

In the Weeds

by
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FADE IN:

1 INT. OFFICE - DAY

1

We see a row of cubes in an office. The walls of the cubes are shoulder high. As we travel down the row we look inside one cube then another. The first cube we pass contains a collage of children's drawings, and art projects. On the desk, next to a computer, is a picture of a balding man, a plump wife and two children: four and eight years old.

The next cube has a collage of good looking Boston sports team players, and next to the computer is a framed wedding picture of a bride and groom in their early 20s.

The third cube is piled with papers and post-it notes. Perry, a man in his early 30s, dressed in cliched business casual, sits in the chair. He's reading Gourmet Magazine, but nothing else in his cube is anything of personal value.

His phone rings and he answers.

PERRY

Be there in a moment.

Perry drops the magazine in an otherwise empty desk drawer and exits.

CUT TO:

2 INT. OFFICE - MR. ALLEN'S OFFICE - CONTINUED

2

Perry enters the office where Mr. Allen, a well groomed man in his early 40s, wearing stylish business clothing, is sitting behind a substantial desk. Around his office are pictures of him with Bobby Orr, him with Greg Norman, and him with Bill Gates. Perry sits down at the desk on a chair across from Mr. Allen, who is hanging up his phone.

Mr. Allen gives a long look at Perry, sighs, then reaches to a stack of papers on his desk. Mr. Allen removes the top sheet and places it in front of him.

MR. ALLEN

You know what this is.

PERRY

Performance report?

MR. ALLEN

Yup.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Mr. Allen looks at Perry and sees Perry is not the least bit concerned.

MR. ALLEN (CONT'D)

The problem here, Perry, is you've constantly done the bare minimum to get by. You're courteous. You're intelligent. Hell, when you're inspired you do incredible work.

Mr. Allen pauses, looks down at the report, then back at Perry.

MR. ALLEN (CONT'D)

Can I ask you a personal question?

PERRY

Why not.

MR. ALLEN

What is it with Gourmet Magazine?

PERRY

My parents keep hoping it's still in my blood.

Mr. Allen looks confused.

PERRY (CONT'D)

Restaurants.

Mr. Allen still does not understand.

PERRY (CONT'D)

I grew up in the restaurant business. My family has owned and run great restaurants for three generations. Not good. Not notable. Great. When I got out of the business...

MR. ALLEN

They were disappointed.

PERRY

I guess. Not really. They don't get disappointed. They know I need to follow my own path, but when I was at Ruloph's, before I came here, there was just something about it that didn't fit.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MR. ALLEN
Speaking of not fitting.

CUT TO:

3 EXT. NEWBURY STREET CAFE - DAY 3

Perry snaps out of his day dream. He's sitting at an outside cafe enjoying a beautiful mid-summer afternoon. People walk by as he lifts an almost empty coffee cup to his lips. He puts the cup down and lifts a newspaper from the table; it's the help wanted section. We focus on the newspaper where we see the professional services section. Account Executive. Account Assistant. Explore Texas! Account Executive -- self starters only!

We see Perry shrug and let out a huge sigh. He looks at a bill left on the table; it reads \$1.75. He digs in his pocket and pulls out a hand full of cash -- a few singles and some change. He leaves four dollars, stands, folds the paper into a stick he can carry, and leaves.

CUT TO:

4 EXT. BOSTON STREETS - CONTINUED 4

Perry walks down the sidewalk. He passes another outdoor cafe. A waiter is at one of the tables. Perry sees the waiter gently tip his head and slightly move his right hand away from his hip as he speaks to the people at the table. At the next moment another waiter, maybe he's a busboy, arrives with a pitcher of water. The second waiter turns the pitcher around and taps the first waiter's hand with handle. The first waiter grasps the pitcher and starts refilling the water glasses of the people at his table while the second waiter goes back to whatever he was doing.

Perry passes another restaurant with a large plate glass window. He pauses and looks inside. The place is empty except for the staff who is preparing for the next meal, cleaning tables and silverware, folding napkins, and reading sheets of paper. They are all smiling. One of them bursts out laughing and the others join in.

CUT TO:

5 EXT. BOSTON PUBLIC GARDENS - LATER 5

Perry finds an empty bench. He stops and sits.

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CONTINUED:

He surreptitiously watches people walking by him. He first sees how they're dressed. Some sloppy. Some casual. Some formal business wear. Then one person catches his eye - a woman in a business suit. At a distance she looks like a woman he and his former colleagues would ogle during lunch. As she gets closer he see a faint run in one of her stockings. He then sees a darker oval at the thigh of her skirt - a coffee stain. As his eyes move up farther he sees her blouse is not about to come untucked, but is not as neat as it must have been ten hours before.

Her hand goes to her face to push aside a strand of hair. She's beautiful. Or is she? After her hand moves aside the hair, Perry can not stop staring at the scowl on her face. She's not just upset from the day, she's miserable, and whether she wants to or not, she's letting the whole world see it. A bead of sweat releases from her brow and traces down her temple as she tears past Perry at his bench.

Perry turns to see her pass and catches his own reflection in the side of an ice cream cart that has just arrived next to the bench. He stops and stares, for what feels like the first time in years, at the reflection of his face. Not just the pimple on his nose that never seems to go away, but how he looks to others. The Perry that others see. He not only looks sad, he almost looks pathetic.

CUT TO:

6

INT. NEIGHBORHOOD RESTAURANT - NIGHT

6

Perry enters a place he's been before. He's not lived in the neighborhood long enough to be considered a regular, but as soon as he enters he knows enough to look to his right towards the bartender, a tall bald man in his late fifties.

BARTENDER 1

Take a seat anywhere, brutha.

Perry looks around the dining room and sees a number of empty tables; it's a slow Tuesday night. He sees spaces at the bar then spies a table for two near the bar, one table back near the front door, and another table, where Perry chooses to sit, near the door to the kitchen. Perry sits down and almost immediately a waitress is at his table; she's an indie-rock chick -- very cute behind all of her piercings and tatoos.

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CONTINUED:

WAITRESS 2

Anything to drink?

PERRY

How about a Harpoon tonight?

WAITRESS 2

Sure. Oh. We're out of mussels tonight, and there are two specials: pasta puttanesca and a Portuguese stew. The pasta's pretty good but the stew sucks.

BARTENDER 1 (O.S.)

I heard that.

WAITRESS 2

It's true.

BARTENDER 1 (O.S.)

At least pretend for Christ's sake.

PERRY

I'll try the puttanesca. And can you change the beer to a chianti?

WAITRESS 2

I don't know. I'm pretty busy.

She smiles, takes his menu and leaves. Perry looks around. The place is comfortable. The bartender laughs with one of the customers at the bar and continues his conversation as he goes to the end of the bar farthest from the door, down to where Perry's waitress is standing. The bartender pours Perry's glass of wine and whispers something to the waitress. She flips off the bartender, he smiles and returns to his customer. The waitress returns to Perry's table with the wine. She carries it firmly by the stem, just out in front of her, so as he looks up from his seat he can see both the wine and the waitress's lips. Perry can't help but notice how similar the color of the wine is to the color of the waitress's lips.

WAITRESS 2 (CONT'D)

Caught you staring.

Perry laughs.

PERRY

Sorry.

She smiles.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WAITRESS 2
No apology necessary.

She smiles again and leaves.

CUT TO:

7 INT. NEIGHBORHOOD RESTAURANT - LATER 7

Perry is eating his meal. He pauses and looks up to see his waitress at a table with two couples across the dining room. The waitress says something and the people at the table laugh. Perry can't take his eyes off of this scene; it reminds him of one of the best times of his life.

DISSOLVE TO:

8 INT. RULOPH'S - FLASHBACK - NIGHT 8

Ruloph's is a funky restaurant built in an old warehouse. There is an open kitchen. To one side of the kitchen is a long bar. The counter from the bar wraps around and connects to the counter for the kitchen. To the other side of the open kitchen is a door leading to the back of the kitchen where food is prepped, coffees are poured and the rest of the business of the restaurant is conducted. Behind the counter of the bar and open kitchen is another door that also leads to the back of the kitchen.

The dining room of the restaurant has two banks of booths that run parallel to the bar, and an array of tables that fans out from the booths.

Perry is standing next to a table where two couples are sitting. The two couples have just finished laughing from a joke. Perry is their waiter.

MAN 1
That's a true story?

PERRY
That's what makes it so funny.

WOMAN 1
Your delivery was perfect.

PERRY
Thanks. I'm here all week, you should try the veal.

Everyone at the table looks uncomfortable.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PERRY (CONT'D)

I never recommend veal at my tables. I'm not a fan of it, but what Paul has done to this dish tonight. Amazing.

The group at the table struggles with Perry's suggestion of veal and look at their menus. Man 1 shrugs.

MAN 1

I don't know why, Perry, but I trust you. I'll try the veal.

WOMAN 1

I don't see how you'd steer me wrong.

MAN 2

Make that three.

WOMAN 2

I just can't. I'm sorry.

PERRY

Don't be sorry. What do you usually order?

Man 1 rolls his eyes.

MAN 1

She's vegan or some shit like that.

WOMAN 2

Not vegan. I just don't eat red meat, or poultry.

PERRY

Maybe I can make some suggestion for everyone else besides the veal.

WOMAN 2

No, no, no. I'm not militant about it, and I don't mind if anyone else eats it, I just don't myself.

PERRY

Alright then. I bet you don't usually order vegetarian meals when you go out because the chef sends out a plate of poorly steamed veggies.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Woman 2 nods.

PERRY (CONT'D)
Do you like Indian?

WOMAN 2
Yeah.

PERRY
How about Thai?

WOMAN 2
Sure.

PERRY
OK. Let me talk to Paul. Is it OK
if I surprise you? I'll make sure
it doesn't cost any more than
tonight's chicken special.

Woman 2 does not know how to react. She's become too
accustomed to the steamed veggie plate.

WOMAN 2
Sounds fine.

Perry turns from the table.

DISSOLVE TO:

9 INT. NEIGHBORHOOD RESTAURANT - BACK FROM FLASHBACK - 9
CONTINUED

Perry watches his waitress leave the table with the two
couples. She passes the bar and sees a customer she
knows. As she passes the customer, she places a gentle
hand on the person's shoulder, says hello and passes by.
In her other hand, the waitress is holding a tray with
four empty glasses. A buss-boy appears, as if by magic,
and deftly sweeps the tray and glasses from the
waitress's hand. She reacts as if she expected the buss-
boy to do this. She gracefully turns to Perry's table.

WAITRESS 2
Everything OK?

PERRY
Perfect. Great suggestion on the
puttanesca by the way.

WAITRESS 2
Nick did a great job with it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Without asking, she slyly removes an empty plate and glass from Perry's table without ever losing eye contact with him.

WAITRESS 2 (CONT'D)

Anything else?

PERRY

A cup of coffee, black, and the check.

WAITRESS 2

Sure.

His waitress leaves, goes in the back of the restaurant, then returns carrying four plates, three in one hand and one in the other. She almost floats to the table of the two couples. Without having to ask the people at the table, she places each plate firmly, yet gently in front of each person at the table, starting first with the women and finishing with the men. The look of anticipation on their faces sends Perry back to Ruloph's.

DISSOLVE TO:

10

INT. RULOPH'S - FLASHBACK - NIGHT

10

Perry is sitting at the bar with his manager, Patrick, a tall Irish man in his late 30s, weathered a few years past his age, wearing glasses and graying at his temples. A sign bearing the restaurant's name, Ruloph's, hangs on the wall behind the bar. Patrick leans over the bar and grabs a bottle of no-name vodka. He removes his glasses, pours a few drops onto the lenses, then takes some bar-napkins and wipes his glasses clean. He places the bottle back behind the bar and puts his glasses back on.

PATRICK

Like a well oiled machine, Perry.

The couples from Perry's table are leaving the restaurant. Woman 2 leaves the group and comes over to Perry.

WOMAN 2

Wonderful. And tell Paul thank you. Thanks.

Paul, a stalky man in his early 40s appears behind the bar. He is dressed in his chef's coat. He stops at a sink behind the bar to wash his hands. Woman 2 puts a hand on Perry's shoulder in appreciation then turns to leave.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WOMAN 2 (CONT'D)

And everyone else said the veal
was to die for.

Paul looks up and smiles.

PATRICK

(to Woman 2)
Thanks for coming.

Patrick looks at Perry and Paul and smiles.

DISSOLVE TO:

11 INT. NEIGHBORHOOD RESTAURANT - BACK FROM FLASHBACK - 11
CONTINUED

Perry contentedly looks around the dining room then down at his table -- the check is already on his table yet he never noticed the waitress put it there. He looks at the check; it reads "Total 28.18" inside a sweeping circle and underneath is scribble "Thanks." Perry puts down the check and lays forty dollars on top.

CUT TO:

12 INT. PERRY'S APARTMENT - DAY 12

Perry sits at a small table that straddles the area that is his kitchen and the area that is his living room. His kitchen is piled with papers, similar to his cube at his former work. Though the room is dishevelled, everything appears to have a place. He sits with a cup of coffee and opens a newspaper to the want ads. There is a knock at the door. Perry gets up to answer.

PERRY

Who is it?

PEG

Peg, dear.

Perry opens the door to reveal a little old lady with sparkling eyes who takes great pride in her appearance. She looks at Perry with great concern, and as she looks past him into his apartment, she is even more shocked to see the disposition of his apartment.

PEG (CONT'D)

Is everything OK dear?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PERRY

Everything's fine, Mrs. McCarthy.

PEG

Now if you're calling me Mrs. McCarthy I *know* everything is not fine. I hate to bring this up Perry, I've never had to do this before. After all, it's been eight years you've been with me, dear.

PERRY

The rent.

PEG

So you have it. Wonderful. I hated bothering you...

PERRY

Peg? Can you give me another week or two?

PEG

Perry, dear, for you, of course. But. Everything's OK?

PERRY

It's fine, Peg. So two or three weeks is OK with you?

PEG

As soon as you can dear.

Peg goes to leave then stops and turns back to Perry.

PEG (CONT'D)

You will tell me if you need help, won't you?

PERRY

I will Peg.

PEG

Because since my Paul died...well let's just say you've been a dear.

The two stare at each other awkwardly, almost as if they were hugging without actually embracing each other.

PEG (CONT'D)

Remember, you tell me if you need any help.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Peg turns and leaves. Perry closes the door and returns to the table and his paper. He opens to the same pages he was viewing at the cafe -- the professional services. He pauses and puts down the paper, staring at the pages. He picks up the paper and flips the pages to the back -- the section that reads "restaurant help."

CUT TO:

13 EXT. SIDEWALK - DAY 13

Perry walks with a bounce in his step. He carries a classified section from the Boston Globe as he strolls along but takes time to sneak a peek in to the window of every restaurant he passes. His stroll ends in front of Aujourd'hui.

DISSOLVE TO:

14 INT. AUJOURD'HUI - DAY DREAM - DAY 14

Perry fantasizes that he is dressed as a waiter, is carrying four plates of food and is approaching a table. He delivers the plates, purposefully yet subtly. As he turns to leave the table one of the patrons taps his elbow. Perry inconspicuously leans towards the guest.

GUEST #1

I'm the food editor for the Boston Globe and I would love to write an article about you. You're fantastic. This is obviously your calling.

CUT TO:

15 EXT. AUJOURD'HUI - BACK FROM DAY DREAM - CONTINUED 15

Perry shakes his head quickly.

PERRY

Bigger.

CUT TO:

16 INT. AUJOURD'HUI - DAY DREAM - DAY 16

Perry's back inside Aujourd'hui serving Guest #1.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GUEST #1
I'm the food editor for the New
York Times.

CUT TO:

17 EXT. AUJOURD'HUI - BACK FROM DAY DREAM - CONTINUED 17
Perry's shakes his head.

PERRY
No. Bigger.

CUT TO:

18 INT. AUJOURD'HUI - DAY DREAM - DAY 18
Perry's back inside Aujourd'hui serving Guest #1 who is
now Sara Moulton, a petite blonde who is the Executive
Chef for Gourmet Magazine.

SARA
I'm Sara Moulton of Gourmet
Magazine.

DISSOLVE TO:

19 EXT. AUJOURD'HUI - BACK FROM DAY DREAM - CONTINUED 19
Perry still stands in front of Aujourd'hui. He folds up
the classifieds of the Boston Globe and slips them into
his back pocket, then heads into Aujourd'hui.

CUT TO:

20 INT. AUJOURD'HUI - LATER 20
Perry finishes filling in an application. The manager on
duty walks up to Perry. Perry hands him the application
and the manager begins to read.

MANAGER
(mumbles)
Office. Two Years. Ruloph's. Hmm.

The manager turns over the application, turns it back
over to the front then places it on a table beside him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MANAGER (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, there's nothing open right now, but we'll be sure to keep your application on file in case anything comes up.

CUT TO:

21 EXT. AUJOURD'HUI - LATER 21

Perry exits Aujourd'hui. He pulls the classifieds from his back pocket, reads a few lines then heads off down the sidewalk.

22 EXT. BOSTON STREETS - MONTAGE - DAY 22

We see Perry going from restaurant to restaurant filling out applications.

23 EXT. RULOPH'S - DAY 23

Perry notices the outside could use a coat of paint, and the sidewalk needs to be swept, then he enters the restaurant.

24 INT. RULOPH'S - CONTINUED 24

Perry goes first for a menu. He looks through and notices many changes since he last worked here. One item catches his attention: Avocado Lime Chicken. Blackened chicken topped with chopped avocado and finished with fresh lime. Perry is interrupted by

CAL

Can we help you?

Cal is an attractive, well groomed man in his late 20s. He's wearing the restaurant's waiters uniform (black pants, white button-down shirt and black vest), but it is a bit unkempt -- wrinkled and stained -- which appears that much more noticeable on a man as well groomed as Cal.

PERRY

You accepting applications?

CAL

Over there.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Perry sees a stack of blank applications on the edge of the bar.

PERRY

Thanks. Hey. Is Patrick around?

CAL

Out back. What's your name?

PERRY

Perry.

CAL

I'll go get him.

Cal goes through the door to the back of the kitchen. Perry goes to the bar to get an application. There's a mirror behind the bar that Perry knows is one-way glass, behind which is the manager's office. Perry looks around the old restaurant. It's exactly the way it used to be except it looks like it hasn't been maintained since he left. Everything is filthy, and the booth closest to him looks like it's about to topple over. Cal returns through the door.

CAL (CONT'D)

Sorry. Pat's all tied up right now, but he said he'll definitely have time if you come back for lunch or dinner some time.

Perry looks at the mirror by the door.

CAL (CONT'D)

(to the application)

You need more time with that?

PERRY

No. I'll finish it later. Thanks.

Perry turns and heads for the door. Just as he reaches the door there's a tremendous crash behind him. He turns to see the booth on the floor and a bewildered Tino, a Brazilian busboy in his late teens, looking down at the mess. Exploding from the door behind the bar is Patrick.

PATRICK

For fuck's sake Tino! What did I tell you about that booth!

Perry turns and continues out the door. As Perry exits, Patrick looks up from the mess to see Perry walking across the street in front of the restaurant.

25 INT. RULOPH'S MANAGER'S OFFICE - LATER

25

Patrick flops down in the chair in the office. He reaches over for a bottle of Bemish whiskey. He pours himself a glass and takes a big sip. He reaches forward and takes a picture of he and Perry down from a bulletin board over his desk. He stares at the picture of the two of them, arms around each other's shoulders, smiles from ear to ear, in Ruloph's during better days. Someone knocks and quickly opens the door. It's Paul. He sees the picture Patrick is holding.

PAUL

So it's true. The prodigal son has returned.

PATRICK

If you mean the son of a bitch who left me high and dry, yeah, he was here.

DISSOLVE TO:

26 INT. PERRY'S APARTMENT - LATER

26

Perry is holding and looking at the same picture as Patrick. Perry's sitting at a table. A dirty rocks glass sits on the table in front of Perry. He reaches for the glass, stands and steps to a small free-standing cabinet in his living room. He opens the door to the cabinet and removes a bottle of Bemish. Perry -- hesitantly -- pours himself a glass of the whiskey.

PATRICK (V.O.)

We're a team, you and me. We'll own this joint and make it the best damned place in the city.

PERRY (V.O.)

A place we can be proud of.

PATRICK (V.O.)

Precisely. A place we can be proud of.

CUT TO:

27 INT. PERRY'S APARTMENT - LATER

27

The bottle of Bemish is half-empty. Perry lays down the picture.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He looks over to his couch covered in newspapers, through the door frame to his bedroom strewn with clothes, and finally into the kitchen that is covered with so many stacks of magazines and papers that the room is unusable.

On top of one of the stacks is a particular Gourmet Magazine: April 1995. Perry picks up the magazine, pushes open a space for him to sit down on his couch and opens the magazine to page 38. The bottom half of the page is a section called "Restaurant News." In the section is the alphabetical list of Berkeley, Chicago, Miami, Los Angeles, New Orleans and Washington. After the name of each city is the detailed description of a restaurant in that city. Perry focuses on Berkeley. The text reads "Bellisimo describes everything about this Bay Area masterpiece."

Perry reads on. We see him focus on the following sentence, "'we look forward to our son Perry taking over operations,' gush Tim and Sarah Fisher, the owners of this five star gem."

He focuses closer on 'we look forward to our son Perry taking over operations.'

Perry shifts his focus to the crisp, unused business card that was saving the page. The business card has the name of a restaurant, "Bellisimo," on it. Perry's name is on the card. Underneath his name is written "Proprietor."

Perry looks up from the article then stares at the mess and disorder. He becomes determined. He stands and sweeps all of the newspapers off of the couch. He piles all of them next to the front door. He steps in to the kitchen and reaches into a cabinet to remove a box of garbage bags. He takes out one bag, opens it and tosses all of the newspapers into the bag. He then totes the bag around the rest of the room, tossing anything that is less than furniture into the open bag.

But he also makes one distinct pile of all the Gourmet magazines, leaving the April 1995 issue on top.

CUT TO:

28

EXT. PERRY'S APARTMENT - LATER

28

Perry comes out of the back door of the apartment. He labors under four large garbage bags, and carries the bags to a dumpster only a few steps from the back door of the building. Perry puts down the bags, opens the top of the dumpster and lifts the bags into the dumpster. Perry closes the door to the dumpster.

29 INT. PERRY'S APARTMENT - LATER 29

Perry's in his bedroom. He picks up a shirt and smells it. He tosses it into a pile. He picks up a pair of pants and smells them. He tosses them into the same pile. He picks up a pair of socks and just tosses them straight into the pile. Like a human bulldozer he pushes all of the clothes into the pile.

CUT TO:

30 EXT. LAUNDROMAT - LATER 30

Perry approaches the entrance with a huge duffle bag that he can barely carry.

CUT TO:

31 EXT. LAUNDROMAT - LATER 31

Perry exits the laundromat.

CUT TO:

32 INT. PERRY'S APARTMENT - LATER 32

Perry comes to the kitchen. He stops and stares into the dark abyss in which he can only make out the general shapes of the kitchen. He turns and opens a closet door, removing a vacuum cleaner, mop and a bucket. He plugs in the vacuum cleaner and starts vacuuming.

CUT TO:

33 INT. PERRY'S APARTMENT - LATER 33

Perry puts away the vacuum and stands with an empty bucket in front of the kitchen. He spies the kitchen faucet poking out of the mess on the counters, turns and heads away from the kitchen. From the bathroom we can hear him turn water on in the bathtub to fill the bucket.

CUT TO:

34 INT. PERRY'S APARTMENT - LATER 34

We see the kitchen but hear the noises of Perry cleaning coming from the bathroom. He returns to the kitchen.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He takes a big breath, turns and goes for the door to his apartment. He leaves.

CUT TO:

35 EXT. LAUNDROMAT - LATER 35

Perry enters the laundromat.

CUT TO:

36 EXT. LAUNDROMAT - LATER 36

Perry leaves with the huge duffle bag.

37 INT. PERRY'S APARTMENT - LATER 37

Perry comes out of his bedroom where he has left piles of folded, clean clothes on his bed. He comes once again to the kitchen where he stands at the threshold. He finally reaches around the wall at the entrance to the kitchen and flips on the light switch. There is a flash and a pop as the light bulb burns out.

Perry opens the closet, retrieves a step ladder and six light bulbs. He climbs the step ladder and we see there is not just one bulb to replace, but six recessed lighting canisters, all with burned out bulbs. He finishes replacing all of the bulbs, climbs down and flips on the light switch.

The lighting is spectacular. The gleam of stainless steel glints through cracks in the mess.

Perry brusksly removes boxes, papers, and a petrified sandwich until he fully reveals a kitchen straight out of an advertisement in a cooking magazine. Stainless steel appliances. Granite counter tops. Spice racks. Racks of gourmet pots and pans, and an array of knives.

He slows down his pace, goes to another cabinet and removes a different bucket, in which there is a chamois, sponge and container of Bon Ami. Perry starts to clean every surface like an artist restoring a priceless painting.

CUT TO:

38 INT. PERRY'S APARTMENT - LATER 38

Perry finishes wiping down the last surface with the chamois. He's very proud of his work. He realizes what he's done and swiftly moves to the refrigerator. He opens the door; it's empty.

PERRY
At least it's clean.

The inside of the refrigerator is empty, yet spotless.

CUT TO:

39 EXT. LOCAL GROCERY STORE - LATER 39

Perry enters the store.

CUT TO:

40 EXT. LOCAL GROCERY STORE - LATER 40

Perry exits with an arm-load of bags.

CUT TO:

41 INT. PERRY'S APARTMENT - LATER 41

Perry enters with the bags, and drops the bags on his kitchen counter. As he returns to close his door, Peg steps forward. She looks inside and sees the clean apartment and the bags of groceries.

PEG
A little cooking?

She smirks.

PERRY
Yes Peg.

PEG
Glad to see it Perry.

She starts walking down the hall.

PEG (CONT'D)
Glad to see it.

CUT TO:

42 INT. PERRY'S APARTMENT - LATER

42

Perry stands at his stove, moving a saute pan over a flame on the stove. He removes the pan, and tops a piece of chicken already placed on a plate. He has finished a perfect version of chicken avocado from Ruloph's.

Perry finishes plating the dish, he cleans his hands, picks up the plate and delivers the plate to the table in his living room as if he was serving someone -- carrying the dish in his right hand, his thumb ten degrees counter clockwise from the chicken on the plate, placing the plate on the table, then giving the plate a fifteen degree clockwise turn so that the chicken would be perfectly centered for his guest to view.

CUT TO:

43 INT. RULOPH'S - DAY

43

A plate of chicken avocado lies on the table. It is not symmetrically placed in front of Patrick.

PATRICK

When are these clowns going to learn how to deliver food?

Patrick reorients the plate on the table so the chicken is centered in front of him.

From Paul's right Cal haphazardly puts the same dish down with his left arm in front of Paul. Cal's elbow almost brushes Paul's nose.

PAUL

When you hire someone like Perry.

Patrick shoots Paul a glare.

PATRICK

We were so close, Paul, and then, like that, he's gone. *I've got to get a real job, Patty.* Owning a restaurant wasn't a real job?

PAUL

A diet of Tylenol and alcohol? No. It's a mental illness. Still. You've got to hear the kid out.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PATRICK

He's no longer a kid, and he
wasn't then either.

PAUL

Neither were we.

PATRICK

Yeah, yeah. I'll call him.

Paul and Patrick start to cut into their meals.

FADE TO:

44 INT. PERRY'S APARTMENT

44

Perry finishes his chicken, and looks at his watch. He stands, clears his plate and goes into the kitchen to clean. After washing his plate and placing it in his dishwasher, he goes to his jacket hanging by the door. From the outside pocket he retrieves a crumpled up piece of paper. He sits back down and un-crumples it, trying to flatten the wrinkles in the paper. We see it is the application from Ruloph's. He takes a pen and starts to fill out the application.

CUT TO:

45 INT. RULOPH'S - DAY

45

Patrick and Paul are finishing their meal. Perry enters the door to the restaurant. No one is there to greet guests, so Perry looks around. He spies Patrick and Paul sitting together. Paul sees Perry spotting them.

PAUL

Speak of the devil.

Perry approaches the table.

PERRY

Patrick. I know I should have
never left.

Patrick does not bother looking up from his meal.

PATRICK

Five years later you're figuring
this out?

PAUL

Pat. Perry, sit.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Perry sits.

PERRY

I'm sorry. I've just spent the last three months out of work -- the last three weeks trying to find a job waiting tables.

46

INT. RULOPH'S - LATER

46

Perry, Patrick and Paul are sitting at the same table.

PERRY

So we're good?

PATRICK

No Perry, we're not good. I'll give you a shot, but look around.

PAUL

It's not like it used to be.

PATRICK

Shit, Perry, I don't know how much longer we're going to be open.

PERRY

I'll take it.

Patrick pushes his chair back, picks up his plate and stands.

PATRICK

And Perry.

PERRY

Yeah?

PATRICK

I can't promise what I'll do if I find out your just jerking me around until you figure out what else is your next calling in life.

Paul pushes his chair back, picks up his plate and stands. Paul gives Perry a look that says, "Patrick's not joking." Patrick and Paul head for the door that leads to the back of the kitchen.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

I know you don't have anything else going on, so be here tomorrow for lunch. You'll train Cal.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PERRY

Cal will be my trainer?

PATRICK

Yeah, that too.

Paul laughs.

CUT TO:

47 INT. PERRY'S APARTMENT - DAY

47

Perry's in his bedroom. He's wet after just having taken a shower. Clothes are laid out on his bed -- the clothes for his first day at Ruloph's. He finishes drying himself off then goes into the bathroom to shave.

He meticulously grooms himself then returns to his bed side where he first slips on a pair of black pants, then puts on a black belt. He puts on and buttons a crisply ironed white button down shirt, then tucks the shirt in and cinches his belt. He pulls on his socks, then puts his arms into a black vest. He puts on a pair of comfortable black leather shoes then stands straight as he buttons the vest.

He looks in the mirror, proud of his presentation, but stops and looks around his room then goes to the top drawer of his night stand. He opens the drawer and removes a simple but aged silver table crumber. Inscribed on the crumber are the initials "GSF." He slips the crumber in the breast pocket of his shirt.

CUT TO:

48 INT. RULOPH'S - DAY

48

Perry enters the front door of the restaurant. A sous chef is chopping garlic at the open kitchen. Tina, the bartender, a woman in her late thirties, but who looks much younger, is preparing the bar area. No one is in the dining room.

Perry sits down to wait. A clock above the front door says 10:02.

49 INT. RULOPH'S - LATER

49

The clock above the front door reads 10:22. Perry is sitting waiting.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The front door opens as Cal, the same waiter who handed Perry application, comes through the door.

PERRY

You must be Cal.

CAL

Yeah?

PERRY

You're training me today.

CAL

You're kidding.

Cal walks past Perry and continues onto the door to the kitchen. Perry stands and follows Cal.

50 INT. RULOPH'S THE KITCHEN - DAY

50

Cal enter the door to the kitchen. Perry follows close behind. Cal stops and turns.

CAL

I have your whole story. So if you were so good, why are you here?

Perry looks at Cal, stunned.

CAL (CONT'D)

Here's your training. Coffee's where it's always been.

Cal points behind him where a coffee station -- a stainless steel counter with three coffee machines, stacks of coffee filters, bags of coffee beans, and piles of coffee mugs lie.

CAL (CONT'D)

You keep your bags here.

Cal points to his side, where the door to a storage closet lies just outside of the swing of the door between the dining room and kitchen.

CAL (CONT'D)

And you know the rest. If you don't remember...you're a smart boy.

Cal opens his bag and removes a wrinkled white button down shirt, wrinkled black pants, and worn out black sneakers.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CAL (CONT'D)

Shit. Forgot my vest. Oh well.

Perry turns and heads out the door to the dining room.

51 INT. RULOPH'S DINING ROOM - LATER

51

Perry sits at a booth folding napkins. He has three stacks of folded napkins -- each must contain 100 folded cloth napkins. Cal comes by the booth.

CAL

Give it a rest, honey. We won't use that many in a week.

Cal shakes his head and continues on. Perry stops folding, stacks his stacks on top of each other, and carries them back to a busser's station that is across from the open kitchen.

The front door opens. The rest of the staff walks in: Lauren, an obviously athletic mulatto woman in her late 20s, Teddy, an awkward looking redhead in his early 20s with an always-present smile, Kaitlin, a pale-skinned, freckle-faced woman of obvious Irish descent in her mid 20s, and Mike, a tall, handsome man in his early thirties who could easily pass for his early 20s. They all walk past Perry and give him puzzled looks. All except for Lauren who stares at Perry. Perry is staring at her too. After Lauren passes, just before she goes through the door to the kitchen, she looks back at Perry and smiles. Perry smiles. Paul enters the open kitchen without Perry noticing.

PAUL

Remind you of someone?

PERRY

Huh?

PAUL

Cal. Just like Russell. Remember that kid?

PERRY

Yeah. Oh yeah!

PAUL

It's not like it used to be, Perry.

Perry looks up at the clock; it reads 11:30.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PERRY

I can see that.

DISSOLVE TO:

52 INT. RULOPH'S DINING ROOM - FLASHBACK - DAY 52

Patrick is surrounded by the wait staff.

PATRICK

We've got twenty, fifteen, six
four tops and four deuces all at
noon.

Ethan, a college kid in his late teens, looks nervous.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

Ethan?

ETHAN

We're going to be so weeded.

PERRY

No, Ethan, you're going to be in
the weeds.

PATRICK

And the rest of you will make sure
no one gets lost.

Russell, a tall, thin, flamboyantly gay man dressed for
waiting tables at Ruloph's bursts through the door.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

(to himself)

Speaking of lost.

(to Russel)

Nice of you to join us!

RUSSELL

Hello!

DISSOLVE TO:

53 INT. RULOPH'S DINING ROOM - BACK FROM FLASHBACK. 53

Perry's standing at the busser's station; he's staring
off in the distance.

CAL

Hello?!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Perry snaps out of his trance.

CAL (CONT'D)

Dunno what you're waiting for.
We'll be lucky to have anyone
before twelve thirty.

Perry leaves Paul and walks up to the front of the dining room. Next to the front door is a waist-high table. On the table is a stack of menus and a book. The cover of the book reads "Reservations." The cover is actually dusty.

Perry opens the book. Every page is labeled with a day of the week. On the first few pages he sees ten or fifteen reservations per page. As he leafs through the book, the number of reservations dwindles from ten per day, to six and finally none. For two months of pages Perry does not see a single reservation.

He stops on June 15 -- today. Still no reservations. Perry takes a deep breath, closes the book, digs a pen from his pocket and places the pen next to the book.

The front door opens and three men in their early 20s enter. They are dressed similarly to how Perry was dressed when he was working in an office.

PERRY

Three?

MAN 3

What? We're going upscale?

MAN 4

(To Perry)

Yes, please.

Perry leads them to a table.

MAN 3

Dude. We always sit over there.

Man 3 points to a table by the window. Perry tries not to be frustrated and leads them over. They sit at a table that is a total mess. No silverware, no plates, glasses or napkins, and stains on the tablecloth left over from the night before.

PERRY

I'm sorry about this. I'll...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Man 3 looks at Perry; he is puzzled by why this new waiter would be so concerned. Man 3 looks over Perry's shoulder and smiles broadly.

MAN 3

There she is!

Man 3 and the other two men, relieved, take their seats. Perry turns and sees Kaitin coming towards the table. The top three buttons of her too tight shirt are undone, obviously for the benefit of her regular guests.

KAITLIN

Hey guys. Starting with the usual?

Perry starts walking towards the kitchen.

MAN 3

What's up with the new guy?

54 INT. RULOLPH'S KITCHEN - CONTINUED

54

Perry enters from the dining room. Lauren is standing with nothing on except for her panties and a bra. Perry stops and stares. Lauren is in incredible shape. She reaches casually into a small bag, retrieves a white button down folded neatly in plastic, and puts it on. She turns nonchalantly and smiles at Perry as she stares back at him and starts buttoning her shirt. After she finishes, she reaches into her bag for her pants. This breaks his stare. He steps past her to the coffee station.

PERRY

Sorry for staring.

LAUREN

Don't be sorry.

Perry pours himself a cup of coffee in a paper cup, pulls a pen out of his pocket and writes his name on the cup, then places the cup on a shelf.

PERRY

Well. I should...do something.

Perry goes back out to the dining room. Lauren chuckles to herself.

Perry comes back in from the dining room.

PERRY (CONT'D)

Forgot where I was going.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Perry continues past Lauren and heads back to the manager's office. He is about to burst into the office to speak with Patrick when he looks through the partially open door to the office. He sees Patrick pouring a glass of Bemish.

Perry stops. He looks around the kitchen. Sous chefs are chopping carrots and tomatoes. World Cup soccer is on a single black and white television turned to Telemundo. Rolando, a short, middle-aged Brazilian man, is washing dishes. Mike and Teddy are still preparing for the day. Perry looks around and finds a clock on the wall; it reads 12:15.

Perry continues to look around. He sees a tray of silverware come out of the dishwasher. He walks briskly to the tray of silverware and starts sorting it into holders for spoons, knives and forks. Perry takes the sorted silverware out to the dining room.

Perry returns from the dining room and goes into a closet where he removes a stack of 20 folded tablecloths. He carries them out to the dining room.

55 INT. RULOPH'S DINING ROOM - CONTINUED 55

In the dining room Perry stops and looks around. He remembers...

DISSOLVE TO:

56 INT. RULOPH'S DINING ROOM - FLASHBACK - DAY 56

The dining room is packed. A line of people is out the door. Perry's standing at the front door -- he's holding menus. A couple stands next to him.

WOMAN 2

Can we sit there?

Perry's vision focuses on a table.

DISSOLVE TO:

57 INT. RULOPH'S DINING ROOM - RETURN FROM FLASHBACK - CONTINUED 57

Perry's staring at the table close to the three men who sat down earlier. Perry moves to the table; it is a mess. The tablecloth is stained from the night before.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Silverware is scattered on the table and there are no napkins.

Perry goes to a busser's station and retrieves a bus-bucket. He returns to the table, strips the table of the tablecloth and silverware, then places everything in the bus-bucket.

Perry meticulously resets the table with a new tablecloth, silverware and napkins. Perry searches for, and finds salt and pepper shakers, containers to hold sugar, and a votive holder. He places them on the table.

Perry moves on to the next closest table and repeats the process.

58

INT. RULOPH'S DINING ROOM - LATER

58

Perry approaches the last table needing resetting. The rest of the wait staff is sitting at the table.

CAL

I've got to find a new job.

PERRY

Excuse me.

The staff remove their elbows from the table.

Perry starts resetting the table. The wait staff does not miss a beat.

LAUREN

Yeah. But where?

MIKE

Seriously. Like working here will help you get work in some other house.

TEDDY

True.

CAL

Then again, at a busy place you need to be worried about being in the weeds all the time.

TEDDY

In the weeds?

MIKE

What you are every day, brutha.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LAUREN

So overwhelmed you don't know
where to begin to get out.

Teddy still looks confused.

Perry finishes. He looks at the table, at the wait staff
still talking, then around the dining room.

The table settings now look oddly perfect since the
tables are lopsided, the floor is filthy, and some of the
chairs look as if they're about to fall apart. Perry
looks at the clock above the door: 1:30 PM.

The table of three men has long since left but no one has
cleaned the table.

CAL (O.S.)

Hey Mary!

LAUREN (O.S.)

What's his name?

CAL (O.S.)

Perry.

LAUREN (O.S.)

Perry!

Perry instantly turns around.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

Come here for a sec.

Perry approaches the table where the wait staff is
sitting.

KAITLIN

We're drawing straws to see who
stays late.

CAL

Hey. He's a new guy. How about...

PERRY

No need. I'll stay.

Cal looks disappointed and confused. He wanted to make
Perry stay.

MIKE

I'm out.

Mike hops from the table.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CAL

Alright then.

Cal gets up. Lauren and Kaitlin rise more slowly, then turn to go back to the kitchen. Kaitlin stops and turns back to Perry.

KAITLIN

You want me to help you with...

PERRY

I've got it.

Perry unbuttons his shirt cuffs and rolls them up. He goes to the kitchen and returns with a rolling bucket and mop, spray bottle and rags. Perry goes to the farthest side of the dining room, puts down his rags and the spray bottle, and leans the mop against the wall. He picks up the bottle and a rags and starts to clean.

59 INT. RULOPH'S DINING ROOM - LATER

59

Perry is at the bar pouring himself a Coke. Paul enters from the kitchen. He looks at Perry then around the dining room.

PAUL

Hasn't looked this clean since the health inspector threatened to shut us down.

PERRY

Patrick?

PAUL

Sleeping.

Perry puts the soda gun back in its place and takes a rag to clean the one drop from the gun left on the bar.

PAUL (CONT'D)

How about something to eat.

PERRY

Toss it up.

Perry and Paul faintly smile at each other.

DISSOLVE TO:

60 INT. RULOPH'S DINING ROOM - FLASHBACK - DAY 60

Perry's at the bar and Paul's at the open kitchen. The restaurant is packed and loud.

PAUL

If you're eatin', it's now.

PERRY

Toss it up.

Paul spins, closes his eyes and randomly throws ingredients into a saute pan on the burner. He opens his eyes, gives the pan a toss as a flame flares up from the burner.

DISSOLVE TO:

61 INT. RULOPH'S DINING ROOM - RETURN FROM FLASHBACK - LATE 61

Perry turns to look at the clock over the front door; it reads 4:30 PM. Paul plates the tossed up dish for Perry, and places it on the counter of the open kitchen.

PAUL

All set Perr.

PERRY

Thanks Paul.

The front door opens. Perry turns, hopeful to see customers. Instead, Cal and Kaitlin walk in. They can't help but notice the difference in the dining room. Kaitlin walks, spellbound like a child seeing Christmas lights, through the dining room. Cal shrugs off his amazement and looks at Perry, seeing Perry holding a plate of food.

CAL

You didn't actually pay for that did you?

Paul looks on and cringes.

PERRY

No. I just had Paul toss it up.

Paul cringes more, turns and walks back into the kitchen. Cal shoots Paul a long glare, then casts aside Perry with a stare as he walks on to the door to the kitchen. Cal disappears into the back of the kitchen.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CAL (O.S.)
Why does *he* get free food?

PAUL (O.S.)
Were your eyes open when you
walked into that dining room?!

CAL (O.S.)
He's only been here one day!

PAUL (O.S.)
And I bet he already knows more
about our menu than you do!

Cal bursts out of the kitchen practically dragging Paul
with him.

CAL
Fine. Ask Mr. Clean about the
menu.

PAUL
Avocado Chicken!

DISSOLVE TO:

62 INT. RULOPH'S DINING ROOM - FLASHBACK - DAY 62

The restaurant is empty. The clock above the door reads
4:35. Waiters and waitresses stand huddled together. Paul
bursts in from the kitchen.

PAUL
Fish Special.

Paul points at Waitress 3 -- a woman in her early 20s.

WAITRESS 3
Blackened swordfish with a side of
brazed spinach...

PAUL
And...

He points to Waiter 1.

WAITER 1
Pan fried sweet potatoes.

PAUL
In olive or canola oil.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PERRY

Canola.

PAUL

Remember to know vegetarian options. And, if you don't know what's in it, don't sell it.

DISSOLVE TO:

63 INT. RULOPH'S DINING ROOM - BACK FROM FLASHBACK - DAY 63

Perry stands in front of Paul and Cal. The rest of the staff has arrived for the dinner shift and is standing around witnessing this little challenge.

PERRY

Boneless chicken breast sauteed in olive oil, garlic, crushed red pepper, black pepper, then finished with diced avocado and lime juice.

PAUL

Side?

PERRY

Rice Pilaf.

TEDDY

(Quietly to Mike)
Did you know that?

PAUL

Sad but true.

MIKE

(Quietly back to
Teddy)
Did he clean this whole place?

CAL

So what.

Paul sees that he's not alone for the first time in a long time.

PAUL

OK. What's in my chicken Parmesan?

CAL

Seriously?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PAUL

Seriously.

CAL

Chicken. Parmesan cheese.

PAUL

C'mon.

CAL

Chicken Parmesan.

PAUL

Don't push me, Cal.

Paul storms back into the kitchen.

CAL

(To Paul)

So *now* you grow some balls?

Everyone is staring at Cal.

CAL (CONT'D)

What?

KAITLIN

He makes it with mozzarella, jack
ass.

MIKE

(to Perry)

Nice job, brutha.

Cal stares maliciously at Perry.

CUT TO:

64 INT. RULOPH'S DINING ROOM - LATER

64

Cal stands at the open kitchen. He looks out at the
dining room and watches Perry approach a table.

Paul places two plates up on the counter.

PAUL

Perry! Order up!

Cal watches Perry tending to his table, then looks down
at the two plates.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

An arm's length from Cal is a busser's station. One shelf has salt and pepper shakers. Cal focuses on the salt shakers then Perry approaches.

PERRY

Cal.

Perry's voice startles Cal. Cal looks up and watches Perry take the plates.

PAUL

Thanks for selling that asparagus.

Perry walks away to deliver the plates to his table.

PAUL (CONT'D)

86 asparagus!

Cal walks away from the open kitchen towards the doors to the back of the kitchen.

CUT TO:

65

INT. RULOPH'S BACK OF THE KITCHEN - CONTINUED

65

Cal enters the back of the kitchen. He stops at the storage closet, turns and looks out the kitchen door windows out into the dining room. All of the staff is busy with their tables.

Cal looks deeper into the kitchen. All of the kitchen staff is busy cooking out at the open kitchen except for Ronaldo. He is frantically trying to clean the pile of dishes, glasses, pots, pans and silverware.

CAL

What would you do if we were busy,
Ronaldo?

RONALDO

(in Portuguese)
Piss off, maricone!

CAL

Maricone. Maricone. Yeah, yeah.

Cal steps into the closet and looks around the bags. He knows the bags of all of the staff, except for Perry's, so he looks for the one bag that he does not recognize. He sees it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Cal leaves the closet, goes to the dish-washing station, and picks a dirty steak knife out of the pile of things to clean. Cal returns to the closet and goes straight for Perry's bag. He opens it and sees a pair of sneakers, a neatly folded t-shirt, pants and a notebook.

Cal lifts the t-shirt out and looks at it, poking it with the knife. He looks at the sneakers. He stuffs the shirt back in the bag, removes the sneakers then removes the laces from the sneakers. He puts the sneakers back in the bag and zips it back up.

Cal stands up and walks to the coffee station. He tosses the laces into the trash barrel next to the coffee station just as the dining room doors burst open.

PERRY

Cal!

Cal spins around.

CAL

Where's the fire?

PERRY

Forty two. They're wondering about their coffees. I was going to get them for you.

CAL

Aren't you just my knight in shining armor.

PERRY

I was...

CAL

Thanks. I got it.

CUT TO:

66 INT. RULOPH'S DINING ROOM - LATER

66

Perry is standing at the storage closet, picking up his bag. Paul walks in through the back of the kitchen.

PAUL

Ronaldo! Que Paso? You OK?

RONALDO

OK. OK my friend.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Paul turns and look back into the kitchen. Omar, a short Lebanese cook stands at a prep table wrapping left over chopped garlic.

PAUL

Omar? OK?

OMAR

Hey! Where you go tonight?

Paul turns back to Perry.

OMAR (CONT'D)

You go gay bar, right?

PAUL

Not what is used to be, is it.

PERRY

Some things never change.

OMAR

(singing)

Tu ta, tu ta char'muta!

PAUL

As long as you don't get weeded by it, right?

(to Omar)

OK char'muta. OK!

OMAR

No. You char'muta.

PAUL

(to Perry)

Good night.

Perry nods. Paul exits and Lauren enters.

She squeezes conspicuously past Perry to reach for her bag in the closet. Perry can't help smelling her hair.

LAUREN

Excuse me.

PERRY

Oh. I'm sorry.

LAUREN

I just need to get something.

Perry keeps staring at Lauren. As he reaches into his bag his gaze is broken.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

He looks in his bag and realizes nothing is in order. He pulls out one of his sneakers and sees that the laces are gone.

Lauren looks at the sneaker and the two look at each other. They both know who took the laces.

Lauren watches Perry to see how he's going to react.

PERRY

Guess I need some new laces.

Perry sticks the sneakers back in the bag.

LAUREN

So. See you tomorrow?

PERRY

I've got no where else to go.

Lauren smiles, tosses her bag over her shoulder and bounds out into the dining room. Perry follows -- slowly slinging his bag over his shoulder as he steps into the dining room where he finds Paul standing at the open kitchen talking to Tina.

TINA

No worries, Paul. See you tomorrow.

Paul waves to Tina and pats the bar as he turns to head out. Perry catches his eye.

PERRY

How about one to finish the night.

PAUL

Silvertone?

CUT TO:

67 INT. SILVERTONE BAR - LATER

67

Paul and Perry sit at the bar of a dark, groovy downtown Boston bar. The bar is still quite loud and crowded.

PAUL

I always forget that Thursday is the night for the suits.

PERRY

Not really suits any more.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Perry looks around. Most of the patrons are dressed very stylishly. The women are beautiful, and Perry notices, so are the men. As he realizes this, he quickly looks away.

PAUL

What I tell you?

PERRY

Not at all like it used to be.

PAUL

You can say that again.

Perry looks back around. He is still stunned by how attractive everyone is.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Some times I wonder how long it will last.

PERRY

Everything changes, Paul.

PAUL

I know. But this thing. It's on life support. Hell, it's already pickled in formaldehyde.

Perry realizes that Paul's talking about Ruloph's.

PERRY

What's Patrick doing about it?

PAUL

Perry.

PERRY

What?

PAUL

He's about as pickled as they come. Ten bucks, tomorrow morning you'll go in there and find him in the same suit he was in tonight. Which I think is the same suit he had on last night.

PERRY

So we do something about it.

PAUL

Like what?

Perry shrugs.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

PAUL (CONT'D)

Be real, Perry. The only reason no one thought we had problems before is because we were making money. It only looks ugly when you're about to go broke.

Perry looks around the bar again, this time noticing how drunk all of these beautiful people were. Suddenly they did not look so attractive.

PERRY

Well there's no reason why we can't do something.

PAUL

About what? Patrick or Ruloph's?

PERRY

Both.

CUT TO:

68 INT. MIRACLE OF SCIENCE - NIGHT

68

Lauren and Kaitlin sit at the bar of an eclectic restaurant in Cambridge.

KAITLIN

Cal doing a little pissing on his territory.

LAUREN

What's he marking? The Titanic?

KAITLIN

Well forget Cal. What do you think?

LAUREN

He's a little...

KAITLIN

Anal. Sure. But when was the last time we had anyone take their job seriously at this place?

LAUREN

I don't know.

KAITLIN

And he's cute.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LAUREN

And there's that.

CUT TO:

69 INT. RULOPH'S BACK OF THE KITCHEN - DAY

69

Perry enters from the dining room and tosses his bag into the storage closet. He continues on through the kitchen. Perry looks up at the clock on the wall that reads 10:45 AM. Sous chefs are already chopping tomatoes, basil, garlic and cleaning chickens. Two TVs now sit on either side of the kitchen. Telemundo is on both sets -- airing World Cup highlights in Spanish from the night before. Tina is carrying three cases of beer from the back closet to the door that leads to the open kitchen and bar. Tina sees Perry.

TINA

Perry, right?

Perry nods.

TINA (CONT'D)

How ya doin'?

PERRY

Great thanks.

Tina pushes through the door to the bar.

Perry walks past the door to the bar a few steps where he stops in front of the door to the manager's office. Perry looks at the door, which is open a slight crack. Perry takes a deep breath, and knocks on the door. There is no answer. The sous chefs stop their chopping and look at Perry, wondering what he is about to do. Perry pushes open the door and is taken aback by the smell that comes out of the office. Each sous chef shakes his head then goes back to chopping.

PATRICK

Close the fucking door!

Patrick is collapsed in his chair and slumped over a table in the back of the office that is not much larger than a broom closet. Perry steps in to the little space that is available to stand in the office.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

Close the fucking door, will ya?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PERRY

Pat.

Patrick snaps up from his slouch and blearily looks at Perry. Patrick is obviously embarrassed.

PERRY (CONT'D)

When was the last time you took a shower?

Patrick futilely smooths his cloths and hair.

PERRY (CONT'D)

For Christ's sake, Patrick. What the hell happened?

Perry hears cheers from the kitchen. Patrick looks shell shocked.

CUT TO:

70

EXT. RULOPH'S - LATER

70

Perry and Patrick sit outside. Both of them hold their own cup of coffee.

PATRICK

I don't know. Democratic National Convention I guess.

PERRY

C'mon. You can't blame this on that.

PATRICK

That's when our numbers really tanked.

PERRY

Everything was purring before then?

PATRICK

Well. Not really.

PERRY

Not really.

PATRICK

Sure they had already started to slip, but not so bad.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PERRY

So you were still doin', what,
sixteen a day?

PATRICK

Not really.

PERRY

OK. Twelve.

Patrick stares at his cup.

PERRY (CONT'D)

Eight?

Patrick keeps staring at his cup. Perry can't believe
this.

PERRY (CONT'D)

Five?

PATRICK

We should really get inside and
get this place set up.

PERRY

You're only doing five grand a day
before the DNC and then you
slipped from there?

Patrick stands.

PERRY (CONT'D)

How have you stayed open?

PATRICK

The owners use it as a huge tax
right off.

Perry stands up and faces Patrick.

PERRY

You've got to be fucking kidding,
Pat. How does the staff make a
living? How does this...

Patrick slaps the cup of coffee out of Perry's hands.

PATRICK

I don't need this from you of all
people, Perry. You haven't been
here. You haven't been living on
whiskey and Tylenol. You...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

PERRY

You don't have to live on whiskey
and Tylenol.

Patrick takes a long breath and stares intensely at
Perry.

PATRICK

You and I could have. We. We were
going to buy this place.

Perry looks away.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

And now this is the only shit hole
where you could get a job.

Patrick pulls open the front door.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

Bloody ironic.

CUT TO:

71 INT. RULOPH'S - LATER

71

Perry sits folding napkins at the same booth where he had
folded napkins on the first day. Cal comes in the front
door. Perry looks up at the clock over the door; it reads
11:15 AM. Cal walks up to the booth where Perry sits.

CAL

You love those napkins there Mary,
don'tchya.

Cal watches Perry methodically take a napkin from the
pile of newly laundered napkins and neatly fold the
napkin for setting on a table.

PERRY

You should try it some time. It
helps release blocked up tension.

Cal gets right in Perry's face.

CAL

Listen superman. I don't care how
good you think you are, or what
you remember this place used to be
like. It's not the place you
remember and you're certainly no
better than anyone here.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Perry slowly stacks the folded napkins then stands, pushing his way up into Cal's face.

PERRY

I'm just doing my job.

Perry turns around and walks back to the busser's station where he puts away the napkins. Cal looks around the dining room where he sees all of the tables set perfectly. Silverware is shining. Tablecloths are clean. Even the tables are evenly spaced and level.

CUT TO:

72

INT. RULOPH'S DINING ROOM - LATER

72

The staff sits at a booth. Perry comes into the dining room with a tray of sorted silverware.

MIKE

(to Perry)

You're stayin' late again today?

Lauren slaps Mike. Perry looks at the staff at the table.

PERRY

Uh. Yeah.

Everyone at the table jumps up and takes off to the back of the kitchen to get their stuff to leave. Everyone except for Lauren. She's a little slower to get up and trails the rest of the staff. Perry watches her. She looks over once as she heads for the door to the kitchen. Perry looks over to catch the end of her glance. He continues to the busser's station with the tray of silverware. Lauren continues to the back of the kitchen.

PERRY (CONT'D)

(to himself)

Jerk.

Perry unloads the silverware into silverware trays at the busser's station. Mike bursts out of the kitchen door and heads to the front door.

MIKE

Thanks brutha!

Cal comes from the kitchen with Kaitlin and Teddy

KAITLIN

Thanks Perry. See you tonight.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Lauren finally comes from the back of the kitchen. She has street clothes on and looks beautiful. She's walking very slowly and obviously fiddling with something in her bag -- a sports gear bag. Perry swallows hard.

PERRY

Lauren?

Lauren stops and turns towards Perry.

PERRY (CONT'D)

Can you help me with something?

LAUREN

Sure.

Lauren comes over to Perry. Perry stares at Lauren. He can't take his eyes off of her. He studies everything about her. He's is not objectifying, but he is mesmerized.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

Yes?

Perry is snapped from his spell. He looks up. Lauren looks up too. The ceiling is almost twenty feet high.

PERRY

Has anyone ever tried to do anything about that?

LAUREN

What that? The lights? The grime?

PERRY

Exactly.

LAUREN

Everyone pretty much tries to ignore it.

PERRY

You wanna help me do something about it?

Lauren studies Perry. Everything about him. She is so terribly curious about him -- and he's cute too.

LAUREN

Sure.

CUT TO:

73

INT. RULOPH'S DINING ROOM - LATER

73

Lauren holds the base of a very tall step ladder as Perry removes a light bulb so dusty it looks like a crusty relic from an archaeological dig. Perry pulls a cloth from his back pocket and cleans the grime from the pressed tin ceiling for as far as he can reach around the light. Perry climbs down the ladder.

PERRY

That's the last one.

LAUREN

That was the easy part.

PERRY

I know. But I don't know how to deal with the other mess.

LAUREN

You just have to pick a spot and start fixing.

Lauren looks at Perry and at a 50 gallon trash barrel filled with burnt out crusty light bulbs. The two of them stare at the ceiling. The ceiling is a dull gray, except for the gleaming sections around the lights that Perry replaced. They don't notice the front door open. Two tourists walk in the door. Tourist 1 is a man in his early sixties with a sweatshirt that reads "San Francisco." Tourist 2 is a woman in her late fifties with a matching sweatshirt.

TOURIST 1

Are you folks open?

The voice startles Lauren and Perry.

PERRY

Of course we are. I'm sorry.

Perry steals a quick glance at the clock above the door; it reads 4:30 PM.

PERRY (CONT'D)

Two for a light meal?

Tourist 1 smiles.

TOURIST 1

Please. Thank you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Perry leads the two to a table near a window away from the front door. As he seats the couple he looks back towards the step ladder and Lauren. She is watching Perry. They smile at each other. Then Perry broadens his gaze around the newly lit dining room. Even though he can now see stains and blemishes on the walls he could not see before, Perry smiles because now he can see them.

PERRY

Something to drink while you look through the menus?

TOURIST 2

Yes. Scotch. Neat please.

PERRY

Would Glenfiddich be fine?

TOURIST 2

Do you have Glenmorangie?

PERRY

Yes we do. And for you sir?

TOURIST 1

Just a glass of water.

PERRY

May I offer you bottled?

TOURIST 1

We're on vacation. Why not.

PERRY

Ice with the glass for your water? I usually suggest no ice and lime or a lemon. The bottle is already cold.

TOURIST 1

No ice and a lemon.

PERRY

You're on vacation. Where are you from?

TOURIST 2

Eugene, Oregon.

Perry looks surprised.

TOURIST 1

Our daughter lives in San Francisco.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

PERRY

For how long are you in town?

Lauren watches Perry speaking with the couple at the table. She slowly folds the tall step ladder being careful not to make too much noise or draw attention to herself. All the while she watches Perry. He looks so natural. He does not look like he is waiting on the table of two old folks, but like he truly enjoys what he is doing, truly enjoys speaking with these two people, and truly wants to serve their needs while they are in the restaurant. She smiles as she lowers the folded step ladder and she carefully pushes her way into the back of the kitchen.

CUT TO:

74

INT. RULOPH'S BACK OF THE KITCHEN - CONTINUED

74

Lauren enters with the ladder and heads to the back hall that leads out to a loading dock. Lauren sets the ladder down as Paul comes in from the loading dock. He's shaking his head.

LAUREN

What did they forget today?

PAUL

Flour. Not like I need a lot,
but...well it doesn't matter now.

LAUREN

Perry.

Paul looks oddly at Lauren, waiting for her to say more. Lauren pauses not knowing how to say what she wants.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

He.

She pauses once more.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

He really likes doing this.

PAUL

It's in his blood.

LAUREN

Did his family own a restaurant?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PAUL

Some of the best in California.
It's in his blood. You know
something about that.

Lauren, shaken by Paul's comment, stares off down the hallway.

PAUL (CONT'D)

When it's in your blood, you don't
have to think; it's always there.

Lauren still stares off down the hallway. Lauren's thoughts have raced backed to her past.

DISSOLVE TO:

75 EXT. ROAD IN CAPE COD - FLASHBACK - DAY 75

We hear Lauren breathing heavily, rhythmically, steadily. She is on a racing bicycle in the middle of a triathlon. The number written on her shoulder with magic marker is the number "3." Lauren's vision starts to become hazy.

DISSOLVE TO:

76 INT. RULOPH'S BACK OF THE KITCHEN - BACK FROM FLASHBACK 76
CONTINUED

We return to Lauren and Paul in the back hall.

PAUL

You'll find it again some day.
Look at Perry.

Lauren turns and heads back to the dining room. Paul watches after her, a look of concern on his face.

77 INT. RULOPH'S DINING ROOM - CONTINUED 77

Lauren comes out from the kitchen and sees Perry entering into the computer the order for the tourist couple. Lauren walks up to Perry and just watches him. Perry becomes a little self-conscious.

PERRY

Yes?

LAUREN

You OK here?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PERRY

Uh. Yeah. I guess.

LAUREN

You mind if I take off for a while?

Perry looks disappointed.

PERRY

Sure. Be back before the rush?

LAUREN

That's a good one, Perry.

Lauren chuckles as she walks back to the kitchen.

78 EXT. CYCLE SHOP - DUSK

78

Lauren stares through the plate glass window at the new bicycles in the window.

79 INT. RULOPH'S DINING ROOM - NIGHT

79

Perry sits at a barstool near the service bar, where the waitstaff pour sodas. A sous-chef turns off all of the burners at his cooking station then walks to and through the door leading to the back of the kitchen. Perry looks down the bar then up to the clock above front door; 7:15 PM. Perry reaches over the bar, grabs two straws out of a stack of straws then starts drumming lightly on the bar. Tina comes in from the door to the back of the kitchen.

TINA

Just another Friday night.

Tina bends down behind the bar to organize bottles of beer in a small refrigerator under the bar.

PERRY

Tina?

TINA

Yeah?

PERRY

Why do you stay working here?

Tina pokes her head up from the refrigerator. She smiles.

TINA

Grad school.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Perry nods like he knows what Tina is talking about but his face shows he does not.

TINA (CONT'D)

I can get studying done, papers written, books read...

Tina points to a stack of papers at the back of the bar.

TINA (CONT'D)

And make just enough to pay for my apartment.

The door from the dining room to the kitchen opens. Mike and Cal already dressed in street clothes walk up to Perry.

CAL

You can handle this on your own, right Super Man?

Perry smiles sarcastically. Mike shrugs his shoulders.

MIKE

Thanks brutha.

Perry watches the two guys walk outside. He turns back to talk to Tina, but she has just walked into the back of the kitchen. Perry hears the front door open. He turns expecting to see Cal or Mike. Instead Perry sees three couples in their late fifties. Perry approaches the couples. One woman, a few pounds over weight and dressed in a sweat suit, steps forward.

WOMAN 4

You must be Perry.

PERRY

Yes I am.

WOMAN 4

Our friends were here earlier in the day. They raved about you, so we all figured we'd come here for dinner tonight.

The man standing next to Woman 4, in his early sixties and in a matching sweatsuit, steps forward, while looking around the dining room.

MAN 5

You are still serving, aren't you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

PERRY

Of course. Should I put some tables together for the six of you?

WOMAN 4

Six? No. Everyone else is coming over too.

PERRY

No problem. How many will that be?

MAN 5

Another twenty.

Perry tries not to look shocked.

PERRY

Great. Well let's get you folks some tables.

80

INT. RULOPH'S BACK OF THE KITCHEN - LATER

80

Perry enters the back of the kitchen. He sees Paul and Tina talking. Perry tries to stay calm.

PERRY

Uh, guys?

Tina and Paul look over to Perry.

PAUL

Did I just here the printers at the line?

PERRY

Paul? Do you have any staff left?

Paul shakes his head "no."

PERRY (CONT'D)

Tina. I need three diet cokes, two ginger ales, four Harpoon IPA, five cosmopolitans, three vodka tonics, two Tanqueray and tonics, and five Glenfiddich neat.

Tina looks at Perry, then at Paul, then back at Perry. Tina sees that Perry is not joking. Tina and Paul run to the door from the back of the kitchen to open kitchen.

CUT TO:

81 INT. RULOPH'S DINING ROOM - CONTINUED

81

Tina and Paul step into the open kitchen. They stop in their tracks. The dining room is half-full with men and women in their late fifties and early sixties. Tina looks at Paul, and Paul at Tina. Tina calmly but swiftly steps behind the bar and starts making drinks. Paul goes to a small printer and reads the appetizer orders Perry had entered.

PAUL

Let's light it up!

Paul grabs a paper towel, lights it on fire from one of the remaining burners that are still lit, then turns on the gas on the other stove's burners. Flames jump from the burners as Paul lights the gas.

CUT TO:

82 INT. RULOPH'S DINING ROOM - LATER

82

Tina has ten martini glasses lined up on the bar. She is shaking drinks in a cocktail shaker.

Paul is in the open kitchen. He calmly yet quickly moves back and forth between fifteen saute pans. He slides over to an oven door, pulls the door open then lets the door slam close as he slides back to the saute pans.

Patrick opens the door from the back of the kitchen.

PATRICK

What the hell?

Patrick's bloodshot eyes widen. He looks out to the dining room and sees Perry, and no one else, moving from table to table in the half-full dining room.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

Paul?

PAUL

(panting)

What Pat?

PATRICK

This is no dream.

PAUL

It's for real Pat. Very real.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Patrick sees Tina pouring the contents of the cocktail shaker into four of the martini glasses. She starts to mix more drinks in the cocktail shaker. Patrick looks at Paul who is still moving briskly from saute pan to saute pan.

Patrick goes to a sink, rolls up his sleeves then washes his hands.

PATRICK

OK Paul. Tell me what you need.

Patrick turns then moves behind Paul. Paul looks over his shoulder and smiles.

PAUL

Get ready 'cause I'm about to plate everything.

Perry comes to the bar with an empty tray. He starts to place the drinks Tina has been pouring onto the tray. He turns and looks at the open kitchen. He almost loses his balance when he sees Patrick. Patrick looks up from the counter where he's preparing plates for Paul and smiles at Perry. Patrick's complexion is washed out and pale, and his eyes are bloodshot, but he's working like he's done this every day of his life. We hear the front door open and see Patrick look up. Patrick's face turns from worry to excitement.

Cal is walking into Ruloph's. He is in such shock at seeing a busy dining room his face is almost ashen. Outside the front door where Cal has just entered stands Thomas, a well-dressed man in his late fifties with a tightly cropped salt and pepper beard. He watches Cal as Cal walks through the dining room.

PATRICK

Let's plate this pronto, amigo.

Paul looks at Patrick strangely.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

What? The rest of the staff is gone, I thought I'd make you feel more at home.

PAUL

Speak only Portuguese, stop listening to me, and stare at World Cup on a cheap-ass television. That'll make me feel like it's any other night.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

PATRICK

Let's get this done. Look who's here.

Paul looks up and sees Cal. Paul looks unimpressed.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

Behind him. Waiting outside.

Paul turns back to the burners and reaches for the first saute pan. He spins with the pan and puts the first dish into a waiting plate.

PAUL

(to Perry)

Here it comes, brutha.

He looks up and tries to look outside the front door.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Thomas.

Both Patrick and Paul smile.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Oh he's gonna love this.

Paul and Patrick start working even faster. Perry is finished putting the drinks on his tray and turns to bring them to the tables when he almost runs into Cal who is staring out into the spectacle of filled seats in the dining room and not watching where he is walking.

PERRY

Behind you!

Cal spins on his heels and glares at Perry then turns to Patrick.

CAL

An Irish wake?

Patrick looks confused.

CUT TO:

83

INT. RULOPH'S DINING ROOM - LATER

83

Thomas comes inside the front door. Patrick comes out of the door to the back of the kitchen to greet Thomas.

PATRICK

Thomas! How's Nancy?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Thomas looks at Patrick in disbelief, which he is trying to hide from Patrick.

THOMAS

Having a good night I see.

PATRICK

Unexpected, but we'll take it any way we can get it.

THOMAS

Good show, Patrick. Glad to see you're putting in the effort.

Thomas looks past the full tables to the rest of the dining room, noticing how it looks cleaner, better lit, and a little more put together.

PATRICK

An old colleague has come back to join us. Perry. The kid on the floor right there.

Patrick points to Perry who is delivering the last of the dishes to the tables with the help of Paul.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

I think he needs a hobby. He's been using all of his spare time cleaning up the place.

THOMAS

As long as he's not on the clock while his doing this extracurricular bull shit. You know this place is costing me a fortune just to keep the lights on.

Thomas is trying terribly hard to hide anger -- anger that the dining room is almost full.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

You know and I know I haven't seen a dime out of this in almost a year.

PATRICK

I know, Thomas. We'll keep the expenses down.

Patrick looks defeated. Then he perks up a bit.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

PATRICK (CONT'D)

But nights like this will surely
help.

Cal comes out from the back of the kitchen carrying a
bag.

THOMAS

We'll see.
(to Cal)
Got what you came for?

Cal lifts up the bag and the two head out the front door.
As the door closes behind them we see Thomas saying
something to Cal in what looks to be a stern whisper.
Thomas does not look happy.

CUT TO:

84 INT. RULOPH'S DINING ROOM - LATER 84

Perry is pulling the dinner dishes from the table of the
large party when the front door opens. Perry looks up,
concerned, and sees his landlady, Peg, enter the
restaurant. She looks around the dining room and smiles
when she see Perry. Perry smiles back.

CUT TO:

85 INT. RULOPH'S DINING ROOM - LATER 85

Peg is sitting at a table and Perry stands next to her.
He pulls his silver crumber from his pocket and slide the
crumber across Peg's table, cleaning the specks of food
and crumbs from the table cloth.

PEG

(about the crumber)
Your grampa's, right?

Perry smiles and lifts the crumber.

PERRY

You remembered.

Peg looks at Perry as if to say "give me a little more
credit."

PEG

You were awfully busy tonight.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PERRY

Thankfully.

PEG

I received your last check. Thank you.

PERRY

Can I get you another glass of wine, or a dessert on the house?

PEG

No Perry. I'm just happy to see things are going well. I'll just take the check.

CUT TO:

86 INT. RULOPH'S DINING ROOM - LATER

86

Perry enters the dining room from the back of the kitchen. Peg has already left her table. On the check is a stack of five dollar bills.

CUT TO:

87 INT. RULOPH'S DINING ROOM - LATER

87

Perry, Patrick, and Paul sit at the bar while Tina leans against the back of the bar.

Patrick is drinking water.

TINA

So what's up with the water, boss?

Perry looks at Tina in disbelief.

PATRICK

When was the last time we were that weeded?

PERRY

It rocked! We rocked!

Paul, Patrick and Tina look at Perry a little stunned by his enthusiasm. They pause and look at each other.

PATRICK

Yeah. We did.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PAUL
Yeah.

TINA
Fuck yeah. We rocked.

The four raise their glasses to each other.

After toasting, Patrick takes a long drink from his glass, looks up at the ceiling and focuses on the polished sections of the ceiling. He stays focused on these sections as he slowly places his glass on the bar.

CUT TO:

88 INT. SILVERTONE BAR - NIGHT

88

Kaitlin and Lauren sit at the bar.

KAITLIN
Three thousand?

LAUREN
That's what they're going for.

KAITLIN
I can totally see why you got out of it.

LAUREN
Because of three grand? Naw.

Lauren stares into her drink.

KAITLIN
So what was it?

Lauren looks up and focuses on her reflection in a mirror behind the bar, focusing on the complexion of her skin.

LAUREN
It's more complicated than that.

KAITLIN
We've known each other for a while, Lauren, and you've never talked about this at all. The only things I know I heard from Paul. I know you were in the top ten nationally. I know you were close to breaking through the top three. I know you had never crashed.

Lauren turns to Kaitlin.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LAUREN

There's nothing sordid -- no defining moment. I just got tired -- tired of having to fight for everything -- fighting for everything I've ever wanted in my life.

Kaitlin looks away then looks back at Lauren.

KAITLIN

So you might as well go jump off the Tobin Bridge.

Lauren looks incensed.

KAITLIN (CONT'D)

Seriously. You're so lucky. You have this thing in you that you were not only good at, but you loved doing. You're beautiful. Think of how many girls like me risk melanoma for skin like yours. You're smart. And the only thing you can say is you got tired of fighting? Most of us in this world are fighting to find something we care enough to fight for.

Lauren looks back to your drink.

KAITLIN (CONT'D)

You're only excuse is you lost your self-confidence.

LAUREN

That's the thing. I never had any. I was always working from this fuel I had from the massive chip I had on my shoulder.

KAITLIN

Chip from what?

LAUREN

I'm not white. I'm not black.

KAITLIN

And my parents weren't born here.

LAUREN

That's so different.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

KAITLIN

I know that, but some people in our neighborhood never did. Lauren, you can always find things that are bad and different. What about when you were doing those triathlons. Did anyone give a shit about your skin?

LAUREN

No.

KAITLIN

So you've had your time to relax. Now it's time to fight again -- fight for everything you want in your life. 'Cause there's really nothing else we have in this life except fighting for the things that matter to us.

CUT TO:

89 INT. RULOPH'S DINING ROOM - DAY

89

Perry enters the dining room. Five tall step ladders are scattered around the dining room. The kitchen staff is up on the ladders cleaning the ceiling. Patrick is standing at the base of one of the ladders looking up.

PATRICK

Great work guys. Keep going. Just like I showed you. I'll be back in a little bit.

Patrick looks over at Perry. Patrick looks different. Brighter.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

Hey Perr.

Patrick leaves the restaurant.

90 INT. RULOPH'S DINING ROOM - LATER

90

The step ladders are gone. The ceiling shines. Perry puts away in the busser's station all of the napkins he has folded for the day. Perry looks up to see Patrick walking through the door. He is clean shaven, wearing a new suit and obviously freshly showered. His eyes look bright and excited. He is carrying a bundle of papers. He flops the bundle on the bar.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The entire kitchen staff has stopped working. Patrick stops and looks around, looking at the kitchen staff, Paul, Perry and Tina all staring at Patrick.

PATRICK

What?

PAUL

What? You come in looking like this and you ask what?

PATRICK

Yeah. What's the big deal?

PAUL

I think this is the first morning in, what, Tina, help me out here. Eight months?

Ronaldo comes out from the back of the kitchen.

TINA

Ten.

RONALDO

Year and a half.

PAUL

You didn't have to be that honest.

PATRICK

Hah. Hah.

Patrick sees everyone is still stunned.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

So I checked out for a while.

PAUL

Quite a while.

PATRICK

Well I'm back.

The kitchen staff cheers. Everyone looks at the kitchen staff. They're staring at six small televisions hung in the open kitchen.

DISSOLVE TO:

91 EXT. ROAD IN CAPE COD - FLASHBACK - DAY

91

A crowd is cheering. Lauren is using a strong kick to finish the run of a triathlon.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She crosses the finish line. There are only two other women at the finish line. They all get together and give each other a hug.

DISSOLVE TO:

92 EXT. RUNNING STORE - BACK FROM FLASHBACK - DAY 92

Lauren is standing in front of a store window staring at a display of running shoes, tights and shirts. She looks at her watch; it reads 10:45.

CUT TO:

93 INT. RULOPH'S DINING ROOM - CONTINUED 93

Patrick is looking at his watch that reads 10:45.

PATRICK

OK. We've got 30 minutes.

PAUL

For what? We haven't had a lunch rush in months.

PATRICK

We're having one today. The group from last night is coming in at 11:15. But that's just today. I'm thinking bigger picture here.

TINA

If we start getting seriously busy, can I get some help, like a bar back or something?

PATRICK

Of course. But we need to get there first. And here's my plan.

The front door opens. Patrick looks up and gets excited. Thomas is walking in the door. Patrick looks around at Paul, Tina and Perry and holds up one finger indicating "one minute." Patrick walks up to Thomas.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

Thomas! You're just in time. I was about to tell the staff my plan for increasing our numbers.

THOMAS

That's great Patrick. You know last night got me thinking.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PATRICK

Me too. So with this...

THOMAS

This is the deal. I and the other owners have been carrying this place for too long. You either do 15 a day for a whole week by the end of next week or we're closing the place.

PATRICK

Thomas.

Thomas turns and starts for the front door.

THOMAS

Good luck with your plans, Pat.

Thomas walks out the front door. Patrick turns slowly, gloomily back to the Paul, Tina and Perry. He walks back to them, trying not to look dejected.

PATRICK

Well, the challenge is a little greater than I thought it would be.

CUT TO:

94 INT. RULOPH'S BACK OF THE KITCHEN - LATER

94

Patrick is surrounded by the kitchen staff, Paul, Tina, and the entire wait staff.

CAL

We're trying to be a real restaurant today?

KAITLIN

Zip it, Cal.

Cal mocks Kaitlin.

LAUREN

You look great today Patrick.

MIKE

Kiss ass.

PATRICK

Shut up, all of you!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Everyone looks around the assembled crowd. Paul looks particularly solemn.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

What we're fighting for today are our jobs.

The entire group look confused.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

Thomas came by this morning. He let me know that unless we start doing 15 a day within two weeks, he and the other owners are going to close the place.

CAL

Like we didn't see this coming.

TINA

Enough of your shit, Cal. I don't know about the rest of you, I really don't want this to be a real full time job, but I don't want to see this place close either.

PERRY

There's nothing stopping us from making this work.

Cal glares at Perry.

TEDDY

Can I ask a stupid question?

PATRICK

What is it Teddy.

TEDDY

Well two stupid questions.

PATRICK

What?

TEDDY

First, how much are we doing a day now?

PATRICK

On a good day? Somewhere around 5.

TEDDY

And what would it take to do 15?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

PERRY

Two table turns at lunch and at least one turn at dinner.

TEDDY

With a full dining room.

CAL

You can't turn the tables without the dining room being full.

TEDDY

You seem to turn tables when all of your *friends* come in and won't sit anywhere except at your tables.

PATRICK

Enough.

The group focuses back on the Patrick.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

So. I have a plan if anyone is interested.

Patrick moves to a stainless steel prep table in the kitchen and spreads some papers on the table.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

First, we need to start promoting. It starts in five minutes. We have a party of 25 coming in and I called a favor with a friend at the Globe. She'll be coming over at 11:30 to find our dining room is almost full for the first time in a year. I have some other ideas about promotion too, but next is the dining room. Thanks to Perry, a lot of the dining room is looking better than it has in months, so the rest of you need to step up now too. We need to start with the grease on the walls near the kitchen.

FADE TO:

95

INT. RULOPH'S DINING ROOM - LATER

95

Cal and Perry wait on the large party. Teddy is on a step ladder cleaning the walls around the open kitchen.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Mike is running food from the open kitchen to the large party. Kaitlin is at the bar stacking drinks for the large party onto a tray. Lauren comes out from the back of the kitchen with a tray of sorted silverware for the busser's station. Beth, a woman in her late twenties with short dark hair, an athletic figure, eye glasses with artsy frames and a camera, is at the end of the bar and is talking with Patrick.

BETH

So different, Pat. I've got some great pictures. Probably looking at this Thursday's issue.

PATRICK

I owe you, Beth.

BETH

Then what about that date you promised, oh, a year ago?

Perry and Cal turn away from the large party at the same time and head for the back of the kitchen.

CUT TO:

96

INT. RULOPH'S BACK OF THE KITCHEN - CONTINUED

96

Perry and Cal come in from the dining room. Perry pours coffee into a Styrofoam cup.

PERRY

Want some, Cal?

CAL

No.

PERRY

We're actually working well together out there, wouldn't you say?

Cal stares into Perry's eyes and walks right up into Perry's face.

CAL

(whispering)

Cut the shit. I don't care what's on the line for any body in this fucking place. It's not going to work. It hasn't for a long time and it's not going to work just because you are here. This can't work.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CAL (CONT'D)

Now we're going to get this pile of old farts out of here quickly, before any body in here or any other potential customers get any bright ideas that we're anything that we're not. And you are going to help me get them out of here now, or working with me is going to quickly become a *real* pain in the ass.

Cal turns and walks back out into the dining room. Perry watches Cal back as Cal walks away. Perry's face turns from a look a disbelief to anger.

CUT TO:

97

INT. RULOPH'S DINING ROOM - CONTINUED

97

Cal is standing at the open kitchen. He is balancing plates on his arms to carry to the tables. Perry walks up to Cal and stands right next to him. Perry starts to take plates and stack them on his arms.

PERRY

I don't know why I didn't do this a long time ago.

Perry looks at Cal.

PERRY (CONT'D)

Look at me.

Cal keeps looking straight ahead.

PERRY (CONT'D)

Look at me!

The kitchen staff stops working as they look up to see where the yelling is coming from. Cal slowly turns his head to look at Perry.

PERRY (CONT'D)

You are *not* going to get in my way. You hear me?

Cal lifts the plates and heads off to the table.

FADE TO:

98

INT. RULOPH'S DINING ROOM - CONTINUED

98

Cal is standing in the middle of all of the tables of the large party. Perry is a few tables away from Cal, approaching with an armful of plates. Mike is next to Perry with his own armful of plate.

PERRY

(to Mike)

Remember, seat one is the closest to the front door.

MIKE

So for 32, seat one is the guy with the crazy red toupee.

Perry looks at table 32, three tables away from he and Mike, and sees a man with an obvious toupee sitting in the seat closest to the front door.

PERRY

Perfect.

Perry and Mike are only a few steps away from Cal, who has been waiting for Mike and Perry to arrive.

PERRY (CONT'D)

(to Cal)

Thanks for waiting.

Cal looks at Perry then over the sea of heads of the large party.

CAL

Who has the veal?

Perry cringes.

PERRY

(whispering to Cal)

That goes to 43, seat 2.

No one in the large party seems to notice.

CAL

(louder)

Who has the veal!

Still, no one in the large party notices. Perry is glaring at Cal. Perry is looking for a place to set down his plates so he can take the plate from Cal.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CAL (CONT'D)
 (even louder)
 Who has the veal?!

Everyone in the large party stops talking and turns in the direction of Cal. Many of the people in the party look obviously annoyed.

MAN 5
 (to Woman 4)
 He must be new.

Cal hears this and becomes obviously annoyed.

CAL
 All right. Last chance for the veal.

A man in the middle of the party raises his hand.

MAN 6
 Over here.

Perry forces a smile.

PERRY
 (to Mike)
 Let's just deliver these.

CUT TO:

99 INT. RULOPH'S BACK OF THE KITCHEN - LATER

99

Cal is at the dishwashing station with a large tray of dirty dishes, silverware and glasses. Ronaldo is busy stacking dishes to put in the dishwasher. Cal is transferring all of the things from the tray onto the stainless steel dishwashing station. Perry enters carrying his own tray of dirty dishes.

PERRY
 Great work out there, Cal.

CAL
 Just the tip of the iceberg, mi amigo.

RONALDO
 (to Cal)
 You. Maricone!

CAL
 Fuck off Ronaldo.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PERRY

Don't take it out on him.

CAL

Fuck you, Perry.

Perry lays the rest of his dirty dishes and his tray at the dishwashing station then turns and gets in Cal's face.

Lauren and Kaitlin enter from the dining room.

LAUREN

I reset your tables.

She sees Cal and Perry start to shove each other.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

What are you two doing?

She gets in between them and easily breaks them apart.

Lauren grabs Perry by the arm and roughly leads him away.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

You need to help me with something.

Lauren leads Perry through the back of the kitchen. The back of the kitchen has cheap televisions packed into every conceivable nook and cranny -- all playing World Cup on Telemundo. Lauren continues with Perry all the way back to the loading dock.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

We're going for a walk.

Perry looks back towards the back of the restaurant.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

Kaitlin's staying late.

CUT TO:

100

EXT. CHARLES RIVER ESPLANADE - DAY

100

Perry and Lauren meander along a path. Joggers jog past. Cyclists zip by. Sailboats are out on the river. They walk side by side but they are silent.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LAUREN

I don't get it. I used to do this...stuff...with a bunch of girls. We all wanted to be the best, but we were also the first to stick up for each other. But with guys...

Perry stares at his feet, looks up at the boats, then back down at his feet.

They continue on silently for another five or six steps.

PERRY

So what's his deal?

Lauren is annoyed by the question.

LAUREN

I don't know. He dates Thomas.

PERRY

Isn't Thomas married?

LAUREN

With a kid too.

Perry shakes his head.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

And he has a few other guys who spoil him rotten.

PERRY

Thomas?

LAUREN

No. Cal. He really doesn't need to work.

PERRY

That seems to be a common theme here.

LAUREN

Not really. Tina. Sure. Cal. Obvious. But the rest of us? We're just too chicken to look for other jobs.

CAL

Then what's Cal's deal?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

LAUREN
 (frustrated)
 Y'know, if you want to know Cal's
 deal, you should ask Cal.

Lauren picks up here pace.

LAUREN (CONT'D)
 I've got some other stuff to do.
 See you tomorrow?

PERRY
 Yeah.

CUT TO:

101 INT. RULOPH'S DINING ROOM - DAY 101

Perry enters the front door. Kaitlin is sitting at a
 booth reading the Boston Globe.

KAITLIN
 (pointing to the
 paper)
 So we're going to be in here on
 Thursday.

PERRY
 Yeah.

Perry sits at the booth.

KAITLIN
 So?

PERRY
 So what?

KAITLIN
 Have a good time with Lauren?

Suddenly what Lauren was trying to do during their walk
 on the Esplanade dawns on Perry.

PERRY
 (to himself)
 Damn it.

Kaitlin looks at Perry curiously.

KAITLIN
 What happened?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PERRY

We were walking. We were talking.

KAITLIN

That's good.

PERRY

And all I could talk about, or ask her about, I guess, was Cal.

Kaitlin stands and looks down at Perry.

KAITLIN

Cal?

Kaitlin walks away. Perry stares down into the booth's table.

PERRY

(to himself)
Yeah. Cal.

CUT TO:

102 INT. SILVERTONE BAR - DAY

102

Looking into the table top, Lauren sits at a cocktail table. She plays with a coffee mug. Cal enters. He sees Lauren and goes over to her table. He sits at the chair across from her.

CAL

Hey.

Lauren is surprised.

LAUREN

Shouldn't you be with...

CAL

He's with his wife today.

LAUREN

Isn't that weird?

CAL

I've seen weirder. So. What do you think of this Perry guy?

Lauren is totally annoyed.

LAUREN

Cal, what does it really matter?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CAL

It matters, Lauren. It matters.

LAUREN

What? Do you like this guy?

Cal laughs.

CAL

Honey, he's as straight as you want him.

Lauren and Cal look at each other for a moment.

LAUREN

What do you think our chances are?

CAL

As good as any.

CUT TO:

103 INT. RULOPH'S BACK OF THE KITCHEN - DAY

103

The kitchen staff is prepping food for dinner. Ten small black and white televisions now sit on shelves around the kitchen they all air Telemundo, which is broadcasting World Cup coverage. Perry stands at the open door to the manager's office. Patrick sits in a chair inside the office.

PATRICK

What do you think?

PERRY

As good a shot as any, right?

PATRICK

That's not what I'm looking for. I'm looking to call in favors, create exposure, anything that can get people in here.

Patrick hands Perry a stack of photocopied flyers. We look at the flyers, they read "Rediscover an old friend" with graphics of plates of food, and smiling people.

CUT TO:

104 INT. OFFICE - DAY

104

The flyer is in the hand of Mr. Allen. He puts the flyer down on his desk.

MR. ALLEN

I'll see about it, Perry.

Mr. Allen holds out his hand and Perry hands him more flyers out of the stack.

MR. ALLEN (CONT'D)

Perry. How's it goin'?

PERRY

Seriously?

Mr. Allen nods.

PERRY (CONT'D)

You did me a huge favor.

Mr. Allen tries not to smile too broadly.

MR. ALLEN

I'll see what I can do, Perry.

CUT TO:

105 EXT. RULOPH'S - DAY

105

Perry walks to the front door of the restaurant where a brand new bicycle leans against the wall next to the door. A bike-lock loops through the back wheel and the frame. Lauren comes out of the front door -- she's wearing bike shorts, a jog bra, and carries a Camel Back backpack.

PERRY

Hey!

Lauren puts on a pair of lightly tinted riding glasses.

LAUREN

Hey.

She goes to the bike and unlocks the lock, then puts the lock into the back pack. She slings the back pack back on her back and mounts the bike.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PERRY

Wow. Is this where you needed to go?

Lauren looks puzzled.

PERRY (CONT'D)

When we were walking.

LAUREN

Oh. Yeah. Yeah, I was going to pick this up.

Perry stuffs his hands into his pockets.

PERRY

So. Enjoy your ride.

LAUREN

Thanks.

PERRY

Where are you going?

LAUREN

I thought I knew, but I think I'm just going to see where the road takes me.

PERRY

That's cool. You working tomorrow?

LAUREN

Does it matter?

Perry looks surprised.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

I mean with the place closing.

PERRY

Don't go looking anywhere else just yet.

Perry and Lauren stare into each other's eyes.

LAUREN

I'll give it one more shot.

Lauren lifts up on one of the pedals, gives a hard down-stroke and pedals down the street. Perry watches Lauren pedal away. Only after she turns the corner at the end of the block does he open the front door to the restaurant.

106 INT. RULOPH'S DINING ROOM - NIGHT

106

The dining room is empty. Perry is leaning against the counter of the open kitchen. Tina is reading behind the bar. Mike and Teddy sit at a booth. Kaitlin reads a newspaper at the bar. Cal comes out of the door that leads to the back of the kitchen. Paul taps Perry on the shoulder with a pair of tongs. Perry turns around.

PAUL

Y'know why you dredge a chicken breast through flour before dipping it in egg when you're breading chicken?

PERRY

It gives the egg, and therefore the breading, something to hang on to. Otherwise your breading's just gonna peel off.

Paul looks disappointed.

PAUL

You're right.

Paul points the tongs at Perry.

PAUL (CONT'D)

It's important to know these things.

PERRY

I know, Paul.

Cal walks behind Perry.

CAL

Another banner night.

Cal leans up against the counter of the open kitchen.

PAUL

Hey Cal.

Cal does not turn around.

CAL

What Paul?

PAUL

Why do you dredge a chicken breast through...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CAL

I'm not a fucking cook, Paul.

PERRY

If you thought for a second that knowing everything you could about the shit you're trying to sell actually made a difference, then maybe, just maybe this place...

CAL

You're blaming this on me? A drunk manager? A menu that looks and tastes like dog food? This is my fault?

Paul reaches across the counter and grabs Cal's shirt. Cal breaks himself free.

CAL (CONT'D)

What the fuck?

PAUL

When you know what makes good food then you can criticize my food. Until then, shut your trap or I'm going to teach you to shut it.

CAL

Oooh. Tough guy.

PERRY

So what are you doing to keep us from closing?

CAL

Not a god damned thing. Thomas should have closed this months ago. So what are you doing?

The front door opens. Two men and two women in their forties enter the dining room. Perry steps forward towards the front door.

PERRY

(to the guests)

Hello folks. Welcome to Ruloph's.

WOMAN 5

Some friends of ours told us to ask for Perry.

CUT TO:

107 INT. RULOPH'S DINING ROOM - NIGHT

107

Two men and two women sit at a table. Perry approaches the table with four plates. Time slows down to a crawl as Perry delivers the plates to the people at the table. We see one table fill with a group of four people. The two men and two women at Perry's table fade into a new couple. The other tables are empty. Outside becomes day and then night again.

The four people at Perry's table fade into another set of four people. Now more tables fade full of customers. Cal fades into view, serving one table.

Outside becomes day and then night again.

All of the customers at the tables fade into new customers. The remaining tables fade full of customers. Lauren, Kaitlin, Mike and Teddy all fade into view, serving different tables around the dining room.

Everyone in the dining room - customers and wait staff - fade out of view.

FADE TO:

108 INT. RULOPH'S DINING ROOM - NIGHT

108

The wait staff sits at the bar. Tina leans on the back of the bar while she reads a book. The dining room is empty.

MIKE

I have to say I like being busy.

TEDDY

The tips don't hurt.

Patrick comes in from the back of the restaurant.

PERRY

And we can make it better.

PATRICK

We have to.

Everyone turns to Patrick. He walks behind the bar to the beer taps, lifts a glass from behind the bar and pours himself a beer. Everyone stares at him.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

Can't I have just one?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CAL

That's a good question.

Patrick takes a small sip of the beer while staring at Cal.

MIKE

What's the worry, Pat? We're kicking ass.

PATRICK

Remember your question about how much is fifteen a day?

TEDDY

That was my question.

PATRICK

Well whoever asked it, we're three short.

Everyone except for Cal lets out a collective graon.

CAL

I knew we couldn't do it.

Perry looks at Cal.

PERRY

Who doesn't want to have a job? If this place closes, none of us will have a job!

CAL

So you get another one.

PERRY

It's never that easy.

TEDDY

And I don't know about you, I like it here.

KAITLIN

Yeah. Me too.

LAUREN

We're like a family.

Patrick smiles.

MIKE

A little dysfunctional, but what family isn't?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Tina closes her book with a slam.

TINA
Can't you all see I'm trying to
study?!

She grabs everyone's attention.

TINA (CONT'D)
Seriously though. What are we
going to do to get that extra
three a day?

PATRICK
Nothing.

Everyone except for Cal looks surprised. Cal smiles,
thinking Patrick has given up.

PATRICK (CONT'D)
We've done everything that I had
hoped we would. We just need to
trust now.

Cal's smile turns to disbelief.

CUT TO:

109 INT. RULOPH'S BACK OF THE KITCHEN - LATER

109

Lauren pulls together her bag in the storage closet near
the coffee station. Perry comes in from the dining room.
Lauren looks up then looks back down at her bag. Lauren
watches Perry out of the corner of her eye. Perry goes
straight to the coffee station and starts cleaning the
coffee station, wiping down surfaces that are only
slightly stained and stacking packages for sending
customer food to go that have fallen down and are strewn
on the table.

LAUREN
Why?

PERRY
Why what?

LAUREN
I know the old line about *if*
you're going to do something, do
it the best you can, but you.
It's. I don't know.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PERRY

Motivation.

Lauren looks confused.

PERRY (CONT'D)

It's all about motivation. Everyone comes to the table with a different motivation. Tina wants a place to study where she can actually make money at the same time - even if it's only ten bucks. Mike is too insecure to see he is so much more talented than he thinks he is. Cal.

Perry looks out through the door to the dining room.

PERRY (CONT'D)

Who the hell knows what Cal's motivation is.

LAUREN

So what's yours?

PERRY

I'm making something up to someone.

Lauren looks at Perry. She's not satisfied with his answer.

PERRY (CONT'D)

Patrick and I were going to buy a place together.

LAUREN

And you got cold feet.

PERRY

I got arrogant.

LAUREN

Thought you could do it on your own.

PERRY

Thought the restaurant business was beneath me.

Perry starts to tell Lauren the whole story about he and Patrick.

CUT TO:

110 INT. RULOPH'S BACK OF THE KITCHEN - LATER 110

Perry is leaning against the coffee station. Lauren is leaning against the wall next to the coffee station.

PERRY

Triathlons?

Patrick comes out of the manager's office and heads to the door to the dining room. He comes close to Perry and Lauren. When Patrick gets close to Perry, he slaps Perry on the shoulder. Patrick's smiling.

PATRICK

We're close. We're close! Now get the fuck out 'cause I'm going home.

Patrick turns off the lights to the back of the kitchen before Perry and Lauren can react.

CUT TO:

111 EXT. RULOPH'S - NIGHT 111

Lauren and Perry come out of the front door as Patrick is inside turning off lights and setting an alarm.

PERRY

How about Chinatown for some cold tea?

LAUREN

If we were already saucy, I'd think about it.

PERRY

Good point. How about Cafe Vittoria?

LAUREN

I really need to train tomorrow morning.

PERRY

If we head over now, they'll only be open for another hour after we get there.

Patrick comes out of the front door.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PATRICK

You two want a lift somewhere?

PERRY

North End?

PATRICK

I live in Cambridge. No way.

LAUREN

Like there'll be any traffic.

PATRICK

I'm going home. See you tomorrow.

LAUREN

PERRY

See ya.

Bye.

Patrick turns and walks down the street. Perry and Lauren look at each other.

PERRY

Cab?

LAUREN

You lazy schmoe. C'mon.

Lauren heads out at a brisk walk.

CUT TO:

112 EXT. CAFE VITTORIA - LATER

112

A classic Boston North End cafe.

CUT TO:

113 INT. CAFE VITTORIA - CONTINUED

113

"That's Amore" plays on a juke box. Lauren and Perry stand next to a table with four chairs inside the crowded cafe. They place their bags on two of the chairs then sit at the two remaining chairs.

PERRY

And you did it for how long?

LAUREN

I started sophomore year of high school and went up through the beginning of last year. So. About fourteen years.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PERRY

So what happened to your bike?

LAUREN

I sold it.

PERRY

I had the same bike for almost twenty years.

LAUREN

I had a new one each season. Any tenth of a second a new innovation could gain you was precious.

PERRY

But I don't get it. Top three finishes. National events. And you just quit.

LAUREN

I just didn't see myself doing any better.

PERRY

(knowingly)
And that's what happened.

LAUREN

What do you mean by that?

PERRY

Why I bailed on Patrick. My grandfather. My parents. They were all so good. I didn't think I'd ever measure up.

LAUREN

So you're not doing this just for Patrick.

PERRY

Guess not.

LAUREN

And things are different now?

PERRY

You tell me.

LAUREN

Looks like it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

PERRY

That's why you bought the new
bike?

Realizing Perry's talking about her now.

LAUREN

I guess it is.

PERRY

You guess?

LAUREN

I know.

A waitress with a serious attitude arrives at the table.

WAITRESS 4

You two ready to order?

PERRY

I'll have an espresso and a
tiramisu, and the lady will have a
decaf cappuccino. Can we get two
spoons with that tiramisu?

LAUREN

The decaf cap is fine, but I'll
have a biscotti.

WAITRESS 4

Sure.

The waitress turns and walks away.

LAUREN

No offence.

PERRY

None taken.

Perry likes Lauren's sense of control.

CUT TO:

114 EXT. CAFE VITTORIA - LATER

114

Lauren and Perry exit the cafe. They stand for a moment
in front of the entrance.

PERRY

Thanks.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LAUREN

For what?

PERRY

This. I had a great time tonight.

LAUREN

Me too.

They look at each other for a moment. Perry breaks the trance.

PERRY

You need to get home.

LAUREN

Yeah.

PERRY

Have a great ride tomorrow.

They turn to walk in different directions down the sidewalk. Perry stops and turns around.

PERRY (CONT'D)

Lauren.

Lauren turns.

PERRY (CONT'D)

Do this again some time?

Lauren nods.

LAUREN

I'd love to.

Each turns back around and starts walking down the sidewalk. Lauren has a large grin on her face. Perry starts whistling "That's Amore."

CUT TO:

115 EXT. RULOPH'S - DAY

115

Perry walks down the sidewalk towards the front door. To the side of the restaurant is an alley that leads to a loading dock for the restaurant. As Perry passes by the alley he gives a casual glance down it. He stops in his tracks and backs up quickly so he can not be seen by Cal and Thomas who stand on the loading dock. Thomas is yelling at Cal who is standing defiantly. Perry looks around.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He sees no one else on the street, then he starts to creep down the alley. He stands out of view, next to a large dumpster.

THOMAS

Twelve Cal. Twelve!

Thomas takes a deep breath.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

I should have pulled the plug long ago.

CAL

That's what I've been telling you.

THOMAS

Cal, I've never paid you for what you know. And the *only* thing I wanted you to do here was make sure business was as usual.

CAL

Perry was not as usual. I could never have planned on Perry.

THOMAS

What can one waiter do?

CAL

He's a guy with passion and focus.

THOMAS

Then go and see if he'll pay you to suck his cock.

Cal swings at Thomas. Thomas steps back from the punch.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

So now you get all tough on me? I like it.

Cal swings again and grazes Thomas' cheek. Thomas is surprised by Cal's intensity. Thomas takes one more step back. Not realizing he's so close to the end of the loading dock, he slips off the edge and falls backwards off the dock into the alley below. Perry starts walking down the alley towards the loading dock. Perry watches Thomas slowly lift himself off the ground and turn to walk out of the alley.

Thomas avoids Perry as they pass each other in the alley. Perry arrives and climbs up onto the loading dock.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

PERRY

Cal?

Cal starts walking away. He stops and turns back to Perry.

CAL

When I was a boy I made a sculpture out of clay -- an ashtray or coaster or something. One of those school projects. My mom kept gushing over how beautiful it was and how much of an artist I was. She had me totally convinced, but the more I looked at this thing the more I thought this thing looks like a pile of cow shit.

PERRY

What was in it for him?

CAL

He hid all the profits from his wine importing. And I gave him what his wife wouldn't.

Perry looks at Cal with empathy.

CAL (CONT'D)

So maybe we can make this thing work.

Perry stares at Cal in disbelief, then starts to crack a wry smile.

CUT TO:

116 INT. RULOPH'S DINING ROOM - NIGHT

116

Cal and Perry stand side by side near the busser's station.

CAL

Not a bad lunch.

PERRY

Not going to get us over fifteen.

CAL

Even if we did.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PERRY

Thomas is pulling the plug
regardless of our numbers.

CAL

He's got a new boyfriend.

Perry looks at Cal. Cal is trying to look tough but Perry
can see he is hurt.

PERRY

So what can we do?

CAL

You heard Patrick yesterday. Let's
trust.

The doors to the back of the kitchen swing open slowly as
Patrick walks into the dining room.

He walks up to Perry and Cal and stands next to them.
Patrick looks out over the dining room.

PATRICK

The prick didn't even have the
balls to do it in person.

CUT TO:

117 INT. RULOPH'S DINING ROOM - LATER

117

The dining room is full. The wait staff is in full swing.
People at the front of the restaurant are waiting for
tables. The front door opens and Mr. Allen walks in with
ten other associates from the office. They talk to a
hostess. She writes down Mr. Allen's name on a pad of
paper then Mr. Allen and his group move over to the bar
area to wait. Mr. Allen orders drinks for the group.
After he has his scotch on the rocks he makes his way
closer to the service bar. Perry arrives to pick up a
drink order. Perry performs a casual scan of the crowd at
the bar. He stops when he sees Mr. Allen.

MR. ALLEN

Here I am.

Perry looks past Mr. Allen to all of the other
associates.

PERRY

I see you brought a crowd.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MR. ALLEN

I thought this place became a pit.

PERRY

It had.

Mr. Allen smiles. Perry turns back to his tray of drinks. Just before he lifts the tray he turns back to Mr. Allen.

PERRY (CONT'D)

Can I ask you a ridiculous question?

CUT TO:

118 INT. RULOPH'S DINING ROOM - LATER

118

Mr. Allen and his group are at one table. Cal and Perry wait on the group. Mr. Allen is talking on a cellular phone. He hangs up the phone then motions for Perry to come over. Perry leans closer to Mr. Allen.

MR. ALLEN

We'll meet after dinner over in the bar area.

CUT TO:

119 INT. RULOPH'S BACK OF THE KITCHEN - LATER

119

Perry is at the coffee station pouring coffee into cups. The door to the dining room opens and Lauren enters. She's smiling. She notices Perry is in a good mood as well.

LAUREN

Happy to see me?

PERRY

Of course.

LAUREN

Anything else?

PERRY

We'll see later.

Lauren raises an eyebrow.

LAUREN

I entered a race.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Perry's eyes widen.

PERRY

Great!

LAUREN

I'm going to need a chase team.

PERRY

I'm good at that -- when I know what I'm chasing.

CUT TO:

120 INT. RULOPH'S DINING ROOM - LATER

120

Only three tables still have customers sitting at them. Mr. Allen sits at the bar, Perry is standing next to Mr. Allen. The two of them talk quietly. Cal is walking to the service bar.

PERRY

Cal.

Perry motions Cal to come over.

PERRY (CONT'D)

Cal. This is Mr. Allen. I used to work for him.

Cal shakes Mr. Allen's hand.

CAL

Looking for some free drinks?

MR. ALLEN

You could say that.

The door to the back of the kitchen opens and Patrick walks into the dining room then over to Perry.

PATRICK

This must be Mr. Allen.

Patrick holds out his hand and they shake.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

I hear you might be able to help us out.

Cal looks at Patrick, at Mr. Allen then at Perry. Cal smiles.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MR. ALLEN

All I could remember was the has-been Ruloph's where you wondered if you'd catch something taking a leak at the urinal. Then I come in and see what I saw tonight. I talked to a few customers, gave some phone calls to some other people I trust, and you guys should be proud of the buzz you've created.

PATRICK

Some times all you need is a new way of looking at things.

MR. ALLEN

Perry knows I have a few friends that could help you all out. Three of them want in. We're going to need some time, we'll probably have to close for a week or more while we work out the paper work, liquor license and all that stuff, but I think we can handle this Thomas guy.

Cal smiles. Paul shows up.

PATRICK

If the liquor license is an issue, we can work around that.

PAUL

A bring your own booze thing for a while, or the under new management line.

MR. ALLEN

I like the bring your own idea.

Tina comes over.

CAL

You could keep it that way for a long time and charge a corking fee.

Lauren comes over.

TINA

Turn this into a juice bar - forget about the booze.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Kaitlin, Mike and Teddy arrive.

LAUREN

Put a climbing wall next to the bar.

KAITLIN

Or at least some dart boards or video games.

MR. ALLEN

That's a little better.

MIKE

Valet parking.

TEDDY

Petition for an after hours permit to serve juices, coffees and teas.

Everyone looks at Teddy, surprised by his idea.

PATRICK

MR. ALLEN

That's a great idea.

Now we're thinking.

An enormous cheer erupts from the back of the kitchen. The kitchen staff starts filing out of the back of the kitchen. Some are carrying Brazilian flags. Others are blowing whistles.

RONALDO

Brazil! Brazil! Brazil! Numero uno!

MR. ALLEN

Maybe tomorrow would be a good day to close for renovations.

CUT TO:

121 EXT. BOSTON COMMONS - DAY

121

Perry and Lauren jog along a walkway.

PERRY

(winded)

So how am I doing?

LAUREN

Fantastic.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PERRY

Seriously. How much faster do you go when you're training?

LAUREN

Seriously?

PERRY

Yeah.

Lauren picks up her pace to a quick run. After a short distance she stops and jogs in place while she waits for Perry. When he arrives he is smiling...and winded.

PERRY (CONT'D)

I'm definitely not going to be able to keep up with you.

LAUREN

I won't let you fall too far behind.

PERRY

Promise?

LAUREN

Promise.

PERRY

You get going. Don't be late for your shift.

LAUREN

OK boss.

Perry smiles.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

You like that way too much.

Lauren races off.

CUT TO:

122 EXT. RULOPH'S - DAY

122

The exterior looks sparkling clean. Perry arrives and enters the front door.

CUT TO:

123 INT. RULOPH'S DINING ROOM - DAY

123

Everything in the dining room is in pristine condition. Mike is folding napkins. Kaitlin sits at a booth with the latest issue of Gourmet Magazine. She looks at page 38 of the latest issue of Gourmet Magazine -- the Restaurant News section. At the top of the list of cities is Boston.

We see Kaitlin start reading "Everything the proprietors Perry Fisher and Patrick Lynch have done is inspirational."

Perry takes a quick glance at the reservations book. A dark line is at the bottom of the page. Under the line is written "taking no more reservations tonight."

Patrick and Paul sit at the end of the bar, a stack of papers between them. Perry walks up and stands between Patrick and Paul.

FADE TO BLACK.

124 THE END.

124