

Keiko

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FADE IN:

INT. GIRL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT - 1993

The bluish glow of a television screen casts its eerie light into an otherwise dark bedroom, its picture largely obscured by the silhouette of a young girl's back (8) as she sits watching. Though we cannot see her face, her dark pigtails and pink Hello Kitty pajamas could belong to none other than a Japanese school girl.

From the TV comes the muted grumble of Japanese being spoken accompanied by the raucous laughter of a studio audience and the more muffled, but no less enthusiastic laughter of the young girl as she tries not to wake her parents.

We pan in closer to the television to reveal....

ON THE TELEVISION

The comedian Dana Carvey circa 1989 performing his opening monologue as George H. W. Bush from the May 20th episode of Saturday Night Live -- all very poorly dubbed into Japanese.

The Japanese dubber tries his best to mimic Carvey's delivery and yet you wonder how punch-lines like "wouldn't be prudent" could possibly ever translate. Nonetheless, the girl finds it all hilarious, enthralled by Carvey's effusive body language even if the political satire is a bit over her head.

The Japanese dubber suddenly switches to a heavily accented English as he says:

JAPANESE DUBBER (V.O.)
"Rive from New York, it's Saturday
Niiiiiiight!!!"

START DANA CARVEY SNL MONTAGE

-- Dana Carvey playing Hans in the 1989 episode with Steven Seagal.

-- Carvey playing the Church Lady in the 1990 episode with Rob Lowe. [1] See endnote for internet link

-- Carvey playing Garth Algar in the 1990 Wayne's World skit with Tom Hanks.

The montage builds in intensity until we...

CUT TO:

INT. GIRL'S BEDROOM - MORNING

The jarring sound of static from a television left on all night assaults our ears. The young Japanese girl lays asleep in her bed with her back still to us.

Above her bed is the Japanese poster of Wayne's World proudly claiming the wall space that most girls her age would have reserved for the latest Japanese teen idol. Next to it, an autographed "headshot" of Dana Carvey.

KNOCK on her bedroom door. From outside the door we hear a woman speak in Japanese.

[NOTE: ALL DIALOGUE FROM NOW ON IS IN JAPANESE WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES UNLESS OTHERWISE SPECIFIED.]

MRS. HASHIMOTO
Keiko! Wake up!

KEIKO
(Her back still to us)
Okay, mom. I'm awake.

MRS. HASHIMOTO (35) Japanese, walks in and immediately turns off the TV.

MRS. HASHIMOTO
How many times do I have to tell you -- no TV at night.

KEIKO
I didn't. I swear.

MRS. HASHIMOTO
The TV just magically turned on?

KEIKO
(still sleeping)
Just five more minutes.

MOM
Keiko, you must not commit a rudeness on your first day of school. Your uniform is hanging in the closet. We're leaving in 10 minutes.

KEIKO
Okay.

As the door shuts behind Mrs. Hashimoto, the young Japanese girl slowly turns over to reveal....the whitest girl you have ever seen.

Juxtaposed next to her long auburn hair and freckles, her Hello Kitty pajamas and schoolgirl pigtails suddenly look inappropriate -- almost racist -- on this clearly Caucasian girl. And yet, there is something intensely sweet about her: her blissful ignorance of her own absurdity makes us instantly fall in love with her.

KEIKO
I'm awake.

START KEIKO GETTING DRESSED MONTAGE

Play: FOXY LADY by Jimi Hendrix

-- Keiko stands at her closet, her back to us, buttoning her uniform as the electric guitars begin to trill. Once the theme kicks in, Keiko swings around and starts walking toward us, bopping up and down to the rhythm of Hendrix's guitar motif a la Garth in Wayne's World during the Foxy Lady sequence. Like Garth, Keiko mouths to the camera "Foxy." [2]

-- Keiko pulls up her white knee-high socks. Once again we see her mouth to the camera "Foxy."

-- Keiko fixes her hair, referencing a picture torn from a magazine of a fashionable Japanese actress -- whose hair is also in pigtails. "Foxy."

-- Keiko brushes her teeth. As the music picks up, she thrusts her pelvis back and forth like Garth.

-- Keiko is wearing her Hello Kitty backpack heading toward her bedroom door, pelvis still thrusting. To the camera she mouths phonetically: "Foxy lady. Here I come. I'm coming to get you."

MRS. HASHIMOTO (O.S.)
Keiko!

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Keiko is eating her breakfast with her parents. Her dad, MR. HASHIMOTO, (40), sternly reads the paper. Mrs. Hashimoto frenetically makes Keiko's boxed lunch.

MRS. HASHIMOTO

Now remember, don't raise your hand too much on the first day. No one likes a know-it-all.

MR. HASHIMOTO

Eh? You must strive to get ahead in the world.

KEIKO

But don't you want to hear about his other characters?

MRS. HASHIMOTO

Finish eating, Keiko.

KEIKO

He plays a body-builder named Hans with this other guy. But it's funny because you can tell he's not really big, he's just wearing a bunch of pillows.

MR. HASHIMOTO

Who gave her this video anyway?

MRS. HASHIMOTO

One of her friends from Osaka as a going away gift. It has that comic man she likes from Waynie's (sic) World.

Dad grunts in acknowledgement.

KEIKO

And he says, (in broken English)
"We are going pump you up."

MR. HASHIMOTO

For real comedy you must watch Kinichi Hagimoto.

MRS. HASHIMOTO

What was that he used to say all the time?

MR. HASHIMOTO

Ah yes....

MOM

"Why does it get like that!"

DAD

"Why does it get like that."

Mom laughs, while dad musters a stilted chuckle.

KEIKO

No that's not funny. That's stupid.

MRS. HASHIMOTO

Don't speak to your father like that.

KEIKO

But it is! I like Dana Carvey best. I want to be a comedian like him.

MR. HASHIMOTO

That's absurd.

MRS. HASHIMOTO

You can't be a comedian.

KEIKO

Why not? Because I'm a Japanese girl?

Parents exchange a look of concern.

KEIKO

Japanese girls can be comedians, too. I'll show you both!

MRS. HASHIMOTO

Why don't you show us how great you can do in third grade first?

KEIKO

I miss Osaka.

MR. HASHIMOTO

Nothing to be done.

KEIKO

Momma, do you think I'll make good friends here like in Osaka?

MOM

I'm sure you will. I'm sure you will.

INT. JAPANESE CLASSROOM - MORNING

The SENSEI, (30) high-strung and with a perpetual look of astonishment, stands beside Keiko in front of the class.

SENSEI

Class, settle down now. Quiet everyone. We have a new student who is going to be joining our class. She just moved here from (like this is shocking) Osaka.

Class reacts as if Osaka is some foreign place.

KEIKO

Hello, my name is Keiko.

Slight giggles in the corner where a group of boys are sitting. One of the boys, TOSHI, (8) the Japanese version of Augustus Gloop, is the ringleader.

SENSEI

Toshi, quiet down. Tell us something about yourself, Keiko.

KEIKO

I like mochi, the color blue and comedy.

More giggling.

SENSEI

Quiet down everyone. Comedy, very interesting. Like Kinichi Hagimoto!

KEIKO

No. Like Saturday Night Live America Television Show. I want to make impressions like Dana Carvey comedy star.

Even more giggling.

SENSEI

(a look of astonishment)
Ohhhhhhhhhh. Can you do an impression for us today?

KEIKO is starting to pick up on the mocking from the class.

KEIKO

Okay. Well I can do one of the impressions that Dana Carvey does because I haven't thought of my own yet. This is my impression of Derek Stevens-san.

(MORE)

KEIKO (cont'd)

(Singing in broken English) "She's chopping broccori. She's chopping broccori. She's chopping broccori. She's chopping broccori." [3]

The giggling turns into full out laughter from the corner posse. The chiding deeply hurts Keiko's feelings.

SENSEI

(genuinely astonished)

Wow! Wow! Welcome Keiko. Why don't you take a seat next to Toshi?

Keiko reluctantly obeys.

SENSEI

Now open your books to page 15 and do problems 1 through 60.

TOSHI

(to Keiko)

What are you?

KEIKO

Keiko.

TOSHI

You're not Japanese. So what's your real name?

KEIKO

My name is Keiko.

TOSHI

Then why do you look so weird?

KEIKO

I don't know.

TOSHI

You're eyes are too big and (pointing at her freckles) you have pocks on your face.

Keiko blushes mortified.

SENSEI

Quiet -- or you both will have to stand in the hallway!

TOSHI

I'm sorry, Sensei, I'm just trying to help the new girl with the math problems. Her school wasn't as good in Osaka.

SENSEI

Oh yes, I've heard that. Thank you, Toshi.

Keiko shoots Toshi a pissed-off look.

Lunch bell RINGS. Everyone clears out quickly and Keiko is left packing her stuff into her backpack.

She walks somberly towards the cafeteria.

INT. CAFETERIA - DAY

People violently brush past Keiko to get to the food line. She stands at the door staring at the sea of people all joyfully eating together.

INT. GIRL'S BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Two girls giggle passed Keiko who smiles meekly in response, trying to hold back tears. Once alone, Keiko walks toward the sink and stares at herself in the mirror, for the first time seeing herself as flawed and ugly. She wipes fruitlessly at her freckles as if to erase them with her hand. She grabs at the skin around her eyes and pulls it taut so her round eyes are now slanty.

KEIKO

Hi, I'm Keiko.

She then looks at her backpack and gets an idea.

MOMENTS LATER

Keiko is finishing taping her eyes so that they are slanted using some scotch tape out of her Hello Kitty dispenser. She seems pleased with the result, like a flat-chested girl suddenly discovering the dual function of her sock drawer.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

We hear the bell RING. Keiko proudly struts back to her classroom with her eyes taped slanted.

The giggles of the kids in the hallway as she passes draw the attention of a nearby teacher.

HALLWAY TEACHER
(to Keiko sternly)
Come with me.

Toshi and his posse are huddled against some lockers dying of laughter.

INT. KITCHEN - EVENING

Keiko's mom scrubs dishes furiously at the sink.

MRS. HASHIMOTO
What in God's name were you thinking?

KEIKO
Toshi said I looked weird -- that my eyes were too big and I have dots on my face.

MRS. HASHIMOTO
But why would you want to change the way you look?

KEIKO
Because I'm ugly. Why do I look so different from everyone else? I just wanted to make my eyes look normal.

MRS. HASHIMOTO
(hesitantly)
Honey, there is something your father and I haven't told you.

KEIKO
Eh?

MRS. HASHIMOTO
We wanted to wait until you were old enough to understand.

KEIKO
What is it?

MRS. HASHIMOTO

Well, when you were a baby, your father and I....well, we....errr....when you were a baby you were -- diagnosed with a rare skin disease.

KEIKO

Oh my God! I have a skin disease?! It's worse than I thought.

MRS. HASHIMOTO

It makes your skin lighter than everyone else's...like, uh...Michael Jackson. And the dots are the places it hasn't faded yet.

KEIKO

And my eyes?

MOM

Your eyes are big because.....you have a.....thyroid problem.

KEIKO

Thyroid problem?! Oh God, that's like cancer isn't it? Worse!

MOM

No, no, no. It's nothing serious. It just makes you look different from other Japanese girls.

KEIKO

Why am I such a monster?

MOM

(cradling Keiko)

Here, here. You are not a monster. You are the most beautiful girl in the entire world. The day I first saw you -- I couldn't believe such a perfect little baby existed

KEIKO

You weren't upset that you gave birth to a monster?

MOM

You are my life, Keiko, don't ever forget that.

INT. JAPANESE CLASSROOM - DAY

Toshi is secretly playing an old-school gameboy under his desk. He stares hostilely at Keiko to not rat on him.

SENSEI

Quiet down everyone. Today we are going to do a very special exercise. (As if this is the most exciting thing in the world) We are going to write letters to our new pen pals in America. We at Tokyo Gakko have a sister school in the beautiful American town of Culver City!!!

The class "oohs" reverently.

STUDENT #1

What do we write, sensei?

TEACHER

Tell them about yourself and life in Japan, and ask them questions. But make sure to use your new vocabulary.

Students take out their vocabulary sheets and pieces of paper.

Keiko pulls out her best Hello Kitty stationery and begins to write.

INSERT -- HELLO KITTY STATIONERY

Keiko writes in English:

"Good morning. My name is Keiko. I like mochi, the color blue, and comidy [sic]. I have a skin disease. But don't worry. Be happy."

Keiko pauses to reference her vocabulary sheet.

INSERT -- VOCABULARY SHEET

We see English words like "Croquet" "Cousins" "Weekend" "Volleyball" next to their Japanese characters.

BACK TO STATIONERY

"Do you like to play croquet with
your cousins on the weekend?
Goodbye. Keiko"

BACK TO SCENE

Keiko looks proudly at her letter.

EXT. SCHOOL GYM CLASS/ASSEMBLY - DAY

The class stands in formation on a grassy field wearing matching red and white gym clothes as they perform an almost cult-like synchronized routine of jumping jacks and bending over.

Leading the exercise is an intimidating and compact man, GYM TEACHER (55). He shouts each movement with the guttural staccato of a samurai.

TOSHI
(to Keiko)
You look like a hairy alien.

GYM TEACHER
Arms up!

A beautiful and unusually tall Japanese girl, AZUMI (9), comes to Keiko's defense. There is a toughness to her.

AZUMI
Shut up, Toshi. You look like a fatty tuna.

GYM TEACHER
Now squat!! Squat!!

Toshi's posse laugh at the rebuff but are quickly silenced by Toshi's disapproving stare.

TOSHI
(to Keiko)
My brother said your parents are not really your parents - that's why you don't look like them.

GYM TEACHER
Bend!! bend!!

KEIKO
No that's not true! (defiantly) I have a skin disease.

TOSHI

Eh?

KEIKO

Like Michael Jackson.

TOSHI

Did you hear that? She has a skin disease. Don't touch her or you'll turn ugly like her.

GYM TEACHER

Thrust! Everyone Thrust!

AZUMI

It doesn't get uglier than you fatso.

TOSHI

Oooh good one, giraffe.

INT. GIRL'S LOCKEROOM - DAY

Keiko and the other girls change back into their uniforms.

KEIKO

Thanks.

AZUMI

No problem. Azumi.

KEIKO

Keiko.

AZUMI

Don't mind Toshi. The hole in his asshole is small. Family's real rich -- thinks he can get away with anything.

Keiko smiles gratefully at her new friend.

INT. KITCHEN - EVENING

The family is gathered around the dinner table.

MR. HASHIMOTO

The stocks are down again.
Interesting trend.

MRS. HASHIMOTO
Very, yes. (offering platter) More
fish? (putting down platter) They
raised the price of fish at the
Tokyo Metropolitan Central
Wholesale Market.

MR. HASHIMOTO
Eh?

MRS. HASHIMOTO
At the Tokyo Metropolitan Central
Wholesale Market....

Dad grunts in disapproval.

MRS. HASHIMOTO
...I was shocked.

KEIKO
At least you don't have to go to
elementary school.

MRS. HASHIMOTO
Just give it time. You'll make
friends.

KEIKO
Toshi and his gang keep making fun
of how I look.

Parents exchange a look.

KEIKO
I tried to explain to them what you
told me about my skin disease, but
now everyone just thinks I'm ugly
and gross. I didn't even get into
the thyroid problem.

Mom chokes on her food, Dad leers at Mom sternly.

INT. KEIKO'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Keiko is drifting off to sleep when she hears her parents
start to argue. She strains to hear what they are saying.

MR. HASHIMOTO (O.S.)
What were you thinking?

MRS. HASHIMOTO (O.S.)
I didn't know what else to say.
Shh. Lower your voice or she'll
hear.

Keiko squeezes her stuffed animal.

INT. PARENTS' BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

The parents are getting dressed for bed as they discuss.

MR. HASHIMOTO
We both knew this day would come.
It's time to tell her, Miyuki.

MRS. HASHIMOTO
But what if she stops loving us? I
couldn't bear that.

MR. HASHIMOTO
Don't be silly. She's at the age
when kids notice every little
difference. She's going to find
out sooner or later and better to
hear it from us.

MRS. HASHIMOTO
I know. It's just that...

MR. HASHIMOTO
End of discussion. It's time she
learns the truth.

EXT. PARENTS' BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Keiko is standing outside of the door listening to every word
looking like she has just been punched in the gut.

INT. JAPANESE CLASSROOM - MORNING

Azumi smiles at Keiko from her seat. STUDENT #2 (8) is up at
the chalkboard trying to draw a complicated Kanji character.

SENSEI
Very interesting. Now let me show
you the right way....

STUDENT #2 returns to his seat dejected as the teacher fixes
the character.

SENSEI

...We will pick up where we left off with our Kanji practice tomorrow. But now we have a wonderful surprise. We received letters from our pen pals in Culver City!

Class cheers for joy.

TEACHER

Haru, I'm afraid your letter must have gotten lost in the mail -- so why don't you look on with someone else.

TOSHI

Ha ha. Haru's even lame in America.

His posse laughs at the awkward-looking boy.

Keiko opens her letter and begins to read.

INSERT - LETTER

YOUNG JAMES (V.O.)

"Dear Keiko, My name is James. I like reading and playing Dark Ages. I have never played croquet, and don't think my cousins have either. They live in Dayton. I will ask them. I like to play basketball with my brother on the weekend. I am sorry about your skin. If you ever are in America you should say hi. My address is 225 Magnolia St. Culver City, California. James."

BACK TO SCENE

Keiko smiles as she looks up from her letter.

STUDENT #3

Hey, my pen pal doesn't know Michael Jordan. But doesn't he live in America?

INT. CAFETERIA - DAY

Keiko stands hesitantly at the door of the cafeteria.

AZUMI

Keiko! Come sit with me.

CAFETERIA TABLE

The two girls eat from their lunch boxes.

AZUMI

So did you just move here?

KEIKO

Yeah, from Osaka, for my dad's job.

AZUMI

I liked your impression the other day. I think I'm the only one in the class who knows what Saturday Night Live is. My brother went to university in America and brought back lots of video cassettes of American movies and TV shows.

KEIKO

Oh cool.

AZUMI

You should come over today and I'll show you my favorite American show of all time.

INT. AZUMI'S LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

The two girls are sitting in front of the television watching an episode of Punky Brewster in English.

KEIKO

They speak so fast.

AZUMI

I'll explain. It's about a girl named Punky.

KEIKO

Punky?

AZUMI

It's an American name. Very popular -- like Noriko.

KEIKO

Ohhhh.

ON THE TELEVISION

An episode of PUNKY BREWSTER plays.

[NOTE: THE FOLLOWING DIALOGUE IS IN ENGLISH]

HENRY

Yes, I know what you mean, Punky,
but I think I may have a solution.
I want to show you something,
something very special.

Henry pulls out a nickel.

PUNKY

A nickel?

HENRY

Ah, but it's not just an ordinary
nickel; it's my magic nickel.

BACK TO SCENE

[NOTE: THE DIALOGUE IS BACK TO JAPANESE WITH ENGLISH
SUBTITLES]

KEIKO

I like the way she dresses.

AZUMI

Me too. My parents would kill me if
I did. Oh my God, you look just
like Punky. I knew you looked
familiar.

KEIKO

Who me and Punky? Are you crazy?
She doesn't look Japanese at
all....

Azumi shrugs.

KEIKO

...Why is her father so old?

AZUMI

Oh -- he's not her real father.
She was adopted by this old guy
named Henry.

KEIKO

What's adopted?

AZUMI

You know, when someone buys you
when you are a baby and raises you
like they are your real parents.

The cogs in Keiko's head start to turn.

ON THE TELEVISION

We see a tight shot of the adorable freckled face of Punky.

BACK TO SCENE

Keiko stares at the TV like looking into a mirror.

KEIKO

Azumi, I need to go now. I forgot I
was supposed to help my mom clean.
Can I borrow this? (holding up the
cover of the Punky Brewster VHS)

AZUMI

Yeah, of course. (turning off the
TV) See you tomorrow, I guess.

INT. KEIKO'S BATHROOM - EVENING

Keiko stares at herself in the mirror holding the cover of Punky Brewster next to her face. She stares at the uncanny resemblance between her and Soleil Moonfry, gasps and drops the VHS cover.

INT. KITCHEN - EVENING

The family is seated to dinner. A miserable Keiko merely pushes her food around the plate.

MR. HASHIMOTO

They're estimating the bilateral
surplus is going to be 60 billion
this year.

MRS. HASHIMOTO

You don't say. (raising platter)
More fish?

Dad grunts and Keiko shrugs.

MR. HASHIMOTO

Of course industrial production is
off by 4.5%. Terrible.

MRS. HASHIMOTO
Unforgivable.
(putting down platter)
Isn't the rice moist tonight?

KEIKO
Why do I look like Punky Brewster?

MR. HASHIMOTO
Eh?

MRS. HASHIMOTO
Is she in Miss Tanaki's class?

KEIKO
No. She's an American girl on TV.
She was adopted by this old guy
named Henry.

Keiko places the VHS cover on the table. Mom starts to cry into her napkin.

KEIKO
Why is mom crying?

MR. HASHIMOTO
There is something we must tell
you, Keiko.

KEIKO
No!

Keiko runs out of the kitchen to her bedroom.

INT. KEIKO'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Keiko's head is buried in her pillow, sobbing. Her parents KNOCK on the door.

KEIKO
I don't want to be adopted. I don't
want to!

MRS. HASHIMOTO (O.S.)
Keiko, please let us explain.

MR. HASHIMOTO (O.S.)
(sternly)
Open the door, young lady.

KEIKO
No!

EXT. KEIKO'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Mom looks at dad for help.

MR. HASHIMOTO

(to the door)

Many successful people have been adopted like Larry Ellison, Chief Executive Officer of Oracle.

Through the door Keiko only cries harder. Mom looks disapprovingly at dad's attempt.

MRS. HASHIMOTO

Some couples, you see, can't have their own children. We tried to adopt in Japan, but after years of no luck, we decided to contact an adoption agency in California.

MR. HASHIMOTO

We intended to get an Asian baby, of course, to be more discreet.

MRS. HASHIMOTO

(shooting her husband dirty look)

It's not that we cared. It's just that here in Japan, adoption is not common, so people can be cruel.

Suddenly, Keiko opens the door -- her face stained with tears and her hair disheveled from burrowing under the pillows.

KEIKO

There are Japanese babies in California?

Mom looks broken-hearted at dad.

MRS. HASHIMOTO

Keiko, you are not....Asian. You are Caucasian.

KEIKO

No -- that's not true. I'm a Japanese person just like you.

MRS. HASHIMOTO

It doesn't matter what you technically are.

Keiko is frantically upset now.

KEIKO
But I want to be Japanese!

MRS. HASHIMOTO
You are....sort of.

Keiko takes the news in.

KEIKO
Does that mean I don't have a skin
disease?

Mom nods her head hopeful this news at least will cheer her.
Instead Keiko starts to sob more violently than before.

CUT TO:

EXT. TOKYO COMEDY CLUB - DAY

SUPER: 15 YEARS LATER

[NOTE: ALL OF DIALOGUE IS STILL IN JAPANESE WITH ENGLISH
SUBTITLES UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED]

A neon sign reads: "THE FUNNY HOLE."

A now 23-year old Keiko stands outside of the club wearing a pink sequined cowboy hat and holding large poster boards. Although older, Keiko still dresses exactly as she did at 8: a school girl outfit with socks pulled high and hair in pigtails. She looks anxious as if she is waiting for someone. A fat Japanese man passes her on his way in.

FAT JAPANESE MAN
(in accented English)
Ex-cusu mee.

INT. COMEDY CLUB

A placard reads in English: "COMEDY OPEN MIC WITH BOB HIROSHI!"

STAGE

We see the HOST (32) mid-act, a Japanese Ryan Seacrest, as cheesy as he is orange from self-tanner.

HOST

And the man said to me, "I'd like
you to meet my daughters....
(very pregnant pause)
Dishonor and Shame!"

The audience roars with laughter and applause.

HOST

Bingo! If you like that one you
should hear the one about my
blowfish. Who here has a pet
blowfish -- or am I the only one?
(nodding cheesily) I'm the only
one, aren't I?

People laugh again enthusiastically.

EXT. JAPANESE COMEDY CLUB - CONTINUOUS

Keiko, still standing outside, checks her rhinestoned pink phone.

INSERT - PINK CELLPHONE

It reads "1 NEW TEXT MESSAGE FROM AZUMI. STUCK IN A MEETING.
WILL BE THERE SOON!"

A discouraged Keiko heads inside.

INT. JAPANESE COMEDY CLUB HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Keiko stares nervously at the sign-up sheet posted on the wall. Her name is next. She looks down the hall at the other comics performing: An old Japanese man who looks like he's straight from the Kyoto Catskills, an angry-looking man with a ventriloquist dummy, and the fat guy who brushed past her before.

MONITOR (O.S.)

Keiko? Is there a Keiko here?

Keiko walks towards the stage entrance.

STAGE

An exiting comedian bows profusely to the audience as the HOST reenters and takes the mic.

HOST

Wow! Wow! Bingo! (in English) Am I right? (in Japanese) Thank you, Sasaki-san and your funny inventions. Our next performer is.....

(condescendingly)

A girl comic. Oooh. Give it up for Keiko and her original impressions!

As the audience applauds, a tall woman dressed in a swanky business suit struggles to get a seat. We recognize her immediately from her height as a grown-up Azumi.

Keiko walks on to the stage in her pink cowboy hat carrying the large poster boards which she places awkwardly on a preset easel.

KEIKO

(extremely nervous and bowing profusely)

Thank you. Thank you.

HOST

Whoa -- you're Keiko? Yeah and my name is Liam Neeson-san.

We hear a symbol CRASH and everyone erupts in laughter.

HOST

Bingo!! Bingo! What's your real name?

KEIKO

Keiko.

HOST

Well, I must say her Japanese is pretty good for a white girl, huh? Can you use chopsticks, too?

The audience applauds as Azumi shoots the Host a dirty look.

HOST

So what kind of impressions are you going to do today?

KEIKO

Famous Japanese Historical persons.

HOST
(faking it)
Sounds hilarious. Take it away,
Keiko!

Azumi applauds enthusiastically to compensate for the increasingly apathetic patrons.

The Host leaves poor Keiko alone on the stage, a deer in headlights. She takes position behind the mic, next to her wonky poster board which reads in English: "KEIKO'S AMAZING COMIDIC (sic) IMPRESSIONS!"

KEIKO
The first impression I will make
for you is Takako Doi.

The audience grumbles with "eh's?" and "who?"

KEIKO
The first female leader of the
Japan Socialist Party.

Keiko takes a big gulp.

GIRLS BATHROOM - LATER

Azumi enters looking for Keiko. She pans the empty stalls until she sees a pair of familiar feet.

AZUMI
You did great.

Keiko opens the door revealing her tear-stained face.

KEIKO
I was terrible.

AZUMI
No, no. It might have been just a
bit over some people's heads.

KEIKO
How could people not know who
Susumu Tonegawa is?

AZUMI
The politician?

KEIKO
The geneticist.

AZUMI
(weighing her words)
Not like I know anything about
comedy....but maybe you need to
pick uh, you know,
more...mainstream people to
impersonate. Like Sada Mayumi!

KEIKO
And be like everyone else? No way.

AZUMI
The club owner told me they need to
clean the bathroom now.

Keiko winces at the thought of showing her face.

AZUMI
Come on -- first times always suck.
I'll buy you a drink and tell you
about the time I lost my virginity.
Now that was mortifying. He
grunted like a samurai the whole
time.

Azumi starts grunting forcing a big laugh from Keiko.

EXT. HASHIMOTO HOUSE - NIGHT

A very drunk Azumi and Keiko stand outside of a small house
in an affluent Tokyo suburb. The girls try fruitlessly to be
quiet as Keiko searches for the right key.

INT. KEIKO'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

The same childhood posters of Dana Carvey -- with new
additions over the years -- ornament the bedroom walls: the
Japanese posters for "Opportunity Knocks", "Master of
Disguise", even "Trapped in Paradise," along with more
autographed headshots of the comic.

The girls are sprawled out on the pink comforter eating
mochi.

AZUMI
(eating mochi)
First times are always rough, see?
Ech, he was foul. Kissed like a
windmill.

Azumi swirls her tongue perversely in the air.

KEIKO

My dad offered me a job at his company.

AZUMI

What? Doing hedge funds? Yeah right.

KEIKO

I didn't say no.

AZUMI

But what about comedy?

KEIKO

Am I funny?

AZUMI

It's what you love.

KEIKO

Doesn't mean I'm good at it.

AZUMI

You'll learn.

KEIKO

I'm 23 years old and still live with my parents. Most respectable Japanese girls would have killed themselves by now.

AZUMI

You're not like everyone else.

KEIKO

I know! And I'm sick of it. I don't fit in anywhere. Not in school, not in comedy, not in Japan -- not in my own stupid family.

AZUMI

I'm gay.

KEIKO

Shut up. (registering) What?

AZUMI

I've been dating this girl for a month. No one knows except....you.

KEIKO

Your parents don't?

AZUMI

God no. They'd disown me in a second. Their only child -- a dyke?

KEIKO

Wow.

AZUMI

So shut up already about your problems. No one fits in -- especially the people who look like they do.

Azumi fiddles uncomfortably with the box of mochi.

KEIKO

So, does that mean you think I'm hot?

AZUMI

I'd rather lick a monkey.

Keiko playfully hits Azumi, and they both laugh.

INT. KEIKO'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Keiko and Azumi are asleep on Keiko's bed in a tableau reminiscent of the hundreds of childhood sleepovers they've had when Keiko's cellphone RING jolts them awake.

KEIKO

(hung-over)

Eh?

AZUMI

(jumping out of bed)

Oh shit what time is it? I'm late for work. Lord of the donkeys!

KEIKO

(answering the phone)

Hi dad... an offer tomorrow? Wow.

Azumi mocks hanging herself as she throws on her clothes.

KEIKO

(feigned excitement)

No, that's great.

(MORE)

KEIKO (cont'd)

Thank you...the H&R people need my transcripts by tomorrow morning?....and board scores, too.....yes, I know where they are....the bottom drawer of the desk in the study, I know. I'll find them later tonight -- I have to go to work....I know you're putting yourself on the line for me.....I won't....fine...Bye.

As Keiko hangs up, Azumi shoots her a look of disapproval. Running out the door, Azumi suddenly turns back.

AZUMI

Did I tell you I was gay last night?

Keiko nods.

AZUMI

Shit. I was afraid of that.

INT. SWANK TOKYO HOTEL - DAY

Guests mill through the bustling, minimalist lobby.

HOTEL BAR

Tourists -- from American families to German businessmen -- occupy the small tables as beautiful Asian waitresses deliver their 3PM martinis.

Manning the bar is a bored Keiko who is in the middle of reading a massive book: "THE BUSINESS OF BUSINESS."

AMERICAN WOMAN'S VOICE

(in English)

I'll take a Manischewitz straight up.

Keiko looks up confused at the woman who we now see is the famous comic, Sarah Silverman.

[NOTE: THE REST OF THE SCENE IS IN ENGLISH UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED.]

SARAH

I'm just fucking with you. I'll have a Coke. God, you and I are probably the only two Jews in this whole country....

Keiko smiles politely and pours Sarah's drink.

SARAH

Sorry, that's terrible of me to presume. I shouldn't judge a book by its arm hair. So you been in Japan long?

Keiko nods.

SARAH

...If you don't mind me prying, you must be really into Asian guys to move all the way out here....

Keiko smiles again courteously.

SARAH

...Nah, it's cool. I get it. I had a huge crush on this doctor back in college. I used to find any excuse at all to go over there. You know, like make sure to schedule my abortions during his office hours. God the things we girls do for love, right?

A middle-age Japanese couple dressed in full tourist regalia who have been eyeing Sarah finally make their move. They barely speak any English.

JAPANESE WOMAN FAN

Excussu mee. You do comedy?

This immediately piques Keiko's interest. Who is this woman at the bar, anyway?

SARAH

Uh, yeah, I am a comedian. Sarah, nice to meet you.

JAPANESE WOMAN FAN

What you do?

SARAH

Big fans I see.

JAPANESE WOMAN FAN

Yes, yes! Big fan!!

SARAH

I've been in a lot of movies and
was on Saturday Night Live. Sarah
Silverman. No?

The words "Saturday Night Live" get Keiko's heart racing.

JAPANESE WOMAN FAN

Saturday Night! Very good. In
hotel?

SARAH

It's a....forget it. Alright well
thanks for...

The woman fan holds up a playbill for Mamma Mia to Sarah

JAPANESE WOMAN FAN

You can sign?

SARAH

Mamma Mia, huh? You guys into
ABBA?

JAPANESE WOMAN FAN

(all of the sudden really
excited)

ABBA yes!! Oh yes! We love!

SARAH

(handing back the signed
playbill)

Well, treasure that. I know you
will. Always so great to meet my
fans....

The Japanese couple walk away bowing and saying thank you.
Sarah turns exhausted to Keiko.

SARAH

...God, it's nice to finally see a
familiar face. I have been dealing
with this shit all day. All this,
you know.....

KEIKO

(in heavily-accented
English)

You do comedy?

SARAH

(thinking Keiko is doing
an impersonation of the
couple)

Exactly! (in Japanese accent) "You do comedy?" How am I supposed to take her seriously with that accent? I mean, it's not like I have a problem with minorities, it's just that I don't feel like I can relax around them, be myself. You know? At the end of a long day it's nice to curl up with a good book, a nice glass of wine and someone that looks like me.

KEIKO

You do Saturday Night Rive?

SARAH

Hey -- you're pretty good at impressions. You sound just like her. I used to bartend back in New York and would impersonate all of the customers, too. (happily remembering) There was this one guy who used to come in all of the time and be like, "Give me your fucking money." No wait, it was more like "Give me your fucking money." Yeah, that's it. He sounded just like that.

KEIKO

Sorry, I am Japanese person. I speak bad Engrish.

SARAH

(lowering her voice)

You are just the kind of offensive bitch I like. You do comedy for real?

KEIKO

(excited)

Yes! I make comedy impressions like Dana Carvey. I do good impression of Takako Doi. I show you. (in caricature woman's voice) "Come on women. You come now women. Get in government so no more sexist."

SARAH
(laughing
enthusiastically)
Seriously, this character you've
got going here is hilarious. You're
like a fucking female Andy Kaufman.
Look, my friend and I are running
this big internet contest for the
next great comic. The winner gets
to appear on Conan O'Brien and do
their stand-up. You should film
something to submit. (in Japanese
accent) "So no more sexist."
Fucking brilliant.

INT. KEIKO'S BEDROOM - EVENING

THROUGH CAMCORDER

Through a mediocre camcorder, we see Keiko standing awkwardly in her performance get-up complete with the pink sequined cowboy hat. The blinking red light signals that she is being recorded.

[NOTE: ALL DIALOGUE IS IN JAPANESE WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES
UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED.]

KEIKO
Are you rolling yet?

AZUMI (O.S.)
Go.

KEIKO
(in bad English, with the
stilted delivery of
someone not used to being
in front of the camera)
Herro everyone. My name is Keiko.
I make comedy impressions. The
first impression I will make for
you is Shigeyama Sennojo.

BACK TO SCENE

Azumi looks up from behind the camcorder at her friend.

AZUMI
You can't do him.

KEIKO
Why not?

AZUMI
No American is going to know who
the hell he is. I don't even.

THROUGH CAMCORDER - MOMENTS LATER

KEIKO
(in poor English)
My first impression is Shigeyama
Sennojo, famous Noh farce actor.

BACK TO SCENE

AZUMI
I think you should do someone more
American.

KEIKO
But Sarah Silverman really liked my
Japanese impressions. Besides, I
don't do any Americans.

Azumi goes over to the computer to research.

AZUMI
(typing)
Easy. Let's just see which
American actors are popular to
impersonate.

THROUGH CAMCORDER - MOMENTS LATER

A posterboard propped up next to Keiko reads in English:
Christopher Walken with the Japanese translation beneath.

KEIKO
(in bad English and an
even worse Christopher
Walken)
"I hadu this hunk of metaru up my
assu for two years. I be damned if
you were denied your birssu right."

MOMENTS LATER

The posterboard now reads in English: Robert Diniro [sic]
with Japanese translation beneath.

KEIKO
(in bad English)
"You talkiniru to me?
(MORE)

KEIKO (cont'd)
You talkiniru to me? You
talkiniru....well who the herru
else are you talkiniru to?"

BACK TO SCENE

Azumi looks up from the camera.

AZUMI
You should do a politician, too.
How about George Bush?

KEIKO
No way. I could never do him as
good as Dana Carvey.

AZUMI
Fine. How about another president?

THROUGH CAMCORDER - MOMENTS LATER

The posterboard now reads in English: President [sic] Taft
with Japanese translation beneath.

AZUMI (O.S.)
(in bad English)
Excuse me, aren't you the 27th
President of the United States?

KEIKO
(also in bad English)
Yes, young man, I am Wirriam Howard
Taft.

BACK TO SCENE - MOMENTS LATER

Keiko is taking off her "comedy costume" as Azumi packs away
the camera.

KEIKO
What do you think? Is it funny?

AZUMI
Only one way to find out. I'll
upload it tomorrow at work. Give
me something fun to do.

INT. KITCHEN - LATER

The family and Azumi eat dinner.

MRS. HASHIMOTO

(to Azumi)

Keiko tells us that you just got promoted at your company.

AZUMI

Yes, but I still have a long way to go.

MRS. HASHIMOTO

Keiko's going to be joining the work force, too.

MR. HASHIMOTO

Did you find the transcripts?

KEIKO

Not yet.

MR. HASHIMOTO

Don't make me look foolish.

MRS. HASHIMOTO

(raising the platters)

More rice? Tempura?

AZUMI

I'm fine, thank you.

MR. HASHIMOTO

This is not some bartending job you can screw around with.

MRS. HASHIMOTO

Your parents must be so proud of you, Azumi, with your job. And you are so pretty. Are you dating any nice boys?

Keiko and Azumi exchange looks, trying not to laugh.

AZUMI

Nope. Just hanging out with my girlfriends.

Keiko stifles a laugh.

MR. HASHIMOTO

Better to stay on track and get ahead otherwise you'll get left behind. Not everyone understands that.

Keiko looks down at her food, defeated.

EXT. KEIKO'S HOUSE - LATER

Azumi, smoking a cigarette, leans against the side of the house next to Keiko.

AZUMI

Your parents would freak if they knew.

KEIKO

About you?

AZUMI

Yeah.

KEIKO

They worship you. I bet they wish they'd picked you as their daughter.

AZUMI

They love you.

KEIKO

They're stuck with me. But I'm not like them, and they don't understand that. Me.

AZUMI

Parents never do.

KEIKO

But they're not even my parents.

AZUMI

Yes they are. Who cares about biology.

KEIKO

I care.

AZUMI

You don't have to take this job.

KEIKO

What other option do I have?

AZUMI

Maybe you'll win the contest.

KEIKO
I don't even know who William
Howard Taft is.

AZUMI
Neither do I -- but Americans do.
And they're the ones judging.

KEIKO
I'm taking the job.

AZUMI
I'm uploading the video.

KEIKO
Fine.

AZUMI
Fine.

INT. KEIKO'S BEDROOM - LATER

Keiko stands in her pink pj's in front of the Dana Carvey posters over her bed. After a moment she solemnly takes them down and throws them in the trash. Climbing into bed with her tedious business book, she suddenly remembers.

KEIKO
The transcript.

INT. HOME OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Keiko walks towards the desk looking for her transcripts. From the bottom drawer she pulls out a folder marked "Keiko." Flipping through she finds old grade reports and paper assignments.

She pauses at a class photo from 3rd grade -- how different she looks from everyone else. Continuing on, she laughs as she stumbles across the pen pal letter from James.

Suddenly her heart stops. Behind the pen pal letter is a document she has never seen before: her birth certificate.

Taking a deep breath she begins to read the document. Birth place: Los Angeles at Good Samaritan Hospital. Birth mother: Janet Smith.

As Keiko reads the name of her birth father she gasps: Dana Carvey.

Her head spinning from the news, she suddenly gets an idea. Grabbing the pen pal letter she reads:

"If you ever are in America you should say hi. My address is 225 Magnolia St. Culver City, California. James."

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Mrs. Hashimoto is making coffee when she notices a note on the counter marked: MOM AND DAD.

KEIKO (V.O.)

Dear mom and dad, Thank you so much for raising me, but I have decided to go to America to find my real parents.

Reading it, Mrs. Hashimoto clasps her hand over her mouth to stifle her screams. Hearing her distress, her husband runs in.

MR. HASHIMOTO

What's going on in there?

MRS. HASHIMOTO

Keiko's gone!

MR. HASHIMOTO

What?

KEIKO (V.O.)

I'm sorry I could not be the daughter you wanted. It is time now to find where I really belong.

The father holds the mother stiffly as she sobs.

INT. AIRPLANE - DAY

Keiko sits between an American businessman and tourist.

[NOTE: THE REST OF THE DIALOGUE IS IN ENGLISH UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED.]

PILOT (O.S.)

(in English)

We are beginning our final descent into Los Angeles.....

KEIKO (V.O.)
(in Japanese)
I love you very much and will
definitely come back to visit with
my real dad, Dana Carvey.

PILOT (O.S.)
Please enjoy your stay and thank
you for flying American Airlines.

KEIKO (V.O.)
(in Japanese, staring
hopefully at her pen pal
letter)
If you need to reach me in the next
few days, I will be staying with my
pen pal, James I'm not sure his
last name, in Culver City. Goodbye,
Keiko Carvey

FAT AMERICAN
(in English to Keiko)
Going home?

Keiko pauses and thinks for a second, and then a smile
spreads across her face as she nods.

INT. LAX AIRPORT - DAY

Keiko looks lost in the sea of people as she walks to the
baggage claim, people violently brushing past her in the
bustle.

A group of passing teenagers laugh at Keiko's outfit.

Keiko walks by an Asian girl texting on her sidekick.
Relieved to see a fellow Asian, Keiko goes up to her and
starts speaking in Japanese.

ASIAN GIRL
I'm from Scarsdale, asshole.

EXT. AIRPORT - LATER

TAXI LINE

Keiko looks out of place next to the Americans with her
schoolgirl outfit and Hello Kitty luggage.

The long taxi line moves without her noticing.

TAXI LINE GUY
(to Keiko)
Go!

Keiko, embarrassed, rushes ahead. In front of her in line is an adorable toddler, KYLIE (3), holding onto her mom's hand. Dressed in a pink outfit almost identical to Keiko's and with her pink Barbie luggage, Kylie looks just like Keiko must have at that age.

KYLIE
(to Keiko)
I like your outfit.

KEIKO
Thank you. I like your outfit too.

KYLIE
I like pink, but sometimes I wear purple. And sometimes, sometimes I don't.

KYLIE'S MOM
Pink is your favorite color, isn't it Kylie?

Keiko looks enviously at the family portrait.

Suddenly the scene turns dream-like and uncomfortably happy.

KYLIE'S MOM
And what's your favorite color, Keiko?

Keiko is now holding the other hand of Kylie's mom.

KEIKO
My favorite color is blue, but I don't wear it because I'm not a boy.

Kylie's mom smiles and kisses Keiko on the forehead.

KYLIE'S MOM
No you're not. But who is a boy?

KEIKO
Daddy.

KYLIE'S MOM
That's right. Your daddy is a boy.

As Kylie's dad turns around and we see he's really Dana Carvey doing his TOM BROKAW impersonation from the famous Gerald Ford sketch. [4]

TOM BROKAW
Alright, who are we up to?

KYLIE
We're still on presidents.

KEIKO
Dad!

Keiko stares at Dana excitedly, but he doesn't seem to see her.

TOM BROKAW
(as if doing a broadcast)
"Tragedy today, as former President
Gerald Ford was eaten by wolves."
Come on.

KYLIE'S MOM
Look you're the one who wants to
spend the whole winter in Barbados.

KEIKO
Dad, it's me, Keiko.

TOM BROKAW
Gerald Ford is not going to be
eaten by wolves.

KYLIE
Taft was.

TOM BROKAW
Really? Taft? Well, alright.

KEIKO
Yes, Taft. I know!
(doing her impression)
"Yes, young man, I am Wirriam
Howard Taft."

Suddenly everyone turns to Keiko. Dana Carvey stares at her quizzically, as if he is only now aware of her presence. After a moment of uncomfortable silence, everyone erupts with laughter. Keiko beams.

The dream sequence suddenly ends and Keiko is thrown back into reality. We see the real KYLIE'S DAD (38) looking nothing like Dana Carvey.

KYLIE'S DAD

I hope she's not bothering you.
She can be quite a talker. Can't
you Kyles?

Kylie giggles joyously as her dad tickles her. Keiko smiles weakly.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - MOMENTS LATER

The cab speeds off leaving Keiko and her iconic luggage in front of an apartment building in Culver City, a complex which was probably chic in the fifties, but now is way past its prime.

KEIKO

(nervously practicing)
Hello, James. It is me Keiko your
pen pal from Tokyo. I am here for
trip and wanted say hi. I don't
hotel so I stay with your house
okay please?

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - SAME

Keiko BUZZES the apartment number. Nothing. She BUZZES again. Just when she is about to leave we hear the voice of an OLD MAN through the intercom.

OLD MAN (O.S.)
Hello? Denyce is that you?

KEIKO
Hi, this is Keiko. I am pen pal of
James from Japan.

OLD MAN (O.S.)
What? You want James?

KEIKO
Yes, I am pen pal from Tokyo. I
come to visit.

OLD MAN (O.S.)
Oh my goodness. I didn't realize
James knew anyone in Japan. But
I'm afraid he doesn't live here
anymore. He hasn't lived here
for...gosh, years -- since he went
off to school.

KEIKO
(her face drops)
Oh...well thank you. Sorry to make
bother in you.

Keiko begins to walk away dejected.

OLD MAN (O.S.)
Do you want his new address? He
lives just a couple streets down.

KEIKO
Oh yes, thank you!

OLD MAN (O.S.)
I'm sure he'll be excited -- you
coming all that way from Japan.
Beautiful place. I was stationed
in Okinawa in the war...oh
er...anyway.

INT. JAMES' APARTMENT - SAME

The sparsely furnished apartment boasts only a ratty couch and makeshift coffee table as if the tenant was in the process of moving in. The only real signs that someone lives here are the rows of bookcases overflowing with books. Truly the apartment of an English major.

Talking on the phone is JAMES (25), an attractive African-American man. He's an old soul who prefers books to TV, records to CD, and yet still probably eats ramen every night. Dressed in creased khakis and a collared shirt, he epitomizes a struggling academic.

Sitting in the middle of the room is one solitary box taped shut as if from a move. In girlie calligraphy it reads:
"CRYSTAL'S STUFF."

JAMES
No, she's basically moved
out....What? She cheated on me....I
don't care how hot she is....no you
can't....eloquent, very eloquent,
Malik....shut the fuck up.
Remember I can still beat your
ass....hold on, I got to take
this....hold up, hold up...yeah,
I'll be there after my section.
(MORE)

JAMES (cont'd)

Just be ready this
time... (switching over) Hello?... Oh
hey granddaddy, what's going
on?... What?.... no, I don't know
anyone from Japan.... my pen
pal?... Oh yeah, we did that in like
3rd grade or something.
Why?.... She's what?.... Wait, hold
on a sec... my Japanese pen pal from
15 years ago is....

KNOCK on the door.

JAMES

Granddad, let me call you later,
okay?

James hangs up and stares bewildered at the door. KNOCK,
KNOCK again.

JAMES

What the fuck?

James opens the door to reveal Keiko standing there with her
luggage smiling politely.

KEIKO

Hello! James?

JAMES

Is this a joke?

KEIKO

Oh sorry. No jokes. I am Keiko your
pen pal from Japan.

JAMES

Yeah, sure you are. (calling out)
Very funny, Crystal.

KEIKO

No, yes, I am your pen pal, see?

Keiko shows James the letter he wrote her years ago.

JAMES

Wow. This is surreal on a level I
have never experienced before.

KEIKO

You are brack!

JAMES

Excuse me?

KEIKO
I didn't think you were brack from
your retters. So funny.

JAMES
Yeah, I know the feeling. (eyeing
her luggage) Well, uh, welcome to
America, and thanks for stopping
by, I guess. I actually have to
run.

Keiko's face drops.

KEIKO
You have go now?

JAMES
(softening a bit)
I mean, in a couple minutes. Oh
man. Look, can I get you water, or
something?

KEIKO
(her face brightening)
Oh yes! Thank you. (walking inside)
Nice accommodations.

JAMES
Really? Thanks. My, uh, roommate
just moved out. She had pretty
much all of the furniture. (filling
a glass with tap water)
So when did you get here?

KEIKO
Here?

JAMES
Here, like Los Angeles.

KEIKO
This afternoon.

JAMES
Wow, and you just came straight
here -- your pen pal's house from
3rd grade. (handing Keiko the
glass) Where are you staying?

KEIKO
In California.

JAMES

Right, but in a hotel?

Keiko stalls politely by taking a big gulp. Luckily she is saved by the phone RINGING.

JAMES

(to Keiko)

Hold on a sec, sorry. (into phone)
Hello?... (suddenly tense)
What?... Crystal, I don't think that would be appropriate... you know why... you know what, I can't have this conversation right now.... I Have someone over... no... look I can't explain right now... oh you should talk.... fine, tomorrow at noon and then that's it. Goodbye.

Keiko stares uncomfortably around the apartment.

KEIKO

Do you still like to play basketball with your brother on the weekend?

JAMES

(laughing)

No, don't do too much of that anymore. Too busy grading papers.

(remembering)

Do you still like the color... blue, right?

KEIKO

Oh yes! It is my favorite color!

JAMES

I can't believe I remembered that. You gotta give me some props for that one.

KEIKO

Oh no I don't have.

JAMES

(laughing)

It's just an expression. Wait, and don't you have some skin disease, too?

KEIKO

Yes! Yes! Oh you remember!

JAMES

(laughing hard now)

Oh man, that tripped me out. I remember picturing -- no offense -- but some sort of sumo wrestler with psoriasis or something. You know, skin flaking off.

KEIKO

(defensive)

Well, I really don't have.

JAMES

No, I mean you look great. I wouldn't have known at all.

KEIKO

No, but I don't have. I am just regular white person, not white person like Michael Jackson.

JAMES

Good to know. (smiles at Keiko)
Look, I do need to go teach a section right now. But it was great catching up.

KEIKO

You are teacher?

JAMES

Uh, sort of. Hope to be one day. I'm a grad student right now getting my Master's in poetry.

KEIKO

Poetry. Very good.

JAMES

Yeah, tell that to my family.

KEIKO

(perusing at his books)

Whitman-san!

JAMES

You know him? I'm actually writing my dissertation on him.

Keiko begins to recite a passage of Whitman in Japanese.

JAMES

Wow -- is that Whitman in Japanese?

KEIKO

Sorry, I don't know in....

JAMES

No, that's amazing. You're quite a surprise, uh...

KEIKO

Keiko.

JAMES

Keiko, right. (looking at her rolling pink suitcase) So I take it from your luggage that you don't have a hotel room.

KEIKO

Do you have room available?

JAMES

Do I have a room? Oh man. I have a couch. (pointing) Couch.

KEIKO

Couch. Oh yes. I can?

JAMES

Yeah sure, I guess.

KEIKO

Thank you so much. Thank you. Thank you.

JAMES

Just a couple of days, right?

KEIKO

Oh yes, yes. A couple days.

INT. UCLA CLASSROOM - AFTERNOON

James is teaching his section as his advisor, PROFESSOR MERRITT (65) scholarly, sits in the corner observing. The students are engrossed in the discussion. James is conspicuously the only African-American in the room.

FEMALE STUDENT #1
I felt bad for Grendel.

MALE STUDENT #1
He's a flesh-eating monster.

Class laughs.

FEMALE STUDENT #1

I know, but -- it's just seems like he's lonely and doesn't really fit in anywhere. Like he's looking for friends. Anybody? Am I the only one?

JAMES

No, you're not actually. John Gardner wrote a version of the Beowulf story in the 1970's told from Grendel's perspective in which he paints Grendel as a misunderstood monster just like you're talking about.

MALE STUDENT #2

Yeah, but he's still a monster.

An incredibly HAIRY STUDENT joins the conversation, monstrous-looking in his own right.

HAIRY STUDENT

Maybe Grendel acts like a monster because people expect him to be one.

JAMES

Interesting point. Nature versus nurture: what do you think?

FEMALE STUDENT #2

I think some people are born gay and some become gay. Like my cousin.

JAMES

Right, so the rest of us are reading Beowulf, Jenny, not sure which book you picked up.

MALE STUDENT #3

Gayowulf.

Class laughs again.

JAMES

And on that note, let's adjourn. Remember papers due to my inbox by midnight tonight. Spencer.

Class groans as they walk out.

PROFESSOR MERRITT

Impressive, James. You have a real gift for keeping their attention.

JAMES

Thank you, Professor Merritt, that means a lot to me. I've actually been wanting to talk to you about my dissertation. I was rereading "Song of Myself" and realized.....

PROFESSOR MERRITT

Good. Why don't you come to my office hours on Monday?

JAMES

That would be great.

PROFESSOR MERRITT

Oh and James, I've been meaning to ask you -- the department wants to do a lecture on the poetry of rap music -- you know, in February. Given your background I thought you'd be perfect to teach it.

JAMES

(tensely)

I'm flattered, but I'm afraid I don't actually listen to rap music.

PROFESSOR MERRITT

Oh no? Well, I could have sworn you did. Huh. My mistake.

JAMES

(tensely)

No problem.

INT. JAMES' APARTMENT - AFTERNOON

Sitting on the couch, Keiko flips through the yellow pages. Her eye lands on a cheesy ad for an obviously low-rent private detective: "STAR DETECTIVES: P.I.'S FOR THE VIP." Lifting the receiver she dials.

INT. STAR DETECTIVES RECEPTION - CONTINUOUS

The receptionist, DONNA, (38) but still dressed like it's 1989, sits sifting through her headshots ignoring the RINGING as long as possible. With disdain, she finally answers.

INTERCUT RECEPTION/JAMES' APARTMENT

DONNA

(unamused)

Star Detectives, this is Donna how can I direct your call?

KEIKO

Hello. I am looking for detective.

DONNA

We give free consultations Monday through Friday. Hold please.

(switching over lines) Hello?

(suddenly chipper) Oh heeeeey Gary...yeah just looking through the new headshots now. I'm really feeling the jean jacket...so any word from the Valtrex people?

...really?....(disappointed) Wow, it's just that I really thought I nailed that one, but....they didn't like my look?! Well, it's a herpes commercial, so what does that even mean?...No, I know it's not personal. It's just you pour your heart into these auditions do hours of herpes sensory work with your acting teacher and then it's like, "I'm sorry" you don't look infested enough or whatever.

The detective, MARTY (55) walks out with a coffee mug with the Comedy/Tragedy Drama symbol on it. Disheveled and seedy, he is still lovable in the way you have a soft spot for your driver's ed instructor even though he probably has stashes of kiddie porn.

MARTY

That better be a client, Donna.

DONNA

I have to call you back, Gary.

MARTY

Why don't you tell your two-bit agent to send you out for the good stuff like Hedda Gabbler.
(pronounces "Gahbbler")

DONNA

Thanks for the career advice, Marty, but I don't do porn. (back to Keiko on the phone) Look, just come in tomorrow before 5 and you can meet with one of our award-winning detectives.

KEIKO

I come tomorrow?

DONNA

Yes, to-morr-ow.

KEIKO

Oh thank you! Very much thank you!

DONNA

(hanging up)

Fucking Mexicans.

I/E. JAMES' CAR - AFTERNOON

James pulls up to trendy shopping area Melrose Avenue to pick up his brother who is hocking his latest hip hop demo to the angst-ridden teenage passersby.

EXT. MELROSE AVENUE - CONTINUOUS

MALIK, (20) African-American and dressed like a wannabe rapper, is surrounded by a group of underage girls, one of whom, TEENAGE GIRL (13), is listening to his demo through headphones. Malik proudly mouths the rap to himself.

MALIK

That's the future of hip hop right there.

TEENAGE GIRL

(handing back the
headphones)

I don't really like the melody.

MALIK
The melody? You kiss Kanye with
that mouth?

James rolls his window down.

JAMES
Malik, I have to get home.

TEENAGE GIRL #2
We have to meet our moms at Urban
Outfitters.

INT. JAMES' CAR - MOMENTS LATER

As James and Malik pull away from Melrose, Malik turns on the radio only to hear it is already tuned to a hip hop station. Malik turns to James as if he has just caught him red-handed.

MALIK
Oh man, I knew you listened to hip
hop!

JAMES
No, I don't. I didn't.

MALIK
My God, you may just be a black man
after all.

JAMES
It was probably just from last time
you were in the car. Turn it to
NPR.

MALIK
Nah, let's crank that shit.

JAMES
Turn it down.

MALIK
Nah, niggah, that's the point.

JAMES
Don't call me that.

MALIK
What's up your ass?

JAMES
Don't call me that.

MALIK

Man, you need to get laid. I told you not to break up with Crystal. Now you're all pent up.

JAMES

I'm fine. I just have a lot of work.

MALIK

That girl was one hot piece of yellow ass. Almost made me get the fever.

JAMES

She cheated on me with her boss, so I think she pretty much broke up with me.

MALIK

See, this here's your problem. You're too romantic about pussy.

JAMES

God, could we please have a conversation I don't feel like I have to take a shower after?

MALIK

I'm sorry, *vagina*. I'm just saying life isn't poetry. So she fucked her boss. So what? There are bigger and better-tittied fish in the sea.

JAMES

Thanks for the insight.

MALIK

And I know the perfect place to find them. My buddy has an "in" to this CD release party Roc-A-Fella Records is throwing at the Skybar this weekend. I'll get you on the list.

JAMES

Maybe another time. I've got to grade papers.

MALIK

Grade papers? Are you kidding me?
Roc-A-Fella Records -- that's Jay-Z
my brother -- which means premium,
juicy pieces of chocolate ass.
Excuse me, thoughtful young women
who are just looking to get banged.

JAMES

Oh man. I totally forgot. I have
this girl staying at my place this
weekend.

MALIK

Well, look at you, playah. And
here I was thinking you need my
help. Let me guess -- some hot
coed needs some private tutoring?
Ooh I envy you.

JAMES

No, it's not like that. I would
never. Jesus. She's my pen pal
from Japan. She just showed up on
my doorstep with her Hello Kitty
luggage and I felt bad turning her
away.

MALIK

Your Japanese *female* pen pal just
showed up on your doorstep with her
Hello Kitty luggage asking to stay
over?

JAMES

Yeah. She doesn't know anyone else
here, I guess.

MALIK

Listen to me, and listen to me
good. God has bestowed unto you
the greatest gift a man can get:
your own personal porn movie. Lost
Japanese pen pal? That's on the
same level as a lesbian sorority
that needs a handyman. You better
not fuck this one up, J, or else I,
on behalf of all other heterosexual
men am going to have to bang her
for you. Is she cute?

JAMES

Uh, I don't know. Yeah, I guess so. I mean, she's not what you're picturing, trust me.

MALIK

I'm picturing Jenna Jameson with slanty eyes.

James pulls up to his parents' apartment building and drops off Malik, who has apparently never moved out.

JAMES

Goodbye, Malik.

MALIK

Or Lucy Liu with elephantitis (sic) of the tit.

INT. JAMES' APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

The smell of home-cooked food greets James at the door.

KEIKO

(in the kitchen)
I make dinner for you to thank.

JAMES

Wow. Thank you. You really didn't need to do this.

KEIKO

I make traditional Japanese meal.
Please enjoy eat (pointing to dumplings) Gyoza and (to fried rice dish) yakisoba. Oh and for dessert, mitsumame.

JAMES

This is unbelievable. I didn't know the oven even worked....

Keiko hands James a glass filled with a milky substance.

JAMES

...What's this?

KEIKO

Is my favorite drink. Very popular in Japan.

James takes a big swig.

JAMES
Hmm. Not bad. Kind of tangy.
(taking another swig) What's it
called?

KEIKO
Is called Calpis.

JAMES
(mouth full of liquid)
What?

KEIKO
Cal-pis.

James spits out the liquid in polite disgust.

JAMES
Cow piss?

KEIKO
Yes, Cal-pis! Very popular in
Japan. You like?

JAMES
Do I like to drink cow piss? You
know I'm more of a donkey piss man,
myself.

KEIKO
Oh I don't know.

JAMES
Excuse me. I'm going to pour
myself some wine and peroxide.

INT. JAPANESE OFFICE - JAPAN - DAY

A bottle of the popular Japanese drink, CALPIS, [5] sits on a desk. A female hand picks it up and brings it to her lips.

It is Azumi, working in her cubicle in a bustling Japanese office.

She types something onto her keyboard, and waits for the site to upload. Suddenly her mouth drops.

AZUMI
(in Japanese with English
subtitles)
Holy shit balls.

INT. KEIKO'S PARENTS' KITCHEN - JAPAN - SAME

Keiko's parents eat lunch in a heavy silence. The chair where Keiko used to sit feels notably empty. [NOTE: THE FOLLOWING SCENE IS IN JAPANESE WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES.]

MR. HASHIMOTO

The Bank of Japan held interest rates at 0.5% for the second meeting in a row.

MRS. HASHIMOTO

(glumly)

Eh....More spicy pickled cabbage?

INT. JAMES' APARTMENT - LATER

James and Keiko are sitting on the floor finishing up their dinner off of a makeshift coffee table adorned with a single glowing candle. The two are awkward in each other's presence, with the nervous energy of a first date.

JAMES

The dinner was delicious.

KEIKO

You like?

JAMES

The food was amazing. Sorry about the furniture. Or lack thereof. My ex-girlfriend took it all.

KEIKO

Oh you just...(gesturing for the word).

JAMES

Broke up, yes.

KEIKO

Oh.

JAMES

What about you? Are you single?

KEIKO

What?

JAMES

Do you have a boyfriend?

KEIKO
Me boyfriend? (blushing) No.

JAMES
Better off. Anyway, you're young.
What are you? Eleven?

KEIKO
Twenty-four.

JAMES
Damn you look young.

KEIKO
I have had boyfriend in university.
We were together for two years.

JAMES
Two years wow. What happened?

KEIKO
He won't introduce me to his
parents.

JAMES
Really?

KEIKO
He say, his parents want him to
date real Japanese girl. Girl who
look Japanese. So he can never
marry me.

JAMES
I'm sorry.
(hesitating)
Not that this is any of my
business, but why don't you look
Japanese?

KEIKO
My parents are Japanese -- they
make adopt me in America when I was
little baby and bring me back to
Japan.

JAMES
Wow. I definitely know a lot of
white parents who have adopted
Asian babies, but no Asian parents
who have adopted white ones.

KEIKO

But I don't feel white. I feel Japanese. But people don't understand. They see how I look, and they think I am same inside.

JAMES

I understand what you mean -- more than you probably know.

KEIKO

Why? You don't feel black?

JAMES

I guess. I don't know. I mean, what does that even mean to feel black anyway? I feel smart. I feel hungry. I feel tired. I don't feel black. I'm treated black. I graduated summa cum laude from Amherst, editor of the poetry journal, Marshall Scholar and yet my doctoral professor still assumes I must listen to rap music. And you know what? I do -- and I like it. But not because I'm black. Because it's good. But do I admit that to him? No -- not to him, not to anyone. Because I don't trust them not to see that as just confirmation that I really am black after all. (collecting himself) Sorry, alcohol always gets me on my soapbox. I never asked you -- what are you doing here in LA anyway? Not everyday someone plans a trip halfway across the world without booking a hotel room.

James smirks at Keiko.

KEIKO

Oh, I am here for....work.

JAMES

Work, really? What do you do?

KEIKO

Comedy.

JAMES

Now I definitely never pegged you as a comedian.

KEIKO

Oh yes. I make comedy impressions.

JAMES

Impressions. Like who?

KEIKO

Like Shibusaburo Kitasato.

JAMES

Who?

KEIKO

A Japanese physicist, and how you say, bacteriologist.

JAMES

Alright, well let's see.

KEIKO

No, no, no.

JAMES

Come on, please? I want to see what you do.

KEIKO

No, no, no.

JAMES

Please -- it's not everyday I get to see an impression of a bacteriologist.

KEIKO

Okay. But I have to translate -- so may be not as good.

JAMES

I understand.

KEIKO

It's something like...(in a more manly voice) "Come here, assistant helper. I have found the infectious agent that cause the Bubonic plague!"

Keiko waits uncomfortably for a response from James.

JAMES

Is that it?

KEIKO

Maybe it not translates well.

JAMES

Oh no -- I just wasn't sure it was done is all. Great. Very....informative. A much more intelligent impression than comics do here, that's for sure.

KEIKO

It's hard to translate and do voice at same time.

JAMES

I'm sure -- but no. Thank you. I bet that's even more funny in Japanese.

KEIKO

(defensive)

Yes, very funny in Japan. Sarah Silverman think I am very funny.

JAMES

Oh wow. Well she's great.

KEIKO

(mortified)

Yes.

JAMES

You're great.

KEIKO

(embarrassed)

What?

JAMES

I've never met anyone like you. I mean...that boy was very foolish to let you go.

James and Keiko stare at each other for moment.

KEIKO

(breaking the mood)

I must make sleep now.

JAMES

Yeah, of course. I'm sure you're jet-lagged and everything.

(MORE)

JAMES (cont'd)
Thanks, again, for dinner.
Goodnight, Keiko.

KEIKO
Goodnight, James-san.

LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Keiko is fast asleep on the couch as James slips off to school. He stops and stares at her sleeping for a moment. He quietly slips out smiling to himself.

LATER

A loud, obnoxious KNOCK jolts Keiko awake. She stares bewildered at the door as the KNOCKING continues to grow with intensity.

CRYSTAL (O.S.)
(saccharinely)
James?

In her head-to-toe Hello Kitty pj's, Keiko looks for James.

KEIKO
James?

CRYSTAL (O.S.)
James?!

KEIKO
James?!

CRYSTAL (O.S.)
(pissy)
Is there a girl inside?

KEIKO
There's a girl outside.

CRYSTAL (O.S.)
James, open this door right this
second or you can forget us getting
back together.

Keiko finally resigns herself to answering the door. The door swings open to reveal CRYSTAL (22), a very petite Korean-American girl (emphasis on the American). She is beautiful and frail-looking, but with the mouth of a sailor: a rhinestone-collared Chihuahua who will bite your face off.

In her pink Hello Kitty footied pj's, Keiko doesn't exactly make the best first impression either.

KEIKO

Herro. Can I help you?

CRYSTAL

Is this a fucking joke?

KEIKO

What joke?

CRYSTAL

Really funny making fun of Asian people. (yelling into house) Really mature, James.

KEIKO

James is not here. I think in crass.

CRYSTAL

In "crass" is he? Alright, listen to me you racist, cunt. Are you fucking him?

KEIKO

James is not here.

CRYSTAL

Are you one of his little coeds? And you better drop the fake Chinese accent, slut, before I shove it up your "crass."

KEIKO

Oh no. I am Japanese. I am pen pal of James from Japan.

CRYSTAL

Un-fucking-believable. Well, I've got a message for your little teacher friend. Tell him....

KEIKO

Hold on -- I get paper to write down.

Keiko quickly grabs a Hello Kitty note pad and pencil.

CRYSTAL

Tell him to keep the shit, you cock-sucking turd.

KEIKO
Sorry -- how you spell cock-
sucking?

CRYSTAL
C-O-C....fuck this. Just give it to
me.

Crystal scribbles something furiously and then shoves the pad
back to Keiko.

CRYSTAL
And as for you -- I hope you get
herpes up your asshole.

Crystal storms off.

KEIKO
Okay, yes, thank you. Nice to meet
you.

CRYSTAL
SUCK IT!

KEIKO
(obliviously cheerful)
Suck it! Suck it!

EXT. CITY BUS - AFTERNOON

Keiko boards a crowded city bus.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD OFFICE BUILDING - AFTERNOON

Keiko walks through the grimy lobby doors passed a sleeping
homeless man.

THIRD FLOOR HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

A yellowed door reads: "STAR DETECTIVES."

INT. DETECTIVE'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Keiko walks into a depressing office punctuated by the even
more depressing occupant. The room is cluttered with metal
filing cabinets and illuminated by the sickly glow of
fluorescent lights.

MARTY

Sit down. I'm Marty -- the detective here. Just so you know -- sit, please, sit -- we're running a 2 for 1 adultery special through the end of the month....

Keiko stares at him blankly.

MARTY

...No? You're lucky -- nasty business, especially in this town. Let me guess. Actress?

Keiko shakes her head no.

MARTY

Good for you. Sad excuse for a life, if you ask me. People come out here with their big dreams, headshots, voice-over reels and then...nothing. 20 years later I see them still waiting tables at Musso & Frank's. Tough industry. Very brutal. That's why I got out. The money. And I was good, too. Sunshine Boys, Man of La Mancha good. I was trained in the theater, you see. That's what most of these kids don't get. You have to be trained. Not to name drop here, but you know the Covina Family Dinner Theatre?

Keiko shakes her head confused.

MARTY

Very well-respected. I did a Stanley there brought down the house. When I said Stella -- I swear to God I could hear tears. You know why? Cause I said it real soft -- you know -- like he's hurt. (softly) "Stella." I showed his vulnerability which is what Brando -- rest his soul -- couldn't do. None of this (loudly like Brando) "Stellllaaaaaa!" Just soft like "Stella." Tom McDonald -- you know him? He worked on NYPD Blue -- in the Art Department -- saw that performance and said I shoulda had Dennis Franz's part. Sipowicz.

(MORE)

MARTY (cont'd)
Anyway, what was I saying? Oh yeah,
how can I help you?

Keiko pulls out her birth certificate and hands it to him.

KEIKO
I am looking for my biological
parents.

MARTY
Holy shit. I wasn't expecting that
voice outta that body. What did
you swallow a Chink for breakfast?

KEIKO
I'm Japanese. My parents make
adopt me from America and bring me
to Japan.

MARTY
You see when I was a kid, no
offense, that sort of mix-match
shit woulda never happened. You
looked like your parents and you
married someone that looked like
you. None of this p.c. crap....

He looks at the birth certificate.

MARTY
...Good Samaritan Hospital. Isn't
that the one there on Wilshire? Oh
you wouldn't know. Well, let me
see what I can do and let's talk on
Monday.

KEIKO
Rearry? Oh thank you! Thank you so
much.

MARTY
Sorry -- it's just going to take me
a second to get used to that.
Look, I always tell new clients
looking for lost loved ones not to
get too excited. Even if I do find
them -- which ain't that likely --
they might not even want to have
anything to do with you anyways.

Keiko's face drops.

MARTY
(softening)
Ah -- what do I know? I'll do my best.

INT. CITY BUS - EVENING

Keiko stares longingly at a signed picture of Dana Carvey in her lap. From the seat beside her, an old woman voices her disapproval.

OLD WOMAN (O.S.)
Dana Carvey, huh? Well isn't that special.

KEIKO
Yes, he is my father.

Keiko looks up to see Dana Carvey dressed as his character of the CHURCH LADY seated next to her.

CHURCH LADY
I wonder what the H-E-Double-Hockey-Sticks he's been up to for the last ten years.

KEIKO
Dad?

All of the sudden the man standing in the aisle next to them leans over to them. We see he is also Dana Carvey playing his character of JOHNNY CARSON.

JOHNNY CARSON
How about that character he used to do, Massive Head Wound Harry? When the dog started eating his brains. Now that was some weird and wild stuff. [6]

KEIKO
Dad, it's me, Keiko!

CHURCH LADY
Oh I'm sure he thinks he's very clever with his heathen comedy. I know another little someone who liked to make fun of going to church. Could it be Satan?

KEIKO
I'm your daughter!

No sooner than the words escape her mouth, the world returns to normal. The Church lady becomes just an old woman and Johnny Carson, a suited man on his way home from work.

INT. JAMES' APARTMENT - LATER

Keiko opens the door just as James is walking out of the bathroom with only a towel around his waist. She immediately covers her eyes in embarrassment.

JAMES
(obliviously)
Hey -- good day?

KEIKO
(flustered)
Uh, yes, good day. You? Good day?

JAMES
Yeah, spent most of it in the library reading "Leaves of Grass," so I can't complain.

KEIKO
Oh a girl came here for you today.

JAMES
Shit, I totally forgot Crystal was getting that box of her stuff today. And you were here -- oh man, she must have had a hissy-fit.

KEIKO
She wrote you a message. Here.

Keiko shows James the message Crystal wrote in her Hello Kitty notebook: a drawing of a big hairy penis.

JAMES
That's my ex-girlfriend for you. Look, I'm really sorry you had to deal with that -- her. She wasn't always such a monster -- or artist, for that matter. But who cares -- she's somebody else's problem now. Oh by the way, I'm not sure if you have plans tonight -- but my brother invited us to this party on the strip if you're interested.

KEIKO

You want me to come to a party with
you tonight?

JAMES

Yeah, I mean, if you're free. It
will probably be lame, but we could
just check it out.

KEIKO

Yes! Oh no!

JAMES

What?

KEIKO

I don't bring any fancy dress.

James eyes the box labeled "Crystal's Stuff" in the corner.

JAMES

I think you may be in luck.

MOMENTS LATER

James is standing outside of the closed bathroom door.

JAMES

Does it fit?

KEIKO (O.S.)

I think yes.

Suddenly a KNOCK on the door. Malik saunters in wearing his
"evening look."

MALIK

Wassup, bro. We gotta head, so we
get first dibs on the meat.

JAMES

And you wonder why you're single.

MALIK

I don't wonder shit. I'm fine. You
should worry about your own sorry
ass. Speaking of which, where is
miss....

Malik's eyes land on the pink Hello Kitty luggage.

MALIK

Oh hell no. This is some R. Kelly business you got going on right here. And I am so proud. You might just be the brother I always wanted after all.

JAMES

She's in the bathroom getting ready. And shut the fuck up or I'm not going. You say any of this crap in front of her -- I swear to God I will....

MALIK

Chill, my boy. I won't mess up your game.

JAMES

Oh and there is one other thing I should mention before you see her....She, uh, doesn't exactly look like....

Keiko emerges from the bathroom wearing a sexy black dress that is about as far from Hello Kitty as you can get. No longer cute: she's a knockout. Keiko looks at them insecurely for approval.

MALIK

Damn.

JAMES

(overlapping)

Damn.

MALIK

(whispering to James)

Shit, you got a harem up in here?
Where's the Asian one?

JAMES

Shhhh. That's her. I'll explain later.

MALIK

Nah, dawg. I got the white girl -- you can take the oriental wherever she at.

Malik goes up to Keiko like the smooth player he isn't.

MALIK

Yo, girl, wassup. I'm Malik. I must say, I like the style you rockin -- it's tight girl. Tiiight.

KEIKO

Herro, I am Keiko. I am pen pal of James from Japan.

Malik shrinks back to James, freaked out, but covering.

JAMES

Don't mind my brother. He's what we call in English -- re-tar-ded.

KEIKO

Re-tar-ded? (understanding)
Ohhhhhhhh. I forget my purse in bathroom.

Keiko leaves, and Malik urgently grabs James' arm.

MALIK

What the fuck is going on?

JAMES

I'll explain later. In the meantime, keep your big mouth shut and let's go.

Keiko reenters, purse in hand and beaming.

KEIKO

Ready?

JAMES

Ready.

KEIKO

I look okay?

JAMES

(leaning in)

You look amazing.

Keiko blushes, and Malik rolls his eyes.

EXT. SKYBAR AT THE MONDRIAN - NIGHT

You can hear the music blaring from inside one of LA's premiere night clubs. Beautiful, surgically enhanced, salon-tanned people stand in line hoping to get in.

INT. SKYBAR

The posh outside bar surrounds a gorgeously lit pool and overlooks an amazing view of LA. Wannabe starlets, producers and music moguls mill about.

MALIK
Now this is what I'm talking about.
Oh hell yes.

KEIKO
Excuse me -- I go find bathroom.

As Keiko walks away, Malik descends on James.

MALIK
Okay, we need to talk. What the fuck is going on? You got some white chick pretending to be Chinese crashing with you.

JAMES
Japanese.

MALIK
Whatever. I'm telling you right now, as a friend, this bitch is even crazier than the last one.

JAMES
She is not crazy. Look, she was adopted by Japanese people when she was a baby and raised there.

MALIK
Come on, J. You ain't that stupid. I could go around talking in a British accent saying I was adopted by Madonna, but that don't make it true.

JAMES
It's true. She's here on business.
Now leave her the fuck alone.

MALIK
Yeah, we'll see how Japanese she really is.

Keiko returns from the bathroom accompanied by another girl, AKO (25) a half-Japanese, half-Caucasian hipster.

KEIKO

James, Malik, this is Ako. She is Japanese, too!

AKO

(am American accent)

Half. My mom is Jewish from Long Island and my dad is Japanese. So I'm Jewpanese. Sorry, bad joke.

KEIKO

She is wearing t-shirt of band very popular in Japan. T.M. Revolution.

AKO

I couldn't believe when you said you knew them. I love this band.

Keiko and Ako start singing one of T.M. Revolution's famous songs: "OH! MY GIRL, OH! MY GOD." [7]

KEIKO

(in Japanese)

I went to one of their concerts with my best friend Azumi when I was like 14 years old. I had the biggest crush on the lead singer.

AKO

(in Japanese)

Oh my god, me too. None of my American friends understood. Said he looked like a tranny. But he is soooooo hot. (looking at Malik and James) So which guy is the one you said is retarded?

KEIKO

(in Japanese)

The younger one with the weird outfit. He seems pretty high-functioning, though. Just make sure to speak slower to him.

AKO

(in Japanese)

Got it. The other one is kind of hot.

KEIKO

(in Japanese)

You should see his ass in a towel.

The girls giggle innocently. Malik watches them dumbfounded as to how Keiko can speak Japanese after all. James just stands there impressed.

KEIKO
(back to English)
Sorry. We just talk about this band.

Ako stifles a giggle.

MALIK
Well, why don't you girls head over to our cabana?

AKO
(very slowly, as to a retarded person)
Thaaaank yooooouu.

INT. CABANA - LATER

You can see by the empty bottles, the alcohol has been flowing and people have coupled up. Ako is off talking with Malik, and Keiko is alone with James.

JAMES
It was amazing watching you speak Japanese. You're like another person. I wish I knew how to speak it with you.

KEIKO
(tipsy)
I think to learn Japanese is very hard.

JAMES
Try me. How do you say, "My name is James"?

KEIKO
Bokuno namae wa James desu.

James tries to repeat it, but only manages to garble out a bunch of nonsense cracking up Keiko.

KEIKO
No. Try again.

James is mesmerized by Keiko's lips as she slowly enunciates the Japanese phrase.

KEIKO
Bo-ku-no na-ma-e-wa James de-su.

He tries again to even less success.

JAMES
How do you say, "You are incredibly beautiful"?

Keiko stares nervously at James unsure of what to do. She starts to say it in Japanese, but before she can get two words out, James kisses her passionately. Keiko melts.

As James smiles at her, Malik swaggers over, a bit disheveled from his own makeout session.

MALIK
Yo. Ako knows about some phat party
in the hills her boss is throwing.
You down?

James and Keiko nod.

MALIK
(to James confidentially)
This Ako chick is hot -- although I
think she might have a little
Special Olympics in her.

AKO
(to Malik very slowly)
Do....you....want.....to.....go?

MALIK
(to Ako, also very slowly)
Yes....we.....do.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD HILLS HOME - LATER

James, Keiko, Malik, and Ako walk up to a swank Muholland Dr. mansion where a raging after party is taking place.

AKO
It's my boss' birthday party. He
manages a lot of big actors and
comedians.

JAMES
Oh Keiko's a comedian.

Keiko smiles nervously.

INT. HOLLYWOOD HILLS HOME

The interior is modern, angular, and uncomfortable in that way that costs a fortune. The crowd is definitely older than at the club -- but still beautiful. The crew walk around checking out the place.

AKO
Oh here, come meet my boss.

They approach a middle-aged hot-shot, BOB (45), deep in conversation with a trim man whose back is to us.

AKO
Hey Bob. Happy Birthday.

BOB
Hey, so glad you could make it.
Ako, this is Dana.

Suddenly the trim man turns around and we see he is actually DANA CARVEY. Keiko looks like she is about to pass out.

DANA CARVEY
Nice to meet you.

MALIK
Oh no fucking way. It's Garth!

DANA CARVEY
(trying to ignore)
So I was just telling Bob my son
just had his birthday and we all
went to this water park....

As Dana Carvey is talking Keiko starts to feel faint. His speech becomes slow and distorted to her. All of the sudden Keiko lunges forward and barfs all over Dana Carvey.

DANA CARVEY
(recoiling in horror)
Holy shit.

BOB
Oh my God, Dana, I'm so sorry. You
can grab one of my shirts upstairs.
(to Ako sternly) Get her out of
here!

EXT. HOLLYWOOD HILLS HOME - MOMENTS LATER

Keiko is sitting on the sidewalk with James' arm around her when Malik approaches.

MALIK

Yo, Ako's gonna take me home. You cool to get back?

JAMES

Yeah.

Ako pulls up in her blue Audi and beeps.

MALIK

(mouthing to James)
It's on!

Malik hops in Ako's car, and they speed off.

JAMES

You sure you're okay.

Keiko nods and then bursts into tears.

JAMES

Hey, don't worry about it. I'm sure you just gave him a gem for his stand-up routine. You're going to laugh at this someday. It might be a long time from now -- but definitely some day.

KEIKO

(through her tears)
I didn't come to America for work.
I came here to find my real parents.

JAMES

Yeah, I sort of guessed that after you showed me your comedy routine. No offense.

KEIKO

My whole life I feel so alone. And then I find my birth certificate, and I think if I find my real parents I will not feel alone anymore. But then I meet my real father and I throw up on him.

JAMES
Oh man, you threw up on him, too?

KEIKO
Noooo. Dana Carvey.

JAMES
Wait -- hold up a sec. Dana Carvey -
- that Dana Carvey -- is your
biological father?

Keiko pulls out her birth certificate and shows James.

JAMES
Whoa. I mean there are a lot of
Dana Carvey's, right? It's got to
be a different guy.

KEIKO
(emotional)
No. I know it is him. Ever since I
was little kid, I love Dana Carvey.
He fit everywhere. He can be any
person he want to be in whole
world: president, big muscle
person, even woman. I want that. I
want to be any person. Any person
but me. I want fit everywhere. I
want fit somewhere. He make me
happy. He make me hope. I know he
is my father. But now I make ruin.

JAMES
Look. You're upset and drunk.
Let's get you home and just deal
with this tomorrow.

INT. JAMES' BEDROOM - NIGHT

James tucks in a passed out Keiko into his bed. He kisses
her forehead before he heads to the couch with a pillow.

INT. KEIKO'S PARENTS' KITCHEN - JAPAN - NIGHT

Keiko's mom and dad solemnly eat dinner. Keiko's empty chair
still looms large. [NOTE: THE FOLLOWING SCENE IS IN JAPANESE
WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES.]

MR. HASHIMOTO

It will be interesting to see if
the Year of the Rat is fruitful for
the prime minister.

MRS. HASHIMOTO

Why couldn't we have just let her
be a comedian?

MR. HASHIMOTO

Nothing to be done.

MRS. HASHIMOTO

(uncharacteristically
bold)

No! There is something to be done.

MR. HASHIMOTO

Eh?

MRS. HASHIMOTO

Go and fight for our daughter.
Seiji, we have too long not stood
up for our child. Tried to make
her blend in for our benefit so we
can seem like a normal Japanese
family. But she needs us. When I
think about her all alone in Culver
City with the gangs and drugs and
drive-by shootings, I....We are her
parents. Now it is time to show
her.

Mr. Hashimoto stares silently for a moment at his wife.

MR. HASHIMOTO

I meant, nothing to be done *here*.

Reaching into his suit pocket, he pulls out two plane tickets
to California.

INT. JAMES' APARTMENT LIVING ROOM - MORNING

A very hung-over Keiko trudges into the living room where
James is sitting cheerily on the couch grading papers.

JAMES

Morning. How you feeling?

KEIKO

I think I am dead.

JAMES
Here have some water -- it will
make you feel better.

KEIKO
What happened after the club? I
don't remember.

JAMES
(sparing her)
Oh. Uh. Nothing.

KEIKO
Did we go to Ako's party?

JAMES
No, we just came back here.

KEIKO
Oh. (embarrassed) Did we...?

JAMES
No, no, no.

KEIKO
Oh. But did we... (puckers lips)

JAMES
(drawing Keiko into him)
That (kissing her) we definitely
did do.

Keiko beams at him.

JAMES
Stay right here. I need to pick up
a few things, and then I am going
to make you a feast American style.

James kisses her again quickly and then leaves.

Keiko grabs the telephone and dials.

INT. AZUMI'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Azumi is fast asleep next to a large, butch, Japanese woman.
The phone RING bolts Azumi awake. The clock reads: 4:14 AM.

[NOTE: THE FOLLOWING SCENE IS IN JAPANESE WITH ENGLISH
SUBTITLES UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED.]

INTERCUT - AZUMI'S BEDROOM/JAMES' APARTMENT

AZUMI
(into the phone)
Hello?

KEIKO
Azumi, it's me.

AZUMI
About fucking time. I've been
trying to reach you for days. Your
parents and I have been worried
sick.

KEIKO
(speaking quickly)
I know. I'm sorry. I'm okay. Oh
my God, I have so much to tell you.
I can't believe how much has
happened in just a couple days.
I'm in LA, and I hired a private
detective, and Dana Carvey is my
dad, and I'm staying with a pen pal
who's black, and I've never felt
this way about anyone before not
even Kenji, and I.....

AZUMI
Keiko, I've been trying to reach
you because you won.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

James merrily runs inside his parent's complex.

[NOTE: THE FOLLOWING SCENE IS IN ENGLISH.]

INT. OWEN FAMILY APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

A well-dressed African-American woman, DENYCE (50), fusses in the kitchen while GRANDPA (80) watches TV. Reading a newspaper on the couch is MAURICE (55), strict and African-American.

On the TV set we see TV pundit NANCY GRACE flaring her nostrils over the latest controversy.

DENEYCE
Dad, I can't turn it any louder or
the neighbors complain.

MAURICE
Tell Michael to put on his suit,
we're leaving for church in ten
minutes.

DENYCE
He wants to be called Malik now,
honey.

MAURICE
Well, why don't you tell Michael to
worry less about his name, and more
about getting a job.

James swings open the door and heads for the fridge.

DENYCE
J.J. my baby! Well, someone looks
happy this morning.

JAMES
(grabbing ingredients)
You put eggs in pancakes, right?

MAURICE
What am I -- a grocery?

DENYCE
And since when did my baby cook? It
wouldn't be a girl, by any chance,
making you smile like this?

JAMES
Thanks.

James kisses his mother merrily on the cheek as he starts to head out the door with his bag of groceries. Just as he's leaving, he sees on the TV a screen-size shot of Keiko wearing her pink cowboy hat.

ON THE TELEVISION

NANCY GRACE
Well I don't care what you say,
Dave. There is no way that making
fun of minorities is funny. Here
we have a white girl pretending to
be Japanese by squinting her eyes
and putting on a two-bit accent. I
mean really, how is this different
from Don Imus and his nappy-headed
ho's? Masahito?

The screen splits to reveal her guest, MASAHIRO, (30) a distinguished-looking Japanese-American man whose title on screen reads: SPOKESPERSON FOR ASIAN-ANTI DEFAMATION LEAGUE.

MASAHIRO
Masahiro.

NANCY GRACE
Whatever.

MASAHIRO
We at the AADL are glad that at least out of this unfortunate video can come a true dialogue about the racism facing Asians in this country today.

INT. JAMES' APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Keiko is sitting on the couch still on the phone.

[NOTE: THE SCENE IS IN JAPANESE WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES.]

KEIKO
What are you talking about Azumi?
Won what?

AZUMI
The competition. The comedy competition with Sarah Silverman. You won -- and you are going to be on Conan O'Brien this week!

KEIKO
I won? I won?

AZUMI
It's crazy. I posted your video at work and when I checked it at lunch it already had 500,000 hits. Last time I looked it was past 6 million.

KEIKO
Oh my God! I won! I won! I'm funny!! I'm funny!!

AZUMI
I told you Americans would know who William Howard Taft is.
(MORE)

AZUMI (cont'd)
Wait, what do you mean Dana Carvey
is your dad?

BACK TO NANCY GRACE SHOW - CONTINUOUS

[NOTE: THE REST OF THE DIALOGUE IS IN ENGLISH UNLESS
OTHERWISE INDICATED.]

The screen is split between Nancy Grace and Masahiro.

MASAHIRO
Nancy, can I say something?

NANCY GRACE
Yes, Massimo.

MASAHIRO
Masahiro.

NANCY GRACE
Your point?

MASAHIRO
The Asian Community would like an
apology from whoever this "Keiko"
is.

NANCY GRACE
Well, David, you run this contest.
Who is this girl who calls herself
"Keiko" really?

The screen splits to reveal DAVID (30), a young, hip comedy
writer whose title on screen reads: PRESIDENT OF LAUGH HOUSE
PRODUCTIONS.

DAVID
Well, that's actually part of the
brilliance of her act.

NANCY GRACE
Ha, brilliance.

DAVID
Sarah met her and said she didn't
once drop character. She's like a
female Sascha Baron Cohen --
totally devoted to the persona
she's cultivated of this Japanese
girl. She might just be a comedic
genius.

NANCY GRACE

Well, I'm sure the Nazi's thought
Nazi comics were hilarious, too.
Here's a clip of the comic -- I use
that term loosely -- who calls
herself Keiko doing her impression
of Christopher Walken. Tasteless.

BACK TO SCENE

We hear the clip playing faintly in the background. But our focus is on James who looks like he's been hit in the gut.

GRANDPA

That's pretty funny, actually.

DENEYCE

Dad! (to James) So when do we get
to meet the mystery girl?

JAMES

I need to go.

BACK TO TELEVISION

NANCY GRACE

(to camera)

Innovator or ingrate? More on this
Keiko controversy plus day 5028 of
the hunt for Natalee Holloway when
we return.

INT. JAMES' APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

James walks in looking rattled. Keiko runs towards him.

KEIKO

Oh James! You never believe! I'm
funny!!

JAMES

(cold)

Why are you on TV?

KEIKO

What?

JAMES

I just went over to my parents'
place, and they had the TV on, and
you were on it.

(MORE)

JAMES (cont'd)
They were showing some video of you doing your impressions. And they were saying you're just playing a character -- that you're like some female Borat or something. Is this some fucking joke? Who are you -- really?

KEIKO
James, I don't understand. I am Keiko. I make comedy impressions...

JAMES
God, I am such a fucking idiot. My brother warned me about this -- about you. Said you were crazy and just screwing with me. But I didn't believe him -- I defended you.

KEIKO
No, James, No. Please no. Let me explain. I win competition. I make to perform on Conan O'Brien.

JAMES
Well, congratulations, you and your character are famous. Now get the fuck out of my house.

Keiko looks at James, pleading with him to understand. Seeing there's no use, she grabs her bags and leaves. Walking out the door, she turns back to him.

KEIKO
I thought you were different. But you treat me like everyone else.

With Keiko gone, James collapses on the couch and slams the coffee table with his fist.

START KEIKO AND JAMES BEING SAD MONTAGE

Play: "CHOPPIN' BROCCOLI" covered by some plaintive Indie rock singer (think Colin Oberst from Bright Eyes)

-- Keiko solemnly drags her pink luggage behind her on Hollywood Blvd.

-- James puts away the fancy dress Keiko wore to Skybar.

-- Keiko passes a billboard featuring African-American model Tyson Beckford. She sighs, wistfully.

-- James drinks a can of Calpis while trying to grade papers.

-- Keiko passes Grauman's Chinese Theatre. Congregated in front are people employed to dress as various iconic movie personae: Marilyn Monroe, Jack Sparrow, Spiderman, Legolas, Lara Croft.

Suddenly Keiko's eye catches a duo dressed as Wayne and Garth.

KEIKO

Dad!

Keiko is excited for a second until "Garth" turns around and looks nothing like the real Dana Carvey.

GARTH IMPERSONATOR

(effeminately to Keiko)

Hey aren't you that comic?

Murmurs of "Oh my god it's Keiko." "It's her." "Mommy, can I get her autograph?" as a crowd begins to gather around Keiko, furiously snapping photos.

Keiko runs down the busy street, away from the gawking crowd, Keiko, and ducks into a souvenir shop.

MOMENTS LATER

Keiko reemerges from the gift shop now completely incognito in head-to-toe LA paraphernalia. She has an LA sweatshirt, LA sweat pants, LA baseball hat, sunglasses, LA gloves, and an LA bandana tied across her face like a bandit. There is literally no skin of hers showing anywhere.

A MIDWESTERN WOMAN, (65) and her GRANDSON (10) stare at Keiko as they walk by.

MIDWESTERN WOMAN

Look, Timmy, it's Michael Jackson.

MALIK

Sorry.

EXT. MELROSE AVENUE - LA - AFTERNOONS

James pulls up in his car to the usual spot on Melrose where Malik is hocking his rap demo to MELROSE GIRL, (17) jailbait.

MALIK

Yo girl, my flow make Fiddy look
like a nickel. Just axe my homie
here. He'll tell you whassup.

JAMES

I've got to go -- so either hop in
the car or walk.

MALIK

My boy, what's your problem?

JAMES

My problem is that I'm sick of
driving your broke ass around
because you don't want to grow up
and get a real job.

MELROSE GIRL

(walking away)

Uh, thanks anyway.

INT. JAMES' CAR - MOMENTS LATER

MALIK

That was some wack shit back there.
I was axing you for help, and....

JAMES

Asking.

MALIK

Excuse me?

JAMES

"Axing" would be the action of
cutting something down with an axe.

MALIK

Well, maybe if you stopped
pretending you were a white man and
started being who you really is,
you'd have understood what I was
saying.

JAMES

I am being who I really am. I
teach poetry. Believe it or not
black men can have jobs other than
basketball players and emcees.

MALIK

And how did you get into poetry? By listening to Pac, and Biggie, and free-styling with me. Or is that too black for you to remember?

JAMES

We grew up in a middle-class neighborhood in Culver City, not Martin Luther King Blvd.

MALIK

But we're black. And no matter how many Ph.D.'s you get, professor, people still gonna lock their car doors when you walk by.

JAMES

So what? I should just become the "thug" people expect me to be? Is that being authentic?

MALIK

More authentic than those cracker-ass loafers and this Volvo.

JAMES

Oh you should talk, "Malik." You think you are all representing your people, but you're just a walking racist stereotype of a black man: a wannabe rapper, with no job, who has to "axe" his brother for rides everywhere.

MALIK

Fuck you. Let me out. I'm gonna walk.

JAMES

Be my guest. Maybe it'll actually force you to grow up.

Just as James is pulling over, a cop car rolls up.

POLICE OFFICER

Can I help you boys with something?

JAMES

No, officer, everything is fine.

POLICE OFFICER

Whose car is this?

JAMES

It's my car. Can I ask what we're
doing that's bothering you?

POLICE OFFICER

I suggest you boys get along your
way now before there's any trouble.

Cop drives off leaving James both fuming and deflated.

MALIK

Cock-sucker.

JAMES

I don't know why I even bother.
Nothing makes a fucking difference.

MALIK

Look, I'm sorry about the shit I
said, but it ain't easy being your
brother. You think I like having to
get rides from you, Mr. Marshall
fucking Scholar? But I don't wanna
get some sell-out job and be
miserable the rest of my life. Hip
hop is the one thing I love, and
I'm good at it, too. Hell, there
ain't no other brother out there
knows more about hip hop than me.

JAMES

Yeah, well....Man, I'm sure I'm
going to live to regret this -- but
the university is actually looking
for someone to give a lecture on
the poetry of hip-hop.

MALIK

You serious? Oh hell yeah - start
with a little KRS-ONE move on to
Dre during his sequin period....

JAMES

You really think you could teach
this?

MALIK

In my sleep.

JAMES

Cause maybe we could do it together
- so you don't make a complete ass
of yourself. I could dig up some of
my old Slick Rick.

MALIK

Ohh, you didn't just say Slick
Rick. My brother is back. Well you
scratch my back, I scratch yours.

JAMES

What?

MALIK

I am going to get you laid. And
none of that crazy white Asian girl
stuff. Sweet, rich, dark chocolate.

JAMES

Thanks, but no thanks.

MALIK

Come on, let me take you out.

JAMES

Fine. Fine.

MALIK

Alright! I told you that bitch was
crazy. Her video's funny as shit,
though.

JAMES

Malik.

MALIK

Sorry.

INT. PAYPHONE IN HOLLYWOOD - SAME

Keiko, still dressed in her LA disguise, holds the phone to
her ear anxiously.

INT. KEIKO'S HOME IN JAPAN - SAME

The phone rings and rings, but the house is empty. The
answering machine finally beeps.

KEIKO
(trying to hold back
tears, Japanese with
English subtitles)
Hey, mom and dad. It's me, Keiko.

INT. AIRPLANE - SAME

Mr. and Mrs. Hashimoto sit next to Azumi.

KEIKO (V.O.)
Everything is going great here. I'm
a famous comic, actually. People in
America really love my impressions.

Keiko's father turns the page of his massive book:
FEUDALISTIC SHOGUNATE AND THE MEIJI RESTORATION.

KEIKO (V.O.)
Oh and dad, I do an impression of
Emperor Go-Daigo that I think you
would like.

PAYPHONE IN HOLLYWOOD

KEIKO
I'm going to be on tv tomorrow, so
maybe you can watch, if you have
time. Anyway, I just wanted to
say, I miss you.

Keiko hangs up, discouraged. She then dials a number she has
written on a piece of paper.

VOICE ON PHONE
Laugh House Productions.

KEIKO
Herro, this is Keiko.

INT. LIMOUSINE - LATER

Keiko is sitting with her luggage accompanied by a LAUGH
HOUSE ASSISTANT -- young and blue-toothed.

LAUGH HOUSE ASSISTANT

Thank God we finally found you. David was freaking out we were going to have to go with our number 2 for Conan, some prop comic out of Tulsa who's got a following on myspace. Big fan of your work by the way. Do you do Groundlings? (he hands her a hotel key) So you'll be staying at the Roosevelt tonight, and then we'll bring you over to Conan in the morning. Congrats, Keiko, you're America's hottest comic.

Keiko smiles proudly.

INT. JAMES' APARTMENT - EARLY MORNING

James and Malik stumble in drunk from a night on the town only now ending.

MALIK

Mmm, I'm telling you -- the ass on that girl.

JAMES

Hey now, what about Paquita and her Rubenesque contours.

MALIK

Once you go black, brother!

As James sets down his coat he notices that his answering machine light is blinking.

JAMES

Oh Paquita. Calling so soon. What hath thee to say fair beauty?

James hits the button to check the message.

MARTY (O.S.)

Hi, uh Keiko, Detective Marty here over at Star Detectives. Just wanted to get back to you on your search for your biological parents. I've got good news and bad news. Hate to say this sort of shit on the phone, but figure you'd want to hear sooner rather than later. So here it goes.

(MORE)

MARTY (O.S.) (cont'd)
The good news is I was able to find your birth parents. They used fake names, of course -- always do when they're giving them up. I had one kid come in here with a birth certificate says dad's name is Mickey Mouse. I guess yours was a fan of some comedian Dana Carvey. Anyway, your mom's real name is Angela Johnson, and your dad's Ronnie Steinman. So you're half Jewish. Mazel tov. The best always are. You know, I played a great Tevye up in Gardena, don't know if I mentioned it before. Anyway, the bad news. God, this is the shit I hate. Both your parents passed a few years back. Sounds like there was some pretty heavy drugs involved. Nicest decision they might have ever made giving you up. So that's the update. You have my number.

James and Malik stand dumb-founded over the machine.

MALIK

Shit.

JAMES

Yeah.

MALIK

I guess she was telling the truth.

JAMES

I guess so. (sobering up) So what exactly do I do?

MALIK

Get your ass to Conan. Come on -- I'm driving. You drive like a pussy. Sorry vagina.

INT. ROOSEVELT HOTEL ROOM - MORNING

Keiko is getting ready for her Conan O'Brien performance. She stares at herself nervously in the mirror.

KEIKO

(in Japanese)

My cowboy hat!

Suddenly there is a KNOCK at the door. Opening the door, Keiko sees it is Dana Carvey.

DANA CARVEY
(in English)
Did someone forget this?

Dana pulls from behind his back her pink cowboy hat.

KEIKO
Dana Carvey -- how did you know where I....?

[NOTE: THE FOLLOWING SCENE IS IN JAPANESE WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES AND HAS THE FEELING OF A SURREAL DREAM.]

DANA CARVEY
(suddenly switching to Japanese)
Uh uh uh. I'm dad now. Remember?

KEIKO
You really are my father?

DANA CARVEY
Of course, I am.

Just as this touching father-daughter reunion is taking place, in walks another Dana Carvey dressed as his character GARTH from "Wayne's World." Wearing an identical pink cowboy hat, he proceeds to sit down next to Keiko and the real Dana Carvey in the vein of "Being John Malkovich."

GARTH
I'm Keiko's dad, too. Schwinguu!

KEIKO
You are?

Now another Dana Carvey strolls in playing his character of the CHURCH LADY wearing a pink cowboy hat and joins the rest.

CHURCH LADY
I'm your father, too. Isn't that special?

And then another Dana Carvey playing GEORGE BUSH SR. wearing a pink cowboy hat.

GEORGE BUSH SR.
Read my lips: I'm Keiko's dad.

And another Dana Carvey as HANS also wearing pink cowboy hat.

HANS

I'm Hans -- and I'm just here to be
(CLAP) your dad.

And another Dana Carvey as Tom Brokaw wearing a pink cowboy hat.

TOM BROKAW

This just in. President Ford was killed today. And I'm Keiko's father.

And another Dana Carvey as JOHNNY CARSON wearing a pink cowboy hat.

JOHNNY CARSON

I'm Keiko's father.

And another Dana Carvey as ROSS PEROT also in pink cowboy hat joins the now sea of Dana Carvey's and pink cowboy hats.

ROSS PEROT

No I am! I am! And just to prove it to you, here's a check for one billion dollars.

KEIKO

I knew it! I always knew it! I had your pictures on my wall all along. You were always there watching out for me.

CHURCH LADY

Well isn't that extra special.

KEIKO

Dad...I mean, dads...I've felt so alone for so long. Nobody understands me. And then I met this boy and I thought he was finally the one. But then I won this competition, and he got angry.

GARTH

Benjamin's nobody's friend. If Benjamin were an ice cream flavor, he'd be pralines and dick.

KEIKO

No, dad, his name is James. And he's an amazing guy. It's just a big misunderstanding.

(MORE)

KEIKO (cont'd)

Maybe I should call him and try to explain again?

GEORGE BUSH SR.

Not going to do it. Wouldn't be prudent.

KEIKO

I guess you're right. (hesitating)
Dad, why did you and mom give me up?

ROSS PEROT

I was just sitting on my porch, just minding my own business, and this dog come up to me an says 'Hey, ain't you Ross Perot?

JOHNNY CARSON

I did not know that.

KEIKO

I don't understand. Did you not love me?

DANA CARVEY

Of course we loved you, Keiko. We did what we thought best at the time. But we never forgot about you -- not for one second.

GARTH

I love you, dream woman.

KEIKO

I love you, too, dads. (looking at clock) Oh no, I have to go now to be on Conan O'Brien. See, I'm a famous comic just like you. But can I come and live with you when the show is done?

Suddenly what has felt like a surreal dream turns into a nightmare.

GEORGE BUSH SR.

Not going to do it. Wouldn't be prudent.

KEIKO

What? Why not?

GARTH

Did you ever see that "Twilight Zone" where the guy signed a contract and they cut out his tongue and put it in a jar and it wouldn't die, it just grew and pulsated and gave birth to baby tongues?

JOHNNY CARSON

That is some weird, wild stuff.

KEIKO

But I don't want to go back to my fake parents. They don't understand me like you do. I want to be with you -- my real dads.

DANA CARVEY

(coldly)

Hey, aren't you the girl who barfed on me?

HANS

Look at the little girlie girl.

KEIKO

No, I didn't mean to. I just got drunk.

CHURCH LADY

Oh I don't know -- could it be...SATAN?

KEIKO

No dad, it's me, your daughter.
It's Keiko. It's Keiko.

DANA CARVEY

You're that girl from the party.

HANS

Girlie girl!

CHURCH LADY

Satan! Satan!

These mantras repeat as the Dana Carvey's start to close in on Keiko like some bad zombie movie. Suddenly Dana Carvey playing MASSIVE HEADWOUND HARRY walks in holding a bloody pink cowboy hat.

MASSIVE HEADWOUND HARRY
Sorry, I'm late. I forgot where you
live.

KEIKO
No! Get away from me! I don't want
you anymore. I just want my old
parents back. No!!!!

INT. HOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

KNOCK. KNOCK. Keiko bolts awake. KNOCK. She goes to the door.

LAUGH HOUSE ASSISTANT
Time to head over to Conan.

INT. JAMES' CAR - CONTINUOUS

James and Malik sit in bumper-to-bumper traffic on the 405.

JAMES
Damn it.

Malik pulls into the breakdown lane and steps on the gas.

JAMES
What are you doing?

MALIK
Getting you laid, my brother.

INT. LIMOUSINE - CONTINUOUS

As Keiko pulls up to the Conan O'Brien building she sees Asian picketers outside holding signs reading: "KEIKO IS SICKO," "RACISM IS NOT FUNNY" and "ASK DAVE." Keiko stares at them, perplexed.

INT. CONAN O'BRIEN - MAKEUP ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Keiko sits excitedly in her makeup chair getting her eyes done. On one side of her, getting his face powdered is comedian EDDIE IZZARD, and on the other, the legendary performer ENGELBERT HUMPERDINCK.

In walks a PRODUCTION ASSISTANT (29) wearing a headset.

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT
You're up in a minute, Mr. Izzard.
Mr. Humperdinck, we'll do the mic
check at commercial.

EDDIE IZZARD
(turning quizzically to
Humperdinck)
Engelbert Humperdinck?

ENGELBERT HUMPERDINCK
Yes, that's right.

EDDIE IZZARD
Oh fantastic. I'd heard you were
dead.

ENGELBERT HUMPERDINCK
I am. (beat) Just kidding. [8]

Eddie Izzard, Engelbert, and the P.A. laugh.

EDDIE IZZARD
And you must be Keiko. Big fan.

Keiko smiles confidently.

ENGELBERT HUMPERDINCK
Actress?

EDDIE IZZARD
No, comedian. You've got to see
her -- she's absolutely hysterical.

Keiko beams.

ENGELBERT HUMPERDINCK
(to Keiko)
So what's your act?

KEIKO
(proudly)
I make comedy impressions.

EDDIE IZZARD
Bloody hilarious, right? A white
girl pretending to be a Japanese
girl who does terrible impressions.
Genius really.

Keiko's face sinks as she finally realizes why everyone
suddenly finds her so funny.

EDDIE IZZARD

(to Keiko)

You know, I do a rather awful impression of Christopher Walken myself. Sort of a Christopher Walken doing Shakespeare, really. So sort of a (in very exaggerated Christopher Walken voice) "To be or not to be -- eh, you know -- it's a question." [9]

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT

Keiko, you're on deck.

Keiko looks like she's had the wind knocked out of her.

INT. RENTAL CAR - CONTINUOUS

Keiko's parents and Azumi are stuck in the same traffic on the 405.

As James' Volvo passes them in the break down lane, Keiko's father veers impulsively into the lane after them.

MR. HASHIMOTO

(like a warrior)

Bansai!!!!

INT. CONAN O'BRIEN - STAGE

Conan is seated at his desk talking with Eddie Izzard.

THROUGH THE TV CAMERA

CONAN O'BRIEN

So, Eddie, wonderful to have you back. I've got to say, your new film, "The Cherry Orchard" is great.

EDDIE IZZARD

Yes, thank you. We're all very proud.

CONAN O'BRIEN

So tell me what it was like to work with Sarah Michelle Gellar?

BACK TO SCENE

GREENROOM - CONTINUOUS

The show plays faintly on the TV in the greenroom where Keiko sits looking nauseated.

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT
(to Keiko)
After the commercial break --
you're up.

INT. NBC STUDIOS - CONTINUOUS

James and Malik run towards the Conan stage. As they sprint, a trolley carrying fanny-packed tourists passes them.

TOURIST #1
Oh look, Chris Rock and Wesley Snipes.

TOURIST #2
No, dummy, Chris Tucker.

INT. CONAN O'BRIEN- STAGE - CONTINUOUS

THROUGH THE TV CAMERA

CONAN O'BRIEN
Tonight we have a very controversial comic. Winner of the Laugh House's stand-up comedy contest. Please put your hands together for the lovely Miss Keiko!

Walking on stage, Keiko looks like she is going to pass out.

EXT. CONAN O'BRIEN - PERFORMERS' ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

As James and Malik run up the side door they are blocked by a 300 lb. security guard, TINO (20).

TINO
This is the performers entrance only.

JAMES
But I'm with a performer.

TINO
Unless you're a manager or...

MALIK

Tino?

TINO

Yeah?

MALIK

Shit, you got fat since high school.

TINO

Michael Owen? Get the hell out.

MALIK

Yo, it's Malik now, dawg.

TINO

Right on, man.

James gives Malik a look of urgency.

MALIK

So look, we cool?

TINO

(looking around)

Yeah sure. Just don't tell anyone -- or I get in trouble.

Walking through the entrance, James plants a big kiss on Malik's cheek.

MALIK

Alright tone down the gay.

INT. CONAN O'BRIEN - STAGE - CONTINUOUS

Keiko is like a deer in headlights on the stage. As the applause fades, there is an uncomfortable silence.

INTERCUT - THROUGH THE TV CAMERA/NOT THROUGH TV CAMERA

KEIKO

Hello. I am Keiko. Today I make for you comedic impressions.

People laugh.

CONAN O'BRIEN

Now Keiko, I hear you do a mean Robert Deniro.

KEIKO

Yes. "You talkiniru to me. You
talkiniru to me. You
talkiniru....well who the herru else
are you talkiniru too?"

The audience laughs harder, only making Keiko more
uncomfortable.

GREENROOM - CONTINUOUS

James and Malik nervously watch Keiko on the TV screen along
with Engelbert Humperdinck.

ENGELBERT HUMPERDINCK

I don't get it. Is she white or
Japanese?

INT. NBC STUDIOS - CONTINUOUS

Mr. and Mrs. Hashimoto and Azumi run towards the Conan stage
passed the trolley.

TOURIST #1

Lucy Liu!

TOURIST #2

Lisa Ling!

STAGE - CONTINUOUS

CONAN O'BRIEN

So, Keiko. Given your background,
you must do some impersonations of
Japanese people, too.

KEIKO

I can do Nichiren Daishonin.

CONAN O'BRIEN

Of course. Rodney Dangerfield used
to do a great impression of him. Or
her?

MAX WEINBERG

Doesn't he plays for the Mariners?

KEIKO

He is 13th century monk.

CONAN O'BRIEN

Well, this should be good.

The audience laughter grows with intensity -- becoming more and more maniacal to Keiko's ear.

GREENROOM - CONTINUOUS

The frazzled intern walks up to the P.A. trailed by Mr. And Mrs. Hashimoto and Azumi.

INTERN

Kendall, they say they are Keiko's family.

MRS. HASHIMOTO

(in heavily-accented English)

We are!

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT

I'm sorry, folks, but...

JAMES

No they're fine. They're with me.

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT

And you are?

JAMES

Keiko's boyfriend.

Azumi smiles approvingly at James. Keiko's mom looks like she's going to pass out.

STAGE - CONTINUOUS

Keiko stands there overwhelmed by the sensation that she is being laughed at, not with.

KEIKO

"Why did you exiled me? All I want to do is make reform in Buddhism."

The audience's laughter keeps building with intensity.

Keiko looks like she is caught in a nightmare.

GREENROOM - CONTINUOUS

Keiko's entourage watches her on the TV.

MOM
(in Japanese)
Oh my goodness! Seiji, get the
camcorder.

ON THE TELEVISION

CONAN O'BRIEN
You may not know this, but Keiko is
not only a monastic scholar, but
also one of U.S. Presidents.

MAX WEINBERG
Excuse me. Aren't you the 27th
president of the United States?

KEIKO
Uh....Uh....

BACK TO SCENE

DAD
(filming with camcorder)
Grover Creverand.

MOM
Shhhh.

Azumi turns to James.

AZUMI
(in English)
You must be the pen pal.

JAMES
Yeah. Nice to meet you.

MALIK
And I am the pen pal's brother.
The pen pal's single brother.

Azumi rolls her eyes.

STAGE - CONTINUOUS

MAX WEINBERG
Aren't you the 27th president of
the United States?

KEIKO
Yes, young man. I am William....I
am William...Howard...

Keiko suddenly bursts into tears.

GREENROOM - CONTINUOUS

DAD
(in Japanese)
Taft, of course.

MOM
(in Japanese)
What's wrong? Let me out there.

STAGE - CONTINUOUS

CONAN O'BRIEN
Hey don't sweat it. I always hated
history, too.

Uncomfortable laughter from the audience.

GREENROOM - CONTINUOUS

JAMES
(to P.A.)
Can't you get her off? For god's
sake cut to commercial or
something.

STAGE - CONTINUOUS

CONAN O'BRIEN
Keiko, everything okay?

KEIKO
I want everyone to stop laughing at
me.

CONAN O'BRIEN
You're a comic. That means things
are going well.

KEIKO
(getting angry)
No, they think I am making fun of
Japanese person. But I am Japanese
person. I am not character you
laugh at. I am real person.
(MORE)

KEIKO (cont'd)
I want to be comic in Japan all my
life, but the truth is: I am not
funny.

AUDIENCE

The audience looks around confused as to whether or not this
is actually part of her "schtick."

STAGE - CONTINUOUS

KEIKO
But then people think I am white
person making pretend to be
Japanese, and now they think I am
funny. I am white person. But I am
also Japanese person. My parents
make adopt me when I little baby
from California and bring me to
Japan. When I find out they are
not my true parent, I start to hate
them. (breaking down) And I am so
sorry. They only love me -- and I
hate them because I don't look like
them.

GREENROOM - CONTINUOUS

Keiko's parents grab each other's hands, a fleeting glimmer
of emotion from Dad. At this point everyone is gathered with
bated breath around the TV set, including Engelbert
Humperdinck.

STAGE - CONTINUOUS

KEIKO
So, I come to America to find my
real parents. And some place where
I belong. But it is not different
here. Just like Japan people only
see the what I look like not who I
am. Except one person. He see the
real me. Not white person. Not
Asian person. Keiko. And I see
him. Not brack person. And I am in
love with him. But now he think I
make pretend like everyone else.
But I don't make pretend. I know
my inside and outside do not make
match -- but so what! I am both.
(MORE)

KEIKO (cont'd)
I am not freaky person. I am not
character. I am Keiko.

The audience bursts into applause and cheers. Even Conan and Eddie start to applaud from the stage.

EDDIE IZZARD
If you want to talk about your
insides and outsides not matching,
try being a transvestite who
fancies girls. Brilliantly fun to
explain.

GREENROOM - CONTINUOUS

Everyone stares proudly at the TV screen.

ENGELBERT HUMPERDINCK
Quite an amazing young lady.
Didn't you say you were her
boyfriend?...

James nods.

ENGELBERT HUMPERDINCK
...Then what the hell are you doing
still standing here? (grabbing
James by the arm) Come with me.

STAGE - CONTINUOUS

CONAN O'BRIEN
Well, thank you, Keiko. I sincerely
hope everything works out for you.
Now, it is my pleasure to
introduce to you musical legend
Engelbert Humperdink.

BACKSTAGE - CONTINUOUS

As Engelbert drags James towards stage, a worried P.A. tries to stop them.

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT
Mr. Humperdink. He can't go on
stage.

ENGELBERT HUMPERDINCK
Sweet cheeks, they don't call me
the "King of Romance" for nothing.

STAGE - CONTINUOUS

Engelbert pulls James, who looks like he's going to pass out with stage-fright, onto the stage with him. James' eyes immediately meet Keiko's.

KEIKO

James?

JAMES

Keiko.

CONAN O'BRIEN

Apparently it is romantic comedy night on Late Night. Can I get a producer up here?

James runs to Keiko and envelopes her in his arms.

KEIKO

But, what are you doing here?

JAMES

I love you.

The two of them kiss passionately as the audience bursts into applause and "aw's".

KEIKO

I can't believe you came.

JAMES

I'm not the only one.

At this point, Keiko's parents, Azumi, and Malik walk on stage. Malik struts on, completely at home in front of the audience. Keiko runs to them and throws her arms around her mother and Azumi.

CONAN O'BRIEN

Okay, isn't it time for a commercial break or something?

KEIKO

(in Japanese)

I'm so sorry. You are my true family. I know that now.

MOM

(in Japanese)

I'm so proud of you, Keiko.

Dad grunts stiltedly in agreement. Keiko turns to him a bit unsure.

DAD
(in Japanese)
Taft-san. Very clever.

Keiko throws her arms around her dad. He softens a bit in her embrace.

JAMES
(suddenly serious)
Oh there is something else I need
to tell you. The detective called.
He found your real parents.

KEIKO
(smiling at her parents)
So did I.

MALIK
Yo, Humptydink. Could we get some
music in the house?

ENGELBERT HUMPERDINCK
Hit it.

As the band strikes up, Engelbert begins to sing the classic:
"MY WAY."

MALIK
(to Azumi)
They're playin' our song, girl.

AZUMI
I am a lesbian.

MALIK
Thank you, God.

AZUMI
(to Keiko in English)
So does this mean you are a
comedian like Dana Carvey now?

Taking everything in for a moment.

KEIKO
(in English)
No. I think I have better idea.

CUT TO:

A hand-written sign propped on an easel reads:

"KEIKO'S AMAZING ADOPTION SUPPORT GROUP"

ROLL CREDITS

As the credits roll we see....

INT. SUBURBAN LIVING ROOM - DAY

A multi-ethnic group of people, including Keiko, sits in a circle of chairs. An INDIAN-AMERICAN BOY (13) has the floor.

INDIAN-AMERICAN BOY

It's like people can't understand how I'm Jewish. I'm like, "Hello, my name is Moishe Steinberg. It doesn't get more Jewish than that." But all they see is "Sanjay."

KEIKO

That must be very hard.

INDIAN-AMERICAN BOY

Yeah. You should have seen my bar mitzvah. I thought people's heads were going to explode.

A CHINESE-AMERICAN GIRL (8) has the floor.

CHINESE-AMERICAN GIRL

(strong Texan accent)

I hate it when people will talk all slow to me, like I don't speak English.

Everyone nods in agreement. An AFRICAN-AMERICAN GIRL (10) nods in agreement.

AFRICAN-AMERICAN GIRL

Or I'll be standing next to my mom - - whose white -- and someone will come up to me and say, "Where's your mommy, honey?"

KEIKO

Oh yes. That happen to me, too.

James, dressed in a swanky professorial outfit, walks in with a tray of cool drinks.

JAMES

Sorry to interrupt. But who wants a glass of ice cold Calpis?

Everyone raises their hands enthusiastically. "Me!" "I do!" etc.

James and Keiko share a smile.

THE END

Please to enjoy links of funny.....

- [1] <http://video.aol.com/video-detail/the-real-church-lady/4174235293>
- [2] <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EvQikrlbmJE>
- [3] <http://www.truveo.com/Derek-Stevens-Chopping-Broccoli/id/1478545345>
- [4] <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZnoLeVuAwY4>
- [5] <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QsMA-p3nRd8>
- [6] <http://www.truveo.com/Massive-Head-Wound-Harry/id/1611148549>
- [7] <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VmyJJdx-RYE>
- [8] <http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=6416747155241758770&q=englebert+eddie+izzard&total=13&start=0&num=10&so=0&type=search&plindex=3> (start at 4:09 for Engelbert section)
- [9] <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pMraego-25o>



