

STEPS

Pilot

Written by

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CHARACTERS

OUR NEW COUPLE:

PAUL: Paul Rudd, 40. Conflict-averse, romantic, dryly funny, enthusiastic elementary school teacher who loves spending his day with people who don't manipulate him. Only child of married parents who would NEVER have left his miserable marriage because men don't leave, even though his ex pushed him exactly like his parents did. Super happy to have found someone who is nice to him after being left by someone who was not.

BEA: Katherine Keener, 40. Groovy former doula/energy healer/placenta-pill maker, current Baby Group Leader. Is spookily good at reading people 8 out of 10 times. Then she's really off. Feels guilt about leaving the grumpy father of her child so wants everyone to be close for the good of the kids.

THE EXES:

LOUIE: Zach Galifianakis, 40. Happily misanthropic, supervisor in the shipping department of an Amazon warehouse, delighted to hate his job and be a homebody except that it lost him the love of his life. Had to move in with his mom for financial reasons after the divorce.

GENEVIEVE: Mindy Kaling, 40. Fast, hard, driven VP of Business Development at Amazon, so close to Louie and yet so very, very far. Left Paul, whom she met in college, because she felt he was too complacent, i.e. "content."

THE KIDS:

PAUL AND GENEVIEVE'S KIDS - BECKER, 16, sincere, overshares, huge heart, hugs his new stepmom too much -- and MAEVE, 8, magical adorable happy little thing who desperately wants to be friends with her new stepsister who will constantly reject her.

LOUIE AND BEA'S KID - ELOISE, 8, very smart, dark, gothy little Wednesday Adams-type who delights in torturing Maeve and being significantly smarter than Becker.

THE GRANDMAS:

JUNE - 60s, Louie's mom with whom he lives. June Squibb, sweet-faced, gray haired, typical grandma, who bakes and has recently gotten in touch with her Sapphic side...

RENATA - 60s, June's "roommate" who Louie doesn't realize is her girlfriend. Lidia Porto in "Get Shorty" the TV show. Mexican-American, tough-as-nails, got four kids across the desert all by herself 30 years ago. Works with June at a "Tuesday Morning" type surplus discount store.

COLD OPEN

Under a MAN'S Nature Doc-narration, we see EARTH from Space.

MAN (V.O.)

Our laboratory today? Earth.

We ZOOM IN to NORTH AMERICA, through clouds to DENVER, CO., over the ROCKIES, through trees, as our Nature Doc continues:

MAN (V.O.)

About 8.7 million species inhabit this small planet. Some are solitary, spending the majority of their lives away from the rest of their kind.

We pass through soil to find a MASSIVE ANT COLONY SWARMING THROUGH ELABORATE TUNNELS, and then emerging from an ANT HILL.

MAN (V.O.)

But some live in vast communities, working together to build carefully engineered homes that are only possible because of this collaboration... which makes up for the tiny size of their brains.

A MAN'S FOOT steps onto the ant hill, destroying it.

LOUIE (O.C.)

Gah! Dammit!

EXT. DENVER PARK - DAY

LOUIE (Zach Galifianakis, mid-40s), arms filled with little girl stuff, swipes at his ant-covered foot. LITTLE GIRLS play soccer in the distance and PARENTS cheer. The real subjects.

LOUIE (CONT'D)

(smacking his legs)

Die die die die die!

BEA, Louie's ex-wife (Katherine Keener, 40) tries to help. Louie still loves her.

BEA

Swipe don't swat, no need to murder, let me help you.

LOUIE

Ow, dammit! I hate outside!

Bea moves towards her aging SUV. Louie helps her load up.

BEA

So you remembered everything? Her school things, pjs, toothbrush...

LOUIE

(shit)

I packed sandals. Cute ones, though.

BEA

Important in October.

LOUIE

I'm sorry. Come by anytime to grab the rest. My mom would love to see you. You don't have to call first.

BEA

We'll be fine. Paul keeps a weird amount of new toothbrushes around.

LOUIE

Yeah, he's an idiot.

BEA

Louie!

LOUIE

What? It's not judgmental to just say what things are. This is a car. That's a tree. Paul's an idiot.

Bea sighs and closes up the back of the car.

EXT. DENVER PARK - PARKING LOT - SAME TIME

GENEVIEVE (Mindy Kaling, 40) and PAUL (Paul Rudd, 40) unload kid things from her Tesla. Genevieve holds a checklist. Her tone falls somewhere between "cheerful" and "condescending."

GENEVIEVE

You've got their daytime clothes, nighttime clothes, soccer uniforms, martial arts gear, notebooks, clarinet, retainer-- And here's a copy of my spreadsheet for when you pack them up so you remember everything. To make it easier.

PAUL

Just gonna nod and think about dolphins.

GENEVIEVE

Know why Becker wanted a nice shirt?

PAUL

No, but I'm sure we'll find out soon. Kid was born without a filter. Today I learned he's "never been happier with his pubes" and that the smell of pears gives him a boner.

GENEVIEVE

Wiping that away, can we talk about Greenview again? A girls' school would be so great for Maeve.

Paul starts across the parking lot with the stuff. She follows. The following is all said in practiced "calm voices."

PAUL

I think it's great for Maeve to be at a school where I'm a teacher. And maybe we don't make her switch schools the same year her mom blew up her kids' lives so she could "live her truth" like she's Oprah.

Genevieve lets this go -- these digs are the price of leaving.

GENEVIEVE

The *truth* is that public school doesn't have the same resources.

PAUL

Our kids are happy and exposed to kids they'd never meet at a private school. Which I can't afford.

GENEVIEVE

You could if you would take more child support. You also could've found a bigger place in a less "funky" neighborhood. Speaking of, here's the keys to the locks I put on their bags in case you're mugged in front of your house.

PAUL

(finally snapping)
It's up and coming!

GENEVIEVE

(she can't either)
It's Blade Runner!

Paul closes his eyes for a moment, takes a breath, then:

PAUL

Nope, there aren't enough dolphins.
I'll meet you at the field.

Paul speeds up. Genevieve spots something, and pauses to bark:

GENEVIEVE

Becker!

A TEEN COUPLE (BECKER - 16 and SCARLETT - 16) break from a really intense make out session near the soccer game.

GENEVIEVE (CONT'D)

Why don't you and your friend come watch your sister play soccer with the other children who have eyes and questions!

The teens sheepishly detangle and walk over to the game.

EXT. DENVER PARK - SOCCER FIELD - SAME TIME

Bea and Louie, on the sidelines, smile and watch ELOISE (8), their Wednesday Adams-ish daughter who hates her soccer uniform. She's on the bench burning ants with a magnifying glass while filming with an iPhone. In a Nature Doc Voice:

ELOISE

The ants' tiny bodies turn to ash while their so-called "family" crawls over their remains on their way to feed.

LOUIE

At least she's not boring.

BEA

And only ninety out of a hundred children who harm animals become sociopaths. I'm still optimistic.

PAUL (O.S.)

Hey.

Bea turns and smiles as Paul approaches and takes her hand. These families are connected! Paul nods at Louie awkwardly.

LOUIE

Hello.

Genevieve walks up, yelling at the COACH:

GENEVIEVE

That was a foul, Coach! Not sure you caught it while you were searching for the perf emoji? OMG no you didn't!

ON THE FIELD, MAEVE, an adorable, happy little girl (8) hopping on one foot while holding her other shin, yells back:

MAEVE

It's okay, Mommy! I'm fine!

ON THE SIDELINES, Bea hugs Genevieve, who barely returns it.

BEA

Hey, Genevieve! I'm looking forward to girl drinks tomorrow.

GENEVIEVE

(looking at Paul)

Yep. We can chat about how I got Maeve into Greenview.

BEA

Greenview?! That place is the best!

Paul turns to the field and cheers to change the subject:

PAUL

Soccer!!!

It's quiet and awkward for a beat.

LOUIE

So... we do this every week now.
(another long beat)
Do they sell beer here? No? No.

More quiet, then all four parents turn towards the game.

ELOISE (O.S.)

Burn! Burn!

CUT TO OPENING CREDITS FOR:

STEPS.

INT. PAUL AND BEA'S HOUSE - THAT EVENING

We are inside a small, funky, original-wood-paneling sort of house. There are some unpacked boxes around. Bea and Paul cook and putter. Upbeat little Maeve runs through:

MAEVE

Daddy, I love my beddy! Eloise,
are you excited for our bunkbeds?

Eloise enters with a pillow and blanket and opens a closet.

ELOISE

You enjoy those, I'm sleeping in
here. You know, Mom, you didn't have
to line up our visitation schedules.
We literally wouldn't have to know
the others even existed.

BEA

El, it'll be fun sharing a room with
Maeve! You can talk and giggle all
night long!

ELOISE

When have you known me to giggle?

BEA

When people fall down.

ELOISE

One for you.

Becker crosses with a large box. Eloise sticks her foot out,
tripping him. He splays across the hall. Bea looks at Eloise
with reproach and Eloise GIGGLES. Creepily.

INT. LOUIE'S MOM'S HOUSE - SAME TIME

Louie enters his mom's house, working-class old lady kitsch.

LOUIE

Hey, Ma!

JUNE (O.S.)

We're in here!

Louie walks to the door of June's bedroom. JUNE (June Squibb,
60s) and her "roommate" RENATA (Lidia Porto, 60s) are on top
of the covers watching How To Get Away With Murder.

LOUIE

Hey, guys. How was your day of
dominating the 99 cent store?

RENATA

Uch, loco. We got in five hundred
damaged candles and the Russian
ladies almost killed each other.

JUNE

Well, ten candles for five dollars is going to cause a frenzy. That's just the world of highly discounted surplus retail.

RENATA

So, Louie, Eloise's first night in her new house. You okay?

LOUIE

Oh, yeah. Bea only signed a six-month lease. She can't even commit a year to the schlub? She'll be back.

Renata and June exchange a look.

JUNE

But she left before the schlub.

LOUIE

(waving dismissively)
Time.

JUNE

Does she know you want her back, honey? Have you done anything to make that happen?

LOUIE

No! Nobody likes a beggar. I just wait for things there to implode, which'll show her how great we had it, and then here I'll be. Waiting.

RENATA

All the great romances did begin with waiting.

JUNE

You should go on a date.

RENATA

Yes.

LOUIE

Oh, you two are on my case? When was the last time either of you went on a date with anyone?

The two women in bed under a Walmart portrait of themselves look at each other, then nod.

JUNE/RENATA

Good point. / You got us.

LOUIE

Mm-hm. Night. Everybody leave their keys out, I'm washing cars and changing oil tomorrow. Try to make it to your bed before you pass out for once, Renata.

Louie leaves. June avoids Renata's "Seriously?" look.

INT. PAUL AND BEA'S HOUSE - THEIR BEDROOM - NIGHT

Paul pulls on PJs. Bea enters and flops down on the mattress on the floor of the half-unpacked room.

BEA

Did we move in too soon? Our first joint transition was terrible.

PAUL

I disagree. Retainers were exchanged. It was chilly and barely civil. Louie looked fat. And now it's over and I can grab your ass.

He sets his hand gently on her bottom.

PAUL (CONT'D)

See? It all worked out.

BEA

(smiling, rolls away)

I don't want chilly and civil, I want four adults lovingly co-parenting three kids together.

PAUL

Honey, that only happens in Europe.

BEA

Well, drinks with Genevieve is gonna be a great first step. I have a list of co-parenting questions so we can get on the same page--

PAUL

Babe, she only agreed to drinks to get you to bully me into sending Maeve to Greenview. And it'll work -- she took my mom to Hawaii once and BOOM, I went to law school.

BEA

Well, you now live with a woman who does not bully.

PAUL

(kissing her)

It's exciting to try something new this late in life.

BEA

Genevieve aside, I'm worried about the girls, too. Eloise is rejecting Maeve out of loyalty to her dad, which is sweet. She's so sweet.

PAUL

(long, long beat)

Sure.

BEA

Would you take her and Maeve to do something fun? Help them bond?

PAUL

Yeah, of course.

BEA

Great! And I thought I'd get Louie to come, too.

PAUL

What? No!

BEA

Paul, if we can close this distance between all of the parents, Eloise will feel like she has the emotional permission to merge into our new family. You need to be the grown up.

PAUL

(like a child)

I'm being a grown up. I don't wanna hang out with the guy who's still in love with my girlfriend.

BEA

What? No.

PAUL

Yes. And of course he is. I have no idea how the human Eeyore even got you in the first place.

BEA

Well, he can be sweet and funny. And he'll take a bullet for the few people he likes. And I know this is shallow, but at first it was fine he never wanted to go out because the sex was crazy--

PAUL

Okay, enough of that. The point is, I don't like all this reaching across the aisle. The one good thing about having to get divorced -- other than, you know, "finding true love"--

BEA

Weird thing to put in air quotes--

PAUL

--the one good thing is Gen isn't around so I finally can parent the way I want to. I can be supportive. Encouraging. The opposite of the way she, and certainly my parents, parent. I don't want less distance. I want more.

Before Bea can respond, Becker enters.

BECKER

Hey, Dad, can I borrow your clippers? Gonna do some personal grooming. Of my pubes.

PAUL

Uch, why?! You said you'd never been happier with them.

(then, stopping himself)

Actually, never mind. I support your grooming decisions. Special occasion?

Becker tries to look innocent for the shortest beat, then:

BECKER

Fine, Bea, you broke me with those eyes! Guys, I've decided to lose my virginity to Scarlett Winoker!

PAUL

Whoa.

BEA

Aw, that's sweet. And, wait, Scarlett is Scarlett Winoker?! I was her mom's doula! Most elastic woman I've ever known.

PAUL

So that's promising. Whoo, okay, Becker, this is big. Are you sure?

BECKER

Dad, I'm ready. We're in love, I'll be checking in at every base for consent and I know all the important stuff is in the front -- thank you, Bea.

BEA

I'm glad the diagrams were useful.

PAUL

And what about our sex talk? That helped too, right?

BECKER

Yeah, sure. "Just keep going until they say they're good." Got it.

PAUL

Okay. Well, I guess I was about your age when I had sex for the first time.

BECKER

Weren't you in college?

PAUL

Yeah, sixteen, twenty, basically the same age. So... you know, um, use protection. Lots of it. Always.

BECKER

Of course.

BEA

And you've told your mom obviously.

BECKER

Oh, no. She makes me get notarized releases from my friend's parents when we take them swimming. She'll tell Scarlett's parents, and Scarlett does not talk to them like I talk to you guys--

PAUL

It's fine. We won't tell her.

BEA

Paul! I'm not gonna keep a secret about her kid.

PAUL

You don't know how crazy she gets.

BEA

I know I'd want her to tell me.

BECKER

Dad! You get it. Please.

Paul looks at Becker, then at Bea, then steals himself:

PAUL

Don't worry, Becker. We're not telling her.

BEA

Really. I don't even get a vote?

PAUL

Well... no. Just like I don't with Eloise.

BEA

Of course you do! You're an adult who's helping to raise her!

PAUL

Then I don't think she should check out serial killer biographies.

BEA

Well, that's censorship, that's stupid.

BECKER

How about I'll tell mom after it happens? Okay? Please, Bea.

Bea, pissed at Paul, struggles with the decision.

BEA

Fine. Since I don't get a vote.

BECKER

Great! C'mon, new family hug?

PAUL

Yeah!

Paul and Becker sandwich Bea, and she smiles a little. Becker holds the hug a real long time, then smiles and says to Bea:

BECKER

Thanks. You have a really nice body.

PAUL

(breaking the hug)

Okay, talk later.

Becker smiles sweetly and leaves. Bea shakes her head at Paul.

BEA

You never use a condom.

PAUL

(patiently)

Because it's like having sex with a sandwich from a gas station. But good fathers pretend it isn't.

Bea shakes her head as she walks out.

INT. GENEVIEVE'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - SAME TIME

We join Genevieve in her stylish, upscale bedroom, through a Skype POV. She chats with Maeve on her computer while playing with Tinder on her phone beneath frame.

MAEVE (ON COMPUTER)

I'm sad Eloise won't be friends.

GENEVIEVE

Sweet girl, she just wasn't raised right. Who lives two hours from Vail and has never been to Vail? Anyway, you're going to a fancy new school where you'll make new friends.

MAEVE (ON COMPUTER)

I like Daddy's school.

GENEVIEVE

(swiping right on phone)

Baby, I used to think I liked Daddy's school, too, but then I realized there were way better schools that pleased me in a way his hadn't in years.

MAEVE (ON COMPUTER)

I wish Eloise went to Daddy's school.

GENEVIEVE

Really. Hey, maybe you and Eloise could both go to the new school. Would you like that?

MAEVE (ON COMPUTER)

Maybe. Yeah, having a friend at the new school would make it okay.

GENEVIEVE

Great. It's happening.

MAEVE (ON COMPUTER)

But Daddy doesn't want me to switch.

GENEVIEVE

Don't worry. Daddy has a new friend he really wants to like him, too.

Genevieve gets a text from "Green-eyed Eurasian Guy": *Kids gone?* Genevieve types into her phone as:

MAEVE (ON COMPUTER)

Okay. Night night, Mama.

GENEVIEVE

Night, baby. I love you the most.

Genevieve and Maeve kiss each other through their cameras as she hits SEND on a text: *Be here in 30. I'd stretch.*

INT. PAUL AND BEA'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - LATER

Bea is meditating on the bed. Paul enters and sits on the bed looking at her until she opens her eyes, annoyed.

PAUL

Oh, good, you're done!
(taking her hands)
Bea, I love you so much. You are soft and happy and never use words like "unrealized potential" about me.

BEA

I love you too. And I know it feels good that Becker came to you with a secret he isn't telling his mom.

PAUL

He's never had a secret for me to keep! I feel like we're the Goonies.

BEA

But. I want us to make joint parenting decisions so we become a family. We splintered the kids' lives. We owe it to them to make them feel they have more family instead of less.

PAUL

See, I think because we splintered their lives we shouldn't give them extra adults telling them what to do.

BEA

I hear you. But I can't pitch open and honest to Genevieve tomorrow while lying about her kid's virginity. So, as your partner, I'm asking you, please get him to tell her.

PAUL

How about I'll go on a double date with Louie and the girls if you agree to keep Becker's secret.

BEA

Seriously? Is horse trading going to be part of our new family?

PAUL

It's his first secret. And we're going to keep it for him. Please.

Bea is pissed again. Eloise enters with her pillow.

ELOISE

Mom, you're right. I'm not gonna sleep in the closet.

BEA

Sweetheart, I'm so glad!

ELOISE

(handing Paul her pillow)
Good luck out there.

Eloise climbs in next to Bea. Paul looks to Bea for help.

BEA

Unfortunately you don't get a vote.

Paul nods and heads for the sofa.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. AMAZON SHIPPING - LOUIE'S OFFICE - THE NEXT DAY

Louie sits at his messy metal desk in his shipping coveralls. His tiny Supervisor's office has glass walls that look into the busy Amazon warehouse. He speaks to Bea on his speakerphone.

LOUIE

Bea, a date with Paul and the girls sounds so, so terrible.

BEA (ON SPEAKERPHONE)

It's for Eloise. Aren't you the one who used to lay awake nights saying that your greatest dream is that your daughter be happier than you?

LOUIE

I want her to be happy. But my greatest dream is--

BEA (ON SPEAKERPHONE)

You're never going to Cancun with Axl Rose, Louie!

Louie's attention is grabbed by a CLICK CLICK CLICK -- Genevieve walking down the stairs in her heels and pencil skirt. Other workers watch her pass. This is weird, clearly.

LOUIE

Fine. I'll do it. I gotta go though.

Louie hangs up as Genevieve knocks as she enters.

GENEVIEVE

Ciao ciao!

LOUIE

Genevieve. This is a surprise.

GENEVIEVE

Well, figured I'd come down, check out shipping, say hello.

(looking around)

I like your...

(she just can't)

How's your kid-free week? Isn't it kinda nice having them half-time?

It's like, I love eating. Need it.

(MORE)

GENEVIEVE (CONT'D)

But if you had to eat all day every day you'd be like, Sweet Mother can I please have a minute to get hungry?!

LOUIE

See, for me it's more like my daughter was one of two people I liked. And she used to be right there so I didn't have to go outside with the other people. But now if I don't want to die with a bunch of raccoons, I have to.

GENEVIEVE

Hm. But having your own space--

LOUIE

Can't afford it, live with my mom.

GENEVIEVE

So not a lot of things in common, I'll get to it. I've spent the last year befriending awful people and writing checks to this amazing school. Now all I have to do is get Paul to let me pay for it and Maeve can go... which she's into if your daughter goes, too.

LOUIE

What? Eloise isn't switching schools.

GENEVIEVE

But I could get her in, and they have financial assistance. Which I know is where men always go, it's like some weird obsession with Paul, the whole where does the money come from thing. Who cares?

LOUIE

Okay, help me out here. What is it about that guy? I'm not seeing it.

GENEVIEVE

Paul? Well, *at first*, I guess he made me laugh. He's really smart. And before kids the sex was amazing, I honestly couldn't get enough--

LOUIE

Okay, done with that. Say hi to VP land for me. This was... weird.

GENEVIEVE

Great. We'll talk more later!

Genevieve grabs a squirt of Louie's Purell, then moves a chair with her hips so she can exit without touching anything.

INT. PAUL AND BEA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Paul straightens up. Maeve runs in, trailed by a glum Eloise.

MAEVE

What time does Louie get here?

ELOISE

And what's your game, Paul? This is weird.

PAUL

No game. I just thought it would be fun for the two dads to take their two girls to a nice, neutral movie in silence together.

There is a KNOCK AT THE DOOR. Paul answers it, and Louie is there, looking as bummed as Paul.

LOUIE

Hey.

PAUL

Hey. Thanks for picking us up, we're down a car. Come on in.

LOUIE

I'm good. Car's running.
(to Eloise)
Hi, baby.

ELOISE

Hi. Hey, I need help on my movie for film club. Instead of going to a movie could we make a movie here instead?

MAEVE

Yeah!!!!

PAUL/LOUIE

No./Uh-uh, baby, no way.

ELOISE (CONT'D)

Pleeeeeease. I had to move into a new house this week and I'm real sad.

PAUL

Oh boy.

ELOISE

(to Louie)

Sadder than I've been since you let Mommy leave.

LOUIE

(to Paul)

So I think we're doing this.

PAUL

Seems like it.

MAEVE/ELOISE

Yaaaaaayyyyy!/That's what I thought.

INT. UPSCALE BAR - SAME TIME

Bea walks in and spots Genevieve at a table. Genevieve gives a big smile and wave. Bea smiles and joins Genevieve, who gives her a big hug with a big warm energy we've never seen.

GENEVIEVE

Bea, you look fantastic. Still using that dry shampoo I see, neat. I'm sorry it's taken so long to do this.

BEA

Oh, it's okay, you're busy.

GENEVIEVE

And you're kind. But you're also too smart not to know I've been blowing you off.

BEA

It's natural you'd be cautious.

GENEVIEVE

Well, and you're like this magical, sexy Mary Poppins who teaches people how to be perfect parents for a living, for God's sake. I guess I'm a little afraid my kids are going to fall as madly in love with you as their father has.

Bea examines Genevieve, and then nods.

BEA

Okay, I see.

(taking her hand)

Genevieve, your love for Maeve is so beautiful.

(MORE)

BEA (CONT'D)

And I understand why you'd pretend to be my friend to get her everything she deserves. But you can just ask for what you want.

Genevieve is taken aback, but a little impressed.

GENEVIEVE

Oh. Okay, then I'll just say it: if you get Paul to send Maeve to Greenview, I'll get Eloise in, too, with financial assistance.

Now Bea looks interested... but then reigns herself in:

BEA

Where you two send your kids to school is not my call to make.

GENEVIEVE

But you get a vote, right? You're an adult helping to raise my daughter.
(off Bea's interest)
I mean, what is Paul, the King?

INT. PAUL AND KIMMIE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - A LITTLE LATER

A shirtless Paul sits holding a beer like a scepter yet looking not at all kingly. Eloise draws with Sharpie on his back and Maeve draws on the front of his neck. They are delighted.

PAUL

Is this really necessary?

ELOISE

Well, Paul, if you want to be at all believable as a weathered Russian gangster it sure is.

MAEVE

You need prison tattoos for "verite."
I'm doing a puppy and a unicorn.

PAUL

Very hard. Where's your dad, Eloise?

ELOISE

Let's hear that in your accent.

PAUL

(bad Russian accent)
Where's your dad, *Eloise-itckka*?

ELOISE

Oof. No gruel in the hole for you.

Paul sighs, Maeve giggles and they both draw.

INT. PAUL AND BEA'S HOUSE - THEIR BEDROOM - SAME TIME

Louie "casually" sticks his head into the bedroom. Calling off:

LOUIE

I'm going to the bathroom, be right back!

He walks over to a dresser, rifles through a little mail. Picks up a PHOTO of Bea, Paul and the three kids. Smells a pillow.

INT. PAUL AND BEA'S HOUSE - THEIR BATHROOM - SAME TIME

Simultaneously, Becker is in the bathroom opening a condom. He takes it out, sticks his finger in it, rolls it onto a shampoo bottle. He looks down and lowers the condom out of frame...

INT. PAUL AND BEA'S HOUSE - THEIR BEDROOM - SAME TIME

Louie looks around furtively, then opens the bathroom door...

INT. PAUL AND BEA'S HOUSE - THEIR BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

...and walks in on Becker, who we get from Louie's face is mid-condom-attempt. We hear the "snap" of rubber against flesh.

BECKER

Ah!!!

LOUIE

Oh, God! I, I needed a bathroom.

BECKER

(fumbling with pants)

I was studying! Ow! So tight, so tight! Ow ow ow!

LOUIE

I'm gonna go--

BECKER

Fine, I was practicing with my dad's condoms because I'm losing my virginity tonight at my mom's house.

(re: condoms)

Although I don't know how anything good happens in these.

LOUIE
(covering eyes)
There's bigger sizes--

BECKER
Oh, shoot! The part about doing it
at my mom's is actually a secret.
Can you please not tell?

LOUIE
I have no need to ever talk about
any of this.

BECKER
Yes! Thank you so much, Louie. I
know things are still chilly with
you and my Dad, but I'm looking
forward to the day when we're all
one big happy family. C'mere!

Becker throws his arms around Louie, who wishes he wouldn't. He
keeps hugging. And... keeps hugging.

LOUIE
Wow, we're really doing this. Glad
you're still wearing protection.

INT. UPSCALE BAR - SAME TIME

The ladies now have drinks.

GENEVIEVE
My dad said the divorce wasn't going
to affect the kids, too. Then he got
a boat and had his second family and
I saw him twice a year. And when I
did he was wearing Tommy Bahama.
(voice cracking)
To the office!

BEA
Well, we can at least do better
than boat people, right?

GENEVIEVE
So ruddy. He got so ruddy.
(shivers, then)
Okay, mother-to-mother, code of
honesty? Greenview is great. It turns
girls into independent women and the
uniforms make even the sluts look
like Christmas decorations.

(MORE)

GENEVIEVE (CONT'D)

But the main reason I want her there is Paul gets her on my days too. He sees her twice as much and it makes me sad.

BEA

Look, I'll talk to Paul about Greenview. But you can drop by anytime to see your kids when they're with us. Open-door policy.

GENEVIEVE

Really? Thank you.

The women smile at each other. Bea then looks guilty.

BEA

Okay, mother-to-mother, code of honesty, I gotta tell you something.

INT. PAUL AND BEA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - SAME TIME

CLOSE ON LOUIE'S FACE... BEAMING. It's weird.

PAUL (O.C.)

Stop. Smiling.

WIDEN to see why Louie is smiling. He stands next to Eloise, Maeve, and Paul, who peeks over his shoulder as they look at Paul's back in a mirror. Eloise has drawn a decent portrait of her, Bea and Louie across Paul's entire back. Paul's furious.

LOUIE

What's wrong? It looks just like us.

ELOISE

Keep this energy for the prison scene, Paul. Love the pulsing neck vein.

Maeve and Louie giggle.

PAUL

Louie, could I talk to you?

Paul storms out. Louie gives Eloise an "uh-oh" look.

EXT. PAUL AND BEA'S HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - CONTINUOUS

Paul exits pulling on a shirt, followed by a smirking Louie.

PAUL

We're supposed to be helping the girls bond. You encouraging this is not helping.

LOUIE

My kid's her own person, man. And clearly way too smart to invest in someone who won't be around as long as I'm gonna be on your back.

PAUL

Whoa! Okay, I'm sorry you're not over Bea, but a man doesn't get treated like this in his own house, even if he does have puppies on his neck. I'm here and I'm not going anywhere. Now, do you have anything else to say to me?

LOUIE

Well, your kid is having sex at your ex-wife's house tonight.

PAUL

(wounded)

What? Becker told you that?

LOUIE

Oh, and your condoms are too small for him. I wanted to say that, too.

Paul looks horrified. And then his phone rings. He answers.

PAUL

Hello?

Intercut with:

INT. UPSCALE BAR - SAME TIME

A furious Genevieve yells into her phone while Bea cringes.

GENEVIEVE

Becker's gonna have sex?!

PAUL

Gen, it's not that big a deal. Although it won't make you calmer that I've just learned it's happening in your house tonight.

GENEVIEVE

What?! Why wouldn't he tell me?

PAUL

I thought because we were Goonies. But then he told Louie.

Genevieve gets up, throwing money on the table furiously.

GENEVIEVE

In my house means I'm liable.
Parents of girls can be crazy about
this! Have you even had the consent
conversation with Becker lately?!

Bea chases after her, pulling out her own phone.

BEA

I have, we had a very sex positive
conversation you would've loved--

GENEVIEVE

I signed him up for a teen trip to
France this summer where he was
supposed to lose his virginity in a
country with loose morays and
nonexistent sexual laws!

Louie's phone rings. Rolling his eyes, he picks up.

LOUIE

Hey, Bea. This is fun.

GENEVIEVE

I gotta stop this. Please kill me.

PAUL

Gen, don't ruin his night--

BEA

Louie, Genevieve's on the warpath.
Please bring Paul to Scarlett's to
run interference? Drop the girls at
your mom's. Please.

Louie groans.

Genevieve hangs up on Paul and exits, Bea calling after:

BEA (CONT'D)

I do think Europe would be wonderful
for Becker!

As the women rush off to ruin a teen romance...

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. GENEVIEVE'S HOUSE - A LITTLE LATER

Genevieve bursts in the front door, covering her eyes:

GENEVIEVE

Stop everything you're doing!

She peeks around as Bea comes in after her.

BEA

Though whatever you're doing is perfectly natural!

We can hear the sweet sounds of Al Green coming from upstairs.

BEA (CONT'D)

And Al Green is a really good call.

Genevieve takes a deep breath and starts for the stairs as Paul backs in the open door, too, grimacing. Louie follows.

PAUL

Coming in. Hoping nothing is out.

LOUIE

(to Bea)

Well, we're "out more." Having fun?

GENEVIEVE

I called but he isn't answering. We've gotta get up there.

PAUL

No, we don't.

(then, impressed)

Wow, Al Green.

LOUIE

Objectively correct.

Genevieve, annoyed, continues upstairs, but runs into Becker, trailed by a mortified Scarlett. He tries to be nonchalant:

BECKER

Hey, guys. Whatcha all doin'?

LOUIE

Hey. You find some bigger condoms?

SCARLETT

Oh my God!

BECKER

Okay, so it's all out. Yes, Louie, I did, but we hadn't gotten there--

(realizing)

Oh man, Dad, no offense, I'm sure you're just used to how tight yours are--

SCARLETT

OH MY GOD!!!

GENEVIEVE

Despite everything I'm enjoying this.

BEA

Size is not the most important--

PAUL

Not the time.

BECKER

Guys, I am so sorry I snuck. I just wanted a nice, safe environment for such an intimate experience.

(to Paul)

But the fact that Louie told you I was here means you guys bonded, yeah? That's gonna be so much better for everyone in the long run--

SCARLETT

Louie knew? Who's Louie?!

BECKER

(indicating Louie)

My dad's new lover's ex. Funny story, he and my mom work together, so my dad and Bea used to chat at company Christmas parties. Then, after their relationships imploded--

SCARLETT

(hysterically screeching)

Oh my God, STOP TALKING! Can you keep anything a secret, like, ever?! It doesn't matter-- we are over. I didn't even post about this!!!

She heads for the door.

BECKER

Scarlett, I'm sorry! I love you!

SCARLETT

Enough. I'm going to Mary's party.
And I'll probably barely have fun!

And she goes. Becker gasps, in mortal pain. A beat, then:

PAUL

They are tight on me, too.

BECKER

We were gonna get married! And move
to St. Tropez! Or Canada!

GENEVIEVE

I'm thinking you have some
misconceptions about Canada, but
come here.

Becker falls into his mom's arms, weeping. A beat, then:

LOUIE

You know, it used to be women
couldn't leave. It was illegal.

PAUL

Yeah! Because they were property.

BECKER

(wiping tears)
Seriously? Wow.

The three men nod, imagining that time fondly.

GENEVIEVE

Wonderful lesson, gentlemen.

BEA

Not the right take-away.

*

*

BECKER (CONT'D)

Dad, how do I get her back? Help me.

Paul, thrilled, takes Becker by the shoulders.

PAUL

You remember Goonies never say die.

BECKER

What?

PAUL

It's grand gesture time, my friend!
C'mon, I'll show you!

GENEVIEVE

Whatever you're about to do sounds like we could get into stalker territory, so I'm coming.

PAUL

No! Please, let me have this.

BECKER

I'm sorry, Dad, but this all went wrong because I didn't take advantage of the fact that I have four amazing adults to help guide me now. I shouldn't be losing my virginity without my parents!

LOUIE

Oh dear.

BECKER

So will you all come?

The adults all look at each other. Paul shrugs.

PAUL

I honestly can't figure this kid out on my own anyway.

The adults nod, mystified, and all follow Becker out.

EXT. MARY'S PARENTS' HOUSE - NIGHT

We hear the thump of music from a house party. TEENS stream in and out, drink on the front lawn, etc. And, across the street is Bea's SUV, with five sets of eyes peering out...

INT. BEA'S SUV - SAME TIME

The four adults case the house and coach Becker.

BECKER

Help me, guys. What's my move?

LOUIE

Dude, your move is you go home. You play it cool, she'll be back.

BECKER

You think?

PAUL

No! Becker, your super power is the size of your great big heart.

GENEVIEVE
Oh thank God.

LOUIE
That wasn't where I thought
you were going.

*
*
*

PAUL (CONT'D)
You go in there and show her that
there is no one who will go as big
for her.

(opening phone)
I've got a "romantic gestures"
Pinterest board, let's see if it
gives us any ideas.

BECKER/LOUIE/GENEVIEVE
Awesome!/You're sleeping with a man
with a Pinterest account./Just no.

BEA
I've got one: wait until it snows,
then wake her up with snowballs
against her window, then crawl out
your two initials in the snow.

LOUIE/GENEVIEVE
No!/So creepy.

BEA
(smiling at Paul)
I thought it was sweet.

Paul squeezes her hand. Louie watches, and realizes Paul knows
his ex-wife better than he ever did. A beat, then:

LOUIE
Okay, Becker, if you can do
something big and weird, you should.
Not everybody can, and it might be
exactly what she needs.

BECKER
I see what you just processed there,
bro, and I love you. I also know
what we should do.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

In QUICK CUTS, under Peter Gabriel's "In Your Eyes," the four
adults and Becker run around collecting fall leaves and yanking
small branches off trees. They're having fun. Finally, they all
approach Scarlett's CAR, arms full of colorful branches:

BECKER

She'll leave the party early because she's sad, but she'll find her car has been decorated in fall leaves -- her favorite thing -- which only I know because she shared some pretty sexy associations she has with them since some childhood experimentation--

LOUIE

(laughing now)

No!! Seriously, dude, it might be illegal for grown men to know this.

GENEVIEVE

Well, I like how this stunt can't be tracked back to you in court, so --

PAUL

Oh God!

Paul has reached Scarlett's car window. The others join him and see Scarlett inside, straddling a TEEN BOY, mid-makeout.

SCARLETT

OH MY GOD!!!!

Becker is stunned, and silent for once. A beat, then all four parents start yelling at Scarlett for him:

GENEVIEVE/BEA/PAUL/LOUIE

WHORE!/I don't slut shame, but COME ON!/Enjoy yourself, lady, because you are going to DIE ALONE!/He loved you! Is that nothing anymore?!

BECKER

(pulling them all away)

Okay, thanks guys, let's go.

The parents throw branches and keep yelling at a humiliated Scarlett as Becker pulls his big, protective family away.

INT. LOUIE'S MOM'S HOUSE - LATER THAT NIGHT

Louie, Bea and Paul enter the dark house to retrieve the girls.

MAN (V.O.)

For many species, working together is often a matter of life and death. During a flood, fire ants cluster into makeshift rafts and ladders, using each other's bodies to escape.

BEA
 (to Louie)
 Thanks again for handling the girls.

They approach June's bedroom door, and look in to find the two grandmas and the two little girls splayed out asleep in the big bed together. Renata and June snore. The three parents smile.

PAUL
 Eloise finally slept with Maeve.

LOUIE
 Should we wake 'em? It's your night--

Maeve and Eloise stir.

ELOISE/MAEVE	PAUL/LOUIE/BEA	*
Hi, guys./Hey.	Hello!/Hi, baby./Hi.	*

MAEVE
 Daddy, Eloise wants to come to your school with me! Can you tell mom?

ELOISE
 Yeah, I think it'd be smart to have a second. And Maeve follows directions. Seems malleable. Cool?

Bea is thrilled. Louie and Paul hate it... but those faces.

PAUL/BEA/LOUIE
 Okay./Yeah!/Sure.

BEA
 (to Paul)
 This means Genevieve is coming over more often.

PAUL
 I'm sorry, what?

MAEVE
 Can you get us in the morning, Daddy? Renata's making menudo.

Paul looks at Bea and Louie, who shrug okay.

EXT. LOUIE'S MOM'S HOUSE - FRONT PORCH

Paul and Bea exit. Paul shakes his head, amused.

PAUL

Maeve has been asking for a puppy to sleep with, but the lesbian grandmas might get me off the hook. I think you might be right about the kids being happy about more family.

BEA

Yeah, but I should have listened to you about Genevieve. I ruined Becker's big night.

PAUL

Are you kidding? If I had done this on my own he would have lost his virginity to the wrong girl. You saved him from giving his heart to a girl who straddles anyone who gets in her Nissan!

(realizing)

And Genevieve did, too.

Bea takes Paul's hand as he processes this.

BEA

Baby, we need each other. There are so many of us now, and things are going to be so much more complicated. So how about even if we don't get to make final decisions about each other's kids, we at least listen to each other's opinions. Like the other is a very powerful lobbyist.

PAUL

Ooh, with sexual ties to the commander in chief? Like when President Michael Douglas listened to the lobbyist from that lesbian movie even when it risked his presidency. Because of love.

BEA

Annette Benning. And sure.

PAUL

I like it! Okay, thank you for such a pleasant first fight. I feel nothing but hope for the future.

Bea smiles and kisses him.

LOUIE (O.S.)

Christ, at least move it off my porch!

Bea and Paul hustle off to their car, under:

MAN (V.O.)

The weave of the lifesaving "ant fabric" raft is held together by connections among ants who cling to each other until the flood is over.

INT. PAUL'S CLASSROOM - DAY

Paul peers through an ANT FARM giving a lecture to his third grade class. He is doing a "Nature Doc" voice, which is what we've been hearing. Eloise and Maeve sit at their desks.

PAUL (DOC VOICE)

Their bodies form a water-repellent structure that allows even the ants at the bottom to survive.

ELOISE

Does he do a lot of voices?

MAEVE

Wait til we get to Einstein. He has a mustache.

ELOISE

Kill me.

And the CAMERA PANS OVER TO THE ANT FARM, where dumb little creatures scurry around, just trying to get it done.

END OF ACT THREE

TAG

EXT. AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

Families stream out of an auditorium that displays a banner reading "REEL KIDZ FILM FESTIVAL." Our parents, kids and grandmas are all there, buzzing from the show.

JUNE

(to Eloise)

I thought your film was just beautiful, honey.

RENATA

The other ninety I could've skipped. I walked four kids from Mexico to Phoenix and tonight felt longer.

Louie stops near Genevieve, who is on her phone.

LOUIE

Hey. Crazy idea. Should we maybe go out sometime?

GENEVIEVE

(not looking up)

Nope, not ever.

LOUIE

Yeah, that was my thought.

Last out, Bea suddenly THROWS UP. No one sees but Paul.

PAUL

Baby! Are you okay?

BEA

(beat, then whispering)

How long has it been since our weekend in the mountains with the Aperol Spritzes?

Paul and Bea suddenly look very worried as Bea holds her tummy and their new family gets used to each other before the next natural catastrophe...

END OF SHOW