

Resurrection

A tech company's middle-aged facilities manager struggles to fit in with his millennial coworkers until, at the company holiday party, a strange woman and her bird give him just the push he needs.

FADE IN:

INT. BLUE FROG BAR AND GRILL - EVENING

Depression-era wood floors and paneling, torn vinyl banquet chairs, mismatched plastic tablecloths. On a small stage, a young woman swings her hair and sings "My Sharona." The crowd is drunk, shouting, dressed just a little too nicely for the place. A sign reads "Home of Chicago's Worst Meatball Sandwich." On the bar, a red plastic water pitcher with a handmade sign: "Just put the tip in, see how it feels." The place is blinking with Christmas lights, strewn with bushy green and red garland.

JEFF (early 40s, tortoise-shell frames) sips a beer. The glasses make him look like David Sedaris. Across the table sits a tiny homeless woman, wrapped in dirty scarves.

WOMAN

(nodding vigorously)

It was the devil! In the window at
Macy's. For all to see!

JEFF

(looking helpless)

I just ... Gladys, I'm going to buy you
a cheeseburger, okay?

The woman, face crinkled in bliss, eats her burger like a cat, licking and nibbling it all around the edges as she disappears into the crowd.

The door bursts open and JANICE enters in a flurry of snow, struggling with a wheeled beverage cooler and a pet carrier. She's wearing black lipstick in a Geisha pout and faux leather boots laced up past the knee. Her eyes, heavily made-up, are large and far apart on her face. Disney princess eyes.

The pet carrier rocks violently. There is a horrible screech and a huge black bird flaps out, jutting its head forward and croaking, neck feathers ruffled. Jeff screams, briefly, like a girl, and falls backward to the floor.

The bird, perched above him, cocks its head menacingly, spreads its huge wings, and screams bloody murder. Jeff bumps his head against a table leg and lurches to his feet.

JEFF

Jesus! What is that, a crow?

Janice is pulling 40 oz. cans from the cooler and setting them loudly on the table. The neon green and black labels feature a sexy female figure, her face hidden in the shadow of a hooded

cloak, under the words "Raven's Brew" and "Resurrection."

JANICE

That's Earl. He's a raven, not a crow.

Earl is croaking and strutting in circles around the table.

JANICE (CONT.)

(sizing Jeff up and shooing the bird away)

Sorry, he's hungry.

She catches the bartender's eye.

BARTENDER

(yelling over his shoulder)

Mo's special rare for the bird!!!

The waitress brings a raw hamburger patty. Earl does a two-step and shoves his head into it, flinging raw meat across the table.

Two twentysomething guys (BRANDON and TYLER) approach.

BRANDON

(slapping Jeff on the back)

Jeff! What's up? You makin' a play on the Raven's Brew girl?

TYLER

(jumping back as Earl lunges for his sleeve)

Shit, that thing tried to bite me!

BRANDON

(to Janice)

Excuse me, miss, but our friend here needs a little liquid courage.

They slam a double shot down on the table. Jeff refuses, but is goaded into drinking it, coughing and wiping his chin. Brandon and Tyler are doubled over, slapping each other on the back.

TYLER

(pointing, as the two head back to the stage)

Get ready, man. You're on the list.

JANICE

Friends of yours?

JEFF

Uh, colleagues. I'm Jeff. Facilities manager at Google.

JANICE

Janice. Purveyor of alcoholic energy drinks. Because, who doesn't love a wide-awake drunk?

They shake hands.

JANICE
So, private party?

JEFF
Yeah. They like to do stuff like this;
rent out random dive bars.

JANICE
And you're in charge of ...

JEFF
Keeping the talent happy.

JANICE
Got it. They're picking your song.

She nods toward the stage.

JEFF
Oh no, I'm not actually going to ...

With another blood-curdling scream, Earl takes flight.

JEFF
(ducking)
Jesus! What's he doing now?

JANICE
Making a little suggestion, looks
like. Earl loves karaoke.

Onstage, Earl has knocked the songbook from a woman's hands and is violently pecking the keys of a laptop.

JANICE
(straining to read the flatscreen)
Bohemian Rhapsody. His favorite.

JEFF
I don't think I really know ...

JANICE
Oh come on, everyone knows that song.

Janice has an epiphany, her Disney princess eyes bulging.

JANICE (CONT.)

Wait! This is perfect! Your crew, they want you to sing, but think you're lame, about to crap out on them. But you're not. Don't you see? You're going to go over there, right where all those drunk douche-bags can see you, and chug one of these.

She thrusts a dripping can of Resurrection across the table, just as Earl returns to her shoulder

JANICE (CONT.)

(gesturing wildly, Earl bobbing)
And then, under the influence of this incredible new beverage, you're going to give them Bohemian Rhapsody like they've never seen. Do you know what my boss will do if I get the Google staff hooked on this shit?

She's frantically pulling up a Youtube videos on her phone.

JANICE (CONT.)

Oh my god, quick, we have six minutes to turn you into Freddie Mercury.

She scoots closer to him.

JANICE (CONT.)

Look, see how he opens his mouth, like, abnormally wide? Pretend you're a horse biting an apple.

JEFF

(shaking his head)
Janice, that's really nice, but ...

Earl jumps across the table and bites him, hard, on the elbow.

JEFF

Ow! What the hell!

It's quiet for a minute, Jeff rubbing his arm, all of them glaring at one another. Then, one by one, their eyes reflecting the image on Janice's phone, they begin to sing along, mouths (and beak) open wide, straining for a bite just out of reach.

JANICE

And you gotta head bang a little.

The three slow-motion head bang. Once. Twice. Three times.

JANICE (CONT.)

Okay, now close your eyes ...

They close their eyes.

JANICE

Arch your back ...

Earl pokes Jeff in the side. Jeff winces and arches his back.

JANICE

Now take off your shirt.

JEFF

Wait, what!?

Janice motions with raised eyebrows at her phone, where a bare-chested Freddie Mercury struts across the stage. She goes for Jeff's sweater and there's a brief struggle. She wins. Jeff sticks his hands in his armpits, covering his nipples. She pops the top on the can and presses it into his hands, pushing him gently toward the stage. Jeff looks uncertain, but then chugs it, gagging, as he walks to the stage. He's there, on a stool, squinting, a microphone in his hand, a huge black bird on his bare shoulder. A spotlight shines as the first notes play.

JEFF

(his voice high and shaky)

Is this the real life? Is this just
fantasy?

Earl screams and flaps his wings. Across the room, Janice takes wild bites at an imaginary apple.

JEFF (CONT.)

(more confident, mouth open wide)

Caught in a landslide ...

The crowd is cheering. Jeff stands up, knocking over his stool, sending Earl flying through the air.

JEFF (CONT.)

(now *channeling* Freddie Mercury)

no escape from reality ..."

FADE OUT.

THE END