

# Dishwasher

written by  
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## EPISODE ONE: SLAPS

FADE IN:

EXT. THE HILL - DAY

Tall grass sways beneath a wide, open sky.

A massive TREE sits atop one of many rolling hills.

Soft LAUGHTER carries through the wind.

A group of young kids skip across the hill, barefoot. They chase small, glowing CREATURES, playfully just out of reach.

One child FLOATS a few feet off the ground, spinning slowly, delighted.

Others tumble down the hill, lay in flowers, and climb the tree's thick branches.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

In sleep, we create worlds free of suffering. Where thought alone shapes reality. We dream more than we know. And remember almost none of it.

A young boy pauses.

He turns his head slightly - a faint smile forming.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

But every dream ends the same way.  
We wake up.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. MARK'S BEDROOM - DAY

The smile is gone.

A messy teen's bedroom. Mounted TV, crooked. Dirty carpet. Tangled charging cables. Greasy headphones hang from the bed. Sunlight creeps through the blinds, catching dust particles.

MARK RILEY (16), sporting a trendy dark-brown perm - now a mess - sprawled across his bed.

Pillows litter the floor.

A smartphone BLARES inches from his head. Alarm title: "WAKE UP!!:("

Mark groans, face scrunched. His hand swings toward the phone... SLAP.

A faint fart.

Cut to black.

CUT TO:

INT. METCALFE'S GROCERY STORE - KITCHEN

Mark washes dishes. The sounds of the grocery store bleed in – carts, chatter, muzak, hum of the refrigerators.

He washes a dish, places it. Washes another.

Water runs down the second dish, forming the title:

TITLE CARD: "DISHWASHER"

CUT TO:

INT. METCALFE'S - STORE

The title lingers in red outline, then fades.

OPENING CREDITS over the following:

MONTAGE - THE STORE

- Aerial view. The store hums with life. Customers everywhere.
- Exit doors. A community board crammed with flyers by the exit. People come and go with their carts. A girl puts up a lost cat sign.
- Butcher counter. JIM BRAUN (17), apron on, weighs meat for a customer.

JIM

Is this good?

The customer nods. Her toddler is acting out TikTok memes.

Toddler

Six! Seven! Six! Seven!

– Cash register. Two cashiers laugh about something. A customer eavesdrops.

– Outside the manager's office. Three managers chat, relaxed.

Everyone is talking to someone.

CUT:

INT. METCALFE'S - KITCHEN

Mark washes dishes. Alone.

The sound of running water.

Earbuds in. Music - his escape, isolating him from the outside world.

Time passes.

FLASH CUT MONTAGE - MARK ALONE

His face and body position remain constant.

– Mark washes dishes. Same motion. Different moments.

– Time jumps. The SINK refills. Empties. Refills.

– Mark drives. Silent. Stuck in traffic.

– Mark in his bedroom. Sitting at his desk.

– Mark in a crowded room. Laughter everywhere. Mark, apart.

– Mark sits in class. No one looks his way.

– Mark eats alone at Noodles and Company.

The cuts accelerate.

Eyes dulled. Plain faced. Mark remains detached throughout it all, waiting for each moment to end. Dazed. Jaded.

CUT TO:

INT. Mark's BEDROOM - NIGHT

Phone light washes over Mark's face.

9:02 PM.

His face SMUSHED into a pillow. Scrolling through TikTok.

A meme plays. He snickers.

MARK  
Heh. Heh.

He scrolls again.

Another video. The algorithm knows him well.

11:00 PM.

Battery: 2%.

His smile fades. He exhales, puffs his cheeks.

Scrolls just once more. Then again.

1:00 AM.

Mark's face reflects faintly on his phone screen, defeated, drained.  
His eyes - empty.

3:30 AM.

Mark jolts awake. Grabs his phone, to write a note. Falls back to bed.

CUT TO:

INT. MARK'S BEDROOM - DAY

Mark wakes.

For a moment - he feels good.

A smile.

He reaches for his phone. It's dead. He's late.

Stares at the ceiling.

Mark exhales.

He bolts out of bed.

CUT TO:

INT. MARK'S KITCHEN - DAY

JILL RILEY, 40s, warm, steady - Mark's mom - sipping tea calmly.

Mark EXPLODES through the kitchen and out the back door.

Jill pauses.

She keeps sipping.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROAD - DAY

Mark drives fast.

Suburban sprawl streaks past - strip malls, fast food signs.

Then - Traffic.

Bumper to bumper.

A dog hangs its head out a nearby window, blissfully unaware.

Mark exhales.

CUT TO:

EXT. METCALFE'S - PARKING LOT - DAY

Mark RIPS into the lot.

Gravel kicks up - tires screaming, about to DRIFT.

A beat of anticipation.

Then - his car creeps into a parking spot.

Uneventful.

CUT TO:

INT. METCALFE'S - MANAGER'S OFFICE - DAY

A small, cluttered office.

DAN METCALFE, 50s, kind-eyed, relentlessly positive, sits across from Mark.

Dan smiles – not unkindly.

DAN  
You're late again, Mark.

Mark nods. Braces.

But Dan stays gentle.

DAN (CONT'D)  
I know things happen. I get it.  
But being on time matters here. People notice.

Mark nods again.

DAN (CONT'D)  
You're quiet. You keep to yourself.  
Nothing wrong with that – but this place runs on people talking to  
each other.

Dan leans forward, sincere.

DAN (CONT'D)  
Word gets around. Folks think you're a loner.  
You don't have to be. Put yourself out there a little.

A beat.

DAN (CONT'D)  
And hey – if you ever need anything, you come to me.  
I've got you.

Mark manages a small nod.

CUT TO:

INT. METCALFE'S - KITCHEN - DAY

Mark places a dish on the rack.

Water traces down the plate, forming a word:

BORED.

The faucet drips.

Once.

Again.

The grocery store noise swells – carts, voices, distant laughter

Mark glances at the clock. It crawls.

His eyes dart. He checks behind him.

No one.

He hits a quick disco dance move.

Stops.

Checks his pocket for his phone.

He forgot it.

The faucet drips again. He notices.

Mark reaches out, instinctively –

The drop slows.

Hangs.

Mark freezes with surprise.

He tries again.

A drop quivers. Slows further. Again.

The drop nearly stops. He keeps trying.

CUT TO:

INT. METCALFE'S - SUSHI BAR - DAY

BO SIDONA (17) relaxed, oblivious, hungry, scans the sushi case.

Empty.

He spots some rolls set aside over the counter. Out of reach.

Scanning for an employee to help.

Mark stands in the background. Focused on the sink. A drop falls through the air.

BO  
Hey, guy.

The DROP shudders.

Hangs midair – frozen.

Mark turns – locks eyes with Bo.

BO (CONT'D)  
Excuse me?

CUT TO:

EXT. MARK'S DREAM - SPAWN POINT - DAY

Mark and Bo stand frozen.

A DESERT stretches endlessly around them. Heat shimmering.

They stand at the top of a dune.

A KITCHEN SINK stands next to them. Dishes fallen in the sand, like wreckage.

Mark and Bo slowly turn their heads – searching, confused.

Mark's eyes jump back and forth – comically wide. Panicked.

Bo's eyes do the same – even wider. In shock.

They slowly turn toward each other.

They lock eyes. Their eyes scream at each other.

DING.

A beat.

BO:

What did you—okay. Okay okay okay. What just happened. What did you do? What was that?

MARK:

I—

BO:

Because I was in a grocery store. I was looking at sushi. California rolls. And now I'm—

He gestures wildly.

BO (CONT'D):

—here? In a desert? With a sink?

MARK:

I don't—

BO:

You made a face. You looked at me. like—

Bo leans in — makes an exaggerated, stupid face.  
Mark starts to steam.

BO (CONT'D):

—like that. You were doing that. And then—

MARK: Can I—

BO:

—everything went white and I'm pretty sure I'm dead now, so if you could just explain what—

MARK:

Let me talk!

Bo freezes.

Mark breathes hard. Raising a semi-threatening backhand.

MARK (CONT'D):

I don't know you. Just... stay away from me.

A loud silence.

A patch of small desert flowers sways gently in the warm breeze.

TIME PASSES

The sun drifts lower. The desert turns an evening reddish pink.

Mark and Bo sit far apart.

Bo holds a plate over his head for shade. Mark uses his shirt, flicks his hair – a habit.

BO

So what's your name, dude?

Mark doesn't look at him.

MARK

Mark.

BO

I'm Bo.

Mark - hands squished into his face. Raises an eyebrow – acknowledgment.

MARK

...didn't ask. (whisper)

Mark stands. Starts stomping away.

BO

Where are you going?

MARK

...Anywhere but here.  
There's no point just sitting.

Mark turns towards Bo.

MARK (CONT'D)

You're a real bozo, you know that, Bo.

He instantly trips.

Mark tumbles down the dune – rolling, kicking up sand.

Bo stands, peers over.

Mark's halfway down.

Bo smirks – starts to turn away – BOOM a violent jolt.

Bo is launched into the air – still clutching the plate.

BLACK.

Bo is falling, flailing in the air. Behind him – a WAVE OF SAND.

A DESERT MEGAMODO erupts from the dune – a colossal lizard beast with leathery scales and crushing jaws.

Bo lands on the plate – sledding down the sand.

He catches up to Mark.

Bo makes another stupid face at Mark.

Trips.

They tumble together, crash landing into the bottom of the dune.

Calmly, they sit up – filthy, caked in dirt.

They look back.

Then at each other.

SFX: ROAD RUNNER / SCOOBY-DOO DASH

They RUN.

MEGAMODO slaps the ground.

Shadows sweep overhead.

A swarm of DESERT RIDERS appear, hovering on their air bikes – All clad in rough desert armor and menacing masks, feral, moving as one through the sand.

A rider trips Bo.

Bo faceplants. Ass up.

Mark hesitates – considers fleeing.

He turns back for Bo.

CUT TO:

EXT. MARK'S DREAM - SPAWN POINT - SUNSET

The DROP, still stuck, hovers above the sink. It falls – just a little.

Like a cactus, the sink, now half-buried, stands alone in the desert. Its shadow stretches across the sand.

CUT TO:

EXT. MARK'S DREAM - CARAVAN - NIGHT

A rock in the dirt TREMBLES under moonlight. Megamodo stomps past.

Bike lights flicker – riders surround the beast, who is strung with lamps.

Bo and Mark are cramped in a tiny cage atop the Megamodo.

Silence. They sit on opposite sides of the cage meant for 1 person.

BO:  
...Texas, maybe?

Mark doesn't respond.

BO (CONT'D):  
Could be Texas. Desert. Hot.

Nothing.

BO (CONT'D):  
Vegas?

MARK:  
There's no casinos.

BO:  
So he speaks.

Mark looks away.

Beat. Bo shifts. Tries again.

BO (CONT'D):

Okay. Hear me out. What if we both just... think really hard. About going home. Like, visualize it.

Mark stares at him.

BO (CONT'D):  
I'm serious. Close your eyes. Concentrate.

MARK:  
That's stupid.

BO:  
You got a better idea?

Mark doesn't.

BO (CONT'D):  
Yeah. That's what I thought.

Beat. Mark exhales. Reluctantly closes his eyes.

Bo closes his. They concentrate. Fierce focus.

A long moment.

Bo farts.

Mark's eyes snap open.

BO (CONT'D):  
(quietly) ...Excuse me.

Mark's jaw tightens. He's not going to laugh. He refuses.

Bo glances at him. Sheepish.

Mark looks away. His shoulders shake—just barely.

BO (CONT'D):  
Are you—

MARK:  
No.

BO:  
You're laughing.

MARK:  
I'm not.

He is. Fighting it. Losing.

Bo grins.

Mark breaks. Just for a second. A real laugh escapes—then he catches himself. Looks away. Angry that he let it happen.

Bo doesn't push it. A small smile.

The caravan moves on. The moon hangs low.

A beat.

In the distance, a RED SOLDIER — red leather jacket, hat, goggles, cloak — watches from high above. Masked, mysterious.

They drop from the sky on a hover bike, rocketing toward the caravan.

The Red Soldier shoots in, kicking up a massive cloud of sand and dust. Like lightning, they rip through the caravan, panic ensues.

The soldier throws a flashbang — MEGAMODO roars, startled, swinging its tail.

Their cage unlocks mysteriously.

The boys without time to think hop on the back of the Red Soldier's bike. They're off. The group weaves through the caravan. Tailed by the desert riders.

The riders begin to peel off, losing them in the dark.

Bo is at the end of the bike, hugging onto Mark. Mark isn't used to hugs.

A desert flower shines in the moonlight.

CUT TO:

INT. SECRET GOVERNMENT NEURO-ENGINEERING LAB - DAY

A wilted FLOWER sits beneath harsh fluorescent light.

A long, sterile hallway stretches endlessly.

Jim Braun (from earlier) - Metcalfe's butcher, psychic agent - calm and methodical, strides down the corridor. He scans charts. Glances at containment tanks. Exchanges quiet words with SCIENTISTS as he walks.

JIM BRAUN

Two more located.

All cargo accounted for.

Subjects stable.

The scientists nod. This isn't panic - it's routine. Almost friendly.

Jim reaches a neural monitoring station. Where lines of people - sedated - wear large brain computer interfaces (BCIs).

One of the BCI SCANNERS SPIKE - a subtle but undeniable change.

Jim stops. Leans in.

JIM BRAUN

That's new.

He moves quickly to a control chair, taps commands into the console. Other AGENTS gather behind him, curious, calm - professionals watching.

A pedal of the flower in the hallway falls on the table.

CUT TO:

EXT. MARK'S DREAM - DESERT TOWN - DAY

Wind howls past - mixed with the smooth HUM of the bike.

The rising sun, in view.

BO

Thanks man! You saved us!

Mark

What's your name, my guy? Where we going?

Red Soldier

...

Silence. Mark feels slighted.

They fly through the land. Strange objects dot the sand – a kid's BUCKET, a SHOVEL. Out of place. Forgotten.

They glide through a winding canyon – vibrant rock layers.

Ahead, a TOWN emerges.

A bustling market. Dense. Alive.

Like Cairo or Tatooine – but dreamlike, alien, wacky.

SERIES OF SHOTS – THE DESERT TOWN:

- A camel-like beast wheels stacked goods through the crowd.
- Humanoid figures of every shape and size, wrapped in desert cloth
  - all speaking SIMLISH – overlapping chatter, nonsense syllables.
- SNOOP DOGG strolls past, completely unbothered.
- Shopkeepers shoo children dressed in strange outfits.

They slow – enter the crowd. Drifting along.

The soldier stops, staring at a stone building.

A beat.

BO

Should we... go in there?

The soldier stays silent.

They dismount, weaving through the crowd, narrowly avoiding collisions.

Mark glances back at the soldier.

A glimmer of sunlight exposes eyes behind the mask –

Blue. Feminine. Striking.

A passerby moves between them.

She's gone.

CUT TO:

INT. MARK'S DREAM – ANTIQUE SHOP – DAY

Dust hangs in the air. Shelves filled with trinkets, paintings, artifacts, VCR players.

The SHOPKEEPER (70s), hunched and weathered, eyes sharp beneath deep wrinkles, spots them from behind the counter. She waves them off, irritated.

SHOPKEEPER

Humaji boobly, ginesetu. Utu!

Mark steps into the light.

MARK

Hi! I'm... Mark. This is Bo. We're lost, and we were... ah... um...

BO

We were told to come in here. We want to go home.

The Shopkeeper pauses. Studies them.

SHOPKEEPER (English accent)

Follow me.

A beat.

SHOPKEEPER (CONT'D)

Well, come along.

She steps through a painting on the wall – disappearing into it.

Mark and Bo exchange a look. They follow.

They move through impossible spaces, filled with antiques – dark, twisting corridors. Gravity shifts. They walk upside down. Walls bend. Logic doesn't apply.

They pass a heavy door marked with a SYMBOL – worth remembering.

They keep moving.

Mark reaches a door. His hand rests on the knob.

He looks back.

The Shopkeeper is gone.

Mark and Bo exchange a glance. Darkness surrounds them.

Mark turns the knob.

Light pours through – blinding.

CUT TO BLACK.

CUT TO:

INT. MARK'S DREAM - SPARE ROOM - DAY

WHITE. Endless. Empty.

Mark and Bo stand alone.

The void fades.

Warm light. A simple room forms.

An OLD MAN (70s), white beard, eyes ancient and knowing – sits in a worn chair. Calm. Waiting.

BO

Sir. We've traveled a long way.  
We need to go home. Can you help us?

MARK

Where are we—

OLD MAN

In a dream. Both of you.  
Everything here – including me – is a figment of your imagination.

He gestures to Mark. Antiques begin to float.

The boys pause.

BO

If this is a dream... how do we wake up?

OLD MAN

Let the dream reach its end.  
You can't escape it. Follow it.

MARK

That's not an answer.

He looks directly at Mark.

OLD MAN

Follow your intuition, Mark. Deep down, you know how. You've been here before.

The old man studies Mark.

OLD MAN

You're being watched, Mark.

CUT TO:

INT. SECRET GOVERNMENT NEURO-ENGINEERING LAB - DAY

Jim sits cross-legged, meditating. Monitors glow around him - brain scans, vitals, data streams.

OLD MAN (V.O.)

Monitored. Kept numb - by design. Deceived. A lab rat in a cage.

CUT TO:

INT. MARK'S DREAM - SPARE ROOM - DAY

OLD MAN:

Why are you so alone?

Bo glances at Mark. Awkward.

Mark's jaw tightens, his heartrate spikes.

CUT TO:

INT. SECRET GOVERNMENT NEURO-ENGINEERING LAB - DAY

Jim's face. Calm.

His eyes slowly open.

The monitors spike.

He stands. Moves quickly.

JIM:

Plug me in. Containment issue.

Technicians move quickly - sensors, earpiece, EMDR glasses. Jim settles into a chair.

CUT TO:

INT. MARK'S DREAM - SPARE OOM - DAY

Mark swallows.

MARK:

...What's the fastest way home?

OLD MAN:

You've been running your whole life, Mark. From people. From yourself.

MARK:

That's not—

BO:

...Okay. So we stop running.

Mark looks at him.

BO (CONT'D):

We got this.

CUT TO:

EXT. MARK'S DREAM - SPAWN POINT - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Mark squares up to DESERT RIDER #3.

He blinks. Instant backhand. He drops.

In the distance — Bo sprints away.

CUT TO:

INT. MARK'S DREAM - SPARE OOM - DAY

Mark stares at Bo.

MARK (skeptical):

...sure.

Silence. The Old Man stands.

OLD MAN:

It's your dream, Mark.

A SWORD materializes. Hovering over his palm.

OLD MAN (CONT'D):  
You make the rules.

He flicks his wrist.

The sword spins toward Mark's head -

CUT TO:

EXT. MARK'S DREAM - SPAWN POINT - DAY

Everything vanishes: the room, the sword, the Old Man.  
Only Mark and Bo remain.

A moment of pause.

On cue, the spiny lizard, Megamodo, peers over the hill and begins descending.

Desert Riders surprise them from behind.

Mark walks backward. Bumps into DESERT RIDER #3.

They lock eyes. The rider raises his hand-

Bo grabs the rider's arm.

BO:  
Run!

The rider turns. SMACKS Bo across the face.

Bo flies. Hits a far away sand mound.

Mark freezes. Staring at Bo.

DESERT RIDER #3 backhands Mark.

Mark drops.

Face SMUSHED into the sand.

A rock nearby - just out of reach. Hopelessness.

The riders start to laugh.

FLASH:

- The Old Man's gaze.

- Mark levitating the drop.
- Bo sacrificing himself.
- A tree on a hill.
- In bed, doomscrolling. The defeat in his eyes.

OLD MAN (V.O)

It's your dream, Mark. You make the rules.  
You aren't alone.

MARK (muttering)

No more running.

- The rock TREMBLES

OLD MAN (V.O)

Wake up!!:)

His eyes ignite with energy. A fierce focus.

The rock flies, knocking DESERT RIDER #1 onto his backside.

Mark springs up.

Runs his hands through his sandy perm - to no effect - and backhands  
DESERT RIDER #3 into the sky. They become a speck. Gone.

Bo lies behind a sand mound. Barely conscious.

Riders closing in. Shadows over him.

He squeezes his eyes shut.

BO (muttering):

Please... please...

A HOVERBIKE materializes beside him.

Bo opens his eyes.

BO (CONT'D):

...Holy shit.

Adrenaline kicks in. He pulls himself onto the bike.

Riders reach the him -

He blasts through the mound at the riders.

Bo rockets toward Mark.

BO  
Hop on!

Bo ascends. Mark hugs on for dear life.

Five riders tail them. Gunfire erupts – all misses.

The duo disappear into the sun, they DRIFT vertically, then plummet toward the riders, firing back.

The lizard monster leaps at them.

Bo swerves out of its jaws.

Mark backhands the monster. It crashes into the sand, causing a small quake.

Mark and Bo throw their hands up in celebration.

BO  
Let's gooo!

MARK  
Whooooooooooooow!

A DROP finally falls, shimmering in rainbow light.

Mark's face – dirty, colorful, eyes electric – smiling.

A long beat.

CUT TO:

INT. METCALFE'S - KITCHEN - DAY

Mark's face – lifeless, dull.

BO  
Can I get some of that sushi?

Mark hesitates. Fear fades. Charisma blossoms.

MARK

Yeah dawg. I'm Mark. What's your name?

BO

I'm Bo.

MARK

Nice to meet you, Bo.

They dap each other up (slap).

The sound echoes through the universe.

DISHWASHER THEME plays.

A native wildflower flutters in the wind.

Dishwasher Ending Animation plays.

END CREDITS over the following:

Two toddlers play in a sandbox, surrounded by toys:

- Shovel and bucket
- Dinosaur
- Motocycles

CUT TO:

EXT. MARK'S DREAM - SPAWN POINT - DAY

Megamodo lies upside down, cross eyed, unconscious. Riders retreat.

RED SOLDIER watches from afar.

JIM BRAUN, in a suit, wields a neon green katana.

He watches from a dune, talking into a device.

JIM

He's awake. Quicker than usual. Under control.

CUT TO:

Ext. METCALFE'S - MANAGER'S OFFICE - DAY

Manager Dan's expression shifts from happy-go-lucky to cold and menacing.

Dan hangs up.

FADE TO BLACK.