

MULCH & THE SUBURBS

Written by

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FADE IN:

TEASER

**CHYRON: 13 MILES WEST OF NEW YORK CITY... THE SUBURBS... OK,
IT'S NEW JERSEY**

EXT. SUBURBAN DRIVEWAY - DAY

Walking up the driveway of a large house we see 3 people.

VITO NAPOLITANO (40, salt and pepper fro-ish hair, a burrito away from fat, in a Jets T-shirt, and retro Jordans) carrying 2 bottles of wine. ROSE NAPOLITANO (40, reddish curly hair, flower tattoos on her left arm, in a sun dress and converse sneakers) holding a fruit plate. ALPHONSE "FONZIE" NAPOLITANO (7, floppy brown hair in gym shorts and grass stains).

They come upon a well-manicured backyard with several kids under the age of 10, and 6 adults in their late 30s: 3 women sitting at a table with hard seltzers, and 3 men standing in a circle with assorted IPAs.

VITO

This... is going to be awkward.

ROSE

It will be good for Fonzie.

Vito looks at Fonzie who is climbing a trestle on the side of the house.

VITO

Dude... Down... Now!

Fonzie jumps off and the three walk to the yard and survey the scene. ALEX (35, cute, short brown hair in yoga pants and a tank top) runs up to Rose and gives her a big hug and kiss.

ALEX

So glad you guys were able to come!

VITO

Well, traffic was a motherfucker,
but we finally made it...

The three look at the house directly next door. Alex starts giggling while Rose, humiliated, punches Vito in the back.

ALEX

Vito, you are hilarious!

ROSE

Thank you so much for having us!

ALEX

It's the least I could do to help
welcome you to the block.

The group walk further in the backyard.

ROSE

(to Vito)

No improv!

ALEX

(to the rest of the party)

Hey guys, please meet our new
neighbors. This is Vito, he's a
stand-up comedian...

VITO

(interrupting)

Former... comedian. I'm in
advertising now.

ALEX

My bad. And this is Rose who works
at a media agency, and Alphonse who
just started first grade.

The adults all turn and wave. The kids are oblivious.

ROSE

We call him Fonzie, Alphonse is a
[pointing to Vito] family name.

Vito politely smiles.

ALEX

Hey Fonzie, our son Alan goes to
your school as well, he's in the
second grade.

Alex motions to the group of boys who are shooting each other
with their fingers. ALAN, 8, blonde with curly hair, waves.
Fonzie runs towards the boys and shoots his fingers.

VITO

As you can see he's very shy.

ALEX

And this is...

[Alex points as each guest
raises their hand]

(MORE)

ALEX (CONT'D)

Sienna and Larry, and Clarice and
Matt, and you know Gabe.

GABE (35, shaggy haired in a ratty old t-shirt and flip
flops) walks over and bro hugs Vito and Rose.

GABE

Welcome neighbors!

Vito and Rose awkwardly return the hug and then hand over the
wine and fruit.

VITO

We gonna rage till 5-0 brings it
down or what?

GABE

We are gonna tear... it... up!

Alex and Rose look at the guys with polite smiles.

Gabe and Alex walk away with the wine and fruit. Vito and
Rose look at Fonzie who's kicking a ball with the other boys.

ROSE

OK, now it's time for you to make
friends.

Rose gestures at the guys.

ROSE (CONT'D)

We'll be living on the same block
with these people until Fonzie
graduates college. So make an
impression... but family friendly.

VITO

But I don't wanna...

Vito walks towards the men and Rose walks towards the women.

We follow Rose as Alex brings a White Claw to SIENNA (32,
black, very thin, wearing fashionable white pants and
matching top), and a glass of Pinot Grigio to CLARICE (38,
blonde, curvy in a tank top and jeans).

SIENNA

Welcome Rose! I am so jealous, you
have such a nice house.

ROSE

I don't know, there are so many
beautiful homes here.

CLARICE

So what brought you to the burbs?
The schools, or the space, or the
yard?

ROSE

All of above I guess. Are you all
from the city?

SIENNA

Pretty much everyone who isn't
collecting social security in this
town lived somewhere around the
city. Then we had a few little
ones, and boom, here we are.

CLARICE

Let me guess, Hoboken?

ROSE

We would be Brooklyn.

The women give a knowing nod.

ALEX

It's the great Western migration.

Sienna leans over and picks up her, to this point unseen,
infant and begins to casually breast feed.

SIENNA

It's basically the same as living
in the city, except with bigger
closets and more trees.

CLARICE

And an extra bedroom so your
snoring ass husband doesn't drive
you crazy every night!

The women laugh but Rose stares at Sienna.

ROSE

Sienna, I can't believe you have an
infant. You look fantastic.

ALEX

She was back at Pilates a week
after she gave birth.

SIENNA

We've got a big house but I still
need to get the hell out of it.

ROSE

Do any of you work in the city?

SIENNA

After this guy I'm pretty much done, gonna ride out my maternity and call it a career.

ALEX

I go in maybe once a month to have drinks with my team. But there's no point sitting on the train for an hour each way when we could just do everything from home.

CLARICE

I miss it though. Just getting out and being with adults instead of dealing with screaming kids and waiting for the Amazon guy. What about you Rose?

ROSE

I go in a couple of days a week. Vito works from home every day and it's nice to...

CLARICE

Not want to constantly murder your husband?

ROSE

(smirking)

And you haven't really met him yet!

The women laugh.

EXT. BACKYARD - LATER

Vito, Gabe, LARRY (32, clean cut with glasses and a golf shirt) and MATT (35, Asian with a man bun and arm sleeve of tattoos) are huddled around a lawn mower.

GABE

After year 2 I decided to step up.

LARRY

How much horsepower? Four?

MATT

No, this is at least 5.5, right?

The guys stare at Gabe eagerly awaiting a reply while Vito couldn't look more confused.

GABE
(smirking)
Actually... it's a 7.

MATT AND LARRY
Nice!

GABE
And it has mulching capability so I don't have to go to Lowe's and fill up my SUV with 30 bags every year.

LARRY
The real key is to get the right mulch mix on the edges, it really frames the yard. This guy last year tried to talk me into synthetic mulch. Yeah, I don't think so!

MATT
Some of the newer organic mulch looks pretty good.

LARRY
True, you can't go wrong with organic.

MATT
Though, I find myself picking up an extra 3 cubic yards a season. Of course you can always go with stone, that will last for years.

GABE
Man I got 4 cubic yards last spring, still wasn't enough.

Vito looks confused but jumps in.

VITO
So.. do you have to replace the old mulch with the new mulch? And if so what do you do with the old mulch? Or can you just mix in the new mulch with old mulch and make like... a mulch salad?

The group takes a beat and stare at an uncomfortable Vito.

LARRY

No man, that's the beauty of it,
you can just rake in the new stuff
with what you have.

GABE

Yeah, as the season goes on the
previous bed starts to...

Gabe, Matt and Larry emphatically continue the discussion while we zoom in on a disjointed Vito who is only hearing odd noises coming out of their mouths in slow motion.

Suddenly, Alphonse carrying a soccer ball runs hard into Vito's crotch breaking the trance and putting Vito in immediate agony.

ALPHONSE

Daddy, I gotta poop!!

Vito takes a second to compose himself.

VITO

Give me a minute fellas.

Vito walks away with Alphonse.

VITO (CONT'D)

(Still in pain, yet
relieved)

You're a life saver big guy!

FADE OUT:

END OF TEASER

ACT1

INT. NAPOLITANO BEDROOM - NIGHT

Inside a large yet messy bedroom with several unopened moving boxes, Vito and Rose are changing and preparing for bed.

ROSE

I cannot believe Sienna has a six week old baby. I didn't have a body like that in high school and she just had her second.

(staring at herself in a full length mirror)

What do you know about Crossfit?

VITO

I hear it's a cult where you get tattoos and your eldest child is ground into protein powder.

Rose starts pulling on a drawer of a dresser that's stuck.

ROSE

Ugh, the top drawer on the dresser is stuck. You got the gold warranty right?

VITO

I still can't believe you convinced me to do that. It's like the undercoat of bedroom furniture.

ROSE

Looks like we need it already.

VITO

I'll call tomorrow.

ROSE

So, how were the guys? Matt seems pretty cool.

VITO

Yeah, he's like Travolta in Saturday Night Fever, strutting around his organic Kentucky grass lawn with self-made compostable fertilizer.

ROSE

What do those guys do?

VITO

(walks into the bathroom)

The hipster Asian guy is in hedge funds and the Waspy dude is a scientist for a drug company, which I thought was weird because I assumed the Asian guy would be... Wait... What the fuck! What the fuckity fucking fuck!!

A shirtless Vito runs out of the bathroom.

VITO (CONT'D)

I just weighed myself. I gained 12 fucking pounds in 3 weeks! How the hell is that possible?

Vito runs to the full length mirror and aggressively pushes his gut in and out.

ROSE

Maybe because you don't do any physical activities anymore?

VITO

I do stuff, I walk around this damn house all day.

ROSE

That's what you're going with? What's next, water yoga?

VITO

You know I'm not a strong swimmer!

ROSE

I'm sorry but since we moved you've been like a sloth. You used to be active. You'd walk to work, and to lunch, and you would even run in the park. Now you go right from bed to your laptop. You order in lunch, you order in snacks, you even order in your weed.

VITO

We should all be very happy Jose is willing to come out this far.

ROSE

Look at your phone, it tracks your steps.

Vito grabs his phone and starts scrolling through.

VITO

I went from 13,000 steps a day
to... 450?

ROSE

See! Well, now there's finally
space to enjoy fresh air!

Rose hugs a distraught Vito

VITO

You're right. I should embrace this
leafy lifestyle more.

ROSE

It's time to leave the nest my
little bird.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREETS - DAY

A shaggy and sweating Vito is running while listening to *Dr. Feelgood* from Motley Crue on wireless earbuds.

Vito is struggling but we see from his POV he's enjoying the scenery. It's a beautiful day, there are nice houses, and several pairs of attractive women in yoga outfits walking their dogs, jogging, and chatting with coffee.

As a smirk begins to form on his face an earbud pops out. Vito tries to catch it, juggling it while continuing to jog. Suddenly, a few kids with bikes shoot out in front of him. He awkwardly tries to stop, but violently crashes to the ground.

On the ground and in pain he hears a man's voice.

MAN

Are you OK Vito?

From Vito's POV the man reaches down and helps him up.

VITO

Yeah, damn wireless earbud popped
out and screwed me up.

MAN

It's impossible to get decent
headphones with wires anymore.

VITO

Sorry man, do I know you?

The man is TIM, 45, heavyset, curly hair in basketball shorts and an oversized brown tank top.

TIM

It's Tim, your next door neighbor... I'm Jonah's husband.

VITO

Oh, shit. Sorry. I haven't seen you guys since the day we moved in.

TIM

We just got back from Spain.

VITO

I got mugged by gypsies while back packing in Barcelona after college.

The two share an awkward beat.

VITO (CONT'D)

Do you run out here a lot?

TIM

Wondering how I got this beautiful figure? No, Jonah's being a real bitch about me getting into shape.

VITO

I can't believe how easy it is to chub up out here.

TIM

Wanna grab an egg sandwich?

VITO

Yes I do.

EXT BAGEL STORE - DAY

Vito and Tim are at an outdoor table eating egg sandwiches.

VITO

Jesus Christ this is good, what did you call this miracle meat?

TIM

Taylor Ham. It's the best thing about New Jersey.

VITO

I gotta say you surprise me Tim.

TIM

How so?

VITO

I've known plenty of gay guys in my life, but you're the least gay, gay guy I've ever met. Are you even sure you like penises?

TIM

Oh yeah.

VITO

Good for you man. I appreciate you doing your own thing.

TIM

Do you ever feel like you're forced to play a certain dad bod, IPA drinking, sports fan bro?

VITO

It's always come kind've natural to me. I like beer. I like sports. I hate working out. Baby, I was born this way.

Clarice appears and walks towards the guys.

CLARICE

Hey you two.

VITO

Oh, hey uhm.

CLARICE

Clarice.

TIM

(more animated)

Hey girl, how are those azaleas?

CLARICE

Oh my God! They're gorgeous! You've got to come over and check them out. White Claws on me!

TIM

You got it girl, any time!

Vito gives Tim a curious look.

CLARICE

Bye guys!

TIM

So long beautiful!

Sienna walks away.

VITO
Do you always do that?

TIM
Do what?

VITO
You just gay-ed it up like 80%.

TIM
Did I?

VITO
Like Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Mister.

TIM
Maybe, there's something about
white women that brings it out of
me. Anyway, what's up with you and
names, she lives on our block.

VITO
I acknowledge I have a problem.

INT. ROSE'S HOME OFFICE - DAY

Rose is sitting at a simple yet messy desk in her small home office. It's surrounded by windows overlooking the backyard.

She's typing and hear's a chirp. She looks up to see a Cardinal on the ledge of the window. Her laptop buzzes with a zoom call. It's Rose's boss JANE, 40, African American.

JANE
Sorry to suddenly pull you in, but
the client wants the website...

ROSE
To be up by the second quarter?

JANE
Did they call you already?

ROSE
I just knew they were going to pull
this shit again. Can you bring up
the original brief...

Rose stops cold as she sees two more cardinals join.

JANE

Rose... Rose? I think her wif is
out. Rose?

ROSE

Uhm, sorry. Can we get the timeline
on screen?

EXT. BACKYARD - LATER

Rose walks to the yard and pours birdseed on a paper plate,
which she places on a patio table. She walks away and stares.

ROSE

C'mon, you didn't fly away did you?

A beat later a Blue Jay lands at the plate and starts
pecking. Rose is elated until she hears a tiny squeak. She
walks towards the garage and sees something on the ground.

ROSE (CONT'D)

Oh baby, oh no!

INT. KITCHEN - LATER

Rose and Fonzie are huddled over a shoebox. Vito walks in.

VITO

What's up fam?

FONZIE

Mom found a sick baby bird!

ROSE

Hey baby, eat up, c'mon now.

We see Rose putting crushed blueberries in a tube, placing it
in a small blue bird's mouth, and squeezing out the contents
as the bird sucks it down.

ROSE (CONT'D)

Isn't he just adorable?

VITO

Is that the device that sucked snot
out of Fonzie's nose as a baby?

ROSE

It was the only thing that I could
find that could replicate a momma
bird feeding a baby.

VITO

Guess you're too hoity toity to vomit it in the bird's throat.

FONZIE

Mom tried that but kept missing.

Rose gives Vito a sheepish grin. Vito is about to say something when the sounds of birds chirping becomes audibly loud. He looks outside the window at the backyard.

EXT. BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS

We watch as Vito slowly exits the house and pull back to see 10 bird feeders with dozens of birds of every variety.

As soon as Vito takes a step out of the house the birds stop chirping creating an eerie silence. Rose and Fonzie follow.

VITO

When did this happen?

ROSE

I may have gone a little overboard, but once I found Chester...

FONZIE

That's the baby bird. He's a nestling that fell out of a nest and his mommy abandoned him to die. I named him Chester because he looks like this You Tuber Chester who makes poop booby traps.

VITO

Thanks for clarifying.

ROSE

We brought him to the pet store and they told me how to take care of him. And I guess I picked up a few things. Aren't they all beautiful?

VITO

You know, they're not bad.

Vito and Rose share a smile.

VITO (CONT'D)

Look at us, all domesticated.

The camera pulls back to show that the lawn is full of overgrown grass and weeds.

ROSE

Hey, Sienna gave me the number of a landscape guy. I'm going to have him start mowing.

FONZIE

Why doesn't daddy mow the lawn like all of the other daddies?

VITO

Yeah, why don't I?

ROSE

This looks like a lot of work.

VITO

And you think that Gabe and Matt and these effete other dads can tend to their land but I need to get a guy to do it?

ROSE

Tend to their land? This isn't a test of manhood, we're not on a ranch in Montana.

VITO

Exactly, how hard can it be?

A beat of serene silence is replaced by a loud THUD, as random bird crashes into a window and falls straight down.

INT. VITO'S HOME OFFICE - DAY

Vito is at his small desk in his home office, messy with uncovered walls and a few random papers. He's on his computer typing furiously looking busy.

His computer BUZZES with a Zoom call. It's his boss JAMIE, 33, blonde.

JAMIE

Good morning Vito, sorry to surprise you. Do you have a minute?

VITO

Hey Jamie, I've been chugging away on the social posts for the new campaign. What's up

JAMIE

So... this is gonna be a hard conversation, but we need to discuss your recent work performance.

VITO

I thought I was doing OK.

JAMIE

When you first joined you were. But, it seems that there's been a regression. Late and sloppy submissions, work that's off brief. Things of that nature.

VITO

Are you firing me?

JAMIE

No, but we need to see an improvement soon or we're going to have to put you on a review plan.

In the background Rose walks past the open door with a basket of laundry. Vito slyly lowers the volume on his computer.

VITO

So, double secret probation then?

JAMIE

You can start by really shining with the Levi's presentation. It's a great opportunity to showcase your creativity.

VITO

OK. I guess I appreciate your honesty?

JAMIE

And I appreciate that. Good luck.

Vito closes out the call. We zoom in and see what he was working on, it's a letter:

(Dear, Amazon, The piece of shit earbuds I purchased as a "Preferred Choice" have failed me greatly. What dick-faced moron decided...)

END ACT 1

ACT 2

INT. NAPOLITANO KITCHEN - DAY

Fonzie is sitting at the kitchen table fixated on his tablet and giggling. Rose walks in and starts making a sandwich.

ROSE

Hey honey, what are you watching?

Rose gets nothing except for more giggles.

ROSE (CONT'D)

Fonzie, what are you watching?

FONZIE

I don't know.

ROSE

How can you not know what you're watching?

FONZIE

It's these guys who make forts out of cardboard boxes and then put traps in them so they trick these other guys who go in and get smacked with poop bombs!

ROSE

What?

FONZIE

Well it's not real poop, it's fake.

Vito walks in the kitchen.

VITO

Hey big guy whatcha watching?

FONZIE

I don't know.

VITO

How can you not know what you're watching?

ROSE

It's crap.

FONZIE

No it's not, it's poop!

ROSE

It's off.

Rose takes the tablet and shuts it off. Fonzie throws a fit.

FONZIE

I was watching that!

ROSE

Watching what?

FONZIE

I don't know.

ROSE

It's a beautiful day outside. You need to go out and play.

FONZIE

But I don't want to go outside, I want to watch!

ROSE

Vito can you do something about this? And did you ever call the furniture place about the dresser?

Camera pans to Vito who is eating Rose's sandwich.

EXT. NAPOLITANO BACKYARD - DAY

Vito and Fonzie are in the overgrown yard, standing 10 feet apart from each other with baseball gloves on.

VITO

Alright buddy, get in the ready position.

Fonzie awkwardly squats and puts his glove hand on the ground in between his legs. Vito throws a grounder which Fonzie dramatically dives at.

VITO (CONT'D)

Good job buddy, you've got the diving down pat. Now try and get it in the glove.

Fonzie throws a strike to Vito making a popping sound.

VITO (CONT'D)

Nice throw!

Gabe's head pops up over the fence.

VITO (CONT'D)

OK, now a pop up.

Vito tosses a soft pop up that Fonzie catches.

VITO (CONT'D)

Great catch!

Fonzie throws another strike to Vito. Vito throws another pop-up which Fonzie catches.

GABE

Wow!

Vito and Fonzie share a shocked reaction to Gabe's presence.

GABE (CONT'D)

Sorry to scare you guys.

Gabe's head emerges above the fence.

GABE (CONT'D)

I got a stool. Sorry to snoop but I heard you guys playing.

FONZIE

Daddy, I'm gonna take a nature pee.

VITO

Go crazy.

Fonzie turns around and starts peeing. Vito walks to Gabe.

GABE

Your guy is pretty damn good.

VITO

I mean, I don't want to brag but I have played catch with him like 4 or 5 times.

GABE

I'm a coach and he's much better than most of the kids even 2 years older than him.

(whispering)

Including Alan.

The guys look at Fonzie who is throwing his glove up and diving to catch it while it hits him in the head.

VITO

Don't these kids have pro trainers
or camps or shit like that?

GABE

Not in this town. Here everything
is soccer, soccer, soccer.

VITO

(with feigned outrage)
It's like we're living in goddamn
Brazil!

GABE

Most of the kids who play baseball
are... some don't know how to run.

VITO

Yeah, right.

GABE

I'm telling ya, some of these kids
look like spastic mimes when they
try to do anything remotely
athletic. Then they complain that
they want to watch their phone. Our
next game is this Saturday. We
could really use him.

VITO

Sure, I guess it would be good to
get him involved in stuff.

GABE

Great! Alan would love it, and
Fonzie seems to like it.

Fonzie is doing a dance and rubbing his glove on his butt.

EXT. NEW YORK CITY STREET - NIGHT

Vito walks down a street in Manhattan. His phone rings and he
picks it up. Rose is on the other line and we go back and
forth between Vito and Rose who's in her home office.

VITO

Hey babe, yeah I'm almost there.

ROSE

You better watch out for those city
guys, they may think you're a
tourist and try to steal your
wallet.

VITO
Can they sell me drugs?

ROSE
Not anymore they can't. Tell Sid I
said hi.

VITO
Will do.

ROSE
By the way, I called the furniture
place, they're gonna take a look
and get someone to fix it.

VITO
I told you I'd do that.

ROSE
Yes you did, but you didn't.

VITO
But I...

ROSE
Have fun.

Rose hangs up. Vito annoyed stops and looks up. We pull back
to see a theater with a marquee that says Comedy Connection.

INT. COMEDY CONNECTION - NIGHT

Vito enters a packed comedy club with a 10 foot wide stage
and ironic brick background. On stage is SID DENNINGS, 40,
tall and slender black man with a shaved head wearing a
Yankees jersey, as he performs.

SID
I still don't get why so many white
folks get so damn upset with the
term Black Lives Matter. I mean, if
I had ball cancer I wouldn't
boycott breast cancer month.

Crowd laughs.

SID (CONT'D)
I love breasts, and I have sick
balls, these things can track!

Crowd laughs louder.

SID (CONT'D)

I love breasts, and I must admit,
like every guy in this room... I am
a bit of a porn connoisseur.

Crowd hoots.

SID (CONT'D)

The worst thing about porn, I've
found, is when you discover one of
these so called stars has died.

Crowd has uneasy chuckles.

SID (CONT'D)

I know, it's fucked up but it
happens, like way too frequently.
Every month there's a story about a
tragic porn death. Shockingly,
porno isn't a stable and healthy
occupation. Who knew, right?

Slightly bigger laughs.

SID (CONT'D)

But here's my problem. My wife will
leave for the grocery store and
I've got 20 minutes. I'm all
settled in with my tablet and dish
towel, for cleanliness, and I'm
surfing the sites and a video pops
up with a hot step sister. Perfect
except... She's dead! That slutty
step sister is no longer living!
What's the protocol for that?

Heartier laughs.

SID (CONT'D)

Do I just skip over her or do I try
and remember the dead as they
lived? Sucking some 10 inch long
dick with a butt plug up her ass?
Isn't that the way she would want
to be remembered?

Crowd erupts in laughter.

INT. COMEDY CONNECTION - LATER

Vito and Sid are sitting at the bar having a drink.

VITO

The place smells different, muskier than I remember it.

SID

It is quite pungent.

VITO

So how many nights are you on?

SID

Every night. Except on Mondays, I'm usually booked for 2 sets at Caroline's.

VITO

That's great.

SID

(beat)

And, I've got some news. I'm going on the road for a few months.

VITO

A few months? Sheila is letting you do that?

SID

She's coming with.

VITO

How the hell are you swinging that?

Sid takes a beat and sips his beer.

SID

Don't freak out but... I'm opening for Chris Rock.

VITO

Yeah, and I'm blowing Rodney Dangerfield. Not every night mind you, just on weekends in the Fall.

SID

I'm serious man, his manager came in a few months ago and I fucking killed it in front of a packed house. I met Chris a few weeks later and... boo yah.

VITO

You know I want to fucking rip your face off I'm so goddamn jealous right now, right?

SID

Anything less and I'd be afraid.

VITO

Come here man.

Vito stands up and gives Sid a huge bear hug.

VITO (CONT'D)

You did it man, you have arrived. I really do want to kill you but I'm also so damn happy for you.

SID

You know it could've been you. You were always tighter than me.

VITO

Bullshit, I was the master of inconsistency.

SID

You were best the first time out with new jokes. Which makes no fucking sense since every other comedian is the exact opposite.

VITO

Retelling the same jokes again and again, I lost the musk for them.

SID

Kind of important for a stand up playing the same set many times though. So how do you like it in regular people world?

VITO

It depends, do you have any killer material about lame blue jeans?

SID

What?

VITO

Never mind. Fonzie is nuts but he's hilarious. Rose is happy as shit.

SID
Rose? A country girl?

VITO
She feeds wild chipmunks and calls
them by name.

Sid looks grossed out by this foreign idea.

VITO (CONT'D)
But, I just don't fit in. The job
I've been bullshitting my way
through just realized I've been
bullshitting my way through it. My
neighbors are all obsessed with
their lawns. My lawn's a fucking
mess. The women are... surprisingly
hot, but look at me like I'm the
weird kid at school.

SID
So come back! You're not in prison.
Quit your job, commute here at
night, and start working sets
again. You can always get bookings,
you know that.

VITO
So you want me to quit from
quitting?

SID
You always were a big fucking
quitter.

Vito and Sid cheer to that and take a shot.

END ACT 2

ACT 3

EXT. DAY- PARK

A group of kids run around a modern playground. Rose and Fonzie walk in and Fonzie sprints off towards Alan and several other kids. Rose walks toward Alex, Sienna, and Clarice who are sitting on benches.

ROSE

Hello ladies, how is it going?

ALEX

Just enjoying the day.

ROSE

This is great, reminds me of Prospect Park.

CLARICE

We had so many great times at Prospect Park. But I do not miss giving money to addicts because I felt guilty about their dog.

SIENNA

So you felt bad for their dogs but not for them? Is that not liberal enough, or too liberal?

CLARICE

Of course I felt bad for them but, c'mon. You know what they're doing with that money, right?

ROSE

And the dog doesn't have a choice.

CLARICE

Thank you Rose! Exactly.

SIENNA

Should we be talking about this?

Clarice pulls out a vape pen, takes a hit and passes it to Alex. Rose does a double take.

ALEX

But you're still giving the money to the homeless person. You do realize that dogs can't go into a store and buy Beggin Bits?

The women laugh.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Rose, wanna hit?

ROSE

Are you sure it's ok to...

(whispers)

Get high at the playground?

SIENNA

Believe me, it's easier to carry
around a vape pen then shlep a
water bottle full of wine.

CLARICE

I thought you were a city girl.

Rose looks at the ladies and after a beat grabs the vape pen,
inhales, and blows out a fairly epic amount of smoke.

ROSE

Wow, I haven't been peer pressured
into doing drugs since college.

The girls share an awkward silence.

ROSE (CONT'D)

Thank you!

They all laugh.

CLARICE

So who wants to micro-dose?

The women, a bit shocked, share an awkward moment.

CLARICE (CONT'D)

Kidding!

They share a hearty laugh.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Rose and Vito sit at the kitchen table and remove Chinese
food from a delivery bag. Rose fills up a huge plate.

VITO

Jesus, are you pregnant again?

ROSE

Why, do I look fat?

VITO

You look like you're eating for 7.

ROSE

No I...

Rose slyly puts her thumb and index finger together by her mouth for a weed smoking signal.

VITO

Oh, good for you.

ROSE

I forgot, we've got actual going out and drinking plans this Saturday! There's some dad band that's playing at Peabodys.

VITO

I'm supposed to know what a dad band is now?

ROSE

Also the furniture place called, they said they won't have the part for the dresser for 5 months. Something about the supply chain.

VITO

So that warranty thing was a big load of bullshit, as I expected.

ROSE

Not quite, they gave us a voucher for it, so... free dresser!

VITO

Free broken dresser.

ROSE

Aren't you cranky? Hungover from your wild night in the city?

VITO

Here's some news. Sid is going on tour with Chris Rock.

ROSE

Wow, really? That's incredible! I've gotta text Sheila.

VITO

It is pretty amazing.

Rose eats quickly while Vito pokes at his food.

ROSE
You're not jealous, are you?

VITO
Jealous? Me?
(beat)
Of course I'm jealous!

ROSE
But we discussed this. You said you
were ok with walking away from
stand up on your own terms.

SMASH CUT TO:
VITO CRYING IN
THE FETAL
POSITION

VITO
Well that was before I knew any of
the guys I came up with would
actually make it.

ROSE
You don't need to go on stage in a
shit hole in the city to be a
comic. Can't you write a book or
screenplay?

VITO
That is THE most pathetic thing
I've ever heard. I'd rather start a
suburban dad Facebook forum than
write a screenplay.

ROSE
That sounds like a perfect idea!

VITO
You really are high. I'm incapable
of any good ideas. I can't even
come up with an interesting idea
for a fucking Levi's ad. They're
blue pants, enjoy!

ROSE
Remember how you told me what
inspired your jokes? You just
observed people, wrote your
thoughts down, and then figured out
how to make it funny.

VITO

What the hell am I observing anymore? I'm in my office all day online not interacting with anyone. It's the same crap.

ROSE

That's an observation!

VITO

I'm too tired to be meta.

Vito leaves the room.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Vito walks in and tosses his wallet on top of the dresser. He tries to open the top drawer but it stops halfway.

VITO

Perfect.

Annoyed he grabs the drawer from both sides and gives it a yank, then yanks it as hard as he can and the force makes it fly out while he falls back, the drawer hits him in the chest, and he drops to the floor in pain with the drawer on top of him.

VITO (CONT'D)

Oww!

Rose rushes in.

ROSE

Oh my God, what happened?

VITO

I... Drawer...

ROSE

I don't understand.

VITO

The drawer, popped out...

ROSE

How did that happen?

VITO

Hit.. chest...

ROSE

What?

VITO
(yelling)
Jesus Christ will you help me up?

ROSE
(yelling)
There's no reason to be mad at me!

Vito still in pain, composes himself and sits up.

VITO
Oh, relax!

ROSE
Do not tell me to relax! You know
how much I hate that!

VITO
(yelling louder)
Are you nuts, I just got attacked
by a goddamn drawer and you're
starting a fight?

ROSE
I'm not starting a fight, you're
lashing out!

Fonzie walks in.

FONZIE
Mom, did you throw a drawer at dad?

ROSE
I didn't honey, please go
downstairs.

Fonzie shrugs and leaves. Vito gets up from the floor and
sits on the bed.

VITO
Sorry.

ROSE
Are you ok?

VITO
It's just that stupid dresser.

ROSE
I don't think it's just the
dresser.

Vito stares at the dresser intently.

VITO
Get me my tools.

ROSE
Excuse me?

VITO
(cowed)
Can you please get me my tools?

ROSE
You don't have tools. You just own
a wrench.

Fonzie runs in with his Bob the Builder Real toolset.

FONZIE
I have tools!

INT. VITO'S HOME OFFICE - NIGHT

MONTAGE set to "I Need a Hero."

Vito intently watching You Tube videos on drawer repair and taking notes.

Laying out all of Fonzie's Bob the Builder Tools.

Inspecting the tracks, and the stripped screw holes.

Finding small screws stuck in the tracks and poking them out.

At the hardware store showing the screws to Art and getting a handful of bigger screws. Getting rung up for \$2.50.

Back at the house screwing in the larger screws.

Maneuvering the heavy drawer back on the track.

Smoothly closing the drawer.

End montage.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Vito triumphantly stands in front of the dresser

Rose walks in with a basket of clean laundry.

ROSE

Babe, I'm so proud of how hard you worked on this but it's fine if we need to call someone. You tried.

VITO

There is no try, there is only... dresser!

Vito dramatically opens and closes the dresser drawers.

ROSE

I... I think I'm gonna cry!

VITO

Close the door, I've got something else to screw.

ROSE

Wow, Ok. Where do you want me to... position the hole?

VITO

(Confused)

The hole is next to the door.

ROSE

What?

VITO

I need to tighten the door hinge.

ROSE

Uhm, isn't there another hinge you want to spread?

VITO

No just that door hinge...

Rose gives Vito a sexy look.

VITO (CONT'D)

(finally getting it)

Ah, oh yeah! Ok, baby I'm hip!

ROSE

You better move those hips.

The two embrace.

VITO

I'm gonna break a hip it's gonna... move so fast!

ROSE
This is weird, let's just have sex.

VITO
Done!

EXT. BASEBALL FIELD - DAY

Vito, Rose, and Fonzie walk towards a well-manicured baseball field. A group of adults chat as their kids run around, while other parents play catch with their kids.

FONZIE
Will I get to hit home runs?

VITO
Did you take the steroids mommy gave you this morning?

FONZIE
She just gave me Cheerios.

VITO
That's the steroids of 7 year olds.
You're ready to go!

Gabe runs up to them.

GABE
Hey Glad you guys could make it.

ROSE
Fonzie's really excited.

GABE
Awesome! Hey Fonzie why don't you go and field grounders with Alan and the guys over there?

Fonzie runs off. Rose looks around and sees the women are perfectly put together in high-end yoga outfits and makeup. She looks at her outfit, a Nike hoodie with jeans. She shakes her head and Vito notices.

VITO
Everything alright? You just got dark for some reason.

ROSE
I can't anymore with these women.
They're always so perfect.

Vito looks around.

VITO
Yeah you're right.

ROSE
What?

VITO
I agree, their hair and makeup and
outfits, they're all done up.
(beat)
It's a little weird.

ROSE
Don't you think they look good?

VITO
We're at a first grade baseball
game at 9:30 in the morning. They
look like they're going clubbing at
the fucking opera. Seems desperate.

Rose looks at the women again and smirks. She gives Vito a quick peck on the cheek. Once she looks away he smirks.

EXT. BASEBALL FIELD - LATER

A kid gets up to the plate and a coach tosses him the ball from one knee. The kid weakly swings and misses, which is repeated several times in fast succession.

ROSE
Aren't there 3 strikes to an out?

VITO
Guess these aren't prison rules,
or... any actual rules.

Finally the kid hits a slow dribbler and runs toward first. Several kids rush to the ball, but after the dust clears Fonzie emerges with it.

VITO (CONT'D)
(yelling)
Throw to first! Throw to first!

Fonzie throws a dart to first base and as the runner is about to reach the bag the ball hits the first baseman's mitt, who then drops it. The crowd groans.

VITO (CONT'D)
Ok buddy, good play!

A few parents clap and nod towards Vito and Rose acknowledging Fonzie's play.

Vito notices several parents taking pictures with their phones, so he pulls his phone out.

The next hitter hits a pop up. While the kids stare Fonzie runs, dives, and catches it. The crowd cheers wildly.

VITO AND ROSE

Yeah Fonzie!

The parents now slap Vito and Rose on the back. Vito looks around and nods back, beaming with pride.

GABE

(yelling)

OK guys that's three outs, switch!

Fonzie and his teammates run off the field.

ROSE

Is he really good? Because he looks like he's really good.

VITO

Compared to these kids he's Roberto Clemente.

Fonzie walks up to the plate. Vito is recording everything with his phone. Gabe jogs out to pitch.

ROSE

Yeah Fonzie, eye on the ball!

(to Vito)

Are you getting this?

VITO

I can honestly say I now have more pictures of Fonzie playing baseball from 10 minutes of his baseball career than my parents ever took of me playing anything my entire life.

ROSE

Well keep shooting, your parents aren't the standard we should be going for.

Fonzie steps up to the plate. Gabe tosses the ball but it's outside so Fonzie lets it go. Gabe tosses another and this one gently hits Fonzie's leg.

VITO

Boo!

GABE

Sorry!

Gabe tosses another and this time Fonzie takes a mighty whack and hits a long fly ball.

Vito and Rose cheer as Fonzie sprints around the bases and, after the fielders mishandle the ball several times, he rounds third, runs home, and steps on the plate.

As the cheering continues Fonzie runs over to Vito and Rose and gives them both a massive hug. Fonzie runs back to the team and Rose beaming looks at Vito who is tearing up.

ROSE

Oh my god, are you crying?

VITO

What? You said to *not* be like my parents.

EXT. SIDEWALK - NIGHT

Vito and Rose walk down the street holding hands.

ROSE

It's about time we're doing this. Our first real night out since we moved.

VITO

It took you long enough to find a sitter.

ROSE

Sienna recommended her, but she's only 15. I hope she can handle it.

VITO

I was going to bars and smoking cigarettes when I was 15. In fact I was smoking cigarettes in bars when I was 15. She'll be fine.

ROSE

You're right. We're going out to see a band in our new town. Kind've feel like an adult again.

Vito and Rose give each other a quick side hug and look up to see Peabody's Bar.

VITO

You sure we're here to see a dad
band, and not dad *bods*... right?

ROSE

Ooh, I didn't even think of that!
Now I'm really turned on!

INT. PEABODY'S BAR AND GRILL - CONTINUOUS

Vito and Rose enter the dive-y gastropub. A large group of people stand in front of a short stage where Matt and Larry tune their guitars and Tim is adjusting the mic.

Gabe and Alex run up and they hug hello.

Vito and Gabe go to the bar and flag down a bartender.

GABE

This is on me. Fonzie saved us.

VITO

I'm getting a financial benefit off
my son? About fucking time!

Tim walks over to the bar.

VITO (CONT'D)

Are you allowed to be in this band?
I thought it was just dads.

TIM

I think daddies count too, if you
know what I mean?

Gabe and Vito look at Tim like they have no idea what he means. Gabe walks off with wine glasses while Vito stays at the bar with Tim.

VITO

Everywhere I look, every day I see
the same people. Is this normal?

TIM

For thousands of years people lived
where they worked, then like 80
years ago people started taking
trains and buses hours to and from
their jobs. Now we're all back
working from home again.

VITO
Don't you ever feel stuck out here?

TIM
I really don't mind it. Do you?

VITO
I'm trying to figure that out.

TIM
Don't try too hard.

Tim hands Vito a shot of tequila, they clink and drink.

TIM (CONT'D)
Just relax and enjoy the show.

Tim runs up on stage

TIM (CONT'D)
Thank you all for being here
tonight. We are Mother's Mistake,
and we are here to rock you!

The crowd of 30 and 40 somethings applaud and the band starts playing "Run Around" by Blues Traveler.

Rose joins Vito at the bar.

ROSE
They're not bad!

VITO
Mother's Mistake seems like a
really aggressive name. Like more
death metal than jam cover band.

The band plays, the crowd grooves, Vito and Rose dance. Vito looks around and focuses on the band and crowd and he stops, takes out his phone and starts writing a note.

ROSE
What's up?

VITO
I think I just figured out an idea
for that Levi's campaign. How's
about a campaign built around dad
bands and their fans?

ROSE
Wearing Levi's?

VITO

It's classic, it's rock, it's
middle aged farts having a good
time on a night out. It's Levi's.

Rose takes it in and then looks back at Vito.

ROSE

(smiling)

Sure, that could be something.

Vito and Rose dance, the band plays. Vito looks at Tim and
the two point at each other as Tim sings.

FADE OUT