

RETCON NIGHT

Written by

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EXT. SUBURBAN HOME - EVENING

Several mid-thirties PARTYGOERS stand around drinking and smoking in the front yard of a suburban Melbourne house.

Bass throbs from inside.

INT. PARTY HOUSE - EVENING

TODD weaves between more PARTYGOERS in the MAIN HALLWAY, turning left into a BATHROOM.

INT. BATHROOM - EVENING

Todd goes past a sink and shower to an adjoining toilet, shutting the door behind him while unzipping.

As he begins to pee, the door opens again, startling him. KYLE swiftly enters the small bathroom behind Todd, closing the door.

Todd half-turns over his shoulder, trying not to miss the bowl while looking back at Kyle, who stands pressed up against him uncomfortably close from behind.

Kyle leans forward, stage whispering over Todd's collar.

KYLE

I fucked up.

TODD

Do I know you?

KYLE

I hope so.

Todd shakes and zips up. He flushes, then turns to face Kyle in the small space.

TODD

I need to get out and wash my hands.

KYLE

You need to stop pretending.

TODD

What do you mean?

KYLE

You don't wash your hands every time you take a piss.

Todd frowns.

TODD  
Of course I do.

Kyle seems surprised.

KYLE  
Do you really? Huh.

TODD  
You don't?

Kyle steps aside so Todd can get out, following him to the adjoining shower and sink.

While Todd stands at the sink, he nervously watches in the mirror as Kyle closes the bathroom door to just a crack, peering out conspiratorially.

KYLE  
I need you to help me fix something, Todd.

Washing his hands with soap, Todd studies Kyle in the mirror.

TODD  
Yeah?

Kyle sighs, latching the bathroom door, locking it.

KYLE  
I wasn't invited to this party.

Todd dries his hands, focused on Kyle's splayed fingers pressed against the closed door.

TODD  
You can be my plus one. I don't know you, but as long as you don't have a knife or anything crazy...

Kyle shakes his head.

KYLE  
No, I *was* invited. I was invited-- originally. And I *do* have a knife.

Todd slowly nods.

TODD  
Ohh, okay. Well I don't want to get in between you and Paul, if you're having a thing.

KYLE

Paul is one of my oldest friends. I know Paul. But I *don't* know him now.

Todd stares, confused.

TODD

Like, he's changed? Orrr..?

KYLE

This party happened. Already.

Todd looks around.

TODD

It's on *now*. Are you on... drugs? Do you have more?

KYLE

We had this party, Todd. I was invited. You were there. Paul was happy. He had invested in my product and it worked right out of the gate. Now it doesn't. Mandy was my wife, now she's my ex. I was a successful tech genius, carving out a new product category, but somehow in this new reality I'm a failed entrepreneur. None of it happened. It did, of course. But now it didn't.

TODD

Are you thinking of the right party?

Kyle reaches inside his jacket pocket, retrieving the 4D REMOTE.

KYLE

I changed something. I fucked up. I got drunk, then something happened and I changed it. Again and again. It's like when you erase pencil too many times, and you tear through the paper. Or when you wipe too much, and you tear through your own asshole.

Todd throws up his hands, wincing.

TODD

What are you... gonna do?

KYLE  
Exactly. What?

TODD  
Man, I'm not even--sure. I don't think I know what this is... about. I haven't followed your meaning, so far.

KYLE  
Huh?

TODD  
What are you talking about?

KYLE  
I changed something. Some crucial event or interaction. I thought I could use the tech to retcon the moment, go back and undo whatever I said to her, and then things would be fine. But I fucked it up worse than before. Like some... law of physics. The situation always unravels more.

TODD  
Wait slow down. What did you say, to who?

KYLE  
I can't even remember, Todd. It pissed her off though. I was fairly drunk, to be honest. We were celebrating, because it worked so well.

TODD  
What, your relationship?

Kyle holds up the remote.

KYLE  
No the technology. Why would--never mind.

TODD  
What is that, the new Android?

KYLE  
It's fucking time travel, Todd. I explained this all to you the first time we met. Right here even. Right now.

(MORE)

KYLE (CONT'D)

(softening) I suppose you wouldn't remember that though. Sorry.

Todd tries to touch the device but Kyle snatches it away, repocketing it.

TODD

Does it work or is it like... metaphorical?

KYLE

It worked *too* well. I think someone else already has the technology. Maybe they stole mine. Steal mine. In the future. Then came back here to really fuck with me at this party.

TODD

Why do you think someone else has it?

KYLE

Everything I do seems to be sabotaged by this asshole.

Todd awkwardly laughs.

TODD

This is a *bit*, right?

KYLE

A bit?

TODD

Like a sketch.

Kyle thinks.

KYLE

Let me explain this in terms you'd be familiar with then.

TODD

(nervous)  
No I don't mean--

KYLE

Picture this, for your own twisted amusement. A guy goes back in time to change something, some faux pas he made at a party he attended with his wife.

(MORE)

KYLE (CONT'D)

He's successful, but it fucks something else up, so he has to go back again and undo that change. Small changes cascade through the future timeline as he makes multiple trips, discovering through trial and error that he needs to recreate everything about the original moment *exactly*, down to the atom, quantum field state, and emotional temperature of the room. He was drunk the first time around, so now he can't remember what was so egregious about the moment that he had to change it, having lived a few hundred iterations of the evening already. He also suspects that one of the other guests may be another time traveler, specifically attempting to derail him on each attempt.

Todd blinks.

TODD

So you are pitching me a--what, scifi comedy? I could see it as a Chris Pratt vehicle maybe.

Kyle seems deflated.

KYLE

I need you to go out there and tell Emily she's forgotten to start the turkey. Please. I can't sit through two more hours of oblivious small talk before she realises the oven isn't plugged in.

TITLE: Retcon Night