

CALL CENTER

"PILOT"

Written by

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TEASER

FADE IN:

INT. T.H.I.S. CALL CENTER - CUBE FLOOR - DAY

A line full of customer service reps work in a large cable/satellite call center. Dull colors. Bargain furniture. Claustrophobic cubicles.

AT THE TEAM C CUBICLES

we move down the line. Several agents make inaudible chatter with customers seeking support.

SUMMER GOLD (25) -- A cheerful, full figured Karate champion with a sexy voice, a cat obsession, and a heart to match her surname -- is one of them.

SUMMER

Thank you for clicking THIS! This is Summer. Who do I have the pleasure of speaking with?

IVAN BERG (51) -- Well spoken, eloquent, and with a full setup of customized office equipment: Raised keyboard, ergonomic seat cushion, specialty headset, ultra-bright magna-lamp and visor -- helps a customer.

IVAN

... You should see connectors with labels of red, green, and blue. But don't connect them yet!

DIEDRE KING (44) -- short-tempered daytime soap addict whose drama carries over to her shift. Knickknacks, lotion, and a Kleenex box clutter her desk.

DIEDRE

-- Sir! I would be happy -- Sir!
(covering her mic and
mouthing obscenities)
Sir! I would be happy to restore
your service, but I can't do that
until you pay -- hey, ass hole!

SAMPSON KINNEY (48) fills out a crossword puzzle and ignores the beeping in his headset. He looks at his watch, winces, and returns to his puzzle. His eyes dart to the agent beside him...

An obnoxious PUNK (22), dressed in half-assed business casual, and with tattoos and facial piercings, argues with a customer.

LADY (V.O.)

... I done told you already, my son ordered that movie and I want it taken off my bill!

PUNK

(mocking, with air quotes)

And I done told you already that you make this same call about twice a month, so I'm not gonna credit your account!

LADY (V.O.)

This is bullshit! I want to speak to your supervisor.

PUNK

No.

LADY (V.O.)

No? ... Did you just tell me no?

PUNK

Yeah. No.

LADY (V.O.)

What do you mean, no? You get me a supervisor right the Hell now!

PUNK

Lady. I'm going to level with you. This is my last day. I got a real job, so I really just don't give a shhh--

A hipster fan-boy manager, ZEKE BAGLEY (29), approaches the Punk, arms crossed.

PUNK

--It.

CUT TO BLACK.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

SUPER: WEDNESDAY.

FADE IN:

ON A BOXY TV

A FAMILY sits on the sofa while EXCITING MUSIC PLAYS and a famous RAP STAR pops out of their flat screen.

RAP STAR

Welcome to THIS Network! The first television system to combine both satellite and cable technologies to make your favorite channels accessible to you twenty-four hours a day, all around the world!

The Rapper performs a short dance and tosses a remote control to the family.

RAP STAR

So get your feet up, fix yo'self a gin and juice and let's get this party started!

The company logo, including an alien with a rabbit ears antenna protruding from its head, fills the screen.

SUPER: T.H.I.S. (TECHNOLOGY for HOME INSTALLATION SERVICES NETWORK).

We pull back to reveal

INT. T.H.I.S. LOBBY - DAY

DANNY REYES (27) watches nervously. Average build, lip ring, earrings. He glances around the room -- high school graduates, senior citizens, and Danny hold resumes and paperwork.

The T.H.I.S. Network logo is on virtually everything in the room, including the outdated TV.

A smug-looking man exits the Human Resources office. Danny winces and turns away to avoid being seen.

The Punk is escorted past Danny to the door by Zeke and two security guards. Punk waves his middle fingers.

PUNK

Good luck, bitches!

Danny frowns and checks his watch.

INT. T.H.I.S. MEN'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Danny approaches the urinal and unzips.

BRENT (O.S.)

Danny? Danny Reyes.

Danny looks at the man beside him -- the smug-looking man from before -- and glares.

DANNY

Brent Jurgens.

BRENT JURGENS (28), an over-confident brown-noser with a mediocre physique, urinates beside him.

BRENT

That's crazy! I almost didn't recognize you, all dressed up like a real professional.

(smug)

Wow. What's it been? Six? Seven years? Last I heard, you were in California pretending to be an actor. And now, here you are. Back in Colorado at a call center job fair.

DANNY

Seeing you standing here tells me you didn't make it very far yourself. I guess all those extra years of high school didn't pay off.

BRENT

One extra year. But it was good for me. See, while you were off playing Peter Pan in La-La Land, the rest of us were here, growing up in the real world.

DANNY

And yet, here you are.

BRENT

That's right. You're here. I'm here. Life's just full of surprises, huh?

After the "pissing contest," Brent flushes and zips up.

BRENT

See you around, Danny boy.

Brent fixes loose strands of hair and exits.

Danny looks over his shoulder at the vacant sink, then the door.

DANNY

Gross.

Danny flushes and heads to the sink. After washing his hands, he eyes himself in the mirror with a disappointed stare, takes a deep breath, and removes his piercings.

INT. HUMAN RESOURCES - LATER

BECCA DUNCAN, 30, flips through Danny's application packet and obnoxiously sucks on a butterscotch candy.

Danny sits impatiently in the cramped office and observes her multiple candy dishes. Becca laughs.

BECCA

You worked at Blast Nightclub in Hollywood?

DANNY

Yeah.
(clearing throat)
Yes, ma'am.

BECCA

My brother works there. Tony Duncan?

DANNY

Yeah. I knew Tony. Great guy.

BECCA

Small world. Why'd you leave?

DANNY

New managers. I guess I didn't have the look they were going for. Good thing this is a phone job, huh?

Crickets. Becca stops sucking and studies the paper.

BECCA

Well, unfortunately you don't have a lot of job experience outside of the entertainment industry...

DANNY

I know... but I was a bartender. And as a bartender, I dealt with lots of difficult people. Sometimes they were drunk, or high, or having sex in the bathroom...

Becca raises an eyebrow.

DANNY

What I mean is, I have great people skills -- excluding this interview -- and I think I'd be a really good fit here. Ask Tony?

Becca lowers her eyebrow and resumes sucking.

CUT TO BLACK.

SUPER: FRIDAY

FADE IN:

EXT. REYES RESIDENCE - MORNING

An average middle class house. Rusted Camaro on blocks in the driveway, a plumbing van, and a Jetta are parked out front. Pink flamingos and gnomes clutter the yard.

INT. REYES RESIDENCE - DANNY'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

A curtain is yanked open, spilling light into a room full of Batman decorations and collectibles. A young man pounces on Danny, who sleeps in his own drool, and attacks him with a pillow.

DOMINIC

Get up! Get up! Get up! Get up!

Danny wakes to see his handsome, educated younger brother, DOMINIC (20), laughing at him.

DOMINIC

Ah, it never gets old.

Danny slurps drool and covers his head with the pillow.

DANNY

What time is it.

DOMINIC

Eleven-thirty.

Danny pauses, removes the pillow, and furrows his brow at Dominic.

DANNY

What are you doing here?

DOMINIC

Spring break.

(MORE)

DOMINIC (cont'd)
 Mom said I should come down for the week. But the real question is, what are you doing here?

DANNY
 Things didn't really work out in Cali.

DOMINIC
 After seven years? Nah. I think there's more to it than that.

Danny shakes his head. He opens his mouth to speak...

A KNOCK comes from the bedroom door.

Danny's Italian health-nut mother, SOPHIA (46), pokes her head in.

SOPHIA
 Wakey-wakey, eggs and non-GMO turkey bakey. I -- oh...

Danny's crude-humored, Chicano father, MIGGY (48), passes by and gropes Sophia along the way.

MIGGY
 Florecita, would you let that boy masturbate in peace?

SOPHIA
 Whoa! T-M-I. Well... finish up and come eat your breakfast.

She follows Miggy into the hallway.

DANNY
 (to his parents)
 I wasn't masturbating!
 (to Dominic)
 Tell 'em, Dom!

DOMINIC
 (loud, for his parents)
 Danny! You shouldn't use the Batman socks for that! They're collectibles!

Dominic heads for the door.

DOMINIC
 (still loud)
 I just wish you could find another way to deal with your stress!

Danny throws a pillow at the doorway as Dominic exits. He takes a deep breath and reaches for his cell phone. He punches a few buttons and listens to his voice-mail.

PHONE VOICE (V.O.)

You have three new messages. First message.

RECRUITER #1 (V.O.)

This message is for Danny Reyes. Danny, this is Christie from Flo-Tex. Unfortunately, we have decided to go with another candidate--

Danny presses a button.

PHONE VOICE (V.O.)

Deleted. Next message.

RECRUITER #2 (V.O.)

Mr. Reyes, this is Zachary Rouseau calling from Kero-Tech. I just wanted to touch base with you about the mailroom job you applied for on the twentieth... It looks like that position has been filled--

Danny presses a button.

PHONE VOICE (V.O.)

Deleted. Next message.

BECCA (V.O.)

Hi, this message is for Danny Reyes. Danny, this is Becca Duncan from THIS Network. I am calling to offer you a job as a level one, customer service representative.

Danny's eyes widen.

BECCA (V.O.)

Our next training sessions begin next week, and you are scheduled to report to Jamal on Monday at two-thirty pm.

DANNY

Jamal?

INT. T.H.I.S. TRAINING ROOM - DAY

JAMAL (36), the no-nonsense, call center drill sergeant gives his perpetual stink-eye to the class.

JAMAL

Jamal.

CUT TO BLACK.

SUPER: MONDAY

FADE IN:

A classroom with tables bordered by computer stations surround the class of eleven and their instructor.

BRADLEY VALENTINE (18), a cocky, arrogant jock, enters, flips his mop of Justin Bieber-esque hair back, and takes a seat. Jamal glares a hole through him.

BRADLEY

Sorry, teacher.

JAMAL

It's Jamal.

BRADLEY

Sorry, Mr. Jamal.

JAMAL

My name is Jamal!

BRADLEY

Okay, bro. Chill. I had to piss.

JAMAL

What's your name, boy?

BRADLEY

Bradley Valentine.

JAMAL

You fresh out of high school, bouncing baby Brad?

BRADLEY

Yes sir.

JAMAL

Well let me explain how it works in the workplace, little boy Brad. You piss on your own time, and you work on company time. This is company time! And I am not your bro! You got me, Brad?

BRADLEY

Yes sir. ... Jamal.

JAMAL

This goes for the rest of you. You get in a car accident and you think you're gonna be late to my class? Make sure it's fatal.

The class is frozen and silent.

JAMAL

Now. There have been some concerns from upper management that I may not be much of a people person. So they have instructed me to provide icebreakers to help us become better acquainted.

Jamal approaches the first row.

JAMAL

So what you're all gonna to do is go around the room, introduce yourselves, and tell us something about you that we don't already know. I'll go first.

Jamal grits his teeth into a smile.

JAMAL

Hi. I'm Jamal. I'm thirty-six, and if it were up to me, they'd ship your jobs to India right fuckin' now! Next!

CLANCY MEADOWS (61), a large man with Coke-bottle glasses, reluctantly stands.

CLANCY

Hello. I'm Clancy Meadows, and I'm here because, well... times are tough! My farm is in danger of going under, so here I am.

JAMAL

That's too bad, Clancy, because your life is about to get a Hell of a lot worse. Next.

Clancy frowns and takes his seat.

Bradley stands.

BRADLEY

I'm Bradley. I'm eighteen, and uh... I dunno what's special about me.

LAKAYA
You got a big ass.

JAMAL
What?

LAKAYA
Look at it. Shit's bigger than mine!

BRADLEY
It's true. Chicks dig the badonk.

JAMAL
Yeah? You got a big ass, Brad?
You like to twerk? Go ahead, Brad.
Twerk.

BRADLEY
Yeah?

Bradley turns around and begins to twerk. The younger females howl and make lewd comments.

JAMAL
Boy, sit your ass down. That ain't nothin' special. Everyone who works here ends up with a fat ass. Next!

LAKAYA WASHINGTON (18), a sassy, outspoken, physically blessed girl fresh out of Alternative high school stands.

LAKAYA
Hi, I'm Lakaya Washington. I'm eighteen, I love shoes, and I have over a thousand followers on Instagram.

JAMAL
Yeah? You take a lot of selfies?
You post pictures of yourself smiling all over the Instagram?

Lakaya is all smiles.

LAKAYA
Mmmhmmm. And Facebook, and Snapchat, and Twitter...

JAMAL
-- That's good! Hold on to those so you can always remember what your smile looked like before I took a wicked piss all over your hopes and dreams! Next!

DANNY

(smooth)

What's up. I'm Danny. I'm twenty-seven, and I'm an alcoholic.

The class chuckles.

JAMAL

(to the class)

Shut it!

Silence.

JAMAL

You must be Danny Reyes.

Danny's eyes widen.

JAMAL

Yeah, I know all about you, Danny Reyes. Big-shot actor, right? Frankly, I don't think you got what it takes to handle THIS.

DANNY

Handle... Do you mean... this? Or THIS?

JAMAL

Oh, we got us a funny guy. Class clown. There's no room for no funny shit in my class, Danny Reyes. You got me? Jamal only trains the best.

Jamal pounds his own chest.

The door opens; Brent enters the room.

JAMAL

Speak of the devil.

Danny's eyes furrow.

JAMAL

Class, this is Brent Jurgens. He's the supervisor for Team A, the best CSR team in the call center. Those of you who make it through my class can only pray you work for him!

BRENT

He's just kidding, guys. I'm sure all of you will end up working for me at some point.

Brent smiles smugly at Danny.

Danny sulks.

INT. T.H.I.S. TRAINING ROOM - LATER

MONTAGE:

A) Among a dozen acronyms on the dry-erase board, Jamal points at the one that says "E.X.C.I.T.E.M.E.N.T. = Enter account number. X-tract password from the customer. Converse. Investigate account history. Troubleshoot. Evaluate the problem. Mention do-it-yourself options. Exhaust all remedies. Note the account. Transfer to advanced technical support."

B) The class looks frightened and confused. Brad raises his hand and asks something.

C) Jamal yells and throws an eraser at Brad.

D) The class hooks headsets into the computers bordering the classroom interior and fumble with log-ins and passwords.

E) Jamal yells into a crying woman's face and points to the door as she gathers her things and leaves.

F) Jamal barks an order as he paces among his soldiers. Clancy takes a swig from his flask and Lakaya snaps a selfie after Jamal passes them.

END MONTAGE.

INT. T.H.I.S. TRAINING ROOM - EVENING

Jamal erases acronyms from the board.

The class looks exhausted, some on the verge of tears.

JAMAL

Let's review. You.
 (pointing at Lakaya)
 What's the order of operations for
 Quality Assurance?

LAKAYA

Um... Answer... Question...
 Verify... Wait, it's --

JAMAL

No! Answer! Greet! Request
 Verification! Evaluate! Explain!
 Make a hypothesis!

(MORE)

JAMAL (cont'd)
 Eradicate the problem! Note the
 account! Terminate the call! A-G-
 R-E-E-M-E-N-T! Agreement!

Jamal points at Bradley.

JAMAL
 You! What are the steps you follow
 to end a call?

BRADLEY
Crack! Conclude, Recap, Advertise,
 Closing, and Kick-start the next
 call! Crack!

JAMAL
 That's right. Some of you might
 just make it after all.

Jamal glances at his watch.

JAMAL
 The State of Colorado says you
 deserve a thirty-minute lunch break.
 Be back in twenty. And don't get
 comfortable. We just got started.

The class sits motionless. Jamal makes a large angry
 "go" gesture. The class hurries out of the room.

INT. T.H.I.S. CAFETERIA - LATER

Danny stands in line for the vending machine. When he
 reaches the front, he frowns at the contents: several
 varieties of energy drinks, and nothing else.

He steps out of line and is nearly run over by a dozen
 nine-to-fivers who suddenly zoom past him.

DANNY
 Where's everyone going?

QUINCY BROWN (24), looks over his shoulder as he races
 with the herd.

QUINCY
 Smoke shack! You coming?

DANNY
 I don't smoke.

QUINCY
 You will!

Danny plops down at a table. Lakaya joins him with a Zone bar as she taps letters on her phone's keyboard. Clancy sits at the table beside him with a large lunch box and proceeds to dig in.

LAKAYA
My boyfriend's so stupid!

DANNY
(awkwardly)
Why?

LAKAYA
He thinks I don't know he's talking to all his bitches on Facebook!

DANNY
How do you know he is?

LAKAYA
'Cause I hacked his Facebook!

Danny opens his mouth to speak, but doesn't. Clancy nods toward the T.H.I.S. logo above them.

CLANCY
So? What do you think?

DANNY
I hate it.

LAKAYA
Me too! It's like, it's just a phone job. Why does everyone take everything so seriously? I ain't about to be one of those people who make it their life.

CLANCY
Sometimes we don't have a choice. Look at me. It was THIS or porn.

Speechless. Bradley joins them with a protein shake.

BRADLEY
Pretty sick, huh? Jamal told me that if I hit all my numbers and make it past probation, I'll be eligible for bonuses.

LAKAYA
(to Bradley)
You on Facebook?

BRADLEY

Yeah?

LAKAYA

Don't add me.

Danny glances at his phone. A "voice mail" icon blinks.

DANNY

If you'll excuse me...

Danny wanders back toward the vending machines and checks his voice-mail.

PHONE VOICE (V.O.)

You have one new message.

SOPHIA (V.O.)

Hi, Danny. It's Mom. I just wanted to wish you a good first day, and remind you that if it doesn't work out, you can always quit and go work with your Dad.

Danny frowns.

SOPHIA (V.O.)

There's no shame in being a plumber. I'll see you tomorrow, and don't forget to eat something! Love you.

PHONE VOICE (V.O.)

End of message.

Danny disconnects. He fidgets with the employee badge at the end of his lanyard. With grim determination, he removes the badge and begins to march...

AMY JO (O.S.)

Danny?

DANNY

Yeah?

AMY JO SIMPSON (27), an ugly duckling in high school, but a beautiful swan now, grins and gestures to herself.

AMY JO

Amy Jo. Amy Jo Simpson. We had yearbook together!

Danny gasps.

DANNY

Amy Jo! Wow! You look... I didn't recognize you! Like, at all! You pulled a total Jonah Hill!

Amy Jo's smile loses potency.

DANNY

Not that you look like Jonah Hill... Well, not anymore...

Amy Jo's smile dissipates.

DANNY

I mean, you didn't -- you don't -- seriously, you look great!

AMY JO

(smiling again)
Thanks, I think.

DANNY

So... you work here?

AMY JO

Yeah. Team B supervisor.

DANNY

That's awesome. Congrats!

AMY JO

Thanks. What about you?

Danny displays his clenched "new employee" badge.

DANNY

First day. Just came in from Cali.

AMY JO

How exciting! Welcome aboard! Did they give you the grand tour?

Danny shakes his head and smiles.

INT. T.H.I.S. CALL CENTER - CUBE FLOOR - MOMENTS LATER

Danny and Amy Jo wander through the call center aisles.

AMY JO

Have you kept in touch with anyone?

DANNY

From high school?
(pondering)
No. Not really.

AMY JO
 Yeah, me neither. Oh! Except for
 Brent. Do you remember Brent
 Jurgens?

In the distance, they see Brent and Jamal wasting time
 by the water cooler near the Team A cubes. Brent,
 engaged in a story, makes hand gestures to describe
 someone with substantially large breasts.

AMY JO (V.O.)
 He's a supervisor for Team A.

Brent notices them and waves smugly.

AT THE TEAM B CUBICLES

Amy Jo points to her area.

AMY JO
 And this is my stop. If you ever
 have any questions, do not hesitate
 to find me.

DANNY
 Will do. We should totally catch
 up sometime.

AMY JO
 We should. Hey! Are busy tonight?
 You should come to Goober's.

DANNY
 Goober's?

AMY JO
 Yeah. Four blocks west, by the
 Frisky Burger.

DANNY
 Oh yeah. The old Pete's Pizza.
 Well, I'm kinda beat... But... I
 mean, I'll definitely try.

AMY JO
 I hope you do.
 (checking her watch)
 Oh! Gotta run. Welcome back, Danny.

Amy Jo weaves between cubicles toward her desk.

DANNY
 Thanks for the tour!

Amy Jo smiles, waves over the cubes, and sits.

BRENT (O.S.)

Ten years later and you still don't have any game.

Danny faces his adversary.

DANNY

That's not what your sister thought. How is Kristine?

Brent is visibly infuriated, but suppresses it.

BRENT

(quietly)

You don't talk about her! Ever! I could take you down right now if I wanted to, Danny. But I'd rather sit back and watch you screw yourself.

DANNY

You want to watch me screw myself?

BRENT

(sighing)

Crack as many jokes as you want, but you know as well as I do that if you get fired, it means you're a failure. And if you stay and work for me? You're a failure works for me. What's it gonna be, Danny?

DANNY

You can't fire me, Brent. I don't work for you.

BRENT

Well, maybe I can't. But I've seen Jamal do worse things to people who roll into class late.

Danny glances at his watch. His eyes widen, but he plays it cool. He gives the "I'm so scared" gesture.

DANNY

I'm not afraid of either one of you, Brent.

BRENT

You will be. You will be.

Danny turns and "slowly" hurries away until he turns the corner. Then it's a mad dash.

INT. T.H.I.S. HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

As he nears the training room, Danny races past two security guards and the crying male new-hire they are escorting out.

INT. T.H.I.S. TRAINING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Danny bursts into the training room. Jamal stops in mid-sentence and turns to Danny.

JAMAL

-- Can cry all you want for all I f--
 (to Danny)
 I thought I told your ass not to be late.

DANNY

Sorry, Jamal. Won't happen again.

Danny heads to his seat.

JAMAL

No, don't sit down. See, from what I hear, you don't really understand the concept of consequences or respect. So we're gonna play a little game and see if we can't teach you some.

Jamal opens a trunk full of games and sporting equipment. He places a board game hourglass on his desk.

JAMAL

It's simple. I'll ask you a question. If you get it right, you live to see another day. If not,
 (throat-slashing motion)
 Outie.

The classmates watch with concern.

JAMAL

Ready? What are the five metrics you have to meet to qualify for a Quality Assurance bonus?

Jamal flips the hour glass.

DANNY

It's Scare. Salutation. Courteousness.

Time runs down...

DANNY
Attention... Reiteration... And,
uh...

Jamal grins. Only a few grains left...

DANNY
... Uh...

Danny glances at the posters around the room -- No luck.

LAKAYA
Excellence!

DANNY
Excellence!

Jamal slaps the desk as the last few grains are drained.

JAMAL
(to Lakaya)
Nobody's supposed to help him!

LAKAYA
You ain't never said that.

Jamal glares a moment. He nods to Danny's seat. Danny takes a deep breath and smiles.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. T.H.I.S. CALL CENTER - CUBE FLOOR

The Wall clock strikes eleven pm. Instead of a race to the exit, employees, new and old, drag themselves to the electronic card-activated turnstile.

The badge scanning slows the process. There is a BEEP with each scan.

DANNY

(to himself)

What's with all the security? A lot of people dying to get in here?

QUINCY

I think it's to keep us from getting away. The shock collars are on backorder.

Another BEEP.

EXT. GOOBER'S BAR & GRILL - NIGHT

The dive bar radiates with life among the packed parking lot near Frisky Burger. 80's music blasts from within, as well as the collective cheers of its patrons.

INT. GOOBER'S BAR & GRILL - CONTINUOUS

Danny enters. As he moves in, he scans the clientele.

One person in a T.H.I.S. shirt. Then another. And another. The bar is infested with them.

A small group noisily plays beer pong, while another group watches.

As Danny nears the bar, he sees Brent standing before three college girls near the patio.

BRENT

(barely audible)

Which one of you lovely ladies wants to buy me a drink?

The girls awkwardly glance at each other.

Danny rolls his eyes. He shakes his head, takes a few steps back, and spins to leave when Amy Jo enters.

AMY JO

Hey! You came!

DANNY

Yeah. So... Is this the place to be after work, or what? I mean, everybody's here. Like, everybody.

AMY JO

Yeah, there's always something going on. Wednesday is trivia. They do Karaoke. There's a gay night -- that's kinda fun. Tonight is beer pong, obviously --

DANNY

-- It just seems like people would want to get away from that place.

AMY JO

You'd think, right? I don't know. I don't care as long as there's no drama. I just can't be around people who don't get along.

Danny glances up. In the distance, Brent snaps camera phone pics of him and his prey.

AMY JO

It's like, let's just all chill. Unwind. Have a beer.

DANNY

So, you're a beer girl?

AMY JO

Sometimes. I'm kind of a lightweight. To be honest, I get kind of ridiculous when I'm drunk, so I usually just have one Cape Cod and call it a night.

DANNY

Cape Cod?

Danny scoffs.

AMY JO

What's wrong with a Cape Cod?

DANNY

Nothing... if you're a sixty-year-old woman with a bridge club and too many cats.

AMY JO

How many cats?

DANNY

I have a theory. I say there are three reasons people order a Cape Cod. It's either because they just don't know what else to drink, they're afraid to try new things, or they simply have no idea what they're looking for.

AMY JO

Or maybe they just like Cape Cods.

DANNY

Do you trust me? I want to try something.

AMY JO

Aren't you supposed to ask me that after I've had a few drinks?

DANNY

I'm serious. I have a special talent.

AMY JO

Aren't you supposed to tell me that after I've had a few drinks?

DANNY

I'm sure I will. But in the meantime, what flavors do you like?

AMY JO

I dunno. Peach.

NEAR THE PATIO DOOR

Two girls urge the third to leave as she recites her number to Brent. Brent finishes saving it to his phone as they walk away. He takes a sip and spots Danny and Amy Jo at the bar. The bartender sets drinks in front of them.

AT THE BAR

Danny hands Amy Jo a drink. She sips it and lights up.

AMY JO

O-M-G!

DANNY

Good?

AMY JO
It's amazing! I don't even taste
the alcohol.

DANNY
It's definitely in there.

AMY JO
I taste the peach, but what's the
other...

DANNY
Pomegranate.

Amy Jo nods.

AMY JO
Your own recipe?

DANNY
I was a bartender, before I came
back.

AMY JO
(matter of fact)
A bartender.

Amy Jo nods and loses herself in the murky pink drink.

DANNY
What?

AMY JO
It's just -- well you were an artist
in high school. I guess I just
pictured you growing up to be some
famous artist or something.

DANNY
You pictured me, huh?

AMY JO
I did. With an easel, a big puffy
hairdo, and a canvas full of happy
little trees. So what happened?

DANNY
Yeah. Life, huh? What about you?
You were gonna be a photographer
when you grew up, right?

AMY JO
And I am. Nothing major, just a
hobby at the moment.

DANNY
That's great! I'd love to see some.

AMY JO
Yeah? Okay.

Amy Jo whips out her cell phone, opens her gallery, and shows him a dark picture in a house.

AMY JO
Okay, don't freak out.

Danny studies the pic. He tilts his head and squints.

DANNY
What is it?

AMY JO
I didn't tell you. Oh, I spaced --
I really want to help people, so I
have been going on these ghost hunts.
I take pictures of orbs, shadows,
ectoplasmic mist... See that there?

Amy Jo points to an area of the screen.

DANNY
No.

AMY JO
Right there. That white dot. See
that?

DANNY
The dust?

AMY JO
No, it's right -- know what? It's
okay. I have some better ones at
home. I'll show you sometime.

She pockets her phone.

DANNY
I'd love to go see them sometime.

They lock eyes.

AMY JO
So...

DANNY
So...

BRENT

So!

Brent squeezes between them with a pitcher of beer and flings an arm around Amy Jo.

AMY JO

Hey, Brent.

BRENT

What's up, Amy? Danny.

DANNY

Brent.

BRENT

(to Amy Jo)

It's like a pre-high school reunion, huh? I'm a supervisor for Team A, you're supervisor for Team B... And Danny, well, he's a CSR that could wind up working for either one of us, really.

AMY JO

CSR?

Amy blushes.

BRENT

Yup. Just started today. He didn't tell you?

AMY JO

No. I just assumed... I thought you transferred from California...

Danny shrinks back.

AMY JO

There's nothing wrong with CSR... We all started there...

BRENT

Yeah, like a decade ago. But I'm sure he'll catch right up. Isn't that right, Danny boy?

Danny shrugs, embarrassed. Brent signals to his table.

BRENT

(to Amy Jo)

Hey, looks like there's an extra shot of Jager at my table. You should come toast with us.

AMY JO

Ugh. I hate Jager.

BRENT

Me too. We can hate it together.
And besides, there is way too much
testosterone at that table. Look
at that sausage fest. We need you,
Amy Jo. We need you.

AMY JO

(laughing)

Has that line ever worked for you?

BRENT

Not until tonight. Come on.

AMY JO

Sure. Why not.

BRENT

A'ight.

Brent gets a high-five from Amy Jo, releases her, and
heads to his table.

BRENT

Danny.

DANNY

Brent.

Amy Jo smiles sadly at Danny.

AMY JO

I guess I'm having Jager. Unless
you're a Jager guy?

DANNY

Nah. Jager gets me naked. I think
I'll probably just finish this one
and head out. Early day of CSR
training tomorrow.

Amy Jo nods.

AMY JO

Get home safe, Danny. Thanks for
the drink.

Danny raises his glass and feigns a smile.

Amy Jo leaves him.

Zeke approaches, as Danny sucks his whole drink down in rapid consecutive gulps, and sets the glass on the bar.

ZEKE

Damn. That good, huh?

DANNY

Not so much.

ZEKE

What was it?

DANNY

Cape Cod.

ZEKE

Coolio.

(to the bartender)

Another Chivas, and one Cape Cod for the man?

EXT. GOOBER'S BAR & GRILL - SMOKING PATIO - NIGHT

Several smokers converse belligerently.

DANNY

So you work at THIS?

Zeke lights a cigarette.

ZEKE

Damn Skippy. Zeke Bagley, Head honcho for Team C.

Zeke extends a hand. Danny shakes.

DANNY

Danny Reyes, twenty-seven-year-old CSR.

ZEKE

Ouch. The world is a vampire.

Zeke raises an eyebrow and offers a cigarette.

DANNY

I don't smoke.

ZEKE

You will.

DANNY

Why does everyone keep saying that?

ZEKE

Just wait 'til the nightmares start.
Who you workin' for?

DANNY

Nobody yet. But it looks like I'll
probably end up working for Brent.

ZEKE

Brent Jurgens? I really hate that
guy.

DANNY

Really?

ZEKE

He's a shady mo-fo. Thinks he's a
big ol' mac daddy. I worked for
him before I got promoted.

DANNY

I went to high school with him.
Couldn't stand him then, either.
And then we were roommates for a
year.

ZEKE

Seriously? How the Hell does that
happen?

DANNY

We had a mutual friend with Leukemia.
Really good guy. Not an enemy in
the world. We tried to get along
for his sake, you know, pretended,
but...

Zeke gets it.

ZEKE

I'm sorry, man.

DANNY

When he died, I kinda freaked out.
I had to get out of here. I realized
life was too short, so I did it. I
got the Hell out.

ZEKE

What happened?

DANNY

I failed and came right the Hell
back.

Danny flicks his straw away and takes a big drink.

Quincy -- wearing a goofy hat -- and Summer join them at the patio table.

QUINCY

We won twice!

ZEKE

Team C represent! Danny, meet Quincy and Summer. We're the lowest ranked team in the call center, but the beer pong champions of the world.

QUINCY

I feel like those titles are related somehow.

ZEKE

We were just talking about your good buddy Brent.

QUINCY

Oh, Hell no! I hate that guy. He hit on my girlfriend at the company Christmas party!

DANNY

What did you do?

QUINCY

After I found them having sex in the coat room? I grabbed my soggy coat and left her ass there! But she drove us, so I had to walk --

SUMMER

-- Screw Brent Jurgens!

Summer pounds the table with her fist. Her raw power startles her companions.

SUMMER

He told me I had a pretty face, and then asked me if I had any skinny sisters! I about choked him out!

QUINCY

Well?

SUMMER

Well what?

QUINCY

What's the sister situation?

Summer scoffs.

ZEKE

Hey, Danny's got you both beat.
High school rivals.

Zeke butts his fists together.

DANNY

And now I'm gonna be stuck working
for him.

Zeke mashes his cigarette in the ashtray.

ZEKE

Not necessarily.

Danny raises an eyebrow. Zeke stuffs his cigarettes in
his fanny pack.

ZEKE

How would you like to fuck up Brent's
day?

INT. GOOBER'S BAR & GRILL - BAR - MOMENTS LATER

Brent waits in line for a pitcher. Zeke and his crew
approach.

ZEKE

Yo, Brent. I hear you got some
beef with our boy, Danny.

BRENT

What? I don't have any beef--

ZEKE

-- Cut the shit, Jerkins. I hereby
challenge you to a game of beer
pong. Winner gets first pick of
the new hires.

BRENT

I already have first pick of the
new hires.

ZEKE

Okay. But we both know you'll lose
most of your picks within the first
six months anyway.

BRENT

What's that supposed to mean.

ZEKE

Brent, everybody knows you pick on the ones you don't like until they quit.

BRENT

I don't pick on anybody. I set a high level of expectations, and that's why my team is the best.

ZEKE

Please. Your team has the highest turnover rate in the call center. I haven't seen that many unnecessary turnovers since the last time the Broncos made it to the Superbowl.

The surrounding crowd let out an "Oooooo."

SUMMER

Hey, now.

ZEKE

I know -- sorry. I lost a lot of money on that game.

BRENT

Still, though.

ZEKE

Don't be a pussy, Jurgens. Are you in or out?

Brent looks around. Other T.H.I.S. employees have taken notice.

BRENT

You're on. Name it.

ZEKE

Danny and me versus you and whoever you got. Winner gets the first three picks.

DANNY

What?

Brent smirks. A crowd begins to roar.

INT. GOOBER'S BAR & GRILL - BEER PONG TABLE - NIGHT

Danny, Quincy and Summer stand on one end of the table while a crowd of T.H.I.S. employees surround them on all sides. Danny fidgets.

Zeke approaches with pitchers of beer.

DANNY
I really wish we had talked about
this first.

ZEKE
Por Que?

DANNY
I have no hand-eye coordination.

ZEKE
Don't even stress. We got this.

Brent emerges from the crowd, another smirk.

ZEKE
Where's your partner, yo?

Brent moves aside to present his partner: Amy Jo. She's
rather intoxicated and stumbles forward.

AMY JO
(to Danny)
Danny! You came!

She waves, emphatically.

Everyone stares at Danny, who waves back, awkwardly.

BRENT
Let's play some pong!

ZEKE
It's on like Mario!

MONTAGE

- A) Zeke makes a point. Half of the crowd cheers.
- B) Brent makes a point the other half cheers.
- C) Danny makes an embarrassing toss. The crowd laughs.
- D) Amy Jo clumsily makes a point. The crowd cheers.
- E) Brent talks trash and makes distracting gestures. Zeke scores anyway.
- F) Danny humps the table in an attempt to distract his opponents; they score anyway.
- G) Danny clumsily makes a point.

H) Zeke chugs beer.

I) Danny chugs beer.

J) Brent chugs beer.

K) Amy Jo chugs beer, wipes the excess with her sleeve.

END MONTAGE.

One cup remains for each team.

Brent whispers something into Amy Jo's ear.

Zeke aims the ball and measures with his eye.

Amy Jo, a complete mess, laughs, lines herself up with the cup, and flashes Zeke to reveal her "T.H.I.S. Network: Everybody's watching" bra upon release.

Everyone gasps.

The ball slowly spins through the air, but it misses the target by a mile.

ZEKE

You're a real package, Brent.

Amy Jo covers the goodies and laughs hysterically. She high-fives her partner.

QUINCY

(eyes fixed on Amy Jo)

On that note, I think I'm gonna go home and take advantage of THIS Network's wide variety of adult programming.

DANNY

We get free porn?

QUINCY

No, we do not.

ZEKE

Sorry, kid. They didn't play fair.

They look on as Brent prepares for game point.

Everything slows down. The crowd is split -- some cheer, some boo.

Brent readies his shot. With a triumphant grin, he draws his forearm back...

Amy Jo jumps for joy. On her third jump -- a worried face. She stops jumping and reels from the liquor.

Danny and Zeke yell and make obscene hand gestures to ruin Brent's shot.

Brent's forearm springs forward in SLOW MOTION.

Just before release, Amy Jo projectile vomits all over Brent.

Brent screams. The ball leaves his hand, bounces on the table, and jettisons in the crowd.

Time goes back to normal as Amy Jo pulls herself toward Danny.

AMY JO

I think... I think...

(hiccup)

I think it was that peach--

She vomits on Danny.

Danny sulks.

EXT. REYES RESIDENCE - NIGHT

A taxi pulls up in front of the house. All of the lights are out, except for the TV light that flickers within.

Danny gets out of the car and stumbles to the door, tripping on -- and dragging -- a gnome along the way.

INT. REYES RESIDENCE - MOMENTS LATER

Danny slinks in and tries to play it cool. In the living room, Miggy and Dominic play video games. Miggy's eyes are glued to the screen.

MIGGY

Mijo! Come watch your old man slap some hookers!

DANNY

What?

DOMINIC

We're playing Grand Theft Auto.
He's actually pretty good at this.
It's kind of... scary, actually.

Miggy sniffs the air.

MIGGY
Mijo, why you smell like throw up?

DANNY
(sniffing)
I don't smell like throw up.

MIGGY
I'm a plumber, mijo. I know throw
up.

DANNY
Did you work today?

MIGGY
Yeah?

DANNY
Then maybe you smell like throw up.

Miggy makes the "mind blown" gesture.

DANNY
I'm going to bed.

Danny stumbles away.

DOMINIC
Oh, hey, how's the job?

Danny grumbles something inaudibly and trudges down the hallway.

Miggy continues to play, fixed on the screen.

Dominic watches his brother until the door SLAMS shut.

Miggy nonchalantly sniffs himself.

MIGGY
It's me.

END OF ACT TWO

TAG

INT. REYES RESIDENCE - DANNY'S ROOM - NIGHT

Danny is encapsulated in his Batman blankets.

After a moment, he peeks out and glances around.

Pinned to the wall are collector's item Batman socks.

Another glance, just in case -- no, he's alone.

Danny snatches one of the socks and disappears beneath the covers.

CUT TO BLACK.

END OF SHOW