

Don't Think Twice

**A Screenplay by
Mike Birbiglia**

FADE IN:

Extreme close-up on a TV:

Recognizable upbeat jazz roars under a video montage of cast members striking candid poses in New York City landmarks. It's the opening title sequence of a sketch comedy TV show.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)
It's Weeeeeekend Liiiiiiive.
Starring...Alicia Bonham!!

ALICIA BONHAM, 20s, buys a donut from a food truck, then looks into the lens. Big smile! The intros continue as we slow zoom back to:

INT. A NEW YORK APARTMENT - NIGHT

A group of six oddballs in their 30s stare longingly at the screen as they share pizza, beer, and pot. We see each person in EXTREME CLOSE-UP. These are our heroes. Finally, MILES, 36, breaks the silence.

MILES
That should be us.

Cut to black.

Title: Don't Think Twice.

As the title fades, we hear tinkles of a piano that become a piano version of the Pixies' "Where Is My Mind?" As we see...

INT. "IMPROV FOR AMERICA" THEATER - STAGE - NIGHT

A theater intern positions six chairs in pools of light.

EXT. "IMPROV FOR AMERICA" THEATER - MAGIC HOUR

A group of twenty patrons lines up outside a hole-in-the-wall theater in the East Village of New York.

EXT. BROOKLYN BRIDGE - MAGIC HOUR

JACK, 30s, "comedy handsome" and stealthily ambitious, weaves his bike in and out of traffic and while tweeting: "Commune show tonight. 8pm. Improv for America Theater. #Now"

INT. "IMPROV FOR AMERICA" THEATER - BONNIE'S OFFICE - NIGHT

BONNIE, 60s, the theater's matriarch, enters her office, a room with forty years of live show posters, a prominent dinosaur head wall trophy, an OLD FIRST AID KIT, and a wall-sized three month dry-erase booking calendar- "August, September, October." She wipes off September and October.

INT. "IMPROV FOR AMERICA" THEATER- GREEN ROOM - NIGHT

Four of our opening scene's oddballs huddle in a word association: "Checkout...Counter...Culture...Iggy Pop..." Jack carries in his bike, locks the wheel to an exposed pipe in a room decked with forty years of posters and graffiti.

JACK

Where's Bill?

They shrug.

INT. "IMPROV FOR AMERICA" THEATER - AUDIENCE - NIGHT

BILL, 36, a bespectacled, big-hearted nerd with a hint of anarchy, seats GERALD, 60s, in the audience and rips off tape that says "Bill's Dad."

INT. "IMPROV FOR AMERICA" THEATER - STAGE - NIGHT

Our PIANIST SETH, 50s, plays a charmingly aged, graffiti'd piano, as "Where is my Mind?" Continues...

INT. "IMPROV FOR AMERICA" GREEN ROOM - NIGHT

The group, now five, warms up in a huddle.

ALLISON

(to Jack)

Where's Sam?

JACK

She's late.

MILES

Power play.

LINDSAY

My therapist says that being late is your way of telling the world you don't want to be there.

INT. SUBWAY STOP - NIGHT

SAMANTHA, 27, dazzling without trying and funny without thinking, jogs, then bolts down subway stairs.

INT. "IMPROV FOR AMERICA" THEATER - BOX OFFICE - NIGHT

A patron hands a five dollar bill to the box office manager, who hands her a stub. The next patron steps up.

INT. "IMPROV FOR AMERICA" THEATER - FOYER - NIGHT

Theatergoers stare at framed 8 X 10 black and white photos of improv teams: "The Awakening," "Partial Credit," "The Commune."

INT. "IMPROV FOR AMERICA" - GREEN ROOM - NIGHT

LINDSAY, 40, a charming mess in pricey designer clothes, puts on makeup then discretely breaks a pill in half. Takes it without water. Thinks. Takes the second half.

INT. "IMPROV FOR AMERICA" THEATER- FOYER - NIGHT

Theatergoers stare at a framed NY Times article reads, "A Breeding Ground for Weekend Live" with a photo of the theater's exterior.

INT. "IMPROV FOR AMERICA"- GREEN ROOM - NIGHT

ALLISON, 35, a heady, obsessive charmer, cartoons in her sketch pad, then rips it up. She grabs a bar of organic hemp soap out of her backpack and washes her hands vigorously. An intern, SHY SARAH, 20s, enters meekly.

SHY SARAH

(quietly)

Five minutes, guys.

Miles looks up. He's played by the person who wrote this script. He's Mike Birbiglia with a hint of bitter.

MILES

Sarah, we can barely hear you.

SHY SARAH

(shout whisper)

Five minutes!

Miles is unimpressed.

INT. SUBWAY PLATFORM - NIGHT

A street performing DRUMMER, who is kind of awesome, plays. Sam dances. She gets lost in it. She opens her wallet, which has about a dollar in it, and throws down the dollar. She turns around and realizes the doors of her train are closing. She sprints. Too late.

INT. "IMPROV FOR AMERICA"- GREEN ROOM - NIGHT

LINDSAY

Two minutes. Where's Bill?

Bill walks out of the dressing room, COMPLETELY NAKED.

BILL
Let's do this.

LINDSAY/ALL
(overlapping, laughing)
Stop it, Bill!! / No one wants this!

BILL
We agreed on this. We were all gonna wear the same thing.

INT. "IMPROV FOR AMERICA"-STANDING BAR AREA - NIGHT

Patrons order beers from a small area next to the stage.

INT. "IMPROV FOR AMERICA" - GREEN ROOM - NIGHT

The group (Minus Sam) exits. As they leave, they each tap a large wooden "Improv For America Theater" sign like athletes.

INT. "IMPROV FOR AMERICA" - BACKSTAGE TUNNEL - NIGHT

The group (minus Sam) shuffles through near-darkness. Hugs and back-patting in this area behind the curtain.

OUR PERFORMERS
(overlapping)
I got your back. I got your back.

INT. "IMPROV FOR AMERICA" - AUDIENCE - NIGHT

An audience of a hundred or so settles in, some with beers.

SHY SARAH (O.S.)
Welcome to the Improv For America Theater. Please turn off...

INT. "IMPROV FOR AMERICA" THEATER - BACKSTAGE TUNNEL - NIGHT

Sam joins the group, out of breath.

SAMANTHA
Sorry. Sorry, guys.

ALL
(imitating Sam)
"Sorry, guys./It's a whole thing."

Jack pulls Sam away, then kisses her. They airdrum and dance to the beat of the piano song. This is not only the group's song, but it's their song.

INT. "IMPROV FOR AMERICA" SOUND BOOTH - NIGHT

Shy Sarah steps up to the microphone.

SHY SARAH
Please welcome...THE COMMUNE!!

INT. "IMPROV FOR AMERICA" THEATER - STAGE - NIGHT

Jack and Sam enter stage. Music crescendos as our six confident performers emerge to recognition applause.

SAMANTHA
Thanks a lot, everybody. We're the
Commune. I'm Sam...

JACK
Jack.

ALLISON
Allison.

MILES
Miles.

LINDSAY
Lindsay.

BILL
Bill.

SAMANTHA
Everything you see tonight will be
improvised, so it'll never happen
again. And this show is about you.
So I'm wondering if anyone had a
particularly hard day that you'd
want to share with us?

MILES
And something actually hard, not
like your roommate ate your yogurt.

AUDIENCE MEMBER 1
(raising hand)
I'm looking for an apartment and it
sucks.

MILES
Why, specifically, does it suck?

AUDIENCE MEMBER 1
The only one I can afford has the
bathroom in the kitchen.

Jack initiates an improv scene. The improv is captured in tight shots. It's funny but that's not the point. They love it. They love each other. They're fish in water.

JACK
So it's got two bedrooms, a kitchen,
a beautiful bathroom...

SAMANTHA
Is that a toilet?

JACK
Yes, the bathroom is in the kitchen.

SAMANTHA
And then who are they?

JACK
Oh, those are...
(inventing this)
Two small orphans. They come with
the place as well.

SAMANTHA
I love it. Did you say orphans?

JACK
That's right. The apartment comes
with these two silly orphans who
mostly lie in the corner but you can
put furniture in front of them or
place them in a hamper.

Allison and Bill become the absurd lethargic orphans.

ALLISON/BILL
Hi.

ANGLE ON: BILL'S DAD BEAMS IN THE AUDIENCE. THAT'S HIS SON.

SAMANTHA
Does the landlord mind if I paint?

JACK
Well, you can't paint the orphans,
but the walls, sure.

Lindsay and Miles enter as a couple.

LINDSAY
This is the place I was telling you
about. It's got a lot of character...

MILES
I like it.

JACK
Get a good look. This'll rent today.

MILES

Then I think we'll take it...

SAMANTHA

No, I'm gonna take it...

MILES

(entering)

No, I'll take it.

SAMANTHA

I'll pay twenty percent over asking...

LINDSAY

(entering)

Thirty...

SAMANTHA

A hundred.

MILES

Why do you want this place so badly?

SAMANTHA

(a beat)

The orphans. I'd like to raise them.
I was an apartment orphan myself.

Audience laughter into...

INT. EAST VILLAGE BAR - NIGHT

The laughter of the Commune (minus Miles) as they drink and share a hamburger at a corner table.

JACK

(laughing)

And Sam goes "I don't live here. I
promise you, I don't."

SAMANTHA

(flattered)

It wasn't that great. It was fine.

LINDSAY

(staring at the bar)

Who is Miles with?

ALLISON

Another one of his students.

We pan to Miles at the bar with AMY, 20s, who pulls out cash.

MILES

No. No. We own this place.

(MORE)

MILES (CONT'D)

(discretely)

So the bar is basically subsidized by the theater. That's a group called "The Enlightenment."

ANGLE ON: TABLE OF BALDING GUYS, 50S, PLAYED BY ACTUAL PEDIGREED IMPROVISERS

MILES (CONT'D)

We call 'em the "high hairlines." They've been together since the eighties. It never happened for them so they hang out here, drink till three, hook up with people who remember who they were. That's Bobby.

(CU on him)

He's been here since seventy five. I mean, that guy played with Belushi.

Bonnie walks by them, determined.

MILES (CONT'D)

That's Bonnie. She started the theater in the seventies. She's like the Gertrude Stein of improv.

AMY

Who's Gertrude Stein?

MILES

Doesn't matter. And these guys are improv students.

ANGLE ON: STUDENTS, 20S, IN "BAR STOOLS" AREA

MILES (CONT'D)

Kids in their twenties who think they have a chance in show business. Some of 'em do. Like three percent. But they think it's ninety percent. That's why they're in a great mood. And that's The Commune.

ANGLE ON: THE COMMUNE, IN A CORNER BOOTH

MILES (CONT'D)

You know how groups always have that one breakout star? Well, we're all the stars. It's actually uncanny we've stayed together this long.

ANGLE ON: JACK WAVING OVER MILES LIKE THERE'S A PROBLEM.

MILES (CONT'D)

(exiting)

Gimme a sec.

INT. EAST VILLAGE BAR - NIGHT

Bonnie breaks news to the Commune. (Sitting on a periphery is Bill's dad.)

BONNIE

We had a ten year lease. Like we've had for forty years. I thought we'd renew. Or it'd go up three percent. But they're selling. Another Trump building, I think. We're done.

This devastates the group. A long pause, then:

ALLISON

I read that Trump doesn't even own the buildings. They just buy the rights to use his name.

MILES

Not now, Data.

ALL

C'mon, Data.

A long beat. They contemplate their future.

LINDSAY

(to herself)

New York City is over.

JACK

(in Donald Trump accent)

"New York City, you're fired."

MILES

(Trump accent also)

"Improv for America, you're fired."

BILL

(laughing, a Trump
that sounds like JFK)

"America, you're fired. From now on, it'll just be me, my lovely daughter, whichever wife this is..."

ALL
 (overlapping)
 Bill, that's JFK. /That's JF Trump.
 /Bill, because of this terrible
 impression you're fired.

They all laugh, except Sam, who is preoccupied.

SAMANTHA
 Bonnie, you can re-open the theater
 somewhere else, right? Brooklyn?
 Or Long Island City?

BONNIE
 I don't know.
 (thinking)
 The business model for selling tickets
 to five dollar shows isn't exactly
 sound. We had a sweetheart deal.

SAMANTHA
 No. That's bullshit.

BONNIE
 They want us out in four weeks.

SAMANTHA
 Well, We're not leaving. We'll
 protest. We'll...

ALL
 (joining in)
 Yeah!/Occupy improv./We'll improvise
 in the streets. /We won't leave.

Sam gets riled up in this protest bit and stands on the table,
 accidentally knocking over a glass which sets off a chain of
 reaction of BROKEN BOTTLES, MUGS, GLASSES- SMASHED on the
 floor.

ANGLE ON: SAM HOPPING DOWN TO PICK UP THE GLASS.

JACK
 Sam, you don't have to do that...

SAMANTHA
 (sweeping glass with
 her hands, gets CUT)
 Jesus!

JACK
 (pulling her up)
 Honey, it's okay.

Sam's hand is bleeding.

SAMANTHA
 (embarrassed)
 I was doing a bit.

Jack laughs, holds her, and tries to wave over a waitress.

JACK
 (laughing)
 You take bits too far...

MILES
 (as Trump)
 "Samantha Byrne, you went too far
 with the bit. As a result you're
 bleeding. You're fired."

INT. "IMPROV FOR AMERICA" THEATER - BONNIE'S OFFICE - NIGHT

CU on OLD FIRST AID KIT. Bonnie pulls it off the wall and
 grabs bandages and rubbing alcohol, applies it to Sam.

BONNIE
 Oh honey, what did you do?
 (then)
 So we need to clear these props this
 week. They're gonna start stripping
 the walls on Monday.

Sam stares at a bundle of props, a wizard costume etc.

SAMANTHA
 Can't we have the full four weeks?

BONNIE
 I knew you were gonna take this the
 hardest. But I need you to know:
 I've been here forty years. And you're
 one of the good ones. You'll find
 new people. You'll find a new home.

INT. "IMPROV FOR AMERICA" THEATER - STAGE - NIGHT

Bill shows his dad around, a single ghost light on.

BILL
 So this is where we've performed for
 seven years.

GERALD
 You had a good run.

BILL
 (defensive)
 Well...it's not over.

INT. "IMPROV FOR AMERICA" THEATER - FOYER - NIGHT

Miles shows Amy a framed black and white photo in dim light with his iPhone's flashlight.

MILES

This was my first group, "The Awakening." Nineteen ninety seven. That had Bill, me, some other guys. This guy Brad Burke ended up on...

AMY

He's on "Stuck in the Middle."

MILES

Exactly. He's doing great.

AMY

And this guy is on Weekend Live.

MILES

Yeah. Hugh Finn. I auditioned that year, too. I was...
(like it was yesterday)
Inches.

EXT. LOWER EAST SIDE STREET - NIGHT

The Commune walks in twos. Jack pushes his bike. Sam uses gauze to press ice against her bloody hand. We track to Bill and Miles as Miles pushes Bill in a shopping cart full of old theater props, books, and a wizard costume. Bill brown-bags a tall boy and fixates on his phone.

BILL

I found this new site. It's the Grindr of Grindr. It evaluates all the New York Grindr guys by height, hair color, dick size.

MILES

I would do very well as a gay man.

BILL

You would do terribly. You're out of shape and have a B minus face.

Miles catches up with Allison and Amy. Lindsay stops and lights her pipe. They look up at "143 Allen Street."

ALLISON

This house was built in 1830 by a ship captain.

LINDSAY
How would you know that, Data?

ALLISON
I listen to a lot of podcasts.

The group stares up at the house from 1830.

LINDSAY
We'll keep the group together. Right guys?

They all pause. Think. They nod, dispirited.

EXT. BROOKLYN BRIDGE - NIGHT

The group walks, defeated, against the NYC skyline.

INT. THE COMMUNE APARTMENT - STAIRWELL - NIGHT

The group trudges up a fifth floor walkup. A guy on rollerblades sidesteps down past them.

BILL
It's only three more.

ALLISON
It feels like two.

MILES
It feels like ten.

INT. THE COMMUNE APARTMENT - NIGHT

Bill leads his dad into an industrial space in Williamsburg. They're broke but there's pride. Bikes on the wall, a hammock, a stair ladder to a bedroom over the kitchen. On the wall is one of Allison's drawings.

GERALD
I can't believe you still live here.
Wait, someone sleeps on a hammock?

BILL
That's for supervised napping.

INT. COMMUNE APARTMENT- MILES' APARTMENT - NIGHT

Miles shows Amy his bedroom, which is the size of a bed, and has a large foam pipe in it's entrance.

MILES
Watch your head on the pipe. So this is it. Not huge, but neither am I.

INT. JACK & SAM'S APARTMENT- KITCHEN/BEDROOM - NIGHT

The camera makes its way through a kitchen where a cake was made: flour, then eggs, then a half eaten cake, then whipped cream. We're hearing Jack and Sam's conversation through the cake business and then we arrive at them, under the sheets. Romantic.

JACK

You make me so hard. There is literally nothing you could do that would not make me hard...

SAMANTHA

There's a colony of ants living in my breasts that are crawling through my pores...

JACK

(laughing)

Stop.

They take a beat and think.

SAMANTHA

What are we gonna do about the theater?

JACK

We'll figure it out, Sam.

Sam nods, unsure.

INT. THE COMMUNE APARTMENT - MILES' BEDROOM - NIGHT

Amy sits in Miles' bed in a bra and panties, texting.

AMY

You think you guys'll stay together?

MILES

Definitely.

AMY

How?

CU on Miles as he thinks. He doesn't know.

INT. THE COMMUNE APARTMENT - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Lindsay smokes a pipe while Allison scrubs dishes.

LINDSAY

There are a lot of spaces.

ALLISON

It's not the same. We're big fish
in a small pond. We're gonna end up
being small fish in a small pond.

EXT. THE STREET IN FRONT OF THE COMMUNE APARTMENT - NIGHT

Bill walks his dad out the door.

GERALD

Ya know, you really oughta view this
as an opportunity. New York is over.
Philadelphia is where it's happening.
(pulls out his phone)

ANGLE ON: WEIRD PORNOGRAPHIC IPHONE PHOTO

GERALD (CONT'D)

It's called "Bucky's."

BILL

That looks like a porn house.

GERALD

It is. I bought it for nothing,
I'll wipe the splooge off the walls
and flip it into a Sephora. You
gotta get into real estate, Bill.

BILL

Dad, I've told you I'm not interested
in real estate.

GERALD

(discretely)
You're better than these guys.

Gerald pulls out a cigarette, walks over to a motorcycle
that he's too old for.

GERALD (CONT'D)

I've been renovating the house.
(more phone pics)
Hot tub. Three car garage. I've
got room for you.

BILL

Dad, I'm not gonna leave New York.

Gerald mounts his bike.

GERALD

Still givin' out hummus samples?

BILL

No. I have a new job.

Bill watches as Gerald rides away. Music swells as we go to:

INT. GROCERY STORE - CHEESE SECTION - DAY

Bill, in a smock, handing out snack-size hummus samples.

BILL

Hummus and chips?

INT. UPSCALE MANHATTAN APARTMENT - DAY

Allison teaches NATHAN, 14, with a thick SAT book.

ALLISON

I got a fifteen twenty, and then I got into Yale.

NATHAN

What'd you do after that?

Allison thinks about it and is uncomfortable.

INT. FANCY LUNCH RESTAURANT - DAY

Sam stands behind a hostess stand, secretly reading a book. Her manager glares at her. Sam tucks away the book.

EXT. BROOKLYN STREET - DAY

Jack rides his bike with two bags of "Brooklyn Organic." He stops, takes out his phone and tweets: "Just delivered a Reuben with a few bites taken out. #ShowBusiness #FuckMyLife"

INT. "IMPROV FOR AMERICA" THEATER - REHEARSAL BASEMENT- DAY

Miles teaches a class of ten, (including GARY, JOSH, and NATASHA, 20s). Gary and Natasha improvise.

NATASHA

I got you this new pen.

GARY

That's not a pen. It's a fish.

Miles walks into the scene.

MILES

Okay, let's pause there for a second. You guys are doing great. So as improvisers we're training our brains to think in positives. So we always say "yes."

(MORE)

MILES (CONT'D)

So if Natasha says "Thanks for this new pen," Gary, you have to agree that there IS a pen and then add something to that reality.

GARY

Yo, I just wanna be on Weekend Live. How do you do that?

MILES

You wait in line, Gary.

Miles flashes a thumbs up to Natasha.

INT. PSYCHIATRIST'S OFFICE - DAY

Lindsay sits across from a PSYCHIATRIST, 60s.

LINDSAY

I'm the most talented copy editor at my agency and they fire me. And what's crazy is, I don't even need the job. Not that I don't want one...

(then)

Can I get the refill on my Klonopin?

PSYCHIATRIST

(writing prescription)

It's hard to have wealthy parents.

INT. "IMPROV FOR AMERICA" - GREEN ROOM - NIGHT

The Commune (without Bill) warms up as Jack locks up his bike wheel. Bonnie enters.

BONNIE

Sarah, we're gonna hold ten.

ALL

(overlapping)

Ten? /Why? /Who's here?

BONNIE

I called Hugh Finn and he's bringing some producers from Weekend Live.

Jack spins and puts his head in his hands to focus. The Commune disperses.

MILES

Jack, don't pull some showboat shit.

JACK
 (doing pushups)
 What are you talking about?

MILES
 Whenever anyone in the business comes
 by you turn into a one-man audition
 tape.

ALLISON
 (washing her hands)
 You did it when the guy from Conan
 came. You it when Law And Order
 came. You did it...

LINDSAY
 (popping a pill)
 Where's Bill?

ALL
 (checking phones,
 looking around)
 Bill!! / Bill?

The group shrugs, sort of "I don't know."

INT. "IMPROV FOR AMERICA" THEATER- STAGE- NIGHT

SAMANTHA
 Did anyone have a particularly hard
 day they'd want to share with us?

AUDIENCE MEMBER 2
 (raising hand)
 I saw my dad today for the first
 time in ten years.

SAMANTHA
 Whoa. Really? Where?

AUDIENCE MEMBER 2
 He's a taxi driver. And I randomly
 got into his cab. I hadn't seen him
 since I was fifteen.

Miles initiates a scene where he's driving a cab.

MILES
 Hop in.

Sam places a chair where the back seat would be.

SAMANTHA
 Thanks for stopping. It's raining
 so hard, didn't think I'd get a cab.

MILES

You look familiar. Where you headed?

SAMANTHA

West fourth and sixth. Meeting
someone I met online.

MILES

That's odd.

SAMANTHA

I'm very promiscuous. I'm from a
broken home. My dad's an asshole.
(then)
I'll hop out here.

Allison initiates a new scene with Sam.

ALLISON

Welcome to La Traviata. How many?

SAMANTHA

Two. I'm meeting someone.

Allison walks her to a table. Miles is there.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

Dad...

MILES

Just trying to be part of your life.

Jack initiates a scene with Sam.

JACK

(Obama impression)

*Now, look, I am president of the
United States...*

Audience laughter. CU on PIANIST looking up, surprised, then
playing "Hail to the Chief."

JACK (CONT'D)

(Obama impression)

*And I see it as my duty to not only
find your father, but to have him
pick you up in a taxi cab and take
you to your destination. It's a
program called "Cabs From Dads."
Some of my critics call it "ObamaCabs"
and that's fine with me.*

Audience laughs.

JACK (CONT'D)
 My wife Michelle...
 (points to Sam, pimping
 her to do an
 impression)
 Supports this as well. She wants to
 put healthy snacks in cabs.

SAMANTHA
 (hesitating, then
 doing a nice Michelle)
Half of my body is made of brocolli.

More audience laughs. CU on Miles pretending to enjoy this.

INT. EAST VILLAGE BAR - NIGHT

The Commune drinks at their table.

LINDSAY
 Way to cram in that Obama impression.

JACK
 I was justifying why a dad would
 pick up his daughter in a cab.

MILES
 It just so happened to be your best
 impersonation.

SAMANTHA
 I thought it was strong.

JACK
 No. They're right. I'm sorry.
 (then, discretely)
 They're here.

MILES
 (turning)
 Who?

A QUICK SHOT OF ALICIA, HUGH AND OTHERS IN A BOOTH

JACK
 Don't stare.
 (then, discretely)
 Hugh Finn and Alicia Bonham.

MILES
 I can stare. We know Hugh.

ALLISON
 Staring is never illegal. Except at
 children.

JACK
Should I go over?

LINDSAY
Why would you go over and not us?

JACK
Not that it has to be me. It could be me. Or you. Or any of us. Just not all of us.

INT. EAST VILLAGE BAR - HUGH'S BOOTH - NIGHT

Jack has extended his hand to shake Alicia's.

JACK
Hey, I'm Jack.

ALICIA
(shaking hands, a little drunk)
I'm Alicia. That show blew my mind.

JACK
Oh my God. Thanks. I'm so flattered-

ALLISON
(poking her head in)
We were so flattered. Such an honor.

Jack turns around. This is his nightmare.

MILES
(poking his head in)
We're all so flattered. I started this group...like seven years ago.

LINDSAY
(from back we hear)
I'm Lindsay!

HUGH
I love these guys. We were in the trenches together. Miles and I are like stage brothers for life.

ALICIA
(to Miles)
So I'll see you at Hugh's wedding!

MILES
You're getting married?

HUGH
It's a really small thing.

MILES

Yeah, don't worry about it. I hate weddings. And kids. I hate kids. If you guys have kids, don't invite me to their baptism...or whatever.

Awkward nodding. This has become the worst conversation.

JACK

(to Alicia)

Hey, I follow you on twitter.

ALICIA

I fucking hate twitter. My publicist made me join.

JACK

Yeah, I hate it too...but it's also part of it, right? If you wanna hate it together I'm "at Jack underscore Mercer." My middle name is underscore.

Alicia smiles.

EXT. KENT AVENUE, BROOKLYN - NIGHT

The Commune walks, the Williamsburg Bridge behind them.

INT. THE COMMUNE APARTMENT - NIGHT

The Commune enters, takes off coats, bags...

MILES

That smug sonovabitch. I'm not invited to the wedding? I introduced him to his wife.

LINDSAY

So were the people with Hugh and
(pronouncing it wrong)
Alicia producers from Weekend Live?

JACK

It's "Ahh-lee-cia"...

As they arrive in the kitchen we see NATASHA, Miles' pixyish 20-something improv student from class, cooking an omelet.

MILES

Oh hey, Natasha!

(then)

Natasha's one of my students. She's crashing with us for a few days.

NATASHA

I got evicted. My roommate sells crack. How was the show?

MILES

Weekend Live showed up.

NATASHA

Are they casting? I've been working on my characters.

(doing a bad character)

"Ya'll want some crack? How about some crack in your omelets?"

MILES

Yeah, I don't think they're casting.

LINDSAY

(looking at her phone)

Bonnie's texted me. Apparently, they loved Sam.

MILES

Did she mention me?

(to Natasha)

I was really close in two thousand four. Like...inches.

JACK

(impersonating Miles)

"I was, like, inches."

ALL

(impersonating Miles)

"I was, like, inches."

Miles wrestles Jack to the floor.

INT. "IMPROV FOR AMERICA"- BONNIE'S OFFICE - NIGHT

BONNIE

(into phone)

...So they wanna see you and Sam audition on the stage at Time Warner on Thursday. Three original characters. Three impersonations...

INT. THE COMMUNE APARTMENT- LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jack on the phone, his eyes light up, he holds on to Sam.

INT. THE COMMUNE APARTMENT- LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Allison, Miles, Lindsay, and Natasha eat omelets, watch TV. Allison removes a block from a tall tower of Jenga. Success.

ALLISON

Do you realize we eat one trillion
eggs a year? A trillion...

LINDSAY

(smoking her pipe)
That is a lot of ovulating chickens.

Bill enters from the front door, putting away his phone.

BILL

Hey guys, sorry I missed the show.

LINDSAY

What happened, dude?

BILL

Um...so my dad rode his motorcycle
home last night...and...an eighteen
wheeler edged him off the highway
and he crashed into the guard rail.

LINDSAY

(thinking it's a bit,
knocking over the
Jenga tower)
Fuck you!

BILL

No. Really. He's at Thomas
Jefferson. He's not responding.
(This is real)
I'm taking the train to Philly in
the morning.

Long beat. They feel terrible. Lindsay gets up and hugs Bill.
Miles joins on awkwardly. A big group hug, minus Jack.

LINDSAY

I'll drive you there, man. I can
borrow my parents' car.

SAMANTHA

I'll come too.

JACK

Actually, Sam. We can't. We're...
(then, to everyone)
We have some news too. Bonnie just
told us that we're auditioning
Thursday for Weekend Live.

MILES

You're comparing your news to Bill's
news?

JACK

No, it's just a coincidence that I had to share something at the same time that Bill did...his news is obviously much more...

SAMANTHA

Important. We're coming too.

BILL

Wait, Weekend Live showed up to the show tonight? Motherfucker.

ALLISON

Sorry, Bill.

BILL

Do you think they'd come again?

They stare at him blankly.

JACK

Bill, I'd love to come tomorrow but I really have to focus.

The room is dead silent. Tense.

JACK (CONT'D)

If it were my dad and you guys...had the audition to prepare for...Nevermind.

INT. THE COMMUNE APARTMENT - MILES' BEDROOM - NIGHT

Miles wanders aimlessly, shirtless and swinging a whiffle ball bat, while Natasha lies in bed in her underwear and Miles' tee shirt from earlier.

MILES

It's weird they didn't want me to audition. I mean, in some ways, it's like you don't want to hire another general, you need infantry.

NATASHA

What's "infantry?"

EXT. A FANCY NYC APARTMENT BUILDING - HALLWAY - NIGHT

A DOORMAN, 50s, holds the door for Lindsay.

LINDSAY

(to the doorman)
Thanks, William.

DOORMAN
 Good night, Lindsay.

INT. A FANCY NYC APARTMENT BUILDING- PENTHOUSE - NIGHT

Lindsay enters, hangs her backpack on a hook that holds Park Ave-style peacoats and umbrellas. She arrives at her room.

CU on a post-it that reads: "Your room smells like pot. Mom"

INT. THE COMMUNE APARTMENT - ALLISON'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Allison in bed writing in a moleskin. She rips out three pages, tears them to pieces, and exits.

INT. THE COMMUNE APARTMENT- BATHROOM - NIGHT

Allison flushes the pages down the toilet. Natasha enters, wearing underwear and Miles' tee shirt.

NATASHA
 (startled)
 Sorry...I didn't know...

ALLISON
 It's okay. I'm just writing.

INT. JACK & SAM'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jack and Sam lie in bed. Jack sorts through the mail.

JACK
 Hey, what do you think of this? This is a character called "Brendan Peace." He's a fake TV psychic who has a show called "Rest in Peace."

Sam laughs.

JACK (CONT'D)
 I sense that someone in your life has passed. Is it an uncle or a neighbor or...

SAMANTHA
 It's my cousin.

JACK
 Yes. I'm talking to your cousin, yes. Is he blond or...

SAMANTHA
 He has clown hair.

JACK

Yes, sort of a rainbow head look.

Sam laughs. Jack returns to the mail. Opens a letter.

JACK (CONT'D)

Fuck. I was supposed to deal with this last month. This is my bad. The rent is seventy five more because they realized we hadn't paid the electric in three months. I can get it.

SAMANTHA

No, I'll get it. You got the groceries this week.

JACK

I can cover it, just eventually...

SAMANTHA

(hopping up)

No, no. I got it.

Sam walks to the bathroom then glances back discretely. She closes the bathroom, turns into a closet, opens a suitcase, digs through sweaters, then pulls out a WEATHERED TOOL BAG. She opens it to reveal what must be about two thousand dollars in fifties. She grabs one.

EXT. LINDSAY'S PARENTS' ESCALADE - THE HIGHWAY - DAY

The truck soars down a scenic highway.

INT. LINDSAY'S PARENTS' ESCALADE - DAY

Lindsay drives the Commune. Bill navigates in a hummus smock. Allison draws in her sketchpad. Jack and Sam do characters.

JACK

This is a character called death-obsessed child.

(child voice)

"Daddy, do you think we might die in the car today?"

SAMANTHA

(laughing, child voice)

"Daddy, do you wish mommy was dead?"

MILES

Lindsay, how much did this thing cost?

LINDSAY
It's a company car.

ALLISON
What company?

INT. HOSPITAL - SEMI-PRIVATE ROOM- DAY

Bill stands next to his dad Gerald, who lies in bed. Bandages on his face and legs, cannula tube in his nose.

A NURSE, 26, swaps out his colostomy bag.

NURSE
Your dad understands what happened
and where he is, but he can't vocalize
more than a word or two.

Bill stands next to his dad, goes to hold his hand, hesitates.

BILL
Is this okay?

The nurse nods. A quiet moment between Bill and his dad.

INT. HOSPITAL- SEMI-PRIVATE ROOM - NIGHT

Miles pours half and half into a styrofoam cup of coffee, then enters the room, where the Commune surrounds Gerald. Jack asleep on Sam. Allison draws in her pad. Empty coffee cups, food wrappers. Bill gets up and kisses his dad goodbye.

BILL
I'll come back and visit real soon,
dad.

ALLISON
Bye, Mister Couglin.

GERALD
(almost unintelligible)
Thank youuuuu.

EXT. HOSPITAL - PARKING LOT- NIGHT

The Commune walks to the van.

BILL
I know this isn't about me, but I
just don't want my dad to die thinking
I was a failure.

SAMANTHA
You're not a failure, Bill. You're
in the Commune.

Sam puts her arm around Bill. It's sweet.

INT. LINDSAY'S PARENTS' ESCALADE - NIGHT

The Commune drives home, spirits down.

ALLISON

I read about this guy who got knocked unconscious by these goons and now he's a human calculator.

JACK

I know it must feel grim, Bill, but he's a fighter.

BILL

Thanks. He had that moment where he said,

(impersonating)

"Thank youuuuu..."

(then)

That was good.

MILES

(impersonating)

"Thank youuuu..."

LINDSAY

(impersonating also)

"Thank youuuuu..."

BILL

I'm pretty sure I'm the only one who should be doing impressions of my dad when he's basically in a coma.

MILES

I thought mine was good.

BILL

(laughing)

It was good. It's just inappropriate.

MILES

(impersonating)

"Thank youuuu...."

INT. JACK & SAM'S APARTMENT- BEDROOM - NIGHT

Sam lies in bed. Jack washes dishes.

SAMANTHA

Bill's dad is there, but he's not, really.

(MORE)

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

It's like, how can the body recover from something like that, and...are you even the same person when you recover? How could you be?

JACK

(nodding, pre-occupied)
Do you think this is funny? It's like a guy who's unaware that his body is covered in soap.

Sam forces a smile as Jack does this absurd soap physicality.

SAMANTHA

I don't know if I should go.

JACK

To what?

SAMANTHA

The audition.

Jack stops and comes over, holding on to her.

JACK

Okay...

SAMANTHA

I'm just thinking about it. Like... You should go. For sure. It's what you want. But...I like my life now.

JACK

It's gonna be like that but better.

SAMANTHA

But is it better? Like, life is so short and we have to do things we're proud of or what's the point? I'm not sure I want to be on Weekend Live. It's, like, this show that was great in the seventies and we pretend it's still great now but it's not. We're great. The Commune is great. We could have our own TV show or even our own theater.

JACK

That's not realistic, Sam. This is a huge opportunity. If anyone else in the Commune had this chance they'd take it in a second. This is fate. This is our chance to keep going.

Sam nods. He makes a good point. Music swells as...

INT. JACK & SAM'S APARTMENT - SHOWER - MORNING

Jack scrubs himself while doing a Liam Neeson impersonation.

JACK

"If you're looking for money, I don't have any. I used it the first six times my daughter was taken."

INT. JACK & SAM'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN- MORNING

Sam studies the mannerisms of Katherine Hepburn in a Dick Cavett interview on her laptop while brewing coffee.

SAMANTHA

(Hepburn impression)

Can't we get a stationary table?!
Is there anything we can put our feet on?!

EXT. JACK AND SAM'S APARTMENT- FRONT STOOP - DAY

Jack and Sam rehearse characters.

SAMANTHA

This is Gena Rowlands in "Woman Under the Influence."

JACK

(laughing)

That was obscure in seventy four...

SAMANTHA

(accurate impression)

"I always understood you, and you always understood me and that was always just how it was, and that's it. "Till death do us part," Nick. You said it. Remember?"

They laugh together, riffing.

EXT. BUSHWICK PARK- WATER OVERLOOK - DAY

Jack and Sam sit on the rocks overlooking the East River.

JACK

(switching to old-timey voice)

"You're going to make somebody a mighty fine wife some day."

SAMANTHA
 (old-timey girl voice)
"Oh, Papa."

JACK
 (old-timey voice)
*"And mighty pretty, too. That is,
 if your nose doesn't grow crooked."*

SAMANTHA
 (girl voice)
*Papa, why ya' always gotta bring up
 my flaws?*

JACK
 (old-timey voice)
There's surgeries now-a-days, see?

They break, laughing.

INT. JACK & SAM'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - DAY

Sam on the floor, buried in her notebook. Jack brushing his teeth and tucking in his shirt as he stares at the mirror.

SAMANTHA
 (to herself, in
 character)
*I am a tree with a strong personality.
 Why does everyone just see me as
 wood?*

Jack enters.

JACK
 We gotta head over.

SAMANTHA
 (in character)
*But an elf has confused my legs for
 trees and sawed them off for firewood.*

Jack walks over and takes her hand.

JACK
 I'm serious.

SAMANTHA
 (pulling him down)
Let's just lie here in the meadow.

JACK
 Sam, c'mon.

SAMANTHA

*Please sir, can you spare a moment
to help me find my legs?*

Jack is annoyed, but tries to play along, picking her up.

JACK

(in character)
Ok, Magical Tree. I shall carry you.

SAMANTHA

(breaking)
Oh dear...
(laughing)
The tree is heavier than you expected.

JACK

(carrying her to door)
C'mon, Sam. We're gonna be late.

Sam escapes Jack's arms.

SAMANTHA

I need time.

JACK

We don't have time.

SAMANTHA

Yours is at four and mine is four
fifteen. I'll see you there.

Sam walks over to the bed and opens her notebook.

JACK

(pacing nervously)
I can wait. Do you want me to wait?

SAMANTHA

Just go, Jack. I'll meet you there.
Don't worry about me.

JACK

I'm trying to...Okay...?

Jack glances at the clock. It's 3:09.

JACK (CONT'D)

Is it better if I meet you there?

Sam nods, then bends over and jots something in her notepad.

JACK (CONT'D)

'Cause I'll stay and figure this out
with you...

SAMANTHA

No, honey. I'm focused. Just go.

Jack looks around, looks at his phone, unsure of what to do.

INT. SUBWAY PLATFORM - DAY

Jack jogs onto a subway car.

EXT. TIME WARNER BUILDING - DAY

Jack enters a fancy New York City building.

INT. TIME WARNER BUILDING - SECURITY AREA - DAY

Jack gets photographed for a guest pass.

INT. TIME WARNER BUILDING - ELEVATOR - DAY

CU on Jack looking down with pride at a laminated pass that says "Jack Mercer. Weekend Live GUEST." Music swells as...

INT. "WEEKEND LIVE" STUDIO - HALLWAY - DAY

Jack stares at portraits of famous Weekend Live guest hosts. A photo of Nathan Lane signed "Thanks for the best week of my Life." These photos are BIG. COLORFUL. BRIGHT.

INT. "WEEKEND LIVE" STUDIO - WAITING ROOM - DAY

Jack signs his name on a sign-in sheet. It's full of names. He signs next to his name. "Jack Mercer: 4pm." Next to it is Samantha Byrne: 4:15pm." A STUDIO PAGE, 20s, enters, picks up the sign in sheet, waves him in.

INT. "WEEKEND LIVE" STUDIO - GREEN ROOM - NIGHT

Jack paces as he hears an IMPRESSIONIST over the monitors.

IMPRESSIONIST (O.S.)

You're incredible. This is incredible.

It's incredible to be Jimmy Fallon.

Crystal Meth is incredible.

Jack looks at his watch, types in his phone.

INT. JACK & SAM'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM- DAY

CU on Sam's buzzing phone: a text from Jack. She's not paying attention. She's having a tea party of four distinct characters conversing with one another.

INT. "WEEKEND LIVE" STUDIO - STAGE- DAY

Jack performs his Liam Neeson in front of ten people.

INT. "WEEKEND LIVE" STUDIO - HALLWAY - DAY

Jack paces in front of the wall of fame, texting.

INT. JACK & SAM'S APARTMENT - DAY

Sam's phone BUZZES again. Sam looks at her phone. A text reads: "where r u?" She picks up her backpack and exits.

INT. SUBWAY PLATFORM - DAY

Sam jogs to a train and just makes it.

INT. "WEEKEND LIVE" - TIMOTHY'S OFFICE - DAY

Jack sits across from TIMOTHY, 60s, who sits behind a desk full of Emmys. Timothy is short, so Jack can barely see him over the Emmys. Jack struggles to follow what he's saying.

TIMOTHY

Thirty years...different every
year...whole new thing...Paul
McCartney once told me the same thing.

JACK

Right, right. Wow.

TIMOTHY

And that's how it goes.

Jack nods, not sure of what has been said.

EXT. TIME WARNER BUILDING - DAY

Sam jogs up and enters.

INT. TIME WARNER BUILDING - SECURITY AREA - DAY

Sam gets photographed, guarding her face from the flash.

INT. TIME WARNER BUILDING - ELEVATOR BANK - DAY

Sam looks at her laminated pass: in the photo she's covering her face. She stares at various elevators- "3-20", "14-30" etc. and she enters one, uncertain.

INT. TIME WARNER BUILDING - ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

Sam looks at the buttons: "4, 5, 6..." She presses "9" but it won't illuminate. Pushes it HARDER. Locked? Should she ask the other passengers? We see the TWO PASSENGERS in extreme closeup pressing buttons. Theirs work.

ELEVATOR PASSENGER 1
I got stuck in wet tar. They were
tarring my roof. And I was barefoot...

First stop. Floor six. A new loud passenger, who, in the
midst of her frustration, feels even louder.

SLICK AGGRESSIVE MAN
(into phone)
Send me your resume, your headshot
and your reel. No. "Reel." R-E-E-
L. Your video. I can't hear you!

INT. "WEEKEND LIVE" STUDIO - HALLWAY - DAY

Sam stares at the same wall of fame portraits. She gets
nervous, turns back. Walks a few steps. Turns back again.
Walks a few steps. Turns back again. Builds up confidence
in the moment, then decides to go in.

INT. "WEEKEND LIVE" STUDIO - WAITING ROOM - DAY

Sam signs her name to a sheet. A STUDIO PAGE, 20s, enters.

STUDIO PAGE
(taking sign-in sheet)
The auditions are closed. I'm sorry.

SAMANTHA
No, no. I'm supposed to be here.

Sam takes back the call sheet, points to her name.

STUDIO PAGE
What was your call time?

SAMANTHA
Four fifteen.

Studio Page looks up at the clock: 4:49.

STUDIO PAGE
I'm sorry. They're done.

Sam is frozen. She really fucked it up this time.

EXT. BRYANT PARK - MAGIC HOUR

Sam sits on a bench, dazed. Two women drink tea beside her.

INT. "IMPROV FOR AMERICA" THEATER - GREEN ROOM - NIGHT

The Commune (minus Sam, & Jack) warms up.

INT. "IMPROV FOR AMERICA" THEATER - STAGE - NIGHT

Sarah jogs across and pulls two chairs, leaving four.

INT. "IMPROV FOR AMERICA" THEATER - STAGE - NIGHT

The Commune improvises.

LINDSAY

Hi, I'm here to quit show business.

BILL

(hammy, jazz hands)

Well, hello!!!

INT. EAST VILLAGE BAR - NIGHT

Commune at their table, Miles' arm around NATASHA, 20s.

JACK

He said, "That's how it goes." So I walked back to the waiting room and Gary Cho was there and he said "We're really excited." Then Timothy's assistant told me it was official.

The group stares. In shock. He expects them to respond more. He takes a sip of his beer. This pause is almost too long and then...

ALL

(saving it)

Cheers! / To Jack! /Holy shit!!

JACK

I know. I'm fucking spinning.

LINDSAY

Where's Sam?

JACK

We went separately. She hasn't answered my texts.

ALLISON

Can you still improvise with us? We only have three weeks left.

JACK

I don't know. It's our first week.

MILES

I don't like how you said "our."
It's like when people call Robert Deniro "Bobby."

Everybody laughs. It's a little mean.

BILL
(spotting Sam enter)
There she is.

SAMANTHA
(flustered)
Hey. Sorry I missed the show.

JACK
Honey, what happened? How'd it go?

SAMANTHA
(sitting down)
I was late. They wouldn't let me in.

JACK
Why?

SAMANTHA
I don't know...

JACK
How late were you?

SAMANTHA
Twenty minutes?

We pan across the group's silent, disappointed faces.

JACK
You were twenty minutes late and they wouldn't let you in?

SAMANTHA
I don't know. Thirty? How did it go for you...?

JACK
I told you I'd wait for you. I told you I'd figure it out with you...

SAMANTHA
I know. I'm sorry. How did it go?

JACK
I got the show.

SAMANTHA
Well, that's great.

Sam starts uncontrollably crying.

JACK
 (holding on to her)
 Honey, I'm sorry. I didn't mean to yell.

SAMANTHA
 It's not that. I'm happy for you...

JACK
 I wanted us both to get it.
 (trying to save it)
 You guys, this is a victory for the whole group....I...I'll get writing jobs for all of us...
 (scrambling)
 I'll talk to Timothy about it.

A glimmer of hope. The group nods, cautiously optimistic.

MILES
 You'd really talk to Timothy for us?

Jack nods, uncertain. Miles puts his arms around him...

MILES (CONT'D)
 Well, let's fucking celebrate!

They all cheers into...THE POP...

INT. THE COMMUNE APARTMENT - NIGHT

...As Allison opens a champagne bottle and pours some in glasses. The group dances to Elel's "40 Watt" that they change the words to "Jack! Jack! Jack!" and "Jack got Weekend Live!" They're all dancing and drinking champagne, pouring it onto Jack, hugging him. It's their victory.

INT. THE COMMUNE APARTMENT - LATER

Miles drinks champagne and talks with Natasha.

MILES
 (discretely)
 It's weird, because I taught Jack originally. I was his first teacher.

NATASHA
 You're my first teacher.

MILES
 Exactly.

ANGLE ON: JACK AND BILL

Bill and Jack sit on the floor.

JACK

There was a point today where I felt so close to it that thought "if I don't get this I'm gonna kill myself."

BILL

You mean like if you had our lives?

JACK

No, I mean...Sorry.

ANGLE ON: ALLISON AND A RANDOM PARTYGOER

ALLISON

I'm actually anti anti-bacterial soap. I'm not pro-bacterial soap. I'm basically for soap in it's purest form, which is natural oils, fats, and sodium hydroxide.

ANGLE ON: LINDSAY AND SAM

LINDSAY

If you ever need a therapist, my lady is really good.

SAMANTHA

It's not that, Lindsay. I just think it's not what I'm meant to do.

ANGLE ON: MILES/NATASHA AS THEY STARE AT SAM ACROSS THE ROOM

MILES

(discretely)

Sam's always struggled with this. She ran away from home at sixteen to become a ballerina.

NATASHA

A ballerina?

MILES

Yeah, it didn't work out, but she started coming to our shows and became obsessed. Then I asked her to join the group.

INT. JACK & SAM'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Sam stares intensely at her laptop. HuffPost reads, "Weekend Live adds Jack Mercer, Al Donovan, & more!" (It's 2:21 AM.)

INT. THE COMMUNE APARTMENT - ALLISON'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Allison reads the same article: "Weekend Live Adds Jack..."

INT. THE COMMUNE APARTMENT - COMMUNAL WORKSPACE - NIGHT

Bill reads "Weekend Live Adds Jack Mercer..."

INT. LINDSAY'S PARENTS' APARTMENT BUILDING- BEDROOM - NIGHT

Lindsay takes a hit from her pipe then breathes the smoke into a sploof. She reads "Weekend Live Adds Jack Mercer..."

INT. THE COMMUNE APARTMENT - MILES' BEDROOM - NIGHT

Miles reads "Weekend Live Adds Jack Mercer..." in bed.
Natasha quietly gets dressed.

MILES

Where you going?

NATASHA

(buttoning her shirt)

I feel like a whore.

MILES

(getting dressed)

What? No! We had a great time.

NATASHA

You're, like, forty.

INT. THE COMMUNE APARTMENT - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Miles, shirtless, stares at his flabby chest. He picks up a hand-held mirror to look at all angles of his hairline.

MILES

(to himself)

I just turned thirty six.

INT. JACK & SAM'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Sam lies in bed, laptop open. Jack brings her some tea in a mug that says "Sam the Coffee Monster." She sips it.

JACK

I'll talk to Timothy...

SAMANTHA

Jack, I'm just happy for you.

JACK

What happened, Sam? I mean, I know you couldn't have just been twenty minutes late.

SAMANTHA

It doesn't matter.

JACK
I'll get you another audition. I'll
talk to Timothy.

SAMANTHA
(lying)
I don't want that.

Jack stares at her, not sure whether to believe her. They
stare forward in silence. Neither knows what to say.

INT. "IMPROV FOR AMERICA" THEATER - BONNIE'S OFFICE - DAY

Sam sits across from Bonnie. An intern carries a computer
monitor out of the office as the two women talk.

BONNIE
I begged you, Sam. Ya know...at a
certain point you have to start
showing up for your own life.

Sam takes this in.

SAMANTHA
But maybe I could take over the
theater when you retire. I could
find a new space...

BONNIE
Sam, I'm not sure you understand
what I do. I file payroll taxes. I
manage a staff. I wake up at six
and show up here.
(points at file cabinet)
You're a wonderful performer
but...you're always late. You're
not dependable. You're a flake.

This hurts Sam. She gets up, awkwardly, and exits, then...

EXT. NYC STREET - MAGIC HOUR

Sam walks with Miles.

MILES
I need you to teach my classes.

SAMANTHA
Why?

MILES
I can't take it. Another one of my
students gets my dream job and I'm
still teaching 101?
(MORE)

MILES (CONT'D)

I need to focus on writing and performing. For myself. For me. I'm gonna submit to Weekend Live and I'm gonna get the job.

SAMANTHA

Good for you, Miles. But...I don't know if I can teach your classes.

MILES

Why?

SAMANTHA

I'm no good on my own.

They walk for a beat. Miles thinks on this. They arrive at the theater. In the window there are CONSTRUCTION PERMITS ("concrete pouring", "electrical permit", etc.) Sam takes this in: This is really happening.

INT. "IMPROV FOR AMERICA" THEATER - STAGE - NIGHT

Commune (minus Jack) improvises as the pianist backs them.

SAMANTHA

(singing like a lunatic)
This is the place we used to live!

MILES

(singing)
And this is the place I'm moving in!

ALLISON

(singing)
This is the place I buy my coffee!!

INT. "IMPROV FOR AMERICA" - GREEN ROOM - NIGHT

The group packs up their stuff. Allison takes out her hemp soap and goes to wash her hands, but the sink is gone. Piping coming out of the walls, knobs exposed. Bonnie enters.

BONNIE

Hey guys, this is Lou. He's a theater producer who was at the show tonight.

LOU, 70s, a warm, charming relic of old New York, enters.

LOU

That was some show, guys.

ALL

(overlapping)
Oh thanks. /Thank you, sir.

LOU

Read about your friend Jack in the trades. Big stuff.

ALL

Thanks. /Yeah./ It's great.

LOU

Usually with a group like this, there's one breakout star. With you guys, it's everybody.

They all nod, especially Miles. It's practically his mantra.

LOU (CONT'D)

Heard about the theater. I'm sorry. The city has lost seventy great theaters in the last decade. Truthfully, watching you guys really struck a chord.

(handing them card)

Lou Bindle. I think we could move this show uptown. Off Broadway. In one of these jazz clubs, like Birdland. Or at the 45th Street Lounge. That way you make a cut of the door, the house makes drinks. You know this show is special, right?

They nod sheepishly, appreciating the compliment.

LOU (CONT'D)

(exiting)

Drop me a line. We'll make some dough.

INT. EAST VILLAGE BAR - NIGHT

The Commune at their regular table. Now they are a meager three people. Bill looks at the card.

BILL

I respect him as a businessman but I don't know if it's our thing.

MILES

Bill, we don't have a thing. We don't have a theater.

ALLISON

(getting up, to Bill)

So I'll see you at nine.

BILL

Can we do nine thirty?

MILES

What are you guys working on?

ALLISON

Writing packet for "Weekend Live."

MILES

I'd love to get in on that.

BILL

(awkward beat)

What do you mean?

MILES

Like, I'd submit with you guys.

BILL

Writing teams are twos.

MILES

(hurt)

Right. Yeah. I don't care. I'll submit on my own.

INT. THE COMMUNE APARTMENT- LIVING ROOM - DAY

Allison writes in her moleskin as she brainstorms with Bill.

ALLISON

(reading from Moleskin)

Okay...So...You know those car ads where it keeps saying "real people. not actors." over and over again? and then they let those people sit inside the Chevys they have in the showroom and they're all like, "Wow, this is a Chevy? awesome!" It's that but one of the people hates cars, one of them lost their child in a car accident, and one of them is sexually attracted to cars.

Bill laughs. Allison smiles. She tears out the moleskin pages and rips them up into pieces. Walks to the kitchen...

BILL

Data, you have to stop this.

Allison puts them in the kitchen sink and runs water on them.

INT. "WEEKEND LIVE" - WRITING OFFICE - NIGHT

Jack sits across from his office mate ROBBIE, 20s, slicker and better looking than you'd imagine a comedy writer.

JACK

Maybe like a cocktail party where celebrities say things they've actually said on twitter? Like Kanye says, "I just fucked Kim so hard."

ROBBIE

Yeah, and then Anthony Wiener is just walking around showing people dick pics on his phone?

JACK

And then Alec Baldwin calls everyone a faggot and leaves.

They laugh. Outside the office two staff members argue as they walk by: WRITER TERI and PRODUCER JEAN.

WRITER TERI

(holding wooden duck)

These are, like, cartoon eye balls. Not duck eye balls.

PRODUCER JEAN

Nobody knows what duck eye balls look like.

WRITER TERI

They're brown irises with black dots in the middle.

PRODUCER JEAN

Who gives a fuck, Teri? The sketch was stupid and unfunny, and that's why it got cut, not because of some fucking duck pupils.

Jack and Robbie make eye contact and cringe.

ROBBIE

(discretely)

Not sure Teri's gonna be here much longer.

Jack cringes, then picks up stress ball and squeezes it.

JACK

Hey...some friends of mine are submitting writing to the show. What's a good time to talk to Timothy?

ROBBIE

Never.

(MORE)

ROBBIE (CONT'D)

(then)

I mean...worry about yourself. First year is all about not getting fired.

Jack takes this in.

INT. "IMPROV FOR AMERICA" REHEARSAL BASEMENT - DAY

Sam paces nervously, teaching a class. (That includes Gary, Josh, and Natasha)

SAMANTHA

It's all about...ya know...when you're on stage...or in class...with your scene partner...trust...Ya know'...With my group, the Commune, ...my old group...I mean, we're working on keeping the group together...but anyway, we try to create a group mind. Where we're all working for the same...goal.

Sam looks at the students. They struggling to follow her.

INT. 45TH STREET LOUNGE - DAY

Commune (minus Jack) tours with Lou. A beautiful space. An actual Steinway piano. Slicker than "Improv For America."

LOU

It's a lovely room.

BILL

Is this a Steinway?

LOU

Biggest one in the city.

LOU (CONT'D)

The rent with union and all will be about six grand.

LINDSAY

For one night?

LOU

Yeah. So...maybe we book that one night. If it sells out, we book a run. Six weeks. Eight weeks. We'd have to split the risk fifty fifty. So you guys would have to front 3K.

ALLISON

Lou, we don't...none of us have money.

LOU

I can't carry this thing on my back.

(They hesitate.)

Look, you got fans. Family. You could probably put together three grand on Kickstarter in a day.

The group considers this. This could be their shot.

INT. LINDSAY'S PARENTS' ESCALADE- THE HIGHWAY - DAY

Lindsay drives Bill, Allison, Miles, and Sam. Angle on: Allison's laptop screen. It's a Kickstarter called "Save The Commune!" It says "\$1121" out of a goal of "\$3000."

ALLISON

So Jack's kicking in a thousand.

BILL

And we could each kick in, like, two or three hundred as a base, right?

SAMANTHA

(tentative)

I could probably do that...yeah.

MILES

Lindsay, don't you have...

(delicate)

Like...your parents have money?

LINDSAY

My parents have money, yes.

BILL

Could we ask...them?

LINDSAY

I don't get along with my parents.

BILL

Right. Yeah.

MILES

Are you working right now? Are you applying for anything?

LINDSAY

Unemployment.

MILES

Unemployment? Your parents have a penthouse on the upper east side.

LINDSAY

Yeah, they do. I'm separate from them.

MILES

You go to therapy twice a week. Who pays for that?

LINDSAY

I'm not having this conversation.

INT. BILL'S DAD'S HOUSE- BEDROOM - NIGHT

Miles and Lindsay carry linens into the bedroom where Bill finishes making a plate for his dad and starts to feed him. Gerald is in a home-care hospital bed. A nurse, LUPE, 30s, helps with Gerald's fluids.

MILES

I just think it's weird that you're the richest one of us technically and you get checks from the government that we, in some way, pay for.

LINDSAY

Why is it weird?

BILL

Miles, you gotta let this go.

MILES

I think we're close enough to have this conversation. If we weren't close, no one would bring it up.

Lindsay is privately hurt.

EXT. BILL'S DAD'S HOUSE - BACKYARD POOL AREA- NIGHT

Bill pours dog food into a bowl as BENNETT THE DOG digs in. The rest of the Commune lounges by the POOL as Sam swims. Miles wanders around, enamored by this big country home.

MILES

We should get your dad to pay for the show.

LINDSAY

You could be like "Dad, I need five thousand dollars and he'd be like,
(MORE)

LINDSAY (CONT'D)

"Thank youuuu.." And you'd like, "I think that's a yes.

The group laughs. Bill organizes mail and piles of paperwork.

BILL

(opening envelope)

My dad ordered tickets to the Marshfield High School production of Peter Pan.

ALLISON

Your dad really likes high school theater.

BILL

He's nostalgic for when I used to be the star of every play. I'm the biggest disappointment this town has ever seen. My career is like a parabola.

ALLISON

Mine too. I won the Kennedy Center award for most promising college cartoonist. I haven't published a single book.

MILES

Then what are you always sketching in your notebook?

ALLISON

It's a graphic novel.

BILL

What's it about?

Allison pulls out her notebook and shows a few drawings that correspond with her storytelling...

ALLISON

It's about a girl who's a sculptor in a small town. So the town saves up money for her to go to a sculpting academy. And she gets there and she never sculpts again.

MILES

Why?

ALLISON

She's intimidated because everyone is so good.

LINDSAY
What's it called?

ALLISON
"The Best in my Town."

MILES
Can I read it?

ALLISON
I haven't finished it.

INT. BILL'S DAD'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The Commune peacefully lies asleep in various positions as a pretty fire blazes in the fireplace. Bill on couch. Allison on the floor. Sam snuggles with Miles. Lindsay on a recliner.

INT. BILL'S DAD'S HOUSE - KITCHEN- MORNING

Allison and Bill drink coffee and brainstorm.

ALLISON
(infomercial voice)
Feeling guilty about watching the NFL? So do we. That's why we invented the Robot Football League. When one of these robots beats his robot wife, it's no big deal, because she's just a robot. And when one of these robots gets a degenerative robot brain disease, no big deal! We just recycle the robot and build a new robot.

Bill laughs. Allison tears out the pages and rips them up, then sticks them in a burning scented candle.

BILL
No, Data. No!

MILES
(entering)
Morning guys. What's going on?

An awkward moment as Miles looks down at Allison's pad.

INT. LINDSAY'S PARENTS' ESCALADE - DAY

CU on Miles as he drives The Commune in silence.

INT. COPY SHOP - DAY

Miles buys a notebook that looks like Allison's.

EXT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Through the window we see Miles writing in his new notebook.

INT. "IMPROV FOR AMERICA" THEATER - NIGHT

End of show applause. (The theater now deeper in decline-stripped paint, a sign that says "Load-bearing Wall.")

SAMANTHA

Thanks, everybody. As you know, Improv for America is closing in two weeks but The Commune is sticking together.

(applause)

Thanks. We're raising money to mount our show in a new theater. We'd love to bring you guys from here to there. So we have a kickstarter...

Bill pulls out a portable projector screen and hooks up a laptop to a projector. The screen has their "Save the Commune" Kickstarter page, which is at "\$1331" out of "\$3000."

MILES

We're also gonna pass around Bill's fedora from college....

Bill holds up a fedora. Audience laughs. He hands it around.

BILL

If you could throw in a dollar or five or twenty it would really help.

An audience member throws in a few bucks and passes it on.

INT. EAST VILLAGE BAR - NIGHT

CU on Bill counting the cash as Commune sits at their table.

BILL

Thirty two bucks. Not good.

Allison grabs the cash to recount. Miles joins the table with LIZ, 36, but somehow feels more mature.

MILES

Guys, this is Liz. We went to Naperville High School together.

ALL

(preoccupied)

Hey, Liz. /Hi.

LIZ

I've been following Miles' facebook posts for years about the Commune. I'm so jealous. We did high school theater together.

MILES

Yeah, we did "A Midsummer Night's Dream" and we had to help each other get changed.

LIZ

I forgot about that.

MILES

I never have.

The group smiles politely.

LIZ

I just got back from Brazil. I was on this silent meditation retreat where you're living with complete strangers and no one speaks.

No one responds. Then Allison realizes it...

ALLISON

(recounting money)

Sorry, we're just a little preoccupied with our...we're raising money.

LIZ

I threw a twenty in the fedora.

Liz grabs the fedora and models it. The group smiles politely. They're not terrible but not super supportive either.

MILES

(sensing it's weird)

We're gonna head out.

INT. "IMPROV FOR AMERICA"- BONNIE'S OFFICE - DAY

Sam packs boxes. She stumbles on a book called "Something wonderful Right Away." She puts it in her bag.

INT. JACK & SAM'S APARTMENT- BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jack does situps in his muscle shirt as Sam reads "Something Wonderful: An Oral History of Improv Theater" in bed.

SAMANTHA

(nodding, reading)

Paul Sills had this great quote about improv in the seventies. He said, "The art that's most exciting right now is impermanent and not meant to last except as an act of love. It comes out between people. It doesn't want to be written down. It passes in a moment and disappears."

JACK

So for tomorrow I can get you seats or you can just in my dressing room.

SAMANTHA

(beat, then)

I don't know if I can go back to that building.

Jack stops mid-situp. He's hurt.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

No, I'll come.

JACK

No, it's okay.

SAMANTHA

No, I know it means it a lot.

JACK

It's cool. You can come to the party.

It sits there.

INT. THE COMMUNE APARTMENT - MILES' BEDROOM - NIGHT

Miles opens the door for Liz.

MILES

Watch your head on the pipe. So this is it. Not huge, but neither am I.

Liz opens what seems like a door. It's a small closet.

MILES (CONT'D)

That's a closet. And you can sit down here if you want...

Miles points to the bed. It looks like a prison bunk.

LIZ

(laughing)

This is moving so fast.

MIKE

(standing up, laughing)
I'm sorry. It's the only furniture
in the room. Here...
(flipping trash can)
I can flip this over...

LIZ

I'm not staying here...

MILES

(lying)
No. I didn't think you would.

LIZ

I'm a thirty six year old woman.
I'm not gonna stay in your, like,
college dorm.

MILES

No, I know. I would never...
(pushing back the bed)
Let me walk you back to your hotel.

Miles leads Liz out...

EXT. A BROOKLYN HOTEL - NIGHT

Miles and Liz arrive in front of a hotel.

LIZ

So...thanks for getting me a ticket.

MILES

Sure, yeah. You should come tomorrow
night. We're watching Jack on TV.

LIZ

(thinks, then smiles)
Yeah. Yeah, I'll do that.

Liz leans over and kisses Miles. He's pleasantly surprised.

CUT TO:

Extreme close-up on a TV:

Our same recognizable jazz roars under a video montage of
cast members striking candid poses in New York City landmarks.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

It's Weeekend Liiiiive.
Starring...Alicia Bonham!!

Same shot of Alicia Bonham buying a donut from a food truck.

INT. THE COMMUNE APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

EXTREME CLOSE-UPS on our heroes as they watch Weekend Live.

ALLISON

This is crazy. Peter Charles is
gonna say Jack's name.

MILES

(discretely, to Liz)
We're gonna watch the show here, but
Jack is gonna get us into the party.

FULL SHOT OF THE TV...

WEEKEND LIVE ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

Featuring...Jack Mercer...

Jack's "candid" pose is him pulling the wheel off his bike.
Jack smiles at the camera. It doesn't feel quite sincere.

BACK TO: CLOSEUPS OF THE COMMUNE

MILES

Eh.

LINDSAY

Fuuuck.

ALLISON

He did it.

BILL

That's our guy.

LATER

ANGLE ON: TV

JACK

(as an old-timey ticket
taker)

Lookey here, I can get you tickets
at a low, low price!!

ANGLE ON: THE COMMUNE WATCHING TV

Miles takes a hit from a bowl.

MILES

Not funny. Skillful, but not funny.

ALLISON

It's like when someone says something
that sounds funny, but isn't funny.

Miles passes the bowl to Lindsay. She wants to take a hit, but makes a decision to pass it on to Allison.

INT. "WEEKEND LIVE" STUDIO - NIGHT

This week's host LENA DUNHAM speaks to a camera on the floor.

LENA DUNHAM
Please welcome, Elele!

ELEL plays "40 Watt."

ANGLE ON: Jack watches in awe. This might be the coolest moment of his life. Robbie pats him on the back. He shares a smile with Lena. Music continues...

INT. THE COMMUNE APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

The Commune watches "ELEL" on TV, deflated.

INT. THE COMMUNE APARTMENT - KITCHEN - NIGHT

The group sits around the table, drinking beers. Lindsay applies makeup. Miles puts on a suit jacket in the mirror.

ALLISON
He did well.

ALL
(overlapping)
Yeah/Totally.

ALLISON
He was technically only in that one thing as an old-timey movie ticket thing, but yeah, he was good in that.

SAMANTHA
He was really good in that.

MILES
It is interesting that...like, any of us could have done that part.

LINDSAY
Right. And Jack is super talented...

ALL
(overlapping)
Yeah. Of course. Super talented.

ALLISON

He's a good fit for it. Historically, they want young, impressionable people whose lives they can consume. It's the Scientology of comedy.

BILL

It's true. Cults always target good looking people. Jack is good looking.

MILES

He's "comedy" good looking.

SAMANTHA

He's good looking.

LINDSAY

Jack looks like Frankenstein if they gave up right in the middle.

EXT. THE COMMUNE APARTMENT - NIGHT

The group sits on their stoop as Bill shouts into the phone.

BILL

(into phone)

Jack, it's us! Tell us where the after-party is and we'll meet you.

(hanging up)

He told me to call and he'd meet us.

LINDSAY

Are you sure he wants us to come?

SAMANTHA

He wants us to come.

ANGLE ON: BILL'S PHONE RINGING.

BILL

It's Jack...

(then, into phone)

Hey!

JACK (O.S.)

Hey, it's at the...

BILL

Can't hear you, Jack.

JACK (O.S.)

Meet me at the...

BILL

Shout it, Jack. Shout the location.

JACK (O.S.)
 ...Time Warner...Super low battery...

BILL
 (shouting)
 Shout it, Jack. We got nothin'!!

Bill presses end, redials.

JACK (O.S.)
 (outgoing VM on speaker)
 Hey it's Jack, I probably won't call
 you back but I will listen to the
 message on speakerphone with my
 friends. My new friends. Not you.
 Kidding. Leave a message.

BILL
 (kicking the stairs)
 Dammit!!!
 (recoiling in pain)
DAMMIT!!!

Silence for a few seconds.

ALLISON
 Not a fan of Jack's new voicemail.

BILL
 (limping)
 I'm gonna go to Time Warner.

MILES
 That's not where the party is.

BILL
 I'll wait outside. I'm sure he's
 looking for us somewhere.

MILES
 Liz and I aren't doing that. We're
 thirty six year old adults.

Liz squeezes Miles' hand. She likes his conviction.

EXT. TIME WARNER BUILDING - NIGHT

Miles, Liz and the Commune approach a mob of oddball AUTOGRAPH
 SEEKERS and paparazzi with cameras, 8 by 10s, and sharpies.
 Lena Dunham walks out to copious flashbulbs and enters an
 Escalade which leaves. They arrive at the security barriers.

LINDSAY
 (to an autograph seeker)
 You think more of 'em will come out?

AUTOGRAPH SEEKER
I think that's it.

ALLISON
Handwriting samples are used in murder
trials more often than DNA.

AUTOGRAPH SEEKER
(creeped out)
Okay.

Sam notices he's holding a photo of Jack, clearly pirated.

SAMANTHA
Where'd you get that one?

AUTOGRAPH SEEKER
I don't know who this is. I found
it on a message board.

SAMANTHA
It's my boyfriend.

Autograph seeker smirks.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)
No, really. The part that's cut off-
(pointing)
That's my arm. Look familiar?

Samantha poses her arm like the photo.

AUTOGRAPH SEEKER
You guys are freaking me out.

MILES
I think we're gonna head home.

BILL
Yeah, I'm done.

A wide shot as this defeated team walks into the night.

INT. "STRIP HOUSE" STEAKHOUSE - NIGHT

Timothy waves Jack over to his private table, which is filled
with senior cast members, the indie band, celebrities. Jack
holds a martini glass that he struggles to keep level.

TIMOTHY
You were very good.

JACK
Thanks. It was...surreal. Thank you.

TIMOTHY

Don't thank me now. It's weak.
Thank me if I don't fire you after
the first season.

JACK

Ha. Right.

TIMOTHY

I'm kidding, but also not.
(then)
I got you something.

JACK

Oh. You didn't have to...

Timothy waves his assistant over, who carries a strange wooden Swedish bike. (Google-image "Swedish wooden bike.")

TIMOTHY

It's Swedish. When Bjork did the
show, she brought a designer named
"Artipelag" who makes them by hand.

Jack is touched. He looks around at the table. It's some cast members, the indie band. This is his new family.

INT. THE COMMUNE APARTMENT - MILES' BEDROOM - NIGHT

Miles and Liz lie in bed, post-coital.

LIZ

I'm heading back in the morning.

MILES

I feel kinda dumb. He did invite us.

LIZ

I was there to hang out with you.

This touches Miles.

LIZ (CONT'D)

I like you.

MILES

I like me too.

LIZ

You just said, "I like me too."

MILES

No, I didn't.

LIZ
Yeah, you did.

MILES
Well, the point is, I like you too.

Liz blushes as music swells into...

EXT. TIMES SQUARE - NIGHT

Jack rides his absurd Swedish bike. He's never been happier.

INT. JACK & SAM'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Sam asleep. Jack carries his insane Swedish bike into the bedroom. He puts it down, climbs in bed, a little drunk.

JACK
Hey!!!

SAMANTHA
(half-asleep)
Sleeping.

JACK
So it was nuts. Like, everyone
treated me like I belonged there.
It was...It's like I understood what
it meant to be an adult...Timothy
gave me this, it's like...
(picking up bike)
Bjork's bike maker made it.

Jack kisses Sam, caresses her hips.

SAMANTHA
(half asleep)
You did so good.

JACK
(coming on to her)
Thanks. Yeah.

SAMANTHA
(pushing him away)
You should have had sex with one of
the ladies at the party.

JACK
I don't want to have sex with them.
I want to have sex with you...

Jack holds on to Sam. Sam kicks him, which causes him to
throw up. Jack grabs towels and wipes the comforter.

INT. THE COMMUNE APARTMENT - MILES' BEDROOM - DAY

Miles wakes up, looks across the bed. Liz is gone.

INT. THE COMMUNE APARTMENT - KITCHEN - DAY

Miles enters, where Liz sits at the kitchen table, distraught, holding a coffee and a Rite Aid bag.

MILES

What happened?

LIZ

Sorry. Something's been on my mind. I snuck out early this morning to go to a pharmacy...and I'm pregnant.

MILES

That was fast.

LIZ

(laughing/crying)

It's not you, idiot. I met this guy in Brazil. And I'm pretty sure...

MILES

Silent guy? You didn't even talk?

LIZ

Yeah, anyway...

MILES

Is he gonna be the dad?

LIZ

No. He's young.

MILES

Illegal? Like fifteen?

(Liz laughing)

'Cause I can keep a secret.

LIZ

The first thing I thought when I found out was "I can't keep it" Then it hit me: "I'm not nineteen."

Miles thinks on this. Neither is he.

INT. "IMPROV FOR AMERICA" - REHEARSAL BASEMENT - DAY

Sam teaches in a room that is in transition. Paint swatches and blueprints on the wall. Two by fours, makeshift tables, sawhorses and plywood, plastic on stacks of chairs.

SAMANTHA

(teaching)

It was Del Close who originally said,
"Don't think" and that's everything.
You don't think. You don't
memorize...

GARY

You don't get paid.

The class laughs.

SAMANTHA

Maybe not, but isn't that cool, too?

Sam's phone rings. She glances down: "Lou Bindle"

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

Excuse me a sec.

(then, tucking away)

Hi, Lou. What's up?

LOU (O.S.)

Sam, we had a hold on the 45th street
lounge but someone challenged the
hold with cash. Since we don't have
the deposit, we're losing the slot.

SAMANTHA

We haven't raised the full amount.

LOU (O.S.)

Then we'll have to punt.

INT. JACK & SAM'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM- DAY

Sam digs in her suitcase. Inside that is a bundle of
sweaters. She squeezes out the small, WEATHERED TOOL BAG.
She takes the bag of cash and stuffs it in her backpack.

EXT. OLD CHINATOWN BUILDING - DAY

Sam, Lindsay, Bill, and Allison approach. Bill stares at
the Lou Bindle business card: Is this it?

INT. STAIRCASE IN CHINATOWN BUILDING - DAY

Sam, Lindsay, Bill and Allison walk up a dingy set of stairs
in an old building, unsure if this is the right place.

Floor 3: They look and see a dirty butcher operation. Meats,
chickens, fish. Walking, walking. Now they're sweaty.

Floor 5: They arrive, see the door for "701" and look through
the window where ten Chinese ladies sit at sewing machines.

They're confused. Sam knocks lightly, opens the door a crack.

SAMANTHA
We're looking for Lou Bindle?

The ladies respond to her in Chinese and continue working. Sam scans the room and spots Lou in a second room.

LOU
Sam! Guys! Come in!!

Lou jogs over, takes Sam's hand and leads her through the sewing room.

LOU (CONT'D)
Sorry about all this. These women are here temporarily.

CHINESE SEWING LADY
Fuck you, Lou Bindle.

LOU
Hey!! Hey!

Lou closes the door but we can still hear the sewing machines.

INT. LOU'S CHINATOWN OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Sam takes out an envelope of cash and the fedora with some change in it.

SAMANTHA
We have the full three thousand.

She takes the cash out of her tool bag and counts out a thousand in fifties. The tool bag is now empty. Lou puts on the fedora and smiles.

INT. JACK & SAM'S APARTMENT - DAY

Sam enters: sweaty, tired, broken. Awaiting her is a flower arrangement you'd imagine Prince William might give Kate. Jack is making a smoothie in a fancy Vitamix machine (the box is nearby.) He brings her the smoothie in a wine glass.

JACK
(old-timey voice)
"Ain't I married to the most beautiful lady in all Williamsburg?"

SAMANTHA
(old-timey voice)
Well, I don't know what to say...

Jack puts his arms around Sam.

JACK
 (as himself)
 Timothy recommended this place that imports flowers from Holland. He gave them to Dorothy Goodwin when she went into rehab.

SAMANTHA
 Oh. Wow. Rehab flowers.

JACK
 (laughing)
 Sorry about what happened with the party....I just want you to know that we're gonna get through this.

SAMANTHA
 I know...

JACK
 No, I just...it's really important that I'm communicating to you that we need each other right now. I need you to stick with me even though I'm not my best.

SAMANTHA
 I will.

JACK
 (holding her)
 Am I communicating enough?

SAMANTHA
 (lying)
 Yeah.

Jack walks into the bedroom, strips and throws on a towel.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)
 Are you coming to our show tonight?

JACK (O.S.)
 I can't. It's a writing night.

Sam has a private moment where she feels their distance.

INT. "IMPROV FOR AMERICA" THEATER - GREEN ROOM - NIGHT

The Commune (minus Jack) warms up. The backstage is STRIPPED. Two random dudes carry the couch out as the group warms up. The room is stark white, open boxes, posters half-hanging.

INT. "IMPROV FOR AMERICA" - STAGE - NIGHT

Sarah jogs out and pulls one of the chairs, leaving five. Seth the pianist walks across the stage holding a synthesizer and a mini amp. He sits down where the piano once was. He starts playing, but the sound is small.

INT. "IMPROV FOR AMERICA" THEATER- GREEN ROOM- NIGHT

Commune taps the "Improv For America" sign as they exit.

INT. "IMPROV FOR AMERICA" THEATER - BACKSTAGE TUNNEL - NIGHT

Commune makes its way through darkness. Hugs, back-patting.

INT. "IMPROV FOR AMERICA" THEATER - STAGE - NIGHT

MILES

(holding up a flier)

Great news. Tickets are now on sale
for our show at the 45th Street
Lounge.

The pianist plays some celebratory chords but it sounds muted.

HECKLER

Will Jack be there?

MILES

(wind out of his sails)

He has a show that night, but it's
sort of an experiment...so if our
show sells out we'll have a lot more
shows there and he will definitely
be at those.

Some "aws" from the audience.

MILES (CONT'D)

If you knew him better, you wouldn't
"aw" so much.

HECKLER

How much are tickets?

ALLISON

They're forty five bucks. But maybe
down the road there'll be discounts.

LINDSAY

(interrupting)

But don't wait for "down the road"
because we have to make sure there
is a road.

BILL
 (a little pathetic)
 I know it's more expensive, you guys.
 But we're trying to keep this show
 alive. So...sorry.

Awkward silence.

MILES
 Okay, so did anyone have a hard day
 they'd like to share with us?

HECKLER
 We're sad Jack isn't here.

Audience laughter. This hurts. The Commune struggles to
 keep a poker face. Allison initiates a scene.

ALLISON
 (eulogizing)
 He was a great man.

SAMANTHA
 (joining in)
 I loved him dearly.

BILL
 (hugging Sam)
 He was young. Not that young. He
 actually had terrible skin.

ALLISON
 He's the kind of guy who you'd talk
 to at a party and he'd be looking
 over your shoulder for someone more
 important...but you'd hardly notice.

SAMANTHA
 Yeah, it's like he thinks he's better
 than you, but not that much better.

LINDSAY
 He's the kind of guy you can talk to
 and he'll say "Uh huh. Uh huh." But
 really, he's just waiting for his
 next turn to talk.

Miles enters from offstage like a messenger.

MILES
 Friends, I have terrible news. Turns
 out Jack is really popular in heaven.
 He has new friends. And they're
 holding a funeral for him in Brooklyn.
 (MORE)

MILES (CONT'D)
 (pantomiming a casket)
 They have his body.

They look inside the empty casket, feel around.

LINDSAY
 Are we invited to that funeral?

MILES
 The bar part, but there's some velvet
 rope stuff that's pretty A-list.

Big laugh, and then in the middle of that...

HECKLER
 Jack is better than you guys!

Miles shrinks.

EXT. NYC STREET - NIGHT

Liz consoles Miles.

LIZ
 I thought it was funny.

MILES
 Those fucking idiots don't know how
 good that show was.

LIZ
 I'm heading home in the morning.

Miles thinks.

MILES
 Hey, if you knew a guy in NYC who
 had a sweet new apartment, do you
 think you and this little Brazilian
 baby might visit?
 (she smiles)
 No, seriously. I think about you all
 the time and if you're not feeling
 similar feelings then I think you
 have to tell me right now.

Liz kisses him. He blushes.

INT. A FANCY BROOKLYN BRUNCH SPOT - DAY

Jack and Miles sit in front of a half-eaten brunch.

MILES
 So, Liz is pregnant.

JACK

Congrats.

MILES

(correcting him)

Someone else's kid. But...anyway...I have a plan. I'm gonna visit her this week, and I may help raise the kid. But, if I moved Liz here she could live with me and if I get the writing job at Weekend Live I could support her and the baby.

JACK

(beat)

Miles, I'll put in a good word for you, but it's not my job to give.

MILES

Yeah, I know. But, I think they'll want me, right? I mean...

Awkward beat as Miles waits for Jack to finish his sentence.

JACK

I'm gonna recommend all you guys.

The waiter drops the check. Jack hands off his card.

MILES

I mean...I taught you everything, Jack. They'll want me, right?

Jack is tense.

EXT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Allison and Bill sit with Jack on a bench with coffees.

ALLISON

(pulling out a binder)

Here's our writing packet.

JACK

(deflated)

Got it.

ALLISON

It was very hard for me to hand that to you, so...respect it.

JACK

Okay...um, I'm gonna recommend all of you guys. Lindsay, Miles...

BILL

Miles? Miles isn't even a writer.

ALLISON

Lindsay's never held a job for six weeks.

BILL

And between us, the doctors put this metal rod in my dad's spine. We didn't have to pay for all of it, but our share alone is, like, twenty thousand dollars.

Jack nods, exhausted, heavy with the pressure.

INT. "WEEKEND LIVE" - WRITING OFFICE - NIGHT

Jack chews his pen nervously as he tacks to the idea-board a card that reads "Matrix 6: Cheeseburger Matrix," among 40 other "Keanu Reeves" ideas. Robbie lies on the couch surrounded by four empty coffees and gross takeout.

JACK

They think I'm on the top but I'm on the bottom of the top.

ROBBIE

(noticing something)

Hey, I think your pen maybe...

We cut to Jack who has ink all over his face. He looks in the mirror and sees this. Robbie hands him a paper towel. Jack reaches for the Poland Spring dispenser but there's no water left. He grabs a 5 GALLON JUG and puts it on but he's too tired and it crashes on the floor. Water everywhere.

JACK

(rubbing eyes)

What time is it?

Jack looks at the clock: 5:14 AM.

JACK (CONT'D)

If I invited the producers to my improv show do you think they'd come? I really want them to see Sam again.

ROBBIE

It's tough during the season.

(thinking)

I mean, if you can get the host to come, I bet they'd tag along.

JACK

Can I ask Keanu Reeves to come to my
improv show?

Robbie shrugs.

INT. "IMPROV FOR AMERICA" - BONNIE'S OFFICE

A stranger removes the dinosaur head wall bust and drops
forty bucks on Bonnie's desk. He exits and we follow him...

INT. "IMPROV FOR AMERICA" THEATER - GREEN ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The Commune warms up (minus Jack/Miles). Two CONSTRUCTION
WORKERS in paper facemasks power sand the wall, drowning out
the dialogue and creating clouds of joint compound dust.

SHY SARAH

(over the sanding)
Any sign of Jack?

ALLISON

No, let's do it.

BILL

What about Miles?

SAMANTHA

He's in Naperville with Liz...
(pointing to workers)
What are these guys doing?

LINDSAY

The new tenant is sanding the walls.

SAMANTHA

Who's the new tenant?

BILL

Urban Outfitters.

Sam storms into Bonnie's office.

INT. "IMPROV FOR AMERICA" - BONNIE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Bonnie on her laptop. The posters are gone, paint stripped.

SAMANTHA

Bonnie, we're trying to warm up and
they're sanding the walls.

Bonnie shrugs sheepishly and Sam storms out.

INT. "IMPROV FOR AMERICA" THEATER - GREEN ROOM - CONTINUOUS

As she returns, Jack jogs in, flanked by two Weekend Live producers and KEANU REEVES. Yes, Keanu Reeves.

JACK
I'm here!! I'm here. Sorry.

ALLISON
Whoa. That's Keanu Reeves.

JACK
Sarah, can you get these guys seats?

Shy Sarah leads them out. Sam goes to exit and tap the sign on the wall, but the sign is gone. She stops. CU on the empty wall with exposed wood and stripped paint.

INT. "IMPROV FOR AMERICA" THEATER - STAGE - NIGHT

The Commune on stage. The walls are now a stark WHITE.

SAMANTHA
Did anyone have a particularly hard day today?

AUDIENCE MEMBER 3
Ticket taker guy!!!

This embarrasses Jack. He shakes his head.

SAMANTHA
Um...that's just a character Jack did on TV. We need an actual...

AUDIENCE MEMBER 4
Keanu Reeves!!

SAMANTHA
That's just an audience member.

KEANU REEVES
(half waving)
Just watchin', thanks!

AUDIENCE MEMBER 5
Weekend Live!!

This embarrasses Jack. He puts his head in his hands.

SAMANTHA
Oh...kay...That's just the name of a television show.

Laughter. Jack initiates a scene.

JACK
 (old timey voice)
*Lookey here, I have a bushel 'a
 tickets. There isn't a show, but I
 do have tickets.*

Audience goes nuts. Applause. Group annoyed.

JACK (CONT'D)
 (to Sam)
Is that Gena Rowlands over there?

SAMANTHA
 No. It's not. I'm just a movie patron.

JACK
 (pimping her to do
 the impression)
 I'm pretty sure it's Gena Rowlands.

Sam shakes her head, refusing to play ball.

INT. EAST VILLAGE BAR - NIGHT

The Commune sulks. Jack joins the table with Keanu Reeves.

JACK
 Keanu, sit down!! This is my
 girlfriend Samantha. My improv group.

ALL
 Hey! Such an honor to meet you!

KEANU REEVES
 (sitting)
 Great show.

LINDSAY
 Thanks.
 (enamored)
 Wow. So when you were in the
 Matrix...like, where were you?

An awkward beat. Jack is embarrassed.

KEANU REEVES
 You mean where were we filming or
 where was my character, Neo?

ALL
 (overlapping)
 Oh my God. /Both.

KEANU REEVES

We filmed it in this studio in Sydney,
Australia and Neo...

(looking around,
pointing)

Hey, is that the bathroom?

JACK

Yeah. Second right.

KEANU REEVES

I'll be right back.

Keanu gets up. Jack waits a beat, then:

JACK

(discretely)

Guys, this isn't an interview.

ALL

(overlapping)

What? /What do you mean?

JACK

Stop asking him so many questions.
This isn't "Sixty Minutes."

LINDSAY

I think Keanu likes us.

JACK

He's being polite because you're
with me.

Sam is hurt. She notices her students at the bar.

SAMANTHA

(exiting)

Some of my students just showed up.
That's Gary and, ya know, I'm gonna
catch up with these guys...

JACK

Sam, why are you leaving?

SAMANTHA

I'm gonna leave before I get scolded.

INT. EAST VILLAGE BAR- BAR STOOLS AREA - NIGHT

Samantha is drunk, proselytizing to her students.

SAMANTHA

So there's two types of bad shows.

(MORE)

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

There's the bad show where everyone sells each other out on stage and no one hangs out afterwards and there's the bad show where you all go down as a group and laugh about it together at the bar. And you want your bad shows to be that one. Because this is about your friends. And your group.

JOSH

Yeah. I totally get that.

SAMANTHA

It's about the love. It's about the willingness to be broke and hit that rock bottom point together where you have a complete trust of your partner on stage.

JOSH

We're definitely broke. We all share a one bedroom in Bushwick.

SAMANTHA

And that's awesome! Way to live it, Josh. And I wanna see your place.

GARY

You can come over, like, any time.

SAMANTHA

I'll come over now.

INT. SAM'S STUDENTS' APARTMENT- NIGHT

It's the smallest apartment you could imagine six people living in. Beds and futons everywhere.

SAMANTHA

I love it. This is real, you guys. This is living.

LATER

Sam smokes a bong with the group.

LATER

Sam dances with the group to a boy band song from the 90s.

LATER

Sam introduces the group to a new improv warmup exercise.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

This is called "Blurt." So just go down the line and blurt out the first thing you think of when you see Connor.

Connor walks down the line and each person blurts:

GARY

You're fat.

NATASHA

You're dangerous.

JOSH

You're a little slow.

CONNOR

(laughing)

This game hurts my feelings.

The group laughs.

SAMANTHA

But we love you!!!

They all hug Connor in a drunken scrum.

INT. SAM'S STUDENTS' APARTMENT - DAY

Sam wakes up, groggy, gets her bearings. Grabs her stuff, throws it in a bag and exits.

INT. NYC SUBWAY CAR - DAY

Sam sits on the train scrolling through her texts. CU on phone: "Missed call: Jack" "Missed call: Jack" Text from Jack: "Where'd u go?" "R u ok??" Missed call: Jack." Text from Lou: "Meeting at my office @ 2?"

INT. LOU'S CHINATOWN OFFICE - DAY

Lou sits across from Commune with a printout of ticket counts.

LOU

Thirteen tickets? You said you had an audience.

ALLISON

No, you did.

LOU

I think you need a hook. What if you all wore tuxedos?

(MORE)

LOU (CONT'D)

What if the girls wore tuxedos and the boys wore dresses? And we called the show "Tuxedo Junction?" Or it's not improvised?

These are the most worst ideas. What are they going to do?

INT. COPY SHOP - DAY

Sam and Allison at a rental computer printing some color copies for "The Commune: One Night Only."

EXT. UNION SQUARE - DAY

Sam and Allison hand out fliers, pitching it to people who are, at best, sympathetic and polite. (Real people)

INT. OBSTETRICIAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Miles and Liz look at a scan of her baby.

INT. BILL'S DAD'S HOUSE - DAY

Bill cuts his dad's food. A nurse adjusts his IV fluids.

INT. "IMPROV FOR AMERICA" - GREEN ROOM - DAY

Bonnie, Sam, Sarah and interns strip posters and stickers from the walls, along with 8 X 10s of improv troupes. Sam puts the Commune's photo in her backpack. They pull down the wooden "Improv For America" sign. Sam eyes it.

INT. JACK & SAM'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Sam lugs the "Improv For America" sign into the apartment.

INT. "WEEKEND LIVE" - TIMOTHY'S OFFICE - DAY

Jack sits across from Timothy.

TIMOTHY

Jack, I'm cutting you from "jugglers with vertigo."

JACK

(hurt)

Oh, okay. Got it. Hey...um, here are some writing samples from some improvisers in my group.

Jack hands him three mini-binders.

JACK (CONT'D)

It's a talented bunch...

TIMOTHY
Jack, you should worry about yourself.

JACK
Oh, okay...?

Timothy puts the binders to the side.

TIMOTHY
You're not what we call a pure talent.
You're not a virtuoso. You're the
kind of player who needs to write
for himself. Or you'll be...
(signaling "out")
Ya know.

Timothy smiles. Jack nods, anxious.

INT. "WEEKEND LIVE" - WRITING OFFICE - DAY

Jack squeezes a stress ball, brainstorming with Robbie.

JACK
Okay, so we have "Death Obsessed
Child," "Passive Aggressive Cocktail
Party." None of it's gonna get on.

ROBBIE
Is there anything you've done in
your live shows?

JACK
(thinking)
Well, hm...

INT. 45TH STREET LOUNGE - NIGHT

The Commune (minus Jack) performs for a SPARSELY POPULATED
AUDIENCE of thirteen that includes Sam's students, Allison's
SAT student, Lou with a YOUNG DATE (who may be a call girl.)
They improvise in secondhand tuxedos.

INT. 45TH STREET LOUNGE- GREEN ROOM- NIGHT

Lou writes the settlement for the Commune (still in tuxedos).

LOU
(handing it to Bill)
Wasn't pretty. Ya' live and learn.

BILL
(reading the settlement)
What's this thousand dollars?

LOU
 Producer's fee.

SAMANTHA
 Who gets that?

LOU
 Who do you think? The producer. I
 ain't doin' this for free.

The group feels stung.

EXT. NYC STREET - NIGHT

The Commune walks, heads hung low. Bonnie walks next to Miles.

BONNIE
 (discretely)
 I heard from my guy at Weekend Live
 about your writing sample. It's not
 happening for you over there.

Miles takes this hard. How could this happen?

INT. THE COMMUNE APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Miles PUNCHES a wall. His fist goes through the wall.

BILL
 You're gonna have to caulk that.
 We'll get charged.

MILES
 I'm moving out anyway. Fuck this.

ALLISON
 What happened?

MILES
 Did Bonnie talk to you?

ALLISON
 Yeah, we got rejected.

BILL
 So none of us got it. Fuck.

They are broken. Lindsay glances at her phone. Miles turns
 on TV: "Weekend Live." Slowly, each drifts over to the TV.

ANGLE ON TV SCREEN:

JACK
 So it's got two bedrooms, a kitchen,
 a beautiful bathroom...

KEANU REEVES
Is that a toilet?

JACK
Well, obviously the bathroom is in
the kitchen.

KEANU REEVES
And then who are they?

JACK
Oh, these are two small orphans.

KEANU REEVES
Did you say two small orphans?

The audio of the sketch continues as, one by one, we see the
crushed faces of the Commune in EXTREME CLOSE-UP, betrayed.

MILES
He can't do that.

ALLISON
We improvised that scene. We created
that together.

BILL
We've been replaced by Keanu Reeves.

Miles gets up and puts on his coat. He holds up a card that
has party information on it.

MILES
I'm goin' to the party.

ALLISON
We can't just pretend it didn't
happen.

A private moment where Lindsay looks nervous.

INT. NYC SUBWAY CAR - NIGHT

The Commune stands on a subway car, pacing in their tuxedos.

INT. "STRIP HOUSE" STEAKHOUSE - NIGHT

The Commune walks through the party, a sea of A-Listers- Tom
Hanks, Lady Gaga, Lena Dunham. They arrive at Jack.

JACK
Hey, what are you guys doing here?

MILES

We watched the show, Jack. One of the sketches looked pretty familiar.

JACK

(leads them into corner)
We can talk about this, just not here. Just grab a drink and hang.

MILES

Not hanging. You're a fucking thief.

JACK

(grabbing Miles)
Miles, you don't understand what it's like to have a job like this. I've tried to sell you and it is not easy.

Miles PUNCHES Jack in the face. Jack goes to fight back but Bill grabs him, while Allison grabs Jack.

BILL/ALLISON/LINDSAY

Miles! /What are you doing? /What?!

A BOUNCER spots this and swoops in.

BOUNCER

(grabbing them)
You're going outside.

The bouncer drags the two of them across the room while the A-list celebs, among others, stare and cringe. The Commune trails in the wake, apologizing to people in the way.

BILL/ALLISON/LINDSAY

Sorry/Just here for one drink. /I like that alien cop thing you did.

They arrive at the exit and Jack eyes an apology to the bouncer. The bouncer releases Jack but bounces everyone else.

EXT. "STRIP HOUSE" STEAKHOUSE - NIGHT

The Commune stands in the street, unsure of what to say.

BILL

Miles, that wasn't the fucking plan.

MILES

It's just how I felt...

ALLISON

Don't ever drag us into shit like that again.

MILES

I stuck up for all of us. And I'm gonna go back in and tell Timothy that Jack stole that sketch.

ALLISON

Not with me.

BILL

Yeah. Fuck that, you psycho.

A beat. Miles looks over at Lindsay.

MILES

Lindsay? You comin'?

LINDSAY

I can't, Miles.

MILES

Why?

LINDSAY

(reluctantly)

I got the writing job at Weekend Live. I told Bonnie not to tell you. I was embarrassed.

The group is stunned.

ALLISON

Wait...really?

BILL

They gave it to you?

LINDSAY

Why is that a surprise?

ALLISON

I didn't know you were submitting.

MILES

You've never held a job for more than six weeks.

LINDSAY

They looked at my writing, not my experience making out with my students.

MILES

Fuck you, Lindsay. You've...

SAMANTHA

Guys, stop this.

MILES

Can't believe this shit.

(to Lindsay)

You have no idea what is like to work. Or struggle. Your parents are a multimillion dollar safety net. You're too big to fail.

SAMANTHA

Guys...!!

ALLISON/BILL

Miles, let's just go. / Let's call it a night-

LINDSAY

Miles, no one has the heart to tell you but you just don't have it. You really don't. I'm sorry. And if you didn't start the Commune, you wouldn't even be in the group.

Long silence. Miles looks around for someone to stick up for him. They don't. There's a deafening silence.

SAMANTHA

Guys, just everyone go home and sleep it off. It's our final show tomorrow.

MILES

I'm not improvising with this cunt.

SAMANTHA

Miles, stop it!!!

Sam grabs Miles. He pushes her off.

MILES

No. I won't. Fuck off, Sam...

SAMANTHA

I gave all my money to our show.

This stops everyone dead in their tracks.

ALLISON/BILL

What? /What do you mean?

SAMANTHA

The only savings I have, if you'd call it that, is two thousand dollars
(MORE)

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)
 my dad gave me before he killed
 himself when I was fifteen. And the
 night before he did it, he took me
 aside and handed me this bag of
 fifties and he said, "Do what you
 love or you'll hate your life." And
 then he said, "Don't give this to
 your mother." And I kept the money
 for fourteen years. And then I spent
 it on you guys. For the idea of us.
 Because I love you guys.

MILES
 I'm sorry, Sam.

Miles looks at Lindsay. He's still furious.

MILES (CONT'D)
 "Us" is over. I'm sorry.

Miles walks off. Allison and Bill drift off, unsure of what
 to say. Music swells as Sam wanders, alone. Cut to black.

INT. "IMPROV FOR AMERICA" THEATER - GREEN ROOM

Over black:

SHY SARAH (O.S.)
 Hey Sam, it's five minutes.

SAMANTHA (O.S.)
 Is there anyone else here?

SHY SARAH (O.S.)
 It's just you.

We fade from black to Sam's POV as she opens her eyes. Sam
 lies on the floor, face up. No one is around.

SAMANTHA
 Alright, hold on...

Sam stands up.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)
 Okay, let's call it.

SHY SARAH
 Are you sure?

SAMANTHA
 Yeah.

SHY SARAH

Cause...

(gathering her thoughts)

I think you could do the show alone.

This stops Sam dead in her tracks.

SAMANTHA

I can't do anything alone.

SHY SARAH

Well, all of us interns at the theater idolize you. We think you're a badass. You can do anything.

This moves Sam. Maybe she can.

INT. "IMPROV FOR AMERICA" SOUND BOOTH - NIGHT

The sound equipment is stripped so Shy Sarah shouts a capella.

SHY SARAH

Please welcome, The Commune!!

INT. "IMPROV FOR AMERICA" THEATER - NIGHT

Lights turn on as Sam enters stage alone. The elegance of the earlier lighting is gone. It's just the house fluorescents. The stage is bare. Rolled up rugs, buzz saws, stacked chairs, wood, unplugged stage lights on the floor.

SAMANTHA

(to audience)

Welcome to the Commune. It's a...small commune tonight. It's like a Commune after everyone drinks the Kool-Aid.

Laughter. Sarah pulls out all the chairs, one by one as she speaks until...there's just one chair.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

It's just me...But let's see how this goes.

CU on Sam as she sweats, wipes her brow, looks into the eyes of the audience members. They smile. She feels calmer.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

Has anyone had a particularly hard day?

AUDIENCE MEMBER 6

You have!!

Laughter. Sam smiles, embarrassed.

SAMANTHA

True. True. Good one, person who wishes he was on stage.

Laughter.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

No, it's true. I've had a...really hard month actually...

(thinking)

I'm fighting with my boyfriend. This theater is being made into an Urban Outfitters and another theater producer took all my money and now all of my friendships with the people in my group are falling apart too. I just feel like I'm in a...

(trying to find the right word, it sparks an idea for a scene)

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

(to imaginary partner)

Guys, I'm down here! In the well!

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

(playing other character, jogging)

Oh my God. Sam is in a well!! This is a disaster!!

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

(playing 3rd character)

Holy shit, she's stuck in a well.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

(as herself)

I'm okay, guys. It's actually kinda nice down here. There's water. It's not too bright. It's quiet. I can think.

(then)

I see a fish!

Sam becomes the physicality of a fish swimming by.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

(fish character voice)

I like it here too. It's all that a fish could ever want.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

(herself)

Hello, Mister Fish.

(then, being pelted)

Hey, quick throwing pennies!! I'm
down here!!!

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

(an Irish character
walking by)

*Sorry, me lady. I was just making a
wish for my dying Aunt Fiona.*

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

(as herself)

I understand. You can throw pennies
if you want...

(then)

Hey, is that my boyfriend Jack up
there?

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

(dumb version of Jack)

Yeah, that's me.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

(as herself)

I just want you to know...Don't worry
about me.

The real Jack enters from offstage, jogging in late, throwing
off his coat, and dropping his bag. From offstage...

JACK

I'm not worried, honey. I'm just
here to support you. Did you fall...
(feeling it out)
Into a well?

SAMANTHA

Yeah, but don't worry about it. I
like it here.

JACK

I'm lowering the bucket. I'll pull
you up.

SAMANTHA

You could never pull me up. I'm way
too heavy. Leave me here.

JACK

I'm not gonna leave you. I ate these
three magical beans to give me super
strength.

SAMANTHA

The beans I left on the table? Those are black beans from Chipotle.

JACK

But I hired a wizard to cast a spell on the beans and they give me super strength. I just dead-lifted a UPS truck.

Sam grabs the mimed bucket as Jack STRENUOUSLY PULLS HER UP.

SAMANTHA

(weighing down)

I don't know if you can do it!

JACK

(pulling)

I can do it! I can do it!

She falls down as she arrives at the top of the pantomimed well. He's holding her. It's sweet.

JACK (CONT'D)

I want you to marry me.

SAMANTHA

(laughing, this isn't real)

I can't. I can't.

Jack pulls out the diamond ring. Oh shit. This is real.

JACK

No really. I want us to get married.

Sam takes a beat.

SAMANTHA

I don't know why we would. I mean, we've grown apart.

JACK

But we don't have to. We can grow together...like one of those weird trees in the redwoods that wraps around another tree and shares root systems.

SAMANTHA

(not sure)

Okay...

JACK

We're just in a patch of weeds right now. But weeds are no match for trees...I want us to pollinate. And make more trees.

Jack holds on to Sam. He presents the ring.

JACK (CONT'D)

Will you marry me, Sam?

The pianist stops, then switches to "Here Comes the Bride." Sam starts sobbing.

SAMANTHA

I can't.

Laughter. The audience isn't sure what's happening. A long beat as no one is sure what to do or say next.

JACK

Sam, I fucked this whole thing up, but let's start fresh and get married.

SAMANTHA

No one fucked up. It's just...I've made choices and you've made choices and those choices led to other choices and this is where we are. And this
(pointing to them)
Isn't where we are. You saved me from the well, but maybe I belong in the well.

We fade to black.

SFX: The SHRIEK of a newborn.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

CU on a newborn being carried by a doctor. We follow her to Miles and Liz, ecstatic. She hands them the BABY BOY.

SAMANTHA (V.O.)

So before Weekend Live and Second City and Improv Olympic and The UCB and before all of these TV shows that were a byproduct of these theater movements...

INT. SAM'S REHEARSAL SPACE - STAIRWAY - DAY

Sam lugs the wooden "Improv For America" sign up stairs. Over a series of images we hear Sam in a continuous monologue.

INT. SAM'S NEW REHEARSAL SPACE - DAY

Sam hammers the sign onto wall of a new, smaller space. She is assisted by Shy Sarah.

SAMANTHA (V.O.)
Viola Spolin and Paul Sills and Del
Close and a bunch of people in Chicago
and San Francisco in the fifties and
sixties created this art form...

INT. SAM'S NEW REHEARSAL SPACE - DAY

Sam signs a lease with a young man in a suit.

INT. SAM'S NEW REHEARSAL SPACE - DAY

Sam teaches in a small, dilapidated space that has the original wooden "Improv for America" sign on the wall.

SAMANTHA (V.O.)
...By the people, for the people.
Improv is meant to reflect back
people's life experience in a way
that is cathartic...

INT. BILL'S DAD'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

Bill kneels by his dad and takes his pulse. Gets choked up. A BOYFRIEND we don't know, 30s, walks in, holds on to Bill.

SAMANTHA (V.O.)
Because life is a struggle. For a
lot of people...

INT. "WEEKEND LIVE" STUDIO- WRITERS ROOM - NIGHT

Jack, alone, writing with a coffee in the middle of the night.

SAMANTHA (V.O.)
And when you improvise with people
and for people it's actually a gift.
You may never perform in front of an
audience and that's awesome, too...

EXT. LINDSAY'S PARENTS' APARTMENT BUILDING - FOYER - DAY

Lindsay carries two big suitcases out of the building while the doorman carries a box for her into a taxi cab.

SAMANTHA (V.O.)
Because this isn't just about shows.
This is a way of looking at the world.

INT. LINDSAY'S NEW APARTMENT - DAY

Lindsay enters a humbler, empty apartment, her arms full of bags. She drops her stuff. It's a new start.

SAMANTHA (V.O.)
 Saying yes to the world when it feels
 like we should say no and seeing
 what opportunities that creates.
 And if you commit to this...

INT. SAM'S NEW REHEARSAL SPACE - DAY

We land in the location of Sam's voiceover. She teaches ten students in front of the "Improv For America" sign.

SAMANTHA
You'll always have that no matter
 what you do in your life.

NEW IMPROV STUDENT
 Is it true that you turned down an
 audition for Weekend Live?

SAMANTHA
 I'm not sure I'd say it like that,
 but...like you guys, I'm just still
 learning. I'm learning how to say
 yes. It's not easy.

The students take this in. This makes sense to them.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

A coffin on the altar. Bill eulogizes his dad.

BILL
 ...In some ways I got to know him
 better in his last six months than I
 ever did. So I'm lucky...

In the pews, we see Allison. Then Miles, Liz and their baby.
 Then Lindsay and Sam.

EXT. CHURCH - DAY

Jack speaks into the phone as the congregation lets out.

JACK
 (into phone)
 I know it's a fucking problem, but
 I'll be on the next train home. The
 episode will be fine.

(MORE)

JACK (CONT'D)
 (sees people exiting,
 gets more discrete)
 Well, look, I'm at a funeral. I
 can't be writing constantly...

INT. BILL'S DAD'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Commune sits on floor, drinking wine, surrounded by photos,
 candles, a Jenga tower, Bennett the dog, Miles' ADOPTED
 NEWBORN. The group sings for the baby, who is either amused
 or crying.

BILL
 Thanks for making it, guys. I know
 it's not the most convenient.

ALL
 (overlapping)
 Of course, Bill. Yeah. C'mon.

MILES
 (holding his son)
 Thanks for letting me and Liz and
 Rodrigo crash in the guest room.

BILL
 'Course. Ya know, he's got your eyes.

MILES
 He's not my biological son.

LINDSAY
 No, I think those are your eyes.

BILL
 And the consistency of the hair is
 very similar.

MILES
 (doing Bill's dad)
 Thank youuuuu....

BILL
 (laughing)
 Entirely unacceptable. He's dead.

ALL
 (overlapping, laughing)
 Sorry...I'm sorry...

BILL
 So Jack's car is gonna pick him up
 for the train and then we'll head
 over to the theater.

MILES

What's the theater?

BILL

My dad bought this old porn theater in downtown Philly that we're converting into an improv space.

ALLISON

We're gonna teach. Have shows...

BILL

We're gonna have a show for Data's graphic novel.

MILES

Jesus. You finished it, Data?

Allison pulls out a manuscript with a nice text treatment on a red cover: "The Best in My Town."

LINDSAY

How does it end?

ALLISON

She moves back to her town. And she sculpts for everyone she knows.

MILES

Isn't that sad?

ALLISON

No. Because she's learned that there's nothing wrong with being a big fish in a small pond as long as you're swimming.

They think on this.

SFX: A car beep.

Jack grabs his bag and goes to exit. He pauses. He takes in all that's happened between them.

JACK

I think I'll come see the theater with you guys.

SAMANTHA

Jack, it's the last train to New York. You're gonna wanna get on it. You're already cutting it close.

Jack and Sam share a moment. Will they kiss? They hug. More hugs. This is hard. The ending of a chapter in Jack's life.

JACK
Love you guys.

ALL
(overlapping)
Love you, pal. /Love you.

EXT. BILL'S DAD'S HOUSE - DAY

Jack gets into the Lincoln Town Car and it pulls away. The car shrinks in the distance. CU on Jack as he looks back. His friends wave goodbye.

INT. PHILADELPHIA THEATER SPACE - DAY

The Commune enters in a shot that mirrors the "45th Street Lounge" scene, except the room is dilapidated: dusty, broken chairs, popcorn on the floor. They look around, impressed.

BILL
It's gonna be a lot of work but it's ours and we can program it with young people we believe in and try to build an improv scene here in town.

Sam walks on stage, which is really just a six inch step-up.

SAMANTHA
Did anyone have a particularly hard day today?

A beat. They all smile.

BILL
(raising his hand)
I buried my dad.

Sam initiates a scene as an old man digging a hole. They all join in. We don't hear what they're saying but the camera stays on them: their expressions, their laughter, their ease with one another, purpose in knowing exactly what to do. The music swells and then we cut to black.

End of film.