

How Not To Be A Stupid Adult

by

Erik Baker

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - DUSK

A man's head slithers out a closing door. SMASH: A shoebox FIREWORKS its contents near his withdrawing head.

The room is dark. Stacked packing boxes. Heavy BREATHING.

CAR LIGHTS pull out a driveway. Through the blind, they scan KYRA, 19, power-packed petite redhead. She unclenches her fists to thrust open the window and yell out:

KYRA
I told you in 5th grade you'd never
see me cry again Andy Strachan!

The last stripe of light glimmers on her half-carat diamond.

DARKNESS.

Kyra weaves through shadowed boxes to reach the door. FLICKS on the light switch to reveal:

A floor littered with trinkets, colored papers, a map dotted with dates next to X's, a second place ribbon and an old duct-taped shoebox. She plucks up a baseball rolling by her feet.

In blue ink scrawl: "9-14-12 First played catch with Kyra."

KYRA (CONT'D)
(Tosses ball aside)
Generous, calling it "catch".

EXT. SCHOOL PLAYGROUND - PAST

A YOUNG KYRA, age 8, plays catch with another girl. A YOUNG lanky ANDY hunkers on a nearby picnic table, staring. Without pausing her game or glancing his way:

YOUNG KYRA
Hey kid. You're always watching me.
You're creeping me out.

YOUNG ANDY
I was just... you throw every day?

YOUNG KYRA
Gotta train. I'm going to play
professional when I grow up.

YOUNG ANDY
Girls don't play in the pros.

Kyra stops. Her eyes narrow on the ball in her hand.

CATCHING GIRL

Uh, ohhh...

A sheepish Andy closes his eyes. Kyra winds up and--

INT. PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE

MR. HART, balding, places an ice pack on Young Andy's eye.

His look grows stern when he shifts his attention to Young Kyra and sits behind a desk opposite them.

YOUNG KYRA

What? We were just playing catch--

MR. HART

--Andy. I'd like to hear from you
what happened here?

Andy, eyes to floor, surfs the ice pack down to his ribs. Mr. Hart rises. Walks around the desk to tower over him.

Reaches beneath the ice pack to roll up Andy's shirt. Andy winces when two long, purpling welts greet the air.

The furrow in Mr. Hart's eyebrows melts away.

YOUNG KYRA

That wasn't me!

MR. HART

(Signs pink pass)

Kyra, you'll sit on the wall during
recess again this week.

(Hands to Kyra)

Get back to class. Now, please.

Kyra, pass in hand, huffs out. As the door CREAKS shut, Mr. Hart folds into the child-sized seat next to Andy.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - PRESENT

Kyra pulls the pink pass out of a tattered shoebox. Turns it over to read kid penmanship:

Dear Andy,

Do you want to:

[] Train with me for lunch

[] Or be beaten up (Check one box)?

~Kyra

Kyra lets it float to the floor. Peers into the box:

KYRA
No waaay!...?

Pries at something stuck inside. No luck. Flips the shoebox upside-down and shakes it. Stops. Reads the faded masking tape label on the box: "Katching Kyra".

KYRA (CONT'D)
(eye roll)
Quite a way with words, Mr. Writer.

Bangs the box on the floor until a mud-stained, rolled-up purple notebook drops out. Clutches it to her heart.

She sinks into a cross-legged lean against the wall. Flips a few pages to land on:

KYRA (CONT'D)
"How Not To Be A Stupid Adult:
By Kyra Johanna Sparks & Andy
Waldorf Strachan.
#1) Never take away recess..."

EXT. SCHOOL PLAYGROUND - PAST

Young Kyra sits cross-legged, back against the school's brick wall writing with a purple crayon in a clean purple notebook. Without looking up:

YOUNG KYRA
I know you're there, you know.

A nose blooms around the corner into Andy's face, sporting a black eye.

YOUNG ANDY
How'd you know I was here?

YOUNG KYRA
Sixth sense. Writers have that.

YOUNG ANDY
Whatcha writing... about?

YOUNG KYRA
How not to be a stupid adult.

Andy shuffles over.

YOUNG ANDY
So why's #2 say, "Always have
purple flowers?"

Kyra kicks his legs to move his shadow off her page.

YOUNG KYRA
Because, they're flowers. And I
like purple. Duh.

YOUNG ANDY
And #3, "Go on great adventures?"

YOUNG KYRA
When I grow up I'm going to be a
writer that has all-over-the-world
adventures and writes about them.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - PRESENT

Kyra scowls at a Starbucks apron hanging from a closet knob.

EXT. SCHOOL PLAYGROUND - PAST CONTINUING

Young Kyra sizes Andy up and down. He takes a step back.

YOUNG KYRA
Okay, I'll train you. How to fight.
I'll also defend you from Rob
Plimpton until you can hit back.

YOUNG ANDY
Um, you... will? ...Why?

YOUNG KYRA
'Cuz that's stuff best friends do:
Help each other when the other's in
need. And you, Best Friend, are
most definitely in need.

YOUNG ANDY
Best friends? Me... and you?

YOUNG KYRA
Yeah. I decided just now you're
going to be my best friend. You
don't cry when you get hit.

YOUNG ANDY
Don't I get to decide... too?

YOUNG KYRA

No.

Pause.

YOUNG ANDY

I think number 4 should be "Don't
throw things when you're mad."

Kyra considers. Continues writing with a nod.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - PRESENT

Notebook in hand, viewing the trinket apocalypse about her:

KYRA

Nailed it.

ANDY (O.S.)

We never did finish those.

Kyra looks up to see ANDY, a gangly 19 with soft brown eyes,
nudging the door open.

KYRA

(rising)

We are... Finished.

ANDY

That's not what I--

KYRA

You stole this from me!

ANDY

I didn't... I collected it. That's--

KYRA

Mine. And you--

Swats him with the rolled up notebook, backing him into:

INT. HALLWAY

ANDY

--No, it was ours. Just because you
never let me write in it--

KYRA

Well, you're getting enough of that
now aren't ya, Mr. Writer?

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL PARKING LOT - PAST

A TEENAGE KYRA leans against a car holding an opened envelope. TEENAGE ANDY rushes up to her, waving a paper.

ANDY

I got it. I got the scholarship, I--

He notices her envelope, then her expressionless face.

ANDY (CONT'D)

Oh, you didn't get it, did you?

KYRA

Nope. But got something else...

Plants her envelope on his chest. Walks off.

Andy scans a medical report.

ANDY

Pregnant?!

A slack-jawed Andy trots after her.

INT. HALLWAY - PRESENT

ANDY

We agreed, it was best. I take the scholarship--

Andy backpedals Kyra's windmill of swats.

KYRA

--While I serve trust-fund
brats their pumpkin spiced--
"oat, never soy"--lattes all
day long? While you,...
YOU--

ANDY (CONT'D)

--While you-- Am I supposed to
feel bad? All the time that I
got it and you didn't?
You agreed,
YOU--

KYRA (CONT'D)

--I'M PEACHY! Thanks!

ANDY

You said you were fine with--

KYRA

IT WAS MY DREAM! Enjoy the
scholarship you never would have
gotten if I hadn't pushed you to
apply for it. You didn't even
really want it. It isn't... Fair.

ANDY
Missed dreams? You lecturing me
about fair? Or HIM?

She stays her arm mid-swat as they enter an impeccably clean:

INT. BABY'S ROOM - HALF DECORATED IN BLUE AND HALF IN PURPLE

KYRA
...Could be a--

Eyes a to-be-completed sign that reads, "It's a _____!"

ANDY
Kyra. You said you were okay being
the one to make ends meet.

Kyra winds up. Andy, cornered, braces for impact.

KYRA
Oh, we already met--

She fastballs the purple notebook off the wall behind him.

KYRA (CONT'D)
--an "end".

Andy discovers his own hand locked onto the crib railing. He yanks it free as if he just touched white-hot metal.

KYRA (CONT'D)
Feel free to use my clever turn of
phrase in your next assignment.

Silence.

ANDY
Wanna hit me some more?

Cradling his hand, Andy moves to exit, but Kyra plants herself in his path.

Small, resolute body road blocks tall, slumping man.

KYRA
Take a look, Andy. Just look.
What's the harm? YOU LOOK ANDY!

ANDY
(Nearly inaudible)
I can't--

KYRA
 (Wind tunnel of rage)
 L000000000000000000000000--

...she contorts into a howling, cornered animal...

KYRA (CONT'D)
 --000000000000000000000000K!

Andy freezes.

KYRA (CONT'D)
 My. Dream? My Dream! Is supposed to
 be sleeping right there.

Save for a purple notebook, the crib is empty.

KYRA (CONT'D)
 (Convulsing)
 Only dream... That mattered. Gone.
 Forever... Gone.

Andy wraps long arms around her. She writhes against his touch. Flurry of punches, but he holds tight absorbing them.

ANDY
 Stuff best friends do.

The blows slacken. Kyra's body goes limp, wild eyes meet his.

KYRA
 I don't know the color of her eyes.
 I'll never know. We buried our
 child and I never looked to see the
 color of his eyes.

Andy scoops Kyra into a hug. Sobs undulate her limbs.

Embracing.

KYRA (CONT'D)
 I haven't cried since... (sniff)

ANDY
 ...Fifth grade. Yeah, I heard.

They separate: The protective emotional moat re-established.

KYRA
 We only got married because the
 baby was coming. It's best.
 Separation is best.

ANDY

You know I only took Honors Writing
because you were in the class--

Lifts the notebook from the crib. Reads from it:

ANDY (CONT'D)

"#5) If you lose something, it's
okay. You should look for it, but
if you can't find it, that's okay
too." That beaut mine?

His arm lowers the notebook for Kyra to read:

KYRA

"#6) No hitting." Exclamation
point, exclamation point,...
exclamation point.

She hooks her chin on his shoulder.

KYRA (CONT'D)

I'm on a roll.

ANDY

Give you a pass on that one if you
do the same for me: "#7) Don't
leave without talking--ever."
(Makes BUZZER sound) Lightning
round.

KYRA

Ha. "Eight: Hugging is okay, but
not kissing."

Andy stares at her. Sways.

KYRA (CONT'D)

Remember when I wrote that one?

EXT. SCHOOL PLAYGROUND - PAST

Young Andy stands swaying in indecision next to Kyra, who
writes. He jumps--lips first--into a kiss on her cheek.

Kyra continues to write through it. Closes the notebook.
Throws it at him and stomps off.

Andy reaches down to retrieve the notebook from a mud puddle.

INT. BABY'S ROOM

ANDY
You wouldn't talk to me for two weeks.

KYRA
So.

ANDY
Yeah.

KYRA
So?

ANDY
Yeah, I've got an 8 a.m.

He steps around her. She jumps out to plant a kiss on his cheek. He stutter-steps.

KYRA
You... could stay. The night.

Andy hands her the notebook. Continues out the room.

KYRA (CONT'D)
(Holding up notebook)
I can work on more on these.

No response. Waits... Nothing.

KYRA (CONT'D)
ANDY!

Rushes out.

INT. HALLWAY

Andy stands at the end of the hallway. His back to her.

KYRA
Andy?

ANDY
I got number 2 covered.

He turns to face her, a bouquet of purple flowers in-hand.

KYRA
(tears fall)
Come on. Waterworks... twice in one night?

They stare at each other. But neither moves.

ANDY

I don't know what to do.

KYRA

I do.

Kyra rips into a box. Dumps a tray of desk supplies out. Skips over a purple crayon to grab a brown one. Lays the notebook open on a box.

Andy lays the flowers next to it and rests his hand on her shoulder. She tucks her free hand into his.

He watches her scratch out her maiden name, then amend the page to read:

How Not To Be A Stupid Adult --Part 2

By Kyra Johanna ~~Sparks~~ Strachan & Andy Waldorf Strachan

She hands him the crayon and they both sit down to write.