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Growing Up Fisher

“Pilot”

Written by

DJ Nash

Directed by

David Schwimmer

RE-SHOOT SCENES:

1, 3, 8, 11, 18, 20, 21, 23, 25, 27-29, 31

SHOOTING DRAFT

11-27-13



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Growing Up Fisher

SHOOTING DRAFT

November 27, 2013

CAST LIST

(For Re-Shoot Scenes Only)

MEL J.K. Simmons
JOYCE Jenna Elfman
HENRY Eli Baker
KATIE Ava Deluca-Verley
RUNYEN Lance Lim
ADULT HENRY (V.O.) Jason Bateman
JENNY Isabela Moner *

Growing Up Fisher

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SET LIST

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INTERIORS

FISHER CAR
FISHER DEN
MEL'S APARTMENT
MEL'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN
MALL - LADIES' BOUTIQUE
APARTMENT HALLWAY

EXTERIORS

FISHER BACKYARD, PASADENA
EMPTY PARKING LOT
FISHER FRONT STEPS
MEL'S APARTMENT BUILDING

ACT ONE

White text over black:

1 ADULT HENRY (V.O.)
The following is inspired by a true story.

EXT. FISHER BACKYARD - PASADENA - MORNING (D1) 1

A father, MEL, carries a chainsaw in his right hand while holding hands with his son, HENRY, with his left.

2 HENRY
...I just wonder if it's ever gonna happen for me. You know, girl-wise.

3 MEL
Trust me, Henry, you'll meet a girl when you least expect it. Let's just hope it happens while you still got the hair.

Henry stops walking. And so does Mel.

4 ADULT HENRY (V.O.)
When I was eleven, my parents got divorced. Which made me like fifty percent of kids in America.

5 MEL
Okay, tell me what tree to cut down.

6 ADULT HENRY (V.O.)
One kinda huge difference was...

Henry shakes his head -- are they really doing this? Henry takes his dad's hand and puts it on the tree.

7 HENRY
Uh. This one right here.

8 ADULT HENRY (V.O.)
...my dad was blind. As in "can't see the tree he's about to cut down blind." Mom gave me that delightful haircut. And despite what it looks like, she can see fine.

9 MEL
Two quick things: How tall's the tree and where's the house?

10 HENRY
Wow. Super tall and over your left shoulder.

11 MEL
My left shoulder?!

12 HENRY
You know what, let's go get some ice cream. I'll buy.

13 MEL
Nonsense. My kids want a pool, they're getting a pool.

Mel takes off the cover, feels for the choke and pumps it.

14 MEL (CONT'D)
Okay, this is now a Danger Zone. Go inside until I yell "Safety Zone."

15 HENRY
But shouldn't we just--

16 MEL
Danger Zone!

Mel fires up the chainsaw and Henry hightails it out of there. As Henry reaches the deck, he's joined by KATIE.

17 KATIE
Why is he wearing safety glasses?

18 HENRY
Safety glasses? That's what's wrong with this picture?

Their mom, JOYCE, runs out horrified.

19 JOYCE
What is your father doing?!
(then)
Those are my good gardening gloves.
(to Henry)
His hands sweat like feet.

20 HENRY
And his eyes don't work.
(isn't anyone gonna stop him)
Nobody? Interesting.

21 MEL (O.S.)
Timber!

CLOSE ON Henry's face in awe as his dad takes down the tree.

22 MEL (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Safety Zone!

23 HENRY
One down, three to go.

As Henry runs back to point out the next tree, we cut to...

MAIN TITLES: "GROWING UP FISHER"

EXT. FISHER FRONT YARD - LATER (D1) 2

A HUGE stack of fresh cut firewood lines the driveway. We PAN to see Henry hike a football to Mel. Henry goes long, shouting the whole way.

24 ADULT HENRY (V.O.)
Looking back, it wasn't crazy at all that my parents got divorced. What was crazy was the way I found out. But first a little backstory...

25 HENRY
(announcer voice)
Henry Fisher explodes out of the backfield. What he lacks in size he more than makes up for in spirit.

Mel tracks Henry's voice and throws a perfect spiral. Henry catches the ball and runs towards Mel who now plays defense, chasing after Henry's voice.

26 ADULT HENRY (V.O.)
...Dad went blind when he was twelve...

27 HENRY
He's at the thirty, the twenty, he's not forgetting about the big tree! He's fast, he's quick--

28 MEL
He's got one more play before clarinet practice.

29 ADULT HENRY (V.O.)
...but he never let the fact that he couldn't see keep him from doing anything...

Mel tackles Henry to the ground, a bit hard. They laugh.

EXT. EMPTY PARKING LOT / INT. FISHER CAR - LATER (D1) 3

Katie's trying to parallel park. She's backing up. REVEAL Mel sitting shotgun, mid-lesson.

30 ADULT HENRY (V.O.)
...even when it probably should've.

31 MEL
Cut harder! Cut harder!

32 KATIE
I know! I know!
(car jerks to a stop)
There. In. Perfect.

OVERHEAD REVEAL: The car is practically perpendicular between two dumpsters with the back right wheel up on the curb.

33 MEL (O.S.)
Are you sure?

ANGLE ON: Henry and Joyce sitting on a wall, watching the lesson. Joyce is reading a magazine.

34 HENRY
(re: Katie parking)
You and I are the only things she
hasn't hit in this parking lot.

35 ADULT HENRY (V.O.)
*At the time, Mom was on a quest to
find herself. In hindsight, I should
have seen the divorce coming. There
were some subtle red flags...*

36 JOYCE
(re: magazine)
Button, should I get one of these
water bras?

37 ADULT HENRY (V.O.)
...And some not-so-subtle.

38 HENRY
Mom. I'm your son.

39 JOYCE
Which is why I trust your opinion.

Joyce uses her hands to lift and lower her chest, presenting options to Henry.

40 JOYCE (CONT'D)
New mom? Old mom? New mom? Old mom?

41 HENRY
(needing this to end)
Stop. Get the bra. And maybe some
boundaries.

ANGLE ON: The station wagon, Katie's looking out the back as she backs up. The engine revs, but they aren't moving.

42 MEL
I feel good about this one. Twelfth time's a charm.

43 KATIE
Great, now the car's broken.

44 MEL
You're in neutral, Pickle.

45 KATIE
Dammit! I'm never gonna get my license. You have a better chance of getting a license than I do.

46 MEL
Katie, you're a Fisher. You can do anything you put your mind to...

47 ADULT HENRY (V.O.)
Get ready, people, here it comes.

48 MEL
I went to law school blind.

49 KATIE
You do realize it's impossible to compete with that?

50 MEL
I do.
(then)
Sweetie, you can totally do this. You just need to be shown how.

Mel gets out and feels the hood, navigating his way around to the driver's side.

51 HENRY
Uh-oh. Dad's gonna--
(distracted by his mom)
What is that?

Joyce has pulled out an e-cigarette.

52 JOYCE
It's an electronic cigarette. You guys have been on me to stop smoking real ones.
(exhales, selling it)
Huh? Mango.

53 ADULT HENRY (V.O.)
*And with that puff, Dad's blindness
dropped to Number Seventeen on the
list of things that were wrong with my
family.*

As Mel gets in the driver's seat, Katie's forced to quickly hop over to the passenger seat to avoid being sat on.

54 JOYCE
Mel! You should not be driving.

55 MEL
(sniffing)
And you should not be smoking air
fresheners! Just slap on a patch like
everyone else.

56 JOYCE
Do you know how ridiculous I'd look
with a patch?!

Joyce takes a pull on her e-cig. The tip lights up blue. Mel cuts the wheel, the power steering screeches.

57 MEL
Okay, tell me when I'm lined up with
the bumper.

58 KATIE
You're not seriously gonna--?! Now,
now, now!

59 MEL
(calmly cutting to the right)
You cut the wheels to the right until
your front seat is lined up with their--

60 KATIE
You're there! You're there!

61 MEL
(now to the left)
Then you cut to the left and you drop
right in.

Mel swings the car perfectly between the dumpsters.

62 MEL (CONT'D)
Right?

Pleased with himself, Mel gets out. The car starts rolling.

63 ADULT HENRY (V.O.)
*And with that, the blind thing shot up
to Number Five. It's a fluid list.*

64 HENRY / KATIE / JOYCE
Dad! / Dad! / Mel!

65 MEL
I know.
(hopping back in rolling car)
Just showing you the importance of
setting the parking brake. We're
laughing and learning.

66 ADULT HENRY (V.O.)
*Next to my Dad, the coolest guy I knew
was my best friend, Runyen.*

INT. FISHER KITCHEN - DAY - FLASHBACK (FB1)

4

Henry sits at the breakfast table with RUNYEN. Mel enters dressed for work, as Runyen helps himself to a cup of coffee.

67 RUNYEN
Mel Baby! Khakis go with everything,
smart. Suspenders and a belt? I'm
gonna give you a pass because of the
whole "eyes-no-worky" thing.

68 MEL
Hello, Runyen.
(messing with him)
You know, I'd kick you out if I didn't
think it was important for my son to
have Black friends.

69 RUNYEN
(pouring milk into coffee)
Well played. Touché. Coffee?

70 ADULT HENRY (V.O.)
*Runyen was one of the few people
outside our family who knew Dad was
blind. That's right...*

INT. LAW FIRM CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY - FLASHBACK (FB2)

5

Mel and his brother, GLEN, greet a potential client.

71 ADULT HENRY (V.O.)
*...before the divorce, Dad actually
hid his blindness.*

72 GLEN
Bill Duffy, I'd like you to meet--

Mel extends his hand immediately, forcing the client to meet his handshake.

73 MEL
--Mel Fisher.

74 ADULT HENRY (V.O.)
He never lied to anyone...

INT. RESTAURANT - DAY - FLASHBACK (FB3)

6

Glen and a client, SAM, wait at a table. Mel enters and puts a "playful" arm around Henry who again walks on Mel's left side.

75 ADULT HENRY (V.O.)
...but he did trick 'em a lot.

76 MEL
(making a show of it)
Come here! You are not too old to get a hug from your old man!
(then, sotto)
Okay, what do we got?

77 HENRY
(sotto)
Table's ten steps away, empty chair's at three o'clock. Glen's on the left and his fly is wide open.

Mel confidently walks to the table and extends his hand.

78 MEL
Sam. Mel Fisher. Hope you don't mind I brought our youngest associate. Tae Kwon Do got cancelled.
(sotto, gesturing)
Glen, barn door.

As an embarrassed Glen zips up.

79 ADULT HENRY (V.O.)
With me at his side...

INT. FISHER DEN - NIGHT - FLASHBACK (FB4)

7

Henry and Runyen play Monopoly on a COFFEE TABLE, as Katie sits in a chair listening to music on her headphones.

80 ADULT HENRY (V.O.)
...I could help him with anything...

81 RUNYEN
Dude, at this point I basically own you.

Mel enters, plowing into the table. Game pieces fly everywhere.

82 MEL
Ow!

83 ADULT HENRY (V.O.)
...except the damn coffee table.

84 MEL
Every time!

85 RUNYEN
Mel Baby, my hotels! You're killing me!

Henry and Runyen reset the game pieces on the table.

86 ADULT HENRY (V.O.)
*For as long as I could remember, I was
his human guide dog...*

INT. FISHER DEN - DAY - BACK TO PRESENT (D2)

8

Henry and Katie return from school with backpacks to find Joyce and Mel sitting there, waiting for them. Mel is holding a beautiful YELLOW LAB that wears a U-SHAPED HARNESS.

87 ADULT HENRY (V.O.)
*...which is why I was so surprised
when he got a real one.*

88 HENRY
Sweet! We got a dog!

Tail wagging, Elvis crosses to Henry, who starts petting him.

89 JOYCE
Button, sit down. Your father and I
have something to tell you.

90 KATIE
Really? We're doing this now?

91 HENRY
This is awesome!

Joyce SNEEZES.

92 HENRY (CONT'D)
Yeah, wait, I thought we couldn't get
a dog because Mom's--

Joyce SNEEZES again.

93 HENRY (CONT'D)
Allergic.

94 JOYCE
Henry, it's a seeing-eye dog--

95 MEL
The correct term is guide dog. He doesn't see for me, he guides me. He's like a GPS.

96 JOYCE
A GPS that chewed up my new water bra.

97 MEL
Look, Henry, when two parties enter into a contract and reach an impasse, both parties reserve the right to--

98 JOYCE
Mel, c'mon, we can't dance around this. Henry... when two trees grow beside each other, and one can't grow in the shade of the other, it might want to spread its wings--

99 MEL
Trees have wings?

100 JOYCE
Yes. They do, Mel. And they want to enroll in some courses at the local community college.
(back to Henry)
Do you understand, honey?

101 HENRY
(beat, fixated on dog)
Can we name him Optimus Prime?

102 JOYCE
Absolutely.

103 MEL
No, we can't. Joyce, he already has a name. It's Elvis.

104 HENRY
What about Chewbacca?

105 JOYCE
Whatever you want, honey.

She sneezes.

106 MEL
No.
(standing to cross)
(MORE)

MEL (CONT'D)

Henry, just leave the dog alone for a second--

He plows into the coffee table, hitting his shin.

107 MEL (CONT'D)

Every time!

Joyce sneezes again.

108 KATIE

Unbelievable.

(sitting Henry down)

Bug, what they're trying to say is...

108A JOYCE

We still love each other.

108B MEL

We'll always be a family...

(through a wince)

...right on the bone.

109 KATIE (CONT'D)

Dad's moving out. That's why he got the dog.

As this sinks in, Henry lets go of the dog.

110 ADULT HENRY (V.O.)

And that was the super smooth way my parents told me they were getting divorced.

EXT. HOTEL / INT. HOTEL FRONT DESK - THAT DAY (D2)

9

The cab driver pulls Mel's suitcase out of the trunk, as Henry comes around the cab, struggling with a duffle.

111 ADULT HENRY (V.O.)

A lot of kids blame themselves for their parents' divorce...

Henry goes to take his place at Mel's side, but Elvis intercepts. Mel grabs the dog's harness and heads inside to the CLERK.

112 MEL

(to Elvis)

Forward.

113 ADULT HENRY (V.O.)

...but I was pretty certain this one was the dog's fault.

114 CLERK
(into phone)
Well, we're either gonna need the bathrobes back or we're going to charge you the two-hundred-ninety-five dollars.
(noticing Mel)
I gotta go. Can I help you?

115 MEL
Yes, checking in.

116 CLERK
Okay, no, no, no. No dogs allowed.

117 MEL
It's okay, he's a guide dog.

118 CLERK
Yeah... No. No pets. Did you see the sign?

119 MEL
I did not.

120 CLERK
Right. Well, we have a very strict "No Pets" policy.

121 MEL
I have a strict "don't break the law" policy.

122 HENRY
Ooooo. Yeah.
(reading clerk's nametag)
Kevin? If you can pull the trigger on a sick day, I'd do it.

123 MEL
I'm a blind attorney--

124 HENRY
Cannot see a thing.

To prove it, Henry waves his hand in front of Mel's face.

125 MEL
And California Civil Code 54.1 makes it illegal to deny lodging to someone using a service animal.

126 HENRY
It's a civil code, Kev. Our hands are tied.

127 MEL

If you don't give me a room right now
I will sue you so hard that when the
dust settles you'll be calling this
the Mel Fisher Hotel.

128 HENRY

You know a good lawyer, Kev?
(pointing to Mel)
'Cause I do.

INT. HOTEL SUITE - A LITTLE LATER (D2)

10

An amazing suite. Henry and Mel kick back on two giant beds,
scraping the last of the fudge from their sundaes.

129 MEL

Boy, our friend Kevin really redeemed
himself with these hot fudge sundaes.

130 HENRY

Yeah, that last bite was like all
fudge.

131 MEL

How are those veal chops treatin' ya,
Elvis?

REVEAL Elvis face deep in a room service tray of veal. Mel
presses the button on his watch.

132 ELECTRONIC WATCH VOICE

It's-five-o-nine-PM.

133 MEL

Uh-oh, I promised your mom I'd get you
home for dinner. So whatever she's
making, you're hungry.

Henry looks over to his overnight bag.

134 HENRY

Or, or... I could stay here and help
you navigate the hotel.

135 MEL

Buddy, listen--

136 HENRY

(off table tent)
Oh, they have a couples' massage. That
could be fun.

137 MEL

(getting up)

There's nothing I'd love more. I'm sure the hotel offers a fantastic father-son package, but Mom's expecting you. Don't worry about me. I've got Elvis.

Henry grabs his duffle. Elvis takes Henry's place on the bed.

138 ADULT HENRY (V.O.)

And before I even got the hot fudge off my face, my job had been outsourced to a dog.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

EXT. FISHER FRONT STEPS - LATER (N2)

11

Henry exits the cab to see Joyce coming down the steps towards him with her arms outstretched.

139 ADULT HENRY (V.O.)
Dad may have kicked me out of the hotel, but at least when I got home, Mom was waiting for me with open arms... and a vacuum.

Joyce grabs a Dustbuster from the steps.

140 JOYCE
I love you, Button. But you're covered in doggy dander. Arms up.

She turns the vacuum on and vacuums him, talking over it:

141 JOYCE (CONT'D)
I want you to know that even though there are a lot of changes going on, we're still just a regular family. Now turn so I can vacuum your butt.

Henry turns, she vacuums his other side.

142 JOYCE (CONT'D)
I promise once Dad finds a real apartment you can stay with him as much as you want.

Joyce finishes vacuuming and gives him a peck on the head as Katie comes rushing out, excited.

143 KATIE
Oh wait, did I miss it? Did you see Mom's new toy?

144 HENRY
The vacuum? I saw it.

145 KATIE
Nope. Not that. Get ready.

146 JOYCE
I really don't see what the big deal is.

Joyce puts a pipe in her mouth.

147 HENRY
Is that a--?

148 KATIE
Pipe? You betcha.

149 JOYCE
You guys said the e-cigarette looked
ridiculous.
(tapping the bowl)
And I am a mom who listens.

Henry and Katie share a look.

150 ADULT HENRY (V.O.)
*So just to recap: My dad replaced me
with a guide dog and my mom became
Popeye. It was a big week for the
Fisher family.*

INT. BUS / EXT. UPSCALE STREET - A FEW MINUTES LATER (D3) 12

Henry and Runyen are filing off the bus with the rest of the
students who are lining up on the sidewalk.

151 RUNYEN
...I tell you what you gotta do, okay?
You gotta find something you can do
that Elvis can't.

152 HENRY
Like what?

153 RUNYEN
Like, teach Mel Baby the latest dance
moves.

154 HENRY
(spotting something)
Oh, my God, that's it.

155 RUNYEN
Yeah.
(demonstrating)
I mean, I've never seen a dog that can
pop 'n' lock.

156 HENRY
No. Look.

Henry points to a sign that says "Apartment for Rent."

157 HENRY (CONT'D)
I'm going to get my dad an apartment.
That's something a dog can't do.

158 RUNYEN
That's also something a sixth-grader
can't do.

Henry starts to walk towards the apartment.

159 RUNYEN (CONT'D)
Eh, eh, eh, what are you doing? You
cannot leave a field trip.

160 HENRY
(crossing off)
Cover for me!

161 RUNYEN
We signed a permission slip. I am not
going back to Korea!

INT. RENTAL OFFICE - A MINUTE OR TWO LATER (D3) 13

Henry stands in the doorway. The building manager, FRED, sits
behind a big desk on his cell phone.

162 FRED
(into phone, intense)
Wait, she's mad at me?! Everybody
brings wine to a dinner party. But I'm
not everybody. That's why I brought a
cactus.
(then, covering phone)
Can I help you?

163 HENRY
Is the apartment still available?

164 FRED
You running away from home?

165 HENRY
I guess technically my dad is.

Fred gets what Henry means.

166 FRED
Oh, well, you bring him back, and I'll
give him a tour. And a stress ball.
(tosses him a stress ball,
then, back to call)
Manny, your better etiquette books
will tell you--

167 HENRY
Here's the deal, my dad's blind. I'm
going to be his eyes on this. If I
like the place, he'll like the place.
(MORE)

HENRY (CONT'D)

So how 'bout you go ahead and give me that tour.

Henry tosses the stress ball back to Fred.

INT. APARTMENT - A MOMENT LATER (D3)

14

Henry and Fred are mid-tour.

168 HENRY

This could work. This molding is fantastic.

Henry is checking out a huge walk-in pantry.

169 HENRY (CONT'D)

This is a tiny bedroom.

170 FRED

It's a pantry.

171 HENRY

This is a huge pantry.

(then)

What about dogs, Fred? Are they allowed in the building?

172 FRED

No pets.

173 HENRY

What about guide dogs? Civil Code 54.1 says you have to allow them.

174 FRED

(with a smile)

Well then I guess we're going to allow them-- how old are you?

175 HENRY

Eleven and a half.

(fair is fair)

How old are you?

176 FRED

Forty-three.

(off Henry's skeptical look)

And a half.

Satisfied, Henry smiles.

INT. LAW FIRM CONFERENCE ROOM - LATER (D3)

15

Mel, dressed in a suit, deposes a WITNESS. Mel has him on the ropes as his LAWYER, the STENOGRAPHER and Sam look on. Elvis sits nearby watching the action like a tennis match.

177 MEL
...So you shredded the papers?

178 LAWYER
Objection.

179 MEL
This is not a trial, just a deposition. You'll answer.

180 WITNESS
I did. But only because I didn't think they were relevant to the case.

181 MEL
Random papers, not relevant, you thought let's go ahead and shred 'em?

181A LAWYER
Objection.

181B WITNESS
That's right.

182 MEL (CONT'D)
(to court stenographer)
Tell me you got every word of that, Janice.

183 JANICE
All the way through "Tell me you got every word of that, Janice."

184 MEL
I love you. Type that. Don't type that.

185 LAWYER
(desperate)
Can we adjourn until tomorrow?

186 MEL
The thing is we're all here today.

Glen comes in and whispers in Mel's ear.

187 GLEN
You got a phone call. Henry's principal. He was cursing a lot for an educator.

188 MEL
(to opposing council)
But if tomorrow is better for
everyone, I say we do that.
(to Elvis)
Hip-up!

INT. PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - LATER (D3)

16

Mel, still in a suit, Henry and Elvis sit with PRINCIPAL SLOAN, who holds a permission slip like an affidavit.

189 PRINCIPAL SLOAN
Is this not your signature? Did you
not agree to stay with the group and
to say no to drugs?

190 HENRY
I needed to find my dad an apartment.

191 MEL
Joyce and I have separated. It was
mutual. Not that you asked, but just
to be clear.

192 PRINCIPAL SLOAN
That's tough stuff. Wendy and I have
taken a bit of a T.O. ourselves.

193 HENRY
The place is great, Dad. It's an old
converted bakery. It smells like
you're sleeping in a muffin.

194 MEL
This is not about the apartment--
although I do like muffins-- but this
is about you just wandering off down
Griffin Street like the school rules
don't apply to you.

195 PRINCIPAL SLOAN
Griffin Street? That's a sweet section
of town.
(then, back on track)
The point is, you can't just leave a
field trip when-- laundry in the
building?

196 HENRY
Four washers, three dryers.

197 PRINCIPAL SLOAN
Cable?

198 HENRY
Included.

199 PRINCIPAL SLOAN
Basic?

200 HENRY
Premium.

201 PRINCIPAL SLOAN
Shut the front door.

202 MEL
Okay, I think we're all sold on the apartment, but can we get back to what my son did?

203 PRINCIPAL SLOAN
I think I know where you're headed with this, Mel, and I completely agree. I think given the circumstances, discipline should come from home on this one.

(getting up, grabbing keys)
And now, if you'll excuse me, I have an errand to run. Linda, pull up Westside Rentals!

He crosses off. Henry leans back in his chair, proud.

204 MEL
Did he leave?

205 HENRY
Yep. Boom, that was easy.
(smiling, confidently)
Don't worry. I gave the manager a twelve dollar deposit. That apartment isn't going anywhere.

206 MEL
Neither are you. Your mom and I talked and we decided that you need to be punished.

207 HENRY
What?

208 MEL
Yeah.

209 HENRY
You know, when Bobby Lacito's parents split, he got a dirt bike.

210 MEL
Awesome. You're grounded for two weeks.
(gesturing)
Boom. Is that right? There's a hand thing, right?

211 HENRY
Yeah.

INT. MEL'S APARTMENT - THE NEXT DAY (D4) 17

Mel and Glen celebrate with their client, Sam. Beers and snacks are strewn on the COFFEE TABLE.

212 ADULT HENRY (V.O.)
So I'd scored my Dad a sweet apartment. Where he and his work buddies could toast their big win...

213 MEL
They settled for the full amount. Who settles for the full amount?!

They all clank beer bottles.

214 ADULT HENRY (V.O.)
...But I should have been over there celebrating with them...

Elvis barks in camaraderie and Mel gives him a potato chip.

215 MEL
(to Elvis)
Shhh. Here you go.

216 ADULT HENRY (V.O.)
...That should have been my potato chip.

INT. MALL - LADIES' BOUTIQUE - LATER (D4) 18

A group of high school girls crosses away, revealing a defeated Henry sitting on a bench outside the dressing rooms.

217 ADULT HENRY (V.O.)
Instead, I was doing time at the mall, where Mom was trying on Katie's jeans. And her adolescence.

Katie storms over wearing FUCHSIA SKINNY JEANS. Joyce crosses over wearing the SAME JEANS.

218 JOYCE
Ooh, these pants hurt. That's how I know they look good.

219 KATIE
Mom. Focus. You cannot buy the same
jeans as me.

220 JOYCE
Why not? They're awesome. It's not
like I'm getting the belt. Should I
get the belt? Can I try on the belt?

221 KATIE
You may not. Henry, tell Mom to take
off her pants.

222 HENRY
Great, you broke me. Good team effort.

Henry's cell phone rings.

223 HENRY (CONT'D)
(into phone)
Hey, Dad.

INT. MEL'S APARTMENT - SAME (D4)

19

224 MEL
(into phone)
I need you to come over right away.
Elvis got out.

INT. MALL - LADIES' BOUTIQUE - SAME (D4)

20

As Henry takes this in, Joyce checks herself in the mirror.

225 JOYCE
Well, looks like I'm gonna have to buy
these because there's no way in hell I
can get out of them.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. APARTMENT HALLWAY/INT. MEL'S APT - LATER (D4) 21

Henry, Katie and Joyce arrive to find Mel ready to go.

226 MEL

I took Elvis for a walk and then when I got home, I went into the pantry to get his food, and I guess I must have left the front door open.

227 JOYCE

(pipe in mouth)

This place is great, I wish I could live here.

228 KATIE

(beat, looking around)

No one gets the irony?

229 HENRY

Katie! Missing guide dog!

230 KATIE

(to Henry, grabbing Joyce's keys)

Right. I'll take Sherlock, you go with Magoo.

Joyce and Katie start to head down the hall.

231 MEL

Henry.

Henry turns to see his dad standing with his left arm out. Henry's needed again. With renewed purpose, he assumes his position on Mel's left side and proudly leads him out the door.

232 MEL (CONT'D)

Thanks, buddy.

EXT. PASADENA STREET - SAME TIME (D4) 22

Henry pedals the BIKE. Mel stands on the pegs, holding Henry's shoulders. They yell, searching for Elvis.

232A HENRY

Elvis! Elvis where are you?!

232B MEL

Elvis! Elvis!

INT. FISHER CAR - SAME TIME (D4) 23

Katie's at the wheel, Joyce is sitting shotgun and squeaking a chew toy out the window.

233 JOYCE
Elvis! Elvis!
(then, to Katie)
Slow down!

234 KATIE
I'm going six.

REVEAL: The car is going super slowly. A jogger passes them.

235 JOYCE
Ugh, I gotta start jogging again.

A big exhale from Katie, then:

236 KATIE
(yelling out her window)
Elvis! Keep running boy! Just run and
don't look back!

EXT. PASADENA STREET - SAME TIME (D4)

24

Henry labors as he pedals the bike.

237 HENRY
Elvis!

238 MEL
Can you go any faster?

239 HENRY
You weigh like four thousand pounds!

240 MEL
Switch.

241 HENRY
What?!

242 MEL
I'm driving.

243 HENRY
No way.

244 MEL
I went to law school bl--

245 HENRY
Just take the bike.

INT. FISHER CAR - SAME (D4)

25

Back with Joyce and Katie.

246 JOYCE

Quick question: Instagram. Is that something I should be doing?

247 KATIE

None of this is something you should be doing. The pipe, the water bra, my jeans? You already had your chance to be a teenager.

248 JOYCE

But I kinda didn't. In case you haven't done the math, I was very young when I had you--

249 KATIE

Huh. Accident. Message received.

250 JOYCE

I went from being someone's daughter to being someone's wife to being someone's mother--

251 KATIE

While we're putting things out there, I would rather not be my mother's mother. Any way we can make that happen?

Joyce registers her daughter's words for a beat, then:

252 JOYCE

If it's any consolation, I hope I'm half the mother you are.

253 KATIE

It's of no consolation!

EXT. PASADENA STREET - SAME TIME (D4)

26

Mel PEDALS AND STEERS THE BIKE, as Henry sits behind him.

253A HENRY

Elvis!

253B MEL

Elvis!

254 HENRY

A little right, a little right. Look out, look out!

255 MEL

Be more specific!

256 HENRY

Danger Zone! Stop the bike!

Mel stops the bike.

257 MEL
Why did we--?

A giant delivery truck speeds by, blowing back their hair.

258 MEL (CONT'D)
Oh, good call.

As they laugh, Mel starts pedaling again.

INT. MEL'S APARTMENT - LATER (N4) 27

Mel, arm in arm with Henry, Katie and Joyce return. No Elvis.

259 MEL
I guess I'll just call the Guide Dog
Foundation and tell them what
happened. Hey, I can't be the first
blind guy to lose a dog.
(then)
Henry, do you see my phone?

Henry hands the phone to Mel. As Mel dials, Henry notices a
dog bowl, still full by his feet.

260 HENRY
Here Dad. That's weird.

261 MEL
(into phone)
Mathew Harawitz's office please.

262 KATIE
What's weird?

263 HENRY
Elvis left without eating any of his
food.

264 JOYCE
Ugh, I wish I had that kind of
discipline.

She sneezes. Henry clocks this.

265 HENRY
The pantry!

Henry runs to the pantry and opens the door. Elvis rushes
out, tail wagging. Henry, Katie and Joyce cheer.

265A HENRY
Buddy!

265B KATIE
Aw, there he is!

266 MEL
Hey guys, keep it down, I'm on the phone.
(into phone)
Mr. Harawitz, there's no easy way to tell you this--

267 KATIE
Dad, Henry found Elvis!

268 MEL
(into phone, seamless)
...Thanks for the great dog, keep up the good work, let's talk soon.

Mel hangs up and smiles.

269 MEL (CONT'D)
Well done, pal. Consider yourself ungrounded.

270 HENRY
Sweet!

As Henry and Katie pet Elvis, Joyce crosses to Mel.

271 JOYCE
Mel Fisher. I know what you did.

Mel listens to make sure the kids are out of earshot.

272 MEL
I have no idea what you're talking about.

273 JOYCE
You put Elvis in the pantry.
(off his "shh")
Kinda like what you did on our first date. Taking your brother to the museum the day before and memorizing the paintings.

274 MEL
Hey, that got me a second date.

275 JOYCE
And that second date got us Katie.

276 MEL
You said Henry needed to be needed.
(then)
Do you think two divorced people can keep a secret?

She squeezes his arm. Yes. We PULL OUT TO REVEAL Katie has witnessed this exchange.

277 ADULT HENRY (V.O.)
Katie only told me what Dad did years later. Like I said, he never lied, but he did trick us a lot.

Just then, Runyen storms in triumphantly holding the leash of a SCRAWNIER VERSION OF ELVIS.

278 RUNYEN
Good news, Mel Baby, I found your--
Dammit!

On this crazy family tableau, we:

279 ADULT HENRY (V.O.)
When people say "seeing-eye dog," they're wrong. The dog doesn't see for you, it guides you. Safely, in the direction you're supposed to be heading...

INT. MEL'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - LATER (N4)

28

The family sits on the floor, around the coffee table, eating Chinese take-out.

280 ADULT HENRY (V.O.)
...While at first I thought Elvis was breaking our family up...

They all laugh.

281 ADULT HENRY (V.O.)
...it turns out that big ball of fur was really bringing us closer together. The divorce would allow all of us to finally discover who we needed to be...

EXT. MEL'S APARTMENT BUILDING - LATER (N4)

29

Katie and Joyce walk to the car.

282 ADULT HENRY (V.O.)
...For Mom, it would take a lot longer than anyone would have ever expected...

Katie takes off the belt she's wearing and wraps it around her mom's waist. Joyce delights in it. Then eyes Katie's earrings.

283 KATIE

Please just finish this phase of your life as fast as possible.

INT. MEL'S APARTMENT - SAME TIME (N4)

30

Henry hikes the football from before to Mel.

284 ADULT HENRY (V.O.)

...For Dad, this would be the beginning of an amazing journey...

285 HENRY

Here, I'm going long.

Mel listens for Henry's voice and throws it to his son.

286 HENRY (CONT'D)

Shotgun pass!

Henry plays "keep away" from Elvis, runs and hands the ball off to Mel.

287 ADULT HENRY (V.O.)

...As hard as it was for him to get a guide dog and admit to the world he was blind, it was even more important for him to be a good father...

288 MEL

Elvis!

(laughs, sets down ball)

Hey buddy, I got you something.

Mel feels for something on the empty table. Henry sees an envelope on the island, and moves it to the coffee table for Mel to "find." Mel hands it to Henry, who opens the envelope, reaches in and pulls out a key.

289 ADULT HENRY (V.O.)

...At the time, I would have changed just about everything that was happening...

290 MEL

This is not my apartment. This is our apartment.

Henry beams.

291 ADULT HENRY (V.O.)

...But looking back...

Henry runs over and gives his dad a hug.

292 ADULT HENRY (V.O.)
...I wouldn't change a thing.

Outside, there's a LONG CAR HORN.

293 KATIE (O.S.)
Henry, let's go!

294 MEL
If it gets bad, grab the goldfish and
go to the Schumakers'.

295 HENRY
Love you.

296 MEL
Love you.

Henry quickly exits.

INT. APARTMENT HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS (N4) 31

Henry runs out only to discover Elvis has followed him.

297 ADULT HENRY (V.O.)
*That day, I learned something that I would
have to learn over and over again...*

298 HENRY
(calling back to Mel)
Hey! Guide dog out here!

He gets down on one knee and gives Elvis a proper hug goodbye.

299 ADULT HENRY (V.O.)
*...That sometimes the tough moments in
life make way for greater things than
you could possibly imagine.*

Henry turns to see the most beautiful twelve-year-old GIRL
he's ever seen unlocking the door to the apartment next door.

300 GIRL
Do you live here?

He looks at the key and then back at her.

301 HENRY
Yeah. I guess I do.

302 GIRL
(petting Elvis)
You're lucky your dad's blind.
(off Henry's confused look)
(MORE)

GIRL (CONT'D)

They don't let us have dogs in the building.

An awkward beat, then:

303 HENRY

My mom smokes a pipe.

304 GIRL

What?

305 HENRY

I just want you to know everything.

306 GIRL

(smiles, then)

Oh. I'm Jenny.

307 HENRY

(fumbling)

Oh, I'm, uh--

308 JENNY'S MOM (O.S.)

Sweetie, dinner!

309 GIRL

See ya around.

He watches her go, then turns to Elvis who looks up and barks.

310 HENRY

Right?

END OF SHOW