

SIN CITY SAINTS

EPISODE 101: "RUSHIN' ROULETTE"

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ACT ONE

INT. SAINTS LOCKER ROOM - PRE-GAME

This could be any NBA locker room. Professional. Serious. **COACH DOUG PHELPS**, a tired 45, put-upon, personal life and health a distant second to basketball, stands at the white board diagramming offensive sets to his team.

COACH DOUG

Give them some intensity tonight.
I wanna see Bosh and the Bird Man
fighting over the puke bucket. On
the high pick and roll to LaDarius--

Suddenly, Internet billionaire and Saints owner **JAKE TULLIS**, 35, brash but lovable, lives on the brink of trouble, blows in, takes over. The players light up at seeing him. **KEVIN FREEMAN**, weathered Vegas lifer, beefy, Jake's body-man, hangs in the doorway. **BYRON SUMMERS**, 25, socially awkward African-American stats genius, lingers as well. Jake circles, fist-bumping, greeting players like he's one of them:

JAKE

P.J., Tuck, Kenny, white Kenny,
love you guys. Gary, Derek B, Barn-
Door. Awesome year so far. And
here is the man, LaDarius, baby!
(to the team) Quick question.
Anybody else make the All-Star
team? Show of hands?

The players love this. Jake approaches star LaDarius Pope, 20, tall.

JAKE (CONT'D)

(re: LaDarius, exuberant) Love
this guy. Can a man kiss another
man on the lips with tongue without
it being weird?

LADARIUS

Don't even play.

A much shorter Jake hugs him, then.

JAKE

I want to get serious for a minute.
Now, I'm not in here to lay a bunch
of motivational Coach Carter Phil
Jackson meditation beads bullshit
on you guys. You're smarter than
that. But close your eyes.

They do.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Focus on my words and hear them. People say to me, "Why would you buy an expansion team?" I tell them I didn't buy it because I needed a toy, got plenty of toys, or a status symbol, or to bed endless streams of women who are physically so far out of my league it's like I'm a Make-A-Wish kid who's going off to war or something. (beat, they smile) You know why I bought it? Because I missed the rush. The anxiety and the heartbreak and the action that comes with trying to build something of meaning. Something of substance. Something that moves people. Something that matters. You in this room, you are that something. You matter. You are my family. I love you. Last game before the All-Star break, go win it!

They erupt in cheers.

JAKE (CONT'D)

(over the din) And in honor of LaDarius, you're all invited to NYC for the All-Star game, on me. After we win tonight, we fire up Air Jake. We got cases of Crystal on board, and for the weed smokers, clean urine off the Internet! We have one goal on this trip! Get the stats nerd laid!

Angle on Byron, sheepish. More cheers.

JAKE (CONT'D)

And if any of you impregnate any women in New York, make sure they're tall because I promise in twenty years, I will draft your illegitimate children!

They laugh again.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Heads in! Come on, Doug!

They all put their heads in. This merry band of misfits is having a great time, nobody more than Jake.

JAKE (CONT'D)
 Saints on three! Saints! Saints!
 Saints!

The team pours out of the locker room.

CUT TO:

INT. ARENA HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

TV monitors mounted everywhere. The team exits to the court. Kevin gestures to Jake, exits to the men's room. Jake hangs back watching from the wings. Roulette the mascot (real name Andy) walks by carrying the mascot head, not wearing it. He is an over-sharing, energetic weirdo.

ANDY
 (to players) Have a great game!

He is ignored by everyone as they head into battle.

CUT TO:

INT. ARENA - FIVE MINUTES LATER

Over the following: we see the SCOPE and MAGNITUDE of this world. The fans, the announcers, the players, the celebrities. Pure adrenaline and excitement. Something big is happening, even for Vegas. The players are now in their lay-up line.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
 With a win tonight, the Sin City Saints, at 21-20, can be the first expansion team to be above .500 at the All-Star break, all thanks to rookie sensation LaDarius Pope.

LaDarius casually dribbles in, dunks easily. The lights go out in the arena. Lasers cut the darkness. Rap music blares.

P.A. ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
 Ladies and Gentlemen, it's time to welcome Saints' mascot Roulette!

Roulette, now in the head, runs out to mid-court to cheers. He waves to the crowd.

P.A. ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
And his world famous Pope Mobile!

Roulette runs over to the Pope Mobile and gets in. It is a smaller replica of the actual Pope Mobile. The fans go nuts. He gets in, heads toward the players, and pulls to a stop. LaDarius waits to climb aboard the Pope Mobile, as it suddenly lurches into reverse, and TAKES OFF full speed, as players, cheerleaders, and fans scatter, we go close on LaDarius, frozen. SLAM! The Pope Mobile hits him and we hear a sickening thud, a collective inhale, then eerie quiet. On LaDarius writhing on the floor in pain. Byron stunned. A cheerleader cries. A shocked celebrity (i.e. Floyd Mayweather, Lil'Wayne). The announcers stare speechless. The mascot jumps out of the Pope Mobile.

Roulette's POV, through the eye holes. We see the ANGRY CROWD horrified and pissed at the mascot, booing, yelling.

ROULETTE (V.O.)
Oh, shit.

Roulette runs off the floor toward the tunnel in a girly run-skip.

CUT TO:

INT. ARENA HALLWAY - AFTERMATH

Chaos akin to a president having just been shot. Roulette runs into the hallway and ducks down a side hallway and takes off his head. It's JAKE. Andy the mascot approaches in his skivvies, from one direction, Kevin from the other.

JAKE
Shit, shit, shit.

KEVIN
What the hell happened?

ANDY
He wanted to drive! He insisted!

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY - FIVE MINUTES BEFORE - **FLASHBACK**

The tail end of the hallway scene we didn't see.

ANDY
I love driving that Pope Mobile
onto the court.
(MORE)

ANDY (CONT'D)

It's like the rush I used to get from cocaine and blackjack, which I no longer do, but it feels super close to that. The fans LOVE IT.

On Jake, getting a thought, and we know he made Andy let him drive.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Andy is ranting.

ANDY

And he wanted to take off the head and wave! You never take off the head! It goes against every rule of mascot artistry!

JAKE

Shut up!

Security guards sprint down the adjacent hallway. They run off, not seeing Jake. This is serious.

JAKE (CONT'D)

(to Kevin) Do something!

KEVIN

(beat, to Andy) Put the costume back on.

ANDY

Me? Why?

KEVIN

Because you ran over LaDarius.

ANDY

No, he ran him over.

KEVIN

No, you ran him over.

ANDY

No, he did.

KEVIN

No you did. (threatening) Put the costume back on.

ANDY

It's a uniform, not a costume. And no. It's tainted with scandal. Might as well burn it.

JAKE

Hang on, let's think for a second. Maybe I should just tell the truth.

Kevin pulls Jake aside.

KEVIN

The truth is not an option. You just ran over your star player after doing Jaeger bombs with the cheerleaders. They won't forget. Strippers can hold their liquor. Let's pin it on the weirdo and be done with it.

JAKE

Steve Jobs told me before he died that one should never lie. We had that in common. I have a personal policy against lying.

KEVIN

Is being stripped of your team and turned into a laughingstock in your policy? (then) It's Vegas. Trust me, it won't be your last act of deceit.

JAKE

Maybe LaDarius is okay...

We see an ambulance blaze past down the adjacent arena hallway. Jake looks at Kevin, panicking.

KEVIN

This is why you hired me. I'll get rid of him.

Andy has crept up to eavesdrop.

ANDY

You're going to kill me? You can't kill me! Who's going to feed my dog!

KEVIN

No, jerk-off. You're just going to disappear for a while. Just until things calm down.

ANDY

I can't be the fall guy! People know who I am!

KEVIN

No, they really don't. And we promise we will protect your identity, bury it, no one will know.

ANDY

I don't believe you.

JAKE

(sincere) Andy, you have my word.

ANDY

I don't trust the rich.

JAKE

You can trust me. I was middle class as a child.

KEVIN

Where have you always dreamed of going?

ANDY

(instantly) Fiji, no the Maldives, no Salt Lake City. (beat) Fiji.

KEVIN

Done.

ANDY

I can't afford it there.

KEVIN

How's twenty grand?

ANDY

How about a hundred?

Beat. Jake looks at Kevin. A press core goes sprinting by down the other hallway, camera guys in tow. Byron runs by with a heavy-set woman.

JAKE

Fine. Total silence. (to Kevin) Call Yannis, take the jet. Fly with him. I don't want any screw-ups.

ANDY

And the shoes.

Tilt down to reveal Jake's vintage basketball shoes. Jake looks at Kevin, "really?" Kevin nods. Jake quickly takes them off, gives them to Andy.

ANDY (CONT'D)

I'm really sorry for running over LaDarius.

JAKE

Good, very convincing. I'm starting to believe I didn't run him over.

ANDY

That's because I ran him over.

He smiles a big creepy smile and is escorted off by Kevin.

JAKE

This stays between the three of us. Text me when you're wheels up. And get rid of this.

He tosses Kevin the head. As they walk away, a hiding Jake hurries out of the costume as the ambulance lights flash by on him.

ANDY

I'm rich!

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

EXT. HALLWAY/INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

BLACK: We hear labored breathing of a woman running. Come up, it's **MELISSA STANTON**, 30, overweight P.R. woman, surprisingly nimble for a larger lady. Over this, we hear:

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

End of the first, Saints down by 22. We're getting a taste of this team without LaDarius Pope, and it's bitter.

In the distance, a YOUNG MALE REPORTER is outside a doorway, which she rapidly approaches.

DEXTER

Can we get a quote from Jake?

Melissa blows past him into the room and slams the door. Byron, his team of three nerds, AHTIL, the social media guy, and TODD, meek HR guy are there.

MELISSA

I can't find him anywhere. Has anyone seen Jake? The building is crawling with press. This is a p.r. nightmare. We need to control the message.

BYRON

(off his phone) Oh shit, this kid in the first row made a Vine.

Close on phone. We see the Vine. The Pope Mobile hits LaDarius, he goes flying, the mascot gets out of the car, spins in a panicked circle runs off. It repeats.

MELISSA

Who cares?

BYRON

He has 2.7 million followers.

MELISSA

Ahtil, anything to do social media-wise?

AHTIL

You hired me to build some bullshit "what did the cheerleaders have for lunch" Instagram page. This is way out of my league.

MELISSA

Oh, dear.

Jake enters, shaken, hears this.

AHTIL

And that mascot runs like a girl.

JAKE

He's a lot of things, but that is a manly run if I ever saw one. (to Melissa) What's the plan? Is there a plan?

MELISSA

We'll go see LaDarius and show concern. Then we'll come back and you'll make a statement, also showing concern.

JAKE

(brave face) We can do this, people. At Matterhorn, we had a crisis point, we had a rogue coder push a code that turned all of our users phones into botnets, which he was using to perform DDoS attacks and mine Bitcoin. It almost put us out of business. But we used that life lesson to improve, stuck with it, and created the location software that was used to locate and kill Osama Bin Laden. That's right, if not for our sheer tenacity, he would still be living in Abbottabad with his three hideous wives and collection fetish porn. So let's focus and lead.

MELISSA

We're not going to let one act of reckless disregard for basic decency by a low-life piece of subhuman garbage get us down. Let's go, Jake.

They start out.

BYRON

Jake, I've canceled my birthday plans to figure out a solution, player-wise.

JAKE

It's your birthday?

Melissa ushers Jake out.

BYRON

(hurt) Yeah... I told you... like three times...

MELISSA

Anybody leaves this room, just keep walking, because you're...

(MORE)

MELISSA (CONT'D)

I don't have the authority to fire you, but don't leave.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

LaDarius is in bed, laid up, legs immobilized. Jake and Melissa enter. Jake feels awful. SportsCenter is on the TV.

JAKE

LaDarius. My man. I am so sorry.

Jake feels awful.

LADARIUS

It's funny, my biggest fear since I was little was getting hit by a car. That damn thing was coming so fast I just froze. I'm warning you, my mom is freaking out.

Just then Dr. Lombardo enters, followed by a short red-headed white woman, BERNICE POPE, 42.

BERNICE

Out for the year! Torn ACL. Torn MCL. Possible surgery. Possible career-ending injury.

MELISSA

(sotto, to a nurse) How did that kid come out of that woman...

A very tall black man enters. This is WILLIE POPE, Ladarius's dad. Melissa and the nurse react, "of course."

LADARIUS

Dad, tell her to--

BERNICE

--This is my baby. This is my honey. This is my life. (to Jake) This is on you!

JAKE

When we drafted LaDarius, I told you that I would take care of him like he was my yacht. And I mean that now more than ever.

BERNICE

The "Pope Mobile?" Poking a finger in the chest of God? I said it was wrong. All the promotions you did. Selling "Holy Water" at the concession stands. The exorcism at half time. I said, "Why are we being sent to Vegas? Why not Oklahoma City? Or Brooklyn?" But no, we had to go play in Sodom and Gomorrah, well, guess what, God has spoken!

LADARIUS

Mom!

BERNICE

LeBron is going to be worth about two billion by the time he's done. And if my baby can't play, that's on you! That's right, you better show up at my house with one of those giant novelty prize checks like the ones they give away when some lucky hillbilly wins the Powerball!

Jake realizes he is in deep shit.

CUT TO:

INT. WAR ROOM - LATER

A small windowless room in the bowels of the arena. Written on a giant white board are: 360 players' names, their salaries and length of contracts. Free agents and D-League players are written in a separate column. A hoops version of a Beautiful Mind. Byron is there with his two sidekick nerds. Also present is G.M. SAM JOHNSON, 55, old school no-nonsense guy, dream casting is Samuel L. Jackson. Coach Doug sits between them.

SAM

The record for worst loss in league history was in 1991 when Cleveland beat Miami by 68 points. Tonight we "only" lost by 67. So that's something to be proud of!

COACH DOUG

They all just started chucking up shots.

SAM

Everybody wants to be a hero in the absence of the true hero.

BYRON

(giddy) Sam, I think this is a terrific opportunity to improve the team.

Over-lapping dialogue through here:

SAM

(to himself) Could have stayed retired. Could be golfing right now. But no, had to be the big, fancy G.M. again.

BYRON

(plowing ahead) LaDarius averages 24.8 points per game. No way to replace that. But if we can get a mid-range scorer who can defend we can get close. We like Mickey Barnes from Memphis.

COACH DOUG

Barnes?

SAM

The only thing he can shoot is people outside a nightclub.

BYRON

He only shot at them.

SAM

And the motherfucker missed!

COACH DOUG

From three feet!

BYRON

That was six years ago. His plus minus is positive six points when he's on the floor and he can defend and rebound.

SAM

Nothing good ever happens at nightclubs...

BYRON

When LaDarius is out, our shooting percentage goes down 14.2%.

SAM
Stay home, bring the pussy to
you...

BYRON
Steve Crane scores high with us.

SAM
Crane? He retired and owns a
couple of Chipotles now.

COACH DOUG
Love that place.

SAM
That is one tasty-ass burrito.

BYRON
(annoyed) In his last year, he was
near the top in assists and hit
46.7% of his threes.

SAM
You know you can get it without the
tortilla, put it in a bowl.
Healthy and delicious.

COACH DOUG
But without the tortilla, it's just
a big bowl of goo.

BYRON
(more annoyed) Would you please
listen?! I'm trying to help!

They do.

SAM
Sorry, black Moneyball.

Byron's phone dings. He looks at it, exits quickly.

SAM (CONT'D)
(yells to an intern) Can somebody
bring me a burrito?!

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Jake enters as Byron exits the scouting room. Byron meets
him and walks with him. There is an urgency.

JAKE

Out for the season, at least.

BYRON

(into it) If I can get Sam on board, I can make this work...

Just then they see a GORGEOUS WOMAN coming around the other corner.

JAKE

Uh-oh!

They quickly bolt toward the conference room.

CUT TO:

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Same group as before. They haven't left. Melissa, Ahtil, Todd, the group.

MELISSA

Jesus, Todd, we can't take him out of the promo materials. He's the freakin' "A" in Sin City Saints.

We pan over to see the life-size cut-out of LaDarius as the "A." Jake and Byron hustle in.

JAKE

There's a bad lady coming this way. She is not to be trusted. Say nothing.

DUSTY HALFORD, 35, put together on the outside, inside, a bit of a mess, the woman we just saw, enters.

DUSTY

Hi, everyone, I'm Dusty, my dad loved cowboys, get over it, it's not a nickname. I've been asked by the league to do damage control for, how did the commissioner put it, this "mismanaged carnival of the mentally challenged."

MELISSA

I'm Melissa Stanton, head of PR, and this was not Jake's fault.

DUSTY

(to Jake) Aw, that's sweet.
Little crush, there.

MELISSA

(flustered) That's ridiculous.

DUSTY

(to Melissa) Sorry, sweetie, but everything that happens here is Jake's fault. That's how it works when you own a team. He might as well have been driving that clown car himself.

On Jake, smiles nervously, "please, that's ridiculous."

DUSTY (CONT'D)

Article 13. NBA by-laws. "Owners must avoid unethical conduct. In violation, of Article 13, the owner can be removed by a two thirds vote." In short, 'bye Jakey.

JAKE

Entertaining the fans is unethical?

DUSTY

We told you to lose the Pope Mobile. We fined you when you ignored us. We let it slide with a fine when you put a bounty out on the ref...

INSERT: A TWEET BY JAKE THAT READS: "I will give 50 G's to first person who hits Joey Crawford with an egg." #eggJoey #needphotoproof

EXT. PARKING LOT - FLASHBACK

Joey Crawford walks to his car carrying his dry cleaning. **TWO MEN** emerge from nowhere and one pelts him in the face and body with eggs as his buddy takes pics.

CUT TO:

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - PRESENT

JAKE

It was a joke, I apologized...

DUSTY
And the cheerleader situation...

CUT TO:

INT. CHAMPAGNE ROOM - FLASHBACK - DAY

Jake, shirt unbuttoned, is on an epic bender, surrounded by twenty strippers, champagne, friends.

JAKE
(hammered, to strippers one at a time) You have a job and you have a job and you have a job... you're alllll hired!

The strippers cheer.

CUT TO:

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - PRESENT

DUSTY
Do you remember what I said in that leaked transcript you got your filthy little hands on when you were trying to buy the team?

JAKE
"Ill-equipped borderline personality disorder with narcissistic tendencies, indifference to rules and abhorrence of conformity."

Jake smiles.

JAKE (CONT'D)
Also, hallmarks of great entrepreneurs.

DUSTY
Our current problem. LaDarius' mom, who is insane even for a ginger, is most likely already lawyer-ed up.

JAKE
I calmed her down.

DUSTY
Where?

JAKE

The hospital. We went to check on LaDarius.

DUSTY

What? Please tell me you didn't admit fault...

On Jake, shakes his head weakly.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - FLASHBACK

The piece of the scene we didn't see. Jake is mid-speech to Bernice. Everyone is there from the last scene.

JAKE

...on behalf of the team and the league, let me just say it's all our fault...

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - PRESENT

MELISSA

It was my idea to go.

Jake reacts over the following, "oh shit."

DUSTY

Sure, of course. It's real simple. We're going to throw that mascot under the bus like he threw LaDarius under the Pope Mobile. We throw the blame squarely on him and move on. Where is he?

JAKE

Missing.

DUSTY

Missing? Security didn't grab him?

JAKE

I sent Kevin out to look for him, but he could be anywhere. Hell, he could be in Fiji or the Maldives or Salt Lake City by now.

CUT TO:

INT. PRIVATE JET - SAME TIME

Start on Jake's shoes, now on Andy's feet. Pan up, Andy settles into the plane with his little yappy dog, Saint. Kevin enters up the stairs carrying a backpack and a to-go bag from the Palm.

ANDY

Can I see the money? Can I see the money? Show me the money.

Kevin rolls his eyes. Hands him a backpack. Andy opens it. Reveal, 100K in bricks. He brightens. Kevin tosses it on the seat next to him.

ANDY (CONT'D)

Can I please have my luxury shellfish now? Saint will have the fillet.

Kevin wants to kill him.

CUT TO:

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - SAME TIME

DUSTY

Even better that he's missing. Makes him look more guilty.

JAKE

It was an accident. I'd hate to ruin the guy's life...

DUSTY

He's a grown man who makes a living doing cartwheels wearing a fuzzy roulette ball on his head. It's not a long journey to the bottom. Plus, the guy's a total degenerate. Look at this...

Dusty has her iPad, she opens a file. We see Andy's various mug shots slide by as she talks.

DUSTY (CONT'D)

Eight arrests... D.U.I., drugs, prostitution, theft, he stole a belt off a guy at a blackjack table... Did you vet this guy at all?

MELISSA

Todd is H.R.

TODD

(mumbles) It's Vegas. He was our best option. The head fit him. He's enthusiastic and quite agile.

DUSTY

We'll do a press conference. You will reveal him to be an unstable addict with a long arrest record. I will write the speech. You will say it.

JAKE

(under his breath) Man, I'd give anything to be in Fiji right now.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. JAKE'S OFFICE - LATER

Jake is at his desk. A slightly open closet door has twenty pairs of the same shoes on shelves. Dusty is over his shoulder. Jake reads off his Samsung Galaxy tablet.

JAKE

"The only mistake I made is being too trusting and giving this habitual substance abuser a chance..." Can't he sue us for this stuff?

DUSTY

It's not defamation if it's true. What is your problem? The guy has single-handedly ruined your season.

JAKE

Maybe I'm just a good guy.

Dusty considers this.

DUSTY

There are two kinds of guys, douchebags and dickheads.

(MORE)

DUSTY (CONT'D)

Douchebags are douchebags because they're overcompensating for massive insecurity. Dickheads are dickheads because they are actually bad people who act poorly with no regard for others. You're a douchebag, not a dickhead.

JAKE

Thanks...?

DUSTY

So you're not a bad guy, I just don't think you belong in the league.

There's a knock on the door. **SAPPHIRE**, 30, Jake's assistant, we recognize her from the stripper flashback, enters quickly.

SAPPHIRE

Um, Brian to see you.

JAKE

It's Byron, Sapphire. And you can use the intercom.

SAPPHIRE

(blurting, air-headed laugh) Ha-ha! Yeah... no. (whispers) It's Brian's birthday. Either today or very soon. I'm not great with numbers.

She exits. From Dusty's POV, tilt down to reveal Sapphire is wearing clear heels.

DUSTY

Seriously?

JAKE

She can't be a cheerleader. She has a lumbar issue from working the pole. Don't worry, I've dialed it down on making promises while high on molly.

Dusty shakes her head and exits, crossing Byron who's entering. Jake paces, now in the same shoes.

BYRON

Okay, so here's what we're thinking-

JAKE

Hey, I need to bounce something off you.

BYRON

(brightens) Really? That's excellent. Bounce away.

JAKE

That mascot who hit LaDarius--

BYRON

That prick bastard who destroyed everything we've been working for?

JAKE

That was me.

BYRON

No...

JAKE

I made the mascot let me wear the outfit. I wanted to drive the Pope Mobile.

BYRON

Noooooo... (then) Why would you tell me that? Now I'm implicated!

He starts rocking.

JAKE

Stay calm. Adversity is the true test of character.

BYRON

I don't need my character tested! I know that it's weak! I've wanted to be in your inner circle for a very long time. I even spoke to my mom about how best to approach you, but this is not what I envisioned!

JAKE

Relax, Kevin took care of it. We're paying the mascot to keep quiet and leave town.

BYRON

Oh thank God. Then we're okay?

JAKE

Not really. Dusty wants me to make this speech implicating him. But I gave him my word that I wouldn't. Personal integrity and betterment of society are top of mind for me, always. Michelle told me Barack tries to run the country like I ran Matterhorn. And now I'm being asked to publicly ruin the life of an innocent, albeit very weird and annoying man. but I feel like I should just come clean.

BYRON

You can't do that! If you get kicked out, we all go.

JAKE

But wouldn't it be better to just get it over with and move on? The cover up is always worse than the crime.

BYRON

But the cover up is already under way. You can't come clean. Please.

JAKE

(long beat) I'm going to come clean. Welcome to the inner circle. Obviously, not a word to anybody. Oh, and happy birthday.

Jake picks up a Samsung Galaxy tablet, not in the box.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Happy birthday.

He tosses it to Byron. Byron can't catch and fumbles it awkwardly, it shatters. Jake opens a cupboard and we see a stack of forty Samsung Galaxy tablets. He hands him another and exits.

BYRON

He remembered my birthday. (calls)
Thank you!

CUT TO:

INT. PRIVATE JET - SAME TIME

Andy wears a lobster bib, scarfs down the lobster just like Saint, who sits across from him, eating cut up fillet.

ANDY

Lobsters are the only animals that exhibit handedness.

KEVIN

What?

ANDY

Yeah, some have the crusher claw on the right and some have it on the left. This guy's a southpaw.

He crunches into the claw. Juice squirts all over Kevin. Follow Kevin as he gets up and goes to talk to the pilot, Yannis, former Greek special forces.

KEVIN

How long? This lunatic is bludgeoning me with crustacean talk.

YANNIS

Mechanical issue. Gonna be a few.

KEVIN

How few?

YANNIS

Working on it. We could fix the problem, or end up in a ball of fire on the side of mountain.

INT. PRESS CONFERENCE/ANTE-ROOM - LATER

Press room. Jake, in a colorful rich-guy shirt, is getting mic-ed. Dusty gives instructions.

DUSTY

You know how to use the prompter?

JAKE

Of course. I've given multiple TED talks.

DUSTY

Talking about your own accomplishments. Little douchey.

JAKE

Forbes Magazine would not have voted a "douchebag" one of the great thinkers of 2013.

DUSTY

No, but only a douchebag would use that line to try to pick up women.

JAKE

The women I pick up rarely, if ever, read Forbes.

DUSTY

(beat) You know, the guy could have run over the whole rest of the team, wouldn't have mattered. Hitting him is one thing, but the running away afterwards really puts the cherry on the loser sundae. And did you see that run? That run was gayer than that shirt you're wearing.

JAKE

This shirt maybe, but the run is not gay!

DUSTY

(ignoring) Now this mascot? That, my friend, is a dickhead. And I give you my word that when we find him, his sorry excuse for a life will be over.

JAKE

Your word?

DUSTY

Over.

On Jake's POV, Dusty goes SLO MO.

DUSTY (CONT'D)

Oh-ver, oh-ver, oh-ver... (real time) Stick to the script, got it?

She smacks him on the ass, like a player going into a game. Jake is having second thoughts about his integrity.

CUT TO:

EXT./INT. PRIVATE JET - SAME TIME

Yannis is outside under the nose of the plane with the mechanic. Inside, Andy is bugging Kevin.

ANDY

Can I see the money again? Can I
can I can I? When are we taking
off? I'm getting really antsy.
What time are we going to land in
Fiji? I'm bored. Want to play
gin? I'm not supposed to play
cards, but screw it. Where you
from?

Kevin turns on the TV.

KEVIN

Watch TV.

ANDY

I only like sports channels, or
that one where they document the
inner workings of a pawn shop.

Kevin puts on a sports channel and exits to check on the mechanical problem.

CUT TO:

INT. PRESS CONFERENCE - MOMENTS LATER

Reporters are there. Jake is at the podium. Dusty is off to the side. Byron and Melissa are in the back.

JAKE

...we know that LaDarius will be
back with us. And we are... the
real fault of this lies with...
(beat, he is struggling) The fact
is that... we try to vet employees
but sometimes, a bad egg slips
through the cracks...

He stops, looks at Byron. Looks at Dusty.

JAKE (CONT'D)

I need to speak from the heart.

Dusty reacts.

JAKE (CONT'D)

The fact is, I ran Matterhorn with an emphasis on integrity. We had a philosophy of making the world a better place. And, in the spirit of the way I have lived my entire life, I just want to say...

INT. PRIVATE JET - SAME TIME

Andy is watching the press conference, hanging on every word.

INT. PRESS CONFERENCE - SAME TIME

JAKE

...the person who ran over LaDarius is...

INT. PRESS CONFERENCE - SAME TIME

Jake is panicking, sweating.

JAKE

Mmm...issing.

Dusty and Byron breathe a sigh of relief. Jake launches into the statement.

JAKE (CONT'D)

The fact is, Andy Logan, the mascot, is on the run. And he has a long list of prior arrests and convictions that he hid from us during the interview process.

On the screen behind him we see Andy's mug shots from earlier, plus a few more.

INT. PRIVATE PLANE - SAME TIME

Andy is shocked, reacting.

ANDY

I knew it! Never trust the rich!
You picked the wrong roulette ball
to mess with, mister!

He quickly gets up, puts Saint in the backpack full of money, puts it on his back, and exits the plane.

EXT. PRIVATE JET - CONTINUOUS

Yannis and Kevin are arguing with the mechanic.

KEVIN

...this is ridiculous, should we
get another plane... just tell
me...

YANNIS

Calm down, it will be fine...

Unseen by them, Andy sneaks down the stairs and sprints away from the plane.

INT. PRESS CONFERENCE - SAME TIME

Jake is now laying into Andy.

JAKE

Drugs, gambling, prostitution, are
certainly not new to Vegas, but
things that...

INT. PRIVATE JET - SAME TIME

Over the following:

JAKE (V.O.)

...I will not stand for. And you
have my word, that the man who did
this to LaDarius, the team, and the
city of Las Vegas will be sorry he
ever put on that mascot uniform...

Kevin enters and sees the empty plane. The bathroom door is open. The backpack and dog are gone. He looks out the window to see: Andy running across the tarmac. He scampers over the fence, then does his back hand spring move through the desert, complete with the bow at the end. Kevin scrambles out of the plane to give chase.

As Jake rips Andy on the TV, we pan over to see: The mascot head sitting on an empty seat, looking vaguely threatening. And we:

FADE OUT.

END OF SHOW

*