

## 515 REESE'S APARTMENT TRANSCRIPT

Hal and Lois go into the boys' room to find Dewey asleep with a toy catalogue open next to him, pointing to a trampoline for \$250.

**Lois:** Would you look at that?  
**Hal:** He wants a trampoline for his birthday.  
**Lois:** That's so cute, but we can't afford that.

(Dewey moves his finger to a different toy, which costs \$79.

**Lois:** He can have that if he doesn't have a party.

(Dewey moves his finger to a pogo stick which costs \$19.99.

**Hal:** That is perfect. He'll be so surprised!

Malcolm is walking through the school.

**Malcolm (TC)** This is the best part of my day. The sixteen minutes between the horrors of school and the horrors of home.

**Teacher:** Malcolm! There you are. You know Ira James, right? All-state fallback, state single season rushing reekie? Who am I kidding. Probably never even talked to you.

**Ira:** Hi.

**Teacher:** Ira's graduating this year. He's got entries for six division one eight colleges. All right. But the problem is, his school wants him to write an essay on his application.

**Malcolm:** So-

**Teacher:** So, Ira's an idiot. I mean hamster idiot. And that's only if we're talking about a really stupid hamster.

**Ira:** Mum says I have other nice qualities.

**Teacher:** Since you're the smartest kid in the school, I want you to help him write his essay.

**Malcolm:** I wish I could, but I've got three midterms next week.

**Teacher:** Look, you don't understand. Ira is a football player. That means when he needs something, it's up to you non-football kids to do it for him. The cheerleaders understand it. Look, I'll make it worth your while. I'll let you out of gym for the

rest of the semester.

**Malcolm:** I don't mind gym.

**Teacher:** Sure you don't, brainiac.

Cut to home, where Lois is sitting at the table as Hal arrives home from work.

**Hal:** Hi, honey.  
**Lois:** I'm going to need you to be calm.  
**Hal:** Oh, jeez. Which kid is it?  
**Lois:** I'm not going to tell you, you're not calm enough yet.  
**Hal:** Reese. Ok, deep breath. What'd he do?  
**Lois:** All right. Reese. (Cut)

Hal mutters angrily about what Reese did.

**Lois:** Honey, do you want some tea, or a drink?

**Malcolm:** What's wrong with Dad?  
**Lois:** Your father just found out what Reese did.  
**Malcolm:** What'd he do?  
**Lois:** Your brother. (Cut)  
**Malcolm:** Oh my god! Did they have to evacuate?

Reese arrives home and Hal mutters angrily at him.

**Reese:** Oh man. What a day. Big lost his other arm in the meat grinder. And the health department shut us down for fifteen minutes. We were playing catch-it all afternoon.

Hal continues muttering and Lois translates it:

**Lois:** He wants to know you could do something so horrible! And think you could get away with it? (To Hal) Was that scramble or strangle?  
**Reese:** What are you guys talking about?  
**Lois:** You know very well what we're talking about. Last week you - (cut)  
**Reese:** I can name third world countries where stuff like that happens all the time!  
**Lois:** What am I going to do with you, Reese? I don't want to tell you this is a new low, because EVERY TIME I DO, YOU TAKE IT AS A PERSONAL CHALLENGE!  
**Reese:** You know what? I've just worked my butt off for six hours! And I don't appreciate being yelled at the second I come through the door!  
**Lois:** OH - OH - YOU'RE COMPLAINING?  
**Hal:** DON'T COMPLAIN YOU ASS!  
**Lois:** Hal, give yourself another minute!  
**Hal:** Well you both can just shut up!  
**Malcolm (TC):** Oh boy. In this family, that's what we call the closer. We now know that Reese is definitely not living here for the next few days. The only person left, is who gets to take the credit.

We see Reese's, then Lois's, then Hal's facial expressions, then Hal and Lois chase Reese to the door.

**Hal:** OUTSIDE!  
**Lois:** Not if we get to the doorknob first!  
**Lois, Hal:** YOU'RE OUTTA HERE!  
**Reese:** I'M OUTTA HERE! Tide goes to the runner.

Cut to exterior shot of house, where we hear Francis's voice on the phone.

**Francis** They kicked Reese out again?  
**Dewey:** Yeah, we haven't heard from him in two days. I'm actually impressed. (walks through bedroom and sits on Reese's bed) Usually by now he's eating cat food off Mr Harvey's porch.  
**Francis:** This is horrible! How can they do this to their own children?  
**Dewey:** Yeah, it's really traumatizing (scrapes Reese's stuff off cabinet into the bin)  
**Francis:** Don't you care about the psychological damage they're inflicting? A home isn't conditional! A home should be safe, and secure and -  
**Dewey:** Really?  
**Francis:** What? Dewey, the point is, I got kicked out when I was fifteen. And I never got to come home again. They can't do this to Reese. (We see Dewey now lining up his toys on Reese's cabinet) We'll have to do something. Someone has to stop people like these from happening to Reese!  
**Dewey:** (lies down on Reese's bed) I don't think this is as bigger a deal to the rest of the

family as it is to you. Maybe you're overreacting.  
**Francis** (now driving in the car): Overreacting? Dewey, when you're older, you'll understand. There are things in life called priorities. Which I will explain to you in a few hours when I get there. Right now I have to call Otto and cash in some personal days. (hangs up) Overreacting.

Cut to apartment building, then to the interior of an apartment where Reese is taking freshly baked muffins out of the oven. There's a knock at the door. Reese goes to answer it. It's Francis.

**Reese:** Great timing. The muffins just came out.  
**Francis:** Thank god you called me, I can't believe the hell Mum and Dad put you through.

We are shown the living room of the apartment from different angles.

**Francis:** Hey, whose place is this?  
**Reese:** It's mine. It's completely furnished including Cable TV. I told them I was eighteen so I got a two year lease.  
**Francis:** Reese, you can't live in a place like this!  
**Reese:** Yeah I can. They're having a move in special. First month free, it's like three seventy-five a month, utilities included. I can make my rent in a week if I pick up an extra shift. I should have done this like six months ago.  
**Teddy:** (comes in with 2 other guys) Hey Reese. Come on, we're going to the roof. The nursing students across the street are taking their cigarette break.  
**Reese:** I'm sorry, I can't. I'm having my brothers over for breakfast. Francis, this is Teddy, Lou, George. Divorced, separated, wife's doing the best friend.  
**George:** EX-best friend. Excuse me. (leaves)  
**Teddy:** All right, well, you know where we'll be. (Looks at Francis) Hey, is that a wedding ring?  
**Francis:** Yeah.  
**Teddy:** Start hiding the money now, friend. (he and Lou leave)  
**Reese:** Oh man. This place is awesome!  
**Francis:** Reese, I know you think this place is great. But any objective will tell you that it is certainly not.

Malcolm and Dewey enter.

**Malcolm:** Whoa! This place is awesome!  
**Dewey:** One thing's for sure, I'd never, ever leave if I were you!  
**Reese:** So, who's up for some muffins?  
**Malcolm:** I am!  
**Dewey:** Me!  
**Francis:** No! No muffins! Reese, you can't just keep playing house like this! Mum and Dad did something really horrible to you, just like they did to me! Only you can't let them get away with it! You don't belong here, you belong at home!  
**Reese:** All right, fine. Tell me one thing about my life that would be better if I was still at home.

Cut to Malcolm, Reese and Francis leaving the apartment.

**Malcolm:** I thought the toilet seat never needs warming argument was pretty good.

Cut to an exterior shot of the house then to the boys' room, where Malcolm and Ira are preparing to write Ira's College essay.

**Malcolm:** Ok. The main thing to remember about a college essay is that it's just like any other essay you've written. (Ira looks blankly at him) You know, like homework. For one of your classes. Come on, Ira, I know it seems hard, but you just have to

get started. Like, if you had to describe yourself in one word, what would that word be?

**Ira:** (Thinks for a moment) Ira.

**Malcolm:** Ok. There we go. Ira. See, we've started. Now, what else?

**Ira:** I dunno. I'm not much of a writer. Or a reader. I don't like words, they confuse me. There's like hundreds of 'em.

**Malcolm:** Calm down. You can do this. You know what? I'm going to say something, and you just say the first thing that comes to your head. My earliest memory

in life is-

**Ira:** Blue. Thing.

**Malcolm:** Blue thing. Good. You can use that. Like um, sometimes my childhood feels vague and distant. Like something draped in a blue haze. See?

**Ira:** Yeah. That's cool.

**Malcolm:** My biggest fear is –

**Ira:** Spiders. No, waffles.

**Malcolm:** (Gives Ira double thumbs up, writes on pad): I let my fears wash over me and I see that I am imprinted with a repeating pattern of optimism and despair. Yeah, that's not bad. I hope someday, to free myself, to find the one thing –

Cut to Francis in the lounge yelling at Hal and Lois.

**Francis:** You're not going to do anything? You have to go to that apartment and get him back!

**Hal:** Look, that's not how it works.

**Francis:** Oh, I know how it works! I was thrown into Military School so fast I still had shampoo in my hair! The minute a child is inconvenient to you, you kick 'em out!

**Lois:** Francis, this is really none of your business, you don't even live here any more!

**Francis:** Because you kicked me out! And now you're doing the same thing to Reese!

**Lois:** Right now, he's sitting in that apartment with his Cable TV and his huge stack of video games, miserable!

**Hal:** If Reese is unhappy, he brought it on himself!

**Francis:** Really, so what's this, like the tenth time he's brought it on himself? And let's see, Malcolm's brought it on himself six times, so with my twenty-eight times, that makes forty kick outs, three different kids, and the only constant drawl of this is you two!

**Lois:** Francis, that is not fair!

**Francis:** Maybe you just don't like sharing your house with your children! So when's Dewey going to bring it on himself? When's Jamie? Where is Jamie?

**Lois:** He's at the babysitter's.

**Hal:** Just till five.

Cut to Reese lying on his bed watching TV, and we hear what the neighbor on his left side is watching. He shifts to the other side and we then hear what the neighbor on that side is watching.

**Reese:** Hey Dave, is that you?

**Dave:** Yeah.

**Reese:** What channel do you have on in there? Sounds better than what I'm watching.

Cut to the door of a psychiatrist's office, where the plaque reads "DR LUCILLE ARMSTRONG."

M.D – PHD. Cut to the office where Hal and Lois are sitting with Dr Armstrong.

**Lois:** This is all new to us.

**Hal:** We've never examined our parenting before, it always seemed to us like something that should just come naturally.

**Lois:** Yeah, everyone on the planet's been having kids for billions of years. I mean, look at snakes, they never take parenting classes, the world's crawling with 'em.

**Dr Armstrong:** How exactly did you want me to help you?

**Lois:** Well, we have fallen into a bad pattern, our boys misbehave, and they are punished, and then they severely misbehave, and they are severely punished, and then, they misbehave in some outlandish jaw-dropping way, where if we

responded in kind, we'd end up in jail!

**Hal:** We're at the end of our rope here.

**Dr Armstrong:** Well, of course you are.

**Hal:** So we were hoping that with all your training, you could teach us some kind of subtle trick that would stop them in their tracks.

**Dr Armstrong:** Trick?

**Hal:** Yeah. You know, some kind of secret psychological thing that would get them to shut up and listen to us for a change.

**Lois:** Yeah, my husband's getting older but he can still take them individually, but if they ever team up on him –

**Dr Armstrong:** Look, I don't think it's a good idea to treat kids like criminals or animals that need to be broken.

**Lois:** You've never met our boys.

**Hal:** Yeah, you can't begin to imagine the things they do.

**Dr Armstrong:** I've been practicing psychiatry for forty years. There's nothing you could say that would shock me.

**Lois:** All right. Last week, Reese (cut)

**Dr Armstrong:** Oh my god, what were the cats for?

**Hal:** We don't know.

**Dr Armstrong:** Now, even in the most extreme, breath-taking, horrifying cases, there are some techniques that can be useful.

**Hal (to Lois):** See, I told you this wasn't a waste of ninety bucks.

**Dr Armstrong:** Have you ever heard of active listening?

**Lois:** No.

**Dr Armstrong:** Most teenagers act out because they feel no-one cares. With active listening, you mirror back everything your child says, which shows you're hearing them, and by extension, understanding. I know, it sounds simple, but believe me, I've seen it work miracles.

**Lois:** I don't think Reese would respond to that.

**Dr Armstrong:** You're worried it won't help him.

**Lois:** Yes, what if it actually makes it worse? I don't think I could stand any more trouble with him. (covers her face with her hands) Oh, this is so confusing.

**Dr Armstrong:** You're feeling mixed up right now.

**Lois:** God, Yes I am. You know, I'm usually so sure of myself, but this whole thing has made me question every aspect of my- (pauses), oh that's good. Oh, that's really good.

Cut to the house where Malcolm is helping Ira with his essay.

Malcolm (writing): I now realize that blue is not the colour of confusion, but rather, it is the colour of hope. Yeah. That's it.

**Ira:** Dude, the parts I understood, they were awesome.  
**Malcolm:** Great, well, now that we have the ideas all down, all we have to do is put them into the words that you would actually –  
**Ira:** (rips page off pad) Thanks Malcolm. You're awesome! (stands up)  
People are going to think I'm so smart –  
**Malcolm:** Wait, we're not done yet. Hold on a second –  
**Ira:** Blue is definitely my favorite colour now.

Cut to Reese sitting at the bar in his apartment, doing his homework.

**Teddy:** Hey, let's get going, Reese! This lady's getting free shrimp night at the Red Lobster.  
**Reese:** Maybe I'll meet you down there. I gotta catch up on my homework.  
**Teddy:** Hey, you already blew off Air Hockey Night, and Pot Luck Wednesday, but I was counting on you for tonight. I need someone to turn the conversation to my tongue trick.  
**Reese:** I guess now that I'm on my own, I just feel like being more responsible.  
**Teddy:** Hey, I got three kids, you don't see me talking about responsibility. Come on, I'm not taking no for an answer.  
**Reese:** Ok, ok. (Follows Teddy to the door then closes and locks it after he leaves, and returns to his homework).

Cut to Malcolm and Lois in the kitchen.

**Malcolm:** Mum, I have a problem, I need to talk.  
**Lois:** Good, you can talk, and I will listen.  
**Malcolm:** This football player wants to use an essay I wrote for his college application and pretend it's his own. I know it's dishonest, but I might be making too much of it. I wanted to get your advice.  
**Lois:** You're hoping I can help you.  
**Malcolm:** Yeah, I just said that. So, I don't think he should get into college under false pretenses. But are they really false pretenses if nobody thinks he's smart anyway? I don't want to be a part of his cheating, but also don't want to take away his shot at going to college. I just don't know what to do.  
**Lois:** You're uncertain what action to take.  
**Malcolm:** Yes. Why are you talking like a robot?  
**Lois:** You want to know why I'm talking like a robot.  
**Malcolm:** I have a problem and I need your help! All you're doing is mindlessly parroting back what I say.  
**Lois:** You say one thing, and I restate it.  
**Malcolm:** Forget it, if you're not going to help me, you don't have to mock me! (gets up and leaves the room)  
**Lois:** (calling) We did not come from a family of criminals, you do not let him turn in that essay! Oh god, I knew listening to our kids would be a mistake.

Phone rings, Hal answers it.

**Hal:** Hello?  
**Francis:** Hello, is this the residence of the most un-nurturing, callous parents in the universe?  
**Hal:** It's for you.  
**Lois:** Hello?  
**Francis:** Hi, I just got off the phone with your son Reese, it's been over a week and you haven't even talked to him. Congratulations, the

fracturing of

this family is not two fits complete.

**Lois:** Francis, this is a very hard and complicated situation, and I don't need you to yell at me right now!

**Francis:** There's nothing complicated about it, just go to his apartment, tell him you love him, and ask him to come home.

**Lois:** Are you nuts? This is Reese we're talking about!

**Francis:** So what?

**Lois:** Come on, you know exactly how he thinks. If we show that kind of weakness, it's like showing a hyena the belly of an antelope!

Reese will

come home with no limits and no boundaries, and in five years we will be saying our last words to him over a Police bullhorn!

**Francis:** All I know is that you have a child that needs you!

**Dewey:** No he doesn't, he's happy where he is, and so are we!

**Lois:** Dewey, get off the phone!

**Francis:** Mum, I understand what you're worried about, but there is more to Reese than you give him credit for!

**Lois:** I wish I could believe that (beep sound) Honey, I have to go, there's another call. (presses button) Hello? Yes, this is she.

**Teacher:** This is Peter Noyes, Reese's Chemistry teacher. I'm sure you remember me from last year's hearing. There's something new I have to discuss with you.

**Lois:** Oh my god, what did he do now?

**Teacher:** Your son – (cut)

**Hal:** He got an A on his midterm?

**Lois:** They matched the handwriting, they had him reenact the experiment, he did it himself! Mr Noyes said it is the most remarkable turnaround ever seen!

he's

**Hal:** Wow!

**Lois:** (close to tears) He also said that we should be really proud of ourselves!

Cut to a table at school, where Ira is eating his lunch. Malcolm comes to talk to him.

**Malcolm:** Hey Ira, listen, do you have that essay I wrote? I just want to make one quick change.

**Ira:** (gets essay from his bag and gives it to Malcolm): Yeah, sure.

**Malcolm:** The change I want to make is this. (rips it in half)

**Ira:** Was it too long?

**Malcolm:** No. Listen Ira, everyone gives you breaks, everyone does everything for you. You might think it's good, but it's not. They're telling you

you're an

idiot, and you're not an idiot. You can write this essay. You can write this essay on your own! Remember that story you told me about the two pound steak you once ate? You thought it would be impossible, took it one bite at a time, and you did it. You just need to do the thing with your essay.

but you  
same

**Ira:** Ok, I'll try.

(Cut to Malcolm and Ira at school on another day. Ira is reading his own written essay to Malcolm.

**Ira:** And then I pretended I was Rocky, and I told Mr T, go for it. I really wished his Mohawk fell off when he got hit. The end. Thanks,

Malcolm. This is the most work I ever put together in my life!

**Malcolm:** Yeah, it shows.

Cut to Reese eating dinner in his apartment.

**Reese:** Mmmm, this is amazing. I think the lemon zest really brings it to life.  
(turns to wall) how's your dinner?  
**Neighbor:** I'm having a half frozen Lean Cuisine! Not much of a last meal if you ask me!

There's a knock at the door and Reese goes to answer it. It's Hal and Lois.

**Reese:** What are you doing here?  
**Hal:** Can we come in?  
**Reese:** Sure. You want some dinner?  
**Lois:** No, but thank you, Reese.  
**Reese:** Seriously, I just got a Convection oven, I can whip you up a frittata in ten minutes.  
**Hal (looks around):** It's spotless.'  
**Lois:** Reese, we came here to do something. It goes against all of our instincts, and even as I'm about to do it, it doesn't feel right, but, our instincts aren't very good lately, so, here goes.  
**Reese:** What is it?  
**Lois:** Reese, we love you, and we think you might be better off staying here.  
**Reese:** Really?  
**Hal:** Honest to God, you seem to be doing much better without us. Let's face it, in seventeen years with us, you have spent more days in juvenile court than you have in school. But now, after ten days on your own, you're – you're a functioning member of society.  
**Reese:** Wow. I must have really changed. I don't even want to rub it in. (Door opens)  
**Teddy:** Mail call. I confiscated your Victoria's Secret catalogue, I kept your – oh, you're entertaining.  
**Reese:** Teddy, these are my parents, Mum, Dad, this is my neighbor, Teddy.  
**Hal:** (shakes hands with Teddy): Hello. (Teddy says something to Hal then leaves)  
**Lois (looking around):** You know, this place isn't so bad. Next time we come, we can bring some plants.  
**Reese (looking at his mail):** Sweet. Hold on a second. (Picks up phone and dials) Hi, I just got your Deluxe Platinum card, and I want to activate it. 2471. Now listen, I already transferred a three thousand dollar balance from the Federal card over to my Spring Mills Mutual card (Hal and Lois look horrified) because I have an eight thousand dollar limit, but since I'm already bumping against that, I may as well transfer to yours because it has a twenty thousand dollar limit. Sure, I'd love to talk to your supervisor.

Lois grabs the phone and cuts the caller off.

**Reese:** Hey, I was on the phone!  
**Lois:** You've been using credit cards? How much have you spent?  
**Reese:** Ten, eleven grand. But I'm still way under the twenty thousand dollar limit.  
**Hal:** How can you spend that much in ten days?  
**Reese:** Well, you know, I got that new Convection oven, and then that made the refrigerator look kind of shabby, plus I had to buy new clothes every time

mine got dirty. And that giant gong in the bathroom. I mean, how do you guys do it?

Lois grabs Reese by the ear and he drops to his knees, yelping in pain.

**Lois:** Reese, I really owe you some thanks for giving me some faith in myself. The next few days, I will be saying very little, I will be deciding on a punishment, ideas are already popping in my mind, it's very exciting. But

I don't want to get hastie and leave either of us feeling dissatisfied.  
(drags Reese out of the apartment by his ear and Hal follows)

**Reese:** Are you going to drag me all the way home?

**Hal:** Well we are taking your ear there. If the rest of you wants to come, that's fine too.

Cut to Malcolm walking through the school.

**Malcolm (TC):** It's been almost a month, and Mum's still coming up with fresh punishments for Reese. She says she's never felt more creative. She must be doing something right. He has a white streak in his hair.

**Ira:** Hey Malcolm, guess what! I got accepted, I'm going to college!

**Malcolm:** Really, which school?

**Ira:** All of them. A & M, Georgia, Stamford, full scholarships and everything!

**Malcolm:** Stanford liked your essay?

**Ira:** No, I forgot to put it in the envelope. I got in anyway. Don't worry, that essay didn't go to waste. I handed it in as my Math midterm and A. Thanks for making me believe in myself, Malcolm. You've got an proved that

I don't need all these people helping me. Seeya.

**Malcolm (TC):** Stanford, poor guy. I bet he doesn't know it only has the THIRD best Astro-Physics department in the country.