

CRASH COURSE

by

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FADE IN:

INT. MIT - STAIRWELL - NIGHT

Dozens of black-clad frat guys carry car parts upstairs with ninja-like stealth -- a tire, a bumper, a carburetor.

EXT. MIT GREAT DOME - ROOF - DAY

A parking ticket flutters under the wiper of a Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) campus police car, perched on the massive cement-domed roof, 100 feet in the air.

SUPER: Inspired by actual events.

(beat)

Believe it or not.

EXT. MIT GREAT DOME - SIDEWALK - DAY

Psyched students gaze up at the cop car. Pissed campus police mill. A female CNN REPORTER, 30, interviews the MIT DEAN, 50.

During the interview, students behind the Dean use props to make it appear that a long power drill bit is inserted into the Dean's ear, a toilet plunger is inserted into his skull, and his brain (a plastic model) is suctioned out.

CNN REPORTER

In most places if you move a car from point A to point B without permission, it's called grand theft auto. But at MIT, if you dismantle a campus police car in the middle of the night, haul it to the dome of the main academic building piece by piece, and reassemble it, it's called a highly ingenious prank.

MIT DEAN

Our students do have a tradition of perpetrating elaborate practical jokes. It's their way of relieving stress. Pranks, or hacks as we call them, are to MIT what football is to Harvard.

(notices grinning faces)

They're doing something back there, aren't they?

EXT. BUS STOP - DAY

JIM WALDEN, 18, does handstand push-ups against the wall of a deserted bus stop in rural Massachusetts.

JIM

One. Ten. Eleven. One hundred.
One hundred one. One hundred ten.
One hundred eleven.

As Jim bangs out the last few, a Greyhound bus with a "Boston" destination sign pulls up. The doors swing open and a BUS DRIVER, 40, leans out of his seat.

BUS DRIVER

You just do a hundred push-ups?

Jim kicks to the ground and stands.

JIM

Only seven. But it sounds
impressive in binary.

Jim is a triple threat: jock skills, nerd brains, rebel style. He'd be easy to hate if not for that damn charm.

INT. BUS - DAY

Jim hops on the bus, carrying a duffel bag, and takes a seat.

EXT. GREAT DOME - ROOF - DAY

A crane moves into position as two MIT FACILITIES WORKERS prep a harness for the cop car.

MIT FACILITIES WORKER #1

I gotta miss Martinez hurl against
the Yanks 'cause some frat rats
take a cruiser for an aerial
joyride?

MIT FACILITIES WORKER #2

How the hell'd they do this?

MIT FACILITIES WORKER #1

I dunno, but when they find the
damn propeller-heads, they'll
probably give 'em a medal.
Meantime, we're up here risking our
hides, dealing with this mess.

Facilities Worker #1 opens the car door. Whoosh! Thousands of ping-pong balls cascade out and bounce down the dome.

MIT FACILITIES WORKER #1
Fuckin' A!

INT. NATALIE'S CAR, DRIVING BY MIT - DAY

Behind the wheel: NATALIE TAYLOR, 20, armor-piercingly beautiful. She listens to *The Merchant of Venice* on tape.

"PORTIA" ON TAPE
The quality of mercy is not
strain'd. It droppeth as the
gentle rain from heaven.

Ping-pong balls pelt her car.

NATALIE
What the --

She looks up, sees the car on the dome, and shakes her head.

EXT. GREAT DOME - SIDEWALK - DAY

Unflappable Alpha Tau Omega (ATO) senior IAN "ZEN" PIKE lopes along with wide-eyed transfer student TREY REED, who wears a Georgia Tech shirt.

ZEN
At MIT everything moves at warp-
speed, even rush, which only lasts
two days.

Ping-pong balls bounce on the sidewalk, delighting the crowd. Zen catches a ball.

ZEN
Nice touch. Ready for a rapidfire
ethnographic immersion into MIT
frat subcultures?

EXT. POLE VAULT PIT - DAY

Zen and Trey watch a vaulter clear 15 feet. A second student marks a whiteboard with a mind-mauling geometric analysis. The vaulters are black and wear "Chocolate City" shirts.

ZEN
Each frat has its own personality.
Some pride themselves on athletics.

EXT. STUDENT GOVT. FRAT - DAY

Zen and Trey watch frat guys release a remote-controlled blimp, with "Dan Aoki for Sr. Class Prez" on its side.

ZEN

Some emphasize student government.

EXT. DRUGGIE FRAT - DAY

Zen points out a gothic brownstone to Trey.

ZEN

And this one is a leading supplier
of recreational pharmaceuticals on
the East Coast.

INT. DRUGGIE FRAT - BATHROOM - DAY

Frat guys pour colorful, bubbling concoctions into a bathtub and stir. Their shirts say "Lamda Sigma Delta" (LSD).

INT. MIT HALLWAY - DAY

Zen and Trey watch some ATO brothers mount a large drywall patch over the Dean's office door, making it vanish.

Moments later, the guys watch the Dean walk up, reach for his nonexistent doorknob, and look perplexed.

ZEN

But all the frats have one thing in
common... a passion for hacking.
And no one takes that more
seriously than us.

TREY

Why?

EXT. FRAT - ROOF - DAY

Brawny ATO senior BRET "HONDO" HONNOLD peers over the edge of the five-story brownstone in Boston's Back Bay neighborhood.

He holds a pellet of dry ice with pliers and drops it in a plastic bottle two-thirds full of water. He quickly caps it.

EXT. FRAT - FRONT STEPS - DAY

Zen and Trey jog up the steps.

The water bottle plummets from the roof toward Trey. Without looking up, Zen jerks Trey back an instant before the H2O+CO2 bomb impacts the cement and explodes in front of him.

Zen opens the door and continues as if nothing happened.

INT. FRAT - FOYER - DAY

Zen shows Trey a shelf lined with impressive trophies.

ZEN

The Golden Dome, given each year
for the best hack at MIT.

TREY

Giga-awesome! Who gives it out?

ZEN

Anonymous. That way no one knows
who to impress. ATO's won it the
last three years.

Zen hands Trey a trophy and rotates it, revealing an inscription.

TREY

(reading the inscription)

Rule one. Hacks should demonstrate
wit and finesse. Two. Noteworthy
hacks require difficulty in
execution. Three. Hacks should be
non-destructive. Four. Don't get
caught.

A rappelling ROPE silently hits the floor behind Trey.

ZEN

Of course, hacks are about more
than just competing for the Golden
Dome. At MIT it's how we express
ourselves. We use hacks to amuse,
show off, discipline, get revenge,
even impress women... in theory.

ATO senior LUKE BARDOLF rappels down. He's commander of his
Army ROTC battalion, a fact one might guess from his buzzcut,
camo outfit, and bearing. Think Patton as a college student.

TREY
So the cop car on the dome was our
doing?

ZEN
Unfortunately that was Sig Ep.

Luke places Trey in a chokehold, startling him.

LUKE
But we've got a few plans of our
own.

Luke thrusts a tool belt and rappelling gear at Zen.

ZEN
This is Luke, our president and
pledge trainer. Trey is an ATO
transfer from Georgia Tech.

TREY
They call it the "MIT of the
South."

LUKE
Let's not get hysterical.

ZEN
Just giving him a quick download.

LUKE
Spare me the details of your play
date, Zen. Just complete your
mission before the freshmeat
arrive.

INT. BUS - DAY

Jim writes in a journal. On the seat next to him are an MIT
Guidebook and Tom Wolfe's "The Right Stuff."

An MIT JUNIOR across the aisle spots the MIT Guidebook.

MIT JUNIOR
Tech?

JIM
Freshman. You?

MIT JUNIOR
Junior. Gonna rush?

JIM
Is it true ATO is the best frat?

MIT JUNIOR
If your definition of best is are they superjocks who throw epic parties while somehow managing to pull down the highest GPA on campus, then yes. But you know, they're pretty selective.

JIM
Good. So am I.

MIT JUNIOR
Let me guess... valedictorian?

JIM
Is three prime?

MIT JUNIOR
Yeah, you and everybody else at MIT. But put a thousand valedictorians together and all of a sudden, five hundred people who used to be top dog are now the bottom half of the class. Some crack. The usual exit strategy is a twenty story belly flop off the Green Building.

JIM
When I was a kid, my mom used to say "why don't you skip school today and give the other kids a chance to catch up." I did, but they never caught up. I'm not worried.

MIT JUNIOR
Said the big fish as he left his small pond.

Jim smiles and turns away. His expression becomes more serious. He pulls a letter from the Guidebook.

INSERT - MIT REJECTION LETTER

"Dear Jim Walden: We regret to inform you that we are unable to offer you admission. The applicant pool was especially strong this year and..."

BACK TO SCENE

Jim contemplates the letter. Then he looks at the astronauts on the cover of "The Right Stuff."

EXT. BOSTON - NIGHT

Huge red neon letters of the Sheraton's rooftop "SHERATON" sign blaze in the skyline. The "N" flickers and goes dark.

EXT. SHERATON HOTEL - ALLEY - NIGHT

Zen hops off the fire escape and brushes off.

INT. SHERATON HOTEL - LOBBY - NIGHT

A HOTEL MANAGER, 45, mans the front desk. Zen approaches, tool belt and rappelling gear slung over his shoulder. He carries two rolled-up engineering drawings.

The DOORMAN, 50, leans over to the Manager.

DOORMAN

The N on the roof is out.

HOTEL MANAGER

Again?

The doorman returns to his post.

ZEN

Good evening. I'm with MIT's Alpha Tau Omega fraternity. Tonight's our first night of rush and we were hoping you would turn out all the lights in your sign. Except the A, T, and O, of course. We thought it would be good advertising for us.

Zen slides over a masterful engineering drawing, showing the Sheraton sign with only the A, T, and O lit up.

HOTEL MANAGER

I don't have time for this, kid.

ZEN

We thought you might object. So we drafted an alternate version.

Zen unfurls a second drawing, showing how the sign can be made to read: S H I T, by smashing the E, A, O, N, and part of the R. Zen places four steel hex nuts on the drawing.

ZEN

These are one inch, thirty-two thread, zinc-plated steel hex nuts. You can find them many places. Especially on the junction box at the base of the letter N.

The manager now realizes Zen extinguished the N.

ZEN

Now, I could climb back up the fire escape and short out the fuses on the rest of the letters. Or I could decide I'm too tired for all that hoo-hah and extinguish the lights using these hex nuts as projectiles from our rooftop funnel-a-tor. It has an effective range of six hundred meters.

Zen slides over a photo of the funnel-a-tor, ATO's giant rooftop slingshot, a device made of multiple lengths of surgical tubing and a huge funnel.

ZEN

A third option is for you to turn the lights out manually. Your call. They're helium-argon lights, right? About ten grand a pop?

The manager considers. Then decides.

HOTEL MANAGER

Just for tonight.

ZEN

Thanks, sport. Can you make them blink too? By the way, while I was up there, I noticed the A/C condenser was shaking, so I put some shims in as a damper. Call it even?

(pushes over the hex nuts)

You can keep these.

EXT. BOSTON BUS STATION - NIGHT

Jim exits, with a lemonade, and approaches a taxi with its hood up, venting steam. A townie CABBIE, 30, kicks the tire.

JIM
Need help?

CABBIE
No. I always steam clean my shirt
while I'm wearing it.

Jim looks under the hood, takes a hankie, and opens the radiator cap. A steam plume rises.

CABBIE
You know what you're doin'?

Jim pours his lemonade in the radiator and caps it.

CABBIE
That don't look triple-A approved.

Jim wraps the hankie around a leak in a hose. Then he removes the Cabbie's belt.

CABBIE
Are you fuckin' kiddin'?

Jim cinches the belt around the hankie. Rock solid.

CABBIE
Where to, MacGyver?

INT. TAXI - NIGHT

As the taxi zooms through Boston, Jim looks at the skyline. He spots the Sheraton sign: "SHERATO."

Jim watches the "SHER" lights go out, one by one, leaving "ATO." Then, like a confirmation from the heavens, the sign flashes -- ATO, ATO, ATO. Jim is impressed.

EXT. FRAT - FRONT STEPS - NIGHT

Inside the party is popping. Luke and Hondo notice the Sheraton sign blinking "ATO" and clank beer mugs.

Two MIT freshmen approach: leather-jacketed COOL FROSH and ultimate nerd DEXTER GARFINKEL.

Dexter might weigh 130 pounds soaking wet. Never met an SAT question he didn't love. The only problem he can't solve is how to relate to other human beings.

Dexter's shirt says: "Chess: It's Like Battleship. Only With Thinking."

COOL FROSH
(shoves Dexter)
Slink back to the dorms, nerd.
You'll never get in a frat.

DEXTER
And you couldn't copulate even if
you were a hermaphrodite.

COOL FROSH
Whatever, dictionary-breath.

Luke and Hondo overhear this exchange.

LUKE
This one holds much promise.

Dexter and the Cool Frosh approach Luke and Hondo.

DEXTER
Greetings. I wish to join your
organization.

LUKE
First, we need see if either of you
are ATO material. Name the Star
Trek episode where Kirk gets it on
with that green alien chick.

COOL FROSH
Uh...

DEXTER
Do you mean Marta the Orion slave
girl with green skin in "Whom Gods
Destroy" or Shahna the Drill Thrall
with green hair in "The Gamesters
of Triskelion?"

Luke nods to Hondo. Hondo shoves the Cool Frosh back.

HONDO
Flush.

LUKE
What's your name?

DEXTER
Dexter Garfinkel.

HONDO
Want to meet your new brothers?

DEXTER
Can we do more Star Trek trivia?

LUKE
Affirmative, Spock.

Hondo leads Dexter into the frat. Luke follows.

LUKE
(sotto)
Stardate day after never.

Jim's taxi pulls up in front of the frat.

INT. TAXI - NIGHT

Jim leans toward the Cabbie.

JIM
When you replace that hose don't
bother with the steel-braided kind.
They actually hold heat in and will
make your engine run hotter.

The Cabbie hands Jim his card.

CABBIE
If this whole college thing don't
pan out, call me. I'll getcha a
job as a mechanic.

Jim smiles and hops out.

EXT. FRAT - FRONT STEPS - NIGHT

Jim bounds up the steps to the door. He is stopped by a
beefy senior BOUNCER.

BOUNCER
Name?

JIM
Jim Walden.

BOUNCER
Like the seminal book by
transcendentalist philosopher Henry
David Thoreau?

JIM
I usually say "like the pond."

The bouncer pulls out a clipboard and checks his list.

BOUNCER
Sorry. You're not on the list.

A bevy of sexy college girls sashays past the bouncer.

JIM
Were they on the list?

BOUNCER
They had the foresight to bring
their vaginas with them. It's the
all-access pass.

Jim trudges down the steps. He hears music and laughter coming from an open window on the second floor. He sees the bouncer is distracted by a skankalicious coed.

Jim creeps to the frat exterior, out of sight of the bouncer. Slings his duffel over his shoulder. Finds handholds in the masonry. Scales the frat to the second floor.

He reaches the sill. Hops through the window into...

INT. FRAT - PARTY ROOM - NIGHT

A casino party. Jim lands near Trey.

JIM
Fire escape inspector. I've never
seen such shoddy welding. Who's in
charge of this deathtrap?

Jim backs away from Trey and collides with Luke.

LUKE
Watch it, spaz!
(beat)
Walden?

JIM
Luke?

LUKE
What are you doing here?

JIM
Freshman.

LUKE
No shit? Hey Hondo, I know this
guy. We played hockey growing up.

JIM
Luke led the league in goals.

LUKE
Until you came along.

JIM
Then he led in high-sticking.

LUKE
(more proud than sorry)
Sorry about those chipped teeth.

Hondo laughs and whistles for attention.

HONDO
It's time for our annual chug-off!
Anyone foolish enough to challenge
three-year reigning champion, Luke
Bardolf, come forward and be
humiliated!

LUKE
(muscles past Jim)
Step aside, lightweight.

Two freshmen enter the chug-off.

HONDO
We need one more delusional
entrant!

Jim steps forward, eliciting a sneer from Luke.

HONDO
Place your bets, you money-grubbing
bastards!

Zen collects money and hands out chits. On the wall is a
whiteboard with the odds:

Luke	2:1	Frosh 2	6:1
Frosh 1	6:1	Frosh 3	6:1

Jim turns to Zen.

JIM
What are the odds if I do it upside
down?

ZEN
Fifty to one.

JIM

Done.

Zen adjusts the odds:

Luke	2:1	Frosh 2	4 6:1
Frosh 1	4 6:1	Frosh 3	50 6:1

Jim hands Dexter \$100.

JIM

Bet this on me.

DEXTER

Are you certain? Luke's record coupled with his gastronomic capacity suggests that your victory is a low-probability outcome.

JIM

Just do it, cyborg.

Dexter bets.

Jim sets his glass on the floor and flips into a headstand. He balances with one hand and his head. His other hand grasps the glass. Everyone laughs.

Luke and the challengers raise their beers to their lips.

HONDO

Get set, chug!

Jim chugs fast, without spilling. Luke is fast but sloppy, spilling beer on his shirt. He and Jim are neck and neck. The crowd cheers them on.

Luke wins by a split-second. The crowd roars. Jim kicks to his feet and stands, disappointed.

HONDO

Valiant attempt, yoga-boy.

ZEN

Wait! I demand a spill test!
Luke... your shirt please.

Luke begrudgingly takes his shirt off and hands it to Zen. Zen wrings it tight. A drop of beer emerges from the twisted shirt -- clings to the fabric -- then drops.

BROTHERS

Spillage!

HONDO
 (raising Jim's arm)
 We have an upset!

The crowd cheers and douses the losers with beer. Dexter gives Jim the chit. Jim collects a \$5,000 wad of cash, then hands Dexter a generous tip. Luke glowers at Jim.

Brothers lift Jim to their shoulders and hoot and holler.

INT. FRAT - LIBRARY - NIGHT

All-hands meeting with exhausted brothers. A clock says 4:15 a.m. Photos of Jim, Dexter, and eight other pledges are taped to the wall. Luke points to Jim's photo.

LUKE
 I still think we're making a mistake on Walden. I've known him since the days he carried a Battlestar Galactica lunch box. The kid's a cocky showboat, a solo act. Not fraternity material.

ZEN
 You're just pissed he out-chugged you.

LUKE
 I'm not. Fuck it. You'll see. Anyway, our final pledge... Dexter Garfinkel!

Luke points to Dexter's photo. Brothers cheer.

TREY
 Dexter Garfinkel? Come on, Luke!

LUKE
 I'll concede he's a tad bookish.

TREY
 A tad? I asked him if he wanted his drink on the rocks and he gave me a lecture on Archimedes Principle.

LUKE
 Look... we want to kick ass in sports, dominate campus life, throw legendary parties, and keep our grades in the stratosphere, right?
 (off Trey's nod)
 (MORE)

LUKE (cont'd)
So, each year we recruit nine of
the best guys we can find plus one
gargantuan geekazoid. Then we...
utilize his talents.

Trey doesn't get it.

HONDO
We make him do all the problem sets
for his pledge class. Each class
has a Marvin.

TREY
A Marvin?

HONDO
Marvin was our first indentured
homework servant. The name stuck.

Luke removes a tap from a beer keg.

LUKE
It's a mutually beneficial
relationship. We bestow social
legitimacy on the Marvin. He
provides us with an in-house nerd.
(holds up the beer tap)
A nerd on tap!

BROTHERS
Nerd on tap! Nerd on tap!

INT. FRAT - LIBRARY - DAY

Jim, Dexter, and eight other pledges stand before Luke and
the brothers in a pledge ceremony.

LUKE
Jim Walden, do you accept our bid?

JIM
I do.

LUKE
We're not getting married, homo.
Just say "yes" or something.

JIM
Yes.

Luke fastens a pledge pin on Jim, "accidentally" poking him.

JIM

Ouch.

LUKE

Brethren, I give you your pledge class.

Brothers cheer. Luke whistles for silence, pulls out a scavenger hunt list, and hands copies to the pledges.

LUKE

Pledges, this scavenger hunt is your chance to get to know Boston and each other. In addition, your scores will be used to calculate your room assignments, so if you don't want a moldy, spider-infested closet in the basement, I suggest you do your best. You have two hundred items to collect. Pair up, then make like the rain forest and vanish!

Dexter sidles up to Jim.

DEXTER

Jim, help! I'm allergic to mold, spores, arachnids --

JIM

Relax! You and I are a team.

Jim turns to freshman SHAWN MALONE, a lacrosse stud.

JIM

Shawn, have you met Dexter?

SHAWN

Hey, Dex. What's new?

DEXTER

Nu is the thirteenth letter of the Greek alphabet. In fluid dynamics it stands for kinematic viscosity --

JIM

We're still tweaking his people skill subroutines.

SHAWN

(scanning list)

Okay, let's see what we got. First item, a receipt from Stop 'n' Shop for... oh no.

INT. STOP 'N' SHOP - DAY

Shawn squirms in the checkout line, as disgusted shoppers avert their gaze. A CHECKOUT LADY, 40, eyes him scornfully.

CHECKOUT LADY
Plannin' a big night, are ya?

On the conveyor belt: a *Playgal*, lube, a big cucumber, hand lotion, and a box of tissues.

SERIES OF SHOTS - SCAVENGER HUNT

- A) Jim and Dexter measure the horse's phallus at the George Washington equestrian statue in the Boston Common.
- B) PLEDGE #1 staggers from a Red Cross office and adds a fifth "I Donated Blood" sticker to the inside of his coat.
- C) Jim and Dexter run out of the Sam Adams brewery, carrying a life-size cardboard stand-up of Sam Adams. PLEDGE #2 runs up and poaches the stand-up from Jim.

EXT. FERTILITY CLINIC - DAY

Jim reads from the list.

JIM
A specimen cup from the Cambridge Fertility Clinic. Fifty points.

DEXTER
How will you obtain it?

JIM
Wit, charm, cunning. Watch and learn, Dex.

INT. FERTILITY CLINIC - DAY

At the reception desk sits Natalie -- she of the ping-pong ball barrage. She sees Jim and Dexter enter and tosses something to them. Jim catches it. It's a specimen cup.

NATALIE
Now scram.

DEXTER
That was less problematic than I anticipated.

JIM
How'd you know?

NATALIE
Today's the last Wednesday in
August. Time for ATO's annual
scavenger hunt, right?

Natalie picks up a copy of *The Boston Globe* and points to an
article about the cop car on the dome hack: "How'd They Do
That? MIT Pranksters Strike Again."

NATALIE
The real question is why you
techies waste time on pranks when
you could be curing cancer?

Jim is mesmerized.

JIM
I don't know.

NATALIE
Why steal a police car instead of
developing more effective
bulletproof vests?

JIM
I don't know.

Natalie notices tape over the bridge of Dexter's glasses.

NATALIE
You can split an atom, but you
can't get your glasses fixed. What
is it with you geniuses?

JIM
I don't know.

NATALIE
What do you know?

Dexter sees a DVD player on the counter, blinking 12:00.

DEXTER
I know how to do this.

Dexter sets the time on the DVD player at turbo-speed.

NATALIE
Clearly you have your uses. Well
don't let me hold you boys up. I'm
sure you have cows to tip.

Natalie goes back to work. Jim glances at her nametag.
Dexter tugs the entranced Jim out.

INT. SUBWAY CAR - DAY

Dexter inventories their scavenger hunt items.

JIM
... and another thing, I never
tipped a cow.

DEXTER
Nor I. Though I imagine their
elevated center of mass would
facilitate the task.

Jim takes a bite of a chicken sandwich.

DEXTER
How's your dinosaur?

JIM
Come again?

DEXTER
Ask any paleontologist and they'll
tell you that birds are the direct
descendants of small theropod
dinosaurs. So that piece of
chicken breast you just swallowed
is really a... dinosaur tit.

JIM
You must be a riot on a date.

DEXTER
Someday I hope to test that
hypothesis.

JIM
What time is it?

Dexter glances at his digital watch.

DEXTER
Pi o'clock.

Jim grabs Dexter's wrist and looks at his watch. It reads
3:14. Jim rolls his eyes.

JIM
We'll make it if we run.

Suddenly, the subway car jolts to a stop. Jim's look: *uh-oh*.

INT. FRAT - OUTSIDE THE SPIDER CLOSET - DAY

Exhausted pledges listen to Luke.

LUKE

In first place, with thirty five hundred points... Jim and Dexter. However, since you returned two minutes late, you're disqualified and will spend the next year in the Spider Closet...

Luke opens a door to tiny, dilapidated room overrun with spider webs. Dexter is terror-stricken.

LUKE

... unless you redeem yourselves. We're at war with the Dekes over parking spaces. Yesterday those troglodytes put a garden hose in Hondo's Jeep and flooded it. Your mission is revenge. Be brutal, brilliant, and brisk. You have ten minutes. Go!

SERIES OF SHOTS - DEKE REVENGE

- A) Jim and Dexter race through the frat looking for raw materials.
- B) Jim spots three tiny watermelons in the kitchen and grabs them.
- C) Dexter grabs a football pump from a sports closet.

EXT. FRAT - ROOF - DAY

Luke and the brothers watch Jim jab the football pump into a watermelon and pump furiously. He's creating a High Pressure Watermelon (HPW).

Jim loads the HPW into the funnel-a-tor. Dexter helps him pull the funnel back. They fire.

The HPW soars through the air -- across the street -- toward an open window at the Deke brownstone.

It falls short and splatters on the sidewalk.

LUKE
(looking at his watch)
Forty-five seconds!

Jim pumps up another HPW.

They pull the funnel way back and fire. This one impacts the brownstone exterior.

While Jim fills the final HPW, Dexter makes calculations on paper.

Dexter shows Jim a trajectory graph and adjusts their aim to be more of a lob.

They launch the last HPW. This one looks right on course.

INT. DEKE FRAT - BEDROOM - DAY

A Deke sits at his desk. The HPW hurtles through the window, slams into a coffee table, and explodes like a grenade.

The Deke and his room are coated in red pulpy goo. The poor dude looks traumatized.

EXT. FRAT - ROOF - DAY

The guys bust a gut laughing. High-fives all around.

EXT. HARVARD BRIDGE - DAY

Jim, Dexter, Shawn, and Luke walk to MIT. An MIT student wearing a jester's hat unicycles by, his superhero cape billowing behind him.

JIM
That's kinda random.

LUKE
Clearly he wasn't beaten up enough
as a child.
(beat)
By the way, did you know you're not
a student?

Jim's expression: deer in the headlights.

JIM
What are you talking about?

LUKE

I called the Dean for Student Housing to give him our list of pledges and he said there's nobody named Walden in the freshman class.

JIM

Oh... must be a computer error.

LUKE

You realize we're talking about MIT?

JIM

Okay... human error.

LUKE

Anyway, you might want to take care of that.

The guys spot a homeless man, 40s, at the foot of the Harvard Bridge. The man (BRIDGE TROLL) mutters and swings a wooden club like a caveman battling invisible enemies.

The barrel-chested Troll wears a suit jacket with ripped-off sleeves, exposing thick sinewy Popeye arms, strengthened from years of swinging the heavy club.

LUKE

Get 'em, B.T.!

JIM

What's his deal?

LUKE

The Bridge Troll? Been there forever. One of the guys went down and talked to him once. He said he's preparing to defend Earth from the invasion of the evil space reptiles from planet ten. Or some crazy shit like that.

As the group keeps walking, Jim glances back at the Troll.

BRIDGE TROLL

(swinging the club)

Stand still! I've got you! Die!

INT. PHYSICS LECTURE HALL - DAY

Jim, Dexter, and Shawn sit in a huge lecture hall with about 200 students. Shawn glances around.

SHAWN

Wow. Lot of Asians.

A sumo-sized JAPANESE STUDENT turns to face Shawn.

JAPANESE STUDENT

You got a problem with Asians?

SHAWN

No. It's awesome. It means I can cheat off anyone.

The class titters at something happening up front.

In the front Hondo hangs a huge collision ball apparatus ("Newton's Balls"). It consists of five large balls, each suspended by two wires from a large frame, and a giant papier-mâché Isaac Newton. The balls dangle from his crotch.

Hondo pulls and releases a ball, sending them click-clacking back and forth.

Luke writes on the blackboard: "Assignment: Whack Newton's Balls." Students chortle.

Unknown to Luke and Hondo, PROFESSOR NEUSTADT, 60s, enters from a side door, holding a long wooden pointer.

The distinguished, tweedy, intimidating Neustadt strides toward Luke with the vigor of someone half his age. He whacks Luke's butt with the pointer.

PROF. NEUSTADT

Be gone, miscreants!

Luke and Hondo dash out. Neustadt uses the pointer to stop the balls from colliding.

PROF. NEUSTADT

Motion. Physics is the study of motion, from galaxies to baseballs to atoms. In many ways, physics is the ultimate science. Biology is nothing more than glorified butterfly-chasing. And if you can follow a recipe, you can do chemistry. Only physics poses man's most primordial questions: What are the building blocks of matter? What is the origin of the universe? There is beauty in physics, one that can only be appreciated after the beholder has acquired the necessary training.

(MORE)

PROF. NEUSTADT (cont'd)
 Some of you may glimpse that beauty
 as we uncover what makes nature
 tick. We begin with Newton.

EXT. SPORTS FIELDS - DAY

A spiraling football arcs through the air.

PROF. NEUSTADT (V.O.)
 Consider a ball in motion...

An MIT football player fumbles the catch pathetically, trips over his own feet, and eats turf.

Watching on the sidelines, Jim, Luke, and Shawn shake their heads. Nearby some hot and nerdy MIT CHEERLEADERS practice.

MIT CHEERLEADERS
 E to the u, du dx! E to the x dx!
 Cosine, secant, tangent, sine! Pi
 is three point one four one five
 nine! Radical, integral, u dv!
 Calculus, geometry, MIT! We're not
 rough! We're not tough! But we
 know a lot of stuff!

The guys stare at each other, dumbstruck.

MIT CHEERLEADERS
 Repel them! Repel them! Force
 them to relinquish the prolate
 leather spheroid!

The guys facepalm and start walking.

JIM
 I didn't know MIT had women.

LUKE
 It doesn't. The women at MIT are
 the guys who worked their balls off
 in high school.

Shawn stops to drink from a water fountain. The water blasts him like a fire hose. Upon closer inspection, the guys see the water fountain is, in fact, connected to a fire hydrant.

LUKE
 We built that after Neustadt said
 getting an education at MIT is like
 getting a sip of water from a fire
 hose.

SHAWN

Feels like an enema from a fire hose. One week into the semester and I'm four weeks behind.

LUKE

There's a solution for that.

INT. FRAT - LIBRARY - NIGHT

At a long table sits Dexter and the other Marvins: mega-nerds Boris (sophomore), Felix (junior), and Simon (senior).

LUKE

You know the drill. Seniors give Simon your homework. Juniors will be assisted by Felix. Sophomores work with Boris. And opening tonight for a four year run in the main lounge is the King of Calculus, the Lord of the Logarithm... give it up for freshman Dexter Garfinkel!

Brothers clap and cheer. PLEDGES queue up in front of Dexter. PLEDGE #1 hands Dexter a folder.

PLEDGE #1

Here's my organic chemistry problem set. And try to make it look like my handwriting, will ya?

PLEDGE #2 thrusts a ream of papers at Dexter. Dexter looks at them and frets.

DEXTER

Wait! I don't know astrodynamics.

LUKE

Chill, Poindexter. That's what the bibles are for. Twenty years of problem sets and answers.

Luke points to shelves of notebooks with labels like "Linear Algebra," "Differential Equations," and "Electromagnetism."

PLEDGE #2

What about exams?

LUKE

You'll be fine. Homework is two-thirds of your grade.

Jim and Shawn watch from the side.

JIM
There's something wrong about this.

SHAWN
Honor code violation?

JIM
Besides that, you want to drive
your family across a suspension
bridge designed by a guy who
absentee balloted his way through
college?

Luke puts his arms around Jim and Shawn's shoulders.

LUKE
Let's go, coeds. Three dollar
pitchers at the Cask 'n' Flagon.

SHAWN
Raincheck, Luke. I'm up to my ass
in thermodynamics.

LUKE
(indicating Dexter)
We didn't pledge him for his
linebacking ability.

JIM
You can't force Dexter to do
everyone's homework.

LUKE
Who's forcing?

Luke snatches a problem set away from Dexter.

LUKE
Sorry Dex, O Chem is probably too
advanced for you.

DEXTER
(grabs it back)
Wait... I was almost done.
(scribbling furiously)
I would say that phenol is more
acidic than cyclohexanol because
its conjugate base is stabilized by
resonance. Ha!

LUKE
See? Homework is catnip to a
Marvin.

SHAWN
Sure and after I graduate, I'll
just call Dex every time my boss
gives me an assignment I don't
understand 'cause I never learned
the fuckin' material.

LUKE
Suit yourself, douche nozzle, but
your insubordination just earned
you a date with the Dice of Doom.

Luke, Jim, and the brothers exit, leaving Shawn and Dexter.

DEXTER
That doesn't sound auspicious.

INT. CASK 'N' FLAGON BAR - NIGHT

Jim and Luke play eightball in this dive bar. The game is
tied -- each has two balls left.

JIM
You guys sure take rush seriously.

Jim shoots and sinks his ball.

LUKE
Have to. You know Lambda Sigma
Delta?

JIM
The druggie frat?

Jim shoots. His ball misses the pocket by a hair.

LUKE
Ten years ago they were the primo
house on campus. Varsity athletes,
Rhodes scholars, the whole package.
Then they broke the cardinal rule
of rush.

JIM
What's that?

Luke shoots hard and sinks his ball with a resounding thud.

LUKE

Always pledge a man better than yourself. Do that and the house stays strong. Pledge freaks and losers and it goes downhill faster than a celebrity marriage. It's a Darwinian struggle and every year is a new generation. And I sure as hell don't want to come back to our frat in ten years and find a bunch of LARPerS and wastoids lying around getting stoned.

JIM

What if you can't find a man better than yourself?

Luke deftly sinks the final ball plus the eightball in one shot. Game over. Luke wins.

LUKE

That's a problem for me. You needn't worry.

Jim and Luke exchange looks. Two cocky alpha nerds sizing each other up.

INT. FRAT - LIBRARY - DAY

Brothers gather. Luke opens an ornate wood box and removes the Dice of Doom, a twelve-sided die with sides labeled: Aeronautics, Behavioral Science, Biology, Chemistry, Computers, Electronics, Mathematics, Mechanics, Metallurgy, Nuclear, Oceanography, and Physics.

Luke hams it up like a B-movie mad scientist.

LUKE

Gentleman, I present the greatest advance in pledge training since the paddle. You may know it as a harmless dodecahedron, a solid bounded by twelve equilateral pentagons. But in my hands, it becomes the Dice of Doom! A twelve-sided dice with one side for each major at MIT. When a pledge displeases us, this shall dictate his punishment!

The brothers look intrigued and utter murmurs of approval.

TREY
You know technically that's a "die"
not a "dice." Dice is plural. It
should be the "Die of Doom."

Luke shoots a death-stare at Trey.

TREY
Die, dice, either way. They're
both fine. I like "dice." I'm
gonna shut up.

Trey slinks backwards.

LUKE
Our first victim... Shawn Malone.

Luke rolls the Dice. "Aeronautics" comes up.

INT. FRAT - JIM / DEXTER / SHAWN'S ROOM - DAY

Jim looks at Dexter, who is slaving away at a mammoth stack
of homework and wearing an ATO shirt.

JIM
Why do you let them use you like
that?

SHAWN
Yeah, Dex, don't be so spineless or
you'll end up like those Marvins.

DEXTER
I am not an invertebrate! And I'm
fully aware of the Faustian bargain
I've struck. It's just that when I
wear these letters, people afford
me respect. I've never been part
of the in-crowd. Genetic lottery
winners like you two can't fathom
rejection.

JIM
(impulsively)
Oh, I think I can.

DEXTER
Elaborate.

Jim deliberates for a moment, then pulls his MIT rejection
letter from a drawer and shows it to Dexter and Shawn.

DEXTER
Inconceivable.

SHAWN
You're... crashing MIT?

JIM
I want to be an astronaut. And
what's the first thing that comes
to mind when you hear "astronaut?"

DEXTER
An anachronistic career choice with
limited job prospects born out of a
proxy battle with the Soviet Union
for technological and ideological
supremacy?

SHAWN
I was gonna say Tang.

JIM
Hell no! MIT! MIT has produced
more astronauts than any other
university. And I don't settle for
second best.

INT. FRAT - STAIRWAY - DAY

Luke and Hondo run upstairs. Hung around their necks are
bottle rocket launch rigs made from soda bottle crates and
empty longnecks filled with bottle rockets.

INT. FRAT - JIM / DEXTER / SHAWN'S ROOM - DAY

With each question they ask, Dexter and Shawn attack Jim with
alien action figures. With each answer he gives, Jim whacks
the aliens backwards with an astronaut action figure.

DEXTER
Even if your masquerade succeeds
you won't have a degree.

JIM
Does anyone ask to see your
diploma?

SHAWN
What about exams?

JIM
I grade myself.

SHAWN
What if the professor notices
you're not on his roster?

JIM
I say I'm auditing.

DEXTER
Who else knows?

JIM
Just you guys.

SHAWN
So that's it? You ride this out
for four years?

JIM
First I gotta get past mid-terms.
I'm giving myself seven weeks to
prove the admissions committee made
a mistake. If I can't measure up
by then, I'll flunk myself out.

Jim sees Luke light a bottle rocket in the hallway.

JIM
Incoming!

A bottle rocket whizzes in the room and explodes. Shawn and
Dexter dive for cover.

Luke and Hondo begin full-scale bombardment. Jim lunges for
the door but is driven back by the exploding rockets.

Jim picks up a tennis racquet and swats the incoming rockets
back at Luke and Hondo, who retreat. Jim slams the door.

LUKE (O.S.)
This is on you too now, Jim!

Jim, Dexter and Shawn celebrate victory.

INT. FRAT - LUKE'S ROOM - DAY

Hondo watches Luke roll the Dice of Doom. "Mechanics."

INT. FRAT - JIM / DEXTER / SHAWN'S ROOM - LATER

Shawn opens the door, knocking over the lead domino in an
elaborate setup. As dominos fall, they spell "GOTCHA" and
trigger various mechanical devices throughout the room.

Catapults, springs, levers, pulleys, gears and rolling balls all work in balletic precision to propel gobs of chocolate pudding through the air onto Shawn from all directions.

The spectacle is so overwhelming, the contraptions so ingenious that Shawn doesn't seem to mind the drubbing.

INT. FRAT - LUKE'S ROOM - DAY

Hondo watches Luke roll the Dice of Doom. "Chemistry."

INT. FRAT - BATHROOM - DAY

Luke takes a shampoo bottle labeled "Jim" and dumps the shampoo. He fills the bottle with "Fast-Curing Water-Activated Polyurethane Resin" and green hair dye.

INT. FRAT - BATHROOM - LATER

Pledge DEREK, 18, showers. He grabs a shampoo bottle labeled "Derek." Empty. He drops it, grabs Jim's shampoo, and rubs the green goo into his hair. The resin crackles as it solidifies in his hair.

INT. FRAT - HALLWAY OUTSIDE JIM / DEXTER / SHAWN'S ROOM - DAY

Luke and Hondo demo for Trey a pneumatic tube beer delivery system installed in the frat's wall. After a whoosh and a clunk, a plastic capsule containing a beer arrives.

HONDO
Repurposed from an old bank that
was being torn down.

The guys hear a shower curtain ripping off its hooks.

Derek bursts out of the bathroom, his hair a wild, wavy, green disaster. The shower curtain is stuck to his left hand and the bathroom door knob is stuck to his right hand.

DEREK
There better be a fucking antidote!

Luke and Hondo look at each other.

LUKE
Collateral damage.

HONDO
At least he wasn't strokin' it.

INT. FRAT - LUKE'S ROOM - DAY

Hondo watches Luke roll the Dice of Doom. "Metallurgy."

INT. FRAT - JIM / DEXTER / SHAWN'S ROOM - DAY

Jim enters and finds all his belongings wrapped in aluminum foil. Books, pens, desk, everything. He smiles.

On his desk he sees a foil-wrapped burrito and a foil-wrapped bucket containing foil-wrapped beers and ice cubes. He opens a beer, takes a swig.

JIM
Coulda been worse.

EXT. HARVARD BRIDGE - DAY

Jim peels the foil from the burrito as he hustles across the bridge. He's about to bite it when he spots the Troll below foraging for scraps among fast food litter.

EXT. HARVARD BRIDGE - UNDERNEATH - DAY

Jim offers the burrito to the Troll, about twenty feet away.

JIM
Hey, I've got food for you.

The Troll smashes his club on the ground.

JIM
Okay, I'll just leave it here.

Jim sets the burrito down. Suddenly, the Troll charges.

TROLL
Intruder!

JIM
Oh shit!

Jim jackrabbits out of there.

INT. MIT CLASSROOM - DAY

Jim races into class and sits alone in the back row. The THERMO PROFESSOR, 45, enters and grabs Jim by the collar.

THERMO PROFESSOR
The jig is up, young man! You're coming with me.

JIM
I am?

THERMO PROFESSOR
I know your little secret.

JIM
You do?

THERMO PROFESSOR
You think this is the first time someone has tried it?

The professor marches Jim to the front row and seats him.

THERMO PROFESSOR
You sit in the back and hope I won't call on you. Now please explain the difference between adiabatic and isothermal expansion.

As Jim is about to answer, his eyes lock on a large beaker on a table in the classroom.

EXT. / INT. FERTILITY CLINIC - DAY

Jim struts in, carrying the beaker with a dazzling bouquet of flowers in it. He marches up to Natalie.

JIM
What do I know? I know that last week MIT actually did make two huge breakthroughs in cancer research. I know that without nerds your clients would be dancing around a maypole instead of using in-vitro fertilization. I know the technical explanation for eclipses, volcanoes, rainbows, and the Grand Canyon, but I'm still awestruck when I see them. And I know you didn't have to help us with the scavenger hunt, but you did anyway, so thank you.

Jim puts the beaker on the counter. Then he reaches in his pocket and pulls out an aspirin.

JIM
I also know that the
acetylsalicylic acid in aspirin
will make your flowers last longer.

Jim plops the pill in the beaker, turns and leaves. Natalie
doesn't want to be impressed. But she is.

A FEMALE PATIENT, 30, in the waiting room turns to Natalie.

FEMALE PATIENT
Can I get his sperm?

INT. FRAT - LIBRARY - NIGHT

Luke presides over an all-hands meeting.

In the b.g. Derek leans his plasticized green hair over a
table. Shawn whacks Derek's hair with a hammer. Not a dent.

LUKE
As you probably know, two major
hacks were deployed over the
weekend. Kappa Sig hacked the
sound system at Bill Clinton's
speech and changed his walk-up
music from "Hail to the Chief"
to...

Luke pushes "Play" on a remote and a TV turns on.

ON SCREEN: Bill Clinton walks onto an MIT stage as "I'm Just
a Love Machine" by The Miracles blares.

Brothers guffaw.

ZEN
That was inspired.

LUKE
Then D.U. transformed the Great
Dome into a giant tit for breast
cancer awareness month.

ON SCREEN: Aerial footage of the Great Dome turned into an
enormous boob, complete with massive pink ribbon.

Brothers chortle.

LUKE
If we don't do something ass-
shatteringly bold, it's goodbye
Golden Dome.

Luke polishes a Golden Dome Trophy. Brothers boo.

LUKE
Naturally I have a plan. We build
a mock-up of the Apollo lunar
module complete with O.J. Simpson
mannequin and put it on the dome.

Confused looks at the bit about O.J.

LUKE
An homage to "Capricorn One,"
motherfuckers!

Brothers nod and chatter with interest.

JIM
That's pretty rad, but instead of
putting something on the dome,
maybe we plant something under it.

LUKE
Unless you've got a plan to go with
that nebulous idea, I say we --

JIM
Actually, I do.

INT. GREAT DOME - NIGHT

Jim's plan unfolds:

JIM (V.O.)
Saturday is the start of parent's
weekend and at noon the dean will
lead the parents through the main
lobby. So I was thinking we aim
some lasers...

Luke, Hondo and Zen mount lasers in an unobtrusive location.

JIM (V.O.)
... deploy some tunage...

Jim, Dexter and Shawn set up some speakers.

INT. GREAT DOME - DAY

The MIT Dean leads a group of parents into the lobby.

Luke holds an electrical control box and hits a button marked
"LIGHTS." The lobby lights go out. The parents stop.

JIM (V.O.)
 ... hang an inflatable mylar disco
 ball in the dome skylight...

Luke hits a button marked "BALL." A giant silver disco ball
 inflates in the dome skylight. The parents look up.

Luke hits a button marked "LASERS." Lasers hit the disco
 ball and bounce all over the lobby.

Hondo drops a chunk of dry ice into a bucket of water making
 fog creep across the lobby floor.

JIM (V.O.)
 ... add some dry ice and turn lobby
 7 into Studio 54.

Luke hits a button marked "MUSIC." Disco music pumps through
 the lobby. The parents laugh and start boogieing down.

INT. FRAT - LIBRARY - BACK AGAIN

Tense moment. All eyes on Luke, awaiting his verdict. From
 their eager faces, it's clear the brothers love Jim's idea.

Luke clenches his fists and breathes in a controlled manner,
 as if containing an eruption.

LUKE
 That hack presents myriad
 operational challenges and two days
 is not much time to plan.
 (reads the room)
 However... I like it.

Brothers go nuts. Dexter turns to Jim.

DEXTER
 For a moment there, I thought you'd
 divided by zero.

SHAWN
 So who hangs the ball?

Luke slams a toy robot (ZOLTAN) on the table.

LUKE
 As always, such matters will be
 decided by Zoltan.

Luke presses a button on Zoltan. Zoltan whirs. Flashes its
 lights. Spins wildly. Marches toward Dexter. Raises its
 ray gun. Suddenly pivots toward Jim. Fires.

ZOLTAN

You are Zoltan's enemy! You must
be destroyed!

Luke leans close to Jim.

LUKE

If this gets horked up, it's all on
you.

INT. GREAT DOME LOBBY - NIGHT

The guys gaze up at the skylight, 70 feet above them. Luke carries a duffel bag stuffed with gear.

Zen points down a long corridor leading off the main lobby.

ZEN

See that? The Infinite Corridor.
It's the longest corridor in the
world. Straight shot east to west,
so twice a year at sunset, the sun
shines all the way down, bathing
the whole corridor in this really
trippy light.

LUKE

What are you, the fucking Gray Line
tour?

ZEN

I'm just saying they shouldn't miss
it. It's really something.

INT. SODA MACHINE CORRIDOR - NIGHT

The guys walk past a soda machine. At an intersection, our group and two groups of rival frat guys converge.

The Pi Lam gang tugs a goat wearing a CalTech shirt.

The Chocolate City group includes Darnell and Tyrone, who we'll get to know later. Darnell carries a box with the radiation hazard symbol on it.

The groups stop and size each other up, like in a Western. Then everyone continues on their way. The goat sniffs Dexter, making him flinch.

INT. DOME CORRIDOR - NIGHT

They stop at a door marked "NO ADMITTANCE." Luke gets busy with a lock pick. Jim puts a piece of gum in his mouth.

SHAWN
Gotta get my fix.

Shawn jogs back toward the soda machine.

INT. EMPTY CORRIDOR - NIGHT

A no-nonsense Campus Policeman (COP), 35, patrols.

INT. SODA MACHINE CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Shawn searches his pockets for coins. The cop sees Shawn from the end of the corridor. Shawn sees the cop. Fumbles his coins to the floor. Tries to act nonchalant and smiles.

INT. DOME CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Luke is still picking the lock.

HONDO
Rusty?

LUKE
It's not like the goddamn movies
where it takes two seconds.
Wait...

The tumblers click into place. Then they slip.

LUKE
Damn it!

INT. SODA MACHINE CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Shawn picks up his change and puts it in the machine. Pushes a button. A can clunks loudly through the machine.

At the end of the corridor, the cop watches Shawn. Shawn takes his soda. Walks away. Turns the corner. The cop shakes his head and starts on his way.

Shawn's running footsteps echo down the hall. The cop stops.

INT. DOME CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Shawn sprints up to the guys.

SHAWN
I saw a C.P.!

The guys freeze as they hear the cop's footsteps. Suddenly, Luke's pick breaks, half its shaft jammed in the tumbler.

LUKE
Abort.

JIM
Wait.

Jim grabs the broken lock pick handle from Luke.

INT. SODA MACHINE CORRIDOR - NIGHT

The cop walks briskly down the corridor.

INT. DOME CORRIDOR - NIGHT

The cop's footsteps grow louder. Jim takes a speck of gum. Sticks it on the end of the broken pick handle. Inserts it in the tumbler. Retracts the pick shaft.

INT. SODA MACHINE CORRIDOR - NIGHT

The cop is getting closer to the corridor intersection.

INT. DOME CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Footsteps louder. Panic setting in, except for Jim.

JIM
(to Dexter)
Give me your student ID.

Dexter hands Jim his ID. Jim wiggles the card into the latch. Takes a fresh pick. Picks the lock in a flash.

The guys dart through the door and shut it just as the cop rounds the corner. The cop looks around, confused.

INT. GREAT DOME - NIGHT

The gang huddles against the door. Jim locks it. Everyone stares at him, amazed.

JIM

At summer camp, the girls slept in a locked cabin. I got pretty good with these.

INT. DOME CORRIDOR - NIGHT

The cop stands at the door. Tries the knob. Locked. He scratches his head and walks away.

INT. GREAT DOME - NIGHT

Shawn sips his soda. Luke grabs it and sets it on the floor.

LUKE

Put that down, tool! You've caused enough trouble.

Jim dons a harness.

LUKE

Doesn't seem to be much you can't do. Can you belay yourself, too?

JIM

Sure. Got a pulley?

LUKE

Nope. Your life is entirely in my hands.

Luke fastens a strap on Jim's harness. A bit too forcibly.

Zen takes a rope from the bag and ties one end to an I-beam. Then he puts on a pair of work gloves.

Hondo pulls the uninflated mylar disco ball from the bag. Jim tucks the ball under his shirt, takes the rope.

Jim and Luke climb a curved ladder to the dome lip. They look over and see the glass skylight 15 feet below, and the lobby 55 feet below that.

JIM

Whoa...

LUKE
Can't back out. Zoltan has spoken.

JIM
I can't believe I'm taking orders
from a toy robot.

Luke places a pad on the dome lip to prevent the rope from chafing. He carefully avoids a chipped area of the lip.

Luke climbs down the ladder.

HONDO
Belay on!

Jim takes a deep breath and rappels over the lip.

JIM (O.S.)
Aah!

HONDO
What?

JIM (O.S.)
A spider on steroids.

The guys lower Jim. Jim grabs a suspension wire to guide himself to the edge of the skylight.

At the end of the rope, Luke sulks. *Jim's plan. Jim's the star. Fuck Jim!*

Luke faintly hears the cop's footsteps outside and sees Shawn's soda can near the door. He gets an idea.

Quietly, Luke tips over the can so soda spills and seeps under the door, into the corridor.

INT. DOME CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Soda trickles from behind the door. The cop walks up. Sees the puddle. Stops.

The cop puts a key in the lock. Tries to turn it. Wrong key. Tries another.

INT. GREAT DOME - NIGHT

The guys hear the keys in the lock. Luke runs from the back of the line to the front.

HONDO
Get him out of there.

The guys pull the rope so fast, Jim flies up and smashes his back on the overhang.

JIM
Ow!

The guys relax their grip and Jim yo-yos down ten feet.

JIM
Not funny, you lunatics!

While the rest of the guys look back at the door, at the front of the line, Luke jerks the rope to the left, snagging it in the chipped part of the dome lip.

The guys tug on the rope, but it won't budge.

HONDO
Rope's snagged and we have company.
Hang tight, Jim.

COP (O.S.)
Who's in there?

Jim climbs the rope hand over hand.

ZEN
Maintenance. Got an emergency work order on the transverse dome ventilation duct.

COP (O.S.)
Is that you, Johnson?

The guys' expressions say *this might work*.

ZEN
Got no time to jibba-jabba. If I don't install this rheostat pronto, the Primate Lab's gonna overheat and we gonna be up to our ears in angry ring-tailed lemurs. Now let a workin' man be.

The guys' expressions change. Zen went too far.

INT. DOME CORRIDOR - NIGHT

COP
Nice try!

The cop finds the right key. Turns the lock. Opens the door and...

INT. GREAT DOME - NIGHT

Bursts in. The guys are now wearing Albert Einstein masks -- the iconic "Einstein with the tongue out" face.

COP
You boys are in a world of trouble.
You're not supposed to be in here.
It's dangerous.
(notices the rope)
What the hell is on that rope?

The cop climbs up the ladder to the lip. Peers over. Comes face to face with Jim, startling the cop.

JIM
Is this the way to Baker House?

COP
Jesus! Get up here! You could be killed.

The cop tugs at the rope. Stuck. He extends a hand to Jim.

COP
Let go of the rope, son. I got ya.

Jim lets go of the rope with one hand. Grasps the cop's wrist -- right over the cop's expandable metal watch band.

Jim hesitates to let go with his other hand.

COP
It'll be alright. Give me your other hand.

Jim lets go of the rope completely. Reaches for the cop's free hand.

Suddenly, the cop's watch slips off his wrist, taking Jim with it.

Jim and the cop madly paw for each other's hands.

Fail.

Jim is in a back-first freefall, heading for the skylight.

His momentum pulls the rope through the snag and yanks the guys forward into a pile as the rope unspools.

Jim crashes through the skylight and hurtles toward the floor. Shards of glass rain down.

Falling --

The guys grapple to slow the rope. Zen clenches the rope so tightly his gloves smoke.

The rope reaches the end and pulls taut against the I-beam.

Jim jerks to a stop. Dangles 20 feet from the floor, a sea of broken glass. Bleeds from a few cuts.

A chunk of glass slices the air, narrowly missing Jim.

The guys rush up the ladder. Zen peers over at Jim first.

ZEN
You alright?

COP
(into walkie-talkie)
Back-up, lobby seven. EMTs needed.

ZEN
Help's on the way.

LUKE
Rule four is now in effect.

JIM
"Don't get caught."

ZEN
We can't.

LUKE
He's toast. Does our getting
collared help that?

Zen struggles with this decision.

LUKE
Tempus fugit.

JIM
Zen, he's right. Make like an
amoeba...

LUKE
... and split.

Zen descends the ladder and herds the guys toward the door.

ZEN
I think our work here is done.

COP
You fellas ain't going anywhere.

ZEN
Officer, it's imperative that we vacate the premises immediately because we need to... uh...

DEXTER
... elude apprehension?

ZEN
Precisely!

Luke, Hondo, Zen, Dexter and Shawn run out the door, into...

INT. DOME CORRIDOR - NIGHT

The cop gives chase.

ZEN
Disperse!

The guys hightail in different directions. The cop darts after one, then another, then gives up.

INT. GREAT DOME LOBBY - NIGHT

EMTs lower Jim. Dexter's student ID falls from Jim's pocket. The cop picks it up and reads.

COP
Playtime's over...

COMMITTEE CHAIRWOMAN (V.O.)
Mister Garfinkel --

INT. HEARING ROOM - DAY

The COMMITTEE CHAIRWOMAN, 50, scowls at Jim, who sits before the five members of MIT's Discipline Committee, including Professor Neustadt. Jim looks depressed and defeated.

JIM
I'm not Dexter Garfinkel.

COMMITTEE CHAIRWOMAN
Then who are you?

JIM
I'm... somebody who thought it
would be a good idea to crash MIT.

COMMITTEE CHAIRWOMAN
Are you saying you deliberately
crashed through that skylight?

JIM
(laughs)
No, I meant --

COMMITTEE CHAIRWOMAN
Is this hearing amusing to you,
Mister Garfinkel?

Jim realizes all might not be lost. He decides to fight.

JIM
Aspects of it are, ma'am.

COMMITTEE CHAIRWOMAN
Well let's see if you find this
funny. If you don't give us the
names of your accomplices, the
responsibility for this act of
vandalism will be entirely yours.

JIM
Okay. The other guys were Gene
Cernan, Archie Leach, Charles
Martel, and Neil Rudenstine.

COMMITTEE CHAIRWOMAN
(writing names)
Now we're getting somewhere.

PROF. NEUSTADT
Point of order, Madame Chairwoman.

COMMITTEE CHAIRWOMAN
Yes, Professor Neustadt?

PROF. NEUSTADT
I believe the accused has just
implicated the last man to walk on
the moon, Cary Grant, Charlemagne's
grandfather, and the president of
Harvard.

COMMITTEE CHAIRWOMAN
This is nonsense! You want full
responsibility, that's fine with
me.

(MORE)

COMMITTEE CHAIRWOMAN (cont'd)

As one of our top freshmen,
something I can scarcely believe, I
see you have a seven thousand
dollar scholarship. I'm going to
apply that money to the repairs.
So you can stay here as long as you
pay this semester's tuition without
that scholarship. Seven thousand
dollars, due in three weeks. No
extensions.

(bangs gavel)
Hearing adjourned.

As the Committee leaves, Neustadt corners Jim.

PROF. NEUSTADT

Meet me in my lab tomorrow at four.
Assuming you can refrain from being
expelled that long.

INT. FRAT - JIM / DEXTER / SHAWN'S ROOM - DAY

Jim writes on a sheet of paper:

\$7,000	owed for skylight
<u>\$4,000</u>	<u>left from chugging contest</u>
\$3,000	due in three weeks

INT. FRAT - TV ROOM - DAY

Shawn is duct-taped to the ceiling. Hondo and Zen admire
their handiwork.

HONDO

Amazing stuff, that duct tape.

ZEN

Did you know it helped save the
Apollo 13 astronauts?

HONDO

And Ben Hur won the chariot race.
Tell me something I don't know.

ZEN

(beat)
Anti-matter was discovered in 1933.

Jim enters and waves to Shawn.

JIM
Hey guys, what's a good way to make
fast money around here?

ZEN
When I need extra cash, I go bio-
whoring.

Jim doesn't understand.

HONDO
Medical studies, dumbass.

Hondo points to a bulletin board covered with flyers.

Jim walks over and scans them: "Earn \$200 - Spinal Tap
Required," "Make \$500 - Six Week In-Hospital Stay."

One flyer catches his eye. "Earn Big \$\$\$." He takes a
closer look: "Cambridge Fertility Clinic Needs Sperm Donors."

The look on Jim's face: why did it have to be her clinic?

Dexter walks by and spots a flyer that says "All-MIT Chess
Tournament." He plucks it off the board.

INT. FERTILITY CLINIC - DAY

Jim enters. Natalie looks up from her work.

JIM
I'd like to be a donor.

NATALIE
If this is another prank --

JIM
I'm serious.

NATALIE
Okay. First door on the left.

Natalie hands Jim a specimen cup and a *Playboy*. Jim takes
the cup, rejects the *Playboy*.

JIM
Uh... I don't --

NATALIE
Oh, I didn't mean to assume.

Natalie offers him an *International Male* catalog.

JIM

No. No!

NATALIE

Wait. I have just the thing. MIT,
right?

Natalie hands Jim a *Popular Mechanics*. Jim's look says *very funny*. He scans her desk. His eyes lock on a framed photo of Natalie on the beach romping with a dog.

JIM

How about...

NATALIE

(flips the frame down)

Eww.

Jim turns and walks down the hall.

TWO MINUTES LATER: Jim returns and plunks the specimen cup on the counter.

NATALIE

That may be a record.

JIM

Volume?

NATALIE

Speed.

Natalie hands him a check.

JIM

Seventy five bucks? I never realized sperm was such a valuable commodity. I got a friend back home with a tube sock that's probably worth a quarter mill.

NATALIE

Charming. If you want to stop by the day after tomorrow, we'll have results from the screening tests.

JIM

By the way, I'm Jim.

Jim extends his hand, but Natalie rejects it.

NATALIE

Natalie. And I'll pass. I know where that hand's been.

EXT. HARVARD BRIDGE - DAY

Above the Troll, Jim lowers a grocery bag of food on a rope. Several hundred feet away, Luke and Hondo watch Jim.

LUKE
Jim has a pet.

Jim can't see what's going on down there. He feels tugging on the rope and reels the bag up. The food is gone and in its place is a decomposing largemouth bass. Jim smiles.

JIM
I like you, Troll.

INT. NEUSTADT'S LAB - DAY

Jim knocks on the door and enters mad scientist heaven. In a ballistics testing box there's a red balloon.

JIM
You wanted to see me, Professor Neustadt?

PROF. NEUSTADT
Come in, Mister Garfinkel. MIT hacks are known for their originality, humor, technical brilliance, and above all, benign intent. Not for a reckless disregard for life and property.

JIM
Understood.

PROF. NEUSTADT
How's the restitution coming?

JIM
It's a lot to raise in three weeks.

PROF. NEUSTADT
Would you like to work for me?

JIM
Really?

PROF. NEUSTADT
I could use a lab assistant. Your grades are the highest in my class.
(MORE)

PROF. NEUSTADT (cont'd)
And, I must admit, I rather enjoyed
the way you parried the
chairwoman's questions. She's been
insufferable since she won that
Nobel Prize.

JIM
Deal.

PROF. NEUSTADT
Splendid. Let's get started.

Neustadt opens a drawer and pulls out a gun with a silencer.

JIM
Whoa!

Neustadt flicks a switch, turning out the lights.

PROF. NEUSTADT
Don't move.

There is a muffled bang and a bright flash.

JIM
Jesus!

Neustadt flicks the lights on. The red balloon is gone. On
a computer, an image appears -- a bullet piercing the
balloon, frozen in time.

PROF. NEUSTADT
High-speed stroboscopic
photography, my passion.
Illuminating that which is
imperceptible to the human eye.

Neustadt gestures to photos lining the wall: a droplet of
milk splashing, a bullet piercing an apple.

Jim eyes another photo: a young Neustadt (22) on the ledge of
the Green Building, fiddling with an electronic gizmo.

Next to it Jim sees a press clipping: "Green Building Becomes
World's Largest Sound Meter."

JIM
This was your doing?

PROF. NEUSTADT
It was the Fourth of July. The
Boston Pops were playing on the
Esplanade and you could hear it all
the way over here.
(MORE)

PROF. NEUSTADT (cont'd)
To garner the affections of a young lady, I rigged the interior lights of the Green Building to turn on and off, rising and falling in sync with the Sousa marches like a sound meter.

JIM
Never took you for the type.

PROF. NEUSTADT
Not everything is perceptible to the human eye.

INT. FERTILITY CLINIC - DAY

Natalie clasps the hand of a black female patient, 35.

NATALIE
We'll call you as soon as we find a suitable donor.

The patient leaves, discouraged. Jim enters.

NATALIE
You passed.

JIM
Honest?

NATALIE
Trust me. I'm wearing a lab coat.
(beat)
What made you decide to be a donor anyway?

JIM
Hack went south... building damaged... scholarship yanked.

NATALIE
Who would have thought a destructive, childish prank would have negative repercussions?

JIM
Well, it wasn't exactly childish. I mean the engineering required was beyond what any child could --

Natalie's not buying it.

JIM
(to change subject)
So... what sort of tests do you do?

NATALIE
Sperm count, motility, check for
HIV, STDs...

JIM
You do all that here?

Natalie thinks for a moment.

NATALIE
We do. Would you like to see how
it's done?

JIM
I'm cautiously intrigued.

She goes into the lab, out of Jim's sight. Comes back with a specimen cup containing a dollop of whitish liquid.

She swirls the cup under her nose as if it was a glass of merlot. Jim is stunned.

NATALIE
Hm, pungent bouquet... bold,
youthful. A hint of chlorine.
(gulps the liquid down)
Bit of a salty finish. Pass.

Jim doesn't know whether to barf or cry. Natalie cracks up. From behind her back she produces an open can of vanilla Slim-Fast and refills the specimen cup.

JIM
You scarred my retinas.

NATALIE
Try some.

JIM
I've got a better idea. How about
we go for some Peruvian food after
work? There's a little place up
the street. I've never been there
and I have no idea what they eat in
Peru, but I'm reasonably sure it's
not... you know... insects.

NATALIE
So to recap... you and me, dinner,
may or may not consist of bugs.
(MORE)

NATALIE (cont'd)
You MIT guys are smooth.
(beat)
Sorry, can't. I have class
tonight. But you can walk me home.

EXT. CHARLES RIVER SIDEWALK - DAY

Jim and Natalie stroll. Sunlight shimmers on the river as crew teams row by.

JIM
... the nose cone separated, the
parachute deployed, and Jasper
floated back to earth, where he
received a hero's welcome of
sunflower seeds. Of course, my
sister never let me near her
gerbils again.

Natalie smiles.

NATALIE
Did you always want to be an
astronaut?

JIM
I could never imagine a greater
adventure. And since more
astronauts come from MIT than any
other college this was the perfect
place for me. Plus, Tom Scholz
went to MIT.

NATALIE
Who?

JIM
Tom Scholz? The leader of the
greatest rock group in history.
Here's a hint.

Jim waves in the air toward the city of Boston.

NATALIE
Air... Supply?

Jim points directly at the city of Boston.

NATALIE
Oh... Boston!

JIM

And it may sound strange, but
engineers give me hope.

Jim spots a beaver on the river bank. The beaver has begun a
dam, though the river is 500 yards wide at this point.

JIM

Look... a beaver, nature's
engineer. That little guy is
trying to dam the Charles. That's
why I like engineers. They have
this inherent optimism. They think
any problem can be solved if they
just devote enough effort. Like
this beaver. He figures with
enough time and enough logs, he can
build the greatest dam in beaver
history.

NATALIE

He may be a starry-eyed dreamer to
you, but to the rest of us he's a
buck-tooth pain in the ass who's
chopping down beautiful elm trees.

(points to a tree stump)

He's never going to dam the
Charles, so he's wasting his life!

JIM

But damming the Charles is his
dream! Don't you have a dream?

Natalie looks at Jim.

JIM

Well...

NATALIE

I want to play Lady M on Broadway.

JIM

Seriously?

NATALIE

What can I say? I've had a love
affair with Shakespeare ever since
I saw Emma Thompson in *Much Ado*.
I've taken classes, done a ton of
auditions.

JIM

Any success?

NATALIE

(with mock enthusiasm)

I got to play a torch-carrying mute
in *Othello* at the Boston
Shakespeare Company last year.

JIM

What about college?

NATALIE

I auditioned for Julliard, Yale.
Didn't get in. Some doors are just
closed.

JIM

Do something for me.

NATALIE

No way!

JIM

Come on. I earnestly beseech thee.

NATALIE

(thinks)

Alright. This is Goneril from *King
Lear*.

She takes a moment to get into character. As this piece will
show, Natalie is staggeringly talented.

NATALIE

This admiration, sir, is much of
the savor of other your new pranks.
Here do you keep a hundred knights
and squires. Men so disordered, so
deboshed and bold, that this our
court, infected with their manners,
shows like a riotous inn.
Epicurism and lust makes it more
like a tavern or a brothel than a
graced palace. The shame itself
doth speak for instant remedy.

JIM

That was ridiculously great! No...
that takes great and throws it on
the ground and stomps on it. Plus
it was an amazingly accurate
description of fraternity life.

NATALIE

I thought it might be apropos. How
can you live with that many guys?

JIM

I have three sisters. In my house, the line for the bathroom moved like the DMV. I was a guinea pig for hundreds of failed Easy-Bake oven experiments. And my little sister made me attend so many tea parties, it's no wonder I ended up in Boston! I always wanted a brother. Now I have forty.

Natalie laughs and they arrive at...

EXT. NATALIE'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

A building with a view of MIT's Green Building.

NATALIE

(offering hand)

End of the line, you... beaver lover.

JIM

A handshake? Progress.

Natalie smiles and enters her apartment.

INT. FRAT - JIM / DEXTER / SHAWN'S ROOM - DAY

Dexter opens a letter from MIT and becomes livid.

DEXTER

James, did you tell the Discipline Committee you were me!?

JIM

They found your ID on me. I tried to tell them the truth, but they wouldn't listen.

DEXTER

They revoked my scholarship!

JIM

I'll pay it back. Promise.

DEXTER

You'd better. Do not make a nerd angry. We are capable of things. Dark... terrible... things.

Dexter slams the letter on Jim's desk and stomps off.

INT. GYMNASIUM - DAY

Dexter walks down a line of four simultaneous chess games, moving pieces, sticking it to one opponent after another.

DEXTER
Your rook's in jeopardy... Fatal blunder... Check... And mate.

Onlooking students and professors clap.

INT. FRAT - LIBRARY - NIGHT

Brothers and pledges meet.

LUKE
Since Jim's dome hack turned into a giant smoldering crater, we need a new plan. I say we tackle...
(raises a Harvard pennant)
the Crimson Menace.

After the cheering settles down --

ZEN
Any ideas, Jim?

Luke bristles.

EXT. HARVARD YARD - NIGHT

At the John Harvard statue, Zen stands lookout while Jim welds an oversized MIT class ring to John Harvard's finger.

JIM
Ever notice there's a lot of places called square in Cambridge, but none of them are actually squares? Kendall Square is a triangle, Central Square is a parallelogram and Harvard Square is a hyperbola.

ZEN
I give you fifty nerd points for that.

INT. FRAT - SHOP ROOM - NIGHT

Luke solders a circuit in a remote control, while Hondo and Zen assemble a large raft with a propeller on each corner.

HONDO
So Jim took the rap for whole frat?

ZEN
The kid has pendulous gonads.

Luke overhears and fumes.

In the b.g. Derek sits in a chair while Shawn applies a mini rotary saw to Derek's solid mass of green hair.

EXT. FRAT - ROOF - DAY

Luke uses the remote control to steer the raft across the Charles River. The raft has a low profile making it difficult to see. Hondo and Zen watch with binoculars.

EXT. CHARLES RIVER - DAY

The Harvard crew team races down the river.

EXT. FRAT - ROOF - DAY

Luke uses the remote control to steer the raft about 100 feet in front of the Harvard shell. Luke pushes a red button.

EXT. CHARLES RIVER - DAY

On the raft a compressed air tank inflates a giant Loch Ness Monster -- long neck, serpentine head, and arching back.

HARVARD COX
Power ten on my --
(sees Nessie)
WHAT THE HELL IS THAT!?

The oarsmen turn their heads, messing up their sync. Oars stick in the water and collide. Several oarsmen are ejected.

INT. MIT PLANETARIUM - NIGHT

Jim leads Natalie into the dark projection hall.

NATALIE
A planetarium? Is this a date or a field trip?

Jim smiles and clicks a remote and a stunning red gaseous heart appears on the dome-shaped projection screen.

JIM

Let's start with this mix of
interstellar gas and dust clouds
called Emission Nebula I.C.
Eighteen Zero Five, a.k.a. the
Heart Nebula.

NATALIE

Ooh, the Heart Nebula? Is this how
a geek gets romantic?

JIM

Well if I was being romantic I'd
say see that bright star in the
lower right? That's actually a
supernova, an exploding star. We
owe our existence to supernovas
because they make the atoms which
form our bodies. In other words,
you, Natalie, are literally made of
stardust.

NATALIE

I like that.

JIM

A geek would just tell you that
you're nuclear waste from a
hydrogen fusion reaction.

Natalie strokes Jim's thigh and leans in seductively.

NATALIE

You know what turns me on? Your
big... fat... throbbing... brain.

She kisses him. As they kiss, Jim clicks the remote to a
video of a massive exploding supernova.

INT. PHYSICS LECTURE HALL - DAY

Jim, Shawn, Dexter and 200 other freshmen take a physics
exam. Up front Professor Neustadt glances at the clock.

PROF. NEUSTADT

Time is up. Please bring your
exams to the front.

Jim discreetly slips his exam in his backpack.

INT. FRAT - JIM / DEXTER / SHAWN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Shawn and Dexter toil on problem sets. Jim grades his exam with an answer sheet. He writes 42 at the top and files it with others he's taken. His grades are pitiful: 37, 41, 32.

JIM

I got spanked by that physics test.

DEXTER

You may need to recalibrate your expectations.

JIM

What do you mean?

DEXTER

Perhaps you weren't accepted for a reason.

SHAWN

Harsh, Dex.

Luke bursts in and thrusts a mop at Jim.

LUKE

You're the only pledge whose house duty isn't finished.

JIM

Schubert's Eighth Symphony wasn't finished either. And many consider it his greatest work.

Luke tosses the Dice of Doom from hand to hand.

JIM

I'll get it done. It's just that problem sets take longer when you do them yourself.

LUKE

We provide a Marvin. It's not my fault you don't use him.

JIM

Not only that, I've got a job with Professor Neustadt --

LUKE

Really? 'Cause it looks to me like you're spending a lot of time with that tangy piece of ass.

JIM
I can't have a girlfriend?

LUKE
Just don't let her interfere with
your obligation to the house. Bros
before hos.

JIM
Okay if I made decisions based on
what rhymes with what, I'd still be
hopping on pop.

Shawn and Dexter snicker.

LUKE
Man did you just stick a fork in
the toaster.

Luke leaves in a huff.

INT. FRAT - LIBRARY - NIGHT

Brothers gather. No pledges.

LUKE
We're a brotherhood, not forty Lone
Rangers. Sometimes, for the sake
of the group, you need to break a
die-hard individualist. Which
brings us to Mister Walden.

Luke rolls the Dice of Doom. "Biology."

EXT. HARVARD BRIDGE - DAY

Above the Troll, Luke and Hondo lower three bottles of rotgut
whiskey on a rope.

EXT. HARVARD BRIDGE - UNDERNEATH - LATER

Luke and Hondo stand by the Troll, who lies snoring on a
filthy couch.

LUKE
The perfect bio-weapon.

Next to the Troll is a shopping cart containing his worldly
possessions -- blankets, clothes, plastic bags.

Luke gathers everything out of the shopping cart and dumps it in a burning barrel. The flames leap higher.

Luke and Hondo lift the plastered Troll, place him and his club in the shopping cart, then start pushing him.

INT. FRAT - JIM / DEXTER / SHAWN'S ROOM - DAY

In each of Jim's three desk drawers is a roach motel, teeming with cockroaches, with an M-80 firecracker sticking out. Luke lights the fuses and closes the drawers.

The M-80s explode. Smoke billows from Jim's desk.

Hondo opens the door and guides in the staggering Troll.

INT. NEUSTADT'S LAB - DAY

Jim reaches into a circuit board with Neustadt looking on.

PROF. NEUSTADT
You'll want to use the discharge
tool before removing the --

JIM
I've done this a thousand times.

Zap! Jim gets shocked. Neustadt's look: *Told you so.*

JIM
Maybe not with a capacitor this
big.

Jim shakes it off and gazes out a window at the quad, covered with pink flamingo lawn ornaments. Amid the flamingos a sign says "Welcome to the Miami Institute of Technology."

JIM
You think hacks are such a big part
of this place just to win the
Golden Dome?

PROF. NEUSTADT
Not entirely. I think engineers
like a challenge and often possess
a particular sense of humor, a kind
of civil disobedience, if you will.
(gestures to flamingos)
Sometimes a hack can send a
message, like a political cartoon.

JIM
Are you telling me there's a
message in those pink flamingos?

PROF. NEUSTADT
Possibly. If so, what might it be?

JIM
Well, let's see. Um, flamingos are
very colorful. Unlike this place.
Unless you consider gray a color.
So maybe the perpetrators were
trying to say, "Hey MIT, a little
color won't kill ya."

PROF. NEUSTADT
Indeed. Then again, perhaps there
is no message. The important thing
is it got you thinking. You saw
the world a little differently. A
hack can also dethrone authority --

JIM
Dethrone authority?

PROF. NEUSTADT
Certainly. Take the most primitive
prank of all... pulling the chair
away from someone as he sits. The
person goes from being a figure of
authority to just another lump of
matter, subject to the immutable
law of gravity.

JIM
It always comes back to physics
with you, doesn't it?

INT. FRAT - MAIL ROOM - DAY

Dexter pulls a green lizard mask from a box.

DEXTER
My Halloween costume!

SHAWN
Sleestak?

DEXTER
The Gorn from Star Trek.

INT. FRAT - JIM / DEXTER / SHAWN'S ROOM - DAY

Jim and Natalie careen into the room, kissing.

NATALIE
What's that smell?

JIM
With forty guys it gets a little
ripe sometimes.

They tumble into Jim's bed, which suddenly groans and thrashes. They spring off. Natalie screams, backpedals, trips, and falls down.

JIM
What the --

The covers fly off, revealing the drunken, disoriented Troll. He staggers out of bed, moaning.

NATALIE
Oh my god!

TROLL'S POV: We see Jim through the Troll's eyes -- dizzy, out-of-focus.

The Troll grabs his club from the bed. Raises it.

JIM
Relax. It's me, your friend.

NATALIE
You know him?

The Troll looks at Jim, blinks, and lowers the club.

BRIDGE TROLL
Friend?

Dexter bursts into the room, wearing the lizard mask.

DEXTER
Ro-a-a-a-a-a-r!

The Troll's eyes widen. This is the moment he's been training for. Jim's expression: *holy shit*.

BRIDGE TROLL
SPACE REPTILE!

The Troll charges Dexter. Jim tackles Dexter a split-second before the Troll's club whooshes through the air in the spot where Dexter's lizard head was. The club dents the wall.

Jim tries to pull the mask off Dexter.

TROLL'S POV: Through the drunken haze it looks like Lizard Dexter is attacking Jim.

BRIDGE TROLL
I'll save you!

The Troll swings again, but misses and demolishes a lamp.

Jim gets the mask off Dexter and throws it to the floor. The Troll pulverizes it with his club.

The Troll wobbles, collapses into Jim, vomits, passes out.

Jim lowers the Troll onto his bed.

INT. NATALIE'S CAR, DRIVING THROUGH BOSTON - DAY

Natalie drives in the pouring rain. Up front Dexter sits in Jim's lap. The half-conscious Troll lies across the back.

EXT./INT. MENTAL HEALTH CLINIC - DAY

Jim pushes the groggy Troll in a wheelchair to an admitting desk where a COUNSELOR sits. She is 30s, black, heavysset.

COUNSELOR
Who's your friend?

JIM
Don't know his name. Everyone calls him the Bridge Troll.

NATALIE
I think you're looking at acute paranoid schizophrenia for starters. Maybe post-traumatic stress disorder too.

JIM
But what'll make him a handful at your next garden party --

DEXTER
...are his delusions of extra-terrestrial persecution.

JIM
Plus, not much blood left in his alcohol system.

An orderly, 35, takes over the wheelchair. Jim pats the Troll's back. The Troll looks at Jim.

BRIDGE TROLL
Pleasure serving with you, captain.

JIM
Hope to see you back on Earth soon.
Third planet from the sun. You
can't miss it.

The Troll squints at the orderly as he is wheeled away.

BRIDGE TROLL
Space reptile, I presume?

INT. FRAT - JIM / DEXTER / SHAWN'S ROOM - DAY

Jim and Dexter slog into the room, soaked. Dexter heads to the mini-fridge and gets a frozen Charleston Chew.

JIM
Could this day have been any worse?

Jim opens his desk drawer and sees exploded cockroach guts all over his toothbrush, comb, and personal stuff.

JIM
Okay. This is war.

DEXTER
Are you contemplating retaliation?

Jim watches Dexter whack the Charleston Chew on his desk, shattering it into tiny chunks. Jim gets an idea.

INT. FRAT - JIM / DEXTER / SHAWN'S ROOM - DAY

Jim pours a box of rat poison onto a mound of ground beef in a bowl and stirs. Dexter watches, very concerned.

DEXTER
Um, Jim... I'm not sure that
killing Luke is going to be seen as
a proportional response.

JIM
Maybe not, Dex. Maybe not.

Jim hurls the lethal meat glob out the window. It splatters in the alley behind the frat.

INT. FRAT - JIM / DEXTER / SHAWN'S ROOM - NEXT MORNING

Jim hops out of bed and grabs Shawn's lacrosse stick.

EXT. FRAT - DAY

Three dead rats lay next to the lump of half-eaten meat. Jim flings the rats into his duffel bag with the lacrosse stick.

EXT. HARVARD BRIDGE - DAY

Jim bikes across the bridge.

EXT. MIT CHEMISTRY BUILDING - DAY

Jim parks the bike.

INT. MIT CHEMISTRY BUILDING - HALLWAY - DAY

Jim opens a door marked "Cryogenics Lab."

INT. MIT CHEMISTRY BUILDING - CRYOGENICS LAB - DAY

Jim lowers the three rats, their tails tied to the lacrosse stick, into a bubbling vat marked "Liquid Nitrogen -321°F."

INT. MIT CHEMISTRY BUILDING - CRYOGENICS LAB - LATER

Jim lifts the rats out of the vat. Frozen solid.

INT. FRAT - HALLWAY OUTSIDE LUKE'S ROOM - DAY

Jim approaches Luke's room, carrying the Troll's club and the three frozen rats. Jim offers Trey a rat.

JIM
Ratsicle?

TREY
No thanks. I try to avoid the MIT
meal plan.

Jim enters Luke's room. Luke isn't there.

INT. FRAT - LUKE'S ROOM - DAY

Jim tosses a ratsicle in the air and clobbers it with the club, shattering it into a thousand fragments.

Brothers gather.

ZEN
What fresh hell is this?

JIM
Ratter up!

Jim bashes the second rat to smithereens.

JIM
Revenge is a dish best served with
liquid nitrogen!

Jim wallops the third rat and struts out of the room.

The assembled brothers part in two, revealing Luke at the end of the hallway, decked out in his Army ROTC uniform.

Luke strides down the hallway. Hondo leans close to Jim.

HONDO
Spoiler alert... this does not end
well for you.

Zen pats Jim on the back.

ZEN
You're now the proud owner of a
brilliant and ruthless arch-nemesis
with access to military hardware.
Hope that works out for ya.

Luke surveys the melting rat chunks covering his room. He keeps his composure, but his eyes reveal fury.

LUKE
This will have dire repercussions.

JIM
Rats.

Jim saunters off, twirling the club.

INT. NATALIE'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - DAY

Natalie pops up from under the sheets, orgasmized.

NATALIE

Oh my god! Where did you learn how to do that?

Jim emerges, holding a cell phone set to vibrate attached to a kitchen spatula with rubber bands.

JIM

I like to tinker.

NATALIE

You nerds do have your advantages.

(beat)

By the way, congrats, daddio.

JIM

(confused, then scared)

Huh?

NATALIE

Not me!

JIM

Oh! Already? Wow.

NATALIE

How many more donations before you're out of debt?

JIM

About a kindergarten full.

NATALIE

Want to earn a lot more?

JIM

How?

NATALIE

We're desperate for African-American donors. We'll pay you five hundred bucks for every one you bring in. But don't go grabbing any old brother off the street. We're talking MIT or Harvard only.

JIM

You want me to be a bounty hunter for sperm?

Natalie shrugs her assent.

INT. FRAT - LUKE'S ROOM - DAY

Hondo flips through MIT's Freshman Picture Book, pointing at women of varying degrees of beauty. Luke looks on.

HONDO
No. No. Maybe if the beer goggles
were sufficiently opaque.

Hondo points to a real mirror cracker.

HONDO
Wow, look at her.

LUKE
Be nice. She comes from a mixed
family... wildebeest and warthog.

Hondo smiles. Luke points to the gap between freshmen "Koji Wakuda" and "Lisa Watanabe."

LUKE
Wait a sec. What happened to Jim
Walden?

HONDO
He's not fuckable.

LUKE
Cretin, where's his photo?

HONDO
Maybe he didn't send one.

LUKE
Then there'd be one of these.

Luke points to a placeholder graphic: "No Photo Submitted."

DEXTER (V.O.)
Is a photo really necessary?

INT. MIT STUDENT NEWSPAPER OFFICES - DAY

Dexter holds a trophy. A student PHOTOGRAPHER snaps away.

PHOTOGRAPHER
How often are you going to win the
All-MIT Chess Tournament?

DEXTER
Annually, I would expect.

INT. FRAT - JIM / DEXTER / SHAWN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Shawn and Dexter study. Luke strolls in and glances around.

LUKE
Where's Jim?

SHAWN
Natalie's.

LUKE
Isn't young love adorable? I'm
surprised to see you here tonight.

SHAWN
Why?

LUKE
Well, the Cask is having its Saint
Pauli Girl look-alike contest and --

Shawn dashes out of the room.

LUKE
And Dexter, I thought you'd be at
MIT hearing Garry Kasparov speak.

DEXTER
The greatest chess player of all
time?

LUKE
The very same.

Dexter bolts. Luke starts rifling through Jim's desk.

LUKE
Let's see what you're hiding...

Jim's PC screensaver begins drawing a tangle of 3D pipes.

INT. FRAT - JIM / DEXTER / SHAWN'S ROOM - 30 MINUTES LATER

Screensaver pipes overrun Jim's monitor, suggesting the
passage of time.

Luke holds Jim's journal and stares at two letters with awe
and elation, like a prospector who just hit the mother lode.

EXT. FRAT - FRONT STEPS - DAY

Brothers, pledges, and girlfriends gather in beach attire.

DEXTER
Let's emulate the nucleus of a
fissionable isotope and split!

Brothers cheer and yell "Quarry, Quarry!"

EXT. QUINCY, MASSACHUSETTS/INT. CARS - DAY

The gang caravans through town.

EXT. QUINCY QUARRIES - ENTRANCE - DAY

They approach the gate of an eight-foot-high chain link fence topped with barbed wire. The gate is padlocked.

Jim pulls out a lock pick, but before he can insert it, Luke snips the lock off with a pair of bolt cutters. Luke smiles.

DEXTER
Brute force is the last resort of
the incompetent.

A sign on the fence reads: "Quincy Quarries. No Trespassing!
No Swimming! Danger! Keep Out!"

FURTHER ALONG

They walk along a trail.

QUARRY LEDGE

They arrive at the sheer-walled, water-filled quarry. Shawn reads a plaque on a boulder.

SHAWN
Did you guys know this is where
they got the granite for the Bunker
Hill Monument?

DEXTER
Did you guys know the "Battle of
Bunker Hill" is a misnomer because
the battle was actually fought on
Breed's Hill?

LUKE
Did you guys know you're a couple
of uber-dorks and you'll both die
virgins?

DEXTER
Sir Isaac Newton died a virgin.

LUKE
Well you're following in his
footsteps.

DEXTER
Thank you, Luke. That's the nicest
compliment anyone's ever given me.

Luke frowns.

SHAWN
Newton? Isn't he the guy whose
been making my life a living hell
for the last month?

LUKE
No, that would be my job.

Natalie bends over to set her stuff down.

DEXTER
(to Jim)
Wow. She's at least a milliHelen.

LUKE
A milliHelen?

DEXTER
It's a unit of beauty. Helen of
Troy's face launched a thousand
ships, so a milliHelen is a face
that could launch one ship.

LUKE
I see. Well, this is a microbrew.
(dumps beer on Dexter)
And you're going to wear one every
time you make a comment that geeky.

Hondo stands at the cliff's edge.

HONDO
Here goes!

Dexter glances at his digital watch. Hondo leaps.

HONDO
SASKATCHEWAN!

Hondo splashes into the water. The brothers whoop it up.
Dexter checks his watch again.

DEXTER
These cliffs are sixty four feet
high.

NATALIE
How do you know?

DEXTER
Hondo's descent took exactly two
seconds. The height of a falling
object is one-half "a" t-squared.

JIM
I guess Newton has his uses.

Hondo swims to the climb-out. Trey jumps.

TREY
MANITOBA-A-A-A-A!

Trey splashes into the water and swims to the climb-out.
Shawn takes a running leap off the cliff.

SHAWN
PRINCE EDWARD MOTHER FUCKING
ISLAND!

Shawn splashes into the water and swims to the climb-out.
Dexter looks at a clear-cut acre. Nothing but tree stumps.

DEXTER
Unusual place for logging.

LUKE
Nah, man. The city got so tired of
sending cruisers over here to chase
us out that they tried to create a
natural barrier on the water. They
hacked down an acre and threw them
in the quarry. The morons thought
the logs would float.

Dexter is puzzled. He looks at the stumps, then the water.

Natalie peers over the edge. Luke locks eyes with Jim.

LUKE
Attention, everyone! I have huge
news about one of our pledges.

Jim divides his attention between Luke (gathering people),
Natalie (mustering courage), and Dexter (scribbling on a
notepad).

JIM
Give it a rest, brainiac!
(looks at notepad)
That doesn't look like kinematics.

DEXTER
No. Hydrostatics. Luke's anecdote
is illogical. Wood has a variable
modulus of hydrodynamic expansion.

JIM
I'll remember that if it ever comes
up at a cocktail party.

DEXTER
I'm just saying the cellulose cells
probably absorb water over time.

JIM
And what does that mean for those
of us who don't have a microchip
implanted in our skulls?

DEXTER
Well, in a still body of water like
this, I would expect thermal
stratification, a turnover as the
temperatures drop --

JIM
In English, damn it!

DEXTER
One would expect the trees to float
at the thermocline.

JIM
(grabs Dexter)
And where the fuck might that be?

DEXTER
This time of year... about three
meters below the surface.

Natalie jumps.

NATALIE
ONTARIO-O-O-O-O SHIT!

Natalie splashes into the water.

LUKE
Looks like the announcement is
going to have to wait one minute.

Jim looks down. No Natalie. Just bubbles. Jim scans the dark, choppy water. Is that a log underwater? Or shadows playing tricks on him? What's that over there? Another log?

Natalie surfaces. Brothers cheer.

NATALIE

That was awesome! Come on, Jim!

Natalie swims to the climb-out.

JIM

Everyone stop jumping! Dexter thinks there's logs underwater.

LUKE

Really? Let's find out.

Luke shoves Dexter off the cliff.

DEXTER

AAAAAAAAAAH!

Dexter plummets, limbs flailing. Splash!

UNDERWATER

Dexter plunges deep. His left arm smacks a log. His chin strikes a second log. Blood eddies.

The back of his belt catches on a branch of a third log.

LEDGE

Brothers look down, waiting for Dexter to surface. Fewer and fewer bubbles. Finally, no bubbles.

Jim leaps.

He falls, arms out for balance. Then he brings his arms to his side and pierces the water.

UNDERWATER

Jim swims around several submerged logs to find Dexter. Tugs at Dexter. He's hooked on the log. Won't budge.

Swims behind Dexter. Tries to pull him off a branch. Can't.

Stomps on the branch. Won't break.

Swims to Dexter's front. Unfastens Dexter's belt. Pulls it through the loops. Dexter drifts free of the log.

Kicks furiously for air, pulling Dexter with him.

WATER SURFACE

Jim and Dexter surface. Dexter's mouth is bloody and his body is limp. Jim swims to the climb-out, tugging Dexter.

TRAIL

The brothers race down the trail.

ZEN
(to a brother)
Call an ambulance!

CLIMB-OUT

Jim climbs from the water. Pulls Dexter out. Rolls him on his side. Smacks his back. Water pours from Dexter's mouth. Jim rolls him on his back.

Jim tilts Dexter's head back. Performs two quick mouth-to-mouth resuscitation breaths. Dexter coughs.

JIM
You're gonna be alright, Dex.

The guys arrive.

JIM
Luke, that was an incredibly
assholic thing to do.

LUKE
Squelch it, pledge. It was an
accident.

JIM
No, it wasn't! I told you to wait!

LUKE
We're all impressed with your
heroics, but if you don't cool it
I'm gonna haze you back to the
Paleolithic era.

JIM
Haze this!

Jim throws a punch at Luke, but Hondo intercepts Jim's arm at the elbow. Luke lunges at Jim, but the guys hold them apart.

ZEN
Chill, you two!

LUKE
Come on! I'll rearrange your face
like a Picasso painting.

JIM
(struggling)
Let go of me!

LUKE
It's easy to get all glandular when
your girlfriend's watching. By the
way, does she know you're a fraud?
That you were rejected by MIT?

Mutters of disbelief. Luke pulls Jim's rejection letter from his pocket and hands it to Natalie, who reads it.

NATALIE
Is this true, Jim?

Luke whips out the Discipline Committee's letter to Dexter.

LUKE
That's not all he lied about. It
seems Jim told the Discipline
Committee he was Dexter, costing
his best friend his scholarship.

Natalie and the guys are stunned. Luke waves a check stub.

LUKE
And to round out his trifecta of
sleaze, there's this check stub
from a sperm bank. It sickens me
to say this, but Jim is some sort
of sperm gigolo and this young lady
is his pimp!

NATALIE
You're disgusting.

Sirens wail in the distance.

ZEN

We'll sort out this plethora of fuckedupedness back at the house, but for now, anyone who doesn't want a hundred dollar ticket for trespassing should skedaddle.

The brothers release Jim and Luke.

JIM

Natalie, I can explain--

NATALIE

Don't. You and your friends are sick.

Sirens grow louder. Natalie and the guys walk away, leaving Jim and Shawn with Dexter. As they pass Jim, brothers mutter words like "fraud," "fake," "sham," and "wanker."

INT. FRAT - LIBRARY - DAY

Brothers meet. Luke cocks his arm to roll the Dice of Doom. Zen bursts in and snatches the Dice from Luke.

ZEN

Let it go, Luke. You're even.

LUKE

Take a whiff of my room before you tell me we're even. I cleaned every chunk of rat guts I can find and the place still smells like a dead skunk with a dead fish stuck up its ass!

ZEN

He's a good kid, Luke. Don't go Krakatoa on him.

LUKE

It's a matter of principle. He's disrespecting the hierarchy. Do you really want pledges taking revenge on upperclassmen as they see fit? That's not a fraternity. That's anarchy! He's not even a student, guys! He deceived all of us. Now give me the damn dice!
(grabs dice and rolls)
Come on, nuclear!

"Oceanography" comes up.

INT. HOSPITAL - WAITING ROOM - DAY

Jim and Shawn drink coffee. A nurse pushes Dexter in the room in a wheelchair, his left arm in a cast and sling.

Jim and Shawn raise their trespassing tickets, like judges in a competition. Shawn's ticket says 3 squared plus 1. Jim's says the square root of 100. Dexter ekes out a smile.

EXT. HARVARD BRIDGE - DAY

Jim, Shawn, and Dexter walk toward the frat.

SHAWN

The other guys pay tuition but punt the work, while you pay no tuition and do all the work. It's the greatest hack in MIT history plus you save twenty grand a year!

JIM

It's not a hack! I just want to learn. But if MIT finds out, I'm sunk.

SHAWN

We can contain this. We'll talk to the guys. You may be a fake student, but you're a real brother.

DEXTER

Jim, have you forgotten your scheme cost me seven thousand dollars? Due tomorrow afternoon.

JIM

Don't worry, Dex. I've been working my ass off. I've already paid back five grand, and in my desk I've got almost two thousand stashed, so --

SHAWN

Your desk...

JIM

Yeah, my desk.

SHAWN

(pointing)

No. Your desk...

Floating on the river is Luke's raft with all of Jim's furniture set up as it was in his room.

JIM
That's my stuff.

EXT. FRAT - ROOF - DAY

Hondo peers through binoculars at Jim while Luke steers the raft with a remote control.

HONDO
Okay, he sees it.

Zen approaches.

ZEN
So what's the hack?

HONDO
We loaded Jim's stuff on the raft.
He'll have to get a crew barge to
tow it back to land.

Luke pulls a second transmitter from his pocket and extends its antenna. A green light comes on.

HONDO
What's with the second transmitter?

LUKE
Detonator to arm...

Luke rotates a knob from "Safe" to "Arm." A yellow light comes on.

LUKE
... and fire!

Luke pushes the "Fire" button. A red light comes on.

EXT. RAFT ON THE CHARLES RIVER - DAY

Jim's desk explodes. Furniture is blown into the river. Burning money flutters as the raft breaks apart.

EXT. HARVARD BRIDGE - DAY

Jim, Shawn, and Dexter watch the raft disintegrate, appalled.

SHAWN
Holy shit!

EXT. FRAT - ROOF - DAY

Luke sees the brothers looking at him, disgusted.

LUKE
What? He deserved it!

ZEN
It's over, Luke.

The brothers abandon Luke.

LUKE
Let history record this was the
moment we became a sorority.

EXT. HARVARD BRIDGE - DAY

Jim, Shawn, and Dexter stare at the raft's burning remains.

SHAWN
I think you've been blackballed.

DEXTER
Without that money, I'll be
expelled. Tomorrow.

JIM
I'll get it somehow.

DEXTER
Two thousand dollars in one day?

JIM
Half a day. We've got Neustadt's
mid-term in the morning.

INT. MIT LIBRARY - NIGHT

MONTAGE as Jim studies physics. He flips through a notebook, scrawls equations, rocks out via ear buds, mixes Red Bull with coffee and gulps it down, highlights line after line in his text until he realizes he made the whole page yellow.

INT. INFINITE CORRIDOR - OUTSIDE NEUSTADT'S LAB - DAY

Luke slips a copy of *The Tech*, MIT's student newspaper, under the door. The top story is circled: "Garfinkel Wins Chess Tourney," featuring a photo of Dexter. The real Dexter.

INT. NEUSTADT'S LAB - DAY

Prof. Neustadt notices the newspaper.

INT. MIT LIBRARY - DAY

Jim sleeps, face buried in his text. A student accidentally bumps Jim's chair. He wakes, looks at the clock: 8:56 a.m.

Jim bolts up and runs the gauntlet through the library, leaping chairs, book carts, even a student tying his shoe.

EXT. MIT CAMPUS - DAY

Jim sprints across campus like he's being chased by the cops.

He slides down railings, vaults walls, and dodges obstacles in a raw, bruising, parkour-esque display of determination.

INT. GYMNASIUM - DAY

Dexter and Shawn sit at a table set like an Italian restaurant. Red and white tablecloth. Chianti. Cheese. Loaves of fresh bread. The other students sit at bare tables. Mid-terms lay face-down on every table.

Jim races in -- sits next to Dexter -- grabs some bread.

PROF. NEUSTADT

Einstein said "imagination is more important than knowledge." You will find both are required on this mid-term. No extra credit for ambiance, signores, however if you do finish early, please describe as many possible ways to determine the height of a building using a barometer. Begin.

Students groan and flip over their tests. Neustadt leans between Jim and Dexter.

PROF. NEUSTADT
 Congratulations on your chess
 victory, Mister Garfinkel.

DEXTER JIM
Thank you. Chess victory?

Neustadt sets *The Tech* on the table.

PROF. NEUSTADT
(to Jim)
Shall we talk?

INT. GYMNASIUM - HALLWAY - DAY

After spilling his guts, Jim is in a daze. Neustadt regards him with a trace of compassion.

JIM
I was crazy to think I could get
away with this.

PROF. NEUSTADT
Your thirst for knowledge is
admirable, but your methods were
fraudulent.

JIM
Are you going to turn me in?

PROF. NEUSTADT
Technically, you are trespassing.
(beat)
Tell me... just how badly do you
want to be an astronaut?

JIM

It's the childhood dream I never let go of. Instead of baseball cards, I collected astronaut cards. Want to know what kind of golf club Alan Sheppard used on the moon? A six-iron. I want to be an astronaut like an investment banker wants his first million, his second wife, a home in the Hamptons, and one of those shoe buffer things to put in his closet!

(beat)

Can I at least take the test and see how I would have done?

Neustadt studies Jim a moment, moved by his passion.

PROF. NEUSTADT
No harm I suppose. But they do
have a half-hour head start.

EXT. GYMNASIUM - DAY

Students file out. Jim dashes by Dexter and Shawn.

SHAWN
What did Neustadt want?

JIM
No time to explain. Dex, meet me
at the bursar's office at four.

EXT. CHOCOLATE CITY FRAT - DAY

DARNELL, TYRONE and two other buff black brainiacs (21) exit.
Darnell has a basketball. Tyrone has a paper with some
gnarly equations.

DARNELL
Whatcha got there?

TYRONE
Did a nonlinear regression on the
curves of Shondra's bootie. Turns
out she's a fifth order parabolic
hyperboloid.

DARNELL
(admiring equations)
I'd hit that.

Jim jogs up, sweaty and out of breath.

JIM
I need sperm. From all you guys.

TYRONE
Say what?

JIM
(grabs basketball)
I need your spooge so much, I won't
let you have your ball back unless
you agree. What do you say?

DARNELL
I say we whoop your sperm-crazy
lunatic ass!

They chase Jim around the corner. A limo waits on the street. Jim opens the door to the passenger compartment and jumps in. The guys are just a few steps behind.

INT. LIMO - DAY

Jim dives into the front passenger seat and hits a button, raising the window between the compartments. As the window is almost up, the four guys pile into the limo.

TYRONE

Get him!

They pound the window. Jim hits a button. The doors lock.

JIM

Punch it!

The driver peels out. It's Jim's cabbie friend.

DARNELL

What's goin' on?

Jim speaks with them via intercom.

JIM

Sorry for the kidnapping, but I really need your help and I wasn't sure you'd come along willingly. In that cooler, you'll find some champagne. Help yourselves.

Cool urban music starts to play in the limo. The guys are confused but calming down. Tyrone pops the champagne.

JIM

Let's talk artificial insemination. Did you know infertility affects ten percent of the couples in this country? Half those cases are due to low male fertility...

INT. LIMO - LATER

Champagne flowing. Guys looser.

TYRONE

What about adoption?

DARNELL

Don't be ignorant! You know how long a person has to wait to adopt?

JIM
Excellent point, Darnell. Adoption
is a possibility, but artificial
insemination allows a woman to
experience pregnancy, birth, and
breast-feeding.

The guys nod thoughtfully.

EXT. FERTILITY CLINIC - DAY

The limo stops. Everyone piles out.

DARNELL
They ain't got a container big
enough for my love potion!

Jim leads the guys into the clinic.

INT. FERTILITY CLINIC - DAY

A female NURSE, 35, ushers the guys to the back. Jim
approaches Natalie. He still holds the basketball.

NATALIE
Who are you impersonating today?
Larry Bird?
(to nurse)
Make sure those guys are really
from MIT.

JIM
You don't trust me?

Natalie makes a face that says *give me a break*.

JIM
Okay, I never actually lied to you.

NATALIE
Excuse me?

JIM
I never said I was an MIT student.
You just assumed it.

NATALIE
You are not getting off on a
technicality.

Darnell comes out with a Victoria's Secret catalog.

DARNELL
Speaking of gettin' off, you got
anything more hardcore than this?

Natalie hands him a stack of porno mags and he walks off.

DARNELL
That's what I'm talkin' about!

JIM
This is so hard.

DARNELL (O.S.)
That's what she said!

JIM
Can we go someplace where my
apology won't be heckled?

EXT. FERTILITY CLINIC - DAY

Jim bounces the basketball to the cabbie.

NATALIE
Personally I don't care if you go
to MIT, clown college, or no
college. But I do care about
honesty. Do you have any idea how
unfair your hoax was to this
clinic? We only accept Ivy League
donors. If anyone finds out, I'll
lose my job!

The nurse steps outside and hands Jim a check.

NURSE
Four donors at five hundred each.

The nurse goes back inside.

JIM
Your clients want smart donors.
Ivy League doesn't necessarily mean
smart. The most breathtaking acts
of stupidity are committed by the
most highly-educated people.

NATALIE
Oh, really?

JIM
(waving check)
Sure!

(MORE)

JIM (cont'd)

Once this really smart guy used a \$1,500 check from the Rockefeller Foundation as a bookmark, then lost the book. You know who that was? Einstein.

NATALIE

Einstein?

JIM

Yeah, you know, theory of relativity, wild hair, tongue? Look, I've got to get this money over to MIT.

(dashes to the limo)

I'll call you!

INT. BURSAR'S OFFICE - DAY

A SEXY CLERK, 20, with striking blue eyes looks annoyed. A clock says 5:12 pm. Dexter shoots her a nervous smile.

DEXTER

He'll be here momentarily.

SEXY CLERK

I can't stay open any longer.

The Sexy Clerk tries to shut her teller window, but Dexter blocks it with a biology text.

DEXTER

Wait! Has anyone ever told you your eyes resemble the Brazilian poison dart frog?

SEXY CLERK

My eyes are like poisonous frogs?

DEXTER

(flips through bio text)

Your irises. They're the same color as dendrobates azureus. It's a compliment, I assure you. The Brazilian poison dart frog is quite visually arresting.

(finds frog photo)

See?

SEXY CLERK

He is kind of a cutie.

Jim dashes up and sees the Sexy Clerk looking at Dexter flirtatiously. He slides over the \$2,000 check.

JIM
I'll bet two grand on "Brainy
Romeo."

EXT. GREEN BUILDING - ROOF - NIGHT

Jim leans over a low wall on the roof's edge and looks at the courtyard below.

MEMORY HIT

MIT JUNIOR
The usual exit strategy is a twenty
story belly flop off the Green
Building.

He climbs onto the wall and straddles it with one leg
dangling over the abyss.

He gazes at the full moon and slowly shuts his eyes.

JIM'S IMAGINATION

MISSION CONTROL (V.O.)
Mission Control is go for liftoff.

Jim opens his eyes. Stands on the wall.

JIM
(singing Peter Schilling's
"Major Tom")
Earth below us, drifting falling,
floating weightless, coming home.

Jim pitches forward and leaps. Wind rustles as he plummets.

Just before impact --

DEXTER (V.O.)
Astronauts can't have acrophobia, I
suppose.

Jim snaps out of his reverie and sees a bedraggled Dexter
shuffle up, holding a PC keyboard and some tools.

JIM
Jesus, Dex, you look terrible.

DEXTER
 Sleep deprivation has contributed
 to my heightened state of
 dishevelment.

Jim hops off the wall and starts picking the lock on a door
 marked "Electrical."

JIM
 Still doing everyone's problem
 sets?

DEXTER
 It's putting a downward vector on
 my happiness, Jim.

JIM
 Let me put this in terms you can
 understand. You're the host
 organism. They're parasites. What
 happens to the host over time?

As Dexter takes this in, Jim succeeds with the lock and opens
 the door, revealing a rat's nest of multi-colored wiring.

DEXTER
 I had no idea an MIT education
 involved this much lock-picking.

INT. NATALIE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Natalie reads on the couch. Her phone rings. She answers.

NATALIE
 Hello.

EXT. GREEN BUILDING - ROOF - NIGHT

Jim holds his cell phone and looks toward Natalie's building.

INTERCUT - TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

JIM
 I wanted to say I'm sorry.

NATALIE
 It's a lot to forgive.

JIM
 Hallmark didn't have a card big
 enough, so I made one myself. Look
 out your window.

Jim nods to Dexter, who presses "Enter" on the keyboard, which is alligator-clipped into the building wiring.

INT. NATALIE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Natalie looks out her window and sees the Green Building office lights scroll, in ticker-tape fashion, "NATALIE..."

NATALIE
 "If hearty sorrow be sufficient
 ransom for offense, I tender it
 here."

The Green Building lights return to normal.

EXT. GREEN BUILDING - ROOF - NIGHT

Jim waits for a reaction from Natalie.

JIM
 Here's the part where you say,
 "Then I am paid..."

INTERCUT - TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

NATALIE
 (smiles)
 "...and once again I do receive
 thee honest." From *Two Gentlemen*
 of Verona.

INT. MIT HALLWAY - DAY

Jim walks down a hallway when suddenly a hand grabs him by the back of his collar and drags him into an empty classroom.

INT. MIT CLASSROOM - DAY

The hand belongs to Hondo. Zen is with him.

JIM
 You guys ever hear of email?

ZEN
 Got a present for you.

Zen offers Jim Luke's wooden box containing the Dice of Doom.

HONDO
 Roll it.

JIM
Thanks, guys, but I'm done with
hacks.

ZEN
We're not asking you to roll it for
yourself. Do it for us.

Jim hesitates, then rolls the dice. "Behavioral Sciences."
The guys look a bit baffled by this one.

Jim, Zen, and Hondo brainstorm. They toss around ideas,
gesture wildly, get stoked for a sec, then shake their heads.

Nothing.

Jim spots a spider web. Eureka! From the sparkle in his
eyes and his devilish grin, it's clear he has just conceived
the Greatest Hack in MIT History.

INT. FRAT - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Luke sets Jim's pledge photo on fire using a gas stove.
Drops the ashes in the sink.

He opens the fridge. Sees a case of brewskis with a sign:
"JIM'S BEER. HANDS OFF." Swipes the case.

LUKE
Happy hour, guys! Courtesy of Jim.

INT. FRAT - SPIDER CLOSET - NIGHT

Saws and hammers assault the drywall. Brothers scurry about
carrying power tools and wood. Something major is underway.

INT. FRAT - LUKE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Luke lies passed out in bed. Hondo, Zen, and four brothers
enter, lift the mattress with Luke on it, and carry him out.

Jim enters and turns on Luke's computer.

INSERT - LUKE'S COMPUTER - SCAVENGER HUNT LIST

Jim deletes:

Specimen cup from Cambridge Fertility Clinic - 50 points

Jim types:

Photo of pledges bringing lobster dinner to Mr. B. Troll,
Boston Mental Health Clinic - 1,000 points

INT. SPIDER CLOSET - DAWN

A large spider crawls across Luke's sleeping face. A ceiling-mounted speaker crackles to life.

JIM (V.O.)
Did you steal my beer, Luke?

Luke groggily swats the spider as he wakes. He realizes where he is and notices with disgust that he is dressed in a pink bunny costume with a plastic carrot velcroed to his paw.

LUKE
I should lead seances, because I'm
speaking to a dead man.

JIM (V.O.)
Tough words from a pink bunny.

Luke spots a tiny hole in the wall. Luke looks in the hole and sees a ping-pong ball sitting in a tube. He smiles and pulls the carrot off his paw and crams it into the hole.

LUKE
Pathetic job camouflaging the ping-
pong ball blasting tube.

JIM (V.O.)
Oh that wasn't the blasting tube.
That was the "on" switch.

There's the sound of a mechanism coming to life -- whirring, compressed air filling a chamber, plastic rattling in a tube.

Suddenly multi-colored ping-pong balls start walloping Luke from ceiling-mounted tubes. He takes a major pummeling as the closet fills to his waist with balls.

LUKE
Okay, what they did to Mel Gibson
at the end of Braveheart... that
would be considered mild compared
to what I'm going to do to you.

JIM (V.O.)
I'm right outside the door, Luke.
Why don't you... come out of the
closet?

Luke wades through the ping-pong balls and bashes the door open, expecting to see the fraternity basement.

Instead he sees blue sky and a 100 foot drop to the sidewalk.

LUKE
HOLY SHIT!

He -- and the Spider Closet -- have been relocated to the top of the Great Dome.

Ping-pong balls pour out of the Spider Closet and rain down onto the sidewalk.

The dizzying view causes Luke to lose his balance. He nearly falls out the doorway, but is stopped by a rope attached to his tail and anchored to the bed frame.

His face is ashen and his eyes bulge wide with terror.

He stares down at the hysterically laughing assembled brotherhood on the sidewalk. They stand in a triangular formation with Jim at the front.

EXT. MIT GREAT DOME - SIDEWALK - DAY

Zen and Hondo flank Jim, who holds a walkie-talkie. They watch Luke windmill his arms to regain his balance.

Jim holds up a large sign for Luke to see. The sign says, "Q.E.D., BITCH"

JIM
From a figure of authority to just another lump of matter, subject to the immutable law of gravity.

ZEN
Profound.

JIM
Some words of wisdom from a friend.

EXT. MIT GREAT DOME - DAY

Luke yanks at the rope attaching him to the bed frame. His exertions strain the three eye bolts on the opposite side of the Spider Closet.

Suddenly two eye bolts pop out of their attachment points and the Spider Closet pitches forward.

Luke is sent sliding off the dome. He lands about ten feet down the dome on a narrow ledge.

The Spider Closet balances over Luke's head, held in place by one remaining eye bolt.

Luke can't move along the ledge because he is still tethered to the Spider Closet.

EXT. MIT GREAT DOME - SIDEWALK - DAY

Zen and the guys watch aghast.

ZEN

Jim, we have to do something!

(looks around)

Jim? Jim?

INT. MIT - STAIRWELL - DAY

Jim races up the stairs like a bat outta hell.

EXT. MIT GREAT DOME - DAY

Jim FLINGS open a dome access door and climbs down a curved ladder to the narrow ledge.

Jim quickly traverses the ledge. It's a long way down.

Jim reaches Luke, pulls a utility knife from his pocket, and grabs the rope connecting Luke to the Spider Closet.

Luke places his paw on Jim's hand.

LUKE

Wait. I'm not letting you hack me
and be the hero. I'd rather wait
for the fucking fire department.

JIM

Luke, there's only one sketchy eye
bolt between you and half a ton of
hastily put-together lumber.

LUKE

(starts to unzip costume)
I'll just take the costume off.

JIM

You could, except you're not wearing anything underneath and we sort of vandalized your body.

Luke peeks in the costume, sees a huge ejaculating penis drawn on his chest, and smirks.

A scary creak from the Spider Closet gets their attention. Jim quickly cuts the rope and leads Luke along the ledge.

JIM

(extending hand)

Truce?

LUKE

(beat; then shakes)

Temporary cease-fire.

JIM

How'd this go so bad so fast? Why couldn't we be friends?

LUKE

I don't think people can be your friend.

JIM

Why's that?

LUKE

Because you have the highly irritating habit of winning at everything you try and doing it with style. That kinda crap rubs people the wrong way.

JIM

What are you... my Salieri now?

LUKE

(punches Jim's arm)

See what I mean? You gotta take what I said and say it smarter.

Jim and Luke smile and reach the access door.

INT. HALLWAY - OUTSIDE NEUSTADT'S CLASS - DAY

Jim approaches and sees a line of grumpy students. A campus policeman checks IDs before letting students enter class. His charade over, Jim turns and leaves, utterly dejected.

INT. MIT PLANETARIUM - NIGHT

Jim looks through a telescope at the orbiting Space Shuttle. Its cargo bay doors shut, like the doors to his dream.

INT. INFINITE CORRIDOR - DAY

Jim and Natalie walk toward Neustadt's office. Jim's swagger is gone. He looks chastened, humbled.

NATALIE

Guess what. You're looking at the newest cast member of *The Tempest*.

JIM

For real?

NATALIE

I showed up to every rehearsal. I wasn't in the cast. I just wanted to watch. First they asked me to understudy, then they lost their lead actress to a film. Now I'm Miranda.

JIM

Congrats. Then what?

NATALIE

What do you mean "then what?" This is my first big role.

JIM

Maybe the beaver shouldn't try to dam the Charles. When does tenacity become delusion? The gatekeepers to this illustrious institution told me "no" and I said, "no doesn't really work for me." Then this place handed me my ass. I horned into the top frat, but I had to do the whole Frank Sinatra thing and do it my way and we all know what a debacle that turned out to be. I've been playing by my own rules so long, I forgot... I don't make the rules.

INT. INFINITE CORRIDOR - OUTSIDE NEUSTADT'S LAB - DAY

Jim and Natalie arrive at Neustadt's lab. His door is open. Neustadt sees them and joins them in the Infinite Corridor.

PROF. NEUSTADT
You must be Natalie. Delighted to
meet you.

JIM
Can we just get this over with?

PROF. NEUSTADT
(hands Jim a check)
Of course. Here's your final
check.

JIM
Danke schoen. Auf wiedersehen,
Professor Neustadt.

PROF. NEUSTADT
You're not curious?

JIM
About?

PROF. NEUSTADT
The mid-term.

JIM
Kind of moot now.

PROF. NEUSTADT
Then it won't interest you to know
that the real Dexter Garfinkel got
a perfect score. He even solved
the barometer problem. Use the
barometer to measure air pressure
on the ground and on the roof, then
convert the difference in millibars
to feet yielding the height of the
building.

JIM
He'd make a great lab assistant.

PROF. NEUSTADT
You, on the other hand, got a
perfect score and found seventeen
solutions to the extra credit
problem.

(MORE)

PROF. NEUSTADT (cont'd)
Among my favorites are toss the
barometer off the building, timing
its descent to calculate height, or
say to the superintendent "if you
tell me the height of this
building, I'll give you a damn fine
barometer." Unorthodox, yet
workable real-world solutions.

Neustadt hands Jim his test, marked "117%."

PROF. NEUSTADT
The highest score ever. Apparently
you do appreciate the beauty of
physics.
(nods to Natalie)
Among other things. This morning I
made an extraordinary appeal to the
admissions committee on your
behalf. They would be open to
reconsidering your application next
semester.

Jim and Natalie are stunned.

JIM
I don't know what to say.
(beat)
Thank you.

PROF. NEUSTADT
Your persistence may become
legendary around here.

Neustadt turns and walks away.

JIM
Professor Neustadt... you didn't
pull that gun on them, did you?

Neustadt chuckles.

At that moment, the Sun and Earth align, sending sunbeams
blazing down the length of the Infinite Corridor. Jim and
Natalie twirl in the glorious golden glow.

INT. PROF. NEUSTADT'S HOME - STUDY - NIGHT

A fire crackles in the fireplace. Neustadt tapes a large
golden box shut. He takes a sip of brandy.

INT. FRAT - TV ROOM - DAY

Hondo, Zen, Dexter, and Trey watch "Jeopardy."

JEOPARDY CONTESTANT (O.S.)
Subatomic particles for a thousand.

ALEX TREBEK (O.S.)
Physicist Murray Gell-Mann took the
name for this particle from James
Joyce's *Finnegans Wake*.

BROTHERS
What are quarks.

JEOPARDY CONTESTANT (O.S.)
What are electrons?

ALEX TREBEK (O.S.)
No. What are quarks.

Hondo looks concerned as he reads a letter from MIT.

HONDO
What the hell?

Dexter notices what Hondo is doing and quietly leaves.

ZEN
What's up?

HONDO
We're on academic probation. Our G.P.A. is in the toilet. All our freshmen except Dexter got zeroes on their problem sets last month.

ZEN
Impossible! Dexter did them all.

They realize that Dexter intentionally torpedoed the frat.

Dexter! HONDO Dexter! ZEN

EXT. FRAT - FRONT STEPS - DAY

Dexter runs from the frat, grinning ear to ear.

INT. NATALIE'S APARTMENT - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Jim, Dexter, and the Sexy Clerk sit at the dinner table.

JIM
I'm proud of you, Dex. You don't
need them. And mark my words, some
day being a nerd is going to be
cool.

Natalie enters and plops in front of Jim the same golden box
Neustadt taped.

NATALIE
This came for you.

Natalie goes into the kitchen. Jim opens the box and finds
the Golden Dome trophy. Jim and Dexter are astonished.
Natalie enters with a platter of roast chicken.

NATALIE
Who wants chicken?

JIM
I'll take a dinosaur tit.

DEXTER
(passing the salt)
Sodium chloride?

JIM
(passing the milk)
Thank you. Bovine lactation?

DEXTER
Certainly.

Natalie rolls her eyes.

EXT. BOSTON PUBLIC GARDEN - DAY

Gorgeous fall day. Jim sits on a stone wall, writing in his
journal.

MUSIC UP -- Something like John Mayer's "No Such Thing."

INSERT - JIM'S JOURNAL

"I learned a lot about life that semester.
Even helped create some of it."

BACK TO SCENE

Jim looks up and watches toddlers playing on a playground,
their mothers nearby.

Jim sees a child place a toy police car on top of a domed jungle gym. He smiles.

Natalie glides in. Jim hops off the wall and kisses her.

FADE OUT.