

BELINDA

All work and no play makes Jack my first husband! If at first you don't succeed, you're a Spackman!

IN WALTER'S BEDROOM

Walter sits up. Liftoff.

WALTER

Lily.

Belinda enters, and without missing a beat:

BELINDA

Don't do it. It's a death trap, it's a suicide run.

WALTER

Lily's back visiting her Dad. I can tell by the way the air shimmers. And she texted me.

BELINDA

You don't listen to a word I say.

WALTER

I appreciate your advice and I know you care about me.

Walter hops out of bed. Belinda blocks the doorway.

BELINDA

'Care' is insufficient to describe my willingness to murder anyone who hurts you.

WALTER

You're not going to change my mind.

BELINDA

Walter. You may be too old for me to lock in the basement. But you are too young to learn that dreams are just lies we tell ourselves when we're asleep.

Walter believes he is different from everybody else. He can feel it deep inside. Now all he needs is actual proof. Which some might call hope.

WALTER

I should've told her when we were ten and she hated her braces. I should've told her when we were twelve and she placed third in the Scripps National Spelling bee --

BELINDA

I could spell 'laodicean' standing on my head.

WALTER

I should've told her when we were sixteen and she blew out her knee at Kitzbuhel. I should've told her when we were twenty and she modeled in Paris.

BELINDA

Funny thing. You never mention what you were doing at the time.

WALTER

Today, I'm finally going to tell Lily Theroux how I feel. I'm going to put the right words in the right order like a magic spell. And when I do? Everything will be different than it was before. I'll be different, too.

Walter steps to the hallway. Belinda calls after him.

BELINDA

Hearts don't break like legs break. The pieces never really mend. Brush your teeth!!

3

EXT. SPACKMAN HOUSE - DAY

3

Walter wheels his bike out the front door. Walter stops to stare at the house next-door. DOUG THEROUX, mid-50s, steps to his porch to get the morning paper.

THEROUX

Walter. Back home, I see.

WALTER

Temporary downsizing. Until I find a place I can afford.

THEROUX

Lily's asleep. Jet lag.

WALTER

Did you know Melatonin reduces jet lag and speeds up the rate at which your body adjusts to new time zones?

THEROUX

I did not know that.

WALTER

Tell Lily she's in my thoughts. Big day today.

Doug knows how Walter feels about Lily.

THEROUX
Sure thing, Walter. Big day.

4

EXT./INT. THE IM-PAWS-IBLE DREAM PET SALON - DAY

4

The Im-Paws-ible Dream Pet Salon is a tiny pet grooming business hidden in a sunbaked mini-mall. ***Keeping Your Pets Happy Since 2003!***

IN THE SALON

A cramped interior. Walter works at a big metal tub in the back. He wears rubber gloves and an apron. He washes a toy poodle and rehearses:

WALTER
"Lily. I know this will come as a
surprise -- "
(beat)
"Lily. It took me a long time to
understand -- "

AKIO NOMO is in his late 60s. He trims each pet with care and precision. Nomo listens to Walter rehearse.

WALTER
"Lily. I know this will come as a
surprise -- "

NOMO
Walter?

WALTER
Yes, Mister Nomo?

NOMO
There is no way this will come as a
surprise to anyone. Lily included.

Everybody knows how Walter feels about Lily.

NOMO
Try the other way.

WALTER
"It took me a long time -- ?"

NOMO
That one, yes.

WALTER
"Lily. It took me a long time to
understand that my life had a purpose."

Nomo nods approval. Then, quiet and sure:

NOMO
 Congratulations. Today is your happy
 ending.

5 EXT. THE IM-PAWS-IBLE DREAM PET SALON - DAY

5

Walter exits. MACKLIN SPORTELLLO, 26, leans against a beat-up Buick Skylark convertible. Macklin is a sweet-tempered bullshit artist. Someday he's going to be a famous chef and have his own reality TV show. Just ask him.

MACKLIN
 Dude.

WALTER
 Macklin.

IN THE SKYLARK

Macklin drives, Walter sits beside him. Walter looks at an apartment ad circled in The Recycler.

WALTER
 'Bedroom and practice room.' What's a
 practice room?

MACKLIN
 I think that's like a room that's too big
 to call a closet but too small to call a
 bedroom.

WALTER
 Lucky for me I don't own anything bigger
 than a toaster.

MACKLIN
 Joey Yaros, the guy who repeat-fainted in
 Mister Danforth's bio class? His sister
 lives there. The landlord's decent, and
 everything works. We can see it tomorrow
 if you want. I got the day off at the
 restaurant.

WALTER
 You still on prep?

This is a sore subject. Macklin scowls.

MACKLIN
 Screw up *one* cold app and they think you
 don't know the difference between a fork
 and a spoon. I'm a line cook, man.
 Chopping lettuce is beneath me.

They pull up to Walter's house. Walter looks at Lily's house next door. Macklin follows his gaze.

MACKLIN

Formosa tonight. Everybody's goin'.
Katie Burns asked if you'd be there.

WALTER

Can't. I got plans.

MACKLIN

Lily's back in town.

WALTER

How can you tell?

Macklin just shakes his head. Everybody knows.

MACKLIN

See you tomorrow, Walter.

6

INT. SPACKMAN HOUSE - WALTER'S BEDROOM - DAY

6

Walter opens one of the boxes stacked against the wall. It's full of old vinyl. Walter removes a record. There's a name printed on the sleeve. BEN SPACKMAN. Walter takes the album to an old turntable. He places the record on the platter, puts the needle to the groove. 'Are You Ready' by Pacific Gas & Electric, an absurdly soulful rock song, circa 1970, BLASTS into the room.

Walter lets the music wash over him. He is eager. He is ready. At least until the record starts to SKIP. Walter bows to the walls of his bedroom like an Olympic boxer. Lifts the needle from the groove. Steps from the room.

7

EXT. THEROUX HOUSE - BACK YARD - DAY

7

START CLOSE on LILY THEROUX, 26. Lily is beautiful to a breathtaking degree. Lily was a Junior Olympics downhill champion. Lily read every book David Foster Wallace wrote. Lily sits in the back yard of her father's house in a lotus position, eyes closed, and meditates. Doug Theroux ushers Walter into view. Walter just looks at Lily for a beat. He whispers her name like a prayer.

WALTER

Lily.

Lily smiles first, opens her eyes. Her eyes are sky blue.

LILY

Walter.

Lily gets to her feet with consummate grace. She's even taller than you expect. Lily bounds across the grass to the porch. Walter watches every step she takes.

Walter drives his mother's old Toyota up Laurel Canyon Boulevard. Lily sits beside him.

LILY

I can't believe your Mom still has this old car.

WALTER

The engine runs on anger and wishful thinking. Good gas mileage, too.

LILY

Remember my Dad used to take me on father-daughter road trips? We went to El Capitan where they have those tents with floors. Dad made a fire, and we roasted marshmallows, and pretended Mom wasn't dating the stunt coordinator on *Walker, Texas Ranger*.

WALTER

Then he threw all her shoes on the lawn and listened to *Phantom of the Opera* for three months.

Walter and Lily grin at the memory.

LILY

You look good.

WALTER

Thanks. So do you.

LILY

Still washing dogs?

WALTER

Nine to five.

LILY

So. Record store clerk, video store clerk, book store clerk --

WALTER

The digital revolution killed my clerk work.

LILY

Process server.

WALTER

I lasted one day.

LILY

Secret shopper.

WALTER

The trick to secret shopping is a sense of wonder.

LILY

I'm just saying --

WALTER

-- What you always say.

LILY

You can do better if you want. Not that there's anything wrong with pet grooming.

There's affection, not judgement, in this. No matter. Walter is confident in all things. Extremely so.

WALTER

It's all part of my ten-year plan. Looking for a way to live in the world that makes sense takes time. But that doesn't mean I won't find it. Besides. *Everything's* about to change.

LILY

It is? Walter. That's great. How?

Walter reaches the top of the canyon, and turns to her.

WALTER

I have a special surprise for you.

Distant thunder BOOMS, punctuates.

9

EXT. HOLLYWOOD HILLS - DAY

9

The Hollywood Hills. Walter and Lily move down undeveloped terrain.

WALTER

Just a little bit farther.

The sky fills with dark clouds. Then a surprise. There's a park bench carefully positioned on the side of the hill. The bench faces the city.

LILY

How did *that* happen?

WALTER

Me.

TIME CUT - ON THE BENCH

Lily and Walter sit. They look at the city and the sky.

LILY
Thank you for my special surprise.

WALTER
That's not the surprise.

LILY
It's not?

Walter turns to Lily. This is his moment.

WALTER
Lily. It took me a long time to understand that my life had a purpose.

LILY
Is this part of the ten-year plan?

WALTER
If it's okay with you it'd probably be better if there were no more interruptions. This is the kind of thing I need to get out in one piece.

LILY
Oh. Okay. Sorry. Go ahead.

WALTER
Lily. It took me a long time to understand that my life had a purpose. But once I did, I realized it was always there, waiting for me to see it, and to recognize its value. I believe --

A single raindrop interrupts, SPATTERS on Walter's forehead. Walter wipes the water away, resumes:

WALTER
I believe my purpose in life is to make you happy. I think it's something that I would be really good at. Not because I studied for it or because there's a written manual. I will be good at it because that's why my heart was made.

(beat)

I loved you the first day you moved in next door. I loved you during the two week period in 1995 when you weren't beautiful. I loved you in high school when you dated Rex Hainsworth and we didn't talk like we used to. I loved you when you went away. I love you now even more than all those other times. It's the best thing I do.

Lily's eyes fill with tears.

WALTER

I never told you this because I was afraid of what you'd think. But if I never told you, how would you know? I'm not afraid anymore. It's important to me that you know. Now you do. The End.

A tense beat. Walter waits for Lily to reply. Then:

LILY

Oh, Walter. *Walter*. That's the most beautiful thing anyone ever said to me.

WALTER

I practiced in my spare time.

Lily hugs Walter. Every cell in Walter's body sings.

LILY

But --

WALTER

But?

But. Lily pulls back from Walter.

LILY

When I'm away on a job, or in another country, or maybe something that feels like this grand adventure? You're the first person I want to tell about it. Because you're my *best* friend.

Another raindrop spatters on Walter. This time he doesn't wipe it away.

LILY

What you said, I know how hard that was, how *brave*, and how important it is, too. But Walter. I don't feel the same way you do. I wish I did. But I don't. I'm so sorry.

Lily hugs him again. It feels different than the first.

LILY

Are you okay?

WALTER

Fine, thanks.

LILY

Will it help if I pretend this never happened?

WALTER

You can remember if you want. I'm pretty sure I will.

LILY

Maybe -- *maybe* this is the kind of thing that will make our friendship stronger. More durable.

WALTER

Spun polyester is very durable. The open weave reduces fabric stress.

Lily seeks a silver lining. Walter considers opening a vein. That's when rain POURS DOWN from the sky. Lily hops to her feet.

LILY

Walter?

WALTER

I'm just going to sit here for a while if you don't mind.

LILY

That's probably not a good idea --

WALTER

Go away. Please.

The harsh note in his voice takes Lily by surprise. Walter holds out the car keys to her. A beat. Lily takes the keys, and hurries up the hill. She stops, takes one last look at him.

ON THE BENCH

Walter sits in the rain and realizes this is the day he learns he will never be special.

TIME CUT - NIGHT

We return to where we STARTED. Walter sits on the old park bench in the dark on top of the Hollywood Hills during the worst storm the city has seen in five years. Thunder BOOMS. Rain POURS. Walter doesn't move. Walter wishes he was somebody else. Because this is the worst day of his young life.

That's when lightning STRIKES a tree less than two hundred feet away from him. The tree topples, halved. Walter reacts with absolute astonishment. Then he smiles.

WALTER

That is so cool --

Then a second lightning bolt STRIKES Walter right where he sits and the SCREEN goes BRIGHT WHITE and --

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

10

SUDDENLY

10

Walter lies on the ground, his clothing shredded and burned. A JOGGER kneels over him and performs CPR. We HEAR Walter's VOICE OVER. Calm, curious. As if he were watching from a peaceful remove.

WALTER'S VOICE

On average, lightning strikes the earth about 100 times every second. But your chances of getting hit by lightning while sitting on a park bench with a broken heart? One in 280,000.

An ambulance speeds down Los Angeles streets. An EMT works on Walter.

WALTER'S VOICE

The voltage of a typical industrial electrical shock is 20 to 60 kilovolts. A lightning strike delivers 300. The temperature of a lightning strike is about 50,000 degrees Fahrenheit.

ER DOCTORS hurry Walter down a hospital corridor.

WALTER'S VOICE

Roy Sullivan holds the record for getting hit by lightning the most times. He was park ranger and he survived seven strikes. He lost his big toe.

Walter lies on an ER bed. His clothing is cut from his body. Doctors and nurses work feverishly.

WALTER'S VOICE

When the bolt hit, I felt like I was beaten with a hundred sledge hammers. It was like every case of the flu I ever had at the same time. Every single part of my body hurt. My *hair* hurt. My eye lashes hurt. My fingernails, too.

CAMERA RISES UP, LOOKS DOWN at Walter from a high angle.

WALTER'S VOICE

Today was the day I proved I was special. This is not exactly what I had in mind. Or as my Mom would say? When God closes a door, she slams it on your fingers.

The SCREEN goes BLACK. We HEAR one last line.

WALTER'S VOICE

My head filled with the sound of a
thousand church bells ringing.

And now we HEAR them RING.

11

BLACK SCREEN

11

The SCREEN is BLACK. Then we SEE white ceiling tiles,
flourescent light. This is Walter's hospital room. If he
was conscious it would be his POV. But he's not.

BELINDA'S VOICE

Walter?

Belinda Spackman's face moves INTO VIEW. She looks down
at her son with hope and sorrow.

BELINDA

First? I had a very funny gag prepared
about Lily and lightning but it doesn't
feel as funny with you lying there all
scrambled. Second? The doctor, whom I
loathe, says you should snap out of it
any time now, there's no particular
reason for you *not* to, so please give me
a goddam break and *snap* --

The screen goes BLACK. But more faces return to view,
linked by BLACKOUTS.

- Lily Theroux holds Walter's hand.

LILY

Walter? Can you hear me? I just want
you to know, no matter what, that I'm
still --

- Mr. Nomo holds a flower and recites a prayer in Korean.
He places the flower on Walter's chest.

- A sudden silence. TROY HAMILTON is 40 years old. He
wears an expensive suit. Troy looks at Walter like he's
looking for clues. We haven't met Troy before. But we
will meet him again.

- Macklin Sportello pretends he's not terrified but he is.
Which explains the babbling.

MACKLIN

Hi, it's me. Macklin Sportello. In case
you don't remember I'm probably your best
friend. Did you know there was this guy
in a coma but it turned out he was only
paralyzed so he was trapped in his own
body for thirty years? Anyway. We don't
have to talk about that *now* --

- Belinda returns to view, and we've come full circle.
Her voice is thick with emotion.

BELINDA
And third? I love you like crazy I do.

12

INT. GOOD SAMARITAN HOSPITAL - WALTER'S ROOM - NIGHT

12

Night. Walter lies in his hospital bed. Belinda sleeps in a chair. Walter is unconscious. But then a faint stirring. Walter's eyes OPEN. A beat. Then:

WALTER
Ow.

Belinda wakes, and leaps to his side.

BELINDA
Walter?

WALTER
I was struck by lightning.

BELINDA
That explains the charring.

WALTER
Can you hear that?

The RINGING resumed the moment he woke up.

BELINDA
Hear what? *Walter.* How do you feel?

WALTER
Slight numbing weakness in my extremities. Problematic concentration. Increased irritability which is probably the result of frontal lobe damage. Headache, dizziness. And of course the ringing.

BELINDA
Anything else?

WALTER
I used to think I had a destiny and her name was Lily Theroux but now I know I will never be anything but normal.

BELINDA
You got hit by lightning and didn't die.

WALTER
Except for that.

13

EXT./INT. GOOD SAMARITAN HOSPITAL - DAY

13

The hospital exterior. It's a sunny day.

IN WALTER'S HOSPITAL ROOM

Time passes. Walter recovers. He's in the same hospital bed. The RINGING continues at an even lower level. Walter is bored and restless and alone.

There's a glass of water on a stand next to the bed. Walter reaches for the glass, but it is out of reach. Walter frowns, reaches for it a second time. But the glass is still beyond his grasp. Walter exhales an irritable sigh. He keeps his arm extended. And then something impossible happens. The glass MOVES three inches toward his fingertips. As if to respond to his mind's wish. Walter FREEZES. He looks around the room for witnesses or a reason. He checks under the stand. A beat. Walter looks back to the glass.

Belinda Spackman BARGES into the hospital room without warning. Walter SCREAMS at the top of his lungs. Belinda pretends that he didn't.

BELINDA

You're looking chipper.

Macklin follows Belinda into the room. He pushes a wheelchair. Belinda indicates the chair.

BELINDA

Time to go. I completed the relevant paperwork, strangled two doctors and --

WALTER

I think I may be having hallucinations.

BELINDA

Of course you are, dear.

MACKLIN

Maybe it's a side effect of getting your brain boiled.

That's when Walter realizes there's something he missed.

WALTER

The ringing. It's gone.

And it STOPPED the moment he moved that glass. Or hallucinated that he did. Or not.

14

EXT./INT. SPACKMAN HOUSE - DAY

14

Another sunny day in Studio City.

IN WALTER'S BEDROOM

Walter gets out of bed with unusual caution. There's a slipper on the floor. Walter looks at the slipper, and it MOVES three inches closer. Walter lets out YELP, and dives back into bed. He looks around the room. Every object, large and small, represents a threat. If only because Walter is afraid he'll move it with his mind.

TIME CUT - IN THE KITCHEN

Walter eats breakfast with his mother. Walter eyes his bowl of cereal. Naturally, the bowl MOVES three inches in his direction. Walter grabs it with both hands, if only to stop his mother from noticing.

BELINDA

-- And you can stay here for as long as you like. Apartment-hunting can wait. I will tend to your every need.

Walter looks to a glass of orange juice. He reaches for it slowly so as not to disrupt the space/time continuum. Walter takes hold of the glass. It did not move an inch. Walter reacts with relief.

BELINDA

Is there something wrong with the orange juice? I squeezed it myself.

WALTER

No, it's fine. Very fresh.

Walter's spoon starts to bounce and shake. Walter slams a hand on top of it. And changes the subject:

WALTER

So. Mom. What happened to your fake cigarette?

BELINDA

I quit fake smoking. It's fake bad for you.

The doorbell RINGS. Now what?

WALTER

Is that my head or is that the door?

15

INT. SPACKMAN HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - DAY

15

Walter opens the front door. It's Lily Theroux. Lily looks at him with great sympathy.

LILY

Walter. Can I hug you? Is that -- ?

WALTER

A hug would be great. Thanks.

Lily hugs Walter. Walter holds on longer than he should.

TIME CUT - IN THE LIVING ROOM

Walter and Lily sit in the living room. An awkward beat.

LILY

I'm sorry I didn't get back to the hospital. I was in Oakland helping Alice Waters build a sustainable garden for poor children --

WALTER

That's okay. My stay there was completely uneventful.

No it wasn't.

LILY

Are you feeling better?

WALTER

Much improved.

LILY

Walter. We can't pretend you didn't say what you said. But I hope, I *know*, we can get back to the way we were. This doesn't have to make it harder for us to be friends.

WALTER

I don't think it can be much harder.

LILY

Well. I just wanted to check in. Make sure you were all right. Come and see me if you want. Any time. I mean it.

TIME CUT - AT A WINDOW

Walter stands at a window, and watches Lily return to the street. A young man with the chiseled features of an all-star athlete who decided to model for a couple years in Milan waits for her on a motorcycle. This is DJANGO.

Late at night. A bright moon soars overhead.

IN WALTER'S BEDROOM

Walter gets out of bed, steps to his window. He opens the blinds. Lily's bedroom is directly opposite. The bedroom

curtains are drawn. Light shines inside. Walter can HEAR the sound of MUFFLED conversation. Lily's talking on the telephone. Walter extends his arm to her window. Walter focuses and the focus is reflected in his face. He gestures for the curtains to part. And they do. Three inches. But not an inch more. Walter's not freaked out this time. He's not surprised, either. Walter smiles.

17

EXT. THEROUX HOUSE - BACK YARD - DAY

17

Morning. Lily Theroux sunbathes in the back yard. There's a mango tree, and mangos rotting in the grass. Lily reads a magazine. Walter steps into view.

LILY

Walter.

WALTER

There's something I need to tell you.

LILY

You were pretty comprehensive the last time.

WALTER

Not that. Lily. Something amazing is happening to me.

A familiar SOUND is HEARD. It's a motorcycle. Django rolls into the back yard.

LILY

Django!

Django poses on the motorcycle.

LILY

Walter, this is my friend, Django. We met on a job in Tahiti.

DJANGO

What's up, Lloyd?

WALTER

My name is Walter.

DJANGO

You look more like a 'Lloyd' to me.

LILY

Django restored that Vincent Black Shadow with his Dad, and converted it to run on hydrogen fuel cells.

Walter retreats from this latest humiliation. At least until he steps on something squishy. It's a rotten mango.

WALTER
What year is it?

DJANGO
'52. Best Vincent ever.

Walter extends an arm as if to stretch, and aims his new mojo at the mango tree over Django's head. But nothing happens. Lily's cell phone rings, and she answers it.

WALTER
Mind if I take to look?

Walter steps to Django, the motorcycle, and the mango tree. Walter fake stretches, focuses. At a closer distance. A beat. This time, a ripe mango separates from its stem, and FALLS to the ground at Django's feet.

DJANGO
Whoa.

Walter faces the mango tree. A second mango DROPS near the first. The third mango HITS Django on the shoulder.

DJANGO
Whoa.

Walter looks to Django's sunglasses. This requires greater effort. As if his power was beginning to wane. Walter POPS out a lens. Django reacts with astonishment. Walter TURNS ON a portable sprinkler and water SHOOTS UP all around him. Django reacts with greater astonishment. Because he knows, impossible or not, that Walter did this.

Walter reacts with triumph. At least until he sees the look in Django's eye. He's afraid. Lily sees it, too.

LILY
Django -- how did the -- ?

Walter tries to turn off the portable sprinkler. But his power, however temporarily, is gone. Lily hurries to the faucet. Django whispers:

DJANGO
Freak.

LILY
I think it's broken. Walter, what happened -- ?

Walter runs away. The word follows him home. *Freak.*

Walter sits in bed in the dark. Walter thinks about what he did. Walter's not sure where to turn.

19

EXT./INT. THE HOLLYWOOD RESTAURANT - NIGHT

19

The Hollywood Restaurant is a hip hangout in Hollywood.

INSIDE THE RESTAURANT

Post-modern club decor. Tables, booths. An open kitchen and a long bar. Walter sits at the bar over a bottle of beer. Macklin steps into view. He wears kitchen whites.

MACKLIN

What's up?

WALTER

The first of many beers.

MACKLIN

Nuking your sorrows with alcohol. Good plan.

WALTER

Do you think alcohol will help me forget Lily?

MACKLIN

I don't think it's possible to drink that much.

Macklin returns to the kitchen. Walter looks to a bowl of peanuts. The bowl MOVES three inches to his hand. A beat. Then a surprise:

TROY'S VOICE

Hello, Walter.

A stranger sits two stools away. It's Troy Hamilton, last seen at Walter's hospital bed.

WALTER

Hey.

Wait a minute.

WALTER

Have we met?

TROY

No.

WALTER

But you know my name.

TROY

I know everything about you.

WALTER

Why?

TROY

It's my job.

Troy sits beside Walter. He's an affable man. Quick to smile, a twinkle in his eyes. But there's iron behind the friendly exterior.

WALTER

Well, whatever they're paying you? It's too much.

TROY

Why do you say that?

WALTER

I'm a twenty-six year-old dog washer currently living with his mother. What's to know?

TROY

Don't be so hard on yourself. Everybody has a secret gift inside. A difference. You just happen to be a little more in touch with yours than most. The trick is to make the very best of it that you can.

WALTER

My Mom buys audio books that sound just like you.

TROY

I'm curious. Have you tested the limits of your ability? It's important to understand what you can and can't do.

Walter reacts. Troy knows.

WALTER

Who are you?

TROY

Troy Hamilton.

Walter's not sure what to do next. Because this conversation feels impossible.

WALTER

So. Troy Hamilton. What can I do for you?

TROY

Ideally? You can help me fight evil and make the world a better place.

WALTER

Seriously. Why are you here?

TROY

I find people with special talents. We track lightning strike victims. That's how I found you.

WALTER

Are you part of a super secret government organization that turns out to be as bad as the bad guys in the end?

TROY

I'm a private contractor with good intentions and clear conscience. Wasabi peanut?

Troy indicates the bowl of peanuts that Walter pushed. A beat. Walter quietly confesses:

WALTER

Look. Whatever I move, I can only move it three inches. It's the worst superpower ever. Like having an extra thumb.

TROY

You need to expand your line of thinking.

WALTER

Bar bets? The circus?

TROY

You have no idea what you can do. Not yet.

WALTER

Invisibility. Now *there's* a superpower.

TROY

Doesn't exist. I looked.

Walter reacts. Walter looks back to his beer. Troy leans a little closer to him.

TROY

Walter. I know exactly how you feel. You feel lost and alone. You feel like nobody could ever understand. You feel like a freak. But that's not who you are.

Walter turns to Troy. Troy meets his gaze.

WALTER

Okay. Who am I?

TROY

You're a young man with a special talent.
A talent that can make you a *hero*.

WALTER

I'm not hero material. Ask anyone.

Walter gets up, and walks away.

20

EXT. THE HOLLYWOOD RESTAURANT - NIGHT

20

Walter steps from the restaurant to the night. He thinks about everything the stranger said. Walter feels like he's dreaming and can't wake up.

21

INT. THE HOLLYWOOD RESTAURANT - NIGHT

21

Troy Hamilton remains at the bar. Walter returns to him.

WALTER

My talent isn't a talent. It's a *curse*.
I'm going back to washing dogs where I
belong.

Except here he is. Troy meets Walter's gaze.

TROY

Tell you what. Why don't I introduce
you to the rest of the team, and then you
can make up your mind.

WALTER

Wait. There's a *team*?

TROY

Of course there is. You can't fight evil
all by yourself.

Walter takes a closer look at Troy. Having grown up without one, every man he meets is measured for a father.

WALTER

You want a beer? I get a discount.

TROY

A beer would be just the thing.

END ACT TWO

THE HUMAN SMELL

What does he do?

TIME ZONE

I can't tell.

MOOD SWING puts a comforting hand to his back, and looks to the front door. She's a beautiful young woman of 28.

MOOD SWING

Whatever it is? If Troy wanted us all here to meet him, he must be something special.

25

EXT. GRANADA HILLS - DAY

25

Troy drives through an anonymous suburban neighborhood. Walter sits beside him. He is full of doubts. But he's eager too.

WALTER

Why lightning strike victims?

TROY

We check for enhanced perception, paranormal skills.

WALTER

How many did you find?

TROY

There's an octogenarian in New Canaan who can lick postage stamps with her mind. A teenager in Moline who can accurately predict the duration of commercial breaks. Most people just blow out their ear drums.

26

EXT./INT. TEAM HEADQUARTERS - DAY

26

Troy and Walter step toward a drab 1950s ranch house.

TROY

It's not exactly the Fortress of Solitude. We like to keep a low profile.

IN THE LIVING ROOM

Troy ushers Walter into house and living room. Exactly like Time Zone saw it. Troy speaks TO CAMERA again.

TROY

Everybody? This is Walter Spackman. I invited Walter to join us. But Walter has his doubts.

MYNAH BIRD, 45, steps to greet them. She looks like a suburban housewife. From Seoul, Korea. Her expression is blank. Mynah Bird's expression is always blank.

TROY

This is Mynah Bird. She can duplicate and broadcast almost any sound.

Mynah holds out hand to shake. THE BUGMASTER follows. He's an albino man of 35.

TROY

The Bugmaster is able to commune with members of the insect kingdom.

A cockroach skitters from the Bugmaster's hair down the collar of his shirt.

TROY

Time Zone can see into the future. Approximately five minutes.

Time Zone's face retains the headache wince.

TROY

The Human Smell? Well. You can probably guess.

The Human Smell muttered throughout the introductions. Now we HEAR what he's muttering. It's a kind of superhero VOICE OVER, a narration for this boy's life.

THE HUMAN SMELL

-- As they came face to face, the first thing Walter noticed was the Smell's steely gaze, eyes that penetrate --

MOOD SWING

Save it, Stinky.

THE HUMAN SMELL

Sorry. Hey. Dude.

Walter shakes his hand. Troy indicates Mood Swing.

TROY

And Mood Swing. Able to alter and shape emotional states faster and more effectively than any drug known to man.

MOOD SWING

It's not exactly leaping tall buildings in a single bound. But I get by. What's your secret, Walter?

Walter looks at Mood Swing and forgets his own name.

WALTER

I can -- I can -- I --

THE HUMAN SMELL

Probably not public speaking.

TROY

Walter can move any object three inches.

MOOD SWING

That sounds about right. Welcome. I think you're going to like it here.

Mood Swing holds out a hand. Walter takes hold. Walter's doubts decrease by a factor of ten.

27 INT. TEAM HEADQUARTERS - DAY

27

Walter sits before a panel screen in a computer lab. Troy Hamilton looks over his shoulder.

A HIDDEN CAMERA in Walter's hospital room recorded his recovery. Troy FAST-FORWARDS the images. Until he finds Walter considering a glass of water beyond his reach. Walter MOVES the glass toward his fingertips. Walter watches the recent past with quiet fascination.

WALTER

I thought I was crazy.

TROY

Not crazy, Walter. *Amazing.*

Troy puts a hand on Walter's shoulder.

TROY

What do you say we find out just how amazing you are?

28 INT. TEAM HEADQUARTERS - DAY

28

Troy and Walter move to a sterile white room. CAMERAS record the session. A YOUNG WOMAN in a white lab coat inputs data into a hand-held. Troy sets three oranges on a narrow platform.

TROY

Target practice.

WALTER

Are you training me to be a fruit assassin?

Troy deadpans. Walter extends an arm. He focuses, the focus is reflected in his face. Walter pushes the first orange off the platform. Then the second and the third.

TROY

Amazing.

The praise warms. Troy sets up three more oranges. He moves Walter farther from the platform.

TROY

So. This Lily Theroux. What's she do, anyway?

WALTER

How do you know about Lily?

TROY

'I know everything about you.'

WALTER

She's a model-humanitarian.

TROY

Does she know what you can do?

WALTER

No.

Walter knocks an orange off the platform. Troy moves him back a step. Walter handles a second orange, too.

TROY

In my limited experience? When it comes to model-humanitarians, you have to take the long view.

Troy moves Walter back another step. Walter extends his arm, focuses. But this time nothing happens. Troy looks to the young woman in the lab coat.

TROY

Maximum range. Twelve feet, four inches.

Troy looks back to Walter. Walter's still trying to knock the last orange off the platform. He extends his arm as far as he can. His face scrunches with effort.

TROY

The face scrunching probably doesn't help. You can lose the stiff-arm, too.

Walter de-scrunches. Walter drops his arm.

Walter and Troy return to the computer lab. Walter sits at a smart screen. There are locks of different makes on the screen. Some whole, some in pieces. Walter can move the parts with his fingertips. Troy stands over him.

TROY

Your basic key lock contains a small cylinder. When the door is *locked*, a part called the tang is partially out of the cylinder. When the door is *unlocked*, the tang rests fully inside it. You need a key to release the tang. Unless you are you.

WALTER

So what you're saying is. I can be the best locksmith ever. Wow. All my dreams are coming true.

TROY

What I'm saying is. Sometimes the good guys need to walk through doors that only you can open.

Walter never considered that.

TROY

A bowling ball or a feather. It's always three inches?

WALTER

Yep. I don't know why.

TROY

It makes sense. We're made of atoms. Everything is. The only thing holding those atoms together is the electrical attraction between the negatively charged electron and the positively charged nucleus. The lightning must've altered your brain chemistry, allowing you to exert electromagnetic force on the atoms in any object. But there's only so much charge in the atoms that you can access. That would limit the distance you can move them.

30

INT. TEAM EXIMIUS HEADQUARTERS - DAY

30

Back in the white room. There's a glass door on wheels. Walter stands on one side, Troy on the other. Troy speaks to Walter through the glass.

TROY

Let me in.

Walter starts to extend his arm, as is habit. But then he stops. Walter focuses. Nothing. Walter reacts. He tries again. Nothing. Walter mutters unhappily:

WALTER

I can't do this.

MACKLIN

You always have time.

WALTER

Not anymore. Sorry, Macklin. I'm late.

Walter backs away from the Skylark. Macklin sees the sedan waiting for him.

MACKLIN

Who's that?

WALTER

Don't follow me.

MACKLIN

I'm not stalking you, Walter! I'm trying to be your friend!

Walter gets into the sedan. The sedan rolls off. Macklin shouts after it anyway.

MACKLIN

Lightning changed you, man!! And not in a good way!!

33

INT. TEAM HEADQUARTERS - DAY

33

Walter returns to the suburban HQ. Troy leads Walter through the living room to an elevator. The elevator doors OPEN. Walter and Troy step inside, descend.

MONTAGE

- In the white room. Walter faces the familiar platform. But this time he wears headphones. The headphones fill with SOUNDS meant to distract, and impair his focus. High treble hiss, sudden screams, horrific explosions. A Celine Dion power ballad. Walter knocks objects off the platform. He's like a gunslinger and his mind is the gun. Troy Hamilton nods with satisfaction.

- In a corridor. Walter faces a locked door. Troy watches and waits. Walter looks to the keypad. No arm extended, no scrunched face. Just growing confidence. Walter unlocks the door with his mind. He opens the door, reacts. It's a comfortably decorated bedroom, wholly at odds with the rest of the HQ. Walter wonders what the bedroom is for.

- In the white room. Walter faces the platform. There are objects all over the floor. But one remains in place. Walter tries to move it but he can't. The woman in the lab coat checks a stopwatch, writes down the time in a box marked DURATION/LIMIT.

- Sunset. Five cars are parked in the alley behind the drab house. Walter races from car to car, and starts each ignition. Troy waits at the last car. He applauds.

34

INT. TEAM EXIMIUS HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

34

Walter and Troy return to the living room.

TROY

Wait here.

Troy steps off. Walter sits on a sofa. Walter feels special and he never felt like this before. That's when Mood Swing enters.

MOOD SWING

How's it going?

WALTER

Hi. What?

Walter's newly acquired powers do not yet include the ability to converse with beautiful women.

WALTER

Oh. With Troy. Great. I mean I was worried at first, there's all this stuff to learn, and it's hard sometimes, but the thing is --

MOOD SWING

You never really knew how much you could do until now.

WALTER

No, I didn't.

MOOD SWING

Troy does that for everyone.

WALTER

Are you altering or shaping my emotional state with your mind right now?

MOOD SWING

No.

WALTER

Sorry.

MOOD SWING

I've got an idea. Why don't we celebrate? Drinks?

WALTER

Sure. Great. I know a place we can go.

TIME ZONE

Anybody know where the nearest Rite-Aid is?

JUMP CUT - IN THE MENS ROOM

Walter and The Human Smell wash up in the Mens Room.

THE HUMAN SMELL

My baby smell was like the smell of a million stinky baby diapers. Freaked Mom and Dad right out. They were *afraid* of me, you know? And girls are pretty much out of the question 'cause I can't always control my aroma. But here? I'm not a mutant, I'm *special*.

(beat)

Ever wonder why superheroes work in teams? *Family*. Everybody wants one.

JUMP CUT - IN THE BOOTH

Time Zone's cell phone rings. He answers, speaks into it.

TIME ZONE

Hey. Out with the team. We're breaking in the new guy.

The Human Smell mouths explanation to Walter. *The wife*.

TIME ZONE

Cough medicine? Sure. She okay?

The Human Smell mouths again. *The baby*.

TIME ZONE

I'll pick it up upon the way home. There's a Rite Aid on Sunset.

Because he already knew this call was coming.

JUMP CUT - IN THE BOOTH

Walter pours himself another beer. He listens to the back and forth with growing wonder.

THE BUGMASTER

I hear rumors.

TIME ZONE

New mission in forty-eight.

WALTER

Mission?

MOOD SWING

Retrieval and delivery.

WALTER
 Wait. When you say 'forty-eight' do you
 mean forty-eight *hours*?

THE HUMAN SMELL
 What's the target?

MOOD SWING
 Package.

WALTER
 Okay. Hang on. What *kind* of package?

They all look to Walter.

MOOD SWING
 If we knew that?

THE HUMAN SMELL
 It wouldn't be half as fun.

Walter's heart swells. He feels like he's in Joe's Bar on
Galactica with Starbuck and Helo.

37

EXT./INT. THE HOLLYWOOD BAR - NIGHT

37

Patrons exit from the bar to the night. It's late.

INSIDE THE BAR

Mood Swing studies Walter for a beat. Then:

MOOD SWING
 You need a catch phrase.

WALTER
 I do?

THE HUMAN SMELL
 Everybody has one.

WALTER
 They do?

MOOD SWING
 No. But you need a costume.

WALTER
 I do?

THE HUMAN SMELL
 Everybody has one.

WALTER
 They do?

MOOD SWING

No. But you need a superhero identity.

Walter does not speak. If only to avoid getting fooled again. Mood Swing deadpans:

MOOD SWING

Actually you *do* need a superhero identity. "Walter" won't cut it in this line of work.

Walter grins. The Human Smell was right. With each passing moment, this feels more like a family to him.

JUMP CUT - IN THE BOOTH

Walter pours himself another beer.

WALTER

When did you realize you could make people happy or sad?

MOOD SWING

The day after I hit puberty.

WALTER

What's your real name? What did they call you when you were born? If you were running across a summer lawn and your mother shouted your name because it was time for dinner, what name would she -- ?

Walter's shitfaced. A VOICE interrupts:

CAPTAIN NORMAL'S VOICE

That's a secret *nobody* knows.

Walter turns to the sound. Captain Normal stands over him. He's the young man who watched Walter train. He is handsome, cocksure, and strong.

CAPTAIN NORMAL

Step out, Newbie.

Walter obeys without thinking. Captain Normal sits in his place next to Mood Swing.

WALTER

Who are you?

CAPTAIN NORMAL

I'm the guy that makes sure you freaks don't screw up. I'm the team leader, and liasion to Mister Hamilton. When I give an order? You obey. *Sit*.

Freaks. There's that word again. Walter sits in spite of himself. The Human Smell quietly narrates his humiliation:

THE HUMAN SMELL

The night tasted of defeat and broken dreams. Captain Normal smirked, his arrogance exceeded only by his one true ability -- the ability to act like a total douche bag --

Captain Normal shoots a look at the Human Smell.

WALTER

What's *your* special power?

MOOD SWING

Captain Normal doesn't have one.

MYNAH BIRD

Hence the name.

CAPTAIN NORMAL

My special ability is I can kick your ass with one hand tied behind my back.

Captain Normal puts an arm around Mood Swing. Mood Swing shrugs it off. But Walter SEES the way Captain Normal looks at her. Walter's heart sinks just a little.

38

INT. THE HOLLYWOOD BAR - NIGHT

38

In the kitchen. Walter steps between racks. A LINE COOK nods a greeting. He's a familiar face here. Walter finds Macklin chopping lettuce in the back.

WALTER

Still on prep?

Macklin keeps chopping. He's angry.

WALTER

Look. I'm sorry about disappearing like that. But something really weird happened to me -- I brought some friends I want you to meet --

MACKLIN

No worries. I'm going to find a place by myself.

WALTER

Why?

MACKLIN

Well sure, if you were my roommate I could probably get you on the *phone*, but I'm not sure it's worth the aggravation.

WALTER

Maybe you should lighten up a little.

MACKLIN

I've been hacking romaine for three hours. *You* lighten up.

Walter would be more sympathetic if he wasn't shitfaced.

WALTER

You don't have to be a dick about it.

MACKLIN

Right. 'Cause it's *my* fault. I waste my time trying to find us a decent place to live while you chase after Lily who treats you like a *pet* which reminds me, washing dogs? C'mon man, isn't that a *little* embarrassing but no, everything's cool -- joke girl, joke job -- because you have a ten-year plan that everybody knows used to be *five*. Also lately you suck as a friend.

A stunned beat. Walter can't believe he said that. He walks away. Macklin can't believe he said it, either.

AT THE BOOTH

Walter steps back to the booth. Captain Normal is missing. Everybody looks up at him. Walter wobbles.

WALTER

I need you to do me a favor and not ask why and I will happily join the team if you do this favor for me. In return.

TIME CUT - AT THE BOOTH

Captain Normal returns with a pitcher of beer. Only The Human Smell remains. He quietly narrates:

THE HUMAN SMELL

The Smell met his gaze with the carefree abandon of a man with no zits and nothing left to lose --

Walter and Mood Swing linger outside. The Bugmaster moves off into the shadows with Myna Bird and Time Zone. Three moths sit lightly on his shoulder.

MOOD SWING

C'mon, Walter. Better if we're not around.

WALTER

I want to be clear and just for the record? Washing dogs is not who I *am* it's what I *did*. And Lily? Big deal if I'm two years away from adding five more to my ten-year plan. Is that so wrong?

MOOD SWING

You really like beer.

WALTER

Me, too.

Walter wobbles. Then, with quiet affection:

MOOD SWING

I think we'll call you Three Inches.

WALTER

Three Inches. I like that.

MOOD SWING

Now all you need is a catch phrase.

WALTER

Wait. I got one. Up, up, and --

SCREAMS of HORROR are HEARD. PATRONS stream out to the sidewalk. Some rub desperately at their eyes. Some COUGH. Most VOMIT where they stand. A beat. The Human Smell steps into view.

THE HUMAN SMELL

That's how I do.

Walter grins. Mood Swing grins, too. The Human Smell joins them, and they RUN into the night. Walter shouts, and it's the catch phrase in full:

WALTER

Up, up, and a limited distance away!!

Captain Normal emerges from the bar. He wears a breathing device over his mouth and nose. Captain Normal surveys the wreckage, and mutters into his cuff mike.

CAPTAIN NORMAL

Send me a cleaner. There's puke all over Sunset Boulevard.

END ACT THREE

ACT FOUR40 INT. TEAM HEADQUARTERS - DAY

40

Walter rises in an elevator. The doors open to reveal the sparsely furnished house in Grenada Hills.

Walter enters the living room. Walter wears a uniform. It's a sleek black bodysuit. Everyone is waiting for him. Mood Swing, The Bugmaster, Myna Bird, The Human Smell, Time Zone. Troy Hamilton and Captain Normal. They all APPLAUD. Except for Captain Normal.

TROY

How does it feel, Walter?

WALTER

It rides up a little in the butt but I'm sure that can be --

TROY

How does it feel to join the Team?

WALTER

Oh. It feels great.

Troy steps to Walter, claps a hand on either arm.

TROY

Good. First op in thirty-six hours.

41 EXT./INT. SPACKMAN HOUSE - NIGHT

41

Late night. No lights in the Spackman house.

IN WALTER'S BEDROOM

Walter sits in the dark. The iMac's *Buffy* screensaver casts light. Walter is nervous, on edge.

TIME CUT - AT HIS COMPUTER

Walter sits at the computer. He checks the iChat panel. Macklin is on line. Walter composes a message to him. ***This is going to sound insane. But you have to believe me. Every word is true.***

Walter stops. He's not sure how to put the impossible into words. Walter looks away from the computer. When he looks back? Troy Hamilton peers at him from the screen. Walter reacts with yelping surprise.

TROY

Sorry to pop in like this. I just wanted to see how you were doing.

WALTER

Doing great. Never better. Super good.

TROY

You're scared to death.

WALTER

Every cell in my body is screaming.
That's seventy trillion cells.

TROY

Do something for me? Step to the window.
Look at the stars.

Walter steps to the window.

WALTER

I can't see them. But that's mostly due
to the city lights, and there may also be
a cloud or smog layer --

TROY

Walter. You can't see the stars but you
know they're up there. That's not faith
or a good guess. It's a fact. The
courage inside you is like the stars.
You can't see it, but it's there. That's
a fact.

Walter keeps his eyes on the sky. Then, as much to
himself as to Hamilton:

WALTER

I decided at a very early age, four
actually, to learn the answer to every
question. And I did, to the exclusion of
almost everything else, and then one day
there I was, and my head is full of
answers and that's when I realized I
forgot all the questions. Except the
first one.

TROY

What was your first question?

WALTER

"Where's Dad?"

TROY

You never knew your father.

WALTER

I was only three when he died.

TROY

A boy should know his Dad.

Walter looks back to the iMac screen.

WALTER

I got a box of his old records. And a photograph. I used to keep it by my bed. But it wasn't a *memory*. It was just a picture. Like an insert in a frame you buy. All that did was make me sadder. I put it away.

TROY

Do me a favor? Put it back.

WALTER

Okay.

TROY

Get some sleep. Big day, tomorrow.
Good night, son.

Son. It's a companionable descriptive. But it feels like more than that to Walter. Troy Hamilton reaches OFF-SCREEN, disconnects.

42

EXT./INT. THE FOUR SEASONS HOTEL - NIGHT

42

Night. Limousines idle outside the Four Seasons Hotel.

INSIDE THE HOTEL

PAVEL HUSAK sits at the hotel bar. Husak is a quiet man of middle age. He wears a bespoke suit and a blank expression. He drinks a glass of wine. A BODYGUARD sits beside him. The BARTENDER sets his drink on the bar.

BARTENDER'S VOICE

Club soda and lime.

The bartender is Time Zone. The bodyguard takes a sip. Time Zone takes a closer look at him.

TIME CUT - AT THE END OF THE BAR

Time Zone winces through a headache. He speaks into a cuff mike.

TIME ZONE

Men's room.

ON A SOFA

Captain Normal sits on a sofa. He wears a suit. He cleans up nice. Captain Normal speaks into a cuff mike.

CAPTAIN NORMAL

You heard the lady. *Move.*

THREE MERCS in track suits move to the rest rooms. Captain Normal walks out of the lounge.

AT THE BAR

Pavel Husak's bodyguard grunts, grabs at his stomach. He races to the men's room before his bowels explode. A beautiful woman takes his place. It's Mood Swing in a black cocktail dress. Mood Swing cleans up more than nice. She's stunning.

MOOD SWING

Hello, Doctor Husak.

Husak suddenly is filled with warmth, contentment, and memory. He looks at Mood Swing with absolute wonder.

HUSAK

I almost forgot.

MOOD SWING

What did you forget?

HUSAK

Solovyovo. Home. There is an island in the middle of the lake and there are ruins of a church on the island. It is said that the bones of a saint are buried in the soil.

(beat)

I was only eight years old. We took an old rowboat, my sister Vladka and me. We rowed to the island and we looked for the bones. Vladka. I haven't thought about her in years.

Husak is captive to happiness. Mood Swing knows just when to make her move.

MOOD SWING

Tell me where it is, Pavel.

HUSAK

What?

MOOD SWING

The package.

43

EXT. THE FOUR SEASONS HOTEL - NIGHT

43

Husak steps from the hotel. He shakes his head to clear it. He remembers what he told the young woman inside. Husak reaches inside his jacket for a cell phone. But a panel van smokes into view, the side door OPENS, Captain Normal GRABS Husak from behind, and SHOVES him inside. Captain Normal watches the van speed away. A beat. Mood Swing steps beside him.

CAPTAIN NORMAL

Where to?

MOOD SWING

San Pedro.

44

EXT. SAN PEDRO - DOCKS & WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

44

San Pedro. START CLOSE on a pair of black military boots stepping on pavement. We HEAR a man's VOICE OVER:

MAN'S VOICE

Kobe's the better player, sure. But
LeBron is *playin'* better. Aiight?

ANOTHER ANGLE reveals a GUARD in helmet and bulletproof vest. He patrols the perimeter around a warehouse close to the docks. He continues into his headset mike.

GUARD

It's like Alicia Keys. She's got the
skills, but she's not makin' great songs.

We HEAR another GUARD respond over the first guard's headset. He has a deep basso voice.

GUARD #2'S VOICE

This makes sense to me, of course.
However, while gaining an NBA title,
Mister Kobe has become a far better
player, attaining previously unheard-of
performance levels. Dog.

GUARD

Bernard? You *sound* funny.

A beat. The second guard SHOUTS with fear and alarm.

GUARD #2'S VOICE

Omigod. No, no, NO!! HELP!!

AT THE WAREHOUSE

The first guard runs around a corner. He SEES the second guard lying face-down on the pavement. He races to his side, kneels to check his condition.

GUARD

Bernard -- ?

At which point, Captain Normal, wearing the guard's uniform, rolls, and gun-butts him in the face. The guard collapses in a heap. The team emerges from the shadows. Myna Bird wears the first guard's headset. She speaks one more line in the man's deep basso voice.

MYNAH BIRD

I need to work on my sports information
and trivia.

THE HUMAN SMELL

No kidding. Dog.

The team wears bodysuits. Mood Swing's fits her like a second skin. The Human Smell? Not so much.

AT THE DOOR

Walter kneels at a warehouse door. He's nervous, but he's eager, too. He feels like James Bond. Walter indicates the lock.

WALTER

Schlage Tulip. Piece of cake.

THE HUMAN SMELL

Tulip. The name reminded him of flowers and where the Dutch live. How ironic. The thing designed to keep him out is also the name of --

Everyone turns to The Human Smell. *Not now.*

WALTER

It's not ironic, per se. It's actually more like a coincidence --

CAPTAIN NORMAL

We get in, we get out. Retrieve the package and deliver it to HQ. Understood?

45

INT. WAREHOUSE - HALLWAY - NIGHT

45

The warehouse is a high security facility. There's a door at the end of a corridor. A bulletproof glass booth next to the door. A GUARD sits inside. He reads a magazine. Nobody goes through the door without going through him.

There's an air conditioning vent over his head. A butterfly slips through vent. It alights on his shoulder. The guard swats the butterfly away. He turns back to his magazine. But then a second butterfly floats into view. This one bounces off his mouth. The guard spits.

GUARD #3

What the -- ?

A third butterfly appears. A fourth. Butterflies POUR through the vent.

WIDER ANGLE

The booth FILLS with butterflies. The guard flails. When he SCREAMS the butterflies fill his mouth. The team watches the guard sink from view.

THE HUMAN SMELL

Dude. Gross.

THE BUGMASTER

Look who's talking.

46 INT. WAREHOUSE - HALLWAY - NIGHT

46

The team runs down a corridor. There's a T intersection at the end. Captain Normal urges them forward. Walter brings up the rear. Walter turns to look behind them. He TRIPS over his own feet, and FACE-PLANTS on the floor. Walter struggles to his feet. But the rest of the team has vanished from sight. Walter stands, faces the T intersection. Left or right?

47 INT. WAREHOUSE - HALLWAY - NIGHT

47

Walter hurries down another hallway. No sign of anyone. Two armed GUARDS move into view. Walter FREEZES. The first guard aims his weapon at Walter.

GUARD

DOWN ON THE FLOOR. Spread your arms,
spread your legs.

Walter obeys. The second guard steps to Walter. The first is about to speak into his headset mike, when Mood Swing strolls into view.

MOOD SWING'S VOICE

Hello, Boys.

GUARD #2

What the hell -- ?

GUARD

DOWN ON THE FLOOR.

Mood Swing keeps coming. Because her mojo only works at close range.

MOOD SWING

Sorry. I'm running late.

GUARD

DOWN ON THE --

He never finishes the order. He chuckles instead. A beat. The second guard chuckles too, like he heard the same joke. Mood Swing aerosols both with a knockout drug. The guards drop to the floor.

WALTER

I can't feel my legs.

Mood Swing hoists Walter to his feet.

MOOD SWING

Walter. Look at me. One more door to open. Then we can all go home. Got it?

48

INT. WAREHOUSE - HALLWAY & VAULT - NIGHT

48

But not just any door. It's steel-reinforced concrete vault door. Captain Normal takes a device out of his backpack. A portable X-Ray. It reveals the lock's workings on a screen.

CAPTAIN NORMAL

Step on it, freak. We're on the clock.

Freak. Walter checks the X-Ray, faces the lock. Walter reacts. His power is starting to wane.

WALTER

I've never seen anything like this before.

CAPTAIN NORMAL

That's what I was afraid of. Why anybody thought you belonged -- ?

MOOD SWING

He can do it.

CAPTAIN NORMAL

Yeah? Because all I see --

Captain Normal is interrupted by a CLICK. Everyone reacts. The first click is followed by a SECOND. Walter checks the X-Ray, focuses. CLICK. Walter exhales relief.

WALTER

'Freak'? You make it sound like a *bad* thing.

49

INT. WAREHOUSE - VAULT - NIGHT

49

Captain Normal enters the vault. The others follow. But then they STOP. The only thing in the vault is a ten year-old GIRL sitting in a chair. She's the package. Her name is CASSIE. Cassie has been sedated, her speech slurred.

CASSIE

Who are you?

50

INT. WAREHOUSE - HALLWAY - NIGHT

50

Captain Normal ushers Cassie down the hallway. Walter keeps pace beside them.

WALTER

Are you all right, is there anything we
can -- ?

They reach the T intersection, round the corner. FIVE
GUARDS run in their direction.

THE HUMAN SMELL

This is me.

The team members put on small gas masks like the one
Captain Normal wore at The Hollywood Bar. Mood Swing
helps Cassie into a mask. The guards STOP. The Human
Smell steps forward to meet them.

THE HUMAN SMELL

Want to see something gross?

The Human Smell PULLS DOWN the upper half of his bodysuit,
revealing the chubby torso inside. Every one of his PORES
dilates, opens a fraction. We HEAR a faint HISSING. The
guards choke, they hurl, they claw at their eyes. They
collapse on the floor.

51

INT. WAREHOUSE - HALLWAY & DOOR - NIGHT

51

Captain Normal leads the team to the door they came in.
He grips Cassie by the arm. Walter speaks to her.

WALTER

Hello? Hi. My name is --

But then it happens and it happens fast. The first guard
we met, the one Captain Normal gun-butted, CHARGES into
the warehouse. The guard FIRES, and three bullets RIP
into The Human Smell's chest. Mood Swing SCREAMS.

PAN & REVEAL - TIME ZONE

If the slight shimmer didn't give it away, the 180-degree
PAN and CLOSEUP do. Time Zone just looked into the
future. He bends double with pain.

CAPTAIN NORMAL

What?

TIME ZONE

The first guard. He's *coming*.

AT THE DOOR

The guard CHARGES into the warehouse. But this time
Captain Normal's waiting for him. He gun-butts the guard
a second time. The guard falls in a heap all over again.

THE HUMAN SMELL

That dude is gonna need a new grill.

WALTER
 (to Cassie)
 My name is Three Inches. Are you all
 right?

But Captain Normal drags Cassie out the door.

52

EXT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

52

Captain Normal slides the van door open. He deposits Cassie inside. The rest of the team follows. Captain Normal steps to the driver's side door. Walter remains.

WALTER
 Wait a minute. Nobody told us she was
 the package. We don't even know what she
 was doing there. Maybe *somebody* should
 tell us just what the hell is --

CAPTAIN NORMAL
Get in the van.

WALTER
 She's not a package. She's a *girl*.

Captain Normal gets behind the wheel.

MOOD SWING
Walter. Please.

A beat. Walter hurries into the van with the others.

53

EXT. SAN PEDRO - STREETS - NIGHT

53

An intersection. There are no cars in sight. We HEAR the sound of an approaching vehicle. The light turns red. No matter. The van speeds through the light.

IN THE VAN

Team members sit on benches in the back. Cassie gradually regains her senses. Her eyes fill with fear.

MOOD SWING
 It's all right. Don't be --

Cassie darts toward the door. Walter grabs the ten year-old before she can open it.

WALTER
 We won't hurt you. We're here to help.
 Maybe this is a rescue op or --

CAPTAIN NORMAL
 Cuff her.

The Bugmaster reaches for restraints hooked to the wall.

WALTER

What?!

MOOD SWING

We can handle this!

CAPTAIN NORMAL

I've got an idea. Why don't you ask Time Zone what's going to happen if you don't shut up and follow orders!

The Bugmaster aims a cuff at Cassie's arm. Mood Swing shoves The Bugmaster against the van wall.

MOOD SWING

Happy or sad? It's your call.

CAPTAIN NORMAL

What the hell -- ?

WALTER

Until we get to HQ, until Mister Hamilton tells us what's going on? *Nobody gets cuffed.*

The van speeds toward another intersection.

WALTER

We're the *good* guys, remember?

Which is the exact moment an armor-plated black sedan meets them in the intersection, T-BONES the van, sends both vehicles SPINNING --

IN THE INTERSECTION

The van and the sedan each come to a smoking halt on opposite sides of the intersection.

IN THE VAN

Everyone in the van is stunned, but uninjured. Walter holds Cassie in a protecting embrace. Mood Swing slides the van door open. And Captain Normal? He slips nimbly out the driver's side window, lands on his feet, and takes purposeful strides toward the sedan.

AT THE SEDAN

There are two HUGE MEN inside. Samoans with prison tats and great bushy hair roped into ponytails. The driver struggles to open his door. The second Samoan pushes at the passenger side. Captain Normal KICKS and SLAMS the driver's side door on the first Samoan as he tries to exit. The Samoan crumples to the ground. The passenger, now on his feet, aims a revolver at Captain Normal over

the roof of the sedan. But Captain Normal DUCKS down, returns FIRE through the interior. The second Samoan crumples like the first. Walter sees it and:

WALTER

Omigod.

Captain Normal strides back to the van, shouts an order:

CAPTAIN NORMAL

Call HQ. We're going to need new wheels
and a backup --

But a THIRD SAMOAN rolls out the rear door of the sedan, and SHOOTS Captain Normal in the back. Captain Normal falls to the street. A second armor-plated black sedan barrels toward the intersection. Mood Swing shouts:

MOOD SWING

RUN.

54 EXT. SAN PEDRO - ALLEY - NIGHT

54

Walter, Mood Swing, and little Cassie run down a dark alley. The third Samoan follows them. We HEAR the second sedan SCREECH to a halt. Doors OPEN and CLOSE. Walter and Mood Swing reach the end of the alley, hurry around the building. But Cassie stops and faces the Samoan. As if to fight him somehow. But then we SEE it in her face. Whatever she planned, it's not working.

AN EMPTY STREET

Walter, Mood Swing, and Cassie run through a deserted neighborhood.

WALTER

Who are those guys?

MOOD SWING

No idea. *Door.*

Mood Swing indicates a door into an abandoned building. Walter looks to the lock. But --

WALTER

I can only do this for a limited period of time. Then it goes away until my body recharges. It's like the electromagnetic energy inside me --

No matter. Mood Swing KICKS the door open.

55 INT. ABANDONED BUILDING - STAIRWAY - NIGHT

55

Walter, Mood Swing, and Cassie run up a flight of stairs.

ON THE ROOF

There's a door that opens to the roof. It OPENS, and they pour through it. Mood Swing closes and locks the door.

WALTER

You can see the stars from here.

MOOD SWING

What's your name?

CASSIE

Cassie.

MOOD SWING

Cassie. What were you doing in that room?

CASSIE

I don't know. I was on my way home from school. They *took* me.

WALTER

What about the men who are chasing us? Do you know who they are?

CASSIE

No.

WALTER

Mister Hamilton will know what to do.

An angry POUNDING interrupts. They turn to the door. The Samoan is on the other side. He's not alone. Walter, Mood Swing, and Cassie run to the edge. There's an old fire escape below, but it doesn't reach to the roof.

WALTER

That's weird. Apparently I'm terrified of heights.

MOOD SWING

This is not the time to discover new and interesting phobias.

CASSIE

DO SOMETHING!

Mood Swing drops OFF the edge, catches it with her hands, hangs for a moment, finds purchase with her feet, does a seamless BACKFLIP, and lands on the fire escape landing below. Mood Swing runs the fire escape ladder up to the roof. Walter helps Cassie to the ladder, follows.

ON THE STREET

Walter, Mood Swing, and Cassie drop to the street. Walter looks at Mood Swing with amazement.

56

EXT. SAN PEDRO - STREET - NIGHT

56

Walter, Mood Swing, and Cassie run down a deserted street. They can HEAR shouts in the distance.

WALTER

Can't you make them unbearably happy or sad?

MOOD SWING

I'm not close enough to do that.

WALTER

So your power is limited by how *close* you are to the target just like mine --

MOOD SWING

Do you mind if we discuss this later?

Walter spots a lot bordered by chicken wire fence. He peers through the gate. Mood Swing sees what he SEES.

MOOD SWING

You're kidding me.

TIME CUT - ON THE STREET

Four gasping Samoans run to the same fence and gate. They HEAR the sound of something coming. An OLD SCHOOL BUS blows through the gate. The Samoans scatter.

57

EXT. SAN PEDRO - SCHOOL BUS - NIGHT

57

Walter's at the wheel. Mood Swing and Cassie beside him.

MOOD SWING

Now what?

WALTER

Drive to Granada Hills?

MOOD SWING

We'll never make it.

Mood Swing looks out the rear. Walter checks the side mirror. It's an armor-plated black sedan. Then a surprise. A motorcycle appears out of nowhere, right next to the sedan. Walter assumes the worst.

WALTER

Come on. That's just overkill.

But then the rider TOSSES something inside the sedan. A loud POP is HEARD. The sedan FILLS with smoke, crashes to a halt. Walter, Mood Swing, and Cassie celebrate inside the bus. But then the motorcycle rider, wearing a helmet

with a mirror visor, chases after them. The rider pulls out a gun. And FIRES at the tires of the school bus.

WALTER

Now who's chasing us?

MOOD SWING

I have no idea. But it's starting to piss me off.

The shots TAKE OUT the bus's rear tires. Cassie SCREAMS. Walter steers the crippled vehicle to the curb. Mood Swing hurries Cassie to the door. But then:

WALTER

No. Stay here.

Because Walter means to face the rider by himself.

ON THE STREET

Walter steps from the bus. He walks at the rider. The rider walks at him. The rider aims the gun at Walter's heart. Walter stops. He looks hard at a metal construction plate on the street between them. The rider keeps coming. Walter moves the plate an inch. Then another. Walter looks even harder at the metal plate. Walter feels a sharp pain behind his eyes. But then, and at the last possible moment, it moves, and the rider STEPS on the metal plate, the plate gives way, the rider YELPS, and sinks from sight.

Walter drags the metal plate over the opening. He can HEAR angry moaning below. Walter wonders if he can hold the plate in place. Then one last surprise. Mood Swing backs up the school bus, and parks on top of the metal plate. Mood Swing and Cassie hurry to the street.

MOOD SWING

Nice work, Three Inches.

Walter looks at her with disbelief.

WALTER

I thought we were *taking things*.
Retrieval and delivery. That's all.
I've never done anything like this
before. People are hurt, people are
dying. You saw what happened, Captain
Normal, you saw what *happened* --
(beat)

I don't want to be Three Inches anymore.
I quit. My name is Walter Spackman.

It all poured right out of him. And now he's done.

END ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE58 EXT. SAN PEDRO - WAREHOUSE DISTRICT - NIGHT

58

Walter, Mood Swing, and Cassie wait in a deserted warehouse district. Walter is nervous and on edge.

WALTER

Where are they?

MOOD SWING

It's only been five minutes.

Walter looks off into the night. Mood Swing looks at the necklace Cassie is wearing.

MOOD SWING

Where did you get that?

CASSIE

The bad men gave it to me if I promised to stop crying.

Mood Swing rips it off her neck, drops it on the ground, and stomps the necklace to pieces. Walter protests.

WALTER

I'm not sure taking it out on the necklace is really going to *help* --

MOOD SWING

It's a tracking device!

Mood Swing pulls Cassie off into the night. A beat. Walter follows.

59 EXT. SAN PEDRO - STREETS - NIGHT

59

Walter drives another stolen car through the night. Mood Swing sits in the passenger seat. Cassie's in the back.

MOOD SWING

They can't track us anymore.

WALTER

But they *knew* we were coming. They probably know about HQ, too. The only safe place is the last place they'd look.

CASSIE

We can't just drive around all night.

WALTER

I know a place we can go.

60

INT. THE HOLLYWOOD RESTAURANT - NIGHT

60

START CLOSE ON Walter. Walter is a terrible liar.

WALTER

-- more like a scavenger hunt, actually?
And in order to win we have to find a
place to hide for three to five hours
before we try to locate the midget or get
a policeman's autograph.

Walter, Mood Swing, and Cassie are inside *The Hollywood Restaurant*. BUS BOYS clear tables. It's just past closing. Macklin frowns in his kitchen whites.

MACKLIN

The last time you were here a roomful of
paying customers ran screaming into the
night projectile vomiting.

Walter doesn't want to talk about that. Macklin looks from one to the next. Until he gets to Mood Swing.

MACKLIN

There's a day bed in the storage room.

61

INT. THE HOLLYWOOD RESTAURANT - NIGHT

61

Mood Swing checks out the storage room. Cassie bounces on the day bed. She's got her jacket off. Mood Swing notices a red welt on her upper arm.

MOOD SWING

What's that?

CASSIE

Nothing.

Mood Swing takes a closer look.

MOOD SWING

What kind of shots did they give you,
Cassie?

CASSIE

I don't know.

MOOD SWING

How often?

CASSIE

Every morning.

MOOD SWING

The men who gave you the shots, do you
know who they are?

CASSIE

No.

MOOD SWING

Bad guys who keep you. Bad guys who chase you. Bad guys everywhere and you don't know who they are or what they're after.

Cassie shakes her head. She's a bad liar, too.

IN THE RESTAURANT

Meanwhile. Walter and Macklin sit at the bar in the empty restaurant. Macklin looks at Walter like he's crazy.

MACKLIN

So. Just to sum up. After you got fried by a lightning bolt you discovered you could move any object three inches and then you joined a team of superheroes to fight evil but you grabbed a little girl instead.

(beat)

One of us is *really* high.

Walter looks to three beer taps. He focuses, flips the first. Beer SPILLS from the spigot. Macklin hurries to shut it off. Walter flips the second and the third. Macklin shuts off them off, too. He looks at Walter with absolute wonder.

WALTER

Sorry.

MACKLIN

It's. Just. Beer.

WALTER

Not that. For unleashing a hellish odor in here.

MACKLIN

That was *you*?

WALTER

Friend of mine. Calls himself The Human Smell.

MACKLIN

Wow. That is one stinky superpower.

Macklin considers the impossible. Seeing it helped.

MACKLIN

Look. I'm sorry, too.

WALTER

For what?

MACKLIN

I should've known something was going on with you. Maybe not *this* because this is completely insane. But still.

Macklin indicates the storage room in the back.

MACKLIN

What's *her* superpower?

WALTER

She can make you really happy or really sad.

MACKLIN

I meet a lot of girls like that.

That makes Walter smile. It reminds him of when life was closer to normal.

MACKLIN

You trust this guy? Troy.

WALTER

I did. I do. I don't know anymore.

MACKLIN

Why did he send you after a kid? Does she have a superpower too?

Boom. There it is.

WALTER

I have no idea why I did not see that until now.

62

INT. THE HOLLYWOOD RESTAURANT - STORAGE ROOM - NIGHT

62

Walter and Mood Swing face Cassie in the storage room.

WALTER

You're special. Just like us.

Cassie nods.

MOOD SWING

What kind of powers do you have?

CASSIE

Lots.

MOOD SWING

How did you get them?

Cassie shrugs.

WALTER
I got hit by lightning.

CASSIE
Did it hurt?

WALTER
Lots.

MOOD SWING
They're giving her medication.

WALTER
Probably an inhibitor. Will your powers
come back if they stop?

CASSIE
I hope not.

WALTER
Why?

CASSIE
I don't want to be a freak. I don't want
to be different. I'm only ten. I want
to be a real girl.

This breaks Walter's heart. It makes him think, however
briefly, about the difference in him.

TIME CUT - IN THE STORAGE ROOM

Walter and Mood Swing sit and watch Cassie sleep.

WALTER
I wonder what she can do.

MOOD SWING
We should call Troy.

WALTER
I know.

But Walter can't make the call. Not yet.

63

INT./EXT. THE HOLLYWOOD RESTAURANT - DAY

63

Morning. Walter and Mood Swing sleep. Mood Swing rests
her head on his shoulder. Cassie WATCHES them with a
knowing gaze. She slips off the bed, and out of the room.

ON THE STREET

Macklin returns to the restaurant with bagels and coffee. Then he SEES something unexpected. Cassie exits and hurries away. A beat. Macklin follows her.

64 EXT. SAN PEDRO - STREET - DAY

64

A familiar street, school bus, and metal construction plate. A supersized TOW TRUCK drags the bus into the distance. CAMERA PUSHES IN. The metal plate MOVES. TWO HANDS grip the edge and SHOVE it to the street. An ARM SLAMS the motorcycle helmet onto the pavement. The motorcycle rider rises into view. It's a YOUNG WOMAN, about 30, with choppy blonde hair. Her name is CATE.

65 INT. THE HOLLYWOOD RESTAURANT - DAY

65

Walter and Mood Swing explain it all to Troy Hamilton inside The Hollywood Restaurant.

MOOD SWING

She left some time during the night or early morning. Her name is Cassie.

WALTER

The package is a little *girl*. All she wants --

Walter's cell phone RINGS, interrupts. A deadpan beat. Walter sends the caller to Voicemail.

TROY

You have no idea how important that little girl is.

Then a shock. Captain Normal enters. Walter gapes.

WALTER

You're dead.

CAPTAIN NORMAL

I'm bulletproof.

MOOD SWING

Angry Samoans are after her. Then there's the people we took her from. So that's at least two teams that are chasing her --

Walter still can't believe Captain Normal is upright.

WALTER

Literally bulletproof?

TROY

Oh, for God's sake, Walter. He wears body armor!

WALTER

Oh.

TROY

Cassie is a high value subject. The men who held her had the worst possible intentions. I have no idea who the Samoans are working for. But if you're right, and there's a second player? That makes our mission even more urgent.

WALTER

There's also a mysterious motorcycle rider --

Captain Normal can't restrain himself any longer.

CAPTAIN NORMAL

You let her get away.

TROY

(to Captain Normal)

The only thing you need to think about is getting her back. Standard protocol, search and rescue. Go.

Captain Normal's jaw tightens. He exits.

WALTER

I want to help.

TROY

No. I will never send you through a door you're not ready to open. Go home, Walter. It's been a long night for everyone.

Hamilton exits without another word. A beat.

MOOD SWING

I thought you quit.

Walter doesn't answer. He checks his phone, listens to the message. Then:

WALTER

It's Macklin. *He found her.*

66

EXT./INT. UNION STATION - DAY

66

Union Station is an architectural marvel and local legend.

IN THE WAITING ROOM

Walter and Mood Swing meet Macklin on the periphery. Macklin indicates Cassie sitting on one of the burnished wooden benches in the waiting room.

MACKLIN

She's been here all morning.

MOOD SWING

You didn't make contact?

MACKLIN

Are you kidding? What if she has laser beams in her eyes?

WALTER

Look.

Cate steps through the vast interior.

WALTER

The mysterious motorcycle rider is a *woman*.

MOOD SWING

Keep her busy. I'll get Cassie.

Mood Swing hurries to the bench. Walter and Macklin turn to face Cate. Macklin holds up two palms.

MACKLIN

Look. Easy Rider. I don't want to hurt you --

Cate drops Macklin with a swift kick to the solar plexus.

CATE

You want some?

WALTER

I'm good. Thanks.

The SOUND of HEAVY BOOTS interrupts. Captain Normal leads an extraction team into the building. The combat-suited MERCS grab Cassie. Cassie SEES Cate and she SHOUTS:

CASSIE

Cate!!!

The team heads for the door. Cate CHARGES after them. Captain Normal SEES her coming. Cate SHOUTS:

CATE

Cassie!!

Captain Normal LEVELS Cate with a single punch to the jaw. He follows the extraction team out the door. Walter runs to Cate, and kneels at her side.

WALTER

Who are you?

CATE
I'm her sister.

67 EXT./INT. UNION STATION - DAY

67

Walter stands outside with Captain Normal. An armor plated Humvee idles at the curb.

CAPTAIN NORMAL
I figured you'd try something like this.
So I played Follow The Wiener. You are
the Wiener.

WALTER
Congratulations.

CAPTAIN NORMAL
You think I'm stupid, don't you?

WALTER
Not any more.

Captain Normal indicates the Humvee, Cassie inside it.

CAPTAIN NORMAL
Sucks to be her.

WALTER
Why?

CAPTAIN NORMAL
We transfer 'the package' to the client
in the morning.

IN UNION STATION

Mood Swing and Macklin sit with Cate on a bench. Walter joins them. Cate looks up at Walter.

WALTER
Cassie's special, isn't she?

CATE
In ways no one really understands.
We've been on the run since the day she
found out. I do whatever it takes to
protect her. But it's never enough

MOOD SWING
Who are the Samoans working for?

CATE
They're new. I don't know.

WALTER
Do you know who was holding her?

CATE

Government.

WALTER

Really? I'm not sure I believe --

CATE

Not *our* government.

Cate gets to her feet. She looks hard at Walter.

CATE

Who do *you* work for?

WALTER

We don't want to hurt Cassie. We want to help her.

CATE

You don't believe that.

MOOD SWING

Yes, he does.

CATE

What do you think *your* boss is going to do? He's going to measure and probe my little sister just like the others did. And the worst thing is? When he tells you he's doing it for the right reasons? You'll believe that, too.

Cate shoves past Walter. He calls after her.

WALTER

Where're you going?

CATE

To get her back.

Walter turns to Mood Swing.

WALTER

So that's it? We're just going to let them take her? That's not right. She's only a --

MOOD SWING

It's over, Walter. Go home.

Mood Swing doesn't like this any more than he does. But she knows there is nothing they can do.

Afternoon. Walter moves up the walk toward home. Then a familiar SOUND, the throaty rumble of a motorcycle.

LILY'S VOICE

Walter!

Lily sits behind Django on the Vincent Black Shadow. She hops off the bike and lopes to Walter.

LILY

Where've you been? I was away on a job,
but I texted you and you never --

(beat)

Walter. Are you okay?

WALTER

No. I'm not.

Walter walks away.

69

INT. SPACKMAN HOUSE - DAY

69

Walter enters. Belinda gets up from the sofa. The unlit cigarette is back in her mouth.

BELINDA

Well, look who the cat dragged in.

Walter steps down the hall. Belinda follows.

BELINDA

We don't have a cat. That's just an expression. But if we did, I would've spent the night telling Snowball that my son was missing and he didn't answer my calls and I was afraid he was lying in a ditch somewhere, you know, the default ditch that every mother sees in her head when a child doesn't come home --

Walter enters his bedroom, closes the door behind him. Belinda stands at the door.

BELINDA

I'm glad you're not dead.

WALTER'S VOICE

Thank you.

BELINDA

Is there anything you need?

WALTER'S VOICE

No.

BELINDA

I started fake smoking again but don't worry, it's not your fault.

IN WALTER'S BEDROOM

Walter lies on his bed. Belinda is HEARD from the other side of the door.

BELINDA'S VOICE

That was a lie. It's *completely* your fault.

Walter puts a pillow over his head.

70

EXT./INT. SPACKMAN HOUSE - NIGHT

70

Night. The Spackman house is dark.

IN WALTER'S BEDROOM

Walter hasn't moved an inch. The room is dark except for the *Buffy* screensaver on the iMac screen. At least until it disappears and is replaced by Troy Hamilton.

TROY

Walter? May I have a word?

Walter sits, and faces Hamilton on the iMac screen.

TROY

Everybody has a secret gift inside. A difference. You just happen to be a little more in touch with yours than most. The trick is to make the very best of it that you can.

WALTER

You already said that. Word for word. Mynah Bird does a very good impression.

TROY

It's worth repeating. Your abilities have been tested. Sometimes when we're tested, we start to doubt the thing that makes us special.

WALTER

Is being special always this hard?

TROY

It gets easier over time.

WALTER

I hope so.

TROY

You'll have to trust me on that. Good night, son --

Troy reaches OFF-SCREEN to disconnect. But:

WALTER
Mister Hamilton -- how's Cassie?

TROY
Cassie is in good hands.

WALTER
What about her sister?

TROY
I'll take care of the sister.

WALTER
Whoa, wait. Her name is Cate and all she's trying to do is --

TROY
Walter.

WALTER
Yes?

TROY
Get some sleep. We start fresh in the morning.

It's an order. Hamilton DISCONNECTS. Walter sits in the dark. Then he decides. Walter walks out the door.

71

INT. THE HOLLYWOOD RESTAURANT - KITCHEN - NIGHT

71

Walter continues through the kitchen of The Hollywood Restaurant. Until he finds Macklin assembling a cold appetizer.

WALTER
You're off prep.

MACKLIN
Back where I belong. You?

WALTER
I'm about to do something stupid and I need your help.

MACKLIN
Is it *really* stupid?

Walter nods. Macklin grins.

MACKLIN
Cool.

END ACT FIVE

ACT SIX72 INT./EXT. NO-NAME BAR - NIGHT

72

A Hollywood dive. Mood Swing sits at the bar. She came here to be alone. But men don't always respect her wishes. That explains the YOUNG MEN to either side, both sniffing quietly. Mood Swing drinks from a bottle of beer. One of the men chokes back an audible sob.

WALTER'S VOICE

Can I talk to you outside?

Mood Swing turns, SEES Walter standing there.

ON THE SIDEWALK

Walter faces Mood Swing on the sidewalk.

WALTER

I went home.

MOOD SWING

Good idea.

WALTER

I can't stop thinking about Cassie.

MOOD SWING

Bad idea.

WALTER

Cassie needs my help so she can be a real girl but they're transferring her to the client in the morning and we don't even know who the client is and then it will be too late so I'm going to save her and I don't care what the consequences are because for the first time in my life I know *exactly* what to do next. Also it would be great if you came with me.

MOOD SWING

Good speech.

WALTER

Thanks. I usually rehearse them first.

73 EXT. LOS ANGELES - STREET - NIGHT

73

Midnight. Macklin's convertible heads up Laurel Canyon. Macklin, Mood Swing, and Walter sit in the front seat.

MACKLIN

How many superfreaks are out there?

MOOD SWING

It's an HQ, not a sideshow dorm.

WALTER

The house is basically empty. A couple guards up top. Heavier concentration below. They're armed and they're bored.

MOOD SWING

Don't forget Captain Normal. He sleeps there.

WALTER

He does?

MACKLIN

Is Captain Normal normal?

MOOD SWING

Don't worry. I'll take care of him.

WALTER

How?

MOOD SWING

He likes me.

WALTER

What do you mean he *likes* you?

MOOD SWING

If *you* show up in his bedroom in the middle of the night? That's a combat situation. But if *I* do? He won't be thinking about mission parameters.

WALTER

But he'll *know* if you alter his mood --

MOOD SWING

I don't need a superpower to keep Jason occupied.

WALTER

His name is *Jason*? This is a terrible idea that is *not* part of the plan --

Macklin hits the Mullholland light. The light is red. Cate waits for them there. She hops into the back seat. The light turns green. The convertible rolls off.

WALTER

-- There are *hundreds* of better ways to handle Captain Normal. We could blow him up for example. I'm sure I can find some explosives. Is Home Depot open?

Captain Normal sleeps soundly in a small room. The room is bare. There is a surveillance screen on the wall. Rotating images of the HQ interior. A beat of silence. Then a loud KNOCK. Captain Normal sits up, alert, and takes a handgun from under his pillow.

CAPTAIN NORMAL

Who goes there?

The door opens, reveals Mood Swing.

MOOD SWING

I go there. Here. Hi.

IN THE LIVING ROOM

Walter, Macklin, and Cate walk through the living room. There's a guard posted at the elevator.

WALTER

Shift change.

GUARD

On whose orders?

WALTER

Midnight snack?

GUARD

For who?

The guard draws down on them. But Walter POPS the clip right out of his gun. And adds a helpful correction:

WALTER

Whom.

Cate levels the guard. Macklin deadpans:

MACKLIN

I'm starting to think you enjoy that.

CATE

Are you *flirting* with me?

MACKLIN

Would it be a *bad* thing if I was flirting with you?

But then a surprise. An Extraction Team THUNDERS right at them. Helmets, face-plates, and body armor.

IN CAPTAIN NORMAL'S QUARTERS

The latter flashes across the screen in Captain Normal's room. But he doesn't notice. Captain Normal looks up at Mood Swing.

CAPTAIN NORMAL
What are you doing here?

MOOD SWING
I couldn't sleep.

CAPTAIN NORMAL
In *Silver Lake*?

MOOD SWING
Driving relaxes me.

CAPTAIN NORMAL
But you think I'm an idiot, remember?

MOOD SWING
Maybe I forgot.

CAPTAIN NORMAL
C'mon. I'm *normal*. It's my frackin' team name.

MOOD SWING
What's wrong with normal?

CAPTAIN NORMAL
Everything.

There's something surprisingly vulnerable in this. Mood Swing did not see it coming.

75

INT. TEAM HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

75

There are two GUARDS posted at a door in a corridor. Troy Hamilton's VOICE comes over their headsets.

TROY'S VOICE
Attention all units. HQ Code Red. We have intruders on site. Prepare the subject for immediate transfer --

The Extraction Team hurries into view. Helmets, face plates, and body armor. The guards part. The Team Leader bends to door and keypad. The keypad BEEPS. Wait a minute. Those beeps sound weird --

IN THE ROOM

It's a comfortably furnished bedroom. The same one Walter saw during his training days. Cassie sits up in bed. She wears a red nightgown. The Extraction Team pours inside. The Team Leader is Walter.

IN CAPTAIN NORMAL'S QUARTERS

That's when every light inside Captain Normal's room starts to FLASH. A bright STROBING ALARM. Captain Normal looks to Mood Swing, and repeats.

CAPTAIN NORMAL

What're you doing here?

Then we SEE it. The tension that usually animates Captain Normal's features is replaced by contentment. The kind of happiness he never feels. And Mood Swing put it there.

CAPTAIN NORMAL

Please. I don't want to be happy. Not like this.

MOOD SWING

I'm sorry, Jason.

The weird thing is, she means it.

76

EXT. TEAM HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

76

The Extraction Team hurries out the door of the house. But they're not headed toward a Team van. They usher Cassie into Macklin's convertible. ANOTHER ANGLE reveals the latter to be the Samoans' POV. In two sedans. This is what they were waiting for. When the convertible rolls off into the night, they follow.

AT AN INTERSECTION

The convertible stops at a red light. The sedans SCREECH into view. The convertible is trapped between. The Samoans pour out of the sedans, hurry to the convertible. And SEE the very last thing they expected.

The Extraction Team members REMOVE their helmets. It's Mynah Bird, The Bugmaster, and Time Zone. The Human Smell wears Cassie's red nightgown. It's not a great fit. Mynah Bird calls off the all-clear into a headset mike. In the VOICE of Troy Hamilton.

MYNAH BIRD

Attention all units. Stand down. The intruders are in custody. The subject is secure. HQ code is clear.

SAMOAN

What the hell -- ?!

THE HUMAN SMELL

Shock filled their brains with awe. Who were these strangers, why were they here, and where was the little girl in red? Then the night sang with the sound --

They all turn to The Human Smell. He shrugs apology.

THE HUMAN SMELL

Sorry.

Then a SOUND as heard, as promised. It's the BUZZING sound of BEES. The Samoans swipe at their heads. They run in crazy circles.

ANOTHER ANGLE

CAMERA VIEWS the intersection from a DISTANCE. The Samoans circle and swipe. We HEAR their anguished cries in the dark.

77

EXT. GRANADA HILLS - MINI MALL - NIGHT

77

A mini mall on Chatsworth Street. Cate is back on the motorcycle. Little Cassie sits behind her. Walter and Macklin face them.

WALTER

Where will you go?

CATE

A safe place.

WALTER

We'll never see you again.

CATE

I hope not.

Walter looks to Cassie holding her sister tight.

WALTER

You can be a real girl now.

CASSIE

What about you?

WALTER

I'm exactly me.

In this way, Walter accepts the world as it is. Three inches at a time. Cate fires up the bike.

WALTER

Goodbye, Cassie.

CASSIE

'Bye, Walter. Thanks!

And with that, and a deep WHOMP, Cassie TURNS OUT every LIGHT for a hundred miles. The San Fernando Valley goes completely DARK. We HEAR the motorcycle ROAR off into the black. Walter and Macklin deadpan:

WALTER'S VOICE

Sweet kid.

MACKLIN'S VOICE

Cute as a button.

Then a second WHOMP, and the lights RETURN. As if Cassie flicked a single switch. But the motorcycle is nowhere in sight. Walter and Macklin remain. Fixed in place by their own amazement.

MACKLIN

Hungry?

WALTER

Starving.

MACKLIN

Cantor's is open.

WALTER

Let's eat.

78

EXT. THE HOLLYWOOD HILLS - DAY

78

Sunrise. Walter sits on the park bench on top of the Hollywood Hills. He watches the morning advance. Mood Swing sits down beside him. She watches the morning, too.

MOOD SWING

This is nice.

WALTER

It's my new favorite place.

MOOD SWING

Why?

WALTER

This is where lightning hit me.

It's also where Lily broke his heart. But Walter isn't thinking about that now.

WALTER

How did it go with Captain Normal?

MOOD SWING

No problem. How about you?

WALTER

Cassie turned off every light in the city.

MOOD SWING

I noticed.

WALTER
We did the right thing.

MOOD SWING
You did, Walter. The rest of us helped.

A beat. Mood Swing turns to him:

MOOD SWING
I don't have many friends. I hope you
will be my friend.

WALTER
Why?

MOOD SWING
You're super smart. Funny. And easy to
talk to.

WALTER
Everybody wants to be my friend.

MOOD SWING
Another superpower?

WALTER
Sometimes it feels more like an
unnecessary limitation.

Mood Swing looks back to the morning.

MOOD SWING
My name is Tess. It's my secret
identity.

It's an unexpected confession. A beat. Walter looks back
to the morning, too.

79

EXT./INT. TEAM HEADQUARTERS - DAY

79

The drab 1950s ranch house in Granada Hills.

IN THE LIVING ROOM

Troy Hamilton assembles the team. He paces and shouts.

TROY
How can I make it clear to you, *really*
clear, that I'm not just angry, I'm
betrayed, and that's a --

Walter and Mood Swing enter, interrupt. Hamilton darkens.

TROY
You're late.

WALTER

You can't tell me I'm late. I quit.

TROY

What?

WALTER

I set Cassie free. It's my fault.

But then, Mood Swing steps beside him. And repeats:

MOOD SWING

I set Cassie free. It's my fault.

One by one, they get to their feet. The Bugmaster first, tall and pale. Mynah Bird, who looks like a Korean housewife. Time Zone, too. And each time, they repeat:

THE TEAM

I set Cassie free. It's my fault.

The Human Smell narrates. Nobody thinks to stop him.

THE HUMAN SMELL

They rose to their feet and ripped off an old movie my dad would never shut up about that has this guy in it with a big dent in his chin. They did it because they were a team. They did it because the guy before them did it. They did it to blow your mind.

Troy looks from one to the next. Captain Normal is the last to rise. But not to play along.

CAPTAIN NORMAL

HQ is my responsibility. It's *my* fault. I'm sorry, Dad.

Dad. Walter tilts. He speaks aside:

WALTER

Dad?!

MOOD SWING

You didn't know?

WALTER

Not if nobody *tells* me.

TROY

Walter.

Hamilton interrupts the back and forth.

TROY

Follow me.

Troy Hamilton sits behind a desk. Walter sits opposite. Hamilton leans back in his chair, and smiles. Which is unexpected.

TROY

Well done. Even better than I expected.

WALTER

I'm confused.

TROY

I once told you I was a private contractor with a clear conscience. Thanks to you? My conscience is clear.

WALTER

Still confused. Sorry.

TROY

I was hired by a client to retrieve a package. The package turned out to be a little girl. This was as much a surprise to me as it was to you. The client betrayed my trust, and sent a third party to take the girl from me. In case I had any reservations about handing her over.

(beat)

I needed someone to get her out of here and give me plausible deniability at the same time. A disgruntled former employee. Like you.

WALTER

I wasn't really disgruntled. Did you know that 'gruntled' is a word? Am I still quitting -- ?

TROY

It's not enough to have a hero's power. That's just an unfair advantage. You need the heart of a hero, too. Nice work, son.

Son. The word doesn't hit Walter like it did the first time. Hamilton gets to his feet, extends a hand. Walter shakes it. He steps from the room. CAMERA REMAINS long enough for Troy Hamilton's expression to change, if by a fraction. Enough for us to question everything he said.

IN THE LIVING ROOM

Walter returns to the living room. They all waited for him. But Walter walks right out the door.

81

EXT./INT. SPACKMAN HOUSE - DAY

81

Midday. Walter steps toward home. But first he detours to Lily Theroux's front door. Walter rings, waits. Lily answers.

LILY

Walter, hi --

Walter gives Lily a great big KISS. Then he walks away. A beat. Lily puts her fingertips to her lips.

IN THE LIVING ROOM

Belinda sits on the sofa, sucks on an unlit cigarette, and waits for her increasingly wayward son. Again. She HEARS the door open, gets to her feet. She opens her mouth to censure or complain. But Walter interrupts:

WALTER

When I was struck by lightning a strange power was given to me and while I resisted it at first, abused it after that, I eventually found common cause with a group of similarly gifted men and women who fight evil. So basically I'm not washing dogs anymore. I'm going to save the world instead.

The unlit cigarette drops from Belinda Spackman's mouth.

IN WALTER'S BEDROOM

Walter enters his bedroom. He opens the box of his father's records. Walter fits a disc to spindle and platter. Walter puts the needle to the groove. It's "Are You Ready" by Pacific Gas & Electric and the music BLASTS even louder than before. Walter stands at the center of the room.

Walter begins to dance. Just a twitch at first. But then his body finds the rhythm, and he leaps and jukes and slides all over the room. Walter Spackman is a terrible dancer. Walter Spackman has never been happier in his life.

THE END