

THE MIDDLE AGES

PILOT SCRIPT

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Lead Characters

Byron Cornell 14, rising eighth grader. Cooler than cool, he thinks. Girl magnet in his head, basketball star, dancing fool, unconcerned student. Refers to himself in the third person

Lani Cornell, 12, Rising 7th grader. Adorable, tweener, very insecure about who likes who when, Very curious about boys, smart, but settles, crush on Derrick's friend. Worried about the way she looks at all times.

Dean Cornell, 10. Rising 5th grader. Incredibly smart, but hides it. Photographic memory. Wants to be cool like brother Byron and have a posse.

Nat Cornell. 38. Father. Gym teacher at middle school. Sports coach. Way too busy. Laissez faire parenting style. Oblivious/trusting as to what kids are up to. Former star athlete at school. Still has macho instincts. Went to State. Married wife at 22.

Toni Cornell. 38. Retiring as major in the Army after twenty years. Took ROTC in college. Met Nat at State. Excellent athlete. Very disciplined. Meddling. Meticulous. Can't help herself.

Toyman. 14. Byron's friend. New to the school. Very cute. Lani's crush.

SUPPORTING CAST. TOUGH GUY. MARIE. TEACHER.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

DEAN CORNELL, 11 AND WEARING GLASSES, ENTERS LUGGING A HUGE BACKPACK. IT'S SO GIGANTIC THAT HE STARTS TEETERING AND FALLS OVER ONTO A NEARBY COUCH AND THEN BOUNCES DOWN TO THE FLOOR. DEAN STRUGGLES TO GET UP, BUT KEEPS FALLING BACK DOWN.

DEAN

Help!

JUST THEN, **LANI CORNELL**, 12, ADORABLE GIRL, COOLY DRESSED IN A SKIRT AND A CUTE TOP, ENTERS THE HOUSE CARRYING JUST ONE BOOK, WHICH SHE TOSSES ASIDE. SHE THROWS HER SWEATER ONTO THE COUCH, WHICH THEN FALLS ON TOP OF DEAN. LANI IS LISTENING TO AN IPOD AND THUS CAN'T HEAR DEAN'S CRIES FOR HELP.

DEAN (CONT'D)

Help!

LANI, EYES CLOSED AND LOST IN THE MUSIC, "LIP GLOSS" BY LIL MAMA, IS DANCING AND SINGING TO THE MUSIC. SHE COMES CLOSE TO DEAN, BUT STILL DOESN'T SEE HIM AND DOES A DANCE STEP OVER THE MOUND.

DEAN (CONT'D)

Help!

AS A FINALE FOR HER DANCE SHE DOES AN AWKWARD SPLIT RIGHT ON TOP OF DEAN.

DEAN (CONT'D)

Ow!

LANI LOOKS DOWN AND SEES DEAN. SHE TAKES HER IPOD BUDS OUT.

LANI

Hey, Twerpie.

DEAN

Roll me over.

LANI HELPS ROLL DEAN OVER AND EXTRICATE HIM FROM HIS BACKPACK.

LANI

How many times do I have to tell you?
Stop carrying all these books around.

DEAN

That's kinda what school's about. You
remember school?

LANI

I certainly do. By the way, even
though you're totally uncool, do you
think any cool guys would like my hair
this way?
(shakes her hair)

I think I saw L. J. Johnson sneaking
me a look.

DEAN

Maybe a look of disbelief.

DEAN AND LANI START SNACKING ON SOME CHIPS AND STUFF AS THEY
CONTINUE TALKING. LANI KEEPS CHANGING HER HAIR.

LANI

Maybe like this? Or like this?

DEAN

It's good to see you've got your
priorities straight.

LANI

Straight into the pages of **Word Up**.
Any modeling agencies call?

DEAN

Yeah, they called to say "you gotta be kiddin?"

LANI

Oh really? Well I'll be sure and call you from my penthouse in *New York City*.

JUST THEN, ULTRA COOL, **BYRON**, 14, ENTERS. HE HAS TO CLOSE THE DOOR BEHIND HIM BECAUSE THERE ARE SEVERAL SCREAMING GIRLS OUTSIDE. BYRON IS DRESSED IN A BASKETBALL UNIFORM, AND THINKS HE'S COOL BEYOND COMPARE. HE TOSSES HIS SWEAT SHIRT AND SNEAKERS ON THE COUCH AND ANNOUNCES HIS ARRIVAL.

BYRON

Byron is here.

DEAN

Hey, Byron. Great game today.

BYRON

Thanks, little bro. 42 points. 8 assists. 10 rebounds. But who's counting?

LANI

Obviously one person. His Byron-ness.

BYRON

Now. Now, Sis. Whassup with the way you look? You having a bad face day?

DEAN LAUGHS AT BYRON'S JOKE. LANI GIVES DEAN A DIRTY LOOK.

LANI

You want to live to be 5 feet tall, you better shut up.

ALL THREE OF THEM CONTINUE SNACKING AND MESSING THE PLACE UP.

BYRON

Any of my crew call?

LANI

Your crew can't figure out how to use
a phone.

DEAN

I wish I had a crew.

LANI

(to Byron)

Just keep your crew out of this house.
Last time they were here they kept
oogling me...hungering for me with
their eyes.

BYRON

I think they were actually hungering
for those Hot Fries you were eating.

BYRON AND DEAN BUMP FISTS. BYRON PLOPS HIS BASEBALL CAP ONTO
LANI'S HEAD.

SFX/DOORBELL

BYRON (CONT'D)

Oh, that must be Toyman.

LANI CROSSES TOWARD THE DOOR.

DEAN

Who's Toyman?

BYRON

New guy on the team. Just transferred
in.

LANI

"Toyman." Nothing like a geeky name.

LANI OPENS THE DOOR TO REVEAL **TOYMAN**. HE'S 14 AND GREAT
LOOKING. LANI'S STUNNED. SHE TURNS TO HER BROTHERS.

LANI (CONT'D)

Where's my inhaler?.

TOYMAN STEPS IN AND LOOKS AT LANI

TOYMAN

You must be little brother Dean.

TOYMAN TOSSES HIS SWEATSHIRT ON HER SHOULDER AND CROSSES BY.
LANI REACTS.

LANI

No! I'm a girl!

SHE WHIPS OFF THE HAT, SHAKES HER HAIR, BUT TOO LATE.
TOYMAN'S CROSSED AWAY OVER TO BYRON.

BYRON

My man. Byron welcomes you to his
crib. I'll show you my car collection
later.

BYRON AND TOYMAN LAUGH.

LANI STANDS NEXT TO DEAN.

LANI

Can you believe that Toyman?

DEAN

(laughing)

You mean the way he totally dissed you
by thinking you were a boy?

LANI

No, I'm talking about his like total hotness. I've got to go talk to him.

DEAN

Aren't you afraid of being oogled?

LANI

I'm making an exception in Toyman's case. What a cool name, huh?

DEAN REACTS.

LANI (CONT'D)

Can you think of anything for me to say to him?

DEAN

How about...
(ala Lani)

"I'm desperate."

LANI SHAKES HER HEAD AND STARTS THINKING.

MEANWHILE, BYRON AND TOYMAN ARE HAVING A CONVERSATION WHILE PLAYING A VIDEO GAME. THEY'RE ALSO SNACKING UP A MESS.

BYRON

Anyway, I'm thinking of declaring myself eligible for the NBA draft.

TOYMAN

You're in 8th grade, man!

BYRON

So what's your point?

TOYMAN

You're right. I love it. You and
Lebron.

DEAN
(from across room)

I'd buy your shoes.

BYRON

Thanks, little man. Free pair for
you.

TOYMAN
(to Byron)

Just don't play for the Celtics. You
know how much I hate the Celtics.
Uggggggghhhh!

JUST THEN, LANI COMES CROSSING OVER TO BYRON AND TOYMAN. SHE'S DOING AN EXAGGERATED SASHAYING WALK TO TRY AND GET NOTICED. THE BOYS CONTINUE THEIR VIDEO GAME. LANI, FRUSTRATED, BEGINS DOING JUMPING JACKS TO GET ATTENTION. NO LUCK. FINALLY SHE ENDS UP DOING SOMERSAULTS, ULTIMATELY ENDING UP IN THE WIRES OF THEIR GAME, UNPLUGGING IT.

BYRON

Hey, what's up with that, Sis?

LANI

Aren't you going to formally introduce
me to your new friend?

BYRON

No.

LANI JUST PICKS UP TOYMAN'S HAND AND SHAKES IT.

LANI

Hi, I'm Lani. And I'm not doing anything Saturday night.

BYRON

Or any other night.

LANI ELBOWS BYRON HARD.

TOYMAN

Nice to meet you. But I'm busy Saturday night.

LANI

I'm not surprised with a face like that. How about Sunday through Friday night?

TOYMAN

Sorry. Even busier.
(looks at watch)

Hey, I gotta go. Catch you tomorrow.
Seeya Sammy.

LANI

It's Lani. All girl, 100% beautiful, female Lani. Call me. Email. Text. Whatever. I can be anywhere in fifteen minutes.

TOYMAN EXITS THE DOOR. LANI SIGHS, STRICKEN WITH LOVE.

LANI (CONT'D)

I think he likes me.

BYRON

I thought you didn't like being around
my crew.

LANI

Byron, you need to give me some inside
tips so he'll want me for his girl.
His likes and dislikes.

BYRON

Well, I know he's a huge Celtic fan.

LANI RUNS AWAY EXCITED. BYRON WINKS AT DEAN.

INT. LIVING ROOM - LATER

THE PLACE IS A MESS. CLOTHES AND BODIES EVERYWHERE. EACH
KID IS EATING A DIFFERENT TAKE-OUT MEAL. LANI IS EATING FROM
A CHINESE FOOD BOX. BYRON'S EATING SOME KFC. DEAN IS EATING
FROM A TACO BELL BAG.

LUST THEN, DAD, **NAT CORNELL**, AROUND FORTY, ENTERS WEARING A
SPORTS JACKET OVER A SWEAT OUTFIT. HE'S CARRYING A PIZZA
BOX.

NAT

Hey, what's up, family?

KIDS

Hey Dad.

NAT

I brought pizza.

KIDS

I already ordered.

NAT

Okay.

NAT THEN LOOKS AROUND AND EXAMINES THE HUGE MESS OF FOOD.

NAT (CONT'D)

Look at this place.

BYRON

What?

NAT

I can't believe it.

LANI

What?

NAT

Nobody brought out sodas!

DEAN

I'll get 'em.

AT THAT, DEAN CROSSES TO THE FRIDGE AND NAT TOSSES HIS GYM BAG ON TOP OF THE OTHER CLOTHES ON THE COUCH. NAT CROSSES BY LANI AND GIVES HER A KISS ON THE TOP OF THE HEAD.

NAT

How's America's next top model?

LANI

I'm in love.

NAT

That's nice. How come you weren't in gym class today?

LANI

(ad libs)

Um, a pimple?

NAT

Oh, okay.
(then)

Everybody got lots of homework?

BYRON

Nope.

LANI

None tonight.

NAT

Lucky you.

DEAN INTERJECTS, TURNING TO LANI.

DEAN

I heard you've got a history exam
tomorrow.

LANI

No big deal It's on the War of 1812.
(thinks, then)

Say, when was that, anyway?

NAT SIGHS AND SITS DOWN AT A TABLE EATING HIS PIZZA. HE
TURNS TO DEAN.

NAT

I heard you rebuilt the computer in
science lab.

DEAN

Yeah. But it was just the mother
board.

NAT

Speaking of mother, remember Mom's
retiring from the Army and coming home
tomorrow. I can't believe she's been
in Iraq for a whole year.

KIDS

Yeah, I wonder what she's gonna bring
me.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - NEXT DAY

NERDY DEAN, LUGGING HIS BACKPACK AND LOOKING AT HIS LAPTOP,
BUMPS INTO SOME COOL LOOKING GUYS ABOUT HIS AGE.

BOY

Hey, watch it, Nerd.

DEAN

Sorry, I was just doing some last
minute prep for our social studies
quiz.

BOY

Well, aren't you Mr. I.Q.?

DEAN

Did you guys study much?

BOY

No, we've got better things to do.
Like have a social life. You've heard
of that.

DEAN

(under his breath)

Not really.

BOY

The only thing cool about you is your
brother.

JUST THEN, A COMMOTION DOWN THE HALL AS BYRON, WITH HIS
POSSE, INCLUDING TOYMAN AND SOME GIRLS, APPROACHES.

AN OLD SECURITY GUARD IS OVERWHELMED.

BYRON

Make way for Byron. King Byron has
arrived.

NAT, THE DAD, STANDS BY A CLASSROOM, WATCHING BYRON GO BY. A
GIRL, MARIE, APPROACHES NAT.

MARIE

Coach Nat?

NAT

Yes, Marie?

MARIE

Would you please ask Byron to
autograph something for me?

NAT

What is it?

MARIE PULLS HER ICKY DENTAL RETAINER OUT OF HER MOUTH.

MARIE

My retainer. I always want him close
to my lips.

NAT

That's nasty!

MARIE

Is that a 'yes?'

NAT

That's a big 'no.'

BYRON PASSES BY NAT.

BYRON

Hey, Pop. Byron's glad to see you.

NAT

Give him my best.

NAT LOOKS OVER AND SEES LANI.

NAT (CONT'D)

There's your sister. Gee, I didn't
know she liked the Celtics.

WE NOW REVEAL THAT LANI IS WEARING AN ENTIRELY CELTIC OUTFIT
AS SHE APPROACHES TOYMAN. EVERYTHING'S GREEN AND SAYS
CELTICS.

LANI

Hey, Mr. Toy. You like what you see?

TOYMAN'S EYES WIDEN WILDLY AS LANI CONTINUES WITH A CHEER.

LANI (CONT'D)

Go Celtics! Go Celtic! Gooooo
Celtics!

TOYMAN

Are you trippin?

LANI

Why would you think I'm trippin? Go
Celtics!

TOYMAN

I hate the Celtics!

LANI

You do?

TOYMAN

You know, we never started and we're
already through.

TOYMAN TURNS AND WALKS AWAY. LANI'S HUMILIATED AND TURNS
WITH RAGE TOWARD BYRON.

LANI

Byron! Byron!

BYRON STARTS RUNNING DOWN THE HALLWAY WITH LANI IN PURSUIT.
THEY KNOCK OVER THE SLEEPING SECURITY GUARD.

NAT TURNS TO THE ASSEMBLED KIDS.

NAT

I don't know them.

INT. LIVING ROOM - LATER

THE PLACE IS ITS USUAL MESS. DEAN IS SLEEPING IN A CONTORTED
MANNER UNDER ALL THE JUNK ON THE COUCH.

NAT, THE DAD, HAS LANI'S IPOD IN HIS EAR AND IS OBLIVIOUSLY
DANCING AROUND THE ROOM WHILE EATING AND SPILLING POPCORN.
HE'S ALSO MOVING TO "LIP GLOSS."

BYRON PLAYS A VIDEO GAME WHILE BEING YELLED AT BY LANI.

LANI

He hates the Celtics!

BYRON

My bad.

LANI

I'm going to tell everyone at school
how you pick your nose and save what
you find under your bed.

BYRON IGNORES HER.

LANI (CONT'D)

I'm going to tell everyone how you
still read '*Everybody Poops.*'

AGAIN, BYRON IGNORES HER.

LANI (CONT'D)

I'm going to bring home the tarantula
from biology and put him in your
underwear while you sleep.

THIS GETS HIS ATTENTION AND HE FLIPS.

BYRON

No way! If you do, I'll never let you
near one of my boys.

LANI

If I do, you won't be a boy yourself.

LANI MAKES A PINCER GESTURE WITH HER FINGERS.

BYRON

Dad! Dad!

NAT DOESN'T HEAR BECAUSE HE'S STILL DANCING TO "LIP GLOSS"

HE ALSO DOESN'T SEE THE DOOR OPEN BEHIND HIM. STANDING
THERE, IN A CRISP ARMY UNIFORM AND CARRYING A DUFFEL BAG, IS
MAJOR TONI CORNELL, MOM.

TONI

I'm home.

NO ONE NOTICES HER. NAT, EYES CLOSED, DANCES RIGHT PAST HER,
CHANTING "LIP GLOSS."

TONI (CONT'D)

I'm home!

STILL NO RESPONSE. MOM PUTS HER HEAD BACK OUT THE DOOR TO RE-
CHECK THE ADDRESS. SHE THEN RE-ENTERS AND YELLS

TONI (CONT'D)

Attention!

EVERYONE IS STARTLED.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. LIVING ROOM - LATER

LIKE A GENERAL, TONI IS INSPECTING THE TROOPS, THE DISHEVELED FAMILY LINED UP IN FRONT OF THE COUCH.

TONI

Just look at yourselves.

THE FAMILY STARTS LOOKING AT THE OTHER PEOPLE.

TONI (CONT'D)

I mean, look at you. Yourselves.

THE FAMILY THEN LOOKS AT THEMSELVES.

TONI (CONT'D)

What do you have to say for yourselves?

BYRON

Byron looks good?!

TONI REACTS.

NAT

It's good to see you, Honey.

TONI

Don't Honey me, Mister.

TONI PULLS THE IPOD OUT OF HIS EARS.

TONI (CONT'D)

And look at this place. Baghdad
wasn't this messy.

BYRON

What do you mean, Mom?

TONI TAKES A SLOW LOOK AROUND AT THE PILES OF CLOTHES ON THE
COUCH AND FOOD CONTAINERS.

TONI

Are you blind?

BYRON

Byron has super-human vision, Mom.

TONI

Well, the next time you see Byron tell
him he's not leaving this house until
it's clean.

BYRON

But, Major Mom.

TONI LOOKS DOWN AT BYRON'S SAGGING PANTS.

TONI

And be sure and tell Byron there's no
saggin' in this family.

TONI REACHES DOWN AND JERKS UP BYRON'S PANTS. BYRON SHRIEKS.
LANI LAUGHS.

LANI

Ha. Ha. Maybe I won't need that
tarantula.

TONI MOVES OVER TO THE LAUGHING LANI.

TONI

And what are you laughing at you high
skirten, lipstick wearing, 12 year
old?

LANI
(missing the point)

Well, you see, I was telling Byron I'd
put a tarantula in his undies if...

DEAN
(trying to save her)

Lani...Lani...

TONI SHAKES HER HEAD AND LOOKS AROUND

TONI

Place is a mess. Doesn't look like
anybody cooks.

TONI GRABS THE FLAB ON DEAN'S STOMACH.

TONI (CONT'D)

Out of shape.

TONI TURNS TO NAT.

TONI (CONT'D)

Where were you when I was gone?

KIDS

Yeah, dad?

NAT GIVES THEM A DIRTY LOOK

JUST THEN, THE DOORBELL RINGS. TONI CROSSES TO IT AND OPENS
THE DOOR, REVEALING TOYMAN.

LANI

Toyman!

HE SPEAKS TO THE SCOWLING TONI

TOYMAN

I came over to see Lani.

WITHOUT SAYING A WORD, TONI SHUTS THE DOOR IN TOYMAN'S FACE.
SHE TURNS TO NAT.

TONI

We need to talk.

MEANWHILE, LANI RUNS OVER TO THE DOOR, OPENS IT, AND SHOUTS
OUT.

LANI

(wailing)

Toyman! I love you. I'll wait for
you. Love will go on!

INT. LIVING ROOM - TWO DAYS LATER

THE PLACE IS NEAT AS A PIN. NO CLOTHES ON THE COUCH. THE
FAMILY SITS AROUND A TABLE TOGETHER. EACH IS CRISPLY DRESSED
IN CONSERVATIVE CLOTHES, READY FOR THE DAY. THEY'RE EATING
BOWLS OF OATMEAL.

TONI, IN NEAT CIVILIAN ATTIRE, LOOKS OVER THEM.

TONI

Everyone enjoying their multi-grain,
hot oatmeal?

GROUP

Noooooo.

TONI

Excuse me?

GROUP

It's delicious.

LANI

And so good for me.

NAT

And a smart choice for my heart.

BYRON WHISPERS TO DEAN.

BYRON

I'd trade it in a heartbeat for a
triple bacon quesadilla from Wendy's.

TONI

What?

BYRON

Supposed to be *windy* today.

LANI

Hopefully it'll blow these clothes
away.

TONI

I think you look quite sensible.

DEAN

Kids don't want to look sensible.

BYRON

We want to look tight. In a cool way,
not literally.

BYRON REVEALS HIS TOO TIGHT PANTS.

TONI

Too bad. No more hanging down to your
knees.

(then, to Lani)

Or looking like someone twice your
age. Right Nat?

NAT

Absolutely. I tried to tell them.

THE KIDS ALL STARE AT NAT WHO GIVES THEM A 'HUSH' LOOK. TONI PULLS A LARGE CHART FROM UNDER THE TABLE.

LANI

What's that?

TONI

A life chart.

THE CHART HAS LOTS OF COLUMNS WITH THE NAMES OF THE FAMILY MEMBERS ON THE TOP.

TONI (CONT'D)

It lists everybody's chores for the week.

BYRON

Chores? Crossover dribbling is a chore.

LANI

So is getting your makeup to look just right.

TONI

I mean cleaning the house. Making your bed...

DEAN

What about doing fun stuff?

NAT/LANI/BYRON

YEAH?

TONI

Don't worry. You each get twenty minutes a day for that. Now, I'm going to go hang this up.

TONI CROSSES AWAY WITH THE CHART. THE FAMILY CONFERS.

DEAN

We've got a problem...and that problem just got home from Iraq.

LANI

I never thought I'd say it, but I can't wait to get to school.

SFX/TELEPHONE

TONI PICKS UP THE RINGING PHONE.

TONI

Hello, yes, this is Mrs. Cornell. My child got an F minus on the big test? Well, thank you for calling.

TONI HANGS UP THE PHONE AND LOOKS AT THE KIDS.

TONI (CONT'D)

You got an F minus on the big test!

BYRON TURNS TO LANI.

BYRON

I told you to hit the books.

TONI

Not her. Dean's the one who flunked.

AS EVERYONE LOOKS AT DEAN IN DISBELIEF...

INT. SCHOOL - LATER

BYRON, LANI, AND DEAN WALK DOWN THE HALL. THEY'RE VERY CONSERVATIVELY DRESSED. AS THEY WALK, THEY TAKE OFF THIS OUTER LAYER, REVEALING HIP, TRENDY, SAGGING CLOTHES UNDERNEATH. LANI APPLIES MAKEUP AS THEY OPEN THEIR LOCKERS. THEY ADMIRE THEMSELVES.

BYRON

That's more like it. Byron at last
looks like Byron.

LANI LOOKS IN HER LUNCH BAG.

LANI

Look what Mom packed us for our
lunches. A spinach salad, an apple,
and some baby carrots. How am I
supposed to trade with this?

SIMULTANEOUSLY, THE THREE OF THEM DROP THEIR BROWN BAGS IN THE TRASH.

JUST THEN, THE GROUP OF BOYS WHO RAZZED DEAN BEFORE COME BY.

BOY

Hey Man, I hear you flunked the social
studies test.

DEAN

You heard right...man.

A LONG PAUSE, THEN

BOY

Way to go man. Now you got your head
on straight.

HE BUMPS FISTS WITH A PLEASED DEAN.

BOY (CONT'D)

Shove it to the man. You posse-ed up?

DEAN

I'm currently unposse-ed.

BOY

Come hang with us later. We might
have read you all wrong.

CONGRATULATORY HUGS AS THEY WALK AWAY. DEAN IS ALL SMILES
AND WALKS OVER TO BYRON AND LANI WHO ARE NOW EATING SOME
PIZZA.

NEARBY, NAT IS TRYING TO TALK TO THE SECURITY GUARD, WHO IS
FAST ASLEEP.

NAT

Chuck, have you been to the gym?
Somebody stole the wrestling mat, and
the backboards, and the bleachers.

SNORING FROM CHUCK.

NAT (CONT'D)

Chuck! Chuck!

CHUCK'S STILL ASLEEP.

JUST THEN, OUT OF NOWHERE, TONI APPEARS. LIKE A ROCKET, SHE
SPEEDS OVER TO THE KIDS WHO ARE EATING THEIR PIZZA. SHE
PLUCKS THE PIZZA OUT OF THEIR HANDS. SHE GRABS DEAN AND
PULLS HIM AWAY DOWN THE HALL.

TONI

You're coming with me, my little
flunk-ee.

INT. OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

A TEACHER, DAVE, SITS BEHIND A DESK AS TONI PULLS A RESISTING
DEAN INTO THE ROOM. DEAN'S HEELS ARE DRAGGING.

TONI

I'm Major Cornell, Dean's mother. Are you his social studies teacher?

DAVE

Yes, but...

TONI

Would you please ask my son a really tough question?

DEAN

Mom...

DAVE

Let's see. How many electoral college votes does Iowa have?

DEAN

Seven.

TONI

Another.

DAVE

President Abraham's Lincoln's wife's maiden name?

DEAN

Todd.

TONI TURNS TO DAVE.

TONI

I just wanted you to know my boy's smart. He flunked that test on purpose.

DAVE NODS AND CROSSES AWAY. TONI TURNS TO DEAN

TONI (CONT'D)

Are you stupid, or what?

INT. HOME - LATER

THE FAMILY IS SITTING AROUND EATING. NO ONE LOOKS HAPPY.

TONI

Enjoying your sprout salads?

NAT TURNS TO TONI.

NAT

Are we sure the Whopper isn't one of
the five basic food groups?

TONI

Getting you all to eat right is only
one of my missions around here.
Others include convincing my youngest
that he doesn't have to act dumb to be
cool. Teaching my daughter not to go
gaga over every boy with a pulse.

TONI THEN LOOKS AT THE OTHERS.

TONI (CONT'D)

Etcetera. Etcetera.

JUST THEN,

SFX/TELEPHONE

TONI CROSSES AWAY TO ANSWER IT. NAT TURNS TO THE KIDS.

NAT

Kids, we love Mom, right?

KIDS

Right.

NAT

And we know we can all use the
discipline she's bringing to our
lives, right?

KIDS

Right.

NAT

(smiling wickedly)

And we all know that at least for most
of the day, we're safe at school,
right?

KIDS

(enthusiastic)

Right!

THEY ALL BUMP FISTS.

JUST THEN, TONI RETURNS FROM THE PHONE CALL.

TONI

That was the school. They just fired
that sleeping security guard they had.

NAT

Well, he had it coming.

TONI

Yeah, I start tomorrow.

ON EVERYONE'S REACTIONS,

THE END

(CONT'D)