

LIFE IN PIECES

One big family. Four short stories. Every week.

"PILOT"

Written by

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STORY 1

FADE IN:

EXT. ROW HOUSE - NIGHT

MATT (38) rings the FRONT DOOR BELL. After a moment, an adorable, quirky woman exits, COLLEEN (30, MIXED-RACE).

COLLEEN

Hi!

MATT

Hey! You look great.

He goes to hug her but she takes him and kisses him.

COLLEEN

I've been wanting to do that every day at work for the past six months.

MATT

Me, too.

COLLEEN

Get that out of the way.

MATT

Yeah, that's good. Yeah.

COLLEEN

One more --

They passionately kiss again.

COLLEEN (CONT'D)

Okay. Where do you want to eat?
I'm starving!

CUT TO:

INT. SUSHI RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Matt and Colleen are loving their date.

COLLEEN

...And then Chad decided to wait until the night before our rehearsal dinner to tell me he'd been lying to the IRS. He owed \$250,000.

MATT

Oof! What else was he lying about?

COLLEEN

Exactly. It was a blessing in disguise because I was having doubts about Chad anyway, so...

MATT

That sucks. I'm sorry.

COLLEEN

No, you're not. Don't give me that nice guy routine. When I strategically told you at work I had broken up with my boyfriend you pumped your fist.

MATT

No, I didn't.

COLLEEN

A little. I could see it. It was like one of these. Really quick.

He smiles, guilty. They are definitely into each other.

COLLEEN (CONT'D)

What about you? You ever been married or engaged?

MATT

Me? No.

COLLEEN

No? At your age? That's not a good sign. Just so you know, that scares women. Lie about that one next time. Here... So, Matt, ever been married or engaged...?

MATT

Married. Twice.

COLLEEN

Twice? That's messed up. That's too much. By the time you were thirty-eight? What is wrong with you?

MATT

Okay, once.

COLLEEN
(bats her eyes)
Go on...

MATT
It's not that I haven't had my chances, I just, I don't want to settle. My parents have a good marriage. It puts pressure on me to find that.

COLLEEN
Oh, you're one of those.

MATT
Someone with self-esteem?

COLLEEN
Someone waiting for the perfect thing. You're not going to find it.

MATT
I don't know. Maybe I will...

They get lost in each other's eyes...

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. ROW HOUSE - NIGHT

Matt and Colleen are making out in front of her door.

COLLEEN
Want to come up?

MATT
Yeah.

CUT TO:

INT. COLLEEN'S ROW HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Colleen and Matt enter to find a guy on the couch watching TV. He's CHAD (31, AFRICAN AMERICAN).

CHAD
What is this? Who's he?

COLLEEN
Chad, this is Matt. Matt, this is my ex-boyfriend, Chad.

MATT

Oh? Hey.

Matt is a little thrown.

MATT (CONT'D)

I can leave if...?

COLLEEN

Don't worry, it's fine.

(taking Matt aside)

I told him this was happening. I probably should have told you but then you wouldn't have come over and I really wanted you to. I'll get us some drinks.

(to Chad)

Would you mind giving us some privacy, Chad?

Colleen makes her way into the kitchen. Chad glares at Matt, who tries to offer a smile. It's awkward.

COLLEEN (CONT'D)

(calling from kitchen)

You want wine or wine? And I think I have wine.

MATT

(calling back)

A beer sounds good.

COLLEEN

(calling back)

Sure, I have wine.

Chad looks at Matt with disgust.

CHAD

What is that? You guys already have a banter? You got a cute thing going? You "get" each other?

MATT

I'm sorry, I didn't know you were going to be here.

(confused)

What are you doing here?

CHAD

What am I doing here? I live here. This is my place, guy. What are you doing here?

MATT

Uh... Colleen invited me.

CHAD

You mean you forced yourself in here?

MATT

No.

CHAD

I knew it.

MATT

But I said no.

CHAD

No, no, no. Me thinks he doth protest too much. You know she's my fiance, right?

MATT

I thought the wedding was off.

CHAD

To her maybe, but not to me. I never said it was off. So it's half on, okay?

Colleen enters with wine for her and a beer for Matt.

COLLEEN

It's your lucky day. I found a beer.

MATT

Thanks.

CHAD

(noticing)

Is that my beer?

COLLEEN

What are you still doing here? Get in your room.

CHAD

That's my beer.

COLLEEN

That I paid for! Go!

CHAD

(to Matt)

You drink that and I will kill you.

Colleen ushers Chad into his bedroom. She shuts the door on him and sweetly saunters back to Matt.

COLLEEN

Sorry about that. He's harmless.

MATT

Why is he still here?

COLLEEN

It's a long story. We bought this place together. With his IRS problems he can't afford to leave and I can't afford to buy him out. We're figuring it out. It's all good. Cheers!

They touch drinks.

COLLEEN (CONT'D)

Where were we...?

Colleen puts down their drinks and resumes kissing Matt.

MATT

Are you sure it's okay to do this here?

COLLEEN

You mean Chad? He can't hear anything in there.

MATT

But he's looking at us.

COLLEEN

What?

MATT

And he's crying.

Colleen turns to see Chad has his door cracked open and is watching them, CRYING.

COLLEEN

Oh for-- Excuse me.

MATT

I have a tissue if he needs it.

Colleen enters Chad's room with him and shuts the door behind them. Matt can hear HUSHED WHISPERS from behind the door. And more CRYING from Chad. The door opens again and a smiling Colleen enters, shutting Chad's door behind her.

COLLEEN

I am so sorry. Whew, this is a little nutty, huh? I thought this was going to go smoother.

MATT

Is he okay?

COLLEEN

He's fine! He's fine.

But Colleen does seem a little concerned about Chad.

COLLEEN (CONT'D)

It's the first he's cried since we split, so he's just, you know, letting it out. We've been expecting this.

They can hear an upset Chad from the bedroom. Beat.

COLLEEN (CONT'D)

Want to go to your place?

MATT

Good idea.

CUT TO:

INT. MATT'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Matt and Colleen enter a four bedroom home. She's impressed.

COLLEEN

Wow, this is nice...

But she is surprised to see Matt's mother and father, JOAN and JOHN (70), are in the living room watching TV.

JOAN

We're in here, Matt.

JOHN

You gotta see this, Matt. It's that Steven Seagal movie I love. The one with the Eskimos.

Joan notices Colleen.

JOAN

Oh, hello!
(to John)
Matt's got a friend here. Pause
the movie. Pause it. Pause it!

JOHN

I'm trying, Joan! I can't find the
god-damned button!

They ad-lib introductions to Colleen.

MATT

I thought you guys were supposed to
be at the Kaufmann bar mitzvah.

JOAN

They shut the party down early.
Little Joshy got overwhelmed and
had a melt-down. What are you guys
doing?

Matt looks to a confused Colleen who has no idea.

MATT

We're just heading out.

JOAN

Oh. Okay. It was nice meeting
you, Colleen.

COLLEEN

You, too. Enjoy your movie.

JOHN

It's the best!

CUT TO:

EXT. SIDEWALK - MOMENTS LATER

Colleen and Matt stand on the sidewalk.

COLLEEN

Please tell me they're just in-town
visiting you.
(off Matt's look)
You live at home with your parents?

Colleen is crestfallen.

MATT

I wanted to tell you but I didn't know how.

COLLEEN

Just so you know, that scares women, too. Lie about that one next time also.

MATT

I tried. I didn't know they were going to be home.

COLLEEN

(disappointed)

I had such a good time tonight.

MATT

Me, too.

COLLEEN

This feels like it could really be something.

MATT

I think so, too.

COLLEEN

So what do we do? Where do we go?

CUT TO:

INT. MATT'S CAR - NIGHT

Matt and Colleen are going hot and heavy in his car. A LIGHT flashes inside and there is a tap on the window. Matt rolls it down to see a POLICEMAN.

POLICEMAN

Move it. Or I'm going to bust you for solicitation.

Matt quickly drives off. He and Colleen are left wondering how this promising relationship is even supposed to work.

CUT TO:

END OF STORY ONE

STORY TWO

INT. HOSPITAL - DELIVERY ROOM - NIGHT

Husband and wife, GREG (32) and JEN (32, ASIAN-AMERICAN), are about to have their first child. With her OB-GYN in the ready position between her legs, Jen is in the final "pushing" phase of labor. A contraction comes on.

OB-GYN

Okay now -- give me a really good push. Really good!

Jen holds onto Greg's hand and bears down with all her might.

JEN

Aghhhhhh -- OH!

Greg reacts excited.

GREG

I see the baby's head!
(then horrified)
Oh. No. That's not --

JEN

Did I shit on the table? Oh my God, I did, didn't I?

GREG

Um...

JEN

Was it a lot?

GREG

Uh...

JEN

Say something!

Greg is in shock at the turd on the bed. A GUM SMACKING DELIVERY NURSE takes a paper towel and casually picks it up like she's taking a hot dog out of the microwave.

DELIVERY NURSE

Don't worry, Hon. I seen a whole lot worse than that.

JEN

It doesn't get any worse than that!

Greg looks shell-shocked. As another contraction hits and Jen SCREAMS, we...

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL - MATERNITY WARD - THE NEXT DAY

Jen and Greg are admiring their new baby girl, SKYLER.

GREG

She's so beautiful... Just like her daughter.

Jen realizes Greg is talking about her and is touched.

JEN

(to Skyler)

Get used to the corny lines from Daddy. He's here all week.

Jen's doctor enters.

OB-GYN

Knock, knock...

(re: Skyler)

She's gorgeous, you guys...

(to Jen)

So, how are you feeling? Was it a rough night?

GREG

That couch was hell on my back. Oh you mean, Jen?

The doctor is charmed.

JEN

I'm not going to lie, I've been better.

OB-GYN

Pretty uncomfortable? I've already written a prescription for pain. Don't be afraid to take it for the first few days. And I'm going to give you a bunch of these latex gloves...

(to Greg)

Your job is to fill them with water and keep them in the freezer.

(to Jen)

Take the frozen glove and stick a finger up your coochie for relief.

JEN

Oh? Let the fun begin.

OB-GYN

I know, it's weird -- but it works.
I'll see you in six weeks. And of
course, no sex until then.

This is clearly news to Greg.

GREG

I'm sorry, did we know that?

The OB-GYN laughs.

OB-GYN

Every new dad looks like this guy.
Slow your roll, player. She just
had a murder scene in her vagina.

(to Jen)

Which reminds me. Between now and
the time I see you... Do not, no
matter what, under any
circumstances, for any reason, ever
never even once... look down there.

JEN

(gulps, then)

Okay.

OB-GYN

Promise me.

JEN

(scared)

I promise. I swear to God. No
effing way.

OB-GYN

(cheery)

Congratulations, you guys!

As the baby CRIES, Jen and Greg look a little shaken.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOSPITAL PARKING LOT - DAY

Greg is hanging out of the open back seat of his new SUV,
trying with all his might to install a new infant car seat.

GREG

Go in, you little piece of -- Argh!
DAMN IT!!!

Greg stands up and scans the parking lot. FOUR OTHER OBVIOUSLY NEW DADS are struggling to install their car seats as well. Greg then notices a DAD installing his car seat one-handed while eating a donut. Greg approaches him.

GREG (CONT'D)

Hi.
(re: car seat)
Not your first rodeo, huh?

VETERAN DAD

What's that? Oh, yeah. Round four. Your first? Let me give ya a hand.

CUT TO:

INT. GREG AND JEN'S SUV - MOMENTS LATER

The veteran dad is installing Greg's car seat for him. Greg watches from the other side of the back seat.

GREG

So... no sex for six weeks. Nobody ever told me about that one.

VETERAN DAD

Six weeks?

GREG

Yeah. Why, did you not hear that?

VETERAN DAD

My wife told me her doctor said no sex for six months.

GREG

Six months? Jesus...

VETERAN DAD

Yeah, and then after the six months, my first kick back out on the field was through the uprights and sent me back to the bench.

Greg is confused.

GREG

But you can still have sex when
your wife is pregnant.

VETERAN DAD

No, she said her doctor said --
(thinks, then)
Damn... I wonder if she's been
pullin' a fast one on me?

GREG

Why is no one talking about this?
Shouldn't this be a thing guys tell
other guys? I mean you've known
but you haven't told anyone, have
you?

VETERAN DAD

Hell no! Who wants to tell a guy
that. Break his poor little heart.

GREG

Maybe it's like how they say
there's something in women's brains
that erases the memory of labor
because otherwise they'd never go
through it again. Well maybe
there's a similar thing in a dad's
brain that erases his ability to
talk to other guys about sex? You
know, to preserve the species.

The veteran dad considers Greg's theory.

VETERAN DAD

I think you're onto something.

CUT TO:

INT. GREG AND JEN'S CONDO - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Greg is struggling to put together a baby swing.

GREG

Where is piece thirty-two? Where
is piece thirty-two...?

There is a BLOOD CURDLING SCREAM from Jen upstairs.

CUT TO:

INT. GREG AND JEN'S CONDO - MASTER BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Greg sprints up the stairs and into their bedroom. He is relieved to see the baby sleeping peacefully in her bassinet.

GREG

What's wrong?! Is she breathing?
She's breathing, she's breathing.
She's fine. What happened?

Confused, he looks to Jen, who is ashen and pale. He notices she's holding a mirror. His face falls, realizing...

GREG (CONT'D)

Wait. Did you look?

JEN

I looked. I looked down there.

GREG

You looked?

JEN

I looked.

GREG

Oh, God. What happened to waiting
six weeks?

JEN

I couldn't do it. If someone hands
you a box and says there's
something crazy inside it but don't
ever open it -- of course you're
going to open it!
(crying)
I looked in my box...

Greg holds her.

GREG

It's okay. Shhh...
(then)
Was it bad?

JEN

Worse than bad. I don't know if we
can ever have sex again. Ever!

Greg looks like he's been punched in the gut. Then --

GREG

It's okay. So we won't have sex.
(re: Skyler)
(MORE)

GREG (CONT'D)
She's worth it. Look at her.
(then, worried)
Ever?

JEN
Oh my God, I'm in so much pain.
Get the glove. Get the glove!

GREG
Okay. Okay.

Greg starts to run from the room. As he goes --

GREG (CONT'D)
We can save it. We can save your
vagina.

JEN
Hurry!

CUT TO:

INT. GREG AND JEN'S CONDO - MASTER BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

A winded Greg returns with the frozen latex glove.

GREG
Got it! Here...

JEN
Don't give it to me, I can't go
back down there. You do it.

GREG
Oh, no. I don't think --

JEN
Do it! Please!

Jen stands there, holding up the back of her night gown.
Behind her, Greg gets down on one knee.

GREG
This is weird...

JEN
The last time I saw you like that
you proposed to me. It's what got
us in this mess in the first place.

GREG

(re: frozen glove)

If I was holding this instead of a ring I don't think you would have said "Yes."

JEN

You could have put the ring on the frozen finger. Hurry...

GREG

Okay, here goes...

Jen braces herself for the worst, but then --

JEN

(sighs relieved)

Wow. That is nice. Ooh... You should try this.

(then)

Do me a favor... while you're down there, stick the thumb up my butt for my hemorrhoids.

Greg looks up at her.

GREG

What has happened to our relationship?

CUT TO:

END OF STORY TWO

STORY THREE

INT. MOVING MINIVAN - DAY

Husband and wife, TIM and HEATHER (42), are driving their oldest of three kids, TYLER (17), up for his first college visit. Their two younger daughters, SAMANTHA (13) and SOPHIA (8) join Tyler in the back seat, making a weekend out of it. Fun MUSIC is blasting and everyone is happy.

CUT TO:

INT. MOVING MINIVAN - DAY

They enter the bucolic college campus and drive through the verdant grounds.

HEATHER

Your first college interview! Are you excited?

They slowly drive past a GORGEOUS CO-ED. A wide-eyed Tyler takes in the scene.

TYLER

Uh-huh.

CUT TO:

EXT. LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGE CAMPUS PARKING LOT - DAY

The family is talking with Tyler's host for the night, DOUG, (freshman, Hawaiian surfer burn-out).

DOUG

Don't worry, I'll take good care of Tyler. We'll spend some time in the library, grab a healthy dinner, followed by a prayer meeting and then straight to sleepsville.

A dubious Heather and Tim look very concerned. They hug Tyler goodbye.

TIM

Wrap your rascal. They say the "clap" is back.

TYLER

(embarrassed)
I got it.

Tyler starts to head off with Doug.

HEATHER
(calling after Tyler)
And no drinking! Or drugs!

Tyler is embarrassed. Even other passing students hear this and look at Heather askance.

HEATHER (CONT'D)
(to Tim)
Was that too loud? That was too loud.
(calls out, covering)
Or bitches! I love that song! Woo-woo.

Samantha and Sophia look at their mom like she's an idiot.

CUT TO:

INT. BED AND BREAKFAST - NIGHT

Tim and Heather are lounging on the bed reading their phones. Heather is beating herself up.

HEATHER
I'm that mom, aren't I?

TIM
What mom?

HEATHER
The over-protective nagging mom I vowed never to be. I want to be the cool mom. But I don't want to be the cool mom. I want to be the good mom. And the good mom tells her kid not to drink and do drugs.

TIM
That's right. Even though that good mom snorted ecstasy off the toilet seat of a Taco Bell our sophomore year.

HEATHER
I did not. It was an Arby's. Give me some credit for having a little class.

Tim looks at his wife.

TIM

What's wrong?

HEATHER

I'm upset. Tyler is applying to college. It was just yesterday he was in diapers. Remember? He was so cute. How he'd call berries "babies?" Like straw-babies and ras-babies...

TIM

And black-babies. Screaming for them at a restaurant -- "Eat black babies! Eat black babies!" I remember.

CUT TO:

INT. DORM ROOM - NIGHT

Tyler has just finished doing a six-foot beer bong. Doug is there holding the funnel, along with TWO FRESHMAN GIRLS.

DOUG

Want another?

Tyler shakes his head "No."

FRESHMAN GIRL #1

C'mon, High School!

Tyler gets it together and nods, ready for another.

CUT TO:

INT. DORM ROOM - LATER

A bunch of students are now partying. Doug is holding Tyler's legs as Tyler is upside down doing a keg-stand. But Doug gets distracted by FRESHMAN GIRL #2 and inadvertently lets Tyler go, sending Tyler crashing down onto the keg.

CUT TO:

INT. DORM ROOM - LATER

Doug is making out with Freshman Girl #2 on the bed. We see Tyler is seated cross-legged on the floor with Freshman Girl #1. She's looking at him, unsure.

GIRL #1
I can't tell. Are you laughing or
crying?

Tyler is CRYING.

TYLER
Laughing... I'm sorry...

It's the first time he's been this drunk and it's all so
overwhelming.

GIRL #1
I'm going to go.

TYLER
(sobbing)
Okay... It was nice to meet you...

As he continues to cry, we...

CUT TO:

INT. BED AND BREAKFAST - NIGHT

Tyler's youngest sister Sophia is CRYING. Heather is angry
with Sophia's older sister, Sam.

HEATHER
How could you tell her that he
isn't real?!

SOPHIA
She did it on purpose!

SAMANTHA
You asked! What am I supposed to
do, lie?

HEATHER
Yes! Billions of people lie about
it every year!

SAMANTHA
(smug)
Well you told me never to lie.

HEATHER
Go to your room.

SAMANTHA
I don't have a room. We're in a
stupid hotel.

HEATHER

Well then go to the bathroom.

SAMANTHA

I don't have to go.

HEATHER

Go into the bathroom! Now!

CUT TO:

INT. BED AND BREAKFAST - LATER

Sophia is cuddled on the bed with Tim and Heather.

SOPHIA

So it's this giant conspiracy that everyone is in on but me?

TIM

The fact that you know the word conspiracy makes me think you were ready for the truth.

(off Heather's look)

I'm just saying she's got a hell of a vocabulary.

SOPHIA

What else has the entire family been lying about? Like, is the --?

HEATHER

It's made up.

SOPHIA

What about the--?

HEATHER

Made up. It's all made up.

SOPHIA

Even God?

HEATHER

Well no, that's real.

Sophia is reeling.

SOPHIA

Up is down and down is up for me right now. I need some time alone.

Sophia heads for the last available empty room -- the closet. She stops and turns to them.

SOPHIA (CONT'D)

You have some serious trust to rebuild here.

HEATHER

I'm so sorry, Sweetie.

Sophia shuts the closet door behind her. Tim whispers to an upset Heather.

TIM

How can she be so smart and not have figured it out?

HEATHER

(teary-eyed)

Because she's a sweet innocent child! Or she was. Our last baby is grown up. First Tyler, now this. I don't know how much more I can take in one day.

Samantha enters from the bathroom looking shaken.

SAMANTHA

Mom?

HEATHER

(concerned)

What? What is it?

SAMANTHA

I think I got my period.

Heather bursts into tears.

HEATHER

Oh, God!

CUT TO:

INT. BED AND BREAKFAST HALLWAY - LATE THAT NIGHT

It's dark and the girls are sleeping. Heather is quietly leading a confused Tim out of their room and down the hall, holding an ice bucket.

TIM

(whispering)

What do you mean, you don't know how to get ice? You just push the giant button that says "ICE."

HEATHER

Help me...

She pulls him into the ice room and pushes him up against the wall, kissing him. He's surprised.

HEATHER (CONT'D)

I want another baby...

TIM

Here?

HEATHER

Yeah, let's do it now... Fast, before the kids wake up and wonder where we are.

TIM

Can it still work?

Stung, Heather stops and glares at Tim.

HEATHER

I just told you that I wanted to have a child with you and you called me old.

TIM

No! I didn't. It was a practical question. It wasn't a criticism.

HEATHER

Forget it.

Heather exits, upset. Tim feels bad. He calls after her.

TIM

Heather? Did you still want ice?

CUT TO:

INT. DORM LAUNDRY ROOM - THE NEXT MORNING

Tyler is sleeping peacefully. We pull back to reveal he is sleeping inside a giant industrial front loading washing machine. He uses a tiny dryer sheet as his blanket. Doug appears and bangs on the side of the washer, waking Tyler.

DOUG
High School. Your parental units
are here.

Tyler looks around disoriented.

CUT TO:

INT. MOVING MINIVAN - LATER THAT DAY

The family is driving home from the weekend. There's the feeling that they couldn't get away from that school fast enough. Tim turns up the MELLOW MUSIC on the radio. He can tell Heather is still mad at him.

They all look out the windows, not talking, each family member contemplating the huge changes taking place in their lives. Finally, Heather turns back to look at a hung-over Tyler.

HEATHER
So...? What did you think of the
school?

Tyler stares back at her, trying to think of how to answer. He simply THROWS UP into a bag. As the family reacts upset, we...

CUT TO:

END OF STORY THREE

STORY FOUR

INT. FUNERAL HOME - DAY

Heather, Matt and Greg (from the previous stories) are filing into one of the funeral chapels where other MOURNERS are already seated. We realize the three of them are brothers and sister. They pass a PHOTO on an easel of their dad, John. He's on a beach in a chair with a beer, squinting in the sun at the camera.

HEATHER

I always loved that picture of Dad.
He looks a little like you, Matt.

GREG

Yeah, he does. You both have
Nanny's giant nostrils. You ever
try to fit a couple gum balls up
there?

They smile.

MATT

What is wrong with you? I swear,
it's like someone dropped you on
your head.

GREG

You did. When I was six.

HEATHER

I'd take Dad's big nostrils over
Mom's hamster eyes.

GREG

You don't have Mom's hamster eyes.

HEATHER

I do. Listen to me, both of you.
I'm serious.

They look at her.

HEATHER (CONT'D)

The day you think I've turned into
Mom, please be honest and tell me.

MATT

You've turned into mom.

GREG

Totally.

Heather is crushed.

HEATHER

Really?

They take their seats in the front row by the casket, next to their mother, Joan. Joan is wiping tears.

JOAN

Really, what?

HEATHER

(irritated)

Nothing.

JOAN

What did I do?

HEATHER

(softening)

You didn't do anything. I'm sorry.

JOAN

It's okay. We all grieve over your father's death in different ways.

HEATHER

You're really putting on a show here, aren't you?

MATT

Yeah, how are we supposed to act? I've never been to one of these.

Greg gives his mom a tissue.

GREG

It's going to be okay, Mom.

JOAN

That's how you act. Thank you, Sweetheart. Your father would be pleased with your behavior.

Heather and Matt roll their eyes. Their dad, John, (the man from the photo), walks up to the podium.

JOAN (CONT'D)

Oh, here he is now.

John adjusts the microphone.

JOHN

Hello. Thank you all for coming to my funeral...

John's older brother, GARY, calls out to him.

GARY

The ghost speaks!

Laughter from the crowd.

JOHN

Leave it to my brother, Gary, to steal the spot-light from me like he always does.

GARY

You may be dead but your issues are alive and well!

More laughter.

JOHN

But seriously. When my lovely wife of forty-nine years, Joan, asked me what I wanted to do for my seventieth, the hell if I knew. Who wants to celebrate getting another year older at my age? And then it occurred to me, some dear friends have passed away recently and I was struck by how much they would have enjoyed hearing all the kind, loving words said at their funerals. So I thought, I don't want to miss that! Let's do this now, while I'm still here to enjoy it.

John takes in his children and grandchildren before him.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Plus, it's an excuse to get my whole family together, which is rare these days. With everyone's lives moving so fast. My grandson, Tyler, is visiting colleges... His sister, Samantha, just got her first period...

Samantha is mortified.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Anyway, enough of my yakking, I'm here to listen to you. Let the eulogies begin.

Matt turns to his brother and sister and whispers.

MATT

Are we supposed to clap?

They hold back a smile. Joan hushes them. The somber FUNERAL HOME DIRECTOR slowly makes his way to the podium.

HEATHER

(whispers to Matt)

Mom said you have a new "friend."

GREG

Yeah, Dad said she's got big cans.

Matt clearly doesn't want to discuss Colleen.

FUNERAL HOME DIRECTOR

(somber voice)

First up to say a few words is John's loving son, Matthew Short.

Matt approaches the podium. He looks like he's winging it.

MATT

Dad... I just want to tell how much I love you and miss you --

JOHN

Stop talking to me.

MATT

I'm not talking to you. I'm talking to you as if you were in Heaven. You stop talking to me.

JOHN

Well whatever you're doing, it's not good. It takes everyone out of it.

MATT

You being here takes everyone out of it.

(then)

May I continue?

JOHN

It depends on what you're going to say.

MATT

Are you seriously heckling me right now? You want me to speak as if you weren't here? Okay...

(to crowd)

My dad was never proud of me. Not like he was of my older sister, Heather, and our little brother, Greg. Even if he said it to me, I could tell he didn't mean it--

JOHN

Next! Schmuck...

CUT TO:

INT. FUNERAL HOME - LATER

Greg is finishing a poem he wrote.

GREG

...The stars are not wanted now;
put out every one. Pack up the
moon and dismantle the sun. Pour
away the ocean and sweep up the
woods; For nothing now can ever
come to any good.

There isn't a dry eye in the house. John wipes a tear. He gets up and hugs his son. Greg returns to his seat to get a hero's welcome.

JOAN

You wrote that? It's professional!

A proud Greg sits back only to get a tap on his shoulder. It's his wife Jen sitting behind him with their new baby.

JEN

(whispers)

I love you so much!

They kiss. Meanwhile, Matt has been taking this all in and rolls his eyes. He leans in to Greg.

MATT

Did you steal that from FOUR
WEDDINGS AND A FUNERAL?

Greg puts a finger over his mouth for Matt to keep that between them.

CUT TO:

INT. FUNERAL HOME - LATER

Heather, Tim, Tyler, Sam and Sophia stand at the podium SINGING A SONG as Tim plays the guitar.

HEATHER / TIM/ TYLER / SAM /SOPHIA
*Would you know my name,
If I saw you in Heaven...?
Would it be the same,
If I saw you in Heaven...?*

John is now looking very depressed to be at his own funeral.

CUT TO:

INT. FUNERAL HOME - DAY

A crying Joan is at the podium unable to read her speech.

JOAN
I'm sorry...

JOHN
Easy on the water-works, Joan. We get it.

JOAN
This is real, you son of a bitch.
I mean not this...
(indicates funeral)
But this...
(indicates the casket)
Being here, with that... this is what it's going to be like for me when you really do die. I'm going to be standing up here and... It's too much. It's too much.

Joan wipes her tears and takes her seat, comforted by her now genuinely supportive kids. We can tell John is starting to regret this whole thing.

FUNERAL HOME DIRECTOR
And now, to say a few words...
John's loving big brother, Jerry.
Correction, Gary.

Gary, a larger than life character, takes the podium.

GARY

When John and I were little kids
and he would be driving me nuts,
all I could think about was him
dying. I wished for it, I dreamed
about it. This day could not come
fast enough...

Laughter from the crowd.

GARY (CONT'D)

But now that it's here...

Gary clears his throat. At first we think it's because he's
choked up but then we see he's in some physical distress.

GARY (CONT'D)

Excuse me.
(clears throat again)
I'm having... trouble breathing...

His breathing becomes labored before he COLLAPSES. The crowd
GASPS in horror as people rush to his side.

FUNERAL HOME DIRECTOR

(somber voice)

Someone call nine-one-one...

CUT TO:

INT. FUNERAL HOME - LATER

Gary is being wheeled out on a gurney by E.M.T.'s. John
walks next to them, yelling at his brother.

JOHN

I can't believe you are trying to
upstage me even in my death!

JOAN

Would you get a hold of yourself?
Your brother could be dying!

JOHN

If you die at my funeral, I will
kill you!

As Gary is wheeled past, he slyly WINKS and smiles at John,
indicating he once again got the best of his brother.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Did you see that?! He winked! He
winked! You son of a bitch!

Matt, Greg and Jen, and Tim and Heather watch from the side.

HEATHER

I think Dad's got some issues with
turning seventy.

MATT

What makes you say that?

JOHN

(yelling)

I just wanted one day to be about
me...! One day! And he ruins it!

CUT TO:

INT. FUNERAL HOME - LATER

The last of the guests have left and only the family remains,
gathering their things. Heather holds Greg and Jen's new
baby as she chats with Jen. Heather looks up to see Tim
across the room, admiring her with the baby. She softens and
smiles at him, indicating the beautiful child in her arms.
Tim smiles back as he continues his conversation with Greg.

John enters and gets everyone's attention.

JOHN

Hey. All right -- hey. I'd like
to apologize. Okay? This was a
terrible idea. Blame your mother.

JOAN

You kept asking, why don't more
people do this. Well, this is why.

John can only shake his head.

JOHN

I don't want to die.

JOAN

Who said anything about you dying?

JOHN

Everyone! Were you not listening?
It was horrible. Hey, what you
kids don't get yet is life is about
moments...

WE SEE SOME OF THESE "MOMENTS" IN A SERIES OF SHOTS FROM THE PREVIOUS STORIES, INCLUDING:

- Colleen and Matt getting lost in each other's eyes...

JOHN (V.O.)

These little pieces of time...

- Jen and Greg in the hospital holding their newborn baby, Skyler...

JOHN (V.O.)

Slices of life that flash by...

- Tim, Heather and their children laughing and having fun on the drive up to their college visit...

JOHN (V.O.)

But stay with you forever...

BACK ON JOHN IN THE FUNERAL HOME --

JOHN

These moments are what you remember. But I'm running out of moments. How many more do I get?

JOAN

Oh, Honey. You're not dying. We have plenty of time. Seventy is the new eighty.

JOHN

You mean seventy is the new sixty--

JOAN

Sixty, eighty, whatever. You know I hate math. The point is we have a lot of wonderful years left. Age is just a number.

Joan is John's rock. They kiss, still very much in love. Their children and grandchildren watch this, touched. Then --

JOAN (CONT'D)

I just hope I die before you so I don't have to go through this shit again.

The children and grandchildren slowly exit, leaving John and Joan alone. She notices John has started climbing into the empty casket.

JOAN (CONT'D)

Let's go. What are you doing? Get out of there.

JOHN

I just want to see what it feels like.

JOAN

You're sick.

John lies down inside it, getting comfortable.

JOHN

It feels good on my back. There's room in here for you.

JOAN

Stop it!

She playfully hits the casket and THE LID SLAMS CLOSED ON JOHN, trapping him inside. Stunned, Joan tries to open it and when she can't she immediately panics.

JOAN (CONT'D)

John! Johnny!

We can hear John's MUFFLED CRIES from inside.

JOAN (CONT'D)

Are you alright? John?!

Joan puts her ear to the casket.

JOHN

(muffled)

There's no air in here! I can't breathe!

Joan doesn't know what to do. She runs from the room --

JOAN

Oh, God-- HELP! HELP! Someone help my husband or there's going to be a dead body in that casket!

As we hold on the casket with John YELLING and POUNDING on it from the inside, we...

FADE TO BLACK:

END OF STORY FOUR

END OF SHOW