

ROC

Pilot Episode

Written by

Stan Daniels

SHOOTING SCRIPT

April 29, 1991

Rev. April 30, 1991 (pink)

Directed by: James Burrows

ROC

a.

Pilot Episode

SHORT RUNDOWN

SHOOT: 5/1/91

SHOOTING SCRIPT

April 29, 1991

DIRECTOR: James Burrows

<u>SC#</u>	<u>(PG#)</u>	<u>FOX</u>	<u>HBO</u>
<u>COLD OPENING</u>	(1)		
<u>INT. GARBAGEMEN'S LOCKER ROOM - DAY</u> (Roc, Willy, Fred)			
<u>OPENING MAIN TITLES</u>			1:00
<u>ACT I</u>			
1. <u>SCENE A</u> (DAY 1) <u>INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT</u> (Roc, Joey, Andrew, Eleanor)	(5)		
<u>RESET TO:</u> <u>INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS</u> (Roc, Eleanor, Joey)	(8)		
<u>RESET TO:</u> <u>INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS</u> (Roc, Joey, Andrew)	(13)		
2. <u>SCENE B</u> (DAY 2) <u>INT. KITCHEN - DAY</u> (Roc, Joey, Andrew, Eleanor)	(16)		

ROC
(Short Rundown-Cont'd)

Pilot Episode
Shooting Script

b.
4/29/91

<u>SC#</u>	<u>(PG#)</u>	<u>FOX</u>	<u>HBO</u>
<u>ACT II</u>			
3. <u>SCENE C</u> (DAY 2) <u>INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT</u> (Roc, Andrew, Joey, Eleanor)	(25)		
4. <u>SCENE D</u> (DAY 3) <u>INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY</u> (Roc, Eleanor, Joey, Andrew, Violinist, Pony)	(35)		
<u>CLOSING CREDITS</u>			:30
<u>TOTALS</u>			1:30
<u>TOTAL SHOW TIME</u>			22:50
<u>TOTAL:</u>			

ROC

Pilot Episode

TENTATIVE WEEKLY PRODUCTION SCHEDULE

** a/o 4/29/91

MONDAY, APRIL 29

10:00AM	-	1:00PM	CAST REHEARSE
1:00PM	-	2:00PM	LUNCH
2:00PM	-	WRAP	CAST REHEARSE

TUESDAY, APRIL 30

9:00AM	-	10:00AM	E.S.U.
10:00AM	-	1:00PM	CAMERA BLOCK
1:00PM	-	2:00PM	LUNCH
2:00PM	-	4:00PM	CAMERA BLOCK
4:00PM	-	WRAP	CAMERA RUN THRU

WEDNESDAY, MAY 1

12:00PM	-	1:00PM	E.S.U.
1:00PM	-	6:00PM	CAMERA BLOCK
6:00PM	-	7:30PM	DINNER/CAST NOTES
7:30PM	-	WRAP	AIR SHOW

**NOTE: This schedule is subject to change.

Rev. 4/29/91

ROC

Pilot Episode

CAST

ROC EMERSON.....CHARLES DUTTON
JOEY EMERSON.....ROCKY CARROLL
ELEANOR EMERSON.....ELLA JOYCE
ANDREW EMERSON.....CARL GORDON
WILLIE.....JAMIE FOXX
FRED.....HUGH DANE

ROC

Pilot Episode

SETS

COLD OPENING

(PG. 1)

INT. GARBAGEMEN'S LOCKER ROOM
- DAY

ACT ONE

(SCENE A, PG. 5)

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

(RESET: PG. 8)

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

(RESET: PG. 13)

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

(SCENE B, PG. 16)

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

ACT TWO

(SCENE C, PG. 25)

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

(SCENE D, PG. 35)

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

ROC

Pilot Episode

COLD OPENING

FADE IN:

INT. GARBAGEMEN'S LOCKER ROOM - DAY

(Roc, Willy, Fred)

(LATE AFTERNOON. ROC AND HIS YOUNG FRIEND, WILLY, HAVE RETURNED FROM THEIR DAY'S WORK AND ARE CHANGING FROM THEIR COVERALLS INTO THEIR STREET CLOTHES. WILLY SEEMS TROUBLED.)

ROC

...Wanna go for a beer, Willy?

WILLY

No. I'm thinkin' of goin' to see the supervisor and quittin' this here job.

ROC

I thought you liked collecting garbage.

WILLY

I do. Pay's okay. I like the guys. Get lots of fresh air -- at least when the wind's blowin' the right way.

ROC

So what's the problem?

WILLY

Last weekend, I asked three different girls to go out with me. Every one turned me down. My friend Vince says it's 'cause I'm a garbageman.

ROC

I see. ...You have a lot of luck with women before you took this job?

WILLY

No.

ROC

Well, then maybe they just ain't interested in you 'cause you're you.

WILLY

(CONSIDERS IT)

...Yeah. ...I sure hope you're right.

ROC

Listen Willy, ain't nothing to be ashamed of, dealing with garbage.

WILLY

There ain't?

ROC

No. 'Cause everything in this world is garbage. Or at least it's gonna be one day.

WILLY

It is?

ROC

Sure. These here lockers, in time they're all gonna rust. These wooden benches, they're gonna rot. Everything in creation is destined to become garbage in time. Even us. They may call them cemeteries, but they ain't nothing but garbage dumps for people.

WILLY

That's a peaceful thought.

ROC

This planet, the whole universe, it's all gonna turn into garbage. One day all the stars are gonna explode into a billion billion pieces.

WILLY

Now

ROC

So don't you go being ashamed of what you do, Willy. Be proud. Look people straight in the eye and tell them "Garbage is my life." Remember "Garbage is my life!"

(WILLY MOVED, GOES OVER TO FRED WHO IS CHANGING HIS NEARBY TAPS HIM ON THE SHOULDER, AND SAYS "GARBAGE IS MY LIFE")

WILLY

Hey, Fred. My life is garbage!

FRED

(LOOKING HIM UP AND DOWN)

...I don't doubt it.

WILLY

(DELIGHTED)

Thanks, Roc! ...Let's get that beer.

(AND THEY EXIT.)

FADE OUT

ACT ONE

SCENE A

FADE IN:

INT. LIVING ROOM/KITCHEN - NIGHT (DAY 1)

(Roc, Joey, Andrew, Eleanor)

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

(Roc, Joey, Andrew, Eleanor)

(THE LIVING ROOM OF THE SMALL RENTED ROW HOUSE OF ROC AND ELEANOR EMERSON IN A BLACK WORKING CLASS AREA OF BALTIMORE. THE FURNITURE IS ALL OLD-FASHIONED AND NOTHING MATCHES, BUT THE HOUSE IS TIDY AND WELL KEPT UP. A DOOR LEADS TO THE KITCHEN. A STAIRWAY LEADS UPSTAIRS. ROC RELAXES IN FRONT OF THE T.V. WATCHING "THE SIMPSONS.")

SEX: "THE SIMPSONS" AUDIO (POST)

(AFTER A MOMENT, HIS FATHER, ANDREW, ENTERS FROM THE KITCHEN, DRESSED FOR BED, WEARING A WORN BATHROBE. ANDREW NOTICES THE T.V.)

*

ANDREW

What are you watching there?

ROC

"The Simpsons."

ANDREW

"The Simpsons"? Bill Cosby's on.

ROC

I know. I thought I'd catch this for a
change. People say it's funny.

(ANDREW SWITCHES CHANNELS TO "THE COSBY SHOW.")

SFX: "THE COSBY SHOW" AUDIO (POST)

WOMAN PATIENT (V.O.)

My last obstetrician had hangnails.

SFX: LAUGH TRACK (FILTER)

ROC

What you do that for?

ANDREW

Son, there's something I gotta tell you.
I been trying to keep it from you all
these years, but I can't hide it no
longer. Son, we're black. Sorry to
break it to you sudden like this. Must
come as a shock. Enjoy the show.

(ANDREW EXITS UP THE STAIRS. ROC ANGRILY TURNS OFF
THE T.V. HE TURNS AS IF HE'S GOING TO YELL UPSTAIRS AT
HIS FATHER, BUT INSTEAD WHIRLS AROUND AND HARANGUES A
CHAIR. HIS WIFE, ELEANOR, DRESSED IN HER NURSING
CLOTHES, APPEARS IN THE KITCHEN DOORWAY DURING THE
FOLLOWING AND STANDS THERE, UNSEEN BY ROC, OBSERVING HIS
PERFORMANCE.)

Now you listen to me. When Mama died, I
was happy to have you come live here.
But I pay the rent. It's my T.V. And I
watch what I want. Understand?

ELEANOR

That chair been messin' with you again?
(COMES OVER AND TALKS TO THE CHAIR TOO)

You just watch your step or you could end
up firewood! Well, I'm off. Will you
watch "L.A. Law" and tell me what
happens?

ROC

Sure. Ain't fair. Your favorite show
and you almost never see it.

ELEANOR

That's okay. Just make notes so you can
give me a real detailed description.

(SHE GIVES HIM A KISS GOODBYE, BUT ROC GRABS HOLD OF HER
AND KISSES HER ROMANTICALLY. SHE BREAKS AWAY.)

ELEANOR (CONT'D)

Ain't got time, honey.

ROC

Seems the only chance I get to make love
to my wife these days is in my dreams.

ELEANOR

That's okay. Just make notes so you can
give me a real detailed description.

There's a pie in the oven.

(SHE PUTS ON HER COAT. ROC EXITS INTO THE KITCHEN. AS
ELEANOR HEADS FOR THE FRONT DOOR, THERE'S A KNOCK AT THE
DOOR. ELEANOR OPENS THE DOOR AND SEES ROC'S YOUNGER
BROTHER, JOEY, CARRYING A SUITCASE AND A TRUMPET CASE.)

JOEY

Hey, lady, you wanna buy a watch?

ELEANOR

Joey!

(DELIGHTED TO SEE HIM, GIVES HIM A BIG HUG AND BRINGS HIM INSIDE)

I can't think when we last heard from you. We've been worried sick. I could split your skull.

JOEY

So good to be back with family.

(ELEANOR TAKES JOEY'S ARM AND LEADS HIM TOWARD THE KITCHEN.)

ELEANOR

Come on. Roc is gonna be so thrilled to see you.

(JOEY AND ELEANOR EXIT INTO THE KITCHEN.)

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

(Roc, Eleanor, Joey)

(ROC SITS AT THE TABLE EATING A PIECE OF PIE AS JOEY ENTERS)

Hey, Joey

(ROC GOES BACK TO HIS PIE)

ELEANOR

That's it? You don't see your brother for five years and that's it?

ROC

You're right... Hey Joey, where's my money?

JOEY

Hey, pie!

(SITS DOWN AND CUTS HIMSELF A PIECE)

Where's Daddy?

ELEANOR

He's upstairs, sleeping.

JOEY

He okay?

ROC

Yeah, no thanks to you. Daddy's last two birthdays, I sent him cards and forged your signature so he'd think you'd remembered.

JOEY

Oh... Just cards? No gifts?

ROC

Gifts?!

JOEY

(INDIGNANT)

Well, sure... may be forgetful but ain't cheap.

(ROC IS ABOUT TO RESPOND ANGRILY. ELEANOR INTERVENES)

ELEANOR

Well, come on, Joey, tell us what you

been...

JOEY

Well, I put this jazz group together and we've been touring all over.

Unfortunately, last month, in Chicago, I bumped into this telephone pole. Split my lip. Can't play a note.

ELEANOR

That's terrible. A telephone pole?

JOEY

Yeah. My girlfriend's husband lifted me up and threw me into it... So I figured it was a good chance to come back to Baltimore, see my loving family, spend some time with them...

ROC

Sponge off them.

JOEY

(NODDING)

Sponge off them... With no money coming in, I had to give up my flat in New York.

ROC

And you were forced to come crawling to me.

JOEY

That ain't true. There's dozens of people I could have come crawling to. I chose you... Come on, man. You can't put me out in the cold. You swore to Mama on her deathbed you'd look out for me.

ROC

I got caught up in the moment... Well, all right, you can stay. Just till the lip heals. And you g tta find another job. Pay your keep.

JOEY

Absolutely.

ELEANOR

Bye, baby. Joey, there's a spare bed in your daddy's room, but maybe you should sleep on the couch tonight. I gotta go to the hospital.

JOEY

You sick?

ELEANOR

(INDICATING HER NURSES UNIFORM)

I work there.

JOEY

Oh, I thought you were making some
fashion statement.

(ELEANOR EXITS.)

JOEY (CONT'D)

...So you still work at the docks?

ROC

No, I got a much better job with the
city. I'm a garbageman.

JOEY

No, seriously. What're you doing?

ROC

I'm a garbageman. So happens it's a fine
job. With great perks.

JOEY

I'll bet.

ROC

(PROUDLY)

See this refrigerator? See this table?

Come on.

(ROC LEADS JOEY BACK INTO THE LIVING ROOM.)

RESET TO:

(MORE)

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

(Roc, Joey, Andrew)

(ROC AND JOEY ENTER.)

ROC (CONT'D)

See this lamp? See this rug? See that
piano? Didn't cost me a cent. It's all
stuff people threw out.

JOEY

The couch I'm gonna sleep on, too?

ROC

You bet.

JOEY

Mind if I watch the used T.V.?

ROC

Help yourself. That's why they call it
an idiot box.

(JOEY SWITCHES THE T.V. ON AND TUNES IN "THE SIMPSONS.")

SEX: "THE SIMPSONS" AUDIO (POST)

(ROC STARTS FOR THE STAIRS. AS HE REACHES THE STAIRS,
ANDREW APPEARS AT THE TOP OF THE STAIRS.)

ANDREW

How many times I gotta tell you --

Joey?

JOEY

Hi, Daddy.

(ANDREW RUSHES OVER AND KISSES AND HUGS JOEY.)

ANDREW

Joey! My boy! My boy is back!

(TO ROC, ANGRILY)

Why didn't you tell me he's here?

ROC

You said once you're asleep not to wake
you even if Jesus himself comes rapping
at the door.

ANDREW

Jesus, sure. But not Joey!

(TO ROC)

...What you sittin' there for? Go get us
something we can celebrate with.

(ROC GOES AND GETS A BOTTLE OF SCOTCH AND GLASSES AND
POURS DRINKS.)

JOEY

A little ice in mine.

ANDREW

My boy! My boy! Thank you for all those
birthday cards.

(ROC REACTS.)

JOEY

Don't think I'd forget my daddy's
birthday, do you?

(ROC REACTS.)

ANDREW *

You have such a lovely penmanship.

(ROC REACTS.)

ANDREW (CONT'D)

What's that you're watching on T.V.?

JOEY

"The Simpsons."

ANDREW *

"The Simpson's." Oh, I hear it's a funny
show. I'll watch it with you.

(ROC REACTS AND THEY ALL SIT AND WATCH TOGETHER.)

DISSOLVE TO:

ACT ONE

SCENE B

INT. KITCHEN - DAY (DAY 2)

(Roc, Joey, Andrew, Eleanor)

(ROC SITS AT THE TABLE HAVING COFFEE AND READING A
NEWSPAPER. JOEY ENTERS.)

JOEY

Morning.

ROC

Hrrmmph.

JOEY

Can I see some of that U.S.A. Today?

(ROC SHOVES JOEY SOME OF THE PAPER.)

JOEY (CONT'D)

Wait a minute. This is U.S.A. Yesterday.

ROC

Perks. Get em' on my route.

JOEY

You mean you read papers from the day
before? You're always a day behind.

ROC

And a quarter ahead. ...A dollar on
Sundays.

JOEY

And what you gonna do with all those
quarters?

ROC

Every one of them goes into a special
savings account. A few more years and
I'll have enough to put me a down payment
on the kind of house I've always dreamed
about... Semi-detached. ...I never
lived in a house that had a wall with no
one on the other side of it. A man comes
home from work, tired, wants to get away
from the world, all he's gotta do is go
sit up against that wall. And he's all
alone in his castle... And if I gotta
read yesterday's funnies to get me a wall
like that, it's okay with me.

JOEY

Only problem is, when you finally go to
buy your dream house, somebody'll beat
you to it 'cause he read the want ads a
day before you did.

ROC

...Yeah. ...I ain't worked that out yet.

JOEY

Well, I don't feel like waiting until tomorrow to find out how last night's basketball game went. Where can I buy a paper?

ROC

Newsrack. Out front.

(JOEY EXITS THROUGH THE KITCHEN DOOR.)

JOEY (O.S.)

Oh. Hi, Eleanor.

ELEANOR (O.S.)

Hi, Joey.

(THE KITCHEN DOOR OPENS AND ELEANOR ENTERS, STILL IN HER NURSING OUTFIT.)

ROC

Hi, baby.

ELEANOR

(WEARY)

Hi, baby.

(ROC KISSES HER AND HOLDS HER.)

ROC

(WHILE HE'S HOLDING HER)

Now, baby?

ELEANOR

No, baby.

ROC

Tired, baby?

ELEANOR

Yeah, baby.

ROC

'Night, baby?

ELEANOR

You got it, baby.

(SHE KISSES HIM THEN SHE EXITS.)

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

'Night.

JOEY (O.S.)

'Night.

(JOEY ENTERS WITH A NEWSPAPER AND SLAPS IT DOWN ON THE TABLE.)

JOEY (CONT'D)

'Night? Damn. Just one more basket and I would have won my bet. One more basket.

(ANDREW HAS ENTERED DURING THE LAST SPEECH AND HAS OVERHEARD.)

ANDREW

And I can tell you who lost that basket. The white boy.

ROC

What white boy?

ANDREW

The white boy on the team he bet on.

ROC

You don't even know what team that is.

ANDREW

Don't matter. They all gotta have one white boy. Don't matter how slow or uncoordinated. It's a league rule.

ROC

That's crazy. You saying there ain't no good white basketball players? You saying Larry Bird ain't good?

ANDREW

Larry Bird? Well sure he's good. He's real good. But he's black.

ROC

Larry Bird is black?!

ANDREW

You didn't know that? Sure. They just put white makeup on him, straightened his hair, and put those tinted contact lenses in his eyes. But he's black, all right. Larry Bird was born and bred in Harlem. His real name is Abdul Mustapha.

*

(ANDREW TAKES HIS CUP OF COFFEE AND HE EXITS. ROC GOES TO A CLOSET AND SURREPTITIOUSLY REMOVES A CARDBOARD BOX FROM THE REAR OF THE CLOSET.)

ROC

*

I'm going to work.

JOEY

What's in there?

ROC

It's Eleanor's birthday tomorrow. I got her this VCR machine. Now she'll be able to see all her favorite shows.

JOEY

Lemme see.

(LIFTS IT OUT OF THE BOX)

...It's used.

ROC

Right. I found it in someone's trash.

JOEY

Whose trash did he find it in? ...It still work?

ROC

Not yet. But I'm meeting my friend Wiz after work. He'll fix it up like new.

JOEY

They call him Wiz 'cause he's some sort of electronic wizard?

ROC

No. 'Cause he's got a problem with his bladder.

(DURING THE FOLLOWING, ROC GETS HIS WORN, OLD GLOVES, HIS COAT AND HIS LUNCH BOX. JOEY EXAMINES THE VCR.)

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JOEY

Hey Roc, ain't Eleanor gonna mind, it
being used and all?

ROC

This dishwasher. That's what I gave her
for her last birthday. Found it. Wiz
fixed it up. She was thrilled.

JOEY

Thrilled? What'd she do? Jump up on you
and kiss you and make passionate love to
you right there on the kitchen table?

ROC

Well, no. That's not our style. We
don't make love on no kitchen table.

JOEY

Well, she can't do that. You know
what I mean? She can't do that.

ROC

You can't make yourself use it. You
can't make yourself use it.

JOEY

Well, she can't do that. You know
what I mean? She can't do that.

ROC

You can't make yourself use it. You
can't make yourself use it.

ROC

What?

JOEY

...This is kind of embarrassing for me.

...You know how I hate to borrow money.

ROC

Yeah, and you know how I hate to lend it

JOEY

It's just, I didn't realize it was Eleanor's birthday. She's been so great, letting me barge into her home, putting me up like this. She's been a real sister to me. And here I can't even afford to get her a birthday gift. ...I feel shamed, man. ...Really shamed.

(JOEY STARTS TO CRY. ROC IS MOVED.)

ROC

...Hey, come on, man. Don't do that.
...Here's twenty dollars. You go get her something.

JOEY

(FERVENTLY)

Thank you, Roc. You're the best. I don't deserve a brother like you.

ROC

(EMBARRASSED)

Hey, c'mon. You're my baby brother, you always will be. Makes me feel good to know you care about Eleanor like that.

(ROC GIVES JOEY A FRIENDLY NUDGE.)

JOEY

(EMOTIONALLY)

You're the best. I love you, man. You watch, I'm gonna get my life together.

ROC

*

See you later.

(ROC TAKES THE VCR AND HIS OTHER STUFF AND EXITS.
AFTER A BEAT, JOEY GOES TO THE PHONE.)

*

JOEY

*

(INTO THE PHONE)

...Micky? ...Joey. Gimme twenty dollars
on Billy's Hope to win in the third at
Pimlico tomorrow.

FADE OUT

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

SCENE C

FADE IN:

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT (DAY 2)

(Roc, Andrew, Joey, Eleanor)

(THE DINING ROOM TABLE IS SET WITH SOME FESTIVE PAPER NAPKINS AND PARTY FAVORS AND THERE IS A CAKE WITH "HAPPY BIRTHDAY ELEANOR" WRITTEN ON IT. ROC IS CONNECTING THE VCR TO THE T.V. ANDREW STANDS WATCHING. ROC SWITCHES IT ON AND A PROGRAM APPEARS ON T.V. IN FAST FORWARD.)

SEX: T.V. PROGRAM IN FAST FORWARD

INSERT: T.V. PROGRAM IN FAST FORWARD

ANDREW

...What's everybody in such a hurry for?

ROC

It's on fast forward. Wiz needs some more parts before it can do the other stuff. But I wanted to at least show it to Eleanor tonight.

ANDREW

It's a shame white people can't really move that fast. Might make better basketball players.

(MORE)

(ROC TURNS OFF THE VCR.)

SFX: OUT

ANDREW (CONT'D)

(HOLDING UP HIS PRESENT)

Hey, you know what I got Eleanor? A
framed picture of Malcolm X.

ROC

You give her that every year.

ANDREW

Of course. I can't disappoint her now.

(THE FRONT DOOR OPENS AND JOEY ENTERS, CARRYING SOME
PARCELS AND PACKAGES. HE WEARS A GREAT-LOOKING SUIT.
HE POSES LIKE A MALE MODEL.)

JOEY

Hi. Hope I ain't late for the party.

ANDREW

...Will you look at this man!

ROC

That new?

JOEY

Course. Couldn't show up at my sister-
in-law's birthday in an old suit. And it
ain't all that's new. Try this on,
Daddy.

(TAKES AN ELEGANT DRESSING GOWN FROM ONE OF
THE PACKAGES AND GIVES IT TO ANDREW)

Can't have my Daddy walking around in no
old tattered bathrobe.

ANDREW

(ALMOST IN TEARS)

It's the most beautiful thing I ever
saw... Thank you, son.

JOEY

And Roc, these are for you.

(REMOVES SOME VERY WARM-LOOKING GLOVES FROM
ANOTHER PACKAGE)

They're the rage in Paris. All of the
garbagemen are wearing them.

ROC

Where'd you get the money for all this?

JOEY

From the most beautiful filly in the city
of Baltimore.

ANDREW

Damn! He always did have a nice way with
the women.

ROC

Where'd you get the money to bet on the
horses?

JOEY

You gave it to me. Which reminds me,
here's your twenty dollars back.

ROC

Wait a minute. I gave you that money to
buy my wife a gift.

JOEY

Come on, Roc. I can't get no gift for a wonderful lady like Eleanor for no twenty dollars. Be insulting.

ROC

You cried to me for that money. And I almost cried back. And then you go and bet it on a horse?!!

JOEY

Hey, you're not angry, are you? Daddy, can you believe this man?

ANDREW

Now Joey, you and Roc are both my sons. So don't go asking me to take sides here. Especially when it's so obvious he's acting like a jackass.

ROC

You told me you were gonna get Eleanor a gift with that money. You lied to me.

JOEY

I didn't lie. I got her a gift. A great gift. And if I did what I said I'd do, how can that be lying?

ROC

(CONFUSED)

...I ain't worked that out yet.

JOEY

Man, we all got enough bad luck in our lives. A little good luck comes along, the least we can do is enjoy it.

ROC

...Maybe you're right. ...What you get her?

JOEY

(TAKING IT FROM BEHIND THE COUCH)

Look at this. A state-of-the-art, top-of-the-line, cable-compatible VCR.

ROC

VCR?!

JOEY

This is a five hundred dollar machine. But some guy Duwaine down the street sold it to me for just seventy-five. Can you believe that?

ROC

Yeah, I can believe it. Duwaine's a thief. That's stolen property.

JOEY

Ain't my problem.

ANDREW

Anyway, how you know Duwaine stole it? Maybe he just looted it in some riot.

JOEY

Yeah, how you know he didn't loot it in
some riot?

ROC

Stolen or not stolen ain't the point.
How could you get Eleanor a VCR knowing I
got her one?

JOEY

That old funky thing?

ROC

Exactly. And you get her this sleek
modern one. You tryin' to shame me in
front of my woman?!

JOEY

Course not. I figured we'd say it's from
the both of us. Was your twenty dollars
made it all possible.

ROC

(FURIOUS)

Listen, I don't need nobody to buy me no
gift for my wife's birthday. You
understand?

(ELEANOR ENTERS DOWN THE STAIRS IN HER NURSING OUTFIT.)

ELEANOR

What's goin' on here?

ROC

I'll tell you what's going on. My brother and I were just comparing the gifts we got you for your birthday. Seems he got you this brand new, state-of-the-art, top-of-the-line, cable-compatible VCR. And I got you...

(LIFTING HIS VCR OVER HIS HEAD AND HURLING IT TO THE GROUND, SMASHING IT, AND THEN STOMPING IT TO PIECES)

...this! ...This! ...This!

(ROC BURSTS INTO TEARS.)

JOEY

Wait a second, man! I didn't know you were gonna take it this way. Maybe I was dumb, but I really thought it'd please you. But hey, ain't no VCR more important than my brother.

(JOEY LIFTS HIS VCR, SMASHES IT TO THE GROUND AND STOMPS IT TO PIECES, TOO. HE AND ROC STAND FOR A MOMENT LOOKING AT THE MESSSES THEY'VE MADE, THEN RUSH TO EACH OTHER AND TEARFULLY EMBRACE.)

ANDREW

...I don't exactly follow the logic of what's going on here, but I sure as hell ain't gonna be left out. Nothing personal, Malcolm.

ELEANOR GETS HER COAT AND SHE EXITS.)

ROC

...I ain't felt this rotten since the
Colts moved to Indianapolis.

DISSOLVE TO:

ACT TWO

SCENE D

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY (DAY 3)

(Roc, Eleanor, Joey, Andrew, Violinist, Pony)

(EARLY MORNING. ROC, DRESSED, SITS SLUMPED IN A CHAIR.
THE FRONT DOOR OPENS AND ELEANOR ENTERS.)

ELEANOR

...Hi.

ROC

...Hi.

ELEANOR

...Why you up so early?

ROC

Ain't really been able to sleep.

ELEANOR

...Guess I was a little hard on you last
night.

ROC

*

No, you were a hundred percent right in everything you said. After you left, Joey and Daddy and me went down to Charlaine's bar, to drown our sorrows and try and come up with the answer.

ELEANOR

Answer to what?

ROC

What's the craziest thing I could do to show you how crazy I am about you.

ELEANOR

Really?

ROC

Yeah. Everybody in the bar was helping out with suggestions. Joey thought I should hire a gypsy violinist to come serenade you. Wiz said I should take off work today and fly you to New York for a weekend at the most luxurious hotel in town. Daddy said I should hire a pony.

ELEANOR

A Pony?

ROC

Ever since he was a kid he's wanted a party with pony rides. Charlaine suggested I hire you a male stripper.

ELEANOR

Bless her heart.

ROC

Yeah, but I wasn't satisfied. I wanted something even crazier. Something you'd never believe me doing in a million years. And suddenly it came to me in a flash. I decided to go and buy you a dress! What do you think of that?

ELEANOR

Well... that's nice. But a dress -- what's so crazy about that?

ROC

Not just any dress. A designer original from the most exclusive shop on Charles Street.

ELEANOR

Well, that's really nice. But I still don't quite see why you think that's so crazy.

ROC

Eleanor... I bought you a dress from that shop... that was not on sale.

ELEANOR

(ABSOLUTELY STUNNED)

...Not on sale? ...Roc, you didn't!

ROC

I did.

ELEANOR

Roc, you never bought anything that wasn't on sale in your whole life!

ROC

I know, I know. It was the weirdest experience I ever had.

ELEANOR

Not on sale! Oh, Roc!

ROC

I wish you could have been there. The saleslady was so nice and helpful... once I convinced her I wasn't there to rob her, that is. She kept showing me all these great dresses, and I would scratch my chin and consider each one. And then finally she showed me the one dress which I knew would be perfect for you.

ELEANOR

Not on sale!

(ROC TAKES A WRAPPED BOX FROM THE CLOSET AND GIVES IT TO HER.)

(MORE)

ELEANOR (CONT'D)

(UNWRAPPING IT)

...Not on sale!

(TAKES OUT THE DRESS)

Oh Roc, it's beautiful!

(GIVES ROC A LONG, PASSIONATE KISS)

...I'm going up to the bedroom to try it
on. Give me a few minutes, then you come
up.

ROC

Okay. I wasn't sure about the size. I
hope it fits.

ELEANOR

Don't matter. I got a hunch it ain't
gonna stay on all that long.

(AS SHE PUTS THE DRESS BACK IN THE BOX, SHE NOTICES THE
PRICE TAG IS STILL ATTACHED.)

ROC

I know you shouldn't leave the price tag
on a gift, but I thought under the
circumstances...

ELEANOR

(READS, ASTOUNDED)

"Ten hundred and twenty-six dollars"?!...

ROC

(PROUDLY)

Yep.

ELEANOR

(UTTERLY FURIOUS)

You paid a thousand dollars for a dress?!
A thousand dollars?! Are you crazy?!!

ROC

...I thought you wanted me crazy.

ELEANOR

Yeah, crazy. Not brain dead!! A
thousand dollars of our precious savings
on one dress?!

ROC

Aw, baby...

ELEANOR

Don't you touch me!

(ROC STANDS THERE DAZED AS ELEANOR DISAPPEARS UP THE
STAIRS. BUT A MOMENT LATER, WE HEAR HER SCREAM AND SHE
REAPPEARS, BACKING DOWN THE STAIRS, FOLLOWED BY A GYPSY
VIOLINIST, SERENADING HER.)

ELEANOR (CONT'D)

Who the hell is he?!

ROC

(SHEEPISHLY)

Oh, him. Well see, I wasn't sure you'd
think the dress was crazy enough. I
wanted to play it safe.

ELEANOR

You hired a violinist, too?!

(JOEY ENTERS DOWN THE STAIRS, OVERHEARING ELEANOR'S LAST FEW WORDS BUT UNAWARE OF HER FEELINGS.)

JOEY

Yeah. I found him in some Hungarian restaurant.

(SOTTO)

He plays a little flat sometimes, but Itzak Perlman don't do birthday gigs no more.

ELEANOR

(TRYING TO CONTROL HER ANGER)

I better sit down.

JOEY

Not there. ...Daddy!

(ANDREW ENTERS FROM THE KITCHEN, LEADING IN A FESTIVELY DRESSED PONY. JOEY LIFTS ELEANOR ONTO IT.)

ANDREW

I went and picked him out myself. They had another one, black all over. But I didn't wanna use your birthday to make no political statement.

JOEY

(TAKING AN ENVELOPE FROM UNDER THE PONY'S
SADDLE AND REMOVING ITS CONTENTS)

Oooh, and what have we here? Check these out.

(HANDS HER THE TICKETS)

Two plane tickets to Manhattan...

reservation for a room at the Plazaza

Hotel... and two tickets to Miss Saigon.

(PUTTING AN ARM AROUND ROC'S SHOULDER)

Wonder how they got there.

ELEANOR

(TO ROC, QUIETLY, BUT DEAD SERIOUS)

I could kill you.

(ELEANOR FLINGS THE TICKETS ON THE FLOOR AND CLIMBS OFF
THE PONY.)

JOEY

I think this party just turned ugly,

Daddy. Let's show Pinky and Zoltan the

neighborhood.

(THE VIOLINIST STARTS TO PLAY. JOEY, ANDREW, THE
VIOLINIST AND THE PONY EXIT.)

ELEANOR

...What did all this come to?

ROC

...Little over two thousand dollars.

ELEANOR

Two thousand dollars?! That's a third of

what we got saved for the down payment!

ROC

I know.

ELEANOR

Two thousand dollars! You know how many
garbage cans you gotta empty to make two
thousand dollars?!

ROC

A hundred and seventeen thousand, nine
hundred and forty-six. ...I worked it
out waiting for you to come home.

(ELEANOR STARES AT HIM STANDING THERE, LOOKING SO
MISERABLE. THEN, AFTER A MOMENT, SHE SOFTENS AND STARTS
TO LAUGH, QUIETLY AT FIRST, THEN UPROARIOUSLY.)

ROC (CONT'D)

...To hear you laugh like that, I'd empty
a billion cans of garbage.

ELEANOR

That's the most beautiful thing anyone
ever said to me.

(THEY EMBRACE.)

ELEANOR (CONT'D)

...Hey, where's that male stripper?

ROC

...You're looking at him. But that's for
when we get to the Plaza.

(ROC DEMONSTRATES A FEW OF HIS MOVES FOR ELEANOR, WE:) *

FADE OUT

END OF SHOW