

PILOT

STORY BY DEAN CRAIG & JASON ALEXANDER & PETER TILDEN

Written by

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CHARACTER DESCRIPTIONS:

KEN(50) Small, balding, but "Paul Shaffer" hip. For him, the ends always justify means. Brings his stage dad intensity to into every interaction.

MAGGIE(49) The cool mom; a bohemian caretaker that hasn't entirely shed the salty instincts she developed in her colorful past. Caring but unorthodox.

RIA(18) Sinfully sexy, supremely talented, and a prototypical selfish diva. Always looking for the angle that will propel her to true stardom.

SAM(17) Happy, impulsive, endearing. A golden retriever made human, he aims to please but lacks the attention span to follow through. The cute shaggy haired stoner next door.

JERMAINE(14) African American, smart, neurotic. An over-planner adopted by a family of improvisers. Seeks stability over all else.

CASEY(11) The Lisa Simpson-esque moral compass of the family. Pure, innocent, and adorable. A true believer in the wholesome image the family tries to project.

EXT. PRINCE AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

Outside a once great rock and roll theater. The marquee reads in huge letters: **"TONIGHT AND TOMORROW - DUNCAN FREEDOM AND THE REVOLUTIONARIES"**. We focus in on the decidedly smaller type under which reads: "Swallo" with the last 'W' missing.

INT. PRINCE AUDITORIUM STAGE - NIGHT

On stage, our family, The Swallows - wearing red, white, and blue spangly outfits. A wholesome all-American family band. Though they look a little retro, they actually sound decent and fun, with slick vocals, especially RIA. She finishes the classic rock song with a great vocal run.

They finish and run downstage to bow. There's a smattering of applause from the thin crowd. ROADIES start striking the set.

KEN

We are Swallow! We are *America's*
Family Band. Thank you!

The FAMILY waves with big smiles, then tries to exit. Ken holds them in place, attempting to ignite a crowd chant.

KEN (cont'd)

SWALL-OW. SWALL-OW. SWALL-OW.

It's not working.

MAGGIE

Not happenin', hon. You're just
making everyone feel sad. Let it
go...

(into mic)

Up next our headliner, Duncan
Freedom and the Revolutionaries!

Cheers. The crowd starts to fill up as our family exits doing a synchronized kiss-blow. Casey leans into the mic.

CASEY

Dolphin safe tuna!

As Swallow begin their exit to the wings, their public sheen drops and they become their less perfect selves.

RIA

Jesus, Casey, would you stop with
that hippie Green-peace shit?

CASEY

I've got a public platform. I'm using it as a force for good.

RIA

You're using it as a force for stealing the spotlight. No one cares about your bullshit cause of the week. Go fuck a sea turtle.

KEN

(through gritted teeth)
America's family band, Ria. Keep it clean. Keep it wholesome.

MAGGIE

And also don't be mean to your sister. Good show everyone. *

KEN

Awesome show. We were great out there.

CASEY

(a little flirtatious)
You sounded great, Jermaine.

Jermaine is extremely uncomfortable having his sister flirt with him. He nervously takes a puff from his inhaler.

JERMAINE

Oh no. I'm out.

SAM

Here, use mine.

Sam hands him a small bottle. Jermaine looks at it. He lowers his voice so that the parents can't hear.

JERMAINE

Is this a popper?

SAM

Yeah amyl nitrate. It's the same as your stuff.

JERMAINE

No it's not!

SAM

All chemicals, Jermaine.

MAGGIE

Guys, remember you have to finish your homework before bed. I love you, but I *will* fail you if you're late... Or boring...

Maggie walks past a roadie smoking a joint, and takes a moment to sniff the air deeply as she walks past.

EXT. CAR PARK - EVENING

As the family walks across the car park, we see a huge, gleaming band tour bus. A gorgeous mural of Duncan Freedom among images of rocky mountains. Next to it, an empty space.

MAGGIE (cont'd)

Where's our van? Has someone stolen our van?!

*

SAM

How are we gonna get to the motel?

*

KEN

I guess we'll just have to take that bus over there.

We pan to a small cruddy bus towing a U-Haul trailer, several rungs down from bus Duncan Freedom's.

KEN (cont'd)

Surprise!

MAGGIE

Ken, what did you do?

*

KEN

I bought a tour bus... I had all your stuff moved inside while we were on stage. You've got an amazing dad, right? This family band tour just got real! Check out the side!

*

On the side is a mural of the Swallow family, all smiling and wholesome next to large block letters reading "SWALLOW", under which someone's spray painted "my dick".

KEN (cont'd)

Jesus, someone's graffitti'd it already? It's only been there an hour! Anyway, I'll get it painted over. Go on, check it out.

*

The kids tentatively wander onto the bus. Maggie stops Ken before he enters the bus. *

MAGGIE

Can we afford this? *

KEN

Totally. It's no big deal. I got a deal on it. Big deal. I mean the deal was big, not the fact that we bought it. That's no big deal. Point is, we've got a tour with Duncan Freedom, which means money coming in for the next four months so we'll be fine. *

Ken heads onto the bus as Maggie stares after him.

INT. SWALLOW BUS

The kids are checking out the bus. The living area holds a series of bunks in the rear and a tiny bathroom with shower stall. There's a small living room/dining area, and a kitchenette. Ken and Maggie enter.

KEN

Well gang, what do you think?

RIA

Is this a joke? There's zero privacy. Where am I supposed to change? How am I supposed--

KEN

Thanks, Ria. Anyone else?

SAM

(opens a tiny cupboard)
So many amazing little spaces.

KEN

See Maggie, they love it. Hey, you want to see our bedroom?

MAGGIE

We get a bedroom? How fancy. After you, good sir.

INT. KEN AND MAGGIE'S BEDROOM

Ken and Maggie stand next to each other at the foot of a twin-sized bed in the smallest space imaginable.

MAGGIE

It's cozy... but I like it.
 (falls onto bed, sinks
 into it)
 Is this a water bed? *

KEN *

No, it's just old. *
 (off Maggie's grimace) *
 We'll get a new mattress. *

INT. BUS LIVING QUARTERS - LATER

The kids unpack their stuff. Ria's putting on makeup in the bathroom. Sam's unpacking drugs from his duffel bag and is stashing them in various nooks and crannies around the bus. *

JERMAINE

What are you doing?

SAM

You never keep your stash in one stash-hole. That's textbook... This place is so cool, huh? You can give up that boarding school crap now.

JERMAINE

(lowering his voice so no one else can hear)
 I told you I haven't applied yet. I was just thinking about it.

Ria emerges from the bathroom, wearing lots of make up.

CASEY

You know they test make up on bunnies, Ria... Where are you going anyway?

RIA

I'm outa here. There's no way I'm sleeping on this bus.

SAM

Do bunnies even look good in make up? Oh yeah, Jessica Rabbit...

RIA *

You do know that Jessica Rabbit wasn't a real rabbit, right? *
 *

They stop and look at Sam for a beat. Ria's done. She leaves.

EXT. SWALLOW BUS - MORNING

It's early morning as the sun rises in the venue carpark, empty aside from the two tour buses.

INT. SWALLOW BUS - MASTER BEDROOM - MORNING

Ken is squashing Maggie up against the side of the bus.

MAGGIE

Ken, you're crushing me.

KEN

(waking up)

We must have parked on an incline.

MAGGIE

(as Ken tries to move)

That's worse. Now your knee's in my vagina.

KEN

Sorry. I don't know where I am here.

MAGGIE

Jesus, what's that smell? Is that Sam's socks?

SAM (O.S.)

(clear as day)

Sorry.

KEN

(looking around)

Is Sam in the room?

SAM (O.S.)

No, I'm just on the bunk next to you.

MAGGIE

So I guess privacy's gonna be a little tricky.

KEN

Maybe, but at least we're with our kids.

CASEY (O.S.)

(also totally clear)

Not Ria. She's on Duncan's bus.

KEN

Wow, they've been spending a lot of time together lately. He's become kind of like a Grandfather to her.

INT. FREEDOM BUS BEDROOM - MORNING

Ria is banging the hell out of DUNCAN FREEDOM, in his seventies, an old-school John Mellencamp type singer.

DUNCAN

Hold on a second. Let me just put something up my ass.

Duncan sits up and does so.

RIA

Are we gonna talk about me joining your band?

DUNCAN

(straining)

Yeah, yeah. Definitely. Later.

*

Duncan takes a snort of cocaine.

RIA

Aren't you too old for all that?

DUNCAN

I'll show you how old I am.

Duncan pulls Ria on top of him, and she starts bouncing. The sex gets heated till Duncan starts to look pained.

DUNCAN(CONT'D) (cont'd)

Oh God... Oh God... Oh God...

Ria thinks that he's just really into the sex, so starts giving it more. But we can see he's clutching his chest. She bounces on him more aggressively, unaware that he's going blue in the face, trying unsuccessfully to stop her. Finally, Ria orgasms and collapses on his chest, exhausted. Duncan lies there, not moving, eyes open... *stone dead*.

RIA

So, when are you gonna speak to your Manager?... I can't live on that bus with my family, that's for sure. I'll go fucking insane.

Duncan doesn't say anything, because he's dead.

RIA (cont'd)
Do you think you might contribute
to this conversation at any point?

Still nothing.

RIA (CONT'D) (cont'd)
Hello-o?

He's just staring up at the ceiling. She hits his arm.

RIA (CONT'D) (cont'd)
Hey asshole!

She looks into his dead eyes, and checks his breathing. Her
jaw drops. She looks like she's about to vomit.

INT. SWALLOW BUS - MORNING

Sam and Casey are on the bus, having breakfast.

SAM
(shouts out to bathroom)
Jermaine, can you hurry up?

CASEY
Leave him alone. He has a shy
bladder.

Sam pushes the door open. Jermaine is sitting on the toilet.

JERMAINE
What are you doing? Boundaries!

SAM
What are you doing? You know
there's no number two on the bus.

JERMAINE
I'm peeing.

SAM
Sitting down?

JERMAINE
I get vertigo.

CASEY
(entering)
You OK Jermaine? You sound hurt.

*

Jermaine's about to complain when Ria runs onto the bus, looking like a mess, enters the bathroom, slams the bathroom door, squeezing the four of them tightly inside.

JERMAINE

Guys! Please!

RIA

Sam, did you sell Duncan drugs?

SAM

Just a little coco. Why, what's up?

RIA

I'll tell you what's up, fuck face.
Duncan's dead.

SAM

What?

RIA

He just died underneath me.

SAM

Shit, man! He didn't happen to pay
you for the coke, did he? He owes
me three hundred.

RIA

Forget the money, Sam. He's *dead*.
From *your* drugs!

SAM

How do you know he died from the
drugs? Maybe you fucked him to
death.

RIA

That's not even a thing.

CASEY

It definitely is a thing. It's like
the female praying mantis bites the
male's head off while they mate-

*
*
*

RIA

Shut up Casey.

RIA (cont'd)

It also means we no longer have a
tour-

Ken opens the bathroom door. Everyone goes dead quiet.

KEN

Let's get moving. We've got a radio interview in half an hour. And don't forget to wear the outfits.

RIA

It's radio. Why do we need to wear the outfits?

KEN

Because, Ria, when we're in the outfits we're Swallow. When we're out of the outfits, we're nobody.

SAM

Aren't we still Swallow?

KEN

Just put on the outfits!... Why are you all in here?

CASEY

We were helping Jermaine go to the toilet. He has a shy bladder.

*
*

KEN

(unsure)

Oh... Well hang in there, Jermaine.

*
*
*

Ken looks at them all suspiciously, then shuts the door. Everyone stands in silence for a beat.

JERMAINE

Can you guys get out?

INT. RADIO STATION - DAY

In a small booth, The Swallows sit across from DJ DAVE (think Herman Caine) looking the image of a full-of-crap-wholesome-all-American family.

DJ DAVE

So Swallow, you call yourself America's family band. And lord knows we need more family values.

CASEY

That's what we're selling.

KEN

Offering... That's what we're offering.

DJ DAVE

So, how'd you guys get started as a band?

KEN

Well, Maggie and I were a duo back in the 80's. We had a song out and we sold quite a few units.

DJ DAVE

That's great. What was it called?

Ken wants to avoid answering but Maggie jumps in.

MAGGIE

"Oil it up."

DJ DAVE

Can't say I remember it.

MAGGIE

It was such a fun song.

(sings)

Oil it up, get it ready for me, Oil it up, we'll have a good time-

KEN

(hand on her shoulder)

Thanks honey. It was basically a love song to the American auto industry. Anyway, we toured for a few years then we had kids and settled down in King of Prussia, Pennsylvania. Living the simple life. But never forgetting our passion. Which is why we made our kids play instruments before they could even walk.

MAGGIE

Ken always had this dream of us following in the tradition of great family bands.

KEN

The Osmands, The Jacksons...

A pregnant pause as no one can think of any others.

DJ DAVE

Jermaine, how did you become a part of the Swallow Family?

JERMAINE

They adopted me two years ago.
Before that I was in foster homes.

*
*

MAGGIE

We don't really know very much
about Jermaine's real parents. We
think they were probably good
people who had a baby too young and
knew they couldn't give him the
life he deserved.

*
*
*
*
*
*

SAM

Or he could have been the product
of incest rape. No one knows.

*
*

Jermaine looks at Sam, who's oblivious.

*

KEN

The important thing is that
Jermaine's part of our family now.
Which is great for us because he
plays a mean bass. Right, my man?

*
*
*
*
*

There's an awkward silence. DJ Dave breaks the moment.

*

DJ DAVE

Well, it must be nice to finally be
in a stable, secure family like
this, huh Jermaine?

JERMAINE

(deadpan)
Every day is like Christmas.

DJ Dave's not sure how to take his tone.

KEN

Anyway, we started gigging and then
we met Duncan Freedom who asked us
to join him on tour.

RIA

Actually he asked *me* to join him on
tour and then Dad insisted the
whole family had to come along, so
he kind of jumped on my bandwagon.

KEN

That isn't exactly how it happened.

RIA

Yes it is.

MAGGIE

Either way, the good thing is we'll be touring for the next few months. So we can all sleep at night knowing we've got money coming in. It feels like nothing can stop us. Right, kids?

The kids all try not to betray their knowledge.

ALL THE KIDS

Right mom. / Uh-huh. / Yep.

DJ DAVE

And so then you-
(presses his earpiece to his ear)
Oh no. I've just had some truly awful news come through about Duncan Freedom.

SAM

Oh my God! How did he die?
(Ria nudges him)
Assuming he did die? He was old.

DJ DAVE

I'm afraid you're right. He's dead.

KEN

What?!

DJ DAVE

Yeah. I'm hearing that early reports have it as a possible heart attack due to over exertion.

RIA

(to herself)
Shit.

Maggie clocks Ria's unusual behavior.

DJ DAVE

Or, shockingly, police are reporting evidence of a possible drug overdose.

SAM

(to himself)
Damn...

KEN

Guys, language, please--

*

DJ DAVE
The tour has been cancelled with
immediate effect.

KEN
Mother-fucker!

Ken runs out, cursing a blue streak. Maggie follows.

DJ DAVE
Clearly an emotional situation.
Let's take a break.

INT. RADIO STATION HALLWAY - DAY

Maggie approaches Ken who's pacing and pounding the walls. As *
Maggie comes out, Ken tries to pretend everything's OK. *

MAGGIE
How fucked are we?

KEN
What makes you think we're fucked? *

MAGGIE
Because you just swore live on *
radio... And because we just bought *
a bus and don't have a tour. *

KEN
Don't worry about the bus! The bus
is no big deal. We went over that.
We'll be fine as long as we keep *
moving forward. *

MAGGIE
Without a tour? *

KEN
What's the alternative? Think about *
our dream, Maggie! Think about why
we left. This was our chance to be
somebodies. Do you wanna go back to *
King of Prussia to be nobodies? *

MAGGIE
Fuck the fuck out of that. I don't
want to go back to those judgy
scrap-booking bitches.

KEN
Exactly.

MAGGIE

But we don't have a tour. We were riding on Duncan's coat-tails.

Ken has a sudden moment of inspiration.

KEN

Maybe we can ride one more time.

INT. RADIO STATION BOOTH - DAY

*

DJ has resumed the show. Ken runs in and retakes his spot at a microphone.

JERMAINE

... At least if we're not gonna be on the road anymore I'll go to a normal high school, with real teachers in actual classrooms-

KEN

Not so fast, Jermaine. This isn't a time for selfish pursuits, but a time for community and healing, which is why Swallow will perform a Duncan Freedom Memorial Tribute Concert tonight, eight-thirty at the Prince Auditorium where we will remember and celebrate the life and work of this great, great artist, at this terribly tragic time. Parking validation provided.

*

*

*

*

*

EXT. BUS PARKING AREA - LATER THAT MORNING

The Freedom bus has been taped off. A gathering of police, reporters and fans mill about. The family approaches.

RIA

This is gonna be a disaster.

KEN

This is going to be a major media event. And when the world sees us up there tonight - headlining - waving the flag for American family values, we're gonna have bookings coming out of our assholes. This is the greatest day ever!

Ken raises his arms in triumph. Behind him, they're wheeling Duncan's body off the bus. Maggie lowers Ken's arms.

KEN(CONT'D) (cont'd)

(to band)

Sorry for your loss.

(to Maggie)

I'll go to the box office and make
the arrangements.

Ken heads off.

MAGGIE

(to kids)

I'm gonna pay my respects.

Maggie heads over to the mourning band members. The kids
watch as Duncan's body gets wheeled past in a body bag and
onto the ambulance. The PARAMEDICS walk away leaving it open. *

SAM *

I gotta get in there, see if he's
still got his wallet. I could
really use that three hundred back. *

Sam heads into the ambulance. The other kids follow,
perturbed. Jermaine is the last to go. *

JERMAINE *

Sam, are you crazy?!

INT. AMBULANCE - DAY *

Sam gets onto the ambulance, along with the kids. He unzips
the bag so they can see Duncan's face. Without make up and
hair extensions Duncan looks incredibly old and terrible. *

SAM

(under his breath)

Wow, Ria. You had sex with
Voldemort. *

RIA

He looked better when he wasn't
dead. *

Sam reaches inside the body bag and feels around. *

CASEY *

Sam, this doesn't seem right. *

RIA

It's sick. You need to stop this
right now. *

SAM

He owes me three hundred dollars,
Ria, which includes a hundred I owe
you.

*

RIA

Well, hurry up then.

SAM

Shit! He's totally naked.

He pulls his hand out and wipes it on Jermaine.

JERMAINE

Did you just wipe dead guy dick on
me?

A DETECTIVE, mid forties appears at the ambulance doors.

*

DETECTIVE

Is everything OK in here?

*

*

SAM

Sure Officer. We were just paying
our last respects.

*

*

*

DETECTIVE LAWSON

I totally understand... Well when
you're done here I need to come by
your bus and ask some questions.

*

*

SAM

Totally. We've got nothing to hide.

The Detective leaves, looking at Sam a little suspicious.

SAM (cont'd)

Oh man, we got so much to hide. My
stash is spread out all over the
bus. Guys, help me.

CASEY

No way. I'm not moving your drugs.

SAM

OK. What do you want?

CASEY

(thinks)

I want you to not eat tuna ever
again.

*

*

SAM

Kiss my ass, tuna's the best.

*

Casey looks unwavering. Sam reluctantly shakes her hand. *

INT. SWALLOW BUS - DAY

Sam and Casey go through the cupboards, taking out small bags of weed and coke that they then stuff down the toilet.

CASEY

Sam, is this really how you want to live your life?

SAM

Definitely. Now hurry up.

Casey opens a small cupboard and sees some filled envelopes.

CASEY

Jermaine, what the heck? These are applications to boarding schools. You said you were just seeing what was out there.

JERMAINE

How can I see what's out there if I don't apply?

SAM

Guys, I need you to focus.

CASEY

What is happening to my life? I can't process this right now.

Suddenly there's a knock at the door.

DETECTIVE LAWSON (O.S.)

It's Detective Lawson.

SAM

Hang on!

They frantically try to hide the remaining drugs. Sam tries to shove a bag of drugs down Jermaine's pants.

JERMAINE

Are you out of your mind?!

SAM

I need one otherwise my whole supply's gone. And my pants are too tight. *

*
*
*

JERMAINE

I don't care! Put it up your ass.

Sam reluctantly throws it into the toilet and flushes, but it won't flush. Sam tries to plunge it but it won't go down. *

CASEY

Jermaine, promise me you won't apply to boarding schools.

JERMAINE

What?

More knocking from outside.

DETECTIVE LAWSON (O.C.)

Hello?!

CASEY

Promise me, or I'll show the Detective the toilet.

SAM

Shit. Jermaine, just promise her.

JERMAINE

Fine. I promise.

They're out of time. The Detective enters the bus.

DETECTIVE LAWSON

How's it going?

Sam, Casey and Jermaine look like deer caught in headlights.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

Ria's looking upset. Maggie approaches.

MAGGIE

Hey, so... Couldn't help noticing at the radio station, you didn't seem all that surprised to find out Duncan was dead.

(off Ria's guilty look)

Are you OK?

Ria nods.

MAGGIE (cont'd)

Let me give you some motherly advice...

(MORE)

MAGGIE (cont'd)

Young girls sleep with older men sometimes to further their careers. And it doesn't work. I mean, sure it works. And it's fun sometimes, if they've kept things tight. But you don't have to do that. Because you have qualities that most other girls don't have.

RIA

You mean kindness?

MAGGIE

(smiles at the joke)

That's right, Ria. Kindness, which just oozes out of you... But also talent, charisma, beauty and real ability... What did he promise you?

RIA

(confesses)

He told me I could join their band.

MAGGIE

He what? That leathery piece of shit. He tried to poach you? He's lucky he's dead, or I would have-

RIA

Mom, he didn't poach me. It was *me* that wanted to leave the band.

MAGGIE

Wow... That's a kick in the bean bag...

RIA

Mom, we're lame... I'm eighteen. I want freedom. And you want me to live with my annoying family on a shitty bus.

MAGGIE

There's that kindness oozing out again.

RIA

I have my creative vision and Dad doesn't let it come through.

MAGGIE

We all have artistic differences with your Dad. And it is hard for everyone on that bus.

(MORE)

MAGGIE (cont'd)

But I'll tell you what that bus has that other buses don't have - a family that loves you, and who will always look out for you... Even though you scare the shit out of everyone.

RIA

Not all the time.

MAGGIE

That's true. Sometimes you're asleep.

Ria smiles. Maggie puts her arm around her.

MAGGIE (cont'd)

And we're gonna do big things anyway. You know why? Because you have a father who may be small in stature, but he's as strong as a rock.

Maggie sees Ken in the distance, looking pale and distraught using the wall to hold himself upright.

ANGLE ON:

Maggie heads over to Ken. As he sees her coming towards him he stands erect and tries to look normal.

KEN

Hey, how's it going?

MAGGIE

I'm fine. What's going on?

KEN

Everything's cool.

MAGGIE

Really? You don't *look* cool.

KEN

Just a slight wrinkle in the plans, that's all. Turns out we've had a few cancellations. Nothing to be concerned about.

MAGGIE

How many cancellations?

KEN
About six hundred.

MAGGIE
Six hundred cancellations??! So how many does that leave in the audience?

KEN
Twelve.

MAGGIE
Jesus, Ken. That's not a wrinkle! That's a crater!

KEN
Now, let's not panic! I've got this!
(takes a deep breath)
Everyone in this town listens to that radio station. I'm gonna go down there and get DJ Dave to give us a shit ton of free publicity.

MAGGIE
Why would he give us free publicity?

KEN
Because he's a lovely, sensitive guy. And because I'm gonna take Jermaine down there.

MAGGIE
Ken, please don't use our son as a sympathy card.

KEN
I'm not using him as a sympathy card, I'm using him as a race card. Jermaine??!

INT. SWALLOW BUS - DAY

Jermaine, Sam & Casey standing tense while the Detective looks around at the music equipment on the bus. *

DETECTIVE LAWSON
You guys have some good stuff here. *

SAM
All bought and paid for by totally legal means. *

KEN (O.S.) *
Jermaine!!

JERMAINE
(high pitched)
Daddy!

KEN (O.S.) *
I need you to come to the radio
station.

JERMAINE
OK!
(to Detective)
I gotta go, that's my Dad.

Jermaine darts out of the door, leaving Sam and Casey there.

INT. RADIO STATION - AFTERNOON

Ken and Jermaine are in the corridor with DJ Dave.

DJ DAVE
I can't give you free promotion
just because your kid's black.

KEN
No, I totally get that. To be
honest, that was Jermaine's idea.
But the thing is, Jermaine's not
just a black kid, he's also a sick
kid. Which means any money we have
goes to getting him medication. *

DJ DAVE
Why? What's wrong with him?

KEN
So much... Asthma... Nosebleeds.
(sees he's not getting
much of a reaction)
AIDS.

DJ DAVE
What?

JERMAINE
What?

KEN
Yep. He's an AIDS baby.

Jermaine's about to speak so Ken shuts him down with a firm hand on his shoulder.

KEN (cont'd)

We just want to make whatever time he has a little more comfortable. Upshot is we can't pay.

DJ DAVE

Well, any pro bono promotion has to be cleared by Carl. He runs the station. But I warn you, he's... kind of a weird dude.

KEN

Hey man, I toured in the 80's. I've seen it all.

DJ DAVE

If you say so.

DJ Dave exits. Jermaine looks horrified.

INT. BUS - DAY

Casey and Sam are still in the bus with the Detective.

SAM

No offense, Officer, but we've really gotta rehearse. We got a big gig tonight.

DETECTIVE LAWSON

We're all done here anyway. Mind if I just hit the head?

He stands up. Sam jumps up and blocks his way.

SAM

Sorry, it's clogged.

DETECTIVE LAWSON

Oh yeah? Let me take a look. I used to have an RV, I know what a pain in the ass they can be.

Sam frantically starts plunging at the toilet. *

DETECTIVE LAWSON (cont'd)

Give it here. *

He takes over the plunging. The plunger is big enough to block the Detective's view from the drugs in the toilet bowl. *

INT. RADIO STATION - CORRIDOR - DAY

Finally, DJ Dave returns. He looks very uncomfortable. He leads Ken away from Jermaine so they can speak in private.

DJ DAVE

So, Carl's agreed to help you out.

KEN

That's amazing! Thank you so much-

DJ DAVE

But he wants something in return.

KEN

Anything. Anything he wants.

DJ DAVE

You may want to hear what it is first... Truth is, it's come up a couple of times before and frankly I find the whole thing a little sickening, especially having to bring this up to a clean cut, virtuous guy like yourself, but... Carl says he'll give you the promotion if you give him a hand job.

KEN

He wants me to give him a hand with a job?

DJ DAVE

No, no... He wants you to give him a hand job. You know, jerk him off.

Ken regards DJ Dave for a while.

KEN

Are you being serious?

DJ Dave nods, apologetically.

KEN (CONT'D) (cont'd)

This is how you conduct business here? With hand-jobs?

DJ DAVE

No, normally we conduct business with people paying for what they want, not asking for stuff for free.

KEN

Yeah, but a hand job? From *me*?

DJ DAVE

I told you he's a weird dude.

KEN

Well it's out of the question. I'll just find some other way.

DJ DAVE

Of getting six hundred audience members for a gig in a few hours? Good luck.

KEN

OK, let's think here... How about I watch him jack off, and I talk to him while he's doing it.

DJ DAVE

Look, Carl's very clear. You either give him a hand job, or you get some cocaine.

KEN

Cocaine? And you led with the hand job?

DJ DAVE

I thought you were America's family band, so you wouldn't have cocaine.

Ken shakes his head and takes out his phone.

KEN

Give me a minute.

INT. BUS - DAY

Sam and Casey are still in the bathroom with the Detective who's still trying to unclog the toilet. Sam's phone rings.

KEN

Sam, I have to ask you a question. And just know, whatever the answer, I will not be mad. I know you've stopped with the drugs, and the dealing, which is great. But do you happen to have anything left?

SAM

No way Dad!

KEN
SON OF A BITCH!!! I'm so proud of
you... Are you sure?

Sam is just about to answer when they hear a "Whoosh". The
Detective has flushed the whole lot down the toilet.

DETECTIVE LAWSON (O.S.)
Success!

SAM
... Yeah, I'm sure.

INT. RADIO STATION - DAY

Ken puts the phone down, looking defeated. DJ Dave can read
from his face that he's going to do it.

DJ DAVE
He'll meet you in the bathroom down
the hall.

INT. PRINCE AUDITORIUM - BACK STAGE - DAY

Ria's tuning a guitar. Behind her, we see Maggie doing mic
checks on stage on the keyboards. A guileless man approaches.

WARREN
Ria, right? I'm Warren. I'm part of
Duncan Freedom's Management team-

RIA
Okay, stop talking because I know
how this goes. If I sleep with you,
you'll help my career. And maybe a
few hours ago I would have done
that. I've certainly boned worse.
But it's not happening. I don't
bone guys for my career and that's
that.

*
*

WARREN
Actually, I was just gonna ask if
you knew where the venue office is.

RIA
Oh, yeah. You enter the theater and
it's the third door on the left.

He walks off looking flummoxed.

INT. RADIO STATION - CORRIDOR - DAY

Ken is in the corridor outside the bathroom with Jermaine.

JERMAINE
Do I have AIDS?

KEN
No, of course not.

JERMAINE
How do you know? Have I been tested?

KEN
I think they'd have had to disclose that when I adopted you.

JERMAINE
So you think, but you're not sure.

KEN
I am sure. I just had to say that back there for business purposes.

JERMAINE
What about other diseases? Zika?

KEN
(losing it)
Look, relax! Everything is fine, you don't have anything wrong with you except the stuff we already know about. You're loved and your family is stable. Now stand in front of this door, and make sure no one comes in, alright?!

INT. RADIO STATION - BATHROOM - DAY

Ken enters the bathroom and walks up to a short, fat, bald MAN standing at the urinal. The Man opens his mouth to speak, but Ken slaps his hand over his mouth.

KEN
I don't want to interact. No talking, no moaning, no eye contact. We're just gonna do this, and it'll never be spoken of again.

He grabs the Man's dick and starts jerking him off furiously.

INT. RADIO STATION CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Jermaine, guarding the door, hears strange muffled sounds.

JERMAINE

Dad, are you OK?... Dad?

When there's no response, he enters the bathroom...

INT. RADIO STATION - BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

... to be faced with the sight of his Dad jerking off the Man. Ken and Jermaine lock eyes for one horrific moment before Jermaine backs slowly out of the bathroom.

INT. RADIO STATION CORRIDOR - AFTERNOON

The Man hurries out of the bathroom, followed a moment later by a very pale Ken. Jermaine's suckling the empty inhaler.

KEN

Son... Let me explain what you think you saw in there.

JERMAINE

Please don't.

DJ Dave steps up to Ken.

DJ DAVE

Hey, so Carl's on his way over. He just got caught up on a call.

KEN

What are you talking about? I've just seen Carl. It's all been taken care of.

DJ DAVE

No, Carl's in his office. I was just with him.

The terrible truth is dawning on Ken. CARL appears and raises his eyebrows admiringly at Ken before entering the bathroom.

Ken and Jermaine share an uncomfortable moment.

KEN

I'll just be, uh...

Jermaine nods, numb. Ken heads in.

INT. PRINCE AUDITORIUM - DRESSING ROOM - DAY

Ken's scrubbing his hands manically with a cuticle brush. His hands are going red from excessive scrubbing. Maggie enters.

MAGGIE

Kenny! I've been hearing the promos all over the radio, the box office guy said we're almost sold out! You did it, baby.

(off Ken's haunted look)

What's wrong?

KEN

I've done terrible things Maggie. I'm looking in the mirror and I don't know who I am.

MAGGIE

What happened down there?

KEN

I can't tell you. You'll hate me.

MAGGIE

Of course I won't hate you.

KEN

How do you not hate a man who jerks off a strange guy in a bathroom?

MAGGIE

What? Why on earth would you do that? Are you gay?

*
*

KEN

No, I'm not gay! I didn't have a choice. It was the only way I could get the free promotion. You think I wanted to jerk those guys off?!

MAGGIE

Guys plural?... How many guys, Ken?

KEN

Just two. The first one was an accident.

MAGGIE

You jerked someone off by accident?

KEN

Ahhhhhhh - Judging!!!

MAGGIE
I'm not judging-

KEN
God, it was horrible. And it took forever. Pulling and tugging and yanking. Those sons of bitches were holding out.

MAGGIE
Did you do the thing with the tickling the balls?

KEN
Of course I did the thing with the balls. What am I, an idiot?!

MAGGIE
OK, look just calm down!

Maggie tries to get her head together.

MAGGIE (cont'd)
OK, so you jerked off a couple of dudes. I mean, we've all done things for the sake of the family. *

KEN
You jerked people off?! *

MAGGIE
Er, sure... How do you think we got all that airplay for "Oil it up"? *

KEN
I thought they just liked the song. It's a good song.

MAGGIE
Oh Kenny...

Ken looks beaten. Maggie feels bad for him.

MAGGIE (cont'd)
Maybe we shouldn't be doing this. *

KEN
I just jerked off two men for this gig, Maggie. We're doing it. *

MAGGIE
I'm talking about the whole thing... *

(MORE) *

MAGGIE (cont'd)

I want this as much as you do, Ken,
but maybe we've crossed the line
here... Maybe it's time we go home.

KEN

There is no home.

A beat.

MAGGIE

What?

KEN

I sold the house. To help pay for
the bus.

MAGGIE

But... Why did you have to sell the
house? You said you got a great
deal.

KEN

I didn't get a great deal. I got a
terrible deal. I got screwed. But I
didn't realize until I'd already
signed. I sold the house and I
maxed out six credit cards. Some of
them in the kids' names--

MAGGIE

Jesus Ken! What the fuck is wrong
with you? *

KEN

We needed that bus! And the
costumes! The amps! You wanted the
fancy Roland keyboard with pitch-
bend and tremelo effects--

MAGGIE

Screw the tremelo effects! You sold
our house for tremelo effects?!

KEN

(in despair)

What have we become, Maggie. What
are we gonna do? We're ruined!-

MAGGIE

Shut up! *

Ken goes quiet. Maggie thinks for a few seconds, trying to
absorb everything that's happening. She finally speaks. *

MAGGIE (cont'd)

OK, here's what we're gonna do.
 First, no more lies... Apart from
 to the kids. They can't find out
 about any of this. It'll just make
 them feel nervous and insecure....
 And second, if you're telling me
 we've actually got no money and no
 home then we'd better make damn
 sure we make this thing work. And
 if that involves jerking off some
 guys here and there then so be it.
 But we keep going, and we become
 America's Favorite Fucking Family
 Band. OK?

*
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*
*

KEN

I love you, Maggie.

Ken goes to kiss her. She recoils.

MAGGIE

Jesus Christ, Ken, are you out of
 your mind? *Way* too soon.

SMASH CUT TO THEM IN THEIR OUTFITS, DRESSED UP, READY TO GO.

They're putting their hands in the middle. Family spirit is
 high. They're ready to kill it out there.

KEN

Let's do this.

As they head toward the door to the stage, the guy - Warren -
 who approached Ria earlier blocks their path.

WARREN

Hey Swallows, so listen, I was
 thinking it really makes much more
 sense for the Revolutionaries to
 carry the torch for Duncan tonight.
 I talked to the theatre owner and
 he agreed they're gonna do the gig.

KEN

What?

The Family all reacts - "No!" "What the...?"

MAGGIE

Who is this theater owner? I think
 I need to talk to him.

WARREN

Jeff. He's right over there.

Warren points down the hall at JEFF. It's the man from the toilet that Ken jerked off by mistake. Jeff and Ken look at each other. A vague smile comes over Jeff's face and he slinks into his office.

KEN

Kids - grab your instruments. Wait in the wings. I'll be there in three to five minutes. Six, tops.

Ken walks down the hallway like a man on a mission. Jermaine looks uncomfortable. *

AS CREDITS ROLL, WE CUT TO THE BAND ON STAGE. THEY'RE ROCKING OUT AND HAVING A GREAT TIME DOING IT.

OVER CREDITS:

EXT. BUS - MORNING

Casey eating a sandwich walks over to Sam, who's looking pensive. She sits down next to him.

SAM

How come you're eating tuna?

CASEY

I just learned that dolphins have been known to gang rape whale sharks. Screw those dolphins... You bummed about losing your stash?

SAM

You know what? I'm starting to think this whole thing with Duncan dying - it feels like the universe is telling me go clean. Maybe it's a sign, you know?

Casey nods. Jermaine comes and hands Sam a bag of molly.

JERMAINE

Found this in my sock drawer.

SAM

Oh, this is a much better sign.

EXT. BUS - MORNING

Ken and Maggie are feeling pretty good.

KEN

That was a good gig last night.
Even your new song worked.

MAGGIE

Thanks honey.

Ria walks over to them. She has her back pack. The other kids see this, and head over to see what's going on.

MAGGIE (cont'd)

Ria? What's happening?

RIA

I spoke to Warren, the manager guy.
He says he has a band I can be in.
And he's married so he's definitely
not just saying that for the sex.

KEN

But you're already in a band. *Our*
band.

RIA

Yeah, but this other band has
actual gigs, so... I'm sorry guys.
It's nothing personal. But without
a tour or a Manager-

KEN

We have a tour.

SAM

We do?

KEN

Of course! I was gonna wait till
breakfast to tell you about it.

CASEY

Who got us a tour?

KEN

Our Manager.

Maggie looks at Ken, suspicious.

MAGGIE

Our Manager?

*
*
*
*
*

KEN

Yep. I just got a call from him
this morning. He heard how great
our gig was and wants to back us.

RIA

What's his name?

KEN

Kushman. Robert Kushman.

SAM

Oh my God! We have a Manager?!

KEN

We sure do!

CASEY

Where's our next gig?

KEN

Paris.
(as kids go crazy)
Idaho, you know Paris, Idaho?... So
are we pumped or what? We're on our
own tour!

JERMAINE

Where are the other gigs?

KEN

I'll tell you over breakfast. Come
on, let's go celebrate.

The kids climb onto the bus, euphoric.

MAGGIE

(as she boards bus)
We're gonna talk about this later.

KEN

Absolutely.

As they all climb onto the bus, euphoric, we see a road-sign
that says "Kushman Avenue", and next to it a billboard with
the Eiffel Tower on it.

THE END