

TGIF

By

Thomas Hughes

FADE IN:

INT. BAR - NIGHT.

The bar looks like it's been there forever, it hasn't been cleaned in a while, but it is filled with people... depressed people.

MITCH, a balding, out of shape, forty-something guy sits at the bar, holding a bottle of beer. He wears a white shirt and black tie... and he looks miserable.

OWEN, another schlubby guy who also has a beer in front of him, sits next to Mitch.

The two are in mid-conversation...

MITCH

Two weeks ago, my dog died. Last week, I got into a car accident that my insurance wouldn't cover. Now, this week, the boss is up my ass about the goddamn spreadsheets.

(sips beer)

My life is fucking clown shoes, man. A giant joke. And I swear to you, all of this shit happens during the work week.

OWEN

Oh, c'mon. That seems a little irrational. You can't just blame all of your bad luck on the days you work. It's probably just a coincidence.

MITCH

It's not. I know it's not. The universe has it out for me. The world hates me.

OWEN

That's funny. When I was a kid, my mom told me the same thing. I was just trying to blow out the candles.

MITCH

Lemme tell you, Owen, the only words in the English language that I absolutely loathe are "Monday through Thursday." They just make me pessimistic.

(CONTINUED)

OWEN

Wait, "Monday through Thursday?"
What, you don't have work on
Friday?

MITCH

(voice is filled with whimsy)
Oh, yeah, I do. But, you see,
Friday... Friday is a magical day.
It's that one day that makes me
happy. It's the beginning of the
weekend, where all the bullshit and
mishaps of the work week can just
go and fuck itself.

(beat/disappointed)

But that's three, long days away.
It'll feel like an eternity.

OWEN

What would you think if it were
Friday right now?

MITCH

That would be great, man. I could
use that. And maybe a few more
beers.

Owen gets up from his stool.

OWEN

Then let's go.

MITCH

Wh-- What? What are you talking
about?

OWEN

Let's go to TGI Friday's. There's a
new one that just opened up down
the road.

MITCH

What? No. No way. I don't wanna
emulate Friday. I want it to
actually be Friday. Going to a
trashy restaurant is not good
compensation.

OWEN

Well, this is the next best thing.
C'mon. Endless apps might be what
you need to get over your
situation. It'll be fun.

(CONTINUED)

Mitch thinks for a beat.

CUT TO:

INT. TGI FRIDAY'S - ENTRANCE - NIGHT.

Mitch and Owen enter. The scenery is electric. People are drinking beers, eating mile-high burgers, and just having an overall good time. The "Happy Days" theme song is playing.

The HOSTESS approaches.

HOSTESS
(a little over-eager)
Hi! Welcome to Friday's! How many
are you tonight?

OWEN
Two, please.

She grabs two menus.

HOSTESS
Right this way!

CUT TO:

INT. TGI FRIDAY'S - DINING AREA - CONTINUOUS.

She guides them over to a booth and places the menus on both sides of the table.

OWEN
Ooh! Check it out, Mitch, a booth.
Those are only reserved for parties
of four or more. Looks like things
are looking up for you.

Mitch shrugs (It's not a shrug that says "whatever." More like a shrug of quasi-acceptance). The two take their seats.

A WAITER walks over.

WAITER
Hey, fellas! Welcome to Friday's!
Can I start you guys off with a
couple of drinks?

OWEN
Yeah. We'll have two Blue Moons.

(CONTINUED)

WAITER

Blue Moon. Great choice! Mind if I join you?

(laughs)

I'm only kidding. I'll be right back.

He exits.

OWEN

Man, isn't this great? Everyone's so optimistic here.

MITCH

Yeah, I guess so. This may really be what I need. Thanks for taking me here.

OWEN

No problem.

The waiter comes back holding a tray with two very tall glasses of beer.

WAITER

Your drinks.

OWEN

Jesus, that was fast.

MITCH

No kidding. The service here has me floored. Thank you.

WAITER

You're welcome.

(a little menacingly)

It's the least I could do for you, Mitch.

Mitch is taken aback at the sound of his own name. How does the waiter know it?

WAITER(CONT'D)

I'll give you guys some time to decide what you want.

The waiter exits, still leaving Mitch perplexed.

MITCH

Did you hear that? He said my name.

(CONTINUED)

OWEN

What?

MITCH

The waiter. He said my name.

OWEN

You sure?

MITCH

Yeah. I heard it. I'm sure I did.

OWEN

It's probably the stress of the day
getting to you. Making you go a
little crazy.

MITCH

Maybe... I don't know...

OWEN

C'mon, let's drink up while these
beers are still frothy.

Owen lifts his glass.

OWEN(CONT'D)

Cheers. To forgetting the work
week.

Mitch lifts his glass.

MITCH

To forgetting the work week.

The two glasses touch, then the friends chug their drinks.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. TGI FRIDAY'S - DINING AREA - LATER.

Plates of ribs, jalapeno poppers, and a few empty glasses
cover the table (the glasses are mainly on Mitch's side of
the table).

Some dishes have been demolished, leaving no evidence of
food. Other dishes are going to need a doggie bag.

Mitch and Owen are reclined in their seats, clearly stuffed
and satisfied. Owen licks some barbecue sauce off of his
fingers.

(CONTINUED)

OWEN

Dude, this was so good.

MITCH

No kidding. This is exactly what I needed. It actually feels like it's Friday in here.

Mitch's smiling face slowly turns into a look of disappointment.

OWEN

What? What's wrong?

MITCH

Nothing. Don't worry about it.

Mitch signals the waiter (off screen) to come over to the table. The waiter enters the frame.

WAITER

Hey, guys, how are we doing? Can I get you anything else?

MITCH

Just the check, please.

WAITER

You sure you don't want a dessert? We have brownie fudge sundae. It's a classic.

Mitch looks over to Owen. Owen shrugs.

MITCH

We'll take one of those to go for the each of us. And you might as well throw...

(motions to the plates with scraps on them)

...all this in there as well.

WAITER

Great. I'll be right back.

The waiter, with great talent and skill, takes all of the plates off of the table, leaving just the empty beer glasses, then exits.

There's an odd silence between the two of them. This goes on for a few beats. Owen recognizes a sense of pain within Mitch's eyes. Something only a best friend would recognize. Finally--

(CONTINUED)

OWEN

Are you--

MITCH

I wish... I wish everyday can feel like this, you know? I wish everyday could feel this good. This... this feels really awesome. Just me and my friend. This is what my life should be like. This is good.

OWEN

That's a little repetitious, don't you think?

MITCH

But that's how I really feel. Everyday should be like this, man. Don't you think so?

OWEN

Just like this? I don't know. I mean, this is great, but doing this everyday seems like it'd be too much of a good thing.

MITCH

It's better than torturing myself every single day of the week, going to a place that makes me physically and mentally sick. This is a vacation for me. That's how low of a point I'm at right now; TGI Friday's is a vacation.

The waiter returns with his hands full with to-go bags. He places the bags on the table.

WAITER

Your food...

He pulls the check out of his shirt pocket.

WAITER (CONT'D)

...and your check.

Mitch takes the check, then takes out his wallet. He counts out the bills then places them on the table.

MITCH

There you go. And keep the change.

(CONTINUED)

WAITER

Thank you so much. You guys have a good weekend, alright?

The waiter starts to walk away.

MITCH

What? Have a good weekend?

The waiter stops.

MITCH (CONT'D)

(kindly)

I don't mean to be a stickler, but I think you might have misspoke. It's Tuesday.

WAITER

Yes, that's true, out there it's Tuesday. But, in here, it's always Friday.

The waiter winks. Mitch perks up.

WAITER

Anyway, you two have a good night.

The waiter leaves.

Owen scoots out of the booth.

OWEN

Alright, you ready?

Mitch stays in the booth, staring at an empty beer glass.

OWEN

Mitch. Dude. You ready to go?

MITCH

No, I'm not ready.

OWEN

Um... okay. That's fine. You can stay for a little. But I gotta take the car home. Can you call a cab?

MITCH

No, you don't understand... I'm not gonna go.

(CONTINUED)

OWEN

(laughs)

What are you talking about, dude?
We paid. Let's go.

MITCH

No, Owen. I'm not leaving this
place. Ever.

OWEN

I don't know if it's the booze
talking, but you're sounding
insane.

MITCH

You don't understand, man... This
place is everything I've looked
for. You heard the waiter, man. In
here, it's always Friday! This is
just what I wanted!

OWEN

That's just their slogan. It's in
huge letters outside the front
door. It doesn't mean anything.
It's not really Friday. It's
Tuesday. You have work in...
(check his watch)
...seven hours. You have real
responsibilities.

MITCH

I'm done with my old life, Owen.
This is the new Mitch. This is the
TGI Friday's Mitch.

OWEN

You're crazy, man.

MITCH

Owen, you can trust me. I want
this.

Owen clearly thinks this is bullshit.

OWEN

(beat)

Alright. But when you're ready for
a ride home, please call me.

MITCH

I'll be fine. This is my home now.

Owen rolls his eyes.

(CONTINUED)

OWEN
I'll see you later.

He exits.

CUT TO:

INT. TGI FRIDAY'S - ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS.

Owen approaches the hostess.

OWEN
Hey, um... He said he wants to stay.

HOSTESS
Hm... I thought he would. Okay. We'll take care of him.

OWEN
Please... please do. He's my best friend. I don't--

HOSTESS
Nothing's going to happen, Owen. I promise. You can come back to visit whenever you want.

Owen nods, feeling a little regretful. He exits the restaurant.

CUT TO:

INT. TGI FRIDAY'S - DINING AREA - CONTINUOUS.

Mitch looks around, taking it all in, smiling from ear to ear. He nods his head. Everything is looking good. He's home.

In his face, you can tell he believes he's made the right decision.

The waiter comes back to the table, along with the hostess.

WAITER
Mitch! We're so glad you stayed!

HOSTESS
We overheard the discussion you and your friend were having.

(CONTINUED)

MITCH

You did? You guys don't think I'm crazy, do you? It's just that there's such a warm feeling I get when I'm here.

HOSTESS

We don't think you're crazy at all. All the other patients think the same way you do.

MITCH

(beat)

Patients? What are you--

WAITER

Look around around you, Mitch. You're among people much like yourself.

Mitch looks around.

MITCH'S P.O.V.

He sees the restaurant patrons from before. This time, they look a little different... a little more insane.

Their eyes are widened, hair falling out of their heads. They're all insanely grinning. One guy is banging his head into a wall. It's a true madhouse.

BACK TO SCENE

Mitch is horrified by what he sees.

WAITER

Everyone wanted the same thing you want: For it to be the weekend. And they got their wish.

MITCH

(not liking this)

What are you talking about?

HOSTESS

Mitch, do you know the history behind our establishment's name?

Mitch shakes his head, no.

HOSTESS

This is the Thomas Gram Institute for people with Friday syndrome, established in 1965.

(CONTINUED)

MITCH
Friday syndrome?

HOSTESS
Yes, Friday syndrome. People with
that illness are called Friday's.
Hence our name, TGI Friday's.

MITCH
(a mix of panic and confusion)
Wh-- What are you talking about?

WAITER
Everyone surrounding you, they're
all Friday's. And, Mitch... you're
a Friday. Your friend brought you
here because of your illness.

MITCH
Owen did this to me?

HOSTESS
He did the right thing, too. From
what we've observed, your symptoms
are off the charts.

MITCH
This is ridiculous! I'm a normal
human being! This is just what a
normal person wants! This isn't
some illness! The longing for the
weekend is just a preference! This
doesn't make any sense!

He tries to get up from the booth, but the waiter stops him,
making him sit back down.

WAITER
Let's just put it this way,
Mitch...
(beat)
Welcome to Friday's.

As we see Mitch's face fill with horror, we hear the "Happy
Days" theme song play. And, on that, we...

FADE OUT