untitled jeff strauss project

a pilot by

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revised draft
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FADE IN:

INT. THE KELLER’S BEDROOM – NIGHT

IT’S A LIVED-IN, COMFORTABLE-BUT-NOT-OSTENTATIOUS OLDER HOUSE IN A RESIDENTIAL BOSTON NEIGHBORHOOD. THE ROOM IS COZY AND CLUTTERED WITH SIGNS OF TWO BUSY WORKING LIVES, PLUS THREE KIDS. ROB KELLER (MID 30S) ENTERS, COLLAR UNBUTTONED, ROLLED-UP BLUEPRINTS UNDER HIS ARM. NOTICING THE MESS, HE BENDS DOWN AND STARTS PICKING UP TOYS.

ROB

Jessica...? Jess...?

FROM THE BATHROOM, WE HEAR THE SOUND OF TOOTH BRUSHING.

JESSICA (O.S.)

In here, Rob...!

ROB

(CALLING) The kids are asleep!

JESSICA (O.S.)

I can’t believe it either!

ROB

(CHECKS HIS WATCH; THEN, AMAZED)

Sex on a school-night... I feel like I should call somebody.

HE SLIPS OFF HIS SHOES. THE RUNNING WATER SHUTS OFF. ROB POSITIONS HIMSELF ON THE BED, STRIKES A CASUAL POSE AS JESSICA ENTERS. SHE HAS AN EASY EVERYDAY KIND OF BEAUTY, AND YOU COULD TELL, TOO, IF HER FACE WEREN’T OBSCURED BEHIND A THICK, UNEVEN COAT OF INCOMPLETELY-RUBBED-IN MOISTURIZER. SEEING ROB’S LOOK, SHE STOPS.

JESSICA

What?

ROB

This is how you’re coming to bed?
JESSICA
I’m going to go with “yes.”

ROB
Um... You have a little cream on your face. You didn’t want to rub that in?

JESSICA
I was tired. It’s Wednesday - that’s carpool, staff meeting, editor’s lunch, *carpool again* and piano lesson.

ROB
And you ran out of energy just before the cream got rubbed in?

JESSICA
Oh, come on... All right...

SHE GIVES HER CHEEK A CURSORY BRUSH WITH THE BACK OF HER HAND - NO REAL IMPACT ON THE CREAM.

JESSICA (CONT’D)
There. (OFF HIS LOOK) What?

ROB HOLDS UP A FINGER - “WAIT”. HE TURNS, OPENS HIS NIGHT-STAND DRAWER.

JESSICA (CONT’D)
What are you doing?

ROB
I need a pen and paper.

JESSICA
For what?
ROB PULLS A SCRAP OF PAPER AND A PEN FROM HIS NIGHT-STAND.

ROB
I want to write down today’s date.

JESSICA
Why?

ROB
I don’t want to wind up being one of those guys who looks back twenty years from now and says: “I don’t know what happened to my marriage... We just kind of... drifted.” No. I want to be able to point to this piece of paper and say, “October sixth, 2009. That was it. That was the night she gave up.”

HE SMILES. SHE HITS HIM WITH A PILLOW.

CUT TO:

MAIN TITLES
ACT ONE

SCENE A

FADE IN:

EXT. THE KELLER’S HOUSE - THE NEXT MORNING

SFX: A CLOCK RADIO GOES OFF. BOSTON MORNING DRIVE. A SLAP SHUTS IT OFF.

JESSICA (V.O.)

(WITH A GROAN) Dear god, not again.

CUT INSIDE

TO:

INT. ROB AND JESSICA’S BEDROOM - SAME TIME

ROB AND JESSICA IN BED - FACE DOWN IN THEIR PILLOWS - HER HAND, STILL FLOPPED ON THE ALARM CLOCK.

ROB (INTO PILLOW)

You want kids or breakfast?

JESSICA

Like either one of them is good.

ON THIS:

DISSOLVE TO:
ACT ONE

SCENE B

INT. THE KELLER’S KITCHEN – NEARLY CONTINUOUS

JESSICA’S MULTITASKING LIKE SUPERMAN ON CRYSTAL METH. PAPERS FLY INTO BRIEFCASES, PERMISSION SLIPS INTO BACKPACKS, YOGURT TUBES INTO LUNCH-Boxes... SHE SIPS COFFEE, SCRAMBLES EGGS AND TOUCHES UP HER MAKEUP. JANEY (6) EATS CEREAL AT THE TABLE. SAM (2) CLIMBS UP INTO HIS CHAIR. JESSICA TURNS, FRESH HOT PLATE OF EGGS IN HAND.

JESSICA

Sammy, your eggs.

SAM (2) REGARDS THE EGGS WITH HORROR:

SAM

Not that plate! Not that plate!

Not that plate! Not that plaaate!

JESSICA DUMPS THE EGGS ON THE TABLE. SAM DIGS IN.

JANEY

Hey, no fair. I want eggs.

USING THE EDGE OF HER HAND, JESSICA SPLITS THE EGGS AND SLIDES HALF OVER TO JANEY AS ROB ENTERS.

JESSICA

(TO ROB) Do you really think I’ve given up?

ROB

Nah. They can learn about plates at friends’ houses. Let their parents do dishes.

JESSICA

I was talking about us. Last night.
ROB

The face cream thing? (OFF HER
NOD) No.

HE KISSES HER FOR PUNCTUATION.

JESSICA

Good. (BEAT) Where’s Jack?

ROB

Where is Jack? (CALLING OFF)

Jack...!

ROB CROSSES OFF.

JANEY

These eggs taste funny.

JESSICA

It’s not the eggs, it’s the table.

JANEY

Oh.

SATISFIED, SHE KEEPS EATING. ROB RETURNS, CARRYING 4-YEAR-OLD JACK BY HIS WAISTBAND LIKE A SUITCASE.

ROB

(TO JESSICA) Can we talk about
this for a second? Jack just
peed... (GRAVELY) ... and he
wiped the end of his... that with
toilet paper.

Rob waits for Jessica’s response. After a beat:

JESSICA

I don’t think I’m following you.
JANEY

His penis.

JESSICA

(SHE NEW THAT) Thank you, sweetie.

JESSICA LOOKS TO ROB. ROB POINTS TO JACK.

ROB

He peed. Men don’t wipe that when they pee. They shake that. They shake and go.

JESSICA

They “shake and go”?

ROB

They go... And shake and go. Some guys throw in a hop. I’m not a fan, but technically acceptable.

JESSICA

It’s never seemed all that hygienic.

ROB

This is not about hygene.

JESSICA

My mistake.

ROB

What’s it gonna be like? He’s 12... he’s at a Red-Sox game and he’s got to go...
HE'S STANDING AT THE TROUGH WITH HIS PANTS OPEN AND THERE'S NO TOILET PAPER. WHAT'S HE GONNA DO - ASK THE GUY NEXT TO HIM?! I DON'T THINK SO!

JESSICA
HONEY, IF IT'S THAT IMPORTANT, TALK TO HIM - TELL HIM NOT TO USE TOILET PAPER.

ROB
I DID. HE DOESN'T SEEM TO UNDERSTAND.

JESSICA
NEITHER DO I.

ROB
(GIVES UP) ALL RIGHT. LET'S GO. JANET, WE DON'T WANT TO BE LATE AGAIN. (PICKING UP THE BOYS)

BOYS - IT'S SCHOOL TIME.

HE HERDS THE KIDS OUT THE BACK DOOR.

CUT TO:
ACT ONE

SCENE C

EXT. THE KELLER’S DRIVEWAY - AT THE CARS - MOMENTS LATER

ROB AND JESSICA LOAD THEIR CARS FOR WORK. THE KIDS ARE RUNNING AROUND.

JESSICA
So you’re happy with our sex life?

ROB
Are we talking about this in front of the kids?

JESSICA
No.

JESSICA REACHES INTO HER PURSE.

JESSICA (CONT'D)
Who wants gum?!

SHE TOSSES SEVERAL STICK OF GUM INTO THE CAR, THE KIDS CLAMBER IN. JESSICA SHUTS THE CAR DOOR.

JESSICA (CONT'D)
Are you happy with our sex life?

ROB
Yes. Absolutely. (THEN) Okay, it’s not like... wild. But what do you expect after nine years of marriage? We’ve found a comfortable place, so we go there. It’s like... the Holiday Inn of sex.
JESSICA

(A BEAT) The “Holiday Inn of sex?”

ROB

Don’t knock the Holiday Inn.
They’re very successful. And clean. (BEAT) I need Janey.

JESSICA PUTS TWO FINGERS IN HER MOUTH, WHISTLES LOUDLY.

JESSICA

Janey!

JANEY LOOKS UP. JESSICA REACHES INTO HER PURSE, SHOWS JANEY A CANDY BAR, THEN TOSSES IT INTO ROB’S CAR. JANEY JUMPS IN AFTER IT. THEN, TO ROB:

JESSICA (CONT’D)

Maybe we should try a little harder. You know – in bed.

ROB

You’re kidding? (OFF HER LOOK)
You’re not kidding. Look, can we talk about this later? You know I hate being late to Janey’s school.

Ms. Giamatti--

JESSICA

She’s not judging you.

ROB

She gives me the look, like...

HE MAKES A SOUR, JUDGEMENTAL FACE.
JESSICA

(LAUGHS) Go. (KISSES HIM)

Goodbye. (BEAT) I think we need
to spice things up.

ROB

Honey, really, our sex life is--

MAN’S VOICE (O.S.)

Good morning.

CUT WIDE:

AS TWO PAIRS OF LEGS PUSH A BABY-STROLLER PAST ROB AND
JESSICA’S HOUSE. WE DON’T SEE THE FACES.

JESSICA SMILES BROADLY.

JESSICA

Hiiii! Good morning. Doesn’t

Cleo look darling today...?

AS THE LEGS PASS WE PULL BACK TO REVEAL TWO ATTRACTION MEN
IN THEIR MID 3OS PUSHING THE STROLLER. ROB AND JESSICA
SMILE AS THEY GO PAST. WHEN THEY’RE GONE:

JESSICA (CONT’D)

Uch. I hate them. Who do they think
they are - taking their kids for a
walk before school? They’re like the
perfect parents.

ROB

The gay guys?

JESSICA

Yes. Alan and Allen. A bow in the baby’s
hair - what is that?? They both work.
JESSICA (CONT'D)

They’re both lawyers. They almost never
do takeout. How do they do it all??

ROB

Neither of them has to waste any
time being a woman?

ON JESSICA’S REACTION

CUT TO:
ACT ONE

SCENE D

INT. JANEY’S 1ST GRADE CLASSROOM – A LITTLE LATER – DAY

THE TEACHER, MS. GIAMATTI, (LATE 40S) IS HELPING ONE OF THE KIDS WITH A WORK SHEET AS JANEY AND ROB ENTER. ROB IS CARRYING JANEY’S BACKPACK AND LUNCHBOX – HE HANDS THESE TO HER AND GIVES HER A KISS. WITHOUT LOOKING UP, MS. GIAMATTI SAYS:

MS. GIAMATTI

School starts at 8:15, Mr. Keller.

ROB

I know, but... I had Jack.

MS. GIAMATTI SHAKES HER HEAD, GIVES ROB “THE LOOK”. MAKES A MARK IN HER BOOK.

ROB (CONT'D)

Okay, now you don’t have to mark that down, Ms. Giamatti... That was me, not Janey.

MS. GIAMATTI

Mm-hm. I’ll see you Monday night.

ROB

(JOKING) You coming over to watch football?

MS. GIAMATTI

It’s your parent/teacher conference.

ANOTHER “LOOK”, ANOTHER MARK.

ROB

(BACKPEDALING) Right... Right...

There’s just...
I - I knew that it’s just with all the paper you guys send home - the PTA stuff, the field trips...

It’s a little hard to keep track.

HE TAKES THE PEN FROM HIS POCKET AND MAKES A NOTE ON HIS HAND. MS. GIAMATTI GIVES HIM THE LOOK AGAIN.

MS. GIAMATTI

Some people use a bulletin board.

ON ROB’S LOOK:
ACT ONE

SCENE E

EXT. SOMERSET ELEMENTARY PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER - DAY

ROB CROSSES THE SCHOOL PARKING LOT - LOOKING AT THE NOTE ON HIS HAND. HE PASSES HIS FRIEND, AND FELLOW PARENT, JAY. JAY, (30S) OPERATES AT A SLIGHTLY HIGHER INTENSITY LEVEL THAN ROB.

JAY

Hey, Rob. (RE ROB’S HAND)

Cheating on a test?

ROB

I’m trying to remember we’ve got Janey’s parent/teacher on Monday.

JAY

Don’t want to use a bulletin board?

(OFF ROB’S LOOK) What? (PETULANT)

Well, I was going to see if you wanted to grab a latte - but instead I’ll let you go to work caffeine free.

JAY STOPS, UNLOCKS THE DOOR TO A WELL-WORN VOLVO WAGON.

ROB

You’re driving the wagon? I thought Christine got the wagon and you got to see the kids alternate Thanksgivings and Christmases.
JAY
She did. But, I was running late and it was blocking me so we switched.

ROB
You slept at Christine’s... again?

JAY
Yeah. I don’t know what it is. It’s like divorce papers are some kind of aphrodisiac or something. I was just there to drop off Megan and Jeremy, went in to pick up my cordless drill and Bam! We’re having more sex now than we did in the last three years of our marriage.

ROB
Jess came to bed with face cream last night.

JAY
Oooh....

ROB
Yeah.

JAY
You didn’t say anything.

ROB
(KICKING HIMSELF) I did.

JAY
Oooh...
ROB
Now she wants us to “spice things up.” She thinks we’re in some kind of rut.

JAY
Are you in a rut?

ROB
I like to think of it as a system.

JAY
Ahh... The system.

ROB
Yeah. It’s like, we have a playbook. We have a handful of plays – maybe three. We have games on Sunday and we try to practice once during the week.

JAY
(KNOWING SMILE) Does the offense and defense practice separately?

AS ROB SLUMPS AGAINST HIS CAR:

CUT TO:
ACT ONE

SCENE H

INT. CAMBRIDGE CHRONICLE - JESSICA’S OFFICE - DAY

JESSICA’S IN HER TINY OFFICE WITH A COUPLE OTHER CO-WORKERS. AN OFFICE ASSISTANT, JOSH (20S), POSES HIS HEAD IN.

ASSISTANT

Um... Jessica, Howard wants to see you in his office right away.

JESSICA

Josh, I’m in a meeting.

ASSISTANT

Okay, but Howard seemed kinda --

JESSICA STOPS HIM, INDICATES THE OTHERS.

JESSICA

Excuse me, but you see Susan? You see Valerie? You see Donna? This is my department and we are in a “department” meeting. Okay?

HE NODS AND EXITS. JESSICA TURNS BACK TO THE ROOM.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

...and then he calls it “The Holiday Inn of Sex??”

SUSAN

Not even the Hyatt?

JESSICA SHAKES HER HEAD.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT ONE
ACT TWO

SCENE J

EXT. AT THE SOCCER FIELD - THAT AFTERNOON

A GROUP OF FOUR-YEAR-OLD KIDS WEARING BRIGHTLY COLORED SOCCER JERSEYS GET READY TO PLAY. OVER ON THE SIDELINES, THE PARENTS LOOK ON. ROB, CARRYING HIS BRIEFCASE AND ROLLED-UP BLUEPRINTS, CROSSES TO JESSICA. HE KISSES HER.

ROB

Hi.

JESSICA

Hi.

ROB

I had one thought... about, you know...

JESSICA

We are not inviting another woman into our bed.

ROB

(CAUGHT, INDIGNANT) That was not it.

JESSICA

Good. I’m sorry.

ROB

That’s okay.

JESSICA

What was your thought?

ROB

(COVERS) I’ll surprise you.

ROB CROSSES TO JAY AND GORDON BUCKBERGER (LATE 30S). JAY IS BENDING DOWN, TALKING TO HIS DAUGHTER, MEGAN (4).
JAY

Have a good game, sweetie - try
that big kick I showed you.

SHE KICKS HIM IN THE KNEE - HARD. NOT WHAT HE MEANT.

JAY (CONT'D)

(PAINED) That’s the one.

MEGAN JOINS THE GAME AS IT BEGINS. THE REF’S WHISTLE BLOWS
AND THE KIDS ATTACK THE BALL LIKE A DISORGANIZED SWARM OF
BRIGHTLY COLORED BEES. JAY TURNS TO ROB.

JAY (CONT'D)

So, did you figure it out yet?

ROB

I have nothing.

GORDON

Figure what out?

JAY

Tell Gordon.

ROB

I don’t know...

GORDON

Tell Gordon what?

JAY

Rob and Jessica have to spice up
their sex life.

GORDON

Oh god. Why would you want to do
that?

ANGLE ON:
JESSICA

WHO’S WITH HER SHARP TONGUED CO-WORKER, SUSAN (ALSO GORDON’S WIFE.) SUSAN NOTICES JESSICA FIDDLING WITH HER WAISTBAND.

SUSAN

Is everything all right?

JESSICA

I’m having an underwear issue.

SHE PULLS THE TOP OF HER PANTS DOWN JUST A BIT TO REVEAL:

SUSAN

A thong, Jess? Very “Sex in the City”. Since when do you wear a thong?

JESSICA

Since this afternoon.

SUSAN

That was your three-o’clock meeting?

JESSICA

Yes, Susan, it was. (FIDDLES AGAIN) It’s really not that comfortable.

SUSAN

Really? A razor-sharp string right up the crack of your ass – and that’s uncomfortable? (THEN) Has Rob noticed yet?

JESSICA

No. (THEN) I could really use a drink.

SUSAN HOLDS OUT THE JUICE BOX SHE’S BEEN SIPPING FROM. JESSICA DECLINES.
JESSICA (CONT’D)

Thanks, but I was thinking of something a little stronger.

SUSAN

You would have trouble finding anything stronger.

JESSICA TAKES THE JUICE-BOX FROM SUSAN... SIPS - GASPS.

JESSICA

Jesus, Susan! What is that?

SUSAN

It’s really not important. What’s important is, I was able to get it into that tiny little hole.

MEANWHILE:

OVER WITH THE GUYS - THE SAME TIME

ALL THREE WATCHING THE SWARM OF TINY SOCCER PLAYERS.

ROB

Oh, and, did I tell you? I think the day-care is teaching Jack to use toilet paper when he pees.

GORDON

Well, you’re going to have to nip that in the bud. (RE: SOCCER)

Pass it, Noah!

ROB

I know. I’m working on it. (RE: SOCCER) Go, Jack!
JAY
You can’t let a thing like that slide... (RE: SOCCER) Megan, no biting! (TO ROB) Wiping? He’ll never survive at real school.

ROB
I know.

GORDON
Or camp.

ROB
I know.

GORDON
I’m just saying... Jack’s a sensitive kid to begin with. We’ve all seen the way he looks at Noah.

ROB
Okay, we’re going to stop this conversation right now. Jack is four, for god’s sake, he has not made any kind of... lifestyle choice.

JAY
If my dad had caught me with toilet paper anywhere near my penis -- I would have gotten whacked. But those days are gone. Nobody spanks anymore.
GORDON
Not true. (OFF THEIR LOOKS, PROUDLY) Susan and I have decided to start spanking.

ROB
Each other?

GORDON
No, the kids. It’s coming back.

ROB
Well, look at you. I didn’t know you had it in you.

GORDON
I didn’t either. But, the other night, we were having dinner with Denise and Greg, and they said they’d started doing it this summer. They love it. Really recommended it. You should try it.

ROB
Nah, I’m gonna let you guys run point on this one. We’ll stick with time-outs.

GORDON
Time-outs?! Ha! We went through three years of Noah coloring on our walls.
Before he made it to kindergarten he’d spent half his life in a time-out. The other half – he was coloring on our walls. Once I caught him coloring on the wall during a time-out! But no more! Not in the Buckberger house – we are taking back control!

JAY

So, the spanking’s working out well?

GORDON

(WITH A FRUSTRATED SIGH) We haven’t actually tried it yet. We’re still waiting for a spankable offense. For some reason the little buggers have been on their best behavior ever since this started.

ROB

Oof, that’s gotta be frustrating.

GORDON

You have no idea.

THE SOCCER PLAYERS RUSH PAST - A BRIGHTLY COLORED SWARM FOLLOWING THE BALL IN A DISORGANIZED MASS. ROB WATCHES IT GO.
This is ridiculous... Look at
this! This is not soccer - this
is a clump! Why do we put our
kids through this? It’s a waste -

JUST THEN, THE CLUMP DEPOSITS JACK IN FRONT OF ROB.

Daddy, I don’t want to play
anymore. I’m too sweaty.

ROB LOOKS TO GORDON AND JAY. OFF THEIR RAISED EYEBROWS:

It doesn’t mean anything. (THEN,
TO JACK) Get back in there,
buddy!

But --

Go on!

HE GIVES JACK AN GENTLE NUDGE BACK TOWARDS THE CLUMP. JACK
RELUCTANTLY TROTS BACK IN. ROB CALLS AFTER:

And stay away from Noah!

ROB CATCHES JAY AND GORDON’S LOOKS. ROB SHRUGS.

DISSOLVE TO:
ACT TWO

SCENE K

INT. ROB’S CAR/JAY’S CAR – A LITTLE LATER

ROB IS DRIVING. HIS CELL PHONE RINGS. IT’S JAY.

JAY (ON PHONE)

So, what did you get?

ROB

(PLEASED) Edible underwear.

JAY (ON PHONE)

(LET DOWN) Oh.

ROB

(ANNOYED) What?

JAY (ON PHONE)

I’m a little disappointed.

ROB

They’re not for you.

JAY (ON PHONE)

So, what do they taste like?

ROB

I don’t know.

JAY (ON PHONE)

You don’t know?? What happens if she puts them on, and you go to do what they’re designed for and they taste terrible and you make the face?

ROB

She hates the face.
JAY (ON PHONE)

Tonight is not the night you want
to be making the face.

ROB

(EYES THE PACKAGE) Well, I did
buy a three-pack...

HE PULLS OUT A PAIR, LOOKS THEM OVER BRIEFLY AND TAKES A
SMALL BITE OUT OF THE WAIST-BAND.

ROB (CONT’D)

Hmmmm...

JAY (ON PHONE)

So...?

ROB

Not bad... like a kind of
perverted fruit roll-up.

JAY (ON PHONE)

There you go.

ROB

All right, I’ll talk to you later.

JAY (ON PHONE)

Later.

ROB HANGS UP. HE LOOKS AT THE BITTEN PAIR OF UNDERWEAR FOR
A BEAT... THEN BALLS THEM UP AND SHOVES THEM IN HIS MOUTH.
OUT OF THE CORNER OF HIS EYE HE SPOTS SOMETHING...

IT’S MS. GIAMATTI IN THE CAR NEXT TO HIM. SHE GIVES HIM THE
LOOK.

AS ROB SQUIRMS:

DISSOLVE TO:
ACT TWO

SCENE 1

INT. THE KELLER’S UPSTAIRS HALLWAY – LATER THAT NIGHT

ROB LIES IN BED, WORKING, JESSICA ENTERS, CARRYING SOME LAUNDRY, PUTS IT IN HER DRESSER AND SHUTS THE DRAWER – HARD.

ROB

(SETTING DOWN HIS WORK) Okay... What?

JESSICA

(RE: HERSELF) Don’t you notice anything?

ROB

You’re wearing the sweater my mother gave you? Thank you. No?

JESSICA

No!

JESSICA PULLS DOWN THE WAISTBAND OF HER PANTS A LITTLE.

ROB

A thong?

JESSICA

Yes. You didn’t notice at dinner. You didn’t notice at the soccer game?

ROB

Come to think of it you were walking a little funny.

JESSICA

That, you notice?
ROB
Yes. That, I notice - I had no
information. In the future, whenever I
see you, I will pull down your pants
and make sure I’m not missing anything.

JESSICA
(CAN’T HELP BUT SMILE) Shut up.
At least I tried to do something.

ROB
Now wait a minute, I got something, too.

JESSICA
You did?

ROB
I did.

JESSICA
What?

ROB
It’s actually kind of funny, cause
I got underwear, too.

JESSICA
Show me.

ROB
I can’t.

JESSICA
Why not?
ROB

(BEAT) I ate them. (THEN) Okay, don’t look at me that way – they were edible underwear.

JESSICA

And you ate them without me?

ROB

I didn’t have much lunch and... there was traffic.

JESSICA

We’re pathetic.

ROB

We are not pathetic, we’re married. We don’t need to have better sex. We just need to have sex. If we have sex every once in a while do you know how far ahead of our friends we are??

JESSICA TAKES THIS IN.

ROB (CONT’D)

If we slip up and do it twice in a week – people will hate us.

JESSICA

What are you saying?

ROB

I want people to hate us!

FLIP TO:
INT. THE SAME – A LITTLE LATER – NIGHT

IT’S DARK. THE CAMERA MOVES ACROSS THE BED. ROB AND JESSICA’S CLOTHES ARE NOW TANGLED IN THE SHEETS, AS ARE ROB AND JESSICA.

ROB

Now, isn’t this better?

JESSICA

Mmm-hmm...

ROB KISSES HER. IT LINGERS... HER EYES CLOSE.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

Mmmmm...

ROB

Mmmmm...

JANEY’S VOICE

Mommy?

ROB FREEZES. JESSICA CAN’T BEAR TO OPEN HER EYES.

JESSICA

(WHISPERS) Tell me you just called me “mommy.”

JESSICA’S EYES OPEN AND FOLLOW ROB’S GAZE TO FIND JANEY STANDING IN THEIR DOORWAY, LOOKING AT THEM.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

Say something, Rob, say something.

ROB LOOKS OVER AT JANEY, SMILES, AND SAYS:

ROB

...Hi, sweetie.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT TWO
ACT THREE

SCENE M

FADE IN:

INT. THE KELLER’S KITCHEN – THE NEXT AFTERNOON

IT’S A SATURDAY HANG-OUT/DINNER AT THE KELLERS. ROB AND
JESSICA ARE WITH GORDON, SUSAN AND JAY. IN THE BG WE HEAR
THE KIDS PLAYING... THE OTHER ADULTS ARE AGHAST.

GORDON

Oh dear god.

ROB

Yep.

SUSAN

What did you say?

JESSICA

He said, “Hi sweetie.”

ROB

Hey, at least I said something.

SUSAN

You don’t lock your door?

ROB

We do. I got thrown off stride.
She wore a thong.

JESSICA

(TO ROB) Do not blame this on the
thong.

SUSAN

He noticed?
JESSICA
(NOPE) I showed him.

JAY
(TO ROB) What happened to... the underwear?

JESSICA
He ate it.

JAY
All of it?

ROB
There was... traffic.

SUSAN
Wow. Wow... This is classic Freudian stuff. You may be the first people we know to actually scar their child.

GORDON
I’d spank her. (OFF THEIR LOOKS)
We got Noah last night.

JAY
(IMPRESSIONED) You did it?

GORDON
Yep. It was pretty great. I thought I was going to feel guilty, but I just felt... parental.
ROB
Wow. So, what was the spankable offense?

GORDON
Well, that’s not completely... clear.

JESSICA
It’s not “clear”?

GORDON
_Somebody_ left Noah’s Hot Wheels car on the stairs. And we’ve talked to him about that.

ROB
You have. I’ve seen that.

SUSAN
But it also could have been the cat.

JESSICA
The “cat”?

GORDON
(SIGHS) The cat sometimes likes to bat them around. But he definitely left his dirty dish on the table.

JAY
The cat.
GORDON

No, Noah.

JESSICA

So, you either spanked Noah for leaving out a dish, or for a crime committed by a pet?

GORDON

I know. It’s killing me. This whole thing is not going well.

JUST THEN, JACK RUSHES PAST.

JACK

Pee-pee!

HE HURRIES INTO THE BATHROOM. THE DOOR SHUTS. ROB JUMPS UP.

ROB

Excuse me --!

HE BOLTS OVER TO THE BATHROOM, THROWS THE DOOR OPEN - WE HEAR THE TOILET FLUSH. ROB TURNS BACK TO THE GROUP.

JAY

Shake?

ROB

(SADLY) Paper.

JAY

I’m sorry, man.

ROB

Thanks.
SUSAN
So, what are you going to do about Janey?

ROB
I don’t think we have a choice. I think we have to tell her... what we were doing. I think we have to have the talk.

JESSICA
She’s six. We’re not going to just “have the talk”. Besides, we don’t know how long she was standing there. We don’t really know what she saw.

CUT TO:
ACT THREE

SCENE P

INT. ROB AND JESSICA’S BEDROOM – SAME TIME

JANEY STANDS STARING AT JESSICA’S SIDE OF THE BED WITH HER BROTHERS, NOAH, MEGAN AND SEVERAL OTHER 2-TO-FIVE-YEAR-OLD KIDS.

JANEY

(POINTING) My Daddy was right there!

NOAH

(STUNNED) On your Mommy’s side of the bed???

JANEY

(NODS) Uh-huh...

MEGAN

(TOO MUCH TO TAKE) Whoah...

AS THE RUGRAT-ESQUE TABLEAU PONDS THE ENORMITY:

DISSOLVE TO:
ACT THREE

SCENE Q

INT. ROB AND JESSICA’S CARS - MOVING - NIGHT - INTERCUT

ROB IS DRIVING, DRESSED FOR WORK, TALKING ON THE CELL PHONE.

ROB

So, are you close? We don’t want to be late. I don’t want to get “the look.”

JESSICA

We will not get “the look”. I’m turning off Mass Ave right now.

ROB

Good. So, did Janey say anything? Did she bring it up?

JESSICA

Nothing. I dropped her for a playdate at Sophie’s and she spent the whole car ride explaining the difference between a gas sound and a poop sound.

ROB

(SIGHS) That is a huge relief. (BEAT) Okay, I’m here. Are you close?

JESSICA

I’m next to you.

ROB

(LOOKS) Oh.

CUT TO:
EXT. SOMERSET ELEMENTARY PARKING LOT – CONTINUOUS

THEY GET OUT OF THEIR CARS.

ROB

Hi.

JESSICA

Hi.

THEY KISS. JAY COMES OVER, GIVES THEM THE THUMBS-UP.

JAY

Aced the parent/teacher.

ROB

Congrats. (THEN, NOTICING) Still driving the wagon?

JAY

Oh yeah. After soccer yesterday, I swing by Baskin Robbins to get the kids some ice cream, and all of a sudden, this blonde starts checking me out.

ROB

(IMPRESSIONED) The wagon?

JAY

I’m telling you, the Volvo is a chick magnet. Like a wedding ring with wheels.

JESSICA

I think that was their slogan in the early eighties.
JAY
You wanna know what kills me? In the divorce – I traded the house to get the Lexus. The house. Now she has the house.

ROB
Doesn’t seem fair, does it?

JAY
Kills me. (THEN) Oh. How’s it going with Janey? Any repercussions?

JESSICA
She hasn’t brought it up.

ROB
We do not have to have “the talk”.

JAY
Wow. Good for you. Dodged a major parenting bullet, there. (THEN) Well, I’ve gotta fly – I’ve got a half an hour before I go over to the house and see Christine and I was thinking I might swing by Baskin Robbins on my way.

JAY CLIMBS INTO THE WAGON.

JAY (CONT’D)
Think I’m finally getting the hang of this divorce thing.

HE DRIVES OFF. ON JESSICA AND ROB’S REACTIONS:

DISSOLVE TO:
ACT THREE

SCENE R

INT. MS. GIAMATTI’S CLASSROOM – A LITTLE LATER

JESSICA AND ROB ARE SITING AT A TINY TABLE IN TINY CHAIRS – THEIR KNEES ARE UP AROUND THEIR CHINS. MS. GIAMATTI SITS ACROSS FROM THEM, IN A GROWN-UP SIZED CHAIR.

MS. GIAMATTI

...and then, today, we had the children dictate captions and draw pictures of their families. Here’s Janey’s. (FLIPPING PAGES, READING) “Sam picks a booger.”

JESSICA

(WITH A SHRUG) He does that sometimes...

MS. GIAMATTI

“Jack eats a booger.”

ROB

She’s very creative.

MS. GIAMATTI

“Janey wears her new pierced earrings.”

JESSICA

We told her not until sixth grade, but she’s persistent.

MS. GIAMATTI

Mm-hm. And here’s “Daddy on Mommy’s side of the bed.”
MS. GIAMATTI HOLDS UP A PICTURE OF TWO PARENTAL STICK FIGURES - MISSIONARY POSITION. BEAT.

JESSICA
Well, her drawing is really improving. Look at that detail.

MS. GIAMATTI
Mm-hm. And here’s Kayla’s picture... And Oliver’s...

SHE HOLDS UP MORE CRAYON RENDERINGS OF STICK-Figure SEX.

MS. GIAMATTI (CONT’D)
Your family was a popular subject today.

ROB
Okay, look. It was an accident.
We’re really not bad parents.
We’re certainly not the worst parents you have... It’s not like we spank our kids -

ON MS. GIAMATTI’S LOOK:

CUT TO:
ACT THREE

SCENE T

INT. THE KELLER’S KITCHEN - LATER THAT EVENING

ROB AND JESSICA ARE WITH GORDON AND SUSAN SITTING AT THE KITCHEN COUNTER.

GORDON
You told on us?? You told on us??

ROB
Did you see the picture?! Look at the picture. How would you feel if Noah walked in on you?

SUSAN
Well, if Noah walked in on us that would mean we’d have to be having sex.

GORDON
Oh, come on. We have sex. We had sex like... (THINKS) Well, not Tuesday, cause we had Chinese food and that just sits in your stomach... And... (REALIZES) How long has it been?

SUSAN NODS.

JAY COMES IN THE BACK DOOR.

JAY
Hey. How did your parent-teacher go?
JESSICA

Take a look.

SHE SHOWS HIM JANET’S PICTURE.

JAY

Nice. I always liked your hair this way. (BEAT) Guess you’ll be having that talk, huh.

ROB

I don’t see what else we can do. She saw us. She’s asking questions. We can’t just lie to her.

JESSICA

(NODS, THEN) Are you sure...?

ROB

Yes. Look. We’ll do it together. It won’t be easy. Or fun. But maybe it can be... short.

JESSICA

I just have no idea what we’re going to say.

SUSAN

Tell her what my mother told me.

JESSICA

What was that?

SUSAN

“Ask your friends.”
ROB
Her friends are six.

SUSAN
Then she won’t learn anything you
don’t want her to know.

GORDON
(TO ROB) I still can’t believe you
told on us. It’s not like we’re
the only one’s spanking our kids.

JAY
Actually you are.

GORDON
What?

JAY
I bumped into Greg in Harvard
Square. He and Denise have been
spanking each other. They would
never spank the kids. Apparently
Denise is a Quaker.

SUSAN
(TO Gordon) Nice.

FROM OFF SCREEN, WE HEAR:

JACK (O.S.)
(CALLING) Mommy...!

JESSICA
(CALLING OFF) Coming!

SHE EXITS.
ROB
I think we have to admit it - we have no idea what we’re doing with any of this.

GORDON
None whatsoever.

JAY
We’re winging it!

SUSAN
If I could get my hands on the bitch who came up with that “you can have it all” crap...

GORDON
That was your mother.

JESSICA RETURNS WITH JACK.

JESSICA
There was no toilet paper in the bathroom.

ROB
(PROUDLY) I did that. I said, “Jack, when you’re done, just give a shake and pull your pants back up.”

JESSICA
And he did. (BEAT) It was a poop. Here.

SHE HANDS HIM JACK. ON ROB’S REACTION:

DISSOLVE TO:
ACT THREE

SCENE U

INT. ROB AND JESSICA’S BEDROOM - A LITTLE LATER - THAT NIGHT

JANEY SITS ON THE END OF THE BED. JESSICA SITS NEXT TO HER. ROB PACES, TRYING TO HAVE “THE TALK”.

ROB

...so, anyway, Janey, we know you want to know... Want to know...

JANEY

Why you were on Mommy’s side of the bed?

ROB

Right. Right. And... we feel that, since you’re six now --

JANEY

-- and a quarter.

ROB

And a quarter - oh god. I think - we think... that it’s time that you understood that... when a man and a woman love each other very much... Well, not only a man and a woman, sometimes a man and a... Anyway, when a man and a woman love each other very much... And are married...
ROB (CONT'D)

Or not necessarily married, but
definitely grown-ups, sometimes
they need... or want to --

JESSICA

(JUMPING IN) Mommy was cold and
Daddy was keeping her warm.

ROB

(QUICKLY) That’s it.

JANEY

(SATISFIED) Oh.
ACT THREE

SCENE V

INT. ROB AND JESSICA’S BEDROOM - A LITTLE LATER - NIGHT

JESSICA’S DOING WORK ON THE BED AS ROB ENTERS.

ROB

They’re asleep.

JESSICA

(SMILES) Oh, really...?

ROB

Hold that thought Mrs. Keller...

HE TURNS AND LOCKS THE DOOR, TURNS OFF THE OVERHEAD LIGHT. JESSICA SLIPS UNDER THE COVERS, PULLS OFF HER PANTS, TOSSES THEM OUT. ROB CROSSES TO THE BED, UNBUTTONING HIS SHIRT...

AND THERE’S THE SOUND OF LITTLE HANDS WRESTLING WITH THE LOCKED DOOR KNOB.

ROB (CONT’D)

I have to get that, right?

JESSICA NODS. ROB OPENS THE DOOR - IT’S ALL THREE KIDS, CLUTCHING THEIR BLANKIES AND STUFFED ANIMALS...

SAM

We sleep with you, Dada?

JANEY

We don’t want mommy to be cold.

ROB

(SMILES; RESIGNED) No. We don’t.

Come on...

THEY ALL CLimb INTO BED. AS THEY SNUGGLE DOWN UNDER PILES OF KIDS AND STUFFED TOYS, JESSICA LOOKS OVER AT ROB AND WHISPERS:
JESSICA

(WHISPERS) Well... this is a little awkward.

ROB

(WHISPERS) Thong?

JESSICA

Oh yeah...

ON THIS SWEET, IRONIC NOTE:

FADE OUT:

END OF SHOW