

Danger Mike

Written by

Matt Coppa

One-Hour Pilot

"Take The Bull by the Horns"

Matt Coppa
20 Newport Parkway, #1202
Jersey City, NJ 07310
646-752-5149
MattCoppa@aol.com
Mcoppa@starmagazine.com

Manager

Greg Weiss
One Entertainment
212-974-3900
Gweiss@1-ent.com

TEASER

FADE IN:

INT. WEST VIRGINIA COLISEUM - DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

Close up of MIKE (mid 20s) staring intently at the camera. He has a boyish face and floppy hair. A man with a deep Southern drawl, BILLY BOB, applies clown makeup to Mike's face, and his cheeks begin to tremble.

BILLY BOB (O.S.)

Just make sure you fake left, then you go right. Stay calm.

MIKE (V.O.)

What the hell am I doing here? I feel like I'm in prison and my redneck roommate is getting ready to make me his bitch.

BILLY BOB (O.S.)

Whatever you do, do not run away... Do you hear me son?

MIKE (V.O.)

I should leave, I should really leave. But I can't, can I? There's a photographer here and everything. Everyone will think I'm a pus...

Billy Bob snaps his fingers in front of Mike's face.

BILLY BOB (O.S.)

Hey, are you listening?

MIKE

Yeah, I'm good, I'm good, right then left. Right then left, I'm good.

BILLY BOB (O.S.)

Well, Okay then, let's go.

Mike puts a NY Jets baseball hat on and follows Billy Bob out of the room.

INT. WEST VIRGINIA COLISEUM - NIGHT

A packed house of cowboy-hat-wearing fans cheer maniacally at a rodeo. Billy Bob escorts Mike out of the dressing room.

BILLY BOB

Remember what I told you. Fake left, move right. Don't panic - and don't turn away.

(MORE)

BILLY BOB (CONT'D)

He's got four legs, and you've got just the two. He'll run you over in a flash, so you've got to trick him. If you fall, crouch into a ball, and one of the other guys will get ya. You're gonna be fine.

MIKE (V.O.)

What the hell am I doing?

BILLY BOB

Okay, come follow me.

CUT TO:

TRACKING SHOT FOLLOWING MIKE FROM BEHIND

Billy Bob leads Mike to the arena backstage amidst several bull riders and rodeo clowns who shake his hand. An ANNOUNCER speaks as Mike walks into the ring.

INT. WEST VIRGINIA COLISEUM - CONTINUOUS

Mike walks into the dirt-filled coliseum in full rodeo-clown makeup, overalls and his Jets cap.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

Is everyone having a good time?

Wild cheering.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.) (CONT'D)

It's halftime at the Great American Rodeo, and we have a special treat for you today. *Gent Magazine* writer and New York City Subway Superman Mike Dibello will show everyone how tough he really is when he takes on Barney Blue, a 1,164-pound beauty straight from Conroe, Texas. It's a one-on-one face-off that will show once and for all whether a big city subway car can be as ferocious as a pissed-off steer! Let's here it for Mike.

Mike walks to the center of the ring, visibly shaken. Another CLOWN walks up to him.

CLOWN

Hey. You okay, kid? You don't have to do this if you don't want to.

MIKE

No, no, man. I'm cool. Thanks.

Mike faces a bullpen about 50 feet in front of him and sees the huge, menacing bull on the other side.

MIKE (V.O.)

Oh, my God. Oh, my God. I'm going to die in front of people who can't pronounce my last name. Okay, just go left, then right. Or is it right then left? Oh no, should I not...

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

Good luck, Danger Mike!

The bullpen opens. The bull rushes out, straight at Mike. Just when the beast is about to hit him, Mike makes a juke move to his left, leading the bull, then Mike goes right, faking out the bull, which runs about 20 feet away.

MIKE (V.O.)

Yes, I did it! I can't believe it. Wait, why is he coming back?

The bull turns and heads back for Mike. Mike fakes to the left and goes right again, but the bull follows him and hits him in the side, propelling him spinning in the air about 15 feet. Mike lands with a CRASH and immediately balls up. The bull pounces on his back. The other clowns distract the bull and lead it away. Mike slowly stands up.

MIKE

I'm okay? I'm okay!

Mike pats himself down. The crowd remains silent.

MIKE (CONT'D)

I'm okay!

The crowd goes wild with excitement.

MIKE (V.O.)

I could get used to this!

The bull runs up to Mike and knocks him down from the side. Mike's on the ground, as the crowd gasps.

Title Card: Danger Mike

END OF TEASER

ACT 1

FADE IN:

CARD: TWO MONTHS EARLIER

INT. MIKE'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - MORNING

Mike's sloppy bedroom sports cheap furniture and clothes strewn all over. He's shirtless, wearing only dirty jeans and socks. A clock radio's ALARM goes off, reading 8:45 A.M. playing The Howard Stern show.

HOWARD STERN (V.O.)

And the next thing you know porn star Jennifer Glade, naked as a jaybird, fell face first into Baba Boeey's crotch!

Mike looks at the clock and hits the snooze button.

CUT TO:

INT. MIKE'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - MORNING

Mike is still asleep. The clock radio goes off again, reading 9:15 A.M.

HOWARD STERN (V.O.)

And here's a secret about Don Imus: He's already dead! They've been puppetting him around like a wrinkled old Weekend at Bernie's marionette for the past 10 years!

Mike gets up again with a start when he sees the time.

MIKE

Crap.

Mike walks to the unkept bathroom. He gets in the shower but quickly jumps out when ice-cold water shoots out.

EXT. MIKE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Mike runs out of the door of his apartment while carrying a plastic bag of clothes. He jogs around the corner and up the front stairs to an attached home. He rings the buzzer. LILLY (60) opens the door, wearing a bathrobe.

LILLY

Michael? What are you doing here?

MIKE

Sorry, Ma. The hot water is off again, and I need to take a quick shower so I'm not late to work.

LILLY

Oh, of course, come on in. Let me make you some breakfast. Your father just left.

INT. MIKE'S PARENT'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Mike follows Lilly into a clean but cramped kitchen.

MIKE

Thanks, but I'm running late, I just need to get ready for work.

LILLY

Here's some coffee. Don't you want coffee? I'll make you some eggs.

MIKE

Nah, don't worry about it, Ma.

Lilly ignores Mike and begins cracking eggs open into a bowl.

LILLY

So, yesterday, after I finished washing the dishes and catching up with Aunt Jean, I finally made it to church. You know, for the Feast of the Immaculate Conception.

Mike gives in to his mom and sits down at the kitchen table.

MIKE

Yeah?

LILLY

It's a Holy Day of Obligation. You should know that! You did go to Catholic school, didn't you?

MIKE

Yes, Ma, I know.

LILLY

Anyway, at church, I ran into Tony Russo. You guys were such close friends, winning all those awards for the wrestling team. What happened to the two of you?

MIKE (V.O.)

I never had the heart to tell her that Tony became a foot soldier for the mob.

MIKE

I don't know. We stopped hanging out during high school.

LILLY

Well, he still goes to Mass, Michael. What's wrong with you? Jesus gives you so much, and you can't give him one hour out of your week?

MIKE

Holy crap, Ma! Can you stop?

LILLY

Watch your language!

MIKE

Sorry...I'll have some toast. Can I shower now?

LILLY

Of course! Go! Go shower! That's what we're here for, right? That's the only thing we're good for, a hot meal and a shower.

CUT TO:

EXT. MIKE'S PARENTS' HOUSE - DAY

Mike runs out of the house with toast hanging out of his mouth. He runs a few blocks to the subway station. He stops to pick up a copy of the *Daily News* and *New York Post*. He just barely misses his train.

INT. GENT LOBBY - DAY

A beautiful blonde woman sits behind a desk in a well-appointed lobby. Hanging on the wall behind her are multiple *Gent Magazine* covers, featuring women in various states of undress. Mike jogs past and the woman shakes her head.

INT. GENT BULLPEN - CONTINUOUS

Mike enters a contemporary office with open-air bullpen-style desks. The men and women are mostly in their mid 20s casually dressed. Mike hurries to his desk and turns his computer on. JIM (mid 20s), wearing jeans and a T-shirt that reads "Smurfs Do It Blue," gets Mike's attention.

JIM

Man, you were wasted last night.

Jim tries to put eye drops into his left eye, but he gets most of it on his face.

MIKE

Don't remind me... especially since I can't remember much. What happened to you?

JIM

I met up with Liz, and after she turned me down again, I passed out on her couch.

Jim pours the eye drops into his other eye.

JIM (CONT'D)

Did you not notice that I'm wearing the same shirt?

Jim looks at Mike while pointing to his own shirt. Jim's eyes and face are glistening from the eye drops.

MIKE

It certainly smells like you did. Ugh, I came in late, again.

JIM

That's why you should move to the island of Manhattan, or at the very least DUMBO, as opposed to your 'hood in the middle-of-nowhere-land of Bensonhurst.

MIKE

Knock Bensonhurst and you might find your legs broken. Perhaps your gerbil's head will mysteriously appear in your bed.

JIM

Don't sweat the clock. Our fearless leader has yet to show up. Word is that he went home with the Russian cover model.

MIKE

What? That's just depressing.

JIM

Why, because you told her about your GPS golf ball idea and she shot you down?

MIKE

No, because Lance is evil, and his man boobs get bigger by the hour.

Mike picks up a story he wrote with red marks all over it and reads, "This sucks, idiot! Boring! Be funnier!"

MIKE (CONT'D)

Look what that douche wrote on my copy. It's like everything that I do sucks just because I do it. Whereas you...

JIM

Don't give me that diarrhea! It's just because I'm a better writer, reporter and editor than you. Get over it, and let's talk about tonight.

A busty brunette editor, RENEE (29), walks up to the guys' desks. She immediately leans forward on a nearby shelf, exposing a healthy amount of cleavage. Mike and Jim try, quite poorly, to not stare at her breasts.

RENEE

Hey, boys, did you have fun last night?

JIM

Why, yes, we did. That was until you kicked my ass at pool again.

RENEE

I don't know how I became so good, but you always seem so distracted every time we play.

CUT TO:

INT. DIVE BAR - (FLASHBACK TO THE NIGHT BEFORE)

Jim and Renee are playing pool at their regular dive bar, Blaggard's Pub. While playing pool, Jim gets distracted by Renee's chest. Every time he shoots he misses horribly.

CUT TO:

MONTAGE:

- A. Jim misses the cue ball completely.
- B. Jim shoots a ball off the table.
- C. Jim loses his grip on the pool stick, which flies off and hits a patron in the back of the head.

CUT TO:

INT. GENT BULLPEN - CONTINUOUS

JIM

Yeah, not sure what's up with that.

MIKE

How's your latest feature coming along, Renee?

RENEE

I'm taking an in-depth look at women who can only orgasm if they have multiple partners. They're nuts. You guys are gonna love them!

MIKE

Yes, because I meet so many of them. Can you please bring these easy chicks out with us?

RENEE

Michael! How dare you talk about my floozies like that! It's unprofessional.

JIM

It's not like we're screwing the models. That's Lance's job.

Jim makes a blow-job motion with his hand and mouth.

RENEE

Crude.
Renee storms off.

JIM

What's her problem?

MIKE

You.

JIM

What can I say, it's painfully obvious that she wants me. So, what about tonight?

MIKE

Tonight? I'm recovering from last night and planning on watching the Mets lose to the Braves again.

JIM

No, you're coming with me to some Grey Goose party in Chelsea. Free Grey Goose!

MIKE

Only in spirit, my friend, I am taking the night off...

LANCE (early 40s), the editor in chief, walks into the bullpen. He's handsome in a sloppy, five-o'clock-shadow kind of way. Two other staffers walk into the bullpen. One is senior editor DAN (early 30s), a hipster type. The other is baby-faced and perfectly neat assistant editor SETH (25).

MIKE (CONT'D)

...oh, look, there he is, our hero.

DAN

What's up, girlfriends?

JIM

Oh, if it isn't Mr. Williamsburg.

DAN

Guess who can speak Klingon?

MIKE

If you grogggle anything I'm going to slap you straight across your half-bearded face.

DAN

Not me. My bowling, kickball and Thai-pottery leagues keep me busy enough. It's our young geeky friend, Seth, here. Apparently he's gearing up for a fun-filled trip to San Diego for Comic-Con.

SETH

First, you're an idiot, and second, I go to the convention to meet women who assemble from across the country to hook up with guys who actually work in the industry.

DAN

Um, you don't work in science fiction, Mister Mxyzptlk.

SETH

True, but these girls are easy pickings if you have a job in anything other than IT support or mail delivery.

MIKE

You know, as pathetic as that sounds, it beats the "Go out, say nothing, get wasted and embarrass myself," rap I've been honing for the past few years.

SETH

You should come with us, man, you could meet some sweet honeys there.

MIKE

From what planet? Are you prepared for our edit meeting? Any ideas about anything other than utilizing your personal force?

INT. GENT BULLPEN - AFTERNOON

Mike walks to the desk of Executive Editor ANDY (mid 40s). Andy has boyish features, gray hair and a gut.

MIKE

So, why do the Yankees suck so much?

ANDY

Maybe when your pansy Mets get more than two hits, I'll let you buy me lunch. Ugh, I don't have time to wait. Let's grab something to eat.

EXT. MIDTOWN MANHATTAN - CONTINUOUS

Mike and Andy walk and talk on a crowded city street.

ANDY

So, how you holding up, kid?

MIKE

Same as always: late, hung over, frustrated.

ANDY

Well, maybe if you cut down on the hung over-and-late part, you'd be less frustrated.

MIKE

I thought about that, but I'd rather not. Besides I kinda like how they all go together.

ANDY

Their cohesion is sublime.

MIKE

How's life at your homestead?

ANDY

My wife hates me, my kids drive me crazy, I work for a jackass and I have to take a pill to go to sleep at night. Another fantastic example of sublime cohesion.

INT. MANHATTAN DELI - CONTINUOUS

Mike and Andy walk into a deli and wait in line. Two attractive women, a BLONDE WOMAN and brunette, are in line in front of them. Mike catches the eye of the blonde, and she smiles at him. Mike immediately blushes and looks away.

MIKE

I prefer the term douchebag.

ANDY

What did you just call me?

MIKE

Not you - Lance. No one says jackass anymore. This isn't 1924. "Ya square?" "Shine your bootblacks guvnah?"

ANDY

Ah yes, you hip young writers with your rock-and-roll and break-dancing and so forth.

MIKE

Not that you're at all bitter.

ANDY

Well, I...

Andy's cell phone rings. He looks at it to see who's calling.

ANDY (CONT'D)

Great. It's the wife again. Get me a pastrami on rye with mustard.

Andy hands Mike a \$20 bill and walks out. Mike turns to look at the blonde girl. This time, she has a surprised look on her face. Suddenly the brunette woman she's with begins convulsing and collapses.

BLONDE WOMAN

Oh, my God! Someone help! Sally!
What's going on?

Mike stands still and stares.

BLONDE WOMAN (CONT'D)

(frantic)
Sally, what's wrong? Are you okay?

A couple of businessmen run over to aid Sally. BUSINESSMAN 1 takes off his jacket and places it under her head.

BUSINESSMAN 1

Everybody back off. I think she's
having a seizure. Someone call an
ambulance.

Mike whips out his cell phone and begins to call 9-1-1. Before he can finish dialing, a second businessman is already speaking to the operator and explaining the situation. Mike looks defeated and turns to the deli counter to order.

MIKE

Pastrami on rye with mustard and a
ham and cheese in a wrap.

END ACT 1

ACT 2

Fade In:

INT. *GENT* CONFERENCE ROOM - LATER THAT DAY

The staff sits around a high tech conference room with framed *Gent* covers and various man toys.

LANCE

So, a couple of announcements.
First: a memo from HR. There will be no more smoking, of any kind, in the stairwell. Go for your smoke breaks downstairs, pot heads excluded. You hippies can get stoned on your own time. Second, we have a softball game next week against *GQ*.

The staff boos and makes catcalls. Jim makes orgasm sounds.

LANCE (CONT'D)

I'm going to be in L.A. that week for our "Salute to Lingerie," shoot, but I expect all of you to play as dirty as humanly possible against those pansies!

JIM

You mean the ones who fired you?

LANCE

I hate those guys. Okay, so let me hear some ideas. Dan, who do we profile?

DAN

Ashton Kutcher?

GROUP

Boo! Never!

DAN

Robert Downey Jr.? He's got a movie coming out and he's still willing to talk about getting wasted and banging models.

Renee slightly chokes on her coffee.

LANCE

While he's a man after my own heart, he's been done to death.

(MORE)

LANCE (CONT'D)

Think of a few more. Make sure they're not horrible next time.

ANDY

How's about the real Colonel Kurtz, the guy that Marlon Brando's character was based on in *Apocalypse Now*? I can get an interview with him with some exclusive art that's really grisly.

MIKE

Cool.

LANCE

Unless there are shots of actual heads on pikes, I could care less. That movie is, like, 40 years old. What else? Renee, what have you got for a sex story?

RENEE

Well, I was thinking of "The A to Z of Sex, Everything From A...

JIM

Anal?

SETH

Animals?

JIM

Amsterdam?

MIKE

Ass-play?

GROUP

Oooh!

RENEE

No, more like, "How You Can be More *Alluring* to your Girlfriend." B...

JIM

Back-door?

DAN

Boobies?

MIKE

Bowling?

SETH
Bestiality?

MIKE
(to Seth)
I think it's time you let someone
else take care of your cat.

RENEE
More like "Boyfriend, How to be a
Proper One."

Renee takes a slow, deliberate sip of her coffee.

LANCE
Not bad, but let's not go all *Cosmo*
on this, we're still a men's
magazine.

RENEE
Yeah, I know.

LANCE
I'm just saying, sexy it up by
about 42 percent. What else? Jim?

Jim stands up and starts handing out sheets of paper.

JIM
How's about, "Proper iPhone
Etiquette."

SETH
Like "How to Properly Optimize Your
Playlists?"

JIM
Um, yeah, I guess. But I was mostly
thinking, "Proper iPhone Etiquette:
What Not To Do." Like when you're
walking down the street and
listening to some tune and you
fart, and then you realize that
everyone around you is giving you
funny looks?

ANDY
What does farting have to do with
listening to music?

JIM

Well, it's the weirdest thing, but when you can't hear your own farts, it's impossible to control the volume.

SETH

So the volume of an iPod is inversely correlated to the sound of your...

LANCE

Why am I still listening to this? And why did you just hand me a piece of a paper with a crudely drawn picture of chickens screwing each other?

Lance turns the page around to reveal exactly what he just described.

JIM

Professionalism. And I'm just saying, next time you're grooving to the Allman Brothers, make sure that you're alone.

MIKE

I think that will be the title of my first book.

JIM

How about, "What Not to do When a Woman has a Seizure at the Deli."

MIKE

Shut up, asswipe.

RENEE

Wait, what?

MIKE

This woman had a seizure right in front of me today at lunch, and I didn't know what to do.

DAN

You're supposed to just leave seizure victims alone. I think if you move them, they'll bite their tongue off or something.

JIM

I thought you were supposed to stick a piece of wood in their mouths, at least that's what I learned from a very special episode of *Different Strokes*.

MIKE

Right, because I always carry a piece of wood so I can practice my whittling while I'm waiting for a sandwich.

JIM

Well, you *could* improve your whittling skills.

LANCE

C'mon, more ideas, Mike!

MIKE

How about instead of the freak-accident stuff we always do, like guys getting shot in the balls with nail guns...

The group cringes and groans.

MIKE (CONT'D)

...we do a story about accidents that happen to freaks? Like when the world's tallest man gets hit by a car...that's gotta be a pain in the ass for the EMTs. Or the Siamese twins who fall off a roof, how do doctors know which end is up? Or an 800-pound dude who gets stuck in a toilet? I've already done a bunch of research. And I even got a few experts to tell me their craziest tales.

JIM

You have some serious problems.

LANCE

Actually, that's not bad, let's pencil it in for a spread in the October issue. But Mike, I think you should concentrate on the bar pages for that issue. Jim, you do it as a feature.

JIM

(looks uncomfortable)
But Lance, it's Mike's idea, and I'm pretty swamped as it is.

LANCE

Yeah, Mike had a good idea, for once. But I want him to work on his monthly bar pages, and I want you to do this. I don't care how busy you are. Mike's a big boy, this is a team effort. Right, Mike?

Mike stares down, steaming.

MIKE

Yeah, sure, Lance, that's fine.

LANCE

Okay, I have a headache. If you guys don't have anything else, I need an entire pot of coffee. Get back to work!

The group gets up to leave. Mike is clearly dejected. He walks out in shame.

INT. MIKE'S PARENTS' HOUSE - DINING ROOM - EARLY EVENING

Mike and his family are sitting in a cramped dining room. The room is filled with knick knacks. The family talks loudly as they pass food around. They include: JOE (62), his well-dressed father; Lilly; ANTHONY (33), Mike's larger and older brother; Anthony's wife, Lucia, a mousy-looking redhead; Mike's big-haired sister, SAMANTHA (32); and Samantha's doofy-looking husband, Vito (40).

JOE

So, this afternoon at the firm I was getting audited for our quarterly receivership. And this kid, right out of college, starts barking out questions. "Where's this form?" "Where's that form?" So I sat down at my desk, gave him a nice, long stare and asked him if he knew who was in the bottom ring of hell in *The Divine Comedy*.

Joe passes a plate of pasta to Mike.

JOE (CONT'D)

He had no idea what I was talking about.

(MORE)

JOE (CONT'D)

You would think he would have learned at least some literature at school.

MIKE

You mean Judas, Brutus and Cassius?

JOE

Of course! I explained to him that the most vile people in the world are the betrayers.

ANTHONY

What does that have to do with your audit?

JOE

Anthony, how do you expect to get anywhere in life unless you know who you are dealing with? When I asked him if he has ever even heard of Dante, he said he was a character on *The Sopranos*! Like all of Italian history and culture is summed up by a group of mobsters in New Jersey!

MIKE

It was a great show, Dad.

JOE

Well, I'd rather go to the opera than watch some uneducated goons kill hookers.

SAMANTHA

Every opera you dragged me to had goons killing hookers.

ANTHONY

Speaking of hookers - Mike, are you meeting any of those hot girls from the magazine?

LILLY

(yelling)

Anthony! Not at the dinner table!

ANTHONY

(yelling back)

Ok, sorry, enough!

Lilly shakes her head and continues to place food on the table.

MIKE

The answer is no, I've decided not to worry about women until one throws herself at me. Speaking of which, the other day, some girl went into convulsions or something right in front of me at the deli.

LILLY

Are you okay? Did she hit you?

MIKE

Hit me? No, I'm fine, Ma. I think she had a seizure.

JOE

A seizure? Was she on dope?

MIKE

I don't think so. The whole thing happened pretty fast.

ANTHONY

Well, was she all right?

MIKE

I don't really know. I mean, I was there, and a few people came running over and someone called 9-1-1.

ANTHONY

So you just watched this woman squirming on the floor and left?

MIKE

I got my sandwich first.

ANTHONY

What sort of chicken move is that?

JOE

You did the right thing, Michael. You never know these days. You try to help someone one day, and the next, she's suing you out of house and home.

LILLY

And what if she had bird flu? People today, you never know what they're involved in.

MIKE

I don't think she had bird flu, Ma.

ANTHONY

So, why didn't you do anything?

MIKE

I didn't know what to do. What if I made the situation worse?

JOE

That's right, better leave it to the professionals.

MIKE

Still, I feel like I should've done something. I can't stop thinking about that poor girl.

LILLY

That's because your father and I raised you to be a good Catholic boy who cares about other people.

(beat)

Who wants more lasagna?

ANTHONY

(to Mike)

Hey, little bro, this is really bothering you, huh?

MIKE

I guess. It's just that, lately, I can't help but feel so...

ANTHONY

What?

MIKE

Pathetic. I always thought I was better than that, you know? Like, if there were a terrorist attack, I'd be the John McClane guy who sticks around, hiding in ventilation shafts, killing the bad guys and saving everyone.

ANTHONY

You were always a wise ass. Remember how I used to pin you down, with my spit dangling right in front of your face? You just kept swearing that you were going to kick my ass. I trained you well.

MIKE

Yeah, much appreciated. I don't know, . I have my dream job, but it sucks. I can't get laid to save my life. I just want to do something montage-worthy. You know, with some kick ass, 70s classic-rock song in the background. A man of action and substance. You know?

ANTHONY

You just want it all, don't you?

MIKE

Isn't that the American dream?

ANTHONY

Yeah, well, there's a fine line between being an American and being an asshole.

INT. SUBWAY STATION PLATFORM - 42ND STREET STATION - NIGHT

Mike leans against a column while reading a copy of *Newsweek* and listening to his iPhone. A few feet away from Mike is a family of tourists: MR. BROWN, MRS. BROWN and their teen daughters JULIE, SALLY. Mr. Brown films the family.

MR. BROWN

So what was your favorite site? The Empire State building, the Statue of Liberty?

DAUGHTERS

(together)
Bloomingdale's!

MRS. BROWN

All of the culture at that MOMA museum and the Dangerfield museum, and your favorite spot was a department store?

MR. BROWN

Actually, I think it's called the Gugenstein museum. It was more of a Jewish-sounding name.

A group of thuggish-looking male teenagers, including THUG 1 and THUG 2, come down the stairs, roughhousing with each other. Mike gives them a look, but he remains where he is, leaning against the beam. The tourists quiet down. Smelling their fear, the thugs approach the tourists.

THUG 1

Hey, you guys from out of town?

MR. BROWN

Come on, kids, let's walk away.

THUG 1

Hey, I was talking to you. Where are you going?

MR. BROWN

We don't want any trouble.

THUG 2

Trouble? We just wanted to show you guys some New York hospitality. Come on, where are you from?

MR. BROWN

Sorry! We're from Toronto. We've never been to New York before. We've heard such crazy stories.

THUG 1

Really? That's great. Now give me your goddamn camera and wallet, and you'll have a story to tell all your friends.

Mike watches intently. He keeps his distance as several other people on the platform slowly back away.

MR. BROWN

Very funny. Come on, girls.

The family walks away. The thugs attack. One of them punches Mr. Brown in the head, causing him to drop the video camera to the ground. Sally gets knocked onto the train tracks. The thugs freak out and run away, as the roar of an oncoming train builds. Mr. Brown is on the ground, head bleeding.

MR. BROWN (CONT'D)

Sally!

Sally is splayed out on the tracks. She's crying and screaming for help. As the train gets closer, a look of calm comes over Mike's face. He looks at Sally and jumps down to the tracks.

MIKE

Are you all right?

The train is getting closer. Its brakes are screeching.

SALLY

Who are you?

MIKE

It's okay, I'm from Brooklyn.

Mike tries to pick up Sally, but her foot is stuck. The train comes into view and in a final act he yanks her up and flings her back onto the platform. As he jumps up on the platform himself, the train violently strikes him on his side. He's flung 20 feet, his body spinning like a top. He eventually hits a support beam, crashing with THUD. He's facedown—and out cold.

END ACT 2

ACT 3

Fade In:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Mike's family is gathered in a hospital room filled with flowers. Mike's unconscious with health-monitoring leads connected to his chest. Anthony enters the room.

ANTHONY

Any changes?

LILLY

Nothing. I don't understand. The doctor said that he'd be out of the coma by now.

ANTHONY

When was the last time you went home, Ma?

JOE

Two days ago. She won't let me take her home. I told her that she can't do anything for him if she's catatonic.

LILLY

How dare you say that, Joseph?
(while weeping)
My baby needs me!

SAMANTHA

It's gonna be okay, Ma. He's a strong kid.

ANTHONY

It's time for the 5 o'clock news.

Anthony turns on the TV.

CUT TO:

INT. NEW YORK ONE TV STUDIO - DAY

The news anchor, JANETTE CHANG (30s), an attractive Asian woman, begins the nightly broadcast.

JANETTE

Welcome to New York One News at 5.
I'm Janette Chang. Our lead story:
Subway hero Mike Dibello remains in
a coma eight days after saving the
life of a young tourist.

(MORE)

JANETTE (CONT'D)

As his family maintains a vigil at the hospital, dozens of New Yorkers have been placing wreaths outside the building. The whole city waits for positive news. We go to Jessica Nevarez for more.

EXT. HOSPITAL ENTRANCE - DAY

JESSICA

Thank you, Janette. Here at Maimonides Hospital in Brooklyn, Mike Dibello's doctors remain optimistic that the subway hero will make a full recovery. But after suffering several cracked ribs, a broken collarbone and extensive head trauma, there is concern about his prognosis among some of the medical staff.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL PRESS ROOM - EARLIER THAT DAY

Broadcast continues, with DOCTOR being interviewed by Jessica, who is O.S.

DOCTOR

These injuries are quite serious, but the patient has responded well to surgery, and all we can really do now is monitor his progress.

JESSICA (V.O.)

It was just last week when a group of menacing teens attacked the Brown family from Toronto, Canada. It was a harrowing tale turned heroic, thanks to the quick actions of Dibello. But what has really captured the nation's attention is the video of the rescue which has become a viral YouTube sensation.

CUT TO:

SHOT: VIDEO OF THE ATTACK.

The grainy video is from Mr. Brown's camera when it hits the floor, you can see a perfect view of the events.

JESSICA (V.O.)

Earlier, I spoke to Mr. Terrence Brown about the incident.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOSPITAL ENTRANCE - DAY

Broadcast continues as Jessica (O.S.) interviews Mr. Brown.

MR. BROWN

We're just praying for this brave young man. I met his family, and they are just the nicest people. He saved my daughter's life! It's the greatest gift anyone could have ever given us.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

JOE

That man's very nice, but he's a little dopey. I asked him who his favorite composer was, like Vivaldi or Puccini, and he said, "Bono."

The machines Mike is hooked up to start making loud sounds. The family frantically runs around and calls for help. Nurses arrive first. The on-call DOCTOR soon rushes in.

LILLY

Oh, my God! What's happening?

Mike's eyes slowly open. He coughs and looks around. He motions for water.

MIKE

(scratchy voice)
Why is everyone staring at me?

DOCTOR

You gave us quite a scare. Mike, you just came out of a coma. Do you know what year it is?

MIKE

Oh no, is it like 2030 or something? Has it been 20 years?

DOCTOR

No, it's the same year it's been since you were brought in.

MIKE

2012.

LILLY

Oh, my little guy!

Lilly bursts into tears and kisses Mike all over the face.

MIKE

Ma? Dad? What's going on?

Mike looks up at the TV and sees the scene of him helping the girl and getting hit by the train.

MIKE (CONT'D)

That really happened?

CUT TO:

MONTAGE OF MIKE'S CELEBRATING

- A. Mike leaves the hospital to a cheering crowd.
- B. Mike picks up the *New York Daily News* and looks at the front page with the headline "He's From Brooklyn!"
- C. Mike walks past a velvet rope into a club with a group of his friends, joined by beautiful women.
- D. Mike stands on the steps of City Hall with the Mayor and receives the key to the city.
- E. Mike gets interviewed on the *Today* show.
- E. Inside a club. Mike dances with his friends and with beautiful women hanging all over him.

INT. GENT BULLPEN - DAY

Mike walks into the dark office and flips on a light. The staff of the magazine jumps out and yells, "Welcome Back!" Balloons and banners cover the office walls, and everyone applauds. Lance embraces Mike, and, with a drink in his hand, he silences everyone as he prepares to make a speech.

LANCE

Mike, wow, what a month! Well, guys and gals, today we welcome our savior of the city back to the dingy offices of our tasteless magazine. Mike, I always knew you were someone special, and of course I meant "special," in the short-bus sense of the word. But now that you're a minor celebrity and a genuine hero, we plan to milk your paltry fame in every way possible!

The group laughs.

LANCE (CONT'D)

Really, it's great to have you back! What you did is the epitome of selfless heroism, and I think I can speak for all of us when I say none of us would've done the same thing! But now you're all healed up, and as much as I can't stand saying this, I have to admit that you've been missed. Welcome back!

The group applauds and starts clamoring for a speech.

MIKE

Well, wow, thanks. I've been thinking about what I was going to say...

Mike notices Renee lovingly gazing at him and lingering on his every word.

MIKE (CONT'D)

...when I got back here, but I kept putting it off, because I suck without a deadline - and, according to Lance, I also suck *with* a deadline.

Group laughs.

MIKE (CONT'D)

But I really appreciated the letters and flowers and those of you who actually showed up to visit me while I was in the hospital. Even you, Lance, but next time, I'd appreciate it if you stayed away from my sister.

Group laughs.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Seriously though, there were some rough times, and, just, thanks.

Group applauds.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Now that I'm back, I hope that you can forget about the key to the city, the interviews and the mayor kissing my ass.

(MORE)

MIKE (CONT'D)

In short, I hope you can continue to treat me like the piece of shit you always have.... But I guess we can start that tomorrow. Today, let's all celebrate me!

Group applauds and begins hugging Mike.

INT. *GENT* CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Renee walks into the conference room, then looks around to make sure the room is empty before she pulls Lance inside.

RENEE

Where the hell have you been? Where did you go last night?

LANCE

First of all, your boobs look milkier than ever in that thing.

RENEE

Don't give me that! Everyone's been saying you screwed some model!

LANCE

That's total B.S., I was wasted. Someone gave me a Valium, and the next thing I know, I'm in a cab on my way home. Alone!

CUT TO:

INT. YELLOW TAXI CAB - (FLASHBACK TO PREVIOUS NIGHT)

Lance is in the backseat of the cab, kissing and fondling a thin, beautiful blonde woman in a tight black cocktail dress.

CUT TO:

INT. *GENT* CONFERENCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

LANCE

And don't freak out every time you hear one of these idiots talk about me. I'm the Bogeyman. Do I need to explain the Bogeyman Concept to you again?

RENEE

Please don't.

LANCE

Baby, I'm the guy everyone hates. I, as the Bogeyman, get to hobknob with the rich and famous and live the lifestyle everyone yearns for. I am their aspiration, and they know that the only way they'll even get close is to work their asses off and be creative about it. I'm their worst enemy and holy grail.

RENEE

You're a jerk.

LANCE

Baby, come on, you know I'm not as bad as everyone thinks. Remember last month at your sister's place in the Hamptons?

RENEE

You were quite cute helping with my nephews.

CUT TO:

EXT. EAST HAMPTON HOUSE - (FLASHBACK TO A MONTH BEFORE) - DAY

Lance angrily chases after several small children on the lawn. He's screaming obscenities. Renee looks on from far away. To her, it looks like they're all playing tag.

CUT TO:

INT. *GENT* CONFERENCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

LANCE

Come here, beautiful.

Lance pulls Renee in close to him. She initially resists, but quickly gives in, and the two kiss.

INT. *GENT* BULLPEN - NIGHT

Mike's talking to Jim when Lance approaches.

LANCE

Hey Mike, got a minute? Jim, get the hell out of here.

Jim makes a goofy face and walks off.

MIKE

Hey Lance, thanks for this. I couldn't believe how much I missed this place.

LANCE

Well, I gotta say, and this also comes from Mr. Finnerty...

Lance points up and gives a knowing wink.

LANCE (CONT'D)

"Bravo!" Your stunt hasn't hurt magazine sales, they're up about 30 percent from last month! And we all think it's because of the extra publicity you generated.

MIKE

Wow! Well, that's great. Were people buying the magazine to read my captions?

LANCE

Not exactly. We ran a couple of ads congratulating you while also mentioning your new column was going to be in upcoming issues.

MIKE

You want me to write about the subway thing?

LANCE

Mike, you went on the frigging *Today* show to talk about that. That's old news. We were thinking about you doing first-person pieces, doing dangerous stuff. You are "Danger Mike"! Now it's time to earn that reputation.

MIKE

So I guess saving that girl's life didn't quite qualify?

LANCE

You were drunk, right? Do too much sniff-sniff? What was it?

MIKE

I didn't think. I just reacted. After I saw the footage, I couldn't believe it myself. Anyway, what did you have in mind?

LANCE

Well it seems that TBS has invested heavily in broadcasting a classic American sport. And they pledged us a substantial amount of ad revenue if we did a story on it.

MIKE

Did they get the NFL? College Basketball?

LANCE

Do you have any idea what a rodeo clown does?

CUT TO:

INT. WEST VIRGINIA COLISEUM - NIGHT

Card: Present Day

Mike limps out of the center of the arena with the help of Billy Bob.

BILLY BOB

Man, you got lit up but good. Didn't I tell you to fake left and move right? Looks like the flak jacket helped. No holes in ya.

MIKE

Yeah, that was some great advice, by the way. Am I going to be Okay?

BILLY BOB

You look alright, but that was some hit you took. Let's have the doctor take a look at you.

(yells out)

Hank, I got one for ya.

A rodeo CLOWN DOCTOR rushes over to Mike.

CLOWN DOCTOR

Jeez, I haven't seen a hit like that since '98 in Tallahassee.

BILLY BOB

Babin?

CLOWN DOCTOR

That tough bastard shit blood for two months.

MIKE

Wait, am I going to shit blood?

CLOWN DOCTOR

I sure as hell hope not. Are you in any pain, son?

MIKE

(looking skeptical)

Hey man, I don't mean to be a jerk or anything, but can I see a real doctor?

CLOWN DOCTOR

Real doctor?

The Clown Doctor stares at Mike and then looks to Billy Bob without saying a word for way too long. Then they both start hysterically laughing.

CLOWN DOCTOR (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, son, I'm just having some fun. Doc is actually a little busy right now.

CUT TO: A DOCTOR
FRANTICALLY
MENDING A
SCREAMING BULL
RIDER'S
GRUESOMELY
BROKEN LEG.

INT. WEST VIRGINIA COLISEUM - NIGHT

CLOWN DOCTOR

I may not have any formal training, but I've been tending to injured clowns since the early '80s. You're going to be fine, kid. Just make sure you never do this again.

MIKE

Yeah. I don't think that will be a problem. So was it like a red diarrhea stream or bricks of dry blood poop?

CLOWN DOCTOR

I do believe both.

Other clowns and riders shake Mike's hand and pat him on the back.

One of the riders hands Mike a note and points to a pretty blonde girl in the crowd: SARA, wearing a cowboy hat. Mike looks at her, and they both smile.

CUT TO:

INT. WEST VIRGINIA COLISEUM - DRESSING ROOM - DAY

Mike and Sara are passionately kissing. Sara backs off.

SARA

I've never, ever done anything like this before, but then I saw how courageous you were when that nasty bull hit you, you poor New York boy.

MIKE

I gotta say, I'm taking a bit of a shine to you country folk.

Sara takes all of her clothes off.

SARA

Take me to the big city!

MIKE

OK!

Sara jumps on Mike, and they both fall to the ground.

END ACT 3

ACT 4

Fade In:

INT. *GENT* BULLPEN - DAY

Mike strolls into the office, once again late but with no sense of urgency. He gives a few winks and high fives.

MIKE

What's up, bitches?

JIM

Well lookee here, if it isn't Bozo the rodeo clown himself.

Mike and Jim bro hug.

DAN

Man, you've got some pair of balls. We just saw the pictures. Were you petrified?

More staff members come by to hear Mike, including the new managing editor, FRANCESCA (late 30s), has jet black hair and tattoos, and KYLE (mid 30s) the stylish art director who's black and British.

MIKE

A little - but nothing crazy. I just thought of the training.

SETH

What training?

MIKE

About 15 minutes before I went out, this crusty old rodeo clown told me what to do. He was very persuasive.

KYLE

Bull... shit... mate, and I do mean that literally! What training? Some slow-witted wanker telling you to not get killed?

DAN

Yeah, there's no way you weren't freaking. A bull smacked you around in front of 15,000 people!

JIM

If my man Danger Mike says he wasn't scared, he wasn't scared.

Jim bends over and pretends to be a bull, snorting as he holds his hands like horns, running around Mike.

SETH

Yeah, the training kicked in just like SEAL Team 6.

KYLE

He's not a bloody Navy Seal, he got five minutes of advice!

MIKE

Something must have worked, because I'm here alive, with a great story.

Francesca nudges her way into the conversation.

FRANCESCA

Okay, enough with the coffee klatch, get back to work everyone. And Mike, about that story, you'll need to get the copy in by the end of the week.

Mike's confused, he's never met Francesca before.

MIKE

I'm sorry, who are you?

FRANCESCA

Hi, I'm the new managing editor - and in order to make sure we don't have a killer week of shipping, you need to get your copy in by Friday.

Francesca shakes Mike's hand.

MIKE

What happened to AJ?

SETH

Cokehead.

DAN

Cokehead.

KYLE

Bloody friggin' cokehead stole half of the digital cameras we were loaned for a tech shoot.

JIM

He was very photogenic. Until he'd start to like, bleed and tweak.

MIKE

Wow. Okay nice meeting you, but I may need some more time than that.

Mike stands up and appears more assertive than before.

MIKE (CONT'D)

I did just risk my life for this magazine, so I'll get the copy in when I get it in.

Francesca gets in Mike's face, and everyone else slinks away.

FRANCESCA

No, you will get it in by the end of the week. My first close at this magazine will not be held up because you and these other immature frat boy delinquents are too busy drinking to do their jobs. Once you accept an assignment, you also accept the terms for getting the copy in on time.

Francesca turns and walks away.

MIKE

(loudly)

So, who wants to go get wasted tonight!

INT. BLAGGARD'S PUB - NIGHT

Sitting at a table in the crowded bar are Mike, Seth, Dan, Renee and Jim. The table is crammed with pints of beer, shot glasses and half-eaten plates of nachos.

DAN

How can you say beagle? They're like the dim-witted little brother of the hound family.

RENEE

They are adorable and loyal.

DAN

So am I!

RENEE

No, you're like the dim-witted brother of Honey Boo Boo!

The group bursts out laughing. Lance walks into the bar with Francesca and Kyle. They're greeted roundly.

MIKE

What the hell are you guys doing here? We thought you went home two hours ago.

LANCE

One of the forms looked like it had jaundice.

KYLE

The retoucher screwed up the color correction on a spread, so we had to re-send the whole form.

LANCE

What he said. Now, move the hell over so we can catch up.

The new group squeezes in.

MIKE

Where's Andy?

LANCE

Andy had to go home to his nagging wife, who called him so many damn times about their kids' dental insurance I wanted to knock *her* teeth out. Now, on a more interesting note, I bet none of you knew that our lovely new managing editor Francesca is a member of MENSA.

The group sarcastically oohs and ahhs.

FRANCESCA

It's not my fault I was born a genius.

Francesca knocks back a shot.

FRANCESCA (CONT'D)

So I guess I have to drink myself down to your level.

Now they cheer for real.

LANCE

Fran, if you really are as smart as you and the other Mensans say you are, deduce which of these heathens is also a member.

FRANCESCA

I don't know if I'm that smart,
but...

Francesca scans the group, who make goofy faces in turn.

FRANCESCA (CONT'D)

Jim.

LANCE

Holy crap, you really are smart!

The group can't believe it.

MIKE

(to Jim)

You're in friggin MENSA? Last week
you snorted White Out!

JIM

Genius has many facets, Mike.

MIKE

Not really.

FRANCESCA

You actually have to *be* one to know
one, Mike.

MIKE

Pick that one up at a Dragon-Tattoo-
emo-goth-teen-angst-convention?

FRANCESCA

I'm the president. What were you, a
high school football player?

MIKE

No, I was wrestler... My parents
wouldn't let me play football.

The group laughs.

LANCE

Hey, lay off Mike. He's finally
made himself useful.

RENEE

(overly loud)

Lance, that's very rude!

MIKE

Hey Renee, it's cool. Okay, I'm
getting the next pitcher.

INT. BLAGGARD'S PUB BAR - NIGHT

Mike orders two pitchers of beer. A blonde girl sits next to him. It's Sara.

SARA
I'll pay for that.

MIKE
Whoa! What, um, are you doing here?

SARA
Aren't you happy to see me?

MIKE
Sure, but you're a long way from
West Virginia. How did you find me?

SARA
Internet.

That isn't the answer Mike is expecting. This is strange.

MIKE
Not quite sure what that means.

SARA
I sent out Facebook friend requests
to everyone on the *Gent* masthead.
Some guy named Jim accepted, and he
just posted that he was here.

This sounds odd, but before Mike can react Sara gets off of her bar stool and embraces Mike.

SARA (CONT'D)
I missed you so much, I just had to
come by and see you. I can't stop
thinking about our encounter - and
now I want to have you for the
whole night.

Sara is grinding into Mike's crotch, and his hesitations have gone out the window.

MIKE
Where are you staying?

SARA
Your place.

MIKE
Let's go.

INT. MIKE'S APARTMENT LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Mike's sitting at a desk in his apartment and staring at the computer screen. He begins typing something, then shakes his head and puts his head in his hands. Sara walks out of the bedroom, wearing only one of Mike's T-shirts.

SARA

Hey baby, whatcha doing?

MIKE

I couldn't sleep, so I started writing my rodeo clown story.

SARA

I can't wait to read it!

Sara runs over to the desk and sees a blank screen.

MIKE

Yeah, I'm having some difficulty getting started.

SARA

Oh honey, just write how you courageously stared down a bull like you were swatting a fly.

MIKE

That's not really what happened.

SARA

Says who? You should be proud of what you've done. Not only are you a hero but you're fearless. It's like your brand.

MIKE

Well, fearless may be a strong word, but...

SARA

But nothing.

Sara gets on Mike's lap and starts kissing him.

SARA (CONT'D)

You should let everyone know what a strong, tough, gutsy man you are.

MIKE

Yeah, maybe I shouldn't be afraid to brag a little bit. That did take guts, didn't it?

SARA

You bet it did - and you are making me all hot again!

MIKE

Um, are you sure? I can barely walk.

SARA

And I'm gonna make sure you stay that way. I don't want you running away from me! Now come here, my schmoopy woopy!

An aggressive Sara overcomes Mike's mild reluctance.

MIKE

Boy you are really a little, nuts.

SARA

I want to just eat you up!

She knocks Mike off of his roller chair.

INT. GENT BULLPEN -DAY

In sped-up time Mike types at his computer. The rest of the office comes and goes, but Mike is oblivious. A whole day passes by in seconds until Mike is the last one left.

ANGLE ON: MIKE'S
COMPUTER SCREEN
HE'S TYPING.

MIKE (V.O.)

No one thought I could succeed, but I made that bull my bitch. I learned a valuable lesson: You can't teach balls. They have to be a part of who you are, and not everyone can be Danger Mike.

The End.

Mike has a smug smile on his face as he e-mails the story to Lance and Andy.

INT. GENT BULLPEN - FOLLOWING DAY

Mike is chatting with the guys when Francesca drops a proof on his desk with red marks all over it.

MIKE

What's this?

FRANCESCA

You should talk to Lance. It looks like your story needs some work.

MIKE

What the hell?

Lance walks by.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Hey Lance, what's up with this?

LANCE

Let's talk in my office.

INT. LANCE'S OFFICE - DAY

Mike storms in.

MIKE

Is this some sort of new game you're playing? I risk my life for a great story, and you tear it up?

LANCE

Hey, you don't have any right to speak to me that way. I know I run a loose ship, but I'm still your boss, so zip it. Secondly, there's some great stuff in that story, but overall it's shit.

MIKE

I can't do anything right with you, can I?

LANCE

Get your head out of your ass, this isn't personal. Look at the notes and rewrite it. Now get the hell out of my office.

Mike stomps over to Andy and tosses the proof on his desk.

MIKE

Can you believe this? He's jealous because I've become the face of the magazine, and this is how he takes it out on me.

ANDY

Yeah, I wanted to talk to you about that. These edits aren't from Lance, they're from me.

Mike's taken aback.

MIKE

What? But why? I thought you had my back.

ANDY

I do have your back, that's why I was so brutal in the edit. The piece isn't good.

MIKE

What the hell is wrong with it?

ANDY

It just doesn't ring true. You say you weren't afraid? You had the whole thing under control? Bullshit. You were terrified - you told me so yourself.

MIKE

I don't want to come across looking like a big pussy.

ANDY

So instead you want to look like, what did you call it, a douchebag?

MIKE

Listen, I know you're having trouble at home, but there's no need to take it out on me.

ANDY

Wow. Well, I'm gonna let that pass. I realize taking criticism about something so personal is tough. But grow up. The story is boring. There's no conflict or drama, it's self-serving and you come across like a dick. I suggest you read my notes carefully and take a look in the mirror. You're not Lance, so stop acting like it.

A loud GASP is heard in the background. Mike and Andy look around to see Sara listening in on their conversation.

MIKE

Sara, how did you get in here?

SARA

How could you say that Mike's story was no good? What do you know anyway you old fart?

ANDY

Mike, do you know this woman?

MIKE

She's kind of staying with me.

ANDY

Good luck with that.

Andy walks off, leaving Mike and Sara.

MIKE

What are you doing here? You can't talk to Andy like that, he's my boss.

SARA

I thought Lance was your boss.

MIKE

He is too. I'm very low on the totem pole.

SARA

But he was so mean to you!

MIKE

What are you doing here?

SARA

I missed you and wanted to tempt you to leave work early so we can snuggle.

MIKE

I don't think so, Sara. In fact, maybe you should think about going back home.

Sara goes to embrace Mike, who gently pushes her away.

SARA

You don't mean that. You can't.

MIKE

I'm sorry, but I do.

SARA

Well, I'll tell all the newspapers
you hit me.

MIKE

Why would you do that?

SARA

Because you're famous and that's a
big story, so there!

MIKE

I'm not famous - you're, like, my
only fan and you've officially
moved on to insane stalker. So
please, just leave.

SARA

(enraged)

Fine.

Sara walks out but stops in the bullpen and begins yelling.

SARA (CONT'D)

Mike Dibello can't last in bed for
more than three minutes and... he
picks his nose and eats it!

The whole office looks on, as Mike covers his face.

SARA (CONT'D)

I am going to make your life hell!

END ACT 4

ACT 5

Fade in:

EXT. MIKE'S PARENTS' HOUSE - DAY

Mike stands outside the front door, he rings the bell. A second later it quickly opens and a open hand comes out and smacks him on the forehead. It's Joe.

MIKE

Dad! What did you do that for?

JOE

Bull rider? Are you insane or stupid?

MIKE

Relax, I'm fine, I was never in any danger.... Who told you?

JOE

Your brother. He thought it was hilarious that you went off riding bulls.

MIKE

I didn't ride a bull. I was a rodeo clown, and I was perfectly safe. I wore a flak jacket.

JOE

If you were so safe, why did you need a flak jacket?

Mike thinks for a second, that's a good point...

JOE (CONT'D)

Do you know what your mother would do if she found out about this? We just spent two weeks in the hospital wondering if you were going to wake up because you were such a tough guy. This is utterly ridiculous.

MIKE

It's not ridiculous, it's part of my job. You know, that thing you ingrained in my brain every second of my childhood that I'd have to take seriously?

JOE

That was great advice!

MIKE

Not when you're in Kindergarten!

JOE

Well, get another job! You're a writer. The only time your safety should be an issue is if you get a paper cut.

MIKE

I'm not quitting. I'm not a kid anymore, and this is my life. Now, you can tell Mom and I'll deal with it, or you can, hopefully please, not say anything and let's both hope she never finds out.

JOE

Okay, Mr. Big Shot, go do whatever the hell you want. But the next time you need help with the rent or your credit cards go ride a bull to make extra money!

Joe slams the door in Mike's face.

MIKE

(screaming)

I didn't ride the bull!

INT. DIBELLO PHOTO - DAY

Mike enters his brother Anthony's photo studio. Anthony shoots a model with a blank face wearing a wedding gown in front of a screen, with his assistant, KERRY, and other employees mulling around.

ANTHONY

Give me another look like that.
Great. Sexy eyes now. Very nice.

The woman has the same dull expression in every shot.

ANTHONY (CONT'D)

Okay, we're good with this dress.
How many more?

KERRY

That's the last one.

ANTHONY

Cool. Good work, guys. Thanks.

Anthony grabs his retoucher, CRAIG.

ANTHONY (CONT'D)

Hey, make sure you cinch in her waist during the retouch.

CRAIG

Sure thing, boss.

Anthony sees Mike and motions for him to come over.

ANTHONY

What is up, little brother?

MIKE

Why did you tell Dad about the rodeo clown thing?

ANTHONY

Why wouldn't I? That was nuts.

MIKE

Isn't there some sort of brotherly Omertà for when I tell you something in confidence?

ANTHONY

Omertà? You're writing about it in a national magazine. You really think Mom and Dad weren't going to find out?

MIKE

Well, it would buy me a month or so. Besides, my story may never even make it into the issue now.

ANTHONY

Wait up, tell me about it over a sandwich.

EXT. DIBELLO PHOTO FIRE ESCAPE - NIGHT

Anthony takes a hit from a joint and passes it to Mike.

ANTHONY

So why did everybody hate the story so much? I thought it was great when you told me what happened.

MIKE

I didn't write about it the way I told it to you. I have a reputation to protect.

ANTHONY

Well, I don't know about much...

Anthony takes a long hit from the joint and starts coughing violently.

ANTHONY (CONT'D)

But I do know art. And unless you're a performance artist whose whole shtick is your persona, than you can't have any ego. It's like Paris Hilton trying to sing. It just doesn't work.

MIKE

So what should I do? The whole danger thing is based on me being a badass.

ANTHONY

Just be honest. Did you see that last Superman movie? Horrendous, because at the end of the day there's only so many way to introduce kryptonite into a story. Don't be Superman, be John McClane.

MIKE

Speaking of kryptonite - that girl Sara seems to have snorted a bunch of it or something. She went totally nuts.

ANTHONY

Who could've possibly seen that coming? Most rodeo clown groupies from the Appalachians are totally well balanced.

MIKE

Man, she was hot.

INT. MIKE'S APARTMENT LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Mike opens a new Word document on his computer and starts typing. We see what he's typing on the screen.

MIKE (V.O.)

I could barely breathe, I couldn't even spit. The terror paralyzed me, but somehow I started walking to the bull ring. What was I afraid of?

(MORE)

MIKE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

A 2,000-pound bull that was going to stand on my neck and eat my face off? Sure. But what moved my body to go out and actually do this insanely stupid and dangerous act was that I didn't want to look like a coward and back down. I didn't want to tell my boss that the subway thing was just a fluke. In short, I didn't want to look like a pussy.

INT. GENT BULLPEN - MORNING

It's early, and Mike is the only one in the office, typing at his computer. Andy walks in.

ANDY

Well, I do declare, Mike Dibello is actually in early.

MIKE

I'm really just on time.

Andy looks at his watch.

ANDY

No, you're early. It's 9:45. I'm 15 minutes early because the more time spent away from home the better.

MIKE

I thought starting time was 9:30?

ANDY

It's not, but it's nice to know those times you were just 15 minutes late you thought you were actually 45 minutes late.

Andy walks over to his desk and Mike follows.

MIKE

Hey man, I wanted to apologize for yesterday. I read the story again, and you were right - it sucked.

ANDY

No problem, Mike. It takes a big man to admit he was acting like a Lance. Now I have to totally change my opinion of you again.

MIKE

Well, read my new draft first, and then we can talk. I just e-mailed it to you.

ANDY

I'm looking forward to reading it, in about 25 minutes. I'm taking a nap in the conference room first.

MIKE

Aren't people coming in soon?

ANDY

Kid, you're not the only one who's late every day.

Andy walks off to the conference room and passes by Francesca who's walking in.

FRANCESCA

Mike, you're here? Good. So when can I expect that revised copy?

MIKE

I already sent it in.

FRANCESCA

Well, good, I'm glad. Hopefully it's better this time.

MIKE

Hopefully.

Mike begins walking away.

FRANCESCA

Hey, what was up with that blonde girl? Is she your girlfriend or just nuts?

MIKE

I hope neither, but I have no idea.

INT. BLAGGARD'S PUB - NIGHT

Mike, Seth, Renee and Jim play pool. Seth hits three quick shots in a row.

MIKE

Have you been practicing?

SETH

Game, set and match, motherlover!

RENEE

What does motherlover mean? Is that some sort of gross new Internet thing?

SETH

I don't know... it's in, like, every movie.

MIKE

Do you only have basic cable?

SETH

Yeah, why?

JIM

Because, you moron, you're just repeating the dubbed versions of curses.

MIKE

Okay, someone needs to take you to a New York cursing school.

JIM

Yeah, it's called the third grade of every public school in the city!

Andy walks in, and Mike meets him at the bar.

ANDY

There he is. The wunderkind has arrived!

MIKE

Is that what you're calling yourself now?

ANDY

If you think I have anything close to that sort of self-confidence, then you're sadly mistaken.

MIKE

Gotcha.

ANDY

So, what's up?

MIKE

Nothing much, just playing some pool.

ANDY

That's cool. Well I'm just gonna have a beer and head on home.

Andy takes a long, deliberate sip of his beer.

MIKE

So, what did you think?

ANDY

About tonight's Yankees game?

MIKE

Enough! You win! Can you please tell me what you thought about my new story draft!

ANDY

Getting a little testy, huh? You know, I'm not the crazy clown doctor who treated you.

MIKE

Dude!

ANDY

Okay, it was great. I loved it. And I talked to Lance, and he didn't hate it, which is more than I can say about anything I've written for him. So, great job.

Mike, finally at ease, gives Andy a big hug.

MIKE

Thanks, man. Again, sorry for being such a Lance. Let me buy you a shot.

ANDY

I wish, but I've got a Parent-Teacher conference tonight, and my wife frowns on me showing up drunk to those things. Especially after what happened at the last one.

MIKE

You sure?

ANDY

Yeah, go have a good time, You've actually earned it for once!

MIKE

Hardy-har. Later, man.

Andy walks out. Renee walks up next to him at the bar.

RENEE

Hey, I'm down for a shot.

MIKE

Well, very nice.

Mike calls out to the bartender, JIMMY.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Hey, Jimmy - two Petron shots, por favor.

RENEE

So, how did the story turn out?

Jimmy delivers the shots, and Mike and Renee clink glasses and toss them back.

MIKE

Pretty good, I think. I feel like I'm going to look kinda goofy, but I'm happy with it.

RENEE

Good for you. Believe me, there's worse things than looking goofy.

Renee ever so slightly touches Mike's arm. They share a quick glance before Jim pops up.

JIM

What the hell, you're doing shots without me?

MIKE

Sorry man. Jimmy, three more Prego.

JIM

Is that a new type of tomato shot?

The camera pulls back as the three of them do a shot. The camera spots a figure at the bar staring at them. As we get closer, we see it's Sara.

EXT. MIKE'S BLOCK - NIGHT

Mike and Jim are walking to Mike's apartment.

JIM
Hey, man, thanks for letting me
crash.

MIKE
No worries. I knew you'd regret
following those tourists to
Brooklyn.

A loud fire-engine siren SCREAMS past them.

JIM
Whoa, that was way too loud.

MIKE
Yeah, I wonder where...

As the pair turn the corner, Mike and Jim look up in horror.

EXT. MIKE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Flames shoot out of Mike's apartment. People on the street
look on in horror as firemen work to put the blaze out.

JIM
Whoa, is that your place?

MIKE
It was.

JIM
What the hell happened?

MIKE
I have no idea.

INT. GREYHOUND BUS -NIGHT

Sitting and sobbing hysterically is Sara.

FADE OUT.

END OF EPISODE