

LIFE IN PIECES

"Toon Boat Cheat Rash"

Written by

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Story 1: THE REIGN OF THE TOON

INT. JEN AND GREG'S BEDROOM - DAY

JEN and GREG have their suitcases on their bed and are packing.

JEN

Can you fit Lark's things in your suitcase?

GREG

No, that's your thing.

JEN

Yes, *but* I need my trendy sandals and my sensible sneakers so I'm out of room.

Jen attempts to hand Lark's clothes to Greg, but he waves them off.

GREG

I need my skies-out-thighs-out shorts, and my in-case-it-gets-chilly pants. So I have no room in here either.

Greg closes and zips his suitcase.

JEN

You're not really going to wear your skies-out-thighs-out shorts are you? Do you really think those are appropriate for a theme park? There will be small children running around.

GREG

You had a different opinion at...El Matador.

Greg puts his fingers on his head like he's a bull, pawing the ground with his foot and giving Jen bedroom eyes.

JEN

Yes, because *that* was a beach, where social clothing norms don't apply. If they do, I've made some questionable spring break choices.

GREG

You're just saying this to get me to put Lark's things in my suitcase.

JEN

What do you want us to do? Make her carry her own bag?

Pausing, they think about it and exchange a nod, setting aside Lark's clothes.

INT. JEN AND GREG'S KITCHEN

Greg makes sandwiches, while Jen fills the cooler.

JEN

I'm already starting to regret this weekend. I can feel my theme park hangover already.

GREG

That's not a thing. Come on! We've got to see the Animal Actors Show!

Greg makes a face like he's looking at something cute.

JEN

Honey, we could've sat on our porch and saved ourselves hundreds of dollars if I knew all you wanted to do was watch the dogs.

GREG

But they also have squirrels!

JEN

My statement still stands.

LARK runs by the kitchen door.

LARK (O.S.)

I get to meet Spongebob!

GREG

Is she wearing any...?

JEN

Nope.

(to Lark)

Lark, honey, we can't leave until you put on some pants.

Lark runs back the other way.

JEN (CONT'D)

Do you think this is a good idea? I know she's excited to see Spongebob in person, but I really think a six-foot version of her favorite cartoon character might scar her for life.

GREG

What does she expect? It's not like he'd be the same size as on-screen.

JEN

Yeah, Greg? She's three. That could be exactly what she expects.

GREG

Then this could be a good growing-up moment for her.

JEN

Meeting a giant sponge. *That's* your idea of a growing-up moment? Right up there with letting go of her pacie: meeting an *oversized cartoon character*.

Lark runs by fully-clothed.

LARK

Sponge-bob! Sponge-bob!

GREG

She put on pants. She's a big girl.

JEN

Fine. But you're dealing with the tears.

EXT. UNIVERSAL STUDIOS HOLLYWOOD - DAY

Jen, Greg, and Lark stand at the entrance of the park. Lark is excited, Greg is ready, Jen is iffy.

JEN

Remind me again why we paid for a whole weekend of this? Just looking at this place, hearing the screams...

She shivers.

GREG

I think we figured we'd be too tired to finish it all in one day.

They both nod, realizing the truth in their reasoning.

GREG (CONT'D)

Let's grab a stroller. Halfway through the day we'll kick out Lark, and I'll push you around.

JEN

That would be funny if you and I didn't already know that this will end with *you* in the stroller.

Lark spots a flag featuring Spongebob and points and shouts.

LARK

Spongebob! Spongebob!

JEN

Would you look at that. Spongebob!
(to Greg)
Yeah, we're going to need that stroller.

Greg walks away to grab a stroller.

JEN (CONT'D)

Lark, honey. How about we save Spongebob for last, like at the end of the day?

LARK

No.

JEN

But then he can be the big finale, huh? What do you think about that, Lark?

LARK

No.

JEN

I am just *so happy* you learned that word, huh?

Greg returns with the stroller.

JEN (CONT'D)

Well, then let's at least go in order shall we? The Despicable Me ride is straight ahead. What do you say we do that one first?

LARK

No.

JEN

But you love the minions and all their shenanigans! And they'll be small. And on-screen.

GREG

Well, sort of. They're in 3-D.

JEN

Baby steps, Greg.

LARK

No.

JEN

(to Greg)

Well, this is going swell. Wanna offer any more help, Mr. Growing-Up Moment?

GREG

How about Super Silly Fun Land, huh? That sounds super and silly right? They've got some fun rides and a wet zone--

Jen shakes her head.

GREG (CONT'D)

--which we won't be playing in because then we'd need a change of clothes.

LARK

No.

Greg and Jen share a look.

GREG

Worst case scenario, she cries, no big deal.

JEN

And you get to ride the tilt-a-whirl with her until she stops crying. While I indulge in overpriced theme park retail therapy.

Jen starts to walk away.

GREG

Why me? You know my history with the tilt-a-whirl!

INT. MEET AND GREET TENT - DAY

Jen and Greg get in the meet-and-greet line for Spongebob with Lark. Catching sight of more Spongebob banners, Lark jumps up and down.

LARK

Spongebob! Spongebob!

JEN

You don't say.

GREG

Look at her. She'll be fine. No signs of emotional scarring.

JEN

I, on the other hand, already need a drink. Do you think they have bikini bottom coladas?

Jen makes eye contact with a few MOMS across the room who nurse colorful alcoholic beverages. Jen raises her water bottle in a toast and the moms do the same.

A CHARACTER ATTENDANT enters with SPONGEBOB to cheers from the children.

CHARACTER ATTENDANT

Spongebob just got off work at the Krusty Krab. Who's excited to meet him?!

More cheers. Lark is unable to contain her excitement. Greg is unable to take his eyes off of Spongebob.

GREG

Look at the size of that thing.

Seeing him in person, Greg is dumbfounded and more than a little creeped out.

Jen realizes her husband is afraid of Spongebob.

JEN

Yes. It's a six-foot sponge.

GREG

Its unmoving eyes are seeing straight into my soul.

GREG (CONT'D)

You know, it's not too late. We can still do Super Silly Fun Land instead!

LARK

No!

JEN

(looking at her map)
This should be fun! The tilt-a-whirl is Minions-themed.

Greg covers his mouth and looks sick just thinking about it.

GREG

I should probably go check on the stroller. You can handle this on your own, can't you?

Greg starts to inch away from the line. Jen grabs his arm.

JEN

No, you don't. We're about to experience a "growing-up" moment.

Jen, Greg, and Lark reach the front of the line. Jen pulls out her phone to take pictures, motioning Greg forward with Lark.

JEN (CONT'D)

Go ahead, join her!

Greg avoids eye contact as he follows Lark, who runs up to give Spongebob a big hug.

JEN (CONT'D)

Look, Greg, how sweet.

LARK

(to Spongebob)
You're my favorite.

Spongebob boops Lark on the nose.

CHARACTER ATTENDANT

And he says you're *his* favorite!

Greg takes a step away from Spongebob but is immediately herded back in by the character attendant.

JEN

Get in there, Greg.

Giving the character side-eye, Greg reluctantly approaches Spongebob, flinching when it turns to look at him with round, unseeing eyes.

EXT. UNIVERSAL STUDIOS HOLLYWOOD - DAY

Jen and Lark exit the tent. Lark hugs close a Spongebob plush and Jen pushes the stroller in which sits Greg, looking disturbed.

LARK

Mommy, what's wrong with Daddy?

JEN

Nothing a snuggle with Spongebob won't solve!

(to Greg)

How's that growing-up moment going for you?

Toddling around the front of the stroller, Lark holds out her plush to Greg, who flinches away from it.

END OF STORY ONE

Story Two: Don't Rock the Boat

INT. TIM AND HEATHER'S BEDROOM - DAY

Wide awake and excited, TIM rolls over in bed and nudges HEATHER.

TIM

Are you ready for our big day?

HEATHER

What big day?

TIM

Our father-mother-son bonding day!
We're going boating!

HEATHER

That's today?

TIM

Yes, it's today! Your parents
agreed to watch the girls.

HEATHER

Father-mother-son? Isn't three a
crowd?

TIM

Not when it's family!

Heather yawns and then begins to melodramatically cough.

TIM (CONT'D)

No, no, no, what's that?

HEATHER

I've been feeling a throat thing
coming on for days. I think today
is the worst of it, unless you try
to reschedule our trip for
tomorrow.

TIM

Aww, honey.

HEATHER

I think you and Tyler should go
without me.

TIM

Without you? But what happened to him needing to be around an exemplary woman? We've got to show him a healthy marriage.

HEATHER

Do we really think it's healthy for us to rub our relationship in his face? You've been saying you've felt distant from him since his divorce. Now's the time to strengthen your relationship. Just the two of you.

TIM

I don't think it's right to go without you.

HEATHER

But Tyler will love it! Father-son bonding day? That's every boy's dream! And boating is more your thing anyway. Go have a boys' day and share all that raging masculinity.

Heather purrs seductively. Tim reacts excitedly.

INT. TIM'S CAR - DAY

Tim and TYLER sit in the car with Tim behind the wheel.

TIM

How exciting is this? A day of just you and me, riding the waves.

TYLER

Riding the waves? Tell me that was a figure of speech.

TIM

Oops! The cat's out of the bag. Surprise!

TYLER

No, not "surprise." The cat has to be put back in the bag and shipped to another location, one that doesn't involve water.

TIM

What do you mean "one that doesn't involve water?"

TYLER

Dad, I hate being on the water.

TIM

How can you hate being on the water?

TYLER

Did you know you can drown in less than an inch of water? And when water's not a direct threat to your well-being, water's moving and bobbing and--I'm going to be sick.

Tyler rolls down his window and sticks his head outside.

TIM

I didn't know this about you. Look, we're bonding already.

Tyler pulls his head back inside the car.

TYLER

Remember when I was eight, you and mom forced me on that dolphin-watching sunset cruise? I spent all four hours puking PB&J over the side of the boat.

TIM

Wait, it's coming back to me. Is that why you won't touch PB&J?

Tyler throws up his hands. Tim parks the car.

TIM (CONT'D)

You know what? We're going to take advantage of this opportunity. It'll be the ultimate father-son bonding. We're going to confront this fear and make the water our--

TYLER

Please don't finish that sentence.

EXT. MARINA - DAY

Tim and Tyler stand on the end of the pier overlooking the lake in matching ill-fitting life vests and zinc-coated noses. Tim's face is ecstatic. Tyler inwardly prays.

TIM

Look at our sturdy sea vessels!

Tim and Tyler look down at the pink and blue pedal boats in front of them. They rock violently with the smallest disturbance.

TIM (CONT'D)

Take your pick: Bush or Johnson?

The side of the boats clearly read *Bush* and *Johnson*.

TIM (CONT'D)

(chuckling)

Johnson.

Tim nudges Tyler. Tyler rolls his eyes.

TYLER

What's even the point of a pedal boat?

TIM

...I'm not quite sure.

TYLER

Can't we go fishing? Or water skiing? Or dinner boating? Anything that requires a boat not built by Little Tikes?

TIM

C'mon! Doesn't the risk excite you?

TYLER

Can we go back and get the arm floaties?

TIM

No, those were extra.

Resigned, Tyler points at the pink Johnson. Tim starts to climb into the boat and the whole thing tips, water spilling in. Tim hops back up onto the dock.

TIM (CONT'D)

A *fickle* sea vessel! We're going to have to do this both at once.

TYLER

Are you sure we can't trade--?

TIM

Are you kidding? Look at this thing! We're about to have the privilege of an intimate encounter with that flighty temptress: water.

TYLER

It's "adventure."

TIM

It *is* an adventure!

TYLER

No, the quote--nevermind.

TIM

Alright, we're going to do this all at once. Would you like to hold my Johnson?

Tim chuckles. Tyler ignores him.

TIM (CONT'D)

Ready?

TYLER

I don't think my answer will influence this chain of events.

TIM

I'll take that as a yes. Now on the count of three, we'll both step into the boat. Three...

TYLER

Why would you say "count of three" and then start with "three?"

TIM

It's a figure of speech.

TYLER

'Cause you're so good with those.

TIM

Three. Two. One.

Tim and Tyler stumble into the boat which tips forward. The men adjust their weight to balance out the boat and collapse into their seats. The water reaches just below their chests.

TIM (CONT'D)

Whooh! Nothing like a rush of adrenaline to make you feel like a man! My titties are cold!

TYLER

The probability of drowning just increased by over two thousand percent.

TIM

Look at that! You're good at math. I'm learning more about you every minute!

EXT. LAKE - DAY

The water having drained, Tim and Tyler pedal their way out from the dock. Tyler is skittish and attempts to keep his eyes straight ahead.

TYLER

If there's four feet of water, and twelve inches per foot, that's forty-eight--

TIM

What a beautiful day! See? It's not so bad. ISN'T THIS PEACEFUL?

Tim shouts over the sound of a passing motorboat.

TIM (CONT'D)

All I need is a beer in my hand and the day would be perfect, am I right, Tyler?

Tim pulls two beers out of his life vest.

TIM (CONT'D)

How cool am I? Nothing like a beer to bond over!

TYLER

Dad! Watch where you're...where did you...I'm not twenty-one yet.

TIM

Bodies of water are neutral.

TYLER

International bodies of water. This is L.A. Didn't the marina sign say "No alcohol?"

TIM

C'mon! That just makes it more exciting! A father and son, on the wrong side of the law, bonding over their badassery.

Tyler sighs and accepts the beer, popping it open. It sprays him. He takes a sip and makes a face.

TIM (CONT'D)

Not bad, huh? It'll help calm your nerves too!

Tyler chugs half the can, wiping his mouth.

TYLER

You know, this is better than I remember. It is almost...peaceful.

A wave slaps the boat loudly, making Tyler jump.

TIM

I told you so! Just two men and their Johnson...

Tim chuckles.

TYLER

Dad, that has not been funny once.

Around the lake, LIFEGUARDS begin to blow their whistles, motioning the boats to return to the docks.

TYLER (CONT'D)

What does that mean? Dad? What is the whistling for?

TIM

That usually means there's a storm, but it isn't supposed to rain today. We should probably just make our way back soon. I'm sure it's nothing urgent.

The LIFEGUARDS start to blow their whistles in quick rapid succession.

TYLER

That sounds urgent.

TIM

Yeah, let's turn this thing around.
You pedal backwards, and I'll pedal
forwards.

They try this plan of action, but the boat floats in a derpy
line. Tyler begins to panic.

TYLER

(slurred)

Dad...I can't...feel my legs. This
isn't like the wine mom bought me.

TIM

Your mom bought you wine? I thought
I was the cool one! Don't pedal,
I'll do it.

They try this. The boat drifts in a full circle.

TYLER

Is it just me, or is everything
spinning?

TIM

Take a deep breath.

Tyler takes a deep breath and holds it. He panics more.

TIM (CONT'D)

And let it out! Let it out!

Tyler breathes out, a little calmer.

TYLER

I feel sick.

TIM

Alright. Let's try rocking the
boat. With enough momentum, we'll
be able to turn this thing around.
Lean to the left, then the right.

TYLER

I don't think that's a good--

TIM

Ready? Left!

Tyler leans to the right.

TIM (CONT'D)

No more beer for you. Let's try
this again. Go!

Again they lean opposite directions.

TYLER
You said left and then right! I
really don't feel good.

TIM
Okay, again, left!

They lean to the left and the boat tips. Tim tumbles out into the water as Tyler vomits. Tyler self-assesses.

TYLER
Much better.

Tim begins to shout incoherently, flailing as his life vest keeps him from sinking.

TYLER (CONT'D)
Wait! Don't leave me by myself!

TIM
Help! Help!

TYLER
What can I do?

TIM
HELP!

Tyler paddles with his hands, first to push the vomit away, then to pull the boat over to Tim. He drifts further away.

TYLER
Grab my hand!

After a struggle, they grab onto each other and the boat tips.

TYLER (CONT'D)
Let go of my hand!

Tim lets go.

TIM
You'll have to get in and help me!

TYLER
There has to be another way.
How about I pedal toward shore and
you grab the back of the boat!

TIM
What?

TYLER
 (stealing himself)
 Grab my Johnson!

Unable to help himself, Tim lets out a laugh that turns hysterical.

TIM
 I spent hundreds of dollars on swim lessons, and you're not going to get in and help your father?!

TYLER
 Just swim!

TIM
 I can't!

TYLER
 What?

TIM
 I can't swim!

TYLER
 You took us boating and you *can't swim*?

TIM
 I know, I know! I'm not the man you thought I was.

It begins to rain.

TYLER
 You're right, Dad. You're even better than I thought you were. And now we're going to face our fear together.

TIM
 Are we going to bond?

TYLER
 We're going to bond! Look out! I'm coming in!

Standing on the boat, Tyler leaps from it and into the water. Beside each other, Tim and Tyler flail, vomit and beer cans floating around them, the boat taking on water.

INT. JOHN AND JOAN'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Heather sits on the couch, watching soaps and eating bonbons. At the sound of the door being opened, she rubs her nose with a tissue until it's red and throws a blanket over herself.

Tim and Tyler enter the room, sopping wet.

HEATHER

What happened to you?

TIM

Did you know your son has a fear of the water?

HEATHER

Oh, honey. That sunset dolphin cruise. You still can't eat a PB&J.

TYLER

Thanks, Mom.

HEATHER

Well, what did you do?

TYLER

We faced our fears.

HEATHER

Fears? Plural?

TYLER

Dad can't swim.

HEATHER

Tim, you can't swim?

TIM

I don't know, watching Tyler's strong strokes on our Johnson today...

Tim chuckles and nudges Tyler. Tyler can't even.

END OF STORY TWO

Story 3: A MONOPOLY ON CHEATING

INT. JOHN AND JOAN'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

JOAN, JOHN, SOPHIA, and SAMANTHA stand in front of an open closet, staring at their board games. SOPHIA reaches for the Monopoly box. Everyone reacts.

SAMANTHA

Do we have to?

JOHN

No, how about we play something short and sweet, like the Game of Life?

JOAN

Unfortunately, honey, we don't have the full game anymore. The last time we played, you tore up the property deeds when you couldn't afford the mansion.

JOHN

Well, what's the point in playing if you don't have the mansion? Am I supposed to relive my real life in the Game of Life?

Joan isn't sure how to respond to that.

JOHN (CONT'D)

How about Trivial Pursuit?

JOAN

We're missing some pie pieces. You stomped on them when you kept rolling Arts and Literature questions.

JOHN

Parcheesi?

JOAN

You ripped the board.

JOHN

Uno?

JOAN

You spilled on the cards.

JOHN

Dominoes?

JOAN

Uh...dominoes might still be intact.

SAMANTHA

I will not submit myself to dominoes. It is 2018.

SOPHIA

Monopoly it is!

Sophia celebrates.

SOPHIA (CONT'D)

Did you know that Monopoly was originally invented to teach players about the dangers and inevitable pitfalls of capitalism? I think we could all learn something from this lesson.

Sophia looks at Samantha, covered in brand names and texting on her smartphone.

SAMANTHA

What are you looking at me for? I practice materialism, not capitalism.

INT. JOHN AND JOAN'S DINING ROOM - DAY

John, Joan, Samantha, and Sophia sit at the dining room table. Sophia opens the box, pulling out the player pieces.

SOPHIA

I'll be the car of course. It represents my drive as a woman.

JOHN

But--

SAMANTHA

(resigned)

I'll be the boat. I'll pretend it's a cruiseship and I'm on it.

JOAN

And I'll be the Scottie Dog! I always wanted a Scottie dog!

SOPHIA
Grandpa, you can be the thimble.

She hands him the thimble.

JOHN
The thimble? But that's more of a
lady--

John looks around at the women in his company. Sophia gives him a glare.

JOHN (CONT'D)
I'll be the thimble.

INT. JOHN AND JOAN'S DINING ROOM - DAY (LATER)

An hour into the game, nearly all of the properties have hotels on them.

John is exasperated, Samantha is bored, Sophia is smug, and Joan is trying to maintain a smile. Sophia's monopoly money is piled high. John rolls the die.

JOHN
Six.

John moves his game piece and lands on the Boardwalk space.

SOPHIA
That will be two-thousand dollars
please.

Sophia holds her hand out for the money.

JOHN
(mechanically)
Wow, you really got me there. This
has been a great game. I'll be much
more wary of the pitfalls of
capitalism.

John shakes Sophia's outstretched hand and attempts to quickly leave the table.

Joan panics.

JOAN
And just where do you think you're
going? You have properties you can
mortgage.

John looks at his measly green cards before sitting back down and flipping them both over. He reluctantly holds out his hand for cash from the bank.

Joan counts it out, and Sophia reaches over to take it from her.

SOPHIA

Let's cut out the middleman, shall we?

Sophia and John have a stare-down. Winning, Sophia organizes the money amidst her stacks as Joan rolls and takes her turn.

JOAN

Op, uh oh! I'm in jail. But thankfully I'm just visiting.

JOHN

Sounds like the story Matt gave us his first night of college.

Sophia rolls and moves her player.

SOPHIA

Ooh, finally the chance to complete my collection. I'd like to purchase Baltic Avenue please! And as a savvy business woman, how about a hotel while I'm at it?

JOHN

Greedy nincompoop.

Samantha rolls and takes her turn.

SAMANTHA

(sarcastic)

I'm passing "Go." I'm collecting two-hundred dollars, woo hoo.

She ends her turn. John rolls again. And lands on Baltic Avenue. As surreptitiously as he can, John palms the hotel, taking it off the board.

Sophia notices.

SOPHIA

That will be four-fifty, please.

John takes the deed card from her.

JOHN

Right here it says eight dollars if you have both and there's no establishments on it.

SOPHIA

Grandma!

JOAN

John. Did you just cheat?

John doesn't answer.

JOAN (CONT'D)

You did! You palmed the hotel. Kitchen. Now.

Tossing down the card and hotel on the board, John makes a childish face at Sophia. She is smug.

INT. JOHN AND JOAN'S KITCHEN - DAY

John follows Joan around the kitchen island.

JOAN

What was that about?

JOHN

What was what?

Joan pins him with a look.

JOHN (CONT'D)

We've been at it for three hours! Don't tell me you're enjoying this game!

JOAN

Well, no, not particularly. But if it's a lesson against capitalism, I don't think it's meant to be very enjoyable.

JOHN

I only cheated to move the game along a little.

JOAN

Moving the game along would be just letting her win! But that's not the point!

(MORE)

JOAN (CONT'D)

The point is we are setting an example for our impressionable grandchildren. Do unto others...say it with me.

JOHN & JOAN

As you would have done unto you.

JOHN

Fine. But next time we're setting a timer and after an hour we call it quits.

JOAN

But dear, you broke the timer when we were playing Taboo.

INT. JOHN AND JOAN'S DINING ROOM - DAY

John and Joan reenter the dining room.

Sophia is standing by the open game box with her hands full of Monopoly money. She is in the process of handing some to Samantha when John and Joan spot them.

SOPHIA

This isn't what it looks like.

INT. JOHN AND JOAN'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Samantha, John, and Sophia are squished together on the couch as Joan paces in front of them.

JOAN

When is it ever acceptable to cheat?

SAMANTHA

Never.

SOPHIA

It isn't.

JOHN

When you know you won't get caught.

SOPHIA

You've never set an example of cheating for us, Grandma. I'm ashamed of myself.

JOAN

I don't blame you, Sophia.

She looks at John pointedly.

JOHN

I didn't set this example! I
wouldn't have gotten caught!

They all look at him.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Well, yeah, today!

JOAN

Have we ever played a game in which
you haven't cheated?

JOHN

If no one catches you, is it really
cheating?

SAMANTHA

According to my teachers, it is.

JOAN

Your teachers?

JOHN

You can't blame that on me!

SOPHIA

Grandfathers are one of a young
girl's few male role models.

JOAN

See? They learn their habits at
home! And I, for one, will not have
others thinking the Short family
cheats. So we're going to sit here
until we've all learned this
valuable lesson.

JOHN

The one about capitalism?

JOAN

The one about cheating.

SOPHIA

I've learned my lesson, Grandma.
I'll never cheat again.

JOAN

Glad to hear it.

SAMANTHA

I've learned my lesson, Grandma.

JOAN
Good. And you?

JOHN
I've learned my lesson, Grandma.

Joan gives him a look.

JOHN (CONT'D)
I won't cheat.

JOAN
Now, we're going to go back in
there and start over.

JOHN & SAMANTHA
NO!

Sophia pumps her fist victoriously.

END OF STORY THREE

Story Four: Allergic to Children

INT. MATT AND COLLEEN'S FOYER - DAY

MATT and COLLEEN stand in the doorway talking to their NEIGHBOR.

NEIGHBOR

I'm sure Kevin will have a wonderful time with you.

COLLEEN

Of course! Kevin will be absolutely safe and happy with us for the weekend.

MATT

We're going to have so much fun together, it'll be criminal.

COLLEEN

In the metaphorical way. Not as in an actual crime.

MATT

No, of course not. But if it was, Kevin would get the better part of the deal. Being under eighteen and all. We'd be the ones doing "hard time."

COLLEEN

I promise he makes fewer bad jokes when he's not nervous.

MATT

Nervous? I'm not nervous. What would make me nervous? Kevin? I love Kevin. As much as a grown man can love a six-year-old! What a cutie, am I right? I feel warm and tingly just thinking about him.

Colleen hits Matt.

NEIGHBOR

Can you just take Kevin's overnight bag from me so I can leave?

COLLEEN

Yes, of course!

Colleen takes the bag.

COLLEEN (CONT'D)
Enjoy your weekend!

MATT
Kevin's safe in my experienced and
loving hands!

COLLEEN
(under her breath)
You sound like a child molester!

Colleen closes the front door, and her and Matt turn around to look at KEVIN. Kevin is itching his shoulder like his life depends on it.

MATT
What is he doing? He's making me
itchy just looking at him.

Matt begins to scratch his stomach, his hands moving downward.

COLLEEN
DON'T touch yourself, you perv.

Matt pauses in scratching.

COLLEEN (CONT'D)
Hey, buddy! What's going on with
that shoulder, huh?

KEVIN
It's itchy.

MATT
Mosquito bite itchy? Or contagious
itchy?

COLLEEN
Let me take a look at it.

She motions Kevin forward and Matt backs away.

MATT
I'm not touching him.

COLLEEN
That's probably for the best.

Colleen pulls back the collar of Kevin's shirt. There is a small red bump.

COLLEEN (CONT'D)
That looks like a chicken pock.

MATT

A pock? Don't they come in multiples? This one's just scoping out the young, supple--

COLLEEN

If you keep this up, you'll have to go door to door announcing your status as a sex offender.

Matt shuts up.

COLLEEN (CONT'D)

I'm going to go Google what to do about chicken pox.

Colleen moves toward the stairs.

MATT

Whoa, whoa, whoa, you can't leave me alone with him.

COLLEEN

I've preemptively installed baby cams. If you touch him, I'll know.

MATT

No, I mean, I never had chicken pox as a kid! I could catch it at any moment.

COLLEEN

I'm pretty sure that's not how it works.

MATT

That's exactly how it works!

COLLEEN

If we want to have kids, this is the kind of thing you'll have to deal with. You'll be fine!

Colleen heads up the stairs. Kevin is now picking his nose and itching his shoulder. Matt shivers in disgust.

KEVIN

I'm hungry.

Kevin eats the boogers he's surfaced with.

MATT

What, that snack isn't enough for you?

INT. MATT AND COLLEEN'S KITCHEN - DAY

Matt makes Kevin a sandwich. Putting together the two slices of bread, he slides the plate across the counter toward Kevin, yanking his hand back when Kevin reaches for the food. Kevin picks up the sandwich before putting it back down and pushing the plate towards Matt.

KEVIN

You forgot to cut it.

Grossed out, Matt pulls the plate toward him and goes to cut it in half.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

No, in triangles.

Matt cuts it and pushes it back.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

No, four triangles.

Exasperated, Matt takes it back and cuts it again, pushing it toward Kevin. As Kevin eats, Matt washes his hands. He sings "Happy Birthday" under his breath. He turns off the water.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

You have to do it three times.

MATT

Would you just eat the sandwich!

KEVIN

No, washing your hands! You sing "Happy Birthday" three times.

Matt turns back around to wash his hands again.

COLLEEN (O.S.)

Can you take a look at the pock and tell me if it has a yellow tinge to it?

MATT

What?

COLLEEN (O.S.)

Take a look at his--

MATT

No!

COLLEEN (O.S.)
Matthew Short, show me you have
what it takes to be a father.

Pulling open a drawer, Matt grabs a pair of bread tongs.

MATT
Where are the big tongs?

COLLEEN (O.S.)
What?

Seeing an oven mitt on the counter, Matt grabs it and puts in
on as an extra layer of protection.

MATT
Nevermind.

Matt approaches Kevin.

MATT (CONT'D)
What am I looking for?

COLLEEN (O.S.)
A yellow tinge.

Fumbling, Matt attempts to grab the collar of Kevin's shirt
with the tongs. He drops them. Picking them up, he tries
again, choking Kevin in the process.

MATT
Sorry! Sorry!
(to Colleen)
No, I don't see any yellow.

COLLEEN (O.S.)
Phew! He'll live to see his
birthday.

Kevin finishes his sandwich and turns around. Matt jumps away
from him.

KEVIN
Could you scratch my back? It's
itchy.

MATT
Scratch your own back.

KEVIN
I can't reach.

Disgusted, Matt begins to scratch Kevin's back with the
tongs.

KEVIN (CONT'D)
That hurts.

COLLEEN (O.S.)
Matt! What are you doing to that
child?

MATT
Did you actually install baby cams?

COLLEEN
Why would I not?

MATT
Because we don't actually have a
baby?

KEVIN
Use your hands.

MATT
I'm not going to--

COLLEEN (O.S.)
Just use your hands.

Exasperated, Matt sticks the tongs in his pocket, creating a large diagonal bulge in his pants. Using the oven mitt, Matt rubs Kevin's back. He gags.

Colleen walks into the kitchen.

COLLEEN (CONT'D)
I'm going to go to the pharmacy and
see what they have for chicken pox.
(seeing the bulge)
Matt? What is in your pants?

Matt throws the tongs on the ground.

MATT
I'm not a child molester!

INT. MATT AND COLLEEN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Matt lies in bed, itching profusely.

COLLEEN (O.S.)
Good night, Kevin.

Colleen enters the bedroom and sees Matt.

COLLEEN (CONT'D)

Would you stop being melodramatic?
You're fine.

MATT

I am not fine. And when I'm covered
in chicken pox, you'll have to deal
with it.

COLLEEN

Is something going on with you?
You've been extra weird, like
weirder than you usually are.

MATT

Nothing's going on with me. Except
the fact that I've clearly caught
the chicken pox.

Colleen's phone buzzes on the nightstand. She reads the text message.

COLLEEN

"There is calamine in Kevin's
overnight bag. Could you rub it on
his bug bite?"

MATT

So the oatmeal bath I gave him...

COLLEEN

You gave him a bath?

MATT

He was wearing a bathing suit!

COLLEEN

Did you...?

MATT

And I did not get in with him.

COLLEEN

We have oatmeal?

Matt and Colleen think about this.

MATT

I'm going to be a horrible father!
I can't even tell the difference
between oatmeal and--and--whatever
it was that I put in his bath!

COLLEEN

This was one instance--

MATT

I've never had the chicken pox, boogers are gross, I wasn't even the best brother! I taped Greg's finger to his nose so Mom and Dad would know he ate his boogers.

COLLEEN

Well, it's normal for little kids--

MATT

He was sixteen.

COLLEEN

Okay, calm down. That doesn't mean you'll be a horrible father. That means Greg was slow to mature.

MATT

But what am I going to do when--

COLLEEN

Hey, hey. I'm the one who thought a bug bite was the chicken pox! If you want to talk about who's going to be a horrible parent, it's me.

MATT

But you were so fast on that Google search.

COLLEEN

And you got over your fear of touching him. In a non-perverted way.

MATT

I still need to disinfect those tongs.

COLLEEN

When we have a kid of our own, we are going to rise to the challenge. We always perform better than we're expected to. Unless you're me and your mother expects you not to fool around with boys until you're eighteen.

MATT

You know what? You're right. We can do this. And the baby cameras are already installed! We're halfway there!

COLLEEN

Absolutely. We're going to make great parents.

MATT

I agree.

COLLEEN

Are you ready for bed now?

MATT

I'm ready for bed.

COLLEEN

Okay. Good night, Matt.

They kiss. Colleen turns off the lights.

MATT

But really, could you scratch my back? I can't stop itching.

FADE TO BLACK:

END OF STORY FOUR

END OF EPISODE