"APARTMENT 4"

by

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INT. APARTMENT/KITCHEN - NIGHT

The kitchen is open and opposite the living room.

JAY, white, early-20's, is dressed in over the top hip-hop clothes and wearing wireless headphones. He is looking at a laptop placed on the kitchen table. He is rapping and dancing in a weird way.

    JAY
    My name consists of only one letter, 'cause I'm too stupid to think of anything better...

INT. LIVING ROOM

ERIC, white, late-20's, is sitting on the couch. He is watching TV with a beer in his hand.

    ERIC
    (to himself)
    You got that right.

Eric turns and looks at Jay.

INT. KITCHEN

Jay continues rapping and dancing.

    JAY
    ...life's too short to try to get smart. I'd rather take a nap and fart. People call me ret...

Jay notices Eric looking at him. He stops rapping and dancing. He removes the headphones.

    JAY
    You say somethin', bro?

INT. LIVING ROOM

Eric turns off the TV and gets up.

Jay walks up to Eric.

    JAY
    Too loud?

Eric drinks his beer, then puts his hand on Jay's shoulder.

    ERIC
    Jay, I love you like a brother. That is why I have an obligation to (MORE)
ERIC (cont'd)  
be honest with you. You are a  
terrible rapper!

JAY  
You don't know what you're talking  
'bout. I'm on fire!

ERIC  
No, you are not on fire. MC's are  
competitive. It is all about  
proving who is the best. You are  
calling yourself stupid. Your goals  
are to nap and fart. And you cannot  
say "retard" anymore.

JAY  
Hey, I didn't even get to...

Eric and Jay are interrupted by the front door being  
unlocked.

A young Chinese man named QING enters through the front  
door. He is a student who recently arrived in the United  
States. Qing is wearing a backpack and glasses. His hair and  
clothes are wet.

Eric and Jay stare at Qing.

ERIC  
Is it raining outside? Never forget  
to bring an umbrella, Qing. It is  
always good to be prepared.

Qing looks down at the floor. He is ashamed.

QING  
It's pee.

JAY  
Say what?

QING  
Homeless person pee on me.

ERIC  
What? How did it... How is your  
hair wet?

QING  
He climb tree.

JAY  
Oh, yeah. I get it now.
ERIC
Yes. That pretty much clears it.

Eric walks closer to Qing.

Qing fixes his glasses and looks at Eric.

QING
Why this happen to me?

ERIC
Listen, Qing, buddy. This is New York. You do not walk under a tree carefree. You look up. You always check for crazy people in New York City.

JAY
That's right, King! You never know who's creepin'.

Eric turns to Jay.

ERIC
His name is Qing. How many times do I have to correct you? And stop talking black. You are a white male...

Jay interrupts Eric.

JAY
Hey, hold on now. That's racist!

ERIC
How is that racist? If anything, pretending to be a black person is racist.

QING
I think there is word. It's wi...

Jay turns to Qing.

JAY
Don't say it! Don't you say it now!

QING
Ok, I don't say.

ERIC
We have so much to teach you, Qing. Go take a shower. Tomorrow we shall begin.
Qing is walking through the living room while Jay and Eric are watching.

        ERIC
        Something does not add up. Wait a minute, Qing!

Qing stops walking.

        ERIC
        You are soaked. Why did you not get away as soon as you saw the homeless guy peeing on you?

Qing turns to Eric.

        QING
        At first, I thought warm rain. I close my eyes and look up to enjoy.

        ERIC
        Oh, buddy...

Qing looks down and continues walking towards the bathroom.

INT. APARTMENT/LIVING ROOM - DAY

Eric is sitting on the couch watching TV.

Jay is coming from the kitchen. He is carrying two beers. He sits down next to Eric and hands him one of the beers.

Eric takes the beer.

        ERIC
        I love the weekend. Just sitting around, drinking beer all day.

Jay looks at Eric.

Eric notices that Jay is staring.

        ERIC
        What?

        JAY
        You do that every day.

        ERIC
        Yes, but it feels different during the weekends.

        JAY
        How's that?
ERIC
Well, for instance, I have you
bringing me my beers.

JAY
Man, I'm ain't your maid.

Eric drinks his beer.

ERIC
Speaking of which, we need to find
another roommate. The rent is
killing us.

JAY
Maybe if you got yourself a job...

Eric gives Jay a stern look.

JAY
It's cool. Forget I said that.

ERIC
I will not forget you said that.

JAY
Anyway, I thought we were taking
Jing out for his homeless/crazy
person awareness class... thing.

ERIC
Oh, yes. Well, how about I take
care of that and you look for a
roommate. And it is Qing. It is
really not that difficult to...

The doorbell rings and interrupts Eric.

Jay and Eric look at each other.

They continue staring at each other.

JAY
Fine! I'll get it.

ERIC
I told you. I love the weekends.

Eric drinks his beer. Jay stands up and starts walking
towards the front door.

JAY
It's probably the new camera gear I
ordered. I'm shooting my first
video.
ERIC
(to himself)
Oh, dear God...

Eric starts drinking his beer.

INT. FRONT DOOR

Jay opens the front door. It is a DELIVERY GUY carrying a package. He is a young black man.

JAY
Sup, bro?

The delivery guy hands Jay a device.

DELIVERY GUY
Sign here, please.

Jay signs and takes the package.

JAY
Thanks, bro.

The delivery guy takes a long look at how Jay is dressed. He shakes his head disapprovingly and walks away.

Jay closes the door and heads towards the kitchen.

JAY
What was his deal? Man, brothers be smokin' too much weed nowadays...

INT. LIVING ROOM

Eric looks amazed.

ERIC
(to himself)
How is he still alive...

INT. SUBWAY - DAY

Eric and Qing are standing near a bench with a drunk homeless man lying on it.

ERIC
Welcome to the New York City subway, Qing. This is where you earn your wings.

QING
My wings?
ERIC
If you were a pilot... It is a metaphor.

Qing looks confused.

ERIC
Ah, forget it.

QING
Okay. I forget very easy.

Qing smiles.

ERIC
You should not be bragging about that.

Qing looks confused again.

ERIC
Forget that, too. As I said, this is the New York City subway. The place with the highest concentration of "crazy" in this city. Also, it is well known for the highly dense population of rats. But that is another...

Qing interrupts Eric.

QING
The pizza rat!

ERIC
Yes, Qing. The world-famous New York pizza rat. Now focus. Do you see this man here?

Eric points at the homeless man lying on the bench.

QING
I see.

ERIC
This is an obvious example. Sort of a beginner's guide, if you will. Still, even though he appears incapable of doing any harm to us, just watch.

Eric backs up.

The homeless man throws up. Qing looks down at his shoes.
QING
No! My shoes!

ERIC
See. There is a price to be paid for being careless, Qing.

QING
But you told me stay here and not move!

A train arrives.

ERIC
Now, let us get you right into the front lines.

Eric urges Qing to head towards the train.

Qing is reluctant.

INT. APARTMENT/LIVING ROOM - DAY

Jay is interviewing a potential roommate. His name is SEAN. Sean is a young black man.

Jay and Sean are sitting on the couch. Jay's phone is on the table.

JAY
Sean, I'mma play you a little somethin'. I want you to be honest with me.

Jay presses on the phone's screen and starts a music track.

JAY
(rapping over the phone speakers)
Bitch I fuck so hard my dick falls off. Then I put it in my own ass and get off. Yeah that's right, you can call me prick, 'cause I don't need women, I just found out I can suck my own dick!

Jay presses on the screen and stops the recording.

Sean looks stunned.

JAY
What's the verdict, man? Hit me!

Sean is uncomfortable.
SEAN
I am really not a fan of rap music.

JAY
Say what?

SEAN
I don't like it. I find the profanity to be...

Jay interrupts.

JAY
The what? But you're black?

SEAN
That is incredibly racist.

Sean stands up.

JAY
Racist? I'm not racist.

SEAN
I have to go.

Sean starts walking towards the front door.

JAY
Hey, hold on a sec, bro.

Sean leaves.

JAY
Brothers be so sensitive nowadays...

INT. SUBWAY/TRAIN CAR - DAY

Eric and Qing are sitting. Eric is looking around.

ERIC
I do not like it, Qing. Something is not right.

Qing looks worried.

QING
Why? What wrong?

ERIC
That is the thing. Nothing is wrong. Everyone here seems so... normal.
QING
That's good, yes?

Eric starts to get agitated.

ERIC
No. It is not good, Qing. It is not good for the purpose of our exercise.

Eric gets up. He is getting angry.

ERIC
(with loud voice)
We need crazy people. Where are the crazy people when you need them!?

The passengers turn and stare at Eric.

ERIC
Do not look at me! I do not like to be looked at!

The passengers turn away. Those who are close start distancing themselves.

INT. APARTMENT/LIVING ROOM – DAY

Jay is interviewing another potential roommate. His name is ROY. He is a shady looking individual who can't stop scratching himself.

Roy is looking around the apartment. He is scratching his leg.

ROY
You have a really nice place, man.
I like it.

JAY
Yeah, we do. We'd like to keep it that way, too.

ROY
I like it. I like the vibes, man. I like the color of the walls. It's so... colorful.

Roy continues to look around. He starts scratching his neck.

JAY
Listen, Roy. I got to ask. You okay?
ROY
Nah, man. I've been clean.

JAY
You've been what?

ROY
Oh, yeah.

JAY
Yeah?

ROY
Yeah, man. It's been the best two weeks of my life. You know what I'm sayin'?

Roy smiles at Jay. Some of his teeth are missing.

Jay awkwardly smiles back.

Roy starts to scratch his chest. He looks around and sees something.

ROY
What's that over there?

Roy points.

Jay looks in the direction Roy is pointing at.

JAY
You mean the plant?

Roy looks at Jay.

ROY
Yeah, man. Can I touch it?

Jay gets up.

JAY
You know what. We got one just like it outside the building. It bigger and better. You wanna touch that one?

Roy appears to be amazed.

ROY
Yeah, man. I wanna touch it so bad.

EXT. BACK ALLEY - NIGHT

Eric and Qing are walking.
ERIC
I do not understand. We have been walking around for an hour and nothing has happened.

QING
I'm tired.

Eric stops walking and turns to Qing. Qing stops walking and looks at Eric.

ERIC
You are not the only one.

QING
Let's go home.

ERIC
I am sorry but I cannot fail you again, Qing. After what happened on that train...

A MUGGER holding a knife approaches.

MUGGER
Stay calm. If you do as I say, I won't stab you with this knife.

Eric smiles.

ERIC
Oh, thank God. We were about to give up.

Eric takes a step towards the mugger.

MUGGER
Hey, stay back!

ERIC
Finally. Look at him, Qing. This is a New York City mugger. This is who we have been looking for.

The mugger looks confused.

QING
But why? He want to rob us.

ERIC
That is exactly why, Qing. See, I have been mugged exactly six times. I even think one of them was thanks to this gentleman right here.
The mugger backs up.

MUGGER
Hey, man. I didn't mug you. I always remember my vics. Never mug the same person twice. I have principles, you know.

ERIC
No, I am pretty sure it was you. Two years ago. A couple of blocks east from here. You were wearing a hat. It had a white stripe. I am pretty good with details.

MUGGER
Ah, I see. It was my brother. He works that area. We look alike. He wore that stupid hat for years.

ERIC
Really? Is your brother a mugger as well?

MUGGER
Yes. It's not that unusual. It's like a family thing. Sometimes it even goes from one generation to another.

ERIC
I did not know that.

MUGGER
You know what? I'm not mugging you.

ERIC
Why not?

MUGGER
I can't. My brother already did you and you seem like a nice guy. You get the family discount.

ERIC
That is really nice of you. Thank you.

MUGGER
Don't mention it.

The mugger is about to leave.

ERIC
Hey, wait! What about him?
Eric looks at Qing.
Qing is confused.

INT. APARTMENT/KITCHEN - NIGHT

Jay and a young attractive black woman named KYLIE are sitting at the kitchen table. They are eating pizza.

Eric and Qing enter. They are arguing.

QING
All I say, you don't have to give mugger my things.

ERIC
Yes, I did. How else are you going to learn?

QING
Learn what? That you asshole!

Eric and Qing notice Kylie.

Jay gets up.

JAY
This is Kylie. Our new roommate.

Kylie gets up.

KYLIE
Hi.

Eric and Qing are staring.

Qing smiles.

QING
She sleep in my room?

ERIC
Silence, Qing. Jay, I thought that we were deciding this together.

JAY
Yeah. Well, after what I've been through today, I can say for sure we ain't gonna find no one better than her. Trust me. And she's awesome, too.

Kylie smiles.
ERIC
We need to talk alone for a minute.

Kylie's smile disappears. She looks worried.

Eric and Jay walk into the living room. Qing and Kylie are left alone.

KYLIE
So, Jay told me that you recently arrived in America.

QING
Yes. I come two weeks ago.

KYLIE
How do you like it here?

QING
Yesterday, homeless person pee on me. Today, I get mugged.

KYLIE
Wow! Really?

QING
Yes. Tomorrow, I stay here. I don't go outside.

Kylie feels sorry for Qing. She picks up a box with leftover pizza and shows it to Qing.

KYLIE
Do you want some pizza?

QING
Thank you. I am very hungry. We look for crazy people all day.

Qing sits down and grabs a slice.

KYLIE
You looked for crazy people?

Qing bites into the pizza. He stops and removes his teeth without taking a bite. He looks disgusted.

KYLIE
What is it?

QING
I remember pizza rat.
INT. LIVING ROOM

Jay and Eric are close to each other. They are keeping their voices down.

ERIC
What are you doing?

JAY
What?

ERIC
She is a woman.

JAY
So what?

ERIC
What do you mean "so what"? She is a woman!

JAY
Bro, I think you're bein' sexist.

ERIC
First of all, thinking has never been kind to you.

JAY
Hey!

ERIC
Second, it is not sexist. It is called common sense. We are three guys. We cannot live with a woman.

JAY
Why not?

Eric starts to get agitated.

ERIC
Because it is... unnatural. Because... there are things... things that will... happen.

JAY
Like what?

Eric is about to burst with anger.

ERIC
Like...

Jay interrupts Eric.
JAY
She's a bartender at an Irish bar nearby. It's called Mullan's. You know it?

Eric mood changes. He calms down.

ERIC
A bartender?

Eric turns and looks at Kylie, then back at Jay.

ERIC
I have never been.

JAY
Says the beer is really good. And cheap, too. Just the way you like it.

ERIC
That is how everybody likes it, Jay.

JAY
She is working tonight. She invited us. Drinks are on her.

Eric puts his hand on Jay's shoulder.

ERIC
I should not say this often... but you are not a retard. In fact, there may be a glimpse of genius in that head of yours.

Jay laughs.

ERIC
What?

JAY
You said "retard".

ERIC
Do you know what? I take it back.

Eric heads towards the kitchen. Jay follows.

JAY
You can't take it back!

ERIC
I already did.
INT. KITCHEN

Eric and Jay come in. Qing and Kylie are sitting at the table.

ERIC

Kylie, am I correct?

Kylie gets up.

KYLIE

Yes.

ERIC

Very nice to meet you. How do you find our humble apartment?

KYLIE

It's really nice.

ERIC

Thank you. Now, before we seal the deal, as one would say. Are you sure you want to share a room with Qing here? He is Asian. They are known to be a little weird in their perversions.

JAY

This one's got to be racist.

ERIC

Perhaps a little. But necessary.

Eric gets behind Qing and puts his hand on Qing's shoulders.

ERIC

It may not look like it, but he is still a man.

Qing looks up at Eric.

QING

Why you do this to me?

KYLIE

I don't mind. I grew up with two brothers. We shared a room until we finished high school. Trust me, I've seen everything.

ERIC

Then it is official. You shall be our new roommate.
Kylie is happy.

    KYLIE
    Thank you, guys. Let's go celebrate. Drinks are on me.

    ERIC
    There is only one thing I love more than beer.

    KYLIE
    What's that?

Eric and Jay simultaneously.

    ERIC
    A free beer.

    JAY
    A free beer.

    ERIC
    Don't do that!

Kylie, Qing, Jay and Eric head towards the front door.

    JAY
    Do what?

Eric is getting agitated.

    ERIC
    Do not assume you know what I am going to say.

As they leave through the front door.

    JAY
    Why not?

    ERIC
    You are stealing my moment.

Eric closes the door.

    JAY
    (from the hallway)
    No, I wasn't.

    ERIC
    (yelling from the hallway)
    Just shut the fuck up!
INT. BAR - NIGHT

Eric, Jay and Qing are sitting at the bar. They are all drunk. Jay and Qing are with heads on the bar countertop. Eric is sitting between them. He is looking around.

ERIC
I love this place. Do you not love this place? What was it called again?

Jay, without lifting his head.

JAY
Mullan's.

ERIC
Mullan's. I wonder what it means. Is it the name of the owner. Or does it have some kind of a profound meaning...

RAY MULLAN, a bald man, owner, Irish, approaches behind the bar.

RAY
It means bald.

Eric looks at Ray.

ERIC
Like the eagle?

RAY
Take a wild guess.

Eric stares at Ray. He is pensive.

Kylie approaches.

RAY
You need to get your friends out of here. They are too drunk. Even by my standards.

Eric turns around.

ERIC
There is a man sleeping on the floor.

Eric points.

ERIC
He is over there. Look.
A man named MAC is sleeping on the floor.

RAY
That's Mac.

ERIC
MacWho?

RAY
Don't get smart with me, son.

ERIC
I am not...

RAY
He's earned the right to sleep on that floor. The amount of drink that man can hold. It would kill all three of you combined. Hell, might've done these two already.

Jay, without lifting his head.

JAY
I'm alive.

ERIC
I want to earn the right to sleep on this bar here. Give me another round. I will prove myself. I will even pay for it.

Jay lifts his head.

JAY
I think I'm starting to hear things.

RAY
I can appreciate your determination, son. However, I must decline. You are cut off. All of you.

Qing slumps on the floor.

Eric gets up.

ERIC
You cannot die, Qing. We will not make the rent without you.
INT. APARTMENT/LIVING ROOM - DAY

Eric, Jay and Qing are sitting on the couch. The all look miserable.

    JAY
    We didn't think this through.

Eric gives Jay a stern look.

    JAY
    Okay... I didn't think this through.

    ERIC
    How long has it been, Qing?

Qing looks at his watch.

    QING
    Twenty four minutes.

    ERIC
    Who stays in the shower for twenty four minutes!?

    JAY
    Teenage boys?

    ERIC
    Fuck it!

Eric gets up and heads for the balcony.

    JAY
    Where you goin'?

Eric, without looking back.

    ERIC
    Do you know how much beer I drank last night!

Eric goes out on the balcony.

    QING
    I never been so drunk.

    JAY
    Really? You had like less than two beers?

    ERIC
    (from the balcony)
    Hey, Qing! Guess what I am doing?
Qing yells.

QING
What?

Jay shuts his eyes in anguish.

JAY
Don't you shout like that!

QING
Sorry.

ERIC
(from the balcony)
Do not worry, New York, I got warm rain for everybody.

Jay is disgusted.

ERIC
Shit!

Eric comes in a rush. He is fixing his pants.

JAY
What is it?

ERIC
I think some of the warm rain may have landed on a police officer.

Jay gets up.

JAY
What? A cop? He see you?

ERIC
I am not sure. However, I am not waiting to find out.

Eric and Jay leave the apartment. Qing remains on the couch.

INT. LIVING ROOM (FEW MINUTES LATER)

Qing is still on the couch. Kylie exits the bathroom and enters the bedroom.

Qing looks at his watch.

QING
Twenty nine minutes. Still worth.

Qing gets up and heads towards the bathroom.
QING
Last night side booby. Tonight full booby.

FADE OUT.

THE END