

THE NEXT DAY

EPISODE I

"Pilot"

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COLD OPEN

FADE IN:

INT. ELISE'S SUV - NIGHT

SUPER: December 2002.

KENDALL HARVEY SCOTT, 26, a digital designer, wears an old black t-shirt with the heavy metal band logo of the heavy metal band he formed with James. Despite his attire that screams "Let's rock!", he visibly carries the acceptance of life's obligations, showcased by his short black hair and shaved beard, giving him a Monday-ready look for work. Confident and socially intelligent.

TIMOTHY JAMES ANDERSON(a.k.a. TJ), 26, a software developer, is less adapted to adult life with his messy hair and original style. More technical intelligence. More introverted with a childlike character.

STEVE RAWSON, 28, a personal gym trainer, very handsome and fit, with a reputation as a womanizer.

ELISE MILLER, 25, a pediatric psychologist, is an attractive woman with a maternal nature. She's very gentle with the outside world but extremely tough on her loved ones to protect them.

Kendall, James, and Steve just begin to sober up after a long and challenging night.

Elise is driving, Kendall is in the front seat, while Steve and James are sitting in the back. James has fallen asleep in his Frodo costume. Steve's hand is bandaged.

They are heading to Elise's house. She is clearly dressed for a special day.

ELISE

What?! Armed men?! Come on, guys.
You could be sleeping with the fish
by now!

KENDALL

Okay, you're right. We should have
been more careful. We won't do it
again.

ELISE

That's good. At least you're okay.
What did the doctor say about
Steve's hand?

KENDALL

Let's just say he won't be texting any girls for the next few weeks.

ELISE

That's the good news.

(laughs)

I told you to call me whenever "you need a hand", Steve.

Steve, mimics Elise's face and voice.

STEVE

(parroting)

I told you to call me whenever "you need a hand", Steve.

Kendall laughs and fist bumps Elise.

KENDALL

She really got you, dude.

JAMES

(wakes up)

What's going on?

STEVE

See, you woke up Frodo. It's not good to puke on the building's door, man. If Ms. Patty finds out you did this, it's not going to be good for you. But I'm sure it'll be very entertaining for me to watch.

Everyone except James laughs.

James, his face stuck to the car seat, gives Steve the bird.

KENDALL

How are things in Middle Earth, bro?

James, without moving from his spot, raises his thumb to show that everything is fine.

KENDALL (CONT'D)

(to Elise)

Is there something special going on today? You look really nice.

ELISE

You won't believe this, guys. Ashley's in New York!

(MORE)

ELISE (CONT'D)

I'm so happy that you guys will finally meet her. You know, we were living together in college, and I've been trying to convince her to move to New York for the last two years. I was so thrilled when she finally came. I've been so excited all day.

KENDALL

Did Ashley arrive? I thought she was coming next week.

ELISE

I thought so too, but she called last night and said she came back from her Scotland vacation early and booked a flight for this morning. We've been talking about you guys all day. You're going to love her!

STEVE

You can definitely be sure of it.

ELISE

(angrily)

I'm warning you, Steven(*)! You'd better behave yourself!

(*)When someone on the gang is mad at Steve, they call him "Steven".

Elise forcefully turns the rearview mirror towards Steve.

ELISE (CONT'D)

I love Ashley more than anything, and I won't tolerate anyone upsetting her!

Steve Raises both hands in the air in fear of the seriousness of the warning.

STEVE

Message received.

Elise forcefully turns the rearview mirror back to its original position.

KENDALL

You better believe it, dude. I don't know about you, but I've never seen El joke about Ashley.

Steve takes a deep breath and slowly lowers his hands while nodding his head.

ELISE

We're almost there. TJ, I've been wanting to introduce you two for a long time. I think you'll be perfect for each other.

KENDALL

(to James)

That's great news, TJ. Aren't you going to say anything?

When no answer comes, Kendall looks at the back seat.

KENDALL (CONT'D)

TJ?

JAMES

(smiles in his sleep and mumbles)

Come on, Arweeeeen.

ELISE

It seems our guy has already opened the gates of Rivendell.

They laugh.

FADE OUT.

END OF COLD OPEN

ACT I

FADE IN:

INT. ELISE AND ASHLEY'S APARTMENT / KITCHEN - NIGHT

ASHLEY SANDERS, 24, an art writer & critic. She's extremely tough toward the outside world when protecting her loved ones but very gentle with them.

Ashley shows some signs of fatigue from her long journey.

Elise and Ashley are preparing sandwiches in the kitchen, while the others are chatting in the living room.

ASHLEY

Come on El, don't you think you were a bit too harsh on the guys just now?

ELISE

Maybe, but they're grown men and they're still acting like little boys. Something really bad could have happened to them tonight. I get you. You've always been protective of the people around you. But as you get to know our guys, you'll understand. If someone wasn't doing this to them, they would have been in much more serious trouble by now. Trust me, sweetie.

Ashley Nods.

ELISE (CONT'D)

Besides, they're used to me being like this. You'll see when we go back there, they'll have already forgotten what was said. That's just how they are, there is nothing to do... What I really wanted to talk to you about was TJ. I mentioned him to you before, remember? He's such a nice guy, isn't he?

ASHLEY

The one dressed like Frodo?

ELISE

(a little hesitant)

Um... Yeah.

ASHLEY

Well. Aside from the costume and pointy ears, I'm sure he's actually a nice guy, but I don't know.

ELISE

I've known Kenny and TJ since I was 14. I've told you before that we grew up in the same neighborhood. They're both really good guys. Trust me, honey. You and TJ will get along great.

ASHLEY

(blushing)

Umm... Okay... There's no harm in trying, I guess.

ELISE

Great! You won't regret it... Let's join them.

Elise and Ashley pick up the tray of sandwiches and head to the living room.

INT. ELISE AND ASHLEY'S APARTMENT / LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Elise's living room, unlike Kendall and James', is neat and organized.

Kendall is sitting on one couch. James is lying down on the other couch. Steve is sitting in the armchair. They all drink coffee, trying to wake up.

ELISE

Here are the sandwiches, guys. You'll feel better after eating them.

KENDALL

Thanks, ladies. The coffee was also great. I'm starting to clear my head slowly.

JAMES

You're right. Thanks, ladies.

ELISE

(whispers to Ashley)
See? They've already forgotten.

Ashley nods, smiling.

ASHLEY

Looks like it was a rough night.
How are you feeling now, Steve?
You're better, aren't you?

Steve, with fearful eyes, quickly swallows and looks into Elise's eyes.

Elise narrows her eyes, implying that he should be careful about Ashley.

Seeing this, Steve quickly turns his head back to Ashley.

STEVE

(anxiously)
Yes, ma'am!
(clears his throat)
I mean. Yes, I'm better now,
Ashley. Thanks.

Ashley looks at Elise, trying to understand what's going on.

ASHLEY

Okay...

Elise nods her head as if everything is fine.

ELISE

Alright, guys. Your turn! What exactly happened tonight?

KENDALL

We already told you everything that happened.

ELISE

(angry)
No! That was the short version. I want to know everything!

JAMES

That means no more movie nights for a while, I think.

ELISE

Right!

KENDALL

Alright... Actually, all we wanted was to watch the TV premiere of The Lord of the Rings and have a little fun.

FADE TO:

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

INT. KENDALL AND JAMES' APARTMENT / LIVING ROOM - DAY

SUPER: Later that afternoon.

It's decorated with Star Wars and superhero figurines, a few comic books, music equipment such as a guitar and amplifier, a Playstation, music, movie and game CDs, books on music, programming and digital design, a laptop and desktop equipment, and electronic circuit parts can be clearly seen.

Kendall and James are in the living room of their apartment. James stands behind the television trying to fix the snowy image on the screen with a device attached to the antenna.

The device is clearly built by James out of bits and pieces of electronic circuitry.

KENDALL

Try turning it a bit to the right, buddy. Are you sure this... Whatever this is, will do the trick?

James adjusts the position of the antenna again.

JAMES

This is a signal booster and I spent two hours making this device. So, it better do the trick.

KENDALL

I can't believe we're relying on an antenna at a time like this! And on the very night of The Lord of the Rings TV premiere! I'm feeling myself stuck in the 70s! What's next? 8-Track tapes?

(hopeless)

I hope we can manage to have a normal night for once.

JAMES

You're overreacting, buddy. We just have a technical difficulty. At worst, the movie will be a little snowy, that's all.

(pause, then with a grin)

And if it gets too bad, we can always pretend we're watching it in the Misty Mountains.

Kendall smiles.

JAMES (CONT'D)

That's the spirit, buddy. Now stop worrying. Everything's going to be great.

KENDALL

Thanks, man. I hope so too, but you know, I can't remember the last time we were able to have fun without something strange happening to us.

JAMES

I know what you mean. Sometimes when I lay my head on the pillow at night, I wonder what kind of craziness we'll encounter the next day. But it won't be like that this time. This time we're just going to watch the movie, have a few drinks and have fun. That's all.

END FLASHBACK.

INT. ELISE AND ASHLEY'S APARTMENT / LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

ASHLEY

Come on, guys. It can't be that bad.

Everyone nods, as if to say, "Oh, it is that bad."

ASHLEY (CONT'D)

Oh...

JAMES

The only weird thing until that moment was the guys who came to fix the satellite eating our space cakes.

KENDALL

Yeah... We shouldn't have left them out.

KENDALL (CONT'D)

It also wasn't very good that after eating the cake, the short one called his girlfriend and sang to her instead of fixing the dish on the roof. If his girlfriend heard the same thing the whole neighborhood heard, I don't think she was very impressed. It was terrible!

JAMES

I'm not sure his "girlfriend" was actually a woman, bro. Remember the song he was singing.

Kendall realizes and then nods.

ELISE

Oh! How sweet...

ELISE (CONT'D)

I hope they didn't eat all the space cakes? I can't wait to try those amazing things!

Kendall and James glance at Steve.

Elise punches Steve's arm angrily.

Steve yelps in pain.

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

INT. KENDALL AND JAMES' APARTMENT / LIVING ROOM - DAY

The television's sound improves and the snow disappears.

JAMES

There it is! At least it's enough to save the day.

James steps in front of the television.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Not bad, huh?

KENDALL

It works! You're really good at these things, buddy.

JAMES

Thanks, man. If we had a computer, we wouldn't have needed any of this. At least we could've watched it on there.

KENDALL

Don't remind me of that. It wasn't good that the girl who was obsessed with Steve, saw her own nude photos on the computer.

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

INT. KENDALL AND JAMES' APARTMENT BUILDING / HALLWAY - NIGHT

SUPER: Three days ago.

Kendall and James return home from work, with jackets and briefcases. Just as Kendall is about to put the key in the door, they hear the furious yelling of a girl from inside.

GIRL

You're a dead man! I'll show you what it means to take my nude pictures!

Hearing this, Kendall and James look at each other in astonishment.

KENDALL

Nude pictures?

JAMES

What nude pictures?

Before Kendall can even open the door, Steve, wrapped in nothing but a bedsheet, opens it.

STEVE

Run!

Steve bolts.

Kendall and James look at the half-naked angry girl running towards them, surprised and confused.

James, in fear, waves his hands and tries to explain.

JAMES

No! No! We didn't do anything!

KENDALL

She is coming, dude! Run!

Kendall bolts.

James hurriedly closes the door and bolts.

The girl opens the door and yells after them.

GIRL

You're going to regret this! Do you hear me?

She slams the door shut.

EXT. KENDALL AND JAMES' APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

The angry girl is throwing a computer and some other items out the window.

Kendall, James, and Steve watch everything from below with fearful eyes.

GIRL

You sons of bitches!

END FLASHBACK.

INT. KENDALL AND JAMES' APARTMENT / LIVING ROOM - DAY

Kendall and James stare off into the distance, reliving the events of that night.

KENDALL

We're lucky we got out of there alive.

James nods.

JAMES

We need to tell Steve to stop bringing girls to our home. Back in college when we first met Steve, banging chicks into each other's rooms might have been fun, but when it comes to the home you live in, it starts to lose its charm.

KENDALL

Yeah...

JAMES

You remember what happened last time, don't you? The girl's brother turned out to be a cop. I don't think anyone else has had their apartment searched by the police for three days straight.

KENDALL

The apartment search wasn't a problem, but I still can't forget what they did to us with those rubber gloves.

JAMES

Yeah... Having them modify the procedure just for us wasn't fun.

(puts his hand on his butt)

It still hurts just thinking about it.

(pause)

Anyway, at least we have our TV, even if it's a bit snowy, until the new computer arrives. Speaking of Steve, where is he? The movie's gonna start soon.

KENDALL

I thought he was inside.

JAMES

Inside? Really? I didn't see him. Anyway, was there any cake left?

A few seconds after James asks this question, Kendall and James suddenly realize something and yell at each other in panic.

KENDALL

Cake!

JAMES (CONT'D)

Cake!

Steve enters the room, grinning, clearly high. He has the last bite of the SPACE cake in his hand. He pauses for a moment and then, grinning, pops the last bite in his mouth.

STEVE

Sorry, bro.

Steve involuntarily starts to grin again. Kendall and James look at Steve thoughtfully.

KENDALL

(to James)

Do you still think I'm overreacting about having a normal night?

James nods in agreement with Kendall while looking at Steve in despair.

STEVE

Sorry, guys. I was only going to have one slice, but I swear, after the first bite, I saw chocolate waterfalls shining from the cake box!

(pause)

I couldn't resist.

JAMES

(disbelief)

Chocolate waterfalls! That happened to me too!

(raises his hand for a high-five)

You're totally right, bro.

Steve gives him a high-five while nodding his head.

KENDALL

You guys are really unbelievable! Hope you saw a few hiding spots near "those" chocolate waterfalls, because when Elise finds out, we're going to need a place to hide!

(pause)

Anyway, we need to go shopping quick, before the movie starts.

Steve groggily heads towards the door.

STEVE

Alright. Let's go, then.

KENDALL

(holding onto his arm)

Not you, Steven! You can't come with us in that condition.

STEVE

Come on, guys. I'm fine, and I'm ready for the mission!

JAMES

Mission?

STEVE

Chicks, dude! Aren't you guys going to the new bar across the street? Finding chicks is a tough job, but someone's gotta do it!

Kendall runs towards the window excitedly.

KENDALL

A bar opened across the street?!

JAMES

Take it easy, Kenny. No bar has opened across the street.

(to Steve)

How many slices did you eat?

STEVE

(grinning, holds up four fingers)

Three.

KENDALL

I was really excited for a moment, Steven! Unfortunately, you can't come with us, but I know exactly what will make you feel better.

JAMES

Sledgehammer!

STEVE

Sledgehammer!

KENDALL

Yeah!

They high five.

Steve collapses onto the couch with a goofy grin on his face.

INT. KENDALL AND JAMES' APARTMENT / LIVING ROOM - DAY

The door opens and Kendall and James enter with bags in their hands.

Steve is still sleeping on the couch.

JAMES

... but you're already dating Kelly.

KENDALL

Dating? Come on, TJ! Kelly and I haven't started dating yet.

(MORE)

KENDALL (CONT'D)

You know that, buddy. This is relationship foreplay.

JAMES

But you will! In short, not dating her yet doesn't change anything! If anyone among us is going to hit on a girl, it should be me. So that phone number was rightfully mine!

KENDALL

Sorry man, but I'm not going to miss that hot chick for a girl I haven't even started dating yet!

As Kendall closes the door, Steve wakes up.

STEVE

Hot chick?!
(raises his index finger)
Dibs!

KENDALL

Heeeey!

JAMES

You can't do that!

STEVE

Sorry, bro.

Steve falls back asleep.

James heads towards the table to grab the pudding.

JAMES

Alright then. If that's the case, I'm taking this pudding!

KENDALL

Dibs!

James angrily puts the pudding back on the table.

KENDALL (CONT'D)

Sorry, bro.

JAMES

Damn house rules!

James heads to his room like an angry child.

END OF ACT I

ACT II

INT. KENDALL AND JAMES' APARTMENT / LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The three guys are gathered around the coffee table in front of the TV, playing poker. Everyone is already extremely drunk.

James is dressed in a Frodo costume and is holding his poker cards, completely turned towards the TV on his right, watching it as if in a trance.

Steve, behind James' back, nudges Kendall and winks. Then he takes the poker cards from James's hand and replaces them with his own.

James doesn't notice.

Steve and Kendall start to laugh quietly.

Upon hearing this, James redirects his attention back to the game.

JAMES

That Pippin. He is really silly, isn't he?

STEVE

Absolutely! We were laughing at him too.

JAMES

Is it my turn?

STEVE

Yeah. It's your turn.

JAMES

Alright then.

James looks at his cards while Kendall and Steve carefully watch him for his reaction.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Three cards.

Seeing that James hasn't noticed his hand has changed, Steve and Kendall laugh harder.

JAMES (CONT'D)

What?

STEVE

(laughing out loud)
Pippin, he just did something
amazingly funny! We can't even
describe it. Absolutely hilarious!

They laugh.

KENDALL

So, buddy? Are you in or out?

JAMES

I'm in, here's five bucks.

KENDALL

Here's your three cards, may Pippin
bring you luck!

JAMES

Yep!

James picks up the cards and after a few seconds, opens his
hand on the table.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Full house!

STEVE

What?! Full house?! Damn it!

Kendall laughs at Steve.

INT. KENDALL AND JAMES' APARTMENT / LIVING ROOM - LATER

It's late. James is sprawled on the couch, while Kendall is
sprawled on the armchair, both in a dazed state.

Steve enters the living room with two bottles of Sledgehammer
in his hands.

STEVE

Get up, slackers! The night is just
getting started!

JAMES

Leave me alone, Steve, I just want
to take a nap.

James turns over and continues to sleep.

STEVE

Come on!

KENDALL

Get off me!

STEVE

Get off me, huh? Get up, you scumbags! No sleeping!

Steve starts punching Kendall's shoulder.

KENDALL

Hey! Cut it out, Steve!

STEVE

(punches harder)
When I say get up, you get up! Or I'll make you!

KENDALL

So be it!

Kendall starts punching Steve's shoulder too. They start laughing while punching each other.

JAMES

Be quiet, I'm trying to sleep here!

Steve starts punching James' shoulder.

Kendall is still punching Steve's shoulder.

STEVE

Get up, I said no sleeping!

KENDALL

Leave him alone! We've told you a million times to stop your shoulder-punching habit!
(punches harder)
Alright, you asked for it!

JAMES

Yeah! You asked for it!

Kendall and James start punching Steve.

Steve is more muscular than Kendall and James and he is less affected by the punches. After a few seconds of taking punches from Steve...

JAMES (CONT'D)

This won't work, dude! Run!

James rushes towards the kitchen.

Kendall pushes Steve, throwing him off balance, and rushes towards the kitchen as well.

KENDALL

Hurry up! Shut the door!

Steve charges towards the kitchen and pushes the door to prevent it from closing.

STEVE

You can't get away from me that easily, you cowardly chickens!

JAMES

What is this, man? It's time for us to hit the gym. Two against one and we can't push one guy?

KENDALL

We're talking about Steve here! At the same time! One. Two. Three. Push!

Kendall and James lean against the door with all their might.

Steve's hand gets stuck in the door. He screams in pain.

James and Kendall open the door with concern.

FADE TO:

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

It's pouring rain. The three drunken friends are looking for a doctor in the dark of the night. Steve's hand is wrapped in a piece of cloth.

STEVE

(laughs)

TJ, you're sure this rain has nothing to do with you, right, buddy?

JAMES

It was just a coincidence.

KENDALL

We believe you, Frodo, but you better try to focus on other things.

JAMES

Alright... I'm not going to argue with you guys. I'll focus on staying upright.

KENDALL

Same here. How do we get to the hospital? Steve, are you okay?

JAMES

(laughs)

He is under natural anesthesia, man. He probably can't even feel his own hand right now!

(raises his own hand and looks at own fingers)

At least I can't feel mine!

STEVE

(realizes)

That's why! I was thinking why my hand doesn't hurt anymore.

(laughs)

I was started to think I was immune to pain like a superhero.

(sadly)

Oh, come on... I was started to think I was immune to pain like a superhero.

(pause)

Thanks for ruining this perfect moment, TJ.

JAMES

Whenever you want, buddy.

KENDALL

I'm so drunk right now that I can't even feel my face, guys.

JAMES

I'm in the same boat.

KENDALL

Boat? What boat?

STEVE

Is there a boat? If there is a boat, I hope it's a yacht. Always wanted to party on a yacht.

JAMES

Yeah, that would be cool!

KENDALL

On our own party yacht, sailing under the stars with a couple of hot chicks, music blasting and other things...

STEVE

Don't forget the endless buffet!

JAMES

Exactly!

KENDALL

Exactly!

They sigh wistfully.

KENDALL (CONT'D)

(to Steve)

Oh... You should tell us what you put in that Sledgehammer sometime! It really knocks you out, bad.

JAMES

Very bad!

STEVE

Never ask a magician about his trick. Just enjoy the show and don't worry about the rest!

KENDALL

I guess you're right.

(pause)

Anyway... Let's focus. First, we need to find a taxi.

JAMES

(laughs)

Taxi? We shouldn't get our hopes up... I don't think cabs pick up three drunk people in the middle of the night, one of them injured. And I don't think any-

A taxi stops in front of them. The taxi driver TERRY is a young Latin man in his mid-20s. He looks like a hustler.

TAXI DRIVER TERRY

Good night, gentlemen. Need a taxi?

Kendall, James, and Steve look at each other in surprise.

TAXI DRIVER TERRY (CONT'D)

Of course you need a taxi. Get in. Or you can spend the night in the rain for all I care.

(MORE)

TAXI DRIVER TERRY (CONT'D)

It would be better for your friend to get his hand looked at as soon as possible. But you know best, of course. I'm Terry and I think you should listen to your friend Terry.

JAMES

(to Kendall)

I guess you were right about this night not being a normal one too, buddy.

Kendall gives him a look that says, "There is nothing to do".

Kendall, James, and Steve realize they have no other choice. They get in the taxi.

INT. TAXI - NIGHT

They are in the taxi, not knowing what to do.

TAXI DRIVER TERRY

I know, you're wondering how Terry knew you needed a taxi. It's clear from your surprise. Terry may be new in America but Terry has been doing this job for so long that he can spot a man in need of special assistance from miles away. Special assistance, special price. You know what I mean. So? Where shall Terry take you?

JAMES

To the hospital. Take us to the hospital, please.

TAXI DRIVER TERRY

Hospital? Your friend's injury isn't a normal one. He looks like a drunk guy who started a fight in a bar. Insurance companies don't cover that kind of thing. Do you know how much the bill at the hospital will be?

KENDALL

Is it that high?

TAXI DRIVER TERRY

Oh, you bet! So high, that every time your friend uses his hand, he'd find the answer to why he still doesn't have a car!

STEVE

What? A car?

(pause)

So, what are we going to do?

TAXI DRIVER TERRY

Don't panic just yet. Your friend Terry knows very well how to get you out of this situation. There's a small clinic a few blocks away where my cousin Larry works. If you want, Terry can take you there. The price there won't be that cheap either, but it's incomparable to the bill you'd pay at the hospital. Of course, if you don't leave your friend Terry's kindness unanswered. What do you say?

STEVE

Yes, yes! I think the clinic is a good idea, Terry. What do you guys think?

KENDALL

Yes, that's a great idea.

JAMES

We're with you, Terry!

TAXI DRIVER TERRY

Perfect! How do you plan to pay? Credit Cards, Cash, Organs?

STEVE

Credit cards would be better.

TAXI DRIVER TERRY

Why not?

Terry turns on the radio, "AC/DC - Highway to Hell" starts playing.

TAXI DRIVER TERRY (CONT'D)

(shoots a smiling glance)

Let's go then...

Terry steps on the gas.

Kendall, James, and Steve look at each other, as if they sense what's coming.

FADE TO:

INT. TAXI - NIGHT

They arrive to a rough neighborhood. There are shady characters of different races and nationalities roaming outside.

Inside the car, Kendall, James, and Steve watch the outside environment with fearful eyes as they move along.

JAMES

(looking outside)

Terry, is the clinic where your cousin works in this neighborhood?

TAXI DRIVER TERRY

Relax. This neighborhood looks a bit rough, but you don't need to worry. The place is under Harry's control. Harry is Terry's cousin.

STEVE

(looking outside)

How many cousins did you say you have?

TAXI DRIVER TERRY

As many as you need, my friend.

INT./EXT. TAXI/STREETS - NIGHT

The taxi slowly comes to a halt in front of a narrow alleyway between two buildings. The buildings are old and in a dilapidated state. Steam rises from the street's manhole covers.

A few THUGS chatting at the head of the alley, one of them playing with his knife, shift their attention to the taxi, sizing up Kendall, Steve, and especially James, who, because of his Frodo costume, attracts more attention.

Kendall, Steve, and James look at them with fearful eyes from inside the taxi.

TAXI DRIVER TERRY

Here we are! You'll go down that alleyway. The clinic is in the building at the end of the road.

JAMES

(scared)

The building at the end of the road? Terry, are you sure this is where your cousin Larry works? Isn't this a bit of a gloomy place to open a clinic?

TAXI DRIVER TERRY

Yeah, it's a bit gloomy for a clinic, but it's a pretty good clinic, 6 out of 10 patients make it.

Kendall, James and Steve look at Terry with concern.

TAXI DRIVER TERRY (CONT'D)

Just joking... Don't worry. Everything will be over in a blink of an eye, trust me. The clinic is on the third floor. I'll be waiting for you here.

KENDALL

Here? Aren't you coming with us?

TAXI DRIVER TERRY

Terry will stay with the taxi. This isn't a safe place to leave a taxi unattended. You understand what I mean, right?

KENDALL

Yeah, I guess... Third floor, huh?
(pause)
Alright. We'll be right back. Don't go anywhere, okay, Terry?

TAXI DRIVER TERRY

Terry won't go anywhere until he gets his due, my friend. Rest assured.

KENDALL

Alright then. Guys, are you ready?

James and Steve reluctantly agree.

KENDALL (CONT'D)

Okay, then. Let's go!

They get out of the car hesitantly and proceed towards the narrow alleyway between the two buildings.

As they move forward with timid steps under the gaze of the thugs standing at the beginning of the street.

Terry shots from the taxi.

TAXI DRIVER TERRY

Don't forget to tell them Terry sent you!

They nod and continue to move down the alleyway.

FADE TO:

EXT. GLOOMY STREET - NIGHT

Kendall, James, and Steve are slowly moving down the gloomy street, nervously.

JAMES

What the hell are we doing here? I can't wait to get out of here.

Steve turns back towards the taxi with confident strides.

STEVE

(turning back towards the taxi)
Then, let's do that!

KENDALL

Where to?

STEVE

Where? To the hospital, of course! I don't care if the bill is as much as a car. Who needs a car in New York anyway, right?

James follows Steve with the same confident strides.

JAMES

That's right! Let's get out of here.

KENDALL

Come on, guys. We've come this far. We can't go back now.

STEVE

Of course, we can! We're going back to the taxi, and neither hefty bills nor anything else can change our minds!

JAMES

Exactly!

Two gunshots are heard from the other side of the street. Then, two people are seen shouting and chasing a third person.

Seeing this, Steve quickly changes direction and heads towards the clinic with fast steps, passing Kendall.

STEVE

Okay. We changed our minds. We're going to the clinic!

James follows Steve with the same fast steps.

JAMES

(scared)
Exactly!

Seeing Steve and James change their minds so quickly, Kendall forgets about the gunshots and smirks after Steve and James.

KENDALL

So, neither hefty bills nor anything else, huh?

A few seconds later, another gunshot is heard, and Kendall, startled, comes to his senses and runs after Steve and James.

KENDALL (CONT'D)

Hey! Wait for me!

INT. CLINIC FLOOR - NIGHT

On the clinic floor, they approach the clinic door slowly. They stop before knocking on the door.

KENDALL

Remember guys, stay calm and leave the talking to me once we're inside.

STEVE

We got your back, buddy. I mean right here! Right at this point! You understand what I mean, right?

JAMES

Yeah! Right at this point! Piece of cake!

KENDALL

Okay... Then, let's get started.

Kendall knocks on the door.

A fat and ugly Latin WOMAN in her 50s opens the door. She's grumpy. She sniffs the air discreetly and frowns, momentarily surprised to see three drunk men, one in a Frodo costume, in front of her. She yells inside.

WOMAN

Did anyone order three drunk guys?
(to the guys)
You must have come to the wrong place, this isn't one of them frat houses.

As the Woman moves to close the door, Kendall holds it open.

KENDALL

Wait, wait. We're friends of Terry. We're in a bit of trouble. Need your help.

WOMAN

Friends of Terry, huh?
(angrily)
What do you want, tell me quickly!

Under the influence of alcohol and fear, Kendall becomes excited and fumbles.

KENDALL

What do we want? Well...
(looks at James and Steve)
What do we want? Why are we here?

JAMES

(confused)
For the hand?

KENDALL

Yes! Exactly! The hand! Our hand is bleeding!

WOMAN

Your hand? Whose?

KENDALL

Whose? Well. Whose?

Kendall raises his hand and examines it quickly with drunken and nervous movements.

KENDALL (CONT'D)

Not mine.

Then he turns his head to James standing next to him.

KENDALL (CONT'D)

James?

Seeing Kendall looking at him, James raises his hand with the same nervousness and examines it carefully.

JAMES

Not mine either...

James turns his head to Steve standing next to him.

KENDALL

(looking at Steve)
Steve!

JAMES (CONT'D)

(looking at Steve)
Steve!

The Woman laughs loudly and then yells inside.

WOMAN

Amber!

AMBER, a very attractive 20-something Latina enters from another room.

AMBER

Yes, mom.

WOMAN

Take these fools to your uncle.
You three, follow my daughter.
(referring to James)
But your friend should leave those
hairy legs outside. We just cleaned
up.

The Woman goes inside.

Amber smiles at Steve, who looks pleased and ready to flirt.

James realizes the situation and whispers a warning to Steve.

JAMES

(to Steve)
Don't even think about it!

Steve's mood is obviously lifted. He smiles at James and follows Amber.

James warns Steve in a low voice behind him.

JAMES (CONT'D)

No! No!

KENDALL

There is nothing to do... Let's go,
buddy.

They follow Amber.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE KENDALL AND JAMES' APARTMENT - NIGHT

James and Steve wait for Kendall to unlock the door. Steve's hand is completely wrapped in a bandage.

KENDALL

I can't believe we actually made it home. This has been one hell of a night.

(to Steve)

You got the girl's number, didn't you?

Steve pulls out a piece of paper with amber's number on it and shows it with a grin.

STEVE

Of course!

James snatches the paper from Steve's hand.

JAMES

Sorry, but I can't let you do this, buddy. We just got out of trouble. I don't want you doing something stupid and getting us back into it!

STEVE

Come on, TJ, I lost a lot of blood for this.

JAMES

(squeezes Steve's wrapped hand)

Don't push your luck, Steven!

STEVE

(in pain)

Okay, okay, fine. The number is yours.

James lets go of Steve's hand.

STEVE (CONT'D)
You're so cruel, buddy.

JAMES
Sorry, bro.

Kendall frantically pats his pockets.

KENDALL
Oh, come on! I think I left the keys inside!

STEVE
No problem. Let's go to my place. We'll deal with this tomorrow.

KENDALL
I'm still not fully sober. I can't drive in this condition.

STEVE
We can call a taxi.

Steve brings the phone to his ear to call for a taxi.

JAMES Taxi? No! **KENDALL** What? No!

KENDALL (CONT'D)
We don't need another adventure today.

JAMES
Yeah!

STEVE
Okay... Okay... So what are we going to do?

JAMES
The best thing is to call El to come and pick us up.

KENDALL
You do realize Elise is going to kill us when she hears what happened, right?

JAMES
Yeah.

STEVE

(accidentally raises his
injured hand)

Shotgun!

Steve doubles over in pain.

JAMES

After what happened today? You have
no chance, Steven!

STEVE

(resignedly)

Alright...

END FLASHBACK.

END OF ACT II

ACT III

INT. ELISE AND ASHLEY'S APARTMENT / KITCHEN - NIGHT

KENDALL

And that's all.

ASHLEY

Tough night.

KENDALL

Lately, things like this have been happening to us a lot. Last week, we tried to help an old lady and ended up in Atlantic City. We were just going to get some gas for the car.

JAMES

Yeah. When those guys surrounded us, we didn't really have a choice but to go with them. Turns out, the lady had a massive gambling debt. But honestly, even that doesn't compare to what happened after we found the secret message under the coffee cup at that cafe.

KENDALL

(gets annoyed)
James!

JAMES

Sorry.

ASHLEY

What secret message?

They nod nervously, clearly signaling, "Don't ask."

ELISE

(to Ashley, whispers)
We still think our houses are bugged.

KENDALL

(nervously, loudly)
Anyway, we've talked a lot about tonight, right? Tell us, Ashley, how was Scotland?

ASHLEY

Scotland? It was really fun. They're very friendly people. My friends and I stayed in an old Scottish house in a village. You know, one of those houses made of big old broken stones.

STEVE

You mean those ones that look like a "Hobbit" house?

Everyone looks at James and giggles.

JAMES

Come on, guys.

(to Steve)

And as you know, "Hobbit" houses are not made of stone, Steven! Guess who's going to be counting tiles in the kitchen during Princess Leia's scene with Jabba at this year's Star Wars Trilogy night.

STEVE

Come on, TJ. It was just a joke.

JAMES

Acting against the spirit of fantasy worlds! And on Lord of the Rings Day, no less! 10 minutes!

Kendall and Elise sharply inhale in shock.

Ashley watches in astonishment at what is happening.

STEVE

What?! 10 minutes?! But that's not fair! Kendall only got a 5-minute timeout even when he spilled all our Bacta Cola. Ken, aren't you going to say anything?

KENDALL

Sorry bro... He's in charge.

Steve, with his arms crossed in front of him, reluctantly accepts the decision.

STEVE

Okay...

(murmurs)

You'll see next year!

ASHLEY

(whispers to Elise)
What's going on?

ELISE

(whispers)
TJ's in charge of this year's
trilogy night. You'll get used to
it soon.

After a few seconds of silence, Elise winks at Kendall
without being noticed.

ELISE (CONT'D)

Well. Putting that aside, isn't it
nice that TJ and Ash have similar
tastes, guys?

KENDALL

Definitely. Don't you think so, TJ?

JAMES

Well, that's a very nice thing, of
course. I've always admired old
Scottish houses.

James looks at Kendall, trying to understand what's going on.

Kendall nods his head as if everything is fine.

ELISE

Isn't it nice, Ash?

Due to the awkward atmosphere, Ashley forces a smile, but her
face is tense.

ASHLEY

Yes, very nice.

Everyone in the room is tense.

After a short silence, Kendall can't take the forced
atmosphere anymore. He speaks in a raised voice.

KENDALL

I'm sorry, El, but this won't work
by forcing it.

Steve thinks Kendall talked about Elise's harsh attitude
towards him.

STEVE

Thanks, Kenny. Elise, you're really
scaring me-

KENDALL

I'm not talking about her, man. I think Ashley and TJ would be great together, but starting this way is a big mistake!

Everyone suddenly breathes a sigh of relief.

ELISE

Sadly, that's true. If something is going to happen, it shouldn't be like this.

(looks sad)

I'm sorry, guys.

JAMES

Thanks for ending this madness, Ken. I also wouldn't want something to start this way if it's going to happen. Don't you think so, Ashley?

ASHLEY

I'm so relieved. What's been happening for the last five minutes was really starting to hurt.

JAMES

By the way, I don't know anything about Scottish houses.

ASHLEY

I figured. I don't know much about Hobbits either, but I trust El and I have a very good feeling that I'm going to love this Hobbit.

James turns to Steve with a childlike excitement and enthusiasm about starting a relationship with Ashley. He makes a victorious fist and whispers to Steve.

JAMES

Dibs!

Seeing how happy James is, Steve responds with SINCERITY.

STEVE

(smiling)

She's all yours, buddy.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT III

TAG

FADE IN:

INT. KENDALL AND JAMES' APARTMENT / KITCHEN - DAY

SUPER: Later that afternoon.

Steve opens the fridge and takes out a cake box and places it on the counter. There are three slices of space cake left in it. He starts eating one. A few seconds later, Hawaiian music starts to play. He hears the music and looks around in astonishment. Then a bright light spreads out from the box. Steve, scared, spreads his arms wide against the kitchen wall.

STEVE

Oh my God!

Glowing chocolate sauce starts to leak from the box, flowing down the counter like a waterfall. A lit sign appears on the box. The sign shows an arrow pointing inside the box with the words "Eat Me!" written on it.

Steve approaches hesitantly at first, as he takes a bite from one of the glowing cakes, mesmerized.

FADE TO BLACK.

The music continues. After a few seconds, the music stops.

THE END