

THE SKINNARDS

Episode 1 - Pilot

"Let's Start a Band"

Written by

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ACT 1

EXT. CAMELOT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PLAYGROUND - DAY

It's recess. Thirty or so small kids are letting off steam on a cool, sunny day.

The playground is a microcosm of Camelot, Nevada, the gateway to Death Valley - a sparse community of hearty oddballs, living among cactus, desert critters and painted rocks, under a clear bright sun.

JACKSON (7) is trying to show ARNOLD SKINNARD (7) how to play a half-baked variation on the "hold hands and spin" game. Another kid is watching, with a knowing smile.

JACKSON

Okay, you stand there and hold my right hand in your right hand. Your other right hand. Good. Now, stretch out. And when I say go, start running.

ARNOLD

(Very confused)

Huh?

The other kid laughs.

JACKSON

(Dumbing it down)

Okay. Think about it. I run, you run, we're holding on. See? What happens? We go around in circles. Right?

ARNOLD

(Still not getting it)

Oh yeah.

JACKSON

And the first one to let go loses. Got it? Okay, you ready?

Arnold is still confused.

JACKSON (CONT'D)

GO!

The kid starts running and immediately pulls Arnold to the ground. Now, he's really confused and upset. The other kid laughs his ass off.

CONTINUED:

JACKSON (CONT'D)
(Loud and slow)
Okay. Listen. When I say go, you
gotta run too. If you don't, you'll
fall. Get it? That's how it works.

He helps Arnold up and they get in position.

JACKSON (CONT'D)
Okay, now are you ready?

Arnold is not so sure.

JACKSON (CONT'D)
What are you going to do?

ARNOLD
I don't know.

JACKSON
Run! You're going to run.

Arnold nods.

JACKSON (CONT'D)
Ready? Okay. GO!

They start running. They wobble badly at first, then gradually sync up and spin in spiraling circles. Now, it's fun. Crazy and stupid. They start LAUGHING, HOWLING. The faster they go, the dizzier, crazier, wilder it gets.

At maximum velocity, one of them loses his grip and they separate. Jackson regains his balance, but Arnold falls, slamming his head on a sharp rock. Stupid game over.

Jackson is triumphant, jumps around with arms raised. The other kid laughs.

ARNOLD
This game sucks.

Arnold holds his head, as he stands. Jackson sees blood running through Arnold's fingers and freezes.

INT. CAMELOT CLINIC NURSES' STATION - DAY

A nurse, LIZ (32), is doing rock-paper-scissors with another nurse. One, two, three, show.

LIZ
Paper covers rock, you lose.

CONTINUED:

The other one, BRENDA SKINNARD (36), holds her hand up. She's black, bubbly, and speaks her mind as a matter of course.

BRENDA

Liz, wait. Two out of three. Come on. Two out of three.

LIZ

Whatever.

One, two, three, show. Scissors cut paper.

LIZ (CONT'D)

Sorry, I feel for you.

Liz walks off, smiling.

BRENDA

Shit.

INT. EXAM ROOM - DAY

MR. ACOSTA (50) is lying in bed with his sheet pulled back and sterile drapes in place. Brenda stands over him holding a new catheter.

BRENDA

How are we doing, Mr. Acosta?

ACOSTA

Okay?

BRENDA

(Holding it up)

You ready for this?

ACOSTA

Yup.

BRENDA

Okay, you know the drill.

He bears down. She lubricates the part that goes in. He watches, smiles. Out of view, she grabs his penis and goes to work. She grimaces, as he takes a deep breath and smiles wide.

She looks down. He's enjoying himself. She slowly works the catheter in place. He closes his eyes in ecstasy, YELPS.

BRENDA (CONT'D)

You okay?

CONTINUED:

He nods rapidly. Gross! She continues.

BRENDA (CONT'D)
There we go. All done.

She grabs the old catheter and bag.

BRENDA (CONT'D)
How you doing?

ACOSTA
(Disappointed)
Okay.

BRENDA
Good. Well, you hang in there, Mr.
Acosta.

She walks out, dumping the old catheter on the way.

INT. CAMELOT HOSPITAL NURSES' STATION

Removing her gloves, Brenda approaches Liz at the counter.

LIZ
(Smiling)
How did it go?

Brenda enters something in a mobile computer.

BRENDA
What do you think?

LIZ
Good. Got another job for you.

BRENDA
What now?

She points. Brenda peers around a file cabinet and there's Arnold, holding his head with a sheepish look.

BRENDA (CONT'D)
Arnold. What did you do now?

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - DAY

The DOCTOR is stitching up Arnold, while Brenda holds his hand.

CONTINUED:

BRENDA
 (To the doctor)
 Do you think he's got a concussion?

DOCTOR
 Nope, he's fine.
 (To Arnold)
 Aren't you?

ARNOLD
 Do I have to go back to school?

BRENDA
 What do you think?

ARNOLD
 Ow.

BRENDA
 Hang in there, you little twerp.

She rubs his hand.

EXT. SPACE STATION RV PARK - DAY

DERRICK SKINNARD (36) is waiting on the phone, standing next to the RV dump station as sewage bubbles up from below. He's white, tall, skinny, a desert rat. A big RV is sitting in the driveway next to him.

DERRICK
 (On phone)
 I don't know. Somebody must've pumped an elephant down there. I got shit up to my elbows. (BEAT)
 Not literally. It's a... Right.

The driver in the RV leans out the side window, making a face from the odor.

RV GUY
 When's this going to be fixed?

Derrick holds up his index finger, as he listens to the guy yammer on the phone.

RV GUY (CONT'D)
 I got a full tank. Is there another place I can go?

Derrick shrugs, listening on the phone. Another CAMPER approaches.

CONTINUED:

DERRICK

(On phone)

That's the best you can do?

The news isn't good.

CAMPER

(To RV Guy)

What's going on?

RV GUY

What do you think?

CAMPER

I got a full tank.

RV GUY

We all do.

(To Derrick)

Is there another place I can go?

Hey. Is there another place-

DERRICK

(on phone)

Hold on a sec.

(To the campers)

There's a campground ten miles up 95. But if you can just give me a minute, I'll be able to-

The RV Guy spins out and charges down the highway.

DERRICK (CONT'D)

Asshole!

(To Camper)

Sorry.

(Into phone)

Yeah. Yeah. That's great. Whatever you can do would be- It's kind of chaos now. Yeah. Thanks, Sam.

Hangs up.

CAMPER

So, what's the deal?

DERRICK

They're coming right out. Can you wait?

His phone RINGS, he doesn't recognize the caller ID. The camper shakes his head.

CONTINUED: (2)

DERRICK (CONT'D)
 (On phone)
 Hello.

He listens.

CAMPER
 How long will it take?

DERRICK
 (To Camper)
 I don't know. They have to, you
 know, there's a clog. Sorry. Just a
 sec.
 (On phone)
 Sorry. Yes. What happened?
 (Disappointed)
 Oh boy. Okay, fine. I'll be right
 there.

INT. CAMELOT HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - DAY

Principal WARD sits across the desk from Derrick and his son
 BEN (15) - mixed race, shaggy black hair, serious hip-hop
 musician, mature for his age.

WARD
 He's been warned multiple times.

Derrick turns to Ben for an answer.

BEN
 I know.

DERRICK
 Is it true?

BEN
 Yeah.

DERRICK
 So, why do you keep doing it?

BEN
 (Rhetorical answer)
 I don't know.

WARD
 All we can do at this point is put
 him on suspension. He's had ample
 opportunity to change his behavior,
 but he's just not getting the
 message.

CONTINUED:

DERRICK

I'm sure other kids look at their cell phones. What's the problem here?

WARD

Ben sits in the back of the class and talks and plays music with his friends, and the teachers can't seem to get them to stop. He's been down here, maybe once, twice a week - missed assignments, grades are suffering, disrupting-

DERRICK

Okay, so...

WARD

Two-days. Then, we'll see.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL HALL

Derrick is standing with Ben, as he pulls books out of his locker.

DERRICK

You can't do this, man.

BEN

It's just that one class. (BEAT)
Mainly.

DERRICK

Mainly?

BEN

I hate history. It's just a bunch of old crap. All we do is memorize dates, and a bunch of old wars...

DERRICK

It doesn't matter. You have to do it.

BEN

I said I'd do it. So I'll do it. But it's just a lot of pointless busy work.

DERRICK

Just put your cell phone away.

CONTINUED:

BEN

It was just today. Okay? I have a lot to deal with. You wouldn't understand.

He closes the locker and leads his dad toward the doors.

DERRICK

Try me.

BEN

We need to learn new stuff for the show Sunday.

DERRICK

The school talent show.

BEN

It's more than a talent show. We have to do a whole set now.

DERRICK

But why do you have to do it during history?

Derrick's phone RINGS.

BEN

It's a crisis. You don't understand. I knew you wouldn't understand. No one does.

DERRICK (CONT'D)

(On phone)

What's up? I'm a little busy here.

Derrick follows him out the door.

INT. CAMELOT HOSPITAL NURSES' STATION

Arnold is sitting on the counter as Derrick looks at the bandage on his head.

DERRICK

Arnold, what the hell.

BRENDA

He'll be fine. Just get him back to school.

DERRICK

What was he doing?

BRENDA

What is he ever doing?

CONTINUED:

ARNOLD

Me and Anthony were running around in circles to see who would let go first...

DERRICK

And you did.

ARNOLD

I guess.

DERRICK

Well, come on. I got to get back to work.

He lifts Arnold down.

ARNOLD

Work?

DERRICK

The RV park? Remember?

ARNOLD

You work at the RV park?

DERRICK

Come on.

They head out.

BRENDA

(Calling)

No more injuries, please.

DERRICK

Arnold?

ARNOLD

Okay!

INT. CAMELOT MIDDLE SCHOOL BAND ROOM - DAY

A Blast of BAD MUSIC, as the orchestra launches into the Allegro con Brio from Beethoven's 5th. It's a seven-piece orchestra, consisting of a few violins, a clarinet, flute, tuba and a kid banging on a snare and bass drum.

After a few painful lines, the conductor stops them.

CONDUCTOR

Did you hear that? Huh?

CONTINUED:

The kids aren't sure.

CONDUCTOR (CONT'D)
Bah, bah, bah, baaahh. Bah, bah,
bah, baaahh. Almost. Almost. When
everyone is playing together, it's
a beautiful thing. Trust me. You
get goosebumps. Do you ever get
goosebumps?

They're not sure. He turns to the first-chair violinist.

CONDUCTOR (CONT'D)
Anyway. Jane, have you been
practicing?

She nods. JANE SKINNARD (13) is petite, beautiful, with a
wild shock of black hair.

CONDUCTOR (CONT'D)
Good. Just Jane, now. From the top,
slowly. Ready. One, two, one.

The tuba comes in. He stops them. The tuba player is
embarrassed.

CONDUCTOR (CONT'D)
Just Jane. Okay? Ready. One, two,
one.

She performs beautifully - perfect rhythm, intonation and she
sticks in a crescendo for good measure and vibrato on the
last note. The conductor has to restrain himself from gushing
over her in front of the others. After a few lines...

CONDUCTOR (CONT'D)
Good. See? That's... Let's hear all
the violins. From the top. Ready?

He sees the flute lift her instrument.

CONDUCTOR (CONT'D)
Just the violins. One, two, all,
together.

The same three lines are a mess. The conductor wants to say,
"You guys are hopeless." But smiles...

CONDUCTOR (CONT'D)
Good. We'll get there. Okay.
Chipmunk song.

They all cheer and dig through their music for the Chipmunk
score.

EXT. RV PARK BY WASTE DUMP -DAY

An overweight pump operator, SAM, is standing in raw sewage, bent over, looking in the hole.

SAM

Doesn't look like anything's blocking.

DERRICK

Good. That's good, right?

SAM

Well, your tank is maxed out and your drain field is probably... I don't know.

DERRICK

Can you fix it?

He gets that look - stands up tall and looks off in the distance.

SAM

Welp. I'll empty her out. Then we'll see what we got. Could be a lot of things.

DERRICK

Thanks. Do what you can?

Derrick turns. The guy from site 4 is standing behind him.

SITE 4 GUY

Say, we just pulled into site 4 and there's no electricity.

DERRICK

Did you try flipping the breaker?

SITE 4 GUY

What's that?

Derrick turns to Ben, who's sitting by the office, listening with intensity to his cell phone.

DERRICK

Ben. Ben!

Ben looks up with an attitude. Pulls the headphones away from one ear.

CONTINUED:

DERRICK (CONT'D)
Please go to site 4 with this gentleman and turn on his electricity. Please. Please. Thank you.

(To guy)
Sorry.

Ben replaces the headphone and walks off without acknowledging the guy. Derrick's phone RINGS. He looks at the caller ID.

DERRICK (CONT'D)
Oh shit.

He looks at his watch, answers.

DERRICK (CONT'D)
(On phone)
Sorry. I forgot, honey. It's been crazy. I'll be right there. Okay?

The septic pump starts, drowning out the conversation.

DERRICK (CONT'D)
Sorry!!!

INT. DERRICK'S CAR - DAY

He's driving with Ben.

BEN
I don't even know why you work at that fucking RV park. It's nothing but trouble.

DERRICK
Don't use that word. It's not usually this busy.

BEN
Do you like working there? Do you actually like it?

DERRICK
You don't always get to do what you want.

BEN
You never do.

They pull into the school driveway. There's Jane standing by herself holding her violin case.

CONTINUED:

DERRICK
That's not true.

BEN
When? When have you ever done
something you want to do?

DERRICK
Today's not a good example.

He stops. Jane gets in the back.

DERRICK (CONT'D)
Sorry, Janey.

JANE
(Cold shoulder)
Yeah.

SILENCE. Derrick looks at his watch.

DERRICK
Well, we may as well pick up your
mom.

EXT. SKINNARD HOUSE FRONT YARD - DAY

Arnold is sitting on a folding chair with objects arranged around him - various sizes of plastic buckets, metal things suspended from a yellow plastic rope, pan lids, blocks of wood and an assortment of bells.

He picks up two sticks and tests the sound of each object by whacking it a few times in different ways. He makes a few adjustments - moves the wood frame in that holds the metal things, turns a bucket between his legs.

Satisfied, he begins playing a beat, simple at first, then adding backbeats, moving to different objects, adding textures. It's clear he does this often, maybe every chance he gets. The sound becomes music, takes on a pleasant rhythmic groove.

In a moment, this inept little kid effortlessly transforms into some kind of crazy, wild, musical genius. He speeds up, his eyes roll back, he's in the flow. He's Buddy Rich, pounding out a beat with all his soul, his arms and hands moving so quickly they're invisible.

It's magic. We're in awe.

EXT. CAMELOT CLINIC - DAY

The sun is low in the sky. Brenda is getting in the front seat, sees Jane and Ben in the back.

BRENDA
(Suspicious, as usual)
So, what's going on?

DERRICK
I was late getting Jane because I was dealing with the waste dump. Ben was-

BEN
I'll tell her.

DERRICK
Go for it.

BEN
(Sugar-coating it)
We have to learn more songs for the gig Sunday, so I was working on that with Jonah, and fucking Frist-

DERRICK
Don't use that word!

BEN
Frist lost his shit and sent us to Ward-

DERRICK
And he's on suspension for two days.

Brenda gives him a look.

BRENDA
(Instantly livid)
What is wrong with you? What part of "don't use your fucking cell phone-

DERRICK
Don't use that word.

BRENDA
-At school" don't you get.

CONTINUED:

BEN

I get it. But you don't get it. I'm in crisis mode. If we don't have a full set of songs-

BRENDA

Listen! You can do that after school. There's plenty of time. At school, you do NOT use the cell phone. That is NOT okay. You know that. You know you do. School comes before music. It's always been that way and it will always be that way, from now until forever. Why is that so damn difficult to understand?

(Turns to Derrick)

What am I missing here?!

Derrick shrugs.

BEN

Ok, you win. It's not worth arguing about. You don't get it. And that's that.

BRENDA

Oh, I get it. You're the one who-

BEN

Fine! I'm sorry! I won't do it again.

BEAT.

Brenda turns, still boiling mad, and looks out the front window.

BRENDA

(Cooling down)

You always say that, then it's right back to the same old...

(BEAT)

Where's Arnold?

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT

ACT 2

EXT. SKINNARD HOUSE FRONT YARD - DAY

The Skinnard mini-van stops in a dirt space next to the yard. They get out and make their way through the chain-link fence gate and up the worn dirt path, through the unintentional native garden and occasional found art piece to the front porch.

The house is a large, old, double-wide mobile home with a million half-baked additions, plopped down in the desert.

BRENDA
(Calling)
Arnold! Arnold!

Their skinny black mutt Jaime, runs up. Brenda surveys the yard from the front porch. There's Arnold, sitting with his trap set under the makeshift wood shelter.

BRENDA (CONT'D)
Come here, honey.

They gather and sit a moment on the saggy couch, and cuddle up in the warm glow of the setting sun. Then...

BRENDA (CONT'D)
What's for dinner?

They turn to Derrick.

INT. JENNY'S CAFE - NIGHT

The family is reading menus, seated in metal chairs around a table that's too small. Brenda and Derrick are aware of an elderly white couple nearby and work desperately to keep their often-boisterous interactions under control.

DERRICK
Just to be clear. This is not meant to become a habit. It's a special occasion. And money IS an object.

BEN
(Sarcastic)
What are we celebrating?

DERRICK
Everything going to hell at once.

CONTINUED:

BRENDA
Arnold and Jane, you guys order off
the kids' menu.

JANE
How come Ben doesn't have to?

BRENDA
He's too old.

JANE
He's only two years older than me.

BRENDA
Why don't you get the kids'
spaghetti?

JANE
Really? It's crap, that's why.

Brenda groans.

BEN
Can I get a steak?

NO!

BRENDA

NO!

DERRICK

Too loud. They sneak a peak to see how the elderly couple
reacts, make eye contact, smile.

BEN
God. Just asking. It's not as if
this is fucking Caesar's Palace.

DERRICK
Don't use that word.

BRENDA
What did you expect us to
say?

BEN
You're supposed to like nourish us.
We're just kids.

BRENDA
(Threatening)
I'll nourish you.

JANE
I'm not hungry.

She FLAPS the menu closed.

BRENDA
Janey, come on.

CONTINUED: (2)

JANE

Not if I have to eat like deep-fried chicken-slurry lumps.

BRENDA

(Make my day)

Okay. What do you want?

BEAT.

JANE

(Thinking)

Like, uh, like a salad, a chef salad... with blue cheese.

BRENDA

(Leary)

Do you even know what blue cheese is?

JANE

(Duh)

Yeah.

BRENDA

Okay, Miss Smart-ass, you can have a chef's salad with blue cheese. And you have to eat it too. All of it.

JANE

Fine.

BRENDA

(Making it sound gross)

All the crunchy lettuce and chopped-up carrots and cabbage and sliced ONIONS and gooey TOMATOES...

JANE

Can I get it without the cabbage and onions and-

BRENDA

No.

JANE

Why?

BRENDA

Because then it's not a salad. It's no better than the deep-fried chicken-slurry lumps.

CONTINUED: (3)

BEN
Why can't I get a-

BRENDA
NO!

DERRICK
NO!

The waitress appears.

WAITRESS
Alright. You guys ready?

DERRICK
We're going to need another minute,
sorry.

WAITRESS
It's alright. Take your time.

She's off to another table. They quietly study their menus,
then...

BRENDA
You know what the problem is? We're
not a family anymore.

There she goes again. They all talk at once.

DERRICK
What are we then?

BEN
You're exaggerating again,
mom.

JANE
Just because I don't like onions
doesn't mean-

BRENDA
See? We argue. We're all going in
different directions. We're all
scattered, falling apart. We can't
even eat out anymore.

BEN
You call this eating out?

BRENDA
(Controlling herself)
Yes! We're eating out. We should be
having fun, talking about how our
days went, enjoying each other's
company. Not fighting and pulling
away from each other.

(BEAT)
What did you do today, Janey?

CONTINUED: (4)

JANE

(Taken by surprise)

Uh, I don't know.

BRENDA

See? We're not a family. We're a bunch of... animals. A bunch of unappreciative, mean-spirited animals, pushing our own agendas, worrying about our own shit and not caring about each other.

DERRICK

What do you suggest we do?

She has to think about it a little too long.

BRENDA

I don't know. Maybe it's hopeless.

She gets a little weepy. They see she's serious. The silence spreads. No one has the answer.

Then, Arnold reaches over and takes her hand.

INT. SKINNARD MAIN ROOM - NIGHT

The TV is on, flashing from station to snow to station - news, talking head, sitcom, commercial, commercial, nature show - finally settling on cars chasing each other and crashing into stuff.

Derrick has the remote, lying on the couch with a beer, probably his second or third.

Brenda is in the kitchen area at the other end of the small room packed full of unmatched, well-worn used furniture. She's assembling school lunches - variations on white bread, bologna, cheese, peanut butter, carrot sticks, chips, juice boxes. She's also working on a glass of wine.

INT. JANE'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

In a space not much bigger than her single bed and dresser, Jane sits crossed-legged on her comforter, highlighting text in a school book she's reading on her laptop.

She finishes, sets the laptop aside and scoots down to the end of her bed, reaches down and pulls out her violin. She adjusts the tuning, positions it like a pro under her chin, adjusts the bow tension, and starts playing something softly - pretty legato notes with vibrato.

CONTINUED:

Then, she adds little accents, up and down staccatos, spiccatos and ricochets that crescendo beautifully up and down.

The thing is, she's not hammering away on some sheet music. She's making it all up on the spot. She finds a groove and plays it a million ways, over and over until she's in love. Then, she morphs into another groove.

INT. BEN'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

He's on the phone, sitting at his desk, working on an Ableton project on his laptop. His small room is jammed with used electronic music equipment, speakers, amps. The walls are covered with homemade foam rubber panels and hip-hop music posters. A DJ controller sits on a TV tray at his side.

BEN

(On phone)

If Carlos can't make it, we're basically screwed.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. JONAH'S BEDROOM

JONAH (15) is on speaker phone, sitting on his bed.

JONAH

(On phone)

Hey, you and I can just do it. Like in the beginning. We don't need him.

BEN

Yeah, we do. We sucked in the beginning.

JONAH

We've improved, bro. We've like gotten so much better. I mean Carlos adds a ton, but if it means losing this gig... Man, that would really suck.

BEN

I know. Fuck! Okay, you and I'll learn the new tunes. We have two days. If Carlos can't make it, then we'll deal with it, I guess.

CONTINUED:

JONAH
Righteous.

BEN
Righteous?

JONAH
I don't know. I got it from my dad.

BEN
Forget you heard that, okay?

JONAH
Right on.

BEN
And that.

INT. SKINNARD MAIN ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Brenda is finishing the lunches and placing the bags in the fridge.

BRENDA
(Curious)
Where's Arnold?

DERRICK
Isn't he still at Loogie's?

BRENDA
That was a while ago.

DERRICK
Should we start worrying?

The DRUMS start, coming from Ben's room. They're very loud and the sub-woofer rattles the lamps and dishes, like a 6.0 earthquake. They seem unfazed.

BRENDA
(Speaking louder)
I don't know. Let's give him
another half hour!

She pads into the TV area and sits in her comfy chair with a carrot stick. Derrick turns the TV way up.

BRENDA (CONT'D)
How's the waste dump!?

CONTINUED:

DERRICK

Sam said everything went fine!
Steve will check it in the morning!

WE HEAR Jane's violin. She's playing the Beethoven piece, as loudly as possible.

Ben's bass part comes in, causing more rattling. Derrick turns to Brenda, WTF.

Then, another rhythmic sound comes in. It sounds like someone hitting metal cans and plastic buckets.

The TV is all the way up, SCREECHING loud, but it can't compete.

Finally, Jane marches out of her room, still holding her violin, boiling mad.

JANE

Tell him to turn it down! I can't
hear myself think!

BRENDA

What do you say?!

JANE

Please!

Derrick gets up and marches to Derrick's room. Through the door...

DERRICK

Ben! Ben! You need to- Ah, shit.

He opens the door.

INT. BEN'S ROOM

Derrick at the door...

DERRICK

(Shouting)

Hey. Turn it down, okay?!

Ben turns off the player. Sudden SILENCE.

DERRICK (CONT'D)

It's too loud. Use your headphones.

Derrick turns back into the main room.

INT. MAIN ROOM

Ben appears.

BEN

(Highly agitated)

See? This is what I mean. We have a gig in like five days. You guys don't get it. I have to be able to play at performance levels, so I can hear everything-

DERRICK

It's too loud.

BEN

I can't use headphones. It doesn't work that way.

BRENDA

(Standing, livid)

Then, we're shutting you down. Okay? You're not doing any gigs. No gigs. No music. Nothing. And no more cell phones-

BEN

MOM! I'm a performer! That's what I do!

BRENDA

Not anymore, Ben. It's gotten way out of hand.

He runs back in his room and SLAMS the door. Derrick follows him.

DERRICK

Hey, Ben. I want you to be a performer. We just have to find a way for you to perform and do school and not blow up our eardrums. Okay?

Ben comes out.

BEN

I'm moving out.

DERRICK

Ben, come on.

BRENDA

You're not going anywhere.

JANE

Let him!

CONTINUED:

BEN
Try and stop me.

JANE
Let him go.

BRENDA
Use your fuckin' head!

DERRICK
Don't use that word.

Everyone shouts at once.

BEN
I get no support from anyone! You guys, the fucking school, nobody! You all want me to be some braindead zombie that follows orders and memorizes history crap. But I can't do that. That's not me. That's not me. I might as well be dead. If I can't get your support, then I have to get out of here.

BRENDA
That's all we do is support you. We spent 15 years supporting you. We worked our asses off. Do you think I enjoy changing diapers and catheters all day? All we ask in return is for you to get through school, get your damn diploma. Then, you can do whatever crazy shit you want.

DERRICK
(Really loud)
Stop!

They stop and turn to Derrick, surprised. Then, one by one, they turn to the front door as they notice the SOUND.

Jane opens the front door. The others gather behind her.

EXT. FRONT YARD - NIGHT

Arnold is playing his percussion at full level. The four slowly move out onto the porch. They don't know what to say. They are completely taken by surprise.

END OF ACT

ACT 3

EXT. SKINNARD FRONT YARD - NIGHT

Jane, Derrick, Brenda and Ben slowly move out onto the porch and watch Arnold from a distance. He's playing a medium tempo groove, simple but clean with some very clever little fills and backbeats. You wanna dance!

Suddenly, he looks up and notices everyone watching, and stops. He wasn't expecting this, assumes he must be doing something wrong. But they're smiling.

DERRICK

Hey, don't stop. It's beautiful.

BEN

Hey, wait. No don't wait, keep playing.

He runs into the house. Arnold starts again with a simple beat, as he scrutinizes the smiling faces watching him in amazement.

Ben runs back out carrying a cajon drum. He sits on it and falls in with Arnold's beat. They get into it. Add complexity.

Then, Jane comes in with her violin riffs. Sometimes it sounds odd, but it's overall pretty cool. And no one judges.

Then, Derrick runs into the house, as Jane steps closer to the sound and stands squarely between the two. They watch each other and come together like pros.

Derrick returns with his dusty old guitar. Starts picking, tunes a bit, picks, tunes, then finger-picks chords. Jane finds notes that work with the chords. They find interesting patterns, then add variation.

It's far from perfect but there's definitely the genesis of something that draws them further into the musical happening. It's exciting! It's all coming from one mind. Kind of bluegrass/classical/hip-hop. Who knows!

Then, Brenda can stand still no longer. She comes in and breaks out the moves. She feels it, moves her hips, swings her arms, closes her eyes. It's music as it's meant to be - collective, hypnotic joy.

CONTINUED:

Across the street, people come out onto their porches to listen. A small group gathers by the fence, gets into it, smiles.

After a few minutes, Ben gets their attention and they build to an imperfect but beautiful climax, and end perfectly together. How did that happen?

There's thick SILENCE as they look in each other's eyes, sharing the transcendental cathartic rush. No one wants to jinx the magical moment by speaking or moving.

The crowd of seven at the fence start CLAPPING. The Skinnards turn to the SOUND as one unit. Then, they all bow low as if it's the most obvious thing to do.

INT. MAIN ROOM - NIGHT

It's late for a school/work night, but the family is still too wired to settle down. Jane and Derrick are sitting on the edge of the saggy couch; Arnold is bouncing in mom's chair; and Ben and Brenda are pacing. They all have permanent smiles.

BEN

Arnold, where did you learn to do that?

ARNOLD

I don't know.

BEN

You're a genius! You know that? Seriously.

DERRICK

I think he just picked it up, right? Nobody taught you.

ARNOLD

I guess.

BRENDA

There's always music in this house. He was just a baby when Ben started playing. It just came to him naturally.

DERRICK

And Janey! Surprise!

CONTINUED:

BRENDA

And Derrick, what the hell! You are so talented! You're all so talented!

ARNOLD

Let's start a band!

BEN

We have to!

DERRICK

Why not.

JANE

Let's do it.

ARNOLD

Yeah!

BEN

Yeah!

BRENDA

(The adult in the room)
I don't know.

BEN

What?!

BRENDA

We already have issues with certain people not being able to allocate time for their schoolwork.

DERRICK

That's true.

BEN

Mom! I can change. I will change. It's not a big deal.

BRENDA

Oh yeah?

DERRICK

We can't just throw out the idea because of a... technicality.

BRENDA

Oh yeah? Technicality, huh-

DERRICK

(Trying to undo the error)
Alright, so we have issues.

CONTINUED: (2)

BRENDA
You think?

DERRICK
But we can work on them. Right,
Ben?

BEN
Yes. Yes. I promise.

BRENDA
(With the finger in his chest)
No more cell phones in class.
No more talking in class. No
more being sent to the
principal. No more turning in
homework late. No more back
talk. You be a perfect, grade
A student in every way...

BEN (CONT'D)
Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes.

BEN (CONT'D)
Perfect. Yes!

BEAT.

BRENDA
Okay. We'll see.

YES!

BRENDA (CONT'D)
The first time you or any of you
has school or work issues, the deal
is off. No more music group. And no
arguments. Understood?

They all eagerly agree. Then, after a moment to process...

JANE
What'll we call ourselves?

BRENDA
(Shakes her head)
Heaven help us.

INT. SKINNARD LIVING ROOM - LATER

It's quiet now and the lights are low. Derrick is sitting alone on the couch, checking email on his laptop. Brenda comes in and sits on the coffee table across from him.

CONTINUED:

BRENDA
So, what do you think about all
this?

DERRICK
I think it's fine. What about you?

BRENDA
I don't know.

DERRICK
You wanted us to do things as a
family. Seems like it's something
we're all interested in. It doesn't
have to be a big deal.

BRENDA
We just can't let it get out of
control.

DERRICK
Of course.

BEAT.

BRENDA
We'll see.
(BEAT)
I figure I could try writing some
lyrics maybe.

DERRICK
(Smiling)
Yeah?

BRENDA
You know. About our crazy, mixed-up
lives in Camelot.

DERRICK
You're getting into it.

BRENDA
(Smiling finally)
Eh. You coming to bed?

DERRICK
As soon as I check email.

BRENDA
Okay. Night.

She leaves and he goes back to email.

CONTINUED: (2)

Something catches his eye, and he turns deadly serious. He opens the message. It's from a sender called *Desert Delites*, with the subject, "*Don't miss out!*"

EXT. SKINNARD FRONT YARD - NIGHT

Derrick is on the phone, pacing nervously by the fence.

DERRICK

(On phone, furtively)

Hi, I just got your message. Sorry about the late hour, but... Okay. Where? Is it secured? Good. When will I start? Got it. G'night.

He hangs up, rubs his brow, used to the pervasive feeling of dread by now. He grabs his flip phone with both hands and snaps it in half.

INT. DERRICK'S BEDROOM - LATER

He's getting in bed with Brenda, not sure how to break the news. She can sense something's not normal.

BRENDA

Is everything okay?

DERRICK

(Lying back)

I guess.

She waits.

BRENDA

Are you going to tell me?

DERRICK

It's a new project.

This wakes her up.

BRENDA

Oh... When?

DERRICK

Few days. It probably won't last long. But, who knows?

BRENDA

I hate these projects.

CONTINUED:

DERRICK

I know.

BRENDA

But I guess I can't complain.

DERRICK

(Smiling)

Oh, you can always complain.

BRENDA

What's that supposed to-

DERRICK

(Smiling)

Nothing, nothing. G'night.

He kisses her and they lie back down. He closes his eyes, hers are wide open.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The three kids are studying the Partridge Family on TV, performing one of their dated tunes. Ben is mansplaining how the pros do it.

JANE

They're not even... Are they even playing their instruments?

BEN

No. Look. The guitar's not plugged in. And that drummer's not even trying.

The kids experience an "aha" moment as they get their first glimpse behind the scenes.

JANE

Yeah.

BEN

They're not even really singing.

JANE

It looks like they are.

BEN

I know, but they're just lip syncing. It's probably not even their real voices.

CONTINUED:

JANE
(Calling him on it)
How do you know?

BEN
Because that's what they do. I read
about this shit.

JANE
You read?

BEN
Fuck you. I'm not making this up.
You can read it too. It's not a
secret. If you want to be a
performer you got to know this
shit.

It sinks in. Stars begin to twinkle in her eyes.

JANE
Are we going to be performers?

BEN
Yeah.

JANE
Where are we going to play?

BEN
I don't know. I was thinking, we
could start by getting our own
YouTube channel or something.

JANE
Cool. We'll definitely need
matching outfits.

They LAUGH.

EXT. FRONT YARD - DAY

Jane and Arnold are sitting with Jonah on the saggy couch, as
Ben paces in front of them, deep in thought.

BEN
So that's it. Sorry, Jonah. But I
can't do two bands at once.

JONAH
That's cool. My dad says I can't be
in the band anymore anyway.

(MORE)

CONTINUED:

JONAH (CONT'D)

He says it has to do with getting suspended and all, but, you know...

BEN

He just doesn't like our music.

JONAH

Dude. It's this fucking redneck town. We'd be okay if we lived in LA.

BEN

Yeah, well. It's a moot point now because I'm focusing on the, uh, new band. What are we called?

He turns to Jane.

JANE

Hell, I don't know. The Skinnard Family?

Ben and Jonah GROAN.

JANE (CONT'D)

Skinnard Bunch? Smashing Skinnards?

More GROANS.

JONAH

(With attitude)

What about A Band of Skinnards?

They laugh.

BEN

Ok, ok, ok. We'll work on it? So, Jane you're playing violin, right?

JANE

I guess.

BEN

Arnold you're buckets and silverware and crap.

He nods.

BEN (CONT'D)

I'm samples and keyboard and other shit. Dad's guitar. And Mom's? Who knows about mom?

CONTINUED: (2)

JANE

I heard her sing once.

JONAH

I can play guitar.

BEN

You can't be in the band.

JONAH

Whu? I want to play.

BEN

It's a family band.

JONAH

I'll join your family. Mine sucks.

BEN

Yeah, right. We got enough to deal with.

JANE

Maybe he can be a helper. You know, carry around equipment and stuff.

JONAH

Yeah!

BEN

You'd be ok with that?

JONAH

Fuck, yeah.

BEN

Hey, wait. Do you still have that camera?

JONAH

Yeah.

He gets a big idea.

BEN

Cool.

JONAH

What're you thinking?

BEN

I'm thinking we're set. We just need a place where we can work on shit and record.

CONTINUED: (3)

JANE
You mean, like a studio?

He thinks about that.

EXT. STORAGE STRUCTURE - DAY

Derrick and Ben stand examining this small, featureless, cinderblock building, plopped in the desert. The RV park can be seen nearby.

Derrick leads Ben to the metal front door, and opens it with a key. He has to push hard. It hasn't been opened for quite a while.

INT. STORAGE STRUCTURE

As they enter. Derrick flicks on a BUZZY overhead light. It's dusty, smelly, filled with used oil drums, crates of paper, cleaning products and car parts, all covered in cobwebs - anything but appealing.

Ben steps to the middle of the space and looks around.

DERRICK
Well?

Long pause.

BEN
It's perfect.

They high five.

STORAGE STRUCTURE - LATER

Ben and Derrick are highly motivated as they clear out the structure.

- They haul the drums and crates out of the building and load them onto a truck.

- Ben panics when he encounters a snake family under a crate.

- Jane, Arnold and Brenda help the men sweep and dust.

- They hang heavy cloth curtains, and glue egg cartons and foam pads on the walls.

- Ben and Derrick move in his musical gear, computer and desk.

CONTINUED:

- Arnold helps move in and arrange his percussion rig.

INT. PICKUP TRUCK - DAY

Brenda drives Jane and Arnold slowly down a residential street. Jane points.

JANE
There it is.

It's a big yard sale. They stop and get out.

EXT. YARD SALE

The three comb through several aisles of junk. They find a big area rug, some chairs, a couple of floor lamps, a folding table and various quirky decorative items - a stuffed jack rabbit, neon sign that says "JERKY".

INT. STORAGE STRUCTURE - NIGHT

Jane and Ben stand on ladders and hang crazy colorful sound baffles from the ceiling.

INT. SKINNARD STUDIO - LATER

The storage structure is now officially the Skinnard studio. Jane and Brenda add some finishing touches - place the floor lamps, set up a table. Ben paces and wires up his equipment, Arnold adjusts his containers, and Derrick slouches in an old bean bag chair.

DERRICK
I like it!

Ben starts playing a track too loud. They plug their ears.

JANE AND BRENDA
Stop!!!

He does.

BEN
(Indignant)
I'm testing.

BRENDA
Test quieter.

CONTINUED:

BEN

What do you think this is, a retirement home? We can be as loud as we want here.

JANE

Making music, not noise.

BEN

You calling my music noise?

JANE

(Smartass)

If I wanted to hear from an asshole, I'd fart.

Ben BLASTS some loud farting sound from his keyboard. They all YELL, STOP! They LAUGH.

Then, Arnold starts tapping out a beat. Brenda shakes her hips as she adjusts items. Jane joins her in a silly dance. Ben plays percussion on his keyboard. Derrick takes a sip of beer.

They stand back and gaze proudly upon their new digs.

EXT. SKINNARD FRONT YARD - DAYBREAK

Camelot is still fast asleep as the sun begins to pry open the eastern sky.

Derrick steps out of the front door carrying a small suitcase and heads across the front yard. He goes through the gate, tosses his suitcase through the open passenger window of his old Ford pickup. Then, he hops in the driver's side, starts up the engine and drives off. WE stay with him as he disappears down the long highway.

END OF ACT

ACT 4

INT. SKINNARD STUDIO - DAY

Ben is introducing Jane and Arnold to his rig for the first time. Ableton is open with a multitrack project displayed on the monitor. Ben relishes the opportunity to promote his favorite thing in the world.

Jane is standing with her violin in front of a mike rigged with tape on a homemade stand.

JANE
What do I do?

BEN
When you hear the music, start playing.

JANE
Wait, what if I make a mistake?

BEN
It doesn't matter. You can make all the mistakes you want. We can start over, do pickups, delete the whole thing, whatever...

JANE
(Nervous)
Okay.

He starts playing the track.

JANE (CONT'D)
When do I start?

He stops it.

BEN
Ok, when you hear the music, it's recording and you can start playing... whenever you want.

JANE
This is weird.

BEN
It's easy. You'll get used to it. Ready?

CONTINUED:

She nods. He starts the track. She listens for awhile. Then, she tenuously comes in with her riffs. The more she plays, the more confident she gets, the better it sounds. She gets into it. After a minute, he stops the recording.

BEN (CONT'D)
Now, I'll play it back.

JANE
What do I do?

BEN
Just listen.

He plays the section back. Ben makes some adjustments to the mix, adds reverb, adds auto-tune, drops in some crazy effects. They're amazed. Their world is opening up right before their eyes.

ARNOLD
Can I add drums?

BEN
Sure. We can do whatever we want.

INT. HISTORY CLASS - DAY

Brenda and Ben sit in chair desks facing Mr. FRIST the history teacher.

FRIST
(To Ben)
We can't do whatever we want. We have responsibilities.

Brenda turns to Ben.

FRIST (CONT'D)
Ben, you have three missing assignments, D's on the last three tests and very low class participation. That's not going to cut it. I know you're capable. Aren't you?

They wait for an answer.

BEN
Yeah. I... I've been busy.

FRIST
Okay. Sounds like you have a time management problem.

CONTINUED:

BEN

I guess.

FRIST

What are you going to do about it?

BEN

Manage my time better?

FRIST

Do you need help? I can help.

BEN

I guess.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL HALL - DAY

Ben and Brenda are heading toward the door.

BEN

(Highly frustrated)

The bus leaves at three. How am I supposed to get home?

BRENDA

I'll pick you up.

BEN

That means I'll have to sit around here until, like...

BRENDA

After five.

BEN

Shit.

BRENDA

You knew the deal. School first. Everything else second. That hasn't changed. You can go back to your regular schedule when you get caught up.

BEN

Whatever.

She stops him, grabs his shoulders.

BRENDA

Ben, listen to me. This is serious. Do you think I want to shut the music down?

CONTINUED:

He shrugs.

BRENDA (CONT'D)

Of course not. But if I have to because you're too busy to do your homework, it's going to be a sad day. And not just for you.

BEN

I know.

BRENDA

I don't think you do. If you don't get your schoolwork done, we're all going to suffer. Is that what you want? It's not all about you. You have a responsibility to all of us.

He chews on that.

BEN

You just don't want us to play music.

BRENDA

(Getting steamed)

Who said that? Did I ever say that? Hell no. You haven't been listening. We all want the music. Including me. What we can't have is you bringing us all down because you aren't doing your schoolwork.

Ben slouches. It's sinking in.

BRENDA (CONT'D)

Get it together. Figure it out.

She turns and walks out the door. After a moment Ben follows.

INT. MIDDLE SCHOOL LUNCH ROOM - DAY

Jane is eating her sack lunch alone, as usual. OLIVER (13), the tuba player, approaches her, nervously, carrying a lunch tray. He's shorter than Jane with close-cropped red hair, a bit on the chubby side.

OLIVER

Hi.

JANE

Hi.

CONTINUED:

OLIVER
Mind if I sit.

She shakes her head. He sits, arranges things on his tray.
Jane watches him, warily.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
I heard your family is starting a
music group.

JANE
Where did you hear that?

OLIVER
In English class when you told
everyone.

JANE
Oh yeah.

OLIVER
Are you going to play the violin?

JANE
Looks like it.

OLIVER
You're really good.

JANE
Thanks.

Jane looks around. It looks like Oliver is going to stay
awhile.

INT. CAMELOT CLINIC NURSE'S STATION - DAY

Brenda comes out of an exam room and approaches Liz at the
counter, holding a used catheter. Liz starts LAUGHING.

LIZ
You know, every time I see you
these days, you're carrying around
one of those things.

BRENDA
Funny. Your luck isn't going to
hold out forever.

She dumps it in the trash and removes her gloves.

CONTINUED:

LIZ

You know, I think I'm detecting more attitude since you decided to become a songwriter... an hour ago.

BRENDA

You haven't seen the beginning of attitude. And it's been more than an hour.

LIZ

What do you even know about writing songs?

BRENDA

More than you.

LIZ

Do you even know what you're going to write about?

BRENDA

As a matter of fact I do. You're supposed to write about things you know.

LIZ

What, like changing catheters?

BRENDA

Exactly. (BEAT) I'm going to write about my secret obsession with Mr. Acosta's penis.

They LAUGH.

LIZ

That shouldn't take long.

BRENDA

Ha! Good one!

They high five.

INT. STUDIO - NIGHT

Ben, Jane and Arnold are reading something on Ben's laptop. Jonah is capturing every moment with his video camera. When they finish, they look up at Brenda with long faces.

BEN

(Tenuous)
It's good. Yeah.

CONTINUED:

JANE

It's kind of cheesy... But good.

ARNOLD

I like it.

BRENDA

Okay, I can tell you don't like it, and that's alright. What do I know about writing-

BEN

No, no. No judgement. We all have different you know tastes. And that's cool.

JANE

Camelot. We love you a lot. It's... We can work with it.

BEN

Yeah.

They look back at the lyrics.

BRENDA

Ok so, I'm picturing it going like this. Now, don't laugh...

She launches into her rendition of the lyrics, complete with moves. After a couple of lines, she stops and looks up. They're staring...

BRENDA (CONT'D)

So, something like that. Anyway, uh... What?

BEN

That was fuckin' amazing.

JANE

Yeah. Mom, where did that come from?

BRENDA

I don't know. I just...

BEN

I think we have our lead singer.

BRENDA

Really?

CONTINUED: (2)

BEN

Let's record some of it. Come on.

Ben quickly preps Ableton on his laptop, while Jane rushes Brenda to the mike and attempts to adjust it. Then, quickly puts the headphones on her.

JANE

(A pro now)

When you hear the track, start singing. You don't have to worry about mistakes. This is just to see how your voice works against the beat. We'll do final takes later.

BEN

Ready?

BRENDA

I guess.

Ben starts the track and she falls in with the beat and starts singing, falteringly at first, then improving as the music progresses. And Jonah is right there grabbing every exciting moment of the revelation.

After a couple of lines, they are interrupted by a loud commotion as the sticky metal door scrapes open. It's Derrick!

ARNOLD

Dad!

Ben stops the recording and the family goes to meet him by the door.

DERRICK

What's going on?

ARNOLD

We're tracking Mom!

DERRICK

Tracking Mom?

BRENDA

They're trying to record me singing my lyrics.

DERRICK

Cool. Hey, I got-

He stops when he's suddenly distracted by Jonah, right there with the camera in his face.

CONTINUED: (3)

DERRICK (CONT'D)
Hi, uh, Jonah. What's up?

BEN
Jonah's filming us for the
documentary.

DERRICK
What, uh... Okay.
(To the group)
Hey, I got something to show you.

He turns and heads out the door. The others follow.

EXT. SKINNARD STUDIO - SUNSET

The family follows Derrick to his old pickup truck, which is backed in and piled with boxes. Ben immediately starts looking at the labels.

BEN
Mike stands? Powered speakers?!
What is this?

They gather around the truck bed.

DERRICK
It's our studio. I was working near
Vegas and thought I'd pick up a few-

ARNOLD
Are these drums?!

DERRICK
It's an electronic drum kit, so-

BEN
Sixteen channel audio interface!

DERRICK
And I got a few mikes and stands,
and pickups for the violin and
guitar-

BEN
This is everything we need!

DERRICK
It'll get us started, anyway.

BRENDA
How much did all this cost?

CONTINUED:

DERRICK

I knew you'd ask that, but it's an investment. Everyone, grab something and bring it inside.

Derrick grabs a big box.

BRENDA

Derrick!

DERRICK

Don't worry. I put it on the card.

INT. SKINNARD STUDIO

He sets the box down. The others continue to haul in items.

BRENDA

Well, I hope you have a plan for how you're going to pay for all this.

DERRICK

I do.

He looks her in the eye and grabs her arm.

DERRICK (CONT'D)

(Quietly)

Looks like there will be plenty of work for awhile.

BRENDA

You mean?

He nods. Their eyes meet. It's serious. Then, he turns...

DERRICK

Hey, Ben help me with the computer desk.

He heads back out the door with Ben, leaving Brenda deep in thought. Jonah records the whole thing.

INT. SKINNARD STUDIO

The family records their first tune in their studio. And Jonah is ever present, recording every amazing and embarrassing moment.

CONTINUED:

- Brenda records her tracks with a new mike, stand and headphones, does some funny stuff that will end up on the blooper reel.
- Ben works late at night perfecting the beats in Ableton.
- Arnold pounds out an amazing rhythm track with his electronic drums.
- Jane records violin using her new pickup.
- Ben and Jonah are sleeping on piles of sleeping bags in the studio.
- Derrick adds acoustic guitar.
- Arnold adds acoustic percussion.
- Jane runs Ableton while Ben records a rap segment.
- Jonah shoots a creative tussle between Ben and Jane.
- Jane is looking over Ben's shoulder and pointing as he adjusts clips in Ableton.

EXT. STREETS OF CAMELOT - DAY

Derrick drives his truck with Jonah shooting from the bed. It appears Jonah is something of a budding director.

- They drive slowly through the colorful old-west downtown.
- Jonah gets close shots of the locals in action - candid shots of kids at school, a couple of old guys sitting outside the convenience store, people outside the jerky store and grocery.
- Happy customers in the cafe smiling and waving at the camera.

INT. HISTORY CLASS - AFTERNOON

Ben sits at a chair desk by himself with pages spread out busily typing.

INT. SKINNARD STUDIO - NIGHT

The room is dark, except for the glow from Ben's workstation. He is working late, focused with bleary eyes on the monitor, as he tweaks the final video cut. He now has two monitors, a fancy mouse, and a comfy used office chair.

CONTINUED:

Jane is dozing off in a chair behind him. Jonah is sleeping on a new saggy old couch facing the workstation.

Ben comes to a stopping point and rubs his eyes, looks around. He hasn't come up for air in many hours. Jane takes notice.

JANE
(Whispering)
What do you think?

BEN
I can't tell anymore.

JANE
You need some rest.

BEN
I guess.

He yawns.

JANE
Ben?

BEN
What?

This isn't easy for her.

JANE
It's beautiful.

BEN
It's okay. We just need a few more
shots of-

JANE
No. It's beautiful.
(BEAT)
It's the best thing I've ever seen.

He's taken aback. Breaking all the rules, she reaches out and gives him a giant hug.

Behind them, from the couch, Jonah is capturing the moment.

INT. SKINNARD STUDIO - DAY

Everyone has gathered for the big premiere. Family and friends are seated on the couch, folding chairs, and the floor eating chips and veggies, and drinking beer.

CONTINUED:

Oliver is there, along with Loogie, Liz and some neighbors, and of course Jonah.

Ben stands up in front of a big flat screen TV. The crowd settles.

BEN

Hi, everybody. Thank you for coming. Um, here it is.

He presses the play button.

SKINNARD FAMILY MUSIC VIDEO

"Camelot, We Love You A Lot" starts playing. It's everything you'd expect - a lot of enthusiasm and energy with a homespun style. For two and a half minutes, the audience is enthralled with the talent and artistry of a loving family of well-meaning people doing their version of a pop tribute to a great little desert town. They're anything but the Partridge Family and that's all right with the world.

The video ends and the crowd goes wild. The Skinnards stand and take a bow. Ben motions for Jonah to join them. It's a big rush for everyone.

INT. SKINNARD LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The Skinnard family is settled for the evening. Derrick has camped out at the end of the saggy couch with his briefcase open. Ben is next to him and Jane is sitting in Brenda's chair with her cell phone, watching the Skinnards video on YouTube.

JANE

It's so cool.

BEN

What's the hit count?

JANE

143.

BEN

Cool. It was only 99 a couple hours ago.

Brenda calls from the kitchen...

BRENDA

Derrick, can you come here a second?

CONTINUED:

Derrick gets up and heads into the kitchen.

JANE

Are we going to be rich?

BEN

I don't think so. You only get like
50 bucks for 10,000 views.

Arnold races in from somewhere and plops down where Derrick was sitting. When he does, the open briefcase tips over and spills the contents out on his lap.

JANE

But there are 8 billion people in
the world. We could easily get a
million views.

BEN

If we went viral.

Arnold quickly gathers the items up. Then, something catches his eye.

JANE

How do we do that?

BEN

You don't do anything. It just
happens. It either happens or it
doesn't.

Arnold pages through a stack of pictures.

JANE

We just have to keep making music.

BEN

That's how it's done.

Arnold has an unusually serious expression as he turns to watch Derrick help Brenda put away a baking dish.

JANE

I never want to stop making music.

Arnold quickly replaces the papers and closes the briefcase.

FADE OUT.

THE END