

ERIC

"Marty O'Dell's 'How to Be a Football Player'"

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INT. ARMY BASE - HANGAR - DAY

JACOB JACKSON, 19, white, marches through the hangar. His pregnant wife, SHANA JONES, 19, biracial, follows him.

SHANA

Jakey, stop! What do you hope to accomplish, anyway?

JACOB

To do the enemy a favor! There's gonna be one less soldier at the end of the day!

SHANA

Jakey, you can't go and beat up Darius! We don't even know if the baby's his!

JACOB

He shouldn't have done it with you in the first place!

SHANA

But I did it with him, too! We were both wrong! Just like you and my other boss!

Jacob stops and faces Shana.

JACOB

Yeah, and you whooped that ass!

SHANA

(chuckles)

Yeah, I did.

Jacob chuckles with her. They both abruptly STOP.

SHANA (CONT'D)

But I almost got kicked out the Army for that! Who knows what's gonna happen to me when he sees you!

PRIVATE WEBSTER, female, 19, black, enters the hangar from the office.

WEBSTER

Hey, Jones! First Sergeant told me to tell you to shut the hell up out here! He can't hear himself yelling at us in the office!

SHANA

Sorry, Webster. Is Sergeant Murphy in there?

WEBSTER

No. We hadn't seen him in a minute.

SHANA

He must've gone back home to Milwaukee.

WEBSTER

Yeah, that's one way to put it.

SHANA

Huh? What's another way?

WEBSTER

Look, Murphy just got a 100% disability rating.

JACOB

That's exactly what I came here to give him!

WEBSTER

No, ya'll don't understand. He retired!

SHANA

Really?

WEBSTER

Yeah! He dropped off some pizza to the office one afternoon and stepped away. Hours passed, and he never came back!

SHANA

Wow, I didn't even know anything was wrong with him.

WEBSTER

Jonesy, we're in the Army. There's something wrong with all of us!

SHANA

Did anybody try to call him?

WEBSTER

Disconnected.

SHANA

Go by his house?

WEBSTER

Well, a lot of women went to his house, know what I'm sayin'?

SHANA

I don't get it. We were supposed to work something out.

WEBSTER

(shrugs)

Looks like he did.

SHANA

Jacob, what am I gonna do?

She turns around and sees the empty spot where Jacob was.

SHANA (CONT'D)

Jacob? Jacob!

She looks at her stomach and rubs it.

SHANA (CONT'D)

I hope he's getting the car. Well, I hope it's true that soldiers takes care of their own. Webster, can you help...

She looks up and sees the empty spot where Webster was.

SFX: Door SLAM!

SHANA (CONT'D)

Nice! So now, it's just me and a baby?!

Shana's FETUS speaks telepathically from her stomach.
[NOTE: the conversation is in italics.]

FETUS

(female voice)

This is gonna be awkward.

Her OTHER FETUS chimes in.

FETUS #2

(male voice)

I know, right?

(high-pitched voice)

Hey, what about me?

Both fetuses LAUGH.

FETUS #2 (CONT'D)

(regular voice)

Just playin', there's only two of us.

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

ERIC NELSON, 17, black, straightens up around the dining room table as he HUMS. He puts food on two plates.

ERIC

Berniece is coming over! It's gonna be a good night!

SFX: Door KNOCK.

ERIC (CONT'D)

Come in, baby!

The door OPENS off-screen. Eric's back is turned to the door.

ERIC (CONT'D)

I hope you're hungry! And you know I made it! Made it to the restaurant, that is! Ha, ha!

SHANA

That's very sweet, Eric, but you really gotta let me go.

Eric turns around and sees Shana.

ERIC

(gloomily)

Shana. What a surprise.

SHANA

Is my weasel of a husband here?

ERIC

No, man! Why would Jacob be here?

SHANA

You're his only friend!

ERIC

No, you're his only friend!

SHANA

(scoffs)

Please! I love him. I don't like him!

Eric pushes Shana towards the front door.

ERIC

Look, Shana, I would ask what's wrong, but that would mean that I care. So please take your baggage, and...

Jacob enters through the door.

JACOB
Ron, here's that magazine.

He looks at Eric and Shana.

JACOB (CONT'D)
Well, Shana, you don't waste any time, do ya?

SHANA
Oh, shut up, Jacob! What you up to?

JACOB
Returning something of Ron's, why?

SHANA
Yeah, well, it ain't looking for your preggo wife, is it?

JACOB
You should leave that for Darius! Oh wait, he bounced!

ERIC
(gasps)
Really?

SHANA
So? I don't need none of you guys! I can do bad all by myself! Plenty of single mothers have made it!

JACOB
Fine, well, I don't need you, either! That shotgun wedding has led to nothing but disaster!

SHANA
Hey, don't you say "shotgun" around me! I got ribbons in more weaponry than you can imagine!

ERIC
Guys! Take it outside!

JACOB
No need! I'm outta here!

He throws the magazine down and prepares to exit.

SHANA

And don't be comin' around hanging with my friends, either!

JACOB

What are you talking about?

SHANA

Eric and them! They're my friends first!

ERIC

"Friends"??

JACOB

Hey, now, they're my friends, too!

ERIC

"Too"?? Hey, look, guys...

JACOB

And I can hang around them whenever I want!

SHANA

Oh no, you can't!

JACOB

Oh yes, I can!

SHANA

Cannot, cannot, cannot!

JACOB

Can too, can too, can too!

Jacob exits and SLAMS the door. He reopens it.

JACOB (CONT'D)

Can too plus infinity!

He exits and SLAMS the door. Shana GASPS.

ERIC

Our debate team could've used you guys.

SHANA

Oooh, he makes me so mad!

ERIC

You're mad? Ya'll ruining my special night!

SFX: Door KNOCK.

SHANA
 (claps her hands)
 That's probably him again for some angry
 nookie!

Eric frowns at her. His girlfriend, BERNIECE WILLIAMS,
 17, black, enters.

BERNIECE
 Eric, I just saw Jacob storm out the
 building. What's going on here?

ERIC
 Berniece, I need to cool off. Hold on!

Eric storms out the apartment.

BERNIECE
 I don't get it.

Shana sits at the kitchen table.

SHANA
 Well, you can sit and have some food, if
 you want. But I'm eating for two.

FETUS #2
 Yeah, about that...

FETUS #1
 Shh!

INT. COLLEGE - CLASSROOM - DAY

Students sit in a classroom, including GINA RICHARDS,
 20's, black, who wears her cheerleading uniform. Her
 boyfriend, MARTY O'DELL, 20's, black, is a tall, husky,
 football player who is also the teaching assistant. He
 stands in front of the class, wearing a practice jersey
 underneath an open blazer.

MARTY
 So, class, as I said before,
 communication can also be used in our
 freedom of speech.

Gina and other students WHISPER.

MARTY (CONT'D)
 That freedom of speech can be used in
 protests. As long as it's peaceful, I
 always say.

Gina and the students look at Marty confused, then continue to WHISPER.

MARTY (CONT'D)

Uh, guys?

They STOP whispering.

MARTY (CONT'D)

Ms. Richards, a penny for your thoughts?

CHERI, 20, black, chimes in.

CHERI

Be prepared for a refund, Mr. O'Dell!

MARTY

Ms. Richards, what's the issue?

Gina stands up.

GINA

Well, Mr. O'Dell, you know that I never wanna interrupt class, but, me and the guys were wondering...shouldn't you be practicing with the team right now?

MARTY

The team?

CHERI

Yeah! Remember? We got a huge bowl game coming up!

STEVE, 19, black, stands up.

STEVE

That's why we're all in our brown and green!

MIA, 19, Asian, chimes in.

MIA

Yeah! You know, Go Dogcats!

Other students CLAMOR in agreement.

MARTY

Yes, go Dogcats. Look, why don't we get back to the lesson?

HARRY, 20's, white, stands up.

HARRY

But you the man! We won't win the national championship without you!

The class CLAMORS in agreement.

MARTY

Let's get back to class, shall we?

GINA

Marty, what is it you're not telling us?

MARTY

Ms. Richards, may I remind you that we are to keep this relationship at a professional level while class is in session?

GINA

(bellows)

Marty, get over here!

MARTY

(to the class, rapidly)

Class dismissed!

The class exits. Marty approaches Gina.

GINA

Now what's the problem?

MARTY

Nothing, Geenie. I really like teaching. You know that.

GINA

But you also really like football. Love it. We go out and celebrate Brett Favre's birthday every year.

MARTY

And don't I always excuse your absence for it?

GINA

Yeah. So why aren't you out in Florida practicing with the team?

MARTY

I'd rather talk to you later about it.

GINA

But I don't get it! How can I accuse you of hanging out with groupies if you're here?

MARTY

You can accuse me right here, dear! Look, you wouldn't understand.

GINA

Have you talked to anybody about this?

MARTY

(mumbles)

The professor.

GINA

What was that?

MARTY

(regular voice)

The professor.

GINA

Professor Nelson-James knows about it before me??

MARTY

Hey, don't be so upset. My parents don't even know!

GINA

Oh yeah? Well, I'm gonna put a stop to this, whatever it is!

Gina marches away.

MARTY

Geenie, wait!

Gina turns back around.

GINA

What?

MARTY

(sighs)

Will you have your presentation ready for tomorrow?

GINA

Oh, you already know the answer to that!

MARTY

Fine. But you do know that if I was in Florida, I wouldn't be here to give you an extension.

GINA

(stammers)

Don't you act all smart-ass with me, Marty! I still wouldn't be ready!

She storms away. Marty SIGHS.

INT. ERIC, RON AND VANKA'S HOME - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Eric and Berniece sit on the couch in each other's arms.

ERIC

Okay, babe, finally got the house to ourselves.

BERNIECE

Yeah.

ERIC

And we got a very special "Turtleman" episode on TV. Can't get no better.

BERNIECE

I got the Kleenex.

SFX: Door KNOCK. Eric SIGHS.

ERIC

Come in, Jacob and/or Shana!

Jacob enters with a backpack.

JACOB

How'd you know it was me, shrimp?

ERIC

I planned. God laughed. What do you want?

JACOB

Just seeing if you wanted to hang out.

Eric and Berniece cut their eyes.

ERIC

Why?

JACOB

Why not?

ERIC

'Cuz it's not our thing. It's never been our thing! I got the literal scars to prove it!

JACOB

(scoffs)

That's when we were kids, man.

ERIC

Jacob, you ruined one romantic evening for me. You not gonna ruin another. Please leave.

BERNIECE

Eric, don't be mean.

ERIC

Please! He's only doing this to get back at his wife!

JACOB

I can see I wore out my welcome.

ERIC

You would've had to been welcomed to begin with!

BERNIECE

Eric!

Jacob heads for the door.

JACOB

I guess I have to find someone else to split this bag of sticky with.

Eric stands up.

ERIC

Hey, hey, hold on there. Maybe Berniece is right. Come sit down.

Eric directs Jacob to the couch.

JACOB

Okay. Watch the shirt, now.

BERNIECE

Eric...

ERIC

Jacob's going through a tough time right now, Berniece!

JACOB

I am.

ERIC

Yeah, bro's before ho...

Berniece cuts her eyes at Eric.

ERIC (CONT'D)

...homies!

BERNIECE

Huh! If that's the case, then this "ho-homie" is gonna go and console Shana!

She gets up and heads for the exit.

JACOB

Fine. More beer for us!

He opens his backpack. Berniece turns around.

BERNIECE

But like the song says, "Stand By Your Man"!

She sits back down.

JACOB

I know you're not talking about Eric!

Jacob and Berniece CHUCKLE.

ERIC

(chuckles mockingly)

Ha, ha, pass me the stuff, ya'll, or get out.

INT. TIMMY'S PLACE - DAY

Eric's mother, RHONDA NELSON-JAMES, 40's, black, sits at the bar of the restaurant. The owner, TIMMY ROBERTS, 40's, white, approaches her with a glass.

TIMMY

Hey, Rhonda, try this. Does this taste funny to you?

RHONDA

Timmy, why would I try something if it might taste funny?

Rhonda's friend, OFFICER YVETTE TOWNSEND, 40's, black, short and pudgy, snatches the glass from Timmy.

OFFICER TOWNSEND

Gimme that!

RHONDA

Yvette!

OFFICER TOWNSEND

(sotto voce)

If I get food poisoning, I can sue him!

RHONDA

But how can you collect the money if you're dead?

OFFICER TOWNSEND

Well, I'll cross that bridge when I get to it!

Rhonda SCOFFS. Townsend takes a sip.

OFFICER TOWNSEND (CONT'D)

Tastes alright to me, Timmy.

She hands the glass back to Timmy.

TIMMY

(calls out)

See, Ike? Nothing happens if you leave the milk out for 14 hours!

He exits. COACH THURMAN, 40's, black, approaches Rhonda.

COACH THURMAN

Excuse me, are you Professor Nelson-James?

RHONDA

Yes. Call me Rhonda.

COACH THURMAN

Well, Rhonda, does Marty O'Dell work for you?

RHONDA

He's my TA, yes.

The bartender, IKE SWANSON, 20's, black, approaches Thurman. Ike speaks in a "surfer-dude" dialect.

IKE

Whoa, dude! You're that coach of the Dogcats!

COACH THURMAN

Yes I am!

IKE

The city of Milwaukee is all behind you!
We hope you guys kill those Anaheim Amoebas!

COACH THURMAN

Well, we hope to. Marty's not playing.
Ain't that right, Rhonda?

Ike GASPS.

OFFICER TOWNSEND

Rhonda?

RHONDA

Yeah?

OFFICER TOWNSEND

Yo, you not gonna introduce me?

RHONDA

Oh, drink your crappy milk, 'Vette!
(to Thurman)
Coach, I have no idea what Marty is up to.

GINA (O.C.)

Oh, please!

They turn to Gina, who sits at a booth. She gets up and marches over to them.

GINA (CONT'D)

Professor, my Marty looks up to you. He talks about you all the time! Kinda creepy, actually.

RHONDA

Hey, guys, Marty did say he had some concerns about playing in the bowl, but I did nothing to sway him to one side.

OFFICER TOWNSEND

Look, I don't appreciate you guys ganging up on an innocent bystander, and my best friend, here!

(MORE)

OFFICER TOWNSEND (CONT'D)

(pause)

Wait, he's not playing in the bowl?

COACH THURMAN

He's not in Miami with the rest of us! I flew back to tell your friend this!

OFFICER TOWNSEND

Rhonda, are you crazy? He's our only hope!

RHONDA

Please. It's a team sport, right?

COACH THURMAN

Sounds like you watch too many dramas, lady.

RHONDA

Now look, I told Marty that whatever he decides is up to him.

OFFICER TOWNSEND

Uh, no offense, Rhondie, but that's a really selfish attitude.

GINA

Yeah! It's a team sport!

COACH THURMAN

Professor, I do hope you reconsider. Then Marty will reconsider. I gotta get back.

He exits. Timmy returns.

TIMMY

Hey, where'd Coach go? I was gonna give him a taste of our new Dogcat Burger!

IKE

With real dog meat!

TIMMY

Ike!

IKE

Sorry. Dog-flavored meat!

Ike winks at Timmy.

TIMMY

Take a break, Ike.

Ike exits.

TIMMY (CONT'D)

Rhonda, is everything alright?

RHONDA

It is with me!

TIMMY

Well, I don't want any trouble with my customers. They should feel welcome here.

Across the way are two Goth-like sisters, KATHY and KEISHA HUGHES, teens, black. They wear all-black clothing, dark makeup, and talk in a dull voice.

KATHY

Hey, Keisha, let's get Burger King for dinner tonight.

Timmy DROPS his stack of dishes on the counter.

TIMMY

(to the Hughes sisters)

Get out!

The Hughes sisters get up and exit.

KEISHA

Whateva.

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

Eric, Berniece, and Jacob sit in a smoke-filled living room, laid back on the couch. They all speak slightly slurred.

ERIC

This is living.

JACOB

Yep.

BERNIECE

Yep.

JACOB

There's more where that came from.

ERIC

Jacob, I'm a little offended that you're bribing us with weed and alcohol. And that you haven't done it sooner.

JACOB

It took a while for me to sorta tolerate you, "Speech" from Arrested Development. Who's also from Milwaukee, by the way.

BERNIECE

I remember when I first dissed you, Eric. Good times.

JACOB

Eric takes a while to appreciate, but you'll come around, I guess.

Eric looks at the camera, breaking the fourth wall, then quickly turns away.

SFX: Shana BURSTS in the front door.

SHANA

What's going on here??

Eric jumps up.

ERIC

(regular voice)

This man is trying to peer-pressure us kids!

SHANA

Shut up, Eric!

Jacob marches to Shana.

JACOB

(regular voice)

Don't you talk to Eric like that! I was just showing them a good time, is all!

SHANA

Oh, what, I can't?

JACOB

No, you can! After I take them to...Minneapolis!

Eric and Berniece CLAMOR in excitement.

SHANA

Please, I can take them to plenty cities! I have a city named after me!

ERIC AND BERNIECE

Oooooh!

JACOB

Well, I guess I can't compete with your riches, Shana. I'll just go then.

ERIC

Now hold on, there! You guys don't have to compete! Ya'll can bribe us equally!

BERNIECE

Yeah! We won't like you any more or any less!

ERIC

Or at all, even!

BERNIECE

Why don't you guys split up the times with us?

JACOB

Okay, every day after school, I'll pick you guys up!

ERIC

We live in separate cities, Jacob.

SHANA

(to Jacob)

And they got homework! See, you don't even care about the kids' education!

JACOB

Shut up!

BERNIECE

Hold it, guys! Just split up the time on weekends! Shana gets us half a day, Jacob the other half!

JACOB

I guess that'll work.

SHANA

Yeah, but I'm not doing it for you, Jacob. I'm doing it for them. They can't get hurt by all of this.

ERIC

Let's call it a night, guys.

Berniece rubs her eyes.

ERIC (CONT'D)

See? It's time for little Berniece to lay down.

SHANA

Okay. After you, Jacob.

Shana and Jacob exit.

BERNIECE

Man, we're organizing play dates with Jacob and Shana.

ERIC

Yeah, we must be messed up.

BERNIECE

(a little slurred)

Well, I better hit it.

ERIC

(a little slurred)

No, not yet! Jacob's supposed to come over and give us some drinks and smokes!

BERNIECE

Where?

ERIC

Here!

BERNIECE

Here? Hey, how'd I get here?

ERIC

I dunno, but I'm glad you are here!

BERNIECE

Aww!

They both attempt to hug each other, but they both PLOP to the floor face-down. They then begin to SNORE.

INT. NELSON HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Rhonda sits on the couch and watches TV.

RHONDA

Ooh, this must be the episode where Turtleman runs for president!

SFX: Doorbell RINGS.

Rhonda gets up and answers it. Gina stands on the other side.

RHONDA (CONT'D)

Ms. Richards? At my house? Is something wrong?

GINA

Oh, you already know it is! And we're here to make it right!

(calls out)

Class?

Gina and crowds of students from her class march in the house with picket signs.

CROWD

(chants repeatedly)

Hell no, we won't go!

RHONDA

Gina, what is the meaning of this??

GINA

Mr. O'Dell taught us to protest peacefully!

RHONDA

How is this peaceful? This is at my home!

STEVE

It's the weekend! There's no school today!

MIA

And this is more effective, don't ya think?

CHERI

We're staying until you convince Marty to go down to Florida and bring us home a championship!

The crowd CHEERS.

RHONDA

And if he was down there, he wouldn't have been able to teach you about protesting!

GINA

He gets his lessons from you. You would've taught us, anyway!

RHONDA

Oh, now you use logic?

GINA

No. Just a little critical thinking.
Guys?

CROWD

(marches around the living
room, chants repeatedly)
Hell no, we won't go!

GINA

(hushed voice)
Shhh! Peacefully!

CROWD

(hushed voices, chanting
repeatedly)
Hell no, we won't go!

INT. ERIC, RON AND VANKA'S HOME - LIVING ROOM - DAY

VANKA SMIRNOV, 30's, white, medium height and chubby,
talks on her cell phone. She speaks in her Russian accent
throughout.

VANKA

You serious? He's gonna be so
disappointed!

Eric enters from his bedroom, wearing a backwards red cap
and carrying a baseball glove.

VANKA (CONT'D)

I can't believe it!
(pause)
Well, you're gonna need to tell him!
(pause)
No, I'm not gonna do your dirty work!
(pause)
Good grief!

She hangs up.

ERIC

Shana's not coming, is she?

VANKA

Eric, come sit with me.

ERIC

It's alright, really.

VANKA

Eric? Please?

Eric, looking dejected, and Vanka sit on the couch.

VANKA (CONT'D)

Shana is going through some things. It doesn't mean she doesn't care.

ERIC

Mmm-hmm.

VANKA

Now, it's okay to let it out, boy.

ERIC

(scoffs)

I shouldn't be surprised. She pulls this stuff every time!

Berniece enters through the front door.

BERNIECE

Eric, come on! Shana's waiting for us!

Eric jumps up.

ERIC

All right! But wait, who was that on the phone, then?

Eric turns to Vanka, who turns her head away.

ERIC (CONT'D)

Let's just go.

Eric and Berniece exit. Vanka walks outside to the fire escape, where Jacob sits.

VANKA

Alright, you, gimme my stash!

JACOB

No deal! Eric didn't even stay!

Vanka steps up to Jacob.

VANKA

You don't know me or my family very well, do you?

She clutches her fists.

JACOB

Oh, alright.

Jacob digs in his backpack.

JACOB (CONT'D)

Where have you been all my life?

INT. DUMBECK MANSION - DAY

Shana, Eric, and Berniece enter from the front hallway.

ERIC

Man, that was something!

SHANA

I'm glad you guys enjoyed it!

BERNIECE

I've never known anyone to go around the world in a day!

ERIC

Which is why it's good that we only went to Chicago.

SHANA

Well, sit down. I'll have one of my butlers whip us something.

BERNIECE

Actually, Shana, Jacob's supposed to pick us up, remember?

SHANA

Oh yeah.

SFX: Car horn HONKS!

ERIC

That must be him now!

BERNIECE

Let's go!

SHANA

Hey, you don't need to be in such a hurry when he comes.

Eric and Berniece swiftly exit.

SHANA (CONT'D)
 (calls out)
 You're my friends, too, damn it!

Shana's half-sister, ELEANOR DUMBECK, 18, white, enters from her bedroom.

ELEANOR
 Yelling at the help again?

SHANA
 No, Jacob came by to pick up the kids.
 (pause)
 I got it! Eleanor, I need you to...

ELEANOR
 Make you into a man?

Shana frowns.

SHANA
 And how did you know I would say that?

ELEANOR
 'Cuz you're tall, and you got broad shoulders. We just need to hit up Dad's closet.

Shana and Eleanor begin to exit.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)
 It wouldn't take much work to turn you into one. You don't even need that much makeup. In fact, if you pulled your hair back, you'd look just like a...

SHANA
 Alright!

ELEANOR
 I got more!

INT. NELSON HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - LATER

Gina and the students continue to chant and march. Rhonda plays with her phone.

CROWD
 Hell no, we won't go!

STEVE
 Hey, Gina, my voice and feet are hurting.
 How long do we have to do this?

MIA

Yeah, I thought this was supposed to be a peaceful protest.

GINA

It is! We ain't tearing up the place or anything, right?

STEVE

Yeah, but can we sit down for a minute?

GINA

Sit down? What kind of protesting is that?

RHONDA

A sit-in!

GINA

Oh! Because we're in a house! Guys, let's sit!

The crowd stops chanting and sits on the couches and floor.

HARRY

Professor, you're more agreeable with this protest than we thought you'd be.

Rhonda stands up.

RHONDA

Why not? This is a great opportunity to teach you guys something.

The crowd MOANS.

CHERI

Great plan, Gina.

RHONDA

Now, class, what do you think sit-ins accomplish?

GINA

Well, we want you to listen to our demands!

RHONDA

Which is to let Marty play in the game.

CROWD

Yeah!

RHONDA

Even though it's not up to me.

GINA

But where did he start learning to love teaching?

RHONDA

What I'm saying is that he's making this decision by himself, whatever it is.

Rhonda's husband, MATT JAMES, 40's, black, enters through the front door. He looks at the living room full of people.

RHONDA (CONT'D)

Hey, honey. You're probably wondering why there's a group of protesters in our living room.

MATT

(sighs)

Most husbands would. Not me, though.

Matt turns around and exits.

HARRY

Professor, I get what you're saying, but can't you talk Marty into playing? He'll listen to you!

RHONDA

But if he doesn't want to play, how will that attitude translate into performance on the field? Would you rather have a player for your team that don't wanna play?

CHERI

If it wins us the championship, he can sleepwalk, for all I care!

GINA

He did once, and we still won!

The crowd CLAMORS in agreement. Steve stands up.

STEVE

Hey, guys, the Professor may have a point. I'm gonna get outta here.

CHERI

Steve! Come on, now!

STEVE
I'm supposed to be picking up something
for my mom, anyway.

Steve takes his sign and exits.

CHERI
Mama's boy.

MIA
Does that mean he's fair game, now?

CHERI
I'd kill you. Find your own man to cuff!

INT. TIMMY'S PLACE - EVENING

Eric, Berniece, and Jacob sit at the bar, which is crowded with other patrons watching the TV sets.

BERNIECE
Hey, Jacob, thanks for getting us seats
at the bar!

ERIC
We're still on for the big game, right?

JACOB
Is the game even still on? Marty O'Dell's
not playing.

BERNIECE
I know. And a lot of players are already
entering the transfer portal.

JACOB
They might have to start getting players
off the street.

ERIC
They already are!

BERNIECE
Yeah. I'm even on their roster!

Shana, wearing a trenchcoat, dark sunglasses, a black hat, and a fake mustache, enters the restaurant, walking with a bounce and a stroll. She looks around. Ike spots her.

IKE
Shana, is that you?

SHANA

No!

(clears her throat, talks in
a deeper voice)

No, it's not, sir. I'm the Lyft driver.

JACOB

(to Eric and Berniece)

I'll be right back.

She spots Jacob stepping away.

SHANA

(regular voice, sotto voce)

I don't know what they see in that fool.

She bounces and strolls in their direction. She passes Matt and XAVIER, Berniece's father, 40's, black, who both sit at the bar together and look at Jacob walking away.

XAVIER

I don't know what they see in that fool.

Matt shakes his head in disbelief. Shana approaches Eric and Berniece.

SHANA

(deep voice)

Lyft driver for Eric and Berniece!

ERIC

Huh?

SHANA

Jacob Jackson called it for you!

ERIC

Jacob went to the bathroom. I better get him.

SHANA

Why would you need to? He already knows!

ERIC

Good point. Come on, Berniece.

The three exit. Jacob enters from the other direction and sits down.

JACOB

Hey, where are the kids?

MATT

The Lyft driver came and got them.

XAVIER

Yeah, good job on making sure they get home safe, I guess.

JACOB

I never called a Lyft driver!

He chases after them.

JACOB (CONT'D)

Hey, get back here!

IKE

(to Jacob)

Hey, Matt, you forgot to pay!

MATT

Huh?

IKE

(to Matt)

Oh, sorry. Force of habit, dude.

Ike turns back to the exit and SIGHS. He turns to the counter. Matt ZIPS past him.

IKE (CONT'D)

Matt, you forgot to...!

Ike CLICKS his tongue.

INT. DUMBECK MANSION - LATER

Jacob enters the front door.

JACOB

Hey, guys, have you seen Shana?

Eleanor and Shana's father, JOHN DUMBECK, 40's, white, charges forward with his fist. Eleanor charges forward from the other direction with her fist. Jacob GASPS and steps back. Eleanor and John PUNCH each other in the face, and they both PLOP to the ground.

JACOB (CONT'D)

I take it she told you guys about me.

JOHN

(woozy voice)

She took the kids upstairs to the movie theater, cheater.

Jacob SCOFFS, jumps over John's body, and runs upstairs.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Nice punch, Eleanor.

ELEANOR
(woozy voice)
I learned from the best.

BOTH
Mom.

INT. DUMBECK MANSION - MOVIE THEATER - SAME

Eric and Berniece carry popcorn and other snacks. Shana, still dressed as a man, walks with them.

BERNIECE
(to Shana)
Hey, sir, shouldn't we be getting back to Eric's house? Why are we at the movies?

ERIC
(to Berniece)
Shhh! He bought us snacks!

SHANA
(deep voice)
Oh, I wanted to kill a little bit of time. We can catch a quick movie, can't we?

Jacob rushes up to them.

JACOB
Hey, Eric, Berniece, I thought you guys were going home.

ERIC
We're on our way. Our driver stopped here.

JACOB
Is that right? Hey, driver, you look a little familiar. I mean, you look pretty handsome. Very, very mannish.

SHANA
Yeah, well, excuse me.

JACOB
Gotta drain the main vein?

SHANA
What?

JACOB
You know, bathroom?

SHANA
Oh, of course!

JACOB
I do, too!

Jacob and Shana walk to the nearby restroom. Shana heads for the women's restroom.

JACOB (CONT'D)
Uh, sir, whatcha doin'? The men's restroom is right here.

SHANA
Oh yeah!

They both enter the men's restroom and stand near each other at the stalls. Shana looks confused.

JACOB
Problem?

SHANA
Huh?

JACOB
Why are you stalling at the stall?

SHANA
Because you don't have to take the stall right next to me! Gimme some space!

JACOB
Too late, I already started.

MOMENTS PASS.

SHANA
(regular voice)
Oh, all right! I'm Shana!

They both step away from the stalls.

JACOB
Yeah, you're not slick! You're supposed to see Eric and Berniece tomorrow!

Eric and Berniece listen from outside.

SHANA (O.C.)

Oh yeah? What about you, trying to bribe them all the time?

JACOB (O.C.)

I don't have to bribe them! They have more fun with me, anyway!

Eric and Berniece both roll their eyes and shake their heads. Inside, Shana and Jacob continue arguing.

SHANA

In your dreams!

JACOB

Well, let's just ask them!

SHANA

Fine!

They both take one step out of the restroom.

JACOB

Hey, Eric!

They look at the empty space where Eric and Berniece stood.

SHANA

Uh, they're gone.

JACOB

Now look what you did.

PABLO McNAIR, 8, Puerto Rican, approaches Jacob and Shana. He looks at them up and down and then at the restroom door.

PABLO

I'm confused yet intrigued.

Jacob and Shana walk away.

INT. NELSON HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - LATER

The students sit on the couch and the floor. Rhonda sits in a chair.

GINA

Professor, since you have us in here, can't you give us some food or something?

Rhonda frowns at her. Cheri slaps Gina on the arm.

GINA (CONT'D)

It's what good hosts do!

RHONDA

You need to be more focused on your boyfriend's happiness.

GINA

I am! When he plays football, he's happy!

RHONDA

He's also happy when he teaches.

GINA

I just want what's best for him.

RHONDA

Then give him a little time. He'll come around.

Marty enters the house.

MARTY

Guys, what the hell?

GINA

(to Rhonda)

Wow, you're pretty smart for a community college teacher!

(to Marty)

Marty-poo, we're doing this for you!

MIA

Yeah, you taught us how to protest effectively!

CHERI

So we're protesting for you to get back on the team!

MARTY

But guys, I left the team because I wanted to!

HARRY

But why, man? We have a chance to win the championship!

The other students CLAMOR in agreement.

MARTY

Alright, listen, everybody. I was gonna tell Gina this first, then give the announcement in a presser.

(MORE)

MARTY (CONT'D)

But I guess the presser has to be today!
 (exhales)
 I talked to Mac Davidson.

HARRY

Mac Davidson? The big-shot sports agent?

MARTY

Yep. I'm entering the draft!

GINA

(gasps)
 You're joining the military??

MARTY

No, honey, I'm hoping to play
 professional football!

Everyone else CLAMORS in excitement.

MARTY (CONT'D)

That's why I'm not playing in the bowl!

GINA

Oh, honey, that's so cool!

She hugs and kisses him.

GINA (CONT'D)

But what are you gonna do about school?

MARTY

Hey, I'm gettin' the bag! I can always
 finish school after I'm injured and
 retired!

RHONDA

Marty, what did your parents say about
 this?

MARTY

They're on board, too.

RHONDA

Well, I'm gonna miss you as a TA, but I'm
 happy that you're following your dream.

She shakes Marty's hand.

MARTY

Thank you, Professor. I won't forget you.

HARRY

Hey, man, congrats! Don't worry about the team. We can win without you.

MARTY

I'll be there in spirit.

RHONDA

Great. Now can all of ya'll get outta here?

GINA

Alright, guys, let's head on out!

The students start to leave.

GINA (CONT'D)

Oh, wait! Professor, can we get extra credit for this independent learning thing?

The students CLAMOR in agreement.

MARTY

Ya'll really going from possibly getting expelled to asking for extra credit?

GINA

Well, yeah!

RHONDA

Hold on, Marty. Gina needs all the extra credit she can get!

GINA

Yep!

RHONDA

If you guys double-time outta here, I'll think about it!

GINA

Gotcha!

Everyone races out. Rhonda closes the door.

RHONDA

Glad that's over.

She picks up the remote and flips on the TV. An ANNOUNCER speaks.

ANNOUNCER (O.C.)

And more bad news, Dogcat fans. Perry Morris got an ankle sprain in practice and will not play in the national championship. Morris is the top player next to Marty O'Dell, who's already MIA in MIA!

SFX: BANGING on the front door!

CROWD (O.C.)

(chants)

Free Marty! Free Marty!

Rhonda shuts off the TV, locks the door, turns off the lights in the living room, and goes to her bedroom.

GINA (O.C.)

Can you at least throw some snacks out here?

SFX: Water SPLASHES off-camera.

GINA (O.C.) (CONT'D)

Hey! Hot water don't count!

INT. ERIC, RON AND VANKA'S HOME - LIVING ROOM

Jacob enters the front door.

JACOB

Alright, guys, ready to go to Gurnee Mills?

He looks around.

JACOB (CONT'D)

Eric? Berniece?

Shana enters the front door.

SHANA

Okay, kids, we're gonna have a great time at Gurnee Mills!

She sees Jacob.

SHANA (CONT'D)

What are you doing here?

JACOB

The kids wanted me to take them to Gurnee Mills. Eric called me.

SHANA

No, they want me to take them. Berniece called me!

Eric and Berniece enter from the bedroom.

BERNIECE

Alright, guys, this has gone too far!

ERIC

You both made us hate you again!

BERNIECE

So whatever ya'll got goin' on, you're gonna stay here until you work it out!

ERIC

Yeah!

Eric and Berniece exit and SLAM the front door.

BERNIECE

You think this'll work, Eric?

ERIC

It better! I'm so sick of their bickering!

SILENCE.

BERNIECE

I don't hear much bickering.

ERIC

Maybe they killed each other. Which would also be good.

Berniece cracks open the door.

BERNIECE

Well, their bodies are on top of each other.

ERIC

Ugh. On my couch?

BERNIECE

Let's bounce.

ERIC

But it's my hou--

Berniece closes the door and pulls Eric away. Inside, Shana and Jacob make out on the couch.

JACOB

Hold up. We need to figure out just what we're doing.

SHANA

I agree.

JACOB

Now, look. You already have one guy leave you. You don't need another one leaving.

SHANA

Make that two. Eric left me, too.

Jacob frowns at her.

SHANA (CONT'D)

Fine, whatever, man! You act like I need you. I don't need you! I got friends! I got family! I got money! I got houses!

(sighs)

But none of those houses are home.

JACOB

Then I guess it's settled.

SHANA

Should we tell Eric and Berniece that we made up?

JACOB

We'll tell them on our trip to Gurnee Mills.

SHANA

Oh yeah.

JACOB

Shana, can you buy gas? Those fools wiped me out.

SHANA

Have them pay for it on the way there. Threaten them like you used to!

JACOB

I knew there was a reason we're together!

They kiss, then cuddle on the couch.

THE END