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## Screenwriters of color: unheard stories of race, class, and culture in mainstream media

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A Thesis  
Presented to  
the Faculty of the Humanities and Teacher Education Division  
Pepperdine University

In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Fine Arts

by  
Andrea Kathrina Cecilia Montero Baltazar

August 2017

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This thesis, written by

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under the guidance of a faculty committee and approved by its members, has been submitted to and accepted by the graduate faculty in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF FINE ARTS

August 2017

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS/DEDICATION

This thesis would not have been possible without the inspiration and support of my professors at Pepperdine University, my thanks and appreciation to all of you for being a part of this journey. I would like to especially thank my program adviser Dr. Leslie Kreiner-Wilson, and my thesis committee professors, Peter Hanson and Hans Rodionoff. Your guidance, encouragement, and support have helped shaped the writer I am today and will continue to do so past the pages in this thesis. For that, I am deeply grateful.

To the executive producers of my life, Mom and Dad, and my toughest critics, Jaza and Allister. This thesis stands as a testament to your unconditional love, unfailing support, and continuous encouragement. Finally, to my Grandma Mamang, who inspires not only my work but everything I do in life. I dedicate this to you.

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## Screenwriters of Color: Unheard Stories of Race, Class, and Culture in Mainstream Media

Films do much more than simply entertain, they stir emotion within the viewer. Film provides the perfect platform for diverse voices because, despite our differences, we can all relate to an emotional story. Universal emotions are transferred through story and have no bias, color, or race. Screenwriters craft stories using these emotions to connect all of us to humanity and advocate for unheard voices.

I am Filipino American, born in the Philippines and raised in the United States. Like most kids who grew up in my generation, TV and movies were a daily part of our lives. This platform was my introduction to myself as an American. As a screenwriter of color, the emotional impact of film is what originally drew me into this field. My connection to film was enhanced by watching characters who compelled me. I felt like those characters were a part of me somehow. I wanted to be Luke Skywalker or become friends with Kat Stratford from *10 Things I Hate About You*. As I studied in film as an undergraduate, I realized that most films and in particular, the films considered classic films, typically have a white hero. Film history classes focused on the great filmmakers such as Charlie Chaplain or Orson Wells throughout the semester saving one class lecture for filmmakers like Spike Lee or Luis Valdez. Being conscience of this bias, is what motivates me to see more people like myself on screen. I would like to share my own stories, because I know they are just as important and relevant as mainstream stories. In her book, *What Movies Teach Us About Race*, Roslyn Satchel writes:

Blinders and rose-colored glasses crashed to the floor, after sitting in far too many boardroom meetings where I observed deliberate manipulations of audiences through sophisticated means. Images, casting, animation, dialogue, music, color, sound effects, slick marketing strategies and advertising tactics were necessary tricks of the trade employed strategically to lure millions of viewers globally. This was how blockbuster box-office hits were made (21).

This is not to say that those movies are not great, however, I rarely saw non-white protagonists and more specifically Asian, Pacific Islander or Asian/Pacific Islander American heroes. The closest character I could relate to was Short Round and Data, played by the same actor, Ke Huy Quan. However, his characters were one-dimensional and often played the stereotypical smart Asian sidekick.

One-dimensional characters have historically fed into stereotypes that perpetuate today's representation of Asian-Americans in media and have left a lasting effect on viewers. "Media representation plays an integral role in the racialization process. Through priming, cueing, framing, and racially representing groups as stereotypical Others, entertainment and news content producers shape, and are shaped by, what individuals and societies think about race" (21). As a screenwriter, I want to create stories that change and challenge the world around me. The lack of accurate representation in modern day film fuels my passion for my work. I want audiences to relate to my characters even if they do not agree with them wholeheartedly. My characters are the mothers, fathers, children, and grandchildren that feel the same emotions as whites. They are created to do so in their own culture, language, food, and music. As a screenwriter of color, I strive to use my words to empower a culture and give a voice to unheard stories.

Screenwriters of color have revolutionized independent filmmaking. They are no longer art house festival films, but are now box office blockbusters. The primary reason independent films have become mainstream films occurred in the late 50s and 60s. This began with the French New Wave, "According to Esquire, 'The New Wave is the most exciting art form of the Sixties, an integral part of the intellectual and cultural life that keeps Paris supreme among the



world's great cities.' This new Paris was populated by a young, creative generation..." (Neupert, 140). Screenwriters and filmmakers for the first time had affordable film technology that was lightweight and could be taken into places large studio cameras could not go into. A visionary of the French New Wave times, Jean-Luc Godard quoted, "I pity the French Cinema because it has no money. I pity the American Cinema because it has no ideas." And just like the French New Wave, a new wave of storytellers of color have now taken center stage.

Stories constantly flooding the market, and have the ability to stand on their own despite their budget. Prior to digital cinema, people who did not have the means before now have access to telling their own stories within any range of budgets. In his article, "French Cinema in the New Century" Michel Marie writes about a how digital cinema has changed filmmaking globally. "The appearance of the new digital technology has encouraged small budget films and has succeeded in completely upending the film production chain...The economic survival of cinema in the theaters has thus prompted a quantitative renewal in production" (12). We are in a new wave of filmmaking. Indie films once had a need to be explicit in their social commentary. This explicitness was the shock factor that engaged the audience in a low-production film given its budget constraints. The current advances in production materials and technology have given filmmakers access to surpass the constraints held in the past. *Moonlight* is a film that represents a new narrative that houses a different voice for Black filmmakers. This film contrasts the typical narrative veined in the realm of the Spike Lee's, *Do the Right Thing*. Minorities no longer need to soak their vision in social commentary through film. They can be nuanced and subtle. In *Moonlight*, Barry Jenkins quietly addresses public school systems and the prison pipeline that

disproportionately impacts black men without mentioning them. The level of sophistication in independent film has risen to a new age of filmmaking.

*Smoke Signals*, written by Sherman Alexie, was a groundbreaking film. The impact it had on independent filmmaking is worthy of a closer reading. It paved roads and brought another under-represented group of people, Native Americans, to light. This film rebuked the Old Western one-dimensional casting of Native Americans that were typical in John Ford films. This modern representation of Native Americans showed the pain they still carry along with their turmoil as the original peoples of America. Sherman Alexie wrote a beautiful story told in his own voice, a voice that is rarely heard.

I consider myself blessed and excited to have found my passion for filmmaking in this day and age. The technology for making films has changed allowing my generation of filmmakers to tell their stories. Furthermore, there are many avenues to share one's work. YouTube and other social media sites have given filmmakers an audience with the click of a mouse. But *how* to make a film is much different than *why* a film should be made. This is why I believe film education is important and why I have chosen to teach filmmaking to a new generation. It is inspiring to meet young aspiring filmmakers of color who feel underrepresented and let them know that they too have a voice and are able to share it with the masses.

### **Sherman Alexie: Representation on screen**

In school, one of the subjects we learn about is U.S. history. We learn to regurgitate the “necessary” information. Teachers do not tell us that history is written by the winners and the oppressors. *Smoke Signals* (1998, written by Sherman Alexie and directed by Chris Eyre), is a film created entirely by a Native American cast and crew, takes back what the history books and old westerns told us about Native Americans. They gave the audience a glimpse of their culture from their own eyes. The filmmakers did this by taking us on a journey with two young Couer D’Alene Indian Reservation residents: Victor Joseph (Adam Beach) and Thomas Builds-the-Fire (Evan Adams). Through these two characters Alexie challenges the Indian stereotypes historically shown in film. He symbolically shows the Native American journey through vehicles that use these two characters to contrast the stereotypical Indian from the Native American. In one scene, Thomas and Victor eat fry bread, provided by Suzy Song (Irene Bedard). Thomas makes a comment as they mindlessly watch a Western on television, “The only thing more pathetic than Indians on TV is Indians watching Indians on TV.” This is just one comment of many that are embedded in this brilliant film. Not only is it comical but also thought provoking. This type of film causes the audience to laugh from an awkward emotional reaction. This laugh pokes at society and its ignorance about the images we think are an accurate representation of a culture. When in reality, we know so little about the everyday lives of modern-day Native Americans.

At the start of the film Independence Day is announced on the radio. Lester sits on top of a broken-down van placed at an intersection. Like the Native American on top of the van, their people are forced to be observers as Americans, non-native to the land, celebrate its

independence from Great Britain. This holiday holds no victorious representation, but is the day Native Americans “officially” lost their land. In another iconic scene, Velma and Lucy, Alexi’s Native American counterparts of the iconic duo, Thelma and Louise, drive in reverse around the reservation. The metaphor of their vision coming from the rear-view mirror, not the front windshield, is sadly accurate. This symbolizes the Native American experience as they continue to carry a painful past and are forced to see their future through a lens of the past. Sadly, many Native Americans are still not encouraged to grow their culture for their future generations. In another scene, they drop off Victor and Thomas, and ask the two young men an important question:

**Velma:** You guys got your passports?

**Thomas Builds-the-Fire:** Passports?

**Velma:** Yea, you’re leavin’ the rez and goin’ into a whole different country, cousin.

**Thomas Builds-the-Fire:** But... but, it’s the United States.

**Lucy:** Damn right it is! That’s as foreign as it gets. Hope you two have your vaccinations. [All Laugh]

Velma and Lucy provide comic relief that further underscores the fact that reservations are where the United States government forced Native Americans into, without giving them rights to live anywhere else. In her article “John Wayne’s Teeth: Speech, Sound and Representation in ‘Smoke Signals’ and ‘Imagining Indians’” Joanna Hearne comments on these vehicles saying “... all are vehicular images that further complicate the earlier cinematic desires - often frustrated desires - to see the west as a space of individual mobility and freedom” (197). Owning a car is a rite of passage in this country, it is a privilege and a right. However, the vehicles in this film represent a confinement and stalled pain in the history of Native Americans. They underscore the pain of being stuck as an oppressed culture in history. Here, the forgotten and voiceless are left behind with false hope of ever moving forward.

The two protagonists of this film, Victor and Thomas grew up on the reservation. Their fates are intertwined when Thomas' parents die from a fire. Their journey off the reservation is mixed with flashbacks of their childhood. The past and present blend seamlessly as we watch them grow from boys to men. Joanna Hearne writes, "The film's self-reflexive, direct engagement with media stereotypes... reframes and educates the audiences about the history of these images even as it pushes against and past them" (119). The two have grown up with each other but could not be more different. Victor resembles more of the typical Indian we see in films and TV, but Thomas is unique. This is apparent in the bus scene where Victor ridicules Thomas for watching *Dances with Wolves* multiple times. He continues with "Quit grinning like an idiot, Indians ain't supposed to smile like that. Get stoic, like this... You gotta look mean or people won't respect you. White people will run all over you if you don't look mean. You gotta look like a warrior!" Victor makes fun of Thomas but portrays the exact persona of the Indian we are used to seeing. Thomas' smiling face on the other hand is the face we do not see very often. He is unique and does not subscribe to the typical Native American image. What Alexie has done with *Smoke Signals* is groundbreaking. He debunks and addresses the representation of Native Americans on screen, and brings light to the Native Americans that live among us today. These people are not only a part of our history, but they are also a part of the now. They become real and relatable to people who live lives like we do. Screenwriters like Sherman Alexie tell masterful stories like *Smoke Signals* and are able to tell us these types of stories because they understand the lives they write. Like Alexie, I too want to bring my own representations of the world and my own Filipino-American culture to screen.

### Barry Jenkins: Modern Storytelling

*Moonlight* won the Academy Award for Best Picture in the 2017 Academy Awards and rightfully so. It was co-written by Jenkins with Tarell Alvin McCraney based on his play *In Moonlight Black Boys Look Blue*. This film is told in the perspective of Chiron and is a unique coming of age story. In the first act, we follow him as a young child where he is known as, Little, into adolescence in the second known by his given name, Chiron, and then adulthood in the third known simply as, Black. Chiron is quiet and sensitive. He says very little and each of the people that surround and enter his world in each phase of his life, influence who he becomes. By the end of the film, Chiron has physically changed into Black. The circumstances around forces Chiron to build a hard exterior, but he is still the same Little we met in the beginning. Jenkins does things like break the fourth wall, puts the camera in unique angles, and lets the action play out in scenes. Important social issues such as the school to prison pipeline and LBGT+ questions are brought to light with this unique style, and Jenkins tells a beautiful slice of life story and journey of this young man that has so much to say with so little said.

Breaking the fourth wall is something we are not used to seeing on screen. Those shots are normally reserved for more art house films. *Moonlight*, however, borders on that realm, and allows the audience to become a part of the film. As a teenager, Chiron, comes home to his mom, who is high. Her demeanor toward him is a 180-degree change from when we last saw her. Something is not quite right and we are given the opportunity to experience what Chiron is experiencing allowing the audience the opportunity to interact with the film. Contrary to these shots, Jenkins sometimes chooses to stay a little wide and let the action play out within the frame.

One of the most iconic scenes is when Juan is teaching Little to swim in the ocean. The shot stays medium wide. We stay back and watch the scene unfold, with half of the camera in the water and half out. We watch a boy learn how to swim from a surrogate father who takes him in, and otherwise has no other man to look up to. In her article “Father Absence in the African American Community” Shannette Harris’ findings say “negative effects on children’s behavior through its impact on families and has the potential to adversely impact children’s life experiences and development” (7). Chiron’s father is not in the picture and his mother is on a downward spiral and no longer acts as a proper parent to Chiron. Juan a drug dealer takes that role on, albeit reluctantly at first. Teaching Chiron to swim symbolizes a baptism for Chiron who otherwise did not have a point to follow, and was always running away. However, like everyone else in Chiron’s life, Juan too disappoints. When Chiron runs away from home to ask what a faggot is Juan responds:

**Juan:** A faggot is... a word used to make gay people feel bad.

**Little:** nodding, processing that.

**Little:** No. You’re not a faggot. You can be gay, but... you don’t have to let nobody call you a faggot.

Juan does not shy away from the moment, rather he gives an honest and beautiful answer. However, as the scene moves on and Little asks Juan if he sells drugs, Juan can do nothing else but nod and hang his head. In this scene, we rarely go into close ups. Again, we watch the scene play out. Little learns the harsh truth that we all learn in our lives at one point or another, everyone will disappoint you. Juan tells Little that “At some point you gotta decide for yourself who you wanna be. Can’t nobody make that decision for you.” When we move onto “Chiron,” we learn that Juan has passed on, and disappears from the story without any explanation as to why. This storytelling choice echoed the space in which the story is told. People die all the time

in this place, Jenkins showed it, he did not tell it. Chiron is left to his own devices as he navigates through life as a teenager.

One of the biggest issues that this film tackles is the school to prison pipeline, an important issue that our society faces today. In an article titled "Introduction: Documenting the NAACP's First Century From Combating Racial Injustices to Challenging Racial Inequities," Franklin writes:

[O]ver the last century the NAACP has been involved in attacking the racial injustices and 'legal' lynching through the criminal and judicial systems and this has continued into the new millennium... A 2009 study by Northeastern University's Center for Labor Studies found that one in ten young male high school dropouts are in jail or detention on any given day. The figure for African American male dropouts was one out of four. ...The statistics presented demonstrate clearly there is a "public school-to-prison pipeline" in operation, and this social and economic reality should serve as the basis for the reparations lawsuits. (461)

*Moonlight* is a call to action. Chiron, like so many other kids, did not deserve to go to prison. What would we have done in this situation? What could we do to justify the actions? How could educators manage current situations concerning these children day in and day out? What about the classmates who may not have agreed with Terrell, but said nothing, in fear of being outcasted as well? In those moments, what do we do? Do we embrace the facts when the child is LBGTQ+? These are all the thought provoking questions this filmmaker was able to provoke. We do not see what happens between teenage Chiron and adult Black, nor do we need to see the obvious. Chiron, like other innocent kids, are put into the prison system and pushed into a downward cycle. As screenwriters, we do not have to answer the questions but in presenting the facts, we create conversation. Creating a conversation is what we as screenwriters can do when important issues such as these in our society arise.



### **Nahnatchka Kahn: Asian Americans in Mainstream Media**

Nahnatchka Kahn's *Fresh Off The Boat*, is a TV sitcom that shows the memoirs of Eddie Huang. This show gives a first-hand glance at a first-generation Taiwanese American boy and his family who move from their home in Chinatown, D.C., to a suburb in Orlando, Florida. Although they move in pursuit of the American Dream, they soon realize the American Dream is just that, a dream.

According to the *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, the definition of Asian-American is an "American of Asian descent" (merriam-webster.com). Simple. But Asia is filled with so many different kinds of cultures: Chinese, Japanese, Indian, etc. I myself am Filipino American, and rarely do I see Filipinos in mainstream anything. Asian Americans can relate a great deal to the Huang's experience. The immigration experience for non-white people differs greatly than from other non-white minority groups in the United States. John U. Ogbu studied these two particular groups of minorities and shows how, based on these differences, children succeed or not, in school. He defines such groups as:

*Immigrant [voluntary] minorities* are people who have moved more or less voluntarily from their land of origin to another society because they believed that such a move would result in improved economic well-being, better overall opportunities, and/or greater political freedom... these immigrants usually experience initial problems of adjustment in school, but their problems are not characterized by persistent adjustment difficulties or low academic performance... *Involuntary or caste-like minorities* are people who did not initially choose to become members of a society; rather, they were brought into that society through slavery, conquest or colonization... [They] do not have the expectations of a better future that characterize immigrant minorities. (46-47)

*Fresh Off The Boat* exemplifies the voluntary minority experience Ogbu studied. Jessica and Louis Huang immigrate to the United States in search for a better life, they chase the American

Dream, and dedicated hard work towards it. The father becomes his own boss and opens up a Cattle Man's Ranch Steakhouse, rather than the typical Chinese restaurant. This is one of the many ways this sitcom flips the script in pushing the Asian American stereotypes.

A stereotype is an oversimplified idea or image that is usually based on reality. The use of stereotypes in film and television has been used throughout time. They are exaggerated representations of characteristics that are not necessarily true but are known tropes in society. In her article "Of Myths and Men: 'Better Luck Tomorrow' and the Mainstreaming of Asian American Cinema," Margaret Hillenbrand writes:

[D]espite constituting 4.5% of the U.S. population Asian Americans are cast in less than 3% of film, television, and commercial parts, and-perhaps more tellingly-in only 1.7% of lead roles across the entertainment mainstream. Still more challenging than under representation, however, is the intractable problem of misrepresentation, the habitual Hollywood reluctance to grant Asian Americans a subjectivity beyond stereotype. (50)

The Huangs contain the typical stereotypes we are used to seeing with Asian Americans on screen. Both Jessica and Louis have typical "Asian" accents. Jessica is the typical Asian mom: tight with money and expects good grades from her children in order to have successful futures. In the pilot episode, her kids start their first day of school in Orlando. She gives them basic instructions before. Even though she directs the statement to all of them, she looks only at her oldest son, Eddie. She says to him, "I want you all to be polite, respectful, and don't make waves." This is a common theme in Asian cultures. Children are advised to keep their head down, nose clean, and study hard to get a good job, and live the American Dream. *Fresh Off The Boat* also takes the opportunity to show a different type of Asian American in Eddie, the oldest, and not the typical example of a good Chinese boy.

In addition to loving hip-hop music and embracing the 90s hip-hop scene, Shaquille O'Neal is his hero. Eddie is not afraid to speak his mind regardless if he talks to his parents or not. Eddie, compared to his brothers has a hard time in school and exclaims to his parents:

**Eddie:** I need white people lunch! That gets me a seat at the table! And once you're at the table you get to change the rules. Represent like NAS says. I'm not trying to eat with the janitor for the rest of my life, I got big plans. First, get a seat at the table. Second, meet Shaq. Third, change the game. Possibly with the help of Shaq.

Eddie wants to fit in but forges his own way to do that. In his article "The State of Asian American Cinema: In Search of Community" Peter X Feng writes: "Asian Americans are continually asked to choose either an Asian or an American identity: in cinematic terms the most successful filmmakers have either submerged their Asian identities to make films about white Americans or have added Asian 'flavor' to Hollywood filmmaking" (21). As writers, we write about what we know, and should not have to sacrifice the truth to fit other standards. By flipping the script, we as screenwriters we can and should change the typical roles of what we think people of color are supposed to look like on screen.

Currently, when we read characters in a script and the ethnicity is not mentioned, our brains are automatically cast a white character in that place even though the description: fit and handsome, could mean more than John Miller, but also John Long, John Hernandez or John Robinson. As a screenwriter of color, writing stories that specifically tailor to a large range of underrepresented characters will create more diversity on screen. Before that can happen, we need to keep writing the roles we know, can relate to, and stick to them.

### **Conclusion: Making films and teaching**

In his article, “Film Theory for the Digital World: Connecting the Masters to the New Digital Cinema” Berton writes, “The history of cinematic art is closely linked to that of technology. Periodically, technological changes have forced cinema artists to rethink their creative methods; cinema theorists and critics also have had to adjust their ideas accordingly. The progress of computer technology in the last 30 years has invested technological issues with new critical importance” (5). With social media and an internet dependent society, we live in a time filled with so much content and outlets. We now find ourselves in a new era of film, television, and media where filmmakers and writers alike are redefining what these mediums mean, in today’s society.

My passions extend to teaching, mentoring, and passing on my craft. I hope to inspire a new generation of filmmakers and storytellers. I take particular interest in the new age of filmmakers of color. After successfully completing my MFA in Writing for Screen and Television I have been hired by Weber State University to teach media production and help foster filmmakers and storytellers. Creating worlds is my passion and thus, feeds my soul. I plan to continue writing and direct short films in the near future. I anticipate that will lead to producing and directing feature films that represent my own experiences as a Filipino American. The greatest joy I have is in sharing my stories, and I believe this is the medium that allows us to connect on a global level. I am blessed to have found what I love and enjoy doing.

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CROSS FIT

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FADE IN:

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

VARIOUS FILIPINOS and a WHITE GUY surround a wooden dining table. LIGAYA (52) fair skinned, sets another big bowl of RICE on a lazy suzy before she takes her seat. Different HANDS grab at the bowls of food. A COUGH is heard O.S.

NANAY (72), tiny but feisty, looks around at everyone. Hands retreat as her eyes meet theirs. She bows her head and makes the sign of the cross, everyone follows.

NANAY

(Strong Filipino Accent)

In the name of the father, the son  
and the Holy Spirit. Amen. Bless  
us, O Lord and these, Thy gifts,  
which we are about to receive from  
Thy bounty. Through Christ, our  
Lord.

EVERYONE

Amen.

Ligaya picks up the rice bowl and helps serve Nanay food. VALENTINO (53), the only man of the family, sits across the table and helps himself, everyone else follows.

DESIREE (25), petite and fair skinned, spoons pancit and fried chicken for her boyfriend, PAUL (25), the white guy.

MARIA (28), full-figured, dark skinned, opposite of her little sister Desiree sits next to Nanay. Her plate is still empty and she waits for everyone to settle before picking up her fork. She taps her water glass.

MARIA

I have big news for everyone.

Desiree looks over. Maria smiles at her.

DESIREE

I do too!

Maria sighs and picks up her eyebrows.

DESIREE (CONT'D)

You first. Go ahead. Go.

Maria takes a breath.



MARIA

I got a promotion at the auto shop today!

VALENTINO

(Strong Filipino Accent)

Good job Nakkóng, congratulations!

He grabs her hand, Maria smiles.

MARIA

Thanks, pops.

Nanay nods her head and continues to eat. Desiree claps with excitement.

PAUL

Nice one, Mar.

MARIA

Thanks, Paul.

LIGAYA

(Strong Filipino Accent)

Good, Nakkóng.

MARIA

Thanks, mom. I -

LIGAYA

Do you get paid more?

MARIA

Yeah... It's a promotion-

LIGAYA

How about your hours? You're there all the time. You better work less hours and get paid more money.

VALENTINO

Bakut.

Ligaya stares at Maria with pursed lips.

MARIA

I'll have more responsibilities. Stay a few more hours-

LIGAYA

You better get full benefits!

DESIREE

That's great, Manang, so happy for you! I have some news too!

Ligaya turns to Desiree. Her pursed lips have turned into a smile.

LIGAYA

What is it, Nakkóng?

Paul picks the celery out of his pancit. Desiree looks at him and grabs his hand.

DESIREE

We, have news.

Paul puts his fork down, and they both smile.

DESIREE (CONT'D)

Paul and I are engaged!!!

EVERYONE ELSE

Ahhhhh!?!?

Nanay jumps out of her seat like she's 50 years old. Panic strikes Ligaya's eyes and she stands to help her walk.

Desiree slips her ENGAGEMENT RING on to show everyone.

Valentino walks over to shake Paul's hand and give him a hug.

VALENTINO

My first son.

LIGAYA

A lawyer!

Maria stands up and walks toward her sister.

MARIA

You're getting married?

DESIREE

Am I crazy, or what?

MARIA

Crazy is good. Congratulations!

Desiree shrugs and the two embrace one another.

DESIREE

You have to be my MOH.

MARIA  
Of course, yes!

Ligaya walks over with Nanay.

NANAY  
Moh what?

DESIREE  
Maid of Honor, Nanay.

Nanay nods her head.

LIGAYA  
That's good, Nakkóng.

Ligaya hugs Desiree.

LIGAYA (CONT'D)  
We finally have a lawyer in the  
family!

Everyone pats Paul on the back. Maria sits down and serves herself a plate of food. Nanay looks at Maria.

NANAY  
You're sister is getting married.

MARIA  
Yeah, it's great!

NANAY  
When are you getting married?

Ligaya over hears Nanay.

LIGAYA  
Aye Nanay, Maria doesn't have to  
get married, she has me.

Maria rolls her eyes and puts a mouthful of food in her mouth. Nanay pats Maria on the belly.

NANAY  
If you want to find a boyfriend,  
it's time to reduce, hah?

MARIA  
What?

LIGAYA  
You can't fit into a dress looking  
like that.

Ligaya looks over at Maria. She sticks a spoonful of food into her mouth.

Maria's stops chewing her food and pushes her plate away.

INT. AAA AUTO REPAIR SHOP CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Maria and her colleagues sit around a long table. Donut boxes are the centerpiece and everyone has one. Except Maria. Her boss JOHN (65) stands at the front of the room.

JOHN

Maria, our new shop manager...

John looks at Maria. Others nod and smile, Maria takes it all in.

JOHN (CONT'D)

... will continue to overlook the orders and proposals, but will also oversee the Auto Pilot deal. We plan to sign soon and with Maria at the helm, I expect this to go without a hitch. Thanks, everyone.

Everyone gets up from their seats. A few grab more donuts. Maria looks at one like a dog on the on the wrong side of the butcher shop glass. She shakes her head and writes notes. GABE (34) walks up and squats next to her.

GABE

When you get a chance, could you stop by my cubicle, please?

MARIA

Sure thing, Gabe.

He stands up and his knees buckle. Maria grabs his arm.

MARIA (CONT'D)

You okay?

He nods and rushes away.

INT. GABE'S CUBICLE - DAY

Gabe types at his computer. He stops and puts his head in his hands. Maria walks up behind him.

MARIA

Knock, knock.

Gabe turns around and sighs.

GABE  
Thank you, for coming.

MARIA  
Of course, what's wrong?

He waves her closer.

GABE  
I don't know how to tell you this.  
(his eyes well with tears)  
My mother-in-law had a heart  
attack. Reports are due, orders are  
building up, and this new-

Maria pats his shoulder.

MARIA  
Family comes first. Send me what  
you have and take the day?

GABE  
You sure?

MARIA  
Get home. Be with the family.

GABE  
Thanks.

INT. MARIA'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Piles of papers surround Maria's desk. She types on her keyboard and drinks tea. LISA (26), receptionist, skinny, always eating, walks in. SNICKERS CANDY BAR in hand.

LISA  
How goes it, manager?

MARIA  
Same ol' shit, pushing paper, man.

LISA  
If anyone can get things done, it's  
you. Lord knows this place wouldn't  
run as smoothly as it does without  
you.

MARIA  
Make sure you mention that to John  
every once in a while.

LISA  
Sure thing.  
(covers half her face and  
winks at Maria)  
Manager.

They laugh and Maria shakes her head.

MARIA  
You're crazy.

LISA  
How's everything else in life?

Lisa sits in an empty chair.

MARIA  
My sister's getting married.

LISA  
Shut up.

Maria nods her head.

LISA (CONT'D)  
Damn girl. When?

MARIA  
In less than a year. I'm the maid  
of honor.

LISA  
You're gonna bring a date right?

MARIA  
I don't need a date.

LISA  
The MOH has to bring a date!

Maria shakes her head. Lisa's phone rings O.S. Maria looks toward it.

MARIA  
Who has time to date?

LISA  
Just do what everyone else does.  
Swipe right more than left.

The ringing continues.

LISA (CONT'D)

Isn't your sister... younger than you?

MARIA

Isn't that your phone ringing out there?

LISA

Let it go to voicemail.

Maria stares at her. Lisa rolls her eyes.

MARIA

All right. Miss manager.

Maria gets back to work.

INT. MARIA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Maria lies in bed on her cell. ON SCREEN a tinder widow pops up, she types up her profile description. It's typed on screen.

At first, it reads: Love pizza and puppies? Then I'm the girl for you.

Maria shakes her head. Stupid.

She continually deletes and changes the profile.

Finally, it reads: "I like Netflix and Chill in the literal sense and long romantic walks to the fridge." She hits the "Done" button.

Maria looks through various profiles that show up on screen:

A guy's face fills the screen with an awkward smile. Profile: Love horror movies and heavy metal. I don't give a damn what you look like I'm not the best looking either. She swipes left.

A shirtless guy on the beach looks like he wants you to cheers a can of beer with him. Profile: Sometimes life hands you lemons that are worth 2 in the bush, I like puppies. Call me. ;) She swipes left, again.

Maria sighs.

A guy with a nice smiling face. Profile: Looking for a blanket buddy preferably skilled in picking a show on Netflix, and able to help build a bar in the fort.

Maria's eyebrows raise. Finally. She SWIPES RIGHT.

She swipes left and right on a few more then turns off her cell, but lies wide awake in bed.

INT. BREAK ROOM - DAY

Maria eats a yogurt and some celery sticks while looking at a bridal magazine. Her cell sits next to her. Lisa walks in and grabs a TUPPERWARE from the fridge, it's filled with spaghetti. She goes to the microwave to heat it up and turns to Maria.

LISA  
So?

MARIA  
So, what?

LISA  
Have you gotten any matches?

MARIA  
What do you mean?

The microwave beeps. Lisa takes the Tupperware out and sits across from Maria.

LISA  
Well?

MARIA  
I haven't checked.

Lisa grabs Maria's cell.

LISA  
Let's see... Ooooh la, la.

Maria looks impatiently at Lisa.

LISA (CONT'D)  
Hmmm... This one looks like a winner.

Lisa types something and shows it to Maria. Her eyes grow big.

LISA (CONT'D)  
Todd.

MARIA  
What did you do?!?



A message pops up and Maria grabs her cell. A screen shot of their conversation pops on screen.

TODD: Hi! I too prefer long romantic walks to the fridge :)

MARIA: Late night rendezvous with leftovers is the best.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Maria stands in front of the mirror holding blouses in front of her. She sighs and opens the bathroom door.

MARIA  
(yelling)

Des!

DESIREE (O.S.)  
(yelling back)

What!

MARIA  
Come here!

DESIREE (O.S.)  
Why?

MARIA  
I need help!

DESIREE (O.S.)  
What?

MARIA  
Come here damnit!

DESIREE (O.S.)  
Fine!

Desiree walks into the bathroom.

DESIREE (CONT'D)  
What's going on?

MARIA  
What looks better?

Desiree studies the outfits.

DESIREE  
I like the purple one.

Maria nods and slips the top on.

DESIREE (CONT'D)

Where you going?

MARIA

Out.

DESIREE

Out, where?

MARIA

On a ... date.

DESIREE

On a what???

MARIA

A blind date.

DESIREE

A blind date? What? How? You?

Maria rolls her eyes.

MARIA

Tinder.

DESIREE

You're on Tinder!?

MARIA

Geez, don't have a cow!

DESIREE

I can't believe it! You never go out.

MARIA

Uh.. Thanks?

DESIREE

All you do is Netflix and Chill, literally! Which is not what that exactly means by the way-

Maria pushes her out of the bathroom.

MARIA

Bye, bye. I have to pee and then go.

DESIREE

Wait! What are you going to do about makeup?

MARIA  
I'm gonna to go like this.

DESIREE  
No, no, no. At least let me help  
you put some on.

MARIA  
Ugh.

DESIREE  
You have to!

MARIA  
No!

DESIREE  
Just let me do it!

MARIA  
Fine. Don't put a lot on.

Desiree jumps up and down like a girl with a new dolly.

DESIREE  
I won't. Sit!

Maria walks over to the toilet and Desiree works on her face.

MARIA  
Are you done yet?

DESIREE  
Give me a sec.

MARIA  
I'm late!

DESIREE  
And... I'm done.

Maria rolls her eyes, stands up, and looks at herself in the mirror. She gives herself a slight smile.

DESIREE (CONT'D)  
You're so pretty. You should wear  
make up all the time.

Maria looks at her watch.

MARIA  
I'm late! Thanks, Des!

Maria runs out of the bathroom and down the stairs.

Maria opens the front door.

MARIA (CONT'D)  
I'm going out!

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Nanay sits watching a bad Filipino Game Show.

INT. KITCHEN/ DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Ligaya sets the table while Valentino stirs a pot at the stove.

Ligaya walks toward the foyer.

LIGAYA  
Where are you going?

MARIA  
Out.

LIGAYA  
Out where?

MARIA  
To a bar.

LIGAYA  
Hah? A bar? With who? When will you be back?

MARIA  
I don't know mom. I'm late, I gotta go. Love you, bye.

LIGAYA  
Not too late, ah?

Maria slams the door. Desiree appears next to her.

LIGAYA (CONT'D)  
Where is she going?

DESIREE  
On a date.

LIGAYA  
On a date? She dates? Gaga, she better come home.

INT. GASTRO PUB - NIGHT

Maria and TODD (late 20s), good looking, nice smile, sit at the bar. They have half a beer in front of the each of them.

MARIA

This is the first time I've been on a blind date, let alone on an online dating, thing.

TODD

Let's just have a good time, and get to know each other a bit.

Maria takes another gulp of her beer.

TODD (CONT'D)

How about another drink?

Maria smiles. Todd waves the bar tender over.

TODD (CONT'D)

I'll have a Jack and Coke, and whatever the pretty lady wants.

MARIA

A Moscow Mule?

Todd nods his head.

BARTENDER

Coming up.

TODD

So, what are you watching on Netflix.

Maria smiles at him.

DISSOLVE TO:

Maria and Todd laugh. There are different half drunk glasses in front of them.

MARIA

Frank and Claire Underwood on House of Cards are the most evil couple on TV right now.

TODD

No way! Cersei and Jamie Lannister on GoT are!

MARIA

The Underwoods declared war and watched the live execution of the hostage. Together. Like a freaking home movie!

TODD

Cersei caused her son to commit suicide. And what does she do? Sits on the throne.

MARIA

Yeah, that's pretty bad.

Maria finishes her drink. Todd watches her.

TODD

How about we go somewhere private? Your place maybe?

Maria finishes her drink and her eyes go wide.

MARIA

You don't want to stay here?

TODD

I'd rather go somewhere... quiet.

MARIA

We can't go to my place.

TODD

Room mates?

MARIA

Parents.

Todd's eyebrows furrow but relax quickly. He's no amateur.

TODD

How about we drive around. I know just the spot that's nice and quiet.

MARIA

All right.

INT. TODD'S CAR - NIGHT

He drives them to a secluded area that looks at the dark ocean. Oilers in the distant project tiny pinpoints of light.

Maria turns to give Todd an awkward smile. He smiles back and stops the car. The music from the radio plays softly in the background.

He grabs her hand and she stiffens up, but quickly relaxes. He grabs her face and leans in. They kiss. Things start to get intense. Maria pulls away to take a breath.

TODD

Want to move to the back for more room?

Maria nods.

They sit in the backseat and make out. He starts to feel up her shirt and her eyes grow wide. She pushes him away.

TODD (CONT'D)

What's wrong?

MARIA

This is awkward.

Todd sighs. They continue to make out but his hand makes its way under her shirt, again. He tries to unfasten her bra. She tries to push away but his grip gets tighter.

Her shirt half hangs off of her. A knock on the window is heard off screen. A light shines into the car. Maria squints her eyes.

The light moves away and a POLICE OFFICER looks in. Maria struggles to get her lady parts back into her shirt. The two straighten up and Todd rolls the window down.

OFFICER

Miss, are you okay?

MARIA

Yes.

OFFICER

Are you here on your own accord?

MARIA

What?

OFFICER

Do you want to be in this car, miss?

MARIA

Yes.

OFFICER

This is not a hotel, so you're gonna to have to get going.

TODD

Yes, officer.

Maria's face is bright red. The officer walks off.

TODD (CONT'D)

What a buzz kill.

MARIA

Yeah. Maybe next time. Call me?

INT. MARIA'S ROOM - DAY

Maria lies asleep in the same clothes from the night before. Desiree barges into her room.

DESIREE

Manang! Wake up! Wake up!

Maria tries to bat her away.

DESIREE (CONT'D)

How did your date go? Why are you still in your clothes? Did anything happen? Sparks? Manang!

Maria turns on her back. Desiree's not leaving anytime soon.

MARIA

Des, it's too early.

DESIREE

Tell, me!

MARIA

He was ok, but not my type.

DESIREE

That's it? Did he do something to you?

MARIA

No. It just didn't work out.

DESIREE

His loss. Don't give up.



MARIA

If that's it, I'm going to go to sleep.

DESIREE

Fine, then.

Desiree leaves the room.

MARIA

Wait, Des. I was thinking.

Desiree turns around.

MARIA (CONT'D)

I want to help plan the wedding. It'll be a good challenge for me.

Desiree looks at Maria

MARIA (CONT'D)

Unless you already have someone doing that.

DESIREE

Oh my gosh yes! We can do it together!

MARIA

Great, when do you want to get started?

DESIREE

Right away!

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

Maria walks across the parking lot to work. In her arm she has two huge binders. One is the wedding binder. The gym's garage door across the street is open. A long rope hangs from the roof of the open space.

A WOMAN is halfway up the rope. Maria stops to watch as the woman climbs to the top and rings the bell. PEOPLE below clap and cheer as she comes down.

DARIUS LEE (38), a fit Black man, gives her a high five and a hug. He turns and catches Maria's eye. He smiles and nods at her. She smiles back and rushes into the shop.

INT. MARIA'S OFFICE - DAY

Maria is on the phone. John walks in.

MARIA

(on the phone)

Thank you very much sir. I will  
send you a quote. Good bye.

Maria hangs up.

MARIA (CONT'D)

How you doing, John?

JOHN

Great. How is the Auto Pilot  
contract coming? I'm going to need  
the data analysis soon.

MARIA

I'm working on it now. I have a  
couple work orders that are time  
sensitive, but I'll have the  
analysis done soon. Looking at some  
stats to make it air tight.

JOHN

All right.

John looks at the big binder on her desk and points at it.

JOHN (CONT'D)

What's this?

MARIA

That's my sister's wedding binder.  
She's getting married.

JOHN

Looks like a lot of work. You do  
know we're very busy around here as  
well.

MARIA

It's a year away. Plenty of time to  
get everything done.

JOHN

Hmmm. This is a huge deal.

John leaves and Maria looks at the pile of papers and the  
huge wedding planner. She sighs and gets to work. She picks  
up her phone and dials a number.

MARIA

Lisa, can you please get Henry on the phone? Thanks.

INT. HOUSE - DAY

Maria walks into the house and heads to the bathroom. Paul sits in the living room. He is folded over, and holds his head in his hands. He shakes his legs. The door slams shut and Paul gets startled.

MARIA

Hey Paul! You ok? Where's Des?

Paul nods his head a little too fast and points toward the bathroom.

PAUL

She's in the bathroom.

Maria walks to the bathroom and knocks on the door.

MARIA

Des? You in there? I need pee!

The door opens quick. Desiree pulls Maria in and shuts the door. On the counter there is a white pregnancy test on top of some toilet paper.

Maria's eyes go wide and her jaw drops. She looks at Desiree.

DESIREE

I'm late. I don't know, it's just a precaution. It could be wrong right?

A little blue cross appears in the window.

MARIA

What. Does. That...

DESIREE

Ahhhhhhh!

Paul rushes into the bathroom.

PAUL

What happened?!?

DESIREE

Babe, we're pregnant!

Paul's face switches from confused to horror. The two girls hug and scream. Ligaya rushes to see what the commotion is about.

LIGAYA  
 What is going on? I almost got a  
 heart attack. Nanay woke up. Jesus,  
 dinner is almost ready...

Desiree's eyes look down at the pregnancy test. Ligaya follows her gaze, and her eyes get wide.

LIGAYA (CONT'D)  
 (to Paul)  
 You did this!

PAUL  
 I'm sorry.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Everyone sits at the dining table barely anyone touches their food.

VALENTINO  
 (to Desiree and Paul)  
 Nakkóng, I am happy for you I  
 really am. But...

LIGAYA  
 People will talk.

MARIA  
 Mom, we live in different times,  
 who cares? They're practically  
 married.

NANAY  
 But in the eyes of God they are  
 not.

DESIREE  
 We can't change anything. It's  
 happened.

NANAY  
 There's only one thing to do. Move  
 up the wedding.

DESIREE  
 Why?

LIGAYA  
 You don't want to look pregnant in  
 your wedding dress!

INT. FILIPINO DRESS SHOP - DAY

Desiree stands on a dressing platform. Ligaya, Nanay and  
 Desiree look at her in the mirror.

LIGAYA  
 Nakkóng, you look so beautiful.  
 Just like me when I married your  
 father.

Desiree smiles at her.

DESIREE  
 Thanks, Momma.

NANAY  
 Except you weren't pregnant.

LIGAYA  
 Shhhh, Nai!

The seamstress, JANICE (44) Filipino, strong accent, comes up  
 from behind.

JANICE  
 What do you think?

DESIREE  
 It's beautiful. Do you think you  
 can take it out a bit?

JANICE  
 But it will be too baggy. You're so  
 slender.

DESIREE  
 I just want a little room.

LIGAYA  
 Just do what she says. The bride is  
 always right.

The Janice shrugs and nods.

MARIA (O.S.)  
 I told you it wasn't going to fit.

They look back at Maria. Desiree steps off the platform to  
 let her step up.

The dress hangs off half of Maria's body like an awkward straight jacket. The Janice tugs and pulls at the dress.

JANICE

Jesus, Mary, Joseph! It's not going to fit.

LIGAYA

My God, Maria. I thought you were dieting.

She purses her lips and shakes her head.

MARIA

Way to be encouraging mom. Might as well call me ugly.

LIGAYA

Ahhh la! I did not say that you were ugly. You are beautiful honey.

Maria breaks a smile.

LIGAYA (CONT'D)

On the inside.

Maria rolls her eyes and looks back at herself in the mirror. She raises her eyebrows.

NANAY

How are you supposed to get a nice white boy, like your sister?

Desiree talks with Janice.

DESIREE

Can't you alter it to make it the right size?

JANICE

I can take it out one size, not three.

DESIREE

Ugh, I know a Mexican lady that can do anything. We'll just take it to her.

Maria turns to everyone, defeated. Her face scrunches up.

INT. MARIA'S OFFICE - EARLY MORNING

Maria is in the office before any one else. The piles of paper have grown from last time and the wedding binder bursts with pages. A thumping sound shakes the windows.

Her cell rings, she glances at the caller ID. It's Desiree. She turns the ringing off. The thumping continues.

Maria looks out her window. No other building lights are on except for the new gym across the street. She sits back down and tries to work.

Her office phone rings, and she picks it up.

MARIA

(into phone)

Triple A Auto Shop. This is Maria speaking, how may I help you?

DESIREE (OVER THE PHONE)

Manang Mar!

Maria regrets answering the phone.

DESIREE (OVER THE PHONE) (CONT'D)

Manang Mar! I knew you were at work!

Maria rolls her eyes.

MARIA

Yes?

DESIREE (OVER THE PHONE)

Your dress.

MARIA

Des, I'm really busy right now-

DESIREE (OVER THE PHONE)

-Manang!

MARIA

Just get another Maid of Honor. I'll just plan the wedding.

Silence. Maria takes a sip of her tea.

DESIREE (OVER THE PHONE)

Are you drinking that Malunggay tea mom gave you?

Maria slowly puts her tea down.

MARIA

Yeah...

DESIREE (OVER THE PHONE)

And that Garcinica Cambogia?

On her desk is a GARCINIA CAMBOGIA PILL BOTTLE among other vitamin pill bottles.

MARIA

What's your point?

DESIREE (OVER THE PHONE)

You can do this! I know you can!

MARIA

Thanks Des.

DESIREE (OVER THE PHONE)

But if you fail. The Mexican lady can make one dress out of two dresses.

MARIA

I gotta go. Bye.

The thump of the hip hop music gets louder. Her concentration is ruined, and she slams her pen on the table.

She walks out of the room.

EXT. AUTO SHOP/GYM STREET - EARLY MORNING

Maria marches across the street with purpose. The gym door is locked. She walks around to the back.

INT. CROSSFIT GYM - EARLY MORNING

Music blasts through the speakers. She scans the room that is sparsely filled with a few exercise machines, ropes, mats and bars.

At the far end of the building there is a concrete space. Maria sees, Darius. He is shirtless with basketball shorts, workout gloves and covered in sweat. He flips a huge TRACTOR TIRE across the floor.

Maria walks up to him. She blocks Darius' path. The tire falls with a loud THUD in front of Maria, her arms are crossed.



DARIUS

Hello.

Darius smiles. Maria points to her ears and the speakers. Darius chuckles and takes out a small remote to turn down the volume.

DARIUS (CONT'D)

My name is Darius, how can I help you?

MARIA

Your music is too loud.

Darius is amused by her annoyance.

DARIUS

Now, now. I told you my name, it's only fair you tell me yours.

MARIA

You need to turn that music down.

DARIUS

Wow. You are, mad.

Darius turns down the music.

DARIUS (CONT'D)

Let's start over. Hi. I'm, Darius.

Maria sighs.

MARIA

My name is, Maria.

Darius holds his hand out to shake her hand. She quickly shakes it.

DARIUS

You manage the auto body shop, across the street. It's nice to meet you, Maganda Maria.

Maria's eyebrows furrow. Of all the words, he knows that one.

MARIA

It's just, Maria.

DARIUS

Maganda means beautiful in Tagalog, right?

MARIA

And, how do you know Tagalog?

DARIUS

Half my block is Filipino. I love pancit.

Maria clears her throat and changes the subject.

MARIA

Darius, your music is way too loud. I can barely think while I work.

DARIUS

It's 7am. No one works this early?

MARIA

I do.

DARIUS

This is my gym, and I like to get my workouts in before my clients arrive. Loud music gets me in the zone. You can understand that.

MARIA

This is a gym? Doesn't look like one.

DARIUS

It's a CrossFit gym. You should come workout with me, sometime.

Maria looks at the gym and at Darius' fit build.

MARIA

I already have a gym membership. And as you can tell, it's been a minute since I've gone.

DARIUS

You look great to me.

Maria's ears turn red, she crosses her arms, and shifts. Her eyes narrow.

MARIA

I need to get back to work.

Maria turns to leave.

DARIUS  
Working out might release some of  
that pent up stress. I can see it  
in your cute, crumpled face.

She turns back.

MARIA  
I do not have a crumpled face.

Darius walks up to her. He points at her forehead.

DARIUS  
What's that? See these lines.  
That's all stress.

MARIA  
That's just how my face is.

DARIUS  
No. May I?

Darius smooths out her forehead with two fingers. Maria  
relaxes her face.

DARIUS (CONT'D)  
There you go, release the stress.

Maria half smiles.

MARIA  
Just keep the music down, please?

Maria turns and leaves. Darius looks at Maria's ass as she  
walks off.

DARIUS  
I'm here everyday, Maganda Maria.

Darius turns up the music a notch. Maria points up at the  
speaker. He laughs and turns it down. She smiles, but Darius  
does not see it. Her footsteps fade as she leaves the gym.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Maria and Nanay watch a Filipino Game show on TV. Maria  
munches on some popcorn.

It's a singing game show.

MARIA

What are we watching, Nanay? And how come everyone is singing off key? I think the Lakers are playing tonight.

NANAY

Shhh, Bing. Just watch.

Ligaya walks into the living room and sits on the couch.

LIGAYA

What are you going to do Nakkóng?

MARIA

Starve.

LIGAYA

Don't be so dramatic, this is important to her.

MARIA

I know it is. I'm planning it.

LIGAYA

It's time to reduce.

MARIA

I'm on a diet.

Ligaya looks at the bowl of popcorn.

LIGAYA

A buttered popcorn diet?

Maria releases the popcorn in her hand and puts the bowl down.

MARIA

I joined a gym today.

LIGAYA

I thought you already had a gym membership?

MARIA

This one is different. It's a crossfit gym.

LIGAYA

Crossfit? Now, you have two gyms you won't go to, taking your money. Why spend that money when you can do what I do.

Maria rolls her eyes.

LIGAYA (CONT'D)  
Ask me what I do.

MARIA  
What do you do Mom?

LIGAYA  
I take a brisk walk at the park  
with your dad. I eat a little rice,  
a little meat, and many vegetables.  
That's it! It's so easy.

MARIA  
Not everyone is the same, mom.

LIGAYA  
You're my daughter, we are the  
same.

MARIA  
What if I'm happy with the way I  
look?

LIGAYA  
You're happy looking like that?

Maria stares at her mom.

LIGAYA (CONT'D)  
You're trainer better be a  
magician.

INT. AUTO SHOP - NEXT DAY

Maria walks into the shop. Lisa is at the front desk eating a  
big slice of pizza.

LISA  
What's wrong?

MARIA  
What do you mean?

LISA  
You look mad.

Maria rolls her eyes and walks into her

OFFICE

Lisa follows her in.

LISA (CONT'D)

I know your resting bitch face, and that's not it.

MARIA

I didn't fit into my dress.

LISA

Easy fix. Just have them take it out a little.

Maria shakes her head. Lisa looks out the window at the gym.

LISA (CONT'D)

Join the gym across the street. The owner's hot.

MARIA

Darius?

LISA

You know him?

MARIA

I went over there the other day.

LISA

He has like an 8 pack.

Maria shrugs.

LISA (CONT'D)

Pizza?

MARIA

What?

LISA

There's a couple slices left out there.

Maria gives her a look. Lisa averts her eyes and slowly backs out of the office.

INT. CROSSFIT GYM - EVENING

Maria walks into the gym. Darius spots her, and jogs over.

DARIUS

I knew you would come by, Maganda Maria.

MARIA

Could you please just call me  
Maria?

DARIUS

I call it as I see it. How can I  
help you?

MARIA

I need to lose weight fast, and I  
think, I wanna join.

DARIUS

Do. Or do not. There is no think.

MARIA

Seriously?

DARIUS

Yoda was the man. Like I said before,  
you look great. But if you want to  
lose weight, Crossfit is it.

MARIA

So when do we start?

DARIUS

Do you have gym clothes?

Maria nods her head.

DARIUS (CONT'D)

There's a bathroom around the  
corner. We'll start with  
stretching.

MARIA

I hate stretching.

He laughs and nods his head.

DARIUS

You'll thank me later.

Maria walks the opposite direction of the bathroom.

DARIUS (CONT'D)

We haven't even started, and you're  
already giving up?

MARIA

Got my gym bag in the car. It's  
"try" not "think," by the way.

DARIUS

Huh?

MARIA

"Do. Or do not. There is no try."  
That's the quote.

Darius laughs as he watches her walk out.

GYM WORKOUT MONTAGE

They start off by jogging around the building. Next, they do burpies. Finally, they do shoulder presses. Maria struggles through each exercise.

She is drenched in sweat, but still standing. Barely.

DARIUS

How ya feelin'?

MARIA

(she breathes hard)

I. Can. Keep going. But if you're tired, we can pick it up next time.

Darius laughs and hands her a sheet of paper.

DARIUS

Get some rest Maganda, I'll see you next time. Remember, 80/20. 80 percent of losing weight is food choices, 20 percent is working out. Here is a list of what I want you to eat. Rest is important too.

Maria looks at the list. Her eyes grow wide, and she turns the paper around.

MARIA

Pizza's not on the list.

Darius smiles.

INT. MARIA'S OFFICE - DAY

Maria sips on a GREEN SHAKE. Chunks of green, orange and purple float around inside. She talks into the phone.

MARIA

Jer, listen, you sign this and I guarantee, you won't be sorry.

INTERCUT WITH:



INT. JERRY'S AUTO PARTS OFFICE - DAY

JERRY BERNSTEIN (40s), owner of a local auto parts shop, talks with Maria.

JERRY

Maria, y'all have been good to me, but this is a huge decision. I have to protect my company.

MARIA

Trust me Jer. Scared money don't make money.

JERRY

All right, all right. You got me. I'll have Britney fax over the documents. You know Maria, if it was anyone else...

MARIA

Which is why it's, me. Thanks again, Jer!

Maria hangs up the phone and smiles. John walks into her office.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Hey, John. Just got off the phone with Jerry's Auto Parts, they're in.

John looks up. Maria smiles at him. He puts down his pen and nods his head.

JOHN

Good. I looked at the agreements and I gave you some notes for changes.

MARIA

Okay, got it.

JOHN

We're cutting it close, Maria. Are you sure this is going to get done? A lot is riding on this deal. I also see we are behind on orders. It doesn't look like Gabe has been keeping a good record.

MARIA

He's been going through some things, I'll talk to him.

JOHN

Good. Maria, I'm trusting you to get this through.

MARIA

I'm on it.

JOHN

I hope so.

EXT. AUTO SHOP - NIGHT

Maria wears her gym clothes. Her gym bag and purse are slung around her shoulder with the wedding binder under an arm. She struggles to lock the shop door as she talks on her cell.

MARIA

We need the banquet hall at 11 A.M.  
We need buffer time for decorators  
and catering.

Maria listens.

MARIA (CONT'D)

No, it has to be 11 sharp. I have to go, bye.

Maria sighs and puts her cell away.

INT. GYM - NIGHT

Darius talks to some of the other gym members and smiles when he sees Maria walk in. Maria smiles back and puts things in one of the cubby boxes. He jogs over to her.

DARIUS

You ready for today's WOD?

MARIA

Never ready to work out, but hey I'm here.

DARIUS

It's going to be a fun night. First let's warm up by stretching and getting the blood flowing with jumping jacks.

Maria grumbles.

INT. LUNCHROOM - DAY

Maria eats a salad topped with grilled chicken breast and a small cup of yogurt. A huge bottle of water sits next to her. Maria jots notes in the wedding binder. Lisa sits across the table and eats a plate of pasta.

LISA

How's the wedding planning coming along?

MARIA

Good. But all the food and cake tasting is scheduled for this weekend. I have to stay strong, can't break this diet.

LISA

How's Darius?

MARIA

He's a great trainer. I'm sore everyday.

LISA

I bet he's good at what he does.

Lisa looks at Maria's salad with sadness.

LISA (CONT'D)

That's what you're eating?

MARIA

It's what's on the list.

Lisa shakes her head. Gabe walks in and goes to the fridge.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Gabe, how's your mother-in-law?

Gabe takes a soda out of the fridge.

GABE

She's doing much better, thank you.

MARIA

That's great. Do you have a sec? I need to talk to you..

GABE

Sure.

Lisa packs up her lunch.

MARIA

Both of you.

Lisa sighs and plops back in her seat.

INT. CAKE SHOP - DAY

Maria, Ligaya, Desiree, and Paul sit in a cake shop. The cake decorator, MARCO (42) brings out a sample two tier cake, purple and blue orchids stream down one side of the cake the white cake. He also brings out a tray of different cake flavors to try.

MARIA

I gave them a rough idea of how I think you would want your cake to look.

Desiree bounces in her seat, and Paul smiles. Ligaya's expression is indifferent.

DESIREE

Oh my goodness, it looks amazing!

PAUL

Beautiful.

MARCO

The actual cake will be five tiers. Very simple and clean. The topper will be a metal M for Miller.

Everyone smiles but Ligaya, her lips are pursed.

LIGAYA

The flowers are pretty, but I don't know... It's too, simple. Where are the pearls, shine and bling bling.

MARIA

Bling bling? It doesn't need that. This is classy.

LIGAYA

Of course, it does. I'm not talking about diamonds. Just some thing shiny. Don't you think, Des?

Maria and Ligaya turn to Desiree. She looks at her mom, Maria, and then the cake.

DESIREE

Yeah, mommy. You might be right.  
 (to the Marco)  
 What do you think?

MARCO

How about a little glitter?

LIGAYA

Gold glitter. Or Gold Paper, I saw  
 that one time on the Food Network.

Maria's mouth drops.

MARCO

I can add a little of shine no  
 problem, but I think fine silver  
 will look well with the flowers.

MARIA

That sounds, great.

MARCO

Perfect. How about we taste some  
 cake?

Marco passes each of them three pieces of cake.

MARCO (CONT'D)

Maria told me that you like light  
 and bold flavors, so I hope you  
 like what I've prepared for you  
 today. The first is a yellow cake  
 with chocolate ganache, the middle  
 is a chocolate cake with a salted  
 caramel buttercream and the last  
 plays to your Filipino Heritage,  
 something I know is very important  
 to you, a coconut cake with passion  
 fruit filling.

Everyone but Ligaya try the cakes. Maria takes a little bite  
 of each.

LIGAYA

(to Maria)

I thought you were on a diet?

Maria rolls her eyes.

MARIA

A little bite won't hurt.

DESIREE  
Mom, leave her alone.

Paul takes the last bite of his coconut cake.

PAUL  
It's good.

LIGAYA  
I thought you were trying to  
reduce. You know how you are with  
sweets.

DESIREE  
Ma! If she wants a taste, it's ok.  
Just chill! Try some!

A clap is heard O.S. Everyone turns their heads to Marco.

MARCO  
You can pick up two flavors.

Everyone looks up at him.

MARIA  
What do you guys think?

MARCO  
I think we know which cake the  
groom likes.

They all laugh.

DESIREE  
Yes, I agree the coconut is a must.  
I think that the chocolate with  
caramel should be the second.

PAUL  
Good choice, babe.

They high five and then kiss. Ligaya looks at the two of them  
with adoring eyes. Maria looks at her watch.

MARIA  
I have to go.

LIGAYA  
I thought we were going to talk  
about the seating chart.

MARIA  
We are, I promise. See you at  
dinner, tonight!

INT. GYM - AFTERNOON

Maria walks in and nods at the four others there. She rushes past Darius, and pats his back.

MARIA  
Be out in a sec.

DARIUS  
You better be.

Montage: The group powers through a 400 meter run, kettle ball swings and pull-ups.

Maria is last up on the pull-up bar. She tries to pull with all her strength, but doesn't move.

MARIA  
I can't do it!

DARIUS  
Rest your knees on my hands.

MARIA  
Ewww, I'm all sweaty!

DARIUS  
Seriously?

MARIA  
Ugh! Fine.

Darius holds out his hands under her knees. Maria attempts to pull herself up with assistance from Darius. She manages to get three quarters of the way up.

MARIA (CONT'D)  
That's it, I'm done.

DARIUS  
Great job!

He let's go. Maria swings, and drops down.

MARIA  
I couldn't even get one, even with help!

DARIUS  
You'll get it next time, good job!

He hold up his hand for a high five. Reluctant at first, she returns the gesture.

DARIUS (CONT'D)  
Great job everyone!

Everyone claps and disperses. Maria lags behind. She catches her breath and walks over to the rope. Darius joins her, and they both stare at the bell at the top. Darius climbs it, effortlessly.

DARIUS (CONT'D)  
You've been doing great! Proud of you, Maganda Maria.

MARIA  
Could you please drop the Maganda?

DARIUS  
Not a chance.

MARIA  
Hasn't been easy, but I'm trying my best and I'm having fun.

DARIUS  
That's the best you can do man. We should go celebrate.

MARIA  
Celebrate what?

Darius descends and jumps down.

DARIUS  
1 month anniversary.

He smiles.

INT. SOUPLANTATION RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Darius and Maria walk into the salad bar and soup buffet restaurant. He hands her a tray and salad bowl.

MARIA  
Souplantation?

DARIUS  
(laughs)  
All you can eat veggies and soup?  
What could be better than that?

MARIA  
An actual bar, maybe?



DARIUS

Now, now, slow down there girl. I'm not like that. A bar on the first date?

MARIA

You know that's not what I mean.

DARIUS

I know, but after that workout I'm starving. A beer is not going to cut it right now.

MARIA

True, that.

Maria and Darius fill their salad bowls, get soups and find seats to eat.

MARIA (CONT'D)

I'm starving.

DARIUS

I bet, me too. So, tell me how you doing?

MARIA

Busy, busy, busy.

DARIUS

Work?

MARIA

Work, home, wedding.

DARIUS

Wedding? You getting married?

MARIA

No, my sister is. I'm her maid of honor which is why I joined the gym in the first place. I can't fit into my dress and bottom line is, I need to lose weight.

DARIUS

You look great.

MARIA

Yeah, right.

DARIUS

Seriously.

MARIA

My mom and my big gut say otherwise.

DARIUS

You shouldn't listen to what your mom says.

MARIA

Aren't parents always right? Mother knows best!

DARIUS

It's all bull.

MARIA

Parents can be a little rough, but that's a little harsh.

DARIUS

The concept of family is cumbersome.

MARIA

Cumbersome?

DARIUS

Yeah, always in your business, never leaving you alone.

MARIA

Not a big family guy?

DARIUS

It all seems so, suffocating.

MARIA

Oh.

DARIUS

All I'm saying is, you need to be comfortable in your own skin. Who cares what other people think?

MARIA

I guess you're right.

They continue to eat. Maria's cell blinks with a text message. The screen flashes and she catches a glimpse of the sender: MOM. She picks up her cell quickly.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Oh shoot! I forgot!

Maria quickly gets up.

DARIUS

What?

MARIA

I'm so sorry. We were supposed to go over the guest list-

DARIUS

We, what?

MARIA

No. My mom, sister and I... you wouldn't get it. I have to go.

DARIUS

Just calm down, relax. I'm sure whatever it is, it can wait.

MARIA

Not with my family, they expect me to be there. I won't hear the end of it if I don't show up. I'm so sorry. Next time I got dinner, okay?

Maria takes off before Darius can say another word. She shoots a glance at him before she leaves. He nods and smiles back at her.

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Maria shoots through the front door and into the dining room.

MARIA

Sorry, I'm late!

LIGAYA

We're done eating and everything is put away! Reheat the food yourself, if you want. Me and your ading started already.

MARIA

I already ate.

A huge piece of butcher paper sprawled across the dining table acts as a mock banquet hall. Brown paper squares represent tables, and smaller yellow and light green pieces of paper with names are being shuffled around the paper.

LIGAYA

Is that why you're late? You don't want to eat with your family?

MARIA

No, mom, it's not like that.

LIGAYA

Then what Mar? What is it like?

DESIREE

Can't we just finish this, please?

LIGAYA

(to Maria)

Look at your ading. She needs her rest and you have kept her up.

MARIA

(to Desiree)

Sorry! I had dinner with Darius after our workout.

LIGAYA

Who is Darius?

MARIA

My trainer.

LIGAYA

You've been spending a lot of time with him. I think you like him.

Maria rolls her eyes.

DESIREE

Let's just get this done!

MARIA

Ok, ok, ok.

Maria looks at arrangement in progress. She moves some names around.

LIGAYA

If you keep spending time with this man, I think we need to meet him.

Maria sighs and shakes her head.

INT. CATHOLIC CHURCH - DAY

The Montero's take up a whole pew. From the center aisle out sit Ligaya, Valentino, Desiree, Paul, Maria, Nanay, and Darius. Nanay clutches her rosary and glances sideways at a smiling Darius.

NANAY

(sotto voce)

Hail Mary, full of grace. The lord is with thee. Blessed is the fruit of thy womb Jesus. Holy Mary, mother of God pray for us sinners from now until the hour of our death.

Ligaya's face is scrunched up, as if she smelled a bad fart. As the PRIEST gives the homily.

PRIEST

Peace can only come when there is mutual toleration among and between differing religious groups...

Ligaya whispers to Valentino.

LIGAYA

Look at Nanay.

Valentino glances at Nanay as she prays the rosary. He chuckles.

VALENTINO

I don't know what she's worried about, he seemed nice when we met him before mass.

LIGAYA

My poor, mother.

VALENTINO

She's fine.

LIGAYA

I don't know what that Maria was thinking.

PRIEST

Let us pray that our hearts be touched with compassion and courage. But we must never allow intolerance, bigotry, viciousness and hatred to infect us and our response to it. Amen.

## CONGREGATION

Amen.

## INT. FILIPINO RESTAURANT - DAY

The family, along with Paul and Darius sit around a long table filled with various Filipino dishes. Maria's plate is filled with a little bit of everything, mostly veggies. Darius helps himself to another plate of pancit.

VALENTINO

(to Darius)

How is the food?

DARIUS

This stuff is the best! Addicting,  
like crack cocaine.

LIGAYA

(sotto voce)

Crack cocaine?

DARIUS

Filipinos make some of the best  
food.

LIGAYA

You're Maria's trainer?

DARIUS

Yeah, one of them.

LIGAYA

Hah?

DARIUS

All the trainers' work a little  
with everyone.

LIGAYA

How come Maria is not skinny?

MARIA

Mom.

LIGAYA

What? It's true. It doesn't look  
like you will fit into that dress  
still.

MARIA

Not now.

DARIUS  
She looks fine to me. I don't know-

LIGAYA  
Still the same.

VALENTINO  
Bakut, not now.

Ligaya purses her lips.

LIGAYA  
So you like her? My daughter?

MARIA  
Mom, stop.

Darius smiles.

DARIUS  
That's ok. Yes, I like Maria very much.

LIGAYA  
A fit muscly man like you, for sure, can get someone fit and skinny. Why her?

Maria drops her fork on the plate.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Maria talks on the phone while she types.

MARIA  
(into the phone)  
Mr. Ralston, everything is lined up. The supplier for parts is in and we are prepared for your... No, not the analysis... I...

The line goes dead. Maria hangs up the phone. She calls, Lisa.

MARIA (CONT'D)  
(into the phone)  
Lisa, get Mr. Ralston from Auto Pilot back on the phone, please?

John walks into her office.

MARIA (CONT'D)  
Hey, John. Just give me a sec-

JOHN

Guess who I just got off the phone with?

Maria stops what she is doing and looks up.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Mike... Ralston.

Maria winces and sits back in her chair.

MARIA

John, I just need a couple more days.

JOHN

A couple more days? We should be celebrating, right now. Not shitting our pants! A couple more days?!?

Maria puts her head in her hands.

MARIA

I'll take care of it.

JOHN

What was that?

Maria picks up her head.

MARIA

I'll take care of it. I promise. Just talk him into giving me more time.

John raises his eyebrows.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Trust me. You won't regret it.

JOHN

That's what you said last time. This is it, I need it in!

John sighs, nods his head and leaves.

INT. GYM - NIGHT

Maria is on her last set, dead lifts.

DARIUS

You killed it today.



MARIA

I've got a lot of stress to  
release.

DARIUS

You, okay?

MARIA

I'm fine.

DARIUS

You sure, want to go somewhere to  
talk about it?

MARIA

I'm just going to go home and  
crash. Next time ok?

DARIUS

All right, take care.

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Maria walks into the house.

LIGAYA (O.S.)

Finally.

Maria jumps at the sound of her mom's voice from the

LIVING ROOM

MARIA

Geez, Mom, you scared me.

LIGAYA

It's late.

MARIA

It was a long day at work. Just got  
done with my workout. Gonna go  
crash-

LIGAYA

You're always out late, out with  
that trainer. Is he your boyfriend?

MARIA

Mom, I'm tired.

LIGAYA

Ah la! I am talking to you! Whats  
the point in working out if you're  
not getting any thinner?

Maria stares at her mom, shocked.

LIGAYA (CONT'D)

It's that black man. He's  
distracting you. You never come  
home, Nanay is scared of him, and  
you're falling in love. That's why  
you're still fat!

The door slams shut O.S. Maria turns around and exits the  
house.

INT. APARTMENT HALLWAY - NIGHT

Maria stands outside of a door and knocks. The door opens and  
Darius is inside smiling.

DARIUS

Come on in, Maganda.

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

Maria walks in, her gym bag slung over her shoulder.

MARIA

Thanks for letting me stay the  
night.

DARIUS

Mi casa, es su casa.

MARIA

Do you think I could shower,  
please? Need to wash of the stink.

DARIUS

Of course, follow me.

Darius leads her to the

BATHROOM

DARIUS (CONT'D)

Extra towels are on the shelf. Help  
yourself.

MARIA

Thanks.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Darius sits on the couch watching TV. Maria walks in.

DARIUS

How was your shower?

MARIA

Nice. I Feel way better. What you watching?

DARIUS

Some show, sit.

Maria walks over and sits on the opposite end of the couch.

DARIUS (CONT'D)

(laughs)

You can sit closer to me if you want.

Maria scoots over. Darius puts his arm around her.

DARIUS (CONT'D)

There you go, this is nice.

Maria settles and nods her head.

DARIUS (CONT'D)

You gonna tell me what happened?

MARIA

It's my mom, again. Words were said.

DARIUS

What words?

MARIA

She said that I was always out of the house and that I'm never home. Then she asked what the point of me working out is if I'm not losing weight.

DARIUS

Ouch, that's brutal. Parents have a way of pushing those buttons.

MARIA

And then she brought you up.

DARIUS

Oh, yeah? What'd she say about me?

Maria hesitates.

MARIA

Not much. She questioned what kind of trainer you are. That I'm falling in love and that's why I'm still fat.

DARIUS

Wow. What did you say?

MARIA

I just left.

He looks at her.

DARIUS

And are you?

MARIA

What?

DARIUS

Falling in love?

MARIA

(laughs)

No, I don't think so. I don't know.

DARIUS

Hmmm.

MARIA

Don't get me wrong. I like you and I like hanging out with you, but I'm not at that stage yet. I've never been in a real relationship before... Unless you don't consider this one. Then it isn't.

She looks up at him and they kiss. The action gets a little intense and Maria breaks away.

DARIUS

You okay?

MARIA

I just want to take things slow.

DARIUS  
 We don't have to do anything you  
 don't want to.

Maria smiles leans forward to kiss him.

INT. MONTERO HOUSE - NIGHT

The house is dark. A light shines underneath the bathroom  
 door upstairs.

NANAY (O.S.)  
 (quietly shouting)  
 Help!

Ligaya opens her door at the end of the hall. The door to  
 Nanay's room is open. She sees the light in the bathroom.

NANAY (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
 Help!

She rushes to the bathroom and knocks.

LIGAYA  
 Nai? Nai?

NANAY (O.S.)  
 Nakkóng! I can't move!

LIGAYA  
 What's wrong?

NANAY (O.S.)  
 I can't move my arms.

Ligaya opens the door. Desiree and Valentino come out of  
 their rooms.

DESIREE  
 Mom, what's wrong?

LIGAYA  
 Lakay! Call 911!

Valentino rushes into the room. Desiree rushes to her mom.

DESIREE  
 Nanay! What happened? Where's  
 Manang Mar!

INT. DARIUS' ROOM - NIGHT

Darius and Maria lie asleep in bed. Her CELL rings. She picks it up.

MARIA

Hello?

DESIREE

(over the phone)

Manang, where are you?

MARIA

I'm at Darius' place. Why?

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM - NIGHT

Desiree sits in the waiting room. Paul sits next to her holding her hand. Valentino walks in with a couple cups of coffee.

DESIREE

Nanay had a stroke.

Maria sits up.

MARIA

What?

Darius wakes up.

DARIUS

What's wrong?

MARIA

(into the phone)

Where is she now?

DARIUS

Who?

DESIREE

In the E.R. Paul and I are in the waiting room with Dad. Mom is with Nanay. She's going to be admitted into ICU.

MARIA

Ok, I'm coming.

Maria hangs up.

DARIUS  
What happened?

MARIA  
My grandma's in the hospital.

DARIUS  
Oh my God, I'm sorry.

Maria tears stream down her face.

DARIUS (CONT'D)  
All right, let's go.

MARIA  
You don't have to come, I can drive myself.

DARIUS  
No, let's go.

INT. ICU - NIGHT

Maria walks into the small room. Ligaya sits in a chair in the corner of the room. Nanay lies in the hospital bed. Various machines make sounds that are connected to I.Vs and LEADS to her body.

MARIA  
Hi, Mom. How's Nanay?

LIGAYA  
She's stable for now. Where did you go?

MARIA  
I was with Darius.

LIGAYA  
You were at a man's house? Maria!

Maria ignores her. She walks to the side of the bed, grabs her hand, and squeezes it. Nanay's eyes open. She looks at Maria and smiles.

MARIA  
Hi, Nanay.

Nanay smiles at her and slowly nods her head.

MARIA (CONT'D)  
Do you remember who I am?

NANAY

Of course Nakkóng, you are Maria,  
my granddaughter.

MARIA

Right, Nanay.

Maria smiles and fights back tears.

MARIA (CONT'D)

How do you feel?

NANAY

Tired. I don't know what happened.  
I was on the toilet and then I  
couldn't move.

MARIA

Did they tell you what happened to  
you?

Nanay stares at the ceiling.

NANAY

I don't know. Am I paralyzed?

Maria shakes her head and takes both her hands.

MARIA

No, you had a stroke.

Nanay nods.

NANAY

Is that so?

Maria fights back tears.

MARIA

You're strong, Nanay! You're going  
to get better. We'll take care of  
you and make sure you do.

NANAY

Yes, pray for me, okay?

MARIA

Of course, Nanay. You rest now,  
I'll see you tomorrow. Ok?

Nanay nods her head and closes her eyes. Maria leans down,  
kisses her cheek and then takes Nanay's hand into hers and  
presses it to her forehead. "Mano" a sign of respect for  
elders.



MARIA (CONT'D)  
(whispers in her ear)  
I love you.

Maria leaves the room without acknowledging Ligaya.

INT. HALL - NIGHT

Maria walks into the hall. Darius waits for her outside the door.

DARIUS  
How is she?

MARIA  
She's such an independent and  
strong woman. It hurts to see her  
like this.

DARIUS  
I'm so, sorry.

He pulls her into a hug

DARIUS (CONT'D)  
Come on, let's see if anyone needs  
anything.

They walk toward the ICU waiting room. Ligaya comes out of Nanay's room.

LIGAYA  
Maria.

Maria and Darius stop and turn around. Ligaya looks at the two of them and Maria walks to her mom.

MARIA  
Hey mom, about earlier. I'm sorry  
about -

LIGAYA  
This is your fault.

Maria's eyes grow wide.

MARIA  
What?

LIGAYA  
You yelled at me, your mother.

MARIA

What does that have anything to do with Nanay?

LIGAYA

She felt it.

MARIA

She felt it?

LIGAYA

Yes. The bad energy in the house, from you. You made her weaker.

MARIA

Oh, come on. You don't believe that.

LIGAYA

I do, and so should you.

MARIA

I'm going.

LIGAYA

You turn your back on your family again?

MARIA

I'm here aren't I?

LIGAYA

Aren't you ashamed?

MARIA

Ashamed of what?

LIGAYA

You're staying at a man's house. Out of wedlock. My God, Maria. How stupid could you be?

MARIA

I'm almost thirty-years-old. I think I can make my own decisions.

LIGAYA

Is that right? And just because you're that old, you can talk to me this way? Don't you have any respect?

Maria stares at her mom.

LIGAYA (CONT'D)

This man has changed you and you don't even know it. You're blind and turning your back to the family. When we need you most.

Maria turns to Darius

MARIA

Why don't you go on without me? You don't have to deal with this shit.

Darius pulls his arm away.

DARIUS

What? Why?

MARIA

I need to stay with my family right now.

Darius looks at her and then Ligaya who has a slight smile on her face. He shakes his head and turns to walk away.

DARIUS

Call me if you change your mind, Maria.

Ligaya puts her arm around Maria.

Maria shrugs Ligaya off of her and walks into the waiting room. Valentino, Desiree and Paul have been watching the whole time and pop their heads back in as Maria walks in.

EXT. GYM - EARLY MORNING

Maria stands outside the closed garage door. Darius walks up.

MARIA

Hey, you.

DARIUS

Hi.

Darius unlocks the door. Maria helps him pull it up.

MARIA

You mad at me?

DARIUS

No.

MARIA

You called me Maria last night.

DARIUS

That's your name, right?

Maria looks down as they walk into the gym. Darius stops and turns to her.

DARIUS (CONT'D)

I'm just disappointed. You're strong, but when it comes to your mom, it's like you become a little girl again. She has this weird hold on you.

MARIA

My family needed me.

DARIUS

I wanted to be there for you.

Maria is silent.

DARIUS (CONT'D)

You know in your gut that's true, but you didn't go with your gut last night.

Maria nods.

DARIUS (CONT'D)

Come here, Maganda.

Darius gives her a hug and kisses her forehead.

MARIA

Thank you.

DARIUS

Now, why are you here so God damn early?

Maria looks at the rope hanging from the ceiling.

MARIA

I wanted to try the rope.

DARIUS

You sure?

MARIA

Ever since I saw Juliana climb it a month and a half ago it's been one of my goals. It's time.

Darius grabs the rope and hands it to her.

DARIUS

Get it, girl.

Maria takes the thick rope.

MARIA

You wave this thing around like it's a jump rope. It's heavy.

DARIUS

(shrugs)

You get used to after a while. Come on now, Maganda Maria, let's see what you got.

Darius claps his hands. Maria looks up the rope and shakes her head.

MARIA

Here goes nothing.

Maria jumps up and grips the rope.

DARIUS

Now, use your legs with the rope!

MARIA

What? How?!?

Maria tries to go higher. She pulls up, but only ascends a couple inches.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Ughhhhh! I don't know.

DARIUS

Use the rope as leverage.

Maria's legs flail and her grip loosens. She holds on tight and looks down.

DARIUS (CONT'D)

Hold tight!

Maria looks up at the bell, it might as well be the moon. She shakes her head.

MARIA

I can't.

She loosens her grip on the rope as she descends.

DARIUS

That's ok, careful now.

Maria gets to the floor and looks at her hands. They are red and raw. Darius takes her hands into his own.

DARIUS (CONT'D)

Ouch, make sure you chalk up next time. Don't worry, you'll get it, next time.

Maria pulls her hands away.

DARIUS (CONT'D)

Where you going?

Maria grabs her bag and walks out of the gym.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Maria types furiously on her keyboard. Her cell sits on top of the wedding binder. The caller ID reads: Desiree. She ignores it.

Her office phone rings, she sighs, and she picks it up.

MARIA

Des, ... I'm finishing a huge...Oh  
Hi, John.. Sorry about that... I'm  
working on the... yes. First thing  
in the morning, promise.

Maria puts the phone down and takes a deep breath. She shakes her head and continues to type.

A text message from Desiree pops up on screen, it reads:  
Manang I need to talk to you.

Maria stops to respond. On Screen: I can't. Slammed here at work.

Maria turns the cell over. It buzzes again. She continues to work.

Her cell rings again, and this time she picks up.

MARIA (CONT'D)  
(into the phone)  
We'll talk wedding things when I  
get home tonight. Ok? Promise.

Silence.

DESIREE (OVER THE PHONE)  
(sobbing)  
Manang.

Maria's face softens.

MARIA  
What happened?

DESIREE (OVER THE PHONE)  
You need to come to the hospital,  
Nanay had another stroke.

Silence.

DESIREE (OVER THE PHONE) (CONT'D)  
Manang?

Maria hangs up the phone, and She folds over and cries. Gabe  
walks in.

GABE  
Maria! You ok?

Maria quickly sits up straight. She grabs a tissue, wipes her  
eyes and nods.

MARIA  
Hey, Gabe. Yeah, just finishing the  
Auto Pilot Proposal. How, how are  
the orders?

GABE  
Back on schedule.

MARIA  
Great! Good job, you could probably  
head home early today.

Gabe walks away. Maria types and clicks on her computer.  
Tears stream down her face.

A knock is heard off screen. Maria turns toward the door.  
Lisa, eating a bag of chips, and Gabe stand in the doorway.

LISA  
You ok?

Maria nods her head and takes in a big breath.

MARIA

I'm fine. I've just got to finish this up and then-

Maria bursts into tears. Lisa walks in and rubs Maria's back.

LISA

Oh my goodness! What's wrong?

MARIA

It's my grandma. She's worse.

GABE

You have to go. Be with your family.

MARIA

It's due first thing in the morning. John is expecting it.

GABE

Lisa and I will finish it.

LISA

Yeah. Gabe and... wait, did you say Lisa?

MARIA

No, it's ok. I got this.

Maria straightens up and takes a few breaths. Gabe gives Lisa a look.

LISA

Go, we got this.

Maria looks at the two of them and nods. She gets up and Lisa takes her place. Gabe grabs a chair and looks at the charts on the desk.

MARIA

Really, it's pretty much done. Go over the numbers once again, attach the agreements and add the stats page.

GABE

Got it.



MARIA

I'll give it a once over early tomorrow morning. Call me if you have any questions.

Maria rushes out of the door.

INT. ICU - LATE AFTERNOON

Maria talks with the DR. DAS (40) in Nanay's room. Nanay lies asleep in bed.

DR. DAS

We caught it fast this time, and changed some of her meds.

MARIA

Blood thinners?

He nods his head.

MARIA (CONT'D)

And the CT?

DR. DAS

Everything looks fine.

Maria nods her head.

MARIA

Thank you, doctor.

DR. DAS

Your mother tells me that you were once a CNA. On your way to becoming a RN?

MARIA

Medicine was never my thing but my family insisted on it. I'm great at the bedside if that counts for anything.

DR. DAS

It will. Her mobility will be very limited.

MARIA

What do you mean?

DR. DAS

I mean that even with PT, she's not going to be the same.

(MORE)

DR. DAS (CONT'D)  
 But, with a lot of hard work, she  
 can gain some of it back.

MARIA  
 I understand, thank you again.

They shake hands. Dr. Das leaves and Maria turns to Nanay and leans in close.

MARIA (CONT'D)  
 Nanay, you're the strongest person  
 I know. We'll get through this.

Maria smooths out her grandmother's hair, her pillow, and readjusts the blankets. She leans in one more time to kiss her cheek and to pray.

MARIA (CONT'D)  
 (whispers)  
 Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord  
 is with the. Blessed art thou  
 amongst women and blessed is the  
 fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary  
 mother of God pray for us sinners  
 now and at the hour of our death.  
 Amen.

Maria makes the sign of the cross on Nanay and then herself. Ligaya walks into the room.

Maria takes Nanay's hand and puts it to her head for "Mano" and heads out of the room. With pursed lips, Ligaya's eyes follow her out before she goes to Nanay's side.

INT. OFFICE - LATE AFTERNOON

Gabe tells Lisa what to type.

GABE  
 "Triple A Auto Repair has an  
 agreement with local auto parts  
 supplier, Jerry's Auto Parts to--"

LISA  
 Wait. Maybe it should say "united  
 with"

GABE  
 Good catch. Where was I?

LISA  
 "Jerry's Auto Parts"

GABE

Right. "To supply all necessary parts for repair. This will streamline repairs that come in specifically from Auto Pilot."

Lisa finishes typing and grabs a potato chip from the bag in front of her as she scans the screen.

LISA

This looks great. As if Maria never left.

JOHN (O.S.)

And where exactly is Maria?

Gabe and Lisa look toward the door. John stands in the frame, arms crossed. A chip falls from Lisa's open mouth.

INT. HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

Maria sits with Valentino, Desiree, and Paul.

VALENTINO

We'll need to prepare the house for when Nanay get's home.

The others nod their head.

PAUL

(to Desiree)

We should get you home, Babe. You need rest.

DESIREE

I'm okay.

She rests her head on his shoulder.

PAUL

She'll want you to get rest.

VALENTINO

Go, Nakkóng.

Valentino pats Desiree's leg. Desiree nods her head and Paul helps her stand up.

MARIA

I'll stay with Dad a bit longer.

Darius walks into the room. Maria sees him, and she stands up to greets him with a tight hug. He kisses her forehead.

DARIUS  
You ok?

MARIA  
Better now. Thank you for coming.

DARIUS  
Of course.

Darius walks up to Valentino and Paul to shake their hands and gives Desiree a side hug.

DARIUS (CONT'D)  
Hello Mr. Montero, Paul and Ading  
Des.

DESIREE  
(laughs)  
Hey, Kuya Darius.

He smiles

DARIUS  
Isn't Manong more appropriate?

They all laugh. Ligaya walks in the fun has been sucked out of the room. Everyone is silent.

DESIREE  
Mom, Paul and I are going to go say  
bye to Nanay, and head home.

LIGAYA  
Ok, Nakkóng.

Darius walks up to Ligaya and extends his hand.

DARIUS  
Good evening, Mrs. Montero. How's  
your mother doing?

Ligaya takes a step toward Maria and points her pursed lips at Darius.

LIGAYA  
What's he doing here?

VALENTINO  
Bakut, he came here to support  
Maria. What's wrong with that?

Ligaya shoots her husband a look. He stares back and shakes his head and rolls his eyes.

LIGAYA  
Support? It's her fault?

DARIUS  
Mrs. Montero, you don't really  
believe that do you?

DESIREE  
Yeah mom, come on.

Ligaya shoots a look at Desiree, like dog with their tail  
between its legs, she puts her head down.

MARIA  
Mom, none of this is anyone's  
fault.

LIGAYA  
Oh, no?

MARIA  
No.

LIGAYA  
You haven't been around the house  
lately. You've been out with him.  
Neglecting your family.

MARIA  
That's not fair.

LIGAYA  
Hah! You think that because you're  
all grown up, Miss Manager, you can  
treat me like this?

MARIA  
Treat you like what?

DARIUS  
I think everyone is stressed and  
needs to calm down.

Ligaya's eyes grow wide. They almost bulge out of her head.

LIGAYA  
(Who does this black man  
think he's talking to?)  
I am not talking to you Nangisit.

VALENTINO  
Bakut!

## MARIA AND DESIREE

Mom!

Ligaya stares at everyone in the room. Everyone but Maria look away. Darius looks at Maria.

MARIA

Mom, that's enough! You're being rude to Darius and I think Nanay can feel your bad energy.

LIGAYA

Gaga. Don't talk to me about bad energy! Ever since you got that job and brought him home, you're the one bringing bad energy into the house.

MARIA

That's not fair.

LIGAYA

What's not fair? Hah? Is it fair that Nanay had a stroke and she can barely move? Look at your pregnant ading in this place of sickness. You are so selfish!

Darius' hands are in a fist, but he stands still. Maria grabs his arm.

MARIA

Mom, have you ever thought that maybe Nanay is in here because of you? All you ever do is criticize and pressure us. We have to live our own lives too!

LIGAYA

What did you say?

VALENTINO

Bakut. That's enough.

DARIUS

I think that everyone is tired and that it's best that we all go home.

Ligaya's face relaxes, a little.

LIGAYA

You're right Darius. Go home. Good night. Nice of you to come.

MARIA  
I'm going home with Darius tonight.

LIGAYA  
What?

Maria picks up her purse.

LIGAYA (CONT'D)  
Aren't you ashamed? Do you think that's what God wants for you? Your family is all you have in the end.

MARIA  
In the end, God wants us to be happy. Right now, I'm not happy being with you.

She grabs Darius' hand.

MARIA (CONT'D)  
Let's go.

They walk out.

INT. DARIUS' ROOM - NIGHT

Maria lies in bed next to Darius. His arm is draped around her. The two of them are covered.

DARIUS  
Oooh. That's one big boobie. I like that.

MARIA  
Uh, that's my gut, buddy. You have to go north for one of those.

His arm moves underneath the covers.

DARIUS  
Ooops. There we go.

Maria turns over on her back. Darius' arm moves back to her midsection.

DARIUS (CONT'D)  
What's wrong?

MARIA  
Everything.

DARIUS  
Everything?

MARIA  
Nanay's in the ICU, Des's wedding  
is coming up, not to mention she's  
pregnant. And my mom thinks that  
this is all my fault.

DARIUS  
Is that it?

MARIA  
Did I mention I'm still as big as a  
hippopotamus? And then there's the  
damn dress...

Darius' hand moves its way down Maria's body. She closes her  
eyes.

DARIUS  
You know what I think?

MARIA  
HMMMMM?

DARIUS  
One. None of this is your fault.  
And Two. You are beautiful no  
matter what anyone says.

Maria smiles and pulls his face closer to kiss him. He gets  
on top of Maria and things intensify.

Maria pulls his face away.

MARIA  
Wait, wait.

DARIUS  
You ok?

MARIA  
Yeah, I just have to tell you  
something.

Darius rolls off of her.

DARIUS  
You can tell me anything.



MARIA

I know we've messed around before,  
but I've never, done this... for  
real before.

Maria looks away, afraid of Darius' expression. He pulls her  
back toward him.

DARIUS

Ok.

MARIA

You don't think I'm weird or crazy?  
I don't want you to be  
disappointed.

Darius smiles.

DARIUS

Baby you have nothing to worry  
about. We'll go at your pace.

They continue to kiss. Maria pulls him away and pins him on  
his back and smiles.

INT. MARIA'S OFFICE - MORNING

Maria types, and sends off the proposal. She smiles. Gabe and  
Lisa walk into her office.

MARIA

You two are lifesavers! Everything  
looked great. I just sent it to  
Auto Pilot and I have a good  
feeling about this.

Gabe and Lisa force smiles, and John walks in between them.  
He doesn't have a smile on his face.

INT. JOHN'S OFFICE - DAY

Maria sits across from John's desk.

MARIA

Let me explain.

JOHN

You were supposed to finish and  
send off the report to Auto Pilot.

MARIA

I did.

JOHN

But it wasn't you in your office working on it.

MARIA

I had an emergency.

JOHN

I trusted you to get the job done.

JOHN (CONT'D)

I found Gabe, who hasn't necessarily been up to par on his duties lately and Lisa the receptionist, doing your job.

Maria is silent.

JOHN (CONT'D)

You're fired.

MARIA

What? It was a family emergency!

JOHN

I thought I could rely on you and you've let other priorities get in the way.

MARIA

Are you sure about that John?

JOHN

What?

MARIA

I've been here for 7 solid years. I get my work done, in addition to making sure this place runs as smoothly as it does. I should've been made manager a long time ago.

John continues to stare at Maria.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Your customers come back because of me. I was the one who got Auto Pilot on board in the first place.

John stares and shakes his head.

JOHN

I'm sorry.

INT. DARIUS' ROOM - NIGHT

Maria and Darius lie in bed.

DARIUS  
You asleep?

MARIA  
Nope.

DARIUS  
You need to turn off that brain.

MARIA  
How can I? Nanay. The wedding. My  
mom. My job.

DARIUS  
Things will work out.

Maria nods and turns toward him.

MARIA  
It's frustrating.

DARIUS  
There goes the crumpled face again.

Maria releases a slight smile.

DARIUS (CONT'D)  
You should try the Spanish wrap.

MARIA  
What?

DARIUS  
A technique you can use to wrap the  
rope around your leg for help. Like  
this.

Darius twists some of the sheets and places them under  
Maria's feet and legs.

MARIA  
Then, what?

DARIUS  
Then, you use your hips with your  
legs as you climb the rope.

He grabs her hips and mimics the motion. Maria laughs and  
wraps her arms around his neck and kisses him.

INT. WAITING ROOM - DAY

Dr. Das talks to the whole family. Maria shifts in her seat, she looks pale and sweats a bit.

DR. DAS  
She will be discharged on Friday.

LIGAYA  
That's great doctor.

DR. DAS  
Are you sure you've thought about all your options?

DESIREE  
Options?

DR. DAS  
The nursing home has facilities that are made to help people like your grandmother.

LIGAYA  
She's coming home.

Valentino nods his head and squeezes Ligaya's hand.

VALENTINO  
We've been preparing the house for her.

MARIA  
What about her PT?

DR. DAS  
The physical therapist will come to your house twice a week. But if you want to see a fast recovery, you'll have to make sure to work with her as well. It's not going to be easy.

Everyone nods their head.

DR. DAS (CONT'D)  
Please, let me know if you have any questions. I'll be checking in from time to time.

Ligaya and Valentino stand up to shake his hand. Dr. Das leaves the room, and Ligaya walks up to Maria.

LIGAYA  
Are you up for it?

MARIA

Of course, I am. I want Nanay to get better just as much as you do.

LIGAYA

We all have to take care of her. What's wrong with you? You don't look good.

MARIA

I just have a head ache. I'll be fine. And don't worry, I'll help.

Ligaya purses her lips and walks away. Valentino sits next to Maria.

VALENTINO

Don't be so harsh to your mom. She's under a lot of stress.

MARIA

(nods her head)

Sorry.

VALENTINO

She's right, you don't look too well.

MARIA

It might be something going around the hospital. I'll be fine once I get out of here.

Valentino nods his head.

VALENTINO

Go home with your ading.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Maria hurls into the porcelain god. Her offering: this morning's breakfast. Ligaya knocks on the door O.S.

LIGAYA (O.S.)

What's wrong with you this week?

MARIA

I'm sick.

LIGAYA (O.S.)

I know. I've been doing everything around here since Nanay's been home.

Maria hurls again and flushes the toilet.

LIGAYA (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
This is worst than when your sister  
got morning sickness.

Ligaya walks away. Maria stands up at the sink and splashes  
her face with water.

Ligaya walks back and knocks on the door again.

LIGAYA (CONT'D)  
Ah la! You're not pregnant, are  
you?

MARIA  
No, mom.

INT. URGENT CARE PATIENT ROOM - DAY

Maria sits on an examination table. A NURSE (28) walks into  
the room.

NURSE  
Miss. Montero, here are the  
results. Congratulations, you are-

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Ligaya springs up from the couch. Valentino and Desiree are  
at the dining table.

LIGAYA  
- Pregnant!

Maria looks down, unable to say anything.

LIGAYA (CONT'D)  
How can you be so stupid!

DESIREE  
Mom, that's not fair.

LIGAYA  
You're different. You're getting  
married in a couple weeks. You've  
known Paul since high school.  
(to Maria)  
I don't even know Darius! You  
barely know him! Is he the father?

MARIA  
Seriously?

LIGAYA  
Or maybe it's emasculate  
conception?

MARIA  
Immaculate mom.

LIGAYA  
Does he know?

MARIA  
Not yet.

LIGAYA  
How do you think he'll react?

MARIA  
Better than this, I hope.

LIGAYA  
What if he doesn't? Didn't he say  
he didn't have a mom growing up and  
his father wasn't nice?

MARIA  
So?

LIGAYA  
What makes you think he even wants  
a family? Look at him and his big  
muscles Maria! Use your head for  
once!

MARIA  
What do you mean?

LIGAYA  
He's a fitness trainer. He can have  
any woman he wants. You think he  
only wants a girl like you?  
Especially one that's pregnant?

Maria's eyes well with tears.

VALENTINO  
Bakut, that's enough!

Valentino stands up and goes to Maria. He hugs her.

VALENTINO (CONT'D)  
 What's done is done. There is  
 already enough to worry about.

Nanay sits up in a hospital bed at one end of the living room looking at the TV. A bad Filipino Variety show is on, but it doesn't look like she is watching anything.

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - DAY

Maria and Desiree stroll the aisles looking at different place settings. Ahead of them is TRISHA (20), a petite Filipina, she was among the brides maids at the shop and is a cousin.

TRISHA  
 Manang Mar and Manang Des, I'm  
 going to look over here!

They nod their head. Desiree picks up a plate.

DESIREE  
 How about this?

She hands a plate to Maria. She turns it over in her hands. Desiree makes sure Trisha is out of ear shot. Her gaze shifts back to Maria as she places the plate down.

MARIA  
 That one's too fancy.

DESIREE  
 Ok.

Maria picks up a plate with a purple band that runs down the side.

DESIREE (CONT'D)  
 What are you going to do?

MARIA  
 Pick a place setting. Hopefully,  
 before we leave this store.

DESIREE  
 Manang, that's not what I mean!

Desiree pulls her into an aisle and whispers.

DESIREE (CONT'D)  
 I mean about the baby!

Maria sighs.



MARIA

I don't know.

DESIREE

Have you told Darius?

MARIA

Not yet.

DESIREE

What are you waiting for? He needs to know.

MARIA

What if he gets mad?

DESIREE

What if he doesn't?

MARIA

Mom was right about him not wanting a family.

DESIREE

But if he knew, maybe things would change? I can't believe this is happening, especially now.

MARIA

Don't remind me.

DESIREE

How do you feel?

MARIA

Nothing makes sense anymore. To care for a baby too is a lot.

DESIREE

Don't tell me you're not thinking of--

MARIA

I don't want to, and I never thought I would. But--

The sound of a plate shattering is heard O.S. Desiree and Maria turn around. Trisha stands behind them with her mouth open.

INT. MARIA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Maria lies in bed. Her hand rests on her stomach. Her cell is in her other hand. The message screen pops up as she tries to type a text message to Darius.

The last message from Darius reads: Hey, how you doing? Haven't heard from you in a while. Let me know when you're free.

Maria types a response: Hey you. Doing ok. You busy? I need to tell you something.

Her finger hovers over the SEND button, but she deletes the message.

She sits up and opens her laptop. She opens a new browser window and types "Planned Parenthood" in the search engine.

INT. LIVING ROOM - EARLY MORNING

Maria walks over to Nanay's side. Ligaya sleeps on the couch next to her. Maria kisses Nanay's forehead, her eyes open, and she smiles.

MARIA  
(whispering)  
Good morning, Nanay.

NANAY  
Morning, Bing.

MARIA  
How do you feel, today?

NANAY  
I need my strength back.

MARIA  
It will come back. You're Super Woman!

Maria flexes for her. Nanay smiles.

NANAY  
Raise the back of my bed please?

Maria grabs the remote control and raises Nanay up.

NANAY (CONT'D)  
Pray with me, Nakkóng.

MARIA

Yes, Nanay.

They both make the sign of the cross.

NANAY

Lord please give me the strength to continue to help my family. Please bless both my dear granddaughters. Life is a precious gift, may we continue to remember that. Anything is possible through your will and our strength from within comes from you. Life is short, may we live it to the fullest. In Jesus' name, amen.

MARIA

Amen.

They both make the sign of the cross. Maria takes Nanay's hand and gets "Mano," and kisses her.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Thank you, Nanay. Love you.

NANAY

Love you too, Bing.

INT. GYM - DAY

Maria walks into the gym. She looks around and spots one of the other trainers, JULIANA (40 but looks 25), she's the woman that climbed up the rope earlier.

MARIA

Hi, Juliana.

JULIANA

Hey, Maria! Darius isn't here right now.

(laughs)

Thought you'd know his schedule by now.

Maria forces a laugh along side her.

MARIA

Yeah... Wanted to get my workout in and this was the only time I could come in. Wanted to try and tackle the rope.

JULIANA

You sure you don't want to call Darius? I'm pretty sure he would be stoked about you trying the rope again.

MARIA

No!

Juliana is startled.

MARIA (CONT'D)

I mean... No. I just wanted to practice.

JULIANA

All right then, let's workout. On today's menu we have suicides with a side of squats.

MARIA

I forgot what a task master you were.

The two laugh.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

Darius walks up to the door and rings the doorbell. Ligaya answers the door. She stands still, and stares at him with pursed lips.

LIGAYA

Why are you here?

He takes a step back.

DARIUS

Hello, Mrs. Montero. It's nice to see you, today. Is Maria home?

LIGAYA

She went to the gym. I thought that's where you'd be.

DARIUS

What?

LIGAYA

It's not like it does her any good, she's still big.

Darius clenches his fists and takes a deep breath.

DARIUS

Mrs. Montero, you need to stop that.

LIGAYA

Stop what?

DARIUS

Stop talking about your daughter like that.

LIGAYA

Like what?

DARIUS

Calling her big and blaming her for everything that's gone wrong. She works so hard at everything she does, and never asks for help.

LIGAYA

Ha! Is that why she got herself fired?

DARIUS

She got fired because of you!

LIGAYA

Because of me? I did not tell her to go get fired.

DARIUS

You made her feel guilty. The stress was getting to her.

LIGAYA

Stress? Who here is not stressed? That's life and she's neglecting her family.

DARIUS

No, she wasn't. How's she supposed to care for anyone, let alone her family, if she doesn't take care of herself first?

LIGAYA

And what do you know about family.

DARIUS

I don't know much about a family, but I do know that I want a healthy one.

LIGAYA

Psssss, you have not respect for anyone. That's how she got pregnant in the first place. Your selfishness. But she doesn't need you. We don't need you.

DARIUS

What?

INT. GYM - DAY

Maria stands at the bottom of the rope, drenched in sweat. She rubs chalk between her hands. Juliana stands next to her.

JULIANA

You ready?

MARIA

Whether I am or not, just gotta try.

JULIANA

That's the spirit! Get it, babe!

Maria takes the rope. She tugs on it and gets a good grip. She uses the Spanish Wrap technique Darius showed her.

She lifts herself up the rope and uses her hips and legs to inch herself up, and she gains momentum. People below clap and cheer her on.

JULIANA (CONT'D)

You're almost there, take a deep breath and push!

Maria looks at the bell. It's right there! She continues to ascend until...

She RINGS the BELL. The sound echoes throughout the gym, and the peanut gallery cheers below.

JULIANA (CONT'D)

That's right girl! You did it!

Maria breaths hard, but has a huge smile on her face.

She spots Darius' car pulling up. Maria runs to meet him. Darius gets out of his car.

DARIUS

When were you going to tell me you were pregnant?

MARIA  
I'm sorry I--

DARIUS  
How long have you known?

Maria looks down.

MARIA  
Three.

DARIUS  
Three days!

MARIA  
I was afraid you would be upset.

DARIUS  
Congratulations! I am!

MARIA  
I didn't want to scare you.

DARIUS  
You don't trust me, you don't trust anyone. What are you going to do with the baby?

MARIA  
I don't know.

DARIUS  
I don't want to see you right now Maria.

Darius storms off. Maria is frozen.

INT. MARIA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Maria lies in bed. Her eyes are red, but there are no more tears left to cry. A knock is heard off screen. Maria turns her back to the door.

The door opens and Desiree pops her head in.

DESIREE  
Manang, dinner is ready.

Maria doesn't move.

DESIREE (CONT'D)  
Do you want me to bring you something?

Silence. Desiree hangs her head and closes the door. Maria closes her eyes.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MONTAGE - DAY

Maria and a PHYSICAL THERAPIST (40s) help Nanay sit on the edge of her bed. Ligaya watches from the dining room, drying dishes.

Nanay grips onto a walker. Maria stands in front of the walker as the nurse helps her stand. She stands for a few seconds before sitting down. Maria claps and gives Nanay and the nurse a high five.

Ligaya walks into the room. She smiles at Maria. Maria's smile disappears. Once Nanay is settled Maria leaves the room.

INT. TEA SHOP - MONTAGE - DAY

Desiree sits at the head of a long table filled with at least 15 people, all friends and family. She wears a sash with the word bride printed across it.

In the mix are Ligaya, Nanay in a wheel chair and Paul's mom, CATHY (54). Everyone wears smiles. Maria sits listening to a cousin talk with her, her words are inaudible. She smiles and nods but it's apparent that, she doesn't want to be there at all.

INT. GYM - MONTAGE - DAY

Maria does cool down stretches lead by Juliana. Darius walks into the gym. He greets some of the others there. Maria grabs her bag and leaves the gym.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

The family sits around the table. Maria pushes her food around the plate. Nanay sits in a wheel chair next to her, eating on own.

NANAY  
(to Maria)  
Bing, you need to eat.

MARIA  
I'm not that hungry.



NANAY

The baby needs food.

Everyone but Ligaya look at Maria. Ligaya nods her head as she looks at everyone's sad expression toward Maria, she rolls her eyes.

LIGAYA

For goodness sakes Maria, that's enough.

Everyone, but Maria, looks at her.

LIGAYA (CONT'D)

Your sister is getting married this weekend. Nanay is better. This is a happy time for everyone. Can't you be happy too?

Maria puts her fork down.

MARIA

(to Nanay)

I'm sorry Nanay. You've come a long way. In no time, I know you'll be able to walk.

Nanay nods and rubs Maria's hand.

MARIA (CONT'D)

(to Desiree and Paul)

Des and Paul, everything is on schedule, and I know it's going to be a beautiful wedding.

DESIREE

We know it will be, Manang.

Maria smiles at them. Her smile disappears when she looks at her mom.

MARIA

The truth is, I feel like shit. I'll get better, but just not now.

She looks at Desiree.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Get one of the other girls be your MOH. I'll focus on making sure everything happens on time.

DESIREE

Manang, no.

MARIA  
It's ok. I'm ok.

Maria looks at Ligaya.

MARIA (CONT'D)  
Mom, I love you. I really do, but I am an adult. You can't keep telling me I'm fat, that I'd have a better life if I was thin, that Darius is not good enough, or to be ashamed of what I look like.

Ligaya's eyes bulge out of her head. She puts her fork down.

LIGAYA  
You think that because you're an adult you can talk to me that way?

Maria takes a breath.

MARIA  
I am not ashamed of my body. I'm the one that has to live in it, not you or anyone else. That shame pushed Darius away, someone I really care about.

Maria's eyes water. She gets up and leaves.

INT. HOTEL BANQUET HALL - MORNING

The day of the wedding has arrived. Maria has been up since dawn. She carries in the a box of floral centerpieces. Brianna (18), a dark skinned Filipina and another cousin, takes the box from her.

BRIANNA  
Anymore, Manang?

MARIA  
No, that's the last of them. Thanks again, you and your dance team are a huge help. Decorating in the morning and then dancing tonight, wish I had y'all's energy.

BRIANNA  
No problem, happy to do it!

MARIA  
Just finish up here, I'm going to head home soon.

Brianna nods her head. Maria pulls out her cell and dials a number.

MARIA (CONT'D)  
 (into the cell)  
 Mom, is Des awake?... I'll be on my way back soon. The makeup artist will be here soon and so will the others.... Ok, thanks bye.

Maria helps Brianna with a table.

INT. HOUSE - DAY

Maria walks into the house. She yells from the foyer.

MARIA  
 Des! You up? We need to get going soon. I just need to take a quick shower!

No one answers her. She looks into the

LIVING ROOM

Nanay's makeshift bedroom has turned back into the living room. The TV is on, but no one is there. She continues to shout throughout the house.

MARIA (CONT'D)  
 Des? Mom? Dad? Has anyone brought Nanay down? She needs to eat her breakfast.

DINING ROOM

Everything in the house is still. This doesn't sit right with Maria.

DESIREE (O.S.)  
 Manang! Come up quick! To Nanay's room.

Panic strikes Maria's face as she races up the stairs.

MARIA  
 What happened?! Is Nanay, ok? How come no one is answering me?

Desiree stands outside Nanay's room looking in.

MARIA (CONT'D)  
 What happened?

A smile is spread across her face. Maria comes to

INT. NANAY'S ROOM - DAY

Nanay sits in her wheelchair at her sewing machine. Behind her is Ligaya. On Nanay's bed is a dress.

MARIA

What's this?

Desiree points at the dress on the bed.

DESIREE

Nanay did it.

NANAY

Your mother helped me a little.

Maria looks at the dress. It is her dress but it's altered and styled a little differently.

MARIA

Is that my, dress?

Maria looks at Nanay.

MARIA (CONT'D)

It's beautiful. Will it fit?

NANAY

You won't know until you try it on.  
Go ahead.

Maria out of the room.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Maria shuts the door behind her and looks at the dress with concerned eyes.

INT. NANAY'S ROOM - DAY

Ligaya, Desiree and Nanay wait for Maria to return. The bathroom door opens O.S.

Maria appears at the door.

DESIREE

Manang, you look amazing!

NANAY

See? That seamstress is tanga.

LIGAYA

Nakkóng, you really do look beautiful, inside and out. I'm sorry, you take the things I say the wrong way.

Maria's rolls her eyes and smiles.

MARIA

Ok. Thanks, Mom.

They all laugh.

MARIA (CONT'D)

What's everyone sitting around for? My little sister is getting married today!

Desiree wipes tears from her eyes and jumps off the bed. She gives Maria a hug before rushing out of the room. Ligaya walks toward Maria with a garment bag.

MARIA (CONT'D)

What's this?

Ligaya opens up the garment bag and takes out a barong, a traditional male dress shirt.

LIGAYA

I made this one for Darius. I think you better take it to him.

Maria sobs and hugs her mother.

INT. GYM - DAY

Darius trains a big white guy, BOBBY (30). Maria runs in with the garment bag.

MARIA

Hey, you. Can we talk?

DARIUS

I'm in the middle of something right now.

MARIA

Please?

Darius turns to Bobby.

DARIUS

Bobby, give me a sec. Lunges.

Darius turns back to Maria.

MARIA

My mom made this for you.

DARIUS

What is it?

MARIA

It's a Barong, a traditional male  
Filipino dress shirt.

She pulls out the dress shirt.

DARIUS

She made this?

Maria nods.

MARIA

I was wrong to keep you in the  
dark. You should have been the  
first person I told about the  
pregnancy. I was afraid you'd get  
mad and hate me. I was afraid that  
you would just leave anyways so I  
did it first. I know you care for  
me and that wasn't fair. The fact  
is, you inspire me to be a better  
person for myself. But you need to  
know that I love you. I've also  
decided to keep the baby because I  
know that you're going to be a  
great dad no mater what. You're not  
the same as your father, you're  
better.

DARIUS

Come here, Maganda Maria.

Darius kisses her.

DARIUS (CONT'D)

I do care for you and love you,  
too.

Darius takes it and smiles.

DARIUS (CONT'D)

She made it?

MARIA  
Yeah, Big and Tall Barong was  
closed, so she had no choice.

Darius laughs.

DARIUS  
When's the wedding?

MARIA  
In two hours.

DARIUS  
Bobby! We're done for the day!

Bobby is drenched in sweat.

BOBBY  
Oh, thank God!

INT. CHURCH - DAY

Pews are filled with people. Maria stands in the back and  
peaks in. Paul stands at the alter next to the priest. She  
turns around to the wedding party. The men wear BARONGS.

MARIA  
All right everyone places! The  
groom is set. God Parents are up,  
then Grandparents, parents, minus  
dad, flower girl-

MALIYA  
We know the order Manang Mar!  
That's what rehearsal is for!

Everyone laughs.

MARIA  
All right, all right!

Maria spots the first set of God Parents, UNCLE JUN (52) and  
AUNTIE NANCY (51). She fidgets with his tie.

UNCLE JUN  
Ah la! Nancy stop adjusting it!  
It's fine!

MARIA  
Uncle Jun and Auntie Nancy you're  
up!

She pushes them along and the line follows. Maria checks her watch.

Nanay rolls up. Maria picks up her head to see that Darius pushes her wheelchair. Ligaya stands close behind.

MARIA (CONT'D)

All right, grandparents--

DARIUS

I know huh? I look good in this thing.

MARIA

Yeah, you do.

Ligaya looks down the aisle.

LIGAYA

Ah la, it's our turn. Come on Darius, speak to her later. Let's go.

Darius gives Maria a peck on her cheek before taking off.

BRIDAL PARTY PEANUT GALLERY

Ooooooh.

Maria looks behind her.

GUY COUSIN

All right, Mar!

Everyone laughs.

MARIA

Calm down, everyone. Let's get moving.

The line gets shorter and shorter till Desiree, Maria and their dad are left. He holds both their hands.

VALENTINO

I have the two most beautiful daughters in the world. I couldn't ask for anything better.

They all hug. Valentino gives the two sisters a moment and stands ready at the door.

MARIA

This is it. You ready?



DESIREE

I'm getting married, we're having a baby at the same time. This is crazy.

Maria nods as they both laugh.

MARIA

Yeah, this is crazy. But life is crazy. You never know what's going to happen.

Maria takes the tissue from her wrist to dab the tears in Desiree's eyes.

The two sisters laugh and hug. Maria gets behind Desiree to lift the train behind her as the WEDDING MARCH plays.

INT. HOTEL BANQUET HALL - NIGHT

Music plays and everyone on the dance floor makes a soul train line. People come down one by one as the credits roll.

FADE OUT.

**GREEN LIGHT**

Pilot Episode  
"It Takes Two"

*The beginning of a beautiful friendship.*

Written by  
Andrea Baltazar

FADE IN:

TEASER

INT. FILM SOUNDSTAGE - DAY

BRAD (25), a production assistant (PA) enters a bustling sound stage holding an empty file box. He talks into his headset, to fellow PA, TRACY (22).

BRAD  
Have you seen Willy?

TRACY  
Old producer guy? Nope.

Brad continues to scan the set for Willie. He heads to video village and talks to the script supervisor, ANGELA (30).

BRAD  
Have you seen Willy?

ANGELA  
Old guy, with the flip phone?

Brad nods his head.

ANGELA (CONT'D)  
Nope.

Brad spots EDWIN (30), the young director, is setting up the next shot with the director of photography, BRIAN (40) and camera operator, DECLAN (28).

BRAD  
Ed, ya got a minute?

EDWIN  
Not really...  
(to Declan)  
Less headroom!

BRAD  
Have you seen Willy?

EDWIN  
Do I look like an "old-man-sitter"  
to you?  
(to the Declan)  
Are you ready yet?

Brad backs away and walks through a door, onto a studio lot.

EXT. STUDIO LOT - DAY

Other PAs, "Suits," and miscellaneous crew rush by Brad.

He walks to a bungalow, the name on the door says "William West." He knocks on the door.

WILLY (O.S.)  
It's open!

INT. BUNGALOW - DAY

Brad enters the trailer. Four men sit around a small table. One of them slams his cards on the table. This is WILLIAM "WILLY" WEST (65). He has a clean appearance, but judging by its style, his suit is outdated.

WILLY  
Full house, boys! Pay up! Daddy's gotta make alimony.

Brad clears his throat, Willy looks at him, and sighs.

WILLY (CONT'D)  
All right, that's it for today.

Two of the men hand Willy cash. CLIFTON WILKES (60), a hulky black man, stays. He holds out an empty hand. Willy doesn't break eye contact, but he slowly smiles and slaps cash into Clifton's hand. They laugh and Clifton leaves.

Willy walks to his desk and looks at Brad as he pulls out a cigar and lights it.

WILLY (CONT'D)  
Whadaya want?

BRAD  
Mr. Waters needs to speak with you.

Willy gives Brad a shitty look as he picks up his phone.

WILLY  
(to himself)  
Why didn't he just call himself?  
Damn millennials...  
(into phone)  
Hey Janette, it's Willy. Jimmy wanted to talk to me?

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. AMAZEBALLS STUDIOS EXECUTIVE OFFICES - DAY

JAMES WATERS (40), sits at a huge desk and answers the phone. Oscars adorn the room.

JAMES

Hey, Willy, we need to make some cuts.

WILLY

All right Boss. Off the top of my head I can think of a couple of things. How about the aerial shot? Do we really need to rent out a whole helicopter and pilot?

JAMES

Actually, we're renting a drone that day.

WILLY

What's a drone?

JAMES

A remote controlled helicopter with a camera.

WILLY

Fascinating. Well, how about--

JAMES

Willy, we're letting you go. Please pack up your things--

Willy hangs up the phone, he sees red.

Brad holds out the file box, and Willy bats it away. He quickly gets up, but stumbles back a bit. He grabs a large black folder from his desk and walks toward the door, an empty whisky bottle rolls out from behind his desk. Brad runs after him.

BRAD

Mr. West, they're shooting!

INT. SOUNDSTAGE - DAY

Standing on set is ETHAN PARKS (40), the title actor of the film. He stands next to ANNE BANKS (20), a beautiful model turned actress. The 1st assistant director, MARK, stands in front of them, holding a clapper board.

MARK  
32- A, TAKE FOUR!

He claps the marker. The actors settle into position.

POV of camera.

EDWIN  
Remember, Anne. Visualize the  
words... and action!

ETHAN  
I didn't think anyone would be able  
to crack my hard heart.

ANNE  
You saved me from the...  
The...Uh...gutter. Yes, the  
gutter...

The Ethan rolls his eyes.

ETHAN  
No, you saved me.

Ethan takes Anne's face into his hands. They're about to kiss  
when the sound of a crashing door O.S. The actors are  
startled and the take is ruined.

Willy bursts on set in the middle of Ethan and Anne

WILLY  
EDWIN!!!

Edwin looks in the monitor.

EDWIN  
Cut!!! Willy?!?

Ethan quickly lets go of the Anne.

ETHAN  
Amateurs! Ryan, my tea!

His tiny assistant, RYAN (23), rushes to his side, mug in  
hand.

WILLY  
Did you know that I was being  
fired?!? This production cannot  
function without me! I run the  
books!!!

Willy holds up the black folder and shakes it above his head.

WILLY (CONT'D)

I'm the line producer, for Christ's sake!

GINA (30) comes out from behind video village with an iPad.

GINA

Actually, I've been running the board for the past couple of weeks.

She holds up the iPad.

Willy's eyes pop out of his head.

WILLY

I'm in charge of accounts!

JUAN (O.S.)

No, I am.

WILLY

Permits! I take care of those!

MARY (O.S.)

Actually, I do.

The Anne sits in her director's chair sipping a DIET COKE.

ANNE

Who's he?

FADE OUT.

END TEASER

FADE IN:ACT ONE

EXT. WILLY'S HOME - MORNING

Willy steps outside wearing a robe, house slippers, and a cigar in his mouth. He shuffles down the driveway to get the newspaper and his mail.

A young couple get out of a new BMW in front of the remodeled house across the street. They wave at Willy who waves back.

WILLY  
(under his breath)  
Effing millennials...

INT. WILLY'S OFFICE - DAY

Willy sits in an old leather chair. On one side of his desk is an old pc, circa 1996. Scattered amongst the papers are past due utility bills, old racing tickets and the latest edition of the Hollywood Reporter.

He scans the Reporter and circles a promo.

Detail: Martin Crans and Mt. Rushmore Productions in pre-production for new horror film starring Hugh Jackman.

Willy opens his cell phone and dials a number.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. MARTIN CRANS' OFFICE - DAY

MARTIN CRANS (60s) sits in a huge office that looks out to the city of Burbank. His phone rings, he picks it up.

MARTIN CRANS  
Martin Crans speaking.

WILLY  
Marty! How ya' doing? It's Willy!

MARTIN CRANS  
Willy West? How ya doing, ya old dog? I'm doing all right.

WILLY  
Fine, fine. How're Martha and the kids?



MARTIN CRANS

Doing great thanks, she's visiting Rob and his wife. How can I help you, Willy?

WILLY

Good, good. I was wondering if you've found a line producer for that horror you're on?

MARTIN CRANS

I thought you were on that Amazeballs production?

WILLY

Creative differences.

MARTIN CRANS

Right. Geez, I'm sorry, but we found one a couple weeks ago.

WILLY

I see. I don't wanna waste your time my friend, if anything pops up let me know.

MARTIN CRANS

You got it Willy. Hey, let's get coffee sometime and talk about the good ol' days when movies weren't so crappy.

WILLY

Sounds great, Marty. Bye.

Willy hangs up and crosses out the promo. He grabs his Rolodex shuffles through the cards. He stops at a card and shrugs. He dials another number.

WILLY (CONT'D)

(into the phone)

Hello, I wanted to speak to Mr. Bruckheimer, please? This is Willy West.

INT. MEL'S DINER - DAY

Willy, defeated, sits in a booth at Mel's Diner. Old head shots of forgotten Hollywood stars line the walls. A waitress, SHELLY (35), comes by.

SHELLY

How ya doin' Willy?

WILLY  
 (not doing fine)  
 Doin' fine, Shelly.

SHELLY  
 The usual?

Willy nods. He takes out his flip phone and turns it over in his hands. He opens it up and starts to dial a number but closes it.

Shelly comes by with Willy's club sandwich and soda.

WILLY  
 Thanks, Shelly.

SHELLY  
 No problem, Willy. Let me know if you need anything else.

Shelly walks away. Willy takes a bite of his sandwich before he opens his phone and dials a number.

INTERCUT WITH:

EXT. STUART'S BEL AIR HOME BACKYARD - DAY

IMELDA STUART (55) relaxes pool side in a long lounge chair. Lying on the ground next to her is a chocolate french poodle. She is a Nancy Reagan knock off and is Willy's ex-wife. Her phone rings. She notices the caller ID before answering.

IMELDA  
 Willy.

WILLY  
 Imelda, my dear.

IMELDA  
 What do you want?

WILLY  
 How's my boy, Charles?

IMELDA  
 Sunbathing next to me. What do you want?

Willy rolls his eyes.

WILLY

Talk to Connor for me, will ya? See if he has any open gigs for a line producer or something.

IMELDA

And why would I do that?

WILLY

For one, he took you away from me. And two, I am the one who paid for that house.

IMELDA

Willy, I was long gone even before you knew it.

WILLY

He never green lighted anything out of spite! He owes me, he, he---

IMELDA

I doubt there's anything more than a PA gig.

BRETT (20), shirt off, lean and ripped, walks up to Imelda. He smiles and holds up two yoga mats.

IMELDA (CONT'D)

How does that sound?

Willy shuts his phone, pushes his plate of food away, and puts his head down on the table.

Shelly walks up to him.

SHELLY

Girl troubles?

WILLY

(nods no)  
Work troubles.

SHELLY

Awww, I'm sorry. You should try Craislist. Gems pop up from time to time. It's how I got this job.

WILLY

Craig? His list is where?

SHELLY

No, silly. It's like the classified ads in the newspaper, but online.

WILLY

Right, right. Thank you. I think  
I'll take the check, dear.

SHELLY

Sure thing.

INT. WILLY'S OFFICE - DAY

Willy sits in front of his computer as it slowly comes to life. He wipes the dust-caked screen and opens up a browser. He types Craig's List in the search bar.

He fumbles through, and finds the Help Wanted section for "Film and Video." He sees an ad from an independent film company.

On Screen: The Crazies Indie Film Co to film first movie. In need of a producer, who's not crazy. :)

Willy reaches for his flip phone. Someone answers, and muffled loud music from the phone can be heard.

WILLY (INTO THE PHONE)

Hello? HELLO!?! Mr. John Mills?

The music is turned down.

WILLY (INTO THE PHONE) (CONT'D)

I'm calling about your ad in  
Craigslist. My name is William  
West... Yes, the producer. What do  
you think about a meeting? ... Your  
house?... Yes sir, that's fine...  
What is the address?

Willy writes the address down on a piece of paper.

WILLY (INTO THE PHONE) (CONT'D)

Got it. What time?... 10a.m? Sounds  
good, see you tomorrow... Bye, bye.

Willy hangs up and smiles. He eyes the small bar across the room and walks to it. He opens up the bottle of whisky and is about to pour some into a glass, but stops and puts the bottle down. He whistles as he walks out of the room.

EXT. MILLS HOME - DAY

Willy drives through a Pacific Palisades neighborhood in an old 1962 MGB convertible. He pulls up to a huge iron gate. In front of it there is an intercom with a dial pad.

Willy rolls down his window and pushes a green button, the butler answers.

BUTLER (ON SPEAKER)  
Hello, how may I help you?

Willy speaks unnecessarily loud.

WILLY  
I have a meeting with a Mr. Mills  
at 10am.

A loud BEEP comes from the box and the gate slowly opens. Willy drives up and parks his car behind a black, dark-tinted Range Rover.

INT. MILLS HOME - DAY

The BUTLER (45), opens the door.

BUTLER  
One moment, please.

The inside of the house looks bigger than the outside. A man, DR. JOHN MILLS (65 but looks 50), Chinese American and a prominent surgeon, comes walking toward Willy. He wears an expensive suit and it looks like he's in a rush. He gives Willy an odd look as he shakes his hand.

WILLY  
Mr. Mills? It's nice to meet you,  
I'm William West, but please call  
me Willy.

JOHN MILLS  
I'm sorry, who are you?

WILLY  
We spoke yesterday about your ad.

JOHN MILLS  
Ad?

WILLY  
The one on the internet.  
Craig's...uh...list? It says that  
you're looking for a producer for  
your movie.

JOHN MILLS  
(rolls his eyes)  
You must've talked with Jr.

WILLY

I'm sorry?

JOHN MILLS

My son Johnny. He's a "budding filmmaker" trying to make a "movie."

WILLY

Okay.

JOHN MILLS

(To the butler)

Please go get Maria and have her show Mr. West to Johnny's "office".

The butler nods and leaves.

JOHN MILLS (CONT'D)

Mr. West, it was nice to, uh, meet you.

John quickly shakes Willy's hand before Willy can say another word. MARIA (40), Johnny's nanny, an attractive Latina with the air of Eva Longoria. John glances at her before he stalks off. She ignores his look and walks straight to Willy.

NANNY MARIA

Hello sir, I'm Maria.

WILLY

Hello, I'm Willy. I guess I'm here to meet... Johnny?

NANNY MARIA

Yes, please follow me.

Willy follows her as they walk through the living room, the huge kitchen and out the back door.

EXT. MILL'S BACKYARD - DAY

The backyard has a huge swimming pool. On the far end, there is a pool house, and muffled loud music can be heard. Nanny Maria knocks on the door. No answer. She knocks again, harder.

NANNY MARIA

Johnny! You have a visitor.

JOHNNY (O.S.)

Is he here?

NANNY MARIA

Why don't you open the door and see?

The music stops. The door opens. JOHNNY MILLS (25) is smart, tech savvy, and diagnosed high on the ASD scale at 6 years old. He wears His hair is quasi messy and has ear plugs in his ears. He wears a pair of "Harry Potter" glasses, a nerdy t-shirt, in his boxers, and socks. He looks at Nanny Maria.

Johnny grabs Willy's hand and shakes it, vigorously.

JOHNNY

Golly, hi there, Mr. West! Please come in!

Johnny pulls Willy in. Nanny Maria coughs.

NANNY MARIA

Johnny?

Johnny chuckles and looks at Willy, who looks confused.

NANNY MARIA (CONT'D)

Pants, sweetie.

JOHNNY

Oopps, pants, pants, pants! Ok, ok, ok. Must've lost track of time!

Johnny grabs some jeans on the floor.

NANNY MARIA

Let me know if either of you need anything.

JOHNNY

Thank you, Maria! I can't believe Willy West is here in my office! It's really great to meet you!

Johnny shuts the door.

INT. JOHNNY'S BEDROOM OFFICE - DAY

The pool house serves as Johnny's bedroom and office.

Willy seems dazed. There is a desk with a huge computer, a couple of orange pill bottles, and various legos and action figures. On the wall behind his desk is Dan Ackroyd Ghost Busters poster next to a poster of Kobe Bryant.

WILLY  
Call me, Willy.

JOHNNY  
(off on a tangent)  
You were a part of some of the  
greatest movies ever. I hear you  
got the Eye.

Johnny's walls are a collage of movie posters and head shots.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)  
You're the one who added the rain  
to the park scene in, *The*  
*Angelenos*, with Shirley Martin.  
Nature was crying because she  
couldn't!

Makes a sad face.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)  
"If I could only show you how I  
feel, it would have all been worth  
it." And... Cue the rain!

WILLY  
(I am a genius damnit)  
Yeah, yeah. Shirley was great but  
that director--

JOHNNY  
Carl Reynolds?

WILLY  
Wouldn't have gotten another job  
without me, wouldn't ever tell  
anyone that though--

Willy points to a couple of the pictures on the wall.

WILLY (CONT'D)  
Hack... I started his career...  
shmuck... had a fling once, didn't  
last... That guy wasn't so bad.  
Actually, he's still a good friend  
of mine.

JOHNNY  
Christopher Berry is a good friend  
of yours?

WILLY  
Yeah, yeah. Retired now.



JOHNNY

Why don't you make good movies anymore?

Willy freezes for a moment.

WILLY

Tell me about this movie you want to make.

JOHNNY

Yes, yes, yes. Please sit.

Willy sits in the chair across Johnny's desk.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

Did you know that in the 1999/2000 NBA season, the Lakers had a 67-15 record, and won with Phil Jackson's first year as head coach?

WILLY

What?

JOHNNY

Do you like basketball, Mr. West?

WILLY

Willy, kid.

JOHNNY

Willy Kid? I thought your last name was West?

WILLY

It is, West.

JOHNNY

Then who's Kid?

WILLY

You.

JOHNNY

Mr. West, my last name is Mills.

WILLY

No. Look. Just call me Willy, ok?

Johnny stares at Willy, mouth open. Willy stares back but is confused.

JOHNNY

Got it! Ok, ok, ok, Willy.

Willy sighs. He eyes the pill bottles by Johnny's computer.

WILLY

Well?

JOHNNY

I wrote a great.

WILLY

Lemme take a look at it.

Johnny pulls out a red spiral notebook, with the word "SCRIPT" written on the front. The notebook has seen better days. Willy opens it and illegible scribbles are strewn throughout the pages.

WILLY (CONT'D)

This is not really a script. Do you even know how to write one?

Johnny gets uneasy and grabs a little toy cow squeeze doll from his desk. When he squeezes it, "poop" pops out of its butt and then goes back in.

JOHNNY

It's in my brain I know it's a great story.

Willy closes the notebook and places it back on the desk.

WILLY

Kid, I can't do much with this. I'm a producer, not a screenwriter.

Johnny continues to squeeze the cow. Willy shifts in his seat.

WILLY (CONT'D)

Alright, let me hear it.

Johnny relaxes. He puts the cow down and clears the space in front of him except for a couple different Legos and action figures that he uses to tell the story.

JOHNNY

It's a story about a guy, Allen, and his daughter, Ava who is 12. He and Ava's mom go a divorce. It sucked. He coaches Ava's basketball team it's the only way he sees her.

Johnny plugs up one of his ears

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

The only reason he became coach is because the old coach always yelled. He sucked too so he took over the job.

Johnny "kicks" the old lego coach out. Willy sits up a bit.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

Allen doesn't know how to play basketball. As a kid he was only allowed to study, study, study. But when he starts to coach his daughter's team he has two rules. One: that he never yells at them and Two: that they're going to learn to run.

Johnny picks up a lego man and places him in a chair and stares at Willy.

WILLY

Not bad. It's a great idea but it's not a script, yet. You seem like a very nice person, and I'm impressed with all of your film knowledge.

Johnny grabs the little toy cow squeeze doll.

WILLY (CONT'D)

But it takes more than action figures and an idea to make a movie. Maybe you and your friends can do something.

JOHNNY

I don't have any of those.

Willy stares at Johnny's hand squeezing the cow.

WILLY

Making a movie takes a lot of work, time, and even more, money.

Johnny stops squeezing the cow.

JOHNNY

I have money.

WILLY

What do you mean?

JOHNNY  
My dad said that he would pay for  
the movie.

WILLY  
Look, kid, you don't just go out,  
buy a camera, and shoot.

JOHNNY  
I'm directing.

WILLY  
Ok, but we need to pay someone to  
help write the script.

JOHNNY  
But I wrote the script.

Willy looks at the "script."

WILLY  
A proper script.

JOHNNY  
Okay then.

Willy stares at Johnny.

WILLY  
Okay, what?

JOHNNY  
You can take care of all that  
stuff, I will pay and direct.

Willy scoffs and uncrosses his arms.

WILLY  
Yeah, right.

JOHNNY  
That's the spirit!

Johnny presses a button on a phone on his desk. Nanny Maria's  
voice sounds through it.

NANNY MARIA (OVER INTERCOM)  
Yes?

JOHNNY  
I need your help, please!

NANNY MARIA (OVER INTERCOM)  
All right. Be there in a sec.

Johnny let's go of the button.

WILLY  
What's going on?

JOHNNY  
Maria just has to write out the  
checks.

Nanny Maria comes in.

NANNY MARIA  
What do you need, Johnny?

JOHNNY  
Mr. Willy's in! Let's write him a  
check!

Nanny Maria looks at Willy who smiles at her.

FADE OUT.

END ACT ONE

FADE IN:

ACT TWO

INT. WILLY'S CAR - DAY

Willy drives.

WILLY

I know a couple of screenwriters,  
we go way back. They might be able  
to help.

JOHNNY

Who are they?

WILLY

Frank and Eddie.

Johnny's eyes grow wide.

JOHNNY

Franklin Edelstein and Edward  
Glasner? One of the greatest  
writings duos, like, ever! The  
Grand Slam, Journey Beyond the  
Stars, Sack Lunch, A Boy with a  
Sling... "If you weren't scared,  
what would you do?"

Willy laughs.

WILLY

You're pretty good at that, kid.

EXT. FRANK AND EDDIE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Willy rings the doorbell. Sharp high pitched dog BARKS are heard off screen. The door opens, they are greeted by a scrappy english bull dog. FRANKLIN EDELSTEIN (62) and EDWARD GLASNER (63), the two look like Bert and Ernie, but Edward is the more flamboyant of the two.

FRANK

Willy! Old pal, it's great to see  
you! Come in, come in! Make sure  
Rocky doesn't escape.

EDDIE

I hope you brought a check. We  
haven't forgotten!

INT. FRANK AND EDDIE'S APARTMENT - DAY

The place looks like a photo from Architecture Design Magazine, clean, open, and modern with photos lining all the walls.

WILLY

Yeah well... Frank and Eddie, I want to introduce you to my young friend, Johnny.

JOHNNY

(shakes their hands)  
Mr. Edelstein and Mr. Glasner, it's an honor to meet you. Hey, Willy, could you take a picture of us, please? This is so cool!

FRANK

Just call me Frank.

EDDIE

Call me Eddie, Mr. Glasner makes me sound so old.

Johnny hands Willy his phone. Willy looks at Johnny confused.

JOHNNY

Sorry! I'll set up the camera.

Johnny turns on the camera. He rejoins Frank and Eddie. They pose.

WILLY

One, two... three.

Willy presses the button multiple times.

WILLY (CONT'D)

There, I think I got it.

Willy gives Johnny his phone back.

JOHNNY

So, awesome!

Eddie leads them into the

LIVING ROOM

WILLY

Johnny here is not only a big fan of yours, he's also a filmmaker.

WILLY (CONT'D)

He wants to make a movie, and we want you to write it.

EDDIE

Willy, we haven't written in years.

WILLY

And this is your chance to get back in the game.

FRANK

People only want to watch comic book heroes, animated talking animals, live action talking animals, I don't know.

JOHNNY

You write better ones! You two are the best of the best. I could learn so much from you, please, please, please say yes.

FRANK

Willy, can I see you in the kitchen please? Does anyone want anything? Would you like some water Johnny?

JOHNNY

No, thank you.

Frank leads Willy into the

KITCHEN

FRANK

What are you trying to pull by bringing this kid here?

WILLY

How much money do I owe you?

FRANK

What?

WILLY

How much money do I owe you?

FRANK

Cut the bull.

WILLY

I owe you a lot of money, but this kid is loaded.

(MORE)



WILLY (CONT'D)

This is how I'm going to pay you back. All you have to do is play along, write this script, and you'll get paid.

FRANK

Something doesn't feel right.

WILLY

Look, the kid is solid. He knows what he wants and he has the money to back it up. Trust me.

Frank crosses his arms and looks toward the living room.

WILLY (CONT'D)

We all could use the money.

FRANK

If this falls apart, Eddie and I are out, no skin in the game, and I still expect to be paid.

WILLY

Scouts honor.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Eddie explains some of the pictures to Johnny.

EDDIE

...We were on location in Switzerland. They have the best chocolate.

JOHNNY

You and Mr. Frank are great. How long have you been married?

Eddie's eyes grow big and he laughs nervously. Frank and Willy come back into the room.

EDDIE

Oh, we're not married, silly. We're not gay.

Johnny looks at Eddie then at Frank who nervously smiles back. Johnny looks around the room, mouth open at pictures of them together in Paris, Italy, Africa and dressed in drag in Rio.

INT. WILLY'S CAR - DAY

Willy drives.

JOHNNY

Where to now, Mr. Willy?

WILLY

If we're going to be a reputable production company, we are going to need a production office.

JOHNNY

What's wrong with my office?

WILLY

We need a real space.

EXT. DOLLAR TREE STRIP MALL - DAY

Willy drives up to a small strip mall in Van Nuys. Willy parks his car in front of an empty store front that is sandwiched between a Spanish Evangelical Church and an Asian donut shop.

INT. LOCAL 342 TEAMSTERS HEAD QUARTERS - DAY

CLIFTON WILKES (60s), the man we saw in the teaser, stands on a fake golf putting green in the middle the office space. He wears a Malcolm X t-shirt. His wife, GLADYS WILKES (60s), Jewish, sits at one of the desks doing paperwork.

The ball makes it into the cup before Clifton looks up to see who has walked in.

CLIFTON

Willy, my man.

Clifton goes to shake Willy's hand.

WILLY

Gladys, so nice to see you.

GLADYS

Hi, Willy.

Clifton looks at Johnny.

WILLY

Cliff, this is Johnny. Johnny this is Clifton Wilkes. A very good friend of mine.

Clifton shakes Johnny's hand.

WILLY (CONT'D)

He's going to let us use this as  
our production office.

JOHNNY

Oh geez, Mr. Cliff, that's really  
nice of you.

Clifton looks Johnny up and down quizzically.

CLIFTON

Is this your grandson Willy? Didn't  
know you had kids.

Johnny laughs.

JOHNNY

Willy's not my grandpa. My grandpa  
died a long time ago.

WILLY

No, no, he's not my grandkid.  
Johnny here is our movie's  
director.

Clifton stares at Johnny. Johnny walks up to Clifton and  
takes the putter. He starts to putt.

CLIFTON

What the hell?

Willy elbows Clifton steers him to the opposite corner of the  
room.

CLIFTON (CONT'D)

I thought I was production manager  
of a real movie, not some student  
film.

WILLY

The kid's legit.

Willy looks over his shoulder, Johnny makes the ball into the  
cup.

WILLY (CONT'D)

(to Johnny)

Great putt, Johnny, keep at it!

Willy turns back to Clifton.

WILLY (CONT'D)

He's rich. Just play along and I swear you'll be on a real shoot as production manager soon. Frank and Eddie are in too. Trust me.

CLIFTON

Frank and Eddie? Fine.

Willy nods his head and turns back to Johnny.

WILLY

Johnny, Cliff here is also our production manager, the best you can find in the business!

Johnny drops the putter.

JOHNNY

Really? Thanks Mr. Cliff!

Clifton forces a smile. Willy looks at his watch.

WILLY

Look at the time, we must be off. Gladys always a pleasure. Cliff.

Willy shakes Cliff's hand.

CLIFTON

Stay black.

WILLY

You too my, brotha.

Willy puts up his fist like a black power fist salute.

WILLY (CONT'D)

Tomorrow at 10a.m?

Clifton gets ready for a putt.

CLIFTON

Yeah, yeah.

INT. WILLY'S CAR - DAY

Willy drives.

JOHNNY

Thanks, Mr. Willy, everyone seems so cool.

(MORE)

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

I'm super excited my movie is going to get made. With real professionals.

WILLY

Yeah, it's great. I'm late for my appointment.

JOHNNY

What kind of appointment?

WILLY

I have a meeting with my doctor.

JOHNNY

Doctor?

WILLY

Yeah, what of it?

JOHNNY

Nothing, I have doctors too. My parents bring me to a psychiatrist at least once a month. My mom always makes sure he gives her the prescription.

WILLY

Prescription for what?

JOHNNY

The pills I take. I've been taking them since I was six.

Willy glances at Johnny.

WILLY

How about you come with me and meet my doctor. No pills, all natural.

JOHNNY

Cool, cool, cool!

EXT. LOS ANGELES HUMANE SOCIETY - DAY

Willy parks his car.

INT. WILLY'S CAR - DAY

Johnny is confused but follows Willy.

EXT. DOG PARK - DAY

Willy walks a massive PIT BULL named BUDDY and Johnny walks a CHIHUAHUA.

JOHNNY

This is your doctor?

WILLY

Yeah, it's a stress reliever.

They let the dogs off their leashes and sit on a bench and watch the dogs.

Buddy sniffs around at another dog and is about to mount her but the DOG OWNER pulls her away. Willy stands up and laughs.

WILLY (CONT'D)

Poor fella, tryin' to get some lovin'. Too bad, his balls are chopped off!

The other dog owner drags her dog away. Willy walks over to Buddy and pets him. The chihuahua jumps onto Johnny's lap. Johnny takes out his cell phone and RECORDS Willy with Buddy.

INT. MILLS HOME - DINING TABLE - NIGHT

Johnny sits at the dining table with his father, John Sr. and his mother, MAUREEN MILLS (45). His father looks at his plate with disgust and pushes the food around. Maureen sits inattentive as she looks at her phone while eating her food. Johnny sits and eats happily.

JOHNNY

How was work today, dad? Any cool surgeries?

JOHN MILLS

Busy as always. I have another trip coming up soon.

JOHNNY

Cool. Cool. Cool. How about you, mom? How was your day?

Maureen doesn't look up from her phone.

MAUREEN MILLS

It was good. Thank you Johnny.

JOHNNY

Cool. Cool. Cool.

JOHN MILLS  
Why are you smiling?

JOHNNY  
Aren't you going to ask me how my  
day was?

JOHN MILLS  
(sarcastically)  
How was your day, Johnny?

JOHNNY  
It was great! Mr. Willy took me  
around town to meet the film crew.  
This movie is going to be so  
awesome. So awesome.

John, Sr. takes out his phone, half listening.

JOHN MILLS  
Yeah, great.

INT. LOCAL 342 TEAMSTERS HEAD QUARTERS - DAY

The team: Johnny, Frank, Eddie and Clifton sit around a long  
plastic table. Johnny explains his movie idea to the crew.

EDDIE  
What was that about the father?

JOHNNY  
He has two rules. One, he's not  
going to yell at them. Two, they're  
going to change the way they play  
the game.

Everyone in the room nods.

WILLY  
Notes, anyone?

Clifton's hand shoots up.

JOHNNY  
Mr. Cliff?

CLIFTON  
Is the dad black?

Confused looks on people's faces, while Gladys rolls her  
eyes.

JOHNNY

Uh...

Johnny cocks his head to one side.

CLIFTON

Look, it's a basketball movie, it only makes sense that it's about a black guy.

Everyone looks at Clifton. Willy breaks the silence.

WILLY

How about we wait till casting?

CLIFTON

At least make one of the kids black, come on now!

WILLY

Of course, yes.

Willy stands up.

WILLY (CONT'D)

I think that's enough to chew on for the moment.

FRANK

What? We just started.

WILLY

I think we take what we've got so far and do some research.

INT. SANTA ANITA PARK - LATE AFTERNOON

They sit at a bar and take whiskey shots together. Everyone is having fun and drinks are flowing. Johnny slaps his credit card on the bar.

JOHNNY

Another round for me and my friends!

Eddie turns to Willy who is drunk.

EDDIE

How is this research?

WILLY

We're here to observe another type of competition.



Eddie nods.

MONTAGE: They all watch the races and continue to drink. Johnny shoots video with his phone. They're all having fun and win a couple of races and high fives are exchanged all around.

INT. STRIP CLUB - NIGHT

They end up at a strip club. Johnny signs a receipt, drinks his beer and records everyone having fun.

He sees Clifton and Gladys share a kiss at the bar. Johnny turns toward the stage. Frank and Eddie cheer on a busty stripper and shower her with dollar bills.

EXT. MILLS HOME - NIGHT

The Teamster Van pulls up to Johnny's house. They drop off Johnny at his house. Johnny stumbles out of the van. Willy pops his head out the window.

WILLY

Hey kid? You gonna be okay?

JOHNNY

Yeah Mr. Willy, I'll be fine.

He waves at everyone as the van pulls away. Johnny stumbles up the driveway and manages to make it to the pool house.

INT. JOHNNY'S BEDROOM OFFICE - DAY

Johnny is passed out on his bed. The door slams off screen. Johnny jolts up and then falls back into bed. His dad hovers over him holding a printed account balance of Johnny's credit card bill.

JOHN MILLS

4500 dollars! In three days!

JOHNNY

Good morning dad, what time is it?

John is furious.

JOHN MILLS

Do you know what this is?

He waves the bill in Johnny's face. Johnny shakes his head.

JOHN MILLS (CONT'D)

Jr, it's your account balance! Do you think I'm made out of money?

JOHNNY

No, I know you're not made out of money. You're actually mostly made out of water...

John, Sr. crushes the bill into a ball and throws it at Johnny.

JOHN MILLS

Why can't you be normal? We'll talk at dinner, I expect you there. You're mother is making some weird vegan meatloaf with a kale casserole. If I have to eat that vegan crap, you do too!

John, Sr. leaves the room.

JOHNNY

I am normal.

INT. MILLS HOME - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Johnny, his father and mother sit around the dinner table. Johnny takes another helping of food.

JOHN MILLS

Johnny, this "movie" you're making--

JOHNNY

Is going great! Mr. Willy is teaching me a lot and Mr. Frank and Mr. Eddie are so helpful-

JOHN MILLS

(irritated)

Johnny, this has to stop. Maureen.

She puts her phone down.

JOHN MILLS (CONT'D)

Do you have anything to say to your son? He's spending money left and right. You should be keeping track of what he's doing for God's sake!

MAUREEN

You're his father.

JOHN MILLS  
I'm suspending your credit card. No  
more allowance. Gone.

JOHNNY  
But dad, the movie.

He reaches into his pocket for his cow squeeze doll.

JOHN MILLS  
You make a movie? A silly idea in  
the first place. I didn't think you  
could actually get people involved  
in it.

MAUREEN  
I think Maria mentioned to me that  
he's paying them, too...

JOHN MILLS  
Jesus, Johnny! I've been paying a  
bunch of bums!

JOHNNY  
(quietly)  
They're not bums.

JOHN MILLS  
It's over Johnny!

Tears start to stream down Johnny's eyes.

Maureen stares at her husband who is breathing heavily. She  
puts her hand on Johnny's clenched hand holding the cow.

MAUREEN  
How about we make an appointment  
with the psychiatrist, get you on  
some better meds?

Johnny pulls his hand away.

JOHNNY  
The dog park will do just fine!

He storms out of the dining room, past Nanny Maria's room.  
She sees him pass by and follows Johnny to the pool house.

INT. JOHNNY'S BEDROOM OFFICE - NIGHT

Johnny paces back and forth across his room squeezing the cow  
stress doll. A knock is heard off screen.

JOHNNY

Go away!

VOICE (O.S.)

Johnny it's me.

Johnny opens the door.

NANNY MARIA

What happened?

JOHNNY

My dad is not giving me the money I need for my movie.

NANNY MARIA

What did your mother say?

JOHNNY

Nothing. They don't believe in me!  
No one does!!!

Nanny Maria stops him and pulls him into a hug.

NANNY MARIA

You can do it on your own, mijo.

JOHNNY

I can't make a movie without money.

NANNY MARIA

Then go make your own money! You are very smart, Johnny, I know you can think of something.

She hugs him tight before she leaves. Johnny continues to squeeze the cow, and then stops. He walks to his desk and plugs his cell phone into his computer.

He opens up an editing program and looks through footage and assemble clips to a timeline. He plays clips over and over again. Laughs and cheers can be heard from the computer. Johnny turns on the webcam.

JOHNNY

Hi! My name is Johnny Mills and...

FADE OUT.

END ACT TWO

FADE IN:

ACT THREE

INT. IMELDA'S BEL AIR HOME - MORNING

Imelda and CONNOR (60 but looks 55), the opposite of Willy, are in their kitchen eating breakfast. Imelda is talking but he clearly isn't listening. He munches on his toast as he browses the Indiegogo website.

Connor sees one titled "Play Your Game", he sees the director's name, JOHNNY MILLS and then notices the name of the producer, WILLY WEST. He clicks on the link.

IMELDA

What do you think about that?

CONNOR

Is that, Willy?

Imelda walks over to look at the screen. Her mouth drops along with the cup of coffee she holds.

On Screen: Johnny's Indegogo campaign video. Johnny talks into his computer's web camera.

JOHNNY

Hi! My name is Johnny Mills and I am a filmmaker. I want to raise funds to make my first movie. You may not know me, but you might know my friends who are helping me to make this happen.

The next shot is a shot of Clifton talking to everyone at headquarters.

CLIFTON

Every single day, my brothers are being carted away into cells. Not because they failed but because we as a society have failed them...

JOHNNY (V.O.)

Mr. Cliff is a great guy. He's a like a superhero, by day he's a Teamseter but by night, he's our production manager. This is his wife Mrs. Gladys, she's a casting agent and she makes the best cookies.

Clifton and Gladys are talking to each other at the bar, they look into each others eyes as if they are the only people in the room. They kiss.

JOHNNY (V.O.)

Mr. Cliff and Mrs. Gladys are so sweet. Another sweet couple that I get to work with are legends.

Frank and Eddie are at the race track cheering on their horse, drinks in hand. The horse pulls ahead of the pack. They high five, hug and then give each other a short kiss before they high five everyone else.

JOHNNY (V.O.)

The great writing duo, Franklin Edelstein and Edward Glasner. They are teaching me so much and I am learning a lot from them.

The next shot is of Willy who unknowingly records himself and fumbles with the camera phone before he takes a picture of Johnny with Frank and Eddie. The next shot is of Willy talking to everyone at headquarters.

WILLY

It's all about story, Johnny came up with a great idea and now it's up to all of us to crank out a great script...

JOHNNY (V.O.)

Mr. Willy is the one who brought us all together. He chose to help me out and believed that we could do this movie. I can't thank him enough, he's the best.

The next shot is of Willy at the dog park playing with Buddy. Johnny appears on screen again via webcam.

JOHNNY

This is the best film crew anyone could ask for and we need your help. Please donate what you can and we can all bring this movie to life. Thank you!

Johnny waves at the camera before it cuts to black.

INT. LOCAL 342 TEAMSTERS HEAD QUARTERS - DAY

Clifton and Gladys walk in, they turn on the lights. Johnny stands up, he's in his boxers.

CLIFTON

Johnny?! What are you doing in the dark? And where are your pants?

JOHNNY

Hi Mr. Cliff! Mrs. Gladys!  
(he laughs)  
I think better!

CLIFTON

With no lights?

JOHNNY

With no pants.

Clifton shakes his head as Johnny puts some jeans on.

CLIFTON

Maybe I should take that key back.

Frank and Eddie walk in.

FRANK

What's going on?

CLIFTON

Nothing.

JOHNNY

Hi, Mr. Frank and Mr. Eddie! Almost everyone's here.

EDDIE

What is all of this about?

Clifton shrugs his shoulders. Willy walks in.

JOHNNY

Mr. Willy! Now we can get started.  
First, we have no more money.

WILLY

Wait. What are you talking about?

JOHNNY

My Dad got really mad when he saw the credit card bill. He said he wasn't gonna give me any more money.

WILLY

What else did he say?

JOHNNY

That he didn't want to pay a "bunch of shmucks."

WILLY

Why would you tell him you were paying us?

JOHNNY

I'm not going to lie to my dad.

WILLY

We're done, too good to be true.

Willy pounds his fist on the table.

JOHNNY

No, no, Mr. Willy. We're just getting started.

WILLY

How?

JOHNNY

Indigogo!

WILLY

What the hell is that?

FRANK

The crowdsourcing site?

WILLY

Crowd whating?

EDDIE

Crowdsourcing.

GLADYS

It's where people go to help fund campaigns.

Johnny turns his laptop around and shows them the page. All their names are listed and there is a \$10,000 dollar goal set for 30 days.

FRANK

\$10,000 in 30 days?

GLADYS

What's this video attached?



JOHNNY

Watch!

Johnny clicks on the play button. The video starts. Cut to reaction of everyone watching.

DISSOLVE TO:

The video stops no one says a word. They continue to stare at the screen, then at each other, then at Johnny.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

It's only been about a day and look! About 1,000 views already and a couple of supporters.

Clifton stands up.

CLIFTON

What's this bull?!? Who gave you permission to put us on blast like that?

FRANK

On the internet. For everyone to see.

EDDIE

We were all drunk, we didn't even know we were being recorded...

WILLY

How are ANY of us going to get a job again!

JOHNNY

I just wanted everyone else out there know how great you all are. Sometimes you gotta just do it. Like Nike says. I didn't want to hurt anyone.

Everyone gets up and leaves.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

But the movie.

Willy shakes his head.

WILLY

Time to go home, kid.

INT. WILLY'S CAR - DAY

Willy sits quiet, he smokes a cigar. Johnny's head rests on the window.

JOHNNY

Are you mad at me too, Mr Willy?

WILLY

Of course I am! You exposed us.

Johnny pulls out his cow. Willy sighs.

JOHNNY

I don't get it. What did I do wrong?

WILLY

Times have changed but some things haven't, especially us. We came before the internet and when everything was online. You just don't do that.

JOHNNY

Do what?

WILLY

"Put it out there for everyone to see." Their private lives and my private life is just that. Private. You Truman Capote'd them.

EXT. STUDIO LOT - DAY

Clifton sits in the shade of an equipment truck. He looks at the newspaper. MIKE (30), a grip, walks over to the truck.

MIKE

We're going to need a couple C-Stands and some flags.

Clifton sticks the newspaper in his back pocket and opens the truck.

MIKE (CONT'D)

I feel like I've seen you somewhere. What's your name?

CLIFTON

Name's Clifton Wilkes, Local 342 Teamsters Board Member. Maybe you've seen me there.

MIKE  
No, that's not it. Are you an actor  
or something?

CLIFTON  
Nope.

MIKE  
Wait, you were in that video. The  
one about that kid who's trying to  
raise money for that movie...  
Clifton Wilkes, the production  
manager. How's that going?

CLIFTON  
That was a bust.

MIKE  
Oh yeah? Bummer, looked pretty cool  
to me.

Clifton pauses a beat before handing him a C-Stand.

INT. FRANK AND EDDIE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Frank and Eddie watch TV. Frank's cell phone rings.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. ALEJANDRO GARCIA'S OFFICE - DAY

ALEJANDRO GARCIA (42) a prominent movie director, calls up  
Frank and Eddie.

ALEJANDRO GARCIA  
Hello? May I please speak with Mr.  
Franklin Edelstein?

FRANK  
Speaking, who's this?

ALEJANDRO GARCIA  
It's Alejandro Garcia, I just  
wanted to give you a call because I  
saw that video of you and Eddie  
Glasner.

Frank looks at Eddie with wide eyes. He covers the  
mouthpiece.

EDDIE  
Who is it?

FRANK  
Alejandro Garcia.

EDDIE  
(squealing)  
Put him on speaker phone!

Frank presses a button.

FRANK  
Hello, Mr. Garcia.

ALEJANDRO GARCIA  
Please call me, Alé. I just wanted to say that it's great of you two to support that sweet boy. I've always admired your work, keep it up.

They look at each other.

ALEJANDRO GARCIA (CONT'D)  
Hello, Frank?

FRANK  
Yes! Thank you, Alé.

ALEJANDRO GARCIA  
I have to go, keep fighting the good fight. Good bye.

FRANK  
We will, good bye.

Frank hangs up the phone.

EDDIE  
Oh. My. God.

FRANK  
Alejandro Garcia!

EDDIE  
Don't you mean, Alé?

They both laugh and give each other a sweet kiss. Frank's phone rings again. He answers it.

FRANK  
(into the phone)  
Hello?

RYAN (ON PHONE)  
 Hello? Is this Mr. Frank Edelstein?  
 My name is Ryan. I'm from "OUT"  
 magazine.

Frank and Eddie look at each other, eyes big and mouths open.

EXT. DOG PARK - DAY

Willy sits on a bench, Buddy walks up to Willy and rests his head on Willy's lap. Willy pats his head.

EXT. WILLY'S HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

Pulls up in his driveway. He gets out of his car and checks his mail. The young couple from across the street wave at him and give him a thumbs up. Willy slowly waves back. He looks at his mail opens a letter from the mortgage company he reads:

You are 60 days late behind in paying your mortgage. We would like to discuss foreclosure alternatives with you...

INT. WILLY'S OFFICE - LATE AFTERNOON

Willy puts his mail down and turns on his computer. He visits the Indiegogo site. The doorbell rings. He answers the door. It's Imelda, she lets herself in.

IMELDA  
 Alimony is late again.

WILLY  
 I'm in a bind, right now.

IMELDA  
 A bind on, Indiegogo? Is that how you make your money these days?

WILLY  
 I didn't make that account it was the kids idea...

IMELDA  
 I saw the video, you look like a man having a second mid-life crisis.

WILLY  
 Yeah, yeah.

IMELDA

Why don't we take a look at some of the comments...

Imelda brings it up on her phone.

WILLY

You can see it on your phone?

She rolls her eyes.

IMELDA

Ok, here: "I didn't know Edelstine and Glasner were still around, loved those movies." "The guy narrating seems pretty cool." "Willy West, sounds familiar. Looks like a douche..."

Imelda smiles at Willy then continues to read.

IMELDA (CONT'D)

...but I kind of like him. Good job Johnny!"

Imelda looks up to see Willy smile at her.

WILLY

Imelda dear, I think it's time for you to go.

Willy nudges her to the door.

IMELDA

You still have to pay alimony!

Willy shuts the door. He returns to his desk. The Indiedgogo page and mortgage company letter stare at Willy.

Willy flips open his phone and dials a number.

INT. FRANK AND EDDIE'S APARTMENT - LATE AFTERNOON

Frank and Eddie watch TV. Eddie's cell phone rings. He sees the number and hangs it up.

FRANK

Who was it?

EDDIE

No one.

INT. WILLY'S OFFICE - LATE AFTERNOON

Willy dials another number.

EXT. ON LOCATION SHOOT - LATE AFTERNOON

Clifton sits on the back bumper of a truck. His phone rings. He looks at the caller ID.

GRIP DUDE (O.S.)  
Hey, Cliff, can you open up please?

Clifton looks up. He hangs up the call.

CLIFTON  
You need to get in there, boss?

INT. WILLY'S OFFICE - LATE AFTERNOON

Willy puts his phone down and tilts his head back. He rubs his eyes and sighs. He picks up the phone again and dials one more time.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. JOHNNY'S BEDROOM OFFICE - LATE AFTERNOON

Johnny lies in bed watching a movie. His phone rings.

JOHNNY  
Hello?

WILLY  
Hey Johnny, it's Willy. Please don't hang up on me.

JOHNNY  
Why would I do that? You just called me.

WILLY  
Never mind. Listen. I've been thinking about things and looking at the Indian A Go Go thing.

JOHNNY  
Indiegogo? I was going to take it down--

WILLY

No wait! Don't do that. I'm sorry about what I said yesterday. Something about that video was pretty great, I just didn't see it at first. I tried calling everyone but no one would listen.

Willy waits for Johnny's response.

JOHNNY

Yeah, I need to think about things too. I'll get back to you Mr. Willy.

Willy hangs up the phone, puts his head on his desk and GROANS.

INT. JOHNNY'S BEDROOM OFFICE - LATE AFTERNOON

Johnny dials a number.

JOHNNY

Mr. Frank? It's me, Johnny.

FADE OUT.

END ACT THREE



FADE IN:

ACT FOUR

INT. LOCAL 342 TEAMSTERS HEAD QUARTERS - DAY

Johnny stands at the white board. Notes are scribbled across it. Willy walks in.

WILLY  
What're you doing here?

JOHNNY  
Making the movie.

WILLY  
By yourself?

Eddie and Frank walk in, hand in hand.

WILLY (CONT'D)  
(to Frank and Eddie)  
Frank? Eddie?

EDDIE  
Johnny's not giving up, and neither  
are we.

FRANK  
We have a script to write.

They walk up to Johnny and give him a hug. Clifton and Gladys walk in. Clifton shakes Willy's hand.

WILLY  
All right then, it looks like we're  
making a movie. Johnny, explain to  
me this Indy Goo Ga thing.

Johnny brings his laptop over to Willy.

JOHNNY  
Other people look at projects and  
we try to get them to give us  
money. We have a month to raise  
\$10,000. So far, I think we're

WILLY  
What if don't make it?

JOHNNY  
We get nothing.

INT. MILLS HOME - NIGHT

Johnny is at the dinner table with Nanny Maria.

JOHNNY  
Where's mom and dad?

NANNY MARIA  
Your dad is on his business trip  
and your mom is out with her  
friends tonight.

Johnny quietly eats his food.

NANNY MARIA (CONT'D)  
How's your movie coming along?

JOHNNY  
It's going great! Everyone is  
really working together and the  
campaign is going well. Back on  
track!

He gives Maria a thumbs up. Nanny Maria smiles.

INT. LOCAL 342 TEAMSTERS HEAD QUARTERS - DAY

Willy is standing at the front of the room. The rest of the  
team filters in and sit around the table.

WILLY  
I have an idea to make sure our  
campaign picks up more traction. We  
need to make a sizzle reel and  
shoot out a couple of the key  
scenes.

FRANK  
How are we going to do that with no  
money?

JOHNNY  
We can't use any of the campaign  
money.

WILLY  
Right, in the mean time we need to  
raise the money ourselves.

CLIFTON  
How?

EXT. DOLLAR TREE STRIP MALL - MONTAGE - DAY

The team has a car wash. Johnny washes cars along with Frank and Eddie. Cliff stands at the sidewalk with a sign directing people to line up for the car wash. People from the Spanish Evangelical Church help out and the Asian donut shop owner and Gladys sell goodies as people wait for their car. Willy takes care of the cash flow at another table.

INT. LOCAL 342 TEAMSTERS HEAD QUARTERS - DAY

Willy talks to everyone.

WILLY

Great job! I think, we've raided enough to start us off, let's get this sizzle reel made. Cliff?

CLIFTON

I'll make some phone calls to some people at the lot and see what they say.

WILLY

Perfect. Johnny, Frank and Eddie can go through the script and get a couple scenes ready to shoot. Gladys can start auditioning people and I will work on getting a name actor.

Everyone gets to work on their tasks, typing, calling, etc.

Johnny and Eddie huddle around a computer. Frank and Gladys work on a different computer. Clifton hangs up his phone.

CLIFTON

Looks like we can use a set on the lot but we've gotta shoot graveyard shifts. There's some equipment that we can use, too.

GLADYS

Frank just gave me the character descriptions. I'll start auditioning tomorrow, here at the office.

Willy hangs up the phone.

WILLY

Great news everyone, I got a name.

Everyone stops what they are doing.

WILLY (CONT'D)

Marlon Ryans is going to be in it.

JOHNNY

No way! He was amazing in, *The Tide Turns!*

EDDIE

(to Frank and Gladys)

That old hack is still alive?

SIZZLE REEL MONTAGE

INT. LOCAL 342 TEAMSTERS HEAD QUARTERS - DAY

MARLON RYANS (65) stands in front of Willy, Johnny and Gladys. He plays the title character, Allen and auditions with different people to play his daughter and ex-wife.

EXT. STUDIO LOT - NIGHT

It's midnight and the team help unload the equipment truck into a soundstage.

INT. SOUNDSTAGE - NIGHT

All the actors, the main team, and a couple other people they've gotten for crew, make-up, wardrobe, etc. Are on set. Everyone looks tired, but Willy goes around to everyone to hand out energy drinks for the long night of shooting

INT. LOCAL 342 TEAMSTERS HEAD QUARTERS - NIGHT

The office has turned into Johnny's editing room. The little toy cow squeeze doll sits on top of the monitor, looking, as Johnny edits. Willy sleeps in a corner of the room in a chair.

END MONTAGE

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. LOCAL 342 TEAMSTERS HEAD QUARTERS - DAY

Frank and Gladys pace around the room as Eddie, Clifton, and Willy look over Johnny's shoulder as he the final touches on the video.

They all look at the sizzle reel.

Johnny clicks the button to post it.

JOHNNY

Done.

WILLY

Great work, everyone. Let's all go home and get a good nights rest.

INT. WILLY'S CAR - NIGHT

Willy drives Johnny home.

WILLY

Good work, Johnny.

JOHNNY

Thanks Mr. Willy. You know I couldn't have done any of this without you. We *really* are a team huh? I've never felt this good about anything ever before.

INT. WILLY'S OFFICE - DAY

Willy sits at his desk, his phone rings.

WILLY (INTO THE PHONE)

Hello, this is Willy West.

BRYAN WARD (OVER THE PHONE)

Hello Mr. West! This is Bryan Ward with Rolling Hills Media, I just saw the sizzle reel attached to your Indiegogo campaign. It's very interesting.

WILLY

Yeah?

BRYAN WARD (O.S.)

We're interested in buying the rights Mr. West.

(MORE)

BRYAN WARD (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
We think it's a great idea and  
would like to do something with it.  
I'm going to set you up with one of  
our producers to meet with you

WILLY  
Sure, let's see what you got.

FADE OUT.

END ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

ACT FIVE

INT. WILLY'S CAR - DAY

Willy drives to Burbank with Johnny.

JOHNNY

What kind of meeting is this again?

WILLY

All you need to know is that these people have real money, to make a real movie.

JOHNNY

But we're real and making a movie. The Indiegogo is going well. I still don't understand.

Johnny takes out the little toy cow squeeze doll.

WILLY

We wouldn't need the Indiegogo campaign anymore.

JOHNNY

But how about Frank, Eddie, Cliff and Gladys? Shouldn't they be here?

WILLY

You and I are what all we need at this meeting.

JOHNNY

But it's all our movie.

WILLY

Let's just see where this goes and then we can tell everyone after.

Johnny nods his head.

INT. ROLLING HILLS MEDIA BUILDING - DAY

Willy talks to a receptionist, ELIZA (30), while Johnny looks at the different movie posters on the wall.

WILLY

Willy West and Johnny Mills. We have an appointment with Joey Banks.

Eliza looks at her computer and then makes a call.

ELIZA

Please, have a seat. Won't take too long.

WILLY

Thank you.

Willy takes Johnny over to the seats.

WILLY (CONT'D)

Remember Johnny. Let me do all the talking. If they ask you a questions, try to punt it back to me.

JOHNNY

But I don't have a ball to punt.

WILLY

Just let me take care of talking. Just smile and nod.

Johnny smiles and nods.

WILLY (CONT'D)

Perfect.

ELIZA

If you two could please follow me this way, I'll show you to Ms. Banks's office.

Eliza leads them to the office.

WILLY

Excuse me? Ms. Banks?

ELIZA

Yes, she's been here a long time and is itching to get a new project.

ELIZA knocks.

JOEY (O.S.)

Come in!

ELIZA

Good luck!

Willy and Johnny walk into a huge office that overlooks the city.



Joey gets up from her seat to shake their hands.

JOEY

Please, sit. I'm glad you came to  
meet with me. I just saw the  
Indiegogo videos and I must say,  
I'm impressed.

Willy and Johnny take a seat. Johnny looks amazed at  
everything but Willy is a veteran, his face shows nothing.

JOEY (CONT'D)

Bryan called you yesterday to  
discuss a possible deal to buy the  
rights of the movie.

WILLY

Tell us what you have in mind.

FADE OUT.

END EPISODE

#GRETAHASSTYLE

Written by

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FADE IN:

INT. GRETA'S ROOM - DAY

Greta Stiles (83) sits on the edge of her bed. Always stylish, she wears a black long sleeved button up henley shirt, a modern, knit cardigan, a pair of dark straight leg jeans, and flats. The TV is turned on showing a fashion magazine show. On the bedside table sits various magazines such as, People and Vanity Fair.

Greta looks at pictures on the walls, adorned with old head shots, posters, magazine covers, and production stills from her life as a young model.

A KNOCK is heard O.S. Greta freezes. The door opens. JOHN SANTOS (25) a flamboyant Filipino nurse walks in. He sports a high fade pompadour hairstyle, a Daniel Wellington watch with a blue and green striped wrist strap and a pair of black Timberland slip-on shoes.

JOHN

Good morning Ms. Stiles! Don't you look fabulous today?

Greta does not look over at John.

JOHN (CONT'D)

But then again, you look fabulous everyday!

(under his breath)

Better than half the people I know.

John laughs and then sighs when Greta does not join in his amusement. He clears his throat.

JOHN (CONT'D)

It's time for your daily walk outside!

Greta grumbles.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Come on, it's a beautiful day!

Greta averts his gaze.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Here, let me help you up.

GRETA

I can manage just fine. Just give me a second.

John places his hand on his hip.

JOHN

All right then, after you.

John follows closely behind as Greta slowly stands up and shuffles out of her room into the

HALLWAY

Where she encounters some of the other RESIDENTS OF SHADY OAKS RETIREMENT HOME. PAULA MARTINEZ (80) with assistance of a WALKER passes by. NURSE AMY (35) follows behind her, paying more attention to her cell than her charge.

PAULA

Hello, Greta. Beautiful morning isn't it?

Greta glances at her and continues to walk on. Paula's smile disappears.

JOHN

Hi, Mrs. Martinez and Amy! You two look great today. Don't mind Ms. Stiles, she hasn't had breakfast yet.

He leans over and whispers into Greta's ear.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Not as beautiful as you Ms. Stiles, rest assured.

Greta ignores John. She stops right before the sliding doors at, a bulletin board filled with flyers for upcoming events and activities. A flyer with social media logos catches Greta's eye.

The flyer reads, "Learn to Connect to Millions. Social Media Workshop. Next Monday morning, 10 A.M."

John scans the board.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Oh, look, Ms. Stiles. A knitting workshop! They're making bean bag owls!

Greta takes the Social Media Flyer off the board.

INT. COMPUTER LAB - DAY

Greta sits in the back row of the lab for the social media workshop. She wears a sterling enamel hummingbird brooch on her scarf. Several people sit scattered around the lab. JANET (75) walks past Greta.

JANET

Hi, Greta, beautiful brooch you got there.

Greta forces a small smile and nod. Janet sits toward the front of the class. MOLLY (26), hipsterish, stands in front of the class. She talks into a microphone headset.

MOLLY

Hello, everyone. Can everyone hear me, okay? Is this thing on?

She fumbles with the belt pack and increases the volume.

MOLLY (CONT'D)

All right, I think that's better... Welcome! Today, I'm going to be talking about Social Media and Social networking. Does anyone know what that is?

A man, JERRY (75) raises his hand.

JERRY

Is it that Face Space, my grandson is into? You tweety twat things?

Molly politely smiles.

MOLLY

Yes, sort of. It's a way to connect to people all around the world.

Another man, MARVIN (85) raises his hand, he wears a small U.S. Flag pin on his lapel.

MARVIN

I thought we were watching Apocalypse Now in here!

Molly's brows furrow. Janet turns toward him.

JANET

They're showing that in the media room!

MARVIN

Not here?

JANET

No!

Marvin pushes his chair back and walks out as he gives his opinion.

MARVIN

All of this is crap you know! It's an invasion of privacy! First they take away our guns, and now they want to play big brother! Half twit millennials. Probably brainwashed and sent by the feds!

JANET

(to Molly)

Don't mind Marvin dear.

MOLLY

Okay... Any questions so far?

GRETA

Excuse me?

MOLLY

Yes?

GRETA

What are followers?

MOLLY

Followers are other users that "follow" you and receive your posts in their home stream.

GRETA

Like, fans?

MOLLY

Exactly. When you create posts that interest people, they will follow you. They share your posts and you can gain more followers that way.

GRETA

I see. And how about the pound sign I see everywhere in magazines and tv shows?

MOLLY

Pound Sign?

GRETA

The number sign on the telephone?

MOLLY

Oh! You mean a hashtag?

GRETA

Sure?

MOLLY

A hashtag is used with key words to make it easier for users to find specific things of interest.

Greta nods her head.

MOLLY (CONT'D)

By the way that little hummingbird brooch is so beautiful and I love the way you wear it! That kind of tip is Tweet worthy for sure!

Greta smiles. Her cheeks turn a slight red. She strokes her brooch.

MOLLY (CONT'D)

All right, let's create Instagram accounts! Did everyone do the pre-homework assignment and bring a picture for your profile?

Greta pulls out a photo of herself when she was younger. This is her profile picture as well as her first post.

Greta jots some notes on her note pad and types on her computer.

On screen the tweet is typed out with her twitter handle @GRETAHASSTYLE. Greta's tweets are read by the voice of young Greta, think Rosamund Pike.

@GRETAHASSTYLE (V.O.)

Hello world, my name is Greta and I'm here to give tips and insights on fashion. #Fashion #Filtersrock

Greta takes a breath and hits the "Tweet" button.

FADE TO:

INT. COMPUTER LAB - DAY

Greta sits at a computer in the back of the room. There two other people in the lab including Marvin.

She logs into her Instagram account. Next to her is a binder filled with notes scribbled on various pages. She lets out a small giggle and looks around to make sure no one has heard her.

Greta scrolls through her posts. As she reads the comments, their voices are heard O.S. while their comment is typed on screen. Greta's post shows an assortment of her broaches.

@LORAKING (V.O.)

This brooch tip was genius. I now find myself at antique shops buying broaches! #broochesfordays #GretaHasStyle

The next comment responds to a post that shows a bottle of olive oil, sprigs of mint, and a bowl of sugar.

@GLAMJAIMIE (V.O.)

OMG, Miss. @GretaHasStyle this DIY sugar scrub was FABULOUS! The hint of mint opened up my pores and my sinuses. LOL! Love you girl! #Softskin #GretaHasStyle

The third post is a response to a picture from a red carpet event.

@LILLIZANNE (V.O.)

Bwahahahaha! Miss Greta you slay me! On point with that red dress at the red carpet event. She should've just stopped to lie down and stop the shame! Too funny! #GretaHasStyle

John enters the computer lab with a glass of water and a small cup filled of pills.

Greta slides down into her chair a bit. He scans the room. Gotcha.

JOHN

You didn't take your meds this morning!

Greta sits up, her mood is ruined.



GRETA

I don't need those. I'm, fine.

John places the glass of water and pills on the table next to her. He sits down and crosses his arms.

She looks at him and sighs. She grabs the cup of pills.

JOHN

One by one please.

GRETA

Child, please. I've been taking pills before your mama was born.

She pops a couple pills in her mouth then takes a swig of water. She continues to do the same with the rest.

She opens her mouth after swallowing the last pill and shows it to John.

GRETA (CONT'D)

Happy?

JOHN

Yes, thank you.

Greta gives him a slight smile and turns back to the computer.

GRETA

Thank you, you can go now.

John looks at the computer screen.

JOHN

Are you looking on Instagram?

His eyes widen as he continues to look at her screen.

JOHN (CONT'D)

O. Em. Gee! 105 followers? It's only been a week since that workshop. Wait...

Greta rolls her eyes. John sits in an empty chair.

JOHN (CONT'D)

You're *THE* hashtag Greta Has Style!

John laughs, and Greta shushes him.

GRETA

Calm yourself Keep quiet! Someone  
will hear.

Greta looks at Marvin. He talks to his daughter and  
grandchild through Skype.

MARVIN

Can you hear me?

His face is close to the camera. His daughter has her toddler  
and 5-year-old son on her lap is on his computer screen.

DAUGHTER

Pop, we can hear you fine.

5-YEAR-OLD

Grandpa, I can see up your nose!

Marvin sits back in his chair and smiles.

DAUGHTER

That's better.

Greta grumbles.

GRETA

Please keep this to yourself.

JOHN

(making lock and key  
gesture)

Ok, ok, ok. Lips are sealed.

INT. GRETA'S ROOM - DAY

Greta sits on the side of her bed. She rubs her knees. A  
knock is heard O.S.

GRETA

Who is it?

JOHN (O.S.)

It's me, John! Good morning, Ms.  
Stiles. Are you decent?

GRETA

Yeah, yeah, yeah.

John opens the door. He wears a big smile on his face.

GRETA (CONT'D)

Why are you so damn perky all the time?

JOHN

Life is too short not to. You ready for your daily walk!

GRETA

I don't know if I can get up.

JOHN

Mmmm, how about a walk to the computer lab, Miss  
(He looks out the door then  
whispers)  
Greta Has Style.

John lets out a giggle. Greta nods and stands, but she quickly sits back into the bed.

GRETA

Maybe, not today.

JOHN

What about your adoring fans?

Greta frowns and looks up at John.

GRETA

You're right, I can't wait too long in between posts.

She smiles at him with a sweet smile.

GRETA (CONT'D)

I think I need a tablet, that way I can keep up right here in my own room.

John shakes his head.

JOHN

You know that's against the rules. No personal computers or devices in their rooms.

(whispers)

Too many porn sites for the old jocks.

GRETA

I just want to update my accounts.

JOHN  
I know, I'm sorry.

GRETA  
Could you please close the door and  
take a seat?

John closes the door and pulls a chair to sit across from Greta. She averts her eyes from John and he takes her hands into his.

JOHN  
I want to help, but I can't break  
the rules. You understand right?

Greta looks at the pictures on the wall.

GRETA  
I used to be young and beautiful.  
Everyone adored me. Now, look at  
me. No one, knows who I am.

JOHN  
You're followers do!

GRETA  
They think I'm one of them.

JOHN  
That's the beauty of the internet.  
People see what you want them to  
see. You are in control of your  
persona.

GRETA  
You're right. That's why I need a  
tablet.

JOHN  
I don't know.

Greta smiles again and bats her eyes.

GRETA  
Oh, come on, John. You only live  
once. It'll be our little secret.

JOHN  
How about we go take a short walk  
outside and I promise, I will see  
what I can do. How does that sound?

Greta slowly stands up, and walks out the door. John smiles.

INT. GRETA'S ROOM - DIFFERENT DAY

Greta sits at her desk. A small tablet with keyboard is opened up in front of her. Her binder of notes are sprawled on the Desk. John sits next to her. They laugh.

GRETA

Oh my stars, I can't believe that I have over 300 followers.

JOHN

I'm not, you're a fashion legend.

John stands up out of his chair and looks at her.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Madame, I'm in awe of your presence and I am not worthy. All hail the Queen of Style.

John curtsies in front of Greta who lets out a joyful laugh.

GRETA

Oh you, stop that. You're such a drama queen.

JOHN

Why, thank you, your majesty.

John sits back down and looks at the tablet screen.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Wait, what is that? Is that Perez Hilton?

JOHN (CONT'D)

That's not just anyone, that's Perez Hilton?

A video post of Perez Hilton's face is captioned with, #Gretahasstyle.

GRETA

Who's that?

JOHN

Perez Hilton writes gossip posts about celebrities and stuff.

GRETA

What does he want?

JOHN

I don't know, click it!

Greta clicks the video.

A video of Perez Hilton talking to the camera, portrait style, plays.

PEREZ HILTON

Hey there, You Tubers and internet watchers. I just wanted to make a quick shout out to my girl, the one and only, young, hip and wise, @GretaHasStyle. You're always on point! You're my spirit animal. Keep 'em coming! Muah, muah, muah!

The video ends and Greta shuts her tablet. She turns to John.

GRETA

Was a good thing?

JOHN

More like a *great* thing!

John holds his hand out for a high five. Greta returns it and he rubs his hand.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Ow! Dang girl, definitely have some bite left in you!

Greta lightly shoves John and they both laugh.

FADE TO:

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

John walks down the hall. He gets to Greta's door, it's open.

Greta isn't in bed and he sees Nurse Amy fixing the bed.

JOHN

Hi Amy! Where's Ms. Stiles?

Amy does not smile back.

AMY

She had a stroke this morning.

John stands still.

JOHN

What?

AMY

They rushed her to McKay at around  
5 A.M.

John is at a lost for words. He looks at the empty bed, then Amy.

JOHN

I'll take care of the rest. You can  
go honey.

AMY

She'll probably be okay John.

Amy walks out. He walks to the bed and takes a seat. He punches the pillow and sobs.

FADE TO BLACK

INT. GRETA'S ROOM - DAY

Greta lies in bed, the right side of her face has collapsed. A knock is heard. Her eyes dart toward the door. It opens and John walks in. He carries a bouquet of flowers.

His furrowed brow relaxes and he smiles at Greta. He walks to the side of her bed and takes her right hand. He squeezes it, but she does not squeeze back. She turns her head away.

FADE TO BLACK

INT. GRETA'S ROOM - DAY

Greta sits up in bed. John cuts up food and puts a spoon of it up to her crooked mouth. She shies away from the food.

JOHN

Darling, you need to eat something.

Greta stares at John. He holds her stare. She takes a bite.

JOHN (CONT'D)

There you go. How about we try some  
physical therapy today?

Greta shakes her head she swallows her food.

GRETA

(her words are slightly  
slurred)  
Not today.

John sighs and puts more food on the spoon and offers it to Greta. She lifts her left hand to block her face.

FADE TO BLACK

INT. GRETA'S ROOM - DAY

Greta sits up on the edge of the bed, John helps to steady her. Her left arm grips a walker. A physical therapist, DAN (38), stands in front of her holding the walker steady.

DAN

Okay Ms. Greta. On three. One...  
Two... Three...

Greta uses what strength she has to lift herself up. She manages to stand up before she quickly sits back in the bed.

JOHN

That was great! How about we give  
it one more go.

Greta shakes her head.

GRETA

That's enough for the day.

John nods his head at Dan.

DAN

Great job! You'll be up and running  
in no time, see you tomorrow.

Dan leaves the room. John helps Greta back into bed. She is defeated.

She looks up at her tablet and binder on the desk. John follows her gaze.

JOHN

Tomorrow is a new day! And besides,  
I think you've forgotten about your  
loyal followers. Why don't we see  
what the world is up to?

Greta looks at her lifeless right arm, and then at John.

JOHN (CONT'D)

That's why I'm here, silly!

John's turns to get the tablet. Greta smiles for the first time since her stroke. He turns back.



JOHN (CONT'D)  
There's that fabulous smile.

John sits by her bed places her binder on the bed next to her good arm. He opens up the tablet on his lap.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
All right my dear, I need your password.

Greta gives John a look. He throws it back at her.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
I'm good, but I'm not a mind reader?

Greta lets out a laugh and sighs. She opens up her binder, leafs through some pages and finds what she is looking for. She points at a note on the page. John looks at Greta, smiles big, and types on the tablet.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
And, we are in!

John looks around at the screen. His eyes grow wide. Greta tries to look at the screen.

GRETA  
I've been away for too long.

John turns the screen toward her.

JOHN  
You're not going to believe this.

He turns the screen toward her. She reads: "125,000 followers"

GRETA  
My word.

JOHN  
Let's see what people are saying.

As John reads the comments, they are superimposed on screen. The posts are typed on as the words are said in V.O.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
@JohnnyLo says "Greta how did I not find you sooner! Love the warm coconut oil tip..."

John's voice transforms into the voices of the commenters. A selfie of @Johnnylo shows him stylin' and profilin'.

@JOHNNYLO (V.O.)

My hair has been on point and the compliments are non-stop. Girl you are amazing. Tell me what to do about my dry T-Zone. #GretaHasStyle

A meme of MANDY SWIFT (23), an actress, stands at a red carpet wearing a RED DRESS.

@ANDIBEE (V.O.)

OMG! Miss Greta, Did you see Mandy Swift on the red carpet? Was she on point or NOT?! I don't know what to think! #onthefence #GretaHasStyle

Greta smiles as the last tweet is read.

JOHN

So, Miss. @GretaHasStyle. What's next?

Greta flips through some pages in her binder and points at another page.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Fabulous and prepared as always. I'll go get a bowl and some cherries for the pic.

John leaves the room.

The Instagram Post is a picture of mashed up red cherries in a wooden bowl.

@GRETAHASSTYLE (V.O.)

Hello, my little stylagmites and stylagmites. I've been getting questions about what do with dry skin. One word: Cherries! Apply the pulp of. Leave on for 15 minutes and wash with lukewarm water before bed. #CherryMaskForDrySkin

INT. GRETA'S ROOM - DAY

Greta and John continue to work on Greta's posts. On the TV is the Netflix show, *Stranger Things*. Greta leafs through her binder and some magazines. She points at pages for John to write about.

@GRETAHASSTYLE (V.O.)

You can never be too young to love fashion and that is just what the young cast of "Stranger Things" is doing. Isn't Millie Bobby Brown just the cutest thing on the red carpet these days! Classically stylish, innocent and playful. Love it! #StrangerThings #MillieBobbyBrownHasStyle

FADE TO

Greta wraps a soft pink scarf around her neck. She, John, and Dan work on a couple bedside exercises.

The Instagram post is of a younger Greta in black and white, with the same scarf style.

@GRETAHASSTYLE (V.O.)

Scarf weather is coming up! Try wearing it Bunny Ear style. Drape the scarf over your shoulder, one end longer than the other and looped around the neck twice. Tie a simple overhand knot with both ends and so that two ends are dangling slightly to the side. Enjoy! #BunniesHaveStyle

The three of them slowly walk out of the room.

FADE TO BLACK

EXT. PARK BENCH - DAY

Greta and John sit outside on a park bench. Other seniors and nurses pass by.

JOHN

I'm so proud of how far you've come.

GRETA

It hasn't been easy.

JOHN

But you pushed through. You're an inspiration to me.

Greta sighs.

GRETA  
I'm old, and alone.

John sits up and leans in close to Greta.

JOHN  
Not true, you are loved by so many!

GRETA  
Pssssh. They think, I'm young and one of them. If they ever found out, poof. They would leave me, just like everyone else in my life.

JOHN  
You're a legend. Legends live forever. It doesn't matter how old you are, what you look like, or whatever.

John waits for a response. Greta stays silent.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
Does Instagram make you happy?

GRETA  
Yes, it does.

JOHN  
Good, because you make so many others happy too. They love you!

GRETA  
Thank you, I'm not an easy person to get along with.

JOHN  
We are kindred spirits Ms. Stiles.

John links his arm with Greta and rests his head on her shoulder. She stiffens at first but then rests her head on his. They both gaze out the window at the sunset as her latest post is typed on screen and read.

@GRETAHASSTYLE (V.O.)  
The secret to staying young is to be happy, love all and let love in.

FADE TO BLACK

INT. JOHN'S CAR - DAY

John pulls up into a parking spot. He pulls out his phone and looks at his feed. The responses are superimposed on screen and read as John scrolls through.

@GLAMJAIMIE (V.O.)  
 Love you @GretaHasStyle! Words of  
 wisdom to live by everyday!  
 #LoveForAll #Happiness  
 #GretaHasStyle

@ANDIBEE (V.O.)  
 Beautiful words to live by.  
 @GretaHasStyle, forever will your  
 words ring true. #LiveForever  
 #GretaHasStyle

John clicks to her profile. His eyes widen, she has 435,000 followers.

INT. SHADY OAKS RETIREMENT HOME COMMON AREA - DAY

John walks in with a spring in his step and a huge smile on his face. He greets residents with a nod. Marvin walks by.

JOHN  
 Hi Marvin! Beautiful day today!

MARVIN  
 Oh yea? Says who? The IRS?

Nothing can ruin John's day.

John gets to Greta's door. He knocks. There is no answer. He knocks one more time. No answer. He opens the door.

INT. GRETA'S ROOM - DAY

John sees Greta is still in bed. He puts his hand on his hip.

JOHN  
 Still asleep? Ms. Stiles, it's time  
 to get up, I have something to tell  
 you!

Greta does not move. John walks to her side.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
 Wakey, wakey fabulous, la-

John touches her hand. It's cold. He quickly recoils, drops his phone, and freezes. John does not breath as he looks at her. He quickly acts and yells.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
Greta! Greta! Wake up!

John shakes her and checks for a pulse. Nothing. He pushes the call light by the bed repeatedly and starts compressions. Tears stream down his face. He yells toward the door.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
Code blue! Someone please help!  
Code blue!

People rush in the room with a crash cart.

FADE TO BLACK

INT. GRETA'S ROOM - DAY

John stands in the empty room. He looks at the pictures on the wall before taking them down.

He places them in a cardboard box on the bed that contains her tablet and binder. He leaves the room.

The door opens and John grabs the box.

INT. JOHN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

John places the box of Greta's things by his desk, and walks to the

KITCHEN

He opens the refrigerator and looks inside, nothing looks interesting. He shuts the door and walks to the

LIVING ROOM

He sits on the couch and turns on the TV. A red carpet event is on. He watches for a couple of seconds, turns it off and runs his hands through his hair.

He walks to his desk, turns ON the lamp and pulls out one of Greta's pictures from the box. He stares at it and places it on the desk.

He pulls out Greta's tablet and binder of notes from the box.

He opens up the binder, turns on the tablet, and types in the password: JohnHasStyl3.

He leafs through the pages and finds the note he's looking for. He starts to type as Greta's Twitter voice talks.

@GRETAHASSTYLE (V.O.)

Any stylagtites and stylagmites out there with pesky split ends? I know you're out there! Mix egg, olive oil or almond oil and honey as a hair mask and wash off after 30-45 minutes for shiny healthy looking hair all day everyday. #StyleIsLife

FADE OUT.

WALK AWAY

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FADE IN:

INT. BANK OFFICE - DAY

MAX ESPOSITO (34), sits across bank manager BRYAN WALSH (50). His office is adorned with sports memorabilia. A football with various signatures sits on a stand on his desk.

BRYAN

Max, I can't tell you enough how big of a fan I am.

MAX

Thank you, Mr. Walsh.

BRYAN

Please, call me Bryan.

MAX

Thank you, Bryan.

BRYAN

I've followed your career from the start. First round draft pick, top of your game... I always scooped you up for my fantasy league. My lucky charm.

MAX

That's great.

BRYAN

That is until you tore your ACL. Never the same. Broke my heart...

Max clears his throat.

MAX

Yes, well, that's the NFL.

Bryan picks up the stack of papers in front of him and shuffles through them.

BRYAN

Yes, yes. Back to business. You see Max, with all that's happened with, uh... and with the market not doing well..

Max shakes his head. He knows where this is going.

BRYAN (CONT'D)

We can't grant you a loan. If it were up to me, I would give it to you in a heart beat.

MAX

Then why don't you?

BRYAN

It's tough when you have no collateral after everything that's happened.

MAX

You're going to get it back ten fold, I swear. I just need this leg up.

BRYAN

Honestly, I did all I could.

Max pounds his fist on the desk and stands up.

MAX

If that's it, I'll see myself out.

Max walks toward the door.

BRYAN

Max, one more thing.

Max turns back.

MAX

Yes?

Bryan picks up the football.

BRYAN

Would you sign this ball for me?

Max looks at the ball and then Bryan. He sighs.

MAX

Sure.

Max signs the ball. Bryan takes out his cell and takes a selfie next to Max.

INT. DARK ROOM - DAY

MAX (34) and ROBERT (34), sit in a dark room. On a TV screen in the distance, a football game plays.

MAX

Look at this fool number 54.

ROBERT

That's right, keep watching.

On the TV screen, #54, a linebacker in a blue uniform plays defense. The blue team stands across the white team at the line of scrimmage.

The ball is hiked and the quarterback scrambles to find a...

POP! #54, sacks the quarterback. The two men laugh.

Max turns to Robert who has an aux cable around his arm. He holds up a syringe and squeezes a drop of liquid out.

Robert takes a deep breath and plunges the needle into his arm. He waits for the red, and then pushes the heroin. He releases the tourniquet, lights a joint, takes a drag, and smiles at Max.

ROBERT (CONT'D)

What do you mean, were? I still am baby! You're the, were.

Max looks concerned. He looks at the drugs like they are candy.

ROBERT (CONT'D)

My bad, did you want a hit?

MAX

You know I'm done, man. You gotta know when to walk away from the game. Same with that shit too. That dope is no good, stick to the weed bro.

Robert shrugs.

ROBERT

You sound like my wife.

A door opens O.S. The lights turn on. The men sit in a small theater style room. The chairs and walls are in need of a new face. Paraphernalia surround Robert. His wife LINDA (32) blonde, looks 28, stands at the door.

LINDA

How you two doing- What the fuck?!

Robert opens his eyes and turns to her.

LINDA (CONT'D)  
We're not doing this, again!

Robert leans back in his chair. He mutters.

ROBERT  
This is my house.

LINDA  
No! This needs to stop! Max!

Max averts her eyes. Linda takes a plastic baggy off the table. Robert stands up and grabs Linda. Max stands up.

ROBERT  
Give me that, and apologize to Max.

LINDA  
Fucking junkies!

Robert slaps Linda. She falls to her knees, and cries. Robert snatches the baggy from her hands. Max rushes toward her.

MAX  
What the hell?!

Max helps Linda up.

ROBERT  
She's fine.

Linda walks away. Max turns back to Robert.

MAX  
Never put your hands on a woman.  
What the hell is wrong with you?

ROBERT  
Look who's talking! You quit the game!

Robert sits down.

MAX  
I got hurt, just like you.

ROBERT  
Yeah, but I'm going to make it back to the show. Your ass is done.

Max shakes his head.

ROBERT (CONT'D)

Fuck you. Don't come in here like  
you're better than me.

Max glances at the spot Linda was hit.

MAX

You hit your wife again and you'll  
have to hit me.

Robert stands up, Max slightly flinches but stays his ground.  
They both stare at one another.

ROBERT

You threaten me in my own house?  
What do you know about having a  
wife? Yours left with your kid.

Max clenches his fists and teeth.

MAX

We're family man. I looked up to  
you, but I can't see you hurt Linda  
or yourself anymore. Get clean.

Max leaves the room. Robert shrugs it off. He sits and  
continues to smoke and watch the game.

INT. MAX'S KITCHEN - EVENING

Max He cooks dinner. Spaghetti floats in a boiling pot of  
water. Chicken and pancetta fry in a pan. Max adds a creamy  
mixture into the pot. The front door opens O.S. Angela (65),  
Max's mom, a short Italian woman walks in.

MAX

Mio amore, Signora Angela. How are  
you doing Mamma?

She takes off her coat and hangs it in the closet.

ANGELA

Tired.

MAX

You work too hard.

ANGELA

What did the bank say?

Max doesn't respond. Angela walks into the kitchen.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Well?

Max continues to stir the pot, and shakes his head.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

That's the second bank Max.

MAX

I'm doing all I can.

ANGELA

Maybe you can get back on the field? You're better now.

MAX

I have to move on. I'm opening up a restaurant.

ANGELA

You mean, sports bar.

MAX

It's more than that.

Angela hovers over the stove. She tastes the sauce.

ANGELA

This needs something.

MAX

It's fine.

ANGELA

It's good, but something's missing.

MAX

Just set the table, please?

Angela takes some plates and cutlery out of the cabinets. Max takes a final taste, nods his head and adds the pasta to the sauce.

He mixes it and then transfers it to a bowl. He takes the pasta and a salad from the fridge to the

DINING TABLE

He makes a plate of food for the both of them. Angela takes a bite of food.

ANGELA

Could you pass the salt?

Max takes a bite of his food and shakes his head.

ANGELA (CONT'D)  
What? It needs salt.

Max passes the salt to her.

ANGELA (CONT'D)  
Have you talked to Junior? His 10th birthday is coming up.

Max puts down his fork and rubs his eyes.

MAX  
Gabriella, won't answer my calls.

ANGELA  
She wants that child support. When you gonna to find a job?

MAX  
I'm trying.

INT. ROBERT'S THEATER ROOM - NIGHT

Linda walks back into the theater room. Robert yells at the TV as he continues to watch the highlights. He snorts something from the table.

Linda grabs the remote and turns off the TV. Robert turns to her.

ROBERT  
Hey, what'd you do that for?

LINDA  
You said you were done with all this smack!

Robert tries to grab the remote from Linda. She hangs onto it. They fight over the remote. He smacks her but she hangs on.

ROBERT  
Damn it, Linda! Let-

Robert freezes and falls to the ground. He starts to shake and foam at the mouth.

LINDA  
Robert! Baby, wake up! No, no, no!

She rushes out of the room.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Linda scrambles into the bathroom. She rummages in a drawer and finds what she is looking for, a Narlox spray pen.

INT. ROBERT'S THEATER ROOM - NIGHT

Linda runs into the room, kneels down next to Robert, takes the Narlox, and sprays into Robert's nose.

She waits. Finally, his shaking begins to slow. She kneels down and cries.

INT. MAX'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Max and Angela continue to eat dinner. Max grabs Angela's hand.

MAX

Ma, seriously, when are you going to retire? You need more rest.

ANGELA

I don't have a choice.

Max's cell phone rings. He looks at it.

MAX

It's Linda.

Angela nods her head. He answers the phone.

MAX (INTO THE PHONE) (CONT'D)

Linda?

Silence. Max stares at his mom and shrugs.

MAX (CONT'D)

You ok?

LINDA (O.S.)

Could you come by the house please?

MAX

What's wrong?

LINDA

Just, come.

Max hangs up the phone.



MAX

Ma, I-

ANGELA

Go, go.

EXT. ROBERT AND LINDA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Max drives up to the gate, and Linda stands outside of it.  
Max rolls down the window.

MAX

Get in.

Linda opens the passenger side door. Her eyes are red and she  
has a black eye.

INT. MAX'S CAR - NIGHT

Linda gets into the car.

MAX

Did he hit you again?

She stays silent. Max unbuckles his seatbelt. Linda grabs his  
hand and buckles the seat belt.

LINDA

Don't, he just fell asleep. He  
almost OD'd again.

MAX

What? Again?

LINDA

I can't stay here tonight.

MAX

Are you going to tell me what's  
going on?

LINDA

Just, take me to a hotel or  
something, please?

Linda folds over and cries. Max pulls her into a hug and rubs  
her back.

MAX

You'll figure something out. I know  
it.

Linda picks up her head and kisses Max.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Max cooks a huge breakfast. Linda walks into the kitchen. Angela is seated at the kitchen counter.

LINDA  
Oh my God, this smells amazing.

MAX  
I hope you're hungry.

Linda sees Angela, and gives her a hug.

LINDA  
Hi, Angela.

ANGELA  
Hello, Linda.

Linda takes a seat on one of the bar stools next to the counter. Max gives her a plate and fork.

MAX  
Coffee?

LINDA  
Yes, please.

He pours two cups of coffee as Linda makes herself a plate and starts to eat.

ANGELA  
I need to get to work.

Angela grabs her bag and heads for the door.

LINDA  
It was good seeing you Angela.

ANGELA  
It was nice seeing you too.

Angela opens the door, and turns to Linda.

ANGELA (CONT'D)  
This is none of my business, but I need to say something. I'm 65 years old and I'm still working. Not because I want to, but because I have to.

(MORE)

ANGELA (CONT'D)

I chose to be a single mother, than  
let a man put his hands on me.  
There's a time when you have to  
decide to walk away.

Angela heads out the door.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Have a good day you two.

The door closes behind her.

MAX

Sorry about that.

Linda sighs and nods her head.

INT. LINDA AND ROBERT'S OFFICE - DAY

The office, like other rooms in the house are barely  
furnished and decorated. Grime outlines where paintings once  
hung. A trophy case is filled with old trophies that haven't  
been dusted in ages. Linda looks at bills that are sprawled  
across the desk.

ROBERT (O.S.)

Linda! You home?

LINDA

In the office!

Robert walks in.

LINDA (CONT'D)

We're getting behind fast. We have  
to think of the next step, maybe  
sell a few things.

ROBERT

Like, what?

Linda stares into Robert's eyes.

LINDA

The Porsche.

Robert walks up to the desk and slams his hand down. Linda  
jumps a little out of her seat.

ROBERT

We're not selling my car.

LINDA  
We have nothing else!

ROBERT  
Cancel the insurance, I'm feeling better.

LINDA  
No. If something happened to you or me, we would go bankrupt.

ROBERT  
Not true.

Robert straightens up and lights a cigarette.

ROBERT (CONT'D)  
If something would ever happen to me, you would be okay financially.

LINDA  
What do you mean?

ROBERT  
If I die, I die. You would be ok.

Linda puts the bill down and stands up.

LINDA  
Don't talk like that.

Robert takes her hand.

ROBERT  
Babe, I'm good. You'll see. Better than ever.

Linda looks into his eyes. He takes a drag of his cigarette. She pulls her hand away.

EXT. CAR DEALERSHIP - DAY

Max signs some papers on top of a red Chevrolet Camaro. He shakes hands with the salesman and pats the top of the car.

Another car waits for him. Inside sits TYLER (40), his manager. Max gets in.

TYLER  
Takes balls to sell a beauty like that.

Max nods his head and looks out the window at his car one last time.

MAX  
What's next?

TYLER  
Patience.

MAX  
I need to keep busy.

TYLER  
Something will come up soon, I know it.

Max stares out the window.

MAX  
I don't know man. The waiting, the "no's", Robert and Linda... I... I don't want... but-

TYLER  
Max. Stop.

Max turns to Tyler.

MAX  
What?

TYLER  
We'll find something soon. Trust me. Stay strong.

Max hangs his head and then nods.

MAX  
You're right. I just need... something.

TYLER  
Have faith.

Max nods. His phone rings and he answers.

MAX  
(into the phone)  
Hello?

The smile on his face goes away.

MAX (CONT'D)  
(into the phone)  
What?

Max puts his phone down.

TYLER  
What happened?

MAX  
Take me to the hospital.

INT. LINDA'S KITCHEN - EVENING

Drugs and paraphernalia litter the kitchen table. Robert prepares a hit. Standing by are a couple lines of cocaine to snort for a speedball. Robert injects his arm. He releases the tourniquet and snorts a line of cocaine.

ROBERT  
Whoooo!

Robert stands up, swings his arms, starts jogging in place and punches the air. He leaves the kitchen. His phone vibrates on the table.

INT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Max sits in a chair in the corner a tiny. He holds his phone to his ear. His mom lies asleep in the hospital bed next to him. Machines beep around him. The door opens.

DR. GARCIA (50) walks in. Max stands up and puts his phone in his pocket. He stands next to his mom, and grips her hand.

DR. GARCIA  
Mr. Esposito, your mother is stable. We are giving her a steady stream of medication.

MAX  
Will she be okay?

DR. GARCIA  
This was a close call. If she was brought in any later, who knows what could have happened.

Max winces.

MAX  
Is she in any pain?

DR. GARCIA

She's comfortable. We're going to keep her overnight and keep a close eye on her.

Max nods his head.

DR. GARCIA (CONT'D)

The nurse will be in to have you a sign a few papers to get her admitted.

Dr. Garcia leaves the room.

Max pulls out his phone and dials a number.

INT. LINDA'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Linda walks into the kitchen and puts her purse, cell and keys on the counter. She sees the drugs on the table, and looks around.

LINDA

Rob?

Her cell rings on the counter as she leaves the room.

INT. GYM - NIGHT

Robert punches a punching bag bare handed. Blood drips down the back. Music blasts throughout the room. Linda walks in.

LINDA

What's going on?

Linda picks up a remote and turns down the volume. Robert quickly looks around and sees Linda.

ROBERT

Babe, you're home!

He jogs to her and gives her a hug and kiss. She pushes him off of her.

LINDA

What're you doing?

ROBERT

What does it look like? Gonna get back on the field soon.

Robert walks over to the dumb bells and starts doing curls with 60 pound weights.

ROBERT (CONT'D)  
Turn the music back up will ya?

LINDA  
I give up!

Robert looks at her and drops the weights. They hit the floor with a loud thud.

ROBERT  
What did you say to me?

Robert walks up to Linda and gets close to her face.

ROBERT (CONT'D)  
I'm doing what I need to do for us.

LINDA  
It's not working.

Robert slaps Linda. Her head whips back and she stumbles back. Robert grabs her wrists tight. She begins to cry.

ROBERT  
This is the only way.

Robert lets go of her wrists. She storms out of the room and he follows her.

INT. LINDA'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Robert's phone vibrates on the table. He sees a line of cocaine on the table and walks to it but Linda gets there faster. She swats the powder away.

Robert grabs another bag, and Linda watches as he snorts a line.

LINDA  
Nothing's ever going to change!

Linda grabs her bag and keys. Her phone rings and she glances at the caller ID.

ROBERT  
Who's that?

Linda turns the ring off and looks at Robert.



ROBERT (CONT'D)  
Was it Max?

Linda stays silent. Robert pounds his fist on the counter

ROBERT (CONT'D)  
Answer me GOD DAMN IT!

LINDA  
What do you care?

Robert walks toward Linda. His face turns red and veins pop out of his neck.

ROBERT  
You've been spending a lot of time  
with him lately.

LINDA  
He's our closest friend.

ROBERT  
You're, my wife.

LINDA  
He's, you're best friend.

Robert's phone vibrates.

ROBERT  
You're my wife! He's nothing! We--

Robert raises his hand to Linda but stops dead in his tracks. He falls and his eyes roll into his head. Linda drops to her knees next to him. She shakes him.

LINDA  
Robert? Robert!

Robert continues to shake on the ground. Linda's phone lights up with a text message from Max. It reads: Mom had a heart attack. In ICU rite now. Can you guys come?

Linda stands up. Robert lies on the floor. She runs out of the room. His mouth starts to foam and he starts to choke on his spit.

Linda comes back with a Narlox nasal spray shot. She kneels down to him and looks at Robert. Tears stream down her face. She strokes his face. She clutches the shot, shaking, and stands up. She grabs her bag, keys and phone. She looks at her phone and at Robert. She walks out of the kitchen.

The front door opens O.S.

LINDA (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
I'm on my way.

FADE TO:

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

The restaurant is in full swing. The place is packed. Sports memorabilia lines the walls. Max walks out in a chef coat. The crowd of family and friends cheer him. A cake is brought out with the words "One Year Anniversary" written on the top. Linda hugs Max and gives him a kiss on the lips.

LINDA  
I'm so proud of you!

MAX  
I could not have done it without  
you.

Angela stands next to JUNIOR (11), Max's son. He has a huge smile on his face. Angela rings her wine glass and quiets everyone.

ANGELA  
Speech. Speech.

Max looks around. He has a huge smile on his face.

MAX  
I just want to say thank you to all  
of you who came out tonight. I want  
to especially thank the two women  
in my life that made all this  
possible. Mom, you are the  
strongest woman I have ever met. I  
also want to thank Linda, for being  
more than just a business partner,  
you are my best friend. I am proud  
to be called your husband. I love  
you babe.

Everyone cheers. On the wall is a picture of Robert and Max in their uniforms. They are both young and happy.

FADE OUT.