

F. Liam Devlin
Writing Portfolio

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Artistic Statement

My name is F. Liam Devlin, and I am an actor and comedy writer. I first discovered Acting in High School and have kept with it ever since, taking every role and chance and script I could get my hands on.

It's through acting that I discovered my second passion; writing. Growing up most of the people who I have looked up to in the industry were both actors and writers. People like Bo Burnham, Conan O'brien, John Krasinski or the many cast members to grace the set of SNL are just as talented behind the page as they are on the screen. I think it's not something that is particularly easy but I believe being proficient in writing as an actor benefits you and your craft and vice versa.

One of the pillars of my work is the holy war I have declared against proper grammar. All my academic life I've been chastised for my poor grammar... until I began writing scripts. It was then and only then I was recognized for having a “real knack” for dialogue and how characters speak to one another. One of my biggest pet peeves in scripts is when characters have dialogue that prioritize plot over character or story. Where characters have lines that maybe make sense for the nature of the script but shatters the illusion of realism. Time and time again I find myself watching movies, shows, or plays in which I am engaged but become distracted by unrealistic expository dialogue. It's my top priority that the characters I write sound as though their conversation could be heard in the real world. It's my opinion that you can achieve these moments of exposition without sacrificing the speech of your characters.

My sense of humor is best described as plain goofy, I'm a man of simple taste. I think that jokes that become funnier the more thought you put into them are peak hilarity But something as simple as a camera movement or cut can be just as effective. My philosophy is “a joke is just as much about what isn't said as much as what is said.

F. Liam Devlin's Artistic Statement

Bio

I was born and raised in Branchburg, New Jersey. I grew up equidistant from the city and the shore making me the Most central Jersey Newjersian to exist, and we do exist. I found acting my freshman year in highschool and instantly fell in love with the practice. By the time I was a sophomore I knew this would be my field of study. From that point on I began curating my skills as an entertainer. Taking music lessons, Learning creative writing and auditioning for college programs. In 2018 I began training at Quinnipiac University where I would receive a degree in Theater and film. There I studied all aspects of theater production from Stagecraft, to Tech, to Performance. During this time I also joined and eventually led a campus run Web-series *Quinnipiac Tonight* in the position of head writer. My time at quinnipiac not only was incredibly insightful to my process as an actor, but was also instrumental in educating and influencing my approach to the collaborative process that is Theater and the entertainment industry.

Next Stop

By F. Liam Devlin

F. Liam Devlin
Theater Student
Quinnipiac University
1250 Sherman Ave

The players

Todd.....Asshole, not easily intimidated
Tom.....Family man, rides bus with Todd
Alex.....20, Sickly looking, pale

The time: 7:30 AM
Newcastle England

Todd walks on to the bus in athletic clothes. He says hello to the buss driver a plots down next to one of his morning commuters and co workers

Todd

Morning tom

Tom

Hey Todd

Todd

Good weekend

Tom

As good as it can be. Wife has been on me to finish up Kyle's play pen so took up most of the spare time I had.

Todd

Yet another reason not to be married.

Tom

Hey you don't need to be married to have a kid

Todd

Right I forgot someone thought it was a good Idea to double up on the rubbers just incase.

Tom

And kyle has been a blessing to our lives ever day since

Todd

I forgot those are the lines you have to say that or you get your bullocks chopped off.

(Todd's attention has been pulled by someone he doesn't know entering the bus)

(Enter Alex)

Tom

Ive been meaning to talk to you about this you are so crass all of the time and I don't know how you think its coming across but to everyone else you sound-

Alex

Okay everybody listen up.

(snaps his head along with everyone else in the bus.)

Alex

Okay I didn't expect everyone to look so fast. Umm- shoot okay you rehearsed this. Okay My name is Alex- actually uh is- Um My name isn't important- Uhhh please just forget that forget its not important but what is important is Im- um uhhhh

Tom

Are you collecting for something mate?

Alex

No.

Todd

Some sort of performance art?

Alex

Um No not that uh.

Todd

I think you should know what you're about to say if you're going to make a big spectacle about it before you do spit it out lad.

Alex

Im hijacking this bus!

Tom

Bloody hell.

Todd

(beat) You?

Alex

What?

Todd

What you mean what?

Alex

I mean what did you say.

Todd

I said you?

Alex

And what does that supposed to mean.

Tom

Way to go mate you've gone and insulted a domestic terrorist.

Todd

Oh pipe it down he's not a bus jacker.

Alex

And what's that supposed to mean.

Todd

Is that your favorite question or something. I just don't really take you for the hijacking type.

Alex

Well I am.

Todd

Am what?

Alex

A bus Jacker!

Todd

Yeah I'm hearing you but I'm not believing it.

Tom

Todd. If you get us killed ill just have you know my old lady is going to be mighty displeased.

Alex

Shut up! I am a bus jacker and you better pipe down and you better keep driving.

Todd

If you're a bus jacker then where is your weapon?

Alex

My what.

Todd

Your weapon you deaf bugger. surely you don't expect to take over a bus with some strongly pointed words.

Alex

I've got a weapon.

Todd

Once again im afraid I don't believe you.

Tom

I do Todd please stop talking.

Alex

I have a knife in my jumper pocket.

Tom

Is it big?

Alex

Tell me are you stupid or do just want to kick it?

Todd

Im just making an observation its an awfully narrow pocket hole you got there seems like you can't fit much in there.

Alex

Its retractable now sit down and stop getting on my arse.

Todd

Look mate I aint one to go around shaming ya for your size maybe you subscribe to the "its not how big it is but how ya use it method."

Tom

Do phallic shaming metaphors truly seem like the brightest idea to you right now.

Alex

You best keep your mouth shut laddie. Your playing a dangerous game with me.

Todd

Ill be sure to keep that in mind but if youll excuse us our destination appears to approaching. Tom grab you bags were off.

(Alex pulls out a knife and brandishes it at Tom and Todd)

Alex

Sit down.

Tom

Oh god .

Todd

Well that is something.

Alex

I'm warning all you stay in your seats.

Todd

I tell yeah mate I am impressed. I didn't think you had this in ya.

Alex

You don't know a bloody thing about me "mate".

Todd

Your right I made my first assessments purely by how much you look like a twat but clearly I have been mistaken... Youre a twat with a knife.

Alex

I swear ill-

Todd

Oh youll what turn a jacking into a murder? Grow a few hairs on your chest in the clink. piss off. Honestly, son have you thought any of this through. You don't have the nerve.

Alex

What you know I need?

Todd

Well I figure anyone who goes around wearing a matching Gucci track suit don't need to steal no bus.

Alex

I don't "need" it you old fart.

Tom

Hey hes only 35 relax.

Todd

Shut up. Why steal a thing you don't need.

Alex

It's a way to make a name for myself.

Todd

A name eh? And what name would that be king of the coach.

Alex

I don't expect you to-

(Todd disarms Alex of his knife and turns it on him very close to his neck)

Todd

Try my

Tom

Todd!

Todd

Yes tom

Tom

You have a knife to that boys throat

Todd

Oh this boy right here I thought he was a domestic terrorist.

Tom

He's no threat Todd

Alex

Im no threat Todd.

Todd

You seem to forget you were wetting your pants when our mate here fist got on the coach now hes a fluffly litte rabbit.

Alex

I just wanted to go viral!!!

Tom & Todd

Yeah wot

(Alex is crying)

(Todd lets go of Alex)

Alex

Im sorry

Todd

Would you care to disclose what your plan was at this time or am I gonna have to pound on yeah for making me late to my shift with no explanation.

Alex(In hysterics)

I-i- i- I wanted to get my hands on a bus to -to -to live wit my mates and travel the country. An- an- and we were gonna-document it on- on -on tik tok. B-b-but we couldn't afford a j- aj- aj- aj-j-junker.

Tom

Bloody hell Todd look what you did to the poor kid.

Todd

SO you mean to tell me that when you found out you couldn't afford the Junker you thought the next best plan was to just steal an active working bus during its commute.

Alex

(Unintelligible babbling)

Todd

You know mate that's probably about the one thing you could have said to make me just want to-

(Todd raises fist)

Tom

TODD!

(Todd turns to tom.)

Tom

A moment please.

Todd

Ill bite what are we doing over here.

Tom

This is what I was telling you about Todd

Todd

Invest in bitcoin?

Tom

No. well I mean its too late now the prices aren't gonna drop low enough for it to be worth your while at this- I mean this isnt okay your whole uh

Todd

My whole what

Tom

You.

Todd

Pardon?

Tom

You cant be so you all the time.

Todd

I cant what.

Tom

Oh come one Todd don't be daft. Look at what you did to the poor boy.

Todd

The Bus jacker. I'm sorry how did you want me to handle the boyo he had a knife.

Alex

I think My hand it broken.

Tom

You said it yourself earlier he wasn't no threat.

(Todd hangs his head in shame)

Tom

Tell me right now you're proud of what just happened. Go on and look and tell me that you are.

(Todd turns around and looks at Alex who is still groaning)

Todd

I suppose it's a bit of a bad look int.

Tom

You might yeah. Look I didn't want to say it when I caught it earlier but. We never talked about what happened after Sheila

Todd

I thought I said don't say her name.

Tom

You gotta stop running mate. There are plenty of birds on the telephone wire.

Todd

...but She was the only bird that could really listen.

Tom

But shes gone.

Todd

I know.

(Todd begins to get slightly emotional)

Tom

Come here.

(Tom Brings in Todd for a hug)

Tom

Were gonna call you out from the office today I'm going to speak to Wilfred and he'll take care of it.

Alex

I think I need medical treatment can- can someone call me a doctor or an ambulance.

Tom

Piss off.

(Todd and Tom Exit)

End

SCRIPT TITLE

Written by

Name of First Writer

Based on, If Any

Address
Phone Number

INT. NYC APARTMENT- DAY

Two NYPD detectives SIMONS and GREY enter a woman's apartment with cute décor and plants filling the space.

SHOT OF BODY

Detective Simons approaches bends down and lifts the sheet that has a blood stain over the victims face.

SIMONS WINCES

SIMONS
Jeez, talk about botched.

Simons begins to stand

WIDE

GREY
I seriously doubt this was a face
lift Simons.

A walkie talkie goes off

DISPATCH
Do we have an update on the 630.10
off Washington.

SIMONS
You wanna get that I'm gonna take a
look around the apartment. See if
there's anything the suspect left.

Grey takes Simons remark to be a joke.

GREY
Chuckles Okay buddy. This is Grey
were on site now suspect suffered a
heart attack. Waiting on EMT 10-106

SIMONS
Whoa, whoa- Heart attack?

GREY
...yeah. Heart attack.

SIMONS
Yeah heart at- what do you mean
yeah heart attack.

GREY
...Sometimes the body... its meant
to work its designed to- but as you
get older you -

SIMONS Don't patronize me I know what a heart attack is, is there not something else I could possible be talking about?	GREY (CONT'D) Well if you ask a stupid question you're gonna get a stupid answer. "What's a heart attack" are you six?
--	--

GREY (CONT'D)
What?

SIMONS
Grey. The victims got no face.

Grey shrugs

Simons is beside himself.

SIMONS (CONT'D)
Does that not engage your
sensibilities as a detective?

GREY
Shrugs She likes cats.

SIMONS
Excuse me?

GREY
If your looking for your Hannibal
lector, there's your man there.

Simons turns around and sees a kitten with some red on his
mouth

SIMONS
What, You're telling me a cat did
that.

GREY
Oh yeah man cats are coooold
blooded. They'll eat ya dead.

SIMONS
No.

GREY
You better believe it I've seen it
a hundred times. Cat's owner dies.
(MORE)

GREY (CONT'D)

There bowl isn't getting filled
anytime soon. Sooner or later,
somthings gotta be Chow time for
snowball.

SIMONS

This ones name is soy sauce
apparently.

GREY

Point is this is a lot more common
than you'd. Think that's why I
could never have a cat. Be like
having a small furry Hannibal
Lecter sleeping at the foot of your
bed.

SIMONS

Okay well, I don't think my cat
would ever do that to me.

GREY

I'm telling you It wouldn't
hesitate for a moment.

SIMONS

Yeah maybe but I'm sure it varies
on a case by case basis... My cat
probably wouldn't do that.

GREY

(to himsel)

You live in a world of fools grey
dont ever exect anthing diffrent.

SIMONS

Look I don't expect anyone who can
refer to a cat as a Psycho to
understand, but my cat adores me
okay. It starts screaming when it
smells me coming up the elevator in
my apartment. Goose would never eat
me.

GREY

You named your animal another
animal?

SIMONS

I'm telling you it wouldn't happen.

GREY

You can live in fantasy land all
you want but you better hope I come
across your body before goosey
turns you into a golden coral.

SIMONS

Why is it so important to you to
keep pushing the fact that my cat
is wants to kill you.

GREY

I'm not it's not important, I'm
just letting you know the *Fact* that
these animals are biological
killers, the bond you have will not
change that, and this woman died of
a heart attack and her cat did what
cats do.

Simons pulls out their phone to check a message.

SIMONS

I gotta make a call.

GREY

Animal shelter? Need to schedule a
drop off?

SIMONS

God your a prick.

Simons leaves

GREY

(talking while he exits)

You shouldn't take it personally,
there was one time I saw a cat with
one of them automatic feeder things
and it still went to town on the
guy.

GREY (CONT'D)

(to himself)

Yeah... seen it about 100 times.
Tsk tsk tsk... ha. Murder.

GREY NOTICES A BOTTLE OF WINE THAT IS SPILLED IN THE CORNER

OF THE APARTMENT.

GREY
Been on the job for years.

PLANNER FOR AN APPOINTMENT AT AN ANIMAL SHELTER NEXT TOO SOME
CAT ADOPTION PAPERS

Grey notices the papers

GREY
Think I would know... a murder

SHOT OF CLAW MARKS ON THE FLOOR

GREY
If I saw.

We cut back and forth between a close up locked on grey as he's shifting his eyes and body to the evidence of the crime, and the pieces of evidence itself. As the flashing back and forth continues the crime itself begins to play out faintly with opacity over a increasingly more frightened Detective Grey. He then does a 180 and locks eyes with the murder that we don't yet see.

GREY (CONT'D)
You?

MID OF SOYSAUCE

He closes the door with his foot.

GREY
What the F-

Grey stops short touches his stomach and lifts up his fingers which are covered in blood. He collapses as the screen

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. APARTMENT- DA

APARTMENT DOOR

The door opens. Grey is getting off the phone as he enters he notices his partner on the ground.

SIMONS
That was the precinct they want us
to- OH My god.

MID SHOT OF SHEET COVERED VICTIM AND DETECTIVE WITH KNIFE

STICKING OUT OF CHEST AND A RED CHIN (REST OF HEAD CUT OFF BY

CAMERA)

SIMONS
(into walkie) dispatch were gonna
need a second unit for med evac at
washington
(heavy breathing)
My partner has had a heart attack

END

CREDITS

SCRIPT TITLE

Written by

Name of First Writer

Based on, If Any

Address
Phone Number

EXT. ROOFTOP- AFTERNOON

Three men, ANDRE, PAULO, and BRYCE approach FRANK and JOEY.

PAULO

Hey Andre, I'm not sure what it is
you want me to do here, I'm not
even sure what's really going on

ANDRE

Don't worry about it man just look
like you have a purpose okay. Were
not here to do nothing but get what
we came here for and go. We do that
we all walk away a little bit
richer.

PAULO

Okay

ANDRE

Just let Bryce do the talking

BRYCE

Okay I'm doing the talking. You got
the payment.

FRANK

Not until I see the product I
don't.

Bryce looks over to andre. Andre tosses the bag to frank.

BRYCE

Like I said over the phone we wont
be accepting anything less than

Frank hands the bag to

FRANK

I Dont normally deal in such high
values, but times are desprate...
and you got a lot of nerve.

Joey gives frank a look meaning no go.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Especially for someone pushing a
phony product.

Frank raises a gun

PAULO

Whoa. whoa.

Everyone but Paulo raises their guns Paulo pulls his out but doesn't point it.

BRYCE

I don't know what your talking about. But I brought you what you asked. Were just here to deliver

JOEY

Well that unfortunate.

FRANK

Because you're currently failing to deliver.

He clicks back the hammer of his gun

ANDRE

Look Just give us what were promised okay. This doesn't have to end bad.

With frank looking to Andre, Bryce goes for the briefcase of money. In the scuffle it opens in Frank's hand. They push off each other and keep pointing and yelling at each other. Paulo then takes a closer look at what fell out of the briefcase.

PAULO

Hold on! hold on! Pause. What the hell is that.

The camera refocuses to the pile of money that us scattered on the group

CLOSE UP ON COLE'S CASH

FRANK

Don't get any ideas god damn it.

JOEY

We will not hesitate.

PAULO

Guys they set us up do we shoot?

FRANK (CONT'D)

You set us up Kid! Don't get stupid. You make a move your done

BRYCE

Don't worry little man we're walking out of here and that Cole's cash is coming with us

PAULO

What?

BRYCE

No one is getting hurt and no ones walking out of here with that cash unless they are us.

PAULO

...Its Cole's cash.

FRANK

And your not gonna lay a finger on any of it if I have anything to say about-

PAULO

...ITS COLES CASH.

They all look at Paulo puzzled.

PAULO (CONT'D)

It's- Its... Why is everyone looking at me like I'm crazy.

ANDRE

I think were all just confused as to why you keep pointing out what kind of money it is.

PAULO

What kind of Money?

JOEY

Is your friend having an episode or something?

Paulo squints in disbelief

BRYCE

This is his first time on an exchange okay maybe if you stopped pointing these things in his face he could calm down a bit.

PAULO

I'm sorry maybe I am going crazy I'm seeing and saying everything correctly yeah. That's Coles cash on the ground over there I'm saying Coles cash. COLES cash.

<p>FRANK</p> <p>Seriously your boy is freaking me out. You better get him in check. I will pull this trigger.</p>	<p>BRYCE</p> <p>You pull the trigger, I pull the trigger, he, him, we all pull the trigger, No one has to have a bad day here</p>
---	---

Frank uncocks the hammer on his gun and re-cock's it.

ANDRE

Get a hold of yourself man things
are gonna start going down.

PAULO

Alright seriously what's happening
here.

They all pause.

PAULO (CONT'D)

I mean what the hell is this Andre.
You told me I come with you after
school that we could make some real
money here.

Andre nods

PAULO (CONT'D)

In what universe is coles cash
considered real money.

FRANK

Hey, I know your from a different
generation where you all have your
bit coins and your block chain.
Some of us adults prefer to put our
faith in something tangible.

PAULO

Wait, wait a second hold on. You-
you??? You think this is a good
deal. Like for real. Are you guys
playing a prank or just dumb.

Frank and joey shift their weapons to show aggression and
offense.

PAULO (CONT'D)

Oh come on.

BRYCE

Whats a matter kid, are too good
for this now because its a little
late to back out.

PAULO
Did you snort some of that shit
before we came here

BRYCE
Why would I

PAULO
CAUSE YOU ALL SOUND LIKE YOUR FROM
CRAZY TOWN.

They all look as if he's speaking a different language

PAULO (CONT'D)
Coles cash isn't Money. Its not
real Money. We all know this
right?... Right!?

JOEY
...Well No money is-

PAULO
Don't even think about saying no
money is real, you take your coles
cash to the bank and see if-

BRYCE
You know your getting real
aggressive for some ones first day
on the job.

PAULO
How pissed would you be if you
ordered a hamburger and a Fischer
price toy came out the kitchen-
that's what's happening right now.

BRYCE
(trailing off)
My kid loves Fischer price.

FRANK
It sounds like your crew needs to
work some things out.

PAULO
I CANT DECIDE WHOES MORE OF AN
IDIOT RN

FRANK
Hey you better get a beat on your
boy.

PAULO

They just found this stuff man and you tell them that you made a deal with corporate department store coupons- I need to hear the argument you gave he gave in.

FRANK

We discussed the hondueres Peso but agreed to deal in a more stable currency

PAULO

And naturally the next choice was Coles cash

ANDRE

Well that's how we saw it... You know it was funny they pretty much said it at like the exact same time.

FRANK

Almost the exact same- I think I was a little ahead but it clicked mentally at the same moment

ANDRE (CONT'D)

That's the way we saw it.

PUALO

YOU KNEW TOO. You realize your giving away what looks like 60,grand of coke go on savings for already discounted merchandise store. You cant trade Cole's cash for real money.

All but Paulo say in unison

ALL

But they can make great deals even better.

Paulo is speechless

JOEY

Wait, who said anything about coke... He's not talking about the bullshit parmesan you guys brought us.

Paulo shifts to confusion. It also brings a sense of exhaustion to be feeling this way again.

BRYCE

Listen man I know were in a standoff right now but I'm staring to get real concerned for the kid.

(MORE)

BRYCE (CONT'D)
let's all just lower the ink guns
okay. No ones gotta go to the
cleaners today.

Paulo is a broken man. He sits on the ground. He doesn't know
what to do with himself.

FRANK
...Okay just know I'm watching
those 20% off's that are scattered
by his shoes.

ANDRE
Hey man look I know this is scary
being as confused as you are. I'm
not going to pretend to understand
it.

Paulo slowly looks up with a face that reads war crime.

ANDRE (CONT'D)
But what I can do for you is once
we get out of this... I'll buy you
a pair of jeans with my share of
the Coles cash

PAULO
You people are delusional... I'm
beyond words. What's craziest to me
is that some how the choices I've
made Has lead me to be with the
likes of all of you CRAZY!!
LUNATICS WHO ARE CITIZENS OF THE
UNITED DEPARTMENT STORES OF COLES.

He shifts his attention to Joey and frank

PAULO (CONT'D)
AND YOU TWO. WHO THE HELL BUYS
THEIR PARMESAN CHEESE
(Gesturing all around him)
LIKE THIS.

JOEY
We don't have to tell you shit man.

Paulo has a sudden shift in demeanor. He's laughing. Lucid.

PAULO
Oh really. Cause I'm the only one
that brought a real gun apparently.

They are all shocked by this calamoring.

FRANK
You telling me you've been
pointing a loaded weapon at
me this whole time.

PAULO (CONT'D)
....I thought I was Going to
a drug deal... I thought I
was going to a drug deal.

JOEY

PAULO
So I brought my moms gun. You know
my mom Andre. My single mom that's
bed-ridden and drowning in medical
debt for whom I'm committing crime
for. But I guess she's gonna have
to ration her meds a little bit
longer.

BRYCE
Okay man that's a little morbid

PAULO
THAT IS MY LIFE!

There's a long pause.

JOEY
We inherited an already financially
struggling ma and paw restaurant

PAULO
What??

JOEY
You asked why we buy parmesan like
this and-

PAULO
I DON'T ACTUALLY CARE

JOEY
(whispering)
I thought that but then-
(ditching that thought)
Frank I don't feel good about this.
We cant pull out if his mom is in
this bad a shape. This much coles
cash could change their life.

FRANK
It dosen't exactly sit right with
me either but I'm not giving
savings like these over for
synthetic cheese.

PAULO
I will for real shoot you.

BRYCE
Paulo... Champ.

The word champ causes Paulo to raise the gun to Bryces head slowly . Bryce casually lowers it back down with his hand.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
I'm sure your a good kid but this
is a piss poor audition for
Hampton's deli meats and cheese.

Paulo looks to Andre.

PAULO
THAT'S YOUR "FAMILY BUSINESS"
(air quotes)

Andre shrugs

ANDRE
What did you think I meant.

Andre is about to fume when suddenly a calm watches over him.
He stands up and begins walking away.

FRANK
Where is he going

ANDRE
I don't. Yo... dude where are you
goin-

PAULO
I'M GOING HOME ANDRE! WE HAVE A PRE-
CALC TEST TOMORROW.

Paulo leaves the way he came muttering to himself.

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JOEY

Well that unfortunate.

FRANK

Because you're currently failing to deliver.

He clicks back the hammer of his gun

ANDRE

Look Just give us what were promised okay. This doesn't have to end bad.

With frank looking to Andre, Bryce goes for the briefcase of money. In the scuffle it opens in Frank's hand. They push off each other and keep pointing and yelling at each other. Paulo then takes a closer look at what fell out of the briefcase.

PAULO

Hold on! hold on! Pause. What the hell is that.

The camera refocuses to the pile of money that us scattered on the group

CLOSE UP ON COLE'S CASH

FRANK

Don't get any ideas god damn it.

JOEY

We will not hesitate.

PAULO

Guys they set us up do we shoot?

FRANK (CONT'D)

You set us up Kid! Don't get stupid. You make a move your done

BRYCE

Don't worry little man we're walking out of here and that Cole's cash is coming with us

PAULO

What?

BRYCE

No one is getting hurt and no ones walking out of here with that cash unless they are us.

PAULO

...Its Cole's cash.

FRANK

And your not gonna lay a finger on any of it if I have anything to say about-

PAULO

...ITS COLES CASH.

They all look at Paulo puzzled.

PAULO (CONT'D)

It's- Its... Why is everyone looking at me like I'm crazy.

ANDRE

I think were all just confused as to why you keep pointing out what kind of money it is.

PAULO

What kind of Money?

JOEY

Is your friend having an episode or something?

Paulo squints in disbelief

BRYCE

This is his first time on an exchange okay maybe if you stopped pointing these things in his face he could calm down a bit.

PAULO

I'm sorry maybe I am going crazy I'm seeing and saying everything correctly yeah. That's Coles cash on the ground over there I'm saying Coles cash. COLES cash.

<p>FRANK</p> <p>Seriously your boy is freaking me out. You better get him in check. I will pull this trigger.</p>	<p>BRYCE</p> <p>You pull the trigger, I pull the trigger, he, him, we all pull the trigger, No one has to have a bad day here</p>
---	---

Frank uncocks the hammer on his gun and re-cock's it.

ANDRE

Get a hold of yourself man things
are gonna start going down.

PAULO

Alright seriously what's happening
here.

They all pause.

PAULO (CONT'D)

I mean what the hell is this Andre.
You told me I come with you after
school that we could make some real
money here.

Andre nods

PAULO (CONT'D)

In what universe is coles cash
considered real money.

FRANK

Hey, I know your from a different
generation where you all have your
bit coins and your block chain.
Some of us adults prefer to put our
faith in something tangible.

PAULO

Wait, wait a second hold on. You-
you??? You think this is a good
deal. Like for real. Are you guys
playing a prank or just dumb.

Frank and joey shift their weapons to show aggression and
offense.

PAULO (CONT'D)

Oh come on.

BRYCE

Whats a matter kid, are too good
for this now because its a little
late to back out.

PAULO
Did you snort some of that shit
before we came here

BRYCE
Why would I

PAULO
CAUSE YOU ALL SOUND LIKE YOUR FROM
CRAZY TOWN.

They all look as if he's speaking a different language

PAULO (CONT'D)
Coles cash isn't Money. Its not
real Money. We all know this
right?... Right!?

JOEY
...Well No money is-

PAULO
Don't even think about saying no
money is real, you take your coles
cash to the bank and see if-

BRYCE
You know your getting real
aggressive for some ones first day
on the job.

PAULO
How pissed would you be if you
ordered a hamburger and a Fischer
price toy came out the kitchen-
that's what's happening right now.

BRYCE
(trailing off)
My kid loves Fischer price.

FRANK
It sounds like your crew needs to
work some things out.

PAULO
I CANT DECIDE WHOES MORE OF AN
IDIOT RN

FRANK
Hey you better get a beat on your
boy.

PAULO

They just found this stuff man and
you tell them that you made a deal
with corporate department store
coupons- I need to hear the
argument you gave he gave in.

FRANK

We discussed the hondueres Peso but
agreed to deal in a more stable
currency

PAULO

And naturally the next choice was
Coles cash

ANDRE

Well that's how we saw it...
You know it was funny they
pretty much said it at like
the exact same time.

FRANK

Almost the exact same- I
think I was a little ahead
but it clicked mentally at
the same moment

ANDRE (CONT'D)

That's the way we saw it.

PUALO

YOU KNEW TOO. You realize your
giving away what looks like
60,grand of coke go on savings for
already discounted merchandise
store. You cant trade Cole's cash
for real money.

All but Paulo say in unison

ALL

But they can make great deals even
better.

Paulo is speechless

JOEY

Wait, who said anything about
coke... He's not talking about the
bullshit parmesan you guys brought
us.

Paulo shifts to confusion. It also brings a sense of
exhaustion to be feeling this way again.

BRYCE

Listen man I know were in a
standoff right now but I'm staring
to get real concerned for the kid.

(MORE)

BRYCE (CONT'D)
let's all just lower the ink guns
okay. No ones gotta go to the
cleaners today.

Paulo is a broken man. He sits on the ground. He doesn't know
what to do with himself.

FRANK
...Okay just know I'm watching
those 20% off's that are scattered
by his shoes.

ANDRE
Hey man look I know this is scary
being as confused as you are. I'm
not going to pretend to understand
it.

Paulo slowly looks up with a face that reads war crime.

ANDRE (CONT'D)
But what I can do for you is once
we get out of this... I'll buy you
a pair of jeans with my share of
the Coles cash

PAULO
You people are delusional... I'm
beyond words. What's craziest to me
is that some how the choices I've
made Has lead me to be with the
likes of all of you CRAZY!!
LUNATICS WHO ARE CITIZENS OF THE
UNITED DEPARTMENT STORES OF COLES.

He shifts his attention to Joey and frank

PAULO (CONT'D)
AND YOU TWO. WHO THE HELL BUYS
THEIR PARMESAN CHEESE
(Gesturing all around him)
LIKE THIS.

JOEY
We don't have to tell you shit man.

Paulo has a sudden shift in demeanor. He's laughing. Lucid.

PAULO
Oh really. Cause I'm the only one
that brought a real gun apparently.

They are all shocked by this calamoring.

FRANK
You telling me you've been
pointing a loaded weapon at
me this whole time.

PAULO (CONT'D)
....I thought I was Going to
a drug deal... I thought I
was going to a drug deal.

JOEY

PAULO
So I brought my moms gun. You know
my mom Andre. My single mom that's
bed-ridden and drowning in medical
debt for whom I'm committing crime
for. But I guess she's gonna have
to ration her meds a little bit
longer.

BRYCE
Okay man that's a little morbid

PAULO
THAT IS MY LIFE!

There's a long pause.

JOEY
We inherited an already financially
struggling ma and paw restaurant

PAULO
What??

JOEY
You asked why we buy parmesan like
this and-

PAULO
I DON'T ACTUALLY CARE

JOEY
(whispering)
I thought that but then-
(ditching that thought)
Frank I don't feel good about this.
We cant pull out if his mom is in
this bad a shape. This much coles
cash could change their life.

FRANK
It dosen't exactly sit right with
me either but I'm not giving
savings like these over for
synthetic cheese.

PAULO
I will for real shoot you.

BRYCE
Paulo... Champ.

The word champ causes Paulo to raise the gun to Bryces head slowly . Bryce casually lowers it back down with his hand.

BRYCE (CONT'D)
I'm sure your a good kid but this
is a piss poor audition for
Hampton's deli meats and cheese.

Paulo looks to Andre.

PAULO
THAT'S YOUR "FAMILY BUSINESS"
(air quotes)

Andre shrugs

ANDRE
What did you think I meant.

Andre is about to fume when suddenly a calm watches over him.
He stands up and begins walking away.

FRANK
Where is he going

ANDRE
I don't. Yo... dude where are you
goin-

PAULO
I'M GOING HOME ANDRE! WE HAVE A PRE-
CALC TEST TOMORROW.

Paulo leaves the way he came muttering to himself.

THE FRENCH DISASTER

Written by

F. Liam Devlin

Based on, Any and Every Coming of Age Film
Circa 2000-2006

INT. HOUSE-DAY

ALEX (20) wakes up to his alarm playing *The Rare Occasions-Notion* and steps in a small puddle of water beside his bed. He trips over himself as a result clumsily. A montage of him getting ready ensues. He puts on his pants he opens his door to Sandra (49) his mother dressed in a vibrant colorful samba shirt. *

ALEX

Well that settles it i'm still dreaming.

SANDRA

Good morning my love. Or should I say buenas noches.

ALEX

What are you wearing?

He passes her to go to the bathroom.

SANDRA

Oh what this old thing it was just lying around.

ALEX

Seriously.

SANDRA

This is a traditional samba outfit.

ALEX

(brushing teeth)

Why do you have that.

SANDRA

How many times do I have to tell you don't talk to me when you're brushing I can't understand you. So rude.

ALEX

Why do you have a traditional samba outfit.

SANDRA

Its the newest class at the Rec-center. The dance studio is still taken up by the hip hop class but the adult quidditch club had to disband after the accident with the Porter boy.

ALEX

Well if were appropriating clothing
I guess samba is better than hip
hop... somehow. Has dad seen the
make ov-

Alex opens the bathroom door. His father MATTHEW (51) is
wearing a matching outfit and a fruit hat.

MATTHEW

Mornin' champ.

ALEX

... No yeah, that tracks.

Alex looks towards the window and hears a bike bell. He
quickness his getting ready pace.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Griffin is outside I got to go.

MATTHEW

Don't forget breakfast.

SANDRA

Hasta mondana

ALEX

(yelling leaving) you
don't know Spanish.

Matthew hands Alex a banana from his head.

CUT TO:

EXT. FRONT YARD- DAY

Alex walks outside to meet GRIFFIN (19). He is in possession
of a tandem bicycle

GRIFFIN

It's an investment.

ALEX

I'm for sure still dreaming.

Alex and griffin speak simultaneously

ALEX (CONT'D)
I'm not getting on. its
upsetting on so many levles,
well im sorry you lack
critical thinking skills were
gonna be late lets just go

The two leave alex's place on separate bikes, alex is riding along as griffin struggles to keep up with half the necessary man power.

GRIFFIN
Whats the deal with the banana?

ALEX (CONT'D)
Spanish inquisition.

They move over to the side of the road to let the car behind them pass EMMA (21) matches pace with them. She's a few years ahead of alex and griffin. Alex has always liked her.

EMMA
Morning boys. Nice bike.

GRIFFIN
Hey emma.

ALEX
Hey Em.

GRIFFIN
Hey- hey emma, when are you gonna
grow some compassion and start
giving me a ride to class.

EMMA
When you start selling me homework
answers that are actually right
I'll start to think about it.

She pick shoots alex a look he laughs. She laughs at his laugh and she drives off. Griffin looks at alex and notices the blushing

GRIFFIN
(under breath)
Here we go- Am I gonna have to hear about how perfect she is for another 2 years or are you ever gonna do something about it some time soon.

ALEX

I thought I told you to stop
selling homework answers

*
*

GRIFFIN

Ignore me all you want but you need
to get it out of your head that
You're forever the sophomore that
threw up on her in her basement.

*
*
*
*

ALEX

Yeah well other people have
memories that cast further back
than 2 weeks. Look I swear to you
one day it'll happen but the timing
isn't right.

*
*
*
*
*

GRIFFIN

Hey. Man just looking out for your
fragile baby bird soul. Need to let
it jump from the nest eventually.
Its obvious she likes you.

*
*
*

ALEX

Worry about keeping up, you're
criminally slow right now. How is
it obvious.

*
*
*

GRIFFIN

Im telling you she does. Ask her to
go to the carnival with you.

*
*

ALEX

...okay, I'll do it.

*

GRIFFIN

Christ Alex I was joking.

*

ALEX

But you just said-

*
*

GRIFFIN

She may like you need like a month
prep time minimum before-

*
*
*

ALEX

No you know what screw you she's
into me you said so yourself...

*
*

GRIFFIN

... It's just that easy. Its
like playing a game. A
button, B button. A button,
alex does what ever I want

ALEX (CONT'D)

It's rude and I told you I
don't like it. Some people
don't find pride in
manipulation tactics

*

Alex thinks on this as he rides. They continue peddling as
they approach the community college. *

E/I COMUNITY COLLEGE- DAY *

XCU ALEX IS DOODLING ON A PAPER

He looks up at the teacher he isn't really paying attention,
he shifts his focus over to Emma he is enamored by her. *

MS ON EMMA

The camera racks focus and griffin is behind her miming "let"
"baby" "bird" "fly" *

RS ON ALEX

He shoots Griffin a dirty look *

MS ON EMMA

The camera racks focus again. Emma is looking at alex mostly
confused but a little upset by the face.

RS ON ALEX

Alex tries to play it off cool. He fails. The teacher
dismisses them

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Alex catches up with Emma down the hall. Emma is working on a
sketch pad erasing and blending as she moves. *

ALEX

Hey. Em

EMMA

Hey alex uh- what was-

ALEX

Oh that back in class. There was
this really dumb... bird behind-
not important. *

They nervously talk over each other

EMMA
Oh- oh okay yeah Cause I-
okay gotcha, because I was
like whats he doing- no its
fine- its all good

ALEX (CONT'D)
Yeah sorry about that- I get
how- sorry if that was-
didn't mean to confuse you *

ALEX (CONT'D) *

... Is this the latest and *

greatest? *

EMMA *

Oh no this is just something to *

keep me sane throughout Schwans's *

lectures. *

Alex takes in the sketch for a while *

EMMA (CONT'D) *

Its dark I'm aware. *

ALEX *

No- well I mean yeah definitely but *

theres a beauty to it for sure. *

The comment makes Emma smile. They walk together in silence *

for a awkward amount of time *

ALEX (CONT'D)

Hey, quick question?

EMMA

Oh, I actually had one too

ALEX

You do?

EMMA

Yeah but you can go first. *

ALEX *

Im sorry I didnt mean to cut you *

off. Uh well I I was thinking about *

uh- there this uh- wacky

coincidence that the carnival is in

town- I don't know if you like that

stuff- I know I love that type of

thing- well love is a strong word

but. I find enjoyment in them. Find

it in a lot of things-

EMMA

Would you like to go to the

carnival with me?

ALEX

... Yeah that's what I was trying
to ask, I get it if thats not
something your into I totally-

*

*

EMMA

No- no I'm asking you. Would you
like to go to the carnival with me?

Alex is floored.

EMMA (CONT'D)

Alex?

ALEX

Yes- Yeah id like that very much-
please.

EMMA

Great, can we just try to stay away
from the clowns. Because you know.
FREAKYYYYYYYY. Ha ha.

*

ALEX

ABSOLUTELY, I mean yes for sure.

EMMA

Cool... Well. What are we waiting
for.

*

*

She walks ahead of him as they begin to exit frame.

CUT TO:

I/E. ON THE ROAD - MID DAY

Alex and emma drive and listen to *Doc Aquatic- Arrived*. The
music on the radio continues throughout there date.

*

*

CUT TO:

EXT. CARNIVAL- APPROACHING DUSK

Alex and Emma play some carnival games. They play put-put
golf the walk around eating cotton candy they are having a
good time. Alex still seems nervous sometimes but hides it
well from Emma. They take a ride on a Ferris wheel and watch
some fire works. They hold hands at the apex of the ride.
They walk back too Emmas car laughing

*

EMMA

Wait seriously that was you? I didn't even remember.

ALEX

Well that makes me feel slightly better. I mean I really ruined that top.

*
*
*

EMMA

Oh I remember the top, you should feel bad it was beautiful and you destroyed it... god and there was so much I remember now you must of drank so much.

*
*
*
*
*

ALEX

Oh yeah plastered. Definitely hadn't learned my limit yet

*
*

EMMA

Well... id say that you more than made up for it tonight.

*
*

ALEX

...Well I'm glad.

*

Emma phone buzzes and sees 13 missed text.

EMMA

Oh shit.

ALEX

What.

EMMA

I forgot to pick up my baby sister from her soccer game I'm like an hour late.

ALEX

Oh no.

EMMA

Im sorry i really need to-

ALEX

Oh no god are you kidding go. Go. You gotta get her.

Emma pauses

EMMA

Tonight was great Alex.

*

She kisses him on the cheek and continues to walk to her car.

ALEX
(fearing he's missing a moment)
Do you want to come have dinner at my house tomorrow? *

EMMA
(yelling back)
Id love too. What time.

ALEX
Great. We usually start at 7.

EMMA
Text me.

She turns around and picks up pace. Alex punches the air a bunch in celebration then calms down for a second and looks around. *

ALEX
...wheres my bike

CUT TO:

EXT. BRANCBURG COMUNITY COLLEGE -NIGHT

Alexs bike is locked to the bike rack. It gets stolen. *

FADE IN: *

EXT. RESIDENTIAL ROAD -LATE IN THE DAY

Alex and Griffin are ridding bikes back to alexs house. The conversation cuts back and forth between their heads *

ALEX
Then she kissed me on the cheek and went home.

GRIFFIN
I know she did. Do you wanna know how I know. Its the forth time you've told me. Today.

ALEX
Then how can you still think shes not into me.

GRIFFIN

I didn't say that I said you're in
over your head. I do however still
think we can brain storm our way
out of this for you.

ALEX

I learned a long time ago that
pretty much all of your ideas
leaves me worse off than before so
excuse me if I'm not so quick to
jump at it.

The next shot reveals that they are on the tandem bike.

ALEX (CONT'D)

The bike doesn't count.

GRIFFIN

The bike absoulty counts.

They arrive at Alex's house.

GRIFFIN (CONT'D)

...You mind if I use your bathroom

ALEX

No time. Gotta figure out what to
wear what to talk about-

GRIFFIN

Look, Im routing for you here dude
I just want to help. I've got way
more experience than you do when it
comes to this stuff. I mean its the
second date and you invited her for
dinner with your parents.

ALEX

So?

GRIFFIN

Sorry I emphasized wrong. You
invited her to dinner with YOUR
parents.

ALEX

I don't know what your talking
about.

Alex opens the door and his parents are dressed in full mime
apparel Sandra is a happy faced mime and Matthew a sad face
one. They are doing the box trick.

GRIFFIN
 (monotone hitting every
 word separately)
You're right what ever was I
thinking I'm sure this will go over
great.

*

Alex moves him out of the door way and closes the door.

 GRIFFIN (CONT'D)
Hey what about the bathroom?

 ALEX
Theres a bush down the road happy
plant watering.

 GRIFFIN
 (though the door)
See you at my place when this goes
to shit.

*
*
*
*

Sandra looks at Alex and smiles and waves then she moves her
hand over face and it turns to a frown and points to him.

*

CLOSEUP ON ALEX

He is frowning in the same way his mother did

 ALEX
What are you doing. Emma is going
to be here any minute.

Sandra pulls out a card.

 ALEX (CONT'D)
 (reading)
Hello darling. Can you guess what
new class your father and I are
taking. Okay I see very nice, id
love to hear all about it but emma
will here any sec so can you too
get changed.

*

Sandra pulls out another card.

 ALEX (CONT'D)
Are assignment from Missure Allen
was to be mimes for a full 48
hours. Then well share what we
learned next mee- thats not
happening. You're kidding me right?

*

Sandra and Matthew dont move indicating they are serious

*
*

ALEX (CONT'D)

Your not kidding. This is legit?
This is insane. This is actually
insanity. Dad help me out here...
no you too, you're going to indulge
in the madness. Sure thats fine
except its *NOT* fine, are we serious
people.

*
*
*
*
*
*
*

Matthew looks around for a moment. And he turns on a fan.
Sandra begins to act like she's being blown away into the
back yard

ALEX (CONT'D)

Great thank you. Thats a lot of
help, very reassuring I'm giddy Im
not the only sane person in this
house

*
*

Matthew checks to make sure sandra is out of earshot

MATTHEW

Im real sorry about this bud. I
told her that maybe we should put
this off for tonight but she had
already started miming before I
could get through to her.

*

ALEX

This is bat shit you need to try
harder.

MATTHEW

I cant. Im already in to deep. You
should have seen her when I told
her I wanted to stop the Samba
classes I had to offer this class
so she would stop crying.

ALEX

Im going to cry.

MATTHEW

Son, you don't understand, its more
than that, I know how important
this dinner is to you but... your
mother and I haven't been having
sex for years now but, for some
reason since these classes-

*

*
*

ALEX

Now I'm really gonna cry

The door bell rings.

ALEX (CONT'D)
(pulls hair)

*

MATTHEW
What ever happens out there just
know I'm sorry.

Alex makes his way the door trying not to have a panic attack
silhouettes are able to be seen through the frosted glass panes.

*

EMMA
Hello. Is someone there.

Alex stops freaking out, collects himself, then quickly opens
the door about halfway.

*

ALEX
HEY EM- wow. You look really
beautiful.

*

EMMA
Thank you, thats very sweet. Uh-
your not going to believe this I
could have sworn I saw griffin down
the road peeing in a bush.

ALEX
Sounds like something he would come
up with.

EMMA
...May I come in.

*

ALEX
Yes, please.

She begins to breach the door way but Alex closes the door to
about a quarter open

*

ALEX (CONT'D)
Uh actually really quickly I should
give you a quick warning about my
parents.

EMMA
Oh okay is there anything I should
be worried about. They aren't like
cannibals or anything right.

ALEX
Oh no... that would be... far
simpler. They're just a little.
Eccentric

*

EMMA

Don't worry I'm sure your parents
are only as embarrassing as
everyone else's.

ALEX

Doubtful, please come in

EMMA

(flirty)

Besides Im here for you not- SON OF
A FUCK!

*

Sandra is walking up the non existent stairs from behind the
couch. She's waving and smiling very dramatically expressing
joy at the sight of. Emma turns around immediately and heads
for the door. Alex cuts her off.

ALEX

What, what, whats wrong.

EMMA

(whispering)

How the hell did that thing get in
here?

*

ALEX

Unfortunately its the physical
manifestation of my mothers
delusions. Her and my dad are
taking this class and.

EMMA

Im terrified of clowns Alex.

ALEX

What?

EMMA

I told you yesterday Im deathly
afraid of clowns.

*

ALEX

Like a phobia.

EMMA

Yes like a phobia. Coulrophobia.
Its a real thing I'm diagnosed by
my therapist. Why didn't you tell
me your parents were freaking
clowns.

*

ALEX

I just discovered this myself a few minutes ago. And technically they're mimes not-

Emmas face changes and alex instantly realizes that wasn't the right thing to say

ALEX (CONT'D)

But what is a mime if not a french clown. Look I've tried my hardest but theres no way mo mom is gonna drop the act. And my dad is gonna keep playing along with her because he doesn't want to go back to not having sex -

*

EMMA

That is really way to much to be putting on me right now.

ALEX

My point is I totally get it if you would want to leave this is just. Im so upset with them. I'm outraged.

*

*

*

EMMA

(hesitantly)

... This isn't a full time thing.

ALEX

If you mean the mimes no last week was samba

Emma lets out a half chuckle

ALEX (CONT'D)

I wish I were joking.

*

EMMA

... Screw it. I think I can make it though one dinner. Carol were gonna have a lot to unpack next session.

INT. KITCHEN TABLE- NIGHT

Alex, Emma and Matthew are sitting at the dinner table in complete silence. Emma is shaking to a degree that is almost unnoticeable. Alex is desperately trying to act like this is normal. Matthew has a look on his face that tries to display how sorry he is. He goes to open his mouth but he then looks towards the kitchen and backs off immediately.

*

ALEX

So... This is my dad Matt... He's a bank-

Sandra rises up from underneath the table as if she were riding an elevator.

EMMA

Ahhhhhhh- aye yiah yiah that is a very lovely hat. Mrs Thorne. Very very nice. Lovely to meet you.

*

Emmas breath rate increases.

ALEX

This is my mother Sandra. She does... well she does this mostly.

EMMA

She's incredibly talented.

Emma is frantically trying to avoid eye contact with alex's parents hitting the table every once in a while, crossing all manner of appendages. A ding is heard in the kitchen. Sandra goes back to the kitchen her head moving slower behind her body as she travels.

ALEX

Hey um, are you sure your doing alright, you seem very, well for lack of a better word freaked out.

*
*
*

EMMA

I'm not sure why you would think that.

*

ALEX

Well if I'm being honest. the fingernails digging into the chair thing...

*
*
*

*

Emma has a death grip on the arms of her dinner chair.

ALEX (CONT'D)

It's just My grandpa actually built them, along with the table. Its actually the last thing he gave my dad before he died. I can tell he desperately wants to say something to you but he won't due to the aforementioned sex thing-

*
*
*
*
*
*
*

EMMA

Im not sure how you can understand
what your dad feels because the
only read I'm getting off that face
is sad and murder.

*
*

Sandra enters again from the kitchen holding a large silver
dish cover and dish into the room, emma is startled by
Sandras presence. She begins to bring the food into the
dinning room but the food stays locked in place. Sandra does
the ballon routine until the anxiety causes Emma to have an
outburst.

*

EMMA (CONT'D)

Just move the damn dish please!! Im
Sorry- Im sorry please... Im just
so hungry I- I- I just cant wait to
eat.

Sandra puts the dish on the table and with a great deal of
posturing lifts up the cover and reveals a totally empty
plate.

EMMA (CONT'D)

(under breath)
Fucking of course.

*

ALEX

Why can I smell chicken, I can
smell the chicken tell me you
didn't make a chicken to get the
smell of chicken in the air for a
no chicken bit.

*

*

Sandra begins cutting a none existent chicken an serving
herself a plate. She takes a bite out of it while Alex begins
to lay into her about not actually cooking and ruining the
night. Sandra then pulls a small chicken bone out of her
mouth.

EMMA

Okay I cant handle this anymore.

*

*

Alex tries to calm down Emma. Sandra takes a sip from an
empty glass makes a face then spits out water.

ALEX

I said enough with- wait the f- how
did you do that... Wait Emma-

*

Emma storms out.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Emma! Wait!.... Okay what the hell.

Sandra begins to dive into another bit.

ALEX (CONT'D)

No were way past that cut this shit out. How old are you two, five? What life so boring you cant stop playing pretend for 5 seconds? What the hell kind of parenting is that. The two of you just ruined my chances with the most amazing girl I've ever had the chance to even dream of being with. And now thats gone. God Griffin was right- I'm well aware I don't deserve shit in this world, but it be nice to have half a chance anyway. But I don't get that wether I cant find the words to talk to her or the two of you throwing on whatever costumes you think will save you're marriage next. Why cant you just be normal parents and have an affair or see a sex therapist or something, literally anything normal.

*
*

*
*

*
*

*

The silence in the air hangs for a while.

SANDRA

(sheepishly)

Why did you stopped having sex with me?

*
*
*

MATTHEW

...?

SANDRA

For a year now it feels like the only way I can get you to touch me anymore is if were- well if were like this.

MATTHEW

I guess I could be asking you the same question? What about this gets little sandy all rilled up.

Alex wretches at little sandy.

SANDRA

I don't like this. Id love for you to just want to fuck me without all this extra stuff but lately it seems like you wont lay a finger on me... let alone in me.

*

ALEX

For the record I meant you should
discuss this in private not around
your adult son-

MATTHEW

It just seemed like it as never the
right time. Ive wanted to but I- I
don't know.

SANDRA

So it dosnet have to do with us
getting older. Getting less...
sexy.

MATTHEW

Honey. You are the sexiest little
mime this side of Parie. Nothing is
ever gonna change that.

Matthew moves in to kiss sandra. Alexs upset shifts from
being angry at his parents to being annoyed that he cant be
angry anymore. The exchange between them gives him the worlds
faintest smile. The parents kissing becomes more intense,
Alex's eyes widen as he about faces and exits his house.

*
*
*
*

EXT. ALEXS HOUSE- NIGHT

Alex steps out the front door an stares at the street. He
looks closer and Emma is sitting in her car engine off. Alex
approaches her.

*

ALEX

Have you had anything to drink
tonight ma'am.

Emma notices alex

EMMA

Probably should have.

ALEX

Well work on your counter
interrogation skills they're in the
trash right now.

EMMA

Great.

ALEX

So this is the part where I
apologies, I guess

EMMA

You don't have to apologize...

*

ALEX

I'm really sorry. We should have just gone to a movie or, you know, literally anything other than what just happened back there. I just didn't want to change anything and risk mucking up whatever little ground I was able to gain here. I just get so nervous around you

EMMA

Alex.

*

*

ALEX

And I just thought if I could control what was going on- I should have realized theres no controlling any of that.

*

*

EMMA

Alex.

*

*

ALEX

And that I shouldn't need to. So again, Im sorry.

*

EMMA

You didn't do anything you don't have to apologies

*

*

ALEX

I don't?

*

*

EMMA

No. I knew what I was putting myself through. Granted I was shocked there at the jump but when it came down to it I decided to stay. I wanted to push myself and what I'm comfortable with and I did.

*

*

*

*

*

*

*

*

*

ALEX

But-

*

*

EMMA

A-a-a, Im my own person I have my own agency. I control what it is I do.

*

*

*

*

ALEX

Huh... then why do I feel bad about it.

EMMA

Because... your a good guy, and its clear you care... a lot...

Emmas words bring alex a sense of relief

ALEX

Alright... then Im not sor-nope that felt wrong.

EMMA

Why do you feel like you always have to apologize.

ALEX

I don't know... ah thats not true... I get so nervous around you I can't explain it. I mean the first time I ever tried to talk to you I spilled my lunch all over your shirt.

EMMA

Yeah but who can blame the drunk guy for throwing up.

ALEX

Can you blame him while he was sober? I don't know when I'm around you the nerves just go crazy. Anything and everything about you is just... its perfect and I don't feel that way about myself. Im just trying to keep up.

EMMA

I'm not perfect Alex. And if you try to be... you're only going to fail. So don't. Just focus on being you. Besides... he's the guy I got a thing or anyway.

Alex blushes.

EMMA (CONT'D)

Well whoever you decide to be this whole thing does still have me a little freaked so, I think I'm going to head home.

Alex hangs his head in slight disappointment, but recognizes
and respects the decision. *

ALEX EMMA (CONT'D)
Yeah, No thats thats I do ask that the next dinner
understandable leans closer to normal than *

ALEX (CONT'D)
...Uh definitely, for sure, well no
promises with this crowd but I
think its safe to say mimes are
over with. I think they figured out
the whole not having sex thing. *

Emma turns on the car the radio is playing *Rex Orange County-
Television*. They continue the conversation as emma pulls
away. *

EMMA
Good to hear, well I'll see you
latter mime boy. *

ALEX
Mime boy, okay mime boy, thats
something.

EMMA
Oh its something.

ALEX
That gonna stick you think or maybe
we can workshop it.

EMMA
Don't think so. *

ALEX
Got it. *

Alex watches her drive away. *

RS OF ALEX HAPPY LOOKING DOWN THE ROAD *

CUT TO: *

INT. GRIFFINS BASEMENT- NIGHT

Griffin looks at the clock and notices its late into the
night and alex wont be over.

GRIFFIN
Son of a bitch.

CUT TO:

EXT. HIGHWAY- NIGHT

Emma is driving home she has a smile on her face.

CUT TO:

INT. ALEXS HOUSE- NIGHT

Alexs parents are throwing away the costumes. They very
lightly samba together.

CUT TO:

INT. ALEXS BEDROOM- NIGHT

Alex enters his room and closes the door. The song pauses on
the word "choose" as the door closes. Alex walks over to his
bed and lies down.

CLOSE UP OVER HEAD OF ALEX ON THE BED

Thoughts are racing though alex's head he blurts out.

 ALEX
...What just happened?

CUT TO BLACK.

CUT TO BLACK ON LYRICS "WHAT ABOUT ME."

Credits

END

Choices

By F. Liam Devlin

CAST

Tony Bruno **Willy Teare**
Nona **Kiya Nealy**
Morinne **Kiya Nealy**
Paulie Romano **Ari Menes**
Mikey Murphy **F. Liam Devlin**
The Don **Johnny Mardquat**
Sam **Karl Brooks**
Interrogator **Karl Brooks**

CHARACTERS

Tony Bruno, (18) Wishes for a life with excitement and to be able to take care of his grandmother and guardian.

Nona, (84) Grandmother of Tony and Paulie, her health is deteriorating and is always worried about her boys.

Paulie Romano, (27) Cousin of Tony on his Mothers side, married to The Dons Daughter.

Mikey Murphy, (25) Childhood friend of Paulie and by extension Tony.

Don, (54) Crime Boss of Weehawken, Hot Tempered and Incredibly violent. Father in law to Paulie

Sam Wall, (49) Right hand man to Don, incredibly threatening and standoffish

Interrogator, (49) Has gathered incriminating evidence related to Tony, Paulie, and Mikey. Is attempting to get Tony to flip on Don.

Time and Place

2002 to 2004, Weehawken NJ

Lights up

(**Nona** is standing back turned to the audience standing over a stove at dusk. The set is minimal as it transforms from location to location. It currently vaguely resembles a small compact kitchen with a cooking area and a tiny table. Her grandson **Tony** who she raises enters into the room with great excitement)

Tony

Is he home? Was that him?

Nona

What do you think? Of course, he's not. He's late. He's always late. He would be late to my own funeral if he even bothered to come. He gets that from his father.

Tony

Come on Nona cut Paulie some slack. He's got his own stuff he's gotta deal with. And he's taking care of us.

Nona

If he really wanted to take care of us, he would be here setting the table.

Tony

You're right Nona, but let me ask this would there even be a table to set if we couldn't afford to buy the lovely food, which you so beautifully prepare for us every Sunday?

Nona

se non la smetti ora lo giuro...

Tony

Relax Nona I'm just kidding around I-

(Tony notices a pile of over due bills)

Christ Nona how long have these been here?

NONA

It's nothing dont worry. Stir.

(Tony starts stirring gravy)

TONY

You can't just let these sit Nona, if you do they'll only get worse.

NONA

Don't worry Stir.

TONY

I'm serious Nona some of these are months old I-

NONA

Enough!

(**Nona** loses her balance. Tony rushes to support her)

TONY

Nona! Are you okay??

NONA

I'm fine sweetie this stove is so hot, I'm fine really please.

TONY

You sure?

(Nona nods)

TONY

Okay I dont mean to stress you out Nona. It's just we can't afford to be owing anymore money than we already do.

NONA

What money? I have no money.

TONY

We have money we just don't have a lot of money. That's why we need to stay on top of-

(Lights shine through the kitchen window and squeaky break pads are heard.)

TONY

They're here.

NONA

He's 5 minutes late. Why bother coming at all at this point

TONY

You're impossible-

(**Nona** Raises a spoon to hit **Tony**)

TONY

I'll go get the door.

(**Tony** opens the door and a **Paulie** and **Mikey** walk in.)

PAULIE

Hey young man can you do me a favor I'm looking for a little runt about the size of a dinner table. Lives in his own little world. Not the slightest clue what the fuck is going on around him.

TONY

Hi Paulie, it's great to see you too.

PAULIE

Look at this guy huh- look at the pair of legs on this mother fucker. How does our grandma keep you in fuckin pants?

TONY

She buys me shorts.

PAULIE

I can't believe it, get a load of this guy he's got smarts quick as a whip this one.

MIKEY

You look good Tony.

TONY

Thanks, Mikey

PAULIE

Tell me where's the old bat, I've got something for her.

TONY

She's by the stove. Be careful though she's got it out for you right now-

PAULIE

What's she mad for this time. What I do now -
For the love of- (to Mikey) Now that's what I
Call a look out huh Mikey.

TONY

for not being early to set the table.
It's like the one thing she asks. She's
Punctual she appreciates being on time.

(Paulie exits)

TONY

Look out?

MIKEY

That's your cousin being a jack off nothing new.

TONY

Right I'm sure... So how did last night go? What was it like working with Paulie again?

MIKEY

It wasn't nothing special.... It's boring I don't know what to tell you.

TONY

Oh, come on.

MIKEY

Look it's no different than when you asked last week or the week before that. Or really any week for the last 2 months. I ain't saying shit and you- you shouldn't be asking shit neither.

TONY

Why not? I'm family I can keep a secret. Worried I'll tell your boss you spilled?

MIKEY

Not funny. Don't even joke about that. and they're not the ones I'm even worried about. It's your Nona. She'd kill the both of us if she heard you talking like this and I like livin. Plus, I don't want you looking to-

TONY

Relax, I'm not looking to become al Capone okay? I'm just trying to hear what you got going on. We've cancelled our cable you two are my only source of entertainment these days.

MIKEY

Where your cable go? "Cancelled" why'd you go and do that?

TONY

We made some budgetary restraints and the four bills I found means were going to make a few more. By the way if Nona brings it up just nod your head when she says it's that no good repairman's fault.

MIKEY

How much more do you guys need because—

TONY

None. I can't be taking anymore from Paulie and I'm not going to start taking from you

MIKEY

Just take a little bit. Don't think this is pity.
You're like family and I want to help- fine
ok

Okay ill stop, I'm stopping
her

TONY

I'm not going to take it Mikey. I'm serious
I'm grabbing Nona if you don't cut it out
you think I'm being up tight try and offer

Money.

TONY

Just give me a little taste of my favorite tv show. The real scumbags of New Jersey

MIKEY

Hilarious- listen to me Tone. Drop this one. Storyteller is a frowned upon trait in my profession. Be blessed you know what little you do.

TONY

Oh, come on Mikey quit it with that.

Treating me like a dumb kid.

MIKEY

Quit with what.

You are a kid.

MIKEY (Cont)

But you're not dumb, you're smart that's why I can't understand why you're dedicating so much of that beautiful fuckin mind of yours to this-

TONY

I already know what you guys get up to Me you and Paulie and you have been running around since the moment we even could start a little bit of trouble.

MIKEY

And you forget me and Paulie have been running around longer than that. This stuff is just different. Now I'm the one that's goanna grab Nona you hear me. Quit it.

Paulie enters

PAULIE

That old broad has got more spirt in her than a fucking graveyard. Hahahahah, So Tony. How are the nuns at St. Johns? how they handling the best and the brightest these days?

MIKEY

There's no way you're talking about yourself.

PAULIE

Oh what, you think you're better than me? This guy he thinks he's better than me. Take a look at Big shot Mikey-

TONY

They don't take to me all too well Paulie.

PAULIE

Do they know you're my cousin? Tell them you're related to big Paulie that'll turn some heads.

MIKEY

They probably already know must be why they hate him.

PAULIE

I invite you to my grandmother's house and this is how you show your gratitude. I'm disgusted. I'm best friends with a monster.

TONY

I'm fed up with St Johns.

MIKEY

How are the grades?

TONY

I'm almost top of my class but that's not the problem. I just feel trapped. Really, I'm just waiting until I can just work.

PAULIE

Well if it's a job you're after then...

(Mikey shoots Tony a look)

TONY

Uh not interested.

PAULIE

You don't even know what I'm gonna say.

TONY

You're gonna tell me to work for you, but I'm not looking for that type of work.

PAULIE

That type?

MIKEY

Here we go.

PAULIE

Is there something you have to say about

What I do because, please say it with your chest

No don't, don't do that what other way can I take that
If

Than as an insult.

TONY

Why do you always take it like that?!

That's never what I mean, I told you, I
told you I need stable work. No risk.

Worst comes to worse I have to be
around for Nona

PAULIE

No, you're right what was I thinking. I mean you could practically mark my asshole as a secondary residency the way you're always asking me and Mikey about the job. But you got no interest I understand now.

MIKEY

Look Paulie I already told him it's a bad a idea.

PAULIE

And when did you become such a high-level thinker- Don't pay him no mind. Look Tony. I'm gonna level with you. You really need a job. I'm not sure I can really keep up with the loans

TONY

I know Paulie. I appreciate everything you've been doing to help us out, I know that's what you're doing even now. But I will find a job okay I just don't think I can work with you.

PAULIE

Look kid I know you're doing all you can I see that. I forget how young you are. Only because of how capable you are. I just want to see you shine. Live to your full potential.

MIKEY

Paulie...

(Paulie holds up a single finger to Mikey they exchange a series of looks to each other and Paulie seems to pull back)

PAULIE

Maybe I'll tell you more about the job when I know a little more.

TONY

Maybe Paulie. Maybe

(A timer goes off in the background)

I gotta go help with that. Get settled in food will be out in just a second.

PAULIE

Get me a nice fat plate of anything hardy.

TONY

You got it.

(TONY exits)

PAULIE

I don't need you telling me what's best for my cousins.

MIKEY

Paulie I care about the kid. He's like a little brother to me.

PAULIE

Oh yeah... well he's, *My* cousin.

MIKEY

I know your family and I don't want to step on that but be honest with yourself. Is he really made for, you know *Your* family?

PAULIE

Look. I appreciate your concern. Really. It touches my heart. But it's not up to me. A man's gotta make his own choices.

MIKEY

He's a kid-

PAULIE

He may be but that kid is *MY* cousin and I'd never let a thing happen to him. He ain't got a father to teach him how to how to be so pardon fuckin me If I feel that responsibility falls to me. Safest place anyone could be is with family... right.

(Tony re-enters)

TONY

Here you go Paulie.

PAULIE

Thanks kid.

MIKEY

Hey Tone, you know we're not going anywhere I mean you only got what a half year of school left why not focus on that?

PAULIE

Jesus Christ what's a-matter with you- what did I just say.

MIKEY

He's smart, I ain't telling him what to do I'm just putting things in perspective.

TONY

Well Straight A's don't pay the bills. Plus, what's the point of being smart if you can't afford to be? It's not like I'm going to get into any colleges.

MIKEY

That's a lie.

TONY

None that I can afford.

PAULIE

That might be true.

MIKEY

There's good work that don't require college.

TONY

But I don't wanna be like my dad working in some factory till it kills me.

(Paulie gets physically uncomfortable)

MIKEY

Look... Tone-

TONY

Boys, can we talk about something else okay. Mikey I'm not taking a job from Paulie. Paulie I'm gonna find a way to make some cash and pay you back. I'll be fine okay Bruno's always come out on top huh.

PAULIE

I'm done bothering you okay. If that's what you want who the fuck am I to stop you.... But the offer is open.... Fuck that good.

(BLACK OUT)

Paulie and Mikey exit.

The sounds of Paulie's car skirting away is heard as the lights rise back up a little dimmer than before. Tony is by the door watching them leave

Nona

Paulie, Paulie your scarf your-

Tony

They just left Nona you'll have to give it to him next Sunday.

Nona

I look around here and I wonder if I live in a house or a pig sty. Welcome to all don't hang anything up it's not as if anyone lives here or anything

Tony

It's a scarf Nona let me

(Tony grabs the scarf and toys with it.)

Nona

He's a good boy.

Tony

I know that. do you know that?

Nona

He's his father's son that's for sure.

Tony

That reminds me, Me and Paulie spoke earlier and-

Nona

Where's that remote.

(Tony grabs a remote and gives it to Nona)

Tony

Paulie brought up the money issue and you know

Nona

What money issue

Tony

The bills Nona.

Nona

How much.

Tony

Ha, How much. ...Nona are you serious.

Nona

Ohh don't you... eeeerrr

Tony

Either way, I may have to pick up a job so that we can-

(Tony puts away the scarf and in doing so knocks over a box with even more hidden overdue bills. He picks them up)

Tony

Nona, what are these?

Nona

Huh... Let me see.... There just more bills sweetie put them –

Tony

Not these, this Nona.... This is an eviction notice. How long has this-

Nona

Well, if you know what it is, they why ask me about-

Tony

Nona *sigh*, Then I really need a job.

Nona

You don't need a job. You're too young, wait until school is-

Tony

That's the thing Nona I do. You're not bringing in any money anymore and dad life insurance won't last forever. If I just work a shift a day... somewhere it will help keep us in here for a while

Nona

Were fine.

Tony

... well What is it Nona are we fine, or do we have no money. I'm not talking about getting a factory job or anything I mean doing deliveries. Pizza a shi- stuff. If your worried about what happened to dad happing to me, I wouldn't be anywhere near the factories

Nona

No more. We're not speaking about this anymore. Tony where's my remote.

Tony

Its ... right next to you Nona

NOAN

Oh. oh... I think I think I need some rest.

Tony

Do you want any help upstairs Nona I-

Nona

I'm okay tony. Goodnight.

(Nona exits Tony looks at the eviction notice in his hand. He then looks at the red scarf hanging in the closet. Back at the notice. Tony walks over to the landline and gives Paulie a call

Tony

Hey, Paulie, I know you're not home yet but um.... I just want to know what exactly you would need me to do. Just uh swing by and let me know. (he hangs up). What's the worst that can happen.

Interrogator enters

(The lights shift to create a much darker stage with only **Tony** in the spotlight. The feeling of warmth from Tony's home disappears and is replaced by one of drear a voice is heard first from the shadows then visible to the audience but in stature alone. His face remains draped in shadow)

INTERROGATOR

Mr. Bruno

TONY

Lawyer.

INTERROGATOR

Oh no I'm not a lawyer. My name is-

TONY

Law... Yer

INTERROGATOR

Well your welcome to call one or someone who can get you in touch with one, but I think we both know why you don't want to do that.

TONY

You can't be in here without a lawyer or my legal guardian present unless you want a lawsuit the size of Timbuctoo, I recommend you turn your skinny ass around and hop to it.

INTERROGATOR

Is that right?

TONY

As rain.

INTERROGATOR

Well, I hate to be the bearer of bad news but that only applies to minors. Happy birthday by the way. And to the point of that lawyer, well let's just say you're here because some people with even more authority than the Weehawken police department wants you here. And they want me to get to the bottom of some things.

TONY

Okay well I hope what they want to get to the bottom of is all of the ways you can go fuck yourself. Cause that's I'll I have for you.

INTERROGATOR

Hehehe a funny guy. Real funny

(He slams Tony's head on the table)

TONY

Ugh ohhh wat tha fuck

INTERROGATOR

Hilarious in fact.

TONY

Thhhh- Jesus what the fuck is wrong with you. you fucking nuts?

INTERROGATOR

Now that we all understand why I'm here... why don't we circle back to our previous question.

TONY

I'm definitely not telling you shit now you piece of fuck.

INTERROGATOR

Listen here, no matter how much you want to pretend like you got a handle on what's going on here you don't. Ive got some things I want to know, And you will tell me. So... why don't we start here.

(The interrogator presents tony with some photos. The lights shift and the Interrogator exits, tony stands and Paulie enters ushering him along)

TONY

Paulie I cant be here.