

A Little Perspective

"Pilot"

B.J. Mendelson

B.J. Mendelson
BJ@BJMendelson.com
@BJMendelson

COLD OPEN

EXT. MASSENA ECONO LODGE PARKING LOT - MORNING

An old FORD F-150 is parked and running to keep its passengers warm. The truck is custom wrapped to advertise the driver's company, Seaway Landscaping. Their motto? "Dirty Hands, Clean Money." On the radio, Gladys Knight sings "Midnight Train to Georgia".

MARK (O.S.)

Did you pack your medicine, son?

EVAN (O.S.)

Got it right here, Dad.

INT. MARK'S TRUCK - SAME TIME

Inside is EVAN and MARK two normal humans. With them is DOUBT, a literal cartoon character. Evan, early 20s and barely four-foot-two, is in the passenger seat. He's wearing a t-shirt that says STATUS DRAMATICUS and is not at all dressed for the climate.

Evan holds up a medicine bottle for Mark to see, and then puts it back in his pocket. In his lap is a sketch pad that he's drawing something in: A spaceship. And under that, a few creatures that look like the Yip Yips from Sesame Street.

Mark, late 50s, greying, is in the driver seat, dressed for Antartica. Or Mars. He looks over to see what Evan is drawing.

Doubt sits behind them. A hand-drawn cartoon that looks like a Latina Jessica Rabbit. No one can see her, not even Evan.

Evan is uncertain. Mark looks depressed. And Doubt? She's singing along with Gladys like a Broadway star.

DOUBT

He kept dreaming. Dreaming! Oh
that someday he'd be a star.

(quieter)

A superstar but he didn't go far.

Doubt points at Evan.

DOUBT

(singing loud again)

But he sure found out the hard
way.

(MORE)

DOUBT (CONT'D)
That dreams don't always come
true.

EXT. MASSENA ECONO LODGE PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER

The cartoon spaceship EVAN was drawing now hovers in the sky over the Econo Lodge. Evan and Mark exit the truck. They walk to its bed and remove some trash bags with Evan's name on them. This is the first time we notice how short Evan is.

Doubt gets out of the truck holding a Ramona Flowers-like messenger bag. Like her, the messenger bag is animated. It whistles to the tune of "Midnight Train to Georgia".

People emerge from the Econo Lodge for their bus. The bus driver opens the hatch for them. Evan puts his belongings inside, then gets on.

Doubt removes a cartoon knife from her messenger bag. The knife scowls at the people lining up to board the bus.

DOUBT
Don't touch my stuff! I'll cut
you!

Nobody responds. Doubt laughs, then stabs the knife into thin air, cutting out a dark circular hole. She sticks her head inside.

DOUBT
Yeah, I'd like a quarter pounder
with cheese, two large fries, and
a Coke. No. Wait. Pepsi. Make it a
Pepsi.

A voice answers her back in a thick Irish brogue.

WOMAN IN THE HOLE (O.S.)
Why couldn't ya pull that outta
your purse?

DOUBT
What? Are you kidding me? I'm not
getting food in there.

Doubt takes her head out She sticks her hands back in the hole and pulls out a tray with her food. The hole closes. Her food is animated and dancing.

DOUBT
Put food in my purse. Pft. Who am
I, Jessica Rabbit?

ACT 1**INT. EVAN'S BEDROOM - MORIN HOUSE - DAY**

LEGEND: Two Days Ago.

On the wall is Evan's college degree in Graphic Design and New Media from nearby SUNY Potsdam. Under that is a series of plaques. One congratulating Evan on reaching three million followers on TikTok. Another for ten million subscribers on YouTube. And one more for three million followers on Instagram.

Next to Evan's bed, we see his vision board. The vision board displays photos of:

- The house from BOSCH.
- A signed pin-up photo of a busty South Korean Model, JOSIE CHOI.
- A primetime Emmy trophy.

Evan is in the bathroom next door, talking to himself in the mirror.

EVAN (O.S.)
I will marry Josie Choi. I will
live in the house they film BOSCH
in. And I will win a primetime
Emmy award.

Evan breathes deeply.

EVAN (O.S.)
I will marry Josie Choi. I will
live in the house they film BOSCH
in. I will win a primetime Emmy
award.
I will marry Josie Choi. I will
live in the house they film BOSCH
in. I will win a primetime Emmy
award.

INT. BATHROOM - MORIN HOUSE - SAME TIME

EVAN is looking at himself in the mirror. We see DOUBT is standing next to him.

EVAN
And... I will get a better handle
on my auditory hallucinations.

DOUBT
C'mon. What would you be without
me?

EVAN
(mumbling in reply)
A lot more successful.

INT. SEAWAY LANDSCAPING OFFICE - DAY

EVAN is at Mark's desk. He's bored. Drumming his fingers. The lighting isn't great. There's paperwork all over the place. The wood paneled walls are covered in the kind of posters you find in men's magazines. One poster in this genre is of Josie Choi (the same woman from Evan's vision board) wearing only a leather jacket and riding a motorcycle.

There's also an old black rotary phone on the desk. It rings.

EVAN
Seaway Landscaping, this is Evan.

Evan looks around for a pad of paper and a pencil.

EVAN
Uh huh. Uh huh.

He finds them.

EVAN
Sure. No problem, Mrs. Crossman.
I'll let him know.

INTERCUT - INT. SEAWAY LANDSCAPING/EXT. A HOUSE IN MESSINA

Mark and KRISTEN are working the yard. Mark is pushing a lawnmower. Kristen, a Mohawk woman, college age, is walking around with a leaf-blower. She's wearing a shirt that says "Land Back". There's a vibration in her pocket. She turns the blower off and answers her phone.

KRISTEN
Couldn't figure out how to use the
rotary phone could you?

EVAN
I hate that thing. So. So much.

KRISTEN

Strong words from a guy who watches Buster Keaton movies. Want me to put your Dad on?

EVAN

Not yet. I want to hear your voice a little longer.

Kristen grins.

KRISTEN

That's sweet. Hey, did you put the wrestling video up yet? I still can't believe they let you do that.

EVAN attempts to throw a pencil into the ceiling. He looks up. There are dozens of pencils he stuck up there. This attempt fails.

EVAN

Not yet. I'll email a link to you when I'm done. I still have to edit the HipO ad before I can post it publicly.

KRISTEN

What's a HipO?

EVAN

Imagine if Facebook and Uber had a baby.

KRISTEN

Gross. How does THAT work?

Evan throws the pencil into the ceiling and it sticks. He pumps his fist.

Mark stops mowing. He looks at Kristen. Unhappy.

EVAN

You make friends on there, and then if you're going in the same direction as those friends, you can book a ride together.

KRISTEN
White people will do anything not
to ride the bus.

EVAN
Except me.

KRISTEN
Yeah but you're afraid of flying.
What's their excuse?

Mark walks toward Kristen like the T-1000 from Terminator 2.

KRISTEN
Your Dad is coming.

EVAN
Is he doing his T-1000 walk?

KRISTEN
He is! What is that? Who moves
their arms like that when they
walk?

Kristen tosses her phone to Mark. He catches it seamlessly.
Kristen and Mark are a well-oiled machine.

MARK
Couldn't figure out the new rotary
phone could you, son?

EVAN
NEW?!

MARK
A phone is a phone, son and we
needed one. You...

EVAN
You can't beat free. I know.
Wendy called for you.

MARK
Oh yeah. That's right. Ok. I have
some time this afternoon to stop
over there.

Mark looks at his old wedding ring.

EVAN
Mom always liked Mrs. Crossman.

MARK
She did. She did.
(MORE)

MARK (CONT'D)
 (changing the subject)
 Now quit yakking and finish that commercial. The contract says it's due next week and we could use the scratch.

EVAN
 I'm on it. I'm on it.

MARK
 Bye, son.

EVAN
 Bye, Dad.

INT. SEAWAY LANDSCAPING OFFICE - SAME TIME

DOUBT is sitting across from EVAN with her legs on the table. She is playing with a balero.

DOUBT
 Has Denzel ever tried to sell you a Tide pod?

EVAN
 No.

DOUBT
 You know why? Because real actors don't DO commercials. Now let's watch your favorite show instead.

EVAN
 I really gotta get this ad done though.

DOUBT
 Sure. Sure. But AFTER you watch an episode of Status Dramaticus.

Evan looks at his phone.

INT. BARACK OBAMA MEDICAL CENTER - CARDIOLOGY UNIT - DAY

The head of cardiology is DOCTOR DAMES. Mid 40s, a little person, and presently surrounded by a group of young, diverse doctors. All women. And all much taller than he is. Doctor Dames looks at his clipboard.

A Pakistani woman with an English accent, DOCTOR ABIDI is among them. She is the star of our show within a show, STATUS DRAMATICUS.

DOCTOR DAMES
Who can tell me what an aortic
dissection is?

One doctor, an eager young Russian woman, DOCTOR DRAGO, raises her hand.

DOCTOR DAMES
Your eagerness, as always, is
noted, Doctor Drago. But let's
hear from one of our quieter
doctors today.

INT. SEAWAY LANDSCAPING OFFICE - SAME TIME

EVAN and DOUBT watch this scene unfold. Evan is in awe of the attention and respect commanded by Doctor Dames.

**INT. BARACK OBAMA MEDICAL CENTER - CARDIOLOGY UNIT -
DAY**

DOCTOR DAMES is slowly making eye contact with each resident.

DOCTOR DAMES
Anyone? Anyone? Bueller? Bueller?

Doctor Dames chuckles. The young doctors have NO idea what he's referencing.

DOCTOR DAMES
You are all far too young to get
that reference. And it is a tired
one at that. Tired, I presume,
like all of you. But rounds wait
for no one. So, I'll ask again.
Can someone tell me what an aortic
dissection is?

Doctor Abidi cautiously raises her hand.

DOCTOR DAMES
Doctor Abidi. Yes.

DOCTOR ABIDI
(almost inaudibly)
It's...
(MORE)

DOCTOR ABIDI (CONT'D)
An injury that occurs when the
intima...

DOCTOR DAMES
A little louder, Doctor Abidi.
It's hard to hear you from all the
way down here.

The doctors laugh.

DOCTOR ABIDI
(just a little louder)
...It's an injury that occurs when
the intima allows blood ... to
flow between the layers of the
aortic wall... that then forces
those layers apart.

DOCTOR DAMES
Very good, Doctor Abidi. Very
good.

INT. SEAWAY LANDSCAPING OFFICE - MUCH LATER

EVAN and DOUBT are still watching the show. Doubt is eating popcorn from a bag. The popcorn is animated and alive. As one piece approaches Doubt's mouth, it screams. Another kernel shouts.

POPCORN
No! Not Sheila! NOT SHEILA!

Evan is startled by the rotary phone's ring. He puts his phone down and answers.

EVAN
Seaway Landscaping, this is Evan.

Evan's eyes bulge.

EVAN
Mr. Pembleton.

DOUBT
(chewing on screaming
popcorn)
Is that the guy from HipO? Oh
you're so screwed.

PEMBLETON
Did I catch you at a bad time?

EVAN

No. No. Not at all. What can I do for you?

PEMBLETON

I wanted to see how things were going with our commercial?

EVAN

Good. They're going good.

PEMBLETON

WELL, Mr. Morin. They are going WELL. Specificity is critical to one's success.

EVAN

Sure, right. Yeah. The commercial is going well.

PEMBLETON

I am happy to hear that.

There's an uncomfortable moment of silence.

PEMBLETON

But I'd like you to pause your work on the ad.

EVAN

Oh. How come?

PEMBLETON

We've had a change in plans.

EVAN

(nervously)

You don't want to run the ad anymore?

PEMBLETON

Quite the opposite, Mr. Morin. What do you think about coming out here to film an ad for the Super Bowl?

Evan looks like he just won the lottery.

ACT 2**INT. NORTH COUNTRY BUS - SAME TIME AS OPENING**

EVAN is waving to MARK as Mark drives away. The sketchpad is still in his lap. DOUBT sits next to Evan and is housing her food, making an animated mess all over herself and the seat. Some of it splatters on Evan. He doesn't notice. The french fries speak to DOUBT.

FRENCH FRY #1

You should eat Bellhumor, next.

FRENCH FRY #2

Hey fuck you, Underhill. I thought we were friends.

FRENCH FRY #1

We were. Until you slept with my wife!

Evan sneezes into his arm. Doubt pulls her tray away from him like he has the plague.

DOUBT

WHOA. You're not going to sneeze on me are you? It happens every time you're nervous and I really like this dress.

BUS DRIVER

(speaking into the intercom)

We'll get goin' to Syracuse soon. I'm just waiting on da Border Patrol.

EXT. MASSENA ECONO LODGE PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER

Border Patrol arrives. A lazy male agent, WESLEY, 40s, chubby, and a devoted hockey mom, KELLY, fit, a member of the Mohawk tribe, 40s, get out of their SUV.

KELLY

The Sens are picking 10th this year.

WESLEY

They picked 3rd last year. I guess that's progress?

KELLY

Hard to say. Melynk is cheap.

(MORE)

KELLY (CONT'D)

Who knows who he'll keep or trade next to save a few loonies.

WESLEY

He's only cheap when it comes to the team. Did you hear about that \$500,000-a-week yacht he rented for his girlfriend?

KELLY

Fucking Melnyk.

INT. NORTH COUNTRY BUS - SAME TIME

WESLEY and KELLY get on the bus and are greeted by an abrasive elderly white woman, BERTIE.

BERTIE

Is Border Patrol still allowed to check for citizenship?

KELLY

(patiently)

Bertie, like I said last week, Massena is less than 15 miles from the border. So, yes, we're allowed to check.

BERTIE

Yeah, but the ACLU said...

Kelly shrugs. It's less of a fuck you and more of a "I'm just trying to do my job here" shrug.

BUS DRIVER

Would ya pipe down, Bertie?
You're goin' ta make us late.
AGAIN.

Kelly and Wesley ask the passengers for their citizenship. Evan looks out the window. On his sketchpad, we see a half-finished drawing of a nude Josie Choi.

INT. DR. KUMAR'S OFFICE - DAY - FLASHBACK

EVAN is sitting on a couch in a small room. DOCTOR KUMAR, 30s, a former D1 athlete in women's volleyball, enters the room holding a laptop. She doesn't sit, but places the laptop in a stand like a conductor.

DOCTOR KUMAR

The Sens lost last night.

EVAN

Oh I saw. I still don't understand why the shootout exists.

DOCTOR COHEN

No one does. If I wanted to see a video game, I'd stay home and play one, you know?

EVAN

(laughing)
Right?

DOCTOR KUMAR

How are you feeling?

EVAN

Good for the most part. With the medication I'm thinking more clearly. I'm able to finish the stuff that I start. Well, most of it anyway.

DOCTOR KUMAR

And the auditory hallucinations?

QUICK CUT TO:

INT. NORTH COUNTRY BUS - PRESENT

DOUBT is dancing in the bus aisle as Kool & The Gang's Celebration plays. Animated confetti falls from sky.

QUICK CUT TO:

INT. DR. KUMAR'S OFFICE - FLASHBACK

DOCTOR KUMAR is typing away on her laptop as EVAN continues...

EVAN

Still there.

DOCTOR KUMAR

Hm. Sadly, there is no solution for Schizophrenia. We just learn to better manage it over time.

EVAN

I know.

DOCTOR KUMAR

But it sounds like you're making tremendous progress with the other symptoms. Many people with your condition can live happy, productive lives. Speaking of, how are you doing with your goal setting?

EVAN

I do my affirmations every morning. Got the vision board on the wall near my bed. And I picked up the bullet journal you suggested to log my progress.

DOCTOR KUMAR

Excellent. Still going for that Emmy?

EVAN

You know it!

DOCTOR KUMAR

Remember that the WHY behind your goals are important in helping you stay focused on them. Why do you want the Emmy?

EVAN

I want to be seen and respected.

DOCTOR KUMAR

It's a great goal to have, Evan. But remember that so much of what happens in that business is out of your hands. So make sure you stay focused only on what is in your power to control. If you struggle out in LA, remember you have your Dad. You have Kristen, and you have me to lean on.

EVAN

Can I still see you when I'm out there?

DOCTOR KUMAR

Of course. Just call the office to let them know you want to switch to video appointments. To your insurance provider, it makes no difference how you see me.

END FLASHBACK

INT. NORTH COUNTRY BUS - PRESENT DAY

Border Patrol continues their ID check. DOUBT is still dancing. A periscope comes down from the cartoon spaceship. It follows the Border Patrol agents, then stops to ogle KELLY.

EVAN is now sketching the inside of an alien spaceship.

WESLEY

Hello sir, are you an American citizen?

MAN ON THE BUS

Yes.

KELLY

Hello, Ma'am. Are you an American citizen?

FEMALE ON THE BUS

Yes.

WESLEY

Hello, Bertie. Are YOU an American citizen?

BERTIE

Eat shit, pig fucker.

INT. CARTOON SPACESHIP - SAME TIME

As EVAN draws in the details on his sketchpad, the details of the spaceship are drawn in. The viewer sees what starts as a white space become a completed, animated scene of alien debauchery aboard a flying casino.

INT. NORTH COUNTRY BUS - SAME TIME

KELLY and WESLEY are almost to EVAN. DOUBT stops dancing and gets behind them to see what happens.

KELLY

Hello, Ma'am, are you an American Citizen?

Kelly gives the woman, CHANEL, another member of the Mohawk Tribe, a knowing smile.

CHANEL

No. Native.

Chanel hands Kelly a Tribal ID card. Kelly barely looks at it and gives it back.

KELLY
Go Wolves.

CHANEL
Go Wolves.

Wesley walks right by Evan and Doubt. Doubt snickers.

WESLEY
Hello sir, are you an American
Citizen?

MAN ON THE BUS #2
Yeah. But you forgot someone.

The man gestures to Evan. Wesley backs up.

WESLEY
(sheepishly)
Sorry, little guy. Didn't even see
you there.

INT. SUNY POTSDAM - MAXCY ICE ARENA - THE NEXT DAY

LEGEND: Yesterday.

The women's hockey team is playing Buffalo State. KRISTEN is on the ice, shouting like a maniac. She's captain of the Potsdam team.

EVAN is in the stands watching her. He's close enough to the plexiglass to see Kristen absolutely splatter another woman against it. The woman falls over. Kristen smiles and gives Evan a thumbs-up before skating away.

KRISTEN
(shouting up the ice)
Don't you touch that fucking puck.
You hear me? That shit belongs to
me!

**INT. SUNY POTSDAM - MAXCY ICE ARENA - THE STANDS -
LATER**

KRISTEN, still wearing her jersey, is out of breath and covered in sweat.

DOUBT is sitting behind her with a foam finger on one hand, wearing a Potsdam jersey like Kristen's, and has on one of those beer hats where you can sip from two cans at once. She sips from them as loud as she can.

EVAN hands Kristen a Gatorade bottle and sits next to her. She downs it in a single gulp.

KRISTEN

Thanks.

EVAN

Tomorrow's the big day.

KRISTEN

That's a long, long bus ride.

EVAN

Yeah. Still think I should go?

Kristen burps and then tosses the gatorade bottle into a nearby trash can.

KRISTEN

Do they even have hockey in LA?

EVAN

Yeah, I mean, they have the Kings.

Kristen gives Evan a look that says, "C'mon. That's not a real hockey team."

EVAN

Don't give me that look. They won two Stanley Cups.

KRISTEN

After 45 years of futility.

EVAN

And how many cups have the Senators won again?

KRISTEN

Eleven.

EVAN

AFTER World War 2?

KRISTEN

Alright. Alright. You got me. Fucking Melnyk.

EVAN

FUCKING Melnyk.

Both look as the men's team comes on the ice for practice.

KRISTEN
Yes.

EVAN
Yes?

KRISTEN
Yes. You should go.

EVAN
Really?

KRISTEN
How many lottery tickets do you see being handed out around here, Evan?

Kristen's thought is interrupted by a bad play on the ice.

KRISTEN
(shouting)
You call that a check, Eddie? My grandmother can hit harder than that, and she's dead!

EDDIE, college aged, Canadian, shouts from the ice.

EDDIE
Hey fuck off, Kristen. At least we got the W for our game.

KRISTEN
I'll give you a fucking W, you poutine-eating sack of leaves.

Eddie panics and skates away.

DOUBT
(to Evan)
I love her, and she really likes you. And you're going to leave Kristen behind. For what? A shot at Josie Choi? Really? You don't even know that girl. You just follow each other on social media and she occasionally likes your posts. Get real, dude. You have a keeper right in front of you.

Kristen gives Evan a curious look.

KRISTEN
The hallucination acting up again?

EVAN
She is particularly cranked up
today.

KRISTEN
She'll be worse tomorrow then. I
have something that could help
calm you down.

EXT. THE LAST LAP - DAY

The world's saddest strip club. A dilapidated building in
Massena that was the hot new thing in 1972.

INT. THE LAST LAP - SAME TIME

KRISTEN walks into the strip club with EVAN and DOUBT. If this
was "Cheers", Kristen would be Norm. Everyone loves her here.
She is immediately handed a beer by the staff, many of whom are
Mohawk like her.

They sit down around the makeshift stage. DOUBT is grossed out
by her surroundings. A dancer on stage, a Mohawk woman named
SAMANTHA, is dressed like Wonder Woman. She walks over to
Kristen and kisses her right on the lips.

SAMANTHA
Same as usual?

Kristen shakes her head and points at Evan.

SAMANTHA
Oh, I know you! You're the social
media guy.

EVAN
(blushing)
I am.

SAMANTHA leans in and Kristen whispers to her. Samantha nods.

SAMANTHA
(to Evan)
Give me ten minutes, ok big guy?

EVAN
For... what? What is happening
right now? I thought we were going
to the mall.

KRISTEN

You know, I hate drinking, and yet they give me a beer every time I walk into the place.

(beat)

Samantha is great. Did you know she's getting a Ph.D. in chemistry over at Clarkson?

EVAN

Whoa.

KRISTEN

Yeah. It's crazy expensive. So that's why she's here.

Kristen drinks her beer tentatively.

KRISTEN

And it always tastes like piss too. Anyway... I've been thinking: What's the worst that can happen to you out in LA?

DOUBT

(whispering to Evan)

Earthquakes. Mudslides. Fires. Traffic. Smog. Helicopters. Heatwaves. Cougars, both kinds. This can also all be a huge waste of...

EVAN

(continuing Doubt's thought)

...Time too. Hip0 may fire me or not use the commercial at all.

KRISTEN

Ok, so if that happens, do what I do.

EVAN

Which is?

KRISTEN

Practice man. Practice. I want to play in the NWHL, so I'm working on what I need to every chance I have. If this Hip0 thing goes south? You take acting classes. You sleep on people's couches. You do whatever it is you gotta do. But you stay out there in LA until you earn that Emmy. You hear me?

Kristen points at EVAN.

KRISTEN

Do. Not. Come. Back. Here.

Evan nods. Samantha comes back. Doubt is covering most of her face with her hand, but is peeking at Samantha. A crush is forming.

EVAN

Oh, I sent you something during the game.

KRISTEN

The video?

Evan grins. He waves to Kristen as Samantha leads him off for a private dance. Kristen raises her glass to Evan.

KRISTEN

It's your last day in the North Country. May we all be so lucky.

Kristen drinks from the beer and stick out her tongue. The beer is gross to her. She puts it down and takes out her phone instead and begins watching the wrestling video.

ACT 3**INT. SUNY POTSDAM - MAXCY GYM - NIGHT**

The wrestling ring is surrounded by intoxicated college students. Within it is the JUGGERNAUT and 3D MARINE. The SUNY Potsdam Mascot, Max C. Bear, is wearing a referee costume.

EVAN and KRISTEN are seated in the front row. In the ring, the Juggernaut is about to power bomb her opponent. Kristen is filming everything on her phone. The referee in the bear costume is waving their arms and admonishing Juggernaut to put down her opponent.

EVAN
Here it comes!

Juggernaut plants her opponent into the mat, and then points at Evan. He pretends to be surprised.

EVAN
Me?

The Juggernaut nods and waves Evan into the ring. Kristen follows him with her phone.

The person in the bear costume tries to keep Evan from coming into the ring. Evan flexes and growls at the person in the bear costume, who backs off, afraid of Evan.

Evan then gets on the top rope. Everyone in the gym gets to their feet and applauds.

He leaps into the air and lands on the 3D Marine, who sells the move like death just came for her.

The crowd cheers as Evan rolls off the wrestler, allowing Juggernaut to get the pinfall and the victory. The bell rings. Evan looks into Kristen's phone and shouts, "Whoooooooooooo!" and then struts around the ring like Ric Flair.

INT. HIPO HQ - CEO OFFICE - DAY

LEGEND: Today.

STEVEN WHEAT, 50s, jacked. He watches EVAN strut around the ring on a large screen. The viewership numbers for the video are well over five million and counting. Wheat has a big piece of steak in front of him that he's cutting into. There is also a stack of energy bars on his desk.

WHEAT

That kid is going to be money.

INT. HIPO HQ - HALLWAY - SAME TIME

PEMBLETON, 60s, a teddy bear, is talking to a few interns, PATSY, MADISON, and JACKIE. PATSY and Madison are diverse women in their early 20s. JACKIE is in her late thirties. Pembleton is enjoying this teaching moment.

PEMBLETON

One of the things you'll learn here is that we change direction frequently. What was the plan last month may not be the plan tomorrow.

WHEAT

PEMBLETON!

PEMBLETON

(ignoring Wheat)

Take for instance, our internet spots.

PATSY

It was supposed to run with a bunch of influencer videos.

PEMBLETON

That's right. And what happened?

MADISON

We're now doing a Super Bowl commercial instead.

PEMBLETON

Because?

JACKIE

Because Steven changed his mind.

WHEAT

PEMBLETON!

PEMBLETON

Correct. Annoying, isn't it? But I'm afraid to say, you will find this same erratic behavior at any tech company you choose to work for.

(MORE)

PEMBLETON (CONT'D)
Most are unprofitable vanity
projects for the wealthy, The
secret is to roll with the punches
and save your money.

The door to Wheat's office swings open. Wheat stands there
unwrapping his energy bar.

WHEAT
God damn, pal. Can't you hear me
hollering for you?

Pembleton smiles at the interns.

PEMBLETON
How can I help you, Steven?

WHEAT
When's Evan going to be here?

PEMBLETON
It's a three day bus ride.

Wheat bites into his energy bar.

WHEAT
(chewing)
God damn. Kid couldn't just get on
a plane?

PEMBLETON
His father insisted on the bus.

WHEAT
I heard he's some negotiator.
What's he do again?

PEMBLETON
Landscaping.

WHEAT
Shit. Why don't we hire him too?

PEMBLETON
Perhaps we should.

WHEAT
Is the presentation ready?

PEMBLETON
Presentation?

WHEAT

You know, for the investors. About the Super Bowl ad.

Pembleton looks at the interns. He mouths, "presentation?" The interns look as confused as he does.

PEMBLETON

Of course, Steven. When will we be doing it?

WHEAT

Tomorrow.

Pembleton looks down at his VERY expensive shoes.

PEMBLETON

Ok, Steven.

Wheat turns and closes his office door.

JACKIE

He doesn't seem so bad.

She sneezes. Wheat IMMEDIATELY opens his office door and glares at them.

WHEAT

I want names.

Jackie sneezes again. We see Wheat mime putting a shield in front of himself. He does this slowly, and then glares at Jackie.

WHEAT

You're fired.

He slams his door.

JACKIE

Is he serious?

The interns look horrified.

WHEAT (O.S.)

YES!

PEMBLETON

(to Jackie)

You told me once that you wanted to be an actor. Is that still the case?

EXT. THE INTERSTATE - NIGHT

We see the cartoon spaceship from EVAN's drawing flying over the bus.

INT. THE BUS - NIGHT

Evan is out cold. The bus is packed. Nobody looks happy. Doubt is looking through people's wallets and purses, and taking money out of them.

INT. CARTOON SPACESHIP - NIGHT

Evan's dream sequence. Lots of gambling and alien currency is changing hands among the aliens her drew earlier. This is an entire culture that worships only games of chance.

Two of the aliens, KEITH and LARRY, are gathered around a roulette-like table. In the center of the table is a screen that says DUGMIN. Another creature, dressed similarly to a casino dealer, welcomes them.

ALIEN CASINO DEALER
Doubt or Confidence?

Larry and Keith look at each other. Larry takes out a coin.

LARRY
(hesitantly)
Heads gets Doubt?

Keith dismisses the gesture.

KEITH
I enjoy the risk, so I choose
Confidence.
I wager thirty-five-million
American dollars that the human
succeeds in his quest. And I would
like that in singles, please.

LARRY
Singles?

KEITH
For the human strip clubs I will
frequent upon my victory.

Larry nods enthusiastically at this great idea.

LARRY

I'll wager double that on the human failing in his quest. And I too would like that in singles. For I shall visit even MORE strip clubs upon my victory than he.

ALIEN CASINO DEALER

Very good. Allow me to introduce today's human.

Evan appears on the screen. Larry and Keith again nod their heads enthusiastically.

ALIEN CASINO DEALER

The rules are simple. Doubt will attempt to impede this human on his quest to win a primetime Emmy award. At the moment, he cannot see Doubt, and she cannot interact with any other human. However, additional wrinkles can be purchased to alter these rules. If the human succeeds...

The casino dealer gestures to KEITH

ALIEN CASINO DEALER

You will win the bet. And if he does not...

The casino dealer gestures to LARRY

ALIEN CASINO DEALER

You will win the bet. Are all parties agreed to these terms?

Both Larry and Keith nod.

ALIEN CASINO DEALER

Wonderful. Then my friends, we have ourselves... a DUGMIN!

An alarm goes off in the casino. All of the screens change to feature Evan on them. A celebration erupts as more aliens rush to the roulette-like table, waiting for their opportunity to bet on the game.

INT. HIPO HQ - CONFERENCE ROOM - THE NEXT DAY

PEMBLETON gives his presentation to the investors. He is joined by PATSY and MADISON. Notably absent is Steven Wheat. Five investors are present, all women of various ages and types.

PEMBLETON

Despite propaganda from Google and Facebook, television ads are more effective than anything we run online. So, we feel excellent about our chances to make a good impression with viewers during the Super Bowl.

The investors all nod in agreement as WHEAT enters the room.

WHEAT

Did I miss it?

PEMBLETON

You did, Steven.

WHEAT

Well goddamn, pal. Is it too late to make a suggestion then?

PEMBLETON

Of course not. The floor is yours.

WHEAT

You know how little people have magical powers?

PEMBLETON

They don't, Steven.

WHEAT

Of course they do, haven't you seen a leprechaun before? I have. The little bastard shit in my coffee and then flipped me off. I was at Sky Harbor when it happened...

PEMBLETON

(at the end of his rope)

What is your suggestion, Steven?

WHEAT

I want our little guy to wear a wizard hat.

The interns snicker.

WHEAT

Oh, you think that's funny?

The snickering stops cold.

PATSY

No sir.

MADISON

No sir.

Wheat storms out. We can hear him stomp away. Then, a long pause. We hear him stomping again on his return. Wheat throws wizard hats at the interns.

WHEAT

Put it on.

The interns look at Pembleton.

WHEAT

Don't look at him. He doesn't own this company anymore. Put on the hats or you're fired.

The interns put on the hats.

WHEAT

Doesn't that look cool? And while these interns don't have magical powers, I bet our little guy does.

ACT 4**INT. HIPO COMMERCIAL SET - THE NEXT DAY**

EVAN is wearing a visitor badge around his neck and wearing an Ottawa Senators jersey. PEMBLETON enters to greet him.

PEMBLETON

Mr. Morin, you're finally here.

EVAN

Mr. Pembleton. Thank you for having me.

PEMBLETON

It's my pleasure. Now, I was hoping we could get started before our CEO arrives.

EVAN

Oh really? I see him on all the same magazines and shows Elon Musk is on. I'd love to meet him.

PEMBLETON

Elon Musk is a grifter of the highest order. A parasite who runs unprofitable companies that benefit immensely from government funding. Furthering his own wealth at the expense of each and every American taxpayer.

EVAN

Oh. I mean Mr. Wheat.

PEMBLETON

He's something far worse.

WHEAT enters holding a script, the wizard hat, and a grey fake beard he wants Evan to wear. Pembleton grumbles. Evan rushes over to meet Wheat.

EVAN

Mr. Wheat. It's a real honor, sir.

WHEAT

Evan! God damn, pal. You are a little fella, aren't you?

Evan is insulted, but tries to laugh it off.

EVAN

Yeah. Yeah. I uh... I get that a lot.

WHEAT

I'm glad I caught you before we started shooting.

Wheat hands Evan the wizard hat and beard.

EVAN

What's this?

WHEAT

It's your costume for the ad.

Pembleton tries to get between them.

EVAN

Oh. I thought...I was just going to do my thing. You know a little dance. Or maybe a pratfall. I got this one thing where I run into a room and immediately fall flat on my face. It's all one, smooth motion.

WHEAT

What? No. I don't want any of that Buster Keaton stuff. We're going in a NEW direction.

PEMBLETON

Steven, I think we should stick to the script. It's what everyone's agreed on.

Evan is starting to get very nervous. He's sweating. A sneeze brews.

WHEAT

No, no. I fired that director this morning and wrote a new script myself. Here.

Wheat shoves the script into Pembleton's chest. He then leans down to look at Evan.

WHEAT

So what do you say, pal? Want to make some magic?

Evan sneezes right into Wheat's face. Wheat reacts like he's just been shot point blank with a rifle.

WHEAT

Oh God!

Pembleton wants to laugh, but he's also horrified. He escorts Evan away as Wheat shouts.

WHEAT

He got me. The little bastard got me. I'm a goner.

PEMBLETON

Let's take this opportunity to escape while we can.

Evan sweats profusely and starts to have chest pains. We see Doubt is now standing next to him. She's wearing lingerie and carrying an animated toothbrush.

TOOTHBRUSH

You gotta lay off the coffee, girlie. It's staining your teeth.

DOUBT

(yawning)

I'm up. I'm up. Got here as soon as I could. What did I miss?

WHEAT

He got me! He got me with his magical powers!

DOUBT

(laughing)

He thinks you have magic powers?

EVAN

Can I...Is there a bathroom around here?

PEMBLETON

Yes, just make a right outside the studio and then it's the third door on your left.

EVAN

Thanks.

INT. HIPO HQ - BATHROOM - SAME TIME

EVAN is looking in the mirror. DOUBT is taking this opportunity to brush her teeth using the sink in front of her.

DOUBT
That guy is a jerk. Everyone in LA
is a jerk. Let's go back to
Massena.

Evan faints and bangs his head. Doubt doesn't notice.

DOUBT
Massena sucks, but you have a
routine there. Out here, it's an
unpredictable nightmare.

Doubt looks down at Evan.

DOUBT
Huh. That's new.

INT. CARTOON SPACESHIP - SAME TIME

LARRY does an elaborate, NFL-like victory dance. Kool and the
Gang's "Celebration" plays again. KEITH is furious.

KEITH
The game is not over yet. I demand
to purchase a wrinkle.

The Alien Casino Dealer ponders this request for a moment.

ALIEN CASINO DEALER
Wrinkles can be purchased for an
additional fee. A substantial one.

KEITH
I don't care how expensive it is!
Charge my cabin. No game of Dugmin
should be this short.

The music stops. The Alien Casino Dealer presses a button on
the table in front of him. Larry stops dancing and looks on,
concerned.

INT. HIPO HQ - BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

EVAN starts to wake while on the floor. DOUBT stands over him.

DOUBT
Wake up, dude. The day is young
and more horror awaits.

Evan sees her for the first time.

EVAN
You're... Real?

Doubt realizes Evan can see her.

DOUBT
Shit. I knew I should have put
some clothes on.

Pembleton knocks on the bathroom door.

PEMBLETON
Is everything ok, Mr. Morin?
You've been in there for quite a
while.

Doubt and Evan look panicked.

EVAN
Tell him I'm fine.

DOUBT
You tell him.

EVAN
No, you tell him!

DOUBT
You tell him!

Pembleton knocks again.

EVAN
I'm ok!

PEMBLETON
I heard a thud.

DOUBT
Heh. That's what she said.

EVAN
(to Doubt)
Are you kidding me right now?

EVAN
(to Pembleton)
It's nothing. I'm fine. Be out in
a sec.

Doubt helps Evan stand up.

DOUBT

Go do your thing. We'll talk later.

EVAN

Don't you keep me from DOING my thing?

DOUBT

Well, yeah. But you need to be doing a thing for me to do my thing. Otherwise I just stand around with my dick in my hand.

Evan puts his face in his palm.

DOUBT

You should probably wash that.

Evan rolls his eyes, exasperated. He washes his hands and opens the door. Pembleton is waiting for him.

PEMBLETON

Mr. Morin, are you ok?

EVAN

Yes!

PEMBLETON

Terrific. Come with me.

INT. HIPO HQ - PEMBLETON'S OFFICE - LATER

Pembleton's office is huge. There are a few couches all next to each other. Pembleton sits in one. Madison and Patsy the other. Doubt and Evan in the last.

EVAN

I love this office.

PEMBLETON

Thank you. This was the CEO office until recently.

EVAN

Oh really?

PEMBLETON

Yes. I sold the company a few months ago. You've met the new owner.

DOUBT

A real charmer, that one.

PEMBLETON

The truth is, I still run much of the day to day operations, which is the only reason I'm still here. He needs me to be. Otherwise, like Elon Musk, Steven would be exposed as a fool and not the successful business man he wants everyone to think he is.

EVAN

Why did you sell?

PEMBLETON

We all make sacrifices to pursue our dreams, Mr. Morin.

EVAN

I understand.

Over Doubt's head, we see a thought balloon appear with Samantha gyrating inside of it; still wearing that Wonder Woman costume. Doubt smiles and says to the thought balloon...

DOUBT

I'll be seeing YOU later.

PEMBLETON

I'd like to offer you something.

Evan looks up at Pembleton.

PEMBLETON

When I was little, I loved Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory. I played the VHS tape so many times that I was often given a new one each Christmas. I wanted to BE Willy Wonka, giving his factory to Charlie.

INT. PHIL'S HOUSE - DAY

Jackie enters a large mansion with a box of her things. She passes posters for MURDER DAD, an '80s TV show featuring PHIL, a Japanese man with a mohawk and '80s sunglasses.

A smiling modern-day Phil, now in his 70s with a dad bod, greets Jackie enthusiastically.

PEMBLETON (V.O.)

I want to make people's dreams come true.

(MORE)

PEMBLETON (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 As often as I can, for whomever I
 can.

Jackie enters her new bedroom, eyes wide in amazement. It's big
 beyond words.

PEMBLETON
 And just today, I gave away my
 first \$200,000. It went to one of
 our former interns. I also set her
 up with her own rent free bedroom,
 and paid for acting lessons.

INT. HIPO HQ - PEMBLETON'S OFFICE - SAME TIME

Evan is excited to hear this news about Jackie.

EVAN
 She must have been thrilled. I
 don't know her, but I bet you made
 her so happy with that.

PEMBLETON
 I hope so. And I hope I can offer
 you those same three things.

Doubt, in her best Red Foxx impression, falls off the couch.
 She clutches her chest and shouts.

DOUBT
 It's the big one! I'm coming to
 join ya Elizabeth!

EVAN
 Really?

PEMBLETON
 You do want to win an Emmy award,
 don't you?

EVAN
 How did you...

PEMBLETON
 Your father. He's around my age
 and we got to talking during your
 contract negotiation.

Doubt is dead on the floor. A team of animated nurses, all men,
 and all very buff, run into the room and hit her with shock
 paddles. Once she's revived, they leave as quick as they came.

DOUBT

There's gotta be some horrible catch. Like he wants pictures of your feet or something.

Evan looks down at Doubt like "shut up, man." Then he looks back at Pembleton.

EVAN

I'm sorry. I got this nagging voice in my head. So I have to ask.

PEMBLETON

Is there a catch?

EVAN

...I mean. This is just so out of the ordinary from what I'm used to. Aren't billionaires supposed to be evil?

PEMBLETON

Most are. But I encourage you to google Chuck Feeney some time. He gave away his money. All \$8 billion of it. I now have MORE than that, and would like to do the same.

Evan nods.

PEMBLETON

There is no catch, Mr. Morin. Patsy and Madison will assist you in getting situated, and you are free to do as you please. All I ask is that you check in with me. Once a week. Until you have achieved your goal.

Pembleton stands, then the interns do.

EVAN

I don't know what to say. Thank you doesn't cover it.

PEMBLETON

Should you get there, I'll happily accept a thank you from the stage of the Emmys.

EVAN

I'll do my best.

PEMBLETON

I have no doubt.

EXT. THE BOSCH HOUSE - SUNSET

Outside Evan's dream home, the house from BOSCH. Evan stands outside of the home with Doubt and sees the For Sale sign. The asking price is over three million dollars. Patsy and Madison wait in the car as it runs.

DOUBT

What a dump.

EVAN

You're kidding, right?

DOUBT

Am I?

Evan goes quiet.

EVAN

I drew you once. I thought if my doubts were personified, they'd be easier to manage.

DOUBT

I know. That's why I exist.

EVAN

Are we enemies?

DOUBT

No. You don't hate yourself enough for me to be that. You just like to sabotage yourself.

EVAN

So we're not friends either.

DOUBT

I'm just a girl, doing the thing she was drawn to do. Nothing more. Nothing less.

EXT. PHIL'S HOUSE - LATER

8408 Hillside Avenue. An over 20,000 square foot behemoth of a home in the Hollywood Hills. It has three floors, a gym, a spa, a movie theater, office, and infinity pool, among many other luxuries. The movie theater includes its own stage.

This is the kind of home that is unthinkable to anyone living in Massena.

JACKIE opens the door for EVAN, who is carrying his trash bags.

JACKIE
Hey, I'm Jackie. Mr. Pembleton
said you were coming.

EVAN
He's great, isn't he?

JACKIE
One of a kind.

Jackie takes one of Evan's trash bags.

JACKIE
You can have any open room you'd
like, except the master bedroom.
That belongs to Phil.

EVAN
Phil?

JACKIE
Our acting coach and landlord.

Jackie looks toward the MURDER DAD posters on the wall. Evan looks over to them as well.

JACKIE
He's a character. You'll love him.

EVAN
Is there anyone else here?

JACKIE
Just the three of us for now.
There are two open rooms left that
Mr. Pembleton is looking to fill.

EVAN
How well do you know him?

JACKIE
Mr. Pembleton? I taught his
daughter, Amelia, at a charter
school out in Phoenix. His husband
lives out there with her.
I know Amelia better than I know
him.

(MORE)

JACKIE (CONT'D)

But she raved about me, and the next thing I knew, I was offered an all-expenses-paid internship at HipO.

EVAN

So you gave up teaching?

JACKIE

Being a music teacher is rough these days. There's no job security. Any time a budget needs to be cut, you're the first one to go.

EVAN

But something must have happened at HipO to land you here, right?

Jackie puts her index finger on her nose.

JACKIE

The new CEO is crazy.

EVAN

Oh I know. I sneezed on him.

Jackie's face lights up like Christmas.

JACKIE

Amazing. That's... Amazing. I want to hear all about it after you get settled.

INT. EVAN'S BEDROOM - PHIL'S HOUSE - LATER

EVAN is unpacking his clothes as he talks to KRISTEN, who is on speaker phone. DOUBT pulls large, and animated, furniture out of her purse. Soon, she has her own living room set up. That's how big Evan's new bedroom is.

KRISTEN

Are you going to bother your roommates with me on speaker?

EVAN

Not likely. This room is bigger than my Dad's entire house.

KRISTEN

I don't believe any of this is real.

EVAN

Me neither. Feels like the world is going to end at any second.

All of Doubt's stuff shakes, as if an animated earthquake hit.

DOUBT

Oh no! Somebody call The Rock! The San Andreas Fault is acting up again and only he can save us!

Evan shakes his head at Doubt, ignoring her. The animated furniture stops shaking. Doubt pushes an one of her lamps over, annoyed. From the floor, the lamp speaks.

LAMP

Hey, I thought it was funny.

Evan puts his finished drawing of JOSIE CHOI on the bed.

He turns to get something out of his garbage bags.

KRISTEN

If you live within your means, you can really stretch that money out. How long can you stay there?

EVAN

As long as I want.

KRISTEN

I'm coming to visit you. Like, tomorrow.

EVAN

Miss me that much?

KRISTEN

Yeah. I do.

INT. EVAN'S BEDROOM - PHIL'S HOUSE - MORNING

DOUBT is sleeping on her animated couch. Drooling. A thought bubble over her head shows us that she is dreaming about SAMANTHA.

EVAN is sleeping in a giant bed. An animated, and naked, JOSIE CHOI, slips into the bed and curls up next to Evan. His eyes open slowly. He sees Josie, and recoils.

CARTOON JOSIE
Hello, lover boy.

FADE OUT.

END OF SHOW