

UNCLE RON AND THE RYAN EXPRESS - PILOT

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**COLD OPEN**

FADE IN:

EXT. SMALL FISHING BOAT ON POND - DAY

YOUNG RYAN (10) is a gangly anxious kid with black horn-rimmed glasses. UNCLE RON (52), is a Texas rebel type with a tank top, dirty trucker hat and long hair. MERLE, a giant bloodhound, snores. They're fishing, but catching nothing. Uncle Ron pops open a beer with a device on his belt buckle.

SUPER: 2005 - Kilgore, TX

UNCLE RON

Ain't this the life? Two men,  
livin' with nature.

YOUNG RYAN

I think I got one!

Ryan reels in an Oklahoma license plate.

UNCLE RON

Ain't that sump'n'? You caught  
Oklahoma. You'll definitely want to  
throw that one back.

Ryan tosses the plate back into the water.

UNCLE RON (CONT'D)

Yep, Texas is where it's at. God's  
country. Ain't no place better.

YOUNG RYAN

I want to live in New York City.

Uncle Ron nearly chokes on his beer.

UNCLE RON

New York City??!! Have you been  
sniffin' them markers again?

YOUNG RYAN

We studied it in school. They've  
got The Empire State Building, The  
Statue of Liberty, and the best  
pizza in the whole world!

UNCLE RON

Yeah, but they got liberals, no decent barbecue, rats the size of raccoons, and men who dress up in ladies' panty hose.

YOUNG RYAN

(laughing)  
They don't do that.

UNCLE RON

Oh, yes they do. I ain't gonna get into details, but I can tell ya', it ain't as funny as it sounds.

YOUNG RYAN

You could come visit me! We could go to Times Square! And Yankee Stadium!

UNCLE RON

Yankee Stadium? I'd sooner be hog tied, drenched in honey and thrown into a pit of Texas fire ants. Nope, ol' Uncle Ron's never left Texas, and I'm plannin' on keepin' it that way for the duration.

Ryan hangs his head sadly.

YOUNG RYAN

Oh well, it was a dumb idea I guess.

UNCLE RON

Now just hold up a tick. You ain't dumb, by any means. You got A's on yer report card didn't ya?

YOUNG RYAN

One, in creative writing.

UNCLE RON

Well there you go! And if I'm not mistaken, you just turned ten. That means you're gettin' old enough to make yer own decisions.

YOUNG RYAN

I am?

UNCLE RON

Damn skippy. So, if you wanna go live in New York City with a bunch of cracko-s and wacko-s, who am I to say no? Plus, the Yankees play the Rangers ten times a season. I'd come up to see that. The team I love, that won't love me back.

YOUNG RYAN

Really?

UNCLE RON

I always say, sometimes you handle life, sometimes life handles you.  
 (pensive thoughtful pause)  
 You know what else they say, give a man a fish and he eats for a day. Teach a man to fish, and he'll sit in a boat and drink beer all day. Speakin' of which...

Ron pulls a cold beer from the cooler and tosses it to Ryan.

UNCLE RON (CONT'D)

I figure you're ten now. That's legal in my book.

Ryan excitedly guzzles the beer.

UNCLE RON (CONT'D)

Slow down, killer!

Ryan keeps chugging the beer happily. But as he finishes it, his face turns red with panic. He leans over and pukes off the side of the boat. We hear the sound of fish coming to the waters' surface.

UNCLE RON (CONT'D)

Well, I'll be! Look at all these bad boys.

Uncle Ron scoops fish into the boat as fast as he can. Ryan slumps down on the other side.

UNCLE RON (CONT'D)

Who knew barf could be bait!

**END COLD OPEN**

ACT I

FADE IN:

INT. AD AGENCY CONFERENCE ROOM - END OF WORKDAY

SUPER: NEW YORK CITY, 2020

The Empire State Building looms through the window of a conference room. A "DIGITATIONEERS" sign hangs on the wall.

RYAN (26, rock t-shirt, corduroys, same style horn-rimmed glasses he had in the cold open) sits with his creative partner, OSAMA (25, skinny middle-eastern, dressed in tight fitting, fashionable clothes).

A page reading "MutualCo Life Insurance" hangs over a garbled mess of papers pinned to a cork-board, full of scribbles, bizarre sketches, and confusing marketing jargon. They stare at it, hoping for answers. Outside, other creatives are gathered around a table, enjoying end-of-the-week beers.

RYAN

Thanks, Citibank. Yes, I am aware that my rent check bounced again.

OSAMA

A little focus? We need some good ideas pronto, or your check's going to bounce a few more times.

RYAN

How come they're all drinking beers, and we're in here?

OSAMA

Because we work for Razor, and he needs fresh, exciting new MutualCo ideas he can take credit for.

RYAN

Ugh. How do we make exciting ads for the most boring thing on Earth?

OSAMA

He said to try something with monkeys. He likes monkeys, remember?

Osama gestures at a framed poster on the wall of a really bizarre Q-tips ad dancing Orangutan doctors.

RYAN

Ugh. Not exactly what I had in mind when Apple's nineteen eighty-four ad inspired me to get in this business.

OSAMA

I hate to tell you this, but the people of Walmart out there don't want Orwellian references in their ads. They want talking raccoons, dumb stuff. Look at Geico.

Ryan chuckles to himself, possibly remembering Uncle Ron's comment about rats the size of raccoons.

OSAMA (CONT'D)

Look, pooh-pooh Razor's monkeys all you want. But he won two Titaniums for that campaign.

Enter RAZOR (45), a man fighting off middle-age, with a fedora, a cheesy striped shirt, and high-tech glasses. He brandishes a shiny new Titanium Award trophy.

RAZOR

Three Titaniums, my young Padawans.

RYAN

Razor. Didn't know you were here.

RAZOR

I'd like to thank the academy, and all the little people. You two marketing pioneers of the future crack MutualCo yet?

Razor peruses their MutualCo scribblings, looking concerned.

RYAN

Almost. We'll have some ads soon.

RAZOR

Ads? That's your problem right there. We don't make ads. We make multi-touchpoint integrated bacterial experiences.

OSAMA

I think you mean viral.

RAZOR

Whatever. The point is, you gotta keep pushing the work up!

(MORE)

RAZOR (CONT'D)

Crank it up. Vroom. Like a motorcycle. Sons of Anarchy. Anarchy in the UK. Johnny Rotten. Johnny Utah. Point Break. Swayze-esque!

RYAN

Swayze. Life insurance. Right.

OSAMA

What's a Swayze?

RAZOR

Keep after it. Remember, Matthews wants to see ideas Monday, 8AM.

OSAMA

A.M.? As in morning?

RAZOR

Yep. And you'd better be ready to blow her mind, or someone's getting fired. And it won't be the guy with three Titaniums.

Razor struts out, pausing to give one last tip.

RAZOR (CONT'D)

If you get stuck, do something with monkeys. People love monkeys.

RYAN

Think it's ever occurred to him that "put a monkey in it" isn't the answer to every problem?

OSAMA

It is when your father's the Titanium Jury President.

Ryan's phone rings. But Ryan declines the call.

RYAN

Weird. I haven't talked to my uncle in a decade, and he's called twice today. I hope no one died.

OSAMA

Think he's got any MutualCo ideas?

RYAN

Not unless they involve drinking yourself into a stupor and spending the night in a Mexican jail.

Osama puts on some rubber Star Trek Vulcan ears from his bag.

OSAMA

Speaking of jail, I'm outtie. I gotta rest up for the big protest tomorrow. I'm anticipating multiple incarcerations, including por moi.

RYAN

Another protest? What's wrong with the world this week?

OSAMA

Trump called William Shatner a fat loser on Twitter. The Gay Trekkies are holding a sit-in at The Cock until he apologizes.

RYAN

The Cock? Subtle name.

OSAMA

Subtlety has never been our forté. Hey! You should come!

RYAN

I hate Star Trek and I'm not gay.

OSAMA

I believe one of those statements.

RYAN

Wait. If you're uhh, Cock-ing, all weekend, when are we gonna do MutualCo ideas?

OSAMA

We've been over this. You're the writer, I'm the art director. You do the ideas. I do the pictures.

Osama puts a forked hand on Ryan's face before heading out.

OSAMA (CONT'D)

Live long and prosper. I'm sure you'll come up with something.

Ryan sits until he gets a text from "Eve," then hurries out.

INT. SLEEK NEW YORK GASTRONOMIQUE RESTAURANT - EVENING

EVE (25), waits impatiently at a table for two. She's a fashionable black woman, dressed for a night out. Ryan rushes in, ragged, out of breath, in his work clothes.

EVE

Thank God. Do you know how hard it is to get tasting menu reservations here? And I had to pre-pay.

RYAN

Sorry, Razor kept us late again.

EVE

Razor, is he the guy with the hat?

RYAN

His real name is actually Ralph, and he only wears the hat to cover the botched hair plugs.

Ryan's phone buzzes again and Eve snatches it to read.

RYAN (CONT'D)

Speak of the devil.

EVE

Gimme that. Explore monkeys as a metaphor for the dehumanization of man in a digital meta-culture. What does that even mean?

Ryan shrugs. His phone buzzes again. He snatches it back.

RYAN

Now he wants us to probe tertiary subtexts of cultural appropriation of Indians. Think he means Native Americans or people from India?

CINDY (25), a beautiful hip waitress, arrives with Course #1.

CINDY

Course one, steamed whelk nacho with aged goat foam and beaver oil.

RYAN

Beaver oil?

EVE

I'm sure it's delicious. Now can we talk about something besides work?

RYAN

What do you want to talk about?

EVE

What do YOU want to talk about?

Ryan is awkwardly, rudely silent. He can't think of anything.

EVE (CONT'D)

Hello? Seriously, are you OK?

RYAN

OK? Let's see. I work an entry level job for less than minimum wage. I sleep in a La-Z-Boy I found on the curb. I live on coffee, P.B.R. Tall Boys and pretzel bites from the office. I just bounced my rent check for the fourth straight month. And the only discernible asset I have is my MetroCard.

Cindy brings Course #2.

CINDY

Course two. Licorice infused rabbit pancreas, with a side of praise.

RYAN

I'm sorry? A side of--

CINDY

--You both look beautiful, in the prime of your lives. Well done.

Cindy struts off. Ryan still doesn't understand.

EVE

Ryan, something's off with you. I mean, we haven't had sex in months.

RYAN

Can you tell the entire restaurant?

EVE

I love you Ryan. I just want to know what's wrong. Can I help?

RYAN

I don't know. I just, I can't figure this place out.

A waiter brings out a huge contraption with lots of tubes and dials to the next table, like something from a science lab.

He puts some strange ingredients in it, and it spits out logs of congealed food onto the patrons plates. They applaud.

EVE

This place? Yeah, it's a bit much.

RYAN

No, the city, the job. I just can't figure out what these people want.

EVE

These people are transplants too. They don't know anything you don't.

RYAN

Then why am I doing everything I'm supposed to, and getting nowhere?

Cindy comes over and sprinkles silvery dust onto their heads.

CINDY

Course four. Platinum dust mizzle.

EVE

I think the key is, stop trying to figure out what you're supposed to do, and do what you believe in.

RYAN

Gee. Is that Brené Brown? Or Tony Robbins?

EVE

Touché. But this city isn't about some formula. Why'd you move here in the first place? To do what somebody else wants?

RYAN

All I know is, I gotta figure out what Razor wants, or I'm gonna end up right back in Kilgore.

Ryan's phone beeps again. He stares at it, oblivious to Eve.

RYAN (CONT'D)

For the love of all that is holy!

EVE

Hey Ryan, how about we have a a kinky sex orgy with our waitress.

RYAN

Now he wants fired up! Fire in the sky! Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds! Diamondback snake! Whitesnake! Here I go again on my own! Whitesnake?

EVE

(getting up to leave)  
I can't do this.

RYAN

Wait, why? Where are you going?

EVE

Don't know. I just know I can't be around you when you're like this.

RYAN

Look. I'm sorry. I'll turn my phone off. We can do anything you want. What do you want to do?

EVE

I want you to do some thinking about the man you want to be. And then, start being that man.

Eve stomps out. Ryan stands up to yell after her.

RYAN

Yeah? I want YOU to be a man too!

Everyone glares at Ryan, except a young WAITER, who gives Ryan a flirty look. Cindy arrives with their next course.

CINDY

Would you like a to-go box for your crab and stork-fat rhubarb frites?

INT. RYAN'S BROOKLYN APARTMENT - NIGHT

Ryan sits in his apartment with a notebook, trying to think of MutualCo ideas. He's distracted by a photo on his wall of his Dad, COL. MIKE MULLEN (28), posing at a ballgame with famed pitcher NOLAN RYAN. Next to that in the frame is his father's Congressional Medal of Honor. He snaps out of it.

RYAN

Gotta focus. Insurance. Monkeys.

BEGIN DAYDREAM SEQUENCE

EXT. SURREAL BEACH SCENE - LATE AFTERNOON

A voluptuous BIKINI MODEL (20) and MALE STRIPPER (20) strut toward camera, brandishing printed insurance policies.

BIKINI MODEL

Wanna know a secret? Soon, you'll be deader than Julius Caesar.

MALE STRIPPER

Oh yeah. A stinking, rotten, worm-infested corpse.

BIKINI MODEL

But with MutualCo Life Insurance, the cold blackness of death can be as hot and steamy as you want.

MALE STRIPPER

Tell me, is there anything sexier than life insurance?

An ORANGUTAN DOCTOR enters for no particular reason, and throws a bucket of cold water on the models.

MALE STRIPPER (CONT'D)

Oooh! I need a rider on my policy.

BIKINI MODEL

I'm feeling synergy across multiple touchpoints.

The bikini model and male stripper embrace and make out.

END DAYDREAM SEQUENCE.

INT. RYAN'S BROOKLYN APARTMENT - THE NEXT MORNING

Ryan has fallen asleep on the couch and slept all night. An insistent loud knocking at the door wakes him.

RYAN

Sweet Jesus. Coming!

Ryan opens the door to find UNCLE RON (68), dressed in a Johnny Cash t-shirt, black jeans and cowboy hat with a long ponytail. He's with GEORGE JONES, a huge bloodhound.

UNCLE RON

Nolan! Your troubles are over.  
Uncle Ron es en tu casa!

**END ACT I**

**ACT II**

INT. RYAN'S BROOKLYN APARTMENT - MORNING

Ryan stands in his doorway, too surprised to speak at the sight of Uncle Ron. Uncle Ron bear hugs Ryan, then George Jones hops up and slobbers all over him.

RYAN

Nobody calls me Nolan anymore. I go by Ryan now. This can't be Merle?

UNCLE RON

Naw, yer ol' buddy Merle kicked it a few years back. This slobberpuss here is his prodigy, George Jones. Brother to Waylon, Dolly and Hank. Ain't ya gonna invite me in?

RYAN

Of course, sorry. I'm just a little surprised.

UNCLE RON

By how young I look? Yeah, this lady out front gave me some samples of moisturizing cream. It's hydrogenating my pores.

George Jones sniffs everything in the tiny apartment.

RYAN

Uncle Ron, what on Earth are you doing here?

UNCLE RON

Do I need a reason to visit my only nephew?

RYAN

Considering I haven't seen you in a decade? Yeah, you do. How'd you even find me?

UNCLE RON

I'm part Choctaw, remember? A natural born tracker.

RYAN

Where are you staying?

UNCLE RON

I figured I'd bunk up with you for a spell, see where life takes me.

RYAN

Whoa, whoa. That is not gonna work.

UNCLE RON

Gee, it's good to see you too, Nolan!

RYAN

It's Ryan. And it's just, I don't even have a couch.

UNCLE RON

Floor works for me. After 18 months at Ramsey Correctional, I can nod off pretty much anywhere.

RYAN

You can stay tonight I guess, but--

UNCLE RON

--It's settled then. George Jones, Unpack!

George Jones rips open Uncle Ron's pack and spreads his stuff around the apartment. Ryan chases, picking up after him. Uncle Ron opens a curtain, revealing a view of a brick wall.

UNCLE RON (CONT'D)

Yep, like I always said. New York is where it's at. Thought it'd be bigger somehow though.

RYAN

Wait. What did you say?

UNCLE RON

New York City is where it's at.

RYAN

No no no. You always said that you'd never leave Texas, and that New York is nothing but, what was it you used to say, lib-tards in leotards.

UNCLE RON

A man can change his mind can't he? Besides, I done every damn thing there is to do in Texas. Saw the Alamo. Met Jerry Jones.

RYAN  
I get it, but New York City?

UNCLE RON  
What did I always say was my motto?

RYAN  
I've always been crazy and it's kept me from goin' insane. Waylon Jennings.

UNCLE RON  
Damn straight. And what's crazier than yer Uncle Ron movin' to New York City?

RYAN  
Nothing. Nothing is crazier than that.

Uncle Ron realizes Ryan isn't buying what he's selling. He takes on a more serious tone.

UNCLE RON  
Now look here. I know I'm probably 'bout as welcome as a skunk at a lawn party showin' up here after all this time.

RYAN  
It's not that. It's just--

UNCLE RON  
--And I know we ain't been close for a long spell, and it's my fault. I messed things up royally. I was livin' at the bottom of a bottle for damn near twenty years, and I wasn't there for ya like I shoulda been. But now? I've been stone sober for two years'n'change.

Uncle Ron pulls out his two-year A.A. Medallion.

UNCLE RON (CONT'D)  
And I don't aim to go back. I wanna do things right from here on out. Be a real uncle to you. Pass along what I know.

RYAN  
Like what? You already taught me how to fish and hunt.

UNCLE RON

Naw, not that, I mean real life stuff, to help you to not make such a mess of things like I did. Look, I never told you this. But just before yer pop left for his last tour fighting them turban toters--

RYAN

--Ugh. Don't call them that, please.

UNCLE RON

--he made me promise I'd teach you about bein' a man. It's time I kept that promise.

RYAN

Look. Uncle Ron. It's great to see you and it's OK to stay here for a day or two, but that's gotta be it. I can't pay my rent, or my student loans as it is. Hell, I'll probably have to move in with you back in Kilgore before long anyhow.

UNCLE RON

Kilgore? Aww, hell naw. Ain't nothing left in Kilgore. The Rangerettes even stopped comin'.

RYAN

What do you propose to do about it?

Uncle Ron thinks hard for a moment, then turns back to Ryan.

UNCLE RON

I can help you pay yer rent, and those loans.

RYAN

Ha. With what?

UNCLE RON

I'll figure somethin' out. I could drive one-a-them yellow cabs like them Alladin fellas do.

RYAN

I'm sorry, did you say Alladin?

UNCLE RON

Listen. I'll make it happen some way, somehow.

(MORE)

UNCLE RON (CONT'D)  
We'll rustle up some greenbacks  
together. How much you in the hole  
for, anyway?

RYAN  
Ninety.

UNCLE RON  
Ninety bucks? Heck, gimme a fresh  
deck of Hoyles and I'll have twice  
that faster than greased lightnin'.

RYAN  
Ninety thousand, Uncle Ron.

UNCLE RON  
Sweet Loretta! Did that diploma  
come with free lifetime groin  
massages from Loni Anderson?

RYAN  
I'm sorry, but it's not gonna work.

Ryan sees a look of genuine pain and regret from Uncle Ron.

RYAN (CONT'D)  
Look, it's like I said. You can  
crash on my floor for a few days, a  
week or two, max. But that's it.

Uncle Ron lets out a Rebel Yell. George Jones hops up onto  
Ryan knocking him back onto his soft chair.

UNCLE RON  
Yessiree! It's settled then.  
Operation Git Nolan's Britches  
Untangled, commence! Say, did I  
ever tell you how you got your  
name? It was the summer of 1993.  
Robin Ventura at the plate. Ol'  
Noley throws him one-a-them  
patented hundred mile an hour  
heaters--

DISSOLVE TO:

BEGIN MONTAGE

## A) INT. TAXICAB IN BROOKLYN - AFTERNOON

Ryan, Uncle Ron and George Jones ride through Brooklyn. Uncle Ron sits in the front with a massive coffee, jacked up on caffeine, talking manically to the stone-faced cabbie.

## B) EXT. SEX SHOP STOREFRONT - AFTERNOON

Uncle Ron peers into the storefront of a sex shop, darts in, then darts back out with a black leather vest to match his outfit.

## C) INT. SUSHI RESTAURANT - AFTERNOON

Uncle Ron and Ryan sit at the bar, with George Jones looking through the window from the sidewalk. Uncle Ron looks with horror at his sashimi, then cooks a piece over a candle and devours it happily.

## D) INT. SUBWAY CAR - AFTERNOON

Uncle Ron walks up and down the subway car, trying to make friends/shake hands with everyone. No one even looks up.

## E) EXT. TIMES SQUARE - EARLY EVENING

Uncle Ron, George Jones and THE NAKED COWBOY sing/howl a duet. Uncle Ron starts to drop his pants, but Ryan stops him.

## F) INT. TIMES SQUARE SOUVENIR SHOP - EVENING

Uncle Ron tries on a Yankees cap, not happy. Ryan hands him a cowboy hat with Yankees logo on it. Uncle Ron loves it.

## G) EXT. HELL'S KITCHEN SIDEWALK - EVENING

Ryan and Uncle Ron pass NUTMEG (25) and CHARITY (25), two transvestite prostitutes. They make eyes at Uncle Ron, who stops to flirt with them, oblivious. Ryan drags him away.

## H) EXT. CARRIAGE IN CENTRAL PARK - EVENING

Uncle Ron and Ryan ride in the carriage. ENZO (62, old school Italian) drives the carriage with a violin case in the front. They pass the Gay Trekkies rally. Uncle Ron taps Enzo on the shoulder and hands him a \$20 bill.

CUT TO:

Uncle Ron rides the horse from the carriage, galloping the Plaza Hotel at high speed, tipping his hat to some confused UPPER EAST SIDE SOCIALITES outside. Ryan waits in the back of the now horseless carriage for Enzo, who returns with Italian Ices from a nearby STREET VENDOR.

END MONTAGE.

INT. PIZZA JOINT - NIGHT

Ryan and Uncle Ron chill in a typical New York pizza joint. Signed headshots of Al Pacino, Robert DeNiro, James Gandolfini, and for some reason, Johnny Cash adorn the wall near them. MANUEL (45), a smiling Hispanic man in an apron, brings them slices, passing a guitar case nestled just in the back. George Jones devours his slice in one bite.

UNCLE RON

How 'bout that. Italian food served  
by a real Italian. Grazie!

RYAN

He's not, never mind.

UNCLE RON

You alright? I thought you was  
gonna blow yer groceries 'round  
that last corner.

RYAN

Two pepperonis and I'm golden.

UNCLE RON

That's what I like to hear. 'Cuz I  
got big plans for us tonight. Are  
we anywhere near Coyote Ugly?

RYAN

I'm out. I got work to do. Plus, I  
gotta figure out what to do about  
Eve before she breaks up with me.

UNCLE RON

Break up with you? Hogwash. You're  
a tall, dark and Texan man of  
mystery. Hell, I'd date ya if you  
weren't my nephew, and a dude.

RYAN

I probably deserve it. I mean,  
she's my best friend. I love her. I  
just get so preoccupied with work.

UNCLE RON

(looks at Johnny Cash pic)  
You know, there's one other fella  
who had some woman trouble. The Man  
in Black. Know what he did? He  
wrote June a love song that had her  
blubberin' like a baby.

RYAN

I'm afraid Eve isn't gonna want to hear my version of "To June from Johnny." She hates country music.

UNCLE RON

Country or not, it's about showin' what's in yer heart. I ain't seen a woman yet that don't get properly misty after a tearjerkin' ballad.

RYAN

I don't know. I don't think I'd make much of a songwriter.

UNCLE RON

You write them ads, dontcha? Same thing. Besides, I'll help ya. 'Tween the two of us, we can come up with a real heartbreaker of a tune, worthy of Johnny and June.

RYAN

Well, nothing else seems to be working. I gotta try something.

UNCLE RON

It's settled then. Operation Tearjerkin' Ballad commence! But first, have Pudge Rodriguez back there git me one a them BBQ slices.

Uncle Ron grabs a pen and starts scribbling lyrics. Ryan gets up to get them more pizza.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. RYAN'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

Ryan and Uncle Ron stand waiting for a taxi. Ryan looks over the lyrics on the napkin.

RYAN

You know, this isn't half bad.

UNCLE RON

Half bad? Heck, that sucker's ready for the Grand Ol' Opry.

A cab picks up Ryan and George Jones. Uncle Ron stays behind.

RYAN (CONT'D)

Thirty-third and Lex.

UNCLE RON

Thirty-third and Lex. Got it. I'll meet you there. Just need to rustle us up a couple extra ingredients to make sure this dog'll hunt.

RYAN

Wait! What?

The cab screeches away. Uncle Ron waves goodbye with a grin.

EXT. SIDEWALK OUTSIDE EVE'S APARTMENT - LATE NIGHT

Ryan stands with George Jones, looking over his lyrics, when a horse and carriage roars around the corner carrying Uncle Ron, Bert, Manuel the Pizza Guy, Nutmeg and Charity. They stop and hop out, Enzo with a violin, Manuel with his guitar.

UNCLE RON

Got yer backin' band. Turns out Paulie Walnuts here's a regular Charlie Daniels.

RYAN

Right. And what do these two do?

UNCLE RON

Never mind that. Now, you didn't come out here to just pick yer chaps outta yer rear did ya?

(yelling up at window)

Eve! Git' yer buns out here. Nolan's got a tearjerkin' ballad for ya.

Eve pokes her head out. Ryan tries to hide his face.

EVE

Ryan? Why is he calling you Nolan?

UNCLE RON

Naw, not you. We want Ryan's girlfriend, Eve.

RYAN

That is Eve, Uncle Ron.

Uncle Ron looks completely confounded.

UNCLE RON

Wait, are you sayin' Beyonce up there's your girlfriend.

RYAN

Yes, Uncle Ron, she's my girlfriend, and she's black.

UNCLE RON

Well, butter my butt and call me a biscuit. Say, ain't you supposed to say African-American?

RYAN

No, you can say black again now.

UNCLE RON

Oh. Right. And you're supposed to say colored again too, right?

EVE

Did that guy just call me colored?

RYAN

NO! No, he didn't!

UNCLE RON

Oh, I remember now. You say she's a person OF color.

RYAN

No. I mean, yes. Just, let's do this before she goes back in.

The makeshift band plays, with Ryan singing and George Jones howling along. Charity and Nutmeg dance. Neighbors look on.

RYAN (CONT'D)

*Oh Eve/You make me believe/And I perceive/That we can achieve good times together/Cause you're a hottie toddy, with a rockin' body--*

Ryan stops singing and glares at Uncle Ron.

RYAN (CONT'D)

I didn't write that.

UNCLE RON

Just keep goin'.

RYAN

*Eve/The dreams you weave/They make me grieve/To think you'd ever leave*

Ryan fumbles for another napkin. The neighbors applaud.

RYAN (CONT'D)  
Ummm, I guess that's it.

EVE  
Ryan, just come up and we'll talk.

UNCLE RON  
Holy horse apples! It worked!

RYAN  
Wow. OK. Just, umm, wait here?

Ryan heads towards Eve's building. Uncle Ron turns to Charity and Nutmeg, who fawn all over him, kissing him on the cheek.

UNCLE RON  
How's about I give you two ladies  
another Benjamin each and we  
celebrate with a conjugal visit?

Charity and Nutmeg pull off their wigs, whip out badges and guns, and yell in deep male voices.

CHARITY  
NYPD VICE SQUAD! You're under  
arrest. Soliciting sex from an  
undercover officer.

UNCLE RON  
Nolan! It's the pigs! Time ta git!

Uncle Ron gets a crazed PTSD look in his eye, and takes off running.

RYAN  
Oh no.

Nutmeg and Charity give chase, with Ryan close behind. Nutmeg trips on her high heels and eats it on the sidewalk. Charity catches Uncle Ron, and cuffs him. Just as Nutmeg gets up, Ryan round the corner and crashes into her, taking them both down. Nutmeg gets up and cuffs Ryan.

NUTMEG  
And you're under arrest for  
assaulting a police officer.

George Jones leaps up on Nutmeg, licking her face.

**END ACT II**

**ACT III**

INT. JAIL CELL - VERY EARLY MORNING

Ryan and Uncle Ron sit in a cell. A sleepy looking guard pets George Jones just outside the door. The two Vice cops sign some papers and head out, snickering at Uncle Ron. There's a crackhead in the back asleep.

UNCLE RON

I tell ya. I have seen Johnny Law pull some low down tricks in my day, but this is the lowest.

RYAN

I should never have let you stay. I knew this was a bad idea.

UNCLE RON

What're you talkin' about? We're just startin' to have fun.

RYAN

You call sitting in jail with Cracky McGee over there fun?

UNCLE RON

Aww, this ain't so bad. You take things too seriously. Always have, even when you was a little squirt.

RYAN

This feels pretty serious to me.

UNCLE RON

This is paradise compared to cell number nine in Juarez. Plus, didn't you call somebody to get us out?

RYAN

I left Osama a voicemail.

UNCLE RON

Osama? You called a terrorist to bail us out? Which one are you on? Crystal Meth? Bath salts?

RYAN

He's not a terrorist. He's my partner.

UNCLE RON

Partner? This just gets worse and worse. Is there something else you ain't tellin' me?

RYAN

Not life partner, Uncle Ron. Work partner. Work. Dammit, work! Not only am I in jail, but I still don't have ideas for MutualCo, so I'll have getting fired to look forward to, if and when we ever get out of here. I should've never listened to you.

UNCLE RON

Well, yer probably right about that. I always say, listen to your gut. Yer gut ain't stupid.

RYAN

Yeah, well, my gut was stupid enough to move all the way to New York just to get stuck in a jail cell with you.

UNCLE RON

Are you kiddin' me? You're doing great up here. I'm goddamn amazed at what you've done.

RYAN

This is doing great? Really.

UNCLE RON

Damn right. You came up here, to the meanest city in the world, without a penny in yer pocket, no one to lean on, and not a lick of street smarts to call on. And look at ya now. You got yer own place. You got a hot colo-- I mean hot woman of color for a girlfriend. You got a job doing what yer best at. I sure couldn'a done that.

RYAN

That's real nice. But, unless I can come up with a brilliant idea for MutualCo and get out of this jail before eight AM, it's all gonna be over.

Ryan walks across the cell and slumps down, defeated.

UNCLE RON

Maybe you're right. Maybe this is one of them times that ya get thrown off the bull, and ya gotta dust yourself off and hop on a different one. Like I always say, sometimes you handle life, sometimes life handles you.

Ryan perks up as he hears "Sometimes you handle life, sometimes life handles you." His eyes glaze over...

BEGIN DAYDREAM SEQUENCE

EXT. SURREAL TEXAS RANCH SCENE - LATE AFTERNOON

Hall of Fame pitcher Nolan Ryan rides in on a horse, fully dressed in proper cowboy attire, and addresses camera.

NOLAN RYAN

It's like I always say. Sometimes you handle life. Sometimes life handles you. For those times, you need MutualCo insurance.

END DAYDREAM SEQUENCE.

INT. JAIL CELL - VERY EARLY MORNING

RYAN

Sometimes you handle life.  
Sometimes life handles you.

UNCLE RON

Yep. Like I always say.

Ryan springs to his feet. Excited.

RYAN

We gotta get out of here. You still have that Buck Knife of yours?

UNCLE RON

Yep. They didn't do a cavity search.

RYAN

Can you pick that lock with it?

UNCLE RON

Does Dolly Parton sleep on her back?

Ryan moves around to block the guards' view while Uncle Ron picks the lock. But before he can start, Eve shows up.

RYAN

Eve. How'd you know we were here?

EVE

Osama forwarded me your message.

RYAN

Can you bail us out?

EVE

Possibly. But not until you tell me what the hell is going on!

RYAN

What's going on? Well, let's see. This is my Uncle Ron, who came to visit me, I think he actually wants to move in with me, and he told me I should write a song like Johnny Cash, so I did, sort of, but he hit on two tranny hookers, who were actually vice cops, so we got thrown in the clink, and I've got an idea for MutualCo, which is perfect, but it doesn't have Razor's monkeys in it. But screw Razor anyway. But even if I could get out I'll never get it done in time, anyway because my partner is at The Cock protesting Trump calling William Shatner a fat douche on Twitter.

EVE

Tranny is an offensive term.

UNCLE RON

Yep, and you can't say gimp no more either. You're supposed to say hand-i-capable.

RYAN

Can you please get us out of here?

EVE

I shouldn't after they way you've been treating me lately. That stunt of yours last night? You know I hate country music.

UNCLE RON  
 Now listen here, Diana Ross,  
 country music is the--

Ryan reaches over and covers Uncle Ron's mouth

EVE  
 But, you did look cute down there  
 singing. And at least you were  
 doing something, something that  
 only you could've done. So, even  
 though the song you wrote was  
 pretty weak --

UNCLE RON  
 --Hey! I wrote half of it.

EVE  
 --I think maybe the fact that you  
 wrote it, means that you're finally  
 discovering the power of your  
 vulnerability.

RYAN  
 Brené Brown?

EVE  
 Yes. And I love her. So, unless you  
 wanna stay in here. You better just  
 nod your head and say, only by  
 exploring the darkness will I  
 discover the infinite power of my  
 light.

RYAN  
 OK, but after you bail us out.

Eve motions to the OFFICER who's been standing guard. He comes over to unlock the cell door, and glares at Uncle Ron, who guiltily stops trying to pick the lock with his knife.

The officer leads Ryan and Uncle Ron out, just as some POLICE OFFICERS herd a whole bunch of GAY TREKKIES in, after arresting them at their protest rally.

OSAMA  
 The Federation will be avenged!

Osama and Eve see each other.

OSAMA (CONT'D)  
 Eve! You like Star Trek right?

Osama and Ryan see each other.

OSAMA (CONT'D)  
 Ryan! How's the MutualCo stuff?

RYAN  
 (yelling to Eve)  
 Eve! Can you get him--

EVE  
 Already on it.

Eve motions to the officer to bail Osama out as well.

CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE CONFERENCE ROOM. - EARLY MORNING

Ryan and Osama present to Razor and MATTHEWS (40), a sharply dressed, very intense female ad executive.

RYAN  
 And it reads, sometimes you handle  
 life, sometimes life handles you.

Osama unveils a gorgeous sketch of their MutualCo ad, featuring their headline over a cowboy on his horse. Razor looks miffed.

RAZOR  
 I don't know what to say. It's--

MATTHEWS  
 --Perfect. Spot on. It's just what  
 MutualCo needs. The line, the  
 cowboy, it's brilliant.

RAZOR  
 Perhaps, but wouldn't something  
 humorous with say, monkeys, do a  
 better job capitalizing on today's  
 meta-cultural hyper-trends?

MATTHEWS  
 We're not selling Q-tips here. This  
 is life insurance. It's not funny.  
 At any rate, I trust my gut. And my  
 gut says MutualCo will love this.  
 Nicely done, Ralph.

She pats Razor on the back, and heads out. But, she stops before leaving to say something to Ryan first.

MATTHEWS (CONT'D)  
 Remind me your name again?

RYAN

Ryan. Nolan Ryan Mullen.

MATTHEWS

Named for The Ryan Express I take it? I'm from just outside Houston originally. Saw one of his no-hitters. Best heater ever.

Matthews ignores Razor and heads out, smiling. Razor calls meekly after her.

RAZOR

How about a monkey in a cowboy hat?

OSAMA

The Ryan Express? I didn't know they had trains in Texas.

RAZOR

Well, that went well. I guess. A little crazy with the last-second campaign though.

RYAN

Well, I've always been crazy and it's kept me from going insane.

Ryan grins. Razor looks at him with complete confusion.

RAZOR

Whatever. Take the rest of the day off. I'll take care of revisions. I still not sure it's truly achieved hyper-cultural fulcrum.

The team exits. Ryan collapses in a chair, relieved.

OSAMA

I knew you'd come up with something stupendous. You always do. Now I've got some fellow gay Romulans to go bail out.

Osama gives him a quick hug, then exits. Ryan takes a last look at the ad, smiles, then heads out.

**END OF ACT III**

**TAG**

EXT. FISHING BOAT - LATE AFTERNOON

Ryan and Uncle Ron sit in a boat with George Jones, not catching anything. Uncle Ron pulls an ancient mini boom box from his bag and turns on some Merle Haggard.

UNCLE RON

So yer pitch went good. Guess that old sometimes you handle life sayin' handled life for ya. Heh.

RYAN

Yep, everybody liked it. Except Razor, of course.

UNCLE RON

I used to know a fella named Razor. He do any time in Travis County?

RYAN

I suppose it's possible.

UNCLE RON

Ain't this the life? Two men out on the water.

Uncle Ron gets a bite and reels it in. George Jones barks.

UNCLE RON (CONT'D)

Ooh! Feels like a real lunker!

Uncle Ron reels in a New Jersey license plate. Cut wide to reveal that they're fishing in what is perhaps the most unscenic fishing hole on the planet, The Gowanus Canal.

RYAN

Ain't that sump'n'. You caught New Jersey. You'll definitely wanna throw that one back.

UNCLE RON

Next time, we're gettin' live bait.

RYAN

Don't worry. Nobody's gonna eat anything we catch today anyhow.

UNCLE RON

Why the hell not?

Ryan gestures to the water. A syringe and a condom float by.

RYAN

Look, do you really think you could help me? With rent and my loans?

UNCLE RON

I'm through making you promises I can't keep. But I promise that I can damn well try.

RYAN

I could use the help, just for a month or two, 'til I get caught up. Would you like that? Stay on a bit?

UNCLE RON

I reckon I would. But I ain't callin' you Ryan anymore. Nolan was good enough for The Ryan Express, and it's good enough for you.

RYAN

The Ryan Express. That's actually got a nice ring to it.

UNCLE RON

So what are we doin' tonight? I got a hankerin' for some more sushi!

RYAN

Whoa! I was thinkin' we should take it a little easy for a day or two.

UNCLE RON

Take it easy? Apologies to Glenn Frey, but I ain't got time to take it easy. Too much to do!

Ron pulls out a scribbled list, worrying Ryan.

UNCLE RON (CONT'D)

Enter that big hot dog eatin' contest, try one of them cronuts, see The Lion King on Broadway, see one a them peep shows, French Kiss a real French lady, try Chinese food, meet a live Jewish person, get my nipple pierced...

FADE OUT.

**END OF EPISODE**