

elastic



by jd stewart

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cast of characters

Christian McDonald - Male - Scottish: Born in Edinburgh, Scotland.

Lawrence (Laurie) Swenson - Male - American: Born in Miami, Florida.

Adrienne Winter - Female - English: Born in London, England.

setting: *Various.*

time: *2015 - 2019*

author's note

As the play is in reverse, empty space is simply silence or thought. Time can be taken.

(..) denotes an action, or an expression of something without words.

The events at the top of each scene act as a timeline (or could simply be wallpaper), if they can be integrated into the staging, this is at the director's discretion.

At the time of writing: The characters of Lawrence and Adrienne should be cast to reflect the racial diversity of the countries/cities they are from. Christian is white - 98.91% of people living in Scotland are white according to the 2001 census - by looking around, not much has changed.

At the top of the play, Christian is 34, Lawrence is 35, and Adrienne is 30.

some facts:

It is estimated that half a million people enter the United States illegally each year.

During the 2014 fiscal year, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) conducted 315,943 removals of illegal detainees.

During the 2017 fiscal year, it is estimated that ICE held a daily average of slightly more than 38,000 people in immigration detention.

ONE - AUGUST 30TH, 2019 (POST-PARLIAMENT PROROGUE)

*Christian and Lawrence's apartment, New York.
They make dinner. Together.*

*There is a **painting** of Alan Kurdi on the wall.*

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Without looking up:

CHRISTIAN

Can you cut the onions finer? They look really chunky.

LAWRENCE

Kitchen Nazi.

A smile.

CHRISTIAN

My father's son.

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LAWRENCE

Cut them if you want. I'll do the meat.

CHRISTIAN

I don't want to cut them. I want you to make them less chunky. I would have done this last night but I ran out of time. So much for the welcome home meal.

..

LAWRENCE

I brought you a gift.

CHRISTIAN

Distracting me with gifts won't distract me from chunky onions.

LAWRENCE

It's what you asked for!

CHRISTIAN

A gift isn't something you ask for.

LAWRENCE

It is when you carry it across the ocean, only to get harassed over fucking onions. You're being Eeyore.

CHRISTIAN

I know, Piglet.

LAWRENCE

Smile, Eeyore.

Lawrence reveals a four pack of Heinz Baked Beans and slides it across the counter.

CHRISTIAN

Huh.

LAWRENCE

Huh?

CHRISTIAN

Adrienne usually brings me those.

LAWRENCE

I know. But I saw them and couldn't resist.

CHRISTIAN

Thanks.

LAWRENCE

You're welcome.

..

CHRISTIAN

We agreed, whenever you took a job out of the country that you'd call every two days, message every day. To keep things airtight. Three weeks. No calls. One message. I've been extreme Eeyore.

LAWRENCE

It was a good message.

CHRISTIAN

She posted all these pictures of them on Facebook. Like a whole photo shoot. With a bouquet of birthday flowers.

LAWRENCE

Moms love Facebook. Would you have remembered if I hadn't done it?

CHRISTIAN

Of course not. That's why we work.

LAWRENCE

New Years Eve, we sat on the sofa watching the ball drop and you told me: *Laurie, this year, I will be better. We've been through a lot. I need to be less Eeyore and more Piglet. I will let things go. What will be, will be.*

CHRISTIAN

I've let a lot of things go! Don't use that spoon, you know it marks the pan.

..

CHRISTIAN

I miss you, when I don't hear from you. I kind of understand not calling - but the messages. You always message. 11a.m. your time, 6a.m. my time.

LAWRENCE

It was a crazy three weeks. Lots of auditions. Who knew being a legitimate American in London would finally have currency.

CHRISTIAN

I read the reviews. Obviously. I would have been there if I could. You know that, right?

..

LAWRENCE

Do you have sauce?

CHRISTIAN

Almost done. And I'll do the pasta in a sec. Is the meat okay? I can smell it - it smells like it's burning.

LAWRENCE

It's not burning.

CHRISTIAN

Surprising.

LAWRENCE

London was a mess on Wednesday. It's good to be out of there. Your government is going to shit.

CHRISTIAN

Pot. Kettle. Don't call them my government. This is an English mess. Nicola will lead us to independence and Scotland will be fine.

LAWRENCE

I don't believe that.

CHRISTIAN

We will be fine. Any horrific alternative adds so many complications for us. See? I'm totally Piglet.

LAWRENCE

We have to think about it. See the lawyer.

CHRISTIAN

Don't put your anxiety about this onto me, okay? It's 7p.m. on a Friday night. I want to make this pre-anniversary meal (I know you hate any kind of celebration, which is why it's happening now), sit on the sofa, hear about your trip. We can talk. Properly, about us. Then my breakdown can kick back in on Tuesday. Thank God for Labor Day.

LAWRENCE

We need a plan. A real one. We can't avoid this.

CHRISTIAN

What do you recommend? Give up? We are so close to everything being done. Don't you want that? No more lawyers, no more paperwork, no more immigration interrogations. They treat us like those people they've got in cages in Texas. I pay taxes. I do everything right. We've done everything right.

Christian puts his knife down. Lawrence goes to him.

LAWRENCE

Breathe. And again. Good.

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CHRISTIAN

Thank you. Sorry. Work. Twenty-two weddings this month.

LAWRENCE

That's more than last year?

CHRISTIAN

Way more. But I'm doing it. The promo pictures looked good. I recognized some of the guys in the cast. From last year?

LAWRENCE

Yeah. Adrienne came along to see it.

CHRISTIAN

Oh. She did? That was. Nice.

LAWRENCE

Are you okay?

CHRISTIAN

Yes. I'm fine. What a nice reunion! It feels like ages since I saw her. Her skin was glowing. Did I mention that to you? I thought she was pregnant.

LAWRENCE

She's not pregnant.

CHRISTIAN

She could be. It would explain a lot.

LAWRENCE

She's not. What do you mean?

CHRISTIAN

How can you be so sure? Some women don't show.

LAWRENCE

I saw her. We chatted. She was wearing a mini-skirt and tank top. Definitely not pregnant. What do you mean, explain a lot?

CHRISTIAN

Nothing. She was a little snippy the last time I saw her. I honestly thought she was pregnant. Like I said. Glowing. But I'm glad she's not.. She's such a great actress. Wouldn't want her career to be derailed with a baby.

..

CHRISTIAN

We should message Justin. It's been so long. He's been doing a lot of TV - good money, I heard.

LAWRENCE

Acting isn't only about the money.

CHRISTIAN

But you need to survive. I had the biggest crush on Justin.

LAWRENCE

Why?! The guy only eats yellow food -

CHRISTIAN

I know. It's weird now. Plus, I don't need a medium steak when I have the rare.

..

LAWRENCE

Did you meet up with anyone? When I was gone? It's okay if you did.

CHRISTIAN

I know that it's okay. I don't need to. It makes everything so complicated and I still find it hard to feel comfortable after what happened.

LAWRENCE

But it could be good for you. A tension release.

CHRISTIAN

I have these for that. Plus, you said you'd go without for a while. Why can't I?

LAWRENCE

Because sometimes we both need more than a hand.

CHRISTIAN

I was busy with work! And with painting again I don't have time to arrange to meet someone.

LAWRENCE

But it's okay if you want to.

CHRISTIAN

What is going on?

LAWRENCE

Don't get mad.

CHRISTIAN

Don't tell me how to react to information I am yet to receive.

..

CHRISTIAN

Well? What is it?

LAWRENCE

Adrienne.

CHRISTIAN

She is pregnant, isn't she? Oh my god.

LAWRENCE

No, Christian. Would you listen to me?

CHRISTIAN

I'm listening!

LAWRENCE

We've been dating. It's pretty serious. I want to marry her.

..

..

CHRISTIAN

I think if you'd confirmed that she was pregnant I would have felt. Better? We're four days away from four years. You realize that, right? fuck.

TWO - MARCH 18TH, 2019 (POST CHRISTCHURCH, NZ)

Christian's office. A WeWork, New York..

He's on his laptop. He doesn't notice Adrienne come in.

ADRIENNE

Look at you. Mr. Grown Up.

CHRISTIAN

Oh my god! You made it!

ADRIENNE

Sorry I'm late - it's hard to find.

CHRISTIAN

It's fine - I have like, less than ten minutes but of course I wanted to see you!

ADRIENNE

Blame the subway.

CHRISTIAN

Standard New York excuse!

ADRIENNE

It's also the truth.

..

CHRISTIAN

Okay. It's fine. Really. You look great by the way. You're glowing. Are you using something new?

ADRIENNE

Nope. Just my face. I feel like I ran to get here.

CHRISTIAN

Do you want me to get you some water? Coffee?

ADRIENNE

I'm fine.

CHRISTIAN

It's all free!

ADRIENNE

And I said I'm fine.

..

ADRIENNE

It's busy in here.

CHRISTIAN

I hate it. Too much plaid. Too much facial hair. Too many bros who want to change the world with their apps. I feel like any one of these white guys could shoot the place up at any moment. This is my last week here. I convinced my boss to let me work from home.

Space like this makes me anxious. And with everything that happened. But it's getting better.

ADRIENNE

Soon you'll be a shut in.

CHRISTIAN

I wouldn't take it that far! There are certain environments which make it worse. That's all. I got medication. For the anxiety.

ADRIENNE

I'm surprised it took you this long.

CHRISTIAN

To what? Get meds?

ADRIENNE

To acknowledge you have it. You've always operated on a high level of anxiety. Everyone saw it.

CHRISTIAN

Maybe I didn't want to believe it.

..

CHRISTIAN

Is everything okay? Your message made it sound like it was urgent.

ADRIENNE

You know what? You're really busy. I shouldn't have asked to meet while you're at work.

CHRISTIAN

Are you kidding? It's fine! It's been so long since we hung out properly - I wish you'd stayed longer after your last show - it was beautiful. I miss late night beans on toast with you.

ADRIENNE

I didn't bring any with me.

CHRISTIAN

Lawrence will be thrilled. I have so many of them. I'm ready for a war.

ADRIENNE

That's good to know. How are things? Between you two?

CHRISTIAN

We're fine! Four years in September. It flies by. It's so good to see you. Do you miss the city?

ADRIENNE

Not at all. It's good to visit - see people. I felt like I was changing, in a bad way.

CHRISTIAN

I don't feel that at all.

ADRIENNE

Really? I'd say you've changed the most.

CHRISTIAN

Marriage is sacrifice. It seemed silly for both of us following an artistic dream. And money. Anyway, Lawrence has always been better at it than me.

ADRIENNE

I don't think so. Your work was punchy. Guttural.

CHRISTIAN

Tell that to the New York Times. The reviews from my last show still haunt me.

ADRIENNE

But that was ages ago. You took a risk. It failed. But you took it.

CHRISTIAN

You sound like Lawrence. I really like seeing him do well. It's what he wants. I wanted a steady income and I'm good at this. Dreams change, you know? You can either dive in to them or wake up.

..

ADRIENNE

I hope you return to it.

CHRISTIAN

Maybe. If I can save enough. The lawyer is draining us. I look at some of these weddings and think: how can they afford this? But also: I would have loved that.

ADRIENNE

I liked your ceremony.

CHRISTIAN

You did? It was so dull. City Hall. Boring.

..

ADRIENNE

But just what was needed. Right? It's a piece of paper after all.

CHRISTIAN

That it is.

ADRIENNE

Christian. Are you happy? Like this.

CHRISTIAN

What do you mean? It's not how I imagined things, but it's working. We're happy.

ADRIENNE

But it's not real.

..

CHRISTIAN

Justin told you, didn't he? I never meant for it to be a secret for so long, but it was easier. The less people who knew the truth, the less complicated it would be.

ADRIENNE

I wrote my name as a witness. For your green card marriage.

CHRISTIAN

Please keep your voice down - I don't want people hearing this.

ADRIENNE

You don't like any of them.

CHRISTIAN

That's not the point.

ADRIENNE

I lied. You lied to me - I thought we were closer than that. Do your parents know?

CHRISTIAN

They wanted a different life for me and I won't give it to them.

ADRIENNE

Your mum and dad are good people.

CHRISTIAN

Maybe to you. But not to me. Their only son. The first person in the family to get a degree. Two degrees, actually. My dad still thinks I'll come back to take over his business. Did you know that? That's what they want for me, even after all these years. I won't let them have it.

ADRIENNE

Once it's over, do you think you'll be in each others lives?

CHRISTIAN

Who said it will be over?

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CHRISTIAN

We have a complicated history. Yes, it's not normal. But it's ours. I know he sleeps with people. His self control is. It's not like mine. But they don't mean anything.

ADRIENNE

How are you sure?

CHRISTIAN

Because he always comes home again. He gets off with whatever girl takes his fancy and he comes back home.

ADRIENNE

None of this sounds healthy.

CHRISTIAN

This is why I didn't say anything. I knew you wouldn't get it. I'm happy. He's happy. If you were my friend, you'd respect that.

ADRIENNE

I didn't realize we were still friends.

CHRISTIAN

Please. Don't be like that. We can figure this out. It's really not a big deal.

Christian's phone rings. He ignores it. It rings again.

ADRIENNE

Looks like my time is up.

Adrienne stands.

CHRISTIAN

Lawrence told me not to tell you. He can be really weird about things at times. When I think of the moments of how hard it has been, it makes me ill. But then for all those moments there are the good ones. The bits which make it easy. Make it work. Most of the time it works.

ADRIENNE

Maybe if he loved you like you wanted him to, those harder parts wouldn't exist at all.

(beat)

Good luck. Working from home.

THREE - NOVEMBER 2ND, 2018 (POST MIGRANT CARAVAN)

Adrienne's flat, London. She waits. Then, a knock at the door. It's Lawrence.

LAWRENCE

This is one of the most ridiculous things I've done. Happy Birthday.

ADRIENNE

I can't believe you're standing here.

LAWRENCE

Don't ever fly budget to this country. The delays are unstoppable.

They kiss.

ADRIENNE

You should jump in the shower - we can still make it our for drinks.

LAWRENCE

Drinks?

ADRIENNE

I texted some friends when you landed - they wanted to celebrate me, and meet you. I thought: why not?

LAWRENCE

I'm not going for drinks.

ADRIENNE

What do you mean? They wanted to do something tomorrow but when I knew you were coming it made sense for it to happen now. Then we can spend the whole weekend in bed.

LAWRENCE

I want to be in bed right now.

He moves in for another kiss.

ADRIENNE

No! We have to go - come on. In the shower. You stink. Did you come here on a plane or packed into a truck?!

LAWRENCE

You sound like Christian.

ADRIENNE

Not a compliment, considering the circumstances.

LAWRENCE

He's painting again. Illegal immigrants.

ADRIENNE

Self-portrait?

LAWRENCE

Not funny.

ADRIENNE

I'm surprised he's dipping back into that subject matter after the last one wasn't well received.

LAWRENCE

It has more of a theme.

ADRIENNE

Oh yeah?

LAWRENCE

Hands. Only hands.

ADRIENNE

Okay.

LAWRENCE

It's called *The Hidden Hands Still Building America*.

ADRIENNE

I don't want to talk about him.

LAWRENCE

I know. You want to go out partying and drinking. You know I've been awake like, twenty-four hours?

ADRIENNE

Not partying. Only drinking. They're dying to meet you.

LAWRENCE

I can't do that.

ADRIENNE

What do you mean? I'll make coffee while you shower.

LAWRENCE

I'm gonna rest - you go. I'll be here when you get back.

ADRIENNE

Come on! It'll take ten minutes!

LAWRENCE

I don't want to!

..

ADRIENNE

This is about him.

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ADRIENNE

What are you so afraid of? You're allowed friends, aren't you?

LAWRENCE

He thinks I'm in California. And you're supposed to be his friend. If he sees pictures of me with you in London, don't you think that would be a little bit suspicious?

ADRIENNE

I don't care! I hate playing by the rules - it's my birthday!

I have to.

LAWRENCE

For Christian.

ADRIENNE

Do you want me to end up in jail?

LAWRENCE

Don't be stupid. They wouldn't.

ADRIENNE

That's what happens.

LAWRENCE

To people who are illegal.

ADRIENNE

This is illegal! Jail time. Fines.

LAWRENCE

If the sword is destined to fall, then it will fall.

ADRIENNE

What the fuck is that?

LAWRENCE

This is exhausting. Running around. Flying halfway across the world to grab weekends when we can. I mean, we aren't rich. Or young.

ADRIENNE

Speak for yourself.

LAWRENCE

You're older than me, you cheeky git.

ADRIENNE

And I'm here. Can't that be enough?

LAWRENCE

It is - it most definitely is.

ADRIENNE

Once it's over and he's all set up, we'll be moving back here.

LAWRENCE

ADRIENNE

He agreed to that?

LAWRENCE

He said: if it's what you want. We'll get his green card, then we'll move here. Sit it out another couple of years.

ADRIENNE

You told me that's what you wanted.

LAWRENCE

You remember.

ADRIENNE

It's already been three.

LAWRENCE

It takes time! I wanna be here, where you are.

ADRIENNE

What about divorce?

LAWRENCE

We can't. Not while we are waiting for his card.

ADRIENNE

When he has them. Once that's all done, get a divorce. Then we can get married and you can come here.

LAWRENCE

We'd still have to wait. I can't finalize a divorce and get married right away.

ADRIENNE

Right. I don't even know how I feel about marriage. I have this tour in Australia, and then hopefully another one. That was a stupid suggestion.

LAWRENCE

Marriage isn't so bad. Good tax breaks, especially back home. The world was built for two people.

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ADRIENNE

We keep going. Like this.

LAWRENCE

For now.

ADRIENNE

But we have to tell him. It might not be as bad as you think. We could make it work? All three of us.

LAWRENCE

You don't want that.

ADRIENNE

No. But I could try. It's basically the same as now, but he would know.

LAWRENCE

He wouldn't go for it.

ADRIENNE

He wouldn't, or you wouldn't?

LAWRENCE

ADRIENNE

If you don't tell him then I will.

..

ADRIENNE

I should text my friends. They'll be disappointed.

LAWRENCE

I mean, I came all this way and you wanna be out with your friends?

ADRIENNE

Don't manipulate me. It's a busy couple of months and I don't see you making a flying visit to Melbourne.

LAWRENCE

You should talk to him. When you're back. He misses you.

ADRIENNE

He's the one who should feel guilty. Not me. I trusted him and he broke a three year friendship, for what? The perfect fake marriage. To you.

LAWRENCE

It is pretty perfect. I get him and you.

..

ADRIENNE

But there are some things you can only do to me. Get in the shower. I have no milk so the coffee will be black.

LAWRENCE

My energy is very low.

ADRIENNE

It'll be strong.

LAWRENCE

And?

ADRIENNE

You can lay there. You know that I'm perfect when it comes to taking control of what you want.

FOUR - MARCH 22ND, 2018 (PRE-MARCH FOR OUR LIVES)

Christian and Lawrence's apartment, New York.

*Christian sits making something at the table
while Lawrence paces.*

LAWRENCE

Your mother was a teacher.

CHRISTIAN

Is a teacher. She is one.

LAWRENCE

I thought she retired?

CHRISTIAN

Nope. My dad retired, my mum is still working.

LAWRENCE

Right. And your dad worked as a plumber.

CHRISTIAN

Correct.

LAWRENCE

And he harbors anger at you for not wanting to take it over.

CHRISTIAN

Don't mention that.

LAWRENCE

Why not?

CHRISTIAN

Because it makes it sound like I ran away.

LAWRENCE

It was part of the reason we did this.

CHRISTIAN

Exactly. Only part.

LAWRENCE

I can say you know how to fix things though, right? If they ask.

CHRISTIAN

That's how I spent my teenage years.

LAWRENCE

You're a lot more layered than meets the eye. You know that? At least your parents give a shit about you.

CHRISTIAN

They pretend to. If it gets me back there, then they'd do anything. Dreams didn't exist for them and they hate me for having them. They hate me for being this. This way. If you think that is giving a shit, then I'd much prefer what you have going on.

(beat)

Do you think this needs more red?

..

LAWRENCE

I think you've used enough red.

CHRISTIAN

Perfect. I'll start on yours in a second. Can you grab the boxes from the kitchen?

Lawrence exits and returns with a box.

Christian breaks it apart. And begins to make again.

LAWRENCE

I thought that one was mine?

CHRISTIAN

It's Adrienne's.

LAWRENCE

I didn't know she was in town.

CHRISTIAN

Why would you? She gets in late tonight. Flying visit. But she wanted to come.

LAWRENCE

Huh. She never seemed like the protest type.

CHRISTIAN

You met her for like, an hour.

LAWRENCE

I could tell.

CHRISTIAN

In that one hour you saw her whole life and decided she wasn't political? You're more layered than meets the eye as well.

..

LAWRENCE

Don't you think you should be studying?

CHRISTIAN

I studied. I know everything I need to know.

LAWRENCE

The lawyer said this one could be more difficult.

CHRISTIAN

I know. I saw her email. Is this what you want on it?

Christian shows Lawrence something on his phone. He nods.

CHRISTIAN

It's okay for us to go to this, right?

LAWRENCE

You wanted to go.

CHRISTIAN

I know. But guns make me nervous.

LAWRENCE

That's why they're having the rally.

CHRISTIAN

Do you ever think what you'd be doing? If I had.

LAWRENCE

No. Because that didn't happen. The therapist thinks it's a good idea?

CHRISTIAN

Yes. She said it could help with my empowerment.

LAWRENCE

Perfect. You'll be fine. And I'll be right by your side.

CHRISTIAN

Adrienne as well.

..

LAWRENCE

Yes.

CHRISTIAN

We can't post pictures. I don't want to be in pictures. In case someone says I'm anti-American or something.

LAWRENCE

You're allowed to have an opinion.

CHRISTIAN

The only opinion I have until I get a green card is that America is great.

LAWRENCE

I'm not sure we got it back to great yet.

CHRISTIAN

To me, it's great. It has to be. You don't think anyone will like, shoot up the rally. A mass shooting at an anti-gun rally. How tragically poetic.

LAWRENCE

If you get freaked out, we can go. Easy. And if someone does, then at least we won't have to do this interview.

CHRISTIAN

Why are you so stressed about this? She's been at every other meeting we've had, she said it wasn't a big deal.

LAWRENCE

I googled.

CHRISTIAN

You googled? What did you google?

LAWRENCE

Interviews like this without a lawyer. Someone said they got split up. Asked a whole bunch of different questions and their answers didn't match.

CHRISTIAN

What questions?

LAWRENCE

Personal shit.

CHRISTIAN

You leave the toilet seat up, but you still manage to piss on the floor. You don't know how to do your own laundry. Your underwear is black, except for that one pair of white briefs - I have no idea where they came from or why you have them. When you think I'm not looking, you pick your nose. And not lightly, you go treasure hunting in there.

LAWRENCE

So do you!

CHRISTIAN

Exactly. Lunch is expensive.

..

LAWRENCE

They could ask sex stuff.

CHRISTIAN

They can't do that. She said that last time.

LAWRENCE

But she won't be there. Maybe we could ask her to send a colleague.

CHRISTIAN

Stop this. We can cover the basics. You're circumcised. I'm not.

LAWRENCE

How the fuck do you know that?!

CHRISTIAN

Bathrooms. Communal bathrooms.

LAWRENCE

You looked?

CHRISTIAN

It was hard not to.

LAWRENCE

When you've slept with guys, what do you like?

..

CHRISTIAN

I'm not answering that.

LAWRENCE

Christian.

CHRISTIAN

Stop it!

LAWRENCE

Tell me how you get fucked by guys!

CHRISTIAN

It's making me feel weird!

LAWRENCE

I know you like it rough.

..

CHRISTIAN

That's one of the shittiest things you've ever said to me.

LAWRENCE

We're supposed to be married!

..

CHRISTIAN

Do you want me to show you?

LAWRENCE

Fuck off.

..

CHRISTIAN

I like to be on top. It's the only time I feel in control. Of anything. Watching his pupils dilate as I move myself onto him. The way his body tenses inside mine. It makes me feel like I can do anything and he won't have any other choice but to say yes.

..

LAWRENCE

Right.

CHRISTIAN

If they ask, I'll say you do everything to me. I'm your little pig boy.

LAWRENCE

That's gross.

CHRISTIAN

Sex is gross? Or gay sex is gross.

..

LAWRENCE

Your mother is a teacher.

CHRISTIAN
Correct. Who does she teach?

LAWRENCE
Juniors.

CHRISTIAN
But?

LAWRENCE
But - you call them primary. She teaches primary kids!

CHRISTIAN
Gold star for Laurie. Good work. What do you think?

*Christian holds up a sign, a slogan for the
upcoming March for our Lives.*

LAWRENCE
You ran out of black.

CHRISTIAN
I'll go get more.

*Christian stands, Lawrence moves towards him
and kisses him.*

Christian backs away.

CHRISTIAN
What are you doing?

LAWRENCE
We've kissed before.

CHRISTIAN
Not like that. There's a line, Piglet.

LAWRENCE
I'm sorry.

CHRISTIAN
I'm going to the store. Do you need anything?

LAWRENCE

No. I'm good.

Christian stands and picks up his coat.

CHRISTIAN

Don't do that to me again, okay? You know that it's not fair.

FIVE - JANUARY 20TH 2017 (INAUGURATION)*A hospital waiting room, New York. Christian has a bloody nose.**Lawrence enters with two cups of coffee.*

CHRISTIAN

Not sure how I can drink that.

LAWRENCE

I'll get a straw.

CHRISTIAN

It's fine. I'll figure it out.

*He tries. Is unsuccessful.**Lawrence stands.*

CHRISTIAN

Would you sit down? I said it's fine.

LAWRENCE

Why is this taking so long?

CHRISTIAN

I don't know what you mean. This number system is so organized.

..

LAWRENCE

You gonna tell me what happened?

CHRISTIAN
Nope.

LAWRENCE
Okay. Is there a reason why?

CHRISTIAN
Because the last time something like this happened, you put a guy in hospital.

LAWRENCE
So what? It's your turn now?

CHRISTIAN
It's not my turn. I didn't say it was my turn.

..

LAWRENCE
Did he come to the apartment?

CHRISTIAN
Laurie, I'm not doing this right now. Get me another tissue. Please.

Lawrence pulls tissue from his pocket and hands it to Christian.

LAWRENCE
You're going to delete those apps.

CHRISTIAN
You told me to use the apps.

LAWRENCE
I said we should figure out sex with other people.

CHRISTIAN
And I did.

LAWRENCE
Sex, not a beating.

CHRISTIAN
I didn't know that was going to happen.

LAWRENCE

Your complete lack of self-control is really disgusting sometimes. Did he come to the apartment?

CHRISTIAN

He doesn't know where we live if that's what you're asking.

Christian looks up at the TV. He watches.

CHRISTIAN

It's on every channel.

LAWRENCE

It's news.

CHRISTIAN

It's terrorism.

..

LAWRENCE

I can't protect you if you don't tell me what happened.

CHRISTIAN

You said I was disgusting and now you want to protect me?

LAWRENCE

Your self-control. Not you. Protecting you is what I do.

CHRISTIAN

Like a job. I would have called Adrienne.

LAWRENCE

I would have found out.

CHRISTIAN

How?

LAWRENCE

Look at your face.

CHRISTIAN

It could have been worse.

LAWRENCE

What does that mean?

Nothing. CHRISTIAN

There's more? LAWRENCE

Can you stop? CHRISTIAN

If you would fucking tell me what happened then I'd fucking stop! LAWRENCE

Keep your voice down. I don't need all these people knowing my business. CHRISTIAN

..

Christian looks at the number board on the wall.

I thought the purpose of this was to go in order. They jump around. CHRISTIAN

Priority. Health insurance over no health insurance. LAWRENCE

America. Fuck yeah. CHRISTIAN

It's what you wanted. LAWRENCE

If I'd gone home when I was supposed to, we wouldn't be here. We wouldn't be doing any of this. CHRISTIAN

Don't be ridiculous. We did the right thing. It's teething problems. We'll figure it out. LAWRENCE

There's no way he can last four years. Is there? CHRISTIAN

I can't believe he got this far. LAWRENCE

CHRISTIAN

We should get a lawyer. Ever since the result I've been thinking about it and it will be better. We can't take any chances. Especially if he actually follows through on what he wants.

LAWRENCE

If that's what you want.

CHRISTIAN

I'm going to get a proper job.

LAWRENCE

What about your work? You had one bad show.

CHRISTIAN

It's not about the show!

LAWRENCE

Then what is it?

CHRIS

Idle hands.

LAWRENCE

If you've deleted the apps, you can focus. You have savings.

CHRISTIAN

Right. Savings.

LAWRENCE

What does that mean?

CHRISTIAN

Nothing. We need more money. To pay for a lawyer.

LAWRENCE

I can do more shifts at the coffee shop.

CHRISTIAN

You get paid like, \$3 an hour.

LAWRENCE

Plus tips.

CHRISTIAN

It's not a debate.

LAWRENCE

We'll cut some costs. We can pull our savings.

CHRIS

Stop saying savings.

LAWRENCE

What does that mean?

..

CHRISTIAN

He had a gun, Laurie.

LAWRENCE

Are you fucking serious?

CHRISTIAN

Yes. I'm serious. A gun. He pulled out a gun. He wanted money.

LAWRENCE

We have to go the police.

CHRISTIAN

And what are they gonna do?

LAWRENCE

Find him. Arrest him.

CHRISTIAN

That man on TV, owns the police! They aren't going to do anything. They don't care.

..

..

CHRISTIAN

We need more money. I have to get a proper job.

LAWRENCE

Let's get you fixed up. We'll go down to the station together.

CHRISTIAN

Would you stop? I don't want to go to. Okay? Do you know how humiliating that would be? I went to a strangers house for sex, on my own. Nobody forced me. They'd say I got what was coming to me.

LAWRENCE

You don't know that.

CHRISTIAN

With him in charge. Who knows anything anymore.

..

CHRISTIAN

We need this to be easy.

Silence.

CHRISTIAN

And sometimes we have to make sacrifices. We need to make this work. For both of us. I want you to do what you do. Okay? You did this for me. Let me do this. For you. For us.

Lawrence gives Christian another tissue. He switches them out.

CHRISTIAN

I already deleted them.

LAWRENCE

Good.

CHRISTIAN

After I called you I deleted them.

LAWRENCE

I will check.

CHRISTIAN

Go ahead.

..

CHRISTIAN

When I heard the word fag over here, I always thought of cigarettes. I get it now.

Lawrence puts his arm around Christian.

LAWRENCE

I love you, Eeyore.

..

Off the number board.

CHRISTIAN

Finally.

SIX - JUNE 27TH, 2016 (POST-E.U. REFERENDUM)*A coffee shop, New York.**Lawrence sits, highlighter in hand. He doesn't notice Adrienne approach him.*

ADRIENNE

Lawrence? I thought that was you -

LAWRENCE

Hello?

ADRIENNE

You don't remember me. This is awkward. I changed my hair. Adrienne.

LAWRENCE

Adrienne.

ADRIENNE

I was at Christian's last show. And your wedding.

LAWRENCE

Oh, fuck! I am not on this planet today. I'm sorry.

ADRIENNE

The hair.

LAWRENCE

Right, the hair. You changed your hair.

ADRIENNE

Things we do for a part, right?

LAWRENCE

Tell me about it. Straight is cool. Classic. Would you like to join me?

ADRIENNE

I don't wanna interrupt.

LAWRENCE

Not at all. Technically, I'm "working" - but what the manager doesn't know won't kill him.

ADRIENNE

Survival jobs are the worst.

Adrienne sits and looks over the papers in front of Lawrence.

ADRIENNE

We know what we are, but know not what we may be.

LAWRENCE

What's that?

ADRIENNE

Ophelia. It's really not working for you, is it?

LAWRENCE

I've read it like, five times. Read the Sparknotes. Watched the funny YouTube video.

ADRIENNE

It gets easier.

LAWRENCE

Says the girl from England. You were raised on this.

ADRIENNE

You sound like Christian. We don't come out the womb quoting Shakespeare.

LAWRENCE

Thank God. That would be terrifying.

Adrienne's phone dings. She looks at it.

ADRIENNE

Speak of the devil.

LAWRENCE

I'm glad he's messaging someone else.

ADRIENNE
He's having a bad day.

LAWRENCE
I'm very aware.

ADRIENNE
Will this affect anything for you?

LAWRENCE
Is America in the E.U.?

ADRIENNE
It most definitely is not.

LAWRENCE
Which is what I keep telling him.

ADRIENNE
It's worse when you're watching it from afar. Come November you'll be in the eye of the storm.

LAWRENCE
Don't jinx it.

ADRIENNE
He won't win. He can't.

LAWRENCE
But he will. Thinking he won't is the problem.

ADRIENNE
He wants me to go over.

LAWRENCE
You can eat all those beans. They fill a full cupboard.

ADRIENNE
You don't eat them?

LAWRENCE
Never. But I did get him off red meat so I'd consider it a win.

ADRIENNE
We're all allowed a small vice.

LAWRENCE

Exactly. Mine is smoking.

ADRIENNE

He never said you smoke.

LAWRENCE

He doesn't know. I let myself have one a month. That's my beans.

ADRIENNE

I won't say a word.

LAWRENCE

I know. That's why I told you.

..

LAWRENCE

It won't be all bad. When he wins. Think of the art! That's what I keep telling Christian.

ADRIENNE

Is he painting again?

LAWRENCE

No. Not since the last show.

ADRIENNE

I thought it was bold.

LAWRENCE

It was reckless. His work is better than that.

..

ADRIENNE

I should head over to see him. I'll let you get back to not working.

LAWRENCE

You don't have to go. Not yet. You could help me with this.

ADRIENNE

I've never done Hamlet. I know it, but not as well as I should. You should watch the movie. The Kenneth Branagh one is good. Long, but good.

Lawrence picks up his phone, types something.

LAWRENCE
It's playing at the Angelika.

ADRIENNE
Are you serious?

LAWRENCE
Not at all. My attempt at a joke.

ADRIENNE
Noble effort. If it was MacBeth, then I could give major notes.

LAWRENCE
My Scottish accent is awful.

ADRIENNE
You'd think being married to one would help you there.

LAWRENCE
Right. But it doesn't.

Adrienne's phone dings again.

ADRIENNE
That's him again. He's asking for ice-cream.

LAWRENCE
Don't do it. He's not eating dairy.

ADRIENNE
No dairy. No red meat. You've changed him.
(beat)

It was nice seeing you.

Adrienne goes to stand.

LAWRENCE
Would you like to go and see a movie?

ADRIENNE
I can message him, see if he wants to. It didn't sound like he wanted to go out.

LAWRENCE
I meant with me.

ADRIENNE

What about non-dairy ice-cream?

LAWRENCE

We can show up later. Say we ran into each other. This city isn't as big as people think it is.

ADRIENNE

Aren't you supposed to be working?

LAWRENCE

Does it look busy?

ADRIENNE

I think Christian may wanna join. I can ask him.

LAWRENCE

He doesn't need to know. I don't want him to feel weird.

..

LAWRENCE

Usually we don't do things with mutual acquaintances.

ADRIENNE

Do things.

LAWRENCE

Yeah, it's one of our rules. No hook-ups with people we know.

ADRIENNE

I don't follow.

..

LAWRENCE

That's not what any of this is, is it? fuck. Don't tell him I said anything, he'll get really upset.

ADRIENNE

LAWRENCE

When we decided to do the whole green card thing we came up with these rules, just to like, make sure we didn't fuck up. Nobody we know. Only strangers.

ADRIENNE

Green card?

LAWRENCE

Yeah. You didn't think I was -

ADRIENNE

I had no idea.

..

LAWRENCE

I'm gonna kill him.

ADRIENNE

It's fine. Really - I didn't even think to ask. He always spoke about you with so much -

LAWRENCE

What?

ADRIENNE

It doesn't matter. Really. No murder needs to take place.

LAWRENCE

Justin knew. I figured when he asked he would have told you.

ADRIENNE

Nope. Not a word. It makes sense. He always said he wanted to escape his family.

LAWRENCE

And I provided.

ADRIENNE

A selfless act.

LAWRENCE

Not quite. It would be nice to be able to work in more places. Easier to work in more places. Your passport is the gold star.

ADRIENNE

After today, I'm not sure on that.

LAWRENCE

He's convinced Scotland will be free.

(beat)

I shouldn't be talking about this. Go see him. And don't say you saw me.

ADRIENNE

I'm not really sure if I wanna see him right now.

LAWRENCE

Forget I mentioned it. I'm sorry.

ADRIENNE

Stop apologizing. I don't understand why he'd keep that from me. It seems a pretty simple deal between you, right? So why the secrecy?

LAWRENCE

I really have no idea.

Lawrence begins to clean up his papers.

ADRIENNE

What movie?

LAWRENCE

Huh?

ADRIENNE

You asked if I wanted to see a movie. What one?

LAWRENCE

I'd have to check what's playing. Do you wanna invite him?

ADRIENNE

No.

LAWRENCE

Right.

ADRIENNE

I'm not going to ask him.

..

Lawrence looks over Adrienne's shoulder. He stands.

LAWRENCE

I gotta serve that customer. You want anything?

Adrienne gestures to the coffee on the table in front of her.

LAWRENCE

It's on the house. An apology.

ADRIENNE

The pastries look good.

LAWRENCE

You got it.

ADRIENNE

Nothing with nut in it.

LAWRENCE

No nut.

ADRIENNE

And then we'll go and see a movie.

LAWRENCE

Cool.

ADRIENNE

Yeah. Cool.

SEVEN - SEPTEMBER 3RD, 2015 - (POST DEATH OF ALAN KURDI)

Lawrence's apartment, New York.

Christian looks at his phone, dressed in a suit.

CHRISTIAN

Laurie! We're going to be late - are you nearly ready?

LAWRENCE (O.S.)

I'm coming! Have you seen my -

CHRISTIAN

In the cupboard!

Lawrence enters, in half a suit.

CHRISTIAN

Wow.

LAWRENCE

You've seen me in a suit before.

CHRISTIAN

Not wow for you, wow at this. Did you see?

Christian holds his phone up, Lawrence looks.

CHRISTIAN

He's so young. Three years old, my god.

LAWRENCE

Not a wow for me?

CHRISTIAN

Wow. His poor family - unless they died as well.

LAWRENCE

We need to take an Uber.

..

LAWRENCE

Put the phone down!

CHRISTIAN

This could be us.

LAWRENCE

Don't be ridiculous. Ugh - it's like, 90 degrees. I'll be soaked by the time we get there. This won't look good in the photos.

CHRISTIAN

I never thought getting married would be like this.

LAWRENCE

Are you getting all mushy?

CHRISTIAN

I'm not mushy.

LAWRENCE

Right. You're Eeyore. He's never mushy. Only grumpy. Smile, you donkey. It's not a big deal.

CHRISTIAN

Kids are drowning in the ocean and their bodies are washing up on beaches.

LAWRENCE

You showed me and it's sad. But it's not us.

CHRISTIAN

It's haunting but kind of beautiful. Is it wrong to say that?

Lawrence's phone dings. Christian reaches for it and reads the message.

CHRISTIAN

Fuck.

LAWRENCE

What?

Christian holds up Lawrence's phone. He reads.

LAWRENCE

We'll have to find someone else. Lucas is such a fucking flake!

CHRISTIAN

How? How will we do that? We have like, less than two hours until the ceremony.

LAWRENCE

You must know someone who can come along!

CHRISTIAN

Maybe this is a sign.

LAWRENCE

It's a bump in the road. Find someone.

CHRISTIAN

Are we sure? About doing this? Going home might not be so bad.

LAWRENCE

You've spent every minute I've known you talking about how you never want to go back there. How it doesn't work for you. How you can't be what your parents want you to be.

CHRISTIAN

Yeah. You're right, it would be bad.

LAWRENCE

They thought we were a couple when they visited.

CHRISTIAN

They did not.

LAWRENCE

They did. They asked me.

CHRISTIAN

That would have killed them.

LAWRENCE

They wanted you to be happy.

CHRISTIAN

Well they could have spent eighteen years making a fucking effort instead of trying to make me something... someone I won't ever be.

LAWRENCE

We can't do this without two witnesses.

CHRISTIAN

Why didn't you tell me that they wanted me to be happy.

LAWRENCE

Because I knew you wouldn't wanna hear it. That it would make you stop and reexamine your relationship with them.

CHRISTIAN

That's definitely where I'm going right now.

LAWRENCE

Can we do this later? We need another witness.

CHRISTIAN

Maybe it's a sign.

LAWRENCE

Your OPT is ending and you can't afford the next visa.

CHRISTIAN

They want me to be happy.

LAWRENCE

I lied. They think you're a dick. A gross gay asshole.

CHRISTIAN

Laurie!

LAWRENCE

That's what you wanna hear, isn't it? We've paid money to do this. It's the only way you get to live the life you want to live. Them saying they want you to be happy doesn't change anything.

CHRISTIAN

Yeah. You're right.

LAWRENCE

Now please scroll through your phone and find someone to witness this glorious day.

Christian returns to his phone.

CHRISTIAN

I'm gonna paint this picture.

LAWRENCE

More scrolling, less musing.

CHRISTIAN

Wouldn't it look amazing in acrylic?

LAWRENCE

Your focus is starting to piss me off. I need to do my tie. You need a tie. You can't get married without a tie.

CHRISTIAN

Am I looking for a witness or doing a tie? Fuck! I don't have a tie.

LAWRENCE

I have a spare.

Lawrence exits.

Christian resumes to his phone, scrolling through. Then, he types a message and hits send.

Lawrence re-enters with another tie. He does his own, then Christian's.

Any luck?
LAWRENCE

I sent a message.
CHRISTIAN

Only one?
LAWRENCE

You're being really prickly right now.
CHRISTIAN

We said we were gonna do this, and now it's like you're backing out.
LAWRENCE

I'm not! I'm waiting on a reply! Are you leaving your hair like that?
CHRISTIAN

I can't do anything with it.
LAWRENCE

I have product.
CHRISTIAN

I don't put crap in my hair. Never have.
LAWRENCE

I didn't know that.
CHRISTIAN

Lawrence's phone dings - one new message. He checks it.

Well, you do now.
LAWRENCE

CHRISTIAN

Is it time for me to request the Uber? You know as soon as you do it they appear, which is the point. But like, are you close to ready?

LAWRENCE

I need two minutes. I have to grab something. Send a follow up message!

Again, Lawrence exits.

Christian holds his phone, waiting. And then - ding. His relief is visible. Almost.

Lawrence re-enters.

LAWRENCE

Justin messaged. He's on his way. Did you hear back?

CHRISTIAN

Not yet.

..

CHRISTIAN

Do you think we should kiss?

LAWRENCE

Now?

CHRISTIAN

Like, when we do the vows. People kiss, right? That's what happens.

LAWRENCE

We don't have to kiss.

CHRISTIAN

But people will expect it. It's like, what happens.

LAWRENCE

It's City Hall.

CHRISTIAN

I know, but we should decide now so we know. I don't wanna go in for a kiss and then you like, back off.

LAWRENCE

Go in for a kiss?

CHRISTIAN

You know what I mean. A peck? A soft kiss? What are we doing here. I need direction.

Lawrence faces Christian.

LAWRENCE

Kiss me.

CHRISTIAN

Now?!

LAWRENCE

Yes. Now. Kiss me.

CHRISTIAN

I wanted a yes or no on the kiss, not a practice.

LAWRENCE

You wanna kiss, so kiss me.

CHRISTIAN

I'm not doing that.

LAWRENCE

Stop being such a dick, and fucking kiss me. Come on. Kiss me.

..

Christian kisses Lawrence. His phone dings.

..

LAWRENCE

Do we have someone?

CHRISTIAN

That's all you can say.

LAWRENCE

Do we have someone?

CHRISTIAN

My friend Adrienne. You met her at Justin's birthday. She has amazing curly hair.

LAWRENCE

Right. I think I know. Really fucking loud.

CHRISTIAN

She's from London - she can't help that.

LAWRENCE

That's what that accent is? *You sound like your from London!*

CHRISTIAN

Stop it! I didn't think she'd be here.

LAWRENCE

Shorter kiss. No tongue. Long enough for photos.

..

CHRISTIAN

We are really doing this.

LAWRENCE

We are. Me, you, Justin, and the loud girl.

CHRISTIAN

Don't be a dick. Every time she comes over she brings me four tins of baked beans and we eat the whole lot in one night. Lots of melted cheese.

LAWRENCE

That sounds disgusting.

CHRISTIAN

I'll make it for you. You'll love it. Fuck. She was dating Justin for a bit. I think. I hope it's not awkward.

LAWRENCE

Why would it be?

CHRISTIAN

What if they broke up under bad terms? I can send some more messages. See if someone else is around.

LAWRENCE

You're spiraling.

CHRISTIAN

I am.

LAWRENCE

We're doing this.

CHRISTIAN
We are.

..

CHRISTIAN
Finger paint.

LAWRENCE
What?

CHRISTIAN
That's how I'll do the painting of that photo. Finger paint.

LAWRENCE
Why not stick with what you know best?

CHRISTIAN
There needs to be something unique about it.
We should donate money. For the immigrants.

LAWRENCE
All of them?

CHRISTIAN
I don't know. I've never donated anything in my life.

LAWRENCE
We can discuss this later. We need to go. Order the Uber.

CHRISTIAN
On it.

Christian orders an Uber.

Lawrence pulls a ring box out of his pocket.

LAWRENCE
Here. I got this.

Christian looks up from his phone.

Lawrence kneels.

He opens the box.

EIGHT - JANUARY 11TH, 2020 (FIRST CORONA VIRUS DEATH IN CHINA)

As scene one, Lawrence and Christian make dinner.

*The painting of **Alan Kurdi** on the wall.*

Door buzzer.

CHRISTIAN

Are you expecting anyone?

LAWRENCE

Don't get mad.

CHRISTIAN

After last time, I thought you would have learned not to say that to me.

(beat)

Well?

LAWRENCE

It's Adrienne. I invited her. To have dinner with us.

..

CHRISTIAN

You're both lucky I made extra.

Lawrence answers. He goes to the door.

Adrienne enters. Lawrence behind.

ADRIENNE

Hi Christian.

CHRISTIAN

Here we all are.

ADRIENNE

He told you I was coming, right?

..

CHRISTIAN

Yes. Yes, he did.

LAWRENCE

Adrienne brought wine.

CHRISTIAN

Make yourself useful and get some glasses then.

Lawrence does. He pours three glasses.

LAWRENCE

Should we toast?

ADRIENNE

We don't have to toast.

CHRISTIAN

No. I think it would be nice. It's going to be a good year, right? For all of us.

They each reach for a glass.

CHRISTIAN

To Us?

ADRIENNE

I think so. Yes.

..

CHRISTIAN

Laurie, to us?

ADRIENNE

Laurie, to us?

*Then...**Papers being signed.**Champagne.**A wedding.**Maybe there are anti-immigration/gun protests.**A Best Man.**A new home.*

A baby.

Maybe there are children and adults in cages.

A birthday.

Another birthday.

Another baby.

Maybe there are dead bodies on beaches.

Another birthday.

Another baby.

Another birthday.

Maybe there are dead bodies in trucks.

A funeral.

Another funeral.

Another funeral.

END OF PLAY