

SPINSTERS

Pilot
"Alone in the Zone"

Written by
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COLD OPEN

FADE IN:

INT. MARTA'S BATHROOM - MORNING (DAY 1)

(MARTA)

MUSIC PLAYS - AN EMPOWERING SINGLE CHICK ANTHEM

MARTA BEVERLY (37) BLOW-DRIES HER SLEEK GOLDEN HAIR AS IT LUXURIOUSLY BOUNCES AROUND LIKE AN EXAGGERATED SHAMPOO COMMERCIAL. HER SIZABLE GERMAN SHEPHERD DOG WATCHES.

SHE SETS THE DRYER DOWN AND PICKS UP LIPSTICK. SHE SENSUOUSLY APPLIES A FLIRTY RED TO HER POUTY LIPS AND FINISHES WITH A POP.

WITH THE SAME SEX APPEAL, SHE PULLS UP HER SILK THIGH-HIGH NYLONS OVER HER MILE-LONG LEGS AND UNDER HER PENCIL SKIRT THEN SLIPS ON HER STILETTOS.

SHE PATS THE DOG ON THE HEAD AND EXITS.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. TESS'S BATHROOM - SAME TIME (DAY 1)

(TESS)

SOUND FX: RECORD SKIP AS THE MUSIC STOPS AND THEN BEGINS THE MEOW MIX COMMERCIAL WITH ITS "MEOW, MEOW, MEOW, MEOW."

THE CAT SITS ON THE TOILET AND WATCHES AS TESS PAINE (35) APPLIES MEDICATED LIP BALM TO HER CHAFFED LIPS, FINISHES WITH A POP.

TESS

Yeah, that's the stuff.

TESS'S MEDIUM BUILD FILLS OUT HER PURPLE CAT PRINT NURSE SCRUBS, HER AUBURN HAIR STILL WET AND TANGLED. SHE GRABS A HAIR-TIE OFF THE COUNTER AND PULLS THE RAT'S NEST UP WITHOUT A GLANCE.

SHE PULLS ON HER FUZZY SOCKS THEN SLIPS INTO HER UGLY WHITE (YET OH SO COMFY) NURSE CLOGS.

SHE SCOOPS UP THE CAT.

TESS (CONT'D)

Be nice to your brothers today, Peanut.

(DEFEAT) Oh, Lord, I need a man.

SHE PUTS THE CAT DOWN AND SHE'S OUT THE DOOR.

CUT TO:

EXT. TOWNHOUSE STOOP - MOMENTS LATER (DAY 1)

(TESS, MARTA)

THERE ARE TWO DOORS SIDE-BY-SIDE ON THE STOOP - ONE BROWN ONE RED. TESS APPEARS OUT OF THE BROWN ONE AT THE SAME TIME THAT MARTA COMES OUT OF THE RED ONE.

MARTA

What up, girl?

TESS

You're caffeinated already.

MARTA

More like my Bloody Mary kicked in.

Are you driving your Farfegnugen today?

TESS

I don't think that's a real car.

MARTA

Whatever. Do you want to car-pool?

TESS

Nah, I'm taking the bus so I can catch up on my reading.

MARTA

Nerd.

TESS

Skank.

MARTA

Touche!

TESS

Besides, you'll never meet a man driving
all by yourself to work.

MARTA JINGLES HER CAR KEYS OUT OF HER PURSE ANYWAY.

CUT TO:

INT. CITY BUS - A LITTLE LATER (DAY 1)

(TESS, NERD, CREEP, EXTRAS)

TESS IS SQUISHED BETWEEN A MIDDLE-AGED NERD AND A
CREEP ON THE CROWDED CITY BUS. THE NERD RESEMBLES
A HORNY SCHOOL BOY AND THE CREEP LEERS WITH HIS
DINGY ONCE-WHITE FOOD STAINED SHIRT.

CREEP

Come here often?

A DISORIENTED CAMERA ANGLE INTENSIFIES THE GROSSNESS
OF THE SITUATION. IT'S LOUD AS BABIES WAIL AND
SICK PEOPLE COUGH UP THEIR LUNGS.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET INTERSECTION - SAME TIME (DAY 1)

(MARTA, BICYCLE MESSENGER, EXTRAS)

MARTA PULLS UP TO THE STOPLIGHT IN HER SLICK BLACK
CAR, WINDOW CRACKED OPEN, MUSIC BUMPIN'.

A YOUNG ALBEIT UNATTRACTIVE BICYCLE MESSENGER STOPS
BESIDE HER AND KNOCKS ON HER WINDOW. MARTA OPENS
IT ALL THE WAY DOWN.

MARTA

Are you seriously hitting on me? You're driving your Chevro-legs.

HE HANDS HER A SLIP OF PAPER.

BICYCLE MESSENGER

It's from the guy in the Escalade.

MARTA OPENS THE HANDWRITTEN MESSAGE: "CALL ME. TOM 555-8123."

THE LIGHT TURNS GREEN BUT THE MESSENGER TURNS TO HER BEFORE HE PEDALS OFF.

BICYCLE MESSENGER (CONT'D)

Believe it or not, lady, you're not really my type.

MARTA

Ah, I see. You and I have the same type: men.

BICYCLE MESSENGER

That's not it. You're way too old for me.

HE LEAVES MARTA IN HIS DUST AS HE PEDALS OFF.

CUT TO MAIN TITLES:

END OF COLD OPEN

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY (DAY 1)

(TESS, RUSS, PATIENT, NURSE)

TESS PERFORMS THE TEDIOUS TASK OF PRE-LABELING PEE CUPS WITH HER CELL PHONE TUCKED BETWEEN HER EAR AND SHOULDER.

TESS

Uh-huh. (BEAT) Yeah. (BEAT) I hear
ya. (BEAT) But... (BEAT) Listen!
Marta, face it you're pushing 40. You
are probably that messenger's mom's
age.

RUSS HIGINBOTHAM (40), A BOYISHLY CUTE MAN IN PLAIN SCRUBS, WALKS UP NEXT TO TESS. HE MIMICS TALKING INTO A CELL PHONE WITH HIS PINKY AND THUMB, BOBBING HIS HEAD LIKE A VALLEY GIRL.

TESS SMACKS RUSS'S SHOULDER BEFORE SHE SLIDES SOME VILES OF BLOOD OVER TO HIM. A NURSE WALKS A PATIENT PAST THE DUO. THE PATIENT STARES AT THE DUO.

TESS (CONT'D)

I will not take that back. (SARCASTIC)
Oh, please, not the silent treatment.
(BEAT) I thought you were going to
give me the silent treatment?

*

TESS SMACKS HER FOREHEAD WITH HER PALM. RUSS LEANS INTO THE PHONE.

RUSS

Code blue. I repeat code blue.

HE TAKES THE PHONE AND HANGS IT UP FOR TESS.

RUSS (CONT'D)

Your neighbor?

TESS

Bizzo needs to get some ugly-people problems.

THEY FIST BUMP.

RUSS

How was your weekend?

TESS

Oh, you know, martinis, night clubs, city lights. Just like all the glamorous single people on TV.

RUSS

No. Really. How was your weekend?

TESS

(DEFEATED) I took my new cat to the vet for her shots. You?

RUSS

The usual. Wined and dined two beautiful ladies.

TESS

By "wined and dined" you mean ba-bas and Cheerios?

RUSS

Yes, it was my weekend with the twins.

TESS

I don't care what your ex-wife says,
you're a good daddy.

RUSS

Turns out I don't care what she says
either. She's a bit of a...cun-

TESS

Don't you dare. She is, but don't you
finish that sentence.

RUSS GRABS A PEE-CUP AND TOSSES IT IN THE TRASH.

RUSS

Contaminated specimen. Calm down.

THEY GET BACK TO WORK - PULLING AND WRITING IN
CHARTS. AWKWARD SILENCE.

TESS

She is a bit of a contaminated specimen
isn't she?

RUSS

She's such a (AIR QUOTES) "contaminated
specimen" that the guy she left me for
tried to give her back to me. Got her
so stupid drunk and dropped her off at
my house in the middle of the night.

TESS

I'm bringing you with me to my book
club. They're all married, but at
least they'll give you some female
attention.

RUSS

That's what I have you for.

TESS

Here. Be a dear and take this blood
and urine to the lab.

RUSS

Okay, I'll go with you. They better
serve something better than this.

THEIR SMILES EXHIBIT THEIR CHEMISTRY AS FRIENDS...IF
NOT MORE.

CUT TO:

INT. DELI - DAY (DAY 1)

(TESS, GORDON, SYLVIE, EXTRAS)

TESS JOINS HER BROTHER, GORDON PAIN (39) AND SISTER-
IN-LAW, SYLVIE (36) AT THE CAFE TABLE. HER SANDWICH
PLATE IS ALREADY THERE IN HER SPOT.

GORDON, AN AGING ACCOUNTANT IN A SLOPPY SUIT COULD
BE ATTRACTIVE IF HE CARED MORE.

SYLVIE DRESSES CONSERVATIVELY IN JEGGINGS, FLATS, A
DULL SWEATER VEST WITH APPLES ON IT SINCE SHE'S AN
ELEMENTARY TEACHER - WHICH ALSO EXPLAINS THE CRAYON
SHAPED EARRINGS DANGLING ABOUT. SHE LOOKS LIKE A
GOODY-GOODY SUBURBAN MOM, BUT WE'LL SEE.

SYLVIE

I hope turkey with Swiss is okay.

MOUTH STUFFED, TESS NODS.

SYLVIE (CONT'D)

How was your weekend?

TESS

(DEFENSIVE) Why do people keep asking
me that?

SHE TAKES ANOTHER HUGE BITE.

GORDON

Just you and your cats, huh?

SYLVIE

Be nice, Gordon. Your mom said we
aren't supposed to tease her about
that.

TESS

Yet, she lets dad think I'm a lesbian?
Anyway, how was your anniversary
weekend?

GORDON

(SING-SONGY) I got some, I got some.
Oh, yeah. I'm the man.

TESS TOSSES HER SANDWICH DOWN.

TESS

Ew.

SYLVIE

He's not talking about that. He's
bragging about the turtle cheesecake I
got him.

TESS

Cyrus O'Leary's?

HE NODS.

TESS (CONT'D)

(SING-SONGY) My brother got some, oh yeah. Did Marley babysit Haden and Mia?

GORDON

Are you crazy? I had mom babysit Marley.

SYLVIE

The other two aren't teenagers yet. They can still be trusted.

GORDON

That reminds me. Dad needs you to troubleshoot his "wee-fee" for him.

TESS

Not until he stops calling it "wee-fee." Why didn't you do it when you picked up Marley?

GORDON

I had leftover cheesecake to get into the fridge.

SYLVIE

And I had to go shower. We had a quickie in the car before we got there.

TESS

And there it is.

TESS'S PHONE RINGS.

TESS (CONT'D)

Thank goodness, I don't have to be a part of this conversation anymore.

Hello? No way! (BEAT) No way! (BEAT)

Shut the front door! (BEAT) Get out!

SYLVIE AND GORDON SHIELD THEIR FACES FROM THE OTHER PATRONS WHO GLARE AT TESS.

TESS (CONT'D)

Okay, I will.

SYLVIE

What was that all about?

TESS TAKES A BIG BITE AND TALKS WITH HER MOUTH FULL.

TESS

What was what all about?

GORDON

Ew. No wonder you don't have a man.

TESS THROWS A PIECE OF TURKEY AT HER BROTHER. HE POPS IT IN HIS MOUTH. SYLVIE SNEERS.

TESS

Nate is back in town and he's showing up at Donelle's tonight for book club.

GORDON

The Nate? Hunka-hunka-burnin' Nate?

(GIRLY VOICE) My-loins-burn-for-you-Nate?

TESS

I knew you read my diary! Yes, that Nate.

SYLVIE

How come you guys never hooked up?

TESS

He moved overseas for work right before
I worked up the nerve to tell him how
I felt. Not that he felt the same
way.

SYLVIE

What are you going to wear?

TESS

What do you mean? It's right after
work, so my scrubs.

GORDON

You have blood on your shoe.

TESS

Yeah, so? Probably some feces too.

GORDON/TESS

No wonder you don't have a man.

GORDON

I wanted to say it.

SYLVIE

Sorry, babe. You can say it next time.

TESS

I hate you guys. Besides I won't have
time to run home since you volunteered
me to fix dad's "wee-fee."

SYLVIE

Go shopping. Now.

TESS

It's not that big of a deal.

SYLVIE SLAMS HER FIST ON THE TABLE. THE PATRONS
GLARE AGAIN.

SYLVIE

(GRITTED TEETH) Now!

SHE STUFFS THE REST OF HER SANDWICH IN HER MOUTH
AND JUMPS OUT OF HER SEAT.

TESS

You're scary. I feel bad for your
kids.

SYLVIE

Stop talking and go!

CUT TO:

INT. CLOTHING STORE - DAY (DAY 1)

(TESS, MARTA, CASHIER, EXTRAS)

TESS HOLDS A PILE OF CLOTHES SO HIGH SHE CAN'T SEE
OVER IT. SHE REACHES OUT AND GRABS MORE ITEMS OFF
THE RACK.

MARTA BROWSES A NEARBY RACK. TESS, WITH HER ARMS
OUTSTRETCHED, RUNS RIGHT INTO MARTA'S CHEST AND
GROPES HER BIG TIME. TESS'S HAND KEEPS PATTING
MARTA'S BOOB AS SHE TRIES TO FIGURE OUT WHAT SHE
RAN INTO.

MARTA

I knew you were into me. But how did
you manage to resist all this for the
last two years?

TESS PEERS OVER THE TOP OF THE CLOTHES. MARTA GRABS AN OUTFIT OUT OF TESS'S PILE.

MARTA (CONT'D)

Here. Buy this one. You'll look smokin' hot in it. Wait, I don't think I've ever seen you in anything but your scrubs. What's going on? Who is he?

TESS SHAKES HER HEAD.

TESS

Nuh-uh.

MARTA FLIRTATIIOUSLY TICKLES TESS. AN OLD MAN STOPS, GAWKS AND SALIVATES UNTIL HIS OLD LADY WIFE SMACKS HIM WITH HIS PURSE.

MARTA

C'mon, tell me.

TESS

Fine. Stop tickling me. His name is Nate.

MARTA

Sounds hot.

TESS

I knew him in college.

MARTA

College educated. Hot.

TESS

And then he moved away for a job.

MARTA

Employed. Hot.

TESS

He's going to be at my book club
tonight.

MARTA

Boring. Not hot.

TESS

He's hot. And smart and kind and funny.

MARTA

Hot again. Are you nervous? Do you
want me to come with you?

TESS

No, thank you. You steal every viable
option of a man from me.

MARTA

I do not.

TESS

And then if I run into them again,
they lash out at me for (AIR QUOTES)
"setting them up with Satan herself."

MARTA

I have no idea what you are talking
about.

TESS STARES HER DOWN.

MARTA (CONT'D)

Oh, what? So you had to get a new dry
cleaner.

STILL GLARING.

MARTA (CONT'D)

And liquor store. Okay, so they had to switch our mailman to the one who can't make it up our stairs.

STILL GLARING.

MARTA (CONT'D)

And I'm sorry you had to get a new baker.

TESS

Do you know how hard it is to find authentic Stroopwafels?

MARTA

I did you a favor there. You've lost at least ten pounds. Please can I come with you? It's a proven fact that women look more attractive and powerful in pairs.

TESS

I don't have time for this. I have to get back to work.

TESS TAKES HER GARMENT TO THE CASHIER, BUT TURNS BACK.

TESS (CONT'D)

It's a proven fact?

MARTA

Trust me. I do PR for a living.

TESS

Fine. Whatever. Come. But stay away
from Nate.

MARTA

Scout's honor!

SHE CROSSES HER FINGERS BEHIND HER BACK.

FADE TO BLACK:

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

EXT. PARENT'S HOUSE - EVENING (DAY 1)

(TESS, MARTA)

MARTA PULLS HER CAR TO THE CURB OF TESS'S PARENT'S HOUSE. TESS GETS OUT OF THE PASSENGER SIDE.

MARTA

I can't believe I've never met your
folks.

TESS

Sit. Stay. It's for your own good.

MARTA

Fine.

SHE PULLS OUT A NAIL FILE AND SULKS AS TESS MAKES HER WAY UP THE WALK.

CUT TO:

INT. PARENT'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS (DAY 1)

(TESS, MARTA, FILMORE, SALLY)

TESS'S PARENTS, FILMORE AND SALLY, SWAP NEWSPAPER SECTIONS ON THE OUTDATED COUCH.

THE COUPLE IS IN THEIR LATE 60S WITH THEIR GREY HAIR AND READING GLASSES. BOTH CLEARLY DON'T THINK TOO MUCH ABOUT THE CLOTHES THEY PUT ON THEIR BODIES.

TESS BARGES IN THE FRONT DOOR, STILL IN HER WORK SCRUBS.

FILMORE

Hi, honey! New pajamas?

TESS

You like? My other work pajamas didn't
bring out my eyes.

SALLY

Oooh, your eyes and your...

SHE EYES HER UP AND DOWN.

SALLY (CONT'D)

...butt.

TESS

I could say the same for you and that
couch.

SHE LEANS OVER AND KISSES EACH PARENT ON THE
FOREHEAD.

TESS (CONT'D)

What's going on with your Wi-Fi?

THEY LOOK AT HER AS IF SHE'S SPEAKING LATIN.

SALLY

I'm sorry?

FILMORE

I don't understand.

TESS

Oh for Heaven's sake. The computer?

TESS SITS DOWN AT THE ANTIQUE WHITE DINOSAUR
COMPUTER.

FILMORE

Oh why didn't you say so? The wee-fee
isn't working.

(MORE)

FILMORE (CONT'D)

I haven't updated my blog in over a week. I'm sure my follower can't wait to read my review on the little blue pill.

SALLY

(LOOKING UP FROM THE PAPER) Oh, I already know, you big stud.

TESS

Ew. Okay, you're back online.

FILMORE

Thanks, baby. Go ahead and take a dollar out of my wallet.

TESS

(GENUINELY EXCITED) Sweet! Now I'll have a tip for when I use my coffee stand freebie.

SALLY

Well, would you look at that. Little Ellen Snell is getting married.

TESS

Who?

SALLY

You know. The little...(WHISPERS)...retarded girl from down the street.

TESS

Mom, not P.C. at all. Even if you
whisper it. And besides, she only
wore an eye patch and headgear. I'm
sure she's out of that by now.

SALLY HOLDS UP THE ENGAGEMENT SECTION OF THE
NEWSPAPER WHERE ELLEN POSES WITH HER FIANCE. SHE'S
STILL CURSED WITH THE EYE PATCH AND HEADGEAR.

TESS (CONT'D)

Guess there's hope for me. Speaking
of...Nate's back in town.

SALLY

He was such a hot thing wasn't he?

FILMORE

Yes, he was. Way out of Tess's league.

TESS

I'm right here.

SALLY

I agree. He was a ten.

FILMORE

An eleven even. And Tess.

FILMORE/SALLY

Six at most.

TESS

I'm gonna go change.

SHE HEADS OUT OF THE ROOM. MARTA SAUNTERS IN THROUGH
THE FRONT DOOR.

SALLY

Filmore?

FILMORE

Yes, dear?

SALLY

Did you order a stripper?

MARTA

(TO HERSELF, FLATTERED) Take that,
messenger boy.

SHE STICKS OUT HER HAND. FILMORE RUSHES OVER TO
TAKE IT.

MARTA (CONT'D)

I'm Tess's friend, Marta.

FILMORE

Ah shante.

HE KISSES HER HAND, SALLY ROLLS HER EYES.

SALLY

Don't get too excited, Filmore. You
used all your little blue pills.

TESS REAPPEARS, DRESSED TO THE NINES WITH CLEAVAGE
FOR DAYS. UNCOMFORTABLE AS HELL.

TESS

Let's get out of here before they go
into detail.

FILMORE

It's okay, you can read about it on my
blog.

HE HANDS MARTA A BUSINESS CARD. SHE STICKS IT IN
HER BRA. THEY SHUT THE DOOR BEHIND THEM.

FILMORE (CONT'D)

I like her.

SALLY

I'm so glad Tess finally met a nice feminine girl. She doesn't honestly think we believe that she likes boys does she?

FILMORE SHRUGS AND GOES BACK TO READING THE PAPER.

CUT TO:

EXT. PARENT'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS (NIGHT 1)

(TESS, MARTA)

THEY STEP DOWN FROM THE STOOP, TESS STUMBLES OFF THE LAST STEP. MARTA YANKS HER UP BY HER ARM.

MARTA

Nice to see you're wearing some real shoes for once. But what's with that dress?

TESS

You picked it out for me. Remember?

MARTA

I thought you were buying it for me.

TESS

Why on Earth would I buy you a dress?

TESS'S PHONE DINGS.

MARTA

Well, it clearly isn't for you! Oh, well. I look good.

TESS SELF-CONSCIOUSLY PULLS HER HOODIE OVER HER DRESS AND PULLS OUT HER PHONE AND READS.

TESS

Russ, my friend from work isn't coming.
His ex got stuck at work so he's got
his girls.

MARTA

That doesn't effect me. Let's go.

AND OFF THEY GO.

CUT TO:

INT. DONELLE'S LIVING ROOM - LATER (NIGHT 1)

(TESS, MARTA, DONELLE, DONNIE, DONNIE JR, DONETTE,
SYLVIE, GORDON, MARLEY, NATE AND A COUPLE OTHER
MIDDLE-AGED COUPLES)

DONELLE, A 40 YEAR OLD PERFECT JUNE CLEAVER TYPE
(DRESS AND HEELS INCLUDED), LETS TESS AND MARTA
INTO HER PERFECT AND SPOTLESS MARTHA STEWART LIVING
ROOM.

THE REST OF THE CROWD DRINKS THEIR WINE AND CHATS -
THERE ARE NO BOOKS IN SIGHT.

DONELLE KISSES TESS ON THE CHEEK.

DONELLE

You look so pretty, Tess. You must be
Marta. I'm Donelle. Please come in.
Excuse the mess. Donnie Jr and and
Donette were just being little dickens
this afternoon.

SHE EXTENDS A HAND OUT FOR MARTA. MARTA SNEERS AND
RELUCTANTLY RECIPROCATES.

DONELLE (CONT'D)

Excuse me, I have to go check on my
tartlets.

SHE SCURRIES OFF.

MARTA

Woah. What is her deal?

TESS

You think she's something? You should see her kids.

SHE POINTS ACROSS THE ROOM TO DONNIE JR, 12, AND DONETTE, 13, AS THEY STAND STIFFLY AGAINST THE WALL. THEY ARE SOMETHING OUT OF THE SHINING WITH THEIR MATCHING SWEATER VESTS AND CRAZY EYES.

MARTA SHUTTERS.

TESS (CONT'D)

You'll get used to it. Oh, good, my brother and his wife are here. They're normal.

TESS DOESN'T NOTICE AS MARTA MAKES A BEE LINE FOR THE HUNK WHO JUST WALKED THROUGH THE DOOR: NATE, 38. NATE'S THE ONLY ONE WITH A BOOK.

TESS (CONT'D)

Well, at least Sylvie is normal. Can't say so much for my brother.

SHE LOOKS AROUND AND REALIZES SHE'S TALKING TO HERSELF.

TESS (CONT'D)

Marta?

GORDON COMES OVER TO HARASS HIS LITTLE SISTER.

GORDON

Still got that imaginary friend, huh?
What was his name? Mr. Phil I. Buster?
Pat McCracken?

TESS

Once again, I didn't have an imaginary friend.

GORDON

Yes, you did. Remember when I caught you spooning on the sofa?

TESS

We did not spoon! Ben Dover and I were playing doctor.

GORDON LAUGHS IN VICTORY.

TESS (CONT'D)

Oh, fine. Shut up. At least mom didn't catch me with an American pie.

GORDON

You swore never to speak of that again!

HE HITS TESS ON THE ARM.

GORDON (CONT'D)

Isn't that Nate over there? Who's he talking to?

TESS

Nooooo!

EVERYONE QUIETS AND LOOKS AT TESS. NATE GETS UP. MARTA GIVES TESS THE STINK-EYE.

NATE

Tess! Are you okay? When did you get here? I couldn't wait to see you.

TESS

Oh, I'm fine. Just heard they were out of Donelle's famous crab cakes.

NATE

You did always take your meals seriously.

TESS

How was Europe? Gosh, you've been gone for so long.

MARTA POINTS AT NATE AND THEN AT HERSELF, THEN MIME'S WHAT PRESUMABLY CRUDE ACT SHE'D LIKE TO DO WITH HIM LATER. TESS QUICKLY TURNS HER FOCUS BACK ON NATE AFTER SHE SENDS A BRIEF GLARE TO MARTA.

NATE

Yeah, 15 years actually. Time sure flies when you get married...

TESS

You're married? Oh, wow, congratulations!

MARTA NODS HER HEAD AND MOUTHS "I LIKE THAT."

NATE

And time flies when you go through a bitter, international divorce.

NATE AWKWARDLY AVERTS EYE CONTACT, WHERE WE SEE MARTA FLIRTING WITH SOME OTHER HUSBAND. TESS GIVES A QUICK VICTORY "V" WITH HER ARMS AND SOBERS HER EXPRESSION AS SOON AS NATE LOOKS BACK OVER.

TESS

Oh, sounds awful.

NATE

Well, you know what they say. What
doesn't kill you, makes you crazy.

Nothing a little medication can't fix.

HE TAKES A BOTTLE OF PILLS FROM HIS POCKET AND SHAKES
THEM AROUND.

NATE (CONT'D)

Speaking of...it's time for my evening
dose. I'll be right back.

HE HEADS OUT TO THE KITCHEN. GORDON COMES UP AND
PUTS HIS ARM AROUND TESS.

GORDON

So, did Nate tell you about his divorce?

TESS

Yes, he did.

GORDON

I guess his ex really messed him up.
Sorry, kiddo.

TESS

Are you kidding me? This is fantastic.
I finally have a shot. Don't you
remember how cool he was back in
college?

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. COLLEGE CAFETERIA - DAY (FLASHBACK)

(TESS, NATE, EXTRAS)

YOUNGER TESS EATS HER SANDWICH ALONE AT A TABLE
WHILE SHE STUDIES.

SHE'S DRESSED IN UNFLATTERING 90'S GRUNGE WITH HOLEY SUPER-DUPER BAGGY PANTS - HER HAIR IS STRINGY. SHE LOOKS LIKE AN UGLY FEMALE VERSION OF KURT COBAIN.

SHE LOOKS UP AS YOUNGER NATE ENTERS IN EPIC SLOW MOTION, LIT WITH FOG COMPLETE WITH SMOOTH 90'S MUSIC.

HIS ENTOURAGE SURROUNDS HIM - ALL DRESSED SUPER SUAVE IN BRIGHT "COLOR ME BADD" SUITS, WITH PLEATS FOR DAYS. WHAT A ROCKSTAR.

SHE STARES. HIS ENTOURAGE DISPERSES AS HE HEADS HER WAY. THE MUSIC STOPS. HER HAM SLOPS OUT OF HER SANDWICH AND INTO HER LAP.

NATE

Hey, aren't you in my Sociology class?

TESS

Yes! I mean, yeah, I think so. Do you need some notes or something?

HE SLIDES A SCRAP OF PAPER ON THE TABLE.

NATE

Not now. But here's my beeper number. I thought we could partner up for the big project.

TESS

Me? Yeah, totally. I'll, uh, page you sometime.

NATE

Cool.

TESS

Do you want to sit down?

BUT HE DIDN'T HEAR THAT. HE ALREADY HAS JOINED HIPS WITH A BRITNEY SPEARS LOOK ALIKE. TESS GRABS THE FALLEN HAM OUT OF HER LAP AND TAKES A BITE.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. DONELLE'S LIVING ROOM - BACK TO PRESENT

TESS

I knew I should'a started dressing
like Britney for college.

SYLVIE AND MARLEY, 15, JOIN THEM.

GORDON

Anything was better than your Kidd N
Play and Blossom fashion mash up you
did in high school.

SYLVIE

All I know is, you look great now.

MARLEY

You'd look better if you took off your
hoodie.

THEY ALL WATCH AS NATE STRUTS OUT OF THE KITCHEN,
ARM IN ARM WITH MARTA. THEY STOP AT THE GROUP.

NATE

Let's catch up soon, Tess. You've
always been such a good friend. You
can get my number from Donelle.

TESS

Yeah, sure. Sounds great.

MARTA AND NATE FINISH THEIR STRUT, RIGHT OUT THE
FRONT DOOR.

GORDON

Ouch. Friend-zoned.

MARLEY

Told ya. I didn't see a sweatshirt
covering her yabos.

SYLVIE

Marley! The mouths of babes, huh.

TESS

Oops, I did it again.

CUT TO:

INT. BAR - NIGHT (NIGHT 1)

(MARTA, NATE, BARTENDER, EXTRAS)

MARTA AND NATE ENTER ARM-IN-ARM, LAUGHING. THEY
PASS THE BAR TO A NEARBY TABLE WHERE THEY SIT.

MARTA

Wow, just hearing about your ex drives
me to drink too.

MARTA AUTHORITATIVELY MOTIONS FOR THE BARTENDER TO
BRING THEM DRINKS WHILE KEEPING HER SMILE FOR NATE.
THE BARTENDER HUSTLES THEM RIGHT OVER.

NATE

Yeah, I'm not saying I had a drinking
problem for awhile, but I'm not saying
I didn't.

MARTA OFFERS UP HER GLASS FOR CHEERS, HE OBLIGES.
THEY BOTH DRINK.

NATE (CONT'D)

How long have you been neighbors with
Tess?

MARTA

Well, I've lived there going on eight years. But the cats started showing up on the our porch about two years ago. You want to dance?

SHE GETS UP. NATE BREAKS DOWN AND CRIES. AND SHE SITS BACK DOWN.

MARTA COMMANDS MORE DRINKS AND ALSO INCLUDES A PANTOMIME OF SHOTS IN HER ORDER. THE BARTENDER DELIVERS.

NATE

My ex liked to dance. With other men!

MARTA DRINKS UP AS SHE FAKES A COMFORTING NATURE TO NATE.

CUT TO:

EXT. DONELLE'S HOUSE - LATER (NIGHT 1)

(TESS, DONELLE)

DONELLE USHERS TESS OUT. THEY STOP ON THE FRONT PORCH.

TESS

So, what book are we not reading for next time?

DONELLE

Oh, I read all of them, but I would never expect anyone else to. I just like the excuse to have y'all come over. How about Palisades Park by Allen Brennert?

TESS

I don't know how you do it all.

DONELLE

It's easy-peasy lemon-squeezy. I don't know how you do it.

TESS

Do what?

DONELLE

Wander around not knowing where your next date is gonna come from, who you're gonna marry. If at all.

TESS

I open one eyelid at a time in the morning like the rest of ya.

DONELLE

You sure you don't want a ride home?

TESS

Yeah, I'm sure. I have to stop back by the office. I forgot my house key. Besides, the bus has my kind of people.

CUT TO:

INT. CITY BUS - A LITTLE LATER (NIGHT 1)

(TESS, PROSTITUTE, GREASER, EXTRAS)

TESS SITS SANDWICHED BETWEEN A CREEPY GREASER AND A PROSTITUTE WHO WEARS THE SAME DRESS AS HER.

PROSTITUTE

Nice dress.

GREASER

Yeah it is. Mind if I feel?

TESS

Yeah, kinda.

PROSTITUTE

You can feel mine. It's real soft.

THE PROSTITUTE LEANS OVER TESS AS THE GREASER MEETS HER HALFWAY. TESS DOES HER BEST TO LEAN BACK OUT OF THE WAY.

PROSTITUTE (CONT'D)

Feel it up here. They use a real nice lycra.

SHE INDICATES THE FABRIC ON HER BREAST.

CUT TO:

INT. BAR - NIGHT (NIGHT 1)

NATE GOES ON AND ON AS MARTA PROPS HER HEAD UP WITH HER FIST. AND DRINKS SOME MORE.

NATE

And then she had the nerve to accuse me of hitting on her sister. I hate her sister. Her mom I could understand. She looks just like her mom. So soft and...

MORE TEARS. MARTA DOZES INTO DREAMLAND.

CROSS FADE TO:

EXT. SIDEWALK - DAY (MARTA'S DREAM)

(MARTA, NATE)

MARTA'S DRESSED LIKE LUCY FROM THE PEANUTS CARTOONS,
STILL PROPPED UP BORED BEHIND THE HER "PSYCHIATRIC
HELP" BOOTH WHERE IT SAYS "THE DOCTOR IS REAL IN."

NATE WALKS UP IN A CHARLIE BROWN SHIRT. HE DEPOSITS
A NICKEL INTO HER CANISTER WITH A KLINK.

MARTA

More. That's not enough to help you.

NATE INSERTS MORE NICKELS. KLINK.

MARTA (CONT'D)

More. More.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BAR - BACK TO PRESENT

MARTA

More. More.

MARTA WAKES UP AS THE BARTENDER KLINKS MORE SHOTS
DOWN ON THE TABLE.

CUT TO:

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - NIGHT (NIGHT 1)

(TESS, RUSS)

TESS FLIPS ON THE LIGHT AND SEES HER KEYS ON THE
RECEPTION DESK. SHE HEARS THE KEY PAD ON THE FRONT
DOOR CLICK.

SHE GRABS A MAGAZINE AND ROLLS IT INTO A WEAPON.
THE DOOR OPENS AND SHE PUMMELS...RUSS.

RUSS

Settle down. I'm not here to rob you
of your urine samples.

TESS

You scared the bejeezuz out of me.
What are you doing here at ten at night?

RUSS

I can ask you the same thing. I forgot
to finish one of my reports. I won't
sleep with that on my mind.

TESS

I just forgot my house key. I'd be
able to sleep, but I'd be in a dumpster
or something.

THEY WALK BEHIND THE RECEPTION. TESS GRABS HER
KEYS AS HE GRABS A CLIPBOARD AND GETS TO WORK.

RUSS

I didn't see your car. You didn't
ride the bus this late did you?

TESS

It's not so bad.

HE STARES HER DOWN.

TESS (CONT'D)

Okay, it's awful. The freaks really
do come out at night.

RUSS

Give me a minute, I'll give you a ride
home.

SHE TAKES A SEAT.

TESS

We might as well stay the night here,
we have to be back in seven hours
anyway.

HE LOOKS UP FROM HIS CLIPBOARD.

RUSS

I call exam room one. That one is STD
free. You get exam room three.

TESS

The clamymdia and crabs room? No! Oh,
well, I'll just have to tell my future
husband I had too much fun before I
settled down.

RUSS

I won't tell him the truth.

HE WINKS.

RUSS (CONT'D)

You ready?

CUT TO:

INT. RUSS'S CAR - NIGHT (NIGHT 1)

(TESS, RUSS)

RUSS DRIVES THE CAR. HE GLANCES DOWN AND NOTICES
TESS'S LEGS IN HER SKIRT.

RUSS

You look really nice, by the way.
I've never seen you in anything but
scrubs.

TESS

Really? We've worked together for
five years and...

SHE PONDERES.

TESS (CONT'D)

What about the...

RUSS

Christmas parties? Nope. Festive
scrubs.

TESS

That's weird. I feel like we hang out
more than at work.

RUSS

Me too.

TESS

You're my best friend and we've never
hung out?

RUSS FLINCHES AT THE WORD "FRIEND."

RUSS

Guess not. The girls take up so much
of my adult time. How was your thing
tonight? Did you get to see, whats-
his-name?

TESS

Yes. I tried to play it cool, but I
just put him back on that pedestal all
over again.

RUSS

I'm sure that will pass.

TESS

I've been friend-zoned. That's the worst. I'm like a 20 year old again with a giant crush.

RUSS

(TO HIMSELF) I can relate.

CUT TO:

INT. TESS'S BEDROOM - NIGHT (NIGHT 1)

(TESS, MARTA)

TESS WATCHES TV IN BED WITH HER CAT. SHE BURPS.

TESS

Couldn't do that if you were a man in my bed.

MARTA

(SLURRING) Couldn't do what?

TESS LOOKS UP TO SEE MARTA STANDING IN THE DOORWAY WITH HER DOG.

TESS

What are you doing? How did you get in here?

MARTA

I had to go potty. (GIGGLE) I mean I had to take Fritzzy potty.

THE DOG JUMPS UP ON THE BED.

MARTA (CONT'D)

I need you to take me to get my car.
I left it at the bar. C'mon. Lesss
go.

TESS

You don't need your car right now.
I'll take you in the morning.

MARTA SITS ON THE END OF THE BED AND POUNDS HER
FIST LIKE A DRUNK TODDLER.

MARTA

No. We're going now.

MARTA LAYS DOWN ON THE CROWDED BED.

MARTA (CONT'D)

I'm so drunk (GIGGLE). That man, what's-
his-face, is a real downer.

TESS

You're seeing him again, aren't you?

MARTA

Yeah, (HICCUP) I made a fun drinking
game out of the words he says from his
mouth. I drink when he says "ex."

SHE PASSES OUT AND SNORES LIGHTLY. TESS TAKES OFF
MARTA'S SHOES FOR HER, COVERS HER UP AND LAYS BACK
DOWN.

TESS

I am in a relationship after all. A
totally dysfunctional and abusive
relationship.

MARTA

I love you.

TESS

I know.

TESS TURNS OFF THE TV AND GETS SOME SHUT-EYE.

CUT TO:

INT. DELI - AFTERNOON (DAY 2)

(TESS, GORDON, SYLVIE, NATE, OLD WOMAN, OLD MAN,
EXTRAS)

TESS RUSHES INSIDE TO JOIN GORDON AND SYLVIE FOR
LUNCH AS THEY FINISH THEIR FOOD. TESS SITS IN FRONT
OF HER PLATE.

SYLVIE

You look like heck.

GORDON

I wanted to say that. You steal all
my fun.

SYLVIE

That's what wives do best.

GORDON

That's not what wives do best.

THEY GIGGLE AND NUZZLE NOSES.

TESS

You guys are gross.

GORDON

Speaking of gross: did you read dad's
blog this morning?

TESS PLUGS HER EARS.

TESS

Yes, nauseating.

SYLVIE

You know what's more nauseating?

Donelle.

TESS

She's your best friend.

SYLVIE

She just makes everything look so easy.

I forgot to pick up Haden and Mia from
the babysitter's last night.

GORDON

Don't beat yourself up. I didn't
remember either.

SYLVIE

Yeah, but you had a bathroom emergency
as your excuse.

TESS

Well, Donelle is probably just
compensating for something else.

SYLVIE

You're probably right.

SHE LOOKS TOWARD THE DOOR AS NATE ENTERS.

GORDON

Guess who just walked in?

SYLVIE

Where's his arm candy, your rotten neighbor?

TESS

Marta's not all bad. Plus, I'd rather her be the rebound than me.

SYLVIE

You are too nice.

NATE SPOTS THEM AND APPROACHES.

SYLVIE (CONT'D)

Well, we better get going.

GORDON

But I didn't get to order my brownie.

SYLVIE PINCHES THE BACK OF HIS ARM AND HE GETS UP.

GORDON (CONT'D)

Gotta get back to work, I guess. Good to see you, Nate.

NATE NODS.

NATE

Mind if I sit down?

TESS SMILES THE BEST SHE CAN WITH A MOUTH FULL OF FOOD AND NODS.

NATE (CONT'D)

I was really hoping to catch up more with you last night.

TESS

You were? Did you need to copy my notes?

NATE

I wish. Things were so much simpler
back then. We had a lot of fun, didn't
we?

TESS PUSHES HER PLATE TO THE SIDE AND THROWS DOWN
MONEY FOR THE BILL.

TESS

I gotta get back to work right now.
I'll be home around six if you want to
come over.

NATE

That's perfect. We can catch up while
I wait for Marta to get done with her
work thing at seven. It'll be like
old times!

TESS FORCES A SMILE.

TESS

Yup. Exactly like old times.

THEY WAVE GOOD-BYE. TESS'S FACE FALLS AS SHE TURNS
TO LEAVE.

SHE HOLDS THE DOOR OPEN FOR AN ELDERLY COUPLE
ENTERING THE DELI.

OLD MAN

Thank you, sweetheart.

THE OLD WOMAN SMACKS HER OLD MAN.

OLD WOMAN

Are you hitting on her right in front
of me?

TESS

Don't worry. I couldn't steal him
from you even if I tried.

THE ANTAGONISTIC OLD WOMAN WATCHES AS TESS WALKS
AWAY FROM THE DINER.

OLD WOMAN

That's right. Walk away. I was gonna
introduce her to Alpha and Omega.

THE OLD WOMAN PUTS UP HER FISTS.

OLD MAN

You're so sexy.

FADE TO BLACK:

END OF ACT TWO

TAG

FADE IN:

INT. TESS'S BATHROOM - NIGHT (NIGHT 2)

(TESS, MARTA)

TESS WEARS THE BRITNEY SPEARS GET-UP WITH THE PLAID SKIRT, PIG-TAILS AND KNEE-HIGH SOCKS.

TESS'S CATS OBSERVE AS SHE THRUSTS HER HIPS AROUND AND SINGS INTO A HAIRBRUSH.

TESS

Oops, I did it again! I gave you my
heart.

THE CATS RUN AWAY FAST.

TESS (CONT'D)

Hey, where are you guys going?

AND SHE GOES BACK TO HER BATHROOM KARAOKE DANCE PARTY FOR THE TIME WE HAVE LEFT.

AT THE TAIL END MARTA RESTS AGAINST THE DOOR FRAME AS SHE RECORDS THE SPECTACLE ON HER CELL PHONE. SHE TURNS IT AROUND AND TAPS HER PHONE.

MARTA

And posted. You're welcome, world.

CUT TO BLACK:

END OF SHOW