

Not Funny

written by

Eion Falance

FADE IN:

EXT. BROOKLYN BRIDGE - NIGHT

PEDESTRIANS move about the somewhat quiet walkway on the bridge. Cars whiz by below the walking traffic. The LIGHTS of Manhattan illuminate the sky.

EXT. BRIDGE PLATFORM - NIGHT

EION FALANCE, 21, stubborn and determined, is sitting alone on one of the bridge's benches. He's dressed in formal wear, with his tie undone. His hair is messy, and he appears to be a bit dainty. Next to him on the bench is a yellow-pad notebook.

Suddenly, he TOSSES the pad at a nearby trash can.

A HOMELESS MAN sees this and wanders over to him. He's holding a cup that he shakes.

Eion reaches into his pocket. He opens up an empty wallet that has only a folded sticky note inside. He nods his head "no."

The homeless man looks down at Eion's hand with intrigue.

HOMELESS MAN

That?

EION

A joke.

The man gestures for Eion to speak. Eion sits up; this gives him life. He clears his throat and delivers...

EION (CONT'D)

(reading)

"The world is my oyster, but I have a shellfish allergy."

Eion edges forward in his seat, he waits for him to laugh. The homeless man pauses, scratching his head.

The homeless man hands Eion a DOLLAR and walks away.

Eion stands up violently turning to...

EXT. BRIDGE WALKWAY

Eion CLIMBS up onto the side walkway platform, where traffic continues to pass through. He's directly above the line of cars.

Eion closes his eyes and takes a small step forward, but his knees buckle when he hears...

WOMAN (O.S.)
Don't do it!

Eion looks back at a WOMAN, who is removing a bike helmet. A small crowd of ONLOOKERS start to form around her.

She slowly walks towards him with her arms open wide. Eion looks down at the underpass, and then up at the crowd of people.

EION
Why not?

WOMAN
Because you're gonna fuck up traffic.

Beat.

Eion's face lightens. He laughs to himself. He retrieves a small notebook from his pants pocket, and quickly jots something down.

EION
Do you think I could use that?

POLICE LIGHTS shine on his face. Eion visually rehearses what he just wrote.

SUPERIMPOSE TITLE: NOT FUNNY

FADE TO BLACK.

SUPERIMPOSE TITLE: 4 MONTHS EARLIER

FADE IN:

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Eion is peeing at the urinal in a small bathroom. He's dressed in all black; his forehead drips sweat. He's concentrated as he recites...

EION
(to himself)
"Stall, sit down, college, swear,
parents, girlfriend..."

A HAND taps on Eion's back. He jumps back.

He looks over at the urinal next to him and sees DANG, 30s, Chinese, and similarly dressed in all black.

DANG
You were really funny out there.

EION
Huh?

DANG
When you dropped the food.

Dang flushes the urinal, and places a dirty apron over himself. He fixes his shirt while saying...

DANG (CONT'D)
And when you said to your table,
"clean up on aisle me."

Eion half smiles at Dang, waiting for him to leave.

DANG (CONT'D)
Wanna get a drink tonight?

EION
I got an open mic, and then I have
to write.

DANG
That's what you said last week!

Eion shrugs. Dang looks in at his urinal.

DANG (CONT'D)
Whoa... That's some really yellow
pee. You know what that means
right?

EION
Yeah. You're invading my privacy.

Eion flushes, and throws on his apron. Dang walks out of the bathroom.

INT. PLUM BLOSSOM KITCHEN - NIGHT

Eion bursts through the kitchen doors, carrying a tray of dirty dishes en route to a giant sink.

The restaurant's kitchen is rather small, though it is packed with CHINESE EMPLOYEES who are all either washing dishes, cutting vegetables, or sweeping.

Eion locks eyes with MICHAEL, 60s, Chinese, one of the cooks. Michael watches Eion carefully, puffing on a cigarette.

Eion accidentally drops one of the plates. It falls in the dirty water, and SPLASHES onto his face. He recoils. Michael laughs.

INT. FALANCE KITCHEN - NIGHT

Eion enters his family's messy kitchen. He flicks on the light. He's carrying a takeout bag of Chinese Food. He places it on their island counter, pushing papers out of the way.

EION
Mom, Pat, food's here!

PATRICE (O.S.)
There's my baby boy!

PATRICE, 50s, thoughtful and silly, and Eion's mom enters dressed in pajamas. She runs in for a hug, squeezing him tight. She fixes his hair. He pushes away.

She digs into the bag, dumping the food onto a plate.

PATRICE (CONT'D)
Patrick! Your food's getting cold!

PAT, 50s, reserved and diffident, and Eion's stepfather waddles into the kitchen having just woken up. He leans on the kitchen counter.

PAT
Busy tonight?

EION
(sighing)
We were short staffed.

PAT
Isn't it always like that?

EION
Yes.

Patrice presents her phone to Eion.

PATRICE
 (eating)
 Look! I cleaned this really cute
 girl's teeth today. She said she's
 single! Interested?

INSERT: A picture of Patrice in a hygienist uniform taking a selfie with a YOUNG WOMAN in the dental chair. She has various tools in her mouth.

EION
 You took a picture of her? She said
 she was single?

PATRICE
 It was either that or, "it hurts!"

EION
 No time. Gotta run.

Eion jingles his keys.

PATRICE
 You should stay home and watch TV
 with us!

EION
 I've got to get on stage. No days
 off!

Eion walks out of the kitchen. A door SLAMS shut.

Pat digs his fork into Patrice's meal. It's quiet for a moment...

PATRICE
 Should we have sex?

PAT
 Let's go to bed.

PATRICE
 That sounds so much better.

They high five.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Eion is sitting behind the wheel in a small sedan. He drives while simultaneously looking over the page of his yellow-pad that rests on the passenger seat.

The page of the notebook is lined with single bulleted words like, "**books**, **college**, and **dad**." He mouths the order.

He flicks the knob up on the car stereo. A VOICE comes on over the SPEAKER...

JOE LIST (O.S.)

Today is May 5th, 2019 and you're listening to...

EION

Tuesday's with Stories! I'm your host, Joe List. And we're live from New York City's Comedy Cellar! Surf's up comedy nerds. Welcome to another great podcast.

JOE LIST (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Tuesday's with Stories! I'm your host, Joe List. And we're live from New York City's Comedy Cellar! Surf's up comedy nerds. Welcome to another great podcast.

Eion sighs.

EXT. COMEDY WORKS - ESTABLISHING SHOT

The COMEDY WORKS club rests on a busy city street. It has a small entrance, with a staircase extending down to the club.

INT. COMEDY WORKS SHOWROOM - NIGHT

Eion is standing on small illuminated stage, speaking into a microphone. Next to him is a small stool where his yellow-pad rests, along with the mic stand.

There are a few PATRONS scattered in seats around the decently sized showroom.

EION

I just graduated college, and now I'm fifty thousand dollars in debt. I just should have never started, gambling.

Some LAUGHS.

At one table are all of the open mic COMICS, who are all reviewing notebooks, and not paying attention to the show. He looks at them.

EION (CONT'D)

You guys listening? Is this thing on?

Nothing. Eion mumbles to makeup for the silence.

EION (CONT'D)

I-uh. Hmmm. Let's see here...

He walks over to the stool flipping through his notebook. A WHITE LIGHT shines on Eion's face. He points to it.

ANOTHER ANGLE

NICK, late 20s, with long blonde hair, is shining his phone at Eion.

He places the mic back in the stand.

EION

Growing up, I hated getting in trouble and my mom saying, "Just wait until your father gets home." Cause he never came back.

A few LAUGHS, less than before.

EION (CONT'D)

That's my time. You guys have been sub par at best.

CLAPS. Nick runs on stage to shake Eion's hand, grabbing the microphone.

NICK

One more time for, Eion Falance!

INT. COMEDY WORKS BAR - NIGHT

Eion is sitting at a small bar with Nick outside the club showroom. They are both scribbling in their notebooks. A few COMICS are hanging around talking in small groups.

EION

Hey Nick, what if instead of saying, "Cause he never came back," I said, "He abandoned us."

NICK

I think it works. Is that true?

EION

Nah, made it up. They just got divorced.

Nick stares into his notebook. He pops his head up.

NICK
 Oh! I walked in on my mom and dad
 having sex. And I still haven't
 told my stepdad.

Eion wholeheartedly laughs.

EION
 That's really good.

NICK
 That wasn't a joke.

Nick stares off. Eion pats him on the back.

SHAFI, late 20s, Bangladeshis, and well dressed sits down at
 the bar with MACKENZIE, 20s, rough and blunt.

MACKENZIE
 You guys ready for the Funnybone
 showcase tomorrow?

NICK
 Eion is probably going to win
 again. What'll it be like two in a
 row?

EION
 Three.

SHAFI
 You don't need the money. Give it
 to someone less fortunate, like
 Mackenzie. So she doesn't have to
 be an escort!

Mackenzie punches Shafi in the arm.

MACKENZIE
 Shafi, that was one time!

A LOUD CONVERSATION breaks out. They look over to find...

ANOTHER ANGLE

A small GROUP of PEOPLE are exiting a room near the bar
 doors, all carrying notebooks.

They are lead by an OLD MAN, 70s, who is wearing an oversized
 MLB jacket over his proportionate body. He is carrying a
 thermos, which he sips from.

EION
What are they doing here?

SHAFI
That guy runs a stand-up class.

EION
Like you can teach someone how to be funny.

MACKENZIE
I think he was big in the 80s.

EION
And look at him now, in the basement of a comedy club. Sad.

SHAFI
We're in the same place he is.

The old man yawns. Eion stares at the group as they exit up the stairs.

MACKENZIE
OK. Who's drinking tonight?

Mackenzie, Nick, and Shafi get up and start to walk away. Eion stares at his notebook.

MACKENZIE (CONT'D)
You coming?

EION
I gotta write.

MACKENZIE
Whatever.

The gang continues up the stairs. Eion scribbles on his pad.

SHAFI (O.S.)
Mackenzie, how much do you charge by the way?

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Eion is writing at his desk. His room is compact with a poster of "JERRY SEINFELD," on his wall, along with a photo of the COMEDY CELLAR at his desk.

He sits back to reflect on his work. He looks at the clock, it reads "3:00 AM." He stands up out of his chair.

He picks up his pencil and holds it up to his mouth. He looks out at his room, sizing up the surroundings.

EION
 (to himself)
 How are you guys doing tonight?!

He pauses for applause, showering it in.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. PLUM BLOSSOM DINING ROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE on Eion.

EION
 How are you guys doing tonight?

PUSH OUT to reveal Eion is standing in front of a booth, taking an order from a couple.

INT. PLUM KITCHEN TAKEOUT STATION - NIGHT

Eion enters the kitchen. He walks over to a table where STEVE LING, 70s, Chinese, is reading a magazine.

Steve's quite petite, and is wearing a collarless shirt with round glasses. He has long black hair, and speaks with a thick accent.

Next to Steve is BERNA LING, 60s, Chinese, who is packing takeout. She moves around the kitchen elegantly. Around her waist is HENRY, 2, her grandson, who is attached via a "front backpack." Henry tries to grab the takeout bags as she packs.

Eion stands behind both Berna and Steve, wiping his face dry.

EION
 Hey, Berna?

BERNA
 What do you need?

EION
 I'm running late to my show. Dang will take my tables. I just need to order this for him.

Eion presents his check pad, she reviews it.

BERNA
 Sesame Chicken, is "SUP-GO-YO."
 Tell Michael.

Eion leans over the counter to Michael, who is busy looking at his phone.

EION
 Michael, order, "SUP-GO-YO."

Michael shoos Eion away.

EION (CONT'D)
 He's so... evil.

BERNA
 (looking away)
 He is actually a very kind hearted man.

Michael pretends to SHOOT Eion with his hand, reloading his "finger gun." Eion gulps.

Henry grabs Eion's shirt.

BERNA (CONT'D)
 (to Steve)
 Steve, doesn't Henry love his Uncle Eion?

Steve presents his magazine to Eion.

STEVE
 Cool, huh?

CLOSE on the magazine that Steve has been reading. It's NUDE photos of ASIAN WOMEN.

INT. FUNNYBONE SHOWROOM - NIGHT

The comedy club showroom of about 200 seats is filled with AUDIENCE and WAIT STAFF, all still filing in. The stage is empty with the words, "FUNNYBONE," written on the wall.

Eion runs into the showroom, notebook in hand. He sees NICK and MACKENZIE sitting at the back of the room with the other COMICS.

INT. BACK TABLES

Eion sits down in between Nick and Mackenzie. The table is filled with drinks.

EION

Did I make it? What's going on?

Shafi somberly enters with a cocktail in hand. He's wearing a flashy blazer over a button down shirt. He places the drink down on the table as he sits.

SHAFI

I wore this stupid jacket for nothing. Good thing I can still return it.

Nick pounds his fist down on the table.

Shafi's drink SPILLS on his jacket. He winces, scrubbing himself clean.

NICK

We got bumped.

EION

Bumped? What do you mean?

The lights DIM. Music BLARES. A VOICE comes on over the speaker.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

He's from right here in Albany, New York. He just debuted on Last Comic Standing. 23-year-old, Cody McDonald!

Eion POUNDS his fist on the table, and a different drink SPILLS all over Shafi.

ANOTHER ANGLE

CODY MCDONALD, 23, short, and wearing a suit takes the stage to a THUNDEROUS APPLAUSE. He blows a kiss into the crowd.

EXT. MALL PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Eion is SCREAMING in the mall parking lot in front of the "FUNNYBONE" sign.

He falls to his knees on the pavement.

A FAMILY walks by. The MOTHER clutches her CHILD in fear. Eion sees this, and gets up to assure them...

EION
 (shouting)
 Sorry. I'm not crazy. I'm a
 comedian!

INT. FROYO - NIGHT

Eion, Shafi, Nick, and Mackenzie, are all sitting inside the
 mall frozen yogurt shop. They are all eating in silence
 until...

EION
 This sucks!

Beat.

NICK
 I kinda like this place.

EION
 No. The show. Getting bumped.
 Cody is not talented enough to be
 on Last Comic Standing. That should
 be me.

They all look up at him.

EION (CONT'D)
 Us! All of us. Especially... Us.

Eion shakes his head at his mistake.

MACKENZIE
 Who cares. It's the American Idol
 of stand-up. Judges judging
 comedians? Gross.

EION
 So all we have to do is audition
 for it?

SHAFI
 The new season isn't even up yet.
 And you have to be recommended by a
 "big" comic.

Eion gives him a look.

SHAFI (CONT'D)
 I heard he got a tour, and a
 Tonight Show set just from the
 appearance.

EION
Well, I'm gonna be on that stupid
show too. Fuck Cody McDonald.

NICK
Oh. My. God.

They all look up in unison to...

CODY is in line getting yogurt. He spots them and walks over
to the table. They all awkwardly stand up to greet him.

CODY
Hey guys, what's up?

EION
(through his teeth)
It's so good to see you. Congrats
on your success.

They handshake. Eion holds on a little too hard and too long.
Cody pulls back. Silence.

EION (CONT'D)
Well, I think I'm having a heart
attack.

Eion skips away.

CODY
Is he OK?

MACKENZIE
He literally does that all the
time.

Cody shrugs.

SHAFI
Wow, Cody. Your arms are so much
bigger in person. Can I feel them?

Cody flexes as Shafi inspects.

INT. FUNNYBONE BAR - NIGHT (DREAM SEQUENCE)

Eion is dressed in a suit sitting at the bar next to JOE
LIST, 30s, wiry and tall, with thin glasses; a bit nerdy.

Eion presents his hand to Joe.

EION
Hi Joe List, my name's Eion
Falance.

They handshake.

JOE LIST
I know who you are. Everyone does.
Sign my baby?

Joe pulls a newborn BABY out of thin air. The baby is crying.

EION
I was hoping you could do me a
favor.

Joe gives Eion a look. Eion starts to sign the baby with a sharpie. The baby stops crying.

BABY
(deep voice)
You're my favorite comedian, Eion.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY (DREAM SEQUENCE)

Eion and Joe are sitting in a BRIGHT conference room at the end of a long table. On the other side are 2 MEN in business attire.

EION
What's your offer?

MAN 1
We'll give you Last Comic Standing
and a sitcom.

Joe leans in to whisper in Eion's ear.

EION
We'll take it!

Eion stands up. One of the men POPS champagne.

MAN 2
Would you like to meet the
President of the United States?

Eion and Joe embrace.

MAN 2 (CONT'D)
Sorry, I meant you are now the
President of the United States.

An ALARM sounds off.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Eion shoots up in bed to his phone ALARM.

He screams, punching his pillows.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Patrice frantically opens the door, poking her head in.

PATRICE
Is everything alright?

EION
Yeah, except for someone else
accomplishing my hopes and dreams.

PATRICE
Oh. That makes sense.

She leaves, gently closes the door.

INT. BEDROOM DESK - LATER

Eion is sitting in his underwear at his desk. WAITING MUSIC
plays on speakerphone.

EVAN (O.S.)
Last Comic Standing tickets. This
is Evan speaking.

EION
Hi, my name is Eion Falance. I'm-

EVAN (O.S.)
Please stop calling.

The phone goes SILENT.

INT. BEDROOM DESK - MOMENTS LATER

Eion is searching on his computer.

INSERT: He is friend requesting FAMOUS COMEDIANS on FACEBOOK

Eion waits at his desk. He hears a DING.

INSERT: He has been BLOCKED

He sighs.

INT. COMEDY WORKS SHOWROOM - NIGHT

NICK, is standing on the comedy works stage.

10 PATRONS are scattered in seats around the club. The OLD MAN and his group enter and fill in the last row of the room.

NICK

Thanks for coming out to the
Thursday open mic!

(beat)

Got a new shampoo with hemp in it.
So now when I wash my hair I get
double high. Cause I'm already
high. And then my hair is too.

A SINGLE LAUGH is heard. Nick meanders over to his notebook and flips through the pages while he says...

NICK (CONT'D)

What else? What else?

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. COMEDY WORKS SHOWROOM - LATER

Shafi is on stage performing.

SHAFI

I am from Bangladesh, but my
girlfriend is American. I told her
I don't know a lot of english
words, like love.

LAUGHS.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. COMEDY WORKS SHOWROOM - LATER

Mackenzie is on stage performing.

MACKENZIE

I dated this guy. He threw my
glasses out the window during a
fight. He was like, "if you don't
want to see me, then you can't see
anyone."

LAUGHS.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. COMEDY WORKS SHOWROOM - LATER

Eion is on stage performing.

EION

I work in a Chinese restaurant, and
I have this suspicion that the
Chinese speaking workers say mean
things about me. And, you know how
I know?

(beat)

Because, they say it in English.

LAUGHS.

Eion walks around stage. He flips his notebook on the stool.

EION (CONT'D)

Thank you. That's a new one.

BUM (O.S.)

Tell it again.

Eion looks out into the crowd. He sees a BUM, 40s, the person who shouted out.

EION

What?

BUM

The joke!

EION

I only have five minutes. Please
stop interrupting.

BUM

Well then, be funny.

EION

I'm trying to.

Eion has lost his place. His hands are sweating; he clears his throat.

BUM

Speak!

A cold, dead silence ensues.

The OLD MAN stands up at the back of the room.

OLD MAN
 (to the Bum)
 Have you been drinking?

The bum holds up empty drinkware.

OLD MAN (CONT'D)
 Can someone please make sure that
 he drives home tonight?

LAUGHS.

The room is back. Eion smiles. Nick shines the light at him.

EXT. COMEDY WORKS - NIGHT

Eion has his phone up to his ear listening to his SET.

The old man comes up the steps of the club, sipping from his bottle.

EION
 Hi. Hey there. Sir?

The old man turns around, giving him the peace sign. Eion holds out his hand.

EION (CONT'D)
 Thank you for your help tonight.
 Eion Falance.

They shake hands.

DON
 Don Gavin.
 (beat)
 I'm glad my class could see a
 comedian handle a heckler the wrong
 way. Thank you for that.

EION
 How long have you been teaching
 stand up classes?

DON
 For the last 20 years. But we're
 full at the moment.

EION
 No, I'm not trying to sign-up. I'm
 ya know, more than an open mic-er.

DON
 Good. Cause I'm the only know it
 all we need in class...

Don nods. He's done with him. He starts to walk down the
 street in the opposite direction.

DON (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 You should cut down on your set-
 ups.

Eion breaks.

EION
 (shouting)
 Need a ride?

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Eion is driving, as Don sits in the passenger seat. Don swigs
 from his bottle.

DON
 Do you really work at a Chinese
 restaurant?

EION
 Been there for 7 months.
 How long have you been doing
 comedy?

DON
 Sixty years. Haven't been on stage
 in a while. I'm old enough to be
 your grandfather.

EION
 I prefer "papi."

They laugh.

DON
 What do you wanna do?

EION
 This.

DON
 Drive the elderly?

EION
 All I wanna do is be a comedian.
 But I need to be on Last Comic
 Standing.

Don readjusts in his seat.

DON
 Why?

EION
 Because Cody McDonald just got on
 the show. And I'm better than him.

Don thinks. Eion reflects on what he just said.

DON
 Pull over.

EION
 I'm sorry. I didn't mean to come
 off like that.

DON
 Pull over.

EION
 I'm sorry!

DON
 Pull over... This is where I live.

Eion SCREECHES the car to a sudden HALT. They look out at his
 modest home in silence before...

DON (CONT'D)
 Do you drink whiskey?

INT. DON'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Eion is sniffing a glass of whiskey.

Don's living room is quaint and outdated, decked in 70s
 furniture, with pictures of him hanging on the walls as a
 YOUNG MAN.

Eion is seated on a loveseat while Don is pouring whiskey
 into his thermos at his MINI BAR at the far end of the room.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Don sits on the couch across from Eion. He twirls around his thermos before sipping. He laughs.

EION
I'm sorry. Am I here too late? Are we gonna wake up your wife?

Don stands up and knocks back his entire drink. He walks out of the room.

EION (CONT'D)
Did you want me to follow you? Don?

Don walks back into the room and plops a photo album on the table. He sits back down on the couch.

Eion flips through the album. There are photos of a YOUNG DON with other FAMOUS COMEDIANS.

EION (CONT'D)
Wow! You used to open for Jerry Seinfeld?

DON
He opened for me. He'd ask me to watch his sets.

EION
So you know people?

Don nods.

EION (CONT'D)
What happened?

Don stares off. Eion closes the album, and downs his drink in solidarity.

DON
It's getting late. Don't you have school in the morning?

EION
I graduated.

Don gets up and goes to his mini bar. He makes himself another drink.

EION (CONT'D)
Do you think you could help me, Don?

DON
I don't do that kind of shit
anymore. Not after 96'.

EION
What happened in 96?

DON
Kid, you don't wanna know... Or was
it 86'? It was one of the sixes.

EION
Seriously? You can't help me at
all?

Don plumps down on the couch.

DON
Sorry. I can't. But if you wanna
signup for the classes, I can give
you 25% off. You just need to
remember this promo code, A87H-

Eion stands up and exits while saying...

EION
You're probably just some hack
anyway.

Don cracks his knuckles.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Eion is sitting at his desk writing in his yellow-pad
notebook. He looks over at the clock which reads, "3:00 AM."

He closes the notebook and searches "DON GAVIN" on his
laptop.

INSERT: A video of a YOUNG DON GAVIN performing stand-up from
the 80s. It has 229 VIEWS.

DON GAVIN ON COMPUTER
Last year, I was in my car and I
hit a guy. He was in his... living
room. But uhh. I couldn't see him
from the street.

Eion thinks. He turns off the light.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Eion is awoken by a KNOCK on his door.

PATRICE (O.S.)
You're gonna be late for work!

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Eion enters the kitchen with his hair wet, and a towel around his waist. Patrice is ironing clothes.

PATRICE
Your uniform is clean.
(beat)
I made you lunch. Hurry up, because
I want to show you something.

Eion grabs his uniform.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Eion enters his living room. He sits in the loveseat across from the couch where Patrice lays. Pat is buried into the pillow next to her SNORING deeply.

She hands Eion a letter. He opens it up.

PATRICE
First payment is due this month.

His eyes bug open.

PATRICE (CONT'D)
College wasn't cheap. I'm gonna
need you to pick up some extra
shifts.

EION
But if I work more, I won't have
time to write or get on stage.

PATRICE
You have a degree... College was
dumb. All I really got out of it
was a drinking problem.

EION
I thought you went to college
online?

PATRICE

I did.

Patrice changes the channel. On screen is RON WHITE, 60s, dapper, performing stand-up. They watch for a moment.

RON WHITE ON SCREEN

"VARIOUS JOKE..."

Patrice vehemently laughs. Eion grimaces.

EION

He doesn't even write his own jokes. I got a new one you want to hear?

Patrice mutes the TV. He throws the bill down.

EION (CONT'D)

My uncle keeps calling me for a kidney. But I'm not giving it back.

Patrice thinks. Eion waits in anticipation. She shakes her head.

PATRICE

I like stuff that doesn't make me think!

(pointing at the TV)

Just be more relatable!

(getting excited)

Here's a joke you can do... Why do all waiters ask you if you're "still working?"

Beat.

EION

And?

PATRICE

Well, that's the joke. You just gotta make it funny!

EION

Please stop giving me material.

PATRICE

(holding the bill)

Please work with me on this?

Eion waits. Pat sits up.

PAT

If you wanna live here for free,
you gotta pay off school.

(beat)

Is that Ron White? Turn it up.

Patrice turns the volume up on the TV.

RON WHITE ON SCREEN

"VARIOUS JOKE..."

Pat and Patrice burst out laughing.

PAT

Now he's *funny*.

INT. PLUM BLOSSOM BACK TABLES - NIGHT

Steve, Berna, Michael, Eion, Dang, and the rest of CHINESE EMPLOYEES are all seated at a large round table eating.

They are in a secluded area of the restaurant where no one sits at night.

Eion is writing in his notebook, which sits on his lap under the table.

The workers pass around giant pans with authentic Chinese food. UNCLE, 70s, offers to give Eion extra food, but he declines.

EION

(to anyone listening)

What's his name?

BERNA

His name is Uncle. He lives upstairs.

EION

What's his real name?

BERNA

We don't know. We just call him Uncle.

EION

He lives here, and you don't know his name? How did you meet him?

STEVE

You just bump into people.

Eion continues to write. BELLS on the lobby door JINGLE. Dang gets up and goes toward the sound.

BERNA
(to Eion)
Do you have a girlfriend?

EION
No, I don't have time.

STEVE
Make time. I always balance my wife, the restaurant, and my girlfriends.

EION
Girlfriends?

STEVE
(nonchalantly)
I have three in China... I am kidding. I have four.

Dang sits back down.

DANG
(to Eion)
You have a table.

Eion looks at the time on his phone.

EION
I was hoping to leave for my mic but..

He pulls out a thin stack of money.

EION (CONT'D)
OK. I'll wait on them.

Eion puts his notebook down on the table and exits.

INT. BEDROOM DESK - NIGHT

Eion is sitting in his underwear at his desk. WAITING MUSIC plays on speakerphone.

EVAN (O.S.)
Last Comic Standing Tickets, this is Evan-

EION
Hi, Evan. This is Eion-

EVAN (O.S.)
 Falance. I know what you're calling
 about. I want you to know I watched
 you on Youtube, and I recommended
 you to the producer.

EION
 Really?

EVAN (O.S.)
 No.

The phone goes SILENT. Eion taps his fingers on his desk.

INT. BEDROOM DESK - MOMENTS LATER

Eion searches on his laptop.

INSERT: Albany Funnybone Website: CODY MCDONALD, ALL WEEKEND
 LONG

Eion closes the laptop.

INT. FUNNYBONE HALLWAY

A HAND knocks on a door labeled, "TALENT."

CODY (O.S.)
 Come in!

INT. GREEN ROOM

Cody is sitting on a small couch playing video games. The
 room is stocked with snacks and other furniture. He sips a
 soda.

Eion closes the door behind him.

CODY
 (nonchalantly)
 Eion? I thought you had a heart
 attack. I was waiting to see your
 death post on Facebook. I was gonna
 sad react it.

Eion clears his throat. Cody tosses the controller.

CODY (CONT'D)
 Are you hosting tonight's show?

EION
I wanna be on Last Comic Standing.

CODY
Ohhhh kay?

EION
I really hate doing this. And I really hate you. But I don't know who else to ask.

CODY
Look. I can't do that.

EION
You mean like, you couldn't recommend me?

CODY
No I could. But you're not ready.

Cody finishes his soda and burps.

EION
I've won the showcase here twice. Only reason I didn't win a third time is because you bumped us.

CODY
Yeah, well that's also because a bunch of people bomb before you on those shows. Were you funny? Probably. But Last Comic Standing funny? No.

Eion starts to tear up. Cody sees this.

CODY (CONT'D)
You wanna sit down?

Eion sits down in the chair.

CODY (CONT'D)
Whoa. That chair is for talent. I meant sit on the floor.

Eion sits down on the floor.

CODY (CONT'D)
(consoling)
Dude, you're probably the best in the area, after me. But being the best shit sandwich is not going to get you on the show.

Eion wipes his tears away. He boasts...

EION
Fuck, do you know?

CODY
Cause I'm on Last Comic Standing,
and you're not.

A VOICE comes on over the speaker..

VOICE (O.S.)
Cody, five minutes.

CODY
Now you go do your open mic. I'm
headlining a show. Goodbye.

Eion props the door open. He opens his mouth about to say something, but shuts the door instead.

INT. COMEDY WORKS SHOWROOM - NIGHT

Eion is on stage performing in his dirty work uniform in front of about 8 PEOPLE.

EION
I just started calling my stepdad
"dad," which is a lot easier than
calling him "asshole."

Some LAUGHS.

Don enters the club alone, and sits in the last row of seats.

EION (CONT'D)
I just found out I can never have
kids.

DON (O.S.)
Good!

Eion tenses up. His fingers are numb. He clenches the microphone. He mumbles.

EION
Good... What are you my girlfriend?

DON
You wish!

EION
I uh. I. I'm gonna...

Eion goes to his notebook. He flips through the pages.

DON
There's nothing funny in there!

LAUGHS.

Eion cups his hand on his forehead to see into the audience. He sees that it's DON, and finds a second wave.

EION
This is weird, sorry guys.
Apparently, my grandpa escaped the
nursing home.

Don angrily shakes his head. The WHITE LIGHT shines on Eion's face. He puts the mic back in the stand.

EXT. COMEDY WORKS - NIGHT

Eion is waiting by the door of the club. DON walks up the steps outside. Don swigs from his thermos.

He PUSHES Eion in the chest. He clenches his fists, ready to fight.

DON
I'm not a hack!

EION
I know.

DON
(confused)
What?

EION
I found you on Youtube.
(beat)
You're funny. Were funny? I'm
sorry.

DON
Still funny. Thanks.
(changing his tune)
That thing I said about 25% off my
class, I thought about it and I'll
give you 50% off.

Beat.

EION

I don't want to take your class,
Don. I want you to help me get Last
Comic Standing.

DON

Comedy is not some race, you finish
when you finish. Nobody deserves
anything.

EION

I'm ready to work for it.

DON

(gesturing at himself)
You don't want to be this. Get a
real job. A family.

Eion pauses.

EION

(dramatically shouting)
Comedy's all I got, man!

Don takes a swig.

DON

Have a new five minutes tomorrow
night.

Don extends his hand. Eion hugs him instead. He runs off OUT
OF FRAME.

DON (CONT'D)

Where are you going?

Eion slowly walks back INTO FRAME puzzled. Beat.

DON (CONT'D)

Ride home?

INT. BEDROOM DESK - NIGHT

Eion is writing at his desk. He looks over at the clock that
reads "5:00 AM." He gets up and stretches.

He grabs a pencil and holds up to his mouth.

EION

(yawning)
Last Comic Standing, how's
everybody doing tonight?

He collapses onto his bed.

INT. COMEDY CELLAR SHOWROOM - NIGHT (DREAM SEQUENCE)

Eion is watching JOE LIST perform in front of a sold out crowd in the Comedy Cellar. The room has a low ceiling, and resembles that of a basement.

JOE LIST

The doctor told me I have herpes.
Yeah. He said I must have
contracted it after he put me
under.

LAUGHS.

Joe puts the mic in the stand.

JOE LIST (CONT'D)

I'm happy to bring up our next
comic. He's my best friend in the
entire world. He was the best man
at my wedding. And he has an
enormous penis, Eion Falance.

Eion shifts through the crowd of people, giving out high fives.

Eion takes the stage. He shakes hands with Joe. He looks out. He mumbles. The crowd waits. He's starting to sweat.

He flips through his notebook.

The pages are BLANK. He's got nothing. He stares out into the crowd. They start to "BOO."

MAN (O.S.)

Hey, this guy has a small penis!

Eion runs off stage. An ALARM sounds off...

INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

Eion looks over at his clock that reads 10:00 AM. He rolls over.

INT. PLUM BLOSSOM LOBBY - DAY

Eion is standing behind the host table writing on a sticky note.

Behind the table are a row of takeout bags. Steve is on the phone next to him.

Eion slides the note into his wallet. He starts writing on another note.

STEVE
 (on the phone)
 No. I already pay you.

Steve sighs at Eion. He covers the phone with his hand.

STEVE (CONT'D)
 (to Eion)
 He says he's from National Grid,
 but I already pay him. Scam.
 (into the phone)
 Here. I let you speak to the
manager.

Steve WINKS at Eion, and hands him the phone.

Eion clears his throat and raises it up to his ear to say...

EION
 (into the phone)
 Hi... I am *the manager*... I handle
 all the...business.

Steve gives him a thumbs up.

EION (CONT'D)
 (into the phone)
 OK. I understand. Let us call you
 back.

Eion hangs up.

EION (CONT'D)
 They said they're gonna turn off
 the power.

STEVE
 They always say that. I've been
 here for 37 years, and they only
 turn off power once.

Steve looks at Eion's sticky note.

STEVE (CONT'D)
 (reading)
 "God is a woman, because she's mad
 at me and I don't know why." This
 is one of your skits?

STEVE (CONT'D)

Thing I say about manager. Would you want to be in position?

EION

I'm not sure. I want to be a comedian.

STEVE

Pay is very good. I will not be here forever. I am 82. I work 108 hours a week.

Eion mulls this over.

STEVE (CONT'D)

Remember, you cannot be happy about one thing. You cannot be sad about either.

Beat.

EION

What?

Suddenly DARKNESS. The power goes OUT.

STEVE

Can you call them back?

Eion dials.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

A bag of takeout is placed down in the center of the kitchen island. A stack of dollar bills slides next to it.

Patrice and Pat are seated at the island. Eion is standing across from them.

PAT

You're late.

PATRICE

You didn't answer your phone.

EION

I was working.

PAT

(to Patrice)

I told you he sells drugs!

Patrice twirls her hair.

PATRICE
Could we buy some?

EION
I don't sell drugs! I had to work late.

PATRICE
Darn. I was hoping to get my rocks off.

Beat.

PATRICE (CONT'D)
Hey, I cleaned another cute girl's teeth today. She said she's *single*. Or has shingles!

Eion thinks for a moment.

EION
OK. I gotta get going.

PATRICE
But it's Tuesday night. There's no open mics! You're supposed to stay in with us.

Eion grabs his mother's face.

EION
At the end of the summer, I'm going to move to New York City. You and Pat are going to have to get used to me not living at home.

PATRICE
But you're my only child! You're all I have in this world.

Pat coughs.

PATRICE (CONT'D)
I'm scared of you walking around the city by yourself. How will I know that my pride and joy is safe?

Eion pulls out his phone. He clicks.

EION

Here. I just sent you my location.
Now you can see where I am at all
times.

PATRICE

Okay... That makes me feel so much
better!

EION

I'm late. I started working with
this older man, and I can't let him
down.

PATRICE

Does *he* sell drugs?

Eion zips up his jacket and exits.

Beat.

PAT

You love me too right?

INT. DON'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Eion walks into Don's living room. Don is seated on the couch
writing on a note card.

There is a large cork board on wheels filled with the same
cards. They all are labeled with JOKES or one word TOPICS.

DON

What took you so long?

EION

Are you trying to solve a murder?
I had to stay late. I texted you.

DON

I don't think my phone has that.

Don gets up and pins the note card on the board.

DON (CONT'D)

And that's how you build a set.

Eion stands behind him.

EION

(looking at the board)
What's "food?"

DON

"I love food, I eat everyday." You gotta know your material like the back of your hand.

(pointing at the board)

Things in green you rewrite, things in red you get rid of... Where's your material?

Eion hands Don his notebook. He looks at it for a moment.

Don THROWS the notebook across the room.

EION

What the hell?

DON

Your material comes from who you are. Who are you?

EION

I graduated college, I live with my parents, I work at a Chinese restaurant.

DON

Jokes are half the battle. But being likable is everything. We start there.

Don goes towards the door.

DON (CONT'D)

Come on, you gotta get on stage.

EION

I didn't know there was another comedy mic in town.

DON

There isn't.

EXT. NITE MOVES STRIP CLUB - NIGHT

A "LIVE NUDE GIRLS" sign pulsates in NEON lights. The windows are broken on the small and caved in building.

Eion and Don stand outside the entrance of the strip club.
MEN enter.

EION

Don, with all due respect. I can't afford to pay for your lap dance.

DON
 Not here for that. But hey, this'll
 probably be the first time you see
 a naked woman.

Don walks in. Eion waits for a moment.

EION
 (shouting to anyone
 listening)
 I've seen a naked woman before!
 Nude beach!

Eion hastily walks in after him.

INT. NITE MOVES SHOWROOM - NIGHT

The showroom is dense with a single stage. There is a bar in the corner of the room. A couple OLDER WOMEN are dancing half naked around the poles in front of about 10 MEN. DANCE MUSIC plays.

Don is at the counter speaking to the BARTENDER. Don waves Eion over.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Eion shakes the bartender's hand.

DON
 This is my grandson.

The man's hand is sticky. Eion sniffs himself.

DON (CONT'D)
 He's here for the open mic.

EION
 Open mic? Here? What?

BARTENDER
 No one usually comes.
 (to Eion)
 What are you, singing?

EION
 I do stand-up.

The bartender WHISTLES at the women to get off stage. He turns the music DOWN.

BARTENDER

We don't have a microphone so you just have to speak real loud.

EION

Don, I can't possibly perform here.

DON

You got stage time. Don't waste it.

Don pushes Eion forward.

INT. STRIP CLUB STAGE

Eion walks up the stage steps. The men who were sitting watching the women perform start to MURMUR.

BARTENDER (O.S.)

Coming to the stage to tell skits, Ion Fidellance!

Eion waves to the crowd. Some of the men start to get up and leave.

One MAN grabs the change he left on the stage, and puts it back in his pocket. Another man, BOB, 40s, bald and buff yells out...

BOB

What the fuck is this shit!

EION

How's everyone doing tonight?

BOB (O.S.)

Bad!

Eion saunters around the stage. He feels the pole.

EION

Here's a new one. I like to sit down when I pee. But other guys always think that's weird when I'm at the urinal.

GROANS. Eion exhales. He jumps up and down trying to get his energy up.

EION (CONT'D)

I'm gonna try and tell you guys jokes.

BOB
THIS IS A JOKE!

EION
I think you being here on a
weeknight is a joke.

Bob stands up, rolling up his sleeves.

BOB
You wanna say that again?

Eion takes a deep breath. He takes a step back. You can hear
a pin drop.

Eion thinks.

EION
Do you work?

BOB
Yeah, I work.

EION
Right now I work at a Chinese
restaurant. I feel like they don't
like me there, and they say mean
things.

Bob crosses his arms. He's listening now.

EION (CONT'D)
And you know how I know? Cause they
say it in English.

Very few laughs, but the room energy has shifted. Bob grits
his teeth and sits back down.

The strippers stand along the bar watching. He has everyone's
attention.

EION (CONT'D)
(to the strippers)
Great job ladies. I'm 21, and this
is the first time I saw a naked
woman.

Some LAUGHS.

Don points at him. Eion points back.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Eion is driving while Don sits in the passenger seat.

DON
You were somewhat likable tonight.

EION
Tough in the beginning.

DON
Material only ever goes so far.
Winning them over, that's the key.

EION
You were gonna step in if that guy
hit me, right?

DON
No. It'd give you material.

Eion pulls over to the curb. He puts the car in park.

EION
Need another five minutes tomorrow?

DON
You need more life experience. Go
out on a date or something. Write
jokes about that thing.

Don SLAMS the car door shut. Eion taps the wheel.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Eion enters his dark kitchen. He flicks on the LIGHT.

PAT AND PATRICE have been sitting at the counter in the dark.
Eion jumps back.

EION
What the fuck?

PATRICE
Did we get you? Did you think that
was funny?

PAT
It was *her* idea.

Eion places the takeout bag on the counter. They dig through
the containers.

PATRICE

Where's your-

Eion slides her cash.

PATRICE (CONT'D)

You are making our lives so much easier.

(beat)

I cleaned another girls teeth today! She said she was-

EION

Single?

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Eion is sitting in a swanky coffee shop at a table sipping on a hot beverage. He writes something down in his yellow-pad.

MELISSA (O.S.)

So...

PUSH OUT to reveal Eion is sitting across from MELISSA, 22, pretty and hip. She scratches her head.

EION

Sorry, I just had to write something down. I'm a comedian.

MELISSA

You said that. Three times.

EION

What do you do, Melissa?

MELISSA

I work in social media.

EION

But what do you wanna do, do?

MELISSA

I don't know. Wherever the wind takes me.

EION

You don't have a set goal or anything?

MELISSA

Not at the moment.

Eion scribbles something down.

MELISSA (CONT'D)
What did you write?

EION
Went out on a date with this girl
who had no real goals in life.

MELISSA
That's kind of rude.

EION
That's just the set-up. Do you like
stand-up?

MELISSA
I don't really know any comedians.

EION
Well you know one now.

Eion has a wide grin. Melissa rolls her eyes.

MELISSA
Well. I'm gonna get going.

Melissa stands up. Eion doesn't pay attention to her
movements whatsoever.

MELISSA (CONT'D)
Oh and by the way, tell your mom to
stop telling people you're a model.

Eion scribbles down on the pad.

He mimes a head explosion. Melissa shakes her head and walks
away.

INT./EXT. DON'S FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

The doorbell RINGS. Don opens the door.

Eion is standing wide eyed and holding a bag of takeout.

INT. DON'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Don is seated on the couch eating. The cork board now has
only two cards. They read, "CHINESE," and, "PEE SITTING
DOWN."

Eion sits across from him in the chair. Don swigs from his thermos. He pats the bottom of the bottle for more.

DON
So how'd it go?

EION
I got a ton of new jokes.

DON
Did you like her?

EION
Like her? I was just trying to gather material.

DON
Think you'll see her again?

EION
Why?

DON
Best jokes are from experiences. Be present next time.

Don jingles his thermos.

DON (CONT'D)
Get me something to drink, will ya?

EION
(gleefully)
What do you say?

DON
Now.

INT. KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

The lights in the fridge FLICK ON. Eion inspects his food. A couple of oranges, beers, and eggs.

Eion looks in the FREEZER. He pulls out a bottle of VODKA.

ANOTHER ANGLE - MOMENTS LATER

Eion goes through his kitchen cabinets.

EION
(shouting)
Where are your fucking cups?

DON (O.S.)
Check the bottom drawers!

Eion pulls one of the drawers. It's filled to the brim with yellow-pad pages, knick knacks, and old photos.

Eion grabs a ripped photo of an YOUNG DON and a YOUNG WOMAN.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Eion walks in with the bottle in hand and presents the photo.

EION
Hey Don, who's this?

Don gets up and snatches the photo away from him.

DON
Time to go. You have to get on stage tonight.

Don refills his thermos with vodka.

INT. SIDEWALK CAFE SHOWROOM - NIGHT

Eion and Don walk into the busy showroom. It's a very small space that is packed with PERFORMERS. Most of them are holding guitars and other instruments.

There is a WOMAN gently playing VIOLIN on stage.

Don and Eion walk over to the host table. There's a clipboard and pen with a sign-up list.

EION
(whispering)
They're all musicians.

Don writes down Eion's name.

DON
You got to play all types of rooms.

The violinist hits a final NOTE.

VIOLINIST (O.S.)
Thank you everyone.

The rooms CLAPS and the woman gets off the stage. A MAN then gets up on stage holding an accordion.

MAN
I'm going through a rough time
right now.

Everyone SNAPS. The accordion CLANGS. Eion winces.

INT. SIDEWALK CAFE SHOWROOM - LATER

Eion and Don are seated next to a MAN holding an upright
bass.

They are watching POET 1, and POET 2, perform simultaneously
on stage.

POET 1
This song goes out to my loved
ones. My brother was shot dead in
the street.

SNAPS.

POET 2
Metaphorically speaking.

The crowd SNAPS again and the rappers exit stage left.

SOMER, 30s, the MC of the show, sits behind the host table
and speaks into her microphone.

SOMER
Alright thank you, Life Has No
Meaning. Your next performer coming
to the stage is Ian Falzance?

Some CLAPS. Eion reluctantly walks onto the stage.

He plops his notebook on the stool, and clears his throat.
Silence.

ANOTHER ANGLE

EION
It's Eion Falance. Doesn't matter.

SOMER
Did you need a track?

EION
I'm not singing.

SOMER
Let me guess. Comedy?

EION
I'm gonna try.

Still silence.

Eion peters over to the stool and reviews his new jokes in his yellow-pad.

EION (CONT'D)
Every time I meet a woman they try
and change me. It's like no. I'm
me. And it's my diaper.

No response. Eion exhales. He's moving around the stage more than usual, knees buckling.

EION (CONT'D)
A lot of my jokes are like puzzles,
because people fucking hate em!.

Thunderous LAUGHS.

Eion nods his head. He's broken through. With more confidence he delivers...

EION (CONT'D)
Starting working at a Chinese
restaurant with all Chinese staff.
I don't think they like me, cause
they said it in English.

No response. Eion waits for a moment.

He pretends to tee off like he's holding a golf club. Swing!
Nothing.

EION (CONT'D)
I went out on a date today. I think
having sex is like playing a board
game. Like if you play with me,
it's a game of "sorry."

LAUGHS.

EION (CONT'D)
Thanks. That's a new one.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Eion is driving while Don is in the passenger seat.

DON
Almost had them.

EION
The thing they liked the most was
where I made fun of myself.

Don swigs.

EION (CONT'D)
Chinese joke didn't work.

DON
You left some words out. Did you
record your set?

EION
I forgot.

Don swats Eion on the back of the head.

EION (CONT'D)
What the fuck!

DON
Always record your sets.

EION
You don't need to hit me.

DON
I come from a different generation.
My mom didn't even hug me. It's
because she left when I was young,
but still.

EION
I'm sorry.

DON
It's fine... People come and go,
kid. Just make sure it's not
because of you.

EION
Like the woman in the photo?

Don stares out the window.

DON
Hungry?

INT. DINER - NIGHT

Eion and Don are sitting slouched at quiet diner booth. Empty
plates rest on the table.

DON
Comedy got in the way of my
marriage.

EION
You mean you were too busy writing
jokes?

DON
No. I was working the road. Doing
drugs. Not being faithful.

Eion scribbles in his notebook.

DON (CONT'D)
What are you writing?

EION
I thought there was a joke there.

Don covers his hand with Eion's notebook.

DON
I told you to be present.

Eion slides the yellow-pad underneath the table.

DON (CONT'D)
I was in the running for a
commercial. I was going to be the
face of Pepsi in 1988. Couple TV &
radio spots.

EION
What happened?

DON
I came to the audition unprepared.
I wasn't ready. And they gave it to
someone else.

Eion motions to the WAITRESS for the check.

DON (CONT'D)
I did alright, ya know? I made a
living. But I gave up a lot for it.
There are no guarantees in this
business.

EION
But if you're funny, you're funny?
I don't get it.

DON
Doesn't always work like that.

EION
But you wouldn't trade it for
anything, right? Being a comedian?

DON
I would've traded it for her.

The waitress puts down the check.

EION
I got it.

DON
Thanks, kid.

Eion's eyes widen as he looks at the bill.

EION
I think I only have a twenty.

Don throws cash down on the table. He gets up and walks off.

Eion waits at the table, sighing.

INT. BEDROOM DESK - NIGHT

Eion is sitting at his desk writing. He looks over at the
clock it reads "3:00 AM."

Eion stands up, grabs a pencil and holds it to his mouth.

EION
(to the room)
Last Comic Standing! I work in a
Chinese restaurant. All I want to
be is a comedian.

Eion rubs his eyes.

EION (CONT'D)
Lots of people want to do comedy.
But I'm different. Because I'm me.
And if I'm not a comedian. I'm just
some guy.

Eion stares out his window. He continues his set.

EION (CONT'D)
 My name is Eion! Hey. I love
 comedy, and my parents. And Don I
 guess. That's it. Fuck.

Eion sits down on his bed. He hears SNORING from down the
 hall.

INT. FAMILY BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Eion tiptoes into a dark bedroom. In bed are Pat and Patrice,
 both deeply SNORING.

EION
 (softly)
 Mom?

She keeps snoring.

EION (CONT'D)
 (louder)
 Mom?

Nothing.

EION (CONT'D)
 (shouting)
 Mom?!

Patrice jumps up. She looks around the room.

PATRICE
 What?!

EION
 I love you guys.

Eion hugs her.

PATRICE
 OK.

Eion crawls over her.

He nudges himself in between them in bed. He takes a deep
 breath.

Pat rolls over and opens his eyes slowly. Eion stares back at
 him.

PAT
 Eion?

EION
 (softly)
 Yeah?

PAT
 Get the fuck out.

Eion crawls over Pat. They both start SNORING again.

INT. PLUM BLOSSOM KITCHEN - DAY

Eion stands behind Berna at the takeout counter who is packing takeout. Steve is presenting his NUDIE magazine to other MEN in the kitchen.

EION
 (to Berna)
 I ordered the wrong dinner.

Berna gestures for him to try again.

Eion scribbles on his check book and rips the page off on the counter.

EION (CONT'D)
 Uhh. Michael. Cook, "SUP-PO-HAA."

Michael stares at the paper. Their eyes lock. Beat.

Michael YELLS something in CHINESE. Berna matches his YELL in CHINESE back.

Berna, nonchalantly, returns to what she was doing.

EION (CONT'D)
 Well. What did he say?

BERNA
 He say, that is "OK."

Berna exits the kitchen carrying takeout bags.

Eion and Michael share another glance. Beat.

MICHAEL
 I want to kill you.

Michael pretends to shoot Eion with his "finger gun."

INT. PLUM BLOSSOM DINING ROOM - DAY

Eion is wiping down a restaurant booth.

Dang sneaks up behind him, and grabs Eion's waist.

DANG

Boo!

EION

Ah. Hi Dang.

DANG

What are you doing tonight?

EION

Why?

DANG

Because I want to take you to the club. Let me be your wingman.

EION

I'm good.

DANG

I'm trying to meet women online. Help me with my bio?

Eion finishes wiping and sits down at the booth.

EION

I'm trying to work.

DANG

Oh. I meant to tell you, one of your tables just asked where their food was.

EION

I thought Michael cooked..

Eion storms off.

Dang whips out his phone and takes selfies of himself.

INT. PLUM TAKEOUT COUNTER - MOMENTS LATER

Berna is packing takeout. Michael is behind the counter on his phone watching something audibly in CHINESE, enjoying a cigarette.

Eion comes up behind Berna.

EION

Hey, Berna.

BERNA
What do you need?

EION
Michael never cooked my dinners.

Berna YELLS something at Michael. Michael waves his hand at her.

He goes back to what he was doing.

BERNA
He will.

Eion waits. Michael has not moved.

EION
But he's not cooking?

BERNA
He will, he just doesn't like anyone looking at him.

EION
So should I-

BERNA
Go. Go. Go.

The kitchen doors SWING as Eion exits.

INT. PLUM BLOSSOM DINING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Eion walks up to a disgruntled COUPLE.

EION
It should be out shortly.

He walks off, hands behind his back.

INT. PLUM BLOSSOM KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Eion is leaning against the wall in the kitchen. He's staring at Michael as he cooks.

Michael slowly moves around the wok.

He PLOPS the plates on the counter. Eion runs to grab them, skipping out of the kitchen.

INT. PLUM BLOSSOM DINING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Eion places the dinners on the couple's table.

EION

Sorry about the wait.

They shake their heads disapprovingly.

INT. PLUM BLOSSOM DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Eion is mopping the floor of the restaurant. Steve skips across him and almost slips.

STEVE

Let's go home maaaaan.

Eion places the mop in the bucket.

INT. PLUM BLOSSOM DINING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Eion returns to the same table where the couple sat. He counts his tip money.

All they had left was change. He drops the coins on the table. He clenches his fist.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Eion, still in uniform, is sitting in the parking lot of the restaurant counting his money.

Eion looks out the window and sees Michael hurling trash into the dumpster. He disappears into the dark.

INT./EXT. CAR

Michael and Uncle are sitting on the restaurant's back stoop.

Eion pulls his car around to see them. He rolls down the window, holding up one of the coins.

EION

Thanks a lot. I'm trying to pay off school, asshole.

MICHAEL

No English.

Eion angrily rolls up his window when he hears...

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
 Fuck you, comedian!

Eion thinks for a moment. His expression slowly changes into smile.

EION
 (to himself)
 Yeah. I am a comedian.

Michael throws a rock at Eion's car. He pulls away.

INT. MCGEARY'S BAR - NIGHT

Eion and Don are staring at small stage with a mic on it.

It's basically an empty bar, with PATRONS sitting at the counter looking at TV's and quietly conversing.

EION
 No.

DON
 What?

EION
 I'm not doing it.

DON
 Why not?

EION
 Nobody will want to hear this.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Don walks over to the BARTENDER and leans on the counter.

DON
 Can my grandson get on stage?

BARTENDER
 For what?

DON
 It's open mic night.

BARTENDER
 Oh. Sure. I guess.

DON
 You gonna turn down the music?

BARTENDER

No.

DON

OK.

Don walks back over to Eion. He pushes him forward.

DON (CONT'D)

You have to be able to turn any
room around.

Eion picks up the microphone. The mic SCREECHES. Everyone turns around. A silent stare off ensues.

Don sits in a chair near the stage. Some FOLKS exit the bar. MUSIC is still playing.

EION

Hey, how are you guys doing
tonight?

Nothing. But this time, it's more than nothing. It's like Eion is performing just to Don and himself.

EION (CONT'D)

Every time I meet a woman they try
and change me. It's like no. I'm
me. And it's my diaper.

Absolutely nothing. Some PERSON, indistinguishable, shouts from the bar.

PERSON (O.S.)

Shut up!

Eion tries to shield his eyes from the light to see into the crowd.

EION

Who said that? Seriously who said
that? I can't see you.

Don pulls out a cigarette and walks out the door.

Now NO ONE is watching Eion.

More folks exit the bar. Now there's about 3 people sitting at the counter.

Eion goes to the stool to look at his jokes. He closes the notebook.

EION (CONT'D)
 (to the Bartender)
 How long you been working here?

BARTENDER
 Why?

EION
 I don't know.

Eion looks at an OLDER MAN, 80s, decrepit, at the bar.

EION (CONT'D)
 Crowd work... How are you, *sir*?

No answer.

EION (CONT'D)
 Does anyone want me to be here?

OLDER MAN
 Get that girl out!

Eion pushes through.

EION
 I'm trying to have the safest sex possible. My friends ask me you pull out right? I don't even pull in.

A few LAUGHS.

EION (CONT'D)
 I'll never forget a couple years back when my parents first caught me smoking weed. They said they had no idea, "I was cool."

More LAUGHS.

People are turning around in their chairs. He makes a point to make contact with everyone now.

EION (CONT'D)
 My best friend just had sex with my ex girlfriend. Which makes us both... Do you guys know the phrase?

PEOPLE AT BAR
 Eskimo brothers?

EION
HIV Positive.

LAUGHS.

He's got them. The bartender shines a light.

INT. MCGEARY'S BAR - LATER

Eion tries to exit the bar doors before...

BARTENDER (O.S.)
There's a two drink minimum for all
performers.

Eion walks up to the counter, and hands the bartender cash
from his wallet.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Eion and Don are in the car. Eion pulls up to Don's house. He
puts the car in park. Don unbuckles.

DON
Nice job kid.

EION
I felt really good. I felt like I
killed? Did I kill?

DON
Remember that. Tap into that
feeling. Just need a couple more
months like this.

EION
Months? Last Comic Standing might
be scouting sooner.

DON
I will help you. You listen to me.

Don reaches in his pocket. He pulls out a small notebook, and
presents it to Eion.

DON (CONT'D)
In case you don't have your yellow
pad.. You never know when you're
gonna think of something.

Eion pats Don on the back.

EION
I love you, grandpa.

DON
You too kid, you too.

Don SLAMS the door shut. He stands by the car.

DON (CONT'D)
You killed!

Eion smiles, throws on ROCK music, and drives forward. He SKIDS over something.

DON (CONT'D)
My foot!

Eion looks back in his rearview mirror, he continues to drive.

INT. COMEDY WORKS SHOWROOM - NIGHT

Eion is on stage in front of a decent crowd. Mackenzie, Shafi, and Nick all look on from a corner table.

EION
I don't think people are very polite when you hold the door open for them in public. Like today, all I wanted was a simple thank you from this guy and all he... said was, "No I'm not coming in the same stall as you."

LAUGHS.

Eion moves around the stage very naturally. He walks over to the stool, no notebook. He takes a seat.

EION (CONT'D)
For me, having sex is like playing a board game. It's either long like monopoly, or quick like connect 4. But if you play with me, it's a game of sorry.

LAUGHS.

The WHITE LIGHT shines on Eion's face. He points to it.

EION (CONT'D)
 My name is Eion, and don't tell my
 mom what I just said.

More LAUGHS and CLAPS.

Eion waves. He's a rockstar. Nick switches places with him.

NICK (O.S.)
 One more time for, Eion Falance!

Eion fist bumps the COMICS as he walks through to the club
 bar.

INT. COMEDY WORKS BAR - NIGHT

Eion is sitting scribbling in his notebook at the bar. Nick,
 Shafi, and Mackenzie walk over.

NICK
 That was great man!

SHAFI
 Yeah, are you taking steroids or
 something?

EION
 I've just been getting up anywhere
 I can.

SHAFI
 Well it shows.

Shafi puts his arms over Eion.

MACKENZIE
 Well, we're going drinking. Have
 fun writing, Eion!

ANOTHER ANGLE

The gang starts to walk away. Eion puts his notebook down. He
 sighs.

EION
 I'll come!

MACKENZIE
 What?

Eion jumps out of his seat.

EION
I'm coming.

MACKENZIE
Are you even old enough to drink?

EION
Of course. I drink all the time.

They go in for a group hug around Eion. They walk up the steps.

SHAFI
I'm buying you a shot!

INT. BATHROOM - MORNING

Eion wakes up on the floor of his bathroom. There is PUKE in the toilet and his shirt is stained. He stares up at the ceiling.

EVERYBODY WANTS TO RULE THE WORLD by TEARS FOR FEARS plays over...

MONTAGE - VARIOUS

A) INT. DON'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - Eion and Don place 3 note cards on the cork board. The top of the board is labeled "LCS SET."

B) INT. COMEDY CLUB - NIGHT - Eion performs in front of open mic crowd. Don watches on.

C) INT. BAR - NIGHT - Eion, Shafi, Makenzie, and Nick are doing shots.

D) INT. FALANCE KITCHEN - NIGHT - Eion drops off food for his parents. Eion presents Patrice with hundreds in CASH.

E) INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY - Eion is getting coffee with Melissa. They are laughing. There is no notebook in sight.

F) INT. DON'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - Eion and Don place the final CARD on the cork board. They sit back to reflect on their work.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Eion, in his work uniform, is driving while simultaneously looking over his notebook. He mouths his SET. He plugs in his phone.

A VOICE comes over the car SPEAKER to say....

JOE LIST (O.S.)
Today is September 15th, 2019 and
you're listening to...

EION
Tuesday's with Stories! I'm
your host, Joe List. And
we're live from the New York
City's Comedy Cellar! Surf's
up comedy nerds. Welcome to
another great podcast.

JOE LIST (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Tuesday's with Stories! I'm
your host, Joe List. And
we're live from the New York
City's Comedy Cellar! Surf's
up comedy nerds. Welcome to
another great podcast.

JOE LIST (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Another great week of shows. This
weekend I'll be in Albany, New
York.

Eion grabs his heart. He tries to catch his breath.

JOE LIST (O.S.) (CONT'D)
So for the love of God, please come
out to these shows. I'll be
headlining "Clash of the Comics,"
Thursday. See you there.

INT. FALANCE KITCHEN - NIGHT

Eion frantically runs into the kitchen. He throws the TAKEOUT
BAG on the counter.

He circles the kitchen island, stripping his work uniform.

EION
Mom, Pat, come in here quick!

Pat and Patrice walk into find Eion half naked.

PATRICE
My boy has gotten so big.

PAT
You want us to see this?

EION
Hurry and eat. Joe List, was on
Last Comic Standing, he's
headlining the showcase tonight!

PAT
Who?

EION
Joe List! My favorite comedian!

PAT
Never heard of him. He must not be funny.

Eion throws on a t-shirt and cardigan.

PATRICE
We're kinda tired....

EION
I gotta bring two people if I wanna perform, and you have to buy two drinks. So you're coming!

PATRICE
That's fine. I love to drink! It helps me cope with all the bad thoughts in my head.

Silence.

Eion smells his breath in his cupped hand.

EION
Joe could get me on the show. I just need to make a good impression.

INT. FUNNYBONE BAR - NIGHT

Joe List is sitting at a busy bar in the Funnybone Comedy Club. There are small tables and seats with various PATRONS.

JOE LIST
Is he still looking at me?

The BARTENDER nods their head.

Joe turns around and sees EION creepily staring at him in the distance. Eion immediately turns around.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Eion recomposes himself. He sits down at the bar next to Joe. He turns to the bartender.

EION
Merlot.

He pretends like he hasn't seen Joe this whole time.

EION (CONT'D)
 Oh! Hey, Joe... List?
 (extending his hand)
 Eion Falance. I'm on the show. Big fan.

JOE LIST
 I can see that.

The bartender puts down Eion's drink.

EION
 Can I buy you a drink?

JOE LIST
 I'm 5 years sober.

He slides his drink away.

EION
 God. I should have remembered.
 I was thinking of cutting back too.

Joe sits up.

JOE LIST
 I'm just trying to go over my set.

EION
 Oh, sorry.

Eion tries to play it off.

EION (CONT'D)
 Cool, cool. I gotta do that too.

Eion writes the words, "I FUCKING HATE MYSELF" in his notebook.

He gets a tap on his shoulder, it's Pat and Patrice. They're both holding two drinks in their hands, respectively.

PATRICE
 Look we're double fisting! Good luck, my sweetie!

PAT
 Break a leg. Have you talked to Joe List yet?

JOE LIST
 Yes he has.

Pat places down one of his drinks in front of Joe.

PAT
Here, drink's on me.

EION
Don't! He's sober!

Eion slides the drink on the counter. It falls and SHATTERS. Everyone looks at the commotion.

Joe takes off his glasses and rubs his nose.

JOE LIST
(to Eion)
Are these your parents?

Pat and Patrice nod.

JOE LIST (CONT'D)
That is *embarrassing*.

Patrice leans over Eion's shoulder. She reads from his notebook.

PATRICE
Is this a new joke?
(reading)
"I fucking hate myself?"

JOE LIST
That one has promise.

Eion facepalms. Pat leans on the counter.

PAT
(to Joe)
Do you know Ron White? He's really funny.

Joe stands up.

JOE LIST
I'm gonna go to the green room.
(to Eion)
Good luck.

Joe exits. Pat and Patrice sit around Eion.

PATRICE
I think he liked you.

Eion scribbles over the page.

INT. FUNNYBONE SHOWROOM - NIGHT

The showroom of about 200 seats is filled with a sold out AUDIENCE and WAIT STAFF. The lights are up, and the stage is empty. Loud MUSIC is playing. People are still filing in.

INT. BACK TABLES - NIGHT

All of the comics are at the same table conversing.

Eion is off to the side, sitting by himself. He's looking over his set when the lights DIM and he hears...

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)
Are you guys ready for, Clash of
the Comics?

The audience thunderously APPLAUSES.

ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)
We've got a great show for you. Joe
List is here!

Eion slides out of the showroom to...

INT. FUNNYBONE HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Eion knocks on the GREEN ROOM door.

JOE LIST (O.S.)
Come in!

He opens the door to...

INT. GREEN ROOM

Joe is laying down on the couch by himself tossing a baseball up and down.

Eion waits. Joe looks up.

JOE LIST
What do you want?

Eion shuts the door behind him.

JOE LIST (CONT'D)
You're not gonna try and kill me,
are you? Or worse, try to talk to
me?

EION

I was hoping you could watch my set.

JOE LIST

Watch your set? What am I, your other dad?

EION

That was my stepdad. I know you don't have a good relationship with your own father too.

JOE LIST

Where did you hear that?

EION

I listen to your podcast. I've seen your specials. And I watched all your early stuff online.

JOE LIST

Definitely going to kill me.

EION

I know you were on Last Comic Standing. I was hoping you could recommend me?

JOE LIST

Yeah, whatever dude.

EION

I really, really need you to. Please.

JOE LIST

If I say yes, will you leave?

Eion nods and gently exits. Joe looks out longingly for a beat...

He FARTS.

INT. FUNNYBONE SHOWROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Eion gets up and clears his throat. He begins walking towards the stage.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

Coming to the stage, your last local comic, Eion Falance!

INT. STAGE

Eion grabs the microphone. He looks out at the crowd.

EION
How's everybody doing tonight?

CLAPS.

EION (CONT'D)
I hope you guys like me. Cause I
will be selling some shirts after
the show, because they no longer
fit me.

LAUGHS.

Eion continues over...

ANOTHER ANGLE

Joe List stands at the back of the room. His arms are
crossed.

EION (O.S.)
When I was 10 my parents taught me,
"If you don't have anything nice to
say, don't say anything at all."
And that was the last thing they
ever said to me.

Joe laughs. He makes a phone call.

INT. STAGE

Eion is crushing on stage. The audience is LAUGHING
hysterically.

EION
I sit down when I pee, which is
always awkward at the urinal.

More LAUGHS.

A light shines on Eion's face. He waves.

EION (CONT'D)
That's my time. Have a great night!

Eion exits the stage. Shafi, Nick, and Mackenzie all greet
him with handshakes.

INT. STAGE - LATER

Joe is performing on stage. LAUGHS.

JOE LIST

My wife called me a nerd. But what she doesn't understand is I don't care.

More LAUGHS.

Joe puts the mic back in the stand. He's handed an envelope from an offstage HAND.

JOE LIST (CONT'D)

Alright, are you guys ready for your winner?

(opening)

Clash of the Comics champ is, Eion Falance.

The audience CLAPS and WHISTLES.

ANOTHER ANGLE

All the COMICS congratulate Eion.

INT. FUNNYBONE CLUB BAR - NIGHT

Joe is sitting at the bar. Eion is talking to the gang.

NICK

Killer stuff, Eion.

MACKENZIE

I've never seen you so in the zone.

MAN 3 walks up to Eion and grabs his hand.

MAN 3

You were my favorite one tonight.

Man 3 walks off. Shafi turns around to shout...

SHAFI

I was on the show too! That's racist!

Joe waves Eion over.

SHAFI (CONT'D)

Oh look. Joe's giving you the
Johnny Carson wave. He wants you to
sit on the couch.

Eion towards him.

SHAFI (CONT'D)

You guys think I had a good set
too, right?

Mackenzie and Nick lock eyes.

SHAFFI

That is some racist ass shit too!

EXT. FUNNYBONE - NIGHT

Eion and Joe are sitting at a table outside the Funnybone.
PEOPLE are leaving the club, and Joe is smoking a cigar.

JOE LIST

Well, holy hot dog kid. I thought
you were gonna suck.

EION

You liked my set?

JOE LIST

You killed it. No really, I thought
you were gonna suck.

EION

Thank you, Joe.

JOE LIST

No seriously, I thought you were
gonna eat a steaming bag of dog
shit.

Eion nods.

EION

Okay. I got it.

Eion readjusts.

EION (CONT'D)

So?

JOE LIST

Drop me a line if you're in New
York. Here's my number.

Joe puts out his cigar, and unrolls part of the paper. He jots down something in sharpie. Eion edges forward in his seat....

EION
And about the thing?

JOE LIST
Jesus... I feel like an America's
Got Talent judge.

INT. DON'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Eion bursts into Don's living room. Don is standing looking over the cork board.

He stares at him with a wide grin.

DON
Good set?

EXT. DON'S HOUSE

Eion and Don are standing on the porch of his house.

DON
Say it again.

EION
I got an audition on Last Comic
Standing. Next week! Just in time
for the new season.

DON
I don't believe it.

EION
Joe pulled some strings and wallah.
I got it.

Don sits down on his front steps.

EION (CONT'D)
Aren't you gonna say something?

Don takes a swig from his thermos.

EION (CONT'D)
Don?

DON
Go home.

EION
What?

DON
Just get out of here.

He takes another swig. He puts his head in his hands.

EION
Aren't you proud of me?

Don gets up and walks on his lawn. There is some distance between them now.

EION (CONT'D)
Say something!

Don turns around. He slowly walks back to Eion.

DON
I told you kid, you're not ready.
A couple more months.

EION
You just don't want me to be
successful.

DON
Why would you say that?

EION
You're jealous.

DON
I am not jealous of some fucking
dweeb with ten jokes.

EION
Nothing is holding me back. I don't
have a marriage to fuck up.

DON
Fuck you kid.

Don throws his thermos at Eion. He ducks, almost hitting him in the head.

EION
Are you crazy? What is wrong with
you?!

Don and Eion are now inches apart. Don PUSHES Eion.

DON
 (yelling)
 All I said was you're not ready!

EION
 (shouting)
 You were never ready! You didn't
 have it! You said it yourself!

DON
 You're not different. You're not
 special. I don't ever want to see
 you again.

EION
 You're gonna die and no ones gonna
 know your name.
 (beat)
 I'll save you a seat.

Don PUSHES Eion off the porch.

He falls on the grass hard. Don walks back into his house. He
 slams the door shut, and the porch lights flick OFF.

Eion stands up, brushing himself off. He hits the unlock
 button on his keys.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Eion is driving home. He BANGS the wheel, screaming.

He plugs in his phone. A VOICE comes on over the car
 SPEAKER...

JOE LIST (O.S.)
 He spells his name E-I-O-N. He's
 like a nerdy comic guy. Like he's
 gonna either go on stage and suck,
 but he kills. But he's gonna be
 something, this guy. As long as he
 doesn't kill himself. He's gotta
 move to New York.

Eion grabs his chest.

INT. BEDROOM DESK - NIGHT

Eion is sitting at his desk counting a stack of money. He
 slides it into an envelope.

INT. BEDROOM DESK - MOMENTS LATER

Eion is searching on CRAIGSLIST on his computer for an APARTMENT. He double clicks on a listing.

INSERT: "LIVE CHEAP WITH SEX WORKER: I DON'T DO IT IN THE HOUSE."

He strokes his chin. There is a KNOCK at his door. Patrice pokes her head in.

EION
Don't you have work in the morning?

PATRICE
I couldn't sleep.

Patrice enters and sits at the foot of his bed.

EION
I found a cheap place to live in the city.

PATRICE
I figured.

EION
I saved up a lot of money. Paying for school will be easy.

PATRICE
Not worried about it.

Eion gets up from his desk. He hugs his mom.

PATRICE (CONT'D)
I'll miss you around here. All Pat and I do is sleep.

EION
I think you just need a hobby.

PATRICE
Maybe, I could take up comedy? I could say, "What's the deal with my husband and his socks? Are they clean or are they dirty?"

Patrice smiles.

EION
Sure, mom. Sure.

PATRICE

Are you positive you want to do this?

EION

More than anything.

They hug.

PATRICE

When you make it big, will you buy us a new house?

EION

I'm gonna put you and Pat in the best nursing home.

They embrace.

INT. DINER - NIGHT (DREAM SEQUENCE)

Eion is sitting in quiet NYC diner with Joe List. Eion is wearing an unbuttoned suit. They are both laughing.

JOE LIST

You were really funny tonight.

EION

Oh, please.

JOE LIST

Seriously. You're my best friend. The funniest person I know.

Eion shrugs it off playfully. He throws a \$100 bill on the table. They both stand up and put their jackets on.

INT. DINER HALLWAY - (DREAM SEQUENCE)

Eion and Joe are walking through the quiet diner to the exit.

When they get to the doors, they hear a FLOOD of REPORTERS YELLING questions and snapping photos of them with FLASH ...

REPORTER 1

Eion! Eion! What's it like to be the hottest person in comedy?

REPORTER 2

When does your Netflix special drop?

Eion pushes them aside as they exit the restaurant. The reporters follow them.

EXT. NYC STREET - MOMENTS LATER (DREAM SEQUENCE)

Eion and Joe are flooded by paparazzi as they walk down the busy New York City street.

They happen upon MELISSA. Eion and Melissa kiss. They pose for pictures.

EION
Everybody, please!

Everyone stands in a semi-circle around Eion, Joe, and Melissa.

Suddenly, I WANNA DANCE WITH SOMEBODY WHO LOVES ME by WHITNEY HOUSTON plays over...

Eion starts to dance. EVERYONE on the street then joins in a choreographed dance as well.

Eion grabs the hands of a HOMELESS MAN. They start to tap dance on the roof of a CAR.

The car HONKS.

Eion looks through the windshield to see DON GAVIN behind the wheel. Don shakes his head at him.

The MUSIC CUTS. Everyone stops dancing. The reporters walk away. Eion, Melissa, and Joe stand alone.

JOE LIST
Sorry, Eion.

Joe and Melissa walk away holding hands. Don drives away.

Eion sits on the curb.

INT. PLUM BLOSSOM LOBBY - NIGHT

Eion is standing at the host counter. On the other side are Steve, Berna, and Henry, who is wrapped in a backpack around her.

Eion is holding his apron. He places it on the desk.

EION
Thanks for letting me work here.

STEVE

Remember, you can always come back
and be manager. It was either you
or Dang. And I don't like Dang.

PUSH OUT to reveal Dang has been there the whole time. He
scoffs.

STEVE (CONT'D)

Did you find a place to live?

EION

I'll be living with a woman who's a
dominatrix.

(beat)

And boy, do I have my hands tied.

Eion waits for a laugh. Steve coughs.

STEVE

That interests me. What's your
address? I come visit you.

Eion writes on a sticky note and hands it over. Berna picks
up Henry's hand to wave as she delivers...

BERNA

Bye, Uncle Eion!

He starts to walk away when Michael enters the lobby putting
on his jacket.

Berna says something to Michael in CHINESE. Eion says over...

EION

(to Steve)

What's she saying?

STEVE

She's telling him you're leaving.

Berna finishes. Eion and Michael stare at each other once
more.

MICHAEL

You go bye bye?

Eion nods his head "yes."

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Good.

Michael exits.

STEVE

He is a very good man.
Misunderstood.

Berna slides an envelope across the host counter.

BERNA

This is for you.

Eion opens the letter to find \$300 in cash.

EION

I can't take this.

STEVE

Flip it over.

Eion flips the letter over to reveal CHINESE CHARACTERS.

STEVE (CONT'D)

It means good luck.

EION

(trying to hand the letter
back)

Steve I can't.

STEVE

(pushing back)

Take.

Beat.

STEVE (CONT'D)

And take this.

Steve slides Eion a ASIAN NUDIE MAGAZINE. He smiles.

EXT. BROOKLYN BRIDGE - DAY

The Falance's family car drives along the Brooklyn Bridge.

INT. CAR - DAY

Eion is sitting in the backseat of his parent's car. He has headphones in, with his yellow-pad on his lap.

Pat is driving, while Patrice is in the front seat clutching the roof handle.

PATRICE
 Watch out for that guy! Break!
 Break! Oooo!

The car comes to a HALT.

PAT
 I hate driving in the city.

Eion removes one of his ear buds.

EION
 Today is the biggest day of my
 life, and I cannot concentrate.

PATRICE
 Are you going to do the joke I told
 you?

Eion rolls his eyes.

EION
 No.

PATRICE
 Why not? Don't you want to go
 through to the next round?

EION
 Tonight is the biggest night of my
 life. And I'm not doing a joke my
 mother, who is a dental hygienist,
 told me.

PATRICE
 Just think... tonight is just the
 first step in your career. Today
 Last Comic Standing, tomorrow
 Comedy Cellar!

Eion pulls out his phone.

INSERT: Eion is scrolling through the COMEDY CELLAR SHOW
 LINEUP FOR TONIGHT: It reads VARIOUS NAMES and JOE LIST.

PAT
 We're here. Let's unload the car.

Pat ducks his head out the window trying to parallel park
 when he hears...

INT./EXT. CAR

SI WAN, 20s, short and a dominatrix, stands at the foot of the apartment.

SI WAN
Need help?

She drops her WHIP on the ground. They all stare in AWE.

INT. NBC STUDIOS - NIGHT

Eion, dressed in a suit, walks up to the front desk of the NBC studio lobby followed by Pat and Patrice.

The lobby is full of TV show memorabilia and is pristinely WHITE and CLEAN.

There is a CLERK on the other side of the desk typing on a computer.

EION
(to the clerk)
Here to check in. Eion Falance.

Patrice budes in.

PATRICE
Tell him you're a comedian.

A buzzer goes off on a nearby gate.

CLERK
ID.

Eion presents his ID.

CLERK (CONT'D)
Floor 39.

Patrice slides her ID on the counter as well. The clerk, puzzled picks it up to examine.

PATRICE
Look how young I look!

CLERK
You requested 3 tickets?

PATRICE
(to Eion)
There's only two of us. Who's the third person?

EION
Doesn't matter anymore. Let's go.

INT. SHOWROOM - MOMENTS LATER

The elevator doors OPEN. Eion, Patrice, and Pat step out into the showroom.

The "arena" is filled with AUDIENCE, and there is a giant sign hanging over the stage that reads, "LAST COMIC STANDING."

A PRODUCER, 40s, holding a clipboard and wearing a headset, is standing by the elevator doors. He greets them. Standing next to them is another MAN, similarly dressed in black.

PRODUCER
Name?

EION
Eion Falance. These are my guests.

PAT
We're his parents. But really his support group! LOL!

PRODUCER
(to Eion)
You're gonna wanna follow this guy right here to the dressing room.

Eion follows the man out of the showroom. Pat and Patrice wait for a beat...

PATRICE
Can I get your autograph?

PRODUCER
I'm not a comedian.

PATRICE
Oh. Don't be modest!

The producer points to another MAN, and he helps Pat and Patrice find their seats.

INT. DRESSING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Eion is seated in a swivel chair as a CREW MEMBER is putting makeup on his face.

The dressing room is filled with about 10 other COMICS.

There are several TV's on the walls, that are broadcasting a live stream from the showroom.

ANOTHER ANGLE

The Producer enters the holding/dressing room with a stack of papers.

PRODUCER

Everyone gets three minutes, you'll get the light at two. Hit the mark on the floor. Stay for the judge's critiques. Here's the order.

A CREW MEMBER passes the list to each comic.

Eion surveys the order... His name is listed SECOND. He takes a deep breath.

PRODUCER (CONT'D)

Would, Joe Machi please come out to the stage?

The Producer and JOE MACHI, 30s, exit the dressing room. Eion focuses his attention to the TV.

ANOTHER ANGLE

A DRUM ROLL is heard ON SCREEN through the speakers.

Eion watches the HOST, 30s, clean-cut and good-looking, take the stage.

HOST (O.S.)

Last Comic Standing! Welcome to...

Another PRODUCER enters the room.

PRODUCER

Falance, please come with me.

Eion starts to visibly shake.

INT. SHOWROOM - NIGHT

Eion is standing off stage to the point where he is just unseen. He looks out at the massive crowd.

Joe Machi is still on stage getting critiques from JUDGES 1, 2, and 3, while the host meanders around the space.

JUDGE 1

I really liked your first joke.
Second one didn't hit as hard, but
you made it work.

JUDGE 2

(looking at the judges)
What do you guys think?

JUDGE 3

Don't ask me, ask them!

Judge 3 looks back at the audience. They CHEER and APPLAUD.

JUDGE 1

We'll see you in the next round.

A SCRATCHING RECORD SOUND HITS and Joe exits stage left.

HOST

Alright, that act was hot. But this
is even hotter. Give it up for,
Eion Falance.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Eion enters stage right to CHEERS.

Pat and Patrice are sitting towards the back of the room. She
WHISTLES from the crowd.

There is an empty seat next to them.

Eion grabs the microphone and removes it from the stand. He
tries to clear his throat, but it's stuck. He massages his
neck.

INT. COMIC LIVING ROOM - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

Shafi, Nick, and Mackenzie are all seated on the couch eating
popcorn and watching Eion on their TV.

INT. STAGE - CONTINUOUS

The audience waits in anticipation. He breathes deeply into
the mic.

EION

(off the cuff)
Last Comic Standing...
(MORE)

EION (CONT'D)

How's it going? How are you? Doing?
This evening.

Some CHEERS, less than before.

EION (CONT'D)

Great. Great.

Eion looks down at the clock on the floor. It's counting down from 3 minutes, and is now at 2:40.

EION (CONT'D)

I don't think people are very
polite when you hold the door open
for them in public. Like today all
I wanted was a simple thank you
from this guy and all he...

His throat closes up. He hiccups.

Pause. Pausing. A couple seconds go by.

EION (CONT'D)

Excuse me... All he said was, "No
I'm not coming in the same stall as
you."

Some LAUGHS.

It was a palpable lukewarm response.

EION (CONT'D)

(off the cuff)

That joke usually works better.

Nothing.

EION (CONT'D)

Okay...

Eion looks at the clock. 2 minutes remain.

EION (CONT'D)

Every time I meet a woman they try
and change me, every time I meet a
woman they try and change me.

Beat.

He's forgetting the joke...

EION (CONT'D)
 Every time I meet a woman they try
 and change me. But it's like no.
 I'm me. And it's my diaper.

Nothing.

INT. COMIC LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The gang watches in horror.

INT. CROWD - CONTINUOUS

Pat and Patrice are slumped in their seats. SOMEONE takes the
 open seat next to them, but we are unable to see their FACE.

INT. STAGE - CONTINUOUS

Less LAUGHS than before. Eion loosens his tie.

EION
 My parents are here tonight.

Patrice "WOOOS" way too loud.

EION (CONT'D)
 Thanks.

Nothing.

EION (CONT'D)
 I'll never forget a couple years
 back when my parents first caught
 me smoking weed. They said they had
 no idea, "I was cool."

A couple LAUGHS.

EION (CONT'D)
 I might have forgotten some words
 with that one.

Eion looks back down at the clock. 1 MINUTE remains.

EION (CONT'D)
 This one goes out to my friend, Don
 Gavin. You guys don't know him. He
 was a great comic. Still is.

Nothing. What is he doing???

EION (CONT'D)

I work at a Chinese restaurant. I feel like the Chinese staff don't like me there, and they say mean things about me. And you know how I know? Cause they say it in English.

Nothing. Complete and utter BOMB.

The spotlight comes up. A RECORD SCRATCH HITS. The audience starts to MURMUR. Judge 3 turns around to exclaim..

JUDGE 3

Settle down everyone, settle down.

The audience quiets a bit. Eion's arms are shaking as he grips the microphone.

JUDGE 1

How old are you?

EION

21.

JUDGE 1

How long you been doing comedy?

EION

3 years.

JUDGE 2

It shows.

The audience CHEERS ironically. Eion swings like he's holding a golf club.

JUDGE 3

(to the other judges)
Come on guys, he had some good lines.

EION

Thanks.

JUDGE 3

But that was a rough set, man.

Eion looks down at his shoes.

JUDGE 3 (CONT'D)

Hey. I'm talking to you.

JUDGE 1

Let's not waste anymore time.

JUDGE 2

Good luck in the future, Eion.

The RECORD SCRATCH HITS again. The audience barely CLAPS him offstage.

The host takes the floor. Eion shakes as he exits.

HOST

Give it up one more time for
Eion... His first night doing
comedy.

The audience LAUGHS. They're back.

HOST (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Anything can happen on LIVE TV
folks!

INT. COMIC LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Shafi MUTES the TV. They stare for a moment.

SHAFI

Do you wanna see what else is on?

EXT. NBC STUDIOS - NIGHT

Eion, distraught, walks out the door of NBC studios and onto the busy NYC street.

He stares at his yellow-pad notebook in disbelief. He then checks his phone...

INSERT "MISSED CALL FROM MOTHER." The phone starts to ring as he looks at it. He ENDS the call.

He walks aimlessly.

EXT. NYC STREET - LATER

Eion looks at his phone, checking Twitter. He reads the headline, "COMEDIAN BOMBS on LAST COMIC..."

He falls to his knees. People walking on the street bump into him.

He looks up into the distance and sees the BROOKLYN BRIDGE.

EXT. BROOKLYN BRIDGE - NIGHT

Eion is standing on the top platform of the Brooklyn Bridge. We've seen this before...

Police lights SHINE on his face.

EXT. BROOKLYN BRIDGE - LATER

Eion is being huddled around by several POLICE officers. But he's preoccupied with writing down a joke in his notebook.

POLICE OFFICER

ID?

Eion files through his wallet. Suddenly, the cigar wrapper falls onto the ground.

The police officer picks it up and reads...

POLICE OFFICER (CONT'D)

"Wish you weren't here. Joe List."

(beat)

Are you, Joe List?

EION

You don't even know who Joe is?
He's got a great podcast I was
featured on. Tuesday's with
Stories.

He grabs the wrapper from the officer's hands. Eion takes off. Full sprint.

The officer radios in. He's about to chase after him when...

WOMAN

(to the officer)

Don't bother. He just ate shit on
Last Comic Standing.

POLICE OFFICER

Comedian? What like, Ron White?

INT. COMEDY CELLAR BAR - NIGHT

Joe List and several other COMICS are sitting at a table in the Comedy Cellar. The place is packed.

Joe is eating a basket of fries, licking his fingers. One of the comics gets up from their seat next to Joe, leaving it empty.

Eion runs through the crowded room and sits next to Joe.

EION
(out of breath)
Hey, Joe.

Joe looks on at him, puzzled.

EION (CONT'D)
It's me. Eion Falance. From the
Funnybone.

JOE LIST
Oh. Hey. The fuck are you doing
here weirdo?

EION
I saw you were recording the
podcast.

JOE LIST
Did you buy a ticket for the show?
I think we're at max capacity.

EION
No. I came to tell you I just
bombed on Last Comic Standing.

JOE LIST
Bombed? Couldn't have been that
bad.

He presents his phone to Joe.

INSERT: TWITTER HEADLINES ABOUT BOMB ON LCS on Eion's phone.

JOE LIST (CONT'D)
Oh. It was that bad.

EION
I almost killed myself.

JOE LIST
I wasn't in your suicide note was
I? That's the one credit I don't
want.

Joe laughs. Eion puts his head in his hands.

EION
I don't know about comedy anymore.

Joe checks his phone.

JOE LIST
 Show's starting now. I gotta go.

Joe stands up, he starts to walk away from the table but stops when he says...

JOE LIST (CONT'D)
 You wanna maybe do a set?

Eion looks around.

INT. COMEDY CELLAR SHOWROOM - NIGHT

Eion is sitting in the back of the crowded showroom. There is a small stage at the front, which has a sign on the wall that reads, "COMEDY CELLAR."

He is pacing back and forth between the aisles of seats.

A VOICE comes on over the speakers...

VOICE (O.S.)
 Give it up for your opener, EION
 FALANCE!

MUSIC HITS and Eion takes the stage.

EION
 (removing the microphone)
 Thanks. Thanks a lot. Clap it up
 for yourselves for coming out
 tonight.

CLAPS.

EION (CONT'D)
 I hope this goes well tonight. Just
 had a show so bad I removed,
 "comedian," from my Twitter bio.

LAUGHS.

Eion starts to warm up.

EION (CONT'D)
 OK. Thanks for laughing at that.
 That's true.
 (beat)
 I sit down when I pee, which guys
 think is weird at the urinal.

LAUGHS.

Eion paces around. His body eases with every new step.

EION (CONT'D)
I just did that joke and it bombed!

LAUGHS.

EION (CONT'D)
Wow, you guys are really nice.
(beat)
I'm trying to have the safest sex possible. My friends ask if I "pull out?" I don't even pull in.

LAUGHS.

EION (CONT'D)
Are you guys ready for a great show? Please welcome to stage, the host of Tuesday's with Stories, JOE LIST!

Joe takes the stage. He grabs another microphone adjacent to Eion. Eion gestures to leave the stage when...

JOE LIST
Sit down. Sit down.

They both sit in seats and face the crowd.

JOE LIST (CONT'D)
Is that a true story? Your Bio?
Could be a bit...

Eion is stunned he's sitting on stage at the COMEDY CELLAR.

JOE LIST (CONT'D)
Hey, you there?

EION
(realizing)
Oh... Yeah. True.

JOE LIST
What's funny about this is, Eion just came in as an audience member to watch the show.
(beat)
Why are you dressed like you just got done playing a bad wedding?

LAUGHS.

Eion looks out in the crowd. He sees Pat and Patrice at the back of the room.

INT. COMEDY CELLAR BAR - NIGHT

Eion is sitting at the COMICS TABLE with Joe List and others.

JOE LIST

This fucker stole the show. He gave it back. But for a moment, he stole it.

Pat and Patrice walk up to the table.

JOE LIST (CONT'D)

Holy smokes, are these your folks again?

EION

Excuse me, Joe.

JOE LIST

By all means, you're not even supposed to be sitting here.

Eion politely gets up.

EXT. COMEDY CELLAR - NIGHT

Eion is standing outside with his parents in front of the busy Comedy Cellar. There is a LINE to get in.

EION

How'd you find me?

Patrice holds up her phone.

PATRICE

Tracked you.

He recalls.

PATRICE (CONT'D)

You also tweeted about it. 2 likes. Are you OK?

EION

Yeah. I'm better now.

PATRICE

You had a great show.

PAT
First one sucked.

Patrice pushes Pat.

PAT (CONT'D)
Second one was much better.

PATRICE
Someone else saw the show..

Don, pacing, exits the comedy cellar side door.

DON
Hey, kid.

PATRICE
We'll go talk to Joe! I'm sure he'd
love to chat.

Patrice and Pat walk back down the club steps.

INT. COMEDY CELLAR BAR - NIGHT

Pat and Patrice are sitting at the comics table with Joe.
Silence.

PATRICE
How long have you been doing
comedy?

Joe stands up.

JOE LIST
I have to go... talk to someone
else.

EXT. NYC STREET - NIGHT

Eion and Don walk down the street.

EION
I didn't think you'd come.

DON
I came to see you fail. I told you,
you weren't ready.

EION
I'm sorry I said those things.

DON
Yeah, you're a little asshole who
bombed on TV.

EION
Touché. I just felt like you were
holding me back.

DON
(reminiscing)
Something you said.
(beat)
That I was jealous of you... I am
in a way.

EION
Why?

DON
Cause you got time. Lots of time.
That's what I wish I had.

They stop walking. Eion hugs Don. Don doesn't hug him back.
He slowly puts his arms around him.

EION
Thank you for everything.

They push back.

DON
You're not done yet. This is just
the beginning.

They walk in the opposite direction back towards the club.

EION
Will I see you again soon?

DON
Yes you will. Tonight. I need a
place to sleep.

Eion puts his arm around Don.

INT. BROOKLYN BEDROOM - NIGHT

Eion is sleeping on the floor of his tiny room. He stares up
at the ceiling, smiling. Don is laying in bed SNORING.

INT. BROOKLYN BEDROOM - MORNING

Eion wakes up to the sound of WHIPPING coming from the room next to him. Don is nowhere to be seen.

He gets up from the floor and walks out of his room to...

INT. HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Eion knocks on Si Wan's door. The door swings open.

STEVE is being dominated by Si Wan.

Eion gently closes the door.

INT. VARIOUS BAR - NIGHT

Eion is eating and having a drink by himself at a quiet bar. He HEARS from a speaker in the corner of the dining room ...

VOICE (O.S.)
Testing... testing...

Eion thinks for a moment and laughs to himself. A WAITER greets him.

WAITER
Open now.

Eion nods his head and picks up his stuff. He heads to a SIDE ROOM.

INT. SIDE ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Eion walks into a dimly lit room. There is a small table with a WOMAN and MAN sitting behind it.

Eion picks up a pencil and writes down his name.

He sits in a wobbly chair. He pulls out a BRAND new GREEN notebook.

INT. SIDE ROOM - LATER

A HOST is standing by a small stool in front of about 10 people.

HOST
Please welcome to the stage,
Owen... Ian...EON.. Falzance!

Eion meanders to the "stage" and puts his notebook down on the stool. He stares at it for a moment.

EION
Thank you. Thanks.

Nothing.

Eion breathes deep. He feels the mic, it's wet. His palms are sweating.

EION (CONT'D)
How many of you guys saw me on TV
last night?

Nothing. Not even a cough.

EION (CONT'D)
Well, this place is pretty unique.
There's a speaker outside, so here
you can bomb in two rooms.

LAUGHS.

Eion smiles. His body loosens up.

He walks over to his notebook, flipping through the pages....

EION (CONT'D)
What else... What else...

PUSH BACK as Eion's voice becomes less and less audible.

FADE OUT.