

ERIC

"Eric on the Side of Caution"

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INT. DUMBECK MANSION - DAY

(NOTE: This is a continuation from the final scene in "How Shana Got Her Groom Back".)

SHANA JONES, 18, biracial, sits with her husband, JACOB JACKSON, 18, white. Shana's half-sister, ELEANOR DUMBECK, 17, white, sits opposite of them. The girls' father, JOHN DUMBECK, 40's, white, paces back and forth.

JOHN

You went AWOL and got married??

SHANA

No, no, I got married to stay out of the Army, but they came and got me, anyway!

JOHN

Oh, that's much better!

SHANA

Well, it is! It turns out I like the Army! And I like being married to Jacob here!

JOHN

You like being married to some crook running in and out of jail?

JACOB

No, sir, that's my sister! I'm only the bully!

JOHN

Oh, sorry, I got my thugs mixed up!

John pauses and looks at Eleanor.

JOHN (CONT'D)

I can say, "thug", right?

Eleanor shrugs.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Shana?

SHANA

Just keep going.

JOHN

Anyway, did you have any thought about this at all? And what about me? I wanted to throw you a wedding and give you away!

SHANA  
Well, you still can.

JACOB  
(to Shana)  
Hold on, honey. I got this.

He stands up to John.

JACOB (CONT'D)  
Now, Johnny, you don't have to worry about giving her away, because I already have her! Now, you probably don't like me, and I'm sure I feel the same way. But we both care for your daughter. In more ways than one! So let's make amends. The sooner I can call you "Dad", the sooner I can ask you for money. What do you say?

PAUSE.

John grows increasingly mad.

JOHN  
(grumbles)  
Five...four...three...

SHANA  
Run, Jakey!

Shana and Jacob run away. John PLOPS in his seat.

ELEANOR  
Finish counting, Dad! What's next?

INT. NELSON HOUSE - GARAGE - DAY

ERIC NELSON, 16, black, kneels underneath the Nelsons' grand piano and tries to tune it. Shana stands there and talks to him.

SHANA  
So my father isn't too happy with my surprise marriage.

ERIC  
Hmmm. Imagine that.

SHANA  
Okay, I know that Jacob rubs people the wrong way...

ERIC

You mean, "robs" people...

SHANA

But he's an okay guy once you get to know him.

Eric pulls out from underneath.

ERIC

Well, beating all of Milwaukee up says otherwise.

SHANA

That's what I'm saying! He actually sees the good in folks! He saw it in me! You're not the only one who found me attractive!

ERIC

Shana, is there a point to this visit?

SHANA

Yeah. Why don't you try to get to know him?

ERIC

Why? I don't like him! And I ain't too crazy about you, either!

SHANA

That's why you should get to know him! Now, Eleanor suggested...

ERIC

Wait. Eleanor suggested?

SHANA

Hear me out. Since we didn't have a wedding...

ERIC

You want me to throw ya'll a wedding?!

SHANA

No, let me finish! My dad can handle the wedding. What would be cool is if you could handle the night before. You know, like a bachelor party.

ERIC

Shana, I don't know anything about bachelor parties! I'm 16!

SHANA

Well, that way, I'll know there won't be any strippers there!

ERIC

Now hold on! I'm saying, what's in it for me?

SHANA

Absolutely nothing.

ERIC

(sighs)  
I'll call my guys up.

SHANA

Yay!

INT. JACKSON APARTMENT - EVENING

Shana stands in the living room and calls out for Jacob.

SHANA

Come on, Jakey, they're waiting outside!

Jacob enters the living room.

JACOB

This is ridiculous. Eric and them aren't even 18.

SHANA

But they're taking you on a road trip to Madison! Doesn't that sound fun?

JACOB

(flatly)  
Yeah, gives Vegas a run for its money.

SHANA

Look, we went over this. Now do what your wife says, and go on this kid-friendly bachelor party.

JACOB

(groans)  
I thought you liked me, Shana.

Shana embraces Jacob.

SHANA

I do. I love you and everything about you, honey!

(MORE)

SHANA (CONT'D)

Now, with that said, change everything about you before you go. You wanna make friends.

JACOB

No, I don't! Not with them!

SHANA

At least fix your hair!

SFX: Car horn HONKING outside.

Jacob takes a comb and quickly runs it through his hair.

JACOB

Why are you always tryin' to change me?

He exits the house. Shana sits on the couch.

SHANA

That's what wives are for.

SFX: Door KNOCK.

SHANA (CONT'D)

It's open!

A SHERIFF enters.

SHERIFF

Hello, ma'am, is Jacob Jackson here?

Shana gets up.

SHANA

Uh, no, he just left.

SHERIFF

Good, then he must finally be moving.

SHANA

Excuse me?

SHERIFF

May I ask who you are, ma'am?

SHANA

I'm Shana, his wwww...womanly housesitter.

SHERIFF

Well, tell me, how can you sit a house that no longer exists?

Shana pauses and scratches her head.

SHANA  
Hmmm, good question.

INT. BILLY AND RON'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Jacob and other guys sit in the living room, looking bored. Classical music PLAYS on the stereo. Eric talks with his big brother, BILLY NELSON, 20's, and his roommate, RON TYSON, 20's, black.

ERIC  
Thanks, ya'll, for throwing this bachelor party for Jacob.

BILLY  
Uh huh.

ERIC  
Too bad he's not having fun.

RON  
Can you blame him?

Some ballet dancers prance in the middle of the room, while the boys sulk in their seats. Jacob pulls ARNOLD ALLEN, 16, black, dressed in nerdy gear, aside.

JACOB  
Belly dancers! I said I wanted belly dancers, you fool!

ARNOLD  
(scoffs)  
Ugh, why? Besides, these women are the hottest thing out of Moscow!

A few NERDS, dressed similar to Arnold, approaches them. The nerds stare at the dancers.

NERD #1  
(nasal voice)  
Hey, capital party!

NERD #2  
(nasal voice)  
Straight from Russia's capital!

The nerds and Arnold LAUGH in a goofy manner.

Billy approaches the guys with a DVD.

BILLY

Hate to break up the fun, but if you  
wanna see some skin, check this out.

He tosses it to Jacob.

BILLY (CONT'D)

It's an old-school porno bootleg.

DENNIS "DIMMEY" ROBERTS, 16, white, looks at the DVD with  
Jacob.

DIMMEY

"The 40 Virgins"? I heard about this one!

BILLY

And don't worry about fast-forwarding  
through the plot! I edited them out!

ERIC

(smirks)

Ugh, which hand did you edit them with?

BILLY

Shut up.

(to Jacob)

Pop in the DVD.

ERIC

Arnold, get these women out of here.

ARNOLD

But I paid for the whole night!

Arnold SHUTS OFF the music and approaches the ballet  
dancers, who stop dancing.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)

(speaks loudly, enunciating  
every word)

We're...going...to...my...house...now!

ERIC

Yes, Arnold. Yelling makes them  
understand English. Now go.

Arnold, the nerds, and the dancers exit.

JACOB

Okay, this is a start.



RON  
 (to Jacob)  
 That's mostly for the guys. I have a  
 special gift for you.

He whispers in his ear.

JACOB  
 Oh. Lead the way.

Ron and Jacob walk out to the balcony.

ERIC  
 Hey, where ya'll goin'?

He follows them out.

INT. BILLY AND RON'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

The guys continue to watch the movie. Eric enters from the balcony. He walks with a little limp and slurs his speech throughout.

ERIC  
 Hey, ya'll, still watchin' the porn?  
 Let's get some tunes up in here! I'm not  
 talkin' 'bout the "bomb-chicka-wow-wow"  
 crap!

DIMMEY  
 Eric, where you been?

ERIC  
 Hangin', you know.

He goes to the stereo and PLAYS some hip-hop.

ERIC (CONT'D)  
 Ya'll know they call me DJ Eric!

DIMMEY  
 I thought it was "DJ Illson".

ERIC  
 Oh yeah. I stole that from my brother!  
 Among other things! Heh heh!

Billy looks at Eric, then SNIFFS him.

BILLY  
 Oh, great. Come on!

He grabs Eric by the arm.

ERIC

Hey, what's the deal, bruh?

They go out to the balcony. Jacob, Ron, and some other guys sit. Smoke circles around them.

BILLY

Ron, you gave him some of the stash?

ERIC

Hey, hangin' out with this fool, you gotta be high!

He points to Jacob.

ERIC (CONT'D)

No offense.

JACOB

None taken, "Muggsy"!

A heavy-set ballet dancer named VANKA, 30's, white, sits and smokes with them. She speaks with a heavy Russian accent throughout.

VANKA

(laughs)

"Muggsy"! Like the little NBA player from the 90's! That's great!

JACOB

Whoa! You speak English? How come you didn't say that before?

VANKA

Would you have liked me if I did?

JACOB

What?

VANKA

I don't know. I'm pretty effed-up right now.

She, Jacob, and Eric LAUGH.

BILLY

Hey, Eric, don't you have to be heading back home?

ERIC

Huh? Oh, yeah, dang. I wish I could be grown-up.

JACOB

Hey, I didn't have any parents, and look at me! Graduated and married!

ERIC

Right. Well, let's get outta here.

BILLY

No way! Ya'll might get pulled over for a DUI. Guess I'll drive you guys home.

(to Ron)

I'll be in the MKE for a few days.

RON

What about class?

BILLY

(shrugs)

Eh.

ERIC

Aww, my brother ain't got no class! Ha, ha!

(announces)

I'll be here all week! Enjoy the pepper steak!

BILLY

No you won't. Let's go.

VANKA

Hey, I need a ride, too!

BILLY

What? Why didn't you leave with your girls?

VANKA

(sighs)

Well, I was in the bathroom. I wasn't gonna say anything, but thank you for bringing attention to it!

Billy SIGHS. He, Eric, and Jacob exit.

INT. NELSON HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Eric and Billy's stepfather, MATT JAMES, and their mother, RHONDA NELSON-JAMES, both 40's, black, pace back and forth.

RHONDA

I'm gonna kill 'em! Swear to God, I'm gonna kill 'em!

MATT

Honey, we gotta keep calm!

RHONDA

But we raised them right, didn't we?

MATT

Yes, we did. And we're gonna continue to, okay?

Eric and Billy walk downstairs. Eric stretches his arms and YAWNS.

ERIC

(normal voice)

Morning, guys. Did Cynthia make breakfast yet?

RHONDA

Why? Are ya'll craving some munchies??

BILLY

Uh, what?

MATT

Your mother's referring to this.

He pulls out a joint from his pocket.

MATT (CONT'D)

Now who does this belong to?

Eric and Billy stand silent.

MATT (CONT'D)

Now, don't everybody speak at once!

BILLY

Uh...

MATT

Now, listen, you know the rules here. This ain't no after-school special, but just know that you don't wanna go down this road. We're not gonna yell at you, Billy, but don't bring this up in our house no more, understand?

BILLY

Okay, but it's not even mine!

Billy pats his pants pockets down. His parents frown at him.

BILLY (CONT'D)

I was itching. I'm patting it so it can go away!

MATT

So no one's gonna admit it? Fine.

RHONDA

We said we weren't gonna flip out.

ERIC

Okay, I admit it. The joint's mine.

The parents GASP.

MATT

Are you out of your frickin' mind?!

BILLY

(to Eric)

Nice knowing you.

MATT

Billy, go to your...city!

BILLY

Yes, sir!

Billy ZOOMS out the front door.

RHONDA

(weeps)

My own boy, a drug pusher!

ERIC

I'm not a drug pusher, Mom!

MATT

You got your mom all upset now!

(to Rhonda)

Go to the kitchen. I'll handle this.

RHONDA

(sniffles)

You sure?

MATT

Yeah.

RHONDA

Fine.

She GROWLS and advances at Eric, then leaves.

MATT

Boy, what's wrong with you?

ERIC

Hey! You didn't yell at Billy!

MATT

Billy's grown, barely in school,  
unmarried with a kid. His ship has  
sailed. You, we're still responsible for!

ERIC

Matt, I know how to make responsible  
choices. Besides, it's only weed! Ain't  
like it's crack!

MATT

It's still a drug, and I don't want it in  
this house!

ERIC

Come on now. Stars do it, rappers rap  
about it, singers sing about it.

MATT

Yeah, and?

ERIC

And it's practically legal in this state!

MATT

Not in my house, it isn't! And if you  
ain't gonna respect my wishes, you gonna  
have to go!

ERIC

(sighs)

Fine. I'll take it and get rid of it.

He extends his hand.

MATT

Oh, you must be high!

Eric snatches his hand back.

ERIC

So are we done?

MATT

Hey, I'll tell you when we're done!

(pause)

I ain't got nothin' else. We're done.

Eric marches upstairs. Matt SIGHS. Rhonda reenters.

RHONDA

Did you handle it?

MATT

I believe so. Don't worry. Keep packing for your girls' trip.

RHONDA

Alright. Now don't be having any house parties here!

They both CHUCKLE.

MATT

Yeah, right. I'm gonna invite the whole hood here!

They continue LAUGHING.

MATT (CONT'D)

Maybe I'll order a keg. Me and my friends will sit around and get high.

Rhonda starts BAWLING.

MATT (CONT'D)

Oh, honey! No, I was just kidding!

RHONDA

No!!

She runs away.

INT. DUMBECK MANSION - BEDROOM - DAY

Jacob lies in a bed and slowly wakes up. His eyes are still closed.

JACOB

Mmm. Hey, babe, this was a great idea. Thanks for marrying me.

Eleanor sits in a corner.

ELEANOR

No problem. Best \$14 I ever spent!

Jacob quickly wakes up and looks around.

JACOB

Eleanor? What am I doing here?

ELEANOR

According to Shana, you came home high.  
Except "home" was on the curb with all of  
your stuff!

JACOB

Man, I thought that was a dream!

ELEANOR

You're supposed to be supporting her!  
What happened?

JACOB

I guess the landlord doesn't like  
criminals living there. Or maybe 'cuz I'm  
eight months past due. Where's Shana?

ELEANOR

Downstairs trying to smooth things over  
with Dad. If you wanna stay here, you  
have to get on his good side. So she  
invited you to breakfast.

JACOB

But I'm already here.

ELEANOR

No you're not.

She looks at the window, then grins at Jacob evilly.

JACOB

Oh, great.

INT. DUMBECK MANSION - DINING ROOM - SAME

Shana talks with John.

SHANA

Dad, please try to be nice to him!

John MOANS.

SFX: Jacob SCREAMS off-camera, then PLOPS on the ground.

SHANA (CONT'D)

(projects her voice)

Why, who could that be?



She runs to the front door. Jacob stands there, holding his arm with the other.

SHANA (CONT'D)  
 Jakey, nice of you to "drop in"!

JACOB  
 Yeah, my body broke my fall.

Shana and Jacob sit at the dining room table with John and Eleanor.

JOHN  
 (passive voice)  
 Glad for you to join us, Mr. Jackson.

JACOB  
 (snooty voice)  
 Why, thank you, good sir!

He and Shana GIGGLE.

JOHN  
 Okay, you two!

They begin to eat.

JACOB  
 Mr. Dumbeck, let me just say that I know that our marriage was a shock. But we should get past that. Face it. Me and Mrs. Jones...  
 (holds Shana's hand)  
 ...got a thing going on.

JOHN  
 Yeah? Well, I still don't approve of it.  
 (to Shana)  
 I'm sorry, Ms. Jackson.

ELEANOR  
 Yeah! Ms. Jackson, if ya nasty!

The three of them look at Eleanor and frown.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)  
 Well, he did the song thing, then you did it, then...never mind.

JOHN  
 So where are you guys even living?

JACOB

Don't worry, sir. I'll make sure your daughter is in good hands!

SHANA

And your hands feel so good, baby!

JOHN

Ugh. I lost my appetite. Excuse me.

John leaves.

SHANA

Dad!

(sighs)

Well, Jakey, I don't think he's gonna throw us a wedding any time soon.

ELEANOR

What? But I already invited people! A "who's who" of people!

SHANA

What?? Like who? And for when?

JENTILLE, the butler, enters.

JENTILLE

Ladies, the Air Force One just landed in our backyard.

SFX: Shana's cell phone RINGS.

Shana looks at her phone.

SHANA

It's the President calling!

ELEANOR

I'll handle it.

Eleanor takes the phone from Shana and answers it.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)

(deep voice)

New phone, who dis?

Shana and Jacob shake their heads in disbelief.

INT. NELSON HOUSE - DINING ROOM - MORNING

Matt sits at the table and types on his phone.

MATT  
 (reads aloud)  
 "Loan application. Name, Matthew..."

SFX: Police siren BLARES!

Matt jumps out of his seat and looks around. The housekeeper, CYNTHIA McNAIR, 30's, Puerto Rican, approaches him with her cell phone. She STOPS the siren from her phone.

CYNTHIA  
 Ha, ha! Sorry, I couldn't resist!

MATT  
 Shouldn't you be doing something, like working?

CYNTHIA  
 As a matter of fact, Mr. James, I just finished making breakfast.

MATT  
 Well, go tell Eric to come down.

CYNTHIA  
 Okay.

She GIGGLES and goes upstairs. Matt continues typing on his phone.

MATT  
 Okay, "Name, Matthew..."

ON THE PHONE

INSERT - THE PHONE, which reads:

"DENIED"

BACK TO DINING ROOM

MATT  
 What?? But I just put in my first name!  
 (reads the screen)  
 "Sorry, but your poor credit history has ruined it for Matthews everywhere."  
 Wonderful.

Cynthia comes downstairs.

CYNTHIA  
I don't wanna trouble you, but I don't  
think Eric lives here anymore.

MATT  
Say what?

CYNTHIA  
Look upstairs.

Matt enters Eric's room and finds open drawers that are mostly empty, his mattress with no sheets or pillows, and his open closet which is almost bare.

MATT  
Uh oh.

CYNTHIA  
What happened?

MATT  
I told him to either stop bringing weed  
in the house or get out.  
(gulps)  
So I guess he did!

CYNTHIA  
So bringing weed will get you kicked out  
of here?

Matt frowns.

MATT  
Cynthia?

CYNTHIA  
(speaks rapidly)  
Just wanted to know! Eat something,  
you'll feel better!

She dashes away. Matt continues to look around Eric's room.

EXT. CAR DEALERSHIP - SAME

Eric walks with a salesman named SOL, as they approach a raggedy car.

SOL  
This car is just perfect for you.

ERIC  
It looks really used!

SOL

But it runs great! I'm sure of it! They don't call me, "Sure Sol the Salesman", for nothing! Here, take it for a spin.

He hands Eric a key fob. Eric presses a button on it. The car EXPLODES in flames. Eric and Sol jump back.

SOL (CONT'D)

(giggles nervously)

You must've pressed the wrong button.

ERIC

Why is that a button??

EXT. CAR DEALERSHIP - LATER

Eric pulls a large suitcase with other clothes and things strapped to it. He GRUNTS as he pulls it. He approaches another car dealership. He spots another SALESMAN, 20's, black, from afar, pacing back and forth.

SALESMAN

Gotta sell a car. Pointsettia is gonna leave me again!

Eric approaches him.

ERIC

Excuse me, sir, I need a car. I got all of my savings from my DJ gigs. I'll pay anything!

The salesman lifts up an eyebrow.

INT. ERIC'S CAR - LATER

Eric drives his car, which wobbles down the street.

ERIC

This is great! My first car! It even has a window on the floor!

He looks at the hole in the floor of the car. He pulls into a park, takes a shovel from the backseat, and plants it into the ground. The car slows down to a stop. He hops out, takes a rope, and ties one end to a tree stump and the other to the bumper.

ERIC (CONT'D)

This is a good place to camp out. I got snacks, my clothes, the Port-a-Potty down there. I can even roll up somethin' if I want to!

He gets back in the car and reclines his seat. It PLOPS down to the floor. He slightly raises it back up, lies back, and EXHALES.

ERIC (CONT'D)

This is the life. Who says making it on your own has to be rough?

INT. SERGEANT'S OFFICE - DAY

Shana and Jacob sit in front of the desk of SERGEANT HOPPER, 30's, female, black. Hopper looks through some papers.

SERGEANT HOPPER

Private Jones, this is gonna be rough! The wait list for base housing is a mile long!

SHANA

There's nothing available, Sarge?

SERGEANT HOPPER

Even if there was, your husband here's a hardened criminal!

JACOB

Dang, nobody can let that go!

SERGEANT HOPPER

I've seen the police records. You comes from a family of brash, gun-toting, loudmouths. Those are not the kind of people we want on our Army base! Plus it goes against regulations.

SHANA

Regulations? Please! There's regulations for everything. It even says in there, "Missionary style only"!

JACOB

(to Shana)

We broke those rules a couple of times!

They both GIGGLE, then quickly fix their faces and look at Hopper.

SERGEANT HOPPER

Look, there's nothing I can do. I feel sorry for you.

SHANA

Really?

SERGEANT HOPPER

(scoffs)

Yeah, right! No one helped me when I first arrived and got knocked up by Sergeant Murphy! Girl, you on your own!

Shana and Jacob exit the office.

JACOB

I can't believe it.

SHANA

To be fair, though, Sergeant Murphy is a lady-killer.

JACOB

I'm talking about you! I was waiting for you to throw that usual line you people say.

(mockingly, in a snooty voice)

"Do you know who my father is?"

SHANA

Jacob, I'm trying to prove to my father that we can make it without him! And don't act like you ain't at fault! You screwed up and messed things up for us!

(pause)

Gee, you would fit right in with the Army.

They both continue walking.

INT. TIMMY'S PLACE - DAY

Dimmey's father, TIMMY ROBERTS, 40's, white, organizes things behind the bar. IKE the bartender serves patrons their drinks. Matt darts into the bar.

MATT

Oh, Timmy, man, you gotta help me!

TIMMY

What's wrong?

MATT

Eric ran away! Rhonda trusted me with grounding him, and he ran away!

TIMMY

Wait, calm down! Did you guys have an argument or something?

MATT

Well, sort of. He came in the house with some weed!

TIMMY

(gasps)

What??

MATT

And we went back and forth about it, I put my foot down, and I thought that was it. But this morning, I looked in his room, and all of his stuff was gone! We need to find him before Rhonda gets back!

TIMMY

Alright, I'll help. Ike, hold the fort down. I'll be back.

MATT

Thanks.

Matt and Timmy exit.

IKE

(to the patrons)

Like, dang. He had weed all this time?

The patrons murmur in agreement.

INT. TIMMY'S PLACE - LATER

Matt and Timmy reenter.

MATT

Alright, we checked the school, the library, and the church. Where else would a teenage boy run to?

TIMMY

I don't know. I ran away to the Navy myself.



MATT

Man, Rhonda's gonna kill me! I gotta find Eric and bring him back home!

IKE

Uh, Matt, you do know that this is a bar and grill, right?

MATT

Yeah?

IKE

So there's additional seating here, man!

He points to a booth, where Rhonda sits and looks at Matt shockingly.

MATT

(to Timmy)

You and your stupid spacious restaurant!

He and Timmy walk over to Rhonda.

RHONDA

I come back, and our son moved out??

MATT

Rhonda, honey, I can explain!

RHONDA

You can?

PAUSE.

MATT

Well, not really.

RHONDA

He's only a kid! Who knows what could be happening to him?

MATT

He's almost 17, Rhonda, and I'm sure he's fine.

He pulls out his phone.

MATT (CONT'D)

See? He's updating his status, telling everybody that he's fine!

TIMMY

From his phone?

MATT

Yeah.

TIMMY

Matt, have you tried actually calling Eric?

MATT

(scoffs)

Don't be silly, Timmy. Of course I tried calling him!

TIMMY

Okay. Excuse me.

Timmy walks back to the bar. Matt chuckles, stops, looks back at him, then at Rhonda. He dials on his phone.

INTERCUT - MATT, RHONDA & ERIC ON THE PHONE

ERIC

Hello?

MATT

(to Rhonda)

He answered!

Rhonda rolls her eyes, then stands near Matt and the phone.

RHONDA

Eric, where the heck are you?

ERIC

Mom, Matt, don't worry. I'm fine.

RHONDA

Don't tell me not to worry! We're still your parents!

ERIC

I know, but believe me, I'll be okay. I think I just need some time on my own right now.

MATT

Eric, does this have to do with the drugs?

ERIC

It was just weed, Matt, and no, it's not that. I need some space. But I promise that everything's okay.

MATT

(sighs)

Well, take all the time you need, Eric.  
When you're ready to come back, we'll be  
here.

Rhonda looks at Matt as her eyes widen.

ERIC

Really?

MATT

Why wouldn't we? We're family.

RHONDA

(sighs)

Yeah.

ERIC

I'm about to eat, so I'll talk to you  
later.

MATT

Okay, bye.

They hang up. Matt and Rhonda hug each other.

RHONDA

Matt, I hope you know what you're doing.

She sits back down.

MATT

(sotto voce)

Me too.

He sits with Rhonda. Dimmey walks from the kitchen with  
his hands full of containers.

TIMMY

(to Dimmey)

Hey! Where are you going with that?

DIMMEY

We're about to close, so I'm taking these  
leftovers up to Oliver!

TIMMY

All of that??

DIMMEY

He's a big eater, Dad.

Timmy turns to Matt and Rhonda from across the way, who cross their arms and shake their heads. Timmy turns back to Dimmey.

TIMMY

No, son, you can't give any food to Eric!

DIMMEY

Dang.

INT. ROBERTS HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Dimmey walks upstairs to their house. He enters the living room and sees his pet duck, OLIVER, with his friend, DR. SYD the mole, sitting and watching TV.

DIMMEY

Sorry, Oliver, I can't bring back any more garbage from the restaurant.

He walks to his room. Oliver speaks telepathically [written in *italics*].

OLIVER

*Not even any leftover pizza slices? Damn Eric!*

INT. ERIC'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Eric, wrapped in a blanket, sits in his car and shivers.

ERIC

A little chill, but that's cool. Man, where is Dimmey with dinner?

SFX: Text CHIMES from Eric's phone.

Eric picks up the phone and reads the screen.

ERIC (CONT'D)

"Sorry, man, I tried." Dang it!

He throws the phone down. It hits the steering wheel, which then activates the air bag. The wheels POP OFF of the car, which PLOPS to the ground.

ERIC (CONT'D)

Maybe I should have taken this for a test drive.

INT. DUMBECK MANSION - HALLWAY - DAY

Shana and Jacob sneak through the hallway. They talk in subdued voices throughout.

JACOB

Why do we have to keep sneaking through here?

SHANA

So Dad doesn't find out that we're staying here!

JACOB

This is ridiculous!

SHANA

Hey, I don't hear you coming up with any ideas! You're supposed to be taking care of me! What are you gonna do about us? About you, even?

JACOB

I figured I would be a stay-at-home husband. You're the one with the big Army bucks!

SHANA

We don't have a home yet! And you still need to do something while at home! How about school?

JACOB

You guys have a school here!

Eleanor sticks her head out from a room.

ELEANOR

Yeah, and can ya'll keep it down out there? We're learning about geometry!

She SLAMS the door.

SHANA

Look, you're my Jakey-poo, but you have to figure out what you want in life. I did!

She walks away. Eleanor exits from the room and walks past Jacob.

JACOB

And where are you going?

ELEANOR  
I'm tired. I'm going home sick.

JACOB  
But you are home. School is here!

ELEANOR  
(scoffs)  
I know, but I'm still gonna skip!

She walks away.

INT. WILLIAMS HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Eric's girlfriend, BERNIECE WILLIAMS, 16, black, sits on the couch and talks on the phone.

BERNIECE  
Hello?

ERIC (O.C.)  
Hey, Berniece, baby, remember how we talked about pretending that we're married?

BERNIECE  
Yeah.

ERIC (O.C.)  
You know, if it was okay with your dad, I could spend a few nights at your place, and you could stay a few nights at mine?

BERNIECE  
Yeah.

SFX: Doorbell CHIMES.

BERNIECE (CONT'D)  
Hold on.

She puts the phone down and opens the front door. Eric stands there with his suitcase. He looked rugged and unkempt.

ERIC  
Honey, I'm home!

BERNIECE  
I think we should see other people.

INT. THEATER - BACKSTAGE - NIGHT

Two RUSSIAN MEN, dressed in suits, argue with each other in their foreign language.

RUSSIAN MAN #1  
I can't believe you did this!

RUSSIAN MAN #2  
It was an honest mistake!

RUSSIAN MAN #1  
Well, it's too late to back out now.  
(calls out)  
Places!

INT. THEATER - CONTINUOUS

MARTY O'DELL, 20's, a black, husky college football player, and his cheerleader girlfriend, GINA RICHARDS, 20's, black, sit in the audience. Both wear their football jersey and cheerleader uniform, respectively. Marty wears his letter jacket over it with a bowtie.

MARTY  
When is this ballet gonna start?

GINA  
Quit complaining, Marty. Ain't nothin' wrong with having a little culture.

The lights dim.

SFX: Classical music PLAYS.

Three belly dancers, scantily clad, enter the stage, and start dancing. Members of the audience EXCLAIM, including Marty and Gina.

GINA (CONT'D)  
What is this??

MARTY  
Hey, I'm down with this culture! Gimme your pocketbook!

He snatches Gina's pocketbook from her purse. He grabs some dollars from it and tosses the pocketbook back to her. He runs to the front of the stage.

GINA  
Hey!

RUSSIAN MAN #1  
(to the other Russian man)  
Okay, so it was an honest mistake. Fine.

The other Russian man turns to a third Russian man. They  
both fist-bump and SNICKER.

THE END