

INDEPENDENT LIVING

1X01

"On Our Own"

Story by
Aaron Bielert

Written by
Aaron Bielert
Waylon Wyche

INDEPENDENT LIVING

"On Our Own"

TEASER

*

FADE IN:

INT. AARON'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY [6 MONTHS EARLIER]

AARON, JACK and AMBER are sitting excitedly around a kitchen table, staring down at thick ENVELOPES in each of their hands for several moments before:

AARON

Okay, this is it. Who wants to go first?

With a shrug of the shoulders, Amber TEARS her package open and begins speedily reading the contents.

AMBER

Let's see, Dear Miss Johnson, blah, blah, blah, blah, We are blah, blah, blah-

AARON

(rolling his eyes)
Oh, Jesus. Did you get in or not?

AMBER

(smiling)
I did.

JACK

(apathetically)
Yeah, I got in too.

Almost reluctantly, Aaron is the last to open.

AARON

Okay, I guess it all comes down to me.

He reads through the contents.

AARON (cont'd)

I got in!

AMBER

This means we're all going to the same school!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

AARON

This also means that I can do something that I've been wanting to do for a long time.

Aaron takes a knee in front of her.

JACK

Oh God, please no.

AARON

Listen, we've been together for a long time now.

JACK

Are you sure you want to do this?!

AARON

And I love you with all my heart. There is nothing that would make me happier than-

JACK

(yelling)
He's got herpes!

Aaron and Amber stop and stare angrily at him.

JACK (cont'd)

And I gave them to him! We had butt sex. He's gay. Very gay so he can't marry you. Ha!

AARON

Jack!

Jack moans with discontent.

JACK

Fine! Live your lives. Be happy. See if I care!

He stands up from the table and hastily EXITS the room.

AARON

(forcing a smile)
Amber Johnson, will you marry me?

Amber tears up as she's barely able to find the words.

AMBER

Did you even have to ask?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Aaron stands up and the two embrace in a romantic KISS.

INT. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY [PRESENT DAY]

Aaron walks busily through the cluttered apartment, holding a phone to his ear as he carries a box across the room.

AARON

(into phone)

Of course. It's a little small,
but the apartment is great.
Couldn't imagine life being any
better.

(rolling eyes)

No, Mom. Not because I don't miss
you guys. I just- Wait, yeah it is
because I don't miss you guys.

(laughing)

Mom, I'm kidding.

Aaron drops the box and PLOPS down on the couch with the
cordless as Amber walks in.

AMBER

Hey Aaron, how about we go...

(sees he is on phone)

Oh, oops.

She covers her mouth.

AARON

No you didn't hear a woman's
voice. You guys are getting old,
and senile.

(beat)

Okay, fine. You know Amber. Yes,
Amber Johnson. We're engaged and
living together.

(quickly)

Okay, gotta go, bye!

He throws the phone onto the floor and hangs his head onto the
back of the couch with an audible sigh.

BLACK OUT.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

INT. APARTMENT - KITCHEN - EVENING

We stare in at an empty kitchen for several moments before:

AMBER (O.S)
I need more space!

Amber comes storming into the kitchen, but stops after only a few feet and turns around and yells back through the door.

AMBER (cont'd)
(sternly)
I'm a woman and I need my womanly space.

JACK (O.S)
Well at least I'm not the one jerking my best friend!

Amber rolls her eyes and continues on into the kitchen as Jack ENTERS the room, waiting spitefully for any kind of a quip as Amber digs through the refrigerator.

AMBER
At least I can get someone, unlike you, who can only amass a poster of a woman that is utterly symbolic of that which you will never, ever, have.

JACK
Not true, bitch! At prom, I took that girl Angela and you damn well know it!

AMBER
Oh yeah. I do remember that. How'd that end again? Was it with her calling you?

JACK
(beat)
No, but I know she would have if she hadn't have gotten a date with the star quarterback!

AMBER
And if she had been declared legally blind...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JACK

Yeah well, you're a-

Aaron ENTERS the room, looking annoyed by the argument already.

AARON

Hey, what the hell is going on in here?

JACK

Your bitchy fiancée and I were having a friendly argument over bedrooms.

AARON

Enough. I get it, okay? You guys don't get along. You guys have never gotten along and you guys will never get along. That, however, doesn't mean that you can't act civil toward one another.

(beat)

This isn't rocket science, people. We have three bedrooms, so here's what we're going to do. Jack will take the middle room and Amber and I will take the big room-

JACK

Oh, this is such crap!

AMBER

Oh, la, la, honey, you're making me-

AARON

You'll know when I'm finished because my lips will stop moving and that annoying speech thing will stop. Until then, you're both going to listen.

AMBER

Fine. You don't have to get all bitchy about it.

AARON

I'm not getting bitchy.

(more loudly)

This would be bitchy.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

AARON (cont'd)

I'm not angry, but like I said,
I'm not finished and as the only
sane one amongst us, I've declared
myself the maker of all decisions.

Aaron looks back and forth between the two of them, raising
eyebrows and waiting for any more words.

AARON (cont'd)

Okay, we'll use the other room as
a computer room. We're in college
now. It only makes sense. Now as
far as the fighting...for the sake
of argument, we're going to
pretend that this is a permanent
situation and as such, I see
myself going on a cross country
killing spree if I have to listen
to the drama unfold for one more
week, much less eternity. Do you
guys really want to be responsible
for my killing people?

The others let out a collective, but quiet NO.

AARON (cont'd)

What? I can't hear you.

AMBER/JACK

No!

AARON

My potential victims thank you.

Aaron smiles humbly and EXITS the room.

JACK

(beat)

Next time, I say we just take it
outside.

AMBER

Agreed.

INT. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - LATER

Aaron and Amber are lounging on the couch, watching
television.

AARON

Hey, honey, look ER's on if you
want to watch it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Amber starts to look upset and scared.

AARON (cont'd)
What's wrong, sweetheart?

Amber lifts her face up slowly.

AMBER
(spiteful)
You mean aside from talking to me
like I was a dog in obedience
school instead of your girlfriend?

She eyes him for a moment.

AARON
(playfully)
It was all for show, baby. I had
to make Jack think that I was
scolding you too or you would
still be in the kitchen arguing
about it and I'd already be half
way up the clock tower by now.

Amber can't help, but smile at the comment and lets out a
short giggle.

AARON (cont'd)
So we're good?

AMBER
We're good.

They share a quick kiss and Aaron turns back to the television
as Amber's smile quickly fades into a reluctant expression.

AMBER (cont'd)
Listen, I didn't want to tell you
this way...

Aaron looks over, slightly intrigued.

AMBER (cont'd)
(quickly)
...but my sister is going to be
staying with us for about a month
while my mom is out of town. There
I said it.

AARON
You can't be serious.
(beat; off look)
Staying with us?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Amber nods.

AARON (cont'd)
What about your Dad?

AMBER
You know my dad died last year!

AARON
(offended)
I know that!

Aaron scoffs and turns away, shaking his head and letting out an 'oh shit' expression before he turns back to Amber.

AARON (cont'd)
So why didn't you tell me?

AMBER
I was scared that you would
overreact just the way you did.

AARON
I'm not overreacting. I'm just
taken for a loop. I haven't even
gotten used to living on my own
yet, much less playing parent to a
minor.
(beat; sincerely)
But I'm entirely cool with her
coming.

AMBER
Really?

AARON
Of course. She's your sister.
She's always welcome in our house.

AMBER
I love you.

They share another kiss and Amber leans her head on his shoulder as they enjoy the silence.

AARON
So when is she coming?

The doorbell rings.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

AMBER
(nervously)
I'll get it.

Amber SPRINGS up from the couch.

AARON
Oh, you've got to be kidding me.

BLACK OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

INT. APARTMENT - FRONT ROOM - EVENING

Amber SWINGS open the front door to reveal CHRISTINE. The girl's long, brown hair blowing gently in the breeze as she smiles back at Amber with a bag draped over her shoulder.

AMBER

Where's mom?

CHRISTINE

She didn't have time to stay.

(rolling her eyes)

She was already late for her flight because she had to caked on her make-up.

(upbeat)

She said hi though.

Christine walks passed Amber and begins inspecting her surroundings before giving a slight nod of approval.

CHRISTINE (cont'd)

Good to see Aaron's treating my sister alright.

Aaron quickly ENTERS the front room and forces a smile for Christine's benefit.

AARON

Christine, we're so glad to have you here.

(smiling to Amber)

We've been expecting you.

(to Christine)

Let me help you with your bags.

Aaron picks up her bags and EXITS the room as suddenly as he had entered it, leaving Christine staring oddly at the empty doorway.

CHRISTINE

What's with him?

AMBER

(apathetically)

It's his time of the month.

INT. CAMPUS - STUDENT UNION - MORNING

Aaron is sitting at one of a long line of tables with two friends. DAN and RYAN are sitting on the opposite side of the table, eating their lunch as people hurriedly pass by.

Dan is an overly skinny kid in his early twenties, casually dressed and shaggy hair, the polar opposite of Ryan.

The latter of the two is clean shaved, well dressed, and well groomed.

AARON

You know she didn't even tell me?

DAN

Whoa, you mean-

AARON

Yeah, she invited her sister to stay with us without even telling me before hand.

RYAN

That seems hardly fair.

DAN

Fair? He gave the bitch a ring. The only thing that's going to be fair in his life from here on out is the bittersweet death that's finally going to shuffle him loose the matrimonial coil.

AARON

You're really not being cynical so don't worry about it.

Jack walks in and sits down.

JACK

What are we talking about?

RYAN

Amber.

JACK

(scoffs)
Bitch.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

AARON

Look, guys, I'm marrying the girl. You might as well get used to her being around. And furthermore, we need to start exercising restraint when we feel the need to refer to my bride-to-be as a female dog. Don't forget the killing spree.

DAN

What killing spree?

AARON

(motioning to Jack)

He knows what I'm talking about.

JACK

Please do put a sock in it. We've got more important issues at hand. Do any of you have Professor Daniels for physics.

DAN

I do. Why what's the problem?

JACK

He's the problem, he assigned so much homework the first day, that it's going to be midterms before I can pull my head out of his ass for breath.

RYAN

Don't start freaking out. I get off work around four. I'll come over and we'll work it out.

JACK

(smiling to Aaron)

Thanks, Ryan. You, unlike Captain Monogamy over here, are a lifesaver.

Amber ENTERS into view.

AMBER

Hey guys.

Everyone manages a nod as she sits down beside Aaron at the table.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

AMBER (cont'd)
Hey honey, how were your first
three classes?

AARON
Interesting, very interesting.
First, Professor Jenkins of
algebra gave me two assignments.
Then I banged my head against my
desk through two straight hours of
history.

AMBER
Sounds rough.

AARON
It was all worth it just to see
your face.

Jack rolls his eyes.

AMBER
(smiling)
Oh...my baby is so sweet.

AARON
I know, but your baby has also got
to be going.

AMBER
But I just got here.

AARON
The nazi dictator, Professor
Daniels waits for no man...or so
I've been told.

Aaron kisses her.

AARON (cont'd)
Bye, baby.

As he walks out of view, the others exchange anxious looks.

JACK
(beat)
Yeah we've got to go too.

DAN
Right!

Jack, Dan, and Ryan all get up and leave Amber sitting by
herself and staring at the table full of food.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

AMBER
(to herself)
Bye...

INT. APARTMENT - KITCHEN - LATER

Aaron, Dan, Jack and Ryan are all sitting at the kitchen table.

AARON
This Professor Daniels is a buffoon. I mean, come on, giving us this much homework on the first day?

JACK
Yeah, well he doesn't believe in the time honored tradition of slacking of which we've grown so accustomed to. That's for sure.

RYAN
I heard that he's heartless. Seriously, he had it removed years ago.

DAN
Yeah, well I heard that Daniels is the personification of Satan himself and that he fails the majority of the class every year.

AARON
And I got stuck with this guy?

Amber ENTERS the room with a bemused expression upon her face.

AMBER
Where's Christine?

AARON
She said she was going out with friends. Why? Is she in trouble?

AMBER
I just got a call from her school attendance office. She never went to school today. As a matter of fact, she's been cutting class all week. Just because I'm not her mother doesn't mean she can take advantage of me!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JACK
Amber...

AMBER
Is she really that vain to think
that just because Mom let her move
in with me-

JACK
(more loudly)
Amber?

AMBER
What?!

JACK
This dinner isn't going to cook
itself, you know.

Amber SCREAMS and hurries out of the room.

JACK (cont'd)
(shaking head)
Women.

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. APARTMENT - DINING ROOM - EVENING

Aaron and Amber are sitting down and eating dinner.

AARON

So I said why and he said because
you're an idiot.

AMBER

It sounds like he was kind of
harsh on you.

AARON

Not really, that was the better
side of him.

AMBER

I keep hearing about this
Professor Daniels. Who the hell is
he, anyway?

Jack ENTERS the room.

JACK

Physics teacher. So what am I
missing here? Am I the weakest
link or something? I mean we're
talking about a professor. Of
course he's an ass. He gets paid
to be one. He does it
professionally.

Jack looks at the table, walks to the kitchen doorway and
looks in, and then comes back to hover over Aaron.

JACK (cont'd)

You've got to be kidding me! I pay
a third of the rent here and I
don't even get dinner cooked for
me?

AMBER

(matter of fact)

You might have without the sexist
remark you made earlier this
evening.

JACK

You're not going to let her get
away with this?!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

AARON
Try Burger World.

Jack stares blankly.

AARON (cont'd)
(trying not to laugh)
I think they've got a dollar
special on Mondays.

JACK
Savages.

Jack apathetically EXITS the room.

AMBER
Okay, I know he deserved it, but I
think maybe we hurt his feelings.

AARON
He'll get over it. Hell, who
knows...we may just teach him
manners yet.

INT. NIGHT CLUB - NIGHT

Aaron and Amber are sitting at a table amidst a heavily populated bar, Amber scribbling something down onto a napkin as Aaron drinks from his plastic cup and scans the crowd.

AMBER
Now what about a date? I was
thinking next summer.

AARON
A date? I haven't even picked a
best man yet.

AMBER
It's not going to be Jack?

AARON
With Christine as your maid of
honor?

AMBER
Don't even joke about that!

AARON
What? I'm just saying-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

AMBER

They're just dancing! It's nothing more.

AARON

I wasn't implying anything. I agree...dancing nothing more. Jack isn't even her type anyway.

AMBER

Yeah, but breathing counts as Jack's type. My sister is young and impressionable!

AARON

They're just dancing.

AMBER

You don't think I see that?

AARON

All I'm saying is, please...do not go into freaky, overprotective sister mode again like last summer. The guy didn't even say anything to her.

AMBER

He was staring like he was a child rapist!

INT. NIGHT CLUB - DANCE FLOOR

Jack and Christine are dancing along, looking to be thoroughly enjoying themselves.

JACK

You do know that we can never ever be together, right? I'm much too sexy to be dating a high school girl.

CHRISTINE

I suddenly find myself wondering why I ever agreed to dance with you.

JACK

Because no one else would ask you to.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Christine playfully pushes him away and he smiles as he starts to ease his way back into the dance, but gets cut off by Aaron.

AARON

Go talk to Amber for a sec, will you? I need to speak with Christine.

Jack frowns at him and leans in closely.

JACK

(quietly)
Screw off. I think I've really got a shot here!

AARON

Go or it's Burger World for the rest of the week.

JACK

Good God, you're turning into your mother.

Jack angrily walks off screen.

CHRISTINE

What do you want?

AARON

Your sister is going to kill you if you sleep with Jack. Just a friendly warning.

CHRISTINE

Oh, gross. Jack is so not my type.

AARON

Good, so my best advice to you is to stay away from Jack for both mine and your sake.

Aaron smiles back to her and walks back toward the table, not noticing that Christine is staring at his ass the entire way.

CHRISTINE

(to herself)
No problem.

INT. NIGHT CLUB - TABLES

Amber and Jack are sitting at the table when Aaron walks up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JACK

What is this, J. Edgar Hoover? You two are combining your master whit into some nefarious scheme to keep me from getting laid?

AMBER

You said you weren't even attracted to my sister!

JACK

I'm not, but if you do it once, what's to stop you again? Sure, the first time is to protect your little sister, but after that, it's all for sport!

AARON

Sorry to disappoint, but there are no vast conspiracies involving you on our behalf planned in the near, immediate, or distant future. Besides, isn't that, that Veronica chick you were going on all about because she asked you for a piece of paper in our Computer class?

JACK

(looking around)
What?

He finally finds the girl in question, a lovely BLONDE in a cotton dress talking to a group of friends across the room.

JACK (cont'd)

(excited)
Oh, yeah it is. Good eye, man. I think I'll go talk to her.

He smiles again and prepares to walk off, but quickly turns around.

JACK (cont'd)

And don't you-

AARON

(quickly holding up hand)
Scout's honor.

Jack finally makes his way to the object of his desire and smiles boldly as she turns to face him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JACK

Hi, my name is Jack. We're in Computers together. You're Veronica, the twenty-two year old senior, who has only been voted queen of campus like 3 years in a row and asked me for a piece of paper this afternoon.

Veronica stares quizzically at him for a moment before one of her friends speaks up.

VERONICA'S FRIEND

Well, at least he's perceptive.

VERONICA

(looking him up and down)
And mildly attractive...in a rugged kind of way.

Jack smiles as she looks over him.

VERONICA (cont'd)

(to friend)
Would you sleep with him?

VERONICA'S FRIEND

Does he have money?

VERONICA

I don't know.
(to Jack)
Do you have money?

JACK

Not really. I'm-

VERONICA

I'll tell you what. I've got an ex-boyfriend here who's insanely jealous.

Jack takes a quick look around.

JACK

So what are you saying?

VERONICA

Nothing makes an ex more jealous than a girl moving on and having sex with a new guy.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Jack's mouth nearly hits the floor as she walks closely into him.

VERONICA (cont'd)
You wanna be that guy?

JACK
Thank you, God.

BLACK OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

INT. NIGHT CLUB - NIGHT

Christine is sitting with her sister and Aaron, talking away.

CHRISTINE

Well, high school isn't that bad,
but I just...it sucks not having
either of you there now.
Everything was so simple when you
two were there.

AMBER

Because I did your homework and
Aaron kicked the crap out of
anyone who messed with you?

CHRISTINE

I knew you'd understand.

Ryan walks up and interrupts.

RYAN

Can I talk to you?

AARON

Not on your life.

AMBER

(intrigued)
What are you two talking about?

AARON

Ryan wants me to go with him to
Chicago to see his mom.

AMBER

The psychopath?

AARON

One and the same.

RYAN

Come on! What have I ever done to
you? What about all the things
I've done for you in the past?

AARON

What have you done for me? Let me
count the ways.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

AARON (cont'd)

You almost caught my house on fire when we were in junior high, got me in trouble on occasion, and basically ruined my social life in high school after you told everyone that I got an STD while we were in Mexico that summer. No, no, no, and no.

RYAN

Jackass.

Ryan walks away.

CHRISTINE

Okay...

AMBER

Anyway, back to my point. You need to stop worrying about having relationships and worry about getting good grades and into a good college.

CHRISTINE

That, in no way, relates to anything you were just talking about.

AMBER

I was working my way into it.

CHRISTINE

You're just like mom, always telling me what to do. Leave living my life up to me, if you don't mind.

She gets up and, with a reaffirming expression, walks out of view.

INT. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - LATER

Christine is watching TV when the front door rattles open and Aaron and Amber make their way into the living room.

AMBER

Don't bother getting up. It's only us.

AARON

I think...I'll leave you two alone to-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

With that, he EXITS the room.

CHRISTINE

I already know what you're going to say. You want me to get good grades and get into a good college. If I wanted to be lectured I would have went to Dallas with Mom.

Amber sighs as she stares on at her sister.

AMBER

Look maybe I'm just being too hard on you or maybe I expect too much out of you. Or maybe, in the smallest of ways, I'm jealous.

CHRISTINE

Jealous?

AMBER

Yes, Christine, I'm jealous, okay? I mean, I didn't have half of what you have. Did I have a big sister to stay with or anyone other than Mom who cared how I did in school? Not to mention Aaron and Jack to look out for you.

(beat)

Maybe I'm wrong for telling you how to live your life and who to date, but if you agree to try harder in school, then...I'll agree to back off a little.

CHRISTINE

Do you agree to back of totally?

AMBER

Don't push it!

Christine smiles as her sister goes off and the two of them are, very shortly thereafter, hugging.

AMBER (cont'd)

You know that there is no one in this world that pisses me off as much as you?

CHRISTINE

I think that's called being sisters.

INT. APARTMENT - KITCHEN - LATER

Aaron is at the kitchen counter with all the condiments to make a sandwich placed sporadically in front of him.

AARON

I don't see any blood. I take it the two of you made up?

AMBER

Let's just say that she won't be giving us any more crap.

AARON

So you totally caved?

AMBER

Yeah, a little bit.
(beat)
I'm sorry.

AARON

It's probably better than you ending up someone's bitch in prison. You know, it's been an interesting first few days together.

AMBER

Who would have known that we would all be getting along this well. Except for Jack, of course.

AARON

That's a given. How do you feel about kids?

AMBER

(playfully)
Rotten little bastards.

AARON

I only hope that our kids will have it as well as we do.

AMBER

I guess we could be construed as being spoiled.
(beat)
You think our future holds kids?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

AARON

It's hard to say. We could die tomorrow or live forever.

AMBER

We are not going to die tomorrow, or live forever, for that matter. We're going to be a young eighty-five year old couple with absolutely no gray hair. And I mean not a strand!

AARON

Honey, I think you need to lay down. You're going to give yourself a migraine thinking so hard.

AMBER

You're right. I do feel that I need to lie down.

(beat; promiscuously)

How would you feel about lying down with me and practicing to have kids one day?

Amber smiles and walks out of the room.

AARON

I love being on my own.

INT. VERONICA'S BEDROOM

All we see of a bed are two bodies lying underneath a massive pile of blankets until the blankets are thrown back to reveal Jack and Veronica.

JACK

I don't like to brag, but that was awesome.

VERONICA

It was...quaint. And it's only nine o' clock.

JACK

What are you saying?

VERONICA

I'm saying that it's time for you to go home and me to go back to the club to meet my boyfriend.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JACK
Boyfriend?!

VERONICA
Uh huh.

JACK
You said you were trying to piss
of your ex!

VERONICA
I was. What, does that mean I
can't have a current boyfriend
too?

JACK
I just-

A KNOCK at the door.

JACK (cont'd)
Do me a favor and bring my wallet
to class tomorrow.

He starts to spring from the bed, but jumps back in to kiss
her one last time.

VOICE (O.S)
Veronica?

In a bare ass run, he sprints to and LEAPS out the window,
leaving a CRASH to ring out a moment later.

JACK (O.S)
Damn it!

The door finally SWINGS open to reveal Veronica's HUGE
BOYFRIEND.

HUGE BOYFRIEND
What are you doing?

VERONICA
Exfoliating.

HUGE BOYFRIEND
Did I hear a guy's voice?

VERONICA
Must have been the TV.

HUGE BOYFRIEND
The TV isn't on.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

VERONICA
The neighbors.

ANGLE ON: WINDOW

Jack appears in the window, stretching his neck.

JACK
Who the hell is going to leave a-
He suddenly becomes aware of the man staring at him.

JACK (cont'd)
This isn't my house!

A beat and Jack sprints out of view one more time.

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF SHOW