

NOT YOU AGAIN

A HALF HOUR TV PILOT

Written by

Mariia Rudenko

mariia@rudenko.name  
+34674855033

COLD OPEN

EXT. RIVERBANK - DAY

Beautiful summer sunset on a riverbank. Decorations and chairs are set for a wedding ceremony. GEORGE, in his 30s, good looking, in a wedding suit stands near the altar.

Guests are standing next to their chairs. Everyone is waiting for the bride to go down the aisle. Mendelssohn's wedding march is playing.

NINA, in her 30s, perfect makeup and hair, in a wedding dress and holding flowers shows up at the beginning of the aisle. She makes few steps and stops.

The march keeps playing. George's smile changes to confusion. Nina looks around, then looks at George with a guilt on her face.

NINA  
(mouthing inaudibly to  
George)  
I'm sorry.

George is shocked.

GEORGE  
Wait! No, no, no, no! Stop!

Nina grabs her long skirt, turns around and runs away.

CUT TO:

EXT. PARK - DAY

Nina is running, George is chasing her.

GEORGE  
Nina, are you kidding?! Stop!

Nina runs to a road, stops a car, gets in. The car drives away.

INT. NINA'S AND ZOË'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

SUPER: ONE YEAR LATER.

Nina in leggings and oversized hoodie, with messy hair and wearing glasses, sits on a couch. A pile of bills is in front of her on a coffee table. She's adding amounts on a calculator.

NINA  
(frustrated)  
This can't be right.. Have they  
raised electricity prices?

ZOË, short brown hair, in jeans, sneakers and stylish strict jacket, and AUDREY, long blond hair, in a sporty outfit and a baseball hat, both in their 30s, laughing, hugging, kissing, literally fall into the room. They're holding two pizzas and a pack of soda.

ZOË  
(noticing Nina)  
Oh, hey, Neen. We brought pizza.  
You're choosing the movie tonight.

AUDREY  
(pinching Zoë's butt)  
And we don't care what you choose.  
We'll be busy anyway.

Zoë is laughing in a flirty way, hugging Audrey. Nina watches them with annoyance and disgust.

NINA  
(gloomy)  
Get a room.

Audrey flops on a couch next to Nina, slightly pushes her.

AUDREY  
What's up, sista?

Zoë fishes out a slice of pizza from a box, tries to give it to Nina.

ZOË  
Just have a bite. I made it today  
at work in our new Italian oven.

NINA  
 (dodging Zoë's pizza hand;  
 to Audrey)  
 You tell me, what's up. You're my  
 manager.

Audrey shrugs, takes Nina's pizza slice from Zoë, bites it.

AUDREY  
 (chewing)  
 It's showbiz, kid. People are  
 reading your stuff.  
 (jokingly)  
 We're expecting a call from the  
 President any moment now.

Nina stands up, gathers her bills.

NINA  
 It's not funny! Are you actually  
 looking for a gig for me or is your  
 job now focused only around my best  
 friend's ass?

ZOË  
 (appalled)  
 Hey! That was mean!

Nina holding bills and calculator, nervously paces across the  
 room.

NINA  
 Look, chicas, I'm sorry I'm a  
 bitch. But I'm running out of  
 savings while bills are piling up.  
 I have ten feature scripts, five  
 original TV pilots, multiple specs.  
 And the only answer I'm hearing is  
 "It's cool, but not for us, good  
 luck with your project!"

Audrey and Zoë come to Nina, hug her.

ZOË  
 Dude, calm down. You'll get your  
 big break.

NINA  
 (frustrated)  
 It's been months!

AUDREY  
 Look, I warned you. This industry  
 isn't fun and games.  
 (MORE)

AUDREY (CONT'D)

The most common answer here is  
"no". But once...

Audrey's phone rings.

AUDREY (CONT'D)

(into the phone)  
Hello. /.../ Yeah. It is she. /.../  
(quickly looking at Nina)  
Yes, of course. /.../ She'll be  
there. /.../ Thanks. Bye.

Nina and Zoë are looking at Audrey with a question.

NINA

Who was that?

ZOË

So?

Audrey casually flops back on a couch, gets another slice of  
pizza, bites, chews, opens soda.

NINA (CONT'D)

(almost hysterically)  
Audrey, for god's sake, what?!

AUDREY

(breaking into a smile)  
You got an interview at STREAM!

ZOË

(happily)  
Get out!

Nina is gasping for air, can't say anything.

AUDREY

Breathe, Neen. Are you ready?  
They're looking for a staff writer  
for the next season of Clubbers!

Nina finally regains the ability to make sounds and screams  
of joy.

AUDREY (CONT'D)

Tomorrow at nine.

Nina is so shocked she's melting down.

NINA

(loudly laughing of joy)  
I can't believe it! This is huge.  
(suddenly shifting into  
crying)  
This is too huge to handle. I'm not  
ready. I'm sooo gonna fail.

Zoë comes to Nina, grabs her shoulders, shakes her.

ZOË  
Get your shit together and go get  
it!

Nina nods.

ZOË (CONT'D)  
Wait isn't your ex's dad Stream's  
CEO?

Even a bigger fear appears on Nina's face.

NINA  
The old man always liked me, but  
after what happened.. I'm toast.

AUDREY  
I don't care. You will go and you  
will do you best!  
(grabbing Nina's bills)  
Gotta pay bills, remember?

INT. NINA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

CLOSEUP: alarm on a night stand showing "03:00 a.m.". Nina  
sits in her bed watching STACY LIEBERMAN's interview.

STACY (O.S.)  
"Clubbers" is not only a sitcom  
with laughing audience about  
friends opening stand up clubs.  
It's a coming-of-age story about  
finding your purpose, developing  
your skills and not losing it all  
in the moments of despair. It's  
also a reminder that no talent will  
save you, if you're an asshole.

JOURNALIST is laughing, Nina grunts.

NINA  
True thing.

CUT TO:

Nina is watching episodes of Clubbers on her laptop.

JORGE AS JACE (O.S.)  
So I tell her: if you like my  
grandpa so much, why wouldn't you  
marry him!

Clubbers audience bursts of laughter. CLOSEUP: Nina's laptop screen showing one of episodes, where JORGE plays main character Jace.

JORGE AS JACE (CONT'D)

(from stage)

I mean when you come to meet my parents and all night flirt with my grandpa. Who cares my grandpa is George Clooney?

Clubbers audience bursts of laughter. Nina sips coffee from a huge coffee mug, pauses the show, takes some notes. CLOSEUP: Nina's laptop screen -- Nina's fast forwarding through several episodes, hits "play".

LISA AS NATALIE

(to Jace)

I'm telling ya. You can't be a part of the club - create your own club.

Nina gulps the rest of her coffee.

SERIES OF SHOTS:

A) Nina is sitting in her bed among multiple papers, randomly reading them.

B) Nina is watching pieces from Seinfeld, Friends, Alf on her laptop, nodding and waking up, and then nodding again.

C) Nina is trying on different skirts, t-shirts, pants etc in front of the mirror. Nothing seems to be good enough.

Nina's bed is covered with outfits. Nina herself is sleeping on top of them. She wakes up, opens her eyes, looks at her alarm clock: 8:30. Nina jumps off the bed.

NINA

Fuck, fuck, fuck! I'm late!

Nina hurries towards the bathroom, misses the door frame and walks into a wall.

NINA (CONT'D)

Aw! Why do bad things happen to good people?!

ZOË (O.S.)

Said Ross Geller.

Zoë has just come in with a cup of coffee. She hands it to Nina.

ZOË (CONT'D)

You're even talking using phrases  
from TV shows. The job is yours,  
girl.

EXT. PARKING LOT NEAR NINA'S/ZOË'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Nina wearing a strict but elegant outfit (pencil skirt and a blouse), and in heels, is getting in her car.

INT. NINA'S CAR - DAY

Nina is speeding up. Other cars on the road are honking.

NINA

Yeah, whatever. Honk away! Who has  
the most important interview in her  
life? Right. Me! So  
(yelling into the window)  
move away!

Nina gets stuck in a traffic jam. Now Nina is honking.  
CLOSEUP: car clock shows "8:45". CLOSEUP: GPS - 25 minutes to  
destination. Nina honks more.

DRIVER 1 (O.S.)

Shut up!

NINA

(into the window)  
You shut up!

Finally traffic dissolves. Nina speeds up like crazy cutting  
off other cars. They're honking.

NINA (CONT'D)

(annoyed)  
I hate driving!

EXT. PARKING LOT NEAR STREAM STUDIOS - DAY

Nina drives on a high speed, abruptly brakes, parks, gets out  
of the car. She's holding a purse and a big folder with  
papers.

EXT. STREET NEAR STREAM STUDIOS - DAY

Nina runs to the entrance, one of her heels gets stuck in a  
sewer hatch. Nina falls, shoe off, heel broken, her knee is  
in blood.



NINA  
 (almost crying)  
 Oh my go-o-od. This is not  
 happening!

Nina stands up, fixes her hair and clothes, walks into the building barefoot, shoes in hands and with blood on her knee.

INT. STREAM'S RECEPTION AREA - DAY

SECURITY GUARD stops Nina, suspiciously examines her.

SECURITY GUARD  
 Good morning, miss. Can I help you?

Nina understands she looks like a person who has already had not the best day.

NINA  
 Morning. I have an interview with  
 Stacy Lieberman and her team. My  
 name is Nina Stevens.

Nina shows her ID.

NINA (CONT'D)  
 I can imagine how awful I look now.

SECURITY GUARD  
 Do you need help with your knee?

Nina quickly covers her knee.

NINA  
 So embarrassing. I'm fine. I'll be  
 fine.

Security Guard shows Nina where to go.

SECURITY GUARD  
 Please, this way.

INT. CORRIDOR NEAR WRITERS ROOM - DAY

Nina is standing before the door, trying to calm down and get herself together. She looks at her hand watch. CLOSEUP: 8:59. Nina loudly exhales and right before she aims to enter the room someone bumps into her spilling their coffee all over her blouse.

NINA  
 (shocked)  
 For fuck sake! Are you kidding me?  
 Ouch! It's hot!

Nina tries to clean her blouse with napkins she has found in her purse.

JORGE  
 I'm so sorry! I'm so terribly  
 sorry, sweetie pie.

NINA  
 (very annoyed)  
 Don't sweetie pie me, you...

Only now Nina understands it's Jorge Diaz, a TV star and Clubbers' lead actor. He's standing there wearing few thousand dollars suit with his impeccable thick hair and a perfect set of blinding white teeth.

NINA (CONT'D)  
 ...you, entitled TV star.

Having said that, Nina shuts up being shocked with her own reaction. Jorge is stunned as well, but keeps smiling. Awkward silence, and a moment later both burst out laughing.

NINA (CONT'D)  
 I'm so sorry.

JORGE  
 No, no. You're right to be mad! I  
 destroyed your outfit.

NINA  
 I'm about to have an interview  
 here. And I look like I survived a  
 hurricane.

Jorge notices Nina holding her shoes in hands.

JORGE  
 You poor thing... Wait, are you  
 here for staff writer position?

NINA  
 Yes! How do you know?

JORGE  
 I insisted on approving our new  
 staff writer.

Nina is still trying to clean her clothes with napkins.

NINA  
(surprised)  
Do actors do that?

JORGE  
(arrogantly smiling)  
Lead actors. And no, they don't.  
But I do.

Jorge looks at Nina with sympathy.

NINA  
Look at me, you lead actor. I can't  
show up in front of Stacy Lieberman  
like this!

JORGE  
You'll be fine. Trust me. I didn't  
get your name, by the way.

NINA  
Nina. Nina Stevens.

JORGE  
I wanna make it up to you, Nina,  
Nina Stevens. Can I buy you a  
dinner?

NINA  
(breaking into smile)  
No.

Jorge looks at Nina with adoration, opens the door to writers  
room letting her enter first.

INT. WRITERS ROOM - DAY

STACY, in her 50s, long brown hair, loose blouse over jeans,  
PATRICK, in his 30s, good looking, jeans, sneakers, t-shirt  
with Simpson print, LOUI, in his 40s, Chandler Bing style  
outfit, Nina and Jorge are sitting around a coffee table.

NINA  
And when I thought it couldn't get  
worse, your TV star spills coffee  
all over my blouse!

Everyone bursts out laughing.

PATRICK  
Yes, Jorge is a trouble maker here.

Jorge laughs, shrugs.

JORGE  
Guilty as charged.

STACY  
Alright. Straight to business. What are your ideas for Clubbers? We need fresh blood here.

LOUI  
(nodding)  
Yes we do. Stacy is right.

Nina opens her folder she has been carrying with her all morning.

NINA  
First of all Jace needs to grow up. For two seasons now he has been stuck in his teen jokes about failed dates and why all women are bitches.

Loui is silently taking notes. Jorge doesn't really listen. He just enjoys the look of Nina. So he sits there and smiles, nodding to everything she says.

STACY  
That hurts! But I did hate it about the second season. It was fun at first though.

Patrick pours coffee for himself.

PATRICK  
Fair enough. How do you see Jace's storyline in the next season? And most importantly his jokes?

Nina turns few pages in her folder.

NINA  
We have few options. Jace gets therapy and works through his childhood traumas, which is a good ground for jokes.

Loui takes notes. Stacy is all attention.

INT. STREAM'S RECEPTION AREA - DAY

George, wearing a suit and a shirt with a few buttons casually undone, expensive hand watch on his wrist, is walking inside from the street, smiles to Security Guard.

GEORGE  
Good morning, Felix.

SECURITY GUARD  
Good morning, Mr. Richards.

INT. WRITERS ROOM - DAY

NINA  
Jace marries Natalie and they have  
a newborn. Clumsy daddy jokes.

STACY  
(laughing)  
Loui would be of much help here  
with his three little monsters.

LOUI  
(laughs)  
Oh yeah. Your points are good. Do  
you have anything else?

NINA  
Yes. The main thing. Do you  
remember episode 2 of the 1st  
season? Jace mentioned his dad had  
died. And then in episode 3 of the  
second season he comes to visit  
him.

Stacy and Patrick are nodding.

PATRICK  
Yeah, it was a clear fuckup. And we  
pretended nothing happened.

STACY  
Only because no explanation was  
good enough.

NINA  
I have one.

STACY  
Shoot.

Everyone is attentively listening to Nina.

INT. STREAM'S ELEVATOR - DAY

George comes into the elevator, presses the floor button.  
He's all smiles, and in a good mood. Whistles some song.

INT. WRITERS ROOM - DAY

NINA

Jace's dad is dead. Those were his dreams. In the next season it'll become clear no one from Jace's friends saw his dad.

Stacy and Loui are digesting what they've just heard. Patrick frowns.

PATRICK

Okay. But how does it go with the sitcom concept.

NINA

It's just an idea. But he can be a chronic alcoholic who has been hiding it all that time. So those dreams or visions could be a result of his addiction. And we can dance from there. And by the way it'll partially explain him being such a chaotic pain in the ass.

Stacy is serious, she nods. Loui right away nods as well.

STACY

I like it. It's something to think about. Thank you. Are there other changes you have in mind?

NINA

Jace kills himself.

Jorge keeps looking at Nina with admiration and nodding. Then he hears what she has just said.

JORGE

Wait what? I protest!

Everyone is loudly laughing.

NINA

I was just testing how you're listening.

JORGE

(laughing; to Stacy,  
Patrick and Loui pointing  
at Nina)

I think I have a crush on her.

INT. CORRIDOR NEAR WRITERS ROOM - DAY

George is going down the corridor. JANITOR is going the opposite direction.

JANITOR  
Morning, George.

GEORGE  
(nodding)  
Good morning.

INT. WRITERS ROOM - DAY

Door opens, enters George.

GEORGE  
Morning, everyone! I'm sorry I'm late.

STACY  
Ah! Our executive producer's here!  
(to George)  
We've started without you.

Once Nina sees George, she's staring at him being completely shocked. George takes off his jacket, throws it on a chair, proceeds to the coffee table, extending his hand for a hand shake.

GEORGE  
Nice to meet you.

George's eyes meet with Nina's. George is stunned. Nina shakes his hand. Her face is tense.

NINA  
We've met.

GEORGE  
(still holding her hand)  
Yes, we indeed have. A year ago at our wedding.

Stacy, Patrick, Loui, Jorge are watching them, not understanding what's going on.

JORGE  
(disappointed)  
Are you guys married?

George finally lets go of Nina's hand, sits in an armchair.

GEORGE

No. Nina dumped me at the altar.

Everyone gasps, turns their heads to Nina. Nina sits back.

NINA

Yes, I did. I ran away.

(nervous laughter)

I'm actually quite a runner. Was running through trees and bushes, caught a cab.

(pointing at George)

He couldn't catch up with me.

Awkward silence, everyone turns to George, who fails to hide his anger. His face is getting red. Nina is very nervous, fidgets in her chair. Jorge always being center of attention, feels very uncomfortable, tries to fill in this long pause.

JORGE

(laughing)

Bad, it wasn't me. I wouldn't let you run away!

No one pays attention to Jorge. Stacy leans to him, whispers.

STACY

Stop it. You sound like creep.

George shortly looks away, turns his head back wearing a fake smile.

GEORGE

But we're professionals here. So let's talk business.

Patrick also smiles, trying to move on from that weird episode.

PATRICK

We were discussing Nina's ideas for the next season.

George keeps smiling, but looking at Nina with despise.

GEORGE

(artificially interested)

Yes, yes. What did you come up with?

Nina's confidence and wittiness have disappeared.



NINA  
(quietly)  
Well...  
(clearing her throat)  
I had an idea about Jace's dad, who  
first died, and then mistakenly was  
brought back into the show.

Stacy sees how nervous Nina is, tries to help her out.

STACY  
Turns out Jace sees his father in  
his dreams or hallucinations.

GEORGE  
(mumbles)  
Just like Nina, when she said yes  
to my proposal.

Nina notices it, but doesn't say anything.

NINA  
It turns out Jace's friends never  
saw his dad visiting. It was all in  
his head.

GEORGE  
(nodding; mumbling)  
Like our love was just in my head.

Nina suddenly changes her nervousness to anger.

NINA  
(with metal in her voice)  
What did you just say?

Fake smile disappears from George's face.

GEORGE  
That you are a liar! That your love  
was an illusion! A myth!

Nina is appalled.

NINA  
What?

George doesn't hold his emotions back anymore.

GEORGE  
That you're a heartless bitch who  
never cared about me!  
(MORE)

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Apparently words "forever" and "no matter what" mean nothing to a shallow self centered harpee like you!

Everyone is mega awkward, except for Stacy who watches all this with curiosity. Jorge is extremely uncomfortable not being the center of everyone's interest.

JORGE

Sweet people, let's talk about something nice!

GEORGE

Shut up Jorge!

NINA

Stop it!

Jorge looks very offended. Nina stands up, starts gathering all the papers into her folder.

NINA (CONT'D)

(to George)

I'm a heartless bitch? Everything always was about you! George wants to become a pilot! George wants to open a tattoo salon!

Nina throws her folder on a coffee table, rolls up her blouse sleeve showing to everyone a weird looking tattoo on her shoulder. Patrick looks closer.

PATRICK

(uncertain)

Looks.. cute. Is it a pig?

NINA

Looks like it, right?

George is furious and offended.

GEORGE

It's our puppy Clumsy! By the way one of my best works!

LOUI

(actively nodding)

Yes, Mr. Richards. It looks very sophisticated.

STACY

(rolls her eyes; to Loui)

Really?

Nina returns to gathering her things.

NINA

To hell with Nina and her dreams!  
Let's not give a crap about Nina's  
job opportunity on the evening  
prime time show! Let's move to  
Jamaica to learn surfing!

GEORGE

Hey! You said you loved surfing!

STACY

(looking at George; to  
herself)  
What a douche bag.

NINA

I loved you, you moron! I can't  
even swim!

Everyone is looking at George with judgement.

NINA (CONT'D)

You never cared what I wanted! At  
least right now I'm doing what I  
really like!

Nina grabs her folder, her purse.

NINA (CONT'D)

(to everyone)  
I really liked you guys. Thanks for  
great conversation.

Nina storms out of the room, but comes back in a moment.  
She's left her shoes. She grabs her shoes, storms out again,  
slamming the door. Jorge watches Nina leave.

JORGE

Diosa!  
(looking at George)  
How stupid can a man be to lose  
this jewel!

George is all red and distressed, throws an angry look at  
Jorge. They look at each other for few moments in a rivalry  
manner. George looks away first.

GEORGE

Okay. Who's next?

Loui starts looking at some notes.

LOUI

Rick Adams...

STACY  
(interrupting)  
There are no nexts. I want Nina.  
She's perfect for this position.  
The girl is brilliant.

GEORGE  
It's out of the question.

Stacy stands up.

STACY  
Then I quit.

GEORGE  
(frowns)  
Are you kidding me? You created  
this project.

STACY  
I anyway wanted to start something  
new.

Jorge stands up.

JORGE  
I also think that we won't find  
anyone better than Nina.

GEORGE  
Dude, you're not deciding this.  
You're an actor.

JORGE  
A lead actor. And I'll quit if  
she's not hired.

George is frustrated and furious.

GEORGE  
Have you all gone mad?! You all  
signed contracts!

JORGE  
I have good lawyers.

Loui comes closer to George.

LOUI  
Mr. Richards is right. We all went  
a bit crazy here. Taking into  
account Mr. Richards' and Ms.  
Stevens' personal history...

PATRICK

I also think we should go with  
Nina.

George looks betrayed.

GEORGE

I thought you were my friend!

PATRICK

I am your friend. But it's not  
about you or her, or your wedding.  
We're desperate for a good writer.  
And she is good. Sorry, mate.

GEORGE

Don't tell me you're gonna leave  
too.

PATRICK

I won't. But letting her go now,  
you'd be making a mistake.

George is annoyed, puts his jacket back on, goes to the door.

GEORGE

I'm late for my next meeting.

INT. LOTUS AND LIME RESTAURANT - DAY

Pretentious place with classical music, high ceilings and dim  
light. Zoë and Audrey are at a table wearing party hats and  
holding party horns. There's a cake with "Congrats on your  
new gig!" words on it. Audrey is wearing a sparkling jacket.

AUDREY

I look like a clown in your fancy  
place.

Zoë fixes Audrey's jacket's collar.

ZOË

There. You look gorgeous!

AUDREY

Yes, chef!

Nina enters the bar. Zoë notices her, pushes Audrey.

ZOË

She's here!

AUDREY  
 (loudly)  
 Congratulations!

ZOË (CONT'D)  
 (loudly)  
 Our staff writer!

Nina comes closer, throws her folder, purse and shoes on a chair. She's in tears with her mascara all over her face. Zoë and Audrey who have been blowing party horns, freeze.

ZOË (CONT'D)  
 What happened to you? Why you're barefoot?

AUDREY  
 Were you mugged?!

Nina flops into a chair, drops her head on her arms, cries. Zoë and Audrey are not sure what to do. Zoë moves the cake a bit.

ZOË  
 I made a cake for you...

Nina gets napkins from the table, wipes her eyes, blows her nose, looks at the cake, smiles.

NINA  
 It's beautiful. Thank you, honey...

Nina looks around, turns back to Zoë.

NINA (CONT'D)  
 Wait, are you allowed to sit at the table at work?

ZOË  
 It's not a concentration camp. Plus I took the rest of the day off.

Nina starts crying again.

NINA  
 I saw George.

ZOË  
 No way!

AUDREY  
 Oh my god!

NINA  
 He is the new executive producer of Clubbers.

Zoë and Audrey are disappointed. They take off the party hats.

ZOË

I was afraid of it. George is everywhere. Now daddy made him a big boss.

AUDREY

So what happened?

Nina is sobbing.

NINA

He started blaming me. I started blaming him. We yelled at each other in front of all the writing team. Then I slammed the door.

AUDREY

Typical man.

Nina cuts a big piece of cake, takes it with her hand, bites.

NINA

(crying)  
Your cake is so tasty!

ZOË

Wait, but did you talk to Stacy?  
Did she like you?

Nina is sobbing, chewing cake.

NINA

I think so. We had a good vibe talking. All the guys were pretty nice.

ZOË

So maybe you'll still get the job?

Nina stops chewing, wipes her face.

NINA

Are you serious? I'll never work for George!

Nina tries to take another piece of cake, but Audrey moves it away.

AUDREY

Fuck George! He's there thanks to his dad. You're there thanks to your talent! You must get this job!

NINA  
No.

AUDREY  
Yes.

ZOË  
Audrey's right.

NINA  
Dude, I left him at the altar! I  
can't work with him.

ZOË  
He took three years of your life!  
How many career opportunities did  
you lose because of him?

Nina takes another piece of cake, chews.

NINA  
I need a drink.

Nina turns waving to a waiter standing a bit farther, and  
suddenly sees Jorge entering the restaurant.

NINA (CONT'D)  
Shit. Just not this...

AUDREY  
Isn't it Clubbers lead actor?

Nina tries to hide her face, but it's too late. Jorge notices  
her, and comes to their table with an enormous smile.

JORGE  
Nina! What a surprise!

Jorge kisses Zoë's and Audrey's hands. They feel awkward.

JORGE (CONT'D)  
Ladies! Nice to meet you.  
(to Nina)  
How are you honey?

Nina isn't in the mood.

NINA  
Don't honey me, Jorge.



INT. JAPANESE RESTAURANT - NIGHT

BILL, in his 60s, grey hair, casually dressed (jeans and a pullover), is trying to eat ramen with noodles with the sticks. All pieces of food are slipping away. He is annoyed.

GEORGE (O.S.)

Dad, you're holding them wrong.

George is sitting on the other side of the table, shows Bill how to hold the sticks. Bill fails to grab them the right way, throws them away, waves to WAITER.

BILL

Bring me the regular silverware,  
please.

Waiter nods, leaves.

BILL (CONT'D)

You and your noodle soup. I just  
wanted a steak.

GEORGE

It's called ramen.

Waiter brings silverware. Bill nods in a "thank you" manner.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

When I was cooking it in Barbados,  
you loved it.

Bill sips ramen from a spoon.

BILL

Where?

GEORGE

Barbados, dad! When I was a chef!

BILL

Oh... in that restaurant we bought.  
Good we managed to sell it for at  
least for half the price.

George becomes tense, hurries to change the subject.

GEORGE

Anyway. I have a problem.

BILL

Already? Wasn't it your first day?

GEORGE

Today Nina's had an interview with Stacy and others for the position of a staff writer.

Bill stops eating, looks surprised.

BILL

Your girlfriend Nina? It's a small world.

GEORGE

Ex-girlfriend. Ex-fiancée who left me at the altar.

Bill nods, keeps eating.

BILL

Poor son.. She was a good girl.

George is annoyed.

GEORGE

Dad, she crushed my heart!  
Anyway... Stacy and all writing staff liked her, and don't want to hear about any other candidate.

BILL

(shrugs)  
Nina is a talented writer.

GEORGE

How do you know?

BILL

She sent me some of her scripts. I really liked the one for that show you made her give up.

George is almost losing his cool.

GEORGE

Dad! I didn't make her! She wanted to move to Hawaii!

Bill is working on his bowl of ramen, doesn't pay attention to George's temper, speaks calmly.

BILL

She didn't. She can't swim.

GEORGE  
(hisses)  
You should have married her!

BILL  
What?

GEORGE  
Nothing.

George grabs a glass of water, drinks it in a gulp, puts the glass back.

GEORGE (CONT'D)  
Anyway. I told them it was out of the question! I'm not gonna work with my ex.

Bill starts laughing.

BILL  
Did you tell Stacy she can't hire someone she liked?

GEORGE  
Yes.

BILL  
(amused)  
Please tell me what she said?

GEORGE  
She said she would quit!

Bill laughs even more.

GEORGE (CONT'D)  
(annoyed)  
What's so funny?!

BILL  
You don't tell Stacy Lieberman what to do, son. She knows better what the project needs. And if she quits, you're fucked.

GEORGE  
(almost hysterical)  
But I can't work with someone who destroyed my life!

Bill gets serious, looks strictly at George.

BILL

Are you 15? Wipe off your tears and be a professional! Be worthy of your job title for god's sake.

GEORGE

Dad...

BILL

I'm not your dad. I'm your CEO this very second. Nina is a good writer. The creator of the project wants her. This question is closed.

George lights up a cigarette. Waiter is shocked, quickly approaches him.

WAITER

Smoking is forbidden here, sir. I'll have to charge you the fine.

George puts his cigarette out.

GEORGE

I'm sorry.

BILL

Jesus. George. Have you been watching "Mad Men" too much?

George is silent, annoyed, looks away.

BILL (CONT'D)

And, son, we both know, it wasn't just her. You did your part too.

INT. NINA'S BEDROOM - DAY

Nina's room is a mess. Her outfits from the day before are still here and there. Nina herself is still in the same clothes. She sleeps on the covers across the bed. Her cellphone rings. Nina lifts her head, frowns from the daylight.

NINA

What time is it?

Nina's cellphone rings again. Nina grabs her head as a person who has hungover and a horrible headache. Nina looks around trying to locate her phone. Finally she sees it, grabs it.

NINA (CONT'D)  
 (into the phone with a  
 hoarse voice)  
 Hello.  
 (clears her throat)  
 Hello.

STACY (O.S.)  
 (from the phone)  
 Good morning, sweetheart.

NINA  
 Who is it?

INT. STREAM HEADQUARTERS - STACY'S OFFICE - DAY

Stacy is sitting with her feet on the desk. There are multiple papers in front of her. She's holding a coffee mug.

STACY  
 (into the phone)  
 It's Stacy Lieberman from Stream.

INTERCUT - PHONE CONVERSATION

Nina is shocked, she falls off the bed, hits her head.

NINA  
 Aw!

STACY (O.S.)  
 Are you alright?

NINA  
 Yes, yes. Good morning, Stacy.  
 What's up?

Nina is surprised and embarrassed she has just said it.

NINA (CONT'D)  
 (to herself; away from  
 phone)  
 Did I just say "what's up" to Stacy  
 Lieberman?

Stacy laughs, sips coffee.

STACY  
 I love your style! What is up is  
 that you're hired. We're waiting  
 for you tomorrow at 9. Don't be  
 late.

Nina is so stunned, that she abruptly stands up, pulls the cable from the lamp on her night stand. Lamp falls, breaks.

NINA

Shit, shit.

Stacy hears all these falling and cursing sounds from her phone.

STACY

No, seriously, are you okay?

Nina picks up the lamp, races through her room.

NINA

Yes. I'm sorry. Wow. Stacy, I don't know what to say. I'd be honored to work alongside you.

STACY (O.S.)

Wonderful. Don't forget your folder with ideas.

NINA

But I embarrassed myself... And George is the exec... I can't accept your generous offer. I'm so sorry for wasting your time.

STACY (O.S.)

Nonsense! Everyone already forgot about it.

NINA

I'm very very sorry, but no. I can't.

Stacy puts her coffee away, straightens up in her chair.

STACY

You think twice before throwing away a once in a lifetime opportunity because of a man.

Nina thinks for few moments.

NINA

I know exactly what it means. And you're right. But unfortunately it's too complicated. Good bye, Stacy.

Nina ends the call.

JORGE (O.S.)  
Are you crazy?! Take the job!

Nina is genuinely horrified, turns around, looks at Jorge diving from under the covers on her bed. His hair is a mess, but there's same impeccable smile. Nina grabs her head.

INT. WRITERS ROOM - DAY

Patrick, Stacy, Loui, George are around the coffee table, discussing the next season.

PATRICK  
I actually liked Nina's idea with him hallucinating...

LOUI  
Yeah.  
(to Stacy)  
Are you sure her decision is final?

STACY  
(shrugs)  
She said so.

GEORGE  
I'm sure. She knows how to walk away and never turn back.

Door opens. Nina in a professional outfit comes in. She looks fresh and energetic, smiles.

NINA  
Sometimes I do come back.  
(to Patrick)  
You can take my idea. I have tons of them!

Everyone is happy to see Nina. George is stunned. Patrick pushes him, lowers his voice, so that no one hears.

PATRICK  
Bro, don't be bitter.

George pulls a smile on his face, stands up.

GEORGE  
Welcome aboard!

Nina and George, both artificially smiling, shake hands.

STACY

Well, look who has changed her  
mind!

NINA

I had my reasons.

Door opens, Jorge, all smiles, comes in. Right away goes to  
Nina, kisses her on the cheek. He's not surprised to see her.

JORGE

Good morning writing gang!

George and Patrick are looking at Nina, then at Jorge, then  
at each other with confusion. Stacy is watching all of the  
scene with fascination. Nina is also all smiles, holds a big  
folder, looks around.

NINA

Where is my table?

FADE OUT.