

THE DESIGNATED DRIVER

By

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Step Outline
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1 INT. COLLEGE DORM ROOM - NIGHT (SIX MONTHS AGO)

A couple have loud sex. Outside, ZACH, a freshman, stops on his way to his room carrying his toothbrush and overhears them. He's overweight, unshaven, and sloppy looking. He enters--

2 INT. ZACH'S DORM ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Zach watches a movie in his messy room, full of empty soda bottles and candy wrappers.

3 TITLE CARD: "THE DESIGNATED DRIVER"

4 SUPER: "SIX MONTHS LATER"

5 INT. ZACH'S HOUSE - DAY

Zach and his parents move him into his new house and he meets his new roommates - LANCE, PAUL, and SAM, and Sam's girlfriend, ZOEY. Lance is the playboy, Paul the goofball, and Sam the nerd.

6 INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Zach walks home from class and laments not being a part of the social groups he sees around him.

7 INT. ZACH'S HOUSE - DAY

Zoey sets up for Sam's surprise birthday party. Zach realizes he'll have to interact with dozens of people he doesn't know.

8 INT. ZACH'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Zach is lying on the couch upstairs, nervous and anxious as a party rages on below him. Zoey comes up and tells him to relax and come have fun and meet people. Sam blows out his birthday candles downstairs. LAURA comes upstairs and forces Zach to be her beer pong partner.

9 INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

Zach and Laura play beer pong and Zach sucks. KIM makes fun of him. Lance and Paul beat them, and Zach is forced to drink, but admits he doesn't drink. Laura asks Zach to drive her and her friends Kim, ALEX, and GINA to Taco Bell.

10 EXT. ZACH'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Zach goes outside for a breath of fresh air and to calm his nerves. He witnesses a girl MIA being hit on by a drunk guy TIM McHALE and helps Tim out.

11 INT. ZACH'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Laura and her friends are ready for Taco Bell.

12 EXT. ZACH'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Zach pulls up in his almost-new Mustang for his first drive. The girls get in and they take off.

13 INT. MUSTANG - NIGHT

Zach orders for the girls at the drive-thru.

14 INT. ZACH'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Zach returns to the party and is thanked repeatedly by the girls. He helps take care of drunk people and questions why Zoey had served chili at the party.

15 INT. ZACH'S HOUSE - DAY

Zach and his roommates clean up after the party, finding a cup with a lid with day-old vomit inside of it.

16 EXT. SIDEWALK - DAY

Zach tells his mom on the phone that he thinks being the DD will help him make friends, and how nice the girls were to him. She warns him to "be careful."

17 INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

During a lecture, Zach makes a pro and con list for being a DD. It could help him make friends without partying or drinking, but would cost gas money and sleep.

18 INT. ZACH'S ROOM - NIGHT

While playing video games with Paul, Zoey texts Zach for help with her roommates.

19 INT. KYLE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Zach finds Zoey at her brother KYLE's house party. She introduces him to her roommates MICHELE, who Zach is attracted to, and BRITNEY, who doesn't talk when she's drunk. When they are in the bathroom, Kyle brings beer for them, which Zach takes and hides because they are already too drunk. He leaves with Michele and Britney.

20 INT. MUSTANG - NIGHT

Michele and Britney both vomit in the car, but Michele offers to pay for cleaning and Zach is blown away by her kindness. He drops them off, and then offers to drive them whenever they need it, fully committing himself to DD.

"I fart a lot."

21 EXT. HOUSE PARTY - NIGHT

Zach drops Laura, Kim, Alex, and Gina off at a party.

22 EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Zach drives around to kill time, avoiding the party.

23 EXT. HOUSE PARTY - NIGHT

Zach picks the girls back up, this time with Paul. Paul is going around screaming "Parkour!" and tries to climb anything he can, including a tree at the party.

24 INT. MUSTANG - NIGHT

Paul yells "parkour" in the car as the girls squeeze uncomfortably into the back seat. Paul gets out and starts climbing random campus objects, and breaks a fence.

25 INT./EXT. MUSTANG - LATER THAT NIGHT

They gang pull off a "Chinese Fire Drill."

26 INT. ZACH'S ROOM - DAY

Zach Skypes his family, leaving out details of his new social life in front of his little sister. He is obviously compassionate toward her, though.

27 INT. ZACH'S ROOM - NIGHT

Zach gets a call from Laura to pick her up.

28 EXT. KIM'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Zach picks the girls up but they have a new plan: go to the library to dance.

29 INT. LIBRARY - NIGHT

The girls see Sam studying with a group of people and to embarrass him, put books about sex and the human body on his table without saying a word to him and leave. Laura asks Zach for help unpacking at her house.

30 INT. LAURA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Zach helps Laura unpack. They talk for hours into the night, with Zach revealing his backstory: he preferred to spend time with his family and never went out with friends in high school, despite being a top student and baseball player. When Laura asks why he drives people around, he admits to being entertained and making friends from it, but says the main reason is that he thinks everyone deserves someone they can count on.

When Zach goes to leave, Laura tells him to stay and invites him to sleep in her bed. This is the first time he's shared a bed with a woman and has a hard time falling asleep, but nothing else happens between them.

31 INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Zach is assigned a big paper for a class.

32 INT. LIBRARY - DAY

Zach looks for books for his paper, and runs into Zoey, Michele and Britney, and is obviously smitten with Michele. They talk and get to know each other a little, but it is very awkward because he doesn't know what to do or say.

33 INT. MUSTANG - NIGHT

Zach drops Laura off at a party, and she invites him in for the first time. This will be his first party (besides Sam's surprise party, which was at his house).

34 INT. HOUSE PARTY - NIGHT

Zach is hit on by a gay guy, and then runs into Lance, who offers to be his wingman for the night. Lance helps him talk to a girl, but it is very awkward and is saved when Laura tells him she wants Taco Bell.

35 INT. MUSTANG - NIGHT

Zach pulls up to Laura's house with her and Taco Bell. When he asks for his food, she admits to already having eaten it. She tells him to get out.

36 EXT. PARK - MOMENTS LATER

Zach and Laura sit on a swing set looking at the stars. Laura tells Zach her backstory: her father died when she was 13 and she thought she had to be tough and strong for her family, and has never really changed since.

37 INT. ZACH'S ROOM - NIGHT

Zach studies for an exam on a Wednesday night. Gina sends him a series of drunk text messages and he reluctantly goes to find her.

38 EXT. CAMPUS - NIGHT

Zach looks for Gina, trying to decipher her messages, and an hour and a half pass before he finds her throwing up in an ice cream parlor that closed two hours earlier. He walks her back to her dorm room and makes sure she is ok.

39 INT. ALEX'S HOUSE - DAY

At a group lunch at Alex's house, Alex finds out one of her friends can't make it to a big concert that night and invites Zach to come in her place for free.

40 INT. STADIUM - NIGHT

Zach enjoys the concert with Alex, Kim, Gina, Laura, and Alex's sister Catherine. He thinks he has reached the top of the social ladder.

41 INT. SAM'S ROOM - NIGHT

While Sam and Zoey study, Zach enters and asks Zoey for help. He explains that he has a crush on Michele and asks if Zoey will help him out, to which she agrees. She says he needs to be part of the group and do things with Michele before asking her out.

42 INT. BOWLING ALLEY - NIGHT

Zach joins Sam, Zoey, Michele, and a few others on a bowling night and flirts with Michele a little bit. He reiterates that he will drive her anywhere she needs to go.

43 INT. ZACH'S ROOM - NIGHT

Zach is called by Kim and Alex for a ride. He was sleeping, but gets up and gets dressed. When he is dressed, they call again and tell him not to come. Just before he gets back in bed, they call again asking for a ride.

44 EXT. SIDEWALK - NIGHT

It's Halloween, and the whole gang goes out together. Zach dresses as Slash from Guns N' Roses, and gets Michele's number before the group splits up.

45 EXT. SIDEWALK - NIGHT

Later that night, Michele texts Zach for a ride home from a party for her and Britney.

46 INT. MUSTANG - NIGHT

Zach picks Michele and Britney up.

47 EXT. JIMMY JOHN'S - NIGHT

Michele insists on stopping for Jimmy John's, and goes in for day old bread, then doesn't know what to do with it and offers it to people. Outside, Britney (still mute) nearly falls asleep on the sidewalk and Zach keeps talking to her to keep her awake.

48 EXT. STREET - NIGHT

After walking Britney back home, Michele wants to come back to Zach's to see Zoey, Sam, and Lance. On the walk back to the Mustang, Zach and Michele bond and make fun of people's ridiculous Halloween costumes.

49 INT. MUSTANG - NIGHT

Zach drives Laura, Kim, Alex, and Gina around and they send seductive text messages to a previously unseen boy named Ken Bass, who they say never leaves his room, and Laura tells Zach to turn around so they can go find Ken's room.

50 INT. DORMITORY - NIGHT

The girls and Zach try to find Ken's room in a maze-like dormitory. They find it, finally, only to be greeted by Ken, who was masturbating when they find him. On the way out, Zach briefs Laura on his pursuit of Michele and she tells Zach she thinks he'd make an excellent boyfriend.

51 INT. ZACH'S ROOM - NIGHT

Zach's mom calls him and asks why he hasn't called her in nearly three weeks, to which he doesn't have much of an answer.

52 INT. ZACH'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Sam asks Zach to study one night, but instead he opts to drive around town and wait for "the call" (a call from someone for a ride).

53 INT. MUSTANG - NIGHT

Zach waits but nobody ever calls him.

54 INT. ZACH'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Zach returns home and finds Lance leaving his bedroom, with Michele right behind him wearing only a towel, ending Zach's pursuit of Michele and crushing his spirit.

55 INT. ZACH'S ROOM - DAY

Zoey apologizes to Zach for allowing the Michele/Lance hookp to happen and admits to misleading Zach about Michele's interest in Lance over him.

56 INT. LIBRARY - NIGHT

Zach gets a call from Laura and her friends to pick them up.

57 INT. MUSTANG - NIGHT

The girls get in the car, and say they have stolen marijuana from a party and tell Zach to hurry up and get them away from the party.

58 INT. KIM'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The girls decide to "dispose of the evidence" and smoke the weed. Zach watches uncomfortably, insisting Laura let him drive her home.

59 INT. MUSTANG - NIGHT

Zach drives Laura home and tells her he wasn't comfortable with doing that, but nothing else is said.

60 INT. ZACH'S PARENTS HOUSE - DAY

Winter break comes, and Zach is home to see his family, including his sister who he didn't talk to for much of the semester. He gets an email that he has been put on academic probation for his poor grades, and has to tell his parents, who tell him they will not pay his car insurance anymore if he doesn't get his grades up, and that his driving people around all the time is the cause of his bad grades.

61 INT. DINING HALL - DAY

Zach explains to his friends that he can't drive them around anymore.

62 MONTAGE: ZACH RETIRES

- 1) Zach does homework in his room.
- 2) Zach asks Paul to turn the sound off on the TV.
- 3) Zach rents books from the library.
- 4) Zach turns his phone off at 10 pm to avoid being called.
- 5) Zach meets with a professor to talk about an exam.

63 INT. ZACH'S ROOM - NIGHT

Zach Skypes his family and tells them about how his grades are getting better.

64 INT. ZACH'S ROOM - NIGHT

Zach watches movies alone, as he did before moving in to the house and making friends. He's sad and lonely. His phone rings. It's Laura texting him for a ride, but he says no. She calls him a minute later and begs, saying he said everyone needed someone they can count on, and he feels bad and gets up to "unretire" for the night, and tells her this is the last drive he'll do.

65 INT./EXT. MUSTANG - LATER THAT NIGHT

Zach gets back into his car, which is much cleaner than it has been in a very long time.

66 INT. HOUSE PARTY - NIGHT

Zach finds Laura at a house party, except she is the only guest and is being hit on repeatedly by a guy, and shoots him down every time he speaks. She hugs Zach and thanks him for "saving her," and offers to buy him some food.

67 INT. DINER - NIGHT

Zach and Laura pay for their food and Zach confronts Laura about taking advantage of him, pointing out the weed incident especially and blames her for his academic probation. He gets up and leaves but Laura follows him.

68 EXT. DINER - NIGHT

Laura is taken back by this, and yells back at Zach calling him a pushover and then calling him out for not recognizing all the nice things she's done for him. Zach says he's not a pushover and decides to crash a frat party.

69 INT. FRAT PARTY - NIGHT

Zach crashes a frat party and when he doesn't drink or talk to girls, the host asks him to leave, telling him he's "the creepy guy in the corner."

70 INT. FRAT PARTY - LATER

Zach starts drinking and gets really drunk. He hits on a couple of girls, doesn't know how to kiss, and nearly gets into a fight.

71 INT. FRAT BATHROOM - NIGHT

Zach throws up into the toilet and blacks out.

72 INT. LAURA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Zach wakes up, unsure where he is, then recognizes the furniture he helped move and realizes he is at Laura's.

73 INT. LAURA'S KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Laura is making breakfast when Zach walks in. She explains that she took care of him last night and walked him to her house so she could make sure he was okay, and that she really does consider him a friend. Zach apologizes.

74 INT. RESTAURANT - DAY

Zach's family comes to visit and ask him about his grades and social life. He says he's found balance, and that he knows he can make friends without being taken advantage of.

75 EXT. CAMPUS - DAY

Zach shows his sister around campus and asks why part of a fence looks different than the rest of the fence. Recognizing it as the part Paul broke and has since been repaired, he says "some kid probably got drunk and broke it," not admitting he was there when it happened.

76 INT. LIBRARY - DAY

Zach studies with Lance and Sam at the library, answering a Facebook message from Laura about "tonight."

77 INT. ZACH'S ROOM - NIGHT

Zach sits alone his room, and starts a movie, then Laura comes in from the bathroom and joins him.

78 INT. DINING HALL - DAY

Zach runs into Michele, and is cordial.

79 EXT. ZACH'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Zach's bedroom lights turn on, then off again. The Mustang in the driveway beeps and remotely starts.

80 CUT TO BLACK