

WHY NOT

by

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Cast:

Joshua..... Male, 17.

Karen..... Female, 40s. Joshua's mother.

Time:

The present.

Place:

A kitchen.

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(Lights up on a kitchen. Karen is seated at the kitchen table. There is a small tin in front of her.)

JOSHUA  
(Enters from right)

Hey.

KAREN  
Oh. Hello, Joshua. I'm glad you're here, actually.

JOSHUA  
(Looking in fridge)  
Do we have any vitamin water?

KAREN  
No. You know, you could go to the store and get some.

JOSHUA  
It's okay.

KAREN  
Or why don't you go out to the farmers market and get some fruit. Strawberries have just come in. I know how much you love strawberries. They're full of vitamins!

JOSHUA  
I need to get back to the computer.

KAREN  
Joshy—

JOSHUA  
Joshy? I haven't heard that in a while.

KAREN  
Could we talk for a bit? There's something I need to discuss with you.

JOSHUA  
Can we talk later? My app won't write itself.

KAREN  
So what are you working on?

JOSHUA  
I'll show you when it's done.

Joshua! Wait!

KAREN

But I need to—

JOSHUA

I need to talk to you. Sit down, please.

KAREN

But—

JOSHUA

Joshua!

KAREN

(Joshua sits)

Thank you. Now, I need to talk to you about your future.

JOSHUA

Okay.

KAREN

Your therapist called, and—

JOSHUA

(Stands)

I need to get back to my project.

KAREN

Joshua! Sit down!

(Joshua sits)

Your therapist called, and told me that you didn't come to your appointment.

JOSHUA

I was busy.

KAREN

Now, I know you don't like your therapist.

JOSHUA

He's a crank.

KAREN

No, he's not. I think his diagnosis of social anxiety was exactly right.

JOSHUA

Jesus. Are we really going to go over this again?!

Don't take our Lord's name in vain!

KAREN

Sorry.

JOSHUA

Now, Joshy. Let's be honest. You don't have a lot of friends. You don't have a girlfriend. You never go out. You didn't even bother to go to the prom last year. You—

KAREN

Of course I have a girlfriend!

JOSHUA

Who?

KAREN

Megan!

JOSHUA

She's your girlfriend?

KAREN

Yeah.

JOSHUA

But you never talk with her!

KAREN

I just IMed her yesterday.

JOSHUA

You instant messaged her.

KAREN

Yeah.

JOSHUA

You don't IM your girlfriend.

KAREN

I do.

JOSHUA

You go out.

KAREN

JOSHUA

I do go out. I went out with her last week. Friday. A whole bunch of us went to the movies.

KAREN

You go out more often than that. And you go out as a couple. You don't spend all day in the basement working on web sites or whatever.

JOSHUA

It's not a web site, it's an app. Besides, uncle Mike did exactly the same thing.

KAREN

He founded a software company when he was 23. Are you going to found a company?

JOSHUA

What do you want me to do?

KAREN

Go to your appointments. Take your prescriptions.

JOSHUA

Why?! The shrink hasn't changed me. The meds just gave me headaches. Or made me sleepy. Or both.

KAREN

Okay. Fine. If that's not working for you, there is another options.  
(Pushes tin towards Joshua)

JOSHUA

What's that?

KAREN

Open it.

JOSHUA

(Opens tin)

What are these? They look like...Oh my God!

(Closes tin)

Is that...is that...

KAREN

It's medicine.

JOSHUA

It's pot!



KAREN

As I said. It's medicine.

JOSHUA

These are drugs! I'm not going to take drugs.

KAREN

You've never taken pot before?

JOSHUA

No! Does Dad know you're trying to get me hooked on drugs?

KAREN

I'm not trying to get you "hooked". But marijuana has plenty of medical value. And this variety is very good at treating anxiety.

JOSHUA

It's a drug!

KAREN

It's a plant! Probably the most natural thing in this house.

JOSHUA

Yeah, yeah. "All natural". "Hemp has a million uses". "You can make good rope out of it, good paper". Et cetera. Et cetera.

KAREN

I don't care about that. What I do care about is giving you a medicine that will help you. Now here...

JOSHUA

No.

KAREN

One joint won't kill you.

JOSHUA

I'm not going to put drugs in my body. You and Dad taught me that.

KAREN

I was just being an overprotective mother.

JOSHUA

But Dad preaches against drugs all the time.

KAREN

Richard...your father preaches against a lot of things he enjoyed when he was your age.

JOSHUA

Really?

KAREN

That's...that's one of the reasons your father and I separated.

JOSHUA

So he did pot?

KAREN

Quite a lot.

JOSHUA

But you told me that you both never did.

KAREN

Your father thought it would be best if we lied about our past. To set a good example.

JOSHUA

Really.

KAREN

It seemed like a good idea at the time. And before you ask, yes, I've done this as well. It's been a while. I gave it up when I got pregnant with you.

JOSHUA

You found a dealer pretty easily.

KAREN

What? Oh. Joshy, I got these from Dora. From church.

JOSHUA

Dora?! But...but...she's a Eucharistic minister!

KAREN

And after she gives the shut-ins their eucharist, she gives them a little something for their glaucoma as well.

(Opens tin)

Now take one. I've got a lighter.

JOSHUA

I really don't want to—

KAREN  
No excuses. It will be good for you.

JOSHUA  
Maybe later.

KAREN  
I want you to do it now.

JOSHUA  
Mom, no.

KAREN  
It's easy. Just put it in your mouth and—

JOSHUA  
No!

KAREN  
I'll light it up. And then we can share.

JOSHUA  
No, thank you.

KAREN  
It will be a mother-son thing.

JOSHUA  
I am not going to smoke pot!

KAREN  
Damn it, Joshua, I made you eat creamed spinach when you were twelve months old. I can make you smoke pot if I want! You are not going to miss your prom again. You are not going to spend your entire last year of high school in the basement. You—

JOSHUA  
But I am going the prom!

KAREN  
With who?

JOSHUA  
Megan.

KAREN  
Really?

Yeah! She asked me yesterday. JOSHUA

Wait, she asked you? KAREN

Yes. JOSHUA

On IM? KAREN

Yes. JOSHUA

And you said “yes”, right? KAREN

I told her I wasn’t sure I was going, but— JOSHUA

Go! KAREN

But— JOSHUA

You should go! KAREN

I think I will. JOSHUA

You “think”? KAREN

I will. Yeah, I will. JOSHUA

Good. You’re lucky, you know. KAREN

I am? JOSHUA

KAREN

Very few girls would put up with that.

JOSHUA

Mom, we're not getting married. It's just prom. It's just a silly high school ritual.

KAREN

Maybe. But it's still good to do it.

JOSHUA

Okay. I'll just go downstairs now, and—

KAREN

Don't say "yes" by I.M. Say it in person.

JOSHUA

Okay.

KAREN

I suppose you two will need to stop by your father's place.

JOSHUA

He is my Dad.

KAREN

Right. Of course he is. Oh, I know what I should do. I should call your uncle Mike. I'm sure Brad will want to do Megan's corsage. Won't that be nice.

JOSHUA

Mom?

KAREN

What, dear?

JOSHUA

Dad preaches against homosexuality a lot, too.

KAREN

What? Yes, he does.

JOSHUA

Is he...?

KAREN

Oh, no. He's straight.

Good. JOSHUA

Mostly. KAREN

Oh. JOSHUA

We can talk about that later. KAREN  
(Stands)  
You know, Josh, about all this...you don't need to, if you really don't want to. I just did this because I love you.

I know, Mom. I love you, too. JOSHUA  
(They hug)

I'm going to go call your grandparents. They'll be thrilled. KAREN  
(Exits, left)

Well... JOSHUA  
(Moves to exit, right, then stops)

Why not. (Gets a joint from the tin)

(Exits, right. Lights down)

THE END