

Southern Discomfort

“Pilot”

Written by
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ACT I

COLD OPEN (SCENE A)

INT. DOBSON HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - DAY

THE PLACE IS NICE, DEFINITELY CLOSER TO THE UPPER OF UPPER-MIDDLE CLASS, BUT NOT QUITE A MANSION. THE DECOR IS SEMI-TACKY, YET EXPENSIVE.

A 24 YEAR OLD KID LOUNGES ON THE COUCH TYPING ON A LAPTOP. HE'S KIND OF A SLACKER, BUT CLEARLY SERIOUS ABOUT WHATEVER IT IS HE'S TYPING AWAY ON. THIS IS **TY DOBSON**.

HIS MOTHER, **MARY LOU DOBSON**, WELL PUT TOGETHER, MID-40's SITS ON THE COUCH OPPOSITE HIM PETTING THE SMALLEST AND CUTEST CHIHUAHUA ON THE PLANET NAMED **RUDY** WHO SHE IS MAKING TALK AND MOVE BY MANIPULATING HIS HANDS AS THOUGH HE WERE CLAPPING.

MARY LOU
(speaking as Rudy the
chihuahua)

I'm so excited that my sister's
coming back from Harvard! We
haven't seen her in so long.

TY
We saw her five months ago at
Christmas.

MARY LOU
Well, it seems longer.

BOB DOBSON, MID-40's, THE DOBSON PATRIARCH AND PROVIDER, COMES IN FROM THE BEDROOM. HE'S ANNOYED. HE EMERGES WITH A PACKAGE OF UNDERWEAR (TIGHTY WHITIES).

BOB
Mary Lou, what are these?

MARY LOU
Your new underwear, Bob.

BOB
They're different.

MARY LOU
They're the same kind I've been
buying you for the last 25 years.

HE HOLDS UP THE UNDERWEAR, POINTS TO THE TAG, READING:

BOB

"Made in China." The underwear
I've been wearing for 25 years is
made in the U.S.A.

TY

They probably just outsourced their
manufacturing. What's the big deal?

BOB

The big deal is, when I was your
age, nothing I owned was
outsourced. Now China makes every
TV, every computer, every part in
my car but I'm drawing the line at
my crotch. I will not have my most
intimate garment made anywhere
except America! Chapstick.

WITHOUT SKIPPING A BEAT, MARY LOU PRODUCES A STICK OF
CHAPSTICK FROM HER POCKET AND TOSSES IT TO BOB - THEY'VE BEEN
TOGETHER FOR A LONG TIME AND THIS IS HOW THINGS ARE.

BOB APPLIES THE CHAPSTICK AND TOSSES IT BACK TO MARY LOU WHO
PUTS IT IN HER POCKET.

MARY LOU

So what are you going to do?

BOB

Don't know. But I'll tell you what
I'm not going to do - wear Chinese
underwear.

HE EXITS.

MARY LOU

Did you remember the balloons?

BOB (O.S.)

My only successful offspring is coming back from Harvard. Damn right I remembered the balloons.

TY

How come she gets balloons? I didn't get balloons when I graduated.

BOB RE-ENTERS WITHOUT THE UNDERWEAR.

BOB

Let's see if we can solve that mystery... you pissed away a baseball scholarship to UT so I could pay for a degree in creative writing from a school that "didn't believe" in the concept of diplomas.

TY

We've been through this. If I didn't pursue my dream of writing I would have been miserable.

BOB

Well you pursued it straight to my couch. Your sister did what she was supposed to, got into Harvard, just graduated with honors and lined up an investment job in New York that she starts in two weeks. That gets balloons. Plus cake.

TY

You make it seem like I've just been wasting the last two years since I graduated, doing nothing.

BOB

Actually, YOU make it seem like that by... doing nothing.

TY

For your information, I might be reading some of my work at a spoken word event.

MARY LOU

Honey, that's wonderful. I knew someday, somebody would see how talented you are. I want to see him read, don't you?

BOB

Um... well... I'm pretty sure there's a baseball game on that I'd rather watch.

MARY LOU

You don't even know what night it is.

BOB

It's baseball season, there's a game on every night that I'd rather watch.

TY

That's fine, you'd probably be bored to tears anyway, seriously. It's better if you don't come.

MARY LOU

Well, you have our full support.

TY

I'm glad to hear you say that...

BOB

Here it comes.

TY

Because in this case, that support is going to need to come in the form of an entrance fee.

BOB

How much?

TY

It's for charity.

BOB

How much?

TY

A hundred dollars.

BOB

A hundred bucks! What's the charity?

TY

Uh... well... it's a non-profit trying to make gay marriage legal.

BOB

Ha. You want me to pay 100 dollars so you can read your poetry or whatever and I get the added bonus of supporting a political agenda I consider a complete waste of time?

TY

Civil rights isn't a waste of time.

BOB

You're trying to legalize gay marriage... in Texas.

MARY LOU

Bob, everyone who's in love should be allowed to get married. What if

(MORE)

MARY LOU (cont'd)

there would have been a law that stopped us from getting married?

BOB

I would have abided by that law if you would have had a penis.

TY

It's always about money to you. For me it's about the writing, about giving a voice to the things my generation feels like Jack Kerouac did.

BOB

Kerouac made boatloads of money. Your problem is you've been sucking on my teat since you were born and you're still there, sucking away.

TY

No I'm not.

BOB

No? Where do you think your clothes come from?

TY

The store?

BOB

Nope - my teat. Your car insurance, your computer, your haircuts, that bowl'a frickin' cereal - it all comes from my teat.

MARY LOU

Excuse me. I bore him. I raised him. I get some credit here.

BOB

Okay, some of the stuff comes from your mom's teat.

TY

This got weird fast. I mean much weirder than normal. So about that hundred dollars?

BOB

I'm not just going to give it to you. That only makes the problem worse. It's like feeding a stray dog. Think of a way you can earn it and we'll talk.

MARY LOU

Leave him alone, Bob. Ty, make sure Rudy doesn't get a toenail caught when you put on his party suit.

MARY LOU HANDS TY A LITTLE DOG PARTY OUTFIT. TY LOOKS LIKE HE'S CONTEMPLATING SUICIDE.

BOB

Ahh, the fruits of pursuing your dream.

TY TAKES THE DOG OUTFIT, SIGHING.

MARY LOU

I didn't have time to get it let out, it might be a little tight around his boy parts - be careful.

TY TAKES A DEEP BREATH. THIS IS HIS LIFE.

TY TAKES OUT A LITTLE NOTEBOOK, JOTS SOMETHING DOWN, THEN SCOOPS UP RUDY AND POSITIONS HIM TO PUT THE PARTY OUTFIT ON.

TY

The greatest writers all suffered.

THE FRONT DOOR OPENS. A VERY CUTE 22-YEAR OLD **HALEY DOBSON** ENTERS WITH A SMILE.

HALEY

Hey, everyone!

BOB AND MARY LOU RUSH TO THE DOOR.

BOB

What are you doing here? I thought we were picking you up in two hours.

HALEY

I wanted to surprise you so I got an earlier flight and took a cab.

MARY LOU HUGS HER AND IMMEDIATELY STARTS CRYING.

HALEY (cont'd)

Mom, calm down. It's okay.

MARY LOU

Well I haven't seen you in...

HALEY

5 months.

MARY LOU

It seems longer.

BOB HUGS HER.

BOB

Give your old man a hug. We're so proud of you.

HALEY

How have you been, daddy?

BOB

Not good. Found out my underwear is made by the Chinese. But I'm feeling better now that my only offspring to achieve his or her full potential is home.

THEY HUG.

MARY LOU

Rudy wants a hug too.

HALEY LEANS IN AND PETS RUDY.

HALEY

And how has the most beautiful dog
in the world been?

MARY LOU

Creature.

HALEY

What?

BOB

She's right, he's not just the most
beautiful DOG in the world, he's
the most beautiful creature.

TY

It's gotten a little weirder since
you left.

BOB

Now get in Ms. Wall Street.

MARY LOU

You must be so excited.

HALEY

About?

MARY LOU

The job you're starting in two
weeks.

HALEY

(sheepishly)

Oh... the job, yeah. So excited.

TY PICKS UP THAT SOMETHING IS OFF WITH HIS SISTER. THEY ALL
MOVE TOWARD THE LIVING ROOM.

MARY LOU HANDS RUDY TO TY.

MARY LOU

Can you take him out? I think the excitement has him ready to do his business.

TY

"CAN you take him out?" implies a choice that I'm assuming I don't actually have.

BOB

It took you 24 years, but you're finally getting it.

BOB PATS TY ON THE HEAD.

SCENE B

EXT. DOBSON BACK PORCH - SAME

IT'S A NICE BIG BACKYARD.

TY EMERGES FROM THE HOUSE HOLDING RUDY IN HIS TINY PARTY OUTFIT.

TY SITS HIM IN THE GRASS AND THEN TAKES A SEAT ON SOME LAWN FURNITURE.

HE SPEAKS TO RUDY AS THOUGH HE WERE ANOTHER HUMAN BEING, NO CUTESY BABY DOGGY TALK INVOLVED AS HE WRITES IN A LITTLE NOTEBOOK.

TY

Okay, I remember the teat stuff,
but then there was something about
the Chinese and his crotch... If
only I could attach some kind of
recorder to your collar, Rudy. The
things you must hear. You're always
around them, listening, I mean you
sleep in the same bed with them,
the inner sanctum. Actually, that's
a place so dark I'm not equipped to
explore it. How do you deal with
it?

TY NOTICES RUDY HAS FINISHED HIS BUSINESS, ROLLS OFF A LITTLE PLASTIC DOG POOP BAGGIE FROM A ROLL SITTING ON THE PATIO TABLE, STANDS UP AND APPROACHES THE FRUITS OF RUDY'S BUSINESS.

SCENE C

INT. DOBSON HOUSE, KITCHEN - LATE NIGHT

HALEY SITS AT THE KITCHEN TABLE TYPING ON HER LAPTOP, SMILING, LAUGHING TO HERSELF.

TY COMES IN, SURPRISES HER.

HALEY

What're you doing up?

TY

Nightmares. Dad riding my bike in his last pair of underwear. You?

HALEY

Oh, uh, time difference I guess.

TY

Only an hour difference. I've witnessed every fast one you ever pulled on mom and dad. I know how you operate. I KNOW you. Something's up.

HALEY

Nope. Nothing's up.

TY

3rd grade - you broke Mom's Precious Moments tennis player and tried to blame it on shifting humidity and barometric anomalies. I didn't even know what barometric anomalies were, but I knew you broke that thing.

HALEY

You could never prove it.

HALEY'S COMPUTER DINGS. SHE LOOKS DOWN AT HER IM AND LAUGHS.

TY

Oh, just having a standard
hilarious IM session at 4am, huh?

TY SWIVELS THE COMPUTER AROUND SO HE CAN SEE THE SCREEN.

HALEY

Don't.

TY LOOKS AT HER.

HALEY (cont'd)

Fine, read it, I don't care. You're
not going to be able to find
anything out.

TY

So you're admitting there's
something to find out?

HALEY

No. Don't put words in my mouth.

TY READS.

TY

Okay, you're IMing with a guy named
Waylon. That's your old high school
boyfriend isn't it?

HALEY

So. We've kept in touch.

TY

And here he says, thanks for coming
back a day early and spending the
night with me last night. You're
back together with him. You're not
taking that job in New York are
you? Oh my god, you're moving back
home to be with him.

HALEY

How did you?

TY

I KNOW you. I knew something was off the second you walked into this house. But I have to say I couldn't have predicted that you'd waste a degree from Harvard on a guy who works at a gas station?

HALEY

And a junior market.

TY

Wasn't he also the guy who sheared off his pinky toe riding a motorcycle barefoot?

HALEY

I love him, Ty.

TY

Since when?

HALEY

He Facebooked me last year. It was innocuous. That's what Facebook is for right, keeping tabs on your exes. Then we started e-mailing and getting to know each other again and then on my birthday, I was walking to my Qualitative Methods In Cultural Macroeconomic Theory class and there he was.

TY

At Harvard?

HALEY

Yes, he drove all the way just for my birthday. I know it sounds simple but something clicked for me. I knew I didn't want a job in New York. I just wanted to be with him.

TY

This is going to be the most disappointing news dad has ever heard. I can't wait to tell him.

HALEY

Don't tell dad. I'm going to. I've thought it out and I have a plan.

TY

Screw your plan. I clothed a dog today, fed him cake and then cleaned up that cake once he digested it. I need this. I'll be the new favorite Dobson child, I'll rise out of the ashes a phoenix reborn.

HALEY

Is that what you really want? Think it through. All of dad's attention will fall on you. He'll start taking interest in you, in what you do. This little flying below the radar act you've perfected is gone.

TY THINKS FOR A BEAT.

TY

You know all the angles. I've always been jealous of that.

HALEY

It is a gift.

MARY LOU EMERGES FROM THE BEDROOM HOLDING A GROGGY RUDY.

MARY LOU

What are you two doing out here?
You're waking up Rudy.

TY

(speaking as fast as he
can)

Haley's not taking the job in New
York. Instead she's moving back in
with us because she and her old
high school boyfriend have had a
secret long-distance relationship
for the past year.

HALEY

Ty?!?

TY

I said I wouldn't tell dad. I had
to tell somebody.

HALEY

Mom, look-

MARY LOU

Stop. I knew something was up. It's
Waylon, right? The boy from the gas
station?

HALEY

And junior market.

MARY LOU

He's been all over your Facebook
page with wall posts and he
comments on every one of your
status updates.

HALEY

I should never have friended you.

MARY LOU

It wouldn't have mattered. I would have figured it out. You brought home all of your luggage. Why would you do that if you were going back to New York in two weeks?

HALEY

Wow, mom, that's pretty deductive of you.

MARY LOU

Rudy and I watch a lot of Monk.

HALEY

Well you can't tell Daddy.

MARY LOU

Uh... no joke I can't tell him. I don't even want to be in the room when he finds out.

TY

I actually do. If you could just make sure that happens.

SCENE D

INT. DOBSON HOUSE, KITCHEN - MORNING

MARY LOU MAKES BREAKFAST, ALTERNATING EATING A PIECE OF BACON AND FEEDING RUDY A BITE. SHE SPEAKS TO HIM WITH THE MAXIMUM AMOUNT OF BABY-DOGGIE TALK A HUMAN BEING CAN MUSTER.

MARY LOU

Rudykins, they all think that I'm the dumb one in the family, but I pay attention. I'm like you, Rudy. I see everything but I keep my mouth shut. I knew something was up. Waylon has been cleaning my windshield at the gas station for the last few months, and I always go to self serve. I guess there's something kind of cute about her and Waylon back together and I love having your sister home, I really do, but your father is going to be very stressed out for the next few days so we're going to be doing a lot of cooking, which means we also get do a lot of eating. You want some more bacon? Me, too.

SHE KISSES HIM AND GIVES HIM SOME BACON AS SHE EATS A PIECE, AS WELL.

ACT TWO

SCENE E

INT. DOBSON HOUSE, KITCHEN - MORNING

HALEY, TY AND MARY LOU SIT AT THE TABLE, NERVOUS.

BOB COMES IN GRABS HIS CAR KEYS. HE KISSES MARY LOU ON THE CHEEK.

BOB

Have a good day, wife. I love you.
Take care of the underwear problem.

MARY LOU

Are you wearing that same pair of
underwear from yesterday?

BOB

That's disgusting! I'm going
commando.

MARY LOU

THAT's disgusting.

BOB

Well then find me some underwear
that're made in America.

MARY LOU

I went to Target, Walmart, Sam's
Club, Costco... Chinese underwear.

TY

You'd have more luck by expanding
your search beyond the evil empire
of corporate superstores.

BOB

You think you can do better?

TY

How hard could it be?

BOB

Then do it.

TY

Slow down. Let's talk about this.
If I find your underwear would that
be worth, say, \$100, for my event?

BOB

Hmmm. I like that. Initiative. It's
no degree from Harvard or
investment job in New York, but you
got a deal.

HE PATS TY ON THE HEAD THEN TURNS TO HALEY.

BOB (cont'd)

You're a good influence on him.

BOB EXITS.

TY

You have to tell him. I don't know
how long I can keep a straight face
around him knowing that I'm going
to get to see him hit by a
disappointment hydrogen bomb.

HALEY

I don't know why we always have to
walk around on eggshells with
daddy. He's an adult. I'm an adult.
I'm going to take him out to lunch
and have an adult conversation with
him and just tell him.

TY

Can you wait until 2 this
afternoon? That's when I get my
break.

HALEY

You're not going to be there.

TY

Fine. Before I head off to mocha latte land, I thought you might want to get used to Rudy duties, because I won't be doing them much longer. Rudy's favorite shoes are in the drawer next to his raincoat. He'll need them for his 2 o'clock walk. And, enjoy this one, they wipe him now.

HALEY

What?

MARY LOU

He's just happier being clean after he does his business.

TY

Told you, it got weirder.

TY EXITS. A MOMENT. MARY LOU AND HALEY ARE TOGETHER. MARY LOU BEGINS CLEARING THE BREAKFAST DISHES.

MARY LOU

So your plan is just to sit your dad down and talk to him?

HALEY

Yeah. It's not like I'm telling him I'm addicted to crystal meth or something. I just fell in love with a guy who happens to live here and I'm not taking a job that happens to be in New York.

MARY LOU

But, again, your plan is just to tell him this in plain English?

HALEY

Yes. And I think he's going to take it far better than you expect him to.

MARY LOU

I guess we'll find out.

HALEY

You know, I always thought I was just like daddy, smart, business minded, ambitious, but I realized I'm actually more like you.

MARY LOU

Uh... thanks.

HALEY

You know what I mean. I don't want to just be stuck in an office all day. I look at you and you're such a great mom to me and Ty.

MARY LOU

And Rudy.

HALEY

And Rudy, of course, you just seem so happy.

SHE'S WINNING MARY LOU OVER BUT NOT TOTALLY.

MARY LOU

But why Waylon? Why not a nice Harvard boy?

HALEY

I went out with Harvard boys. A lot of them aren't into girls. Not into guys either, they're just into themselves. Waylon's not like that.

MARY LOU

Uh-huh.

HALEY

I know he didn't go to Harvard or anything, but he's smart in his own way. And he's much more mature than when he cut off his pinky toe in that barefoot motorcycle accident.

MARY LOU

I thought that was the other one.

HALEY

No, the other one was Mark. He's going to Yale law school now.

MARY LOU

Don't tell your dad that.

SCENE F

INT. DOBSON HOUSE, HALEY'S BEDROOM - DAY

HALEY TALKS TO RUDY. HER DOG TALK IS SOMEWHERE BETWEEN MARY LOU'S AND TY'S. NOT QUITE BABY TALK, BUT NOT QUITE TREATING RUDY AS AN ADULT HUMAN BEING.

HALEY

You only have four toes on your feet don't you? I guess five if you count the dew claws on your front feet, but that doesn't really count. And it's not so bad is it? I don't see what the big deal is about having five toes on both feet, do you?

SCENE G

INT. COLTER'S BARBECUE - DAY

HALEY AND BOB SIT AT A TABLE. BOB'S IN HIS WORK SUIT. OTHER GUYS DRESSED LIKE HIM MILL AROUND THE PLACE.

BOB

Well this sure is a nice surprise,
my successful daughter taking me
out to lunch.

HALEY

There's actually a reason for it. I
want to tell you something.

A **GUY IN A SUIT** APPROACHES THEM, ROUGHLY BOB'S AGE.

GUY IN A SUIT

Dobson, this the daughter you're
always talking about?

BOB

Yep. Just home for two weeks before
she starts her big New York job.
Taking her old man out to lunch. I
guess I deserve a lunch after
footing the bill for Harvard right?

GUY IN A SUIT

Well, congrats. He sure is proud of
you. You're all he talks about at
the office. Good luck in New York.

HALEY

Thanks.

GUY IN A SUIT MOVES ON.

HALEY (cont'd)

Do a lot of your co-workers eat
here?

BOB

Yeah, we eat here almost every day.

HALEY

It doesn't get old?

BOB

I find the best, and then stick with it. Never deviate from the plan - no surprises. So what did you want to tell me?

HALEY

This is hard to say, but-

BOB

I know what this is about.

HALEY

You do?

BOB

Yeah, I'm not stupid. New York's expensive and it's your first job. Don't worry, I'll help you. I look at it as an investment.

HALEY

That's generous, daddy, but this isn't about money.

GUY IN SUIT #2 APPROACHES THE TABLE.

GUY IN SUIT #2

Dobson, this your Harvard graduate daughter?

BOB

Yes it is. Couldn't be more proud.

HALEY BURIES HER HEAD IN HER HANDS, AS BOB AND THE GUY IN SUIT #2 CARRY ON. THERE'S NO WAY SHE CAN TELL HIM IN THIS ENVIRONMENT.

SCENE H

EXT. DOBSON FRONT PORCH - AFTERNOON

HALEY STANDS ON THE PORCH WITH RUDY AND **WAYLON**, HE'S HALEY'S AGE AND ALMOST A REDNECK BUT NOT QUITE.

HALEY

Today was the wrong environment.
But tonight is the right one.

WAYLON

You're having a hard time telling
your dad about us. Maybe that means
something.

HALEY

What does it mean?

WAYLON

Maybe it means you should take that
job in New York.

HALEY

What? What about us?

WAYLON

Maybe we just got caught up in a
Facebook fantasy. I've been
thinking, I can't let you ruin a
shot at something big to stay here
with me. I work at a gas station.

HALEY

It's also a Jr. Market. And you
know I don't care about that. I
love you, Waylon.

WAYLON

I love you, too, that's why I gotta
set you free.

HALEY

But if you set someone free and they come back, then they love you, too. And I've already come back to you. You know the plan and it's going to work. Just ring the doorbell in two minutes. See you inside.

SHE KISSES HIM AND GOES INSIDE LEAVING WAYLON ALONE ON THE PORCH WITH RUDY.

WAYLON LOOKS AT RUDY.

WAYLON

Hey, Rudy. I wanna show you something.

WAYLON TAKES OUT A RING BOX, OPENS IT AND SHOWS IT TO RUDY. IT'S EMPTY.

WAYLON (cont'd)

What do you think of that? Yeah, I know there's nothing in there, yet. But one day, when I save up the money, I'm gonna put a ring in it and I'm gonna give it to the girl who just walked through that door. What do you think of that? I guess you don't think much of it because you have a dog's brain and you can't understand human customs or traditions. (beat) I envy you.

SCENE I

INT. DOBSON HOUSE, KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

MARY LOU IS PUTTING THE FINISHING TOUCHES ON THE RIBS SHE'S BEEN COOKING. HALEY ENTERS. TY IS PRESENT ALSO.

HALEY

Mom, thanks for helping with dinner. The more daddy eats, the more pliable his mind will be.

MARY LOU

You don't think I know that. I got the ribs, the cobbler, and a six pack of Coors.

HALEY

So the plan is, Waylon will come in, we'll act surprised, I'll play it off like we haven't seen each other in a long time, Mom, you'll insist that he stay for dinner, we'll eat, daddy will get full and drink some beers and see that Waylon is a nice guy, and that's when I start phase two.

TY

The actual truth phase?
You're making a mistake. This is a band aid situation.

HALEY

What?

TY

It's like ripping off a band aid. Do it quick, endure the pain and begin the healing process.

HALEY

That's stupid. I've thought this out. I know how to deal with people. I mean I almost minored in psychology.

THE DOORBELL RINGS.

BOB

Get it.

HALEY

(mock curiosity)

Who could that be?

SHE OPENS THE DOOR, WAYLON COMES IN.

HALEY (cont'd)

Oh, my gosh, it's Waylon. Daddy you remember him don't you?

BOB

Yeah, your old boyfriend right?
What's he doing here?

WAYLON

(stilted acting)

Well sir, I heard Haley was back in town and thought I'd drop by to say hello as a friend only.

MARY LOU

(just as stilted)

Well you simply have to stay for dinner.

WAYLON

Oh, no I couldn't impose.

BOB

More for me.

BOB SHUTS THE DOOR IN HIS FACE.

MARY LOU

Bob!

SHE OPENS THE DOOR.

MARY LOU (cont'd)

Come in, Waylon. You're staying for
dinner and that's final.

AS THEY ALL WALK TOWARD THE DINING ROOM...

BOB

Weren't you the kid who lost a toe
in a motorcycle accident?

DISSOLVE TO:

SCENE I

INT. DOBSON FAMILY DINING ROOM - EVENING

THE WHOLE FAMILY, WAYLON INCLUDED SITS AT THE TABLE.

WAYLON

...sure I missed it at first. But the way I look at it, one less thing to wash in the shower. One less toenail to clip.

MARY LOU

That's a very positive attitude.

WAYLON

Yeah, I got a different outlook on life after my dad died and I decided not to go to college to stay home and help my mom with the family business.

BOB

The gas station?

WAYLON

And junior mart, yeah. I guess I just kind felt like you owe your parents something, you know?

BOB

I do know. Too bad this one (points at Ty) doesn't know.

TY

Well sometimes your parents owe you something. Like \$100.

TY HANDS BOB A LITTLE WRAPPED PACKAGE. BOB UNWRAPS IT. UNDERWEAR. HE READS THE TAG.

BOB

"Made in The U.S.A.?" I'll be damned. Where did you get these?

TY

In an effort to maintain my value
as your personal underwear
concierge I'm keeping that
information secret.

BOB

You earned yourself a hundred
bucks.

BOB GIVES TY A HUNDRED DOLLARS.

MARY LOU

That's great. So you can do your
reading. After dinner we should all
go watch him as a family.

BOB

Another plan is you guys can go and
I'll stay here and drink beer and
watch baseball.

TY

That sounds like the better plan to
me.

MARY LOU

Well then... Haley, do you have
something you'd like to say?

HALEY POUNDS THE REST OF HER WINE.

HALEY

I'm a strong woman. I took a Modern
Feminism class. I can do this.
Daddy... Mom tell him.

BOB

What's going on here?

MARY LOU STRENGTHENS HER RESOLVE, POUNDS HER WINE. SHE'S
GOING TO DO IT. THEN...

MARY LOU

Not a chance in hell. Ty?

TY

My involvement is as a spectator only.

BOB

Somebody better come clean.

WAYLON

Fine. I'm the only one here who's not blood related, I'll do it. Mr. Dobson, Haley and I have been back together for a year. She's not going to take that job in New York. She's moving back home.

BOB SLOWLY DRAINS HIS BEER. SILENT.

HALEY

Daddy? Are you okay?

BOB

Shhh. Processing.

THE WHOLE FAMILY SITS IN SILENCE FOR A FEW BEATS. THEN...

BOB (cont'd)

Harvard degree!!! 9 toes!!! These things do not go together!!! I will not allow you to ruin your life!!!

HALEY

I knew it. I knew you wouldn't be supportive. You're not supportive of anyone in this family?

BOB

I'm giving Ty a hundred dollars for his poetry reading. I gave you money this afternoon for New York,
(MORE)

BOB (cont'd)

which I now expect to be paid back.
I support you kids non-stop.

TY

Wait, she got money for nothing and
I had to find underwear for you?
It'll never be fair.

HALEY

It's all about money to you. You
support us, but you're not
supportive of us.

BOB

What the hell does that even mean?

HALEY

Ty is doing something tonight that
is one of the most important things
in his life and the thought never
even crossed your mind to be there
for it.

TY

Which is fine.

BOB

Don't bring him into this. This is
about you and the Harvard degree
you're throwing in the toilet for a
guy who works at a gas station.

WAYLON

And junior market.

HALEY

I love Waylon, Daddy, and the
corporate world, the life you
wanted for me isn't what makes me
happy.

BOB

Happy? Happiness comes after retirement when your kids get jobs and move out, usually right at about the age both of you are now.

MARY LOU
(anger rising)

Bob...

HALEY

Please don't be mad at me anymore, Daddy.

SHE GIVES HER BEST PUPPY DOG EYES.

BOB

Nope. Your little get anything you want routine only works when you're not crushing my dreams.

HALEY

YOUR dreams. That's the point. It's the life you wanted for me. Not the life I wanted but I guess that doesn't matter.

SHE RUNS AWAY IN TEARS. A BEAT.

WAYLON

I'm going to go and... thanks for a great dinner, Mrs. Dobson.

HE HUSTLES OUT. BOB TURNS TO TY.

BOB

Am I not supportive of you?

TY

What we have here is exactly what it needs to be.

TY EXITS.

BOB

Honest to God, Mary Lou, I don't know where we went wrong. How did we end up with kids who don't know the value of work. Chapstick!

MARY LOU

All you had to do was be civil for half an hour but you couldn't. Get your own damn Chapstick!

BOB

Why are you so mad?

MARY LOU

Why can't you understand that sometimes your children are going to do things that you don't want them to do and that's part of growing up.

BOB

I can understand that but I can't understand throwing away her life for this guy.

MARY LOU

Why did I have to throw away my life for this guy? (she pokes Bob)

BOB

Uh... your life ended up alright.

MARY LOU

And so will Haley's. Remember how my parents reacted when we got married?

BOB

Yeah, they hated me.

MARY LOU

And it made things really
difficult.

BOB

Only until they died.

MARY LOU

Bob, they're still alive.

BOB

But they'll die eventually.

MARY LOU

Twenty years from now, do you want
Haley to be telling Waylon how much
she can't wait for you to die?

BOB

Not really.

MARY LOU

And twenty years from now when Ty's
a famous writer don't you want to
be able to say that you saw his
first reading?

BOB

Not really.

MARY LOU

How many of his baseball games did
you miss.

BOB

Zero.

MARY LOU

He loves writing as much as you
loved him playing baseball. Think
about that.

MARY LOU EXITS.

ACT III

SCENE J

INT. DOBSON FAMILY DINING ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

BOB WATCHES A BASEBALL GAME WITH RUDY. BOB'S DOGGIE TALK IS INTERMITTENTLY BABYISH AND ADULT.

BOB

This is fun isn't it. Just you and me and baseball. You don't cause me any trouble.

HE TAKES A SIP OF HIS BEER.

BOB (cont'd)

I'm a supportive father, but there's a limit.

HE TAKES ANOTHER SIP.

BOB (cont'd)

You just can't let your kids do whatever they want even if they are legally adults.

HE TAKES A SIP.

BOB (cont'd)

Okay, so I screwed up. (defeated)
Yeah, I know. I have to go to the poetry reading and be supportive.
Rudy your love is tough, but always fair you beautiful bastard.

BOB KISSES RUDY ON THE HEAD AND TURNS OFF THE TV STARTS TO LEAVE, TURNS BACK AROUND, TURNS BACK ON THE TV.

BOB (cont'd)

Sorry, Rudy.

BOB EXITS. RUDY WATCHES THE GAME.

SCENE K

INT. COFFEE HOUSE - NIGHT

A DOZEN OR SO PATRONS FILL THE COFFEE HOUSE.

TY, MARY LOU, HALEY AND WAYLON, SIT AT A TABLE TOGETHER. NO ONE LOOKS HAPPY WITH THE SITUATION EXCEPT WAYLON.

TY

Thanks for coming guys. I'm actually kind of glad Dad stayed home.

HALEY

Me, too.

MARY LOU

Well I'm not. He should be here.

AN **MC** IN HIPSTER CLOTHES AND GLASSES IS ON THE MIC.

MC

I'd like to welcome you to the Spoken Word Jam For Gay Rights. We're going to hear some really unique voices sharing their thoughts and struggles. And we're doing it for a good cause, so our lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender brothers and sisters can be treated as equals here in our home state. First up is Ty Dobson.

TY TAKES THE STAGE, NOTEBOOK IN HAND, TAKES A DEEP BREATH.

BOB WALKS IN AND SITS DOWN AT THE TABLE WITH HIS FAMILY, UNSEEN BY TY.

BOB

Look, I'm sorry I reacted the way I did. Your mom made me realize that you have your own choices to make

(MORE)

BOB (cont'd)

and as much as I think you're making the biggest mistake of your life, I have no real choice but to support you and be supportive of you.

HALEY

That was the worst apology I've ever heard, but I'll accept it.

BOB

Good, because it's the only one you're getting. Now if you're going to do this, live in my house as my third adult dependant, you're going to have to get a job.

HALEY

I know. I'm planning on getting a job, Daddy.

BOB

You start looking Monday morning.

HALEY

Well, I was thinking more like taking week or two to settle in and then I'll ease into it.

BOB

If you think-

MARY LOU

Shhh. Bob!

ON STAGE TY BEGINS.

TY

The work I am going to read tonight is entitled, (winces) "Conversation With My Father."

(reading)

(MORE)

TY (cont'd)

"Father, what do you think about universal health care?" "I don't give two craps about it. I have a real job that gives me the best insurance money can buy."

MURMURS OF SHOCK AND DISAPPROVAL FROM THE CROWD.

BOB
(proudly)

Hey, I actually said that.

HALEY

Are you serious? Oh my God.

TY
(reading)

"Father do you think we should try to cut our dependence on foreign oil?" "Absolutely, we should just take over the Middle East, make it part of America and it won't be foreign oil anymore, it'll be ours."

THIS ONE GETS SOME LAUGHS FROM THE CROWD.

HIPSTER #1

Oh I get it. It's satire.

BOB

I said that, too. This might not be bad after all.

TY
(reading)

"Father what do you think of global warming?" "It's a lie created by the liberal media to keep us all looking the other way while they take troops out of Iraq."

LAUGHTER AND APPLAUSE FROM THE CROWD. BOB LOOKS AROUND TAKING IN THE FACT THAT HE'S IN A ROOM FULL OF KIDS WHO ARE SIMILAR TO HIS OWN SON IN EVERY VISIBLE WAY.

HALEY

Wow, they really seem to like his stuff.

BOB

They like it because it's about me.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. COFFEE SHOP - LATER

THE CROWD LAUGHS HYSTERICALLY AS TY FINISHES UP.

TY

"... so it's not worth having the Olympics here. It's just a half million foreigners smelling up one of our major cities."

TY BOWS TO A STANDING OVATION FROM THE CROWD. HE SITS DOWN WITH HIS FAMILY.

BOB

That was great. See, if your subject matter is interesting, then your writing doesn't have to be crappy.

TY

You liked it? You're not mad?

BOB

Why would I be? I'm being supportive.

HALEY

But it made you look... you know what, never mind. It was great Ty.

WAYLON

I really liked the bit about making all illegal aliens work at MSNBC.

BOB

I'm starting to like you Waylon.

MARY LOU

It was very good, Ty. I'm really proud of you.

TWO **PATRONS** APPROACHES THEIR TABLE.

PATRON #1

Ty, that was amazing. Where did you come up with that stuff?

PATRON #2

It really cut to the quick of who the true villain is in our country right now - the middle aged, white collar, conservative. Great work.

TY

Thanks.

THEY LEAVE.

BOB

Villain? Wait a minute? Is that what you think of me, that I'm a villain?

TY

You do work for one of the biggest oil companies on the planet.

HALEY

He has a point, daddy. You specifically didn't do it, but companies like yours are kind of the reason for most of the problems in our country right now.

BOB

Without guys like me, kids like you have no house to live in, no car,

(MORE)

BOB (cont'd)

no way to pursue your little dreams. I'd bet that every person who read tonight had their entry fee paid for by daddy with money he made working for one of those big companies you guys all hate so much. Guys like me keep this entire country running. Your generation doesn't make anything. Your problem is you don't want jobs. You want dreams.

TY

Uh... actually the underwear you're wearing were made by a guy who pursued his dream, dad.

BOB

Some guy's dream was to make my underwear?

TY

That company was started by a guy I went to college with who always wanted to help the homeless. So he hires homeless people to make clothes. And they donate most of their revenue to charity.

BOB

So your liberal pal makes underwear with hobos - let me guess, no kids.

TY

No, I don't think he has any.

BOB

Well when he gets some, he's gonna find out what donating his revenue

(MORE)

BOB (cont'd)

is really all about. Waylon's the only one here with a real job.

WAYLON

Me?

BOB

That's right. Gas station work is hard and thankless, just what a real job should be.

WAYLON

Well I actually want to race, though.

BOB

We know that's never going to happen. And we know Ty will probably never be a writer and Haley will never use her degree.

HALEY

Daddy, that's not fair.

BOB

(defeated)

Nope it's not, but I just figured something out. I thought it was just my kids who were squandering their potential but we just sat in a whole room of kids just like you - it's your whole generation. And it's my fault. I made everything easy for you. I take responsibility for that and I know that I'll never be able to retire and you two will be on my teat until the day I die. Chapstick!

MARY LOU HANDS HIM CHAPSTICK. HE APPLIES IT, HANDS IT BACK.

MARY LOU

Kids, now might be a good time to
tell your father that you won't be
on his teat until the day he dies.

TY

I can't predict the future.

MARY LOU

Just say it.

TY/HALEY

Oh, right, no the situation is
temporary, just a few more years,
just until I get on my feet, etc.

DISSOLVE TO:

TAG

INT. BOB AND MARY LOU'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

MARY LOU'S IN BED WITH RUDY. SHE TALKS TO HIM.

MARY LOU

You're so handsome in your new pajamas. And look how light you seem now that your anal glands have been expressed.

RUDY LICKS MARY LOU AS BOB COMES OUT OF THE BATHROOM ONLY WEARING HIS NEW UNDERWEAR.

BOB

I'll tell you what. This underwear? Not a bad pair. Really keeps everything tight without hurting.

MARY LOU

See. One of your kids did good.

HE GETS INTO BED.

BOB

Maybe I want too much from them.

MARY LOU

Maybe you do.

BOB

I wish they were more like Rudy. He's quiet, loyal, doesn't eat too much, never disappoints. Maybe we should have just had dogs.

MARY LOU

They are simpler.

BOB

And the great thing about dogs is they can't even get into Harvard.

MARY LOU

Well, Rudy could.

BOB

You're right, but he'd get a full
ride on his looks alone.

THEY SHOWER RUDY WITH LOVE.

FADE OUT.