Roommates

EXT - Apartment Parking Lot - Night

The lights are on in the small apartment above. The TV is on, and can be heard through the window. James, a twenty- something skinny, white male, exits his cheap -looking sedan with his girlfriend, Viv, a modest twenty- something African-American woman. She is wearing ripped jeans and a knit sweater, and James wears slacks and a collared shirt.

VIV

That was fun…

JAMES  
Yeah, I had a good time too.

VIV

So… are you gonna invite me up?

James blushes. He looks up at the window.

JAMES  
We’re gonna have to be quiet.

INT - Apartment - Night

James opens the door and Viv walks in quietly. Suddenly, a loud piano string blasts from the TV, and they both jump. Graham, a heavyset, twenty- something white male, is sprawled out on the couch watching a horror movie. He’s eating a bag a chips, and it’s clear from the crumbs and bags on the floor that he’s been at this for a while.

GRAHAM

Oh hey, James. What’s up?

Viv gives James a disapproving look.

JAMES  
Hey, uhm, Graham, do you think you could watch this later?

GRAHAM

It’s almost over.

JAMES  
How much is left?

GRAHAM

An hour.

VIV

How is that almost over?

GRAHAM  
It’s a three hour movie.

JAMES  
Whatever, man. We’ll just, uh, go to my room.

INT - Bedroom - Night

Jim walks into his bedroom with Viv. It’s small, and has two single beds in it, one on each wall. Aiden, a trim, twenty- something black male, is wearing a smock and painting on a canvas with just one big bucket of red paint.

AIDEN

Just pretend I’m not here, Jim.

JAMES  
Is it possible you could… Not be here?

AIDEN

It’s my room too.

James sighs.

JAMES  
I’m sorry.

VIV

… You’re cute when you're sad.

Viv gives James a peck on the cheek and she falls onto his small bed. James follows her and they start kissing .Aiden looks at them and starts splatter-painting.

AIDEN

This is actually kind of helping.

JAMES  
Can you, like, try to be quiet.

AIDEN

Sorry, shutting up.

VIV

Maybe this was a mistake.

JAMES

… Please don’t go.

VIV

… Okay, but only because you’re so cute.

AIDEN

Ahhh…

Another jump-scare blasts from the TV in the next room.

GRAHAM (0.S.)

Shit!

AIDEN

Aaaah!

Aiden jumps in surprise, and spills the red paint all over Jim and Viv, covering them completely. Viv wipes away the paint from her eyes shocked.

EXT - Apartment - Day

The three roommates can be seen arguing through the window.

AIDEN(O.S.)

Okay, this is not gonna work.

INT - Apartment - Day

Gram and James are sitting on the sofa. Coffee mugs are out on the coffee table. Aiden is pacing back and forth. James still has red paint splotches on his clothes.

AIDEN

This worked when we were all in college, but we have lives now.

GRAHAM  
Well, I do.

AIDEN

Shut up.

JAMES  
What are you suggesting?

AIDEN

I think one of us is going to have to leave.

GRAHAM

What? But, we’ve been best friends forever.

AIDEN

Exactly, so we shouldn’t have to all live together. I’m confident that our friendship is strong enough that we don’t have to see each other every second of every day.

JAMES  
Why is just one person leaving?

GRAHAM

I can’t pay the rent on my own.

JAMES  
I guess… none of us can.

AIDEN

But we clearly can’t all stay here.

GRAHAM

We can make it work. We always find a way.

JAMES  
No, Aiden’s right.

GRAHAM

You’ve never complained about space before.

AIDEN

James never complains about anything. I spilled paint all over him last night and he didn’t complain.

GRAHAM  
So how do you know there’s a problem?

JAMES  
There’s a problem.

Awkward silence.

GRAHAM

Well, I’m not leaving.

AIDEN

Nobody wants to leave.

JAMES

Somebody has to.

GRAHAM

But we’ve been best friends since high school. We’re all friends.

Aiden stops pacing and smirks.

INT - Apartment - Afternoon

James and Gram are sitting on the couch blindfolded. The rest of the apartment is out of the shot, putting the viewer in perspective of the characters.

GRAHAM

Can we take these stupid things off yet?

JAMES  
Please?

AIDEN (O.S.)

Okay, done.

Aiden pulls off the blindfold.

AIDEN

Voila! My masterpiece.

A red stool is in the center of the room in front of a splatter painted cardboard backdrop with an extensive collage on it made up of pictures of the roommates together throughout the years. The coffee table is in front of the stool, with a stack off index card on them.

JAMES  
You made a gameshow?

GRAHAM

A shitty gameshow?

AIDEN

It’s to help us decide who has to leave.

JAMES  
 Seems a bit… excessive.

AIDEN

Not in the least. This is all absolutely necessary. You see, we’re all friends, so we don’t want to kick anyone out of the apartment. That’s why I made this game to determine who is the worst friend.

GRAHAM

Nifty.

AIDEN

We each take turns sitting in the “hot seat” while trying to answer questions about each other. Who ever knows the least about the other two, loses.

GRAHAM

Uh… If you wrote all the cards, don’t you know all the answers.

AIDEN

No, you see….. oh.

James

Y’know what, I don’t think we even need to do this. We had a bad night, sure, but I’m confident that-

GRAHAM(O.S.)

No…

Aiden and Gram turn to see that James is testing out the hot seat.

GRAHAM  
Let’s do this.

INT - Apartment - Sunset

Gram is sitting in the hotseat, blindfolded. James is sitting on the couch,d and Aiden is pacing back and forth.

GRAHAM

Is the blindfold really necessary?

AIDEN

It’s part of the experience.

JAMES  
Who goes first?

AIDEN

I will. Okay, Gram, ten questions, five from each of us.

GRAHAM

Shoot. I know I’m obviously your best friend for sitting through this shit.

AIDEN

What was my aunt’s Maiden name?

GRAHAM

Seriously?

AIDEN

How do you not know this?

JAMES  
It is a big part of who he is.

AIDEN

Should we start packing your bags?

GRAHAM  
Grace.

AIDEN  
… Very good.

EXT - Apartment Complex - Night

The gameshow backdrop can be seen through the window. The moon and the stars are visible.

AIDEN (O.S.)

What’s my favorite color?

INT - Apartment - Night

James is in the hot seat now. Graham is on the couch and Aiden continues to pace back and forth.

JAMES  
Seriously? Red. I should know.

GRAHAM  
Let me ask one?

AIDEN

Fine.

GRAHAM

Alright James, ol’ buddy, ol’ pal, what was the name of my fish?

JAMES  
… Crap. I dunno. I can’t believe I don’t remember. You were crying about it for weeks when it died.

GRAHAM

It was so sudden. Aiden overfed the..

AIDEN

Oh, not this shit again.

Gram stands up.

GRAHAM

Oh yes, this shit again. I go away for one week and give you one simple task, give the fish three pellets worth of food every other day! No more, no less! And somehow, you manage to-

AIDEN

-I gave your goddamn fish its goddamn food. It died because you were too lazy to ever change its water!

JAMES  
Guys!

Gram and Aiden shut up and turn back to James.

JAMES  
I can’t remember.

Awkward silence.

AIDEN

Well,… you missed three.

GRAHAM

I only missed two, so I’m safe. You wanna know why? Because I’m a great friend… who doesn’t kill his friend’s fish!

JAMES  
Gram, stop. We’ve been through this already.

AIDEN

Oh, so now James, the perfect friend, is coming to my defense. Give it a rest, you missed two, you don’t know anything about me.

GRAHAM

James is twice the friend you are. Get in the chair. You can’t leave soon enough.

INT - Apartment - Night

Aiden is in the hot seat. Graham is standing up now, and James is back on the couch.

GRAHAM

How do you know my girlfriend’s middle name? I didn’t even know until you guessed and reminded me.

AIDEN  
Because I’m a great friend, you asshole.

JAMES  
Guys!

GRAHAM

Just ask your damn question, James.

JAMES  
… Where did Viv and I meet?

AIDEN

Easy… at the DMV.

JAMES  
… that’s right.

AIDEN

Suck it. It’s my last question and I only missed one.

JAMES  
What happens if you tie with me?

GRAHAM

He won’t. I’m taking him out now…. What was my fish’s name?

AIDEN

Gilbert? I should know… I killed him.

Graham lunges at Aiden and tackles him off the stool, knocking over the gameshow back drop.

GRAHAM

Sonnuvvabitch!

Graham and Aiden are exchanging blows on the ground. James gets up.

JAMES  
Guys stop.

GRAHAM (fighting)  
Quit being the pacifist and help me out!

AIDEN(fighting)

He’s not gonna help you. He’s with me.

JAMES  
I’m not taking a side.

GRAHAM (Fighting)

Of course you’re not. You don’t care about either of us.

AIDEN (Fighting)

Yeah, you’re the worst friend.

JAMES  
You know what? I HATE YOU GUYS!

Graham and Aiden stop fighting.

JAMES

You never listen to anything I say. I make so many sacrifices for you, and yet you still take advantage of me. Even back in college, when you each cut classes, I took notes for you and neither of you so much as thanked me. And whenever you guys fuck up my life, and you do, often, I I just suck it up. Well, you know what? I’m done. I’m glad I’m leaving. Screw you guys.

EXT Apartment - Complex - Sunrise

James packs the last of his stuff into his car, which is filled with clothing, books, furniture, and other personal belongings. He gets in, slams the door shut, and drives away.

INT - Apartment - Day

Graham is sprawled out on the couch and Aiden is painting in what is now his own room with the door open.

GRAHAM

Well, we won. Just the two of us… best of friends. The two amigos.

Aiden slams his bedroom door shut.

GRAHAM

Plenty of room and plenty of good cheer…. murderer!

AIDEN (0.S.)

I hate you!