

HOW I MET YOUR MOTHER

"This Totally Sweet Game Show"

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May 20, 2008
WGA Registration #1277042

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HOW I MET YOUR MOTHER

"This Totally Sweet Game Show"

ACT ONE

INT. 2030 LIVING ROOM - EVENING
(NARRATOR)

THE NARRATOR'S SON AND DAUGHTER SIT ON THE COUCH WATCHING THEIR FATHER (OFF CAMERA) NARRATE HIS STORY.

NARRATOR (O.S.)

Kids, this is the story of what your Uncle Marshall calls the most awesome moment of his life. It all started with a simple decision whose consequences were far more important than any of us imagined.

INT. TED'S KITCHEN - MORNING
(LILY, TED)

ON A LAZY SATURDAY MORNING, TED AND LILY LOOK THROUGH THE CUPBOARDS AT VARIOUS BOXES OF CEREAL.

LILY

So, Fruit Loops or Frosted Flakes?

TED

I don't know. I just don't know. So many delicious choices. How does one decide?

LILY

There's always eeny-meeny-miny-moe.

TED

You expect me to use a child's game to choose something as important as what meal I start my day with?

LILY

Well it's either that or pick a number.

TED

That seems so simplistic, it just might work. Alright, how about six?

LILY

One, two, three, four, five, six. You have chosen Grapenuts.

TED

Really? Grapenuts? That's so... what's the word?

LILY

Dull?

TED

Dull! That's it exactly. Can I pick a different number?

LILY

But Ted, that completely ruins the point of the number picking system. You have to stick with the first number that you picked. And you picked six. And six is Grapenuts.

THEY WALK INTO THE LIVING ROOM WITH THEIR CEREAL AND TURN ON THE TV.

INT. TED'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

(MARSHALL, TED, LILY, BARNEY, NARRATOR)

MARSHALL ENTERS WITH THE MAIL.

MARSHALL

Morning guys. Here's your mail, Ted.

TED

Oh, thanks.

LILY

Did we get anything?

MARSHALL

No - most of our mail is still getting lost between being forwarded from here to our new place and then being forwarded back to here. Either that or it's getting lost in an alternate dimension.

TED

Not your dimension theories again.

MARSHALL

Hey - it's absolutely possible that there are planes of existence that we can't see. And that our mail is occasionally lost in them without anyone noticing. It would certainly explain a lot. Like, what ever happened to my toothbrush?

LILY

Maybe you lost it during the move.

MARSHALL IS PERPLEXED BY THE FACT THAT LILY MIGHT BE RIGHT. BUT BEFORE HE CAN COME UP WITH A RESPONSE, THE PHONE RINGS. MARSHALL ANSWERS.

MARSHALL

(re: his phone conversation)

This is Marshall. Uh-huh. Seriously?

You've got to be joking. Not joking?

Okay. When? Where? How much!?

That's so sweet! No, thank you!

MARSHALL HANGS UP.

LILY

What was that, Sweetie?

TED

Did they find your mail?

MARSHALL

Even better. I just saved a bunch of money on our car insurance by switching to Geico!

FOR JUST A MOMENT, TED AND LILY THINK HE MIGHT BE SERIOUS.

TED

Okay, that joke only works if you actually own a car.

LILY

I don't think that joke works, ever. Seriously, what was that phone call about? You sounded so excited.

MARSHALL

Maybe you guys had better sit down.

TED

We are sitting.

LILY

Come on, honey. Just spill the beans already. Our cereal is getting soggy.

MARSHALL

Alright. I just got invited to the most awesome thing...

BARNEY ENTERS, INTERRUPTING.

BARNEY

Guess who just got invited to the most awesome thing ever! Spoilers: it was me.

MARSHALL

Um, no. It was me. I did. I just got invited to the most awesome thing ever. There's no way that your invitation is more awesome than mine.

BARNEY

You think so? Well I was just invited to the Sports Illustrated - wait for it - swim suit issue - wait for it - photo shoot!

(MORE)

BARNEY (CONT'D)

That's right, I'm going to be there with all those models in their itty bitty bikinis. Let's see you top that on the awesomeness scale.

TED

Ooo, that is quite awesome, indeed. Marshall?

MARSHALL

Oh - I've totally got that beat. I was just invited to be a contestant on Deal...

FREEZE FRAME.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Alright kids - let me pause the story here for a moment and explain a few things.

GAME SHOW MONTAGE

(NARRATOR)

A QUICK MONTAGE OF CLIPS FROM SOME OF THE MORE POPULAR GAME SHOWS AROUND TODAY: 1 VS. 100, DEAL OR NO DEAL, MOMENT OF TRUTH, WHO WANTS TO BE A MILLIONAIRE, ETC.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Back in 2008 there was an explosion of these things called game shows. People would humiliate themselves on live television for a chance to win obscene amounts of money.

(MORE)

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

They usually got washed up comedians
to host the things.

A CLIP FROM 1 VS. 100 PLAYS DURING THIS NEXT LINE.

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

But some of the hosts were incredibly
popular and handsome. Anyway - it
seemed like everyone was obsessed with
the idea of getting on a game show.
And your Uncle Marshall was no
exception.

A CLIP FROM DEAL OR NO DEAL PLAYS DURING THIS NEXT LINE.

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

There was one game show in particular
that he was absolutely in love with.
Unfortunately - after what happened in
2010 - he became pretty embarrassed
about his obsession.

INT. 2010 NEWSROOM - NIGHT
(REPORTER, NARRATOR)

A 2010 NEWS REPORTER GIVES A STANDARD NEWSCAST. A PICTURE
[TAKEN FROM ACT 3] OF BARNEY DRESSED UP AS MARSHALL ON THE
SET OF WHAT IS CLEARLY SUPPOSED TO BE DEAL OR NO DEAL IS IN
THE BACKGROUND.

REPORTER

And in other news, everyone's
suspicions were confirmed last night
when we uncovered irrefutable evidence
that this once popular game show was
rigged.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

So, for Uncle Marshall's sake, I'm not going to tell you what the name of the show was. Let's just call it...

CUT TO:

INT. TED'S APARTMENT - WHERE WE LEFT OFF
(MARSHALL, LILY, TED, BARNEY)

PICKING UP RIGHT WHERE WE LEFT OFF A MOMENT AGO.

MARSHALL

I was just invited to be a contestant on THIS TOTALLY SWEET GAME SHOW!

LILY

Oh my God Marshall, that's incredible!

TED

Congratulations man!

BARNEY

That's it? Dude - Sports Illustrated. Swim suit. Photo shoot. Come on! Ted? Back me up here.

TED

I don't know, Barney. You know how much this means to Marshall. He's always wanted to go on THIS TOTALLY SWEET GAME SHOW.

LILY

He's seen every single episode.

MARSHALL

Ha! I totally out-awesomed you.

BARNEY

Did I mention it's the swim suit
issue?

LILY

Barney, where do you even get all of
these invitations from, anyway?

BARNEY

Hmph. Please. Isn't it obvious?

BEAT. IT'S NOT OBVIOUS TO ANYONE BUT HIM.

BARNEY (CONT'D)

People love me.

TED

Wait, Marshall, don't they film THIS
TOTALLY SWEET GAME SHOW in LA?

MARSHALL

Yes they do.

LILY

Does that mean what I think it means?

MARSHALL

Yes it does.

SIMULTANEOUSLY THEY ALL SAY...

LILY & MARSHALL & TED &
BARNEY

We're going to Los Angeles!

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWOINT. TED'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

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

A FEW DAYS LATER, MARSHALL IS EARNESTLY WATCHING THE TV. TED IS SEMI-WATCHING WHILE OTHERWISE OCCUPYING HIMSELF ON HIS LAPTOP. BARNEY WATCHES, SLIGHTLY CONFUSED. HE DOESN'T QUITE UNDERSTAND THE SHOW.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

We spent the rest of the week
preparing for our trip to LA, mostly
by watching a lot of television.

MARSHALL

(talking to the television)

Oh come on. Take the deal. This is
ridiculous. What are you even
thinking about? Of course you take
the deal. There's only a twenty
percent chance that your case has more
money than this deal. Now is the time
to walk away, woman!

TED

You do know that no matter how loudly
you talk, she can't hear you?

MARSHALL

Very funny, Ted. Look - if I'm going
to be a contestant on THIS TOTALLY
SWEET GAME SHOW - I need to know when
to take a good deal. I can't be
tempted to risk it all for a chance to
win more money.

(MORE)

MARSHALL (CONT'D)

See, I would totally take the deal in a situation like this. The odds are, she's gonna crash and burn.

(re: what's happening on the television)

Oh, and, down the offer drops. I am so good at this game!

BARNEY

See - that's the part of the show I just don't understand. Why would you ever take the deal? Why not just pick the million dollar case in the beginning? Then all the deals become irrelevant.

MARSHALL

Listen to this amateur. You can't just pick the million dollar case. The odds of that are only one in twenty six. How would you even do that?

BARNEY

Uh, you be awesome. Duh. Like me.

MARSHALL

(mocking Barney)

"You just be awesome." Like you could do it.

BARNEY

I could. In fact, I am so confident in my awesomeness that if you let me go on the show in your place, and I don't pick the million dollar case, I will give you one million dollars.

MARSHALL

What if you do pick the million dollar case?

BARNEY

Oh, you can keep your money. But! In exchange, you have to... wait for it... Hrm. What's the most un-awesome thing I can think of? Keep waiting... Got it. You have to be my personal butler for a week.

MARSHALL

You really can't handle the fact that my invitation out-awesomed your little photo shoot, can you?

BARNEY

I must ask you Marshall Eriksen, is it a deal or is it not a deal?

MARSHALL

No deal, dude. I really want to go on THIS TOTALLY SWEET GAME SHOW.

(MORE)

MARSHALL (CONT'D)

It's about more than money. It's gonna be the most awesome moment of my life.

ENTER ROBIN AND LILY.

ROBIN

Alright, we're here. Now spill it, Lily.

MARSHALL

What? What's going on?

ROBIN

Lily said she has a huge announcement, but she wouldn't tell me until we were all together.

MARSHALL

Really? What's this big announcement?

LILY

Well, today, after class...

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. LILY'S KINDERGARTEN ROOM - THAT AFTERNOON
(CHARLES, LILY)

THE CLASSROOM IS A MESS AS THE KIDS HAVE JUST FINISHED FINGER PAINTING. LILY HERSELF IS COVERED IN PAINT. ONE OF LILY'S PAINTINGS IS ON DISPLAY AT THE FRONT OF THE ROOM AS AN EXAMPLE FOR THE KIDS. LILY WAVES GOODBYE TO WHAT SHE THINKS IS THE LAST OF HER STUDENTS LEAVING WITH THEIR PARENTS AT THE END OF THE DAY. SHE TURNS AROUND, READY TO RELAX, AND IS SHOCKED TO SEE CHARLES STILL STANDING THERE. CHARLES IS A GOOD LOOKING MIDDLE AGED MAN WITH A GOATEE. HIS CLOTHES ARE VERY HIP. HE IS INVOLVED IN THE ART WORLD, AND WE CAN TELL.

CHARLES

I am terribly sorry. I didn't mean to startle you.

LILY

Oh, it's okay. Was there something you needed Mr. Habberwackle?

CHARLES

Oh please, call me Charles.

LILY

Okay, Charles. What can I help you with? Rebecca is a great student, you know.

(realizing)

Uh-oh. Is this about her little nose picking incident?

CHARLES

No, no. It's nothing like that at all. I... nose picking? Nevermind, I don't think I want to know. No, I was just noticing the finger painting you were having the children do. And I can't help but think that this fine masterpiece was not composed by an amateurish kindergartner.

LILY

No, this one's mine. I kind of have a painting thing I do on the side.

CHARLES

Well I think it's marvelous.

LILY

Thank you, Charles. I really appreciate that. All of my kindergartners seemed to like it, too.

CHARLES

No - I really mean it. I'm an art auctioneer and I happen to think that work like this could sell for quite a handsome sum.

LILY

How handsome? Like Ben Affleck handsome?

CHARLES

Um, sure. Look - I'd love to sell some of your art, but I do all of my auctions in Los Angeles and I would need to have someone more familiar with your art there to represent it.

LILY

Well, I don't know if this is enough notice, but I'm going out to LA this weekend.

CHARLES

That is most fortuitous indeed. I'm having an auction on Saturday.

LILY

Oh no! Can't it be any day but Saturday? My husband Marshall is going to be a contestant on THIS TOTALLY SWEET GAME SHOW. He needs me there to support him. I'm his good luck charm.

BACK TO:

INT. TED'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER
(MARSHALL, LILY)

MARSHALL
(responding to Lily's story)

Oh, Lily, that was so sweet. But you didn't have to do that for me. Selling your art is your dream, and I want to support that. You should totally go to the auction.

LILY

Thanks Marshmallow. But my story's not done yet.

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. LILY'S KINDERGARTEN ROOM - CONTINUED
(CHARLES, LILY)

CHARLES

Really? I absolutely adore THIS TOTALLY SWEET GAME SHOW.

LILY

I know. I'm so excited. But there's just no way I could do Saturday.

CHARLES

Well, there is another auction on Sunday, but it's quite full already.

CHARLES TAKES A BEAT TO THINK OF A SOLUTION.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

How about this. Because you have been so good to my little Rebecca, if you call me as soon as you get into Los Angeles, I'll find a way to work you into Sunday's auction.

BACK TO:

INT. TED'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER
(MARSHALL, LILY, TED, ROBIN, BARNEY)

MARSHALL

Oh thank goodness, baby. I don't think I could do the show without you.

LILY

And you'll be there to support me at the auction, right?

MARSHALL

Absolutely. I wouldn't miss it for the world.

TED

I can't believe this. So much great stuff is happening to us this week.

ROBIN

I can't believe that Lily thinks Ben Affleck is handsome.

BARNEY

This is gonna be great. A journey to Los Angeles. The city of angels. The city of brand new chicks to have sex with and never have to speak to again.

ROBIN

Yeah. Have fun with that Barney. Marshall, Lily, the best of luck to both of you guys.

LILY

Best of luck? Aren't you coming with us?

ROBIN

Oh no. Absolutely not. I can never go back to Los Angeles.

TED

What? Robin, how come?

FOOTAGE FROM "ROBIN SPARKLES VIDEO"
(NARRATOR)

A QUICK CLIP FROM A ROBIN SPARKLES MUSIC VIDEO.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Now kids, remember when we found out that Robin had once been a Canadian pop super star named Robin Sparkles? Oh man, that was a good day. Anyway, what we didn't realize is just how big she was in LA.

CUT TO:

EXT. - STREETS OF LA - AFTERNOON

(NARRATOR)

YEARS AGO, ROBIN - DRESSED AS ROBIN SPARKLES - RUNS DOWN THE STREET, CHASED BY A CROWD OF CRAZED FANS TRYING TO GET AN AUTOGRAPH. THE FANS ARE WAVING AROUND PAPER, PENS, POSTERS, AND ROBIN SPARKLES MERCHANDISE.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

She was huge in LA.

BACK TO:

INT. TED'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

(ROBIN, BARNEY)

ROBIN

It was horrible. I couldn't even come out of my hotel room. I can never go through that again.

BARNEY

If being recognized is all you're worried about, you can just do what I do to avoid girls I never want to talk to again.

INT. TED'S APARTMENT - MORNING

(NARRATOR, ROBIN)

A FEW DAYS LATER, ON FRIDAY MORNING, TED, MARSHALL, AND LILY ARE PUTTING THE FINISHING TOUCHES ON THEIR PACKING. BARNEY IS WAITING FOR THEM BY THE DOOR WITH HIS SUITCASES. LILY HAS A FEW PAINTINGS THAT SHE'S TAKING WITH HER.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

So everything was going great. Lily was on her way to her first art auction. Marshall was on his way to the most awesome moment of his life.

(MORE)

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

And we were even able to convince
Robin to come.

ENTER ROBIN DRESSED UP WITH A WIG, A SCARF THAT COVERS MOST OF HER FACE, AND DARK SUNGLASSES. SHE LOOKS KIND OF LIKE A WHITE TYRA BANKS TRYING TO AVOID THE PRESS.

ROBIN

Alright. Let's go.

THEY FINISH GRABBING THEIR BAGS AND HEADING OUT THE DOOR AS THE NARRATOR SPEAKS.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Once we got to Los Angeles, we still had a day before Marshall's appearance on THIS TOTALLY SWEET GAME SHOW. So we decided to do what any group of tourists from New York would do - we went bar hopping.

CUT TO:

INT. BAD BAR #1 - THAT EVENING

(TED)

TED, MARSHALL, BARNEY, LILY, AND ROBIN (STILL IN DISGUISE)
ENTER A LESS THAN AWESOME BAR, LOOK AROUND FOR A SECOND...

TED

This place looks terrible. Come on,
let's go.

AND LEAVE.

CUT TO:

INT. BAD BAR #2 - A BIT LATER

(TED, MARSHALL)

SAME SONG AND DANCE.

TED

Oh man, does LA have no good bars?

MARSHALL

There has to be a good place to get a beer somewhere around here.

THEY LEAVE.

CUT TO:

INT. BAR - A BIT LATER

(TED, ROBIN, MARSHALL, LILY, BARNEY, WENDY, NARRATOR)

THIS BAR LOOKS EERILY IDENTICAL TO MACCLAREN'S - THE BAR THEY FREQUENT IN NEW YORK - RIGHT DOWN TO THE GIANT CHAMPAGNE BOTTLE, CARL THE BARTENDER, AND WENDY THE WAITRESS. ENTER TED, MARSHALL, BARNEY, LILY, AND ROBIN (IN NO PARTICULAR ORDER) WHO LOOK AROUND IN ASTONISHMENT.

TED

Now this is more like it.

ROBIN

This looks like a good bar.

MARSHALL

But isn't it kind of eerie?

LILY

Totally eerie.

BARNEY

But in a completely awesome way.

LILY

Totally awesome.

THEY GO OVER AND SIT DOWN AT THEIR REGULAR BOOTH.

MARSHALL

Maybe we stepped into an alternate dimension.

(MORE)

MARSHALL (CONT'D)
(re: their looks)

What? It could happen. Stranger things have happened.

BARNEY

Like what? Name one thing stranger than accidentally stepping into an alternate dimension where the only discernible difference is that a bar in Los Angeles looks identical to our bar in New York?

MARSHALL

I'm just saying you should all keep your minds open to the possibility.

WENDY THE WAITRESS APPROACHES THEIR BOOTH. EVERYONE IS ASTONISHED BY HER RESEMBLANCE TO THE NEW YORK VERSION OF WENDY THE WAITRESS.

WENDY

Hey guys. My name's Wendy. What can I get for you?

ROBIN

Woah.

TED

Yikes.

MARSHALL

See? Come on, guys. This is just too much to deny.

WENDY

Hey, don't I know you from somewhere?

BARNEY

We just have one of those faces.

TED

Well, five of those faces.

WENDY

No. I really think I've seen you
somewhere before.

MARSHALL

Like in another dimension?

WENDY

(to Robin)

No. You're that Canadian singer,
aren't you?

ROBIN

Here we go.

TED

How can you tell through the wig?

WENDY

Oh my God, Carl, it's Avril Lavigne!

ROBIN

Please, Wendy, I'm trying to keep a
low profile. Wait, who? No - I don't
look anything like that bimbo.

WENDY

Oh. Nevermind, Carl, it's not her.

DISAPPOINTED, WENDY WALKS BACK TO THE BAR.

ROBIN

Wait - are you sure you don't
recognize me, Wendy?

ROBIN STANDS UP ON THE BOOTH AND TAKES OFF HER DISGUISE.

ROBIN (CONT'D)

Doesn't anybody recognize me?
(she starts singing her song)

*Everybody come and play! Throw every
last care away. Let's go to the
mall... Today!*

THE PEOPLE IN THE BAR LOOK AT HER LIKE SHE'S EITHER DRUNK,
INSANE, OR POSSIBLY BOTH. DISCOURAGED, ROBIN SITS BACK DOWN.

TED

I thought you didn't want to be
recognized.

ROBIN

Well not by everybody. But I was
hoping that at least a few hot guys
would still remember me. Maybe a few
good looking lesbians would ask me to
sign their boobs.

BARNEY

Been there. You're not missing much.

LILY

Oh no! That reminds me. I still
haven't called Charles. I was
supposed to call him as soon as we got
into LA.

EVERYONE GIVES HER A CONFUSED LOOK.

ROBIN

How do you go from lesbian boob to...?

LILY

Well I was thinking about how difficult it would be to sign a boob, since they're so squishy. Which reminded me why sometimes when Marshall plays with my boobs he pretends they're giant marshmallows. And marshmallows are delicious, but sticky. And so are buggers. Sticky, not delicious. Then in class the other day, there was an incident with buggers - don't ask - and it involved a sweet little girl named Rebecca who is Charles' daughter!

ROBIN

Okay.

TED

That actually makes a surprising amount of sense.

BARNEY

(to Marshall)

I love the marshmallow thing, too.

LILY GETS UP AND LEAVES THE BAR WHILE PULLING OUT HER CELLPHONE. AS LILY LEAVES, CINDY AND MARY, TWO INCREDIBLY ATTRACTIVE GIRLS, ENTER THE BAR. MARY IS A MODEL ON "THIS TOTALLY SWEET GAME SHOW" (BUT THIS OUGHTN'T BE OBVIOUS TO THE AUDIENCE.) CINDY CATCHES BARNEY'S GAZE. HE WAVES AT HER.

SHE WAVES BACK FLIRTATIIOUSLY. BARNEY MOTIONS FOR TED TO TURN AROUND AND CHECK THEM OUT. CINDY MOTIONS FOR MARY TO TURN AROUND AND CHECK OUT THE GUYS AT THE BOOTH. TED AND MARY TURN AT THE SAME TIME AND LOCK EYES. INSTANT CHEMISTRY.

BARNEY (CONT'D)

Alright, time to do my thing. Come on wing-man.

BARNEY AND TED GET UP AND WALK TOWARDS CINDY AND MARY.

TED

I don't know Barney. Something looks weirdly familiar about that girl.

BARNEY

Ted, look around us. Everything here looks weirdly familiar.

MEANWHILE, LILY REENTERS, TEARS IN HER EYES, AND MAKES HER WAY OVER TO THE BOOTH, WHERE MARSHALL AND ROBIN ARE STILL SITTING.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Unfortunately, kids, sometimes decisions aren't as simple as which cereal you want to eat in the morning, or who gets which girl. Sometimes - no matter what you choose - somebody is going to get hurt.

LILY

Robin, can you give us a minute?

ROBIN

Sure.

ROBIN LEAVES THE BOOTH.

MARSHALL

Lilypad, what happened? Did they cancel the art auction?

LILY

Worse. It was too late to get me into Sunday's auction, so I have to go on Saturday. Which means there's no way we can go to THIS TOTALLY SWEET GAME SHOW.

MARSHALL

But Lily, you're my good luck charm. I need you there. Wait, we? Don't you mean there's no way you can go?

LILY

Sweetie, I need you with me at the auction. Besides, it's just a stupid game show.

MARSHALL

I'm sorry, did you just say stupid game show? It's not just any stupid game show. It's THIS TOTALLY SWEET GAME SHOW. This is a once in a lifetime opportunity for me. It's supposed to be the most awesome moment of my life.

LILY

But I need you to come with me. I
need your support.

SIMULTANEOUSLY LILY AND MARSHALL LOOK AT EACH OTHER AND SAY:

LILY & MARSHALL

I can't do this without you.

BEAT.

MARSHALL

Well, we had already agreed to go on
the show before your auction. I was
first.

LILY

Yeah, but, it's your fault I can't
make it.

MARSHALL

What? How is this my fault?

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. AIRPORT - EARLIER THAT AFTERNOON
(LILY, MARSHALL)

HAVING JUST GOTTEN OFF THE PLANE AND WAITING FOR THEIR
LUGGAGE, LILY PULLS OUT HER CELLPHONE.

LILY

I better go ahead and call Charles.

MARSHALL

Oh - there are our bags. Lily, quick,
grab that one.

LILY HAS TO QUICKLY HANG UP HER CELLPHONE AND GRAB A BAG OFF
THE LUGGAGE CAROUSEL.

CUT TO:

INT. TAXI CAB - A BIT LATER
(LILY, CAB DRIVER, MARSHALL)

AFTER GETTING IN THE TAXI, LILY TAKES OUT HER CELLPHONE.

LILY

I'm gonna give Charles a call.

CAB DRIVER

Where to?

MARSHALL

Lily, do you have the name of the
hotel?

LILY

What?

MARSHALL

Don't you have the name of our hotel
written down?

LILY PUTS HER CELLPHONE AWAY AND DIGS THROUGH HER LUGGAGE.

LILY

I'm sure it's in my bag here
somewhere.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM - LATER THAT AFTERNOON
(MARSHALL)

LILY PUTS HER LUGGAGE ON THE BED AND TAKES OUT HER CELLPHONE.
MARSHALL IS UNPACKING.

MARSHALL

Oh my God! Sweetie, look!

STARTLED AND WORRIED, LILY PUTS HER CELLPHONE AWAY AND TURNS
HER ATTENTION TO MARSHALL.

MARSHALL (CONT'D)

I found my toothbrush!

BACK TO:

INT. BAR - CONTINUED

(LILY, MARSHALL, BARNEY)

PICKING UP WHERE WE LEFT OFF.

LILY

If I had just been able to make one simple phone call then I would have been able to make it into Sunday's auction, and I wouldn't have to miss your big moment.

MARSHALL

You can't ask me to choose between the most awesome moment of my life and my wife.

LILY

I know. You're right. I guess we'll have to go our separate ways.

MARSHALL

I guess so.

BARNEY COMES BACK OVER TO THE BOOTH.

BARNEY

Oh man - Ted's totally about to bang a model. How's it going over here?

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREEINT. BACKSTAGE OF A GAME SHOW - NIGHT

(PAGE, BARNEY, TED, MARSHALL)

THE NEXT NIGHT, MARSHALL, TED, AND BARNEY ENTER THE BACKSTAGE AREA OF "THIS TOTALLY SWEET GAME SHOW." THERE ARE MONITORS SET UP FOR WATCHING WHAT'S HAPPENING ON STAGE. A PAGE WHO WORKS FOR THE SHOW (AN ATTRACTIVE GIRL AROUND 24 YEARS OLD WEARING A SLIGHTLY SLUTTY VERSION OF A STANDARD ISSUE PAGE UNIFORM) CHECKS TO MAKE SURE THEY'RE ON THE LIST OF PEOPLE OKAY TO BE BACKSTAGE.

PAGE

Name?

BARNEY

I got this, guys. Hi, I'm Barney Stinson. I'm with the next contestant on THIS TOTALLY SWEET GAME SHOW.

PAGE

It's a pleasure to meet you, Barney Stinson. You guys can come on in. Is the rest of your party with you?

TED

Rest of our party?

PAGE

I have a Robin Scherbatsky and a Lily Aldrin on the list.

MARSHALL

No. I'm afraid they couldn't make it.

PAGE

But are either of them, you know, with you?

BARNEY

Oh. Why, no. I'm afraid I came all alone.

PAGE

What a shame. We'll have to do something about that.

THE PAGE WRITES DOWN HER NUMBER AND SLIPS IT TO BARNEY.

PAGE (CONT'D)

Call me sometime.

TED

How do you do that?

BARNEY

Oh, what are you complaining about?
You slept with a model last night.

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. BAR - LAST NIGHT
(BARNEY, MARY)

BACK AT THE BAR, TED, BARNEY, CINDY, AND MARY ARE TALKING.

BARNEY

Ladies, can you believe Ted here almost didn't want to come over and talk to you?

MARY

Ooo, what a shame that would have been.

BARNEY

He thought you looked weirdly familiar.

MARY

Well, I'm a model. Maybe you've seen
some of my work.

BARNEY

See, Ted. She's a model.

BACK TO:

INT. BACKSTAGE OF A GAME SHOW - CONTINUED
(TED, MARSHALL, BARNEY, PAGE)

TED

Yes I did. So Marshall, buddy, you
ready for this? The most awesome
moment of your life is finally here.

MARSHALL

Yeah, I'm totally ready. This is
gonna be sweet. I got my boys here
and... oh God I can't do this without
Lily. It's not awesome without the
most important person in my life here
to share it with.

TED

But I'm right here.
(re: Marshall's look)

Okay, not helping.

BARNEY

You can do this man. You don't need
your good luck charm. You just need
to be like me - awesome!

TED

You've been watching this show since forever, Marshall. You know exactly what to do.

MARSHALL

But whenever I've imagined this moment, I always had Lily with me.
(to the Page)

Excuse me, how much longer do we have until it's our turn?

THE PAGE INDICATES ONE OF THE MONITORS.

PAGE

Whenever this lady finally finishes, it'll be your turn.

FLASH TO:

INT. GAME SHOW SET - AT THAT MOMENT
(WOMAN)

AN OLDER WOMAN STANDS IN THE MIDDLE OF A GAME SHOW SET THAT BEARS AN UNCANNY RESEMBLANCE TO DEAL OR NO DEAL. ALL TWENTY-SIX MODELS ARE STILL ON THE STAIRS, HOLDING CASES. ONE OF THEM IS MARY - FROM THE BAR - BUT IT'S IMPORTANT THAT WE DON'T GET A GOOD LOOK AT HER, YET. THE MODELS ARE TIRED, AS THEY'VE BEEN HOLDING THIS POSE FOR WHO KNOWS HOW LONG WHILE THE OLDER WOMAN THINKS VERY HARD ABOUT HER DECISION.

WOMAN

Gee, I don't know. Once I decide on a number, I have to stick with it. I guess I could try eeny-meeny-miny-moe. But, to use a child's game to pick something so important...

BACK TO:

INT. BACKSTAGE OF A GAME SHOW - CONTINUED
(PAGE, BARNEY, MARSHALL, TED)

PAGE

It might be awhile.

BARNEY

The longer the better, I always say.

MARSHALL

Ted, if this lady takes forever, then maybe there's still time. Lily's auction probably hasn't started quite yet. I should be there with her, supporting her dream.

TED

But Marshall - what about your moment?

MARSHALL

I know, Ted. But some things are just more important than awesomeness.

BARNEY

Ha, yeah right. Oh, you were serious? So, what, are you just quitting?

MARSHALL

I don't know. I... Barney. Deal! You can do it. You be me.

TED

What? That's ridiculous.

BARNEY

No, no. I think I see where he's going with this. Marshall. Buddy.

(MORE)

BARNEY (CONT'D)

I never thought I'd be saying this to you - so don't take it the wrong way - but... un-suit up!

MARSHALL

Barney, are you trying to get in my pants?

BARNEY

Yes sir. That is exactly what I'm trying to do. If I'm going to be you, then I need to look the part. So get out of those trousers before I have to rip them off of you!

THEY START SWITCHING CLOTHES. THE PAGE COMES OVER, LITERALLY CATCHING THEM WITH THEIR PANTS DOWN.

PAGE

You are sick, you know that!?

BARNEY

Wait, it's not what you think.

CHASING AFTER THE PAGE, BARNEY TRIPS OVER HIS PANTS.

BARNEY (CONT'D)
(from the floor)

Alright Marshall - go be with your wife. I've got a million dollars to win.

INT. AUCTION HOUSE - LATER
(MARSHALL, CHARLES)

THE AUCTION HOUSE IS SET UP FOR AN ART AUCTION. THERE ARE A PLETHORA OF PAINTINGS SET UP WITH ARTISTS IN FRONT OF EACH OF THEM, TALKING ABOUT THEIR PAINTINGS TO THE VARIOUS PATRONS EXAMINING THEM.

MARSHALL ENTERS, NOW WEARING BARNEY'S TWO-SIZES-TOO-SMALL SUIT. HE WALKS THROUGH A CROWD OF PEOPLE, LOOKING FOR LILY. HE APPROACHES CHARLES.

MARSHALL

Excuse me - I'm looking for Lily Aldrin.

CHARLES

Me too. I'm afraid that if I don't find her in the next few minutes, I won't be able to sell her art.

MARSHALL

What? Why not?

CHARLES

Someone familiar with the art has to present it for our patrons.

MARSHALL

And Lily's not here to do that?

CHARLES

I haven't been able to find her.

MARSHALL

Where could she be?

INT. BACKSTAGE OF A GAME SHOW - LATER
(TED, BARNEY, ROBIN, PAGE, LILY)

THEY'VE BEEN WAITING FOR QUITE AWHILE NOW. BARNEY IS STILL ADJUSTING TO WEARING MARSHALL'S TWO-SIZES-TOO-BIG CLOTHES.

TED

This is never going to work.

BARNEY

Come on, Ted. You have to believe.

ENTER LILY AND ROBIN. WHILE THEY'RE CHECKING IN WITH THE PAGE, BARNEY APPROACHES THEM.

ROBIN
(holding back laughter)

Barney, what are you wearing?

BARNEY
Ha ha. Let's all make fun of the boy from Minnesota who has terrible taste in clothes. Oh look, my beautiful wife Lily is here.

PAGE
You're married!?! I thought you said you came alone.
(vindictively to Lily)

I hope you know you're husband was totally hitting on me.

LILY
What? Marshall wouldn't do that.

LILY WALKS IN AND LOOKS AROUND FOR MARSHALL - SHE NOTICES THAT BARNEY IS WEARING MARSHALL'S CLOTHES.

LILY (CONT'D)
Wait a minute - what happened to Marshall?

BARNEY
I am Marshall. And I sure am glad you could make it down here to watch me play THIS TOTALLY SWEET GAME SHOW.

TED GIVES HER A "JUST GO ALONG WITH IT" NOD.

LILY

Oh yeah, you know me, Marshall, my husband. Always supportive of you, who are my husband.

SKEPTICAL AND FLUSTERED, THE PAGE EXITS.

TED

Oh my God, Lily, what are you doing here?

LILY

I left the auction to be with Marshall. Where is he?

BARNEY

I'm right here, babe.

LILY

You are not my husband! I came here to support my husband! Now what have you done with him?!

TED

Lily, Marshall left to go be with you at your art auction. Barney's taking his place on the game show.

LILY

Awww, that's the sweetest thing he's ever done.

BARNEY

You're welcome.

LILY

Not you. I was talking about my
husband.

BARNEY

You're welcome.

LILY

You are not my husband!

BARNEY

Oh my God, Ted, can you talk some
sense into my wife? She is totally
preventing me from getting into
character. I can't work with this.

THE PAGE ENTERS AND APPROACHES BARNEY.

PAGE

You're up next, piq!

TED

Finally.

ROBIN

What's her problem?

CUT TO:

INT. GAME SHOW SET - A BIT LATER
(HOST, BARNEY)

BARNEY STANDS IN THE MIDDLE OF THE STAGE. LILY, ROBIN, AND
TED STAND ON STAGE IN THE AREA DESIGNATED FOR FRIENDS AND
FAMILY. THE HOST'S VOICE IS MEANT TO EMULATE HOWIE MANDEL.

HOST (O.S.)

I'd like to welcome to the show
Marshall Eriksen. Marshall, tell us a
little bit about yourself.

BARNEY

Oh, what is there to tell really? I'm a lawyer. I'm from New York, err, wait, Minnesota. But I live in New York. And my name is Marshall.

HOST (O.S.)

Anything else? Anything unique that the audience might want to know?

BARNEY

Hrm, alright. What makes Marshall unique? His favorite meal is brunch. Mine. My. My favorite meal is brunch. That's kind of weird. Oh wait - I can top that. I am an avid believer in the Loch Ness monster and alternate dimensions.

HOST (O.S.)

Okay. That certainly is... unique. Shall we get started?

CUT TO:

INT. BACKSTAGE OF A GAME SHOW - AT THAT MOMENT
(MARSHALL, PAGE)

ENTER MARSHALL, QUITE TIRED. HE RUSHED HERE.

MARSHALL

Did I make it? Are they still taping.

PAGE

Yeah. But you can't go in.

MARSHALL

What? Don't you remember me? I was just here a few hours ago.

PAGE

Oh, I remember you. You're the guy who was making funny business with the contestant. Well I hope you know something - he's married.

MARSHALL

Yeah, I know. So you remember me? So I can go in?

PAGE

Nobody goes in once taping has started.

MARSHALL

But I'm the contestant!

PAGE

Sure doesn't seem that way from here.

FRUSTRATED, MARSHALL TURNS HIS ATTENTION TO ONE OF THE MONITORS WHERE HE SEES...

INT. GAME SHOW SET - AT THAT MOMENT

(HOST, BARNEY)

HOST (O.S.)

So, have you decided which case you think has a million dollars in it?

BARNEY

Well, Sarah is looking quite beautiful today. Oh, but so is Gloria.

(MORE)

BARNEY (CONT'D)

So many decisions. How does one choose? Ah, of course. I'll take Mary's case.

HOST (O.S.)

So, case number five?

BARNEY

Yeah. That's what I said. Mary's case. Hi Mary.

BARNEY WAVES. AS MARY (YES, THE MARY FROM THE BAR) WALKS DOWN AND GIVES BARNEY HER CASE, WE NEVER GET A GOOD LOOK AT HER FACE. THE AUDIENCE SHOULDN'T YET BE ABLE TO PUT TOGETHER THAT THIS IS THE GIRL FROM THE BAR.

FLASH TO:

INT. BACKSTAGE OF A GAME SHOW - THAT SAME MOMENT
(MARSHALL)

MARSHALL CONTINUES TO WATCH THE MONITOR.

MARSHALL

Huh, she looks weirdly familiar.

BACK TO:

INT. GAME SHOW SET - LATER
(HOST, BARNEY, TED, LILY)

HOST (O.S.)

Alright. You're doing great so far. Now let's meet the friends you brought with you for support.

BARNEY

Alright. This is my best friend Ted. We met in a bar in New York.

(MORE)

BARNEY (CONT'D)

Wait, no! We went to college together. We were roommates, right?

TED

Yeah. Well remembered.

BARNEY

And this is my lovely wife, Lily. Isn't that right... sweetie?

LILY
(begrudgingly)

I... yes. This is my husband. I am married to this man.

BARNEY

Gimme a kiss.

LILY

Don't push your luck.

BARNEY

And this is Robin. You may remember her as Canadian pop star Robin Sparkles.

HOST (O.S.)

Nope, doesn't ring a bell.

CUT TO:

INT. GAME SHOW SET - LATER
(HOST, BARNEY, TED, ROBIN)

HOST (O.S.)

So, Marshall Eriksen, deal or no deal?

BEAT. BARNEY DOESN'T REALIZE THE HOST IS TALKING TO HIM.

BARNEY

What? Oh, me. Right. Because I'm Marshall Eriksen. Duh. I mean, of course I'm Marshall Eriksen. Why would you think otherwise? Am I right, Ted?

TED

Totally.

BARNEY

I'm sorry, what was the question?

HOST (O.S.)

Deal or no deal?

BARNEY

A hundred thousand dollars sure is a lot of money. But I just have this feeling - you know? I feel that this case has a million dollars in it.

ROBIN

Oh come on. You are not as good at this game as you think you are. Take the deal, Barney!

HOST (O.S.)

Who's Barney?

BARNEY

What? Oh, Barney is just what they call me sometimes. You know, cause I resemble... a, uh, purple dinosaur.

(MORE)

BARNEY (CONT'D)

That isn't weird at all, right Ted?
Back me up here.

TED

Nope. Not weird at all. Totally
normal. Nothing going on here.

FLASH TO:

INT. BACKSTAGE OF A GAME SHOW - AT THAT MOMENT
(MARSHALL)

MARSHALL

We're screwed.

BACK TO:

INT. GAME SHOW SET - LATER
(HOST, BARNEY)

HOST (O.S.)

It's come down to this. There are
only 2 cases left. One of them has a
million dollars in it. The other,
just a penny. The deal is four
hundred and fifty thousand dollars.
So, do you sell your case for the
guaranteed money, or do you have the
guts to go all the way and take a
fifty fifty shot at one million
dollars?

BARNEY

That's an easy choice. This is going
to be legen - wait for it...

CUT TO:

INT. BACKSTAGE OF A GAME SHOW - AT THAT MOMENT

(MARSHALL, PAGE, BARNEY, LILY, TED, ROBIN, NETWORK EXECUTIVE)

MARSHALL

What a horrible time for a commercial break. Come on, Barney. Please, please, please take the deal. I don't even care about the bet anymore. I'll dress up as a butler any time you want. Just take the money!

PAGE

You do know that he can't hear you, right?

BARNEY (V.O.)
(coming from the monitor)

Dary. This is going to be legendary.
No deal!

MARSHALL

What?! Oh no. What have you done?
This can't be happening. I can't watch. Wait - what? No way - that's impossible. That's... that's the million dollar case. He actually picked the million dollar case! We won a million dollars!

ECSTATIC - LILY, ROBIN, TED, AND BARNEY COME BACKSTAGE AND JOIN MARSHALL.

MARSHALL (CONT'D)

We won a million dollars!

LILY

Marshmallow! You made it!

TED

This is unbelievable!

ROBIN

It's incredible! What a rush!

MARSHALL

Wow, Barney. I am so sorry that I
ever doubted you. You were right.
You totally are awesome.

BARNEY

I know. Also - you owe me one week of
butler services.

MARSHALL

Absolutely. It's totally worth it.

ENTER NETWORK EXECUTIVE. HE'S AN UPTIGHT GUY BENT ON RUINING
PEOPLES' FUN WHILE WEARING AN OVERLY EXPENSIVE SUIT.

MARSHALL (CONT'D)

Guys, I can't believe I finally have
an excuse to say this. SHOW ME THE
MONEY!

NETWORK EXECUTIVE

I'm afraid that isn't going to happen.
You've been disqualified.

MARSHALL

What? Why?

NETWORK EXECUTIVE

It appears that certain members of
your party were behaving
inappropriately.

EVERYONE IMMEDIATELY LOOKS AT BARNEY.

BARNEY

Why must you always immediately assume
that it was me?
(beat)

Okay, so it's usually me. But this
time...

BARNEY LOOKS OVER TO TED.

TED

Oh man. Marshall, I am so sorry
buddy. Remember Mary, the model from
the bar we told you about?

MARSHALL

Yeah, but what does that have to do
with...?

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. BAR - LAST NIGHT
(BARNEY, TED, MARY)

BARNEY

See, Ted. She's a model.

TED

That must be why I recognized you.
What sort of modeling do you do?

MARY

Have you ever seen THIS TOTALLY SWEET
GAME SHOW?

CUT TO:

INT. GAME SHOW SET - EARLIER
(BARNEY)

THE SAME MOMENT THAT BARNEY PICKED MARY'S CASE. BUT NOW, AS SHE WALKS DOWN TO HAND BARNEY HER CASE, EVERYONE CAN CLEARLY SEE THAT SHE IS THE GIRL FROM THE BAR.

BARNEY

Yeah. That's what I said. Mary's
case. Hi Mary.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL BEDROOM - LAST NIGHT
(MARY, TED)

TED AND MARY ARE LYING IN BED AFTER HAVING SEX.

MARY

Wow.

TED

Yeah.

MARY

I can't believe it.

TED

Neither can I.

MARY

Your best friend's really going to be
on the show tomorrow?

TED

Yep.

MARY

If anyone finds out about this...

TED

I know. Disqualified.

MARY

I'm really sorry, Ted.

TED

Oh, that's okay. He probably won't win that much money anyway.

BACK TO:

INT. BACKSTAGE OF A GAME SHOW - CONTINUED
(MARSHALL, TED, NETWORK EXECUTIVE, BARNEY)

MARSHALL

You got me disqualified? What kind of a friend are you? That's the most selfish thing you've ever done.

TED

I know. I know. I screwed up. I'm sorry. Really, really sorry. One million sorries. Even if I have to work at it the rest of my life, I swear I'll find some way to make it up to you.

NETWORK EXECUTIVE

Actually - as horrible of a thing that was to do to your friend - that is not the inappropriate behavior I was referring to.

(MORE)

NETWORK EXECUTIVE (CONT'D)

I am afraid that Marshall here - or is it here? - was disqualified for false representation.

MARSHALL

Oh. You figured it out, huh?

NETWORK EXECUTIVE

It wasn't that difficult to piece together. Your friend's performance was not entirely believable.

BARNEY

Can you blame me? I had no time to study my character.

MARSHALL

Dude, you've known me for seven years.

BARNEY

Look, I'm sorry you don't get the money. But just remember what's really important here: I still won the bet.

MARSHALL

I know. I know. You were awesome.

BARNEY

Are. You accidentally used the past tense.

MARSHALL

Right. You are awesome. But you know what, I think it's okay that we didn't win the money. Because something incredible happened tonight.

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. AUCTION HOUSE - EARLIER THAT NIGHT
(MARSHALL, CHARLES)

MARSHALL IS STANDING AT THE FRONT OF THE AUCTION HOUSE PRESENTING LILY'S PAINTINGS. CHARLES IS STANDING BEHIND A PODIUM, BEING AN AUCTIONEER.

MARSHALL

And this is something my lovely wife painted on our honeymoon. It was inspired by Nessie - the gentle creature of Loch Ness.

CHARLES

What do I hear for this lovely painting?

A PATRON IN THE AUDIENCE BIDS ON THE PAINTING AND MARSHALL REACTS WITH MUCH GLEE.

BACK TO:

INT. BACKSTAGE OF A GAME SHOW - CONTINUED
(LILY, MARSHALL, ROBIN, BARNEY, TED, NARRATOR)

LILY

Oh sweetie. You did that for me?

MARSHALL

Yep. And you know something?
Standing up there - knowing that I was
helping fulfill your dream - that was
the most awesome moment of my life.

LILY

Oh sweetie, that's so wonderful.

SHE KISSES HIM LOVINGLY IN A WAY THAT MAKES ALL THE PROBLEMS
OF THE WEEKEND SEEM TO FADE AWAY.

ROBIN

Oh please. Gag me with a spoon.

BARNEY

There is so no way that was better
than my picking the million dollar
case. Ted?

TED

Not unless he sold the painting for a
million bucks.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

And so, even though we didn't win any
money, Marshall still got to have his
most awesome moment. And that was our
trip to Los Angeles. You know
something - in retrospect, it would
have been a much better trip if we had
won a million dollars.

END OF ACT THREE

TAG

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

BARNEY IS LOUNGING ON THE COUCH, DRINKING A BEER AND WATCHING TV.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Even though it wasn't actually my
fault, I felt bad that Marshall didn't
get his million dollars. So I found a
way to make it up to him.

TED ENTERS FROM THE KITCHEN, DRESSED LIKE A BUTLER. HE
SERVES BARNEY ANOTHER BEER.

TED
(in his best butler voice)

Your beverage, Good Sir.

BARNEY

Best bet I ever won.

THE END