SCRIPT TITLE

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EXT./ESTAB. OFFICE BUILDING - DAY
INT. OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

WE ARE IN THE OFFICES OF A VIDEO GAME COMPANY. “LIGHTSTORM”. KIND OF A FUN ENVIRONMENT, OPEN AND CLUTTERED. POSTERS OF GAMES THE COMPANY HAS PRODUCED SUCH AS “DEATH CITY” AND “ELFSHADE” ADORN THE WALLS. ELI, MID-THIRTIES, HAS HIS FEET UP ON HIS DESK. WARNER, MID-THIRTIES, ENTERS CLEARLY FLUSTERED.

WARNER

(ANTIC) My dad. My dad! Myyyy daaaad! Hooray!

ELI

(CHUCKLING) Yes. What? Disaster?

WARNER

Ridiculous. I don’t know how he doesn’t know what he does. How could he not know?

ELI

(STILL CHUCKLING) He’s a dad, that’s how. Are we talking around the house disaster, or financial disaster?

WARNER

Both! Remember that solar panel oil fracking company my dad was trying to get off the ground?

ELI

Yeah, the one that simultaneously helps and hurts the environment.

WARNER

Exactly. So last night I get home and there's this weird little guy sitting in the living room having a drink with my dad. Like 5' 2" little.

ELI

Ew. You don't want to be surprised by someone that short. I feel like they know magic.

WARNER

So my dad introduces me, and it turns out the little guy is, Clem, the CEO of the solar-fracking company and he's staying for dinner.

ELI

Also weird. What company has a tiny CEO? That's not good for business.

WARNER

Sad, tense board meetings, right? Anyway, I'm like, "Dad, yes I am letting you live here, but no, you cannot just invite people over without asking."

ELI

Especially creepy short guys in charge of weird stuff.

(MORE)

ELI (CONT'D)

Another reason I live alone. There will never be a creepy short guy in my apartment by surprise.

WARNER

It turns out the whole reason my dad invited him over was because he convinced “Clem” that the best way to market his company was by making a video game about it, (THEN, DAD VOICE) “and my son is the king of making video games.”

WARNER SHAKES HIS HEAD IN DISBELIEF AT THE MEMORY, ELI STARTS LAUGHING.

ELI

Yes.

WARNER

A video game about solar panel oil fracking?! What the hell?! What would that even be?! And for who?! For what possible person?!!

ELI

(LAUGHING) We should make a game about your dad called, “Ambush of Nonsense.”

WARNER

I thought you’d enjoy my misery.

ELI

I do. Immensely. That's why you're my best friend. If you ever get happy, this relationship is over.

WARNER

Well, you should be overjoyed today because he's behaving very dadly.

ELI

Dadly Do-wrong. Is that something?

WARNER

No. And neither was "Dadly". "Dadly" was bait, and you took it. You okay?

VERONICA, AN ASIAN GIRL IN HER MID-20'S ASIAN WITH "COOL" NERD GLASSES AND AN ODD AND ENTITLED SENSIBILITY (THINK CHARLYNE YI) ENTERS.

VERONICA

Oh, hi guys. I couldn't help but hear you complain about your dads for the last <u>forever</u>.

WARNER

Yeah, well, they are a pain in the ass.

VERONICA

My dad beat me with a math book until I was 16.

ELI

Yes, but we're white, so we can whine about things that you can't.

WARNER

Speaking of awesome Asians... Is everything ready for the Nanjing Investment Group visit on Friday?

VERONICA

All the presentation stuff is ready, yeah. The rest is up to you guys. If you want to expand your games into China, you better put on a coat and tie and wear some expensive dumpling cologne.

ELI

Is that a real thing?

VERONICA

Of course not, you racist!

WARNER

(TO ELI) Dude, why do you keep taking the bait today?

ELI

I'm a little shook up. I sneezed while peeing this morning, and I think I blew something down there.

WARNER

Gross. (THEN) V, are you from "no freedom" Asia or "too much freedom" Asia?

VERONICA

No freedom. My parents escaped in an ox torso.

WARNER

Good, well maybe you can help us with these guys.

VERONICA

No! They'd hate me.

WARNER

Why?

VERONICA

They're from Guangdong Province and my family's from Gonsu Province.

WARNER

So?

VERONICA

All Asians hate all other Asians. They all look down on each other for weird reasons.

ELI

Can't you just put that aside and help us by sitting in the meeting?

VERONICA

Are you kidding? I'd never sit in a room with a Guangdong. They wear fish skin underwear and bathe in dog spit.

ELI

Ok, we're hiding you from them.

WARNER

How many of them are there?

VERONICA

12.

ELI

That's like none to them.

WARNER

Yeah, what is that in Caucasian

numbers?

VERONICA

Two.

ELI

Okay, I can see it now.

<u>EXT./ESTAB. WARNER'S HOUSE - NIGHT</u>
INT. WARNER'S HOUSE - SAME

WARNER ENTERS THE FRONT DOOR. HIS TWO DOGS GREET HIM, AND HIS FOUR-YEAR-OLD SON ALDEN RACES INTO HIS ARMS.

ALDEN

Daddy! Daddy! Look, you are here at

home!

WARNER

(HUGGING AND KISSING HIM) I know. I

know!

WARNER'S WIFE KATHERINE, MID-30'S, DARK, BEAUTIFUL, COMES AROUND THE CORNER HOLDING A ONE-YEAR-OLD IN HER ARMS. HE KISSES THE BABY.

WARNER (CONT'D)

Hi, small baby. Did your Latina mommy beat you today with her mean, jungle hands?

KATHERINE ROLLS HER EYES AT WARNER AND HANDS HIM THE BABY.

KATHERINE

Here, go with your dorky video game white bread and mayonnaise father.

WARNER AND KATHERINE KISS.

KATHERINE (CONT'D)

Did you have a nice day of being a professional child?

WARNER

I can't wait until all of your mom paychecks roll in and I can quit.

KATHERINE

Shut up.

THEY KISS AGAIN THEN A DROP OF WATER FALLS ON WARNER'S FACE.

WARNER

What the--

WARNER LOOKS UP AND SEES THAT THE WATER IS DRIPPING FROM A LIGHT FIXTURE IN THE CEILING. JUST THEN, CRAWFORD, WARNER'S DAD MID-60'S, W.A.S.P.Y, COMES DOWN THE STAIRS. HE LOOKS HAPPY AND RELAXED, AND HIS HAIR IS WET AND FRESHLY PARTED.

CRAWFORD

I just love that new jacuzzi tub. I am so relaxed.

ANOTHER DROP OF WATER FALLS ON WARNER'S FACE.

WARNER

Oh my god, dad, did you turn off the jets before you drained it?

CRAWFORD

I didn't want to touch anything, just in case something bad happened.

THE LIGHT FIXTURE ABOVE WARNER'S HEAD SUDDENLY GOES OUT WITH A POP AND A FLASH. THEN THE POWER IN THE REST OF THE HOUSE GOES OUT. A BEAT THEN:

CRAWFORD (CONT'D)

Warner, I believe the power's gone out. (THEN) What a shame, I was really looking forward to listening to the radio tonight.

EXT./ESTAB. WARNER'S HOUSE - NIGHT
WE SEE IT IS THE ONLY HOUSE ON THE BLOCK WITHOUT POWER.

INT. WARNER AND KATHERINE'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS
WARNER AND KATHERINE LIE IN BED, READING BY CANDLELIGHT.

WARNER

It's like I can't get away from him. I finally have my own thing going and he's just pulling me down.

KATHERINE

He doesn't mean to. It could be worse, you could have Eli's dad.

WARNER

I wish! Eli's dad lives in another state. Mine's in the next room. It's unbelievable.

(MORE)

WARNER (CONT'D)

My whole childhood was: (DAD VOICE) "Guys, I've hit it big with my natural gas partnership, we're going to Barbados for spring break! Gang, my specialty foods company didn't work out, we have to move out of the apartment. Guys, I got 40% ownership in a Greek shipping conglomerate! I'm getting your mother a Mercedes! Guys, I'm going to have to return the Mercedes. Turns out the ships never existed."

KATHERINE CHUCKLES.

KATHERINE

It's because he's a dreamer. He believes in everything. All he sees is possibility.

WARNER

Yeah, and because of that all I see is 'disaster ahead!' I'm constantly worrying, because he never does. I never had any control, and now he's back again to drag me down until I have nothing. I mean, how much is this jacuzzi nightmare gonna cost me?

KATHERINE SNUGGLES UP TO WARNER SUGGESTIVELY.

KATHERINE

(SEXY) Let’s worry about that tomorrow and focus on something else tonight.

WARNER

Not tonight, babe. I have a huge dump on deck. It’s pushing all the buttons at once back there.

KATHERINE

Well, why don’t you go to the bathroom?

WARNER

No, I’m gonna let sleep shape it into a morning pleasure.

EXT./ESTAB. ELI’S APARTMENT - MORNING

INT. ELI’S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

WE PAN ACROSS A NICE APARTMENT THAT’S FILLED WITH ITEMS OF A MAN WHO HASN’T GROWN UP. IT’S ELI’S. POOL TABLE, ARCADE MACHINES, STAR WARS POSTERS, ETC. FINALLY, THE SHOT GOES TO THE BED AND WE SEE ELI UNCOMFORTABLY SCRUNCHED TO ONE SIDE AS HIS CURRENT GIRLFRIEND, TANIA, LATE 20S, HOT, IS SLEEPING ON 90% OF THE AVAILABLE SURFACE. ELI MIMES SHOUTING AT HER, AND TRIES TO SUBTLY PUSH HER AWAY. HE FINALLY GIVES UP AND SLINKS OUT OF BED. HE QUIETLY MOVES OVER TO HIS COUCH. LOOKING OVER HIS SHOULDER, HE TAKES OUT A BAG OF WEED AND BEGINS TO PUT TOGETHER A BONG HIT. BEFORE HE CAN SMOKE IT, HIS CELLPHONE RINGS. HE QUICKLY ANSWERS IT.

ELI

(HUSHED) Hi, dad.

WE SPLIT SCREEN TO REVEAL DAVID, ELI’S DAD, 60’S JEWISH, A QUIET MONSTER OF NEGATIVITY, ON A PHONE IN AN INDETERMINATE LOCATION.

DAVID

Hello? Eli?

ELI

(STILL WHISPERING) Yes, I'm here!

DAVID

Uh, I can't hear you. Why are you whispering?

ELI

(GETTING ANGRY) Why are you calling at 7 am?

TANIA STIRS IN THE BED.

ELI (CONT'D)

Great. What, dad?

DAVID

Yeah, just making sure we're still on track for my visit.

ELI

What, for Thanksgiving?

DAVID

No, I sent you email.

ELI

When, dad?

DAVID

I mailed you an "E"-mail, and you never said no.

ELI

Dad, you don't have to stress the "e".

DAVID

Wha?

ELI

I didn't get an email. You have to attach an address.

DAVID

I put your address on there. 5670 Watkins Glen, Apartment 5.

ELI

Dad, that's a real address.

DAVID

Good.

ELI

Never mind. When are you coming?

DAVID

4.

ELI

Ok, the 4th at what time.

DAVID

No, 4 o'clock today.

WIDEN ON DAVID'S SIDE TO REVEAL HE'S BOARDING A PLANE. TANIA ENTERS WEARING ONLY ELI'S SHIRT.

ELI

Dad, that's insane.

TANIA

Who's on the phone?

ELI WAVES HER OFF.

TANIA (CONT'D)

Were you smoking pot? It's 7 am.

ELI GIVES HER A COLD STARE.

ELI

Dad, whatever. I'll just see you when you get here.

ELI HANGS UP AND THE SPLIT SCREEN ENDS.

ELI (CONT'D)

Thanks for announcing that to my dad.

TANIA

I didn't know.

ELI

How could you know? You were too busy taking up the entire surface of my bed.

TANIA

God, you always get so mean when you talk to your dad.

ELI

Sorry, my dad is just so annoying. He's like the ghost of Conan O'Brien and I'm the only one he haunts.

TANIA

Is Conan O'Brien dead?

ELI

No, but he'd be a pretty annoying ghost, right?

TANIA

What about a Craig Ferguson ghost?

ELI

Come on, he's got a Scottish accent.

That's delightful. Think.

EXT./ESTAB. OFFICE BUILDING - DAY
INT. OFFICE - SAME

ELI SITS AT HIS DESK WITH HIS HEAD IN HIS HANDS AS WARNER STANDS OVER HIM WITH A BROAD SMILE.

WARNER

Yes! Feel It! Feel the dad!

ELI

Come on, this is not funny. He's a life grenade.

WARNER

Oh, but it's funny when I have to deal with my dad?

ELI

Yes! Because that's you, so it's funny. This is happening to me! Not funny. Besides, my dad is way worse than your dad.

WARNER

Excuse me? I thought you just said your dad is worse than mine.

ELI

He is! Way worse. Your dad is nice. My dad is the king of negativity. It sucks.

WARNER

My dad searched our entire house for his reading glasses with dog crap on his loafer.

ELI

My dad sucks food through his teeth and it sounds like new sneakers on a basketball court.

WARNER

He then cleaned the loafer in our kitchen sink, where we prepare food.

ELI

My dad can clear his throat for 50 minutes of a two hour movie.

WARNER

The paper towels used to clean the loafer were then disposed of not in a garbage bin outside, oh no, but in house.

ELI

My dad is a light-kiss-on-the-lips dad.

WARNER

The search for the origin of the smell of dog crap was fruitless, because it was so well-dispersed around the entire house. It was everywhere.

ELI

My dad divorced my mom and left the country when I was 5. (BEAT) Yeah, top that.

WARNER

We had to sleep with the windows open that night. It was 37 degrees out. Both kids got ear infections. That's what my dad does.

VERONICA ENTERS.

VERONICA

Guys, all this complaining is ridiculous. My dad died of lung cancer when I was 19.

WARNER / ELI

Lucky. / So lucky.

<u>EXT./ESTAB. ELI'S APARTMENT - NIGHT</u>

INT. ELI'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

DAVID SITS ON THE COUCH WITH TANIA AS EDNA, ELI'S MAID, LOOKS ON.

DAVID

So, Eli is afraid of all the animals, and I'm trying to get one picture for his mother where he's not crying, but every time a goat or sheep comes near him he gets so scared--

OUTSIDE THE DOOR, WE SEE ELI ARRIVING HOME AND HEARING LAUGHTER FROM INSIDE THE APARTMENT. HE SIGHS AND OPENS THE DOOR. TANIA, EDNA AND DAVID CONTINUE LAUGHING AS ELI ENTERS.

DAVID (CONT'D)

There's my little cry-baby boy!

ELI

Hi, dad.

DAVID STANDS AND GIVES ELI A LIGHT KISS ON THE LIPS WITH A "MWAH".

TANIA

Your dad was telling us about your visit to the petting zoo.

ELI

(ANNOYED) Was he?

DAVID

I can still see you crying like it was yesterday.

ELI

Well, when you're only a dad for 5 years, there are way fewer things to remember.

EDNA

(THROUGH LAUGHTER) You scared of the baby goat!

EDNA STAGGERS UNSTEADILY O.S.

TANIA

Well, I think it's sweet that your dad remembers. Stop being so mean to him.

ELI

Boy, you love using that word with me.

DAVID OPENS A SODA AT THE FRIDGE.

DAVID

You're out of Diet Coke.

ELI

Well, maybe don't drink that one. I was saving it for me.

TANIA

Drink it. I'll go buy some more, it's not a big deal.

ELI

Yes dad. Do anything you want without a thought for anyone else. The world is yours for free!

DAVID

Eli, calm down. It's just a joke.

ELI

Really? Where's the joke there? What's the set up? What's the punchline? Oh yeah, guy walks into a bar and his nightmare dad is there and the guy has to buy him all the drinks in the world as a reward for being a mediocre parent. Haha!! What a fantastic joke!!

DAVID

I'm gonna use the bathroom.

DAVID GOES INTO THE BATHROOM.

TANIA

How can you talk to him like that?

It's embarrassing.

ELI

You have no idea what you're talking

about.

TANIA

He's a sweet man, and he's hiding in

the bathroom.

ELI

He's not sweet. He's a monster. And,

he's not hiding in there, he's really

using it.

WE HEAR A TRUMPET-LIKE FART FOLLOWED BY A RELIEVED EXHALE FROM BEHIND THE BEDROOM DOOR.

ELI (CONT'D)

See?!

TANIA

I don't like how you're acting.

ELI

You know what? I'm not "acting".

This is the real me and if you don't

like it, maybe you should just leave.

TANIA

(ANGRILY GRABBING HER BAG) Fine. I

don't need to be treated this way.

(MORE)

TANIA (CONT'D)

(EXTRA LOUD) Maybe you should smoke some pot and relax! Goodbye, you child.

TANIA EXITS IN A HUFF.

ELI

(CALLING AFTER) Consider yourself unfollowed on Twitter!

EDNA STAGGERS BACK IN HOLDING A FOLDED SHIRT.

EDNA

Is bitch?

ELI

Yes.

EDNA

You no marry her.

ELI

No.

EDNA

Good boy.

EDNA PUTS THE FOLDED SHIRT IN THE FRIDGE AND STAGGERS O.S. THE TOILET FLUSHES AND AFTER A BEAT, DAVID EXITS.

DAVID

Well, another relationship up in flames, huh? Just like your old man.

ELI

Whatever, she didn’t like “Fargo”.

DAVID

Great movie.

ELI

The best. Where's your bags, I'll take them to your room.

DAVID HANDS ELI A WHITE PLASTIC BAG. ELI LOOKS IN IT.

ELI (CONT'D)

(CALLING OFF) Edna? Will you put my dad's stuff in the wash?

EDNA STAGGERS BACK IN AND LOOKS IN THE PLASTIC BAG.

EDNA

(SHAKING HEAD) No. I clean you. No him.

ELI

I get that.

EDNA

And I need ride home because my daughter threw a lamp at my boyfriend (SLURRED SPANISH) and now I am drunk.

ELI

I somehow get that, too.

END OF ACT I

ACT II

EXT./ESTAB. OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

INT. OFFICE BUILDING - CONTINUOUS
ELI, WARNER, VERONICA

ELI, WARNER AND VERONICA ARE IN THE OFFICE, PREPARING FOR THE UPCOMING CHINESE INVESTOR MEETING.

ELI

Do we ask them to invest, or do they ask us? I feel like there's a Chinese protocol that we need to observe.

WARNER

Are you asking me? I don't know.

ELI

No, I'm asking our resident ching-chong here.

VERONICA

Yes, you have to let them ask you. They are the guests. But you can't say things like "ching-chong", and you can't whistle-- (SHE WHISTLES THE OFFENSIVE "CHING CHONG" THEME).

WARNER

Come on, do you think we're idiots? Don't answer. We can do this. We have a good company. We'll just talk about the games and their success and let them come to us.

ELI

That song's gonna be stuck in my head.

VERONICA

Sorry.

WARNER

Well, get it out of your head! Smoke pot and listen to Zeppelin, or something. Don't mess this up.

ELI

That's the problem, I can't smoke pot when my dad's around.

WARNER

Why, you think he'd care?

ELI

No, he'd probably do it with me and the last thing I wanna do is bond with him.

WARNER

Last night, my dad answered our house phone and pledged $500 to a local animal shelter. Of course, he doesn't have $500, so that's where I come in.

ELI

I don't think my dad has spent $500 dollars on anything in his life ever.

WARNER

That’s the smallest amount mine pays for anything.

ELI

That’s good. At least he’s generous.

WARNER

Even more so with my money.

ELI

You know they’re having lunch today. (PERKING UP) You can pay for my dad’s meal! I would text him to order a steak but he’s too cheap to get a cellphone.

VERONICA

My father was accidentally cremated while working a low skill factory job.

WARNER

Stop rubbing it in! Wait, didn’t you say your dad died of lung cancer?

VERONICA

He was diagnosed with lung cancer right before the factory accident.

ELI

God, save a dad tragedy for the rest of us!

EXT./ESTAB. DINER - DAY
INT. DINER - SAME

DAVID SITS BY HIMSELF AT A BOOTH. HE HAS CLEARLY BEEN WAITING FOR A LONG TIME. HE LOOKS AROUND, AND THEN QUICKLY TAKES AN EQUAL PACKET FROM THE SUGAR TRAY AND SHOVES IT IN HIS WALLET. A WAITRESS APPROACHES. HE IS CAUGHT.

DAVID

I was just--

WAITRESS

--stealing a packet of equal because you're crazy cheap. You want me to take away this setting or are you still expecting someone?

DAVID

What happened to "the customer is always right"?

WAITRESS

Time.

JUST THEN, CRAWFORD WALKS IN THE FRONT DOOR OF THE RESTAURANT. HE IS CARRYING A LARGE AND VERY WORLD-WEARY CANVASS BAG OVERFLOWING WITH PAPERS. WE SEE HIM SCAN THE RESTAURANT FOR DAVID. HE IS UNABLE TO SPOT HIM EVEN THOUGH HE IS RIGHT IN FRONT OF HIM.

DAVID

Crawford.

CRAWFORD HEARS HIS NAME AND LOOKS IN THE EXACT OPPOSITE DIRECTION OF DAVID. HE CONTINUES TO SCAN THE ROOM.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Crawford.

AGAIN CRAWFORD LOOKS IN THE WRONGEST POSSIBLE DIRECTION.

DAVID (CONT'D)

(WAVING) CRAWFORD!

FINALLY CRAWFORD SEES DAVID RIGHT IN FRONT OF HIM, AND MAKES A FACE THAT READS: "WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN HIDING?"

CRAWFORD

David, how are you?

DAVID

Good to see you, Crawford.

THEY SHAKE HANDS AND CRAWFORD SITS DOWN.

CRAWFORD

You know, I think the last time we saw each other was at the reunion.

DAVID

Yeah, the 40th.

CRAWFORD

I love those things. What?

I said I love those things!

DAVID

I hate those things. What?

I said I hate those things!

CRAWFORD

Yeah, they're terrific.

CRAWFORD PLACES HIS OVERSTUFFED CANVAS BAG IN THE BOOTH WITH A KIND OF AWKWARDNESS AND CAREFUL OVER-BALANCING THAT SUGGESTS HE HAS NEVER PUT ANYTHING DOWN EVER. HE SITS.

DAVID

You got your whole office in there?

CRAWFORD

Nearly, yes. I just came from a very interesting -- very interesting in fact -- meeting with an outfit that owns the copyright on Black Santa Clause of all things.

DAVID

Huh.

CRAWFORD

It almost sounds silly until you realize what kind of money can be made. They are going to make a fortune for the right investor.

DAVID

(GENUINELY INTERESTED) Really?

CRAWFORD

No question. It's the investment opportunity of the century. Do you have any idea how much the firm that owns the copyright on the Mexican Easter Bunny made last year? $400,000,000. I've talked to Warner about it, but I just can't seem to get him interested.

DAVID

Yeah, well our sons wouldn't know a good opportunity if it smacked them in the face.

CRAWFORD

Well, I don't know about that. Without a doubt, they run the hottest video game company in the country, if not the world.

DAVID

Well, those things have a way of going south before you know it.

CRAWFORD

Well, if there's bigger video game talent out there, I surely haven't seen it. And I am a business man.

DAVID

People were pretty confident in 1929 then, poof!

CRAWFORD

They're doing great. Our sons are making a ton of money. They are. Warner just bought me a $3,600 pair of hearing aid implants.

DAVID

$3,600? Is that right?

CRAWFORD

He did. And they have a masseuse come over once a week. Don't think for one second I don't get in on that, too. (CHUCKLES)

DAVID

Sounds like you got a pretty good set up over there.

CRAWFORD

I do, but I pull my weight. Believe me. I spent the better half of yesterday afternoon searching for the cheapest fares to Hawaii.

DAVID

Oh, they're going to Hawaii?

CRAWFORD

No, I am. Going to look at this company that does (RAISING HEAD AS IF ITS THE MOST INTERESTING THING IN THE WORLD) Pineapple gene therapy.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING - DAY
ELI, WARNER, CHINESE INVESTMENT GROUP

A TRANSLATOR SPEAKS IN CHINESE AS WARNER SPEAKS.

WARNER

So, in conclusion, we feel that China is the next logical step for a video game company that's growing by 200% every year. We'd love to have a strong partner in country for a mutually beneficial financial experience.

ONE OF THE INVESTORS SAYS SOMETHING TO THE TRANSLATOR.

TRANSLATOR

We like what we're hearing and we think together we can soar like bald American eagle and emotional sexy dragon.

WARNER AND ELI NOD, SLIGHTLY CONFUSED.

WARNER

Thank you? (TO TRANSLATOR) Don't say it like a question.

THE TRANSLATOR CONVEYS THE THANK YOU.

ELI

And, in the words of Confucious, "To see what is right and not do it is want of courage."

THE TRANSLATOR RELAYS THIS TO THE INVESTORS WHO NOD APPROVINGLY. AMONG THEM IS AN ATTRACTIVE WOMAN IN HER EARLY 30S, DONGMEI. SHE AND ELI MEET EYES AS THE INVESTORS STAND AND SHAKE HANDS WITH WARNER. VERONICA LOOKS IN THROUGH THE CONFERENCE ROOM WINDOW WITH A "HOW'D IT GO?" EXPRESSION. WARNER GIVES HER THE THUMBS UP AND, IN A MOMENT OF EXCITEMENT AND CONFUSION, WHISTLES THE SAME OFFENSIVE TUNE THAT VERONICA HAD WARNED THEM NOT TO DO. THE INVESTORS ALL LOOK AT WARNER WITH EXPRESSIONS OF ANGER AND DISAPPROVAL. ONE OF THE INVESTORS ASKS THE TRANSLATOR WHAT JUST HAPPENED. THE TRANSLATOR WHISTLES THE SAME OFFENSIVE TUNE. THE INVESTOR MAKES AN ANGRY EXPRESSION OF DISAPPROVAL.

<u>EXT. ESTAB. WARNER'S HOUSE - NIGHT</u>
INT. WARNER'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - SAME

WARNER AND KATHERINE ARGUE AS THEY BOTH COOK.

KATHERINE

Warner, he ruined the entire chair. He's like a smiling buffalo. In a house. Full of my pretty stuff.

WARNER

Look, I'm mad too, but he didn't know he had an open hi-lighter in his back pocket.

KATHERINE

But he does this all the time!

WARNER

Yeah, I know, but he doesn't know what he's doing. He has zero awareness. In fact, when you point these things out to him, he acts as if a third party was responsible. And then you can't get mad at him, because he's already mad at the third party who never existed.

KATHERINE

Ugh, it's just so frustrating. Can't you just talk to him about it?

WARNER

It will make no difference. Why don't you try talking to him?

KATHERINE

(YELLING) Because I'm too shy and wonderful to get mad at other people! I can only get mad at you!

CRAWFORD ENTERS, CHEERFUL AND OBLIVIOUS TO THEIR ARGUING.

CRAWFORD

Hi guys. Smells delicious.

KATHERINE

(SUDDENLY POLITE) Oh, good. I hope you're going to like it.

THE DOORBELL RINGS. WARNER CROSSES TO THE FRONT DOOR AND OPENS IT, REVEALING ELI AND DAVID.

WARNER

Hey hey.

ELI

Little something.

ELI HANDS WARNER A BOTTLE OF WINE.

WARNER

Nice. Very nice.

DAVID

It better be the best wine you ever tasted. It was $27!

ELI

Dad! Shut up! You don't know anything about what wine costs.

DAVID

I know it costs enough that you could have bought 1,300 paperclips instead of that wine.

ELI LOOKS MORTIFIED.

WARNER

(DELIGHTED) Oh, yes. Please come in. And David tell us more about your intimate cost knowledge of office supplies.

ELI GIVES WARNER A DIRTY LOOK.

DAVID

Hi, Warner.

BEFORE WARNER KNOWS WHAT'S HAPPENING, DAVID LEANS IN AND GIVES HIM A QUICK PECK ON THE LIPS, THEN WALKS INSIDE. WARNER IS FROZEN IN PLACE.

ELI

(BIG SMILE) Yes. You just kissed my dad.

EXT./ESTAB. WARNER'S HOUSE - NIGHT - LATER
INT. WARNER'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - SAME

WARNER, KATHERINE, CRAWFORD, ELI AND DAVID HAVE DINNER. CRAWFORD IS FINISHING A STORY.

CRAWFORD

...and that's basically how everyone else involved in the project became millionaires except me.

ELI

Another of many missed opportunities. Seems like the answer is to keep trying.

WARNER SHOOTS ELI A DIRTY LOOK.

WARNER

Can I get anyone more of this delicious wine?

KATHERINE

I'll have some more. I need to get loaded to sleep with my husband.

WARNER

He has a headache.

DAVID

Yeah, I'll take a $2.50's worth, which I'm sure is about a thimble.

ELI

We get it! You feel the wine was too expensive! Hahaha! Stop advertising how cheap you are!

DAVID

Dickens said there's nobility in frugality.

EVERYONE LOOKS A LITTLE AWKWARD, EXCEPT WARNER, WHO IS ENJOYING ELI'S DISCOMFORT.

ELI

No he didn't! Guys, ignore that quotation because it was probably never said.

DAVID

Boy, we're all just goats at the petting zoo, huh Eli? Everything makes you upset.

ELI

No! Not everything. Not mom, not Warner, not Warner's kids -- whose names escape me -- just you.

WARNER

(PATTING ELI AND DAVID ON THE SHOULDER) Alden and Porter.

ELI

Stop enjoying this.

DAVID

Eli, at some point you just have to put the past behind you and grow up.

ELI

Grow up?! I have grown up! I have a job! Do you? No, you have a shopping bag with two pairs of underwear in it. Great job, dad. Way to grow up!

CRAWFORD

I think it's wonderful to get all of this stuff out on the table.

EVERYONE IS INCREDIBLY TENSE.

ELI

You were a terrible father! You were like Darth Vader, Ryan O'Neal and Bing Crosby all rolled into <u>none</u> because you were never there!

ELI STORMS OUT OF THE ROOM THEN RE-ENTERS.

ELI (CONT'D)

(MEEK) There was a sleeping child in the room I stormed into.

THERE IS A BEAT OF SILENCE, THEN:

KATHERINE

(TO WARNER) And your dad ruined my new chair with a hi-lighter!

KATHERINE STORMS OFF.

CRAWFORD

Oh no, is that true? What a shame. I love that chair.

END OF ACT II

ACT III

EXT./ESTAB. OFFICE BUILDING - DAY
INT. LIGHTSTORM OFFICES - SAME

WARNER AND ELI SIT IN A RECORD BOOTH AS THEY DIRECT A VOICE ACTOR.

WARNER

(THROUGH MICROPHONE) Can we try that again, maybe with a little more Wizard-like quality.

VOICE ACTOR (O.S. - FROM BOOTH)

Okay, got it. (THEN, ETHEREAL) If you wish to enchant your crystal sword, you must visit the One-eyed Blacksmith in the Dwarve's Guild.

WARNER

God, we write such nerd nonsense. (THEN, THROUGH MICROPHONE) Great. Just continue like that. (THEN, TO ELI) So wow, last night, huh?

(NOTE: THROUGHOUT THE REST OF THE SCENE WE OCCASIONALLY HEAR THE VOICE ACTOR DOING HIS LINES IN THE BG.)

ELI

Yeah, nightmare. He hasn't said a word to me since.

WARNER

Mature dad silent treatment.

VOICE ACTOR (O.S.)

Who dares to challenge the Mage of Acknar?

ELI

I feel slightly bad about what I said, but I just want him to leave.

WARNER

When does he go?

ELI

Tomorrow.

WARNER

Well I, for one, will miss him.

ELI

I bet. I just gotta get through one more day. (THEN) You don't have any Vicodin, do you?

WARNER

Sorry, buddy. Saving it for Mexico trip.

VOICE ACTOR (O.S. - FROM BOOTH)

(HUGE OVERACTING) Take this bone from my tunic and wear it always in the face of men.

ELI AND WARNER LAUGH.

ELI

That's some pretty gay nerd nonsense right there.

WARNER

Should we tell him to do one even

bigger just to see how bad it can get?

ELI

Awesome. (THEN, INTO MICROPHONE) Walt,

let's try that one again, but bigger,

more.

VOICE ACTOR (O.S. - FROM BOOTH)

Sure, okay. (THEN, RIDICULOUSLY OVER-

THE-TOP) TAKE THIS BONE FROM MY TUNIC

AND WEAR IT ALWAYS IN THE FACE OF MEN!

ELI AND WARNER FALL ON THE FLOOR LAUGHING.

VOICE ACTOR (O.S. - FROM BOOTH) (CONT'D)

Did that work for you guys?

THEY CONTINUE TO LAUGH.

<u>INT. ELI'S APARTMENT - EVENING</u>
ELI, DAVID, EDNA

DAVID SITS ON THE COUCH WITH HIS FEET UP, DRINKING A SODA AND WATCHING A BRITISH DOCUMENTARY ON THE HISTORY OF THE JEWS.

BRITISH NARRATOR (V.O.)

And so, this new wave of anti-semitism

led to what became known as the

Granada Massacre of 1066--

ELI ENTERS. HE AND DAVID EXCHANGE A GLANCE IN SILENCE, NEITHER WILLING TO APOLOGIZE FOR THE PREVIOUS NIGHT'S FIGHT. ELI THROWS HIS BAG DOWN ON A NEARBY TABLE AND EXITS INTO HIS ROOM TO CHANGE FOR HIS UPCOMING DATE. DAVID CLEARS HIS THROAT LOUDLY.

BRITISH NARRATOR (V.O.)

Some 1500 Jewish families were slaughtered and those left behind were forced to pay the newly imposed poll tax for the deceased--

ELI RE-ENTERS SILENTLY IN HIS BOXERS AND A T-SHIRT. HE STANDS BEHIND DAVID WHO CONTINUES TO WATCH THE DOCUMENTARY ON THE COUCH. ELI MIMES CHOKING DAVID, AND SILENTLY SCREAMS "GET OUT!" HE PULLS OUT HIS OWN HAIR. DAVID TURNS AND ELI IS SUDDENLY STILL, PRETENDING TO LOOK FOR SOMETHING. DAVID TURNS BACK TO THE TV AND ELI MIMES MORE MURDEROUS GESTURES.

BRITISH NARRATOR (V.O.)

In many ways, the event was mirrored in 1840 by what is commonly known as the Damascus Affair, in which middle-eastern Jews were blamed for the disappearance of a French monk and his scribe.

ELI CONTINUES TO MIME VIOLENT ACTS BEHIND DAVID. WHILE HE IS DOING THIS, EDNA SNEAKS IN BEHIND ELI AND SILENTLY TAKES A LONG SLUG FROM A BOTTLE OF WHISKEY. SHE THEN EXITS, DUSTING A POTTED PLANT ON HER WAY OUT. ELI LOSES STEAM, HANGS HIS HEAD AND HEADS BACK INTO HIS ROOM.

BRITISH NARRATOR (V.O.)

Once again, the Jews were forced to gather what meager possessions they could carry, and move on to a new country in hopes of acceptance.

ELI (NOW FULLY DRESSED) WORDLESSLY HEADS OUT THE DOOR. AFTER A BEAT, EDNA STAGGERS IN AND TURNS OFF THE TV WITH A "CLICK".

EDNA

(TO David, RE: TV) No. Is too sad.

EXT./ESTAB. WARNER'S HOUSE - NIGHT
INT. WARNER'S HOUSE - MEDIA ROOM - SAME

WARNER IS ON THE COUCH PLAYING VIDEO GAMES WITH A DRINK IN FRONT OF HIM.

WARNER

(TO HIMSELF) Yes!

KATHERINE ENTERS.

KATHERINE

Is Alden asleep?

WARNER

Yup. The baby?

KATHERINE

Finally, yes.

WARNER

(HOPEFUL) Do you have shows to watch?

KATHERINE

(EXCITED) Oh, yeah. Housewives

reunion, baby!

THEY KISS.

WARNER

Love you.

KATHERINE

Love you.

KATHERINE TURNS TO EXIT, BUT CRAWFORD IS STANDING THERE.

CRAWFORD

I'm afraid I've done something to your

TV recorder device.

(MORE)

CRAWFORD (CONT'D)

I was trying to set it to record “The Golden Age of Airships””, and (GETTING ANGRY) the damn thing went absolutely crazy and I think it erased everything. And I also was unable to record my show. God!

KATHERINE HEAVES A BIG SIGH.

KATHERINE

(COVERING) Oh no, that’s okay. There was nothing on there.

CRAWFORD

Well, I’m going to pour myself a giant scotch. I could really use it after this whole “Golden Age of Airships” fiasco. Such a shame.

CRAWFORD EXITS.

WARNER

See? Already mad at no one. Can’t get mad at him.

KATHERINE

Well, you know what no shows for me means?

WARNER TURNS OFF HIS VIDEO GAME.

WARNER

Yes. Quality time with my wife. Thanks, dad.

KATHERINE

That's right, honey. Many, many hours of talking about us and the kids, and me getting thin after the baby, and parents I hate at school.

WARNER

My fucking dad!

KATHERINE

Yup. We're all suffering.

EXT. CHINESE RESTAURANT - NIGHT

INT. CHINESE RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS
ELI, DONGMEI, DAVID, WAITER

ELI ENTERS THE RESTAURANT AND WE SEE THAT DONGMEI IS ALREADY SEATED AT A TABLE. ELI HEADS OVER TO THE TABLE.

ELI

Ah, you're early. I like that. That's respect.

THEY SHAKE HANDS.

ELI (CONT'D)

Yes, a handshake. Very staid. Gonna be different later when your moaning in Chinese. So, where's Timmy the translator?

DONGMEI HANDS ELI A PIECE OF PAPER.

ELI (CONT'D)

(READING PAPER) "Eli, I have the flu. So sorry I will not be able to translate for you and Dongmei tonight. Tim." Is this a joke?

DONGMEI SMILES AND NODS.

DONGMEI

Thank you.

ELI

You're welcome. Would you excuse me for just one second? I'll be right back.

ELI PULLS OUT HIS PHONE AND HEADS FOR THE FRONT OF THE RESTAURANT. WE SPLIT SCREEN WITH VERONICA'S APARTMENT. SHE ANSWERS HER CELLPHONE.

VERONICA

What?

ELI

What do you mean, "What?" I'm your boss, that's what. Answer the phone happier.

VERONICA

Hi! What?!

ELI

Ok, here's what. I'm on my date with Dongmei and the idiot translator decided to get the flu.

VERONICA

Ha!

ELI

Will you come down here and translate for us?

VERONICA

What? No!

ELI

Come on, this girl's really hot. I need this. I'm still really sad about breaking up with Tania.

VERONICA

You broke up with Tania?

ELI

No, but I'm going to in a few months.

VERONICA

No way. I would never do that and, I don't speak Chinese.

ELI

You don't?

VERONICA

No.

ELI

You can't play violin, you can't speak Chinese, and you're an excellent driver. You're a disgrace and bring great shame to your family.

VERONICA

Have fun!

VERONICA HANGS UP AND WE STAY IN HER APARTMENT. WE WIDEN TO INCLUDE TIM, THE TRANSLATOR, LYING IN HER BED. VERONICA IS WEARING HIS BUTTON DOWN SHIRT.

TIM

(IN CHINESE) Would you like to take a nice, refreshing dog spit bath?

VERONICA

(IN CHINESE) Guangdong scum.

OFF VERONICA'S SULTRY LOOK WE GO TO:

EXT./ESTAB. OFFICE BUILDING - DAY
INT. LIGHTSTORM OFFICES - SAME

WARNER AND ELI SIT AT THEIR DESKS.

WARNER

Dude, I'm just nervous that you hitting on this girl from the group is gonna mess things up.

ELI

Actually, you already did that with your little racist whistling stunt.

WARNER

Right.

ELI

I don't care. I'm just so excited that he's leaving tonight. This is when I love him the most, when I'm driving him to the airport.

WARNER

You should be a little more grateful to your dad. You know he had to have sex in the 1970's so that you could exist. And there (THEN, ENUNCIATING) weren't much personal grooming back then if you know what I mean.

ELI

Gross. They probably did it on brown paisley sheets, too.

WARNER

Yeah, and some guy that looks like Joaquin Phoenix with big sideburns was probably peaking in through the window.

ELI

Creepy.

WARNER

Yeah, and he has a shotgun, and then he breaks in and your dad had to fight off Joaquin Phoenix guy just so he could finish with your mom and create you.

ELI

Alright, calm down.

WARNER

Sorry, I was working on “Daughter Slaughter 2” this morning.

INT. CAR - NIGHT
ELI, DAVID

ELI HAPPILY DRUMS THE STEERING WHEEL IN TIME TO THE MUSIC AS DAVID STARES OUT THE WINDOW.

ELI

Well, dad, it’s been a visit. Yup, just always so great to have you and, god, it sucks that I won’t see you until Thanksgiving, that’s SO far away! God darn darn! Boy, makin’ every light, huh?

DAVID

Huh? Oh, yeah.

ELI

Yeah, you bet we are! This might be a record time airport run. You are sitting next to a potential record setting driver right now.

DAVID

Yup, really making good time.

ELI

Oh, terminal 3, sir! Here we are!

ELI PULLS OVER AND HOPS OUT OF THE CAR WITH A SPRING IN HIS STEP. HE TAKES DAVID’S BAG OUT OF THE BACK AND PLOPS IT ON THE CURB AS DAVID SLOWLY GETS OUT OF THE CAR.

ELI (CONT'D)

Well, ups and downs, but we came out on the other side. Bye, dad. I'll call you next week.

ELI GIVES DAVID A QUICK HUG AND BOUNDS BACK TO THE CAR.

DAVID

Bye.

ELI

Now, I've got a record to break, huh? Yeah! Alright, have a good one, dad!

ELI GETS BACK IN THE CAR.

ELI (CONT'D)

Wooo-hooo!! Yes!!

THE CAR ZOOMS OFF. DAVID STANDS ON THE CURB WITH HIS BAG IN HIS HAND. AFTER A BEAT, HE HAILS A CAB AND GETS IN. WE FOLLOW DAVID INSIDE THE CAB AND SEE HIM STARING OUT THE WINDOW SADLY AS THE CAB LEAVES THE AIRPORT.

EXT. CRAPPY MOTEL - NIGHT

DAVID STANDS OUTSIDE A CRAPPY MOTEL AS THE CAB PULLS AWAY.

INT. CRAPPY MOTEL - MOMENTS LATER

DAVID ENTERS A DEPRESSING MOTEL ROOM AND SITS ON THE BED, CLUTCHING HIS BAG. HE SIGHS. AFTER A BEAT, THERE IS A KNOCK AT THE DOOR. DAVID GETS UP AND OPENS IT. IT'S ELI.

ELI

Dad, what are you doing?

DAVID

How did you know I was here?

ELI

Well, I hit the red light on the way out of the airport.

WE SEE A FLASHBACK OF ELI HAPPILY SINGING IN HIS CAR WHILE STOPPED AT A RED LIGHT IN THE AIRPORT. AFTER A BEAT, A TAXI PULLS UP NEXT TO HIM. ELI LOOKS OVER AND SEES DAVID SITTING IN THE BACKSEAT.

ELI (CONT'D)

No. No! What are you doing?! Go back!! Why??!! Why??!!

WE SEE THE SAME MOMENT FROM DAVID'S TAXI. DAVID STARES OUT THE WINDOW, OBLIVIOUS AS ELI SCREAMS BEHIND THE CLOSED WINDOWS IN THE CAR NEXT TO HIM. THE FLASHBACK ENDS AND WE'RE BACK INSIDE THE MOTEL ROOM.

ELI (CONT'D)

So, what's going on, dad? Why aren't you going back home?

DAVID

Well, the truth is, there's no home to go back to. I couldn't make the last few payments on the condo and the bank took it back.

ELI

What? Why didn't you come to me? I would've loaned you the money.

DAVID

Do you have any idea how humiliating that is? I mean, yes, I'm your dad, but I'm also a human being with pride. I couldn't do that to either of us.

(MORE)

DAVID (CONT'D)

I guess I was just hoping I could stay with you, like Warner’s dad stays with him, but then we started fighting and I knew it wasn’t going to happen. So, here I am.

ELI

(SIGHS) Look, dad, I’m sorry we fight, it’s just sometimes I feel like you’re rooting for me to fail, and that’s terrifying.

DAVID

It’s me who’s failed. Failed to keep my home, failed to stay with your mom, failed to be a real dad to you.

ELI

Come on...

DAVID

Are you gonna deny those things?

ELI

No, but I’m gonna say “come on.”

DAVID SITS BACK DOWN ON THE BED, DEFLATED.

ELI (CONT’D)

Dad, it’s not too late. We can try. Get your stuff and let’s get out of this place. I think murder is legal here.

DAVID

Really?

ELI

Yeah, I wouldn't be able to sleep if you were stuck in a place like this. I love you, dad. You can stay with me.

DAVID

I love you too.

DAVID GETS UP AND THEY HUG. WE SEE DAVID'S FACE IS CLEARLY HAPPY AND EMOTIONAL. ANGLE ON ELI'S FACE AS HE MOUTHS "WHAT THE FUCK AM I DOING?!"

EXT./ESTAB. OFFICE - DAY
INT. OFFICE - SAME

WARNER AND ELI SHOW CRAWFORD AND DAVID AROUND THE LIGHTSTORM OFFICES.

WARNER

And this is where we do most of the writing and concept art for the games.

CRAWFORD

Incredible. It never ceases to amaze me. You come up with all that stuff right here.

WARNER

(A LITTLE EMBARRASSED) It's just video games.

CRAWFORD

It's not just games. I assure you, everything you do here is very highly regarded in the business community, and I know the business community quite well.

DAVID

Yeah, it is pretty cool what you guys do. On the other hand--

ELI

Dad!

DAVID

What you do is very cool.

VERONICA ENTERS.

VERONICA

Guys, I think I fixed your racial blunder with the Chinese.

ELI

What?! That's awesome!

WARNER

How did you do it?

VERONICA

You remember Timmy, the translator, right?

VERONICA (CONT'D)

Let's just say I wrecked him in the bedroom like a panda wrecks bamboo if a panda was having crazy sex with bamboo.

ELI

Nice! Gross. But nice.

VERONICA

No big deal. It was China penis, so it was like wrecking a furious baby's toe.

ELI

Okay, that was just gross. But...

ELI AND WARNER HUG VERONICA.

WARNER/ELI

Yay, Veronica!

VERONICA

They said they wanted to do an initial investment of $50 million.

WARNER/ELI

Oh. My. God.

THEY ALL JUMP UP AND DOWN AS THEY HUG. SUDDENLY CRAWFORD IS PART OF THE HUG.

CRAWFORD

Yay! I'm part of it, too!

Businessman! $50 million! Yay!

DAVID

(TO VERONICA) Will your dad get this

excited?

VERONICA

He died twice.

THERE IS A BEAT OF SILENCE, THEN DAVID JOINS THE GROUP HUG AND THEY ALL JUMP UP AND DOWN, SOMBERLY.

DAVID

(SMALL) Hooray.

END OF SHOW