ERIC

"Nelson Ratings"

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INT. DIMMEY'S CAR - DAY

ERIC NELSON, 16, rides in the backseat of the car that his best friend, DENNIS "DIMMEY" ROBERTS, 16, drives. Dimmey's girlfriend, CONNIE McDOWELL, 16, sits in the passenger's seat. Dimmey and Connie argue.

CONNIE
I don't know why you don't wanna go, Dimmey.

DIMMEY
I told you! A cotillion is a silly idea!

CONNIE
But my parents really want to see you! And I can't be the only McDowell there without a date!

DIMMEY
I don't care, Connie! I'm not going!

CONNIE
I can't believe it! I have to go everywhere with you and your stupid duck and his stupid doorag!

DIMMEY
And I have to hang around with your stupid toy pig! At least my pet is real!

CONNIE
Whatever, man!

DIMMEY
Don't "whatever" me! And you can forget about the cotillion! I ain't goin'! I'm the man in this relationship, and that's that!

Dimmey pulls over. Connie gets out and SLAMS the car door. Dimmey drives off.

ERIC
Going down swinging, huh?

DIMMEY
(sighs)
Yep. Let's go find me a tux.

ERIC
Hey, wait. Connie left her book in here. Turn back around.

DIMMEY
Well, you take it in to her. I can't stand her! I really should break up with her.

ERIC
Right.

EXT. CONNIE'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Eric, with a book in his hand, KNOCKS on Connie's door.

ERIC
Connie, you forgot your book!

SILENCE.

ERIC (CONT'D)
Connie?

He jiggles the doorknob, turns it, opens the door and walks in.

ERIC (CONT'D)
Connie? I'm just gonna leave it here on your couch!

He places the book on the couch and heads towards the door. FRANKFURT, a six-foot pig who wears a collar, walks from the kitchen into the living room with a plate of food.

FRANKFURT
(to Eric)
How ya doin'?

ERIC
Oh, hey. Tell Connie I left her book here.

Eric walks out of the house and closes the door. He stops in his tracks and GASPS.

ERIC (CONT'D)
(shakes his head)
Nah!

He reopens the door and looks around the living room. He closes the door.

ERIC (CONT'D)
No, it couldn't be!
(pause)
Could it?

He opens the door again.

ERIC (CONT'D)
Connie?
(hesitantly)
Large, talking pig?

INT. DIMMEY'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Eric enters Dimmey's car, looking puzzled.

DIMMEY
What's up with you? You look like you've seen a ghost.

ERIC
I wish I had!

DIMMEY
Huh?

ERIC
Oh, you wouldn't believe me if I told you. I'm sure of that.

They drive away.

INT. CONNIE'S HOUSE - CONNIE'S BEDROOM - SAME

Frankfurt lies on top of Connie's bed, eating a sandwich. Connie enters.

CONNIE
Was that somebody at the door?

SFX: Frankfurt MAKES the "I don't know" mumble and shrugs.

FRANKFURT
Oh, hey! Guess who I saw today!

INT. COLLEGE LOUNGE - DAY

INSERT - a sign, which reads:
"5TH ANNUAL BACHELOR AUCTION"

Female students sit and converse. Eric's brother, BILLY NELSON, sits with his friend/roommate, RON TYSON, both 20, to the side.

BILLY
This is awesome, Ron. They're about to bid on me: newly single, clean record!

RON
I don't know, man, this seems so degrading.

BILLY
This has nothing to do with that hoodrat that wanted to buy you?

RON
She wanted to pay with a coupon, Billy!

BILLY
So? Take it as it comes. When's the last time you had a date?

RON
You know, good point.
(calls out to someone off-screen)
Hey, Targonesha, wait up!

Ron runs off. BELINDA, a college girl, approaches the microphone.

BELINDA
Alright, ladies, next up is William P. Nelson III!

Billy walks up to the front.

BILLY
Thanks. "Billy Nelson" works just fine.

BELINDA
Right.
(to the ladies)
Okay, let's start the bidding for William!

Different LADIES shout out.

LADY #1
One dollar!

BELINDA
Do I hear two dollars?

LADY #2
Two dollars!

BELINDA
Five?

LADY #3
Five dollars!

BILLY
(to Belinda)
Ya'll ain't gonna bid higher?

BELINDA
We're in college. We ain't got no money as it is!
(to the ladies)
Do I hear ten?

A WOMAN stands up.

LADY
Twenty dollars!

Belinda BABBLES gibberish similar to an auctioneer, then continues announcing.

BELINDA
Do I hear 25?

SILENCE.

BELINDA (CONT'D)
Going once. Going twice. Sold!

The woman walks up to Billy and Belinda.

BILLY
(to the woman)
Hi.

BELINDA
(to Billy)
You know, no one ever got this high like you!

BILLY
Really?

BELINDA
The only one to do it is him!

She points over to Billy's father, JUNIOR, who slides to the middle of the floor. He wears a sequined jumpsuit and a large afro with a headband in the middle of it.

JUNIOR
Wassup, Mad-town!!

BILLY
Dad?! What are you doing here? You don't even go here!

JUNIOR
That's where you're wrong, son. I enrolled in a five-day seminar here. So that makes me a student.

BILLY
A seminar in what?

JUNIOR
Marriage! But I'm getting a "C" so far.

BILLY
(dryly)
You don't say.

A SEXY LADY walks up to Junior.

SEXY LADY
Ready to go?

JUNIOR
You know it! By the way, this is my son, William P. Nelson III.

BILLY
Or, "Billy".

WOMAN
(to Billy)
You didn't tell me your dad was Willie Jr.!

SEXY LADY
(to Junior)
And you didn't tell me you had a son!

BILLY
(sternly)
He has two.

SEXY LADY
Are you gonna introduce me to the rest of your family?

JUNIOR
Sure! That's what love is all about.
(pauses, then snaps his fingers)
That's what love is all about! We need to go by my professor's. I gotta change an answer on my test!

Junior and the sexy lady walk away.

INT. DIMMEY'S CAR - LATER

Dimmey continues driving with Eric in the passenger's seat.

ERIC
Dimmey, how much do you know about Connie?

DIMMEY
Oh, too much! I really should have left her long ago!

ERIC
But you always say that!

DIMMEY
Eh, no different from a married couple. But don't tell her I said that. I don't wanna give her any ideas.

ERIC
And what about her friend, Frankfurt?

DIMMEY
You mean her toy, Frankfurt?

ERIC
Yeah. He is just a toy, right?

DIMMEY
What? Man, you sound just like her. Maybe you should date her.

ERIC
(laughs)
Yeah, sure. And I give you Berniece.

DIMMEY
Wait, really?

ERIC
No, fool!

Dimmey pulls over to Eric's house. Eric gets out.

DIMMEY
Well, if you think that toy is real, then <u>you're</u> the fool.

Dimmey drives off.

ERIC
Maybe I was seeing things.
(points up)
Like those two mice flying in the air.

FRISKERS MOUSE flies through the sky with his bow tie operating as propellers. WHISKERS MOUSE hangs on to Friskers' feet.

ERIC (CONT'D)
And Chaz falling asleep behind the wheel.

CHAZ TREPUR drives past Eric in his car. His head is down as he SNORES. Eric walks away.

SFX: Car horns HONK! Chaz's car CRASHES off-screen.

INT. BILLY AND RON'S APARTMENT - DAY

Billy paces back and forth. Ron sits in a chair. Billy's pregnant ex-girlfriend, SHARON ROSS, sits on the couch, eating a large bag of chips.

BILLY
I hate this, Ron! I would have been the hottest one in the auction if it wasn't for my father!

SHARON
There was nothing behind door #3?

She and Ron snicker.

BILLY
(to Sharon)
Tell me again why you're here?

SHARON
You're supposed to be taking care of your baby mama!

BILLY
The jury is still out on everything you just said.

Sharon sticks her tongue out at Billy.

BILLY (CONT'D)
It's just that I'm sick of being in Dad's shadow. I want someone to like me for me!

SHARON
You did have someone like that!

Sharon's FETUS telepathically chimes in from her stomach.

FETUS
Yeah, and then some!

SFX: Doorbell RINGS.

Billy opens the door, where MAUREEN WALKER, 19, stands, wearing skimpy clothes.

BILLY
Hey, Maureen, what's up?

MAUREEN
Billy, honey, I'm here to tell you that you won!

BILLY
Won what?

MAUREEN
Well, you're very close to winning. It's the annual "Sexiest Man in Madison" contest!

BILLY
Wow, I didn't know there was a contest. What's the prize?

MAUREEN
(pause)
Winning the annual "Sexiest Man in Madison" contest!

BILLY
Whatever, fine. So when's the ceremony and all that?

MAUREEN
Oh, details coming soon, baby. I actually just wanted to know that now that I see your place, do you wanna see mine? You know, for dinner?

SHARON
(fake coughs)
Slut!

MAUREEN
(to Sharon)
Says the pregnant, single girl!

Sharon starts to stand up and walks towards Maureen. Ron pulls her back down to her seat.

BILLY
Sure, that would be nice.

MAUREEN
Oh, it will be.

She kisses Billy on the cheek and sashays away. Billy closes the door.

BILLY
Whoa.

SHARON
Sexiest Man in Madison? No wonder Madison sucks.

She and Ron giggle.

BILLY
(to Sharon)
That’s it. Get out!

SHARON
Fine, fine.

Sharon gets up and exits the apartment.

BILLY
You get out, too!

RON
It’s my house, too!

BILLY
Oh yeah. Then I’ll leave!

Billy exits the apartment.

RON
That always works.

Ron sniffs the air and frowns.

RON (CONT'D)
Ugh! How you gonna fart and leave?

Ron runs to the back. Sharon reenters the apartment, sits in Ron's seat, and eats from her bag of chips. She kicks her feet up.

SHARON
That always works.

INT. CONNIE'S HOUSE - DAY

SFX: Doorbell RINGS.

Connie opens the door and finds Eric there, wearing a backpack.

ERIC
Hey, Connie, are you alone?

CONNIE
No.

ERIC
So someone else is with you?

He enters the house.

CONNIE
Yeah. My mom and dad.

ERIC
(chuckles)
Oh. Of course. I thought I saw something strange the other day.

CONNIE
(cuts her eyes)
I'm seeing something strange right now.

ERIC
Oh, you see him, too?

He turns his head around, then back.

ERIC (CONT'D)
Oh, ha ha, very funny.

CONNIE
Do you see him now?

ERIC
Just your toy pig there on the couch.

SFX: Phone RINGS.

CONNIE
I gotta get that. Are we done?

ERIC
Yeah, go ahead. I'll let myself out.

Connie exits. Eric takes his backpack off and unzips it. He walks past the couch where Frankfurt sits. He feigns tripping over his feet and holds out his arm.

ERIC (CONT'D)
Whoops!

He PLOPS to the floor, while Frankfurt falls in his backpack. Eric quickly gets up, looks around, and exits the house.

FRANKFURT (O.S.)
Oooh, I'm gonna get him for this.

EXT. COLLEGE LIBRARY MALL - DAY

Billy walks outside the mall area and stops Maureen.

BILLY
Hey, Maureen! It's been a minute.

MAUREEN
Uh, yeah!

BILLY
So, what's going on with that contest?

MAUREEN
Oh, that. Well, you see, you've been disqualified.

BILLY
What? How?

MAUREEN
The contest was given by Channel 15, and employees and their relatives are ineligible.

BILLY
What are you talking about? I'm not related to anyone there!

MAUREEN
But isn’t your father, William P. Nelson, Jr., married to a producer there?

BILLY
(sighs)
I wouldn’t be surprised.

MAUREEN
Sorry.

She begins to leave.

BILLY
Wait! The date is still on, right?

MAUREEN
Oh, I don’t wanna be involved in this scandal. How would that make me look?

She straightens out her breasts, pulls her skirt from the crack of her behind, and shimmies away.

BILLY
Oooh, I’m gonna kill him!

Junior approaches Billy.

JUNIOR
Hey, fellow student! Or “former fellow student”. I’m all done with class!

Billy GRUNTS.

BILLY
Dad, are you still married to that producer at the station?

JUNIOR
(pause)
Ooh, I knew I forgot to do something!

BILLY
I just got disqualified from a contest because of you. And you cost me a chance with Maureen Walker! She’s the surest of sure things!

JUNIOR
Oh, come on. You’ll find another. Believe me, I know.

BILLY
You keep messing up everything for me! Why don't you do like in the past and just stay out of my life?

Billy marches away.

JUNIOR
I can't believe it! After all I've...
(pauses, then sighs)
Oh. That's it. I better go talk to him.

Junior walks in Billy's direction.

JUNIOR (CONT'D)
(calls out)
Hey, Billy! Does that mean Maureen's available?

INT. NELSON HOUSE - DINING ROOM - LATER

Eric's mother, RHONDA NELSON-JAMES, and stepfather, MATT JAMES, sit at the dining room table. Rhonda drinks a beverage. Matt looks on his phone.

MATT
Hey, honey! My credit score went up!

RHONDA
From zero?

MATT
(mockingly laughs)
No, for real. Check it out!

He looks at his phone again.

MATT (CONT'D)
Oh, never mind. That's just my area code.

Eric enters the house.

ERIC
Guys, I wanna show you something, and tell me if I'm crazy.

MATT
Okay.

ERIC
Introducing Frankfurt the pig!

Eric unzips his backpack. Frankfurt's plush head sticks out.

SILENCE.

RHONDA
Aw, honey, you and your little toys. Are you having a mid-life crisis?

ERIC
No, he talks! Okay, Frankfurt, say something!

SILENCE.

ERIC (CONT'D)
But he said something to me a few days ago!

His parents stare at him.

ERIC (CONT'D)
We'll be back. Talk amongst yourselves.

Eric dashes away with his backpack.

MATT
That's your son.

RHONDA
Oh, now he's <u>my</u> son?

MATT
<u>I</u> married into this family. <u>You</u> created it. Don't blame me!

RHONDA
Mmm hmm.

INT. BAR - LATER

Billy takes a seat at the bar.

BILLY
Bartender, gimme a beer, please.

A FEMALE BARTENDER serves him his drink.

FEMALE BARTENDER
Here you go, honey.
(pause)
Hey, you look familiar!

BILLY
Ma'am, I only have enough for one beer, okay?

FEMALE BARTENDER
No. Didn't you win that "Sexiest Man" contest?

BILLY
Almost.
(smiles)
You recognize me, huh?

FEMALE BARTENDER
Yeah. You're Willie Jr.'s son!

BILLY
(smile fades)
Oh, great. I <u>am</u> more than that, you know.

FEMALE BARTENDER
Okay, okay, just trying to cheer you up. You're killing our business. This <u>is</u> happy hour, you know.

BILLY
Oh yeah. Sorry.

A MALE BARTENDER approaches the counter.

MALE BARTENDER
Miranda, close that woman's tab over there.

FEMALE BARTENDER/MIRANDA
Okay.

The male bartender leaves.

BILLY
Miranda, huh? Don't go too far. Let's finish talking.

Miranda smiles.

INT. TIMMY'S PLACE - LATER

Eric sits at a booth with his girlfriend, BERNIECE WILLIAMS, 16.

ERIC
I can't figure it out, Berniece. I took your friend's toy, and he won't say a thing!

BERNIECE
You sure it wasn't Connie in a costume or something?

ERIC
Halloween already came and went!

BERNIECE
And you didn't do anything for it?

ERIC
No. Was I supposed to?

BERNIECE
Would've been nice.

ERIC
Oh. Maybe next year.

BERNIECE
Mmm.

ERIC
I even took that pig to school with me for Show n' Tell!

BERNIECE
And?

ERIC
Let's just say I would have gotten a better grade if I turned <u>nothing</u> in.
(sighs)
At least I can talk to the one person who understands me.

Berniece smiles.

ERIC (CONT'D)
...the beaver doctor!

Eric gets up and runs away. Berniece stops smiling.

BERNIECE
(sotto voce)
I think he's a squirrel.

INT. RESTAURANT - LATER

Billy sits at a table in a posh restaurant. Junior walks by.

BILLY
Dad, wait!

JUNIOR
What's up, son?

BILLY
Hey, I'm sorry for the way I came off at you.

JUNIOR
Oh, it's okay. I've said some bad things about you, too. Even more frequent!

BILLY
Anyway, what are you doing here?

JUNIOR
Waiting for my date.

BILLY
Oh, cool. Mine's in the restroom. You should see her, too. Nice figure, fine, a Latina.

JUNIOR
What a coincidence. So is my date.

BILLY
Oh. Well, she's a bartender at a bar around the corner.

JUNIOR
Hey, mine is, too! But she works at some pub down the street.

PAUSE.

BILLY
No way can this be true. My girl's name is...

JUNIOR
Miranda?

Miranda walks up to both of them.

BILLY
Miranda! Oh, not again!

MIRANDA
Billy, wait a minute!

BILLY
It's no use! I'm no match for my dad!

JUNIOR
But son...

BILLY
Know what? Keep her, Dad. I guess I'll always be in your shadow. It's not worth fighting it anymore.

JUNIOR
Son, listen...

BILLY
Have a good time. Both of you.

Billy exits. Another LATINA, who looks exactly like Miranda, approaches Junior and Miranda from the other direction.

LATINA
(to Miranda)
Hey, sis.
(to Junior)
Sorry I'm late. I see you've met my sister, Maria Miranda.

JUNIOR
I sure did, Linda Miranda.

MARIA MIRANDA
(to Linda)
My date just left me, though.

Junior puts his hands around both ladies.

JUNIOR
It's alright, ladies. You'll just have to fight over me!

MARIA MIRANDA
Oh, we don't fight. We share!

JUNIOR
(face lights up)
Really?

LINDA MIRANDA
The hell we do!

MARIA MIRANDA
Not even for a threesome?

LINDA MIRANDA
Not after what happened last time!

JUNIOR
What happened last time?

LINDA MIRANDA
You don't wanna know.

Junior takes his arms from around them.

MARIA MIRANDA
Fine, Linda, you take him them.

LINDA MIRANDA
No, that's alright. You don't have a date. You take him.

MARIA MIRANDA
No, the young guy looks better. I'm really not that into old dudes. I just thought he was famous!

LINDA MIRANDA
Well, he used to be, right?

Junior quietly slips away.

LINDA MIRANDA (O.S.)
(CONT'D)
I don't know. Mom said so!

MARIA MIRANDA (O.S.)
Well, just have him pay for dinner!

LINDA MIRANDA (O.S.)
Man, I don't know.

MARIA MIRANDA (O.S.)
Yeah, he don't even have a song out. <u>We</u> might have to pay.

The two continue to argue as Junior exits.

INT. DR. SYD'S OFFICE - LATER

Eric lies in a hammock outdoors. DR. SYD, a mole with long, curly hair who wears a white coat, sits on a stump next to Eric. He scribbles on a notepad.

ERIC
So, Dr. Syd, I'm pretty sure that I saw Connie's toy pig walk through her house. He even said hi to me!

SFX: Dr. Syd SCRIBBLES.

ERIC (CONT'D)
But it's weird that he hasn't said anything to me since. I must be losing my mind.

SFX: More SCRIBBLING.

ERIC (CONT'D)
And Dimmey thinks Connie loses her mind whenever she sees Frankfurt. I guess me and Connie are kinda the same.

SFX: More SCRIBBLING.

ERIC (CONT'D)
You know, the only time I saw Frankfurt is after Dimmey and Connie talked about it.
(pause)
Maybe this is a way of understanding where Connie is coming from!

SFX: More SCRIBBLING.

ERIC (CONT'D)
Thanks, Doc, great advice as usual!

He gets up and runs to Berniece, who sits in the waiting area next to OLIVER DUCK, Dr. Syd's assistant. He types at his desk. (NOTE: Oliver speaks telepathically throughout.)

ERIC (CONT'D)
Come on, Berniece! I'm all good now!

Eric runs away. Berniece gets up. Dr. Syd approaches Berniece and Oliver.

BERNIECE
Wow! What would Eric be without you guys?

Berniece follows Eric out.

OLIVER
I dunno. Canceled?

INT. BILLY AND RON'S APARTMENT - DAY

Billy lies on top of his bed.

SFX: His phone RINGS.

BILLY
Hello?
(pause)
Oh, you finally called!
(pause)
Yeah, you sounded nice online. Now wait, you don't know who my father is, do you?
(pause)
No, that's okay. He's not really worth knowing.
(pause)
Great! Another thing, I just got out of a bad relationship, so I'm not really looking for anything serious.

INTERCUT - BILLY AND RON'S APARTMENT/GIRL'S DORM ROOM

The girl on the phone is GINA RICHARDS, a college cheerleader and girlfriend of college football player Marty O'Dell.

GINA
(laughs)
That's fine. Serious is not in my vocabulary. Just ask my teachers!

BILLY
So you're not looking for a long-term relationship?

GINA
Yeah, you might say that.

BILLY
(sighs with relief)
Finally!

EXT. SCHOOL - DAY

The school bell RINGS, and students exit the building, along with Eric and Dimmey, who look to their right.

DIMMEY
Here comes Connie. She looks upset. I wonder what's her deal now.

ERIC
Hey, lay off on Connie a bit. She's not that bad.

DIMMEY
She's a weirdo!

ERIC
Yeah, but if she were any less weird, you'd love her less. Admit it!

Connie approaches them.

CONNIE
Dennis Roberts, I've been hearing that you're trying to dump me! Well?

DIMMEY
And you believe them? Honey, those are just rumors! You know my heart's for you!

CONNIE
Uh huh.
(to Eric)
I'm sorry I was rude to you.

ERIC
It's okay. I get you. You're cool peeps.

He fist-bumps her.

CONNIE
Uh, okay.

DIMMEY
So everything's cool now. Hey, guys, where's Frankfurt?

Connie and Eric stare at him.

CONNIE
Dimmey, don't be weird.

DIMMEY
(sotto voce, sighs)
I don't know why I keep trying with them.

CONNIE
(to Eric)
Let's get some ice cream.

ERIC
Cool.

Eric and Connie leave.

DIMMEY
(gasps)
Hey, wait! You're gonna need a ride!

Dimmey chases after them.

INT. DR. SYD'S OFFICE - SAME

Frankfurt, in the plush form, is seated in the hammock. Dr. Syd sits and stares at him while holding his notepad.

SILENCE.

Oliver approaches Dr. Syd.

OLIVER
Syd, I've been done with my work. Can't I just go home?

SFX: Dr. Syd SQUEAKS.

More SILENCE. Dr. Syd continues to stare.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
But he's been sitting here for hours!

More SILENCE. Dr. Syd continues to stare.

SFX: Dr. Syd SQUEAKS.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
You might be getting through to him?

More SILENCE. Dr. Syd continues to stare. Oliver SIGHS and walks away.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
I really need to complete that union paperwork.

THE END