

IMAGINATION PARK

'The Audition'

(Pilot)

Written by

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SUPER: 1995

EXT. IMAGINATION PARK - DAY

WHIMSICAL MUSIC underscores aerial camera footage of a PRESTIGIOUS THEME PARK-- Its allure echoes the wonders of Disneyland.

EXT. INDUSTRIAL AVENUE - CONTINUOUS

The camera descends through towering smokestacks before unveiling PARK GOERS bustling up and down a Steampunk-themed main street.

At the end of its cobblestone avenue, large brass gears crank the clock tower of a majestic palace, where SHARON, a perky news reporter whose hairspray helmet is an attraction in itself, steps into frame.

SHARON

Welcome to Imagination Park. For decades, this fantastical place has captured the hearts of all ages. A place that truly exemplifies the American spirit.

Oblivious to her backdrop, kernels go-a-flying when a BRAT CHILD stomps on the foot of a POPCORN VENDOR.

BEGIN MONTAGE:

EXT. ENCHANTED FOREST TRAIL

SHARON (V.O.)

... It's a place for the entire family to explore, with enchanting sights you can't ignore...

Distracted by the sights, a DOPEY DAD pushing a STROLLER cluelessly clips the heels of other PARK GUESTS.

EXT. FAIRY TALE BOAT RIDE / BRIDGE

SHARON (V.O.)

... A place where you felt your childhood began...

On the bridge, TWO BOYS play sword fight and accidentally snag the TOUPEE off a MAN on an electric scooter.

SHARON (V.O.)

... A place where innocence never ends.

A TEENAGE COUPLE on the boat ride disappears into a dark tunnel. Moments later, a BRA flies out of the tunnel.

EXT. COURTYARD

SHARON (V.O.)

... A place where strangers lend a hand...

An elderly BLIND LADY accidentally heads into the men's restroom. But a HANDSOME MAN exiting escorts her in the right direction...

SHARON (V.O.)

... A place for laughter with your friends...

The so-called Blind Lady lowers her sunglasses to wink at her GIRLFRIENDS, giggling on a bench with SCORE CARDS reading: "10," "9.5," "10."

BACK TO SCENE

A CROWD gathers around a CAMERA CREW filming Sharon.

SHARON

But what is their secret to keeping the magic alive and guests coming back for more? Well, we're told it's the spectacular Parades here. And *INSIDE WEEKLY* has the exclusive.

Across the street, watching all the buzz, two GUYS in CORPORATE suits with park name tags on, comment.

CORPORATE GUY #1

Oh, God. What Jack Knob did they put in charge of this lollipop-washing?

CORPORATE GUY #2

I'll give you one guess.

INT. ENTERTAINMENT COMPLEX (BEHIND THE PARK) - DAY

RICKY LAWLER, 36, a cheery, eager beaver, and poster child for Workaholics Anonymous, stands with Sharon, cheesing it up.

SHARON

I'm here with Ricky Lawler, the Director of Parades. And of course, Freddy the Ferret.

ONLOOKERS get excited when FREDDY, the park's most beloved Mascot, enters the room and plants a smooch on Sharon's hand. Then up her arm. Ricky's uncomfortable. Sharon giggles, struggling to regain focus.

SHARON (cont'd)  
 Oo. Oh. Sorry. Yes-- Ricky, share with us what's happening today that's drawing so many here to sunny Santa Calista, California.

EXT. ENTERTAINMENT COMPLEX - AUDITION LINE - DAY

An aerial view captures a line of people wrapping around a building.

RICKY (V.O.)  
 Well, Sharon, every spring we hold auditions in search of the most talented kids. Kids who just want to be part of that Imagination Magic...

On the ground, the camera crew pans past an excited line of DANCERS and ends with an enthusiastic SUMO WRESTLER, waving a pom-pom and pennant flag. Everyone's confused and grossed out.

BACK TO SCENE

RICKY  
 ... But this particular year is very special. Isn't that right, Freddy?

Freddy overly-animates an agreement that looks like an octopus having a seizure.

RICKY (cont'd)  
 Um... My sentiments exactly. It's our 40th anniversary!

POW! POW! Blasts from confetti canons shower them in an array of colors and glitter. Onlookers CHEER. Except for one nut job trying to catch confetti in his mouth.

RICKY (cont'd)  
 And we're excited to announce that this anniversary parade spectacular will open June 1st, the same date that Elijah Beaumont opened this beautiful park. It was one man's imagination, a dream come true. And dreams are about to come true for several of these talented kids.

SHARON  
 Annd CUT! Perfect. Let's take ten.

Freddy abruptly breaks character and storms off. In passing, he nearly knocks over IAN, 40, a fashionista and Ricky's cynical best friend, making him spill coffee on his designer suit. Ian lets out a SQUEAL that could curl spaghetti. He madly waves Ricky over to speak.

IAN

Ricky. Can I just point out again what an absolute "crack-pipe" idea this is?

RICKY

Sorry, Ian. When Beaumont boasts that we're "The Home of Workplace Happiness," it's not the best look if your chefs are out in picket lines instead of conga lines.

IAN

Oh. And so you thought a news special covering Parade auditions would say what? "Don't look over there, look over here, we're bedazzled, and we got a mean sashay."

Ian whips out a few cheesy dance moves.

RICKY

Oh. Now that may get their attention. But no. I figured if we bail him out of this P.R. mess, it could be the express train to finally getting some resources around here. And who knows, Beaumont may even remember my name.

IAN

Look, Ricky. I realize this new role has you all excited and wanting to suck up-- I mean shine and move up in the company. But homo to homo... they ain't exactly saving seats for us at the good ol' boy's club's table.

RICKY

Well, maybe times have changed, Ian. It is the nineties. Look at us. Directors of operations and creative.

IAN

Well-- yeah. But nothing screams, "Hey, come shit on my career," like allowing this filming, when you know us entertainment folk have no filter.

Shouting pulls their focus to a backstage door swinging open to a view of Freddy removing his head. The headless ferret reveals a short, BUTCH-looking WOMAN, yelling at staff.

BUTCH WOMAN/FREDDY

Hey! Dumb-ass! Did we forget to clean this costume?!

(MORE)

BUTCH WOMAN/FREDDY (CONT'D)  
 Then why does this fuckin' thing smell  
 like Scooby snacks and ass-cracks?!

The door SLAMS shut. Ian looks back at Ricky, and with serious sass--

IAN  
 Ricky... "You in danger, girl."

INT. AIDEN'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

In the ultimate geek's den, *Star Wars*, *Jurassic Park*, and other movie memorabilia clutter the shelves.

AIDEN, 22, an awkward yet adorable mixed African American, stares disapprovingly in the mirror, stuffed in a tight blue shirt with the hip-hop duo, *Kris Kross* on it. His mother, GLORIA, 52, and Church's M.V.P. enters the room.

GLORIA  
 Aiden, honey. You want me to pack you a lunch?

AIDEN  
 Mom, it's an audition, not my first day at elementary school!  
 (pinching his belly fat)  
 And besides, I should skip a meal.  
 Looks like I'm shoplifting pork loins.

He turns further to see his love handle on full display and that the back of his shirt reads: "Wiggity Wiggity Wack."

AIDEN (cont'd)  
 Yep. The red muumuu it is.

GLORIA  
 Oh, stop. You look fine. As the good book says, man does not live by bread alone-- hence, our divine curves. If only carb counting was on the menu back then. Anyway. Your dad would be so proud of you right now. He always encouraged, "If you can imagine it..."

AIDEN & GLORIA  
 "... Go achieve it."

GLORIA  
 That's right, baby. You got this.

Excited, Aiden changes shirts and turns to a "*Staying Alive*" poster of John Travolta, wearing a headband, intensely staring back at him.

AIDEN  
 (to poster)  
 Ok, Manero... It's time to strut.

Gloria slyly slips a RED HEADBAND into Aiden's backpack before handing it to him as he makes his nerdy yet confident strut out the door.

INT./EXT. JORDY'S CAR (MOVING) - DAY

Jamming out to *Crystal Waters' "100%, Pure Love"*, JORDY, 28, a Caucasian, male version of a mean girl, over-corrects his luxury BMW, eliciting a flurry of BEEPING HORNS.

KATY, 23, a feisty Korean beauty and champion of all charity cases, sits shotgun and smacks Jordy on the shoulder.

KATY  
 Christ, Jordy! Watch the damn road!

She's supported by shouts from NYDIA, 23, a Mexican glamour girl, and DUSTIN, 18, a Caucasian flirt, with boyish good looks, who both hang on for dear life in the back seat.

KATY (cont'd)  
 God. I can see the headlines now: "Four Dancers Dead," because Roadkill Rita here can't drive a fuckin' stick shift.

JORDY  
 Well, Katy, this is what happens when my Daddy Dearest loses his ass in the stock market; the help gets furloughed, and I'm forced to drive you non-car-havin' bitches to work.

DUSTIN  
 Aww. Shit. And Hector was like your hottest driver, too.

NYDIA  
 Hey. If your dad needs investment tips; Beanie Babies are poppin' right now. By the millennium, I guarantee you'll all be bathing in wealth.

DUSTIN  
 Yeah. Sure, Nydia. Anyway, Jordy, maybe it's time for you and your family to come on over to reality.

JORDY  
 Fuck that. "Reality" is for people with middle incomes.

KATY

Speaking of incomes. Can you at least get us to work in one piece? My friend Aiden needs my moral support for auditions today.

NYDIA

Aiden? Isn't that the guy you had a crush on last semester?

KATY

It was only a little crush. And well--

JORDY

Yikes. Got the friendship bracelet, huh?

DUSTIN

(to Katy)

Then why are you all glammed up then?

JORDY

Lord, please don't tell me it's because Graysen's back....

(off Katy's look)

Seriously, Katy?! First, the gullibility to think that Graysen was a virgin and you were his first--

DUSTIN

-- First Asian, maybe...

JORDY

Then he gets all distant-cy before a boys' trip to Barbados. Honey. The guy's a playa. Like a professional ho. I mean, he has a mirror over his bed for God's sake--

KATY

Well, you're wrong, Jordy. 'Cause he sent me this dress while he was in Barbados. It's an island original. So obviously he was thinking of me. And like his letter said, he just needs a little space, you know, so he can spread his wings.

The whole car GROANS.

KATY (cont'd)

Oh, screw all of you! And for the record, Jordy. I do have a car, it's just in the shop.

JORDY  
Katy, it's been two years.

Katy crosses her arms in defeat.

EXT. ENTERTAINMENT COMPLEX - AUDITION LINE - DAY

Aiden struts confidently up to the back of the line, but immediately wilts when he sees up ahead, CODY, 19, a cocky dancer with lots of pep, soaking up his fifteen seconds of fame, as INSIDE WEEKLY captures his two pirouettes into a jump split cooter-smash.

SHARON  
(to Ricky)  
Well, if that don't break your hot dog warmer, I don't know what will.  
(to crew)  
Ok, let's take Cody's last shot.  
(to camera)  
We're here with Cody Shunock...

Ricky rolls his eyes. Aiden finishes observing.

AIDEN  
(to himself)  
Who am I kidding? I can't do this.

Aiden retreats from the audition line. As he turns, he collides with a SKATEBOARDER rolling past-- BLAM! The impact lands them both on their rear estates.

When Aiden looks up, he instantly recognizes-- SHAYNE, 22, with Boy Band good looks, straight off the cover of Tiger Beat Magazine.

AIDEN (cont'd)  
Shayne?! Shayne Jacobs?!

Shayne flips back his flawless young DiCaprio bangs.

SHAYNE  
Oh, shit... Aiden? Dude. It's been like years. Like high school.

AIDEN  
Well, more like middle school since you talked to me last. But who keeps track of those things? Why are you here?

SHAYNE  
I was headed to the skate park. Needed to blow off some steam.

AIDEN

Oh, let me guess. Girlfriend problems?

SHAYNE

Yeah, you know. The usual boy meets girl, brother steals girl, but boy still has to work for his brother's carpet cleaning company. Anyway, what about you? What's this line for?

AIDEN

It's parade auditions for Imagination Park.

SHAYNE

Oh, sick! That's right. Mr. Sugar Hips. Ready for the big leagues, I see. Shoot. I could use a new job myself. Maybe I should sign up. Ha. Can you imagine?

AIDEN

Yeah. I can just see you having beers with your old football buddies and breaking the news with jazz hands to announce, "Hey guys. I'm a dancer now!"

Aiden's jazz hands and bad Broadway moves make others take notice. UP AHEAD: Ricky walks with Sharon and the crew, scouting the line.

SHARON

Okay. What we need now, Ricky, is "The Long Shot." Someone who wouldn't stand a snowflake's chance in July of making the-

Sharon's face beams with joy when she spots Aiden, dancing divinely awful, surrounded by onlookers clapping and cheering him on while tragically doing "The Alf," and "New Kids On The Block" dance moves.

MOMENTS LATER: Sharon stands with Aiden. The camera rolls. Shayne gives Aiden the thumbs up.

SHARON (cont'd)

I'm here with Aiden Becker, twenty-two, who says he's been preparing his whole life for this moment. Aiden, share with us your story.

AIDEN

Well, not to sound like an episode of The Reading Rainbow, but it all started when my parents took me to Imagination Park for the first time...

BEGIN FLASHBACK SEQUENCE:

**EXT. IMAGINATION PARK (1978) - PARADE ROUTE - DAY**

YOUNG AIDEN, 5, and his INTERRACIAL PARENTS: sit on the curb, watching in amazement at the parade in front of them.

AIDEN (V.O.)  
 ... And when I saw those Parade  
 Dancers, living their best life... I  
 knew right then; that's gonna be me.

**INT. AIDEN'S HOME (1986) - LIVING ROOM - DAY**

A VHS tape is pushed into a VCR. Aiden's parents watch in laughter as TWEEN AIDEN turns a necktie into a headband and mimics his idol on TV - gyrating his hips, and doing the "shampooing the hair" dance move.

AIDEN (V.O.)  
 So, I trained my little butt off. But,  
 Man-- there was something about John  
 Travolta in "*Staying Alive*." The  
 confidence.

**INT. AIDEN'S HIGH SCHOOL (1991) - HALLWAY - DAY**

NERD AIDEN, 18, now slightly heavysset with glasses, sees a posted flyer for Imagination Park auditions.

AIDEN (V.O.)  
 And when I was finally old enough to go  
 work for the ferret-- Oh, and with the  
 full support of my fellow classmates...

A leather jacket-wearing PUNK rips the flyer off the wall, crumples it, and throws it at Aiden's forehead.

PUNK  
 Fucking Loser!

AIDEN (V.O.)  
 ... I knew I was ready

**INT./EXT. ENTERTAINMENT COMPLEX (MULTIPLE YEARS) - DAY**

Nerd Aiden's parents wave from the car as he heads inside.

AIDEN (V.O.)  
 ... But I learned very quickly that  
 those Eighties' dance moves didn't  
 prepare me, not one damn bit, for  
 auditioning. Because technique... Well,  
 I had none...

Inside, Aiden hits a final Travolta pose. He wipes the steam from his glasses to see SAMANTHA, 36, a blonde diva who only smiles on leap years, sitting behind a judges' table, pointing him to the exit.

AIDEN (V.O.)

... And Samantha Segal, the Darth Vader of choreographers, made it quite clear, each and every year...

BAM! Aiden exits through the door DISAPPOINTED.

BAM! Aiden exits through the door PISSED OFF. [1992]

BAM! Aiden sits on the curb crying, comforted by his Father. [1993]

AIDEN (V.O.)

... That I was better suited for park janitor.

END FLASHBACK SEQUENCE

SHARON

Wow. And you're back again. Shoot. I would've grounded the plane ages ago.

AIDEN

Oh, trust me. I did. But, when my father passed away last month-- who, by the way, was obsessed with this park. Well... he inspired me to never give up on my dreams.

Ricky and the onlookers wipe tears from their eyes.

SHARON

Oh. How special. Well, we're all gonna be rooting for you, Aiden. Thanks for sharing your beautiful story.

They cut tape. Onlookers applaud, and everyone disperses.

SHAYNE

Dude. Sorry to hear about your dad. He was like everyone's second father.

AIDEN

Thanks, Shayne.

SHAYNE

You know what? The hell with it. I'm gonna audition with you. My non-existent dance moves should make you look that much better.

AIDEN

Seriously?! Wow. That's solid, man.

SHAYNE

Now, I have no clue what I'm in for.  
Sorta like showering for the first time  
in 7th grade P.E., and realizing the  
competition has more skin in the game.

INT. PARADE OFFICE TRAILER - RICKY'S OFFICE - DAY

In a cluttered office of wood panel walls that cry, "recycled '70s  
disco floor," Ian and Samantha rush in to catch Ricky.

SAMANTHA

Hey, Ricky. Snagged the latest float  
designs straight from the dream  
factory. You want to dive in and  
shimmy over the specs?  
(she shimmies)

RICKY

Sorry, Sam. I'm neck-tie deep in  
Filming Hell right now. Let's park that  
float talk for tomorrow. Oh--

His focus is pulled when his supervisor, KELLY, 20s, passes by.

RICKY (cont'd)

Hey, Kelly! No need to rush now. His  
secretary said he's golfing all day.

KELLY

Great. 'Cause why meet deadlines when  
you can hit the fairway? But I'll have  
that gift on his desk by the 18th hole.

RICKY

Thanks, Kelly.

He pushes aside a gift box of cigars on his desk, tied with a red  
ribbon. Ian sees the name on the greeting card.

IAN

Seriously, Ricky?! Have you officially  
drank the ferret-flavored Kool-Aid?

RICKY

What? It's Beaumont's Birthday.

IAN

I don't care how much ass-snorkeling you  
do, that man is taking advantage of you.

RICKY

Nobody's taking advantage of me.

IAN

Oh yeah? Then why is it every time Beaumont plays kickball with the hornet's nest, you come-a-running in your beekeeper onesie for damage control? Let me spell it out for you, Ricky: Beaumont's not approving that renovation budget! So give it a rest

SAMANTHA

Yeah, Ricky. He never even approved that manager position, knowing darn well you need the help. Honestly, the only gift that man deserves-- Ian, hand me my purse.

Samantha wildly unties the ribbon on the gift box. She opens it and starts tossing cigars everywhere.

RICKY

Hey! What are you doing?!

She reaches into her purse, pulls out tampons, and lines the box with them. Ian snatches the greeting card and joins in the fun. He writes: "PUFF ON THIS, PRICK."

RICKY (cont'd)

Okay. I'ma need both of you to steady your machetes. You gotta let me do things my way this time. Look. Beaumont spares no expense on these shows we put on. So, maybe a little nudge will get him to invest in the people who actually make "show magic" happen.

IAN

Well, those people, Ricky, is why business has been booming the last five years. And guess what? We ain't seen a lick of raises or any improvements to this backstage dump.

SAMANTHA

Yeah, Ricky. We're still working out of a trailer. It would be an upgrade to hitch her to a truck and join the circus.

RICKY

Well, I betcha if Elijah Beaumont was still around-- God rest his soul--

IAN

Well, he's not, Ricky. Okay. No, we're stuck with Eddie, his ungrateful son, or, known to many as The Duke of Disaster.

SAMANTHA

And let's not forget his royal court jesters, his old washed-up college buddies that he made VPs-- Who by the way, no nothing about running a theme park.

RICKY

Yes. Exactly. And that's why I think Elijah is counting on us to uphold his legacy. But that's gonna take resilience. And only then can we change minds and make a difference. Watch. You'll see.

IAN

Your optimism is almost nauseating. But I'm here if you need a shoulder to cry on.

INT./EXT. JORDY'S CAR - EMPLOYEE PARKING LOT - DAY

Driving into the lot, Jordy notices the audition line.

JORDY

Oh, my God. It's like the "Lolla-pallosers" of talentless goobs.

KATY

And look. There's Cody, that annoying piece of--Shit! Jordy look out!

Not seeing a CAR stopped ahead of him, in a panic, Jordy swerves right and hits a lamp post.

EXT. AUDITION LINE - DAY

As Sharon sets up for the next interview, Ricky is rattled by the sight behind her; a lamp post slowly falling toward the Audition line. Ricky deflects Sharon.

RICKY

Oh, I think over here would be a much better shot. Just look at that backdrop.

UP AHEAD: Dancers in line, including Aiden and Shayne, dive out of the way of the falling post. CRASH! Smoke rises from the hood of Jordy's car. Katy steps out to check for any casualties.

KATY

Holy hell! Is everyone still with us?

AIDEN

Katy?!

KATY

Oh my god, Aiden. You made it. I knew I could convince you to make a comeback.

As they hug, the gang emerges from the car, looking bewildered.

KATY (cont'd)

Oh, sorry. Aiden. This is my crew: Nydia, Dustin, and then Jordy— who clearly prefers dramatic entries.

AIDEN

Nice to meet you. And this is my friend Shayne-- you almost killed.

Shayne smiles and waves, but with a flirty focus on Nydia. Having diverted the film crew, Ricky stomps up.

RICKY

Jordy, what the hell?! *INSIDE WEEKLY* is filming an audition, not an action movie. Get this car moved. Now!

(to staff)

Someone get me engineering!

As Ricky stresses while evaluating the area, Jordy notices someone pulling out of a parking space directly behind him.

JORDY

Oh, snap! Hold my weave!

Jordy removes an imaginary wig and tosses it at Dustin before hopping back into the car. The gang embarrassingly watches as he parks and bumps the car in the adjacent spot.

MOMENTS LATER: Katy sees Shayne off to the side, where Ricky hands out first aid packs.

KATY

Soo. Tell me about Shayne. He's cute. And I know you get googly for them Wonder Bread White boys. But wait...

She sniffs the air in Shayne's general direction.

KATY (cont'd)

I smell hetero. Aiden. You know you're never gonna find a boyfriend if you keep gravitating to straight dudes.

DUSTIN

Yes, leave that to the professionals.

AIDEN

No. Shayne and I are just friends.

JORDY

Csh, Cshhhhh. Buckle up, bitches. Here comes Graysen, Cody, and-- Looord, what's on Crystal's head? Curly Fries?

They turn to see Cody approaching with THE RIVALS: CRYSTAL, 24, a rich valley girl, with a spiral curl hairdo; GRAYSEN, 25, a fine-ass Black man, and his Caucasian entourage: a VAIN DUMB JOCK and a WANGSTA.

WANGSTA

Yo, yo. What's good, peeps?

JORDY

(mocking Wangsta)

Yo. Just chillin', Milk Toast. Keepin' it crispy in the cereal aisle.

KATY

Hey. Thanks for the dress, Graysen. I really love it. How was your trip?

GRAYSEN

Oh. It was good.

CRYSTAL

Good?! It was fly as hell!

KATY

Excuse me, what? I thought it was a boys' trip--

Katy snaps her head at Graysen, but he's already darted off.

CRYSTAL

Um. You obliviot do realize this line is for the newbies, right? The advanced audition is after work.

AIDEN

Wait, you guys have to audition again? But, why? You already work here.

JORDY

Well, that's because some hoes be tired, and need replacing.

CODY

Well, just so you know, I plan on snatching up one of those veteran "Swing" spots. So that means the reign is about to end for one of you venomous hens.

JORDY

Well, it won't be mine, Clarice, but you keep reaching for those stars.

KATY

Oh my God, Aiden. I forgot to tell you.

AIDEN

Tell me what?

KATY

Samantha's been stripped from casting. So, no more crushing dreams like beer cans. Yeah. There's a new position in town, called the Casting Director.

AIDEN

Well, shit. Maybe I stand a chance. 'Cause with this "Strike Four, No More" audition policy, this is my last shot.

KATY

Then this is it. Even my neighbor predicted that good fortune would come to a friend today. Now, she's still new at this psychic reading shit, but I feel Miss Cleo's got this one right.

The gang tugs on Katy's arm to leave.

KATY (cont'd)

Crap. We gotta clock in. Good luck, Aiden. And remember to...

She gestures for him to smile and use his eyes before they jet off.

RICKY TALKING HEAD

SHARON (O.S.)

Hold that smile, Ricky. Let's zoom in. I want a few talking headshots. So, as you were saying, Ricky...

RICKY

Look. I smiled until my teeth asked to be removed. It's tough breaking in. I mean this is the greatest theme park on earth. Trust. Even my journey...

(MORE)

RICKY (CONT'D)  
 complete Gong Show. But hey, look at me now. And I love that I get to nurture these young careers and ensure they make the right choices. Well, that's if they don't get caught up with the wrong crowd.

INT. ENTERTAINMENT COMPLEX - CLOCK-IN AREA - DAY

The gang rushes in to swipe their IDs to start their shift. Out of breath, they're greeted by a SHOW CAPTAIN, with a clipboard in hand.

SHOW CAPTAIN  
 Well, if it isn't the "Hot Mess Express." Cutting it pretty close as usual. We only had one call-out today, so all of you are uncast...

KATY/NYDIA/JORDY/DUSTIN  
 Yay!

SHOW CAPTAIN  
 ... Except for Jordy. I have you in Royal-Canopy Seven.

JORDY  
 What?! Seriously? Did that scrub call out just because I said he walked like a power bottom? Ugh. It was just a joke. Straight men. They're just so sensitive.

INT. PARADE OFFICE TRAILER - BOARDROOM - DAY

Ricky enters with a to-go tray of coffee for Ian and Samantha.

RICKY  
 Ok. Some VanWechel's pick-me-up? I figured we'll need it today.

Samantha pulls out and unscrews an AIRPLANE BOTTLE OF WHISKEY, and pours it into her coffee. Off the guys' looks--

SAMANTHA  
 What?! If this new Casting Director casts a bunch of Tragic Tinas from Tater Tot, Kentucky, I'm gonna need a little buzz to take the edge off.

RICKY

Wow. Anyway. I've been so busy, I didn't get to tell you what happened this morning...

IAN

Oh, Lord. What now?

RICKY

Well, I was rushing out of the house...

**INT. RICKY'S HOME - KITCHEN - DAY (EARLIER)**

Ricky frantically comes out of the bedroom, disheveled, with one arm in blazer, while fixing his tie.

RICKY (cont'd)

Babe. I'm running late. I'll just grab somethin--

He stops when he sees a full spread of breakfast delights on the counter, and his boyfriend, CHRIS, 30s, mad as hell, standing under a banner that reads, "Happy 5th Anniversary."

BACK TO SCENE

IAN

What?! You forgot? You idiot! Ricky if you screw this up. I swear to God--

SAMANTHA

Yeah. We need at least one of us in a healthy, semi-normal, not-catastrophic relationship.

IAN

So, wait... You remembered Beaumont's Birthday but not your own Anniversary? Wow... I have no words.

RICKY

I know. And Chris said that if I don't start saying "no" to Beaumont and make time for us, "We've got trouble, with a capital 'T', and that rhymes with 'D', and that stands for 'Done.'"

SAMANTHA

This is tragic.

RICKY

Well... Yeah. But the good news is: Chris is letting me make it up to him over dinner tonight.

IAN

Good. Then we're gonna need a bougie gift to exonerate your continued pursuit of stupidity.

SAMANTHA

Ooh. And I know just the guy. He sells these luxury watches out of his car. So that means he delivers.

RICKY

(grimacing)

Well, jeez. That doesn't sound shady at all... But I'll take it.

INT. ENTERTAINMENT COMPLEX -LOBBY - DAY

A Polaroid camera ejects a picture, then lowers to reveal Ricky's Supervisor, Kelly who shakes it dry, staples it to a form, and gives Aiden and Shayne their audition numbers with the cheeriest of sarcasm.

KELLY

Welcome. You're in studio one. Where dreams turn into reality checks.

INT. AUDITION STUDIO #1 - CONTINUOUS

They walk in. Aiden spots a kind CHUBBY FACE WOMAN behind the judges' table.

AIDEN

That must be the new Casting Director. At least she smiles. And that's what Katy says is the key to getting in: "Smile, and tell a story with your eyes." So, I've been practicing.

Shayne's taken aback by Aiden's look of constipation.

SHAYNE

Well, maybe dial it back some. You look like a cat trying to solve algebra.

The CASTING DIRECTOR stands up, all 4-feet 3-inches of her. She steps forward with that friendly smile, accompanied by DEEDEE, her Assistant Choreographer who slows her pace to match the Director's hobbled stride.

CASTING DIRECTOR

Alright, superstars, DeeDee here is about to break down a routine that is less 'Swan Lake' and more like 'The Muppet Show'- Because first, we're looking for character.

(MORE)

## CASTING DIRECTOR (CONT'D)

It's all about the face and the flail, not just the footwork. And once you've got it- or at least stopped looking like confused penguins- we'll crank up the tunes, and send you across the floor in pairs to see who sparkles. At the finish line, if I point you to go right- Boom. You're starring in the sequel! Left- Well, there's always next year... Oh. Unless it's your fourth go at it. Then, Ha. You're really screwed.

Aiden recoils. Everyone else takes their place to learn the routine.

A KICK-BALL-CHANGE LATER: The dancers take a break. Aiden checks his backpack and is touched to see a paper bag lunch his mother made anyway. But he's hit with surprise when he pulls out a RED HEADBAND.

AIDEN

Oh, my God. She found it.

SHAYNE

What's that?

AIDEN

(reflects)

My Dad gave me this. Something to channel my inner Travolta.

MOMENTS AFTER: Paired dancers are lined up along the side. Shayne and Aiden, with headband on, are sixth in line to go.

DEEDEE

Ok, everyone! Here we go. And Ignore the cameras.

SHAYNE

Shit. In here too? Great. Why tell your football buddies when you can just televise it.

DEEDEE

Alright. And ah 5,6,7,8.

The music starts, and the first pair frolic across the floor as if they were personally invited to visit the Great Wizard of Oz.

It's Aiden and Shayne's turn. It's a clunky beginning but they manage to look a little less pathetic by mid-point. On the easy part of this Sesame Street meets Jazzercise routine, they take a moment to talk through their fake smiles.

SHAYNE

So... What story are you telling with your eyes?

AIDEN

I'm going for "Revenge of the Nerds, Part Five. Escape from Tech Support" And you?

SHAYNE

Have you seen the movie, "Hurry and Get This the Fuck Over With?" Oh, it's really good. Nominated for an Oscar.

The boys rapidly approach the finish line, sweating with doubt. The Casting Director stares at them intensely. Her hand wavers, deciding where to send them. But surprisingly, she sends them right. Their jaws drop. Both push out the doors to celebrate in the hallway.

AIDEN

Oh my God, we did it! I can't believe it.

SHAYNE

Neither can I. I was awful. She must have cataracts.

AIDEN

Well, who cares now. Advance Dance, here we come!

INT. EMPLOYEE CAFETERIA - DAY

At lunch, the Hot Mess Express listens to Jordy complain.

JORDY

Well, that parade sucked ass. What I'd give to bitch-slap the hemorrhoid who designed that heavy-ass canopy.

A BEAUTIFUL YOUNG LADY enters, wearing tropical apparel.

DUSTIN

Csh, Cshhhhh. Hold the phone! Katy. That girl is wearing your exact same dress.

JORDY

Okay. Some original...

But the Girl freezes when she spots a THIRD GIRL wearing the same dress as well. CRASH! SCREAM! The Third Girl drops her food tray when she sees Graysen and Crystal kissing at a table.

KATY

Ok. Not to be a spiteful bitch...

JORDY

Atta girl. What's the plan? I draw the line at Lorena Bobbitt shit.

INT. ENTERTAINMENT COMPLEX - RESTROOM ENTRANCE - DAY

Aiden waits outside the restrooms, tapping his foot on Shayne's skateboard. Shayne exits and jogs over. Aiden hands him his bag.

SHAYNE

Ah. Thanks, man. Hey, Aiden... About high school. I want to apologize for being a total ass-wipe.

AIDEN

No. I got it. The jocks. The Nerds. Don't mix. Least you didn't bully me.

SHAYNE

No, worse. I stopped hanging out with you because I didn't want to *get* bullied. And that's fucked up. We were like brothers growing up. And I'm sorry about that. Can we start over?

Shayne reaches out for a handshake. Aiden reciprocates.

AIDEN

I'd like that. And Shayne... I'm out now. Gay. Just so you know.

SHAYNE

It's all good, man. And Aiden... I've always known.

Shayne pulls him in for a big embrace, up to his limit of machismo.

SHAYNE (cont'd)

Alright, let's go get this job. Maybe casting needed Tangina from Poltergeist to break your audition curse.

AIDEN

Ha. You may be right.

As Aiden reaches for the skateboard, still under his foot, his full body weight makes the board ROCKET out from underneath him. SLAM! Aiden falls-- and can only watch as the torpedoing board sends the unsuspecting Tangina-like Casting Director, crashing into a trashcan, and writhing in pain on the floor.

AIDEN (cont'd)

Ohhh crap!

Amusingly, the board rolls back in front of Aiden. As people rush to aid the woman, Shayne stealthily snatches his board.

SHAYNE

We gotta go!

Shayne yanks Aiden away from the crime scene. Neither notice that Aiden's headband has fallen off and is left behind.

INT. RICKY'S OFFICE - DAY

Samantha watches Ricky recite lines to Ian as he stands in front of a wall calendar, with "No New Projects" written across every week.

RICKY

No, Mr. Beaumont. I'm not available.

IAN

Again!

RICKY

No, Mr. Beaumont. Screw you and your projects!

IAN

Yes! That's it. Some assertiveness and time management, makes for a better work-life balance. You're welcome.

SAMANTHA

Speaking of time management, my watch guy is running late.

RICKY

Crap. I can't wait. We're shooting b-roll of the second parade, which is stepping off in--

KNOCK KNOCK. A DELIVERY GUY enters holding an envelope.

DELIVERY GUY

Letter for Ricky Lawler.

Ricky takes and opens the letter. He reads it and perks up.

RICKY

A-ha. And here you thought I was being taken advantage of. It's from Eddie Beaumont, appreciating this filming. I told you resilience would win the day.

IAN

Yeah. But until that budget gets signed, I'm the Queen of England, waiting for my crown.

RICKY

Then cheer up, you old bitter queen. 'Cause happy days are just around the corner. Now I want all smiles on deck. I need the rest of this filming to go perfectly or I'll...

IAN

What? Take a bitch down?

EXT. BACKSTAGE/PARADE ROUTE - DAY

Katy keeps watch as her friends deploy like secret agents.

MONTAGE - MISSION PAYBACK

-- Nydia discretely whispers something to the Costume Supervisor, GINA, 45, Mexican, who reacts with disgust.

-- Dustin slyly pours a packet of LAXATIVE POWDER into a cup.

-- Gina angrily talks to herself while hand-sewing a PINK COSTUME.

-- Graysen unknowingly chugs the same cup before putting on his costume.

-- A PARADE SUPERVISOR yells for performers to get ready.

PARADE SUPERVISOR

Five minutes to step-off!

-- Another COSTUME ATTENDANT frantically helps Crystal zip up her PINK COSTUME, but it's not fitting. Jordy passes by.

JORDY

Aw, hun. Too many Bonbons?

-- Crystal cries as the parade leaves the gate without her.

-- On the parade route, Jordy, Graysen, and other male performers are ridiculously dressed as Royal Pages, carrying the legs of two Royal Canopies that shade Prince and Princess face-actors.

Graysen's bright smile gives way to a literal "OH SHIT" face. He spots a bathroom behind the crowd, clenches his ass cheeks, and makes a run for it. But his mad dash snaps off the canopy leg and takes down the entire canopy and everyone underneath it. CRASH!

On the sidewalk, The gang stands with Gina, laughing their asses off. Nydia puts her head on Gina's shoulder.

NYDIA

Thanks, Mom.

GINA

De nada. No one messes with my mija's friends.

On the other side of the street, Ricky watches in horror. He turns and gestures to Sharon and the camera crew to cut tape.

RICKY

If you'll excuse me, there's another audition. My audition; for the lead role in "Crisis Management: The Musical."

Ricky pouts off. Before the Cameraman could press pause..

SHARON

Oh, no. Keep rolling. This is good.

MONTAGE ENDS

INT. REHEARSAL STUDIO #1 - MOMENTS LATER

*INSIDE WEEKLY* captures a group of newbies still beaming from their earlier victory. Aiden shrinks himself among them to not be seen.

SHAYNE

What are you doing?

AIDEN

The Casting Director. Do you think she saw it was me?

SHAYNE

Chill out. You're good. Stand up.

Their focus is turned when a pack of sexy Broadway-quality-looking dancers pushes through the doors.

AIDEN

Jeez. Where's Tonya Harding when you need her?

SHAYNE

Man. When I agreed to make an ass out of myself, I wasn't plan on it being in a room full of hot chicks.

(MORE)

SHAYNE (CONT'D)  
 (nervously sweating,  
 sniffs hit pit)  
 Hm. I think I'll start a new fragrance.  
 I'm calling it, "Regret for Men."

Bringing up the rear, the Hot Mess Express enters laughing.

JORDY  
 Well, if that don't give you closure, I  
 don't know what will.

DUSTIN  
 Then it's official. We're all single  
 ladies now.

KATY  
 (spots Aiden & Shayne)  
 Oh, thank God. You both got through.

Ricky claps his hands to get everyone's attention.

RICKY  
 Ok, everyone! Welcome to the advanced  
 call. Unfortunately, I just received  
 word that our new Casting Director was  
 taken to the hospital-- Courtesy of an  
 unmanned, hit-and-run skateboarding.

Aiden's face grimaces with guilt. But that look turns into utter  
 terror at the sight of two people entering the room.

RICKY (cont'd)  
 ...So, Samantha and Ian were gracious  
 enough to step back into the role of  
 casting for the advanced round.

KATY  
 Oh no.

AIDEN  
 Christ on crutches.

INT. ENTERTAINMENT COMPLEX - CORRIDOR - DAY

After seeing a strange SHIFTY-LOOKING DUDE in a trench coat pass by  
 the door, Ricky steps into the hall to investigate.

RICKY  
 Excuse me, Sir. Can I help you?

Shifty flashes his inner jacket with an array of shiny watches.

SHIFTY  
Badda-Bling?

Embarrassed, Ricky checks around before pulling the man into a room.

INT. BROOM CLOSET

The man flashes Ricky his inventory again.

SHIFTY (cont'd)  
So, what's good?

RICKY  
Wow. Those are really nice.

SHIFTY  
Cash only. No receipts. No returns.

RICKY  
They aren't, um... stolen are they?

SHIFTY  
Define stolen.

RICKY  
There's only one definition, isn't there?

Shifty-looking dude frowns. He starts to close his coat.

RICKY (cont'd)  
Okay, okay, okay! I'm just gonna assume they're not stolen because you haven't told me they are?

SHIFTY  
Now you're getting it.

INT. REHEARSAL STUDIO #1 - LATER

The dancers are given the rundown.

DEEDEE  
Alright, everyone, Since there are so many of you, we'll first teach the jazz routine in two groups. Then break you up to perform it.

SAMANTHA  
And the yellow casting cards you see taped to the mirror will be handed to those we cast. So, if you don't get one, consider yourself cast as Park Guests.

DEEDEE

However... we do encourage you to come back and audition again in the future.

SAMANTHA

(under breath)

Yeah, yeah. Keep those delusions alive.  
(to room)

Ok, let's get this started. And try not to suck.

AIDEN

(to Shayne)

I guess the curse is back.

The two groups are divided, splitting up the gang. As Jordy and Dustin learn the routine, Katy and Nydia watch from the sideline with Aiden and Shayne, who stand spooked as more of the complicated choreography is revealed.

AIDEN (cont'd)

What the hell was that move? Does she think we're Mighty Morphin' Power Rangers?

NYDIA

That's called an axel jump.

SHAYNE

Yeah, right into that triple salchow.

Entering a back door, an unaware foot kicks Aiden's headband into the room. It's Kelly. She approaches Ricky, watching the audition.

KELLY

Ricky. I delivered those cigars to Beaumont's Office as you requested.

RICKY

Great, thank you, Kelly.

It takes a few seconds for it to sink in.

RICKY (cont'd)

Aw. Shit!

As Ricky jets out, the 1st group of dancers finishes and the 2nd group is called to take the dance floor.

SHAYNE

Oh god. This is gonna be a complete disasturbation.

NYDIA  
 (flirty smile)  
 I can help you if you want.

SHAYNE  
 Yeah. I'd like that.

Katy helps a skittish Aiden learn the routine. Nydia teaches Shayne who looks like he's been commanded to do four moves simultaneously in a game of Twister, so Cody interjects...

CODY  
 Oh, bless your Dolly Dinkle hearts.

Shayne's next move gets his bracelet caught in a girl's hair. As they struggle to get untangled, Aiden's axel attempt bumps the Sumo Wrestler, causing him to STUMBLE and CRASH on top of Jordy.

JORDY  
 Ow! What the fuck?! This is a dance audition, not Tag Team Wrestling!

DEEDEE  
 (to room)  
 Nice, that's both groups. Take a ten. When we come back, we'll break you up in fives to perform it.

SAMANTHA  
 And there's nowhere to hide when you're in groups of five.

KATY  
 (to Aiden)  
 I swear that woman has served time--

Katy turns to Aiden -- who's not there. She spots him and Shayne across the way, packing their bags. She runs over.

KATY (cont'd)  
 Hey! What are you guys doing?

AIDEN  
 Katy, this is way too hard. We can't.

KATY  
 Just breathe. Chillax. Remember, they need both dancing and non-dancing roles. And you'll get that axel. All you have to do is try.

AIDEN  
 The only thing I'm trying, Katy, is that door that says "Exit."

KATY

Aiden Dwayne Becker! Don't you dare walk out. You've come way too far to give up now. So, get your ass back out there and dance. "Dance I say!"  
(mulling over familiar words)

SHAYNE

She's right, Aiden. This is your last shot. You gotta stay. As for me, I'ma take the last of my dignity and dip. I'll wait for you guys in the lobby.

The Rivals witness Shayne's grand exit.

CODY

See, if you can't take the heat, then get the hell off the dance floor.

INT. ENTERTAINMENT COMPLEX - SIDE CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Shayne exits and flips his skateboard 360 in the air before landing on it to roll away. A PARADE SUPERVISOR spots him...

PARADE SUPERVISOR

Hey you! Come back here!

INT. EDDIE BEAUMONT'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Ricky shims his credit card into the locked office door. CLICK! He's in. He flips the lights and spots the Cigar box on the desk, still wrapped. THANK GOD. He quickly grabs it and about-faces.

Before he exits, he notices a towering stack of budget request papers, unapproved. He can't help himself, so he fiddles through them. Of course, his are at the bottom. But a lovely rubber stamp on a desk, by a stack of "Approved" requests, tempts him...

Soooo... HE GOES FOR IT. He stamps one.

RICKY

Oh, how badly I need a Manager--

Before he can stamp the 2nd, he gets startled by VOICES IN THE HALL and knocks over a can of soda onto his 2nd form.

RICKY (cont'd)

Shit.

He hurries to wipe up everything and shimmies his 1st form into the approved stack. The voices now approach the door.

RICKY (cont'd)

Fuck.

He hits the lights and quickly ducks under the desk. When the door opens, he hears the voice of Eddie come near before he is confronted with Eddie's crotch in his face upon sitting.

EDDIE BEAUMONT (O.S.)

Let me lock this up and then we can go.  
Anyway. Wasn't that some great food?  
Makes you gassy though.

Ricky eyes widen before he covers his nose and mouth.

INT. REHEARSAL STUDIO #1 - NIGHT

The first five dancers are called out to dance.

DEEDEE

Alright! Let me have Jordy and Dustin  
in the front line. And my ladies:  
Nydia, Dawn, and Catu in the back.

Aiden nervously watches the first group take the floor. He touches his forehead and then panics. He reaches into his bag --

AIDEN

Oh no. Where's my headband?!

He frantically looks around before bowing his head as if to pray.

AIDEN (cont'd)

Oh, help me, John Joseph Travolta.  
You're my only hope.

As the first five get counted in, "*Far From Over*" from "*Staying Alive*" plays in Aiden's head. Jordy, Dustin, and Nydia kill it on the dance floor, and end with flair and confidence.

SAMANTHA

Nice! That's how you do it, folks.

DEEDEE

Next group! Let me have Aiden and  
Robert in front. In back: Katy,  
Michelle, and Jenn!

KATY

(to Aiden)  
Crap, that's us.

Katy nudges Aiden in mid-swig from his water bottle, causing him to spill water on his lap.

AIDEN

Shit! I can't go up there like this.

KATY

Oh, my god. I'm so sorry. Maybe they won't notice.

Aiden steps onto the floor, clearly looking like he's pissed his pants. The room snickers. Samantha takes notice.

SAMANTHA

You, in front! Do you need a moment? Your diaper looks full.

AIDEN

No. This isn't--I just spilt water.

SAMANTHA

Sure, run with that.

(to the group)

Alright, next group! Give it to me!

Aiden dances stiffly yet charming. He fudges the landing on his axel jump and goes careening wildly toward the sideline.

CODY

Oh my God! It's a twister, Auntie Em!

The onlookers jump aside to avoid impact. Aiden disappears into the crowd, before speed-crawling back out to strike any last pose. Samantha mutters to Ian.

SAMANTHA

Wow. I think I contracted pink eye, just from watching that shit.

Ian checks her eyeball. Ricky interrupts them to whisper something to Samantha. The room watches as they appear to disagree about something before she addresses Aiden's group.

SAMANTHA (cont'd)

Um, we'll come back to you five. We're gonna let that one marinate. Next!

As more dancers perform, a TIME-LAPSE of casting cards are being removed from the mirror.

INT. ENTERTAINMENT COMPLEX - LOBBY - NIGHT

The Sumo Wrestler exits Studio #1, crying, followed by Katy, trying to contain her excitement. She flashes her casting card with a big smile to the Hot Mess Express waiting.

KATY

Still the Queen of "Swing," baby.

NYDIA

Yay! We all got Swing. Anything for Aiden?

KATY

Nothing yet.

Katy crosses her fingers. Crystal interrupts, approaching from the corridor with Graysen and his buddies.

CRYSTAL

You guys! Graysen got it!

DUSTIN

Got what? That smell out of the bathroom?

CRYSTAL

Huh? No. You're now looking at the park's first-ever African American Prince Face-Actor. Graysen got two-day Prince, Three-Day Swing. Actually, all four of us got Swing.

JORDY

What the fuck? Did casting all have a collective stroke?!

INT. REHEARSAL STUDIO #1- NIGHT

Samantha recognizes a name on a paper. She looks up to see Cody proudly up front in the next group.

SAMANTHA

Cody Shunock? Didn't I see you on TV in the Imagination Holiday Special?

CODY

You sure did. Some of my best work.

SAMANTHA

I thought you were absolutely fantastic. Keep up the good work.

Cody gives Aiden a snarky look before beginning. Several counts in, Cody takes more time to show off a flexible kick. Unfortunately, it puts him beats behind, now lost in the routine, and at times, facing the wrong direction.

SAMANTHA (cont'd)  
Dear God. What. Is. Happening?

IAN  
It's like watching a graceful gazelle,  
right before the lion tears off its  
ass.

Watching on the side, Aiden's eyes pop out when he sees his red headband, unfortunately, on the dance floor in session.

In Cody's desperation to catch up with the routine, he runs and lands on Aiden's headband, sending him crashing into a table and pulling down the back drape to the makeshift BROADCAST ROOM for *INSIDE WEEKLY*. Everyone gasps.

IAN (cont'd)  
Holy shit!

SAMANTHA  
See? This is why I don't give compliments.

In the back of the room, Ricky yells for assistance.

RICKY  
Call Medical!

He then turns to Sharon before going to assist.

RICKY (cont'd)  
So, um, what's our editing budget?

Aiden sneaks to retrieve his headband. Samantha continues, despite the medical fiasco in the background.

SAMANTHA  
Ok. Last call for the rest of y'all!

As the remaining do-over dancers fight it out for the last cards, the mirror dwindles down to 50... 30... then 10 cards left. Aiden's concerned face says it all.

Aiden is called up in the last group. He puts on his headband with the utmost determination. As the routine reaches its climactic end, Aiden anxiously anticipates the axel jump. And this time, he somewhat lands it. He's so excited that he forgets his last pose.

STAYING ALIVE SEQUENCE ENDS

Samantha takes the last yellow card off the mirror, goes over to the twenty remaining dancers, and scans the eager faces.

She approaches Aiden. He lights up. But she instead hands the card to a guy behind him. Aiden is devastated. Ricky approaches Samantha and hands her a blue card. He whispers in her ear...

RICKY

This one reminds me of me.

Confused, Samantha turns to present the blue card to Aiden.

SAMANTHA

Congratulations, Wetsy Betsy, it looks like you finally made it.

Aiden's face erupts with elation before looking down at his card.

AIDEN

Stiltwalker? But I don't--

RICKY

Don't worry, they'll train you. You're no dancer yet, but there's potential. Keep working on it.

AIDEN

Thank you! I will! Thank you.

He hugs Ricky. He goes to hug Sam, but she looks at his wet pants, holds him at a distance, and pats him on the shoulder instead.

RICKY TALKING HEAD

RICKY

You know, this department may have its challenges, but I wouldn't trade my job for anything in world. And I know this is gonna sound all cheesy, Hallmark-like, but if you can create special moments for park guests every day with Imagination magic...

INT. LOBBY - NIGHT

Ricky presents a luxury watch to his boyfriend who gives him the biggest hug. Ian and Samantha stare adoringly.

RICKY (V.O.)

... Who's to say you can't sprinkle a little of that magic in your personal life...

Across the way, Aiden exits Studio #1. He flashes his blue card and gets dog-piled with congratulations by the gang.

RICKY (V.O.)  
 ... Or even share it with someone who  
 just needs a chance...

Aiden turns when tapped on his shoulder. It's Shayne, who also flashes a blue card.

AIDEN  
 Wait. What? How?

SHAYNE  
 I guess there was also a stunt and specialty act audition next door. Turns out they needed skateboarders. You're looking at "Steampunk Hover-Boarder" number three, baby!

KATY  
 Well, shit. This calls for a celebration. See. Miss Cleo was right. She may just blow up and start chargin' bitches.

EXT./INT. SHAYNE'S CAR - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

The gang piles into an SUV. In the front passenger seat, Aiden removes his headband, kisses it up to the night sky and exclaims...

AIDEN  
 Thanks, Dad.

RICKY (V.O.)  
 ... Because when given the chance, it reminds us to keep on believing... And when you believe in Imagination magic... that's when dreams really come true.

As they drive off the lot, as if on cue, fireworks go off over the park and magically light up the night sky.

BACK TO LOBBY

Ricky watches his boyfriend walk away, still thrilled about his gift.

CHRIS  
 Ok. I'll pull the car around.

As Chris pushes out, Ian and Samantha give Ricky plaudits.

IAN  
 That couldn't have gone more perfect.

RICKY

Yep. Happy Boyfriend. Filming's a wrap.  
And see, you thought I couldn't scoop my  
"crappy life" out of the kitty litter.

KELLY (O.S.)

Ricky! You have a call on line two.

At a wall phone, Kelly presents the receiver to Ricky.

RICKY

Hello... Oh, hey! Mr. Beaumont.

EDDIE BEAUMONT (V.O.)

Ricky! I heard the filming went great.

RICKY

You did?-- I mean, yeah. Really. Great.

As Ricky listens, he sees EMTs wheeling Cody by on a gurney, wearing a neck brace, moaning in pain. Ricky smiles to make it all ok.

EDDIE BEAUMONT (V.O.)

Well, that's all thanks to your  
brilliant suggestion. And you will be  
happy to know that *INSIDE WEEKLY* not  
only called with your praises, but they  
also inspired my next project.

RICKY

Um... Next project?

Ricky nervously swallows. Sam and Ian move in closer to eavesdrop.

EDDIE BEAUMONT (V.O.)

Yeah. Picture taking today's footage,  
and instead, doing a fully documented  
behind-the-scenes of how we open this  
upcoming anniversary parade. Shoot. If  
that goes well, I want you spearheading  
something like this for every  
department; a collection I want to call,  
"Every Role Brings Imagination."

With a forced smile and fear in his eyes, he briefly looks at Ian. He looks at Samantha. He looks out to his boyfriend, waving in the car, so he awkwardly waves back. He hesitates to respond to Beaumont.

RICKY

Yes. That. Sounds. Wonderful.

He tears up before dropping the phone and crying on Ian's shoulder.

END OF EPISODE