

DODIE

Very funny! The surprise isn't an "it." It's a "him," and he's waiting to meet you, Daddy. He's on the porch.

WALTER

Then, tell him to come on in!

DODIE

(calls out)

Mama, come here for a minute!

Barbara enters, wiping her hands on a dish towel.

Barbara START

BARBARA

What's goin' on?

Dodie extends her left hand.

DODIE

I'm engaged!

Barbara audibly gasps. Shocked, Walter removes his glasses.

WALTER

Engaged?! I didn't even know you had a boyfriend!

BARBARA

That's right! We've never even met him, Dodie.

DODIE

I was scared you wouldn't like him.

WALTER

He's supposed to come talk to me first. He's gotta ask permission.

DODIE

People don't do that anymore, Daddy. That's old-fashioned.

BARBARA

Does this boy have a job?

DODIE

He's a medical student, Mama.

Walter buries his head behind the newspaper.

WALTER

Thanks for telling us! We'll be invited to the wedding, I suppose!

He puts the newspaper down.

WALTER (CONT'D)

Well, -- bring him on in. I guess I should meet my future son-in-law.

Dodie exits. Barbara hurriedly tidies up the room, as:

BARBARA

Might be kind of nice to have a doctor in the family.

KEVIN

He'll be our doctor? For free?

KYLE

Nobody does nothin' for free.

Dodie returns...

DODIE

Everybody, I want you to meet my fiance and future husband, Andre --

Dodie stretches out her arm toward the doorway:

DODIE (CONT'D)

Andre Shigetomi!!

ANDRE SHIGETOMI, 26, and Japanese, ENTERS. Dodie and he affectionately lock arms. He speaks perfect English.

ANDRE

I'm honored to meet you all!

Walter, Barbara, Kyle and Kevin are more than stunned. Their jaws drop, mouths, frozen-open. Kyle looks angry.

KYLE

She's not pregnant; she's crazy!

Dodie ignores his remark.

Kevin START

DODIE  
These are my brothers, Kyle and Kevin.

ANDRE  
Hi, Kevin!

KEVIN  
Hi.

ANDRE  
Hi, Kyle!

Kyle doesn't answer. In an awkward silence, Andre sits down on the couch next to Kyle. Kyle immediately gets up and moves to a chair. Irritated, Dodie's eyes follow him...

BARBARA  
Uh, uh, I'm sorry. I-I'm terrible about remembering names.

KYLE  
Especially foreign names.

Dodie glares at him...

DODIE  
(pursing her lips  
Andre, Mama! It's Andre!

KEVIN  
You look Chinese, but you sure don't sound Chinese.

Amused, Andre laughs...

ANDRE  
That's because I'm not, Kyle. I'm Japanese! I was born right here in Los Angeles just like you.

BARBARA  
Uh, Dodie says you're in medical school, Andre.

ANDRE  
I graduate in June and then I'll start my residency in the fall at U.C.L.A.

DODIE  
Isn't that great?

KYLE  
 (sarcastic)  
 Yeah, it's real neat!

WALTER  
 Racial problems! You know you're gonna have 'em.

DODIE  
 We're in love! We don't care.

WALTER  
 A lot of people don't like to see different races together.

Kevin slowly works his way over to Andre, while:

ANDRE  
 Are you one of those people, Mr. Richard? I would've been here sooner, but Dodie said "no." She didn't know how you would react.

Andre now notices that Kevin is standing next to him, staring at his face.

ANDRE (CONT'D)  
 I hope you're not prejudiced because we want your blessing.

Walter leans forward in his chair...

WALTER  
 And, if I don't give it?

ANDRE  
 We're getting married anyway.

KEVIN  
 (to Andre, innocently)  
 Can you see out the side of your eyes?

At first, Andre's taken aback, then, he breaks out into a soft smile...

ANDRE  
 Sure. Just as well as you can.

KEVIN  
 Do you know how to do Kung-Fu?

ANDRE

Enough to take care of myself if somebody messes with me.

KEVIN

Wow! Will you teach me?

ANDRE

You bet! Anytime you want.

KEVIN

Oh, boy!!

DODIE

If we're going to the movies, Andre, we better leave now.

ANDRE

Okay. It was nice meeting you, Mr. Richard, Mrs. Richard.

WALTER

Same here. I guess.

Andre gets up and shakes Walter's and Barbara's hands.

BARBARA

Nice meeting you too, Andre. And I wish you all the luck in the world.

WALTER

Yeah, 'cause you're gonna need it.

ANDRE

Bye, Kyle. See you, Kevin.

KEVIN

Bye!

Kyle doesn't answer. Dodie and Andre exit. Immediately, Kyle gets up and moves back over to the couch.

BARBARA

Well, what do you think, Walter?

WALTER

I don't know, I'm not over the shock yet.

Kyle lazily stretches out on the couch. Kevin sits back on the floor in front of the television.

KYLE

Chinese, Japanese; they all look alike! I don't wanna see nothin' like him in this house again.

BARBARA

We didn't raise you to think like that. That's for ignorant people. And get your feet off my couch!

KYLE

My sister, married to a Jap! Eek! Can you imagine what their kids will look like? Little brown-skinned twurps with slits for eyes.

WALTER

Better him than a White man. They're all blue-eyed devils. You can't trust none of 'em!

BARBARA

I can't believe you two. Where did you learn such prejudice, Kyle? Certainly not from me.

KYLE

What do you mean, where? Look in the mirror. I overheard you tellin' Dodie, now that a Mexican family's movin' in, "there goes the neighborhood." That's what they say 'bout us Black people. You sound just like "Whitey!"

BARBARA

But that's not hating somebody.

KYLE

No. That's stereotyping!

KEVIN

You're a hypocrite, -- whatever that's supposed to mean.

WALTER

You stay out of grown folk's conversation!

KEVIN

My teacher says, "Ignorance leads to prejudice and prejudice leads to hate."

WALTER

Isn't it your bedtime, Kevin?

KEVIN

Bedtime?! It's just eight o'clock!

BARBARA

Don't you have some homework to do, baby?

KEVIN

Nope! And stop calling me baby! My name is Kevin!

KYLE

You sure are talkin' tough for a guy your size. You need to whip him, Pops. He hasn't had a spankin' in a long time.

Kevin angrily jumps up...

KEVIN

Oh, yeah? Well, somebody needs to whip all of you. I'm not gonna hate anybody when they haven't even done anything to me!

Kevin rushes out:

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

Hypocrites!! That's what you all are! Stupid hypocrites!

Walter attempts to get up to go after him.

WALTER

Now wait just a minute, young man! Who do you think you're talkin' to? You've gotten too smart for your own britches!

BARBARA

Let him go, Walter! Can't you see the boy is just hurt?

WALTER

Not like he's gonna be!

BARBARA

He's right! We're telling Kevin not to love, when he's got enough of it in his little heart to fill a river bed.

WALTER

I'm just trying to teach him how to survive, Barbara.

KYLE

Love don't put money in the bank, Mama.

Kevin END

BARBARA

But that's what's wrong with this world.  
Everybody's looking out for number one. They  
don't care whose toes they step on as long as  
they get what they want. As parents, we should  
the example. The kids can't hear what we're  
saying for watching what we're doing!

Barbara END

MUSIC INTRO: "LET IT START HERE TODAY"

BARBARA (SINGS)

(1) There's a child who can't understand/ What  
beguiles and confuses man/ He perceives the  
world through a golden eye, unobserved

(2) Help the child who's lost in the crowd  
Never heard when he cries out loud/ From the  
things he sees/ All life's miseries/ To him  
seem absurd and in a single word

Bridge: He asks "why" do we hate so/ When love is all we need  
Let it start here today

(3) There's a heart filled with hopes and  
dreams  
Such a heart should not know the schemes of the  
puppeteer and the games we play, unashamed

(4) There's a place where time never flies  
It's a place where love never dies/ Where the  
young, I'm told/ Never do grow old  
Let the peace somehow/ Be transformed here now

(CONT'D)

Bridge: We destroy and we hurt so  
But if love can stop the pain  
Let it start here today  
Let it start right away

Every road has a beginning/ And with each path  
that love may take  
Let it start here today/ Let it start right  
away/ Let it start here today/ Let it start  
here today with me/ Let it start

SCENE 11:

SHIGETOMI'S DRY CLEANERS

Andre's parents, SAM and ALEXIS  
SHIGETOMI, both late-forties, are  
the proprietors. Walter enters...