“Pilot”

Written by

Casey Johnson
&
David Windsor

Directed by

Michael Fresco

Table Draft
March 12, 2010
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 ................................................................................ TCLB
JASON ................................................................................ TCLB
JODI ................................................................................ TCLB
MOVER ................................................................................ TCLB
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:

EXT. WEDDING VENUE – DAY – SIXTEEN YEARS AGO

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:

INT. GRADE SCHOOL – DAY – SIX YEARS AGO

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:

EXT. KAREN’S HOUSE – DAY – TWO YEARS AGO

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:

EXT. SAME WEDDING VENUE - DAY - FLASHBACK

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:

EXT. KAREN’S HOUSE - DAY - ONE YEAR AGO

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:

INT. KAREN’S HOUSE - GEORGE’S BEDROOM - PRESENT DAY

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:

INT. KAREN’S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

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:

EXT. KAREN’S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

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:

INT. HOWARD’S HOUSE - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

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:

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

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:

INT. SEÑOR CALDERO’S MEXICAN RESTAURANT - THE NEXT NIGHT

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:

INT. KAREN’S HOUSE - KITCHEN - THE NEXT DAY

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:

EXT. STOP ‘N GO PARKING LOT - THAT DAY

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:

EXT. HOWARD’S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - LATER THAT DAY
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:

INT. HOWARD’S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - THE NEXT DAY
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:
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)
Yeah, I’m sure that’s what’s happening.

Karen’s look sends Carl back to his house.

CUT TO:

INT. KAREN’S HOUSE – GARAGE – MOMENTS LATER

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)

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:

INT. HOWARD’S HOUSE – GEORGE’S BEDROOM – LATER THAT DAY

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)
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:

INT. HOWARD’S HOUSE – KITCHEN – LATER THAT DAY

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:

EXT. HOWARD’S HOUSE – SAME

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:

INT. KAREN’S HOUSE – LIVING ROOM – SAME

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:

EXT. HOWARD’S HOUSE – SAME

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:

EXT. STREET - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

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:

INT. SCOTT’S CAR - MOMENTS LATER

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:

INT. HOWARD’S HOUSE – GEORGE’S BEDROOM – MOMENTS LATER

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!

INT. HOWARD’S HOUSE – BEDROOM HALLWAY – SAME

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

HOWARD

Seriously? The mattress?

EXT. HOWARD’S HOUSE – MOMENTS LATER

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.

INT. HOWARD’S HOUSE – LIVING ROOM – LATER

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
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
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

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:

EXT. HOWARD’S HOUSE – ANOTHER DAY

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