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HONESTY

A SHORT SCREENPLAY BY
DENNIS J. MANNING

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SHORT SCREENPLAY

Written by

Dennis J. Manning
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Dennis@danforthmusic.org
401-644-4759

FADE IN:

INT. GRANT'S APARTMENT — NIGHT (ROUND 1)

5:30 P.M. The sun slips toward the horizon.

ON SCREEN: *September 10 — The Invitation to Dance*

GRANT (37), a man of quiet confidence and gentle polish, sets a bottle of red wine in a bucket of ice. The bar gleams with vodka, gin, triple sec, vermouth.

GRANT
(thinking)
Cosmo or martini? Red wine or
water?
Well—let's see what the night
brings.

He wears a loose polo, easy jeans. A hint of gray at his temple that somehow works in his favor.

He glances at the mirror — adjusts his collar, tests a smile. Too wide. He softens it. Approves.

GRANT (CONT'D)
No need to give them everything the
first go-around.

A KNOCK at the door. His heart ticks faster.

GRANT (CONT'D)
(to himself)
Easy, boy. Relax.

Another knock.

CARL (O.S.)
Hello? Grant?

Grant catches his reflection once more — confidence mask on.

GRANT
Be right there.

He opens the door.

INT. GRANT'S APARTMENT — CONTINUOUS

CARL (32), gym trainer and bartender, a man honed for his own pleasure.

Tank top, shorts, the swagger of someone born in mirrors.

He moves straight to the bar, scanning the bottles like it's home.

CARL

Grant, you're very easy to look at.

He shakes the martinis like a pro.

GRANT

Sure, I'll have a martini.

CARL

Good—'cause that's what we're having.

He pours.

CARL (CONT'D)

Alexa, play cool jazz.

ALEXA

Playing cool jazz.

Carl downs his drink in one go and pulls off his tank top.

Grant freezes — breath gone.

Carl turns, slowly. His body is art and arrogance.

GRANT

My God.

CARL

(laughing)

You like?

GRANT

(stammering)

Yes. I mean—yes.

CARL

This happens a lot.

He checks his watch.

CARL (CONT'D)
So, now or now. I prefer
now. Massage client at eight.

Carl drops his shorts. Grant is overtaken by the size of
Carl's manhood.

GRANT
(stammering)
Oh my...

CARL
(smiling, proud)
Yeah, I know. He's beautiful.
(beat)
I call him.. Rex.

GRANT
You... named him?

CARL
Of course. He's big. He's loud. He
makes me roar.

Grant blinks – twice – trying to reset his brain.

GRANT
(still processing)
Rex. Right. Of course. Does Rex...
talk?

CARL
(eyebrow up)
No, but he communicates.

Carl checks his watch – businesslike.

CARL (CONT'D)
I've got a massage client at eight.
We could do three, maybe four
rounds if you keep up.

GRANT
(nods, politely horrified)
Yes. Well. Endurance. Admirable.
(beat)
Dinner's out then?

CARL
Structured meal plan.

Grant's eyes dart to the mirror. He barely recognizes the man
in it.

GRANT
Right. Well—you and Rex have a lovely evening.

CARL
(easy)
You sure? We could just go two rounds?

Grant nods, as if it's normal.

Carl pulls up his shorts.

Time seems to drag.

Carl slips his shirt back on and heads out the door without missing a beat.

Silence.

Grant stares after him.

GRANT
(to himself)
Rex. He calls him Rex.
(beat)
Next.

He exhales, glances in the mirror. The smile doesn't come back.

INT. GRANT'S APARTMENT — NIGHT (ROUND 2)

5:30 P.M. A light rain falls.

ON SCREEN: *September 17 — The Invitation to Dance (Round 2)*

Grant places beers in the fridge. A bowl of pretzels on the counter.

TV ON — *Food Network.*

GRANT
Oops—wrong impression.

He flips to *SportsCenter*.

GRANT (CONT'D)
Fuck yeah! How about those Tigers?

He flexes in the mirror, half-mocking himself. The light is harsh — judgmental.

GRANT (CONT'D)
Let the shopper know what's in the
window.

A knock.

Grant pops a beer. Turns up the volume – armor up.

CLICK.

Door swings open.

BRENT (43), tall, ironed, controlled. Looks like he's never
spilled anything in his life.

Grant leans against the doorframe, chugging a beer.

GRANT (CONT'D)
S'up?

BRENT
Pardon?

GRANT
Come on in, Bro. Got the game on.

Brent hesitates, steps inside.

The TV blares – too loud, too alive.

GRANT (CONT'D)
Whatcha drinkin'?

BRENT
White wine.

GRANT
(half shouting)
You want white wine?

The game blares even louder now.

BRENT
(leaning in)
What? I can't hear you—the game—

GRANT
Hell yeah, I keep that on all the
time! Who do you like?

BRENT
What? Do I ride a bike? Can you
turn that down?

Grant drops the volume, proud of himself.

GRANT
There you go, Bro.

BRENT
It's Brent. My name is Brent.

GRANT
Sure, whatever.

Grant gets a beer and tosses it to Brent. Bad throw and a bad catch. The beer hits the floor and explodes.

SFX: Slow motion – beer explodes, foam baptizing Brent in pure chaos.

The sound dies. Just two men. One drenched. One confused. The game still plays somewhere in the distance.

SILENCE. 3 beats.

Brent freezes – poisoned by imperfection.

BRENT
I just ironed this shirt–

GRANT
You what?

BRENT
Ironed. You do know what that is?

GRANT
Duh–of course. But why?
(beat)
You wanna just skip to the naked part?

Beat. Brent blinks.

BRENT
This is a first date. I'm not above it–just not like this.

He turns and leaves.

Door shuts.

Silence.

Grant sighs. Crunches a pretzel.

GRANT
(into phone)
Hey Tammy, sushi or salad?
Yeah, no—didn't work out.
Guess we couldn't *iron out our
differences.*

He switches the channel back to *Cooking Network.*

The hiss of sauté pans. A soothing rhythm.

Grant looks around – the mess, the foam, the emptiness.

GRANT (CONT'D)
(scoffs softly)
I don't even like beer. Give me a
bag of chips any day.

He cleans up in silence. The clink of bottles. The towel on
tile.

He starts to speak—stops. The reflection in the oven stares
back.

GRANT (CONT'D)
I throw shade way better than I can
throw a football.

The apartment is too perfect. Too empty.

He laughs dryly.

GRANT (CONT'D)
Well, that just sounded like sad
melodrama. Maybe use that for
Inspiration for the Spring line,
"Sad in the Rain."

He fluffs the pillows on the couch.

GRANT (CONT'D)
It's that I'm lonely, I am just
tired of being alone. I want sex, I
want quick, but I want Sunday
mornings when you wake up together,
and just get out of my head.

He goes to look out the window. The city lights below and
above. The camera catches his reflection in the window.

GRANT (CONT'D)
I have lots of friends. And most of
them all have that one, that I use
to have with Roger. So I don't get
(MORE)

GRANT (CONT'D)
 out much, I have work, God I would
 love to not have a routine

He catches sight of a sketch. *A woman, umbrella tilted.*

GRANT (CONT'D)
 Dinner? A show? No? Oh—you have
 someone.

He sets it down.

SAD WOMAN IN THE RAIN
 (sweet, barely audible)
 Go get lost.

Grant freezes.

He lifts the drawing.

SAD WOMAN IN THE RAIN (CONT'D)
 Go get lost.

GRANT
 (chuckling)
 Now you've got opinions.

He checks his phone — *Tammy: "30 mins?"*

Mirror again. Candlelight softens his edges.

GRANT (CONT'D)
 Let's just go with it.
 Who do we pretend to be next time?
 Prince Charming? The Wolf?
 (pause)
 How about... just Grant?

Beat.

GRANT (CONT'D)
 Who the hell is he?

Lights off. He goes out the door.

GRANT (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 He calls him Rex!
 (he laughs) "Bro" what was I
 thinking?

GRANT (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 (from the hallway,
 muffled)
 REX! ROAR!

INT. GRANT'S APARTMENT — NIGHT (ROUND 3)

5:30 P.M. Light rain.

ON SCREEN: September 24 — The Invitation to Dance (Round 3)

Grant hums along to salsa. A Cuban shirt. Capri khakis.
Loafers, no socks.

Two chains around his neck. He's feeling it — maybe too much.

GRANT
Señor Frankie's gonna feel Papi's
heat tonight!

He laughs. Checks the mirror. It smiles back — old friend
now.

GRANT (CONT'D)
Don't shop when you're hungry.
Hungry? I'm starving for
love.

A knock.

GRANT (CONT'D)
Si, si! Coming!

He opens the door.

Heels. Skirt. Pearls. Blue eyes. *FRANKIE SANCHEZ* (30s)
beams with warmth, a bottle of champagne in hand.

FRANKIE
Hi! I'm Frankie. Third date this
month. Guess I'm persistent.

She twirls a strand of hair.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)
There are so many strange men—some
only want sex.
(laughs)
Listen to me. I'm rambling.

Grant just stares. Processing.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)
Alexander McQueen capris? Love.

A silence. She signs gently:

FRANKIE (CONT'D)
Are you deaf? It's okay, I'm rusty
at sign language.

Grant half laughs, lost.

GRANT
You're... Frankie?

FRANKIE
Yep. Born this way.

GRANT
I thought you were a man.

FRANKIE
Nope. Always been me. I mean, I'm
not opposed to transgender—be who
you are inside, right?

GRANT
I'm just... a little confused.

FRANKIE
Geeze, I'm sorry. Did I do
something wrong? I loved your ad.

She pulls out her phone, reading it aloud with a grin.

FRANKIE (ONT'D) (CONT'D)
"Looking for someone who laughs
easy, opens their heart and arms to
new experiences, and asks the next
person they meet—'What is your
passion?'"

He softens.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)
So—what's your passion?

GRANT
Life.

She grins, hugs him unexpectedly.

FRANKIE
Good answer.

She eases him inside, both laughing.

EXT. GRANT'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

FRANKIE (O.S.)
Love the Latin music! I have no
idea what they're saying, but I
love it!

Their laughter trails off as the door closes. Fade out

TRANSITION: the faint sound of jazz dissolves into the hum
of city wind.

INT. GRANT'S APARTMENT - RISING ACTION

November 20, 5:30 P.M.

Outside, autumn leaves drift past the window.

Grant sketches alone, a quiet rhythm. His cell phone rings.
He puts it on speaker. He continues to work.

RASHONDA is Grant's manager at the design agency. She's
quick. Abrupt. Icy. All blade, no sheath.

RASHONDA (V.O.)
Darling.

GRANT
By tomorrow.

RASHONDA (V.O.)
Sweetheart.

GRANT
Ten A.M. Tammy will drop them off.

RASHONDA (V.O.)
Will I-

GRANT
-Love them? Please. No one warms
the Ice Queen like I do.

RASHONDA (V.O.)
Talk dirty to me.

GRANT
Can't. Hangnail.

RASHONDA (V.O.)
You're cruel. I want to see you.

GRANT
I'll send a selfie. Bye, love.

RASHONDA (V.O.)
Ten A.M., darling. Don't make me
send the hounds.

She laughs — sharp and gone.

A *text buzzes*: Cruella DeVil meme with "THE HOUNDS."

He smiles faintly, sets it down.

GRANT
So I had a love. He died.
Three years ago.
Everyone says "move on."
Yeah... not that easy. How do you
replace Roger?

A knock.

He sighs, opens the door mid-sentence—

GRANT (CONT'D)
(talking out to the room
the door knocker person)
I have no time for/

—and freezes.

TEDDY (30s), UPS uniform, green eyes, gentle smile, stands
holding a teddy bear wrapped in plastic.

TEDDY
Hi, are you Grant Thomas? Or Thomas
Grant? Happens all the time.
They mix up the names.
(beat, smiling)
I deal with it.

Grant nods, entranced.

Teddy gives wink. Snaps his fingers politely.

Grant seems in a dream state.

SFX. Go to Slow Motion

TEDDY (CONT'D)
(sounding slow motion)
Mr. Thomas? Mr. Grant you ok?

BACK TO Real-Time.

TEDDY (CONT'D)
Just sign here.

He hands the scanner over. Their fingers brush. Electricity.

GRANT
Who's it from?

TEDDY
Box got destroyed. Maybe there's a note.

Beat.

Teddy gets close and inspects the package.

Grant breathes him in. Heaven.

TEDDY (CONT'D)
Well on his little paw there's a brand name maybe you call and they can help you.

GRANT
You wanna come in?

TEDDY
(laughing)
I get that a lot. Uniform thing. Fantasy, right?

GRANT
No-sorry, I-

TEDDY
All good. So you got your package and I am on the clock and got 10 more deliveries. You have a great Thanksgiving

GRANT
When is it?

TEDDY
Tomorrow. Parade passes right by here. Great view.

He starts to leave.

GRANT
Hey-what's your name?

TEDDY
Teddy. Like the bear.

He winks, goes.

GRANT
You just never know.

Grant unwraps the bear. A tag: *TEDDYBEAR INC.*

He presses the paw.

THE BEAR
(mechanical)
ROOOAR! I'm Teddy!

Grant laughs. Finds a note on the tag:

> *Hey Grant. Nice to meet you. I like hugs.*

He smiles. Fades out.

INT. GRANT'S APARTMENT — THE CLIMAX

December 24, 5:30 P.M. — "Blue Hawaii" Theme.

Holiday lights. Tropical colors. Perfection.

GRANT
Martha Stewart would be proud. Blue
Hawaii, eat your heart out.

He looks in the mirror, approving his own audacity.

GRANT (CONT'D)
If you're gonna wear it—own it.

Music: *Elvis croons softly.*

A knock.

GRANT (CONT'D)
Too early for Santa.

He opens the door—

—and there's TEDDY. Same green eyes. Green shirt, black pants, Santa hat. Warm as sunlight.

TEDDY
Merry Christmas.

Grant smiles and then without thinking tears well up. In an instant Grant is swept up in a hug that is like a security blanket. Strong, comforting, not sexual, just love abounding.

TEDDY (CONT'D)
(softly)
Oh Grant, it's ok. Go ahead.

Grant softly weeps. He steps back.

GRANT
I don't know what just happened. I
am not like this.

TEDDY
You just shared your passion, life.

Grant exhales – peace.

GRANT
Will you come in?

TEDDY
Yes.

They enter.

INT. GRANT'S APARTMENT – CONTINUOUS

The 50's holiday music is playing. Several plates of festive holiday appetizers are scattered around the room.

Teddy spies a large tray of home-made holiday cookies.

Grant passes the mirror. For the first time, he doesn't check it. He catches his reflection by accident – and smiles anyway.

TEDDY
I Love to bake holiday cookies.

GRANT
You do? So do I.

TEDDY & GRANT
(in unison surprisingly)
I always baked with my mother.

They stop. Look. Laugh.

Teddy looks around.

TEDDY
I am sensing a theme.

GRANT
Oh I always do a theme.

Teddy looks like a detective spying for clues. He looks at Grant. Gives him the cue to "turn around" to see the entire outfit.

TEDDY
Blue Hawaii.

GRANT
(surprised)
Well, yes!

Grant looks at Teddy. He smiles

TEDDY
So what are your plans.

GRANT
Nothing, I have the entire evening open.

TEDDY
Ah, waiting for Santa?

GRANT
Well you do have the hat?

They both laugh. Teddy sits. Casual. Easy. Grant feels his sense of peace.

GRANT (CONT'D)
So it was you that gave me the
Teddy Bear.

Grant looks over and he has dressed the bear in a Blue Hawaii outfit.

TEDDY
Yes.

GRANT
Why? And Why did you just leave?
You really don't work for a
delivery company, right?

TEDDY
Caught me! I am an actor for one
trade and I put on a costume and
played a role.

GRANT
Ok, so?

TEDDY

I kept seeing you—outside the café,
crossing Eighth—always looked like
someone waiting for something.

GRANT

Rashonda.

TEDDY

She terrifies me.

GRANT

(laugh)

She scares everybody.

GRANT (CONT'D)

I am glad you found me.

TEDDY

Me, too. I want to make sure you
are following your passion.

GRANT

My passion?

TEDDY

Life.

GRANT

Oh that? So over-rated. I, a,
well, what's your passion?

TEDDY

Creating.

GRANT

Hmm. So, what happens now?

TEDDY

If I don't have one of those
cookies right now, I will not
forgive myself.

Grant gets up and gets the tray.

Teddy lingers over each one, there are several to select
from. He lands on a peanut butter blossom.

He takes it. Smells it. Eats it and melts.

TEDDY (CONT'D)

My God, that is so good.

Grant smiles.

GRANT
Secret ingredient's "forgiveness."

The holiday music swells. The camera finds the Blue Hawaii theme all around the room.

They laugh, bake, dance. A warmth fills the room.

INT. GRANT'S BEDROOM — FALLING ACTION

Christmas Morning.

Snow light floods the room. The bed, a cloud of white comfort. Grant wakes. A lump under the covers.

GRANT
Teddy? Merry Christmas.

GRANT (CONT'D)
Teddy Bear. Wake up.

Grant reaches over to do a bear-hug and he hugs a pillow. He pulls back the sheet. Empty.

He looks down—naked. Shock.

GRANT (CONT'D)
I never sleep naked.

He scrambles for boxers, robe, Winnie-the-Pooh slippers.

GRANT (CONT'D)
Teddy?

Silence.

He retraces steps — glasses, cookie tray, the window.

Nothing.

GRANT (CONT'D)
Guess Christmas is for children.
You wait for that day, you open the
pretty box and "SURPRISE" (pause)
Oh thank you just what I've always
wanted.

He glances outside — snow drifts gently down.

SFX. The room freezes and he looks around. Only his head moves. Clues seem to be everywhere.

He clocks the empty blossom tray... then freezes—the bear now wears a green shirt, black pants, Santa hat.

BACK TO REAL
TIME

He picks up the tray and looks.

TEDDY (V.O.)
The peanut butter blossoms are my
favorite.

Not a single Blossom cookie left.

Grant picks up the Bear. He presses the paw.

THE BEAR
(mechanical)
I want to make sure you're
following your passion.

He laughs, near tears.

GRANT
You and me both.

At the window, his breath fogs the glass — reveals a faint heart.

He doesn't see it. Turns away.

GRANT (CONT'D)
Teddy? Who am I calling to?

He slumps on the couch.

He tosses the bear aside. Gets up. Paces.

GRANT (CONT'D)
I mean I smell him on me (he
sniffs) Well, I think I do.

He goes the bar and pours a strong drink.

CARL (V.O.)
(easy, forward)
Grant, you are very easy to look
at. Say hello to Rex!

SFX. The sound of Carl shaking the gin martinis in the shaker.

He puts the drink down, untouched.

GRANT

Ok maybe I am just going crazy. It happens all the time. People just go, batshit crazy for no reason.

Grant appears to be hyperventilating. He runs to the fridge.

POV. All the beer in the fridge.

GRANT (V.O.)

You wanna just skip to the naked part?

Grant screams in shame.

GRANT

Oh, My God, I said that? You wanna just skip to the naked part?

Grant laughs.

He does the sign language:

FRANKIE

Are you deaf? It's okay—I'm a little rusty with my sign language.

He goes to the window. Sees the snow. He sighs a few times. His breath fogs the window. As he turns he misses what the fog reveals. The Camera catches just the glimpse of the shape of a heart.

He turns off the music. He slumps on the couch. Teddy, the bear, is on his back and seems to be smiling.

GRANT

Oh sure you get to smile. Me. What did I learn?

He looks over at his sketches.

GRANT (CONT'D)

(snaps)

And if you, Miss Rain-in-Spring, start talking, I will rip you to shreds.

Tears fall down his face.

GRANT (CONT'D)

I just wanted...I needed to feel again. Something. Except not afraid and not alone. And not on Christmas.

Tears come. He rubs his eyes.

He sighs. He rubs his temple and the room blurs for a moment.

INT. FRONT DOOR OF GRANT'S APARTMENT

In the blur the front door opens.

POV. Just a pair of men's boots with snow, quietly coming in.

Grant is unaware.

The room comes back into focus.

INT. GRANT'S APARTMENT

Grant rubs his head.

GRANT

I thought Teddy was real. (laughs)
It turns out he's just a bear.

He pulls the bear close to him.

The man in the background doesn't move or make a sound.

Grant looks to the window and the interior fog wisps away. He thought he saw something.

He darts to the window and breaths again. There it is.

POV. On the window fog a HEART is drawn and inside the word:
LIFE.

GRANT (CONT'D)

That's my passion. But I haven't
been passionate for 3 years. What
am I doing? Wasting time on these
dates. Trying to be someone I'm
not. I don't want to be locked in
this cell anymore.

SFX: The jingle of keys.

He doesn't react.

Another breath on glass — a *second heart* appears. Inside
it: *CREATE.*

GRANT (CONT'D)

Who put that there?

A soft voice – behind him.

TEDDY
I did. Merry Christmas.

Grant turns – Teddy stands in the doorway, snow-dusted, arms open.

They meet halfway, embrace – the *best Teddy-bear hug ever.*

INT. GRANT'S APARTMENT – DENOUEMENT

Montage – Christmas Day.

* Grant and Teddy make breakfast.

* Cookie crumbs, milk moustaches.

* They unwrap gifts for no one and laugh: *"It's just what I wanted!"*

* They fall back into bed.

Later-jackets, Santa hats.

They step out into the snowy city, hand in hand.

The door closes.

The apartment glows in *Blue Hawaii* light.

The camera glides:

– Two hearts on the frosted window.

– Empty cookie tray.

– The Teddy Bear on the chair.

A faint shimmer lands on his nose.

Silence.

THE BEAR
(soft, old-soul)
This is your life.
Do what you love and do it often.

The faint sound of keys jingling – a door opening. Light spills into the room.

The bear winks again.

THE BEAR (CONT'D)
(soft, old-soul)
This is your life. Share it.

Grant rushes in, breathless, still smiling from the hallway.

He scoops the bear into his arms.

GRANT
You're coming with us.
No one should be alone on Christmas
Day.

He hugs the bear tightly – warmth, joy, belief – then turns
for the door.

The bear looks back at the camera, over Grant's shoulder.

That same twinkle.

The bear winks.

CUT TO BLACK.

MUSIC: "Blue Hawaii" (instrumental reprise).

THE END