

THE BUFFER

Written by

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FADE IN:

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

CLIFF CONNORS (Caucasian, 30) groggily wakes up and looks at the bedside clock. It reads "12:47pm". He rubs his eyes and smiles.

CLIFF

It's already a great day. I missed the morning.

MONTAGE OF CLIFF'S DAYTIME ACTIVITIES:

\*Cliff, wearing a tie dye shirt, hole-ridden, cutoff jean shorts, and flip flops, fires up a bong and inhales like an asthmatic Scuba-diver.

\*Cliff putts a golf ball into a hole he has installed at the end of a long hallway and celebrates with fist-pumps and high-five to imaginary fans.

\*Cliff wears a giant headset and plays a video game he's intensely trying to win.

CLIFF

Oh, here we go, come to Daddy, bring it home ... OH, COME ON! That's total bullshit, you can't sabotage me like that, Novak!

Novak sounds Eastern European and - at the oldest - 12.

NOVAK (V.O.)

Cliff, that was perfectly legal. Perhaps you should play in The Kindergarten League ... Bitch.

CLIFF

Oh, I'll show a Bitch, you fuckin' Amateur. Bring it!!!

\*Cliff eats a Nutter Butter on a giant couch while watching the movie *Road House*: The classic scene where the giant redneck approaches Sam Elliott and says, "You wanna fight?" Cliff says Sam Elliott's line along with him:

CLIFF (AND SAM ELLIOTT) (CONT'D)

Well, I sure ain't gonna show you my dick.

Cliff acts out Sam Elliott's fight moves, which kick the giant redneck in the crotch and kneecap, making him drop him to the ground.

CLIFF (AND SAM ELLIOTT) (CONT'D)  
Damn, that hurts, don't it?

\*Cliff moon-walks across the kitchen floor and does an elegant, full spin ... then instantly crashes to the ground.

\*Cliff on couch, watching *Sex And The City* - the movie. It's the scene at the end where Miranda and Steve reunite on The Brooklyn Bridge, crying and kissing. Cliff begins weeping.

CLIFF (CONT'D)  
Oh, Thank God. Miranda, if you didn't meet Steve at The Bridge, I would've driven there and jumped off myself!

\*Cliff has a makeshift "Drum Set", comprised of pots, pans, a strainer, a blender, etc. He goes to town with two large, wooden spoons. He ends a rapid-fire, complicated solo with conviction!

Just then, JUDITH walks in, shocked. He doesn't notice.

CLIFF (CONT'D)  
Thank you, Goodnight! Neal Peart, John Bonham and Keith Moon can't do that, Baby! Mainly because they're dead, but nevertheless! I rocked the house! "Goodnight, Boston!"

JUDITH  
Cliff?

CLIFF  
Oh - hi, Honey. Just jamming a quick solo.

He trots over and gives her a peck on the lips. She continues to look shocked and concerned.

CLIFF (CONT'D)  
Don't worry, Babe - I'll put all these appliances back ... unless you need 'em when you cook dinner tonight?

She stares at him, even more concerned.

CLIFF (CONT'D)

Or you wanna go out to eat? Hey, that's cool with me! But definitely bring your American Express Card, so we can build points toward that Tahiti trip.

JUDITH

"We"? Uh, how did your job search go today?

He pauses, thinking of the right answer ...

CLIFF

Got off to kind of a late start, but hey - there's always tomorrow. Oh, that reminds me of a great joke: You know why I'm such a procrastinator?

JUDITH

(Reluctantly)  
Why?

CLIFF

I'll tell you later. Look out!

He laughs and claps his hands.

She rolls her eyes. Cliff smiles at her, attempting to be as charming as possible. He then breaks into another Moonwalk and full spin ... which leaves him crashing to the ground and knocking over a few big pots, CLANG!!! She shakes her head. Cliff recovers and pops up as fast as possible ...

FREEZE FRAME on Cliff smiling.

TITLE: "THE BUFFER".

INT. LIVING ROOM - A LITTLE LATER

Judith sits in a chair; Cliff is on the couch.

JUDITH

It's not you, it's not me; it's both of us. This just isn't working. We want different things.

CLIFF

What are you talking about? We love each other and have so much fun!

JUDITH

I haven't had fun in months.

CLIFF

That's not true. Last Thursday, we went to Dave & Busters-

JUDITH

Yeah, YOU had fun. I can't stand Dave & Busters; it's Chuck E. Cheese with Jello Shots!

CLIFF

Totally! That's what makes it original!

(Seeing she doesn't agree)

Okay, what about the Steel Panther Concert?

JUDITH

You mean that group of middle-aged men in Spandex singing about getting laid?

CLIFF

They're a parody; they're making fun of 80's Hair Bands-

JUDITH

I get it, that's not the point: Cliff, you are a fun guy. And you're really sweet. But you're not what I need.

CLIFF

Then why the hell did you ask me to move in with you?

JUDITH

Because you have so much potential, and I keep waiting for you to change and be the man I know you can be ... but you never do.

CLIFF

Oh, please - that's not fair.

JUDITH

It's the truth. You have no motivation. I've been with you three years, and you refuse to get a job. I'm tired of being The Breadwinner, The Caretaker ...

(MORE)

JUDITH (CONT'D)

and My God, if we ever had a child,  
I'd be the mother of TWO kids.

CLIFF

Well, you've had plenty of sex with  
me, so that makes you a pedophile!  
Forget Tahiti, maybe you should go  
to "Epstein Island"!

JUDITH

And you should go back to your  
parents. We're done. I want you out  
of here by Friday.

CLIFF

Well, Judy, let's at least talk  
about this-

JUDITH

There's nothing to talk about,  
Clifford. You're never going to  
change.

Cliff lets this sink in.

CLIFF

Can I still use your Netflix  
password?

Judith buries her face in her hands.

JUDITH

Oh, God ...

CLIFF

How 'bout Amazon Prime? Hulu? You  
don't even watch your Apple TV ...?

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Cliff has dinner with his parents, CHARLOTTE (60s) and  
GREGORY (60s). Charlotte smiles at him, sweetly. Gregory  
looks very disappointed.

CHARLOTTE

Honey, I'm sorry it didn't work out  
with Judith. She's a very lovely  
girl.

CLIFF

Thanks, Mom.

CHARLOTTE

So what are you going to do now?

Cliff thinks for a moment.

CLIFF

Dad, can you please pass the sugar?

GREGORY

Guess it's the next best thing,  
since you don't have "The Sugar  
Momma".

Gregory chuckles at his own joke as he passes Cliff sugar.  
Cliff puts it in his coffee and stirs.

GREGORY (CONT'D)

Are you gonna answer your mother,  
Son?

CLIFF

This coffee is delicious! I'm so  
glad you guys have gone Organic.  
Much better than that Folgers crap.  
But you know what I say: "The best  
part of waking up is realizing you  
slept through the morning." Am I  
right?

They both stare at him.

GREGORY

I'll ask again: What are your plans  
now?

CLIFF

I don't know. This just happened,  
she completely pulled the rug out  
from under me, and I'm ... trying  
to figure everything out.

CHARLOTTE

I know this has been quite an  
emotional blow, but-

GREGORY

You gotta get your life together,  
Hotshot.

CLIFF

Welcome back to "No Sympathy" with  
Charlotte and Greg!

CHARLOTTE

Sweetheart, you're 32 years old.  
You're unemployed, and don't even  
seem to have any goals.

GREGORY

Yeah, what would you like to  
accomplish?

CLIFF

Let's start with "Living Alone".

CHARLOTTE

You've got a Philosophy degree,  
maybe you can teach? You'd be  
great!

CLIFF

A teacher? No thanks, I don't wanna  
get shot.

GREGORY

Well, you gotta figure something  
out, Kid. When I was your age, I  
was supporting your Mom and two  
kids, AND getting promoted.

CLIFF

Well, give Pop a Gold Star! Jesus,  
there's more judgment in this house  
than Nuremberg. Look, I didn't come  
here to get humiliated.

He stands up and starts to leave.

CHARLOTTE

Cliff, we're sorry, Honey. Aren't  
we, Gregory?

GREGORY

Here's my point, Son: As a  
financial advisor, I've invested in  
a lotta people and given birth to  
many careers. But I can't help you  
with yours until you choose one.

Charlotte hands Cliff a brochure.

CHARLOTTE

There's a big "Job Fair" downtown  
on Monday. You should go.



CLIFF  
 (Studying brochure)  
 9am? Mom, you know I don't do  
 mornings.

EXT. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE BUILDING - MORNING

Cliff drags his feet to the steps, exhausted. He drearily sips his coffee, which spills on his shirt. He freaks out, grabs a napkin and dabs the spill.

CLIFF  
 Fuck! Why?!! Well, I'm awake now!!!

An ATTRACTIVE WOMAN (30s) walks by him, grimacing.

CLIFF (CONT'D)  
 Hi, Good Morning.

He pauses until she gets further away, then resumes frantically dabbing.

CLIFF (CONT'D)  
 Why hasn't someone invented  
 "Transparent-Colored Coffee"???

INT. JOB FAIR - A LITTLE LATER

MONTAGE OF CLIFF INTERACTING AT JOB FAIR:

\*Cliff sits in a chair, opposite a CURMUDGEONLY MAN in a desk who stares at a file.

CURMUDGEONLY MAN  
 It says here your IQ is "148".  
 That's incredibly high, it  
 qualifies for Mensa.  
 (Staring at Cliff)  
 So why haven't you done anything  
 impressive since college?

CLIFF  
 Hey, I'm a Lemon Queen Sunflower.

CURMUDGEONLY MAN  
 I'm sorry?

CLIFF  
 "A Late Bloomer". Wow, guess you  
 didn't make the cut for Mensa, huh?

He nervously laughs as the man glares at him.

\*Cliff sits opposite an incredibly RIGID WOMAN, sitting in her desk.

RIGID WOMAN

What do you consider your "skills"?

CLIFF

Well ... I'm great at relating to people.

RIGID WOMAN

You haven't related to me yet.

CLIFF

That's because you're a Cyborg.

\*Cliff sits opposite a MOUSY, LIBRARIAN-TYPE LADY.

MOUSY LIBRARIAN LADY

What are your weaknesses?

CLIFF

Oh, boy. How much time you got?

He chuckles as she anxiously presses her thumb on the top of her pen.

\*Cliff sits opposite a young, SMUG MAN in an expensive, colorful suit. The man chomps gum, wears earbuds, and squeezes a stress ball. They're both laughing.

SMUG MAN

That's hilarious, Cliff.

(Studying him)

So why are you here today?

CLIFF

I'm here ... because my Dad didn't pull out.

They both share a laugh again.

SMUG MAN

Man, you're really funny.

(Viewing his resume)

You have the capability to be wildly successful. It's a shame.

CLIFF

Whoa. That's a bad thing?

SMUG MAN

Yes, because you're never gonna do it. I hardly meet anyone with your intelligence and aptitude; but when I do, there's an even lesser chance they'll actually apply themselves.

CLIFF

What? That doesn't make any sense.

SMUG MAN

Sure, it does. The most talented people never reach their full potential, because they're never forced to.

CLIFF

So how do you "force" someone-

SMUG MAN

You can't. They have to "want" it. But most don't, because they're talented enough to just "get by". They don't give it 100%, because they don't have to. I hire people who want to thrive, not survive. Good luck to you, kid.

EXT. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE BUILDING - NOON

Cliff stands on the steps, holding his cellphone to his ear.

INT. KITCHEN - SAME

WALT (African-American, 30), his best friend, answers the phone. He's wearing a headset, holding a treat, and attempting to train his cat.

WALT

Connors, Baby! How'd the Career Fair go?

INTERCUT:

CLIFF

Horrendous. Hopefully, my folks need a maid.

WALT (V.O.)

That bad, huh? Ouch. I said "Ouch!"

CLIFF

Yeah, dude, I heard you.

Walt's cat is biting his finger.

WALT

No, not you - this damn cat! Get off, Fuzzy!

He wiggles out of Fuzzy's grip.

CLIFF

(Smiling)

Still trying to train him, Doolittle?

WALT

Hey, you're the one with no job, "Do Little"!

CLIFF (V.O.)

Touché.

WALT

So I got a proposition for ya: I'm having dinner with Alice tonight. Since our breakup, we gotta figure out who gets the cat, all the DVDs, et cetera.

CLIFF

Alright, so where do I come in?

WALT

I want you to join us.

CLIFF

No way! I'm not being "The Third Wheel" in Divorce Court.

WALT

She's gonna be on MUCH better behavior if you're there. Plus, she'll feel sorry for you 'cos Judith kicked you out and be in a better mood!

CLIFF

I'd rather watch a "Matlock Marathon" with my parents.

WALT

C-Con, if you go, she'll bring  
Sheryl, her hot-ass Bellydancer  
friend ...

CLIFF

Walt, I JUST got dumped. I'm not in  
the mood to get set up.

WALT

Bro, we're going to Ruth's Chris  
Steakhouse ... ON ME.

CLIFF

Well shit - what time, Playa?

WALT

8 o'clock.

CLIFF

Done.

WALT

Thank you.

CLIFF

Listen, you want this to go as  
smooth as possible? Just give her  
the damn cat. See you soon.

Cliff hangs up. Walt waves a cat toy in front of Fuzzy.

WALT

Come on, roll over, my little furry  
friend.

Fuzzy hisses and claws at him.

INT. RUTH'S CHRIS STEAKHOUSE - NIGHT

Alice, Sheryl, Walt and Cliff are at a table. Dinner is over;  
they're having drinks and laughing as Cliff finishes a story.

CLIFF

So Yours Truly and this maniac-  
(pointing to Walt)  
-head into "The Snakepit" at Last  
Call. And we are HAMMERED. Like "I  
Just Got My Divorce Settlement Then  
Won The Powerball" hammered.

WALT

Like "Amanda Bynes at Mardis Gras",  
Baby!

Everybody laughs.

CLIFF

As we walk in, we see three  
absolutely stunning women at the  
bar, at least we thought so, after  
we each had about a fifth of Jack  
Daniels. I politely nod to them and  
order a round. By the time I turn  
back - Walt is yelling at the  
women, "Go ahead, call the cops! I  
don't give a shit!"

They all crack up.

CLIFF (CONT'D)

What did you possibly do in 12  
seconds to make them wanna press  
charges?

ALICE

He called one of them "The C Word".  
That's the only thing I can think  
of that would make women  
immediately snap.

WALT

Hey, I never called you that!

ALICE

You did once-

WALT

Wait a minute, I didn't CALL you  
"The C-Word"; I just said you were  
ACTING like "A C-Word".

ALICE

Oh, that's so much better!

CLIFF

Okay, I have a very serious  
question for you, Alice; and  
there's no wrong answer: When Walt  
said you were "acting like a C-  
Word", at that moment ... were you  
being a cunt?

She throws a lemon wedge at him. Walt and Sheryl die out  
laughing.

ALICE

You're lucky I like you, Cliff!  
I'll still choke you, though!

SHERYL

Alice, you're letting him win,  
girlfriend. If women are striving  
to be equal, we can't fly off the  
handle every time someone calls us  
"The C-Word". Do you ever see men  
crying because someone referred to  
them as a "Dickhead"? Ever hear a  
man call that term "The D-Word"?  
Never, because they call each other  
that all the time, they become  
desensitized; and the word loses  
its power.

ALICE

Wow. Food for thought, Sheryl.

SHERYL

Just my opinion. You may not agree,  
and that's ok. But if you don't,  
your'e a cunt.

They all crack up.

CLIFF

Sheryl, I realize we've only known  
each other for 2 hours, but I just  
fell in love with you.

She smiles at him. They share a moment, then her phone starts  
vibrating. She quickly looks at it.

SHERYL

Oh! Sorry everyone - this is my co-  
worker; I gotta get my shift  
switched this weekend.

She answers the phone and walks off.

ALICE

So what do you think of my friend,  
Playboy?

WALT

I told ya, she's hot, huh?

Alice hits Walt's shoulder, playfully but hard.

WALT (CONT'D)  
What, we're not married. We're not  
even divorced.

Alice glares at him.

WALT (CONT'D)  
Cliff, you were saying?

CLIFF  
She's lovely, but it's not about me  
right now. It's about you two.

Walt and Alice look at him, uncomfortable.

CLIFF (CONT'D)  
You're achieving one of the most  
mature feats in humanity: Remaining  
friends after a long-term  
relationship. I applaud you both.

They share a quick smile.

CLIFF (CONT'D)  
I just have one question - other  
than Fuzzy, what other major shared  
items do you need to divide between  
you?

ALICE  
Honestly, Fuzzy is the only thing I  
want. I rescued her 8 years ago-

WALT  
Take the cat.

Alice is surprised and emotionally overwhelmed.

ALICE  
Really?

WALT  
Absolutely. You deserve her. She's  
yours. I mean, she never even  
listens to me-

Alice throws her arms around Walt, hugging him tight.

ALICE  
Thank you!



CLIFF

Okay, now what about your DVD collection, CDs, framed pictures, furniture?

ALICE

All I want is Fuzzy. And I got her, thanks to this sweet man.

WALT

But Baby, that Love Seat is yours. Oh, and the Lazy Susan. And don't forget about the hammock!

She kisses him. They start making out.

CLIFF

Okay, what about shared expenses? Bills, insurance? Parking spots?

Walt waves his hand, signaling "Go away" as he keeps making out with Alice. Sheryl returns.

SHERYL

Well, I guess they worked things out.

CLIFF

Wanna hit the patio bar? Please?

She nods her head toward the door. Cliff springs up.

EXT. BAR - MOMENTS LATER

Cliff and Sheryl sit side-by-side at a low-lit table in the corner. She's heavily flirting with him.

SHERYL

So I hear you also just got out of a long relationship.

CLIFF

You heard right.

SHERYL

I also heard that's not the only thing about you that's long.

CLIFF

Ah, yes. You must be talking about my resume'.

She laughs.

CLIFF (CONT'D)

Sheryl, I'm having a great time with you. But I'd be lying if I said I didn't have a giant hole in my heart.

She gently puts her hand on his thigh.

SHERYL

Well ... maybe you just need to find a way to fill that hole.

CLIFF

You just gave me a "Heart-On".

They kiss passionately.

JUMP CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM - THAT NIGHT

Cliff and Sheryl are making out. They're both topless; he's in his boxers, and she is in a pair of sexy shorties. The door swings open! Cliff's Dad Gregory barges in and flips on the lights. He's also shirtless and wearing knee-high, black socks; as well as boxers with an image of Richard Nixon and the words "Meet Tricky Dick!"

GREGORY

What the hell is going - well,  
HELLO!

SHERYL

Ahhhh!!!

Sheryl straddles Cliff and hugs him, covering her breasts.

CLIFF

Sheryl, this is my roommate,  
Gregory. What can I do for you,  
GREGORY?

GREGORY

You two are so loud, your mother sent me down here to make sure you weren't sticking your dick in the vacuum again. Remember that time, when you were in eighth grade-

CLIFF

Okay, that's enough, Gregory!  
(To Sheryl)  
He's got *quite* the imagination.

GREGORY

What's with this "Gregory" crap?

Cliff's Mom Charlotte runs in, wearing a bright blue nightie.

CHARLOTTE

Now you BOTH are keeping me up. Oh, honey - you have company!

CLIFF

Sheryl, this is my other roommate, Charlotte. And Charlotte, this is Sheryl.

SHERYL

(Still straddling and covering breasts)

Hi, it's very nice to meet you.

CHARLOTTE

Nice to meet you, Dear. Aren't you a pretty thing? Isn't she lovely, Gregory?

GREGORY

Oh, she's more than that.

CHARLOTTE

(Suddenly indignant)

Shut up and go put on a shirt!

Gregory gives an ecstatic "thumbs up" to his son then leaves. Charlotte instantly reverts back to being a kind Hostess.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

Can I make you some flapjacks, Sweetheart?

SHERYL

No, I'm good. Thank you.

CHARLOTTE

Well, now I know how you keep that perfectly voluptuous figure. Clifford, wear a condom.

She closes the door. Charlotte removes herself from hugging Cliff and covers her mouth with one hand, catching her breath.

CLIFF

Man, I really need to invest in a lock. Now where were we, Darlin'?

He moves toward Sheryl, who blocks him with her hands. She stands up, searching for her clothes.

SHERYL

I was just leaving and telling you  
to never contact me again.

CLIFF

Oh, come on. They went to bed.

The door swings open again! It's Gregory. Sheryl screams and squats down, covering herself.

GREGORY

Daddy's making Margaritas! How do  
you like 'em, Toots? Frozen, or on  
the rocks?

INT. DINER - THE NEXT MORNING

Cliff and Walt sit in a booth. Walt is elated; Cliff is hungover, massaging his temples, and sipping coffee.

CLIFF

I appreciate you hooking me up with  
another meal, my man - but why do  
we have to meet in the morning?

WALT

Bro - it's 11:45.

CLIFF

Yeah, but you still woke me up at  
10-

WALT

Not only am I treating you to your  
favorite omelette in the WORLD, I'm  
giving you the secret to your  
future success and sole purpose in  
life.

CLIFF

Um, I don't know what kind of  
omelette you're getting, but sounds  
like you already had mushrooms.

WALT

What you did last night was nothing  
short ... of AMAZING.

CLIFF

What, get cock-blocked by my parents?

WALT

No, Dumbass - I'm talking about what you did for me and Alice!

CLIFF

Oh, no ... you didn't get back together with her?

WALT

Christ, no! But after what you said last night - you saw us making out, right?

CLIFF

Yes, Walt. I think most of North America saw that.

WALT

Ok - yes, we went home and had incredible sex. But not only does she want to work things out amicably, she wants to remain "Friends With Benz" - and she knows we'll NEVER be Soulmates and get married, so if either of us gets serious with another person, we'll just be honest with each other; and all is cool.

CLIFF

And you think I made that happen?

WALT

Of course you did! Dude, you showed up, put everyone at ease, told jokes, kept the conversation moving - and then ... at the perfect time ... you got down to Brass Tacks and asked us what we wanted. I took your advice; it worked like a Goddam charm; and it produced the Best Possible Outcome!

CLIFF

Sounds like I found my calling.

WALT

You better believe it. This is gonna be your job, Motherfucker.

CLIFF

What, patching up things with your exes?

WALT

Negative. You are gonna be a "Professional Buffer". People who don't get along with a relative, a co-worker, an ex, or anyone they know who's gonna be at a social function where they HAVE to interact - you'll be right there to provide comfort, entertainment, and ultimately ... Peace.

CLIFF

So now I'm a Professional Buffer?

WALT

Yes! This is "your thing"! And you'll be the best in the world.

CLIFF

Well, this job didn't exist until 10 seconds ago, so I better be.

Walt laughs. Cliff envisions his new fate.

CLIFF (CONT'D)

Dude, I got this. One question: How the hell do I get clients?

WALT

Thought you'd ask that. What's my job?

CLIFF

Advertising, or marketing, or some shit.

WALT

Who do you know has access to a full studio with camera equipment, green screens, special effects, "The Works"? Furthermore, who do you know has relationships with many, many local advertisers who owe him favors?

CLIFF

No way! But wait - how much is this gonna cost?

WALT

As long as I'm a company employee?  
Zero.

JIMMY, the diner manager, delivers their food.

JIMMY

Hey fellas - here's the Chocolate  
Chip Pancakes, and The Hungry Man's  
Breakfast.

WALT

Hey, Jimmy. They got you bringing  
food out today, huh?

JIMMY

Yeah, we just had a cook quit - so  
today, "The Manager" is also a  
waiter and chef. Enjoy!

Jimmy smiles and rushes off.

CLIFF

Thanks, pal!

(To Walt)

Look, it sounds perfect. A little  
"too perfect" ...

WALT

Well, if you want people to see  
your ads, you gotta pay for 'em.

CLIFF

Here we go. Sing along if you know  
the words!

WALT

Which I will cover, if you make me  
a silent partner.

CLIFF

Well, let's hurry up and eat so we  
can make some damn commercials!

They do a secret handshake.

INT. STUDIO - DAY

Cliff addresses the camera.

CLIFF

We've all been stuck in a dreaded obligation you CAN'T get out of: Brunch with your hateful Mother-In-Law.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. RESTAURANT - MORNING

An UNCOMFORTABLE MAN sits at a table with an ANGRY, OLDER WOMAN.

UNCOMFORTABLE MAN

Mrs. Jenkins, could you please pass the salt?

MRS. JENKINS

Could you please pass "The Bar"? When are you gonna be a lawyer, not a loser?!!

CUT BACK TO:

Cliff addressing camera.

CLIFF

Golf with your verbally abusive Boss.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. GOLF COURSE - DAY

A YOUNG, NERVOUS GOLPHER runs up to his HOSTILE BOSS.

YOUNG GOLPHER

Hey, Mr. Dillinger! Thanks for inviting me to play golf.

MR. DILLINGER

Oh, you're not here to play. You're gonna be my Caddy, Sucker!

He throws a huge bag of golf clubs at the young golpher, which knocks him to the ground.

CUT BACK TO:

Cliff, to camera.



CLIFF

Dinner with your wife.

He looks horrified at the camera, then smiles.

CLIFF (CONT'D)

Ok, that last one was a joke. Now seriously, what do you do when you're forced to endure a horribly awkward situation with someone you don't even like? You call ME.

Words and numbers on the screen flash, "1-843-283-3337" (1-THE-BUF-FFER)

CLIFF (CONT'D)

I'm Cliff Connors, The Buffer. I'm an expert "Mediator" people hire to accompany them to social settings that are otherwise uncomfortable, problematic, or simply a downright nightmare.

As Cliff speaks, we see him walking into an elegant soiree with a WOMAN and a MAN who both look miserable. We then see him making them laugh, getting them to dance, starting a food fight, then finally walking out with the now ecstatic couple. Cliff is in the middle, and they all have their arms locked around each other's.

Angle back on Cliff, talking to camera.

CLIFF (CONT'D)

What's your problem? Gotta take a cross-country road trip with your annoying sibling? Coffee with the person you're divorcing, so you can agree on the settlement? Mandatory Karaoke Night with all your co-workers, and you're gonna be harassed by that guy who sends you his weekly GOFUNDME? Whatever it is, you need "The Buffer". Call me at 1-843-283-3337.

A ridiculously energetic VO repeats the number.

VO

That's 1-843-283-3337, or 1-T-H-E-B-U-F-F-F-E-R. That's right, 3 "Fs" for this Bufffer!!!

CLIFF

Let me make your life MUCH easier.  
Call The Buffer. I'm the one you  
want to see ... when you face the  
one you DON'T want to see.

VO

Call "The Buffer"! The One You Want  
To See ... When You Face The One  
You DON'T Want To See.

INT. EDITING BOOTH - DAY

Cliff and Walt have just finished watching their ad.

CLIFF

Ok, what do you think? Seriously?

WALT

I think it's money in the bank.  
Ready to move out of your parents'  
house?

Cliff smiles at him.

WALT (CONT'D)

Oh, I'm sorry. I mean, "Your  
Roommates'?"

Cliff hits Walt with a stack of papers. Walt laughs and  
claps.

INT. CAR - DAY

As Cliff drives, he answers his ringing phone.

CLIFF

Hi, you've reached "The Buffer  
Enterprises"! Cliff Connors  
speaking.

FEMALE CUSTOMER (V.O.)

Oh, hello. I saw your commercial,  
and I really need your help.

CLIFF

You've come to the right place.  
Actually, you've come to the ONLY  
place. What can I do for you?

Cliff veers off to the side of the road, grabbing a pen.

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

Cliff sits at a dining room table next to ELLA (Latina, 40) and across from BUFORD (Caucasian, 40s), who looks ferociously intimidating. He's a large, muscular man dressed in Biker attire with a mohawk, tanktop, and tattoos.

CLIFF

Okay, so this is simple: Ella, you would like Buford to move out.

ELLA

That's right.

CLIFF

And Buford - even though you no longer have a relationship with Ella and you're currently "between jobs" ... think you should stay in the spare bedroom?

BUFORD

Wrong. I know I should, Motherfucker.

Buford stares at Cliff like a hungry Tiger eyeing its next meal.

CLIFF

Boom! Straight to the point! Hey, why mince words - I respect that, Amigo.

Buford continues his non-blinking stare. Cliff is petrified, but determined to do his job. Ella pipes up.

ELLA

Play nice, Buford. Remember, you're on parole!

BUFORD

Then call 911, woman! I ain't done shit!

Cliff stays the course.

CLIFF

You got some cool tats, man.  
(Pointing to shoulder)  
Hey, the Iron Maiden Mascot!  
"Eddie"! You're a Maiden fan, huh?

BUFORD

Yeah, they're my favorite band.

CLIFF

Dude, they rock! I saw 'em on "The Final Frontier" tour.

BUFORD

Hell, yeah. That was a killer show.

CLIFF

Are you kidding me?  
(Singing a la Iron Maiden)  
"Run To The Hills!!!"

Buford chuckles. Ella breaths a little easier.

CLIFF (CONT'D)

Look man, I totally understand the hassle of getting a job. I mean - most jobs suck, don't they?

BUFORD

I heard that.

ELLA

Well, it's not like you been looking!

Cliff looks at Ella like "Why the hell would you say that?"

BUFORD

Hey, I WAS looking!

CLIFF

I'm sure you were. Where'd you go?

Buford lets his guard down, suddenly appearing more sensitive and vulnerable.

BUFORD

Well, I applied to be a delivery driver ... but I don't have a car.

CLIFF

Ok, well, that's a bit of a challenge.

BUFORD

Then I tried to be a dog walker ... but I realized I'm more of a "Cat Person".

CLIFF

Buford, do you have any sort of hobby you'd like to get paid for?

BUFORD  
Yeah, cooking.

CLIFF  
No way! Cooking?

ELLA  
He's actually REALLY good.

CLIFF  
What do you like to cook?

BUFORD  
Pretty much anything - but my  
favorite is breakfast.

CLIFF  
You know what? My favorite diner  
that I've been going to for years  
is looking for help in the kitchen.  
The manager's my boy; I can hook  
you up! It's "Jimmy's Egg", the one  
downtown by all the banks.

BUFORD  
No shit? My brother lives over  
there.

ELLA  
You mean the one who has all your  
stuff at his place?

Buford nods.

CLIFF  
So what stuff do you have here?

BUFORD  
Just my motorcycle and a duffle bag  
of clothes, all packed up, in case  
shit goes down.

CLIFF  
If I set up a meeting with them in  
the morning, can you drive your  
stuff to your brothers and stay  
there tonight?

BUFORD  
Hell, yeah. I can leave right now.

CLIFF  
(Handing him card)  
Here's my card.  
(MORE)

CLIFF (CONT'D)

The manager's always available at 11am, before the lunch rush. Meet me then.

Buford hurriedly grabs his duffle bag and looks at Ella.

BUFORD

You're gonna miss my omelettes,  
Baby!

He rushes to the door and speaks a voice-to-text into his phone.

BUFORD (CONT'D)

I'm coming over and staying with you while I look for a place. I got a job! You better have beer!

He runs out and slams the door.

ELLA

Wow! Problem solved! You ... are ... good. So, what now?

Cliff jumps up and locks the door.

CLIFF

Change the locks. IMMEDIATELY.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Cliff and Walt sit at desks, both holding pens and notebooks.

WALT

Ok, you definitely wanna avoid clients on parole. So what's the lesson we just learned in two words?

CLIFF

Background Checks.

WALT

Boom! Mandatory for all customers. I just put the disclaimer on your site.

INT. PORCH - DAY

Cliff sits at a table, having tea with ANGIE (30s), a stressed woman, and NONNIE (80), her Grandmother.

CLIFF

So Nonnie, how long have you lived  
in this beautiful house?

NONNIE

You saw a mouse?!! Dammit, Angie, I  
told you to call Pest Control!

ANGIE

No, Nonnie - he said your "house".

NONNIE

My spouse? Donald's been dead for 9  
years!

CLIFF

I'm so sorry to hear that. But I'm  
jealous - Donald was an extremely  
lucky man.

Nonnie blushes and smiles. She suddenly grabs his hand and  
stares at him seductively.

NONNIE

Play your cards right, and you will  
be, too.

INT. HALL - NIGHT

Cliff gives a Pep Talk to JEREMIAH, an insecure, young man.

CLIFF

Ok, Jeremiah, just remember: I'll  
handle this douchebag you work  
with; but if he comes at you with  
ANYTHING, you know what to say.

JEREMIAH

I'm ready!

INT. BANQUET ROOM - A LITTLE LATER

KEVIN, Jeremiah's douchebag co-worker, gives a speech on a  
microphone to a small office party.

KEVIN

I'm really proud of this company.  
Just look around! I see so many  
amazing, successful faces ... and  
Jeremiah.

The crowd chuckles at this insult. Cliff nods at Jeremiah.

JEREMIAH

At least I didn't cook fish in the microwave!

The crowd gasps, then gives a collective "Oooooohhhh."

KEVIN

What?

JEREMIAH

You heard me, Kevin! You were the one who microwaved FISH! Don't deny it; I got it on video!

CLIFF

OhmiGod, who puts FISH in a MICROWAVE??? What's wrong with you?

Cliff and Jeremiah start a planned chant.

CLIFF AND JEREMIAH

Get Another Job! Get Another Job!

The crowd immediately joins them in the chant!

KEVIN

Ok, great work, everyone! Keep it up!

The microphone stand somehow gets attached to Kevin's jacket as he frantically leaves the stage. He drags it away with him, which is loudly heard over the speakers. Jeremiah jubilantly hugs Cliff.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

CLIFF

(Answering phone)

Buffer Enterprises, Cliff Connors speaking?

He listens and quickly becomes very confused ... then he realizes something and shakes his head.

CLIFF (CONT'D)

I can't help you, Sir; I don't offer that service. I believe you're looking for a "Fluffer".

He hangs up, disgusted. Zoom out to reveal Walt next to him, filming him on a phone and cracking up.



WALT

There's your next commercial, Baby!

CLIFF

Oh, come on!

Cliff sticks his face inches from the camera.

CLIFF (CONT'D)

I'm a "Buffer". If you're looking for a "Fluffer", then why don't YOU go eat a dick.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Cliff is in a busy coffee shop, viewing emails on his phone. He sees a lovely woman (MEILANI) waiting in the "Pick Up" section. They make eye contact and smile at each other. Cliff is mesmerized; he is magnetically drawn to her. He wanders toward her, as he pretends to be focused on his phone. As he's just about to bump into her ... he looks up and stops.

CLIFF

Oh, I'm so sorry! I didn't see you there.

MEILANI

Sure, you did.

CLIFF

Okay, my peripheral vision may or may not have been focusing on you so hard, I'm now cross-eyed.

MEILANI

Well, considering you were walking directly toward me in a straight line, I don't think you were even using your peripheral vision.

CLIFF

Really? Oh, no - I'm more cross-eyed than I thought!

She chuckles. He looks into her eyes.

CLIFF (CONT'D)

How are my eyes? Do they seem normal?

MEILANI

No. They're better than normal.

They share a moment. Then Cliff points over his shoulder at a random woman walking by.

CLIFF

Excuse me, Miss - I was talking to her.

They both laugh. Cliff's "Buffer" ad comes on a nearby TV. She looks at it, then at him.

MEILANI

Hey ... you're The Buffer guy.

CLIFF

(Joking, but completely deadpan)

Him? Me? No, it's just an uncanny resemblance.

A barista yells out Cliff's newly made drink.

BARISTA

Large Vanilla Late for "The Buffer"!

Cliff stares at Meilani for a moment then raises his hand.

CLIFF

Right here, my friend.

He takes his drink and leaves a tip.

CLIFF (CONT'D)

You must be a detective.

MEILANI

And you must be busy! I see your ads all the time.

CLIFF

Well, my first rule of business is: Make sure you have no competition. Yes, it's been nice.

MEILANI

Well, it's about to get even better.

CLIFF

Trust me, it already has.

He smiles at her. She smiles back then quickly carries on.

MEILANI

I know some people who really need your help.

Her phone starts buzzing.

MEILANI (CONT'D)

Oh, I gotta take this. I'll be in touch!

CLIFF

Wait, we haven't exchanged information. We don't even know each other's name.

MEILANI

(Answering phone)

Hang on, I'll be right with you.

(To Cliff)

You're Cliff. And your number is "The Buf-F-Fer".

CLIFF

And you are ...?

MEILANI

Meilani. You'll see me again.

She smiles and takes her call.

MEILANI (CONT'D)

Hey, there. Great, what time?

She walks off as Cliff wistfully watches. Just then, a Neanderthal-looking FRAT BOY approaches him.

FRAT BOY

No ... Way. It's "The Fluffer"!

INT. RESTAURANT LOBBY - NIGHT

Cliff talks to ZACK (Caucasian, 30s).

CLIFF

I know it's never easy dealing with divorced parents, especially when they have to figure out the will. But that's why you got me, Zack.

ZACK

I definitely feel better with you there. You remember everything?

CLIFF

Hmm, let's see: Your father Howard is a war Veteran and self-made CEO of "20/20 Life Insurance", he has a habit of asking a question then immediately answering it with 3 different options in the form of a question; your Mom Daphne taught English Lit at Baylor University and loves passive-aggressive, backhanded compliments; your baby brother Eli does data entry from home and has a rare form of Tourette's where he yells three random words, one of them always being a specific body part; and your younger sister Meilani is a very caring Assistant Director of our local Zoo.

He confidently looks at Zack.

CLIFF (CONT'D)

No, sorry, buddy - I'm drawing a blank.

ZACK

Well-done!

(Looking at phone)

Oh, looks like our family lawyer, Jamison, will be there as well.

CLIFF

What?!! Well, my goodness; that's some vital information. Why didn't you tell me?

ZACK

I just found out, my sister texted me.

(Looking behind Cliff)

Oh, and here she is! Cliff, this is my sister -

Cliff turns around ... It's Meilani, from the coffee shop! She shakes his hand. He smiles.

CLIFF

Meilani.

MEILANI

Told you I'd be in touch. Thanks so much for doing this, Cliff.

CLIFF

Don't thank me yet. I don't know how crazy your parents are.

She and Zack chuckle.

MEILANI

Speaking of, I'm gonna make sure they're not stabbing each other. See you guys in there.

She smiles at Cliff, then walks to the host stand. Cliff opens a Memo section on his phone.

CLIFF

So what else should I know about this Jamison?

ZACK

Both my parents love him; he's pretty much the only thing they still agree on, that's why he reps them both. Doesn't drink-

CLIFF

Okay - so he either used to have a problem, or he's a total control freak.

ZACK

Very successful, youngest guy to ever be partner of his firm. Oh yeah, and he always thinks he's the funniest guy in the room.

CLIFF

Not tonight.

INT. RESTAURANT TABLE - A LITTLE LATER

Cliff sits with the whole group - Zack, Howard, Daphne, Eli, Meilani, and Jamison. He's telling a joke.

CLIFF

So the trainer says to the one-handed boxer, "You got a mean right hook!"

Everyone but Jamison cackles with laughter.

HOWARD

Zack, this guy is a hoot and a holler! Where'd you find him - comedy club? Party? Nudie Bar?

DAPHNE

You don't know? This is The Buffer, haven't you seen his commercials?

HOWARD

No, Daphne, I have a job.

DAPHNE

Well, let me know when you have manners.

MEILANI

Ok, Parents - it's not a competition. Daddy - he's a Social Mediator. His ads are *hilarious*.

CLIFF

Why, thank you, Meilani.

They smile at each other.

Jamison angrily pounds his fist on a fork, which flies over his head and hits an unsuspecting customer who screams in pain. The others look at Jamison.

JAMISON

My apologies. I saw a fly.

ELI

(To Cliff)

Could you please pass the butter?  
UMBRELLA, SHOESHINE, NIPPLE!  
UMBRELLA, SHOESHINE, NIPPLE!

Cliff is startled! He quickly passes Eli the butter.

JAMISON

Don't let Eli scare you. So Cliff, you're a "Social Mediator"?

CLIFF

You betcha. By the way, that's cool you're an attorney named "Jamison".  
FUN FACT: The man who invented the Irish whiskey "Jameson" was a lawyer.

ZACK

Really?

CLIFF

Yeah, and it was the only time he passed the bar.

Everyone but Jamison dies out laughing.

CLIFF (CONT'D)

Jamison, you look like you need a shot, buddy.

JAMISON

I don't drink.

CLIFF

Good for you. I tried that once, but honestly ... I prefer having fun.

HOWARD

Atta-boy!

Howard clinks his drink with Cliff's.

JAMISON

Now what exactly do "Social Mediators" do?

CLIFF

I attend social events with my clients and help them feel at ease.

JAMISON

Zack, you hired "The Buffer"?

DAPHNE

Well, now I know where that "micro-loan" went" ...

ZACK

Look, it's complicated-

CLIFF

You know what, my friends? It's actually not: We have one divorced couple, one Will, one sober lawyer, and three kids. So what needs to be agreed upon?

JAMISON

The Head of Estate.

HOWARD

I say Zack, he's the oldest.

DAPHNE  
Meilani, she's the most organized.

CLIFF  
Okay, so you both concur it's not  
Eli?

A waitress has just filled Eli's water glass.

ELI  
Thank you. Xylophone Biscuit  
Clitoris! Xylophone Biscuit  
Clitoris!

The waitress looks offended.

HOWARD AND DAPHNE  
No!

ZACK  
Look, I don't care about being Head  
of Estate, I just want everyone to  
be logical and civil, then just  
move on with our lives.

MEILANI  
Amen. I have no horse in this race.

CLIFF  
Well, Daphne and Howard - how would  
you feel about Jamison being the  
Executor? He's the one thing you  
both have agreed on.

HOWARD  
What is that, a trick question?  
Riddle? Hyku?

DAPHNE  
Well, so much for "Ladies first."  
Cliff, that's a fabulous idea. We  
know and trust Jamison. Don't we,  
Howard?

HOWARD  
By "we", you mean "me"? "You"?  
"Us"? Yes.

CLIFF  
Jamison? I don't mean to put  
pressure on you, it just seems-

JAMISON  
I'd be honored.



CLIFF

Great! Problem solved!

ZACK

(Grabbing his drink,  
preparing to toast)  
Beautiful! Well, since there's  
nothing else to discuss-

HOWARD

Not so fast, Son. I need to bring  
up one more vital thing.

Everyone anxiously awaits what exactly this is.

HOWARD (CONT'D)

I need to apologize to my ex-wife  
for answering before she did. That  
was not being a gentleman. Daphne,  
you look absolutely stunning  
tonight. What are you drinking -  
Merlot? Shiraz? Fountain of Youth?

DAPHNE

Thank you, Howard. I like your tie.

ZACK

Well, without further adieu, how  
about a toast to The Ferguson  
Family finally working things out?

MEILANI

And to the man who made all this  
possible, our new friend Cliff!

Everyone happily toasts and says "Cheers", "Here, here!",  
etc. Even Jamison, who is quite pleased with his new title.

ELI

COCONUT DRUMSTICK TESTICLE! COCONUT  
DRUMSTICK TESTICLE!

INT. RESTAURANT LOBBY - LATER

Cliff stands in the corner with Zack and Howard, who shakes  
his hand.

HOWARD

You're quite the firecracker, kid!  
We gotta play racketball, you have  
my card.

CLIFF  
 (Talking in Howard's  
 rhythm)  
 What's your best shot - forehand?  
 Backhand? Serve?

HOWARD  
 Ahh, a taste of my own medicine!

Howard playfully slaps his shoulder. Zack emphatically shakes Cliff's hand with both of his.

ZACK  
 This was amazing, thank you. Gotta  
 drop off Dad, I'll be in touch.

CLIFF  
 You know how to find me!

Cliff turns around to see Eli. Unseen by them both, Meilani stands nearby and catches their conversation.

CLIFF (CONT'D)  
 Hey Eli, it was great meeting you.  
 I think it's really cool how you  
 speak your mind.

ELI  
 Unfortunately, it's uncontrollable.

CLIFF  
 Listen, communicating in an  
 unfiltered, stream of conscious way  
 is a sign of true genius.

ELI  
 Really?

CLIFF  
 Oh, yeah. Some examples are the  
 lyrics of Bob Dylan, the writing of  
 Tolstoy, and the dialogue of Eli.

Eli smiles. Meilani is impressed.

ELI  
 Well, that makes me feel better,  
 but I wish I could censor myself.

CLIFF  
 You know, I've got a cousin who has  
 a similar condition. He started  
 doing vocal exercises that really  
 helped.

(MORE)

CLIFF (CONT'D)

(Handing him a card)

Here, write down your email, and -  
if you like - I can send them to  
you.

ELI

(Taking card, writing)

Awesome, thank you.

Daphne and Jamison walk up. Meilani joins them.

DAPHNE

It was lovely meeting you, Cliff. I  
hope we'll see you again soon.

CLIFF

Absolutely, it'd be my pleasure.

MEILANI

It was an honor to watch you work,  
Mr. Buffer.

CLIFF

Please, call me "Mr. Social  
Mediator".

Everyone chuckles.

JAMISON

Ladies, I'll be right there. I just  
need a quick minute with Cliff, if  
that's alright?

DAPHNE

Sure, we'll be in the parking lot.

Eli shakes hands with Cliff and exits. Meilani looks at  
Cliff. They definitely have natural chemistry.

MEILANI

Thank you, Cliff.

The ladies leave. Jamison begins his agenda.

JAMISON

Okay, I'll admit it: Initially, I  
thought the concept of a "Buffer"  
seemed absurd.

CLIFF

(Sarcastically)

Well, at least you didn't show it.

JAMISON

But you're really good at it. What can I say? You dazzled me. I'd like to hire you to repair my rocky relationship with my fiancé. Can you meet us tomorrow morning at 9am?

CLIFF

Ooh, 9am. Can we do it a little later?

JAMISON

Fine, you wanna play "Hardball"? I'll double your rate.

CLIFF

What's the address?

Jamison smiles.

EXT. CLIFF'S PARENTS' HOUSE - DAY

Cliff closes the back door on a small U-Haul, which is packed with his belongings. He briskly skips over to the front door, where his parents stand. He hugs Charlotte.

CHARLOTTE

Oh, my baby boy. I'm gonna miss you, but I'm very proud of you and your business. Now we'll see you Thursday for BBQ Night!

CLIFF

Thanks, Mom. See you then.

She scowls at her husband.

CHARLOTTE

And I'll unfortunately see you in about two minutes!

She walks off, in a huff.

CLIFF

What's that about?

GREGORY

Oh, it's probably just her time of the month.

CLIFF

Pop, she's 60 years old.

GREGORY

I don't mean "period". I mean, once a month, she acts like a crazy bitch.

CLIFF

I noticed you've been sleeping on the couch.

GREGORY

It's more comfortable. Our mattress is too hard on my back.

CLIFF

Dad, let me to talk to her-

GREGORY

(Putting hands on Cliff's shoulders)

Don't worry, we don't need The Buffer. But if we do, I expect "The Family Discount".

He smiles at him.

GREGORY (CONT'D)

Now come here.

They hug.

CHARLOTTE (V.O.)

Gregory! Did you drink Grape Soda on our white carpet again?

Gregory heavily sighs.

GREGORY

Let me know when you invent a "Human Mute Button".

INT. LAVISH OFFICE - MORNING

Cliff walks into a beautiful office that looks like it was just built and refurbished yesterday. He approaches the RECEPTIONIST (Female, 20s) sitting at a giant, gold desk.

RECEPTIONIST

Hi, may I help you?

CLIFF

Hi, I'm Cliff Connors, here to see Jamison Campbell.

INT. LAVISH OFFICE, OUTSIDE A DOOR - MOMENTS LATER

An ASSISTANT (Male, early 20's) feebly opens the door.

ASSISTANT

Mr. Campbell, I have your 9 o'clock here.

Jamison quickly appears in the doorway, beckoning Cliff in.

JAMISON

Good morning, Cliff. Come on in.  
Thank you, Duncan.

Cliff steps in and shakes his hand.

JAMISON (CONT'D)

Cliff, I'd like you to meet the love of my life. My fiancé, Meilani.

It's HER! Cliff looks dumbfounded. Meilani is just as perky and confident as before.

MEILANI

Well, hello, Cliff. Lovely to see you again.  
(Handing him a coffee)  
Large Vanilla Latte?

CLIFF

Thank you.  
(Taking it)  
Well, sorry, Jamison, but today - I'll be taking her side on everything.

They chuckle. Meilani sits; the men join her.

CLIFF (CONT'D)

So, here I am at your service.

They nervously look at each other, then at Cliff.

CLIFF (CONT'D)

Hey, you two are getting married!

They both nervously nod.

CLIFF (CONT'D)

Wow, a lawyer and a Zoo Director.  
So one handles unruly animals trying to break out of their cages ... and the other's a Zoo Director!

He laughs until he realizes they're not joining him. Time to get to work.

CLIFF (CONT'D)

Listen, these things are never easy. But we're gonna figure it out together, okay? So talk to me.

JAMISON

Look - clearly, we love each other. It's just ...

MEILANI

Not gonna lie to you, Cliff - we got problems.

JAMISON

Well, Honey - EVERY couple has their problems.

MEILANI

Oh, yeah? Well, does EVERY woman catch her fiancé porking her co-worker in a Jacuzzi?

JAMISON

That was a mistake! And NOT FAIR - you said we've moved on, but you keep bringing it up!

MEILANI

Well, I'll start doing my best when you stop doing my friends.

JAMISON

Well, I'll stop doing your friends when you start doing "The Reverse Cowgirl".

CLIFF

THAT'S IT, ENOUGH!!!

They are both startled by his reaction.

CLIFF (CONT'D)

I came here to work with two adults. All I see before me, is a couple of self-entitled children. If we boil your friction down to the bare root - it's that Jamison cheated, and Meilani keeps reminding him of that. True?

JAMISON

Nailed it!

MEILANI

Damn right!

CLIFF

Gotcha. This is not an uncommon dilemma.

JAMISON

She promised to stop bringing up my despicable error. I'd just like her to keep her word.

MEILANI

And I would just like him to keep his dick in his pants.

CLIFF

FOLKS! I did NOT come here to referee a finger-pointing contest.

Meilani looks out the window. Jamison bows his head.

CLIFF (CONT'D)

Plus, it wouldn't be fair. Clearly, Jamison has more experience when it comes to "Fingering".

Meilani and Jamison reluctantly crack up.

CLIFF (CONT'D)

You're both having a lot of "Big Feelings", and that's good news, because it just means you care about each other. So here's what I suggest: I'm gonna do a one-on-one session with each of you, then we'll do another Joint Session. Ideally within about a week?

JAMISON

Works for me!

MEILANI

Sure.

CLIFF

Beautiful!

(beat)

Just out of curiosity, Folks - why didn't you just go to therapy?



MEILANI  
Please. Therapy?

JAMISON  
That's for LOSERS!

Meilani and Jamison high-five. Cliff is perplexed.

EXT. SIDEWALK - DAY

Cliff walks and talks to Walt on his phone earpiece.

WALT (V.O.)  
I got you booked for the month, my  
dude!

CLIFF  
Walt, you da man! Just remember -  
I'm working with Meilani and  
Jamison every week now, so we gotta-

WALT (V.O.)  
I know, Fool; I'm looking at your  
calendar!

Cliff laughs as he walks to a house's front door.

CLIFF  
Of course. Ok, I'm about to help  
this guy with his annoying  
roommate.

WALT (V.O.)  
Godspeed, Soldier!

CLIFF  
Later.

As Cliff is about to knock, ROGER (40s) - a wild-haired,  
disheveled-looking man - swings the door open.

ROGER  
You must be The Buffer!

CLIFF  
Hi, Cliff Connors.  
(shaking hand)  
You must be Roger. I'm here to help  
your situation with Charlie.

ROGER

Okay, Quick, Fair Warning: He's agreed to do this, but he's in one of his moods again. So just be calm and patient. Charlie ...

CLIFF

No problem. I'm sure this is nothing I haven't already seen -  
Whoa!!!

The Disheveled Man has opened the door to reveal CHARLIE, an angry pitbull. He stares at Cliff, growling.

CLIFF (CONT'D)

THIS is your "roommate"?

ROGER

Yeah, we've lived together for years.

Cliff stares at both of them, then tries to bond with Charlie.

CLIFF

Hey, Charlie. You're a sweet-looking-

Charlie barks loudly, scaring Cliff out of the house.

EXT. LEMONADE STAND - DAY

Cliff talks to two different Girl Scouts.

CLIFF

So McKenzie, it's okay if Sophie sells her product across the street from you; that's where she lives. But you're the only one who gets to have a sign that says, "I Was Here First." Sound good?

MCKENZIE

(Hesitantly)

Fine.

SOPHIE

Your lemonade sucks!

MCKENZIE

AAAHHH!!!

McKenzie tackles Sophie. Cliff breaks it up.

INT. NURSING HOME - DAY

Cliff mediates a dispute among senior citizens during a Bingo Game.

CLIFF

So Edgar, all we're asking you to do is to start saying "Exactly!" or "That's right!", instead of "Bingo". Otherwise, it's really confusing. Does that make sense?

EDGAR

Go Fish!

EXT. ALLEY - DAY

Cliff works out a disagreement between two gang members, LOCO TORNADO (Latino, 20s) and 'LIL SHANK (African-American, 20s).

CLIFF

So, Loco Tornado, it's okay to joke around - but when you refer to 'Lil Shank as " 'Lil Skank " ... it's very disrespectful. Isn't that true, 'Lil Shank?

'LIL SHANK

(Vulnerable)

Yeah, homey. It just really hurts my feelings, Dogg.

LOCO TORNADO

My bad, Fool. Come here.

Loco Tornado and 'Lil Shank hug. Cliff smiles and exhales.

INT. CLIFF'S OFFICE - DAY

Cliff and Meilani are in the middle of a session.

CLIFF

Look, I get it, okay? I understand why you're angry and resentful. He cheated. I've been cheated on; it's humiliating.

MEILANI

Yes! I feel so betrayed.

CLIFF

But you also need to take responsibility for what you've done.

MEILANI

Excuse me? Exactly what do you think I've done?

CLIFF

Taken him back. Once you take someone who's strayed back, you have to forgive them, or it's never gonna work.

MEILANI

Well, he needs to know how much he hurt me.

CLIFF

He knows. Trust me, you've told him plenty of times. If you wanna resent him for the rest of your life - that's fine, but you gotta cut him loose. If you want to marry him, then you have to let go of your anger. Otherwise, it's not fair to him.

MEILANI

How ironic. He's the unfaithful one, yet I have to be "fair" to his feelings.

CLIFF

Just look at it like ... you're starting from Square One, a clean slate. But if you're always resentful of him, then you feel like you're always above him. And that just sets you up to fail.

MEILANI

All that makes sense in my brain, just not in my heart.

(Pausing, looking at him)

So what horrible woman broke your heart?

CLIFF

Scarlett Johansson, the day she got married.

Meilani giggles and playfully slaps his shoulder.

INT. CLIFF'S OFFICE - DAY

Cliff and Jamison, mid-session.

CLIFF

You want me to tell Meilani to give you a Hall Pass for your Bachelor Party?

JAMISON

Well, don't say it like that. I just want us to have a "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy.

CLIFF

Okay - well, what about her? At her Bachelorette Party, can she do the same?

JAMISON

I don't wanna know. That's why it's called "Don't Ask, Don't Tell"!

CLIFF

Jamison, I really don't think this is a good idea.

JAMISON

Well, I really don't think it's your choice. I hired you, I'm paying you double your rate, and I'm telling you what I need.

He stares at Cliff, awaiting an answer.

CLIFF

Fine, but she's not gonna be on board with this.

Jamison checks his watch and stands up.

JAMISON

Well, I'm sure you'll find a way, I have faith in you.

He pulls a large wad of cash from his pocket and throws it on the floor.

JAMISON (CONT'D)

Oops, I dropped something. Keep it, you've earned it so far.

Jamison leaves. Cliff eyes the money, then looks pensively out the window.

INT. CLIFF'S PARENTS' HOUSE - DAY

Charlotte closes the front door, and Cliff walks in carrying boxes of to-go food.

CHARLOTTE

Cliffy, that's very sweet. Next time, just give me a warning when you're coming by.

He puts it all on a living room table and starts taking the food out. Charlotte looks quite concerned.

CLIFF

But you love surprises. Especially if it's you and Pop's favorite afternoon snack from The Fruit Stand! They also had those awesome desserts with the nuts and whipped cream.

CHARLOTTE

Listen, Honey - I need to fill you in on something.

Gregory walks in with a giant box.

GREGORY

Did you tell him yet?

CHARLOTTE

I was just about to-

GREGORY

Your mother's kicking me out!

CLIFF

What? What the hell are you talking about? You two have been married almost 35 years!

CHARLOTTE

Exactly. I can't take it anymore! He never listens to me, he's always messy and refuses to clean up-

GREGORY

Meanwhile she's constantly nagging and guilt-tripping, it never stops!

Gregory drops the giant box on his foot. It breaks in half, as random trinkets spill all over the floor. Gregory grabs his foot and begins hopping in pain.

GREGORY (CONT'D)

Ow!!! Goddammit!

CHARLOTTE

Oh, great - now we have to sweep again.

CLIFF

Alright, calm down, you two. I'll clean it up - but first, let's clean THIS up. Pop, are you okay?

Still hopping on one foot, Gregory loses his balance and flips over an ottoman.

GREGORY

Oh, NOOOO!!!

Cliff rushes to him and slowly helps him up on the ottoman. Charlotte goes to the kitchen and grabs an icepack.

CLIFF

Easy, Dad. I gotcha.

(Addressing both)

This is ridiculous. You're not separating. You love each other too much. Look - Mom brought you ice for your foot, because, clearly, she cares-

Charlotte tosses the icepack to Gregory, thinking he'll catch it ... he misses, and it lands on his foot, making him scream in excruciating pain.

GREGORY

AHHHH!!! Damn you, Woman!

CHARLOTTE

I was throwing it to you - You're supposed to catch it! What the hell happened to your reflexes?!!

GREGORY

Call 9-1-1! Domestic Abuse!

CLIFF

Stop it! Just STOP. IT.

They both stop talking.

CLIFF (CONT'D)

Is this really the hill you wanna die on, Mom?

CHARLOTTE

I'd rather die alone on a hill than die with him.

She grabs her purse and rushes out the front door.

GREGORY

Well, either way, YOU'RE OVER-THE-HILL!

CLIFF

Pop, you don't feel that way, do you? You don't wanna be alone?

GREGORY

Of course not, Son.

(pause)

I want be with a long, tall El Salvadorian stripper. With milk-bags the size of hub-cabs.

Cliff hangs his head.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Cliff sits on a couch, working on his laptop. Walt shoots a ball in a "Pop A Shot" basket, which hangs from the door.

WALT

I got a great prospective client, a dude I went to school with that's making BANK managing hedge-funds.

CLIFF

Sweet!

WALT

We're doing lunch Friday at 1. Wanna come?

Cliff stops typing and glances at a calendar.

CLIFF

Aw, man - I can't, Meilani had to switch her time to then.

He instantly gets back to typing.

WALT

So ... were you gonna tell me? I do manage your affairs, ya know.



CLIFF

Sorry man, she just messaged me 10 minutes ago. Dammit, I can't get this thing to record a voice Memo!

WALT

You're seeing a lot of this Meilani.

CLIFF

Well, yeah - Jamison and her wanna meet every week, then do a Joint Session.

Walt stops shooting and turns to him.

WALT

Be careful, Cliff.

CLIFF

(Not looking up)  
Always am, my man. Oh, come on!  
What is so hard about recording?

Walt chucks the Nerf ball at Cliff's head. It softly bounces off.

CLIFF (CONT'D)

What the fuck, Bro?

WALT

I'm serious. Be careful. I know you like her. Are you being honest with yourself, about what you really want?

CLIFF

Look - I just want her to be happy. And if I can't be the man to do that, I wanna make sure she's with one who can.

WALT

I been there, brother. Just don't do anything to jeopardize our business.

CLIFF

Walt. You REALLY think I'm capable of being that stupid?

WALT

Your big head's not. It's that little head of yours I don't trust.

Cliff gets up and grabs the Pop-A-Shot ball.

CLIFF  
Ain't nothing "little" about it.

He prepares to shoot. Walt tries to block him.

WALT  
That's not what I heard.

Cliff spins and runs around him.

CLIFF  
Well, just ask Alice.

He shoots the ball in the basket and celebrates.

WALT  
Oh, I'm-a kill you now!

Walt picks him up and drops him on the couch.

CLIFF  
Well, at least your'e not  
"jeopardizing our business."

WALT  
(Smiling)  
Just the spokesman.

He rushes toward Cliff, who springs up and dodges him. Walt playfully chases after him.

INT. CLIFF'S OFFICE - DAY

Cliff is meeting with Meilani and Jamison.

MEILANI  
So then this Jackass requested that  
during his Bachelor Party, he wants  
to do whatever and whoever he  
wants.

JAMISON  
Wait, I didn't say THAT-

MEILANI  
Oh, right, you said that famous  
Military Slogan.

CLIFF  
What, "Be All You Can Be"?

MEILANI

No ...

CLIFF

"Looking For A Few Good Men"?

MEILANI

NOOO ...

CLIFF

"Don't Ask, Don't Tell"?

MEILANI

That's it! So basically, he wants a Hall Pass. Ridiculous, right?

She stares at Cliff, shaking her head. Jamison stares at Cliff intensely.

JAMISON

What do you think, Cliff?

Cliff absorbs all this information and plots his next move. He cups his hands against his nose, like he's praying.

CLIFF

I think you should do it.

MEILANI

What?

JAMISON

Yes!

CLIFF

I think you both should do it. That way, it's completely fair, no Double Standard. For one night, you each have pure, unadulterated fun - not "adultery", 'cause you're not married yet - but you individually have a blast, get it out of your systems, "Don't Ask, Don't Tell".

MEILANI

But I don't WANT to have sex with a stranger!

CLIFF

Then don't. There's plenty of other ways to celebrate a Bachelorette Party.

MEILANI

Oh, so I'll just pretend to enjoy my night while my husband-to-be's banging a stripper?!!

JAMISON

Hey - "Don't Ask, Don't Tell."

MEILANI

You know what? I'm outta here!

She jumps up and heads to the door. Cliff stands.

CLIFF

Meilani, please! Relationships are all about compromise! You know - Give and Take?

MEILANI

You're both idiots! Jamison - Once again, you're trying to "take" too much. And Cliff - up until now, I thought you were great at what you do and really genuine. Well, you are great at your job ... but you're just as shallow and unevolved as the average douchebag at Last Call!

She stomps away and slams the door. Cliff is disturbed. Jamison elatedly slaps Cliff on the shoulder.

JAMISON

That was killer, Bro! Thank you!  
Don't worry, she'll come around.  
Now here's the next thing I need  
...

INT. CLIFF'S PARENTS' HOUSE - DAY

Cliff paces the room as Charlotte slowly rocks in a rocking chair, sewing a sweater.

CLIFF

Mom, you just can't do this! You and Dad are the two people in my life who set the ultimate example of how relationships should be!

(MORE)

CLIFF (CONT'D)

I mean, you're both so loving and understanding and compassionate to each other - and after 35 years, you're just gonna piss it all away because he won't clean up and you won't shut up?

Charlotte, who has been continuously and calmly sewing, finally stops and looks up.

CHARLOTTE

You done?

CLIFF

Yes, 'Mam.

CHARLOTTE

Sit down.

He takes a seat in a chair, close to her. She puts her sewing kit and sweater aside.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

Is your father messy? Absolutely. Is he stubborn? As a mule. Do I fantasize about choking him with his bathrobe sash? Every time he forgets to tie it.

CLIFF

Ugh, the visual ...

CHARLOTTE

But do I love him? Since the very first day we met. Cliff, I don't want to end things with Gregory, I was just trying to send him a message, because I didn't feel heard.

CLIFF

Well, that's a relief. So why isn't he home?

CHARLOTTE

Now he's staying away out of spite. I guess I went too far.

CLIFF

No, Mom - it's not your fault.

(He hugs her.)

You both just overreacted, that's all. I'll talk to him. This'll all work out, okay?

CHARLOTTE  
What makes you so sure?

CLIFF  
Because it's my job.

EXT. ICE CREAM PARLOR PATIO - DAY

Cliff and Meilani sit at a small table on the patio. He finishes a banana split while she enjoys a milkshake.

MEILANI  
This is a nice change of scenery  
for our meeting. Is it so I won't  
make a scene?

CLIFF  
Noooo. Why would you make a scene?

MEILANI  
Oh, Jeez, I don't know ... maybe  
because YOU TOLD MY FIANCE' WE  
SHOULD HAVE SEX WITH OTHER PEOPLE!

A couple walking into the parlor looks at them, appalled.

CLIFF  
Not permanently. Just that one  
night!

MEILANI  
Oh, that makes it SOOO much better!  
Do you REALLY think that's in  
Jamison's and my greatest and  
highest good?

CLIFF  
Of course it's not!

She takes this in. Cliff realizes what he just blurted out.  
He regains his composure and looks at her.

CLIFF (CONT'D)  
Of course not, Meilani.

MEILANI  
Then why the hell would you ever  
suggest such a thing?

CLIFF

I was using reverse psychology. Many "A Type Personalities" like Jamison tend to make ridiculous demands, but - very often - if you stop fighting them and just give into their requests, they don't even want 'em anymore.

MEILANI

Well, I don't think that's stopped him. Do you?

CLIFF

It doesn't appear that way.

She looks away, agitated.

CLIFF (CONT'D)

Look, I'm really sorry. I would never intentionally do anything to hurt you.

She looks at him. They both internalize a whirlwind of emotions. For a moment, The Buffer is speechless.

CLIFF (CONT'D)

Um ... or any of my clients.

MEILANI

I know you wouldn't.  
(Leaning in)  
But you did.

CLIFF

I see that now. And believe me, I feel terrible about it.

They lock eyes for another moment.

CLIFF (CONT'D)

Did I mention that you smell fantastic? A perfect blend of Vanilla, Cinnamon, and Butter Pecan.

She gives him a depreciating smile and sits back.

MEILANI

Always with the jokes.

CLIFF

I know, I do it when I'm uncomfortable, it's a self-defense mechanism. Come to think of it, I do it when I'm comfortable, too.

MEILANI

It's actually very cute.

She sincerely smiles at him.

MEILANI (CONT'D)

You're a sweet guy. I could tell that the moment I saw you helping Eli.

CLIFF

Oh. I didn't know anyone was watching.

MEILANI

That's what makes it so sweet.

They take each other in. Cliff is very smitten ... and she seems to be, too. He reminds himself he's at work.

CLIFF

What about Jamison? Is he sweet?

MEILANI

When he wants to be.

She looks away and reminds herself she's a client.

MEILANI (CONT'D)

Look, it's not just that he wants to be with other women. It's the way he goes about it - he's an emotional bully.

CLIFF

Okay, so just so I'm 100% clear here - you're taking a Hard Pass on the Hall Pass?

MEILANI

Yes.

CLIFF

And you would like him to be more respectful and considerate of your feelings?



MEILANI

OhmiGod, yes.

CLIFF

And the whole "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" thing makes you feel like you're not enough?

MEILANI

Absolutely!

CLIFF

Okay, this is great progress! These are all valid points you should bring up to him in our next session.

MEILANI

Well, maybe YOU can bring 'em up and defend ME for once!

She storms off. A CHEESY-LOOKING MAN in a purple leisure suit stands nearby, watching the action. He turns to Cliff.

CHEESY MAN

Whoa. Sounds like somebody ordered "The Rocky Road", huh?

Cliff glares at him.

INT. CLIFF'S OFFICE - DAY

Cliff is mid-session with Meilani and a seething Jamison.

JAMISON

So now we're NOT doing a Hall Pass right before the wedding? Even after we all agreed on it!

MEILANI

For the record, I never agreed.

JAMISON

Cliff did! He said we should!

CLIFF

I did. But after realizing how upset it made Meilani during our last meeting, I realized ... I made a mistake.

JAMISON

I want my money back.

MEILANI

Jamison, we're not getting a refund. The man is trying his best to help us.

JAMISON

Is he? 'Cause I feel we're in a worse place than where we started!

Jamison slams his fist on the table. Meilani looks uncomfortable. Cliff breaths heavily then focuses on Jamison.

CLIFF

What about how she feels? Do you care about that?

JAMISON

Of course.

CLIFF

Then tell her.

JAMISON

What?

CLIFF

TELL. HER.

Jamison looks at Meilani and gently grabs her hand.

JAMISON

Meilani, I love you more than you know. I've obviously been selfish and not focused on your needs. You're not a fan of "Operation: Don't Ask, Don't Tell", are you?

She tears up and shakes her head.

JAMISON (CONT'D)

Well, don't worry; it's not gonna happen. It was a stupid idea.

She smiles as she tears up even more.

JAMISON (CONT'D)

I got scared and I tried to emotionally distance myself. And I am so sorry, Sugarpie. You are my only true love, and I promise I'm gonna think more about your feelings instead of just hurting them.

She hugs him tight and sobs.

MEILANI

Thank you, Jamie. I love you, too.

Jamison holds her and softly caresses her back. Cliff politely nods at them, then looks away.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CLIFF'S OFFICE - SCREEN READS "7 MINUTES LATER"

Cliff is on his laptop and scribbling notes on a pad. The door bursts open, and Jamison barges in!

JAMISON

What the hell was that, Cliff?!!

CLIFF

I'm just doing my job.

JAMISON

I paid you extra money to take MY side, not hers! You work for ME,; you're supposed to set up things for my benefit!

CLIFF

Jamison, not only is that unethical, that's not fair to Meilani.

Jamison snatches Cliff's writing pad and throws it against the wall.

JAMISON

(In a rage)

Fuck Meilani! I bend over backwards for her, and she can't even let me have one crazy night? I'm trying to grow as a person, and now I gotta keep nailing broads and lie about it!

Cliff, taken aback by this outlandish admission, stands up and slowly backs away.

CLIFF

Look, I tried my best. She didn't go for it. So let's think about how to service her-

JAMISON

You're trying to bang her, aren't ya?

He walks toward Cliff.

CLIFF

What? No, I'm trying to fix your relationship!

JAMISON

That better be all you're trying to do. Because if not ... I'll destroy you.

Jamison gets in his face, practically pinning him to the wall. Walt swings the door open.

WALT

Hey there, Jamison. Cliff, we got a crazy day - I thought you may need some "assistance"?

CLIFF

Oh, you know what - 'Ole Jamison was just leaving, weren't you?

JAMISON

(Looking at Walt)

Yeah, gotta run.

(Turning back to Cliff)

On the next disagreement, side with me.

Walt walks over, which makes Jamison step back from Cliff.

WALT

Don't tell him how to do his job; he's the best in the world at it.

(Gesturing to door)

I'll walk you to your car.

Jamison rapidly walks to the door.

JAMISON

No need, I know the way.

WALT

I'm not offering, I'm telling you: I'm walking you to your car.

He shoves Jamison out the door.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Cliff and Gregory sit at a tiny table in a hotel room. They both drink Schlitz Lite Tallboys.

GREGORY

I got a mini-fridge, free breakfast buffet, free parking, pool and gym, and I'm right next door to the Ice Machine!

CLIFF

Hmm. You know what they don't have here? MOM.

GREGORY

So THAT'S why it's so quiet ...

CLIFF

Come on, Pop. You telling me you don't miss her at all?

GREGORY

I miss her every second.

He swigs his beer.

CLIFF

Then go back home and see her.

GREGORY

It's not that simple, Son. We've reached this weird stand-off, I feel like I'm at the point of no return.

CLIFF

You're not. Remember when Bernadette and I used to fight? You'd say, "Sometimes, you gotta be the bigger person." Good thing I wasn't obese.

Gregory smiles.

GREGORY

I still believe that. It'd just be nice if she were the bigger person sometimes.

CLIFF

I think you both are, in different ways.

GREGORY

I've been with your mother for so long. And now that I left ... what if she won't take me back?

Gregory starts crying. Cliff hugs him.

CLIFF

Hey, Pop - it's okay. Look, she's gonna take you back - I told you what she said; she loves you.

GREGORY

That's good.

He wipes his tears then suddenly escapes from the embrace.

GREGORY (CONT'D)

But, wait! I can't just show up and pretend nothing happened. "Hey Honey, I'm back! Now turn on 'Wheel Of Fortune'!"

CLIFF

Okay, name 3 things Mom absolutely LOVES. Not crazy-expensive, just everyday things in life.

GREGORY

Uh ... cheesecake. Shiraz wine. And night walks to The Canyon.

CLIFF

Great! Now just find a way to incorporate 2 of those into the next time you see her.

GREGORY

That's ... very smart, Kiddo. You really found your calling.

CLIFF

You sure you wouldn't rather me teach Philosophy?

They both laugh and toast beers.

GREGORY

Seriously, how do you know so much about relationships?

CLIFF

Honestly? My clients. Right now I'm trying like hell to please this one couple.

GREGORY

"This one couple" or "this one girl"?

Cliff looks at him, surprised.

GREGORY (CONT'D)

I may or may not have overheard you on the phone to Walt. You really like her, huh?

CLIFF

More than I want to.

GREGORY

Well, maybe it's time to do something about that.

INT. CLIFF'S CAR - DAY

Cliff drives on a freeway with no traffic, blasting and singing along to a song. He shuts it off to answer his phone.

CLIFF

Buffer Enterprises: Don't Snuff 'Em, Buff 'Em! This is Cliff.

CUT TO:

INT. MEILANI'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Meilani paces. She's clearly been crying and is distraught.

MEILANI

Cliff, I need your help!

INTERCUT:

CLIFF

Sure, Meilani, what is it?

MEILANI

Jamison's friends kidnapped him and are taking him to a "Secret Pre-Bachelor Party"!

CLIFF

What do you mean "kidnapped"?  
Should we call the cops?

MEILANI

No, they're not gonna hurt him,  
they just came in wearing ski masks  
and are doing some stupid Frat Boy  
prank.

CLIFF

Okay, but he's not in danger?

MEILANI

Not that I know of. But I have no  
idea where they're taking him, I  
don't know how many women are gonna  
be all over him, and I'm really  
freaking out!

She starts crying.

CLIFF

Where are you, home?

MEILANI

Yes - same address you have on  
file, 1618 St. Thomas Drive.

CLIFF

Okay, stay there - I'm on my way!

He hangs up and speeds like he's auditioning for NASCAR.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. MEILANI'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - A LITTLE LATER

Close-up of Meilani. As she speaks, she becomes increasingly  
panicked.

MEILANI

We had this amazing session - I  
mean, you were there - he  
apologized and was so sweet and  
promised to make my feelings a  
priority - and finally, I didn't  
have to be all paranoid about him  
having a one-night stand on his  
Bachelor Party, but NOW ...

(MORE)



MEILANI (CONT'D)

his dumbass buddies ambush him and force him - well, let's be honest, I'm sure he would've GLADLY joined them - to party in a mysterious location with God knows how many sluts!!!

Camera has been slowly zooming out, finally revealing Cliff rigidly sitting on the edge of a chair, anxiously biting his nails. Meilani, sitting on a large couch, starts gulping a large glass of wine.

CLIFF

Okay, your concern is 100% valid. But first of all, we don't know that he's at a crazy party with a bunch of sluts.

MEILANI

But we don't know that he's NOT!  
(She calms herself)  
What's the "second" thing?

CLIFF

Come again?

MEILANI

You just said, "First of all". So what's the second thing?

CLIFF

I have no idea. I just blurted that out; guess I had "premature speculation."

He nervously chuckles as she stares at him.

MEILANI

(Dejectedly)  
Perfect.

She gulps more wine. Cliff joins her on the couch, keeping a respectful distance away.

CLIFF

Listen, the fact that he told you to scrap the whole "Hall Pass" idea is a HUGE step. That's major progress.

MEILANI

I know. It's just - here we are on a Holiday Weekend, he's not answering his phone-

CLIFF  
Do you trust him?

MEILANI  
Well, I'm wearing the ring he gave  
me.

CLIFF  
That's not what I asked.  
(Passionately)  
Do you trust him?

MEILANI  
Honestly ... I don't know, Cliff.  
I'm trying my best, but I just  
don't know.

She breaks down. He is uncertain of what to do. As she continues to cry, he slowly moves in and gently hugs her. She cries into his shoulder.

CLIFF  
It's gonna be okay. I promise,  
we're gonna solve this problem.

After a moment, she stops crying and lets go of him. He grabs a box of tissues and offers it to her.

MEILANI  
Oh, no, thank you. I accidentally  
turned your shirt into a Kleenex.

They both start laughing. They are still sitting quite close to each other.

MEILANI (CONT'D)  
Sorry about that.

CLIFF  
Don't be, this shirt has endured  
much worse than that.

She smiles.

CLIFF (CONT'D)  
I'm sorry you've been so upset. You  
don't deserve to feel all this  
misery. You only deserve happiness.

She looks at him ... then grabs his face with her hands and kisses him. They enjoy a mutual, passionate kiss for a moment ... then Cliff pulls away.

CLIFF (CONT'D)

Wait! What about Jamison?

MEILANI

I ... I don't know.

CLIFF

Then we shouldn't be doing this.

MEILANI

You're right. Oh, my God, I'm such an idiot ...

Cliff can tell she's on the verge of another breakdown. He reassuringly grabs her hand.

CLIFF

Hey, hey - you're not an idiot. Not at all! I'm just trying to be professional. And fair to you ... and him.

MEILANI

Well, don't worry. You definitely are.

They share a look of mutual understanding and bonding, as if they just survived a war together. Cliff slowly stands.

CLIFF

I should get going.

MEILANI

Thank you for coming over. And for everything.

She grabs his hand and gently squeezes it. He lightly pats her hand with his free hand, then trots to the door.

INT. CAR - SAME

A PRIVATE DETECTIVE (40s) sits in his car, just outside Meilani's house. He is parked with a clear view into her living room. He looks at some pictures he just took of the two hugging, kissing, and holding hands.

DETECTIVE

Gotcha.

Close-up of his phone as he texts the pictures, with a message reading "Look what I just saw ..."

JUMP CUT TO:

INT. CLIFF'S OFFICE - THE NEXT DAY

Cliff organizes a small stack of index cards at his desk. The phone rings; he picks it up right away.

CLIFF  
Hey, Jamison! Talk to me.

CUT TO:

INT. JAMISON'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Jamison stands in front of a bigscreen mounted on his wall, speaking into a headset.

JAMISON  
Turn on Channel 8.

INTERCUT:

CLIFF  
One sec.

He grabs a remote and turns on his office TV, then hits the desired channel.

CLIFF (CONT'D)  
Local news? Okay, it looks like a riveting story on "The Town's Oldest Librarian".

JAMISON  
This segment's almost over. Just keep watching. I'll be in touch.

Jamison hangs up.

Cliff stares inquisitively at his phone.

CLIFF  
O ... k.

He looks at the TV, which now displays: "BREAKING LOCAL NEWS!" A reporter, TANNER KIRKLAND, addresses the camera.

TANNER  
Hi, I'm Tanner Kirkland. Welcome to "Busted For Justice!"

The screen displays a billboard with a giant image of Cliff and the words, "THE BUFFER".

TANNER (V.O.)  
You've seen his billboards.

The screen shows a clip of a "Buffer" ad with Cliff now talking to the audience.

CLIFF  
I'm the guy who makes your life  
easier, when people make it harder.

TANNER (V.O.)  
You've seen his commercials.

The screen displays Cliff shaking hands with various clients.

TANNER (V.O.)  
You may have even seen him in your  
home, workplace, or favorite  
restaurant.

The screen shows another "Buffer" ad.

CLIFF  
I'm a professional Social Mediator.

FREEZE-FRAME on Cliff smiling.

TANNER (V.O.)  
But if you're thinking about hiring  
Cliff "The Buffer" Connors ... you  
might wanna think again.

We see an image of Cliff and Meilani kissing in her living room. Her face is blacked out; his is clearly visible.

TANNER (V.O.)  
It looks like The Buffer may be  
only in business for himself.

INT. STUDIO - CONTINUOUS

Tanner interviews Jamison, whose face is in the shadows.

TANNER  
So Cliff Connors tried to seduce  
your fiancé?

JAMISON  
Yes! I hired him to fix our  
relationship, and he tried to  
destroy it!

INT. NEWS ROOM - CONTINUOUS

TANNER

(To camera)

Claiming to be the ultimate solution to social conundrums, this Cliff Connors character has a clear history of using his job to pursue sexual relationships.

Several images are displayed of Cliff hugging women, who are presumably female customers.

QUICK MONTAGE OF TANNER INTERVIEWING PEOPLE IN THE STREET:

Tanner interviews a middle-aged businessman.

BUSINESSMAN

Hey, what can you say? Cliff loves the ladies.

Tanner interviews a beautiful woman in her 20's.

BEAUTIFUL WOMAN

(Smiling)

Yeah, Cliff loves the ladies a little too much ...

Tanner interviews a muscular jock in a tanktop.

TANKTOP JOCK

Oh, Cliff Connors, The Buffer? Yeah, that dude gets mad tail!

INT. NEWS ROOM - CONTINUOUS

TANNER

(To camera)

Cliff Connors is a great people's person, but he is far from a great person. "The Buffer" often lies ... and lies down with whomever he can. Perhaps Cliff Connors should change his nickname to "The Stuffer".

INT. CLIFF'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Shell-shocked, Cliff hits the mute button. His business phone starts ringing off the hook; he screens the calls.

He looks at a text on his cellphone from Jamison, which reads, "Told you I'd destroy you. STAY AWAY." He deeply inhales, exhales and rubs his temples. WHAT THE HELL JUST HAPPENED?

Just then, the door opens and Meilani bolts in.

MEILANI

Well, if it isn't the solution to every person's People Problem: Cliff Fuckin' Connors!

CLIFF

Lemme just tell you - that news story was greatly distorted-

MEILANI

Oh, really? You've never used your Buffer skills to get laid?

CLIFF

Well, not necessarily.

MEILANI

Oh, Christ ...

CLIFF

Look - not with a client, no!

MEILANI

Oh, so I suppose I'm the ONLY one you've ever kissed!

CLIFF

Yes, and the only one I've ever fallen for!

She's still livid, but she wasn't expecting that. And he wasn't expecting to say it. They both internalize a plethora of emotions. Finally, Meilani speaks.

MEILANI

I just have one question for you: Did you accept a bribe from Jamison to tell him what he wanted to hear?

CLIFF

I told you I was using reverse psychology.

MEILANI

That wasn't the question. Did you, or did you not, take money from my fiancé, in exchange for convincing me to let him fuck other people?

CLIFF

Yes, I did.

They look at each other. He is guilt-ridden and apologetic, he feels terrible. She is heartbroken.

CLIFF (CONT'D)

Meilani, I am beyond sorry. The good news is - we all learned a lesson from "Don't Ask, Don't Tell." No one's gonna bring it up again. That whole chapter in our lives is over.

MEILANI

Yeah. It sure is.

She turns and starts walking out the door. Cliff runs after her; she turns around.

CLIFF

Wait! "Fiancé"? You're still gonna marry Jamison?

MEILANI

He's a lot of things, Cliff. But at least he's honest. He told me about the bribe. I had to pry it outta you. Have a nice life.

She walks away.

INT. CLIFF'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - LATER

Cliff and Walt are in a heated discussion. Walt's pissed.

WALT

What did I say? Did I not tell you to "be careful"?

CLIFF

You sure did.

WALT

Did I tell you to jeopardize our company?



CLIFF

No, you actually said the complete opposite. I'm sorry, Walt-

WALT

What the fuck were you thinking, man?

Cliff starts to speak.

WALT (CONT'D)

You know what - don't answer that! 'Cause you were doing exactly what I was worried about, thinking with your little head.

CLIFF

Hey, I was also thinking with my heart!

WALT

Well, how romantic. Maybe your heart can reimburse me for the 30 grand I invested to start this Epic Fail of an Operation!

Walt stomps to the door and opens it.

CLIFF

Walt, I'll pay you back!

Walt turns around.

WALT

Oh, really? You and what Sugar Momma?

He leaves in a huff.

INT. CLIFF'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - LATER

A disheveled Cliff sits on his couch, in front of a table littered with beer cans, potato chip bags, pizza boxes, etc. He puts on his video game headset.

CLIFF

Okay, Novak - show me whatcha got, Baby!

NOVAK

Not until you get some help, Cliff. Sorry, Momma says you're too dangerous for me to play with.

CLIFF  
What? Oh, and I'm sure your Mom is  
a fuckin' Angel, huh?

The phone disconnects. Cliff tosses the headset behind him  
and swigs a beer. There's a loud knock on his front door.

Angle on door. He opens it ... it's Judith.

JUDITH  
Hi, Cliff.

CLIFF  
Judith?

She smiles sweetly at him.

JUMP CUT TO:

INT. CLIFF'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Cliff and Judith in a conversation.

JUDITH  
You started an entire business that  
had never even existed before, all  
based on your unique talent. I'm so  
proud of you.

CLIFF  
Thank you. But now, that business  
no longer exists again.

JUDITH  
That's okay, because you tried.  
That's all I ever wanted you to do.  
Just give *something* 100%. You  
finally did that! So it didn't work  
out; that's okay - now you don't  
have to spend the rest of your life  
wondering what would have happened.

CLIFF  
Yet I feel like a colossal failure.

JUDITH  
Oh, you're not, Sweetheart, you are  
anything but a failure.

She gets very close and grabs his hand.

JUDITH (CONT'D)

I just got another promotion at work.

CLIFF

Congratulations.

JUDITH

A big one. Like, in a whole new tax bracket.

CLIFF

That's fantastic, Judith.

JUDITH

I want you back. I made a mistake. Move back in with me, let me take care of you, and let's have our life back. Together.

CLIFF

Wow ... I wasn't expecting this.

JUDITH

Cliffy, since we've been apart, have you thought about me?

CLIFF

Well, of course-

She kisses him. He kisses back. He's vulnerable and needs some sort of positivity right now. Zoom in on Cliff.

CUT TO:

INT. CLIFF'S HEAD - CONTINUOUS

We see a series of quick flashbacks whirling around Cliff's head, intercut with fast-moving shapes and thought bubbles.

\*Walt says, "This is your thing! And you'll be the best in the world!"

\*Gregory says, "You really found your calling."

\*Jamison says, "What can I say? You dazzled me."

\*Meilani says, "It was an honor to watch you work, Mr. Buffer." She smiles.

\*Judith, seconds ago, says, "Now you don't have to spend the rest of your life wondering what would have happened."

\*Smug Man at Job Fair says, "The most talented people never reach their full potential, because they're never forced to."

\*Cliff says, "I just want her to be happy. And if I can't be the man to do that, I wanna make sure she's with one who can."

\*Gregory says, "You really like her, huh? ... It's time to do something about that."

INT. CLIFF'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Cliff's eyes suddenly open. He pulls away from Judith.

CLIFF

Judith, you are a wonderful person,  
and you deserve ALL of your  
lifetime goals.

JUDITH

Aw, thank you, Baby. You've always  
been so sweet-

CLIFF

But I'm not one of them.

JUDITH

What?

CLIFF

I'm not the guy for you. Not  
anymore. I don't wanna be enabled,  
I don't wanna be dependent ... I  
don't wanna feel sorry for myself.

JUDITH

But I need you.

CLIFF

No, you don't. You need that guy  
who used to live in your house,  
hide from responsibility, and never  
challenge himself. But that's not  
me anymore. Now go find him.

He kisses her on the forehead and runs to the front door.

JUDITH

Wait, your'e leaving? This is your  
house!

He opens the door and sprints to his car.

CLIFF

The door automatically locks, just close it!

INT. CLIFF'S OFFICE - LATER

Cliff works on his laptop. Files and notes are spread all over his desk.

CLIFF

Okay ... proof that Jamison is not the right guy.

He accidentally types the wrong button. His computer suddenly plays a recording of his last sentence.

CLIFF (V.O.)

Okay ... proof that Jamison is not the right guy.

He looks at his screen, confused.

CLIFF

Oh, NOW you start working?

He searches something on his laptop and clicks a button. It plays a previous conversation between him and Walt.

CLIFF (V.O.)

Dammit, I can't get this thing to record a voice Memo!

WALT (V.O.)

You're seeing a lot of this Meilani girl.

CLIFF (V.O.)

Well, yeah - Jamison and her wanna meet every week, then do a Joint Session.

He clicks "pause".

CLIFF

No way! Has this been recording every time I'm online?

He searches for a moment then clicks his mouse again. We hear a previous exchange with Jamison.

JAMISON (V.O.)

I paid you extra money to take MY side, not hers! You work for ME,;  
(MORE)

JAMISON (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
you're supposed to set up things  
for my benefit!

He clicks "pause".

CLIFF  
Jackpot!

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. EDITING BOOTH - DAY

Cliff, wearing a backpack, breathlessly runs to the door and knocks on it. After a few seconds, Walt opens it, looks at his friend, and freezes in his tracks.

CLIFF  
I know you don't even wanna think  
about me right now, and you have my  
full permission to kick my ass -  
but first: I have something you  
need to hear.

Walt sighs, annoyed.

JUMP CUT TO:

INT. EDITING BOOTH - MOMENTS LATER

Walt sits in the booth. Cliff stands as he plays a previous recorded conversation with Jamison.

CLIFF (V.O.)  
I'm trying to fix your  
relationship!

JAMISON (V.O.)  
That better be all you're trying to  
do. Because if not ... I'll destroy  
you.

Cliff hits "pause".

CLIFF  
And that's when you came in!

WALT  
Yeah, I remember.

CLIFF  
So what do you think? Be honest.

WALT

I think you're irresponsible. You fell in love and let him destroy our business.

CLIFF

Well ... can't argue with that.

WALT

You also just found a way to get it back. Now let's make sure we get that motherfucker back, too.

He smiles at Cliff, who immediately hugs him.

INT. CLIFF'S OFFICE - LATER

Cliff and Walt look at a bulletin board with a bunch of pinned-up index cards. They're hatching their plan ... there's a loud knock on the door. Walt opens it to find Charlotte and Gregory.

WALT

(Playfully)

Man, we gotta start locking the front door! Hey, Mr. and Mrs. Connors, how are you?

CHARLOTTE

Hey, Walt, great to see you!

She hugs him, then Gregory shakes his hand.

GREGORY

How are you, Son?

(To Cliff)

And how are you, Son?

CLIFF

Mom and Dad! You're back together?

CHARLOTTE

Of course! I can't stay mad at my Soulmate.

GREGORY

She let me come back home. It's amazing what a little night walk, cheesecake, and Shiraz can do.

CLIFF

You went with all three? Smart.

WALT  
Pimp move, Playa.

Walt gives Gregory a fist-bump. Charlotte blushes.

CLIFF  
So, what are you two doing here?

GREGORY  
Well, your phone's been turned off.

CHARLOTTE  
We haven't heard from you since that horrible expose' aired. You weren't home, so we thought we might catch you here.

CLIFF  
Oh, sorry I worried you. Maybe we can talk about this over dinner, we're actually working right now-

WALT  
On a plan to get our business back.

GREGORY  
Good. We can help. Show me your plan.

He smiles and puts his arm around Charlotte.

CLIFF  
Dad, I appreciate the sentiment, but this is a complicated matter-

CHARLOTTE  
Honey, your father didn't run a successful company and increase profits for over 20 years in a row by accident.

GREGORY  
You know I have a personal relationship with Tanner Kirkland?

Cliff and Walt look at each other, shocked.

CLIFF  
No, I didn't know that at all!

WALT  
You know the "Busted For Justice" dude?



GREGORY

You betcha. Son of a bitch owes me a big favor, I helped him get his start. Told ya I invested in a lotta people.

WALT

Cliff, show him the damn plan!

Walt is hopping with excitement. Cliff grabs a wooden stick and points it to the upper left corner of their board.

CLIFF

Ok, here we go ...

EXT. COUNTRY CLUB - DAY

Close-up of a giant, purple banner that reads "Meilani & Jamison's Co-Ed, Gender-Fluid, Nonbinary Bridal Shower!" Zoom out to reveal the buildings of a beautiful, exquisite country club. Most of the guests are seated in the patio area at fine dining tables, enjoying five-star dinners and drinks.

Meilani and Jamison sit at a small table for two, front row and center of a stage. They smile at each other. Jamison points at one of his arrogant-looking friends from across the large patio.

JAMISON

Hey Huck - we found your missing balls, they're in your wife's purse!

Huck and Jamison start chortling. Meilani rolls her eyes.

JUMP CUT TO:

EXT. COUNTRY CLUB - MINUTES LATER

PAIGE, an eccentric woman in an ostentatious dress featuring no less than 12 different colors, is giving a speech on the stage with a microphone.

PAIGE

Meilani is kind and supportive and loyal to a fault. And what's amazing is, as stubborn and crazy as we both are, we actually get along!

(People chuckle)

(MORE)

PAIGE (CONT'D)

The only thing we argue about is how Carol Baskin killed her husband.

(Loud laughter)

That bitch is guiltier than O.J.,  
AM I RIGHT?!!

Dead silence. No one was ready for that.

PAIGE (CONT'D)

Anyway, I don't have many friends. And I am so lucky that this wonderful woman has chosen to be mine. Meilani, I am here for you 'til the day I die - which was almost that one night in Reno, remember?

Meilani laughs and claps.

PAIGE (CONT'D)

Word to the wise: Don't poledance in a moving flatbed truck!

(Crowd laughs)

I almost died another night when I confused my Tic-Tacs with my Xanax; but don't worry - I'm not a cutter anymore! Ha-ha-ha!

Dead silence again. What is wrong with this woman?

PAIGE (CONT'D)

Anyway, here's to Meilani and Jamison. Good luck!

The crowd awkwardly claps, perplexed as to what they just heard. Paige hurriedly hands the mic to TRAVIS, a preppy-looking emcee. She exits the stage.

TRAVIS

Okay, folks, keep it going for Paige! Too bad she's not a cutter anymore, that speech could use some trimming.

Jamison dies out laughing and beats the table. Meilani stares at him, shocked and repulsed. He sees her, instantly stops and kisses her hand.

TRAVIS (CONT'D)

Folks, we have a surprise guest. Straight from Channel 5, please welcome ... Tanner Kirkland!

Tanner Kirkland takes the stage and shakes Travis' hand. The audience goes wild!

TANNER  
Thank you, Ladies and Gentlemen!

A big spotlight hits him and he goes into "Show Mode".

TANNER (CONT'D)  
Hi, I'm Tanner Kirkland. Welcome to  
"Busted For Justice!"

The audience loudly claps and hollers, thinking the couple of honor has planned this.

TANNER (CONT'D)  
You may have seen the recent  
expose' I did on the professional  
social mediator known as "The  
Buffer".

Angle on Jamison and Meilani, looking confused.

TANNER (CONT'D)  
Well, I've recently received new,  
critical information regarding this  
story. And what better source to  
clarify it than "The Buffer"  
himself, Mr. Cliff Connors!

Tanner disappears. Cliff walks out in a suit to an astounded, speechless crowd and speaks into the microphone.

CLIFF  
Hi, I'm Cliff Connors.

Everyone stares, no one makes a sound. Meilani is anxious; Jamison angrily stands up. Buford suddenly approaches him.

BUFORD  
Take a seat, pal.

Jamison stares at him. Meilani grabs Jamison's hand.

MEILANI  
Yeah, Honey, let's hear what he has  
to say.

Jamison slowly sits. Angle back on Cliff.

CLIFF  
The recent news segment Mr.  
Kirkland mentioned depicted me as a  
self-absorbed, reckless Charlatan.  
(MORE)

CLIFF (CONT'D)

This made me irate ... because for the most part, it's true.

The audience gasps and stares at each other, offended.

CLIFF (CONT'D)

I started this job because I didn't have any other skills. The ONLY thing I've ever naturally been good at is dealing with people. Making them feel comfortable in uncomfortable situations. Decreasing tension with humor, balancing their negative energy with my positive energy - being the ultimate "Buffer".

Angle on Tanner standing to the side of the stage, next to Walt.

CLIFF (CONT'D)

I honestly just wanted to use my talent to help people. Finally, I found I job that I gave a shit about. And then she walked into my life ...

He looks at Meilani. They lock eyes, staring at each other like they're the only people in the room.

CLIFF (CONT'D)

My career was on the up-and-up, I was 100% focused on building an Enterprise with my business partner, and THEN: I get offered a job to save a crumbling relationship between a guy with a lot of money ... and the exact same girl I met and became absolutely smitten with the day before.

The audience does a collective "oooh".

CLIFF (CONT'D)

The "Busted For Justice" piece suggested I use my job as a way to sleep with my female clients. I'm here to set the record straight: That is completely untrue. However, "male client action" is a whole other story ...

He nervously awaits the awkward audience to react to his joke. One man speaks up.

STIMULATED MALE

Hey-Ayyy ...

CLIFF

Okay, for real, people: NOT ONCE  
did I sleep with ANY of my  
customers.

A disbelieving grumble is heard throughout the crowd.

CLIFF (CONT'D)

I'm serious! If you have any proof  
otherwise, I give Tanner full  
permission to broadcast it. WELL  
... ANYONE?!!!

The audience shushes.

CLIFF (CONT'D)

Here's the closest I ever came to  
that: A client called me in an  
emergency situation, a House Call.  
In a moment of vulnerability and  
confusion, which anyone here could  
easily do when you think your  
fiance is cheating on you at a "Pre-  
Bachelor Party", she kissed me. And  
I kissed her back.

The audience grumbles again.

CLIFF (CONT'D)

But we stopped, agreed it was a  
mistake, then I left.

Angle on a very emotional Meilani. Jamison is livid.

CLIFF (CONT'D)

But you know what I did before  
that? I accepted a bribe from him  
to convince his future wife let him  
have a Hall Pass the night of his  
actual Bachelor Party!

The crowd very verbally opposes this thought.

CLIFF (CONT'D)

Relax, it never happened; she never  
agreed to it! No matter how much I  
tried to persuade her ... But  
that's not the point. What I did  
was wrong. So Jamison, here's all  
the money I took from you in that  
little payoff; I don't want it!

Cliff tosses a bag of cash, which lands on Jamison's lap. The crowd looks on, shocked. He nonchalantly puts his hands over it and continues seething.

CLIFF (CONT'D)

I learned something from my terrible mistake: I always buffer other people, but I never buffer myself. Until right now. Jamison, Meilani - remember the contracts you signed for me? It clearly stated, "All services I provide are personally tailored, diligent, and honest." Well, since I wasn't honest, here's my chance: Meilani, since the moment we met in that coffee shop, you are ALL I think about. I mean, yeah - there's your picture-perfect smile and mesmerizing eyes and graceful, hourglass figure and alluring cadence, which still freaks me out, - but you're also the most selfless and loyal person I've ever met. We can ALL learn from you. And that's why you can't marry Jamison.

Jamison stands up.

JAMISON

What? How dare you, asshole!

CLIFF

Hold on, Jamison - I promised I'd be honest.

(pause)

Hit it.

A tape of a prerecorded exchange between Cliff and Jamison plays.

JAMISON (V.O.)

I paid you extra money to take MY side, not hers! You work for ME,; you're supposed to set up things for my benefit!

CLIFF (V.O.)

Jamison, not only is that unethical, that's not fair to Meilani.

Angle on Meilani, staring inquisitively at an indignant Jamison.

JAMISON

This is absurd.

JAMISON (V.O.)

Fuck Meilani! I bend over backwards for her, and she can't even let me have one crazy night? I'm trying to grow as a person, and now I gotta keep nailing broads and lie about it!

Meilani is embarrassed. Jamison tries to save himself.

JAMISON

Shut it off! This is obviously a bad joke!

CLIFF (V.O.)

Look, I tried my best. She didn't go for it. So let's think about how to service her-

JAMISON (V.O.)

You're trying to bang her, aren't ya?

CLIFF (V.O.)

What? No, I'm trying to fix your relationship!

JAMISON (V.O.)

That better be all you're trying to do. Because if not ... I'll destroy you.

The tape stops. Cliff stares at Jamison, who stomps on Buford's foot. Buford hops, clutching his foot in pain. Jamison jumps up and rushes the stage!

Walt immediately runs out to his aid.

WALT

I'm here, Bro!

Cliff holds his hand out and backs up.

CLIFF

Thanks, I got this!

Jamison somersaults onto the stage.

JAMISON

You're fucking dead!

Jamison screams and runs right at Cliff, who grabs him, lowers himself to the floor, and flips Jamison over the back stage rail with his feet!

Walt looks at him, impressively surprised.

CLIFF  
 Playing all those video games  
 finally paid off.

Cliff dusts himself off, jumps offstage, and stands directly before Meilani.

CLIFF (CONT'D)  
 I'm not even going to pretend I'm  
 the perfect guy for you. I don't  
 know if anyone is. But I know **he's**  
 not. Look, I'm the best in the  
 world at fixing relationships, and  
 I couldn't fix yours. And while I'm  
 being 100% honest here, I'm also  
 insanely in love with you.

Meilani springs up and walks right in front of him, just inches away. She stares at him for a quick moment, then slaps him hard.

CLIFF (CONT'D)  
 Ow!

MEILANI  
 That's for the bribe!

CLIFF  
 (Holding his cheek)  
 Fair enough.

MEILANI  
 And this is for changing my life.

She grabs him and impetuously kisses him. They DEFINIETLY have chemistry.

Angle on Jamison, backstage. In an uncontrollable rage, he grabs a steakknife off a waiter's tray and knocks him to the ground. Utensils fly, plates break!

JAMISON  
 Gimme that, loser!

JAMISON'S POV - MOVING FAST TOWARD CLIFF AND MEILANI!

Cliff looks up and instantly reacts.



CLIFF

Get down!

Meilani drops under the table, Cliff runs in the opposite direction. Jamison lunges toward him and tries to stab him, but he dodges out of the way! Jamison raises the knife again and zeroes in on Cliff.

JAMISON

You gonna defend yourself now,  
Bitch?

CLIFF

(Doing his best Sam  
Elliott)

Well, I sure ain't gonna show you  
my dick.

Cliff implements the exact same fight moves that Sam Elliott does in the scene he studied from *Road House*, which bring Jamison to the ground and make him writhe in pain. He kicks the knife away and leans toward him.

CLIFF (CONT'D)

(As Sam Elliott, still)

Damn, that hurts, don't it?

Two POLICE OFFICERS emerge and handcuff Jamison. Cliff puts his hands up.

OFFICER #1

It's okay, Sir - we witnessed the  
entire event.

OFFICER #2

Everyone here did. You're a brave  
man.

They escort the groaning Jamison out. Meilani rushes to Cliff.

MEILANI

Holy Shit! Where did you learn  
that?

JAMISON

Sam Elliott.

MEILANI

Why am I not surprised?

They smile at each other.

Angle on the stage. Tanner is back on the microphone.

TANNER

Ladies and Gentlemen, the real fraud here is Jamison from the Alexander & McMurray Law Firm. And the real hero is Cliff Connors, "The Buffer". Next time you need a solution to your social emergency, I suggest you call him. I'm Tanner Kirkland, and this has been "Busted For Justice"!

The crowd wildy applauds again. Tanner turns to a camera operator and his show producer.

TANNER (CONT'D)

If that episode doesn't get top of the ratings, I quit!

Angle on Meilani and Cliff.

MEILANI

Stay right there, gotta make a quick announcement!

As she runs toward the stage, Tanner notices and jumps back on the microphone.

TANNER

And everyone, please welcome the only guest of honor who actually has honor, Miss Meilani Ferguson!

The audience claps for her as she takes the microphone.

MEILANI

Okay, so the bad news is: I'm not getting married. But the good news is: I dodged a bullet, we still have all night to party, and did I mention it's an "Open Bar"?!!

The crowd goes nuts!

MEILANI (CONT'D)

Whoo! See you on the dance floor!

Dance music starts playing. Three large, white women get up and shake everything they got. Many people join them.

Angle on Cliff, smiling at Meilani.

JUMP CUT TO:

EXT. COUNTRY CLUB - A LITTLE LATER

Walt is on the microphone with all the cash Cliff returned to Jamison.

WALT

Just remember, Ladies - This is a Shower. And it wouldn't be a "Shower" ... if we didn't "Make It Rain". Hit it, DJ!

Crazy rock music blasts, and Walt makes the dance floor rain cash. Drunk, crazy women bolt after it, snatching it up and dancing.

Angle on Cliff and Meilani talking to Howard, Daphne, Zack and Eli.

HOWARD

Cliff, thank you for exposing him. Now we have to get a new lawyer. Where do we go - Yelp, Google, Synagogue?

DAPHNE

Howard, without Jamison - what are we gonna agree on?

HOWARD

I can think of a few things ...

They kiss ... romantically.

ZACK

Oh, here we go again.

Meilani turns away, hiding her face.

CLIFF

What? You're back together!

DAPHNE

Yes. And honestly, it's because of you. After you met with us, we started talking, and remembered all the things we still have in common.

HOWARD

But we're not getting married again. Way Too Expensive!

He starts cackling. She slaps his chest and they make out again.

MEILANI

Okay, I really don't need to see this.

ZACK

Yeah, get a room. Or at least get away.

ELI

TUBA KUMQUAT DICKHOLE! TUBA KUMQUAT DICKHOLE!

CLIFF

I feel you, Eli.

JUMP CUT TO:

EXT. COUNTRY CLUB - LATER

Cliff simultaneously hugs Charlotte and Gregory. Meilani stands near.

CLIFF

Thank you both for everything.

GREGORY

You didn't think your old man had that Ace up his sleeve, huh?

CLIFF

I COMPLETELY underestimated you!

Gregory starts laughing.

CHARLOTTE

Honey, we're so proud of you. And thank you for working your magic on us.

CLIFF

Of course. Oh - Mom, Dad ... a woman who needs no introduction.

He proudly gestures to Meilani.

MEILANI

Hi, I'm Meilani. It's lovely to meet you both!

CHARLOTTE

Hi, I'm Charlotte. You are just stunning.

MEILANI

Aw, thank you.

GREGORY

Hey there, I'm Gregory. You like Margaritas?

Charlotte rolls her eyes.

CLIFF

Well, that only took seven seconds!

MEILANI

It's okay. I love Margaritas!

GREGORY

She's a keeper, Kid.

Cliff looks up to see Tanner, standing about 20 feet away, motioning for him to come over.

CLIFF

Excuse me, folks.  
(Pretending to be cocky)  
Tanner wants to talk to me.

MEILANI

Ooooh ...

CHARLOTTE

Go get 'em.

GREGORY

You're welcome!

Cliff walks over to Tanner and shakes his hand.

CLIFF

I cannot thank you enough for saving my business.

TANNER

Hey, I only made it alive. Now meet the man who can make it thrive.

Tanner gestures to the same Smug Man from the Job Fair that Cliff attended.

SMUG MAN

Remember me?

They shake hands. Tanner steps away.

CLIFF

Of course. Boris Jettleson, CEO of what is now the biggest party-planning chain in America.

SMUG MAN

Impressive memory.

CLIFF

I never forgot what you said in my interview.

SMUG MAN

Man, I had you pegged totally wrong.

CLIFF

No, you were 100% accurate. But it was the kick in the ass I needed to hear. Made me try my best.

The Smug Man studies him for a moment.

SMUG MAN

I need some help working with a lot of powerful personalities and fragile egos. I can pay you extremely well, but we'll have to meet extensively every week.

CLIFF

So lemme get this straight: You're gonna give me a lot of money, but you also expect me to actually work?

SMUG MAN

(Smiling)

Don't push your luck, Jackass.

Cliff chuckles.

CLIFF

Well, considering an hour ago, I was unemployed, we can meet every day! Hell, we can meet right now.

SMUG MAN

Excellent. What are you drinking?

INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

Cliff groggily wakes up and looks at the bedside clock. It reads "7:30am". He smiles, rolls over and sees Meilani next to him, waking up.

MEILANI

7:30. Isn't this a little early for you?

CLIFF

Not at all. I'm up ... but I'm not planning on us getting outta bed til 9:30, if you know what I'm saying ...

MEILANI

Oh, really? Two hours, huh?

CLIFF

Okay, maybe more like 7:32 ..

She laughs and kisses him. They disappear under the covers.

Credits roll as Classic Rock Music plays.

THE END