Tyler Davis

Final

Dream Prince moves the coffee table out of the middle of the living room. LED’s lit already behind the TV, beats bump from the 1980’s speakers from under the TV stand. His roommates help him move the kitchen table into the center of the room and push the furniture back against the walls. Red cups are brought out and a new package of pong balls is opened just as the door opens. Early guests, Dream’s friends from high school.

They’re a fun couple guys, making themselves immediately comfortable. Dream goes to his room and rolls a joint and goes out on the front stoop with a roommate, her brother, and a friend from high school. He lights it and pulls, enjoying the act of smoking almost as much as the company; or perhaps because of. Roommate gets first dibs, Dream doesn’t know why but he knows she does. She coughs out the smoke, then just the steam from her mouth, and passes to her brother. He pulls a couple and passes to the high school hippie. It goes around a couple more times, Dream letting his roommate’s brother finish off.

Dream’s younger brother arrives and borrows some weed to smoke himself, as the group heads back inside.

“Time for a kickoff shot! Dream calls to his roommate and her brother. In the absence of his older brother, he has taken the job of pusher. An important job for the Prince brothers. Make sure a designated couple people get sufficiently drunk, but not too drunk. If you push them, you’re responsible for them. Dream is in charge of his roommate, and her brother.

Dream offers jello shots to a couple people, making sure the red, the stronger of the two colors, goes to his roommate’s brother. Dream takes a green. Dream becomes very aware of a girl on the couch next to the jello shots that has been to his apartment before. She won’t take a jello shot but claims she wants to get drunk tonight. She never has before. She gets a shot of Admiral that she drinks half of now and tells her to give her the other half later.

Dream turns the lights off so the room is lit only by the LED’s and the Christmas lights he put up before the party. He brings Kenny over to his laptop to mess with the playlist. Kenny puts on Goosebumps by Travis Scott.

Dream sees four jello shots hit the table empty beside his roommate.

Dream sees his roommate by the doorway admiring their party. He joins her for a while. He enjoys some Kanye and Father Christmas by the Kinks. The best Christmas song, in his opinion.

They take a shot of Admiral. Dream was The Admiral for a while so he chooses it for nostalgia’s sake. It’s his roommate’s choice and it’s smooth enough.

“… and you have to tell the truth” Dream smiles at her.

The door opens, “Kenny!” Dream shouts and rushes over to hug the newcomer. Admiral shots are taken in welcome.

He sees his roommate swigging the Admiral.

“Why are you always smiling?” The girl asks him. “Because I’m happy. All my friends are here! Together! Having fun!” It makes him grin more just thinking about it. “No, like you’re always smiling even not today” He hands her a half shot of Admiral and she drinks it. “Because I am happy. If I’m happy, that helps everyone see it and be happy too!” She chokes a little on the shot again, “It’s all about spreading the love”

People steadily fill the party. Big Sean booms as a game of stack cup is constructed. Lots of beer is consumed during stack cup and Dream targets his roommate. She drinks a lot. Dream notices his old roommate has switched spots to be next to his current one.

Dream points to his watch. It was his grandpa’s and hasn’t worked since well before he got it “It’s that time!” he says to his roommate and her brother. He laughs, she groans. Dream grins and they take another shot of Admiral.

“You’re right” she says, her face only a few inches from his.

Dream points to the watch again, “Hey guess what time it is?” He asks his roommate’s brother. “Am I drunk or are the hands not moving?” “Both. It is stuck on Admiral O’clock”. Dream corrals his roommate and the girl. His old roommate joins and they all take another shot. “You’re going to kill me” His roommate tells him, “Half shots from now on”

There’s a couple people in the middle of the room just talking. They join in for a while. At a lull in the conversation they extract themselves and sit on the bed and start to talk again.

“You know what’s really wild?” Dream says nonchalantly as he leans on the doorframe admiring the party next to his roommate. She doesn’t look at him, she keeps watching the party, their guests, her brother, enjoying themselves, “What,” “I really can’t believe this,” Dream says, starting to smile again. “What?” She stops surveying the scene, now clearly interested. “It’s already that time again” She shoves him in the chest gently shaking her head, but then walks into the kitchen for another shot. Dream grabs her brother on their way over.

The others in the room leave, leaving them sitting on the bed together.

“I always try to see the beauty in everyone but I can’t see it in myself. I don’t get how you can see the beauty in everyone including yourself!” Dream smiles because he can see the beauty clearly sitting on the bed right in front of him, “It starts and ends with yourself. I had to see it in myself before I could really spread the love the way I do now.”

Everyone dissipates to where they were before the game.

Dream ends up right next to the girl again.

Dream watches his roommate stumble out the door into the cold, a friend with a sympathetic hand follows.

The door swings open. Dream’s eyebrows shoot up in surprise.

“My ride says he leaves at 2:15” She tells him. Dream’s not exactly sure why she’s telling him, but is glad she seems to think he should know.

Dream lets her in on a secret, “I’ve been doing half shots all night and haven’t given you a full since our first”. She laughs and gives him an approving look. She and his old roommate depart into the living room.

“Where’s my sister?” His roommate’s brother asks. She hasn’t been gone too long. Dream shrugs but walks to the only closed door with her brother right behind.

They start to play a game of King’s cup. Kenny’s friend says she doesn’t know the rules so Dream explains. “If a Queen is pulled, you get asked three questions…”

Dream knocks. A hesitant, “Uh…” responds. A hand reaches over his shoulder and grabs the doorknob.

Dream Smiles at the song change and approaches his roommate’s brother.

“You look so happy. I bet you give good hugs” She tells him. Dream grins, he likes to think he does, “I try”, she stands up and hugs him. After, she pulls her head back before letting go.

She finishes the bottle and sees Dream’s roommate leaving the living room. She nods at them and pushes Dream toward the doorway she just left through. When they reach the doorway, she turns the opposite way of where his roommate had just gone, and they enter a room.

Dream goes to his roommate’s room. He hears sheets moving.

“But how do you look in the mirror and see the beauty there?” Dream pushes on, but doesn’t want to overstep. He’s no therapist after all, “It takes effort, and time. I just saw that I could make other people happy and even though there’s not much evidence people find me attractive I just have to believe it. It’s almost like a choice. It took a while but now, almost all the time I can look in the mirror when I try to look good and say I’m happy with what I see” “But you *are* attractive!” She tells him. Dream smiles, but even though he’s been drinking he knows this isn’t about him. “And I wish there was something I could do to convince you that you are too”

He pulls her socks off, moving her head to the pillow.

The middle can pops and Dream’s old roommate has to chug it.

They separate. Dream hears the doorknob move and looks over at the door.

“Hey what time is it?” The girl asks him. This takes him by surprise, then he remembers.

“You look really high” his roommate tells him. “Why because I’m smiling? I’m just happy,” He grins at her a moment, “And really high. Or because. Who knows” He grins wider.

*If I kiss her right now what happens?*

Dream offers jello shots to a couple people, making sure the red, the stronger of the two colors, goes to his roommate’s brother. Dream takes a green. Dream becomes very aware of a girl on the couch next to the jello shots that has been to his apartment before. She won’t take a jello shot but claims she wants to get drunk tonight. She never has before. She gets a shot of Admiral that she drinks half of now and tells her to give her the other half later.

The door opens. Dream nearly cricks his neck turning toward it.

Dream takes a jello shot to chase the Admiral, and again returns to the girl’s side.

The game begins and Dream has to drink more than he wanted to. He is distracted because he is trying to keep an eye on three people.

It’s just his old roommate and his roommate having a talk. Surprise passes, Dream exhales. “Everything okay in here?” Her brother asks, concerned. Dream’s old roommate nods. Dream notices his roommate wipe away tears before turning her head. “Heeeey! Lemme see your watch!” Dream indulges her, “Looks like it’s that time!” They all leave the room. When Dream pours the shots, she gets almost none, just in case.

Dream opens a bottle of Rosé wine and pours some into a cheap thrift-store champagne glass for himself. He carries the bottle into the living room and offers some to the girl. “It’ll chase the Admiral well” She sips it, and likes it.

It’s her ride. Dream exhales.

Dream checks his watch theatrically. “It’s time for the rest of that shot” he tells her. “Already? How long’s it been?” She asks. “Long enough” is his reply. She finishes it with a grimace, then a smile.

Dream hugs her goodbye, and hugs her ride, and she leaves. He’s unsure of when he’ll see her again, break looming.

Dream’s roommate enters behind the guests leaving, wiping puke off his face. Dream sends him to their shared room.

He enters and his roommate’s struggling getting into bed. Her shoes still on. Dream pulls his roommate’s shoes off and she collapses onto her bed sideways. “You’re the best” She tells him.

“Goodnight” Dream tells his roommate before leaving and closing her door behind him. Another party success. Or as successful as they come.

Dream gets the girl up and into her coat. He’s glad they were interrupted before anything could happen. He poured the drinks in her after all. He was responsible for her.

So, my mind returned to our first (I think) assignment of the semester. I was thinking about it having two different storylines to it where either could have been real. I also thought about how we discussed prewriting a story and scrambling it vs. writing out of order to begin with. I was curious to see if I could write a story, and scramble it to create an effect of a story that ramps up in tension, has lulls in the tension, and ramps up again, as effectively as that story, with one storyline. I wrote out one story, with three main lines happening at once. The one roommate and the old roommate, Dream and the girl, and the second roommate and his getting way too drunk. It is hard, knowing everything that happens and in what order, to determine if I did this well. I am curious if it was clear by the end that there were two separate roommates at all. The main goal was to tell the story with enough misdirection, but also enough resolution to the misdirection, to create a compelling story that ramps up in tension effectively while telling a coherent story. I have the ordered list on my computer if you’re curious enough to want to see it, if you don’t think it would ruin the effect of the out of order story. I of course would like feedback!

Dream Prince is the name of my go-to party playlist.