

621 BUSEYS TAKE A HOSTAGE TRANSCRIPT

Reese: So, if Rex Huntington is the finest doctor in Spring Valley, why is he defending Jessica in the murder trial?

Lois: Because, before he got pushed off that mountain and got amnesia, he was the finest lawyer in Spring Valley.

Reese: What I can't believe is Jessica is having an affair with the judge. I mean, he's totally using her to get his hands on the Farnsworth fortune. (pretending he's in trouble) (sees Malcolm coming, turns off the TV and stands up) You can't ground me! That fire could have been started by anybody! Why don't you ever take my side?! You never listen anything I say! (waits for Malcolm to go into the bedroom and turns TV back on)

Lois: You know, Reese, some very manly men watch soap operas with their mothers.

Mr Flerch: If you are diligent in your efforts, you will find that our spring project will develop your fine motor skills and powers of concentration. Also, it will teach you a vocation that may, one day, lead you a life of semi-independence.

Principal: Hello, class.

Mr Flerch: Hello, Principal Jeffers. You've come at a very exciting time. We're about to open a new box of key clips.

Principal: And how are we all today, students?

Dewey: I know no one gives a crap about the kids in this class, but could you get us some books so we could actually learn something? The only thing we've done here for the last ten weeks is make lanyards!

Principal: You know what subject I hated most when I was a kid? Math.

Hanson: Dewey, I need you to re-sort my pills again.

Dewey: I just finished sorting them. It took me a half hour.

Hanson: I know. But then I unsorted them so I could see if I could sort them by myself. I can't.

Dewey: All right. Just don't touch them anymore. I'll do it with you after school.

Penelope: Dewey, I need your help after school.

Dewey: I'm already helping Hanson.

Penelope: But I need you! The sidewalks told me they wouldn't let me walk home anymore.

Dewey: Can you...?

Dewey: Okay, just wait till I'm done, then I'll walk you home. But, seriously, you guys have to start trying to do a little more for yourselves.

Chad: Oh, that reminds me. My uncle died, and my parents were wondering if you'd explain death to me.

Malcolm: Are you studying?

Reese: Yeah. My stupid teachers wait until the end of my senior year to tell me I have final exams. In every single class! I've got to get serious now. If the finals are anything like this practice test, it's gonna be brutal.

Malcolm: It's just a bunch of true/false questions.

Reese: So it's a 50-50 chance. Do you know what the odds are of getting one of those right?

Hal: \$23 for the neighborhood association. The annual meeting is tomorrow night.

Lois: It's been a year already? Those people are relentless. You think, if we showed up once, they'd stop inviting us?

Hal: That's always been the pattern.

Lois: Hal, don't worry. You have a good excuse. Tomorrow you're cleaning the dead possum out of the chimney. The smell has gotten so bad, I can't tell when Jamie needs changing anymore.

Hal: You know, if we just wait a few more weeks, it'll disintegrate on its own.

Lois: Tomorrow, Hal. I'm sick of all those crows on roof.

Malcolm: Hey, Dad.

Hal: (getting up, angrily) What? Wait. You think patriotism is a joke?! Representative government is an outdated sham? I can't believe my ears!

Malcolm: What are you talking about?

Lois: What did he say?

Hal: I can't even repeat it. I'm sorry, Lois, but the chimney will just have to wait. I'm taking Malcolm to the neighborhood association meeting. Let's hope seeing democracy in action will give our little cynic a wake-up call.

Dewey: Chad, I have to finish correcting everyone's homework. It's been in your mouth a half an hour. Either spit it out or swallow it.

Francis: Dewey?

Dewey: Oh, hey, Francis. You want to talk to Mom?

Francis: No. I called to talk to you.

Dewey: Me? Really?

Francis: Yeah. Listen. I'm up for a job as activities director at a summer camp, but I have to show them what kind of program I can put together. I need you to help me.

Dewey: You want my help?

Francis: Yeah. I have all these great ideas for games, so I'm gonna come home tomorrow so I can play them with you. You know, to make sure they're fun enough. So how does that sound?

Dewey: Like a setup for a cruel practical joke, but I'm willing to take the risk.

Hal: Excuse me. We're here for the homeowners meeting.

Jim: Oh, my God! Really? Oh, that's fantastic! Jim Phipps. I'm the association's attorney.

Hal: So... where is everyone?

Jim: Well, I kind of am everyone. No one's ever shown up for a homeowners meeting in 20 years.

Hal: You're kidding. Not one person?

Jim: Not one... not one... I send out 150 flyers every year, exactly as mandated by the developer, but nobody ever comes. I've tried different fonts, I've upgraded the doughnuts, but people just don't seem to be interested.

Malcolm: So, every year, you rent a room, and hold a meeting for nobody?

Jim: Absolutely. My contract with the developer is very clear. In exchange for a \$2,000 annual retainer, I'm to conduct annual meetings, take the minutes, and manage the association's financial interests.

Hal: Financial interest?

Jim: Well, actually, there aren't any. I didn't mean to come off so self-important. Only the homeowners can decide where the money goes, so I've just been putting the dues in a savings account. The bank gave me a toaster in 1987. I never even opened the box.

Malcolm: (TC): So, 150 homes paying 23 bucks over 20 years, passbook interest, minus the retainer... Oh, my God! If my math is right, he's sitting on at least \$83,000! Who am I kidding? Of course my math is right.

Jim: You know, it sure would be nice to have someone finally take charge of this thing. Would you ever consider being president of the neighborhood association?

Hal: I don't think so. It sounds like... work.

Malcolm: Dad, what are you talking about? Of course you want to be president! This is your chance to really do something for the community.

Hal: I don't think...

Malcolm: You can't turn this down. You've always told me that a real citizen is willing to make sacrifices for the greater good.

Hal: This doesn't sound like...

Malcolm: And I took those words to heart! They inspired me. And now I have a chance to see my own dad show me what democracy is all about. You can't deny me that.

Hal: Well...

Malcolm: It's not just for me. It's for our family, our block, the whole neighbourhood! Think of all the people you could help. The world is waiting for you to make it a better place!

Hal: Well... Okay. I'll do it.

Jim: Finally! This is exactly the reason I went into zoning law.

Reese: I don't see how this helps.

Francis: Where's Dewey? When I was his age, I was out of school hours ago. Doing independent study... at the library... not smoking.

Lois: So, it's exciting about the job.

Francis: Yeah. It's been a long hunt, but it finally paid off.

Lois: Don't you have to have some kind of degree or something to work with children?

Francis: You never think anything I ever do is good enough! I happened to do very well at that interview. All I have to do now is just show them that I can put together a good program for the summer.

Lois: So you don't have the job.

Francis: I have the job! What don't you understand about that?!

Lois: I don't know. It just sounds like the real estate thing all over again.

Francis: Why can't you just have faith in me for once?! (wins card game) Gin. Want to play again?

Lois: Sure. You know who's hiring?

Francis: I have a job!

Mr Flerch: I am appalled. This completion stitch is kinked. Young lady, if you neglect your education, you deny yourself the keys to success.

Hanson: Dewey, wait!

Dewey: I can't. I have to get home to see my brother.

Hanson: But I need you to help me with the algebra problems you gave me.

Dewey: I went over those problems 20 times!

Hanson: But my head passed through a magnet, and I think I forgot everything.

Dewey: I'm sorry! I can't! I can't do this anymore. I'm sorry.

Hanson: It's okay, Dewey. We understand.

Penelope: Yeah. Go have fun with your brother. We'll be fine.

Mr Flerch: Everyone turn in their assignments.

Chad: I have to take this one home with me. It doesn't believe that I have a cat.

Mr Flerch: It's 3:00. It is now time to clear your area! (tries to yank lanyard from Chad's grasp)

Penelope: I don't think you want to do anything physical with Chad.

Mr Flerch: Don't test me, young man. I am an educator who is not afraid to use discipline. (Chad bites him) All right. Now it's a matter for the police.

Chad: Dewey! What do we do?

Hanson: He's not here.

Penelope: Somebody do something! (Mr Flerch starts dialling on his mobile phone)

Hanson: Excuse me, Mr. Flerch? (cut to the class standing around Mr Flerch, who is tied to his chair, with tape over his mouth).

Hanson: Well I think of the three ideas we had, this was the best.

Dewey: I win!

Francis: Good job. Okay, Dewey, of all the things we did today, what seemed like it could be more fun? The rainbow acle course or the tickle maze or the shower of lollipops?

Dewey: I have to tell it was all fantastic. It was by far the best day of my life.

Francis: I can make you happier.

Lois: "President, comma, Newcastle Adjacent Neighborhood Association." Hal, that is so fancy.

Hal: Feel the little duck. That's embossed. So. How's my little bureaucrat?

Malcolm: Fantastic. I'm just finishing up the details in all the neighborhood initiatives you've been talking about.

Hal: I was?

Malcolm: Yeah. Remember you said, "I hope I do a good job"? Obviously that means structural improvements, like installing lights at the basketball court and building a skate park... and Friday night dance parties with a killer DJ.

Hal: Isn't that kind expensive?

Malcolm: You have to think of it as an investment. It's actually expensive not to do it.

Hal: There's \$87,000 in the account? Wow.

Malcolm: Well, a lot of it gets eaten up servicing the infrastructure. Like, there's no point in having a DJ if you're not going to have a really rock sound system.

Hal: Why don't we just give the homeowners a refund check?

Malcolm: We could. But we wouldn't have the money for what you said was the most important thing... security.

Hal: Well, security is big.

Malcolm: I've been racking my brain, trying find a way to give every area equal protection. I wish there was some magic kind of mobile security system that could weave through the neighbourhood.

Hal: Like a security car?

Malcolm: Dad that's brilliant! And then citizens from the neighbourhood could drive a car out to make sure there's no trouble.

Hal: I don't know. Purchasing a car isn't the only expense. You got to think about storage fees... wait, we could park it at our house.

Malcolm: You have a real talent for this.

Dewey: Hey, it's almost lunchtime. Where's Flerch?

Hanson: I don't know. You'd think he'd be here by now, but he definitely isn't.

Penelope: I know. I'm so fed up, I don't even think it's worth complaining about.

Dewey: Listen, guys, I'm sorry I blew up at you yesterday. I guess I just kind needed a break.

Chad: Forget it Dewey. We need start doing things on our own.

Hanson: And you know what? I think we're already doing things we didn't think we were capable of.

Cut to the Wilkersons' house. It's morning, and Malcolm wakes to find Reese still sitting at his desk, studying.

Reese: 3,081.

Malcolm: Did you pull an all nighter?

Reese: Yeah. Math. I kept getting confused, so I'm making a list of all the numbers. 3,082. Where do they stop?

Malcolm: The state-of-the-art rehearsal studio is essentially free, because once the garage band makes it big, the community gets ten percent of the record sales.

Hal: So it's basically the same business model as the extreme sport camp. (doorbell rings)

Malcolm: So, did you get a chance to go through my proposal for a girls' volleyball tournament?

Hal: Well... (answers door) Jim, what are you doing here?

Jim: I had to share this with you.

Hal: What is it?

Jim: I was so inspired by what your son said, that I went beyond the requirements of my retainer and wrote a new constitution for the Neighborhood Association. Pro bono of course. It's designed, so that everyone in a community will have an equal voice in all decisions. I think it'll really get people participating.

Hal: That sounds great, Jim. Thanks.

Jim: No, thank you for showing up at that meeting and making me believe again.

Malcolm: What a jerk.

Hal: What? Why?

Malcolm: Coming in here with his agenda like you are not doing fantastic job when you are.

Hal: I think he just wants the voice of the people to be heard.

Malcolm: You are the voice of the people. You are the one with the vision. You are the one with the amazing ideas tumbling out of you every second.

Hal: Maybe not every second.

Malcolm: Yes. Your brain is a factory of ideas. Please do not close the factory.

Hal: You know, sometimes it feels like a factory.

Malcolm: Of course it does. You are the leader of this community. Everybody recognizes it and they love you for it.

Hal: Well don't worry son, I won't let the people down.

Francis: Okay, Dewey, I've got a pretty good handle on these games, I just want ask you some questions.

Dewey: Okay.

Francis: When I was cheering encouragement at you, did it ever make you feel scared or angry?

Dewey: What? No.

Francis: Good. And when you lost the candy tag, did it make you feel bad and want to hurt yourself?

Dewey: What do you talking about Francis? These questions are weird.

Francis: I'm just trying understand better, Dewey. I mean, I don't know all the right questions to ask kids like you.

Dewey: What you mean "kids like me"?

Francis: Well, you're in that class. And this is a special camp for children with your... needs.

Dewey: I'm not emotionally disturbed, what the hell is wrong with you?

Francis: There's nothing wrong with either of us.

Dewey: I'm not in that class because I'm disturbed! I'm in that class so I can help... you're a jerk!

Francis: Okay, my games obviously have too much sugar.

Cut to the Buseys' classroom. It's dark. Chad is sleeping on a mattress on the floor, when the other students arrive.

Hanson: Is everything okay?

Chad: Yeah. This is my favourite time of day. The sun's about to come up and my mean voice is still asleep.

Penelope: I hate walking to school in the dark. I have to run past people's houses so I don't catch their nightmares. We have to tell Dewey about this.

Hanson: No. This is exactly the kind of thing he doesn't want to be bothered with.

Penelope: We can't handle taking care of Flerch! If he dies, we're gonna have to tell everybody!

Chad: Are you saying I'm not doing a good job feeding him? I chewed his steak for 20 minutes before I gave it to him!

Mr Flerch: Oh, help me! It's my heart, weakened as it was by a childhood ailment!

Penelope: He's dying! I totally called this!

Hanson: Give him CPR!

Penelope: I-I'm not strong enough!

Hanson: We have to keep his heart pumping. Use your legs! Chad, help him breathe.

Hanson: (he and Penelope kick Mr Flerch's back) One, two, three, breathe! One, two, three, breathe! One, two, three, breathe! One, two, three, breathe!

Penelope: Wait. I saw this thing on TV once where they helped a guy breathe by cutting a hole in his throat and jamming a pen in it!

Hanson: I've got a pen! Somebody get scissors!

Mr Flerch: (cleaner enters) Eddie, for God sake, help me! They're gonna kill me! I'm sorry I assumed you could break-dance! I'm actually one-sixteenth Cherokee myself! (fat kid closes the door behind Eddie, and he and another girl block it)

Malcolm: Dad, you okay?

Hal: Malcolm, I couldn't sleep. My mind has been on fire with the possibilities of what this neighborhood could become. At first it seemed crazy and kind of stupid, but then I remembered what you said about the factory! In the middle of the night I had a vision.

Malcolm: You had a vision without me? (looks at piece of paper) "Mulberry Village"?

Hal: Mulberry Village. A new utopia!

Malcolm: What the hell is all this stuff?

Hal: Just a few compulsory guidelines to help people make the transition.

Malcolm: (reading) "Failure to smile 'Hello,' \$50 fine? Not knowing your neighbor's name: \$25? Failure to remove your fence: \$100?"

Hal: People can be resistant to change.

Malcolm: What's the "Hug your child" initiative?

Hal: Everyone has to publicly hug their child at least once a day. A hotline will be set up so that children can inform on non-hugging parents.

Malcolm: You're going to make kids inform on their parents?

Hal: Parents, neighbours, teachers, everybody! If they've got nothing to hide, they've got nothing to worry about.

Malcolm: Tell me about the "Re-education Center."

Hal: Oh! That's where the best, most neighborly children will be plucked from the corrupting influence of their families, and immersed in round-the-clock friendliness training. I call them the Mulberry Youth.

Malcolm: Dad... give me the fliers.

Hal: Thank you, son, but they've already been distributed throughout the whole neighborhood. Like a modern-day Martin Luther, I nailed them to the front doors.

Malcolm: (angry voices can be heard) Maybe we should go out the back door and spend the rest of the day at the library.

Hal: Not now, Malcolm. The villagers are coming.

Cut to Dewey's school, where he runs into Francis in the corridor outside his classroom.

Dewey: Look, I told you, leave me alone.

Francis: I'm just going to ask your teacher if I can have ten minutes with your buddies at recess. (Dewey goes inside to see Mr Flerch, the janitor, the Principal and another staff member all tied up)

Dewey: What the hell happened?!

Penelope: Isn't it obvious?

Hanson: I know we're not supposed to ask for help, Dewey, but... this one kind of got away from us.

Dewey: (to Francis) We gotta get out of here. Let's go call the police.

Francis: You're just gonna bail? You don't understand these kids. If I fix this problem, there's going to be a hundred more. It never stops with them!

Francis: Dewey... you don't get to choose the people who need your help. Look, I don't know much, but I do know two things. These kids need your help, you gotta do it. And even though I've never met him, that guy is a total dink.

Dewey: (puts down his backpack then goes and removes the tape from the Principal's mouth) I thought when I decided to help, something would come to me, but I'm completely blank.

Principal: You're all going to jail. If you untie me in the next five seconds, you and you alone will see some slight leniency.

Chad: (sees Francis with lanyard keyring) Hey, lanyards belong in the lanyard box.

Francis: What?

Chad: That's my lanyard. I made it. Mr. Flerch is going to flip out if you don't put it back in the lanyard box.

Francis: You couldn't have made this. I bought it at a truck stop 200 miles from here.

Dewey: Can I see that, Francis? (takes it from him and goes over to the Principal) Can you think of any connection between the thousands of lanyards that were made by the emotionally disturbed children at your school, and this one my brother found for sale at a retail outlet? Mr. Jeffers, I would be horrified to think that a public school principal would use innocent children as slave labor.

Mr Jeffers: I don't know what you're talking about, young man.

Mr Flerch: (spitting out tape) It was all his idea! I'm just his obedient stooge! He dangled Assistant Vice Principal in front of me! It came with parking!

Dewey: I wonder who would get the worst penalty. A bunch of emotionally disturbed kids who tied people up for a little while... or the trusted public servant who forced them into slavery? We could ask a judge, or everyone could just keep quiet about everything.

Francis: Sound okay to you guys?

Janitor: That depends. Can we get five minutes alone with these guys before you untie them?

Cut to the Wilkersons' house, where Lois is furiously putting dishes away. She slams the cupboard door, picks up the washing basket and storms off.

Malcolm: What's up with Mom?

Reese: She just saw my report card. I flunked out of every single class.

Malcolm: What?

Reese: Every single one of my finals, I got every question wrong.

Malcolm: Oh, my God.

Reese: I know. Now I get to repeat my senior year! Isn't this great? I worked so hard for this. I had to make sure I flunked every class so completely, I couldn't make it up in summer school. Now I don't have to move out or go to college or get a job for a whole 'nother year! This is the greatest achievement of my entire life! Yeah, I know, Mom.