

36 DRAMATIC SITUATIONS
IN ABOUT AS MANY MINUTES

By

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SETTING: TULSA. A MODERN HOTEL LOBBY. A CONCIERGE DESK SITS IN THE CENTER.

(LIGHTS UP on ALEX, the concierge, adjusting his work space. He is preparing for the day.)

(MR. BLAKE, a man in a sharp suit, enters.)

ALEX

Ah! Mr. Blake - I just want to thank you again. I can't stress enough how appreciative I am that you are considering promoting me to lead concierge.

BLAKE

Think nothing of it, Alex. It's only the natural conclusion to the truly stellar work you have done at the Polti Hotel. You have proven yourself to be qualified for the job. Well... Mostly qualified.

ALEX

Just mostly qualified?

BLAKE

How do I put this delicately? You are a day concierge, Alex. I don't mean to offend, but day shifts are easy. All you do is check out guests that are leaving and check in the new ones. Occasionally, someone asks you where the nearest place to get a pancake is, you say IHOP, and they go on their merry way.

ALEX

Well, I think it's a bit more complicated than tha-

BLAKE

No it isn't!

(Alex is a bit taken aback.)

Look, kiddo. I know how this industry works. If you're not careful it can eat you alive. I say that you are mostly qualified because there is an emotional component to concierge-ing that I have yet to see from you. We have to put you through the gauntlet in order to see if you can handle everything our industry can throw at you. Hotels are quiet and relaxing during the day, but at night anything can happen. Strange and dangerous people can wander in off the street. Guests call the front desk to report sightings of everything from ghosts to chupacabras, and it is your job to investigate each and every call. Heck, I even had one guest that woke up in a bathtub full of ice with their kidney missing!

ALEX

Okay, okay, I get it.

BLAKE

I don't think you do. Nothing in your training has prepared you for tonight. If you want that promotion you have to prove to me that you have what it takes to handle every guest's needs, no matter how scary or unmanageable they may seem. Night shift concierges have been driven to madness or even claimed to lose part of their souls at this job. That being said, I just have one question for you, Alex... Are you ready for what's to come?

ALEX

Uh... I think so?

(Blake takes a step back and opens their arms up to the sky.)

BLAKE

Then welcome... To the NIGHT SHIFT.

(THUNDER CRASHES throughout the lobby as the lights FLICKER around Blake.)

ALEX

What the heck was that!?

BLAKE

Oh that? There's a Horror Film Convention in Ballroom B. Crazy timing, right!? The toilets on the third floor are acting up again. Have the plunger on standby, okay, bud?

(Blake exits.)

ALEX

Alright, Alex. You can do this. How bad could it really be?

(DYLAN, a bell hop, enters. They go to the desk and start rummaging around the drawers.)

Um... Excuse me?

DYLAN

Not now, pal. It's almost five. I gotta get ready.

(Dylan disappears behind the desk.)

ALEX

Ready for what?

(Dylan pops up holding makeshift body armor.)

DYLAN

What are you new here?

ALEX

New? No, I... Well, I guess I am new to the shift. I've been working mornings for the past five years. Come to think of it, I haven't seen you here before.

DYLAN

Oh, that's understandable. I've only been here for about a year and I only work the night shift.

ALEX

Huh... Can I ask you... Is it really that bad at night?

(Dylan pulls a samurai sword out of the desk and straps it onto their back.)

DYLAN

Buddy. You have no idea.

(MALACHI and THRASHER enter dressed like goth vampires.)

ALEX

Ah, you fine folks must be here for the Horror Film Convention!

MALACHI

How dare you! We have been coming to this hotel for decades and have *NEVER* been treated so horribly.

ALEX

I apologize. There is a convention in Ballroom B and I just thought with the outfits... No, no, there is no excuse. I made a mistake and I am sorry.

DYLAN

Mr. and Mrs. Owens. Alex here didn't know, and definitely should not be *assuming* things in the future.

THRASHER

I should hope so.

DYLAN

I will take your luggage and tell the kitchen to have complimentary bloody marys sent up to your room.

MALACHI

Just bloody marys huh? I would've preferred actual blood.

DYLAN

Hey, you're getting free booze. I really would appreciate it if you wouldn't *B NEGATIVE*, okay?

(Malachi and Thrasher laugh heartily.)

THRASHER

I swear, Dylan, you are the best part of this hotel.

(Malachi and Thrasher continue to laugh as they make their way out.)

B Negative!

(Dylan grabs the bags and starts to follow the Owens, but stops.)

DYLAN

Hey – you seem like a nice person, but you’ve got a lot to learn. You’re not on the day shift anymore.

(Dylan looks at Alex peculiarly.)

ALEX

What? Do I have something on my face?

DYLAN

No, it’s just... In this light you look kind of cute. Like a terrified, little bunny.

ALEX

Thanks. In this light you look, pretty badass.

DYLAN

I know. See you around.

(Dylan exits.)

(Three people, BAKER, PRESSLY, and GOZZIE enter. They are wearing identical, non-threatening sweaters.)

GOZZIE

Hello. We are the Gozzie party here for the convention.

ALEX

Ah yes! The Gozzie party. One bedroom, one bed?

GOZZIE

That’s correct. We find it safer to sleep in one bed.

ALEX

No explanation needed. I completely understand.

(Alex hands them a room key and some papers.)

Here is your receipt and room key. Your convention will be in Ballroom B, just down this way.

(Alex leads them off stage left.)

GOZZIE

Thank you.

ALEX

You're very welcome. Enjoy your stay at the Polti Hotel.

(Gozzie, Baker and Pressly exit.)

(Alex walks back to his desk and immediately hears the HORRIFIED SCREAMS of his guests. Gozzie, Baker, and Pressly run back onstage, falling to their knees, letting out terrified sounds and clawing at their faces.)

What the-! What happened?

GOZZIE

Why would you send us into a place like that!?

BAKER

I see death when I close my eyes!

PRESSLY

There was so much blood!

(MR. POLTI, an old-but-spry man, enters in a huff.)

POLTI

What is going on here!? I could hear screaming from clear across the building!

ALEX

Who are you?

POLTI

Who am I? Why, I'm Bartholomew Polti, owner of this hotel.

ALEX

You are Mr. Polti? Why have I never seen you here before?

POLTI

Maybe you just aren't very good at your job. Otherwise, you may have known that there are two conventions occupying our ballrooms tonight. One is the Horror Film Convention and the other is hosted by the Family Film Festival of Northern Oklahoma.

ALEX

The Family Film Festival of Northern Oklahoma?

GOZZIE

That's right, you fool. We don't watch filth like horror films. They terrify us! We like simple movies about dogs that get lost and have to find their way home, or children that go to heaven, but are revived and come back down to Earth and write a book or –

ALEX

The musical, *Oklahoma!*?

GOZZIE

How dare you. Have you been listening at all? You think just because we represent Northern Oklahoma that we would watch such vulgarity as the musical *Oklahoma!*? Polti!

POLTI

Yes, Mr. Gozzie.

GOZZIE

I have never been more offended in my life.

POLTI

I am terribly sorry. I will make sure that this employee is punished to the fullest extent.

GOZZIE

They better be.

POLTI

Please, let me show you to Ballroom A and we can put this horrible mess behind us.

GOZZIE

Thank you, Polti. You have always been a wonderful friend of the foundation.

POLTI

It is an honor. So, what film are you watching this week?

(Polti starts to show Gozzie, Baker, and Pressly out.)

GOZZIE

It's a lovely film called, *Mouse in the House*, where a misprinted election ballot causes a mouse to accidentally be elected as President of the United States! As you can imagine, the possibilities for wholesome shenanigans are endless.

(They exit, leaving Alex alone yet again.)

(Alex starts pacing.)

ALEX

Oh man. How did I screw up so badly on the first five minutes of the job? I have to do something to get on Mr. Polti's good side. But, what?

(From Ballroom A, "Hail to the Chief" starts playing loudly.)

Man, that's loud. But, I can't tell them to turn it down when I've already screwed up so badly.

(GOETHE, dressed like a very intimidating demon, enters from Ballroom B.)

GOETHE

What's going on here? We're trying to enjoy our horror convention and all we can hear is this lame music!

(Alex rushes over to the concierge desk.)

ALEX

I'm terribly sorry, Mr.?

GOETHE

Goethe.

ALEX

Yes, Mr. Goethe, I would like to apologize. There is another convention happening at the moment and –

GOETHE

-And that takes priority over my convention?

ALEX

No, it doesn't, but I –

GOETHE

-You what? What are you going to do to fix this?

ALEX

I...

(Alex looks back at Ballroom A, but can't bring himself to enter.)

GOETHE

I see how it is. Well, if you're not going to do anything, then I guess I will. Let's see how they like this.

(Goethe exits. Seconds later, THRASH METAL starts playing from Ballroom B.)

ALEX

Oh no.

(Gozzie enters.)

GOZZIE

What is that horrible sound? It is destroying our sense of wonder!

ALEX

I'm sorry, sir. The people at the Horror Film Convention were mad at the sound coming from your ballroom.

GOZZIE

Oh, so you knew about their plan and went along with it? How dare you. You can be assured that Mr. Polti will hear about this.

ALEX

Please, no. I will talk to them, but...

GOZZIE

But what?

ALEX

Maybe you can turn your music down as a show of good faith?

GOZZIE

Preposterous! I will not give in to their bullying!

(Yelling to the Ballroom.)

Baker! Pressly! Turn the music up!

(The music gets louder.)

We'll see how they like that.

(Baker and Pressly enter and stand behind their boss.)

ALEX

Sir, please!

(Goethe enters with MANGE and ARES, who are dressed in scary costumes. They are ready to fight.)

GOETHE

What's the matter, punks? Can't handle good music?

(Yelling to the Ballroom.)

Turn it up, boys!

ALEX

NO!!! TURN THE MUSIC OFF!

(The music on both sides stops.)

We have other guests in this hotel!

GOETHE

And those guests are more important than us? We reserved our ballroom fair and squa-

(Goethe notices Gozzie for the first time.)

Gozzie?

GOZZIE

Who's asking?

(Goethe takes his mask off.)

Goethe!? Why doesn't it surprise me that a deviant like you is hosting an event like that?

GOETHE

You always were a scared, little twerp, Gozzie!

ALEX

I'm sorry, but you two know each other?

GOZZIE AND GOETHE

He's my brother!

(Everyone gasps,)

ALEX

Gentleman, gentleman. May I suggest that in the name of brotherhood you put aside your differences, go back to your respective conventions, and just be a little more respectful of each other?

(Beat.)

ALL EXCEPT FOR ALEX

NO!!!

GOETHE

I will NEVER have respect for you, Gozzie. I still haven't forgiven you for what you did all those years ago.

GOZZIE

Well, I still haven't forgiven you for what you did all those years ago.

ALEX

Wait. What happened all those years ago?

BAKER

None of your business!

MANGE

Quiet jerk!

PRESSLY

Yeah, shut up!

ARES

Don't make us beat you up, you glorified bell hop.

ALEX

Sorry. Jeeze.

GOETHE

How about this - you stay on your side of the hotel and we'll stay on ours. If we even think you're plotting something against us or one of yours looks at us the wrong way - things are gonna get messy.

GOZZIE

I couldn't have said it better myself. I mean - I definitely could have said it better, because you're an idiot and I'm much smarter than you.

(Goethe and Gozzie launch at each other, but their groups hold them back.)

MANGE

He's not worth it, boss.

PRESSLY

Just let it go. Don't let his bad attitude ruin our convention.

(Goethe and Gozzie dust themselves off like tough guys. Their groups look at each other menacingly, then leave.)

ALEX

What's going on here!?

(Dylan enters covered in blood. Dylan doesn't see them.)

DYLAN

Screaming to the heavens? Yeah, I've been there.

ALEX

How do you handle the craziness?

(Alex sees Dylan's bloody clothes.)

Oh my God! What happened to you?

DYLAN

You should see the other guy.

ALEX

What?

DYLAN

Just kidding. This is the other guy. He tried to jump off the third floor balcony and land in the pool.

ALEX

Wow. Did he make it in?

DYLAN

Most of him did.

ALEX

Oh my god. Mr. Polti is going to kill me.

DYLAN

Why do you say that?

ALEX

I just... I can't have anything else go wrong on my watch. I'm up for a huge promotion and I feel like he hates me already. There's no way Blake will give me the job if Polti talks to him.

DYLAN

You know what? Let me see what I can do. I've got a little sway with Polti.

ALEX

Really? You'd do that for me?

DYLAN

Like I said earlier – you seem like a nice guy. I've got a good feeling about you.

ALEX

Thanks. I really appreciate it.

DYLAN

My pleasure.

(A phone RINGS. Dylan picks it up.)

Uh huh. Got it. Be right up.

(They hang up and immediately get the plunger from the desk.)

Doody calls.

(Dylan laughs and snorts cutely, then exits.)

(Alex smiles and watches them leave.)

(HAROLD enters holding a bar stool, whiskey glass and a bottle of brown liquid. He puts it on the concierge desk and sits on his stool.)

HAROLD

Oh I know *that* look.

ALEX

Excuse me.

(Alex sees Harold pouring a glass of the liquid.)

Hey, buddy, you can't drink that over here.

HAROLD

Relax. I never touch the devil's nectar. This is just iced tea.

ALEX

Really?

(Alex smells the tea.)

Huh... Why are you drinking it like that?

HAROLD

I thought it might open you up to talking to me. You know? Like a bartender lending a sympathetic ear. Come on, bud. You tell me yours and I'll tell you mine? Who were you smiling like a dope at?

ALEX

Oh, it's, uh... Nobody. Just a coworker.

HAROLD

I've never looked at a coworker like that. Well, once, but I ended up marrying that coworker. Didn't make a difference. I was still fired for inappropriate behavior in the workplace.

ALEX

That's too bad. But, you two were in love, right? You had to be if you got married.

HAROLD

Yeah. For a time, I suppose.

ALEX

I probably shouldn't pursue Dylan, anyway. It would be inappropriate. Plus, if I get this promotion then I'll be their boss and that would just add another ethical dilemma on top of that and... Nevermind. I must be boring you. I'll shut up.

HAROLD

No, no. Not at all. Actually, since you told me your problem, do you mind if I tell you mine?

ALEX

Sure. That's what a concierge is for, I guess.

HAROLD

Good.

(Harold shoots back the iced tea and slams it on the desk.)

The year was 2010. My wife and I had just come back from our honeymoon to Miami.

ALEX

Florida?

HAROLD

Oklahoma. We love to go to the Ottawa County Fair. We also love that they were founded in 1891, have a history of lead and zinc mining, and have just over thirteen thousand people living there. But I digress. We had just gotten back from our honeymoon when I was approached by two federal agents. They claimed that I had sold State secrets to the Russians. Can you believe that?

ALEX

I'm not sure. I don't know you that well.

HAROLD

Well, it wasn't true! Still, it's hard to fight charges like espionage, and I went to jail for a long time.

ALEX

How long?

HAROLD

I just got out last week. Broke out, actually.

ALEX

Oh wow.

HAROLD

So, I sneak back to my old house, and what do I see when I get there? My best friend has seduced and is living with my wife! They even... They even have a child together.

ALEX

This sounds like the plot of *The Count of Monte Cristo*.

HAROLD

Well it's not! This is real life!

ALEX

Okay. Sorry. Please continue.

HAROLD

So, I have come to this hotel in order to seek my revenge. I happen to know that they are attending a Family Film convention today. I will find them and enact my vengeance.

ALEX

Wow. How are you going to do that?

(Harold whistles.)

HAROLD

I thought you would never ask.

(TANYA, a super slick acrobat enters and tumbles across the stage.)

Tanya Gould. Two time Olympic Silver Medalist and expert thief.

(REGINALD, a stereotypical hacker enters holding a keyboard.)

HAROLD

Reginald Van Damme. One of the world's best hackers. He can break into the Department of Defense in his sleep.

(The Kraken, a master assassin enters, twirling a bo staff.)

They call this one, "The Kraken". Little is known about them, but when you want a high value target taken care of, they're the one you call.

ALEX

Wow. This is... A lot.

HAROLD

Do you think it's too much?

ALEX

No, I mean... I don't know the details of your "mission", but it seems like you're ready for anything.

HAROLD

That's right. Now, if you'll excuse us, we have to plan for tonight.

ALEX

Sure. Please call if you need anything. I mean, like, extra towels or something. I can't help you deactivate a laser grid.

HAROLD

Why would you? That's why we have Reginald.

(Harold, Reginald, The Kraken, and Tanya exit.)

(A GHOST runs across the stage and HOWLING WILDLY.)

ALEX

What the heck is going on? Excuse me, sir? Are you here for the horror conven-... No, Alex, don't assume things. Ah man. What... Sir? Or ma'am? Is there anything I can do to stop your pain?

(Dylan runs onstage with a net. They are covered in green slime. They chase the Ghost around.)

Oh thank god.

DYLAN

Hey Alex.

ALEX

Hey Dylan. What are you doing?

DYLAN

I'm trying to catch this ghost. Well, I guess technically it's a poltergeist.

ALEX

Wait, ghosts are real!?

DYLAN

Yeah, a real pain in the -

(Dylan catches the Ghost in the net.)

Got ya! Alex, can you call maintenance and tell them the ghost haunting room 212 has been caught, and to look in the walls for human remains.

ALEX

Look in the walls for human remains?

DYLAN

Yeah. Ghosts like this usually haunt the place they were killed in. Either that or they left a cursed object in the drawers and house keeping just missed it. You'll learn this stuff in time.

ALEX

Okay. I'll make a note to tell them.

DYLAN

Thanks. I gotta take this thing down to the basement. Don't even know if it'll fit, we have so many ghosts there already.

ALEX

Okay...

(Dylan and the Ghost exit.)

How many people are murdered in this hotel?

(Alex starts cleaning off the bar when SLUG and JAMIE enter simultaneously. Slug is dressed as what can only be described as a fire demon and enters from Ballroom B. Jamie is wearing a nice sweater vest, and enters from Ballroom A. They immediately catch each other's eye.)

SLUG AND JAMIE

Excuse me, but I –

(They giggle and blush.)

SLUG

I have to say – you are the most beautiful creature I've ever laid eyes on.

JAMIE

I was about to say the same thing!

(Slug and Jamie meet in the center of the room and look at each other in awe.)

Tell me... Do you believe in love at first sight?

SLUG

I never had, before I laid eyes on you. Now I can't imagine a world without such a concept.

JAMIE

Truly. It's like, when I look at you, my mind and my heart opens and I feel like the infinite glories of the Universe are within my grasp. Can I –

(Jamie puts their hand on Slug's face, but Slug recoils.)

SLUG

No. I mean... I would like nothing more than your touch, but it can't be so. We are from two different worlds. My people hate yours for some reason.

JAMIE

Aye, and mine yours. Curse! A curse on them and their stubborn natures. Why must we be subjected to the limitations of their minds? Why can't I love a fan of horror films? Occasionally... I like to watch actors be murdered by unstoppable killing machines...

SLUG

Yes, and I like to decompress after a long day with nice stories about penguins learning how to dance.

(Slug and Jamie begin to embrace.)

ALEX

Um. Excuse me?

SLUG

Buddy, we're kind of in the middle of something here.

ALEX

I'm sorry, I just couldn't help but overhear. I wonder if there is something that I can do to help with your particular situation?

JAMIE

You would like to help us? Why?

ALEX

I'm a fan of love. And, I'm a bit worried that we're on the brink of an all out brawl if your two conventions don't solve their differences.

SLUG

True. If mine friends slayeth any of yours, my dear... –

JAMIE

-Jamie.

SLUG

Jamie! Pretty name. I'm Slug.

JAMIE

Slug?

SLUG

Like the insect.

JAMIE

Uh huh.

SLUG

Anyway. I fear if my group fights with yours than we will never be able to get together.

JAMIE

I fear that as well. What are you proposing, concierge?

ALEX

Well, I'm thinking that we pretend that you are both kidnapped. I will write out a series of clues and give them to each of your groups. The trick is – we make the Horror Film Convention *have* to work with the Family Film Convention and vice versa, in order to solve the mystery. Once they get to know each other by working as a team, we can surprise them with a big party in the lobby and watch a fun, family horror movie like, oh, I don't know... *Gremlins*. That's when you two go public with your relationship, further sealing your groups' new bond.

SLUG

That's just crazy enough to work!

JAMIE

I agree. Thank you so much –

(She reads his name tag.)

-Alex.

ALEX

My pleasure.

(Alex takes a key card and gives it to them.)

Take this room key. You can hide out there while I write the clues to your disappearance.

(Dylan enters.)

JAMIE

Thank you so much! I don't know how to repay you.

ALEX

No need. It's my job.

(Jamie, Slug and Alex share a smile as Jamie and Slug depart.)

DYLAN

What was that about?

ALEX

Oh, just trying to unite two sworn enemies into one big, happy family again.

DYLAN

That's ambitious.

ALEX

Well, I think if I'm going to salvage this day and my job I either go big or go home. Speaking of which – were you able to talk with Mr. Polti?

DYLAN

Yeah... He, uh, really is not impressed with you. I think you're going to need something just short of a miracle to save yourself.

ALEX

Okay.

(Alex starts pumping himself up.)

I can do this. This plan will work. I know it will!

(Dylan smiles cutely.)

What?

DYLAN

You just... You've changed a lot since I met you this morning. I think you're really starting to get what it's like working on the night shift. You just might be who this job needs after all.

ALEX

You really think so?

DYLAN

I do. Maybe I'll follow suit some day.

ALEX

I know that I just recently met you, but from what I've seen you can handle this job with your eyes closed.

DYLAN

Thanks, Alex. I really appreciate that.

(Dylan lays a small kiss on Alex's cheek.)

ALEX

You... Shouldn't have done that.

DYLAN

Oh. It was inappropriate. I'm sorry. You're going to be my boss and I... I should have asked.

ALEX

Uh... Yeah, no, I... It's not that I don't -

DYLAN

I get it. I'm going to go back to work.

(Alex scrambles to finish the notes.)

ALEX

Wait, Dylan. Do you mind helping me with my plan?

DYLAN

Um. Sure.

ALEX

Can you hand this note to Gozzie, and this note to Goethe.

DYLAN

Of course. I hope it works.

(Dylan smiles slightly askew, then exits.)

(A very TALL MAN enters wearing a trench coat and wobbling back and forth.)

ALEX

(To self.)

Well, that's not conspicuous.

TALL MAN

Excuse me, kind sir. I am a guest at this hotel and could use some help.

ALEX

Absolutely. How can I help you?

TALL MAN

As you can see, I am a successful business person who is in town for an important business conference. I have worked a long day and could use something fun to help me relax.

ALEX

I can definitely point you in the right direction. Tulsa has a fantastic night life. What are you interested in?

TALL MAN

I would like to have a drink, but I seem to have forgotten my driver's identification back in Chicago. I'm from Chicago, you see. I was curious as to whether or not you knew of a bar that didn't card?

ALEX

Oh... I see... Uh, no. I'm sorry, I don't know of any bars that don't require ID. In fact, it's against the law if they don't check your ID at the door.

(Tall Man's stomach shouts "Damnit!".)

Uh... What was that?

TALL MAN

I am sorry. Doctor said if I don't take care of that indigestion, it'll kill me.

ALEX

Yes, that sounds serious.

TALL MAN

It is. But, if alcohol is not an option, perhaps you could direct me to the nearest establishment for... How do I say this?... Dancers...

ALEX

Oh. Yes, well, Tulsa is home to many of those as well, but again, they require ID at the door.

TALL MAN

Man! Not cool! Ugh... I dunno... Fireworks?

ALEX

Forgive me if this is a rude question, but are you just two kids in a trench coat trying to do adult stuff?

(Beat.)

TALL MAN

You're right. That is a rude question and I am offended that you asked it. Good day.

(Tall Man wobbles away.)

(Polti enters.)

POLTI

I assume you turned away those children in the trench coat?

ALEX

Yes sir. I know that I have let you down today and left a pretty bad impression, but I promise that I will not let any more trouble get past me tonight.

POLTI

You better not, Alex. This hotel has an excellent reputation, and I will not have it be sullied by an uncaring employee.

ALEX

I understand that sir. I can assure you that I care deeply for this job, and will do everything in my power to ensure that our guests are treated with five star service.

POLTI

That's what I like to hear. Dylan talked to me earlier tonight. Said they had a good feeling about you.

ALEX

Oh, wow, that's -

POLTI

- Not a sentiment that Dylan and I share. But... Sometimes, I enjoy being proven wrong.

ALEX

Well... Hopefully, I can prove you wrong tonight.

POLTI

We'll see, Alex. We'll see.

(Polti exits.)

(Harold enters wearing a skin tight cat suit. He tries to look inconspicuous as he walks to the desk.)

HAROLD

Try not to look so damn sketchy, Alex.

ALEX

Oh god... I forgot about you.

HAROLD

Don't worry, pal. I'll be out of your hair soon enough. The mission should be wrapping up any second.

(Tanya, Reginald, and The Kraken enter, all wearing cat suits.)

ALEX

Nice outfits. Not in any way conspicuous.

HAROLD

Team. Is it done?

THE KRAKEN

Da.

HAROLD

Good. How did it go?

TANYA

I used my thief skills to rob their safe. I also took their bank cards and cleaned them out.

HAROLD

Perfect. And you, Reginald?

REGINALD

I used my hacking skills to dump their internet history. They were doing lots of illegal stuff there. The cops should find the information very useful.

HAROLD

Yes! That'll show them.

THE KRAKEN

Wait? Reginald is the hacker? I thought I was the hacker?

HAROLD

No. He was the hacker. You are the heavy. Just in case things went south and you had to rough someone up a bit.

THE KRAKEN

Oh!

HAROLD

Why? What did you do?

THE KRAKEN

I hacked them.

(She takes out an axe.)

To pieces. In their bed. Did you not want that?

HAROLD

What?... Oh my god... No. No no no no. You didn't...

THE KRAKEN

I'm sorry. Our wires must have crossed somewhere. I guess I have egg on my face. And a little bit of brains.

HAROLD

No... I can't believe it... What have I done? Who am I to take a life!? Oh NO! Cynthia! My beautiful wife. And Monty, my best friend! Gone... And it's all my fault.

(A slow clap starts offstage. Cynthia and Monty emerge from the shadows.)

CYNTHIA

It's about time you admitted something was your fault.

HAROLD

Cynthia? Monty? What is going on here?

(Tanya, Reginald, and The Kraken all drop their characters.)

CYNTHIA

Harold, you never killed anyone. These experts you "hired" are just actors that Monty and I actually hired to get you some help.

THE KRAKEN

Hi! We are an improv group called "Impoverished". It's a fun play on the fact that we do improv and the fact that none of us have jobs. Well besides, "killing your wife".

(Impoverished start laughing with each other.)

Can you imagine? Let's go to IHOP and hang out for six hours.

(They exit.)

HAROLD

But... Why?

CYNTHIA

Because you need help, Harold. You broke out of prison, and we all know you were in there for the right reasons. You told everyone about selling secrets to the Russians.

HAROLD

But... But, what about Monty. You're having an affair with him.

CYNTHIA

Harold. Monty is just a friend. And super gay.

MONTY

Super gay. It's fantastic.

HAROLD

Oh man, good for you for living your best life, but, what about the little girl I saw?

CYNTHIA

You mean my niece?

HAROLD

Oh! Forgot you had a niece.

MONTY

Harold, we just want you to get better. You have to go back to jail.

HAROLD

I know. I miss you two. I can't believe I jumped to such crazy conclusions about you.

CYNTHIA

Come on, Harold. We'll take you back to jail and explain what happened. Hopefully, the judge will go easy on you.

HAROLD

I would like that. Thank you two.

(Harold, Cynthia, and Monty exit.)

(Dylan enters in a tattered, burnt uniform.)

ALEX

Wow... Should I even ask?

DYLAN

It's not as interesting of a story as you may think.

ALEX

I find that hard to believe.

DYLAN

It's not. I just had to evacuate room 302 when a bachelor party for an eighty year-old woman got a little out of hand. The dancer had an Uncle Sam theme and his sparklers didn't mesh well with her oxygen tank. I'm surprised you didn't hear the explosion.

ALEX

Explosion?

DYLAN

Don't worry. I got everybody out in one piece. Well, the bride-to-be was missing her eyebrows. But, I couldn't figure out if Julio, the dancer, had his hair burned off too, or was just completely hairless to begin with... He looked like a god in the light of that fireball.

ALEX

You really are amazing, you know?

DYLAN

No, I'm not. I just do my job.

ALEX

You go above and beyond. I don't know if I could ever be like that.

DYLAN

You just need a little crazy in ya. I think this job requires a little crazy.

ALEX

Yeah...

DYLAN

I think I should probably go find a clean outfit.

ALEX

How many outfits do you go through a week?

DYLAN

On a good week?

ALEX

What constitutes a good week?

DYLAN

The more outfits destroyed, the better the week... Try to find your crazy. Maybe you just misplaced it.

(Dylan exits.)

(Slug and Jamie enter, only this time Slug is dressed like a Family Film Fan and Jamie is dressed in Horror Film garb.)

ALEX

Slug! Jamie! Nice clothes. In the notes I left I told both groups to meet here for their next clue. They should be here any minute, so wait behind the desk until I tell you to come out.

(Slug and Jamie hide.)

(Gozzie and Goethe enter holding their notes.)

GOZZIE

What the heck is this!?

GOETHE

I could ask you the same thing!

ALEX

Whoa, what happened?

GOZZIE

I received this note saying my Jamie is missing, and to ask the horror jerks for help.

GOETHE

And I received this note saying Slug was missing, and to ask these creeps for help!

ALEX

Well, I'm no detective, but it seems like, in order to find your missing people, you should work together to solve the elaborate clues left for each of you.

GOETHE

That's the dumbest thing I've ever heard. For all I know, he stole my kid!

(Baker, Pressly, Mange, and Ares enter, ready to fight.)

GOZZIE

I don't particularly love violence, but I can stomach it enough to crack your skull open!

JAMIE

Hey, hey, hey! Stop this madness. There is a perfectly logical explanation for this.

GOZZIE

Who is this person?

GOETHE

I've never seen them before in my life.

GOZZIE

You must be the kidnapper! You won't get away with this!

(Gozzie punches Jamie, sending them reeling backward into Goethe's arms.)

(All hell breaks loose. The costumed Horror Film Fans use their props to strike while the Family Film Fans use selfie sticks and other nice-but-lame things to defend.)

(Alex rushes in front of the crowd and drops to his knees.)

ALEX

Why is this happening!?! Why can't I just have a nice, normal night where nothing crazy happens? Why, God, why!?!

(The action slows down until everyone but Alex freezes. Heavenly lights isolate Alex.)

(God enters.)

GOD

You think I did this, my child?

ALEX

... God?...

GOD

The one and only. Which religion? Not gonna tell ya. But, it's not the one your thinking.

ALEX

Why... Why are you doing this?

GOD

I'm not doing this to you, Alex. Sometimes things just don't work out the way you plan.

ALEX

But... I've grown so much. I feel like a different person than I did this morning. If I can just adapt and change, then I can be enough for this job. I swear!

GOD

That's the problem with you, Alex. You're always thinking about yourself. You have been scheming all day to make yourself liked, when that's not what these people needed. Harold probably shouldn't have been allowed to go forward with his crazy plan. Slug and Jamie may have fared better if they just sat down and talked to their families respectfully. You have adapted these problems to serve your purposes, but not really solve any.

ALEX

I guess you're right. But, please, God, you have to tell me what to do to stop this.

GOD

You already know what to do. Stop being so scared to leap before looking. Why do you think Dylan is so good at their job? It's simple. It takes no skill to tell people what they should be doing. But, it takes a real hero to roll up their sleeves and put themselves in the line of fire.

ALEX

Thanks God.

GOD

Don't mention it, buddy. Want me to rewind time?

ALEX

You can do that?

GOD

Yeah. I'm God.

ALEX

Oh, cool. Like fifteen seconds?

GOD

You got it.

(God snaps their fingers and time rewinds back to just before Jamie is punched.)

(God exits as the groups square up with each other.)

(Alex pushes Jamie out of the way and is punched by Goethe.)

ALEX

Ow! Son of a... Argh! That hurts.

GOETHE

What did you do that for? You have no skin in this fight, kid.

ALEX

I, sir, am the concierge. Anything that happens in this hotel is my responsibility. And right now, I am responsible for ending this war. Of course, I'm going to need some help to do that. You can come out now.

(Slug enters, sporting his sweater vest proudly.)

GOETHE

Son? You're wearing a –

SLUG

-Sweater vest. I know, dad.

GOETHE

You have brought dishonor to our family by wearing that!

SLUG

No! You have brought dishonor to our family by this stupid feud.

GOETHE

You're no son of mine.

GOZZIE

And you are no kin of ours.

JAMIE

Stop it, you two! Don't take your hatred out on Slug. He's right. How far are you willing to go to have others fight your battle?

GOZZIE

And who are you to stop us?

(Jamie takes off her costume, stunning Gozzie.)

Jamie? It can't be. You dress like these degenerates?

JAMIE

I am one of these degenerates. And so are you. And so is Baker, and Pressly, and all of us. Everyone likes to be scared every now and then. Who are we to deny it? Can you honestly say that your heart doesn't fill with joy when you hear a blood-curdling scream or the revving of a chainsaw?

GOZZIE

I suppose. On occasion.

JAMIE

And you –

(They turn to Goethe.)

Can you honestly say that a story of a child befriending a lost bear cub doesn't bring a tear to your eye?

GOETHE

My god... You're right.

JAMIE

Don't you think it's time we put this silly feud behind us?

GOETHE

I think that's a great idea.

SLUG

Say, what was the feud about anyway?

GOETHE AND GOZZIE

He destroyed my VHS copy of *Gremlins*... What?... Your copy...

(They laugh.)

GOETHE

That was my favorite movie!

GOZZIE

Mine too. I guess the VCR must have destroyed it and we secretly blamed each other.

GOETHE

Well. We may have lost the past twenty years, but let's not lose the next twenty. What do you say, brother?

(They hug.)

SLUG AND JAMIE

Brother! You're my cousin? Oh, we can't do this.

(Slug and Jamie pull away from each other.)

ALEX

If anyone wants to watch *Gremlins*, it will be playing in fifteen minutes in the lobby.

GOETHE

Perfect! Let's get a drink and catch up.

GOZZIE

You read my mind.

(Everyone exits except Alex.)

(Polti and Dylan enter.)

POLTI

Well. It looks like you pulled these disparate groups together for the better. I'm impressed. And, from what my granddaughter here has been telling me - you are right for this job after all. There is just one last surprise in store for you.

(Polti pulls of his costume to reveal he is Blake.)

ALEX

Blake!? What's going on here?

BLAKE

I was watching you the entire time. You thoroughly impressed me tonight. I will do anything to get you onboard as a head concierge. It's just a matter of what you want.

ALEX

What I want? I want... I want you to give a concierge job to Dylan.

BLAKE

Dylan? But why?

ALEX

Because they can handle it. They are talented and if you stand Dylan and I side by side, there is no comparison. They blow me out of the water. I quit.

BLAKE

Are you sure?

ALEX

I'm sure.

BLAKE

Okay. Congratulations, Dylan. You are a concierge.

DYLAN

Thank you. I won't let you down.

(Blake gives Dylan and Alex some space.)

ALEX

Hey. Since, I no longer work for the hotel, I was wondering if you would like to go on a date with me.

DYLAN

I think that can be arranged. I'm a concierge so... I know all the good spots.

(Dylan extends their arm and Alex takes it.)

Hey, Blake, I'm a bit confused. Where is my Grandfather?

POLTI

He was murdered. Yes, it was tragic, really. The man that killed him thought you may want vengeance some day, and left you a set of clues that will lead you on an epic journey to find him. He also said you can only choose three traveling companions, so choose wisely.

(They begin to exit together as the lights fade down.)

DYLAN

Man... Classic story...