

GENERATION GAP
(working title)

"Pilot"

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COLD OPENFADE IN:INT. MIDDLE SCHOOL - ENTRANCE - MORNING

KIDS MINGLE NEAR THEIR LOCKERS. SYDNEY REYNOLDS, 12,
ENTERS WITH HER BEST FRIEND, OLIVE.

SYDNEY

(LOOKING AROUND, EXCITED) This is it,
Olive, seventh grade. The big time.
Time to make our mark! Take chances!
Blaze a trail! And... any number of
other inspiring cliches! (THEN) Are
you even listening?

OLIVE

(OFF CELL) No. I'm checking my first
day of school horoscope. (READING,
BARELY AUDIBLE) "Pisces, you are
introverted and quiet, but this is the
year to speak up."

SYDNEY

I can't hear you. What's it say?

OLIVE

(LOUDLY) It says I need to speak up!

SYDNEY

(OFF KIDS' STARES) I don't think
you've found your level yet.

SUDDENLY EVERYONE'S CELL PHONES PING.

OLIVE

(RE: CELL) Hey, Friday's picture day.
I better work on my smile. How's
this? (GRINS FROM EAR TO EAR)

SYDNEY

Keep working. (UPSET) Do you realize
my class photo's looked the same since
like forever?

OLIVE

So has mine.

SYDNEY

Well, you found a look in kindergarten
and it works for you.

SYDNEY LOOKS AT HERSELF IN THE MIRROR OF HER LOCKER.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

(OFF MIRROR) Look at me. That's the
look of a girl who played it safe. I
could've been Ariel in The Little
Mermaid, but settled for Flounder. I
hid my light under a fin.

OLIVE

I was a just a barnacle. Scenery.

SYDNEY

Olive, I need a new look. One that
reflects seventh grade me. Someone
bold. Fierce. Someone who takes
chances. As Gandhi once said, "Be the
change you want to see in the world."

OLIVE

So you gonna shave your head and wear
a diaper?

SYDNEY

Too literal, Olive. Too literal.

MAX REYNOLDS ENTERS AND CROSSES OVER.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

Dad? What are you doing here? You
dropped me off like a minute ago.

MAX

You forgot your lunch in the car.

AS HE HANDS HER THE LUNCH BAG, THE OTHER STUDENTS STARE,
JUDGMENTALLY.

MAX (CONT'D)

(OFF THEIR STARES, DEFENSIVE) Bag's
reusable, container's non toxic, and
utensils are biodegradable. Planet's
not going down on my watch.

THE KIDS NOD APPROVAL AND GO BACK TO THEIR BUSINESS.

OLIVE

(SPEAKING UP, LOUDLY) Hi, Mr.
Reynolds. How are you?

MAX

Fine, Olive. Are you mic'd?

SYDNEY

She's just obsessed with horoscopes.

OLIVE

I am not.

OLIVE OPENS HER LOCKER REVEALING EVERY KIND OF
ASTROLOGICAL CHART IMAGINABLE.

SYDNEY

Dad, thanks for bringing my lunch, but you've gotta go.

MAX

Okay, okay. I just want to take a quick peek at my old school.

SYDNEY

Please make it fast. This has seriously high embarrassment potential.

MAX

I'll just be a sec. (TAKING IN THE PLACE) Wow. It's like being in seventh grade again.

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. MIDDLE SCHOOL - HALLWAY - 1992

TWELVE YEAR OLD MAX IS PLAYING SUPER MARIO KART ON A GAME BOY AS HIS BEST FRIEND, LEO (TALL, LANKY) WATCHES.

MAX

Oh, snap! I'm on the last lap. (TO HIMSELF) Okay Max, just pass Luigi on the right... now avoid that banana and... Whoomp, there it is!

LEO

You're a God!

ANOTHER BOY, HOWIE, TAKES THE GAME BOY.

LEO (CONT'D)

(GRABBING IT) Wait your turn, Howie.

LEO STARTS TO PLAY. SUDDENLY MAX NOTICES A CUTE GIRL, TIFFANY, CROSS BY. SHE JOINS A GROUP OF BOYS WEARING BAGGY JEANS WITH BOXERS HANGING OUT AND BLEACHED HAIR.

MAX

Leo, is this how seventh grade's going to be? The cool guys hanging with girls while we're in the corner playing video games?

LEO

Let's hope. How great was sixth grade?!

MAX

Could've lived without Tuna Tuesdays. Prisoners have rioted over less. (THEN) Leo, this is our chance for a fresh start. Get something we've never had.

LEO

Mortal Kombat? I'm not sure my thumbs are in that kinda shape.

MAX

No, social lives. (RE: COOL GUYS) Look at those guys. (WAVES) Wsup.

LEO

(DISDAINFULLY) They think they're all that and a bag of chips.

MAX

They're not just the bag -- they're the whole party pack! I want to be one of them. (RE: GIRL LAUGHING) Tiffany should be giggling with this (INDICATES SELF) tasty Dorito.

LEO

Max, dudes who like computers, read comic books, and play video games will never be cool.

MAX

Not the way we look. Check out their hair. Frosted tips, so rad. I'm gonna get my whole head frosted, bleach it all.

LEO

Seriously? What about your Mom?

MAX

She doesn't tell me what to do. I'm not afraid of her. (BEAT) I'll ask her after her second Chardonnay.

SUDDENLY A MUSCLE-BOUND FOOTBALL JOCK TAKES LEO AND TRIES TO STUFF HIM IN HIS LOCKER.

JOCK

Get in there, dork.

LEO

(FLAILING) I won't fit! I had a growth spurt over the summer!

THE JOCK TURNS AND SETS HIS SIGHTS ON MAX.

MAX

Excuse me, Thor. Are you on the track team, too?

JOCK

No.

MAX

Good. See ya.

MAX MAKES A RUN FOR IT.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. MIDDLE SCHOOL - HALLWAY - PRESENT DAY

MAX STARES AT A LOCKER. A SEVENTH GRADE JOCK APPROACHES.

MAX

Oh, is this your locker? Sorry. I was just remembering the time a jock tried to stuff me in it.

SEVENTH GRADE JOCK

(SYMPATHETIC) That was so mean. If you need to talk, I'm here.

MAX

That's really nice. I understand your winless streak now. But that's really nice.

MAX CROSSES TO SYDNEY WHOSE STANDING WITH HER BACK TO HIM.

MAX (CONT'D)

Well, the embarrassment potential is leaving. Love you, honey.

HE KISSES THE TOP OF HER HEAD, BUT IT'S NOT SYDNEY.

SYDNEY

(HORRIFIED) Dad!!!

MAX, REALIZING HIS MISTAKE, QUICKLY EXITS. ALL EYES ARE ON SYDNEY. SYDNEY, EMBARRASSED, GETS INTO HER LOCKER AND CLOSES THE DOOR, AS WE:

FADE OUT:

END OF COLD OPEN

ACT ONESCENE AFADE IN:INT. SYDNEY'S BEDROOM - THE NEXT MORNING

SYDNEY'S ON HER LAPTOP USING AN APP THAT SUPERIMPOSES HAIR STYLES ON HER FACE. IN A CORNER OF THE SCREEN WE SEE OLIVE. WHENEVER SYDNEY TAPS HER LAPTOP, WE SEE A DIFFERENT LOOK ON THE SCREEN SUPERIMPOSED OVER HER.

SYDNEY

... Okay, how do I look with a pixie cut? (TAPS)

OLIVE (V.O.)

Cute.

SYDNEY

I don't want cute. Cute's the old me. Cute's the reason my Dad confused me with Glenda Kunkel.

OLIVE (V.O.)

He kissed her. (RE: CELL) It's become a meme. (THEN) Let's see how you look with a bob? I love bobs.

SYDNEY

Okay. Here's the classic bob. (TAPS)

OLIVE (V.O.)

Try another.

SYDNEY

The blunt bob. (TAPS)

OLIVE (V.O.)

Another.

SYNDEY

The bodacious bob. (TAPS)

OLIVE (V.O.)

Another.

SYDNEY

No more bobs! They're too young.

Olive, we're not little kids anymore.

We're going to be in the bathroom with eighth graders. Let's look at color.

OLIVE (V.O.)

How about rainbow?

SYDNEY

Too trendy. How 'bout pink? (TAPS)

Green? (TAPS) Orange? (TAPS) Purple?

OLIVE (V.O.)

Slow down. I'm getting color queasy.

And you know how easy I vom. (THEN) I don't even know what look you're going for. Pick a lane.

SYDNEY

I don't need to pick a lane. I'm my own lane. As a great philosopher once said, "The things that make me different, are the things that make me."

OLIVE (V.O.)

Great philosopher? That's Winnie The Pooh.

SYDNEY

It's Piglet. Get your Pooh straight.
I've got an idea. What if I take the
blunt bob. Add some pink, blonde, and
purple. And shave one side? (TAPS)

OLIVE (V.O.)

Wow! That's pretty radical. I would
never do that.

SYDNEY

Then it's perfect. (THEN) The only
problem is I don't have enough saved
up. But my Dad's cool lending me
money... kinda... sorta... once.

OLIVE (V.O.)

Just to be safe, let me look up your
horoscope to see if it's the right
time for a major change.

SYDNEY

No. I hate when you read those
things. They're so vague and wishy
washy. I don't want to hear it.

(THEN) What's it say?

OLIVE (V.O.)

It says, "Now is definitely not the
time for a major change."

SYDNEY

(BEAT) See? That could mean anything.

CUT TO:

SCENE BINT. KITCHEN - MORNING

MAX IS MAKING BREAKFAST. SYDNEY ENTERS.

SYDNEY

Mornin', Dad.

MAX

Good morning, Syd. (EXCITED) Hey, they gave me a new car to test drive. Wanna take it for a spin after school?

SYDNEY

Don't I always.

MAX

Yes. And it's my favorite part about being a car reviewer. That and the rush I get behind the wheel of a fuel-efficient hatchback.

THEY LAUGH. SYDNEY PLANS HER LINE OF ATTACK.

SYDNEY

Dad, remember yesterday when you kissed Glenda Kunkel in front of the entire school?

MAX

I am so sorry about that.

SYDNEY

It's okay. I told her you were legally blind.

MAX

Oh. Good.

SYDNEY

And even though you didn't scar me for life... totally. It helped me realize, it's time for a change. I need to do something different with my hair.

MAX

I'm cool with that. So, how much is different going to cost me?

SYDNEY

How'd you know I need money?

MAX

Because you're holding my check book.

SYDNEY

(REALIZING) Oh. Right.

MAX

Don't worry, still cool.

SYDNEY

Really? You're the best. I came up with the most amazing look.

SYDNEY OPENS THE LAPTOP AND SHOWS MAX THE SCREENSHOT OF HER WITH THE PINK, BLOND, AND PURPLE BOB AND SHAVED SIDE.

MAX

(HORRIFIED) Holy crap! (THEN) Oh, I get it. Very funny. Now show me the real one.

SYDNEY

That is the real one.

MAX

(HORRIFIED) Holy crap!

SYDNEY

I'll pay you back every penny.

MAX

You won't have to. There's no way I'm letting you do it.

SYDNEY

Are you serious? Why not?

MAX

Because you're too young and it's too extreme. You look like My Little Pony exploded on your head.

SYDNEY

This is so unfair. As a woman I should have a choice over how I want my hair to look. It shouldn't be dictated by a man.

MAX

I'm not a man. I'm your father... and a man.

SYDNEY

Well a mother would understand. Can't you act like a mom instead of a dad?

MAX

Fair enough. Pretend I'm your mother.

SYDNEY

Okay. (BEAT) Mom?

MAX

Yes, honey.

SYDNEY

(HOLDING UP LAPTOP) How awesome is this hairstyle? I really, really want to get mine done like that. Okay?

MAX

(BEAT) You'll have to ask your father.

SYDNEY

A mother would never say that!

MAX

Well this mother would. I'm an old-fashioned woman.

RESET TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

GRANDMA JUDY COMES THROUGH THE FRONT DOOR. SYDNEY ENTERS FROM THE KITCHEN, FOLLOWED BY MAX.

GRANDMA JUDY

(TO SYDNEY) Hey, noodle.

SYDNEY

(KISSING HER) Hey, Grandma. I thought you were still sleeping.

GRANDMA JUDY

Why waste time doing that? I just took my first spinning class. Only problem is I can't get "Booty Shake" out of my head. Or the instructor.

MAX

We figured since it's your first day of retirement, you'd want to take it easy.

GRANDMA JUDY

Are you kidding? I plan on doing all the things I never had a chance to. Take karate, learn Mandarin, do naked cartwheels on a beach.

MAX

(PUTTING DOWN BOWL) And... breakfast is over.

SYDNEY

I'm happy for you, Grandma. Your life is kinda just beginning. And mine is over.

GRANDMA JUDY

What did your Dad do now?

MAX

What makes you think it's my fault?

GRANDMA JUDY

Because your generation doesn't get us.

SYDNEY

I came up with an awesome new hairstyle for seventh grade, but my Dad won't let me do it.

SYDNEY SHOWS GRANDMA JUDY HER LAPTOP.

MAX

Now you can see why.

GRANDMA JUDY

It is awesome. If it were up to me I'd let you do it. But if your Dad wants to stifle your self expression and crush your spirit, that's his call.

SYDNEY

(GRABBING BACKPACK) Parents can be so lame.

GRANDMA JUDY

I know, right?

MAX

Remember, Syd, I'm picking you up after school for that test drive.

SYDNEY

Oh. I just realized I can't make it.

MAX

Why not?

SYDNEY

Because I'm not talking to you!

SYDNEY STORMS OUT.

MAX

(ANNOYED) "If it were up to me I'd let you do it." Where was that mom when I was a kid?

GRANDMA JUDY

What are you talking about? I've always been the fun mom.

FLASHBACK TO:

SCENE CINT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY - 1992

IT'S THE SAME HOUSE AS THE PRESENT, BUT WITH 90'S FURNISHINGS. MOM JUDY (LATE 30'S) HAS BIG HAIR WITH BANGS. NOTE: THE SAME ACTRESS WILL PLAY MOM JUDY AND GRANDMA JUDY. TWELVE YEAR OLD MAX ENTERS.

MOM JUDY

Three-fifteen means three-fifteen!

Where have you been? I've been
beeping you.

MAX

Sorry, Mom. I had to turn it off. I
was in the library studying Einstein's
Theory Of Time and what do you know, I
lost track of it.

MOM JUDY

Is that right? (THE DETECTIVE POUNCES)
Hands smudged. Pockets overflowing
with quarters and tickets. You were
at the video arcade, weren't you?

MAX

(BLURTS) Just eighty thousand more
tickets and I get a Super Ball!

MOM JUDY

What have I told you about wasting
your time at the arcade?

MAX

"Driving cars isn't going to prepare
me for a future career." (THEN) You're
right, Mom. You are so wise. Not to
mention super cool. You're da bomb.

MOM JUDY

That's so sweet. (THEN) What do you want?

MAX

I want to get my hair bleached.

JUDY

No.

MAX

Why not?

MOM JUDY

Because I said so.

MAX

Can't you at least give me a reason?

MOM JUDY

Okay. (THEN) Because I'm your mother and I said so.

MAX

You're acting like a dictator. First you stop me from bleaching my hair. What's next? Shutting down the press?

MOM JUDY

(RAISING HAND) Talk to the hand.

MAX

(BERATING HIMSELF) I knew I should've waited for the Chardonnay.

AS MAX EXITS, WE:

CUT TO:

SCENE DINT. MALL - FOOD COURT - PRESENT DAY

SYDNEY AND OLIVE ARE EATING A HEALTHY SNACK.

SYDNEY

... I told him as a woman, I should have control over my hair. Not him.

OLIVE

Wow. You played the feminist card?

SYDNEY

And the guilt card, the anger card, the "This is so unfair" card. I emptied the deck.

OLIVE

And your Dad still said, "No"?

SYDNEY

He said I was too young. If it were up to him I'd still be taking nap-naps in my bouncy chair.

OLIVE

Well, it's probably for the best. Not a good time for change. Jupiter is in retrograde.

SYDNEY

Olive, for the last time, I don't believe in horoscopes.

OLIVE

I know. Virgos are like that.

OLIVE PUTS DOWN HER CELL. CLOSE ON ITS RETRO CASE -- A 90'S VIDEO CASSETTE.

FLASHBACK TO:

SCENE EINT. MALL - VIDEO STORE - 1992

CLOSE ON A VIDEO CASSETTE. WIDEN TO REVEAL IT'S BEING HELD BY MAX. HE AND LEO ARE RE-STOCKING SHELVES WITH MOVIES.

MAX

... She said, "Talk to the hand."
(INCREDULOUS) When did she get so
street?

LEO

(POINTING) Hey, you put Hocus Pocus
between Beethoven and Babe. Get your
head in the game!

MAX

Okay, chillax. (THEN) You're so lucky
you get free movies whenever you want.

LEO

My Dad hopes one day I take over the
video store. Says it's a business
that's going to last forever. Like
bookstores.

MAX

It's like your Dad can see the future.
He gets it. Not like my Mom. She
doesn't get anything. Especially me.

THE COOL BOYS FROM SCHOOL WITH THE BLEACHED HAIR, ENTER.

MAX (CONT'D)

(TO BOYS) Wsup?

MAX SUDDENLY NOTICES HOWIE SANDERS, THE KIDS WHO WAS PLAYING VIDEO GAMES EARLIER, IS WITH THEM. HE'S NOW GOT BLEACHED HAIR.

HOWIE

(TO MAX) Wsup?

HOWIE AND THE GROUP CROSS AWAY.

MAX

(TO LEO, SHOCKED) I just got wsuped by Howie Sanders. He's hangin' with the cool dudes, now? The kid still sleeps in footie pajamas.

LEO

How'd that happen? We're cooler than him.

MAX

Way cooler. I sleep commando... during the summer months. Anyway, I'll tell you how it happened. He bleached his hair. And that's what I'm gonna do.

LEO

But I thought your Mom said--

MAX

Who cares what she said. I'm my own man. I'm twelve and a half. In some countries I'd be on my second wife.

CUT BACK TO:

SCENE HINT. MALL - FOOD COURT - PRESENT DAY

SYDNEY AND OLIVE ARE THERE. THEIR CELLS PING.

OLIVE

(OFF CELL) Ooh. It's a reminder.
Tomorrow's picture day. How's this
smile look? (SMILES)

SYDNEY

Awesome. (THEN) What am I gonna do?
I can't have my seventh grade picture
looking like all the others. That's
not who I am anymore. Years from now
I'll look at it and say, "Why wasn't I
more daring?" "Why wasn't I true to
myself?" "Why didn't I warn Olive
about her lame smile?"

OLIVE

You said it was awesome!

SYDNEY

I lied! (THEN) That's it. I'm doing
my hair the way I want.

OLIVE

But what about your Dad?

SYDNEY

I'm not listening to him. Besides, he
didn't say I couldn't do it at home.

OLIVE

You're doing your hair yourself?!

SYDNEY

Of course not. That'd be insane.

(THEN) You're doing it with me.

SYDNEY GRABS OLIVE AND DRAGS HER OUT, AS WE:

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWOSCENE JINT. SYDNEY'S BEDROOM - DAY

SYDNEY IS AT HER DESK WITH A TOWEL WRAPPED AROUND HER SHOULDERS. HER HAIR IS SEPARATED INTO SECTIONS. SPREAD OUT ON THE DESK ARE DYES, SCISSORS, AND AN ELECTRIC RAZOR.

SYDNEY

Okay, first we color, then we cut,
then we shave. (BEAT) Was that as
scary as it sounded?

NO RESPONSE.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

Olive, what are you doing?

OLIVE

(STUDYING PAMPHLET) Reading the
directions.

SYDNEY

You've already read them three times
in four languages. (CLAPS HANDS)
Vamos! Shnell! Andiamo! Haul butt!

OLIVE

'Kay.

OLIVE DIPS A BRUSH IN THE DYE AND VERY SLOWLY APPLIES IT TO A TINY, TINY, PIECE OF SYDNEY'S HAIR.

SYDNEY

Olive, if you continue at this speed,
I won't need to dye my hair. I'll
just stick with the natural grey.

OLIVE

I'm doing a strand test to make sure
the color's right.

SYDNEY

No time for a strand test. We've got
to be done before my Dad comes home.

OLIVE

About that. What's going to happen
when he finds out you... ya know...
totally didn't listen to him?

SYDNEY

I know my Dad. Once he sees my hair
he's going to love it... is what I
keep telling myself.

OLIVE

(APPLYING DYE) I'm pretty good at
this. I could literally be a
hairdresser.

SYDNEY

Hey, let's pretend we're at a salon.

OLIVE

(EXCITED) Okay.

SYDNEY

(LIFTING TABLET) I'm going to read.

Tell me when you're done.

SYDNEY PUTS HER FEET UP ON HER DESK. CLOSE ON THE DYES
AND MIXING CONTAINERS.

FLASHBACK TO:

SCENE KINT. MAX'S BEDROOM - 1992

CLOSE ON A DESK WITH DYES AND MIXING CONTAINERS. WIDEN TO REVEAL WE'RE IN THE SAME BEDROOM, BUT IN THE NINETIES. MAX IS MIXING INGREDIENTS. LEO IS HIS ASSISTANT.

MAX

(HOLDING OUT HAND) Hydrogen Peroxide.

LEO

(HANDING HIM BOTTLE) Check.

MAX

(HOLDING OUT HAND) Household bleach.

LEO

(HANDING HIM BOTTLE) Check. Your Mom's gonna kill you.

MAX

Check. But by the time she finds out, it'll be too late. I'll already be a frosted haired Adonis -- God of wsup.

LEO

(NERVOUS) By the way, where is your Mom?

MAX

Don't worry. She's at the movies, Went to see Home Alone.

LEO

MAX (CONT'D)

Best movie ever!

Best movie ever!

MAX (CONT'D)

(RE: BOWL) Okay, it's ready.

MAX SITS IN A CHAIR AND HANDS LEO A GIANT PAINTBRUSH --
THE KIND USED TO PAINT WALLS.

LEO

You sure about this?

MAX

Just do it like it said on America
Online.

LEO

Okay.

LEO DIPS THE BRUSH IN THE BLEACH AND SLATHERS A HUGE
AMOUNT ON MAX'S HAIR.

MAX

(IN PAIN) Ow-ow-ow-ow-ow-ow-ow!

MAX, STILL "OWING", GETS UP AND STARTS BANGING HIS HEAD
AGAINST THE WALL.

CUT BACK TO:

SCENE LINT. SYDNEY'S BEDROOM - PRESENT DAY

SYDNEY WEARS A SHOWER CAP TO KEEP IN THE DYE AS OLIVE STARES AT THE WALL.

OLIVE

Syd, you ever wonder how that dent in your wall got there?

SYDNEY

Probably something dumb my Dad did as a kid.

SYDNEY/OLIVE

(JUDGMENTAL) Boys.

SFX: BEEPING SOUNDS OF A PHONE TIMER

SYDNEY

Times up! I can't wait to see how my hair looks. (THEN) We make a good team.

OLIVE

Team? I'm the one who did the dying.

SYDNEY

But I'm the one who picked the color.

OLIVE

You're right. We do make a good team.

SYDNEY

A great team!

SMASH CUT TO:

SCENE M

INT. BATHROOM

SYDNEY'S HAIR IS A BIZARRE, MULTI COLORED MESS. SHE SEES HERSELF IN THE MIRROR AND SCREAMS.

SYDNEY

What did you do to my hair!

OLIVE

Me?

SYDNEY

You're the one who dyed it!

OLIVE

You're the one who picked the color!

FLASHBACK TO:

SCENE RINT. BATHROOM - 1992

MAX, WITH TIN FOIL WRAPPED AROUND HIS HEAD, STANDS IN FRONT OF THE MIRROR. LEO IS NEXT TO HIM.

LEO

I still think we should wait -- keep
the bleach on a little longer.

MAX

No. It's time. I've kept the ladies
waiting long enough.

MAX REMOVES THE TIN FOIL. HIS HAIR HAS TURNED ORANGE. HE SEES HIMSELF IN THE MIRROR AND A LA THE HOME ALONE KID, PUTS HIS HANDS ON HIS FACE AND SCREAMS.

MAX (CONT'D)

Ahhhhhhh!

SUDDENLY, IN THE MIRROR, HE SEES HIS MOTHER STANDING BEHIND HIM.

MAX (CONT'D)

(A LA HOME ALONE KID)

Ahhhhhhh!

LEO RUNS FOR HIS LIFE.

LEO

(A LA HOME ALONE KID)

Ahhhhhhh!

CUT BACK TO:

SCENE SINT. SYDNEY'S BEDROOM - PRESENT DAY

SYDNEY AND OLIVE ENTER. SYDNEY IS IN A PANIC.

SYDNEY

Okay, let's not play the blame game.
You ruined me. Now fix it.

OLIVE

(RE: INSTRUCTIONS) It says to remove
semi-permanent dye, wash hair with
baking soda and shampoo.

SYDNEY

Yes! (THEN) What's the matter?

OLIVE

You didn't buy semi-permanent dye.

SYDNEY

Please don't say I bought permanent.

OLIVE

(BEAT) So, what's new?

SYDNEY

Oh, no. What am I gonna do?

SFX: KNOCK ON DOOR

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

Who is it?

MAX (O.S.)

It's me. Dad.

ON SYDNEY'S REACTION, WE:

FADE OUT.END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREESCENE TFADE IN:INT. SYDNEY'S BEDROOM / HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

DURING THE FOLLOWING WE INTERCUT BETWEEN SYDNEY IN HER BEDROOM AND MAX IN THE HALLWAY.

MAX (O.S.)

Sydney?

SYDNEY

(CALMLY) One second, Dad. Just got out of the shower. (PANICKED, WHISPERS) What am I going to do?

OLIVE

(WHISPERS) You should have listened to your horoscope. It said, "No changes!" "No changes!"

SYDNEY

(WHISPERS) Not helping! Not helping!

MAX (O.S.)

Honey, I have a surprise for you.

OLIVE

She has one for you, too.

SYDNEY COVERS OLIVE'S MOUTH.

MAX (O.S.)

I've been thinking back to when I was your age. And decided to lend you the money to do your hair the way you want. Happy?

SYDNEY, GUILT RIDDEN, STARTS TO CRY.

SYDNEY

(THROUGH TEARS) Yes.

MAX (O.S.)

In fact I called the salon and they
can take you right away.

SYDNEY

(HORRIFIED, WHISPERS) What? (EXCITED)

Awesome!

MAX (O.S.)

Sydney, I know you were upset this
morning. But the important thing is
you respected my decision. And that
means more to me than anything.

OLIVE

(WHISPERS) Now he's just being mean.

ON SYDNEY'S REACTION, WE:

CUT TO:

SCENE VINT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

MAX IS WAITING FOR SYDNEY. GRANDMA JUDY COMES THROUGH THE FRONT DOOR, WALKING GINGERLY.

GRANDMA JUDY

Well, I just crossed one more thing
off my bucket list.

MAX

What?

GRANDMA JUDY

Fire walking. Then I crossed off
another - crying in a stranger's arms.

MAX

I wish you were this cool when I was
Sydney's age. You were so tough.

GRANDMA JUDY

Me? Tough? I was a softie.

FLASHBACK TO:

SCENE W

INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY - 1992

MAX, WITH ORANGE HAIR, IS PLEADING WITH HIS MOTHER.

MOM JUDY

Move it, Big Red.

TWELVE YEAR OLD MAX

Mom, I'm begging you, it's picture

day. Don't make me go to school

looking like Peg Bundy. Pleeeeeease!

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. MIDDLE SCHOOL - 1992

MAX, ORANGE HAIR, IS HAVING HIS SCHOOL PICTURE TAKEN AS
KIDS OFF TO THE SIDE LAUGH.

CUT BACK TO:

SCENE XINT. LIVING ROOM - PRESENT DAY

MAX

Because of you I spent seventh grade
with kids pretending to roast
marshmallows on my head.

GRANDMA JUDY

And that's my fault?

MAX

Yes. You wouldn't let me do my hair
the way I wanted. And that's why I'm
a better parent. Sydney would never
do anything behind my back because we
have an honest and open relationship.
She doesn't hide things from me.

SYDNEY ENTERS WEARING A HAT TO HIDE HER HAIR FROM HER DAD.

MAX (CONT'D)

There she is. Ready to go?

SYDNEY

(NERVOUS) Uh-huh.

MAX

Olive, you coming with us for the big
moment?

OLIVE

No thanks. I'm kinda tired.

SHE RUNS AWAY AT THE SPEED OF LIGHT.

CUT TO:

SCENE YINT. HAIR SALON - DAY

MAX AND SYDNEY ENTER. SYDNEY, WEARING HAT, IS DREADING THIS. MAX GOES OVER TO A STYLIST, GIA. YOUNG. COOL.

MAX

Hi. I called before. This is my daughter, Sydney.

GIA

Of course. Hi, Sydney. I'm Gia.

SYDNEY MANAGES A WEAK WAVE.

MAX

Just so you know, she can do her hair however she wants.

GIA

Wow. What a great dad.

MAX

I've got a great daughter.

SYDNEY MANAGES A WEAK SMILE.

SYDNEY

(PANICKED) Dad, this could take like forever. Why don't you go to a movie and have dinner? Then maybe go to another movie... and eat again.

MAX

Are you kidding. I don't want to miss any of this. (TAKES OUT CELL) Let me know when to hit record.

GIA

Wow. What a great--

SYDNEY

(GUILT RIDDEN) You said that already!

SYDNEY SPOTS A ROW OF MANNEQUINS WITH WIGS ON THEM. SHE RUSHES OVER AND PUTS A BLUE ONE ON HER HEAD OVER HER HAT.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

How awesome is this wig? This is what

I want. Blue. Blue's my color.

Brings out my eyes. Let's go.

MAX

Sydney.

SYDNEY

(GRABS ANOTHER) Or Pink. Pink is good. Brings out my... gums.

MAX

I know what you're up to. (OFF HER LOOK) You're trying to save money.

Don't worry. This is my treat.

GIA

Aww. Sydney, why don't you go put on a smock.

SYDNEY CROSSES AWAY.

MAX

(TO GIA) When I was her age, I wanted to bleach my hair, but my mother wouldn't let me. (PAINED) Still hurts.

SYDNEY RETURNS WEARING A SMOCK AND SITS DOWN.

GIA

Okay, time to take the hat off.

A LONG BEAT. SYDNEY SLOWLY REMOVES THE HAT REVEALING HER NATURAL HAIR WHICH MIRACULOUSLY IS BACK TO THE WAY IT WAS.

SYDNEY

Dad, can you please give me some privacy? Getting a new look is kind of a big deal. Gia and I need to create a bond. Get a vibe going.

MAX

But--

GIA

She's right. It's a girl thing.

MAX

Okay. Text me when you're done.

SYDNEY

(RELIEVED) Thank you!

MAX

I'm gonna miss your old look.

MAX PATS HER HEAD. A HAIR GETS CAUGHT IN HIS WATCH AND SYDNEY'S WIG COMES OFF, REVEALING HER HAIR DISASTER. MAX IS SHOCKED. HE STARES AT HER, ANGRY AND DISAPPOINTED.

SYDNEY

Dad, please don't stare at me. Say something. Yell.

GIA

(BEAT, YELLS) What the hell were you thinking?!

CUT TO:

SCENE ZINT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

GRANDMA JUDY IS THERE. MAX AND SYDNEY ENTER IN SILENCE. SHE STILL HAS HORRIBLY COLORED HAIR.

GRANDMA JUDY

Syd, let's see the new look. (COVERING HORROR) Well, the important thing is you love it.

MAX

Sydney, go to your room.

SYDNEY

Dad, for the millionth time. I'm sorry.

AS SYDNEY CROSSES AWAY, SHE SPOTS A PICTURE ON THE TABLE.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

What's this?

GRANDMA JUDY

That's your Dad's seventh grade school picture. I just found it.

SYDNEY

(LOOKING AT PICTURE) Why does he have orange hair?

MAX

(JUMPING IN) No reason. Up to your room. Uppie.

GRANDMA JUDY

I wouldn't let him bleach it so he did it himself.

SYDNEY

(ENRAGED) He what?! (TO MAX) You're such a hypocrite! You did exactly what I did. This is all your fault.

MAX

How's it my fault?

SYDNEY

None of this would have happened if you'd let me do my hair the way I wanted.

GRANDMA JUDY

(SMILING) Where have I heard that before?

SYDNEY

(TO MAX) Because of you I look like a Smurf and Troll's love child.

SHE STORMS UPSTAIRS.

GRANDMA JUDY

Max, my memory's not so good. What was that you said about being a better parent than me?

MAX

Don't rub it in. I feel bad enough.

GRANDMA JUDY

Why? Because your daughter's hit adolescence. Asserting her independence. Pushing boundaries.

MAX

Yeah. I was kinda hoping we could just skip over this phase.

GRANDMA JUDY

Oh, this is just the beginning. Get used to it.

MAX

But we were doing so well. (PAINED)
Why'd it have to end? Why?

GRANDMA JUDY

It's not easy being a single parent, is it?

MAX

No, Mom. It's not. I guess that's why you were so hard on me.

GRANDMA JUDY

In hindsight, maybe I was a little strict.

MAX

You mean like making me spend seventh grade with orange hair?

GRANDMA JUDY

I was trying to teach you a lesson. Plus it made you easy to find in the pick-up line.

CUT TO:

SCENE AAINT. SYDNEY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

SYDNEY'S ON HER LAPTOP. THERE'S A KNOCK ON THE DOOR.

SYDNEY

Go away.

MAX ENTERS.

MAX

We need to talk.

SYDNEY

Well, I'm not listening.

MAX

You were absolutely right.

SYDNEY

(BEAT) I'm listening.

MAX

I was being a hypocrite. I did the same thing you did. Right in this room. (NOTICES DENT) Boy that hurt.

SYDNEY

So why'd you get so mad when I did it?

MAX

I was hoping we have a better relationship than I did with my mom. Her answer to everything was, "Because I said so." Now I've become the "Because I said so" guy.

SYDNEY

No, you're not. You're not that guy.

MAX

How do you know?

SYDNEY

Because I said so. (THEN) Dad, you changed your mind. You were going to let me do my hair the way I wanted. It was my fault for being so impulsive.

MAX

I know. That's why you're grounded.

SYDNEY

I'm what?

MAX

But that's not important right now.

SYDNEY

Feels pretty important.

MAX

(BEAT) Sydney, I know this isn't just about hair. You're trying to find your place in the world. Seventh grade could be a scary time.

SYDNEY

I'm not scared.

MAX

I meant for me. I've got to face the fact you're growing up. Changing.

(MORE)

MAX (CONT'D)

Discovering boys. Not to mention all
the things going on in your body.

(OFF HER LOOK) Too much?

SYDNEY

(CALLS OUT) Grandma!

MAX

No. No, Grandma. We're gonna get
through this... hopefully.

SYDNEY

(BEAT) Okay. Maybe you're right.
Maybe I am a teeny, tiny, teeny,
teeny, tiny bit nervous about seventh
grade.

MAX

So was I. And I get that you want to
change. Take chances. I think it's
great. But you don't need to do it
overnight. So slow down. Baby steps.

SYDNEY

I am not getting back in that bouncy!
(THEN) Love you, Dad.

THEY HUG.

MAX

Okay, let's get going.

SYDNEY

Where?

MAX

Back to the salon. You think I'm
going to let you spend seventh grade
looking like that?

SYDNEY

Seriously?

MAX

Seriously. (RE: HAIR) Although it
would make you easier to find in the
pick-up line.

AS SYDNEY AND MAX EXIT, WE:

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

TAGINT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

GRANDMA JUDY, WEARING PAINT BALL CAMOS, IS ASLEEP ON THE COUCH. MAX AND SYDNEY ENTER. HER HAIR LOOKS GREAT.

GRANDMA JUDY

(JOLTED AWAKE) Flank and fire! Flank
and fire!

SYDNEY

Grandma, are you okay?

GRANDMA JUDY

Just got back from a game of
paintball. I'm exhausted. Good thing
next on my list was "Nap on a couch."

SYDNEY

(RE: HAIR) So Grandma, what do you
think?

GRANDMA JUDY

It looks beautiful. But I thought you
were going for something more extreme.

SYDNEY

I decided right now, extreme might be
a little too extreme. Especially
after I saw that picture of my Dad.

GRANDMA JUDY

You mean, Big Red?

SYDNEY

GRANDMA JUDY (CONT'D)

Big Red!

Big Red!

MAX

(JUMPING IN) Alright, up to your room.

SYDNEY

Do I really have to be grounded?

MAX

Yep, but you're gonna look great doing it.

SYDNEY

Okay, okay. Good-night, Grandma.

SHE GIVES GRANDMA JUDY A KISS AND HEADS UPSTAIRS.

GRANDMA JUDY

Remember when I used to ground you?
You'd try to sneak out your window and
climb down the tree. But I always
caught you.

MAX

Not always. Sometimes. Once in a
while. Okay, every time. But I'm not
the same parent you were. Sydney and I
have a special bond. A mutual respect.

BEHIND HIM, THROUGH THE WINDOW, WE SEE SYDNEY DROP DOWN
FROM A TREE.

MAX (CONT'D)

Did you hear something?

GRANDMA JUDY

(SMILING) Not a thing.

FADE OUT.

END OF SHOW