

UNDER THE INFLUENCE

"Pilot"

By

MARTIN GARCIA

COLD OPEN

FADE IN:

INT. HOTEL BALL ROOM - NIGHT

"Celebration" by Kool & the Gang is blasting through a sad hotel ball room where the 30th reunion of the 1989 graduates of Boone High is taking place. A banner reads "Welcome Back, Frontiersmen Persons". We pull back to see the somewhat filled dance floor and tables along side it.

We pull in closer on one table. Sitting at one of the round tables is TONY GARZA(48). Tony was one of the artsy kids in school; didn't fit in with them either. He has angry resting face, he's brooding, observant, judgmental, and he's bald. So, he's a writer.

"Celebration" fades a little and we focus on...

DJ

All right, we need Mark and Elaine  
Morgan to come out to the dance  
floor please.

The crowd applauds for ELAINE and MARK MORGAN(both 47-48), the Brangelina of Boone High class of 1989. Still sickeningly beautiful, they make their way to the dance floor. "Right Here Waiting" by Richard Marx begins and the couple dances. Elaine waves at Tony. He smiles and waves back. Mark gives him a nod. Tony's smile fades.

DJ (CONT'D)

Mark and Elaine you are still and  
will always be Boone High's Prom  
King and Queen of 1989.

Mark and Elaine slow dance together, the perfect couple. Tony looks on a little sad(?). Jealous(?). Something.

Tony's phone lights up. He checks his texts.

TEXT

*YOU'RE FRIED.*

Tony is confused. Then...

TEXT

...

10 seconds later...

TEXT

*FIRED.*

Tony sighs. It figures.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL BALL ROOM - NIGHT - LATER

A song fades out. Our friendly DJ chimes in.

DJ (O.C.)

Once again, this one goes out to  
Liz from Doug.

TONY

(to himself)

Better not be "Celebration", Doug.

Immediately, "Celebration" by Kool & the Gang blares through the speakers.

A disgusted Tony gets up to leave and almost gets run over by A MAN and WOMAN heading to the dance floor.

WOMAN

I LOVE THIS SONG!

MAN

YEAH! THE TITLE SAYS WHAT IT'S FOR!

A displeased Tony heads toward the exit when suddenly Elaine comes up.

ELAINE

Tony. Am I interrupting your  
judging?

TONY

Be easier to interrupt time.

They hug. Tony takes her in.

TONY (CONT'D)

And it looks like you have, Elaine.  
You look absolutely stunning, as  
usual.

ELAINE

Stop, people will talk. Why aren't  
you dancing?

TONY

You know better than anybody that I do not "celebrate good times, come on."

An OLDER MAN(48) and a YOUNG WOMAN(25), holding hands, pass by Elaine and Tony on the way to the dance floor.

YOUNG WOMAN

I love this song. It reminds me of my dad.

They continue to the dance floor.

TONY

(imitating)

"Which is also why I love you, Todd!"

Elaine laughs.

ELAINE

It's so wonderful to see you.

TONY

I look forward to it every time. When are you going to leave that Ken doll and get yourself a real man?

Speak of the devil, Mark walks up.

MARK

Mr. Hollywood! Didn't think you'd be here. Good to see you.

ELAINE

How's work? Our girls are huge fans of your show. Seriously, knowing someone who writes on *Steamy High* gives us major street cred. It helped us get through their teens.

MARK

Really?! I think that was my debit card.

Good looking people get no laughs from Tony.

DJ (O.C.)

Sorry, folks, Doug is a big tipper.

"Celebration" by Kool & the Gang starts over.

TONY

I think the jury will understand  
why I murdered Doug, right?

ELAINE

A third helping of Kool and his  
gang is my cue. I'm heading out  
with you, Tony.

(to Mark)

Coming?

MARK

I'm going to catch up with Misty  
Broussard and then I'll be up.

Mark gives Elaine a peck and heads off. As Tony and Elaine  
walk out, Tony shoots Mark another look, then...

SMASH CUT:

INT. TONY'S HOTEL BEDROOM - SAME HOTEL - SAME NIGHT

Two people are having athletic sex under the covers.  
Everyone's needs seem to be met and the cool down begins.

Our mystery pair disentangle and crawl out from under the  
covers. It's Tony and...Mark!?

TONY

So. How're the kids?

BLACK OUT

END COLD OPEN

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

We rejoin Mark and Tony right where we left them, naked in bed. Mark is showing Tony pictures of the girls on his phone.

MARK

They're both in college now.

TONY

They're beautiful. Of course.

MARK

They're incredibly smart too.

TONY

Yeah but they're pretty so nobody will ever care.

Mark kisses Tony. Mark gets up and starts getting his things together. He continues to do that as they talk.

TONY

You know, if I had ever gotten to have a child I would have wanted a girl.

MARK

Why didn't you?

TONY

Well, there's the whole uterus thing. I don't know. I guess I was too busy trying to get my career going. Then when I got it going work became my child...and now the ungrateful shit has flown the coop after sucking all the life out of me and destroying my vagina.

MARK

Don't blame work for your vagina. It was always kind of weird. What happened this time?

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. SOUND STAGE - CRAFT SERVICE TABLE - ABOUT 2 WEEKS  
EARLIER

Tony surveys the craft services table.

TONY

Hmm. Do I want the glazed diabetes  
or the chocolate-covered heart  
attack?

He opts for the glazed diabetes. He turns to take off and  
hears some whispering. He moves to look behind a fake wall.  
There he sees STEPH MILLER(18), the star of *Steamy High* with  
PAT BLANK(40), the producer of *Steamy High*. Kissing! And  
other stuff!

PAT

I do want to be with you, but it's  
complicated.

STEPH

Love isn't complicated. It's love.

PAT

That is lame.

STEPH

Tell me about it. That's an example  
of the drivel that old man writes  
for me.

PAT

What old man? Tony?

STEPH

Is there another one?

PAT

Tony is like a comfy chair around  
here. He's broken in and you don't  
need to worry about spilling food  
on him.

STEPH

Ugh. He's Medusa old.

TONY

Methuselah. It's Methuselah!

Pat and Steph, startled, jump away from each other  
immediately.

TONY

Medusa is snakes for hair, turns people to stone. You know, like Pat's wife, when she finds out about this.

PAT

Now, hold on buddy, maybe you should think about what you're saying...

TONY

...maybe you should think about how you're a married 40 year-old man kissing an 18 year-old who plays 14.

STEPH

Oh, I'm so scared. You figured it out, Sherlock Homes!

TONY

HOLMES! It's HOLMES. Sherlock HOMES sounds like a convalescent home for retired sleuths.

STEPH

Sleuths don't live in homes, stupid, they live in the jungle.

TONY

SLOTHS! Sloths live in the jungle!

STEPH

Everybody in the writers' room calls you Hackagawea.

TONY

A little racist toward Sacagawea, don't you think.

STEPH

You can't be racist against a Canadian province.

TONY

That's Saskatchewan! Jesus! Do I have to write all your dialogue when your not in front of the camera too?! You are a stupid...

Steph gasps really loudly and covers her mouth.

MATCH CUT TO:



INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS  
Mark gasps really loudly and covers his mouth.

TONY  
...I know.

MARK  
Wow, Tony. That's so not like you.

TONY  
I know. Usually I say that behind  
someone's back, precisely for this  
reason.

MARK  
Like a normal person.

TONY  
I reported what I saw to HR, but  
she reported what I called her, and  
I'm not a producer or the star of  
the show so I'M the immoral one.

MARK  
You're one of the most moral people  
I know.

Tony peeks under the covers.

TONY  
I wonder if Elaine would agree.

Mark is oblivious to the irony.

MARK  
I think it's adorable that, at your  
age, you still believe in justice  
and fairness. Oh, that reminds me.  
I'm going to be in LA again at the  
end of March. By myself.

TONY  
Mark! This has to stop. I feel  
terrible. Then I feel amazing for  
like 20 minutes, then it's back to  
terrible.

Mark kisses Tony. A shared look. Reluctantly...

TONY  
Text me when you get there.

Mission accomplished. Mark finishes dressing.

MARK

Great! So what're you going to do about work?

Tony looks up at the ceiling.

TONY

It'll be fine. My agent always has my back.

SMASH CUT:

INT. OFFICE - DAY - NEXT DAY

CLOSE-UP OF SAL(pushing 80), TONY'S AGENT:

SAL

You are fucked, Tony.

Reveal Sal's office. Ancient noisy ceiling fan, ancient pics, ancient files, ancient Sal.

SAL (CONT'D)

What do you care this girl is having an affair with a producer? Hell, in my day you couldn't get on a show without sleeping with a producer. Remind me to tell you a story about Telly Savalas and Dino DeLaurentis--

TONY

Probably won't.

SAL

The business has changed, Tony. You can't say that word anymore.

TONY

I didn't mean...

SAL

Used to be you couldn't get on a studio lot without saying it. Then Jane Fonda goes to Vietnam and all of a sudden it's no longer the password.

TONY

Which is a *GOOD* thing!

SAL

Of course! I loved The Electric Horseman. So, you're going to be Hollywood kryptonite for a while. You know, "difficult", but who knows? There are so many places producing shows nowadays. Ech! Even my fucking phone company is producing shows now. Why watch TV on your phone? I miss the good old days when you went to a bar to avoid the phone. Now? It follows me wherever I go. Even in the john. I don't want to make deals while I'm on the toilet. Who am I? Elvis?!

There's finally silence.

TONY

God your old. I don't know, Sal. I'm thinking of getting out. I got into this business wanting to write great stuff and instead it's garbage show after garbage show. Maybe it's time to move on.

SAL

Oh, well then that makes this easier. We're going to have to let you go, Tony.

TONY

What? Why?

SAL

You're difficult.

CUT TO:

INT. THE DIVE BAR - NIGHT

Tony hangs out with his writer friends, LISA STILES(35) and PAUL NICHOLS(40). There's a rather loud group of 20-somethings engaged in a rather heated ping pong game. We notice one of the 20-something ping pongers. She's an adorable nerd-chick. This is TIFF THOMPSON . She smiles a lot. Tony is not amused by these usurpers.

TONY

Fuck, when did they start letting in children? The end is nigh.

PAUL  
Well, the end of your career, at  
least.

TONY  
Here, here! A toast to the end of  
my career.

They all toast.

LISA  
And to Sal!

TONY  
Who am I going to hate now?

PAUL/LISA  
Yourself?/Yourself?

TONY  
I still have that.

They all toast.

TONY  
What does it matter anymore? Life  
is one disappointment after  
another. You try to change things  
and instead you change into what  
you were trying to change.

PAUL  
There's a bumper sticker.

LISA  
You know what, Tony? Sometimes when  
you lose everything that's when  
something amazing happens.

TONY  
A celebrity rehab show?

PAUL  
Rehab?

LISA  
Celebrity?

TONY  
Ha!

Suddenly, a ping pong ball plops into Tony's drink. The  
youngsters all laugh and razz the culprit. Tiff approaches  
Tony. She's recording with her phone.

TIFF  
(into camera)  
I'm so sorry. I didn't mean to  
assault your drink, sir.

TONY  
That's okay, m'am. My drink was  
asking for it. Look how it's  
dressed.

TIFF  
WOW! The opinions expressed in this  
Looky are not those of @TiffTom.  
#POOPers.

Tiff pulls down the phone and begins posting.

TIFF  
(still in her phone)  
Someone likes controversy. Tiff  
Thompson.

TONY  
None of this matters. Tony Garza.

LISA  
I recognize you. LookyMe, right?

TIFF  
OMG!! Yes. How did you know?

LISA  
I saw that video you did.

PAUL  
Oh, yeah. The one where you did  
that thing in that place. Very  
clever.

TIFF  
Ah, thanks for your specificity.  
Well, you know what I do, so what's  
your gig?

Tiff's friends shout for her to throw the ball back. She  
pulls it out of Tony's drink and throws it back to them.

LISA  
We're TV writers. Paul and I write  
for Late Talk and Tony writes for  
Steamy High.

TIFF  
(finally out of her phone)  
GET OUT! You write for Steamy  
High??!!

TONY  
Wrote.

TIFF  
I LOVE that show!

TONY  
It's garbage.

TIFF  
I LOVE garbage!

TIFF  
You said, "wrote". Please tell me  
the show didn't get canceled.

TONY  
The show didn't get canceled.

TIFF  
Yay.

TONY  
I got canceled.

TIFF  
Boo.

TONY  
It's more like I quit not being  
fired. Semantics.

TIFF  
(back in phone)  
Well, if it makes you feel any  
better, your post is getting major  
Looky likes.

TONY  
Aw, cool. It doesn't.

TIFF  
Cool beans. Lates.

Tiff exits, positive as ever.

TONY

And on that note, my friends, time to stop sitting in a bar feeling sorry for myself. Time to go home and feel sorry for myself.

Tony finishes his drink. Stands up. Reaches for his wallet.

LISA

Nope. I got it, Tony.

TONY

Oh, c'mon Lisa.

PAUL

Let her pay, dude. It turns me on.

LISA

In that case, you pay, Tony.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE DIVE BAR - NIGHT

Tony exits the bar. Heads to the parking lot.

TIFF

Mr. Garza!

Tony turns to see Tiff in her phone as usual.

TONY

It's Tony, please.

TIFF

(in phone)

This is going to sound totally rando, but I'm in the market for a writer.

TONY

Well, I'm flattered but I'm off the market for a while.

TIFF

Oh, no, I was going to ask you if you knew anybody that might qualify.

TONY

Qualify?

TIFF  
Humble brag, I'm the hottest thing  
on LookyMe right now.

TONY  
Were you giving me a choice between  
humble and brag?

TIFF  
I have 7 million followers.  
(checks her phone)  
Oops, make that 7.5 million.

TONY  
So, you have no boundaries or  
talent.

TIFF  
...or *shame*. What I do have are  
meetings with HBO, Hulu, and  
Netflix about doing a show.

TONY  
Of course you do.

TIFF  
So I was wondering if you knew any  
up and coming writers?

TONY  
You mean young?

TIFF  
Wow. You already get me.

TONY  
Can't think of anybody right off  
hand, but that's probably the  
dementia kicking in. After all, I'm  
50 in Hollywood so the only thing  
I'm qualified to write is my own  
obituary.

Tiff is totally out of her phone.

TIFF  
Wow. You are dark.

TONY  
Thanks.

Back into phone.



TIFF  
 Okay, well, if you think of anybody  
 just contact me.

Tiff hands him a business card.

TIFF  
 Here's my card because that's what  
 you're supposed to do with these  
 things.

Tony looks at the card and squints.

TIFF  
 Is the font too small?

TONY  
 No. No, it's not.

An Uber pulls up. Tony gets in and drives off. Tony looks at  
 the card again, squinting and moving it toward and away from  
 his eyes.

DRIVER  
 Want my readers?

TONY  
 NO! I don't need your readers...

Tony looks at his phone for the guys Uber name.

TONY  
 ...Derrick.

DRIVER  
 It's Lionel.

BLACK OUT

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

INT. TIFF'S APARTMENT - VIDEO

In front of us is Tiff. She speaks to the camera while putting on lip stick. She pretends to notice the camera for the first time.

TIFF

Oh, Hello...

Tiff turns her head toward the camera but keeps the lipstick on her lips creating a lipstick line across her cheek.

TIFF

...I didn't see you there. Now you all know that I don't like to get political, but here goes. The border wall solution is simple. Walls are expensive, which is why, instead, we put a gigantic velvet rope along the border, and like back in the day at Studio 54, you only get in if you're beautiful. Let's learn from our past. @TiffTom out. #POOPers

CUT TO:

INT. TONY'S BEDROOM - NEXT DAY - MORNING

A groggy Tony watches this video. Tony half smiles then shakes his head. He rolls over and shuts it off. He stretches in a surprisingly flexible way. A series of cracks and pops is heard. This is just his body.

He gets out of bed, more and louder pops. We follow him to the bathroom, pops and cracks.

CUT TO:

INT. TONY'S BATHROOM - SHOWER - MORNING - LATER

Tony takes a hot, steamy shower. "Don't You Want Me" by Human League plays and Tony sings it loudly and well, but we can still hear the pops and cracks.

CUT TO:

INT. COFFEE SHOP - SAME MORNING - MOMENTS LATER

Tony sits at, more than likely, the same seat at the same coffee shop, taking a sip of the same coffee and looking out the same window...when his phone vibrates. He answers, hands free.

TONY

Aren't y'all supposed to be working?

PAUL

How's retirement going for you, old man?

LISA

Ask him what traffic is like on aisle 5 of Vons.

TONY

Har. Dee. Har. Guess who I ran into in the parking lot last night.

LISA

A pimp?

TONY

Not this time. The LookyMe chick.

PAUL

The one who did that video with that thing in that place?

TONY

Yeah. Her.

LISA

What did you talk about?

TONY

She needs a writer.

PAUL

And she offered you a job?

LISA

I told you something big was going to happen.

TONY

She asked me if I knew any young writers because she's the hottest thing on LookyMe and has meetings with all of Hollywood to make all of the shows.

PAUL

Did you mention me?

LISA

I'm younger than you.

PAUL

In age, yes. Mentality, no.

LISA

Damn! I just got painted into a corner.

TONY

Well, if she's going to hire someone it should be me.

PAUL

You!?

LISA

(laughing)

You writing for an influencer. That joke writes itself. You just learned how to order an Uber.

TONY

Yes, and don't take a ride from a guy named Lionel. I gave him one star for insubordination. So you two don't think I could do it?

LISA

Tony, it's not an issue of capability. It's an issue of desire and interest. I say this out of love. You are a stick in the mud. It's part of what we love about you but it's not a very young way of thinking.

PAUL

Yeah. When was the last time you heard a young person say, "I'm retired"?

TONY

Yeah. I'm retired. My old ass is going to travel to old ass places using my old ass savings. Fuck this business!

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. SAL'S OFFICE - SAME DAY - MOMENTS LATER

CLOSE-UP OF SAL'S FACE

SAL

You are fucked, Tony.

Sal sits behind his desk across from Tony.

TONY

Did you call me in just so you could say that again?

SAL

That would have been fun but this is a different kind of fucked. The company we use as financial consultants was just busted by the FBI. There's no money.

TONY

No money for what?

SAL

For anything. You're broke. You don't have a penny to your name. If it makes you feel any better, neither do we.

TONY

No. No it doesn't make me feel any better. What about my severance from Steamy High?

SAL

You called a 14 year-old girl a...

TONY

She's an 18 year-old who plays 14.

SAL  
You gave them cause. They don't owe  
you anything.

TONY  
Well, then you have to get me  
something, Sal!

SAL  
I don't represent you anymore.  
Besides, I can't get you any  
meetings. I can't get anyone to  
look at you at all because you're  
difficult.

TONY  
I have a lot of friends in the  
business, surely...

SAL  
Nobody was or is biting. Trust me.  
If you had any prospects I would  
rep you again...because I need the  
money.

TONY  
This is bull shit! Do you want to  
know how much money I have right  
now?

Tony sticks his hands in his pocket and pulls them out. They  
are empty except for something that falls to the floor.

It's Tiff's card. He picks it up. Looks at it. Squints. Tony  
gets an idea.

SMASH CUT TO:

MONTAGE:

INT. GLASSES STORE - DAY

Tony exits the store wearing a brand new pair of glasses. He  
looks good.

INT. BOOKSTORE - DAY

Tony leaves the cashier. We see the book he's bought, Social  
Networking for "Really Stubborn, Old People".

INT. TONY'S APARTMENT - DAY

Tony stares into his phone screen maniacally. We see he's creating profiles for many different social networks, the last being LookyMe.

INT. TONY'S APARTMENT - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Tony poses for pics on his phone in various ridiculous ways.

INT. TONY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Tony sits at his computer typing away.

INT. TONY'S APARTMENT - NEXT DAY

Tony finishes up an email and is hitting send.

INT. TONY'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - DAY

Tony crashes into his bed. He shifts. We hear a bunch of cracks and pops.

END MONTAGE

INT. TONY'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - LATER THAT DAY

Tony's phone vibrates. He answers.

TONY  
(groggy)  
Hello.

TIFF  
Hey. So you submitted yourself for  
my show?

TONY  
Huh?

TIFF  
I'll pass your stuff on to my  
manager, but I wouldn't get my  
hopes up.

TONY

Of course I submitted. I'm going to prove that an old dog can learn new tricks and can teach some old ones to the puppies.

TIFF

You're doing a really horrible job of being retired, you know.

TONY

Yes. The worst.

TIFF

Not that it matters, but you have me on your side. I'll be back in touch soon.

Tony hangs up and immediately falls back asleep.

INT. TONY'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

The phone once again wakes Tony up.

TIFF

My manager hated your packet.

TONY

Already? You just called.

TIFF

Okay. He hates you.

TONY

Sounds fair.

TIFF

I got him to agree to meet with you, but you should know he represents Steph Miller, the girl you called a--

CUT TO:

INT. TIFF'S MANAGER'S OFFICE - DAY

CLOSE-UP: AARON EDWARD'S (35) FACE.

We pull back to reveal Tiff, Tony, and Aaron sitting in a sterile-y chic conference room. Aaron is dressed impeccably. He's handsome, blunt but charming, even when he's saying kind of shitty things.



AARON

...Anyone, especially a man your age, should know better than to call a girl that. She's only 14.

TONY

18. She plays 14. And if it helps, I've called boys that as well.

AARON

I guess that makes it all better? It seems that maybe you can't control your temper. How do I know that won't become a problem with our project? How do I know that you won't call another innocent girl, like Tiff here, that name or worse.

Tony looks at Tiff. They both begin to giggle.

TIFF

Yeah, Tony. I'm just an innocent widdle girl.

TONY

You're a lot more innocent than Steph Miller.

(to Aaron)

You know she was sleeping with the producer, right? Have you protected her from that?

AARON

Love the old hipster look by the way. Thanks for dressing up for the occasion.

TONY

I'll take the change of subject as a "no".

AARON

Let me make myself clear, Mr. Garza, this is all Tiff's idea. She seems to think you're the perfect person for this. I don't.

TONY

(not surprised)

That surprises me.

AARON

These are the reasons why you're not the right person for this job.

You don't have a LookyMe profile...

TONY  
Actually...

AARON  
...which means you're old...

TONY  
...Well established character  
flaw...

AARON  
...and you've been troublesome at  
previous jobs...

TONY  
JOB. Singular.

AARON  
And, in case you haven't noticed, I  
don't like you.

TONY  
I did notice, but first impressions  
are sometimes inaccurate.

AARON  
Mr. Garza if I may be honest, your  
age is a problem for me, but that  
could get me in trouble with HR.  
However, since you've been a  
problem for HR it makes it easy for  
me to end this meeting. Sorry to  
have wasted your time.

Silence. Then Aaron pushes a button on the table that  
automatically opens the conference doors.

Tony, getting the hint, slowly gets up and walks out.  
Defeated.

The conference doors close. Tony looks at the receptionist.

TONY (CONT'D)  
I don't know about you, but I think  
I have a really good shot!

(CONT'D)

END ACT II

ACT III

INT. AARON'S OFFICE - SAME DAY

Tiff and Aaron are in the same place as where we left them.

TIFF

Jesus, Aaron!

AARON

You'll thank me some day. There's another candidate to meet. She wrote some amazing stuff. Her name is Tonya Zarga. She's 25 but her writing is incredibly mature and funny. Plus she has a great LookyMe profile.

Aaron pushes the intercom.

AARON (CONT'D)

Send in Ms. Zarga, please.

TIFF

Who's her rep?

AARON

Nobody big. Ziegler? Sal Ziegler.

The doors to the conference room open. There stands...Tony again.

TONY

Hi! Long time no see.

AARON

Mr. Garza, don't embarrass yourself. I don't want to call security.

TONY

Actually, it's Ms. Tonya Zarga. Oh, is that my profile on your tablet? Amazing what you can do with a gender filter. I'm very upset to realize that you must not have read Mr. Garza's samples, Mr. Edwards. If you had you would have noticed that our samples were exactly the same, other than our gender and age, of course.

(MORE)

TONY (CONT'D)

It's like I say in my post from 3pm yesterday, "If people realized how freeing it is to be fully yourself, or anybody else, they'd stop spitting acid at influencers and start living the new freedom!#ILOVETONYA". That got 500 Looky likes.

TIFF

Way to go Tonya.

TONY

And to be as honest as you were with me Mr. Edwards, the idea of writing a hit show that's going to make you ridiculously rich makes me as sick as you are right now knowing that you still want you some Tonya!

A silence.

AARON

(to Tiff)

You know that this is a terrible idea.

TONY

(smirking)

Train wreck.

TIFF

Have them get the contracts together, Aaron.

AARON

Great. You'll be writing a show with your granddaughter.

With that Aaron exits, but not before he takes a gander at Tony one last time.

TONY

That guy hates me almost as much as I do...I think I'm in love.

(then)

He knows that I'm more like your dad that had you very late in life, right?

TIFF

You're more like my g-pa

TONY

C'mon. I'm not old enough to be your grandpa.

TIFF

The G doesn't stand for grand, Gay-pa.

TONY

Gay-pa. I like it. I've always wanted to be a gay-pa.

TIFF

Woohoo! Congratulations! You got the job!

TONY

Yay!

Tiff gets up.

TIFF

Okay, so I'll see you tonight at my place. We might have to pull an all nighter because we need to have something for HBO by Friday. Toodles!

Tiff leaves the office. The doors close, leaving Tony in the room by himself. The dog caught the car.

TONY

(gulps)  
Shit.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. TIFF'S MANSION - HUGE OFFICE

Tony and Tiff sit in a huge office at Tiff's mansion. It's stark, empty, and way too large for just two people. Tiff is in her phone, as usual, and Tony is staring, plaintively, at a blank notebook, trying to will ideas onto it. The clock reads 9:10.

The clock reads 10:10. Tiff does something into her phone. Tony still stares.

The clock reads 10:40. Tiff does something into her phone. Tony stares.

Then...

TONY

So...have you been posting this whole time?

TIFF

Kylie J just released a new lip gel so, you know.

TONY

Okay. Do you ever let down your character? Because it's really great, but I need to know the actual person I'm writing for or this isn't going to work. I mean #POOPers? Seriously?

Tiff is bemused; smirks and says nothing.

TONY (CONT'D)

Oh. Are you, like, Andy Kaufmann-ing this shit? I loved him, but he got kinda weird, with the wrestling and everything. You're not going to wrestle, are you? I was like, "PLEASE, go back to being Balke".

Tony laughs. Just the sound of Tiff's keystrokes.

TIFF

It's Latka.

TONY

Sorry?

TIFF

Balke is from Perfect Strangers, played by Bronson Pinchot. Andy Kaufmann played Latka on Taxi.

TONY

Impressive.

Tiff does her best Latka.

TIFF

Thank you very much.

Tony laughs out loud. Like sincerely. He likes this girl, regardless if she's a character or not.

TONY

How'd you know that? It's way before your time.

TIFF

TV Land, Hulu, Netflix...It's like I'm a time traveler.

TONY

When I started enjoying posting on LookyMe, I felt like I had gone to a dystopian future. Like I caught the virus that ends the human race.  
(using zombie voice)  
OMG! Am Zombie! #BRAINS.

Tiff laughs and finally looks up from her phone.

TIFF

POOPers stands for People Offending Other People...ers. My secret. Now ours. It's kind of a way to get to people without them knowing it. If they think you're vapid they don't take it as seriously and get offended.

TONY

You like offending other people?

TIFF

I don't know that you can avoid it. So might as well speak your mind. Just find a better way to do it.

TONY

How do your folks feel about all this?

TIFF

They were all about it. My dad was my "manager" for a while. He actually protected me from a lot of shit, but then his father instincts started getting in the way of making more money so I had to...let him go. Aaron has really taken me to another level and he can be objective.

TONY

Yes. I've noticed how objective he is.

TIFF

How about you?

TONY

My father passed away so I never  
got the chance to fire him.  
#regrets.

Tiff laughs.

TIFF

You got a boo?

TONY

Yes...and he has a wife and two  
daughters.

TIFF

Gay-pa!

TONY

I identify as Tony.

They share a laugh.

TIFF

OMG! This reminds me of high school  
when we had one of those stupid  
seminar things to try and make  
everyone like each other.

TONY

Sounds fucking terrible.

TIFF

Right? Any way, you were assigned a  
partner and then each of you had to  
dare the other to do something that  
you thought would make their life  
better. Something challenging  
like...I dare you to break it off  
with the cheater.

She's serious.

TONY

Oh, we're doing this? Hmm. So...I  
dare you to call your dad and make  
up.

The room goes silent. Tiff moves to sit next to Tony. They  
shake hands. Tiff's phone buzzes.

TIFF

More likes. Hey, I meant to tell  
you, our post really blew up.

(MORE)



TIFF (CONT'D)

See, now you are timeless, forever  
in the ether.

Tony gets an idea.

TONY

That's kind of a cool idea. I mean  
the issue of time keeps coming up.  
How short these videos are, how you  
go back in time to see old  
shows,...

TIFF

...life is short. What if there's  
an app that sends me back in time  
with my phone and...

Tony's phone dings. Guess who? Tony looks at Tiff. Tiff  
clocks who the text was from.

TIFF (CONT'D)

Challenge.

SMASH CUT:

INT. MARK'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Mark and Tony are, once again, in a hotel bed, naked.

TONY

So, how are the kids?

Mark laughs.

MARK

Exciting about the new gig. I don't  
know how you're not having a  
nervous breakdown every minute.  
Your business is insane.

TONY

I hear, there's no business like  
it.

They kiss again. Mark gets out of bed.

MARK

I'm going to shower. Wanna join?

TONY

No. I'll lay in the bed I didn't  
make.

And Mark is in the bathroom. The shower starts running.

Tony lays in bed, disappointed in himself. On the night stand, his phone begins to vibrate.

TIFF  
TALKED TO MY DAD. YOU WERE RIGHT.  
THANKS.

TONY  
G-PA KNOWS BEST.

TIFF  
DID G-PA TALK TO HIS FUCK BUDDY?

TONY  
HEY! NOT FUCK BUDDY. SIDE PIECE.  
GET IT RIGHT.

Dots.

TONY (CONT'D)  
NOT YET.

TIFF  
YOU ARE WORTH MORE THAN SECOND  
THOUGHTS AND MAYBES. KNOW YOUR  
WORTH.

The shower turns off in the background.

TONY  
DID YOU GET THAT FROM JOY LUCK  
CLUB?

TIFF  
WTH IS JOY LUCK CLUB?!

Mark, in a towel, jumps on the bed playfully. Curse him for looking so good. He goes in for a kiss.

TONY  
I can't do this anymore. God, I am  
a hack. I WON'T do this anymore.

Mark pulls away, confused.

TONY (CONT'D)  
C'mon, Mark. This is not  
sustainable. I wasn't going to come  
at all, but I wanted one  
last...little hurrah.

MARK

Well if I'd known it was the last I  
would've tried for a bigger hurrah.

Mark chuckles then quickly stops.

TONY

You have a wife, and 2 beautiful  
children. I have no one. I want  
more. More than you can give me. I  
am worth more than second thoughts  
and maybes.

Mark smiles that smile. You know. The one that always works.  
Tony gets up from the bed. Mark follows suit.

TONY (CONT'D)

I'm going to take a shower.

Tony kisses Mark.

TONY (CONT'D)

It would be great if you weren't  
here when I get out. Goodbye, Mark.

Tony closes the door behind him

MARK

(almost to himself)  
But...it's my room.

CUT TO:

INT. TIFF'S APARTMENT - SAME NIGHT

Tiff is in her phone as usual.

**CLOSE-UP ON HER PHONE**

TONY

*IT'S DONE.*

She receives Tony's message. She switches from text screen to  
the RECENT PHONE CALLS page. A number tops the page with the  
contact name DAD. She touches the phone and the phone dials  
the same number again. The phone rings a couple of times,  
then...

PHONE

The number you are trying to reach  
is no longer in service.

Tiff hangs up...then tears up.

CUT TO:

INT. MARK'S HOTEL - NIGHT

An emotionally drained Tony exits the elevator into the hotel lobby. As he walks out, he hears a song we all recognize, "Celebration". Tony follows the sound to a ballroom. A stranger's wedding, but who gives a shit. He bee-lines to the dance floor and...starts dancing. He dances anger, sadness, joy, excitement.

WEDDING GUEST

Boy, that guy really likes this song.

BLACK OUT

END OF ACT THREE