

TIME LAPSE

By Jules Tasca

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CAST:

EMIT BINGEM – a male

MOTHER, EMILY, NURSE – all played by the same female

NOTE: The actors make transitions from lapse to lapse in that abrupt mechanical fashion, the way plants and flowers change form and grow and wither in time-lapse films. The tempo of this play should be kept at a very fast pace.

(At opening, MOTHER holds son, EMIT, cradling him in her arms.)

MOTHER: Emit was eight pounds at birth. ***(EMIT cries)*** A half-hour of contractions and then after a strenuous symphony of moans and cries, Emit came free and concluded the concert... ***(EMIT cries to a crescendo)*** No birth is easy and I refused medication, fearing it would harm my Emit. ***(EMIT cries)*** Emit grew healthy and plump. I breast fed my boy, so I know he has an immune system that's equipped with a whole deadly array of missiles, ready to shoot down microbes. ***(EMIT cries)*** If we only knew the wars that go on inside us each and every day. Our internal microbiological attacks and counter-attacks rival the great wars of the world in ferocity. ***(EMIT cries)*** Yes, Emit Bingem's a boy whose antibodies kick butt and win. And when we had him christened, we drove the devil out of him as well.

(Time lapse. EMIT begins to crawl on all fours.)

MOTHER: Emit's father worked hard so that we could send Emit to a Montessori day school, where everything is kept clean and the snacks are all whole wheat. Emits first words were...

EMIT: OI eat...whole eat...whole wheat...whole wheat... whole wheat...whole...

MOTHER: That'll do, Emit.

EMIT: Wheat.

MOTHER: Your father and I are trying to read.

EMIT: Whole wheat, whole wheat.

MOTHER: He was so cute.

EMIT: Whole wheat.

Time Lapse - Page 3

MOTHER: Soon he was into whole sentences.

EMIT: **(sitting up)** Cabbage's got Vitamin K. Orange's got Vitamin C.
Broccoli has calcium. Vitamin E is an anti-oxidant.

(Time lapse. EMIT stands holding his stomach.)

EMIT: Mom.

MOTHER: Yes, Emit?

EMIT: I feel sick.

MOTHER: You most certainly do not, Son.

EMIT: But...but I do.

MOTHER: You've never been sick.

EMIT: Can't I be just this once, Mom, please?

MOTHER: Emit Bingem, sick from what? We eat organic. We exercise.
We do yoga. And we go to church. You can't just...just get sick from
nothing. Well?

EMIT: Mom...Mom...

MOTHER: Out with it, Son...Emit!

EMIT: I bought candy and chocolate with my first communion money
that Dad gave me.

MOTHER: Emit Bingem...

EMIT: I did.

MOTHER: With processed sugar and artificial coloring and trans fatty
oils?

EMIT: I'm pretty sure, Mom, because it tasted yummy.

MOTHER: Where did you get such poisoned food products? Did
someone sell them to you from the back of a van?

EMIT: No. I bought them after church at the church basement sale.

MOTHER: After first communion? You mixed falsely flavored junk food
with the body of the Lord?

EMIT: The Lord does seem pretty annoyed to do this to my stomach.

MOTHER: While your father and I were talking to the pastor, you snuck
away and bought unnatural foods!

EMIT: My stomach is queasy.

MOTHER: You'll never do this again, Emit!

EMIT: No, Mom. I'm sorry. May I go vomit now?

MOTHER: Not until I get the Lysol spray...

(Time lapse. EMIT puts on a baseball cap backwards.)

EMIT: Mom...

MOTHER: What is it dear?

EMIT: I...well...I sort of don't...don't know...I mean, like, I don't know
how to...what I'm trying to say is...

Time Lapse - Page 4

MOTHER: Is this a sexual matter, Son?

EMIT: How'd you know, Mom?

MOTHER: You're father sounds the same way when he's asking for a baby oil rubdown. Are you trying to tell your mother, Emit, that you're interested in...in...women?

EMIT: Well, Mom, it's worse than that.

MOTHER: Worse than what? Emit Bingem, have you been...wh...?

EMIT: Mom, I love somebody.

MOTHER: **(laughing)** You can't love anyone at your age. You're so cute. You're merely at the exploratory stage and you need a good heart-to-heart talk, but you don't love anybody.

EMIT: I don't?

MOTHER: No. No. No. No. You're just experiencing what I call "hormone love."

EMIT: Hormone love?

MOTHER: Yes, dear, hormonal love. That's all. Don't be alarmed now. Your hormones are falling in love every seven seconds.

EMIT: My hormones love Emily Muldoon and it's like way over every seven seconds. I mean, like, I think I love her along with my hormones.

MOTHER: Emit, that's nothing but testoserone talk.

EMIT: You think so?

MOTHER: Yes. For heaven's sake, you're just a little bundle of hormones with a baseball cap. You're not in love.

EMIT: Maybe...then perhaps hormone love's enough right now.

MOTHER: Son, you...you don't have any crazy ideas, do you? You're not, I hope, not contemplating...I mean...with this...pig, Emily...

EMIT: I am...and she's not a pig, Mom. She's the same as me, hot and bothered, that's all.

MOTHER: And just *where* does a fourteen-year-old boy learn a phrase like "hot and bothered"?

EMIT: It was in a documentary on Congressmen, Mom.

MOTHER: All right...I can see...I can see you've grown. You talk dirty now, so we're really going to have to have that mother-son heart to heart talk.

EMIT: How long will it...

MOTHER: I'd have your father do this, but he...he knows so little.

EMIT: Mom, say what you want to say, but like, I'm...I'm meeting Emily at four o'clock.

MOTHER: Meeting? What kind of meeting? Emit, listen to me. Sex is deadly today. Even kissing is poisonous. You – how should I say this – you kiss someone today, you kiss every other partner that that other person ever kissed. You're slobbering and slurping the ills of the whole planet into your immune system. You are...

Time Lapse - Page 5

EMIT: Emily Muldoon's fourteen, Mom.

MOTHER: A woman can have two dozen partners by age fourteen, Mr. Ladies man.

EMIT: She's not a woman, she's a girl.

MOTHER: *Do you want to die, Son?*

EMIT: Not today, no. I love Emily, Mom.

MOTHER: You will love other people! Clean, safe, disease free people, Emit. I'll see to it. I'll have every woman you date tested and quarantined before I let you destroy yourself by going near a sinkhole like Emily Muldoon.

(Time lapse. EMIT removes his cap and puts on a sports jacket. MOTHER sings "Happy Birthday" to EMIT.)

EMIT: What a party!

MOTHER: Twenty-one years old! It's a milestone. And you're healthy as a horse; thanks to the way we live. Nobody touched the cake.

EMIT: I don't think regular people eat soybean flour birthday cake, Mom.

MOTHER: That's why their insides are degenerating.

EMIT: If we live so healthy, how is it that Dad died so young?

MOTHER: Emit, you know the stress he was under.

EMIT: You always say that.

MOTHER: Because he was. The stress of trying to earn enough to keep up our gym fees, the spa three times a year, organic foods. Why our bill from the General Nutrition store alone costs \$350.00 a month.

EMIT: Why did Grandmom tell me tonight that Dad died of Vitamin A poisoning?

MOTHER: So she can blame me for Dad dying.

EMIT: Why doesn't she like you, Mom?

MOTHER: Because we have different outlooks on life, dear! We live a modern healthful lifestyle. But she smokes. She drinks VO, and she eats pork rinds. She's jealous of our health.

EMIT: Grandmom's ninety-two!

MOTHER: But she wears glasses and has a chronic cough. Her skin's all yellow. She looks like a worn out lemon.

EMIT: I'd be happy to live to ninety-two.

MOTHER: You'll live longer than that and be as healthy as you are now. Not like your grandmother. She wheezed all over the cake tonight, worse than she did at Emily's wedding shower.

EMIT: Emily likes Grandmom.

MOTHER: Your Emily's got a lot to learn. After you two are married, we'll tune up her lifestyle. She's got to stop the potato chips. She's got more salt in her than Lot's wife.

Time Lapse - Page 6

(Time lapse. EMIT removes the jacket. MOTHER puts on a wig and becomes EMILY.)

EMIT: Emily! Geez, Emily! Come here!

EMILY: What is it, Emit? What?

EMIT: ***(showing a strand of hair)*** Look! Look right here! Do you see it?!

EMILY: Where?

EMIT: Here, Emily, here!

EMILY: Oh...oh yeah...oh my gosh, Emit. It's...it's...*it's a gray hair!*

EMIT: Keep your voice down. The windows are open. Listen to me, Emily. I'm aging.

EMILY: You're only thirty.

EMIT: Only?! You know what thirty means? Huh? It means I'm half way to go!

EMILY: I'm thirty too, and I have gray hair.

EMIT: You do?

EMILY: Yes.

EMIT: I'm sorry. I'm sorry, Emily. If there's anything I can do for you...I mean...

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