## THE BROTHERS DIM

written by

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FADE IN:

EXT. NERDKINGDOM - DAY

On a late summer Friday afternoon, two nerdy teenagers are approaching the doors of a geeky hobby store within a mall. JIM, a short and stoic boy with his head in the clouds and his grades in the grave, waddles awkwardly yet proudly towards the doors. His slim and insecure best friend, ANDREW, lags slightly alongside, dragging his feet.

INT. NERDKINGDOM - CONTINUOUS

Jim and Andrew enter the store, looking up at the treasures piled high on the walls. The two look as if they've just arrived at home— this is clearly not their first time here.

JIM

So, Andrew, what do you say? Divide and conquer?

ANDREW

As usual.

JIM

You take the left side, I'll browse the right.

ANDREW

Let's do it.

Jim and Andrew split apart to begin their methodical browsing. Jim scans the shelves mindlessly at a rapid pace, knocking a few items off and bumping into strangers.

Meanwhile, Andrew carefully peruses the aisles slowly. He picks up a deck of cards and holds it in front of his face, observing it carefully.

JIM (0.S.)

Andrew! Hey, Andrew!

Andrew lowers the deck, revealing Jim on the other side of the store.

JIM

Come here!

Andrew walks over to Jim, who has a knowing mile-long grin across his face.

Jim gestures up to the top shelf. Andrew's eyes widen with delight, as if the Holy Grail had revealed itself.

JIM

Isn't that the most beautiful thing you've ever seen?

**ANDREW** 

(reading off the tag)
"The Dark Blade of Jawforger..."

The object is revealed atop the shelf, high above their heads. It is a shiny prop sword, gleaming brilliantly on its stand.

JIM

"... The Slayer of Oryx".

ANDREW

How much is it?

JIM

I can't find the price tag. Here, let's see.

Jim reaches up to the sword to remove it from the shelf.

ANDREW

You're gonna break it, you klutz.

JIM

(struggling)

I got it, don't worry.

ANDREW

That's what you said last time. You know... when you were wrong.

JIM

That was in December, Andrew, I've changed my evil ways.

ANDREW

(looking around store
 anxiously)

We should really find an employee to get it down. It's on the top shelf, they don't like us touching that stuff. JIM

Well, I don't hear you calling for help.

**ANDREW** 

You're the one who needs it, not me.

JIM

(still struggling)
I told you, I don't need it.

**ANDREW** 

You'll never admit that you need help, will you?

JIM

And you'll never ask for it, will you?

Andrew says nothing. Jim pulls the sword stand halfway off the shelf haphazardly. Just as it is about to fall, Andrew grabs it and pushes it back up, making a slight ruckus as he lightly brushes a few lower shelves. Jim looks back at him innocently.

JIM (CONT'D)

See? We're fine.

DERRICK (O.S.)

You boys need help?

Andrew and Jim turn around and see DERRICK, a nerdy but uncooperative employee in his mid-twenties, at the end of the aisle. His patience vanishes when he sees them. They both cower at his looming presence— Jim especially.

DERRICK

(impatiently)

Oh, not you two again.

JIM

Sir, we're fine.

**ANDREW** 

Well, we actually...

DERRICK

Whoa, whoa! Get away from there, you mouth breathers!

Jim and Andrew jump back in surprise as Derrick steams in front of the two urgently.

DERRICK (CONT'D)

You foolish mortals almost broke the Dark Blade of Jawforger, the Slayer of Oryx!

JIM

Sir, well, I was just getting it down from the shelf—

DERRICK

This is an extremely valuable and delicate item! Why do you think we put it on the top shelf?

Derrick looks over and grabs an unstable chair from the end of the aisle. He steps up on it to grab the sword.

MTT.

Uh... so we can see it?

DERRICK

I wasn't asking you.

JIM

Then who were you—

DERRICK

Would you shut it, orc-head?!

Derrick lifts the sword with ease and turns around, standing on the chair like a podium.

DERRICK (CONT'D)

For your information, items like this are placed higher up so young kids like you won't break them with your slippery, Cheetolaced fingers. Leave it to us employees to handle instead, because we're not stupid.

As Derrick steps off the chair, he accidentally drops the sword, which hits the ground with an audible smash, breaking into shards on impact. He stands, with a completely blank and shell-shocked expression, staring at where the sword used to be. Andrew and Jim look down at the shards on the floor.

A rolled up map falls from within the hilt and lands, unbeknownst to Andrew, right next to his shoe.

VECTOR (O.S.)

Derrick, what was that?

Derrick's expression changes to one of abject horror. After a moment, he snaps to attention, kicking the chair backwards and donning a charming smile.

VECTOR, the large and intimidating middle-aged store owner, rounds the corner with a look of concern on his face— one that quickly morphs into shock.

VECTOR

What happened here?

Derrick raises his finger and points at the two boys instinctively, without hesitation.

DERRICK

(without hesitation)
These fools broke The Dark Blade
of Jawforger, the Slayer of Oryx.

VECTOR

Andrew, Jim... you boys know the top shelf protocol.

Derrick slithers around to Vector's side of the aisle, hanging behind his shoulder.

JIM

Yes, this isn't our first time, sir, we're, in the know, y'know. No?

VECTOR

But you didn't ask for help.

JIM

You're right, I didn't. But my friend did! I was going to grab the item, you see, my friend Andrew though, he asked... right? Andrew?

Andrew stands, smiling inexplicably, frozen. He cannot speak, and instead stares at the ground.

DERRICK

Like I said, Vector.

VECTOR

Is this true, young man?

Who? Um, Jim, yes? Wait. Yes?

Vector hangs his head in disappointment.

VECTOR

I'm sorry boys, but you are hereby banned from NerdKingdom.

Andrew looks down with a guilty and solemn expression. Jim's eyes open in horror as if he's just received a death sentence. Derrick smirks ever-so-slightly.

JIM

No, sir, please, anything but that!

VECTOR

I'm sorry, Jim, but I warned you last time that this would be the third strike. And this Dark Blade of Jawforger, Slayer of Oryx isn't cheap, either.

JIM

But, sir, we didn't do it! It wasn't us!

VECTOR

Then who was it?

Jim turns to Andrew, gesturing for him to add on. He does not.

JIM

Andrew?...

Jim and Andrew simultaneously turn at Derrick, who plasters an innocent expression of disgusted shock.

VECTOR

I hope you're not insinuating that it was Derrick that did it.

Derrick's eyes turn to icicles, causing Jim to look back up at Vector and remain silent. Vector's disappointment quickly evolves into abject disgust and anger.

VECTOR (CONT'D)

Shame on both of you.

DERRICK

Did you really expect anything more from The Brothers Dim?

**VECTOR** 

Derrick, please man the register while I clean up this mess. And boys, please leave. Now.

Derrick walks away as Vector bends down to begin picking up the sword's shards. One of them bears the price tag, which reads to be \$249.

JIM

(desperately)

Come on, Vector, there's gotta be something we can do to redeem ourselves! We come here all the time!

Vector sighs as he stops his cleaning, standing up to address the two desperate boys.

VECTOR

If you can pay me back for the item you've broken before we close tomorrow, and you sincerely apologize to Derrick, then I might reconsider your banning.

Vector drops a shard of the sword with the price tag on it in Jim's hands. Jim and Andrew stare at him, expectantly.

VECTOR (CONT'D)

And only if you leave within the next minute. Go!

Vector turns around to begin cleaning up the sword. Jim and Andrew turn around to find Derrick now standing at the other entrance to the aisle, smirking heartlessly.

DERRICK

I expect a written apology. If it's not too much to ask. Have a nice evening.

Jim and Andrew both stare at Derrick as he walks away, too miserable to even be angry.

CUT TO:

## EXT. NERDKINGDOM - MOMENTS LATER

Jim and Andrew stare through the window of NerdKingdom longingly. After a brief moment of silence, Jim speaks up.

JIM

Thanks for having my back there, Andrew. I really appreciate it.

ANDREW

Are you really trying to blame this on me? You admitted that you tried to grab the item.

JIM

Yeah, is that not true?

ANDREW

Sure, but look where it's gotten us. You dug us into this hole.

JIM

Well, I didn't hear you helping to dig me out!

ANDREW

Well, you had the shovel!

JIM

Well, you're good at digging, and you didn't grab another imaginary shovel and help!

ANDREW

(avoiding the

extended metaphor)

I just can't talk sometimes, Jim!

JIM

Then what the hell are you doing right now?

A moment of uncomfortable silence as the two stare back through the window again.

JIM (CONT'D)

You know, I guess I could get used to this view. Maybe we should at least try to look up.

ANDREW

Look down.

JIM

Dammit, Andrew! Must you always be the contrarian?

ANDREW

Jim, your shoe.

Jim looks down and sees the crumpled up map, stuck to the bottom of his shoe by a piece of gum. He picks it up.

JIM

"The Great Quest to the Dark Blade of Jawforger..."

ANDREW

... The Slayer of Oryx".

Jim and Andrew look up from the map at each other in unison, eyes wide and hopeful.

JIM

You thinking what I'm thinking?

ANDREW

(confused)

No.

JIM

(holding out price
 tag shard)

I can't afford this, and neither can you.

**ANDREW** 

Yeah.

JIM

But we don't need to pay him back if we can replace the sword.

ANDREW

(still confused)

Right.

JIM

And if we follow this quest... we can find the sword and replace the one we broke!

Andrew's eyes drop in disappointment.

What? Jim, this is a-

JIM

Andrew, we can do this before they close tomorrow. I'll meet you at your house at seven tomorrow.

ANDREW

Jim-

Jim waves the map as he begins running towards the mall exit.

JIM

I gotta get home, but I'll see you tomorrow! Remember— seven.

Andrew stares in confusion as Jim walks away.

ANDREW

You're kidding, right?

FADE TO:

EXT. ANDREW'S HOUSE - DAY

Jim is standing at the door to Andrew's house, knocking furiously, breaking periodically only to check his watch. He is wearing an oversized backpack with a large bright water bottle on the side.

Andrew finally opens the door with tired rings under his eyes, holding a cup of steaming hot coffee. Jim steps back a foot innocently. Andrew sighs.

**ANDREW** 

You weren't kidding.

Jim whips out the map and holds it in front of his face as he walks back down the path. He grabs a pencil and gestures to the map.

JIM

Okay, first on the map— we gotta find the Stream of Staggerforth.

ANDREW

(sleepy and somewhat
irritable)

Why?

JIM

So we can follow it to the Wasteland Waterfall.

ANDREW

No, Jim, why are we doing this?

JIM

(disregarding Andrew)
Well? Divide and conquer?

ANDREW

Maybe?

Jim begins walking down the driveway as Andrew stands, confused. Andrew sets the coffee down next to him.

ANDREW (CONT'D)

Jim, there isn't exactly water anywhere near us, do you—

JIM

(calling back)

Don't be such a pessimist, Andrew!

**ANDREW** 

I'm not a pessimist, I'm just being a realist.

JIM

You're not a realist, Andrew, you're a blaphemist! Now come over here and help me look!

ANDREW

Look, I know it's fun to pretend we're on a quest and all, but imagination only gets you so far, man.

JIM

(still ignoring him)
I don't see you looking!

**ANDREW** 

Would you just admit that I'm right this time? You're never gonna find that stream.

JIM

Andrew, look! I found the stream!

Jim, on his hands and knees in the gutter, beckons to Andrew, who walks over reluctantly. Jim is pointing downward at a narrow yet defined stream of runoff water, staring down it like it's the Yellow Brick Road.

Jim points at the icon on the map, which appears to match up almost perfectly with the pebbles and leaves in the gutter. Andrew stares at the map, defeated— almost as if he can't stand the fact that Jim might be right this time.

Despite the obvious rapid current downhill, Jim picks up a leaf— one that is very obviously far too large for the stream— and places it in the water, where it doesn't move. Andrew snips off the end and sets it free.

Jim looks at Andrew with a face that seems to say "I told you so" as he pulls out a pen and draws a check next to the icon.

JIM (CONT'D)

Shall we?

The two boys eagerly walk into the distance, Jim's enormous backpack weighing him down just slightly. The Brothers Dim have begun their great quest.

FADE TO:

EXT. PARK - LATER

The two boys carry on down the sidewalk, now passing by the entrance to a park. Jim, on the curb, and Andrew, trudging through the gutter, continue to follow the stream diligently. Jim takes a swig from his slightly-less-full water bottle.

JIM

Aha! There it is!

Jim leans in, staring at the dwindling stream of water as it meets a bitter end, falling into the bowels of a storm drain.

JIM (CONT'D)

(excitedly)

The Wasteland Waterfall!

ANDREW

So... what now?

JIM

Come on, let's go!

Jim beckons for Andrew to follow him as he squats down and prepares to squeeze through the storm drain entrance. He places the backpack and map down on the lid of the drain.

ANDREW

Okay, no, Jim, we're not going down there.

JIM

We have to pass the waterfall to find the Rolling Green Knolls of Cool Resentment.

Andrew can hardly speak in disbelief at Jim's ridiculousness.

**ANDREW** 

Dude, you aren't going to find anything green down there! At least not that kind of green...

JIM

Come on, Andrew.

ANDREW

You're never gonna find it.

JIM

That's what you said last time. You know... when you were wrong.

ANDREW

That and you're probably going to get killed by a rat down there.

JIM

Only if you don't save me first.

Andrew picks up the map and studies it. Jim continues to try and squeeze his head through the opening.

**ANDREW** 

You need to use that brain of yours more often, Jim.

JIM

Would you just admit that I'm right this time?

ANDREW

Wait wait wait, Jim, look! The hills are next to the waterfall, not at the bottom of it. See?

Jim pulls his head back and looks over at the map in Andrew's hands. Andrew gestures to the hills on the map, which are in fact next to the waterfall rather than below it. He then lowers the map and reveals the hills of the park in front of him, which match up with the drawing perfectly.

Jim stares at the map, defeated— almost as if he can't stand the fact that Andrew might be right this time. Andrew looks at Jim, again, with a face that seems to say "I told you so", and draws a check next to the waterfall icon.

FADE TO:

EXT. PARK BATHROOMS - LATER

As the boys stumble down over the final hill, Jim can be seen checking it off on the map. Jim stops for a brief water break at the foot of the hill, simultaneously examining the map.

JIM

We're looking for the Raging Devils River.

**ANDREW** 

I don't see it.

JIM

There it is!

Jim gestures over to the bathroom at the edge of the park. A water fountain is mounted on the side, its pipes leaking a small flow of water down towards the street.

**ANDREW** 

I still don't see it.

JIM

Come on, Andrew, let's go.

Andrew walks up to the "river" and stands awkwardly.

ANDREW

Uh... what do we do?

JIM

Leap across it.

Andrew steps over it nonchalantly.

JIM (CONT'D)

No, Andrew, you have to LEAP over it! Not step. Come back here, you dumbass.

Andrew rolls his eyes and steps back.

Jim, now practically in a trance, poises to leap across. He stares down as if it were a gushing river beneath him.

JIM (CONT'D)

Don't fall in!

Jim dramatically soars across the "river". He looks back expectantly at Andrew, who looks around to see if anyone is watching, then steps over it with the slightest hint of a hop.

JIM (CONT'D)

No, Andrew, go back.

Andrew steps back, rolling his eyes again.

ANDREW

Jim, it's just a line of water.

JIM

No, Andrew, it's the Raging Devils River!

Andrew laughs to himself and sighs.

JIM (CONT'D)

You can do it! Don't be afraid!

Andrew continues to stand still uncomfortably on the other "bank" of the river, in total disbelief that he's even dealing with this.

ANDREW

I'm not afraid, I just don't want to look stupid.

JIM

You're afraid to look stupid?

ANDREW

No, I just don't want to be stupid.

JIM

Are you calling me stupid?

No, it's just... this just looks kinda stupid.

JIM

Well, from my point of view, what you're doing right now looks kinda stupid.

ANDREW

Well, maybe you're just not seeing this from a realistic point of view.

JIM

Maybe you're just stupid.

Andrew chuckles, but almost seems to take it to heart as he looks down at the ground.

JIM (CONT'D)

Go on, then!

Without hesitation, Andrew leaps across with an elegance that puts Jim to shame. He lands, smiling, with only a slight hint of the cynicism remaining. A grin breaks across Jim's face.

**ANDREW** 

So what now, Jim?

JIM

(studying map)

The final item on the quest... the All-Knowing Eye of Oryx.

ANDREW

You mean, like this thing right here?

Andrew bends down to the ground and is about to pick up a rubber eyeball that just happens to be lying at their feet in the mud.

JIM

Wait! Don't touch it! Look at the map— the eye points right at the Dark Blade of Jawforger, the Slayer of Oryx.

ANDREW

It's pointing at you.

JIM

Oh. It's probably pointing at the map since it belonged with the sword.

A brief beat. Jim lowers the maps slightly.

JIM (CONT'D)

So I guess that's it, then.

Andrew smiles slightly, looking past Jim's head.

ANDREW

Actually, Jim, that's not it.

JIM

What do you mean? The eye was pointing at me, and I haven't got the sword. It's over.

ANDREW

Hang on, man. Think about this.

JIM

I don't think, Andrew, that's your thing.

**ANDREW** 

Try it.

JIM

I don't think I know how to think.

ANDREW

I think you do.

JIM

Exactly. You think, then I do. That's how we work. I don't think.

ANDREW

No, Jim... stop selling yourself so short. Why do you say the eye is looking at you?

JIM

I've got the map.

Again, why do you say it's looking at you?

JIM

Because it's looking towards me.

**ANDREW** 

Towards you? Or at you?

JIM

Hang on... are you saying the eyeball might be...

Jim steps to the left and right, watching the eyeball, completely stationary and locked in one direction.

JIM (CONT'D)

Maybe the eye is... looking at...

Jim turns around and sees what Andrew is looking at. The entrance to the mall towers above them, just across the street, glowing in the setting sun.

ANDREW

Come on, Jim, let's qo!

JIM

Well, wait, I'm confused. How are we going to find a replacement there?... Wait—

ANDREW

I like the way you're thinking, but now is not the time to think.

JIM

Then what time is it?

Jim, upon hearing the word "time" out his own mouth, looks down at his watch. It is 6:50.

JIM (CONT'D)

NerdKingdom closes in ten minutes! Let's go!

Jim absentmindedly sprints across the street towards the mall. Andrew begins to run but quickly stops to turn around and pick up the rubber eyeball. He studies it for a moment before pocketing it and sprinting away.

## EXT. NERDKINGDOM - MOMENTS LATER

Jim and Andrew skid to a halt at the entrance of the store. They spy through the window.

ANDREW

Derrick, two o'clock.

JIM

Vector, ten o'clock.

ANDREW

Divide and conquer?

JIM

You know it.

CUT TO:

## INT. NERDKINGDOM - CONTINUOUS

Jim and Andrew dart into the store and scurry around the aisles like top-secret spies. From separate sides of the store, they dart around shelves and pop their heads up from behind items, nodding at each other and slinking around behind the backs of both Derrick and Vector.

Within a minute, they've covered the entire store, and end up sliding next to each other from behind a shelf at the back of the store.

Their energy begins to dwindle as they sit on the floor. Jim looks down at his watch.

JIM

7:01. We're too late.

Jim's head droops in defeat. Andrew follows suit. For a brief moment, they seem to sit in solemn silence.

ANDREW

Well, I guess we're never going to see NerdKingdom again.

JIM

I really wish you'd used your stupidly big brain to keep me from wasting our time.

And I wish you'd used your stupidly endless imagination to help me look at this from a new point of view.

JIM

And I wish I stopped blaming you. It's my fault.

ANDREW

And I wish I stopped blaming you. It's my fault.

A lengthy beat. Then:

JIM

Wait, what the hell am I talking about? It's not my fault.

ANDREW

I know. It's my fault.

JIM

No, it's Derrick's fault.

ANDREW

You know, I really hadn't thought about that.

JIM

If we weren't so afraid of that guy, maybe we would have tried taking this from a new point of view. Instead of going on a quest to find whatever.

Andrew sits in silence as his own words run through his mind and his eyes open wide, having an epiphany.

**ANDREW** 

A new point of view... Jim! Jim, look up, dude!

JIM

Well, I'm glad you're finally becoming an optimist, Andrew.

ANDREW

No, Jim, seriously. Look up!

Jim lifts his head, only to be greeted by the towering image of Derrick standing above him, grinning evilly.

DERRICK

Well, well... what have we here? Vector!

ANDREW

No, Jim, keep looking up!

Jim takes a moment, then tilts his head further and looks straight up at the ceiling, right into the All-Knowing Eye of Oryx up on the ceiling— a security camera.

Vector steps in front of the two boys, covering them in his shadow against the shelves.

VECTOR

What the hell are you boys doing?

JIM

Well, uh, we...

VECTOR

(sternly)

Do you have the reimbursements? You're three minutes too late, but as long as you're here...

Jim is about to blurt out everything on his mind, but he turns to Andrew and holds his tongue.

JIM

No, Vector, we don't.

VECTOR

(Sighs)

I really did not want to do this, but you boys are hereby—

**ANDREW** 

Vector. Sir. It is true, we do not have the money. But we aren't in debt, anyway.

Vector is surprised to hear such confidence in the normally timid boy's voice and is slightly taken aback.

VECTOR

I'm sorry?

DERRICK

Oh, yes you are.

JIM

Oh, no. YOU are.

Jim stands up and turns to face Vector, proudly and confidently.

JIM (CONT'D)

For you see, Vector, it was Derrick who broke the Dark Blade of Jawforger, Slayer of Oryx in the first place. He came over to help us, dropped the damn thing, and framed us as a couple of reckless poltroons.

Andrew, standing up, stares on at Jim, impressed. He gives him a little thumbs up from behind. Vector's anger has faded, and he almost appears to believe Jim.

VECTOR

Is this true, Derrick? Did you break the Dark Blade of Jawforger, Slayer of Oryx?

DERRICK

Of course not! I took the Dark Blade of Jawforger, Slayer of Oryx down off the shelf, and these two little rascals—

ANDREW

Vector, sir, if you wouldn't mind running the footage from that security camera up there...

VECTOR

I hadn't even considered that.

Vector pulls out his phone and opens up an archive containing all the security footage. Derrick begins to silently panic.

JIM

(pun-tastically)

I guess you can now see it from a new point of view.

**VECTOR** 

Sure. What he said.

DERRICK

Sir, these two delinquents aren't to be taken seriously, surely—

**VECTOR** 

There's no harm in just checking, Derrick... right?

DERRICK

Certainly you don't believe this kid—

VECTOR

I suppose we're about to find out, aren't we?

Jim and Andrew watch the footage over each of Vector's shoulders as Derrick stands facing them blankly.

The three watch the screen as the sword shatters on the floor. In the footage, Derrick almost immediately looks up and right into the eye of the security camera. Vector pauses the playback on this frame, then turns the phone to face Derrick in person.

DERRICK

Vector— I mean, I can explain, sir—

**VECTOR** 

Get out, Derrick. You're fired.

DERRICK

Sir, please! I can explain!

VECTOR

No, I don't think you can, lying to me and incriminating customers. Are you kidding me? Get out of here and don't even think about coming back.

Derrick storms off to grab his backpack from the registers. Vector turns to the two boys warmly.

VECTOR (CONT'D)

Boys, I apologize for coming down so hard on you and not thinking to check the security footage. I appreciate your honesty.

Thank you, sir.

VECTOR

Please, call me Vector.

JIM

Thank you, Sir Vector.

ANDREW

Thanks, Vector.

JIM

Hey, Sir Vector, do you know if there's any more Dark Blade of Jawforger, Slayer of Oryx's in stock? I mean, I know I can't afford it and all, but...

VECTOR

Maybe I'll knock off 50% if I can find one in stock. As a token of gratitude.

JIM

Maybe... 70%?

Vector laughs and shakes his head.

VECTOR

First let me see if I can find one in the back.

Vector walks off to the back of the store. As Jim is about to speak to Andrew, Derrick comes storming over with his backpack on. As he walks by, he points his finger in their faces, menacingly. Jim and Andrew don't flinch.

DERRICK

If I ever see you two little ungrateful twerps again...

JIM

Oh, please, Derrick. You can call us "The Brothers Dim".

Derrick scowls and turns to leave. Before he can, Andrew interrupts him.

ANDREW

Before you go, Derrick— here. Take this.

Andrew hands Derrick a torn-off piece of the map. It contains only the words "Raging Devil" from "Raging Devils River" and an adjacent caricature of a devil that happens to resemble Derrick, down to the clothing and exact stance at the moment.

ANDREW (CONT'D)
My written apology. Have a nice evening.

As Derrick stomps out the door, Jim and Andrew turn to each other and fist bump with matching smirks of just satisfaction.

FADE OUT.

THE END