SOBER COMPANION

"PILOT"

written by

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AND

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FADE IN:

TIGHT ON: ROBERT LANG, EARLY THIRTIES, HANDSOME, CHARISMATIC, A YOUNG ROBERT DOWNEY JR. HE'S IN AN EXPANSIVE, CONFESSIONAL MOOD. WE ARE NOT SURE WHERE HE IS OR WHO HE'S TALKING TO.

ROBERT

...And look, my ex-wife wasn't perfect either. Soon as we had the baby she changed-- it's like they tossed her sense of humor out with the placenta. Suddenly our marriage became a job. A job with long hours and no benefits, if you know what I mean. And we used to be connected. (EMOTIONAL) I mean, we wouldn't just have sex, we would actually make love. Which I know is an embarrassing thing to say--

MAN (O.C.)

That's what you think is embarrassing, Counselor?

INT. COURTROOM -- DAY

WIDEN TO REVEAL THAT ROBERT, A LAWYER, IS CURRENTLY STANDING IN A COURTROOM BEFORE A JUDGE. HIS CLIENT, MRS. WORTHINGTON, WEALTHY, CONSERVATIVE, LATE 50'S IS SITTING, LOOKING AT HIM IN DISBELIEF.

MRS. WORTHINGTON

That's your opening statement?

JUDGE

Mr. Lang, can you approach the bench?

ROBERT

(GAMELY) I can try.

ROBERT STARTS TOWARD THE BENCH. AS HE WALKS, IT BECOMES IMMEDIATELY CLEAR -- HE IS QUITE DRUNK. ROBERT TAKES ANOTHER STEP THEN STUMBLES AND AS HE STARTS TO FALL ON HIS FACE, WE FREEZE FRAME, MID-FALL: ON SCREEN --

DAYS SOBER: 0

MAIN TITLES:

INT. ELEVATOR - THE NEXT MORNING

ROBERT, HUNG OVER AND USING HIS BRIEFCASE AS A PILLOW, LEANS AGAINST THE ELEVATOR WALL. AS THE DOORS ARE ABOUT TO CLOSE, A VOICE CALLS --

JEREMY (O.C.)

Hold the elevator!

ROBERT IMMEDIATELY PRESSES THE BUTTON: "CLOSE, CLOSE, CLOSE" BUT JEREMY BRUMMEL (LATE TWENTIES, A LITTLE OVERWEIGHT, PERENNIALLY UPBEAT -- A YOUNG ZACH GALIFIANAKIS) MAKES IT JUST IN TIME.

JEREMY (CONT'D)

Thanks, buddy. First day of work,

don't want to be late. Eighteen

please--

ROBERT INDICATES THE BUTTON IS ALREADY PRESSED. JEREMY SMILES. THEN, HE MOVES IN -- A LITTLE TOO CLOSE --

JEREMY (CONT'D)

Hey, do you have a breath mint?

ROBERT

(BACKING UP) No, but I certainly

support your quest for one.

JEREMY

(RE: HEARTBURN) Yeah, that smoked

salmon is swimming upstream right

about now.

(MORE)

JEREMY (CONT'D)

(DIGS IN LARGE SATCHEL) I must have a

mint in here somewhere -- Aha!

JEREMY PULLS SOMETHING OUT OF HIS SATCHEL. HE'S ABOUT TO PUT IT IN HIS MOUTH, WHEN --

JEREMY (CONT'D)

Oh, wait. That's not a breath mint,

that's a thumbtack. Wow. Good thing I

didn't pop that in my mouth --

SUDDENLY, THE ELEVATOR LURCHES TO A STOP AND JEREMY IS JOLTED FORWARD INTO ROBERT, PLUNGING THE THUMBTACK INTO HIS BACK.

ROBERT

Ahhhhhh!

JEREMY

Oh my god, I'm sorry, I'm

sorry, I'm sorry --

HE TRIES TO HELP HIM, ROBERT'S GRABBING HIS BACK, IN SHOCK --

ROBERT

You <u>stabbed</u> me!

JEREMY

It lurched, let me pull it out --

ROBERT

No, no, get off of me --

HE PUSHES HIM OFF AND JEREMY'S SATCHEL DROPS; THUMBTACKS SPILL EVERYWHERE--

JEREMY

Damn it -- Shoot -- the box must have

opened --

MEANWHILE, ROBERT PULLS THE THUMBTACK OUT OF HIS BACK.

ROBERT

Ow!

THE DOORS OPEN. JEREMY'S ON HIS HANDS AND KNEES PICKING UP HIS THUMBTACKS.

JEREMY

Hey! (GRINS) Found a breath mint.

HE POPS IT IN HIS MOUTH, ROBERT GLARES, WALKING OUT...

INT. LANG AND SON LAW FIRM - BULLPEN -- CONTINUOUS

A LARGE BULLPEN WHERE A FEW LEGAL ASSISTANTS ARE STATIONED. OFFICES BRANCH OUT BEHIND THEM. THERE'S A KITCHENETTE IN THE CORNER.

ROBERT APPROACHES HIS ASSISTANT DEREK. DEREK SEEMS MORE LIKE YOUR FRIENDLY NEIGHBORHOOD POT DEALER THAN A LEGAL ASSISTANT, BECAUSE, WELL, HE IS. WHEN HE SEES ROBERT HE IMMEDIATELY POURS A CAN OF TOMATO JUICE INTO A GLASS, CRACKS AN EGG INTO IT AND HANDS IT TO HIM.

DEREK

Dude, your dad is pissed. This

morning, he was all "Raahhh" and I was

all "Whoaa" and he was like

"Roberrrt!" and I was all "Whaat?"

ROBERT

You've been here so long that totally

made sense to me. (THEN) Set me a

meeting at 420, okay buddy?

DEREK SALUTES -- YES SIR -- AS ROBERT ENTERS HIS OFFICE...

INT. ROBERT'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

AND IS SURPRISED AND DISMAYED TO FIND HIS FATHER, STEVEN LANG, FIFTIES, BLOWHARD, QUICK TO ANGER, WAITING FOR HIM.

DEREK O.C.

Oh, and your dad's in your office!

ROBERT REACTS AS STEVEN LAUNCHES IN--

STEVEN

Four divorces I've handled for Mrs. Worthington. All without incident, all highly profitable--

ROBERT

Dad, I get it, I screwed up yesterday. But I bring in more business for this firm than anybody -- --

STEVEN

Not once did I face plant in court--

ROBERT

Yeah, about the drinking --I'm gonna slow down--

STEVEN

--you're gonna stop.

ROBERT

--You didn't let me finish. I'm gonna slow down... to a stop.

STEVEN

The judge wanted to throw you in jail. Much as that would delight me, it would also embarrass this firm--

ROBERT

Agreed. So what'd you work out? A fine? A round of community service? Do I have to adopt a highway?

STEVEN

You've been assigned a sober companion for the next ninety days.

ROBERT

What? Like a babysitter? (MAKING LIGHT) Fine, I'd like to request Mandy Ellis. She always let me stay up an extra half hour and never wore a bra.

JEREMY (O.C.)

Well, I'm not Mandy Ellis, but if it makes you feel better, I don't wear a bra either.

ROBERT TURNS TO FIND -- JEREMY. HE REACTS --

ROBERT

What are you doing here?

JEREMY

I'm your sober companion. And listen, I'm sorry again, about earlier --

ROBERT

No way. (TO DAD) Dad, not this guy --

JEREMY

Hey, "this guy" graduated top of his class at a partially accredited University--

ROBERT

(TO HIS DAD) He stabbed me with a thumb tack!

JEREMY

That did happen, yes. The elevator lurched and I -- (MAKES THE GESTURE).

STEVEN LOOKS AT HIM. THEN BACK TO HIS SON.

STEVEN

You're whining about a thumbtack? Let me tell you a story about a young man.

ROBERT REACTS, KNOWS WHAT'S COMING.

ROBERT JEREMY

I don't need to hear a story. I would love to hear a story!

STEVEN (CONT'D)

A young man who came to this country with nothing. A young man who put himself through school working the circular cold saw at the Simmons Industrial Factory. A young man who lost his concentration for a split second and -- (CHAIN SAW SOUND) ZZZZZ. Sawed right through his pinkie. And today, do you think he cries about his poor missing finger or do you think he's the reigning racquetball champion at the Lower Womack country club --

STEVEN HOLDS UP HIS RIGHT HAND, REVEALING FOUR LONG FINGERS AND A STUMP WHERE HIS PINKY USED TO BE.

STEVEN (CONT'D)

Five years in a row.

JEREMY

Two questions. Do you still have the pinkie? And can I see it?

STEVEN

I do and you can't. (TO ROBERT) Screw up again, you're fired.

AND WITH THAT, HE HEADS OUT. JEREMY TURNS TO ROBERT.

JEREMY

What do you say we start over? Hi, I'm Jeremy. And I'm a recovering addict myself, so I know what you're going through, buddy. My addiction took over and I did some really ugly things, things I'm not proud of--

ROBERT

That explains the haircut. Look, I don't need a sober companion --

JEREMY

Well, the fifth district court of Chicago thinks you do. (THEN UPBEAT) So I have a little paperwork for you to fill out--

HE GIVES HIM A HUGE STACK OF PAPERS.

ROBERT

What the hell is all this?

JEREMY

It's the standard intake form for a psychological evaluation, with a few extra questions based on the work of Carl Jung. (THEN ADMITTING) With a dash of eharmony, they're really thorough over there.

ROBERT

I'll save you some time-- you're not my type.

JEREMY

(GOOD-HUMORED) Tell you what-- I'll fill it in as I get to know you. So let's talk about your relationship with your dad. I'm guessing it wasn't always a walk in the park with Sergeant Pinkie over there--

FLASHBACK TO-- WE ARE TIGHT ON A MUCH YOUNGER STEVEN. HE IS, AS USUAL, PONTIFICATING.

YOUNGER STEVEN

But hey, if you want to spend your life mired in mediocrity and face the twin curses of poor discipline and declining expectations, by all means, go right ahead.

REVEAL-- HE IS TALKING TO A SIX YEAR OLD ROBERT, WHO STANDS IN THE SUPERMARKET AISLE HOLDING A BOX OF CEREAL.

6 YEAR OLD ROBERT

So, that's a "no" on the Lucky Charms?

BACK TO SCENE.

ROBERT

I'm not talking to you about my relationship with my dad.

JEREMY

Say no more. I get it. You don't walk up to a rape victim and say tell me about that time you got raped --

ROBERT

(WHAT?) My dad did not rape me--

JEREMY

Gotcha. (FILLS IN FORM) Question number 42 is a no. (THEN, RE PICTURE) Aw, who's the little girl?

HE HOLDS UP A FRAMED PHOTO OF ROBERT AND AN ADORABLE NINE YEAR-OLD GIRL.

ROBERT

My Nana. Who do you think it is?

JEREMY

I think it's your daughter who you recently lost overnight custody visits with because of your erratic behavior. But that's just a guess.

ROBERT

I have to work now.

JEREMY

(EQUALLY INTENSE) So do I. (THEN)

Let's start with an exercise I call

touching and talking.

BEFORE ROBERT CAN RESPOND, HIS SISTER, ALEX, ENTERS. ALEX (LATE 20'S) IS A PRETTY, COMPETITIVE, TIGHTLY-WOUND WORKAHOLIC. SHE IS CONSTANTLY PUFFING ON AN ELECTRONIC CIGARETTE.

ALEX

Just got off the phone with Phillips,

I told him if he doesn't settle today,

we're gonna sue him, his father, and

we'd dig up his grandpa and sue him

too. (HOLDS OUT HAND) You must be

Jeremy, I'm Alex, Robert's younger,

smarter, less intoxicated sister.

ROBERT

She's a little off putting at first,

but trust me, once you get to know

her, you'll really learn to hate her.

ALEX

(IGNORES HIM, TO JEREMY) So, any

breakthroughs yet? Did he tell you he

sucked his thumb til he was eleven?

JEREMY

Early addictive behavior, good to

know. (TO ROBERT) Your sister has

been so great in setting this all up --

ROBERT

She set it up. Of course. (TO JEREMY) I actually need to speak to the succubus in private. About a case. (GUIDES HIM OUT) Confidential--

JEREMY

No problem. If you need me, I'll be right out there. And also, (TAPS ROBERT'S CHEST) right in here.

AS HE HEADS OUT, ALEX CALLS --

ALEX

Keep up the great work, Jeremy!

JEREMY

It's not work when you love what you do--

ROBERT CLOSES THE DOOR IN HIS FACE. THEN, HE TURNS TO ALEX.

ROBERT

Congratulations. You found me the most annoying sober companion on the planet.

ALEX

(PROUD) Yeah, that's what his Yelp review said.

ROBERT

Okay, good job, very funny. (THEN, SERIOUSLY) So how do I get rid of him?

ALEX

You can't. He's already been court approved. (OFF ROBERT) Oh come on. You do drink too much. This guy apparently gets results. And as a bonus he'll slowly drive you insane in the process. (BIG SMILE) Win-win.

OFF ROBERT, STUCK...

INT. ROBERT'S OFFICE -- END OF THE DAY

JEREMY NOW HAS HIS OWN LITTLE DESK FACING ROBERT'S. HIS WORKSPACE IS DECORATED LIKE HE'S BEEN THERE FOR YEARS. LOTS OF PERSONAL AFFECTS THUMB TACKED TO THE WALLS AND LOTS OF NERD PARAPHERNALIA -- SUPERHERO BOBBLEHEADS AND STAR WARS/TREK ACTION FIGURES ON HIS DESK. ROBERT IS MAKING NOTES ON A LEGAL DOCUMENT, AS JEREMY READS EMPLOYEE QUESTIONNAIRES.

JEREMY

Wow, judging by these employee questionnaires you are definitely a controversial character around here --

DEREK ENTERS WITH HIS QUESTIONNAIRE. HE HANDS IT TO JEREMY.

DEREK

Okay, finished mine. Couldn't get through the essay though. It was just "Bhaaaa" and I was all "Mhrrrr" so I just had to "Ftttth". (THEN TO ROBERT) B.T.Dubs, your 4:20 meeting is in my desk, rolled and ready to go.

DEREK EXITS. AS JEREMY CONTINUES TO REVIEW QUESTIONAIRES:

JEREMY

It’s not, I already flushed it down the toilet. (THEN, RE: PAPERS) Huh. See, I don’t see you as the cold, arrogant attorney who thinks he’s too good to participate in Secret Santa or chip in for Marnie’s hip replacement. (TO ROBERT, DEEP STUFF) I see a little boy whose workaholic dad never made time for him.

ROBERT

First of all, Marnie’s “hip replacement” was liposuction--

DEREK (O.C.)

(”WHOA”) Shut up!

ROBERT

-- And my childhood was fine.

JEREMY

Come on, Robert. Your sister told me how every day you’d come home from school and take out your little glove and put on your little Ryne Sandberg jersey and beg your dad to play catch (GETS EMOTIONAL) but he was always too busy.

ROBERT

Are you crying?

JEREMY

I'm in touch with my feelings. When you cut me I bleed, when you hurt me I cry. When you hug me, I feel better --

JEREMY OPENS HIS ARMS FOR A HUG. BEAT, THEN --

ROBERT

And apparently when you talk a lot, you sweat. So why don't you put those arms down. (THEN) So listen, I'm gonna call it a day --

JEREMY

Oh, okay, let me just get my things --

ROBERT

You don't have to walk me out --

JEREMY

Walk you out? I'm coming home with you. This is a 24/7 operation.

ROBERT REACTS. WTF? THEN:

ROBERT

Absolutely not. No way. That is where I draw the line --

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. ROBERT'S CHICAGO APARTMENT

AN UPSCALE APARTMENT WITH AN OPEN FLOOR PLAN AND GREAT VIEWS OVER CHICAGO. UNEXPECTED, BUT TASTEFUL JAPANESE INFUSIONS HERE AND THERE. ROBERT ENTERS, JEREMY (CARRYING HIS SUITCASE, HIS SATCHEL, AND HIS INTAKE FORM) FOLLOWS. HE TAKES IN THE APARTMENT AS HE PUTS DOWN HIS BAG --

JEREMY

Nice digs. When did you move in here?

ROBERT

You know what? After that forty-eight point plan we went over in the car, I'm tired of talking.

JEREMY

No problem. Just nod if I get close -- (RAPIDLY) one year ago, two years ago, three years ago --

ROBERT

(MAKE IT STOP) Five years ago. I moved in here five years ago, with my second wife.

JEREMY

(RE: INTAKE FORMS) Ah yes, Kamiko. Your sister said you met on a trip?

<u>INT. AIRPLANE -- FOUR YEARS AGO -- FLASHBACK</u>

ROBERT SITS IN AN AIRPLANE IN FIRST CLASS AS A PRETTY JAPANESE STEWARDESS SERVES HIM DRINK AFTER DRINK. THIS IS <u>KAMIKO</u>. ROBERT'S CLEARLY LOADED.

<u>INT. KARAOKE BAR IN JAPAN</u>

THE PLACE IS INCREDIBLY LOUD. ROBERT RAISES HIS VOICE, SHOUTING AT KAMIKO:

ROBERT

You really get me! We have so much in common! Will you marry me?!

KAMIKO STARES AT ROBERT WITH A BLANK EXPRESSION. <u>WIDEN TO REVEAL</u>: A TRANSLATOR WHO REPEATS THIS IN JAPANESE.

KAMIKO

Yes.

TRANSLATOR

(SUBTITLED JAPANESE) Are you sure?

INT. ROBERT'S APARTMENT -- LIVING ROOM -- THE PRESENT

ROBERT

Why don't you ask Kamiko when she comes home. (OFF JEREMY, EXPLAINS) She's crashing here for a while. So listen, I have work to do. So don't make yourself at home, don't help yourself to whatever's in the fridge, and don't tell me if you need anything.

HE LEANS BACK, MAKING A POINT OF READING HIS BRIEF--

JEREMY

No problemo. But just a heads up, we have to order dinner in fifteen --

AS ROBERT WORKS, JEREMY STARTS OPENING CABINETS, THE FRIDGE, ETC, THROWING OUT ALCOHOL. AS HE DOES THIS:

ROBERT

I'm not hungry. What are you doing?

JEREMY

Dumping the booze. And you have to provide me with food every four hours. It's in my contract. Low blood sugar and I are not friends.

ROBERT

Suddenly I’m jealous of low blood sugar.

JEREMY

(IGNORES THE JAB) So you and your sister seem to have an interesting relationship. Any issues growing up? You ever see her naked? You know, she’s coming out of the shower, the door’s ajar, you catch a glimpse of side boob --

ROBERT

You know what? Let’s get a jump on that dinner order. Thai food work?

ROBERT WALKS OVER TO HIS DESK WITH THE COMPUTER, TAKES OUT A MENU AND HANDS IT TO JEREMY.

JEREMY

Love Thai! Let’s get two things and share.

ROBERT

(AS HE DIALS) No thank you --

JEREMY

But you don’t even know what I want, how do you know you don’t want to share?

ROBERT

I know. (INTO PHONE) Hi. Yes, can I get an order of pad thai --

JEREMY

(SEE?!) That's what I was gonna get!

ROBERT

So get it --

JEREMY

No, I'll just do bites of yours. (RE: MENU) Let's see, what do I want, what do I want --

ROBERT

(INTO PHONE) Yes I'm here, sorry. (TO JEREMY) Hurry up --

JEREMY

I'm sorry, I'm sorry, you threw me off with the whole pad thai thing -- okay, um, um, ummmmm...

ROBERT

(INTO PHONE) No, don't put me on hold--

JEREMY

(TRIUMPHANT) Cashew chicken.

ROBERT

(BOILING) It's too late. I'm on hold.

ROBERT OPENS HIS FACEBOOK, WAITING FOR THE MAN TO RETURN TO THE LINE. A BING! FRIEND REQUEST. IT'S JEREMY. ROBERT LOOKS OVER TO HIM, JEREMY'S TYPING ON HIS PHONE, GIVES ROBERT A LITTLE WAVE. ROBERT HITS IGNORE. SUDDENLY, ROBERT SEES SOMETHING, HIS FACE CHANGES --

ROBERT (CONT'D)

(RE: COMPUTER) What the hell?

JEREMY LOOKS OVER AS ROBERT REACTS, UPSET --

JEREMY

(AN OPPORTUNITY!) What's going on,

tell me, let's talk about it --

ROBERT IGNORES HIM AS HE PULLS ON HIS JACKET AND HEADS OUT THE FRONT DOOR. JEREMY FOLLOWS HIM:

JEREMY (CONT'D)

Okay, we'll talk in the car then, no

problem.

EXT. CATE'S HOUSE -- 20 MINUTES LATER

A SWEET SUBURBAN HOUSE, WHITE PICKET FENCE AND ALL. ROBERT IS WALKING UP TO THE FRONT DOOR, JEREMY IN TOW:

JEREMY

I just think, before you do this, we

should do a little deep breathing,

maybe some positive visualizations --

THEY ARRIVE AT THE FRONT DOOR. ROBERT KNOCKS ANGRILY.

ROBERT

Great idea. (DEEP BREATH) Okay, I'm

visualizing you back in the car.

JEREMY

No way. I'm not letting you out of my

sight. Ex-wives are a huge trigger.

CATE OPENS THE DOOR, BLOCKING JEREMY BEHIND THE DOOR. PREPPY, PRETTY, PUT-TOGETHER, CATE. ROBERT'S FIRST EX-WIFE. THESE TWO TALK FAST AND FIGHT FASTER.

CATE

You have days, court ordered days -- --

ROBERT

And the court of human decency holds that you invite me to my own daughter's birthday party!

CATE

You expect an invitation after what happened last year?

FLASHBACK TO: A BEAUTY AND THE BEAST THEMED KIDS PARTY. ROBERT IS DRUNK AND GRINDING ON A COSTUMED WOMAN DRESSED AS BELLE AS KIDS LOOK ON DISTURBED.

ROBERT

Look out Beauty, here comes the Beast!

BACK TO SCENE. JEREMY STEPS OUT FROM BEHIND THE DOOR:

JEREMY

I'm more of a Little Mermaid man myself. That moment when she emerges from the water in her clam shells, we see a little cartoon side boob --

CATE LOOKS AT HIM AS --

ROBERT

What is it with you and side boob?

CATE

(TO JEREMY) Who the hell are you?

JEREMY

I'm Jeremy, Robert's sober companion. We spoke on the phone for like three hours last night?

CATE

Oh, right. Of course.

JEREMY HOLDS OUT HIS ARMS FOR A HUG --

ROBERT

She doesn't want to hug you --

BUT THEY ARE ALREADY HUGGING. JEREMY TO CATE:

JEREMY

Oh and everything you said? Spot on.

CATE

Right?

JEREMY

How'd you last 7 years? It's been 7 hours and I want to kill him --

ROBERT

(INCREDULOUS) <u>You</u> want to kill <u>me?</u>

CATE

There's that defensiveness --

JEREMY

Classic Robert.

ROBERT

Look, you had no right to contact Cate--

CATE

Robert, it's okay. This is a good thing.

A BEAT. THIS CLEARLY MEANS SOMETHING TO ROBERT. DESPITE EVERYTHING, WE CAN SEE HE STILL HOLDS A TORCH FOR CATE. BUT BEFORE HE CAN RESPOND, WE HEAR A GIRL'S VOICE:

JOANJETT

Dad, Dad-- you want pie?

MEET ROBERT AND CATE'S DAUGHTER - JOANJETT. AT 9 YEARS OLD, JOANJETT IS WEIRD AND NERDY. HER CHARM LIES IN THE FACT THAT SHE DOESN'T CARE THAT SHE'S WEIRD AND NERDY.

ROBERT

Uh, sure. I'll have some pie.

JOANJETT

(FAST) 3.14159265358979. Get it? It's the number pi! We're working on jokes in my social skills class. That might be one I'd tell in order to make humorous connections with my peers.

(THEN, TO JEREMY) Who are you?

CATE

(JUMPS IN) A friend of your father's --

A DEEPLY-ACCENTED, DEEPLY-MOCKING, AUSTRIAN VOICE:

SERGEI (O.S.)

You made a friend, Robert?

MEET SERGEI. CATE'S INCREDIBLY HANDSOME, INCREDIBLY FIT, INCREDIBLY MASCULINE, BALLET TEACHER BOYFRIEND. THINK THOR MEETS BARYSHNIKOV. ROBERT HATES HIM. THE FEELING IS MUTUAL. ROBERT BARELY CONTAINS HIS DISGUST --

ROBERT

Hello Sergei --

SERGEI APPROACHES THE DOOR IN HIS TANK TOP AND DANCE PANTS, WHICH ACCENTUATE HIS GIANT PACKAGE --

SERGEI

I wish you'd come earlier, Robert.

You could have joined in the ballet

lesson I did for the little girls--

ROBERT

(TO JEREMY) This is Sergei, my ex

wife's future ex-boyfriend --

SERGEI

(CAT/CANARY) Actually, I'm her fiance--

HE HOLDS UP CATE'S HAND, SHOWING OFF A BIG DIAMOND RING.

ROBERT CATE

What? (ANNOYED) Sergei!

THIS NEWS HITS ROBERT LIKE A TON OF BRICKS. SERGEI GIVES ROBERT A SHIT-EATING GRIN. JOANJETT (OBLIVIOUS TO THE GROWN UP DYNAMICS) HOLDS OUT HER HAND. SHE TOO HAS A DIAMOND RING.

JOANJETT

Look Daddy, he proposed to us both!

JEREMY

(MOVED) Stop it. That is too sweet.

(SOTTO TO ROBERT) Be cool, we will

process this together.

SERGEI

Hey, when you have the two greatest

ladies in the world, you'd have to be

a drunken idiot to let them go, right?

CATE

Sergei, that's enough. (THEN, TO ROBERT) Look, I wanted to tell you in private --

INDEED, ROBERT IS HURT, BUT HE PLAYS IT OFF --

ROBERT

No, it was great to hear it from giant Tinkerbell. (TO JOANJETT) Listen, I gotta run but I'll skype you later, okay sweetie?

HE BENDS DOWN AND GIVES JOANJETT A HUG.

ROBERT (CONT'D)

Sergei, (RE: CATE) Good luck with the Nutcracker.

WITH THAT HE HEADS TOWARDS THE CAR. JEREMY FOLLOWS.

<u>INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE ROBERT'S APARTMENT -- LATER THAT NIGHT</u>

ROBERT AND JEREMY ARE MID-CONVERSATION AS ROBERT UNLOCKS THE FRONT DOOR:

JEREMY

But if you had to guess--

ROBERT

(SHUT UP) I don't know, four hours --

JEREMY

You think Sergei works out four hours a day?! (THEN, CONSIDERS) I guess he'd have to to get that body.

ROBERT OPENS THE DOOR AND WE ARE IMMEDIATELY ASSAULTED BY LOUD PARTY MUSIC.

INT. ROBERT'S APARTMENT -- CONTINUOUS

THEY ENTER TO FIND: THREE STEWARDESSES (IN VARIOUS STAGES OF DRESS), PUTTING ON MAKEUP, GETTING READY FOR A NIGHT ON THE TOWN. AND THEY ARE ALL DRINKING FROM MINI AIRPLANE BOTTLES OF BOOZE. JEREMY ZEROS IN THIS --

JEREMY

Don't panic, let me handle this...

BUT HE TRAILS OFF BECAUSE KAMIKO EMERGES FROM HER BEDROOM. SHE'S IN HER BRA AND UNDERWEAR. JEREMY'S EYES GO WIDE.

KAMIKO

Oh good, Robbie, you're home. We're celebrating! My disability got extended --

SHE SPOTS HER BLACK DRESS ON THE COUCH, GRABS IT --

KAMIKO (CONT'D)

-- so where's all the booze, honey, we had to bust out the minis.

BEFORE ROBERT CAN ANSWER --

JEREMY

I'm sorry, but there's no more booze around here. I'm Jeremy, Robert's sober companion. The guy who left you eleven messages? (THEN, RE: HER BODY) And you don't look disabled. At all.

KAMIKO

Aw, thanks cutie. I'm fighting through.

SHE STEPS INTO HER DRESS. JEREMY TRIES NOT TO OGLE.

JEREMY

What happened?

KAMIKO

Post-tramatutic stress after an emergency landing in Uraguay. Hit me hard. Had to stop flying. It even led to my divorce --

ROBERT

In that she banged a Uraguayan luggage inspector.

KAMIKO

I was just so glad to be alive.

JEREMY

(NODS, THEN) Well, I'm trying to keep Robert alive. So I'm going to have to confiscate all the liquor --

HE MAKES A MOVE TOWARDS THE BOOZE, BUT KAMIKO STEPS IN FRONT OF HIM. A SWITCH HAS BEEN FLIPPED. SUDDENLY SHE'S MENACING AND SCARY.

KAMIKO

Step back, fat man --

JEREMY

I'm sorry, but if you want to continue to crash in Robert's apartment --

ROBERT CRINGES -- UH-OH. BUT IT'S TOO LATE.

KAMIKO

Robert's apartment? You think this is Robert's apartment?

THEN, LOSING IT, SHE STARTS SCREAMING AT HIM IN JAPANESE. JEREMY LEANS IN TO ROBERT:

JEREMY

(TRYING TO DECIPHER) Hang on, I got this, I watch a lot of anime. (LISTENS, THEN) Something about a noodle...

KAMIKO

I'm saying that this is my apartment, dumbass! I lost it in the divorce!

JEREMY LOOKS AT ROBERT. ROBERT SHRUGS. IT'S TRUE. JEREMY REACTS.

JEREMY

My apologies, Kamiko. I should have known. Addicts are notorious liars. (BACK TO WORK) Okay, this is a really unorthodox situation. It's going to be difficult for Robert to abstain around active drinkers --

KAMIKO

(CALM NOW) He'll be fine, he'll just do coke. Zip me up baby?

SHE TURNS AND JEREMY ZIPS HER SHORT DRESS. HE'S A LITTLE DISTRACTED BY HER SMELL AND HER BEAUTY AND HER SIDE-BOOB, BUT TRIES TO FIGHT THROUGH --

JEREMY

No. No coke. Completely sober.

KAMIKO

Oh. Yeah, then you're in trouble.

JEREMY

Look, there are workarounds. What if I get a little lock box, we stash all your booze in there --

KAMIKO

Isn't that excessive? I mean, you gotta trust him a little.

JEREMY

I wish I could, but I've been to the dark side myself, I know the lengths people will go...

HE TURNS TO SEE ROBERT WHO IS SITTING ON THE COUCH BETWEEN TWO OF THE STEWARDESSES. ROBERT SMILES AT JEREMY. JEREMY'S EYES NARROW. SUDDENLY, HE'S ALL BUSINESS --

JEREMY (CONT'D)

You're smiling. And there were 23 mini-bottles when we entered this apartment, now there are 21.

JEREMY TAKES A LIGHTER OUT OF HIS POCKET. FLICKS IT IN FRONT OF ROBERT'S FACE.

JEREMY (CONT'D)

Breathe.

ROBERT

Don't be ridiculous.

BUT HE CONTINUES TO HOLD THE FLAME. ROBERT HAS NO CHOICE. HE HUFFS, BLOWING OUT, AND BOOM! HE BREATHES A HUGE FIREBALL INTO THE AIR. FREEZE FRAME ON THE FIREBALL. ON SCREEN--

DAYS SOBER: 0

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

EXT. JEREMY'S HOUSE -- LATER THAT NIGHT

A MOSTLY SOBER ROBERT AND JEREMY ARE WALKING UP TO A MODEST SUBURBAN HOME.

ROBERT

You don't live "just outside of Chicago." I smell cows. We were in the car for over an hour.

JEREMY

Which gave you a chance to sober up and gave me a chance to know you better. For instance, I now know that you don't like Radio Disney.

INT. JEREMY'S HOUSE -- MOMENTS LATER

THEY ENTER THE HOUSE. IT'S SOMEWHAT "MATURE" LOOKING. A FLORAL ENTRYWAY. BAD CRAFT SHOW ART. ROBERT DOESN'T KNOW WHAT HE EXPECTED, BUT NOT THIS.

JEREMY

(CALLS OUT) Mom, Dad, I'm home!

ROBERT

You live with your parents?

JEREMY

You bet. (OFF ROBERT) What, we have a great relationship. (CALLS OUT) Hey Dad! Wanna have a catch?!

MAN'S VOICE (O.C.)

Anytime, anywhere, son!

JEREMY LOOKS AT ROBERT, "SEE". JEREMY'S MOM, MARLENE, (50'S, DOTING, UPBEAT), ENTERS. SHE REACTS -- THRILLED -- WHEN SHE SEES ROBERT.

MARLENE

Hi, sweetie. (CALLS) Howie, get down here! Jeremy brought a friend!

JEREMY

Not a friend, a client, Mom.

SHE REACTS DISAPPOINTED AS JEREMY CONTINUES --

JEREMY (CONT'D)

I couldn't properly secure his environment, so I had to bring him back to home base.

MARLENE

Say no more. You two hungry? I just made a bean dip for your father.

ROBERT

I'm fine, thanks.

JEREMY

Yeah we're gonna go to my room. Just send in some sliders, two Cokes and a pickle plate.

MARLENE

You boys have fun. (TO ROBERT) And don't worry, you're in good hands. My son fixed a man who used to put balloons of cocaine up his tushie.

INT. JEREMY'S BASEMENT APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

ROBERT AND JEREMY ENTER THE BASEMENT WHERE JEREMY LIVES. IT'S LARGE AND OPEN AND PACKED WITH THINGS. HUNDREDS OF COMIC BOOKS. BRAND NEW LEATHER JACKETS AND BASEBALL CAPS AND SHOES AND SNOWBOARDS. A HARRY POTTER PINBALL MACHINE.

A LIFE-SIZED STORM TROOPER. A SCALE REPLICA OF THE IRON THRONE FROM GAME OF THRONES. AS THEY ENTER --

JEREMY

So it's a little crowded down here, be careful --

ROBERT

What the hell is all this crap?

JEREMY

Oh, just the fallout from my addiction.

ROBERT LOOKS AT HIM, NOT UNDERSTANDING.

ROBERT

What do you mean? You used to buy stuff when you got wasted?

JEREMY

Oh, I'm not addicted to drugs or alcohol. I'm a shopping addict. With a very strong hoarding component.

ROBERT

Are you joking? You're addicted to shopping?

JEREMY

The medical term is omniomania --

ROBERT

You said you'd been to the dark side! You're not even a real addict!

JEREMY

(DEFENSIVE) Oh, I'm very much a real addict and it got plenty dark. I ran up over three hundred thousand dollars in debt, I stole from my parents, and I was completely out of control.

FLASH TO-- A SERIES OF PHOTOS OF JEREMY LIVING LARGE.

JEREMY IN A FUR COAT -- HE'S A BALLER ROLLING INTO A COMIC BOOK STORE HOLDING A WAD OF CASH, MAKING IT RAIN.

JEREMY -- DRESSED AS AN "UNSULLIED"(FROM GAME OF THRONES), HOLDING TWO BAGS STUFFED WITH SPEARS AND SWORDS AND FLAILS.

JEREMY THROWING DOWN MONEY FOR THE BATMOBILE.

BACK TO SCENE --

JEREMY (CONT'D)

Addiction's addiction. It's all the same thing.

ROBERT

Oh, totally. I almost got disbarred and went to prison and you bought (INDICATING) nine pairs of rollerblades. (THEN) Just tell me where I'm sleeping.

JEREMY

First, skype with your daughter like you said you would. Keeping your word is the only way to rebuild trust.

ROBERT

I'll call her tomorrow, I'm tired, I have a big court appearance in the morning and I can't screw it up--

SSSSSZZZZH. ROBERT TURNS TO THE SOUND. JEREMY IS NOW HOLDING A LARGE LIGHT SABER. HE POINTS IT AT ROBERT.

JEREMY

(YODA VOICE) Skype with your daughter, you must.

ROBERT TRIES TO IGNORE THIS, TAKING OFF HIS SHOES --SSSSZZZH!

JEREMY (CONT'D)

(YODA VOICE) Follow through on your promises or return to the dark side, you will --

ROBERT

Punch you in the throat if you don't stop, I'm going to.

NEVERTHELESS, ROBERT OPENS HIS COMPUTER AND DIALS JOANJETT. AS IT RINGS, JEREMY SETTLES HIMSELF ON HIS IRON THRONE.

ROBERT (CONT'D)

It's not going through.

JEREMY

(AS TYWIN LANNISTER) Patience, my Little Lord. Even a slow internet connection is no threat to the realm.

AND THEN JOANJETT APPEARS ON THE SCREEN. SHE IS SURPRISED TO BE HEARING FROM HER FATHER.

JOANJETT

Hey, Dad! Whoa, where are you?

ROBERT

Hell. How's it going, JJ?

JOANJETT

Did you know that Teddy Roosevelt had five guinea pigs? You know who else had a guinea pig? Albert Einstein. Can I get a guinea pig?

BEFORE ROBERT CAN ANSWER, SERGEI'S GIANT PACKAGE (IN HIS TIGHT DANCE PANTS) APPEARS ON SCREEN BEHIND JOANJETT. ROBERT ROLLS HIS EYES.

SERGEI O.C.

Hey, dinner's ready, kiddo. Time to wash up.

JOANJETT

Be right there.

SERGEI'S PACKAGE EXITS.

JOANJETT (CONT'D)

So, what do you think? I'll be totally responsible, I swear. Please, I want one so bad. I'm gonna name him Potato.

ROBERT

Let me give you some legal advice. Your mom's instinct is gonna be to say no. So don't ask for the guinea pig. Ask for a snake. Or a tarantula. And then compromise on the guinea pig.

JOANJETT

That’s genius! Thanks, Dad.

CATE O.C.

JoanJett! Let’s go!

JOANJETT

Coming! (THEN, TO ROBERT) Oh, and I’m sorry about not inviting you to my birthday party. Mom said I should, but... I don’t know... It was just so embarrassing last year.

OUCH. ROBERT TAKES THIS IN FOR A BEAT. IT WASN’T CATE WHO DIDN’T WANT HIM THERE -- IT WAS HIS DAUGHTER. JEREMY WATCHES BUT REMAINS SILENT.

ROBERT

Oh, no, that’s fine. I get it.

JOANJETT

Okay. Bye, Dad.

JOANJETT CLICKS OFF. ROBERT CLICKS OFF. BRUISED. A BEAT:

JEREMY

You know what always makes me feel better--

JEREMY HOLDS OUT THE LORD OF THE RINGS RING FOR ROBERT.

JEREMY (CONT’D)

When I hold the precious.

<u>INT. JEREMY’S HOUSE - BASEMENT - THEN NEXT MORNING</u>

ROBERT IS PUTTING ON HIS TIE. JEREMY IS BLOW DRYING HIS HAIR. THE PULL-OUT COUCH IS OPEN; THEY HAVE OBVIOUSLY SLEPT IN THE SAME BED.

JEREMY

Sorry about the accidental spooning last night.

ROBERT

It’s not accidental if you ask me first, I say no and then you do it anyway.

MARLENE O.C.

You boys want some breakfast?!

JEREMY

(CALLING) We’re good, Mom! Maybe just a couple Denver omelettes, hash browns and two strawberry smoothies!

ROBERT

Oh no. No, no, no, no!

JEREMY

(LOOKS OVER) Hey, you want a different flavor just scream it out.

ROBERT

I had all these notarized documents and I left them at my apartment--

JEREMY

Kamiko’s apartment -- And this is why you shouldn’t drink.

ROBERT

Dammit. I have a deposition this morning, now I have to stop there first. (OFF WATCH) C'mon, we gotta hustle if we're gonna make it--

ROBERT QUICKLY GATHERS HIS THINGS. JEREMY FOLLOWS SUIT.

JEREMY

(CALLING) We'll need those omelettes walkin', Mom!

INT. CAR - LATER

ROBERT IS BEHIND THE WHEEL. JEREMY SITS NEXT TO HIM EATING HIS OMELETTE. THEY ARE IN HEAVY TRAFFIC; ROBERT IS PANICKED.

ROBERT

I can't believe this traffic. And I can't believe how loud you're chewing.

JEREMY

(MOUTH FULL OF OMELETTE) Do you mind? I have TMJ and I'm a little sensitive about it.

ROBERT

(LAYS ON HORN) Come on! Move, move, move! (OFF HIS PHONE, ANXIOUS) Where's Derek? Why isn't he calling?

JEREMY

I bet it's times like these you're glad you hired the most qualified applicant and not just some dude who can score good weed.

(MORE)

JEREMY (CONT'D)

(THEN, CHECKING) Who doesn't keep Tabasco in the glove box?

THE PHONE RINGS. DEREK. ROBERT ANSWERS; IT GOES TO BLUETOOTH.

ROBERT

Derek, talk to me. Tell me you have the documents from my apartment.

DEREK (O.C.)

Got 'em, boss. Driving 'em back to the office.

ROBERT REACTS RELIEVED, AS --

JEREMY

(TO ROBERT) Take the next left.

DEREK (O.C.)

Going left, roger that.

ROBERT

No, not you Derek.

JEREMY

(TO ROBERT) Left, go left--

DEREK (O.C.)

Alright, going left again --

ROBERT

No, stop!

DEREK (O.C.)

Oh yeah, I don't want to get on this ferry.

ROBERT

(PANICKED) Derek, do not get on the ferry!

DEREK (O.C.)

(EQUALLY PANICKED) It's too late, I'm on the ferry!

SFX: FERRY HORN.

ROBERT

Derek, I'm hanging up the phone. I don't care how you do it, but get off that ferry and meet me at the office with those papers.

WITH THAT, HE HANGS UP THE PHONE AS --

JEREMY

We're goin' like four miles an hour. Look, I got Google maps right here and Kinzie is wide open all the way downtown.

ROBERT

Alright, I'm goin' for it.

ROBERT TURNS THE WHEEL HARD, GETS INTO THE LEFT HAND TURN LANE AND MAKES A SHARP LEFT.

ROBERT (CONT'D)

Noooo!

THEY HAVE TURNED DOWN A STREET WHICH IS PACKED WITH TRAFFIC. NO CARS ARE MOVING AND THERE'S NO WAY OUT.

JEREMY

(RE: PHONE) Oh, my bad. That's Curson not Kinzie. Yeah, Kinzie is totally jammed.

INT. ROBERT'S OFFICE -- BULLPEN

ROBERT AND JEREMY ENTER TO FIND ALEX CLOSING UP THE CONFERENCE ROOM. SHE LOOKS AT HER BROTHER, DISAPPOINTED.

ROBERT

Did I miss the deposition? (OFF HER NOD, REACTS) Dad's gonna kill me.

STEVEN (O.C.)

No, I'm just going to fire you.

ROBERT TURNS TO FIND STEVEN STANDING BEHIND HIM.

STEVEN (CONT'D)

Effective immediately. Clean out your office.

WITH THAT, HE HEADS OFF, THROUGH THE BULLPEN. ALEX LOOKS AT HER BROTHER. A BEAT, THEN --

ALEX

Huh. This doesn't feel as good as I thought it would. (THEN) Eh, I'm sure it'll kick in later.

ROBERT

C'mon. Can you try to talk to him?

ALEX

(A BEAT, THEN RELUCTANTLY) Fine.

STEVEN

(STILL WALKING) Forget it, Alex.

ALEX

(SHRUGS) I tried.

AND WITH THAT, SHE FOLLOWS HER DAD OUT. ROBERT IS REELING. HE HEADS INTO HIS OFFICE. JEREMY FOLLOWS --

INT. ROBERT'S OFFICE -- CONTINUOUS

ROBERT STARTS ANGRILY PACKING UP ITEMS AS --

JEREMY

Okay, Robert I know this feels really bad, but we're going to solve it. The important thing right now is that you are not drinking. We'll work through the feelings, then I'll call an emergency family session, you, your dad, your sister, me -- we'll talk things out--

ROBERT

No, stop. Please. All you do is talk. If you could ever manage to stop talking for five seconds you'd realize that nobody gives a rat's ass about anything you have to say.

JEREMY

It's okay, take your anger at your dad out on me --

ROBERT STOPS PACKING, LOOKS AT JEREMY -- FURIOUS.

ROBERT

No. This is not dad anger. This is Jeremy anger. Specific Jeremy anger.

(MORE)

ROBERT (CONT'D)

Because you are, undeniably, the worst sober companion in the world. In fact, you've got the wrong job, pal. You should be a companion for people who want to drink themselves to death. You could be the planet's number one Drunk Companion. You'd make a fortune!

JEREMY

Look, you're upset, I get it. But you need to look at this as a life lesson--

ROBERT

Why would I take a life lesson from someone who has no life?! (OFF JEREMY, STUNG) Face it. You're just a pathetic Lord of the Thrones loser who still lives at home with his parents. (THEN) Oh, and by the way, since I'm out of a job, you are too. So leave me the hell alone.

JEREMY LOOKS AT HIM FOR A BEAT, HURT, THEN HE TURNS AND HEADS OUT. A BEAT. THEN DEREK RUNS INTO HIS OFFICE, DRIPPING WET. HE'S HOLDING A FILE.

DEREK

Wet but readable! Who's the man?

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. KAMIKO AND ROBERT'S APARTMENT -- LATER THAT DAY

ROBERT ENTERS WITH HIS BOX OF OFFICE ITEMS AND FINDS KAMIKO FINISHING HER INCREDIBLY DIFFICULT YOGA PRACTICE. SHE IS, FRANKLY, THE IMAGE OF HEALTH.

KAMIKO

Hey. Where's your sober buddy?

ROBERT

Ditched him.

KAMIKO

I'll drink to that.

SHE HEADS TO THE KITCHEN AND STARTS TO MAKES A MARTINI.

ROBERT

Make it two.

KAMIKO LOOKS AT HIM. REALLY? HE NODS. KAMIKO SHRUGS. NOT HER BUSINESS.

KAMIKO

So you never told me. How'd your big

divorce case go? With the Worthington

lady?

INT. ROBERT AND KAMIKO'S APARTMENT -- FLASHBACK

IT'S THE MORNING OF OUR OPENING SCENE. ONLY YOU WOULDN'T KNOW IT BY THE DARK APARTMENT. THE SHADES ARE DRAWN. ROBERT, KAMIKO, AND A FEW OF HER STEWARDESS FRIENDS HAVE BEEN DRINKING ALL NIGHT. ROBERT, IN A SUIT, LOOKS AT HIS WATCH --

ROBERT

Wait, is it eight a.m. or p.m.?

KAMIKO IS HALF-PASSED OUT ON A COUCH BY THE WINDOW. SHE PULLS THE SHADE UP. BRIGHT SUNLIGHT POURS IN.

ROBERT (CONT'D)

Oh, crap. Crap! I have to be

downtown in court in ten minutes --

HE IS PANICKED NOW, LOOKS AROUND, GRABS HIS BRIEFCASE, HEADS OUT. KAMIKO WATCHES HIM GO. THEN, SHE NOTICES PAPERS ON THE GROUND. SHE PICKS THEM UP. TO HER FRIEND:

KAMIKO

You think he needs this? It says

"Opening Statement."

BUT THE FRIEND'S TOO TIRED AND TOO WASTED TO CARE. AND SO IS KAMIKO. WHATEVER. SHE SHRUGS, DROPPING THE PAPERS, PULLING THE SHADE, PLUNGING US INTO DARKNESS.

BACK TO SCENE.

KAMIKO PUTS A MARTINI IN FRONT OF ROBERT.

ROBERT

I'm not gonna lie. It didn't go well.

HE PICKS UP THE DRINK -- IT LOOKS PERFECT -- WHEN: HIS PHONE RINGS. KAMIKO AND ROBERT LOOK DOWN, SEE THE CALLER I.D. CATE. ROBERT REACTS, SURPRISED. AS HE REACHES FOR THE PHONE--

KAMIKO

Ooh, say hi to her yummy boyfriend for

me.

ROBERT TAKES HIS DRINK AND HEADS OUT TO THE BALCONY.

ROBERT

(INTO PHONE) What's up, everything

okay with Joanjett?

SPLIT SCREEN: WITH CATE, SITTING ON HER FRONT PORCH.

CATE

Yeah -- she's great. Thrilled because

you called when you said you would.

ON THE BALCONY: THIS LANDS ON ROBERT. HE'S SUDDENLY GRATEFUL THAT JEREMY MADE HIM CALL. HE SITS DOWN AT A SMALL TABLE.

CATE (CONT'D)

She also said you gave her some good advice, which I assume has to do with the fact that I now have a disgusting guinea pig.

ROBERT

(SMILES, THEN) I plead the fifth.

CATE

(BEAT, THEN) Look, I don't think I realized how much she was missing you--

ROBERT

I miss her too.

CATE

I know. (THEN) And I like Jeremy, by the way. I mean, sure he's a little overzealous with the calls and the emails and the snapchats, but he's really invested in you and I looked him up and he's got this incredible success rate and -- I'm proud of you. It seems like you're finally making a change.

ROBERT LOOKS AT HIS DRINK ON THE TABLE. SAYS NOTHING.

CATE (CONT'D)

So anyway, if you and Jeremy aren't doing anything and want to come by on Sunday, I know JoanJett would really like that. (BEAT) And I would too.

ROBERT TAKES THIS IN. IT'S CLEAR THIS MEANS A LOT TO HIM. HE SMILES, THEN--

ROBERT

So, what I'm hearing is... you miss me.

CATE

Bye, Robert.

ROBERT

Did you and the ballerina set a date?

CATE

Hanging up.

ROBERT HANGS UP. HE LOOKS AT THE DRINK IN FRONT OF HIM FOR A MOMENT. THEN, HE GETS UP AND POURS IT OUT OVER THE BALCONY. A BEAT. THEN WE HEAR A MAN'S VOICE, CALLING FROM BELOW...

MAN (O.S.)

What the hell?!

OOPS. ROBERT HURRIES BACK INSIDE.

<u>INT. JEREMY'S BASEMENT APARTMENT -- LATE AFTERNOON</u>

WE FIND A FEW PEOPLE (MOSTLY 20-SOMETHING NERDY MALES) BROWSING THROUGH JEREMY'S THINGS. JEREMY IS STRAIGHTENING HIS FIGURINES WHEN WOLVERINE APPROACHES.

WOLVERINE

I'll take these claws. And the Buffy tea set.

JEREMY

Great. 150 bucks. And I'll throw in a book of Sarah Michelle Gellar stamps.

AS THE MAN PAYS, ROBERT ENTERS THE ROOM. HE LOOKS AROUND, TAKING IN THE SCENE. HE SEES JEREMY, HEADS OVER.

ROBERT

What's going on here?

JEREMY

Well, I'm not sure if you heard, but I lost my job. And since I've worked out a very rigorous payment plan with my creditors, I'm selling off some of the merchandise from my "fake addiction." Now if you'll excuse me, this sale is for paying customers only.

ROBERT

Okay, I'll take this... long cape. (THEN, RE: PRICE TAG) 350 dollars?! Are you out of your mind?!

JEREMY

This is an exact replica of the Cloak of Invisibility that was gifted to Harry Potter by Dumbledore in The Sorcerers Stone. But that only means something to -- what did you call us -- Lord of the Thrones Losers?

WOLVERINE LOOKS OVER AND BEARS HIS SILVER CLAWS. MENACING. ROBERT TO JEREMY --

ROBERT

Look, I'm sorry about that.

Unfortunately, I don't carry that kind

of cash --

JEREMY

We take credit cards, right Mom?

REVEAL: MARLENE. AT A TABLE WITH THE CREDIT CARD MACHINE.

MARLENE

(CHEERFUL) Visa, Mastercard and Amex.

And I also accept Bed, Bath and Beyond

coupons.

A BEAT, ROBERT HAS NO CHOICE -- HE GIVES JEREMY HIS CARD. JEREMY PASSES IT TO HIS MOM.

ROBERT

Look, I'm sorry about what I said. And

I thought maybe we could give it

another try.

JEREMY IGNORES HIM, FOLDING AND BAGGING THE CAPE. ROBERT PUTS A STACK OF PAPERS ON THE TABLE.

ROBERT (CONT'D)

C'mon. I did your intake form. All

one hundred and seventy three pages.

I even did the self-portrait.

UNIMPRESSED, JEREMY PUTS DOWN THE CREDIT CARD RECEIPT. AS ROBERT SIGNS IT, A SOUR FANBOY APPROACHES --

SOUR FANBOY

Dude, the virtual reality game is totally busted, you can't even get through the Jungle of the Phoenix--

JEREMY

That game works perfectly. (OFF FANBOY'S NO) I'll show you. Mom, hold down the fort!

SHE NODS ENTHUSIASTICALLY. JEREMY HANDS ROBERT HIS CAPE.

JEREMY (CONT'D)

Enjoy your purchase.

AND HE HEADS THROUGH THE BASEMENT. ROBERT FOLLOWS -- DODGING MERCHANDISE. JEREMY ENTERS A DOOR THAT LEADS TO...

INT. JEREMY'S HOUSE -- BOILER ROOM

THE BOILER ROOM IS PACKED WITH MERCHANDISE -- INCLUDING A VIRTUAL REALITY GAME. A FEW MORE PEOPLE ARE BROWSING HERE. ROBERT TAKES IT ALL IN.

ROBERT

Wow. I did not see this room. You really did have a problem.

JEREMY

I don't need you to validate my addiction. Now, if you'll excuse me --

JEREMY APPROACHES THE VIRTUAL REALITY GAME -- A MAIN CONSOLE AND TWO PADS TO STAND ON, A SET OF GOGGLES ON EACH PAD. JEREMY TURNS ON THE CONSOLE.

ROBERT

Look, I admit it-- I'm a closed off, cynical, damaged mess --

JEREMY

And you don't want to change. You're not willing to do the work. (TO THE FANBOY) All right, I'm goin' in.

(THEN) Take care, Robert.

AND WITH THAT, HE PUTS ON HIS GOGGLES AND STEPS ON THE VIRTUAL REALITY PAD.

WE POP INTO THE GAME, SEEING WHAT JEREMY SEES. WE SEE HIS AVATAR, RAYGAR (A MUSCULAR WARRIOR IN A LOIN CLOTH). JEREMY/RAYGAR STARTS RUNNING. HE'S IN A JUNGLE ADVENTURE LANDSCAPE. HE PUNCHES THROUGH A ROCK FACE, UNTIL HE UNCOVERS A SHINING GOLDEN SWORD.

HE TAKES THE SWORD AND HEADS TOWARD A GIANT WATERFALL WHEN SUDDENLY A BEAUTIFUL, BUXOM, SCANTILY-CLAD WARRIOR PRINCESS APPEARS UNDER A RAINBOW. HE REACTS.

JEREMY/RAYGAR

Joxsor, is that you? Do you come bearing The Shell of Concubus?

WHEN THE WOMAN SPEAKS, IT'S ROBERT'S VOICE.

ROBERT/JOXSOR

Uh... yes.

POP OUT OF THE GAME. ROBERT, IN GOGGLES, HAS JOINED.

JEREMY/RAYGAR

Get out of here, Robert.

ROBERT/JOXSOR

I'm not Robert. I'm Joxsor. And I have The Shell --

BACK IN THE GAME. ROBERT LOOKS DOWN AT HIS BODY.

ROBERT/JOXSOR (CONT'D)

(SQUEEZING) And giant breasts.

(TRYING TO LURE HIM) Look, side boob --

SUDDENLY SIX GIANT SABER TOOTH BEASTS COME CHARGING AT THEM.

ROBERT/JOXSOR (CONT'D)

What the hell is that?!

JEREMY/RAYGAR

Run!!

ROBERT/JOXSOR

Where are you going? I'm not gonna --

BUT JEREMY/RAYGAR IS SPEEDING AWAY, DISAPPEARING INTO THE JUNGLE. ROBERT/JOXSOR HAS NO CHOICE, HE RUNS AFTER JEREMY, THE BEASTS NIPPING AT HIS HEELS.

AS ROBERT CATCHES UP, JEREMY SPOTS A LARGE WEEPING WILLOW WITH DISTINCT BLUE FLOWERS.

JEREMY/RAYGAR

Look, it's the Tree of Hidden Secrets

and it will keep us safe until the

last flower falls.

A BLUE FLOWER FALLS TO THE GROUND. AS MORE FLOWERS FALL AROUND THEM, ROBERT CATCHES HIS BREATH:

ROBERT/JOXSOR

(BENT OVER, WINDED) Perfect. So

listen. What do you say? One more

chance?

JEREMY/RAYGAR

You don't want my help --

ROBERT/JOXSOR

You're right. I don't. (THEN, AN

ADMISSION) But I want my family back.

I want a relationship with my kid.

(MORE)

ROBERT/JOXSOR (CONT'D)

And the only way that’s gonna happen

is with your help.

JEREMY/RAYGAR

And you’re willing to do the work?

You’re going to trust me and do what I

say?

ROBERT/JOXSOR

Yes. Absolutely. I promise.

JEREMY CONSIDERS THIS, BUT BEFORE HE CAN ANSWER -- THE LAST FLOWER FALLS. THE SABER TOOTH BEASTS SPOT THEM AND CHARGE.

JEREMY/RAYGAR

Then follow me!

JEREMY TAKES OFF RUNNING, ROBERT FOLLOWS HIM. THEY ARE RUNNING FOR THEIR LIVES WHEN SUDDENLY THERE'S A CLIFF. THEY MANAGE TO STOP JUST IN TIME. THEY LOOK AROUND. THERE'S NO WAY OUT! AND THE BEASTS ARE UPON THEM! THEY RAISE THEIR SWORDS AND FIGHT THEM OFF. IT'S INTENSE. THE GAME HAS NOW GOTTEN A HOLD OF ROBERT! HE'S FIGHTING FOR HIS LIFE ALONGSIDE JEREMY.

WE <u>POP OUT</u> TO SEE THE TWO MEN ON THEIR VIRTUAL REALITY PADS, WITH THEIR GOGGLES ON, WILDLY SWINGING THEIR IMAGINARY SWORDS. THE FANBOY YAWNS. WE <u>POP BACK</u> INTO THE GAME.

ROBERT/JOXSOR

Go! Save yourself! I’ll hold them

off!

JEREMY/RAYGAR

No way! We save each other!

JEREMY HOLDS OUT HIS HAND.

JEREMY/RAYGAR (CONT’D)

We gotta jump! Give me your hand!

ROBERT/JOXSOR

There's no way --

JEREMY HOLDS OUT HIS HAND, INTENSE --

JEREMY/RAYGAR

If you trust me, give me your hand!

A BEAT. ROBERT TAKES JEREMY'S HAND.

JEREMY/RAYGAR (CONT'D)

On my count. One... Two...

WE POP OUT TO SEE ROBERT AND JEREMY HOLDING HANDS AND STANDING ON THEIR MATS.

JEREMY/RAYGAR (CONT'D)

...Three!

WE SEE ROBERT AND JEREMY JUMP UP. WITHOUT THE BENEFIT OF VIRTUAL REALITY, IT'S A PRETTY UNREMARKABLE JUMP.

POP BACK INTO THE VIRTUAL WORLD AS THEY'RE FALLING. THEY LAND SAFELY ON A DENSE GLOWING FIELD OF POPPIES. THEY MADE IT!!! THE MEN EXCITEDLY EMBRACE.

POP BACK OUT AND SEE THEM HUGGING ON THEIR MATS -- WINDED AND EXHILARATED. THE FANBOY LOOKS ON, UNIMPRESSED. AS THE MEN BREAK FROM THE EMBRACE, JEREMY PUTS A GENTLE HAND ON ROBERT'S CHEEK.

JEREMY

You're so beautiful, Joxsor.

ROBERT

(REMOVING HIS GOGGLES) Okay, I'm done

with this.

END OF ACT THREE

TAG

INT. ROBERT'S OFFICE -- DAY

ROBERT IS AT HIS LARGE DESK, LOOKING AT HIS I-CAL AS HE PUTS HIS PERSONAL EFFECTS BACK ON HIS DESK.

ROBERT

Okay, I have to be in court on Monday--

I've got a deposition Thursday --

JEREMY (O.C.)

Slow down. A deposition, Thursday...

REVEAL JEREMY, FACING HIM ON THE IRON THRONE WHICH IS NOW BEHIND HIS LITTLE DESK. HE ENTERS THINGS INTO HIS I-PHONE.

ROBERT

Gotta give you credit, didn't think

you could get me back my job.

JEREMY

I told you a family session would do

the trick.

INT. ROBERT'S OFFICE -- FLASHBACK

ROBERT, HIS FATHER STEVEN, HIS SISTER ALEX AND JEREMY ARE ALL SITTING IN A CIRCLE, HOLDING HANDS.

JEREMY

See? Now we're touching and talking.

STEVEN

(BEAT) If I agree to give him his job

back, can you promise we'll never have

to do this again?

BACK TO SCENE.

ROBERT

Friday morning I'm meeting with a new client, I have a date Friday night --

JEREMY

Oooh, ooh, where we going?

ROBERT

You're not going.

JEREMY

I'm absolutely going. Remember the agreement, visual contact at all times. Unless of course, it proceeds to love-making. In which case I just need to hear.

BEFORE ROBERT CAN RESPOND DEREK ENTERS WITH THEIR LUNCH ORDERS. AS HE HANDS THEM OUT --

DEREK

All right, one turkey club, one BLT and two plates for sharing. That's twenty-six bucks.

JEREMY

Robert's got it.

ROBERT

How 'bout you pay this time?

JEREMY

Oh, I never carry money. I can't risk a relapse.

ROBERT REACTS, "OF COURSE." AS HE PAYS --

JEREMY (CONT'D)

Okay, let's see. This is my weekend, so we're going to my parents for dinner Saturday night, Sunday we have Chicago-con --

ROBERT

I really have to go to that?

JEREMY

You'll love it. At midnight they turn the whole place into a planetarium --

ROBERT

You want to stay til midnight?!

JEREMY

No. We're staying 'til it closes at two. I'm just saying it turns into a planetarium at midnight. (THEN) And we'll need to find some time before then to fit you for your costume.

ROBERT

I'm not wearing a costume --

JEREMY

You'll see it, you'll try it on, we'll go from there --

ROBERT REACTS. THIS IS GONNA BE A LONG 90 DAYS. AND WE FREEZE FRAME ON SCREEN--

DAYS SOBER: 1

END OF SHOW *