

ERIC

"A Girl Called Eric"

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INT. NELSON HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

ERIC NELSON, 17, black, sits on the couch and plays on his phone.

SFX: Text CHIMES!

He opens his texts and chats with a guy named DAVID.
[NOTE: The following conversation appears on screen as text messages.]

DAVID

Good morning, good sir. My name is David. Are you available for parties? I am having weeding [misspells "wedding"] with my girlfriend. What are your rates?

ERIC

I charge \$50 per hour, cash.

DAVID

This sounds good, and we accept this quote. Kindly please give me your address, so I can send you a check. Sincerely, Michael Parsons, King Hospital, New York, New York.

ERIC

I do not take checks, cash only.

DAVID

The weeding will be at 555 Hampton Ave, Milwaukee, WI. My soon to be father in law gave me \$2000 for a deposit. I would give it to you, and then you would pay the photographer with that.

ERIC

Like I said, I don't take checks. And I looked up the venue. The house says, "Sold", on NewHome.com.

DAVID

We just bought the house, and we are celebrating it. Sincerely, Michael Parsons.

ERIC

I thought this was for a wedding. And you said your name was David.

DAVID

David stepped away. This is Michael.

ERIC

Also, why would you have a wedding here at a previously for-sale house, when you live in New York?

PAUSE.

DAVID

Not buying it?

ERIC

You're overeager. Keep the lies simple, go back out, and try it again.

DAVID

Thank you, good sir.

Eric puts his phone down and SIGHS. His girlfriend, BERNIECE WILLIAMS, 17, black, enters the house.

BERNIECE

Hey, honey! You know, for someone who no longer lives here, you sure do visit a lot!

ERIC

You want me to take you out to the movies or not?

BERNIECE

Dang, what's your problem?

ERIC

Sorry, Berniece. The DJ business is drying up. The only contacts I'm getting are scammers.

BERNIECE

Don't worry, Eric. You'll get a real gig soon.

ERIC

I know. It's just that you can't tell what's real sometimes.

Eric and Berniece walk past the family pets, BONY DOG and EDDIE THE CAT. They both sleep in their beds. Eric and Berniece exit the house. The pets continue sleeping. Seconds later, they open their eyes and speak to the camera, breaking the fourth wall.

BONY

Huh? Oh, we're not doing that today.

EDDIE

Yeah. Writer's strike.

WHISKERS MOUSE and his friend Friskers approach them.

WHISKERS

(angrily)

No kidding!

INT. SHARON'S HOME - DAY

SHARON ROSS, 20's, black, sits at the kitchen table with her roommates SHANA JONES, 19, biracial, and Shana's husband, JACOB JACKSON, 19, white. They eat.

SHANA

Prime rib, corn on the cob, BBQ baked beans, apple pie, and a glass of wine?

JACOB

This is like a "last meal" type of meal!

SHANA

(to Jacob)

You would know, Jakey.

SHARON

Thanks, I hope you guys like it.

SHANA

Yeah! All four of us like it!

Shana rubs her pregnant belly, which carries a MALE and a FEMALE FETUS. The fetuses speak telepathically [written in *italics*].

MALE FETUS

What I really wanna know is how that wine tastes.

FEMALE FETUS

Yeah, Mom! Take one for the team!

SHARON

I'm glad you mentioned your soon-to-be-newborns, Shana, because there's something I wanted to talk to you guys about.

JACOB

Dang, ya'll, look at the time! I'm gonna be late for work!

Jacob gets up, swiftly exits, and SLAMS the front door.

SHARON

Jacob has a job?

SHANA

(mouth full)

Yeah, he works at...at the thing...and...

(mumbles)

...yeah.

SHARON

Alright, I'll talk to you, then. I think we need to discuss...

SHANA

Ow! Did you hear that? The babies kicked!

SHARON

How could I hear that?

SHANA

Well, I can! I felt it, too! Ooh, I gotta sit down!

SHARON

You are!

SHANA

In my room! Oh, give me a moment! I'll be back! Damn, this pregnancy be "pregnanting"!

Shana gets up and wobbles away. Sharon SIGHS.

INT. NELSON HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Eric's stepfather, MATT JAMES, 40's, black, straightens up the living room.

MATT

(sings)

Anchors aweigh, my son, anchors aweigh!

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

RHONDA

What are you straightening up for?

(gasps)

Did you fire Cynthia?

MATT

How can I? She ain't ever here! Actually, I'm waiting for Billy to go home. He said he got some big news to tell us!

RHONDA

Oh.

MATT

And I know exactly what it is! Me and him went out with some of my Navy buddies last night. Honey, I think he's gonna enlist!

RHONDA

Really?

MATT

Yeah! And it makes the most sense! He can provide for Will a lot better, and even help Sharon with the bills. And it'll help give him discipline! Oh, this is gonna be great!

Eric's brother, BILLY, 20's, enters the house.

BILLY

Hey, guys, you ready?

MATT

We're all ears, son!
(to Rhonda)
Sit down!

Matt pulls Rhonda down with him on the couch.

BILLY

So I've been doing a lot of thinking, okay? And I don't wanna keep going to college if I don't know what I'm gonna do when I graduate.

RHONDA

Oh no, you're talking about quitting again?

MATT

Rhonda, give him a chance.

RHONDA

But he's always trying out something one day and then quitting the next! First it was football player, then food critic, then a preacher! That was a good one!

BILLY

Hey, what were those "church folk" doing at that club I was at, anyway? But none of that matters, because I've finally found something!

MATT

Go ahead!

BILLY

Mom?

Rhonda looks at her phone.

RHONDA

Yeah, yeah.

BILLY

I want your job.

Rhonda puts her phone down.

RHONDA

What?

BILLY

I want to be a professor!

RHONDA

But you have to go to school for it.

BILLY

I never said I was quitting school. I wanna go as long as I need to so I can eventually be a professor.

MATT

Billy, what are you talking--

RHONDA

Matt, hush!

Rhonda stands up and hugs Billy.

RHONDA (CONT'D)

Oh, William, that is wonderful! But I never heard you talk about this before!

BILLY

Well, when me and Eric went to that funeral for that teacher, I looked at his pics with his students. And when I die, I want to leave behind people who I taught and helped enrich their lives.

(MORE)

BILLY (CONT'D)

There has to be something out in this world more important than me.

MATT

(scoffs)

That's ridiculous!

RHONDA

Matt!

(to Billy)

Well, I must say I'm impressed.

BILLY

Okay, but I'm not doing this to impress nobody, except me and my son.

RHONDA

Ooh, I can't wait to tell my colleagues! Matt, aren't you gonna say something?

MATT

Well, if you guys are happy, then I am, too. Congratulations, Billy.

BILLY

Thanks! Now I'm gonna have to buckle down on my classes...

RHONDA

Yeah!

BILLY

...maybe take a few more so I can still graduate on time...

RHONDA

Yeah!

BILLY

...so me and Will have to move back to Madison so I can focus.

RHONDA

What??

BILLY

Yeah! You know that I was only staying here temporarily, right?

RHONDA

Oh, hell, we weren't worried about you!

MATT
 (to Billy)
 Yeah, we're talking about our grandson!

BILLY
 (chuckles)
 Oh, you guys! I'm gonna start packing our stuff!

Billy exits to his room.

RHONDA
 My god! What are we gonna do with that boy?

MATT
 So selfish!

EXT. SUBS N' SUCH - DAY

Shana pulls her car over to the shop. Sharon exits from the car.

SHARON
 Thanks for giving me a lift, Shana. My car should be ready this afternoon.

SHANA
 You know, you should get a car for every day of the week, like me, so you won't have this problem.

SHARON
 Yeah, that's at the top of my list. Right next to mountain-climbing.

A cashier, PAULETTA, black, walks past them and begins to enter the store.

SHANA
 So, see you at home?

SHARON
 Yeah. Then we can talk about our living arrang--

SHANA
 Okay, gotta go, bye!

Shana ZOOMS off.

MALE FETUS

Man, I can't wait 'til we grow up and be babies!

FEMALE FETUS

Yeah, so she'll stop using us as an excuse to get out of stuff!

INT. SUBS N' SUCH - CONTINUOUS

Sharon and Pauletta enter the shop and walk behind the counter.

PAULETTA

Dang, boss lady, if I didn't know any better, I'd think your roommate's trying to play you.

SHARON

No, it's not that. I think she's just trying to stall.

PAULETTA

Hmmph. I guess.

SHARON

Hey, did you and Patty get to decide which one of you are gonna work extra hours this weekend?

PAULETTA

(rapidly)
Sorry, boss, I gotta help this customer in need!

She walks to the counter. Eric stands on the other side.

PAULETTA (CONT'D)

Hi. No refunds. The sandwich is supposed to taste like that.

ERIC

I didn't even order yet! And what's the sandwich supposed to taste like?

PAULETTA

Like heaven, now hurry up with your order.

Berniece sits at a table and plays on her phone. Eric's phone sits across from her. It RINGS repeatedly.

BERNIECE
 (sotto voce)
 I'm not gonna look. I'm not gonna look.

Eric's phone continues RINGING.

BERNIECE (CONT'D)
 (sotto voce)
 I'll just grab a napkin. Yeah.

Berniece leans across and hovers over the napkin dispenser in the middle of the table. She peeks at Eric's phone and sits back down. Eric returns to the table and sits.

ERIC
 Our food should be ready soon. According to most restaurants' standards, anyway.

BERNIECE
 Who's this person that keeps calling you from Moscow?

ERIC
 What?

He looks at his phone.

ERIC (CONT'D)
 I don't know. Probably one of those spam calls again.

SFX: His phone RINGS.

ERIC (CONT'D)
 Looks like it's them again.

He picks up the phone.

ERIC (CONT'D)
 Hello?
 (pause)
 Hello?
 (pause)
 Come on now!

He hangs up.

ERIC (CONT'D)
 Probably nobody.

BERNIECE
 Or it's probably somebody. You ain't fooling around on me up here, are you?

ERIC
Berniece, if I was, then why would I
leave my phone on the table near you?

BERNIECE
So you thought it out.

Eric CLICKS HIS TONGUE.

BERNIECE (CONT'D)
I know. I believe you. But why does this
person or thing keep calling and saying
nothing?

ERIC
There you go. It is probably a thing. And
if it was a live person, and an important
message, they'll call back.

His phone RINGS. He answers it.

ERIC (CONT'D)
Quit calling me!

Eric hangs up.

ERIC (CONT'D)
Let's eat!

Eric and Berniece get up from their table.

EXT. NELSON HOUSE - DAY

Billy carries Will and stands outside of his car with
luggage. Matt and Rhonda stand outside the house.

RHONDA
You got everything?

BILLY
Yep. Hey, don't look down, ya'll! You
guys made me into what I am today!

MATT
(smirks)
You don't have to throw that in our
faces.

BILLY
Alright, we're off.
(to Will)
Say bye-bye, son.

RHONDA

Is Sharon okay with you guys moving back in?

BILLY

Yeah, why wouldn't she? I'll call her on the way, just to make sure.

INT. BILLY'S CAR - LATER

Will is in the car seat in the back. Billy drives and dials on his phone through the dashboard.

INTERCUT - BILLY/SHARON

SHARON

Hello?

BILLY

Hey, Sharon, guess what! I'm going back to school to be a teacher!

SHARON

Oh, that's cool!

BILLY

Yeah, and me and our son are coming back to move in with you!

SHARON

Oh, really? Not tonight, is it?

BILLY

Why, what's wrong? There's still room for us, right?

SHARON

Well, yeah, but...I kinda have plans.

BILLY

Plans? What plans?

SHARON

You know, plans.

BILLY

What, some guy?

SHARON

It's not really any of your business, Billy!

BILLY

Oh yeah. You're right. We ain't dating.
Okay, fine. Have a good night.

SHARON

Look, Billy...

Billy hangs up.

BILLY

Plans. Sheesh. I got plans, too. I just
have to make them. Don't worry, Will.
We'll just stay with your Uncle Eric
tonight.

Will opens his mouth.

BILLY (CONT'D)

Willie, you tryin' to say something?

WILL

(thinks, similar to the
fetuses)

*Yeah! Please get back with Mom! You know
you still love each other! Go to her
house and tell her that, so we can be a
happy family!*

(speaks)

Da-da!

BILLY

Aw, Will!

Will SIGHS (in his head).

INT. ERIC, RON, AND VANKA'S HOME - EVENING

Billy and Will sit at the kitchen table and eat with Eric
and his roommates RON TYSON, 20's, black, and Ron's wife,
a chubby Russian woman named VANKA SMIRNOV, 30's, white.
Eric's phone RINGS, and he answers it.

ERIC

(sighs)

Hello?

(pause)

Look, stop bugging me, man!

He hangs up and GRUNTS while pressing down on the phone.

ERIC (CONT'D)

I miss slammin' down a receiver.

RON

Lemme guess: another crank call?

ERIC

Yeah! I'm getting them more and more!
While I'm here trying to enjoy Vanka's
okroshka!

BILLY

You can say that again.

RON

I've been getting those same kind of
calls lately.

ERIC

What about you, Vanka?

VANKA

(mouth full)

No.

BILLY

What's the big deal? Just forward them to
that "Do Not Call" list!

RON

I thought I did!

SFX: Eric's phone RINGS.

ERIC

That's it!

Eric answers.

ERIC (CONT'D)

Hey, state your biz!

(pause)

Oh.

(pause)

No, there's no Natassja Goldschmitt here!

(pause)

Okay! Bye!

Eric hangs up.

ERIC (CONT'D)

Alright! That girl shouldn't be calling
me no more!

RON

That's weird, though, calling both of us
looking for this Natassja Goldschmitt.
And she's from Moscow?

ERIC

Hey, Vanka...

BILLY

(sotto voce)

What you doin', Eric? Isn't that kinda
stereotypical, thinking all Russians know
each other? I mean, we don't know Oprah,
do we?

ERIC

Shana does. Hey, Vanka...

SFX: PLOP on the floor!

The men get up from the table. Vanka lies face down with
her right leg wrapped around her chair.

ERIC (CONT'D)

(dryly)

You wouldn't happen to know a Natassja
Goldschmitt, would you?

VANKA

(mumbles)

I might.

INT. ERIC, RON, AND VANKA'S HOME - LATER

Eric, Billy, Ron, and Vanka sit in the living room. Will
sits in his playpen.

VANKA

This is long story, so sit back and
listen.

Billy gets up.

BILLY

Yeah, I'm 'bout to head on out...

Eric pulls Billy back down.

ERIC

Sit down!

VANKA

My family and I grew up poor and famished. I had to share clothes with my mother when I went to school. And on top of that, our country was always at war. The enemies took out every single one of my family members, and I was next. So I changed my name, joined the ballet, and flew here.

ERIC

Oh, man!

SFX: KNOCK on door.

Ron gets up and opens it. A Russian man named IVAN stands there. He speaks with an accent, like Vanka.

IVAN

Good evening, sir, I...

Ivan spots Vanka.

IVAN (CONT'D)

Mom! There you are!

ERIC, BILLY, AND RON

"Mom"??

VANKA

Okay, forget everything I just told you.

RON

(to Vanka)

How about telling us the truth for once?

VANKA

(sighs)

Fine. The girl who has been calling you guys is Alina, Ivan's sister. I'm their mother. Natassja is my first name; Vanka is my middle. I sorta ran away from home. I'm not very good at marriage.

RON

(rolls his eyes)

No kidding!

VANKA

For real! My first marriage was terrible! My husband proposed to me during a basketball game. Our team lost. That should've been a sign.

IVAN

Okay, that was the past, Mom. Now tell them about your current marriage!

RON

Oh, your son knows about us?

PAUSE.

VANKA

No. I'm sorta married to Gladney Goldschmitt back home.

RON

What??

ERIC

Hey, so that means you and Ron can't be married!

BILLY

Yeah, but why all the lies and running away?

RON

Yeah, this is like a low-budget "Coming to America"!

VANKA

Like I said, I'm no good at marriage, and the marriage to Gladney was an arranged one. I couldn't take it no more. During the honeymoon, I told Gladney that I was going to the ladies' room. I just didn't tell him which one.

ERIC

So now your family's here to take you back home, I take it.

VANKA

Yeah, but damned if I'm going!

(to Ivan)

Son, I love you, but I made life and family here!

RON

Off of lies.

VANKA

It's still life and family!

ERIC

Well, you shouldn't be forced to do anything you don't want to do.

BILLY

Yeah, can't you talk to your husband about this?

RON

Hey, guys, I doubt we'll get anything solved tonight. Let's sleep on it.

IVAN

Okay. Do you have pillow and cover for me?

RON

What? You mean, you don't have anywhere to stay?

VANKA

Come on, Ron, he's your in-law.

RON

No he's not!

IVAN

Well, please let me stay, anyway. I spent all my money hitching rides.

RON

(sighs)

Why not?

WILL

But me and Dad are still good, right? Dad could sleep in the car, I don't care.

INT. SHARON'S HOME - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Jacob and Shana sit on the couch, making out. Sharon enters.

SHARON

Hey, guys. I finally caught you.

Jacob and Shana stop.

JACOB

Hey, Sharon. You want some privacy.

(to Shana)

Let's bounce.

They get up and head for the exit.

SHARON

But wait!

JACOB

No, it's cool! It's your house and all!

Jacob and Shana exit the front door and close it. They turn around and prepare to walk away. Sharon is facing them. They GASP and look back and forth.

SHANA

How'd you get out here??

SHARON

Hello, it's a cartoon!

Sharon directs them back inside. The three of them sit on the couch.

SHARON (CONT'D)

Now listen. Shana, you're about to give birth to twins. My own baby is about to move back in, and I think Billy is talking about moving back in, too.

SHANA

We realize that.

SHARON

And I thought this whole living arrangement was supposed to be temporary.

JACOB

Don't worry, it is!

SHANA

Yeah, we just need to...

(moans and stands up)

Ohhhh! I think the babies are coming!

SHARON

Knock it off, Shana!

JACOB

Oh yeah? Look!

Jacob points to underneath Shana. Sharon looks down.

SHARON

Oh! We better get going!

Jacob and Sharon assist Shana and slowly walk her out of the house.

FEMALE FETUS

Madison, here we come!

MALE FETUS

Last one out's a rotten egg!

INT. SUBS N' SUCH - DAY

Ivan stands by the windows, facing the counter. Shana's half-sister, ELEANOR DUMBECK, 18, white, approaches him.

ELEANOR

Excuse me, are you in line?

IVAN

Uh, don't you see I'm standing by the window?

ELEANOR

Duh! Answer the question!

IVAN

No, I'm not.

ELEANOR

Good, because I didn't wanna skip you.

IVAN

There is no line!

ELEANOR

I know, because you haven't ordered yet!

IVAN

I'm waiting for my order!

ELEANOR

Well, in order to order your order, you have to get in line!

Ivan SIGHS, holds his head, and walks towards a table where Eric, Billy, Will, Ron, and Vanka sit.

IVAN

Please tell me that girl over there doesn't reflect all you Americans.

Eric turns his head.

ERIC

Eleanor?

Eleanor approaches the table.

ELEANOR

Make it quick, Eric. Nobody's holding my place in line.

(points to Ivan)

Thanks to you, Brainiac.

ERIC

What are you doing in Madison?

ELEANOR

I'm here for my sister! Shana's having her babies, so I rushed right up here!

ERIC

Cool!

BILLY

Well, then, shouldn't you be with her right now?

ELEANOR

Eh, she'll be alright.

VANKA

Hey, Eleanor, sorry I wasted your time in trying to marry me.

ELEANOR

Yeah, I heard about that. It's all good. You shouldn't be forced into any marriage, anyway.

She walks away. A GENTLEMAN dressed in a fancy suit enters. He speaks in a thick accent.

GENTLEMAN

(bellows)

All hail the Prince!

PRINCE GLADNEY GOLDSCHMITT, wearing a fancy jumpsuit, gold chains, and a crown, walks with his nose in the air. He speaks in a thick accent, as well.

PRINCE GOLDSCHMITT

You people don't stand up for me?

BILLY

Who the hell are you?

PRINCE GOLDSCHMITT

Why don't you ask Natassja here?

VANKA

(mutters)

Hi, Gladney.

(to everyone else)

This is my new husband.

ERIC

He kinda looks like a big deal, Vanka.

VANKA

(to Goldschmitt)

What are you even doing here?

PRINCE GOLDSCHMITT

I was in area, and I was hungry. So I came to buy restaurant to go.

IVAN

Come on, new Dad, tell the truth.

PRINCE GOLDSCHMITT

Fine, I came to win you back! Despite fact that you took longest bathroom break ever!

VANKA

Look, you never had me, Gladney! It was an arranged marriage!

PRINCE GOLDSCHMITT

Yes, but by my parents, you know, King and Queen?

ERIC

My god, Vanka, you're married into royalty!

VANKA

Believe me, it's not as pretty as it seems.

Eleanor returns with a drink. She sees Goldschmitt, DROPS her drink, and falls on her knees.

ELEANOR

Prince Goldschmitt!

PRINCE GOLDSCHMITT

As you were, Dumbeck!

Eleanor gets up.

ELEANOR
What brings you here?

PRINCE GOLDSCHMITT
My wife. I hope to bring her back home.

Eleanor looks at Vanka and GASPS.

ELEANOR
Can I have a word with your wife, my Majesty?

PRINCE GOLDSCHMITT
Sure.

He steps aside.

ELEANOR
Vanka, I know that pastors usually use this language, but...
(pause)
...bitch, are you crazy??

BILLY
Eleanor has a point.

Everyone else looks at Billy strangely. He SHRUGS.

ELEANOR
This man can give you everything and more!

ERIC
He sure looks rich and famous.

ELEANOR
Rich and famous? My father owes him money!

PRINCE GOLDSCHMITT
(to Eleanor)
Oh yeah, I wanted to talk to him about that.

ELEANOR
Hey, do you mind??

PRINCE GOLDSCHMITT
Sorry.

VANKA
Look, I was bad at marriage once before...

RON

Twice.

VANKA

...and I don't wanna be bad at it again,
especially if it's with someone I don't
even love! I...

She looks below Prince Goldschmitt's waist and MOANS
AMOROUSLY.

VANKA (CONT'D)

Oh, mother of God.

ELEANOR

What is it? His package?

VANKA

No, a little lower.

ELEANOR

Feet? Same thing, right?

VANKA

A little higher.

ELEANOR

I'm getting dizzy, spill it!

VANKA

Gladney, raise your pant leg up.

PRINCE GOLDSCHMITT

Okay.

He rolls up his left pant leg.

VANKA

That is the sexiest calf muscle I've ever
laid my eyes on!

ERIC

Say what?

VANKA

What can I say? I have fetish for calves!

PRINCE GOLDSCHMITT

And there's more where that came from!

He rolls up his right pant leg. Vanka MOANS louder.

VANKA

Maybe we can work this out, Gladney.

PRINCE GOLDSCHMITT
I know we can. Come here!

Vanka gets up and hugs Goldschmitt.

RON
(hesitates)
I got in extra steps earlier.

BILLY
Ron!

INT. ERIC, RON, AND VANKA'S HOME - LATER

Vanka stands at the front door with a suitcase. Billy stands with her. Eric and Ron face them.

BILLY
You're gonna miss your flight with the family, Vanka.

VANKA
I'll be down there. Just take my luggage.

BILLY
Alright.

Billy takes her luggage and exits.

VANKA
Well, you guys, it's been fun.

RON
Yeah. It was cool pretending to be a family.

ERIC
Who was pretending? Not me!

VANKA
Me neither.

Ron smirks.

VANKA (CONT'D)
I'll never forget the good times.

DISSOLVE TO:

FLASHBACK - VANKA SITS ON COUCH, EATING CHIPS

SFX: Dreamy music PLAYS for one second.

END OF FLASHBACK

DISSOLVE TO:

PRESENT DAY

ERIC
Moments like that are priceless.

Vanka hugs Eric, then Ron.

RON
Have a safe trip, "honey".

Ron and Vanka chuckle.

ERIC
Yeah, keep in touch. And God save...the
in-laws.

VANKA
Bye.

Vanka exits. Ron closes the door.

RON
Well, that's that.

ERIC
Yeah, it's just you and me now, Ron.

RON
Uh huh.
(pause)
Listen, Eric, I want to talk to you about
that. See, I...

Eric trembles.

ERIC
Uh oh, that's my phone vibrating!

He pulls it out of his pocket.

RON
But Eric...

ERIC
(rapidly)
Yeah, it must be another spammer! You
know I gotta take this call! It could be
somebody calling me back to the
motherland!

Eric runs away. Ron SIGHS and walks to a picture frame with him, Eric, and Vanka in the photo. He holds it up and stares at it.

THE END