

SPEC SCRIPT
for

RONNY CHIENG: INTERNATIONAL STUDENT

Season 2, Episode 1

"The Supp"

written by
Euan Mitchell

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MAIN TITLE SEQUENCE

CUT TO:

ACT ONE

1. INT. UNIVERSITY SHOPPING ARCADE. DAY 1
RONNY and ASHER are walking through the shopping arcade.

ASHER

What else did you put on your exam paper other than a whale jumping over a unicorn?

RONNY

I remember a rainbow, a flower and maybe a giant jellyfish.

ASHER

Don't think that'll get you over the line, Ronny.

RONNY

I can't fail this subject, Asher. My mother will cane me.

ASHER

You don't expect me to believe that, do you? You're an adult.

RONNY

That only means instead of using the thin cane for kids, she uses the thick one.

ASHER

Seriously, you should ask Professor Dale for a supp exam.

RONNY

You really think he'd give me a second chance?

ASHER

Can't hurt to ask. Well, less than the cane anyway.

RONNY

Maybe I could drop by his office.

ASHER

Nah, don't bother.

RONNY

But you just said -

ASHER
He's right over there. And now
looks like a good time to ask.

RONNY
Huh? Why?

ASHER
I think he's just juiced up
his e-cigarette.

PROFESSOR DALE exits a pharmacy. He takes a long drag on
his e-cigarette. He exhales a plume of vapour with relief.

Ronny exchanges a nod with Asher, who goes on her way, then
he jogs towards Dale.

RONNY
Professor!

Ronny eases up to Dale, who is more interested in vaping.

RONNY (CONT'D)
Sir.

PROFESSOR DALE
You. (BEAT) Ronny Chieng,
isn't it?

RONNY
Yes, Professor.

PROFESSOR DALE
Walk with me, Chieng.

RONNY
Thank you, sir. It's about my
exam paper.

PROFESSOR DALE
The one I used for a paper
plane?

RONNY
Um, yeah. About that. Can I
sit a supplementary exam?

PROFESSOR DALE
Well, there is a supp exam
tomorrow afternoon.

RONNY
(surprised and hopeful)
Aah.

PROFESSOR DALE
But I've only offered it to
students who failed by (MORE)

PROFESSOR DALE (CONT'D)
a small margin, not to those
who handed in a collage of ...
magical marine life.

RONNY
But I had a fever.

PROFESSOR DALE
Funny, I thought you'd taken
too many cold and flu tablets.

RONNY
Well, I was trying to bring
down the fever.

PROFESSOR DALE
But you ended up shit creek.

They walk out of the building and into an outdoor area.

2. EXT. UNIVERSITY GROUNDS. CONTINUOUS

2

RONNY
Is there any way - ?

They are interrupted by Professor Dale's ex-wife JOY-ANNE
spotting him from a distance.

JOY-ANNE
There you are, you bastard!

PROFESSOR DALE
(TO RONNY) Jog with me, Chieng.

Dale takes a long drag as if to get up a head of steam

RONNY
Ah, OK.

They jog. Dale looks pained as he grips his e-cigarette.
Joy-Anne breaks into a run, arms pumping high.

JOY-ANNE
Give him back, you loser!

PROFESSOR DALE
(TO RONNY) My ex-wife thinks I
kidnapped the dog she stole from me.

RONNY
Did you?

PROFESSOR DALE
Look, taking our house and car
should've been enough for her.
(BEAT) Run with me, Chieng?

RONNY
You know what?

Ronny starts to slow, but Dale speeds up, arms flailing.

RONNY (CONT'D)
We can talk later.

PROFESSOR DALE
There won't be a later if we
don't make my office and she
tears me another asshole.

Ronny looks at the furious Joy-Anne. He catches up with Dale.

RONNY
But don't you two have
restraining orders out?

PROFESSOR DALE
Yeah. (GASPING FOR AIR) Meant
to be 50 metres. Plus she can't
come into the Law Faculty and I
can't go into Medicine.

Ronny looks ahead. They are nearly at the Law building.

JOY-ANNE
Hiding in there won't save
your pathetic neck, Declan!

3. EXT. ENTRANCE TO MAIN LAW BUILDING. CONTINUOUS 3
Dale and Ronny almost crash through the automatic door as
they stumble inside the Law Building.

PROFESSOR DALE
To my office!

Not far behind, Joy-Anne looks up at the security camera
covering the entrance. She curses indistinctly, stops short
of the door, pulls out her phone and dials.

JOY-ANNE
Security!

4. INT. PROFESSOR DALE'S OFFICE. CONTINUOUS 4
A friendly dog called ESKY (a breed such as a chocolate
Labrador, mature but still excitable), greets Dale and
Ronny as they breathlessly come in the door.

PROFESSOR DALE
Hello, Esky! Who's a good boy?

Dale pats his dog. Ronny eyes the dog cautiously.

RONNY

Good dog.

PROFESSOR DALE

She'll have security busting
in here any minute.

RONNY

I should just go.

PROFESSOR DALE

Tell you what. You take Esky
out the fire escape (POINTS AT
REAR EXIT), hide him till, um,

(awkwardly)

... it's dark,

(more forthrightly)

and I'll let you join the
other students doing a supp
tomorrow arvo.

RONNY

But that doesn't leave me much
time to study and I can't hide
a dog in International House
or the library.

PROFESSOR DALE

No pressure, of course, but
how will the news of failing
Property Law go down at home?

5. INT. ENTRANCE FOYER OF INTERNATIONAL HOUSE. DAY

5

Ronny is on his phone while leading the dog into the foyer.
The dog gives a happy bark when inside. To one side of the
foyer, the usual TWO GAMERS don't miss a beat of play.

RONNY

Easier if I explain when you
get here, Asher. (PAUSE)
Thanks. (HE HANGS UP, THEN
STARTS TAKING OFF HIS SHOES.)

WEI JUN emerges from the other side of the foyer.

WEI JUN

You cannot bring that in here!

ELVIN appears and looks pleased to see the dog.

ELVIN

Yeah, he can, Wei Jun.

WEI JUN

(seething)

Elvin ...

ELVIN
What? (SHRUGS) I like dogs.

A momentary exchange of glances at this ambiguous response.

CRAIG COOPER comes out of a nearby room. He is still waking up but in good humour. He goes straight over to pat Esky.

CRAIG
Hey, cool dog! Where'd you get him?

RONNY
Listen -

ELVIN
(interjecting but ignored by the others)
The market?

RONNY
- I'm only minding him today for (CLEARS THROAT) ... Professor Dale

CRAIG
Ooh, who's the teacher's pet now, Ronny Chieng?

RONNY
Wait. Craig, did you get offered a supp exam?

CRAIG
Um, well, yeah ... me and a few others.

Craig looks sheepishly at Wei Jun who glares at him.

WEI JUN
Why didn't you tell me?

CRAIG
Hey, it's not something I really wanted to broadcast.

Asher arrives at the entrance foyer. She is all smiles as she takes off her shoes and checks out the dog.

ASHER
Oh, wow! Where'd you get the dog?

RONNY
Just minding him for today.

ASHER
Who for?

CRAIG
(with an insinuating grin)
For Professor Dale.

ASHER
For Dale? What did you -

WEI JUN
(abruptly)
Whatever. Ronny, just take the
dog away so you don't get us
all in trouble.

RONNY
(TO ASHER) If you can hold
Esky while I get my laptop, I
will tell you all about it on
a walk to the park.

ASHER
Esky! What a cool name.

Asher takes the lead and starts patting the dog.

RONNY
Thank you.

ASHER
I miss my dog at home so much.

Ronny starts walking towards his room. Over his shoulder he
sees Esky lick Asher's smiling face. Ronny recoils slightly
in disgust. Wei Jun shakes her head and walks off. Craig
looks at Wei Jun leaving, but joins Asher in patting Esky.

CRAIG
Who's a good pooch, then?

Elvin smiles cryptically at Asher and Craig patting Esky.

6. EXT. UNIVERSITY GROUNDS OUTSIDE INTERNATIONAL HOUSE. DAY 6
Asher and Ronny are walking the dog away from International
House. There is a laneway nearby that they walk down.

RONNY
Can we go down that back way?

ASHER
Sure. Why?

RONNY
Less chance of Professor
Dale's ex-wife seeing us.

ASHER
Oh my god! Are they in a
custody dispute over this dog?

RONNY
It's their latest war.

ASHER
(LAUGHS) Let me guess: he
stole the dog back from her?

RONNY
And if I hide Esky till dark,
Dale gives me a supp.

ASHER
You are a smooth talker.

RONNY
He didn't leave me much
choice.

ASHER
I suppose his ex-wife can't
have him arrested without the
evidence on the other end of
this lead.

Ronny's phone rings. He stops and takes it out. It's his Mom.
Screenviews of MRS CHIENG punctuate her dialogue with Ronny.

RONNY
(TO ASHER) How does she do
that?

ASHER
What?

RONNY
How does my mom somehow know
the worst times to ring?

ASHER
(trying not to laugh)
I think it's her gift.

RONNY
(ANSWERS PHONE) Hi, Mom.

MRS CHIENG
Ronny. Are you in any trouble?

RONNY
No, mom. I'm not in any
trouble.

MRS CHIENG
Then why are your results not
showing online?

RONNY
Oh that. Yeah ...

MRS CHIENG

Yes?

RONNY

It means I got, um, a ... a

ASHER

(urgent whisper)

Lie!

RONNY

... lie ...

ASHER

(pained whisper)

No!

RONNY

(realises his misunderstanding)

(TO MOTHER) ... sen ... gee ... um.

MRS CHIENG

What's a lie-sen-geum?

RONNY

It's a law word, for, um,
extension work.

MRS CHIENG

Extension work?

RONNY

Yeah. It's an honour to get a
lie-sengeum.

MRS CHIENG

You got honours?

RONNY

Not exactly. I'll explain
after I finish all this work
I've got to do. So busy now,
Mom.

MRS CHIENG

But, Ronny ...

RONNY

Love ya. (HANGS UP)

ASHER

(CHUCKLES) Your mother really
does have a gift.

RONNY

Aaarrgh!

Ronny looks pained as he shakes his head at Asher's grin.

7. INT. VICE-CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE, RECEPTION. DAY 7

Joy-Anne stomps into the Vice-Chancellor's office reception area. A well-groomed but steely female RECEPTIONIST about her own age is sitting at the reception desk.

RECEPTIONIST
Hello, Joy-Anne.

JOY-ANNE
Don't try telling me he's in a meeting.

RECEPTIONIST
Well, he's -

JOY-ANNE
This can't wait.

The Receptionist wearily picks up her desk phone.

RECEPTIONIST
I'll check.

JOY-ANNE
Good of you.

8. INT. VICE-CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE. DAY 8

The VICE-CHANCELLOR is a silver-haired suit who is writing at his desk. The speakerphone on his desk buzzes.

RECEPTIONIST (ON PHONE)
Joy-Anne would like to see you, Vice-Chancellor.

VICE-CHANCELLOR
Oh, Lord, not again. What now?

RECEPTIONIST (ON PHONE)
I haven't asked.

VICE-CHANCELLOR
Probably just wants me to fillet her ex-husband.

RECEPTIONIST (ON PHONE)
Would you like her to wait while you finish what you're doing?

VICE-CHANCELLOR
No, that just makes her madder than a sack of feral cats.

9. INT. VICE-CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE, RECEPTION. CONTINUOUS 9

RECEPTIONIST
And wet ones at that. (HANGS UP)

Joy-Anne looks quizzically at the Receptionist and is about to question her comment, but the Receptionist cuts her off.

RECEPTIONIST (CONT'D)
(sickly sweet)
The Vice-Chancellor will see
you now.

10. INT. VICE-CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE. CONTINUOUS 10
Joy-Anne storms through the Vice-Chancellor's office door.

VICE-CHANCELLOR
(FORCED SMILE) Joy-Anne.

JOY-ANNE
Martin, this time that pitiful
ex-husband of mine really has
screwed the pooch.

VICE-CHANCELLOR
What's he done now, Joy-Anne?

JOY-ANNE
Stolen my dog and hidden it in
his office.

VICE-CHANCELLOR
How do you know?

JOY-ANNE
I saw him take it into the Law
Faculty.

VICE-CHANCELLOR
What were you doing at the Law
Faculty? You know you're not
meant to go near there.

JOY-ANNE
Look, I was watching him from
a distance, and this isn't
about me. It's about him
kidnapping my dog.

VICE-CHANCELLOR
Any idea how this dognapping
occurred?

JOY-ANNE
He must've broken in while I
was out. I'm going to lay
charges with the police once I
have the evidence.

VICE-CHANCELLOR
Evidence?

JOY-ANNE
The dog, Einstein.

VICE-CHANCELLOR
Very well (SIGHS). I can call him before a disciplinary committee of the Law Faculty.

JOY-ANNE
Why can't you just put him out of his misery and fire him?

VICE-CHANCELLOR
That's a little extreme, don't you think?

JOY-ANNE
Not if you grew a testicle did your job properly.

VICE-CHANCELLOR
Now, there's no need for that sort of language, Joy-Anne.

JOY-ANNE
Humph! Prove me wrong.

The Vice-Chancellor shakes his head and picks up his desk phone.

11. EXT. INNER-CITY PARK. DAY

11

Ronny and Asher walk Esky into a tree-lined park with a grassy open space and a playground.

RONNY
You got any cold and flu tablets?

ASHER
(scoldingly)
Ronny ...

RONNY
Kidding.

Ronny walks up to a picnic table and puts his laptop on it.

RONNY
Well, this is it - last chance, last stand, let the cramming begin.

ASHER
Take your time. Esky and I have a lot of business to attend to.

Asher lets Esky off his lead and throws a stick, which Esky chases. Ronny grins at them as he takes his laptop out of its case.

MONTAGE:

- Ronny grits his teeth as he looks at his laptop's screen. He types with urgency. His eyes are intense.
- Esky is bringing the stick back to Asher, who gladly accepts it, then throws it again for Esky.
- Ronny's brow is furrowed and there is a hint of perspiration on his forehead as he studies on.
- Asher and Esky are playing a tug of war with the stick and Asher ends up on her bum. Ouch!
- Ronny forces a quick smile as he glances at Asher and Esky having fun. But Ronny's real focus is his laptop.
- Asher and Esky are rolling in the grass together.

FADE TO BLACK

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

12. EXT. STREET OUTSIDE INNER-CITY APARTMENTS. LATE AFTERNOON 12
At the end of a long day, Professor Dale is carrying his briefcase home as he walks along the street outside his block of (dog-box) apartments.

Dale spots a FIGURE watching him from a car parked opposite his block of apartments. The Figure pretends not to look, but can't help peering back at Dale after a few moments.

Dale's gait is suddenly stilted, with a touch of panic, as he goes to enter his block of apartments.

13. INT. PROFESSOR DALE'S LIVING ROOM. LATE AFTERNOON 13
Professor Dale bustles in the door of his apartment and straight into a poky living room where a computer is on a table near the main window. He throws down his briefcase.

Dale wakes up his computer with a wiggle of its mouse. In the few seconds it takes for the screen to light up, Dale peeks out his blinds to see if the Figure in the car is still watching him.

14. EXT. STREET OUTSIDE INNER-CITY APARTMENTS. CONTINUOUS 14
The Figure in the car is not only still present, but he appears to have just finished taking a photo of Dale's apartment with his phone. The Figure quickly pretends to be checking something on the screen of his phone.

15. INT. PROFESSOR DALE'S LIVING ROOM. CONTINUOUS 15
Dale lets go of the blinds and looks even more alarmed as he sits down at his computer and brings up a window that says: "STUDENT RECORDS".

Dale clicks again, scrolls down and sees the right link, which he clicks to reveal Ronny Chieng's enrolment record, complete with photo.

Dale pulls out his phone and types in a number.

16. EXT. INNER-CITY PARK. LATE AFTERNOON 16
Asher and Esky are dozing on the grass, not far from where Ronny is still intensely studying with his laptop at the picnic table.

Ronny's phone rings. It wakes Asher and Esky. During the following dialogue - intercut between Professor Dale and Ronny - Asher and Esky pick themselves up and wander back to Ronny's picnic table.

RONNY

Hello?

PROFESSOR DALE

Chieng, it's me, Professor Dale.

RONNY

Oh, good. Esky is all OK and I'll bring him back to your office now.

PROFESSOR DALE

No, no, I'm at home.

RONNY

Oh. Is that far from uni?

PROFESSOR DALE

Within walking distance. But I need you to hold onto Esky till tomorrow morning.

RONNY

But you said only till dark.

PROFESSOR DALE

I know, I know, but my adorable ex-wife has hired someone to watch my place.

RONNY

But I have to give you back Esky. I need the time to study.

PROFESSOR DALE

You can bring him back in the morning, right after my hearing.

RONNY

What hearing?

PROFESSOR DALE

I've got to face a Law Faculty disciplinary hearing.

RONNY

What will they do to you?

PROFESSOR DALE

Well, if they suspend me, then no-one gets a supp exam.

RONNY

(HE DROPS HIS HEAD INTO ONE HAND) Oh no.

PROFESSOR DALE

But as long as you're hiding
Esky, there's nothing to worry
about.

RONNY

You sure?

PROFESSOR DALE

Trust me, if there's no hard
evidence against me, after 30
years in the law I can talk my
way out of anything.

RONNY

Okaaay. So do you think you
could use your years of legal
experience to talk your ex-
wife into sharing your dog 50-
50?

PROFESSOR DALE

Chieng, she teaches dissection
to budding doctors so I'd
probably end up with 50
percent of a dog that's been
split down the middle for
educational purposes.

RONNY

Oowarr, no! (BEAT) OK, OK.
I'll figure something out and
see you tomorrow morning.

PROFESSOR DALE

Good man.

Ronny ends the call. He looks at Asher.

RONNY

Asher. Have you got any room
on your couch tonight?

17. EXT. FRONT OF NEIGHBOURHOOD SUPERMARKET. EARLY EVENING 17

Ronny, Asher and Esky are walking up to a pole near the
front entrance of a supermarket.

Asher ties Esky's lead to the pole.

Asher and Ronny walk into the supermarket's entrance.

18. INT. SUPERMARKET AISLE, PET FOOD SECTION. EARLY EVENING 18

For a long moment, Ronny and Asher are looking up and down
the wide variety of pet foods along the shelves.

RONNY

How many different ways are there to package meat that's not fit for humans so it looks delicious?

ASHER

All we need is the second cheapest can of muck and a packet of treats.

RONNY

Treats?

ASHER

Yeah, stuff like dried beef jerky that you can whip out to get a dog to come back to you.

RONNY

Oh yeah, look ... (PICKS PACK FROM SHELF) these straps are made from "real kangaroo". Like there are a lot of fake ones hanging round.

ASHER

OK, let's try 'em. They might be good.

RONNY

Ooh, I dunno these could lead to bad habits. What's next, dried wombat ... koala jerky?

ASHER

I didn't think you'd be squeamish about strange meats. I mean, aren't fruit bats a delicacy in Malaysia?

RONNY

Yeah, but we don't put them on our national coat of arms.

ASHER

Well, if you can find a can of emu meat, we might be able to get Esky to sing the national anthem.

Asher keeps a straight face. Ronny nods and grins - he likes the idea - then resumes the search.

Ronny runs his finger over several cans.

RONNY

Emu ... emu ... emu?

Asher lets a smile creep onto her face as she continues to browse for the right can of dog food.

19. EXT. STREET FRONT OF INNER-CITY SHARE HOUSE. NIGHT 19
Ronny, Asher and the dog approach the front of Asher's share house. The porch light is on, but the other windows are dark.

20. INT. HALLWAY OF SHARE HOUSE. NIGHT 20
Asher flicks on the hallway light as she leads Esky and Ronny towards the kitchen at the back.

ASHER
(calling out)
Hello. (PAUSE) Anyone home?

There is no answer.

RONNY
So far so good.

21. INT. KITCHEN OF SHARE HOUSE. CONTINUOUS 21
Asher leads Esky and Ronny into the kitchen. She goes to a cupboard to get a bowl.

ASHER
I'll grab a bowl to feed Esky from, but we should probably keep him outside because we don't know how well house-trained he is.

RONNY
With his parents, he's almost guaranteed to have a bed-wetting problem.

22. EXT. BACKYARD OF SHARE HOUSE. NIGHT 22
Ronny and Asher enter the backyard. They let Esky off the lead and he sniffs around. During the first few lines of the following dialogue, Asher opens the ring-top can of dog food and empties it into the bowl. Esky sits and waits.

RONNY
Hey, you've got a little shed that Esky could sleep in.

ASHER
No, it's full of crap.

RONNY
He could go free range.

ASHER
Yeah, but (SHE LOOKS AT SKY)
it might rain tonight.

Esky gets stuck into his bowl of food.

RONNY
Never a spare kennel around
when you need one.

ASHER
Hey, I know. We've got some
old cardboard packing boxes
folded up in the shed.

Asher walks to the backyard shed. Ronny follows.

RONNY
Yeah, one of them might fold
out into a pop-up kennel.

Asher picks out a cardboard box.

ASHER
Here we go. If I can remember
how to fold the flaps.

Asher starts folding out the box, but it's not easy.

RONNY
Does that flap (POINTS) go
under (POINTS) that one?

ASHER
You know, Ronny, can you just
let me do this, please?

RONNY
Sorry. Only trying to help.

ASHER
Aaand, yes! There we go.

Asher puts the box on its side.

ASHER (CONT'D)
Come on, Esky. Come and try
out your kennel.

Esky sits and stays put.

RONNY
I think Esky thinks it's a
little small for him.

ASHER
We haven't got any bigger
boxes.

RONNY
What about we use all the
boxes to make a super kennel?

ASHER
Could work. I've got packing
tape and a stapler inside.

RONNY
You grab them and I'll get the
other boxes out.

ASHER
Cool.

Asher disappears inside the house.

TIME LAPSE SHOTS of Ronny and Asher building a bizarre
kennel out of numerous boxes, partly supported by two spare
fence palings, a few bricks, packing tape and staples.

At the end they stand back and admire their work.

RONNY
We can probably now call
ourselves property developers.

ASHER
More qualified than many.

Asher bends down near the entrance to the improvised kennel
and slaps her thighs a few times to beckon Esky.

ASHER (CONT'D)
Carn, Esky. Come and try out
your new house.

Esky is sitting and paying attention but staying put.

RONNY
Come on. (ESKY UNMOVED) Good dog.

ASHER
You got those treats handy?

RONNY
In my pocket.

ASHER
See what happens if you toss
one inside the kennel.

Ronny pulls out a treat and tosses it inside the kennel.
Esky leaps into the kennel, scoffs the treat and settles
down inside his improvised shelter. Ronny and Asher laugh.

RONNY
It's like he wants to do more
than eat the kangaroo.

ASHER
He wants to be the kangaroo.

Suddenly, the back door opens and RACHEL, a 20-year-old engineering student, enters the backyard. Rachel is dressed plainly and has a sensible haircut.

RACHEL
You two playing house already?

ASHER
(a little embarrassed)
Oh, hi, Rachel. Rachel, this is Ronny. Ronny, meet Rachel.

RONNY
Hi, Rachel.

RACHEL
We finally get to meet you.

ASHER
Ronny and I have just made a pop-up kennel so a friend of ours can stay the night.
(TURNS TO KENNEL) Esky!

Esky comes out to say hello.

RACHEL
Yeah, that's fine with me, but Fritha has just come home too, and I'm pretty sure she's -

A loud sneeze comes from inside the house. All eyes turn to watch FRITHA enter the backyard. Fritha is a 20-year-old arts student who dresses mostly in black and has streaks of colour in her hair. An even louder sneeze follows.

FRITHA
My allergies are suddenly ...
(SNEEZES AGAIN) Oh my god, whose dog is that?!

RONNY
I'm minding him for a friend.

FRITHA
I'm allergic to dogs!
(SNEEZES)

ASHER
Oh, I'm so sorry, Fritha, I didn't know.

FRITHA
You must be Ronny.

RONNY
Yeah, sorry, Fritha. We didn't know. I'll take him away.

FRITHA

Look I appreciate a bit of
child substitution as much as
the next person, but ...
(SNEEZES)

RONNY

Child substitution ...?

FRITHA

(matter-of-factly)
Yeah. So any chance you could
take him out the back gate
instead of through the house?

RONNY

Fine. Come on, Esky.

Fritha and Rachel go inside. Ronny puts the lead on Esky.

ASHER

I'm really sorry, Ronny.

RONNY

We'll be OK. It's after dark
so I should be able to sneak
him into International House.

ASHER

You sure?

Ronny puts on a brave smile, and Asher looks sad as she
walks to open the back gate.

RONNY

Yeah. Thanks for trying, but I
think Esky will be watching me
study in my room all night.

ASHER

Hey, Esky. Make sure you don't
let him near the cold and flu
tablets again.

23. EXT. NEIGHBOURHOOD SHOPPING CENTRE. NIGHT

23

Ronny is walking Esky along the footpath outside some
shops. Ronny stops. He looks in the window of a kebab shop.

RONNY

I've heard about this in
Australia, Esky. (BEAT) You're
on your way home and suddenly
a kebab seems like the best
thing in the world to eat.

Esky and Ronny look at each other, like Esky knows what
Ronny means.

24. EXT. BUS STOP IN SHOPPING CENTRE. NIGHT 24

Ronny is sitting in an empty bus stop while he munches on a kebab. Esky is sitting and waiting for a morsel. Ronny pulls off a piece of meat and tosses it in the air for Esky to catch.

RONNY
There you go, buddy.

Esky catches the meat, eats it instantly and waits for more. Ronny smiles and shakes his head. They've bonded.

25. INT. FOYER OF INTERNATIONAL HOUSE. NIGHT 25

Ronny sneaks in the door as quietly as he can. He mimes for Esky to be quiet. In the background there are some faint noises from a computer game.

Ronny takes off his shoes and looks ahead to the door of his dorm room. He starts tip-toeing towards it across the recreation room.

26. INT. RECREATION ROOM AT INTERNATIONAL HOUSE. NIGHT 26

The two Gamers are playing away as usual, oblivious to Ronny and Esky. As Ronny goes to pass a couch, he notices a familiar mass on it. He pauses. After a moment, he pokes the mass on the couch.

RONNY
(quietly)
Craig. (POKES HIM AGAIN)
(slightly louder)
Craig.

CRAIG
(GRUNTS) Yeeaaaah. What?

RONNY
Craig, shouldn't you be studying?

CRAIG
I was trying to ...

Craig picks up a law textbook from the floor.

RONNY
Come with me.

Craig sits up some more, then sees Esky.

CRAIG
Oh, great, you got -

RONNY
Shhh!

CRAIG
Yeah, OK. Coming.

27. INT. RONNY'S ROOM. CONTINUOUS

27

Ronny leads Esky and Craig into his room. Craig is carrying his law textbook.

CRAIG
Did you do much study today?

RONNY
You know, I think after going over Wei Jun's notes again, with another cram session, I might just get there.

CRAIG
Cool.

Ronny sits at his desk and turns on his laptop.

RONNY
But I'm not going to count my ducks before they hatch.

Craig takes a seat on the side of Ronny's bed.

CRAIG
(grinning)
Chickens.

RONNY
Huh?

CRAIG
Don't count your chickens before they hatch.

RONNY
Yeah, whatever.

CRAIG
Hey, if we cram together tonight maybe both of us will pass.

RONNY
That's the idea.

CRAIG
Esky should be alright on the floor.

Esky has already settled into a corner of the room.

RONNY
Good dog, Esky.

CRAIG
Do you want me to see if I
have any cold and flu tablets
left in my room?

RONNY
Just open your book, Craig.

Craig opens his law book. Ronny looks at his computer.

CRAIG
Chapter 6?

RONNY
Yeah. (BEAT) So in regard to
the division between movable
and immovable property within
the civil law system -

CRAIG
As opposed to the common law
system of court-determined
precedents.

RONNY
Yup ... the relevant
codification of legal
principles into a referable
framework extends into ...

FADE TO BLACK

ACT THREE

28. INT. RONNY'S ROOM. MORNING

28

Ronny is asleep, slumped over his desk. Craig is slumped over Ronny's made bed and has his head resting on an open law textbook. Craig's open mouth is drooling onto a page.

A spluttering snore from Craig causes Ronny to stir.

RONNY
(groggy with sleep)
Ohhh, what the ...?

Ronny's eyes suddenly pop open. His face shows he has just remembered something. He props himself up on his elbows.

RONNY (CONT'D)
(whispering)
Es-ky.

Ronny looks at his bedside clock, which shows it is just after 10 am. Ronny is not pleased but is not yet alarmed.

RONNY (CONT'D)
Oh, no.

Ronny sits up fully at his desk. He looks around his room.

RONNY (CONT'D)
(at speaking volume)
Esky. (PAUSE) Here, boy.

Ronny sees the door to his room is open a crack.

RONNY (CONT'D)
Oh, shit!

Ronny jumps to his feet and shakes Craig.

RONNY (CONT'D)
Craig, Craig!

CRAIG
(half asleep)
Whaaat?

RONNY
The door's open and Esky's gone!

Ronny dashes to the door of his room, as Craig slowly gets to his feet, groaning as he levers himself up off the bed.

29. INT. RECREATION ROOM AT INTERNATIONAL HOUSE. CONTINUOUS 29
Ronny dashes around the rec room, calling out as he goes.

RONNY
Esky! Esky! Has anyone seen
Esky?

The two Gamers who are permanently in the rec room don't miss a beat of their play as they answer.

GAMER 1
Sorry.

GAMER 2
No time.

RONNY
(continuing to look)
Esky!

Elvin appears from the food preparation area. He is wearing an apron and holding a vegetable knife.

ELVIN
(smiling)
What happen to Esky?

RONNY
Elvin?! You didn't -? (BEAT).
Have you seen Esky?

ELVIN
Not since yesterday.

RONNY
He's escaped from my room.

ELVIN
Who leave your door open?

Craig walks out of Ronny's room into the rec room.

CRAIG
Morning! Any sign of Esky?

RONNY
Did you leave the door of my
room open last night?

CRAIG
No.

RONNY
You sure?

CRAIG
Oh, wait. I did go to the
bathroom early this morning.

RONNY

How early?

CRAIG

I dunno. But things were pretty quiet.

RONNY

Oh my god, Esky could've been gone for a few hours!

CRAIG

OK. Don't panic! (HE LOOKS PANICKED) Let's start by searching the campus.

RONNY

I'll start with the Law Faculty. He might have tried to find Professor Dale.

CRAIG

Yeah, but he's a dog who likes to eat so he might be up around the caf.

ELVIN

And I look out for him here (INDICATES FOOD AREA WITH KNIFE) in case he come back.

CRAIG

Ronny, ring Asher. She might be somewhere on campus.

RONNY

I'll get my phone. Ring me - (CALLS OUT TO ALL) anybody ring me - if you see Esky!

30. INT. PROFESSOR DALE'S OFFICE. DAY

30

Professor Dale is reading the racing form guide at his desk. He puts down the form guide. To the sound of a military executioner's drum beat, Dale reaches into the bottom drawer of his desk and pulls out a crumpled academic gown. He un-crumples the gown as he stands up. He puts the gown on and brushes it down in a hopeless attempt to make himself look neat and formal.

From one side of his desk, Dale picks up a black satchel that is designed to carry legal briefing papers. He weighs it up. It feels too light. He bends down to his printer and takes out some blank A4 pages, which he drops into the satchel. He looks pleased at the new weight of his satchel, which he puts under his arm.

Dale checks the form guide one last time, straightens up, takes a deep breath and reaches for the door handle.

31. INT. CORRIDOR FROM DALE'S OFFICE TO BOARD ROOM. DAY 31
The sound of a military executioner's drum continues as Dale strides down a corridor towards a door with a SECURITY GUARD standing next to it. The sign on the door becomes clearer as Dale approaches: "Law Faculty Board Room".

PROFESSOR DALE
Are you really necessary at
these proceedings?

SECURITY OFFICER
More than anyone would like to
admit, Professor.

Professor Dale forces a smile and gulps as he steps forward to open the door.

32. INT. LAW FACULTY BOARD ROOM. DAY 32
Professor Dale enters the board room and the Security Guard follows him in.

Directly ahead of Dale there are FIVE LAW ACADEMICS wearing gowns, who have been talking casually and indistinctly. On Dale's arrival they fall silent and take their seats along a bench to sit in judgment. In the middle of the bench sits a large man with a round and permanently red face (from long-term drinking) who has a gavel, he is the ADJUDICATOR.

PROFESSOR DALE
Good morning, all.

Five pairs of eyes look sternly at Dale. No-one replies in the awkward pause that follows.

33. EXT. UNIVERSITY GROUNDS NEAR LIBRARY. DAY 33
Ronny is running while gripping his phone to one ear and calling out as he goes.

RONNY
Esky! Come on, come here, boy!

34. EXT. WALKWAY IN A GREEN PART OF THE CAMPUS. DAY 34
Asher answers her phone. The words that are exchanged are indistinct, but the message has effect. She looks alarmed, hitches her bag securely on her shoulder and starts to run.

35. EXT. UNIVERSITY GROUNDS NEAR THE CAFETERIA. DAY 35
Craig is running and looking high and low.

CRAIG
Esky! Esky! Here, buddy!

MICK, the Aussie bogan, sees Craig and shakes his head.

MICK
I know how it feels, man.
Losing an esky is like losing
a part of your inner being.

CRAIG
What are you talking about, Mick?

MICK
Especially when you've only
just filled it up with grog.

Mick tears up. Craig looks puzzled, nods and runs on.

36. EXT. GROUNDS OUTSIDE THE LAW BUILDING. DAY 36
Ronny and Asher are approaching the front of the Law
Building from different directions.

37. EXT/INT. ENTRANCE TO LAW BUILDING. CONTINUOUS 37
Ronny and Asher are breathing heavily as they arrive in the
doorway of the Law Building.

RONNY
If he's not in here, I don't
know where he is.

ASHER
You tried the number he rang
you on yesterday?

RONNY
Yeah. No answer.

ASHER
Come on.

They run down the hallway towards Dale's office.

38. INT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE DALE'S OFFICE. CONTINUOUS 38
Ronny knocks on Professor Dale's door. He and Asher catch
their breath. There is no answer.

RONNY
Dammit! He's not here.

ASHER
He's probably in the middle of
that hearing.

RONNY
We can't interrupt that or
we'll blow his story.

ASHER

What now?

RONNY

Come on, maybe one of the security guys has seen Esky.

39. EXT. UNIVERSITY'S SECURITY OFFICE. DAY

39

Ronny and Asher run up to the door of the security office. But when Ronny goes to open it, he finds it is locked.

RONNY

Why do they lock their office during the day?

ASHER

Look, there's an intercom.

Ronny presses the intercom button. There is a pause, then a crackly voice speaks.

SECURITY VOICE

What seems to be the problem?

RONNY

Have you seen a lost dog running around campus this morning?

SECURITY VOICE

All lost property is handled by the Facilities Department, behind the Botany building.

RONNY

Lost dogs are lost property?

SECURITY VOICE

(louder)

All lost property is handled -

RONNY

Yeah, OK, we get it.
(TO ASHER) Come on.

Ronny and Asher run off.

40. EXT. UNIVERSITY GROUNDS NEAR FACILITIES OFFICE. DAY

40

Joy-Anne is walking along a pathway when she spots Ronny and Asher walking quickly towards the Facilities office.

Joy-Anne stops. She watches Ronny and Asher enter the office. Joy-Anne purses her lips and gives a knowing nod.

41. INT. FACILITIES OFFICE. DAY

41

There is a FACILITIES PERSON in overalls behind a counter with a partly obscured storage area behind.

RONNY

Hi. Have you seen a lost -?

There is a bark from deeper inside the office.

ASHER

Our dog!

FACILITIES PERSON

Ha! Found him wandering around campus this morning.

RONNY

Sorry, I didn't tie him up properly when I was at the caf.

FACILITIES PERSON

Lucky he didn't get too far. What's his name?

RONNY

Esky.

The Facilities Person shuffles towards the back storage area while continuing to talk.

FACILITIES PERSON

Well, I was just about to put Esky in a campus-wide email because there's no ID tag on his collar.

RONNY

I'm so sorry, I've gotta do something about that.

FACILITIES PERSON

No worries. Here you go.

Ronny and Asher bend down to give Esky a pat and take his lead. Esky's tail is wagging wildly.

Two figures suddenly arrive in the doorway behind. It is Joy-Anne, flanked by a LARGE SECURITY GUARD.

JOY-ANNE

I had a hunch, it would be worth following you two in here.

RONNY / ASHER

Uh-oh. / Gulp.

JOY-ANNE
I'll be taking that dog, thank
you very much.

FACILITIES PERSON
But I thought he belonged to
these two.

JOY-ANNE
They'd like you to believe
that, but this is my dog.

Joy-Anne grabs hold of Esky's lead. Esky whimpers.

FACILITIES PERSON
Can you prove that?

JOY-ANNE
Call the Vice-Chancellor if
you need confirmation. I'll be
in my office.

RONNY
(TO FACILITIES PERSON) Long
story. (SHRUGS)

42. EXT. GROUNDS OUTSIDE FACILITIES OFFICE. DAY 42

Joy-Anne is leading Esky away from the Facilities office.
A sad Ronny and Asher slowly follow them out the door.

Esky looks back at Ronny and Asher, and tries to drag Joy-
Anne back in their direction. Joy-Anne reacts aggressively.

JOY-ANNE
Come on, you stupid dog!

Esky whimpers as he is snapped back into step by Joy-Anne.
Ronny and Asher follow at a distance.

43. EXT. GROUNDS OUTSIDE MEDICINE FACULTY BUILDING. DAY 43

Ronny and Asher are watching Joy-Anne lead a reluctant Esky
towards the Medicine Faculty Building.

RONNY
I hope Esky comes out of that
Medicine Faculty in one piece.

ASHER
She wouldn't, would she?

RONNY
Look, I feel sorry for Esky
but I don't want to get into
any more trouble.

ASHER
We can't let Joy-Anne win.

RONNY
We should just get back to Professor Dale and tell him what's happened. He can deal with her.

ASHER
You know, I wouldn't have much faith in Professor Dale being able to talk his way out of trouble with a disciplinary committee.

RONNY
What are you saying?

ASHER
Dale might go down and you won't get your supp.

RONNY
Oh.

ASHER
Who would you rather face:
Joy-Anne or your mother?

Ronny gulps. Then a thought crosses his mind.

RONNY
Hey! I've still got those roo
treats in my pocket.

Ronny pulls out the pack and extracts a strap of dried roo.

ASHER
I reckon that dog would take on a wild boar to get one of those.

RONNY
(GRINS) We'll soon find out.

ASHER
Just don't let Joy-Anne see you coming, or she'll have time to brace herself.

RONNY
OK. I'll try slipping up behind them, if you can you make sure the automatic door is open for a quick getaway.

Ronny darts into the entrance of the Medicine Building. Asher quietly follows, several paces back.

44. INT. ENTRANCE FOYER OF MEDICINE FACULTY BUILDING. DAY 44
 Joy-Anne and Esky are waiting for the lift. Esky has spotted Ronny, but Joy-Anne hasn't noticed. Suddenly the lift door opens.

JOY-ANNE
 (TO ESKY) In the lift. Heel!

Joy-Anne is stepping into the lift as she pulls on Esky's lead. Ronny knows it's now or never.

RONNY
 Treat! Treat!

Esky vigorously shakes his neck, manages to slip his collar and charges towards Ronny. Joy-Anne looks set to explode.

JOY-ANNE
 You mongrel flea factory!

Ronny keeps running with the treat to where Asher is keeping the automatic door open. The lift doors start to close on Joy-Anne, which she violently shoves aside.

RONNY
 Come on, Esky!

ASHER
 Good boy, Esky!

Ronny, Asher and Esky run out of the Medicine Faculty.

JOY-ANNE
 Come back here, you swine!

As Joy-Anne takes off, a trolley of empty animal cages is wheeled across her path by an ORDERLY. She crashes into the cages, knocking some flying, but she quickly re-groups.

ORDERLY
 Sorry, Doctor!

JOY-ANNE
 Where were these when I needed them a minute ago?

45. EXT. UNIVERSITY LAWNS. DAY 45
 Ronny, Asher and Esky dash across the lawns with Joy-Anne running a reasonable way behind them.

46. EXT. UNIVERSITY OUTDOOR EATING AREA. DAY 46
 Ronny, Asher and Esky dash past tables where students are eating. Esky looks interested in all the food being eaten, but Ronny urges him on.

RONNY
Come on, Esky. You can eat
later.

Joy-Anne is looking like she is going to burst as she continues to pursue them.

47. EXT. ENTRANCE TO LAW BUILDING. DAY 47

Ronny lets go of Esky's lead and he gallops into the Law Faculty. Ronny and Asher see Joy-Anne is not far behind.

JOY-ANNE
I've got you now!

48. INT. LAW FACULTY BOARD ROOM. DAY 48

ADJUDICATOR
Professor Declan Dale, (PICKS
UP GAVEL) it is the decision
of this disciplinary panel,
that under the Law Faculty
code of conduct you are hereby
suspended immediately from all
duties until the issue in
question can be conclusively -

The Adjudicator is about to bring down his gavel, when he is interrupted by a dog's bark from outside the room. All eyes look to the door. Professor Dale swivels around.

DALE
Esky!

ADJUDICATOR
(TO THE SECURITY GUARD) Open
the door, man! That might be
the very evidence we need.

The Security Guard opens the door.

49. INT. CORRIDOR BETWEEN DALE'S OFFICE AND BOARD ROOM. DAY 49

Esky is outside Dale's office door, but sees the door open to the board room down the corridor. Ronny and Asher are coming up behind. Joy-Anne is still in pursuit.

JOY-ANNE (COMING INTO SHOT)
(hoarse screech)
You will not get away with
this!

50. INT. LAW FACULTY BOARD ROOM. CONTINUOUS 50

The Adjudicator looks shocked as he hold up his hands, with the gavel clasped in one of them.

ADJUDICATOR

Get that dog!

In slow motion, Esky leaps through the air, like he is momentarily flying, and into Professor Dale's waiting arms.

The momentum of Esky's landing sends the chair, with Dale holding Esky, rolling across the room. The chair hits a step, or similar obstacle, tips over and Dale and Esky tumble to the ground.

Esky licks Dale's face. Dale smiles, but Ronny still looks disgusted at the sight.

JOY-ANNE

And there's your evidence, you legal windbags! That piece of human excrement stole my dog.

PROFESSOR DALE

Nice try at framing me, Joy-Anne (or "Jolene").

JOY-ANNE

What?! Me trying to frame you!

PROFESSOR DALE

What's that in your hand, Joy-Anne?

JOY-ANNE

What does it look like, peckerhead? It's a dog lead.

ADJUDICATOR

Why do you have it?

JOY-ANNE

I was taking my dog back and he slipped this lead.

ADJUDICATOR

So you were in charge of the dog, not Professor Dale, before the dog slipped his lead?

JOY-ANNE

Don't try and twist this around, you pointy-headed bastards.

PROFESSOR DALE

Or you'll what? Go to the police?

JOY-ANNE

If that's what it takes, loser.

PROFESSOR DALE
Go ahead, call them. So I can
bring a charge of my own.

JOY-ANNE
Yeah, right, Declan. You've
got nothing on me.

PROFESSOR DALE
On the contrary, you have
violated my restraining order
in front of several fairly
reliable witnesses.

JOY-ANNE
(shouting)
Ah, fuck!

ADJUDICATOR
I think we have seen enough
here today to know which owner
is in the dog's best interest.

JOY-ANNE
Now, listen, you low-life
lawyering scum -

ADJUDICATOR
Professor Declan Dale you are
free to take your dog and
resume your duties (BANGS
GAVEL).

JOY-ANNE
How dare you!

ADJUDICATOR
Joy-Anne, I am referring you
directly to the Vice-
Chancellor for further
disciplinary action, pending
police charges. Security!

JOY-ANNE
You won't get away with this,
you fricken tomato head!

The Security Guard comes to take Joy-Anne away. The dog
barks happily and the others laugh.

SMASH CUT TO BLACK

FADE IN:

51. INT. UNIVERSITY TUTORIAL ROOM. DAY 51

Ronny, Craig and another SIX STUDENTS are writing furiously as Professor Dale looks at his watch in between fiddling with his e-cigarette.

PROFESSOR DALE
Your time is nearly up.

Everyone writes that little bit harder.

PROFESSOR DALE (CONT'D)
Alright, pens down.

Ronny looks satisfied.

RONNY
(TO CRAIG) You get there?

CRAIG
Just. You?

Professor Dale interrupts to take up their papers. He glances at Ronny's paper.

PROFESSOR DALE
Let me see. (PAUSE) No magical marine creatures. That's a good start.

Ronny, Professor Dale and Craig exchange smiles.

52. EXT. UNIVERSITY LAWNS. DAY 52

Ronny is walking by himself across the university lawns when he receives a call on his phone from his mother.

MRS CHIENG
So how did you go with your lie-sengeum?

RONNY
I think I did OK, Mom.

MRS CHIENG
When will your results be online?

RONNY
In the next day or two.

MRS CHIENG
So then you're on holidays and I can do a surprise visit.

RONNY

What?! No!

MRS CHIENG
(shocked)

Ronny!

RONNY

No, I mean, if you visit now
it's not really a surprise.

MRS CHIENG

Why not?

RONNY

You just told me. So it can't
be a surprise.

MRS CHIENG

You surprised when I told you?

RONNY

Well, yeah.

MRS CHIENG

See!

RONNY

You know, Mom, you really do
have a gift. (SHAKES HEAD)

FADE TO BLACK

ROLL END CREDITS