STRANGE BREW

“Pilot”

Written by

David Kohan & Max Mutchnick
ACT ONE

SCENE A

INT. BURT’S OFFICE – DAY
(Ted, Burt)

WE’RE IN THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF BURT’S BREWING
COMPANY IN BOULDER, COLORADO. BURT SITS AT HIS DESK. HE IS
MID 50’S, FIT, COMFORTABLE IN HIS REPUBLICAN SKIN. HE SITS
ACROSS FROM TED FORREST, OUR HERO, THE PRESIDENT OF A MULTI-
GENERATIONAL BREWING COMPANY THAT BEARS HIS NAME. ONCE A
WEATHERED OUTDOORSMEN, THE LAST TEN YEARS HAS TURNED HIM INTO
A WITHERED INDOORSMEN. TODAY FINDS TED IN A BAD MOOD. MOST
DAYS FIND TED IN A BAD MOOD. THINK THOMAS HAYDEN CHURCH.
BURT HOLDS OUT A CANDY DISH.

BURT
Lemon drop?

TED
Nope.

BURT
Have a lemon drop.

TED
Don’t want one.

BURT
It’s a good way to start a meeting.

TED
You know what I’ve always found to be
a good way to start a meeting?
Starting the meeting.
BURT
You sure? They’ve got vitamin C. I buy them at the farmers market over on Boulder Canyon from this Mexican girl with one arm. She told me she squeezes the lemons herself so I figure it must take her twice as long to make ‘em. She likes to flirt with me, but she’s a big girl and you know the arm, I can’t --

TED
Just give me the lemon drop and tell me why I’m here!

BURT
You know Ted, you’re always in a bad mood.

TED
I’m not in a bad mood, Burt.

BURT
You don’t seem happy.

TED
(FLAT) I’m happy.

BURT
How happy?

TED
(LONG LONG BEAT) Six.
BURT

Six?! On what, the Dick Cheney scale?
You’re no six. You’re a point four.
I’m an eight. I smile. I’m buoyant.
You hear how I talk? There’s a tone.
My sentences go up at the end. I’d be
a nine but I had too much rice last
night so I didn’t take a good --

TED

Why am I here, Burt?

BURT

(SIGHS, THEN) I just... it’s been too
long. I don’t want to be the bad guy
anymore. I want to find away for us
to be... friends. I care about you,
Ted.

TED TRIES TO ABSORB WHAT BURT HAS JUST SAID. BURT BREAKS
INTO A HEARTY LAUGH.

BURT (CONT’D)

Dammit, I thought I could keep a
straight face. (THEN, SWALLOWING HARD)
Ooh, ow, I just swallowed that lemon
drop. Ow, that really hurts.

TED

Now I’m a seven.
BURT

This is why I called: your company’s *
in debt. I’ll get you out of the hole
in exchange for a small piece of the
business.

TED

The brewery is not in debt. I don’t
know where you get that idea from. *

BURT

We have the same barber, Ted.

TED

Mario told you that?

BURT

I’m not saying he did and I’m not
saying he didn’t. I’m just saying we
have the same barber... and he did.

TED

I can’t believe Mario would gossip
about me like that. I wouldn’t expect
that from... (REALIZING) a chatty,
effeminate man at a hair salon.

BURT

I also know you stopped caring about *
this business a long time ago.

TED

That’s just not true, Burt.
BURT
Your mouth says, “no,” but your
dentist said something else.

TED
Isn’t that against the law?

BURT
Only if it’s medical information. Dr.
Thomas just told me something
personal. It’s not like she said,
“Oh, Ted Forrest has a larger-than-
normal tongue.”

TED
I do have a larger-than-normal tongue.

BURT
I know, she told me.

TED
This is not right.

BURT
Look, we live in a small town. People
talk. It doesn’t matter how I found
out. It’s what I can do now to make
it better.

TED
You’re not buying me out.

BURT
I’m not trying to buy you out, Ted. I
make beer. It’s what I know.

(MORE)
BURT (CONT’D)

I’m making an investment in another beer company in the hopes of turning a profit.

TED

What’s the catch?

BURT

No catch. I just want you to get rid of some of the dead weight.

TED

What do you mean by “dead weight?”

BURT

Your kids.

TED

Go to hell, Burt. This meeting is over.

BURT

I’m just telling it like is, Ted. Your kids are not equipped to take over Forrest Ale after you leave.

TED

You don’t know anything about them or me.

*BURT

I know that you hate your job. I know your wife hates sobriety.

(MORE)
I know that your daughter hates your wife, and I know that your twin boys are so out of it, they can’t tell if it’s raining or Tuesday. You could use my help, Ted.

TED

Let me remind you of something, Burt. Forrest Ale is a family business. That means it stays in the family. And as far as I’m concerned, our business is the best of its kind.

BURT

Well, it’s not. We have better marketing, better distribution, bigger market share... Let’s face it, Burt’s Brew is a better company.

TED

Except for one thing.

BURT

What’s that?

TED

(BRIGHTLY) We make better beer, you jackass. See how I went up at the end?

HE EXITS. AS WE:

CUT TO
ACT ONE

SCENE B

INT. FORREST HOUSE - DAY
(Ted, Janie, Michael)

JANIE FORREST. A TAUT, ANXIOUS, ATTRACTIVE WOMAN PACES IN THE LARGE KITCHEN OF "THE CABIN." IS WALKING DOWN THE HALLWAY OF HER WELL-APPOINTED AND WELL-WORN HOME OF THREE GENERATIONS OF FORRESTS. SHE’S YELLING TO ANYONE WHO WILL LISTEN.

JANIE

Where are my prayer beads?! I can’t meditate if I don’t have my g-damn prayer beads! Can somebody answer me please?! Or should I just start drinking again?! Is that what everybody wants? Mom to be drunk again? (BEAT) Hello! Am I talking to myself!? (TO HERSELF) I am talking to myself. (THEN, NOTICING) There are my beads.

MICHAEL FORREST SITS AT THE KITCHEN TABLE EATING A SANDWICH. HE’S AN INCREDIBLY HANDSOME, ALL-AMERICAN 15-YEAR-OLD WHO IS WEARING HIS HIGH SCHOOL BASEBALL UNIFORM. JANIE ENTERS.

JANIE (CONT’D)

Michael, you better hurry. You don’t want to be late for practice.

MICHAEL

Practice is not for another hour.

JANIE

Oh, okay... fine. Take your time.
SHE SITS DOWN AT THE TABLE AND STARES AT HIM FOR A BEAT, THEN:

    JANIE (CONT’D)

    Sweetheart, I need you to get out.  
    Mommy’s got to medicate. “Medicate?”
    I meant meditate. Mommy’s got to meditate. Not medicate. I wish...

    MICHAEL

    You know every time you meditate you have a panic attack.

    JANIE

    You know every time you judge me I die a little.  Now get out of my house.

HE GRABS HIS SANDWICH AND THROWS A LARGE SPORTS BAG OVER HIS SHOULDER.  HE KISSES HIS MOM GOOD-BYE AND AS HE TURNS, A CD DROPS OUT OF HIS BAG.  SHE PICKS IT UP.

    JANIE (CONT’D)

    Ooh, honey you dropped this.  (OFF CD)
    “Lady Gaga”?

    MICHAEL

    (NERVOUS) It’s not mine. It’s, ah...
    It’s a friend’s.  I’m just holding it.

    JANIE

    Okay.  Well, make sure she gets it back.

    MICHAEL

    See you later.

HE GRABS IT AND HUSTLES TO THE FRONT DOOR.  AS HE OPENS THE DOOR, TED ENTERS.
MICHAEL (CONT’D)

Hey, Dad.

TED

Oh, hey, ah....

MICHAEL

Michael.

TED

I know.

MICHAEL EXITS.

JANIE

What are you doing here? You’re not supposed to be here.

TED

And yet here I am, so we both lose?

JANIE

And with that, Eeyore entered the room.

TED

I forgot my briefcase.

JANIE

Shock. You’re in a bad mood.

TED

You’re in a bad mood.

JANIE

Yeah. I’m a sober woman living in a brewery. Eighty-eight days ago I stopped drinking and swearing.

(MORE)
The two things that defined who I was for my entire adult life. That's why I’m in a bad mood. Cheese and effing crackers, Ted. What’s your excuse? *

TED

I’m married to that woman. *

JANIE

Not nice! *

TED

You’re right, I’m sorry. I didn’t mean it. It’s just... you hung a curve ball and I had to take a swing at it. *

JANIE

Yes, I’m a little edgy these days, but you have to admit it’s much better now that I stopped drinking. Right? (OFF HIS SILENCE) This is where you talk. *

TED

Of course it’s better. Much better. (THEN) I mean, there are a couple of things I miss... *

JANIE

Like what? *

TED

Just... you know... sex and fun. *
JANIE

That’s not true. I still want to
have... fun.

TED CROSSES TO PICK UP HIS BRIEFCASE, THEN:

TED

Janie, do you think the kids have the
potential to run the company one day?

JANIE

Why?

TED

Eh, no reason. (THEN CROSSING TO
EXIT) Time to make the donuts...

JANIE

Ted, you know, in my group they have
an expression when you’re having a bad
day, or a bad week, or a bad ten years
in your case. “Fake it til you make
it.”

TED

Hmmm. It rhymes.

JANIE

It does honey, you’re right. But the
point of it is, even if you’re not
happy, pretend like you are and
eventually it will become the truth.

TED

Fake it til you make it, huh?
JANIE
Fake it til you make it, Ted. (THEN)
so how we doin’?

TED
Great. Couldn’t be better. I’m a
whirlygig of ebullience.

JANIE
Take me seriously. (THEN) How we
doin’?

TED
(FLAT) Fair.

JANIE
Fake it, better. Come on, buddy, put
your back into it. How we doin’?

TED
(BRIGHTLY) Fair!

JANIE
Well look at that. You’ve practically
got sunshine shooting out of your ass,
I mean, tushy.

TED ALMOST SMILES AND EXITS. JANIE LOOKS AROUND THE ROOM.

JANIE (CONT’D)
Oh, flick a duck, where are those
prayer beads?

CUT TO:
SCENE C

INT. FORREST BREWERY – A LITTLE LATER
(Ted, Kyle, Clay, Lewis)


CLAY

Hey, Kyle, I was thinking... you know how every brewery uses really hot blondes to sell their beer? If Dad ever let us advertise, I think we should um... use girls that, I don’t know, are kind of a little chubby with dark hair and maybe have something ah... missing, but were really nice and smiled at me at the farmers market.

KYLE
(RE: TANK) Dude, we have a problem.

CLAY

It’s not a problem, Kyle. It’s what I like. Her name is Carmen and I’m asking her out. I don’t care if she has one arm.
KYLE

No, dude, I’m talking about up here. We have a problem. Remember that stray cat we’ve been feeding, that Dad told us to get rid of?

CLAY

Yeah, I haven’t seen her today.

KYLE

That’s cause she’s dead, Kyle.

CLAY

How do you know?

KYLE

I’m looking at her right now.

CLAY

Oh my god, the cat is in the vat?

KYLE

Cat in the vat, dude.

CLAY

Poor Miss Mittens! I hope she wasn’t scared.

KYLE

She wasn’t scared, she was hammered. Don’t feel bad, Bro. It’s a good death. It’s how I want to go.
CLAY

(REALIZING) Wait! That beer is supposed to be bottled and shipped by the end of the day. What are we going to do!?

KYLE

Well you can start by calming down.

CLAY

You calm down.

KYLE

Calm down, Clay.

CLAY

No, you calm down, Kyle.

KYLE

I am calm.

CLAY

So am I.

KYLE

Hey, calm down!

CLAY

I am calm!!!

LESTER LEWIS III, THE AFRICAN AMERICAN BREWMASTER OF FORREST ALE ENTERS. HE’S THE THIRD GENERATION OF LEWIS’ TO BE BREWMASTER AT FORREST ALE. AS TOM HAGEN WAS TO THE CORLEONE FAMILY, LESTER LEWIS IS TO THE FORREST FAMILY – IN IT, BUT NOT TRULY ONE OF THEM. BUT WHERE TOM WAS GRATEFUL, LESTER IS DISGUSTED.
LEWIS

Gentleman, am I getting my ale at three o’clock?

CLAY

(ABOUT TO CONFESS) Um, actually --

KYLE

It’s not your ale, Lester, okay? If it was, it would be called Lewis Ale. But it’s called Forrest Ale which is our name.

LEWIS

That’s true. But if it was mine, I wouldn’t call it “Lewis Ale.”

KYLE

What would you call it?

LEWIS

I would call it, “I-don’t-get-note.”

KYLE

What?

LEWIS

“I-don’t-get-note.”

KYLE

(SOUNDS LIKE “I DON’T GET NO TAIL”) “I don’t get note-ale?”

LEWIS

Yep. But I’d say it faster.
KYLE

(FASTER, BUT STILL NOT HEARING HIMSELF) I don’t get no tail. I don’t get no tail. (THEN) Why?

LEWIS

‘Cause you’re ugly and stupid. Now get me my beer at three.

LESTER EXITS. THE BOYS ARE SILENT FOR A BEAT TRYING TO FIGURE OUT WHAT’S JUST HAPPENED TO THEM, THEN:

CLAY

Who’s telling Dad about the beer?

KYLE

No one.

DURING THE FOLLOWING THEY ARE TOTALLY UNAWARE THAT THEY SOUND LIKE A “DR. SEUSS” PASSAGE.

CLAY

But Kyle, there’s a cat in the vat.

KYLE

It’s going to shipping and that is that!

CLAY

Let’s talk about this...

KYLE

I don’t want to chat. If we wait any longer the beer will go flat.

CLAY

It could be worse, it could be a rat.
KYLE

Exactly, let’s do it. Now hand me my hat.

CLAY HANDS KYLE HIS BASEBALL CAP. THE BOYS CROSS TO ONE OF THE LARGE TANKS. THEY ARE ABOUT TO START THE MACHINE BUT KYLE SAYS:

KYLE (CONT’D)

You don’t think this is going to taste like cat do you?

CLAY

I don’t know, I’ve never tasted cat.

KYLE LAUGHS.

CLAY (CONT’D)

Why are you laughing?

KYLE

(SUGGESTIVE) “You’ve never tasted cat?”

CLAY

No.

KYLE

You sure? What’s another word for cat?

CLAY

Kitty?

KYLE

Another one.

CLAY

Kitten?
KYLE

Another one, starting with a “P”.
You’ve never tasted...

CLAY

Persian!

KYLE

No, you moron! Forget it. You ruined the joke.

TED WALKS UP TO HIS SONS HOLDING A BOTTLE OF BURT’S BREW.

TED

(UPBEAT) Hey, boys. How’s it goin’?

KYLE

Good. Why are you so happy?

CLAY

Uh-oh. Did Mom fall off the wagon?

TED

No, she didn’t fall off -- (THEN) I’m just... I’m tryin’ something.

KYLE

What’s with the Burt’s, Dad?!

TED

Oh, you know, making sure we’re still... the best.

CLAY

Can I try it?

TED

Sure.
KYLE

Give me a hit of that too.

THEY CROSS TO A TASTING TABLE, POP OPEN THE BEER AND POUR THREE SAMPLES. BEFORE THEY TASTE THE BEER, THEY EXAMINE THE COLOR, ETC. IT BECOMES APPARENT WHILE THEY ARE INEPT AT EVERYTHING ELSE, THEY ARE BEER SAVANTS.

TED

They’ve changed it, haven’t they?

CLAY

Yeah, it’s gotten very hop heavy.

KYLE

The finish is a little more bitter.

CLAY

There’s a slight nuttiness in there.

KYLE

And the mouth feel is a little sharper. Not as silky.

CLAY

The malt notes are more whiskey-like.

TED

So... what do we think?

KYLE/CLAY

It sucks.

KYLE

Unless their customers like the taste of foot.

CLAY

Dipped in ass.
KYLE

(TO CLAY) Good one.

TED

So we’re still the best. (THEN) Let me ask you guys something. Do you feel like you could run this company when the time comes?

KYLE

(COCKY) Psst. Hells yeah.

TED

I’m talking about everything – sales, distribution, personnel, the whole business.

KYLE

We could do all that crap.

TED

Clay?

CLAY

N-n-n-n-n-yes.

TED


TED EXITS.
KYLE

Dude, you know what that was? That was Dad telling us that pretty soon you and I are going to be running this place.

CLAY

Why?

KYLE

We’re good at what we do.

CLAY

I guess you’re right.

KYLE

Of course I am. We’re the best at this. Now let’s fish that dead cat out of the beer so we can get it into bottles and out to the customers.

CLAY

Puma!

KYLE

What? Oh. Yeah, Clay. It’s really funny that you’ve never tasted Puma.

THEY CROSS OFF AS WE:

CUT TO:

*
ACT ONE

SCENE D

INT. TED’S OUTER OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER (Ted, Lizzy, Lester)

LIZZY FORREST IS A BEAUTIFUL, HIGHLY-INTELLIGENT, HIGHLY-UNDERACHIEVING YOUNG WOMAN OF 24. SHE IS HER FATHER’S SECRETARY. WITH PHONE CRADLED IN HER NECK SHE CUTS HER EX-BOYFRIEND OUT OF ONE PHOTO AFTER ANOTHER WHILE CARRYING ON THE FOLLOWING CONVERSATION.

LIZZY

(INTO PHONE) Dr. Broder, I’m telling you, I’m in pain. Isn’t that good enough? If you were in pain I’d believe you. (THEN) Look, I’m sure you have patients who pop pills to alleviate the spirit-sucking boredom of their desk jobs --

DURING THE REST OF THE SPEECH LIZZY REACHES ACROSS FROM HER DESK TO POUR A CUP OF COFFEE. SHE’S REMARKABLY NIMBLE. EVEN USES HER EXTRA FOOT TO SLAM THE MINI-FRIDGE DOOR.

LIZZY (CONT’D)

-- or to escape the emotional pain of bad choices they made in their lives, but I can assure you, I’m not one of them. I really hurt. I can’t get out of bed, I can’t walk. I can barely move.

ON THAT SHE SKY HOOKS A GIANT BALL OF CRUMPLED UP PHOTOGRAPHS ACROSS THE ROOM AND SINKS IT INTO AN OFFICE TRASH CAN. ANOTHER LINE STARTS TO RING.
LIZZY (CONT’D)

(INTO PHONE) Doctor, can you hold on one sec? (PRESSES A BUTTON, FLAT)
Ted Forrest’s office... No, ma’am brewers yeast can not give you a yeast infection. But if that’s what you want, my ex-boyfriend can give you one, would you like his number?
Hello? (PRESSES LINE ONE) Dr. Broder?
(HE’S GONE) Dammit!

TED ENTERS ON HIS WAY TO HIS OFFICE.

TED

Hey, Lizzy. How’s it going?

LIZZY

Great. Couldn’t be better. I’m a whirligig of ebullience.

TED

* Honey... (MEANINGFULLY) do you like working here?

LIZZY

(BEAT, THEN) Where ya going with this?

TED

I’m just checking in to see how you’re doing.

LIZZY

As your secretary or your daughter?
TED
Daughter, of course.

LIZZY
Well, to this day, I don’t understand why you stay married to that woman – my “birth mother” as we call her. And living at home at twenty-four doesn’t exactly scream “winner.” And you know, I’m still really upset about Todd and the way he --

TED
-- how about as my secretary?

LIZZY
Fine, whatever. What are you doing?

TED
Nothing, nothing... I just... I want you to know I think you’re an incredible woman, Lizzy. You’re smart, you’re talented and I know that you’re capable of running this place one day. Don’t you agree?

LIZZY
I guess. I mean, I’m also capable of snorting a line of ants. But would I want to...?
TED

Okay, well... that’s not a “no.” Keep up the good work. I have faith in you Elizabeth Forrest.

LIZZY GIVES HER DAD A TEpid, IRONIC THUMBS UP, AND ADDS A WINK AND A CLICK FOR GOOD MEASURE. TED CROSSES INTO HIS OFFICE. BEFORE HE SHUTS THE DOOR, HE TURNS BACK TO LIZZY. *

TED (CONT’D) *

Hey, I know it probably seems like I’m in a bad mood a lot of the time, but I just want you to know... I’m working on it.

LIZZY *

You never seem like you’re in a bad mood.

TED *

See... this is why you’re my favorite.

HE CLOSES THE DOOR TO HIS OFFICE. AFTER A FEW BEATS, LESTER APPROACHES HER DESK.

LESTER`

Lizzy...

LIZZY, WHO LOVES LESTER, DECIDES TO PLAY A CHARACTER TO WASTE HIS TIME.

LIZZY

(AS SOUTHERN BELLE) Why, Lester you shouldn’t sneak up on a girl like that.

LESTER

(ROLLING HIS EYES) Shipping report.
LIZZY

(HANDING HIM A FILE) You see, I was taken aback by your elemental sexuality and dark (AIR QUOTES) "otherness."

LESTER

(OFF REPORT) The shipment for Southwest Beverage is leaving today, not tomorrow. Make sure they know that.

LIZZY

But what's to become of us?

LESTER

Got that? Southwest Beverage. Today, not tomorrow.

LIZZY

(AS HERSELF) You're no fun anymore.

LESTER

Don't get me wrong. Nobody likes playing southern-belle-frightened-by-yet-attracted-to-black-man-at-the-general-store more than I do, but I have to get home.

LIZZY

Why?
LESTER
Andre had his wisdom teeth pulled and
I want to go check up on him.

LIZZY
Ouch.

LESTER
Yeah, he’s pretty out of it. They got
him on all these pain meds. Poor guy.

LIZZY
(EXCITED) Yeah. Poor, poor Andre.

LESTER
I’m off. Call Southwest Beverage now.
If they don’t know the truck is coming
it’ll sit on the loading dock all
night and the beer will go bad.

LESTER EXITS. LIZZY GOES TO HER ROLODEX AND LOOKS UP A
NUMBER. SHE DIALS.

LIZZY
(INTO PHONE) Andre, hi. It’s Lizzy.
Who wants me to bring him a milkshake
later?

CUT TO:
ACT ONE

SCENE E

INT. FORREST HOUSE – LATER THAT NIGHT
(Ted, Janie, Lizzy, Michael, Kyle, Clay)

IT’S DINNER TIME AT THE FORREST HOUSE. JANIE IS MAKING IT
ALL HAPPEN. HER FOUR CHILDREN ARE SPREAD OUT ON A LARGE
COMFORTABLE COUCH WATCHING TV. JANIE IS GROWING INCREASINGLY
ANNOYED WITH THEIR LACK OF ASSISTANCE AND SHOWS HER DISGUST
BY GETTING LOUDER AND LOUDER WITH HER PREPARATIONS. THE KIDS
ARE TOTALLY UNFAZED.

KYLE

(OFF TV) Nicole’s the hottest one.
She’s totally going to win. You like
her, Mikey?

MICHAEL, STILL IN HIS BASEBALL UNIFORM SITS VERY CLOSE TO HIS
SISTER, LIZZY.

MICHAEL

She’s pretty, but her outfits are
kinda stupid.

KYLE

Her outfits? What the hell does that
have to do with anything?

JANIE

(CARRYING A HEAVY TRAY) It’s okay,
guys. Sit there. I don’t need any
help. I understand you’re in a
weakened condition because you’re
recently sober. I want to be
sensitive to that.

THE KIDS DON’T EVEN LOOK IN HER DIRECTION. THEY CONTINUE
TALKING TO THE TELEVISION.
CLAY
They’re all too skinny. Why do models have to be so skinny?

LIZZY
You like a big girl, don’t ya, Clay?

KYLE
Only if she has one arm and a gold tooth.

CLAY
Shut up, Kyle.

KYLE
Calm down, Clay. No one cares that you like a hefty Latina who can’t clap.

TED ENTERS HOLDING A PLAYGIRL.

TED
Who put the Playgirl Magazine behind my toilet?

KYLE
Mom?

JANIE
You’re rude! Ted, hit him.

TED SMACKS KYLE ON THE BACK OF THE HEAD WITH THE MAGAZINE.

TED
(I NEVER GET LAID) Trust me, it wasn’t your mother.
JANIE
(TO TED) Nice.

CLAY
It wasn’t me.

KYLE
Lizzy?

LIZZY
I don’t think so.

KYLE
You sure you weren’t in mom’s bathroom twiddling the bean?

LIZZY
You’re a very elegant man, Kyle.

JANIE
Well if it’s not yours, then whose is it?

AT THAT MOMENT, THE FAMILY TURNS TOWARDS MICHAEL. LIZZY NOTICES HER BROTHER STARTING TO PANIC & QUICKLY JUMPS IN.

LIZZY
Fine, it’s mine. Sue me. I wanted to see Levi’s johnson.

JANIE
Lizzy, I’ll thank you to leave your smut in your own room. (SOTTO, TO TED)
Don’t throw that out. (SHOUTING)

Dinner!

EVERYBODY GETS UP AND CROSSES TO THE DINING TABLE. LIZZY LEANS INTO HER BABY BROTHER AND SPEAKS SOFTLY.
LIZZY

Next time, find a better place to hide your stash.

SHE GIVES MICHAEL A SWEET, SAFE SMILE. HE GIVES HER A "THANK YOU" LOOK.

ANGLE ON:

EVERYONE IS NOW AT THE TABLE. THERE IS BEER IN FRONT OF EVERYONE EXCEPT JANIE AND MICHAEL. TED LIFTS A BOTTLE OF FORREST ALE. WHEN HE DOES THIS HE INITIATES A SMALL RITUAL THAT STARTS EVERY MEAL. IT IS DONE WITH THE EASE AND "UN-THINKING-NESS" OF A FAMILY THAT HAS PRACTICED IT SINCE BEFORE THEY CAN REMEMBER. IT GOES LIKE THIS: EACH GRABS HIS OR HER BOTTLE OF ALE, LIFTS IT IN THE AIR AND THEN BRINGS IT DOWN, TAPPING THE BOTTOM OF THE BOTTLE ON THE TABLE THREE TIMES. EACH NAME GETS A TAP.

ALL


THEN, THEY SIMULTANEOUSLY PUT THEIR BOTTLE INTO A CENTERPIECE WHICH IS A CUSTOM-MADE SIX PRONGED BOTTLE OPENER/FAMILY HEIRLOOM AND POP OFF THEIR CAPS.

AND THIS IS HOW THE FORREST FAMILY SAYS "GRACE."

JANIE

How was everyone’s day?

TED

I had an interesting day today. I had a meeting this morning --

JANIE

(TO LIZZY) What’s with the look?

LIZZY

Nothing. You obviously got your hair done today. It’s pretty.
JANIE

(SKEPTICAL) Thank you?

LIZZY

What do they call that ‘do? “Wife of an astronaut?”

JANIE

Ted, do you hear her?! It’s always a kiss and a punch with this child. (TO LIZZY, THRU GRITTED TEETH, MEAN) How did you get so mean?

TED

Come on, Liz.

LIZZY

What? I like it. It’s like... one giant poof for mankind.

JANIE

Keep it up, Elizabeth! Just keep it up! I can be plenty mean, too. You’ll see. I can be a bitch on you know what... I mean, a you know what on wheels. (THEN, TO TED) I’m sorry, Honey, you were saying. (TO KIDS) Clay, that’s too much. Michael, take some salad.
TED
Well... I had a meeting this morning that really made me think about how amazing it is that we’ve been able to keep this business going through three generations, and pretty soon --

THE PHONE RINGS.

MICHAEL
I’ll get it.

MICHAEL CROSSES OVER TO THE PHONE AND ANSWERS.

MICHAEL (CONT’D)
(INTO PHONE) Hello? Sure, hang on just a second... (PUTS HAND OVER THE RECEIVER) Dad, it’s Lester. He said it’s important.

TED
(TO EVERYONE) Hold on.

TED CROSSES TO THE PHONE. MICHAEL SITS BACK AT THE TABLE.

KYLE
Hey, Mikey how was practice?

MICHAEL
Good. I threw a ninety one mile-an-hour fastball today.

KYLE
That’s amazing, buddy. You know your brother Clay here wants to plow a fatty with one arm.
CLAY

Why Kyle?

ANGLE ON: TED ON THE PHONE IN THE KITCHEN, CONCERNED.

TED

(INTO PHONE) Lester, I don’t understand how a flea collar gets into a bottle of beer...

ANGLE ON: THE TABLE.

LIZZY

(TO JANIE) I’m sorry about the hair comment.

JANIE

Thank you.

LIZZY

You’re welcome. (THEN) So what can you tell me about this blouse-coat-dress?

JANIE

Don’t.

ANGLE ON: TED, STILL ON THE PHONE.

TED

(INTO PHONE) What do you mean it’s just sitting on the loading dock. Why didn’t we call? Oh, okay.

TED LOOKS AT HIS FAMILY AND GIVES THEM A LONG HARD LOOK, THEN INTO PHONE.
TED (CONT’D)

Lester, do me a favor. Call Burt.
Tell him to meet me at my office first
thing in the morning.

TED STARTS TO EXIT TO HIS BEDROOM.

JANIE

What’s wrong?

TED

I’m in a bad mood.

JANIE

I thought we talked about this.

TED

Sorry, Janie. Something’s you just
can’t fake.

FADE TO BLACK

END OF ACT ONE
SCENE H

INT. TED’S OFFICE – THE NEXT MORNING
(Ted, Lester (O.C.), Burt)

WE’RE IN TED’S OFFICE. HE’S TALKING TO BURT.

TED

...could we use the infusion of cash?
Sure. But the real reason I’m doing this is because I don’t want to limit my kids. You and I had to take over our dads’ business. I don’t want to do that to my children. They have big dreams. Lizzy is very curious about ...magazines. Clay has expressed an interest in working with the needy – particularly amputees. And who am I to say no?

BURT

I see. And it has nothing to with the fact that they almost shipped out a batch of ale that had a dead cat floating in it? What are you calling that variety, “Dead Pussy Lager?”

TED

How did you...?

BURT

The vet. (THEN) Do we have a deal?
TED
(SIGHS, THEN) Fine. Wire the money
and I’ll... I’ll tell my kids.

BURT
Fire your kids and I’ll wire the
money.

TED
Burt, do you hear what you’re asking
me to do?

BURT
Face it, Ted. You hate the business.
This gets you one step closer to where
you’ve always wanted to be -- out.

TED
I don’t know, I don’t know. Look, let
me talk to my Brewmaster, Lester
Lewis. He works really closely with
the kids. He may not like this at
all.

FROM THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DOOR WE HEAR LESTER, WHO’S CLEARLY BEEN LISTENING THE ENTIRE TIME.

LESTER (O.C.)
I’ll survive. Take the money.

OFF TED’S LOOK, WE:

DISSOLVE TO:
ACT TWO

SCENE J

INT. TED’S OFFICE – LATER THAT DAY
(Ted, Lizzy, Kyle, Clay)

THE FOREST CHILDREN (EXCEPT FOR MICHAEL) ARE SITTING IN
THEIR FATHER’S OFFICE.

LIZZY

Do you have any idea why Dad wants to
see us?

CLAY

I think Kyle and I are in trouble
because we --

KYLE

Shh, dude, come on, she doesn’t need
to know anything about the dead-buh
cat-buh.

CLAY

It’s-buh just-buh Lizzy-buh.

KYLE

Still-buh.

LIZZY

If only I could understand your
impossibly esoteric twin language.

CLAY

It’s not as hard as you think. You
just --

KYLE

Don’t-buh tell-buh her-buh.
LIZZY

(TO HERSELF) Schmucks-buh.

CLAY

(LAUGHING) If you only knew what you just called us.

TED ENTERS.

TED

Kids.

THEY AD-LIB "HEY DAD."

TED (CONT’D)

This is not an easy thing to do as a businessman, let alone a father...

KYLE

Dad, I know where you’re going with this, and I also know in a situation like this it’s really important to be brave and mature and take responsibility for the mistake that’s been made. So... Clay, you got something you want to say to Dad?

CLAY

What?! Kyle’s the one that made us bottle the brew. I said we should dump the tank as soon as he told me Miss Mittens was floating in there.
KYLE

(FEIGNING SHOCK) What?! There was a cat in there and you let it go to shipping?! Our name is on that bottle, Brah. Where’s your pride?

TED

Enough. Both of you. I know about the cat.

LIZZY

(TO TED) Can you believe these two?

TED

(TO LIZZY) And I know that you forgot to call Southwest Beverage yesterday and an entire shipment went bad on a loading dock in Arizona!

LIZZY

I can explain.

TED

Go ahead.

LIZZY

Umm... (THEN, TO BROTHERS) Little-buh help-buh...

TED

It doesn’t matter. Face it, Liz, your head is not in this job.

(MORE)
TED (CONT'D)
You’re rude on the phone, You have no
motivation... Frankly, you’re a bad
employee.

KYLE
(SMALL, HIGH-PITCHED, SOTTO) Ha ha.

TED
You’re all bad employees, and that’s
why I’m firing you.

KYLE
What?

LIZZY
Dad, come on...

CLAY
We’re your kids.

TED
That’s right, and you will always be
my kids, but you will no longer be my
employees. Pack your desks and go
home. It’s over.

SHOCKED, THE KIDS GET UP AND START TO LEAVE HIS OFFICE.

TED (CONT'D)
(CALLING OFF) Oh, Mom called.
Dinner’s at six. She made spaghetti.

CUT TO:
ACT TWO

SCENE K

INT. FORREST HOUSE – DINNER TIME
(Ted, Janie, Lizzy, Michael, Kyle, Clay)

THE ENTIRE FAMILY IS AT THE DINING TABLE. THEY DO A TOTALLY
LIFELESS VERSION OF THE FAMILY TOAST.

ALL

(FLAT AND DEPRESSED) John. Jacob.
Forrest.

THEY START DINNER. IT’S STILTED AND QUIET. AFTER A BEAT.

TED

Look, I know everybody is upset about
what happened at work today, but that
was work. Now we’re at home at our
dinner table and we’re going to talk
about things that families talk about
at their dinner tables. Understood?

THEY AD-LIB A QUASI ASSENT.

LIZZY

He’s right. Let’s talk about what
families talk about. (TO KYLE) Kyle,
how was your day?

KYLE

Really bad.

LIZZY

Oh, I’m sorry to hear that. Why?

KYLE

My dickhead boss fired me today.
LIZZY
That sucks. He sounds like a real jackass.

KYLE
Word.

CLAY
I’m not hungry. (THEN TO TED, RE: KYLE AND LIZZY) You know they were talking about you, right?

JANIE
He knows, Clay.

LIZZY, KYLE AND CLAY GET UP FROM THE TABLE AND START TO LEAVE.

LIZZY
Michael, get up.

MICHAEL
I’m eating.

LIZZY
Come on, I want to show you something in the closet.

MICHAEL
What?

STANDING WHERE ONLY MICHAEL CAN SEE SHE POINTS TO HIM AND MOUTHS THE WORD “YOU.” HE SHOOTS UP FROM HIS CHAIR AND FOLLOWS HIS BROTHERS AND SISTER OUT OF THE DINING ROOM, LEAVING TED AND JANIE ALONE.

TED
What?
JANIE
Nothing. I’m staying out of it.

TED
Good.

JANIE
How could you fire your own children?

TED
If I don’t fire them, Burt doesn’t * invest, and if Burt doesn’t invest we don’t get out of debt, and if we don’t get out of debt, there goes everything * - the house, the I.R.A., the jeep...

JANIE
We’ll be fine. *

TED
No more QVC.

JANIE
(BEAT) Maybe you did the right thing.

TED
I hate Burt for making me do it, but is he wrong? I mean, Lizzy and Clay and Kyle...they just don’t care. When I was their age, I could do everyone’s job on the floor of that brewery better than the people who were doing it. Why can’t they? Why don’t they work harder?

(MORE)
TED (CONT'D)
Why don’t they take more pride in
their family business? I mean, have
they learned nothing from me? (OFF
HER LOOK) What?

JANIE
They’ve learned everything from you.
That’s the problem.

TED
What are you saying?

JANIE
Face it, Ted. You haven’t cared about
this business for years.

TED
Oh, please --

JANIE
No, it’s true! You used to love it.
You used to be so focused on it, so
caring. It was the first thing you
thought about when you woke up and the
last thing you thought about when you
went to bed. It was your world.
Then...things changed. And you lost
interest. You got bored by it. And
that took its toll.

(MORE)
It started going downhill and before long it was drinking Chardonnay for breakfast and watching Maury Povich in my pajamas. You checked-out melon farmer!

TED
Um, are we talking about you or the brewery or the kids...?

JANIE
Yes!

TED
What do you mean, "things changed"?
What changed?

JANIE
You know what I’m talking about.

TED
When my father died?

JANIE
Your father did the one thing you’re not supposed to do in a family business - he pitted his sons against each other. And when he died, you and your brother almost destroyed the business and each other. So your brother left.

(MORE)
JANIE (CONT'D)

That’s put you in a bad mood and you’ve been in a bad mood ever since.

TED

Maybe, but it doesn’t change the fact that the kids are --

JANIE

Ted, you don’t know what the kids are.

TED

What the hell does that mean?

JANIE

Why is Lizzy your secretary?

TED

It’s a good way to learn things.

JANIE

It’s a good way to learn how to answer the phone. As nasty as she is, she’s a very smart woman, and you are squandering her abilities.

TED

I’m not squandering her --

JANIE

‘Cause let me tell you something Ted Forrest. You let the talents of an intelligent, creative woman go to waste like that and she can go a little nutsy koo-koo on you!
TED

Are we talking about Lizzy or you?

JANIE

Yes! (THEN) And the boys... Remember when they didn’t get enough oxygen at birth, and we were worried that they might be a little stupid?

TED

Yeah...?

JANIE

We were right! But when it comes to their taste buds, they’re gifted. Is it the gift I would have wished for? Not so much. A financial wiz and a heart surgeon might have been nice, but you play the hand you’re dealt. Point is, they should not be on the factory floor operating heavy equipment. They should be in the lab tasting beer.

TED

I hear what you’re saying, but I still think... I mean, there’s no excuse for laziness or --
JANIE
There’s nothing to say. Just care.
If you want your kids to be better,
then show them how to be better!
Lead! Or don’t, and let Burt buy us out. Just know that whatever you do,
that’s your legacy. The choice is yours, Ted.

TED
I love you, Janie.

JANIE
Ted, you don’t have to --

TED
I mean it. I really love you. (THEN)
You make me want to be a... slightly
less grumpy man.

JANIE
Okay, that’s something.

TED
Wanna fool around?

JANIE
Really? It’s been a while. I may be
a little rusty.

TED
It’s okay. You’ll just... make it
till you fake it.
JANIE
I think you have that backwards.

TED
If only that were true.

THEY HEAD OFF TO THEIR BEDROOM AS WE:

FADE TO BLACK.
ACT TWO

SCENE I

INT. BURT’S OFFICE – THE NEXT MORNING
(Ted, Burt)

BURT IS AT HIS DESK. TED IS TALKING TO HIM.

BURT
What do you mean you re-hired the kids? I told you firing them was a condition of the deal.

TED
Then I guess we have no deal.

BURT
You’re making a huge mistake, Ted. With all due respect, your kids are...

TED
What? Losers? Boneheads? Underachievers?

BURT
I was just going to say, “not that interested in beer”, but if you want to go with boneheads...

TED
Yeah, they might be boneheads, but they’re my boneheads, and you know what else? It’s my fault they’re that way.
BURT

I’m just saying, I don’t know if they have what it takes...

TED

Well, you’re wrong. They’re very capable. They just need a good leader. And from now I’m going to be that leader.

BURT

Ted, I --

TED

This conversation is over. And I’d appreciate if you kept your opinions to yourself. There’s nothing you can tell me about my kids that I don’t know already.

BURT

Oh really, well Dr. Broder told me that Lizzy --

TED

Stop gossiping about my kids, Burt! How’d you like it if I gossiped about your kids?

BURT

You’d have nothing to say.
TED

Oh, wouldn’t I? Because I happened to be at the high school for a baseball game last week when I overheard a group of students talking about the president of a local beer company whose son happens to be a homosexual! What do you think about that?

BURT

My son is married. To a woman.

TED

Burt Jr. got married?! I can’t believe you didn’t invite us to the wedding.

BURT

Mom said you’d never come.

TED

Well, she was wrong. I would’ve liked to have seen my nephew get married. (WITH FEELING) Because in spite of our differences, Burt, I’ve always been impressed with your children and had a great deal of respect for you as a husband and a father.

BURT TRIES TO ABSORB WHAT TED HAS JUST SAID. TED BREAKS INTO A HEARTY LAUGH.
TED (CONT’D)

You’re right, it is hard to keep a
straight face. See you around,
brother.

TED EXITS AS WE:

END OF SHOW