ALL SOAPED UP

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of requirements
For the degree of Master of Arts
in Screenwriting

By

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December 2012
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ABSTRACT

ALL SOAPED UP

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All Soaped Up is a comedy about 28 year old Miles Bradley, a guy struggling to raise his rambunctious teenage sister, Katie. Despite working two jobs, Miles can’t seem to keep up with the bills, and now that Katie has been expelled from public school, he’s forced to reevaluate their situation. Unfortunately for Miles, his best option seems to be a radical one – auditioning for a role on a soap opera. A soap opera, mind you, that happens to be the stomping grounds of his old high school enemy, Eric. Much to his surprise, Miles gets the part and packs up their life, making the trip to sunny Los Angeles – where all their dreams will come true… or so he thinks. What he discovers however, is that the job of his dreams is utter crap… The soap is in a rapid death spiral toward cancelation and Miles must do whatever it takes to save the show; which seems impossible with Eric sabotaging his every move, and Katie desperately fighting to get the hell out of dodge. In the end, Miles must decide what’s more important… feeling like a hero or actually being one.
Fade In:

EXT. WINBROOK HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

It is June 2002 in a quaint New England town. Surrounded by evergreens and late-blossoming buds, a school banner proudly waves in the wind, congratulating the graduating class; the "CL" blacked out with marker.

Behind the double blue doors of the faded brick school, comes the familiar sound of the GRADUATION MARCH.

INT. WINBROOK GYMNASIUM - CONTINUOUS

Cameras FLASH as the procession of blue CAPS AND GOWNS slowly make their way toward the front of the packed gymnasium, and into their seats.

MILES BRADLEY, eighteen, with optimistic eyes and the slightest hint of a swagger, marches proudly down the aisle, nodding at the crowd as he passes.

Behind him, ERIC WINTERSTORM, a beanpole with a uni-brow, purposely steps on the back of Miles' gown, yanking him backward.

Miles spins around.

MILES
What the heck, Eric?

ERIC
Oh, I'm sorry. Did my ridiculously expensive loafers damage your ten dollar gown?

TRACY, a girl in a neck brace, urgently gets in between them.

TRACY
Guys! We're supposed to cherish our last moments together...
(teary)
Not throw them away like snotty, used tissues.

MILES
Sorry, Tracy.

Miles scowls at Eric before returning to his place in line.

ERIC
(mimics Miles)
Sorry, Tracy. Ugh! What a tool.

As Eric drags himself forward, ANGLE ON...
A stage that has been constructed at the far end of the room. PRINCIPAL SMALLS, a balding dwarf, stands impatiently beside his petite podium. He motions to the nearby BAND DIRECTOR: speed it up.

The director swings his baton faster and the HIGH SCHOOL BAND struggles to keep up. The TUBA PLAYER, a freckled brace-face, puffs into his mouthpiece - his cheeks about to explode.

It's still too slow. Principal Smalls gestures again.

A quick up of the tempo and the procession of graduates move at an incredible pace, nearly sprinting to their seats.

The tuba player faints into the CLARINETIST next to him. Miles plops down into his chair. Eric slouches next to him.

And as the last graduate scrambles to his seat, the Principal takes his place behind the podium.

ON THE STAGE...

PRINCIPAL SMALLS
Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for coming. Now, if you'll please take your seats.

There's a rustle of movement and chatter.

PRINCIPAL SMALLS (CONT'D)
I said take your seats!

That does it - everyone sits. Beat.

PRINCIPAL SMALLS (CONT'D)
Now, let's get this glorious evening underway, shall we? First, I'd like to introduce you to tonight's key note speaker. This student exemplifies everything it means to be a Winbrook Bobcat. He is intelligent, he is brave, and he is bursting with determination. Not only has this student excelled academically, but he has also entertained us all with his wonderful talents on the stage. Now, he may be leaving us to pursue his dreams of acting at NYU, but something tells me he'll be back... and when he is, he'll be signing autographs. Students, and faculty... family, and friends...

He gestures to Miles in the crowd.

PRINCIPAL SMALLS (CONT'D)
Miles Bradley!

ON Miles in the crowd as he rises to a THUNDEROUS APPLAUSE. Everyone leaps their feet, except for Eric.
ON THE STAGE...

Miles makes his way to the podium. He shakes the Principal's hand then bends down awkwardly to the mic.

MILES
   Thank you, Principal Smalls.

Miles quickly realizes this isn't going to work, and loosens the mic from the stand. He moves front and center, confident.

MILES (CONT'D)
   When I was a young man. Well, younger...

The audience laughs. Eric grunts.

MILES (CONT'D)
   My father told me two very important things. Number one - don't pick it, it'll never heal.
          (laughter)
   And two - dreams are within your reach, but that's only if you never quit. And I'm reminded of that advice today as I look out at my peers, my teachers, my family...

Miles looks out into the audience. He spots three empty seats that say: "Reserved for the Bradleys." He falters ever so slightly.

MILES (CONT'D)
   Um. And reflect on the adventure we are all about the embark on...

INT. WINBROOK GYMNASIUM - LATER

Principal Smalls stands at the podium, again addressing the audience.

PRINCIPAL SMALLS
   And as you throw your feathers, and not your caps - because it is a safety hazard - remember that you are like a bird about to soar into a world of possibilities. Congratulations class of 2002. And good luck!

The place EXPLODES. Hundreds of feathers fly through the air as the graduates leap to their feet.

The tuba player coughs as an aggressive piece of plumage floats into his mouth.

Family and friends flood the gymnasium floor. Miles searches the hundreds of faces, but doesn't seem to find who he's looking for.
EXT. WINBROOK HIGH SCHOOL - NIGHT

The buzz of graduation excitement is long gone from the air. Alone, with only his thoughts and dozens of serenading crickets, Miles kicks at a nearby rock.

He checks his cell phone: no missed calls.

Suddenly, a cop car pulls up. Miles instantly tenses as an OFFICER with a furrowed brow hops out.

OFFICER

Miles Bradley?

MILES

What's wrong?

OFFICER

There's been an accident...

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - NIGHT

Miles races down the hallway bypassing sleepy nurses, and restless patients. He practically launches himself into room 215.

INT. KATIE'S HOSPITAL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Illuminated by a cartoon on the television, KATIE, five years old, covered in bumps and bruises, fights to keep her eyes open. Miles races to her side.

MILES

Oh God, Katie... Are you okay?

She nods sleepily.

KATIE

Where's Mommy and Daddy...? I need the good-night song.

Miles instantly tears up and pulls his little sister close.

MILES

How about I sing you the good-night song? Would that be okay?

KATIE

But you can't sing.

MILES

I'll make an exception just for you.

He brushes his sister's hair gently away from the bandage on her forehead as he sings:
MILES (CONT'D)
Good-night moon, good-night stars... good-night fishes,
good-night cars...

As Katie begins to drift off to sleep...

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - LATER

Just outside Katie's room, a solemn DOCTOR speaks with Miles.

DOCTOR
Son, I understand how you feel, but you're only eighteen... and this is a huge responsibility.

MILES
(stern)
She's my sister. She stays with me.

The doctor knows better than to fight him...

DOCTOR
Well, child services will be here in the morning. We'll discuss it further then.

The doctor moves off, leaving Miles alone. He leans against the wall, and slides to the floor, letting the gravity of it all finally hit him.

The nearby slop of a wet mop against the floor distracts him... CLOSE ON the mop swishing against the linoleum...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. WINBROOK HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY - NIGHT

CLOSE ON another mop dancing across the dark floor, then REVEAL a haggard-looking Miles holding it, dressed in a janitor's jumper.

SUPER: 10 YEARS LATER

MONTAGE

- Miles mops, takes out the garbage, cleans the blackboards, sweeps the gymnasium, and scrapes gum out from under desks.

INT. WINBROOK HIGH HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Miles navigates the mop and bucket down the empty hallway. He tosses it into a nearby janitor's closet, and heads for the doorway.

He stops in front of a glassed display - inside are awards, ribbons, and framed photos of past students. He focuses on a photo of his younger self on stage. A smile momentarily creeps across his face, but disappears when he catches his own reflection in the glass.
EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

A dented sedan pulls up in front of the eye-sore of a building. The yellow shingles are cracked. The shutters hang loose. And the white picket fence that surrounds it is no longer white... Or pickety.

Miles pulls his body out of the vehicle and heads inside.

INT. MILES' APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

The one bedroom apartment is dark and still as Miles makes his way to the sunken couch. He slips on his headphones and lies back. As classical music begins to PLAY, Miles closes his eyes.

The alarm clock reads: 3:35AM.

EXT. MILES' APARTMENT - MORNING

The beautiful pink sun rises. Birds CHIRP. The grass glistens. And the horrible BUZZ of an alarm clock echoes from inside.

INT. MILES' APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Miles SNORES horrifically as the sweet sounds of "Morning Mood" travel from his barely on head-phones. The alarm clock on the nearby coffee table continues to SCREAM at him, but he doesn't stir.

Suddenly, Miles eyes snap open. The alarms reads: 7:08AM.

MILES

Shit!

He slams his fist down on the BUZZER and jumps to his feet, unaware that he is still attached to his headphones.

MILES (CONT'D)

Katie, we --

The cord of the headphones pull him back. He yanks them off and the MUSIC SCREECHES to a halt.

MILES (CONT'D)

We overslept again! Time to get up!

Silence as he climbs to his feet. Miles approaches the only bedroom in the place. The door is plastered with sports paraphernalia.

He KNOCKS.

MILES (CONT'D)

Katie?

There's no answer.
INT. KATIE'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Miles, eyes closed, enters. The walls are plastered with photos of friends and family, athletic images - but nothing that is mainstream, because that would be so uncool.

MILES
If you're indecent, cover up.

Silence. He opens his eyes.

MILES (CONT'D)
Katie?

The lofted bed is empty and still made. Miles moves closer and crouches down to the floor.

UNDER THE BED

Fast asleep, 15 year old Katie lies amongst a cocoon of blankets.

MILES
(in a cutesy voice and obnoxiously loud)
Good morning, sunshine. Rise and shine!

She GROANS awake.

KATIE
I hate you.

MILES
Well, I love you! Now come on.

He pulls her out from under the bed.

KATIE
Hey!

KATIE'S BEDROOM

Annoyed, Katie scrambles to her feet.

MILES
Time to get up. Don't want my princess to be late for school.

KATIE
Don't make me throw up.

MILES
Shower. Now.

Katie marches into the bathroom, slamming the door behind her.
INT. HALLWAY - LATER

Miles stands, arms crossed, outside the bathroom door.

    MILES
    Come on, Katie. We're going to be late!

Katie emerges in a thick robe, towel wrapped around her head, and surrounded by steam.

    KATIE
    All yours, princess.

    MILES
    Very funny. Have fun walking to school.

    KATIE
    Have fun in the cold shower.

Miles rushes into the bathroom.

INT. SHOWER

Miles quickly rinses and repeats. He lathers shampoo in his hair, whistles happily, when suddenly...

The water flow stops. He freezes, covered in shampoo.

    MILES
    Hello?

He fiddles with the shower, but to no avail.

INT. MILES' APARTMENT - LATER

Miles, now wrapped in a robe and covered in suds, marches out of the bathroom. There is so much shampoo he can barely see.

    MILES
    Katie!

    KATIE (O.S.)
    I'm right here.

Miles wipes away some shampoo to see she's literally right in front of him, dressed and ready to go.

    MILES
    Do you remember when I gave you those envelopes and told you to put them in the mail? Remember I said they were very, very important and not to forget to mail them.
KATIE
Yeah, I remember.

MILES
Did you mail them?

KATIE
...I forgot.

MILES
Katie, those were our bills.

KATIE
Who pays their bills through the mail anymore?

MILES
People who can't afford the internet!

Miles picks up the apartment phone, dials.

MILES (CONT'D)
I'll just call the water company. It'll be fine.

ZAP. The lights snap off. Miles hangs up.

MILES (CONT'D)
Should have seen that coming.

Katie scrambles for the kitchen.

KATIE
It's okay. We don't need water... Or electricity. It'll be like camping.

MILES
Last time we went camping, I got typhoid fever!

Katie throws open the fridge and pulls out the only liquid she can find: milk.

KATIE
Don't panic. You can use the milk... or the toilet water...

Miles looks toward the toilet, then back to the milk.

INT. MILES' CAR - LATER

Miles, now wearing scrubs, pulls up to Winbrook High. His hair sticks every which way.

KATIE
It doesn't look that bad.

Miles just glares. She gives him a weak smile and pops out of the car.
He looks at himself in the rearview mirror and attempts to comb back a stubborn piece of hair, but it refuses to cooperate and sticks straight up. Miles Sighs and pulls out onto the street.

EXT. SHADY ACRES RETIREMENT HOME PARKING LOT - DAY

Overlooking a small pond with an angelic fountain is Shady Acres Retirement Home. Modeled after the white house it towers over the surrounding buildings.

INT. SHADY ACRES RETIREMENT HOME RECEPTION - DAY

Miles moves behind the reception desk, guarded by Patreese, a portly, middle-aged woman.

MILES
Good morning, Patreese.

He grabs his time card from a nearby shelf and clocks in.

PATRESEE
Speak for yourself. I haven't had a good morning since my thirtieth birthday.

MILES
Wasn't that last week?

PATRESEE
You're sweet. I like your new look.

MILES
Thanks. I'm trying this new product. It's full of calcium.

Miles moves off, Patreese checks out his behind.

PATRESEE
Mmm.

The phone rings. Patreese rolls her eyes and answers.

PATRESEE (CONT'D)
What?!

INT. RECREATION ROOM

In a shockingly white room, lined with bingo tables, a group of female senior citizens wait anxiously for Miles to arrive.

Amongst them is Clara, a 72 year old firecracker, petite and spunky. Next to her is Dolores, 81, in full make-up and an evening gown. And standing timidly in the back is Morty, an 83 year old balding man in sweat-pants.

Morty shyly makes his way toward Dolores.
MORTY
Hello, Dolores. Lovely dress.

DOLORES
Yes, it is. I picked it up while I was touring the south of France.

MORTY
Oh, I love France.

DOLORES
Really?

MORTY
Oh, yes. I'm big fan of all things French. French toast... French kissing.

He raises his eyebrows and licks his lips. She GUFFAWS and stalks off.

Miles arrives.

MILES
Hello, everybody. Sorry to keep you waiting.

CLARA
About time. Some of us are on death's door, you know.

She nods her head toward an ELDERLY WOMAN crouched in the back with an oxygen tank.

ELDERLY WOMAN
(pulls back her oxygen mask)
Bite me, wench.

MILES
All right, let's get started.

Miles centers himself in front of the group and clicks on a BOOM BOX on a table beside him.

MILES (CONT'D)
Okay, ladies. Time to salsa!

MONTAGE
-- As SPICY LATIN MUSIC plays, Miles walks the group through a simple step. Morty stumbles through the move and accidentally steps on Clara's foot. Clara recoils in pain, but snaps back and punches Morty right between the eyes.

-- The group splits into pairs and dance around the room. Miles, paired with Dolores, swings her into a dramatic dip. Dolores's back locks and she's stuck in the dipped position.
-- The class continues to sway around the room. Morty has retired to a chair near the back. He SNORES, fast asleep. Miles sashays by and CLAPS to the beat, startling Morty awake.

-- A conga line has begun. It crawls by at a snail's pace.

INT. RECREATION ROOM - OUT OF MONTAGE

The group now relaxes in chairs from their work-out.

    MILES
    Good job, everybody!

    MORTY
    I can't find my dentures.

    MILES
    Okay, while I look for Morty's dentures why don't you all head to the TV room. Because it is time for "The Brave and the Sassy!"

As the group heads out. Clara whispers to Dolores:

    CLARA
    Just because we're old doesn't mean we like soap operas.

    DOLORES
    But we do like soap operas.

INT. TV ROOM - DAY

Clara, Dolores, and other RESIDENT WOMEN crowd around a run-down 26 inch TV. Morty sits in the very front and squints through his coke-bottle glasses to see the screen.

    CLARA
    Out of the way, shrimp.

    MORTY
    I can't see from back there.

    CLARA
    You're legally blind! You can't see from anywhere.

Morty moves back and takes a seat next to Dolores. He grins at her. She inches farther away.

Miles wheels in a cart with apples, oranges and grapes.

    MILES
    I've got snacks.

Everyone crowds around. Morty grabs an apple, and takes a huge bite. As he pulls the apple from his mouth, his dentures go with it.
MILES (CONT'D)
(RE: TV)
What'd I miss?

DOLORES
Vivian just told Max that Dr. Shavazo is the father of her baby and then slipped back into her coma.

Miles nods. He notices an empty chair.

MILES
Hey, anybody seen Edith?

CLARA
She had one of her breakdowns again. Threw her bedpan out the window. Won't take her meds.
(quickly, re: TV)
Quiet! It's back on.

They turn back to the TV and Miles sneaks out.

INT. NURSING HOME HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Miles knocks lightly on a patient's door.

MILES
Edith?

A petite NURSE walks by. Miles waits till she is gone, then knocks again.

MILES (CONT'D)
Edith.
(lowers his voice, raises an eyebrow)
It is I, Dr. Shavazo. I need to speak with you at once.

Miles waits a beat, then the door opens.

EDITH'S ROOM

Covered in floral designs and hand-made quilts, the room is warm and inviting. A stereotypical, adorable grandma, EDITH, moves back as Miles enters.

EDITH
Dr. Shavazo, if this is about the poison. I already know.

MILES
(in character)
You do?

She picks up a little paper cup that holds two pills.
EDITH
Of course. But this time I won't let them win.
(dramatic)
No. I won't let them win.

She throws her head back and LAUGHS dramatically. Miles pulls her close and whispers.

MILES
Listen to me, that's not poison.

EDITH
It's not?

MILES
No. It's an antidote for the virus you contracted when you were brainwashed by the evil Victor Malone.

Edith looks at the pills.

MILES (CONT'D)
If you want to live, take them now. Take them now, damn it!

Edith quickly swallows the pills and smiles.

INT. TV ROOM

Miles escorts a now calmed Edith to her seat.

MILES
Look who's joining us, everybody.

The others continue to watch the TV, not looking up.

DOLORES
(points to the screen)
Oh, Miles, this is the thing I was telling you about. Watch!

Miles turns his attention to the screen.

ON THE TELEVISION

Eric Winterstorm walks into frame and sits in a director's chair. The ten years since high school have been good to him... very, very good.

ERIC
Hi. I'm Eric Winterstorm, but you probably know me as Philip Malone from the daytime drama "The Brave and the Sassy."
TV ROOM
Dolores swoons.

DOLORES
He's so dreamy.

Miles pretends to busy himself with the snacks, but clearly he's watching.

ON THE TELEVISION
The promo continues:

ERIC
As you know, we have been searching the country far and wide for a new cast member. We have looked week after week for someone special, someone with pizazz, someone with raw talent. Now, I am pleased to announce that BS is hosting the last and final stage of the open casting call in my hometown at the Town Square Mall. So come on out, America, this is your last chance to be a star. Like me.

The SCREEN GOES BLACK.

TV ROOM
Miles throws down the remote.

DOLORES
I think you should audition, Miles. You're a wonderful actor.

MILES
But I've already got a job.
(corrects himself)
I got jobs that make me perfectly happy.

CLARA
I don't buy that enthusiasm for one second. What are you afraid of?

MORTY
Jell-O.

CLARA
Not you.

Just then, Patreese barges in.

PATRESESE
Miles, there's a call for you. It's about your sister.
Miles follows Patreese out.

INT. PRINCIPAL SMALLS' OFFICE - LATER

Miles sits next to Katie, her arms defiantly crossed across her chest.

MILES
Expelled?!

Behind a tall mahogany desk, an office chair swivels around to reveal Principal Smalls with a new toupee that's not fooling anyone.

PRINCIPAL SMALLS
I'm afraid so. Your sister was caught stealing another student's lunch. Again.

Miles turns to Katie.

MILES
Katie!

KATIE
What? I'm doing my part to cure America of teenage obesity. It truly is a silent epidemic.

PRINCIPAL SMALLS
That's enough, Miss Bradley.

MILES
Look, there has to be some other way we can resolve this...? I mean isn't there some sort of school community service she can do?

Principal Smalls plops from his seat and circles around to the front of the desk.

PRINCIPAL SMALLS
I'm sorry, Miles, but we have a strict three strikes policy here at Winbrook. And this is Katie's fifth. She can finish out the day, but that's it...

KATIE
But what about the softball tournament! The team needs me.

PRINCIPAL SMALLS
They'll have to compete without you.

MILES
(more to himself)
But I can't afford private school...
PRINCIPAL SMALLS
You're a resourceful man, Miles. I'm sure you'll think of something.

INT. WINBROOK HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY

Miles and Katie walk down the locker lined hallway.

    MILES
    What were you thinking?

    KATIE
    I was hungry.

    MILES
    But you get free lunch!

    KATIE
    I think I would know if I did.

    MILES
    Yes! I filled out the paperwork at the beginning of the school year. Didn't you hand it in?
    (off her look)
    Katie?! What have you been doing this whole year?

    KATIE
    Borrowing from rich kids.

Miles starts to pace.

    MILES
    What are we gonna do...? Benedict Prep is 30K a year...

    KATIE
    Who cares about the money? Their athletic department is crap.

Miles ignores, on his own track.

    MILES
    I'll have to get a third job...

    KATIE
    I hear hookin' is quite profitable.

    MILES
    Get to class. We are going to have a long... long talk when you get home.

    KATIE
    Okay, I'll start hookin'.
MILES

Go!

Katie dives into the nearby classroom.

INT. BARRY'S OFFICE - LATER

In a bright and breezy office, Miles sinks into a bean-bag chair across from his boss, BARRY. Barry flashes his glistening braces as he smiles from ear to ear.

MILES
Thanks for meeting with me, Barry.

BARRY
Hey, what did I say when I hired you, huh? Open door policy. Always. Except at four o'clock when I'm doing my yoga.

Barry bursts into LAUGHTER.

BARRY (CONT'D)
So, Miles, what can I do for you?

MILES
I was wondering if I could pick up some extra shifts. Money's pretty tight at home and I could really --

BARRY
Oh, Miles... I'd love to help you out, but you know the policy on office over-time. It's strictly forbidden here at Shady Acres.

MILES
And there's nothing you can do?

BARRY
You know what? There is something.

Barry pulls Miles into a hug.

BARRY (CONT'D)
How's that? Does that make it better?

Barry closes his eyes and hugs with all his might. Miles just takes it.

INT. MILES' APARTMENT - NIGHT

Miles sits on the couch surrounded by candles. He holds his cell phone to his ear and taps his foot impatiently.
MILES
Yes, hi. No, the power's still not on. Well, I know
you're saying it is, but trust me it isn't. Ma'am, I'm not
giving you attitude, it's just that my electricity is --

Suddenly, the lights FLICKER ON and the television snaps to LIFE.

MILES (CONT'D)
On. Thank you very much.

Miles hangs up and quickly blows out the candles.

MILES (CONT'D)
Katie, the power is on!

She pokes her head out from her bedroom.

KATIE
No shit, Sherlock. What about the water...? I really
gotta pee.

MILES
You'll have to go outside. Can't pay till I get my check
from the school.

KATIE
Maybe I should just...

MILES
Do not say drop out.

KATIE
Drop out and get a job.

MILES
We've been over this, Katie. You are going to stay in
school, then go to college and earn every degree a person
can earn, because you are going to have a better a life.

KATIE
What's so wrong with this life?

MILES
I just told you you have to pee outside.

Katie shrugs as Miles turns his attention to the TV.

MILES (CONT'D)
But I don't want you to worry, all right? I'll figure
something out.

ON THE TELEVISION
The BS promo plays again. Eric smiles at the camera.

ERIC
BS is hosting the last and final stage of the open casting call in my hometown at the Town Square Mall. So come on out, America, this is your last chance to be a star. Like me.

INT. MILES' APARTMENT

Miles scoffs and moves to turn off the TV. His hand is on the button, when he stops and looks at Eric's smiling face on the screen.

Miles stands back up, clearly mulling something over.

MILES (CONT'D)
Katie. Get your coat. We're going to the mall.

KATIE
We can't afford the water bill, but you want to go shopping. Real responsible, Miles.

She heads to her bedroom as Miles grins to himself.

INT. MALL FOOD COURT - NIGHT

Open on a mall food court. Amongst the fooderies, tables have been cleared away and a stage stands in the middle. A banner hangs above, it reads: "The Brave and the Sassy Talent Search!"

A small CROWD, consisting mainly of post-menopausal grandmas, has gathered around, waiting for the show to begin.

BACKSTAGE - CONTINUOUS

Miles, dressed to the nines in a tuxedo and top hat, stands amongst the pre-show hustle and bustle. Katie munches on bubble gum beside him.

Miles stares down the long line of hunky contestants, then turns to Katie.

MILES
I think I'm overdressed.

KATIE
You think?

Miles quickly takes off the top hat. A STAGE MANAGER, equipped with a head set and clip board, swings in and addresses the contestants.

STAGE MANAGER
All right, ladies and gentlemen. We're about to begin.

The contestants HOOP and HOLLER. Miles gulps nervously.
MILES
Oh, God, I think I'm going to be sick.

INT. STAGE - CONTINUOS

The MC, PERCY FITZGERALD, a gawky middle-aged man with glowing white teeth and strangely orange skin, struts out onto the stage. The audience CHEERS. Percy gleefully GIGGLES at the applause.

PERCY
Thank you. Thank you so much.

The applause dies down.

PERCY (CONT'D)
Ladies and gentlemen, I'm Percy Fitzgerald and welcome to the very first nation wide talent search for "The Brave and the Sassy!"

APPLAUSE breaks out again.

PERCY (CONT'D)
Now, as you know, we have searched far and wide for a new addition to the "BS" cast. And guess what America, we haven't had much luck. But I think that's going to change tonight, don't you?

The crowd CHEERS.

PERCY (CONT'D)
So let's not waste anymore time! Bring on the talent!

Percy sashays around the stage.

PERCY (CONT'D)
(calls o.c.)
Hey Paul - can you send Olivia out here, please?
(to audience)
That's right, America, Olivia Dullbrook is here tonight, in your hometown, to read opposite our wonderful contestants!

The crowd ERUPTS.

INT. BACKSTAGE

Miles stands frozen with Katie at his side.

MILES
Did he say Olivia Dullbrook?

Just than OLIVIA, a voluptuous blonde with perfectly quaffed hair and legs that go on for miles, squeezes through the contestants. She quickly hops on stage.
PERCY (O.S.)
There she is. Olivia Dullbrook, everybody.

MILES
That was Olivia Dullbrook.

KATIE
Yeah, I know. Now smarten up. You've got to nail this audition.

MILES
I thought you didn't want me to do this.

KATIE
Well... California's full of division one schools. Could be good for me.

MILES
(touched)
We're gonna do this.

KATIE
You're gonna do this.

MILES
I'm gonna do this.

KATIE
That's what I said.

Miles quickly takes off his coat jacket and bow tie. He hands them to Katie.

MILES
Why don't you go take a seat, Katie?
(a little too confident)
Enjoy the show.

Miles struts, chest puffed out, toward the stage. The stage manager looks at him.

MILES (CONT'D)
(with bravado)
I'm ready for my audition now.

He begins up the steps to the stage. The stage manager quickly stops him.

STAGE MANAGER
Sir. You have to wait your turn.

He points to the long, long line of contestants. Miles slightly deflated, nods and heads to the back.
INT. MALL FOOD COURT - LATER

Katie sits anxiously in the crowd, now wearing Miles hat, tie, and coat jacket.

STAGE

Percy excuses an obese man wearing coveralls, TROY.

    PERCY
    Thank you, Troy. That was... interesting. Who's next?

Troy sulks off one end of the stage and Miles enters from the other.

MALL FOOD COURT

Katie perks up in her seat. An ELDERLY GENTLEMAN slouches, passed out cold next her. She slaps him awake.

    KATIE
    Pay attention!

The gentleman, confused, jumps up.

STAGE

Miles approaches Percy with his lines in hand. Olivia smiles politely, Miles blushes.

    PERCY
    And what is your name?

Miles nervously takes the mic and places it far too close to his mouth. What comes out is breathy and almost inaudible.

    MILES
    Miles. Miles Bradley.

Percy takes the mic back.

    PERCY
    Okay, Giles. Action.

Miles nervously moves to the X on the stage and looks out at his sister in the audience.

MALL FOOD COURT

Katie gives Miles an anxious thumbs up.

STAGE

Miles takes a deep breath, gathers his strength, then looks up to Olivia. She smiles and nods for him to start.
MILES
Cassandra. It's me. I came back for you.

OLIVIA
(as Cassandra)
But you're... Dead. I saw my father push you off the pier.

MILES
Ha! Dead. How silly.

Miles dramatically throws his pages into the crowd, really getting into the scene.

MILES (CONT'D)
I have cheated death more times than I care to say.
(quickly)
Seven. Seven times I have cheated death. A bullet wound, car crash, wild jaguar, clone gone wrong, hospital mix-up, asphyxiation, and a cold.

OLIVIA
A cold?

MILES
It was a bad one.

She looks at him longingly.

OLIVIA
Oh, Philip.

MILES
Oh, Cassandra.

And with that, Olivia runs into his arms. He is about to kiss her when:

PERCY
Cut!

Olivia pulls back.

PERCY (CONT'D)
Fantastic, Giles! Really got my heart racing!

Miles pulls himself out of the moment, almost shocked. He looks out to Katie in the audience.

MALL FOOD COURT
Katie is on her chair, cheering like a nut.

KATIE
Woo! Miles!
She jumps down and continues to WHOOP and HOLLER directly in the face of the elderly man next to her.

STAGE - LATER

The competition has drawn to an end. Miles and a GQ-esque stud, COLT CASSIDY, stand anxiously next to Percy.

Percy addresses the crowd with an envelope in hand.

PERCY
Here we are, ladies and gentlemen. The judges have come to a decision!
(holds up an envelope)
I have here -- in my perfectly manicured hands -- the results of the first nation wide talent search for the hit daytime drama, "The Brave and the Sassy!"
(points to Miles/Colt)
One of these lucky contestants will win two tickets to sunny Los Angeles! A three night stay at the luxurious Hollywood Days Inn and a $20 gift certificate to my personal favorite, Denny's! But most importantly, the winner will become the newest cast member of --
(motions for the crowd to chime in)
"The Brave and The Sassy!"
(turns to Miles/Colt)
Are you ready, boys?

Miles nods nervously, while Colt smiles smug and winks out at the audience.

Percy opens the envelope.

PERCY (CONT'D)
And the winner is --

MALL FOOD COURT

Katie scrunches down to the floor, fingers crossed, eyes closed.

STAGE

IN SLOW MOTION... a drop of sweat beads down Mile's forehead. Colt bobs his head back and forth confidently.

PERCY (CONT'D)
(slo-mo)
Miles Bradley!

Still in SLOW-MO, Miles lets out a SCREAM - a little too girly, but he doesn't care. He jumps up and down, grabbing confused Colt by the hands and taking him with him.

MALL FOOD COURT
In SLOW MOTION, Katie excitedly WAILS and throws Miles coat into the crowd, knocking over a SMALL BOY.

STAGE

Out of SLOW MOTION. Miles stops screaming and jumping. He realizes everyone is staring at him. Embarrassed, he lightly pumps his fist.

MILES

Yay!

He slinks off the stage.

INT. RECREATION ROOM - NEXT DAY

Festive balloons and streamers decorate the room. A champagne bottle POPS and glasses are poured.

Miles, Clara, and Dolores stand around a half eaten face-cake of Miles. Morty slurps two glasses of champagne behind them. Other PATIENTS mingle about.

Katie and three of her FRIENDS (SHANNON, MANDY, and ALISSA) are huddled together in the background, making balloons out of latex gloves.

DOLORES
We are so proud of you, Miles. You're going to be a real star. Just like my dear friend Frank Sinatra.

CLARA
Oh, you never met Frank Sinatra.

DOLORES
I did! We were the best of friends growing up.

CLARA
Right...
(turns to Miles)
Anyway, kid, we're really gonna miss you.

MILES
I'm gonna miss you guys, too.

Behind them, Morty has made his way to the window. He opens it just enough to stick his bare behind out, and he moons the building across the street.

MORTY
Ha ha! Feast your eyes on this, people across the street!

EXT. BUILDING ACROSS THE STREET

A few OFFICE EMPLOYEES GASP from inside the office building. A WOMAN covers her SON'S eyes.
INT. RECREATION ROOM

Morty continues to shake his toosh.

    MORTY
    Woo, I am so wasted.

    MILES
    (lifts his glass)
    Morty, this is sparkling grape juice. You're not even a little wasted.

Morty embarrassed pulls his pants up and moves away from the window.

    CLARA
    (to Miles)
    You sure you're gonna miss this?

Miles takes a bite of his cake and looks over at Katie. Clara notices:

    CLARA (CONT'D)
    Don't worry. Katie's gonna love it. You're going to Hollywood! What fifteen year old wouldn't want that?

As Miles watches Katie laugh with her friends...

EXT. LAX - DAY

An airplane skids to a stop on one of the many busy LAX runways.

INT. LAX BAGGAGE CLAIM - DAY

Katie sprints down the busy, fluorescent hallway to the baggage claim. She wears oversized headphones, sunglasses, and PJ's. Miles trails behind pulling two roll-away bags.

Katie excitedly jumps up and down as she finds a man, BRUCE, in a trucker hat and bomber jacket, holding a sign that reads: MILES BRADLEY.

    KATIE
    Miles! They got us a limo!

EXT. LAX PARKING STRUCTURE - LATER

Miles and Katie excitedly follow Bruce through the maze of cars. Bruce marches impatiently forward, and stops in front of a RED SHUTTLE VAN parked haphazardly, taking up two spots.

Inside the van, are several other passengers. A SMALL ASIAN FAMILY, two babbling TEENAGE GIRLS and an OBESE MAN.

    KATIE
    This is our ride?
BRUCE
Yep. Now, get in.

Bruce takes their bags and throws them a little too hard into the trunk. Miles and Katie exchange a worried look.

EXT. NETWORK BUILDING - LATER

The shuttle van screeches up, the front tires drive onto the curb, and they come to an abrupt stop.

The back-seat door swings open and Miles and Katie poke their heads out. They stop for a moment to admire the glistening skyscraper.

MILES
This is it, Katie. This is where our dreams come --

BRUCE
Get out of my van.

Bruce slams their bags down on the sidewalk and stalks back to the driver's side.

MILES
Okay.

Miles and Katie pop out. The van immediately speeds off.

INT. UPSCALE LOBBY - LATER

A sleek and sophisticated entry. Clean lines. Modern paintings. Emmys on display. It screams pretentious LA, but to Miles and Katie, it's just plain fancy.

KATIE
Miles, I think I've died and gone to office building heaven.

Miles beams as they approach the receptionist, AMBER, fresh out of college, and texting away.

MILES
Excuse me, I'm here to see Mr. Myrick.

Amber doesn't look up from her phone.

AMBER
Just... one... second...
(finally looks up)
Okay... What did you say?

INT. ED'S OFFICE - LATER

Amber shows Miles into the Executive Producer's office. The room is elegant with a grand LCD TV plastered to the wall, and work-out equipment in the corner.
The office appears empty. Miles takes a seat.

Behind a door, Miles hears painful GRUNTING.

    MILES
    Hello?

There is a quick CLEAR OF THE THROAT, then the whoosh of a TOILET FLUSHING. The door swings open to reveal, ED, a gruff, no-nonsense type of man.

Without a word, Ed plops down into his plush leather office chair. He presses a button on his intercom.

    ED
    Amber, get me my bananas.

Amber GROANS on the other end.

    ED (CONT'D)
    So. You're the new guy?

    MILES
    I'm Miles Bra--

    ED
    Walk with me.

    MILES
    Okay...

Miles hops to his feet, and heads for the door, but stops when he realizes Ed isn't following him. Instead, he's powering up a treadmill.

    ED
    What are you, a slow learner? Get over here.

Unsure what to do, Miles marches in place next to Ed.

    ED (CONT'D)
    Miles, I'm sure you've heard the rumors about the slow and inevitable death of soap operas.

    MILES
    No... I hadn't, but --

    ED
    Well, even if you had. It's not true. BS is thriving.
    (re: walking)
    Faster.

Miles moves his legs faster.
MILES
Really? So the ratings are good?

ED
I didn't say that. Now. First things first, we're gonna get your contract signed, then we'll get you on set. You're gonna love it there - it's beautiful, state of the art. Next step - stardom, baby.

MILES
(out of breath)
I can't wait.

Miles spots a picture of Ed and his kids. Ed catches him looking.

ED
If you got a thing for kids, this isn't gonna work. Last time we got in a whole lotta trouble.

MILES
What? No, no! I take care of my sister, I was just wondering if it's too early to enroll her in school.

ED
Too early? It's March.

MILES
No... I mean... I want to make sure things are looking good here before I --

Just then, Amber enters with a bundle of bananas. Ed grabs one, munches away without removing the peel.

ED
Amber, call my kid's school. Get Miles' sister enrolled for Monday.
   (quick, to Miles)
It's a great school. She'll love it. Beautiful.

MILES
Is it... expensive?

ED
What do you care? You're a star now, kid. You're swimming in dough.

A sweat bead drops.

MILES
Well, thank you... that means a lot.
ED
(winks)
Anything for my cast. Now, I want you to get out of here. Enjoy the sites, and we'll see you on set bright and early Monday morning.

MILES
Can't wait.

Miles heads for the door, when:

ED
Oh, and Miles. Loose the gut.

INT. MILES' HOTEL ROOM - DAYS LATER, NIGHT

In a generic hotel room, lit up by a flashing cop car outside, Katie and Miles collapse into their side by side queen beds.

Miles is decked out in LA tourist gear - an "I HEART LA" shirt, a Hollywood baseball cap, and he holds a fake Oscar with the label: Best Brother.

MILES
Hollywood isn't as glamorous as I thought it would be.

KATIE
Yeah... I don't remember reading, "covered in dirt," in the brochure.

MILES
Look, I know it's not quite what we expected, but according to my boss, your school is the finest in the county.

The sounds of a FIGHTING COUPLE come from the room next door.

MILES (CONT'D)
And it's nowhere near here. You're going to love it.
(imitates Ed)
It's beautiful.

Katie laughs.

MILES (CONT'D)
Seriously though, are you nervous?

Katie shakes her head.

MILES (CONT'D)
I mean, you've had the same friends since you were little. Never moved before. It's going to be a big--
KATIE
Are you trying to make me nervous?

MILES
Just want to make sure you're prepared.

KATIE
I'm a big girl. I'll be fine.

(beat)
Are you nervous for your first day?

MILES
(scoffs)
I feel like my insides are dying.

KATIE
But you did it, Miles. You finally made it to Hollywood!

MILES
You're right. What am I saying? This is it, Katie. We
have officially started a better life.

GUN SHOTS outside, followed by a SCREAM.

MILES (CONT'D)
I'm just gonna move the dresser in front the door.

Katie nods in agreement.

EXT. STUDIO LOT - NEXT DAY

Miles steps out of a taxi cab, all smiles. His smile fades when he sees the lot before him...
it's nothing like the ones in the movies. It's run down and small. Really small.

EXT. CHAPLIN ACADEMY - DAY

Katie steps out of a Mercedes school bus. She pauses in front of the glamorous school. It
is exactly like the ones in the movies. She takes a deep breath and heads for the entrance.

INT. STUDIO HALLWAY - DAY

Miles inches his way down a dark and dingy hallway. Portraits of past actors line the walls,
while the current CÅST meander about, popping in and out of rooms. A TOPLESS actor
passes Miles.

MILES
Hey.

The actor flexes.

TOPLESS ACTOR
'Sup.
Miles passes by the make-up room. He peeks in...

MAKE-UP ROOM

The glow of the light bulb lined mirrors is dim - every other bulb busted.

Olivia, the beautiful actress from before, chats with CHANTEL, the too-cool make-up artist.

OLIVIA
No, no, no, I told them light lights, not medium-light lights.

CHANTEL
That is so sad.

Olivia looks up and catches Miles peeking in.

OLIVIA
(peeved)
Um, the extras holding room is in the dungeon.

MILES
I'm sorry, what?

OLIVIA
Extras go downstairs.

MILES
Oh, no, I'm not an extra. It's me, Miles. We met a few weeks ago... at the talent search.

She looks at him wide-eyed, then turns to Chantel. Chantel nods and shuts the make-up room door - right in Miles face.

MILES (CONT'D)
(to himself)
What the hell is this place?

Just then a crackling VOICE booms from the overhead PA.

VOICE (O.S.)
We're approaching scene five, people. Eric Winterstorm and Miles Bradley to stage 5.

Miles looks around: where the hell is stage 5?

INT. CHAPLIN ACADEMY MAIN OFFICE - DAY

Katie looks over a list of classes in the posh office. An impatient RECEPTIONIST taps a pen, waiting for Katie to exit.
RECEPTIONIST
Miss, you really must skedaddle if you're going to make it to homeroom on time.

KATIE
This has to be some sort of mistake.  
(re: class list)
Period one, Opera Appreciation.  Period two, Jazz Hands.  Period three, A Day in the Life of a Mime?

RECEPTIONIST
Excellent class.  You're very lucky we got you in.

KATIE
What the hell kind of school is this?

RECEPTIONIST
The kind that doesn't tolerate potty-mouthed children.

The receptionist produces a large mason jar labeled, "Swear Jar."

RECEPTIONIST (CONT'D)
Now, reach inside and pick a punishment.

Katie does and pulls out a piece of paper.

KATIE
(reads paper)
Donate one good thought to the Good Thoughts Fund.

RECEPTIONIST
Well?

Katie weirded out, closes her eyes and thinks of a good thought.

KATIE
Good thought out there.  
(quick)
But seriously, what kind of school is this?

The receptionist gestures dramatically with her arms.

RECEPTIONIST
Only the finest institution around - Chaplin Academy - Academy of the arts.

KATIE
(to herself)
You've gotta be shittin' me...

The receptionist clears her throat and thrusts the swear jar at Katie again.  Katie rolls her eyes and reaches in.
INT. STAGE FIVE - DAY

The stage is lined with set after cheap-looking set, three bulky television cameras, boom mics, blinding lights, and several exhausted looking CREW MEMBERS.

One camera operator, ARTIE, puffs on a cigarette. The STAGE MANAGER glares at him.

    STAGE MANAGER
    (re: cigarette)
    How many times do I have to tell you?

    ARTIE
    Sorry.

Artie stubs the cigarette out on his camera.

Miles enters, open-mouthed. This is not what he imagined. The stage manager approaches.

    STAGE MANAGER
    Miles?

    MILES
    Uh huh.

    STAGE MANAGER
    You ready for your scene?

    MILES
    I think there's been some sort of mistake. I just got here. I haven't even been to hair and make-up--

    (coughs, re: hairspray/powder)
    But I haven't--

    STAGE MANAGER
    (cuts in)
    Denise! Franz!

A petite, pear of woman with horrendous make-up, DENISE, and ultra modern gay man, FRANZ, race over.

Denise dusts Miles with powder, clearly a shade too light, and Franz shellacs Miles hair back with an endless mist of hairspray.

    MILES
    I'm sorry, but --
    (cough, re: hairspray/powder)
    But I haven't--
    (coughs, to Denise and Franz)
    Could you give me a minute?

Denise and Franz stop.

    DENISE
    I was done anyway.
Franz spritzes one last time and hurries off.

STAGE MANAGER
You look great.

He does not.

STAGE MANAGER (CONT'D)
Ready for your scene?

MILES
I'm sorry, but I didn't get any scripts. I don't even know what scene you're talking about.

The stage manager thrusts a script at him.

STAGE MANAGER
You've got five minutes.

Miles wide-eyed scours the page.

ERIC (O.S.)
What's the hold up?!

Miles takes his eyes off the page, recognizing the voice. He turns to see Eric Winterstorm in all his glory - perfectly made up, hair delicately quaffed, his muscles gleaming under the lights.

STAGE MANAGER
New guy's not prepared.

Not about to be bestest in front of Eric:

MILES
Prepared, shmared. Let's do this thing!

Miles races to the PIER SET (lots of wood and barrels), where Eric stands.

MILES (CONT'D)
Hey, Eric. Long time, no see.

ERIC
Yes, considering I've never seen you before.

MILES
It's me. Miles Bradley. We went to high school together... we were both did theater... I took your sister to the prom?

ERIC
Not ringing a bell.
STAGE MANAGER
All right, ladies, you ready?

Miles nervously eyes the page again, then notices a beautiful woman, LAURA, approaching the set. She whispers something in the stage manager's ear.

STAGE MANAGER (CONT'D)
Okay, people, the network rented out the studio again, we need to be out of here by 5. Now let's get rolling.

Laura smiles at Miles as she disappears from the stage.

ERIC
You know what, I do remember you. You're the janitor, right? That's right. You were there when they dedicated the school theater in my name.

Off Miles' embarrassment...

INT. CHAPLIN ACADEMY CLASSROOM - DAY
A group of enthused TEENAGERS mime imaginary boxes around them, while a silent TEACHER walks around critiquing them.

Katie half-heartedly feels for the imaginary box. The teacher manually corrects Katie's movement.

Finally, the bell RINGS. Katie drops her arms in relief.

TEACHER
And that's lunch. Great work, everybody.

Katie breaks for the door, and whispers to the group of girls next to her: MAKENZIE, MADISON, and SKYLAR - all pretty, and all stuck up.

KATIE
Talk about an easy A.

MAKENZIE
With those spaghetti arms, you'll be lucky if you pass.

The other girls snicker as they move off.

EXT. CHAPLIN ACADEMY COURTYARD - LATER
Katie cautiously moves into the grassy outdoor eating area. Clicks of kids sit together under trees, at tables, on the stairs. Katie looks around, unsure where she fits in.

But then she spots them! A group of TEENS dressed in athletic clothing sitting under a shady tree. As she joins their circle:

KATIE
Oh, thank God. I was worried I was the only one.
GIRL
Excuse me?

KATIE
An athlete! I was starting to feel outnumbered by these artsy freaks. What sport do you play?

GIRL
Um, the sport of theater.

SNOTTY BOY
(to Katie)
You might want to watch your tone when you're talking to us... we're the chorus line.

KATIE
In those clothes?

GIRL
Rebecca Romaine formally Stamos, do you not listen?

She gestures to a billboard that reads: Chaplin Academy presents a musical rendition of "A League of Our Own."

KATIE
Oh.

The group of teens grab their food and go.

KATIE (CONT'D)
(calls after them)
Good luck with your... play...

As she sadly takes a bite from her sandwich...

EXT. PIER/ INT. STAGE 5 - NIGHT

We are suddenly transported to the world of "The Brave and the Sassy." Eric, as Philip, struts onto the windy pier, looking behind him every few seconds. He stops, calls out:

ERIC
(as Philip)
This is ridiculous, I know you're following me!

Silence.

ERIC (CONT'D)
Come out, damn it, and face me like a man!

There is a light RUSTLE of movement from behind a crate, and out pops Miles, looking mysterious.
MILES
(as Marco)
Hello, brother.

ERIC
Marco...? You're... alive!

Eric rushes to Miles and pulls him into a hug, when suddenly... a unseen light POPS. Miles, now in the shadow, looks off camera.

The stage manager motions for Miles and Eric to keep going.

Miles thrown, tries to stay in the light.

ERIC (CONT'D)
You must tell me how it's possible that you're standing before me?

Eric circles Miles, so that Miles has to stand in the shadow. They begin to dance around each other, both avoiding the darkness.

MILES
A story for another time perhaps.

ERIC
I understand.
(puts Miles in shadow)
So. What are your plans... now that you're back with the living?

Miles laughs dramatically, moves into the light.

MILES
Pick up where I left off I guess.

He stares off toward the camera. Long beat.

MILES (CONT'D)
I'm going to get Cassie back, Philip.

ERIC
Marco, there's something I need to tell you...

Eric moves close - really, really close.

ERIC (CONT'D)
Cassie is my wife.

MILES
Oh, brother... (dark)
I already know.
Miles moves to circle Eric, but Eric sticks out his foot and trips him.

But much to Eric's surprise, Miles spins around and pulls Eric down to the ground with him.

They both GROAN as they hit. On the break:

MILES (CONT'D)
I go down, you go down. Remember, brother?

They glare at each other.

STAGE MANAGER (O.S.)
And cut!

Miles and Eric scramble to their feet.

STAGE MANAGER (CONT'D)
Really great stuff, guys.

MILES
But the light went out mid-scene.

STAGE MANAGER
Yeah, we'll fix it in post. Use some sort of special effect.

MILES
(impressed)
Really?

STAGE MANAGER
No.

The stage manager marches off.

STAGE MANAGER (CONT'D)
That's a five, people!

MILES
Hey, Eric --

He turns to find Eric long gone.

INT. COMMISSARY - LATER

Miles forks at a sad, little salad as he spots Eric sitting alone at a table across the commissary. He sighs, and stands.

ERIC'S TABLE...

Miles approaches as Eric crosses out a line in a script.
ERIC
Max!

MILES
Miles.

ERIC
Close enough.

MILES
So... this is pretty exciting, huh? The two of us acting together again.

ERIC
For you, I'm sure.

Miles bites his tongue.

MILES
Listen, I know what's going on here. This whole, I don't remember you act. And I get it. I wasn't your biggest fan in high school either.

Eric stares at him blankly.

MILES (CONT'D)
...But if it's okay with you, I'd really like to put the past behind us... and start anew.

ERIC
I see what's happening, but I'm sorry, Miles, I'm not gay.

MILES
What?! No, no. Me neither.
(over-macho)
I totally like women. Love boobs. Boobies! Am I right?

Awkward.

MILES (CONT'D)
Um... anyway, would you like to grab a beer or something?

Eric looks at Miles' belly.

ERIC
Beer is that last thing you need.
Eric quickly scribbles an address on a piece of paper.

ERIC (CONT'D)
I'll tell you what. Meet me at my gym, 8 PM. We'll kill one bird with two stones.

MILES
Two birds. One stone.

Eric looks at him as if he has two heads.

MILES (CONT'D)
Okay, great. See you there.

INT. MILES AND KATIE'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Miles, in work-out clothes, looks himself up and down in the mirror. Katie slams in, throwing her book bag on the bed.

MILES
So it went well, huh?

KATIE
Miles, that place is a nightmare! Literally, it is my worst nightmare come true. (re: Miles' outfit) Why are you dressed like Olivia Newton John?

He quickly pulls off his sweat head-band.

MILES
Come on, it couldn't have been that bad.

KATIE
In my fifth period class, we spent an hour discussing the importance of diction.

MILES
It's very important, that's true.

KATIE
Miles, please don't make me go back there.

MILES
Look, first days are rough. Remember your first day at soccer camp? You called me crying thirty minutes after I dropped you off.

KATIE
I wasn't crying. It was allergies season.
MILES
But by the end of the summer I had to drag you to the car, you loved it so much. The point is, it'll get better. I promise.

KATIE
And if it doesn't?

MILES
We'll figure something out. Just give it another shot. For me?

KATIE
Oh, all right.
(re: outfit)
So. Is there a Flashdance convention in town?

MILES
Ha ha, very funny. For your information, I'm going to the gym.

KATIE
Without supervision?

MILES
Not exactly. I'm meeting Eric there.

KATIE
Eric from high school rival, Eric?

MILES
Yeah. You wanna come?

KATIE
Oh, no. I've had enough embarrassment for one day. You have fun.

Miles takes one last look in the mirror. He flexes his muscles.

EXT. WORK ME OUT GYM - NIGHT

A structure that exudes everything a gym should be - strength, beauty, and a whole lot of money.

INT. WORK ME OUT GYM

Muscles, muscles everywhere. These people don't sweat, they glisten.

Miles enters, completely out of place. He approaches the main desk and a BUBBLY TRAINER greets him.
BUBBLY TRAINER
Hello, sir. Welcome to Work Me Out. How can I help you today?

MILES
I'd like to... work out.

BUBBLY TRAINER
Okay. If you're not a member, a day pass is $55.00. But if you're interested, and you should be, we can set you up with a wonderful membership counselor and get you enrolled today!

MILES
(low)
How much, roundabouts, does a membership cost?

BUBBLY TRAINER
(whispers)
Sir, if you have to ask, then you probably can't afford it.

MILES
Right.

Just then, Eric slaps him on the shoulder.

BUBBLY TRAINER
Mr. Winterstorm. Good to see you again.

ERIC
(to Miles)
Ready to rock?

MILES
Actually --

ERIC
It's the money, isn't it?
(Miles look confirms)
Don't worry. Today's session is on me.

Eric heads in toward the machines.

ERIC (CONT'D)
Now, come on. Let's break a sweat.

Miles watches Eric head off. Maybe he's not such a bad guy after all.

TREADMILL STATION
Eric and Miles jump on side-by-side treadmills. They start out with a light jog.
MILES
This isn't so bad.

ERIC
You'll never get your burn at that rate.

Eric ups his speed. He's like a gazelle. Miles ups his... not quite so graceful.

ERIC (CONT'D)
Run like you're chasing a cheeseburger!

Miles pants, but keeps up. Eric ups his a couple more notches. Miles, eyes wide, does the same. He's not gonna let this beat him.

To his surprise, he's keeping up. But before the smile can spread across his face, he looses his footing and goes flying.

BENCH PRESS...

Miles pumps the heavy bar high above his head. He sits up, confident, and peeks over at Eric on a nearby bench. Eric easily presses double the weight.

Not about to be bested, Miles adds more weight. He leans back, and lifts... and lifts some more... but the bar's not going anywhere.

PULL-UP BAR....

Eric, like GI Joe, pulls himself up over and over again.

Miles manages to get up once, but he doesn't dare drop. He hugs the bar. Suddenly, he looses his grip and tumbles to the mat below.

Miles struggles to catch his breath, when something catches his attention. He smiles...

MILES' POV - a dance class.

INT. DANCE STUDIO - MOMENTS LATER

Miles is the star of the dance class, moving to the rhythm like a natural. Eric stumbles wildly in the back; he can't keep up.

As the CLASS cheers Miles on, Eric storms out.

INT. STEAM ROOM - LATER

A triumphant Miles reclines in his sweat. Eric glowers.

MILES
Great work-out. You've got some moves, soap star.

Eric jumps to his feet, and heads for the exit.
ERIC
I'll see you at the studio.

INT. WORK ME OUT GYM - LATER

Freshly showered, Miles heads for exit when the bubbly trainer stops him.

BUBBLY TRAINER
Sir! You forgot to pay your bill.

MILES
Mr. Winterstorm didn't...?

He already knows the answer and whips out his check book.

MILES (CONT'D)
Can you wait till Friday to cash this?

EXT. FROZEN YOGURT SHOP - LATER

Miles sits at a picnic table, munching on a small frozen yogurt.

LAURA (O.S.)
Miles?

He turns around to see Laura with a frozen yogurt of her own.

MILES
Hey, I know you. I saw you on set today.

Laura offers him her hand and Miles takes it.

LAURA
I'm Laura.

MILES
Care to join me, Laura?

She smiles and takes a seat next to him.

MILES (CONT'D)
So what do you do on the show?

LAURA
I'm an associate producer.

MILES
Sounds important.

LAURA
Let's just say it's a lot of work for little money, and little respect.
Miles nods, takes a bite.

MILES
I am very familiar with that feeling.

LAURA
So. How was your first day?

MILES
Honestly? It was not what I expected.

LAURA
You mean you expected it to be a clean and happy environment?

MILES
(laughs)
Something like that.

LAURA
Yeah, well, it used to be a great show, but with all the budget cuts and downgrades... it really has fallen apart.

Laura scrapes the bottom of her yogurt.

LAURA (CONT'D)
Well, I'll all out.

MILES
Me too. Sadly, the small is actually very small.

LAURA
Hey, would you wanna get a drink? I know this great bar down the street.

MILES
I would love to, but... I don't drink...

LAURA
Please don't tell me you're a Mormon, because I have had some --

MILES
No, no, nothing like that.

LAURA
Ooo, I sense a juicy story. Come on, spill.

MILES
It'll bore you.
LAURA
I'm all ears, Davis.
(off his look)
Miles. Davis. Nevermind. Tell me your story.

MILES
Well, basically... a few years back I started drinking a little too much and I almost lost custody of Katie... That was enough to straighten me up and I haven't touched a drop since then.

LAURA
Wow.

MILES
Told you it was boring.

LAURA
Not boring, surprising.
(smiles)
In a good way.

ON their shared smile.

EXT. ERIC'S BACHELOR PAD - NIGHT
A hillside home with floor to ceiling windows glows against the dark, smoggy Hollywood sky.

INT. ERIC'S BACHELOR PAD - NIGHT
Sappy MUSIC belts from stereo system as Eric, in a velvet robe, pours himself a glass of wine. Wine in one hand, and high school yearbook in another, he stumbles to the ultra-modern, ultra-masculine couch.

Eric mouths the lyrics of the song as he flips through the year book. He stops on a page, and glares at its contents.

ERIC'S POV...
Miles' senior portrait with devil horns and pitchfork drawn in. Eric trails his finger around Miles' face.

The phone RINGS. Startled, Eric slams the yearbook shut, grabs a nearby remote, and quiets the music.

ERIC
(into the phone, oober macho)
Eric Winterstorm.

GORDAN
Eric, baby, it's me!
Eric instantly perks up.

INT. GORDON'S MERCEDES - CONTINUOUS
A real sleazy suit-type, GORDAN, cruises down the PCH.

ERIC
Tell me you have good news.

GORDAN
Not good news, Eric. Fuckin' great news! You got the part!

Eric leaps to his feet.

ERIC
No way!

GORDAN
(movie voice)
Soon to a theater near you, Eric Winterstorm in Saw VIII!

ERIC
I can't believe this.

GORDAN
Believe it, baby. There's only one catch... I can't get you out of your contract at BS.

ERIC
What?! Is that legal?

GORDAN
It's hard to tell. So. Looks like you either gotta get fired, or the shows gotta get canceled for you to take this gig.

Eric looks at a hanging portrait of himself on the wall.

ERIC
Gordan. Call the Saw people. Tell them Eric Winterstorm is on board.

INT. MAKE-UP ROOM - NEXT DAY
Chantel dusts Miles' face with powder, while Miles rereads his lines.

CHANTEL
Your face is so... oily.
MILES
Thanks.

CHANTEL
It wasn't a compliment.

MILES
Yeah, I got that.

Just then, Laura pokes her head in.

LAURA
Hey. You ready?

Miles nods, and follows her out.

MILES
Laura, have you read this script? It's --

LAURA
Awful, I know. More budget cuts. We only have room for two writers, which as you can tell... is not enough.

MILES
They misspelled cat.

LAURA
Do what you can to make it work.

Just then, Eric stumbles in with a five o'clock shadow, and yesterday's clothes.

ERIC
(slurs)
Don't worry, people... the star... has arrived!

LAURA
(re: his smell)
Oh, God...

MILES
Eric, buddy, did you have too many mimosas at breakfast?

ERIC
Wouldn't you like to know!

Miles wraps an arm around him.

MILES
Okay, let's get you to your dressing room.

ERIC
Don't touch me! I can do it myself.
Eric stumbles off down the hall.

    LAURA
    (to Miles)
    Great! Now we have to reschedule all his scenes!

Miles looks at his script, then back at Laura.

    MILES
    Maybe not... You got a pen? I've got an idea.

INT. STAGE FIVE, BAR SET - LATER

Under the bright lights, Miles (in character) heads for the bar of a sleazy joint. Olivia (also in character) tries desperately to rouse unconscious Eric.

    OLIVIA
    Philip! Philip, wake up!
    (cries)
    Please?

Miles rushes to her side.

    MILES
    Cassandra...

    OLIVIA
    (in tears)
    He relapsed, Marco! After years of sobriety... he finally slipped.

Eric wakes up, tries to interrupt.

    ERIC
    You're Dr--

    MILES
    (hand in his face)
    Shhhhh! Just rest.
    (to Olivia)
    Don't worry. I'll get him home. You head to the hospital. Your father needs you.

Olivia nods, tearful.

    OLIVIA
    I'll make it up to you, Marco. I promise.

    MILES
    Oh, Cassandra... just being here... You already have.

They lock eyes for a very, very long beat and...
STAGE MANAGER

Cut!

They break character.

OLIVIA

Nice work, new guy.

She winks at him and struts off. Laura runs up.

LAURA

Miles! You saved us!

MILES

Just a little rewrite, that's all.

LAURA

Well, thank you.

Just then, Eric falls from his seat in the background.

ERIC

(moans from the ground)
Can someone get me my teddy...?

MILES

(to Laura)
Do you think he means bear... or nightgown?

LAURA

I don't wanna know.

The stage manager approaches.

STAGE MANAGER

Miles. Call for you. You got five minutes.

INT. STUDIO HALLWAY - LATER

Miles picks up the bright red hallway phone.

MILES

Hello?

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. JANITOR'S CLOSET - CONTINUOUS

Stuffed between a bucket and a mop, Katie urgently whispers into her cell phone.

KATIE

Miles. I need you to call me out sick.
MILES
What's the matter? You all right?

KATIE
No. I'm not all right. I'm surrounded by airheads. I swear, if someone asks me to express myself one more time --

MILES
Katie, I'm not pulling you out of school because you don't want to express yourself. What happened to giving it a shot?

KATIE
I gave it a shot and I'm drawing blanks. This place is mental.

The stage manager pops out.

STAGE MANAGER
I said five minutes!

MILES
It's been two...
(into phone)
Look, Katie, I gotta go. We'll talk about this later, okay?

KATIE
But Miles --

It's too late. He's gone. STAY with Katie as the door swings open and a startled JANITOR looks down at her. She hands him a mop.

KATIE (CONT'D)
Mop?

INT. CHAPLIN ACADEMY CLASSROOM - LATER

Katie stands at the front of the class, looking miserable as she reads off a sheet of paper. A HIPPY TEACHER listens intently. Makenzie, Madison, and Skylar pass notes in the back.

KATIE
I like the color blue and I'm a Sagittarius.
(lowers the paper)
That's it.
HIPPY TEACHER
Now, come on, Katie. I know, and I think you know, that that's not it. Tell me who you are... not what you like. If you can't express yourself in Feelings 101, where can you?

Katie shaking with an inner anger, snaps.

KATIE
Fine. I'm Katie. I moved to this crap-hole place because of my stupid brother. All because he got a stupid role on a stupid soap opera. And I think all of you are fake and phony, and I don't care about the arts - I don't care about feelings. Feelings are for wimps.
(to teacher)
You're a wimp!

Katie freezes, realizing she's gone too far.

HIPPY TEACHER
Well, Katie... that... was... wonderful!

The teacher picks up her grade book, and scribbles inside.

HIPPY TEACHER (CONT'D)
Double smiley face for you!

The bell RINGS and students run for the door, including Katie.

INT. CHAPLIN ACADEMY HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS
Katie escapes and heads for her locker. As she enters her combination:

MAKENZIE (O.S.)
Hey, Katie.

Katie turns to see she's been cornered by Makenzie, Madison, and Skylar.

KATIE
Ah!

MADISON
We liked your speech.

SKYLAR
Yeah, super moving.

KATIE
It wasn't really a speech...

MAKENZIE
But you were totally right, everyone here is so fake. Like Barbie fake.
Madison and Skylar bob their heads in agreement.

MAKENZIE (CONT'D)
So what soap is your brother on?

Katie backs up against her locker, uncomfortable with their intense closeness.

KATIE
Uh... The Brave and The Sassy.

SKYLAR
OMG, that's my fave.

MAKENZIE
You think he could get me an audition?

KATIE
I don't know... he just started.

MAKENZIE
Oh, come on, Katie, don't be such a skeeze. Get me a part.

KATIE
What?

MAKENZIE
You'll regret it if you don't.

Not a pushover, Katie steps forward and slams her locker.

KATIE
I'm sorry, Makenzie, but I only do favors for my friends.

With that she walks off, the tribe of girls watch her go...

SKYLAR
Guess you don't do any favors then.

MAKENZIE
Shut up, Skylar.

Skylar instantly clams up.

INT. STAGE FIVE - DAY

A buff MALE EXTRA schmoozes with Miles between takes. The rest of the crew slum it.

MALE EXTRA
Honestly, I did a thousand chin ups last night. No joke.
MILES
Cool...

Miles notices Laura enter. She looks distraught.

MILES (CONT'D)
(to extra)
Excuse me.

MALE EXTRA
No prob, dude.

Miles approaches Laura.

MILES
Everything all right?

She shakes her head, "no."

LAURA
Excuse me, everyone. I have an announcement to make.

The crew mumbles and grumbles as they gather up around her. Chantel skips up next to Miles. A hungover Eric slouches in the background.

LAURA (CONT'D)
I just got a call from Ed. Apparently... Network will be coming to set in three weeks.

There are GASPS and SIGHS all around.

CHANTEL
Oh, God!

MILES
(to Chantel)
What? What's wrong?

CHANTEL
What's wrong?! Network never comes to set... It can only mean one thing...
(big sob)
We're getting canceled!

This hits Miles like a ton of bricks.

MILES
Canceled... but I just got here.

Laura to the group, as whimpers and whispers spread like wildfire.
LAURA
Look, I know what you're thinking, but cancellation is not the only possibility here.

STAGE MANAGER
Yeah, right! We're done for!

CAMERA MAN
We're screwed!

The crew and cast disperse... Miles notices Eric sneaking off with an unusually bright smile on his face.

INT. DRESSING ROOM HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Eric pulls out his cell phone and dials.

ERIC
(into phone)
Hey, Gordan it's me. Listen, I have the best news. The show's been canceled. Yeah! Get the contracts ready because I am as good as Sawed.
(beat)

REVEAL Miles around the corner, having heard every word. Suddenly, lightbulb! He's got an idea.

INT. CHAPLIN ACADEMY CLASSROOM - DAY

Katie fights to keep her eyes open as MR. BROWN drones on at the front of the class.

MR. BROWN
So Hamlet said, "listen, lady, that's my father you're talking about..."

VOICE FROM THE INTERCOM (O.S.)
Excuse Mr. Brown?

MR. BROWN
Yes?

VOICE FROM THE INTERCOM (O.S.)
Could you send Katie Bradley to the principal's office, please?

Katie snaps to attention.

MR. BROWN
She'll be right there.

KATIE
What did I do?
INT. PRINCIPAL PARKER'S OFFICE - DAY

Katie hesitantly enters to find a tearful Makenzie with a black eye seated in front of PRINCIPAL PARKER, a wasp of a woman.

PRINCIPAL PARKER
Please take a seat, Miss Bradley.

She does.

KATIE
What's going on?

PRINCIPAL PARKER
Miss Bradley, I know you've had a difficult childhood, and previous to your time at Chaplin, you were enrolled in public school, but that does not excuse your behavior today. Hitting another student simply will not be tolerated.

KATIE
What?!

MAKENZIE
(whimpers)
I told her to stop.

KATIE
She's lying! I didn't touch her!

PRINCIPAL PARKER
That's enough, Miss Bradley. Not another peep.

KATIE
But --

She stops, off the principal's stern look.

PRINCIPAL PARKER
Another word and I will double your punishment.

KATIE
(seeing an out)
Punishment?

PRINCIPAL PARKER
Yes. I'm sorry to say this, but --

KATIE
Principal Parker, let me stop you right there. I completely understand my punishment. And you're right, I deserve to be expelled.
PRINCIPAL PARKER
Miss Bradley, we run a tight ship here, but not that tight. No, no, no. We're not expelling you, but you will have to assist Mr. Shermanheimer with his spring production of Les Mis. They are in need of a set hand.

KATIE
What?! That's ridiculous! You can't make me do it.

PRINCIPAL PARKER
Oh, yes I can. Principal Parker heads for the door.

PRINCIPAL PARKER (CONT'D)
Now, I'm going to call Mr. Shermanheimer and tell him about our little arrangement.
(pointed, to Katie)
Under no circumstances are you to use your fists while I'm gone!

As soon as she's gone, Katie turns to Makenzie.

KATIE
What the hell?!

Makenzie, smug, rubs the corner of her eye with her finger, then displays it to Katie. It's covered in blue powder.

KATIE (CONT'D)
Make-up? Are you crazy? Wait a minute, I already know the answer. Of course, you're crazy!

Makenzie pulls her head-shot out of her back pack, hands it to Katie.

MAKENZIE
Get me a part on your brother's show or I will make your life a living hell.

KATIE
You're bluffing.

MAKENZIE
I hear Mrs. Rabowski needs a student helper in mime class...

KATIE
You wouldn't!

Makenzie raises her eyebrows as if to say, "try me."

KATIE (CONT'D)
I'll talk to my brother.
MAKENZIE
I knew you'd see it my way.

Katie crosses her arms in disgust.

INT. ERIC'S DRESSING ROOM - DAY

Eric happily hums as he takes his artwork down from the wall. Suddenly, Miles' voice booms from the intercom.

   MILES (V.O.)
   All cast and crew to stage five, please, for an immediate announcement. I repeat, cast and --

   STAGE MANAGER (V.O.)
   Give me that!

   MILES (V.O.)
   I'm just --

The sounds of struggle.

   MILES (V.O.) (CONT'D)
   Everybody to the --

   STAGE MANAGER (V.O.)
   Give me --

   MILES (V.O.)
   Come or you'll be fired!

There's a loud FEEDBACK from the mic, the a SLAM.

   ERIC
   What are you up to, Miles Bradley?

Eric charges out of the room.

INT. STAGE FIVE - MOMENTS LATER

An angry Eric followed by Laura charge in.

   LAURA
   What's going on?

   ERIC
   Trust me, I'm going to find out.

Miles stands atop a chair, beckoning the crew and cast to come closer.

   MILES
   Come on, everyone, gather up. This will only take a minute.
LAURA
Miles, have you lost your mind? Get down from there.

MILES
Not till I say what I have to say.

Olivia walks up in just a bra.

LAURA
(to Olivia)
Liv, you're not wearing a shirt.

She looks down, rolls her eyes.

OLIVIA
Not again.

She huffs and heads off.

BACK TO MILES...

MILES
Hello, cast and crew. I am Miles Bradley... and I know
I just started here --

CREW MEMBER #1
Who are you? And why are you ruining my lunch
break?!

MILES
As established, I am Miles Bradley. I play Marco
Malone - anyway - that's not important. What is
important is this show. Now, I don't know about you,
but BS has seen me through some pretty tough times...
when my parents died. I took comfort in knowing my
television friends would still be there.

CREW MEMBER #2
(low)
Nerd.

MILES
And when I had my heart broken by my first... and
only girlfriend... I was able to heal because I knew girls
like Maggie Fisher...

He gestures to a BEAUTIFUL ACTRESS in the crowd.

MILES (CONT'D)
Were still out there in the world. And when my sister
and I were down on our luck, BS gave me a job... and
a new hope.
ERIC
(to crowd)
I'm not listening to anymore sad stories. Come on, gang, lunch on me...

Eric heads for the exit, a few follow.

MILES
Wait! What I'm trying to say is - we owe it to BS and all the fans out there - to try and make this show work. Come on, guys, we can turn this place around! A little make-up here...
(gestures to CLOWN-FACED WOMAN)
A little rewrite there and our ratings will go up in no time. A total revamp! What do you say?

Silence. The crowd is not reacting as he'd thought. Laura sees this, and joins Miles on the very small chair.

LAURA
Miles is right! We can do this! Let's save the show!

The crew finally coming aboard, start to clap, then chant:

CREW & CAST
Giles! Giles! Giles!

MILES
(over)
It's Miles actually.

CREW & CAST
(gaining enthusiasm)
Giles! Giles!

ERIC
No! Let's let the show die gracefully. Come on, people! This is a joke!

But no one's listening they're too busy chanting the wrong name.

LAURA
(to Miles)
Think we can do this?

MILES
We have to try.

Suddenly, the crew and cast sweep Miles off his feet and lift him above their heads. Miles whoops and hollers as he crowd surfs. He gets to Eric, Eric lets him drop, and disappears behind the crowd.
MILES (CONT'D)
(groans)
I'm okay...

INT. MILES AND KATIE'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Miles dances in on a high to find Katie, bags packed, sitting on the bed.

MILES
Hey!

KATIE
If we hurry we can catch the 8:30 flight.

MILES
Flight? What are you talking about?
(too happy to care)
It doesn't matter because I had the best day. I literally crowd surfed as the crew chanted my name. Well... sorta.

KATIE
That's great, Miles. I'm really happy for you, but I can't do this anymore. I want to go home.

MILES
I think you're overreacting.

KATIE
Overreacting? Today I ate my lunch in the janitor's closet.

MILES
Which is probably the cleanest place at school.

KATIE
Are you even listening to me? I am miserable here!

Katie pulls out Makenzie's head-shot and thrusts it at Miles.

KATIE (CONT'D)
This girl is harassing me! Today she told the teacher I gave her a black eye, which I didn't, all because I told her you couldn't get her a role on BS!

MILES
(looking at headshot)
Is she in a cereal commercial? She looks so familiar.

KATIE
Miles, please?!

Finally serious, Miles sits down next to her.
MILES
Look. Maybe this school isn't for you, but it took my entire signing bonus just to pay for this one semester. And with things the way they are at work... I can't afford to transfer you somewhere else. So I'm sorry, but you're gonna have to tough it out.

KATIE
This is so unfair.

Katie jumps her feet and stomps to the bathroom, slamming the door. Beat.

Miles lightly knocks on the bathroom door.

MILES
Katie...?

KATIE (O.S.)
No, Miles. Don't even try to apologize.

MILES
(sheepish)
Actually... I really need to use the bathroom.

Katie squeals in anger, then CLICK goes the lock.

MILES (CONT'D)
That's alright... I'll go outside.

INT. LAURA'S OFFICE - NEXT DAY

Miles looking a little wired, in yesterday's clothes, charges into Laura's office with a piece of paper in hand.

MILES
I've figured it out, Laura.
(waving paper in air)
It's all right here.

LAURA
Are you okay? You look a little --

MILES
Enthused! Excited! Over the moon?

LAURA
I was gonna say homeless, but excited, sure.

MILES
I was up all night going over the budget and I think I've figured it out... a way to turn this place around.

He hands Laura the paper.
LAURA
Miles, how did you get a hold of the budget?

MILES
(caught)
I'm sorry, what did you say?

LAURA
(smiles)
We'll come back to that. Let's look at what you've got here.
(looks at paper)
Wow... you really did your homework.

MILES
I just moved things around a bit... if we utilize what we already have and produce a better product, they have to keep us on the air, right?

LAURA
Can't hurt to try.

Miles races to the door.

MILES
Great! I'll get started right now! We'll put together a pitch. You know, like in the movies?

LAURA
Hey, Miles.

Miles turns back...

LAURA (CONT'D)
You might consider showering first.

MILES
Got it.

MONTAGE - OVER A SERIES OF DAYS

-- Miles looks over the shoulder of a tired WRITER. He dictates a few lines. The writer turns relieved, and gives Miles a high five.

-- In make-up, Miles stands beside Chantel as she dusts a powder of the appropriate shade on Olivia's face. Chantel goes to grab a bright blush. Miles shakes his head, and hands her a lighter tone. Olivia mouths, "thank you."

-- Miles and the art department CREW happily touch up the paint of a set facade. Eric, in the shadows, unseen by the others, dumps paint thinner in the can of paint. Miles continues none-the-wiser.
-- At Chaplin Academy, Katie makes her way to class, but sees Makenzie down the way, and ducks into a nearby classroom. She turns around to see everyone staring at her.

-- In wardrobe, Miles helps the COSTUMER patch up old dresses. Eric walks by the costume rack and discreetly rips the sleeve off a shirt.

-- Katie eats lunch in the janitor's closet. The janitor comes in. She offers him half her sandwich, he kicks her out.

-- While Miles helps replace a busted light hanging from the ceiling grid, Eric pulls the foam off the end of a boom mic.

-- Alone in the hotel room, Katie bored changes channels on the TV. She gives up and picks up the phone, dials Miles. We GO TO Miles' empty dressing room, where his cell phone lights up with a missed call. Katie hangs up, throws her phone to the bed.

-- Miles and grips construct a beautiful stage - like a barn-raising - and all cheer as they stand back to survey their work. When Miles isn't looking Eric removes an essential block of wood.

-- Miles and Laura practice their show revamp presentation. The two seem flirty as Miles tickles her playfully.

-- Miles and Olivia mid-scene on a new and improved set. Eric watches from the shadows, clearly plotting.

INT. STAGE FIVE - OUT OF MONTAGE

Miles wraps up a scene with Olivia.

    STAGE MANAGER

And scene!
    (to the crew)
That's a wrap, people!

There are a few WHOOPS and HOLLERS as the crew disperses. Laura enters and approaches Miles.

    LAURA

Great scene.

    MILES

You think? I felt like I was over-acting a little.

    LAURA

In a soap? Not possible.

They laugh.

    LAURA (CONT'D)

Hey, I wanted to show you something.

She hands him a sheet of paper. He looks it up and down.
MILES
Will you judge me, if I tell you I have no idea what I'm looking at?

LAURA
It's the ratings!

MILES
Oh, right! Right!
(beat)
Are they good?

LAURA
Well, no. But they went up! And I know the new material just barely started airing, but I think that's a great sign, don't you?

MILES
Let's hope so.
(looks around at the changes)
Can you believe how quickly this all came together?

LAURA
I know. I can't believe tomorrow's the big photo shoot, and then BD day after that.
(off Miles' look)
Big decision day. It's not my best acronym.

MILES
Hey, listen... I was wondering if --

Just then, Olivia marches up, all perky and well... chesty.

OLIVIA
Hey, guys. I'm not interrupting am I? Doesn't matter because I'll be quick.
(turns Miles, sexy)
Will you have dinner with me tomorrow night?

MILES
Um...

He looks uncomfortable from Olivia to Laura. Laura jumps in, in an attempt to save herself from getting hurt.

LAURA
Of course he will.

MILES
I will?

LAURA
Yeah.
OLIVIA
Great! I'll have my people call your people.

Olivia skips off, leaving Laura and Miles in an awkward place.

LAURA
I didn't know people still used that phrase.

MILES
Yeah... question. Who are my people?

Laura laughs despite herself.

INT. STAGE FIVE - NEXT DAY

The entire CAST has gathered, all dressed to the nines. A PHOTOGRAPHER arranges a few on the stage built earlier by the crew. It seems to bend under the weight, but no one notices.

Miles makes his way toward the craft services table, adjusting his bow-tie on the way.

ERIC (O.S.)
No photo-shoot in the world is going to fix our dismal ratings, am I right?

Miles looks up to see Eric beside him at the table.

MILES
Whatever you say, Eric.

ERIC
So, I hear you've got a hot date with Olivia tonight.

MILES
That's none of your business.

ERIC
Look, Miles, I know we didn't get off on the best foot --

MILES
Cut the crap, Eric. I know all about your little gig. You want this show canceled more than anyone. Well, sorry, buddy, I'm not gonna let that happen.

Eric looks caught for a moment, the side steps...

ERIC
You heard about the Saw gig?

MILES
Yeah. The jig is up.
ERIC
(covers)
Well, jokes on you because I lost the role. Yeah. So we're on the same team. I want BS to stand the test of television time too.

MILES
(wary)
Really?

ERIC
Hey. Would I lie to you?

Eric smiles big and shoves a stuffed mushroom in his mouth.

ERIC (CONT'D)
Dude, you have got to have one of these.

MILES
Is there crab in the filling?

ERIC
If there were, I'd be dead by now. Deathly allergic since childhood.

MILES
Me too, actually.

ERIC
Huh! How about that?

Eric takes another for the road, and walks off. Miles picks one up, debates, then pops it in his mouth. It's good!

INT. CHAPLIN ACADEMY CLASSROOM - DAY

As a TEACHER finishes her lecture, Katie glances nervously up at the clock, then back to Makenzie, Madison, and Skylar. She GULPS as she sees they are looking right back at her.

TEACHER
And that is the origin of the jazz hand...

RING. The school bell purrs and Katie leaps from her desk and out the door.

INT. CHAPLIN ACADEMY HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Katie pushes past the crowd of students, nervously glancing behind her. Makenzie, Madison, and Skylar are hot on her trail.

Katie ducks into the nearby girls' bathroom.
INT. PREP SCHOOL BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Katie dashes into the girls' bathroom, taking nervous glances behind her. The bathroom is nicer than most apartments - clearly this is where half the tuition goes.

Katie quickly ducks into an empty stall.

INT. STALL - CONTINUOUS

Katie backs into the corner as if doing so will make her invisible. Suddenly, three pairs of very expensive shoes appear on the other side.

    MAKENZIE (O.S.)
    Come out, come out, wherever you are.

    KATIE
    (disguises her voice)
    Lo siendo. Occupado.

Suddenly, the door is kicked in and Makenzie, Madison, and Skylar stand before her. Madison reaches in and pulls Katie out.

INT. PREP SCHOOL BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Madison throws Katie against the wall and the girls draw dangerously close.

    MAKENZIE
    Did you do what I told you to do?

    KATIE
    I gave him your head-shot, but like I told you, he's new. He doesn't have any say in casting.

Makenzie slams her hand against the wall.

    MAKENZIE (CONT'D)
    And I told you - to get me a part on your brother's show or there'd be trouble.

Katie gulps.

    MAKENZIE (CONT'D)
    Now. How are we going to fix this little problem?

Nervous, Katie scours her brain for an idea...

INT. STAGE FIVE - LATER

The cast has been arranged in a big, beautiful, tightly-knit group, surrounded by dancing candle light. Miles is dead in the center, itching at his collar just a little bit.

The photographer jumps behind his camera.
PHOTOGRAPHER
All right, everybody! Say shish-kabob!

CAST
Shish-kabob!

Miles frantically pulls at his collar.

PHOTOGRAPHER
Mr. Bradley, I need you to stand still.

Miles GASPS, desperate for air.

PHOTOGRAPHER (CONT'D)
Mr. Bradley?

Miles, panicked, starts to flail about - causing various cast members to tumble from their spots. The show's PATRIARCH falls to the ground.

PATRIARCH
My hip!

Miles throws his body around, crashing into Olivia. She goes flying straight into the craft services table.

Then another ACTRESS tumbles back, her hair catching aflame on one of the candles. She thrashes about, screaming.

It's chaos.

PHOTOGRAPHER
He's having an allergic reaction! Does anyone have an epipen?!

Eric pulls out a pen.

ERIC
I've got this.

He dives and tackles gasping Miles to the ground. He stabs the pen into Miles' arm.

MILES
Ahhhhh!
(wheezes)
Epipen. Not pen!

ERIC
My mistake. Maybe somebody should call an ambulance.

Miles looks up at Eric, his face morphed and swelling by the second.
ERIC (CONT'D)
You know what... it's not shellfish that I'm allergic to.
It's peanuts. Huh!

As if on cue, the stage COLLAPSES under the stress and the remaining cast are sent tumbling.

EXT. CHAPLIN ACADEMY SCHOOL YARD - DAY

STAY TIGHT on Katie, with a black eye as she holds her cell phone to her ear.

KATIE
Pick up. Pick up....

MILES (O.S.)
Hello?

KATIE
(panicked, but trying not to sound it)
Miles! Hey! You remember that actress friend I told you about?

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. AMBULANCE - CONTINUOUS

REVEAL Miles puffy and drugged up as he is loaded into an ambulance..

MILES
Boogidy boogidy.

KATIE
What?! Miles, quit kidding around. This is serious!

Eric, "the attentive friend," take Miles' phone out of his hand.

ERIC
Here let me take care of that for you, buddy.

KATIE
Miles? Hello?!

Eric hangs up on Katie.

ERIC
You just focus on getting well.

MILES
You're... swell, Eric.

As the ambulance doors close, and it pulls away, STAY with Katie and REVEAL she's strung from the top of a flag pole. She looks down below her to Makenzie, Madison, and Skylar.
MAKENZIE
(calls up)
I want that role, Bradley. Or --

She draws her finger across her neck like an imaginary knife. The other girls giggle as they walk away.

KATIE
(calls out)
Wait! How am I...?
(to herself, as they're gone)
Supposed to get down.

Just then the school bell RINGS and herds of students rush out, quickly to discover Katie hanging high above them. Some laugh and point, while others, misinterpreting this as an artistic statement, snap their fingers in the air.

KATIE (CONT'D)
Could somebody help me down... please?

Nobody moves an inch to help her. Katie dials a number on her phone.

KATIE (CONT'D)
9-1-1? This is an emergency!
(beat)
No, I won't hold!

INT. MAKE-UP ROOM - NIGHT

Eric ducks his head in to find Olivia touching up her make up.

ERIC
(faux sad)
Hey, Liv.

OLIVIA
Hey! Crazy photo shoot, huh?

ERIC
The craziest. Listen, I have some bad news... Miles asked me to tell you... that he's not gonna make it tonight.

OLIVIA
Really?

ERIC
Yeah... apparently you're just not his type.

OLIVIA
But I'm every guy's type.
ERIC
Just not his... What a jerk, right?

Olivia huffs and storms off. Just then, Miles' phone BEEPS in Eric's pocket. He takes it out. A text message from Katie reads: "I need your help ASAP. Come to my school right now!" An evil smile spreads across Eric's face as he heads out.

INT. SAINT JOE'S HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Miles still slightly swollen sits patiently as a DOCTOR gives him a once over. The pain medicine now worn off.

The doctor scribbles notes on Miles' chart.

DOCTOR
Well, Miles, it appears that you are suffering from an allergic reaction.

MILES
That makes sense considering I ate a food that I am allergic to.

DOCTOR
Yes, yes it does.
(reads chart)
And according to your blood work, you have minor ink poisoning.

MILES
I'm gonna guess that's from the pen stabbing.

DOCTOR
Hard to say. But I can say, you're going to all right. I'll write you a prescription and you can be on your way.

MILES
Great.

Miles leaps off the exam table and grabs his coat. He empties his pockets.

MILES (CONT'D)
My phone... it's missing.

DOCTOR
(looks at chart)
I'm not seeing that here...

MILES
(ignores, re: room phone)
Can I use this?
DOCTOR
Go ahead. But be careful...
(points to overhead cameras, mouths)
They're watching...

The doctor exits, leaving Miles alone to make his call.

MILES
Hey, Katie, it's me... listen, I lost my phone, so if you've been trying to get a hold of me... well, you can't.
Anyway, I know you wanted to talk tonight, but some stuff happened at work -- I won't get into now -- but I'm running a little late. So I'm not gonna make it home before my date.
(proud)
With Olivia Dullbrook. No big deal. Anyway. Don't wait up, okay? Love you.

EXT. MILES AND KATIE'S HOTEL/ INT. ERIC'S CAR - NIGHT

Eric steers the car into a parking spot outside the hotel. Katie sits quietly in the passenger seat. Her phone LIGHTS up her purse, but she doesn't notice.

KATIE
Thanks for helping me down from the flag pole...

ERIC
Happy to help. I just wish your brother could have been there instead, but you know... first dates are very important.

KATIE
(scoffs)
More important than your sister...? This is so not like him.

ERIC
I've seen this before. People come to Hollywood to make it big and they let this place change them...
(so fake)
It's sad... really, really sad.

KATIE
Miles isn't like that. And besides you hate him, of course you would say something like that...

ERIC
Oh, Katie. I don't hate your brother. Frankly, I feel bad for him... he has the one thing I always wanted, a family. And now he's just throwing it away.
KATIE
(beat)
I should go. Thanks for the ride.

ERIC
You're welcome.

Katie hops out.

ERIC (CONT'D)
Hey, Katie.

She stops, looks back in.

ERIC (CONT'D)
Miles might ruin his life... but don't let him ruin yours.

Katie just nods and dashes off. ON Eric's menacing smile...

INT. UPSCALE RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Miles sits alone in a hip LA restaurant. His face is still slightly puffy from the allergic reaction. A sympathetic WAITER approaches.

WAITER
I'm sorry, sir, but... it's been an hour, and restaurant policy says you either have to order something... or leave.

Miles looks at his watch, then the door.

MILES
Does a drink count?

The waiter nods.

MILES (CONT'D)
I'll take something with alcohol.

WAITER
Anything in particular, sir?

Miles looks at the menu...

MILES
You know, just bring me something that doesn't take like liquor, but is liquor. Does that make sense?

WAITER
(nods)
I'll be right back, sir.
INT. UPSCALE RESTAURANT - LATER

Miles dips back, and chugs what remains of his drink. He plops the empty glass on the table to reveal several other empty cups... and an empty restaurant. The waiter listens, impatiently checking his watch.

MILES
(drunk)
I ate crab, got stabbed with a pen, definitely ruined the photoshoot... And you know what...?
(whispers)
I think I've been stood up!

WAITER
Sir... let me call you a cab.

MILES
(drunk)
No, thank you. I'm going to walk.

WAITER
Sir, you're in LA. Nobody walks.

EXT. BUSY STREET - NIGHT

Miles drunkenly stumbles along the sidewalk. Cars whiz by. A DRIVER hollers out his window:

DRIVER
Get a car!

MILES
You get a car!

Miles looks up, sees something that catches his eye, and smiles.

MILES' POV...

EXT. FROZEN YOGURT SHOP - MOMENTS LATER

Miles pounds on the door of the frozen yogurt shop. An EMPLOYEE mops up inside, not enthused.

MILES
Open up! I want yogurt!

EMPLOYEE
(calls through the door)
Dude, for the hundredth time, we're closed!

Just then, there's a HONK behind him.
LAURA (O.S.)

Miles!

Miles turns around to see Laura pulled into the parking lot.

MILES
Laura! What are you doing here?

LAURA
You called me from the restaurant, remember? Nevermind, just get in the car.

Laura pops open the passenger side door. Miles stumbles toward the car, momentarily stopping to throw up.

INT. LAURA’S CAR - LATER

Miles and Laura sit in silence as they drive through LA.

MILES
Sorry, I threw up in your car.

LAURA
Don't worry about it. I'll take it out of your paycheck.

Miles chuckles.

LAURA (CONT'D)
(beat)
Bad date?

MILES
It wasn't bad. It just didn't happen. (off Laura's look)
I was stood up.

LAURA
Ah. Well, you know actors... sometimes they forget there's a whole world out there besides their own.

MILES
Yeah.

Miles tries to lock eyes with Laura, but she avoids his gaze.

MILES (CONT'D)
Thanks for picking me up, Laura. It's really decent of you.

Laura just looks at him, then looks back to the road.
INT. CAR/ EXT. MILES’ HOTEL - LATER
Laura pulls up, puts the car in park.

MILES
Thanks again.

Miles struggles to unbuckle his seat belt.

LAURA
Let me help you. It sticks.

Laura unsnaps the buckle, and looks up to find Miles looking at her. Miles pulls her into a kiss, but Laura quickly pushes him off.

LAURA (CONT’D)
Miles?! What are you doing?!

MILES
Kissing you?

LAURA
Is that your idea of romantic? You threw up in my car! And you were just on a date with another girl!

MILES
First of all, she didn't show... And second, I only went on the date because you told me to.

LAURA (caught)
Don't try to put this on me.

Miles backs up embarrassed.

MILES
I'm sorry... I... I just... I like you.

LAURA
Maybe you should try telling me that when you're not drunk.

Beat.

LAURA (CONT’D)
Good night, Miles.

Miles nods and stumbles out into the night.

INT. MILES AND KATIE’S HOTEL ROOM - MOMENTS LATER
Miles pulls himself into the dark hotel room.
MILES

Katie?

But she's already fast asleep, under her covers. Miles plops down onto his bed.

MILES (CONT'D)

(more to himself than her)
I think I'm blowing it, Katie... I wanted to be the hero... the big man on campus. I thought this would be my Good Will Hunting, you know...? But who am I kidding? I'm just a janitor in a cheap suit. I'm no Matt Damon...

Beat, nothing from Katie.

MILES (CONT'D)

Anyway... night, Katie. Love you...

As Miles drifts off to sleep, REVEAL a pillow sticking out from under Katie's sheets. She's long gone.

INT. MILES AND KATIE'S HOTEL ROOM - NEXT MORNING

WAH WAH WAH goes the alarm clock. Miles jumps awake.

MILES

Marlon Brando!

He shakes off his sleep as he quiets the alarm.

MILES (CONT'D)

Katie... Time to get up.

Silence.

MILES (CONT'D)

Katie, come on.

Again, nothing. Hungover and still dressed in last night's clothes, Miles stands and crosses to Katie's bed. He pulls back the blankets only to find she's not there. It's the old pillow under a blanket gag.

MILES (CONT'D)

Katie!

EXT. MILES AND KATIE'S HOTEL - DAY

Miles races out, frantic. He grabs a nearby PEDESTRIAN.

MILES

Have you seen my sister?!
PEDESTRIAN

Who?

Frustrated Miles runs to his parking spot. His car's back at the restaurant.

MILES

Damn it!

He races off.

EXT. CHAPLIN ACADEMY - DAY

Teachers and students make their way into the building. A city bus pulls up. Miles jumps out and sprints toward the entrance.

INT. PRINCIPAL PARKER'S OFFICE - DAY

Miles rushes in out of breath. No one appears to be around.

MILES

Hello?!

A bedazzled sock puppet appears from behind the counter.

RECEPTIONIST (O.S.)

May I help you?

MILES

(stunned)

What the hell is this?

RECEPTIONIST (O.S.)

Performance art! Now, if you'll kindly pull a punishment from the swear jar, I'll be happy to help you.

MILES

What?! No! I need to find my sister, Katie Bradley. Is she here?

RECEPTIONIST (O.S.)

(gestures)

I can't answer that until you reach into the --

Frustrated, Miles yanks the receptionist to her feet. She whelps in shock.

MILES

Look, lady. I love the arts, but I love my sister more. Now, can you please tell me if my sister showed up for school today?

The receptionist hurumphs and types into her computer.
RECEPTIONIST
   (curtly)
   No. She did not show up.

MILES
Thank you!

He races out, then turns back around.

MILES (CONT'D)
   Sorry about your puppet.

He's gone again.

INT. CHAPLIN ACADEMY HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Miles heads for the door and passes Makenzie. She turns around, stops him.

MAKENZIE
Miles?!

MILES
   (anxious)
   Yes?

MAKENZIE
I'm Makenzie. Your sister's friend. The actress.

MILES
You're Makenzie?

MAKENZIE
Yeah!

MILES
   (quick)
   Okay. Well then, Makenzie, if you so much as look at my sister, I will tarnish your name in Hollywood and you will never work again. Ta-tah!

MAKENZIE
Ah!

Miles dashes off, leaving Makenzie pouting.

INT. STAGE FIVE - DAY

The stage has been decorated for the big revamp. The sets look their best, the lights are all lit, the actors are beautifully made-up, and a large cake that reads: "Welcome to the new "Brave and Sassy," is displayed center stage.

An anxious Laura ducks into a corner. She takes out her cell and dials.
LAURA (CONT'D)
(as it rings)
Come on, Miles, pick up...

She sighs as it reaches Miles' voicemail.

LAURA (CONT'D)
Miles, it's Laura... where are you?! The execs will be here in less than a half hour. We need you... I need you. I can't make this pitch on my own... Call me back.

INT. STUDIO HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Eric looks at Miles' phone in his hand. There are several missed calls and voicemails. He smiles and tosses the phone into the nearby trash.

EXT. CHAPLIN ACADEMY - DAY

Miles anxiously waits for the bus. A wary BYSTANDER keeps her distance.

MILES
Come on! I don't have time for this!

Just then, a car pulls up to the curb. A clingy MOM pops out to hug her SON good-bye.

SON
Mooooom!

The mom is so busy hugging her son that she doesn't notice Miles sliding into the drivers seat.

He quickly starts the engine and pulls out into the street.

MOM
Hey! That's my car!

Miles rolls down the window.

MILES
I'll return it! I promise!

EXT. BUS STATION/ INT. STOLEN CAR - DAY

Miles drives by the entrance of the nearby bus station. Greyhound busses roar in and out. No sign of Katie.

EXT. COMMUTER RAIL STATION/ INT. STOLEN CAR - DAY

Miles haphazardly pulls up out front, hops out, and disappears into the station. Moments later, he pops back out. No Katie.
EXT. LAX/ INT. STOLEN CAR - DAY

Miles peers through the passenger side window as he steers the car slowly past each terminal. A line of cars HONK behind him. Finally, he spots her: Katie balled up on a bench. Her luggage under her feet.

MILES
Katie!

Miles pulls up onto the curb and jumps out. An AIRPORT EMPLOYEE quickly barrels over.

AIRPORT EMPLOYEE
Hey! You can't park here!

Miles tosses him the keys.

MILES
Keep it!

He races to Katie's side.

MILES (CONT'D)
Katie!

KATIE
(immediately on the defense)
Ugh. What do you want?

MILES
What are you doing here? You scared the crap out of me!

KATIE
I don't care. I'm getting the hell out of here.

MILES
Okay --

KATIE
(cuts in)
No, Miles. You can't talk me into going back there!
(realizes)
Wait. Did you say okay?

MILES
I did. You don't have to back to that school.

KATIE
What? Really?

MILES
I went there looking for you... And wow.
KATIE
Right?! I tried to tell you.

MILES
I know and I'm sorry I didn't listen to you sooner...

KATIE
(fighting to stay mad)
You should be.

MILES
Listen... if you don't like LA, we'll go somewhere else. I don't need some show to make me happy, I need you.

KATIE
And money.

MILES
Well, the money helps. But seriously, whatever you want. My home is with you.

Katie considers.

KATIE
So you'll get on this plane with me and go wherever I want?

MILES
Absolutely.

KATIE
Well... turns out you have to have money and a legal guardian to buy a plane ticket. So looks like we're staying here.

MILES
 Might not be an option...

Katie checks her watch.

KATIE
You're missing the revamp pitch.

MILES
Eh. What are you gonna do?

Katie jumps to her feet.

KATIE
Miles?! This is your Good Will Hunting. Now you go save that show or I'll...
(fumphers)
You know, do something bad.
MILES

Seriously?

KATIE
What are you waiting for?!

MILES
What am I waiting for? Let's go!

Miles leaps to his feet, grabs Katie's bag, and runs back to the airport attendant. He snaps the keys out of the guy's hand.

MILES (CONT'D)
Thanks for watching it for me.
(to Katie)
Hop in!

They jump in and speed off.

INT. STAGE FIVE - DAY

Four EXECUTIVES in suits, with what can only be a stick up their asses, trail behind Laura as she nervously shows them the new sets.

LAURA
(shaky)
And this is our remodeled Malone mansion. As you can see we --

As they approach a faux mansion set, Eric, reclined on the "living room" sofa, bursts out laughing. He acknowledges the group, then holds up his phone.

ERIC
Sorry. I was just watching a daytime talk show on my phone. Boy are they entertaining, and cheap to produce.

LAURA
(through gritted teeth)
Eric. Don't you have a scene to rehearse?

ERIC
Oh, yes. Of course.

He hops up, whispers to the execs.

ERIC (CONT'D)
As if it'll help.

Eric winks and walks off.

LAURA
(to execs)
Sorry about that. He's a... method actor.
The execs mumble and nod.

LAURA (CONT'D)
Moving on. So as you can see, we've reupholstered
the furniture --

She checks her watch...

INT. STOLEN CAR - DAY

Miles drives down the 405. Katie leans over and checks the speedometer.

KATIE
Shouldn't you go a little faster?

MILES
I can't break the law.

KATIE
You stole a car.

Beat. Miles floors it.

INT. STAGE FIVE - DAY

Reading off note cards, Laura nervously presents the revamp idea to the stoic executives. Laura is awkward and stilted.

LAURA
BS 2.0 will focus on what has made us a staple in
American homes... family, friendship, and most
importantly love.

An awkward cough cuts the silence.

LAURA (CONT'D)
Um. L-love is what built this show... and it's what's
going to revive it.

INT. STUDIO HALLWAY - DAY

Panting, Miles and Katie race toward the stage. Olivia pops out of nowhere and stops them.

MILES
Olivia.

Slap!

OLIVIA
How dare you?!

MILES
Excuse me?
OLIVIA
You said I wasn't your type?! I paid a lot of money to ensure that never happened. Just who the hell do you think you are, Miles Bradley?!

Miles and Katie exchange a look.

MILES
Wait a minute. Who told you I said that?

OLIVIA
Eric!

MILES
So that's why you didn't show up...

OLIVIA
Eric told me you canceled.

MILES
He did, did he...?

Katie chimes in.

KATIE
And he told me you'd changed... that I was better off without you.

MILES
(realizes)
He's still trying to ruin this show...

Suddenly, out of the shadows, Eric appears, slow clapping. It's dramatic, it's cheesy, it's a soap.

ERIC
Congratulations, Miles, you figured me out.

MILES
Get out of my way, Eric.

Miles tries to push past Eric, but he won't let him past.

ERIC
You're too late. The show's as good as canceled. And I'll finally be free as a cah-cah.

MILES
What?

ERIC
Free as a bird.
Miles pushes past him.

MILES
Come on, Katie. We have show to save.

Eric taunts from behind.

ERIC
Hey, Miles. When the show gets canceled, and the state takes your sister away from you - don't worry, I'll do my best to keep an eye on her. After all, what are friends for?

Miles freezes.

MILES
Don't talk about my sister.

ERIC
(taunts)
You mean... Katie?
(points)
That sister.

MILES
I'm warning you, Eric. Back off.

Miles starts toward the stage again. Beat. Eric can't help, but go for the dagger.

ERIC
Just think. If your parents hadn't died, your sister might actually have had a chance.

That's it. Miles ROARS as he spins around and leaps on Eric. Eric tumbles to the ground.

MILES
Don't you ever talk about my family! Ever!

Miles tries to punch at Eric, but he really is a terrible fighter. His punches are more like close-fisted slaps. Eric pushes him off, and rises to his feet.

ERIC
Get off me!

Eric starts to walk toward the stage.

ERIC (CONT'D)
You'll always be a just a small town hero, Miles. You don't belong here.

Once again, Miles jumps to his feet.
MILES
That's where you're wrong!

He charges at Eric and the two go flying right through the studio doors...

INT. STAGE FIVE - CONTINUOUS

Miles and Eric come flying in - right into the celebratory cake. The table and cake collapse - frosting everywhere.

Miles and Eric wipe the frosting from their eyes to find hundreds of eyes on them. Awkward...

Miles quickly jumps to his feet, approaches the executives. He offers his hand...

MILES
Hi, I'm Miles Bradley. I play Marco Malone.

No one takes his frosting covered hand. Laura gives Miles a desperate look: "what are you gonna do?!"

MILES (CONT'D)
I bet you're wondering what --
(gestures to cake and Eric)
That was all about?

No response.

MILES (CONT'D)
Well. As part of the relaunch, our talented writers plan on exploring the complex relationship between brothers Philip and Marco Malone. We were just giving you a little sneak peek.

Eric leaps to his feet.

ERIC
Not true! He's lying. He's a liar!

MILES
(low, to Eric)
Dude, how old are you?

The leader of the executives finally speaks up.

EXECUTIVE
This whole revamp thing is very cute... very exciting.

Miles and Laura exchange a look: "cute?"

EXECUTIVE (CONT'D)
But we just came by for a little visit.
There's an audible sigh of relief, except for:

    ERIC
   Oh, come on!

    MILES
  So the show's fine?

    EXECUTIVE
   Oh, no, no. It's definitely canceled.  
     (perky)
  Now about that cake... is there any part you didn't ruin?

    LAURA
   (shocked)
  There's an extra cake for pictures in the commissary.

    EXECUTIVE
   Excellent. Come now, minions.  
     (to crew)
  They like it when I call them that.

They other executives follow him out.

    ERIC
   Yes!  
     (turns to Miles)
  In your face. I win, Miles. I finally win! Now, if you'll 
  excuse me, I have to call my agent. Suckah!

Eric marches off, overjoyed.

    MILES
  That stung.

    KATIE
  I'm sorry, Miles...

Miles gives a solemn nod and moves to Laura's side.

    MILES
  Hey. Sorry I blew it today... and last night.

    LAURA
  I'm sorry, too. But it seems like they were going to cancel us no matter what we did.

    MILES
  Maybe.

Miles looks around at the disappointed cast and crew as they mill about.
MILES (CONT'D)
Maybe not.
(addresses the group)
Hey! Wipe those sad looks off your faces. You should
be proud of yourselves.
(gestures to room)
Look at this place. It looks great! And you did that!
Not the studio, not the network. You guys! And so
what if the powers that be can't see how great this show
is. We'll take it somewhere else!

CREW MEMBER #2
Like Mexico?

MILES
I was thinking more like the internet, but Mexico's a
possibility... Now, what you say? Let's forge on!

CAST & CREW
Yeah!

MILES
We're not going down without a fight!

The cast and crew cheer. The start to chant:

CAST & CREW
Giles! Giles! Giles!

MILES
Really? I thought we sorted the whole name thing
out.

KATIE
Giles! Giles!

Miles is shuffled around - people patting his back, others ruffling his hair. Sexy Olivia
comes up out of nowhere.

OLIVIA
So, Miles, what do you say about that date?

Miles looks over at Laura in the crowd.

MILES
Sorry, Olivia... my heart belongs to someone else.

OLIVIA
Oh, that's fine. I'm not interested in your heart.

MILES
Um... you're not my type?
Olivia HUFFS and storms off. As the chanting continues, Miles attempts to make his way to beaming Laura, but he's swept up by the crowd and lifted to their shoulders.

CAST & CREW
Giles! Giles! Giles!

MILES
Okay, guys, let's just remember how this ended last time.
   (giving in)
   Oh, what the hell!

He leans back to crowd surf, but no one's expecting it, and Miles tumbles to the floor. An airy cough escapes his mouth and...

EXT. MILES AND KATIE'S HOUSE - DAY

SUPER: One year later...

A small, but comfortable ranch home somewhere in the Valley. Finally a place to call their own.

KATIE (O.S.)
Quick, quick! It's starting!

INT. MILES AND KATIE'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

A warm living room with cushy couches and colorful family portraits on the wall.

Katie sits in front of the TV. Miles and Laura rush in from the kitchen with snacks and drinks. Katie steals the snacks.

KATIE
What took you so long?

Miles and Laura share a smile, and kiss.

KATIE (CONT'D)
Alright, I get it. Enough of the kissy kissy.
   (re: TV)
   Oh, here it is!

LAURA
Turn it up.

Katie hits a couple buttons on the tv.

ANGLE ON THE SCREEN...

An ACCESS HOLLYWOOD type show is underway. A beautiful FEMALE HOST addresses the camera.
FEMALE HOST
...Thanks, Dave. Now most of you know, yesterday marked the last and final episode of the beloved daytime drama, "The Brave and the Sassy." But what you don't know is that hunky lead, Miles Bradley --

A picture of Miles appears in the upper left hand corner of the screen.

FEMALE HOST (CONT'D)
Who has been credited with the show's rejuvenated success its last months, is about to hit the silver screen in what's bound to be a blockbuster hit: "Good Will Hunting 2."

SHOTS of Miles on the red carpet, Katie beside him.

BACK TO Katie, Miles and Laura.

KATIE
God I look good.

Miles hugs her tight...

BACK TO SCREEN...

FEMALE HOST
Produced and directed by Miles' behind the scenes girlfriend Laura Patterson, the film has become more than just a job for Miles...

FOOTAGE from set. The host interviews Miles.

MILES
It truly is a labor of love, you know? We're like one big family here on set.

BACK TO STAGE... The host talks to the camera.

FEMALE HOST
In fact, Miles' younger sister, Katie had a large role in casting the highly anticipated project.

FOOTAGE from set. The host interview Katie.

KATIE
I may only be sixteen, but I have an eye for talent. And that talent is in Morty.

BACK to STAGE... The host addresses the camera.

FEMALE HOST
Of course, the Morty she is referring to is none other than Morty Meyers.
A photo of Morty (from the nursing home) fills the screen.

FEMALE HOST (CONT’D)
The raved actor whose guest spot on "Brave and the Sassy" astounded not only critics, but the audience too. Meyers is cast to play Miles’ senile uncle, who helps him find his true genius through science. The film is set to hit theaters next month.

BACK TO Katie, Miles, and Laura, who burst into screams.

KATIE
Can you believe it?!

MILES
No!

KATIE
I looked so good!

Miles gives her a noogie, then turns to Laura.

MILES
We did it.

LAURA
You did it.

They move into a kiss.

KATIE
Hey! What did I say?

DING DONG. The door bell rings.

MILES
That's the pizza.

Miles jumps to answer the door.

EXT. MILES AND KATIE’S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Miles swings open the door to find the pizza delivery man hidden behind to large boxes.

ERIC (O.S.)
(hidden by the pizza)
I got two large, double mushroom. That’ll be $22.50.

He lowers the pizza, immediately shocked to see Miles in front of him.

MILES
Eric?
ERIC
(plays it cool)
Oh, hey, Miles. Didn't see you there. I thought this might be your house.

MILES
So you're delivering pizza now?

Miles hands Eric the cash.

ERIC
(covers)
Research for a movie.

MILES
Great. Hey, tough luck with the Saw movie, man. Who knew America was sick of that franchise.

ERIC
Yeah, well. This new movie's gonna blow Saw VIII out of the water, so...
(chipper)
Enjoy your pizza! I made it extra yummy for you.

Eric quickly spins away. Miles closes the door behind him.

INT. MILES AND KATIE'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Pizzas in hand, Miles turns to Katie and Laura.

MILES
Wow.

KATIE
Yeah, that was weird.

LAURA
(quick)
You should probably throw out those pizzas.

MILES
Yeah, they're definitely poisoned.

FADE TO: BLACK

THE END.