

I AM GOING TO CHANGE THE WORLD

a play by

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THE CAST:

JOHN: 20s.
MARLA: 50s or 60s
FRANK: 50s or 60s
DR. JENSEN: 50s.
TROY: 30s
DANIELLE: 30s
GEOFFREY: 30s/40s
RAY/TOM: 40s/50s

TIME & PLACE:

2011. Chicago, IL and Gary, IN.

A NOTE ON THE FORMATTING:

A double dash (--) signifies no pause. If it comes after a line, it signifies overlapping dialogue. The next line should begin on the last (or second-to-last) syllable of the previous line.

If a double dash (--) is embedded within a line, it means the character's jumping from one thought to another without breath.

If a double dash (--) begins a line, it signifies a continuation of that character's previous line.

THE INTRO

Lights up.

JOHN stands center stage, wearing a cap and gown.

JOHN

To leave the world a bit better...

Whether by a healthy child,
A garden patch
Or a redeemed social condition;

To know even one life has breathed easier
Because you lived...

This is to have succeeded.

(Beat)

John smirks.

JOHN

Really?

He smirks again.

JOHN

A garden patch? No -- all due respect Ralph Waldo -- but I've clear cut forests writing and re-writing this speech; I plant a garden -- the world's a better place?

Don't buy it. This isn't success; it's a man who looks back on his life and asks "What did I do with all that time?"

And so today, on this -- our graduation day -- let us vow never to become that person. Let us strive for something more ambitious than planting gardens and bettering a single life.

You wanna go into medicine? Don't just treat patients; eradicate disease and know that millions breathed easier because you lived.

Wanna go into law? Don't aspire to the best schools; reinvent the field and have the best schools named after you. For god sakes, be the person who gets quoted rather than the person who needs quotes to get through his day.

Or take me for example. I want to share something with you.

(reaches into his wallet)

Something I wrote when I was nine years old. Something I've carried in my wallet all these years.

(clears throat)

(MORE)

JOHN (cont'd)

When I am 17, I will graduate high school at the top of my class.

At 21, I'll do it again in college.

Also 21, land a job with a really big bank. And then in parenthesis I wrote, Goldman Sachs, because they're the biggest.

22: Get married.

23: Get promoted.

24: Buy two houses -- one for my parents, one for me and my wife.

25: Get promoted again.

26: Have a daughter.

27: Promoted.

28: A son.

30: Become Vice President of Goldman Sachs.

And 35: Take over the company, run all the banks and basically become the most powerful man in the world.

John folds his list, puts it back in his wallet.

JOHN

(to audience)

Yeah, I was the kid you beat up in grade school.

But before you think I'm completely ridiculous, I just want to say this.

When I was seventeen years old, I did graduate as my high school's valedictorian.

And this afternoon, I'm honored to deliver this address as Northwestern's -- and I'm especially honored to deliver it to my classmate and fiancee, Katherine Hanson.

Oh, and right -- I almost forgot. At precisely eight thirty tomorrow morning, I interview for an M&A analyst position... at Goldman Sachs.

So am I really that ridiculous?

(beat; John grins)

I guess we find out tomorrow.

Blackout.

SCENE ONE

In darkness, we hear the clattering of pots & pans.

MARLA
Breakfast, sweetheart!

Lights rise on Marla & Frank in the kitchen.

Marla moves from station to station, flipping pancakes, stirring syrup.

Frank sits at the table, reading the paper.

MARLA
(hollering)
Sweetheart!
(beat; to Frank)
Don't s'pose you're havin' any.

FRANK
I've got my oats.

MARLA
(sing-song)
Apple-berry hotcakes.

FRANK
You spoil that boy.

MARLA
It is a special occasion.
(back to stirring; under her
breath)
And he doesn't like it when you call him that.

FRANK
(without looking up)
Mm?

MARLA
He doesn't like it when you call him a boy.

Frank looks up, they make eye contact.

(Quick Beat)

FRANK
Mmmm...

He flips the paper.

MARLA
Johnny?!
(exiting)
Well geez louise...

She exits and we hear her footsteps clumping down the steps.

MARLA (O.S.)

C'mon, sleepyhead, you don' wanna be late on your big day.

Frank sighs; flips the paper. We hear Marla's steps clumping back up.

MARLA (O.S.)

Well would ya look at this?

She enters; reading a note.

MARLA

'Buenos dias, late risers. Didn't wanna wake you, but let's celebrate when I get home.'

FRANK

(peering over his paper)

He got up early?

MARLA

Up an' at em on his big day.

Frank sets down his paper.

FRANK

Huh.

MARLA

He beat you outta bed, didn't he?

FRANK

(slight grin)

Yeah.

MARLA

(off his look)

What?

Frank rises, walks to Marla, and scoops his oatmeal into the trash. He sticks one of her hotcakes into his bowl and drizzles syrup over it.

He kisses her on the cheek.

FRANK

Thanks for breakfast.

He returns to his chair as lights crossfade to...

SCENE TWO

... John, outside the M&A department at Goldman Sachs, psyching himself up for his interview.

He takes a deep breath, then 3 fast ones, then shadowboxes the air. 2 quick jabs and an uppercut. On the uppercut, he clutches his back.

He shakes it off and enters the office as lights rise on Geoffrey, the receptionist.

GEOFFREY

Can I help you, sir?

JOHN

Oh I suspect you'll be helping me quite a bit from now on.

GEOFFREY

I'm sorry?

JOHN

Name's John Chapman -- I'm here for an interview.

GEOFFREY

Ohh.

So you were being cocky just then.

JOHN

Confident.

GEOFFREY

Well good. We don't have enough of that around here.

(typing into the calendar)

What did you say your name was --

JOHN

Chapman. John Chap --

GEOFFREY

Ookay, I'm not showing anything.

JOHN

I have an eight thirty appointment.

GEOFFREY

Would it be under a different name?

JOHN

Why would it be under a different name?

JOHN

What are you --

GEOFFREY

I have worked here twelve years; I've never seen that
letterhead in my life --

JOHN

(getting quite agitated)

Look, it's right here. I have an interview with --

GEOFFREY

Sir --

JOHN

(reading)

-- with Dominic Jones.

GEOFFREY

There is no one here under that name.

(Beat)

John has a revelation.

JOHN

I see what what's going on.

GEOFFREY

I'm sorry?

JOHN

How did I not -- I mean, you guys like invented the
unconventional interview --

GEOFFREY

Excuse me --

JOHN

No they tell you -- they warn you -- be prepared for
anything. They'll stick you on the other side of the table
and ask you to solve world peace.

GEOFFREY

Sir, this is not part of the --

JOHN

It's okay -- you don't need to -- I get what you're trying --
you wanna see if I'll tuck tail and run --

GEOFFREY

Look --

JOHN

You go in there and tell Mr. Jones I'm not going anywhere.
Oooh no -- better yet, bring him this.

(reaching into his pocket)

See this: Also 21: Get a job with a really big bank -- see that yellowing on the paper -- how it's curled on the corners? -- I wrote this when I was nine years -- no one is getting this position but me -- it is destined -- it's written.

(Quick Beat)

GEOFFREY

And I have a new theory.

JOHN

Yeah?

GEOFFREY

You're a crazy person.

JOHN

No, look --

GEOFFREY

If you don't leave this office in five seconds, I'm calling security.

JOHN

You can call the armed guard -- I'm not going anywhere.

This is exactly where I'm supposed to be.

Blackout.

A phone rings.

SCENE THREE

Lights up.

Marla's at a receptionist desk.

She picks up the phone.

MARLA

Wesley Realty?

Lights up on John at a table, on the phone.

JOHN

Hi... hi mom.

MARLA

Well this isn't a nice --

JOHN

Mom, look --

MARLA

How's my guy doin' on his big day?

JOHN

Yeah that's why I'm... look, um --

MARLA

Is everything okay?

JOHN

Well... yeah, I'm gonna cut to the chase -- are you and dad in on this?

(Beat)

MARLA

What?

JOHN

Cuz I started thinking, you know, my alarm didn't go off this morning and I figured the power went out last night but now I'm starting to think -- cuz I'm nearly positive I laid my suit out last night, but then this morning it wasn't even there -- I had to find one jammed at the back of the closet.

MARLA

Sweetheart, where are you right now?

JOHN

(casually)

I dunno, some sort of holding cell at Goldman Sachs.

I'm right, though, aren't I? You and dad -- you're part of the whole interview, right?

(Quick Beat)

MARLA

Your interview at Goldman Sachs.

JOHN

(as if it's obvious)

Yeah.

(Beat)

MARLA

Yes, sweetheart. We are.

JOHN

I knew it!

(softer)

Look, okay, I'm sure you're not supposed to clue me in or anything, but if you could throw me a few -- like, if you could just prep me for what's next...

No response.

JOHN

Mom?

(Quick Beat)

MARLA

I'm here, sweetheart.

And, um, actually... yeah, I'm s'posed to tell you where ya go next.

JOHN

God, it's like a scavenger hunt with these people.

MARLA

Now I'm gonna give you an address and I need you to go straight there, okay?

JOHN

Yeah -- of course.

MARLA

Okay.

Okay.

Now I need you to put one of those nice security men on the phone.

Lights crossfade to...

SCENE FOUR

Dr. Jensen's office.

She's on the phone.

DR. JENSEN

Yes.

(MORE)

DR. JENSEN (cont'd)

No, I think it would be very appropriate for you to be here when he gets out.

Her intercom buzzes.

DR. JENSEN

(on phone)

Okay.

(she hangs up; to intercom)

I'm ready.

John enters.

DR. JENSEN

John -- thank you so much for seeing me.

They shake hands.

JOHN

No, thank you for this tremendous opportunity.

(Beat)

DR. JENSEN

Grab a seat.

He does.

DR. JENSEN

John, do you know who I am?

JOHN

Well I noticed on your door you're a psychiatrist, so I imagine this is some sort of eval they do with all their candidates --

DR. JENSEN

No, I'm sorry. Have we met?

(Quick Beat)

JOHN

Okay, I feel like this is an observation test -- like maybe I saw you in passing and you're testing if I remember.

DR. JENSEN

So we haven't met.

JOHN

I just -- I'm not sure how I'm supposed to answer the question.

DR. JENSEN

You're supposed to answer it honestly.

(Quick Beat)

JOHN

No. We haven't met.

She scribbles something down.

JOHN

I got that wrong, didn't I --

DR. JENSEN

Tell me about your morning.

JOHN

My morning.

DR. JENSEN

What happened when you woke up?

JOHN

Oh-kay -- well I woke up early --

(as if to impress)

And that's something you should know about me; I always wake up early and I always stay late.

DR. JENSEN

Uh-huh.

JOHN

And it's a good thing I woke up early 'cuz my parents shut off my alarm -- but that's okay -- I get it -- they're in on the whole thing.

DR. JENSEN

They're in on it.

JOHN

The test -- the plan -- they'd been told to make me late.

DR. JENSEN

And do you often feel people conspire against you?

(Quick Beat)

JOHN

What?

DR. JENSEN

Has the government ever tapped your phone?

JOHN

What? No.

DR. JENSEN

You've never felt that your life was under surveillance?

JOHN

What?

DR. JENSEN

Like in The Truman Show.

JOHN

The what?

She scribbles something.

JOHN

No, please -- you don't need to -- I just didn't understand --

DR. JENSEN

How did you get to Goldman Sachs this morning?

JOHN

(trying to catch up)

I, I drove.

DR. JENSEN

And did anything strike you as different on the way in?

JOHN

I... I'm sorry I don't quite understand the --

DR. JENSEN

Did anything about your car strike you as foreign?

JOHN

What? -- no. You drive a foreign car in Gary, you're likely to get --

DR. JENSEN

No, I'm sorry, was it foreign to you?

JOHN

Was it foreign to --

(realizing)

Oh I see -- this is another observation test --

DR. JENSEN

John --

JOHN

No and look -- I know I got the first question wrong, but I'm very astute, and if you just give me a chance to prove myself --

DR. JENSEN
I want you to look in that mirror.

JOHN
Great -- perfect -- thank you.

He goes to the mirror.

DR. JENSEN
Look closely.

JOHN
Okay.

DR. JENSEN
Has anything changed from last night to this morning?

JOHN
Well...
(not sure what she's fishing
for)
I... I'm wearing a suit.

DR. JENSEN
What else.

JOHN
I'm sorry -- I just -- I feel like you're fishing for
something specific and maybe if you give me the category of --

He sees something in his reflection
that unnerves him.

(Beat)

He runs his finger underneath his eyes.

DR. JENSEN
What is it?

He pulls up his hair and stares at his
hairline.

DR. JENSEN
(gently)
What is it?

(Quick Beat)

He lets his hair drop.

JOHN
Nothing.

John -- DR. JENSEN

Nothing -- no gel this morning. JOHN

(Beat)

What else? DR. JENSEN

Clearly something about his reflection is making John nervous.

John? DR. JENSEN

Nothing. JOHN

How does your back feel this morning? DR. JENSEN

He turns to Dr. Jensen, stares at her.

Did it hurt when you woke up? DR. JENSEN

What's going on? DR. JENSEN

Does it hurt right now? DR. JENSEN

What's going on? JOHN

Today's a big day for you. DR. JENSEN

Yeah I know it is and -- JOHN

You've been thinking about today for years --- DR. JENSEN

And that's why I need to -- wait how did you know -- JOHN

You even wrote it down on a piece of paper you carry -- DR. JENSEN

JOHN
Oh... I get it...

DR. JENSEN
-- in your wallet wherever
you go.

JOHN
You talked to the guy.

DR. JENSEN
What guy?

JOHN
The guy.

DR. JENSEN
What guy did I --

JOHN
The receptionist --

DR. JENSEN
I didn't talk to --

JOHN
Oh, okay --

DR. JENSEN
John, I did not talk to --

JOHN
Then how'd you know I wrote about this interview when --

DR. JENSEN
Because this isn't your interview.
(beat)
It's your 35th birthday.

(Long Beat)

DR. JENSEN
(gently)
John.

JOHN
(quietly)
Wow.

DR. JENSEN
I know it's a lot to take in --

JOHN
I mean I knew Goldman was unconventional, but this is --

DR. JENSEN
John --

JOHN

Can we just move to the next --

DR. JENSEN

You don't really think you're still in an interview --

JOHN

I mean this is a little unnecessary --

JOHN

Oh I dunno, you tell me what's more likely. A. I'm being toyed with by a company that's like, world-famous, for colossal mind-fuck interviews OR B. I go to bed and magically wake up 14 years later --

DR. JENSEN

John --

JOHN

Oh, and that's a little problem with your story there --

DR. JENSEN

And what is --

JOHN

If I'm thirty-five, why'd I wake up this morning in my parents' basemen...

He stops. Stares at Dr. Jensen.

JOHN

No.

DR. JENSEN

John --

JOHN

Nuh-uh.

DR. JENSEN

John --

JOHN

No --

DR. JENSEN

You moved into that basement when you were nine years old.

John stares at Dr. Jensen.

DR. JENSEN

It was the mid 80s. The recession hit and your father -- a man you looked to as a god... he lost his job.

And when the bank took your home, you had to leave Chicago and move to Gary and you hated it there.

(MORE)

DR. JENSEN (cont'd)

You were the new kid, the kid everyone beat up in grade school. And so one night, you sat in that basement and made a plan to grow up, buy your parents a new house, and take over all the banks so that they could never do something like this again.

(Beat)

JOHN

How do you...

I never told -- it's not possible that you --

DR. JENSEN

You've been seeing me for about four years now.

(he looks at her)

But this... what's happening today -- this is something new.

(beat)

John, please sit down.

(beat; he does)

John, there's a condition -- it's very rare -- it's called an anniversary reaction.

You see the mind, it associates certain dates -- like, even me, I've woken some mornings and felt absolutely awful for no reason. And then I remember it's the anniversary of a loved one's death.

(beat; even gentler)

But in your case... well you associated your 35th birthday with the culmination of all your dreams -- and it seems you've blocked out everything that didn't quite... meet your expectations.

(Quick Beat)

JOHN

(small)

Is this a joke?

DR. JENSEN

(gently)

No.

JOHN

Because...

DR. JENSEN

(gently)

John.

JOHN
 (he rises, slowly walks around
 the room)
 No, cuz I woke up this morning...

DR. JENSEN
 I know this is a lot to take in.

JOHN
 (to himself)
 ... and and I put on my suit...

DR. JENSEN
 But we're going to need to run some tests, some scans just to
 make sure there isn't something malignant causing all --

JOHN
 (growing louder)
 But my interview at Goldman Sachs.

DR. JENSEN
 You had it fourteen years ago.

She looks at him like it's obvious.

DR. JENSEN
 Yeah, you didn't get the job.

Lights fade.

SCENE FIVE

... and rise and John, Frank & Marla.

They're in the kitchen.

JOHN
 What do you mean, it just didn't work out?

No response.

JOHN
 Mom? What do you mean, it just --

MARLA
 Johnny, please sit down.

JOHN
 No, we were in love -- what do you mean it didn't work out?

MARLA
 Really, Johnny, the doctor said not to --

FRANK
(dismissive)
Doctor --

MARLA
Hey.

JOHN
Well where is she?

MARLA
Johnny --

JOHN
No maybe I could still see her -- maybe it's not too late.

MARLA
Oh that was years and years a --

JOHN
Yeah but if Katie saw me --

FRANK
She married someone else, son.
(beat)
A few years back. She's got a family of her own.

JOHN
What?

MARLA
(almost to herself)
Always could tell that girl was gonna have boys.

(Beat)

FRANK
But yer right about somethin', son. It's not too late.

JOHN
What?

MARLA
What?

FRANK
Fer you, I'm sayin'.
(to Marla)
Well the tests came negative, right, so he's in the clear there --

MARLA
Well yeah but --

FRANK

Who knows why? Why didn' Northwestern take ya when y'applied early whatchama --

JOHN

Early decision.

MARLA

Because they were nincompoops.

FRANK

But did ya give up?

JOHN

No.

FRANK

You worked twice as hard on the next one -- and ya coulda done the same with Goldman Sachs.

MARLA

(to John)

I for one am glad you didn't.

FRANK

Ya coulda gone in there first thing, every day -- 'here's my resume -- I'll take the bottom job and work my way up.'

MARLA

Listen to me, Johnny -- I don't want you ta ever set foot in Goldman Sachs again.

FRANK

(to Marla)

Well ya got your wish.

MARLA

(to John; undeterred)

And I think it took guts for you to form your own investment firm.

JOHN

Wait -- what?

FRANK

Such as it was.

JOHN

Slow down -- what are you --

MARLA

And I don't see why you gotta keep bringin' these things up --

FRANK

Because they happened!

(to John)

But you've been given a chance, son, to set things right.

MARLA

It wasn't his fault to begin with --

Franks slams his hand on the table.

Then a (Beat) as he calms down.

FRANK

You go ahead, you be as nice and soft as you want.

But tell 'em the truth, Marla. Or he's gonna hear it from me.

Frank exits.

(Beat)

MARLA

Look, after Goldman Sachs didn' take ya --

(encouraging)

Well ya set right out to prove 'em wrong. Went right out and did a Master's in Economics at the best program in the whole world.

JOHN

You're talking about University of Chicago?

MARLA

(beaming)

That's right.

JOHN

I did a Master's at U of C?

MARLA

(beaming)

You sure did.

JOHN

How the hell did I pay for it?

MARLA

Oh your father and I were happy --

JOHN

Jesus Christ --

MARLA

And hey -- you did your part -- pullin' shifts at dad's plant

--

JOHN

I commuted from Gary?

MARLA

You were savin' bucks.

(quieter)

And you... well ya liked to take the train in, so you could stop off at Goldman Sachs.

JOHN

What?

MARLA

Ya liked to stand outside the building. And you'd say somethin' like, "pretty soon, I'm gonna be in charge of all of you" and we thought -- ya know -- good for you -- that'll show em -- but we shoulda seen that you were kinda fixated there. And Katie, ya know... well you kept pushing back the weddin' date and she started to wonder if it was ever gonna happen --

(under her breath)

-- we all started to wonder that --

(back to normal)

But you had a plan, ya know -- first a job, then get married.

But I guess she sorta got tired of waitin'.

(Beat)

JOHN

Oh.

Well.

(trying not to care)

Look if she can't see the importance of finishing a degree before --

MARLA

Yeah, I never said ya finished, Johnny.

(off his look)

Well ya took it pretty hard when Katie left, ya know --

JOHN

I dropped out?

MARLA

More like ya failed out --

(off his reaction)

But hey -- ya went right out and formed your own investment firm.

JOHN

What?

MARLA

Right here in the basement. And you were doin' good, too. Oh it took a while to get started, but after a few years, things were lookin' up -- you were doin' good, Johnny -- but you were workin' so hard -- you just didn' have anything left when...

JOHN

When what?

(Quick Beat)

MARLA

'Bout four years ago, the market, it uh...

JOHN

What?

MARLA

It kinda went caput.

JOHN

What?

MARLA

And unlike Goldman Sachs, you didn' get bunches of money to bail you out.

(Beat)

JOHN

Who were my investors?

MARLA

Oh, that's not really --

JOHN

Who were my investors?

MARLA

Just some of your friends... some of our friends.

JOHN

Well I need to talk to them.

MARLA

I don't think that's such a --

JOHN

So I can trace my decisions and find out where --

MARLA

They don't really talk to us any more.

(Beat)

JOHN

What about you and dad?

MARLA

What about us, sweetheart --

JOHN

Did you invest?

MARLA

We were happy to --

JOHN

How much did you lose?

MARLA

It's not your fault that --

JOHN

Because between school and this venture you must've --

MARLA

Hey -- that's what second mortgages are for.

(beat)

Me and your father -- we are doin' just fine.

The doorbell rings.

MARLA

Oh good.

She exits as John stares at the table.

JOHN

Jesus.

He rises with some difficulty and places his hand on his back.

JOHN

Fuck.

Marla returns with Troy, a 37 year-old man wearing a Garfield T-shirt.

TROY

Wassup, Chaps?! Sounds like you're havin' kind of a day, yeah? Waddya say we go downstairs and I own you in some jouer au tennis?

MARLA

Waddya think sweetheart?

JOHN

What's going on?

MARLA

Nothin' goin' -- what? -- Frank! -- nothin's goin' -- I just thought that --

(Frank enters)

I was tellin' John it might be fun if Troy spent the --

JOHN

I'm not an idiot, Mom. Why can't I be alone?

Frank looks at Marla. Troy looks at the floor.

JOHN

Mom?

MARLA

It's, it's nothing.

JOHN

What?

FRANK

Marla, if you're not gonna tell him --

MARLA

It is in the past.

JOHN

Jesus Christ, mom, that's what I'm supposed to find out.

TROY

(reaches out; trying to calm)

Okay Chaps, let's just --

JOHN

Get your fucking hands off me -- I don't even know who the fuck you are --

MARLA

(gently)

Don't be like this.

JOHN

Hey, you're the one who said it's a good thing.

MARLA

(gently)

This isn't you.

JOHN

Then who the fuck am I?!

MARLA

Please.

JOHN

Will you just tell me what fucking happened?!

FRANK

Ya jumped off a bridge.

(silence; beat)

Right after your little firm went belly up.

Ya took a train downtown.

Stood right outside Goldman Sachs.

And jumped off the Adams Street bridge.

(Beat)

JOHN

I tried to --

MARLA

No.

FRANK

Marla.

MARLA

No.

(Beat)

JOHN

What happened?

Frank looks at his son quizzically.

FRANK

What do ya mean what happened?

JOHN

No, I --

FRANK

They fished you out.

JOHN

I just --

FRANK

Broken back and all.

JOHN

But --

FRANK

Twenty thousand in hospital bills is what happened.

(Beat)

John starts to exit.

MARLA

Johnny.

She goes to the cupboard.

MARLA

Before ya...
(she removes a bottle of pills)
Ya need to take one of these, sweetheart.

FRANK

Mm.

MARLA

Doctor Jensen said he still needs to take 'em.

JOHN

Oh, I get it -- this is like for my depression, right?

MARLA

Well we don' need ta --

JOHN

No it's fine -- let me just grab some water.

He takes the pills from his mom, runs the sink, then pours all the pills down the sink.

MARLA

Sweetheart!

She reaches in vain to grab them as John exits to the basement.

TROY

I better... you know...

Troy follows John down.

Marla gives up trying to salvage the pills, then turns to her husband.

MARLA

Thanks a lot for the help.

Lights fade.

SCENE SIX

A game of Wii tennis appears on the screen.

Lights up on Troy and John.

Troy's moving like a madman, whipping forehands and jumping into the air for overhead slams.

John, meanwhile, barely flicks his wrist when the ball comes to him.

The point ends and Troy's up to serve.

TROY

Match point, Chaps, you ready for the heat?

No response.

TROY

Chaptain.

No response.

TROY

Chapington Bear.

JOHN

What.

TROY

Are you ready for the heat?

JOHN

You keep saying that --

TROY

I'm just warning you -- you haven't seen the fast one -- when it comes, you're not gonna be able to --

JOHN

You keep saying that and --

Troy tries to serve a bullet, mistimes it and hits a slow one.

-- yeah, see --
 JOHN
 John whips a winner in the corner.
 The replay comes on.
 TROY
 You don't gotta watch the replay every time.
 JOHN
 Oh, I didn't know --
 TROY
 I'm just sayin'; you can win with a little class is all.
 JOHN
 How do you --
 TROY
 Hit the A button.
 John pushes it.
 The "You Win" graphic flashes on the screen.
 TROY
 Rematch?
 TROY
 No, thank you --
 TROY
 C'mon --
 JOHN
No --
 TROY
 (dorky warrior voice)
 -- I SUMMON YOU TO FULFILL YOUR OATH.
 (silence)
 See and then and then you say, "None but the king of Gon..."
 (silence)
 Cuz see we always quote the Lor...
 (beat)
 It's okay, I'm I'm sure you'll remember soon.
 JOHN
 Well gee I hope so.
 TROY
 You don't have to be an a-hole, I --

JOHN
I'm going to bed.

TROY
Hey before you do --

JOHN
What, Troy?

TROY
Look I'm sorry to ask, but once I shut my eyes, I am out, so -

JOHN
What do you want --

TROY
It's just, I saw you taking your pills earlier and --

JOHN
Excuse me --

TROY
Your your pain relievers and --

JOHN
My pai -- okay first of all I took one fucking pill --

TROY
Yeah, it's just --

JOHN
And second of all it's not a pain reliever -- like it's
fucking Tylenol -- it's Percocet --

TROY
No I know but --

JOHN
-- no you know why I don't do your stupid-ass overhead slam --
other than the fact it's totally unnecessary -- is cuz I
raise my arms and apparently my hands go to sleep. I woke up
this morning and it felt like someone took a fucking hammer
to my spine and it's nothing I even did to deserve it!

TROY
(quietly)
It's just, I'm s'psoed to keep the bottle of pills is all --

JOHN
(throwing them at Troy)
There's your fucking pills, Garfield.

John goes back to his bed and, with
some difficulty, lays down.

Troy bends down, picks up the bottle of pills and looks at them.

TROY

Yeah.

You did do it, Chaps.

(John looks at Troy)

The thing to your back.

(Troy looks at John)

You may not remember it, but you did do it, and it was me and your mom in that hospital til you came back.

Troy goes to bed.

JOHN

Troy...

Troy shuts off the light.

The two sit for a moment in darkness in silence.

JOHN

Look I'm sorry, okay, it's just, I woke up this morning and...

Troy?

Troy snores.

JOHN

Jesus Christ, you weren't kidding.

(Beat)

John flips on a light by his bed.

He sits up in bed and his feet bump something on the floor.

John pulls out a shoebox from under his bed.

He pulls off the top, then sets aside a couple Penthouse Magazines that are on top.

He pulls out a videotape, looks at it a second.

Then he sticks it in the machine, and we hear...

JOHN

(voice)

Don't buy it. This isn't success; it's a man who looks back on his life and asks "What did I do with all that time?"

And so today, on this -- our graduation day -- let us vow never to become that person.

John takes the remote and makes to turn off the video.

But before he can, the video fuzzes over, indicating that something has been taped over the graduation video.

And in this case, that something happens to be porn.

John watches for a moment, then shakes his head and shuts off the video as lights fade.

If you're interested in reading the rest of the script, please contact Corinne Hayoun at chayoun@caa.com

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