

7th Heaven

"You Don't Know What You've Got Till He's Gone"

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SEVENTH HEAVEN

"You Don't Know What You've Got 'Till He's Gone"

PROLOGUE

FADE IN:

DAY ONE

1	EXT. CAMDEN HOUSE - ESTABLISHING - DAY	1
2	INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY	2

RUTHIE is coming down the stairs when T BONE approaches, smiling.

T BONE

Hi. I looked for you at school today.

She rolls her eyes.

T BONE

How'd it go?

RUTHIE

I hated it. I can't believe I'm
back there and right in the middle
of the year.

T BONE

Yeah, guess it's a little tough
starting after everyone else. At
least you got to start with a half
day, teacher work day.

RUTHIE

Yeah, what a crock. All I did was
register. You know, the bureaucracy
in American schools is absurd, the
whole thing is such a waste of my
time. In Scotland, we learned
geography and sociology by meeting
people and actually traveling, we
learned history by going to castles,
even by hanging out in pubs, we
learned accounting by living on our
own and managing our own money. And
philosophy, I had a philosophy class.
They don't even offer philosophy at
our stupid school.

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED:

2

T BONE

I have an interest in philosophy myself. I just read on my own. A little of Nietzsche, a little of Kierkegaard.

She looks at him.

RUTHIE

Yeah, I'm sure you understand both of those guys reading on your own.

He reacts.

T BONE

I do okay.

RUTHIE

Don't kid yourself. You can't get a real education at our high school.

T BONE

Uh, yes you can, if you want.

RUTHIE

No you can't.

T BONE

Then why don't you join the twins and do a home schooling program?

She laughs.

RUTHIE

Yeah, like my mom and dad know anything.

T BONE

Oh, I think they know plenty.

RUTHIE

They're very limited by their life experiences, believe me. They've never spent any time out of the country at all.

He smiles.

T BONE

Not like you, I mean, you were away the entire six months.

(CONTINUED)

RUTHIE
(not getting his hint of
sarcasm)
Yeah, it was really an eye opener.

T BONE
But your parents are both really
smart people, and they read, and
they have friends from every walk
of life.

RUTHIE
What does that have to do with
anything?

T BONE
Well. I mean, what difference does
it make if you meet people from all
over the world in Scotland or you
meet them here in the little hamlet
of Glenoak?

RUTHIE
Are you kidding? There's no culture
here.

T BONE
There's plenty of culture here, if
you... get outside your own head.

RUTHIE
Excuse me?

T BONE
You came back from six months in
Scotland quite the... self-centered,
I'm better than everyone else, I'm
smarter than everyone else, pain in
the neck, didn't you?

She looks at him.

RUTHIE
You can't talk to me like that.

T BONE
Sure I can. I just did. And, I'm
not finished. You better wise up.
Your dad is seriously ill.

RUTHIE
Yeah, my dad, not your dad, my dad.
And it's not your family. And it's
none of your business.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

RUTHIE (CONT'D)

And just for your information, I'm home now, and I have some say in who's in our house.

T BONE

What is that, a threat?

RUTHIE

Maybe. What are you going to do about it if it is?

T BONE

I'll tell you what I'm going to do about it.

He looks at her. She looks at him. He grabs her and kisses her. Then he quickly nods and walks away toward his room, trying to be cool but with a look of "yikes" on his face. She's in a state of shock. Then she hears GIGGLING. Then she sees SAM and DAVID.

SAM/DAVID

Ruthie and T Bone sitting in a tree
k-i-s-s-i-n-g.

She reacts, runs back upstairs.

FADE OUT.

END OF PROLOGUE

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

3 INT. CHURCH OFFICE - DAY

3

For once, the SNIPES, the CREDITS, everything rolls over the following dialogue... Light reflects mid-afternoon to early evening as we reach the last session.

ERIC is sitting in his office in a counseling session with an ordinary woman, BETSEY.

BETSEY

I don't know, it's just that I'm the one who isn't married and doesn't have any children, and of course Aunt Pearl is going to ask me in front of everyone, "Where's your boyfriend?" "Why aren't you married yet?" "Don't you want to have children?"

ERIC

Okay, let me stop you right there.

BETSEY

Oh. I'm sorry. I know my problems must seem pretty trivial to you right now when... Well... I know that you're...

ERIC

Well, the clock is ticking for everyone, isn't it, Betsey? This year, why don't you just sit down next to Aunt Pearl and tell her the truth? Tell her you care more about your job than having a relationship and that you don't feel like making any effort to meet a guy.

She reacts.

BETSEY

I make an effort.

ERIC

No you don't. So maybe you'll meet a guy, maybe you won't. But if it depends on making an effort, well, you won't.

Betsey reacts, that's kind of harsh.

(CONTINUED)

3 CONTINUED:

3

ERIC

It's like every time you sense a
guy is interested, you're so afraid
of him, that you run the other way.
Are you scared or just... Lazy?

Now she starts gathering her things.

CUT TO:

4 INT. CHURCH OFFICE - DAY

4

A big man, PHIL, sits across from Eric.

ERIC

Then stop eating so much and exercise
more.

Phil reacts.

ERIC

No kidding, Phil, that's really all
there is to it, that and you might
consider why you eat so much. You
eat so much because your wife
humiliates you, and you feel
powerless, and she nags you to diet
so you get back at her by eating.
Break the cycle. Get up tomorrow
morning and start walking. Get on
any diet program or just keep a
food journal, count your calories,
set a limit. Eat less, move more.
It's not that complicated.

Phil looks at him.

PHIL

My wife doesn't humiliate me.

Eric considers.

ERIC

Yeah, I think she does.

Phil reacts.

CUT TO:

5 INT. CHURCH OFFICE - DAY

5

A woman, fortyish, LINDSAY, sits across from Eric.

(CONTINUED)

ERIC

Lindsay, your brother hasn't spoken to you for three years because, in his words, you were a jerk, and I'm sure he thinks you're still a jerk because all the man wants is an apology. Just apologize to him. You know you were wrong, and even if you weren't, better to apologize than never see your brother again, because I know you, you love your brother, otherwise you wouldn't have been talking about this for three years.

LINDSAY

But I think we were both wrong. He owes me an apology, too.

ERIC

Wrong again. You told his fiancée that he was in love with his ex-wife and then his fiancée left him.

LINDSAY

Well, he was in love with his ex-wife.

ERIC

Just apologize.

Lindsay reacts.

CUT TO:

A man in his thirties, LARRY, sits across from Eric.

ERIC

I don't care how much your children want a whateveritis, children have to understand that they can't have everything they want -- even if Santa can figure out a way to pay for it over the next twelve months. If after paying for food, clothing and shelter, and putting a set amount of money into savings to reach your financial goals, if you can then pay cash for it, then buy it and enjoy it with the children. Simple as that. But if you don't buy it, the children will still love you. Maybe even more.

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED:

6

Larry reacts.

ERIC

I swear. And I don't do that very often.

Larry reacts.

CUT TO:

7 INT. CHURCH OFFICE - DAY

7

Eric looks at a woman, NELL.

ERIC

Nell, if no one ever buys you anything you want, then buy yourself something you want. Or, but this is harder, share more of your life with those you love so they know you better and know something you might really want, or bonus, the feelings you share with each other will take the place of any present and relieve your need to receive the perfect gift. Love is the perfect gift. But you have to give love to get love.

She rolls her eyes.

NELL

You know, if you weren't... nevermind.

Picks up her mock designer bag and exits.

CUT TO:

8 INT. CHURCH OFFICE - DAY

8

Eric looks at an old woman, JOYCE.

ERIC

How long are you going to complain about not getting the doll for Christmas? About not getting as much as your brothers got when you were all children? God knows, your mother only sent the boys to the country during the Depression so they could eat, she wasn't favoring them, she was doing what she had to do.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED:

8

ERIC (CONT'D)
She probably was afraid to send you
to the country. She probably figured
the boys were tougher, I don't know.
But what I do know is you've missed
enjoying, what seventy Christmases
at this point?

Joyce reacts.

CUT TO:

9 INT. CHURCH OFFICE - DAY

9

Eric watches a couple, DEAN and ANDIE, Andie clearly not
happy, go out the door. He calls after them.

ERIC
Dean's not ready, that's all I'm
saying, he's not ready!

And as they walk out, Eric smiles, ah, his work is done and
he begins packing up his briefcase, when LUCY enters, sees
him, looks at him, he looks at her, opens his arms, hugs
her.

ERIC
Good to see you. I love you, Lucy.

LUCY
Dad, that's so nice. I love you,
too.

They break.

ERIC
What are you doing here? Your mom's
cooking dinner for all of us and
she should be putting it on the
table in...
(checks his watch)
Fifteen minutes.

LUCY
I know. Kevin and I are taking off
for a couple of days.

He looks at her.

ERIC
Oh?

She smiles.

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED:

9

ERIC
Second honeymoon?

She smiles.

LUCY
Yeah. We're going up to San
Francisco. Just for two days.

He smiles.

ERIC
Savannah staying with us?

LUCY
Yes, but Jane and Margaret are
available to help with her, they
like her and she likes them,
especially Margaret.

Eric nods.

LUCY
So. I just wanted to stop by and
say goodbye before we leave. Kevin's
waiting for me in the parking lot.

He looks at her.

ERIC
Get any phone calls lately?

LUCY
Phone calls?

ERIC
Any complaints?

LUCY
Oh, you mean about the counseling
sessions?

He nods.

LUCY
I got a couple of phone calls. Not
so much as complaints. Just...
Concerned phone calls.

ERIC
What are people so concerned about?

LUCY
It's just that...

(CONTINUED)

ERIC

People don't really want me to tell them what's wrong with them, they just want me to fix them without really doing any of the work themselves. I'm focusing in on seven people. I've got seven chronic complainers who want fixing bad.

She thinks about it, nods yes.

LUCY

Isn't that what they all want? To be fixed without doing any of the work themselves?

ERIC

Pretty much, yeah.

Lucy looks at him.

LUCY

But there's no reason that you have to be in a hurry to help them, do you? No one has to fix things right away, do they?

ERIC

No. Just a gut feeling that the time is now.

He looks at her.

ERIC

You came by to see me before you left just in case anything happens to me?

She looks at him.

ERIC

I'm fine, Luce, right now I'm just fine. And you should go have a wonderful time in San Francisco with your husband.

LUCY

Okay, Dad. But if you need me, call me.

ERIC

Promise.

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED: (3)

9

And as he grabs his jacket, he motions for her to exit,
follows her out.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

10 EXT. CAMDEN HOUSE - ESTABLISHING - NIGHT 10

11 INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT 11

Ruthie is loading the dishwasher as T Bone rinses off the dishes.

T BONE
Your dad looks a little tired
tonight, doesn't he?

Ruthie doesn't look at him.

RUTHIE
He's fine, he looks fine, he's just
old, everyone should leave him alone
and quit talking about him. And to
him. I don't know why everyone has
to talk to him.

T BONE
He's not that old.

RUTHIE
Most of my friends in Scotland have
parents in their thirties, Dad's in
his fifties.

T BONE
Only in his fifties. Do you have
any idea how lucky you are to have
two parents?

RUTHIE
Yes. And I don't need you to tell
me. Where's your mother by the way?

T BONE
Vegas. She pretty much abandoned me
so I'm declaring myself an adult.

She looks at him.

RUTHIE
You're what?

T BONE
It's called emancipation.

RUTHIE
Does my dad know?

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED:

11

T BONE

He knows. He's helping me.

She smiles.

RUTHIE

You think he's helping you. He's probably got your mother in some kind of program and she'll show up at Christmas to take you home.

He looks at her.

T BONE

I don't think so.

RUTHIE

Yeah, well, I think I know him a little better than you do.

T BONE

Right. Because he's your father. And you know him as your father, whereas I simply know him as a man, a minister and a human being. Therefore, I trust him to tell me the truth when he advises me to declare my independence.

RUTHIE

Whatever.

T BONE

I can do this by myself.

RUTHIE

Mom asked both of us to do it.

T BONE

And since when do you do what your parents tell you to do?

They stare at each other. JANE and MARGARET enter, one of them carrying SAVANNAH. Jane and Margaret watch them.

JANE

Told you.

Margaret smiles.

T BONE

Told her what?

JANE

You two like each other.

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED: (2)

11

RUTHIE

We do not like each other.

JANE

I think you do. Seriously like.

MARGARET

Serious.

T BONE

We don't like each other.

Margaret looks at Jane.

MARGARET

They do.

ANNIE enters.

ANNIE

Who does what?

Ruthie gives Jane the evil eye.

ANNIE

Are you two having a problem?

JANE

I'm not having a problem with Ruthie.
Ruthie, do you have a problem with
me?

RUTHIE

No.

ANNIE

With Margaret? You're not having a
problem with Margaret, are you?

MARGARET

No.

Margaret looks at Ruthie.

RUTHIE

No, I'm not having a problem with
Margaret.

ANNIE

That only leaves T Bone. And I know
you're not having a problem with T
Bone.

Jane and Margaret smile. Annie reacts.

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED: (3)

11

ANNIE

What's the problem?

Ruthie says nothing. T Bone shrugs.

ANNIE

Whatever it is, you two take care
of it. Your father is up to here
with problems this time of year,
and he doesn't need any more
problems. So you two settle this
right now.

And she starts to leave, she looks at Jane and Margaret.

ANNIE

See you tomorrow. Goodnight.

Annie exits. Margaret hands the baby to Ruthie.

MARGARET

Goodnight.

She looks at Jane. Jane doesn't move. Ruthie looks at them,
then Ruthie takes the baby upstairs. Jane and Margaret wait
for her to go then Jane leans in.

JANE

What happened?

T BONE

Nothing, nothing happened.

JANE

Liar.

T BONE

No, I'm not lying.

JANE

You kissed her.

He reacts.

T BONE

How did you know that?

MARGARET

She didn't.

T Bone reacts.

12 INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

12

Eric and Annie are standing in the hallway when Ruthie and Savannah come up the stairs.

ERIC
Hi.

ANNIE
Hi.

RUTHIE
Hi.

ANNIE
What's going on with you and T Bone?
The two of you avoided each other
all during dinner.

ERIC
So go back downstairs and straighten
things out like your mother asked
you to do. That kid has been through
a really hard time and he's a really
nice guy.

Ruthie looks at them.

RUTHIE
I'm not having a problem with T
Bone. I don't know where you got
that.

The boys appear in their doorway. Ruthie looks at them. They smile.

RUTHIE
But I'll talk to him.

She leaves Savannah with them and exits. Eric and Annie look at each other, look at the twins.

ANNIE
Hi, boys.

ERIC
You think Ruthie is having a problem
with T Bone?

They shake their heads no.

ERIC
Really?

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED:

12

ANNIE

They're not fighting?

They smile, shake their heads no.

DAVID

No.

SAM

They're not fighting.

DAVID

They're in love.

Eric and Annie react.

13 INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

13

Ruthie enters. Jane and Margaret are still there. So is T Bone.

RUTHIE

I need to talk to him.

JANE

Go ahead.

MARGARET

Bye.

She grabs Jane's arm and pulls her toward the door.

JANE

So is he a good kisser?

And they go out the door. Ruthie looks at him.

RUTHIE

Thanks a lot.

T BONE

They guessed.

RUTHIE

Right. Like you don't talk too much.
And by the way, it was an accident.

T BONE

It wasn't an accident.

RUTHIE

Yeah, it was. I meant to slap you.

T BONE

You meant to slap me, I see.

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED:

13

RUTHIE

You're like a brother, you're living
in my house.

T BONE

I would be like a brother if you
had been living in your house. But
you haven't been living in your
house so I'm not like your brother.

RUTHIE

You are way too young for me.

T BONE

We're the same age.

RUTHIE

Seriously, you're too immature for
me.

T BONE

Is that right?

RUTHIE

Everyone knows guys are not as mature
as girls at this age.

T BONE

I've heard that. But I'm a guy who's
been living alone and taking care
of myself by myself for a long time
so that has matured me way beyond
my years, and your years as well. I
may only be seventeen, but make no
mistake about it, I'm a man.

RUTHIE

(scoffs)

You're not a man.

T Bone reacts.

INTERCUT:

14 INT. STAIRWELL - NIGHT

14

Annie and Eric are listening with amused interest. Annie
tries to move down the stairs, Eric pulls her back.

ERIC

Ssssh.

They listen again. In the kitchen, T Bone looks at Ruthie.

T BONE

Would I do this if I weren't a man?

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED:

14

And he kisses her again. On the stairwell, Eric and Annie react.

RUTHIE

Would I do this if I weren't a woman?

And she kisses him.

T BONE

I never said you weren't a woman.

And they kiss again. Annie and Eric just can't believe it.

RUTHIE

Alright, so we're not having any problems.

Eric and Annie hurry back up the stairs.

T BONE

No, we certainly don't appear to be having any problems.

RUTHIE

Fine.

T BONE

Fine.

And she heads back up the stairs.

15 INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

15

Ruthie comes up the landing and finds Eric and Annie positioned right where they were before. She looks at them.

RUTHIE

We talked.

ANNIE

Good, I'm glad you did.

ERIC

Me, too.

And Eric and Annie watch as Ruthie heads for the stairs.

RUTHIE

I'll be going to bed now.

ANNIE

Goodnight.

ERIC

Goodnight.

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED:

15

ERIC/ANNIE
Love you, Ruthie.

RUTHIE
Yeah, I love you, too.

ERIC
And I'm happy you're home.

RUTHIE
Yeah, it's okay. For now. 'Night.

And she smiles, realizes she's smiling, stops smiling and then goes up the stairs. T Bone enters, coming up the landing.

T BONE
Well, guess it's homework time.
Goodnight. Thanks again for daughter.

He is horrified. Freudian slip.

T BONE
Dinner. Heh. Did I say "daughter"?

ERIC
I believe you did.

T BONE
Dinner. Really a good dinner, Mrs.
Camden.

ANNIE
Thank you, T Bone. Goodnight.

T BONE
Goodnight.

He walks down the hall and enters his room.

ANNIE
Well, it's a little early just to
go to bed.

ERIC
Yeah, if we were just going to bed.

She looks at him.

ANNIE
Seriously, you're too immature for
me.

He smiles, and they head down the hall together.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

DAY TWO

16 EXT. CAMDEN HOUSE - ESTABLISHING - DAY 16

17 INT. KITCHEN - DAY 17

Eric reaches around Annie to pour some coffee. The boys are at the kitchen table with their books out.

DAVID
Come on, Dad.

SAM
Yeah, we can't wait to find out
what happens in the story.

ERIC
But what if we don't start with
English, what if there's a pop quiz
instead?

SAM/DAVID
Yes!

ERIC
I didn't say what subject.

SAM
We studied last night. Every subject.

DAVID
Spelling. Please, Dad.

Eric looks at Annie.

ERIC
Is it me or were they always so
enthusiastic about school?

ANNIE
Let me think. Hmmm. It's you.

ERIC
Where are our two lovebirds this
morning?

ANNIE
They left early, they're taking the
bus. You know, so they won't bother
us with driving them to school.

Eric nods. She smiles.

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED:

17

ANNIE

I know it's not right that Ruthie likes a guy who is living in our house, but...

ERIC

But I think I saw her smile last night.

ANNIE

Yeah. Isn't it great?

They kiss. Eric looks around.

ERIC

Aren't we missing a wee baby girl?

ANNIE

Jane and Margaret took her for a walk. And they took Samson and Delilah with them.

Eric reacts.

ERIC

Jane and Margaret are up?

ANNIE

They are. Jane has a job interview this morning at eleven.

Eric looks at Annie. She nods.

ANNIE

Receptionist. Environmental public relations firm.

Eric reacts.

ERIC

You found that for her?

ANNIE

She was doing her usual routine about how much she hates eating meat when a customer at the Dairy Shack offered to have her come in and talk to him about a job with his company.

ERIC

It's a miraculous time of year.

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED: (2)

17

ANNIE

Yeah, it is. But you sent him to
the Dairy Shack, didn't you? Winston
James? He goes to our church?

Eric reacts, who me?

18 EXT. STREET - DAY

18

Jane is walking along with the dogs, Margaret is pushing
Savannah in the stroller.

MARGARET

I really hope you get that job.

JANE

Me, too. But I hate to leave you
all alone at the Shack.

Margaret shrugs. A woman, EVELYN, comes out of her house
dragging her redheaded toddler with her.

EVELYN

Hello! Merry Christmas!

JANE

Uh oh.

Jane and Margaret exchange a glance as Evelyn approaches.

EVELYN

Hi. Is that Savannah Kinkirk?

JANE

Hey, we didn't steal her, we're
helping out the Camdens. Honest.

EVELYN

You're the girls living in the garage
apartment?

JANE

Maybe. Can we help you with
something?

EVELYN

Oh, Reverend Camden said you were
the talkative one, and so you --
(meaning Margaret)
-- must be the one who likes
children?

MARGARET

I do.

(CONTINUED)

18 CONTINUED:

18

EVELYN

Would you be interested in mine?

They react.

EVELYN

No, I mean... Reverend Camden suggested you might make a good nanny, and I'd be willing to pay a lot of money, a lot of money. I don't want to put Georgina back into daycare and I have to go back to work, I have to, we have a family business, and well, would you?

Margaret answers all too quick.

MARGARET

(in her high-pitched
squeal)

Yes!

(off the Evelyn's reaction)

I mean, yes, I'd love to, I really would. I'm going to try to go back to school, but I could take classes at night or on weekends or online even and in the meantime...

(looks at the kid)

...we could be such great friends. I love the park, I love animals, I love to read books and watch the same videos over and over, and I can make odd things out of Playdough, and I love playing dress up and braiding hair, and I know how to make cookies from refrigerated cookie dough.

Evelyn reacts.

EVELYN

Hired!

Margaret reacts.

19 INT. HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY

19

Ruthie is at her locker when T Bone approaches.

T BONE

So, am I supposed to act as if I know you or not?

RUTHIE

Or not.

(CONTINUED)

T BONE

But everyone knows I live at your house.

RUTHIE

Yeah, okay. But you're not my boyfriend. We just know each other from the house.

T BONE

Okay. As long as that means we can still make out, I don't really care.

RUTHIE

We can't keep making out, my parents know.

T BONE

No, they don't.

RUTHIE

David and Sam saw us. If they didn't tell them last night, they'll tell them this morning. Those two can't keep a secret. And neither can your buddies Jane and Margaret. Believe me, someone has told them or will tell them. And once the secret is out, your living arrangements are in jeopardy.

He considers.

T BONE

Maybe someone already told them and maybe they don't care.

RUTHIE

You think my parents are so much cooler than they really are.

T BONE

Maybe they're cooler than you think.

RUTHIE

Stop acting as if you know more about my family than I do.

T BONE

Maybe I do.

RUTHIE

No you don't.

(CONTINUED)

T BONE
I know your father is critically ill.

RUTHIE
Yeah, but he's not going to die.
(off his look)
He's not.

T BONE
Okay. I certainly hope not. I don't want anything to happen to him. But... He is walking around with a bad heart.

RUTHIE
And you think I don't know that?

T BONE
I think you don't act like that.

RUTHIE
Because if I did act like that, it would be a burden on him.

T BONE
And it's not a burden walking around acting as if you don't care?

RUTHIE
I care. He knows I care.

T BONE
How?

RUTHIE
I came home, didn't I?

T BONE
You had to.

RUTHIE
I wanted to.

He reacts.

T BONE
I think that would be news to everyone.

RUTHIE
Well, everyone should understand that it's just not that easy to be back under these circumstances.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

19 CONTINUED: (3)

19

RUTHIE (CONT'D)

It's hard, I love my dad, I have to walk away from my dad every morning knowing I may never see him again.

T BONE

You didn't even say goodbye to him this morning.

She looks at him.

T BONE

Me? That was my fault?

RUTHIE

You're the one who wanted to take the bus.

T BONE

I didn't know you were feeling the way you're feeling. You never said anything. And I thought we'd make out on the bus.

He looks at her.

T BONE

Oh, like you weren't thinking that?

She looks at him, takes out her cell phone and dials.

INTERCUT:

20 INT. KITCHEN - DAY

20

Eric is watching as the boys work, he picks up the RINGING phone.

ERIC

Hello?

RUTHIE

Hey, Dad, I didn't get a chance to say goodbye to you this morning.

ERIC

Oh, that's okay, I know you wanted to get to the bus. You and T Bone.

She looks at T Bone, mouths, "He knows."

RUTHIE

Okay, well, I'll let you go.

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED:

20

ERIC

No, no, I'm glad you called, I got a package here from the mailman. It's from you. Looks like it was sent a month ago. I didn't know if it was meant for Christmas or if I can open it now.

RUTHIE

You can open it now. It's not really a Christmas present. It's stupid. I don't know if you'll even like it.

The bell RINGS.

RUTHIE

I have to go.
(then)
Bye, Dad.

ERIC

Bye, Ruthie. Love you. And tell T Bone goodbye, too.

He hangs up, chuckling. She looks at T Bone.

RUTHIE

He says goodbye to you, too.

They walk off down the hall.

RUTHIE

Not so close.

He takes a step or two to the side.

21 INT. KITCHEN - DAY

21

Eric tears open the package. He takes out a... skirt.

DAVID

Is that for you?

ERIC

It is. It's a kilt. Ruthie sent it from Scotland. Isn't it great?

SAM

Are you going to wear it?

ERIC

I most certainly am.

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED:

21

DAVID

You're not afraid people will laugh
at you?

ERIC

I don't care if people laugh at me,
I love this. I love it. I'm going
to go right upstairs and try it on.

He exits. David looks at Sam.

SAM

He's brave.

DAVID

And funny.

SAM

And smart.

DAVID

And kind.

They think for a beat.

SAM

I just hope he has good legs.

DAVID

I just hope he has a good heart.

They look at each other.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

22 EXT. CAMDEN HOUSE - ESTABLISHING - DAY 22

23 INT. KITCHEN - DAY 23

Eric is wearing the kilt. Annie is looking at him. So is Savannah. So are Sam and David.

ANNIE

Well, I have to admit, you look...
brilliant.

He looks at Sam and David. They force a smile. He looks at Savannah.

SAVANNAH

Pretty.

He laughs.

ERIC

Alright, I've got to get down to
the church.

ANNIE

And you're going to go down to the
church in your skirt, er uh, kilt?

ERIC

I am. I've wanted one of these my
whole life.

ANNIE

You never mentioned it.

ERIC

Didn't I?

ANNIE

No.

ERIC

Maybe I'll wear it from now until
Christmas. Maybe I'll declare the
weeks after Thanksgiving and before
Christmas kilt wearin' weeks and
wear it this time of year every
year.

ANNIE

Alright, if that's what you want to
do.

(CONTINUED)

ERIC

By the way, any news on who's coming for Christmas and who isn't?

ANNIE

Oh, everyone's coming.

ERIC

Matt and Sarah and Mary and Carlos and the children?

ANNIE

All of them.

ERIC

And Simon's going to show up?

ANNIE

He is.

ERIC

With...?

ANNIE

I have a feeling he has a girlfriend, but he's not saying. And Sandy and Aaron are going to stay with us, while her dad stays across the street with Martin's dad and Martin. So we're going to have a full house, especially with Jane and Margaret and T Bone.

ERIC

(smiles)

T Bone. How great is it that she has a boyfriend? A boyfriend! A boyfriend for the holiday season. And the entire family will be here, all of them? For Christmas Eve?

ANNIE

God willing.

ERIC

I hope they're not all coming just because...

(I'm dying)

ANNIE

No, no, it just worked out that way this year.

(CONTINUED)

ERIC

I doubt it, but... I don't care.
Whatever the reason is, I'll be
happy to see them, all of them.

ANNIE

Me, too.

ERIC

Alright, well, I'll be on my way.
Bye, boys.

They run over and hug him.

ERIC

Bye, Savannah.

He gives her a kiss. He gives Annie a kiss.

ERIC

Bye, Annie, see you around seven.

ANNIE

Bye. Love you.

ERIC

Love you, too. All of you.

He looks at the three dogs.

ERIC

And all of you.

He exits, sticks his head back in.

ERIC

Bye.

And he's out. The boys look at Annie.

DAVID

You think it's safe for him to go
to work in a skirt?

SAM

Some people might not like it.

ANNIE

Well, we don't care if people like
it or not, if your father wants to
wear a skirt, he can wear a skirt.
And it's not a skirt, it's a kilt.

DAVID

What's the difference?

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED: (3)

23

ANNIE
Well, a skirt's a skirt and a kilt's
a... kilt.

They nod.

DISSOLVE TO:

24 EXT. GLENOAK COMMUNITY CHURCH - ESTABLISHING - DAY

24

25 INT. CHURCH OFFICE - DAY

25

Eric comes into the office, whistling "I'll be home for
Christmas." He is startled when he sees Dean and Andie.

ERIC
Whoa. Wasn't really expecting anyone.

ANDIE
Sorry, I just wanted to say thank
you so much.

DEAN
She settled for an engagement ring.

ANDIE
(thrilled)
His mother's ring.

DEAN
And a date.

ANDIE
We're getting married next New Year's
Eve. Isn't that perfect? That's
just twelve months and two weeks
and a day away.

Eric smiles.

ERIC
Congratulations.

DEAN
She wanted you to be the first to
know. Once the pressure was off, I
don't know, I just... realized how
much she means to me.

ANDIE
Happy happy happy holidays.

Eric smiles.

(CONTINUED)

ERIC
Merry Christmas.

Just then Joyce enters, sees them.

JOYCE
(looks at Eric)
Oh, hello. I can come back when
you're not so busy.

ANDIE
No, we were just leaving. Bye,
Reverend Camden.

DEAN
Bye. And hey, nice skirt.

And they exit. Eric looks at Joyce.

ERIC
It was a gift from Ruthie.

JOYCE
You're opening your gifts early
this year?

ERIC
I... guess I am. Have a seat, make
yourself comfortable.

JOYCE
I just wanted you to know how very
happy I am that you were so terribly
rude to me yesterday.

ERIC
Was I? I'm sorry.

JOYCE
You were. But as it turns out, it
was just what I needed. I went from
here straight over to the post office
and picked up one of the letters to
Santa, and this year, I'm going to
be Santa myself. I'm going to take
a very special doll to a little
girl right in my own neighborhood.
Isn't that wonderful?

ERIC
That is wonderful.

JOYCE
It's all because of you.

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED: (2)

25

ERIC

I have a feeling, it's all because
of someone greater than me.

She smiles.

JOYCE

I hope you and your family have the
loveliest Christmas you've ever
had.

ERIC

Thanks. And I wish the same for
you.

Joyce smiles.

DISSOLVE TO:

26 INT. CHURCH OFFICE - DAY

26

He's putting away a book, when Nell knocks and enters.

NELL

Sorry to interrupt.

ERIC

Not a problem, what's up?

NELL

I need a letter of reference.

ERIC

You're changing jobs?

NELL

No, I love my job. And I love how
much money it pays. The problem is,
I have too much money and too big a
house and no family to share it
with.

Eric looks at her.

NELL

I've decided to adopt.

ERIC

Really?

She shrugs.

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED:

26

NELL

(calls back)

You got to give love to get love.
And the gift I want to give myself
is a family. I've always wanted to
have a dozen children, and I don't
know when or if I'll ever get married
so I'm going to start a family of
my own. I'm going to start with a
sibling group of five from Ethiopia.

He reacts.

ERIC

Five?

NELL

Why not? So thank you, Reverend
Camden, for pushing me yesterday.

He smiles.

ERIC

My pleasure.

NELL

Nice skirt.

Eric reacts.

DISSOLVE TO:

27 INT. CHURCH OFFICE - DAY

27

Larry comes in as Eric looks up from his book.

LARRY

Don't get up. You can show off your
skirt some other time. I just want
to say I had a long talk with the
children and I gave them a choice,
they can either have that crazy
expensive electronic whateveritis
and no allowance for six months, or
they can just have me without my
cell phone or email for three days,
December 24th, 25th and 26th. And,
they took that one. And they got so
excited, I'm giving 'em December
31st and January 1st, electronic
free, too. So you were right and I
was wrong. That's all I came to
say. That and thank you.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

27 CONTINUED:

27

LARRY (CONT'D)
I'm really looking forward to
Christmas and the rest of my debt
free year. Merry Christmas.

And he's out.

DISSOLVE TO:

28 INT. CHURCH OFFICE - DAY

28

Eric's packing up his computer to go when he gets a call. He
picks up the RINGING phone.

ERIC
Hi, this is Reverend Camden...

INTERCUT:

29 EXT. STREET - DAY

29

Lindsay is on the phone.

LINDSAY
I just want you to know that I just
got back from apologizing.

ERIC
You apologized to your brother?

LINDSAY
No, I apologized to his ex-fiancée.
And she's still single and she's
still interested. So now all I have
to do is apologize to my brother,
who is still single and still
interested. So there you go. Next
time don't wait three years to yell
at me.

ERIC
I wasn't yelling.

LINDSAY
You were yelling. And what's with
the skirt? I hear you're wearing a
skirt. I wish I had time to come by
and see it, but I want to change
before I go over to my brother's
house. Merry Christmas.

ERIC
Same to you.

And he hangs up, looks up. Phil enters.

(CONTINUED)

PHIL
So, busy afternoon?

ERIC
Yes, it is. But a very nice
afternoon.

PHIL
I just got back from Overeaters.

Eric nods.

ERIC
Good for you, Phil, good for you.
What'd you think?

PHIL
There's a lot of humiliation going
around.

ERIC
I agree.

Phil looks at the kilt, smiles.

ERIC
Oh no, I wanted to wear this, this
is a gift from Ruthie, she was living
in Scotland you know, she was part
of an exchange program.

Phil puts up his hand.

PHIL
I just came from a meeting, I've
heard enough family stories for one
day. I don't know how you do it,
listening to one person after another
after another complaining and
complaining.

ERIC
I like people. I do. You might say,
I even love people.

PHIL
(teasing)
Hey, I'm a married man. I got to go
home and talk to my wife. Really
talk to her. We've got some stuff
to work out.

Eric smiles.

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED: (2)

29

ERIC

Good time a year to start fresh.

PHIL

Yeah. It is. Thanks, Rev.

And he's out. Eric picks up the phone, dials.

INTERCUT:

30 INT. KITCHEN - DAY

30

Annie, who is very happy and cooking dinner, answers the RINGING phone.

ANNIE

Where are you?

ERIC

I'm sorry. I'm having the nicest day.

ANNIE

Don't be sorry about having the nicest day. What's going on?

ERIC

Everyone I yelled at or practically everyone, has come back by here today to tell me some good bit of news. And everyone is coming home for Christmas. And I'm wearing a kilt. I'm just insanely happy.

ANNIE

Me, too.

ERIC

Five minutes. I'll be home in five minutes.

ANNIE

You know, it's meat night. So don't be late. It won't come around for another week.

ERIC

How great is that? Meat night. I completely forgot. What are we having?

ANNIE

Pork chops. Very lean. Baked. With just a little bit of barbecue sauce.

(CONTINUED)

ERIC

I'm in heaven just thinking about
it.

He looks up, sees Betsey.

ERIC

Oops. Got another visitor.

ANNIE

Okay, but that's the last one.

ERIC

Promise. Love you.

ANNIE

And I love you.

They hang up. Eric looks at Betsey.

ERIC

I was kind of expecting you.

BETSEY

Didn't sound like it.

ERIC

No, I was. It's been that kind of
day. Sit down.

BETSEY

No, that's okay. I'm sorry I didn't
call, I was just driving by and it
was as if I got pulled in.

ERIC

Something happen today? Something
good?

BETSEY

He told you already?

ERIC

He?

BETSEY

Van.

He looks at her, smiles.

ERIC

Van?

(CONTINUED)

BETSEY

I saw him in the grocery store last night.

ERIC

I didn't know.

BETSEY

He's asked me out before.

ERIC

I think he tries to sit with you in church every Sunday, but you always put yourself at the end of a row next to a family so there's no room.

BETSEY

I wasn't aware.

He looks at her.

BETSEY

Okay, maybe I was.

ERIC

And?

BETSEY

He was buying something for dinner and I was buying something for dinner, and I don't know... we decided to just go out for dinner.

ERIC

Oh?

BETSEY

I took him to my Aunt Pearl's restaurant. She invited him for Christmas.

ERIC

Well, I'll be darned.

BETSEY

Yeah, me too. We stayed so long, I missed a deadline at work.

He waits.

ERIC

And nothing bad happened.

She shakes her head "no."

(CONTINUED)

BETSEY

I just wanted to tell you that.

ERIC

Thank you.

BETSEY

No, thank you, Reverend. Thank you for everything. For helping me, for helping everyone. I don't know what we'd do without you.

ERIC

Hey, with any luck, we won't have to find that out for a long, long time.

BETSEY

So you're doing okay?

ERIC

I'm fine. Everything is fine. And I don't know, I just have this feeling that something almost magical is happening to me today. Maybe it's the season.

She smiles.

BETSEY

Maybe it is. So... Happy holidays.

He nods.

ERIC

Merry Christmas.

She exits. He smiles.

ERIC

(mumbles)

All this, and pork chops, too.

He looks heavenward.

ERIC

Thank you.

And as he heads out the door, there's a bit of a twinge in his arm. Hmmm. What would that be? Probably nothing. And he exits, turning to look back on his office. The phone RINGS. He looks at his watch. He goes to pick up the phone.

ERIC

Hello?

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED: (4)

30

He smiles.

ERIC

Hi, Luce. No, I'm fine. How are
you? How's San Francisco?

And as he listens, we:

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

31 EXT. CHURCH PARKING LOT - NIGHT

31

Eric walks toward the car whistling, "I'll be home for Christmas, you can count on me..." And all of a sudden out of the darkness, there's STANLEY.

ERIC

(good-naturedly)

Good God, man, you nearly scared the skirt off me. And don't ask, you can't have it.

STANLEY

Funny you should say that.

ERIC

What?

STANLEY

I've just been thinking. How come you never ask to live?

ERIC

I don't know, I'm just grateful to be alive. Had a wonderful day, going home to a wonderful meal. You want to join us, Stanley? Come on, have some pork chops.

STANLEY

Not tonight. Maybe some other night. I'm not a fan of the other white meat. Not enough fat on it. I like a big juicy steak with some fat on it. That's why my heart's probably so good. I eat the fat and my whole body adapts to the fat. How come you don't ask to live?

Eric looks at him.

STANLEY

Anything I ask for, I get. And I'm no better than you are. What keeps you from asking, man?

ERIC

Did you just come by here to find that out?

(CONTINUED)

STANLEY

I did.

ERIC

I don't know, Stanley.

STANLEY

How's the family?

ERIC

They're fine, thank you.

STANLEY

Annie?

ERIC

Annie is great. We got a new bed.
One of those electronic things. A
gift.

STANLEY

The twins?

ERIC

The boys are doing well, and they're
so smart, they love home school,
and I'm enjoying spending time with
them.

STANLEY

And Reverend Kinkirk, where's she?

ERIC

She and Kevin took off for a few
days in San Francisco. She's a very
resilient person, that Lucy.

STANLEY

And that little one?

ERIC

She's in love. She doesn't know it
yet, but I think she's in love. And
with a guy that I actually like.

STANLEY

The rest of 'em?

ERIC

All the children are well, all of
them. And they're all coming home
for Christmas.

(CONTINUED)

STANLEY

What about the ones that aren't
your children?

ERIC

They're good, too. All is right
with the world, Stanley.

STANLEY

Well, that's what I like to hear,
Reverend. But do me a favor, just
ask about living.

Eric looks at him.

ERIC

Okay, Stanley, I'll do that. Is
there anything else?

STANLEY

Nothing for right now. And thank
you.

Stanley starts to walk away.

ERIC

(calls after him)
For what?

STANLEY

(calls back, not turning
back to look at him)
For everything.

And Eric shakes his head, starts to get in the car, looks
heavenward at the North Star.

ERIC

Let me live Lord, let me live.

And we see him look confused as he feels something strange
inside his chest. But what? He looks up. CUT TO the North
Star.

FADE OUT.

END OF SHOW