

Fursona Non Grata

by
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DRAMATIS FURSONAE

LISA

DANE - Lisa's boyfriend

ZEBRINA - Lisa's mother, orange zebra

BUCK/CARL - Lisa's father, a talking bobcat

NICK - Lisa's brother, a Siberian Husky

ALEX - Lisa's sister, a goth lesbian vampire

GRAN - Lisa's grandmother

TERI/PAUL - Alex's wife, a mid-op transsexual

YAVA - Lisa's high school sweetheart, a weasel

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ACT ONE

SCENE I - Lisa's apartment

(Enter LISA, coming home from work. Professional dress, a lawyer, perhaps, but with a touch of pink. She hears an offstage noise and freezes in her tracks, sniffing the air suspiciously. Something is amiss.)

LISA
Dane?

DANE
(offstage)
In the kitchen!

(LISA goes to the kitchen door but doesn't go in.)

LISA
What are you doing in the kitchen? We use that for storage.

(DANE appears at the kitchen door wearing oven mitts and an apron.)

DANE
You use it for storage. Some people use it to actually cook things. And by "some people", I mean, the entire rest of the whole human race.

LISA
Well, come out of there!

(She tries to pull him out of the kitchen.)

DANE
Wait, wait, not yet! Don't look! Close your eyes.

(LISA closes her eyes.)

LISA
How did you get in here?

DANE
I used the emergency key.

LISA
That's not what that key is for. It's for emergencies. Not for breaking into my house and... and homemaking!!

DANE
I know. This is an outrage. You shouldn't stand for it. Here, put this on.

(He puts a blindfold on her.)

LISA

Why do I need a blindfold if my eyes are already closed?

DANE

Because you can't be trusted.

LISA

I can't be trusted?? You broke into my house.

DANE

You'll peek.

LISA

Why would I peek?

DANE

You always peek.

LISA

I promise I won't peek.

DANE

That's just what a peeker would say.

LISA

Can I open my eyes then?

DANE

No.

LISA

What! Why not?

DANE

You have to close your eyes to show you can be trusted, and I have to blindfold you anyway, because we both know that you cannot.

LISA

How would you know if I did?

DANE

See? You're already thinking about cheating. Trust me, I'll know. Here, sit.

(DANE sits her at the living room table and scurries about, setting up a lavish romantic dinner in front of her.)

LISA

What are you doing?

DANE

It's a surprise.

LISA

It's not a surprised, you cooked, I can smell.

DANE

Yes, but what did I cook?

(LISA sniffs. She smells the whole table.)

LISA

(touched)

Oh, Dane! You made all my favorites!

DANE

Aw, you're no fun. I forgot you got a nose like a foxhound. All right, go ahead and take it off.

LISA
Okay, but don't call me "hound".

(LISA unbuttons her blouse.)

DANE
The blindfold.

LISA
Oh.

*(LISA takes off her blindfold instead.
DANE has transformed the living room
into a romantic candlelit dinner.)*

DANE
Huh?

LISA
Oh. Wow. Dane, thank you. This is great.

DANE
I am a great Dane.

LISA
Probably shouldn't call yourself that if you wanna
get lucky tonight.

DANE
You're right, I gotta watch the bestiality references
if I want the evening to go according to plan.

LISA
And what is your plan, exactly?

DANE
Well, I was thinking: Candlelight dinner for two.
Bottle of your favorite wine.

LISA
Bottled is my favorite wine.

DANE
And after dessert--

LISA
You made dessert?!

DANE
--and a short-subject porn film, I thought we'd hump
like bunnies.

LISA
Dane!

DANE
I mean, make the beast-with-two-backs. Like bunnies.

LISA
Dane!!

DANE
What? That's classic.

LISA
Classic doesn't make it classy.

DANE
You're right, I apologize. But we haven't had crazy
monkey sex in a dog's age.

LISA
The term is "coon's age" and that is just offensive.

DANE

I know, that's why I made him a dog.

LISA

You're incorrigible.

DANE

You're foxy.

LISA

Grrrr...

(She kisses him.)

DANE

Aren't you going to ask me: "What's the occasion"?

LISA

Why does there always have to be an occasion?

DANE

No, see, that's my line.

LISA

Can't you just love me all the time unconditionally?

DANE

This is why we can't have nice things.

LISA

All right, fine. What, pray tell, is the occasion?

DANE

Why does there always have to be an occasion?

LISA

(throwing food at him)

Incorrigible!

DANE

Hey, stop! You're getting food on me! That's what dessert is for!

LISA

What's the occasion, Dane?

DANE

Well... if you must know... it just so happens that it was exactly three and a half years ago today, that the two of us--you and I--stepped out onto the balcony at a certain boring charity function, and officially became an item when the caterers caught us making out under the chocolate fountain. Which makes today our third and a half anniversary, which I remembered, and you did not.

(LISA glares at him.)

LISA

Oh, is that what this is about?

DANE

(feigning innocence)

Why does it always have to be about something?

LISA

Okay--and I don't want to spoil the mood, because this is all really great, Dane--

DANE

I am a great--

LISA

Don't say it.

DANE

Woof.

LISA

But I just want to state for the record--just so you don't get the wrong idea--that this does not make up for the fact that you completely forgot our third anniversary, on our actual anniversary.

DANE

I know.

LISA

You left me waiting at the restaurant in a ball gown for 3 hours, while you were home asleep.

DANE

I thought you had to work late.

LISA

You forgot. And making up an extra half-anniversary, so you could remember one that I didn't even know about, does not make up for that.

DANE

I know.

LISA

At all.

DANE

I know.

LISA

You still owe me.

DANE

I know, I know, I totally understand that it's not the same. And it was completely wrong of me to think that me being nice to you out of the blue for no reason at all could ever make up for you being nice to me all the time on purpose and on a strict schedule.

LISA

That's right.

DANE

So I asked myself: "What could I possibly do--besides the candlelit dinner, and the crazy bunny sex after--to make this evening extra-special?"

LISA

I dunno.

DANE

What is the one thing, besides all her favorite foods, and her favorite Cabernet, and her favorite candlelight, and I'm not sure how she feels about chocolate mousse, but I like my odds here.

LISA

Mm...mousse.

DANE

What could make this particular evening so unforgettable that she will totally forget that she's still mad at me for the one I messed up six months ago?

LISA

I give up.

DANE

The one thing that could make this night a night to remember for many weeks, or even years to come.

LISA

Well, it's starting to sound like Twister.

DANE

It's not Twister.

LISA

Well, I don't know then.

(DANE gets down on one knee.)

DANE

Lisa Nicole Firelli...

LISA

Oh my God!

DANE

Wait, let me finish, I practiced a whole thing.

Lisa... Dear, beloved Lisa...

LISA

(glancing around in a panic)

Oh my God, Oh my God.

(She grabs a spoon off the table and fixes her hair in the reflection.)

DANE

These past three years, six months, zero days and fifteen minutes--cuz you were late.

LISA

Don't go there.

DANE

Just sayin'. Have been everything I ever dreamed a semi-committed long-term booty call could be. Not that we haven't had our ups and downs. But the sex is so good, I really oughta lock this down, am I right?

LISA

Dane!!

DANE

What I'm trying to say is... You are perfect. In every way. Except for one.

LISA

Watch it...

DANE

Because the one thing that's always been missing...

(He takes out a ring box.)

DANE
In my humble opinion...

(The telephone rings.)

DANE
That's your ring.

LISA
I can see that.

(The telephone rings again. LISA tries to ignore it.)

DANE
Are you going to get that?

LISA
It'll go to voice mail.

(Eventually, the telephone stops ringing.)

LISA
You were saying?

DANE
I was saying...

(Her cell phone rings. She quickly hangs it up.)

LISA
Go on.

DANE
Lisa...

LISA
Yes?

(The telephone rings again.)

DANE
You're really not going to get that?

LISA
It's probably just my mother again. She's calling to see if I'm coming home for Thanksgiving. Which I already told her I am not.

DANE
And why is that? We never go to your folks' place for the holidays. When are you going to introduce me to this mysterious family of yours that I've heard so much about that I feel like I know them already, but only as an oral history.

LISA
Well, I guess that depends on what you were about to ask me.

DANE
In that case...

(He kneels with renewed conviction. Her cell phone and the home phone both start ringing at once.)

DANE
Maybe it's important.

LISA
It's not important.

DANE
Maybe someone is dying.

(LISA glares at him.)

LISA
Nice, Dane.

(She answers the cell phone.)

LISA
Hello, Mom.

(The other telephone continues to ring.)

LISA
You can hang up the other phone now.

(The telephone stops ringing.)

LISA
You don't have to call me on every line every time,
Mom.

(Pause.)

No, I already told you we made other plans for
Thanksgiving. Dane has a thing.

DANE
Don't blame me into this.

LISA
And crying about it hasn't worked on me since I was
eight.

(Beat.)

No matter how loud you do it.

(starting to worry)

Mom? Okay, Mom, calm down, what's wrong?

(Beat. Then, panicked:)

What?! When? How bad is it? No, yes, I'm coming,
I'll come. Of course, I'll come, I'm on my way.
I'll be right there. But Mom-- Mom, just-- when I
get there, you have to, please, could you please just
be normal? Could everybody please be normal? Just
this once? Okay? You promise? All right, I'll be
there in an hour.

(LISA hangs up.)

LISA
Well, I hope you're happy!

DANE
Blissfully.

LISA
My grandmother is dying.

DANE
Oh, shit. Oh, baby, I'm sorry.

LISA

Don't touch me.

DANE

Okay.

LISA

Don't talk to me.

DANE

No problem.

LISA

Get in the car.

DANE

I'm sorry, what?

LISA

You know I can't drive when I'm upset.

(She tosses him the keys and exits into the bedroom to get her coat. Beat.)

DANE

(calling after her:)

Lisa, why did you tell your mother to be normal?

(LISA comes back, putting on her coat.)

LISA

This is going to be the longest car ride of your life.

(She walks out the front door.)

DANE

I love you...?

(He looks at the ring box in his hand, and puts it back in his pocket and follows her out. As DANE exits, the scene changes to...)

SCENE II - Living Room of Lisa's family's house

(LISA walks in the front door, babbling about a trip to France in college, followed by DANE.)

LISA

And then I met Pierre in Paris. Not his real name. I mean, I don't know, I didn't ask. That's just what I liked to call him.

(calling out:)

Mom?

(to DANE)

Oh, good. Maybe they're still at the hospital.

DANE

They left the door unlocked.

LISA

Oh my God, what am I saying? That sounds like I slept with a guy I didn't even know his name. You have to understand it was summer, it was Paris, there were street performers everywhere. And their leotards left nothing to the imagination.

DANE

Lisa, is there something you want to tell me?

LISA

Okay, yes. Dane... I might have slept with a mime in college.

DANE

Might have?

LISA

Well, nothing is for sure, but he had a lot of make up for a guy.

DANE

Right, but that's not the problem.

LISA

What do you mean? This is huge. You hate clowns.

DANE

Lisa, what's really wrong? I feel like you're avoiding something.

LISA

Like what?

DANE

Well, eye contact for one. The subject for another. You just gave me an unsolicited rundown of everyone you dated in college. Which is information I really could have lived without. And don't get me wrong, I love that we can talk about these things. I just don't love that we do talk about them.

LISA

I talk when I'm nervous, Dane. You know that.

DANE

Yeah, but you never talk about what you're actually upset about.

LISA

I'm not upset. Do I look upset?

DANE

Lisa, of course you're upset. Your grandmother is dying.

LISA

Yes. Thanks. Remind me. Again.

DANE

Oh, God, I'm so sorry. Look, what's the matter? I've never seen you like this.

LISA

Well, you've never seen me here.

DANE

Because you never wanted me to meet your family. Are you ashamed of me?

LISA

No, of course not.

DANE

Well, then what?

LISA

All right, Dane, it's like this. My family--don't get me wrong--is very important to me... But they are also very different.

DANE

Different? That's what this is about? Lisa, my family is different. My parents divorced when I was 2, they remarried and divorced again when I was 4. I never even met my grandparents. I barely know my own brother, because we spent our whole childhood swapping back and forth between trailer parks so my parents wouldn't have to buy a set of bunk beds. Everybody's family is different. At least you know where to find yours. Your parents stayed together. They actually want you to come home for Thanksgiving.

LISA

Yeh... I don't want to rain on your dysfunction, but my family's more different than that.

DANE

All right, fine, what's wrong with them?

LISA

I didn't say there was anything wrong with them. You take that back!

DANE

(throws up his hands)

I don't even know what we're talking about.

LISA

You always think the worst thing. Your mind always goes to the worst places.

DANE

All right, fine! What is so wonderful about your family, that you've been hiding them from me for 3 years?

(Enter ZEBRINA, Lisa's mother, from the kitchen with a tray of cookies.)

She is the stereotypical June Cleaver housewife type in an orange striped apron and matching orange oven mitts.)

MOM

Oh, Lisa! I didn't hear you come in!

LISA

What are you doing?

MOM

I was just baking some cookies. I made your favorites. Oh, gracious! You brought Dane! You're Dane, right? Oh, this is wonderful. Oh, look at you! You are just as strapping as your photos.

(shouts)

Buck, come in here! Lisa's home!!

DANE

You've seen my picture?

MOM

Of course, I have. Lisa sends them.

DANE

I thought sure you didn't know I existed. Because I practically didn't know you did.

MOM

She talks about you on the phone all the time. It's almost like you're a part of the family. That never visits.

LISA

Mom!

DANE

Well, it's nice to finally meet you, Ms. Firelli.

MOM

Oh, please, call me Zebrina.

DANE

Zebrina? That's your name?

LISA

No, Mom. No, it's not. It's Maureen.

MOM

I think I know my own name.

LISA

(exasperated)

Oh Jesus...

DANE

So... Zebrina? Is that a family name?

MOM

Oh, I don't know. I made it up. I think it suits me, though, don't you? It's so good to see you, Lisa.

(MOM turns to hug LISA, DANE notices for the first time that MOM is wearing an ORANGE ZEBRA TAIL.)

DANE

(pointing)

Um... Lisa...

(LISA sees it, too.)

LISA

Mom! What did I tell you?!

MOM

About what?

LISA

(aside to MOM)

I asked you to be normal.

MOM

I am normal. What's that supposed to mean?

DANE

(to LISA)

Your mother has a tail.

LISA

No, she doesn't!

MOM

I don't? Oh my God.

(she finds her tail)

No, there it is, sweetie. Oh my God, my ears!

(MOM grabs her ears and runs into the kitchen.)

DANE

Why does your Mom have a tail?

LISA

It's not a real tail.

DANE

Yeah, no, I know that.

(MOM returns wearing a pair of ORANGE STRIPED ZEBRA EARS, to match her tail.)

MOM

There, that's better. Do I look presentable? I was listening to music and I left my ears on the counter again. Sometimes I think I'd forget my head if it wasn't attached. Did you hear your brother's thinking about having his attached?

LISA

Mom, I specifically asked you to be normal.

MOM

Why do you think I made cookies?

LISA

Mom, what happened to Grandma?

MOM

Oh! There's brownies, too!

(MOM exits into the kitchen.)

LISA

I think she's lost it.

DANE

What was your first clue?

LISA

She cooks when she's upset. That's how you can tell.

DANE

I could tell because she's a zebra.

LISA

Yeah, well, yeah. She's not a real zebra.

DANE

I know that!!

(Enter ALEX. She wears scaly elbow-length gloves. Like a lizard. Or a Goth girl.)

ALEX

Well, look who's come crawling back to the nest. I thought you weren't coming. Ever. Who's this? Never mind, I don't care. No, wait, maybe I do. Oh my God. It's him, isn't it? You finally deigned to grace us with his presence. Oh, that's kind of a pun.

(ALEX slinks over to DANE and casually feels him up.)

DANE

(uncomfortable)

And you must be the Lesbian--the lister--Lester the sister. Lisa's sister Lexie.

ALEX

The lesbian?

(to LISA)

You told him I was a lesbian?

DANE

Was I not supposed to know that?

ALEX

Do I look like a lesbian?

DANE

You look like a lizard, kinda. What are you supposed to be? A bat?

ALEX

Why don't I get a bat and beat you till you know the difference?

LISA

I told him you're married to a woman. He just assumed.

ALEX

Jesus, why does everybody assume because I'm married to a woman, that I'm a lesbian?!

DANE

Because you're married to a woman?

ALEX

I'm married to Paul.

DANE

Oh. Okay. My mistake.

LISA

Paul is a woman.

ALEX

Not yet, she isn't. And until that happens, I'm queer as a one dollar bill.

DANE

I'm confused.

LISA

No, Paul's confused.

ALEX

Paul is not confused! How dare you! And his name is Teri!

LISA

(smirks)

So it's the DMV that's confused.

ALEX

I know where you live, Lisa.

DANE

Well, I'm glad we cleared that up.

(BUCK enters from the garage in a full fursuit as BUCKAROO BOBCAT.)

BUCK

Would you look'ee what the kit dragged in?

LISA

(flabbergasted)

Daddy!

DANE

(seeing BUCK in his fursuit)

Holy shit!

BUCK

Boy's got a mouth like a sailor. I dunno if I like my little girl datin' a sailor.

ALEX

But if it's just the mouth...

LISA

Does no one know what "normal" means?

ALEX

Maybe you forgot what normal means.

DANE

Is it just me or has everybody lost their minds?

ALEX

Have we lost our minds? Jesus, Lisa, don't we get enough of people judging us at AA meetings?

LISA

You're not still going to those?

ALEX

It's cheaper than group therapy. And for a buck you get coffee. And what do you care? You never went anyway.

LISA

Because I am not an alcoholic. And neither are you!

BUCK

So who is this tasty morsel? He looks delicious.

(BUCK playfully threatens to eat DANE.)

LISA

That's Dane, leave him alone. Don't eat him.

ALEX

Aw, he likes it.

(ALEX bites DANE.)

DANE

Ow!

BUCK

You shoulda told us you was comin', we'da rolled out the red carpet.

LISA

I did! I talked to mom.

BUCK

Nobody told me.

LISA

I told Mom!

BUCK

Your mother knew you was coming? Maureen!

LISA

She didn't tell you? Mom!

ALEX

Oo, Mom's in trouble now.

DANE

I thought her name was Zebrina.

BUCK

Is that who she is? Zebrina! Get your Zebra tail on in here!

MOM

(offstage)

I'm cooking!

BUCK

Aw, lookit how I'm dressed. And here we got company.

LISA

Yes, Daddy, please, go and change. I wanted you all to meet Dane.

BUCK

Well, we're meetin' him.

ALEX

We've met.

LISA

(to BUCK)

Go!

BUCK

Oh my golly.

(shouts into the basement)

Nick! You better get all duded up, your sister's brought her special beau from fancy town.

(BUCK exits back into the garage.)

DANE

Who was that?

LISA

I'm sorry. He's not always like that.

DANE

Why is he ever like that?

LISA

This is not how I wanted you to meet him.

ALEX

You were hoping for a dark alley?

*(BUCK re-enters wearing the same
fursuit WITH A FORMAL VEST AND TIE.)*

BUCK

Howdy there, Lil Pardner. I'm Buckaroo Bobcat.
What's your name?

DANE

I'm Dane. What is going on? Do you work at a theme
park?

BUCK

Oh, God, I wish! That's the dream o' course. I've
applied, but they always want you to be a duck or a
mouse or a rabbit or some such. Instead o' just
bein' yourself. No imagination. I mean, do I look
like a duck?

DANE

Follow up question. Are my pupils fixed and dilated?
Am I having an aneurysm?

LISA

Dane, I'm sorry. I didn't want you to find out like
this.

DANE

What am I finding out, exactly?

ALEX

You didn't tell him?

DANE

Tell me what?

ALEX

(to BUCK)

He doesn't know we're furries.

BUCK

He doesn't know we're furries?

LISA

Daddy, please!

DANE

You're what?

LISA

I tried to tell you a million times but I didn't want
you to think they were weird.

ALEX

We're not the one's dressed like a corporate fantasy
sex doll.

LISA

I'm a lawyer!

(MOM enters with a plate of brownies.)

MOM

Brownies?

DANE

I think I'm losing my mind.

ALEX

You see? It's him, it's not us.

(Enter NICK the brother from the basement in a full-on sheepdog fursuit, but with NO HEAD.)

NICK

Where's my head?

ALEX

Don't look at me.

NICK

Mom, did you take my head? I asked you not to clean him without telling me.

MOM

Oh, why would I take your head?

NICK

Because you know I'm shipping out in a week, and you think you can stop me by hiding my things.

DANE

You're in the military?

NICK

The Peace Corps.

MOM

If you go to Africa, you will never get the mud out. You are an Arctic dog.

NICK

Can, too!

MOM

What kind of mother would I be if I sent you into a warzone without your head? I'm sure it's around here somewhere.

NICK

I looked everywhere. Alex?

ALEX

Don't look at me. I want you to leave the country. Or the basement.

NICK

Was that a dig?

ALEX

Is that a pun? Do you need a bone?

NICK

I'm serious.

ALEX

What? And I'm a circus clown?

BUCK

Lexie wouldn't take your head, it don't fit no one but you.

ALEX

The rest of us have frontal lobes.

NICK

Lexie! This isn't funny!

BUCK

Your head's gotta be around here somewhere. Where'd you see it last?

NICK

It was on my face.

DANE

(to LISA)

What's going on?

NICK

Who are you?

DANE

Who am I?

NICK

I asked you first.

MOM

That's your sister's friend.

NICK

Lisa doesn't have any friends. Oh, you mean from the city. You're the one! You're the guy!

ALEX

Dane.

NICK

That's his name! You're Dane? You're Lisa's Dane? It's so great to meet you. You gotta help me. These people are trying to kill me. You're some kind of a lawyer, right?

DANE

No, Lisa's the lawyer. I'm an office manager.

NICK

Great! You can get me a job. They got me locked up in the basement.

BUCK

You're not locked in. You just gotta jiggle the handle.

ALEX

You just don't want your own apartment.

MOM

But he does get locked in, sometimes.

NICK

You see how I'm treated?

BUCK

I done told you that latch is broke. You gotta not slam it. Leave the door partway open.

NICK

What about my privacy? They've got me living like an animal!

BUCK

You wanna fix it, you go to the hardware store and do it yourself.

ALEX

You wouldn't need privacy if you had your own apartment. In another city.

LISA

What do you care? You do live in another city.

ALEX

I still have to visit. And stink rises.

NICK

(to DANE)

You see what I have to put up with?

DANE

You must be Nick the Black Sheep.

LISA

Uh oh.

(to NICK)

No no no no, he didn't just call you that--

NICK

(*furious*)

Sheep? Sheep?! You told him I was a sheep?!

LISA

No, what I said was--

NICK

I am a pure-bred Siberian Husky Malamute mix. I have papers. I could be in a show!

ALEX

They give papers for neutering?

DANE

You're not in a show?

NICK

I have a pedicure!

ALEX

Pedigree.

NICK

My full name is Bandit Czar Nikolas Nikolovna Piotr the Great Tchaikovsky Rasputin III, son of Czar Pavlov Anatoly Kruschev and Czarina Anastasia Natasha.

ALEX

Ask him to see the papers.

NICK

I'll get the papers!

BUCK

Don't shut the door all the way--

(*NICK storms into the basement and the door slams shut behind him.*)

DANE

Is he all right?

LISA

Where's his head?

ALEX

Grandma probably has it.

(*The doorknob to the basement jiggles.*)

BUCK

The old bird's been gettin' a bit kleptophobic lately. So don't leave nothin' layin' around.

LISA

Oh my God. I forgot about Grandma!

BUCK

"Bird" is a figger o' speech.

DANE

I've heard it.

LISA

Where is she? How is she?

BUCK

Geez, I don't know. Zebrina, have you seen her?

ALEX

She's probably at the mall.

LISA

What's she doing there?

ALEX

I didn't ask, I just dropped 'em off.

DANE

You left a dying woman at the mall?

BUCK

Oh my golly! She's dying?

LISA

Of course, she's dying! Why do you think I came home?

BUCK

Sweet calamity Christmas! Zebrina! Your mother's on the fritz.

LISA

(suspicious)

At least, that's what I was told.

ALEX

I'm calling Paul.

(BUCK unsticks the basement door.)

BUCK

Nick, get your head. We gotta go find Grandma.

NICK

Why? Where's Grandma?

BUCK

If I knew that, would I be lookin' all over heck and yonder for her?

MOM

Cookies?

ALEX

(on cell phone)

Paul, where are you? What did you do with my grandmother?

(Enter TERI/PAUL pushing GRAN in a wheelchair. GRAN has a sheepdog head. TERI/PAUL is a mid-op transsexual.)

TERI/PAUL

(entering)

I'm right here.

MOM

She's right here.

TERI/PAUL

Close your eyes, everybody!

(Nobody does.)

TERI/PAUL

Ta da! Doesn't she look great?

NICK

Grandma! That's my head!

GRAN

I'm not your grandma, I'm a raccoon. Everybody stay back or I'll steal your garbage. I swear to God I'll do it.

NICK

You're not a raccoon, you're a Siberian Husky!

GRAN

I'm a raccoon if I want to be. You don't tell me what to be! I'm old!

TERI/PAUL

Oh, you're not old, Nanna. You're still a teenager at heart.

GRAN

I'm a robot at heart. I'm so full of metal tubes and punch cards I can't hear myself think. You cross me and I'll mess up your credit.

LISA

Mom, what is going on?

DANE

Lisa, what's going on?

LISA

Dane, I'm on it. Mom? Why isn't she dead?

BUCK

Good Lord o' God. The things you say.

GRAN

Is that my Lisa? I hear something snarly and angry. Lisa, come give your grandma some sugar. Raccoon's love sugar.

MOM

Lisa's here for Thanksgiving dinner, Mom. Isn't that wonderful? It's like having the whole family together for the holidays.

GRAN

Grab it by the scruff before it gets away. That's how they catch 'em in the wild.

LISA

I'm not here for dinner. I'm here because you're dying.

GRAN

I'm dying? My God! How did it happen?

(to TERI/PAUL)

You gotta learn to drive better, missy.

NICK

Dad, Grandma's got my head.

BUCK

Now, Bando, you gotta respect your elders.
Especially when they're losing their marbles. And I
want you to remember that when your Mom and me are
losing ours.

GRAN

I never took your marbles. And I don't know nothing
about no head.

NICK

You can't talk when you're in the head, Grandma! It
spoils the illusion.

MOM

Where have you two been? Lisa was worried sick about
you.

LISA

Me?

DANE

Why is your grandmother wearing a raccoon head?

NICK

She's not a raccoon!

TERI/PAUL

We were just at the mall. Nanna didn't have nothing
to wear with her new head.

NICK

It's not her head!

TERI/PAUL

So I took her thrifting, and we got her this sexy new
frock. Work it for us, Nanna.

*(GRAN gets out of the wheelchair and
hula dances briefly around the room.)*

GRAN

(spinning)

Whee! I'm a kite.

ALEX

Krunk it, Grammy.

DANE

(to LISA)

Is she high?

GRAN

I'm too old for this luau.

(GRAN sits back down exhausted.)

TERI/PAUL

And show 'em the earrings! Show 'em the earrings!

NICK

You pierced my ears?! Oh my God! Now everyone's
going to think I'm gay!

TERI/PAUL

Or stylish.

NICK

Dad, make her give Bandit back! Before she gets me a
tattoo.

TERI/PAUL

You shouldn't talk about yourself in the third person, Nicky.

MOM

It's true, dear, it makes you sound dissociative.

BUCK

Now, son, let the old gal play. She don't mean nothin'.

GRAN

Who you callin' "mean"?!

BUCK

You, ya mean ol' bat.

GRAN

I ain't a bat, I'm a flying squirrel, and you oughta know the difference. That's what I wanna know. That's what I wanna know!

LISA

You want to know what, Grandma?

GRAN

(pointing at DANE)

I want to know what he's doin' up in my beehive. Who invited him. Who's responsible for him, and who's he been screwin' on the lawn?!

LISA

This is Dane, my fianc-- Oh, wait... but I guess that's not official yet.

DANE

What's not official?

LISA

You know, the...

DANE

Oh! Oh, do you want to...?

LISA

I dunno. Maybe we...

DANE

Let's do that later, yeah.

LISA

Everybody, this is Dane. Just plain ordinary Dane.

ALEX

He looks pretty ordinary.

MOM

Please, don't screw on the lawn. Your father has to mow there. And I don't want him getting any ideas.

LISA

Dane, this is Mom, Dad, Nick, Lexie, Grandma, Paul.

TERI/PAUL

Teri.

LISA

Sorry, Teri.

GRAN

I want two names.

ALEX

You can have as many names as you want, G. You've earned 'em.

GRAN

Then call me Pirate Queen Sophia da Rat.

TERI/PAUL

You're not a rat, you're a raccoon.

GRAN

I can be who I want!

TERI/PAUL

Yes, but remember, we bought you that outfit. The outfit goes with raccoon. If you want to go pirate, that's a whole different thrift store.

NICK

She's not a raccoon! She's clearly a mixed breed husky!

GRAN

It's a figure of speech, for the love of Holy Saint Jesus! I'm a rat, because I betrayed my captain at the battle of Midway, stole his yacht and sailed the seven seas.

DANE

Okay, can I ask one question?

MOM

Oh, certainly, Dane. Everybody pay attention to Dane. He's trying to speak.

DANE

What...and don't take this the wrong way...the freakin' hell? What the hell, Lisa?!

GRAN

Good question!

ALEX

Really? I found it vague and misleading.

LISA

Dane, I'm sorry about this. I know my family is a little...

DANE

A little?! I'd say they're a lot! I'd say they're almost completely!

LISA

This is what I didn't know how to tell you.

DANE

How would you? It's happening right in front of my eyes, and I don't know what it is.

TERI/PAUL

What what is?

DANE

The suits and the tails and the... whatever this is you're doing.

ALEX

She didn't tell him we're furrries.

NICK

You didn't tell him we're furrries?

MOM

Oh, Lisa. We raised you better than that.

NICK

That's withholding evidence! You could get disbarred for that.

(A knock at the door.)

GRAN

Do you hear that? Was that me?

TERI/PAUL

I'll get it.

DANE

I mean, now I get why you were afraid for me to meet your family.

LISA

I wasn't afraid.

(TERI/PAUL opens the front door.)

YAVA

(offstage)

Am Lisa am here? Yava am seen her car.

TERI/PAUL

Lisa, it's for you!

YAVA

(offstage)

Tell her it am Yava am see her.

TERI/PAUL

Weasel's here to see you.

ALEX

It's your boOooOoyfriend.

(Enter YAVA, a weasel, with a bouquet of pink roses. It looks like he's been chewing on some of them.)

YAVA

Yava am heard Lisa am back in town.

LISA

Hello, Yava.

YAVA

Yava am brought you flowers. Flowers am pink. That am Lisa favorite color.

LISA

Thank you, Yava. That's very sweet.

DANE

Who is this?

YAVA

That am question Yava am like to ask you.

DANE

Huh?

YAVA

Lisa, am this guy am bother you?

LISA

No, Yava, this is Dane. He's my boyfriend. From the city.

YAVA

(saddened)

Lisa am city boyfriend, too?

LISA

No, Yava, he's my everyplace boyfriend.

DANE

Who are you?

YAVA

(bristling)

Yava am Yava. Yava am Lisa country boyfriend, city mouse.

LISA

No, Yava, we have talked about this. That was a long time ago.

YAVA

See? Yava am Lisa long time boyfriend.

LISA

No. Yava--

DANE

You dated this guy? And you thought I'd be worried about the mime?

LISA

It was a long time ago. It was high school.

YAVA

Yava am Lisa high school sweetheart. Lisa am like Yava's tail.

(YAVA wiggles his tail.)

ALEX

Shake 'em if you got 'em.

LISA

Yava, no.

YAVA

Lisa am think Yava am cute. Lisa am call Yava tail sexy.

LISA

Dane, just ignore him.

DANE

How am I supposed to do that? He's a great big weasel.

YAVA

(bristling)

Skinsuit am call Yava fat??

DANE

(drily)

What is wrong with you?

LISA

Mom, what happened to Grandma? Why isn't she D-E-A-D?

GRAN

I can still spell! Raccoons are the smartest member of the panda family. You're not taking me to the V-E-T.

TERI/PAUL

Oh, for Christ sake, I took her shopping. The woman's on a fixed income. I thought she deserved a little makeover.

LISA

(to MOM)

Then why did you say she was dying?

MOM

Oh, you're exaggerating.

ALEX

We're all dying.

NICK

I'm dying of hunger.

MOM

(to NICK)

Don't eat too many of those cookies. I'm making dinner.

(She exits into the kitchen.)

LISA

Mom, come back here.

(LISA follows MOM to the kitchen door, but doesn't go in.)

LISA

Mom, come out here!

DANE

So it's not just your kitchen you're afraid of.

LISA

She's up to something. I know it. She cooks when she's nervous.

(MOM brings out some crackers for YAVA.)

YAVA

Yava am thank you.

(LISA blocks MOM's escape back to the kitchen.)

LISA

Mom!

MOM

All right, I lied to you and told you there was something wrong with your Grandmother because I wanted the family together for one last Thanksgiving. Is that so wrong?

LISA

Thanksgiving is three weeks away.

MOM

Now, who's hungry?

LISA

Mom, you're avoiding.

DANE

I could eat.

LISA

Dane, don't encourage her.

DANE

Don't encourage her to what? Feed me?

LISA

She only does this when she's hiding something. She bakes out of guilt. It's like me when I talk.

ALEX

Only with Mom you get biscuits.

LISA

When I was a teenager and we had to have our talk about the facts of life, I gained 5 pounds.

MOM

But I learned so much.

BUCK

Y'know, Lisa's right. You have been cooking up a storm lately. You got a bur in your bonnet, sugar-stripes?

MOM

Why does there always have to be an occasion? Can't a woman want to make a nice home-cooked meal for her whole family once in this life without everyone trying to turn it into a conspiracy. Now, let's eat and be thankful and don't ask why.

DANE

You're going to eat in the living room?

TERI/PAUL

Nanna won't go in the kitchen.

GRAN

You're not gettin' me in that deathhole!

NICK

Do we have to talk about this while people are trying to eat?

GRAN

Rather eat in a mortuary.

NICK

Grandma!

GRAN

They got those nice flat tables.

LISA

Well, Dane and I are not eating.

(DANE was about to start eating.)

DANE

What? Why not?

LISA

Don't you want to know what's going on here?

DANE

You don't know the half of how much I want to know that, but I also haven't eaten since we almost didn't have dinner the first time, and neither have you, and I'm just saying a little blood sugar might do us all a lotta good.

LISA

Fine, take her side!

MOM

Oh, I'm not choosing sides, dear.

ALEX

I want him on my side, then.

LISA

You can't always have what you want, Lexy!

ALEX

It takes one to know one, Lisa!

DANE

(to TERI/PAUL)

So you're a transvestite?

(TERI/PAUL glares at DANE.)

TERI/PAUL

So I'm a what?

DANE

A trans... um... So what are you?

ALEX

Oh, Jesus.

TERI/PAUL

(to DANE)

What I am, XY, is a person. You wanna try that again?

DANE

Oh, well, sure...

TERI/PAUL

A person who happens to be born with a few more male parts than are absolutely necessary.

BUCK

Tell that to your wife.

TERI/PAUL

If you would like me to describe the mechanics of your daughter's sex life, Mr. F...

BUCK

No, thank you.

NICK

I'm trying to eat.

BUCK

Sorry, I brought it up.

GRAN

I made it with a mechanic one time.

NICK

Grandma!

GRAN

It was in the war. He worked for the air forces. He had a pneumatic power drill like you would not believe.

LISA

That was Grandpa, and he worked for the airlines, and it was a price war.

GRAN

I shagged him, didn't I? That oughta count for something.

LISA

What you and grandpa may or may not have done in the privacy of that cargo hangar is another thing I'd rather not discuss over dinner.

GRAN

When he'd turn it on high, that thing would oscillate like a mother load.

NICK

Grandma. I would like my head back.

TERI/PAUL

You see, Dwayne, we're all an unholy mix of female and male traits.

DANE

Dane.

TERI/PAUL

I'm sorry, Dwayne. Did someone just call you something you'd rather not be called? That must be so traumatic for you.

DANE

I'm sorry if I called you a transa-- A whatever you are--

TERI/PAUL

And now I'm a whatever. Jesus Mother of God.

BUCK

You don't know when to stop, do ya, boy?

DANE

Look, I'm not trying to be offensive, but I honestly don't understand the difference.

TERI/PAUL

Who says there has to be a difference?

DANE

There's obviously a difference.

ALEX

If it's obvious, why do you need an explanation?

TERI/PAUL

We think we can look at a person and go, "Broad shoulders, likes football, bulges in all the right places: must be a man." Or "Boobies and Barbies and colors her hair: that one's a lady." And we lump all these hundreds of arbitrary traits into two arbitrary categories--Snakes and snails and puppy dog tails in this corner. Anything wearing pink in that corner.-- And the little girl who wants to be a herpetologist ends up in the middle of the room feeling like an outcast when she's probably the only normal one there.

ALEX

Baby, you need better grades to be a herpetologist.

TERI/PAUL

I could have got a tutor!

DANE

But it's not really completely arbitrary, is it?

TERI/PAUL

Are you a football player, Dwayne?

DANE

No, and it's Dane.

TERI/PAUL

So you don't play football, and you have a girl's name. You must be woman.

DANE

A lot of guys don't play football.

TERI/PAUL

Most guys don't play football, in fact.

DANE

But it doesn't make me a woman.

TERI/PAUL

You're right, of course. You're still a man. Just not as much of a man.

DANE

There's nothing wrong with my manhood.

TERI/PAUL

Nothing a six-pack and a night in a duck blind won't fix.

DANE

I don't need to be fixed.

ALEX

Let's ask Lisa. How's he hangin', Leez?

LISA

No comment.

DANE

Thank you.

ALEX

I don't think that was a compliment.

TERI/PAUL

So maybe you're just gay.

DANE

I have sex with women.

ALEX

So do I. We should go be lesbians together.

LISA

You have sex with women?

DANE

With woman. With one woman. At a time. With you.

TERI/PAUL

Only one? So you dabble. Maybe you're just experimenting.

DANE

I can't believe I'm having this conversation.

TERI/PAUL

Oh, I can. It's the same conversation every girl has when she's going through this phase.

LISA

All right, leave him alone, Teri. It's not his fault he doesn't know the terminology. He didn't get the newsletter.

TERI/PAUL

(to ALEX)

Get his email.

LISA

Dad, what's wrong with Grandma?

BUCK

Nothing. She's been in good shape lately.

GRAN

I'm healthy as a whore is! That's what he told me.

BUCK

A horse! I called you a horse, you old goat!

NICK

Dad, can I talk to you?

BUCK

Can it wait, Nick?

NICK

Fine!

LISA

Then why did Mom tell me she had collapsed? And wasn't going to make it.

BUCK

(laughs)

Oh. Yeah. She said she might do that. We thought she was joking.

LISA

You thought that would be funny?!

ALEX

Guess you had to be there.

BUCK

Maybe she just wanted you home for Thanksgiving.

(Enter MOM.)

LISA

Mom...

MOM

So maybe I wanted you home for Thanksgiving. Is that so wrong?

LISA

Yes, it is wrong. You lied to me. You scared the bejeez-whiz out of me.

DANE

Which, by the way, not telling me your family is a buncha freaks falls into that same category.

LISA

Well, maybe I didn't tell you cuz I thought you'd call them freaks!

DANE

That's not what I meant.

LISA

It's what you said.

ALEX

Yeah, you did.

NICK

I heard it.

YAVA

(growls)

Rrrrrr...

DANE

I take it back.

LISA

Tell the truth, it's what you think. Now that you met them.

DANE

That's not-- I'm not saying--

YAVA

(growls)

Rrrrrr...

DANE

How could you keep this from me?

LISA

Because it's none of your business. Because it shouldn't matter.

DANE

How is not knowing what I'm marrying into none of my business?

MOM

You're getting married?!

BUCK

What the--? Congratulations! Oh my chittlin's! I gotta get a tux.

(BUCK heads for the garage.)

TERI/PAUL

When's the wedding?

LISA

He hasn't proposed yet!

ALEX

Hold the tux!

LISA

Not all the way.

ALEX

Third base?

TERI/PAUL

Then how do you know you're getting married?

GRAN

Look at 'em argue. It's a done deal.

NICK

I have an announcement. I'm moving out.

ALEX

Of the basement?

MOM

No, no, no, the guest room upstairs is for guests.

BUCK

You wouldn't like it in there, son. Too many of your Grandma's lace doilies.

MOM

And where would your grandmother sleep?

NICK

I didn't say I was moving upstairs.

BUCK

I better clean out my ears. That's what I thought sure you said.

NICK

I said I'm moving out.

ALEX

Of the basement?

BUCK

Now there, I heard it again. Clear as a bell.

MOM

I guess he could have Lisa's old room. If she's really never coming back.

BUCK

No. You can't indulge him. He just wants us to clean the basement for him. Those dust bunnies are your responsibility, boy.

DANE

I think he means he's moving out of the house. Moving out on his own.

NICK

Thank you! I'm glad *someone* in this house understands me.

DANE

I'm not actually in the house.

NICK

You are officially my favorite one of Lisa's ex-boyfriends.

DANE

I'm not an ex-boyfriend.

ALEX

Yet.

LISA

But you're working at it.

YAVA

Yava am not your favorite?

TERI/PAUL

No, Yava, he's just saying that. You're still everybody's favorite.

(TERI/PAUL scratches YAVA behind the ears.)

NICK

Yeah, I'm sorry, buddy. You're still the best one.

YAVA

Yava am thank you. Mmm... Lower.

TERI/PAUL

Well, while we're making announcements, Lexie and I have one to make, too.

ALEX

We're moving, too!

TERI/PAUL

We're getting married!

MOM

Oh, wonderful. It could be a double wedding.

BUCK

Where are you moving to?

TERI/PAUL

Somewhere they'll let us get married.

ALEX

Belgium, if we have to.

DANE

I thought you were already married.

TERI/PAUL

We are. But we want to get gay-married.

DANE

(to ALEX)

But you're not gay.

ALEX

I'm not gay. But my marriage is.

TERI/PAUL

And I'm not gay. But I will be after the operation.

ALEX

And we just don't want to have any problems at the airport after Paul gets his sex change. Besides all the wedding photos from our last wedding are awful. Paul looks so uncomfortable in that man-suit.

MOM

This is wonderful. It could be a big huge double wedding.

BUCK

I don't know how wonderful it's gonna be. I'm the father of two outta three brides.

LISA

There's not going to be a double wedding.

TERI/PAUL

Oh, please, Lisa? All your pink will complement Ali's black so nicely.

ALEX

You'll be wearing gold lamé, won't you, sweetie?

(MOM bursts into tears.)

LISA

Mom, why are you crying?

MOM

I'm so proud of all of you. So much is changing in our little family, so it's time I let you know I have an announcement too. That's why I wanted us all to have one last Thanksgiving dinner together as a family.

ALEX

We're getting married, not murdered. We'll all be back.

YAVA

Yava am come back. Unless Skinsuit am something to say about it.

BUCK

Oh, Yava, you're always welcome in this house. No matter who she marries.

MOM

You shouldn't make promises you can't keep, Buck.

YAVA

Yava am have to pee.

BUCK

I said the Weasel can come over and I mean it.

MOM

What makes you think you're getting the house?

BUCK

What?

MOM

In the divorce settlement.

LISA

What?

MOM

Your father and I are getting a divorce.

NICK

You're what? Pop? No! How could you do this to me?

BUCK

This is the first I've heard of it.

MOM

Oh, I'm sorry. Buck, I want a divorce.

BUCK

What?

LISA

Why?

MOM

He knows why.

BUCK

Pretty sure I don't.

NICK

I need stability!

GRAN

Whenever your Grandfather and I had marital trouble, I'd slip a little laxative in his oatmeal. He straightened up right quick.

MOM

Because your father is cheating on me.

BUCK

I'm what?

TERI/PAUL

Jesus, Mr. F.

NICK

Dad, how could you?

MOM

With another furry.

BUCK

What? Now, honey!

YAVA

Yava am excuse himself.

(YAVA exits to the bathroom.)

GRAN

He knew if he ever run out on me, he'd have the runs doing it. I always told him, you wanna stay regular, you better stay true.

MOM

Don't try to deny it! I was washing Buckaroo and I found someone else's fur in your zipper.

BUCK

Well, Zebrina, it was probably one of my buddies at the last convention helping me zip up. You know I have trouble getting in and out of the suit by myself.

MOM

Denial is a river you're about to be up without a paddle, Buck Bobcat.

BUCK

Okay, we have to talk about this.

MOM

I'm through talking. You keep your filthy paws off me.

NICK

Don't touch my Mom!

(NICK punches BUCK. NICK hugs MOM and cries.)

MOM

There, there, sweetie. Good dog.

GRAN

He never gave me no trouble, except that one time during the war. When he started charging extra for carryon bags. I said, "Extra for carryon?! Where am I supposed to hide my cocaine? In my checked luggage? I'm not paying you to get half the baggage handlers at LAX high." Haven't I sacrificed enough for this country? Metal detectives and cavity searches and the heat. I don't know how you can stand it in this heat. It's like bees. And the floor is sticky as jello dripping from the ceiling like swiss cheese. And through the holes, I can see God smilin' up at me like a hungry mountain lion. Back! Back, you devil! These are my acorns. Mine! Mine!!

ALEX

Grammy!

TERI/PAUL

I think she's having an attack.

DANE

Everybody stay calm. I'm calling 9-1-1.

(DANE springs into action, races to the phone.)

LISA

Get Yava in here. Yava!

ALEX

Weasel!

YAVA

(offstage)

Yava am try to pee!

TERI/PAUL

It's an emergency.

DANE

(on the phone)

Yes, hello, we need help. The nature of the emergency is that we need somebody right away. There's a woman here and she's having an attack of some sort. I don't know what kind of attack, because I can't see her head. No, no, her head is inside a raccoon.

NICK

He's a sled dog! An Alaskan Husky Malamute mix.

(YAVA enters from the rest room, zipping up.)

YAVA

(entering)

What am the big dillio?

TERI/PAUL

It's Nanna.

DANE

(on the phone)

The address? Lisa, what's the address here?

(YAVA springs into action.)

YAVA

(losing his character voice)

Get out of my way. Grammy, can you hear me?

GRAN

If I wasn't so blue, you'd hear what I'm trying to soften up with you people.

YAVA

She's incoherent. I'm goin' in!

(YAVA grabs a steak knife off a dinner tray and stabs GRAN in the face and rips open her head.)

NICK

You're tearing my face apart!!

MOM

Shut up, Nicky!

BUCK

Everybody, stay calm. What would your grandfather do?

ALEX

(to LISA)

This is your fault! Why did you have to come back?

DANE

(on the phone)

Okay, they got her head off.

YAVA

Pulse is weak. We gotta get her up on the table.

MOM

Push those tray tables together.

YAVA

Where's the defibrillator?

BUCK

The defibbawhubba?

YAVA

The defibrillator I told you to buy. Come on, Buck!

MOM

It's in the kitchen. By the toaster.

YAVA

Let's get her in there.

LISA

No, not the kitchen!

GRAN

(*incomprehensible*)

Nod the nonna.**

*** (I'm not goin' in the kitchen!)*

LISA

She doesn't want to go in the kitchen!

YAVA

You! Skinsuit! Grab her legs.

LISA

She doesn't want to go in the kitchen.

YAVA

Lisa, get the door.

ALEX

I'll get the door.

MOM

I'll clear off the kitchen table.

YAVA

On 3, gently. 1-2-3.

LISA

She wouldn't want this.

YAVA

Lisa, help or get out of the way.

DANE

For God's sake, Lisa!

MOM

Do you need me to boil some water?

(They lift GRAN and carry her into the kitchen as LISA watches aghast.)

LISA

(hyperventilating)

No, this can't be happening. This can't be happening. This can't be happening again.

(LISA looks around helplessly, frantically, then runs out the front door.)

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

SCENE I - Living Room of Lisa's family's house

(A few hours later. BUCK, YAVA and NICK come in the front door, followed by DANE.)

BUCK

(enters)

Well, I'm glad that's over.

YAVA

(enters)

Gammy am not out of woods yet.

NICK

(enters with tattered head)

Look at my face! Look what you did to my face!

YAVA

Face am battle scars now. Bandit face am sexy for the ladies. Rrrrr.

(MOM comes in and makes a beeline for the kitchen.)

MOM

Is anybody hungry? You all must be starving. I'll make some cookies.

BUCK

We have to talk.

MOM

I have to bake.

BUCK

Don't walk away from me, Zebrina!

(MOM exits into the kitchen.)

BUCK

You can't cook your way outta this one, Maureen!

(Beat.)

Well, it better be mighty tasty, whatever it is!

(MOM storms back in from the kitchen.)

MOM

Don't tell me how to cook! Don't you dare tell me how to cook!

BUCK

Fine! Cook how you want to!

MOM

(thwarted)

Ooh!

BUCK

Ha!

YAVA

Gammy am not need this stress. Gammy am peace and quiet now.

(TERI/PAUL enters pushing GRAN in her wheelchair.)

GRAN

I'm healthy as a whore is!

TERI/PAUL

That you are, Nanna.

GRAN

Why's it so bright in here?

TERI/PAUL

Cuz you're not a raccoon anymore.

GRAN

That's right! Raccoons are nocturnal. Now I'm a mourning dove! Coo... coo...

(ALEX enters.)

NICK

I'm not a raccoon!

MOM

I'll be in the kitchen!

(MOM storms into the kitchen.)

BUCK

I'll be in the garage!

(BUCK storms into the garage.)

ALEX

What'd I miss?

(MOM storms back in from the kitchen and locks BUCK in the garage.)

MOM

(shouting through the door)

And you stay there until you think about what you've done!

BUCK

(offstage, pounds on door)

Zebrina! You open up this here door! Don't you go lockin' a man in his own garage! It ain't respectful. You quit being childish now, Maureen.

MOM

(plugging her ears)

I'm not listening! La la la la la!

BUCK

(offstage)

Zebrina!

(MOM exits into the kitchen with her hands over her ears.)

NICK

Mom's in a feeding frenzy.

ALEX

I'll go talk to her.

(ALEX exits into the kitchen.)

TERI/PAUL

I'll lick the spoon.

(TERI/PAUL exits into the kitchen.)

YAVA

Yava am glad that am settled. Gammy am too much anxiety. Gammy am rest and relaxation now.

GRAN

You remind me of that nice boy Lisa dated in high school. Whatever happened to him? Weasly little fella.

YAVA

That am Yava!

GRAN

And where is Lisa? She must be all grown up now. Moved outta the nest and gave up living like an animal, she did. Ran off to the big city, and joined the rat race, instead.

YAVA

That am right.

(to DANE)

Rrrrats am rrrrace.

DANE

Yeah, I get it.

YAVA

Yava am paperwork to fill out. Gammy am try not to get too excited. Gammy am got to take her meds like am good girl.

GRAN

If they're not Flintstones chewable, you're gonna have to force-feed me.

YAVA

(turns to NICK)

Scarface am do it. Right, Scarface?

NICK

That's not funny, Yava.

YAVA

Yava am joke. Weasel am tease Bandit.

NICK

Well, it's hurtful.

YAVA

Yava am 'pologize. This am important, Scarface. Gammy am take her meds or Gammy am have another panic attack.

GRAN

It wasn't a panic attack! I have diphtheria! That's a real disease, I didn't make it up!

NICK

I'll make sure she does it, Yava.

(takes the pills from YAVA, then turns vengefully on GRAN)

You hear that, Grandma? You steal my head again, you don't get your pills!

YAVA

(snatches pills away from NICK)

Gimme that! Nick am bad dog!

(YAVA smacks NICK with a rolled up newspaper.)

NICK

Yipe!

(YAVA turns reluctantly to DANE.)

YAVA

Okay. Yava am no choice. Skinsuit am make sure

Gammy am take her pills?

DANE

Nuh uh. No. You ask me right.

YAVA

(sighs, exasperated)

Skinsuit am please give Gammy her pills? Skinsuit am pretty please am sugar on top...

DANE

No, no, no. I heard you before. You know how to talk normal. That's not how you spoke at the hospital. So I know you can do it.

YAVA

Yava am coworkers am hospital. Skinsuit am not sign Yava paycheck.

DANE

I'm onto you.

YAVA

Oo, Skinsuit am so clever from figure out Yava am bilingual?

DANE

You're not bilingual! This am not am language.

YAVA

Now Skinsuit am make fun of Yava accent?

DANE

It's not an accent!

YAVA

(pointedly)

Skinsuit am honestly believe Yava am all-a-time talk like weasel? Hmm? Now which am smarter? Weasel or Skinsuit?

GRAN

He's right, there. You're a dumbass.

YAVA

Yava am got to go. Where am Lisa?

DANE

I dunno. Lisa?

YAVA

Lisa?

DANE

Lisa!!

NICK

Somebody left the door unlocked. She musta got out!

DANE

Her car's gone.

YAVA

Yava am find her. Yava am nose for finding.

*(YAVA runs outside, leaving NICK & DANE
with nothing to talk about.)*

DANE

Sorry about your head.

NICK

Have you ever been in the military?

DANE

I thought I'd wait for the movie.

NICK

Because maybe if I joined the army they'd have more respect for me.

DANE

Do they let raccoons in the army?

NICK

For your information, if they don't ask me, I don't have to tell.

DANE

Well, sure.

NICK

And I am a Siberian Husky!

DANE

Right.

NICK

And I'm not even that anymore! I've got no head. I'm just a loser in a hair suit with a man-head. Just like you!

DANE

If it bothers you, why don't you take it off?

NICK

Take what off?

DANE

The suit.

NICK

Are you insane?!

DANE

Well, that would be the simplest explanation. That only one of us is insane. And the rest of you are all figments.

NICK

Don't you get how this works?

DANE

Obviously not.

NICK

If I take off the suit, then the terrorists win.

DANE

Well, in that case, I thank you for your service.

NICK

Do you know what it's like to grow up being picked on every day at school because this is how your family makes you dress?

DANE

No. Nobody does.

NICK

Yeah, cuz it's not bullying, if we only beat up the weirdos, Right?

DANE

There was nobody like you at my school.

NICK

How do you know if you never saw one?

DANE

Exactly! If you wore that in public, what did you expect?

NICK

I expect to be treated like a human being.

DANE

Apparently not.

NICK

And that! That right there is the attitude I'm talking about. Because me being who I am is not the problem. Do you know what's the problem? That a kid could be walking down the hallway, minding his own business, trying to get to math class and someone he never even met before could smack him in the face for no reason, and everyone would laugh like that was perfectly normal. I mean, what's up with that? In what reality is that acceptable behavior?

DANE

Well, when you put it that way...

NICK

I wear the suit, because it's not about the suit.

DANE

That seems counter-intuitive.

NICK

Do you know who they beat up if Lisa pissed off somebody at school? Or if Lexy pissed off everybody at school?

DANE

So I guess you had it pretty rough.

NICK

Not me. The Weasel. They beat the crap out of him. That guy can really take a punch. That's who you want in your cockpit when the plane is going down.

DANE

Actually, I want the guy with the parachutes.

NICK

I wear the suit, because somewhere out there is a kid just like me who needs an example to look up to.

GRAN

You can't be an example if you never leave the house.

NICK

Lisa really didn't tell you anything about us?

DANE

Would I be here if she had?

NICK

Wow. I'm so sorry, buddy.

DANE

For what?

NICK

I mean, think about it. She didn't tell you this.

What else is she hiding from you?

DANE

That's not-- I don't think-- No, this is definitely the only thing.

NICK

Now who's delusional?

DANE

I never called you delusional.

(Enter LISA with a bag of groceries.)

DANE

Lisa!

LISA

(ignoring DANE)

Hi, Grandma.

GRAN

Oh, hello, Lisa. You just missed a discussion of strays in the military.

LISA

Are you all right, Grandma?

GRAN

Oh, yes, that nice weasel boy took good care of me. Said it was all in my head. Now my head is gone and I'm good as gold. Even got that new car smell.

DANE

Lisa, where the hell have you been?!

LISA

I had to run to the store.

(knocks on kitchen door)

Mom, I got you some flour and eggs. I'm leaving them here by the door.

DANE

You went grocery shopping?!

LISA

She started cooking, didn't she?

DANE

What's that got to do with anything?

LISA

Have you ever had flourless cookies?

DANE

We were in a medical emergency!

LISA

I don't expect you to understand.

DANE

You don't expect much of me, do you?

LISA

This isn't about you, Dane.

DANE

No, it's about you. Your Grandmother could have been dying. Again. No offense.

GRAN

Oh, none taken.

DANE

You don't just walk out on your family when they need you.

LISA

You don't know what my family needs.

DANE

Really? They need cookies?

NICK

I could go for a cookie. Grandma?

GRAN

Don't try to bribe me!

LISA

This isn't easy for me, being here. I'm going through a lot of stuff right now.

DANE

Well, now we're both here and we're both going through stuff. Together!

LISA

This doesn't have to be your problem, Dane.

DANE

I didn't really have a choice. You left me here with these people. If you can call them that.

LISA

These people? Is that what they are to you?!

DANE

I don't know what they are! Is this why you've been hiding them? You were afraid I couldn't handle the truth?

LISA

Cuz you're handling it so well now.

DANE

I'm not the one running away when they need me.

LISA

They don't need you! The weasel's an EMT!

DANE

We're not talking about me! We're talking about you!

LISA

So the royal "me"?

DANE

Well, I'm just glad I'm finding all this out now before it's too late.

LISA

Before it's too late?! For what, exactly?

DANE

(caught)

Okay, that's not what I meant.

LISA

It's what you said.

DANE

Too late before it goes on any longer, is what I meant to say.

GRAN

Bull crap! I know when a man's lying to my granddaughter. Cuz his mandibles are moving.

(to NICK)

Sic 'im, Bandit!

NICK

What? Me?

GRAN

Go for the juggler!

NICK

(to DANE)

Um, okay, dude, I'm gonna have to ask you to leave.

LISA

He's not going anywhere till I get an apology.

DANE

I'm not going anywhere, cuz you've got the car keys.

NICK

Cool, so you can stay?

LISA

"Too late to get out." That's what you meant to say.

DANE

Okay, now you're putting words in my mouth again.

LISA

I'm not the mouth who's trying to get out before it's "too late".

DANE

If I'm trying to get out, then why am I here?

LISA

You're here because you don't have the car keys.

DANE

Fine, give me the keys.

LISA

I bet you'd like that! Is that how you see commitment? As a cage you have to squirm out of? A relationship that's headed for a cliff and you have to bail out before I take you down with me?

DANE

You can't accuse me of bailing when you weren't even here.

LISA

Don't tell me where I am! I know where I am!

Because I'm the one who's always there!

DANE

And now you're avoiding.

LISA

We'll see who's avoiding. Go ahead and propose to me now.

DANE

I am not going to propose under duress.

LISA

See?!

DANE

No! Nuh uh!

LISA

You're fine taking the plunge as long as the water is warm and the sex is good and I don't have any baggage weighing us down, but the minute things get complicated--! Well, I got news for you, I'm complicated. And I've got bags you don't even know about.

NICK

Is she calling us luggage?

GRAN

I'm a steamer trunk.

NICK

Cuz you're leathery?

GRAN

Cuz I don't fit in the overhead compartment!

DANE

What is this really about, Lisa?

LISA

Is this how you're going to react when one of our kids turns out to be furry? Or gay? Or, or Muslim?

DANE

Why would our kids turn out to be any of those things? Well, gay, maybe.

LISA

Maybe I didn't tell you about my family, because I knew you'd take one look at them and think what everybody always thinks.

DANE

Okay, don't take this the wrong way, but it's not my fault if you're ashamed of your family.

LISA

If I'm *what*?!

DANE

Okay, you took it the wrong way.

LISA

I'm not ashamed of my family! And this is not my fault!

NICK

It's kinda your fault.

LISA

Not now, Nick!

NICK

Well, it is.

LISA

Nick, go to your room!

NICK

We wouldn't be furrries if it wasn't for you.

LISA

Don't make me roll up a newspaper!

NICK

You don't scare me!

(LISA rolls up a newspaper.)

(NICK flees into the basement, slamming the door behind him. After a beat, the door knob jiggles futilely.)

LISA

Let me tell you something, Dane. My family made me who I am. And I'm proud of every single one of them, no matter who they are or what they look like. And maybe I didn't tell you because my family's got enough problems without you coming here and judging them before you even gave them half a chance!

DANE

Well, then that makes two of us, because you never gave me a chance, either. Before I even got here, you decided how I was gonna feel and what I was gonna think.

LISA

Was I wrong?

DANE

I don't know what I would've done if you told me earlier, but I know one thing: Neither do you. You judged me, too, Lisa.

LISA

I think you should leave.

DANE

Maybe I should.

LISA

You don't want to be here. Fine, don't be here. My family makes you uncomfortable. So go back home. There's a nice comfy, uncomplicated couch waiting for you to potato in.

DANE

Maybe that's best.

LISA

Maybe that's why I suggested it.

DANE

I'll see you back at the apartment.

LISA

We'll see about that.

(LISA heads upstairs.)

DANE

Lisa! Are you going to give me the car keys?

LISA

It's my car! You find your own way back.

DANE

It's a two-hour drive! I'm not going to walk.

(YAVA re-enters.)

DANE

Lisa! How am I supposed to get home without a car?

YAVA

Yava am give you a ride.

DANE

We live in the city.

YAVA

Yava am take you downtown.

DANE

No, not this city. The real city. The one that this is a suburb of.

YAVA

That am okay.

DANE

It's in another state.

YAVA

Yava am drive Skinsuit to Kansas if that am get rid of him.

DANE

I'm not getting in a car with you.

YAVA

Yava am buy you a bus ticket.

DANE

I'm not going anywhere.

YAVA

Oh, well. Yava am try. Where am Lisa?

GRAN

She went off in a snit.

YAVA

Weasel am good with snits. Yava am show Skinsuit how it am done.

(YAVA exits upstairs.)

YAVA

(offstage)

Lisa...?

LISA

(screams)

What are you doing?!

YAVA

(offstage)

Yava am--

LISA

(offstage)

Get out!

YAVA

(offstage)

Yava--

LISA

(offstage)

What part of "Get the hell out of here" don't you understand, you freak! I don't need your help with everything!

YAVA

(offstage)

Yava am--

LISA

Go!!

(YAVA re-enters.)

YAVA

Yava am wait till Lisa am out of shower.

DANE

Ha!

YAVA

(bristling)

Yava am go rent you a car.

(YAVA exits.)

(TERI/PAUL enters licking the spoon.)

TERI/PAUL

Looks like you're the last man standing.

DANE

Weren't that many men to begin with.

TERI/PAUL

Zing. Well, I think you made the right decision.

DANE

About what?

TERI/PAUL

Marrying Lisa. If I was a guy, that's the one I'd pick.

DANE

You picked Lexie.

TERI/PAUL

If I was a girl, I'd pick Lexie, she's got better shoes. But if I was a guy, I'd pick Lisa. We'd make a cute couple.

DANE

I don't think that decision is up to me anymore.

TERI/PAUL

Well, of course, it's not. Once you pop her the question, it's up to the lady. You did pop her, didn't you?

DANE

Not quite.

TERI/PAUL

Ugh! Men... What are you waiting for? The right moment?

DANE

I think that train has left the station.

TERI/PAUL

Well, then, lube it up and cram it back in the station. I hope I'm not mixing my metaphors.

DANE

I'm starting to think we're not right for each other.

TERI/PAUL

You're just starting? Oh, honey, that should be from day one. You start out thinking it's not right and you keep thinking that until it's completely wrong. And if you're still together at that point, that's when you know you got something.

DANE

It's not that simple.

TERI/PAUL

Yes, it is.

DANE

I just think it's not a good fit.

TERI/PAUL

I understand. Cocktail weiner?

DANE

No!

TERI/PAUL

Well, what is it?

DANE

I think I'd need a tail.

TERI/PAUL

Honey, it's not about the tail. Love is love. You don't need matching parts. Look at me and Lexie. Is that a good fit?

DANE

Is that a trick question?

TERI/PAUL

Good answer.

DANE

So what's your secret?

TERI/PAUL

Oh, you can't go by the two of us. When God made us for each other he broke the mold, and threw away the key.

DANE

But how did you even meet? I mean, no offense. It's just hard to imagine.

TERI/PAUL

Oh, we never met. We've just always known each other. My mama lived up the street. Nanna used to babysit us when she had to work late.

GRAN

I did no such thing! It was child neglect, plain and simple. We jacked you all up on soft drinks and sugar cookies and locked you in the basement to come down, so me and the mister could have some upstairs naked time.

TERI/PAUL

TMI, Nanna.

GRAN

I shouldn't have to go to Nepal to make sweet love to a happily married man on the living room coffee table.

TERI/PAUL

It means "too much information", Nanna.

GRAN

You want information?

(sotto voce to DANE)

This one's a "home essential". And now he's infected my granddaughter! They say it's not catching, but I wash my hands every day and I'm straight as an airstrip.

TERI/PAUL

And about as many skid marks.

GRAN

You stay outta my knickers!

TERI/PAUL

You're the only one fits me.

GRAN

Fat ass!

TERI/PAUL

If you didn't dress so trashy, I wouldn't have to steal your things.

GRAN

That's it! You better be taking me to the mall after this.

TERI/PAUL

If you can get Alex to drive us.

GRAN

No, thanks. I just washed my hands.

TERI/PAUL

(to DANE)

You see what we had to grow up with? It was like being raised by wolves.

GRAN

One time we caught 'em playing "hide the sausage" in the laundry room.

DANE

These stories are not helping me.

GRAN

Little Paulie had his sausage tucked so far up his own ying-yang, we thought he'd never learn English. Little Alex got ahold of a hot melt glue gun--

DANE

Ouch, stop!

TERI/PAUL

Lexie and me were best friends up until high school. But she wanted to be more than friends. And I wanted to be more than heterosexual. So it just wasn't meant to be.

GRAN

(chuckles)

You poor thing. Musta burned like hell.

TERI/PAUL

But a funny thing happened--on the way to never was-- I had a few dozen boys break my heart. But Lexie was always there to staple the pieces back together. And eventually, I came to realize that sex with strange boys is something I do for, like, 10, 15, minutes a day. On a good day. And crying about it on the phone to Lexie was what I did for 2 and a half hours every night. And once I get my little nip/tuck. It probably won't even be that much.

GRAN

Give somebody else a chance to use the phone bill.

TERI/PAUL

Love isn't about sex. And marriage isn't about love.

DANE

But sex is part of it.

TERI/PAUL

Sex is part of life. That doesn't mean I want to know if it thinks I look fat in this dress.

GRAN

(sweetly)

You look fat in everything, dear.

TERI/PAUL

Thank you, Nanna. This is why you're still single.

(to DANE)

Best sex I ever had was Derek Tomlin, sophomore year, in the boy's locker room. Mean as a snake and hung like one, too.

GRAN

Best sex I ever had was a rough landing over Tokyo when your grandfather was in Atlanta.

DANE

He's not my grandfather.

TERI/PAUL

Derek gave me a night to remember that lasted about 15 minutes between classes on a Tuesday afternoon. But does that mean I need to be the one diapering him when his prostate gives out? No sex is that good.

GRAN

You weren't on that plane.

TERI/PAUL

Hell, there are people who marry for the tax breaks. But those vows are in sickness and health. So you don't want to go down that aisle unless you got a stomach for pre-existing conditions.

GRAN

And you gotta fly coach. Those snobs in first class don't know what they're missing. Too much padding in the seats.

TERI/PAUL

My relationship with Lexie is more than everything I'm ever gonna need in life. That's how I define love.

DANE

But what about Lexie? Doesn't she want... things... out of the relationship? Physically.

TERI/PAUL

Honey, she's been in love with the same gay man since high school. She's not in it for the sex, either.

DANE

But what if she wants a family?

TERI/PAUL

We are a family.

DANE

You know what I mean. What if she wants kids?

TERI/PAUL

What if I want kids?

DANE

All right then.

TERI/PAUL

So we freeze up some sperm in case we need it later. If not that, we adopt. If not that, we grow old and bitter together. Or we smother Lisa's children with affection. You got a problem with that?

GRAN

Alex'll teach 'em how to smoke.

DANE

So she's really not a lesbian.

TERI/PAUL

Of course not. And neither am I. But I love her more than everything. And I'm not gonna let some little prick come between us. And you shouldn't either. Lick?

(TERI/PAUL offers the spoon to DANE.)

(CARL comes in the front door, walks right past everyone and flops down on the couch like he lives there.)

CARL

Don't all get up at once.

TERI/PAUL

Hi, Carl.

CARL

Where is everyone?

TERI/PAUL

They heard you were coming.

CARL

Anything good happen while I was gone?

GRAN

I almost died.

CARL

Sorry I missed that.

DANE

Who are you?

CARL

I could ask you the same thing!

GRAN

That's Lisa's mate, Norm. Leave him alone, he's cute. Takes after his grandfather.

DANE

(to CARL)

Um, I'm not-- We're not related. I'm Dane.

CARL

Oh, I know who you are. And let me tell you something about Lisa:

(suddenly threatening)

If you hurt her, I will hunt you down and kill you like a wounded animal. That's what I'm supposed to say, right?

(threatening again)

If you ever harm her, I will pull your beating nuts out of your pants and feed them to you. This is fun.

(threatening)

If you break her heart, I will break your spine like a bad romance novel. If she comes crying to me, I will give her something to cry about at your closed casket funeral.

DANE

Okay, don't take this the wrong way, but... Who the hell are you?

CARL

I'm Carl. I'm Lisa's Dad.

DANE

Carl? Carl Firelli? You're her father?

CARL

That's what I said.

DANE

Then who's the other guy?

CARL

Hey! There are no other guys! I'm her real dad. No matter what her mother tells you. She says things when she's upset. Don't listen to her!

DANE

If you're her father, then who's that in the garage?

CARL

Nobody's in the garage.

GRAN

He means Buck.

CARL

Oh, Buckaroo. Don'tcha love that guy?

DANE

Yes and no. Yes, I don't love him. And no...I don't love him.

CARL

You're lucky I'm not here to say that to my face.

DANE

You're not--? I'm sorry, what?

CARL

I'm Buckaroo Bobcat! I mean, not right now. But when I'm him, that's who I am. That's my fursona.

My nom de fur, as it were. I thought you figured that out.

DANE

Oh, it's you again.

CARL

Nice to see you, too.

DANE

I thought you were locked in the-- Oh.

CARL

My wife locked me in the garage. It's got another door. Pretty big one.

DANE

Right.

GRAN

He went around.

CARL

He figured that out.

DANE

So you're not always a bobcat?

CARL

Man, I wish. But, no, how could I be? Man's gotta pee sometime. At heart I am, I guess. But you gotta pace yourself. You can't spend too much time in the suit. You get dehydrated. You know how I sweat?

DANE

So sometimes you're like this--? I mean, you're not always like that.

CARL

I'm always like this. I just don't always look it. You don't need a fursuit to be furry. Look at Lisa.

DANE

I've never seen her in a fursuit.

CARL

And yet...?

DANE

And yet?

CARL

You've never seen her in a fur suit, and yet...?

*(DANE doesn't understand the question.
But then he gets it.)*

DANE

Oh my God. You think she's still one of you?

CARL

Of course, she is. We're her family.

DANE

But, no, that's not possible. This isn't a real thing. I mean, I've never heard of this before today.

GRAN

You should get out more.

DANE

It's not like being...

TERI/PAUL

Gay?

DANE

Well, no--

TERI/PAUL

Or Mexican? Or Muslim?

DANE

Okay, but those things are real--

CARL

You know what I noticed? People who aren't a thing are usually the worst judge of whether a thing is a thing or not.

DANE

But it's not! You're not born--

TERI/PAUL

Oh, Christ.

DANE

--in an animal suit. Well, you're not! Right?

(TERI/PAUL exits into the kitchen.)

DANE

You weren't a furry when you were a kid, were you?

CARL

Heck, no. Started when Lisa was about 8.

DANE

Nick said it's Lisa's fault you're all-- That you became furries?

GRAN

He's jealous it's not his fault!

CARL

Oh, it's nobody's fault. We are what we are. But I guess it's thanks to Lisa that we found ourselves out.

GRAN

Her and that damn cat!

CARL

When Lisa was a little girl, she wanted a cat.

GRAN

They all do. Kids! They beg and scream for house pets, and you try to tell 'em a cat's not a toy. Somebody's got to feed it and comb it and keep it off the couch. And they promise they'll do all that, but *who* ends up scooping up after it? You do. Because you can't make a binding legal contract with a child. Remember how you cried when we didn't get you that puppy?

CARL

You're not my real mother, Gran!

GRAN

Then what am I doin' in your house?!

CARL

That's what I keep asking!

DANE

So you got her a cat?

CARL

We couldn't. Lisa had allergies. Cats and dogs. Any kinda pet dander. Pretty bad, too. She'd swell up like a little pink blow-up doll just watching Lassie--

GRAN

A what?

CARL

A balloon. You know what I meant.

DANE

Should we be having this conversation without adult supervision?

CARL

When we found out Lisa could never have a pet, I gotta tell you I was relieved. I thought we were off the hook. But Lisa just started crying like you wouldn't believe. For weeks on end, screaming and wailing like somebody died.

GRAN

It wasn't me.

CARL

Her mother was baking her cookies and brownies and I dunno what.

GRAN

You'd think we'd murdered that cat.

CARL

So I started looking on the Internet for hypoallergenic animals--

GRAN

You didn't do squat. Her grandfather was an engineer. He's the one discovered the Internet.

CARL

Fine!

GRAN

You're not man enough to hold that man's weiner.

CARL

If you ever listened to yourself, your head would explode.

GRAN

Wouldn't be the first time!

CARL

So "we" stumbled onto this website about furrries. Chock full o' these funny pictures of folks in dog suits and cat suits and panda pajamas that were havin' a convention not half an hour north of here. And I thought, "What the heck! It's cheaper than Disneyland!"

GRAN

So's a plate of sugar cookies and a trip to the basement.

CARL

So we loaded up the kids in the car and we're off to this dinky little hotel just off the interstate.

And as we're standing in line at the check in, we look around and see all these people waitin' in the lobby with tails on. Just pants and shirts and a tail stickin' out, like it was no big deal. And some of 'em had ears. But other than that they were just like anybody else. Goth kids and guys in the military, and normal working folks just like us. And then this lion walked in. Full-on lion suit. Mane out to here. And everybody just turned and looked at him. It was like he was a rock star. You shoulda seen Lisa, her little jaw just about hit the floor. And next thing you know they're all running over and hugging and petting him, and calling him by name. And he was rollin' on the floor, lettin' 'em scratch his belly. Pull his tail.

And I feel this tugging at my arm, and look down and Lisa is just yankin' at me like she's gonna pull my arm out of the socket. "Daddy, daddy, please, can I ride the lion?" So I let her go and she ran right over and just jumped on him. And I don't know how he did it--because the visibility in those suits is not always good--but he caught her up in midair and scooped her up on his shoulder, and she was ridin' around on this lion's back, hugging and petting him on the head. And so happy. Do you know what it's like to see your daughter really happy for once? I know we only went there for her, but I never wanted anything more than I wanted to be that lion.

We had so much fun that weekend, watching the animal parades and the art shows and the swimsuit competition. By the time we had to leave on Sunday, we were crying and hugging people goodbye just like everybody else. It was like we'd come home. Here was this whole crazy community we didn't even know we were a part of until we got there and saw for ourself. And now we never wanted to leave.

We got home and looked up where there were other furry conventions in the area. And we just started going. My father-in-law's a mechanical engineer and he started making fursuits for the kids. He figured out a way to put better ventilation in the masks. Became sort of a local hero in the furry community. They had a group howl when he died.

DANE

So what's Lisa's fursona?

(LISA enters from upstairs wearing a PINK FOX OUTFIT - perky pink tail, pointy pink ears, and fuzzy pink half paws. She's kinda sexy.)

CARL

Lisa's a fox.

LISA

Why, thank you, Daddy.

DANE

Whoa! You are a fox.

LISA

What do you think?

DANE

I think I shouldn't be getting this turned on by a chick in a critter suit.

CARL

Maybe you two need some privacy. C'mon, Gran.

GRAN

Leave me alone! I want to watch! You're not supposed to get me riled!

CARL

Well, I'm going in the garage.

(CARL unlocks the garage and exits into it.)

LISA

When I was a little girl, I had allergies.

DANE

Your Dad already told me.

LISA

Daddy!

CARL

(offstage)

He asked!

DANE

So that's it? You rode one lion and suddenly you went furry? Or got furry? Converted to furdom-ism? Whatever it is that happened.

LISA

Pretty much. Sometimes things that are meant to be happen pretty fast. If you know what that's like.

DANE

There's a certain chocolate fountain that comes to mind.

LISA

When I was a kid, the neighbors across the street had two big golden retrievers. Beautiful show dogs that everyone was jealous of. But I had tigers and stallions and coyotes, growing up. I had friends who were dragons.

DANE

Then why did you stop?

LISA

Stop? You can't stop being what you are. I'll always be furry inside. But sometimes you think maybe you can hide it from... you know, law school, your law firm, other things... other people.

You think you can shed your skin and no one will ever know.

DANE

But why did you try? Just so you could fit in?

LISA

Well, when you put it that way...

GRAN

Sounds kind of cowardly.

DANE

Your family changed their whole lives for you. But you don't even have a tail at your apartment.

LISA

It's not that big an apartment. When I moved to the city, I had to leave some stuff behind. You can't take everything with you. And everyplace I looked at was a rat hole. You know what it's like trying to find a decent single in a halfway decent neighborhood? I'm lucky I have a kitchen I can stand up in, let alone use it for closet space.

DANE

But that's not why you don't have a tail.

LISA

I guess it was after my first year of college and I was home for summer, and there was a terrible heat wave, so I packed it away. No one was wearing their tails as much anyway. Cuz it's great for winter, but you do get hot in these things. It's like carrying an extra five pounds around on your ass.

DANE

But that's not why.

LISA

I don't know, you grow up, you get out of the habit. Life was happening around me. Why does there always have to be a reason?

(ALEX enters.)

ALEX

I'll give you a reason.

LISA

Alex...

ALEX

She killed our grandfather.

DANE

What?

ALEX

She ran away from home to be all grown-up and convince herself she didn't need anyone anymore. And she didn't call, and she didn't write. And we all missed you. But she didn't care.

But you missed us, too, didn't you, Leez? Because college is hard. And you don't like hard things. It wasn't summer, when you came back, it was spring break. The semester wasn't even over yet.

And you were planning on dropping out. But you didn't have the guts to tell anyone why you were home early.

Everyone was so excited to see her, they threw her a party--the prodigal vixen, home for a visit. Mom made a cake and Grandpa was running around red in the face all morning. He had that new fursuit he was building and he wanted to show it off, so he was carrying her through the house on his back like she was 8 again.

He was doing cartwheels in the kitchen when he had a coronary. And she's never forgiven herself, have you, Leez?

LISA

Neither have you.

ALEX

You don't deserve to be forgiven!

LISA

I don't need you to tell me that!

ALEX

I didn't even get to see him.

LISA

You wanted to see it? You think that makes it better? That I was in there when it happened?

DANE

So this is why you don't like kitchens?

LISA

I don't like *losing people*, Dane!

ALEX

Then you shouldn't have come home!

LISA

I didn't want to come home!

ALEX

Good!

LISA

Fine!

GRAN

Now stop it! I've heard enough o' this.

(to ALEX)

She didn't kill your grandfather.

(to LISA)

And neither did you!

(to both of them)

You listen to me: That man died doing what he loved, which was loving his family. He knew better than to be doing cartwheels in that heat. He knew there wasn't enough ventilation in that goddamn bobcat suit. But he did it anyway, cuz it made you laugh, every single one of you, and that was worth dying for. Or at least it was worth living for.

(to ALEX)

And you didn't want to see it!

Everyone who was in that kitchen has been messed up ever since. But don't you cry for your grandfather. That man died happier than most of us live. When I go, I hope it's for half as stupid a reason as him.

(CARL enters with an overstuffed trash bag.)

GRAN

What's in the body bag?

CARL

Garbage. I'm throwin' it out.

GRAN

You can't do that! If you put that thing in the trash, you're just gonna dig it back out again, and you'll stink like a skunk at the next convention.

CARL

No, I'm giving it up forever this time. For the sake of the family. I already lost a daughter. I'm not going to lose my wife.

(MOM enters with pumpkin pie, followed by TERI/PAUL.)

MOM

Where's your suit?

GRAN

He's throwing it out.

MOM

Carl, you know how hard that is to dry clean.

CARL

I'm quitting.

GRAN

He's giving it up forever to save his family.

MOM

I never said you should give it up.

CARL

No, you said we should get a divorce. And if that's what being myself gets me, then I'm through being me.

MOM

(exasperated)

Do you see, girls? This is what husbands are like. They never listen.

ALEX

Uh huh.

LISA

Yep.

TERI/PAUL

Tell it, sister.

CARL

Then why are we getting a divorce?

MOM

You know very well why!

CARL

No, I'm afraid you're gonna have to tell me.

MOM

Because you cheated!

CARL

Is this still about the fur in the zipper? Look, I can explain--

MOM

No, you can't!

CARL

If you'd let me try!

MOM

I'm listening. We're all listening.

GRAN

I'm not! I want to be surprised at the ending.

(GRAN exits into the garage.)

CARL

So you found fur in my zipper! That could have been anybody. You know I can't reach around back and zip up. Somebody was probably helping me in and got his paw snagged.

MOM

I'm not talking about that zipper, Carl.

CARL

What other zippers are there?

MOM

Don't play dumb with me. You had yourself altered.

DANE

What?

MOM

I found the new one.

CARL

Oh.

MOM

The one you had installed in front.

CARL

Okay, I can explain that, too. But maybe this shouldn't be a family meeting.

MOM

The sex zipper, Carl! You installed a sex zipper in Buckaroo!

CARL

Okay, indoor voices, Maureen.

MOM

And I found fur in that!

CARL

Okay, in my defense--

MOM

Orange fur!

ALEX

Aw, Daddy!

TERI/PAUL

Jesus, Mr. F.

CARL

This is not how it sounds like it looks.

MOM

Who is it? That orange cougar from the church group?

CARL

Hilda? No.

MOM

She has a name?!?

CARL

For God's sake, I take attendance! She means nothing to me!

MOM

My God, it's worse than I thought.

CARL

She's not even my type!

MOM

Well, somebody orange is your type!

CARL

You are! You're the only thing orange in my life!

MOM

I wish I was still naive enough to believe that.

CARL

I can't believe you don't trust me!

MOM

I shouldn't have to trust you.

CARL

And I shouldn't have to explain!

(Enter from the garage, a WOMAN IN AN ORANGE ZEBRA FURSUIT.)

DANE

Uh oh.

CARL

Okay, now, let me explain.

MOM

You slept with another Zebra!?!?

(MOM lunges at the ZEBRA with pinking shears.)

CARL

Wait-- Stop--

(They manage to disarm her. But she still strangles the Zebra. In the struggle, its HEAD comes off to reveal... GRAN is the Zebra!)

MOM

You're having an affair with my mother?!?!?!?

CARL

No! That's disgusting!

GRAN

You take that back!

(GRAN attacks CARL. They manage to pull her off him.)

CARL

No, I was making you a zebra suit in the garage. All this time, Zebrina, you've never had more than a pair of ears.

MOM

Because we can't afford it.

CARL

And you're always the one has to sacrifice and make do while the rest of us get what we want. But now that the kids are out of the house... mostly... I wanted to surprise you. I made her for you.

TERI/PAUL

Aw, Mr. F...

MOM

So why was there orange fur in your zipper?

CARL

(blushes)

Well, I had to try it out.

MOM

Oh, Carl!

ALEX

Aw, Daddy...

CARL

But I wasn't cheating! I was thinking of you the whole time!

MOM

Carl, please!

ALEX

Daddy, stop.

CARL

Can you ever forgive me?

MOM

No! You're still a sicko!

CARL

Maybe so. But I'm a sicko who loves you.

MOM

That doesn't make it better.

CARL

I love you.

MOM

Shut up.

(They sit next to each other on the couch. He tries to hold her hand. She slaps it away. He tries to slide closer. She puts a throw pillow between them.)

DANE

(to LISA)

Are your folks going to be all right?

LISA

Well...

ALEX

At least she's not cooking.

MOM

(begrudgingly)

She's a beautiful Zebra. The girls at the con are going to think I had work done.

TERI/PAUL

I'm so glad your folks are back together. Lisa, now that we're not having a double wedding, would you be my maid of honor?

ALEX

Paul!!

TERI/PAUL

What?

ALEX

She's my sister!

TERI/PAUL

What's wrong with that?

ALEX

She's going to be my maid of honor.

TERI/PAUL

I've known her longer!

ALEX

That's not true!

TERI/PAUL

I like her better!

ALEX

She's my sister, I don't have to like her!

TERI/PAUL

Who am I going to have? My family hates me!

(NICK bursts out of the basement!)

NICK

I'm quitting the Army! There, I said it! And the Peace Corps! And I'm gay! And I'm Jewish! And I'm going to kill myself!

(Nobody seems to care.)

DANE

You're gay?

NICK

I went in for my physical, and the blood test came back positive for gay.

ALEX

What do you mean? For HIV?

NICK

That's it. So I'm dying. Soon. And I'm joining a convent.

ALEX

You mean a monastery?

NICK

I mean a convent! And they're kicking me out of that, too!

GRAN

Well, if you need a place to stay... Too bad! I got dibs on the guest room!

NICK

Argh!! Do you know how hard it is to get attention in this family?

DANE

Maybe you're normal.

NICK

(stunned)

What did you just call me?

DANE

Maybe there's nothing wrong with you. Maybe you're not the black sheep. Maybe it's them.

NICK

(sobs)

That's the nicest thing anyone's ever said to me.

(NICK bear hugs DANE.)

MOM

(to CARL)

I'm not going to apologize.

CARL

I know.

MOM

I shouldn't have to apologize.

CARL

And I'm not gonna accept it, when you do.

(LISA hands DANE the car keys.)

LISA

You better go. This is going to take longer than I thought.

DANE

What? How long?

LISA

I don't know. But my family needs me. More than I thought.

DANE

They need something.

LISA

I thought I could ignore it and pretend it wasn't happening. But running away from my problems got me nowhere. And there's really no quick fix for this. But I hope you'll still be there when I get back.

DANE

Or I could be there right now.

LISA

You don't want to be here for this.

DANE

Who says?

LISA

You did. Remember?

ALEX

Yeah, you did. Skinsuit.

DANE

Look, maybe I didn't have a family like this growing up...

TERI/PAUL

Nobody did.

DANE

But that's only because I barely had a family at all. So if this is what being a part of something is like...

(DANE takes out the ring box and gets down on one knee)

DANE

Lisa Nicole Firelli...

(TERI/PAUL hyperventilates and bites her nails.)

TERI/PAUL

Oh my God...

NICK

What?

DANE

Will you let me be a part of your... something?

TERI/PAUL

oh my god oh my god oh my god...

ALEX

Ssh! I'm trying to watch.

(LISA looks like she's going to cry.)

DANE

Um... Lisa?

(LISA nods.)

GRAN

For God's sake, kiss him!!

(LISA does.)

END OF ACT TWO

END OF PLAY