

ERIC

"Little Darlings"

By E.J. Rupert

Jimmy Rupe Productions
Milwaukee, WI
(414) 550-0547
ejrupert@yahoo.com
©E.J. Rupert

INT. NELSON HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

POLLY McNAIR, 11, Puerto Rican, and her brother, PABLO, 8, sit and watch TV.

PABLO
Yeah! Get her, Turtleman!

SFX: ZAPPING and EXPLOSION SOUNDS from the show on TV.

POLLY
Oh, Amoeba Person, when will you learn?

ERIC NELSON, 16, slowly opens the front door from outside and peeks in.

ERIC
(whispers)
Hey, kids, are my parents here?

POLLY
I don't think so.

ERIC
(regular voice)
Well, good!

He walks inside.

PABLO
You live here again?

ERIC
I never stopped. I'm just staying at the Dumbecks for a while. I came to get my things.

POLLY
The Dumbecks?! They're loaded!

Pablo NUDGES her.

POLLY (CONT'D)
Uh, how did you pull that off?

ERIC
'Cuz I'm me!

PABLO
(to Polly)
Alright, the show's over. A "Girlfriends" rerun is coming on.

POLLY

Not really. This is the episode that turns into "The Game".

ERIC

Oh, I saw that one before. That was a backdoor pilot for "The Game".

PABLO

Backdoor pilot? What's that?

ERIC

Oh, that's where a show introduces another show as a spinoff. Hey, I need some muscle to help carry these things.

POLLY

(sighs)

Here I come.

ERIC

Thanks.

Polly follows Eric upstairs. Pablo turns off the TV and walks into the kitchen. OFFICER YVETTE TOWNSEND, 40's, black, big-boned, and short, bursts in through the back door.

OFFICER TOWNSEND

(calls out)

Cynthia! You ready?

PABLO

Hey, copper! Not so loud!

OFFICER TOWNSEND

Where's your mother?

PABLO

I dunno. Still packing?

Pablo exits out the back door.

OFFICER TOWNSEND

Cynthia, where you at?

Polly and Pablo's mother, CYNTHIA, 30's, enters from the living room with her dog, ARLENE, on a leash.

CYNTHIA

Arlene had to go. Either that or she craps in your car.

OFFICER TOWNSEND

It probably would have made it an improvement. I still got a boot on it.

CYNTHIA

I take it you're all packed, then?

OFFICER TOWNSEND

Yep. I bet you'll be happy to see the Darlings again, huh?

CYNTHIA

And they'll be happy to see Arlene again!

She pets Arlene, who licks Cynthia.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)

Just like you'll be happy to see your family again!

OFFICER TOWNSEND

Huh? Oh, right, them. Well, let's get going.

CYNTHIA

Hey, wait. How are we gonna get there if there's a boot on your car?

OFFICER TOWNSEND

Aw, the boot is just cardboard. Once the car rolls, it'll just spin off.

CYNTHIA

Uh, we'll take my car instead.

OFFICER TOWNSEND

Fine. Less work for me!

The three exit the house.

INT. DARLING HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

SUPER: "SOMEWHERE IN TENNESSEE"

DARLENE DARLING, 16, black, and her little sister, CHARLENE, 9, sit in front of the TV. [NOTE: The Darlings and everyone else in the town speak in a southern accent throughout.]

CHARLENE

Darlene, I wanna watch something else!

DARLENE

Too bad. I was here first!

CHARLENE

But we each get an hour! You remember what Mom said! I'm telling!

DARLENE

Alright, fine! Here!

Darlene passes Charlene the remote.

CHARLENE

Good!

DARLENE

You shouldn't wanna bother Mom anyway. She has a lot on her plate trying to juggle family, going back to school, and working a full-time job at the grocery. While Dad keeps up with the repairs around the house and runs the hardware store next door. Luckily, I still have my job at the hotel. It's up to you, me, and our big brother to keep the Darling family sane.

CHARLENE

Uh, what are you doing? I know all of these things already!

DARLENE

Nothing wrong with a little backstory...er, I mean, "reminder".

CHARLENE

What a weirdo. Ain't that right, Defrazio the Dopar?

Charlene turns her head to DEFRAZIO THE DOPAR, a furry alien.

DEFRAZIO

You said it, girlfriend!

He disappears in thin air.

DARLENE

(to Charlene)

Once again talking to the alien that only you can see.

CHARLENE

You can see him, too! Admit it!

The girls' father, STARLING, enters from the side door.

STARLING

Oh, business is picking up out there!

His wife, MARLENE, enters from the kitchen.

MARLENE

Is that right?

STARLING

That's right, my little Darlings! Too bad I gotta close up while I go on my business trip!

Charlene runs up to Starling and hugs his leg.

CHARLENE

Aw, Daddy, can't I go with you?

Starling pats her on the head.

STARLING

Honey, I would pack you in my carry-on, if I could!

(sighs)

But the airlines won't let us do that anymore.

CHARLENE

(sighs)

We'll always have The Soul Plane.

The Darlings' older son, MATT DARLING, 20's, walks downstairs.

MATT DARLING

Alright, guys, off to my last week of school!

MARLENE

Oh, my son, about to graduate from pilot school!

MATT DARLING

Yeah, well, I hope somebody picks up this pilot. I need a job!

STARLING

That's my boy! I can't wait to hear your name at graduation!

MATT DARLING

Yep! Matt Darling!

STARLING

(groans)

No, your first name, Marlon Darling!

MATT DARLING

No way. People make fun of our names
enough already! See ya!

Matt exits from the front door. Cynthia and Officer
Townsend passes him and enters with Townsend's grandson,
MICHAEL, 2, and Arlene. They all EXCHANGE PLEASANTRIES.

CYNTHIA

Marlene!

She and Marlene hug.

MARLENE

Did you guys have a safe ride?

CYNTHIA

Yvette didn't drive this time, so yeah.

Cynthia and Marlene LAUGH. Townsend LAUGHS mockingly.

MARLENE

(to her daughters)

Girls, you remember Arlene, don't you?

Arlene runs to them and licks them. They pet her.

DARLENE

Yeah! Hey, girl!

MARLENE

(to Cynthia and Townsend)

You girls ready?

OFFICER TOWNSEND

Had this marked on my calendar!

MARLENE

(to her daughters)

Alright, now, you girls take care of
Arlene and Michael, while we go on our
girls' trip.

MICHAEL

(to the ladies)

Can I come, too?

He feigns droopy-eyes at them.

CHARLENE
 (to Michael)
 Hey, kid, slow your roll. This is my
 racket.

The ladies start to exit the front door.

MARLENE
 Now, remember, kids, no parties while me
 and Dad are gone!

DARLENE
 Yeah, yeah, we know.

Darlene closes the door.

INT. DARLING HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The house is filled with partygoers. Live music PLAYS in the background. Charlene and Michael sit by the front door with a jar full of money. Matt Darling approaches them.

MATT DARLING
 How's the party going?

CHARLENE
 Everyone's having fun. Or being drunk. I
 can't tell. I'm a kid!

MATT DARLING
 I mean, is everyone paying at the door?

Darlene approaches them.

DARLENE
 Don't worry, big brother, you'll get your
 money.

MATT DARLING
 Good. I need to pay off my hold soon, so
 they'll let me back into school.

DARLENE
 Why didn't you just tell Mom and Dad the
 truth?

MATT DARLING
 Yeah, right. They'll kill me. Having a
 house party on the low is better.

CHARLENE

Or you could just turn in the school library book pay the overdue fine.

MATT DARLING

I can't. The book fell out of the plane we were flying.

DARLENE

Dang, really?

MATT DARLING

Well, me and the guys were playing "keepaway" with it, and I accidentally threw it out of the open door while in flight.

A black GUY with sunglasses, a backwards cap, T-shirt, and jeans approaches the Darlings.

GUY

Ayo, Matt Darling, great party! Ya'll went in!

He and Matt SLAP hands.

MATT DARLING

Thanks. Drink up!

Matt Darling points to a keg. The guy walks there.

DARLENE

Who was that?

MATT DARLING

Oh, my friend Bill. He's from Philly.

DARLENE

But what's he doing all the way here?

MATT DARLING

Oh, he got in one little fight, and his mom got scared.

Two MEN approach Charlene at the door.

CHARLENE

Five dollars each, please.

MAN #1

Five dollars?

MAN #2

Since when do you charge for a party?

CHARLENE
Rent party!

MAN #1
You guys pay rent here?

PAUSE.

Michael BAWLS. Charlene JOINS IN.

CHARLENE
Daddy, they're bothering us!

MAN #1
Okay, okay, here!

The men give Charlene the money and enter. Charlene and Michael STOP.

CHARLENE
(to Michael)
Nice touch.

MICHAEL
You know it!

SUPER: "THE NEXT MORNING"

Matt Darling lays stretched-out over a couch and mumbles while waking up.

MATT DARLING
Wow, that party was the bomb!

Darlene is also stretched out over a love seat, waking up.

DARLENE
Sure was.

Charlene wakes up from a recliner.

CHARLENE
Do ya'll feel a draft in here?

The three open up their eyes and look to see that they are outdoors.

DARLENE
Something's missing. Didn't we used to have a house?

MATT DARLING

Oh dear.

They all hop out of their seats.

DARLENE

What the heck happened? And where's
Arlene? And Michael?

CHARLENE

Barking up the wrong tree?

She points to Arlene and Michael, who lie on a tree
branch and awaken.

MICHAEL

(yawns)
Heck of a party!
(looks around)
What the...?

Arlene MOANS. Matt Darling gets both of them down.

MATT DARLING

Somebody stole our house!

MICHAEL

(frowns)
Gee, you guys are quite the hosts.

DARLENE

We gotta do something!

MATT DARLING

And what's that? "911, I'd like to report
a missing house." That'll go over well!

DARLENE

You got any better ideas?

CHARLENE

Maybe you should think. Which one of your
friends would steal a house?

MATT DARLING

(to Arlene)
And you! What kind of a guard dog are
you?

Arlene WHIMPERS.

DARLENE

She's a guard dog?

MATT DARLING

(pause)

Aren't they all?

DARLENE

No!

Charlene pets Arlene.

CHARLENE

Don't listen to him. He's an idiot.

DARLENE

Yeah! If it weren't for you and your stupid pilot friends, this wouldn't have happened!

MATT DARLING

Yeah, fine. It's a learning experience. I won't lose my book next time, otherwise I'll lose my house!

CHARLENE

Guys, calm down! Maybe we should split up!

MATT DARLING

Fine. We have to act quick before Mom and Dad find out they have nothing to come home to!

MICHAEL

(laughs)

They already don't!

The Darlings frown at him.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Sorry, I couldn't resist.

MATT DARLING

(to Michael)

I'm throwing you back to your doorstep on the way!

He picks up Michael, and they exit.

DARLENE

Alright, Charlene. You and me need to work fast.

CHARLENE

Oh boy.

DARLENE

Don't be too surprised. Matt Darling always gets in trouble, and it's our job to get him out of it.

CHARLENE

It is?

Darlene SLAPS Charlene on the arm.

CHARLENE (CONT'D)

Ow! I mean, yeah, it is!

EXT. OUTDOORS - LATER

Darlene stands with a sign that reads, "COUCH FOR SALE", next to a purple couch with pink flowers. Charlene, with Arlene on a leash, approaches her.

CHARLENE

Darlene, what are you doing? We're supposed to be getting our house back!

DARLENE

I know. But while Matt is looking into that, at least I can sell this couch and help pay off his debt.

CHARLENE

But nobody's gonna buy this ugly thing! Arlene's pee is on one side of the cushion!

Arlene WHIMPERS.

DARLENE

Yeah, and Matt's you-know-what on the other. But hey, my heart's in the right place.

CHARLENE

Too bad your head's still up your...

DARLENE

Hey! Just pass me my phone.

Charlene gives it to her. Darlene dials.

INTERCUT - ERIC AT THE DUMBECK MANSION/DARLENE

Eric lies back in a white robe, on top of a bed. He answers his cell phone.

ERIC
Dumbeck residence.

DARLENE
Oh, sorry. I thought this was Eric's
number.

ERIC
(snooty voice)
'Tis I, Eric T. Nelson. I'm here with the
Dumbecks.

DARLENE
Oh. I was seeing if your family would
like to buy a couch from us.

ERIC
(regular voice)
Then why are you calling me? You'd be
better off talking to Cynthia, my...I
mean, their maid. I got everything I need
at my place right here.

JACOB JACKSON and his wife, SHANA JONES, both 5'10"
compared to Eric at 5'3", stand over him with their arms
crossed.

ERIC (CONT'D)
Gotta go. This married couple wants their
room back.

He hangs up.

ERIC (CONT'D)
(to the couple)
You guys were standing here this whole
time?

SHANA
You know we had to drop in.

JACOB
Yeah, so beat it, "Kevin Hart"!

Eric gets up and leaves.

BACK TO OUTDOORS

DARLENE
I guess I'll call Cynthia.

She dials.

INTERCUT - CYNTHIA AT A STRIP CLUB/DARLENE

Cynthia sits and CHEERS with Marlene and Officer Townsend, whose daughter GLORIA, 20's, also joins them. She answers her RINGING phone.

CYNTHIA
(loudly)
Hello?

DARLENE
Cynthia! Did I catch you at a bad time?

A male stripper shakes his behind in Cynthia's face. She moves her head in sync with his behind.

CYNTHIA
You might say that!

DARLENE
Okay, real quick, and don't tell my mom, but would you like to buy our purple and pink couch?

The stripper grabs Cynthia's hand and pulls her on stage. The audience CHEERS and CAT-CALLS.

CYNTHIA
I got better stuff to spend my money on right now! Besides, you wouldn't be able to give that ugly thing away! Gotta go!

Cynthia hangs up. She begins to dance with the stripper, then stops.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)
Sorry, I can't!

She steps off the stage and returns to her seat. The audience JEERS.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)
(to her friends)
I didn't feel right. Marlene, you go up.

MARLENE
No, I got a man. And morals.

GLORIA
Hell, I ain't got none of that! 'Scuse me!

Gloria runs onto the stage.

MARLENE
 (to Cynthia)
 Still thinking about your ex, huh?

CYNTHIA
 Maybe. He's such an ass, but damn, I miss him.

OFFICER TOWNSEND
 Hey, you know what they say. The way to get over a man...

CYNTHIA
 ...is to get under a new one?

OFFICER TOWNSEND
 I was gonna say, "To get over a glass of wine."

Townsend GULPS DOWN a glass of wine and BURPS.

OFFICER TOWNSEND (CONT'D)
 But do what you want.

Gloria runs up to Townsend.

GLORIA
 (rapidly)
 Mom, lemme see your pocketbook! Thanks!

She snatches it from Townsend.

OFFICER TOWNSEND
 Hey! Ya'll didn't even ask if I wanted to go up there!

Gloria looks at Townsend up and down.

GLORIA
 (snorts)
 Huh!

Gloria runs back to the stage.

OFFICER TOWNSEND
 I'ma kill her.

EXT. OUTDOORS - SAME

DARLENE
 (to Charlene)
 No luck yet.

CHARLENE
Did you try calling Greg?

DARLENE
You mean the guy with that mother, the car?

CHARLENE
No, the guy that turns into the car.

DARLENE
I'll try him. Meanwhile, we need more prospects. Pull out them pearly whites, and pretend you're cute and adorable!

Charlene paints a fake, exaggerated grin.

CHARLENE
(through her teeth)
The things I go through for family.
(to Arlene)
You ain't excused from this!

Arlene begins to PANT.

CHARLENE (CONT'D)
No, with the teeth!

Arlene STRUGGLES to smile and show her teeth.

INT. BOWL-U-OVER - DAY

Matt Darling enters the bowling alley and approaches the bar. He addresses the bartender, DARNELL.

MATT DARLING
Hey, Darnell, is Wasted Wendy here?

DARNELL
(dryly)
Where else would she be?

He points to a bowling lane, where WASTED WENDY lies. Matt Darling SIGHS, approaches her, and shakes her.

MATT DARLING
Wendy, get up now, come on.

WASTED WENDY
(slurred speech)
Sorry, Mr. Mayor, no autographs!

MATT DARLING

Wendy, listen! You wouldn't know what happened to my house, do you?

WASTED WENDY

Oh yeah. I wanted to entertain some friends, and you said that I could use it anytime.

MATT DARLING

I didn't say, "Take the whole house!"

WASTED WENDY

Oh. I'll know next time.

MATT DARLING

How did you even move our house, anyway?

WASTED WENDY

Easy!

PAUSE.

MATT DARLING

Wendy, we need our house back now!

WASTED WENDY

Oh, come on! You know I'm good for it!

MATT DARLING

No, we need a place to live! Unlike you, we can't stay camped out at a bar.

WASTED WENDY

Don't knock it 'til you try it. You get all the free air you can suck in. And my mother is staying in the house.

MATT DARLING

You mean, "Beverage Beverly"?

WASTED WENDY

Uh huh. Where am I supposed to put her?

MATT DARLING

Here with you! Now let's move it!

WASTED WENDY

Okay, fine.

(calls out)

Darnell, is it okay if my ma stays here with me?

DARNELL
I never said you could!

Matt Darling and Wasted Wendy exit. A LADY SHOUTS at Wendy.

LADY (O.C.)
Hey, wait! You're my good luck charm!

DARNELL
(to Matt and Wendy)
Incoming!

Matt and Wendy duck. A bowling ball ZOOMS past their direction.

LADY (O.C.)
See?

SFX: Glass BREAKS off-camera.

EXT. OUTDOORS - LATER

BEVERAGE BEVERLY drives a large truck that carries the Darlings' house. Matt Darling and Wasted Wendy direct her. Charlene, Darlene, and Arlene stay in their same spots.

MATT DARLING
Okay, Beverly, right over here!

SFX: Truck BEEPS repeatedly.

Beverly backs up the truck and lowers the back. A large shadow looms over the Arlene and the girls.

CHARLENE AND DARLENE
AAARRGH!!

MATT DARLING
Beverly, stop!

Beverly stops lowering the back.

MATT DARLING (CONT'D)
Don't plop the house over the kids!

BEVERAGE BEVERLY
(hiccups)
Oh.

She moves the truck forward and backs up in another direction. The truck BEEPS.

INT. DARLING HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Darlene and Charlene straighten up the living room. Arlene sits on the floor. Michael sits on the couch. Matt Darling runs downstairs.

MATT DARLING

Everything looks back-to-normal yet?

DARLENE

Charlene accidentally vaccumed up the goldfish, so yes.

MATT DARLING

Good.

CHARLENE

Yeah, Charles #5 lived a fulfilling life.

Marlene, Cynthia, Officer Townsend, and Gloria enter the house.

MARLENE

We're back! I see the house is still in one piece!

MATT DARLING

Of course! Did you ladies have a fun trip?

GLORIA

Oh, yeah!

(sighs)

But now, it's time to go back to being a parent.

OFFICER TOWNSEND

(to Gloria)

When did you start?

GLORIA

(slyly)

Around the same time you did.

MARLENE

Okay, "Waltons", take Michael and go home now.

Charlene and Michael walk to the adults.

CHARLENE

See you later, Michael. Hey, we make a good team.

MICHAEL

(scoffs)

You had your chance! Peace out!

Gloria picks him up. They and Townsend exit.

CYNTHIA

We better go, too.

(to Arlene)

Come on, girl!

Arlene runs up to her.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)

Thanks for everything, Marlene.

MARLENE

Yep. Until next time!

Cynthia and Arlene exit. Marlene closes the door.

MARLENE (CONT'D)

So, I see everything's in its place. Even that ugly couch.

DARLENE

Yep. Can't seem to get rid of that thing!

MARLENE

Ya'll didn't have no parties up in here, did you?

MATT DARLING

(scoffs)

Yeah, right, sure we did!

Matt Darling and the girls LAUGH.

DARLENE

Yeah, we brought the house down!

They SUBDUE their laughter as Charlene and Matt Darling NUDGE Darlene.

MARLENE

Alright. I need a coffee.

She heads to the kitchen. The kids sit on the couch.

DARLENE

(sighs)

We did it!

MATT DARLING

Yeah, I guess so, but it still seems like I'm forgetting something.

SFX: Door SLAM!

Starling holds up a paper and an open envelope.

STARLING

Marlon Matthew Darling, what's this about you getting kicked out of school??

The kids GASP.

CHARLENE

Run, Matt Darling, run!

Matt Darling shoots up from his seat and races to his room. Starling chases after him.

INT. NELSON HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Polly and Pablo sit on the couch and watch TV.

PABLO

Oh no, Turtleman's gonna die again!

POLLY

Shhh!

Eric walks downstairs and carries a large box.

ERIC

(sarcastically)

No, don't get up! I'll get the door!

POLLY

Hey, it's your house you're moving out of.

Cynthia enters the front door with Arlene.

CYNTHIA

We're back!

Arlene runs to Polly and Pablo.

PABLO

Hey, girl! You missed us?

Arlene licks him and Polly as they pet her.

POLLY

How was your trip, Mom?

CYNTHIA

It was cool, but it's good to be back home.

ERIC

Hey, Cynthia, did Darlene ever get that couch sold?

CYNTHIA

Nah. Those little Darlings are cute and all, but I don't see it getting picked up any time soon.

ERIC

Oh. That's too bad.

CYNTHIA

Really?

ERIC

(scoffs)

No!

He exits the house with his box.

THE END