

ERIC

"Bernie Mack"

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INT. HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY

ERIC NELSON and other BOYS, all in their teens, stand next to their lockers and check out the girls walking by.

ERIC

There goes Shaquanna. Man, you can see her butt from the front!

The other boys nod in agreement.

ERIC (CONT'D)

And there's Melissa. She's wearing that sweater again!

All of the boys give a moaning sigh.

BERNIECE WILLIAMS and CONNIE McDOWELL, also in their teens, look at the boys from afar.

BERNIECE

Look at them drooling over there.

CONNIE

Boys and their hormones.

BERNIECE

And speaking of hormones...

MAUREEN WALKER, a curvaceous teen girl who wears a tight dress and heavy makeup, wiggles her hips and walks up to the boys.

MAUREEN

What's up, fellas?

BOY #1

(stutters)

Carry your books?

MAUREEN

Nah, I'm good.

BOY #2

You sure are.

Maureen sashays away.

BERNIECE

Oh, now they're tongue-tied!

MAUREEN

(approaches the girls)

It's all in the walk. Heads turn when I come around.

BERNIECE

They turn away so they don't catch nothing.

Connie nudges Berniece to quiet her.

MAUREEN

You could learn a thing or two from me, Berniece.

Maureen sashays away.

BERNIECE

Yeah, right. All I gotta do is say the right things. Men don't think with their heads. The right head, anyway.

CHARLES, 15, wears a letter jacket, and walks down the hallway.

BERNIECE (CONT'D)

Hey, Charles, nice game.

CHARLES

Thanks! You saw me play?

BERNIECE

The finest brother on the team. We should go out after school. Your treat.

CHARLES

Whatever you say. See you then.

He exits.

BERNIECE

See?

CONNIE

Hey, I bet I can do that, too! Watch!

BERNIECE

You can't! You're in love with Dimmey, remember?

CONNIE

Oh yeah! Dang it! Can I change my mind?

PRINCIPAL PETERS arrives, stops, and addresses all of the kids.

PRINCIPAL PETERS
All right, that's enough! Get to class!

The kids exit. COACH SUGGS, a male teacher, approaches Peters.

COACH SUGGS
Hey, the lunch lady's wearing those hip-huggers again.

PRINCIPAL PETERS
Ugh. Don't remind me.

INT. NELSON HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Eric and his best friend DIMMEY ROBERTS, 15, sit on the couch and watch TV. The power suddenly goes out, and they sit in the dark.

ERIC
Hey, the power went out!

DIMMEY
Guess we really can't start on that project now.

ERIC
Cool, a built-in excuse!

DIMMEY
Yeah!

EXT. OUTDOORS - DR. SYD'S OFFICE - SAME

DR. SYD the mole sits on a stoop with his notepad in front of a space heater and lamp. IKE SWANSON, 20's, with long hair that covers his right eye, sits in a hammock next to him. OLIVER the duck, who speaks telepathically, sits at a desk and types on his laptop.

IKE
(sobs)
Like, it's just not fair, dude!

SFX: The CLICK of the power shutting off the lamp, heater, and laptop.

OLIVER
The power's out.
 (to Ike)
Sorry, sir, until the power's back on,
you'll have to leave.

Oliver points to the exit. Ike gets up and follows that direction.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
Hey, this doesn't count as my lunch, does it?

SFX: Dr. Syd SQUEAKS.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
Just my break?
 (sarcastically)
Thanks a lot.

INT. NELSON HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - LATER

The power is back on, and Eric sits and watches TV. His mother, RHONDA NELSON-JAMES, gasps off-screen.

ERIC
 (turns around)
 Mom, what's wrong?

Rhonda enters the living room with her husband, MATT JAMES.

RHONDA
 The window is broken in the guest room!

MATT
 Must've happened while the power went out!
 (to Eric)
 You didn't hear anything?

ERIC
 No.

Dimmey's father, TIMMY ROBERTS, enters the house.

TIMMY
 Hey, guys, what's goin' on?

MATT
 Not great, Timmy. I think we've been robbed!

TIMMY
(scoffs)
How can you tell?

Matt looks at Timmy angrily.

TIMMY (CONT'D)
(in a more serious tone)
I mean, "How can you tell?"

MATT
Let's look around the house.

INT. NELSON HOUSE - MATT AND RHONDA'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS
LATER

Eric, Matt, Rhonda, and Timmy look around the room.

RHONDA
It doesn't look like they took anything
in here.

Matt opens a bare dresser drawer.

MATT
Except this! All of my socks are gone!

Eric runs out of the room. Rhonda looks in her drawer.

RHONDA
So are mine!

Eric reenters.

ERIC
Mine are too!

MATT
That's odd! Who would break in to steal
socks?

TIMMY
(to Matt)
Yeah, especially yours?

Timmy snickers.

EXT. NELSON HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - MOMENTS LATER

Timmy is tossed out of the house.

TIMMY

AARGH!

SFX: Timmy CRASHES into the garbage cans off-screen.

Matt peeks his head out.

MATT

You know, I gave you a freebie earlier.

TIMMY (O.S.)

(sighs)

I know.

Matt closes the door.

INT. TIMMY'S PLACE - DAY

Eric sits at a booth opposite Dimmey and Connie. Timmy approaches their table.

TIMMY

(to Dimmey)

Son, we might be closing soon.

DIMMEY

When?

Ike works at the bar.

IKE (O.S.)

Timmy, like, we're out of alcohol!

TIMMY

Now.

The people at the bar begin to leave.

TIMMY (CONT'D)

The liquor suppliers are running late! I can still whip something up in the kitchen, though.

The three kids look at their plates of food.

ERIC, DIMMEY, AND CONNIE

You're closed.

Timmy walks away. Berniece walks with PRESTON, 15.

PRESTON

I'm outta here. So, we're still going out tonight?

BERNIECE

Yep. Pick me up at 8.

Preston exits while Berniece giggles and waves goodbye. Berniece quickly stops giggling and runs to the kids' booth.

BERNIECE (CONT'D)

Connie, I'm in trouble!

CONNIE

In paradise? You?

BERNIECE

I can't decide which boy to keep: Preston or Charles!

ERIC

(to Berniece)

Wow, I didn't know we were in an open relationship!

Berniece scoffs and shoos him with her hand.

BERNIECE

What do I do, Connie?

CONNIE

I don't know, but you better decide quick, because Charles is coming this way.

Berniece GASPS. Charles arrives at the booth.

CHARLES

Hey, Berniece. I can't wait for tonight.

BERNIECE

Tonight?

ERIC

Oh, Berniece, I forgot it was you two's anniversary.

BERNIECE

(chuckles)

Well, yeah, it's our one-week anniversary!

CHARLES

It's not our anniversary!

Berniece looks at Eric angrily. Eric quietly snickers along with Connie and Dimmey.

BERNIECE

Are you sure, because I'm sure it's been a week since we've been dating.

CHARLES

Well, maybe it has, but I'm talking about my birthday.

BERNIECE

Well, of course. Happy birthday, sweetie!

She hugs and kisses Charles.

ERIC

What do you have planned for Charles?

BERNIECE

Oh, it's a surprise.

ERIC

No kidding.

Berniece looks at Eric angrily.

ERIC (CONT'D)

By the way, I can't make it to your party. Oops!

Berniece's eyes open wide.

CHARLES

Party?

ERIC

Yeah, isn't that what you meant by "surprise", Berniece?

BERNIECE

(nervously chuckles)

Okay, you got me, Charles.

(mutters to Eric)

Thanks a lot.

ERIC

Sorry about that, but Charles, just act surprised. Just like how Berniece looks now.

CHARLES

Alright, I'm gonna practice in front of my mirror. I'll talk to you later!

Charles kisses Berniece on the cheek and exits.

BERNIECE

Eric, I'm gonna kill you!

ERIC

What, you can't handle your many men?

Berniece storms away.

CONNIE

Berniece, wait up!

Connie frowns at Eric and follows Berniece out. Eric chuckles.

DIMMEY

Well, that's a great way to get into her pants.

Eric stops chuckling.

ERIC

Oh, crap.

EXT./INT. SAMPSON'S FOOD & LIQUOR - LATER

A long line stands outside of the door and into the store. The cashier, KATHY HUGHES, a black teenage girl dressed in Goth-like gear, makes an announcement on the speaker.

KATHY

(in a dull voice)

Attention Sampson's shoppers: due to our low inventory, we can only allow one pack of socks per person.

Her sister, KEISHA, dressed similar to her, arrives at the counter with multiple packs of socks.

KATHY (CONT'D)

That goes for you, too.

KEISHA

Hmmph. Whateva.

Keisha gives her money to Kathy, takes one pack of socks, and leaves. Further back in line are Eric, Matt, and Rhonda, each with a pack of socks in a shopping cart. Rhonda's friend, OFFICER YVETTE TOWNSEND, a short, big-boned lady, stands in front of them.

MATT

Another long line.

RHONDA

Yep, the "Sock Bandit" struck again.

OFFICER TOWNSEND

Never you worry. I'll solve this mystery.

Townsend steps out of line, walks around, and returns to the line.

OFFICER TOWNSEND (CONT'D)

Yep, just like I thought. Everybody is buying a pack of socks!

MATT

Nice sleuthing. How about finding out who the Sock Bandit is?

OFFICER TOWNSEND

Oh, I think I found my culprit, but I'm gonna need ya'll help.

RHONDA

What about your partners? Why us?

OFFICER TOWNSEND

Well, how else am I gonna get Eric and the gang involved?

ERIC

She has a point.

OFFICER TOWNSEND

The Gretch is right in front of me. Follow my lead. Hey, Rhonda, "Sock Bandit" is a good name. Mind if I take credit for it?

Rhonda shoos Townsend with her hand. Townsend peers over GRETCH JACKSON's shoulder. Gretch wears ragged clothing and is in her 20's.

OFFICER TOWNSEND (CONT'D)

I got my eye on you, Jackson.

GRETCH

(stays faced forward in line)
Leave me alone, copper.

OFFICER TOWNSEND

Where were you last night at around 7?

GRETCH

Minding my own, which is what you should do.

OFFICER TOWNSEND

You got a lot of socks there. Why do you have so many?

GRETCH

(faces Townsend)

Because I was robbed, and I need some more?

OFFICER TOWNSEND

A likely story!

RHONDA

(to Townsend)

Actually, 'Vette, it is a likely story.

OFFICER TOWNSEND

Hey, I'm not paying you guys to think!

RHONDA

You're not paying me at all.

OFFICER TOWNSEND

Exactly!

MATT

Wait, you're supposed to pay us? I wanna get paid!

OFFICER TOWNSEND

Shush, you two!

(to Gretch)

I'll be watching you.

GRETCH

(looks at Townsend's belly)

You need to watch what you eat.

Gretch turns back around. Eric GIGGLES. Matt HITS Eric on the arm. Eric stops laughing, then dials on his cellphone.

ERIC

Hey, Billy, I have a little problem.

EXT. BILLY'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Eric's big brother, BILLY, 19, lifts weights while speaking with his earbuds.

BILLY

You are a little problem.

ERIC

Yeah, but I'm a good problem to have!

BILLY

What do you want, squirt?

ERIC

Berniece has a date with two different dudes on the same night!

BILLY

And that has to do with you because?

ERIC

'Cuz neither of them are me!

BILLY

You really gotta let her go. There's other women out there.

ERIC

Easy for you to say, you have a girlfriend.

BILLY

Fine, then arrange one spot where both of her dates can be, so she can switch back and forth without them knowing.

ERIC

Why would I help her keep the dates?

BILLY

Because when it blows up in her face, you'll look all the better to her.

ERIC

Billy, that's...

(pause)

...not a bad idea. You're actually good for something.

BILLY

Yeah, well, let me know how it goes. No, wait. Don't ever call me again.

ERIC

Naw, too late, you love me.

Billy hangs up. His girlfriend, SHARON ROSS, approaches him.

SHARON

So, is that what you're teaching your brother, to trick women into liking him?

BILLY

No! How do you even know I was talking about that?

SHARON

(walks away)

I know all! Plus I heard you from outside.

Billy sighs and continues lifting weights.

INT. NELSON HOUSE - GARAGE - LATER

Eric kneels underneath the family's broken grand piano and tries to tune it. Dimmey and Berniece stand around the piano.

SFX: Tools CHURNING.

ERIC

Alright. Dimmey, your father's restaurant is closed tonight, right?

DIMMEY

Yeah.

ERIC

And Berniece, both of your dates are still tonight at the same time?

BERNIECE

Roughly.

ERIC

And Dimmey, where's your dad?

DIMMEY

Out shopping for socks. There's a big shortage, so he'll be gone a while.

Eric lifts his head up.

ERIC

Okay. Berniece, you throw a surprise party for your first date in Timmy's Place. Then you go upstairs to Dimmey's place, pretend that it's yours, and have a nice dinner with your second date.

BERNIECE

Hmmm, okay. That might work.

DIMMEY

And I can keep my dad away even longer by having him go food shopping for my duck, Oliver.

BERNIECE

Well, we don't have time to waste! Dimmey, talk to your father. I'll get some people to help set up the restaurant.

DIMMEY

Right.

Dimmey exits. Eric goes back underneath the piano.

BERNIECE

Wait, Eric, why are you so willing to help me?

ERIC

Well, I feel partly responsible for putting you in this mess.

BERNIECE

That's sweet. I gotta go. I love you.

SFX: Eric SLAMS his head underneath the piano and lifts his head up from there.

ERIC

(holds his head)

What??

BERNIECE

Just kidding, I wanted to see what you would do.

Berniece exits. Eric moans.

ERIC

(shrugs his shoulders)

Love taps.

He goes back underneath.

INT. OFFICER TOWNSEND'S APARTMENT - LATER

Officer Townsend, Rhonda, and Matt sit and watch TV in the living room.

SFX: Power SHUTS off. Glass window BREAKS! Townsend SCREAMS. POUNDING from the ceiling.

OFFICER TOWNSEND

(calls out)

Sorry, Mr. Allen. There was a break-in attempt!

The power comes back on.

MATT

Is everybody okay?

RHONDA

Yeah.

Townsend runs to her bedroom and returns to the living room.

OFFICER TOWNSEND

My window is broken, and Gretch stole my socks!

RHONDA

We don't know if it was her.

OFFICER TOWNSEND

This has her name written all over it. She's crafty like that.

Townsend points to a plate of cookies on the kitchen table.

OFFICER TOWNSEND (CONT'D)

See? She didn't even fall for the booby trap. These cookies are still here. Now why is that?

MATT

Because she's not a bear?

OFFICER TOWNSEND

We'll see about that. Come on!

The three begin to exit her apartment. Townsend grabs a cookie.

OFFICER TOWNSEND (CONT'D)

One for the road.

MATT

(reaches for a cookie)

Can I get one, too?

OFFICER TOWNSEND
(slaps his hand away)
No touching the evidence!

They exit.

EXT. JACKSON APARTMENT - LATER

Officer Townsend, Rhonda, and Matt stand outside the door.

OFFICER TOWNSEND
Okay, guys, you knock on the door. Gretch won't answer if it's me. I'll hide around the corner.

RHONDA
Whatever.

Townsend goes around the corner. Matt knocks on the door.

SFX: Dog BARKING from inside.

Opening the door is Gretch's little brother, JACOB, 17.

MATT
Hey, I know you! You're that boy who bullies our son!

JACOB
Yes, and how can I help you?

RHONDA
Is your sister around?

SFX: Jacob's dog BARKS.

JACOB
(to the dog)
Quiet!
(to the adults)
That's Dexter. He wouldn't hurt a fly. He does hurt people, though.

RHONDA
Nice. Now about your sister?

JACOB
She's gone. She's usually here around this time.

Townsend jumps from behind the corner.

OFFICER TOWNSEND

A-ha! So Gretch is supposed to be here!

JACOB

I guess so.

OFFICER TOWNSEND

You mind if I look around your place?

JACOB

Don't you need a warrant for that?

OFFICER TOWNSEND

Oh, you people know all about warrants, huh?

JACOB

Look, are we done? I got stuff to do.

OFFICER TOWNSEND

Fine. I'll come back with a warrant, and when I do, you'll be sorry.

JACOB

Why? I didn't do anything.

OFFICER TOWNSEND

Did you, Jackson? Did you?

JACOB

No.

PAUSE.

OFFICER TOWNSEND

Okay, smart-ass, get outta my sight.

Jacob slams the door.

OFFICER TOWNSEND (CONT'D)

Ooh, I'll get that Gretchen if it's the last thing I do!

She walks away.

MATT

So this will be the first and last thing she does?

Rhonda nudges Matt to quiet him. They both follow Townsend out.

INT. ROBERTS HOME - EVENING

Berniece and Preston sit at the kitchen table with their dinners in front of them.

BERNIECE

Isn't this nice, Preston? A home-cooked meal?

PRESTON

Yeah, but I thought this was take-out. And speaking of home, why are there all those pics of white people around the living room?

BERNIECE

Oh, that was my ex. He couldn't hang.

PRESTON

And the older white guy?

BERNIECE

His father. We all were really close.

She pretends to sob.

BERNIECE (CONT'D)

Sometimes it's so hard to let go!

PRESTON

Okay, okay, sorry I asked. It'll be okay.

BERNIECE

Excuse me while I run to the bathroom for some tissue.

She gets up and heads to the bathroom, then quickly changes direction and exits out the house. She runs downstairs to the restaurant.

INT. TIMMY'S PLACE - CONTINUOUS

Berniece runs up to kids who finish decorating the restaurant.

BERNIECE

Okay, guys, it looks nice in here. Eleanor, you got the food?

ELEANOR DUMBECK, 15, approaches Berniece.

ELEANOR

Food? I didn't say I was getting it.

BERNIECE

What? When I asked about the food,
drinks, and the cake, you said, "Don't
worry about it!"

ELEANOR

Yeah, because you looked really upset!

BERNIECE

(advances toward Eleanor)
Ooh, I oughta kick your butt!

ELEANOR

Now, now, that attitude won't make the
food come any faster!

BERNIECE

What are we gonna do? Have a party with
no drinks?

DIMMEY

Don't worry. So the kids won't get too
tired or thirsty, we'll keep the music
real low. Plus, Preston won't be able to
hear the party from upstairs.

BERNIECE

Well, okay. We should start hiding. Who's
looking out for Charles?

DIMMEY

Uh...

Charles walks behind the three of them.

CHARLES

Hey, Berniece.

Berniece GASPS.

BERNIECE, ELEANOR, AND
DIMMEY

Surprise!

They get the other kids to join them.

BERNIECE, ELEANOR, AND
DIMMEY (CONT'D)

Surprise!

CHARLES

Oh my god, you guys shouldn't have!

ARNOLD ALLEN, 15, dressed in a sweater vest, tie, and wearing bifocals, walks up to the group.

ARNOLD
(to Charles)
You already knew about this surprise party, didn't you?

CHARLES
Yep.

ARNOLD
Mmm hmm.

ELEANOR
(to Arnold)
Surprise!

Arnold is startled, then frowns at Eleanor.

BERNIECE
Alright, let's get this party started!

SFX: One of the kids TURNS THE MUSIC UP.

DIMMEY
But very quietly!

SFX: The kid TURNS THE MUSIC DOWN a little.

CHARLES
Why quietly?

DIMMEY
It'll give this party an...intimate experience.

BERNIECE
I'll take your coat, birthday boy.
Anything you need?

CHARLES
Something to drink?

BERNIECE
Unfortunately, we don't have that here.
And I hope you already ate.

ELEANOR
(to Charles)
Surprise!

BERNIECE
 (to Eleanor)
 Will you stop that?
 (to Charles)
 I'm gonna go and put your coat up!

She walks, then runs up the stairs to Dimmey's home.

INT. ROBERTS HOME - CONTINUOUS

Berniece throws Charles's coat behind a couch and meets Preston back at the dinner table.

PRESTON
 Feeling better?

BERNIECE
 What? Oh yeah, that joker is history!

Berniece eats her food quickly.

PRESTON
 Hey, slow down! We don't have to go anywhere!

BERNIECE
 Right, right. It's just that the food is so good.
 (pause)
 So good that it's going right through me. I need to hit the ladies' room again. Finish without me, if you must.

PRESTON
 O..kay.

Berniece quickly sneaks out the house and runs downstairs.

INT. TIMMY'S PLACE - CONTINUOUS

Berniece quickly walks to Charles.

BERNIECE
 (pants)
 Okay, Charles, enjoying the party so far?

CHARLES
 Yeah, it's cool.

BERNIECE
 Good, excuse me.

Berniece walks over to Connie.

BERNIECE (CONT'D)

Connie, help me! I need something to
prolong the time so Charles doesn't know
I'm gone!

CONNIE

I know!

(calls out)

All right, everybody, it's time for "Spin
the Bottle"!

DIMMEY

"Spin the Bottle"? What generation is
this?

ARNOLD

The generation where I need a girl! I'm
in!

Arnold walks to the center of the restaurant and sits on
the floor. The rest of the party joins him.

BERNIECE

I'll spin first.

(to Charles)

Don't take this personal, it's just a
game.

CHARLES

I'm cool.

SFX: WHOOSH sound as Berniece spins the bottle.

The bottle stops at Arnold.

ARNOLD

All right!

CONNIE

Okay, you two have to go in the broom
closet to kiss. You have five minutes.

SFX: The rest of the party WHISTLES.

DIMMEY

That's five minutes too many!

Other kids laugh.

BERNIECE

Let's go, Arnold.

Berniece grabs Arnold by the arm, and they head to the broom closet.

 CONNIE
 Okay, let's keep spinning!

 ARNOLD
 You ready, Berniece?

 BERNIECE
 No, go away.

Berniece quickly exits the restaurant.

 ARNOLD
 Anybody else wanna take her place?

 CONNIE
 (speaks rapidly)
 Sorry, Arnold, the game's over. We're getting back to the party. Turn up the music!

SFX: The music RESUMES.

Connie walks away.

 ARNOLD
 Even when I win, I lose.

MARY, 15, dressed in nerdy gear similar to Arnold, approaches him.

 MARY
 It's their loss, Arnold.

 ARNOLD
 Yeah!

They both stare into each other's eyes and smile.

 ARNOLD (CONT'D)
 Enjoy the party, Margo.

Arnold confidently walks away.

 MARY (O.S.)
 It's Mary!

INT. OFFICER TOWNSEND'S POLICE CAR - LATER

Officer Townsend drives her car with Rhonda in the front and Eric and Matt in the back.

RHONDA

'Vette, we been doing this ride-along for an hour. Unless you're gonna give me a hat, let me outta here!

OFFICER TOWNSEND

Hold on, I'm getting warm.

Gretch, wearing a backpack, rides a bike down the street.

OFFICER TOWNSEND (CONT'D)

There she is!

Townsend puts the siren on and stops Gretch. She and the others get out of the car.

GRETCH

(to Eric)

Eric in the back of the police car? I have a whole new respect for you.

OFFICER TOWNSEND

Alright, Gretch! What are you doing on this bike?

GRETCH

The walking's hurting my feet. I think I got some glass or something in my shoe.

OFFICER TOWNSEND

(gasps)

I knew it! And what's that on your back?
(points to the backpack)
Go on, take it off!

GRETCH

Not on the first date.

Townsend sticks out her hand. Gretch hands over her backpack. Townsend opens it.

OFFICER TOWNSEND

Socks!

GRETCH

Yeah, I had to buy some more!

OFFICER TOWNSEND

Or "stole some more"! You're under arrest!

GRETCH

Hey, wait a minute!

Townsend begins to place handcuffs on Gretch. Another police car arrives. A male COP jumps out with a male BURGLAR handcuffed to him. The burglar wears all black with a black ski mask.

OFFICER TOWNSEND

Hey, I didn't call for backup. Did I?

COP

No. I came to tell you that I caught the burglar!

OFFICER TOWNSEND

What? Well, let's see who it is!

Townsend pulls off the ski mask.

OFFICER TOWNSEND AND COP

Officer Dayton??

OFFICER TOWNSEND

Ex-Officer Dayton!

MATT

Who is he?

OFFICER TOWNSEND

He used to be on the force but got let go.

DAYTON

Yep, I know all of the houses and all of the ways to shut off the power in this city!

ERIC

But why socks?

DAYTON

I wanted to make a name for myself. First socks, then shoes, then who knows, expensive paintings. And I would've gotten away with it, if it weren't for you meddling...

(looks around, then to the cop)

...adult cop!

COP

That's enough out of you. Let's go!

The cop takes Dayton back into the car, and they drive off.

OFFICER TOWNSEND

Well, Jackson, we're...

Rhonda nudges Townsend.

OFFICER TOWNSEND (CONT'D)

I'm sorry.

GRETCH

Believe me, if I stole something, you would know.

ERIC

Hey, Gretch, it's none of our business, but why were you always gone at the same time every night?

GRETCH

(takes back her backpack and digs in it)

Well, if the copper bothered to continue searching through my bag, without a warrant, I might add...

OFFICER TOWNSEND

(sighs)

It's always about warrants with you Jacksons.

GRETCH

...she would have found this!

Gretch pulls out a folder and shows the others.

MATT

You got your G.E.D.?

GRETCH

Yeah. I was studying. And I passed.

OFFICER TOWNSEND

Jackson, I'm surprised.

GRETCH

(to Townsend)

Hey, I don't care about much, especially not you, but I care about my edgy-cation.

OFFICER TOWNSEND

Okay, well, you better go and celebrate, then.

GRETCH

Mmm hmm. Later, losers.

Gretch takes the folder back and rides away on her bike.

OFFICER TOWNSEND

Well, another day, another mystery solved!

MATT

You're kidding, right?

OFFICER TOWNSEND

I could go for a burger.

Townsend pats her pants for her wallet.

OFFICER TOWNSEND (CONT'D)

My wallet!

(yells in Gretch's direction)

Hey, Gretch! Come back here!

Townsend hops in her car and chases after Gretch. They both race off up and down some hills and into the sunset.

SFX: Cheesy, slapstick music PLAYS.

MATT

That's our Gretch!

Eric, Matt, and Rhonda laugh.

IRIS BEGINS.

RHONDA

Hey, wait a minute!

IRIS REVERSES.

SFX: Music SUBSIDES.

RHONDA (CONT'D)

Eric, don't you have a party to go to?

ERIC

Oh yeah, I better get going!

Eric runs away.

MATT

Um, wasn't Yvette our ride home?

PAUSE.

Matt and Rhonda begin to exit the scene.

RHONDA
That's our 'Vette.

MATT
That's your 'Vette.

INT. ROBERTS HOME - LATER

Berniece and Preston continue eating their meals.

PRESTON
You like basketball?

BERNIECE
A little.

PRESTON
Bucks vs. Bulls is about to start. Mind
if we watch it?

BERNIECE
No, let's go!

Berniece goes to the living room and picks up a remote control.

BERNIECE (CONT'D)
Dang, I can't turn it on. I need the
code.

PRESTON
To your own TV?

BERNIECE
No, wait. I think the fuse went out for
the socket. Let me check the fuse box.

Berniece jets out of the house.

PRESTON
But...

INT. TIMMY'S PLACE - CONTINUOUS

Berniece runs into the restaurant, catching her breath.

CHARLES
There you are! Let's dance!

BERNIECE
(pants)
Actually, I'm a little...

CHARLES

Come on! This beat hits!

Both of them dance. Berniece spots Dimmey and Connie dancing; she and Charles move towards them.

BERNIECE

(to Connie)

Can I cut in?

CONNIE

People still do that?

Berniece GRUNTS at Connie, who then quickly swaps places with Berniece.

DIMMEY

What's up?

BERNIECE

Dimmey, I need the code to your remote!

DIMMEY

7969.

BERNIECE

7969. Great, thanks. 7969. 7969.

Berniece swiftly walks, repeating those numbers aloud. She tries to make her way through a crowd of people. In her way are a boy and a GIRL with their cell phones out.

BOY #3

So your number is 555-8732?

GIRL

No, it's 555-3732!

Berniece wrestles through the crowd while covering her ears.

BOY #3

414-555-3732?

GIRL

No, 262-555-3732!

BERNIECE

(to the boy and girl)

Shut up!!

Berniece pushes through the crowd and runs upstairs.

INT. ROBERTS HOME - CONTINUOUS

Berniece limps in the house, wiping sweat off her forehead.

PRESTON

Berniece, is everything all right?

BERNIECE

Yep! Let me turn on the TV.

She picks up the remote.

BERNIECE (CONT'D)

Aw, damn!

PRESTON

That's okay. What's that music I hear?

BERNIECE

It must be downstairs. I'll tell Timmy to turn it down.

Berniece hurries out of the house but leaves the door open.

PRESTON

But I don't mind it!

INT. TIMMY'S PLACE - CONTINUOUS

Berniece hurries through the crowd.

ARNOLD

Berniece, this party is pretty "lit", as you guys say, but some of us are pretty parched.

ELEANOR

Yeah, and thirsty, too!

BERNIECE

Good point.

(calls out)

Alright, somebody put a slow jam on! And lower the music!

SFX: The music SWITCHES from fast to slow. Some kids dance with others.

CHARLES

(to Berniece)

Can we continue our dance now?

BERNIECE

Sure.

Charles tries to dance slow, but Berniece dances fast, then stops after a few seconds.

BERNIECE (CONT'D)

That was the bomb! I gotta take a break!

Berniece runs away.

EXT. TIMMY'S PLACE - CONTINUOUS

Berniece steps outside and tries to catch her breath.

ERIC (O.S.)

Another day in the life of Ms. Casanova,
huh?

Berniece turns around to see Eric standing there.

INT. TIMMY'S PLACE - SAME

Eleanor notices the door that leads to the stairway upstairs.

ELEANOR

(calls out)

Hey, Dimmey, does this lead to the
bathroom?

Eleanor walks upstairs.

DIMMEY

No, Eleanor, it's...oh, screw it.

INT. ROBERTS HOME - CONTINUOUS

Eleanor and a few kids walk into Dimmey's house, where Preston waits.

ELEANOR

Food!

The kids run to the kitchen and begin eating and drinking the remainder of the food on the counter.

PRESTON

Are you sure ya'll have enough?!

ELEANOR

Good point.

SFX: Eleanor SWIPES Preston's plate of food from him.
Loud music BANGS from downstairs.

PRESTON

Hey, that's my jam! Where is that music
coming from?

Preston exits the house.

INT. TIMMY'S PLACE - CONTINUOUS

Preston enters the restaurant, where kids are dancing.

PRESTON

Hey now, that's what I'm talking about!

He glides to the middle of the dance floor. Near the
hallway exit, Charles approaches Eleanor who has a cup in
her hand.

CHARLES

Where'd you get that drink from?

ELEANOR

Upstairs!

ARNOLD

A resting place? Come on, everybody!

Arnold and some kids run upstairs.

DIMMEY

Wait, hold up! Don't mess up the place!

Dimmey and Connie run after the crowd.

EXT. TIMMY'S PLACE - SAME

Eric and Berniece sit on the bench.

ERIC

Looks like this is too much for you.

BERNIECE

No, I'm fine. I just needed some fresh
air.

ERIC

Why are you going through all this for two guys, anyway? Especially when you could be doing it for only one!

BERNIECE

I know what you're trying to do, Eric, but I got it under control! Now, are you coming in?

ERIC

Yeah. I gotta see this.

INT. TIMMY'S PLACE - CONTINUOUS

Eric and Berniece walk in and see a few kids dancing with cups in their hands.

ARNOLD

Hey, Berniece, capital idea to have the party downstairs and the cool-down part upstairs!

DIMMEY

(to Arnold)

It is my house, you know.

Dimmey picks up his cell phone from his pocket.

ERIC

Well, it looks like everyone's having fun.

Dimmey hangs up his phone, then runs and turns off the music.

DIMMEY

(calls out)

My dad's on his way back. Party's over!
Thanks for coming!

CROWD

Awww!

The crowd starts hurrying to the exit.

DIMMEY

Connie, you get everyone out down here.
I'll do upstairs!

CONNIE

Right!

Dimmey runs upstairs.

BERNIECE

(to Connie)

I gotta go upstairs and get Preston.

CONNIE

No you don't. He's right over there talking to Charles.

BERNIECE

What? No he's not.

Preston and Charles approach Berniece. Connie walks away.

BERNIECE (CONT'D)

(nervously)

Oh, hey, Preston, Charles! Ya'll know each other?

CHARLES

We do now.

PRESTON

Apparently, we have more in common than we thought!

BERNIECE

Well, Connie suggested...

CONNIE (O.S.)

Girl, you are on your own!

BERNIECE

Okay, I know this may look bad, but I threw a great party and provided a great date, plus a spot to chill for everyone involved. So it all balances out, right?

Preston and Charles frown at Berniece.

BERNIECE (CONT'D)

(sighs and waves)

Get home safely.

The two boys exit. Eric walks up to Berniece.

ERIC

Sorry that happened to you, Berniece.

BERNIECE

It's all right. I had it coming.

ERIC

You know, at times like this, it's important to realize that your one true love could be right underneath your nose.

BERNIECE

You know, you're right. We played "Spin the Bottle" earlier, and we had to make out in the broom closet over there. Why don't I show you how it's played?

ERIC

For real? Yeah, let's go! Trust, you're gonna walk outta here speechless!

Eric hurries to the broom closet.

BERNIECE

(sotto voce)

Yeah, right.

She walks in the other direction and runs into her FATHER, along with Timmy and Officer Townsend.

SFX: Berniece GASPS.

BERNIECE (CONT'D)

Dad!

(babbles)

I, uh, uh...

FATHER

Going out studying, huh?

BERNIECE

(babbles)

But I, uh, buh, buh...

TIMMY

What are these kids doing here? This place is supposed to be closed!

BERNIECE

(babbles)

Buh, buh, I, uh...

OFFICER TOWNSEND

And we got a disturbing-the-peace call!

Berniece continues to babble as the three adults corner her and walk her outside the restaurant. Eric stands by the open broom closet.

ERIC
(chuckles)
Oh well. I'll get my woman someday.

SHANA JONES, 17, pops out of the broom closet.

SHANA
Someday is today, Babycakes!

ERIC
(sighs)
What took you so long?

SHANA
Just getting the mood right in here. Come
on!

Shana pulls Eric inside the closet.

ERIC
But the mood is never ri...Wait, nooo!

Shana closes the door.

THE END