

SUMMER BAY HOUSE - NIGHT

RYDER, ROO

RYDER is waiting on the couch, his mind racing, when ROO comes in, carrying shopping bags, sporting a dark expression. Before she can say a word, RYDER leaps up:

RYDER

I know what you're thinking - but you've got it wrong.

ROO

Do I now?

RYDER

Yes! I wouldn't even know where to get prawns.

ROO

You just did a shift in the Bait Shop.

RYDER

Grumps was all out. Huge prawn shortage at the moment.

ROO

I see.

RYDER clocks the shopping bags, hoping to change the subject.

RYDER

So. Now we've settled that - what's for dinner?

ROO

Prawns.

RYDER

(thinking fast)
The shortage is over, good to know... But I swear to you - I did not put prawns in the piano.

ROO

So *that's* where the smell was coming from...

RYDER kicks himself, but tries to salvage things:

RYDER

...Lucky guess?

ROO

Ryder, stop. I know it was you. I saw you go into the music room.

(CONTINUED)

RYDER

Okay fine. I was in there.
(ashamed)
But I was just hiding.

ROO

What from?

RYDER's suddenly flat. Embarrassed to admit the truth:

RYDER

The guys in my class. They're
always making fun of me. Like I'm
trying to be stupid on purpose.

ROO

(softening)
You're not stupid.

RYDER

So how come I failed the maths
test?

He rubs his eyes, tired.

ROO

Maybe if you went to bed before
midnight -

RYDER's frustrated - he's heard this advice a hundred times.

RYDER

I can never sleep, I'm too wired.
(beat)
And Grumps dragging me off fishing
at five am doesn't help...

ROO

Tell you what. Tomorrow, you can
sleep in as long as you like - and
I'll tell Dad to leave you alone,
okay?

RYDER's touched. No-one's ever been understanding like this
before.

RYDER

Really?
(genuine)
Thanks, Aunty Roo.

ROO

And once you're up, we can go
through your test together and work
on the areas you don't understand.

RYDER

That'd be awesome -
(pulling up, suspicious)
Wait, tomorrow's a school day.

ROO

Not for you darling. You're
suspended for the rest of the week.

RYDER

What?! Why?

ROO

Lack of sleep doesn't excuse the
prawn stunt.

A beat.

RYDER

Coco ratted me out, didn't she?

Off ROO's silent acknowledgement:

RYDER

I knew she saw me kiss Raffy...

ROO

What?

RYDER

Nothing! Let's get that barbie
fired up, hey?

And with that, RYDER escapes.

END OF SCENE