

Paulo's Rad Rods

"Pilot"

Written by

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6/13/10

TEASER

INT. RAY BRIGHAM'S HOT ROD SHOP - DAY (DAY 1)
(PAULO, REGGIE, BECKY, HOBO)

AT FIRST GLANCE IT LOOKS MORE LIKE A MATCHBOX CAR HOT ROD SHOP THAN A BUSINESS. THE WALLS ARE PAINTED A MIX OF RED, YELLOW AND GREEN, LIKE THE COLORS OF DRAG STRIP STARTING LIGHTS, THE FLOORS ARE WHITE AND BLACK PARQUET LIKE THE CHECKERED FLAG AT THE FINISH LINE, AND THE LIFTS AND TOOL KITS ARE AN ASPHALT GRAY LIKE THE OPEN ROAD. ON THE FLOOR ARE A FEW OUT OF THIS WORLD, BRIGHTLY COLORED CARTOONISH HOT RODS. ONE HOT ROD LOOKS LIKE A SPACE CAR, ANOTHER LOOKS LIKE A STAGECOACH AND THE LAST ONE LOOKS LIKE A SHOE. THE ROOM IS EMPTY OF ANY KIND OF LIVING SOUL EXCEPT FOR A HOBO SLEEPING ON A PILE OF TIRES.

PAULO (O.S.)

Come on, hurry!

PAULO, (14), LATINO, YOUNG HIPSTER ATTIRE, ENTERS WITH REGGIE, (14), AFRICAN-AMERICAN, UPSCALE URBAN ATTIRE.

PAULO (CONT'D)

(STILL LOOKING BACK AT REGGIE) ...once
the place fills up, they won't let anyone
else in.

REGGIE

(SEES IT'S EMPTY) I think we're gonna
make it.

PAULO TURNS TO SEE THE HOT ROD SHOP EMPTY.

PAULO

Where is everyone?

REGGIE

Don't know. Maybe they're serving pizza
bagels in the back room.

PAULO

It's a car shop, they don't serve food.

REGGIE

Really? (THEN) Good thing I always come prepared.

REGGIE PULLS A PLASTIC BAG CONTAINING A PIZZA BAGEL OUT OF HIS POCKET AND BEGINS CHOWING DOWN.

PAULO

Maybe we're here on the wrong day.

BECKY, (15), BEAUTIFUL, DRESSED IN A PINK "RAY BRIGHAM'S HOT RODS" SHIRT AND BLUE DICKIES ENTERS HOLDING A CLIPBOARD. SEEING THE BOYS, SHE SMILES AND CROSSES TO THEM.

BECKY

Hey, guys, thanks for coming to the open house.

PAULO IS SMITTEN AND SPEECHLESS.

PAULO

Uh... uh... uh...

BECKY

What's wrong with your friend?

REGGIE

Oh, sometimes his hard drive gets stuck.

You just gotta smack him upside the head.

REGGIE THWACKS PAULO A FEW TIMES.

PAULO

Okay, I'm good. I'm talking. Stop with the slappity. (THEN) I'm Paulo.

BECKY

I'm Becky.

REGGIE

Reggie. (THEN) So what up with the lack of people?

BECKY

Wish I knew. We were hoping this open house would bring in some business, but you guys are the only ones that showed. Well, except for that hobo.

REGGIE

(TURNS, EXCITED) A real life hobo?! Can I poke him?

BECKY

(HANDS HIM BROOM) Knock yourself out.

REGGIE CROSSES OFF AND BEGINS HAPPILY POKING THE HOBO.

PAULO

I can't believe no one else came. This is Ray Brigham's hot rod shop. Last year this place was packed. I saw Lil' Wayne ordering a car.

BECKY

Yeah, well, that was then and this is now. No one seems to care about my dad's whacky designs anymore.

PAULO

Whacky? Your dad's a a genius -- (JAW DROP) Wait, did I just say Ray's your dad?

BECKY

Yep. And he is.

PAULO

Erh... Erh... Erh...

BECKY THWACKS HIM. HE STOPS.

PAULO (CONT'D)

Weird, it even works when you do it.

(THEN) How come I've never seen you here
before?

BECKY

I was living with my mom. Came down a
few months ago to help dad out.

Unfortunately I wasn't much help.

This'll be our last open house.

PAULO

"Last open house?!"

BECKY

Yeah. Unfortunately no sale today means
we're gonna have to close shop.

PAULO QUICKLY PULLS OUT THE CONTENTS OF HIS POCKETS.

PAULO

I've got two bucks and a taco coupon,
will that help?

BECKY

(SMILES) Sorry. (THEN) It was nice
meeting you. See ya, Reggie.

BECKY EXITS. PAULO CRAMS HIS STUFF BACK INTO HIS POCKETS.
REGGIE'S LOOKING AT THE PRICE TAG ON THE SHOE CAR.

REGGIE

No wonder they're going out of business.
You'd think for a hundred and fifty-
thousand dollars, you could get a car
that didn't look like a shoe.

PAULO

Man, this really bites. I always dreamed
I'd work here. How'm I supposed to do
that if the shop is gone?

REGGIE

I dunno. Guess you're out of luck.

REGGIE HANDS PAULO THE BROOM.

PAULO

What's that for?

REGGIE

To make you feel better. Ain't you ever
read about the therapeutic benefits of
pokin' a hobo?

PAULO SHAKES HIS HEAD AND HANDS THE BROOM BACK TO REGGIE THEN
EXITS. REGGIE GIVES THE HOBO ONE MORE POKE, THEN FOLLOWS.

FADE OUT.

ACT ONESCENE AINT. PAULO'S BEDROOM - LATER (DAY 1)

(PAULO, REGGIE, NAIBE, BENITA)

CUSTOM CAR SKETCHES HANG OVER A DESK WHERE PAULO SITS WORKING WITH AN AIRBRUSH. REGGIE SITS ON THE BED STUDYING.

PAULO

(TURNS TO REGGIE) What you workin' on?

REGGIE

Easier way to tie my shoes.

REGGIE SHOWS PAULO HIS NOTEBOOK WHICH HAS A DRAWING OF A WOMAN KNEELING DOWN, TYING A BOY'S SHOE.

PAULO

Well, I guess having your mom tie your shoes is easier--

REGGIE

No. That's how my shoes currently get tied. I'm looking for a change.

(ANNOYED) She's always yelling.

PAULO'S SISTER, NAIBE, (9), DRESSED IN A KARATE GHI AND TEXTING ON A CELLPHONE, ENTERS.

NAIBE

It's your turn to empty the recycling.

PAULO

(NOT LOOKING UP) Can't. Studying.

NAIBE

(LOOKS UP FROM HER PHONE) You're not studying. Go empty it or I'll tell mom.

PAULO

C'mon, Naibe. The art contest's tomorrow and it's my only chance of getting a new airbrush. (TO REGGIE) First prize.

NAIBE

You're not gonna win.

PAULO

Oh, yeah? How do you know that?

NAIBE

(RE: PICTURE) 'Cuz one, this isn't art. It's a car. And two, you entered the contest the last three years and lost the last three years. (POINTING) Same cars, same contest, same loser. You.

PAULO TAKES HIS AIRBRUSH AND SPRAYS THREE QUICK BURSTS OF PAINT, LEAVING NAIBE WITH A PENCIL MOUSTACHE AND A BEARD.

PAULO

Sure about that, Frenchie?

NAIBE KARATE CHOPS PAULO IN THE GUT. PAULO YELPS.

REGGIE

Ooo, can you give me a goatee? Trying to get a Denzel thing going on.

HIS MOTHER, BENITA, (MID 30S), ENTERS CARRYING A REPORT CARD.

BENITA

Paulo, did you think I wouldn't notice you changed your grades?

PAULO

What are you talking about? I didn't
change my grades.

BENITA HOLDS THE REPORT CARD UP NEXT TO NAIBE'S FACE.

BENITA

Then why does your report card have the
same over-spray as your sister's goatee?

PAULO

(TO SELF) Man, I need a new airbrush.

BENITA GRABS THE AIRBRUSH OFF THE DESK.

BENITA

Now you have no airbrush. Start studying.

BENITA EXITS WITH THE AIRBRUSH. NAIBE SMIRKS, SATISFIED.

NAIBE

Guess you won't be making the art show.

PAULO

You know, that paint'll wash off-- (PICKS
UP MARKER) But this won't.

NAIBE GRABS PAULO'S HAND AND FLIPS HIM TO THE GROUND. SHE
EXITS. REGGIE LOOKS DOWN AT HIM, DISAPPOINTED.

PAULO (CONT'D)

What?

REGGIE

You gotta stop letting your lil' sister
beat you up. It's just embarrassing.

AS REGGIE HELPS HIM TO HIS FEET, WE...

CUT TO:

SCENE B

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - WESTSIDE COUNTRY DAY - NEXT DAY (DAY 2)
(PAULO, REGGIE, V.P. ROMATELLI, KID, EXTRAS)

A HALLWAY IN THE HIPPEST OF RICHIE-RICH PRIVILEGED SCHOOLS.
PAULO AND REGGIE APPROACH THE SNACK MACHINES.

REGGIE

Whoa. When did prices go up?

PAULO

Three dollars for a Zagbutt? (STARTS TO
WALK AWAY) I can't afford that.

REGGIE PULLS A PLASTIC BAG OUT OF HIS POCKET.

REGGIE

(OFFERING) Sushi?

PAULO REACTS AS VICE PRINCIPAL ROMATELLI, GRUFF, (40S) WALKS UP
TO A NEARBY STUDENT WHO'S WEARING A SHIRT THAT READS "L.O.L."

VICE PRINCIPAL ROMATELLI

What's so funny?

KID

Nothing.

VICE PRINCIPAL ROMATELLI

Then why are you laughing?

KID

I'm not.

VICE PRINCIPAL ROMATELLI

So you're calling your shirt a liar?

Detention. After school. Art room.

THE KID SLUMPS AND WALKS OFF.

V.P. ROMATELLI

I heard that!

HE CROSSES OFF.

PAULO

Oh man, the one day I need to get in that room after school... (THEN) Wait. If I got detention I could use the--

REGGIE

Whoa, slow your roll. They don't let you do anything in detention that could bring you enjoyment. It's like church. But without the free bread and grape juice.

PAULO

This rots. And I can't even drown my sorrows in a Charlie Chu bar 'cuz I don't have five bucks.

REGGIE

Five bucks for a Charlie Chu? If there weren't so many teachers around I'd cloud up and rain all over this machine.

PAULO

And then you'd get detention and could sneak me the airbrush! That's brilliant!

REGGIE

No. Brilliant is me staying out of detention so my mom doesn't make me do the laundry again.

PAULO

Please? I know you could pull it off.

REGGIE

No way. You ever have to wash your own underpants? It's nasty.

PAULO

Fine. (THEN, TEMPTING) Three-fifty for a Planet Bar. Don't that make you angry?

REGGIE

Nope. Just mildly irritated.

PAULO

Five dollars for a bag of Crunchy Nuts?

REGGIE

Okay, that's kinda gratin' my butt.

PAULO

Six-fifty for a pack of Choco Piles?

REGGIE

Oh, it's poundin' time!

REGGIE BEGINS GOING OFF ON THE MACHINE, THROWING FISTS AND KICKS. THIS GETS THE ATTENTION OF VICE PRINCIPAL ROMATELLI.

VICE PRINCIPAL ROMATELLI

What's wrong with you?! You head-butt a truck?

V.P. ROMATELLI DRAGS REGGIE OUT. PAULO GIVES HIM A THUMBS UP.

CUT TO:

SCENE CINT. SCHOOL CLASSROOM - LATER (DAY 2)

(PAULO, REGGIE, MIKEY, VICE PRINCIPAL ROMATELLI, JARVIS, EXTRAS)

DETENTION; IT'S FILLED WITH THE USUAL RIFFRAFF. UNSEEN TO V.P. ROMATELLI, PAULO PEEKS HIS HEAD IN AND SIGNALS REGGIE. REGGIE TAPS MIKEY, BIG JOCK, HOCKEY JERSEY, ON THE SHOULDER.

REGGIE

Hey, Mikey. (POINTING) Josh over there
says you check like his grandma.

MIKEY'S EYES GO DARK. HE STANDS UP AND RUN-CHECKS JOSH'S DESK. IT GOES FLYING.

MIKEY

Is that harder than your grandma?!

VICE PRINCIPAL ROMATELLI JUMPS UP FROM HIS DESK, GRABBING MIKEY AND JOSH AND BEGINS DRAGGING THEM OUT THE DOOR.

VICE PRINCIPAL ROMATELLI

What's wrong with you? Been drinkin'
bacon grease?

AS SOON AS THEY'RE GONE, REGGIE GOES TO THE CUPBOARD AND PULLS OUT AN AIRBRUSH. PAULO ENTERS.

REGGIE

(SMILES) It's always surprising how easy
it is to set jocks off.

PAULO

I know. Yesterday I saw a kid step on a fry in the cafeteria and Jarvis pummeled him for "disrespecting a fallen potato."

REGGIE

Yeah, Jarvis likes his tuberous
vegetables.

PAULO GRABS AN AIRBRUSH OFF THE COUNTER AND STARTS TO EXIT.

PAULO

You gonna be okay in here?

REGGIE

I can entertain myself if I get bored.

PAULO EXITS. A BEAT, THEN.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

Hey, Jarvis. That kid next to you said
mash potatoes taste like garbage.

JARVIS

No one mocks a spud!

JARVIS TACKLES THE KID OUT OF HIS CHAIR.

REGGIE

(PUTS FEET UP, SMILES) Too easy.

AS REGGIE ENJOYS THE SCUFFLE, WE...

CUT TO:

SCENE D

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - THAT NIGHT - ART SHOW (NIGHT 2)
(PAULO, REGGIE, NAIBE, MEGA X, TASHEENA, EXTRAS)

ENTRIES LINE THE HALL. TEACHERS AND PARENTS MILL ABOUT. PAULO STANDS BY HIS CAR SKETCH. REGGIE ENTERS AND CROSSES TO PAULO.

REGGIE

How'd you sneak past your mom?

PAULO

I told her I needed to come to the library and look up some stuff.

REGGIE

Your mom's so trusting, it's hilarious.

PAULO

Your mom doesn't trust you?

REGGIE

Nah. Last time she did, I covered my sister in pudding.

PAULO

Sounds like a waste of pudding.

REGGIE

Yeah, I regretted that. (THEN) So you feelin' confident in your work?

PAULO

Of course. I mean there's a lot of good stuff here tonight, but c'mon, (RE: SKETCH) look at that ride.

REGGIE

Nice coupe! Look at those rims.... and
is that dollar bills I see ghosting in
the paint? Nice!

THE GUYS EXCHANGE AN ELABORATE HANDSHAKE OF A SLAP UP, SLAP
DOWN THEN GO TO SHAKE EACH OTHER'S RAISED FEET AND
ACCIDENTLY BUMP HEADS.

PAULO

We'll get that someday.

AT THE OTHER END OF THE HALL NAIBE ENTERS WITH A GIRL FRIEND.
REGGIE NOTICES HER.

REGGIE

Uh-oh. Psycho-Sis at three o'clock.

PAULO

What's she doing here?! She's supposed
to be at karate giving kids big owwies.
(THEN) I'll meet you outside.

REGGIE TAKES OFF AS PAULO RUNS OVER TO GRAB HIS SKETCH. A
MAN, MEGA X, (30S), EXPENSIVE URBAN ATTIRE, WALKS UP.

MEGA X

Your drawing's tight.

PAULO

(ELATED) Really?

PAULO SEES NAIBE MAKING HER WAY DOWN THE ART DISPLAYS.

PAULO (CONT'D)

Y'know what, it's not good at all. Which
is why taking it out of the contest.

HE GRABS THE PICTURE AND IS ABOUT TO SPLIT. MEGA GRABS IT.

MEGA X

It's the best piece in the show. You
gotta leave it.

PAULO SEES NAIBE'S GETTING CLOSER. PAULO YANKS THE DRAWING,
STARTING A CHILDLIKE TUG O' WAR BETWEEN THEM.

PAULO

I appreciate your good taste, but me and
my drawing really have to go.

MEGA X

Leave it. You'll win.

NAIBE'S FEET AWAY NOW, HER EYE LINE BLOCKED BY A TALL STUDENT.

PAULO

Gotta go, gotta go, gotta, go--

THERE'S A FINAL TUG O' WAR BETWEEN AND MEGA X WINS. PAULO
RUNS OFF LEAVING HIS DRAWING BEHIND. THE GIRLS APPROACH.

TASHEENA

Hey, Dad. (RE: DRAWING) What's that?

MEGA X

Entry for the contest. Crazy kid who
drew it wanted to take it outta the show.

TASHEENA

Oh my god, why? That car's hot. Who
drew it?

NAIBE

(RECOGNIZING THE DRAWING) My brother.

(SMILES) And his life is about to end.

AS NAIBE PULLS OUT HER CELLPHONE, WE...

CUT TO:

SCENE E

INT. PAULO'S LIVING ROOM - LATER (NIGHT 2)
(PAULO, BENITA)

PAULO RUNS IN. BENITA APPEARS IN THE HALL DOORWAY.

BENITA

What are you doing home so early? I thought you were gonna be at the library 'till eight workin' on your report.

PAULO

Uh, I was, but they closed early cuz this kid totally puked all over the place; must of gotten sick from too much reading. Happens. Feeling a little sick myself. Night!

PAULO GOES TO EXIT, BUT BENITA STANDS BLOCKING THE DOORWAY.

BENITA

Naibe called and said she saw your drawing in the contest. How'd you manage to finish that without your airbrush?

PAULO

(HOPEFUL) Bucket of paint and a straw?

BENITA

I don't know how you did it, but from now on not only will there be no airbrush, you'll also be spending your afternoons with me at the store so I can keep an eye on you.

PAULO

Oh man... that is so uncool. Everyone at that store smells like B.O.

BENITA

It's an organic grocery store. People like to smell natural.

PAULO

Yeah, well, someone should tell them rocks don't work as deodorant.

BENITA

You can tell them yourself while you're doing your homework. Now go to your room.

PAULO JUST STANDS THERE.

BENITA (CONT'D)

I said go to your room.

PAULO

I know, but I can't walk through you. Basic physics. Two pieces of matter can't occupy the same space. Read that at the library. (OFF HER LOOK) I'll go around.

PAULO TAKES OFF IN THE OTHER DIRECTION.

CUT TO:

SCENE HINT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - THE NEXT DAY (DAY 3)

(PAULO, REGGIE, MEGA X, EXTRAS)

PAULO AND REGGIE WALK DOWN THE HALLWAY.

PAULO

So instead of doing your laundry punishment,
you just threw out all your underwear?

REGGIE

It's better than washing them.

PAULO

(RE: REGGIE) So you're not wearing any
underwear?

REGGIE

No, I'm covered. Made my own with some
napkins from the cafeteria and a big
rubber band.

PAULO SHAKES HIS HEAD AS A KID WALKS UP WEARING THE EXACT
SAME BACKPACK AS REGGIE. HE TURNS HIS BACK TO HIM THEN TAKES
HIS BACKPACK OFF, SETTING IT ON THE GROUND. REGGIE DOES THE
SAME. THE KID PICKS UP REGGIE'S BACKPACK, PUTS IT ON AND
WALKS OFF.

PAULO

Uh, that kid just took your backpack.

REGGIE

Oh, yeah. That's Anon. Good customer.
Drinks too much of the Sudsy Cola if you
ask me, but hey, I'm not here to judge.

PAULO

You're selling snacks now?

REGGIE

Yeah. When I broke the candy machine I took out the only competition. Now I'm trading him cola for homework.

PAULO

Wow. Living the dream.

MEGA X ENTERS AND WALKS UP WITH A GIFT BAG.

MEGA X

(TO PAULO) Hey, kid.

REGGIE

Whoa! Mega X! (RAPPING & DANCING)

*CAUSE I WALK WITH A HUMP FROM THE JEWELRY
ON MY FRONT--*

PAULO PUTS HIS HAND OVER REGGIE'S MOUTH, SILENCING HIM.

PAULO

Sorry, he's a bit obsessed.

MEGA X

I just wanted to come by and say sorry for yankin' your drawing away.

HE PULLS AN AIRBRUSH OUT OF THE GIFT BAG.

PAULO

Thanks, but I think I'm giving up designing cars. With all the trouble with my mom, and with Ray's shop closing...

MEGA X

Wait a minute. Ray Brigham? The guy that built that dog-looking car for Usher?

PAULO

Yeah. I was hopin' my drawings would get me a job there someday.

MEGA X

Anything I can do to help 'em stay open?

PAULO

(SARCASTIC) Yeah, you could have him build a car for you.

MEGA X

Done.

PAULO

Really?! (THEN, HOPEFUL) You could have him build my car for you.

MEGA X

Definitely done.

REGGIE

You could sign me to a three record deal!

MEGA X

Not a chance.

REGGIE SLUMPS.

PAULO

Meet me at Ray's shop this afternoon.

We'll get it started.

MEGA X EXITS. THE GUYS CELEBRATE WITH THEIR TOKEN HANDSHAKE, AGAIN RESULTING IN A HEAD BUMP.

REGGIE

There's just one problem. How you gonna
escape your mom to go to Ray's shop?

PAULO STICKS HIS HEAD INTO AN OPEN LOCKER AND BEGINS YELLING
THINGS WE CAN'T UNDERSTAND. HE STOPS AND PULLS HIS HEAD OUT.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

You gonna be okay?

PAULO

No.

REGGIE

You gonna cry?

PAULO

Maybe.

REGGIE REACHES IN HIS PANTS AND PULLS OUT A NAPKIN FOR PAULO.

PAULO (CONT'D)

Know what, I'm good.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWOSCENE JINT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - LATER THAT DAY (DAY 3)

(PAULO, REGGIE, BENITA, MR. TEXERIA, V.P. ROMATELLI, EXTRAS)

IT'S THE END OF THE SCHOOL DAY. KIDS GATHER THEIR BELONGINGS AND HEAD OFF. PAULO WALKS UP TO REGGIE, SMILING.

REGGIE

Why you so happy? Ain't your mom supposed
to be taking you to her hippy shop?

PAULO PULLS A COUPLE OF IGNITION WIRES ATTACHED TO A DISTRIBUTOR CAP OUT OF HIS BACKPACK.

PAULO

I disabled her car. Now while she's
waiting for a tow, I'll take your bike
and tell her I'm heading to the store to
get started on my work. But I'll really
be going to Ray's shop.

REGGIE

I guess that could work. Except for one
thing. You didn't ask to borrow my bike.

PAULO

Sorry. Can I borrow your bike?

REGGIE

Ain't got it. My friend Paulo took it
without asking.

BENITA ENTERS SEEMING ANNOYED.

BENITA

My car won't start.

PAULO

(OVER-ACTING) Really? Bummer.

REGGIE GIGGLES A LITTLE BIT. PAULO ELBOWS HIM.

BENITA

What's he laughing at?

PAULO

(COVERING) Nothing. You just missed a kid walking into his locker.

REGGIE

(STIFLED LAUGH) I enjoyed his pain.

PAULO

Y'know what, Mom? I got a lot of work to do, so I'm gonna take Reggie's bike to the store and get started.

BEFORE BENITA CAN RESPOND, PAULO GRABS HIS BAG AND TAKES OFF.

REGGIE

Care for a beverage while you wait?

BENITA

Uh... sure.

REGGIE PUSHES ON THE CEILING OF HIS LOCKER AND A PANEL DROPS DOWN REVEALING A SECRET STASH OF SNACKS AND DRINKS AS BENITA'S PHONE RINGS.

BENITA (CONT'D)

(INTO PHONE) Hello? Yes, I called for a tow. Be right out.

BENITA HANDS HIM A DOLLAR AND EXITS.

REGGIE

What, no tip?

A FEW KIDS NOTICE HE'S OPEN FOR BUSINESS AND GATHER. A
TEACHER, MR. TEXERIA, SEES THIS AND WALKS UP.

MR. TEXERIA

What do you think you're doing?

REGGIE

Oh, hey, Mr. T. Care for a Wagnut?

MR. TEXERIA

No. And nobody else will be either!

THE KIDS SCATTER.

MR. TEXERIA (CONT'D)

I'm shutting this locker bodega down!

That snack machine you broke was mine.

REGGIE

You?! (THEN) Oh, I see. Can't handle
the competition, huh?

MR. TEXERIA

Oh, I can handle it.

VICE PRINCIPAL TAYLOR WALKS DOWN THE HALL.

MR. TEXERIA (CONT'D)

Vice Principal Taylor, Reggie spit on me.

VICE PRINCIPAL ROMATELLI

We don't allow spitting on teachers. Or
anyone for that matter. Except spiders.

But only because they're not people.

THE VICE PRINCIPAL DRAGS REGGIE DOWN THE HALL, AS WE...

CUT TO:

SCENE KINT. HOT ROD SHOP - LITTLE LATER (DAY 3)

(PAULO, BECKY, RAY, MEGA X)

RAY BRIGHAM, (40S), CRAZY LIKE DOC BROWN FROM BACK TO THE FUTURE, IS TALKING WITH MEGA X. PAULO ENTERS AND SEEING RAY FOR THE FIRST TIME, STOPS DEAD IN HIS TRACKS.

RAY

So the cobra's trying to bite me and my monkey's getting punched by a donkey, but I just kept playing my banjo!

MEGA X

(NOTICING PAULO) There's my man!

MEGA GREETES PAULO WITH A HIP-HOP HUG.

MEGA X (CONT'D)

Ray, this is Paulo.

RAY

Very, nice to meet you. You haven't seen my cobra, have you?

PAULO

No, sorry.

RAY

Well, let me know if he bites you. Means he's hungry.

MEGA X'S CELLPHONE RINGS. HE ANSWERS AND STEPS AWAY.

RAY (CONT'D)

So, you got yourself quite a talent with cars, my young friend. Who taught you?

PAULO

My grandpa. He was an oldschool wrencher.

RAY

Ah, then you'll appreciate an oldschool
method of mine for shaping metal.

HE WALKS PAULO OVER TO A TABLE AND PLACES A GRAPEFRUIT UNDER A
SHEET OF METAL THEN BEGINS HITTING IT WITH AN OAR, SHAPING IT.

PAULO

A grapefruit and a boat oar? (POINTING TO
MACHINE) Why not use the English Wheel?

RAY

Oh, that tool may do the job just as
well, but it lacks a desired side effect.

(PULLS OUT GLASS) Juice!

BECKY ENTERS AND CROSSES TO THEM.

RAY (CONT'D)

Becky, this is the young man who drew Mr.
X's design. He's quite good.

BECKY

I know. And fun to hit, too. (BONKS
HIM, THEN) C'mon, I'll show you around.

BECKY LEADS PAULO AWAY.

RAY

And I'll make more juice. (GRABS AN
ORANGE FROM THE TABLE) Orange-
grapefruit? It could work!

BECKY

Thanks for bringing in the Mega X job.

This is huge.

BECKY STARTS TO WALK HIM AROUND THE SHOP.

PAULO

No prob. I didn't want you guys to close shop. (BASHFUL) I kinda want to work here.

BECKY

Sounds good to me. You're hired.

PAULO

Wait. What?! Really?! (THEN) Hang on, can you do that?

BECKY

Yeah. My dad may be the genius, but he's not so good with numbers. I kinda run the business end. So you want the job?

PAULO

Yes! Of course.

BECKY

I think your skills will really help bring the shop up to date. And while you're at it, maybe you can teach my dad to use the regular tools.

WE SEE RAY HAS PICKED UP A SMALL SLEDGEHAMMER AND IS POUNDING THE PADDLE INTO A SHEET OF METAL. JUICE FLOWS FROM BENEATH.

PAULO

Sure. (THEN) Now I just have to figure out how to sneak past my mom to come here everyday.

BECKY

Why don't you just tell her?

PAULO STARTS LAUGH HYSTERICALLY.

PAULO

(OFF HER LOOK) Oh, you're serious?

(THEN) No, she'd kill me.

BECKY

So what're you gonna do?

PAULO

I have no idea.

RAY WHO'S NOW COVERED IN PULP, CROSSES OVER HOLDING A BROKEN OAR.

RAY

(SAD) I broke my juicer.

CUT TO:

SCENE L

INT. RAY BRIGHAM'S HOT ROD SHOP - FEW DAYS LATER (DAY 4)
(PAULO, REGGIE, BECKY, RAY)

PAULO IS ALONE IN THE SHOP, HOLDING A WALKIE, AS REGGIE ENTERS.

PAULO

Hey, thanks for sneakin' out.

REGGIE

This better be good. I was workin' on ways to mess with Mister T. for getting me suspended. (SHOWING HIM PAD) Check it.

HE HANDS PAULO THE PAD.

PAULO

How's this gonna mess with him? It's a drawing of an angry grizzly bear and an alligator on a dirt bike.

REGGIE

I don't know yet, but I know I want them involved.

BECKY ENTERS. AD-LIB HELLOS.

BECKY

(TO PAULO) So what's so important you're makin' me open shop on a Saturday?

PAULO

You're about to see. (INTO WALKIE)

Bring it in!

THE GARAGE DOOR IN BACK OPENS AND RAY ENTERS DRIVING AN OLD DIESEL MERCEDES.

REGGIE

Is that your mom's car?

PAULO

Yep. See, I thought about how I could try and sneak out every day to come work here, but every way I ran it, it just ended up like it always does. Me grounded and my mom yellin' about studying hard so I can go to college and get a good job...

BECKY

So instead you stole her car.

PAULO

My mom doesn't want me to end up a poor grease monkey like my grandpa. So I'm gonna show her I can make money by tricking out her car.

REGGIE

So your plan is to mess up her car and charger her for it? Nice knowing you.

PAULO

Trust me, she'll love it. Now Mega X volunteered to take my mom and Naibe to some fund-raiser. We've only got four hours to completely remake this car...

REGGIE

Aw, man. That sounds like a lot of work.

BECKY

(TEMPTING) C'mon. I'll teach you how
to use the plasma torch.

REGGIE

Unh-unh. That involves fire.

PAULO

You're scared of fire?

REGGIE

Why do you think I always have you blow
out the candles on my birthday cake?
(SEES SOMETHING O.S.) Now that's my
style.

REGGIE RUNS OFF.

BECKY

I gotta say, I'm impressed.

PAULO

So impressed you think I'm cute?

REGGIE PULLS INTO FRAME IN THE FORKLIFT.

REGGIE

Let's do this!

PAULO

Put it away.

REGGIE SADLY PUTS IT INTO REVERSE AND BACKS AWAY, THE
FORKLIFT BEEPING AS HE BACKS OUT OF FRAME.

CUT TO:

SCENE MINT. RAY BRIGHAM'S HOT ROD SHOP - MONTAGE (DAY 4)

(PAULO, REGGIE, BECKY, RAY)

- PAULO AND BECKY TAKE TO REMOVING THE FRONT BUMPER AS RAY PULLS OFF THE HOOD.

- REGGIE STARTS TRYING TO REMOVE THE DRIVER'S SEAT.

- BECKY FLIPS DOWN HER SAFETY MASK AND BEGINS GRINDING AT THE BUMPER BRACKETS. SPARKS FLY.

- PAULO REMOVES THE HANDLE FROM THE PASSENGER DOOR.

- REGGIE UNDOES THE "LAST SCREW" FROM THE DRIVER'S SEAT. HE TRIES TO REMOVE IT, BUT IT WON'T BUDGE.

- RAY AND BECKY SEEM TO BE HAVING AN ARGUMENT. BECKY GESTURES WITH A RUBBER MALLET. RAY GESTURES WITH A BASEBALL BAT AND A POTATO.

- PAULO IS WELDING A PLATE IN THE HOLE WHERE THE DOOR HANDLE USED TO BE. HE FLIPS UP HIS WELDING MASK TO CHECK HIS WORK AND SEES REGGIE PUTTING A HEAVY STRAP AROUND THE DRIVER'S SEAT.

- BECKY PULLS OUT ONE OF THE FRONT SUSPENSION SPRINGS AND BEGINS INSTALLING A NEW "LOWERING SPRING."

- THE DRIVER'S SEAT GOES FLYING OUT OF THE CAR. WIDEN TO REVEAL REGGIE HAS USED THE FORKLIFT TO RIP THE SEAT OUT OF THE CAR. PAULO SHAKES HIS HEAD AND GOES BACK TO WELDING.

END MONTAGE

CUT TO:

SCENE R

INT. HOT ROD SHOP/INT. BENITA'S CAR - LATE THAT NIGHT (DAY 4)
(PAULO, REGGIE, BECKY, RAY, NAIBE, BENITA, MEGA, TASHEENA)

BENITA'S CAR HAS BEEN THOROUGHLY DONE OVER. THE CREW STANDS BACK ADMIRING THEIR WORK.

PAULO

Whaddya think?

REGGIE

Bro, your design is tight.

THEY FIST-BUMP.

RAY

Yes, quite impressive. Almost perfect.

Except... How would you feel about making
it look like a vacuum?

PAULO'S PHONE BEEPS.

PAULO

Mega just texted me they're pulling up.

Grab the sheet.

PAULO AND THE GANG HUSTLE AND THROW A SHEET OVER HIS MOM'S CAR JUST IN TIME AS BENITA AND NAIBE ARE LED IN BY MEGA X ALONG WITH HIS DAUGHTER TASHEENA.

BENITA

What's going on? (TO MEGA) You said we
were going to look at your new car.

PAULO STEPS OUT AND PULLS OFF THE TARP.

PAULO

Nope. We're here to look at your new car.

BENITA

This is what you were doing instead of studying?! You are in sooooo--

MEGA X

C'mon, Benita, give it a chance. He really--

BENITA

I don't care what he did. He lied to me. And so did you, Horace.

REGGIE

Your real name's Horace?

MEGA X

Now you know why I changed it.

BECKY

(TO BENITA) Please, just check it out.

BENITA

I don't even know who you are but I am not "checking" anything. Paulo, Naibe, get in the car!

BENITA CROSSES TO THE CAR, FOLLOWED BY A SMIRKING NAIBE. BENITA REACHES FOR THE DOORHANDLE.

BENITA (CONT'D)

My door handles are gone. Where are my door handles? Paulo?!

PAULO

Sorry, hang on.

HE GRABS THE KEYCHAIN FROM HER, PRESSES A BUTTON. THE CAR EMITS A CHIRPING SOUND AND BOTH DOORS POP OPEN.

BENITA

(SURPRISED) Ooo! That scared me. You
know I don't like to be scared by my car.

SHE AND NAIBE GET IN THE CAR. PAULO FOLLOWS.

RESET TO:

INT. BENITA'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

(BENITA, NAIBE, PAULO)

BENITA'S CHECKING OUT THE INTERIOR AS PAULO GETS IN.

PAULO

Mom, I'm sorry. I just wanted to--

BENITA

Are these new seats?

PAULO

Yeah. With heat and air conditioning
built in. (THEN) I'm really sorry.

BENITA

Mm-hmm. When we get home I'm gonna lock
you in your room and throw away the key.

BENITA TURNS THE CAR ON, GAUGES COME TO LIFE ON THE DASH.

BENITA (CONT'D)

What's all this?

PAULO

New gauges. RPMs, engine temp... That
one tells you how many miles per gallon
you're getting running on bio-diesel.

BENITA

You made my car green?

PAULO

Of course. I knew it's what you wanted.

BENITA

(BEAT) Please tell me you at least did some of your homework before coming here.

NAIBE

(DISBELIEF) Mom, you can't be buying into this. He went behind your back and didn't--

BENITA

Be quite, honey. (THEN) Paulo, thank you. This is amazing. What else did you do?

PAULO

Step outside and I'll show you.

BENITA QUICKLY GETS OUT AND CLOSES THE DOOR. NAIBE STEAMS.

PAULO (CONT'D)

(STICKS OUT TONGUE, THEN) Sorry. You lose.

NAIBE

My revenge will be fierce and your hair will change color.

PAULO GETS OUT. NAIBE FOLLOWS.

RESET TO:

INT. RAY BRIGHAM'S HOT ROD SHOP - CONTINUOUS

(PAULO, BECKY, REGGIE, BENITA, RAY, NAIBE, MEGA, TASHEENA)

PAULO

It's okay, guys. She likes it.

EVERYONE CHEERS.

PAULO (CONT'D)

Becky, you want to show my mom the rest?

BECKY

Of course! You got new rims, new tires,
a performance exhaust, custom paint,
solar powered A.C.

BENITA LETS OUT A GIDDY SCREECH AND HUGS PAULO AGAIN.

NAIBE

No. Don't hug him! You're supporting
his defiance!

REGGIE GRABS A CLEAN RAG AND STUFFS IT IN NAIBE'S MOUTH,
SILENCING HER.

PAULO

I'm glad you like it.

BENITA

I love it! But how could you afford
this? This must have cost--

BECKY

(RE: INVOICE) Ten thousand one hundred
two dollars and seventy three cents.

REGGIE

Uh-oh. Put on your raincoats, she spits
when she screams.

BENITA SHOOTS REGGIE A LOOK.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

What? You do.

PAULO

(SOTTO, TO BECKY) Ten thousand dollars?
I thought you were gonna give me a deal.

BENITA

Paulo, you can't afford ten thousand
dollars. I can't afford that. (TO
PAULO) You are so back in trouble again.

NAIBE SPITS OUT THE RAG IN HER MOUTH AND TAKES OUT HER PHONE.

NAIBE

(FILMING WITH PHONE) You're gonna look so
good getting yelled at on YouTube.

BECKY

It's okay, Miss. Garcia. Paulo paid for it
all.

PAULO

I did?

BECKY

Yeah, with the money you're gonna get
paid for designing Mega's car.

PAULO

Nice! (THEN) See, Mom. Customizing cars
is a good job. And a job I'm good at.

BENITA

(THINKS, THEN) Okay, you can work here.
But only on weekends 'till you get your
grades up.

PAULO HUGS BENITA.

PAULO

I'm working at Ray's shop!

REGGIE

Living the dream.

THEY DO THEIR HANDSHAKE AND THIS TIME MANAGE TO NOT BUMP HEADS.

RAY

Alright, let's party!

EVERYONE CHEERS, EXCEPT NAIBE WHO STEAMS. PAULO HITS A BUTTON ON BENITA'S KEY REMOTE AND THE CAR STEREO TURNS ON AND MUSIC PLAYS. PAULO, BENITA, BECKY, TASHEENA AND MEGA X START DANCING. RAY AND REGGIE RUN OFF. A MOMENT LATER, RAY STRUTS BACK IN PLAYING A BANJO, BALANCING A DANCING COBRA ON HIS HEAD. REGGIE PULLS INTO FRAME ON THE FORKLIFT.

PAULO

BECKY

Put it away.

Put it away.

RAY AND REGGIE BOTH BACK AWAY, RAY STRUMMING A SAD TUNE ON THE BANJO AND THE FORKLIFT MAKING REVERSE BEEPING SOUNDS. AS THE GANG CONTINUES TO PARTY, WE...

CUT TO:

SCENE SINT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - THE NEXT DAY (DAY 5)

(PAULO, REGGIE, GIRL, EXTRAS)

PAULO WALKS UP TO HIS LOCKER. SOME CUTE GIRLS GIGGLE NEARBY. PAULO POLITELY SMILES, THEN CHECKS HIS PANT'S ZIPPER.

PAULO

(TO SELF) Nope, all good there... For once.

ONE OF THE GIRLS APPROACHES.

GIRL

Is it true you designed Mega X's car?

PAULO

Um, yeah, actually, how did you--

GIRL

Here's my number. Call me, okay?

SHE RUNS BACK TO HER FRIENDS WHO ALL BEGIN GOSSIPING AS THEY ENTER A NEARBY CLASSROOM.

PAULO

(CALLING AFTER) Wait. Where'd you hear that?

REGGIE (O.S.)

Her sweet sixteen's when? Alright, alright. I'll see if we can get you in on the eleventh.

REGGIE APPEARS AT THE TOP OF THE STAIRS WEARING A SLICK SUIT AND TALKING INTO A BLUETOOTH HEADSET.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

But I gotta tell you, with what you're thinking, it ain't gonna be cheap.

(MORE)

REGGIE (CONT'D)

"Money's not an object?" Alright. I'll call the zoo and tell them to start training one of their monkey's to drive.

HE WALKS UP TO PAULO, HANGING UP HIS PHONE.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

Cha-ching! I hope you're not busy for like the next two years, cuz the orders are flying in.

PAULO

Hold on. First what's with the suit? Second, who are you selling my skills to? And third, what's this gonna cost me?

REGGIE

One, you gotta look good to sell good. Two, this school's filled with rich kids about to turn sixteen. And three, don't worry, just the usual twenty percent.

PAULO GLARES AT HIM.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

Okay, ten, but I can't go any lower. Papa needs some shoes to go with this suit.

HE PULLS UP HIS PANT LEGS AND WE SEE HE'S WEARING SLIPPERS.

PAULO

Bear slippers?

REGGIE

What? Brown belt, brown shoes. That's
the rule.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

TAG

FADE IN:

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - LATER THAT DAY (DAY 5)
(PAULO, REGGIE, MR. TEXERIA, V.P. ROMATELLI, EXTRAS)

TWO BIG KIDS ENTER AND WHEEL A SNACK MACHINE INTO PLACE. THE MACHINE'S LABELED "REGGIE'S SNACKS."

PAULO

Um, isn't this how you got suspended?

REGGIE

Yeah, it's also how I got off suspension early. (CALLING) Hey, Mr. T.!

MR. TEXERIA COMES OUT OF HIS CLASSROOM.

MR. TEXERIA

What do you think you're doing?!

REGGIE

I got permission from Vice Principal Romatelli. Now you can't stop me from putting you and your rip-off snack machines out of business.

MR. TEXERIA

Listen, you little jerk. This is my territory and I'll charge you rich little brats anything I want.

REGGIE SMILES AND PULLS ON THE FRONT OF THE MACHINE. IT OPENS LIKE A DOOR, REVEALING THE VICE PRINCIPAL INSIDE.

VICE PRINCIPAL ROMATELLI

Taking advantage of students. What's wrong with you? You been eating paint?

V.P. ROMATELLI DRAGS HIM OFF.

MR. TEXERIA

I'll get you for this, Reggie Cooper!

REGGIE

Yeah, yeah. Move along little man.

PAULO LOOKS AT THE CANDY INSIDE THE MACHINE.

PAULO

Can I have a freebie?

REGGIE NODS YES. PAULO PICKS UP A LARGE GUMBALL CANDY.

REGGIE

Nice choice, but I am not legally responsible for what happens once you put that in your mouth.

PAULO

Um... okay.

PAULO POPS THE CANDY INTO HIS MOUTH. HE BITES DOWN AND WE HEAR A CRACK.

REGGIE

I warned you. They don't call it a Tooth Cracker for nothin'.

PAULO

Why would they even make this?

REGGIE

Just be glad you didn't have a Chocolate Filling Ripper, you'd be missing teeth.

AS PAULO RUBS HIS CHEEK, WE...

FADE OUT.

END OF SHOW