

MEDIATOR DANIELS SIDES

3.

Client sits down in a barber chair, who we only see from behind.

Eric shakes out a barber cape and places it around Client's neck.

CLIENT

Come on bro, cut my damn hair. I got a flight to catch to Miami.

Eric pats him on the shoulder.

ERIC

Take it easy, I got you.

Eric checks his watch, he has a message from Na-Na.

ERIC (CONT'D)

(to self) I'm running late anyway.

Cut to the sound of him turning on the clippers.

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INT. - FAMILY COURT MEDIATION ROOM- MORNING

4

We hear a clock ticking.

Open on MEDIATOR DANIELS, (mid 40s, African American female, strong, confident, NO nonsense when it comes to the business of court and children), and a SOCIAL WORKER (non-descript) sitting on opposite ends of a conference table, making small talk (inaudible).

We hear a ding from the elevator. Eric exits the elevator and greets his mom, NA-NA, (mid 50s, Mexican-American woman, average appearance, funny, witty, prankster, but scared of everything), who looks anxious and has been waiting for him.

Mediator Daniels sees through the window that Eric has finally arrived and gives him a side eye.

START

NA-NA

Mijo, what took you so long?

As she straightens his collar and shirt.

NA-NA (CONT'D)

She's been waiting for you.

Eric and Na-Na rush into the mediation room and stand at the end of the table.

MEDIATOR DANIELS
Please, have a seat. (beat)

Mediator Daniels is obviously irritated by Eric's tardiness and without looking at him.

MEDIATOR DANIELS (CONT'D)
9am Mr. Gonzalez. My watch says
that it's now 9:42?

Eric attempts to apologize to Mediator Daniels.

ERIC
(stuttering, nervously)
You know ah, your honor, the map
had me going down the 710 but it
was way backed up so I got off and
took the streets but it was bad on
the streets because it's school
time and it was SOOOOOO many school
buses and then I...

Mediator Daniels, still without looking at him, interrupts as she shuffles through file folders on her desk.

MEDIATOR DANIELS
Is that right, Mr. Gonzalez?

ERIC
Yes, it was terrible, I cut so many
corners, but it was crazy traffic
this morning. The map kept adding
to my time.

MEDIATOR DANIELS
Are you sure it wasn't a "tour" bus
Mr. Gonzalez, some big time actor
or one of those baseball players
that you work for?

ERIC
Basketball.

Mediator Daniels looks sternly at him.

ERIC (CONT'D)
(whispering)
Basketball players, ma'am.

Eric knows he's busted as he and Na-Na exchange looks.

Na-Na is boiling on the inside.

Eric just looks bewildered.

Mediator Daniels proceeds with the case and makes note that Vivian Cabral, the mother of Eric's children, is not present, again.

She speaks to the Social Worker.

MEDIATOR DANIELS

This is the third time that Miss Cabral hasn't shown up for this court proceeding. (beat) I've tried to show some grace and understanding up until this point. (beat) But, now this has become a problem. Have you spoken with Miss Cabral?

SOCIAL WORKER

I've attempted to call her multiple times this morning. She hasn't responded to any of my messages for the past several days. I haven't been able to reach her at her home either.

Mediator Daniels shuffles and skims through the stack of papers in their file.

She pauses, thinking deeply.

She looks at Eric and then Na-Na, they look anxious.

MEDIATOR DANIELS

Mr. Gonzalez, you're a very lucky man to have the support of your mother. Your daughters are lucky to have her in their lives as well.

Mediator Daniels acknowledges Na-Na with a smile.

MEDIATOR DANIELS (CONT'D)

But it looks like those athletes might be the ones waiting for YOU next time, because as of today, you'll have full-time daddy duties. This court grants you sole custody of your daughters.

She writes on a paper on her desk.

Na-Na is very happy.

MEDIATOR DANIELS (CONT'D)

Court orders every other weekend visits with Miss Cabral.

Eric tries to stall Mediator Daniels from making her final decision.

ERIC

Uhmmm, wait, let me call her for you....

Eric pulls out his phone in an attempt to make the phone call.

ERIC (CONT'D)

I think she's just stuck in traffic, I told you the 710 was really backed up. She'll answer my call. Watch this....

He elbows Na-Na to help him, she attempts to speak up, hesitantly but Mediator Daniels pounds her gavel.

MEDIATOR DANIELS

Congratulations Mr. Gonzalez and good luck. Have a great day!

Eric looks stunned, Na-Na is relieved and excited.

NA-NA

Oh Mijo, Finally! Gracias Dios Mio!
Gracias, your honor!

END

Na-Na is overjoyed, walks quickly out of the mediation room.

Eric is walking slowly and looking around in a daze.

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EXT. - BARBERSHOP - MORNING

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Eric, driving his Luxury SUV, pulls up in front of his barber shop, "*Sorry, We're OPEN*", still in disbelief of the responsibilities that will come with the sole custody ruling.

He's sitting in his car, talking to himself with the court papers in his hand and some on the dashboard with a cigarette burning in the ashtray.

ZHA'NEE, (mid 30s, African American, darker brown complexion, naturally beautiful, talks with her hands, animated, funny, with the "shits"), walking down the street on her route as meter maid, and talking on the phone.

Wearing her blue uniform, earbuds obvious, long nails, heavy lip gloss & wearing a name plate necklace.