

PARTY DOWN

"'Once Upon a Time' Proms Away Prom-otional Event"

Episode #305

Written by
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Directed by
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Production Draft (White) 01/24/22

Blue Draft 01/27/22

Pink Draft 01/29/22

Yellow Draft 02/02/22

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PARTY DOWN

EPISODE #305

CAST LIST

HENRY POLLARD.....ADAM SCOTT
RON DONALD.....KEN MARINO
CONSTANCE CARMELL.....JANE LYNCH
KYLE BRADWAY.....RYAN HANSEN
ROMAN DEBEERS.....MARTIN STARR
LYDIA DUNFREE.....MEGAN MULLALLY
EVIE ADLER.....JENNIFER GARNER
SACKSON.....TYREL JACKSON WILLIAMS
LUCY DANG.....ZOË CHAO
SLOAN MEITZ.....LYRIC LEWIS
ESCAPADE DUNFREE.....LIV HEWSON
TED FINE.....SETH MORRIS
STEPH.....TAYLOR ORTEGA
DJ.....MAXWELE D'ANGELO
MAN.....DANIEL ARYEH

PARTY DOWN

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SET LIST

INTERIORS

HOTEL -- BALLROOM

HOTEL -- KITCHEN

BALLROOM -- BAR

BALLROOM -- BUFFET

BALLROOM -- DANCE FLOOR

HOTEL -- HALLWAY

HOTEL -- BATHROOM

HOTEL -- HALLWAY/LANDING

BALLROOM -- PHOTO STATION

EXTERIORS

NONE

1 INT. BALLROOM -- NIGHT

1

A hotel ballroom decorated like a public school prom. SACKSON and KYLE are hanging DIY posters. Fairy tale images and theme, "Once Upon on Time." There's a PHOTO-STATION-THING with a Fairy tale backdrop. LYDIA and RON review the scene.

RON

"Once Upon a Time." Has a nice fairy-tale quality.

LYDIA

That's the actual theme of the Glendale Flats High Senior prom that Escapade never got to attend.

RON

So did nobody ask her, or--?

LYDIA

Bobby Dando did, but we booked an adult diaper ad. It was a hard decision, but she needed drama on her reel. God, she *nailed* it. Her performance when she sees the wet spot on Grandpa? Horror and shame--

RON

And now she's a star, it was the right choice.

LYDIA

Or I might've ruined her life. She has been focused on work too long, so I want this to be the magical prom experience she missed. I want her to dance, have fun, I invited Bobby Dando, maybe she'll fall in love? Or have to choose between two boys, or have her heart broken?

RON

(brandishing clipboard)
Got it all planned. Fancy court ceremony, King Bobby and Queen Escapade, champagne tower--

He sees Sackson putting up a poster featuring "dark" fairy tale stuff. Creepy trees, a Giant, a witch eating a child, scared orphans in a forest, etc. He reacts.

RON (CONT'D)

Sackson, what the hell's that? It's supposed to be fairy tales!

SACKSON

This is fairy tales.

RON

Not like that! *Cinderella, Snow White*, "happily ever after!"

Sackson starts taking it down. Lydia continues with Ron.

LYDIA

But remember *it is* a PR event for her movie, *Proms Away*, which must go perfect so she doesn't fire me!

RON

Lydia, it's gonna be a "fairy tale" ending. For both of us!

LYDIA

(taking it in)

Boy, this takes me back. I met my ex-husband Ed at my senior prom.

RON

Talk about a fairy tale ending. Lemme guess, captain of the football team?

LYDIA

Coach of the football team.

TITLES

2

INT. KITCHEN -- NIGHT

2

ROMAN preps while LUCY arranges some fancy-looking puffs.

ROMAN

--I realized I could use the time loop to link the secret of the worm-kind to the birth of the Council. I still gotta work out some details, but I think I cracked it. After ten years. Even got a title. *Wells of Time*. Guess I owe you one for shaming me to take shrooms.

LUCY

It works! It's how I got the idea for this appetizer. Which I didn't think I'd ever get to try, but tonight, Ron *insisted* I pull out all the stops.

Kyle enters in to continue prep work.

KYLE

Yeah, who's psyched for prom night?

LUCY

No one. Prom is performative social hierarchy bullshit.

ROMAN

No kidding. "Buy a ticket to your debasement." It was a total scam.

KYLE

You went to prom? With who or what?

ROMAN

Milda Peele. Who laughed so hard at the jocks and sosches making fun of me her headgear sprung off.

KYLE

So, the most romantic night of your life.

ROMAN

Haha. Fuck romance and the entire prom-industrial complex.

Ron bustles in. Focused and intense. He scoops up a handful of Lucy's urchin puffs. Nibbles them nervously.

RON

Okay. Constance isn't Zooming in, we'll skip the spiritual cleansing nonsense and get right to business.

Ron shows a headshot of SLOAN MEITZ. Severe, brittle smile.

RON (CONT'D)

This's Sloan Meitz. EVP of physical marketing at Bisno Studios. Events *legend*. If you're in Sloan Meitz's rolodex, you will *work constantly!* Tonight's goal? *Dazzle* Sloan with professionalism, exchange business cards, get in her rolodex. Simple--

Ron brandishes a Party Down business card, slips it into the clipboard. Anxiously wolfs Lucy's puffs, as HENRY enters. He's in vintage 90's pants, and 90's hair.

LUCY

Just so you know, Ron, you've almost eaten the whole batch.

RON

Sorry, I'm nervous eating and I can't even taste. Get another tray.

LUCY

I mean, that was all of it.

RON

You made one tray for the whole party?

LUCY

That was all the red urchin I could get with what you budgeted.

RON

These're sea urchin--?

LUCY

You said pull out all the stops.

RON

Just...do the shrimps.
(to Henry, re photo)
Henry. You know who this--?

HENRY

Sloan Meitz, PR legend, and, yes, I'll bartend my heart out.

RON

Tonight's for all the marbles.
(turning to team)
Okay! This's it! Go time! I want tight, professional service and--

CONSTANCE (O.S.)

Soo sorry I'm late!

CONSTANCE rushes in with an iPad under her arm. Ron. Shit...

RON

Constance. You said you were taking your borzoi to the dog spa in Ojai.

CONSTANCE

And miss the big night? Gotta be here for my partner! So, why don't we start with a favorite mantra--

RON

(terse)
Already did team meeting. How about for now, just monitor...this area.

CONSTANCE

Yes. "The room where it happens."
You can count on me.

Ron nods and exits. Constance turns to Henry. Off his hair.

CONSTANCE (CONT'D)

I like your wig.

HENRY

Oh, just gel and stuff. Evie and I both missed prom back in the day, so she suggested we do a 90's flashback prom thing, hence...

ROMAN

Must be getting serious if you're at the "humiliate yourself" stage.

HENRY

I guess, maybe.

ROMAN

I'm glad Milda betrayed me. Love stuff looks hella embarrassing.

3 INT. BALLROOM -- NIGHT

3

MUSIC blasts -- the prom is underway. People dance. Guests in prom dress enter past "Proms Away" branding. THE DJ intones--

DJ

Once Upon a Time, there was a magical prom! Brought to you by *Proms Away*, in theaters everywhere--

4 INT. BAR -- NIGHT

4

POV ON PHOTO BOOTH. ESCAPADE, 23, prom dress, hugs BOBBY DANDO, handsome, 23, and pulls him before the camera.

AT THE BAR, LYDIA watches Escapade and Bobby swooningly--

LYDIA

Escapade, oh, she looks so great. Do you think she's having fun?

Henry is leaving a message on his phone--

HENRY

--Hey, Evie, got your message about dinner running late, just, I'm here, see you soon. Bye.

Henry turns to the photo booth to watch. Escapade and Bobby pose for photos. MARCOS, 20's, approaches. Greetings, etc--

HENRY (CONT'D)

So that's the kid who asked her to
prom in high school?

LYDIA

Bobby Dando. Isn't he so handsome?
Lead in every musical, captain of
the diving team, charming! This's
gonna be the most romantic night--!

Escapade poses, as Bobby and Marcos, clearly a couple, kiss.

LYDIA (CONT'D)

Oh, for god's sake, not again. I've
been in Hollywood how long and I
don't have even *rudimentary* gaynar?

HENRY

Gaynar?

LYDIA

Like, gay sonar? To know who's gay?

Escapade, upbeat and energized, approaches the bar. Considers
the Prom-theme signs. "Punch," "Who Spiked The Punch?" etc.

ESCAPADE

"Who spiked the punch," please.

(to Lydia)

Fun party, Mom. Great viral
marketing potential!

Henry gets a glass of punch. Pours in vodka.

LYDIA

Like the prom you never had. Might
even be...magical?

ESCAPADE

Maybe!

She gives Lydia a mischievous smile and heads off, as Kyle
and Sackson drift by, circulating.

HENRY

She seems into it, it's working.

LYDIA

Maybe. That's the thing with a kid
actor, you never know what's real.

(worried)

Is she having fun? Like, real fun?

(to Sackson)

You do computer dances like the
Goobot or the Schmaz or whatever,
she loves that. Go make her dance.

SACKSON

Like, go over there, and--

LYDIA

Make her dance. Or whatever. I just want her never not having fun.

Sackson heads off. Kyle, coolly assuming he's part of it.

KYLE

So, you want me on this--?

LYDIA

Actually, Kyle, it's her prom, she should be having a cool fun time with kids her own age.

KYLE

Sure. I mean, she always thought I was cool and fun, but I get it.

Kyle exits as Ron slides up to the bar. Anxious nodding. SLOAN MEITZ approaches, scanning critically.

RON

She's here. Sloan is here.

(nervous, sotto)

Introduce me? Just casual, "This's Ron, great guy, a total pro--"

LYDIA

Sloan, hi! Always great to see you. Thanks for coming.

SLOAN

It is my job. Interesting party. Brand messaging plus "realness."

LYDIA

Yes. Escapade missed her prom, so--

SLOAN

Wish I missed mine.

LYDIA

It wasn't romantic?

SLOAN

Did you see the movie *Carrie*?

LYDIA

No. Is it romantic--?

(Ron clears his throat)

Oh, speaking of, did you meet--?

RON

Ron Donald, Party Down Catering.
Can my bartender Henry make you a
drink to start the evening?

SLOAN

Gin martini, dirty, one olive.

Henry "professionally" gets to work on the drink.

SLOAN (CONT'D)

Ron Donald? I thought I knew every
caterer in the county.

RON

Lemme give you my card--

SLOAN

Any relation to a *Ronald* Donald
cited by the Event Guild for an off-
book quinceanera during lockdown?

RON

...um, no...who--?

HENRY

Gin martini, dirty, one olive.

Henry slides her the drink. She eyes it. Takes a full sip.
Holds. Dribbles it back into the glass, sets it on the bar.

SLOAN

I don't drink. On the job. Very
solid, Henry. And nice haircut.

Sloan heads off. Lydia reacts.

LYDIA

Wow. She was practically throwing
herself at you, Henry.

Henry reacts, confused. Lydia sees Escapade across the room,
as she and Sackson hit the dance floor.

LYDIA (CONT'D)

At least she's having fun. I think.

Exit Lydia. Henry turns to Ron, who wipes his brow.

RON

Sloan Meitz likes you! Use it.
Flirt. Make her feel special. Make
her *beg* for the card--

HENRY

It's *illegal* to ask me to do that.

RON

For the team. I'd do it for you.

HENRY

In what circumstances? And are you okay? You're kinda sweating.

RON

Big night, lotta pressure. But you know what they say about pressure.

HENRY

It...smushes you?

RON

Pressure makes diamonds. By the end of tonight, this guy's a diamond.

Off Ron, confident and determined...

5

INT. BALLROOM -- BUFFET -- NIGHT

5

Roman ignores restocking the buffet as he writes in a notebook. STEPH, 20's, cute, glasses, intense, makes a plate.

STEPH

Chicken finger inventory?

ROMAN

Notes for a thing I'm working on. I'm a writer, actually.

STEPH

What kinda stuff?

ROMAN

Sci fi.

STEPH

I love sci fi.

ROMAN

Hard sci fi.

STEPH

Like, how hard?

ROMAN

It makes *Dune* look like *Star Wars*.

STEPH
(dismissive)
Dune basically is Star Wars.

ROMAN
Yeah. But...this's way harder.
(awkwardly smitten)
I'm Roman.

6 INT. BALLROOM -- DANCE FLOOR -- NIGHT

6

Sackson leans against a table, scanning his phone, as Kyle wanders by, glancing from Sackson to Escapade, who is seated nearby, intently texting. Kyle smirks at Sackson.

KYLE
Looks like she's having a blast.

SACKSON
She was, but then she got a text she said she had to deal with.

KYLE
Uh huh. Let me know if you need any help or anything.

SACKSON
With what?

KYLE
With Escapade. When she was a kid she always thought I was cool--

SACKSON
Like a cool...dad, or--?

KYLE
No! Dude, come on, I...I was Bohdi in *O.C. The Return*.

A shrug, then Sackson drifts away. Kyle frowns.

7 INT. BALLROOM -- BUFFET -- NIGHT

7

Roman is still chatting with Steph. Now an intense conversation as Roman describes his Sci fi idea.

ROMAN
--but after the Novice Guardian finds the time loop, he learns the secret of the council founding--

STEPH

Like, they stole the energy well
from the worm-kind--?

ROMAN

--then trapped them in the past.

STEPH

That should totally be, like, a
quality streaming series.

ROMAN

Totally--!

Ron is passing by, looking as "in charge" as possible. Seeing Sloan nearby, he shoots Roman a glare.

RON (O.S.)

Roman! RDD! ABC!

(Roman shrugs, what?)

Always be circulating!

STEPH

Bummer. Would you be interested in
maybe, like, talking...more, later?

ROMAN

Oh. I mean, okay, I guess--?

Steph smiles as she goes. Roman smiles back stupidly.

8

INT. KITCHEN -- NIGHT

8

Constance sits at a counter, fiddling with her iPad. Lucy works, as Roman preps, grappling with his feelings--

LUCY

I don't understand. You're the one
who said "fuck romance and the
entire prom-industrial complex--"

ROMAN

Yeah, I don't do "romance." But
it's weird, I think I felt what
might've been a romantic feeling.

LUCY

Usually that's just lust.

ROMAN

No, she's alright, but my lust
criteria are very high. This was
different. We really *talked*.

(MORE)

ROMAN (CONT'D)

Like a real connection, eyes
locked. She had a sick burn on
Dune, she was into my idea, and I
just felt, like...something.

CONSTANCE

Could be love at first sight.

LUCY

But it's usually lust.

ROMAN

I'm just don't know what to do.

CONSTANCE

Roman, if there's one thing I took
away from all my relationships --
marriages, affairs, flings, one
night stands, blindfold parties,
coin flip fucks -- it's this.
Follow your heart.

(then, off iPad)

So, who wants to see my one woman
show, *Me, Myself, and Susan Anton*?

ROMAN

What is it about?

CONSTANCE

It's about the time Susan Anton
came into the restaurant where I
worked. My theater cancelled, so my
genius tech guru Muki recorded one
Zoom performance for posterity. I
think it's the best work I've done.

Roman and Lucy exchange a look, as Constance hits "Play."

ON THE IPAD SCREEN, we see: A BLINK'S WORTH of a "THE END"
title. Then just VIDEO FUZZ. A beat...

CONSTANCE (CONT'D)

Ah...shit.

9 OMITTED

9

10 INT. HALLWAY -- NIGHT

10

Escapade and two friends, having fun, head into the ballroom.
Lydia, exiting, smiles and waves at Escapade as they cross.

Nervously upbeat, Lydia walks down the hall. Glancing back, she spots something. Freezes. Scoots behind a potted plant.

TED FINE, 50-ish, nice suit, has entered and heads toward the party. Pausing to field a call. Lydia reacts. Shit. Sackson, tray under arm, exits the ballroom. Spots Lydia.

SACKSON

Oh. Hi, Lydia. What're you--?

LYDIA

It's Ted Fine! Don't look!

SACKSON

(looking back)

Who?

LYDIA

Arguably the top manager in town!
He's trying to steal Escapade.

SACKSON

So why'd you invite him?

LYDIA

I didn't! He found out and now he's
boldly swooping in. Classic Ted.

Ted finishes his phone call, and starts toward the ballroom entrance. He pauses when he spots Lydia and Sackson.

TED

Lydia? Hello.

Lydia, spotted, awkwardly freezes. Then steels herself as Ted moves her way. Their pleasantries are arch.

LYDIA

Ted. A nice surprise. I was worried
I forgot to send your invite.

TED

It appears you might have.

LYDIA

I'm so sorry. But here you are.

TED

Yes, Escapade invited me.

LYDIA

(beat...oh shit...)

Oh. Well, have a magic prom night.

Lydia heads off, Sackson trails. Ted enters the ballroom.

LYDIA (CONT'D)

Oh god, she *invited* him! It's the nightmare scenario. She's gonna fire me and sign with Ted Fine. I need you to get rid of him.

SACKSON

Like, murder--?

LYDIA

No, just get him out of here somehow! I can't compete with arguably the savviest manager in town before Escapade's even had the magical prom she never had!

Lydia and Sackson head off in different directions.

11 OMITTED 11

12 INT. BUFFET -- NIGHT 12

Roman, stocking the buffet, sees Steph across the room. He watches. Gauging his feelings. She turns his way. Smiles. Waves. Roman smiles. Waves-- but Steph is looking at an approaching MAN. They kiss. Roman stares. Crushed. WTF?

13 INT. BAR -- NIGHT 13

Henry is going through the business of making a martini, while doing his best to "flirt" with Sloan.

SLOAN

--*The Weatherer* DVD release event was solid. Not good, but solid.

HENRY

You enjoying the prom, though?

SLOAN

As brand marketing it's fine. Prom as a concept is not for me.

HENRY

Sorry you had a bad time at yours.

SLOAN

Who said I had a rough time?

HENRY

Earlier, you said it was like the movie, *Carrie*?

SLOAN

Oh, yes. We poured pig blood on an annoying girl. A *week's* detention. School district gave her a hundred grand. Pig owner got twenty. Go to a livestock auction, you can get a perfectly decent feeder pig for ten, twenty dollars--

HENRY

Huh. Gin martini with olive, dirty.

As he sets the drink on the bar, Henry's PHONE buzzes. He glances at the ID. Sloan sees him look.

SLOAN

That your phone?

HENRY

(knowing better)

Yes, but at Party Down, there's no personal business on company time.

SLOAN

(impressed, then--)

My prom date had your exact hair. Troy Blemmons. Only boy in town with a moped. Died during the alfalfa festival. He baled himself--

Sloan takes a wistful sip of her drink. Holds, spits it back in the glass. Looks at Henry with approval.

SLOAN (CONT'D)

Consistent.

She exits. Henry grabs his phone, checks his voicemail. Hangs up, frustrated, as Roman approaches. He pours a shot...

HENRY

Longest dinner in state history...

ROMAN

Getting stood up?

HENRY

Again.

ROMAN

After debasing yourself with that hair? What do you mean, again?

HENRY

Night of my high school prom, my date's ex did the *Say Anything* move where you stand under her window and blast a song on a boombox.

ROMAN

What? That worked?
(Henry nods/shrugs)
I tried it once but she didn't even come to the window. Just her dad, who threw a cup of urine on me.

HENRY

(pouring two shots)
As they say, fool me once shame on you. Fool me twice, fuck prom.

ROMAN

Fuck prom.

A14 INT. HALLWAY -- NIGHT

A14

Ron exits the ballroom, and runs into Lydia heading in.

RON

Going great in there. Is Sloan impressed?

LYDIA

I don't know, I've never seen her have an emotion. Is Escapade happy?

RON

Having the time of her life.

LYDIA

And you, Ron? You look red and wet.

RON

I'm great!

He heads off, as Lydia turns toward the ballroom just as TED FINE exits, shirt splashed with red wine. Sackson trails...

SACKSON

--I'm sorry, that guy bumped me, I lost tray control--

TED

It's fine, I understand accidents
sometimes happen--

(seeing Lydia)

Oh, Lydia. I was involved in a
little wine accident and didn't
bring a back up shirt, so I'll be
saying goodnight. Perhaps at
another time...

LYDIA

Uh huh, good to see you, Ted.

(as Ted exits)

Wow! Wow. I can't believe I just
took a game off Ted Fine, arguably
the savviest manager in town!

(checking, to Sackson)

He doesn't know you did it on
purpose, right? You pretended?

SACKSON

Yes.

14

INT. KITCHEN -- NIGHT

14

Constance is at her iPad. On her phone. Roman preps.

CONSTANCE

--I'm looking at it now. Just fuzz.
Muki, we all make mistakes, let's
just fix it. No? So it's gone--?

Ron enters, sweating, rashy. Roman and Constance react.

RON

Okay, we are looking *good*--!

ROMAN

And you look like a lobster being
boiled *while* having a heart attack.

CONSTANCE

Ron, you do look weird. You okay?

RON

Fine. Little pressure, but you
know, pressure makes diamonds.

ROMAN

Very rarely. Usually it just
crushes stuff.

Ron deflates, suddenly slumping on a stool.

RON

Oh, man. I try to power through,
but my stomach's in knots, I have a
rash, I'm sweating--

Constance moves in behind him. Massaging his shoulders.

CONSTANCE

Just relax. Stress is a story your mind tells your body, so just have your mind tell your mind to tell your body a relaxing story--

RON

This's like in high school, on the football team, I wanted to be wide receiver so bad. I got my lucky break when they suspended the starting offense for rolling a nerd down a hill in a trashcan, but on game day, I got so nervous, sweating, I got hives--

CONSTANCE

Then played the game of your life?

RON

First play I threw up in my helmet and ran into a cheerleader pyramid.

CONSTANCE

I don't know football, is that bad?

Lucy enters, finishing a phonecall. Ron looks up--

RON

Lucy, did you get the urchin? I really want Sloan to try--

LUCY

Actually, Ron, I just found out my urchin guy sold me hot urchin. Which might be why you feel bad.

ROMAN

Stolen urchin?

LUCY

Stolen and left in a hot car. Did it smell or taste off--?

RON

I have no smell or taste! You're saying I got food poisoning from bad sea urchin?

LUCY

Sorry, Ron. I asked my urchin guy to please not do it again--

Ron jumps up happily.

RON

Oh, thank *god!* *Food poisoning!* I
thought I couldn't take the
pressure! Oh, man, what a relief!

(to Lucy)

Loan me some powder, I'll touch up,
and power through.

As Lucy digs for the make-up, Constance packs up her iPad.

CONSTANCE

Great. So, my show is lost forever
it seems, so I'm off--

RON

Wait...did you just come in to show
everyone your video?

CONSTANCE

No...I'm here to help my partner--?

Lucy holds out a make-up kit.

RON

Great. So maybe do a quick app
inventory while I do this?

(taking make-up)

Thanks, I'll give it right back.

LUCY

You can keep it.

Ron exits.

15

INT. BALLROOM -- NIGHT

15

MUSIC. Party pumping. Sackson, circulating, sees Kyle and
Escapade dancing. He angles over. To Escapade.

SACKSON

Sorry, I was helping your mom--

ESCAPADE

No problem. Kyle's a great dancer!

SACKSON

(glaring at Kyle)

Yeah, I heard he's a cool, fun guy.

KYLE

(glaring back)

And not in a "dad" way at all--

SACKSON

Hm. Wonder if he knows the
schmeeze?

Sackson Schmeezes his way into their dance, and it's game on.

16 INT. BALLROOM -- BUFFET-- NIGHT

16

Steph steps to the buffet. Sees Roman.

STEPH

Hey, there you are. I was hoping we'd get a chance to continue our conversation. I just had a thought about the end, when the worm-kind--

ROMAN

Sure you want to talk now? Don't have anyone to make out with?

STEPH

Wait, what--?

ROMAN

Just, I thought there was a thing, like, we were flirting, but--

STEPH

What're you talking about?

ROMAN

Like, how your were over there making out with some dude--?

STEPH

My boyfriend. But, what do you mean, "flirting?"

ROMAN

Like, us?
(off her look)
That was flirting, right?

17 INT. BALLROOM -- NIGHT

17

Sackson, Kyle, and Escapade, still dancing. Kyle and Sackson now almost totally focused on each other. Trying to one up each other with their moves.

Finally, Kyle does a HEROIC MOVE -- splits or something. Oof. Kyle winces as something snaps. Trying to hide his wince. But ESCAPADE is reacting to something on her phone. Concerned.

ESCAPADE

Shit. Sorry, gotta deal with this.

She turns to go as Kyle and Sackson pause. Eye each other.

KYLE

Sure. Long as you were having fun.

ESCAPADE

Yeah! Totally! So fun!

SACKSON

Like...equally, or, was one of us, like, more cool--

KYLE

Like, dance style, or in general--?

ESCAPADE

What, like, who's cooler? Which one of you is a cooler dude?

KYLE

I mean, when you say it like that it sounds goofy.

SACKSON

But, if you had to pick? You were clearly having fun, so--

ESCAPADE

(dropping facade...)

Look. I'm here 'cause of my mom, okay? She did this whole party for me, I know it means a lot to her, so I want her to think I'm having the greatest time.

KYLE

Sure, but in terms of fun with us--

ESCAPADE

Yes, Kyle, I was "having fun" with you, as part of the performance. I've been *acting* all night!
(shaking herself out)
God, my sense memory is *exhausted* from psychological gesturing. I gotta make this call.

She hurries off, scanning her phone, then dialing. As the guys watch her go. Kyle smirks.

KYLE

Well, there it is. "Yes, Kyle, I was having fun with you."

Kyle stands his ground. Sackson glares at him...

SACKSON

"You," plural, bitch! It's a tie!
This isn't over!

Sackson stalks off. Kyle's smug look melts into a wince...

18

INT. BATHROOM -- NIGHT

18

The door swings open. Kyle limps in, a bag of ice in hand. He leans against a sink, icing his butt. Eyes his reflection.

RON (O.S.)

It's no joke, getting older.

Kyle looks up to see Ron exiting a stall. He's half-powdered. He goes to another sink to finish the job.

RON (CONT'D)

Back in the day little belly ache
wouldn't've slowed me down but now--
(thoughtful)
Time, man.

KYLE

Yeah. Like, what even is it?

RON

I don't even know.

Henry, tipsy, walks in, finishing a phone message.

HENRY (INTO PHONE)

--it's a large decorated room, they
play music, whatever, prom doesn't
live up to the hype. Sorry for the
long message, see you later.
(hangs up)
You guys doing okay?

Kyle and Ron nod at Henry.

RON

Great, Henry. It wasn't the stress!
Just food poisoning, I'm fine.

KYLE

Just had to stretch. I'm good.

As Kyle heads out.

HENRY

Okay, great.

RON

It is great. Been a long road, but
I powered through and here I am.

Ron finishes his powder touch-up. Straightens tie, smooths hair. He does not look normal. He heads for the door--

RON (CONT'D)

On the brink of success. When I
exchange business cards with Sloan
it's gonna feel so good.

Ron misses the door handle and collapses. Off Henry...shit...

19

INT. KITCHEN -- NIGHT

19

Lucy works while Constance fiddles on her iPad. Roman enters, smiling to himself.

ROMAN

Okay, so good news.

CONSTANCE

You got kissed at the prom?

ROMAN

No. It's not like that at all.
She's a development exec. Sci fi's
hot now, and she was into my idea.

LUCY

So the romantic feelings you had--?

ROMAN

I never had anyone be into my stuff
before. Turns out it's like a great
feeling.

CONSTANCE

But, you said you had this intense
connection, with the eyes--

ROMAN

She was on coke. But the big news--
(brandish biz card)

(MORE)

ROMAN (CONT'D)

She bought my idea! "Wells of Time," coming soon, to Smydgyn!

LUCY

(frowning at card)
Smydgyn? What's Smydgyn?

ROMAN

Future of streaming. Quality long form content optimized for today's media. Phones, tablets, car dashes, fridge screens, gas pumps--
(reacting, off--)
Oh, shit--

Henry helps Ron into the kitchen. Ron's a mess.

HENRY

Okay, Ron, we'll just sit...

LUCY

Don't get his slime on anything.

RON

Just a little rest, then we start setting up for prom court ceremony. Where's my clipboard?
(it's right there)
Good. Okay, so Constance did the inventory and--

CONSTANCE

I did not get to it yet.

RON

Constance, what happened to "you can count on me?"

CONSTANCE

What happened to "I'll be fine?"

Henry helps Ron to a stool. He burps, farts, slides off.

HENRY

Ron, Jesus...

RON

Constance, I might not power through. We gotta impress Sloan and exchange business cards. We gotta finish the party. It's all in here, just tell them what to do.

Ron pushes the clipboard into her hands. She quails..

CONSTANCE

Ron, I can't. Order people around?
That tension and pressure, I think
I'm actually allergic to it. I
experience sweating, hives--

RON

(re: himself)
You mean like this?

CONSTANCE

Well, I mean, not *that* bad.

RON

We're supposed to be partners!
(then)
Oh, jeez, I need a pot. A big pot--

Henry grabs a large pot.

LUCY

Not that pot...

Henry grabs another pot. Slides it down the counter. Ron
leans over it like a sick child poised to barf. A beat...

RON

Ooops, no...wrong end...

HENRY

(realizing)
Clear out! Everyone clear out!

They flee as Ron clangs the pot down, fumbling with his belt.
They huddle in the doorway, looking away. Awful noises occur.

EVIE (O.S.)

Henry?

He turns to see EVIE approaching behind him. Apologetic.

EVIE (CONT'D)

I'm sorry I'm late-- Oh, your hair!
(off Ron noise)
What's that--!?

HENRY

Evie, stop there, don't look...

Evie pauses. Craning past Henry to see what's up.

EVIE'S POV INTO KITCHEN -- a glimpse of RON, half-hidden
behind kitchen stuff, hunched over a pot, pale, red, sweaty.

EVIE
Jesus *Christ...*

OFF CONSTANCE, holding the clipboard...

DJ (PRE-LAP)

It's almost time for our prom court
ceremony to crown our prom king and
queen, brought to you by Proms
Away, in theaters everywhere...

20 OMITTED 20

21 INT. BALLROOM -- NIGHT 21

Constance stands with the clipboard, doing her best to coordinate Kyle, Sackson, and Roman as they bring up special chairs, a decorative arch, "Once Upon a Time" themed bits.

Constance, conscious of the eyes of Sloan on her every move, directs Kyle and Sackson as they line up the thrones...

CONSTANCE

Side by side. Arms length apart.
Arms. Like, human arms.

Sloan sidles up, watching critically. Glances at Constance.

CONSTANCE (CONT'D)

(fighting anxiety)
Hello. Constance Carmell. Ron's
partner.

SLOAN

Sloan. Sloan Meitz.

She moves along. Off Constance as sweat trickles....

22 INT. HALLWAY -- NIGHT 22

Lydia hustles down the hall, spotting Escapade, who leans there scanning her phone.

LYDIA

There you are, honey. Having fun--?

ESCAPADE

Mom, did you see Ted Fine earlier?
I invited him but he left suddenly--

LYDIA

(beat...snapping...)
Okay, so you admit it?

ESCAPADE

Admit what?

LYDIA

That you invited Ted Fine to the party I planned to give you the magical prom you never had, to talk behind my back about firing me, after everything I did, sacrificing my whole entire life to make your dream a reality and--

ESCAPADE

--you think I invited Ted so I could fire you and sign with him?

LYDIA

Classic Ted, three dimensional chess, the guy's a total pro--
(off Escapade's look)
Was it not for that?

ESCAPADE

Mom, I invited Ted tonight for you.
(Lydia is confused)
It's a set-up.

LYDIA

A set up? For me?

DJ (O.S.)

Okay, it's just about time to crown the king and queen of the prom!

ESCAPADE

I worry, mom. You work too much.
(a beat, then)
Gotta go do some marketing.

As Lydia realizes how wrong she was...PRE-LAP APPLAUSE...

DJ (O.S.)

Just beautiful. Your Prom King and Queen, everyone. Brought to you by Proms Away, in theaters everywhere--

23

INT. BALLROOM -- NIGHT

23

ON ESCAPADE AND BOBBY, in crowns, standing there waving...

Lucy helps Roman lay out champagne glasses on a table while Constance nervously makes a champagne glass tower.

CONSTANCE

They need to be straight. I said
straight! You wanna keep this job?
Like a number one, or a small "L!"

On Constance...sweating...Sloan watching...as Constance
checks the clipboard...

...turns to the DJ. Points. A ROMANTIC SLOW SONG STARTS, as Escapade and Bobby move out to dance.

Constance, a nervous wreck, observes, while anxiously monitoring the team, as a wistful Lydia steps up to watch.

LYDIA

Isn't it all so beautiful?

CONSTANCE

If you like that sort of thing.

LYDIA

I do. My prom was magical. I danced, I fell in love...

CONSTANCE

Let me guess, captain of the football team?

LYDIA

Something like that. What about yours. Was it magical?

CONSTANCE

A nightmare, actually.
(harsh whisper offscreen)
Kyle! Tray straight, for fuck sake!

LYDIA

Oh no. Did no one ask you?

CONSTANCE

Steve Deaver. A popular boy from the rich side of town. Handsome--

LYDIA

That sounds magical.

CONSTANCE

--but Andy Gorick, not quite as handsome, but a sensitive nice type with a quirky sense of humor, was also there, and I ended up having to choose.

LYDIA

Choosing between two boys, one popular and one nice? I love that!

CONSTANCE

It was *so fucking* tense. How can anyone make that choice? It's the ultimate conundrum.

(MORE)

CONSTANCE (CONT'D)
(harsh whisper offscreen)
Sackson! Napkin down! Napkin down!

*
*

LYDIA
What did you decide?

*
*

CONSTANCE
I couldn't. I threw up in a bush
and ran home crying, which was six
miles. Worst night of my life.

*
*
*
*

LYDIA
Well. At least this one's been
magical, right?

*
*
*

CONSTANCE
Long as I get that fucking card.

*
*

24 INT. BALLROOM -- NIGHT

24

Couples slow dance. Henry and Evie among them.

EVIE
Well, the slow dance's the one that
counts. Is how I think proms work.
(Henry shrugs)
Sorry dinner went so late and you
and your hair got stuck here alone.
Seeing it now, I get it must have
been a difficult time for you.

HENRY
I do look like a fucking idiot.

EVIE
Just, dinner got very business-y--

HENRY
Well, hope it was good business.

EVIE
Yes, well, I have good news and bad
news. The bad news. That part I
wanted to get you? Colonel Stryker?

HENRY
Right, a Mark Strong Type.

EVIE
They went with Mark Strong. Sorry.

HENRY

Story of my entire life, totally
used to it. What's the good news?

EVIE

I got promoted.

HENRY

Oh. Congrats. Good for you.

EVIE

And for you! I was talking about how the hero stuff felt like a dead end and I maybe wanted a change--

HENRY

Like, you quit--?

EVIE

I was running it up the flagpole and he said, what about Star Saga? Like, oversee the whole franchise. Starts in Tunisia in three months.

HENRY

So, good for me, I didn't get the job, girlfriend moves to Tunisia--?

EVIE

Good for you 'cause you can be Colonel Barlorian.

HENRY

Colonel Barlorian?

EVIE

He's a space guy. Pops up all over the franchise. They want a Mark Strong type and I have final say.

HENRY

Isn't that kinda like, nepotism?

EVIE

Yes. A real stroke of luck for you. I mean, if you still want it.

A beat, as Henry, hazy, drunk, looks at Evie. Realizes she's serious. As he starts to smile, he leans in to kiss her. He looks up to see SLOAN nearby, glaring. Henry reacts.

HENRY

Oh, shit...

WITH SLOAN, as she spots Constance passing.

SLOAN

Ms. Carmell, I wasn't aware you condone your staff leaving their stations to fraternize with...is that *person* even a valid guest--?

Constance reacts. WTF? She races over...

CONSTANCE

Henry, why aren't you at your station!? Is this job a joke to you? This's no joke, Henry, this's catering. Also no joke? You're *fired*. Fired, Henry. If you ever tend bar again, it'll be to serve boiled shit to Satan in Hell! Go!

HENRY

(off Sloan, getting it)
Okay. I'm sorry to've let down such a quality catering compan--

CONSTANCE

(eyeing Evie)
You too, Poindexter! Fuck off!

Constance rushes off. Henry and Evie turn to go--

EVIE

Did you get a new boss?

HENRY

She doesn't even work here.

A25

INT. BALLROOM -- PHOTO STATION -- NIGHT

A25

Escapade and Lydia pose together as flashes flash...

LYDIA

My little prom queen. I'm so proud of you, honey.

ESCAPADE

It's was a good party, mom. I did have fun. I'm not acting.

LYDIA

I'm just glad you're not all screwed up, sweetie.

ESCAPADE

That child actor thing is a myth.

LYDIA

I figured it was. What I'm worried about now is the mom manager thing.

ESCAPADE

Wait, that's a thing?

LYDIA

Yeah. You end up getting your work
and your family life all scrambled
up, and it's just a whole mess.

(beat)

So I'm firing you as a client,
honey. From now on, I'm just mom.

ESCAPADE

Wait, mom, what--?

FLASH -- the final picture snaps.

25 INT. BATHROOM -- NIGHT

25

The bathroom door swings violently open, as Constance rushes
in, bee-lining to the trashcan. She HEAVES into it...

RON (O.S.)

Actually, this's the men's room.

Constance, trying to catch her breath and shake off her
stress, turns to see Ron, pale and exhausted, slumped in a
stall, pants at his ankles.

CONSTANCE

I see. I didn't check. It's done. I
gave her our card, and look--

She holds up SLOAN'S BUSINESS CARD. Ron reacts. Overjoyed.

RON

You exchanged cards!?

CONSTANCE

We exchanged cards.

RON

Oh, man, yes--!

RON (CONT'D)

I knew I could do it!

CONSTANCE

I knew I could do it!

*

END TITLES

26 INT. HALLWAY/LANDING -- NIGHT

26

Henry is helping load out, on the phone. Dance music comes
from the landing ahead, where people are gathered around.

HENRY

--well, at least we got the slow
dance, that's the one that matters.
Am I thinking about it? Were you
serious? Then yeah, I am thinking
about it. Seriously...

He pauses as he sees Kyle and Sackson on the landing beside a speaker playing dance music. Roman is recording on his phone. Lucy stands watching. Noticing Henry's puzzled look.

LUCY

It's some kind of dance off to determine who's coolest.

HENRY

Huh.

(continues, back to call)

Sorry, they're having a dance off. Anyway, I could come over, and we could...discuss further...?

As Henry continues out...

ROMAN

Kyle, you're up.

Kyle's tired. But he digs deep to unleash his most furious burst of dance...which ends with him dancing up the stairs then sliding neatly down the banister on his butt. Ta da! But we can see that Kyle's energy is spent.

Sackson, nodding, goes to hand Roman his phone.

SACKSON

Make sure you get this.

(as Roman records)

Sacks here, winning a dance-off.

He then goes into action, deliberately copying Kyle's general idea, finally dancing up the stairs...

...and then sliding down the bannister on his feet, like a skateboarder sliding down a railing. It's awesome...until he loses control and wipes out catastrophically, falling onto the up escalator. As he's limply carried up the escalator...

KYLE

Yes!

ROMAN

(still filming)

This is amazing.

END OF SHOW