Dangerous Exploits: Pilot Episode

By

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INT. ROLAND’S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Roland, a white, very attractive, 24 year old male, puts on a shirt and sits at his computer in his bedroom. He checks email. A porn advertisement pops up.

Roland speaks in a dark, slow, sarcastic tone for voice-overs, and a friendly, charming tone in conversation.

ROLAND (V.O.)
Sex. It’s everything. It starts lives, ends lives, and starts them back up again.

He opens his drawer and takes it out of the dresser completely. He flips it over to reveal a bag taped under the drawer, full of hundreds of condoms. He takes a few condoms and puts them in his pocket. He puts the bag and the drawer back in place.

ROLAND (V.O.) (CONT’D)
Everyone does it. Humans...
Animals...

Roland steps on a misplaced dead leaf as he walks towards the door.

ROLAND (V.O.) (CONT’D)
Plants.

INT. TV ROOM

There are several posters of naked women on the wall.

ROLAND (V.O.) (CONT’D)
It should be illegal. At least regulated. Yes, that’s just a joke; part of my ‘charm’. Inside, I’m not really all that charming, not at all. But outwardly, I have to be. Or I’d never get laid, right?

An advertisement about erectile dysfunction plays on the tv. Roland walks into the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN

Roland gets a banana. His roommate DAVE motions a blowjob at Roland as Roland eats the banana and smirks.
ROLAND (V.O.) (CONT’D)
I really have no idea why I do it.
Yet I feel some need to continue
on. The act itself just barely
crosses over the line of enjoyment.
Like getting the lowest possible
"above average" grade on a
standardized test. A 69 in my case.
Ironic.

Roland walks to the bathroom and opens the door. His
roommate, JESSE, is in the bathroom, and faces away from the
door. He has a ruler and compares it along side his penis.
Roland quickly slams the door shut.

ROLAND (V.O.) (CONT’D)
I guess I just found what I’m good
at. And no, I’m not even saying I’m
good at sex: I’m just good at
getting it.

Jesse bursts out of the bathroom.

JESSE
I think it grew!

ROLAND
Aw, ew, man, come on, nobody cares.

Roland walks into the bathroom.

INT. BATHROOM

Roland puts on deodorant. The deodorant label says "Smell
like a man".

ROLAND (V.O.)
’Smell like a man’. But what type
of man? Some women like nice guys.
Some like assholes. Some like
abusive men, clingy men, distant
men, poor men, rich men, or just
plain weird men.

Roland throws the deodorant in the garbage.

ROLAND (V.O.) (CONT’D)
I am all of the above and more.

Roland walks out of the bathroom.
INT. TV ROOM

His roommates, SHAWN, Dave, and Jesse are seated at the couch as they watch tv. They turn around as he approaches them.

ROLAND
You guys ready?

SHAWN
Hell yeah.

DAVE
Let’s do it.

Roland smiles with a thumbs up, and points towards the front door.

ROLAND (V.O.)
My name is Roland Rijpstra, and I am a self-declared, sexual sociopath.

EXT. STREET - TEMPE, ARIZONA

Roland, and his roommates, Shawn, Jesse, and Dave, walk down the street excitedly.

SHAWN
First party of the semester! Bringin’ me back...

DAVE
Yeah man, two more years of this shit! So pumped! Figured graduation would be the end.

ROLAND
Well, now we’re grads in Grad school, go figure.

DAVE
Clever, bro. Hey Shawn, got an extra rubber?

SHAWN
Not extra, sorry. Ask Roland or Jesse.

DAVE
Ha, ask Roland?
ROLAND
Why’d you say it like that?

DAVE
We’ve lived with you for five years now, and not once have you brought a girl back.

ROLAND
Girlfriends don’t count?

DAVE
No, they don’t. Plus, two girlfriends in five years? A hottie you dumped for no reason, and some fat chick for a few months.

ROLAND
She wasn’t that fat, and she was really cool.

ROLAND (V.O.)
She was that fat, and she wasn’t really cool. I had to maintain my image. Nobody suspects a ‘nice guy’ like me, who dated a big girl for her personality, would do what I do.

ROLAND (CONT’D)
Plus, I wouldn’t bring a girl back to our place with your gross self wandering around.

JESSE
Oh shit!

DAVE
I’m always just wandering trying to find your V-card, but, oh, wait, you never dropped it.

JESSE
Oh!!!

ROLAND
False. And here ya go.

Roland slaps a condom into Dave’s hand.

DAVE
This probably expired in like 1997.
ROLAND
Okay, I’ll take it back.

DAVE
Nah I’m kidding, thanks man, clutch.

ROLAND
Clutch? Why?

DAVE
Easily nailin’ this girl from class.

ROLAND
Oh yeah? What’s her name?

DAVE
Jenny, uh, I forget her last name, I think maybe, Jameson.

ROLAND
If you’re making the joke that it sounds like, you mean Jenna.

DAVE
True, is that who you whack off to since you’re never bringing girls home?

ROLAND (V.O.)
Dave just made a mistake.

ROLAND
Yeah, her and your mom.

JESSE
Ohh!!

ROLAND (V.O.)
Uncharacteristically juvenile of me, but not far from the truth...

SHAWN
Man, stop with that, Jesse.

The guys stop as they hear loud music from above. They look up. There is a big party on the roof of an apartment complex. The guys enter the apartment complex.
EXT. ROOF POOL PARTY

The pool party is loud. Everyone runs around in their bathing suits, drinks, and dances. Roland looks over and sees a couple as they nearly have sex in the corner.

    ROLAND (V.O.)
    Sometimes it’s as easy as saying hello and finding one common bond. Forty-something minutes later, you’re the eighth girl I’ve fucked, this week.

Roland walks by a pretty girl and smiles. She turns away, as he looks past her and notices her boyfriend, who stares angrily at Roland.

    ROLAND (V.O.) (CONT’D)
    Other times they make me work on it. Could be for months. Figuring her out, her complexities, faults, what she wants, what her boyfriend doesn’t give her, what her Daddy did wrong, what she’s done wrong. And while I’m out playing sexual hopscotch, I didn’t forget about her. When the moment’s right, I make my move. And I always make my move.

Shawn unexpectedly puts a Yankees hat on Roland’s head.

    SHAWN
    Check out what I found on the stairs.

    ROLAND
    Ew man, you found that?

Roland takes the hat off, pretends to toss it, and gives it back to Shawn.

    ROLAND (V.O.)
    I have more "championships" in a month than the Yankees have in their entire history. And yes, that is saying much.

    JESSE
    Yo, Roland! Shawn! Come here! Shots!
Roland and Shawn walk over to a table where Jesse, Dave, and JENNY await him with a shot of vodka. They all cheers and take a shot.

DAVE
Hey, Roland, this is my friend Jenny from class.

ROLAND (V.O.)
Fuck. He used my real name. I don’t like to do that.

Jenny is short, brunette, and pretty. Roland extends his hand for a handshake

JENNY
No, I like hugs.

Jenny, clearly drunk, gives Roland a hug.

ROLAND
Nice to meet you too. Alright I’m gonna walk around I’ll come back in a few minutes for another shot.

DAVE
Sounds good man.

Roland walks around the party, as he gives all elements of the scene a look at. He looks at what the girls drink, the guys drink, what girls are with what guys, and analyzes what girls are too drunk.

ROLAND (V.O.)
So much to gather from such little information. The girl in the pool...

A girl in a white bikini is surrounded by guys in the pool as she drinks from a bottle with laughs and smiles.

ROLAND (V.O.) (CONT’D)
...hates her life. She’s suffered; a creature of depression, victim of neglect. Most guys see a girl like her and smile, but it makes me kind of sad. Kinda...

FLASHBACK: APPROX 24 YEARS AGO
INT. FARGO’S FINEST: STRIP CLUB – NIGHT

ZOE, a pretty, pregnant woman in her late teens, works at the front entrance booth of Fargo’s Finest, a strip club. The strip club is empty aside from two strippers on stage, the manager, PAUL ROLAND, and three male customers.

A GROSS MAN walks in and approaches the entrance booth.

   ZOE
   Ten bucks to get inside, there.

Gross Man looks down at Zoe’s pregnant belly.

   GROSS MAN
   How about I give you twenty and say we have a little premature threesome?

Gross Man laughs and goes to rub Zoe’s belly. Zoe slaps his hand away.

   ZOE
   Ten bucks, please.

   GROSS MAN
   Aw come on now, let me touch it.

Gross Man forces his hand on Zoe’s belly and rubs it with a smile. Zoe moans in pain.

   ZOE
   Ah! Oooh! Oh my G-d, wha-

   GROSS MAN
   Sure a quickie for a regular tart.

Zoe continues to moan. Water splashes on the floor beneath her. Paul Roland runs over to Zoe.

   ZOE
   My fucking water just broke!

   PAUL ROLAND
   Everyone get the fuck out of here!

The three men and Gross Man quickly leave. The two strippers, MANDY and ANGIE, run over to Zoe.

   MANDY
   Come here, baby, we got you.

Mandy, Angie, and Paul Roland carry Zoe onto the stripper stage. Zoe yells fiercely. She goes into labor.
SEVERAL HOURS LATER.

Zoe, drenched in sweat, bears a baby boy. Paul Roland cuts his cord and hands him to Zoe. She holds him in her arms.

ZOE
Sweet baby Roland.

THREE YEARS LATER.

INT. FARGO’S FINEST: STRIP CLUB - EVENING

Zoe does a routine on the stripper pole on stage. Roland, three years old, cries in the corner. Zoe soon gets off stage. She picks up Roland.

ZOE
Jesus Christ do you ever stop?
Let’s get you to bed.

Zoe walks towards the exit. A MAN taps her on the shoulder.

MAN
How much for some private time, sweetheart?

ZOE
I’m kinda busy here...I’ll be back in like five minutes for lapdances.

MAN
I’m not talking about lapdances...

Man holds out a stack of cash. Zoe raises her eyebrows.

MAN (CONT’D)
Got a place?

INT. ZOE’S APARTMENT

Zoe’s apartment is a one bedroom studio right on top of Fargo’s Finest.

Zoe puts Roland in his crib, which is next to her bed. She then has sex with Man. Roland watches.

BACK TO PRESENT
EXT. ROOF POOL PARTY

The girl in the white bikini starts to kiss one of the guys in the pool.

    ROLAND (V.O.) (CONT’D)
    The lack of pleasure she gets from life, she tries to make up for with sex and alcohol. Too easy. For tonight at least.

Roland looks over at a girl that is across the party from him. She sips on wine as she text messages.

    ROLAND (V.O.)
    Boyfriend, long term.

Roland looks at the dance-area. Most girls grind with guys, but a few just dance casually.

    ROLAND (V.O.)
    Boyfriends, short term. They still feel like "independent women" that can go out dancing. That’ll end soon.

Roland walks back over to the table where his roommates and Jenny are.

    DAVE
    Roland!

    ROLAND
    Hey. How many shots did you take?

    DAVE
    Only like, six.

    ROLAND
    What! I’ve been gone like two minutes!

    ROLAND (V.O.)
    Dave’s making my job easier.

    DAVE
    Gotta catch up to Jenny, she’s been here like an hour!

    ROLAND (V.O.)
    So easy.
ROLAND
Alright man, well line me up, I need to get on your level.

Dave pours Roland a shot.

DAVE (to Jenny)
See, he needs to get on my level.

JENNY
Roland, isn’t Dave’s shirt awesome?

Dave’s shirt reads: "Know Your Vowels: A-E-I-FOCK-U"

ROLAND (V.O.)
Peacocking. Wearing something that gets you attention, a convo starter.

ROLAND
Yeah it’s really cool, I gotta get some shirts like that.

ROLAND (V.O.)
And my face is usually peacock enough. Humble, I know.

JENNY
Nah, you have good style.

ROLAND (V.O.)
Thanks for the in, Dave. I guess peacocking worked against you tonight.

ROLAND
Thanks. Another shot?

JENNY
Yeah, let’s do it.

DAVE
Yeah! Number 8!

JENNY
You should really slow down, Dave.

ROLAND (V.O.)
Gracias, Dave. See you later.
Dave stumbles off. Roland and Jenny cheers and take a shot.

ROLAND
So you’re in class with Dave?

JENNY
No, no, no, no, no, I was just taking a tour, thinking about starting here in the Spring.

ROLAND
Oh, cool, what grad program?

JENNY
Nah, not grad, undergrad. I don’t know why they had me sit in on a grad class.

ROLAND (V.O.)
Please be eighteen, please be eighteen...

ROLAND
Yeah that’s weird. So are you a senior?

JENNY
In high school? No, no, I graduated a few years ago, I just took some time off before college, I’m 19.

ROLAND (V.O.)
Thank fucking G-d.

ROLAND
Gotcha. Travel or anything?

JENNY
Nah, I wish. Just worked and figured out what I want to do with life.

ROLAND
And what’s that?

JENNY
Travel. Ha, no, just kidding, um, like social work. What do you want to do?
I’ll stick with the theme and say I want to travel as well, but I’m studying psychology.

Oh, wow! That must be pretty interesting.

Yeah, must be. I think so at least. Hey I’m gonna go catch up with my roommates and see how Dave is, I’ll see you later though?

Yeah, definitely, sounds good.

Roland walks around, as he further observes the party.

Time to let her marinate.

The girl in the white bikini in the pool kisses another guy.

Shocker.

The guy puts his hand down the girl’s white bikini bottom.

Literately.

Roland finds Dave, who can hardly walk.

Hey, you alright buddy?

Dave sounds very drunk.

Yes, I am good. Where Jenny?

I don’t know, around. Still going for it?

Uh, duh, yes, so in there. She loved my shirt.
ROLAND
Yeah, you got it man. I’m gonna go walk around.

DAVE
Okay, tell Jenny to come here.

ROLAND
Will do buddy.

Roland walks back to Jenny.

ROLAND
Hey, Dave wants you to go talk to him...you might have some babysitting to do...

JENNY
Ugh, great. You’re his roommate, go take care of him.

Roland gives Jenny a "yeah right" stare. Jenny slaps Roland’s arm.

JENNY
I’m kidding! Jeez!

ROLAND
Good. Alright I’ll catch up with you in a few minutes, you don’t want to leave Dave waiting.

JENNY
Woo-hoo...

Roland walks exits the roof and walks into the apartment building.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING STAIRWELLS

The stairwell is very dark, and has a space under the sets of stairs on each floor, the size of a small room.

ROLAND (V.O.)
Time to scope it out. The number one rule, never bring a girl home. That’s how they find you again. Some say don’t shit where you eat, I say don’t fuck where you eat. Not that I shit where I eat either. This will due.
Roland exits the stairwell and returns to the rooftop pool party.

EXT. ROOF POOL PARTY

Roland walks back onto the roof. Dave sits in the corner with a puke bucket as Jenny rubs his back. Roland approaches them.

ROLAND
Hey buddy, how ya feeling?

DAVE
Jenny’s nice girl.

Jenny and Roland look at each other with a smile.

ROLAND
Sure is. You okay, Dave?

DAVE
Yes. Need drink.

JENNY
No!

DAVE
Ow! Loud! No, drink water, not bad drink.

ROLAND
Hold on, let me get you some water.

Roland walks over and gets a bottle of water out of a cooler that is by the alcohol table. He walks back over to Dave, opens the cap, and hands the water bottle to Dave.

ROLAND
Here ya go, drink up.

JENNY
So sweet.

DAVE
Yeah, you are like a, honey flower.. teddy bear, lolly-pop.

ROLAND
Okay...thanks man.

Jenny smiles.
ROLAND (V.O.)
I am a sweet, attractive guy, a great friend, and showed little interest. She is very interested.

ROLAND
Dave, will you be okay if we go take a shot and come back?

DAVE
Yes.

ROLAND
Okay then. After you, Jenny.

Jenny and Roland walk towards the alcohol table. Jenny stops Roland.

JENNY
Thanks for getting me out of that.

ROLAND
No problem, he does it all the time, he’ll probably pass out any minute.

JENNY
You’d think he’d be able to handle his liquor at his age.

ROLAND
You’d think. Another shot?

JENNY
Eh, I mean I’m kinda drunk.. I will if you want, –

ROLAND
Nah I’m good, I just figured you wanted to.

Roland and Jenny chuckle.

ROLAND (V.O.)
And now I’m relatable. The intimidation, just like her pants, is basically gone.

JENNY
So where’d you go before?
ROLAND
Come with me, I’ll show you.

Roland grabs Jenny’s hand and leads her out the door.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING STAIRWELLS

ROLAND
Just felt like taking a break from the party for a minute.

JENNY
Yeah, I gotcha.

ROLAND (C.O.)
If I were creepy she’d be creeped out, but I’m not.

Roland and Jenny sit under a set of stairs. Roland puts his arm around Jenny. He kisses Jenny. She kisses back. She soon stops him.

JENNY
Do you live around here?

ROLAND
Kinda, why?

JENNY
I don’t know, I mean, I’d rather go there than a stairwell.

ROLAND
Yeah, I would too, but I’d feel really bad taking you back. Seems like Dave kinda likes you.

JENNY
Really? Yeah, I thought he might, ugh. I can leave really early though.

ROLAND
It isn’t worth the risk, I don’t want him to be mad at me.

JENNY
You’re a good friend.

ROLAND (V.O.)
I’m a good friend.
Jenny kisses Roland. They lay down together as the kisses become more intense. Clothes come off. A condom comes out.

10 MINUTES LATER.

ROLAND
Shit! What time is it?

JENNY
Uh, like, 12:45.

ROLAND
Shit! I meant to leave earlier.

JENNY
You seemed fine outside, not a lot of time passed in here...

ROLAND
Ouch.

Jenny rubs up against Roland.

JENNY
Come on, do you have another condom.

ROLAND
No, I don’t, I’m sorry. I really need to go.

JENNY
And not even a cuddle? So sad.

ROLAND
I wish I could. I know most guys hate it, but I seriously love cuddling, it’s so relaxing.

JENNY
Yeah! It really is! Wow, a guy that likes cuddling, we should hang out again.

ROLAND (V.O.)
Cuddling and euthanasia are synonymous to me.

ROLAND
Yeah, definitely.
JENNY
Well, what’s your number?
Jenny takes her phone out of her pocket.

ROLAND
480-446-0609

JENNY
I’m really sorry, what was your name again? I’m awful with names, especially if I’m drinking.

ROLAND (V.O.)
I was banking on that.

ROLAND
Ha, yeah, no worries, I am too. It’s Cliff.

ROLAND (V.O.)
The name of my childhood pet rabbit.

JENNY
Okay cool, I’ll give you a text. Why do you have to leave so early anyway?

ROLAND
Got work in the morning.

ROLAND (V.O.)
That’s a lie. I work night shifts, part time at Safeway Supermarket.

JENNY
How responsible.

ROLAND
Grad student, gotta prepare for real life soon.

JENNY
Very true.

ROLAND
Hey, could you tell Dave I say bye when you go in?

JENNY
Why don’t you go in real quick?
ROLAND
Eh, it’ll take forever to get outta there by time I say bye to everyone.

JENNY
Oh, sorry, Mr. Popular.

Jenny sticks her tongue out.

ROLAND
That’s me.

JENNY
No problem though, I’ll tell him. Goodnight, text me.

Jenny kisses Roland and goes back to the roof. Roland walks down the stairwell and out the building.

EXT. STREET – TEMPE, ARIZONA

Roland walks down the street. A buzz is heard. Roland takes his phone out of his pocket. He has a text message, from Jenny, that reads:
"Hope you had fun tonight, ASU may have just became my first choice :) See you soon?"

Roland saves Jenny’s number in his phone, deletes the text, and turns his phone off as he continues to walk down the street.

ROLAND (V.O.)
I never give girls my real number. This is my "going out" phone...helps me keep track of my "numbers"...although, I can only save a maximum of 300 contacts...

Roland arrives at his apartment, enters, and closes the door behind him.

FOUR DAYS LATER

INT. SAFEWAY SUPERMARKET – EARLY MORNING

Roland walks out of the dark, unlit Safeway Supermarket.
EXT. STREET
Roland walks many blocks down the street and arrives at Arizona Mills Mall.

INT. ARIZONA MILLS MALL
Roland walks into the mall and over to the food court. He orders a snack, sits down, and eats it. While he eats, he stares, subtly, at the girl who works at Tempe Cafe in the food court. She has "hipster" style.

ROLLAND (V.O.)
Final day of research. Can’t wait for the test..

INT. ASU CLASSROOM - MORNING
Roland sits in the middle of a classroom. The class consists of 24 other students. His professor, PROFESSOR KENRICK, addresses the class from the front of the room.

PROFESSOR KENRICK
Class, good morning. My name is Albert Kenrick, you can call me Albert, Professor Kenrick, Al, whatever. Before we get started, congrats to all of you for getting into this elite program. Only 25 students are selected at any one time. And since this University has the highest enrollment in the country...

ROLLAND (V.O.)
Which is why I go here.

PROFESSOR KENRICK
..that is certainly a feat. So a little bit about me. Well, I’m from Virginia originally, but I like sand and dry heat so now I’m here.

A few students chuckle.

PROFESSOR KENRICK (CONT’D)
My area of expertise involves the application of evolutionary models to social cognition and interpersonal behavior, you know, influence of fundamental motives on (MORE)
PROFESSOR KENRICK (CONT’D) (cont’d)

attention memory, and economic
decision-making. The motives being
primarily self-protection, disease
avoidance, uh, what else, oh,
mating, romantic attraction,

ROLAND (V.O.)

Bingo.

PROFESSOR KENRICK

etc. I know, I sound like a
textbook sometimes, hopefully I
didn’t scare you off with the big
words, but hey, you’re in Grad
school now, so get used to it. Now
a lot of you probably will be
working with other professors that
share your research interests. Who
here is signed up to be working
with me?

Roland, PACO, a chubby, male, Latino student, KATIE, an
attractive female student, EVA, an unattractive, fat female
student, and KELLY, a harsh, feminist-type female student,
all raise their hands.

PROFESSOR KENRICK

Excellent. Really quickly, each of
you say your name, where you’re
from, and why you’re here.

Professor Kenrick points to Paco. Paco stands up. Paco
speaks with a subtle Mexican accent.

PACO

Hey, I’m Paco Escobedo, uh, I’m
Mexican-American, from near Rio
Rancho, New Mexico. And, I’m here
to learn!

The class laughs. Roland stands up. He speaks well and with
a smile.

ROLAND

Hey guys, Professor, my name’s
Roland Rijpstra. I’m from Grafton,
North Dakota, but managed to get
out of there before the weird Fargo
accent set in.

The class laughs.
ROLAND
I also got my bachelors degree here, and I want to be a psychiatrist so I can help people with their problems

ROLAND (V.O.)
And use my knowledge to sleep with as many women as possible despite my disinterest in sex itself.

PROFESSOR KENRICK
Very nice Roland, I look forward to working with you.

Paco looks offended.

PACO
(under his breath)
Don’t look forward to workin’ with me?

PROFESSOR KENRICK
Roland, pick someone to go next.

ROLAND
Alright, how about, you?

Roland points to Kelly. Kelly stands up. She sounds unenthusiastic, sarcastic, and angry.

KELLY
Yeah I’m Kelly, from San Francisco, this stuff interests me so I study it. To answer the question you’re all afraid to ask, yeah, I’m a feminist dyke, fight for the rights, woo-hoo, get over it.
Bachelors at Cal State Berkley.

Katie stands up. She has a sweet tone to her voice.

KATIE
I’m Katie Smith, not a feminist dyke, from Phoenix, Arizona. I used to cheerlead at Michigan State, now I’m back here for my Masters so I can commute, and I want to work in research.

ROLAND (V.O.)
Can’t fuck a classmate, can’t fuck a classmate, can’t fuck a classmate.
PROFESSOR KENRICK
Okay, great Katie. And finally we have:

Eva stands up. She looks around the room and barely makes eye contact with any students or Professor Kenrick.

EVA
My name’s Eva, I’m from Mississippi. I, uh, I don’t know what else really to say I’m sorry.

PROFESSOR KENRICK
That’s alright, nice to meet you Eva. I’m gonna hand out the curriculum and let you guys go.

Professor Kenrick passes out packets to each student.

ROLAND (V.O.)
If Eva wasn’t a classmate, I’d absolutely give her a confidence-fuck, poor girl. But, can’t fuck a classmate.

PACO
That’s it?

PROFESSOR KENRICK
Yup, that’s it. Your respective professors will be emailing you with your individual and group meeting times. Thanks for your time today guys, regardless of its brevity.

The students file out of the classroom and into the hall.

INT. ASU ACADEMIC BUILDING HALLWAY

Paco catches up to Roland.

PACO
Ay yo, Roland, hold up.

ROLAND
Hey man! How’s it going?

Paco and Roland shake hands.
PACO
Decent, you know. Want to grab lunch?

ROLAND
Yeah definitely, cafeteria?

PACO
Sounds good to me. Man this is awesome, I totally forgot you were coming for Grad school here too.

ROLAND
Having a friend doing the same research will definitely make it better.

PACO
For sure man.

Paco and Roland walk into the cafeteria. They pick out their meals and find a seat. Paco eats two salads and Roland eats a sandwich with chips.

ROLAND
Salads?

PACO
Yeah man, gotta drop a few.

ROLAND
But two salads?

PACO
Eh, better than two burgers.

ROLAND
This is true. So anything new going on?

Paco looks deep into his salad and takes a hard stab at it. He bits the salad off the fork roughly and fills up his whole mouth. He speaks with food in his mouth.

PACO
Eh, nah, I mean not really, you?

ROLAND (CONT’D)
Paco is easy to read for a psychology major.
ROLAND
Nah, just work and now school. You sure you’re all good?

Paco avoids eye contact.

PACO
Yeah man, why?

ROLAND
You seem a little...angry at your salad.

PACO
It’s nothing important.

ROLAND
Come on, my future profession is going to be helping people talk out their problems, what is it?

ROLAND (V.O.)
Paco is a decent friend of mine, I’m willing to help.

Paco puts his fork down.

PACO
Okay, listen, you can’t talk to anyone about this.

ROLAND
Of course.

PACO
I really could use your help though.

ROLAND
Sure, with what?

PACO
Okay so my little sister was here the other week. Thinkin’ about coming to ASU, checkin’ it out.

ROLAND
Sounds awful.

PACO
Fuck you man. Nah, but like, she came back to my place all drunk, which is fine, college, whatever. (MORE)
PACO (cont’d)
But she was cryin’ sayin’ some dude
like touched her.

ROLAND
Oh man, that’s awful.

ROLAND (V.O.)
I strongly dislike the idea of
rape.

ROLAND (CONT’D)
Did she get a name?

PACO
Nah that’s the problem, she was
like blacked out, doesn’t remember
a lot of the night. But she’s
freakin’ out, like thinks she’s
pregnant.

ROLAND
I’m really sorry to hear that man.

PACO
Yeah, but I’m definitely findin’
this guy. Down to help out?

ROLAND
I mean, sure, but did you get any
info on him?

PACO
Just that he’s some pretty boy,
Grad student.

ROLAND (V.O.)
No way...

ROLAND
I guess that narrows it down a
little.

PACO
Yeah I’m a figure out the address of
that party, talk to some people,
see who was there.

ROLAND (V.O.)
Could her misconstrued memory be
pointing a finger at me?
ROLAND
Once you find out where the party was at, it shouldn’t be too hard to figure it out from there.

PACO
I hope so.

ROLAND
Well you have my number, let me know if you need anything.

PACO
I do and I will. I appreciate it Roland.

ROLAND
Any time.

ROLAND (V.O.)
...Fuck.

NEXT DAY.

INT. SAFEWAY SUPERMARKET - EARLY MORNING

It is 6:30am. Roland has 30 minutes left of his shift at Safeway.

Roland walks around the dark grocery store, up and down isles. He skims through the book "On The Road" by Jack Kerouac.

ROLAND (V.O.)
Spontaneity. Kerouac seems to have it down to a science. Not a normal book on my list, but a key element in my next experiment.

Roland walks into the back of the store and goes to the employee lockers. He opens his locker and takes out a backpack.

ROLAND (V.O.) (CONT’D)
The play is finally today. Time to dress the part.

Roland puts on thick-framed, black glasses, roughs up his hair, and puts on a shirt that says: ’Republicans Are Terrorists’.

Roland signs himself out of work and exits the building as others come in to take over his shift.
EXT. STREET

Roland walks down the street, opposite direction of his apartment and ASU. He walks for a while, until he arrives at the Arizona Mills Mall.

INT. ARIZONA MILLS MALL

ROLAND (V.O.) (CONT’D)
Since I’ve been working the graveyard shift, I’ve been going to the mall food court for breakfast afterwards. With a ‘fully loaded menu’, I had struggled to pick just one. But, I managed.

Roland sits at a table and watches JAYNE. Jayne is a hipster by all means and works at the Tempe Cafe in the mall food court.

ROLAND (V.O.) (CONT’D)
She’s been working here for years. She met me a few months ago, but has no idea. A quick transformation and the tables are turned.

Roland walks up to the Tempe Cafe counter, with his "On The Road" book in hand. He acts and sounds superior with a tone of boredom.

ROLAND
Soy mocha latte, no sugar unless you have natural cane.

JAYNE
Your total is $5.35.

Roland takes out his wallet and puts "On The Road" on the counter.

ROLAND
Only $5.35? Great. Hope it’s good.

JAYNE
Always is. Hey you’re reading On The Road?

ROLAND
Yeah.
JAYNE
Awesome, great read.

ROLAND
Yeah, I mean, it is, but my trip is more exciting honestly.

JAYNE
Oh, really? Where are you going?

ROLAND
Going? Nowhere, I’m already here. But soon, all the way East. New York is where I want to be.

JAYNE
That’s so cool!

ROLAND
Mhm.

Roland hums a tune as he pulls money out of his wallet.

JAYNE
Oh my gosh are you humming Of Montreal?!

ROLAND
Yeah. They’re great.

JAYNE
Yeah! I feel like nobody around here has even heard of them!

ROLAND
Nobody around here seems to know much.

JAYNE
Seriously, you’re lucky you don’t live here.

ROLAND
Yeah, seems it. Where I’m from isn’t great, but yeah.

JAYNE
Where are you from?

ROLAND
West LA.

West LA is the Malibu-area of Los Angeles.
JAYNE
Isn’t it dangerous there?

ROLAND
I mean, a little bit, but when you grow up around it, you get used to it.

JAYNE
Wow.

ROLAND
Wow, indeed. You seem like a pretty interesting person, shocked to find one around here. Gettin’ off work soon?

JAYNE
I was just gonna say, I’m going on break soon.

ROLAND
Break? Take off, I can’t stand being in a mall anymore.

JAYNE
Ah, I don’t know, I can’t just leave work.

ROLAND
You can. It’s just if you want to, is the question.

JAYNE
I do, anything’s better than working in this mall. It’s a quiet day anyway, b-.

ROLAND
Okay then.

JAYNE
Wait, sorry, what’s your name by the way?

ROLAND
Asher. You?

JAYNE
Jayne.
ROLAND
Cute name.

Jayne blushes.

JAYNE
Thanks. I’m gonna go tell my boss I feel sick.

Jayne goes in the back of the cafe. She comes back with a smile.

JAYNE
Okay, let’s go.

EXT. STREET

Jayne and Roland stand outside the mall.

JAYNE
I feel like I’m in 500 Days Of Summer or something. I haven’t done anything like this in forever.

ROLAND
What does that mean?

JAYNE
It’s a movie, pretty good.

ROLAND
Oh. I don’t really watch movies.

JAYNE
Yeah, no, I usually don’t..I don’t know.

ROLAND
That’s cool.

Jayne begins to walk in the direction of Safeway. Roland doesn’t move.

JAYNE
Coming?

ROLAND
Nope.

JAYNE
Why not?
ROLAND
I’ve been that way.

JAYNE
So?

ROLAND
I told myself that I wouldn’t take steps backwards in my trip.

ROLAND (V.O.)
Or towards my house...

JAYNE
So you literally won’t go somewhere you’ve been already?

ROLAND
Exactly.

JAYNE
Wow that’s really cool.

ROLAND
Yeah.

ROLAND (V.O.)
Even I’m surprised this act is working. Although there is some truth to me not turning back...

SEVEN YEARS AGO:

INT. RUBY’S CITY DINER

A group of middle aged men, Mr. Jensen, MAN 2, MAN 3, MAN 4, and MAN 5, in camo outfits sit around a table in Ruby’s City Diner in Grafton, ND. It is a hick restaurant, with many dead animals on the walls.

Roland, age fifteen, enters. RUBY is at the cash register. She sees Roland before the men do, and quickly motions for him to leave.

ROLAND
Hey Ruby, I’ll take the usual to go, for my Dad too.

The group stares at Roland.
ROLAND (CONT’D)
Hey, what’s up everybody?

MR. JENSEN
Guess you haven’t heard from one of your girlfriends in a while.

ROLAND
Which? As in your daughter?

MR. JENSEN
Yeah, as in, my daughter. Think you’re sly, son?

Mr. Jensen throws Roland a newspaper. The front cover says: "Local Teenage Girl Commits Suicide".

ROLAND
Is...is that-

MR. JENSEN
Couldn’t keep your little dick in your pants, boy?

ROLAND
Wh-

MR. JENSEN
Claire was buyin’ a dress for the dance, thought you’d ask her. Funny thing, she ran into three other girls thinkin’ the same damn thing. You had them all tricked up, every last one. You think that’s right?

ROLAND
Sir, I n-

MR. JENSEN
She was cryin’ all night. Thought it to be nothing, just an embarrassed teenage girl. But imagine my morning. Seein’ something in the yard, think it’s a possum stuck up a tree. I nearly got out my shotgun to shoot it down. But I went closer to it, still half asleep. It looked like...

Mr. Jensen stops for a moment but Roland knows what he is saying.
MR. JENSEN
Nothin’ I could do but cut her down, put her in her grave, and pray to Jesus that he’ll still take her into heaven.

ROLAND
Mr. Jensen, I neve-

MR. JENSEN
You’d better hope you still have a spot with your whore of a mother down in Fargo, ’cause if I ever see you again, I’m gonna shoot you right in the mouth.

BACK TO PRESENT.

EXT. STREET

JAYNE
Well... we can go to my house if you want.

ROLAND
Yeah, whatever. As long as it’s forward.

JAYNE
Ha, it is, don’t worry.

ROLAND
Solid.

INT. PACO’S APARTMENT

Paco is on the phone with Jenny while he searches a number on whitepages.com.

PACO
Yo I got it! The site worked, the number you gave me, the address is around here. 42 East Spence Ave.

JENNY
What are you gonna do?

PACO
I’m a just go over there and talk to him.
JENNY
Don’t do anything stupid, Paco!

PACO
Nah, chill, it’ll be fine.

JENNY
Seriously, he might be the father of my kid.

PACO
Fuckin’ rape kid! I should kill him, your kid would be happy!

JENNY
Paco!

Jenny begins to cry and sniffle.

PACO
I’m sorry, yo, don’t worry, it’ll be fine. I’ll just straighten this Cliff guy out, my boy is comin’ with me. He’s way more level headed, nothin’ crazy is gonna happen. You trust me?

JENNY
I do, thank you. Just be careful.

PACO
Don’t worry, it’ll be fine, Jenny. I’ll let you know how it goes. Call me after you take the pregnancy test.

JENNY
Thanks, Paco. I will, and thanks for not telling Mom.

PACO
You got it. Bye, love you.

JENNY
Love you.

INT. JAYNE’S HOUSE

Jayne and Roland walk into Jayne’s house. They walk into the tv room and sit on a couch.
ROLAND
That thing’s a waste of money.

JAYNE
Yeah, my parents gave me it, I don’t really use it.

There is an open "TV Guide" on the coffee table in front of them.

ROLLAND
That’s good. Sucks I’m not staying longer, hard to find a girl that’s cool like you.

JAYNE
Then why don’t you stay longer?

ROLLAND
Can’t. Got a lot to do, lots to see. I should be gone already, honestly.

JAYNE
I really want to travel like that one day.

ROLLAND (V.O.)
Time to let her ‘live vicariously’ through me.

ROLLAND
Yeah it’s the best. Living out of a backpack, good beer, great music.

JAYNE
Ugh, take me with you.

ROLLAND
In a dream. But I travel alone usually. I just prefer it.

JAYNE
What if you had an awesome chick with you?

ROLLAND
If she was making more than eggs that could be cool.

JAYNE
Oh, I think she would be.

Jayne leans in to kiss Roland. He leans away.
ROLAND
I was just hoping we’d talk more first. I find you really interesting.

JAYNE
Wow, guys like you don’t exist. You should really stick around here for like, a day even.

ROLAND (V.O.)
Somebody get this girl to a used car salesman. She’ll buy anything.

ROLAND
Maybe.

Roland leans in to kiss Jayne. She accepts with a smile. They get intimate. Roland’s cell phone rings.

JAYNE
Gonna get it?

ROLAND
The world is nothing other than what’s in front of me right now.

JAYNE
Me?

ROLAND
You.

ROLAND (V.O.)
Wow...

Roland and Jayne have sex on the couch.

10 MINUTES LATER.

Jayne hands Roland his shirt with a smile.

JAYNE
I meant to say, that’s a great shirt.

ROLAND (V.O.)
I peacocked...whoops.

ROLAND
Thanks.
JAYNE
Voted Obama?

ROLAND
Nah, I chose not to vote. I think it’s disgusting how the majority of people don’t vote, but I seriously studied each candidate in depth and decided neither were fit.

JAYNE
Yeah, I get that.

ROLAND
I’m glad. Listen, I should keep on moving, I’m still nowhere near New York.

JAYNE
Already? How are you getting there?

ROLAND
Just hitching.

JAYNE
Do you want a ride to the highway at least?

ROLAND
Nah, that’d ruin it. Just point me East.

JAYNE
Alright I can do that.

Jayne and Roland go outside.

EXT. OUTSIDE JAYNE’S HOUSE

JAYNE
Just walk that way, towards Hardy Drive, you’ll see signs.

ROLAND
Thanks. See ya.

JAYNE
Wait. Are you ever gonna be back here?
ROLLAND
Can you see the wind blow?

Jayne looks confused.

ROLLAND (CONT’D)
That’s the certainty I feel when I travel. I’ll take down your number just in case.

JAYNE
Yeah that’d be awesome, it’s 480-491-7707.

Roland takes out his phone and types in the number.

ROLLAND
Goodbye, Jayne.

JAYNE
Bye, Asher. Text me sometime.

Roland walks off down the street.

EXT. STREET

His phone rings. He answers.

PACO
Yo man, I got some info, and I kinda know where this mother fucker lives.

ROLLAND
Huh?

PACO
The fuckin’ rapist, can you meet up?

ROLLAND
Oh, what?! That’s wild. Yeah I can, where?

PACO
Whitepages.com let me trace his address by phone number.

ROLLAND
She has his number?
PACO
Yeah, some fuckin’ dude named, uh..hold on, I wrote it down.

ROLAND (V.O.)
Cliff?

PACO
Cliff. Fuckin’ stupid name. Yo I gotta go, meet me at 42 East Spence Avenue, around noon.

ROLAND
Wait, Paco, y-Fuck!

NOON, SAME DAY.

INT. ROLAND’S APARTMENT

There is a knock at the front door. Roland opens the door to find Paco outside. Paco looks very confused.

PACO
Bro, what the fuck are you doin’ inside?

ROLAND
I live here.

PACO
Wait so you know Cliff?!

ROLAND
Man, there’s no eas-

Dave wakes up from the couch and peeps his head up towards Paco and Roland.

DAVE
Who’s there Ro?

ROLAND
My friend Paco, that girl Jenny’s sister.

PACO
That girl?

Dave perks up off the couch and comes over to Roland and Paco.
ROLAND
No, I mean like, t-

PACO
Yo, what the hell is going on?

DAVE
Dude, that’s your sister?

PACO
Yeah man, that fucking is. What the hell is this shit?

DAVE
I’m really sorry, dude, like you can beat the shit out of me, I deserve it. I was an asshole. I’m sorry, let me talk to he-

Roland looks confused at Dave’s apology. Paco punches Dave across the face. Dave falls backwards.

PACO
You think you can just go touch any girl however you want, Cliff?!

Roland’s eyes widen, but tries to pry Paco off Dave as Paco begins to choke Dave.

ROLAND
Paco, wait! D-

PACO
Back the FUCK off, Roland!

ROLAND
That’s Dave! Not Cliff!

Paco stops and looks up at Roland, out of breath.

PACO
Huh?

ROLAND
This is my roommate Dave. We were both at the party, and both met Jenny, but Dave didn’t do anything.

ROLAND (V.O.)
End of an era...
ROLAND
I’m C-

DAVE
I was sayin’ sorry that I couldn’t stop Cliff, man. That’s all.

PACO
What?

Dave gives a "just go with it" look to Roland.

DAVE
Your sis was in my class for the day so I knew her. And me and Roland chilled with her at the party. But then this dude, Cliff, was like super drunk and bein’ all aggressive.

PACO
So why are you sorry?

DAVE
’Cause like, I felt responsible, she didn’t know anyone else there. And I got too drunk to see what was goin’ on. And I left her there.

PACO
Man, you know that’s really messed up, leaving her in that situation. But respect for being honest with me. I’m sorry ’bout punchin’ you.

DAVE
Yeah man, no, no problem, I’dve done the same if I thought someone messed with my lil sis.

PACO
Alright, we’re all good. But then how’d whitepages lead me here?

ROLAND
Maybe you accidentally put my number in the search. Remember how we studied that last year? Subconscious cognitive dissonance, kinda stuff.
PACO
I was pretty sure I put in Cliff’s, but you know, yeah that’d make sense actually.

DAVE
Yeah, and if not, it could be the number of whoever lived here last.

PACO
Yeah it’s probably that. But man, I almost wish Cliff lived here. I need to find this guy.

ROLAND
I mean I’m down to help, but you might just have to let it go, so many kids go to ASU.

PACO
Nah, Dave knows, someone messes with your little sister, it isn’t something you let go.

DAVE
That’s the truth.

PACO
So you said you’re still down to help out, right Roland?

ROLAND
Of course.

PACO
How about you, man? The more troops the better.

DAVE
I mean, yeah, sure. I’m really busy, but keep in touch through Roland. If I’m free I’m in.

PACO
Awesome bro. Nah even better, keep in touch through me.

Dave and Paco exchange numbers.

DAVE
Sweet man, will do.
PACO
I really appreciate it guys. Yo when shit’s settled, you guys down to party soon?

ROLAND
Absolutely man.

DAVE
Always.

PACO
Alright, sick. I’m gonna run, sorry about the confusion, and thanks Roland.

DAVE
Nice to meet you man. Well, kinda.

PACO
Ha, just put some ice on that, my bad. See you guys.

Paco leaves the house.

DAVE
What the fuck was that!?

ROLAND
You tell me! Who the fuck is Cliff?

DAVE
There is no Cliff, I was just coverin’ my own ass with that b.s.

ROLAND
What?

DAVE
At the party, I guess I passed out for a while. I woke up and you were gone. I guess shit got a little sloppy, I don’t know, I browned out, basically blacked out.

ROLAND
And?

DAVE
When I saw Jenny I just started makin’ out with her.
ROLAND
Dude..

DAVE
But I think that’s it. Like, I really don’t remember, but who knows, there could be a Cliff, but savin’ her from another guy is the last thing on my mind. ’Cause I was actin’ like ‘that guy’.

ROLAND
Yeah, well, Paco says Jenny thinks she might’ve been raped.

DAVE
What?! So maybe there is a Cliff? That got to her once I passed out again?

ROLAND
I don’t know, but he also said she might be pregnant.

DAVE
What?! Why aren’t these people usin’ condoms.

ROLAND
I doubt rapists think that rationally...

ROLAND (V.O.)
Or do they, Dave?

DAVE
But has she not heard of abortion?

ROLAND
That’s what I’m sayin’. But still...

DAVE
Fuckin’ weird, all of it.

ROLAND
Yeah. Man, you need to stop blacking out.

DAVE
Tough life I live.
ROLAND
Alright, "Cliff". Go ice your bruise.

Roland and Dave laugh.

DAVE
Yeah I really should.

Dave goes to the kitchen to get ice. Roland looks deep in thought.

ROLAND (V.O.)
Am I Cliff? Or Dave? Or both?...

Roland’s phone rings.

ROLAND
Hey, Paco?

PACO
Yo man, just called Jenny to tell her about today’s fail.

ROLAND
What’d she say?

PACO
She wants to come up again next weekend.

ROLAND (V.O.)
Party animal..

ROLAND
Huh, why?

PACO
To help me find Cliff. She says she’ll know his face.

ROLAND
She wants to drive like seven hours just to look for one guy on a 70,000 student campus?

PACO
That one guy is gonna be the father of her child, so yeah, she does.

ROLAND
Holy fuck! Paco, I’m..
ROLAND (V.O.)
screwed..

ROLAND (CONT’D)
so sorry man, I can’t believe this.
I almost feel responsible, I was
there.

PACO
Don’t feel that way, it’s nobody’s
fault. Cept the guy, Cliff. But you
and Dave really need to help when
she comes next weekend.

ROLAND
Yeah, of course. But how would we
be useful? She’s just looking for
one guy by face.

PACO
Just safety in numbers, I don’t
know, I can’t think right now, I’ll
hit you up later.

ROLAND
Alright man, let me know if you
need anything, peace.

Roland hangs up. He walks into the kitchen.

INT. ROLAND’S APARTMENT – KITCHEN

Roland sits next to Dave at the kitchen table, as Dave ices
his bruise. Roland looks worn out.

DAVE
What was that call about?

ROLAND
Paco.

DAVE
Seems like he needs a life. What’d
he want?

ROLAND
Jenny, she’s coming up next
weekend. To look for the guy.
Cliff.
DAVE
...Seriously?

ROLAND
Yup. She’s pregnant.

Dave drops the ice with a look of horror.

ROLAND (V.O.)
I think I may be Cliff. Dave thinks
he may be Cliff. What do you think, Cliff?..