

CONTENT WARNING FOR ADULT LANGUAGE, EXCESSIVE DRINKING, VOMITING

[Lights up. Two dudebros are in line to get into a bar on Santacon. LAWRENCE is a little less of a dudebro than BRENDON, but they do have matching Santa hats in common. And maybe a tattoo that was not well thought-out.]

LAWRENCE *[looking at his phone]*:

Nick's almost here. E.T.A. within five minutes, he says, which with him could mean five, ten, or sixty.

BRENDON:

I'll find it in my heart to allow it. It's Christmas after all.

LAWRENCE:

It's December 7th.

BRENDON:

Potato, puh-tah-toe, or should I say poinsettia-poin... actually not sure if I pronounced that right just now.

LAWRENCE:

Dude, this place better be good. We've been in line for half an hour.

BRENDON:

The night is young.

LAWRENCE:

It's eleven thirty in the morning.

BRENDON:

Lawrence, bruhv, on this day, the highest of holy days, Santacon 2021, you need to drop your dumb little brother thing -

LAWRENCE:

I'm like ten months older than you

BRENDON:

And learn to lighten up and agree with me on the simple lovely facts of life. The weather is perfect.

LAWRENCE:

The weather IS perfect.

BRENDON:

The spirit of Christmas is upon us.

LAWRENCE:

The spirit of Christmas IS upon us.

[Brendon is visibly looking around for more good things to say.]

BRENDON:

The women are wearing Santa hats and little else.

LAWRENCE:

That's... great, but it's getting pretty cold already, I don't know...

BRENDON:

There's not a hobo in sight.

LAWRENCE:

That could just mean they're in a shelter.

BRENDON:

Well, good. It's getting pretty cold already. See? We agree. Oh look! There's a theatre. Broadway is recovering.

LAWRENCE:

This isn't Broadway.

BRENDON:

What are you talking about? It's New York.

LAWRENCE:

Broadway means within a certain zone of streets. We're on thirtieth. We're not in that zone.

BRENDON:

Well, okay, sorry, Nathan Lane, jeez

LAWRENCE:

I'm shocked you know who that is.

BRENDON:

Lion King, pal.

[NICK shows up and joins them in line. He hears some people yelling at him about cutting the line, and he briefly considers getting angry about it, but keeps going to meet the other two.]

LAWRENCE:

Nick!

BRENDON:

Nick-a-rino!

LAWRENCE:

Nick-a-licious.

BRENDON:

Nick me up, buttercup, hey, what's wrong? That girl called you a pussy and you didn't say shit back to her and you're like the comeback master.

LAWRENCE:

Last time you roasted me in the group chat I considered deleting my number and joining the witness protection program.

NICK:

I feel weird today.

LAWRENCE:

Why?

BRENDON:

The weather is changing.

LAWRENCE:

No, Brendon, hold on. Nick, why? What's up?

NICK:

Ash left me.

BRENDON [*overlapping with Nick and Lawrence's next couple lines*]:

Why wouldn't you just open with that? Why would you start with "I feel weird" and not just like the obvious reason

LAWRENCE:

When?

NICK:

This morning.

LAWRENCE:

This morning? Are you serious? Brendon, shut up for a sec. Why this morning? What happened?

NICK:

I got up and went to make us coffee like always and she was in the kitchen picking out her silverware from the drawer and putting it in her purse. I was like, What are you doing? and she was like, Nick, I can't take it anymore. I told you I can't just be in this relationship going nowhere doing nothing for years and years. I have to go.

BRENDON:

Wait, just like THAT?

LAWRENCE:

Has she mentioned this at all before?

NICK:

Not really, only kind of.

LAWRENCE [*overlapping with Brendon*]:

"Only kind of"?

BRENDON [*overlapping with Lawrence*]:

What a bitch!

NICK:

I was like, Well, wait, can we—and she was like No we cannot talk about it, Nick, and I was like Do you at least want a coffee first? And she was like, No, Nick, I have to go. She said my name that many times and everything. Real serious-like. And then she went to the door, where I only just then saw - she had these other bags packed. Both of her gym bags, and one suitcase she uses to go see her parents. And her purse all filled. With silverware and shit. I thought that only happened in movies or something. But nah, she did it. Packed up in the night and left in the morning.

LAWRENCE:

Dude, I mean... that sucks, how do you feel?

NICK:

Hungry. She took the spoons. Couldn't eat breakfast.

BRENDON:

What a BITCH!

NICK:

Yeah.

LAWRENCE:

No, guys, well, maybe she's a bitch, I don't know, but... yeah, you're hungry. But what else? Anything else? You're not at all like, sad over it?

NICK:

She mentioned last month a couple times that we never go out anymore or do anything fun except watch Netflix

BRENDON:

I think that's fun

NICK:

Yeah, right? *Squid Games*, man.

BRENDON:

Yeah. *Great British Bake Off*.

NICK:

Yeah, and she said that stuff a few times, but we talked about it and I didn't think that meant like, she was gonna leave or anything.

LAWRENCE:

So, you feel kinda blindsided, maybe?

NICK:

Nah. She *did* say that stuff, at least.

LAWRENCE:

So you feel...

NICK:

Nothing, I guess.

LAWRENCE:

How long were you with Ash?

NICK:

Three years. Don't know the months.

BRENDON:

Girls are into knowing the months.

NICK:

Yeah, I'm just not great at math. I majored in film, remember.

BRENDON:

Your GPA was super high tho

LAWRENCE:

Okay, hold up on the riffing. Nick -

BRENDON:

Nick at Night -

LAWRENCE:

I said pause the riffing, Bren. I'm trying to talk to Nick about something fucked up that happened to him this morning.

BRENDON:

Why?

LAWRENCE:

Because it's fucked up to not do that?

BRENDON:

I'm not saying never do that but it's Santacon. Nick, do you want to talk about your feelings?

[Nick shrugs.]

LAWRENCE:

Don't ask him in that tone. It makes him feel pressured to keep the peace.

BRENDON:

Okay, since when have you been all Mayor of Emotiontown? I get it, Lawrence, you're the one with the steadiest paycheck, the 401K, the tailored suits, and the Peloton bike and all that. I actually really dig it, by the way, you're real smooth and we all have to have one friend that has their shit together.

[The next few lines are a bit of respite.]

NICK:

If it wasn't for Lawrence we wouldn't have gone to Delray Beach for spring break that one time, collecting all the money and making the reservations and whatever -

BRENDON:

Ayyooooo what's good 561!

LAWRENCE:

FIVE SIX WHA-WHA-ONNNNEEEEE

NICK:

FIVE SIX ONE BAAAYBBEEEEEEEE

BRENDON:

WE FUCKED THAT SHIT UUUUPPPP

[and in a flash it's over]

BRENDON:

No but yeah dude you can just be a little judgey sometimes. No need to judge today. We're all in Santa hats just the same.

LAWRENCE:

I'm not trying to judge. I'm trying to help. That's all I'm ever trying to do. If you feel judged, I apologize, and we should also talk about that at some point. Preferably soon.

BRENDON [*clearly deflecting*]:

Excuse me but of course you're going to be all in your feelings. Your name is Lawrence.

LAWRENCE:

So?

BRENDON:

So that's the kind of name guys have when they're the kind of mother who's in their feeling all the damn time.

LAWRENCE:

What makes Brendon not that kind of name?

BRENDON:

Well, for starters, have you met me?

LAWRENCE:

If Lawrence is the kind of name who goes to therapy and learns how to process feelings, then I should call my mom and thank her now.

BRENDON:

You should call your mom and thank her anyway because she rocks. Susan is the bomb and makes the best macaroni and cheese.

NICK:

You go to therapy?

LAWRENCE:

Sure do.

NICK:

Since when?

LAWRENCE:

Went on and off in high school when I got mixed up in the wrong crowd. Started going consistently about two months ago.

NICK:

Why?

LAWRENCE:

No real reason. Just to better myself.

NICK:

When do you stop getting better and just start being Lawrence?

BRENDON:

Probably when he pays off that Peloton. Heard it's hella expensive.

LAWRENCE:

Alright. I have an idea. It means I get to see you guys make progress towards processing your emotions and moving past the immense fucking hurdle that is toxic masculinity -

NICK:

Yeah that's kind of a thing huh?

BRENDON:

Yeah I can't deflect that one

LAWRENCE:

-- And you still get to drink like you've got a second liver.

BRENDON:

I still get to wear the Santa hat, right?

NICK:

Hey, yeah, I had to go to like four different Duane Reades to find this thing.

LAWRENCE:

For every genuine and different emotion you two assholes can express to me today, I will buy you a drink.

BRENDON:

Well, get ready to have to sell your fancy ass Bushwick loft to pay your tabs -

LAWRENCE:

I rent, I don't own, in this economy -

BRENDON:

Because I'm going to feel all the things today. And then drink them back down.

See, there's one. Confidence. Does that count?

LAWRENCE:

Something not in the happiness zone.

BRENDON:

Well, that's not fair, I live there. Like I literally live in Sunnyside, bro.

LAWRENCE:

That's the point.

BRENDON:

Once again I'm punished for being positive and taking the 7 train.

NICK:

Lawrence, I don't know about this, man. I came out even after such a shitty morning so I could have fun with my bros and not be sitting at home stewing in the breakup. It's a little raw to be facing like two hours after, you know?

LAWRENCE:

I feel that, but talking it out helps people process.

NICK:

Why can't I process on my own?

BRENDON:

Don't they say you can just like use Tetris instead?

LAWRENCE:

You think you're processing when you're doing it all on your own, but inside your own head - that's just an echo chamber, dude.

BRENDON:

Saw something about that on Facebook

NICK:

I like it in the echo chamber, bruh

LAWRENCE:

I know but you can't grow in the echo chamber, bruh

BRENDON:

Like if you play tetris after a traumatic incident then your trauma, like, goes down

NICK:

... I'm scared to leave the echo chamber. Bruh.

BRENDON:

Stop saying echo chamber

[Lawrence is very taken with this discovery. In his next section he gets closer to Nick. They are inching toward a hug.]

LAWRENCE:

DUDE! That is so big of you to say! You have no idea the kind of cajones it takes to say shit like that! We feel that insane damn pressure to always be cool with everything and never be a pussy but that's what I'm talking about - that shit isn't HEALTHY, man! This shit is healthy! Saying it out loud! Doesn't that feel SO much better? Don't you feel like not as scared just because you said? Do you feel that POWER, man? That power over your own emotions?

BRENDON:

Oh, shit, guys, we're up. They're letting us in!

[Brendon heads into the bar. Nick puts his hand up on Lawrence's shoulders. It's dramatic. Lawrence is so in his feels over that.]

LAWRENCE:

You're driving the car. What next?

NICK:

I want my first drink to be a Long Island Ice Tea.

[Nick heads into the bar. Lawrence takes off his Santa hat, looking at it like the dumb fake prop it is. But then he huffs and follows others inside

Lights fade out as the noise of Santas drinking profusely gets louder and louder.]