Bruce Almighty

By Steve Koren
INT. KOWOLSKI'S BAKERY - KITCHEN - DAY
A news crew shuttles around a GIGANTIC COOKIE. Standing by are the KOWOLSKI BROTHERS, GUSTOV and VOL, two SHORT, STOCKY, MEN, along with MOTHER KOWOLSKI and other bakery family employees. A "30 YEAR ANNIVERSARY" sign hangs in the background.

BRUCE NOLAN looks into a make-up mirror, desperately trying to place a large segment of wayward hair.

BRUCE
Oh, God, no! The hair's wrong.
This is a bad sign.
(calling out)
We really need to get a make-up person?!

The segment producer, ALLY LOMAN, steps over.

ALLY
Not in the budget. And not to worry, you're going to look great in this.

She holds out a HAIR NET.

BRUCE
A hair net? I'm not wearing a hair net. I just did the hair.

ALLY
(matter of fact)
Health code. In the kitchen or around the cookie, you gotta have it.

BRUCE
(to crew: re hair net)
You guy's should tell me this before hand, this is like a huge waste of...moose.

Bruce spreads the hair net, bends down out of frame, comes up looking ridiculous and very disgruntled.

BRUCE
Remind me to swing by an elementary school after this and serve lunch.

Ally laughs.

ALLY
You're a thing of beauty. In three, two, one...
Bruce SNAPS from pissed to instant charismatic TV newsman.

(Note:
"REPORTER'S VOICE" - that recognizable, too-smooth delivery that all news reporters seem to have. In mathematical terms Bruce's version is to the 7th power.)

BRUCE
For three decades the Kowolski Family Bakery has been a mainstay in downtown Buffalo. Known for their sinfully rich, cream filled, deep fried polski pierogis. And the occasional sugar induced coma that follows. Today, in honor of their 30 year anniversary, Momma Kowolski and her sons Gustov and Vol, decided to do something, a little bit different. Tell me guys, how did this idea come about?

GUSTOV
Well, Vol said to me, 'Gustov, why don't we make the biggest chocolate chip cookie in Buffalo?' And I said, 'Yeah, sure.'

BRUCE
Wow. Fascinating.

Bruce steps up to the HUGE COOKIE.

BRUCE
The previous Buffalo cookie record was 3 feet, 17 inches baked by Gladys Pelsnick. But this behemoth cookie clearly proving that Gustov and Vol have much more free time. The Kowolski brothers and all celebrate in the background, toasting with big mugs of milk. Bruce steps forward, looks dramatically at camera, slow zoom in as he speaks.

BRUCE (CONT'D)
As we witness the ceremonial toasting with milk it makes one pause and think. What are we really looking at here?

(MORE)

BRUCE (CONT'D)

3.
Is it just a big cookie or does this cookie represent the pride of Buffalo? Our dedicated and hard working citizens the key ingredient, with a few nuts thrown in.

(motions his eyes to the Kowolski twins)
And finally, the love of our families which provides the warm chewy center making our beloved Buffalo the sweetest place to live.

Camera is in CLOSE as Bruce signs-off.

BRUCE (CONT'D)
And that's the way the cookie crumbles. I'm Bruce Nolan, Eyewitness News.

Bruce's hair net SLIPS UP, PUFFING HIS HAIR INTO A BUN ON THE TOP OF HIS HEAD. The Kowolskis and bystanders all laugh.

The frame FREEZES.
We PULL BACK from the TV and find Bruce holding the remote, watching the recorded spot on TV. We are now...

INT. BRUCE AND GRACE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT
Bruce is with his longtime girlfriend, GRACE. She has a box of photos on the coffee table in front of her organizing them into a photo album.

BRUCE
So, what do you think?

GRACE
It's good.

BRUCE

It sucks. It's a story about a cookie. People with eating disorders will be riveted,

(goes into huge pathetic fan character)
Dear Bruce, love the bakery piece.
I can't wait to vomit so I can make room for more cookies.

GRACE
I thought it was funny. I love the hair net. How'd you get it to do that?
BRUCE
What? I'm cutting that. They made me wear that stupid thing. I don't even look like myself. The hair is one of the most important parts of an on camera persona. Right out of the gate, I lost the hair advantage.

Grace looks at a photo,

GRACE
Oh, my gosh, look at this one. My sister is so drunk.

She places it in the album.

BRUCE
Grace. Try to stay focused here. I need your help.

GRACE
Aren't you taking this a little too seriously?

BRUCE
It's sweeps Grace. It is serious. There's an anchor job open. This is important. This is our future!

Bruce points to the TV as he says "future," not realizing he's pointing at the ridiculous image of himself with the hair net bun. Grace can't help but giggle.

GRACE
I'm sorry.

Bruce collapses into Grace's arms like a child. He clearly has a fragile temperament.

BRUCE
(sighs)
I'm never going to get anchor doing these kind of assignments. I want my work to matter.

GRACE
It does matter. You're funny. You make people smile. Come on, take a break, help me put this album together.

BRUCE
(reluctant)
Alright.

Grace holds up a photo.
GRACE
Oh look at this. It's the first
day we moved in together.
It's the two of them, younger, laughing.

BRUCE
(down)
Yeah, so full of hopes and dreams.

GRACE
Oh, here's me at my sister's
wedding. I caught the bouquet.

It's a picture of Grace overpowering the other bridesmaids
for the bouquet.

BRUCE
You look pretty intense, hun.

GRACE
Well, I was thinking about you.

Grace cuddles into Bruce.

BRUCE
So, you're attracted to me in some
way, is that what you're trying to
say?

Grace rolls over onto Bruce.

GRACE
You have no idea.

BRUCE
I was saving myself for the wedding
night, but if you keep this up, I
may lose my resolve.

Grace stands, pulling Bruce up.

GRACE
Well, that's the way the cookie
crumbles.

They kiss, stumbling toward the bedroom.

6.

BRUCE
Hey, that's a good line, but you
need more resonance. From the
diaphragm.

(newscaster voice)
That's the way the cookie crumbles.

GRACE
Oh, say it again.

BRUCE
(bigger)
That's the way the cookie crumbles.

GRACE
(sweet, southern groupie)
Oh, I just love on-air personalities.

BRUCE
(newscaster voice)
Well then, let me take these clothes off and slip into my hair net.

Grace laughs, Bruce joins in as they disappear into the bedroom.

CUT TO:

A TELEVISION SCREEN
We see the INTRO FOR SIXTY MINUTES:

NEWS CLIP
I'm Ed Bradley, I'm Merely Safer, and I'm --

LESLIE STAHL is HIT IN THE NECK WITH A TRANQUILIZER DART.
Her head wavers, then DROPS on the desk. The camera PANS to BRUCE, who lowers a bamboo blow gun, coolly addresses camera.

BRUCE
...Bruce Nolan. And this is Sixty Minutes.

THE SIXTY MINUTES TICKING CLOCK

DISSOLVE TO:

BRUCE'S ALARM CLOCK - IT RINGS
We are in. . .

INT. BRUCE AND GRACE'S APARTMENT - MORNING
Bruce lies next to Grace with a big smile on his face. Grace hits the alarm, rolls over snuggling close to Bruce.

GRACE
Sweety, time to get up...

She kisses Bruce, gets up.

BRUCE
No, I'm having a great dream.

The covers are RIPPED OUT OF FRAME. Bruce throws a mock hissy fit.

INT. BEDROOM - MORNING
Bruce watches TV as he buttons his shirt.

SPORTSCASTER
...and the Sabers lost another close one last night. Four to
three to the Toronto Maple Leafs.

BRUCE

Of course they lost, they're my team.

CUT TO:

MOMENTS LATER:

Bruce checks his hair in the mirror practicing his new sign-off.

BRUCE

"And that's the way the cookie crumbles."

(calls to Grace)

You know, I think there might be something to that cookie line. Everything great anchor has his own signature sign-off.

(as Walter Cronkite)

"And that's the way the cookie crumbles."

ANGLE - SAM

Peeing in the corner on the carpet.

BRUCE

Oh no! Grace, the dog!

GRACE (O.S.)

I'm in the shower!

BRUCE

Ah!

INT. APARTMENT STAIRCASE

Bruce runs along carrying the peeing Sam with extended arms dodges a man ascending the stairs, who gets sprinkled.

BRUCE

Whoops, sorry.

EXT. APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Bruce makes it outside, sets Sam down on the grass. Sam looks up innocently at Bruce, finished.

BRUCE

Oh, you're all done, huh? B-e-a-utiful.

EXT. SMALL WONDERS DAY CARE - MORNING

Bruce pulls up in his Ford Tauras to a cluster of cars unloading kids. A 2003 MERCEDES SRL passes by.

GRACE
Wow, nice car, huh?

BRUCE

Yeah, if you want to rub your success in people's faces.

Then Bruce notices a big medical van in front of the school with a BLOOD DRIVE SIGN.

BRUCE

What's with the hubbub?

GRACE

We're having a blood drive.

BRUCE

Creepy. Needles, yech...

GRACE

Oh, that's a nice response.

BRUCE

I mean, it's just so...

GRACE

Helpful and life saving?

BRUCE

C'mon, that's your...blood. It's in your body and I don't think it's supposed to come out. Besides, they stockpile that stuff. They have an endless supply frozen in a warehouse somewhere then tell everyone there's a shortage.

GRACE

They do not. Now stop it. I'm giving. I have a very rare blood type, AB positive.

BRUCE

Well, I'm IB positive. IB positive they aint touchin' me with no needle.

Grace sighs in exasperation, starts out when...

GRACE

(suddenly remembers something)

O...

h

She places a STRING OF PRAYER BEADS on the rearview mirror.

BRUCE

What's that?
GRACE
Prayer beads. The kids made 'em.
Keep you safe.

BRUCE
Well, I hope they work, cause it's
going to take a miracle to get me to
work on time.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY
Bruce is stuck in bumper to bumper traffic. He stares at the
prayer beads with a "thanks alot" look.

A big accident ahead. Bruce looks at his watch, he's
screwed. A person is CARRIED BY ON A STRETCHER, Bruce is
oblivious.

BRUCE
This is just my luck.

Bruce's BEEPER sounds. He checks it.

BRUCE.
The meeting's starting, perfect...
(thinks)
Screw it.

He looks to the right of the car in front of him, then peels
off onto the shoulder, passing tons of cars.

BRUCE
(laughs)
Catch you later, lemmings 1 It's
kill or be killed, only the strong
survive, no guts, no glory1

SFX:
Bruce pulls over, fumes.

BRUCE
(looking heavenward)
Thank you.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY
Bruce screeches into a space, races out of the car, bumping
over a trash can, goes back to pick it up, sees a HOMELESS
MAN who sits peacefully next to a paint bucket and sign
boards. The various "warnings" change daily. Today's SIGN

READS:
R EWE BLIND?
Bruce looks at the sign quizzically for a beat, then
continues on.
INT. NEWSROOM - DAY
Bruce rushes through the newsroom, rounds a corner and runs right into BOBBY, the endlessly yammering PASTRY CART GUY.

BOBBY
Bruce the goose! Morning, Buddy.
Don't even move, I got somethin' special today. My mom made it just for you.

BRUCE
Well, that's- Bobby, I gotta go-
I'm late...

BOBBY
(bending down)
You like Quiche?

He comes back up, proudly presents a slice of quiche.

BOBBY
You know, contrary to popular belief the quiche was actually invented by the Mayans, then stolen by the French. They shoulda said, "Hey, that quiche ain't yours, it's Mayan!"

Bobby belts out a laugh.

BRUCE
Bobby, I can't, I--

BOBBY
Just taste it, taste it...

Bobby shoves a bite into Bruce's mouth. Bruce feigns liking it with exasperation.

BRUCE
Mmm, delicious, I really gotta go.

BOBBY
That's a buck seventy-five.

BRUCE
Can you get Kelly- Ahh...

Bruce tosses the thought, digs into his pocket, fishing for cash.

BOBBY
(excited)
Oh, two o'clock, two o'clock, two-o-five, two-ten...
Bruce glances over, annoyed but freezes at the sight of sexy anchorwoman, SUSAN ORTEGA across the room.

BOBBY
Way out of our league, huh?

Bruce offers his money to Bobby.

BOBBY
You know, I saw them editing your cookie piece.

BRUCE
Really?

BOBBY
They must have gotten high or something, cause they was orderin' everything, I had. Hey, how long have you been interested in pastry? 'Cause I've got an aunt who makes baklava twenty layers deep.

BRUCE
(holding money out)

Bobby.

BOBBY
(gets a brilliant idea)

Maybe you could do a story on her!

Bruce tosses the money on the cart, heads off.

BRUCE
Keep the change.

BOBBY
(calling after)

I'll give her a call, we'll talk about it later!

INT. STAFF MEETING ROOM - DAY

ON THE MONITOR:

EVAN
Is something killing your kids?
Find out tonight at eleven.

Bruce looks at the sign quizzically for a beat, then continues on.

IN THE ROOM:
The morning meeting is well in progress. Leading the group is the station manager and Bruce's boss, JACK KELLER, 50's, a constant furrow in his brow.
Also in the room: Bruce's fellow field reporter and rival EVAN BAXTER, 30's, a walking statement. Impeccable posture, perfect speech, perfect everything and he knows it. FRED DONOHUE, the ever jovial sports reporter; always tanned, vain weatherman, DALLAS COLEMAN and segment producer Ally Loman.

JACK
Okay, promos are approved, let's--

ALLY
Ah, isn't that last one a little misleading? I mean, the story's about flu shots. Do we have to scare people to death?

EVAN
No, just into watching. Or I could change it to: "Slow news day, come yawn with us. At eleven."

FRED
Sniffles at eleven is nice.

DALLAS
Attack of the killer sniffles?

ALLY
(to Dallas)
The tanning booth is starting to zap your brain, you know that?

DALLAS
I don't use a tanning booth.

A beat and they all crack up.

FRED
*Come on. You're turning orange.*

EVAN
*

He looks Florida ripe to me.

*More laughs.*

JACK
I would have swore I already said this, but promos are approved. Now can we move on?

ALLY
Jack, shouldn't the promos be focusing on Pete's retirement. This is his last week.

EVAN
(leading)
Yeah, yeah. Any word on the open anchor position, Jack?

JACK
Evan, you'll know something when I know something.

Bruce bursts into the room. The meeting stops. Jack doesn't need to say anything, he just looks at his watch.

BRUCE
Sorry, Jack. It wasn't my fault. The traffic was -- You guys already played the spots?

JACK
Nice story, Bruce, but we're going with Evan's piece on the sex scandal at the mayor's office for sweeps.

This hits Bruce hard. A beat of silence.

EVAN
And that's the way the cookie crumbles.

The others chuckle. Only Ally remains sympathetic.

EVAN
I'm just messin' with you, Bruce. See you've got to remember that the news room is like a cookie...

More laughs.

BRUCE
(re: Evan's perfect posture)
That's great Evan.

(MORE)

BRUCE (cont'd)
Is you're posture naturally that good, or do you have to shove a stick up there?

JACK
Okay, knock it off... Bruce we're holding your story in reserve. Now, can we get back to the board so we have something to air today?

Jack continues with assignments. Evan sits smugly, as Bruce slides down into his chair, deflated.

INT. HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER
Jack is at Bobby's cart, paying for a sandwich. Bruce catches up to him.

BRUCE
Jack, Jack, hey. Can I talk to you for a second?

JACK
Sure, Bruce. What do you need?

BRUCE
Sweeps.

Jack takes his sandwich and leaves. Bobby leans to Bruce.

BOBBY
Don't worry about it. I called my aunt, we're on.

Bruce looks at Bobby, continues after and catches Jack.

BRUCE
Look, Jack. Hear me out, I'm getting desperate man, I am pushing forty and what have I got to show for it? The point is, I've hit some kind of a ceiling here. Some kind of anti-Bruce barrier! And Evan is just lovin' it, by the way. He gets the good stories, he gets on sweeps. Maybe I have to be more like Evan.

JACK
You don't want to be like Evan. Evan's an asshole.

BRUCE
I can be an asshole.

JACK
No, Bruce. You can't.

Bruce thinks, then flips Jack's sandwich plate over. It scatters on the floor. Jack and Bruce stare at each other for a beat.

JACK
Are you going to pick that up?

BRUCE
Yeah, I'm sorry.

Bruce bends down, starts picking up Jack's food.

BRUCE
It's just- this anchor position looming, it's gotten me nuts...
He hands the plate to Jack, as sexy anchorwoman SUSAN ORTEGA saunters by.

JACK
Hi, Susan.

BRUCE
Hi, Susan.

SUSAN ORTEGA
Hi, Jack.

Bruce blanches at this obvious snubbing.

JACK
Look, Bruce. You're a good reporter. You make people laugh. God knows today we can use it.

Bruce slumps, he's heard this a thousand times before.

JACK
Alright, tell you what. It's the 23rd anniversary of the Maid of the Mist. I want you at Niagara Falls in an hour.

BRUCE
Maid of the Mist. That's always live.

JACK
Yep.

BRUCE
Evan gets the live feeds.

JACK
Well now you and Evan get the live feeds.

BRUCE
I'm going live. In sweeps.

JACK
Yes, but watch yourself, Bruce. I've seen your outtakes.

Bruce hugs Jack, pressing the sandwich against his chest.

BRUCE
Yes 1 You will not regret this, Jack.

(releases Jack)
I will not forget you when I go national.

Bruce takes off, Jack looks down, peels the sandwich off his chest. We hear children's joyous SHRIEKS...

INT. SMALL WONDERS DAY CARE - DAY
A COUPLE DOZEN KIDS playing at Grace's self-starter business, a one room day care center filled with children and toys. Grace turns, reacts.

GRACE
Martin, are you eating the glitter again?

ON MARTIN - AN ADORABLE HISPANIC BOY
He shakes his head "no."

GRACE
Martin. Open your mouth. Abra su boca.

He does. His tongue sparkles with glitter.

GRACE
Oh, you're not huh? Well, then you've got a bad case of Liberace.

Grace's sister, Debbie, enters. She's wearing a nurse's outfit. Her youngest, ZOE, 3, runs over to greet her.

ZOE
Mommy

GRACE
They didn't teach you Spanish in nursing school, did they?

DEBBIE
Well, it seemed like they were speaking a foreign language sometimes, but no. Problemo?

GRACE
Martin has decided to explore new food groups.

(back to Martin)

Martin, this is for art. Like this. She spreads paste on the paper, sprinkles glitter.

DEBBIE
Is it so wrong to tie them up?

GRACE
Deb -- Martin!

Martin is busted with the paste spreader stuck in his mouth. Grace snatches it.

GRACE
Okay, go rinse your mouth with water. Lave su boca. Go.

(to Debbie)
I swear that kid is going to poop
an ornament.

DEBBIE

(laughs)
You're good with them, you know.
You should have some of your own.

GRACE
Don't start...

DEBBIE
Free milk cow.

GRACE
Debbie, don't call me that.

DEBBIE
If the moo fits.

The phone RINGS.

GRACE
Saved by the bell. Grab that for me, will you?

Debbie does.

DEBBIE
Small Wonders Day Care.

EXT. NIAGARA FALLS - DAY
Bruce is on his cell phone, while the NEWS CREW races around, setting up for the report. The FALLS ROAR behind him and the Mate of the Mist sightseeing boat is in the b.g.

BRUCE
Grace?

INTERCUT DAY CARE AND FALLS

DEBBIE

(cheery)
No, it's Debbie. The sister who's life you're not wasting.

GRACE
Hey.

Grace GRABS THE PHONE.

DEBBIE

(feigns innocent)
What?

GRACE
Sorry, honey. My sister seems to think she's my mother. Where are you?

BRUCE

(flying high)
Oh, A little place called the
winners circle. I'm at the Falls
doing a "live" report.

GRACE

Live? That's great!

BRUCE

Yep, it's happenin', hun. I got
sweeps and I'm live. You know what
that means?

(MORE)

BRUCE (cont'd)

They're seeing if I can think on my
feet, like you might have to do in
a live news anchor situation.

GRACE

Oh, my gosh.

BRUCE

This is happening for us, Grace.
What we've always talked about.
Jack practically came out and told
me.

Grace quickly switches gears. She experienced the premature-celebration before.

GRACE

Wait, what do you mean practically?

BRUCE

Well, he didn't spell it out, but
this is exactly what happened to
Susan Ortega right before she was
bumped up to the desk.

GRACE

(being cautious)
I just want to make sure we're not
going too ahead of ourselves.

BRUCE

I totally agree, but in the mean
time you should start thinking
about what coast you want to live
on.

Ally interrupts, indicating the time.

BRUCE

Oh, they're calling me, I gotta go.

GRACE
Good luck, honey. I love you.

BRUCE

I love you.

(hangs up)

Debbie turns to Grace.

DEBBIE

Moooo.

GRACE

Stop it.

EXT. NIAGARA FALLS - MAID OF THE MIST BOAT - DAY

Ally hustles Bruce toward the bow of the boat, as he places his ear piece.

ALLY

They want you close to the falls.

BRUCE

What for? I'll get soaked.

ALLY

That's the point. They want you to hold up this.

She hands Bruce a very stupid looking, blue "falls" shaped UMBRELLA with the MAID OF THE MIST INSIGNIA.

ALLY

Part of the condition of us getting the exclusive.

Bruce takes the umbrella.

BRUCE

Lovely. Glad I wore my tap shoes.

ALLY

Remember, this is their 23rd anniversary. Capacity is 59. They cater to tourists, honeymooners . . .

BRUCE

And people who are insanely thirsty, I get it.

ALLY

And you'll be interviewing Irene Dansfeild...

She positions A VERY, VERY OLD WOMAN next to Bruce.

ALLY

...She rode on the maiden voyage with her late husband. Okay, 90 seconds.

Bruce looks upward at the ridiculous umbrella. Mutter
encouragement to himself.

BRUCE
90 seconds, going live. Think anchor, think dignity,
(glances up toward umbrella)
Ignore umbrella. Just have fun.

CUT TO:

THE LIVE FEED IN THE CAMERA TRUCK AT THE FALLS
Some of the CREW MEMBERS watch the feed.

ON TV:
Pete Fineman is reporting.

PETE FINEMAN
...but because of the fast response by our local fire fighters, the toxic chemicals were cleaned up without incident. Susan.

The female co-anchor, SUSAN ORTEGA:

SUSAN
Bruce Nolan is standing by at Niagara Falls with a report on the Maid of the Mist sightseeing boat, but before we go live to Bruce, we have an announcement to make. As everyone knows, after 33 years, our beloved Pete Fineman is retiring.

Pete smiles a proud, heart-felt smile.

SUSAN
Pete's shoes are virtually impossible to fill, but the show must go on. And we could think of no one better than our very own Evan Baxter.

ON BRUCE:
Listening to the feed. His FACE GOES WHITE. He stands in shock.

Evan is seated next to Susan.

SUSAN
Congratulations, Evan. Looks like we'll be sitting side by side from
EVAN
Thanks, Susan. I'm thrilled and honored. Like you said, no one can replace the great Pete Fineman, but I'll do my best. I have to say I am so proud to be a part of our local community. Of Buffalo. I think a great city is a lot like a great recipe really. Put in some hard working citizens, add some care givers, maybe a few nuts...

The other news anchors and Evan himself chuckle at "his" joke. Bruce listens on the feed, beyond stunned.

EVAN (CONT'D)
All sprinkled with the strength and love of our good families, that ultimately creates a sweet place to live. Thank you.

SUSAN
(touched)
Wow. That was amazing. And now let's go live to wacky Bruce Nolan out at Niagara Falls.

EXT. NIAGARA FALLS - CONTINUOUS
Bruce stands like a deer in headlights, drenched, holding the ridiculous umbrella. Ally signals Bruce he's on. He stares into camera, numb.

INT. SMALL WONDER DAY CARE - SAME TIME
The kids are gone. Grace watches the TV with a few other teachers. She's concerned.

GRACE
Talk honey, talk.

INT. STUDIO CONTROL ROOM - CONTINUOUS
Jack rushes in, looking at Bruce on the monitor.

JACK
What's going on?

DIRECTOR
We've got a Walt Disney.

CONSOLE OPERATOR
Frozen solid.

JACK
He may not have audio. Check his
feed, have Susan cover.
INT. STUDIO CONTROL ROOM - CONTINUOUS
Susan reacts to the message in her ear piece.
  SUSAN
  We may be having a bit of technical
difficulty...
Evan smiles in the background, clearly enjoying himself.
INT. STUDIO CONTROL ROOM - CONTINUOUS
  CONSOLE OPERATOR
  Feed's good, Jack.
  JACK
  Come on, Bruce, talk damn-it...
  Okay, get ready to pull the plug.
INT. SMALL WONDERS CARE - DAY
  GRACE
  Please baby, say something...
EXT. NIAGARA FALLS - CONTINUOUS
Like popping out of a coma, Bruce surges in. Surprisingly,
seems very up and fine.
  BRUCE
  Thank you, Susan 1 Bruce Nolan here
  aboard the Maid of the Mist at
  Niagara falls.
INT. SMALL WONDERS DAY CARE - CONTINUOUS
  GRACE
  Thank you, God.

INT. STUDIO CONTROL ROOM - CONTINUOUS
  JACK
  (sighs relief)
  Thank God.
Jack pats the Director's shoulder, heads out of the room.
EXT. NIAGARA FALLS - CONTINUOUS
  BRUCE
  First off, "I want to add another
  congratulations to Evan Baxter.
  It's good to see what someone with
  real talent can accomplish when
  great opportunities are given to
  him instead of me.
  (still smiling)
  Anyway, I'm here, I believe with
  Katherine Hepburn's mom. Tell me,
  why did you toss the blue "heart of
the ocean" jewel over the railing of Titanic?
The Old Woman doesn't know what to say.

BRUCE
Did you feel guilty at all letting Leonardo Decaprio freeze, while you were safe floating on the big door? Do you think he would have survived if you had taken turns, or were you too afraid to freeze your big fat ass off?

INT. STUDIO CONTROL ROOM - CONTINUOUS
Jack rockets back into the room.

JACK
Did I just hear...?

BRUCE
Well, I guess that's the way life works, isn't it? Some people are drenched, freezing to death, on a stupid boat, with a stupid umbrella...

(heaves the umbrella)
while others who aren't fit to kiss my willy, are sitting in a nice, comfy news room, sucking up all the glory!

INT. SMALL .WONDERS DAY CARE - CONTINUOUS
GRACE
This isn't happening. This isn't happening...

EXT. NIAGARA FALLS - CONTINUOUS
Bruce takes off walking, the camera follows.

BRUCE
Now, lets speak to the owner. Come on in here, Bill.

Bill shakes his head "NO" as Bruce pulls him into frame.

BRUCE
Bill, you.'ve been running the Maid of the Mist for 23 years. Tell me, why do you think I didn't get the anchor job?

BILL
Hey, man, I don't want any--
BRUCE
Do you think it's my hair?
(Bruce messes his hair
like crazy)
Maybe my teeth aren't white enough?
Or like the great falls, is the
bedrock of my life slowly eroding
underneath me.
(moving closer to camera,
to an inch away)
Erroding. Errooodding.
Errodiing...
INT. NEWS ROOM - DAY
All work has stopped. Stunned staffers stare at the monitor.
INT. STUDIO CONTROL ROOM - CONTINUOUS
Jack stands with his jaw dropped, snaps out of it.
JACK
Alright, cut the feed! Cut to
black if you have to.
CONTROL BOOTH OPERATOR
I'm on it.

EXT. NIAGARA FALLS - CONTINUOUS
Bruce is now licking the camera lens. He steps back and
signs-off. Smooth as silk.
BRUCE
I'm Bruce Nolan for Eyewitness
news. Back to you fuckers 1

INT. STUDIO CONTROL ROOM - CONTINUOUS
Susan Ortega stares frozen blankly into camera.
SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - DAY
Bruce is TOSSED OUT THE FRONT DOORS, his box of possessions
spilling on the ground. Bruce FLAILS at the building.
EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY
Bruce carries his box to his car, when he HEARS A NOISE.
A street GANG is hassling the HOMELESS SIGN GUY. Pushing him
around, breaking and painting over his signs.
Instinctively, Bruce walks over.
BRUCE
Hey, come on guys. What are you
doin'? Just leave him alone.
They turn, look at Bruce, laugh and head off. Bruce helps
the Sign Guy up, looks after the Gang.
They stop cold, turn back to Bruce and CHARGE AT HIM. Bruce attempts to run, but they leap on him in a big dog pile, swinging and kicking.

Bruce is left with a bloody lip, lying beside his car. We hear the sound of smashing glass and scratching metal and the gang running off. Bruce slowly gets up. Reveal Bruce's car, WINDOW'S SMASHED, PAINT SCRAPED and the word "HERO" KEY SCRATCHED ON THE DOOR.

BRUCE
B-e-a-utiful.
(looks up)
(MORE)

BRUCE (cont'd)
Just what you get for trying to help someone.

Bruce gets in, pulls out of the parking lot passing the Homeless Man who sits beaten up holding a scrawled out sign "LIFE IS. JUST"

BRUCE
Get a clue, buddy.

INT. BRUCE AND GRACE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Bruce is pacing, holding an ICE PACK to his swollen lip.

GRACE
Thank God you're alright.

BRUCE
God, yeah. Let's thank God.
Thanks for everything, Lord. I am so honored that my horrible demise is a part of your loving and mysterious plan.

GRACE
Bruce, don't talk like that.

BRUCE
Oh, don't worry, he's not listening. If he is he doesn't care. Have you seen the news lately? We got gangs, we got drugs, we got corruption. What kind of God lets that happen? Every time we cure a disease he comes up with a new one!
Yeah, is this the lab? Yeah, it's God. They've just come up with a treatment for syphilis down there. I think it's time to release the tainted monkey. Oh, and there's a guy in Ohio who's praying for strength and wisdom, blind him and cut off his legs.

GRACE
So God is torturing us?

BRUCE
Think about it, Grace. God is all-powerful. He could fix everything in five minutes if he wanted to.

(MORE)

BRUCE (cont'd)
But he doesn't want to. He doesn't like me.

Sam starts PEEING ON THE RUG.

BRUCE
Oh, Perfect!
(to the dog)
But you're aim isn't so good, I'm over here

GRACE
Bruce, please. This isn't his fault.

BRUCE
Of course not.
(hushed tone)
It's part of the mysterious plan.

Grace puts Sam outside. Returns, trying to calm Bruce.

GRACE
Honey, you're mad right now. It's understandable. And what Evan did was slimy and wrong. But your job doesn't matter to me. You matter to me. You could've really been hurt. I'm just glad you're okay.

BRUCE
Okay? News flash: I'm not okay
And I'm not okay with the fact that
you think everything is okay. I'm not okay with a mediocre job. I'm not okay with a mediocre apartment. I'm not okay with a mediocre LIFE!

Bruce angrily swipes at the table knocking the photos and the photo albums to floor.

GRACE
Is that what you have, Bruce?
A mediocre life? Well, I'm sorry for being a piece in your mediocre puzzle.

BRUCE
Terrific. I'm drowning and you throw me a brick!

Grace starts to cry.

30.

BRUCE
Perfect! I'll have the worst day of my life with a side order of guilt, please. I-- I don't need this.

Bruce grabs his keys and heads out.

INT. CAR - NIGHT
It's RAINING now. Bruce drives, going nowhere in particular. His frustration is turning to desperation.

BRUCE
Okay, God. You want me to talk to you? Then talk back. Tell me what's going on? What should I do? Give me a sign... Bruce passes a BLINKING YELLOW CAUTION LIGHT, doesn't notice. . .

BRUCE
I'm right here. Speak to me.

A PEDESTRIAN stepping into the crosswalk, steps back out of the way.

PEDESTRIAN
SLOW DOWN, ASSHOLE!

Bruce is oblivious.

BRUCE
All I need is some guidance.
Please send me a signal.

A TRUCK TRANSPORTING VARIOUS ROAD SIGNS pulls in front of Br uce . F our way s, bli nki ng. The va rie d s igns re ad: Yi eld ,
Wrong Way, Dead End, Do Not Enter, Stop.

BRUCE
Oh well, I guess you don't care.

Bruce spots the PRAYER BEADS hanging on the rearview mirror.

BRUCE
Okay, we'll do it your way.

(pulls the beads from the mirror)

Lord, I need a miracle. Please help me.

31.

He hits a bump and the BEADS DROP TO THE FLOOR. Bruce reaches down, fishes for the beads...

BRUCE
Come on, where'd you go?

(holds them up in triumph)

Ah ha! AHHH!
And BAM! 11 BRUCE'S CAR SLAMS INTO A LIGHT POST.

EXT. STREET - LAKE EERIE - CONTINUOUS
Bruce stumbles out, surveys his demolished car, then looks at the beads in his hands. He begins to laugh maniacally.
He spots the lake, starts running toward it like a madman, HEAVES THE PRAYER BEADS INTO THE LAKE. He looks heavenward, challenging the Infinite.

BRUCE
Okay, if that's the way you want it. The gloves are off, pal! Let me see a little wrath! Smite me oh mighty smiteri What, no pestilence no boils? Come on, you got me on the ropes, don't you want to finish me off?! You're the one who should be fired! The only one around here not doing his job is YOU! What are we, you're little pet project? A hobby you tinker with now and again? Answer me. ANSWER ME!!!
A beat of silence then Bruce's BEEPER GOES OFF. He cynically chuckles at the timing, checks it, sees 772-5623.

BRUCE
Sorry, don't know you, wouldn't call you if I did.

Bruce walks off toward his wrecked car, it BEEPS AGAIN.

CUT TO:
CLOSE ON - AN ALARM CLOCK
The BEEPING continues. We are in... INT. BRUCE AND GRACE'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - MORNING
Bruce wakes, slaps at the alarm clock, groggy, reaches for the phone, finally realizes it's the beeper. He gets up, begrudgingly, checks it. The same number.

BRUCE
Well, hello again 772-5623, don't hold your breath.

Bruce tosses the pager on the bed, heads for the bathroom. The beeper BEEPS. Bruce stops in his tracks, turns, opens the window, grabs the beeper and FIRES IT OUT. It SHATTERS against a telephone pole. He calmly continues to the bathroom.

INT. BATHROOM
A note is stuck in the bathroom mirror, with an old picture of he and Grace in happier times. The note simply says: "I LOVE YOU. WE NEED TO TALK. Grace"

Peering over top of the note, Bruce sees Sam circling on the rug.

BRUCE
Oh, no.

EXT. STAIR WELL - CONTINUOUS
Bruce runs down the stairs carrying the trickling, Sam.

EXT. APARTMENT - DAY
Bruce sets Sam on the grass. Sam looks up, finished.

BRUCE
What's the point?

BEEP, BEEP, BEEP...

Bruce walks over to the shattered beeper. He picks up a small piece of it containing the LED read out: 772-5623

ON BRUCE - AMAZED

CUT TO:
INT. BRUCE AND GRACE'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER
A PHONE - BRUCE DIALS THE NUMBER
A PRERECORDED VOICE ANSWERS

COMPUTERIZED VOICE
Denied that promotion at work? Is life unfair? Everywhere you turn is there someone less talented than you reaping all the benefits? Is
your name Bruce? Then do we have
the job for you. We're located at
77256 23rd Street...

Bruce reaches for a pen, begins jotting down the address.

    COMPUTERIZED VOICE

    So come on down, or we'll just keep
    beepin' ya.

EXT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

An old building on the outskirts of town. A faded sign
painted on the wall reads, OMNI PRESENTS.

Bruce's demolished car enters frame. He studies the area and
building suspiciously.

Bruce cautiously moves towards the structure and then, STEPS
IN A PUDDLE. He SINKS UP TO HIS KNEE.

    BRUCE

    Perfect.

He gets out, shakes off his sopping leg, and heads inside.

INT. OMNI PRESENTS - DAY

Bruce enters and checks the BUILDING DIRECTORY. It reads:

    OMNI PRESENTS UNLTD.
    Personnel Rm. 7
    Accounting Rm. 7
    Security Rm. 7
    Creative Rm. 7

    VOICE (O.S.)

    You're looking for room 7.

Bruce turns to see a JANITOR mopping the floor. He looks at
Bruce's wet leg, offers the mop.

    JANITOR

    Want me to even those up for you?

    BRUCE

      (feigns a smile)
      How would I get to room 7?

    JANITOR

      That'd be on the seventh floor.
      Stairs are right over there.

    BRUCE

      What about the elevator?

He points to an elevator bank a couple of steps away.

    JANITOR

      Out of order.

Bruce heads for the stairs.

    JANITOR
You mind giving me a hand with this floor?

BRUCE

What? Yeah, I mind.

He continues on.

SEVENTH FLOOR:
The stairwell door opens up to a LARGE ROOM with a SINGLE DESK at the end of an otherwise empty space. Bruce hears someone tinkering atop a tall ladder extending into a hole in the ceiling.

BRUCE

Excuse me. Hello. I'm, ah, looking for whoever runs this joint...

MAN (O.S.)

Be right with y'a, just fixin' a light. Tell me if it's working?

CLICK and an INSANELY BRIGHT WHITE LIGHT ILLUMINATES, shining down blinding Bruce.

BRUCE

Yep, seems to be.

(wiping his eyes)

Kinda bright, though.

An electrician, silhouetted in the bright light, descends the ladder.

MAN (O.S.)

Yeah, it is for most people. They spend their lives in the dark...

As he talks he steps down next to Bruce and we see that it is the SAME JANITOR.

JANITOR (CONT'D)

... thinkin' they can hide from me.

The two stand, angelically illuminated. Bruce tries to put everything together.

BRUCE

Oh, the elevator's broken, huh?

JANITOR

Yeah, but I'll get around to it.

The Janitor CLAPS HIS HANDS TWICE and the light goes off.

BRUCE

You installed a clapper?

JANITOR
Nope. Catchy jingle, though.

(sings)

CLAP ON. CLAP OFF. CLAP ON, CLAP OFF. THE CLAPPER.

(claps twice)

You can't get it out of your head.

BRUCE

I gotta go.

JANITOR

Okay, but the boss'll be right out.

The Janitor unzips his uniform, revealing a very nice suit. He extends his hand to Bruce.

JANITOR

You must be Bruce. I've been expecting you.

BRUCE

Oh, this is hilarious. So you're the boss and the electrician and the janitor.

JANITOR

Nothin' wrong with rollin' up your sleeves, son. People underestimate the benefits of good 'ol manual labor. There's freedom in it. Happiest people in the world stink like hell at the end of the day.

He strolls down the room, takes a seat behind the big desk.

JANITOR

Your father knew that. He was a damn good welder.

Bruce approaches the desk.

BRUCE

How do you know my father? And how did you get my pager number?

JANITOR

Oh, I know a lot about you Bruce. Pretty much everything there is to know. Everything you've ever said, done or thought about doin', is right there in that file cabinet.

He points out a single drawer file cabinet.

BRUCE

(sarcastic)
Wow, a whole drawer. Just for me?
Mind if I take a look?

JANITOR

It's your life.

Bruce pulls the drawer and it FLIES OPEN, DRAGGING HIM THE FULL LENGTH OF THE ROOM --

The Janitor casually pulls a file.

JANITOR

Now this last entry was a little disturbing.

He thumps the file cabinet with his fist and the drawer dramatically sucks closed, DRAGGING BRUCE BACK. The Janitor reads from the file.

JANITOR

(reads, scanning)

Thanks for everything, Lord.

(MORE)

JANITOR (cont'd)

I am so honored that my horrible demise is a part of your loving and mysterious plan.. The gloves are off, pal.. Smite me oh mighty smiter.

(aside)

I'm not much for blaspheming but that one made me laugh. Oh, and let's not forget "What kind of a God would let this happen? I mean, have you seen then news lately?"

Bruce stands, dazed.

BRUCE

Who are you?

JANITOR

I'm the creator of the heavens and the earth. I'm the alpha & omega. The first and the last.

BRUCE

Sorry, it's not ringing a bell.

JANITOR/GOD

I'm God, Bruce.

BRUCE

Oh, you're God. Well that explains everything! That's how you know
everything about me. That's how you got up to the seventh floor so quickly.

(placating)
Well, it's really nice to meet you.
Thanks for the Grand Canyon and, ah, good luck with the apocalypse.

Bruce turns to leave, BUT FINDS HIMSELF WALKING RIGHT TOWARD GOD AND HIS DESK. He tries again, and again.

BRUCE
Okay, I don't know how you're doing that, but I really gotta go. This place is obviously rigged in some way. We're on some freaky hidden camera show.

(playing to the "cameras")
...for which I will not sign a release, by the way! But you know what, I'd be a little more impressed if you didn't use the cheesy file cabinet illusion.

(MORE)

BRUCE      (cont'd)
Everyone with a      brain in their head
would know that      the drawer is being
fed through the       wall from behind--

Bruce pulls the file cabinet from the wall, sees it has a normal back.

BRUCE
Okay. That's good. That's a good one.

Bruce quickly puts his hands behind his back.

BRUCE
Okay, God. How many fingers am I holding out?

Bruce extends three fingers.

GOD
Three.

He quickly pulls one finger in.

GOD
Two.

Bruce begins switching fingers rapidly. God doesn't miss a beat.
Four. Nine. Six. Eight. One...

One final attempt, Bruce holds seven fingers.

Okay, how about now.

He quickly pulls in two fingers.

Seven.

AH HAI

Bruce proudly presents his single hand of five extended fingers to God, then immediately notices he has SEVEN FINGERS ON HIS ONE Hand.

AAAHHHl

He shakes his fingers wildly and the two extra fingers disappear. God approaches Bruce.

You've been doing a lot of complaining about me, Bruce. And quite frankly, I'm tired of it...

Bruce backs away from God.

You stay away from me! I don't know what your doing. But whatever you're doing is probably actionable!

Well, that's not very neighborly. I brought you here to offer you a job.

Job? Wh at job?

My job. You think you can do it better, so here's your chance. When you leave this building you will be endowed with all my powers.

Sure, whatever you say, Pal.

He turns to go but GOD STANDS BEFORE HIM in the Janitor uniform, holding the mop.

GOD
All the power of God.
Bruce glances back at the empty desk, turns back again and
God the Janitor has also vanished. A beat, then Bruce
sprints out of the room.
EXT. OMNI PRESENTS – DAY
Bruce barrels out of the building --

BRUCE

Okay, that did not happen.
He races to his car stepping in the SAME PUDDLE, but this
time his foot doesn't sink, he WALKS RIGHT ACROSS IT. He
pauses for a beat --

BRUCE

No.
He races on.
INT. BRUCE'S CAR
Bruce jumps in, turns the key, the car turns over but doesn't
start.

BRUCE

I'm having a breakdown. That's
what it is. Just a normal,
everyday psychotic episode, brought
on by tumor or brain lesion...
We hear the car wind down to nothing. Bruce releases the key
pounds the steering wheel in frustration.

BRUCE

(to the car)
Come on, start!
The car INSTANTLY starts.

BRUCE

(denial)
Well, that was lucky.
Bruce backs up, peels out.

MUSIC UP:

EXT. CITY STREETS
Bruce drives, whistling the tune, catches himself,
immediately stops whistling.

BRUCE

Okay, just relax here. I did not
meet God and I do not have his
powers.

(laughs)
If that was God, then I'm Mario
Andretti.
Instantly, Bruce's car PEELS OUT, races through traffic, dodging and passing cars right and left.

BRUCE
AAAHHHHHHHHH!J!

Suddenly there is a GUY IN A RED PIT CREW SUIT standing before Bruce waving a red flag. Bruce swerves to avoid the man and SCREECHES into a pit stop. Several other red-suited Italian men engulf the car. Bruce watches in amazement as the professional racing team jacks up his car, slaps on HUGE MAG TIRES, gasses him up, etc. PAUL NEWMAN leans into the driver's window.

PAUL NEWMAN
Hey Mario, did you get that box of dressing I sent you?

Bruce responds against his will IN PERFECT ITALIAN --

BRUCE
(in perfect Italian)
Si, dovete venire sopra per il pranzo un certo tempo.

(SUBTITLES: Yes, you must come over for dinner some time.)

Bruce reacts shocked. The crew backs off and urges him on in Italian.

PIT CREW
Vete l Ve tel

Bruce's car peels out on it's own, he struggles to control the wheel, finally pulling over to a curb. His car door won't open so he has to crawl out of the driver's window. He rushes onto the sidewalk, backing away from his normal looking Taurus. Not knowing what to do, he slips into a diner.

INT. DINER - DAY
Bruce quickly walks to a back corner booth. The only other patron is an OLD MAN seated at the counter.

BRUCE
It isn't real, it isn't real, it isn't real...

An older. Sally Kirkland-type WAITRESS, order pad in hand, stands listening to Bruce with a raised eyebrow.

BRUCE
Oh hi, ah, coffee please.
The waitress pours him a cup.

WAITRESS
We've got a special on soup today.

BRUCE
No, that's okay.

WAITRESS
It's tomato.

BRUCE
Alright, okay.

She heads off. Bruce sits thinking. Could it be real? He looks at the SUGAR down at the end of the table, holds out his hand and the SUGAR SLIDES ACROSS THE TABLE RIGHT INTO HIS HAND. The CREAMER slides into his other hand. Bruce is half scared, half thrilled. He pours some cream and sugar into his cup, looks around the table.

BRUCE
Excuse me I need a spooooo...

Bruce chokes up a spoon into his hands, wipes it off with his napkin.

BRUCE
That's alright, I found one.

The Old Man eyes Bruce suspiciously, gets up and moves further down the counter.

The Waitress sets down the soup, heads off, then turns back.

WAITRESS
I lie to my sister.

BRUCE
What?

WAITRESS
(becoming emotional)

And I'm sleeping with my best friend's husband. I know he's just using me but... I'm just so tired of being alone. I don't know why I'm telling you all this. Just seems like you'd understand.

BRUCE
Okay.

WAITRESS
(set the check down)

Take care of that whenever you're ready.
Bruce looks at the soup. His look grows intense. He slowly raises his hands over the soup bowl....

MUSIC UP:
The front door blows open, as A WIND SWIRLS through the diner and with all the flourish of Moses at the Red Sea, BRUCE PARTS HIS RED SOUP.
A little cockroach scurries across the table, climbs up the edge of the bowl and walks through to the other side.

GOD (O.S.)
Havin' fun?

Bruce is startled and the soup splashes back to normal collapsing on the cockroach. He looks up at God standing beside the booth. Bruce is now awestruck.

BRUCE
You- He- Thy...

GOD
Let's take a walk.

EXT. LAKE ERIE - DAY
God leans down, lets the little soup covered cockroach go.
God and Bruce then walk along the lake shore.

GOD
(re: the cockroach)
Most people want to kill these guys. I'm quite fond of em'. Very streamlined design. Like little armored tanks. Y'know, they can hold their breath for forty minutes and their cells divide only once per molting cycle creating a cytoskeleton with cell adhesion that...

(catching himself)
Oh, this is a bit over your head, isn't it?

Off Bruce's look.

44.

GOD
Okay, let me explain the rules.

BRUCE
Rules?

GOD
Yeah, you left in such a rush I didn't get a chance to explain.
BRUCE
Well the two extra fingers freaked me out a little bit.

GOD
(laughs)
I figured that would get your attention.. I did the same thing to Ghandi, he couldn't eat for three weeks. Now, here's the deal. You have all my power. Use it any way you choose. There are only two rules. You can't tell anyone you're God. Believe me you don't want that kind of attention. And you can't mess with free will.

BRUCE
Uh huh. Can I-ask why?

GOD
(excited)
Yes you can. That's the beauty it.

Suddenly a LARGE SAILBOAT SAIL PASSES RIGHT BY THEM. Bruce looks to the sail, oddly, then...

WIDE ANGLE - REVEAL God and Bruce are now walking ON THE LAKE about 100 feet from the shore. They watch the sailboat pass. Bruce is awestruck.

BRUCE
This is amazing.

GOD
Oh, speaking of amazing...

God dips his hand in the Lake and pulls out THE PRAYER BEADS. He pockets them as he talks.

GOD
Since you're finished with these, I think I'll hang to 'em. Might come in handy someday.

WIDE MASTER - BUFFALO CITY-SCAPE
God and Bruce are tiny figures on the river, as God begins to walk away.

GOD
I'll be seein' ya.

BRUCE
Where are you going?

GOD
I'm taking a vacation.

BRUCE

God can't take a vacation. Can he? Can you?

GOD

Ever hear of the Dark Ages? Besides, I'm covered. You can fix everything in five minutes if you want to, right?

ON BRUCE:

BRUCE

...Right.

Left alone, Bruce begins to carefully tip toe back to shore, progresses to a full sprint.

INT. GROCERY STORE - DAY

Grace and Debbie stand at the check-out stand. Grace flips through a celeb magazine, as Debbie places the last few items from the cart to the conveyor belt. In the background, throughout, Debbie's daughter, Zoe is grabbing random items off the shelves and placing them on the belt.

GRACE

(re: magazine)

Gosh, this girl is so talented and all they ever talk about is her hair.

DEBBIE

Yeah, she should marry somebody famous, take the focus off.

Grace checks her cell phone screen.

DEBBIE

We would have heard it ring.

GRACE

I know. It's just that he usually calls during the day.

DEBBIE

He just needs to blow off some steam, he'll be fine.

GRACE

I hope so. I've never seen him that mad. And I lashed back--

DEBBIE
Wow, you lashed? You never lash.
I'm impressed.

GRACE
I feel bad for him. He's wanted anchor for so long.

Zoe begins pulling groups of items onto the belt.

DEBBIE
Well, I've been praying to win the lottery for fifteen years, but it's not going to happen. You know, it's not all about money.

The CLERK finishes ringing the last item.

CLERK
That'll be four hundred and twenty-seven, eighty.-

DEBBIE
What?!

Debbie looks in a bag, pulls out a handful of various counter items. Zoe giggles and proudly holds up one of the hundred or so Tic-Tac mint containers.

DEBBIE
Zoe.

(to Clerk)

(MORE)

DEBBIE (cont'd)
Hang on, I might need you to un-check a few things.

The people in line hem and haw, exasperated.

GUY IN LINE
Come on, lady.

DEBBIE
(snaps)
Hey, everybody back-off i

Zoe laughs, enjoying the commotion.

GRACE
Listen, I better get back. I want to be there for him.

DEBBIE
You're a saint, Grace.

GRACE
What can I say, I love him. And if I know Bruce, he's out there wandering around with the weight of
Bruce struts down the street, the embodiment of confidence. He turns shooting a finger at a fire hydrant, it BLASTS WATER. KIDS run off their front steps, start playing. A PRETTY GIRL IN A DRESS, comes' walking toward him. As she passes he BLOWS A LITTLE AIR OUT OF THE CORNER OF HIS MOUTH and turns to watch her SKIRT FLY UP.

BRUCE

And he saw that it was good.

He spots a mannequin in a store window display, wearing a cool, casual outfit. He closes his eyes. When he opens them, HE'S WEARING THE COOL NEW OUTFIT and the mannequin is dressed in his clothes. He checks his reflection... better.

Bruce rounds the corner, sees the SAME GANG that beat him up, hanging out in the alley.

BRUCE

B-e-a-utifull

EXT. ALLEY

Bruce approaches the gang.

BRUCE

Hey guys, remember me?

The gang members turn to Bruce.

HOOD #1

Oh look, it's the hero.

HOOD #2

Hungry for another can of whoop-ass?

HOOD #3

Your stereo sounds great in my car, man.

He and a couple other gang members laugh and high-five.

BRUCE

Look, I don't want to fight you guys. So as soon as you apologize, I'll be on my way.

A beat, then the Hoods BURST OUT LAUGHING. A few circle behind, surrounding Bruce.

HOOD #1

Oh, yeah. I'll apologize... The day a monkey climbs out of my butt.

BRUCE
What a coincidence. That's today.
The Hood gets a PAINED LOOK, starts gyrating around, then a MONKEY comes climbing out the back of his baggy pants. The Big Guy looks at Hood #1.

BIG GUY
Did that come out of your butt, man?

Hood #1 faints from shock.

BRUCE
Now I'm going to have to teach the rest of you guys a lesson.

HOOD #2
Yeah, you and whose army?

BRUCE
Just me... and me...

ANOTHER BRUCE steps out from behind a stack of crates.

BRUCE
And me, and me, and me, me, me, me, me, me and me and me.

As Bruce talks, DUPLICATE BRUCE'S begin popping out from various spots, a doorway, hanging down from a fire escape, a dumpster pops open, six Bruce's jump out.

BRUCE
PILE ON THE RABBIT1

THE BRUCES CONVERGE ON THE GANG --

Hood #2 is instantly tackled by THREE BRUCES --

ONE BRUCE kneels down behind a hood, ANOTHER BRUCE pushes him down over his back. The two Bruce's high-five --

A Hood climbs a fire escape. ONE BRUCE gives a hand up to ANOTHER BRUCE, who takes pursuit. ANOTHER BRUCE leans out of a window SMASHES a potted plant over his head --

ON THE MONKEY - SCREECHING, ENJOYING THE EXCITEMENT

Our Bruce stands in the middle of the action, happily watching the mayhem.

HOOD #2
Let's get out of here, man!

Hood #2 takes off running, the gang members follow.

BRUCE
Okay guys, Kum Ba Yal

The Bruce's jog over, leaping and diving into Bruce's body.

BRUCE
I'll take it from here.

Bruce takes a deep breath, OPENS HIS MOUTH WIDE, RELEASING A
EXT. ALLEY - CONTINUOUS
The gang streams out of the alley screaming, COVERED IN LOCUSTS.
Bruce exits the alley, the monkey at his side. He looks down to the monkey.

BRUCE
Back home for you, little one.
The monkey takes off back into the alley, as we see HOOD #1 stumbling to his feet.

HOOD #1
NoI NOOOOO1
He takes off running, the monkey in hot pursuit.

ON BRUCE:
He belches and one last locust flies out. He reacts to the unpleasant aftertaste and walks off.

CUT TO:
CLOSE ON - BRUCE
We widen to an UP ANGLE of him standing on the top of Buffalo's tallest SKYSCRAPER. Clouds swirl behind him. He looks out over the vast city lights, opens his arms and proclaims to the world.

BRUCE
I AM THE LORD THY BRUCE ALMIGHTY.
MY WILL BE DONE I
Bruce poses in dramatic god-like form, lightning crashes behind him. He is an awesome god.

INT. BRUCE AND GRACE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT
Grace sits on the floor next to the coffee table with a box of photos working on the album. She takes a sip of wine, sets down the glass. Sam walks over and laps up the wine.

GRACE
(to Sam)
Well, at least I have someone to drink with.
Grace hears Bruce coming up the stairs, singing.

BRUCE
What if God was one of us... Just a slob like one of us... Just a stranger on a bus... Trying to make his way...
Grace reacts a bit surprised by Bruce's happy tone, she gets up, opens the door and there stands BRUCE, beaming smile, holding a very unique BOUQUET OF FLOWERS.

BRUCE
(finishing song)
...home.

GRACE
(re: the flowers)
Oh, my God.

BRUCE
You can call me Bruce.

GRACE
Where have you been? You're so...happy.

BRUCE
Who wouldn't be on a night like this?
(holding out the flowers)
For you.

Grace takes the flowers, gives Bruce a kiss, still sizing up his mood.

GRACE
These are amazing. What are they?

BRUCE
It's a totally new breed. A cross pollination between tulips and Daisies. I call them Todayzees.

GRACE
Todayzees? Okay...

Grace goes to put them in water.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

GRACE
Bruce, is there something you're not telling me?

BRUCE
Nothing of this world. Why?

GRACE
What do you mean, why? Last night you weren't exactly happy with life.

BRUCE
Last night, I was only human.

Bruce backs out of the kitchen seductively.
INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS
Bruce breezes through, casually instructs the stereo as he passes.

BRUCE
CD 4, Track 7.
The Stereo illuminates and Barry White music plays.

EXT. BALCONY - CONTINUOUS
Bruce opens the doors, steps onto the balcony. He surveys the cloudy sky, reaches up with his hand and ERASES THE CLOUDS, LIKE ON A CHALKBOARD.
Still not completely satisfied he reaches up toward the moon and makes a LASSOING MOTION, THEN BELGINS TO PULL.

CUT TO:

OUTER SPACE - BEHIND THE MOON
Earth far off in the distance - And with a THUNDEROUS RUMBLE the MOON starts MOVING CLOSER TO EARTH.

BACK TO SCENE:
Bruce adds a finishing touch by adding several stars with points of his finger.
Grace joins Bruce on the balcony and is taken aback by the perfectly orchestrated sky.

GRACE
Wow, it really cleared up. I've never seen the moon that big.
Bruce puts his arms around Grace from behind.

BRUCE
We shouldn't waste it.
Bruce starts kissing her neck. Grace turns, they kiss and a METEOR SHOWER lights the sky behind them. The kiss ends.

BRUCE
Bedroom.

GRACE
Five minutes.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT
Grace grabs a negligé from the drawer, heads into the bathroom. Bruce enters, adjusts the ambience of the room, BLOWS THE LIGHTS OUT with a quick puff of air, LIGHTS CANDLES with a gesture. His clothes magically fall away.

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS
Grace slips her negligé on, begins brushing her hair.

GRACE
I'll be out in a minute.
BRUCE (O.S.)
Don't rush yourself. Sometimes anticipation can heighten the pleasure.
Grace SHUDDERS a bit at the word "pleasure", quickly finishes brushing, picks up her lipstick.

BRUCE (O.S.)
It's a funny thing about, pleasure.
GRACE'S KNEES BUCKLE, causing the lipstick to smear across her face. She sits down on the toilet seat to get a hold of herself.

BRUCE (O.S.)
It can be extremely pleasurable.
Grace has a very POWERFUL ORGASM and slides off the toilet out of frame to the ground.

GRACE (out of control)
Oh, oh. Oh my...

CUT TO:

BRUCE:
Standing at the door with both arms extended toward the bathroom like an WARLOCK CASTING A SPELL. Suddenly the light hits him from the open bathroom door and he quickly strikes a casual pose.
Grace stands in the open doorway, panting like an animal. She dives on Bruce, attacking him.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING
ON TV - THE MORNING NEWS

MORNING REPORTER
In international news, Japanese relief workers are staging a desperate effort to rescue hundreds of people stranded by a freak tidal wave that hit Kitamoto City...

We see remote footage of Japanese families being airlifted from root tops.

MORNING REPORTER
Scientists say the tsunami may have been caused by what they're describing as "unusual lunar activity." More on this, as it develops...
Grace half watches the newscast as she finishes breakfast.

INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

Bruce lies blissfully asleep. Big smile, life is good. Then, we hear WHISPERING - Like distant voices MURMURING all at once. Bruce wakes with a start. He looks around puzzled, sticks his finger in his ear checking his hearing as the voices fade away.

ANGLE - SAM
Circling, getting ready to go on the carpet. Bruce casually warns.

BRUCE
Sam. Uh uh uh.

Sam looks at Bruce for a beat, then walks into bathroom, raises the toilet seat with his nose, and STANDS UP ON HIS TWO HIND LEGS, HOLDING HIS SNAUSAGE WITH HIS FRONT PAWS (NO, WE DON'T SEE IT) AND STARTS TO GO. He looks proudly back at Bruce.

BRUCE
Good boy.

INT. KITCHEN
Grace places breakfast on the table. Bruce comes out, fully dressed with a spring in his step.

BRUCE
Good morning.

GRACE
(gushy-lovey, sing songy)
Good morning. Cooked you grilled cheese.

BRUCE
Oo, my favey.

Bruce sits, Grace sets down his plate, leans close.

GRACE
Last night was just...

BRUCE
Heavenly?

GRACE
Mmm hmm.

Bruce enjoys his grilled cheese.

GRACE
It's funny, but when I woke up this morning, It felt like my boobs were bigger.

Bruce looks away, guilty, trying to be nonchalant.
GRACE
(holding them up)
Do they look bigger to you?
BRUCE
Huh? Ah, no, they, ah, look the
same to me.

They aren't. They are clearly bigger. She holds them.
GRACE
They're definitely bigger. They
feel huge to me.

Bruce throws up his hands.
BRUCE
You got me. Probably just a
hormonal thing.
(takes a quick final bite)
Well, enjoy your breakfast, I've
gotta run.
GRACE
Where are you going?

He stops, turns. A new confident Bruce.
BRUCE
To get my job back.

MUSIC UP:
EXT. BRUCE'S APARTMENT - DAY
Bruce heads for his severely beat-up junker car whistling
"What if God were One of Us."
INT. BRUCE'S CAR
CLOSE ON - BRUCE
He gets in, fastens his seat belt, as two teenagers cruise by
on skateboards, stop outside Bruce's window.
TEENAGER
(sincerely impressed)
Wow, nice car man.
BRUCE
Well, it gets me from A to B.

MASTER - STREET
Reveal Bruce's car is now a brand new MERCEDES 2003 VISION
SLR. He starts and revs THE POWERFUL NEW ENGINE and peels
out.

EXT. CITY STREETS - DAY
Bruce turns the corner into bumper to bumper traffic. No
problem, the traffic magically opens up for him, cars instantly swerving right and left clearing a path for Bruce. He waves as he passes.

BRUCE
And the last shall be first.

EXT. POLICE TRAINING CENTER - DAY
A POLICE DOG, HANK, performs some standard TAKE DOWNS by "attacking" a "criminal" (trainer) on the run. PHIL, a reporter from a rival station is wrapping up his story.

PHIL
I certainly wouldn't want to be a fugitive on the run with Hank, Buffalo's number one police dog, on the job. This is Phil Sidleman reporting from The Police Canine Training center.

(beat)
And cut it. Let's go, guys.

The crew start to wrap up.

ANGLE - BRUCE
Watching the action from the side, holding his own home video camera. Phil spots him.

PHIL
Hey, channel seven, right? You're the guy that went crazy.

BRUCE
Yeah, I had a bad day. But things are lookin' up.

PHIL
What are you doin' here?

BRUCE
Just lookin' for a story.

PHIL
(waving the video tape)
Well, this pond's fished out. Pretty standard stuff anyway.

BRUCE
I don't know. My instinct tells me there's something more.

PHIL
Well, go with that. It's served you well in the past, right?

Phil and a couple of his crew laugh, as they load the last of
their equipment into the van and shut the doors.

    TRAINER (O.S.)
    Hey, Hank found something!

Phil turns back, Bruce and he exchange a glance. Hank is DIGGING FURIOUSLY, making a BIG HOLE. The Policeman jogs over, joins the trainer. They watch as TWO DRESS SHOES ARE UNCOVERED IN THE DIRT. Hank BARKS.

    POLICEMAN
    We got a body!

    PHIL
    (to his crew)
    Shit. Get the camera, now!

EXTREME CLOSE ON - THE VAN'S DOOR LOCK

It LOCKS AUTOMATICALLY. The CAMERAMAN yanks at the door.

    CAMERAMAN
    It's locked and the keys are inside I

Bruce casually turns his camera on, gives Phil a "tough break" look, heads for the scene, as Phil and his crew scramble around the van.

CUT TO:

ON A TV

    DAN RATHER
The body of Jimmy Hoffa was uncovered in a field today outside of a canine training center in Buffalo New York. Local Buffalo freelance field reporter Bruce Nolan was the first on the scene...

We cut to the pre-taped story. Bruce stands with Hank and his trainer before camera, the body being exhumed from the ground behind him.

    BRUCE
Since the disapearence of Teamster president Jimmy Hoffa in the nineteen sixties, his whereabouts have remained one of this country's great unsolved mysteries. That is until just moments ago, when during a routine training session, a police dog named Hank sniffed his way right into the history books. As you can see behind us, the body
is being carefully exhumed and will be transported to a hospital facility where DNA testing will confirm the identity. That, of course, only a formality as in a bizarre twist, the body was found buried with a birth certificate and complete set of dental records.

(rubs Hank's neck)
Sort of a two-in-one for Hank today, as moments later, he busted a local news camera crew with four kilo's of marijuana.

We see footage of PHIL AND HIS NEWS CREW, being cuffed on the ground, as large stacks of marijuana plants are being pulled from the van.

PHIL
I've never seen it before, I swear I

EXT. NEWS STATION - DAY
As Bruce pulls up in front of the building the NO PARKING SIGN flies back into the bushes and the RED CURB TRANSFORMS TO GREEN as though being sloppily painted with invisible brushes.

Bruce exits the car and smooths past the Homeless Sign Guy, who sits in his usual spot. His sign reads: "HEAVEN IS AT HAND. LEGGO YOUR EGGO."

INT. NEWSROOM - DAY
Bruce cruises through the office, fielding greetings.

60.

VARIOUS OFFICE STAFF
Nice Job, Bruce...Way to go, buddy...GO get 'em, Bruce, etc.

Susan Ortega smooths up to Bruce.

SUSAN ORTEGA
Hi, Bruce.

BRUCE
(surprised)
Oh, Susan.. Hi.

SUSAN ORTEGA
Good work, I'm impressed.

She give's Bruce a "look" and continues on. Bruce is a bit inflated by the encounter.

Bobby the pastry cart guy wheels his cart up along side.

BOBBY
Hey, Bruce. Nice job, man. Wasn't the same without you around here, pal.

(leading)
I hear Jack wants to see you.

BRUCE
That's the word.

BOBBY
You're going to need your energy in there. Can I interest you in a donut?

BRUCE
No, thank you, I'm not hungry.

BOBBY
Coffee?

BRUCE
No.

BOBBY
Fiber grain bar with bee pollen and Spiralina?

BRUCE
I'm really not interested.

BOBBY
Yeah, I don't blame 'ya, they taste like grass.

Bobby cuts Bruce off with his cart. Bruce is forced to stop.

BOBBY
Tell you what? I wasn't going to break it open until lunch time, but I made a batch of rhubarb that you have got to try.

BRUCE
Bobby, I--

BOBBY
Come on, it's my mother's recipe she's practically cripple...

Bobby forces a ladle of rhubarb out at Bruce.

BRUCE
No, I really-- no...

BOBBY
Open up, that's it, here comes the news chopper...

(makes sound of Chopper)
BRUCE
No, Bobby. No, I said I didn't want anything.
(turns, heading off)
Damn you...
Bruce continues off, as Bobby stops cold, adopts an odd
expression, then his EYES ROLL UP IN THEIR SOCKETS, SPIN ALL
THE WAR AROUND, THEN GLOW RED. LITTLE HORN BUMPS PUSH UP
FROM HIS SKULL. He turns instantly demonic.
An overly PERKY FEMALE OFFICE WORKER approaches Bobby from
behind.
FEMALE OFFICE WORKER
Hi, Bobby. Is there any of that
split pea soup left?
She is instantly hit in the chest with a stream of green
vomit. A beat and Bobby offers out a plastic spoon.
INT. JACK'S OFFICE - DAY

ON JACK:

He sees Bruce enter, immediately perks up.
JACK
(big laugh)
The re he i sl Ho ff al H a i W h a t a r e
the odds of that?
BRUCE
(laughing along with him)
Ha! What are the odds?
JACK
Look, I'll be straight. We want
you back, Bruce. I want to tell
you, it wasn't my decision to let
you go. When the big guy gives the
order, I gotta...
BRUCE
No harm no foul, Jack. I needed
some time off to reassess my goals
and get in touch with my true self.
JACK
You did that in a day?
BRUCE
Imagine what I can do with seven.
Jack pauses for an awkward beat. His face grows serious.
JACK
I haven't been the best father in the world.

BRUCE
What's that?

JACK
I cur se a lo t. I c hea t on my ta xe s. My w ife u se d to mak e my kids call me, when she was alive...

(breaking down)
...Now, I go to strip clubs, and dri nk a ll nig ht. Bu t at le ast their open unt il four. W hat are you doing tonight?

BRUCE
Oh, I'm busy doing...things.

Jack recovers, rejuvenated.

JACK
Yeah, I gotcha. It feels good to get that out. Thank you.

Jack gives Bruce a big hug.

JACK
Look, it's not in my power to give you a nchor, but as far as field repor ting goes, if you're looking for a bump.

BRUCE
Jack, don't worry about that. Just give me a camera and a crew and I'll give you the news.

Bruce exits. Jack likes the new Bruce.

INT. NEWSROOM
Bruce heads out as The Eyewitness News opening plays on several monitors. Susan Ortega opens.

SUSAN
Good evening and welcome to Eyewitness News at six. I'm Susan Ortega.

EVAN
And I'm Evan Baxter. And here's what's making news...

This stops Bruce. He watches Evan on a newsroom monitor. A devilish smile forms on Bruce's face.

EVAN
A potential scandal with the Buffalo P.D. surfaced today when...

Evan's voice suddenly becomes HIGH PITCHED, like a girl's.

Evan (falsetto)
...the mayor demanded that the Chief of Police issue...
(clears his throat)
...Uh-hum, that the Chief of Police...

Evan tries to clear his throat again, but his voice remains HIGH PITCHED.

64,

Evan (falsetto)
...the Chief of Police issue a response over allegations made b. . .

INT. JACK'S OFFICE - SAME TIME

JACK

What the hell is that?

Evan is starting to visibly sweat.

Evan (falsetto)
I'm sorry. There seems to be something.

Evan shoots Susan a look to cover for him. Susan tries to cover with a joke.

SUSAN

Looks like my new co-anchor may need a glass of water.

She laughs, Evan laughs in a RIDICULOUS HIGH PITCHED GIRLY LAUGH that makes it even worse. He sips the water and his voice returns.

Evan (falsetto)
Ah, there we go. Sorry about that.

The Prime Minister of Sweden visited Washington today as my
little tiny nipples moved to France—
Evan stops cold, staring at the teleprompter.

INT. TV STUDIO - CONTINUOUS
The Director in the booth reacts.

DIRECTOR
What did he just say? Check the prompter.
The Console Operator checks the text being fed to Evan.

CONSOLE OPERATOR
It's fine.

DIRECTOR
Well, signal for him to keep going.

65.

^- The Stage Manager motions to Evan, he reluctantly continues reading.

INTERCUT TV STUDIO AND NEWSROOM MONITOR

EVAN
The White House reception committee greeted the Prime Rib Roast Minister and I do the cha cha like a sissy girl...
(urged to keep going, so continues slowly)
I lika do da cha cha...

In desperation, Evan shifts from the prompter to the paper script on his desk.

EVAN
Sorry, we're having a few technical difficulties, here...
(reading)
In other n-n-n-n....n-n-n-n...

Evan's NOSE STARTS BLEEDING. A sudden stream out of one nostril. Susan reacts. So does Jack. Bruce smiles.

, Evan sees the blood, tries to stop it but it only streams faster. He keeps talking, but the stream increases. Susan gets up, tries to help.

SUSAN
Somebody get some napkins. Dallas, help me.

DALLAS
I'm not touching hinu
(realizing he's on camera)
I mean, I'm not really qualified.

Evan's hair IGNITES.
SUSAN
His hair's on fire!
Dallas runs off.

BRUCE
(casual to an amazed news staffer)
You know, he does have a certain pizazz about him.

Susan reaches for a water pitcher, as a crew man steps in and BLASTS Evan's head with a fire extinguisher. Evan is in shock, his face now white.
The screen cuts to a "PLEASE STAND-BY" title card, then cuts to an episode of "Dragnet."
ON BRUCE - It's fun to be God.
MUSIC UP/MONTAGE UP
EXT. FAIR GROUNDS - DAY
Bruce is bored off his ass, interviewing some BLUE HAIRER OLD LADIES at the Mark Twain chili cook off.

BLUE HAIRER LADY
(talks so slow you want to kill yourself)
My secret is I let the jalapeno's marinade in a spicy sauce for over 24 hours before I--
We see Bruce's pained face, realizing what horrible news this is, when he gets an idea and SCHWWWVVVWAAAAAM!11 AN ASTEROID CRASHES to earth behind them.

BRUCE
Hold that thought, Hazel!
(Bruce walks back toward the explosion)
It seems some type of meteor or asteroid has, by chance, hit the earth right behind the Mark Twain Chili Cook Off. . .

EXT. SKY - DAY
Bruce is free-falling in full sky diving uniform.

BRUCE
. . . So remember, it's sky diving season at Old Pete's airfield.
(grabs the ripcord)
This is Bruce Nolan..
(gives it a tug, doesn't
My rip cord appears to be a bit stuck.
Bruce yanks again harder, nothing, then again and the cord rips free from the suit.

BRUCE
This is a very unfortunate turn of events. I'm heading toward the earth at a very precarious speed...
The cameraman pops his shoot and we see Bruce continue to stream toward the ground below. He falls into a wooded area.
A CAMERA ON THE GROUND picks up the coverage, runs through the brush with other BYSTANDERS to find Bruce laying on top of a BIG, HAIRY CREATURE.

Bystanders (O.S.)
He's okay...What's that?...It's Bigfoot!...Bigfoot broke his fall!...
Bruce stands groggy, points to a dazed Bigfoot.

BRUCE
Ah ha! You are real!

INT. BRUCE AND GRACE'S APARTMENT - DAY
Bruce sits watching a hockey game on TV. He follows the puck intently with his eyes, as though controlling it's path.
GOAL, SABERS! THE CROWD ROARS!

CUT TO:
GOAL, SABERS! THE CROWD ROARS!

CUT TO:
Grace sits aside him, working on the photo album.

GRACE
Do you believe how they're playing?
(beat)
Oh, honey, would you hand me the scissors?
Bruce diverts his attention, when the Sabers screw up and the crowd GROANS. Bruce immediately turns, looks intently at the puck and GOAL, SABERS! THE CROWD ROARS!

INT. BRUCE AND GRACE'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - MORNING
CLOSE ON - BRA CLASP
Grace's BOOBS ARE EVEN BIGGER. Bruce is trying to help her fasten her bra, but it's a good three inches from touching. Bruce shrugs "got me."
EXT. BUFFALO ZOO - DAY
Bruce is doing a report just outside the Pandas' enclosure.

    BRUCE
    In the past, zoo officials have been unable to get these Panda's to mate, but that doesn't seem to be a problem today.

REVEAL A MALE PANDA wholeheartedly humping another PANDA.

    BRUCE
    And the mood seems to be catching on.

WIDE SHOT of the enclosure - PANDA'S are coupled off and humping everywhere. Mothers are frantically covering children's eyes, ushering them away from the exhibit.

QUICK CUTS OF DIFFERENT NEWSCASTERS ON TV

    NEWSCASTER
    His stories are all over town...

    NEWSCASTER #2
    ...from unearthing Jimmy Hoffa...

    NEWSCASTER #3
    ...to an asteroid crashing to earth. Bruce Nolan is rapidly becoming known as.

EXT. BUFFALO - DAY
A BILLBOARD being put up with a big smiling Bruce with arms extended. It reads: "Mr. Exclusive".

INT. HOCKEY ARENA - NIGHT
A close up of Bruce on the Jumbotron.

    ANNOUNCER
    Ladies and Gentlemen, please welcome Mr. Exlusive, Buffalo's own, Bruce Nolan.

Bruce starts SINGING THE MOST AMAZING GOSPEL SINGER/JAZZ VERSION OF THE NATIONAL ANTHEM ANYONE HAS EVER HEARD.

    BRUCE
    Oh, say can you see...

ON GRACE - IN THE STANDS
Debbie turns to her, she shrugs.

    GRACE
    I didn't even know he could sing.

INT. BRUCE AND GRACE'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - DAY
Grace opens the bathroom door, revealing SAM, SITTING ON THE TOILET SEAT WITH A NEWSPAPER UNDER HIS FRONT PAWS. Sam BARKS and Grace quickly closes the door.

INT. HOCKEY ARENA - NIGHT
Bruce sings, still on the same word.

BRUCE
...eeeEEEEeeeeeEEEEEEEEEEEEeeeeee. . .

INT. BRUCE AND GRACE'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - DAY
Bruce finishes running a bath, gets into the tub but SLIPS as is UNABLE TO SINK and ends up sliding around ON THE WATER like on a sheet of glass. He tries to break through, can't. Then, he concentrates and finally LOWERS INTO THE WATER.

INT. HOCKEY ARENA - NIGHT
Bruce dramatically finishes the national anthem.

BRUCE
...of the BraaaaaaaaaAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAVE i .

He hits an impossibly high note and the rink glass SHATTERS I Bruce is projected on the ARENA JUMBOTRON. He shoots his arms up, the crowd goes nuts! "Mr. Exclusive" flashes on the screen.

EXT. WOODS - DAY
A Mob of photographers flash photos like crazy, as Bruce stands casually with his arm around BIGFOOT.

BRUCE
...and that's the way the cookie crumbles.

EXT. FAIRGROUNDS - DAY
Bruce surrounded by Hazel and other chili cook off contestants shouts up from the bottom of the crater hole:

BRUCE & CHILI CONTESTANTS
(in unison)
And that's the way the cookie crumbles!

INT. HOCKEY ARENA - DAY
The words FLASH on the jumbotron and the entire crowd chants:

CROWD
And that's the way the cookie crumbles!

MUSIC OUT/MONTAGE OUT

INT. BEAUTY SALON - DAY
Grace lies in full body wrap, while Debbie is in the process of being wrapped by MARGARITA, a rather ruff Spanish Salon
attendant.

DEBBIE
So this is what success buys you.

GRACE
I guess.

(wiggling around)
I feel like a human taquito.

DEBBIE
Well, thank Mr. Exclusive for me. He's on a quite a roll. What'd he do make a deal with the devil?

GRACE
And he's taking me out tonight to dinner at Chez L'Amour.

DEBBIE
Well, la-ti-da. Mike's idea of a romantic evening is Chez Sizzler.

Margarita pulls the wrap tightly around Debbie.

DEBBIE
(to Margarita)
What does this do again?

MARGARITA
EstS para su grasa.

DEBBIE
Grasa? Doesn't that mean fat?

GRACE
Afraid so.

Debbie eyes Margarita.

GRACE
(gushing)
So, Bruce said and I quote: "Prepare yourself for an amazing evening that will change our lives forever."

Margarita reaches Debbie's waist and YANKS tightly.

DEBBIE
Good - you wouldn't want to leave any spare oxygen in there.

(back to Grace)
Wait a second, you don't think he's going to propose, do you?

GRACE
I don't think anything.
DEBBIE
You do. You think he's going to propose.

GRACE
Well, he's always said when he gets his career together, you know... And his career is more than together. I mean, come on, Chez L'Amour. Change our lives...

DEBBIE
I don't know, hun. I mean, I like Bruce but that man's priority list is him, him, him, then him some more and then you.

GRACE
Well, he just might surprise you.

DEBBIE
That's what I'm worried about. (re: Margarita)
Careful, you missed a spot of free flowing circulation.

Margarita senses the attitude and pulls tighter. Debbie reacts.

DEBBIE
That'd do it.
Margarita motions for Debbie to lay down and leaves. Debbie struggles to lay down.

DEBBIE
Let's see, how do I--
Debbie slides to the ground, Grace cracks up, gets up to help, but also in mummy wrap, topples on top of her. They both laugh and struggling to get up. Hearing the ruckus, Margarita enters and gasps.

MARGARITA
Lesbianas!
Grace and Debbie crack up harder.

DEBBIE
Hey, I'll take that over fat...
Margarita tries to pull them up, but falls too.

MARGARITA
No sexo, no sexol
Grace and Debbie can't stop laughing.

INT. CHEZ L'AMOUR - NIGHT
A waiter pours the first trickle of wine into Bruce's glass. Bruce whiffs it, tastes it.

BRUCE

Very good. If you run out just bring me some water, I'll take it from there.

Grace looks over the menu as Bruce notices people at various tables eyeing him. He glances up to a ceiling light and redirects it with his mind, so it spotlights him in golden light.

Two cute girls with dates smile and wave. He waves back.

GRACE

Should we ask for a more private table?

BRUCE

Huh? Oh, no this is fine right here.

Bruce looks at Grace lovingly. He takes her hand.

BRUCE

I was going to wait until after the meal, but I think it's going to just bust out of me if I don't do it now.

Grace beams, looks at Bruce with total love.

BRUCE

You ready?

GRACE

(nervous)

I think so.

BRUCE

I got anchor.

Grace's face falls. She does her best to cover.

BRUCE

Evidently, they're having problems with Evan. He's finishing up the week and I go live Monday.

GRACE

That's great, honey. Congratulations. Wow. So that's what's tonight is about?

BRUCE

Well, yeah. Grace, I got anchor. We got anchor!
She's having a hard time covering her let down.

BRUCE
(noticing her flat reaction)
What's the matter?

GRACE
Well, to be honest, I thought that maybe tonight, you--

The TWO CUTE GIRLS interrupt, approach Bruce.

CUTE GIRL #1
I'm sorry, but we had to come over. We just think you're amazing and...

CUTE GIRL #2
Well, we can't believe it's you!

They both laugh, Bruce enjoys the attention.

BRUCE
(laughing along)
Yep, it's me.

CUTE GIRL #1
Can we get a picture with you?

BRUCE
Well, sure.
(glances to Grace)
Just one second, hun.
(leans to Grace)
Fans. We better get used to this, huh?

Grace sits watching the two girls take turns sitting on Bruce's lap, taking pictures. Sees Bruce relishing in the attention. One girl gives Bruce a peck on the cheek and they leave. Grace is clearly upset.

GRACE
You have lipstick on your face.

BRUCE
Oh, thanks...

GRACE
Bruce, we need to talk. I thought we had an understanding--

Suddenly, the WHISPERS start again. Bruce looks around, figures it's coming from the restaurant patrons.

BRUCE
Wow. It's kind of loud in here.
Grace looks around the quiet romantic setting.

GRACE
What are you talking about? It's not loud.

The WHISPERS GROW IN VOLUME.

BRUCE
Geez...
(shouts to the restaurant)

-----   - COULD YOU ~KEEP IT DOWN!---  --

GRACE
Bruce, this isn't funny.

BRUCE
(talking loud over the "racket")

WHAT? WOULD YOU EXCUSE ME FOR A SECOND?

He gets up and darts off.

INT. CHEZ L'AMOUR KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS
Bruce races through the restaurant kitchen holding his ears -

EXT. ALLEYWAY - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS
He BURSTS out the kitchen exit into the alley. Unclasps his ears, but no relief. The whispers are now loud voices. We start to make out fragments of words "Please," "Help me," etc.

Overwhelmed and scared, he slides down the alley wall, covering his face, then TOTAL SILENCE --

Bruce lowers his hands and finds himself SITTING ATOP A HIGH MOUNTAIN PEAK.

GOD (O.S.)
Really something isn't it?

God sits down next to Bruce.

BRUCE
Is this heaven?

God laughs at this one.

GOD
It's Everest. You should try flipping on the Discovery Channel every now and then. Well, I guess you can't now, being dead and all.

BRUCE
I'm dead?

God laughs.
GOD
No, I'm just messing with you.

BRUCE
Those voices...

GOD
They're prayers, Bruce. You keep ignoring them and they're going to build up on. You like that. You didn't think being God was going to be all fun and games did you?

BRUCE
Prayers? Those are prayers? Why can't I understand them?

God forms a snowball in his hands as he talks.

GOD
You aren't listening, son. Let's see, you've had my powers for over a week now and how many people have you helped?

BRUCE
Okay, so maybe I've righted a couple of the wrongs in my own life. I was going to get around to others. I can do both. I can help the world.

GOD
The world? That wasn't the world, Bruce. That was just Buffalo, between Commonwealth and 57th. Didn't want to start you out with more than you can handle. Now how you doing otherwise? Personal life in good shape?

BRUCE
Yeah. Everything is great.

A DOORWAY OPENS like a crack in space. Grace steps out, sees Bruce.

GRACE
Bruce? What are you doing out here?

With that, the terrain TRANSFORMS back into the alley where Grace has been standing all along. She can not see God.

BRUCE
Oh, ah,
      (to God)
She can't...
      (God shakes his head, back
to Grace)
I just, ah, needed a little fresh
air.
Bruce fakes a couple big breaths.
      GRACE
Bruce, what is going on? The
second I want to talk about us you
run out on me.
      GOD
      (to Bruce)
Everything's great, huh?
      BRUCE
I wasn't running out on you...
      GRACE
You know, I actually had the crazy
idea that you were going to ask me
to marry you tonight.
      GOD
Now it's heating up.
      BRUCE
      (to God)
You are not helping.
      (back to Grace)
...me at all here, Grace.
      GOD
      (sarcastic)
Nice recovery.
Bruce looks to God to shut up.
      GRACE
Not helping you what?
      BRUCE
      (to Grace)
Look hun, I want to talk about
this. This just isn't a good time.
Okay?
      GRACE
When is it a good time? It's never
a good time.
She's got a point.

BRUCE
(to God)
Stay out of this.

Grace looks at him like he's nuts.

GRACE
Who are you talking to?!

Just then, the WHISPERS start in again.  Bruce reacts.

BRUCE
Oh, not now.

Bruce puts his hands to his ears.  Grace takes this as him not wanting to listen to her.

GOD
You're going to have to answer those things, y'know.

GRACE
Fine.  You know what?  I'm going to go home and if by some miracle it suddenly becomes a 'good time', you know where to find me.

And speaking of time, you're running out of it.

Grace heads back into the restaurant.  Bruce stands completely frustrated.

BRUCE
(to God)
Thank you.

GOD
You want some friendly advice?

BRUCE
No.

God smiles.

GOD
You wanted the job, Bruce. I suggest you get to it.

INT. BRUCE AND GRACE'S APARTMENT - DAY
Grace is asleep in the bedroom while Bruce paces in the living room.

BRUCE
Okay...Prayers.

He concentrates for a second and in an instant, the WHISPERS...
Okay, first off, this creepy whisper thing has got to go.

(paces)

Organization and management. I need a system. Something concrete...

(an idea)

Prayer files 1

(commands)

Let all prayers be organized into files.

Bruce WAVES HIS HAND---

Instantly, the room is JAMMED FULL OF FILE. CABINETS.

BRUCE

Too bulky. Ah! Prayer post-it's!

Instantly, the files are gone and millions of POST-IT'S, EACH WITH A PERSON'S PRAYER REQUEST begin slapping down attaching themselves to everything in the room.

Bruce himself becomes a big post-it mummy. He pulls the one covering his mouth.

BRUCE

Sloppy.

(an idea)

Ah!

CUT TO:

Bruce sits before a High Tech computer sitting on a desktop.

We HEAR the famous "You've Got Mail" sound bite.

BRUCE

Welcome to the information super highway. No mess, full bless.

A COMPUTER PROGRESS BAR titled "Downloading Prayers" appears on screen, there's a long, long way to go.

Bruce watches and waits, bored - looks at his watch.

DISSOLVE TO:

BRUCE - MORNING

He's fallen asleep by the computer. As he wakes he sees: "1,567,432 unread messages"

BRUCE

Whoa.

Suddenly, Grace bounds out of the bathroom.

GRACE
Okay, this is getting ridiculous I grace's boobs are enormous! a healthy d-cup. grace i have to see a doctor. there's definitely something wrong with me.

bruce jumps up from the computer, hides what he's doing...

bruce no. you look great.

grace i look like a hooker i my whole body is changing.

she turns profile, her back sways causing her ass to stick out.

grace my back didn't used to arch like this.

bruce gets up, walks to grace.

bruce i think you look amazing.

grace bruce, i feel like our relationship is becoming all about sex.

bruce no it's not. come on, give me a hug.

grace no, bruce. come on.

she breaks away and sees the computer is on.

grace what's that? what are you doing?

bruce tries to cover.

bruce oh, ah. nothing. surfing the internet...for stories...

grace is this why you didn't come to bed?

bruce no, ah...honey, you're going to be late.

grace
No, I'm not.

Bruce looks over Grace's shoulder and adjusts the clock forty minutes forward. Grace turns and is surprised.

GRACE
Oh my gosh! How did I sleep this late? I've got to run. Are you giving me a ride?

BRUCE
Don't need to.

Bruce motions to the window. Grace walks over, looks out and sees...

A new sporty red convertible wrapped in a white bow.

BRUCE
Happy two months and four days before your birthday.

GRACE
(gasps)
You're crazy. Can we afford that?

BRUCE
I'll work it out. Just trust me.

Bruce dangles the keys in front of her eyes.

GRACE
If you're trying to buy your way out of the hot water you're in, it's not working...

(looks at the car)
Well, it's working a little...

Bruce smiles.

CUT TO:

GRACE DRIVES OFF IN HER NEW CAR

Bruce turns away from the window, gets back to the computer.

BRUCE
Okay. Let's start with something easy.

(typing)

Find:

(reading)
Please make the Sabers win the playoffs, good. Please, please let the Red Wings beat the Sabers.

Bruce puzzles over the two prayers.

Starts typing.
BRUCE

Yes to you, loyal Sabers fan. And
no to you.

(typing)
And your goalie has turrets.

Bruce smiles, this is fun.

MUSIC UP:
MONTAGE - BRUCE ANSWERS PRAYERS
CLOSE ON COMPUTER SCREEN
Emails scroll, stop at:
Filbert Davidson RE: GYM CLASS

83.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL GYM - ROPE CLIMBING DRILL - DAY
A BULLY taunts a FAT KID WITH HORN RIMMED GLASSES.
ANGLE BRUCE - WATCHING FROM THE BLEACHERS.
The FAT KID nervously grabs the rope and much to his surprise, he CLIMBS IT LIKE STALLONE IN CLIFF HANGER.
Bruce is in the stands, pleased. He flicks his finger upward and the BULLY'S gym shorts SHOOT UP HIS BUTT CRACK - a supernatural wedgy.
Filbert flexes his flabby arm, amazed.

CLOSE ON - COMPUTER SCREEN E-MAIL

Ester Maha RE:
INT. BANK OFFICE - DAY
Bruce looks in the bank window and sees a very stressed, ESTER sitting in the loan officer's office, tears in her eyes. As she opens her purse for a tissue, IT IS FULL OF CASH. She registers shock and joy.

BRUCE
Ask and ye shall receive.

CLOSE ON - COMPUTER SCREEN E-MAIL

Bella Winters. RE - PARKING.
EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY
Close on a middle-aged woman driving a car in a parking lot.

MIDDLE AGED WOMAN
Please let. me find a space.
She drives right by Bruce who smiles...

BRUCE
Knock, and the door shall be open...
Bruce makes a KNOCKING MOTION and... *

ANGLE - HANDICAPPED SPACES

All the signs fall off their post. The painted wheelchair symbols on the pavement animate WHEELING THEMSELVES OFF THE SPACES. She pulls into the now open spaces.

EXT. PRISON YARD - DAY
Bruce watches a stickball game in progress. One PRISONER chases a batted ball to the prison wall revealing a HUGE HOLE to freedom.

PRISONER
(looks heavenward)
Thank you, God.

EXT. BEASLEY CONSTRUCTION SITE - DAY
Construction workers stand staring down in awe as woman after woman on the sidewalk below, STOP, RAISE THEIR TOPS AND FLASH THEM.

CONSTRUCTION WORKER
Thank you, God.

INT. SMALL WONDERS DAY CARE - DAY
Grace bends over to help with a craft, revealing ample cleavage.

ANGLE - MARTIN AND THE OTHER BOYS STARING AT HER, EYES WIDE.

MARTIN
Gracias, dios.
(Subtitles read: Thank you, God.)
He shovels a scoop of paste in his mouth.

CLOSE ON:
Bruce's hands typing responses. His fingers move faster and faster.

FRAGMENT MONTAGE OF OVERLAPPING IMAGERY - TEXT AND VISUALS:
"I want to be bigger" text and dissolve to a young man growing six inches. He smiles wide -- Close up computer text snippets dissolve over one another: "Please help my stock go up" "...my stock..." "...make a killing in the market..."
Then another "I want to be bigger" this time dissolve to a grown man, peeks down his pants, smiles wide --

EXT. BUFFALO CITY STREETS - DAY
Bruce walks along head high, FULL OF HIMSELF. He audibly hears snippets of prayers, snapping off responses.
I've got to find a better job...Come on light, turn...God, I wish I were thinner...

BRUCE
Promotion with 15% raise...It's green... Donuts are now healthy...

INT. BRUCE AND GRACE'S APARTMENT - DAY
Bruce sits at the computer, looks at the total prayer requests, his jaw drops. 3 MILLION and growing.

BRUCE
Oh, come on. What a bunch of whiners. This is going to suck up my whole life.

Bruce gets an idea, pulls down a menu on the computer, highlights "ANSWER ALL" types in the word "YES" and hits enter.

The computer takes over, ANSWERING EACH EMAIL AUTOMATICALLY.

Bruce smiles and gets up.

CLOSE ON - THE COMPUTER SCREEN
We see the list scroll by, everything from "LOST CAT" to "MORE MONEY" "MAKE ME SMARTER" "MAKE ME THINNER," ETC. "YES" "SEND", "YES" "SEND" and on and on.

MUSIC OUT/END MONTAGE

INT. EYEWITNESS NEWS STATION - JACK'S OFFICE - DAY

ON JACK:
Very uncomfortable, struggles for the right words as he's firing somebody.

JACK
Look this isn't easy for me. We're starting to get some complaints and... Well, Bobby, things just aren't working out.

JACK'S POV
Bobby's demon-looking head, slowly ROTATES 360 DEGREES ON HIS NECK.

JACK
(scared)
An, you can keep the cart if you like.

We can SEE BOBBY'S BREATH NOW.
(deep demonic voice)
Thanks. I've grown kind of
attached to it.

EXT. SMALL WONDERS DAY CARE - DAY
Bruce pulls up, Grace, her BODY BACK TO NORMAL, walks up and
hops in, happy.

GRACE
Look! I'm back to normal. It was
the wildest thing, I was worried,
so I said a prayer and the next
thing I know, I was completely
healed. It was like a miracle.

BRUCE
(fakes happy)
That's great.

GRACE
So, you're taking me to lunch?
This is rare --
(catches herself)
But wonderful.

BRUCE
Oh, I've got something better than
lunch.

Bruce pulls out. They drive off.

GRACE (O.S.)
Oh, you'll never believe it.
Debbie won the lottery

BRUCE (O.S.)
Really?

GRACE (O.S.)
But get this, there were like 433
thousand other winners, so it only
paid out 17 dollars. Can you
believe the odds of that?

EXT., UPSCALE HOME - DAY
Bruce leads her out of the car.

BRUCE
Keep 'em closed...

GRACE
(laughing)
What is this?

EXT. UPSCALE HOME - DAY
Bruce leads Grace through the gates.
Okay...open your eyes.
Grace does and sees a STAGGERING MANSION.
Wow. This is a bit overwhelming.
I know, it's incredible. Come on in, look.

INT. MANSION
As amazing as it is, it's interior design is way over the top ritzy. Painted ceilings, gold trim everwhere.

(laughing)
This place is hilarious. Are you doing a story here?

(coy)
No. Guess again?

Grace turns to Bruce confused.

It's mine...ours.

What?

(beaming)
This is our new home. Come on...

Bruce pulls Grace up the stairs.

This had to cost-- I can't even imagine how much this had to cost.
7 million. That was the asking, but I got a deal.

Wh-What am I missing here? You can't afford this. You're a reporter. Buying cars is one t hing, but this--

Bruce grabs a hold of Grace.

We'll have the money. Listen to me closely. I'm getting anchor. Then, I'm going to get spotted,
offers will come flooding in to go national, and then you and I are moving to New York City to a place that will put this to shame. This has been my exact dream my whole life and it's finally going to happen. Every step just how I pictured it.

Grace just stares at Bruce.

**GRACE**
There's only one problem.
**BRUCE**
What?
**GRACE**
I hate it.

Bruce is surprised.

**GRACE:**
What were you thinking? Why didn't you talk to me about this?
**BRUCE**
I wanted to surprise you.
**GRACE**
Mission accomplished.

**BRUCE:**
Honestly, I thought you'd be a little more appreciative.

**GRACE:**
Appreciative of what? The fact that you didn't include me on a major life decision or that we now live in the Sultan of Bernali's house?

**BRUCE**
(under his breath)
Like pearls to swine.

**GRACE:**
What is that supposed to mean?

**BRUCE:**
Let those with ears hear.

GRACE:
What is happening to you? You're changing.

BRUCE
Exactly. For the better. I'm not poor and struggling. And maybe that threatens you. I'm telling you, there are plenty of women who would love this place.

GRACE
Yeah, and so would their pimps. *

BRUCE
I can't believe this. I did all this for us. *

GRACE
Us? What us? You always said when your career takes off we'd get married. What happened to that us? *

BRUCE
I want that.

GRACE
'That'. You can't even say the word. *

BRUCE
Marriage, I want marriage, okay. It's just not a great time right now.

GRACE
Not a great time. What is that, your mantra? This is never going to change. . .

Grace heads down the stairs.

BRUCE
Come on Grace, lighten up. *

Tomorrow's Saturday. The office is throwing me a party here, for getting anchor. Let's enjoy the ride for a while. We're just starting to have some fun.

GRACE
No, you're just starting to have
fun.

Suddenly, the TOILET FLUSHES off camera. Grace sees Sam in the bathroom spraying some deodorizer before he exits.

GRACE
And what in God's name is going on with that dog I?

Grace pulls her cell phone out of her purse, heads for the door.

GRACE
I'm going to have Debbie pick me up.

BRUCE
Grace.

GRACE
I'm sorry, but I won't be attending your little party tomorrow. And if you would like to see me after I will be at our home.

She starts out.

GRACE (CONT'D)
Oh, and that poor, struggling guy you talked about? I miss him.

ON BRUCE - BUMMED

PARTY MUSIC UP:

INT. UPSCALE HOME - NIGHT
The PARTY OF PARTIES is in order. The place is jam packed with co-workers, fellow reporters, and various news contacts Everyone is in an ecstatic mood, many prayers having been recently answered. We MOVE THROUGH THE PARTY and hear snippets of various conversations.

BUSINESSMAN
I'll drink to that! My tech stocks tripled in five days.

They clink glasses.

WOMAN
You seem taller.

JOE
I am!

FATHER TYPE
My son pitched a no hitter!

HEAVYISH WOMAN
I lost 47 lbs on the Krispy Kreme
ON SAM:
Walking on his hind legs, delivers a cold beer to Bruce.

ON BRUCE:
Well on his way to plastered, takes a swig, then glances at the beer.

BRUCE
(to Sam)
Hello...
(pointing to bottle)
Corona. Lime next time?

Sam walks away, his tail between his legs.
Bruce maneuvers down the hall dancing, high-fiving, drunkenly accepting the praise coming at him from all sides.

PARTIERS
There he is... The manI.. All hail our new anchor!I

BRUCE
Bless you. Bless you.

PARTYING SPORTS GUY
Hey Bruce, who do you like in the game tonight?

BRUCE
Put your money on the Sabers.
Coach prays a lot.

A FRENCH WAITER approaches Bruce.

FRENCH WAITER
Ah, Mr. Nolan, we're running out of hors doerves. I'm afraid we under-ordered, sir. And the people are hungry.

BRUCE
What do you have left?

The Waiter holds up a small basket.

FRENCH WAITER
Only three chips and two shrimp.

BRUCE
(confident)
Just take it around.

The Waiter gets a confused look.

CUT TO:
CHIPS OVERFLOWING, SHRIMP SPILLING OUT OF BASKETS, HANDS REACHING GLUTTONOUSLY FOR THE BOUNTY.
The Waiter walks along amazed as handfuls of shrimp and chips are pulled from the small basket.
Partiers crowd around Bruce, start to chant.

CROWD
Speech! Speech!! Speech!

Bruce takes center stage, quiets the crowd.

BRUCE
I ' d thank you all for coming, but
the liquor is free so maybe you
should THANK ME!

Everyone laughs.

BRUCE
And now let me tell you a story.
There was a man who had two sons.
The younger son took his
inheritance and squandered his
money on a life of lust and
debauchery. I LOVE THAT GUY!!

Everyone throws their hands up and continues to party.
Bruce's big smile fades. He looks around the room, hoping to
spot Grace. He grabs a phone, walks out to the balcony,
dials --

He gets their answering machine, hears their outgoing message
together from happier times. He hangs up.

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)
Hey there.

Bruce turns, sees SUSAN ORTEGA, completely stunning in a sexy
dress.

SUSAN
Hi Bruce. What are you doing out
here all alone?

BRUCE
Oh, ah, I was calling Grace.

SUSAN
Yeah, I didn't see her in there. I
love the new place, by the way. So
how are you and Grace doing?

BRUCE
I don't know, we had a fight
earlier. Ever since I . . . Well,
things are different now and...
SUSAN
You're on fire Bruce. Some women can't handle fire. Some can.
Susan smooths close to Bruce.

SUSAN
You know, I always had an instinct about you. I knew you were going to make something of yourself.

BRUCE
Really?

SUSAN
There's something special about you Bruce. I like special...

BRUCE
Look Susan, I don't know, I--

Susan grabs Bruce, kisses him passionately. Bruce doesn't join in, but doesn't fight it either.

ANGLE - THE FRONT DOOR

Grace and Debbie enter.

DEBBIE
So this is your new place, huh?

GRACE
Cozy, don't you think? Come on help me find him.

They head into the room.

DEBBIE
You sure you want to do this?

GRACE
I don't know. It's his big night. I don't want to spoil it. I know how much this means to him.

DEBBIE
* * *

So much for lashing back...

Grace stops dead in her tracks. Her face drops.

GRACE'S POV - BRUCE, still lip-locked with Susan Ortega.

DEBBIE
Oh, boy.

Bruce turns and sees Grace.

BRUCE
Grace, I...

GRACE
. (fighting back tears)
Get the car, Deb.

DEBBIE
Right.

BRUCE
Grace, wait.

Grace follows Debbie out.

EXT. UPSCALE HOME - NIGHT
Bruce follows Grace outside.

BRUCE
Grace, come on.

Grace stops, opens her purse, tosses the keys to her new car in Bruce's chest.

GRACE
Here. I don't want your car. I don't want your things... I don't want you.

BRUCE
Come on, don't say that. I was just calling you--

GRACE
And you thought Susan's mouth was the phone?

BRUCE
I didn't think you were coming-- I mean, I... I screwed up, okay. Let me make it up to you.

GRACE
How about a boat, Bruce?

BRUCE
If that's what you want.

GRACE
Yeah, a big boat and oh, maybe two bags of cash, you know, the ones with the big cartoon dollar signs on the front. Then I'll be happy. Because I'm just hollow inside. Debbie's been right. All this time. I defended you, told her there was good in you. Another side to you. Well, I just saw that other side and I don't want anything to do with it.
Debbie pulls up, Grace storms off to the car. Bruce follows,

BRUCE
Grace, come on, don't do this.

GRACE
Go back to your little co-anchor.
Or is that ho-anchor?
(tearing)
I came back here to apologize. How stupid am I?

Grace turns and heads to the car.

BRUCE
You're the one that didn't like the new place!

Grace gets in, slams the door.

BRUCE
You can't walk out on me! I'm the alpha, lady! I'm the Omega!

Debbie peels out.

BRUCE
(desperate last attempt)
I could make you stay!

Bruce is left alone in the middle of the street.

BRUCE
Fine! I don't need you! I have everything I need. Did you hear that?!
(yelling)
I have EVERYTHING!

INT. UPSCALE HOME - MOMENTS LATER
Bruce walks in, Susan is waiting for him.

SUSAN
I was right. She couldn't handle the fire.

Bruce looks at Susan with disgust, then glances to a FIRE ALARM on the wall, mentally TRIGGERS IT. The sprinklers turn on, as well. People scream, rush toward the exit.

Bruce sits down on the sofa, being rained on by the sprinklers, alone. He finally plops back and God is sitting next to him.

GOD
Enjoying your party? Yeah, nothing like spending time with some real
friends. Any shrimp left?

BRUCE

Grace left me.

GOD

I know.

BRUCE

certain)

She'll take me back.

(uncertain)

Will she take me back?

GOD

Would you take you back?

Bruce mulls this over, - then...

BRUCE

How do you make someone love you when you can't effect free will?

GOD

Welcome to my world, son. You come up with an answer to that one, you let me know.

Off of Bruce thinking...

CUT TO:

INT. DEBBIE AND MIKE'S HOUSE - MORNING

Grace's alarm goes off. The radio comes on and it plays a John Cougar Mellencamp song. But the lyrics are different.

JOHN COUGAR MELLENCAMP

Here's a little ditty, about Grace and her man Bruce, two Americans growing up, needing to make a truce.

Grace's eyes pop open. Is she dreaming?

EXT. DEBBIE'S HOUSE

Bruce hides behind a hedge, watches Grace jog past.

ON GRACE:

notices something CARVED IN THE TREE it reads: "GRACE +

BRUCE". Carved in the next tree, "A COUPLE FOR THE AGES". Carved in the next tree, "COME ON ALREADY, GIVE HIM ANOTHER CHANCE". She does a double take, continues on.

INT. COFFEE SHOP

Grace reaches in her purse to pay for her coffee and a bunch of PICTURES FALL OUT. They are all of Bruce and Grace. She thinks, definitely didn't - put them there.
INT. SMALL WONDER'S DAY CARE - DAY
Grace is helping one of the kids, when she notices something outside the window. It's a cloud formation that strangely looks like BRUCE (in profile) HOLDING HANDS WITH GRACE. She reacts as the imagery melts away into a very faint "FORGIVE HIM."

EXT. SMALL WONDERS DAY CARE - LATER
Grace is talking with one of the other teachers. The kids, playing dodgeball in the background, laugh and scream louder and louder. Grace turns and sees...
Bruce getting pelted by multiple balls.

BRUCE
Okay, surrender, surrender.
He walks over to Grace.

BRUCE
Hi.

GRACE
Hi..

BRUCE
I, ah, have my first anchor tonight.

GRACE
That's great. I hope it goes well for you.

He's hit in the head by a ball. Grace can't help but smile
Bruce leaps at the opportunity.

BRUCE
I miss you.
(off her silence)
I just took the first step, shot myself out on the ledge, awaiting vulnerably your response.

GRACE
... I don't know what to say.

BRUCE
How about you love me and you'll take me back.

GRACE
No, Bruce.

BRUCE
Come on, what about all the signs?

GRACE
What? How do you know about that?
Did you talk to Debbie?

BRUCE

(beat)
Would it help if I told you I acted like an ass?

Martin is standing nearby.

MARTIN
Hey, you said ass.

BRUCE
It's okay as long as you mean a donkey. I didn't add "hole." It's only bad when you say "ass-ho--

GRACE
Alright, inside, Martin.

(to the others)
Okay everyone, inside.

The kids race in. Grace starts to follow.

BRUCE
Grace, please. None of this seems right without you.

(off her reaction)
Is that a glimmer of hope I see?

GRACE
I have to go...

She starts off...

BRUCE
Wait.

Bruce DRAMATICALLY RAISES A HAND TOWARD GRACE, like putting a love spell on her.

BRUCE
Now how do you feel?

She looks at him, oddly.

GRACE
...Are you out of your mind? Have you been drinking?

BRUCE
Drin kin g? Sur e. I'm dru nk wit h POWER.

Bruce RAISES BOTH HANDS IN FULL HEXING FASHION...

BRUCE
...LOVE ME!!

GRACE
(a beat)
You need help.
She heads back inside. Bruce throws his hands in the air, frustrated.

EXT. SMALL WONDER'S PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER
Bruce heads for his car as he sees two guys in PRISON SUITS (from the prison yard) drive off with it.

101.

BRUCE
Hey11 That's my car!!

INT. BRUCE'S CAR - CONTINUOUS
The PRISONERS drive off laughing.

PRISONER #1
Ha, nice wheels, huh?

BRUCE sits up in the back seat.

BRUCE
Thou shalt not steal.

The prisoners JUMP.

BRUCE
Car, show them the way out.

Instantly, the car doors fly open and the seats tilt sideways dumping the prisoners.

BRUCE
What is wrong with the world?

INT. EYEWITNESS NEWS STATION - TV STUDIO

ON A TV MONITOR:

NEWS ANCHOR #1
The Dow skyrocketed again today and with a new influx of paper millionaires, analysts are warning of a potential run on banks...

We see a stock graph superimposed on the screen with a ludicrous jump straight up off the charts.

CHANNEL CHANGES TO:

NEWSANCHOR #2
The scene nearly turned violent when hundreds of disgruntled Buffalo residents protested the results of last week's fluke lottery results...

CHANNEL CHANGES TO:

NEWS ANCHOR #3
...another 37 arrests today at the
Beasley Construction Site for indecent exposure.

We see women getting pulled away one by one into police vans, after they flash their tops. In the background, a "Girl's Gone Wild" van is there rolling tape of each flashing.

ON JACK:

JACK

The world's gone mad.

Jack clicks off the monitor. Bruce hustles in from make-up. An air of forced confidence about him. Nothing and no one is going to ruin his big moment.

JACK

Oh, there you are. Your big debut.
How you feeling?

BRUCE

You know what? I'm good. The show must go on.

Bruce sits in the anchor desk, breathes in the reality.

SUSAN

(whispers)
Bruce, if I had any idea Grace was going to be there last night...

BRUCE

Susan, you didn't do anything wrong. In fact, I found the moment rather pleasurable.

Susan shudders, tries to compose himself.

SUSAN

(flustered)
Oh, really. . . that's nice.

JACK

Okay, the Sabers just won the Stanley Cup. It's getting pretty crazy out there. We're going to kick live to Fred at the stadium. Oh, and Bruce, you won the pool again. Exact score, dead on. Twenty-three to one, who would have thought.

bXA

JACK

This is it, you good?

Bruce nods, straightens in his chair, prepares for his dream
ON THE MONITOR
The Eyewitness News opening plays, then fades away to Bruce and Susan.

    SUSAN
    I'm Susan Ortega.
    BRUCE
    I'm Bruce Nolan and here's what's making news --
And the screen goes to STATIC. Lights dim in the studio.
    JACK
    What happened? What the hell happened?
The Stage Manager listens to his wire.
    STAGE MANAGER
    We lost the signal. It's another power surge.
    JACK
    Aw, geez. Ever since that damn asteroid hit.
The power comes back up.
    STAGE MANAGER
    We're back.
    SUSAN
    We apologize for the interruption, and now back to the news. Bruce... 
    BRUCE
    Thank you, Susan--
Susan gets a feed in her earpiece.

    SUSAN
    I'm sorry, we're going live to Rupp arena where the Buffalo Sabers have won the Stanley cup. Fred...
Bruce is noticeably bothered.

    CUT TO:
INT. SABERS LOCKEROOM.
Fred is with the coach. The team is celebrating, champagne rains down.

    FRED
    Thank's Susan. I'm here with coach Tucker who has lead the Sabers to their first championship in 22 years...
ON BRUCE'S mounting frustration. He gives a look.
FRED
Tell me coach...
Fred's face registers A PAINED LOOK. He tries to keep it
一起. A beat of silence...
FRED '
(quickly)
I have to use the restroom.
He drops the mic and runs out. Off the coach's puzzled
look...
INT. NEWS STATION
JACK
What the hell?
Bruce covers.
BRUCE
We'll get back to the Saber victory
in just a moment. In other news--
Again, STATIC... Jack tosses his headset.
JACK
Oh, for the love of God! What is
it now?
The Stage Manager again listens to his wire.

STAGE MANAGER
The whole booth is down.
CRASH! A BRICK flies through a front window.    Bruce turns to see...
EXT. DOWNTOWN - NIGHT
A FULL ON RIOT in progress. College students, city dwellers
going crazy. Cars are burning, people are out of control.
Escaped convicts are running in and out of stores looting
right alongside ordinary citizens.
The Kowolski brothers and Momma Kowolski are helpless against
the onslaught as pillagers run out of the bakery carrying
cakes, pies, bread - whatever they can get their hands on.
Bruce stumbles through the mayhem, confused.
BRUCE
What's going on?
COLLEGE KIDS
Partying, man. Wooooll!!    Sabers I!
They continue to trash the area.
BRUCE
But your team won!
Cars are being rolled over. A lone POLICE OFFICER protects
himself with his shield as he's pelted with various debris.
The Officer PULLS BRUCE down behind a car.

POLICE OFFICE

Stay down.

BRUCE

Where are the other officers?

POLICE OFFICE

What other officers? Half the force just retired. Said their "ship came in." You better get home pal. It's dangerous out here.

The Officer heads out. Bruce stands, then quickly DUCKS, as a bottle is tossed through a window that has a lotto sticker on it.

RIOTE R

The lottery sucks! I only won 17 bucks i

BACK TO SCENE:

Bruce looks up at a burning building with a flaming "Mr. Exclusive" billboard above - it comes CRASHING DOWN. Bruce looks out over the rioters.

ON BRUCE:

We see the anger build in his face, like Moses looking down on the Israelites. He RAISES HIS ARMS. DARK CLOUDS SWIRL IN THE SKY. WIND BLOWS. LIGHTENING CRACKS.

BRUCE

Hear, O' Buffalo, you have awakened my wrath. Vengeance is mine!

A BOLT OF LIGHTENING shoots right into the middle of the rioters, scattering them. People flee in every direction as THUNDER CRASHES and lightning bolts continue to strike. Bruce stands alone in the street, surveys the smoldering mayhem, then reaches into his pocket and pulls out the key God gave him. He grips it tightly and...

INT. OMNI PRESENTS - NIGHT

Bruce stands there, sees God as he originally found him, mopping. God looks up at Bruce, not surprised to see him.

BRUCE

They're all out of control. I don't know what to do.

GOD

You mind giving me a hand with this
floor first?
Off Bruce's look. . .

DISSOLVE TO:

LATER:
Bruce's sleeves rolled up, mopping next to God.

GOD

"Poor man wanna be rich, rich man
wanna be king, king's disatisfied
'cause he rules everything..."

(MORE)

GOD (cont'd)
(to Bruce)

Springsteen. I like a little Boss
in my head while I'm workin'...

They finish up. God looks back at the sparkling floor, satisfied.

GOD

There we go. Wonderful thing. No
matter how filthy something gets,
it can always be cleaned right up.

God collects Bruce's mop.

BRUCE

What happened? I gave everyone
what they wanted.

God sets the mops down.

GOD

Since when does anyone have a clue
about what they want?

God holds up a REMOTE AND CLICKS, changing the room into the
DINER where Bruce first parted his soup. (NOTE: Whenever the
room "changes" we're actually still in the room, but seeing a
full projection of an environment on the walls and columns)
The older waitress, Ginnie, clears some dishes...

GOD

Remember Ginnie?

Ginnie bends down behind the counter and when she comes back
up she is a hot 21 YEAR OLD.

GOD

Ginnie thought she lost her beauty
when she got older. I'm trying to
convince her otherwise.

Ginnie bends down again, and when she comes back up, she is
HER OLDER SELF again.

God clicks the remote, changing the environment into a SCHOOL
YARD. We see the grade school where Filbert Davis, the boy
Bruce helped up the rope, is in a fight.

GOD

Ah yes, Filbert. Brilliant young
man. He was going to be a great
poet.

(MORE) 108.

GOD (cont'd)
The soul of his work would have
been built out of his hardships.
He would have touched millions.
(feigns cheery)
But now he's headed for a career as
a professional wrestler.

God clicks, changing the environment into a CONDO. We see a
lonely woman (who found the cash in her purse) sitting
depressed, rocking in a chair.

GOD

Ester Maha. I love Ester. Ester
was bankrupt. She was going to
have to eat her pride and call her
sister. Would've got the two of
them together again. Instead, she
bought a condo in Florida.

* 

God clicks the remote again...

GOD

(recalling Bruce's own
words)
And have you seen the news lately?

We see footage of the ARCTIC SEA and NORTH AND SOUTH POLES...

NEWSCASTER #1

Scientists believe last weeks
asteroid may have knocked the earth
off it's access resulting in the
rapid acceleration of the melting
of the polar caps. . .

Click. More footage of FLOODWATERS and RISING TIDES...

NEWSCASTER #2

And more tidal wave activity
reported and resulting in devastating floods all tied to last weeks abnormal lunar activity...

Click. We see footage of DECIMATED CROPS.

NEWSCASTER #2

That swarm of locusts spotted in Buffalo has multiplied, wreaking havoc on local agricultural crops. Food and produce prices are expected to skyrocket.

109.

GOD

(to Bruce, again using Bruce's words)

Now what kind of a God let's that happen?

God clicks the images off.

GOD

Not as easy as it looks, is it? This God business.

BRUCE

So what do I do?

God smiles, asks him again what he asked him in the alley...

GOD

You want some advice?

BRUCE

Yes.

God smiles, starts to walk away...

GOD

Everybody wants a miracle, Bruce. Want me to do everything for 'em. But what they don't understand is, they're the one's holding the power.

God claps the bright ceiling light on, walks over to the latter.

BRUCE

Wait. Where are you going?

GOD

This is good-bye, Bruce. You've learned a lot. I think you should be able to handle things now.

God climbs, ascending into the light.

BRUCE
What if I have a question? What if
I need you?

God stops, looks down to Bruce.

110.

GOD

See Bruce, that's your problem.
That's everybody's problem. You
keep looking up. . .

He smiles and disappears into the light, leaves Bruce thinking.

INT. BRUCE AND GRACE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Bruce stands in the apartment, Sam at his side. No signs of Grace. The bed is made. Empty.

Then, he notices the BOX OF PHOTOS, the incomplete albums. He picks up a photo of he and Grace in an even tinier apartment, Sam is a puppy, they have little money, and despite it all look very happy. Bruce smiles at the memory. Reaches for a stack of photos...

EXT. CITY STREETS - MORNING

Bruce sits in bumper to bumper traffic. A man's car is broken down in the middle of the street causing the bottleneck. Bruce sees THE SIGN GUY by the side of the road. His sign reads:

Bruce looks out at the other drivers honking and shouting at the frustrated man.

CUT TO - the stalled car is now rolling to the shoulder and we REVEAL that Bruce is doing the pushing.

INT. BRUCE AND GRACE'S APARTMENT

THE COMPUTER:
The auto-function is answering "YES" to the prayer emails. Bruce clicks cancel, turns off the computer.

INT. SCHOOL YARD

Filbert Davis is beating up another kid. Bruce watches at a distance.

BRUCE

Bruce giveth and Bruce taketh away.

Suddenly, Filbert goes to throw a punch but his punch has no sting. The bigger boy looks down and grins.

CLOSE ON FILBERT - SUDDEN FEAR IN HIS EYES
INT. SCHOOL CLASSROOM
The teacher stands before the class, reading a student's paper.

    TEACHER
    "Pain". By Filbert Davis.
As she reads the poem, PAN TO Filbert Davis seated in class with a ripe BLACK EYE.

EXT. BRUCE AND GRACE'S APARTMENT - MORNING
Bruce is waiting for Sam to pee.

    BRUCE
    Come on, Sam. Let's do this the right way... Oh, alright...
Bruce pulls out a SWATCH OF CARPET, lays it on the grass.
Sam happily goes. They walk off together.

    BRUCE
    That's not normal you know.

INT. HARDWARE STORE - DAY
Bobby places three blue home address number tiles on the counter - all number 6.

    BOBBY
    (demonic voice)
    Do you have these in red?
Bruce walks up behind Bobby.

    BRUCE
    Okay Bobby, it's time to come back.
Bobby HISSES at Bruce, turns INSANELY DEMONIC.

    BOBBY
    LEAVE ME HOLY MAN OR I WILL FEED ON YOUR SOUL!It
    BRUCE
    (casual)
    Un-damn you, Bobby.
Bobby instantly transforms to normal.

    BOBBY
    Hey thanks, Bruce.
    (holds out a cookie)
    Biscotti?

INT. NEWSROOM - DAY
Evan is packing his things at his desk, still looking much worse for the wear. Bruce walks up to him.

    EVAN
    You're probably here to gloat over the anchor position. Go ahead, I'm
sure I deserve it.

BRUCE
You know, Evan. I've been a real prick.

Evan stops, looks up at Bruce, confused.

BRUCE
You were born to anchor. I'm not taking the position. Oh, and I never really congratulated you on getting the job in the first place. Congratulations, Evan.

Bruce offers his hand, Evan takes it. When their hands meet, there is a kind of ELECTRICAL CHARGE that passes between them. Bruce walks off, Evan is confused when he catches his reflection in the mirror. HE'S BACK TO NORMAL!

INT. JACK'S OFFICE - LATER

ON TV:
Evan is manning the anchor desk and looking good doing it. Jack is relieved.

Evan Baxter
In the financial world, things are settling back to normal in what analysts are calling a fluke market fluctuation...

Bruce enters.

BRUCE
You made the right choice, Jack.

JACK
So what about you? What will you do?

BRUCE
With your permission, I think I'll go out there and make the people laugh. To quote a friend, "God knows we could use it."

Jack smiles.

JACK
Permission granted.

Bruce turns to go, then turns back.

BRUCE
Oh, are you hungry? I know a place that makes a mean tomato soup.
EXT. STREET - NIGHT
Bruce walks along side Jack. Jack talks and talks, happy to have the company. Bruce opens a door for Jack, leading to..

INT. DINER
Bruce and Jack take a seat at the counter.

WAITRESS (O.S.)
Coffee, gentlemen?
Jack and the waitress lock eyes - there's an instant attraction. Bruce smiles.

BRUCE
Jack. This is a friend of mine, Cindy. Cindy this is Jack.

JACK                                CINDY
(sm in ten)                           (smite ten)
Hi.                                   Hi.

EXT. EYEWITNESS NEWS STATION - DAY
ON THE HOMELESS SIGN GUY

His sign reads:
"GOD BEE GOOD HONEY"

PULL BACK to reveal BRUCE, sitting next to him with his own

sign reading:
"WHATEVER fl£ SAID"

With a little arrow pointing to the Homeless Sign Guy.

EXT. BRUCE AND GRACE'S APARTMENT - DUSK
Bruce paces, waiting for Sam.

BRUCE
You can do it, Sam. Without the carpet. Come on.

Sam does. Bruce celebrates, does a happy dance and is surprised to see Debbie standing there.

DEBBIE
(re: the peeing dog)
Looks like your rain dance worked.

BRUCE
Debbie. Hey. You know, I never got to apologize for--

DEBBIE
I didn't really come to chat, I came for Grace's things.

INT. BRUCE AND GRACE'S APARTMENT
Debbie is packing items into a box. She sees the photo
albums on the coffee table. She flips through, surprised.

DEBBIE
They're full... You did all this?

Bruce nods. Debbie looks at Bruce, sizing him up.

DEBBIE
You really hurt her, you know.

BRUCE
I know.

Debbie starts to go, but turns back.

DEBBIE
You know what I do before I go to sleep every night? I tuck my kids in bed, I eat a scoop of ice cream and watch Conan.

(MORE)

DEBBIE (cont'd)
You know what Grace does? She prays. Most of the time for you.

This not only touches Bruce, but it gives him an idea.

INT. BRUCE AND GRACE' S APARTMENT - NIGHT
Bruce sits anxiously at the computer with Sam, checks the e-mails and types in GRACE CONNELLY. He hits "search". 1,273 entries appear.

BRUCE
The woman does pray a lot.

He types in "Grace and Bruce" and eagerly awaits. There are 335 matches. He checks a few...

"Dear God, please help Bruce to find himself, find contentment, find You."

"Dear God, please help Bruce. He's struggling to find meaning."

"Dear God, help Bruce to be happy. He can't seem to find his way..."

Over and over, he finds the same prayer, the same entry every morning and night for months on end.

Bruce is touched.

BRUCE
She still loves me, Buddy.

He KISSES SAM and races out.

EXT. DEBBIE HOUSE - NIGHT
Bruce stands in front of the house with flowers, another special creation. He looks at the lavish bouquet, then sets them down, picks a single, normal Daisy from the garden.
Better.
He heads for the door when he hears crying. It's Grace. He looks up, sees a light on in the upstairs guest room.
He climbs the fire escape and looks in the window. GRACE is sitting on the bed crying. As Bruce watches her cry, feeling her emotion, it starts to LIGHTLY RAIN.

GRACE
Please God. Please...

Through her tears she is praying. Bruce looks at her with total love.

GRACE
Please God. I still love him...

Bruce smiles, thankful.

GRACE
...but I don't want to love him anymore. Please God. Help me to forget.

(cries)
I don't want to hurt anymore. I want to forget.

Bruce just stands there, stunned. He gets it. He raises a hand, and with a simple wave, he performs an excruciatingly selfless act. He lets Grace go.

ON GRACE:
Her face changes. She wipes her eyes. The pain is lifted. And it is Bruce now who feels that pain. He looks at Grace. A sad smile.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT
Rain droplets splash on the river where Bruce first raged at God. He stands in the middle of the street, looks up heavenward, weakly. Humble.

BRUCE
You win. I'm done. Please. I don't want to do this anymore. I don't want to be God.

(sighs)
Please, help me.

And with that, the rain stops. The dark clouds slowly open as beams of light cut through, shining down upon Bruce, birds begin to chirp, adding to this magical moment as...

HONK1 HONKI
A MAC TRUCK SLAMS THROUGH FRAME, MOWS BRUCE DOWN. His spirit
remains in the same spot, looking confused, then STREAKS UP heavenward.

**FLYING POV:**

SHOOTING HEAVENWARD like a missile, THROUGH THE CLOUDS, THROUGH THE SKY to...

A HUGE WHITE ROOM - No walls, just white as far as the eye can see. The flooring is the whitest of white puffy clouds. Bruce finds himself standing there. He looks around and when he turns behind him, he sees GOD. Floating on nothing, as though sitting in the most royal throne.

**BRUCE**

Am I...?

**GOD**

You can't expect to kneel down in the middle of a highway and live to talk about it.

**BRUCE**

But why? Why now?

**GOD**

I work in mysterious ways, son.

A beat as Bruce takes everything in.

**BRUCE**

You knew it all along. You knew if I got everything I wanted, I would ruin my life.

God doesn't respond, just listens.

**BRUCE**

So I'm dead... Okay. If this is what you want. Okay, okay...

God holds up the PRAYER BEADS, tosses them to Bruce. Bruce looks at the beads, then up at God, puzzled.

**GOD**

Go ahead, use 'em.

**BRUCE**

Alright... I've learned that I don't know as much I thought I did...

**GOD**

Boy, you can say that again.

**BRUCE**

Hey, I'm praying here.
Sorry, go.

If I could have just one thing in the world. It would be for Grace to live a happy, joyful life. And that she finds someone...

...that she finds someone that will treat her with the love and respect that she so deserves.

God smiles the most satisfied of smiles.

Now that is a prayer.

Well, I better get on that one.

Off Bruce's puzzled reaction he DROPS THROUGH THE CLOUDS -- FALLING POV -- BACK DOWN TOWARDS EARTH, back THROUGH THE CLOUDS, and right INTO ANOTHER WHITE ROOM where...

BRUCE EYES OPEN and he GASPS FOR BREATH. The PRAYER BEADS still clutched tightly in his hand.

TWO DOCTORS stop giving Bruce CPR, see that his vitals have returned. . .

He's back!

BRUCE? Can you hear me?

We almost lost you there.

WIDER ANGLE -- The WHITE ROOM is a HOSPITAL ROOM -- Bruce is heavily bruised and bandaged.

You lost a lot of blood. It wasn't easy to find a match – you're a very rare blood type.

Bruce looks to the blood bag, sees "A/B Positive" written on the side.
CLOSE ON BRUCE - THINKING, HIS MIND RACING

BRUCE
(groggy whisper)
A/B Positive...

DOCTOR #2 (O.S.)
You should thank God for donors.
We don't have a lot of that type on hand.

NURSE
There's your angel now.
Bruce turns toward the hospital door and sees...

GRACE:
A cotton swab taped to her arm. Now he remembers where he heard of that blood type.

GRACE
(re: her swab)
I hear that all of this winds up in a warehouse somewhere. But you know me, I'm a sucker for this stuff.
The doctors give Grace the nod to enter as they go, leaving the two of them alone. Grace tentatively approaches.

GRACE
I don't even know what I'm doing here. But... When I heard that you'd been in an accident and that you might not make it... She starts to cry.

BRUCE
Hey, I'm okay.

GRACE
Does it hurt?

BRUCE
Only when I talk., and smile... and y'know, exist in general.

Grace laughs. That's one thing Bruce could always do, is make her laugh. Grace spots the prayer beads in Bruce's hand, raises his arm.

GRACE
Oh my gosh, you still have those?
Bruce looks at the prayer beads, then looks at Grace. He remembers his prayer to God and the emotion wells within him
GRACE
What is it?

BRUCE
Nothing. It's just really nice to see you.

She goes to him, Bruce sits up a bit and they embrace.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CITY PARK - DAY
A BIG BLOOD DRIVE in progress. Everyone is there, Grace, Sam, Debbie and Zoe, Ginnie and Jack, the Kowolski brothers, Momma Kowolski, Evan, Susan, Dallas, Fred. Bobby serves various food items from his cart.

BOBBY
You know, French Toast was invented by tavern owner, Joseph French, who had a poor knowledge of grammar, and did not know how to use the possessive apostrophe, so he called it French Toast instead of French's Toast...

Pull back to reveal BRUCE, crutch under one arm, cast on his leg, mic in hand, reporting. He's now talking in his OWN VOICE, much more himself.

BRUCE
This is Bruce Nolan at Buffalo's first annual "Be the Miracle" blood drive. Remember, the life you save may be mine, so hurry down. I had a close call and, well, can you imagine what life would have been like without me?

Laughs in the background, from the people that know Bruce. Bruce walks over to the Kowolski Brothers.

BRUCE
In honor of this event, the Kowolski brothers have baked a one-of-a-kind, creation.

The brothers proudly unveil the special cookie and we see that it's a HUGE SYRINGE SHAPED CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIE.

BRUCE
Sure, a little creepy and a shameless plug, but we love 'em. (Bruce breaks off a little
piece, takes a bite)

Mmm, good needle. Remember, that's Kowolski's bakery. The bakery that gets more air time than a high speed chase.

Everyone laughs. The Kowolski brothers beam. Bruce takes a seat as a VOLUNTEER NURSE pulls up his sleeve, revealing the prayer beads worn around his wrist. She ties off his arm, starts to probe for a vein.

BRUCE

To be honest, I've never been a big fan of shots...

The volunteer now is swabbing Bruce's arm and Bruce is starting to sweat.

BRUCE

(nervous)
Okay, we're good to go...They just stick it into my arm. Breaking through the skin, of course...

The volunteer pulls out the needle and Bruce PASSES OUT COLD. Gasps, the Nurse leans close, total silence, then:

BRUCE

BLLLAAAA!

Bruce jolts awake making the Nurse and several people jump. They all laugh.

BRUCE

Had you going, didn't I I I I I

He reacts to the nurse POKING the needle in. Everyone laughs more.

BRUCE

No, this is nothing. In fact, this is the second time I've given blood this week. For those of you who haven't heard, I'd like you to meet the soon to be Mrs. Exclusive.

He throws a look to Grace who smiles in return. The crowd applauds.

BRUCE

This is Bruce Nolan reporting for Eyewitness News.

The camera cuts. Bruce lowers his mic, turns to Grace.

BRUCE
So, what'd you think?

GRACE

I don't know, I thought it was very pleasurable.

Bruce smiles, they kiss...

As the blood drive continues, we push through the crowd, heading somewhere. Bodies clear frame and we see the HOMELESS MAN sitting on a park bench. His sign reads:

THEE END:

The Homeless Man smiles into camera. We continue forward and in a slow, mysterious, subtle fashion his face slowly transforms into the very pleased, FACE OF GOD, who winks and we

cut to black:

ROLL CREDITS: