

Sports Night

"An Awful Way"

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TEASER

INT. AIRPORT LOUNGE

ISAAC sits at a bench, attended by two EMTs. ISAAC's speech is slurred and labored throughout.

ISAAC

I don't know who your boss is, but
my boss is Luther Sachs, and he
doesn't like sick days!

EMT #1

This is a stroke. You're not going
to just shake it off, Mr. Jeffery.

ISAAC

Isaac *Jaffe*.

EMT #1

Fine.

EMT #2

(to EMT #1)

Calm down.

EMT #1

I can't believe this.

ISAAC

I'm fine.

(waving them off)

Go help sick people.

EMT #1

What, Mr. Jaffe? Are you just
going to walk out of here?

ISAAC

(said with authority that hits the
EMT)

Don't take that tone with me. I'll
walk out of here when I'm damn
good and ready.

EMT #1

Twenty minutes ago, you collapsed,
right?

ISAAC
I was woozy.

EMT #1
Okay.

ISAAC
From the plane.

EMT #1
(sarcastic)
Sure.

ISAAC
I'll be fine.

EMT #2 shoos EMT #1 aside.

EMT #2
I'm sorry. He's had a bad day.

ISAAC
A bad day?

EMT #2
He was called on this --

ISAAC
And I'm supposed to go to the
hospital with him?

EMT #2
It's not --

ISAAC
When I have a bad day, my show
goes to hell; when an EMT has a
bad day, people end up dead.

EMT #2
Mr. Jaffe, listen. There's a
chance that if you're not treated
you'll end up dead. You seem like
a good guy, Isaac, and we don't
want anything bad to happen to you.

ISAAC

(beat)

Then leave me alone. I'll just go
to work after I get my suitcase
from the...
(trails off)

EMT #2

The --

ISAAC

(calm; perplexed)

No, don't tell me.

EMT #2

(indicating the baggage carousel)
That thing right over there?

ISAAC

I know I know this.

EMT #1

(irritated)

You're disoriented. It's normal.

ISAAC

That thing. The thing that moves
all the luggage around, and the
people take their luggage off of
it, and now I don't know what it
is.

(short beat)

I don't even remember packing my
suitcase. What the hell's wrong
with me?

EMT #2

Isaac?

ISAAC

Mmm?

EMT #2

Headache?

ISAAC

Yes.

EMT #2
Bad?

ISAAC
Mm-hmm.

EMT #2
You weak on one side?

ISAAC
(looks up slowly, points to his
left side)
Here.

EMT #2
And that slurred speech -- you
didn't get drunk on the duty-free
liquor, did you?

ISAAC
(tiny laugh, then)
No.

EMT #2
Okay.

ISAAC
Is it bad?

EMT #2
We really can't tell until we have
a diagnostic --

ISAAC
(a little scared)
Is it bad?

EMT #2
(sighing)
It might be, yeah.
(short beat)
So we need to --

ISAAC
(peremptorily holding up his hand)
I'll go.

EMT #2
Okay.

EMT #1 helps him up; EMT #2 gets a wheelchair.

EMT #1
'Baggage carousel.'

ISAAC
What?

EMT #1
(helping him on)
That thing. The thing without the
name.

ISAAC
(Getting on the wheelchair; to EMT
#2)
What the hell is he talking about?

EMT #2
It's not important. Is there
anyone we should contact?

ISAAC
Esther's still in London, with...

EMT #1
Should we call, what, Luther Sachs?

ISAAC
(thinking)
They're doing their show.

EMT #1
Okay...

ISAAC
They're happy. It can wait.

EMT #2
Let's go.

FADE TO BLACK

END OF TEASER

ACT I

EXT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

DANA (O. S.)
This is impossible!

INT. HOSPITAL - REGISTRATION DESK.
DANA and NATALIE are at the registration desk, arguing with
a NURSE.

NURSE
Lady, it is totally possible.

DANA
You have a state-of-the-art
computer system, you have to fill
out fifteen forms every time
someone coughs around here -- it
is impossible that you lost him!

NURSE
I can't --

DANA
Don't tell me you can't find Isaac
Jaffe!

NURSE
Jeffery?

NATALIE
(smiles)
Um -- it's J-A-F-F-E.

NURSE
That's what I thought.
(types a few more things in;
getting irate)
We don't have any record of him.

NATALIE
(to Dana)
If he were here, Esther would be
here.

DANA
He was admitted here four hours
ago. Male, black, sixty-five.

NATALIE
Older.

DANA
A little older.

NURSE
He's not on file.

NATALIE
If he were here, they would have
him on file.

NURSE
(tearing off printout)
I've got no Jaffe here, just a
whole mess of car accidents. You
can look at the sheet yourself if
you want, but I've got more
important things to do.
(She walks away.)

NATALIE
Is it just me, or did it get
Antarctic in here?

DANA
Good to know Isaac's in such
caring hands.

CASEY enters.

CASEY
Hey.

NATALIE
Hey.

DANA
Casey, what are you doing back?
You're supposed to be recording
the teaser!

CASEY

Yeah, Dana. Isaac's lying unconscious here in this hospital somewhere, but you know what's really important? Tomorrow's advertising.

DANA

You're the one lecturing about how important our jobs are.

CASEY

Jeremy could get by with just one of us. Dan was recording audio when I left.

DANA

Who said Dan had to stay?

CASEY

We flipped a coin. He should be here any minute. Where's Isaac?

NATALIE

They're saying he's not even in the hospital.

CASEY

Esther told me Presbyterian.

DANA

Did Esther give you a phone number?
(CASEY shakes his head.)
Casey!

CASEY starts to speak -- NATALIE cuts him off.

NATALIE

I was about to do some investigative reporting.

CASEY

Good luck. I've been all over the place just trying to find you guys.

DANA shakes her head and gets the NURSE's attention.

DANA

You. Yes, I'm not done with you.
Let me speak to your supervisor.

NURSE

Honey, it's one in the morning. I
am the supervisor.

DANA

(in background)

Then you should be doing your job!

NURSE

(with a smile)

I can call security.

NATALIE

(overlapping as she leaves)

Wanna help?

CASEY

Sure.

NATALIE and CASEY leave as the NURSE and DANA continue
arguing.

INT. HOSPITAL - HALLWAY

DAN is accosted by a DOCTOR.

DOCTOR

Mr. Rydell? You do great work on
Sports Night. I really like the
show.

DAN

That's great, and it's great
talking to you, but I've got to

DAN makes a vague gesture meaning 'leave.'

DOCTOR

Sure.

DAN

Great.

As soon as DAN turns around, the smile goes, and he looks like hell. He walks through a door, down a short hallway, and into another room. By the time he gets there, he's trembling a bit. He tries to shake it off.

CASEY

Hey.

DAN

(jumping a mile)

Jesus!

CASEY

Yes, my son.

DAN

(relief)

Casey.

(nods)

How's Isaac?

CASEY

We still don't know anything.

(off of Dan's haggard appearance)

How're you?

DAN

Fine.

(laughs)

Not so good.

CASEY

Where's --

DAN

Jeremy's editing together audio
for the teaser. Be here later.

CASEY

(still off of Dan)

What was it you had to tell me
before?

This animates DAN a bit; he takes a seat, with an "are you ready for this?" look.

DAN

What's the biggest surprise I
could tell you right now?

CASEY

That John Kruk made thirty-one
feet in the men's pole vault.

DAN

What's the biggest non-sports-
related surprise I could tell you
right now?

CASEY

That cream cheese
(short beat)
is made of people.

DAN

You're not helping.

NATALIE enters.

DAN

Natalie, what's the biggest
surprise I could tell you right
now?

NATALIE

That San Francisco is being
attacked by giant armadillos.

DAN

Steve Cisco was in Rebecca's
office today.

NATALIE

I think the armadillos are a
bigger surprise.

DAN

And I know why.

CASEY

This is the big surprise?

DAN
They're. Still. Married.

NATALIE
Awww.

CASEY
Hello.

DAN
Yes.

CASEY
We have a winner!

NATALIE
Rebecca is still married to Steve
Cisco?

DAN
Yes.

CASEY
Why is Rebecca still married to
Steve Cisco?

NATALIE
Why is anybody married to Steve
Cisco?

DAN
Both of these are questions I've
thought of.

NATALIE
The man has no lips!

DAN
Hadn't thought of that, but yes.

NATALIE
And he's a jerk.

CASEY
What, you don't like it when guys
call you a nice --

NATALIE

NO, I don't. Steve Cisco sucks.

DAN

Natalie, Rebecca's choosing him over me; don't dog him too much.

NATALIE

Well, she's just wrong, and I'll continue to dog him.

CASEY

Why was he in her office?

DAN

They've been separated. They're thinking of getting back together.

CASEY

What, are there kids involved?

DAN

(short pause)

Dear god, I hope not.

DANA enters)

DANA

Natalie.

NATALIE

What's the biggest surprise I could tell you right now?

DANA

(ignoring question)

You aren't doing your investigative reporting?

CASEY

Lame surprise.

DANA

Bite me, Casey.

CASEY

Well, I --

DANA
Natalie -- let's talk.

DANA exits.

NATALIE
They said if Isaac was here, he'd
be in neurology.

CASEY
We're on it.

NATALIE exits.

DAN
So gossip spreads.

CASEY
So it spins its web.

DAN
Because Natalie could not keep a
secret in a bucket.

CASEY
She couldn't keep a secret on a
leash.
(beat)

DAN
(stops)
Do you think Isaac is -- y'know,
could be already...

CASEY
What, d--

DAN
Yeah.

CASEY
(with certainty)
No. No I don't.

DAN
Nah.

A short beat; start walking again.

DAN
Didn't think so either.

CASEY
So how was your day with Bobbi
Bernstein?

DAN
(laughs, shakes head)
Not so good.

INT. HOSPITAL -- LOUNGE
DANA and NATALIE are seated.

DANA
I threatened to sack the desk
wench, but she wasn't about to
help. I don't think Isaac is even
here, Natalie. Have you found out
anything?

NATALIE
Dana, I am in a crisis.

DANA
What's wrong?

NATALIE
Rebecca. She's married.

DANA
(shocked reaction, then)
Awww.

NATALIE
I got him into this.

DANA
Natalie...

NATALIE
I should --

DANA
Don't get like this. Not now. Stay
focused.

NATALIE
I should have seen the signs.

DANA
Signs?

NATALIE
I can see it now. There were signs.

DANA
What signs?

NATALIE
Of this whole thing. The Cisco
fiasco.

DANA
God, what a lout. Do you know what
Steve Cisco called me?

NATALIE
Do you know what he called me?

DANA
He said you were a nice --

NATALIE
Yeah. Plus -- he has no lips.

DANA
He doesn't, does he.

NATALIE
If I had paid attention when he
first met Rebecca, everything
would be fine now.

DANA
You just introduced them. And
they've been really happy, and
it's not your fault that Rebecca
has, occasionally, taste in men

that borders on pathological. Some people are just stupid like that.

NATALIE

Jennifer from Accounting, and Rebecca, and Dan, and I were in an elevator. Dan had been talking to Rebecca, and he got a phone call.

DANA

And he took it?

NATALIE

Yeah.

DANA

In the elevator?

NATALIE

Yes.

DANA

That's rude.

NATALIE

That's what I said. Then Jennifer from Accounting said, "Be nice. For a sportscaster, he's a nice guy." Then Rebecca said, under her breath, "For a sportscaster, he's a god."

DANA

Dan's a sports anchor.

NATALIE

Rebecca's a marketing analyst. I don't think she knows the difference.

DANA

(thinking it through)
So you thought she really liked Dan.

NATALIE

(nodding)

And instead, she was just slamming
everybody in our line of work.

DANA

Hmm. We don't like Rebecca, do we?

NATALIE

You and I have to take care of Dan
and Casey --

DANA

Mmm.

NATALIE

-- and I don't like people jerking
them around.

DANA

Yeah.

DANA puts a hand on NATALIE's shoulder.

DANA

You should be helping me track
down Isaac.

NATALIE

Everything happens for a reason,
Dana, and my egregious Rebecca
mistake is showing me the world is
just nuts... jeez, maybe you
aren't even secretly in love with
Casey.

DANA

I am not secretly in love with
Casey. I secretly hate Casey.

NATALIE

No, you openly hate Casey.

DANA

That's right.

NATALIE

But you're secretly in love with

him.

A short beat.

DANA
(a bit vulnerable)
Do you think he's secretly in love
with me?

NATALIE
Yes.

DANA
He doesn't act like it.

NATALIE
That's because it's Casey's secret.

Beat. DANA's cell phone rings, and she answers it.

DANA
Hello? Okay.
(Hands phone to NATALIE)
Jeremy.

NATALIE
Hey sweetie. Okay, I'll meet you.

NATALIE hangs up and hands the phone back.

NATALIE
He's on his way in.

DANA
I'm going to start calling
hospitals. If Isaac's not here, he
has to be somewhere.

INT. HOSPITAL -- ELEVATOR LOBBY.
CASEY and DAN enter.

CASEY
Where else would the Hotel de
Spain be?

DAN presses the elevator button.

DAN
(a perfectly logical explanation)
Bobbi had said it was in Andorra.

CASEY
Dan?

DAN
I know.

CASEY
Andorra is a mountain principality
about the size of Rhode Island.

DAN
I know that now.

CASEY
You don't spend a night drunk on
the Eurail and wake up in Andorra.

DAN
Yeah, when you're done beating
that into the ground, give me a
call.

CASEY
So you weren't lying to her?

DAN
I thought I wasn't, but I was. I'm
no better than Rebecca.

CASEY
Dan --

DAN
Okay, I'm no better than Gordon.
We can agree Gordon's a liar.

CASEY
(impromptu impression)
"Dana, I'm... sorry. I'm going to
be working... late tonight."

DAN

On a little job called Sally.

CASEY

God. Thinking of him with Dana
makes me sick.

DAN

And you're lying to Dana.

CASEY

(short beat)

I'm withholding the whole horrible
truth from Dana. And trust me,
she's better off not hearing it.

DAN

That you were sleeping with Sally
Sasser as well.

CASEY

Keep it down, will you?

DAN

Fine.

CASEY

I hate this. Secrets.

DAN

Like being spies.

CASEY

Hushed conversations.

DAN

Very hush-hush.

CASEY

It just feels bad.

DAN

It's driving you to the edge.

CASEY

Another big scare like this and I
think I'll go unhinged.

DAN
Already there, my friend.

CASEY
(hesitant)
And every time I talk to Dana,
it's like --

Elevator dings, opens as NATALIE enters the lobby -- CASEY and DAN are suddenly quiet.

NATALIE
Has either of you seen Jeremy?

CASEY
Oh. Hey, Natalie.

An awkward pause.

NATALIE
What's up?

CASEY
What?

NATALIE
What were you two talking about?

CASEY
Oh...

CASEY looks over to Dan, who innocently watches him twist in the wind. The elevator shuts and goes.

CASEY
Masculine. Hygiene.

NATALIE
("Why not just tell me to go
away?")
Oh. Okay. Well, I'll go look for
Jeremy then.

NATALIE exits.

DAN

I think I've figured out why you
don't like lying, Casey.

CASEY

Not asking you why.

DAN

(hits the button again)
It's because you are the worst
liar that has ever lived.

END OF ACT I

ACT II

INT. HOSPITAL -- FRONT LOBBY.

NATALIE waits, pacing, humming to herself. JEREMY enters, tired, but brightens on seeing her.

JEREMY
Natalie.
(They hug.)
How bad is it?

NATALIE
(firm)
Isaac will get through this.

JEREMY
What do you know?

NATALIE
Isaac's a fighter.

JEREMY
Yeah.
(release hug)
Where is he? How's he doing?

NATALIE
We think he's in the building, we know what ward he would be in, but we can't get any doctors to talk to us.

JEREMY
We're reporters! We'll have to do investigative reporting!

NATALIE
Exactly. Who should we talk to?

JEREMY
It's been four hours. By now he'll have had a CT scan in emergency, and if it wasn't that severe, they'll have moved Isaac to neurology.

NATALIE

Dan and Casey are already on it.

JEREMY

Good.

NATALIE

What if it was severe?

JEREMY

Then we should check with
emergency.

NATALIE

(worried)

Okay.

JEREMY

He'll get through this.

NATALIE

(squeezing Jeremy's hand as they
exit)

I hope so.

INT. HOSPITAL -- FOURTH-FLOOR ELEVATOR LOBBY
CASEY and DAN emerge from the elevator.

CASEY

Fourth floor: neurology.

DAN

This is where Isaac would be, if
Isaac were at this hospital.

CASEY

Esther said Presbyterian.

DAN

(stops)

It's time.

CASEY

(stops)

Time for what?

DAN
Time for the heavy artillery.

CASEY

(catching on)
The secret weapon.

DAN
It's time, Casey, to play the fame
card.

CASEY
Are you ready to live forever?

DAN
Yes.

CASEY
Are you ready to learn how to fly?

DAN
Let's just play the fame card.

CASEY
Okay.

They approach a RECEPTIONIST at the counter, both looking
halfway afraid to find out how Isaac is.

DAN
Hi.

RECEPTIONIST
(solid New York attitude)
May I help you?

DAN
I'm Dan Rydell, this is Casey
McCall. You may recognize us from
CSC's Sports Night.

RECEPTIONIST
Huh?

CASEY

It's our TV show. We're trying to
find our friend --

RECEPTIONIST

Anybody here watch Sports Night?

A chorus of replies evenly split between 'what?' and 'no.'

RECEPTIONIST #2

(points to CASEY)

Wasn't he on Jeopardy?

CASEY

That's right, I also appeared on
Celebrity Jeopardy!, where I --

RECEPTIONIST #2

You people know so much about show
tunes, it's scary.

CASEY

Show tunes?

RECEPTIONIST

That's right, he ran the category.

CASEY

'You people?' What people?

DAN

Casey, let's just go before it
gets ugly.

CASEY

What?

DAN

Come with me.

DAN and CASEY get out of earshot.

CASEY

(puts it together)

The entire nursing staff thinks
I'm gay.

DAN

What you should do now, is go back
there and convince them you like
women.

CASEY

I will do that.

DAN

I'll get everybody to watch. We
can bring popcorn.

CASEY

Maybe I won't do that.

DAN

Casey, for a heterosexual man, you
do know way too much about musical
theater.

CASEY

It was Celebrity Jeopardy!, Danny,
a trained monkey could have gotten
those.

DAN

Hey Casey.

CASEY

Oh, God.

DAN

"This team prevailed in the 1998
World Series."

CASEY

Dead horse, Danny.

DAN

"What is baseball?!"

CASEY

I misinterpreted the --

DAN

What do you do for a living, again?

CASEY

I work for a woman who shirks the show every time her desperate date decides he's more important than her life.

DAN

That was last week, Casey.

CASEY

Why's she with him?

DAN

I have my theories.

CASEY

She's attractive, she's professional, and she's just demeaning herself with this --

DANA enters. They go quiet.

DAN

(dispirited)

And that's all the material we have about Knoxville?

(not looking at him)

Right, Casey?

DANA

Why aren't you in neurology?! Is Isaac there?

CASEY

We don't know, Dana.

DANA

Are you even trying to find Isaac?

Why aren't you checking with neurology?

DAN

(enjoying this)

Because the nursing staff thinks Casey is gay.

DANA
Casey.

CASEY
(clenched teeth)
What, Dana?

DANA
This is low. I've seen low, and
I've seen low from you, but this
is the lowest. Do you even care
about Isaac?

CASEY
What?

DANA
He could be dying, Casey. As it
is, Casey, his mind's probably
gone, and you've been laughing and
joking like it's no big deal.

CASEY
I know. I know he could be... in a
lot of trouble. Isaac's my friend,
too, Dana. He's my boss, too.

DANA
What does that mean?

CASEY
It means I've been holding up my
end of Isaac's show.

DANA
Don't start with me.

CASEY
I think I will.

DANA
Don't.

CASEY
Think I already have.

DANA

I do not have to choose between
being faithful to my show and
having a relationship with Gordon.

CASEY

And I'm saying you chose settling
for Gordon.

DANA

What do you mean, 'settling?!'

CASEY

You feel like your clock is
ticking and, well, Gordon has a
pretty car and a nice degree, and
well he'll have to do.

DANA

Oh you are one to talk, married to
Lisa for god's sake.

CASEY

(beat; quietly)

Dana, don't say things you won't
be able to take back.

DANA

You are not allowed to judge me,
Casey. When it comes to whom I
choose to spend my time with, you
have no right to tell anybody what
to do. And don't dare tell me I'm
not doing my job.

DANA exits.

CASEY

It'll blow over.

DAN

Tell her.

CASEY

What?

DAN
What? Nothing.

CASEY
She just needs to cool down.

DAN
Yeah, good thing we're at a hospital where one of our best friends might be dead. That'll really soothe her nerves.

CASEY
I just don't need to deal with that now.

DAN
Yeah.

DAN walks away, then stops in the doorway.

CASEY
What is it?

DAN
It's nothing. What's what?

CASEY
No, it's obvious you've got something so important to say you've got to turn and say it from the door in your patented melodramatic Danny style.

DAN
Fine!
(Crossing back to him)
Fine, I'll say it to your face!

CASEY
Say what, Dan?

DAN
That all this mess, all this subfertuge.

CASEY
Subfertuge?

DAN
Subfer -- damn it, you know what I
mean, Casey!

CASEY
(sarcastic)
What do you mean, Danny?

DAN
(spelling it out)
You are being a jerk. You're
making Dana feel like crap, Casey,
and she doesn't even know why,
because you haven't been menschy
enough to tell her! You're lying
to her every day, Casey, and she's
eventually going to find out. Do
you know how she's going to feel?

CASEY
Dan --

DAN
Because I have a pretty good idea.
(short beat)
You don't treat your friends like
that. I mean: *you* don't treat
your friends like that.
(shrugging, smiling in disbelief)
Especially not on an awful night
like this.

JEREMY and NATALIE burst through the door. JEREMY is
excited and cheerful. NATALIE is reading the two anchors'
body language and is a bit wary.

JEREMY
I think this night is turning
around!

NATALIE
Is the masculine hygiene talk over?

JEREMY
What the hell is --

NATALIE
It's nothing.

CASEY
Jeremy -- what's up?

JEREMY
Isaac is a lot better than we
thought.

CASEY
Do you know where he is?

JEREMY
No.

DAN
Can he walk?

JEREMY
No.

CASEY
Can he talk?

JEREMY
Not that well.

DAN
Is he awake?

JEREMY
Probably not.

CASEY
That's better than we thought?

DAN
That's better than I thought.

JEREMY
(frustrated)
No, he can't walk, but yes, he can
learn to walk again. And it's true

he won't be able to dance any time soon.

CASEY
Hey, neither can Dan.

DAN
Hey --

JEREMY
That apart, I've talked to the EMT who brought Isaac in, and it looks like Isaac had a mild -- that's the important word, mild -- right-sided ischemic infarct. Typically this impairs speech and motor coordination, and Isaac has both of those problems. But, if Isaac undergoes aggressive physical therapy, it's not the end of the road at all.

CASEY
What are you, a doctor all of a sudden?

JEREMY
No, I dodged that bullet long ago.

NATALIE
He would have been a good doctor.

JEREMY
I would have been a miserable doctor.

NATALIE
I think he would have been good.

JEREMY
Well, you and my father.

DAN
So Isaac will be okay?

JEREMY
He has a lot of hard work ahead of
him.

DAN
Yeah, but this is Isaac.

JEREMY
What do you mean?

CASEY
Isaac can do hard work.

INT. HOSPITAL -- NEUROLOGY LOBBY.
DANA talks on her cell phone to Gordon. Across the room
from her is a coffee vending machine.

DANA
(near tears)
Gordon, please come. You should be
here with me. I know it's silly.
Because he's had a stroke. Yes,
Isaac. Yes, him. And Casey's
been acting --

DAN and CASEY enter.

DANA
Well, I need something, Gordon.
Yes, I'm at Presbyterian. It's
not far.
(apologetic)
No. No, that's fine.

CASEY
(hating Gordon)
I think I'll get some coffee.

DANA
No, I understand. It's okay,
don't... okay.

DANA turns off the phone.

DAN
How was Gordon?

DANA

I was thinking maybe he could stop
by, and... it turns out he has to
work early tomorrow anyway, so...

(shrug)

long days.

CASEY starts filling a cup from the dispenser.

DAN

(full of irony)

Say, Dana, Gordon's been working
late a lot lately.

DANA

What does that --

CASEY crushes the Styrofoam cup in his hand; scalding
coffee spills all over his hand.

CASEY screams and hops around, holding his hand in pain.
CASEY glares at DAN.

INT. HOSPITAL -- OBSERVATION ROOM.

CASEY is getting his hand bandaged by a DOCTOR. A
SUPERVISOR looks on. DANA stands, waits, irate, in the
corner.

DOCTOR

You should stay here and let it
soak until I come back.

CASEY

But I only burned my hand on the
coffee machine.

SUPERVISOR

Well, we want to make sure that --

The DOCTOR leaves.

CASEY

It's nothing.

DANA

Great, how many forms does he have
to fill out for this?

SUPERVISOR

Mr. McCall, we are so sorry about
this mishap.

CASEY

Jeez.

SUPERVISOR

We had been meaning to replace the
coffee dispenser.

CASEY

Okay.

SUPERVISOR

And we'd hate it if you felt like
there was some animosity remaining,
or some need of reciprocation, or
if you felt you had to...

DANA

What, sue?

SUP

(clears throat)

We don't like that word.

DANA

Well, maybe I do like that word --

SUPERVISOR

We want this to inconvenience you
as little as possible.

DANA

He appears on a national TV show
every night. Now his hand is going
to be bandaged up?

SUPERVISOR

I'm just saying if there anything
we can do for you, please ask. Is
there anything at all you need?

DANA
(an idea)
Yes. Yes, sir. We need answers.

SUPERVISOR
Answers?

CASEY
(catching on)
Our friend, Isaac Jaffe. He's had
a stroke.

DANA
(all business)
We want to know where he is. We
want to talk to a doctor about his
condition. We'd like to see him,
if it's at all possible.

SUPERVISOR
I'll be right back.

The SUPERVISOR leaves.

CASEY
(screwing up his courage)
What Dan and I were talking about
earlier.

DANA
Huh?

CASEY
It wasn't Knoxville.

DANA
What was it?

CASEY
(sighs, screws up his courage)
There's this one shirt that I like.
(pause, self-doubt)

DANA
Okay.

CASEY
And --

The SUPERVISOR enters.

SUPERVISOR
I believe I've found him.

DANA
Isaac?

CASEY
That fast?

SUPERVISOR
He was in our computers as Isaac
Jeffery.

DANA
Oh, god!

CASEY
Dana --

DANA
I knew it.

SUPERVISOR
I've told Dr. Ramunjan to meet you
and your friends outside his room,
that's 509-C. The doctor should be
there in a few minutes.

DANA
Great.

SUPERVISOR
Are you sure you're all right, Mr.
McCall?

CASEY
(annoyed)
I'm fine.

SUPERVISOR
Wonderful. Wonderful.

The SUPERVISOR exits.

DANA
(getting up)
I'm going to go talk to --

CASEY
Dana, what I was saying before was
about...

DANA
About what?

CASEY
About why I thought you were...
'settling.'

DANA
Why?

All through the next line, CASEY is trying to say what's on his mind, but not say exactly what's on his mind.)

CASEY
Because you deserve better. You
deserve somebody that loves you
because of your devotion to what
you do, not in spite of it. That's
who you are, and nobody --

DANA
Casey, if you'd just give him a
chance, he's funny, and he's
charming, and he treats me really
well, and --

CASEY
No, he doesn't.

DANA
What?

CASEY
He doesn't treat you really well.

DANA
What, is he planning to kill me or
something?

CASEY
No. It's... it's nothing.

DANA
That's all you had to say?

CASEY
(... and failing.)
Yeah.

DANA
Casey, Gordon's had an intense
load of cases lately.

CASEY
Yeah.

DANA
And it's not up to you who I date,
and if you have a problem with it,
then you can't just act like a
jerk, and --

CASEY
You're right. That's no excuse.
(really trying to tell her)
You just deserve somebody who
would be here with you right now,
instead of staying home and going
to bed early.
(bitter)
For work.
(DANA titters)
What?

DANA
It's so obvious.

CASEY
What is?

DANA
You're very protective.

(CASEY winces)
No, it's nice.

CASEY
You should go back upstairs. I can
wait here.

DANA
Don't worry.
(mock-conspiratorial)
I know your secret, and it's safe
with me.

CASEY
(very evenly -- what does she know
about Sally?)
You know my secret?

DANA
I know.
(as she leaves)
And I think it's sweet!

CASEY is confused.

INT. HOSPITAL -- LOBBY OUTSIDE ISAAC'S ROOM
DANA enters, interrupting a conversation between JEREMY,
NATALIE, DAN, and a DOCTOR.

DAN
This is ridiculous! We've looked
all over the hospital and now we
can't talk to him?

DOCTOR
The man's exhausted.

JEREMY
Is Isaac asleep?

DOCTOR
No, but --

DANA
(Odd determination)
I have to see him.

DOCTOR
Okay, I'll let one of you in, but
just for a little bit.

DANA
It should be me.

DAN
No, me!

EVERYONE starts talking at once.

DOCTOR
Fine, okay. I'm thinking of a
number.

DANA
Five.

DOCTOR
You're a mind-reader. Amazing.
Come with me.

The DOCTOR and DANA exit.

NATALIE
What the hell was that?

JEREMY
It looks like Dana's a mind-reader.

DAN
I've seen Mexican wrestling
matches that were less fixed than
that.

DAN sighs. DAN and NATALIE sit.

JEREMY
(suddenly tired)
Anyone want a soda?

NATALIE
I would, if you can find a machine
in this maze.

JEREMY
I shall do my best.

JEREMY exits.

NATALIE
Hey Dan.

DAN
Hey what?

NATALIE moves her right hand from right to left across her face, wagging one raised right index finger back and forth as she does so.

NATALIE
What's this?

DAN
I give up. What?

NATALIE repeats the gesture.

NATALIE
I dunno, but there goes another
one.

DAN
Natalie, telling me bad jokes
isn't going to make me feel better.

NATALIE
Hey Dan.

DAN
What?

NATALIE moves her right hand from right to left across her face, wagging all five fingers back and forth as she does so.

NATALIE
What's that?

DAN
(intrigued)
I don't know. What?

NATALIE repeats the first gesture.

NATALIE
A whole herd of those.

DAN
That is the dumbest joke I've ever
heard.

A short pause. DAN stifles a laugh.

NATALIE
Hey Dan.

DAN
Hey what?

NATALIE
A rabbit, a priest, and a man
holding a turtle walk into a bar -
-

DAN
Don't you mean a rabbi?

NATALIE
No. In this one, it's a rabbit.

INT. HOSPITAL -- ISAAC'S ROOM

ISAAC lies in a hospital bed. DANA enters. Across the room is a radio, playing an old Sam Cooke tune in the background:

*Another Saturday night, and I ain't got nobody
I got some money 'cause I just got paid
I wish I had someone to talk to
I'm in an awful way...*

DANA is flummoxed at not knowing what to say; she tries a little laugh.

DANA
They turned on the radio for you.
It's nice.

ISAAC scowls.

DANA
They turned on the radio and you
didn't want them to.

DANA clicks it off.

DANA
Better?

ISAAC smiles. DANA sits by the bed.

DANA
Oh, Isaac. Esther's on the next
flight back with your daughter,
and Cathy is flying in, and, and
everybody's here, Isaac, Casey,
and Dan, and Natalie, and Jeremy,
only they wouldn't let --

DANA starts to cry, catches herself, restarts.

DANA
There was this really mean doctor
who wouldn't let anybody in.
(she smiles)
Just me. You look good.

ISAAC puts on a "don't bullshit me" look.)

DANA
You do.

ISAAC is pleased.

DANA
Things at work have been good.
(beat)
Expanded coverage had our best
ratings this year, and... things
at work have sucked. I've been
trying to hold on to Gordon, and
he's gonna dump me, and Casey's
been a total prick lately, and Dan
just found out his girlfriend's
married -- to another total and

utter prick, and now this. Why did
you do this, Isaac? Why now?

ISAAC scowls. DANA is aghast at herself.

DANA

I'm sorry -- I'm so sorry --
that's silly. Natalie says
everything happens for a reason,
Isaac, but this doesn't make any
sense. You're the only one that
has it together and we've got
nothing to be proud of.

ISAAC starts trying to talk; he's tired. It's gotten much
harder. He's obviously frustrated.

DANA

Oh, you don't have to... to talk
or anything. You should rest. They
said you should rest -- and
they're doctors.

ISAAC

I am.

DANA

What? What is it, Isaac?

ISAAC

Proud.

DANA

(starting to lose it)

Oh, I -- I know.

(beat)

I love you Isaac.

ISAAC is already asleep. In the background, a NURSE enters;
DANA doesn't see this.

DANA

Oh, God, I didn't kill him, did I?

NURSE

(suspicious)

No.

DANA
Aaah!

NURSE
He's just sleeping.

DANA
Oh. Oh yeah, the thing's still
beeping. That's a 'he's still
alive' beep.

NURSE
Ma'am, you know these aren't
visiting hours.

DANA starts to exit.

DANA
Right. Right, I'm now going. I --

DANA stops for a moment.

DANA
Listen, you'll take good care of
him, right? Because --

NURSE
Yes, but you'll have to go!

DANA
Okay, I'm shooing myself out. But
-- you remember what I almost said.

NURSE
Sure.

INT. HOSPITAL -- NEUROLOGY LOBBY
NATALIE and DAN are still talking.

NATALIE
And then the priest said --

DAN
If he said "He won by a hare," I
swear I will --

NATALIE
No. That would be bad.

DAN
What'd he say?

NATALIE
"He won by a hare!"

DAN
(shaking his head, chuckling)
That's so bad.

NATALIE
I know.

DAN
It does make me feel better.

NATALIE
If I had known she was married,
Danny --

DAN
Hey -- it's not your fault.

NATALIE
I know.

DAN
It's not.

NATALIE
It's Rebecca's fault.

DAN
Kinda.

NATALIE hugs DAN.

NATALIE
Dana and I have decided we don't
like her.

JEREMY enters.

JEREMY

Hey, hey, what's going on here?

NATALIE

No! We've been caught!

DAN

(mock serious)

Don't worry, Jeremy. I only go for
married women.

DAN is a little hurt by his own joke.

JEREMY

Natalie? Are you secretly married?

NATALIE

(melodramatic)

Yes! To Steve Cisco!

DAN

Oh, god...

NATALIE

Dan. Was Rebecca trying to hurt
you?

DAN

(smiles)

No.

NATALIE

Is she still being nice to you?

DAN

Yeah.

JEREMY

Is there any chance that Steve
Cisco will have a debilitating
stroke?

DAN

Maybe.

NATALIE

Jeremy!

JEREMY
You're right, that's evil.

DAN
Steve Cisco will be fine.

NATALIE
You'll be okay, Danny.

DAN smiles.

DAN
I know. I mean, if they break up,
I'll get back together with her.
And if they don't, I'll help her
out as her friend.

JEREMY
Good plan.

DAN
... and that's how you treat your
friends at times like this.

The end of "Try Whistling This" plays in the background:
*And my words are ringing in your ears
Drawing your attention now to
All the things that you ignore*

CASEY walks down a hallway and enters the waiting room. He greets DAN, NATALIE, and JEREMY. CASEY asks a question; they point him to another door.

CASEY heads out. DAN stops him and they have a quick exchange. DAN pats him on the back as CASEY goes on to the lobby outside Isaac's room, and sits at a couch.

The song continues:
*If I can't be with you
I would rather have a different face
And if I can't be near you
I would rather be adrift in space*

CASEY waits for a second, impatiently. DANA emerges from the room and smiles. DANA sits beside CASEY. She looks down at her hands in her lap.

At the same time, CASEY reflexively puts his arm around her, stops himself before she sees, then rests a hand on her near shoulder instead. She looks at him, still worried but smiling, puts her hand on his.

FADE TO BLACK

END OF SHOW