

**Watching Football**  
**A One-Act by Zachariah Ezer**

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## **Characters**

Zach- black, 19

Eli- white, 19

Paul- asian, 19

Dan- optimistic, 19

Leonardo DiCaprio- self

Jackie Chan- self

Bell-Boy/Bell-Boy- Ashton Kutcher

The Concierge- Scarlett Johansson

Ethan/Soberman/TV- voice of reason

Announcer 1 & Announcer 2- Color Commentary

## **Staging Note**

The stage is divided in half at all times. The half that is Stage Left is always the same, a dorm room full of smoke. The other half changes each act for the new worlds created. Half the stage will be dark for much of the production.

## **Lighting Note**

The notation **Switch** means that the half of the stage that is lit (Left or Right) will be switched.

Vape- To inhale and exhale the vapor produced by an electronic cigarette or similar device."

-Oxford Dictionaries, 2014 Word of the Year

## First Sequence- The Censorship of Dreams

### Scene I

*(AT RISE: Spotlight downstage center. ANNOUNCERS 1 and 2 stand side-by-side in blazers. The announcers should be ad-libbing the commentary of a football game. The game begins sometime in the first quarter but certainly not at the beginning. The Chicago Bears are playing the New York Jets and the Bears have taken an early lead. It is absolutely crucial that nothing else happens on stage as the audio of the game continues to play. One becomes aware that even though the game time coverage is American, the commercials, or at least the accents the actors use, are not. One begins to realize that the audio is coming from a British telecast.)*

Zach

Do you ever notice how many pointless facts these announcers say?

*(Announcers exit. The Stage Left lights open to Zach, ELI, and PAUL sitting, around a vaporizer smoking weed while watching the football game on TV (here represented by the fourth wall). Suddenly, they stop watching the football game in order to speak to each other. They are on their second bowl of the vaporizer, so there should be occasional pauses in between some lines as the stoners try*

*to parse out what each other  
are saying)*

Eli

Are you winning in your fantasy team, Paul?

*(Paul was taking a hit from  
the vaporizer but stops to  
answer Eli's question, smoke  
trailing out of his mouth  
when he does so)*

Paul

Yeah, it's 103-27, it's an absolute massacre. The only reason I'm watching is because football is so much better when you're high.

Zach

Definitely, everything just seems better. The marvelous feats of athleticism, the strange intonations of the sportscasters, and the fucking fact dumps are incredible.

Eli

Yeah, who gives a shit if it's the 497<sup>th</sup> Monday night football game ever?

Zach

Guys, this is kind of weird, but what if I just stopped to pitch you a movie idea right now.

*(Eli and Paul are vaguely  
intrigued, but they are  
mostly stoned)*

Zach

Never mind, I realize that's kind of weird, and totally something people don't do. Like we're in the middle of something and I'm just like hold up, let me pitch you a movie. Can you imagine if they did that in a movie? It'd be like that episode of *Breaking Bad* where Badger and Skinny Pete just randomly pitch that *Star Trek* episode. Kind of like Italo Calvino. Like imagine if Jackie Chan and Leonardo DiCaprio were in a buddy cop movie, where Leo is like the rookie detective and Jackie is the more experienced cop, where halfway through, like they wanted to go get the bad guy, but Leo just stopped to pitch a movie idea.

**Switch**

**Scene II**

*(Stage Right, JACKIE CHAN and LEONARDO DICAPRIO were in a buddy cop movie, where Leo is like the rookie detective and Jackie is the more experienced cop where halfway through, like they wanted to go get the bad guy, but Leo just stopped to pitch a movie idea. It is not actually Leonardo DiCaprio and Jackie Chan; that would cost too much. Instead, the role of Jackie Chan playing a cop is just played by an Asian guy, or not. Leo, though, is actually Leo. If he's not getting the Oscar, let's go for a Tony.)*

Jackie Chan

C'mon Leo. We have to stop Flask before his criminal organization frames the chief of police for murder and they kill your ex-wife in the process!

Leonardo DiCaprio

But we've been kicked off the force, sarge. No guns, no badges, nothing.

Jackie Chan

Don't you see Leo, we never needed any badges. We're good people, and that's exactly what this city needs right now.

Leonardo DiCaprio

Damn it, you're right!

Jackie Chan:

Well c'mon!

Leonardo DiCaprio

Hold on. I know this isn't the best time for this, but can I pitch you a movie idea real quick. I've just had this rattling around in my head for a couple of days and I have to see what someone else thinks. It'll take like 5 minutes, I swear, like an elevator pitch.

Jackie Chan (*very confused*)

Uh...

Leonardo DiCaprio

Okay, so here it is. So basically, it's the drama of the concert booking committee of a small liberal arts college. I'm thinking Wesleyan, but if their people don't agree to it, we can do Vassar or Oberlin, some shit. So I want to do this like a made for TV movie from the nineties, super low stakes, but you just watch a few seconds of it enough times on cable and eventually you've seen the whole thing. I swear, it's an untapped market. What films do you know like that now? *Forrest Gump*, *The Waterboy*, you've never sat down to watch them, but you know every fucking thing that happens. So anyway, we've got this guy, Zach, right, and he's just sitting in a room smoking pot with his friends Eli and Paul.

**Switch**

*(Back to Eli, Zach, and Paul speaking and smoking again. Zach is on his phone. The long pauses should continue. Announcers re-enter)*

Announcer 1

The coach is probably wondering what the heck that was.

Announcer 2

I can guarantee you that Rex Ryan did not say "heck"  
*(Chuckles)*

Eli

What a strange window into the real life of football announcers.

Paul

You mean the Rex Ryan thing?

Eli

Yeah, they just shared an inside joke about the coach live on air.

Paul

Well they have to keep talking, so some irrelevant topics are bound to come up.

Eli

Sure, sure, but that required some serious prior knowledge in order to understand. Monday Night Football has back ground literature.

Paul

Weird.

*(Zach re-enters the conversation)*

Zach

So, some drama is going on right now and I don't know if it's because I'm stoned or what, but this feels like a *Game of Thrones* episode.

Eli

Okay, what's happening?

*(Paul seems less interested and packs another bowl for the vaporizer)*

Zach

So, it's like this. We approved this girl to book an act for \$1,500. They randomly asked for an extra \$500. We said no, we couldn't afford it. We can afford it, but fuck them, we agreed \$1500. We come to find out, the head of the Spring Fling Committee told the girl who booked the show that we can afford it, and she told the act. Now the act is hitting us up for the extra \$500.

Eli

No, you're right, that is some drama. What are you going to do?

Zach

So the most senior member of the committee wants to give them half, but this guy in our year wants to tell them to go fuck themselves. I'll be honest, I'm kind of following his lead on this one because the older guy is out at the end of the year and the guy in our year really seems like he has his shit together.

Eli

I know him, and I can definitely see what you're saying happening.

Zach

Yeah, so now we have to make a show of force because this guy on Spring Fling thinks he owns us, and that's *our* money. It's so hard to send a message when you're high though. Fuck it, "I said I agree" to the guy from our year.

Eli

Sounds like a plan.

**Switch**

Leonardo DiCaprio

And then it kind of goes on like that for a while.

**Switch**

**Scene III**

*(The NFL game is still playing, Zach Paul and Eli are still just sitting around smoking out of a vaporizer and watching the game)*

Announcer 1

And another touchdown for the Bears!

Eli

What's that guy's name?

Zach

No idea, but look it up. Now I'm curious.

*(Eli takes out his phone and Googles it)*

Eli

Jon Gruden of the unfortunately named town, Sandusky, Ohio.

Paul

Oh, that's terrible. They should just change their name after the Penn State thing.

Zach

Yeah, it could be We're Sorry, Ohio

Paul

And the motto could be: So secluded, not even Joe Paterno has any idea what's going on here.

*(Zach and Eli laugh. Pause)*

Zach

So back to the movie. The best part about the movie is, that if I made it and people actually liked it: in an avant-garde sort of way, of course. They would be like "You should make that concert committee movie into a real movie" like *Machete* in the Grindhouse double-feature. But you know what I do? I don't make the movie. I tell them fuck you and I don't do the movie, ever, I keep the rights. That's basically the cruelest thing you can do to someone, set up a fictional world they want to explore, then take it away from them.

Eli

How long have you been talking? Because I didn't get any of that.

Zach

Any of it? Or just not the part about me being a huge asshole?

Eli

Any of it.

Zach

Fuck.

*(DAN enters, completely sober)*

Dan

Hey guys, just got back from doing some work at Olin. So is this a game or are the Bears just killing it?

Zach

Bears are winning, but hold on Dan, I've got this movie idea for you.

Eli

It's actually pretty interesting.

Dan

Okay, I'm all ears.

Zach *(with equal enthusiasm)*

Think about a movie that stopped in the middle so a character could pitch another movie? It'd be like that episode of *Breaking Bad* where Badger and Skinny Pete just randomly pitch that *Star Trek* episode. Kind of like Italo Calvino. Like imagine if Jackie Chan and Leonardo DiCaprio were in a buddy cop movie, where Leo is like the rookie detective and Jackie is the more experienced cop where halfway through, like they wanted to go get the bad guy, but Leo just stopped to pitch a movie idea.

*(Dan sits down)*

**Switch**

Jackie Chan

C'mon Leo. We have to stop Flask before his criminal organization frames the chief of police for murder and they kill your ex-wife in the process!

*(Leo and Jackie freeze)*

Dan *(from the other side of the stage)*

Who's Flask?

Zach *(from the other side of the stage)*

He's just, like, the bad guy.

*(Leo and Jackie unfreeze. Jackie does a double take. He's seen this before)*

Leonardo DiCaprio

But we've been kicked off the force, sarge. No guns, no badges, nothing.

Jackie Chan *(stumbling)*

Don't you see Leo, we never needed any badges. We're good people, and that's exactly what this city needs right now.

Leonardo DiCaprio

Damn it, you're right!

Jackie Chan *(uninspired)*

Well c'mon!

Leonardo DiCaprio

Hold on. I know this isn't the best time for this, but can I pitch you a movie idea real quick. I've just had this rattling around in my head for a couple of days and I have to see what someone else thinks. It'll take like 5 minutes, I swear, like an elevator pitch.

Jackie Chan *(trying to stop him)*

Uh...

Leonardo DiCaprio

Okay, so here it is. So basically, it's the drama of the concert booking committee of a small liberal arts college. I'm thinking Wesleyan, but if their people don't agree to it, we can do Vassar or Oberlin, some shit. So I want to do this like a made for TV movie from the nineties, super low stakes, but you just

watch a few seconds of it enough times on cable and eventually you've seen the whole thing. I swear it's an untapped market. What films do you know like that now? *Forrest Gump*, *The Waterboy*, you've never sat down to watch them, but you know every fucking thing that happens.

*(Jackie, having heard this before, gets bored. He yawns, check his phone. Leo tries to get him back)*

So **anyway**, we've got this guy, Zach, right, and he's just sitting in a room smoking pot with his friends Eli and Paul.

### **Switch**

Dan

Shit. That's really weird, but I'd watch that. Can you imagine what a producer would do if you came up with that as a movie idea?

Zach

It could be a play too. I'm in this playwriting class. I could do it for an exercise. What do you think would happen?

Eli

I can't tell. I think you might fail, or the professor might think it's brilliant. I don't know.

Zach

People would also have to read this super self-referential mess. And like imagine if the NFL game was going on in the background the entire time; we could call it "Watching Football," all super-artsy. Like just think about what would happen if a room full of people were reading this right now, or even if an audience was watching it? Just let that sink in.

*(Long Pause)*

Eli

That would be super weird. How would you end it?

Zach

I could just end it. Like bye.

**Curtain**

**Curtains Rise**

Dan

Nah, that'd be stupid. You would have to make it poetic, like wait until the game's over or something.

TV

ESPN thanks you for watching this televised production of the National Football League.

Zach

Yeah, that's the end.

**Curtain**

## Second Sequence- The Fauna of Mirrors

### Scene I

*(AT RISE: Return to the room where Zach and Paul are brewing tea next to the vaporizer. Paul is swiping through prospective Tinder matches on his phone.)*

Zach

So Baud must be your guy then?

Paul

Why do you say that?

Zach

You do that one quote all the time, what is it, about sex and seduction?

Paul

"Seduction is always more singular and sublime than sex and it commands the higher price." Jean Baudrillard.

Zach

Yeah, you have that shit on your Tinder profile. I think it's safe to say he's your favorite philosopher. It's okay, I have one too; it's Zizek. I love that insane man to death.

Paul

No, I'm actually more of a neo-Kantian. I like Baud because of those quotes, and I'm also a big Borges fan because of Loyola EM.

Zach

I never liked Kant, too much into absolutes. Plus the book he wrote ranking all the races was pretty wack. And Loyola EM, like a debate team?

Paul *(growing ominous)*

Yeah, I can't remember their names, but they're this really successful debate team from Loyola high school and they do this super cool case with Borges. He talks about this story called like "The Mirror People" or something, and it's an ancient Chinese fable about how our reflections were once another world that tried to conquer ours. We fought back with a sorcerer that

sealed them in the mirror and made them our reflections, but little by little they will push at the mirror until they try to take over the world again.

*(Paul loses his gravitas)*

Paul

They basically use that to say they are the mirror of debate and no one can make arguments against them because they're just arguing against themselves. *(Pause)* Hey, is the tea ready?

Zach

Just finished boiling. Give me your cup.

*(Zach pours Paul a cup of water from his hot pot, then pours one for himself. They drink slowly, Zach burning his mouth on every sip)*

Paul

This is great. What was this called again?

Zach

This is Kava tea. Your body metabolizes it the same way that it does alcohol and it gives you an insane body high when you smoke with it.

Paul

Sounds dope.

*(Eli bursts into the room)*

Eli

Are we watching Monday Night Football or what? Oh shit, are you guys making Kava tea? Can I have some?

Zach

Sure, grab a cup.

*(Eli pours himself a cup of tea. He, Paul, and Zach turn on the TV and start watching Monday Night Football. The Seattle Seahawks are playing the Washington Redskins. It is a close game, but the Seahawks have the lead. The*

*Announcers should take their place and once again ad-lib the game, though at one point, they must say "eyes through the thighs", getting a laugh from Zach, Eli, and Paul. The vaporizer is turned on and the guys start taking hits. The telecast is once again British. They watch the game until somewhere in the middle of the first commercial break and begin to talk again.)*

Announcer 2 (*with a poor British accent*)

I like to gamble baby, but not when it comes to me car insurance.

Zach

What the fuck did he just say?

Paul

That's hilarious.

Eli (*doing a poor impression*)

But not when it comes to me car insurance.

Zach

That's fucking amazing. This is a night of quotes. First eyes through the thighs and now this.

(*Pause*)

Eli

So, I came up with a new villain for Bell-Boy/Bell-Boy.

Paul

This is that comic book you two are working on, right?

Eli

Yeah. This guy's called Soberman. His power is that he makes everyone around him incredibly drunk while he stays totally sober.

Zach

I love it. We can add him to the cast list for the movie adaptation. Didn't Dan text that to us today? Who do we have?

Eli

So, our hero Bell-Boy/Bell Boy, by day a bell ringer in a church and by night...

Zach (*realizing*)

Shit, I just got that.

Eli

What?

Zach

I didn't get that he was an actual bell-boy all the time. I thought that he worked in a hotel and was a superhero named Bell-Boy at night.

Eli (*exasperated*)

No, the whole reason we thought of this was because I ring the bells on campus.

Zach

You're right, that makes so much sense; it's like Simon's Quest. What a horrible night to have a curse and shit. Why did I not put that together? So does he have two sets of powers then? Like I know at night he's like a Batman-Style vigilante with a bunch of hotel themed gadgets, but what is he by day? Does he have bell powers?

Eli

I hadn't really thought that far ahead, to be honest.

Zach

Well, he could have sonic powers, like he can turn anything into a bell. And he could carry hand-chimes.

Paul

What are hand-chimes?

Eli

Fuck the hand-chimes, if the average audience doesn't recognize them, we don't need them.

Zach

You're probably right. Anyway, give me the cast list.

Eli

Right. So our hero Bell-Boy/Bell-Boy is going to be played by Ashton Kutcher to appeal to mainstream audiences. His love interest, the Concierge of the hotel he works at will be played by Scarlett Johansson. We have Dr. Scott Higgins, master of Physics and Robotics played by Christopher Lloyd.

Paul

Wait, isn't Scott Higgins the name of one of the film professors here?

Eli

Yeah, but Zach and I thought it sounded like a badass villain name. Higgins isn't even a doctor, we just added that.

*(Paul nods)*

Anyway, the Human Nail will be played by Steve Buscemi, and I'm thinking Liam Neeson for Soberman. Cos like if you imagine someone just unable to get drunk, I'm thinking Neeson.

Zach

I like that, kind of a Wolverine thing, his body won't let him get drunk thing. And this completes the trilogy. But how is he going to defeat Soberman?

**Switch**

**Scene II**

*(BELL-BOY/BELL-BOY,  
played by Ashton  
Kutcher, because, why  
not, dressed in his  
hotel uniform stands in  
a hotel lobby talking to  
the CONCEIRGE, some kind  
of a Scarlett  
Johannsson-type)*

Bell-Boy/Bell-Boy

This isn't good. I thought it was bad enough that Dr. Scott Higgins and The Human Nail were both on the loose again, but this new Soberman guy is a huge problem. I don't know how I'm going to defeat him if I can't even walk straight.

Concierge

What did Pastor Jannsen tell you?

**Switch**

Eli

Fuck, we forgot about Pastor Jannsen.

Paul

Wait, back up a minute. What is a Human Nail?

Eli

He's basically a big ass hand. And the different colors he paints his nails give him different superpowers. Like the red one would let him shoot lasers and the blue one would let him have water powers and stuff.

Paul

Okay, and where's his head? Like is it in one of the nails, is it in the palm, or what? Which way is the hand even facing?

Eli

We really haven't thought it out that much, I guess. We just know that anything that monstrous couldn't have any other face than Steve Buscemi's.

Zach

Right, right. But who do you get to play Jannsen? He's an incompetent pastor we stole from an old Swedish Variety show. Ideas? I was thinking maybe Luke Wilson.

Eli

I think he's too hapless. Plus, whenever I think about Luke and Owen Wilson, I think about them being related to Tim Taylor's neighbor on "Home Improvement."

Paul

I didn't really watch that one.

Eli

It was the one where Adam Sandler had a DIY daytime talk show.

Zach

It was Tim Allen.

Eli

Shit, I always mess that up. I don't even think Sandler's done a TV show besides SNL.

Paul

How about Christoph Waltz?

Zach and Eli

Perfect!

**Switch**

Bell-Boy/Bell-Boy

That's the problem. Pastor Jannsen is gone. No one's seen him since he went to Burma to look for that missing bell.

**Switch**

Zach

Burma! We forgot all about Burma too! It's...

**Switch**

Concierge

Of course! He went to Burma to find the largest bell ever created that went missing in Burma (now Myanmar) sometime in the thirteenth century. But without his guidance, how will you ever defeat Soberman? You have no way of getting near him and when you do, you'll be too drunk to aim any attacks against him.

Bell-Boy/Bell-Boy

You're right. I was reading in one of Pastor Jannsen's old books about techniques of past Bell Ringers. There's this thing called

the Vertigo State, but we can't do that without at least one more member of the old Fraternal Order of the Bell Ringers.

**Switch**

Paul

Now I'm definitely confused. Fraternal Order of the Bell Ringers?

Eli

Yeah. Pastor Jannsen was part of a Bell-Ringer's society in Sweden. They were the keeper of the ancient power of the bells. There were thirteen of them, but when Bell-Boy/Bell-Boy was born, according to ancient prophecy, he would become the greatest bell ringer of all time, and one of the Bell Ringer's didn't like that. So, he left the order and he began to plot their downfall. He created automatons that wiped out all of the ringers except for Pastor Jannsen who fled to America with Bell-Boy/Bell-Boy and raised him as his own in the bell tower of an old hotel where he started to hone his craft. And Dr. Scott Higgins is the son of that rogue bell-ringer come to complete the job his father never could.

Paul

Okay, makes perfect sense.

*(Paul begins vaping, he passes the whip around as they keep talking. The game is still on)*

Zach

Guys, that's it. I figured out how we activate the Vertigo State!

**Switch**

Concierge

I'm going to what?

Bell-Boy/Bell-Boy

I need to teach you. You have to take up the Bell so that I can enter the Vertigo State. I can't do it without you. There's only 2 ways to get close to Soberman without getting creamed. The first is to not be affected by his drunkenness, and that's not an option. OR I can make him just as off-balance as me to make it a fair fight. With the Vertigo State, two or more bell-

ringers create an aura of unbalance that only they are immune to. This way, I can fight him on an even playing field.

Concierge

I get it now! We'll beat him at his own game. But why do you need me? I don't have any special powers, I'm not part of any prophecy.

Bell-Boy/Bell-Boy

But you have something more important. You're the one who helped me tune my frequency to destroy Dr. Scott Higgins' Robots and to get back everything he sent into another dimension with his black hole. And you're the one who helped me turn a pair of hotel bells into a nail clipper that defeated the Human Nail once and for all. Don't you see? I need you, but it's more than that. I... think I'm in love with you.

Concierge

Bell-Boy, I always thought so.

*(She jumps over her desk)*

I'm in love with you too.

*(They go in to kiss)*

## **Switch**

Eli

That's it! That's genius. We get Concierge into the action and we pull the feminist crowd, we make the romantic subplot wrap up nicely, and we defeat Soberman in an awesome way. This is the ending we need. And we also get to film a fight of two dizzy guys punching the crap out of each other. But what happens to Pastor Jannsen?

Zach

I'm not sure, but I love this idea. That shit about the largest bell ever created getting lost in Burma is absolutely real. My dad pitched it to me at dinner when he came to visit. It's so crazy. The other thing is that we could actually shoot the Burmese scenes in Myanmar. They just started opening up to the West and I bet they would love nothing more than a big American blockbuster shot on their soil. I'm seeing tax credits galore. I know a Burmese guy, he owns some land there. For the story, I guess he comes back having found the bell and tries to reinvigorate the bell-ringing order.

Eli

No way, it's all about down-notes. Think about it, what's the best Star Wars? *Empire*. Luke lost his hand, Han got frozen, and Lando betrayed them. Which is the best Batman movie? *Dark Knight*. Harvey Dent is Two-Face, Batman is vilified, and Gordon has to chase him down when the city needs him most.

Announcer 1 (O.S.)

And another big play for Russell Wilson, he's having an amazing night!

Paul

Fuck!

Zach

What?

Paul

I don't have Russell Wilson. I'm getting murdered this week.

Eli

That sucks. Did he go early in your league's draft?

Paul

That's the thing, he didn't. I just wasn't paying attention to him. I feel super out of touch.

Zach (*free-associating*)

You just reminded me of something. Whenever Bush Sr. was running for office, and he went to a supermarket for a publicity stunt, he had no idea what a price scanner was. He was that out of touch.

Eli

James Carville has a way better story about that. He was running late for a flight and he had never seen those big TSA scanners, so he tries to get into one, and they make him take off his belt, and shoes, and what have you, and he's getting frustrated, and he just says "Measure my penis, and let me get on this plane!"

(*Laughs*)

Paul

He had no idea what it did, but that's where his mind went first?

(*More laughs*)

Paul

I know this may be a bit of a digression, but shout out to the human body. It's fucking amazing that we can put weed and Kava tea inside them and we feel like this. Am I the only one who thinks so?

Eli

Yo, you are not wrong. Specific shout out to the pyloric sphincter, easily the most amazing part of you. Like how does it know when to let shit into your small intestine?

Zach

I think the brain is the most interesting part of your body, but then, I would think that. That's exactly what it wants.

Eli

You've had too much.

Zach

Or not enough. My fiction professor always says, when late for an appointment, walk more slowly.

*(Dan enters, completely sober)*

Dan

How's the game guys?

Eli

I have to be perfectly honest with you, we were barely watching it.

Dan

No worries, can I get some of that?

*(Gestures to the vaporizer)*

Eli

Sure, just jump in. So, anyway, I was thinking that Bell-Boy/Bell-Boy needs to be created already. Enough sitting on our asses.

*(Dan has taken the vaporizer from Eli, but is attempting to pass it back to Eli)*

Paul

Dan, over here. You know the rule, left is law.

Dan

Oh yeah. I guess I'm left-handed so it's against my instinct to pass to my dominant hand. My bad.

Eli

That's pretty fucked.

Dan

What?

Eli (*growing angry*)

Left is law favors righties. This is another way that the right-handed hegemony perpetrates it's subjugation of left-handed people. Scissors, Desks, and now this. This is why left-handers live shorter life-spans.

Dan

I guess. I might have just passed it the wrong way.

### **Switch**

*(Back in the alley)*

Leonardo DiCaprio

So it kind of fades out there. And you're not exactly sure what to believe.

Jackie Chan

That's the end of your movie? We never even find out what happens to the concert. These guys just get side tracked talking about other shit. And don't you think you're going to get in legal trouble?

Leonardo DiCaprio

For what?

Jackie Chan

For using an existing property in your movie.

Leonardo DiCaprio

Shit, you're right. Bell-Boy/Bell-Boy will never sign onto this. After that lackluster movie adaptation, those guys haven't licensed anything. Speaking of, I think that is a franchise that is really due for a reboot. Make it all dark and gritty you know, that kind of thing.

Jackie Chan

They just did one like seven years ago. Why do you think now is the time? If anything it's too soon.

Leonardo DiCaprio

Look at *Spiderman*, they rebooted that like twice in less than a decade, and if you think there isn't a crowd of fans hungry for another crack at Bell-Boy/Bell-Boy, you're crazy.

Jackie Chan

Whatever. I wasn't a fan of re-rebooting Spiderman either. Did you see *Amazing Spiderman 2*? Absolute garbage. I think we need to wait until we have a reason to tell that story.

Leonardo DiCaprio

Again with that shit, sarge. It's because of people like you that good remakes get buried.

Jackie Chan

What's your favorite remake? Go.

*(Leo struggles with this one)*

Leonardo DiCaprio

Fuck you, sarge.

Jackie Chan

That's what I thought. Now we have to get going soon, by now, Flask has probably started to move. Did you call our ex-con contact to get us guns for the showdown?

Leonardo DiCaprio

Shit!

### **Switch**

Zach

Update on the concert committee drama.

Dan

What's up?

Zach

The artist is refusing to perform unless he gets the \$500, and at this point, we're too locked in to go back on our word.

Dan

That's some bullshit!

*(Stands up. The Vaporizer whip comes out of the vaporizer and all of the weed falls to the floor)*

Fuck, I'm sorry guys.

*(Tries to pick up the fallen weed, but accidentally crushes the glass tip of the vaporizer whip underfoot)*

Wheels are coming off right now. Fuck, I guess we're done smoking for tonight.

### **Switch**

*(Back to the lobby)*

Concierge

Bell-Boy, do you ever think this is a bit much?

Bell-Boy/Bell-Boy

What do you mean?

Concierge

I guess I just wonder if all the melodrama and the colorful villains are a little too over the top. Like who actually fights a guy named Soberman?

Bell-Boy/Bell-Boy

I do. This is kind of my life. I'm not really sure what you're getting at here.

Concierge

I don't really know either, but this all seems like it's a little too neat to be real, you know what I'm saying?

Bell-Boy/Bell-Boy

Not really. Like do you think this is another one of Dr. Scott Higgin's schemes?

Concierge

No, in fact, I think Higgin's schemes are really someone else's schemes.

Bell-Boy/Bell-Boy

Oh, I see. There must be an even smarter scientist telling Higgins what to do. Higgins might even be a robot himself!

Concierge

No, like, have you ever read any Nozick?

Bell-Boy/Bell-Boy

I can't say I have.

Concierge

It doesn't matter. I'm sure you've played a videogame before. What if we are that videogame? What if someone just writes everything that we do into existence? Nothing we do would matter.

Bell-Boy/Bell-Boy

Sure it matters, we've got to protect the city from the bad guys. Otherwise, they'll take over and rule with an iron fist. That's pretty objectively terrible no matter how you look at it.

Concierge

But what if the city isn't real? What if nothing is? Then does it really matter?

Bell-Boy/Bell-Boy

I don't know about any of that. I just know that if we don't stop Soberman, the city will be in danger. We can wax philosophical all day, but people who, real or not, are as real as you or me, need our help. Are you in?

Concierge (*resigned*)

Yes Bell-Boy, I'm with you.

TV

ESPN thanks you for watching this televised production of the National Football League.

**Curtain**

## Third Sequence- The Castration of Uranus

### Scene I

*(AT RISE: Return to the room where Zach, Eli, and Paul are smoking out of a demonstrably different vaporizer whip and watching football. The 49ers are playing the Rams. The Announcers enter and should ad-lib this game as well ending with the below)*

Announcer 2

This team can't throw. And if you can't throw, you can't score, and if you can't score, you can't win.

Eli

What the fuck was that? If you can't score you can't win? How asinine is that? It's like they say the most basic things ever.

Zach

Fucking fact dumps man, they have to always say something.

Paul

Yeah, they'll eventually just run out of shit to talk about.  
*(Pause. Announcers exit)*

Zach

I'm pretty fucked on this ending guys.

Paul

How come? The story's working so far? Didn't you say your professor actually liked it?

Zach

That's the problem. She really likes it. I was doing okay in that class, but "Watching Football" is the first time she said she actually liked something I did. She told me it had "great comedic moments" and it was "unpretentious."

Eli

If only she knew you.

Zach

Exactly. And we spent so much time on it in class. They compared the false curtain at the end to all sorts of actually high-brow shit. I stole it from *Loony Tunes*! I have a meeting about the project next week.

Eli

Well that sucks. But it is really funny how people actually took your high musings seriously.

Zach

Yeah, but now I have to deliver on an "amazing" concept. And I've got absolutely nothing.

Paul

Maybe that's the conflict. The conflict to find a conflict.

Zach

I thought about that, but it doesn't work. Then you're just left pissed off at me, and you don't understand why I wasted your time with the whole play. The thing about this is I'm teetering on a very precarious ledge here. If I try to make it too smart, then people will see right through it and it will be trite, but if I keep it dumb, then people will see that everything they thought about the play was just that, their thoughts, and I've gone from a dramaturgical genius to a laser light show in the span of the third act. I'm fucked.

Paul

Well there's only one way to find the solution.

Zach

How's that?

Paul

The same way you found every other solution.

*(Gestures to the vaporizer. Zach looks doubtful)*

At the very least, you'll forget about it for a few hours.

*Zach (convinced, or at least satiated)*

Sounds like a plan.

*(Takes the whip and a monster hit.)*

Zach

How come you never see douchebags playing guitar everywhere anymore? That was a huge thing at my high school, and now in college, where you'd expect it, there's not one to be found.

Eli

That's because they're all producers now.

Zach

Really?

Eli

Yep, Ableton is the new guitar, and they all "DJ" every once in a while, like it's a verb rather than a noun. They are not DJs, they DJ. It's that same demographic.

Paul

Interesting phenomenon.

*(Eli takes out his phone)*

Eli

Weird, Ethan just called me. I missed it. I'll give him a call back.

*(Eli calls Ethan)*

Zach

That is such a dumb fucking commercial. Who would want to turn everything into Skittles by touching them? Also, the Midas touch as a concept is stupid. I guarantee the average person would go about six hours before forgetting and gilding their junk.

Paul

I could see that. I wouldn't even want to turn everything into weed. Shit is too dangerous. With great power comes great responsibility and all that shit.

Zach

For real.

Eli

Weird. He didn't pick up. I fucking hate phone tag.

Zach

Maybe he'll call back. Why don't you just text him?

Eli

Shit, didn't think of that.

*(Eli's phone rings. The song is "Fucked Up" by Rafael Casal and Daveed Diggs)*

Eli *(on phone)*

Hey man, what's up?

Ethan *(voice over)*

I don't know man, you called me.

Eli *(on phone)*

I know, because you called me first. What'd you, butt-dial me?

Eli *(to room)*

He's being difficult about this.

Ethan *(voice over)*

I couldn't have butt-dialed you, my phone is in my front pocket.

Eli *(on phone, exasperated)*

Fine, you nut dialed me then,

*(Zach and Paul laugh)*

But check your call log. You called.

*(Pause)*

Ethan *(voice over)*

So I did, my bad. See you after a Capella rehearsal. Peace.

Eli *(on phone)*

Bye.

Eli *(to room)*

Can you believe that?

Zach

Oh my god, nut dialed is perfect. It may be the best invention I've ever heard of. It's exactly the weird Seinfeldian bullshit that we always talk about. I love it.

Paul

Dude, *Nut Dialed* could be a movie. Like a guy accidentally nut dials his girlfriend and says some suspicious-sounding shit. She breaks up with him and he spends the rest of the movie trying to explain himself.

Zach

I've got one. It's about the phenomenon of nut dialing and how a group of friends all nut dial each other in hilarious situations, *Love Actually* style, but it does all kinds of different things. It starts relationships, makes careers, but it also causes break-ups and family strife. Nut dialing as a cultural phenomenon; it's all people will be talking about.

Eli

I was thinking more of a slapstick comedy. People getting hit in the balls, bad puns, the whole nine yards. I won't be happy unless someone is about to get hit in the nuts, and they say "This is nuts!" and they get hit in the face. Classic misdirection. Put that in the trailer. *Nut Dialed*, starring Adam Sandler, coming this summer.

Zach

That would be critically panned, but I'd see it. You know what would be the biggest slap to the face? Or the nuts as the case may be?

Paul

What?

Zach

What if we make *Nut Dialed*, the Eli version, but underneath all of it, we put something super high-brow. My playwriting professor was telling me about how if you get stuck with a plot, make the whole plot relate to a fairy tale. Like you know that movie *Secretary*?

Eli

The BDSM thing with Maggie Gyllenhaal?

Zach

Yeah, that one. The whole thing, scene for scene, is Little Red Riding Hood.

Eli

No way. That's amazing! I have to re-watch that.

Zach

There are a lot of reasons to re-watch that movie. But here it is. *Nut Dialed* is all based on a castration myth, like the Greek one of Uranus.

Paul

Please tell me about the castration of Uranus. I'm so interested.

*(Laughs)*

Zach *(sighs)*

Uranus was the first ruler of the universe, he married his mother Gaia and put all of his children, like the Cyclopes, in Tartarus. Eventually, Gaia gave their son Cronos an unbreakable scythe that he used to castrate Uranus and take the throne. That cock and balls, by the way, fell into the ocean, and eventually became Aphrodite. I don't know how we'd do it, but we remake that as *Nut Dialed* and we have a phenomenon on our hands.

Paul

Why do you say that?

Zach

No one is going to get that on first viewing. Critics will pan it, no one will care about it, until one day, probably on a reddit thread, someone will figure it out, and then boom! Rotten Tomatoes, IMDb, and Metacritic all give it a perfect rating out of respect, and then, critics will have to reverse their stances. On the weekend of release, they'll be like...

*(Zach crosses to the other side of the stage, which is now furnished with a movie chair like Siskel and Ebert used to sit in)*

Zach *(as critic)*

I knew that Sandler wouldn't produce anything of value, he is still on his crusade to make every terrible fake movie from *Funny People*, but he has outdone himself with *Nut Dialed*. I sat through *Jack and Jill*, *Grown Ups 2*, and *That's my Boy*, and I thought that we had reached the nadir of American Cinema, but this takes the cake and shits all over it. I have not seen such a self-indulgent, poorly acted, nonsensical, film so desperate for cheap laughs in all my days as a critic.

*(Zach returns to the room)*

Zach

All full of hate and vitriol, but in their end of the year or decade review, you're going to see an absolute 180.

*(Zach crosses again)*

Zach (*as critic*)

And at number one (or more likely something nominal like three or four) is the film that had everyone fooled. What we mistook for low-brow schlock is actually one of the 21<sup>st</sup> century's most insightful pieces of modern cinema. Even the terrible jokes were all references to one of the oldest myths in Western Culture. I think I speak for everyone when I say, *Nut Dialed* is a masterpiece.

(*Zach returns to the room*)

Zach

People are going to have to say that they didn't understand the cinematic genius of *Nut Dialed* upon its first viewing. Can you imagine that, a whole legion of pretentious liberal arts school students and the culturally hyper-literate sociopaths they grow up to be, taken down by a film called *Nut Dialed*, starring Adam Sandler? It's almost too beautiful for words.

Paul

That's fucking hilarious.

Zach (*eureka*)

That's it!

Eli

What?

Zach

That's it! That's the end! "Watching Football" ends with *Nut Dialed*. It's so obvious. Why didn't I see it before? Something as not serious as this can only end with something even less serious on a way bigger scale! It's perfect!

Paul

Well I'm glad you found your ending. But that can't be the whole thing. Don't you have some loops to close? Like what happens to Jackie and Leo? What happens to Bell-Boy/Bell-Boy?

Zach

I'm not 100% sure yet, but I feel like all I can do is just end them. Like Paul, you won your fantasy league this season. The concert committee never gave that artist the extra cash and he did the show for the agreed upon price, and the guy from Spring Fling got kicked off committee. Just like one-sentence to tell you an ending. Kind of like how in *Animal House* or *The Sandlot*,

those kids just got the one sentence about what happened to them. Like Bertram who disappeared into the 60's. What was up with that, by the way?

Paul

That isn't good enough. You need to leave these people with something. Something they can write home about. You can't let the play die on a couple of one sentence endings.

Zach

You're right goddamn it! I can do much better than that. Fuck it, I'll show the final battle between Bell-boy/Bell-Boy and Soberman.

### **Switch**

*(SOBERMAN and Bell-Boy/Bellboy fight in the lobby. Concierge is on the sidelines keeping up the Vertigo State. Bell-Boy/Bell-Boy is winning)*

Bell-Boy/Bell-Boy

You'll never win Soberman. In the Vertigo State, we're on an equal playing field, and I've been at this a lot longer than you.

Soberman

You've got nothing on me, Bell-Boy. I've only been showing you a fraction of my power. While your Vertigo State is impressive, it is too bad that you never thought of anyone else having bell powers other than yourself.

*(Soberman reaches a hand out to Concierge enveloping himself into the Vertigo State)*

Bell-Boy/Bell-Boy *(slurring)*

Fuck. This isn't good. Concierge, any ideas?

Concierge

Well I brought this hand chime...

Bell-Boy/Bell-Boy

What's a hand chime? Fuck it, it doesn't matter. Use it!

*(Concierge uses the hand  
chime to incapacitate  
Soberman)*

Soberman  
Very clever. I'm so... proud of you.

*(Soberman collapses)*

Concierge  
Proud, what the hell did he mean by that?

Bell-Boy/Bell-Boy  
I think *I* know.

*(Bell-Boy/Bell-Boy  
dramatically  
removes Soberman's  
mask. Concierge  
gasps as if to  
recognize him)*

Concierge  
Who the hell is that?

Bell-Boy/Bell-Boy  
It may look like Soberman, but I know for sure. It's Pastor  
Jannsen.

Concierge  
Pastor Jannsen, but how?

Bell-Boy/Bell-Boy  
Very simple. I knew once I found out Soberman's origin story,  
namely that he was a Westerner who sought a cure for his  
condition in Burma (a nation known for its magical cures), that  
he must have encountered Pastor Jannsen who easily took him out,  
then switched faces with him just like in that movie *Face-Off*  
with Nic Cage and Jon Travolta. We were never drunk at all, we  
were just dizzy; he wanted us to discover the power of the  
Vertigo State. But how did he know that we would succeed?

Soberman/Pastor Jannsen  
I believed in you... both of you.

*(dies)*

Bell-Boy/Bell-Boy  
A bittersweet victory. Cinematically, the best kind.

Concierge

I'm so sorry he died. What are you going to do now?

Bell-Boy/Bell-Boy

Not me, we, and we are going to protect this hotel as Pastor Jannsen and I have done my entire life. That is, if you'll join me on a more permanent basis.

Concierge

I don't know. I'm still not convinced that we are or aren't real. What does saving a fake city endless times really prove?

Bell-Boy/Bell-Boy

Not this again. Listen, I don't know if we are real or not. I don't know if a bell-ringing superhero/hotel employee and his girlfriend are really a believable story, but I don't care. I love you and isn't that enough for you?

Concierge

I don't know if it is. I'm sorry.

*(She moves to exit.  
Suddenly Soberman/Pastor  
Jannsen's body stirs)*

Soberman/Pastor Jannsen

One of you seeks truth, the other justice. Your paths are different, but intertwined. "All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players; they have their exits and their entrances."

Concierge

That's "As You like It," Act II Scene VII. Pastor Jannsen, are you agreeing with me that none of this could be real?

*(Soberman doesn't reply)*

But so what if it isn't real? It's real to me, and that's what's important. If saving the city means something to me, who's to judge.

Bell-Boy/Bell-Boy

So, do you believe in our reality? Do you believe in us?

Concierge

I'm not sure yet, but finding out that the biggest threat to our city's safety was actually just a test by your missing mentor

has somehow convinced me that this world is definitely more real than I thought it was.

Bell-Boy/Bell-Boy

So does this mean you're going to join me?

Concierge

Bell-Boy, I thought you'd never ask.

*(They kiss)*

### **Switch**

Eli

Now that's an ending. Cut, Print, 400 million dollar opening weekend. The Beautiful Burmese Bell Bumbles Bell-Boy and the Pastor Pretends... um.

Zach

Predatory Predilections.

Eli

Perfect.

Paul

But what about Jackie and Leo?

Zach

I'm sure that people won't give too much of a shit about that.

### **Switch**

*(Jackie and Leo still talking in the alley)*

Jackie Chan

That's your idea of a *Bell-Boy/Bell-Boy* reboot? It has the same ending as an old *Scooby Doo* episode. And you still never finished the thing about the concert committee.

Leonardo DiCaprio

You know what. I am so tired of your negativity. It's so easy to shoot down ideas but this is what movies are. We're willing to sit through long chains of predictable set pieces and predetermined twists in the hopes of seeing one grand flash of originality, just one thing we haven't seen before. Well, if it's so easy to make something wholly original, let's see you pitch something. Go ahead sarge, show me what you got.

Jackie Chan

Okay, I've been kicking around this one idea for a few weeks. It's called *Nut Dialed*, and basically... wait a second here. This is getting completely Tarantinian, we have a job to do, and we can't waste our time talking about movies. We have a criminal to apprehend. Are you ready, kid?

Leonardo DiCaprio

I thought you'd never ask, let's go!

*(Exit)*

**Blackout**

*(Spotlight on a bed center stage. Zach is in it.)*

Zach

I was high the whole time!

*(Leonardo DiCaprio enters with a top. He spins it on the floor. The rest of the cast runs behind the bed in football helmets.)*

Zach/Leonardo DiCaprio

Goddamn it, that's perfect.

*(To Audience)*

That way, they'd never know if I was serious or not.

TV

ESPN thanks you for watching this televised production of the National Football League.

**Curtain**

**Curtain Rise**

Dan

Where is everybody? Zach, did you finish your play? Were we trying to rip bong tonight instead?

**Curtain**