

Family Apology Conference

By

Scott Leonardi

Scott Leonardi 2017

Scottleonardi@yahoo.com

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Two NEWSCASTERS hold microphones commenting on the conference about to take place.

NEWSCASTER 1

Well, here we are folks. Just after the 2016 holiday festivities we all wait with bated breath to see what Mark Hughes, the record holder for this years all-time inappropriate behavior, has to say for himself after such an embarrassing display of trying to fit in to his girlfriend's family Christmas.

NEWSCASTER 2

That's right Jim, and what a display it was. We know that this was the first time Mark had been invited over for family Christmas, as his relationship with his girlfriend, Erica, has only been going on for around a year.

NEWSCASTER 1

Yes, I believe the relationship started a short time after last years Christmas. At the time, Erica had invited her previous boyfriend, Tom-

NEWSCASTER 2

Great guy.

NEWSCASTER 1

Fantastic guy. Love 'em. Well, she invited him to the very same holiday with her family. Sources say that Erica had been feeling unsure of how committed she was feeling to Tom, and after bringing him home to her parents house for Christmas, her entire family liked him so much that they almost immediately started making jokes about weddings and when they were going to start having kids. This massive approval of her family was just what Erica needed to push her fear of commitment over the edge and she ended the relationship a few days later.

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NEWSCASTER 2

Such a shame, but this is where Mark comes into play. After only a month of being freshly single, Erica met Mark during karaoke night at a local bar. Ten shots, two joints, and countless sloppy make out sessions later, the two were inseparable. Some could argue that this was Mark's peak in the relationship, that it's only gone downhill from there and that his current absolute explosion of alcohol-fueled embarrassment was inevitable.

NEWSCASTER 1

Absolutely, Jim. But the one thing that people have noticed during the entirety of this shit-show of a relationship is that Erica seems to be more smitten than ever with Mark. Nothing seems to sway her mind when it comes to forgiving Mark for his reckless and irresponsible behavior over the past year. Not the innumerable three o'clock in the morning fights, not the time Mark crashed her car and left it in a ditch to later claim it was stolen to avoid getting a DUI, not even when Mark projectile vomited onto a framed photograph of Erica's grandmother, knocking the picture off of the nightstand on which it sat and onto the floor where the glass of the frame broke and Mark's vomit soaked and ruined the old photograph underneath. If this isn't love, John, then I don't know what mental illness it is.

NEWSCASTER 2

Damn right, John. Damn right.

Jim holds a hand to his ear piece.

NEWSCASTER 1

Alright, yes, I'm getting word that Mark and Erica have arrived and are making their way to the podium.

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MARK and ERICA walk onto the stage in front of a small crowd. Mark looks sick and tired and is wearing an ill-fitting and stained suit. Erica is in a beautiful dress and jacket. The Newscasters comment over the scene.

NEWSCASTER 2 (O.S.)

Yes, I can see Mark now and I must say, he looks like he slept in a dumpster, John.

NEWSCASTER 1 (O.S.)

Couldn't have said it better myself, Jim. In fact, not only does it look as if he slept in a dumpster, but rather that while he slept there, a homeless man threw away his old suit and Mark proceeded to use it as a blanket, wake up in it, and wear it to this conference.

NEWSCASTER 2 (O.S.)

My God he is a walking tragedy. Erica on the other hand, an absolute dream.

NEWSCASTER 1 (O.S.)

Oh yes, of course she is. I'll tell ya Jim, it is a well known fact that this girl has always been light years out of Mark's league. The face of a Queen.

NEWSCASTER 2 (O.S.)

And the ass of an angel.

NEWSCASTER 1 (O.S.)

A God damn angel.

Mark pulls his sagging pants up and sits at a slew of microphones. He goes to pull one closer to him and there is loud FEEDBACK. He pulls his hand away and scoots his chair up. Erica sits next to him.

MARK

Hey guys. Um, I'm here today to address some things that have been brought to my attention recently about my conduct at this years Christmas dinner.

NEWSCASTER 1 (O.S.)
I'm cringing already, Jim.

NEWSCASTER 2 (O.S.)
My asshole's as tight as a sailor's knot, John. This is one train wreck you can't look away from.

MARK
First of all, I want to say that during the events that apparently occurred, the alcohol I consumed caused me to black out the majority of the night. That being said, Erica, my beautiful girlfriend, has told me exactly what happened and I'd like to apologize to her first. So, baby, I'm sorry for how I acted and I hope you can forgive me.

(to Erica)
I love you, babe.

Erica grabs Mark's hand and mouths 'I love you' to him.

NEWSCASTER 1 (O.S.)
(scoffs)

NEWSCASTER 2 (O.S.)
Pitiful.

MARK
Anyways, I'd like to apologize to Erica's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence. I'm sorry that on my way inside I trampled your flower beds. I'm also sorry I insisted on giving you each a thirty second bear hug, and for thanking Mr. Lawrence for, quote, "locking down such a sweet piece of ass cuz' now if I ever marry Erica I know I'm not gonna be stuck to an old frumpadump for all eternity."

In the audience, Mr. Lawrence shakes his head and Mrs. Lawrence blots a tear with a handkerchief.

MARK
To Erica's grandmother, I'm sorry that when you were preparing the ham for dinner, I asked where the turkey and stuffing were, to which you replied that turkey and

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MARK (cont'd)
stuffing were for Thanksgiving, to which I said, quote, "Well, shit. Your skin looks like a turkey neck and it's never too late to get stuffed." then winking multiple times while saying that I just had something in my eye and nudging you with my elbow.

Erica's grandmother scowls then looks over to another old man in the audience who she seductively eyes up and down.

NEWSCASTER 1 (O.S.)
Wow. I mean, I couldn't be more disgusted if you shoved your finger up your ass and shoved it up my nose, Jim.

NEWSCASTER 2 (O.S.)
Just say the word, John.

MARK
To Erica's Uncle Jeff, I'm sorry that when we were shooting hoops in the driveway I shouted 'Think fast, bitch' and passed you the ball at an obnoxious speed, causing the ball to break your nose and telling you to "walk it off".

UNCLE JEFF sits with his arms crossed and a huge bandage over his swollen nose.

UNCLE JEFF
(voice obstructed)
Fucking asshole.

Erica cringes and sympathetically pats Mark's back.

MARK
To Erica's Aunt Lily, I'm sorry for saying that crystal therapy is for, quote, "Wacko crackers with too many bugs in their brains and too much dirt in their skirt." I- I honestly don't even know what that's supposed to mean and I'm sorry I said it.

Aunt Lily rocks back and forth slightly while clutching a handful of crystals and beads and whispering to herself.

MARK (CONT'D)

To Erica's little brother, Denny, I'm sorry for making so many gay jokes while apparently trying to bond with you that you got so fed up you came out of the closet because you had actually been debating your sexuality for years. I didn't mean to push you out. I mean, maybe it's kinda like I helped you though? I dunno, bang whoever you want, man. Don't gotta worry about you cock blocking me I guess.

(laughs nervously)

Crowd quietly murmurs and Erica gives Mark a serious look. Denny rolls his eyes.

MARK (CONT'D)

Sorry, I mean like, if penises were soccer balls, I'd want you to be the best goalie in the world cuz you'd like, block so many...cocks.

Crowds murmuring gets louder.

DENNY

Wow!

NEWSCASTER 1 (O.S.)

Good lord.

MARK

You know, cuz you'd be so good at it cuz you like, know you're gay now. Wait no! Like, it's not a joke now! I want him to be proud! I'm being nice!

The crowd gets louder. Erica puts her hand over the mic and whispers into Mark's ear.

MARK (CONT'D)

Everyone, again I apologize. Denny please forgive my previous comment, and also all the same stuff I was talking about before. Continuing on, to Erica's young cousins, I'm sorry that when we were playing Mario Kart that I didn't take it easy on you, and every time I hit you with a shell I grabbed and

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MARK (CONT'D) (cont'd)
shook your heads and yelled "Shell shocked." I'm also sorry that when the game was over, I started crying because, quote, "This nostalgia trip got me feelin' all kinds of freaky." then proceeded to hug you so hard you almost passed out while whispering in your ears that I, quote, "Miss my childhood so much. So so much. Man oh man, so much. Geez oh man oh geez so much. Hold on to these moments with all the strength you have in your little boy bones." I can see that that was a bit much for you guys and I'm sorry.

NEWSCASTER 2 (O.S.)
This mother fucker.

NEWSCASTER 1 (O.S.)
Preach.

MARK
And finally, to the entire Lawrence family, I know I didn't make a very good first impression and I'm sorry for that, but I want you to know that I'm going to try to make it up to you.

Erica shakes Mark's hands excitedly and whispers something to him.

MARK (CONT'D)
(excitedly to Erica)
I know, babe. I know.
(to crowd)
That's why, here today, I'd like to make the announcement to you all, that-

ERICA
We're getting married!

Crowd starts shouting.

MR. LAWRENCE
The fuck you are!

Everyone in the crowd stands up and starts throwing trash at Mark.

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ERICA

We'll see you all at the reception!
It's in Vegas!

Erica pulls Mark off stage with her while the crowd carries on.

NEWSCASTER 1 (O.S.)

Oh, my Lordy Lord above, Jimmy.
This is one for the books. I cannot
believe what I'm hearing right now.

NEWSCASTER 2 (O.S.)

Neither can I, Johnny boy. This is
more suprising than the time I
walked in on my wife and three
other men in furry suits playing
downhill skier.

NEWSCASTER 1 (O.S.)

Jesus, TMI, Jimmy, TMI.

NEWSCASTER 2 (O.S.)

Sorry about that, John. You know
how I get when I'm excited.

NEWSCASTER 1 (O.S.)

Boy do I. By the way, Jimbo, you
never saw the faces of those guys
with your wife, did you?

NEWSCASTER 2 (O.S.)

Unfortunatly not, John. They were
all wearing masks.

NEWSCASTER 1 (O.S.)

(quietly)
Right, right...good.

NEWSCASTER 2 (O.S.)

What's that, Johnny?

NEWSCASTER 1 (O.S.)

I said good God, what a show!

NEWSCASTER 2 (O.S.)

Damn right!

NEWSCASTER 1 (O.S.)

Well, that's it, folks! You saw it
here first! Join us here tomorrow
for our weekly mix and match, where
we follow one bold man as he makes

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NEWSCASTER 1 (O.S.) (cont'd)
his way through a club full of
women out with their friends who
"just want to dance" to see if
he'll beat last weeks record for
rejections in under an hour. It's
gonna be a real nail biter! See you
then!

The crowd lingers around talking to each other. A man on stage tries to wave everybody out. You can still hear the Newscasters talking to each other.

NEWSCASTER 2 (O.S.)
Hey John, I was walking by your car
and noticed some big hairy thing in
your back seat, mind if I ask what
that was?

NEWSCASTER 1 (O.S.)
What? Oh that. I, uh, bought a fur
coat for the wife. I know she
wanted one.

NEWSCASTER 2 (O.S.)
Oh, of course. It's almost summer
though. Won't she be hot?

NEWSCASTER 1 (O.S.)
Yea...well, you know how she is.

NEWSCASTER 2 (O.S.)
Ha, yea. She always did like that
nice, fancy stuff.

NEWSCASTER 1 (O.S.)
(beat)
Yep.