

HOW TO BE A BETTER AMERICAN
by
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ACT ONEEXT. SUBURBAN HOME - EARLY MORNING (DAY 1)

An idyllic morning in San Diego, California. A groggy HUGH PELL (41), dressed in a bathrobe, emerges from his front door to let his dog pee. Hugh decides to pee al fresco as well. A LADY JOGGER runs by, witnesses this and frowns. SUDDENLY a car roars through the neighborhood at top speed. Hugh runs out into the street after the car.

HUGH

Slow down, you son of a bitch! There are kids in this neighborhood! You're what's wrong with this country!

INT. KITCHEN - A LITTLE LATER (DAY 1)

Hugh, dressed for work, plays on his laptop across the table from CHAD PELL (36), his overweight, unemployed brother. Chad is dressed in a t-shirt and tighty-whities. There is egg stuck in his four day old beard.

CHAD

Hey bro, the Mayans say the world is going to end in 2012. Makes you think, what's the point of doing anything?

REVEAL Hugh's wife KATIE PELL (39), a stressed out whirlwind of efficiency, looking on disapprovingly.

KATIE

Hugh, can I talk to you over here for a second?

HUGH

You bet. (HE DOESN'T MOVE)

KATIE

Hugh. Over here. (HUGH MOVES TO KATIE) Couple things. Your brother needs to wear pants in the house.

HUGH

He's too sexy, huh? Turning you on?

KATIE

It's disgusting and he's setting a bad example for the kids.

HUGH

You're exaggerating.

MARTIN PELL (9), their sensitive television and video game addicted son, walks by wearing a t-shirt and tighty whities.

MARTIN

Wanna play some video games,
Uncle Chad?

CHAD

Hells to the yeah.

They exit.

KATIE

They look like homeless twins. Chad's
been here six months and he's gettin'
way too comfortable.

HUGH

Give him a break. He's on disability.

KATIE

Asthma induced back spasms? Does that
sound real to you?

HUGH

Not a bit. (LAUGH) But the government
bought it.

KATIE

Well then the government should buy
him some pants. (THEN) Okay, I gotta
go. I have a chiropractor appointment
in about three minutes so you need to
help me out with some things this
morning. (SHE HANDS HIM A LIST)

HUGH

(IGNORING LIST) No can do. Gotta get
into work early. Very important
performance review today. Jerry
Taylor got ball cancer, so his job
opened up. Fingers crossed.

KATIE

Write those words down, in case they
ask you to do his eulogy. (HOLDS OUT
LIST) Please, Hugh.

HUGH

Alright. (RE: LIST) Feed the dog.
Okay. Clean out the kitty litter? No
way. Uggh. That cat hasn't taken a
solid crap in years.

KATIE

Have a heart, she's old. I saw her fall over for no reason yesterday. Please just take care of it. (THEN) And have you talked to Martin yet?

HUGH

Yes. (THEN) About what again?

KATIE

You're killing me, Hugh. I told you this. He's refusing to play soccer.

HUGH

Well, soccer is kind of douchey.

KATIE

He has to do something active. All he does is play video games and watch TV.

SFX: A horrifyingly loud noise.

HUGH

(SCARED) What was that? It sounded like the end of all good things!

KATIE

That's your son playing a video game on the ridiculous television you bought without asking me.

HUGH

(SMILING) Awesome.

KATIE

No. It's not awesome.

Katie and Hugh exit to the family room. Chad and Martin play a violent video game on a 72" plasma TV that is larger than the wall. It hangs over into a doorway.

KATIE

Do you see anything wrong here?

HUGH

I do indeed. We need to extend that wall. And once I get my promotion, we'll be able to afford that. I wonder if that wall is load bearing?

KATIE

No, you're not going to do that! That TV is gross.

(MORE)

KATIE (CONT'D)

It's too big, it's too loud and it's too expensive. Please take it back today.

HUGH

It wasn't that expensive. And look how happy it makes everyone.

ANGLE ON: The dead-looking faces of Chad and Martin. A door opens and bangs into the TV which is blocking the way.

LOLA (O.C.)

God, I hate this thing!

REVEAL: LOLA (13), Hugh's prickly daughter, pushes her way past the TV. She has purple lipstick, straight jet black hair over her eyes and purple and black striped stockings.

HUGH

Easy, that TV cost a fortune. And scrape some of that make up off. You look like that creepy kid from "The Ring."

Lola storms off.

KATIE

Great. Now there's someone else you need to talk to.

HUGH

Oh relax. She's fine. All twelve-year-olds act that way.

KATIE

She's thirteen!

HUGH

Thirteen? That doesn't sound right.

KATIE

You don't know your own daughter's age, but you're willing to change the structural integrity of our house to accommodate that TV. Is this raising any red flags for you?

HUGH

No.

KATIE

Hugh, you're becoming the kind of guy who answers his blue tooth at a funeral. And has a blue tooth.

HUGH

It was a work call.

KATIE

You were pre-ordering tickets for
"Avatar."

HUGH

Yeah and while those dopes were
waiting all night in their tents, we
walked right in. You said it made you
feel like the Queen of England.

KATIE

(SMILING) I'm not going to lie. It
was pretty good.

HUGH

Great. So we keep the TV.

KATIE

No! (GRABS HIS FACE) Hugh, look at
me. No, that's the ceiling. That's my
chin. Right here. Good. (THEN) These
things are important to me. Take the
TV back, do the list and talk to your
son. Here, I'll get you started.
(SHOUTING) Martin, turn off the TV,
your Dad wants to talk to you!

She exits. Hugh frowns. Martin walks up.

MARTIN

What?

HUGH

Your mom wants you to play soccer.

MARTIN

I don't want to.

HUGH

Well, at least play a sports video
game. Go play Madden right now!

Martin exits pouting. Lola walks by.

HUGH

Hey. You're twelve right?

LOLA

Not since October.

INT. HUGH'S OFFICE - DAY (DAY 1)

In SLOW-MO Hugh moves through the office, grabs all the candy from a bowl, gives an unwanted shoulder massage to a creeped-out female employee, then finally cuts in front of somebody and pours himself the last bit of coffee. Sipping his coffee, he walks up to a SECRETARY at a desk.

HUGH

Hugh Pell. I'm here for my performance review.

OFF the secretary's frowning face, WE...

INT. OFFICE - A LITTLE LATER (DAY 1)

Hugh's boss, CHRISTINE KING (39), pretty and professional, is just finishing up his review.

CHRISTINE

So to wrap things up, we think you're doing a great job. Just keep doin' what you're doin'.

HUGH

Oh. Okay. Hey, are you still interviewing people for Jerry Taylor's job?

CHRISTINE

We sure are.

HUGH

I assume I'm still in the running?

CHRISTINE

No, actually, you're not. We love you right where you are. (THEN) Well, I've got a lot of reviews, so... (STANDING)

HUGH

(STAYS SEATED) Wait. No. This isn't right. I've been here twelve years-- longer than you I might add-- and I'm still an associate. You just said that I do a great job. So what's the deal? Is this about that thing at the company barbecue?

CHRISTINE

What thing?

HUGH

You know what thing. We were in the rib line and you were wearing that tight little t-shirt and you kept rubbing your chest on my back.

CHRISTINE

That is totally inappropriate.

HUGH

Yeah, it is inappropriate if I'm being held back because you have a sexual thing for me.

CHRISTINE

Get out of here right now.

HUGH

(ANGRY) No! I'm not goin' anywhere until I get an answer. Stop being such a tight ass and tell me the truth!

CHRISTINE

Fine. You want the truth? You want to know why you'll never move up in this company? Because you are, by far, the biggest knob I have ever known in my life. The only reason you're still around is that you're actually good at your job. So count your blessings, shut your trap and get out of my office.

HUGH

So this is sexual?

CHRISTINE

OH MY GOD! This is why no one in the office can stand you. Do you know I've had more complaints about you than that racist janitor we fired? And he burned a cross in the parking structure!

HUGH

That's a lie.

CHRISTINE

Is it? Come with me. (HUGH FOLLOWS CHRISTINE INTO MAIN OFFICE) Excuse me everyone. Can I get your attention, please? Who here thinks Hugh Pell is a spectacular tool?

No one raises their hand.

CHRISTINE
No one will be fired.

Their hands shoot up. She points to a chubby guy.

CHRISTINE
Yes, Ron.

RON
(WEAKLY) Most mornings he calls me
Ron-zilla. Then he makes a roaring
sound and knocks stuff off my desk.

HUGH
I'm just teasing.

RON
It hurts so much.

GEORGE
He ate my cookies.

HUGH
They were in the break room George, I
thought they were for everyone.

GEORGE
They were in a zipped bag with my
insulin. They're for my diabetes. I
went into a sugar crash and called
Sandy a whore.

A near-by woman puts her face in her hands.

GEORGE
Sandy, it was the disease talking.

CAROL
And you've never once come to any of
the company volunteer trips.

HUGH
Is this about reading to those old
people, Carol? I had a kidney stone.
I called you from the hospital.

CAROL
Must have been a pretty fancy hospital
because I heard a waiter ask you if
you wanted to see the wine list.

Hugh turns to ANTHONY, an olive skinned co-worker.

HUGH

Anthony, stand up for me here. We're abuelas, right?

CARLOS

Abuelas is Spanish for grandmothers Hugh. I think the word you're looking for is *amigos*. And no, we're not. And by the way, I'm Italian!

HUGH

I don't get this. This seems to be coming out of nowhere.

RON

It's not out of nowhere. I've asked you many times--

HUGH

Shut up Ron!

CHRISTINE

Okay. Hugh, maybe it'd be best if you took the rest of the day off.

HUGH

Are you firing me?

CHRISTINE

No, no. I'm giving you an opportunity. Take the weekend, think about what's been said here, and we'll start fresh on Monday.

HUGH

Maybe that's a good idea.

As Hugh walks off, he passes Ron's desk, roars and knocks stuff off on to the floor.

HUGH

None of you find that funny?

They stare at him. Amazed, Hugh exits.

EXT. HUGH'S HOUSE - LATER (DAY 1)

Hugh pulls up to the house to find Katie, Chad and the kids walking out. Hugh gets out of his car and approaches them.

HUGH

Where's everybody goin'?

KATIE

We're goin' to Franco's to get some dinner.

HUGH

That is a great idea. I had such a horrible day at work.

KATIE

You're not coming. (TO FAMILY) Get in the car everybody.

They all the get in the car.

HUGH

What's going on?

KATIE

You did nothing that I asked! You didn't feed the dog. You didn't clean the litter box. And I found our son "exercising" with a video game on your giant, stupid ass TV which I asked you to return.

HUGH

I was using it as a parenting tool!

KATIE

I told you these things were important to me and you ignored them.

HUGH

Look, I'm sorry I didn't do your little chores, but you're not the only one who had a bad day. I didn't get my promotion because, apparently, everyone I work with thinks I'm an awful human being.

KATIE

I'd love to sympathize with you, but I happen to agree with them.

HUGH

You don't mean that. It's the cat poop talking.

KATIE

No it's not. Honey I love you, but in the last couple of years that's been harder and harder to do. You used to be sweet and funny and generous.

(MORE)

KATIE (CONT'D)

Now there isn't a car ride that goes by where you don't give someone the finger. You are at a crossroads, my love. You need to decide what kind of man you want to be. Do you want to be a man with a giant TV that doesn't fit in his house or do you want to be someone your kids can look up to?

Hugh takes too long to consider this.

KATIE

Forget it! Go be with your TV. You two deserve each other. You're both big, obnoxious and terrible for our family. Now please get out of my way.

Katie walks around Hugh. Hugh suddenly grabs the keys from her, jumps into the car and locks the door.

KATIE

Hugh! Unlock the door, right now!

HUGH

No! I'm going to Francos with the people in my family who think I'm a good person. (TO FAMILY) You guys think I'm a good person right?

There is silence.

HUGH

Martin? Lola? (THEY LOOK AWAY) Chad?

CHAD

I just want to go Francos, man.

Completely crushed, Hugh gets out of the car. Katie climbs in and drives off.

INT. TV ROOM - LATER

Hugh sits alone, in his underwear, eating a Hot Pocket and watching his huge TV. Suddenly, the TV lurches forward off its mount, pulling out part of the drywall and just hangs there precariously.

CLOSE ON: a sad looking Hugh.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWOINT. HUGH'S BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING

Katie is sound asleep. She looks unbelievably comfortable.
SFX: VERY LOUD SMOKE ALARM. Katie's eyes snap open and she jumps out of bed.

KATIE
Oh my God!

INT. HALLWAY/LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Katie meets up with a bleary eyed Martin and Lola.

LOLA
Do we have an escape plan?

KATIE
Your father was supposed to get one together. Just head for an exit without fire!

Chad enters, dressed in his underwear (sans t-shirt).

CHAD
I don't want to die!

KATIE
Pants Chad! And shirt!

The ALARM GOES OFF and Hugh enters wearing an apron.

HUGH
Sorry. My bad. I was makin' you guys a surprise breakfast and I set off the smoke alarm. (EXCITED) But since you're up. Come on.

Off their blank stares, WE...

INT. KITCHEN - A LITTLE LATER

The family all sit at the table which is filled with a big breakfast spread. They eat quietly and suspiciously.

HUGH
Why's everyone so quiet?

LOLA
Cause this is weird.

KATIE

It's not weird. It's very nice.
(BEAT) I mean it's a little weird.

MARTIN

Yeah, we never eat together. Uncle Chad eats on the toilet.

CHAD

Food's going there anyway.

HUGH

Wonderful image, Chad. (THEN) Look, guys I made this breakfast because I wanted to get us all together. I need to say something. Katie, you were right, I have been a jerk. I'm rude to you guys and my co-workers. I don't help out in my community. I don't know my neighbors. Do you know I've never even voted? Ever.

LOLA

Not true. You voted for Sanjaya like a hundred times.

HUGH

Yes, but that was done ironically. (THEN) Guys, I'm trying to tell you that I want to be a better man, someone you can respect. (STANDING, GETTING EXCITED) I want to be part of the solution, not the problem. Like the insurance companies. I want to attack that, whatever's going on there. People are upset about that and I want it stopped, whatever it is. How about starting a vegetable garden? Or saving different animals?

KATIE

(LAUGHS) I'm sorry, honey. It's a lot to take from someone who told a kid petitioning to protect marine life that dolphins were the "a-holes" of the sea.

HUGH

I do think they're arrogant. But I'm willing to give that another look. That's what I'm talking about. (SITTING) I know you guys don't believe me. But I'm really fired up about this.

(MORE)

HUGH (CONT'D)

And I'm going to make a promise to you. I promise I will be a better person.

MARTIN

Is this a McDonald's pancake?

HUGH

And I will start now by admitting that, yes, all this food is from McDonalds. And also, I set off that smoke alarm because none of you were waking up quick enough for my surprise. Now eat up, I've got big plans for today.

EXT. HUGH'S HOME - LATER (DAY 2)

Hugh says goodbye to Katie at the door.

KATIE

Are you sure you don't want me to come with you?

HUGH

No, you get the whole day off. Pamper yourself. Go get your hair curled. Get your nails done. Have them pull out that hair on your chin that's always bothering you.

KATIE

What hair on my chin?

HUGH

Do whatever. It's your special day.

KATIE

Thanks, sweetie. So what's your plan for the day?

HUGH

Gonna take Martin to his soccer practice, then get in some sweet Daddy/Daughter time with Lola. Then back over to watch Martin's game.

SFX: CAR HORN THAT SOUNDS LIKE THE "CLOSE ENCOUNTERS" TONES

CHAD

Let's do this!

REVEAL: Chad sitting in his crappy, late model conversion van. The van features a sci-fi mural on the side.

KATIE

You got Chad to leave the house?

HUGH

His van is the only thing big enough
to hold the TV, which I'm returning.

Hugh opens the side door of the van to REVEAL Lola and
Martin crammed in with the giant TV.

LOLA

This sucks ass!

MARTIN

I hate soccer!

HUGH

(SHUTS DOOR ON THEM) Well, gotta go.
Full schedule.

KATIE

I love the ambition, but you know
you can't change everything in a day?

HUGH

I know. I have to start somewhere.

KATIE

What have you done with my husband?

HUGH

That jerk is gone forever.

They kiss. Chad hits the horn again.

HUGH

(HARSH) Lay off the frickin' horn,
ass clown!

KATIE

There's my guy.

INT. CHAD'S VAN - LATER (DAY 2)

They drive along a highway. Chad signals to exit.

HUGH

What are you doing?

CHAD

This is the exit for the electronics
store. We're taking the TV back,
right?

Hugh grabs the wheel, swerving them back on the highway.

LOLA
(TERRIFIED) Dad!

CHAD
What the hell are you doing?!

HUGH
I can't do it right now. We'll do it
at the end of the day. (LOOKING BACK)
Is the TV okay?

LOLA
It's crushing me.

HUGH
Well be careful with it.

EXT. SOCCER FIELD - LATER (DAY 2)

Hugh sits with Martin on a bench. A group of Martin's
teammates kick a ball around the field.

MARTIN
Please don't make me play. PLEASE!

HUGH
Martin, calm down. It's just kickin'
a ball. (LOOKING AT WATCH) I wish I
had time for a pep talk, but I am
really up against it. You'll be fine.

Hugh walks away, thinks better of it and walks back.

HUGH
Look I know I haven't been to your
games that much.

MARTIN
You've never been. I had to tell you
how to get here.

HUGH
Fair enough. But I'm here now and I
want to help you. But I can't do that
if you don't tell me the reason you
don't want to play.

MARTIN
I'm afraid of getting hurt, okay.

HUGH

That's valid. But, you know, sometimes facing our fears, makes us stronger. (THEN) You're not buying this are you?

MARTIN

Nope.

HUGH

You know what, I have an idea. (TAKES OFF NECKLACE, HANDS IT TO MARTIN) This is the St. Christopher's medal that your mother gave to me on our wedding day. Do you know who St. Christopher is?

MARTIN

No. Who is he?

HUGH

I was asking you. I don't know either. Doesn't matter. All I know is it protects you from harm.

MARTIN

Like magic?

HUGH

Exactly. I've been wearing it a long time I've never been hurt.

MARTIN

What about when the donkey kicked you in your wiener at the petting zoo?

HUGH

That didn't hurt.

MARTIN

But you threw up.

HUGH

Listen, you wear that today and no harm will come to you. I promise.

MARTIN

(BEAT) I guess.

HUGH

Good. Now I'll be back for the game in about an hour. I'll be cheerin' you on. Right over there by that chesty lady. Love ya.

Hugh gets up and trips over the bench on purpose.

HUGH
See?

OFF Martin's smile WE...

INT. LIVING ROOM - LATER (DAY 2)

Katie, alone in the house for the first time in a while, collapses on the couch with a sigh of relief. SFX: VIDEO GAME NOISE.

KATIE
What is that?!

She reaches under a cushion to find Martin's hand-held video game. Annoyed, she begins mashing buttons.

KATIE
How do you turn this damn thing off?
(SMILING) Huh. That button moves the sword.

She pushes it again and smiles. She's hooked.

INT. CHAD'S VAN - LATER (DAY 2)

Hugh, Chad and Lola pull up to a building with a sign that reads: "ROYAL OAKS MANOR RETIREMENT HOME"

LOLA
What are we doing here?

HUGH
I told you, we're spending time together.

LOLA
I assumed that meant we'd go to the mall and split up.

HUGH
This is what you call a two'fer.
We're spending time together *and* giving back to the community.

CHAD
Well, good luck you guys. I'm gonna go drink at the pier.

HUGH
Oh no, you're going too.

CHAD

I can't. I hate old people. I've had nightmares where they sharpen their dentures into fangs and suck out my life force.

HUGH

Guys, old people are a neglected part of our society. Don't you want to help them?

CHAD

Nope.

LOLA

Me neither.

HUGH

I'll give you each fifty bucks.

INT. THE ROYAL OAKS MANOR - CONTINUOUS (DAY 2)

The family walks into the lobby.

HUGH

This is gonna be great. They say helping people releases endorphins. (THE SMELL HITS HUGH HARD) Good Lord. Wow. That is a powerful smell. (GAGS) Holy cow. It smells like bleach and pudding. (GAGS) You'd think they would put out some scented candles or something. Okay, you know what? Maybe this is a little ambitious. Let's all go to the pier.

A very perky retirement home director Beverly (60) walks up.

BEVERLY

Welcome! You must be the Pells. Thank you so much for coming. I'm Beverly Kearns, the director here. Let me show you around.

They follow her. A nearby OLD MAN reaches for Chad.

CHAD

(AVOIDING HIM) Not today, vampire.

INT. ACTIVITY ROOM - SAME TIME (DAY 2)

Hugh and Beverly stand in the doorway of the activity room that is full of bored looking seniors.

BEVERLY

This will be a treat for our residents. Our seniors so love young people.

HUGH

Well that's perfect, because my family so loves seniors.

ANGLE ON: A terrified Chad backing away from CAROL, an old lady who is trying to dance with him.

CHAD

Give me some space, lady!

CAROL

But I'm a wonderful dancer. I use to go to Catalina Island and dance until the morning.

CHAD

I'd be happy to play bingo with you or feed you soup. But no touching.

Chad backs into ART (75), who puts a finger into his back.

ART

Whoa there, young man.

CHAD

(HORRIFIED) My life force!

BACK ON: Beverly and Hugh

BEVERLY

Wonderful. Old people have so much to give, if people would just take the time.

HUGH

Speaking of time, can we hit the gas a little? I've got a soccer game I need to get to later. I'd love to be out of here in twenty.

BEVERLY

Well, alright. Follow me.

Hugh waves at LOLA, who shoots him the bird as he exits. An old woman, RUTH (78), pokes Lola with a cane.

RUTH

What's your beef, princess?

LOLA
I don't want to be here.

RUTH
That makes two of us. Why don't you
make yourself useful and fix this TV
so I can watch my judge shows.

Ruth indicates a very small TV with a crappy picture. Lola sighs and calls her mom.

INT. BATHROOM - LATER (DAY 2)

Katie relaxes in a bathtub surrounded by candles. REVEAL: she is still playing the video game. Her cell phone, sitting on the toilet, goes off. It's Lola. She answers. We cut back and forth between Katie and Lola.

KATIE
Hello, my love.

LOLA
Do you know where Dad and I are
"spending time" right now?

KATIE
I assumed you went to the mall and
split up.

LOLA
No. We're at some nasty retirement
home called "Royal Oaks" or
something. Dad's totally abandoned me
and I want you to come get me.

KATIE
Sweetie, I hear you. But it sounds
like your Dad's trying to do
something good for the community.
What do you say we keep an open mind?

Lola sits in silence and then gets an idea.

LOLA
(OFF TO NO ONE) What? Okay, I'm
coming. (TO KATIE) Sorry, mom, they
need me to change a catheter in an
old man. I can't believe the first
penis I'm going to see belongs to a
withered old geezer.

KATIE
Now, honey, that's clearly a lie.

LOLA
Goodbye, Mother.

Lola hangs up. We finish on Katie's worried looking face.

EXT. SOCCER FIELD - LATER (DAY 2)

It's just before the game and the other team are warming up. They are all giant kids. Martin leans over to his coach.

MARTIN
Are those kids our age?

COACH
Yup. They're from some Scandinavian private school. (SMILING) Don't worry, you'll get to play.

Martin nervously squeezes his St. Christopher medal.

INT. RETIREMENT HOME ROOM - LATER (DAY 2)

Beverly and Hugh stand by a frail woman GRACE (83) who lays in bed.

HUGH
She's not really what I had in mind. Don't you have a salty old veteran who has lots of dirty stories about World War II?

BEVERLY
This isn't a dating service Mr. Pell. (TO GRACE) Grace, this is Hugh. He's here to read to you. (TO HUGH) I'll leave you to it.

Beverly leaves. Hugh pulls a chair up to Grace's bed.

HUGH
Okay, Grace, I just grabbed one of those Harry Potter books from my son's room. (OPENING BOOK) Okay, here we go. "Mr. and Mrs. Dursley of number 4 Privet Drive---

GRACE
I don't want to listen to Larry Potter. I'm so tired. Sometimes I wonder if I'd be better off dead.

HUGH

Don't say that, Grace. You've got a lot to live for. You've got your family.

GRACE

They haven't visited in years.

HUGH

That's a bummer. Well, aside from what looks like dry skin, you've got your health. Right?

GRACE

I can't hold food down. And every movement is agony.

HUGH

Woof. No family, bad health. There's really no way out of this dump. You are in a pickle.

GRACE

You're absolutely right. (THEN) Kill me.

HUGH

Oh boy. Let's jump back into Larry Potter here. (FLIPPING THROUGH) Death? ghosts? Dead parents? Where are the party scenes?

Grace

Please. I don't want to live this way. Kill me.

HUGH

Yikes. I'll go get Beverly.

GRACE

No, no. She'll stop you. If you really want to do something for me, then set me free. Here, use my pillow.

Grace feebly hands Hugh her pillow. Hugh looks around again. As he slowly puts the pillow over her face, WE...

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREEINT. RETIREMENT HOME ROOM - CONTINUOUS (DAY 2)

Hugh pulls the pillow away from Grace's face.

HUGH

You know, Grace, my wife has said to me about a thousand times, "Hugh, before you do something rash, take a beat, and ask yourself if I would do it." And I know for a fact that she would not smother you with a pillow. So I'm gonna take a pass here.

GRACE

(HARSH) You spineless wuss.

HUGH

Excuse me?

GRACE

Just my luck. I got a flat-assed nancy man.

HUGH

Hey, there's no reason to trash talk, you crazy coot.

GRACE

Go away, I'll do it myself.

Grace puts the pillow over her face. Hugh takes it off.

HUGH

Okay, cut it out.

They get in a tug of war. Beverly walks in.

BEVERLY

Mr. Pell!

HUGH

No! She asked me to kill her but I didn't!

GRACE

Beverly! Help me!

HUGH

(TO GRACE) What are you doing?

GRACE
 (TO HUGH) You screwed me, now I screw
 you. (TO BEVERLY) Help me!

HUGH
 Shut up!

Hugh puts the pillow over Grace's face to shut her up.

BEVERLY
 Security!

INT. RETIREMENT HOME ACTIVITIES ROOM - DAY

Chad sits with Art, the old man from before.

ART
 Old people can't steal souls, you
 idiot. Even if I could, I wouldn't
 steal yours. You look like a hobo.

CHAD
 I have nicer sweat pants, but they
 were dirty.

ART
 Sweat pants! You don't wear sweat
 pants out of the house. You're not
 Rocky Balboa! Put on some decent
 clothes.

CHAD
 What's the point? The world's ending
 in 2012 anyway.

OLD MAN
 The world's always coming to an end.
 Piece of advice pal. Dress nice. It
 gives you purpose.

WE PAN over to find Ruth and Lola watching TV. Ruth pulls
 out a cigarette and pops it in her mouth.

LOLA
 Can you smoke in here?

RUTH
 No.

But before she can light up, the TV goes out again.

RUTH
 Son of a bitch!

LOLA
Your TV sucks.

RUTH
That's what happens when your son and his whore wife put you in the fiftieth best Retirement Home in California. You should try the food, or as I like to call it, "Guaranteed Diarrhea".

Lola laughs, but catches herself and stops.

RUTH
Isn't that better than frowning?
(THEN) I was thirteen once too. Trust me, Kiddo, it gets better.

LOLA
It does?

RUTH
Yep. Then it gets worse again. Then it gets better. Then it gets shockingly bad.

LOLA
Wow. Don't sugar coat it.

RUTH
I'm not done honey. See, bad stuff is gonna happen no matter what you do. The only thing you have control over is your attitude. Now pull your hair out of your face, you look like Dracula's ugly sister.

Ruth brushes Lola's hair aside. Lola smiles. This tender moment is interrupted by shouting.

ANGLE ON: Hugh being dragged past the doorway by security.

HUGH
Call your mother! CALL YOUR MOTHER!

Lola sighs and pulls out her cell phone. A hand reaches in and grabs the phone.

REVEAL: Katie standing there.

KATIE
Save your minutes. I'm already here.

EXT. SOCCER FIELD - LATER (DAY 2)

The game is in progress and Martin tries to avoid the action. Suddenly the ball hits him in the face. He looks up to see a pack of HUGE BOYS running toward him. A terrified Martin kicks the ball away, and breathes a sigh of relief. After a beat, the ball hits him in the face again.

MARTIN
(EXASPERATED) Really?

The huge boys run at him again. Martin closes his eyes, kicks the ball hard, then drops to the ground and covers his head. A pile of boys fall on him.

SFX: CROWD CHEERING

Martin opens his eyes. His own teammates are on top of him.

TEAM MATE
You scored dude!

Martin smiles and looks to the crowd. He sees the CHESTY LADY, but no Hugh. His smile fades to disappointment.

INT. BEVERLY'S OFFICE - LATER (DAY 2)

A concerned Beverly sits at a desk across from the family.

BEVERLY
I'm afraid I'm going to have to call the police.

KATIE
What did he do? Pee outside?

BEVERLY
Your husband tried to suffocate one of our guests.

CHAD
You monster!

HUGH
(TO CHAD) I didn't do it! Whose side are you on?!

KATIE
(TO BEVERLY) Ms. Kearns, my husband can be very stupid. He once brought a real hawk into a three-year-olds birthday party. The results were very nearly tragic.
(MORE)

KATIE (CONT'D)

But he has a good heart and he would never do something this horrible. It's just a misunderstanding and if you give us a pass, you'll never see this family again.

BEVERLY

I don't know...

HUGH

(PULLS OUT WALLET) How much to make this go away? Give me a number.

KATIE

Hugh!

BEVERLY

Mr. Pell, I'm sorry. There is nothing that will make this go away.

LOLA

Maybe there is.

INT. RETIREMENT HOME ROOM - LATER (DAY 2)

All the happy seniors are gathered around Hugh's 72" flat screen watching Judge Joe Brown. Lola sits with Ruth.

RUTH

(TO LOLA) You did good, kid. Judge Brown's face is so clear.

ART

I didn't even know he was black!

WE PAN over to find a sullen Hugh standing with Katie and Chad.

KATIE

Doesn't it feel good to help people?

HUGH

It sure does. (THEN, MANIC) I can't give that TV up! (TO CHAD) Give them your van!

CHAD

No way.

HUGH

Come on. They could use it to pick up boxes of adult diapers.

CHAD
We need the van to pick up Martin.

HUGH
(LOOKING AT WATCH) Son of a bitch!

KATIE
Take my car.

EXT. SOCCER FIELD - DAY (DAY 2)

The game is breaking up. People congratulate Martin. Suddenly Hugh drives his car onto the field. Hugh jumps out. Martin walks up.

HUGH
Hey buddy, I made it.

MARTIN
You missed the game.

HUGH
I meant, I made it to pick you up.
How'd it go?

MARTIN
We won. I scored a goal.

Martin gets into the car.

MARTIN
Hey that's grea--

Martin angrily slams the car door shut on a defeated Hugh.

INT. HUGH'S BEDROOM - EVENING (DAY 2)

Hugh sits on the edge of the bed moping. Katie joins him.

HUGH
I can't believe I missed Martin's game. You should have seen his face.
(THEN) You know, I really wanted to do something good, but I don't think I'm capable of it. I think I'm broken or something. I might even be evil.

KATIE
You're not evil. Evil people tend to plot and plan, like Osama Bin Laden. You're more like George Bush.

HUGH
Okay, fun talk.

KATIE

Hugh, I think you trying to be better is a great thing. But I think you found out today that being a good person is hard, for all of us. My advice, don't try to save the world, just go to your kid's soccer game.

HUGH

(STANDING) Well, I'm going to go find Martin. I found his video game in our bathroom.

KATIE

(TAKING IT) I'll give it to him.

HUGH

But I'm going to see him right now.

KATIE

I know. I'll put it in his room.

HUGH

Okay.

Hugh leaves and Katie starts up the video game.

KATIE

Hello, Mario, my old friend.

INT. VARIOUS LOCATIONS IN THE HOUSE - EVENING (DAY 2)

MUSIC PLAYS as Hugh goes around the house looking for Martin:

1) He looks in Martin's room. He's not there, but the TV is on. Hugh turns it off and leaves.

2) He looks in Lola's room and sees her in her bathroom happily experimenting with wearing her hair up. Her TV is on and he turns it off and leaves.

3) He walks into the family room. The small TV from the retirement home sits where the huge one sat. Hugh starts to turn it off when Chad enters with a bowl of ice cream.

CHAD

I'm watching that.

HUGH

Sorry. Hey, you're wearing pants.

CHAD

Am I? Didn't even notice.

HUGH
 You look nice. Hey, do you know where
 Martin is? I looked in every TV room
 in the house.

CHAD
 I think he's in the front yard.

EXT. HUGH'S FRONT YARD - DUSK (DAY 2)

Martin is kicking the soccer ball around.

HUGH
 Hey buddy.

MARTIN
 Don't call me that.

HUGH
 Okay, you're mad at me. (NO RESPONSE)
 How about I lay down on the ground
 and you kick the ball in my face?
 Would that make you feel better?

MARTIN
 That sounds awesome.

HUGH
 I'm not gonna do that.

MARTIN
 I'm going inside.

HUGH
 Hang on, hang on. (THEN) I'm so sorry
 I missed your game. You scored a goal
 and I missed it. I've missed way too
 many of those moments and I feel
 awful. I don't deserve it, but if you
 could see your way to giving me
 another chance, I'd appreciate it.

Martin hands the St. Christopher medal to Hugh.

MARTIN
 You need this more than I do. Maybe
 it can help you be better.

HUGH
 Thanks. (HUGS MARTIN) I love you,
 buddy.

Just then the FAST DRIVER from before whizzes by.

HUGH
SLOW DOWN, ASS FACE!

Hugh chucks the soccer ball at the car and hits it. The car screeches to a stop. Hugh shuffles Martin toward the house.

HUGH
Let's get inside. I'll be better tomorrow.

END OF SHOW