

Lucky

By

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****ALL IN BLACK & WHITE UNTIL NOTED.****

INT. A BARN - DAY

Open onto a barn, its door thrown open wide, a beam of light filtering in like a spotlight. In its ray a young man, ZACH LEHMAN (18), our hero, hooks bales of hay onto a cart. He sets down his tool, wipes his face with a kerchief.

He gives a winning smile to some imagined camera in the distance. His face is smeared with dirt, but his perfect white teeth shine through the grime.

EXT. THE RED CARPET - HOLLYWOOD

Cameras flash, reporters lunge with microphones, fans scream and claw. Beautiful people everywhere.

In the middle of it all: Zach, cleaned up *nice*. He's got a tailored suit, his hair oiled back in a pomaded wave, a beautiful WOMAN on his arm just as young and vibrant as him.

He laughs with reporters, signs photos, embraces beautiful friends. It culminates with a dipping kiss of the Woman, who looks fondly into his eyes as he lifts her. The crowd loves it. Classic Hollywood.

A strange VOICE clarifies amidst the cheer.

VOICE

LEHMAN.

Zach recognizes the drawl. Someone starts pushing to the front of the crowd.

VOICE

LEHMAN.

The crowd goes silent.

ZACH

I don't want to go back.

A person emerges: it's FARMER JOE (50s), scowling. His overalls are stained, his boots caked with cow shit. There's a FAT PIG with him: weirdly it has the same expression on its face.

FARMER JOE

Lehman! The hell you cheesin' at you Kansan shit-hucker. LEHMAN!

INT. A BARN - DAY - CONT'D

Farmer Joe is inches from Zach's face. He looks exactly the same here in the real world. The pig is here too, looking alert.

ZACH
Nothin', sir.

FARMER JOE
Nothin'?

ZACH
Just dreamin'.

FARMER JOE
Dreamin'? Is that workin'?

ZACH
No.

Farmer Joe spits. The pig farts.

FARMER JOE
'Course it ain't, dummy. It's a historical question.

ZACH
Rhe-torical.

FARMER JOE
Hell are you talkin' about?

ZACH
Workin'.

Farmer Joe gets in his face. The pig furiously oinks.

FARMER JOE
You mockin' me, boy?

ZACH
(noticing the pig)
... no, sir.

Farmer Joe backs down. The pig falls onto its side.

FARMER JOE
Best ain't be ... or'll work that face of yours with this.
(points to his fist)
Teach you 'bout workin' ...

(CONTINUED)

ZACH
(flashes a big smile)
Yes, sir.

FARMER JOE
(starts to walk away, then
turns back)
Ay, how the hell'd you get them
chompers lookin' like that?

ZACH
I brush them three times a day,
floss and mouthwash twice. White
strips every night.

FARMER JOE
White strips ... the hell you doin'
all that for?

The pig, asleep, kicks a leg.

ZACH
(surging with pride)
I'm going to be a famous actor in
Hollywood.

Farmer Joe gives him a long up-and-down.

FARMER JOE
How long I got you on contract for?

ZACH
Six months and three days and about
two minutes more.

Farmer Joe looks up as if telling the time from the sun.

FARMER JOE
'S 'bout right.

He spits. The pig now basks in the sun, not going anywhere.

FARMER JOE
Git. Hello to your pops for me.

Zach flashes his winning smile.

ZACH
Will do.

EXT. THE BARN

ZACH wipes his hands and walks out of the barn to his car, a hunk-of-junk pickup truck. On the dashboard is a picture of the Hollywood sign, and next to it, a photograph of him and the same girl from his daydream. He looks at himself in the rearview. Flashes his smile. Then drives out.

EXT. THE LEHMAN'S HOME - DAY

A run-down, two-story home on an anonymous stretch of dirt road. We're in Kansas, big-sky country. There's nothing but a few straggling trees in the front yard and an old spring horse-toy with a bleak metal rod thrust in its head.

INT. THE LEHMAN'S HOME, THE GARAGE - CONT.

Signs of a serial tinkerer everywhere: stray parts, tubing, tires, strips of tin. Amidst the clutter we make out GEORGE LEHMAN (40s). He's sitting at a workbench with a welding mask on. Bottles of cheap liquor everywhere.

GEORGE

And then this ... this goes here
... yes ... and then this goes ...
yes, yes, YES!

He jerks up from his seat, shoves off the welding mask, and pushes his chair away from him: a "eureka" moment. We see what he's "invented." It's like a subwoofer made of a garbage can top, aluminum foil, and cheap copper wire.

He flicks a switch. The garbage can top vibrates and ... *something* plays. It sounds like warbling garbage.

GEORGE

Mathilda? ... MATHILDA!

As he shouts and searches for an open bottle, he brushes a tarp aside, revealing a trove of patriotic memorabilia: red-white-blue pennants, a "Mayor of Saukville" sash, old photos of a family atop a pedestal.

George finds a bottle and smashes it down onto a framed photo, cracking the glass. George picks it up, peers in.

GEORGE

(mutters)
Politics.

Then he chucks it. He takes a long pull.

(CONTINUED)

GEORGE
MATHILDA!

INT. THE LEHMAN'S HOME, THE KITCHEN - CONT.

The kitchen is dirty, cramped. *Stuff* everywhere. It connects to the living room, where the TV plays the news.

MATHILDA LEHMAN(40s) (née Matthews) stands over a stove, stares off into space. She's a tough-looking woman with a worn face. Something sizzles and spits on the stove top.

GEORGE (O.S.)
MATHILDA! MATHILDA!

Mathilda registers his voice with a flick of her eyes. She seems to stare off again, but: she raises a pencil to her mouth, ticks her teeth.

In front of her: The *New York Times* Saturday Crossword ... and the Sudoku. We can see the rest of the paper in the trash, spilling over.

MATHILDA
(mumbles)
Where to find the Mercury line and
the Girdle of Venus.

Behind her, a baby, GEORGE III, squeals. He's in a high chair. There's a mess of baby food on his face.

MATHILDA
Reviewer born the same day as Paul
McCartney ...

She looks down at the heavily-marked Sudoku, puts down a number, rapidly erases others. George squeals again; Mathilda goes over to him holding her crossword. George III just looks up with bulbous eyes and slams his fists.

GEORGE (O.S.)
MATHILDA!!!!!!!!!!

The pan is smoking now; George III smashes away. Mathilda just stares at her crossword.

MATHILDA
That's Roger Ebert, Georgie. Isn't
it, Georgie? Ro-ger. E-bert.

INT. THE LEHMAN'S HOME, UPSTAIRS, ERICA'S BEDROOM

ERICA LEHMAN (20s), lying on a bed, a cot. She's very pregnant. The bottom of her belly pops out of her too-small shirt: it can't help but look trashy. She's on the phone, a land line, with LAUREN WARREN (20s).

LAUREN

And, like, he was just staring at my boobs.

ERICA

Uhuh.

LAUREN

And I was like, um, okay?

ERICA

Uhuh.

LAUREN

And I look down, and like ... I'm *milking* or whatever.

ERICA

Oh my god.

LAUREN

Oh *my* god.

Erica peers up at the mound of her belly.

ERICA

You're so pregnant.

LAUREN

So like, was I milking or whatever because I thought this guy was cute? Hah, so embarrassing ... whatever, I'm going to burst like tomorrow like obviously.

Erica stares at her belly.

ERICA

Uhuh ...

GEORGE (O.S.)

(faintly)

MATHILDA!!!!

(CONTINUED)

LAUREN

Oh my god it just kicked. Oh my god
ow.

ERICA

(jealous)

Okay, like, I don't need the full
blow by blow.

LAUREN

Um, okay? What's your--

GEORGE (O.S.)

(louder)

MATHILDA!!!!

ERICA

What is going on down there.

ERICA rudely puts Lauren on hold. She heaves herself up onto
the side of the bed, cups her belly.

GEORGE (O.S.)

MATHILDA!!!!

ERICA

(whispers)

So annoying.

EXT. THE LEHMAN'S HOME, BACKYARD - DAY - CONT.

BRION LEHMAN (10), in the backyard, holds a very
realistic-looking airsoft pistol up to his dog, CHOW, an old
golden retriever. The yard is patchy and flat, extending for
miles into fallow corn fields.

BRION

One more word, Chow, and you're
dead.

Chow sits patiently, his tongue wagging. Brion re-grips the
gun, tries something different:

BRION

Any last words, Chow?

Chow just huffs and looks at Brion. Brion waves the gun
around; Chow follows it.

BRION

BARK, Chow!

Chow sneezes.

(CONTINUED)

BRION
Whatever.

BRION rolls away from Chow like a spy, shoots across the yard at a couple of cans. He misses badly.

At the sound of the shots, GRANDPA MATTHEWS (70s, Mathilda's father), sitting near the door to the house, jolts awake.

GRANDPA MATTHEWS
EH MAYOR MATTHEWS SPEAKING.
SPEAKING. SPEAKING.

At the sound of his voice, GRANDMA LEHMAN (70s, George's mother), sitting beside him, wakes up too.

GRANDMA LEHMAN
EH MS. LEHMAN, HIS SECRETARY,
PLEASE HOLD.

Suddenly smoke pours out through the yard's screen door. The fire alarm goes off.

GRANDPA MATTHEWS
EH WHOSE CAR? WHAT POTHOLES?

GRANDMA LEHMAN
STOP THAT YELLIN'. WHO'S YELLIN'?

Chow bounds over to the screen door and barks at the sound.

BRION
INSPECTOR CHOW IS GETTING AWAY!

Brion does a couple of rolls and shoots in a wild spray into the yard, at enemies converging on him. One shot fires upward, into the open window above.

INT. THE LEHMAN'S HOME, UPSTAIRS, ERICA'S ROOM - CONT.

As she laboriously stands up, Brion's airsoft pellet zings into the room and hits her in the skull. She wobbles, shocked. Then her face contorts into an insane rage.

ERICA
I'M PREGNANT!

She storms out of the room, suddenly quite spry.

PAN to the other side of the room as she goes. There's another bed here, and ALLISON (14), the younger sister. She has glasses, she's nerdy, tomboyish. She's got a collection of what looks like shale arrowheads spread out on her bed.

INT. THE LEHMAN'S HOME, THE GARAGE - CONT.

GEORGE takes another giant pull from his bottle. He sniffs.

GEORGE
Somethin's burning.

He takes a big, dramatic sniff.

GEORGE
Something is BURNING.

He takes a huge swig, stumbles toward the garage door.

GEORGE
MATHILDA!! SOEMTHIN'S BURNIN'!

EXT. THE LEHMAN'S HOME, THE BACKYARD - DAY - CONT.

BRION keeps shooting everywhere.

BRION
AGH!! TAKE THAT!! YOU WON'T GET
AWAY WITH THIS, CHOW!

GRANDPA MATTHEWS
WHO'S SHOOTIN'? WHERE'S MY
SHOTGUN?

Chow, pawing at the door, manages to open it by breaking it down: the door collapses forward and he runs in.

BRION chases him inside.

GRANDMA LEHMAN
MATHILDA WHAT'S BURNING? IS THAT
BURNING?

Both grandparents, sitting in wheelchairs, slowly wheel towards the door.

INT. THE LEHMAN'S HOME, THE KITCHEN - CONT.

The kitchen is in chaos. George III bawls, smashes his high chair, flings food everywhere. A black cloud of smoke billows from the pan. Mathilda clears the air with the crossword puzzle.

As the family converges on the scene, the radio-alarm goes off: opera music *blares* ("NESSUM DORMA", Pavrotti recording, "Vincero" line). Chow comes howling into the room and jumps on Mathilda. George comes up from the garage:

(CONTINUED)

GEORGE
MATHILDA!! SOMETHING'S BURNING!!

Erica comes down the stairs:

ERICA
DOES ANYONE HERE REALIZE I'M, UM,
PREGNANT?

Brion comes running in with his gun:

BRION
SOMEBODY STOP CHOW!

The grandparents wheel in:

GRANDPA MATTHEWS
EH WHO'S THERE?

GRANDMA LEHMAN
EH TAKE A MESSAGE?

A pause, as they watch Mathila. Then the pan erupts in flame.

ALL AT ONCE
FIRE!!

Everyone runs around trying to find something to put out the fire, grabbing all the strange clutter around the house.

Suddenly, the music stops.

ZACH (O.S.)
WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON HERE.

Zach calmly goes over to the stove, pulls a lid out of the sink, and puts it over the pan. The fire stops.

ZACH
Anyone? ANYONE?

Everyone hangs their head in shame. Even Chow.

ZACH
Mom?

MATHILDA
I was cooking Pancakes.

ZACH
It's five o'clock! Dad, what the
hell are you doing?

(CONTINUED)

GEORGE
Making a subwoofer.

ZACH
A sub ... this is *insane*, this is
... this is like ...

We hear feet running down the stairs, the front door open and close. *Allison*. Everyone looks. And then looks back down.

ZACH
This is like a bad TV show. The
worst. *Worse*.

ERICA
(beat; then, sheepishly)
What show?

ZACH
(beat)
I don't even know!

He leaves, slams the door behind him. A long beat, and then:

MATHILDA
I thought he loved pancakes.

EXT. THE LEHMAN'S HOME - FRONT YARD - CONT.

Zach stands on the porch. Allison rocks back and forth on the unicorn-horse while looking at one of her arrowheads.

ZACH
Whatcha you got there?

Allie happily unfolds her hand.

ZACH
Another rock?

ALLIE
Sandstone. With quartz and
feldspar. Did you know we live in
the Ogallala formation?

ZACH
No, I didn't.

ALLIE
Well, we do.

Zach sighs and looks back at the house.

(CONTINUED)

ZACH
(softly)
I'm not doing it. Not today.

Zach takes a long look at Allie. Then at his car. An idea occurs to him.

ZACH
(excitedly)
Get in the car.

ALLIE
Okay?

They get in. Zach puts both hands on the wheels determinedly. Looks at the Hollywood sign.

ALLIE
Where are we going?

ZACH
I don't know. Anywhere. We can do anything.

ALLIE
We can?

ZACH
We can ... today's my birthday, Allie.

ALLIE
Duh.

ZACH
I can't drink and I'll never smoke a cigarette as long as I live.

Zach points to the Hollywood sign on the dash. He lingers for a moment on the photo of the mystery girl.

ZACH
I'm gonna get out of here, Allie.
But not today. Soon. But today ...
what I can do is this. Today, I can
play ... **The Lottery**.

Zach throws the car into drive. He revs the engine and lets out a whooping yell. The car zooms down the road.

INT. THE MAYOR'S OFFICE - DAY

MAYOR JEANETTE MAYOR (50s) holds court with SHERIFF ADAM JONES (30s). Her office is ostentatiously civic, patriotic: American Flags, bald eagle statuettes and paintings, "I choose you" Uncle Sam posters, etc.

MAYOR MAYOR is obese, ruddy-faced, overly jovial in a conniving way: the epitome of the local politician. SHERIFF JONES is her opposite: tall, thin, dour. The kind of man who irons his uniform every morning.

He's also *unusually* well-endowed. It *shows*.

MAYOR MAYOR
How can I do you, Jones.

SHERIFF JONES
Same as always, Ms. Mayor. I need--

MAYOR MAYOR
Ms. Mayor.
(she takes a big breath)
That sound, that ... *swelling* sound. I feel so much better the more you, *Jones*, insert that name, Ms. *Mayor*, into your ...

SHERIFF JONES
I need a new patrol car, Ms. Mayor.

MAYOR MAYOR
(not paying attention, waving a little American flag)
Robust vocabulary. Remind me why?

SHERIFF JONES
One was totaled in the line of duty. You know this.

MAYOR MAYOR
The line of duty? What would you know about the *line of duty*, Jones?

SHERIFF JONES
As I have said, I do not think the whole force should be punished for Lieutenant Miller's ill-measured decision to--

(CONTINUED)

MAYOR MAYOR
How many drunks on the force,
Jones? I mean honestly. Use your
big brain there.

SHERIFF JONES
I do not like to speculate on that
which I do not know.

MAYOR MAYOR
(gives him a hard look)
Jones, Jones, Jones. Why so
hard-headed? Let's walk.

An awkward pause as Mayor Mayor tries to get up. She can't.

MAYOR MAYOR
God damned goiter.

She smashes the intercom button.

MAYOR MAYOR
BEETLE!

There's crashing sounds from the hallway, and a moment later
BEETLE scurries in, stands at attention by the Mayor's side.
Beetle (early 20s) is a sickly-thin looking young woman,
oily hair plastered to her forehead. She glances at Jones's
crotch, looks down.

MAYOR MAYOR
It's my god damned goiter, Beetle.

Mayor Mayor hands Beetle a flip phone, then picks up her
desk phone's receiver. She punches in a number, and the flip
phone rings. Beetle obediently picks up, puts it on speaker.

BEETLE
Ms. Mayor?

MAYOR MAYOR
(into the receiver)
Beetle, take us on a walk.

The mayor's voice seems to echo in the small room. (This
throughout the scene).

BEETLE
Yes, ma'am. The god damned goiter.

MAYOR MAYOR
Did you just swear in my presence,
Beetle?

(CONTINUED)

BEETLE

Yes, ma'am.

MAYOR MAYOR

Now what did the good lord say
about using her name in vain?

BEETLE

She said not to do that, ma'am.

MAYOR MAYOR

And what does the good lord do to
those who use her name in vain,
Beetle?

BEETLE

She smites them, ma'am.

MAYOR MAYOR

That's right, purest Beetle. She
smites them.

(to Sheriff Jones)

You look rather rigid over there,
Jones, say hello to Beetle.

SHERIFF JONES

Hi, Becky. How's your mother?

BEETLE looks at him wide-eyed, scared to answer to her name.

MAYOR MAYOR

(annoyed)

How honorable. How very good. Good
Beetle. Very good Beetle. Now WALK!

Beetle scurries out the front door. Jones gives Mayor Mayor
a long, disgusted look. But Mayor Mayor is singing "Stars
and Stripes" forever, waving her flag, looking at Uncle Sam.
Then she notices Jones.

MAYOR MAYOR

At attention, still, I see.

SHERIFF JONES

The car.

MAYOR MAYOR

(gestures at the door)

We are *walking*, Jones, and *talking*,
Jones.

(as he turns to go)

Do say hello to my horrid little
daughter out ... *there*.

(CONTINUED)

SHERIFF JONES
Okay, Miss Mayor.

More singing as Jones walks out.

INT. THE LEHMAN'S HOME, THE KITCHEN

Erica is back on the phone, bouncing George III.

ERICA
And then he like, *barged* in ...

George is by the radio, trying to hook up the subwoofer to the radio with two wires. Tools everywhere. He *creates* clutter.

GEORGE
Stupid ... thing ...

Brion points the gun at CHOW.

BRION
Bang ...

Suddenly the beebees fall out of the bottom of the gun. Chow starts trying to eat them.

ERICA
I know ... I *know* ...

Mathilda holds the crossword in one hand, mixes pancake batter with the other.

(cont'd)
Where to find the Mercury line and
the Girdle of Venus.

Grandpa Matthews signs a random piece of paper, hands it to Grandma Lehman

GRANDPA MATTHEWS
Hm.

Grandma Lehman takes it, slips it between a couch cushion

GRANDMA LEHMAN
Hm.

They continue to do this.

George's wires spark and shock him.

(CONTINUED)

GEORGE

BAH!

Mathilda goes over to him starts working on the wires.
George picks the front page of the *Times* up off the floor.
Then he chucks it.

GEORGE

(mumbles)

Politics.

INT. WARREN'S GROCERIES - DAY

A shanty grocery store, liquor the only well-stocked ware in the place. JENNIFER MAYOR (18) stands behind the counter, messy with tobacco products and ads for the lotto. We recognize her: she's the girl in Zach's photo. Behind her, an old man is passed out and snoring on a chair: LLOYD WARREN, the store's proprietor. Another drunk.

LAUREN WARREN steps out of the backroom door. She's sipping out of a sippy cup, talking on the phone.

LAUREN

... on his *birthday*?

Jennifer ignores her.

LAUREN

(clears her throat)

Oh my god ... I wonder what
Jennifer would think if she heard
her boyfriend was being so rude and
ungrateful to his mother on his
birthday.

JENNIFER

I don't care what you're saying.

LAUREN

(into the phone)

Someone's in a mood ...

JENNIFER

I didn't say anything.

LAUREN

Oh my god, stop being so defensive
... I'm pregnant, you know.

(CONTINUED)

JENNIFER

Oh, really? I hadn't heard.

LAUREN

You know I read? Like on the internet? And Erica told me this was true too?

(into the phone)

Right, Erica?

(back to Jennifer)

That negativity is really bad for the baby.. It can *hear it all*.

(puts her arms under her belly, talks to it)

Isn't that right, baby? You can hear Jennifer being a bitch can't you?

(looks back up at Jennifer)

Lies are like *drugs*. That's what the bible says.

JENNIFER

You're so dumb.

LAUREN

I'm *pregnant*.

(to her Dad, sweetly)

Dad? Jennifer's being rude to my baby because her mother is the mayor and she thinks that makes her better than everyone.

Lloyd starts to grumble awake.

JENNIFER

Are you kidding me ...

Lloyd wakes up with a snort. Looks at Jennifer.

LLOYD

Bathrooms! Clean the bathrooms!

JENNIFER

Who, me?

LLOYD

Yes ... pregnant ... smells like shit ...

JENNIFER

But--

He collapses backwards on the chair, asleep.

(CONTINUED)

LAUREN
(into the phone)
Hold, Erica?
(to Lloyd)
Oh, daddy.

Lauren goes over to him and holds his head. She gives Jennifer a toothy, vicious smile and a wink.

LAUREN
I'll take care of you, daddy.
Jennifer will clean up the shit,
you just sit there.

Lloyd snores. Burps.

JENNIFER
I hate this place.

INT. CITY HALL, OUTSIDE MAYOR'S OFFICE - CONT.

Jones stands tall, straightens the badge on his uniform, his cap. Beetle stands next to him, agitated.

MAYOR MAYOR
(singing through the phone)
Let despots remember the day ...
they proclaimed as they marched ...
their might their right
(hacking cough stops her)
BEETLE! Are we walking?

BEETLE
Yes.

Beetle wildly gestures for them to walk forward. They do so.

MAYOR MAYOR
You see all this, Jones?
(beat)
YES YOU DO?

SHERIFF JONES
Yes. I do. I work here.

They pass by the front desk, to a trembling, shell-shocked SECRETARY who puts a finger to her lips, looks down, types away. They go through the door.

INT. CITY HALL - THE LOBBY - CONT.

MAYOR MAYOR
I own all of this. Including you.
Do you understand?

SHERIFF JONES
The township of Saukville owns
this.

MAYOR MAYOR
I AM Saukville. Saukville c'est
moi. Comprende?

Jones does not understand this.

BEETLE
It's french.

MAYOR MAYOR
IS THAT BEETLE SPEAKING?

SHERIFF JONES
No.

MAYOR MAYOR
YOU'RE ME, BEETLE. BEETLE C'EST
MOI.

BEETLE
Yes, ma'am. Beetle c'est ... toi.

They go outside.

INT. THE LEHMAN'S HOME, THE KITCHEN - CONT.

Mathilda gets the wires in place. The warbling sound comes
through. Then she goes back to her position.

GEORGE
(ecstatic)
Yes! YES!

ERICA
So ... *dramatic* ... Oh I have no
idea.

Mathilda absentmindedly tries the batter like it's soup. She
shakes her head: not right.

(CONTINUED)

ERICA
(to the phone)
Hang on.
(to family)
So like ... where did Zach go?

They all look at her. Then go back to what they're doing.

Mathilda slams her hand: the pancake mix flings all over her, the floor, the counter.

MATHILDA
The palm! The Mercury line and the
Girdle of Venus. The palm.

George III squeals in delight.

EXT. WARREN'S GROCERIES - ZACH'S CAR

Zach parks outside. He stares intently at the store, drumming the wheel, checking himself in the mirror.

ZACH
How do I look?

ALLIE
I don't know. Fine.

ZACH
What's in that rock again?

ALLIE
Feldspar and quartz.

ZACH
Any of that lucky?

ALLIE
Feldspar is a tectosilicate mineral
that makes makes up about 41% of
the earth's crust.

ZACH
I'll take that.

ALLIE
Quartz is the second-most abundant
and its molecule is a tetrahedron.

ZACH
Tetrahedron. That means four,
right?

(CONTINUED)

ALLIE

Yes.

ZACH

Sounds pretty lucky to me.

Allie looks at Zach like he's an alien.

ALLIE

Why are you so nervous?

ZACH

I'm feeling good, Allie. I'm
feeling *good*.

ALLIE

So?

ZACH

(beat)

You have a name for that rock?

ALLIE

A name?

ZACH

Never mind.

Zach lets out a deep breath.

ZACH

How do I look?

ALLIE

I don't know. Fine.

ZACH

(beat)

Jennifer. You know her?

ALLIE

You mean the girl you've been
dating for ten years?

ZACH

Yes. Well, no. It's complicated, we
... I love her. Allie. If I win ...
I don't know what I'll do.

ALLIE

Have a baby with her?

Zach laughs hysterically, then calms to seriousness. He
takes another deep breath.

(CONTINUED)

ZACH
Okay. Let's do this.

EXT. THE RED CARPET - HOLLYWOOD

ZACH steps out of his truck in the same swanky get-up as before, onto another red carpet swarming with photographers. He puts on his winning smile and goes forth.

EXT. CITY HALL - DAY - CONT.

SHERIFF JONES and BEETLE walk out of the City Hall. Immediately, SUSAN MAYFIELD (24), the editor of the local paper (and Jones's girlfriend) is on them, with a mic in Jones's face: she's been waiting. She's tailed by ROLAND, her camera man. Beetle looks scared of her, shuts the phone. She looks down in horror at what she's done.

SUSAN
Sheriff what did Ms. Mayor have to say for herself?

SHERIFF JONES
Hi, Suze. *Roland.*

Roland nods from behind the camera.

SUSAN
Sheriff just *what* did you and Ms. Mayor discuss this afternoon?

He looks at Warren's Groceries just across the street.
We see Zach heading towards the doors, Allie tailing him.

SHERIFF JONES
I'll tell you later. Do you want to grab a hotdog?

SUSAN
Sheriff, did Ms. Mayor mention anything about the blight on Farmer Joe's crop or Mayor Matthews's upcoming ceremony?

SHERIFF JONES
Is that camera even connected? Or whatever?

ROLAND
Actually, it is.

(CONTINUED)

SHERIFF JONES

Great. Well, I'm going to grab a hotdog? And a soda. You want one?

ROLAND

Yeah, I'll have a hotdog and a--

SHERIFF JONES

Not *you*.

Jones walks toward the store. Susan motions Roland to follow and she bustles after him. Beetle tails, hiding the phone. Then it rings:

BEETLE

(quietly)

Yes. Sorry. Sorry ... Ms. Mayor.

SUSAN

(noticing)

Is that the mayor?

BEETLE

(into the phone)

Yes, Ms. Mayor ... yes that's Ms. Mayfield speaking ...

SUSAN

Give me the phone, Beetle.

BEETLE

She's asking me for the phone ... okay. Okay ... okay.

Beetle hangs up. Looks scared.

BEETLE

Unfortunately the Mayor cannot speak with you at this time. She regrets this, but her civic duties call. She has authorized me to continue this tour on her behalf and implores you to accept the offer of my humble services. She would also like Susan to please provide, as soon as possible, the exact measurements of Sheriff Jones's--

SUSAN

Oh, shut up.

(CONTINUED)

SHERIFF JONES

Susan.

SUSAN

Oh, you shut up too.

SHERIFF JONES

... hotdog and a soda?

SUSAN

Yeah, okay.

Susan gives Sheriff Jones a peck on the cheek.

ROLAND

(relieved, putting down the
camera)

Oh, great.

SUSAN

KEEP ROLLING, ROLAND.

Roland hoists the camera back on his shoulder. The four of them head towards Warren's Groceries, Roland circling them. Beetle trails, staring down at her phone.

INT. WARREN'S GROCERIES - CONT.

Zach bursts into the store, full of energy. He goes right up to the counter flashing his Hollywood smile.

ZACH

Lauren.

LAUREN

(to the phone)

Hold on. He's *here* ...

(to Zach)

What?

The toilet flushes, Jennifer steps out. She's wearing big rubber boots and gloves, and her hair is up in a shower cap. She doesn't notice Zach.

JENNIFER

How in god's name could it get so
... so ... so *shitty* in there. I
mean it smells like one *entire*
piece of shit.

She turns and sees Zach, beaming at her.

(CONTINUED)

JENNIFER
This is the worst day.

But Zach, lost in this moment, is romantic:

ZACH
Jennifer. It's my birthday.

Lauren snorts. Lloyd snores. Allie starts giggling.

JENNIFER
I know. Happy--

ZACH
(chivalrous)
Jennifer. I've come to play the
lottery ... and I'd like you to
tender my ticket.

JENNIFER
(liking it)
... okay.

LAUREN
This is the corniest shit I've ever
seen.

Jennifer takes off her gloves and heads behind the counter.
She and Zach look across at each other. *Special* moment.

JENNIFER
Which would you like to play?

ZACH
The grandest one there is.

Jennifer looks down at her lottery cheat sheet with a
puzzled look.

JENNIFER
Okay.

She begins processing the ticket when Susan, Jones, Beetle,
and Roland walk in.

SHERIFF JONES
Hey, Jen. Your mother says hi.

ZACH
(unprodged, to them)
Today's my birthday. And today I'm
buying a lottery ticket.

(CONTINUED)

SUSAN
(to herself)
Well, this'll do.
(to Roland)
ROLL.
(she coughs, puts on a smile)
... ah shit what's his name?

SHERIFF JONES
Zach Lehman.

SUSAN
Zach Lehman, today is your
birthday. What does an eighteen
year-old Saukvillian do on his
special day?

ZACH
(right into the camera, a
natural)
Not stay at home, I'll tell you
that much.

JENNIFER
Which numbers would you like?

ZACH
41 ... 4 ... 18 ... 34 ... 11

SUSAN
Zach Lehman, any special meaning to
those numbers?

ALLIE
41 is the percent composition of
feldspar in the earth's crust. 4 is
the number of vertices in a
tetrahedron, 18 is his birthday,
Kansas is the 34th state in the
Union, 11 is ...

ZACH
(with a wink to Allie)
Your birthday date.

SUSAN
Now who are you, young one?

SHERIFF JONES
Allison Lehman.

(CONTINUED)

ALLIE

Allie.

SUSAN

All right, Allie. What else do the numbers mean?

ALLIE

Nothing.

SUSAN

(beat)

How old are you?

JENNIFER

Zach ... your ticket.

Zach ceremoniously, with two hands, takes it from her.

ZACH

Thank you, Jennifer. What now?

JENNIFER

The numbers will be announced.

ZACH

When?

ROLAND

Now.

He nods to a TV behind the counter. Everyone turns to watch.

On screen five tubes, a jumble of numbers below. It's the classic TV Powerball scene.

ANNOUNCER

And the first ... 41! And the second ... 4!

The room tenses. Is it *possible*?

ANNOUNCER

And the third ... 18!

LAUREN

Oh ... my ... god.

SUSAN

ROLAND!

(CONTINUED)

ANNOUNCER
And the fourth ... 34!

ZACH
Jennifer?

JENNIFER
Zach?

ANNOUNCER
And the fifth ... 11!

A huge, leaden beat. Everyone in complete shock.

LAUREN
Oh my *god*.

An explosion of action. Sheriff Jones calls into his walkie-talkie:

SHERIFF JONES
12-6, 12-6, we have a 12-6
Potential Public Disturbance at the
Warren Grocery, over.

Beetle flips open the phone, calls the Mayor. Allie stares agape. Jennifer is silent-crying.

SUSAN
Zach Lehman, oh my god, Zach
Lehman.

But Zach is looking only at Jennifer.

ZACH
Jennifer. I said ... if I won the
lottery, I didn't know what I'd do.
But now I do. Jennifer ...

SUSAN
What is happening? Zach Lehman,
please explain what is happening to
the camera.

Lauren is staring down at the card.

LAUREN
Jennifer, which ticket did you get
him? Which powerball was that?

ZACH
Jennifer Warren, I have loved you
since the sixth grade.

(CONTINUED)

LAUREN
JENNIFER!

JENNIFER
(to Lauren)
I DON'T KNOW!
(to Zach, crying now)
I love you too. I love you.

ZACH
This is fate. I know it is. And I
want ... to start a life. With you.

SUSAN
Are you *proposing*?
(while the remaining is going
on, she pulls out her phone)
John, it's Susan. Pitch: guy wins
lottery first try now proposing
what do you think ... I don't know
which lottery who gives a shit ...
the powerball ... yes, live. Yes,
... *not* like last time, *not* ...

Jennifer is totally overwhelmed.

LAUREN
DAD! DAD!

Lloyd wakes up with a start.

LLOYD
Where's my wife?

LAUREN
She's dead, Dad. What lottery is
this? What lottery is on TV right
now?

Lloyd finally shakes off his sleep and puts on his glasses.
He looks at the ticket, at the TV, then his wristwatch. It's
dawning on him.

JENNIFER
Yeah? You do?

ZACH
Yes, I do.
(to Allie)
Allie, give me the rock.

(CONTINUED)

ALLIE
Sandstone.

ZACH
Allie, please give me the
sandstone.

BEETLE
(into the phone)
Ms. Mayor? Zach Lehman just won the
lottery and is proposing to your
daughter ...

Allie reluctantly gives Zach the sandstone.

SUSAN
(to the phone)
We're on? We've got it?

Zach gets down on one knee, so his head barely shows above
the counter. He extends the sandstone.

ZACH
Jennifer Mayor. Will you marry me?

INT. THE LEHMAN'S HOME, THE KITCHEN

Everyone remains at their little tasks ...

The Grandparents, however, have rolled over to the TV.

NEWSCASTER #1
We're just now getting live footage
from a contributor out in a
Saukville with a scene you truly
won't believe.

NEWSCASTER #2
That's right, in little old
Saukville a young man has won the
lottery, and yes, is now *proposing*.

NEWSCASTER #1
Amazing. Let's take a look.

The scene at Warren's pops onto the screen.

GRANDMA LEHMAN
EH ZACH!

(CONTINUED)

GRANDPA MATTHEWS
EH ALLIE!

The family all looks up at once. Seeing it's them, they all rush over to the couch.

GEORGE
Didn't even *know* it was his
birthday. Ingrate can't even
remember the day we birthed him.
Now he's on TV!

George III starts to wail.

ERICA
Come on, Georgie--and Momma's gonna
buy you a--just shit up now
Georgie, come on now--mockingbird
...

They see Zach get down on one knee. Mathilda covers her mouth with the crossword.

They watch him hand over the sandstone and propose.

JENNIFER
(on T.V.)
I do!

Zach stands up and they kiss, over the counter. The living room is absolutely still.

SUSAN
(stepping into frame)
What a moment. This is TV history,
right here.

There's a commotion behind the counter. It's Lloyd, anxious and stammering.

LLOYD
The-the-the ticket. The ticket ...
Zach, you won the lottery.

ZACH
Thanks for that, Lloyd. But
Jennifer is the real prize.

He smiles his winning smile at the camera.

LLOYD
No ... no ... you ... you won 500
million dollars.

(CONTINUED)

ZACH
(smile fades)
What?

LLOYD
You're ... you're a millionaire.

A quite pregnant pause as the Lehmans take this in. On screen, camera ZOOMS on Zach's look.

THEN:

GEORGE
WE'RE RICH!!!!

MATHILDA
WE'RE RICH!!!

ERICA
WE'RE RICH!!!

BRION
WE'RE RICH!!!

GRANDMA LEHMAN
WE'RE RICH!!!

GRANDPA MATTHEWS
WE'RE --

Grandpa Matthews clutches his heart and goes limp as:

****COLOR BURSTS BACK INTO THE ROOM.****

****THE WAVE OF COLOR GOES OUT THE FRONT DOOR INTO THE FIELDS,
THE TOWN. WE GO FURTHER AND FURTHER OUT WATCHING THE WAVE
SPREAD AND SPREAD UNTIL THE WHOLE OF SAUKVILLE IS IN FULL
COLOR ONCE AGAIN.****

FADE TO BLACK.