

LOWERING THE BAR - "PILOT"

ACT ONE

EXT. AIRPORT ARRIVALS - DAY

(SCOTT, MIKE, TOMMY, ATTRACTIVE GIRLS, SUIT GUY)

The terminal is busy with people coming and going. Meet our heroes: SCOTT (21, Caucasian, thin, stylish), MIKE (22, black, athletic, sporty-but-smart) and TOMMY (21, white, slightly overweight, sports-fan-esque) have just arrived, luggage in tow. Tommy is sweating profusely from the heat.

TOMMY

What the hell did I agree to home here for? I could've been banging hot Asian chicks back in New York right now.

MIKE

Tommy, you're *in* Asia right now.

TOMMY

I know, but what's more fun - take out or home delivery?

Scott pulls out a cellphone and starts dialling.

MIKE

What're you doing?

SCOTT

Calling my uncle, he was supposed to meet us.

He puts the phone to his ear. In the background, almost inaudibly, a cellphone RINGS. Nobody acknowledges it.

SCOTT (CONT'D)

No answer. We'd better get a cab.

They grab their luggage and start walking towards the cab stand. A group of ATTRACTIVE GIRLS walk past, one of whom is fishing in her purse for something. Tommy and Mike both check them out.

TOMMY

Hey Sweetheart, I got what you're searching for--  
(grabs his crotch)  
--right here.

ATTRACTIVE GIRL #1

If I was looking for something that small, I'd never find it.

The boys grab Tommy, who's clearly hurt by this.

MIKE

Man, the girls here are smoking hot.

Scott's got his eyes on SUIT GUY (mid-20s, good-looking, sharply dressed) at the coffee cart. They lock eyes, Suit Guy smiles. Scott turns quickly away - he doesn't want the guys to see him - and plays along.

SCOTT

Yeah. Really something.

(beat)

C'mon guys, let's just get to the bar.  
I promise you, you're gonna love it.  
It's the hottest place in town!

TOMMY

There better be girls there.

SCOTT

I guarantee it. But we gotta hurry,  
there's a journalist coming to review  
the place and I want to be there to  
meet him.

A cab pulls up and they start piling luggage in. The attractive girls come running.

ATTRACTIVE GIRL #2

Going into the city?

ATTRACTIVE GIRL #1

Can we share?

TOMMY

So now you need Tommy, huh? Take a  
hike, sweetheart.

The guys laugh and pile into the cab.

INT. THE BAR - DAY

(SCOTT, MIKE, TOMMY, EXTRAS)

The bar is small, run-down and packed full of older, homeless-looking guys. There's nobody behind the bar and everyone's drinking water. An old TV in the corner of the room is showing the news in Tagalog. A couple of guys are playing cards, but they obviously don't have a full deck. This is the scene the boys find when they walk in.

TOMMY

This is the hottest place in town?

MIKE

Man, check out the girls up in here.  
It's like Studio 54.

TOMMY

Yeah, studio aged-54.

SCOTT  
Okay, the place isn't like I  
remembered it, but we can fix it up.

MIKE  
Fix it up, Scott? I forgot to pack my  
bulldozer.

SCOTT  
Don't be so negative.

Scott goes behind the bar and takes a look out back.

SCOTT (O.C.) (CONT'D)  
Uncle Datu?

He comes back to the main bar and finds a note behind it.

SCOTT (CONT'D)  
(reading)  
"Scotty, left for the airport early to  
miss rush hour. The keys to the  
apartment are in the register, make  
yourselves at home and have fun.  
Datu."  
(beat, no longer reading)  
We've got the apartment upstairs,  
apparently.

MIKE  
Really? Is it as luxurious as the bar?  
Tommy, check it out, we're gonna be  
living at The Ritz!

INT. THE APARTMENT - DAY  
(SCOTT, MIKE, TOMMY)

The apartment isn't just luxurious, it's ridiculous. Huge,  
stylishly-decorated and modern with an incredible view. Scott  
opens the door and leads them in. Tommy and Mike drop their  
bags simultaneously, open-mouthed.

MIKE  
Holy sh--

SCOTT  
(interrupting)  
Not so funny now, are we Mikey?

MIKE  
Would you look at this place?

TOMMY  
It's like being on Cribs, man.

Scott starts for the kitchen. Tommy finds a hairbrush and  
examines it. Mike finds a purse.

Tommy finds some lacy underwear and sniffs it gleefully.  
Scott returns, carrying a note.

SCOTT

Just found a this on the refrigerator.  
My cousin's staying here for the  
summer.

He sees Tommy has her underwear in his hand and snatches it  
from him, throwing it to one side.

TOMMY

Is she hot?

MIKE

Why do you care? So long as she's got  
a pulse, a white cane and no seeing  
eye dog to protect her, you're all  
set.

SCOTT

C'mon guys, that's my cousin you're  
talking about.

TOMMY

You didn't answer the question - is  
she hot?

Mike punches him in the arm.

TOMMY (CONT'D)

Ah!

SCOTT

Last time I saw her she was a fat kid  
with acne and braces.

TOMMY

Damn. Just my luck.

SCOTT

Let's just get our things into our  
rooms and we'll get back downstairs,  
okay? I've got the master, you guys  
figure yourselves out.

They break up. Scott goes into--

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

(SCOTT)

And sees his cousin has already taken it over. Her things are  
everywhere, clothes especially. It looks like The Gap after a  
tornado.

INT. MIKE'S ROOM - DAY

(MIKE)

Mike's picked a tidy double with a great view, a flat-screen and a lot of space.

MIKE

Jackpot.

He dumps his bags on the bed.

INT. TOMMY'S ROOM - DAY

(TOMMY)

Tommy's got a double, too. He's particularly taken by the full length mirror. He tosses his bags, pulls out a comb, looks in the mirror and starts to comb his hair before pulling a 'Fonzie' shrug.

INT. SCOTT'S ROOM - DAY

(SCOTT, MIKE, TOMMY)

Scott takes the last room available. A cramped, ordinary single.

SCOTT

Guess this'll have to do.

He puts his bag on the bed and begins to unpack methodically. The guys join him.

MIKE

Check out the Presidential Suite.

TOMMY

A single bed? Old-school. The chicks are gonna love it, Scotty!

SCOTT

It's a bed, Tommy. It's for sleeping in. I'm here to work, remember?

TOMMY

Good for you, man. I'll try not to keep you awake all night, okay?

Scott checks his watch.

SCOTT

We've got to get back to the bar. The writer's gonna be here soon.

MIKE

Yeah, it'd be a real tragedy if you weren't there to tell them all about the party capital of the Philippines, wouldn't it, Scotty?

INT. THE BAR - DAY

(SCOTT, MIKE, TOMMY, RILEY, BARFLY)

Nobody has moved in the bar, the TV is still playing in the background and the guys are still playing cards. The guys join the scene from the back.

MIKE

Looks like we missed a whole pile of fun.

SCOTT

Watch the bar for a minute, I'm just going to check things out in the office.

MIKE

'Watch the bar'? What, in case someone steals something? What are they going to steal, water?

SCOTT

Just watch the bar, okay? I want someone to be here when that journalist arrives.

TOMMY

What do you want us to do when they get here?

SCOTT

Keep them talking. If you see something broken, hide it. If you can't hide it, keep them away from it. I'll be back as soon as I can.

Scott heads back to the office.

TOMMY

So, how about we make this summer interesting?

MIKE

Interesting?

TOMMY

A little bet, just me and you.

MIKE

I'm listening.

TOMMY

I got a thousand bucks that says I can get more girls this summer than you can.

MIKE

A thousand bucks?

TOMMY

Too rich for ya?

MIKE

No, I just can't believe that you'd be dumb enough to make that bet.

TOMMY

Does that mean you're in?

MIKE

We lived together for four years in college, Tommy, and I don't remember you ever getting laid.

TOMMY

Sure I did...

MIKE

Hookers don't count.

TOMMY

They weren't all hookers.

MIKE

If that's your story.

(beat)

Okay, you're on. I'm going to check the place out. Try not to break anything or upset anybody, okay?

Mike goes to 'check the place out' and starts changing channels on the TV looking for sports, much to the locals annoyance. A BARFLY comes to the bar.

BARFLY

(in Tagalog)

Can I have more water please?

TOMMY

What?

BARFLY

(in Tagalog)

Water, please?

TOMMY

I don't speak Asian, sir.

The barfly and Tommy start a little improv mime game - the barfly asking for water, Tommy is in 'no comprende' mode until--

RILEY (O.C.)

He wants a glass of water.

Tommy turns to see RILEY, 20. She's dressed in a bikini/sarong combo and carrying a notepad and pen, as well as a copy of "Tiny Sunbirds, Far Away." This girl is so hot she could make Stevie Wonder's jaw drop, so she definitely has Tommy's attention. He hands the guy some water as Mike reappears.

MIKE

(to Riley)

Hi there, we've been expecting you.

RILEY

I hope so.

MIKE

C'mon, let me show you around.

TOMMY

(correcting him)

Let *us* show you around.

Riley's clearly confused but--

RILEY

Okay.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

(SCOTT)

The office is obscenely tidy, with everything on the desk neatly filed, a well-organized calendar, and nothing out of the ordinary. Scott flicks on a light, rifles through some brochures in a file on the desk, not finding anything of interest. He tries the drawers of the desk and finds all but one locked. In the open draw he finds nothing but stationary and some recent candid-style pictures of Riley enjoying a day at the beach.

SCOTT

Dirty old perv.

He puts the picture back in the drawer and closes it.

INT. THE BAR - DAY

(TOMMY, MIKE, RILEY)

The tour begins at the bar.

TOMMY

So, this is the bar. Where all the drinks come from.

RILEY

Right.

TOMMY

Can I get you a drink?



Tommy pulls out a glass and puts it under the tap. He's about to pull when Mike grabs his arm - causing him to drop the glass - and pulls him close.

MIKE  
 (under his breath)  
 We don't have any drink, dumbass.  
 (to Riley)  
 If you take a look over there, you'll notice that we've got a TV.

He leads her towards the TV, away from Tommy.

MIKE (CONT'D)  
 (changing channels rapidly)  
 I don't think we can get ESPN, but it looks like we can get a whole bunch of news channels I can't understand.

Tommy grabs Riley by the arm and leads her over to the wall, which has a 'Big Mouth Billy Bass' mounted on it.

TOMMY  
 But if you don't like TV, we've also got fun stuff like this.

He pushes the button and dances along goofily. Mike rips it off the wall and throws it down hard, breaking it.

RILEY  
 (taken aback)  
 Guys, this has been fun but...

MIKE  
 I get it, you probably want something more interesting for your article.

RILEY  
 Article?  
 (half beat)  
 Oh, sure.

MIKE  
 If you look over there--  
 (pointing towards the window)  
 You'll see the beach--

TOMMY  
 And the ocean. The *Atlantic* ocean.

RILEY  
 You know, I think I've seen enough.

MIKE  
 Really? There's more!

RILEY  
 Really.

She walks casually towards the bar--

MIKE  
 (to Tommy)  
 That's the Pacific, you moron!

TOMMY  
 Not where I come from.

--rounds it--

MIKE  
 Uh, miss, where are you going?

--she ignores him, continuing into--

INT. OFFICE - DAY  
 (SCOTT, TOMMY, MIKE, RILEY)

Where Scott is trying to jimmy open the drawers to the desk.

RILEY  
 For the record, your friends are  
 idiots.

He looks up, take a second to recognize the girl from the  
 photograph.

SCOTT  
 Riley?

RILEY  
 Good guess.

She reaches up and feels along the door frame until she finds  
 a key.

RILEY (CONT'D)  
 Try this?

She throws it to him.

SCOTT  
 Thanks.

Tommy and Mike appear.

MIKE  
 Sorry Scotty, we tried to stop her--

SCOTT  
 What the hell are you talking about?

TOMMY  
 We showed her around, like you said--

MIKE

--she said she had everything she needed and came back here.

SCOTT

Guys, I want you to meet my cousin, Riley.

TOMMY

The fat chick with acne and braces?

RILEY

What?

(to Scott)

You told them that?

SCOTT

I said-- you were-- you've changed. You've, uh, grown up.

She SLAPS him.

RILEY

You asshole!

Riley storms out of the room and STOMPS up the stairs.

SCOTT

(after her)

I'm sorry!

INT. THE APARTMENT - LATER

(SCOTT, RILEY)

Scott enters the apartment carrying a six pack and finds Riley lying on the couch wrapped in a robe. Her eyes are red, she's obviously been crying. He lifts her legs and sits where they were, putting them back across his lap.

SCOTT

I'm sorry, I guess I just remembered you as a nine-year-old, huh?

He opens a beer and offers it to her. She looks at him questioningly and takes it.

SCOTT (CONT'D)

(explaining)

I sent the boys on a beer run.

RILEY

Where are they?

SCOTT

Watching the bar. They shouldn't be able to get into too much trouble.

(half beat)

Are you okay?

RILEY

Yeah, I just tried to forget about those days. Too many bad memories.

SCOTT

Well, y'know, I'm sorry. I shouldn't have told the guys that.

RILEY

It's okay, really. I get attention all the time and I'm used to it... it helps me hide the fat kid with braces that I tired to forget about. I mean, she's still there, but I love that nobody sees her anymore.

(beat)

Talking of hiding things, do the guys know you're gay?

SCOTT

Gay? What makes you say that?

RILEY

You're the first guy I've had a conversation with in five years who wasn't staring at my chest.

SCOTT

You're my cousin!

RILEY

It doesn't stop my father.

SCOTT

That's kind of creepy.

RILEY

Tell me about it. So when are you going to tell them?

SCOTT

I will. It's just, y'know, complicated.

RILEY

I get it. I'm hiding the fat kid, you're hiding the gay guy. Difference is that I can change and learn to live with my past. You need to learn to live with yourself.

SCOTT

If only things were that simple.

RILEY

They are once you stop caring what others think.

SCOTT

Just don't tell them, okay? I'll get to it.

RILEY

Your secret is safe with me. Besides, at least that way we don't have to compete for the hot guys.

SCOTT

What makes you so sure that it'd be a competition?

She hits him with a cushion. They share a laugh, then an awkward pause. Both swig from their beers.

SCOTT (CONT'D)

So, I looked at the books. This place is screwed, right?

RILEY

Yep.

SCOTT

I'm not sure we'll even still be in business when your dad comes home.

She says nothing. He turns to look at her and catches her look.

SCOTT (CONT'D)

He's not coming home is he?

RILEY

Nope.

He downs the remnants of his bottle.

INT. THE BAR - NIGHT

(MIKE, TOMMY, JOURNALIST)

Mike and Tommy are cleaning down the bar and drinking beers of their own as they usher out the last of the customers. They've found some sport on TV, a game of Sipa with commentary in Tagalog.

MIKE

I really don't understand this game.

TOMMY

It is kinda weird.

MIKE

I mean, is it tennis, soccer, hacky sack? It just doesn't make any sense.

Tommy shepherds the last customer out the door. Mike joins him and locks the door, flipping the 'closed' sign as the JOURNALIST (40s, balding, nerdy) knocks on the door.

TOMMY  
(through the door)  
We're closed.

JOURNALIST  
I'm sorry, my flight was delayed. I'm a journalist, I'm here to review the bar. I spoke to Scott about it.

TOMMY  
C'mon dude, I'm not falling for that one again.

He drops the blind in front of the door. The reporter knocks frantically.

MIKE  
Who was that?

TOMMY  
Just some dude claiming to be a journalist.

MIKE  
As if.

They both pop fresh beers and turn the game up.

FADE TO BLACK.