don't know honestly what it's like to live here and have your stuff taken. Let's face it, you treat this apartment like you're on vacation 24/7, and have contributed zero income towards it or any furnishing within it. You've had a free ride up until this point and plenty of opportunities, but all you do is play video games, drink, and write when you feel like it.

WAYLON

And it's worked up until now! Why should it end?

LEE

Because I'm sick of it.

CLAIRE

Chris? Your thoughts?

Claire looks to Chris on the counter. Waylon turns around and gives Chris that Waylon grin.

WAYLON

See? That's your problem right there. Chris won't betray me. Right, little buddy? We're great friends. Sharing two couches together has solidified our manly bond which cannot be broken by mere mortal hands.

(doubtful)

Right?

Waylon looks at Chris now, genuinely serious as Chris gets up off the counter.

CHRIS

I... say... I don't know.

(beat)

I know I should say 'out.'

WAYLON

What? *Et tu*, Kelly?

IAN

Ouch. Best friend betraying you...

(beat)

That's like a lot of stories, actually.

(CONTINUED)

WAYLON

I vote against. In case my position wasn't obvious enough.

LEE

When you contribute to the rent, you'll get a vote.

(to others)

Now, here's the deal. We've all said and done a lot in the heat of the moment. Waylon has, well... been Waylon.

IAN

Reason enough to kick him out.

LEE

But -

WAYLON

You've realized you all love me and can't bear the thought of waking up with me gone?

LEE

No. Waylon you're going to leave the apartment for a while. I don't care where or what you do. Just get the hell out. Everyone else can do what they like. Cool down. Ponder if your votes stand as they are right now or if it was just the anger talking. We'll have a final vote later this evening and that will decide it. Deal?

WAYLON

No deal.

Everyone else takes a second or two before nodding. Lee gets out of his chair and glares at Waylon, placing both of his hands on the table so he towers over the southerner.

LEE

Now. I think you're intelligent enough to gather that no one wants to be around you at the moment. So the only thing that can really help your case right now is to stop bloody whining and get out.

Waylon doesn't say anything. There's a long beat. He simply nods as if he's heard this plan for the first time. He stands up and walks out. No one looking at him as he leaves.

BLACK OUT:

(CONTINUED)

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

10

INT. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - LATER

10

Lee's sitting on the couch now, depressed. Chris sits against a wall with Emma. Ian lies down on the other couch, with his arm covering his eyes, sulking. Claire enters from the kitchen with a phone in her hand.

CLAIRE

(into phone)

Yes, thank you. I understand.

(beat;listening)

No, I really do get it. You've explained yourself. Bye, now.

Claire hangs up the phone.

CLAIRE (cont'd)

Stupid cow.

CHRIS

What did the police say?

CLAIRE

Since we've already been robbed and we're not in a hostage situation, or any danger they can avert us from, apparently all we can do is go down there and fill out a report of what's been taken. And one of them will stop by when they have the time.

IAN

I told you. The police are useless.

CHRIS

So they're not going to dust for fingerprints? Or interrogate the neighbors?

LEE

Sadly, American television has affected your mind because I don't think it works like that.

EMMA

I just can't believe all our stuff is gone. Aside from the kitchen, and our beds. I mean they even took Lady Jasper.

(off looks)

The Princess of the Ninth Galaxy?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

EMMA (cont'd)

It's a stuffed toy I had since I was six.

Emma's look dares someone to say anymore on the issue, before she rests her head on the wall again.

CHRIS

So...

LEE

I think I hate that word.

Lee nods to himself, as if confirming it in his head. Claire takes a seat beside him. Then there's just silence.

CLAIRE

Not to point out the obvious, but it's freakishly quiet in here.

Ian doesn't react. Claire looks to Chris, Emma, and Lee, but their faces remain dismal. She nods to herself.

LEE

It's been a long day.

EMMA

(beat)

Yup.

Lee and Emma both still look distant. But Chris snaps out of it and looks up.

CHRIS

Do you think we were too hard on him?

CLAIRE

Maybe.

Ian takes his arm off of his face and turns over. Looking between both Chris and Claire.

IAN

God, no. He's lucky we didn't try to drown him in the sink.

LEE

(pondering)

I don't know. Part of me feels guilty. But part of me just doesn't care any more.

EMMA

I could have verbally harassed him some more if Chris let me. And didn't whisper to me to calm down before entering the kitchen.

CHRIS

I just think we tore him apart in the living room. I mean, I know he deserved it. Logically it makes sense. But my brain just keeps locking Waylon in the 'friend zone' and refuses to put his name in the 'doomed to die friendless and alone' column.

CLAIRE

Something definitely had to be said about his behavior at some point.

EMMA

When you think about it... it isn't like he contributed much of anything anyway. Aside from a laugh.

LEE

Except for his writing, though. But now the majority of that's out the window now.

IAN

So there's really no point in him sticking around. Unless we want to risk this again.

CLAIRE

That's not fair to say, though.

CHRIS

Though sadly true. It is a possibility.

CLAIRE

(glum)
So...

LEE

There's that word again.

Chris gets up off the ground and heads towards the door.

CHRIS

Alright. I need to go out for a while. I'll see you guys later.

CLAIRE

Bye.

IAN

If you see Waylon, don't push him into oncoming traffic. We don't need any more bad karma.

LEE

Don't be too long. We need to make a final decision eventually.

EMMA

I'll come with you.

Chris just nods again and waves to the others as Emma starts to push herself up off the floor and we FADE TO:

11 EXT. PARK - SAME TIME

11

A jungle gym is before us. Kids are playing together in their little cliques. They're on the monkey bars or just playing tag. We find Waylon twenty feet away, sitting on a wooden park bench. Alone.

WAYLON

(muttering)

Those bastards. Who the hell needs them?

He kicks out at a small rock in front of him. The rock soars over towards the playground and lands at the grass right before it. Waylon watches it for a second, before looking to the kids playing with each other.

WAYLON (cont'd)

You poor uneducated little assgoblins. You have no comprehension of what friendship is and how fucked it can get sometimes. You're all so damn naive to reality I'm almost jealous.

(beat)

But I get sex and beer, which hopefully you don't, cause that could lead to issues. So I think I win.

A MOTHER walks past pushing a stroller. She pauses and gives Waylon a scathing look.

WAYLON (cont'd)

You know it's true!

The mother acts like Waylon's not there and continues to push past the bench. Waylon sticks his tongue out at her, before looking back to the kids playing.

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED:

11

WAYLON (cont'd)

It's easier when you're a kid though, I'll admit that. You can just walk up to whoever and start to race. Bam! You're friends. You can make plans to see each other again.

(beat)

Do that when you're older, though, it's considered weird.

Waylon looks to the sunny blue sky, expecting an answer.

12 INT. O'GRADY'S - LATER

12

A section of the bar has been cordoned off and a band with four people are setting up their guitars, microphones and amps as we pan over to:

Chris and Emma sitting at a table as Tara comes over, oozing with cheer.

TARA

If it isn't two of my favorite customers! And I can say that legitimately because you and your friends are one of the only tables that never hits on me.

CHRIS

I would... but that one over there would disapprove.

Chris gestures over to Emma and she hits him across the table. Tara laughs.

EMMA

"That one"? Excuse me, do you want me to ask Tara for your dignity to go, or shall I put your undying worship of me on the tab?

CHRIS

I guess I do have to pay that off sometime.

TARA

(Shaking head)

You two are ridiculous.

Tara passes them the menus, and Emma kicks Chris under the table. Tara raises her eyebrows.

(CONTINUED)

EMMA

(justifying)

He started it! With his "that one" remark.

TARA

I'm sure he has other names for you.

(beat)

And that came out very wrong. Sorry.

Chris and Emma don't take offense though and grin.

TARA (cont'd)

So before I put my foot in my mouth any further, let's pretend I just walked over here.

(beat)

Hey! Back so soon?

EMMA

It's been one of those days.

CHRIS

Jack Bauer wouldn't have been able to survive. Car explosions, bombs, low key cult sacrifices and rituals. It's all very random and far too poignant.

EMMA

Which is really just a ratings killer. So a water for me.

(to Chris)

And order of fries?

CHRIS

Sounds like a plan. And I'll just have a tea.

Tara nods, and grabs the menus back. She looks between the couple with a raised eyebrow.

TARA

I know I'm trespassing on the barman's territory here of confessing your problems and over exposing your soul, but... are you guys okay?

Emma and Chris look at each other for a second before turning back to Tara. Chris smiles.

CHRIS

We're fine.

12 CONTINUED: (2)

12

Tara slowly nods, and walks away. Chris' expression falls. Emma slouches back in her chair.

EMMA

Just dandy.

The couple are the only people in the bar not talking. The band starts to play live music. It's a cheery, happy go lucky beat. Someone at the bar CHEERS! Yet, Chris and Emma don't even flinch as we FADE TO:

13 EXT. APARTMENT - BALCONY - LATER

13

Claire stands, her arms holding onto the railings. She watches the little people moving below. A light breeze blows past.

Lee sits on the chair a few feet away, lost in thought. Claire squints at the sun overhead as she finally looks up at eye level, but doesn't turn around.

CLAIRE

You don't have to answer what I'm about to ask you. Though I'm sure you'll judge me either way. I don't want to confirm your thoughts in my head or it'll make me feel worse.

LEE

So why ask?

CLAIRE

I don't know. I guess because we've been out here for the last hour and neither one of us has said anything. It's eccentric.

LEE

I'm comfortable.

Claire nods and looks down at the people moving about their lives again below.

CLAIRE

Okay, so here goes. Don't answer me. Just listen. So...

(beat)

Am I a bad person? For wishing we kicked Waylon out back when Ian had presented the opportunity? Well, it was one of the first of many.

Claire rolls her eyes, still looking down at the people. Lee leans forward in his seat.

(CONTINUED)

CLAIRE (cont'd)

Do you remember that secret meeting in the wee hours of the morning in my room? It feels like ages ago now. Yet, I keep playing that memory over in my mind and wishing we had just severed our ties then.
(sighing)

So... I think I'm a bad person.

LEE

I take it you've come to your decision.

Claire finally turns around and shoots Lee a look.

CLAIRE

What did I just say? Don't answer me.

LEE

You're being irrational -

CLAIRE

I know I am! But I think I'm allowed to every now and again.

LEE

Of course. But that's not what I was going to say.

CLAIRE

Oh. Sorry.

LEE

I was saying that your being irrational because you feel guilty, because despite his many many flaws, some small part of you still likes him as a person. Even though you can't understand why.

(beat)

Am I close?

Claire pouts as if Lee nailed it.

CLAIRE

It's annoying how you do that.

LEE

It's both my greatest gift and curse.

(wry)

And probably why I'll die alone.

Claire smiles. Ian slides open the door and steps out to join them.

IAN

Emma and Chris are back.

Lee looks grim. Claire leans on the balcony, looking down again.

LEE

Then I guess it's time we do this,
huh?

CLAIRE

It really sucks being us sometimes.

IAN

Only every other day.

LEE

And so we vote.

Lee gets up out of the chair and Ian turns around as we CUT
TO:

Chris and Emma stand beside the couch. Ian, Claire, and Lee enter all the way over from the other side of the room through the balcony door. Ian shuts it.

The trio walk over to meet Chris and Emma in the middle of the room. In between the couches. No one says anything.

Emma isn't able to keep her legs still. Claire's eyes are glued to the ceiling. Ian glances at his watch. Chris awkwardly smiles for a beat, while Lee stuffs his hands in his pockets.

Everyone eventually making eye contact with each other, expressions grim. Obviously, a decision has to be made.

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

15

INT. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

15

From the looks outside the window, it's pitch black. The sun has gone down. Lee, Claire, and Ian sit on one couch. Chris and Emma sit on the other.

You'd think they were watching TV if the TV hadn't been stolen. Instead everyone's just staring at the wall, ignoring the game of Monopoly that was set up on the floor. Piles of multicolored money and properties are scattered across the carpet. It looks like it has been abandoned.

EMMA

So... what now?

LEE

Seriously, that word should just be banned from the English language. The worst part is I know I rely on it as well.

A remote sits on the couch arm beside Ian. He looks at the device longingly.

IAN

The fact that they didn't steal the remote baffles me!

CLAIRE

Maybe they were in a hurry.

IAN

Yeah, but come on! Leaving the remote here as a reminder is just cruelty!

Ian presses the remote's buttons, naturally nothing happens.

IAN (cont'd)

(to remote)

See? I'm just so tempted, but no! I can't use you! Because someone stole your love away from me.

CHRIS

We all have some money saved up, so it won't be like we're living in an open house forever.

CLAIRE

We can hit up some goodwill stores or go to garage sales.

(CONTINUED)

Chris shudders at the thought.

EMMA

He has a fear of second hand stuff.
Except for money.

IAN

How do you live?

CHRIS

Quite well until I came here,
actually. Not that I'm complaining.

LEE

The days of running to your parents
are over.

CHRIS

I know that! But can't we just take
out a loan or two? Get some credit
cards? They do fix everything in
the short term.

CLAIRE

No.

LEE

(to Emma)

And you're to keep Chris under
constant surveillance to ensure we
don't have pretty things and become
indebted.

EMMA

Got it.

Emma pats Chris nee, while Chris looks up to the ceiling
hopelessly.

CLAIRE

We'll find some good bargains
Chris. I'm sure. It'll look like
people live here again in no time.

CHRIS

People say the same thing about
back alley doctors, and it never
ends well.

IAN

And in LA? If we try to bargain
we'll get shot!

EMMA

I don't want a bullet in me!

LEE

Bullets will not be involved. I hope.

CLAIRE

Now you've -

There's a rattling at the apartment doorknob. Everyone goes quiet as the lock turns. The apartment door opens... and Waylon enters casually, coming to a stop in the middle of the room.

WAYLON

(excited)

Hey y'all! I got Lee's message! I knew you couldn't get rid of me that easily. I'm like a tumor!

(off looks)

But a happy one.

Claire and Emma smile. Ian rolls his eyes. There's less tension in the room than the last time the six of them were together as Lee stands up.

LEE

Actually the message just said we'd reached an agreement.

(pointing at couches)

Among the five of us.

WAYLON

You guys? Seriously? The ones where there's five different opinions on what butter to get?

CLAIRE

That would be us, yes.

WAYLON

I'm all ears. And I can kind of see where this is going.

Waylon grins, a little too ecstatically. Not picking up on the fact that everyone else in the room is clearly not looking at him.

Lee looks around to the others, gesturing for someone to help him, as Waylon starts to giddily bounce on his feet.

WAYLON (cont'd)

Alright, I'm making a rule right now that there's no group hug.

LEE

Well... you see...

Waylon leans in. Lee starts to sweat. He looks at the ground, grinning awkwardly, before looking back to Waylon, seemingly at a loss for words. Until...

Chris stands up and takes a step forward.

CHRIS

We think it's time you leave.

Waylon's face falls. No one except for Chris and Lee look at Waylon.

WAYLON

I, um..well
(long beat)
... what?

LEE

(beat)
We think it's for the best.

WAYLON

(pleading)
But I've lived with you for the
last six months! You can't do this!

EMMA

Everyone agrees.

IAN

And as you point out, on occasion,
this is the land of the free.
Democracy and all that.

Waylon looks at them each in turn. This time, everyone does look Waylon in the eye.

WAYLON

All of you? But...

CLAIRE

You have tonight to collect your
things, and we've booked you two
nights at the holiday inn. So you
can make travel or whatever other
arrangements you wish.

WAYLON

(begging)
But guys! Don't do this!

EMMA

Waylon, don't make this any harder
than it has to be.

Waylon takes a step back. Looking like he's mulling things over in his head. He gets a glint in his eye as if an idea has hit him. He marches over to the couch and sits down.

WAYLON

No! You're not doing this. You can say whatever the hell you want. Google black magic if you have to, but I am not leaving and you can't physically make me.

LEE

Waylon...

WAYLON

Don't 'Waylon' me! You know I weigh more than three of you combined. I'd like to see you try carry me as a group without breaking something.

Waylon raises his eyebrows. Claire and Emma get up off the couch.

CLAIRE

Don't do this.

EMMA

You're being immature.

WAYLON

Me? What about you guys? All about the teamwork and "the gang" of us. We all live here. So just because you want me to leave, doesn't mean I have to!

Emma looks at Waylon, she looks a little sorry for him, while Ian just glares.

CHRIS

Actually...

All eyes are on Chris now. Waylon glaring.

CHRIS (cont'd)

Your name's not on the lease for this place.

WAYLON

(beat)

So? What's that got to do with anything?

CLAIRE
(realizing)
You don't legally live here.

CHRIS
(nodding)
So... technically you're
trespassing.

IAN
(brightly)
We can call the cops?

No one else looks like they like this option but Ian can't wipe the smile off his face. Waylon looks at Chris, baffled, as if it's finally hit him.

WAYLON
Fine.
(beat)
I'll go. But I hope you bastards
wind up like every wannabee writer
and actor in this town and end up
nowhere! And have to resort to
giving handjobs for crack!

Claire grimaces as Waylon stands up. "Vindicated" by Dashboard Confessional starts to play over the next few scenes. Chris appears ashamed of himself for a few seconds. Looking down, he finds Emma's hand in his.

Waylon ignores Chris as he walks past.

16 INT. APARTMENT - KITCHEN

16

Waylon enters the kitchen and glares at Claire, who's sitting down eating. Waylon reaches over to one of the cupboards and aggressively opens it. There's a selection of cups, bowls and glasses on the different shelves within.

Spotting one with a funny saying on it, Waylon pulls it down and looks to Claire as if daring her to say anything as he walks out, leaving the cupboard open. Claire stops eating.

17 INT. APARTMENT - BOY'S ROOM

17

Lee throws a tennis ball against the wall. The room is quite bare, but it's clear not everything was taken.

Ian is also in the room, folding his laundry, but he and Lee aren't talking. Lee is entirely focused on the ball. Its bounce on the floor. Bounce to the wall. And its ricochet back into his palm.

17 CONTINUED:

17

Lee just keeps throwing it. Again and again, And after Ian walks past to put some clothes in the closet, Lee tosses the ball again.

18 INT. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM

18

The couch known as Waylon's bed has been torn apart. The cushions are behind him and he roots around in the couches sides.

Chris mouths something to him, but we don't hear it. Waylon just acts like he isn't there, turning his attention back to his box marked "My Crap" which is looking quite full, beside his black wheelable suitcase.

19 INT. APARTMENT - BATHROOM

19

Emma isn't going to the bathroom. The toilet cover is fully down and she's just sitting there. Looking down at the floor. Glancing to her hands.

After what feels like a long while of staring into space she looks to the side and we see the door. She looks like she's debating moving.

She finally does and stands up. She walks over to the door, her hand reaches out... but she pauses right before the knob. Her hand falls to her side.

Emma turns to face her reflection in the mirror. The blonde staring back at her does not make Emma smile.

20 INT. APARTMENT - HALLWAY - LATER

20

The apartment door is open. Waylon is walking out in his jacket with his box under one arm as he's pulling his luggage along with the other.

Claire walks out and calls out. Waylon turns around, questioningly. Claire takes a few steps forward, a hand in her pocket. She pulls out a hotel key card and extends it forward, hopeful.

Waylon shoots her down. Starting to rant before cutting himself short. Whatever he's said has Claire upset as Waylon turns around and walks down the hall. Claire watches him go.

21 INT. APARTMENT - GARAGE

21

An old looking red pick up truck's lights are on. The engine is running as we find Waylon outside putting his stuff in the trunk.

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED:

21

Waylon looks once at the garage door that we assume leads into the apartment before looking back to his things. He gets into the car, turns his keys and starts to reverse, as we:

FADE TO:

22 INT. APARTMENT - KITCHEN - THE NEXT DAY

22

The song stops playing as we find Ian humming in the kitchen. He washes a dish in the sink, while Lee walks in.

LEE

Afternoon.

IAN

Lovely day, isn't it?

LEE

You have no conscience whatsoever, do you?

IAN

It's taken a leave of absence.

(beat; curious)

How was your orientation at the coffee shop?

LEE

Let's just say if I didn't have suicidal tendencies before... that's all I can really say and think of at the moment. I think customer service is a field I shouldn't be in. Give me a cubicle!

(remembering)

Which, by the way... you ponce! I will get you back for making me accept said job.

IAN

I didn't make you. I merely presented an opportunity. You chose to bypass the awkwardness, but you could have told Chris the truth. But you're a people pleaser.

(pondering)

Come to think of it, your life is customer service.

Lee takes a seat at the table, as Ian opens the fridge and looks for food.

LEE

They made me watch a video. I'm pretty sure they used cartoon characters.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

LEE (cont'd)
 And said characters were invented
 in the early 1920's and in black
 and white.

Emma and Chris enter, dressed in new gear and looking
 slightly better than when we last saw them.

IAN
 'Lo. How goes it?

EMMA
 Better. Life goes on.

LEE
 Nice philosophy. Probably won't
 last.

CHRIS
 But we can hope!

Emma puts her hands on both chairs and looks between Lee and
 Ian.

EMMA
 How are you ladies doing today?

IAN
 Lee cried all night.

LEE
 I did not!

CHRIS
 (nodding)
 I believe it.

LEE
 I should have kicked you lot out
 instead.

That silences everyone for a few seconds.

LEE (cont'd)
 And wrong thing to -

Lee's cell phone starts to ring and he looks confused as he
 pulls it out of his pocket and picks up.

LEE (cont'd)
 Hello?
 (beat; listening)
 Yes, this is Lee Chrimes.

IAN
 Is it your virginity calling? Does
 it want you back?

Lee gives Ian the finger.

LEE

Seriously? Um... are you sure you have the right number?

CHRIS

Are you there, God? It's me, Lee.

LEE

(listening for a bit)

No. No, that's great news. I'm thrilled you've called! Thanks a million.

(beat)

No, you have a great day!

Lee hangs up and puts the cell back in his pocket. Blissfully unaware Chris, Emma, and Ian are all looking at him expectantly.

CHRIS

You can't just do that and not say -

CLAIRE (O.S.)

Lee!

LEE

In the kitchen.

Claire rushes in, looking thrilled. The others are just confused.

CLAIRE

Did you get the call as well?

LEE

(surprised/content)

No! You did as well? That's great.

Lee jumps up. He and Claire hug.

CLAIRE

Uh, I knew you'd get in as well.

(beat)

Well... congratulations!

LEE

Congratulations to you!

Claire laughs, pulling away from Lee. They're both beaming. While Emma taps Claire on the shoulder.

EMMA

Any one of you want to fill the rest of us in or do we have to guess?

CLAIRE

Oh. It's the Fellowship Of The Pen.

CHRIS

That sounds like a really weird parody.

CLAIRE

Guys. You don't remember? It's that writing workshop we all applied to months ago, where only twenty five people get in. Joss Whedon is one of the writers helping to host it.

LEE

(pointing)

And we're two of the twenty five!

Lee doesn't realize the effect his words have on Ian, Emma, and Chris. He's far too happy to notice the blink of disappointment.

EMMA

Oh.

(beat; fake excitement)

Oh!

CHRIS

That's... great!

CLAIRE

Yeah.

IAN

We should go out and celebrate.

LEE

I think this occasion does call for it!

Emma nods and smiles. Everyone starts to head out of the kitchen. The excitement in the room a little more contagious to Chris, Emma and Ian for now, as we FADE TO:

It's sunny and bright outside as Ian, Claire, Emma, Lee, and Chris step out of the apartment entrance and walk down the steps, looking like a family unit.

They turn left and start to walk down the road, Chris and Emma linking arms at the back of the group.

CHRIS

You realize if you meet anyone famous, like "The Joss," you have to put a good word in for the rest of us.

LEE

Of course, of course.

CLAIRE

Though we're there to learn. Not to brag.

EMMA

And to make connections that we can exploit!

CLAIRE

And that as well. I was just saying.

IAN

And if you can sabotage your competition, I say go for it.

LEE

It's not a competition.

CHRIS

Of course it is.

IAN

You just have to be sneaky about it.

Lee rolls his eyes and Claire laughs as the gang continues to walk away from the apartment. We pan over:

Across the street. We still see the group and the apartment. Although the group is walking further away.

Waylon is in his truck, watching them. Looking worn out and saddened. While a light wind blows past, we:

BLACK OUT:

END OF SHOW