

Getting Behind

By

Javi Mulero

Email: javimull1@yahoo.com  
mujavier2000@yahoo.com  
Tel. #: (323)804-8264

ACT I

Scene 1

*(SETTING: BACKSTAGE at a SMALL THEATER, or AUDITORIUM.*

*Small Kitchen, a table with chairs;*

*Doors Right and Left leading to Dressing Rooms, or Backstage. JIM is in the Kitchen, stirring soup in a large pot.*

*TONY enters.)*

TONY

Hey, Jim, how's the house tonight? Sold out?

JIM

How are you, darling? Eat. I made chicken soup today.

TONY

After the show. I'm already in costume, I don't want to have an accident and then spill it all over.

JIM

Well, honey, if you do, just take them off. I'll wash them in the meantime - very slowly.

*(JIM pats TONY'S behind playfully.)*

TONY

*(laughing it off)*  
Oh, jeez.

JIM

Sorry, darling. Just couldn't resist.

TONY

I gotta go check on my comps with Box Office.

*(TONY exits. Then, CAROL enters.)*

JIM

Carol, after curtain call, after their bows, when the actors come out back into the wings, can you hold the curtain, do you have time?

CAROL

Yeah, sure, I can be there.

(CONTINUED)

JIM

Can you hold it wide? Like this wide, just so nobody will get stuck on it, you know?

CAROL

I can be there, no problem.

JIM

Great. I'm going to have to be in the lobby waiting for some people I know. Those fuckers are coming tonight.

*(JIM exits. A moment later, TONY enters again.)*

CAROL

Are you going to have some soup?

TONY

Yeah.

*(he pats her in her behind)*

But after the show, not right now.

CAROL

*(stunned)*

Tony?!

*(CAROL goes after him, following him around the table. TONY just laughs, thinking this a playful game. But it gets more frenetic and -- serious? Finally, TONY stops running.)*

TONY

What's up? I was just --

*(CAROL slaps him.)*

TONY

The hell was THAT for??...

CAROL

You can't do that!

TONY

What?!?

CAROL

You can't hit me in the ass like that?!

TONY

I was just KIDDIN'!

CAROL

No. You can't do that, Tony!

TONY

Jesus, Carol! People do that all the time. It doesn't mean anything. Relax!

CAROL

You can't -- no! It's not the same with a woman.

TONY

What if I reacted like that every time somebody hit me in the ass??

CAROL

I'm telling you: IT'S NOT THE SAME WITH A WOMAN!

TONY

Woman, get a hold of yourself, Christ!

CAROL

Don't talk to me that way, Tony! You gotta respect me!

TONY

I do! I mean, up until now, that's for sure: 'cause you just slapped me.

CAROL

You can't do that to somebody! They might be a little sensitive, you know?

TONY

Sorry. Didn't know you were so sensitive about your fucking behind. Not with what you're wearing. Not with it staring at me like two headlights!

CAROL

Tony, I warn you! See? Proof positive!

TONY

Oh, please! You women wave the tits and your ass so provocatively in front of men's faces, and then -- it's not like I raped you, okay?

CAROL

Something like that does feel like rape, Tony, you know?

TONY

No, I don't know. You're full of shit.

(CONTINUED)

CAROL

I was not dangling my ass provoc --

TONY

Oh, please!

CAROL

I wasn't! I was behind forward to get some soup.

TONY

Why are you wearing that, for heaven's sake? Obviously to provoke a reaction. It's no big deal!

CAROL

Some people really don't like to get touched that way. Sometimes one has to draw the line somewhere, you know? I mean, I'm sorry I hit you, but I just -- I just don't let just ANYBODY just - DO that, you know?!

TONY

Carol, is it because I'm a guy that you react like that?

CAROL

Wasn't it because I'm a chick that you grabbed my ass?

TONY

I didn't grab it!

CAROL

No? Then what did you do?

TONY

I -- I pat it?

CAROL

You went for my ass, period. End of argument.

TONY

Fuck you!

CAROL

The point is -- NO: Fuck you, Tony! -- You went for my ass, and that's all I'm talking about. I am very sensitive about stuff like that.

TONY

You know - I got a show to do. This is bullshit. Fucking bitch.

CAROL

Tony! --

(CONTINUED)

TONY

Obviously I'm not gonna be able to prove to a woman - that it means NOTHING!!

CAROL

Stop bringing women into this!!

TONY

You brought them into the argument yourself in the first place! You said it's different with women, that you 'can't do that to women'! Okay - I understand what you're trying to say. But what you don't wanna hear is that, with YOU -- it meant NOTHING!!

CAROL

Okay. Now you're taking it too far.

TONY

Jesus!

CAROL

You've asked me out before. So you can't SAY that. That it meant nothing.

TONY

Oh my God! I don't believe this!

CAROL

Was the fact that I said "no" the reason for this?

TONY

No! And I can't tell you why I did it, because it all happened in a second. Between intention and the so-called "crime": One second! For no reason! No pre-meditated NOTHING! There was no time! It was as off-the-cuff a reaction as a wise-ass crack -- I'm sorry -- REMARK! Sorry. And now you'll probably find an ulterior Freudian intention with THAT one right there...

CAROL

Tony, yours was not a reaction. You started it. MINE was a reaction.

TONY

Everything is a reaction, woman!

CAROL

Oh! So your excuse is that my butt is staring at you, invitingly, and THAT provoked your reaction??

TONY

You said it. That - and what you're wearing. I mean, I guess! I'm not analyzing it.

CAROL

Well, it wasn't an invite, Tony. Get it??

TONY

Yes, I get it now. Thank you for blowing it all out of proportion beforehand.

CAROL

All I'm saying is you better never EVER do that to me again. Okay?

TONY

(beat)

I gotta do a fucking show. Go PMS on someone else's face. This is bullshit.

CAROL

It's not bullshit! -- See? You have an attitude that --

TONY

No. YOU have an attitude!

CAROL

It's an attitude that could lead you into a lot of trouble. So please, you should apologize to me and acknowledge that you did wrong. Even if you didn't think you were. I don't want you to think that I easily blow up like a man-hating bitch for no reason. I had a legitimate reason. PMS is neither here nor there. I don't have PMS.

TONY

Then you must be a fucking bitch.

CAROL

See?? It's that kind of thinking that takes you there! "PMS all over some guy's face"! I mean, come ON!...

TONY

Okay, okay. I didn't literally mean that.

CAROL

It's not always about what we SAY, Tony!

TONY

Then what the hell do you want me to do? You're having a cow about anything I say, you're having a cow even about what I'm not saying!

(CONTINUED)

*(JIM re-enters)*

CAROL

I want you to apologize. I really do. It's important to me.

JIM

(hesitant)  
What's... going on?...  
(looking at both of their faces for a clue.)  
You guys okay??

TONY

Yeah. This is between us, Jim. It's okay.

JIM

Sorry. I just heard some -- (stops) Sorry. I'll go check the box office.

*(JIM exits again.)*

*TONY and CAROL are all alone again.)*

TONY

Look. I'm sorry that it escalated the way it did. I didn't mean anything at all by what I did. People like to read shit into things nowadays because of lawyers and lawsuits and PC shit.

CAROL

It's not --

TONY

(he just plows through:)  
BUT -- I didn't mean to upset you like this. Otherwise -- I would not have done it. I'm sorry.

CAROL

Thank you. That's all. Thank you, Tony.

TONY

You okay?

CAROL

Yeah. It's just -- some people, you know. They have -- I have a friend who -- you can't touch her feet. You just can't touch her feet. Or she goes bonkers. Since she was a little girl. She screams and she cries, if you touch her feet. And she gets upset, really upset, for the next fifteen minutes. And she herself doesn't even know why. (beat) I'm the same say. But not with my feet.

(CONTINUED)



TONY

And you don't know why?

CAROL

I think I know why. But I can't tell you.

TONY

Why?

CAROL

Does a person have to have a reason to tell you, Tony?

TONY

Well, pardon me for asking.

CAROL

No, please, I don't want you getting mad again. (Beat) It's personal.

TONY

Oh.

CAROL

Thanks for listening. Why don't you have some soup? Jim made it.

TONY

No, I... Actually, yeah. I think I will.

*(TONY serves himself some soup)*

TONY

I swear it didn't mean anything, this time, you know?

CAROL

Yeah.

TONY

I mean -- you ARE attractive, so for that reason alone, it would be hard to prove - and, and - plus I've asked you out before, which totally shatters my credibility here, but --

CAROL

Nobody has to prove anything, Tony.

TONY

Just -- equal opportunity ribbing, you know?...

CAROL

And I'm sorry for slapping -- hitting you. I really am. It wasn't YOU. Anybody could set me off just by -- by doing that.

(CONTINUED)

*(TONY tastes the soup)*

CAROL

Is it good?

TONY

It doesn't suck.

*(JIM re-enters.)*

JIM

How's my soup? Ya like it?? Good, huh?

TONY

Good. Great, yeah.

JIM

Have some more. I don't want to save anything. Just be careful: you're in costume.

*(CAROL has attended to cleaning around in the Kitchen.)*

TONY

I will be careful. Believe me.

JIM

Oh: Where's Timmy? Oh, boy!... I --

*(as he goes out again:)*

I gotta get Timmy. Has anybody seen Timmy?

*(And on his way out, JIM pats CAROL's behind in a friendly, off-handed way -- just as TONY had done earlier.)*

JIM

Hey, talk to you later, darling...

*(as he exits:)*

Timmy! Timmy!...

*(JIM is gone. Left behind is our couple: The moment CAROL feels the pat in her rear is once more 'electric' for her. She is stunned. She whips around accusatorily -- really mad -- and only sees TONY, in her shock.*

*TONY, who has witnessed this last event, and who hasn't missed a single moment, just shrugs and points after the departed JIM, as if to say: "Aha! See? It's not just ME. And don't look at me, because I didn't do shit this time!"*

(CONTINUED)

*TONY just sips more soup, trying hard to suppress a victorious smile that's also coupled with a bitter taste.*

*CAROL is at a crossroad. TONY just watches: "What will she do?" CAROL is livid, as she realizes now that the culprit was JIM, not TONY.*

*At that moment, JIM enters again.)*

JIM

I can't find Timmy. Where is he? Has anyone seen Timmy?

CAROL

Jim... you hit my -- my behind!

JIM

*(laughing good-naturedly:)*

I know, I'm sorry! It just looked so cute and cuddly and ready for plucking when you push it up like that. I didn't mean anything, hon. I love you -- I was just playing, huh? I'm a raging queen, no harm meant!

*(JIM has grabbed her and hugged her in a sweet and friendly way, which makes her melt, safe in his arms. She has no choice but to laugh it off with him.)*

JIM

Okay. I have to find Timmy. I have to give him some notes. Something was off in last night's performance. Something was really off... (as he exists:) Timmy!!...

*(CAROL is still. She feels TONY's eyes on her, like daggers.*

*They stare at each other across the room. To her, it is, after all, HER body. Then she exits-- to her dressing room.*

*TONY just stands there. He cannot say anything. And he exits the opposite way -- into HIS dressing room.*

THE END