

COMPLICATED

by

Mikey Jackson

Episode 1

Daughters and Lovers

30 minute TV sitcom

www.mikeyjackson.com

INT. KIRK'S BEDSIT - AFTERNOON. DAY 2

KIRK YOUNG, 22, (who could easily win Geeky Misfit of the Year) answers the door to --

-- SPENCER GRIMES, 22, soaking wet, strands of pondweed in his sodden hair, swathed in nothing but an oddly dry dressing gown. KIRK screws up his face at the sight.

KIRK

In a parallel universe, that might pass as fashion. Here... no.

SPENCER

It was all I could whip off somebody's washing line at such short notice.

KIRK blinks, perplexed as SPENCER enters a typical geek's dive. Posters of aliens, Star Trek, that kind of thing.

SPENCER

Kirk, listen to me. I need your help with a dilemma.

KIRK

Oh, mate. Dilemmas aren't my strong point. It was bad enough this morning deciding out of Cornflakes or Coco Pops.

SPENCER

What did you choose?

KIRK

Toast.

KIRK frees a sprig of pondweed from SPENCER'S hair.

KIRK

What's with the green stuff? Did you take a dip in the local duck pond?

SPENCER

Not exactly, no.

KIRK'S eyes widen, excited. He thinks he's sussed it.

KIRK

Or... wow. Is your unfortunate sodden state a direct result of a daring escape?

SPENCER

Um... sort of, yeah.

KIRK

Wow. You mean.... alien abduction?

SPENCER

Oh, not this again. You think everything is alien-related.

KIRK

Don't knock it, Spencer. I read a similar article in UFO Spotter's Monthly. There was this woman who --

SPENCER

Kirk. I did not get abducted by aliens.

KIRK

How do you know? They could have wiped your memory. Of course, dirty tricks like that would never work on an expert like me. They'd have to get up pretty early in the morning to pull their alien wool over my eyes.

SPENCER

Yeah. At least eleven o'clock.

KIRK

So what's your explanation?

SPENCER

It all started with a phone call.

KIRK

What phone call?

SPENCER

This one.

** Hey, maybe he reaches to one side of our screen and pulls the next scene into full view. **

EXT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - MORNING. DAY 1

Okay, we now go back in time to A DAY EARLIER.

Here's SPENCER in overalls, high up on a ladder, cleaning a window. His mobile sings for attention. He struggles to pluck it from his back pocket and checks the display, oh, no, it's her again, and puts it to his ear.

SPENCER

I hope this is important. I'm up a ladder.

EXT. HIGH STREET - MORNING. DAY 1

Meet the caller, TIFFANY YOUNG, 20, busy peroxide hair, phone to ear, laden with multiple shopping bags as she weaves through a chaotic confusion of fellow SHOPPERS.

TIFFANY

Like, duh. Emergency of the year awards. I'm getting evicted from my flat. The letting agency wants me gone by tonight.

SPENCER (V.O.)

Ouch. That's a bit harsh.

TIFFANY

I don't know what their problem is. I'm only five months behind with the rent. How I'm expected to pay up is beyond me. They know I'm between jobs at the moment.

EXT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - MORNING. DAY 1

SPENCER

To be fair, Tiffany, you've been between jobs since the Middle Ages.

TIFFANY (V.O.)

Oh, that's right, Spencer. Kick me when I'm down. You're supposed to be on my side.

SPENCER

Just book yourself an appointment with Citizen's Advice. They'll be able to help.

EXT. HIGH STREET - MORNING. DAY 1

TIFFANY

And miss out on all the sales? Massive no-no.

SPENCER (V.O.)

I don't believe you. You're on the brink of homelessness, yet there you are, clothes shopping.

TIFFANY

It's called retail therapy. You wouldn't understand, it's a woman thing. Let's face it, I might as well max the plax while it's still loyal. -- By the way, where are you at the moment?

EXT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - MORNING. DAY 1

SPENCER

I told you. Up a ladder.

TIFFANY

I need to see you. Usual place. Now.

SPENCER

I'm at work.

TIFFANY

Then un-work yourself. You're self employed, you can do what you like.

SPENCER

I can't just leave a job half finished.

EXT. HIGH STREET - MORNING. DAY 1

TIFFANY

Oh, really? You'd better decide what's more important. Your chamois leathers or your girlfriend.

She hangs up abruptly.

EXT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - MORNING. DAY 1

SPENCER notices she's hung up. Oh, great. Now he's torn between a rock and a hard place.

INT. KIRK'S BEDSIT - AFTERNOON. DAY 2

A quick return to the PRESENT DAY.

KIRK sits on the bed, watching SPENCER towel dry his hair.

KIRK

What was your decision?

SPENCER

Tiffany, as per usual.

KIRK

Yeah, my sister can be pretty persuasive when she puts her mind to it. When I was ten, she convinced me to wear her frilly dress for the day, all because she reckoned it matched my eyes. I've never really been the same since.

SPENCER lobs him a weird look, then shrugs it off.

SPENCER

Look, I really need to get shot of this dressing gown. Can I borrow some of your clothes?

KIRK points to a nearby chest of drawers.

KIRK

Yeah, sure. You'll find a pair of jeans and a tee-shirt in the top drawer.

SPENCER opens the drawer. He pulls out the jeans. Oh, God, these trousers are bright orange! He looks at KIRK and makes a face.

SPENCER

Orange jeans?

KIRK

It's fashion.

SPENCER:

Yeah, in a dark cave maybe. Not in broad daylight.

KIRK

That's all I've got. The rest are in the wash.

SPENCER concedes, fair enough. Then he pulls out the tee-shirt and holds it up. It sports the slogan "UFO spotters do it at night." Again, he screws up his face at KIRK.

KIRK

Take it or leave it, Spencer.

SPENCER

It'll have to do. Got any spare boxers?

KIRK searches the through the untidiness of strewn clothes, paperwork, litter and whatnot on the floor.

KIRK

Down here somewhere. Aha, there you go.

He chucks over a pair of boxers. SPENCER catches them, then makes yet another face. Yuck.

SPENCER

Kirk. I meant a clean pair.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - MORNING. DAY 1

And we're back to THE DAY BEFORE.

TIFFANY sits alone at a table, a trillion shopping bags by her feet. SPENCER enters and joins the girl.

SPENCER

This had better be good.

TIFFANY

It is. Brilliant idea of the decade. Let's get ourselves a flat together.

SPENCER

I haven't got that kind of money. And besides, I couldn't leave Mrs Peabody in the lurch.

TIFFANY

You'd rather rent one tiny room with a certified nutter than shack up with your fiancée?

SPENCER

Oh, engaged now, are we?

TIFFANY

The old bat's got a screw loose. She acts like she's your mother, ironing your clothes, cooking your meals. I'm surprised she doesn't tuck you in bed at night.

By SPENCER'S pained wince, she does. TIFFANY is gobsmacked.

TIFFANY

It's official. She's barking.

SPENCER

It was only the once. That time when I was struck down with the flu.

TIFFANY

Spencer. How long have we been going out?

SPENCER

Almost a year, why?

TIFFANY

That makes us practically married. Can't you see? It doesn't make sense us paying two lots of rent.

SPENCER

One lot of rent. You never bother with yours.

She delivers the mother of all scowls.

SPENCER

Tiffany, renting a flat would be mental. I can barely afford to live on my earnings as it is.

TIFFANY

Then get shot of that stupid window cleaning round and find yourself a proper job.

SPENCER

Oh, yeah, like it's that easy.

Her predicament fully sinks in. Worried o'clock.

TIFFANY

Oh, God. What am I going to do? I don't think I could handle Cardboard City. Cold. Wet. Nowhere to plug in my straighteners.

SPENCER

Tell you what, I'll have a quiet word with Mrs Peabody to see if you can move in with me.

TIFFANY

You what? That woman won't even let me sleep over, so she's hardly likely to grant me permanent residence.

SPENCER

There must be somewhere you can go. What about your parents?

TIFFANY

Oh, them. The old man, he disappeared off the face of the Earth before the ink was dry on the divorce papers. And my mum... well... we haven't spoken for a couple of years.

SPENCER

Maybe this is the perfect opportunity to make amends. At least then you'll have a roof over your head.

TIFFANY

Have you gone doolally or something? Moving back into the family home is a street-cred no-no. I could get beaten up for even considering it.

EXT. STREET - MIDDAY. DAY 1

We follow SPENCER'S small old van. It sports "Grimes Window Cleaning Services" on its flanks.

He is alone in the van. He passes a broken down car by the roadside, bonnet up. GRACE YOUNG, 41, too well-dressed to even consider a tinker, grimaces at its innards. SPENCER pulls over and steps out.

SPENCER

Excuse me. Need a hand?
(then recognition)
Oh. Hello, Mrs Young.

GRACE throws him a quizzical glance.

SPENCER

Don't you recognise me? Spencer Grimes. Your son Kirk's best friend from school.

GRACE

Ah, yes, I remember you now. Shy spotty lad.

SPENCER

Oh. I suppose I was back then.

GRACE

Always wore your school jumper back to front, but never noticed the ticket sticking out.

SPENCER

Did I?

GRACE

And who could forget your terrible flatulence problem? I lost count of the times I blamed the cat.

The look of sheer horror on his face amuses GRACE.

GRACE

Relax. I'm only joking. -- Wow, doesn't time fly? look at you, all grown up.

She looks him up and down, liking what she sees.

GRACE

You're certainly looking well.

SPENCER

(mmm, baby)

So are you.

They both realise they're admiring each other a bit too much and check themselves. Ahem!

GRACE

Are you a mechanic these days?

SPENCER

Hardly. But I do have experience in this field. My van breaks down at least once a month.

An exchange of smiles. SPENCER reaches into her car and turns the ignition key. Cruck!

SPENCER

Uh oh. Sounds like your engine's had it. Sorry, but this car is going nowhere.

GRACE

Oh, great, that's all I need.

As SPENCER puts the bonnet down, he seizes an opportunity.

SPENCER

If you've got to be somewhere, I don't mind giving you a lift.

GRACE

Oh, could you? That would be wonderful,
thank you.

SPENCER

Madame. Your chariot awaits.

A chivalrous SPENCER opens his passenger door for GRACE --
-- and a chaotic cascade of spent sandwich cartons, crisp
packets and empty fizzy drink bottles spills out. SPENCER
winces, embarrassed. A stern look from GRACE.

GRACE

I see you eat healthily.

A sharp change of subject --

SPENCER

Um. Where would you like dropping off?

GRACE scans his face. It's clear she's working things out in her
head.

GRACE

Are you hungry?

SPENCER

Starving.

GRACE

Let's do lunch.

INT. RESTAURANT - EARLY AFTERNOON. DAY 1

With childlike curiosity, SPENCER dissects his posh "work-of-
art" meal. It's a cylindrical chunk of meat, topped with
greenage and drizzled with a strange-coloured sauce.

GRACE

Is there a problem, Spencer?

SPENCER

Not being funny, but when you suggested
lunch, I thought you meant something
I'd be able to recognise.

A smile from GRACE. She finds his actions endearing.

GRACE

I take it you don't frequent places
like this too often.

SPENCER

To be honest, the nearest I ever get to exotic is the kebab shop. I blame my Mum and Dad. They were never that adventurous. Well, not until they parted from this life.

GRACE

Oh. I'm sorry to hear that. It must have been horrible for you to lose both parents.

SPENCER

Oh, no, no, no, they're not dead. They live in Spain. Spur of the moment thing. They sold the house and bought a bar out there.

GRACE

They left you in the lurch?

SPENCER

Not exactly, no. You could say Dad considered my welfare. He bought me the window cleaning round. Off a man in a pub.

GRACE can't help but raise another smile.

GRACE

You must miss them.

SPENCER

Yeah, right, as if.

(then off her look)

Believe me. If you met my parents, you'd understand. -- So. What do you do for a living?

GRACE

Same as you.

SPENCER

Window cleaning?

GRACE

(with a smirk)

No. I meant I also run a small business. A vehicle hire company. Which is ironic, seeing as my car broke down.

SPENCER

Yeah, I guess. Doing well?

GRACE

Not bad. This year, I'm expecting turnover to hit a million.

SPENCER. Astonished. Then we see it's making him feel inadequate. Time to do something about it, i.e. lie!

SPENCER

Oh. Well, my business isn't exactly small. I employ about... oh, at last count... fifty people.

GRACE

Really?

SPENCER

Yep. Covering most of this district. I usually control things from the office. I'm only mucking in today as one of the lads is off sick.

GRACE

Oh? Nothing serious, I hope.

SPENCER begins to falter. He's clearly crap at fibs.

SPENCER

Um. No. It's... a headache.

GRACE

Is that all? You are way too soft with your workforce.

SPENCER

Did I say headache? I meant a bad cold. Actually, it's worse than that. Appendicitis. A broken leg.

GRACE

Which one is it?

SPENCER

All of them.

GRACE lobs him a funny look. Nervous smile from SPENCER.

SPENCER

Poor bloke always seems to catch whatever's going round.

As a sceptical GRACE opens her mouth to speak, SPENCER'S mobile bursts into life. He takes the call at lightning speed, not checking who it is.

SPENCER
Grimes Window Cleaning Servi-

INT. COFFEE SHOP - EARLY AFTERNOON. DAY 1

TIFFANY with a milkshake, phone to ear.

TIFFANY
Spencer. Emergency code red. My credit card's been refused. The shoe shop won't let me have this gorgeous pair of red stilettos. Seriously, they've got heels so high they should come with a free oxygen canister.

INT. RESTAURANT - EARLY AFTERNOON. DAY 1

Shit, it's her! SPENCER thinks about it, then --

SPENCER
Oh. Hello... Dave.

He covers the phone with his palm and says to GRACE --

SPENCER
It's Dave. One of my employees.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - EARLY AFTERNOON. DAY 1

TIFFANY makes a face. WTF?

TIFFANY
Who the hell's Dave? It's me, you divvy.

SPENCER (V.O.)
What's the matter, Dave? Problem with your round?

TIFFANY
Have you gone mental or something?

INT. RESTAURANT - EARLY AFTERNOON. DAY 1

SPENCER tries his hardest to keep up the charade.

SPENCER
Oh, good. Glad everything's fine.

TIFFANY (V.O.)
Spencer. Read my voice. I need fifty quid. Urgently.

SPENCER
I'm not made of money!

He notices GRACE giving a puzzled frown. Uh oh.

SPENCER
Um. What I mean is, I don't have that much in petty cash.

TIFFANY (V.O.)
Petty cash? What are you snorting?

SPENCER
I'll have to pop to a cashpoint. Will fifty pounds do?

INT. COFFEE SHOP - EARLY AFTERNOON. DAY 1

TIFFANY
Have you had a bang on the head? That's what I asked for. Fifty quid. Which I need right now. So hurry up.

INT. RESTAURANT - EARLY AFTERNOON. DAY 1

SPENCER
I can't. I'm having lunch with... a customer.

TIFFANY (V.O.)
Since when did you entertain clients? You're a window cleaner, not a theatrical agent. Where are you?

SPENCER
Restaurant.

TIFFANY (V.O.)
Ooh, goody. While you're there, pick us up a double cheeseburger with fries.

SPENCER rolls his eyes at her naivety.

SPENCER
Will do.

TIFFANY (V.O.)
Cheers, big ears. Love you.

SPENCER doesn't respond.

TIFFANY (V.O.)
Well? Aren't you going to tell me you
love me back?

His face drops from a great height.

TIFFANY (V.O.)
I'm waiting.

He doesn't know what to do.

TIFFANY (V.O.)
Spencer. My rock hard knees could
seriously scupper your future plans for
a family. Tell me. Now.

SPENCER
I... um... love you too.

A grimace from SPENCER. GRACE throws a quizzical look.

TIFFANY (V.O.)
There. Not so hard, was it?

And she hangs up. SPENCER lobs GRACE a nervous beam.

SPENCER
Me and the lads, we have a very close
working relationship.

EXT. OUTSIDE GRACE'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON. DAY 1

The van pulls up and parks. SPENCER steps out. He trots round to the passenger side and opens the door for GRACE.

GRACE
Ooh. A gentleman.

And as they both walk to the front door --

SPENCER
Thanks for lunch, Mrs Young. Even
though I never did find out what I ate.

GRACE
It was the least I could do. And
please. Call me Grace.

They reach the front door. A coy hiatus. Then --