

LIVING CONDITIONS

Written by

GARIN TURNER
JACOB RYAN COLON

Created by
Garin Turner

EXT. APARTMENT COMPLEX - NIGHT

DAVID, 20s, single father, walks into an apartment building, daughter FAITH's, 6, hand in his. Faith rubs her eye tiredly.

INT. APARTMENT COMPLEX - NIGHT

David and Faith enter, a dim, often flickering lobby, with a run down elevator before them.

Aside the elevator is ERIC, 40s, heavysset, messy hair. He reads a magazine, sitting in silence.

FAITH

Daddy? Can you carry me?

David, visibly tired, sighs.

DAVID

I had a long day at work,
sweetheart. Maybe another time?

Faith hangs her head.

Eric glances over at him, back at the magazine.

David looks at the closed down elevator.

David, aggravated, steps towards Eric.

DAVID (CONT'D)

You said you'd fix the elevator
today.

Eric snickers, turns a page in his magazine.

DAVID (CONT'D)

You know, instead of sitting on
your--

Eric puts down his magazine.

ERIC

--You don't like it here, you can
take your daughter and leave.

DAVID

Three years we've been here, and
it's the same thing. No action,
just words. I wonder why I haven't
called up the housing authority
yet.

Eric shrugs, reads his magazine.

ERIC

I guess you'll just have to keep
taking the stairs until I get the
elevator in working order.

David advances towards Eric, Faith tugs at his arm. David stops.

DAVID

It's not just the elevator, look at
this place! The carpet is torn--

He kicks the torn carpet.

DAVID (CONT'D)

--Instead of replacing it, your
answer was superglue. To make
matters worse, *nails* are sticking
out of the floor! What if Faith
stepped on one?

FAITH

Daddy? Do I have to stay here
again?

David's angry expression goes calm. He turns towards his daughter, kneels.

DAVID

Sorry, Faith. Daddy's got to go
back to work, you know that.

FAITH

Why can't I come with you? I hate
it here!

DAVID

I know you don't like it here--

FAITH

--I *hate* it.

David smiles, nods.

DAVID

I know you don't like it here.
(beat)
But I promise it'll be better.

ERIC

You ought to be more grateful to
your daddy here.

They turn towards Eric. He stands, moves to his desk. He tosses his magazine on it.

ERIC (CONT'D)
Working all day, all night to
support you. My dad never did any
of that for me.

He grins slightly. David gives him a stern look.

BABYSITTER (O.S.)
Oh, David, you're home!

Faith's babysitter, NATTY 20s, comes from the staircase.

NATTY
Hi, Faith!

Faith rubs her eye.

FAITH
Hi, Natty.

DAVID
(to Natasha)
Hi, Natty. Could you take her
upstairs, please?
(to Faith)
I'll be right up, sweetheart, okay?

Faith nods.

NATTY
Sure thing.
(to Faith)
Wow, you sure do look exhausted!
Want me to carry you?

FAITH
No, I'm okay.

Faith follows Natty up the stairs.

David turns towards Eric.

DAVID
It's like you said. I go to work
every day, almost every night--

ERIC
--You can't afford to have a child,
then just put her up for adoption.

David looks infuriated.

DAVID

Did you just fucking say that to me?

ERIC

You wouldn't be the first to do it. Certainly won't be the last.

DAVID

My father left right after I was born. I'm not gonna do what he did.

Eric nods, raises his eyebrows, before walking over to his chair with a different book in hand.

DAVID (CONT'D)

My daughter has clean clothes. She's got food and a roof over her head.

ERIC

Well then, what do you want from me, Captain Do-Gooder?

DAVID

You know what, you can go fuck yourself! Better yet, why don't you get up off your old ass and fix the goddamn elevator?

Eric jumps up out of his seat.

ERIC

(sarcastic)

You know what, now that I've heard that, I'm ready. I'm gonna get this place in tip-top shape!

Eric drops the book on his desk, goes behind it, grabs a broom and dustpan.

DAVID

I've had enough of the empty promises, the nothing ever getting done.

Eric smiles, nods, sweeps up small bits of dust.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Tomorrow I'm going to the housing authority.

Eric angrily stops.

ERIC
I told you, I'd take care of the
elevator, didn't I?

David looks at him unsettlingly.

ERIC (CONT'D)
What exactly do you think you'll
accomplish, huh? Housing
Authority's so backed up it'll be a
year before they even hear your
complaint.

DAVID
At least it's something. Even if
you do start to fix things, it's
just you. You don't have anyone
here, no help, employees, nothing!

Eric laughs.

DAVID (CONT'D)
You're pathetic! Too old and proud
to ask for help--

Eric throws his broom aside.

ERIC
--You don't think I've asked?

Eric calms down.

ERIC (CONT'D)
You don't think I've asked for
help?

He scoffs.

ERIC (CONT'D)
Been practically begging for it
since I started running this place.

He sits in his chair.

ERIC (CONT'D)
I inherited this place from my mom,
and before that, we lived here.
I've been here forever.
(beat)
And I'm done busting my ass for
people that don't care, people that
aren't grateful.

DAVID

So that's why you sit around on
your ass every day? Because you're
tired of doing things on your own?

Eric shakes his head.

ERIC

You don't get it. What do you know?

DAVID

I know that nothing's ever going to
change if you just sit here like a
lazy asshole--

ERIC

And you're so much better, right?
Yelling and cursing!

David calms.

ERIC (CONT'D)

Like I said, you don't get it. For
me, there's no leaving this place,
there is no getting out.

David looks to the ground.

ERIC (CONT'D)

You, your daughter. That's another
story. Hoped you'd see that
eventually.

(beat)

I'm as old and expendable as this
building.

Eric slaps his leg. David walks closer to him.

DAVID

When Faith's mom died...

Eric looks at him sadly.

DAVID (CONT'D)

I didn't hear from anyone either.
Her friends, her family. It's like
she was their excuse to know me, to
care about me. Like this building
is peoples' excuse to know you.

Eric looks away.

David goes to Eric's desk, pulls up a chair, then sits across
from Eric.

DAVID (CONT'D)
You're right. Not about me not
getting it, but the cursing part.

He jokes.

DAVID (CONT'D)
I'm just glad Faith wasn't here to
hear that.

ERIC
I guess being defensive didn't
help, either.

DAVID
But it's like I said. Nothing's
gonna happen if you don't make it
happen.

Eric looks at David.

ERIC
So? What? The housing authority?
No, absolutely not--

DAVID
--I was planning on going down
there tomorrow.
(beat)
Why don't we both go? Two heads are
always better than one.

Eric looks at him sideways.

ERIC
Us? Together? Next thing you'll be
asking me to dinner.

David laughs.

DAVID
Let's not get carried away.

Eric chuckles. He nods.

ERIC
Okay.

David extends a hand.

Eric shakes it.