

ERIC

"The Papers Chase"

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INT. SCHOOL - LUNCHROOM - DAY

ERIC NELSON and his girlfriend, BERNIECE WILLIAMS, both 16, black, sit at a table and eat lunch. Across from Eric is their friend, ELEANOR DUMBECK, 17, white. Eleanor's half-sister, SHANA JONES, 18, biracial, runs to their table.

SHANA

Hey, guys!

ERIC

What's goin' on, Shana?

SHANA

You are looking at the new valedictorian for graduation!

Eleanor looks at Eric.

ELEANOR

(gasps)

No way! Eric, you're not even graduating yet!

Eric and Berniece shake their heads.

SHANA

No, Eleanor, look over here. It's me.

ELEANOR

(scoffs)

I know it's you, Shana, duh! We're sisters!

SHANA

(gloomily)

And you remind me every day.

BERNIECE

Congratulations, Shana, what an honor!

ERIC

Yeah, all that geekiness finally paid off!

SHANA

You bet it did!

(to Eleanor)

Oh, I just remembered. Eleanor, we can't go shopping after school. Dad needs help arranging my graduation party. He just rented the place.

ELEANOR

What? Aw, phooey!

ERIC

Where's the party gonna be at?

SHANA

Oh, in Racine.

ERIC

Cool, what place?

SHANA

Racine, silly!

Shana leaves.

ELEANOR

(dull voice)

Yahoo. Can't wait.

BERNIECE

What gives, Eleanor? I thought you'd be happy for your sister.

ELEANOR

Oh yeah, I'm happy. I'm Hispanic!

ERIC

Uh, Eleanor, I don't think you...

ELEANOR

Just let me have this one!

ERIC

Okay.

EXT. SCHOOL - PLAYGROUND

JACOB JACKSON, 18, white, has a booth set up outside. A sign on the booth reads, "LUNCH MONEY COLLECTION". A line of NERDS visit him one by one and give him money.

JACOB

Step right up, nerds, and gimme your lunch money!

He marks names off of a list.

JACOB (CONT'D)

Pay me now, and I won't have to look for you and kill you later!

ARNOLD ALLEN, 16, gives him money.

ARNOLD
Hey, you didn't mark my name off your list!

JACOB
Huh? Oh, how silly of me.

ARNOLD
Yeah, right. I can't wait till you graduate! What are you gonna do then?

Arnold stomps away.

JACOB
(calls out)
Don't worry about it, Allen!

Jacob PAUSES, then SIGHS.

JACOB (CONT'D)
Hey, everybody, I'm closed. This was a mistake.

NERD #1
(nasally voice)
So can I get my money back, then?

JACOB
Get outta here!!

The nerds dash away. Jacob sits in silence.

INT. NELSON HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Eric's stepfather, MATT JAMES, 40's, black, sits on the couch and watches TV. A pile of mail sits on the coffee table, then tips over.

MATT
Oh, dang it.

His wife, RHONDA NELSON-JAMES, 40's, black, walks by.

MATT (CONT'D)
Oh, honey, can you get that?

RHONDA
Yeah.

She bends down in front of the TV.

MATT

Dang, your butt isn't a window!

RHONDA

Whatever.

She scoots over picks up the mail.

MATT

I do like the view, though.

Rhonda SCOFFS. She flips through the mail.

RHONDA

Matt, what's all this?

MATT

I've been meaning to open the mail this weekend.

RHONDA

Even all of this from Assurance Credit Company?

MATT

Yeah, they said that I owe on a credit card years ago.

RHONDA

Did you ever pay it?

MATT

It was so long ago. I just assumed I did!

RHONDA

O...kay. There are, like, ten letters from them alone! Did you ever try to talk to them about this?

MATT

Yeah. I kept yelling, "Representative," the machine kept saying...

(in robotic voice)

"Sorry you're having trouble..."

(in normal voice)

...then it hangs up on me. My intentions were good.

RHONDA

Matt, this is serious! They could send this to collections!

MATT

Story of my life.

He takes a swig of his beer.

RHONDA

But after so many months, they could take you to court!

He almost chokes.

MATT

What??

RHONDA

Yep! They could serve you with papers any moment!

SFX: Doorbell RINGS.

RHONDA (CONT'D)

Well, bye!

Rhonda leaves.

SFX: Doorbell RINGS again.

MATT

Cynthia? Eric? Somebody other than me, get the door?

Matt creeps to the door.

MATT (CONT'D)

(high-pitched voice)

Who is it?

He hears a MAN's voice behind the door.

MAN

(grumbled voice)

Is Matthew James there?

MATT

(in a fake accent, still high-pitched)

Matthew no live here!

The man, who is Matt's friend, TIMMY ROBERTS, 40's, white, opens the door.

TIMMY

(normal voice)

Yeah, next time, you might wanna lock the door!

MATT

Timmy, what do you want?

TIMMY

Just sayin' what up. Why are you trying to disguise your voice?

MATT

I think there's a bill collector after me.

TIMMY

(rolls his eyes)

Get out of town.

MATT

No, but this time, he might be trying to sue me for the money!

TIMMY

Don't worry about it, Matt! If any company tries to sue you for money, they'll run themselves out of business!
(guffaws)

I mean, how can they sue you for zero dollars?

Matt LAUGHS along with him and wraps his arm around Timmy's shoulders.

MATT

That's a good one! You know, this whole thing has made me turn over a new leaf.

TIMMY

Oh really?

MATT

Yeah!

EXT. NELSON HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - CONTINUOUS

Matt throws Timmy out of the house.

TIMMY

AAARRRGHH!

SFX: Timmy CRASHES into some trash cans.

MATT

(calls out)

I'm gonna start paying my bills on time!

He steps back in the house and SLAMS the door.

TIMMY

Oh good. I wouldn't have wanted to miss all of this.

EXT. DUMBECK MANSION - LATER

Shana runs to the front door. Her butler, JENTILLE, opens it.

SHANA

I can't believe it! Eleanor got her hands caught in the toilet again?

JENTILLE

Yes, Ms. Jones. Your father isn't here, so I called you.

SHANA

(sighs)

Hold on.

She runs inside the living room. A CROWD OF PEOPLE stand facing her.

CROWD

Surprise!!

Shana stops and smiles. She looks around. Everyone LAUGHS.

SHANA

Oh my god! What's all this?

Eleanor approaches her.

SHANA (CONT'D)

Your hands weren't really stuck?

ELEANOR

(chuckles)

What do you think?

Eleanor shakes off some water off her hands, behind her back.

SHANA

Aw, Eleanor, thank you!

She hugs Eleanor, who hugs Shana back and wipes her hands on her back.

ELEANOR

We did this all for you, big sis, for being a "Valet of Victoria"!

SHANA

I don't know what to say!

Berniece stands with others, looking puzzled.

BERNIECE

Me neither!

The crowd starts to chatter and walk around.

SHANA

This is so great! Ha, ha!

She approaches her father, JOHN DUMBECK, 40's, white, who stands with his ex-wife, RENEE CHAPMAN, 40's, white.

SHANA (CONT'D)

Daddy?

JOHN

(rolls his eyes and smiles)

Yes, Shana, I'm still throwing you a graduation party.

SHANA

Oh, thank you!

Shana leaves.

RENEE

(to John, slyly)

You must be very proud of your daughter.

Eleanor approaches them.

ELEANOR

(to Renee)

Oh, Mom, I parked your car, but I think I might have hit a pedestrian. It's okay, you can always buy a new one, right?

She hands Renee the keys and leaves. Renee looks shocked.

JOHN

As you are of yours.

Eric stands behind a table with his DJ equipment. He speaks on the microphone.

ERIC
Ayo, check it out, DJ Illson is in the building!

SHANA
Really? Where?

She and others look around.

ERIC
It's me, guys. Right here.

The crowd ACKNOWLEDGES and CHATS. Eric PLAYS party music.

ERIC (CONT'D)
A big shout out to Shana here!

The crowd CHEERS.

JOHN
And she'll be going to Wisconsin State University in the fall!

The crowd CHEERS.

SHANA
Hold it, Dad, I didn't even get the acceptance letter yet!

JOHN
Don't worry about that, dear! You got the grades! You're as good as in!

RENEE
And not just because I own the majority of the campus!

JOHN
So congrats!

The crowd CHEERS, as does Eleanor. Eleanor stops.

INT. DUMBECK MANSION - ELEANOR'S ROOM - SAME

A large envelope peeks out from under Eleanor's mattress.

BACK TO PARTY

ELEANOR
Uh oh.

INT. NELSON HOUSE - MATT AND RHONDA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Rhonda sits up in the bed and reads on her cell phone.
Matt comes into bed.

RHONDA

Matt, who was that at the door earlier?

MATT

Timmy, but I threw him out.

RHONDA

Oh. Good.

MATT

Yeah, I thought it was that bill collector you told me about.

RHONDA

Uh, honey, if the credit card company is trying to serve you, they wouldn't send a bill collector!

MATT

What now?

RHONDA

It goes past collections! They send it to court, who then gives it to anybody to serve you!

MATT

(gulps)
Any...body?

RHONDA

Yep! You know, just in case you're not home to receive the papers. Your neighbors, friends, anyone.

MATT

Even...you?

RHONDA

No, Matt. I live here.

MATT

(gasps)
Get away from me! AARRRGH!

He leaps out of bed, SCREAMS, and runs out of the room.
Rhonda rolls over.

RHONDA
If only it were that easy.

INT. SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

Shana and Eleanor walk down the hallway. Arnold and another nerd walk past them.

NERD #2
Congrats on making Valedictorian, Shana!

ARNOLD
Yeah, I hear that'll really make you popular in college!

Eleanor looks to the side at what appears to be "the fourth wall", but it is a camera.

INT. SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

Eleanor speaks to an unseen interviewer, documentary-style. She faces slightly to her right.

ELEANOR
I may have done something very wrong to my sister. She's gonna kill me when she finds out.

PRINCIPAL PETERS walks behind her and looks at both the interviewer and the camera.

PRINCIPAL PETERS
Dumbeck, who are you talking to? What is this? I never authorized this! Get outta here!

He shoos Eleanor away. He speaks to the interviewer.

PRINCIPAL PETERS (CONT'D)
You see what I have to deal with? Follow me to my office! I'll show you!

He walks away. The camera follows him out. On the other side of the hallway, Eric puts books in his locker. Jacob runs to him.

JACOB
Nelson, quick, don't say nothin'!

ERIC
What?

JACOB

Look, just keep quiet, and I'll beat you up less!

ERIC

But...

A large MAN approaches them both.

MAN

Kermit Jackson, Jr.!

JACOB

(rolls his eyes)

This is my dad, K.J. Jackson.

ERIC

(to Jacob)

"Kermit"??

STUDENTS point and SNICKER.

JACOB

(yells)

Hey! "Jacob" is my middle name! And ya'll better keep callin' me that!

K.J.

That's tellin' 'em, son. What's goin' on over here?

JACOB

Aw, just hangin' out with my best friend, Eric Nelson.

He puts his arm around Eric and pulls him over.

ERIC

Uh, that's right...

(to Jacob)

...bro!

K.J.

I meant what's going on with school? I got called down here!

JACOB

You come when the school calls, but not when I call you?

K.J.

Hey, your mama and I are handling business on the road! Besides, Gretch takes care of ya!

JACOB
Yeah, from jail.

K.J.
Look, this ain't about me, it's about you! Your principal said that you haven't been going to Math class, and you need that last class to graduate!

STUDENTS
Ooooooh.

JACOB
Man, all of ya'll are dead! Get outta here!

The students giggle and walk away.

ERIC
Good idea. Good luck, man.

Eric closes his locker door and leaves.

K.J.
Come with me, son!

He drags Jacob outside the building.

K.J. (CONT'D)
Is the coast clear?

He looks around.

K.J. (CONT'D)
Good. Forget that class, son! Come with me on the road!

JACOB
What? No way!

K.J.
Oh, "Mr. I'm gonna be the first to graduate"! What, you're too good enough for me or something?

JACOB
No! That would be the other way around!

K.J.
Look, I keep telling you. Me and your mama were just fooling around. We didn't plan to have you. Or Gretchen for that matter.

(MORE)

K.J. (CONT'D)

That's why we took off and started our own business. Your sister was responsible enough to raise you.

JACOB

At the ripe age of 8!

K.J.

Women mature faster, son. Anyway, I'm here now. And I need help at my garage. If you come with me now, you can make a lot of money as a mechanic.

JACOB

We haven't talked in years. Why should I listen to you at all?

K.J.

Father knows best.

JACOB

Leave me alone. I can't believe I'm saying this, but I'm gonna be late for class.

Jacob walks away.

K.J.

Don't walk away from me, son! I know where you live!

(pause)

Wait, I don't.

(calls out)

Does that Aaron friend of yours know of any cheap motels?

He turns to the camera and then the unseen interviewer.

K.J. (CONT'D)

I think I can make progress with my son. I never finished school and I turned out...

PRINCIPAL PETERS (O.S.)

Hey, beat it!

The camera turns to Peters approaching K.J. and the camera crew. It then turns to K.J. running away.

INT. TIMMY'S PLACE - DAY

Timmy fills a glass at the bar.

TIMMY

It's great that you're finally out of the house, Matt.

MATT (O.S.)

Hey, I'm not afraid of no silly bill collector!

Timmy hands the glass of beer to Matt, who sits at the bar and wears a black hoodie, with the hood up, and black sunglasses.

TIMMY

Then explain the all-black everything.

MATT

It makes me look thinner.

TIMMY

So does running!

MATT

I'm not running!

A LADY approaches Matt.

LADY

Excuse me, are you Matthew James?

She reaches in her pocket. Matt SHRIEKS and dashes out of the restaurant.

LADY (CONT'D)

(to Timmy)

What? I was gonna ask if this was his wallet!

She hands the wallet to IKE, the bartender.

IKE

Like, this thing is of no value here!
Ain't that right?

He laughs, lifts his hand to Timmy for a high-five. Timmy crosses his arms, looks at Ike, and frowns. Ike quickly puts his hand down and stops laughing.

MONTAGE - MATT SNEAKS AROUND TOWN

-- Matt steps behind a tree, peeks around, then quickly tiptoes.

-- Matt goes behind a fat man who stands at a bus stop. A bus drives to the stop, then pulls off. The fat man is no longer there. Matt looks shocked, then quickly dashes off.

-- Matt runs behind a side of car. The car slowly pulls away; he walks with it. The car accelerates speed and drives away. Matt tries to run with it, then tires out. A fire truck drives near him. He leaps to the back of it and hangs on. A FIREMAN looks at him.

FIREMAN

Hey, no free rides! You have to pretend you're a fireman, like the rest of us are doing!

-- He kicks Matt off of the truck. Matt rolls to the ground, looks up, and sees his house. He quickly runs in.

END OF MONTAGE

INT. NELSON HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Matt runs in the front door, SLAMS it, and stands behind it.

MATT

Safe and sound!

Eleanor opens the door from the outside. The door SLAMS Matt to the wall.

ELEANOR

Eric! You here?

She pulls the door back. Matt GROANS.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)

Oh, hey, "Mr. Nelson-Jamisez". Is your son here?

MATT

No, he's at school!

ELEANOR

School! Dang, I knew I had to go somewhere today! Thanks!

MATT

(groans)
Don't mention it.

Eleanor leaves and closes the door behind her. Matt PLOPS to the ground.

INT. SCHOOL - HALLWAY - LATER

Eric walks down the hallway. Eleanor races up to him.

ELEANOR
Eric! You gotta help me!

ERIC
That's way above my pay grade, Eleanor.

ELEANOR
No, listen! I may have done something terrible to my sister!

Eric stops walking.

ERIC
I'm shocked yet intrigued. Go on.

ELEANOR
You know how she's waiting for her acceptance letter to college? Well, I might have forgotten to mail her application in. And by "forgotten", I mean, "deliberately".

ERIC
What?? That don't sound like you!

ELEANOR
(groans)
I know! I must have done it unconsciously!

ERIC
You mean, "subconsciously".

ELEANOR
No, I mean, "unconsciously", because I remember the whole thing!

Eric looks confused, and begins to speak, but holds back.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)
Here's how it happened.

INT. DUMBECK MANSION - LIVING ROOM - DAY - FLASHBACK

SFX: Classical piano-style background music PLAYS.

(NOTE: A series of still, photo-style shots illustrates the flashback.)

ELEANOR (V.O.)

I was on my way to mail coins and dollars to my bank.

-- Still of Eleanor pouring coins in envelope, followed by a still of coins breaking through envelope.

ELEANOR (V.O.)

Shana, knowing this, stops me.

-- Still of Shana handing Eleanor an envelope.

ELEANOR (V.O.)

She asks me if I can mail her college application since I'm going there, anyway.

-- Still of Shana in the middle of speaking.

ELEANOR (V.O.)

I told her, "I'm not going to college yet! I'm not old enough! Sheesh, and you're going to college?"

-- Still of Eleanor in the middle of speaking.

ELEANOR (V.O.)

Then she grows frustrated and says, "No, stupid, I mean the post office!"

-- Still of Shana facepalming.

ELEANOR (V.O.)

Then I said, "Oh, I knew that! Sure!"

-- Still of Eleanor laughing, then still of Shana walking away.

ELEANOR (V.O.)

But deep inside, I hated the way that she dismisses me, calls me names, and gets me to do things for her. She never wants to do anything with me. And now, she's gonna go to college and leave us!

-- Still of Eleanor looking angry, then still of her walking upstairs.

-- Still of her tripping up the stairs, followed by still of her touching her knee.

-- Still of her continuing to walk up the stairs.

ELEANOR (V.O.)

So I took her envelope and put it
underneath my mattress!

-- Still of her doing so, in her bedroom.

BACK TO PRESENT DAY

ELEANOR

Later, Shana apologized for giving me a
hard time, and she said that we would
hang out more before she leaves. But I
just remembered that I never mailed her
application!

ERIC

Okay, but what can I do about this?

ELEANOR

Good, thanks for asking! Your mother's a
college professor, right? She probably
has some educator friends in her circle.
Maybe she can find out where the
admissions person's office is, and we can
put the application on her desk without
her knowing!

ERIC

What? That's crazy! I'm not doing it!

ELEANOR

Okay, fine, Eric. But if Shana doesn't go
to college, she'll stay here and hang
around you. And she'll start gushing all
over you again.

(imitating Shana's voice)

"Oh, Babycakes! I love you, Babycakes!"

ERIC

Hey, stop that!

He looks around.

ELEANOR

(louder, more seductively)

"Ooh, Babycakes! Come to me, Babycakes!"

ERIC

Stop it!

ELEANOR
(even louder)
"Oh, Babycakes!"

ERIC
Alright! I'll help you! Geez!

He storms away.

ELEANOR
(normal voice)
Ooh, that got me hot!

She fans herself with her hands.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)
Anybody got a cigarette?

INT. SCHOOL - MATH CLASS - DAY

MR. BLACK, the teacher, writes on the board and address the class.

MR. BLACK
And the answer is 12. Okay, moving on.

JACOB
(mutters)
Three.

MR. BLACK
Excuse me, Mr. Jackson?

JACOB
(speaks up)
The answer should be three.

Arnold raises his hand.

ARNOLD
Hell must've frozen over. Jacob is right, sir.

Black looks at the board.

MR. BLACK
Oh yeah. My bad.

He erases the board and writes on it again.

MR. BLACK (CONT'D)

(to Jacob)

First day in class, and you think you know everything, huh?

Black chuckles. The rest of the class OOHHS.

JACOB

Hey, I'm only here so I can graduate outta this stupid school.

MR. BLACK

Oh yeah. The ice cream truck industry awaits!

The class LAUGHS. Jacob gets up.

JACOB

You know what? Why wait until graduation? I'm outta here!

MR. BLACK

Struck a nerve?

JACOB

Hell no! Who needs this? I'm gonna work for my dad! Later!

Jacob exits and SLAMS the door. Arnold raises his hand.

ARNOLD

Mr. Black, it's time to go to my Mensa meeting.

MR. BLACK

Now?

ARNOLD

Yep!

MR. BLACK

Hmmph. Well, you did find it. Go ahead.

Arnold walks into the hallway.

ARNOLD

Oh boy, here we go.

He pulls out his cellphone and dials.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)

911? I like to report a kid who's been bullying me.

(pause)

(MORE)

ARNOLD (CONT'D)

Yes, it's me, Arnold!

(pause)

But it's super important this time!

(pause)

Thanks.

INT. NELSON HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - LATER

Matt and Timmy enter from the kitchen. Matt carries a bag of popcorn and sits on the couch.

TIMMY

So you're back to hiding out in here again?

MATT

I'm not hiding, man!

TIMMY

Look, you need to be real with yourself and remove the stress from your life!

MATT

(sighs)

You're absolutely right.

EXT. NELSON HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Rhonda approaches the front door. Timmy SOARS past her in the air.

TIMMY

AAARRRGHHH!

RHONDA

Bye, Timmy.

Rhonda enters the house.

SFX: Timmy CRASHES off-screen.

Rhonda closes the door.

RHONDA (CONT'D)

Did he say something you didn't like?

MATT

(clicks his tongue)

Ya'll just don't get it. I'm standing my ground. I don't care what anyone says. I'm not giving that bill collector my hard-earned 20 dollars!

RHONDA
20 dollars?? You're going through all
this for 20 dollars??

MATT
It's the principle of it, Rhonda!

RHONDA
Damn the principle! It's 20 dollars,
Matt! Of course, now that I think of it,
after the court fees and everything, it's
probably 200 dollars now.

MATT
See? So it's justified!

Rhonda GRUNTS.

INT. POLICE STATION - LATER

Jacob is dragged into the station in handcuffs by OFFICER
YVETTE TOWNSEND, 40's, black.

JACOB
I keep telling you I didn't do anything!

OFFICER TOWNSEND
Well, I'm pretty sure you were about to.
Now, you're staying here until your
guardian comes.

She takes him to the holding cell.

OFFICER TOWNSEND (CONT'D)
Oh look, she's here right now!

Jacob's sister, GRETCHEN "GRETCH" JACKSON, 20's, sits in
there. Townsend opens the door, unlocks the handcuffs,
pushes him in the cell, SLAMS the door, and exits.

GRETCH
What's up, squirt?

JACOB
I'm in here for a crime I didn't commit.
But you wouldn't know anything about
that.

GRETCH
I hear K.J.'s back in town.

JACOB

Yeah. He wants me to go with him and help with his job.

GRETCH

When?

JACOB

Now.

GRETCH

What about graduation?

JACOB

Forget school. Who needs it? You didn't even finish.

GRETCH

But I went and got my GED. Look, don't give up school for that clown.

JACOB

(sighs)

Dad's not that bad.

GRETCH

You're too young to remember. When he left us, he didn't even say that he was going out for milk. He said to us, "I'm leavin' you!"

JACOB

Man! He can't even leave us right!

GRETCH

See what I'm saying?

JACOB

Alright, so he's a jerk. But at least he's doing something with his life. I don't even know what I wanna do.

He walks over to the door and shakes the bars. The door opens.

JACOB (CONT'D)

Gretch, you know this door is unlocked, right?

GRETCH

Yeah, but it's "Meatloaf Night".

JACOB

Whatever. See you at home.

GRETCH

"Home"?

JACOB

(sighs)

Never mind.

Jacob exits.

GRETCH

Mmm, meatloaf. Just like Mom used to not make!

INT. COLLEGE HALL - NIGHT

Eric and Eleanor creep into a room filled with partygoers. Music PLAYS in the background. The partygoers CHATTER. Eric wears a sportcoat, fedora, and a fake mustache. Eleanor wears a sweater and large glasses. She carries a large envelope with her.

ELEANOR

Are you sure this is the place?

ERIC

Yeah, my mom said that there's a faculty party. This must be it. Now we're looking for a Mrs. Robinson.

ELEANOR

Why?

ERIC

She's the admissions director. Let's split up and ask where she is.

Eleanor bumps into a MALE PROFESSOR.

MALE PROFESSOR

Oh, excuse me.

ELEANOR

(snooty voice)

Do not worry about it, and what not. Carry on, sir, and so forth.

Eric approaches a group of AIDES conversing. He BREAKS out in laughter.

ERIC

(snooty voice)

Oh, this party is grand! Where is that Mrs. Robinson, that crazy gal?

AIDE #1

Right over there.

He points to MRS. ROBINSON, who stands from afar.

ERIC

Thank you kindly. As you were, young folk!

He walks over to Eleanor.

ELEANOR

Man, this is what it must feel like for ordinary people to rub elbows with my family!

ERIC

We'll have to rub elbows with Mrs. Robinson, literally. Look, she has a set of keys on her person.

ELEANOR

She has a person on her? Where? I don't see one.

ERIC

Just follow my lead.

Eric and Eleanor creep behind Mrs. Robinson.

ERIC (CONT'D)

(shouts)

Oh my god! Look over there! A streaker, and what not!

Eric points to the right. The party turns, clamors, and runs in that direction.

MALE PROFESSOR

Let's get him!

Eric rubs against Mrs. Robinson. Her keys fall to the floor. Eric grabs them and passes them to Eleanor.

ERIC

Now go up to her office and put the envelope on her desk!

ELEANOR

Right!

Eric runs with the crowd. Eleanor runs to Mrs. Robinson's office. She unlocks the door.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)
Here goes something!

She enters the office, quickly puts the envelope on the desk, and leaves. She returns to the party, as do the partygoers. She approaches Eric.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)
Alright, I did it. Let's go.

ERIC
Well, I don't know. These guys are talking to me about giving a dissertation tomorrow morning.

ELEANOR
Oh, no problem. My butler can make a great dissertation. He can whip up a pie, and we can drop it off tomorrow.

They both exit.

AIDE #2
(to a professor)
There wasn't a streaker there at all!

A GENTLEMAN, wearing nothing but a trench coat, hat, and sunglasses, stands in the doorway.

GENTLEMAN
(sotto voce)
Dang. Wouldn't be as effective if I did it now.

He walks away with his head down.

INT. NELSON HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - THE NEXT DAY

SFX: Doorbell RINGS.

Matt walks by the front door.

MATT
Who is it?

A GUY from the other side of the door answers.

GUY #1 (O.S.)
Pizza!

Matt approaches the door and prepares to open it. He stops.

MATT

Wait a minute. I didn't order a pizza!

He runs through the kitchen and exits through the back door. Eric calls out from upstairs.

ERIC (O.S.)

Matt, is that the pizza?

Matt sneaks out of the back door. Another GUY yells at him from afar.

GUY #2

Hey, you!

MATT

You can't serve me if you can't catch me!

Matt starts running. The guy chases him. Matt runs through a neighbor's lawn, leaps over fences, and knocks over trash cans. He ZOOMS past EDDIE THE CAT, who chases WHISKERS and FRISKERS MOUSE. A cloud of smoke from Matt's running knocks Eddie and the mice down. BONY the dog yells.

BONY (O.S.)

Cut!

Bony approaches Eddie and the mice with a megaphone.

BONY (CONT'D)

That's it! I've had it! They're always ruining our shots!

EDDIE

We need our own show, Bony!

WHISKERS AND FRISKERS

Yeah!

BONY

That's right!

(to the camera, breaking the fourth wall)

Hey, we need our own sh--

CUT TO MATT RUNNING

Matt hops on a bike and pedals swiftly through traffic. Bony sticks his head in the frame.

BONY (CONT'D)

(to the camera)

Oh, not cool!

He sticks his head out. Matt jumps off the bike and leaps over a fence.

GUY #2 (O.S.)
Hey! Come back here!

Matt jumps on a clothesline, lights one end with a lighter, and swings from it. He flies off of the clothesline and CRASHES through the window of his living room.

MATT
(pants and catches his
breath)
Ya'll can't stop me!

SFX: Matt's cell phone RINGS.

MATT (CONT'D)
Hello?

An AUTOMATED VOICE from the other end SPEAKS.

AUTOMATED VOICE (O.S.)
We've been trying to reach you about your
car's extended warranty.

Matt begins to hang up.

AUTOMATED VOICE (O.S.)
(CONT'D)
Don't hang up, because we're gonna keep
calling, and calling, and calling...

Matt slowly falls to the ground.

AUTOMATED VOICE (O.S.)
(CONT'D)
Hello?
(pause)
Hello?
(pause)
Bitch, I know you're there!

INT. SCHOOL - MATH CLASS - DAY

Mr. Black takes attendance.

MR. BLACK
Okay, Ames. Abbott. Allen.

Arnold shoots up from his seat.

ARNOLD
Present as always!

The class MOANS.

MR. BLACK
Thanks for that.

Jacob walks into class.

MR. BLACK (CONT'D)
Jackson, you're late.

JACOB
Yeah, yeah, but I'm here.

He sits down.

JACOB (CONT'D)
(to Arnold, sotto voce)
Hey, dork, did you call the police on me?

ARNOLD
(sotto voce)
I don't know what you're talking about.
Did you run into your sister and future
cellmate?

JACOB
What do you care?

ARNOLD
(scoffs)
I don't!

JACOB
I didn't think so. Man, I can't wait to
graduate and get outta here.

ARNOLD
I'll help you clean out your locker!

JACOB
You're damn right, you will!

ERIC
You guys know you like each other. Just
kiss, make up, and get a room.

JACOB AND ARNOLD
(regular voices)
Shut up, Eric!

ERIC

See? Ya'll already saying what the other
one's thinking!

Mr. Black walks by Eric.

MR. BLACK

Take their advice, Mr. Nelson.

ARNOLD

(to Jacob, sotto voce)

You have my permission to kick his butt.

JACOB

I was going to, anyway.

They both snicker, then quickly stop, clear their
throats, frown at each other, and put their heads in
their books.

INT. DUMBECK MANSION - DAY

Jentille brings John his cell phone.

JENTILLE

Phone for you, sir.

JOHN

(on the phone)

John Dumbeck speaking.

(pause)

Yes!

Shana and Eleanor approach John.

JOHN (CONT'D)

(to the girls)

It's Wisconsin State!

The girls CHEER in a hushed manner.

ELEANOR

(to Shana)

The moment of truth, sis!

SHANA

I know!

JOHN

(on the phone)

Yes?

(pause)

Yes?

(MORE)

JOHN (CONT'D)

(dejected)

Oh. Yeah.

(pause)

Yeah.

(pause)

Uh huh. Thanks.

He hangs up and SIGHS.

ELEANOR

Sounds like good news! What did they say?

JOHN

Somehow, the admissions office got Shana's mail by accident. And she may have already won a million dollars.

ELEANOR

Oh yeah! The return address is for the top, not the middle!

SHANA

Eleanor, what are you talking about?

ELEANOR

(sighs)

Shana, I gotta show you something. Let's go to my room.

SHANA

No way! It always smells like farts and feet in there!

ELEANOR

It does not, now come on!

INT. DUMBECK MANSION - ELEANOR'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Eleanor pulls the envelope out from underneath her mattress and hands it to Shana.

ELEANOR

Here's your college application right here.

SHANA

What?? Why?

ELEANOR

At first, I didn't like the way you were treating me! Then you were gonna leave for school! But then, we started hanging out more. So my bad!

SHANA

Oh.

ELEANOR

That's it? You're not mad?

SHANA

I should be! But what if I told you that I wanna do something else? Something different from what everyone expects of me, know what I'm sayin'?

ELEANOR

Oh!

(chuckles, then stops)

Not really.

SHANA

I'll explain along the way. Come on.

INT. NELSON HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Matt kneels on the couch, which faces the front door. He wears an old military helmet. He peeks his head from over the couch.

MATT

All quiet on the home front, sir.

Rhonda enters.

RHONDA

Oh no. Matt, what is all of this?

MATT

I'm using my combat experience to spot the enemy!

RHONDA

"Combat experience"? You were an office assistant on a boat!

MATT

Hey, I binged a lot of "M*A*S*H" while standing watch!

RHONDA

Look, I want this foolishness to stop now!

MATT

Shhh! I hear footsteps! I'm goin' in!

He leaps over the couch. Timmy enters the front door.

TIMMY

Hey, guys.

MATT

YAAAAAAH!

He rushes to Timmy and grabs him.

EXT. NELSON HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - CONTINUOUS

Matt throws Timmy out.

TIMMY

AARRRRGGGHH!

He PLOPS to the ground. A bunch of hats fly towards him and land on the ground. Timmy looks around.

TIMMY (CONT'D)

Oh, very funny!

Matt SLAMS the door and begins to walk away.

SFX: Doorbell RINGS.

MATT

Look, Timmy, what don't you understand?

Matt opens the door. The guy who chased him earlier stands there. Matt SHRIEKS, turns around, and tries to run away. Rhonda stands there and frowns. Matt SIGHS and turns back to the guy.

GUY #2

William P. Nelson, Jr.?

MATT

What? No, I'm Matthew James!

GUY #2

Then why does your mailbox say, "Nelson"?

MATT

Look, that fool left his family and ran back to Madison! I'm the new fool now...I mean, I live here now.

RHONDA

It's true, sir.

GUY #2

Okay, then. Sorry.

The guy exits. Matt closes the door and SIGHS in relief.

MATT

How about that? He wasn't after me at all!

He turns on the TV and sits down.

RHONDA

Yeah! So, are you gonna pay that 20 dollars?

MATT

I'm watching commercials right now. I'll do it later.

Rhonda SIGHS, shakes her head, and exits. Matt reads from the TV.

MATT (CONT'D)

"Actor portrayal"? Aww, that changes everything!

EXT. DR. SYD'S OFFICE - LATER

Shana and Eleanor sit in a hammock. They are in the outdoor office of DR. SYD the mole, who sits on a stump. He dons a white jacket, curly hair, and glasses.

SHANA

So, like I told my sister here, I wanna make a difference in the world. I want to see the world, help out others, and know that there's a purpose. And I believe I found the answer!

SFX: Dr. Syd SCRIBBLES on his notepad.

ELEANOR

Really? What is it?

SFX: An alarm clock BUZZES.

Dr. Syd looks at his watch.

SHANA

Oh, time's up. We'll have to come back next week. Thanks, Doc.

She and Eleanor get up and begin to exit.

ELEANOR

But Shana, why don't you just tell me on the way home?

SHANA

No, Eleanor, I'll tell you next week!

ELEANOR

Oh, right.

They exit.

INT. ICE SKATING RINK - NIGHT

A spotlight shines on an ice rink. An ANNOUNCER speaks off-screen.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

And now, the three stars of the night!
Number three, with the outstanding effort
to escape from "The Man", Matt James!

Matt, on ice skates and holding a hockey stick, glides to the center. An audience CHEERS off-screen.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Number two, with the max effort to fix
her screw-up, Eleanor Dumbeck!

Eleanor, with a hockey stick, clumsily waddles on her ice skates and stands next to Matt. The audience CHEERS.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.) (CONT'D)

And the number one star, because it's his
show, Eric T. Nelson!

Eric, with a hockey stick, skates to the center. The audience CHEERS. A REPORTER with a mic approaches him.

REPORTER

Eric, how do you feel about tonight?

ERIC

(into the mic)

First, I'd like to thank my damn self,
'cuz without me, none of this would be
possible. But give credit to my crew
here. We gave it 110 percent tonight!
Now, we're gonna look at the tape and
come back strong next week!

(yells in the mic)

Yeah!

The audience CHEERS. Eric skates around the rink.

THE END