

(12/06/14) Journaling hasn't worked for me. Perhaps it's because I'm not the best audience for my own sarcasm. Thing is, rather than writing my feelings down and getting them off my chest, I write them down, re-read them, and feel worse off. I guess I'm too obsessive to not re-read my own writing. So we're giving this a try. This is my first attempt at "journaling" in screenplay format. I've considered this for a while. I've thought about tone and stylistic choices. I think what we want here is a bit of LOUIE, with more daydreaming, let my own crazy flights of fancy creep in, in sort of "SCRUBS-esque" cut-aways.

We open with a musical number / montage.

INT. JOE'S CHICAGO APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

August 2014. Warm and brilliant sunlight shines through the rustic bay window, around which brown cardboard boxes are stacked. A bird lands on the windowsill and chirps a merry tune.

BEGIN SONG: An original composition with lyrics about moving on, reaching for the stars, and having it all.

JOE, a bright-eyed young man of 24 enters. He carries a cardboard box with a label that reads "Things for NY". He holds himself with pride and confidence, big smile upon his face.

MONTAGE

-Shots of Joe's college graduation outside the Chicago Theater.

-Joe behind a camera in the Phathom Production studio.

-Phathom co-workers hand Joe a gift, a statue of a big apple with the company's logo on it.

-Joe kisses his girlfriend goodbye.

-ANDY, Joe's Roommate, a tall fellow with a bit of a swagger stands outside of the Chicago Apartment. He hands Joe a box to load into a Green 2001 Ford Windstar. The car is completely stuffed with boxes and there's a mattresses tied on top. Think the Clampett's car in the opening of "Beverly Hillbillies".

-Andy waves as the van pulls away.

-INSERT sign "Welcome to New York: The Empire State"

-Joe Stands in center of Time Square, big smile on his face. He spins and looks up at the various billboards for the TV

shows taking place in or produced in the New York area. A la "The Mary Tyler Moore Show"

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. DOCTOR SANI'S OFFICE - DAY

In stark contrast to the warm bright colors from the opening montage, the office has a cold sterile florescent tint. Joe sits on an exam table. Smile and bright-eyes replaced with a static deadpan look of subtle dread. DR. SANI sits at a desk next to Joe. He's a tall man with dark skin, salt and pepper hair, and a stern warrior's face though not without a sympathetic sadness in his eyes. There's a monitor on the desk which displays an MRI cross section of a brain.

DR. SANI

And as you can see the tumor is growing here, by the brain stem, and poking through the bone of the skull here.

Joe stares blankly at the wall.

DR. SANI (CONT'D)

Mr. Riedel? Mr. Riedel?

JOE

What do you mean, "you think it's cancerous"?

DR. SANI

Based on the shape and texture it's safe to assume we're looking at a Chordoma. Now, not everyone agrees that this type of tumor fits the cancerous category, and you'll of course want to get a second opinion.

(beat)

We never really know until the biopsy results are done but given the proximity to the brain we'll need to start discussing treatment right away. I hope you don't have any big plans the next few months.

JOE

No...nothing big.

A GOOD SENSE OF "TUMOR" TITLE SEQUENCE

INT. JOE'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Joe lies on his bed. The covers are a mess, all kicked into

one corner. The room is littered with relics from Joe's past. Power Rangers, Star Wars figures, and Muppets, rest in every nook and cranny. There's a knock on the door and CATHY, a short woman in her 50s wearing yoga clothes opens the door and pokes her head in.

CATHY

Honey, you're meeting with Alice is in 15 minutes.

JOE

What?

Joe grabs the alarm clock on his bedside table. It's an old beat up machine, held together mostly by tape. Joe flips it over to discover that the tape which secures the batteries in place has peeled away and the batteries have rolled out.

JOE (CONT'D)

Argh! Why do we keep these things?

CATHY

Please, your father won't throw it away if he can fix it himself.

Joe jumps from the bed and runs to the door. His insulin pump drags behind him by the chord attached to his body.

INT. HALLWAY - JOE'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Joe rounds the corner to the bathroom. He knocks on the door.

EMILY (O.S.)

What is it?

JOE

Almost done? I need the shower.

EMILY (O.S.)

Just a second.

JOE

Seriously Em, I'm late.

EMILY (O.S.)

Hold on, I'm getting ready for school.

(Beat)

Sorry Justin. So James' moms grounded him with simply no end date and--

JOE

You're on your phone in there!?

EMILY (O.S.)

No.

Joe storms off. He rounds another corner and bolts down a flight of stairs, insulin pump bouncing off the steps as it drags behind him.

INT. KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Joe looks at the clock on the microwave. 7:50. He rolls his eyes and opens the refrigerator and pokes around.

JOE
(yelling)

Is there anything in here that isn't
gluten free bread?

Cathy enters.

CATHY

There's some gluten free waffles.
Try them, you'd never know the
difference.

JOE

Carbs. It's all carbs. I can't just
have carbs. Diabetic and all that.

CATHY

Well if you need something just put
it on the list.

Joe finds a Shopping List hanging on the refrigerator door. He writes "FOOD!" in all caps. He makes his way to exit, but the insulin chord wraps around his ankles which causes him to trip and hit his forehead against the stove.

CUT TO:

INT. FARM BREW COFFEE - LATER

Works by local artist adorn the muraled walls. There's no order to the layout of the mismatched tables and chairs. A giant old fashion coffee bean roaster sits in the corner by the counter.

Joe has a massive bump on his forehead. His un-showered hair sticks out in all directions and his shirt is mis-buttoned. He sits across from ALICE, late 20's and impeccably dressed.

JOE

Again, thanks so much for meeting

with me. It really means a lot.

ALICE

Of course. Glad our moms talked. It sounds like you've had some good experience and we're really hurting for some producers right now.

JOE

Yeah, I did what I could in Chicago. It was time to make the next move though.

ALICE

Well it's cool to have you back east. Where you living these days?

JOE

I was suppose to move in with Stan, you remember Stan. Stan Campbell from High school.

ALICE

Sure.

JOE

Right, um, so he had an opening for me in his apartment, but -- some stuff came up and I'm staying with my family for now.

ALICE

Yeah. Mom told me about that. How are you feeling?

JOE

Oh -- It's day to day. Health is fine. Not really showing any symptoms. It's just the dealing with it that's a pain.

ALICE

Must be tough. You know what you're doing about it yet?

JOE

I'm suppose to take care of it as soon as possible. Planning surgery's the next step I guess. Then there's a couple months of recovery. Maybe radiation.

ALICE

What's recovery gonna be like?

JOE
I don't really know. Bed-rest, low
energy, no strenuous activities.

ALICE
So no work?

JOE
I'm -- not really sure.

ALICE
Well, you'd certainly fit in with
what we're doing, but you know how
it is. It's a long project. You
think you could realistically
commitment to something like that
right now?

(Beat)
Hey, we're always looking for
people. If not now I'm sure there'll
be something later on. You all
right?

JOE
Yeah. No problem. I get it.

ALICE
I'm gonna grab another Chai. You
want anything?

JOE
Latte would be great.

ALICE
Okay.

Joe takes out his wallet.

ALICE (CONT'D)
No, no. I'll get this one.

Alice exits. Joe bangs his head against the table in
frustration. He lets out a yelp and recoils holding his
giant forehead lump in pain. Everyone in earshot turns to
look at him.

JOE
(Addressing the onlookers)
Hey. How's it going? Great coffee
right?

END.

