



"Pilot"

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It Takes A Village

“Pilot”

CAST

KAREN.....LEAH REMINI

HOWARD.....CHRISTOPHER SIEBER

SCOTT.....CHEYENNE JACKSON

CARL.....JAMES PATRICK STUART

GEORGE.....ZACH MILLS

CHRIS.....GABRIEL MORALES

ALYSSA.....TBD

JASON.....TBD

JODI.....TBD

MOVER.....TBD

It Takes A Village

“Pilot”

SET LIST

Interiors

GRADE SCHOOL
KAREN’S HOUSE – GEORGE’S BEDROOM
KAREN’S HOUSE – LIVING ROOM
HOWARD’S HOUSE – KITCHEN
HOWARD’S HOUSE – FRONT DOOR
SEÑOR CALDERO’S MEXICAN RESTAURANT
KAREN’S HOUSE - KITCHEN
KAREN’S HOUSE – GARAGE
HOWARD’S HOUSE – GEORGE’S BEDROOM
HOWARD’S HOUSE – BEDROOM HALLWAY
HOWARD’S HOUSE – LIVING ROOM

Exteriors

WEDDING VENUE
KAREN’S HOUSE
STOP ‘N GO PARKING LOT
HOWARD’S HOUSE – DRIVEWAY
HOWARD’S HOUSE
STREET

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

1 EXT. WEDDING VENUE - DAY - SIXTEEN YEARS AGO 1

We come up on a happy young couple on their wedding day. This is HOWARD and KAREN COOPER. Karen looks beautiful, despite some pretty large bangs. A photographer positions them for a photo.

GEORGE (V.O.)
These are my parents. They got
married just like fifty-nine percent
of Americans.

The picture FREEZES.

CUT TO:

2 INT. GRADE SCHOOL - DAY - SIX YEARS AGO 2

We PAN across several second graders smiling for a class photo.

GEORGE (V.O.)
Then, like forty-seven percent of
those same Americans, they had a kid.

We dip down and land on a short one.

GEORGE (V.O.)
Me, George.

FREEZE.

CUT TO:

3 EXT. KAREN'S HOUSE - DAY - TWO YEARS AGO 3

Karen angrily throws clothes from the upstairs window.
FREEZE.

GEORGE (V.O.)
Most people think divorce happens in
fifty percent of marriages.

ON HOWARD, below the window as clothes rain down on him.

GEORGE (V.O.)
Actually, it's closer to forty-two.

CUT TO:

4 EXT. SAME WEDDING VENUE - DAY - FLASHBACK 4

ON KAREN, now in a different wedding dress.

GEORGE (V.O.)
Either way, there's a good chance your
mom could end up remarried to this
guy...

Widen to reveal Karen's new husband, CARL, who wears matching
Chicago Bears tie and cummerbund.

GEORGE (V.O.)
And still be friends with your dad...

Widen further to reveal Howard, who stands on the other side
of Karen. They all pose for a picture. FREEZE.

CUT TO:

5 EXT. KAREN'S HOUSE - DAY - ONE YEAR AGO 5

Close on Howard, who is playing catch with his son, George.

GEORGE (V.O.)
I've always loved statistics because
they can predict things and make your
world a little more certain.

HOWARD
Son, do you know what a homosexual is?

GEORGE
I like girls, Dad, they just don't
like me. If that makes me gay, then
so is everyone else in science club.

HOWARD
I'm not talking about you, George.

GEORGE (V.O.)
And that's when it hit me.

The ball hits a startled George in the face and we FREEZE.

GEORGE (V.O.)
Statistics are useless.

CUT TO:

6 INT. KAREN'S HOUSE - GEORGE'S BEDROOM - PRESENT DAY 6

George tosses clothes, shoes and books into a duffle bag.
Karen refolds everything he stuffs in.

KAREN
So does Scott hang out with your dad a lot?

GEORGE
I don't know. I guess some.

KAREN
I'm just curious. Because for twelve years your father was happily married to an amazing woman then one day I buy him a gym membership and he comes home gay. It's a lot of changes. I just want to make sure you're okay with it.

GEORGE
I am. Are you?

Over-compensating, Karen laughs too hard, then stops.

KAREN
Of course.

CUT TO:

7 INT. KAREN'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER 7

Karen leads George down the stairs carrying his bag.

KAREN
Say goodbye to your stepdad.

GEORGE
Later, Carl. See you next week.

Carl sits in his La-Z-Boy watching football on a giant flat screen.

CARL
Don't forget Dick Butkus.

GEORGE
'Bye, Dick Butkus.

The DOG at Carl's feet BARKS as George and Karen exit.

CUT TO:

8

EXT. KAREN'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

8

Karen and George walk down the end of her driveway. Karen holds out a Tupperware container.

KAREN

Here, I made you and your dad a stew.

GEORGE

He knows how to cook.

KAREN

It's sweet how you defend him.

She presses the stew onto George, who takes it and heads off. Karen continues calling to him.

KAREN

Call if you need anything. Love you.
You love me, too. It won't embarrass
me if you say it once in a while. Now
would be good.

The camera FOLLOWS George into the street. It lands on his dad, Howard, at the end of his driveway right across the street, taking his mail from his mailbox.

HOWARD

Hi, Kar. Do you have my People
magazine?

KAREN

No, because I read novels. Big ones.
(then, noticing)
Hey, I don't know those jeans.

HOWARD

They're new. We're very happy
together.
(then)
If you're going to do my celebrity
crossword, can you at least use a
pencil?

KAREN

Please, I have better things to do.
(then, realizing)
Hugh Jackman is the sexy Aussie
wolverine!

She hurries inside.

GEORGE

You know you could get her her own
subscription.

HOWARD

But this is something we do as a
family.

CUT TO:

9

INT. HOWARD'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

9

Howard opens the freezer and struggles to cram Karen's stew
next to several other similar containers.

GEORGE

Let's talk about whether it's weird
you bought the house across the street
from mom. I'll start. Yes, it is.

HOWARD

I always loved this house and I wanted
to be near you guys. Although, who
needs this much stew?

He pushes the container in and closes the freezer door.

HOWARD (CONT'D)

Hey, I invited Scott to have dinner
with us tomorrow. You're okay with
that, right?

GEORGE

Sure, I like Scott. Let's get crazy.

HOWARD

I invited your mom and Carl, too.

GEORGE

Wait, did you say tomorrow? Oh, man,
tomorrow I have to do that thing, with
Chris, at that place, where people go,
to do that thing, that I'm doing, with
Chris, tomorrow. I'll bring you some.

HOWARD

That sounds important and totally
believable, but your mom and I are
still friends, and I want Carl and
Scott to be friends with everyone,
too.

GEORGE

But all of us together is just going to be weird. You're like four moons orbiting around the only thing you have in common, me, who really needs to do that thing. Tomorrow. In a different galaxy.

The doorbell RINGS.

CUT TO:

10

INT. HOWARD'S HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - MOMENTS LATER

10

Howard opens the door to reveal Carl.

CARL

George forgot his Vitamin C. Karen made me bring it.

He hands Howard a large vitamin bottle.

HOWARD

Did she give you my "People"?

CARL

You mean... other homosexuals?

HOWARD

(sarcastically)

Yes, she has a closet full of them which she distributes when the town is running low. Anything else?

CARL

No, it's just Karen always wants me to talk to you more, and if I go right back she'll know I didn't.

HOWARD

Marvelous.

CARL

Hey, you'll never guess who someone saw at the deli counter at Pauley's. Dick Butkus.

HOWARD

Your dog? What was he doing at the deli counter?

CARL

No, the real guy. Why would you think my dog would be at the deli counter at Pauley's?

HOWARD

I don't know. You're always talking about how smart he is.

CARL

But how would he order, how would he hold the money--

HOWARD

Do you see why I thought giving your dog a human name was a bad idea?

CARL

Plus, I love Dick Butkus, but I'd never trust him to carry food home without eating it.

HOWARD

The dog or the guy?

CARL

The dog. Why wouldn't I trust human Dick Butkus with food?

HOWARD

I don't know. He's fairly large. He probably eats a lot.

CARL

The dog or the guy?

HOWARD

I give up, Carl. Which one was at Pauley's?!

CARL

Why would my dog... I'm just going to tell Karen we talked about the weather.

Carl turns to go, as we:

CUT TO:

11 INT. SEÑOR CALDERO'S MEXICAN RESTAURANT - THE NEXT NIGHT 11

Howard and his boyfriend, SCOTT, mid-thirties and good looking, sit at a large glass table with George.

HOWARD

Remember, Carl's a guy's guy. Maybe work into the conversation how you and your father used to kill innocent animals for fun.

SCOTT

It's called hunting, and I thought you said I looked sexy in camouflage.

HOWARD

Well, I did like you in those camo boy shorts on Halloween.

GEORGE

This is so fun for me.

Karen and Carl enter and cross to the table.

KAREN

Sorry we're late.

Karen takes off her coat and looks hot in a shirt that accentuates her cleavage. Howard and Scott do a double take.

HOWARD

Whoa.

KAREN

(proud)

I know. They've been in storage for fifteen years.

SCOTT

You could like, keep stuff in there.

CARL

Yes, you can.

GEORGE

Okay, my mother has a fine, fine rack. What else?

HOWARD

Well, I'm glad you guys made it. This is nice, the five of us having dinner together.

KAREN

(trying too hard)

It is nice.

She nudges Carl.

CARL

Absolutely. I mean who would have thought that I'd be out on a double date with a couple of homosexuals?

GEORGE

Why don't we just wrap up the chips and get out of here?

HOWARD

Listen, the reason I wanted us all together tonight is because I have some news.

(takes Scott's hand)
Scott's moving in.

It's awkward and silent while everyone absorbs this. Then:

KAREN

George, you can tell your father if you think it's quick. That would be completely understandable. Because it is quick. So tell him if you think it is. Because it is.

HOWARD

We've been dating for six months.

SCOTT

Didn't you and Carl get married after three?

KAREN

We were going to lose the venue!

Carl, sensing the tension, stares at his menu.

CARL

What's a "chimichanga?" Isn't that a type of dog?

SCOTT

Karen, I know it's an unusual situation, but you shouldn't feel like I'm the other woman.

KAREN

Don't be silly...

Karen leans over in Howard and Scott's direction to grab a chip, intentionally revealing her ample cleavage.

KAREN

You're not a woman.

We hear a THUNK. The adults look over to see George with his head on the glass table. Everyone looks at him.

Looking up from under the glass table, we see George's smushed face. Howard and Karen come into the frame.

HOWARD

Buddy? You okay?

KAREN

Did you not take your vitamin C?

Scott and Carl's heads pop into frame, too.

SCOTT

Actually, vitamin B is for energy.

Karen shoots Scott an annoyed look. Carl's eyes wander from George to Karen's cleavage.

CARL

Love that shirt.

On hearing this, George closes his eyes.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

12 INT. KAREN'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - THE NEXT DAY 12

Karen makes cookies. Carl enters.

CARL

I thought I wasn't allowed to have cookies in the house.

KAREN

They're not for you. They're welcome to the neighborhood cookies for Scott.

Carl now sees several trays of cookies already lining the counter. Her mixing becomes more aggressive.

KAREN

Although, in my opinion when there's a child involved, you shouldn't move in with someone based on a few dates and a romantic weekend at Spoon River watching the leaves change!

By now batter is flying. Carl sneaks a cookie.

KAREN

But what do I know? You and I had sex after our second date at Buca de Bepo!

CARL

You were right. I'm glad we waited.

CUT TO:

13 EXT. STOP 'N GO PARKING LOT - THAT DAY 13

This convenience store is the after school hangout. George and his best friend CHRIS exit, sharing a big tray of nachos.

CHRIS

So, did you set the curve on your trig test because you're upset your dad's lover is moving in and you're hiding your pain by excelling in math?

GEORGE

Are you flunking most of your classes because you resent your over-achiever parents?

CHRIS

Duh.

ALYSSA (O.C.)

Excuse me?

George and Chris turn to find beautiful, tall, ALYSSA OSTER, star of the volleyball team. She makes her volleyball uniform look indecent.

GEORGE

Alyssa Oster!

(then, cool)

What's up? What's shakin'?

ALYSSA

Congratulations on setting the curve in trig. I mean it kind of sucks for me because it made my D like a solid D.

GEORGE

Well, you sure "set" the curve in volleyball.

Chris shakes his head disapprovingly.

ALYSSA

Would you be interested in studying with me maybe?

GEORGE

Uh... yeah. Sure. I would. Yes. Most def. And that's all I'm gonna say about it. I hope.

ALYSSA

Great. I'll come by your house tomorrow. Like three?

GEORGE

Perfect. Three's a prime number, by the way. So I guess officially that's our first lesson.

Alyssa looks confused.

ALYSSA

Okay.

She crosses off.

CHRIS
(yelling after)
It's a date!
(to George)
You're totally going to bone her.

GEORGE
Bone? Who says that?

CHRIS
People who are awesome.

CUT TO:

14 EXT. HOWARD'S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - LATER THAT DAY 14

Howard is getting the paper from his mailbox. Carl is doing the same. They acknowledge each other. Carl looks back at his house, then back to Howard.

CARL
Just wanted to give you the heads up.
Karen made Scott cookies.

HOWARD
Aww, that's really nice.

CARL
Is it?

HOWARD
Isn't it?

CARL
You pulled the pin, my friend. Status quo?

Carl mimes an explosion.

CUT TO:

15 INT. HOWARD'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - THE NEXT DAY 15

Chris kicks it on the couch flipping through a gay parenting book as George runs around the room, straightening up.

CHRIS
Dude, stop straightening things.
You're acting gayer than your dad.

GEORGE

I've never had a girl over. When my dad sees her he's going to get all excited and call my mom, and she's going to get all excited, even though it's not a date and no one should get excited.

CHRIS

Of course it's a date. There are plenty of math dorks in our school and Alyssa Oster chose you. She's the best setter in Illinois who doesn't have time for trigonometry or foreplay. She wants to bone and this is how she's going to get it done.

The doorbell RINGS.

GEORGE

That's Alyssa! Alyssa Oster's at my house. What if it is a date? What do I do?

CHRIS

Open the door.

GEORGE

And then what?!

CHRIS

Then you bone her! I can't make it any clearer.

Doorbell RINGS again. Howard enters from the kitchen.

HOWARD

What's the matter with you guys? Didn't you hear the doorbell?

GEORGE

It's not a date! It's only--

Howard opens the door.

HOWARD

Scott!

Scott stands at the door. We see a moving truck in the background.

SCOTT

Okay, last chance. Once the elliptical machine is in the garage there's no turning back.

GEORGE

Today? You're moving in today?

HOWARD

I put it on the calendar with a smiley face.

(to Chris)

What's with him?

CHRIS

He's nervous because he has a date.

GEORGE

It's not--

HOWARD

You have a date? Your mother's going to die.

Howard takes him into a big hug. Howard notices Scott standing there and grabs him to be a part of it.

SCOTT

Oh... okay. We're all going to hug.

ALYSSA (O.C.)

Hello?

They turn around to see Alyssa in the doorway. George wiggles out of the hug, mortified. Alyssa waves at Chris.

ALYSSA

(to Chris)

Hey, George. Ready to study?

Chris steps forward.

CHRIS

Sure am.

GEORGE

Actually, I'm George.

ALYSSA

Oh. I'm sorry. I never really looked at you before.

CUT TO:

16

EXT. HOWARD'S HOUSE - LATER THAT DAY

16

Howard and Scott are by the moving truck. Scott looks over and sees Karen and Carl walk out of their house with several plates of cookies. Karen has a reusable shopping bag over her shoulder.

SCOTT

Yay. Here comes my first official awkward moment in my new neighborhood.

HOWARD

Be nice.

SCOTT

When am I not nice?

(then)

Oh my God, Carl's wearing jean shorts.

ANGLES ON Karen and Carl as they cross the street. Carl is indeed wearing jean shorts.

KAREN

(to Scott)

Welcome, neighbor! I made you cookies. They're gluten-free muesli balls.

SCOTT

Wow, the only words I recognized in there were "cookies" and "balls." But thank you.

Karen hands Scott her plate, then Carl hands Howard his plate, then Karen pulls another Tupperware container out of her shopping bag.

SCOTT

Billions of them. Wow, again.

KAREN

(excited, to Howard)

So, George's first date. He was just a kid and now he's all grown up and I just want squeeze his little face off!

HOWARD

I know! I always told him if he was good in math he'd get noticed.

SCOTT

You think it's a date? I got the feeling that girl wasn't interested.

(MORE)

SCOTT (cont'd)

I don't even think she saw George from her perch on those six foot legs.

KAREN

Thanks, Scott. But since Howard's the dad and I'm the mom, I'm not sure we need a spin teacher's opinion right now. Maybe if George was, oh, spinning...

SCOTT

Karen, George is a great kid. I don't even like kids and I like him. But I went to high school, too, and guys like George don't usually get girls like Alyssa. Don't you think you're doing him a disservice not telling him how it really is?

KAREN

And crush his spirit?! Your stuff's still on the driveway and you're already telling us how to raise our son?

SCOTT

You're welcome??

KAREN

You and me are going to go 'round and 'round, aren't we.

HOWARD

(to Scott)

Why don't you grab the Bed, Bath and Stuff stuff out of the car?

(to Karen)

We bought these great little espresso cups. They're wonderful and they totally change the subject.

Scott walks off.

CARL

If you're concerned about the boy, do what my father did for me and buy him a hooker. It's a real confidence builder.

(off Karen's look)

Or maybe he's up there right now gettin' it done.

(off their looks, losing steam)

(MORE)

CARL (cont'd)
Yeah, I'm sure that's what's
happening.

Karen's look sends Carl back to his house.

CUT TO:

17 INT. KAREN'S HOUSE - GARAGE - MOMENTS LATER

17

Carl is checking the tire pressure on Karen's red convertible. She enters with a head of steam.

CARL
Babe, have you been checking your tire
pressure because --

KAREN
Can you believe that guy?

CARL
No. Which one?

KAREN
Scott! When I'm looking for a place
to get a spray-on tan or a tank top,
I'll ask him. But I don't need advice
on how to parent my own child!

CARL
Maybe you should write him a letter.

KAREN
What?!

CARL
Remember that time the airline lost
your bag? You were really mad but
then you wrote them that letter and
they sent you a twenty-five dollar
voucher. Remember how much better you
felt?
(off her look)
Remember?

KAREN
Oh. My. God.

CARL
Okay, forget the letter. What about
this? You do nothing and silently
bear it.

KAREN
That's your idea.

CARL
No, it is not.

KAREN
Because I am not going to just shut
the hell up, Carl.

CARL
No, you are not.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

18 INT. HOWARD'S HOUSE - GEORGE'S BEDROOM - LATER THAT DAY 18

It's clear a teenager lives here. A map of the world is partially covered with posters of hot Russian tennis stars. George and Alyssa sit on a futon studying.

GEORGE

So, in this triangle, which side is the hypotenuse?

ALYSSA

That one?

GEORGE

Try again.

ALYSSA

That one?

GEORGE

Close.

ALYSSA

That one?

GEORGE

Yes! You're a natural at this.

George phone RINGS with a SPECIAL RING TONE.

PHONE (CHRIS'S VOICE)

"Oh yeah, it's my cell phone, and I'm gonna get freaky--"

George scrambles for his phone and looks at the caller ID.

GEORGE

(into phone)

What'd you do to my phone?

CHRIS (O.S.)

(on phone)

Dude, you've got a woman in your room. You're a pimp!

GEORGE

(into phone, covering)

Listen to me, you... phone company, I don't want a new ring.

(MORE)

GEORGE (cont'd)
And I'll talk to you later... when I
need some of the other services your
company offers.

George smiles weakly at Alyssa, who looks at him, confused.

CUT TO:

19

INT. HOWARD'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - LATER THAT DAY

19

Howard and Scott are unpacking some boxes of Scott's things.

SCOTT
Since I'm living with a podiatrist
now, does that mean I get a foot
massage every night?

HOWARD
Oh, my God!

SCOTT
I'll take that as a "no." And now
we've had our first fight.

HOWARD
The espresso maker's gone.

SCOTT
What? Where'd it go?

HOWARD
Karen. I'll bet she took it. When we
split up she didn't want it-- caffeine
makes her irritable.
(off Scott's look)
I know. Can you imagine?
(then)
She must be mad.

Howard heads for the door, with Scott in tow.

CUT TO:

20

EXT. HOWARD'S HOUSE - SAME

20

JASON, the mover, carries the espresso maker down Howard's
driveway. Howard and Scott come out the front door.

SCOTT
You mean "mad" insane? Because yes,
she must be.

HOWARD

You questioned her parenting, I mentioned espresso cups, she steals the related appliance. See how that works?

SCOTT

Seriously, who behaves like that?

Howard catches up to Jason.

HOWARD

Sorry, Jason. There's been a mix up. The espresso maker stays here.

JASON

But Mrs. Cooper said to "grab the frigging thing" and bring it to her house.

HOWARD

She's Mrs. Olson now and since Mr. Olson thinks espresso just means you make it faster, they don't need it.

Jason starts to bring the espresso maker back to Howard's.

SCOTT

I'm going to go talk to her. That chick needs to learn some boundaries.

Scott takes a step toward Karen's house. Howard stops him.

HOWARD

Hm. Yeah, Karen's not so good with boundaries. We share a son, gardening tools, magazines, we shop together, I walk Dick Butkus-- not the football guy-- the dog-- the football guy's on his own. The point is, Karen and I are very connected.

SCOTT

Well, maybe you're too connected. It's not normal, Howard. Or healthy.

HOWARD

It's as normal and healthy as any ex's relationship.

(then)

Oh, my god, she's spying on us. Don't turn around.

Scott defiantly turns around and sees Karen peeking through her mini-blinds.

SCOTT

Hi, Karen!

CUT TO:

21 INT. KAREN'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - SAME

21

Karen looks through her mini-blinds.

KAREN

(to herself)

This isn't over, pretty boy.

She snaps the blinds shut and turns. Carl is there. He diplomatically tries to weigh in.

CARL

Or maybe... it is over. Maybe you should just leave him alone. Ignore him. Just let everybody live their lives.

(off her look, without a beat)

That's not who you are.

KAREN

I love it when you see me.

CUT TO:

22 EXT. HOWARD'S HOUSE - SAME

22

Howard and Scott are where we left them.

SCOTT

Fine. I won't go over. But you are so giving me a foot massage tonight.

HOWARD

I'm happy to. But I just want to make sure you know-- that's not what podiatrists do.

George runs out of the house, panicked.

GEORGE

Alyssa Oster wants root beer!

HOWARD

We don't have root beer.

GEORGE
I need root beer!!

George starts running down the street.

GEORGE
I need root beer!

CUT TO:

23 EXT. STREET - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

23

George runs down the street. Scott pulls up next to him in his car and keeps pace. George notices him.

GEORGE
Why did I tell Alyssa we had root beer?! It's those tight volleyball shorts! I can see all her parts.

SCOTT
You want a ride to the store?

George stops.

GEORGE
Oh. Yeah, that'd be good.

CUT TO:

24 INT. SCOTT'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER

24

Scott and George ride in silence a beat. Then:

GEORGE
So... our first time alone together.

SCOTT
That girl's not into you.

GEORGE
Wow. Okay. That's the worst small talk ever.

SCOTT
Sorry, I'm not good at small talk.
"Nice weather." Who cares?

GEORGE
How do you know she's not into me?

SCOTT

Because I once dated a girl just like her. Jenny Pierson. Dirty Dancing was her favorite movie and I was the only thirteen year-old at Camp Palawopec who could do "The Lift." When summer ended, she dumped my ass and broke my heart. Now I'm gay. See what happens?

George takes this in. They stop at a traffic light.

GEORGE

So, now are you going to say I'm a terrific kid and I'll find somebody else?

SCOTT

No, I'm going to be honest and say you're thirteen, and despite what your parents tell you, the next few years are going to suck.

GEORGE

You know what else you're not good at? Pep talks.

SCOTT

Don't worry. By the time you're seventeen, you'll have a car, your ears will fit your face, and girls will want to make out with you. If you play it right, you might even get to touch one or even two of their boobs. Start with one.

CUT TO:

25 INT. HOWARD'S HOUSE - GEORGE'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER 25

George enters carrying a glass of root beer.

GEORGE

Sorry about the wait. Specialty drinks take longer.

George stops when he sees Alyssa sitting near his open backpack, his notebook open next to hers.

GEORGE

Are you copying my homework?

ALYSSA

Yep.

Her honesty takes him by surprise.

ALYSSA

Sean Lombardi invited me over to watch his band, Fingertoe, and you can't turn that down.

George looks at her a moment, then remembers what Scott said.

GEORGE

You know, I was really excited for you to come over. Because, hey, you're Alyssa Oster. But it's obvious you have better things to do. And the truth is, so do I. No, I don't. But I will. Some day. When I have a car. And ears that make sense. In the meantime, maybe you should find someone else to study with.

ALYSSA

Okay.

(then)

Hey, maybe your friend George can help me.

GEORGE

I'm George!

26 INT. HOWARD'S HOUSE - BEDROOM HALLWAY - SAME

26

Howard walks by his bedroom. Out of the corner of his eye sees something's missing.

HOWARD

Seriously? The mattress?

27 EXT. HOWARD'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

27

Howard marches out of the house to find Karen directing the movers and his mattress toward her house.

HOWARD

Really, Karen? Really??

KAREN

I bought this mattress. Now I want it back!

HOWARD

(to mover)

Jason, take it back to my house.

KAREN

Jason, take it to my house or I'll tell your mom I saw you smoking a joint in the moving truck.

Frozen, Jason isn't sure what to do.

JASON

Uh... I'm just gonna...

He nods to the other movers and they cross off, leaving Howard and Karen with the mattress in the middle of the street. They each pull the mattress towards their house; it's a tug-of-war.

A minivan rolls to a stop. A Midwestern mom politely taps on her horn. Karen lets go of the mattress and steps toward the minivan.

KAREN

Where's the fire, Jodi?!

JODI

Sor-ry. Take your time.

With Karen distracted, Howard tries to make a getaway with the mattress. It's too heavy. He struggles a beat, then gives up.

HOWARD

...And I'm the strongest podiatrist I know.

(then, to Karen)

Okay, why don't we do something we've never done and talk about what's really going on?

KAREN

There's nothing to talk about.

HONK. There are now three cars. From the last one, an irritated Carl gets out to see what the hold up is.

CARL

What the--

Realizing it's Karen and Howard, he gets back in his car and puts it in reverse driving away undetected.

HOWARD

(to Karen)

Okay, fine. Take the unusually heavy mattress!

Howard turns towards his house. Karen struggles alone with the mattress. Finally, the weight of her situation becomes too much and she calls out:

KAREN

You took Scott to Bed, Bath and Stuff!

This stops Howard.

KAREN (CONT'D)

That's our store.

HOWARD

We only bought fitted sheets. We didn't even go into housewares.

KAREN

Don't. Don't tell me you didn't love it. You always loved it.

HOWARD

They just have so much stuff!

KAREN

Well, who am I supposed to go with?

Finally, the truth. Howard looks at her, feels empathy.

KAREN

I love shopping with you, and now Scott's going to do all that. Carl only goes to stores that sell TVs and meat. And he doesn't brunch either. He thinks a fun couple's activity is checking the tire pressure on my car.

Karen drops the mattress and sits on it. Howard joins her. The waiting cars, realizing this could take a while, start to back up and turn around.

HOWARD

All those mimosas and white sales, didn't you ever think maybe I was gay?

KAREN

I thought I was just lucky.

HOWARD

And that I once cried at an incredible selection of hand towels.

KAREN

I'm not saying there weren't clues.

HOWARD

And that I could never take my eyes off that busboy at the Pancake House?

KAREN

Well, that situation's crazy. He's like a super model covered in syrup. Who can't look at that?

HOWARD

I know, right? And what carrying a stack of dishes does to his biceps? I mean, as long as we're talking about it.

KAREN

At least I'll never have that problem with Carl. Carl is very, you know, enthusiastic about me. Especially after he's been to the meat store.

HOWARD

See? Carl's a guy's guy. He can fix cars, and "take" women. Maybe checking your tire pressure is his way of showing he cares about you.

KAREN

That's true. Why didn't you ever check my tire pressure?

HOWARD

Please, that little knobby thing is so filthy.

Karen smiles. She puts her head on his shoulder. There's a reason these two will always be friends. George walks up from the house.

GEORGE

Hi, guys. Alyssa's about to leave. Can you not be sitting in the middle of the street on a mattress when she goes?

KAREN

Why is she leaving?

GEORGE

She was basically using me for my brain.

KAREN

I'm gonna strangle that girl with her own legs.

Karen starts to head for Howard's house.

GEORGE

Mom, it's okay. When I'm seventeen things will be different. Just nine hundred thirty-five girl-less days to go.

HOWARD

Volleyball's going to punish that young lady, anyway. Peroneal tendinitis. It's a foot thing. You don't want it.

GEORGE (V.O.)

Studies show that children from two-parent families perform better on achievement tests. It would stand to reason that if I have four, maybe I'm ahead of the curve.

28

INT. HOWARD'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - LATER

28

Scott, eating from a bowl, walks up to Howard.

SCOTT

Did you make this stew? It's really good.

HOWARD

Actually, Karen did.

SCOTT

I'll have to get the recipe from her.

Scott and Howard exchange a look. It's all good. George leads Alyssa down the stairs.

ALYSSA

Bye, everyone. I think it's cool that you're gay, by the way.

SCOTT

Thank you so much, Melissa.

ALYSSA

It's Alyssa.

HOWARD

Good for you, knowing your own name.

George appreciates this and smiles a little as they exit.

GEORGE (V.O.)

But studies also show that children from divorced families are three times more likely to need psychological help at some point in their lives.

CUT TO:

29 EXT. HOWARD'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

29

George and Alyssa walk up to her bike. Its seat is gone.

ALYSSA

My bike seat's missing.

GEORGE

Are you sure you had it when you rode it over?

CUT TO:

30 INT. KAREN'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

30

Karen peers through the blinds.

KAREN

Mess with my son.

Carl steps in behind her. She turns to face him.

CARL

That was exciting.

Karen hugs him. As Carl's arms come around her, we see he's holding a bike seat.

KAREN

He's so lucky to have us.

She kisses Carl. It soon turns passionate.

GEORGE (V.O.)
I don't know exactly what the research
is in my situation....

CUT TO:

31 EXT. HOWARD'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

31

As Alyssa walks her bike home, George steps into the street.

GEORGE (V.O.)
But I can tell you that statistically,
four people from the same family can't
all be crazy at the same time.

As the camera CRANES UP we see George standing between his
two homes.

GEORGE (V.O.)
Which means I'll always have at least
one person watching my back.

PHONE (CHRIS'S VOICE)
"Oh yeah, it's my cell phone, and I'm
gonna get freaky--

George answers.

CHRIS (ON PHONE)
So? Did you bone her?

GEORGE
She got boned alright.

And we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

TAG

FADE IN:

32

EXT. HOWARD'S HOUSE - ANOTHER DAY

32

George rides up on his skateboard to find Karen standing in front of Howard's mailbox, going through his mail.

GEORGE

Mom, what you're doing right now is a felony.

KAREN

Nonsense. I'm just borrowing some catalogs. It's like taking them from their night stand, only they're not dog-eared.

Scott comes out of the house, heading purposefully toward Karen.

KAREN

(to George, re: Scott)
Slow him down 'til I get inside.

Karen hurries across the street.

SCOTT

I see you, Karen. I know you can hear me!

Scott stops. Howard comes over to him.

HOWARD

It's cute how you think you're going to win this.

FADE OUT.

END OF SHOW

*