

happy accident

Pilot

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ACT ONE

1 INT. GOOSKI'S BAR - MORNING

1

A Pittsburgh sports bar. THREE WOMEN at a table: ELEANOR (30, professor, analytical, no time for nonsense, could come unspooled at any moment), DANIELLE (28, emotional, neurotic, single mother, bleeding heart), and SAMANTHA "SAMMY" (26, a mix of millennial entitlement and laziness, the "son" their father never had.) Danielle smiles at her phone.

ELEANOR

Why are you smiling? Putin fell off his horse?

DANIELLE

Confirming my coffee date with Kenan, that cute med student.

SAMMY

How gay is this one?

Sammy LAUGHS, Eleanor can't resist a smile.

DANIELLE

Keep in mind I'm picking someone who may have to be a role model for my son. When you're looking for sensitive, modern, evolved men, you're bound to hit a gay road block.

BUD

Gay road block? Sounds like Danielle met a new fella.

BUD, their doting father, has entered in a Steeler jersey and cargo shorts, (50s, never left Pittsburgh, loves his 80s hair, an old school "every-man" on the verge of a wake-up call). Sammy LAUGHS and fist-bumps her Dad as he sits.

DANIELLE

Hilarious. Don't act like that's such a problem for me.

STILL PHOTO: CHRYON READS: "Danielle's prom date". A young gowned Danielle has her arms around her HANDSOME DATE. She smiles for camera, he checks out another guy's ass.

2ND PHOTO: CHYRON READS: "Danielle's first boyfriend". An ice rink. Danielle kisses the rouged cheek of a PRETTY WEEPING MAN in a sequined top who holds a bouquet of roses.

1 CONTINUED:

1

3RD PHOTO: CHYRON: "Danielle's former fiance." A family photo. A red arrow points to a lithe ASIAN MAN who sits with his MUCH OLDER HUSBAND and their THREE MIXED-RACE KIDS.

BACK TO SCENE :

SAMMY

Dad, you want to finish my omelet?

BUD

Yep. All I had this morning was two hot dogs and a donut at the gas station. I'll be in the Bahamas in six hours, gotta make sure --
(patting his gut)
-- my beach body's poppin' for my lady friend.

DANIELLE

You know my feelings about Facebook politically - I hate it and everyone on it - but if it helps you reconnect with an old flame --

SAMMY

(to Bud)

I checked her profile. Kind of looks like Mom. Maybe you score, then dump her and feel like a winner again.

ELEANOR

Sammy, be a person.

SAMMY

Eleanor, don't censor my voice.

ELEANOR

Okay, enough chit-chat. Dad, while we're excited for your trip, we are a bit worried it could be psychologically fraught, given --

DANIELLE

(to Bud)

You just found out Mom got engaged. We told her to keep that from you until after your trip but she's --

SAMMY

A selfish cow.

ELEANOR

Can I just do this, please?

1 CONTINUED: (2)

1

Eleanor fiddles with her phone during:

ELEANOR (CONT'D)

Point being, I thought I'd introduce you to a therapist, a colleague of mine at Pitt. She can Facetime with you in an emotional emergency.

DR. CASSANDRA (FROM PHONE)

Hello? This is Dr. Cassandra.

ELEANOR

(to phone)

Hi, Mona. I'm sitting with my Dad.

Eleanor turns the phone to Bud, Bud turns it back.

BUD

Guys, I'm great! I got the world by the danglers.

ELEANOR

Or are you just putting on a brave face?

BUD

Well, now I feel trapped because I happen to have a brave face.

DANIELLE

It's okay to *feel*, Dad. If my life was as much of a soap opera as yours, I'd be holed up in the dark, sobbing into my lentils and rice.

(getting emotional)

It breaks my heart that your high school sweetheart looked at you after thirty years and said, "this is not enough for me, I'm out, I'm leaving you for a younger, taller--"

SAMMY

Puer-to Ri-can.

ELEANOR

Unnecessary.

(then, to Bud)

Not to mention you're on the wrong side of sociological history.

BUD

'The hell does that mean?

1 CONTINUED: (3)

1

ELEANOR

As a straight, white, middle-aged man, you've evolved to dominate a world that won't soon exist. In an age of text alerts, you're Paul Revere, screaming news at people from a horse.

DANIELLE

White people. Don't let the door hit you in the ass. Actually, do.

SAMMY

What color do you think you are?

BUD

Guys, I appreciate how much you care, but trust me, this trip isn't going to be a problem.

DANIELLE

Really? You haven't been with another woman since Mom, Sammy doesn't think you're even masturbating --

BUD

Hey, now. There's a kids' menu here.

SAMMY

I checked your browser history. It's all cars and a weird obsession with Ben Roethlisberger's body.

BUD

It's injury updates. And I'm worried about his weight.

DR. CASSANDRA (FROM PHONE)

Can we get back to the masturbation question? His reaction is critical to my analysis and I'm staring straight into a sugar caddy.

ELEANOR

I'd say defensive, a little shamed.

DR. CASSANDRA (ON PHONE)

Interesting.

BUD

Not interesting! I take care of myse-- can we get to the airport?

1 CONTINUED: (4)

1

ELEANOR

Look, all we're saying is if you have a breakdown mid-coitus triggered by your suppressed well of pain, rather than drink yourself to death in some abandoned Carribean beach hut, please call one of us.

BUD

Got it.

ELEANOR/DANIEL/SAMMY

Yay! / You're gonna have so much fun! / Woop-woop!!

2 INT. BUD'S TRUCK / EXT. PITTSBURGH AIRPORT - AN HOUR LATER

2

Sammy drives. Bud, Eleanor and Danielle ride.

BUD

Sammy, pass this yutz in the Tacoma. A man should have a real truck. Thousand bucks says he lives in his girlfriend's apartment, pretends to like her cats.

(as they drive by)

This is America! You don't have to live like this!

Sammy pulls over.

BUD (CONT'D)

Okay, love you girls. See you in two weeks.

The GIRLS AD-LIB, "love you, too," "have so much fun," etc.

SAMMY

Hey.

Sammy puts a condom in his chest pocket with a wink.

SAMMY (CONT'D)

Don't be a chump, cover your stump.

Bud offers a tight smile and walks into the terminal as the girls drive off. A beat, then Bud rushes back out and sneaks into a Geo Metro that pulls up to meet him.

3 INT. PAUL'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

3

Bud hops in with his friend PAUL (30s, Pittsburgh accent, heavy, mustached, deluded, idolizes Bud, why is he sweating?)

BUD

Girls didn't suspect a thing.

PAUL

"Operation Lie to the Ladies" has cleared its first hurdle.

BUD

Aren't operation names usually clever?

PAUL

It's more of an art than a science.
I'm running multiple operations.
Best to err on the side of clarity.

Paul pulls out wide then has to swerve back into his lane.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Whoa. Sorry, I stopped eating bread yesterday and I'm all jittery.

MAIN TITLES

4 INT. THE FAMILY HOME - BUD'S BEDROOM - LATER

4

A modest, weathered home outside Pittsburgh. Eleanor takes a framed photo off the wall and dumps it in a box. Sammy enters, cracking a beer.

SAMMY

Did Dad say you could get rid of all Mom's stuff?

ELEANOR

No, because he doesn't know what's good for him. He can't move on with memories of her everywhere.

Eleanor picks up a nearby phallic "sculpture".

ELEANOR (CONT'D)

A middle-aged prison nurse takes up sculpture and makes a bunch of what are clearly glazed wieners -- he should have seen this coming.

4 CONTINUED:

4

SAMMY

Well, when he gets pissed, I'm telling him you made me do it.

Sammy starts to help, grabbing things for the box.

ELEANOR

Who cares, I'm his favorite.

SAMMY

You're his favorite? He named me Sammy after his favorite food. Chipped chopped ham Sammies.

ELEANOR

I marvel at the things that fuel your self-esteem.
(then, pointed)
And while we're on the subject of removing items from Dad's home that are holding him back --

SAMMY

I don't hold Dad back! I live here to take care of him. It's my burden. Thanks to me, Danielle is freed up to hippie-brainwash her weird sperm bank kid, and you get to sip wine at museums with your teeny bird-husband.

ELEANOR

Philip had scarlet fever as a child and had to take an experimental antibiotic that stunted his growth! He's a giant where it counts. IN HIS MIND.

SAMMY

Interesting. Same parents, but I go for dumb and hung.

ELEANOR

And how are you taking care of Dad? It looks like you're just turning into him: morning beers, cargo shorts --

SAMMY

Everything I need is right on my thighs. Band-Aid, lipstick, you could sneak Philip onto a plane in one of these side-pockets.

Eleanor notices something in a drawer.

4 CONTINUED: (2)

4

ELEANOR

Oh my god.
(holding it up)
Dad's passport. It's here.

SAMMY

How? He texted and said he boarded.

ELEANOR

Did he lie? Why would he lie?

Eleanor searches drawers as Sammy takes an iPad from one of her pockets.

SAMMY

I can track his phone. Hold on.

ELEANOR

You track his phone?!
(GASPS, noticing)
He didn't take his bathing suit!

Eleanor holds up Bud's JAMS bathing suit.

SAMMY

Maybe he took another one?

ELEANOR

You know Dad's rule: a man should only have one bathing suit unless he's a model or a millionaire.

SAMMY

(off iPad, whispering)
Hey, he's in the house.

Eleanor looks at the screen.

ELEANOR

That says "Eleanor's phone"! You track me, too?!

SAMMY

I have to keep this family together!
I'm the matriarch now!

5 INT. CAFE - DAY

5

KENAN sits alone. (20's, black, cute guy who swears he's not a control freak in spite of his panic attacks.) His PHONE DINGS. A text from "Mother" says, "Where are you?" He rolls his eyes. 2ND TEXT: "Why aren't you answering?" 3RD TEXT: "What did I do now???" 4TH TEXT: "CALL ME!"

5 CONTINUED:

5

Bad news from the doctor :-(" Kenan finally hits dial, then:

KENAN
(into phone)
What happened with the doctor?

INTERCUT WITH:

6 INT. SHERRI'S CAR - SAME

6

SHERRI (50s, black, gorgeous diva with limited means, lounge-singer at a Ritz Carlton, fabulous Donna Summer 70's hair, shades). "Little White Lies" PLAYS on the CAR RADIO.

SHERRI
He's moving! Across town, to a strip mall, nowhere near any of my luncheon spots. THIS is the better healthcare system? I want Barack back!

KENAN
I'm not sure Obamacare did what you think it did.
(then, noticing)
Are you playing your own album?

SHERRI
An under-appreciated gem from the late '90s. It was originally intended to be a series of duets with Mel Torme, but we decided to go solo when he stopped returning my calls.
(then)
I'm out running errands and I want to come over. I miss you, love.

KENAN
(suddenly nervous)
Oh, um, sorry, I'm not home.

SHERRI
Kenan, if you're in Pittsburgh, I swear to God --

KENAN
I'm not! I'm actually at school. In the lab. Anatomy mid-term.

SHERRI
Oh really?

REVEAL Sherri is parked nearby. She holds opera glasses to her eyes and looks accusingly at Kenan in the cafe.

6 CONTINUED:

6

SHERRI (CONT'D)
(singing along, pointed)
THE DEVIL WAS IN YOUR HEART // BUT
HEAVEN WAS IN YOUR EYES // THE NIGHT
THAT YOU TOLD ME THOSE LITTLE WHITE
LIES...

Kenan spots Danielle approach the window.

KENAN
Okay, you're harmonizing with
yourself, I'm gonna go. Love you.

Kenan hangs up and notices Danielle primping for her date in the window: picks teeth, fluffs hair, adjusts breasts. When she realizes he can see her, she LAUGHS nervously then mimes shooting herself in the head.

7 EXT. BUD'S CABIN - LATER

7

An A-Frame in the woods. Paul's car pulls up, a boat now on top. Bud and Paul hop out, Bud wears an awesome, thick, 80s sheepskin coat. Paul regards the house, in awe.

PAUL
As you know, I'm not a deeply
religious man --

BUD
We've never discussed it.

PAUL
-- but if there's a heaven, I'd wager
it looks a lot like a cabin you built
in the woods.

Paul and Bud take the boat off the car, then unload gear from the back seat, a shotgun, fishing rod, etc.

BUD
I'm not even going to be humble about
it -- I feel like one of those people
that settled America. Like, who's a
famous frontiersman?

PAUL
Oh. Um. Betsy Ross?!
(off Bud's look)
You put me on the spot. I want so
badly to have the answers you need.

BUD
Wasn't there somebody named "Wild"?

7 CONTINUED:

7

PAUL

Oscar Wilde!

BUD

Yes! Thank you.

(then)

Screw the Bahamas, this is what I need. Three weeks to be a man again -- little fishing, little hunting, finish the cabin. Although, I feel bad about lying to the girls.

PAUL

Hey, it's a good time to take a break from all ladies. They're angry, Bud. My plan, lay low a couple years, give 'em time to cool off. When we emerge, who knows what the world'll look like? Could be like Planet of the Apes, except the women will have evolved to ride horses.

BUD

Women can ride horses now.

PAUL

They're not here, we can have fun.

A BIRD flies past them and smashes into the large window of the house, falls dead on the porch.

BUD

That keeps happening. That's not an omen, right? In horror films, dead birds would mean something bad.

PAUL

Nah, horror films are rarely set in remote cabins in the woods. And don't worry, I'll be here with you the whole time.

Paul pulls a sheepskin coat out of the back and puts it on.

BUD

No you won't. And what's with the sheepskin? That's my thing. I bought it at a police auction. They got it off a dead guy.

7 CONTINUED: (2)

7

PAUL

Uh, we both know it's Stallone's thing from Rocky IV. And what do you mean I'm not going to be here?

BUD

The whole point of this was for me to be here alone.

PAUL

Yeah, with me. Two guys alone in the woods, doing Oscar Wilde stuff.

BUD

No! I want to do Oscar Wilde stuff by myself!

(concerned)

Are we talking about the right guy?

PAUL

I took three weeks off work and this is how you treat me? The guy who was there when your wife left? Who brought you beers and a Penthouse, and didn't judge you for listening to Coldplay?

BUD

I told you never to bring that up!

PAUL

You know what? You're a user. I wouldn't stay now if you asked me.

Paul waits a beat.

BUD

I'm not asking you to stay.

PAUL

That's not why I paused!

Paul, gets in his car, starts it and cranks down the window.

PAUL (CONT'D)

And by the way... Tammy's the one who hurt you, not me!

He gasses the engine, his wheels spin as he takes off, shooting a rock into Bud's forehead. He goes down.

BUD

Ow! Damn it!

7 CONTINUED: (3)

7

Paul drives off as Bud, a bloody cut on his forehead, gets to his feet and takes a Band-Aid out of his cargo shorts. Another BIRD hits his window - THUD. Bud reacts, disturbed.

8 INT. CAFE - LATER

8

Danielle, clearly enamored, sits with KENAN.

KENAN

I've been putting myself through med-school by cooking, then I fell in love with it. And now I'm wondering -- should I just be a cook?

DANIELLE

I so admire people who cook, you know? Because food... really... feeds us... Then again, the doctors, man. They... really...

KENAN

Take care of us?

DANIELLE

Thanks, I was in free-fall. You talk while I think of a way to convince you I'm not on painkillers.

KENAN

You're very hard on yourself.

DANIELLE

And others.

KENAN

(laughs, then)

It's just, my whole life I've wanted to be a doctor, but lately the universe is sending me subtle signals it may not be for me.

9 INT. MEDICAL SCHOOL LAB - DAY - FLASHBACK

9

Kenan, in scrubs, cuts into a cadaver as PROFESSORS and other STUDENTS look on.

KENAN

Oh, god, it's oozing. I didn't expect so much... fluid. Wow.

(MORE)

9 CONTINUED:

9

KENAN (CONT'D)
(slicing again, then)
Oop, I cut myself, right through the glove. Oh, hey, got the fluid in my cut.
(panicking)
Is that bad? Does anyone know what this guy died of? I'm blanking: how long does, say, ebola, stay alive in its host after --

Dizzy, he starts to fall, grabs on to the cadaver's arm. He goes down, pulling the cadaver down on top of him. A beat.

KENAN (O.S.)
Something went in my mouth!

10 INT. CAFE - BACK TO SCENE

10

Danielle and Kenan, as they were. Kenan takes out his phone.

KENAN
I can't talk about myself anymore.
(re: his phone)
I looked at your Instagram. Tell me about your artwork.

DANIELLE
Oh, I stage and photograph children's toys to subvert cultural power dynamics. I call it photo she-alism.

KENAN
That's her-riffic.
(off her look)
As in TER-iffic, not HOR-riffic.

DANIELLE
Thanks for clarifying, I get both.

Over the following, we SEE THE IMAGE Danielle describes.

DANIELLE (V.O.)
This is a series where I take on corporate board rooms by putting all women execs - your Barbies, your Strawberry Shortcakes - at the table, while all the men - Ken, G.I. Joe, Han Solo - run the vacuum and empty the trash in french maid uniforms.

Back to scene, Danielle's PHONE RINGS. She looks.

10 CONTINUED:

10

DANIELLE

I'm so sorry, I have to take this.
(into phone)
Hello... Uh-huh...

KENAN

(re: pic on phone)
Is Papa Smurf nursing a baby?

DANIELLE

(covers phone, sotto)
I love that you saw that. Some men
don't.
(alarmed, into phone)
Oh. Okay. Be right there.
(hangs up, to Kenan)
That was the mom from my kid's
playdate. Apparently, Miles did
something weird and they want me to
pick him up.

KENAN

Oh, that's okay. Can I drive you?

DANIELLE

What? No. That's too nice.

Kenan throws money on the table and they head out on:

KENAN

Hey, I was raised by a single mom.
I know how hard it is because she
constantly reminds me.

11 EXT. CAFE - SECONDS LATER

11

Kenan and Danielle, in his car, pull out of their space.
Nearby, Sherri puts on huge sunglasses and tails them.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

12 INT. GOOSKI'S BAR - LATER

12

Paul nurses a beer and gorges on bread. Eleanor and Sammy, enter, spot him and cross as he finishes the last piece, then taps on the empty basket as a WAITRESS passes.

PAUL

Another round. I'm starting to feel even again.

SAMMY

Where's our Dad?

PAUL

I'll tell you where he is -- in the doghouse.

ELEANOR

Paul, we don't have time for your one-sided love affair. Where is he?

PAUL

(re: Eleanor)

We both know he's not the member of your family I'm sweet on.

He flirtily fixes his hair -- it somehow gets worse.

PAUL (CONT'D)

How's your premature baby of a husband, by the way? Dead yet?

ELEANOR

If you must know, the doctor put him on Pedia-Sure and olive oil and he's put on four pounds!

SAMMY

(to Paul)

Enough stalling, you jowl-y jagoff.

(holds up passport)

We know he didn't go to the Bahamas, and we know he can't take a whiz without peeling you off his jock.

ELEANOR

Classy.

PAUL

It's true. We're tighter than Beyonce's underpants --

12 CONTINUED:

12

ELEANOR

Guys, there's a church next door.

(then)

Paul, we're worried about Dad, we all know he's navigating an emotional minefield right now --

PAUL

'Cause he punched his boss and lost his job?

ELEANOR / SAMMY

What?! / He lost his job?

ELEANOR

Now you have to tell us where he is!

PAUL

As marginalized as I feel by him right now, nothing you can say will make me betray his confidence.

SAMMY

(beat, then to Eleanor)

Just let him touch something so we can get out of here.

13 EXT. MILES' PLAYDATE HOUSE - DAY

13

A suburban Pittsburgh street - older brick houses. As Kenan and Danielle exit Kenan's car...

KENAN

It's so cool you had a kid on your own. Must be so rewarding.

DANIELLE

Yeah, sometimes.

Danielle looks up to see NAVYA (30s, Indian suburban mom) sitting on the porch with MILES (7, Danielle's son, blonde). Miles wears a Black Panther costume, mask pushed up on his head. Nearby, AARAV (7, Indian boy) searches for something.

DANIELLE (CONT'D)

Hey Navya. Hey, Miles. This is my friend, Kenan.

KENAN

Nice to meet you.

(to Miles)

Black Panther, huh? Cool costume.

13 CONTINUED:

13

NAVYA

It is. My son Aarav has one, too.
And he'd love to put it on but Miles
hid it somewhere.

MILES

There's only one Black Panther.

NAVYA

We offered him a Superman costume
but Miles refused because you told
him, "white people are over."

Kenan shoots Danielle a bemused look.

DANIELLE

("laughing", awkward)
Well, come on, you guys get it.
Enough already, right?

Kenan has spotted something off-screen -- the top of Sherri's
fabulous 70's Donna Summer hair bouncing behind a wall.

DANIELLE (CONT'D)

Look, it's all so confusing now. I
mean, what's the line between cultural
appropriation and good ol' admiration?

NAVYA

Here's how I'd break it down: let
the white kid dress up like every
other superhero ever. Let the brown
kid be Black Panther.

DANIELLE

Well, technically, he isn't Brown
Panth -- this seems like a bad road.
(to Kenan)
Maybe you'd like to weigh in?

KENAN

Can you give me a second?

Kenan crosses toward the Donna Summer hair. ANGLE ON: Sherri,
behind the wall, crouched and creeping closer to listen.

14 EXT. POND - DAY

14

Bud, bandaged head, in his sheepskin coat, sits in a rowboat
with a cooler and boombox. We hear Chuck Norris reading "To
Build a Fire" by Jack London.

14 CONTINUED:

14

CHUCK NORRIS (V.O.)

Day had dawned cold and gray when a man turned aside from the main Yukon trail...

Bud cracks a beer, breathes in the fresh air, picks up his fishing rod, winds up for a glorious cast. The hook catches his ear, rips it and draws blood. He YELPS, then frantically tries to unhook it from his ear. He loses his balance, tips the boat and falls in the water. Chuck Norris goes quiet. Bud bobs up, struggles to grab the boat for safety.

BUD

This sheepskin is like an anchor.

He pulls at the zipper. It's stuck.

BUD (CONT'D)

My God, I'm gonna be the second guy to die in this thing.

His fishing rod, which floats in the water, suddenly tugs and shoots away on the surface of the water.

15 EXT. SUBURBAN STREET NEAR MILES' PLAYDATE HOUSE - DAY

15

Sherri is peeking over the wall, but doesn't see Kenan.

KENAN

This is the wig you choose to tail me in?

She turns, surprised, then tries to play casual.

SHERRI

Gomez didn't have time take it off after my show last night. It went well, by the way, did a disco set. Lotta Marriot Rewards members desecrating the Hustle. Flattering, but hard not to judge.
(then, accusatory)
You said you weren't in Pittsburgh.

KENAN

You said you were running errands.

SHERRI

I am. First I stop you from making a huge mistake, then I pick up a new yoga mat. At my age this...
(flexible dance pose)
...doesn't just happen.

15 CONTINUED:

15

KENAN
 (checking for Danielle)
 Please stop drawing attention to
 yourself for once.
 (then)
 Let me handle this my way.

SHERRI
 Have you thought about how this little
 adventure of yours will affect me?

KENAN
 How about we put my needs first this
 time? And please don't bring up --

SHERRI
 I gave up a summer
 tour with Shalamar
 when Jody Whatley left
 because you were having
 panic attacks and became
 afraid of the wind!

KENAN
 -- that whole Shalamar
 Jody Whatley thing and my
 panic attacks and I was
 never afraid of the wind!

KENAN (CONT'D)
 I'm doing this! Stop being so
 dramatic and selfish!

SHERRI
 I don't know where you learned to
 hurt people with your words, but
 it's ugly and no one will love you.

KENAN
 Mom, get on board, or go home.

Hurt, Sherri turns and walks toward her car.

16 EXT. MILES' PLAYDATE HOUSE - SAME

16

Danielle is with Miles (still in costume) near Kenan's car.
 She looks around for him as her PHONE BUZZES.

INTERCUT WITH:

17 INT. BUD'S PICKUP TRUCK - SAME

17

Sammy drives, Eleanor rides shotgun, Danielle is on SPEAKER.

DANIELLE
 Hey, what's up?

17 CONTINUED:

17

SAMMY

Dad didn't go to the Bahamas. He lost his job and he's holed up in some cabin in the woods with a gun!

DANIELLE

What?

ELEANOR

Dad lied, there's no old girlfriend, Paul told us everything. I think we should get over there.

DANIELLE

Paul knew where he was?

SAMMY

Yeah, he broke down and told us when Eleanor showed him her nipple.

ELEANOR

I was going for cleavage and overshoot!

18 INT. BUD'S A-FRAME - SAME

18

Bud drags himself in, bleeding from his ear, soaking wet. He tries his stuck coat zipper again, to no avail. He contorts, tries to pull the coat over his head. POP. He yelps as his shoulder dislocates. He walks to the wall, moaning, and smashes his shoulder back into place.

19 EXT. BUD'S A-FRAME - MOMENTS LATER

19

Danielle, Kenan and Miles (costumed, mask on) get out of Kenan's car to meet Sammy and Eleanor who stand by the pickup.

SAMMY

Took you long enough.
(re: Kenan)
Who's this? A cop?

DANIELLE

This is Kenan, my coffee date.

KENAN

Hello, everyone.

DANIELLE

He was nice enough to drive me and Miles here.

19 CONTINUED:

19

SAMMY
(sotto, to Eleanor)
Creepy.

ELEANOR
Alright, let's get in there, now
that everybody's here.

DR. CASSANDRA (ON PHONE)
FYI, I'll have to hop off at three
for another patient. This is a
beautiful lot, by the way. I can
almost smell those old maples.

As they head towards the house:

KENAN
I'm not a cop by the way, med student.
Maybe becoming a cook. You don't
care, what with your dad having a
breakdown and--
(getting queasy)
Oof, is that blood on the porch?

Alarmed, they all rush into the cabin.

20 INT. BUD'S CABIN - CONTINUOUS

20

They enter to see a main room decorated as a shrine to Bud's
youth: sports memorabilia, rock/movie posters (Bon Jovi,
Rambo, etc.), all from the '80s. Bud stands with a knife
aimed at his chest. They ALL REACT.

SAMMY
Daddy, no!

She pulls a ping-pong paddle from her cargo shorts and throws
it at him like a tomahawk. It bonks him in the head.

BUD
Ow!

He drops the knife, Sammy rushes and grabs it.

SAMMY
You were going to off yourself? I
just got us Bob Seger tickets!

BUD
I'm just trying to cut myself out of
this damn jacket.

Bud grabs the knife back and cuts open his coat throughout:

20 CONTINUED:

20

BUD (CONT'D)

What the hell are you doing here?!
(re: Kenan)
And why'd you bring a cop?

MILES

He's not a cop, he's a med student
or a cook.

KENAN

Hi, I'm Kenan, nice to --

DANIELLE

Not right now. Dad, what the hell?
Why'd you lie to us? What is this
place?

BUD

It's my cabin. I built it.

SAMMY

So, this is what you've been doing
when you said you were at work?
That's right, Paul told us you got
fired for punching your Polish boss.

ELEANOR

Must you name everyone's ethnicity?!

KENAN

I should go wait by the car.

Kenan crosses to the door, but struggles to get it open.

ELEANOR

Dad, what happened?

BUD

Don't worry, it's just a leave of
absence. I guess, when your mom
left, I had some anger, but it's
better now.

A BIRD flies into the window, falls to its death.

BUD (CONT'D)

("to birds")
It's a window, you filthy idiots!
(then, to girls)
How can they not see that?? I hate
them!

20 CONTINUED: (2)

20

DR. CASSANDRA (ON PHONE)
Intriguing. Anger, isolation --
(re: posters)
-- surrounding himself with sexually
ambiguous imagery from his youth.
There's an article in this.

BUD
She's here?! Give me that.

Bud grabs the phone and hangs up.

KENAN
(re: doorknob)
I'm having trouble with the --

BUD
It's crooked, okay?! You try building
a cabin by yourself!

DANIELLE
Why didn't you just tell us you wanted
to come here?

BUD
'Cause of this! You're all over me,
telling me what to feel, what to
think! And I knew you'd never leave
me alone if I didn't say I was a
thousand miles away. I'm sorry, but
what I need right now is less family!

Sherri bursts in dramatically, knocking Kenan (who's been
holding the door handle) on his ass.

SHERRI
Well, tough!
(re: Kenan)
He's your son and you can't shut him
out!

KENAN
Nooooo!

The whole room reacts, completely SHOCKED.

SHERRI
Wait, were you not talking about
this? I heard him say the thing
about less family, I assumed --

20 CONTINUED: (3)

20

KENAN

What are you doing here? I thought you were leaving.

SHERRI

We both know that wasn't happening.

SAMMY

(to Kenan)

Hey, who's the hot lady?!

BUD

Holy cow. Sherri Luuv?

SHERRI

Old stage name. So cheesy, "love" with two u's. Now I'm Sherri Fox, double x's.

(then)

Hello, Bud.

DANIELLE

Kenan! Did she say son?

KENAN

Yeah, um, I was gonna get to that.

ELEANOR

Can you do it now?

KENAN

(getting nervous)

Oh God, okay, um, on a whim, I did a "23 and Me". They told me I was a fifty percent match with a Danielle Bennett. I went to mom, said "Is it possible the man I thought was my dad is not my dad?" She threw a drink in my face, shouted, "how dare you!" then said "I guess so, yeah."

SHERRI

It was the 90s, free love. Don't judge me.

KENAN

I showed Mom Danielle's Instagram, she recognized Bud from a picture...

DANIELLE

I thought we were on a date!

20 CONTINUED: (4)

20

SHERRI

A date? He's gay.

KENAN

Hadn't gotten to that, either. Is it getting suffocate-y in here?

DANIELLE

Are you kidding me?! I was trying to sleep with another gay guy?!

ELEANOR

He could also be your brother, that's more the headline.

BUD

Good god, my life is a soap opera.

DANIELLE

(to Kenan)

Why didn't you just tell me?

KENAN

I kind of wanted to get to know you all before springing the news.

SAMMY

You were testing us?!

SHERRI

He had every right to hedge his bets. With all due respect, you people seem nuts.

Sherri notices Kenan, hands on his knees, hyper-ventilating.

KENAN

I feel like I'm dying.

(to Bud, panicking)

That reminds me, do we have any hereditary illnesses? Do you get like this?

ELEANOR

Dad, when did this happen?

DANIELLE

Yeah, did you cheat on Mom?

SHERRI

If I could pipe in for a sec... was this --

(MORE)

SHERRI (CONT'D)

(re: Bud's Belly)

-- always a part of the equation?
That has not historically been my
thing.

SAMMY

(to Bud)

He's not going to get to go to
football games with you. Wait, he's
gay, he's not going to want to go.

KENAN

(fighting nausea)

Huge Steeler fan.

SAMMY

I'm the boy around here!

ELEANOR

Everybody stop! Let Dad talk!

They all turn to Bud, waiting for something. A beat, then Bud walks to the door, grabs his gun from a gun rack, which promptly crashes to the floor. He walks out, slams the door. The doorknob falls to the floor, rolls past everyone, picking up steam. A BIRD flies into the window, falls to its death.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

21 INT. BUD'S CABIN - MOMENTS LATER

21

Everyone but Bud, as they were. Danielle turns to Kenan.

DANIELLE

Why didn't you just tell me?

KENAN

I'm sorry, this was not the plan. I thought we'd become friends, you'd invite me to a holiday dinner, I'd offer to cook for you all, you'd love it, someone would point out there's some mystery ingredient that's making it all delicious. I'd point out the mystery ingredient is me, your brother-slash-son, the glue that this family needs. Big hug.

SAMMY

I mean...

Sammy gestures to Kenan, then flips her hand, making the limp-wrist gesture.

ELEANOR

(to Kenan)

I'd like to issue an ongoing apology for Sammy. Draw from it as needed.

(then)

I should go after Dad, right?

DANIELLE

Actually, it seems Ms. Fox--
(emphasizing second x)
--Ksss, is already gone.

22 EXT. WOODS - LATER

22

Bud aims a shotgun into the woods. Sherri runs up in heels.

SHERRI

Hey!

BUD

You followed me out here?!

SHERRI

I'm as surprised as you are.
(MORE)

SHERRI (CONT'D)

The last time a black woman ran through these woods she was trying to keep up with Harriet Tubman.

(then)

How dare you walk out like that!

BUD

Go away. I need a minute to think, shoot something.

SHERRI

This is not sexy, by the way. Waving your gun around. A real man faces his responsibility.

BUD

Responsibility?! I found out five minutes ago! Why didn't you ever tell me?

SHERRI

I didn't know! It was one night, you were on the outs with your wife, I was on the outs with another white guy I actually loved. It could have been him, there was no reason to question anything. I mean, I barely remembered what you looked like.

(then)

Although the hair looks familiar. You really locked in there, huh?

BUD

(re: Sherri's hair)

You're going to criticize me about hair? Actually, that's sexy as hell... is that real?

SHERRI

Never ask a black woman if her hair is real!

(then, sincere)

Look, I didn't want Kenan to find you. I guess I was afraid of losing him. But I'm being selfish, so if he wants this, he should have it. Please, go back and talk to our son.

BUD

Shhhh!

22 CONTINUED: (2)

22

SHERRI

Don't "shhh" me when I'm being
vulnerable, you repressed forest
bumpkin.

BUD

(urgent whisper)
There's a deer!

Bud takes aim.

SHERRI

(singing, to deer)
Run awayyyyyy!!!!

The deer runs off through the forest. Bud glares at her:

SHERRI (CONT'D)

The great Patti Labelle once told me
to sing rather than yell to protect
my instrument. And don't you dare
ask me if her hair was real.

23 EXT. BUD'S A-FRAME - LATER

23

Danielle sits with Kenan as Miles walks up, in full costume.

DANIELLE

Honey, you think maybe it's time to
take that costume off?

She lifts the mask off his face.

MILES

I don't want to. Everyone cool is a
person of color. My friend Eduardo
from math, Jay-Z, God.

DANIELLE

(off Kenan's look)
Yes, I'm aware I bear some of the
responsibility for this.

MILES

(to Kenan)
Are you mad at me, too?

KENAN

Nah. Everyone wants to look different
at some point. But you know what I
believe? Some day people will see
you for who you are, and look past
the color of your skin.

23 CONTINUED:

23

It's a sweet moment, Danielle is clearly moved.

MILES

Easy for you to say, you're black.

24 EXT. BUD'S CABIN - PORCH - SAME

24

Eleanor and Sammy use planks of wood (from the cabin build) to sweep dead birds off the porch. There are many.

SAMMY

This is so nasty.

ELEANOR

I can't help but notice all these suicidal birds are males - the robins, the cardinals, all brighter plumage. It's like Dad, they've all chosen this same spot to just give up.

Danielle enters.

DANIELLE

You should see Kenan with Miles. It's so sexy to watch a man be so present and nurturing with your kid. Uch, why does he have to be gay?

ELEANOR

And your brother.

We hear a GUNSHOT. They all react, startled.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)

It's perfect -- instead of facing a complex emotional situation head on, Dad's off in the woods playing with a gun, which is basically an extension of his wiener.

SAMMY

Stop saying wiener! Are you eight? Say joint, or log.

DANIELLE

I really feel for Dad.

ELEANOR

Well, let's figure out a way to help him. That's what we do.

24 CONTINUED:

24

SAMMY

Hey, nobody's more worried about him than me, but the guy lied and hid in the woods to get away from us. Maybe for once we back off and trust him.

This lands with Eleanor and Danielle.

ELEANOR

Huh. I guess one of those pockets was holding a little wisdom.

DANIELLE

You're right. He's a grown man, he can take care of himself.

We hear Bud MOANING and GROANING in pain.

SHERRI (O.S.)

Your father shot himself in the foot.

They see Sherri helping Bud (bleeding foot, in pain) limp onto the porch. They REACT and follow them into the house.

25 INT. BUD'S CABIN - MOMENTS LATER

25

Kenan and Miles are there as Sherri, the girls and Bud enter.

SHERRI

Kenan, take him. That belly is as heavy as it looks.

BUD

Get me to the bathroom, I don't want to bleed on my new floors.

Kenan supports Bud as the girls AD-LIB: "Are you okay?", "What the hell?", "How did this happen?" Bud's in pain.

BUD (CONT'D)

It's just a flesh wound! She was singing the deer away and I got distracted! When she takes a deep breath --

(re: bosom)

-- those things get huge.

DANIELLE

Dad, you can't say stuff like that!

SHERRI

Yes, he can. The sky must be so gray in your world.

26 INT. BUD'S CABIN - BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

26

Kenan helps Bud to the tub's edge. The ladies crowd in.

KENAN

Yikes, that's a lot of blood. Oozing
is where I run into trouble.

(noticing)

Oh my god.

BUD

What? Is it bad?

KENAN

We have the same calves.

Kenan pulls up his pant leg to show.

ELEANOR

Shouldn't we be looking for something
to wrap that with?

BUD

I have an ace bandage
in my second left side
pocket.

SAMMY

(re: shorts pocket)
Got an ace bandage right
here.

DANIELLE

I think we should call an ambulance.

BUD

I don't need an ambulance!

SAMMY

You don't know what you need! I'm
in charge now!

KENAN

Everybody back it down! Unless you're
averaging a C-minus in medical school,
get out! I will handle this!

The girls are taken aback as Bud looks to Kenan, impressed.

SAMMY

I am not going to be talked to like
that by some brother.

(off their looks)

I meant brother as in family, not --

SHERRI

Don't finish that. Let's go.

26 CONTINUED:

26

As Sherri urges the ladies out.

SAMMY

(to Sherri)

Just so's you know, I'm not looking
for a new Mommy.

SHERRI

Great. I'm not looking for a new...
I want to say, daughter?

They close the bathroom door behind him.

KENAN

Let's get your shoe off. This
shouldn't hurt.

He takes the shoe off, Bud SCREAMS.

KENAN (CONT'D)

I don't know why I said that, I knew
it would hurt. I just didn't want
to disappoint you already.

Kenan begins wrapping Bud's foot.

BUD

Disappoint me? I can't be the father
you were picturing. The second I
hear, I run out? I'm sorry.

KENAN

It's okay. You want less family
right now. I get it -- you've met
my mother. We'll take a beat, if
you're ever ready to --

BUD

No no, that's just a thing I said.
I'm a little off right now. Your
whole life, you think the world is
one thing, then you wake up one day
and the woman you thought you'd grow
old with says, "I can't stand the
way you breathe," and drives off
with some white collar criminal.

(MORE)

BUD (CONT'D)

(building intensity)

So I got all that noise, plus the noise of the world -- my phone never stops beeping bad news at me, I click on a picture of the hot girl from "Too Close for Comfort" to see if I really am shocked at how she looks now and suddenly I'm getting a million ads for low-testosterone, which is like, "fuck off, computer, you don't know me." Plus, apparently my whole personality, which people used to love, now just pisses everybody off! It's like I don't know who I am anymore, you know?

KENAN

Yeah. I met my real father a half hour ago and I lived in the closet for twenty years. Also, I built my life around becoming a doctor and I just bandaged a bottle of hand sanitizer to your foot.

We see a lumpy, messy, wrap job on Bud's ankle.

BUD

You think maybe I'm having the breakdown the girls say I am?

KENAN

Possibly. But sometimes... when your life is in pieces, what you need is to try a new...

(re: self, hopeful)

Glue?

SHERRI (O.S.)

Don't need it so bad, honey! Make him work for it!

BUD

(to Kenan, whispering)

They heard everything?

ELEANOR (O.S.)

Every word. These walls are paper thin and the doors don't close.

Bud enters, leaning on Kenan and faces his daughters.

27 CONTINUED:

27

DANIELLE

Before you try to down-play all that,
we're glad we heard it. It's real.

BUD

I'm the Dad, I'm supposed to be okay.

ELEANOR

That's crazy. You're going through
a lot right now.

SAMMY

Yeah, Dad, your life is rough.

SHERRI

Try being a single black woman putting
her dreams on hold to raise a son --

Sherri has stopped talking because Kenan has hugged her from
behind, one hand over her mouth.

KENAN

Other people can have moments too.

ELEANOR

Dad, we just want you to be happy.
We'll try to back off a little.

BUD

(smiles, then)

All right, I need a drink. No more
touchy, feely, gay talk.

Kenan and Bud meet eyes. Loong pause. Then:

KENAN

Seems like a bad time to tell you to
pick a different word.

BUD

Sorry. The whole gay thing is kinda
new to me.

Paul enters, emotional, drawing everyone's attention.

PAUL

Bud, I'm sorry I betrayed you but I
was hurt. I should know when you're
pushing me away it's 'cause you don't
know how to ask me to come closer.

27 CONTINUED: (2)

27

BUD

It's fine, Paul. The girls know everything, we're good.

PAUL

They're cool with you moving in here?

GIRLS AD-LIB: "Moving in?!" "What?", "No, you're not!"

BUD

We'll talk about that later.

(then)

First things first. Paul, this has been an incredible day, and there's someone I'd like you to meet. This is my son...

Bud proudly puts his hand on Kenan's shoulder. Everyone looks on. It's a really nice moment.

BUD (CONT'D)

Kareem.

KENAN

Kenan.

BUD

Damn it.

END OF SHOW