

COLLEGE KIDS

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COLD OPEN

EXT. CASTLE HILL COLLEGE MAIN ENTRANCE - DAY

Two WORKMEN hang a "Welcome New Knights" banner from the university's iconic, wrought-iron gate.

LANDON METZKER-TRAVIS, 15, tall with a muscular build, walks through the gate. We would know he's an athlete even without his grass-stained lacrosse jersey. He waves at the workmen who look happy to see him.

WORKMAN #1

Game today?

LANDON

Just practice. Sign looks nice.

WORKMAN #2

Same one every year.

INT. WESTING HOUSE DORM - STAIRCASE - DAY

Landon bounds up a wooden staircase two steps at a time. His heavy footsteps echo through the deserted dorm.

INT. WESTING HOUSE DORM - HALLWAY - DAY

Landon walks past dozens of doors decorated with festive name plates: "Jayde," "Emily," "Conner," "Elliot."

He stops at the last door on the hall and pulls out his key. ANGLE ON the door's nameplate: "Metzker-Travis Family: Faculty In Residence."

INT. THE METZKER-TRAVIS APARTMENT - DAY

Landon tosses his duffle bag next to the shoe closet. The apartment is an open floor plan, with no clear divide between the entryway, the kitchen, or the living room.

DR. MIRIAM METZKER, a forty-something woman wearing tie-die overalls, is in the kitchen struggling to fasten an apron on her son DREW, 13. Unlike Landon, Drew has a frail build and could never be confused with an athlete. *

Drew's best friend SAVANAH, 12, measures pitchers-full of flour and sugar. She grabs a spoonful of batter and takes a bite. *
*

LONDON

I'm home!

*

No one stops to acknowledge Landon.

DREW

I don't need an apron.

DR. METZKER

But what if you got oil on your favorite Star Wars shirt?

SAVANAH

He has six others exactly like it.

DR. METZKER

But this is the only one with the bleach stain on the collar. It's one-of-a-kind.

*

*

LONDON

Isn't someone going to ask me how my day went?

Dr. Metzker turns around. She's a bit surprised to see her eldest son.

*

DR. METZKER

Hey, honey. How was sports?

LONDON

It's lacrosse, mom.

DR. METZKER

Of course. Drew, be careful with the oven, I don't want you burning yourself again.

DREW

I'm an expert with a soldering iron. I can definitely handle an oven set at three-fifty.

SAVANAH

And I've dissected genetically modified mice. Surely that counts for something.

*

The moment Dr. Metzker turns her back, Drew furtively dips his finger in the batter. But Dr. Metzker has a sixth sense and spins around to face Drew.

*

*

*

DR. METZKER

Don't you dare! There's raw eggs in that.

DREW

But you let Savannah taste the batter earlier.

SAVANAH

Basically, if I do it, it's fine, but since you have a higher probability of dying anyway you'd better not push it.

DR. METZKER

Want a healthy snack instead? We're out of meal worms, but we have crickets.

Dr. Metzker opens the pantry. The top two shelves are filled with dozens of clear Tupperware containers whose contents are suspiciously bug-colored.

DREW

I'll pass.

DR. METZKER

Suit yourself.

Dr. Metzker takes a container from the shelf, grabs a handful of dried crickets, and begins popping them in her mouth like popcorn. Landon fakes gagging.

There's a KNOCK.

DR. METZKER (CONT'D)

Landon, could you get the door?

Landon doesn't budge from the couch.

DR. METZKER (CONT'D)

I invited Ellie, it's probably her.

Landon, suddenly interested, hurries to open the door. It's ELLIE. She's 14. Rather bookish, but beautiful. The kind of girl who considers Landon way out of her league.

ELLIE

Hey Landon. Your mom invited me to help with baking for move-in day.

LANDON

Yeah. Sure. Come in.

Landon, preoccupied, takes a few moments to realize he's blocking the doorway. As he steps out of her way. Ellie brushes past him and enters the kitchen. Landon watches her go.

SAVANAH
 (to Ellie)
 Just so you know, I'm the
 mastermind of this operation.

*
 *
 *
 *

DR. METZKER
 Savannah's invaluable. She converted
 our milk jugs into measuring cups.

*

Savanah shows off a plastic milk jug. It still says "2%," but it's full of rainbow sprinkles.

SAVANAH
 I sawed the tops off with scalpels
 from the rat lab.

DREW
 Don't worry. I made her wash 'em
 first.

Drew offers Ellie a plate of cookies.

DREW (CONT'D)
 Want to try the control group?

SAVANAH
 Test batch.

ELLIE
 Sure, thanks.

*

She grabs a cookie, but Dr. Metzker stops her from putting it in her mouth.

DR. METZKER
 Na-uh. Apron before chocolate.

Cookie in hand, Ellie takes a tie-die apron from Dr. Metzker.

*

LANDON
 Want help with that?

He reaches to tie the strings on Ellie's apron.

ELLIE
 I got it, thanks.

She brings the strings around in front of her and ties them into a nice bow.

LONDON
Where's my apron?

DREW *
Wait a sec. This is a tightly
controlled experiment. Your
flippant attitude means I can't
trust you in a laboratory
situation.

LONDON
We're not in a lab, we're baking
cookies.

DREW
That's the flippant attitude I'm
talking about!

Landon glares at Drew. His glance shifts to all the
ingredients on the counter.

LONDON
If you won't let me help you, I'll
make a batch myself.

DREW
Fine. You'll burn them.

Landon goes to the pantry and stares at the dozens of
Tupperware containers. *

LONDON *
Where are the chocolate chips? *

SAVANAH *
Top shelf, second container from
the right. I know your kitchen
better than you and I don't even
live here. Just saying. *

Landon reaches for the container of chocolate chips but gets
distracted by a yelp of pain. *

DR. METZKER (O.S.)
I told you to be careful with the
oven!

DREW (O.S.)
I'm fine, Mom. Chill out.

Landon grabs the wrong container. *

END OF COLD OPEN

ACT ONE

EXT. CASTLE HILL COLLEGE MAIN ENTRANCE - DAY

A steady stream of cars crammed with students and suitcases drive under the "Welcome New Knights" banner. *

EXT. THE QUAD - DAY

Savannah and Drew both wear "Faculty In Residence" tee-shirts with a graphic of a fir tree. Drew's shirt is a few sizes too large. Savannah carries a clipboard, and Drew carries a basket full of individually wrapped, homemade cookies.

Savannah approaches new students and families with the enthusiasm of salesmen in a car dealership. Drew tags along behind her as she approaches a 40-something SOCCER MOM carrying a moving box full of shampoo and stuffed animals. *

SAVANAH

Welcome to Castle Hill! Can I help you?

SOCCER MOM

Actually, yes. Do you know where Green Leaf Dorm is?

SAVANAH

See the one next to the dining hall? With the solar panels? It's that one. The best dorm on campus. *

DREW

She's biased cause she lives there.

Soccer Mom laughs, thinking he's kidding.

SAVANAH

No, really. Our parents are FIRs. Faculty in Residence. *

She points to the fir tree on her tee-shirt. *

SOCCER MOM

Ooh. Exciting.

As Soccer Mom turns to leave, Savannah turns to Drew.

SAVANAH

Seriously, Drew? You have one job.

DREW
 (calling after Soccer Mom)
 Want a welcome cookie?

EXT. WESTING HOUSE DORM - ENTRANCE - DAY

Landon walks out the Westing House door. He sees his father, DR. TRAVIS, and tries to duck out of sight. But, Dr. Travis, a philosophy professor with uncombed hair and mismatched socks, notices him anyway.

DR. TRAVIS
 Landon, I've got two suitcases
 for room 315. *

LANDON
 But Dad, I've been carrying stuff
 all morning. *

DR. TRAVIS
 You just took a forty-minute break.

LANDON
 Can't I make it forty-five? *

Dr. Travis hands him a suitcase.

INT. WESTING HOUSE DORM - STAIRCASE - DAY

Landon climbs the wooden staircase, lugging two international-sized suitcases. He stops on a landing to catch his breath. A CUTE COLLEGE GIRL comes down the staircase.

COLLEGE GIRL
 Some suitcases. Looks heavy.

LANDON
 Trust me, they are.

She smiles. It's hard to tell if she's flirting or just being friendly.

COLLEGE GIRL
 I'm Audrey. I'm on floor four.

LANDON
 Landon. Floor three.

AUDREY
 So you're a freshman, too?

LONDON
 (lying)
 Yeah. Yeah. Just moving in.

AUDREY
 We should hang out sometime. A group of friends, we're going downtown for lunch. Wanna join?

LONDON
 I'd love to, but I, like, have to unpack still.

AUDREY
 I feel that.

LONDON
 But we should, like, totally meet up sometime at, like, the dining hall or something.

AUDREY
 Yeah, definitely? Wanna exchange contacts?

She gives Landon her phone and he types in his number. *

LONDON
 There you go. *

AUDREY
 Perfect. See you around. And good luck with the suitcases. *

LONDON
 Thanks. See ya.

As Audrey turns the corner of the staircase, Landon silently makes a fist in victory. A text pops up a moment later: "Audrey from floor 4:)." He goes to contacts and adds her. First name: Audrey. Last name: Cute College Girl. *

EXT. THE QUAD - DAY

Savanah and Drew are sitting at a picnic table. Drew is reading a pocket-sized version of Stephen Hawking's A Brief History of Time. Savanah looks at her clipboard.

SAVANAH
 Pick up clipboard. Check. Welcome new students. Check. Assist students with move-in. No thank you.

Drew looks up from his book and notices a group of middle school boys throwing frisbee in front of Westing House.

DREW

Hey, is that Joel Jacobson? Tossing frisbee? I should go say hi. *

SAVANAH *

You shouldn't. *

DREW *

But I haven't seen him in like a year. Since before the surgery. *

SAVANAH *

Trust me, he's changed. *

DREW *

I'm gonna say hi. Hold this. *

Drew shoves the basket of cookies to Savannah and she slides one into her pocket. Drew crosses the sidewalk to the Westing House lawn. It's definitely JOEL, plus three of his friends. *

Joel, 13, wears a Vineyard Vines shirt and khaki shorts. He oozes cool-kid. As soon as he sees Drew, he snaps the frisbee his way.

JOEL

Metzker-Travis! Ready for it?

Drew isn't. He ducks, but the disk curves and slams into his arm. Drew tries not to wince. *

JOEL (CONT'D)

Shoulda seen it coming, man.

Drew picks up the frisbee and lobs a wobbly pass back to Joel. A few of Joel's friends snicker. Drew tries to make conversation anyway.

DREW

Why are you here?

JOEL

Didn't you hear? My sister got in Castle Hill. *

DREW

Give her my congratulations. Hey, I'm excited to start school Monday. Aren't you? *

It's the wrong question. Drew realizes his mistake and takes a step back from Joel, but Joel takes two steps closer.

Even from a distance, Savannah can tell something's wrong. She rushes over.

JOEL

You're literally the only guy I've met who gets excited for school. And yet you're also the one repeating seventh grade.

*

DREW

I'm not repeating it. I barely started it.

JOEL

Go hang with someone your own age. Like her.

*

He motions to Savannah, who's walking up to their conversation to intervene.

SAVANAH

Joel, if you'd been a little nicer, I'd have offered you a cookie.

Joel pulls a wrapped cookie from his pocket.

JOEL

Got one already.

INT. WESTING HOUSE DORM - STAIRCASE - DAY

*

Landon climbs down the staircase, suitcase-less. He almost runs into Ellie. Like Landon, she's hot and sweaty.

LANDON

Hey! How's your first move-in going for you?

ELLIE

Not gonna lie. Long day.

LANDON

Want to take a break? I could show you my favorite part of Westing House.

ELLIE

Where's that?

LONDON

Hope you don't mind taking the stairs.

INT. WESTING HOUSE DORM - ROOF ACCESS - DAY

At the top of the staircase, there's a tiny door with "Roof Access" and "Alarm Will Sound" spray-painted onto the door.

Landon pulls out a key ring with enough keys to get him anywhere in the school.

EXT. WESTING HOUSE DORM - ROOF - DAY

Ellie follows Landon through the door and onto the roof. It's bare except for an AC unit, and three folding chairs, and a flimsy Igloo cooler.

LONDON

We used to have two chairs. Then Savannah moved in. Now that you're the fourth college kid, we'll have to add another chair.

Ellie looks over the edge of the roof. She's in no danger of falling off, thanks to a four-foot wall.

ELLIE

This view is amazing.

LONDON

Make sure no one can see you. Don't wanna scare the empty-nesters. Or my mom.

ELLIE

She doesn't know you come up here?

LONDON

If she ever knew I let Drew on the roof of a seven-story building, she'd kill me.

ELLIE

She's so protective of him.

LONDON

I know. I mean, I guess we all are. He had emergency heart surgery last year and missed most of seventh grade.

*

ELLIE
I didn't know.

*

LANDON
You wouldn't have.

ELLIE
I'm sorry.

LANDON
I mean, Dad tried to homeschool
him, and now Drew knows every book
in the library like the back of his
hand. But, still.

ELLIE
So that's why you get a little bit
forgotten sometimes?

LANDON
Let's just say it's easier for me
to sneak off unnoticed than Drew.
It's like, if you didn't almost
die, no one cares about you.

ELLIE
You know that's not true.

LANDON
I know.

Landon, self-conscious, looks around for a way to diffuse the
tension.

LANDON (CONT'D)
Hey, want a few of the cookies I
made last night? I hid some in the
cooler.

*

ELLIE
I ate so many last night that if I
have another bite of sugar I'm
gonna throw up.

*

LANDON
You had Drew's cookies. My batch is
healthier. I used oatmeal.

He crosses to the cooler and pulls out two individually-
wrapped cookies.

ELLIE
I'll have half.

LONDON
You won't regret it.

He breaks the cookie in two and gives the bigger section to Ellie. She takes a bite. Then she flinches. Then she starts gagging and spits the cookie out onto the roof.

ELLIE
Cricket.

LONDON
What?

She's gagging too hard to answer his question. Landon looks down at his own cookie. What at first glance looks like a chocolate chip turns out to be the hind legs of an unidentified insect. What should have been a raisin is actually a baked cricket-head whose crispy eyes glare at Landon.

LONDON (CONT'D)
No. No. That's impossible.

ELLIE
How many of these did you make?

LONDON
Seventy-three.

Ellie starts gagging again and spits up a whole cricket. She sinks down into one of the folding chairs, pale and shaky.

Landon runs to the edge of the roof and looks at hundreds of unsuspecting families. He can see Savannah and Drew still handing out more cookies.

On the quad, Joel Jacobson is throwing up into a trashcan.

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. LANDON AND DREW'S ROOM - DAY

Drew stares at the closet he shares with Landon. On Drew's side, every shirt is on a hanger and his shoes are lined up in a neat row. All of Landon's clothes are clumped onto the floor.

DREW

What do cool people wear on the first day school?

LANDON

Stop talking to me. I gotta read three hundred pages before breakfast.

Landon, still in his pajamas, lies down on the top bunk with his feet touching the ceiling. He's flipping through a weighty copy of *Les Misérables*, one page every two seconds.

DREW

Not happening.

LANDON

Shut. Up. I'm concentrating.

Drew pulls out a plaid, long-sleeve, button-down shirt and puts it on over his Star Wars shirt. Nothing matches. Landon looks up from his book and is appalled by what he sees.

LANDON (CONT'D)

You look like 2009 Justin Bieber.

DREW

Perfect. He's, like, famous, right?

LANDON

You're hopeless.

Landon sets down his book and jumps off the top bunk without using a ladder. He begins rustling through clothes on Drew's side of the closet.

LANDON (CONT'D)

Trust me, don't show up on the first day of school wearing that. Or any day of school.

Landon pulls out a sweatshirt and pair of jeans.

LONDON (CONT'D)

Try this.

INT. THE METZKER-TRAVIS APARTMENT - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Dr. Travis pours two cups of coffee and hands one to his wife, Dr. Metzker.

DR. METZKER

You're sure I shouldn't walk with him to school?

DR. TRAVIS

His friends would never let him live it down.

DR. METZKER

What friends?

INT. LONDON AND DREW'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Drew looks in the mirror. He's wearing the sweatshirt. Landon stands in the background.

LONDON

Almost.

INT. KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Dr. Metzker stirs cream and honey into her coffee. Dr. Travis drinks his black.

DR. TRAVIS

He'll be fine. He's smart.

DR. METZKER

Smart doesn't do you any good before sophomore year of college. I found that out the hard way.

DR. TRAVIS

I thought you were a social butterfly in high school.

DR. METZKER

I was. Because I knew how to play dumb.

Drew enters. He looks almost popular in blue jeans and Landon's old letterman's jacket. Landon follows behind him, proud of the change he's wrought.

LANDON
 (re: Drew)
 What do you think?

DR. METZKER
 I think you didn't finish your
 summer reading.

LANDON
 Didn't have to. Drew gave me the
 SparkNotes version. Parisian
 sewers. Everybody dies. The end.

DR. METZKER
 Drew, you've got to start letting
 your brother do his own reading.

DREW
 It was a trade for making me look
 like a cool kid.

DR. METZKER
 In my eyes, you always look like a
 cool kid.

DR. TRAVIS
 And I don't care what either of you
 look like, just as long as you stay
 yourselves.

Drew and Landon aren't exactly paying attention. They've
 heard this lecture a million times. They've even given it a
 code name.

LANDON
 Lecture number twenty-six. We get
 it.

DREW
 Technically lecture number twenty-
 six B.

EXT. THE QUAD - DAY

Landon and Drew walk together across the quad. Dew glistens
 on the grass.

LANDON
 Never walk into a storage closet
 alone. Remember why?

*
 *
 *

DREW
 Because varsity football might
 barricade me in with the bench
 press.

*
 *
 *
 *

Drew notices a girl waving from across the quad.

*

DREW (CONT'D)
 Do you know her?

Drew turns to look. It's Audrey.

*

LANDON
 Yeah. Yeah, I do, actually. Catch
 you later.

*
 *

Landon begins crossing the quad but turns around to shout
 back at Drew.

*
 *

LANDON (CONT'D)
 Oh, and never raise your hand in
 Mr. Matthias's chemistry class.

*
 *
 *

DREW
 Why not?

*
 *

But Landon is already gone.

*

EXT. THE DINING HALL - ENTRANCE - DAY

Drew, alone, rounds the corner towards the main entrance to
 the dining hall. He sees Savannah setting up a bake-sale booth
 on the dining hall's outdoor patio. She pulls out a sharpie
 and writes on poster board: "Cricket Cookies!"

SAVANAH
 Wait for it.

She adds "And more!" in cursive.

*

DREW
 What do you think you're doing?

SAVANAH
 Taking advantage of an opening in
 the marketplace.

DREW
 By making everyone on campus relive
 the traumatic memory of seventy-
 three people throwing up at once?

SAVANAH

Haven't you heard? Landon's cricket cookies were a smash hit.

DREW

With who?

SAVANAH

With Green Leaf dorm!

DREW

Because you're all hippies.

SAVANAH

We're not hippies, we're just smarter than you. Crickets leave almost no carbon footprint, and they're over 65% pure protein. Like a Builder's Bar, but in a cookie.

DREW

I'll stick with my yogurt.

SAVANAH

Sure you don't want to try one? *

DREW

Okay fine. *

SAVANAH

That'll be two seventy-five.

Drew looks at her. She's serious.

DREW

I'm not paying for something I wouldn't eat at home.

INT. THE DINING HALL - DAY

Drew navigates his way around the breakfast buffet. He grabs a bowl of yogurt and adds granola and boysenberries. He notices Ellie sitting alone at a table, her plate overflowing with chocolate donuts. He joins her.

ELLIE

Have you tried the donuts?

DREW

Trust me. The excitement of unlimited food wears off after the first Taco Tuesday.

ELLIE
I love tacos!

DREW
Ours taste like Tabasco sauce mixed
with old tires. *

ELLIE
Where's Landon?

DREW
Don't look now, but over your left
shoulder, fifteen degrees south of
northwest.

Ellie turns around. She sees Landon sitting at a table with a dozen college students, mostly girls. He's certainly enjoying himself.

ELLIE
How does he pull it off? His first
day of high school, he's already
hitting it off with college girls. *

DREW
He says it's his charisma. I say
he's magic. *

EXT. THE DINING HALL - ENTRANCE - DAY *

Savanah is talking to a group of college students, mostly hipsters who wear beanies in seventy-degree weather.

SAVANAH
Just two seventy-five for one,
sixteen ninety-nine for a dozen. We
accept cash, card, and Venmo.

As Savanah finishes making the transaction, a DINING HALL MANAGER in a crisp white shirt strolls by her booth. Savanah flags him down.

SAVANAH (CONT'D)
Cricket cookies? *

MANAGER
I'm not interested in buying. But,
I am interested in why you set up
shop so close to the dining hall.

SAVANAH

It's the best location on campus.
Heavy foot traffic, hungry college
kids.

MANAGER

Ever think it might be bad for
business at the dining hall?

SAVANAH

Bad for your business, but good for
mine.

EXT. THE BRIDGE - DAY

Drew and Ellie cross a wooden pedestrian bridge separating *
the college campus from the prep school. Although the college *
looms in the background, the prep school is its own world, *
one owned by sixteen-year-olds driving shiny BMW's and not *
upper-class college students who only wear flannel.

Ellie and Drew near the parking lot. A teenage girl gets out *
of her Tesla.

ELLIE

So, Teslas are like, a thing here?

DREW

If your parents drive, then yes.
Mine don't. We're bicycle people.

ELLIE

Then how do you survive here?

DREW

Barely.

INT. CASTLE HILL PREP - MAIN OFFICE - DAY

Joel Jacobson sits across the desk from his mother JENNY *
JACOBSON, a receptionist in her mid-40's with a saccharine- *
sweet personality. Jenny is mid-lecture when Drew walks up to *
the door unnoticed by either Jacobson. *

JENNY

I can only imagine, missing a year *
of school. But, remember, don't *
pity him. Just treat him like *
always.

JOEL

Of course, Mom.

JENNY

Because he's an ordinary seventh-grade boy. Just older. And smarter. But smaller. And skinnier.

Drew shuffles his feet. Finally, Jenny notices his presence. *

JENNY (CONT'D)

Drew! It's so good to see you! Give Ms. Jacobson a great big hug.

Drew obeys. It's awkward. Joel suppresses a snicker.

DREW

I just came to drop off this form.

He hands her a yellow slip of paper.

JENNY

You're cleared to play sports again? Congratulations, sweetheart!

DREW

Non-contact sports.

JOEL

That leaves, like what? Badminton?

INT. CASTLE HILL PREP - SCIENCE CLASSROOM - DAY

MR. MATTHIAS, an elderly chemistry teacher with coffee in one hand and a cane in the other, stands in front of a renovated chemistry classroom.

MR. MATTHIAS

You know why I don't keep dry erase markers in the chemistry lab? Because they're highly flammable. Can anyone tell me why?

Drew's hand hovers an inch off his desk. For a moment it looks like he's going to raise it, but he decides better and drops it.

MR. MATTHIAS (CONT'D)

No one? Because they've got Ethanol in them. Alcohol. Like you drink. But there's also Isopropanol in it. Causes liver damage, kidney damage. If you're lucky, sudden fainting. *

Mr. Matthias pulls out a vial of clear liquid from inside his desk.

MR. MATTHIAS (CONT'D)
 Now, if I told you this chemical
 could erase a whiteboard, what
 would you say it is?

Drew scribbles in his notebook: "Rubbing alcohol --> solvent - *
 -> erases." He adds a smiley face. Drew tries to keep his *
 head down but accidentally catches Mr. Matthias's eye. *

MR. MATTHIAS (CONT'D)
 Mr. Metzker-Travis. Hint: it goes
 up in flames lickety-split.

Drew wracks his brain for a wrong answer.

DREW
 Um. Water. Because it would wash
 the marker off the board.

MR. MATTHIAS
 I said it's flammable.

DREW
 Soapy water?

A few kids snicker.

MR. MATTHIAS
 Rubbing alcohol. Used to bring *
 vodka but the principal stopped me. *

INT. CASTLE HILL PREP - HALLWAY - DAY

Drew fumbles with the combination to get into his locker. *
 KEVIN and FAULKNER, two seventh-grade boys in letterman's *
 jackets watch him from across the hallway. KEVIN is the *
 taller of the two. *

KEVIN
 He doesn't look like an athlete.

FAULKNER
 But he's got the jacket.

KEVIN
 And in class, man, he was terrific. *
 Didn't know a single answer. *

FAULKNER *
 Yeah. He's one of us.

They walk over to Drew, smiling and trying to make a good
 first impression.

KEVIN

Hey, man, you're in our science class. With Matthias. I'm Kevin.

FAULKNER

Faulkner.

*

Drew's a bit taken aback. Usually, athletes talking to him is a sign of trouble. But, Kevin and Faulkner seem friendly enough.

DREW

I'm Drew.

FAULKNER

You new?

DREW

I mean, sorta. Yeah, I'm new.

FAULKNER

Hey, we should hang out sometime. After school, we're getting a group together, going to the gym to shoot some hoops. Wanna join?

KEVIN

You could play point guard.

DREW

I'd love to.

FAULKNER

Awesome. Meet you in the parking lot as soon as the bell rings.

Faulkner shoots an invisible basketball into the air. Drew laughs.

EXT. THE DINING HALL - ENTRANCE - THAT AFTERNOON

Ellie and Savannah turn down the sidewalk that leads to the dining hall. As they approach, Ellie notices a golf cart with blinking lights. It's parked in front of Savannah's cricket-cookie booth.

A security guard is on his knees, thoroughly inspecting the booth. The dining hall manager stands behind him, watching.

ELLIE

Um, do you know those guys?

Unbridled fury crosses Savannah's face. She starts running towards the security guard. Ellie keeps up with her as best she can.

SAVANAH
(yelling)
Jordan! What do you think you're doing?

Ellie, still panting, whips out her cell phone and starts filming. The security guard looks slightly sheepish.

JORDAN
Sorry, Savannah, I'm just doing my job.

SAVANAH
You're shutting down my booth!

MANAGER
Because I asked him to. You never got a sidewalk permit.

SAVANAH
What about all the sports teams? They do fundraisers out here all the time. They never have permits.

MANAGER
They never cut into my breakfast business, either.

SAVANAH
But I'm saving the world! One cricket at a time.

MANAGER
You'll have to save the world somewhere off campus. Like your front lawn. You could set up a lemonade stand.

SAVANAH
This is my front lawn. I live in Green Leaf Dorm.

Ellie turns her phone to capture the front entrance of Green Leaf, only twenty yards away.

INT. COLLEGE ATHLETIC CENTER - DAY

A large gym with three basketball courts and one court set up for a badminton tournament.

Drew is out on the basketball court with Faulkner and Kevin. Thanks to Landon's letterman's jacket, Drew almost looks like he belongs with them. *

Faulkner tosses Drew a basketball. He catches it easily.

FAULKNER *
We're waiting for a couple other *
guys. Chris, Walker, Joel.

DREW
Joel Jacobson?

FAULKNER
Yeah. You friends with him?

DREW
Used to be.

FAULKNER
What happened?

DREW
I left school.

KEVIN
That happened to a friend of mine.
Got kicked out for six months cause
he punched the principal's
daughter.

Across the gym, Landon, Audrey, and the clique of college girls head for the badminton court.

AUDREY
I don't like to brag, but I'm
pretty much the queen of badminton.

If Audrey wasn't flirting at first, she definitely is now. *

LANDON
I call captain. Audrey's on my
team.

AUDREY
But if we're on the same team, how
am I supposed to prove I'm the
better athlete?

Landon glances over to the basketball court and notices Drew playing basketball. He's immediately worried. *

AUDREY (CONT'D)
Something wrong?

LANDON

No. I just ... know one of the kids over there, that's all.

AUDREY

One of the middle schoolers?

LANDON

Yeah. My friend's little brother.
Look, I'm gonna go say hi.

*
*

AUDREY

Introduce me.

*

LANDON

No, you stay here. I'll only be gone a minute.

*

Landon jogs to the court and waves to Drew, who passes the ball to Faulkner and heads over.

*

LANDON (CONT'D)

If you don't stop playing right now I'm telling Mom.

*

DREW

You do, and I'll tell her you're going on dates with a college girl.

LANDON

Drew, you're on, like, a million blood thinners. Is it really worth bleeding to death over a pickup basketball game?

*

DREW

I'll be fine.

LANDON

For once, you don't want to think something through rationally? What if you wake up tomorrow covered in bruises?

*
*
*

DREW

I'll tell Mom I had another accident with the library bookshelves.

*

LANDON

Get off the court right now or I'm taking back the jacket.

*

The brothers lock eyes for a second. Drew looks over his shoulder at his friends.

DREW
Faulkner! I'm open!

Faulkner passes the ball. Drew shoots and sinks it from twenty feet out.

LANDON
How in the world are you so good at this?

DREW
See, if you stand forty-five degrees from center and aim for the white tape thing on the backboard, it's bound to go in. Learned that from a trigonometry textbook.

Landon looks to Audrey, who's watching from the distance.

LANDON
Just stay safe. If you die, Mom'll kill me.

EXT. THE DINING HALL - ENTRANCE - DAY

Jordan the security guard ropes Savannah's booth into the back of his golf cart. Ellie's still streaming on her phone.

SAVANAH
It's not my fault people know a good cookie when they taste one!

In the distance, college students start to file out of Green Leaf dorm. A few hold picket signs. They head for Jordan.

GREEN LEAF STUDENTS
(chanting)
You're a fake and you're not green,
If you don't picket for cricket
team!

*
*

JORDAN
They don't pay me enough to put up with this.

Jordan slams on the gas and the golf cart tires squeal. The crowd of protesters run after him.

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. COLLEGE ATHLETIC CENTER - BASKETBALL COURT - DAY

Drew is on the court playing a game of three-on-three. Faulkner and Kevin are on his team, and Joel is guarding him. A couple of COLLEGE BASKETBALL GUYS stop to watch.

Drew fakes left and dribbles around Joel, who tries to snatch the ball away but ends up grabbing Drew's wrist in the process. The College Basketball Guys aren't pleased.

7-FOOT-1 GUY

(to Joel)

That's a foul, dude! Free throw!

JOEL

Give it to him. He'll never make the shot.

6-FOOT-4 GUY

(to 7-foot Guy)

See? That's why a team needs short guys like me. We dribble circles around y'all, and there's nothing y'all can do about it.

EXT. THE QUAD - DAY

An angry mob of college students, at least half of whom are wearing Green Leaf Dorm apparel, circle around a gigantic bronze statue of an armored knight riding a horse. Ellie and Savannah stand on the marble base of the statue like politicians rousing their voter base.

SAVANAH

Today, the new generation finds its voice!

*

ELLIE

Today, we're fighting for the cricket baked goods movement, but we're also fighting for so much more.

*

SAVANAH

We're fighting against big business, capitalistic systems, and meal plans that require you to eat chicken or starve.

*

*

(MORE)

SAVANAH (CONT'D)

Today, we're taking back some of
our own dignity. Today, we march on
Rockwell Hall.

*
*
*

DUDE WITH 50 TATTOOS

To the president's office!

*

INT. ATHLETIC CENTER - BASKETBALL COURT - DAY

*

Drew, drenched in sweat and breathing heavily, stands at the
free-throw line. He shoots the ball. Nothing but net.

INT. ATHLETIC CENTER - BADMINTON COURT - DAY

Across the gym, Landon and Audrey play badminton against two
college girls in designer athletic gear. Landon glances
nervously at the basketball courts and misses an easy volley.

*

AUDREY

Landon, where's your head at? Two-
minute time out. Landon and I need
a game plan.

Audrey pulls Landon to the side and the two girls in designer
exercise clothes pull out their phones to check social media.

*

LULU LEMON GIRL

OMG, Castle Hill is trending!

ATHLETA GIRL

Wait, what? Why?

LULU LEMON GIRL

Did you hear about the cricket
rights protest?

ATHLETA GIRL

That sounds, like, so lit. We're
one-hundred percent going.

*

At the mention of crickets, Landon is taken aback. No, it
couldn't be. He pulls out his phone and checks social media.
Ellie's livestream of the protest is the first thing he sees.

INT. COLLEGE ATHLETIC CENTER - BASKETBALL COURT - DAY

Drew is sweating so much that his hair is plastered onto his
forehead, but he's guarding Joel and not backing down. Joel
tries to dribble down the court, but Drew snatches it away.

KEVIN

Drew! Behind you!

Drew swivels and passes to Kevin, who shoots and scores. *
Nearby on the bleachers, 7-foot-1 Guy looks down at his
phone. *

7-FOOT-1 GUY

Oh no. Man, you gotta be kidding
me. Castle Hill is trending. *

6-FOOT-4 GUY

What for?

7-FOOT-1 GUY

Some protest group is trying to
make the dining hall vegan. They're
replacing the dessert bar with
baked crickets. *

6-FOOT-4 GUY

That's against our first amendment
rights!

From the court, the middle schoolers listen in on the
conversation.

7-FOOT-1 GUY

Don't worry, there's a hamburger
rights group forming. A bunch of
the football guys are joining. *
*

6-FOOT-4 GUY

They're marching to the president's
office now. Mark just texted me and
said they're trying to get more
people. *
*
*

Kevin stops dribbling the ball.

KEVIN

Need more guys? We'll join.

The College Basketball Guys seem to have forgotten the middle
schoolers existed. It takes a moment for 6-foot-4 guy to
process the comment, but eventually he looks vaguely amused
by the offer.

6-FOOT-4 GUY

Hey, young activists. I like it.

Drew looks around at Kevin and Faulkner.

DREW

Wait, seriously? You're joining a
hamburger rights movement? *

FAULKNER

Why not? We get to hang with the
tall guys and put it on social
media.

DREW

But, like, crickets are actually
incredibly good for the
environment. My mom eats them,
like, every day. *

KEVIN

Wait. Does that mean your mom's
vegan?

There's only one right answer in this situation.

DREW

(lying)

No.

EXT. THE STEPS OUTSIDE ROCKWELL HALL - DAY

Ellie and Savannah are in the middle of a sea of college
students and three TV crews. The crowd is gathered outside of
Rockwell Hall, an imposing building with countless marble
steps. Five security guards struggle to keep the crowd away
from the entrance to the heavy wooden doors.

Most of the protesters are pro-cricket, but a few football
players and basketball players stand out among the crowd.

A TV ANCHORWOMAN tries to shove a microphone in Ellie's face.

TV ANCHORWOMAN

Can you tell me how this whole
movement started?

ELLIE

I have no idea.

GREEN LEAF STUDENTS

You're a fake and you're not Green,
If you don't picket for the cricket
team!

Landon and Audrey cross the quad and approach the pro-cricket
protestors.

LONDON

Wow. This is like, really cool. I feel like we're actually making a difference, you know?

AUDREY

Who knew that a protest could be so romantic?

She grabs his hand. Landon panics a bit, but he doesn't pull away. Savannah shoves her way through the crowd to reach NICOLAS, the head security guard. *

SAVANAH

Nicholas, we demand to talk to the president!

NICHOLAS

Can't you talk to him next week at the Faculty in Residence brunch?

SAVANAH

I could, but it wouldn't have the same dramatic effect.

NICHOLAS

He's in a meeting. And my only job is to keep you and your mob outside of Rockwell Hall until said meeting is over. *

A stream of basketball and football players join the Hamburger rights protest group. The average height of the counter-protesters is about two feet taller than the cricket protesters.

But, the tallest person at the protest isn't 7-foot-1 Guy. It's Drew. He's riding on 6-foot-4 Guy's shoulders. And, he's carrying a "Keep College Cricket-Free!" poster.

DREW

Hey, Savannah!

SAVANAH

Don't talk to me, you two-faced backstabber.

6-foot-4 Guy makes his way through the crowd, and we see Drew bobbing above the college students. Landon looks over to see his brother's head eight feet off the ground.

LONDON

Drew! Get off of him! First contact sports and now crowdsurfing!

As 6-foot-4 Guy moves towards his friends, Landon and Drew drift apart.

DREW
 (calling back to Landon)
 It's perfectly safe! Plus, I don't
 know how to get down.

Audrey scans Landon's face carefully.

AUDREY
 Why do you care so much about your
 friend's little brother?

LANDON
 I worry for him sometimes, I guess. *

AUDREY
 Because you're such a wonderful
 person.

Drew drifts towards Ellie. He catches her attention by shouting over the protester's chants. *

DREW
 Ellie! Are you really trying to
 make the dining hall vegan?

ELLIE
 Are you crazy? I'd never give up
 ice cream for crickets.

DREW
 Tell that to the basketball team! *

Slowly, the heavy wooden doors to Rockwell Hall swing open.

DUDE WITH 50 TATTOOS
 (Hamilton-style)
 Here comes the Presi-DENT!

The door swings open to reveal the UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT, an elderly man in a suit and tie, standing next to Dr. Metzker in her overalls. *

SAVANAH
 I demand a meeting!

UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT
 Savannah, couldn't we just talk at
 our FIR lunch next week?

Dr. Metzker scans the crowd and immediately notices one of her sons floating in midair and the other lurking in the background, arm wrapped tightly around a college freshman. *

DR. METZKER

Drew Fitzgerald Metzker-Travis, get off that mountain of a man this instant!

DREW

But I don't know how! He's too tall!

DR. METZKER

I'm disappointed in you! I raised you better than to question environmental activism.

The TV anchorwoman can't decide whether to focus on the University President or Dr. Metzker. There's a good chance she doesn't know which one of them is in charge. *

Landon is trying to melt into the crowd. Audrey pulls him the other way, trying to get a good look at Dr. Metzker.

AUDREY

She's yelling at your friend's brother. Aren't you gonna do something?

Dr. Metzker shoves her way over to Audrey.

DR. METZKER

Hello darling, who's this lovely young college girl holding hands with my fifteen-year-old son?

Audrey turns beet-red and immediately lets go. *

AUDREY

(to Landon)

You said you were a freshman.

LANDON

Yeah, I'm a freshman. A freshman in high school.

AUDREY

You said you lived in my dorm.

LANDON

I do!

DR. METZKER

Landon Olivia Metzker Travis,
you're grounded and heading home
this instant. No more flirting with
my residents, understood?

Landon mouths "I'm sorry" to Audrey as his mother pulls him
away. Dr. Metzker stops in front of 6-foot-4 guy. *

DR. METZKER (CONT'D)

Would you please set down my son?

6-FOOT-4 GUY

Sure thing, ma'am. Hey, Rodger,
gimme a hand.

7-foot-1 guy replies to his name, picks up Drew barbell-
style, and sets him down on solid ground. Drew is a sweaty
mess, breathing hard and slightly bruised, but he's beaming. *

DR. METZKER

How did you get a hold of my son in
the first place?

6-FOOT-4 GUY

We're friends now. Met on the
basketball court.

Fury builds on Dr. Metzker's face.

DR. METZKER

Drew, did you play contact sports?

Drew isn't a skilled enough actor to hide the guilt on his
face. Dr. Metzker grabs him by the collar of his letterman's
jacket and pulls him out of the crowd.

INT. THE METZKER-TRAVIS APARTMENT - KITCHEN - DAY *

Drew and Landon sit at the kitchen table, both on edge.
Landon keeps tapping his fingers on the table. Drew gives him
the evil eye. Landon stops tapping.

LANDON

Sorry. Without my phone, my fingers
don't know what to do.

He starts bouncing his foot up and down instead, making a
sharp thudding noise every time his heel hits the floor.

DREW

Why can't your nervous habit be
something quiet like nail biting?

INT. APARTMENT - THE PARENT'S ROOM - DAY

*

Dr. Metzker and Dr. Travis sit on the foot of a plain double bed. In the background is a small closet and two meticulously clean desks.

DR. TRAVIS

They're teenagers. Teenagers make stupid mistakes.

DR. METZKER

I don't know what's stupider, lying to date a college girl or playing basketball on blood thinners.

DR. TRAVIS

That's obvious.

DR. METZKER

Dating a college girl.

DR. TRAVIS (CONT'D)

Playing basketball.

The parents look at each other and laugh. There's a bit of levity to the conversation now.

DR. TRAVIS (CONT'D)

So what are we going to do?

DR. METZKER

Stage another protest, obviously. I'm the cricket queen who started this whole thing, remember?

DR. TRAVIS

I meant about the boys.

DR. METZKER

I know. I have an idea.

INT. THE METZKER-TRAVIS APARTMENT - KITCHEN - DAY

*

Dr. Travis and Dr. Metzker enter the kitchen and sit down at the table with their sons.

DR. TRAVIS

Looks like we're going to need some new rules. What are we on now? Rule number two-forty-nine?

*

*

*

*

DR. METZKER

Two-forty-nine A: Don't date college girls until you're at least a rising senior in high school.

*

*

*

*

LANDON
But that's, like, three more years!

DR. METZKER
Don't push your luck.

DR. TRAVIS
And rule two-forty-nine B. Drew,
you know where this is going.

DREW
But I haven't been able to, like,
play on a team or even be on a
basketball court for like nine
months. And I didn't die, I didn't
faint. I didn't even come close.

DR. METZKER
You're a scientist. You know
there's a reason for doctor's
orders.

DREW
I know, but hear me out. I'm a
scientist, and I've been doing
research, and if we change the
medications I'm on, I might could
play contact sports safely. What do
you think?

DR. TRAVIS
I think we talk to Dr. Doyle and
see what he says.

DREW
I had fun playing today, but it'd
be a lot more fun if I knew I
wasn't going to hurt myself.

DR. METZKER
We'll see. But for now you're both
still grounded.

LANDON
Right. How long are you keeping our
phones?

DR. METZKER
Until you bake 600 cricket cookies
for my next protest.

END OF ACT THREE

TAG

INT. - KITCHEN - THE NEXT DAY

Drew and Landon are both in aprons. The kitchen counter is covered in clear plastic containers of chocolate chips and crickets. Dr. Travis is helping his sons stir crickets into cookie batter.

LANDON

Dad, you really don't have to help.

DR. TRAVIS

I know. But I feel like you need a refresher on lecture number eighteen C.

DREW

But, Dad, I've read Kant's Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals, like, fifty times.

DR. TRAVIS

Then why do you still pretend to be someone you're not? Surely you don't want everyone in the world to act like you did yesterday?

DREW

Dad, I'm just trying to make friends. And, if the athletes are the only guys who talk to me, then I have to play their game.

DR. TRAVIS

You have other friends. Friends who like you for who you are.

DREW

Like who?

There's a knock on the door.

LANDON

I'll get it.

He dusts the flour off his hands and opens the door. It's Savannah and Ellie.

SAVANAH

Cricket crew, here to help.

Savanah slides right past him and goes immediately to the sink to wash her hands. Ellie stays in the hallway a moment longer, just looking at Landon. He smiles at her.

DR. TRAVIS

Cookie baking was supposed to be a punishment, not a party.

DREW

You won't find me complaining about it.

SAVANAH

Hey, what are friends for?

Ellie and Landon walk into the kitchen. Ellie grabs a denim apron out of the pantry and starts to tie it around her waist.

LANDON

Want help with that?

A beat. It's hard to tell if Ellie is thinking about it or just messing with Landon's head. Then she cracks a smile.

ELLIE

Sure.

END TAG

Title: *College Kids*

Series Format: 30-minute, single-camera comedy

Genre/type: Family sitcom

Logline: Tween-aged children of faculty-in-residence navigate the difficulties of dorm life at an uppity college.

Target Network: Disney, Netflix, Nickelodeon.

Demo: Children aged 8-12.

World of the Show: Castle Hill College, an almost-Ivy-League school. Most of the show takes place in the dorms, such as Westing House (imposing and stately on the outside, but crumbling on the inside).

Backstory: 13-year-old Drew and his 15-year-old brother, Landon, can barely remember a time before they were at college. Their parents are faculty-in-residence at Castle Hill College tasked with preventing a dorm's-worth of college students from destroying the building. The boys are part of a tight-knit friend-group of "college kids," children whose parents live and work on campus.

Drew missed months of school while recovering from heart surgery, and he struggles with the idea of returning to middle school a grade behind his old friends. Landon is dealing with his own demons, and he tries to keep his slipping school grades a secret from his parents. Castle Hill's gated campus offers a welcome break from the pressures of middle and high school, but dorm life comes with its own stressors, like tearful English majors, awkward ice-cream socials, and fight-'til-the-death foosball tournaments.

Lead Characters:

Drew Metzker-Travis (13): A small, rather frail boy who is absolutely genius and smart enough to realize his only chance at making friends is to play dumb. At the beginning of the series, Drew returns to seventh grade for the second time. The previous year, he withdrew from school to recover from heart surgery. During his months off, he read every book on campus, and his unofficial homeschool lessons mean he's far ahead of his peers academically. Still, he feigns incomprehension in class to keep his peers from bullying him.

Landon Metzker-Travis (15): Tall and athletic, his skills on the soccer field make him the second-coolest member of his family (behind only his social-media-savvy mother). He's obsessed with his perfect hair and keeping up with preppy schoolmates, but he has a secret geeky side and occasionally sneaks into the library after-hours to read science-fiction novels. When he wants, Landon can pass himself off as a very young-looking college freshman.

Savanah Elliot (12): A year younger than Drew but a foot taller, Savanah is a college kid who lives with her parents in the dorm across from Westing House. A bundle of energy and a habitual schemer, her favorite part of living on campus is pranking unsuspecting freshmen. She knows Landon's secret science-fiction obsession and Drew's hidden genius. Unfortunately, the boys have too many years' worth of dirt against her for her to safely blackmail them. Her father is Drew's pediatric cardiologist.

Ellie James (14): The newest college kid who's still self-conscious about being among the youngest people on campus. She's beautiful in a bookish sort of way and quite clueless about college life. Landon has a bit of a crush on her.

Dr. Mirriam Metzker (37): Landon and Drew's mother. A women's studies professor. She's so involved with her projects and protests that she occasionally forgets her own sons, especially Landon.

Dr. Robert Travis (43): The boy's father and Dr. Metzker's husband. A soft-spoken philosophy professor who only wears socks if they're both argyle and different colors. He serves as a fountain of wisdom on the rare occasions when people actually listen to him.

Recurring Characters:

Bria Leon (19): A first-generation college student. She took Drew under her wing during the months he was out of school, and she taught him the ropes of the school's physics lab. Bria is somewhat of a misfit among the Castle Hill students, and her favorite pastime is freezing vegetables in liquid nitrogen. She serves as the lens into the college students' side of campus life.

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