

HOW I MET YOUR MOTHER - PILOT

# how i met your mother

PILOT EPISODE

by

Carter Bays  
&  
Craig Thomas



WRITERS' 2<sup>ND</sup> DRAFT  
January 28<sup>th</sup>, 2005

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Writers' 2nd Draft  
1-28-05

ACT ONE

INT. 2029 LIVING ROOM - EVENING

(NARRATOR, DAUGHTER, SON)

A WARM LOOKING COUCH IN A FAMILY ROOM, IN SOME SUBURBAN HOME. A FIRE CRACKLES IN THE FIREPLACE. TWO TEENAGERS -- A 14-YEAR OLD SON AND A 16-YEAR OLD DAUGHTER -- SIT ON THE COUCH. THEY LOOK AT THE CAMERA, AND LISTEN TO THE NARRATOR.

NARRATOR (O.S.)

Okay. You guys are old enough. I'm gonna tell you the story of how I met your mother.

DAUGHTER

Heard it.

SON

You told us already.

NARRATOR (O.S.)

Sure, you've heard the short version. But there's a bigger story, and it's important for you to hear it.

SON

Are we being punished for something?

NARRATOR (O.S.)

No.

DAUGHTER

Is this gonna take awhile?

NARRATOR (O.S.)

Yes. Once upon a time, before I was "Dad," I had this whole other life.

SERIES OF PHOTOS OF 27-YEAR-OLD TED, HANDSOME AND OPTIMISTIC;  
 TED HANGING OUT AT A BAR, TED ON A CONSTRUCTION SITE HOLDING  
 BLUEPRINTS, TED IN CENTRAL PARK, TED IN HIS APARTMENT WITH  
 MARSHALL, HIS BOYISH, MIDWESTERN BEST FRIEND.

NARRATOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)

It was way back in 2005. I was single,  
 I had a full head of hair, my career  
 as an architect was taking off, and I  
 lived in New York City with Marshall,  
 my best friend from college. Life was  
 good, until one brisk October night,  
 when Uncle Marshall screwed the whole  
 thing up.

INT. TED AND MARSHALL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT  
 (MARSHALL, TED, NARRATOR)

A 20-SOMETHING BACHELOR APARTMENT THAT, TONIGHT, HAS BEEN  
 SPRUCED UP A BIT. MARSHALL, ON BENDED KNEE, NERVOUSLY  
 PRESENTS TED WITH A DIAMOND RING.

MARSHALL

Will you marry me?

TED

Perfect! And then she says yes, you're  
 engaged, you pop the champagne, drink  
 a toast, have sex on the kitchen  
 floor. (BEAT, THINKS) Don't have sex  
 on our kitchen floor.

MARSHALL

Got it. Geez, I'm so nervous. My  
 stomach's going crazy.

TED  
It's not cancer.

MARSHALL  
Who said cancer?

TED  
You were about to.

MARSHALL  
It could be cancer! I've got all these  
symptoms, I've been peeing like crazy,  
my mouth is dry, she's gonna say no!

TED  
All right, c'mere, bring it in.

TED GIVES HIM A HUG.

MARSHALL  
Thanks for helping me plan this out,  
Ted.

TED  
Dude, it's you and Lily! I've been  
there for all the big moments of you  
and Lily. The night you met, your  
first date...other first things.

MARSHALL  
I'm sorry. We thought you were asleep.

TED  
It's physics, Marshall. If the bottom  
bunk moves, the top bunk moves too.

(MORE)

TED (CONT'D)

But that was nine years ago, the  
nightmares have almost stopped. (BEAT)  
And you're getting engaged. Tonight.

MARSHALL

Yeah. What are you doing tonight?

TED THINKS. FREEZE FRAME.

NARRATOR

What was I doing? Here Uncle Marshall  
was taking the biggest step of his  
life, and me? I'm calling up this guy.

CUT TO:

INT. BARNEY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT  
(BARNEY, NARRATOR, TED)

SPLIT-SCREEN BETWEEN TED AND BARNEY (32, DEVILISH, LIVES ON  
STEAKS AND CIGARS). BARNEY'S CELL PHONE RINGS. HE SEES WHO IT  
IS, AND ANSWERS.

BARNEY

Hey, so you know how I've always had a  
thing for half-Asian girls?

FREEZE FRAME ON BARNEY.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Your Uncle Barney.

UNFREEZE.

BARNEY

Well, I have a new favorite: Lebanese  
girls. Lebanese girls are the new half-  
Asians.

TED  
I don't even know what a Lebanese girl  
looks like.

BARNEY  
Trust me. They're Leba-licious.

TED  
Listen, Marshall's getting engaged  
here tonight. You wanna--

BARNEY  
(SNAPPING INTO ACTION) Meet me at the  
bar in fifteen. And suit up!

TED  
No, no "suit up."

BARNEY  
Suit up or I'm not coming.

TED  
(BEAT) Fine, I'll suit up.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

(BARNEY, TED, YASMIN, NARRATOR)

A NON-TRENDY CLASSIC NEW YORK NEIGHBORHOOD BAR, CURRENTLY  
POPULATED BY A SMALL WEDNESDAY-AFTER-WORK CROWD. TED APPEARS  
IN A LONG SLEEVE T-SHIRT AND CASUAL SLACKS. BARNEY GLARES.

BARNEY  
Where's your suit? We said suit up! I  
show up looking awesome and you show  
up in your pajamas? Fine. I'm  
Superman, you're Clark Kent.

TED

Wait, doesn't Clark Kent always wear a suit? And doesn't Superman kinda wear pajamas?

BARNEY

(IN A FEMALE VOICE) "Ooh, Michelle, check out those two guys over at the bar arguing about Superman. God, that gets me hot!" (AS HIMSELF) Come on, Ted. Pull yourself together.

TED

You know what's weird? I just spent all day planning this romantic marriage proposal...and it's for someone else.

BARNEY

Oh, I see. Marshall gets engaged, and all of a sudden your ovaries are shrinking. Have you forgotten what I said to you the night we met? We were sitting right over there...

WE STYLISHLY WHIP-PAN TO A BOOTH WHERE, MAGICALLY, A YOUNGER BARNEY SITS NEXT TO A YOUNGER TED, WHO HAS A GOATEE. BARNEY PUTS HIS ARM AROUND TED.

TITLE: FOUR YEARS EARLIER...

BARNEY (CONT'D)

Ted, I'm gonna teach you how to live.

(OFF TED'S CONFUSION) Barney. We met  
at the urinal.

TED

Oh, right. Hi.

BARNEY

Lesson one, lose the goatee. Lesson  
two, never wear jeans to a strip club.  
You want a fabric that's light and  
roomy.

TED

Why? (BEAT, REALIZING) Oh.

BARNEY

Lesson three: don't even think about  
getting married till you're 30.

WHIP-PAN BACK TO PRESENT-DAY BARNEY AND TED AT THE BAR.

TED

I'm not thinking about it. Just 'cuz  
my best friend's getting married  
doesn't mean I have to.

BARNEY

I thought I'm your best friend. (BEAT)  
Ted, say I'm your best friend.

TED

You're my best friend, Barney.

BARNEY  
 Good. Then as your best friend, I  
 suggest we play a little game I call,  
 "Have Ya Met Ted?"

TED  
 What? No, we're not playing "Have Ya  
 Met Ted."

TOO LATE. BARNEY TAPS AN EXOTIC, SEXY GIRL ON THE SHOULDER.

BARNEY  
 Hi. Have ya met Ted?

BARNEY WALKS AWAY, LEAVING TED ALONE WITH THE GIRL. AWKWARD  
 BEAT. TED SMILES, STICKS OUT HIS HAND.

TED  
 Hi, I'm Ted.

YASMIN  
 Yasmin.

TED  
 That's a very pretty name.

YASMIN  
 It's Lebanese.

FREEZE FRAME ON TED'S LOOK OF SURPRISE.

NARRATOR (V.O.)  
 Your Uncle Barney was right from time  
 to time.

INT. TED AND MARSHALL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT  
 (MARSHALL, LILY)

THE TABLE'S SET, AND COOKING IS UNDERWAY. MARSHALL'S TRYING  
 TO LIGHT MANY CANDLES WITH ONE DWINDLING MATCH.

MARSHALL

Ow! Ow ow ow ow ow ow!

\*

THE FRONT DOOR OPENS. LILY (EARTHY, STRONG, MATERNAL) ENTERS.

LILY

I've had a long day, my eyes could be  
playing tricks on me - but it almost  
looks like you're cooking.

\*

\*

\*

MARSHALL

I am. You've been taking care of hyper-  
active kindergartners all day. So now  
I'm taking care of you.

\*

\*

\*

\*

LILY

Oh, you're the best. It was finger-  
painting day.

\*

\*

\*

SHE OPENS HER COAT TO REVEAL A NICE BLOUSE COVERED IN FINGER-  
PAINT. THERE IS A CLEAR HANDPRINT ON HER BREAST.

\*

\*

MARSHALL

Did someone touch your boob?

\*

\*

LILY

Justin Stangel. He's a very advanced  
little boy. (THEN) I could really use  
a shower.

\*

\*

\*

\*

MARSHALL

You go ahead. I'll propose the feast  
(CATCHING HIMSELF) prepare the feast.

\*

\*

LILY HEADS FOR THE BATHROOM. MARSHALL LOOKS AT A RECIPE.

MARSHALL (CONT'D)  
 Hey, sweetie? If the recipe says  
 cinnamon and we don't have cinnamon,  
 can I use nutmeg?

LILY  
 Sure, I guess.

MARSHALL  
 Sweetie, where's the nutmeg?

LILY  
 On the spice-rack. \*

LILY ALMOST MAKES IT TO THE BATHROOM THIS TIME, BUT THEN...

MARSHALL  
 Where's the spice-rack? \*

LILY  
 Over the oven!

MARSHALL  
 Oh, here it is. Oh, hey, we do have  
 cinnamon! (BEAT) Wait, it's cinnamon  
 sticks. Can you eat these? (WITH A  
 MOUTHFUL) Oh, no, no you cannot.  
 Sweetie?!

LILY PUTS HER HEAD IN HER HANDS.

INT. BAR - NIGHT  
 (TED, YASMIN) \*

TED SITS AT A TABLE, FLIRTING WITH YASMIN. \*

TED

Here's how it breaks down: I'm 27 now.  
I'll make partner at my architecture  
firm by 30, so that's when I'll start  
looking. It'll take two years to meet  
her, that's 32. We date for a year,  
and at 33, I propose. Then you need a  
year to book a room and a decent band.  
That puts me married at 34. So, yeah,  
marriage is the furthest thing from my  
mind right now.

YASMIN

Really? Because it's all you've talked  
about for the past ten minutes.

TED

That's not true. I also mentioned I'm  
a successful architect. You caught  
that, right?

YASMIN

(LAUGHS) Yes. But I don't think you  
can design your life like it's some  
building. What if you meet a girl who  
wants to start a family right away?  
You haven't planned when you're going  
to have kids, have you?

TED  
 One when I'm 36, one when I'm 39. Two  
 boys.

INT. 2029 LIVING ROOM - EVENING  
 (DAUGHTER, NARRATOR)

DAUGHTER  
 Hey!

NARRATOR (O.S.)  
 Oh, honey, I'm very glad we had you.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT  
 (MARSHALL, LILY)

LILY, FRUSTRATED, COOKS FRANTICALLY OVER THE STOVE, WHILE  
 MARSHALL HOVERS NEARBY, NOT COOKING.

MARSHALL  
 This is great. Cooking together, as a  
 couple.

LILY SHOOTS HIM A LOOK.

MARSHALL (CONT'D)  
 Ooh! Almost forgot!

HE OPENS THE FRIDGE, GRABS A BOTTLE OF CHAMPAGNE.

LILY  
 Oh, honey, champagne!

A BEAT. MARSHALL HOLDS OUT THE BOTTLE, EXPECTANTLY.

LILY (CONT'D)  
 No. Uh-uh. I'm standing here, cooking  
your romantic dinner for me, no,  
 you're opening that bottle yourself.

A BEAT. HE GIVES HER THE PUPPY DOG EYES.

LILY (CONT'D)  
 Marshall, you're too old to be scared  
 to open a champagne bottle.

MARSHALL  
 I'm not scared.

LILY  
 Then open it!

MARSHALL  
 Fine. (A BEAT) Please open it. \*

LILY  
 Dammit, Marshall!

THEY CONTINUE ARGUING.

INT. BAR - NIGHT  
 (NARRATOR, MARSHALL, TED)

WE GO TO A SPLIT SCREEN. AT THE TOP OF THE SCREEN, MARSHALL  
 AND LILY CONTINUE ARGUING. AT THE BOTTOM, TED KEEPS ON  
 FLIRTING WITH YASMIN.

NARRATOR (V.O.)  
 In life, there are two big, gutsy \*  
 questions a man has to ask. One's  
 usually sweet and romantic, and the \*  
 other usually comes half-drunk in some  
 bar. But they're equally important. \*

MARSHALL WHIPS OUT THE RING.

MARSHALL  
 Will you marry me?

TED  
You wanna go out sometime?

\*

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT  
(LILY)

LILY SCREAMS.

LILY  
Yes!!!

SHE JUMPS ON MARSHALL. THEY FALL TO THE FLOOR.

CUT TO:

INT. BAR - NIGHT  
(YASMIN)

\*

YASMIN LOOKS AT TED, AND SMILES.

YASMIN  
Sorry. The bartender's my boyfriend.

\*

A MUSCULAR BARTENDER GLARES AT TED FROM DOWN THE BAR.

\*

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - A BIT LATER  
(MARSHALL, LILY)

THE ROOM LOOKS EMPTY. THEN MARSHALL SITS UP INTO FRAME,  
SHIRTLESS, HAIR MUSSED UP, GRINNING LIKE AN IDIOT.

\*

MARSHALL  
I promised Ted we wouldn't do that.

\*

LILY SITS UP AS WELL, GRINNING.

LILY  
Champagne?

MARSHALL  
Allow me, Mademoiselle.

\*

\*

HE GETS UP, AND PICKS UP THE BOTTLE.

MARSHALL (CONT'D)

I don't know why I was so scared of  
this. It's really pretty easy, right?

LILY STARTS TO GET UP, AS MARSHALL FIDDLES WITH THE BOTTLE.  
HE ABSENTMINDEDLY AIMS IT AT LILY. POP!

LILY (O.S.)

OWWW!!!

INT. BAR - NIGHT

(BARNEY, TED, NARRATOR)

TED AND BARNEY SIT AT THE BAR DRINKING.

BARNEY

What are you thinking, hitting on the  
bartender's girlfriend?!

TED

I bet Marshall and Lily'll start  
having kids soon.

BARNEY

Oh God, we're back on this...

TED

I always figured our kids would play  
together. But now Marshall's pulling  
ahead. My kids'll be playing Candyland  
while Marshall junior's out on the  
porch sneaking cigarettes.

BARNEY

Okay, lesson number -- God, what are  
we up to? 749 or 750. We'll round up.

(MORE)

BARNEY (CONT'D)

Lesson 750: Shut up! You're too young  
to get married!

TED

Six days older than Marshall.

BARNEY

Marshall's from Minnesota. 27-year-  
olds in Minnesota have grandkids. In  
New York, there's a bar on every  
corner. In New York, you're too young.

TED

You're right. And there's one other  
big difference between me and  
Marshall: he's found the love of his  
life. Even if I was ready, it's like,  
okay, I'm ready! Where is she?

HE PRETENDS TO LOOK AROUND...BUT THEN ACTUALLY SEES SOMETHING  
THAT STOPS HIM COLD.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

And there she was.

WE SEE WHO HE'S LOOKING AT: STANDING BETWEEN TWO OF HER  
FRIENDS, ROBIN SCHERBATSKY LOOKS BACK AT TED.

END ACT ONE

ACT TWOINT. BAR - NIGHT

TED LOOKS AT ROBIN (28, BEAUTIFUL, SOPHISTICATED). THEY MAKE EYE CONTACT.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

It was like something from an old movie, where the sailor sees the girl across the crowded dance floor, and he turns to his buddy and says, "See that girl? I'm gonna marry her someday."

TED

Hey Barney, see that girl?

BARNEY

Oh yeah, check out that rack! That is some Grade-A sweater meat. (LOOKING CLOSER) Wait, dude, that girl's a reporter. I've seen her on New York One. Go say hi.

TED

I can't just go say hi. No, here's the plan: I'll wait till she goes to the bathroom, then strategically place myself at the jukebox so that--

BEHIND TED, ROBIN PASSES BY. BARNEY TAPS HER SHOULDER.

BARNEY

(TO ROBIN) Have ya met Ted?

BARNEY WALKS AWAY, LEAVING TED ALONE WITH HER.

TED

Hi, I'm Ted.

SHE SHAKES HIS HAND.

ROBIN

(SMILES) So I hear.

INT. CAB - NIGHT

MARSHALL AND LILY (NOW WITH AN ICE-PACK ON HER EYE) HOP IN.

MARSHALL

I'm sorry. Lily, I'm sorry. (TO THE  
CAB DRIVER) Take us to the hospital!

CAB DRIVER

Whoa, whoa, whoa. Did you hit her?

MARSHALL AND LILY LOOK AT EACH OTHER. A BEAT. THEY CRACK UP.

LILY

Please, I'd kick his skinny ass in.

MARSHALL

It's true, she would.

LILY

I mean, I love him, we just got  
engaged, but this guy can barely even  
spank me in bed for fun. It's just  
these tentative little love-pats--

MARSHALL

Honey? (RE: CAB DRIVER) Stranger.

THE CAB DRIVER STARTS DRIVING. A BEAT.

CAB DRIVER

Hey, S&M's not sick. It's just good,  
clean fun between you and the Missus.  
For my wife's last birthday, I turned  
our basement into a sex dungeon. (TO  
MARSHALL) Hey, buddy, you should build  
one of those for your fiancée.

LILY

Fiancée! Sweetie, that's the first  
time someone's said that!

MARSHALL

(UNCOMFORTABLE) Yeah...

INT. BAR - NIGHT

TED AND ROBIN CONTINUE CHATTING AT THE BAR.

ROBIN

I'm still new, so they never let me  
cover the big stories. I always get  
the stupid fluff pieces at the end of  
the news, you know, the monkey who can  
play the ukulele.

TED

A monkey can play the ukulele? That's  
a big story! First they figure out the  
ukulele, then our computers, our  
weaponry.

(MORE)

TED (CONT'D)

Pretty soon the Statue of Liberty's  
half buried on some beach, and people  
are saying, "Why didn't we see this  
coming?!" Why? Because you didn't  
watch the stupid fluff piece at the  
end of the news.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

ROBIN LAUGHS. OVER AT HER TABLE, HER FRIENDS GLARE AT THEM.

TED (CONT'D)

Your friends don't seem too happy.

\*  
\*

ROBIN

That's 'cuz I'm here talking to a  
Daniel.

TED

Actually it's Ted. Have ya met Ted?

ROBIN

No, see, the one in the middle just  
got dumped by this jerk, Daniel. And  
so tonight, every guy is a Daniel.

\*  
\*  
\*

TED

You know, if it'll make your friend  
feel better, you could throw a drink  
in my face. I don't mind.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

ROBIN

That's an oddly sweet offer. I might  
just take you up on that. Anything I  
can do in return?

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

TED  
Have dinner with me Saturday night.

ROBIN  
Ooh, I can't, we're all going to  
Bermuda for a week. We leave Friday.

ROBIN'S DUMPED FRIEND CALLS OUT.

DUMPED FRIEND  
Hey, what's taking so long?!

TED  
Well, I know it's a long-shot, but  
tomorrow night?

ROBIN  
(BEAT) What the hell.

ROBIN SUBTLY WRITES HER NUMBER DOWN AND HANDS IT TO TED. THEN  
SHE FLAMBOYANTLY THROWS HER DRINK IN HIS FACE.

ROBIN (CONT'D)  
(LOUD) Jerk! (SOTTO) See you tomorrow.

ROBIN STRUTS OVER TO HER FRIENDS. THE DUMPED FRIEND HIGH-  
FIVES HER TRIUMPHANTLY. TED WALKS OVER TO BARNEY, WHO HOLDS  
OUT A NAPKIN AND CHUCKLES.

BARNEY  
Stuffed!

TED  
We're going out tomorrow night.

BARNEY  
Hey, I thought we were gonna go play  
Laser Tag tomorrow night!

TED  
 (BEAT) Yeah, I was never gonna go play  
 laser tag.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT  
 (NARRATOR, ROBIN, TED)

TED AND ROBIN SIT AT THE TABLE. ON THE WALL ABOVE THEM IS A  
 FRENCH HORN THAT HAS BEEN PAINTED BLUE AND MOUNTED.

NARRATOR (V.O.)  
 So the next night, I took her out to  
 dinner at this cute little bistro,  
 where we sat under a blue French horn.

ROBIN  
 That is a bad-ass blue French horn. I  
 gotta get something like that to hang  
 over my fireplace.

TED  
 You know, I came here once with my  
 friend Barney and he said something  
 about that blue French horn, and as a  
 result, I couldn't enjoy my meal.

ROBIN  
 What did he say?

TED  
 He said it's probably what a Smurf  
 penis would look like.

FREEZE FRAME ON TED.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Son, a piece of advice. When you go on  
a first date with a girl, you don't  
want to say "Smurf penis." Girls don't  
ordinarily like that.

UNFREEZE. ROBIN CRACKS UP. TED LAUGHS TOO.

ROBIN

That's one lucky Smurf.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

But this was no ordinary girl.

INT. TED AND MARSHALL'S APARTMENT - THE NEXT EVENING  
(LILY, MARSHALL, TED)

LILY -- WHO NOW WEARS AN EYE PATCH -- READS A WEDDING  
MAGAZINE ON THE COUCH WHILE MARSHALL'S ON THE INTERNET.

LILY

What kind of wedding cake would you  
prefer: Chocolate Layer or Tahitian  
Vanilla?

MARSHALL

(RE: SCREEN) I have diabetes!

LILY

So...something sugar free?

MARSHALL

Listen to this: "Diabetes. Symptoms  
include: Nausea." Check. "Dry mouth."  
Got it. "Increased urination." Like a  
firehose.

(MORE)

MARSHALL (CONT'D)

(THEN, CONFUSED) "Loss of sheen on  
coat. Less playful, doesn't want to go  
on walks."

LILY GOES OVER TO THE COMPUTER, CHECKS OUT THE SCREEN.

LILY

This is a canine medical website.

MARSHALL

But I have all the symptoms. I never  
go on walks anymore!

LILY

You don't have doggie diabetes.

MARSHALL

Yeah, you're right.

LILY

Marshall, every time we disagree on  
something, you say "Yeah, you're  
right." You're in law school. How are  
you ever gonna win a case if your only  
argument is "Yeah, you're right"?

MARSHALL

Okay. I do have doggie diabetes.

LILY

No you don't.

MARSHALL

Yeah, you're right.

LILY

Dammit, Marshall!

TED ENTERS, SEES LILY'S NEW EYE PATCH. \*

TED \*  
I'm sorry, am I interrupting an (LIKE \*  
A PIRATE) Arrrrr-gument? \*

LILY \*  
Oh, that's clever. 'Cuz I'm a pirate. \*

MARSHALL \*  
Hey, how was your big date? \*

TED \*  
Mom, Dad, I've met the future Mrs. Ted \*  
Mosby. She's perfect. Marshall, how \*  
have I always described my perfect \*  
woman? \*

MARSHALL \*  
She loves dogs? \*

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT \*  
(ROBIN, TED) \*

ROBIN \*  
I've got five dogs. \*

TED \*  
Five dogs! \*

INT. TED AND MARSHALL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT \*  
(LILY, TED, MARSHALL) \*

TED IS RECOUNTING THE STORY TO MARSHALL AND LILY. \*

LILY \*  
Five dogs! \*

TED \*  
That's an easy one. Dig deeper. \*

MARSHALL  
She drinks scotch?

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT  
(ROBIN)

ROBIN SIPS A GLASS OF SCOTCH.

ROBIN  
Ahhh. I love a Scotch that's old  
enough to order its own Scotch.

INT. TED AND MARSHALL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT  
(MARSHALL)

MARSHALL  
Can quote obscure lines from  
Ghostbusters?

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT  
(ROBIN)

ROBIN  
"Ray, when someone asks you if you're  
a god, you say yes!"

INT. TED AND MARSHALL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT  
(LILY, TED)

LILY  
Wow, Ted, did you, like, go back to  
the eighties and hire some nerds to  
build this girl with their computer?

TED  
I'm saving the best for last.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT  
(ROBIN)

ROBIN PICKS THE OLIVES OUT OF HER SALAD. SHE LOOKS UP AT TED.

ROBIN

Do you want these? I hate olives.

INT. TED AND MARSHALL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT  
(LILY, MARSHALL)

MARSHALL AND LILY ARE FLOORED BY THIS.

LILY

She hates olives! That's great!

MARSHALL

The olive theory!

INT. 2029 LIVING ROOM - EVENING  
(SON)

THE KIDS LOOK CONFUSED.

SON

What's the olive theory?

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT  
(TED, ROBIN)

TED IS NOW EATING THE OLIVES.

TED

People either love olives or they hate  
'em, right? Very few undecideds out  
there. So here's the spooky thing I've  
observed: in every great relationship,  
there's an olive lover and an olive  
hater. It's like positive and negative  
ions. Perfect symbiosis.

ROBIN

Ya know, I've had a jar of olives just  
sitting in my fridge forever.

TED  
I could take them off your hands.

ROBIN  
(FLIRTATIOUS) They're all yours.

INT. TED AND MARSHALL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

MARSHALL AND LILY ARE EXCITED BY THIS.

LILY  
Aw yeahhhh!

MARSHALL  
(SINGING) *When I get that feelin' / I  
need sexual healin'!*

LILY  
Wait, it's only 10:45. And you don't  
look sexually healed. What happened?

TED  
Well, I had the whole thing planned  
out. Dinner, a romantic walk back to  
her apartment through the park, you  
know, to set up the goodnight kiss...

EXT. ROBIN'S BROWNSTONE - NIGHT

TED AND ROBIN WALK UP TO HER DOOR, THE BASEMENT APARTMENT.

ROBIN  
I gotta get me one of those blue  
French horns. It's gotta be blue and  
it's gotta be a French horn.

TED  
No green clarinet, no purple tuba...

ROBIN  
 It's a Smurf penis, or no dice. (BEAT)  
 I had a really nice time tonight.

TED  
 Me, too.

SUDDENLY, A NEWS VAN PULLS UP. A PRODUCER HOPS OUT, URGENT.

PRODUCER  
 There you are! We got a jumper. Some  
 crazy guy on the ledge of the  
 Manhattan Bridge. Come on, you're  
 covering it.

ROBIN  
 Oh. Okay. Just give me a sec, okay?

THE PRODUCER GETS BACK IN THE NEWS VAN. ROBIN TURNS TO TED.

ROBIN (CONT'D)  
 I really did have a great time. I'm  
 sorry to run off like this.

ROBIN LINGERS FOR A MOMENT.

INT. TED AND MARSHALL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

TED FINISHES THE STORY TO MARSHALL AND LILY.

LILY  
 So'd you kiss her?

TED  
 Nah.

LILY  
 Why not?!

TED

There was a news crew, a guy's gonna  
jump off a bridge...Look, this girl  
could actually be my future wife. I  
want our first kiss to be amazing.

LILY

Aw, Ted, that's so sweet. (BEAT) So  
you chickened out.

TED

I didn't chicken out! Kissing a girl  
for the first time is a delicate  
thing. I didn't even get the signal.

LILY

There's a signal?

TED

Yeah, it's like this exciting  
radiation she gives off. And if you  
don't feel it, you don't kiss her. You  
wouldn't understand. You haven't been  
single since The Macarena.

LILY

Ted, even the dumbest single person  
alive would say you should have kissed  
her. (BEAT) And if you don't believe  
me, call him.

INT. LASER TAG ARENA - NIGHT  
(BARNEY, TED)

BARNEY, IN A LASER TAG VEST AND HELMET, IS IN THE MIDST OF A LASER TAG BATTLE. HE STOPS TO ANSWER HIS PHONE. SPLIT-SCREEN BETWEEN BARNEY AND TED ON THE PHONE.

BARNEY  
Hey, loser. How's not playing Laser  
Tag? Because playing Laser Tag is  
awesome.

TED  
Listen, I need your opinion--

BARNEY  
Meet me at the bar in fifteen! And  
suit up!

BARNEY HANGS UP ON TED.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

MARSHALL, LILY (STILL WEARING EYEPATCH), BARNEY (NOW IN A SUIT) AND TED (NOT IN A SUIT) LISTEN TO THE END OF THE STORY.

TED  
So...what do you think?

BARNEY  
I can't believe you're still not  
wearing a suit!

TED  
Will you please tell Long Jane Silver  
here I didn't chicken out?

BARNEY  
Lily...he totally chickened out.

TED

No! Dude, you're not listening, I  
didn't get the signal.

BARNEY

Oh please. "The signal." Like that's  
even a thing. What, is she gonna bat  
her eyes in Morse code? (BLINKING)  
"Ted...I like you...kiss me..." No!  
You just kiss her!

TED

You can't kiss her if you don't get  
the signal!

BARNEY GRABS MARSHALL BY THE ARMS AND KISSES HIM ON THE LIPS.

MARSHALL

Dude!

BARNEY

Did Marshall give me "the signal?"

MARSHALL

(SPITTING) No. And you need to shave.

BARNEY

But see, at least I'll get to sleep  
tonight knowing, Marshall and me?  
Never gonna happen. You should've  
kissed her.

BEAT AS TED LETS ALL THIS SINK IN.

TED

I should've kissed her. Well, I guess  
I'll just...see her when she gets back  
from Bermuda.

BARNEY

Bermuda? Yeah, she's gonna hook up in  
Bermuda. You're never gonna see her  
again. So I suggest we play a little  
game I call--

MARSHALL

Hey look, she's on TV!

LILY

Ooh, she's cute! Cheryl, turn it up.

THE BARTENDER TURNS UP THE VOLUME. ANGLE ON TV: ROBIN, NOW  
MADE UP AND IN A DIFFERENT OUTFIT, REPORTS WITH THE MANHATTAN  
BRIDGE IN THE BACKGROUND.

ROBIN

...at which point, police apprehended  
the man, giving this bizarre story a  
happy ending. For New York One News,  
I'm--

CHERYL MUTES THE TV.

MARSHALL

Huh. The guy didn't jump.

SOMEHOW HAUNTED BY THIS, TED STANDS UP.

TED

I'm gonna go kiss her goodnight. Right  
now.

BARNEY

Okay, let's not do anything crazy.

TED

I never do anything crazy! I'm always waiting for the moment, planning the moment - maybe this is the moment.

(POINTS TO TV) I gotta do what that guy couldn't. I gotta take the leap.

(OFF THEIR LOOKS) Okay, it's not a perfect metaphor, 'cuz for me, it's "fall in love and get married," and for him it's death.

BARNEY

Actually, that is a perfect metaphor.

(OFF MARSHALL AND LILY'S GLARES) By the way, did I congratulate you two?

TED

So, what do you think?

LILY

Do it.

MARSHALL

Do it.

ALL EYES TURN TO BARNEY.

BARNEY

All right, I'll sign off on this, but under one condition...

INT. CAB - NIGHT

THE FOUR OF THEM ARE IN A CAB. TED'S NOW WEARING A SUIT.

BARNEY

Look at you in that suit! This totally  
makes up for laser tag!

TED

(SEEING SOMETHING) Stop the car!

THE CAB STOPS, AND TED RUNS OUT.

MARSHALL

Where's he going?

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

THE SAME RESTAURANT FROM THE DATE. A FEW STRAGGLING DINERS  
FINISH THEIR DESSERT. TWO WAITERS TALK.

WAITER #1

So'd that guy end up jumping?

WAITER #2

(DISAPPOINTED) Nah, they never jump.

TED RUNS IN, GRABS THE FRENCH HORN OFF THE WALL AND RUNS OUT.

WAITER #1

Hey!

INT. CAB - MOMENTS LATER

TED DIVES BACK INTO THE CAB WITH THE HORN.

TED

Go! Go! Go! (OFF THEIR LOOKS) Flowers  
are so cliché.

AS THE WAITERS RUN OUT, THE CAB PULLS OFF INTO THE NIGHT.

END OF ACT TWO

---

ACT THREE

INT. CAB - NIGHT

(NARRATOR, LILY, BARNEY, TED)

THE CAB PULLS UP IN FRONT OF ROBIN'S BROWNSTONE. TED IS IN THE FRONT SEAT HOLDING THE FRENCH HORN. BARNEY, MARSHALL, AND LILY RIDE IN THE BACK.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

So we pulled up in front of her place  
with a stolen blue french horn.

LILY

...because I love olives and Marshall  
hates them. And that's how Ted came up  
with the olive theory. (POKING TED)  
Such a romantic.

BARNEY

Yeah. Hey, Ted, if you kiss her, can I  
watch? I love it when chicks make out.

TED

Her light's on. She's home.

TED GETS OUT OF THE CAB.

LILY

Ted, hang on! So should we wait here?  
What if you, uh...

BARNEY

Get it on with the TV reporter?

(CHUCKLING) "This just in."

BARNEY LAUGHS AT HIS OWN JOKE. NO ONE ELSE DOES.

LILY  
 (OFF BARNEY, TO TED) Please don't  
 leave us out here all night.

TED  
 If it's going well, I'll call your  
 cellphone and let it ring once. And  
 you guys can take off.

LILY  
 Kiss her, Ted. Kiss her good.

TED  
 Marshall, remember this night. When  
 you're the best man at our wedding,  
 and you give a speech...you're gonna  
 tell this story.

TED WALKS OFF TRIUMPHANTLY.

BARNEY  
 Why does he get to be the best man?!  
I'm your best friend!

EXT. ROBIN'S BROWNSTONE - NIGHT

HE APPROACHES HER DOOR.

NARRATOR (V.O.)  
 With each step, a million thoughts  
 raced through my mind. Unfortunately,  
 there was one distinct thought that  
 didn't.

FLASH TO:

INT. RESTAURANT - EARLIER THAT NIGHT  
(ROBIN)

A SNIPPET FROM TED AND ROBIN'S DINNER CONVERSATION.

ROBIN  
I have five dogs.

FLASH TO:

EXT. ROBIN'S BROWNSTONE - WHERE WE LEFT OFF  
(TED, BARNEY, ROBIN)

TED RINGS THE DOORBELL. IMMEDIATELY, FIVE DOGS BEGIN BARKING UPROARIOUSLY. TED FREAKS OUT. LIGHTS START GOING ON IN OTHER APARTMENTS. TED HEADS BACK TOWARD THE CAB.

TED  
Crap. Crap crap crap.

BARNEY LEANS OUT THE WINDOW OF THE CAB

BARNEY  
No! Be a man! You're wearing a suit!

NODDING, TED RETURNS TO ROBIN'S DOOR. THE DOOR OPENS, REVEALING ROBIN IN HER PAJAMAS.

TED  
Hi. I was just, uh...

\*

HE HOLDS UP THE FRENCH HORN. SHE LOOKS AT IT, AND LOOKS AT HIM. WITHOUT BATTING AN EYE:

ROBIN  
Come on in.

TED GOES INSIDE.

INT. CAB - NIGHT  
(BARNEY, RANJIT, LILY, MARSHALL)

\*

THEY WATCH HIM GO IN. BARNEY LOOKS AT THE NAMETAG OF THE CAB DRIVER. IT READS "RANJIT SINGH."

\*

BARNEY  
Hey, Ranjit. Where you from? Lebanon?

\*

RANJIT  
Bangladesh.

BARNEY  
That's too bad. Lebanese girls,  
Ranjit. Lebanese girls.

LILY  
Okay, I already can't take this  
anymore. I'm gonna go see if that  
bodega has a bathroom, I gotta pee.

LILY GETS OUT.

MARSHALL  
Should I come with you?

LILY  
Do you have to pee?

MARSHALL  
No.

LILY  
Then stay. (AS IF TO A DOG) Stay.

SHE EXITS.

INT. ROBIN'S BROWNSTONE - NIGHT  
(TED, ROBIN)

THE APARTMENT IS STYLISH AND NEAT, EXCEPT FOR FIVE DOGS THAT  
WANDER ABOUT. ROBIN HANGS THE FRENCH HORN OVER THE FIREPLACE,  
THEN STEPS BACK NEXT TO TED TO ASSESS IT.

TED  
That looks...just terrible.

ROBIN

Heinous. So, Ted, what brings you to  
Brooklyn at one in the morning with a  
blue French horn?

\*  
\*  
\*

TED

Well, you know, our night ended so  
abruptly. And ever since I've been  
kicking myself, because I really  
wanted to...get those olives from you.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

ROBIN

(SMILES) Would you like those olives  
with some gin and vermouth?

\*

TED

Some would call that a martini.

\*

SHE EXITS INTO THE KITCHEN.

\*

TED (CONT'D)

This is good, this is good...

\*  
\*

HE WHIPS OUT HIS PHONE AND STARTS TO DIAL.

\*

ROBIN (O.S.)

One drink, then I'm kicking you out.

HE PUTS THE PHONE AWAY.

ROBIN (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Although the subway may be closed.

HE WHIPS OUT THE PHONE AGAIN.

ROBIN (O.S.) (CONT'D)

But there's a car service that runs  
all night.

\*

TED TURNS TO ONE OF ROBIN'S DOGS, A DACHSHUND.

TED  
Is she always this confusing?

ROBIN RETURNS WITH THE MARTINIS, TURNS ON THE STEREO, AND  
STARTS SWAYING BACK AND FORTH SEDUCTIVELY. \*

ROBIN  
You wanna dance?

TED  
One second.

TED STARTS TO DIAL HIS PHONE. ROBIN TAKES IT, TOSSES IT.

TED (CONT'D)  
Eh, it can wait. \*

THEY START SLOW-DANCING. \*

INT. 2029 LIVING ROOM - EVENING  
(DAUGHTER, NARRATOR)

THE KIDS CRINGE.

DAUGHTER  
Oh God, is this leading up to you  
having sex? \*

NARRATOR  
Just bear with me, okay? \*

INT. CAB - NIGHT  
(BARNEY, MARSHALL) \*

IT'S JUST MARSHALL AND BARNEY NOW. A BEAT.

BARNEY  
So Marshall. Ya hate olives. Lily  
loves 'em...but you can't stand 'em.

MARSHALL

Yeah, I've never cared for olives.

BARNEY

That's interesting. Two weeks ago, at that Spanish restaurant, I seem to recall a little dish of olives. And I also seem to recall...you had some.

\*  
\*  
\*

MARSHALL

Did I?

BARNEY

Cut the crap, Marshall! You like olives.

MARSHALL MAKES SURE LILY'S GONE, THEN TAKES A DEEP BREATH.

MARSHALL

On our second date, Lily and I went to this Greek restaurant, and I had a salad. She started taking my olives, 'cuz she loves olives, and she asked if I minded, and I said, "No, I hate olives." Then based on that, Ted came up with his whole olive theory, so I played along. For nine years.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

BARNEY

Marshall, I'm gonna give you an early wedding present: don't get married.

\*

INT. ROBIN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

(ROBIN, TED)

\*

TED AND ROBIN DANCE. IT'S GETTING PRETTY INTIMATE. ROBIN  
NOTICES TED'S GLASS (EMPTY SAVE FOR OLIVES) ON THE TABLE. \*

ROBIN  
You didn't eat your olives. Open up. \*

ROBIN TAKES AN OLIVE AND FEEDS IT TO TED.

ROBIN (CONT'D)  
You know, I think I like your olive  
theory. \*

TED  
I think I like your new French Horn.

ROBIN  
I think I like your nose.

TED  
I think I'm in love with you.

INT. BAR - LATER THAT NIGHT \*  
(MARSHALL, LILY AND BARNEY)

TED, HIS TIE UNTIED, BURIES HIS FACE IN HIS HANDS. MARSHALL,  
LILY AND BARNEY ARE STUNNED. \*

MARSHALL, LILY AND BARNEY  
What?!

INT. 2029 LIVING ROOM - EVENING  
(KIDS)

THE KIDS ARE STUNNED.

KIDS  
What?!

INT. ROBIN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT  
(ROBIN, TED)

ROBIN PULLS AWAY FROM TED, STUNNED.

ROBIN

What?!

A BEAT. SHE TURNS OFF THE STEREO. \*

TED

Wow.

ROBIN \*

Yeah. \*

TED \*

I really said that. \*

ROBIN \*

You really did. \*

TED \*

Maybe a little too soon for that. \*

ROBIN \*

Maybe a wee bit. \*

INT. CAB - NIGHT

(BARNEY, RANJIT, MARSHALL, LILY)

MARSHALL AND BARNEY CONTINUE THEIR CONVERSATION.

BARNEY

Ranjit, back me up! He needs to lose  
this woman!

RANJIT

I think they seem nice.

BARNEY

Look, you said your stomach's been  
hurting, right? Ya know what that is?

MARSHALL  
Canine diabetes?

BARNEY  
It's hunger. You're hungry, Marshall.  
Hungry for experience. Hungry for  
something new. Hungry...for olives.  
But you're too scared to do anything  
about it.

MARSHALL  
Yeah. You're right. I'm scared. I'm  
scared of everything: cancer,  
champagne corks, Katie Couric. But  
when I think of spending the rest of  
my life with Lily - committing,  
forever, no other women - that doesn't  
scare me at all. It's the best and  
least-scary thing I can possibly  
imagine. I'm getting married.

REVEAL LILY NOW STANDING BY THE OPEN WINDOW, HAVING HEARD  
THIS. SHE LEANS IN TO KISS MARSHALL. HE STOPS HER.

MARSHALL (CONT'D)  
(DEEP BREATH) Lily...I like olives.

LILY  
(BEAT) We'll make it work.

SHE KISSES HIM PASSIONATELY.

MARSHALL  
There's something we have to do.

BARNEY

Ranjit, do not let these two slam in  
your cab.

\*  
\*

MARSHALL

I'll be right back. (TO LILY) Stay!

MARSHALL RUNS OFF.

INT. ROBIN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

(ROBIN, TED)

\*

TED AND ROBIN SIT ON THE COUCH FOR A BEAT, STUNNED.

ROBIN

You were about to kiss me!

\*  
\*

TED

I know!

\*  
\*

ROBIN

And I was gonna kiss you back.

Probably drag you into the bedroom.

You were gonna get some!

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

TED

Really? 'Cuz, okay, cards on the

table: I'm just here for sex. Cheap

meaningless sex. I'm never even gonna

call you afterwards.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

ROBIN

(SMILES) Now you're just telling me

what I want to hear.

\*  
\*  
\*

TED

I'm sorry. I'm not always like this.  
It's just, my best friend got engaged  
and I went a little crazy. And then I  
meet you, and you're so amazing...

\*

ROBIN

You've only known me one night.

TED

So? And believe me, I've abandoned all  
hope, we're just talking here. But do  
you really think there's no such thing  
as love at first sight?

\*

\*

ROBIN

Not in 2005. And definitely not in New  
York. Ted, I like being single. When I  
need stable companionship, I've got  
five dogs. I don't need a boyfriend.

\*

TED

God, why do those words make me wanna  
be your boyfriend so badly?

ROBIN

(SHRUGS) The universe hates you?

EXT. ROBIN'S BROWNSTONE - NIGHT

(MARSHALL, LILY, COP, BARNEY)

LILY WAITS ON THE STEPS. MARSHALL APPEARS, HOLDING A BOTTLE  
OF CHAMPAGNE.

MARSHALL  
 Champagne! From the rolling hills of  
 (CHECKING BOTTLE) New Jersey.

LILY  
 Oh, honey, can we afford that?

MARSHALL  
 Step aside, little lady, and watch as  
 I pop this...

HE UNWRAPS THE FOIL. IT'S A TWIST-OFF.

MARSHALL (CONT'D)  
 Twist-off cap. Hmm. Kinda takes the  
 danger out of it. \*

LILY  
 Wait. (COVERS HER EYES) Okay, do it. \*

MARSHALL UNSCREWS THE CAP.

MARSHALL  
 Pop. It's open. \*

LILY  
 (UNCOVERS EYES) I love you, sweetie. \*

HE POURS TWO GLASSES.

MARSHALL  
 I love you too.

MARSHALL AND LILY TRY TO IGNORE IT. THEY'RE JUST ABOUT TO  
 CLINK GLASSES WHEN A COP APPEARS.

COP  
 Good evening. Wanna take that inside?

LILY  
Oh. We don't live here.

MARSHALL  
See, we just got engaged--

COP  
Congratulations. You can't drink on  
the sidewalk. Either dispose of the  
bottle, or go inside.

ANGLE ON BARNEY IN THE CAB.

BARNEY  
Okay, Ranjit, time to go. \*

THE CAB PULLS OFF.

LILY  
Son of a bitch!

MARSHALL  
Look, we just got engaged. We're \*  
having this toast. Officer. Although \*  
you're still a hero, and we appreciate  
everything you've done for this city.

COP  
(RE: LILY'S EYE) Did he hit you?

LILY  
Ha!

COP  
Give me the bottle, sir.

LILY  
Give him the bottle, Marshall.

MARSHALL

No!

COP

You're saying no to me?

LILY

I can't believe he's saying no to me.

MARSHALL

See? I can be assertive. I'm gonna be  
a great lawyer.

COP

You're gonna need one, ~~asshole!~~

THE COP GRABS MARSHALL AND CUFFS HIM ROUGHLY.

INT. ROBIN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

TED AND ROBIN STAND AT THE DOOR, SAYING GOOD NIGHT.

TED

Well, have a great trip. Oh, and when  
you tell this story to your friends,  
could you avoid the word "psycho." I'd  
prefer "eccentric."

ROBIN

(LAUGHS) Noted.

TED

Hey, that guy on the bridge -- why'd  
he want to jump, anyway?

ROBIN

He told a first date he loved her.  
Kidding. (BEAT) He was just lonely.

EXT. ROBIN'S BROWNSTONE - NIGHT \*  
(NARRATOR)

TED EXITS. NO CAB, NO FRIENDS. HE DIALS HIS CELLPHONE. \*

INT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT  
(LILY)

LILY SITS AT A DESK, FACING A COP. SHE'S COUNTING OUT TWENTY DOLLAR BILLS FOR MARSHALL'S BAIL. MARSHALL SITS BEHIND BARS IN A HOLDING PEN IN THE BACKGROUND.

LILY  
(ANSWERING) Tell me you kissed her.

EXT. ROBIN'S BROWNSTONE - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER  
(TED, ROBIN)

TED RINGS THE DOORBELL. THE DOGS BARK AGAIN. ROBIN ANSWERS.

TED  
How do I get to the F train?

ROBIN  
Two blocks that way, take a right.

TED  
Robin, I figured something out \*  
tonight. I'm sick of being single. I'm \*  
not cut out for it. It's like some \*  
suit that doesn't quite fit me. But if \*  
a woman - not you, just some \*  
hypothetical woman - were to bear with \*  
me through all this stuff I clearly \*  
suck at, I think I'd make a damn good \*  
husband. Because that's the stuff I'd \*  
be good at. Stuff like being \*  
supportive. And making her laugh. \*

(MORE)

TED (CONT'D)

And walking her five hypothetical  
dogs. And being a good father. And  
being a good kisser.

\*  
\*  
\*

ROBIN

Everyone thinks they're a good kisser.

TED

Oh, I've got references.

ROBIN

(LAUGHS) I'm sure you do.

TED

Good night, Robin.

TED EXTENDS HIS HAND. ROBIN SHAKES IT.

TED (CONT'D)

And I'm a good handshaker.

ROBIN

That's a pretty great handshake.

THEY SMILE AT EACH OTHER. THE HANDSHAKE LINGERS A BEAT.

INT. BAR - LATER

(TED, MARSHALL, LILY, BARNEY, RANJIT, NARRATOR)

TED, TIE UNTIED, SITS AT A TABLE, SADLY TELLING HIS STORY.

TED

And that was it. I'll probably never  
see her again.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

REVEAL THE OTHER THREE, STARING AT TED LIKE HE'S CRAZY.

TED (CONT'D)

What?

\*  
\*

MARSHALL  
That was the signal!

LILY  
 Definitely! That long, lingering  
 handshake? You should've kissed her.

BARNEY  
 There's no such thing as the signal.  
 (BEAT) But yeah, that was the signal.

REVEAL RANJIT SITTING AT THEIR TABLE.

RANJIT  
 (NODS) Signal.

TED  
 No, look, Ranjit, you guys weren't  
 there!

LILY  
 Sorry we disappeared. Oh, that reminds  
 me. (TO BARNEY) You're a douche.

BARNEY  
 I'll make it up to you.

LILY  
 How could you possibly--

POP! A CHAMPAGNE BOTTLE OPENS. LILY DUCKS REFLEXIVELY. THE  
 BARTENDER HANDS BARNEY AN EXPENSIVE BOTTLE OF DOM.

BARNEY  
 So you can have your stupid toast.

LILY SMILES, SURPRISED AND TOUCHED. BARNEY STARTS POURING.

TED  
That wasn't the signal.

BARNEY  
Yeah, Ted, we're not on you anymore.

LILY  
God, I'm starving.

TED REACHES INTO HIS POCKET, HANDS HER THE JAR OF OLIVES.

LILY (CONT'D)  
Oh, score!

SHE STARTS DEVOURING THE OLIVES. MARSHALL JOINS IN.

TED  
(SHOCKED) You're eating olives?

BARNEY  
Oh, yeah, your olive theory? Load of  
crap. All right, let's do this.

HE HANDS EACH OF THEM A GLASS. THEY RAISE THEM.

LILY  
To the future.

THEY CLINK AND DRINK. A BEAT.

TED  
That was not the signal.

NARRATOR (V.O.)  
I asked her about it years later, and  
yeah, that was the signal. I could  
have kissed her.

MONTAGE: ROBIN THROWING A DRINK IN TED'S FACE, THE TWO OF  
THEM EATING AT THE RESTAURANT, THE TWO OF THEM DANCING.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)  
 But that's the funny thing about  
 destiny: it happens whether you plan  
 it or not. I mean, I thought I'd never  
 see that girl again. But it turns out  
 I was just too close to the puzzle to  
 see the picture that was forming.

\*

THE LAST SHOT OF THE MONTAGE IS ROBIN AND TED SHAKING HANDS.

NARRATOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
 Because that, kids, is the true story  
 of how I met my good friend Robin  
 Scherbatsky. You know, Aunt Robin.

\*

INT. 2029 LIVING ROOM - EVENING

(SON AND DAUGHTER, DAUGHTER, NARRATOR)

SON AND DAUGHTER  
 (DISAPPOINTED) Awww!

DAUGHTER  
 I thought this was how you met Mom.

NARRATOR (V.O.)  
 Will you relax? I'm getting to it.

CUT TO BLACK.

NARRATOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
 Like I said, it's a long story.

THE END