

# THE HIGH LIFE

"Mommy Dearest"

by  
Lee A. Chrimes

&

Waylon Wyche

TEASER

FADE IN:

1 INT. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY 1

Peace reigns inside the apartment. LEE sits on the threadbare, cracked old leather couch, watching some kind of space western TV show or something on a tiny, flickering PORTABLE TV.

CLAIRE is half-leaning against him, fast asleep, SNORING softly - much to Lee's amusement.

CHRIS sits in one of the couch chairs, laptop balanced across his knees as he types, occasionally distracted by the TV.

EMMA sits on the floor in front of him, thoroughly engrossed in the TV with her arms snaked round Chris' legs.

EMMA

(off TV)

Those are some damn tight pants he's wearing.

LEE

'Pants'?

EMMA

It's what the natives call them.

LEE

Ah. And here I was, thinking you'd finally lost your tiny little mind. Or would that have been when you started dating Chris?

CHRIS

(without looking up)

I heard that.

LEE

(tongue in cheek)

Just checking you were still with us.

EMMA

(turns to Chris)

How's it going?

Chris EXHALES loudly, settling back and interlacing his fingers behind his head.

CHRIS

Slow. I hate Act Threes. Have I said that yet?

(CONTINUED)

LEE

Every few words or so.

CHRIS

They're just... it's like I know exactly where everything's supposed to be at this point. Right? Villain here, Hero there, Damsel there and so on. But can I get them to that point? Can I squat.

EMMA

(pats his legs)  
You'll sort it, hun.

LEE

Yes, because patting someone on the head and telling them how pretty they are whenever they miss a deadline is exactly how Hollywood operates.

Emma shoots him a withering look - but Lee's better at weathering them by now.

LEE (cont'd)

All I'm saying is, if that bit of the script's kicking your arse for a bit, then distract yourself.

(beat)

More than you already are, I mean.

EMMA

(brightens)  
Oo, what about -

LEE

No.

EMMA

(pouts)  
You don't even know -

LEE

Yes, I do. Chris knew. Even Claire knew.

Claire SNORTS loudly once as if in response, then settles back into a light snore. Emma folds her arms sulkily.

EMMA

You people never let me have any fun.

LEE

I think you'll find we let you have plenty of fun. That's precisely why you can stand to go without for now!

Emma turns to Chris, as if waiting for him to back her up.

CHRIS

What? You heard the man.

EMMA

He's not in charge!

CHRIS

(stalling)

True, but, uh...

The front door is suddenly FLUNG OPEN with a loud SLAM!

CHRIS (cont'd)

Oh, thank God.

Claire wakes with a SNORT, still half-asleep:

CLAIRE

No, Captain Tightpants, I won't...

(blinks)

What?

Everyone turns as IAN strides triumphantly indoors.

IAN

Rejoice to the heavens, my fellow compatriots in crime, for today is the most auspicious day since the invention of the word 'auspicious'!

LEE

(beat)

Eh?

He hurries inside, standing in front of the TV. He's oblivious to the annoyed looks as he blocks the screen.

IAN

In my hands...

He realises his hands are empty. He reaches into his back pocket and produces a LETTER.

IAN (cont'd)

In my hands I hold an acceptance letter... from UCLA!

1 CONTINUED: (3)

EMMA  
(surprised)  
They took you in?

IAN  
I'm officially a student! Again!

EMMA  
They took you in?

IAN  
(not hearing her)  
Back to the halcyon days of wine,  
women and song...

CLAIRE  
What on Earth is going on?

Lee mentally processes things - then realises:

LEE  
His submission letter...

He exchanges a conspiratorial glance with Chris - which Ian misses completely.

IAN  
I'm going to start next term - or  
'semester,' whatever one of those  
is - and once all 'i's are dotted  
and 't's crossed, I'm a card-  
carrying member of the student body  
for one of the country - nay, the  
world's most prestigious writing  
courses!

EMMA  
(beat)  
Seriously? You? What the hell did  
you put in this letter? A gold bar?

LEE  
(quickly)  
I think it's fantastic news. Well  
done, Ian.

CHRIS  
Yeah, good work, dude.

Ian BEAMS merrily, reading and re-reading the letter.

IAN  
I only wish I could remember what  
the hell I wrote in my submission  
letter. I should have it framed!  
Embossed! Gold plated, even!

(CONTINUED)

EMMA

(twigs; to Chris)

Didn't you -

CHRIS

(quickly; over her)

No need to concern yourself with  
the details now, man - you got in!  
That's awesome!

LEE

Yes, and once you get your student  
ID then the rest of us can go  
bumming around on campus like the  
good old days again.

(nostalgic)

Young, impressionable, beautiful  
girls by the bucketload, ready to  
be wooed, subdued and violated all  
in the name of -

VOICE (O.S.)

Lee?

Everyone turns - and standing in the doorway are a MIDDLE-  
AGED COUPLE, complete with hand luggage.

Lee GASPS, colour draining from his face in an instant. The  
couple are staring at him, so the others look to Lee, who can  
only utter:

LEE

(meek)

Mother?

And as eyebrows rise accordingly, we:

**BLACK OUT:**

**END OF TEASER**

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

2 INT. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY 2

The gang - minus Lee - are gathered in the front room. The door to the kitchen is closed, with VOICES filtering through from the other side.

CLAIRE

What are they doing here?

EMMA

Did we know they were coming?

IAN

That would be something Lee'd tell us, I think.

CHRIS

Maybe he did mention something...

Chris looks thoughtful for a moment, and we CUT TO:

3 INT. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 3

The housemates are gathered on their old - pre-burglary - couch, eating and watching TV.

Lee stands behind them, arms waving as he speaks - but all that comes out of his mouth is:

LEE

('Charlie Brown' teacher style)

Wah waah wah waah... waah waah wah waah waah. Waah! Waah wah waah!

The gibberish keeps playing as we DISSOLVE TO:

4 INT. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY 4

Chris SHRUGS.

CHRIS

Maybe he didn't. We'll never know.

IAN

Do we have any glasses?

CLAIRE

What for?

IAN

So we can listen at the door!

(CONTINUED)

EMMA

Pretty sure it's not that interesting.

IAN

Unannounced visit by the parental units? Stranger in a strange land? More importantly, five youngsters living in a recently ransacked apartment with only the bare minimum of creature comforts to exist upon? Oh, I think you'll find they're having a very interesting conversation in there...

All eyes turn towards the kitchen door as we CUT TO:

5 INT. APARTMENT - KITCHEN - NEXT

5

Lee sits glumly at the counter. MUM is clucking around, inspecting piles of unwashed plates and nosing through cupboards, while DAD leans against the wall over by the window, arms folded.

There's an obvious family resemblance - Mum has curly blonde hair and is quite short, while Dad has thinning dark hair.

MUM

I just don't understand why there isn't a single trace of any fresh fruit in here.

LEE

Oh, for God's sake...

MUM

What about milk? Where's the milk?

LEE

The cat probably drank it.

MUM

(horrified)

You've got a cat? With your allergies?

LEE

Well... no. But there are cats in this neighbourhood, and that window's never closed properly since Waylon tried to push Ian out of it once, and...

(off looks)

We don't have any milk.

(CONTINUED)

MUM

(to Dad)

Ray, you'll have to go and get some.

DAD

Sandra, we're in the middle of Los Angeles. How am I supposed to know where to go and get some milk?

LEE

(raises hand)

I know where -

MUM

(over him)

I need a cup of tea, Raymond. I've not had one since we left the UK!

DAD

They had tea on the plane!

MUM

It was airline tea! Have you ever tried to drink that?

DAD

Well, no, but -

LEE

Seriously, it's right round the -

MUM

Go on. It won't take a minute. Have you got some dollars?

DAD

Yes, I've -

She reaches into her purse, rooting around and quickly drawing out some dollar bills.

MUM

Here you are. Semi-skimmed. Or whatever passes for that over here.

(to Lee)

Do they have semi-skimmed milk over here?

LEE

Sometimes, I'm not even sure they have actual cows.

(off looks; sighs)

Yes, mum, they do.

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED: (2)

5

DAD

I... I don't even know where -

MUM

Oh, alright then. I'll come with you.

She hooks her arm through his and hauls him away from the window ledge.

MUM (cont'd)

We'll be back in a minute. Once I've had a drink, then you can introduce us to your friends properly.

They head for the door, opening it:

6 INT. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NEXT

6

But as they do, Ian, Emma, Chris and Claire stumble back and clatter into one another, falling in a heap to the floor. Empty glasses roll from their outstretched hands.

Without missing a beat. Lee's mother steps over them and they duo head for the door.

MUM

(cheery)

See you all in a minute. Bye!

And they're gone. The others exchange looks, then pile into the kitchen:

7 INT. APARTMENT - KITCHEN - NEXT

7

To find Lee morosely filling the sink with hot, soapy water.

CLAIRE

My God, it's worse than I thought.

IAN

What are you doing?

LEE

Damage limitation. If all this...  
(motions to dirty plates)  
... is gone when she gets back, she won't question how it happened but she will at least stop mentioning it.

CHRIS

Speaking of stopping mentioning things...

(CONTINUED)

He gives Lee a light SHOVE.

CHRIS (cont'd)  
Parents? Visit?

LEE  
I told you all. Weeks ago. I  
just... forgot.

EMMA  
You have had a lot on your mind,  
what with all the nothing we've  
been doing since we got here.

He shoots her a scathing look, but she doesn't notice. Ian,  
meanwhile, is peering into the sink with a look of wonder.

IAN  
What is it?

LEE  
It's what we do the washing up in,  
Ian.

IAN  
The what?

LEE  
( 'moving on...' )  
Guys, listen to me. This is  
important. Do not tell my mother  
anything.

EMMA  
Not even -

LEE  
Whatever you were about to say, no.  
She means well, but... let's just  
say she tends to fixate on details  
if she doesn't approve of them.

CHRIS  
What could she possibly disapprove  
of here?

He tries to nonchalantly lean on the kitchen counter -  
dislodging several dirty plates which careen to the floor and  
SMASH.

CHRIS (cont'd)  
I mean, besides that?

Ian sinks his hands into the hot, soapy water.

IAN

(in awe)

It's... it's like little tingles of heaven...

LEE

Seriously. She worries about my weight, my stress, my job, my money, my living arrangements, where I sleep, how I'm doing my hair - everything.

EMMA

Possibly not the hair.

LEE

(blinks)

Are you trying to irritate me today or something?

EMMA

Oh, I don't 'try' anything.

LEE

(exhales)

Look, once she's had a cup of tea she'll be marginally more agreeable until the caffeine wears off. Can you four just help me by getting the apartment more presentable before they get back?

CHRIS

What's in it for us?

LEE

Me not murdering you all in your sleep and selling your organs to pay for a better apartment.

CLAIRE

And this is me cleaning.

She reaches for a dustpan and starts sweeping up shattered pieces of crockery from the floor.

Mum and Dad walk down the street, Mum wrinkling her nose distastefully at the less than stellar surroundings.

MUM

Oh, Ray, I knew this was a bad idea.

DAD  
Everything's fine.

He pats her arm reassuringly, but it's not working on her.

MUM  
I mean, just look at all this?

She sweeps an arm round - okay, so there's a few boarded up buildings and some shady looking guys on one corner.

DAD  
He's trying to strike out and do his own thing. Follow his dreams. And he's not by himself either.

MUM  
Hmm. Yes. We'll have to speak to him about those 'friends' of his too.

DAD  
He's known them all for years.

MUM  
Over the internet! They could be cyber... whatsits! He doesn't know these people!

Dad looks up - they've reached a corner store. He exhales, relieved at the distraction.

DAD  
He's been living with five people for months now. Trust me, he'll have gotten to know them pretty well by now.

MUM  
Four.

DAD  
Hmm?

MUM  
There were four of them back there.

DAD  
Maybe one's out at work or something. Come on. Let's get what we need and head back.

He pushes the door open and they head inside.

9

INT. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

9

Lee has the couch up on its back, attacking the filthy carpet with a tiny, wheezing dustbuster.

CLAIRE  
Getting anywhere?

LEE  
It's like attacking a forest fire  
with a water pistol.

He sits up, deflated - just as the dustbuster RATTLES and then dies like a wounded animal.

LEE (cont'd)  
Next time we get robbed - and I  
have little doubt there will be a  
next time - we'll have to put  
'vacuum cleaner' down on our  
household items list. That way,  
maybe we can fool the insurance  
company into giving us a new one.

CLAIRE  
Assuming we remember to get  
household insurance at any point.

LEE  
I... I actually have no comeback  
for that.

Claire grins, taking the dustbuster from him. She pops the back cover open and starts poking round inside.

LEE (cont'd)  
We also need to be careful not to  
let slip about Waylon to the  
others.

CLAIRE  
Why would we?

LEE  
Because as far as my mum knows, he  
still lives here. We have to be  
airtight in our story. My mother  
has the kind of attention to detail  
war criminal prosecutors would be  
envious of. One slip and we're done  
for.

CLAIRE  
Is she really going to interrogate  
us about that kind of thing?

(CONTINUED)

Lee's return look is all the answer she needs. That's when the others pile back in.

IAN  
We're done.

LEE  
No, you're not.

CHRIS  
You're right. We're not.

EMMA  
We got tired.

LEE  
It's been less than five minutes!

CHRIS  
We tire easily.

LEE  
Christ! It's like having two  
equally inept Siamese twins!

He puts a hand to his head, breathing hard. Claire rubs his arm, then shoots the others a glare.

CLAIRE  
Guys. This is important.

EMMA  
Pfft. We'll be fine. I can handle  
people's parents no problem. I've  
wooded my fair share.

CHRIS  
What, like for old boyfriends?

EMMA  
I decline to answer that on the  
grounds that it may incriminate me.

Lee's head snaps up - and a moment later, the gang can hear VOICES from the stairwell outside.

LEE  
That's them.

IAN  
How did you do that?

Lee leaps to his feet, grunting as he SHOVES the couch right again. The others watch, bemused, as he dashes round the room, trying to make it look more presentable.

EMMA

We'll tell her it's 'lived in.'

CHRIS

Yeah, you know. Homely.

IAN

Cheap.

LEE

All kinds of not helping.

CLAIRE

What's the worst she could do?

LEE

Talk me into going home?

EMMA

What, just like that?

LEE

As I think has been made abundantly clear, you've never met my mother.

Lee starts trying to arrange the meagre furniture to best cover the variety of stains on the carpet.

CHRIS

What could she possibly say that'd make you turn your back on your favourite bunch of bros and hos?

Emma SLAPS his arm for that.

LEE

You all have parents.

(beat)

Well, maybe not Ian, given that he resembles a pod person more and more each day, but... you know how your mum always knows exactly what buttons to push to get you all worked up, no matter what mood you started the conversation in?

CLAIRE

Actually, yes. Mine has this way of inflecting the ends of her sentences - like 'are you going out like that, Claire?' It's subtle, but... ooh. Teeth-grinding.

LEE

Exactly.

EMMA

I repeat - pfft. Nothing to worry about.

There's a KNOCK at the door. Lee visibly tenses up.

LEE

You all have to leave.

CHRIS

But -

LEE

Now. It's the only way. Do it!

He leaps for the door and throws it open, snapping into 'warm welcome' face as his parents enter.

Claire quickly grabs jackets from the pile by the door, tossing them to the others.

DAD

Oh, are you all off out?

EMMA

We've been ordered to -

CLAIRE

(cuts her off)

Yes, yes, sorry to dash out just as you get here, but we've got a, uh -

CHRIS

A meeting to get to. Writer stuff.

CLAIRE

Yes, so we'll be back later.

MUM

Yes, yes, of course. We'll be here when you get back, and then Lee can introduce you to us properly. Given that he's failed to do it up till now.

Lee visibly grinds his teeth at the barbed comment. Claire quickly ushers Emma and Ian outside.

CHRIS

Charmed to meet you, Mrs. C.

He takes her hand and KISSES it, missing Lee's horrified expression.

He nods to Dad and follows the others out. Mum waits for the door to close, before she rounds on Lee with:

MUM

Where on earth did you find those people?

LEE

(groans)

Mum...

MUM

We need to sit down and have a talk, young man. Ray, see if you can find a kettle in whatever that kitchen is supposed to be.

DAD

Calm down, Sandra.

MUM

'Calm down'? Our son and heir is living in a crack alley with a bunch of miscreants who all look like they're on drugs, and you want me to 'calm down'?

DAD

(beat)

I'll make us some tea.

He heads for the kitchen, knowing better than to argue. Lee flops down onto the couch. He watches as Mum starts to fuss around the front room, his head slowly sinking into his hands before we:

**BLACK OUT:**

**END OF ACT ONE**

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

10

EXT. STREET - DAY

10

The foursome are walking along a small park in the mid-afternoon sunshine.

CLAIRE

Maybe we should try getting them a gift?

IAN

Why spend our money on them? They're clearly loaded.

CHRIS

What makes you say that?

IAN

I can smell money. The same way a desperate hound dog can sniff out a fresh plate of pork sausages.

EMMA

(beat)

You're hungry, aren't you.

IAN

Little bit.

Emma nods towards a nearby HOT DOG STAND, the group veering towards it.

CLAIRE

I can imagine how this must be for him, though. Disapproving parents are always the hardest to impress if you don't have something bulletproof to shut them up with.

CHRIS

We have the project.

EMMA

No, we have a half-finished script and dozens of folders filled with notes about nothing. What we have is nothing.

IAN

There's always The Wooden Horse.

CLAIRE

(blinks)

The what?

(CONTINUED)

CHRIS  
 (rolls eyes)  
 Dude, we promised not to talk about  
 this...

EMMA  
 Talk about what?

Ian grins at Chris, who shakes his head as he distributes hot dogs to the others.

IAN  
 It's a poetry anthology I've been  
 working on. Something to get  
 published and earn us some easy  
 money.

CLAIRE  
 You... write poetry?

IAN  
 I write lots of things.

EMMA  
 Let's hear one, then.

CHRIS  
 No. Just... no.

IAN  
 (clears throat)  
 This wretch grasps a stabbing  
 implement from his top drawer, All  
 of Satan's verses smiling back at  
 him, strewn on the floor,  
 Hope for this boy is hopeless, he  
 pains himself with caffeine,  
 All of the twisted rumors,  
 governing his actions, pervading  
 his wet dream.

There's a long beat of silence.

IAN (cont'd)  
 Would you like to hear -

THE OTHERS  
 (together)  
 No.

IAN  
 (sags)  
 There's always my haikus about  
 Spam.

At a loss, Claire takes an absent bite from her hot dog.

11 INT. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

11

Lee and his mother are no longer using their indoor voices.

LEE

Of course it's a proper fellowship!  
What, do you think I made that up?

MUM

I just don't see how you're making  
any money out here!

LEE

I told you, I've got a job!

MUM

At a coffee shop? Is that what you  
came all the way out here for?

LEE

No, but - but...

DAD

What about the money your mother  
and I have been sending you?

LEE

Oh, that? That's had to go on...  
stuff.

MUM

'Stuff'? What kind of 'stuff'?

LEE

Important... writer-y... things.

DAD

Do you have any of it left?

LEE

(beat)  
No.

MUM

Lee... I think maybe you need to  
seriously reconsider what you're  
doing all the way out here.

LEE

Oh, here we go...

DAD

'Here we go' what, son? Your  
mother's making a valid point. I  
mean...

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED:

11

He looks round the apartment. Lee catches the question in his expression.

LEE  
We were burgled.

MUM  
(shrieks)  
What?!?

LEE  
It's fine. We changed the locks.  
They didn't get much. We don't  
exactly have a lot worth taking.

MUM  
I can see that.

LEE  
Oh... don't.

He rises, taking a deep breath as Mum takes a haughty sip from her tea.

LEE (cont'd)  
I am going to the bathroom. When I  
return, we will discuss my  
continued stay out here like  
adults, which is what we all are.

She doesn't answer, leaving Lee to head for the bathroom. His dad offers a mildly comforting smile as Lee passes.

12 INT. APARTMENT - BATHROOM - NEXT

12

Lee has his head resting against the bathroom cabinet.

LEE  
You can manage this, Lee. You can  
talk them round. You've dealt with  
more stressful situations than  
this.

VOICE (O.S.)  
Then that would explain the hair,  
wouldn't it?

Lee blinks, looking up - and into his own reflection. Which proceeds to SHRUG back at him!

13 INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - DAY

13

Chris and Ian are wandering the aisles, browsing for gifts.

(CONTINUED)

IAN

(out of nowhere)

There once was a young sow named Pam, who had an affair with a Ram. The result of her sins was pink meat in blue tins, and the folks at Hormel called it Spam.

CHRIS

Dude, enough! I've told you, I have no idea what 'spam' is! And that wasn't a haiku!

IAN

I expanded upon my original concept.

CHRIS

I'll expand you in a minute if you don't quit it. Now help me pick something. What says 'don't deport our friend' to you?

An ATTRACTIVE WOMAN walks by and Chris immediately takes notice.

CHRIS (cont'd)

(British accent)

Ello, luv.

The Woman smiles back and keeps on walking.

IAN

What the hell was that?

CHRIS

(shrugs)

Chicks like accents. Besides, since Emma and me hooked up, my flirt muscles are getting lax.

IAN

Yeah, well... don't get your hopes up. The accent thing isn't all it's made out to be in the movies, trust me. I had an incident at the airport. There was mace and an inflatable airplane involved, that's all that need be said.

A beat as they look around their environment, trying to find something interesting.

IAN (cont'd)

And on the subject of women... How in the bloody hell have you ended up with so many of them, anyway?

CHRIS

Meaning?

IAN

Meaning you don't look like Zac Efron and yet you're always getting the eye off sprightly young fillies as they come a-prancing by.

CHRIS

(smiles)

You really wanna know?

IAN

No, I'd rather be out dress shopping with Lee. Of course I want to know!

CHRIS

I told them I was Colin Farrell.

IAN

(beat)

Fine. Don't tell me.

CHRIS

Hand to God.

IAN

You look nothing like Colin Farrell!

CHRIS

I know. That's what made it so bittersweet. I told them I'd recently had some work done for a new part. A new haircut, blah, blah, blah.

IAN

I was wondering why those girls down the hall kept calling you Colin! That's amazing.

CHRIS

(waggles eyebrows)

I know.

IAN

Christ on a flatbread, dude, you've got to teach me how to do that.

(CONTINUED)

CHRIS

What? You mean right, like, right now?

He looks around for a moment, considering the options. And at that moment, an attractive WOMAN heads down the aisle towards them. Chris grins, rolling his neck.

CHRIS (cont'd)

She's perfect. Everyone wants to say that they met a celebrity, and her outfits screams 'gold digger who ain't goin' for no broke n-'

IAN

(quickly; over him)  
And that's the reason we don't let you watch MTV Base.

Ian looks a bit nervous as he glances over at the woman.

IAN (cont'd)

And I didn't necessarily mean now. Are you sure this is a good idea?

CHRIS

Of course I am. Watch a master at work.

Ian GULPS as Chris heads towards the woman.

Lee is standing in front of the mirror, still staring back at his asinine self.

LEE'S REFLECTION

So now you're deaf, dumb, and vaginal?

Lee blinks rapidly, shakes his head. Looks back into the mirror and all is normal, until:

LEE'S REFLECTION (cont'd)

And retarded, apparently.

LEE

This can't be happening.

LEE'S REFLECTION

Psychosomatic auditory hallucinations. They're not that uncommon considering the stress and anxiety.

LEE

Really?

LEE'S REFLECTION

How the hell should I know?! I only know what you know, and the only reason you know that term is because you heard it in a movie!

Lee cowers down a little bit at the audacity and ferociousness of himself.

LEE'S REFLECTION (cont'd)

So let's get down to the shizzle, shall we? And while we're at it, no more MTV, asshole, okay? I'm here because you're having a crisis of gender. Your mother is challenging your authority, and it's making you put on a pair of whiny little bitch panties rather than stand up for yourself and tell her to stay the hell out of your life.

(matter of fact)

And I'm not going away until we solve it.

Lee looks over his shoulder to make to make sure no one's within earshot. He turns back to argue, but before he can get a word out:

MUM (O.S.)

Lee?

Lee bites his lip, then flips himself off in the mirror. Heads back into the living room.

LEE'S REFLECTION

(rolls eyes)

Alright, very mature.

The reflection SIGHS loudly, folding his arms and waiting. RAISED VOICES sound from the next room, and the Reflection throws up his hands theatrically.

LEE'S REFLECTION (cont'd)

I never learn.

As the argument continues, we CUT TO:

As they approach the woman, Ian's almost petrified, but Chris is cool as the other side of the pillow.

CHRIS

Just be cool. Remember, you're with  
a professional.

Chris opens his mouth to deliver the opening salvo, when:

WOMAN (O.S.)

Cindy?

CINDY turns back around, sees another woman waving her over. She walks toward her, Chris watching her like a hawk all the while.

IAN

I think that was sign from God. We  
shouldn't do this.

CHRIS

(still eyeing Cindy)  
No, it's cool. We've just got -

Chris strains to look around the corner and catches wind of something he likes, eyes go wide.

CHRIS (cont'd)

And the plot thickens... to a very  
agreeable thickness.

From the back room, Cindy is speaking with a very attractive woman in her early twenties.

This is her friend, KIMBERLY, likewise professionally dressed with her blonde hair pulled back into a neat pony tail. Very attractive.

And with that, Chris goes utterly serious as if this were life and death, speaking very quickly.

CHRIS (cont'd)

Alright, look, we've got to do this  
fast.

IAN

'Do' what?

CHRIS

Shhh! No time, just listen. Cindy, also known as Our Target, is older and disconnected from today's youth. We pick a couple young, upcoming celebrities from a first run of television or an obscure movie, she'll never know the difference. This was the plan.

IAN  
(rising volume)  
'Was'?

CHRIS  
Shhh! It's recently come to my  
attention that she's got an  
apprentice - younger, more in tune  
with pop culture.

Ian's borderline hysterical by this point.

IAN  
What do we do?

CHRIS  
Goddamn it, I said listen! She's  
into pop culture and shit, that's  
true, in the presence of a  
celebrity, she doesn't want to come  
off as an asinine naysayer.  
Especially in front of her friend.

Ian starts to question him again, but a stern look makes him  
keep quiet.

CHRIS (cont'd)  
So we're going with rock stars.

IAN  
Rock stars?!?

Chris SLAPS HIS FACE.

CHRIS  
Get a hold of yourself, man! We've  
got to be cool to pull this off.

He looks back over, and they're starting their way.

IAN  
I don't want to do this.

CHRIS  
You'll thank me later.

He barely gets that out before the girls walk by, and Chris  
is straight in with:

CHRIS (cont'd)  
(poor Southern accent)  
Excuse me, ladies...

They turn, and he flashes a million-dollar smile.

CHRIS (cont'd)

So sorry to bother you two lovely young things, but my associate and I here are picking presents for my dear old mom and dad, just in town today on a flying visit, and, well, we're coming up short. You know, being intellectually challenged males and all.

Another disarming smile. The girls chuckle at his joke.

CINDY

Sorry to hear that.

CHRIS

No problem at all, Miss...

CINDY

Oh, my name is Cindy, and this is Kimberly, my executive assistant.

CHRIS

A title that's well deserved, no doubt. You look very...  
(looks her up and down)  
... helpful.

She smiles back, but Cindy clears her throat to interrupt the moment.

CINDY

Anyhow, I didn't get your name, Mr...

CHRIS

Daughtry.

CINDY

As in... the...

CHRIS

As in The, yes.

Ian rolls his eyes, and takes a deep breath.

**BLACK OUT:**

**END OF ACT TWO**

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

16 INT. APARTMENT - BOY'S ROOM - NEXT

16

Lee sits on the edge of the bed, chin resting on his hands, when he hears:

LEE'S REFLECTION (O.S.)  
Hey, dillhole.

Lee turns to see his reflection looking back at him from a blank laptop screen. He rolls his eyes.

LEE  
Leave me alone!

LEE'S REFLECTION  
Not until we settle this.

LEE  
People are going to think I'm  
crazy!

LEE'S REFLECTION  
You're talking to your own  
reflection on a laptop screen,  
sweetheart. Do you really think  
you're a bastion of sanity?

Lee looks around, making sure the door is closed.

LEE  
Fine! What do you want from me?

LEE'S REFLECTION  
I want you to tell me why you've  
grown a mangina! You've lost your  
moxy, Chrimes, and it's affecting  
me!

LEE  
You don't understand! You don't  
know what she's like when she gets  
her teeth round an argument - she's  
like a bloody dingo with a baby!

LEE'S REFLECTION  
It's hanging around with all the  
girls, isn't it? Emma and Claire  
are a bad influence on you. They're  
elevating your already high natural  
estrogen levels past acceptable  
limits.

(CONTINUED)

LEE

Oh, piss off. Xander Harris hung out with two girls all the time, and he's one of the top five television characters of all time.

LEE'S REFLECTION

Yeah, and he also lived in his parents' basement and didn't start getting laid on a regular basis until he was almost twenty. Not to mention the fact that he's a FICTIONAL CHARACTER!

Lee grimaces at the loud outburst, looking around to make sure no one else heard it.

LEE

I don't know what you want from me!

LEE'S REFLECTION

I want you to grow a pair, Chrimsey. I'm tired of this life of oppression. If you don't start acting like a man and belching, watching football, or fighting - I swear to God, I'm going to start killing your friends.

LEE

Dear Lord.

LEE'S REFLECTION

Oh, stop whining! That last part was a joke. This subconscious can't take over his host. Trust me, I've tried. But would it be too much to ask for a little fun now and then?

MUM (O.S.)

(from next room)

Lee? Is everything alright in there?

LEE'S REFLECTION

(shouts back)

Just pushing one out, ma! Won't be long!

LEE

Shut up!

MUM (O.S.)

What?

LEE

Oh, uh - not you!

(to laptop; hisses)

You. Zip it, or else I'll bury this thing so deep they'll have to shoot flares backwards to try and -

LEE'S REFLECTION

You know I can appear to you on any reflective surface, right? What are you going to do, spend the rest of your life in a padded cell?

LEE

(mutters)

More and more each day...

He turns and marches out of the room, SLAMMING the door behind him as we CUT TO:

Kimberly is looking at Chris with a bit of apprehension, mixed with borderline elation.

KIMBERLY

Daughtry? You mean, like... Chris Daughtry?

CHRIS

One and the same, sweetness.

KIMBERLY

Oh, my God!

CHRIS

Close, but not quite.

CINDY

Am I missing something?

KIMBERLY

(very matter of factly)

He's a musician.

The older woman's face lights up a bit at the prospect.

CINDY

Oh, so we have a celebrity.

CHRIS

I wouldn't say celebrity as much as I would devilishly handsome and famous.

(slaps Ian on the back)

(MORE)

CHRIS (cont'd)

This is my guitarist, Jonathan  
Hendrix.

He barely gets that part out without a smile.

CINDY

Very well. So, you're looking for  
gifts for your parents?

Ian starts to speak, but Chris cuts in:

CHRIS

Let me stop you right there, Cindy.  
You probably don't know this about  
me, but I'm from Roanoke Rapids,  
North Carolina - a small town boy.  
I just moved to LA because I'm  
about to go into the studio for my  
next album...

(bragging to Kimberly)

Killer shit by the way.

(raises brows; to Cindy)

... and the reason I'm hanging out  
in a place like this instead of  
going to Cartier or somesuch is I'm  
really not into the whole paparazzi  
scandal, high life way of living.

CINDY

That's very refreshing to hear.

CHRIS

Exactly, right? So once we're done  
shopping, what I'm looking for is  
your average, run of the mill place  
for myself and my band to occupy  
without bringing notice to  
ourselves. Something cheap - you  
know, for appearance's sake.

CINDY

Well, I'm sure we can find  
something for you, Mr. Daughtry. It  
just so happens that I work in  
event management, so I'm sure  
there's a way Kimber and I can...  
accommodate you. My office isn't  
far from here and my Escalade is  
parked outside if you'd like to  
have a quick meeting?

Kimberly smiles again to Chris before she turns and follows  
her boss toward the door. Ian takes a deep breath as Chris  
shakes his head, seemingly disappointed.

IAN

That was horrible.

CHRIS

I know. I'm just not feeling it.  
Nothing of a challenge. You think  
it's too late to change our names  
to Keith and Mick?

Chris mulls it over as he heads to the parking lot.

IAN

I hate you.

Ian sighs and follows him and we CUT TO:

18 INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - AISLE - DAY

18

Meanwhile, Emma and Claire are in an aisle filled with tacky  
gifts of any and all description, mooching up and down.

CLAIRE

How about this?

She holds up a tourist-tastic 'Welcome To LA' bumper sticker.  
Emma squints at the fine print beneath the slogan.

EMMA

It says 'Support GTA - Kill A  
Hooker Today.'

CLAIRE

Oh.

She quickly stuffs it back onto the shelf. Then puts more  
stuff over it to hide it for good.

EMMA

This is hopeless. Where's some good  
old-fashioned British tack when you  
need it? You can't fall over in  
Liverpool without skinning your  
knee on Beatles chintz.

CLAIRE

I don't think Los Angeles has one  
single identifying export like  
that.

EMMA

We could steal them a letter from  
the 'Hollywood' sign.

CLAIRE

How, exactly?

EMMA

I'm a big picture girl, Claire. You and Lee always handle the fine details.

CLAIRE

I see. And the others?

EMMA

Chris is our getaway driver. Ian... still working on that one.

They browse for a few more beats, but there's nothing here that feels right.

EMMA (cont'd)

There's nothing here that feels right!

CLAIRE

I know, I heard.

EMMA

Huh?

CLAIRE

(shakes head)

We should probably find the boys and head back. Our gifts will have to be built more around glowing recommendations of Lee, his leadership skills and all the good things we've achieved in LA so far.

EMMA

Do we have any of those things?

CLAIRE

Big picture, Emma. Big picture.

The girls head off as we CUT TO:

Lee stares back at his reflection in the kitchen window.

LEE

So if I promise to do this, act like what you call a man, then you'll leave me alone?

LEE'S REFLECTION

Let's just say that if you don't, I'll haunt you 'till the end of freakin' time. I'm not asking for any miracles here.

(MORE)

19 CONTINUED:

19

LEE'S REFLECTION (cont'd)

I just want you to stick up for yourself, take charge when you need to. Otherwise, this little project isn't going to see the light of day. And you're never going to get laid sober.

Lee mulls it over for a moment.

LEE

That's some pretty sage advice for someone lacking corporeal form. His reflection shrugs.

LEE'S REFLECTION

We've all got our thing.

LEE

Thanks...  
(thinking)  
... me.

LEE'S REFLECTION

Don't mention it. Now get out there and do your thing.

Lee smiles and turns away, his reflection fading back into his own.

20 INT. ESCALADE - NEXT

20

Chris and Ian are riding in the backseat of the Escalade, on their way to the house. Cindy is on the phone. The guys are arguing quietly among themselves before Kimberly breaks in.

KIMBERLY

So, Chris. How do you like LA so far?

CHRIS

Silicone and sunshine, doll. Nothing much to catch your eye... until today, that is.

KIMBERLY

(blushes)

If you want, I could show you around sometime. The city, I mean.

CHRIS

I would absolutely love that. Perhaps when we're done here -

Cindy hangs up her phone and quickly interjects.

CINDY

I've got great news!

(CONTINUED)

CHRIS

You found us a gig already? I've got to admit, that's quick work, isn't it, Jonathan?

Ian only fakes a placated smile of approval.

CINDY

Even better. I just got off the phone with your agent, Chuck.

Ian's almost panicked now, but Chris doesn't skip a beat.

CHRIS

Oh? How's Chuck doing, I haven't spoken to him in almost two hours now.

(smirks)

Agents.

CINDY

He's gotten wind of a charity function that he was going to pass on, but since it's on the way, he said you could stop by and play a few songs.

CHRIS

That'd be great, Cindy. It really would, but we're on a bit of a schedule today, Hendrix and I, so if we can just -

IAN

(blurts; rapidly)

There was a young lady from Dallas whose treatment of SPAM was callous. She'd open the can, take the meat in her hand, and use it much like a phallus!

Silence falls over the car. Chris clears his throat.

CHRIS

He's, um... well, he takes after his great-uncle, put it that way.

CINDY

('anyway...')

This concert's for a really great cause.

CHRIS

Honestly, if I only had the time.

CINDY

The benefit is going to give funding to programs that help handicapped children.

Chris is starting to get irritated by her persistence.

CHRIS

Honestly, Cindy, I don't even like retards.

CINDY

(blinks)

Excuse me?

CHRIS

Yeah, you heard right. I got bit by a little quote, end quote special person, and I had to get thirteen stitches and a rabies shot. Hendrix got stabbed one in the chest by one who said she did it because he looked better in red! So I say that if we let 'em all starve, it wouldn't be the worst thing that ever happened to the world.

(laughs)

It's better than letting them procreate, right?

Both Kimberly and Cindy stare straight forward. How are they supposed to react to that? Chris sits back, certain that he's maintained his cover as a pompous rock star.

CINDY

Whether you agree with or not, it's a good cause, and you should use your fame for something other than yourself.

With that, she pulls the car over.

CINDY (cont'd)

This is it.

For the first time, Chris looks a little shaken by the events.

Lee is back with his folks. He's scrunched up on one couch seat, visibly shrinking into himself.

MUM

I just don't think any of this is working out particularly well.

LEE

Appearances can be deceiving.  
(looks round apartment)  
Often very deceiving.

DAD

We're just worried about you, son.

LEE

Yeah, but you don't need to be! I'm not living on some crack alley, I have money coming in, I've got my foot in the door with the writing, which is the real reason I'm here, and I've got my mates here as well!

MUM

Speaking of, when are any of them coming back?

LEE

God only knows. You probably scared them off.

DAD

(reprimanding)  
Lee...

LEE

No offence meant, mother, but you can be a bit... intimidating to people who haven't known you their whole lives.

MUM

I do no such thing! In fact, if it wasn't for your father and me, you wouldn't be out here in the first place! Did you forget that?

LEE

Of course I didn't, I just -

She rises, stabbing a finger his way. She's on a roll now.

MUM

And what's more, without the money we invested in your future to get you out here, you didn't even have enough for a plane ticket!

DAD

Sandra! Calm down.

He steps between them. She releases the breath she's been holding, and softens in an instant.

MUM

I'm sorry, I'm sorry, it's just that... I miss you.

Her lip starts to tremble. Lee gets sucked in by it - for all of three seconds. He explodes out from the seat.

LEE

For God's sake! It's like a blitzkrieg with you, isn't it? One second you're furious and taking cheap shots, and the next you flood me with waterworks to guilt trip me for having gotten upset at you in the first place!

(beat)

And now my head's spinning.

He flops back into the chair.

MUM

You have to see this from our point of view, Lee. It's not going well for you out here.

LEE

Have you registered anything I've said? I'm already getting somewhere, but it takes years to get going in this industry!

MUM

Well... you don't have years.

LEE

(gasps)

Oh, God, I've got a terminal illness, haven't I. That's why you're here!

DAD

No, no, it's just...

MUM

Your father wants to retire, and that means we can't afford to keep sending you money each month.

LEE

Ssh! The others don't know about that.

DAD

Sorry son, but without that money...

Lee SIGHS, defeated.

LEE

I know. There's no way I can afford  
to scrape a living here on what  
I've been making.

Behind him, unseen, Emma and Claire have returned.

LEE (cont'd)

I'm going to have to go home.

The two GASPS behind him get him to turn - and he sees the girls.

CLAIRE

Lee? What...

Emma stares at him for a beat - then rounds on his mother!

EMMA

What the hell did you people do?

And as his mum reels from Emma's opening salvo, we:

**BLACK OUT:**

**END OF ACT THREE**

**ACT FOUR**

FADE IN:

22

INT. CHARITY BENEFIT - TENT - MOMENTS LATER

22

Chris and Ian are both standing nervously in front of a dozen other musicians.

IAN

How on earth has this gone on for so long?

CHRIS

Because I have a plus seven to Blather?

IAN

Don't quote RPG stats at me, fool - you don't look anything like Chris effin' Daughtry!

CHRIS

I know... that's weird, isn't it? Or maybe I do and I never realised?

Finally, the concert promoter comes around to talk to Chris.

PROMOTER

Mr. Daughtry, sorry it took me so long to get around to meeting you, but I've had a full plate today. I want to thank you again for taking time out of your busy schedule to -

IAN

Um, just a quick question, and forgive me if this sounds crazy, but... have you actually met Chris before now?

PROMOTER

No, I haven't. I don't even watch 'American Idol.' But I've heard nothing but good things about you.

He shakes Chris' hand warmly.

PROMOTER (cont'd)

Good to finally put a face to the name, you know? The legend in the making that is, and so on.

That breaks it for Chris. He looks up at the promoter.

(CONTINUED)

CHRIS

That's all fine and good, man, but I'm afraid that we're going to have to drop out of this show.

The promoter looks stunned.

CHRIS (cont'd)

We, uh... didn't bring our instruments.

The promoter takes a deep, thankful breath.

PROMOTER

Not a problem, we've got everything you'll need.

(pointing)

Behind that curtain is a wall of guitars for you to choose from. I know it's not your own, but it should make due.

CHRIS

Great...

PROMOTER

Anything else you guys need?

CHRIS

We -

IAN

A lot of whiskey. Neat. Just bring the bottle. Two bottles. Three.

PROMOTER

(chuckles)

No problem. That everything?

CHRIS

Could we -

IAN

Oh, and a bowl of M&Ms. But with all the brown ones taken out.

The promoter raises an eyebrow, but Ian crosses his arms and haughtily turns away.

CHRIS

Best just indulge him, my friend. He's a little... eccentric.

PROMOTER

Alright, whatever. I'll be back for you guys soon.

(CONTINUED)

He walks back off to join another crowd of artists. Chris turns to Ian, raising an eyebrow.

CHRIS

M&Ms?

IAN

It's called 'stalling,' Chris. Look it up. Assuming we survive all this, I mean.

Chris and Ian share a look before both sitting down without a word. Now what?

23 INT. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

23

Back with Emma as she advances on Lee's mother.

EMMA

What have you been filling his head with to make him think he has to go home?

MUM

He can't handle living out here! I'm surprised any of you can, given the state of this place!

CLAIRE

(meekly)

Um, we were burgled...

Emma shoots her a sharp look. Stay out of this.

EMMA

(to Lee's mum)

We make do just fine, thanks. Do you know what Lee's managed to accomplish since he landed here?

MUM

Not a fat lot, by the sounds of it.

EMMA

Wrong, he kept us here.

Lee looks up, surprised by that remark.

EMMA (cont'd)

Every single one of us has wanted to bail out of this whole venture and scamper home with our tails between our legs. Right, Claire?

CLAIRE

I haven't -

EMMA

(over her)

Exactly. But do you know what's stopped that from happening? What's been the UHF glue holding this assortment of minds and bad habits together?

She points dramatically to her side.

MUM

The sofa?

Emma turns - she's pointing at the couch, not Lee. She quickly adjusts her aim.

EMMA

Your son!

LEE

Emma...

EMMA

Hush, Lee, I'm defending you.

(to Mum)

Chris is on the run from his own family, and the associated fortune that he inexplicably turned his back on, just to be here. We had a private eye come after him and everything. But he stayed.

(counting off on fingers)

Claire managed to leave the hell hole of South Africa that her family moved to behind for a fresh start out here. Has it been difficult? Of course. She's been accused of flashing and endured a very strange on/off romance with a teacher that left her pretty broken hearted. But she stayed.

CLAIRE

That's not -

EMMA

Zip it!

(beat)

Waylon... well, he was a fat pig and we kicked him out, but before that Lee was the one trying to make sure he settled in with the rest of us. See, it's never about him, it's always about us. That's probably why he's losing his hair so quickly.

LEE

I am not -

EMMA

Ian? He just got accepted into a prestigious screenwriting course at UCLA. And he wouldn't even have managed that if Lee hadn't faked an acceptance letter for him.

LEE

(eyes bulge)

How did you -

EMMA

Oh, of course I knew. Chris tells me everything, on pain of death.

(back to Mum)

In fact, that's something else. Thanks to the six of us getting together out here, I've met a boy I love. Chris.

MUM

Which one was he?

CLAIRE

The one who didn't look like he'd been let out on day release.

EMMA

Chris makes every single day I'm out here a little bit better than the last, and once again, we'd never even have met if it wasn't for your son.

Emma marches over to Lee, grabbing him by the shoulders and hauling him to his feet.

EMMA (cont'd)

I know he doesn't look like much. God only knows that.

LEE

Oi!

EMMA

But he's got it where it counts.

She pats a hand over his heart.

EMMA (cont'd)

(to Mum)

Five seconds in a room with you and I can see where he got it from.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

EMMA (cont'd)

He won't let us give up because  
this is what he believes in.

MUM

Are you saying... are you implying  
we don't believe in him?

EMMA

No, I'm saying you believe in  
knowing your son is safe and happy,  
and at the moment you don't think  
that which is why you've come out  
here to talk him into coming back  
home.

Emma marches up to Mum once more.

EMMA (cont'd)

He's happy. He's safe. He's  
staying.

Mum holds Emma's gaze for a beat, then looks past her to her  
son.

MUM

Lee?

LEE

You heard the girl. They need me  
out here just as much as I need  
them. Unfortunately.

MUM

And... and you're sure about this?  
This is... you're happy?

LEE

In an odd kind of way, yes. I am.

Dad steps up, taking Mum by the shoulders. He boasts a proud  
smile.

DAD

Good for you, son. Sandra, let's  
head for the hotel.

LEE

(face falls)  
Hotel?

DAD

We're staying in town for a few  
days. I thought I'd show your  
mother round a few places, you  
know. Drop by for a longer visit.

LEE

Um... that'd be... great?

DAD

And now, I think your mother would like another cup of tea.

MUM

(subdued)

Yes...

DAD

Come on, then.

He heads off to the kitchen, leading Mum after him. The others exchange bemused looks - until the door opens.

It's Chris, proudly holding the same bumper sticker Claire tried to hide earlier.

CHRIS

Hey, are they still here? I found an awesome present.

LEE

Where's Ian?

CHRIS

(beat; innocent)

Who?

Lee can only EXHALE loudly as we DISSOLVE TO:

Chris and Ian are standing behind the curtain, both with a guitar in hand. Ian looks like he's about to have a stroke.

Chris takes a quick peek outside, scanning the crowd waiting beyond.

IAN

How many?

CHRIS

All of them, I think.

IAN

What the hell are we supposed to do?

CHRIS

Can you play the guitar at all?

IAN

Yeah, but I don't know any of this  
guy's songs!

CHRIS

It's alright. We'll just start off  
with a cover.

PROMOTER (O.S.)

Ladies and gentlemen, Chris  
Daughtry!

IAN

What song?!?

CHRIS

I don't know. Surprise me.

Ian takes a deep breath as the curtain starts to go up. And without thinking, he plays the first song that comes into his mind: "Kiss From a Rose" by Seal.

The crowd is silent, but Ian plays on into the first verse. When the lyrics aren't accompanying the music, he looks over to Chris.

BUT HE'S GONE! Ian stops playing, looks out to the crowd of thousands.

IAN

(to himself)

I really hate that bastard.

Ian smiles nervously to the crowd, and then BOLTS OFFSTAGE. He pushes his way through the crowd and jumps the security fence like a world class hurdler.

He quickly disappears into the sea of people along the sidewalks, leaving a wake behind him.

IAN (cont'd)

I'm quite proud of this one. It's  
called 'Idle.'

(clears throat; beat)

Idle is the r2d2, who ingots and  
imagines a puddle. Idle is the la-  
la, who bothers a snuggling  
fuzzlewug. Idle is the rat-a-tat,  
he adults a boar dumb stuffer.

(beat)

Noodle stew.

Ian takes a mock bow. To no applause.

He keeps up his proud smile as we PULL BACK, into:

25 INT. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

25

Watching Ian's 'performance' on a news broadcast on TV.

NEWSREADER

(filtered; through TV)

And there were scenes of an entirely different sort of 'entertainment' this afternoon, as a Chris Daughtry impersonator managed to gatecrash a charity concert and horrify thousands of eager fans hoping to catch a glimpse of their idol.

ON SCREEN, Ian attempts to start another song, but is viciously TACKLED by half a dozen burly SECURITY GUARDS.

ON SCENE as Ian, heavily bruised and bandaged, turns to Chris, who just shrugs from his position on the couch, reclining with Emma.

CHRIS

Don't look at me, dude. I told you the limericks were a bad idea.

IAN

I hate you.

LEE

And that's the love I'm talking about.

He looks round at his motley crew - meeting Claire's gaze along the way. They share a smile, until:

IAN

You didn't even show your face out there, you duplicitous bastard!

CHRIS

And now, the legend of Daughtry goes up another few points. All thanks to me.

EMMA

I wonder what the real Chris Daughtry thinks about all this?

CUT TO:

26 INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

26

Where, sure enough, CHRIS DAUGHTRY is pacing around, talking on his cell phone. He seems rather flustered.

(CONTINUED)

DAUGHTRY

I'm telling you, I had nothing to do with it! Why the hell would I put my name behind some two-bit practical joker, who...

He trails off, the TV catching his attention.

DAUGHTRY (cont'd)

(into phone)

Hang on.

He heads closer - the TV is showing the same news report as before.

NEWSREADER

(filtered; through TV)

Let's just hope that Daughtry's own national tour, which kicks off next month, doesn't plan on having this guy as the support act.

NEWSREADER #2

Maybe he'd be able to tell us what 'spam' is?

They LAUGH jovially. Daughtry's grip tightens on his phone, his face twisting into a snarl.

DAUGHTRY

(into phone)

Find me that little bastard... now.

He disconnects the call, glaring murderously at the scene - which PUSHES IN on Ian mid-scuffle with the guards before we:

**BLACK OUT:**

**END OF SHOW**