

From Mammoth

By Don Zolidis

NAOMI, 41

MATT, 40

MATT is packing up his mother's basement to put her into a nursing home. NAOMI and MATT are about to get a divorce.

(NAOMI and MATT are down in the basement.)

NAOMI

You've made a lot of progress.

MATT

Are you saying that sarcastically?

NAOMI

It looks the same as it did three days ago.

MATT

We actually boxed up a lot of stuff – I've been at Goodwill every day – they're getting sick of me over there.

NAOMI

You know that's a for-profit institution, right?

MATT

No it's not.

NAOMI

The CEO earns like two million dollars a year.

MATT

That doesn't make it for-profit.

NAOMI

Okay, fine, the things you're donating are largely going to the people off the top.

MATT

Great. Now I feel even better about it.

NAOMI

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Riley missed you at her swim meet.

MATT

How'd she do?

NAOMI

I thought you were gonna be there.

MATT

I said I *might* be there.

NAOMI

She thought you were gonna be there.

MATT

Why did you tell her that?

NAOMI

Cause I thought you were coming home yesterday.

MATT

We're like twenty percent done here –

NAOMI

Yeah, I know, it's a little ridiculous – what have you guys been doing?

MATT

You've met my brother, right? We can't actually accomplish anything unless we fight about it for an hour first.

NAOMI

Great.

MATT

How did she do in the meet?

NAOMI

She DQ'd on her relay.

MATT

What?

NAOMI

Left early.

MATT

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Oh man.

NAOMI

She did okay in her other events. Got like a 1:31 in her backstroke.

MATT

That's good.

NAOMI

First place was like 1:17.

MATT

Wow.

NAOMI

Yeah. She was moving. Nuts. That little girl was like triangular, you know? Like cut. It was weird. She was like some kind of East German wonder-tot. She was probably shaving her mustache. They were injecting her with horse testosterone between events.

MATT

She feeling okay about everything?

NAOMI

Yeah. She was fine. She's a little concerned about you...

MATT

What did you tell her?

NAOMI

I'm not telling her anything until we can both be there. She just – she's intuitive – she knows something's going on.

(MATT nods.)

You know you're welcome to stay – until you find a place – you don't have to hide out.

MATT

I'm not hiding out.

NAOMI

Where are you sleeping?

MATT

In my old room.

NAOMI

There's no furniture in there.

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Yeah it's – MATT

Are you on the floor? NAOMI

It's not the best. MATT

God. Come home. You can be in the guest/ room. NAOMI

I'm not gonna/ be in the MATT

What's wrong with the guest room? NAOMI

So I can - ? No. I'm not staying in the guest room. MATT

Okay. NAOMI

-- MATT

-- NAOMI

Anyway. I'm fine. MATT

Are we telling her tomorrow? NAOMI

Yes. MATT

You sure you're going to be there? NAOMI

Yes. I will be there. MATT

NAOMI

That's what/ you said on Monday and –

MATT

Goddamn it yes, I will be there tomorrow.

NAOMI

This is so damn typical of you, you know? You say you're going to do one thing, I bend over backwards to rearrange everything to fit with your schedule and then you just blow it off –

MATT

I didn't blow it off.

NAOMI

You didn't call.

MATT

We were working. We were trying/ to take care of

NAOMI

You weren't working. You were screwing around with your brother. Just like you to leave me to do everything by myself.

MATT

You don't do everything by yourself. That is such a fucking exaggeration.

NAOMI

Look I'm sorry you lost your job/ I'm sorry your Mom is sick

MATT

This is not about me – don't make this about me –

NAOMI

But you haven't done anything –

MATT

Oh I haven't done *anything* I haven't done anything? You know what? I don't want to fight with you right now. I'm not fighting with you. I am done fighting with you.

NAOMI

Fine. Don't fight.

MATT

I'm not.

NAOMI

Don't show up. Don't give a damn about your daughter.

MATT

That's so unfair.

NAOMI

Ditch us all, because that's what you're doing -

MATT

I'm not ditching you -

NAOMI

Like you're jumping out of an airplane or something.

MATT

That's not what I'm doing.

NAOMI

I don't want a divorce Matt.

MATT

--

NAOMI

I guess you do.

MATT

--

NAOMI

Fine. Fourteen years and you just give up. You know I know you've convinced yourself that I'm the bad guy in all of this - that I was somehow so unfair to you - that I was relentless or... whatever... but - all I've ever wanted you to do was just to *try*, you know? And you haven't been. I come home for lunch and most of the time you're not out of your pajamas. I try to find places for you to apply to, and you resent the fact that I'm even bringing it up - I can't drag the whole family by myself. So, yes, I tried to get you up, I tried to get you to find whatever it is that you're missing, and maybe you took that as pressure or whatever, and maybe I just don't understand how to talk to you without putting that pressure on you, but it's the only thing I could think of to try and save your life. And that's what I felt it was. Because you seem like you're dying half the time. And that's not exactly easy to be around.

MATT

--

NAOMI

Are you gonna be there tomorrow?

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Yes.

MATT

And what are we going to tell her?

NAOMI

--
I don't know.

MATT

That's a pretty clear answer to me.

NAOMI