

LEERY

Written by

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FADE IN:

INT. NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

DAVE (late 20's) leans against a bar, dressed business casual, relaxed and amused as he stares off toward the dance floor, buzzing with energy. BILL, 40, with wet hair and a gray suit, joins him, setting down a tray of tequila-filled shot glasses and his dripping coat.

BILL  
I made it! Everyone, let's have a  
toast!

Bill grabs a shot glass and raises it. Dave and three others follow suit.

BILL (CONT'D)  
Where's Larry?

DAVE  
He's already had a few.

Dave points toward the dance floor and Bill spots him.

BILL  
Larry! Larry!

Bill waves. Larry, late 20's and sharply dressed, does a spin move as he appears.

DAVE  
Sweet move, dude!

Dave hands Larry his shot.

BILL  
Now let us officially welcome our  
newest employee, Dave, to the team!

Everyone downs their tequila shots. Larry nearly misses his stool as he tries to sit.

DAVE  
(chuckling)  
Whoa there, what's wrong with you?

Larry ignores him and reaches for another shot, blocked by a hand.

BARTENDER  
Keys first, buddy.

Larry surrenders his keys and grabs a shot, then stares back at the dance floor.

LARRY

Just getting my courage up. I'm gonna ask her out.

Dave follows Larry's line of sight to an attractive brunette standing alone, glancing back toward them with a weak smile.

DAVE

Yep, I'm sure she can't resist your charms, Larry... or should I say Leery?

LARRY

Hey, I keep catching her looking at me.

DAVE

Hard to not be entertained by your dance moves.

LARRY

Yo, cut it out.

DAVE

I'm just joking, man.

Dave grabs two more shots and hands Larry one.

DAVE (CONT'D)

To our friendship.

Larry stares hard at Dave, then relents and they drink.

BILL

Larry, I like your ring.

Larry brightens, admiring his ring, then opens his mouth to speak.

DAVE

Ugh. Rings can be so uncomfortable.

LARRY

My Dad gave it to me. Try saying something nice for once?

DAVE

Okay, okay, calm down Leery. I won't talk about your fashion choices anymore. Wear what you like, I won't say a word.

BILL  
Leery?

DAVE  
Yeah, he's been stalking a woman  
out there.

LARRY  
I'm not fucking stalking her.

Larry squares with Dave.

LARRY (CONT'D)  
Why do you keep needling me anyway?  
What sort of friend are you?

Larry turns toward Bill.

LARRY (CONT'D)  
This asshole has been getting his  
little insults in since I first met  
him. I'm tired of this shit.

DAVE  
He gets temperamental sometimes.

During the awkward pause, Larry's eyes drift back to the  
woman of interest.

BILL  
So, eh, Dave, did you find a new  
place yet?

DAVE  
Yep, just about to sign a lease for  
an apartment in Eastwood, fifteen  
minutes away.

BILL  
Hey Larry, didn't you find one  
closer?

LARRY  
Yep, I love it. Lots of window  
light and blue carpeting.

DAVE  
I've seen his apartment. He's  
wasting his money.

LARRY  
So I like nice things. What's your  
deal?

DAVE

Did you see the new car Leery  
dumped his money into? The way he's  
drinking, it'll be worth half that  
by the time he's sober.

Bill chuckles. Larry finishes another drink then turns.

LARRY

I knew it'd be a mistake to tell  
you about this job. Bill, you know  
what my (air quotes) friend said  
when I told him I got my dream job?  
He said that it was in a sketchy  
area. Just subtle enough.

DAVE

Tell me, are you done with your  
little tantrum?

BILL

(to Dave)

Give us a minute?

Dave steps away with a sigh.

BILL (CONT'D)

You look like you've had a bit too  
many. How about I call you a cab?

LARRY

I just can't take him anymore. I'm  
done with him.

BILL

Look, I'm not sure of the history  
here and you don't need to be  
friends, but, can ya at least get  
along? I need you both.

LARRY

It's bad enough all my friends know  
him, but this is too much.

Larry exchanges glances again with the woman, then grabs  
another shot.

BILL

Just give it a try? Dave has skills  
that are hard to find.

LARRY

No.

BILL

Dave, come over here.

Dave returns.

BILL (CONT'D)

Can you stop giving Larry a hard time? I need you both to get along.

LARRY

And I need him out of my life.

DAVE

We're going to be in the same building. You're going to have to deal with me at some point.

LARRY

No, I won't. Bill, it's him or me.

BILL

But you love your job! There's also something else...

LARRY

I'm not liking the neighborhood anyway.

DAVE

(whispering to Larry)

Behind you. Now's your chance!

Larry freezes as the brunette he's been staring at steps up to the bar and places a drink order. He breathes deeply, then faces her.

LARRY

Umm, hi...

WOMAN

Don't. And can you please stop staring at me?

Just as abruptly, the woman leaves him in stunned silence. Dave bursts out laughing.

Larry flips his middle fingers toward Dave, who smirks and leans toward Bill.

DAVE

Ya gotta understand, Leery's Dad wasn't around long enough to teach him about women.

Larry stands, his eyes stabbing into Dave's, the corner of his mouth twitching.

LARRY  
You asshole.

Dave flashes a smile which dies quickly. Bill cocks his head in evaluation.

Larry rushes behind the bar, snatching his keys off the wall behind a distracted bartender. As he storms toward the exit, Bill's eyes widen.

BILL  
Larry, what the hell are you doing?

Bill starts to follow but Dave grabs his shoulder.

DAVE  
Relax, he'll be back.

BILL  
Don't you see he's wasted!

Bill moves again but Dave saunters into his path.

DAVE  
He'll be fine!

BILL  
Move!

Dave tries to block him again but Bill shoves him to the ground and chases after Larry.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Bill stops at the edge of the parking lot and shouts.

BILL  
Larry! Stop!

Car tires screech.

BILL (CONT'D)  
LARRY!

A horn honks along with more screeching, followed by a crash, as Bill looks on in horror.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Larry rests in his childhood bedroom, wrapped in blankets and bandages, his attention focused on his laptop's screen. The door, and his pepper-haired MOTHER peeks in.

MOTHER

Larry, a man named Bill wants to check on you. Is that okay?

LARRY

Bill's here? I guess.

Larry's mother disappears and moments later, Bill walks in, awkwardly setting a box of cookies on the dresser, then forcing his eyes up.

BILL

How're you feeling?

LARRY

It's not as bad as it looks. The doctor says I'll be able to start job-hunting in a month or two.

BILL

That's great to hear, but...

LARRY

But what? I need to work.

BILL

I was going to tell you that night. We wanted to promote you to manager. Dave would report to you. The job's still yours if you want it.

After a moment of consideration, Larry meets Bill's eyes. Larry grins.

FADE OUT