

UNTITLED NATE BARGATZE

"Pilot"

December 14, 2018 - NETWORK Revised

COLD OPEN A

FADE IN:

EXT. NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

ESTABLISHING BEAUTY SHOTS OF NASHVILLE: THE RYMAN, VANDERBILT, THE WALKING BRIDGE, BATMAN BUILDING, SOUNDS GUITAR SCOREBOARD. OVER THESE WE HEAR NATE BARGATZE ON STAGE.

NATE (V.O.)

I am married and have a five year old daughter. I met my wife in Los Angeles where she is from but finally got her to agree to move back to my hometown Nashville, TN.

EXT. ZANIES COMEDY CLUB - ESTABLISHING - NIGHT

INT. ZANIES COMEDY CLUB - CONTINUOUS

NATE'S ON STAGE.

NATE

When we told all our LA friends we're moving to Nashville, they'd say "I love to visit the South but I would never raise a family there." "Oh. Like exactly what I am doing." "Where would you shop? Walmart?" Nashville is a major city. They acted like I joined the army and we got stationed in some podunk town. And what's wrong with Walmart? People don't like Walmart because it kills the mom and pop shops.

(MORE)

NATE (CONT'D)

Walmart was a mom and pop shop at some point and then got their act together and became unbelievable. Anyway. This is why I wanted to move. LA people think they are better than everyone. I am sure not all LA people but definitely the ones we hung out with. I don't want all that rubbing off on my daughter. The last thing I need is her to grow up thinking she's better than me. "No maam. You start where I start. No one gets a leg up in this family! Except your mom of course who is from LA."

CUT TO:

COLD OPEN B

INT. NASHVILLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, HALLWAY - DAY

NATE AND HIS WIFE LAURA, DRESSED CALIFORNIA COOL (PICTURE PRINCESS MEGHAN MARKLE AT THE INVICTUS GAMES), ENTER A NICE SCHOOL. LAURA IS AMAZED BY SOMETHING, WHICH AMUSES NATE.

LAURA

I've just never seen anything like it!

NATE

I know!

LAURA

The light was green for like twenty seconds--

NATE

At least!

LAURA

And nobody honked! Everybody just sat there, totally chill.

NATE

And you know what everybody was thinking sitting there at that light? They're like, "If you don't want to go I totally understand. I'm probably not going to go when I get up there so, yeah, let's just wait it out right. Shouldn't we just wait it out?"

LAURA

It's awesome. We've only been out of
LA for like three weeks and I'm
already so much more relaxed.

THEY ENTER THE KINDERGARTEN CLASSROOM.

INT. KINDERGARTEN CLASSROOM - CONTINUOUS

NATE

And look at this place. Brand new
pencils and... paper! And those aren't
Go Fund Me supplies. Those are state-
issue right there. And there's only
like 20 desks. If any of these kids
choke on something, the teacher will
totally notice right away.

NATE REALIZES HE'S LOST LAURA. SHE'S LOOKING AT A SIGN
HANGING ABOVE THE CHALKBOARD THAT SAYS: "IN GOD WE TRUST."

LAURA

"In God We Trust"? I thought this was
a public school.

NATE

It is! And look at the cubby--! (THEN,
REALIZING) Oh, we stopped having fun.

FADE OUT.

END COLD OPEN

ACT ONE

SCENE A

FADE IN:

INT. NATE AND LAURA'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

NATE AND LAURA ENTER, MID CONVERSATION.

NATE

"In God We Trust" is our national motto. It's on all our money. And we're all Christians in the South so it's not like we're offending anyone.

LAURA

No, you're not. Nashville alone has like ten thousand Jewish people and Muslims and yes I googled that before we moved here. And, come on. You haven't gone to church once since I've known you.

NATE

Because I married a hellion.

LAURA

Sorry, I just don't think any child should be pushed in a direction, especially in their kindergarten classroom. I want Harper to be a free thinker and decide for herself.

NATE

Her religion?

LAURA

Yes. And if she even wants to have one or not. Just because you chose to be Christian doesn't mean she has to.

NATE'S DAD, STEPHEN, ENTERS FROM THE KITCHEN.

STEPHEN

He didn't choose it. We chose it for him. No one chooses their religion, Laura.

LAURA

Hi, Stephen.

NATE

Hey, Dad. How's Harper?

STEPHEN

I didn't choose mine. My grandfather didn't choose his. It's passed down. From God. Heard of Him?

LAURA

Yeah, we just said what's up to Him at the place formerly known as Harper's new school.

NATE

(ANSWERING HIS OWN QUESTION) She's good? Upstairs with Mom? Okay, thanks.

NATE HEADS UPSTAIRS.

CUT TO:

ACT ONE

SCENE B

INT. HARPER'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

NATE ENTERS TO FIND HIS MOM, CAROL, AND HIS FIVE-YEAR-OLD DAUGHTER, HARPER. HARPER IS WIDE-EYED. SHE THROWS HER ARMS AROUND NATE AND WON'T LET GO.

HARPER

Daddy!

NATE

Harper, what's wrong?

HARPER

Grandma said you were going to hit me when you got home.

NATE

Mom?!

CAROL

Spank. I said spank. But she didn't even know what the word meant so I had to explain. In detail. Was about to show her a video on the iPad, but she seemed to get it.

HARPER

Don't hit me, Daddy.

NATE SHOOTS CAROL A "REALLY" LOOK.

CUT TO:

ACT ONE

SCENE C

INT. LIVING ROOM – MOMENTS LATER

NATE, LAURA, CAROL AND STEPHEN DISCUSS.

CAROL

She hit me first!

LAURA

What?

NATE

Harper hit you?

CAROL

I told her she had to stop playing
with her toys, come down and eat some
lunch, then she screamed no and threw
her doll at my face. And it had some
heft.

CAROL INDICATES HER FOREHEAD. STEPHEN RUBS HIS FINGER ON IT.

STEPHEN

Oh yeah, gave you a little goose egg
there, honey.

NATE

I'm sorry, Mom.

LAURA

Yeah, Carol. It's not okay that Harper
did that. And we will totally
discipline her. But we don't spank.

NATE

Well... I mean, whatever we're doing
hasn't exactly been working.

LAURA

Seriously?

NATE

Look, I'd love to chalk it up to the
move, but Harper was acting out before
we left. For the past few months she's
been on some kind of power trip,
stomping and yelling and pushing kids
off swings. It'll serve her well as a
CEO some day, but not when she's five.

CAROL

Stephen, give the boy your belt.

STEPHEN REMOVES HIS BELT AND HANDS IT TO NATE.

STEPHEN

Here. (OFF THEIR LOOK) That's genuine
leather. They use it on horses.

NATE FEELS THE WEIGHT IN HIS HAND FOR JUST A SECOND.

LAURA

Nate?

NATE HANDS THE BELT BACK TO HIS DAD.

NATE

I wasn't going to. But they have had a
lot of experience with discipline.
They hit us a bunch growing up.

STEPHEN

Hitting your kid is a proud Bargatze family tradition. Passed down from generation to generation.

CAROL

Stephen used to do this cute little thing where he'd make Nate pick out the switch he was going to use to spank him with. Nate, you remember that?

NATE

Yeah, I remember. You'd think the smaller branches would hurt less, but it actually hurts more. Something about the aerodynamics.

STEPHEN

It was discipline and a physics lesson all in one! I was always thinking about their education.

LAURA

(TO NATE) You had to choose the weapon your father was going to use to beat you with? That's psychological warfare.

STEPHEN

Well what do you think raising a kid is? It's an 18 year all out war.

(MORE)

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

You know how many times I had to watch
"Apocalypse Now" just to perfect my
spanking technique?

CAROL

He turned beating the children into an
art form. He put in the work, and the
work paid off.

NATE

You guys really think spanking Harper
will solve the problems we're having
with her?

STEPHEN

Of course! Human beings learn through
physical consequences. I learned not
to touch the oven when I burned my
hand at age two. I learned to wear a
seat belt when I was t-boned by a
Chevy Impala in 1973. Re-learned it
again from a Dodge Caravan in 1997.

LAURA

It's just Nate and I like to let
Harper know what she's done wrong so
she can reflect on it and learn from
her mistakes.

CAROL

Learn from her own mistakes? Perhaps you should just let her be raised by the wind.

STEPHEN

You two really believe a child has the capacity to sit and reflect? I'm an adult and I haven't reflected a day in my life.

CAROL

He's not lying.

STEPHEN

I was planning on doing some reflecting when I retired. But by then they already had smart phones and Netflix. So, yeah... It's just never gonna happen for me.

NATE

Look it's not like we've never thought about discipline and stuff. We have. We got other techniques too besides time out. Some, I even invented on my own...

LAURA

Oh no... Not the water thing.

CAROL

What water thing? Nate have you been waterboarding my little grand-baby!?

NATE

What? No.

CAROL

Okay good. We do not water board in this family.

STEPHEN

Save that for the terrorists, or even folks that aren't terrorists, but could just happen to know something about terrorists. Better to be safe than nine-elevened. That's what I always say.

EVERYONE GIVES STEPHEN A LOOK.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

What? I thought we were being open here?

NATE

Okay look, the water thing is just, you know those times when things get really chaotic at home, crying, and arguing, and throwing temper-tantrums. And you just don't want to deal with any of it?

CAROL

(BLURTS) No. Because we ran a structured home.

NATE

(ANNOYED) Okay, well... just imagine.

CAROL

(SHE DOES) Ugh. It's horrible.

NATE

Right, while in those moments, I sometimes will purposely spill a glass of water... Or flip over a chair. Make the fire alarm go off... Whatever works... See, what I've found is if you do something abrupt enough and absurd enough it shifts the energy, takes everyone's mind off what's happening, and then you don't have to deal with your problems.

LAURA

This is another way of you trying to make your life easier.

NATE

No I am not.

STEPHEN

It sounds like it. Like that time you got a blackberry so you didn't stare at your phone all day?

LAURA

And then I would have to look
everything up for you.

CAROL

Or the time he wanted to wear the same
outfit everyday?

LAURA

Which is pretty hard to keep track of
what's clean and what's dirty.

NATE

Steve Jobs did it so why shouldn't I?

CAROL

Or the time you only ate fruit?

STEPHEN

Or the time he could eat anything
except for fruit.

NATE

Those were all good ideas. On a side
note, I am about to start only eating
potatoes. Regardless. (TO LAURA) This
is not about making my life easier.
It's about making our lives easier.

LAURA

But it's just prolonging the conflict.
You should solve the conflict.

NATE

What about when you give me the silent treatment? That is you not solving conflict.

LAURA

Why when a woman is pissed off and doesn't want to talk is it called "the silent treatment" but when a man doesn't want to talk it's called being pissed off and not wanting to talk? That's gender biased language designed to make women look manipulative.

STEPHEN

Doesn't mean it isn't real. Remember the movie the *Sixth Sense*? When we watched that movie for the first time, no one knew he was dead. That was the biggest surprise we have ever seen in a movie. We just thought his wife wasn't talking to him for like a year. That made more sense to us than him possibly being dead.

NATE

All I know is, it seems like when we tell Harper to stop doing something it just makes her do it even more. That's not how I behaved when I was a kid.

(MORE)

NATE (CONT'D)

Maybe it's a Southern thing, but I respected you and Dad.

CAROL

No you didn't. You feared us. God too.

STEPHEN

That's right. You were terrified of me. Don't you remember? You didn't make eye contact with me for the first time 'til you were eleven.

CAROL

The second time was your graduation.

LAURA

And you're proud of that?

CAROL

Having his kids fear him is one of Stephen's greatest accomplishments. A child that doesn't fear you doesn't strive to impress you either.

NATE

I still get knots in my stomach thinking about the phrase, "Just you wait until your dad comes home."

CAROL

Oh Stephen, did you hear that? It just warms my heart to hear that the work we did as parents resonates with Nate to this day. Makes it all worthwhile.

LAURA

Nate, do you really want Harper to be afraid of you coming home?

NATE

I didn't say that.

CAROL

So you're just going to let your daughter hit her grandmother when she doesn't get her way?

NATE

No.

CAROL

So what are you going to do?

NATE STANDS FROZEN AS LAURA AND CAROL STARE AT HIM.

NATE

Handle it?

NATE HEADS UPSTAIRS.

CAROL

Just so you know, Laura, I've thought about it and I've decided I'm not going to press any charges or lawsuits or what have you about the bump on the noggin your daughter gave me.

LAURA

You're a loving mother-in-law, Carol.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

SCENE D

FADE IN:

INT. HARPER'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

NATE ENTERS HARPER'S ROOM. HARPER IS SITTING ON HER BED. NATE DOESN'T SEEM CONFIDENT ABOUT HOW TO SCOLD HER.

NATE

Harper, that was very very bad what you did to grandma... Very bad... We do not hit in this house... or outside of this house... Bad.

HARPER

She took my doll.

NATE

Well just cause someone took your doll away doesn't mean you can hit them.

HARPER

Even if it's a stranger?

NATE

We don't hit strangers either.

HARPER

What if the stranger is stealing me?

NATE

Well... Yes... If someone's kidnapping you, then I guess you do whatever it takes... Look that doesn't matter right now.

(MORE)

NATE (CONT'D)

That's not what we're talking about.
The point is you are in timeout. You
may not leave your room.

HARPER

But I was already in my room.

NATE

Yes... well... now you're in your room
but there's no toys. In fact you can't
do anything. The only thing you're
allowed to do is sit there and reflect
on your bad behavior. Is that clear?

HARPER

Am I allowed to breathe?

NATE

Well... yes. Yes. You can breathe.

HARPER

Can I make clicking sounds?

NATE

What?

HARPER

Like this.

HARPER MAKES CLICKING SOUNDS. NATE IS STUMPED. HE LOOKS AT A
NEARBY GLASS OF WATER ON HARPER'S NIGHTSTAND, CONSIDERS.

NATE

Umm... I don't know... I guess...

NATE LEAVES UNSATISFIED. HARPER CONTINUES TO MAKE CLICKING
NOISES AS THE DOOR CLOSES.

CUT TO:

ACT TWO

SCENE E

INT. LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

NATE WALKS DOWNSTAIRS. LAURA, CAROL AND STEPHEN ARE THERE. CAROL AND STEPHEN ARE MID-ARGUMENT ABOUT IF HYPOTHETICALLY CAROL WOULD HAVE A CASE AGAINST HER CHILD. LAURA CAN'T BELIEVE THEY'RE STILL GOING.

CAROL

You're not listening to me, Stephen.

I'm not saying I would sue my son, I'm just saying Jacoby and Meyers would absolutely take this case! They'd be thrilled to take my case! They'd jump on it in a heartbeat!

STEPHEN

Well I guess we're just gonna have to agree to disagree then, Honey.

CAROL

I guess we will.

LAURA

(TO NATE) How'd it go?

NATE

Good... I think? She's in timeout.

CAROL AND STEVEN SHARE A CONDESCENDING LAUGH.

LAURA

Nate, I think your parents have more to share.

CAROL

Timeout isn't a consequence. It's a luxury. You just sent Harper on an all expenses paid vacation to her room. Complete with her favorite toys and leftover Halloween candy.

TRAVIS, NATE'S CHILDHOOD FRIEND, ENTERS THE FRONT DOOR WITH THE CONFIDENCE OF SOMEONE WHO'S NEVER BEEN TOLD "NO." HE'S EATING TACO BELL.

NATE

Travis!

STEPHEN

(UNENTHUSIASTIC) Hey Travis.

CAROL

Travis, have you been staying out of trouble?

TRAVIS

Oh yes, I've been doing tremendous Mrs. B! This is the best I've ever felt. (THEN) Nate I need to borrow \$600.

NATE

Why?

TRAVIS

To get you guys a housewarming gift.

NATE

I'd rather have the \$600.

TRAVIS

Great. You're welcome. Do y'all have
hot sauce?

NATE

You know what? Come with me, let's see
what we can find.

NATE ESCORTS TRAVIS TO THE KITCHEN.

LAURA

Nate?

NATE

He can't eat tacos without hot sauce.

THEY EXIT.

RESET TO:

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

NATE AND TRAVIS ENTER.

TRAVIS

Isn't it great I can just come by and
surprise you?

NATE

That is great. And you can help me
actually.

TRAVIS

Sure man. Anything.

NATE

I have to get my parents out of here.

TRAVIS

So Laura can get some peace and quiet?

NATE

No. So I can. Look, we go back in there and I say we need to get some stuff from the grocery store. Then you say, "Why don't I do it for you?" And then I will say, "How about my parents go with you? It's a lot of stuff." And you say, "Cool. I'll drive."

TRAVIS

I don't have a car.

NATE

How did you get here?

TRAVIS

Lyft.

NATE

You know what? Say that. And then I will just ask if my parents can drive and drop you off on the way back from the store.

TRAVIS

Cool. (THEN) Where's the hot sauce?

NATE

I have no idea and I don't care.

NATE CROSSES BACK OUT. TRAVIS FOLLOWS HIM.

RESET TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

NATE AND TRAVIS ENTER.

NATE

No hot sauce.

TRAVIS

(STIFFLY) Hey everyone. Why don't me
and Nate's parents go to a grocery
store?

EVERYONE LOOKS AT HIM CONFUSED.

NATE

I asked Travis if he could go with you
guys to the grocery store. And then
could you drop him back off at home?
He doesn't have a car.

STEPHEN

Of course he doesn't.

CAROL

That's fine.

TRAVIS

There's a Kroger right by my house.

STEPHEN

We are not setting foot in Kroger!

NATE

Why not?

CAROL

The list.

LAURA

What list?

CAROL

Stephen has a protest list of places he won't go shop and Kroger is number one.

TRAVIS

What did Kroger do?

NATE

It doesn't matter. You guys should get going.

STEPHEN

No. Everyone should hear this. Kroger has done one of the most unpatriotic things I've ever seen a corporation do in my life. They allowed themselves to get bullied by social justice warriors and put restrictions on their gun sales.

LAURA

No one is trying to take away your guns. But we "social justice warriors" don't want just anybody running around with military grade machine guns.

CAROL

A. You can't just buy a machine gun. And B, who are you all to tell me I don't need a machine gun?

TRAVIS

Wait, a grocery store sells guns?

LAURA

No. (REFERRING TO STEPHEN AND CAROL)

What Mr. And Mrs. Rambo are talking about is Fred Meyers, a company owned by Kroger, phasing out all gun sales. Which is the reason we will only shop at Kroger.

JUST THEN THEY HEAR THE SOUNDS OF "LET IT GO" FROM *FROZEN* EMERGE FROM UPSTAIRS. NATE AND LAURA STOP IN THEIR TRACKS. IT'S AN UNCOMFORTABLE BEAT.

TRAVIS

What's that sound?

NATE

(OFF LAURA'S LOOK) Maybe it went off on accident.

HARPER (O.S.)

(SINGING ALONG) *Let it go, let it go. Can't hold it back anymore. Let it go, let it go. Turn away and slam the door.*

NATE HANGS HIS HEAD, FRUSTRATED.

CAROL

Travis, when you were growing up, did your parents spank you?

NATE

Great question, mom. You guys should talk about that in the car.

TRAVIS

(SITTING DOWN) Oh heavens no, my parents would never lay a finger on me. If they had do you think they'd be my best friends and current roommates today? (THEN, TO NATE) Sorry, buddy. Second best friends.

CAROL

Travis, thank you for your perspective. Stephen, your belt.

STEPHEN WHIPS OFF HIS BELT AGAIN.

LAURA

I can't.

LAURA EXITS TO THE KITCHEN. NATE IS FRUSTRATED.

TRAVIS

Hey Nate, do you still want me to try to get your parents out of your house?

CAROL AND STEPHEN GIVE NATE A LOOK AS HE CROSSES TO THE KITCHEN.

NATE

Thanks, buddy.

RESET TO:

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

NATE ENTERS TO FIND LAURA.

LAURA

I don't get it. We move to Tennessee
and you become Joe Jackson?

NATE

I'm not Joe Jackson. Did you hear
Harper singing up there?

LAURA

So do you want to spank her or not?

NATE

I don't know. I'm not good with this
stuff. You usually just tell me what I
want and I say okay. We started dating
when we were 21. I went from my mom to
you, so I don't even know what it
feels like to not have some lady be
like, "I don't know if I would do
that." And now we have a daughter so I
will never know. I'll never know.

LAURA

Look, I was excited about moving here
and happy to finally have help when
you're on the road. And I knew your
parents were... them. But it's just
starting to feel like it's me against
the three of you.

NATE

It's not. Laura, I'm honestly thinking about what's best for Harper. This has nothing to do with my parents.

LAURA

Then why didn't you say anything about spanking her when we were living in LA?

NATE

Because you can't say you want to spank your child in LA. You can get your kid taken away there just for feeding them gluten.

LAURA

So now LA was some terrible place to live? You know, Harper got to be surrounded by diversity and unconventional families. I love that she had friends with two Moms or two Dads. Here the most she can hope for is a friend with a dad who's closeted and really unhappy.

NATE

Well I think what parents in LA do to their kids is way worse than spanking.

(MORE)

NATE (CONT'D)

Everyone there is giving their kids anxiety disorders, talking about global warming, acting like there's only five months left on earth. One time I heard a woman telling her kid Santa doesn't have anywhere to live anymore because ice at the North Pole is melting. Now that's child abuse.

STEPHEN AND CAROL ENTER, BOTH LAUGHING.

STEPHEN

Santa. That's funny.

CAROL

You should put that in your little stand-up show, honey.

NATE

I don't do topical jokes.

LAURA

(TO CAROL AND STEPHEN) Not even a knock, huh?

STEPHEN

Who knocks on a kitchen door?

CAROL

Laura, this isn't like when you'd come for a week over the holidays. You live here now. We can't be having private conversations. We need to be open and honest with each other.

LAURA

Okay. Let's do that.

NATE

Naaaaah.

LAURA

I honestly don't want your opinion when it comes to Harper, and I don't need a lecture on Southern values. Spanking is not the only way to raise a child-- not talking about Travis. My parents never laid a hand on me, and I turned out just fine.

CAROL

(MUTTERS) Hmm. Says who?

LAURA

What is that supposed to mean?

NATE

Nothing. It means nothing.

NATE QUICKLY GRABS A DIRTY DISH WITH LEFT OVER MAC & CHEESE IN IT. HE TURNS IT OVER, CAUSING THE WET BALL OF FOOD TO DUMP OUT ONTO THE MIDDLE OF THE KITCHEN FLOOR WITH A PLOP. EVERYONE STARES FOR A BEAT, THEN RETURNS RIGHT BACK WHERE THEY WERE.

CAROL

It means you're arrogant and stubborn. You have a problem you can't handle and won't accept answers from people who are trying to help you.

(MORE)

CAROL (CONT'D)

And clearly growing up in "anything goes" LA made you very sensitive.

NATE

Okay, let's not say anything we can't take back. Let's all just take a quick breath.

STEPHEN TAKES A LOUD DEEP INHALE, THEN:

STEPHEN

I think there's mold in here.

LAURA

I can't believe you guys think I'm the arrogant and stubborn one. You guys are ignorant and overbearing. You assume you have all the answers, but you've never left Tennessee and you'd never open your minds enough to even consider any views outside the vacuum you live in.

CAROL AND STEPHEN STARE AT LAURA. NATE CAREFULLY REACHES BETWEEN HIS WIFE AND HIS PARENTS... TO GRAB THE CAR KEYS.

NATE

I really should run to the store.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

SCENE H

INT. HARPER'S ROOM - LATER

(LAURA, TOY PIANO, ELSA DOLL, HARPER / ELSA, HARPER)

HARPER IS FIDDLING WITH A TOY PIANO THAT'S STILL PLAYING "LET IT GO" FROM *FROZEN*. (AND DON'T YOU DARE SAY WE CAN'T CLEAR IT, 20TH CENTURY DISNEY) LAURA ENTERS.

LAURA

Harper, I want to explain to you why

what you've done today is not okay.

Turn that off. Listen to Mommy.

HARPER DOESN'T BUDGE. LAURA, ANNOYED BENDS DOWN AND TURNS OFF THE PIANO.

LAURA (CONT'D)

When you're upset about something,

it's not okay to scream or throw

things. And when Daddy puts you in a

timeout--

HARPER TURNS THE PIANO BACK ON.

TOY PIANO

"Let it go! Let it go!"

LAURA SNATCHES THE TOY PIANO FROM HER AND TURNS IT OFF.

LAURA

Harper, I'm trying to communicate with

you with my words and I need you to be

a big girl and --

HARPER GRABS A DIFFERENT TOY, A *FROZEN* ELSA DOLL, WHICH PLAYS THE EXACT SAME SONG.

ELSA DOLL

"Let it go! Let it go!"

LAURA

(SCREAMING) Harper, you are not
listening to me! And how many *Frozen*
toys do you have!?

HARPER IS STUNNED. SHE'S NEVER HEARD HER MOM SO ANGRY.
LAURA'S EVEN SURPRISED HERSELF.

LAURA (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, I didn't mean to raise my
voice like that, but you just --

THEN, HARPER SINGS ALONG WITH THE ELSA DOLL.

HARPER / ELSA

"Let it go! Let it go! --

CUT TO:

ACT THREE

SCENE J

INT. COMPARE FOODS - SAME

NATE, CAROL AND STEPHEN SHOP AT A TERRIBLE RUNDOWN GROCERY STORE. STEPHEN IS PUSHING THE CART AHEAD OF NATE AND CAROL.

CAROL

Why did we have to drop Travis off
first?

NATE

Because he has a problem with Compare
Foods and everyone I know is insane.

CAROL

You could have went to Kroger by
yourself.

NATE

Laura needed a break from all of us.
(THEN) She's so upset. I feel
terrible.

CAROL

Well you brought a square peg to a
round hole, Nate. She's just not like
us and quite frankly I think she
thinks she's better than us. With her
lipgloss and her outfits.

NATE

She is better than us! Look where we
are at. This store is terrible.

STEPHEN

Buy her some flowers. That will smooth things out. These here are seventy percent off!

STEPHEN TAKES SOME FLOWERS FROM A SMALL DISPLAY TABLE NEARBY. LIKE EVERYTHING IN THE STORE, THE FLOWERS LOOK AWFUL.

CAROL

Well grab it from the bottom, honey. I'm pretty sure that's poison ivy on there.

A BADLY BEHAVED CHILD RUNS UP AND POURS OUT A BOX OF KING VITAMIN (A POOR MAN'S CAP'N CRUNCH) ALL OVER THE FLOOR.

CAROL (CONT'D)

Would you look at that. Speaking of children that need to be spanked.

THE KID'S VERY ANGRY MOTHER APPROACHES.

MOM

Jack, no! You get your butt over here right now!

CAROL

Ooop. Nevermind. She seems to have it under control.

STEPHEN

Ooh. He's gonna get it.

CAROL

Laura should be here to see this.

THE MOM DRAGS THE SCREAMING CHILD ACROSS THE FLOOR. HE KNOCKS OVER A DISPLAY OF PETER PAN PEANUT BUTTER AS HE SCREAMS IN TERROR FOR HELP THAT WILL NEVER COME. THE BARGATZE'S FLINCH AS THEY WATCH WITH HORROR THE BEATING THAT HAPPENS OFFSCREEN.

STEPHEN

Man, is that what spanking looks like
from the outside?

NATE

I don't know. I was always the one
getting spanked.

CAROL

Well don't look at me. I let your dad
handle it for a reason. (CONCERNED) Is
that what Laura thinks we're trying to
do to her daughter?

STEPHEN

She must think we're monsters.

CAROL

What do we do?

STEPHEN

We shouldn't get involved.

AS THEY CONTINUE TO DISCUSS IT, NATE DECIDES TO TAKE ACTION
AND PUSHES OVER AN ENTIRE SHELF OF COOKIES. THE KID'S MOTHER
IS STARTLED AND STOPS HITTING HIM.

MOM

Hey! That almost landed on my kid!

CAROL, EMBARRASSED, TRIES TO MAKE HERSELF INVISIBLE WHILE
STEPHEN MOTIONS APOLOGIES TO THE PEOPLE IN THE STORE.

STEPHEN

Maybe it is time we start going back
to Kroger.

CUT TO:

ACT THREE

SCENE K

INT. NATE AND LAURA'S BEDROOM - LATER

NATE ENTERS THE BEDROOM TO FIND LAURA NOW WEARING MISMATCHED SWEATS. HE HOLDS A BEAUTIFUL BOUQUET OF FLOWERS.

NATE

Hey.

LAURA

Hey.

NATE

My mom got you these.

LAURA

Pretty.

NATE

They're from Kroger. We are no longer shopping at Compare Foods.

LAURA

Your dad add them to the list?

NATE

Actually, we're on their list.

LAURA SETS THE FLOWERS ASIDE. NATE SITS NEXT TO HER.

NATE (CONT'D)

Look, I never want you to feel like it's you against me and my family. I'm sorry you felt that way.

LAURA

Thank you, Nate. I appreciate that.

NATE

And it is really important to me that Harper learns values from both of us. That won't change because we're living in my hometown. Or because she goes to a Christian public school.

LAURA

Funny.

NATE

And just to point out something you'll really like about living here... (RE: HER SWEATS) That outfit you're wearing, you could wear that to a wedding if you wanted.

LAURA

(LAUGHING) Shut up.

NATE

I'm serious! Everybody here gave up a long time ago. The pressure is off.

LAURA

(RE: SWEATS) I'd at least want to match the tops and bottoms. (THEN) Hey, I thought of another good thing.

NATE

What?

LAURA

For the price of our small apartment
we got a four bedroom house with a
backyard so big it scares me at night.

NATE

Can't beat that.

LAURA

(SCARED) Seriously, there's something
out there.

NATE

Well... it can't be as scary as what's
downstairs.

CUT TO:

ACT THREE

SCENE 1

INT. NATE AND LAURA'S LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

NATE AND LAURA WALK DOWNSTAIRS AND ARE GREETED BY STEPHEN AND CAROL WHO HOLD A CAKE WITH BRUCE WILLIS ON IT.

CAROL / STEPHEN

Happy house warming!

LAURA

Is that Bruce Willis?

STEPHEN

From *Sixth Sense*. Kroger can put anything on a cake.

CAROL

We're sorry about how we acted earlier. We need to put ourselves in your over-priced California shoes.

LAURA

It's okay. And who knows, maybe you guys are on to something. I mean, what Nate and I have been doing with Harper definitely hasn't been working.

NATE

(SUDDENLY UPSET) Hey! Don't you dare lay a finger on my baby girl, you psycho!

LAURA

What? What did you just call me?

NATE

Sorry, I saw something earlier at the grocery store that changed me forever.

LAURA

Really? What did you see?

STEPHEN

It's probably better if we never talk about it... God I hope that boy is okay.

LAURA

What boy?

NATE

(DISTURBED) He said it's best if we don't talk about it! (THEN) Look, our daughter is a good kid. I know she acts up sometimes, but she's five. That's what five-year-olds do. I think we're doing fine. We don't need to spank our kid.

HARPER ENTERS, WEARING A LITTLE PURSE AND CARRYING A HAND-DRAWN PICTURE.

NATE / STEPHEN

There's our little trouble maker. /
Hey Harper!

CAROL

(FORMAL) Harper.

HARPER

Grandma, I'm sorry I hit your face.

HARPER HANDS CAROL THE PICTURE AND KISSES HER ON THE CHEEK.

CAROL

Okay, baby. I appreciate that.

NATE

Oh Harper, that's so sweet. You drew
Grandma a picture.

HE HUGS HER AND KISSES HER ON THE FOREHEAD.

NATE (CONT'D)

See. Our daughter's an angel.

HARPER

Daddy, if I promise to be good can I
get a new *Frozen* doll?

NATE

What? What happened to your *Frozen*
doll?

HARPER PULLS OUT THE HEAD OF HER DOLL FROM HER PURSE.

HARPER

Mommy ripped the head off and said I
was next if I didn't behave.

THEY ALL LOOK AT LAURA.

LAURA

I used your little distraction thing.
You were right. It can solve conflict.

NATE

(SHOCKED) I don't feel right.

LAURA

(TO CAROL AND STEPHEN) There was a little touch of psychological warfare in there too. (TO HARPER, UPBEAT) Come on, honey. Let's go get you a snack.

THE FAMILY WATCHES SHOCKED AND A LITTLE SCARED AS HARPER AND LAURA EXIT TO THE KITCHEN.

LAURA (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Be careful, someone spilled some mac & cheese and still needs to clean it up.

HARPER (O.S.)

Okay, Mommy.

CAROL

Good God.

STEPHEN

Nate, you got yourself a good woman.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

TAG

FADE IN:

INT. KINDERGARTEN CLASSROOM - DAY

KINDERGARTNERS RUN AROUND. ALL EXCEPT HARPER WHO SITS AT HER DESK, HANDS FOLDED, THE PERFECT STUDENT. AS PARENTS TRY TO GET THEIR KIDS TO QUIET DOWN, NATE AND LAURA LOOK ON PROUDLY. A STRESSED PARENT CHASES DOWN HIS SON.

STRESSED PARENT

Tyler! Tyler!

NATE

(TO STRESSED DAD) You need a hand?

Because my daughter is...

THE STRESSED DAD LOOKS ANNOYED.

NATE (CONT'D)

Just let me know. (TO LAURA) This is amazing.

LAURA

I know! We're the best parents ever!

THE TEACHER, MISS JULIE, APPROACHES.

MISS JULIE

Wow, I wish I had twenty Harpers.

NATE

You know, Miss Julie, we just make sure she understands the importance of respect.

LAURA

That's all you can do.

ANOTHER TEACHER CROSSES TO THE FRONT OF THE ROOM.

LAURA (CONT'D)

Who's that?

MISS JULIE

Oh, that's Miss Stacey.

NATE

There are two teachers? For twenty kids? Did you hear that, honey? This school is perfect!

LAURA

Almost.

MISS JULIE

Excuse me.

MISS JULIE GOES TO HELP CORRAL KIDS.

MISS STACEY

Okay, class. Let's stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

THE KIDS ALL STAND AT THEIR DESKS.

MISS STACEY (CONT'D)

Repeat after me. I pledge allegiance...

ALL THE KIDS REPEAT AFTER MISS STACEY, EXCEPT HARPER... WHO TAKES A KNEE.

KIDS

I pledge allegiance...

NATE

No no no! What is she doing? (TO LAURA) What did you do?

LAURA

This isn't me! You're the one who
watches football with her!

THE KIDS CONTINUE.

NATE

(WHISPER YELLING) Harper! Harper!
Stand up!

LAURA

(WHISPER YELLING) Yes! At least until
you understand why you're doing it!

(TO NATE) Quick. Distract! Distract!

NATE LOOKS FOR SOMETHING TO KNOCK OVER. LAURA THEN JUST HIP
CHECKS NATE INTO A ROW OF DESK CAUSING A HUGE DISTRACTION.
MISS JULIE LOOKS CONFUSED. AS NATE AND LAURA CONTINUE TO
FREAK OUT, THE STRESSED PARENT TURNS TO ANOTHER PARENT.

STRESSED PARENT

They just moved from LA.

THE OTHER PARENT NODS, "THAT MAKES SENSE".

FADE OUT.

END OF SHOW