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Away We Go

By Dave Eggers

Burt.
What?
Don't.
Why?
Come back up here,
I want to kiss you.
No, come on. I want to do this.
I'm staying down here.
Okay.
Just don't blow.
What?
Don't blow.
Why would I blow?
I don't know why you do
anything you do, Burt.
Just don't blow.
Okay. Just stop
moving. Okay?
Okay.
You'll love it.
All right, no more talking.
What's wrong?
Nothing.
Why'd you stop?
I'm just trying to figure out how
to say what I'm about to say.
Why do you have
to say anything?
You taste different.
Did you know that?
No, Burt.
How would I know that?
Just get up here. Okay?
I don't want to keep talking
to the top of your head.
Do you want me to shower?
No, no.
You don't taste dirty.
You just taste different.
Like, kind of fruity.
God.
Wait. Did you know a woman can taste
different depending on various co-factors?
I don't want to hear that.

And I thought that we agreed you wouldn't use the word "co-factors."

No, I said I wouldn't misuse it.

All I'm saying is, from what I've read about vaginal flavor...

Jesus!

...from what I've read, abrupt changes can happen when a woman's either menopausal or...

Burt?

Oh! Good, you're awake.

What are you doing?

Cobbling.

I really want to be that dad that knows how to make stuff out of wood. You know?

I just want our kid to wake up in the morning and walk out on the back porch and find me cobbling.

You know, that's not what it's called.

Yeah, it is.

Burt, cobbling is shoes.

That's why the people that make shoes are called cobblers.

You're not cobbling, you're carving.

Or possibly whittling.

Good morning.

Morning.

I got this great book on knots. learn them all.

And I still have to build that kiln.

Man, you gotta be ready.

You remember, we go to your parents' house this afternoon?

Yeah, you know, I pushed that because I have Family Defense class today.

Yeah. Does everybody there dress like that?

Hey, where are those goggles you had?

My airbrush ones?

Yeah.

You can't use them.

Got them.

Burt.

All right.

I will be back at 3:00.

Maybe a little later if I get into
some hand-to-hand combat.

Okay, bye.

Bye.

They look like the
California Raisins, remember?
The big bodies, the little legs
and the sunglasses.

Lovely.

It's so bad. I really
wish you could see this.

You want to hear the pregnancy rap?

It's even worse.

You get much more
from your pelvic floor
When you pass on the bagel
and do one more Kegel

Jesus Christ. Tell me, do I have to be
this uncool for the rest of my life?

What are you doing?

You're talking to me
while you're exercising?

No, I'm just watching it.

I have this subdural
hematoma thing due Friday.

I'm trying to finish it
before we go out tonight.

Out? You two? Where?

Dinner at Burt's parents'.

They must be
out-of-their-minds excited.

Yeah, you know them.

I think they're probably happy to be
the only set of grandparents
and have the baby
to themselves.

Don't say that. You're lucky
to have them so close.

I know, I know.

We're gonna lean pretty hard on them.

You know I'd be there if I could.
I hate that I'll be so far away.
I know.
Who do you think she'll look like?
God, I hope she doesn't have Burt's...
What, facial hair?
Feet.
Those feet. Square feet.
Like seal flippers.
Oh! Shit, I just gave
this guy's brain a vulva.
I really want her to have
an epic kind of childhood.
I want her to run along streams
and know how to work a canoe,
be able to entertain
herself outside.
I want her childhood to be Huck Finn-y.
You know?
Yeah. I had that.
Yeah, exactly.
Burt Farlander.
You old so-and-so.
I'm sorry about
your Pacers, my friend.
Hey, if you think Mike Dunleavy can
carry more than a bucket of water,
I got some Florida swampland you
might be interested in. Yeah.
That's loud.
No, real good price.
Yeah. Yeah.
Oh! That one gets me
every time. Yeah.
Well, I'm glad you called. Yeah.
You're too much.
All right, I will. Bye.
They expect that from me.
They expect you to sound
like Casey Kasem.
Verona, most of these guys
are in their 50s and 60s.
We're talking about millions of dollars
in insurance futures.

They don't want to be dealing with some
So, Casey Kasem finished college?
Yeah.
This next long-distance dedication...
No.
goes out to a really special girl.
The letter reads,
"Dear Casey, my name is Burt, and my
girlfriend's pregnant and frustrated.
"Could you play a song that will make her smile?
Thanks. Signed, Burt Farlander."
Your pregnant girlfriend's
gonna kill you.
Go away.
Thanks, Casey.
Oh! Look at you!
You look so big!
Good for you!
Hi.
Wow, look at your hair.
I freed it!
I don't think it makes
you look crazy at all.
I know, I know. Get inside.
Your father's just finishing up a call.
Sit, Verona. Sit next to me and
let me hear the heartbeat.
You can't hear the heartbeat
'cause her placenta is on... Okay.
Well, Bill, if you believe that,
I've got a bridge in New York
you might be interested in.
Yep, okay.
That is really sweet.
Au revoir.
Hey, Jerry. You're looking so much better.
You can barely tell.
Oh! Thank you, my dear.
Verona, you look beautiful.
Thank you.
Hey, did you bring the pictures
from the sonogram?
I did. Here you go, Dad.
These are fabulous.

You haven't opened
the envelope yet.
I can just tell he's a beauty.
She's a girl.
Did you...
Yes. I did tell
you that, Dad.
She's a beauty.
Wow. Spectacular.
Exquisite. I mean,
talk about perfection.
Verona, do you think
she's gonna look like you?
Well, I hope so.
I think I'm the mom.
I just want a little Verona.
After 2 boys, I want a little Verona
in a leotard. Can you do that for me?
I will definitely
work on it.
Okay, and just how black
do you think she'll be?
Mom...
Wow. I don't know.
Maybe we can leave her out in the sun
for a couple of days, expedite things?
Verona, are you on schedule?
Oh! Jerry!
You don't ask her that!
But I'll tell you what scares me,
it's that tilted uterus of yours.
Does it really?
Do you think that's gonna
make the delivery hell?
I don't know.
You know how I had this one?
Yes.
Yeah.
Thank you.
In the tub.
Yep.
I had to call the fire department,
it happened so fast.
The water broke,

I make the call.
burst in the bathroom.
You've got to picture me.
No, we don't.
I'm 23, gorgeous, alone, the skirt's hiked
up to the waist, the legs are apart,
I'm huffing and puffing, and bang!
I'm surrounded by the 3 men
in the uniforms.
It's August, so humid.
My blouse is soaked,
I'm engorged with milk...
Did they bring their hoses, Gloria?
They were all over me.
Very capable men, knew exactly
what they were doing.
Almighty food gatherer, father of
the earth, sky, water and ice
and food, we give you thanks.
Thank you.
So, we've been reading
a bunch of books,
trying to decide what kind of birthing
experience we want to have.
That's terrific.
And we think that we want to limit
the amount of people in the room,
or near the room.
Well, you don't have
to worry about that.
Right. No sweat.
And we decided that we don't want
any videotaping. Sorry, Jerry.
Right, I won't.
Fabulous.
But we really want
to share this with you.
Your presence is really,
really important to us.
Definitely.
Yeah, yeah.
You're so right.
We so are looking forward to it.
We will definitely be there.

The only reason we won't be there
is if we're living in Belgium.
Okay, we have news.
It's big.
What is it?
We're leaving in June.
We're finally doing it.
You're leaving in June?
The baby's due in July.
Right. To Antwerp.
City of light.
Well, that's not...
No, you're not.
Yeah, we are.
It's gonna be superb.
No. And don't
say that word.
We thought you'd
be proud of us.
We've been talking
about this for 15 years.
And now we can
finally do it.
You're leaving a month
before the baby's born?
You're moving 3,000 miles
away from your grandchild.
I think it's more than
I think so.
I can't believe this!
There are planes, Burt.
We've been planning this forever, folks.
You know that.
I didn't know that.
Wait, hold on a second.
How long are you gonna live there?
Just 2 years. Okay?
"Just 2 years"? You guys.
Wait. Are you selling the house?
See, that's the best part.
We were going to rent the house out
with the help of a very elegant
gentleman named Fareed,
but no one's come forward yet. So...

Wait. How long have you
been planning this?
Hold on. If we don't find
a renter in the next month,
you two can stay here
while we're gone.
You can have the house
for the next 2 years.
Outstanding.
Were your ears burning?
Your ears must
have been on fire, sir.
What is that?
Magnificent, isn't it?
I didn't think you'd notice. \$12,000.
I cannot believe it.
I know.
She's a Choctaw princess, I'm told.
I think it's important
that we honor our Indian...
Indigent people...
Our ingenious...
In-de-gentious people.
Who was it?
Nobody.
Was it... Was it Fareed?
Later.
Later.
If it was Fareed,
did he...
Yeah.
He did? He...
When?
The day we leave.
Oh, my God!
I guess we've got some
more news for you two.
We could get someone else
to be the grandparents.
Those old people, across the street,
what are their names?
I mean, we moved
here for them.
And now, they're gonna miss

the baby's first 2 years.
It just really takes selfishness
to a whole new level.
It's not like your parents
are doing anything.
My parents are dead, Burt.
Still.
I can see my breath.
Hold on, I'll get the thing.
Make it nice and toasty.
There you go.
God damn it.
Great.
All I did was turn it on.
I even said to the guy at the store,
I said, "Could I have a red fuse?"
He said, "You want a blue fuse."
I said, "No, I already
had the blue fuse."
"Didn't work out great.
So I'll take a red one."
He's like, "Trust me,
it's the blue one." "Okay."
Now we know who will be getting
a red fuse next time.
Burt. You know, we don't have
to stay here.
What?
I'm saying we could leave, too.
But we live here.
I know, but the only reason that we're here
is because your parents are here.
Or were here.
Well, where would we go?
I don't know.
We could go anywhere we want.
Anywhere, anywhere?
Yeah.
I can do my job from anywhere.
And all you need's a phone, right?
Well, we don't want to go
back to Chicago, do we?
No, we did Chicago.
I used to picture myself in Alaska.

God, I love that landscape.
Alaska?
Yeah.
You've never mentioned Alaska.
Wow, they pay people
to live in Alaska.
Phoenix. We could
live near my sister.
She could be Auntie Grace
all the time.
Think of that, Burt.
That would make me so happy.
And Lily and Lowell
live there.
Who are Lily and Lowell?
Lily, my old boss in Chicago.
Right.
What do you
think of that?
Yeah, they could be
our friends in Phoenix.
They weren't really
our friends in Chicago.
I know, but they could be
when we live in Phoenix.
They could be our new good friends
when we live in Phoenix.
Well, we wouldn't need a
space heater in Phoenix.
Burt, are we fuck-ups?
No.
What do you mean?
I mean, we're 34.
We don't even have this basic
stuff figured out.
Basic, like how?
Basic, like how to live.
We're not fuck-ups.
We have a cardboard window.
We're not fuck-ups.
I think we might be fuck-ups.
We're not fuck-ups.
Are we nuts?
Well, look around.

We both agree we need to be
near some kind of family.
Some friends, something.
Some connection, someone we know, so...
We'll look at Phoenix,
see my sister.
Your closest friends.
Lily and Lowell.
And then to Madison
for your job interview.
My what?
God. Your interview.
Your interview
with Mutual Choice.
To see if they'll give you a better commission?
You set it up.
Okay. So then from Madison, we go home.
No. Did you look at the itinerary?
I stapled it to the inside
of your jacket.
See? From Madison,
we go to Montreal.
Montreal is where I think we should
live if we don't live in Phoenix.
Okay, Montreal.
See? This is exciting,
if you think about it.
We're completely
untethered, Burt.
This is a dream scenario.
What are you doing?
Honey, let me tuck you in.
God, look at you!
You're only 6 months in!
Jesus, you're huge!
And your face, it's so fat!
Come here, give us a hug!
Lowell, come and give a hug to the
most beautiful woman in the world.
Look at that.
Nice to see you, Lowell.
Come on,
don't be such a pill.
He's upset 'cause

we didn't get into the club.
Hey, how are you?
Good, I was almost out.
I'll get an opener.
Verona and I were
desk buddies in Chicago.
I hired her at the agency.
That was before she
broke out on her own.
I still have no idea where you learned how
to paint the insides of dead people.
So fucking disgusting, girlfriend!
Come on, let's get a drink.
She's so talented,
our little artiste.
For the land
Of the free
And the home of the brave
Play ball.
Wow. So, you're
in Arizona now.
Cheers.
Cheers.
To the Arizonans.
You got it.
God. I can't believe it.
I can't believe how big the kids are now.
Right?
And Taylor's so handsome.
Well, thanks. We're gonna
do something about those ears.
Do you see them?
He looks like a trophy.
You know what I mean?
One of those trophies
with the arms on it.
Oh, my God.
And this one has
that dyke look.
She walks like a teamster,
doesn't she?
I mean, it's weird.
She's only 12, and I know she's a dyke.
Ashley! Ashley!

Show Verona your tough-girl walk.
Come on. Go butch on us.
Come on! Come on!
Oh! Now she's shy.
Did you see her ass?
She's got like...
What is it? What is it?
What?
Junk in the trunk.
She's got junk in her trunk!
Oh, my God!
It looks like a duffel bag
full of bricks.
I don't know if dykes
go for that or not.
Do they?
Burt, you worked with
a lesbian, didn't you?
Yes. Yes, I did.
I can't hear you!
I just don't think we should be talking
about it right in front of the children.
Please. Burt, it's just white noise
to them. Listen, watch this.
Taylor? Taylor?
Taylor? Taylor?
Taylor? Taylor?
I can keep going on and on.
They don't hear us. Seriously.
So tell me about the dyke.
The greyhounds have reached the
starting box for this afternoon's first race.
They are ready to go
over the 550-yard course.
What's your line again, Burt?
Insurance.
Like life insurance?
Sometimes.
But it's mostly
insurance futures.
It's pretty cool, actually.
Similar to how an individual or
a family might get insurance,
insurance companies

need insurance themselves.
It's sort of this hedge against...
Goddamn.
Of course it would come to this.
Yeah. What?
They made us afraid
of everything.
Insurance for insurance,
for insurance.
This country is just such a...
Ladies and gentlemen,
it is now race time.
Well, anyway,
if this country is shit,
everyone else is just
the flies on our shit.
Am I right?
And away they go and to the inside.
157 powers out to the front,
followed by the...
Go! Go!
...now on the inside turn...
Pick it up, pal!
Pick it up!
Hey, Lowell!
I used to have nice tits, right?
Verona doesn't seem to remember,
I don't think.
I had nice jugs, right?
They sucked me dry.
I don't even need a bra.
Now I just tuck them into my socks.
You ready for that, Burt?
They'll look like
an old man's nut sack.
They even grow hair on them.
A hairy old man's nut sack.
In Some Time and Queen Anne...
In Some Time!
Queen Anne is second.
Look at them go!
Pathetic.
So, Burt, you excited about all this?
Yeah.

This might be the best
one I've ever seen.
No, the baby, dummy.
Does this mean you guys
will finally get married?
They're not married?
I told you that.
Burt wants to, Verona doesn't
see the point.
Insurance, for one. If anyone,
you should understand that, Bart.
Anyone ever call you Bart?
It'd be kind of funny.
We didn't have insurance
when Ashley was born.
Well, we thought we did, and then
we didn't. And then I couldn't get it.
Pre-existing condition.
I'm crazy!
Look, whatever.
I don't know. I...
I guess I just never gave that much
thought to "marriage" marriage.
Well, at the very least, it'll keep you from
taking off in the middle of the night
when there's trouble.
I almost left Lowell about a dozen times.
Kids don't know that.
And then you start thinking about
the wedding and all that money...
\$46,000 for ours.
It was worth maybe
\$31,000, \$31,500.
I hope you guys move here.
We're having a hell of a time breaking
into the social world here.
Really?
It seems very cliquish.
I don't know what it is.
We didn't get into the good golf club.
There's no water left, anyway.
The drought's coming.
Like the biblical flood, but in reverse.
The golf course will be the first to go.

Then the fountains.
All the water fountains.
The restaurants.
Basic services.
Large mammals.
Then regular-size mammals.
Reptiles. Birds.
Then people.
You done?
Thanks for treating.
This was wonderful.
I so hope you move down here.
This is the place for you guys.
It's so obvious.
Don't listen
to anyone else.
And I'm sorry I said anything
about the marriage stuff.
No!
No, you guys do
what you need to do.
Your baby won't care.
Kids are resilient.
And they're genetically
predetermined anyway.
They're screwed up
out of the womb. So what?
They'll have cell phones,
they'll be fine. Okay.
It was so great
to see you.
Bye, honey.
Bye.
Bye.
Okay.
Lowell!
You don't agree
with them, do you?
No.
About what?
That thing they said earlier, about
how you can't make a good family.
Everything's destined for failure.
No, I don't.

You know that I don't
agree, Burt. I just...
I really hate that attitude, you know?
"Everything's already broken,
"so why don't we just keep on
breaking it again and again?"
Hey, did you... Did you hear
what Lily said about her boobs?
Did you know Lily
when she had her boobs?
Man, she was huge.
Really?
Enormous.
But as long as the baby's
healthy, right?
You awake?
You're my light, Verona.
My sky.
I can't wait
to see you as a mom.
Her little hand in yours.
And your smile on her face.
What?
What are we gonna do?
What?
What are we gonna do?
How do you mean?
No one's in love
like us, right?
It's so weird.
What are we gonna do?
I think we just
gotta ride it out.
Hey, listen, I need you to
concentrate for a second, okay?
Okay.
My sister's been dating
this guy named Rob, who seems nice,
but she thinks he's boring.
He likes going to steakhouses,
that kind of thing.
Good afternoon, madam.
Hi.
Wait, is that a good thing or

a bad thing, steakhouses?
Bad. Anyway...
Like an Outback Steakhouse?
I'm not sure.
Ruth's Chris Steakhouse?
I honestly don't know.
But we need to make
him seem cool.
She loves you, Burt. She'll value
your endorsement of this guy.
I got it.
And don't look at her boobs.
No, I'm over it.
I was better last time.
Yeah, but she's bigger now.
She went on the pill
and she's been complaining about
getting new bras and everything.
Wait a minute.
Why don't you go on the pill?
Huh! Let me think.
Beckett, what is that?
That's a fern.
That's right, this is a fern.
What's that?
That's a cactus.
That's a cactus, that's right.
And what is the plural
of cactus, huh?
Cacti.
That's right!
What is that?
Baby.
That's right, that's a baby.
This lady is about to have a baby?
Any day now.
Or in 3 months.
Thank you.
Beckett. Hey, tell the nice lady
what you know about babies.
No. Go on, tell the
nice people what...
Beckett, you're being rude.
Babies like to breathe,

and they're good at hiding it.
I put a pillow over a baby.
I thought she wasn't
breathing, but she was.
She was sneaky,
but I'll try again.
Okay.
Holy shit, you're actually showing!
I know!
I love that dress!
Look what you did to my sister, Burt.
So, you want to get a drink here
or go out? Do you need to eat?
We don't want to go out there.
Not right now.
No, it's like an oven.
Yeah, it's pretty hot.
No, no, I mean,
literally, like an oven.
Like if you were in an oven,
that's what it would be like.
It's almost like
God's trying to melt us
all down and make
something better.
Wow, Burt.
That is so stoney.
Well, it's just the Bible.
QED.
if I liked music.
Like music is something
people don't like?
You know, he posed the question like
it was some great conversation-starter.
"Grace, do you like music?"
It was painful.
I don't know, I wish somebody would
ask me that sometime, you know?
'Cause that's a probing sort
of intelligence, I think.
Really?
Yeah.
I mean, he doesn't assume the obvious.
He's a lawyer, right?

A tax attorney.
Tax attorney, that's what I mean.
So he's gotta be smart,
he's gotta be wily.
He drives a cabriolet.
A cabriolet, that's good design.
Good mileage.
He uses the word "robust."
That's because a lot
of things are robust.
He took me
to Long John Silver's.
I thought you said
it was a steakhouse.
When I told him I didn't want
to go to the steakhouse,
he took me to Long John Silver's.
That's being attentive to your needs
and your desires.
Who is this guy?
Grace, this guy sounds
like a goddamn champ.
He sounds awesome.
I need you to know something.
I really think you guys should get married.
Gotta take this.
Ned! Yeah.
Surprised you aren't
hiding under a rock,
the way your Padres
played last night.
Sorry.
Yeah. Well, what was it?
Yeah. Yeah.
I thought so.
Look at him.
I'm about to have a baby that might
have 3 hands or a shovel for a head,
and the thing he is
most concerned about
is whether or not
I'm gonna keep my boobs.
I think that's sexy.
Yeah. Yeah.

You got lucky, sister.
Yeah, I know.
Yeah. No, I did.
What is it?
I'd put a wager on it.
So what are you looking for?
A Jacuzzi-type thing? Or a "tub" tub?
Jacuzzi.
So how do you feel?
Do you feel different?
No. No, I feel the same.
Maybe I should feel different.
Maybe it's just late coming to me.
Like everything else.
Join the club.
Can you believe Mom was just 25
when she had you?
Get in.
I don't need to get in.
It's a nice tub.
Come on. I'll wash your hair.
If I can get in.
It's nice. I like it.
So when was the last time
you went back home?
You know it's been a long time.
When are you gonna
sell that place, anyway?
You mean, when are we gonna sell it?
I don't know. Not yet.
We've had good luck
with renters.
Selling it just seems
like the last thing.
Can you imagine how excited Mom and Dad
would be if they could see you now?
Stop. You're doing it again.
What?
You're just getting all...
Trying to get me
to talk about them.
It's only because
you never do.
I do. You know I do.

I just did.
I just want to talk more.
You're the big sister.
You remember more.
Fine. What do you
want to know?
You know that baby's gonna have
something of them in her.
I mean, what if she's got Mom's
crazy green eyes or something?
What if it's one of those features
that skipped you and me
and jumps onto the face
of that little baby?
You're bringing them back, you know.
In a little way.
I know.
Are you trying to make me cry
in a bathtub?
In a bathtub showroom?
You're gonna be a great mom.
Like our mom.
Hi.
Hello.
You know you can't fly after
Oh! I'm only 6 months.
Dana, come here for a second.
Do you have a note
from the doctor?
What? Really?
It's okay. You're supposed to
have a note from the doctor
if you want to fly
after 8 months.
But I'm only 6 months, so...
Carrie?
You got a minute?
She says she's only 6 months.
Can you turn to the side?
I think this is better, actually.
This is the railroad.
The romance of the rails.
'Rona, it's like Casey Jones
or Thomas the Train.

Hey, you know what?
We might see some buffalo.
I'm so tired of being big.
I'm tired of not having sex.
Do you want to have sex?
No.
We haven't done it in a month.
And you don't want to now?
No.
I just... I feel so ugly.
No, no, no. Don't be sad.
You're not that big.
You're still super-sexy.
Hot, even.
Oh! No. Honey... Hey.
I'll always love you.
Even if you're enormous.
Even if it takes you months
to lose this weight. A year.
Even if you gain weight
after having the baby.
Even if you gain so much weight
that I can't find your vagina.
You go ahead and write
that in stone in your heart.
I will love you.
Even if I can't find your vagina.
Her heart rate's pretty slow.
What is it?
It's like 115.
That seems normal
enough, right?
Well, it's supposed to be
between 120 and 160.
She's just mellow.
Mellow's good.
I don't want mellow now.
I want lively now, mellow later.
I think it's fine.
That's 'cause you
don't want to fight.
We should fight more,
just get riled up.
Didn't we fight last night?

No, we discussed.
We need to fight.
You never raise your voice.
Okay.
You've done something wrong,
and I'm really bothered by it.
Man, am I cross.
Real mad.
No, it has to be convincing.
Like, should I swear?
No, just raise your voice.
You cuntsucker!
I didn't mean now.
But the element of surprise
is so crucial.
You've never heard me say
"cuntsucker" before, have you?
No.
See?
And I will get that heart rate up.
I know what I'm doing.
Wow, look at this.
This is really nice.
Yeah, it is.
So, is Ellen a full
professor or an associate?
And wait, which side is she on?
She's a first cousin, right?
She's not technically
my cousin, actually.
Her mom was an old friend of my dad's.
I've no idea how.
Anyway, they started calling us
cousins when we were kids.
She always used to make me
take pictures of her.
Excuse me.
Yes?
Do you know where Ellen
Fisher-Herrin's office is?
Ellen Fisher-Herrin.
Yes, I do know.
As a matter of fact,
she's in William Stone Hall.

Room 340, about halfway down.

Thanks.

Yeah.

She'll be the mom
without the stroller.

She doesn't have a stroller?

I thought you said she got
some sort of big trust fund.

She did. Here it is.

I thought her name was Ellen.

What does "L-N" stand for?

No!

Don't say anything. Please.

It's open.

Here we go.

Hello.

Welcome.

Come on in.

Come on in. Okay.

Okay.

Mama's gonna put
her booby back in.

All right.

I'll give it right back.

So great to have you.

It's good to see you. Hi.

How are you?

I'm good. I'm good.

You remember Verona?

Hi.

Of course.

How can I forget
such a gorgeous woman?

Verona, you just look beautiful.

Thanks.

Look at your hair.

Yeah.

And, well, it's a boy.

A girl.

No.

Really? With those hips and that shape?

Who told you it was a girl?

Well, the doctor and the sonogram...

Well, we'll see.

Right.

Should we go?

Yes.

Sorry we're late.

I tried to call.

Oh! Right. Yeah, I don't answer
the phone when I'm nursing.

It's not fair to the children.

I gotta get this one to crafting.

We got directions from this really
nice lady who seemed to know you.

She was... Had brown hair,
wearing a blazer and glasses.

She had a baby.

Ruby.

Poor Ruby. She hates me.

I breastfed her baby.

Pardon?

Can you do that?

Well, I was baby-sitting and
the child was fussing. Starving.

Wouldn't take the bottle. So I fed him,
and he took to me right away.

But, you know, I think my mistake was...

I shouldn't have told her.

She's got lactation problems,
and she couldn't appreciate it.

And now she won't let me baby-sit,
she won't let me near her husband,
and I think there's something
strangely paranoid about that, right?

So, dinner. Should we go out,
or do you want to eat in?

Let's eat in.

We've had train food all day.

Train food.

Okay, let me think.

What do I have?

Let us get the food.

We have a car.

We can get the groceries.

I mean, it's the least that we can do.

Look at you, so helpful.

Oh, Burtie.

I'm really proud of you, babe.
And I have to say I'm so glad
you guys got pregnant so easily.
I was concerned when I heard
about your tilted uterus.
You told her I have a tilted uterus?
I don't know.
Maybe it was my mom.
Is your tilted uterus a secret?
Yeah, my tilted uterus
is a fucking secret.
Oh, really, you fucking bitch!
Your fucking uterus is
a motherfucking secret?
Well, fuck you!
You know, it was really nice of you
to think of getting them a stroller.
Yeah. I had no idea how
expensive it would be.
I told you.
No, like, really expensive.
I know.
Well, let me just hide this.
There we go.
You ready?
Yeah.
You think we got them a good one?
Hi.
Hi.
You, too.
Oh, fabulous. Great.
If you don't mind, there are
slippers just there.
Just any of these?
I like those.
Go get the stroller.
Okay.
We brought you something.
Oh, my God. How...
Oh, my God.
Okay, all right, I'm sorry.
Why don't we just
put it on the porch?
Okay.

They had it in blue. But...
Just a little further away.
Okay.
All right, come on.
Okay.
Let's go upstairs
and meet Roderick.
Okay.
Hello.
Honey.
Hi.
Hey.
I don't think we've met.
Oh, yes, we have.
Burning Man, '97.
This is a big bed.
We are a Continuum home.
What is that?
Continuum?
Continuum?
Yes.
Continuum.
Yes.
The Continuum movement
recognizes that
the world will give your baby plenty of
alienation and despair in good time,
so while we can, we should
hold them close.
So, it's the 3 "S's," no separation,
no sugar, no strollers.
They gave us a stroller.
What is wrong with strollers?
Burts, I love my babies.
Why would I want to push them
away from me?
And you wonder why this country
is so dysfunctional.
Because of strollers?
Mama,
in this house
we carry our babies.
We hold them close.
What about sleeping?

This is where they sleep.
We practice family bed.
So what if the two
of you want to,
you know? Be alone?
Do you go out to the car?
No, Verona.
We don't go out to the car.
Are you planning on hiding
your lovemaking from your kids?
Are you guys making love?
It can be so great in the 6th month.
And it is so important to expose
your kids to sexuality,
especially in utero.
Do you know what
it does to a child
to have their parents' expression
of love kept a secret?
No.
Oh! Well,
that's why I have an Electra complex.
Oh, babe.
It is okay.
Which one's that, again?
I think that is when a woman
wants to do her father.
Do you mean "Oedipal complex"?
Don't... Don't try
and diagnose me, Verona.
Why the seahorses, Rod?
In the seahorse community,
the males give birth.
The female inserts her ovipositor
into the male's brood pouch.
That's where she
deposits her eggs.
If I could,
I would lay my eggs
in your brood pouch.
I know you would.
Don't...
Don't, don't, don't.
So, have you chosen a doula?

I already had one.
A little weird, but good.
A doula, Burtie, not a dolma.
We are not using a doula.
Really?
Who is your midwife?
Oh, no, no. Midwives and doulas are
for when the husband is clueless
or doesn't want to be involved.
And I'm neither of those things.
I'm really looking
forward to being involved.
That's great, Burtie. I totally understand,
and I think that's great,
but don't you think Verona
might want someone there
who really understands
the female experience?
Oh! There's this great
Simone de Beauvoir quote.
I can't remember the book,
but I'll find it for you.
It's something like, "One is not born,
but becomes, a woman."
What does that have to do with...
But it is worth it.
The pain is so enlightening.
And now, having experienced childbirth,
I watch CNN and I really
feel like I understand war.
On top of which, when I had Wolfie,
I had the most enormous orgasm.
It was so beautiful.
This soup is delicious.
Alice Walker said, "There's nothing more
important than how we enter this world."
And I agree with her.
And my mom had a hospital birth.
The stirrups, the machines,
the drugs.
And she wonders why I can't walk into
a dry cleaner's without vomiting.
Okay, can that maybe be the last bit
of parental advice we get tonight?

Just a... Just a thought.
Honey? Are you counting on this job
interview tomorrow?
Where is it?
Mutual Choice.
No, not really.
Because I'm already doing fine.
This would just be
a better commission rate.
Commission rate.
What is it again, exactly,
that you do, Rod?
What do you mean?
How do I "make my living"?
Yes. That's exactly
what I mean.
Don't worry, Wolf. You won't ever
have to do anything like that.
Like... "Anything like that"?
Roderick...
Like fearmongering.
Fearmongering?
Or skimming.
Roderick, honey?
Cajoling? Billing?
Roderick...
Are you being serious?
Roderick, Roderick.
It's so easy to forget how great
the economic divide is these days.
These guys have nothing.
How should we expect them to
know anything about anything?
And Verona lost her parents.
Honey, how old were you
when they died?
Oh, you poor thing.
I was just wondering how much your
mama was able to pass on to you
about motherhood before she died.
Your people have such a wonderful
oral tradition.
Okay, that's it!
That's it!

You are a terrible person.
Did you know that?
You are terrible people.
And Verona? She is twice
the woman that you'll ever be!
Because this whole thing... I just...
I never... I'm sorry because...
And this guy!
Look at him!
Oh, honey.
Burt.
We are leaving.
And I hate these slippers!
What is going on?
You know what? If I have to explain it
to you Looney Tunes, just forget it.
All right.
Just fly away, Burtie.
Fly away. And take that
shitty stroller with you.
Gladly! You fucking lunatic!
Actually, I forgot something!
Burt, honey.
Honey, what are you doing?
Hey, Wolfie.
Want to get in the stroller?
Wolfie, you... No...
Just take a little ride.
Wolfie, don't listen to him.
It's okay.
It will be really fun,
like a tiny sports car.
Do not get out of that chair.
Honey, you do
exactly as you like.
Sweetheart. Sweetheart!
Listen to your heart!
Listen to your heart...
There we go!
Not in this house! No!
I'm gonna go in the stroller!
No! I will not let
you do that in my house!
That's good!

And there he goes!
Burt, Burt...
I reject your aggression.
I reject your
unbelievable bullshit!
No! Wolfie!
Yes!
Wolfie, did you have fun?
Because you won't have that much fun
until you discover oral pleasure!
This was great!
What a horse's ass.
That was cool.
Oh, my God.
Thank you.
Hi.
Hey.
So, how did it go?
Good.
Yeah?
Really good.
So, did they offer you the job?
Yeah.
Yeah?
They probably will.
I just need some time to
think about it a little bit.
So, they're probably
going to offer you the job?
They are ready to. They just need
a couple of days for arrangements
and formalities.
So, they didn't offer you the job?
No.
I'm really sorry I brought
you here, Verona.
I don't know what I was thinking.
Burt.
It is not your fault.
So, this place isn't for us.
So, now we know.
I think Montreal is going
to be way better. It will.
You know what I hear

they have in Montreal?
You know what they put
on their French fries there?
Mayonnaise?
Nope. Better.
Gravy.
You know, I had a dream about
Montreal last week?
Really?
Yeah.
What was it about?
Well, it was a bunch of things.
Was I topless in it?
Yes.
Sorry.
We did it. Sorry.
We're just having a baby.
It's okay.
Holy shit!
Is this their house?
We went to college with these guys.
How can they be so grown up?
While we are so...
Stunted?
Confused? Immature?
American?
Do it again.
That's awesome.
Hey, Camille. Cammie.
Remember us?
Should we come in?
Okay.
They are in their room.
Mom's going to wear a little skirt.
Okay.
The sun has gone to bed
And so must I
So long, farewell
Auf wiedersehen, goodbye
Goodbye
There she is.
Verona, you look amazing.
Thanks.
Perfect. Perfect.

Hey.
Good to see you.
It's great to see you.
Here, watch this.
Goodbye
All right. Yeah.
Hey, great job.
Hey, everybody.
This is Verona and Burt.
Your mom and I went
to school with them.
Say hi.
Hi.
Hi.
Get yourselves some pizza.
Pizza.
Pizza. What's up, James?
You're in the middle.
Hey, so, the movie ends when
the von Trapps go to sleep?
Yeah, we sort of skipped it.
You skipped the Nazis?
We kind of figured,
"What's the point?"
It is just that we think they could
live a few more happy years
before, you know,
Juicy Couture and Hitler.
Excuse me. Do you know
the way to San Jose?
Where did you get that?
She has never done this before.
You are seeing this
for the first time.
Who's underneath?
Who's underneath?
Come here.
Tie him up.
Verona! Verona! Help!
Isn't that cute?
Mama! Mama!
Now what's...
Hi!
Hi, Munch.

Oh, Verona. Look at you!
You look so good!
Thanks.
I can't believe you are 6 months in.
I know.
You look amazing.
Where's Burt?
You do, too.
I think he's been
taken hostage over here.
Oh, hi.
Are you okay?
Yeah, I have all this gear at home.
I do this to relax.
This is the family I want.
Every part of it. All those kids.
All those ages. Everyone draped over
each other, just taking care of each other.
So, you want to adopt?
Yeah.
All right. So we will just trade this one in
and we will get whatever we want.
No, I want her and them, too.
This is a family.
Yeah, it works.
It's real.
We should move here.
Montreal.
Think of that.
Do you still
find time to go out?
We're out a lot, I guess.
I mean, it depends.
You have to find the balance
because the kids want you there,
but not all the time.
They need air
as much as you do.
Should we tell them?
I think we're moving here.
To Montreal?
Yeah.
We already won the competition.
Over Madison. Over Phoenix.

Hell, yeah!
You guys!
That is wonderful!
Let us toast.
Does anyone know a toast?
Okay. So, yay for Burt
and Verona moving here,
probably, if they are not stupid.
Yay!
Yay!
I love this...
Trombone, man.
I love the trombone.
I was just about to say that!
It is amazing, right?
The 'bone!
We don't know, actually.
We weren't 100% trying.
I mean, we wanted
to have a baby.
It just sort of came
ahead of schedule.
Have you had any
problems so far?
No. No. Not so far.
It's been great.
Yeah.
Yeah.
That's wonderful. That's...
Ladies, I have an announcement.
We need real food.
She said, "Mrs. Farlander,
your husband requests..."
What do you mean,
"Mrs. Farlander"?
You're still not married?
No.
We talked about this.
We talked about this.
No. Why don't you propose?
When are you going to propose?
Propose?
All I do is propose.
Are you kidding?

Watch this. Watch. Watch this.

Verona.

Yeah?

You really are
the love of my life.

Thanks, honey.

Will you marry me?

No.

Wow.

What?

That actually stings.

Is this true?

It's you who's behind this.

I can't see the point.

That's romantic.

Well, there isn't any,
really. I mean...

Well, not unless you have parents
who care one way or the other.

Which you don't.

But your wedding
was so good.

Really good.

Yeah, it was.

It was really good. The wedding
was good. Marriage is great.

But what you need to be happy,
and sane, is this.

What is that?

This?

Okay, watch this.

Here is you 2 guys.

Really?

No...

Okay, here is you 2 guys.

Stop.

Okay, so you kiss, you do other things
and then you make a baby.

The baby comes in there
and he nestles in.

And you guys hug and get real tight.

And then we do this.

And this. There...

And this...

Are those the bedposts?
It's your house.
Now what is this?
Is that a home? Is that a family?
Yeah.
No. No, of course not.
That's just the raw material.
The people, the walls, the furniture.
Okay, so that's the basics.
But that's not a home.
That's not a family.
What binds it all together is this.
Awesome. That's awesome.
This is love.
I knew it.
Yes, here we go.
This is your love, guys.
Here it comes. The patience, your
consideration, your better selves.
Man, you just have no idea
how good you can be.
But you have to use all of it.
All of it.
It's not like simple masonry,
where you use a little layer of mortar
between each row of bricks.
No. With this,
you have to use tons of it.
For every brick, there's
a half-ton of mortar.
I thought we were doing syrup.
Mortar, syrup. Syrup, mortar.
It is all the same. It's the glue.
It's all those good
things you have in you.
The love,
the wisdom, the generosity.
The selflessness.
The patience. Patience.

At 3:

awake because Ibrahim is sick
and he can't find the bathroom and
he just puked in Katya's bed.

Patience when you blink...
It was awful.
When you blink and it's 5:30
and it is time to get up again,
and you know you're going to be tired
all day, all week, all your fucking life.
And you are thinking,
"What happened to Greece?
"What happened to swimming naked
off the coast of Greece?"
And you have to be willing to make
the family out of whatever you have.
You have to be so much
better than you ever thought.
Right?
Wow, I've never
done this before.
It's like dance karaoke?
It's Montreal.
World capital of this kind of shit.
Montreal, baby.
Oh! Now listen, are there going to be any...
Is this just dudes?
No, no, no. It's not that those
guys weren't enjoyable.
No, plenty of girls coming.
I swear.
Okay.
I hope so.
No, there's girls coming.
Where's 'Rona?
I think she's in the bathroom.
Where's Munch?
I have no fucking idea.
She had another miscarriage.
What?
When?
Thursday.
This Thursday?
Yeah.
This is her 5th.
I know she loves all those kids like
they were her own blood,
but I wonder if we

have been selfish.
People like us,
we wait until our 30s,
and then we are surprised when the
babies aren't so easy to make anymore.
And every day another million
It's terrible feeling this helpless, man.
You just watch these babies grow,
and then...
Then fade.
And you don't know if you're
supposed to name them
or bury them, or...
I'm sorry.
Well, you have
every right to be pissed.
Or worse.
Yeah...
Damn right, I'll be there.
You're my brother,
for God's sake. Come on.
This afternoon.
Yeah, well, we're leaving
as soon as 'Rona wakes up.
No, will you stop?
Hey, you're always paying, all right?
I'll pay. I can swing it.
Wait, hold on a second.
I think she is up.
What's going on?
It's my brother.
I'm telling her right now.
Helena left him.
What?
We're going to Miami.
What happened?
I spy with my little eye
something that is blue.
You... You didn't see
this coming, did you?
I mean,
she was normal, right?
Oh, yeah.
Definitely. Yeah.

Do you have any idea how many times
I've checked my messages?
It's a tick now.
It's, like, 10 times an hour.
I've got all the lines
bouncing to my cell.
The weird thing is,
part of me is so angry,
I never want to hear
her name again.
But if she came back tomorrow
and said she was sorry,
I would be so
fucking relieved.
Well, Annabelle seems
to be doing great.
I know.
It's even weirder.
Well, what did you tell her?
I told her it was a business trip.
I made the mistake of
telling her she'd be 5 days.
I actually thought that
was a conservative estimate.
I thought I would have
it figured out by then.
But then 5 days go by and
she wants to know where her mom is.
So I told her that Grandpa died.
You told her Dad died?
No, no, no, Helena's father.
Listen, Burt,
I really need your help.
I mean, if she's
really gone for good,
I gotta know
what to tell Belle.
And it is wrong to say that her mom
was murdered, right?
Yes. I think that
would be traumatic.
Yeah, but there's finality there.
"Where is my crown?
I simply cannot find my crown.

"Oh, brother, I just
swallowed another fly."
And to that the crab replied...
"You will never find your crown, Frog,
"because I have hid
it under the ocean."
And then they fought.
"Give me your tongue.
Give me your tongue, Frog."
"That's my tongue."
"I have your tongue."
And then they made up.
"Bullfrog, I have to admit something.
"You're my best friend."
"I still love you."
"I'm really sorry about that, Frog.
I've always loved your eyes."
"Don't worry about it."
"Thank you very much."
"Thank you. Thank you very much."
"Thank you. Be sure
to tip your waitress."
Say good night to
Uncle Burp and Verona.
Good night, Bella.
Good night, Daddy.
Good night, Bella.
Good night.
Good night, chicken.
Could you stay a little longer?
Sure.
I'll stay with you.
Hey! Mr. Tambourine Man
play a song for me
I'm not sleepy and there is no place
I'm going to
Hey! Mr. Tambourine Man
Thank you.
Cheers.
Cheers.
In the jingle jangle morning
I'll come followin' you
Did you see this?
What's that?

Look at that.
Man, she is so cute.
Yeah.
She just took that on Monday.
Remember when we had to wait
weeks for the school pictures?
Oh, yeah. It was...
Hey. What's that on her lip?
Carrot juice.
Carrot juice.
Yeah, so that's the picture.
Yeah, I didn't see the carrot juice on
her mouth when she left the house.
I'm never going to see stuff like that.
Moms see the carrot juice
on their daughters' mouths.
Moms know when they
aren't dressed right.
Moms go shopping with them, and make
sure their hair doesn't look all spazzy.
In one fell swoop,
Helena has changed
this girl's life
from a normal one,
where she can be
popular and all that,
to the distinct likelihood that she's
going to be introverted.
A poor dresser.
One of those kids
that looks all longingly
at the girls with the new shoes
and the right backpack.
Well, at least it's just
carrot juice, right?
I mean, it's not whiskey or glue.
It's just the beginning, though.
I'm going to be spending every waking
moment trying to reconstruct a normal life.
But that little girl in there will always
be the girl without a mom.
Into my own parade cast
your dancing spell my way
I promise to go under it

Hey! Mr. Tambourine Man
play a song for me
I'm not sleepy and there's no place
I'm going to
Hey! Mr. Tambourine Man
play a song for me
In the jingle jangle morning
I'll come followin' you
Yeah? Well, the fact that
I'm even calling this late
means it's important, doesn't it?
I think so.
What's your name?
I already know, 'cause I...
Listen, you know what?
Well, I think you know more than
you're letting on. How about that?
Burt?
So... Hello?
Burt.
Damn it!
Burt, what are you doing?
Calling everyone she knew.
Her old company. Her friends.
At midnight?
Right.
The element of surprise.
Well, can you stop, please?
I mean, what kind of goddamned
person leaves her daughter?
I don't know. Maybe not such
a strong person. Please stop.
And you know what
the worst of it is?
There is nothing we can do about it.
Because she is gone. And this family
can't be fixed. And that is it.
And what if one of us
freaks out like that?
We won't.
It can be fixed.
And you know it.
Thank you.
Burt.

It's okay.
Look at me, please.
But really?
I mean, what if something
happens to one of us
and just makes us go crazy?
I mean, what if I'm walking by a
construction site and something falls,
and then my frontal lobe gets chopped
off and my personality's altered
and then I'm not a good dad?
What happens then?
Well, be careful walking near
construction sites.
What about Munch?
She'll be careful walking
near construction sites, too.
No, really.
I mean, don't you just look at her
and want to give her
everything that
she's ever wanted?
It is so incredibly
unfair that she can't...
Yeah, you're right.
It's unfair that
she can't have a baby
and that bad parents
still get to be parents
and good parents die when their
daughters are in college. So what?
I'm sorry, 'Rona.
Look, all we can do is be good
for this one baby.
We don't have control
over much else.
Will you marry me?
At least.
Never.
I will never leave you.
Yeah.
I promise.
No, I know.
You...

You promised never to marry me
because you don't want to get married
without your parents there.

I get that.

You promise
never to leave me.

Do you promise to never leave
this baby that we are having?

I promise.

I do.

Do you promise
to stop talking about your ability to find
or not find my vagina after I give birth?

I do.

Do you promise
to let me cobble...

Carve.

...to carve in my spare time,
and teach our daughter the lore
of the great Mississippi?

I do.

Do you promise never to
develop a thing for seahorses?

I do.

Good.

Do you promise to let our
daughter be fat or skinny
or any weight at all? Because we want
her to be happy, no matter what.

Being obsessed with weight is just
too cliché for our daughter.

Yes, I do.

Do you promise, when she talks,
you'll listen?

Like, really listen,
especially when she's scared?

And that her fights
will be your fights?

I do.

And do you promise that if I die some
embarrassing and boring death
that you're gonna tell our daughter
that her father was killed
by Russian soldiers in this intense

hand-to-hand combat
in an attempt to save the lives
of 850 Chechnyan orphans?
I do.
Chechnyan orphans. I do.
I do.
We had an orange tree.
Who?
When we were kids.
My dad was really
proud of it.
He planted it one spring, and he used to
go out there first thing every morning,
see if any oranges had grown.
But nothing ever grew.
The thing was sickly or something,
or the soil wasn't right.
One morning, my mom woke Grace
and me up really early,

like, at 5:

and she led us out to the tree with these
and pineapples and grapes
and melons, for some reason.
And we just hung all the fruit from
the tree using tape and string.
It worked, actually.
And then we all ran into the truck
and we slouched down
and we just waited
for my dad to come out.
What did he say?
Well, he stared
at it for a full minute,
just staring at it.
I think at first
he thought they were real,
like the tree had burst
into fruit overnight,
and then, I guess he saw the
pineapples or something,
and he just started laughing harder
than we'd ever heard him laugh.
And Grace and I just ran

out of the truck, squealing.
And my mom just...
And from then on,
every once in a while one of us
would hang fruit from there.
Usually something plastic, like pears
or strawberries or bananas.
Is this starting to look familiar?
I think so.
God, I want it to.
But I want it to be new.
You know?
New for us.
New enough to feel like we found it.
Does that make sense?
Yeah.
You ready?
I am.
Are you?
Yes, I am.
God, I forgot how beautiful it is.
This place is perfect for us.
Don't you think?
I hope so.
I really fucking hope so.