

DONUTS AT DAWN

FADE IN:

EXT. SUBURBAN NEW JERSEY STREET - EARLY MORNING

It is a January morning and a blanket of gray snow covers the rooftops and lawns. The small houses appear well maintained, considering the modest income of their owners and the fact that they were built in the fifties.

A 1997 Ford Taurus idles in the driveway of house #12. ISABELLE RUFF, 68, known to everyone as Izzy, steps out into the cold and down the front steps. A nubby blue and beige knit cap with a fraying pom-pom covers most of her grayish-blond hair. The wind howls and Izzy squints, as she pulls her dark wool coat close.

As Izzy maneuvers across the slick walkway, her daughter DAWN RUFF, 44, rolls down the driver's side window, creating ribbons of smoke as the warm car air tangos with the cold outdoors. Dawn wears no make-up to hide the lines etched on her face; lines earned by years of hard work and shouldered burdens.

DAWN

Ma, you think Adam will see the  
note I left him to bring that  
overdue library book back to  
school?

IZZY

(sarcastic)

You sure it's big enough?  
Maybe next time you should put  
a billboard up in his room.

Dawn rolls up the window as Izzy gets in the car. They pull out of the driveway, momentarily skidding as they turn out toward the street.

EXT. STRIP MALL - BEFORE SUNRISE

The Ford Taurus stands like a lone sentry in the empty strip mall parking lot. All the stores are dark, except for a few slivers of light that shimmy through the closed blinds of the donut shop.

INT. DONUTS AT DAWN - DAY

Izzy and Dawn silently stack coffee cups, fill napkin holders and arrange display shelves with donuts fresh out of the oven. Over their clothes they wear black aprons with "Donuts At Dawn" emblazoned in white script across the chest.

Izzy pauses at the fishbowl near the front door, where one unusually large goldfish swims slowly in circles. She picks up the fish food as Dawn carries a tray of donuts to the front.

DAWN

You're going to kill that fish  
if you keep feeding it. It's  
already a mutant.

Izzy taps food in and the Fish scurries to the top.

IZZY

In my day we called that  
zaftig. She's healthy.

DAWN

The jellies should be ready  
now. Go pull those out of the  
oven.

IZZY

Did you make the extra tray?

DAWN

No. I'm trying a new lemon  
filling instead.

IZZY

You should make extra jellies.  
They always go first.

DAWN

What time is it?

Izzy checks the wall clock and walks to the door.

IZZY

Six. I'll open the blinds and  
unlock the door.

DAWN

Another day...

IZZY

...Another donut.

INT. DONUT SHOP - LATER THAT MORNING

CUSTOMERS form a line from the counter to the door.  
Working behind the counter, Izzy hands a CUSTOMER a bag and  
then motions to the heavysset MAN, in a business suit, who  
is next in line.

IZZY

What can I get you this  
morning?

MAN

I need a dozen. Four glazed,  
three chocolate and the rest  
jelly.

Izzy takes out a box and starts lining up donuts.

IZZY

We're all out of jelly.

Dawn walks up from the kitchen and Izzy shoots her an "I  
told you so" glare. Dawn takes her place on the other side  
of the counter.

DAWN

Next person, step up.

A young WOMAN with a TODDLER moves up to the counter.

MAN

My boss likes jelly.

IZZY

If you want the jellies you  
have to get here before eight-  
thirty.

Dawn smiles at Izzy's customer.

DAWN  
Try the lemon-filled. They're  
very nice.

MAN  
(ignoring Dawn)  
Give me cream-filled for the  
rest and an extra large coffee.  
Black.

Izzy finishes the order and drops the box and coffee on the  
counter before punching the buttons on the register.

MAN  
I saw the nice write-up you got  
in the paper last month. Are  
you the owner?

IZZY  
No, that's Dawn, my daughter.

Izzy tilts her head toward Dawn.

IZZY (cont'd)  
I'm Isabelle. Everyone calls  
me Izzy. That'll be five  
twenty-five.

He pays her, then grabs the coffee and box.

MAN  
(snidely)  
Izzy, you might want to work on  
that jelly thing.

The Man leaves.

IZZY  
(mutters)  
Jackass.

DAWN  
Ma!

The Woman and Toddler look horrified as Dawn smiles broadly.

WOMAN  
I'll have four glazed.

Dawn bags the donuts and puts them on the counter.

DAWN  
Sorry about that. Mom's on new  
blood pressure medicine.  
Sometimes it makes her a little  
screwy. That's two dollars.

IZZY  
If you're going to talk about  
me, at least whisper.

DAWN  
If I whisper you won't hear and  
you need to hear.

The Woman gives Dawn the money, takes her bag and quickly  
leads the Toddler out of the store.

DAWN AND IZZY  
(in unison)  
Next person, step up!

EXT. PARKING LOT - SAME MORNING

HOWARD PEARLMAN, 50, is a man with gray-peppered brown hair  
and a paunch hanging over his belt. He lifts himself out  
of his BMW. His father, MAX PEARLMAN, 70, a shorter,  
grayer and thinner version of his son, steps out of the  
passenger side. Howard retrieves a box from the trunk.

HOWARD  
You want to wait in the car  
while I ship this?

MAX  
Nah. I'm going to walk around.  
I'll pick up some donuts over  
there.

They cross to the sidewalk.

HOWARD  
When's that old Buick of yours  
going to be ready?

MAX  
Next week.

HOWARD  
You should get a new one. That  
thing's got over a hundred  
thousand miles on it.

MAX  
So do I, but you're not getting  
rid of me, are you?

HOWARD  
(teasing)  
I try, but you won't go.

Max shoots Howard a perturbed look before he ambles away.

HOWARD (cont'd)  
(calling out)  
I'm just kidding, Pop. Hey,  
don't get lost.

INT. DONUT SHOP - MINUTES LATER

There is no line when ROSE, 64, rushes in. Rose is the  
owner of the woman's boutique on the other side of the  
strip mall.

ROSE  
(sing-songs)  
Good morning, girls.

IZZY  
Good morning, Rose. I'll go  
get your platter.

Izzy heads back to the kitchen. Dawn takes a towel and  
wipes a coffee stain from the counter top.

DAWN

Running a little late this morning?

ROSE

I had a customer knock on my front window at nine. She must have tried on half the store, but at least she bought at full price.

(whispers)

I didn't show her anything that was on sale.

Dawn smirks. Izzy comes back with a black tray containing a pyramid of donuts stacked beneath the clear lid.

IZZY

If any of your customers want more, we're open till one.

ROSE

You think I don't know what time you close? I woke up this morning a day older, not a day dumber.

(pauses)

Dawn, I meant to ask, did Amanda leave for college?

DAWN

Yes, she went back to B.U. last week.

ROSE

Does she have a boyfriend this year?

DAWN

Nooo! And she's better off, she's got so much work. She needs to stay focused on her studies and get her house in order before she starts playing house.



IZZY  
(sarcastic)  
Like you?

DAWN  
I learned from my mistakes, Ma.  
Amanda doesn't have to make the  
same ones. I'm telling you  
when my daughter graduates,  
we're going to expand this  
donut shop. I'm going to be  
the Mrs. Fields of the donut  
world.

Max walks in and crosses to the counter.

DAWN  
What can I get you?

MAX  
I'll take a dozen. Half  
glazed, half with sprinkles.

Dawn fills a box with donuts.

ROSE  
Max, Max Pearlman?

Max looks at Rose blankly.

ROSE (cont'd)  
It's Rose, Rose Meisel. I live  
in the apartment block across  
from you. At Meadowlark.

MAX  
(matter-of-factly)  
Oh yeah? I didn't recognize  
you.

Dawn puts the box on the counter.

DAWN  
That'll be five twenty-five.

ROSE

I just lightened my hair.  
Everyone says it makes me look  
much younger.

Max takes the donut box and hands Dawn exact change. He  
nods briefly at Rose and leaves.

ROSE

Bye, Max.

IZZY

(sarcastic to Rose)  
Friendly, isn't he?

Rose leans over the counter into gossiping position.

ROSE

A widower. His wife passed  
away seven years ago. Plenty  
of women at Meadowlark have  
made overtures. They've  
brought him food, invited him  
out. Nothing! He used to own  
that catering place in  
Millburn. Now his son runs it.  
Oh Izzy, that reminds me.  
There's a two-bedroom a few  
doors down from me that's for  
sale. You should take a look.

DAWN

Ma doesn't need an apartment.  
She lives with me.

ROSE

I bet that's just a laugh a  
minute. Where I live  
everyone's your mother's age.  
There are a lot of activities.  
Your mother could get out and  
live a little. Maybe meet a  
nice fella.

DAWN

She's not interested in that.  
(MORE)

DAWN (cont'd)  
Right, Ma? Besides, she  
shouldn't be living alone after  
her heart surgery.

ROSE  
Izzy, your bypass was three  
years ago, right?

IZZY  
Yeah, and the doctor said it  
probably added twenty years to  
my life.

ROSE  
That's seventeen good years to  
go.

Dawn glances between them bewildered.

DAWN  
Ma, since when do you want to  
move?

IZZY  
(defensively)  
I don't. It was just a  
thought.

Dawn walks to the kitchen and Rose leans toward Izzy.

ROSE  
I tried, Izzy.

Dawn comes back with a tray of donuts that she transfers  
one by one to a display shelf.

ROSE  
Are those jellies?

IZZY  
We're all out, but I saved you  
two.

Izzy retrieves a bag from under the counter and puts it on  
top of Rose's platter. Rose picks up her tray and bag.

ROSE

See you later, girls.

Rose leaves.

DAWN

(reprimanding)

Ma, you can't save donuts for  
the people you like.

IZZY

Don't talk to me like I'm a  
child! (beat) Listen, maybe I  
should go look at that  
apartment. We're on top of  
each here, at home.

DAWN

What? We have plenty of room  
at the house. With Amanda at  
school, it's just you, me and  
Adam. Besides, Daddy made me  
promise that if anything ever  
happened to him, I'd look after  
you.

A bell RINGS, announcing the arrival of new CUSTOMERS.

DAWN (cont'd)

I'll get that. You look tired,  
Ma. Go take a break for a few  
minutes.

INT. DONUTS AT DAWN KITCHEN - DAY

Izzy retrieves a Meadowlark Adult Community brochure from  
her pocket. She slowly turns it over in her hands and then  
puts it away again.

EXT. MEADOWLARK PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Max gets out of the passenger side of Howard's BMW.

HOWARD

You sure you don't want to come  
with us for dinner tonight?

MAX

It's your anniversary. You don't need me tagging along.

HOWARD

Are you going to check out the concert at the social hall?

MAX

Who wants to spend the night with a bunch a yentas? Besides, the hockey game is on tonight. The Devils are playing.

HOWARD

I hate the thought of you alone all the time. Next week we'll grab a bite to eat. We haven't done the father-son thing in a while.

MAX

We see each other at the place all the time.

HOWARD

I was talking about enjoyment. Working with you is annoyance.

Max waves a dismissive hand and walks towards his apartment door. He goes inside and closes the door. Howard pulls away just as EDNA, 70, and ALICE, 68, approach Max's apartment from opposite directions. Edna carries a large pot, while Alice holds a tinfoil-covered platter. Seeing each other, they pick up speed, meeting in front of Max's door.

ALICE

What do you have in there, Edna?

EDNA

Chicken soup. And you?

ALICE

Brisket and potatoes.

They knock on the door at the same time. Max opens the door and the women giggle like girls in a schoolyard.

EDNA and ALICE  
Hi, Max!

Max swallows his annoyance.

MAX  
Ladies, I've just come home.  
I'm pretty tired.

Edna and Alice take turns cutting in front of each other.

EDNA  
I've got chicken soup.

ALICE  
How about some nice brisket  
first?

EDNA  
Chicken soup, the Jewish  
penicillin that cures all.

ALICE  
I think Max is a meat and  
potatoes man.

EDNA  
Nonsense!

MAX  
Ladies, I appreciate your  
culinary efforts. But don't  
forget, I'm a caterer. I have  
plenty of food. I'm sure there  
are others in greater need of  
your attention.

ALICE  
Are you coming to the concert,  
Max? I'd be happy to save you  
a seat.

EDNA

I was going to save him a seat!

ALICE

So, who's stopping you?

MAX

That won't be necessary. The  
hockey game is on tonight.  
Thanks for visiting.

Max forces a smile, quickly closing the door. Edna shrugs.

EDNA

Seven years and he still isn't  
ready.

ALICE

Go figure.

EDNA

What about Hyman Shulstein?

ALICE

(nodding)

His wife passed two weeks ago.

Their eyes narrow and they speed off.

INT. MAX'S APARTMENT KITCHEN - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Max opens his refrigerator, where the top shelf is stacked with Styrofoam take-out containers. They are labeled with the names of different catering events. Max takes out the one reading, "Fefferman Bar Mitzvah."

INT. MAX'S APARTMENT DEN - CONTINUOUS

A hockey game plays on the television. Max carries the container, a fork and a can of beer. He sits on the couch and places the items on a television tray.

MAX

(opens container)

What's so bad about this?  
Leftover party food. The  
(MORE)

MAX (cont'd)  
Devils playing the Rangers.  
Who needs a bunch of yentas in  
a social hall?

Max's eyes fall on the old black and white wedding photo of  
he and his wife. He sighs. Putting a forkful of food in  
his mouth, he grimaces.

MAX  
I think this chicken is past  
its prime.

Max sighs and moves the tray aside.

MAX  
Then again, so am I. So am I.

INT. RUFF HOUSE KITCHEN - NIGHT

Dawn's son ADAM, 16, sits opposite Izzy at the kitchen  
table, playing a game of Battleship.

ADAM  
B2.

IZZY  
Not even close.

Dawn walks in and pours herself a glass of milk.

IZZY (cont'd)  
E2.

ADAM  
Shit! You sunk my battle ship!

Dawn smacks Adam on the back of the head with her hand.

DAWN  
Watch the language in front of  
your grandmother.

ADAM  
She sunk my last battleship!



IZZY

And I've heard shit before.

DAWN

You're not helping, Ma.

A car door SLAMS outside.

DAWN

Who's here now? Adam go look  
out the front. Come on, Ma.  
I'll play you a round.

Adam leaves the kitchen and Dawn takes his spot at the  
table, rolling up her sleeves.

DAWN (cont'd)

Prepare to be beaten.

IZZY

You and what army?

ADAM (O.S.)

(shouts from foyer)

Hey, it's Amanda. And she's  
with some guy.

EXT. RUFF HOUSE - NIGHT

AMANDA RUFF, 19, hesitates outside the front door with her  
shoulder length butterscotch tresses blowing in her face.  
Her hand hovers near the doorknob. JEFF DAVIS, 22, wraps  
his arms around her waist. He is tall and angular, with  
his brown hair cropped short.

JEFF

It's going to be okay. I  
promise.

Amanda recoils.

AMANDA

I can't. When my mother finds  
out I dropped out of school and  
that we're getting married,  
she's going to go ballistic.

JEFF

I bet she'll be understanding.

AMANDA

Understanding? That word was  
whited out of our family  
dictionary before I was even  
born.

Amanda glances down at the engagement ring on her third  
finger. Jeff takes her hand.

JEFF

I love you. And don't forget,  
your fiance is going to be a  
lawyer. I'll argue our case.

AMANDA

In my family arguing is a  
sport. They do it just for the  
thrill.

They kiss. The door whips open revealing Adam, Izzy and  
Dawn, each with their mouths open in shock. Izzy COUGHS.  
Amanda and Jeff ricochet off each other, their arms  
flailing in search of a noncompromising position.

AMANDA

Hi!

Dawn throws her arms around Amanda and hugs her tight.

DAWN

Oh my god! What are you doing  
here?

The question awakens Dawn's alarm and she feels Amanda's  
head as if she were a little girl.

DAWN

Are you sick?

AMANDA

I'm not sick. I'm fine. Just  
a little homesick.

DAWN  
(suspiciously)  
Homesick?

Jeff clears his throat. Dawn tilts her head toward him.

DAWN  
Who's that?

JEFF  
I'm Jeff Davis. Amanda and I  
started dating last semester.  
It's so nice to finally meet  
you all. I've heard so much  
about you. Especially you,  
Grandma Izz.

DAWN  
(snorting)  
Well, we haven't heard shit  
about you.

AMANDA  
Ma! Do we have to do this out  
here? Let's at least go  
inside.

DAWN  
(dramatically  
steps aside)  
How rude of me. By all means  
come inside. Jeff, this way.  
Or do you already know the way?

INT. RUFF HOUSE DEN - MINUTES LATER

Amanda and Jeff sit on the couch while Dawn paces with her  
arms folded across her chest. Izzy sits in a chair  
crocheting feverishly. Adam plops on the couch next to  
Jeff.

AMANDA  
Mom, before you start. Let me  
explain.

Dawns sniffs loudly and perches on the edge of a chair.

DAWN

Fine.

AMANDA

Jeff graduated in December from Brandeis and next week he's starting an internship with a law firm in the city. The lawyer he's assigned to is a former senator.

JEFF

In the fall I'm starting law school at University of Washington in Seattle. I hope to run for office someday.

AMANDA

Maybe even President.

Izzy looks up from her crochet needle.

IZZY

President?

JEFF

Well, not right away.

DAWN

(shakes her head)

No, of course not. Amanda, what does any of this have to do with why you're here and not in Boston studying for your next exam?

Amanda straightens her back.

AMANDA

When Jeff goes to Seattle, I'm going with him.

Dawn rockets to her feet and Izzy crochets as fast her fingers can move.

DAWN

You're what?

AMANDA

I'm going to transfer and  
finish school there.

Adam slaps Jeff on the back.

ADAM

So dude, are you gettin' freaky  
with my sister?

DAWN

Shut up Adam!

(to Amanda)

Nineteen years old and you're  
going to follow some guy you  
just met across the country.  
What about their business  
school? Is it any good?

AMANDA

It doesn't matter. I'm  
switching majors. I'm going  
into social work.

DAWN

Social work! What about our  
plans for the donut shop?

Dawn waves an accusatory finger at Jeff.

DAWN

(to Amanda)

Did he talk you into this?

JEFF

She decided on her own, Mrs.  
Ruff.

DAWN

I'll get to you, Mr. President.

Izzy puts her forefinger momentarily to her lips, signaling  
Jeff to stay quiet.

DAWN

(cont'd)

Well did he?

AMANDA

Business school was never what  
I wanted, Ma. It was what you  
wanted.

The color drains from Dawn's face.

DAWN

You're pregnant aren't you?

AMANDA

No!

Izzy feigns spitting on her fingers in a Yiddish gesture to  
ward off bad luck.

DAWN

I don't understand. Then what?

AMANDA

I'm engaged.

Amanda holds up her hand proudly. Izzy drops her  
crocheting and gets up, wrapping Amanda in her arms.

IZZY

My granddaughter's getting  
married. I don't believe it.  
Dawn, do you believe it?

There is a loud THUD. All heads turn toward Dawn, who has  
fainted.

INT. RUFF HOUSE DEN - MINUTE LATER

Dawn opens her eyes and sees Izzy, Amanda, Jeff and Adam's  
faces swimming above her.

IZZY

Dawn, are you okay?

Dawn appears to still be out of it.

DAWN

I don't know.

ADAM

Hey, Mom.

Dawn tries to focus on Adam.

ADAM (cont'd)

Since we're sharing tonight, I  
have something to tell you.  
I'm gay.

Dawn's head hits the floor again with a THUD, knocking her  
out cold. Amanda turns to Adam.

AMANDA

You are?

ADAM

(shakes his head)  
Nah, I just wanted to see if  
Mom would faint again.

Amanda and Izzy both smack him on the back of the head.

INT. RUFF HOUSE UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - TWO HOURS LATER

Jeff leans against the wall, while Amanda paces back and  
forth.

AMANDA

Do you believe this? I knew  
she would take it hard, but I  
didn't think it would kill her.

JEFF

You didn't kill her, she passed  
out. We surprised her...

AMANDA

...to death.

Izzy steps out from Dawn's bedroom and gently closes the  
door behind her. A loud CRASH is heard from the bedroom  
and Izzy flinches.

IZZY

Jeff, go bring Amanda's things  
in.

Jeff looks to Amanda. She nods that it's okay. He gallops down the stairs. Izzy heads to the linen closet at the end of the hall, as Amanda trails behind her.

AMANDA

Why, Grandma? Why does she have to be like this? Most mothers do backflips when their daughters bring home a handsome, soon to be lawyer. But not my mother. She throws a fit and faints!

IZZY

(rummages in closet)  
Let her sleep on it. She'll come around in the morning. So is he...

Amanda feigns ignorance.

AMANDA

What?

IZZY

You know what. Is he Jewish?

AMANDA

Define Jewish.

IZZY

(peers at her)  
Excuse me?

AMANDA

His parents are Jewish but Jeff's an atheist. He doesn't believe in God.

Izzy looks at her bewildered.

IZZY

No God? That's like going to the diner and ordering chicken in the pot, but there's no  
(MORE)



IZZY (cont'd)  
chicken. Everything in that  
pot works around the chicken.  
You wouldn't even have broth  
without it.

AMANDA  
Jeff believes there are  
scientific answers to  
everything.

Izzy pulls a set of sheets, a blanket and pillow out of the closet.

IZZY  
Yeah? You ask him then how you  
make chicken broth without the  
chicken. Hmph! Come, you and  
I will go set up the couch in  
the den for him.

AMANDA  
We're engaged, Grandma. He can  
stay in my room with me.

There is another CRASH and SCREAM from inside Dawn's bedroom. Amanda holds out her arms.

AMANDA  
Fine. Give me the sheets.

INT. RUFF HOUSE KITCHEN - NEXT DAY

Dawn is hunkered at the kitchen table with a cup of juice, the newspaper and a half-eaten donut on a plate. Izzy walks in wearing a warm-up suit.

DAWN  
How was your walk this  
afternoon?

IZZY  
Okay. The mall was packed  
today. Have you spoken to  
Amanda yet?

Amanda walks into the kitchen, but Dawn ignores her, keeping her gaze fixed on Izzy.

DAWN  
Your Social Security check came  
in the mail today, Ma. You  
want me to take you to the bank  
later?

IZZY  
No, I'll go tomorrow.

Amanda takes a donut from the box on the table.

AMANDA  
Jeff and I can take you, Gram.

IZZY  
No one has to take me. Thank  
you.

Izzy starts emptying the dishwasher. Amanda bites into the donut.

AMANDA  
Delicious as ever, Mom.

DAWN  
(sarcastic)  
Gee, I'm so glad to have your  
approval.

AMANDA  
You think I don't want your  
approval? Because I do.

DAWN  
Well prancing in and announcing  
you're already engaged is a  
hell of a way to get it.

AMANDA  
Yeah, well you do plenty of  
things without my approval,  
too.

DAWN

Really? Because I've lived my whole life for you and your brother.

AMANDA

When you changed your name back to your maiden name, did you have to change mine and Adam's too? We don't even have our father's last name. You never asked us.

DAWN

You were eight and I did you a favor. Would you rather go through life as Amanda Lipschitz?

AMANDA

That's not the point.

IZZY

Can't you two just talk?

DAWN

Stay out of it, Ma!

(to Amanda)

Let's get to the point. When Jeff does this internship where's he staying?

AMANDA

He and another guy interning are sharing a studio in the city. There's no room for me.

DAWN

And where are you staying?

AMANDA

Isn't this still my home?

DAWN

Maybe.

Izzy drops a dish.

IZZY

Dawn!

DAWN

Ma, please!

(to Amanda)

If you're planning to live  
under my roof, I have some  
rules. First, you can help  
Gram and I out at the donut  
shop.

Jeff walks in as Amanda opens her mouth to protest.

DAWN (cont'd)

I'm not finished.

Amanda closes her mouth and folds her arms across her  
chest.

DAWN (cont'd)

Friday, after we close, I made  
us an appointment to see the  
Pearl Plaza and meet with the  
caterer.

AMANDA

You did?

DAWN

You thought I wasn't going to  
throw my only daughter a  
wedding? I don't want you  
running off and eloping like I  
did.

Izzy opens her mouth to comment, but Dawn holds up her  
hand.

DAWN (cont'd)

Don't say it, Ma. I know I did  
you wrong back then.

AMANDA

Mom, are you sure?

DAWN

Sure? No, I'm not sure.

JEFF

That's great, Mrs. Ruff.

Jeff reaches for a sprinkled donut, but Dawn nabs it first. Her tone is caustic.

DAWN

I'm saving that one for Adam.  
You can't help yourself to  
everything around here.

EXT. PEARL PLAZA - DAY

A brick building with white columns stands on this busy street next to a gas station. A small fountain in the shape of an open clam shell sits in the center of the lawn. Water shoots from a pearl inside the clam shell.

INT. PEARL PLAZA OFFICE - DAY

Howard is seated behind a desk. Dawn, Izzy and Amanda are seated on the other side of the desk.

HOWARD

I can assure you, Ms. Ruff,  
there isn't a place on this  
side of the Hudson that throws  
a celebration quite like we do  
here at the Pearl.

DAWN

You can call me Dawn. My  
mother and I come here every  
year for the Garden State  
Bakery Association dinner.  
It's a lovely affair.

HOWARD

And only the best for your  
little girl, right?

Izzy rolls her eyes.

DAWN

The best would be her going  
back to B.U. and calling this  
off.

AMANDA

Mom!

Howard shifts in his chair and laughs awkwardly.

HOWARD

Okay! Well, when were we  
thinking of holding this joyous  
event?

Amanda and Dawn's words trip over each other.

AMANDA

June.

DAWN

August.

Howard pulls a big calendar out from the desk.

HOWARD

To have a June wedding, you'd  
have to have gotten engaged in  
the womb, Amanda. I think  
August would be better.

AMANDA

Jeff has to be in Seattle by  
August first.

Dawn claps her hands together.

DAWN

Well that settles it. He'll go  
without you. You'll go back to  
Boston, and maybe we'll try  
again next summer.

HOWARD

We do have an opening on July  
fourth. It's a Sunday. I can  
(MORE)

HOWARD (cont'd)  
give you a good price with  
holiday and all. You won't be  
sorry. Mark my words.

IZZY  
(mutters)  
I'd rather erase them.

AMANDA  
I really wanted June.

DAWN  
I really wanted you to finish  
college.

Amanda's eyes glisten with tears.

AMANDA  
Why'd you even bother to make  
this appointment if this was  
how you were going to be?

Amanda walks out and Izzy gives Dawn a disgusted grunt.

IZZY  
Honestly, Dawn.

Izzy stands up and follows Amanda.

HOWARD  
So, should I put you down for  
July fourth?

INT. BALLROOM - FIVE MINUTES LATER

Izzy peers in finding only a handful of barren wood tables  
and rows of stacked chairs in varying heights like mini  
skyscrapers. An old boom box rests at the edge of the  
dance floor, playing big band MUSIC.

IZZY  
Amanda?

Izzy walks to the center of the dance floor, craning her  
head around.

IZZY (cont'd)  
Nice room.

She backs into a broom that leans against one of the tables. Her eyes twinkle and a mischievous grin spreads across her face. Her hand wraps around the broom.

IZZY (cont'd)  
Shall we?

Izzy waltzes the broom out onto the dance floor.

IZZY  
Loosen up! You're so stiff.

She dances, unaware that Max has quietly slipped in the door, his gray hair peaking out from a beige custodial cap and matching coveralls. A smirk stretches over his face. As the song ends, Izzy dips the broom and Max claps, startling her. The broom slips from her fingers and falls to the floor with an echoing CLATTER.

MAX  
Dropping your partner is a big no-no. I think the broom might need traction.

Max walks over and picks it up as Izzy flushes.

IZZY  
It's not nice to snoop on people!

MAX  
I wasn't snooping. And I'll have you know I just cleaned this floor you're prancing around on. If anyone's snooping, it's you.

IZZY  
My granddaughter's getting married here. I was looking around.



MAX

That's your family making such a ruckus. Poor Howard, I don't envy him.

IZZY

The caterer. What a shyster.

MAX

I taught him everything he knows.

IZZY

You...?

MAX

He's my son.

(wipes a hand  
on coveralls)

Max Pearlman. And you're...

IZZY

Isabelle, Isabelle Ruff. Most people call me Izzy.

(suspiciously)

I recognize you. You came into my daughter's donut shop. So if your son's the caterer, how come you look like a janitor?

Max sweeps and talks, causing Izzy to periodically step out of the way of the broom.

MAX

I started this place forty years ago and I've done just about every job here. Including cook.

IZZY

You don't look like a cook to me.

MAX

I'm not. One night, about twenty-five years ago my chef  
(MORE)

MAX (cont'd)  
quit in the middle of an  
anniversary party we were  
doing. So I stepped in to  
cook.

IZZY  
Yeah, how'd that go?

MAX  
Not so good. Everyone got  
sick. But my wife Sophie, may  
she rest in peace, saved my  
ass. She sent each guest home  
with a gift wrapped box of Alka  
Seltzer and a promise to never  
let me loose in the kitchen  
again.

IZZY  
She sounds like a smart cookie,  
your wife.

Max stops sweeping.

MAX  
You know what they call a smart  
cookie today?

IZZY  
What?

MAX  
A spin doctor.

Izzy and Max laugh drowning out the music from the radio.

IZZY  
Well. (beat) I better go find  
my family.

MAX  
It was nice meeting you, Izzy.  
I'm sorry if I startled you.

IZZY  
Nice meeting you too, Max.

Max watches Izzy walk out of the room. The door swings closed and he sweeps, whistling along to the music.

INT. DAWN'S CAR - ONE HOUR LATER

Dawn drives, focusing on the road ahead. Izzy is in the front passenger seat staring out the window, while Amanda sits in the back and looks out the opposite window. The car radio plays softly.

IZZY

July is perfect. Not too humid. The temperature's usually in the eighties. I think we got lucky.

Izzy turns to Amanda.

IZZY (cont'd)

Don't you?

Amanda looks at Izzy for a moment, then turns and stares back out the window. Izzy faces Dawn.

IZZY (cont'd)

I had no idea weddings had gotten so expensive. Maybe I can help with it.

DAWN

Ma, that's sweet. But where do you have that kind of money? Come on. Are you stashing it in your mattress?

Izzy laughs awkwardly.

IZZY

My mother used to do that.

DAWN

Too bad she's not around now. I'll manage.

Izzy looks out the window as if searching for a way to phrase her words.

IZZY

Too bad Jeff had to be in the city already. Maybe we should have Jeff's parents over for dinner. Don't you think so?

Dawn ignores the question and turns the radio up louder. Izzy turns to Amanda.

IZZY (cont'd)

You should mention it to him.

Amanda remains focused out the window as she answers.

AMANDA

His dad's a professor teaching a fellowship program at the London School of Economics. They won't be back in the country until the end of June.

Dawn snorts.

DAWN

Hoity-toity.

Dawn reaches for the radio and makes it even louder.

IZZY

Yup, July is going to be just perfect.

INT. DONUT SHOP - A FEW DAYS LATER

The display cases hold a few scattered donuts, except for the bottom right shelf, which is full. Dawn looks at them dismally.

DAWN

I thought the apricot would go over better.

Izzy rolls her eyes, as she starts to toss donuts in a big trash bag. Amanda walks in from the kitchen, wearing a Donuts at Dawn apron and a frown.

IZZY

Did you reach Jeff?

AMANDA

No, his roommate said he's at the courthouse.

Dawn straightens up and walks to the register. She opens the drawer and starts counting the money.

DAWN

That's a shame.

Amanda scowls at Dawn and then turns to Izzy.

AMANDA

You're not throwing those donuts out, are you?

IZZY

We always do.

DAWN

Don't worry, I put a box of leftovers aside for us to bring home.

AMANDA

You should donate these.

DAWN

Who would want them?

AMANDA

What about the Interfaith Food Shuttle? They have volunteers that do pick-ups. They bring it to shelters.

IZZY

I do hate seeing good food go to waste.

DAWN

I don't have time to set that  
up and I don't want to be  
sitting around here waiting for  
a truck every afternoon.

AMANDA

God, Mom, don't you want to  
help people?

Amanda walks back into the kitchen in a huff.

DAWN

(calls out)

I help, I help plenty. But  
right now I have to look after  
us first.

AMANDA (O.S)

(shouts from kitchen)

I'll do it! And I bet you'll  
even get a tax break on the  
donations.

DAWN

(mumbles)

Now you're talking.

INT. AMANDA'S ROOM - THAT NIGHT

Amanda lays on her bed reading a Seattle guide book. There  
is a KNOCK on the door.

AMANDA

Yeah?

Izzy opens the door.

IZZY

Can I come in?

AMANDA

Are you neutral?

IZZY

Like Switzerland.

AMANDA

Enter.

Amanda puts the book down as Izzy comes to sit on the bed, briefly glancing at the cover.

IZZY

Seattle. It rains a lot I hear. I hate going out in the rain. Too gloomy.

AMANDA

If Mom sent you up here...well, just don't bother.

IZZY

I'm not your mother's messenger. Listen this is a shock for her. She had plans for you.

AMANDA

It's like she sees only the daughter she wants me to be, and that's someone who doesn't exist. It's not who I am. College opened my eyes. This is my life! She had her turn. It's not my fault she blew it.

IZZY

Hey! She may be your mother, but she's my daughter. And she didn't blow anything. She raised two great kids, while making a living after your father walked out on her. And you two were still babies.

AMANDA

I bet when Mom married my father you didn't blow up like this.

IZZY

How do you know? You weren't there.

Amanda rolls her eyes impatiently.

IZZY (cont'd)

Your mother was just out of high school when your father pranced into our lives. She was supposed to go to college. Then four weeks after her high school graduation they eloped.

AMANDA

Grandma, I know the story.

IZZY

Shah! I didn't blow up because I had to be the calm one. Your grandfather was ready to skin them both. Don't forget, your grandfather was a butcher.

AMANDA

Grandpa? I couldn't see him hurting a fly.

IZZY

He had his heart set on your mother being the first in the Ruff family to go to college. He was just a butcher. He wanted your mother to be educated. They're really so alike.

AMANDA

Who? Mom and Grandpa?

IZZY

Cut from the same stubborn cloth. But when your father left, how old were you?

Amanda answers without pause, the age painfully ingrained.

AMANDA

Six.



Izzy pats Amanda's hair.

IZZY

So young. After Joe left, your mother came up with the idea for the donut shop. Your Grandpa couldn't get to the bank fast enough to give her the money. If it wasn't open, I swear, he would've broken down the door. He said, 'now she's going to make something of herself!' And she did, while taking care of you and Adam.

AMANDA

I know this story, too. Dawn the saint, raising two kids on her own while slaving away over the donuts.

IZZY

Don't be fresh. Your mother just doesn't want you to make the same mistakes she did.

AMANDA

I'm not.

IZZY

Explain to me then how dropping out of school and following some fella across the country is living your life your way?

AMANDA

You don't understand, Grandma.

IZZY

Maybe not.

Izzy gets up slowly from the bed.

IZZY

Are you hungry? I'll make you a sandwich.

Amanda picks up her book.

AMANDA

I'll come down later and eat  
something.

Izzy tosses a reluctant glance back at Amanda before  
leaving the room.

INT. PEARL PLAZA OFFICE - NIGHT

Howard types on his computer when Max walks in.

MAX

You ready to go yet?

HOWARD

Yeah, I was just checking the  
calendar. I think we're going  
to have a good summer.

MAX

Did the Ruff party book?

HOWARD

She dropped off the check  
today. I thought we had a dead  
Fourth of July weekend, but  
they came through. Why?

MAX

Nothing. I was talking to  
Izzy, the girl's grandmother.  
She was nice.

HOWARD

(curiously)

Yeah?

MAX

Yeah nothing. You need to talk  
to the bartenders. I think  
they're watering down the  
liquor.

HOWARD

Pop, no one's watering anything. I thought when I took over you were gonna retire.

MAX

I did. I only come in five days now instead of seven.

HOWARD

Is that all? Pop, don't you trust me? Haven't I run the business just fine for the last few years? Come on. Kick back and enjoy your life. You've earned it.

MAX

Who doesn't enjoy? I've got my TV, my weekly poker game. And every Monday your wife invites me to dinner.

HOWARD

Don't you want more? Come on, Mom died seven years ago already.

Weariness creeps into Max's voice as the wrinkles on his face sink a little deeper.

MAX

I've had more. This is my life now. Take it or leave it.

Max crosses to the door.

MAX (cont'd)

I'm gonna go shut the lights.  
I'll meet you in the car.

Max walks out, closing the door and the discussion behind him.

EXT. DONUT SHOP - DAY

The front window is decorated with hearts and flowers and a white script banner that reads "Happy Valentine's Day."

INT. DONUT SHOP - DAY

Dawn and Izzy are behind the counter filling the shelves, while Amanda sits at the register with a gloomy expression on her face.

DAWN

Amanda, you think you could perk up a little before the customers come in? It's gonna be a busy morning.

Amanda obliges with a fleeting smile before her chin collapses into the palm of her hand.

IZZY

Are you sick?

Izzy lines one shelf with heart-shaped donuts, topped with pink and red frosting. Amanda waves forlornly at the donuts.

AMANDA

That's what's the matter.  
Right there!

IZZY

What? The donuts?

AMANDA

Gram! It's Valentine's Day and Jeff has to be in the office all weekend preparing briefs.

IZZY

I'll be your Valentine.

AMANDA

Gee, thanks.

DAWN

Don't forget you're coming with us tomorrow night to the bakery association dinner. I'm nominated again in the single retail unit division.

IZZY

You're like the Susan Lucci of that category. It's been eight years and you haven't won. That guy from Clark, the one who pinches, he wins every year. It's fixed.

DAWN

It's not fixed. And the place is called Just a Pinch, it's not him.

IZZY

Jessica Wam told me that she danced with him at last year's dinner and he pinched her right on the ass.

DAWN

That's ridiculous!

IZZY

I know. Jessica is over three hundred pounds. He's lucky he didn't lose a hand taking on that tush.

Amanda rushes toward the kitchen in tears. Dawn calls after her.

DAWN

Oh, honey, don't worry. I'll win eventually.

IZZY

She doesn't give a shit if you win.

Izzy grabs her jacket from the coat rack near the kitchen.

IZZY (cont'd)  
Go talk to your daughter. And  
Dawn, for once put ballet  
slippers on your tongue instead  
of combat boots. I'm going to  
the bank.

EXT. PARKING LOT - MINUTES LATER

Izzy navigates her way across the parking lot to the bank  
across the street from the strip mall.

INT. BANK - LATER

Izzy goes to one of the counters to fill out slips. From  
her purse she pulls out four envelopes, each from Social  
Security. After spending a moment writing out a deposit  
slip, she takes her things to an open TELLER window.

TELLER  
Good morning. What do we have  
today?

Izzy passes her papers over.

IZZY  
Just deposit two hundred. Can  
you give me the change in  
hundreds?

TELLER  
Whatever you'd like.

The Teller taps on a computer and then slips the bills into  
a bank envelope. She hands it to Izzy with a receipt.

TELLER  
Have a nice day.

IZZY  
Is there someone who can let me  
into my safety deposit box?

TELLER  
Sure. I just need to grab the  
keys.

INT. BANK PRIVATE VIEWING ROOM - MINUTES LATER

Izzy puts a safety deposit box on the counter. She sits down, opens the box, and takes out a few documents, revealing a huge stash of bills underneath. Izzy takes the bills from the bank envelope and adds them to the pile. Then she carefully puts the papers back on top and closes the box.

INT. DONUT SHOP - AFTERNOON

Dawn empties the register, while Izzy sprays and wipes the tables. Rose sits at the counter eating her lunch. MIKE WEINSTEIN, 26, walks in. He is classically handsome with blond hair, blue eyes and a slightly pug nose. Dawn looks up briefly from the register.

DAWN

We're closed, but we have a few donuts left if you want.

Mike's low honeyed drawl could melt butter.

MIKE

Well, I guess I'm fixin' to take 'em all.

Izzy stops cleaning. Dawn looks up.

DAWN

All?

Amanda walks in from the kitchen.

MIKE

Yes, ma'am. I'm Mike Weinstein, from the Interfaith Food Shuttle.

Mike extends his hand.

MIKE (cont'd)

I'll be by every Friday to pickup. That's my volunteer day. Someone else will be here on Wednesdays.

Dawn ignores his hand, but Amanda jumps forward and shakes it.

AMANDA

I'm Amanda Ruff. I spoke to the food shuttle people. This is my mother Dawn and my grandmother Izzy. And that's Rose Miesel. She owns the clothes store over there.

ROSE

So Mike Weinstein, you're not from New Jersey are you?

MIKE

No, ma'am. I'm from North Carolina.

IZZY

I bet there's not a lot of Weinstains in North Carolina.

AMANDA

Grandma!

IZZY

Can't a person be curious without it being a crime?

MIKE

That's all right, I get that a lot up here with my name, especially since I'm a doctor. Most people think I'm Jewish. My great granddaddy was, but my family's a little bit of everything now.

Izzy and Rose nod.

ROSE

A religious smorgasbord.

Mike laughs.



MIKE  
Somethin' like that.

Amanda cuts in before Izzy can say anything else.

AMANDA  
Okay. Mike follow me to the  
kitchen. I have everything in  
boxes for you.

MIKE  
Yes, ma'am.

Amanda frowns at Izzy as she walks out.

EXT. STRIP MALL PARKING LOT - TEN MINUTES LATER

Amanda stands outside the Interfaith Food Shuttle truck as Mike loads boxes. He closes the back doors and pulls out a clipboard from the front seat. After writing on the top sheet, he hands a copy to Amanda.

MIKE  
Just hang onto these for the  
tax man and I will see you next  
Friday.

AMANDA  
Thanks. So, Mike Weinstein,  
what do you do when you're not  
out collecting food for the  
homeless?

MIKE  
I'm a pediatrician. Friday is  
my day off and I donate my time  
to this.

Amanda casts a verbal fishing line.

AMANDA  
Your family doesn't mind?

MIKE  
I don't have a family. I mean  
I have family back home. A  
(MORE)

MIKE (cont'd)  
mother, father, a couple  
brothers. But no wife and  
kids. That's what you're  
asking, right?

AMANDA  
I didn't mean...I wasn't...

MIKE  
That's all right.

Mike nods toward the ring on her finger.

MIKE (cont'd)  
Does your fiance work 'round  
here?

Amanda fidgets with the ring.

AMANDA  
No. He's in the city doing an  
internship. After the wedding  
we're moving to Seattle so he  
can go to law school.

MIKE  
What about you? Are you done  
with school?

AMANDA  
No. I was in my junior year at  
B.U. When we get out there,  
I'm going to finish at  
University of Washington. I'm  
going to be a social worker.

MIKE  
That's great.

AMANDA  
Yeah.

MIKE  
Your family must be real  
excited.

AMANDA

That's one way to put it. In  
shock would be another.

Mike gets in the truck and starts the engine. He leans out  
the window smiling.

MIKE

Your Mama doesn't strike me as  
the type that takes kindly to  
unexpected news.

AMANDA

You could say that.

They share a smile and the truck pulls away.

INT. DONUT SHOP - SECONDS LATER

Izzy and Rose are plastered against the window. Izzy grabs  
a rag and pretends to be cleaning the glass as Amanda walks  
in. Rose studies the beverage choices in the refrigerator  
case.

AMANDA

Cleaning the windows?

IZZY

Yup.

Amanda walks away calling over her shoulder.

AMANDA

He's a pediatrician.

Izzy and Rose nod.

INT. DAWN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Dawn is dressed neatly in black pants with a cream colored  
blazer. Izzy walks in wearing a floral print skirt and  
pastel sweater set. She checks herself in the full length  
mirror.

IZZY

Do I look fat in this?

DAWN

You look great.

IZZY

As long they keep making steel  
enforced undergarments strong  
enough to hoist everything off  
the floor, I'll be okay.

Amanda shuffles in wearing sweatpants and an old tee shirt.

DAWN

You're not dressed!

AMANDA

Why do I have to go to this  
when all I want to do is sit  
home and croon along to sad  
love songs?

IZZY

You've crooned all day. Take a  
break.

The front doorbell RINGS.

IZZY

Are you expecting someone?

Dawn shakes her head. Amanda peers out the front window  
and turns, her face glowing. She rushes out, calling  
behind her.

AMANDA

It's Jeff!

INT. RUFF HOUSE FOYER - NIGHT

Whipping the door open, Amanda finds Jeff with a huge  
bouquet of flowers extended in his hand.

JEFF

Happy belated Valentine's Day.

AMANDA

Oh, Jeff.

She takes the flowers and falls into his arms just as Dawn and Izzy trail down the stairs.

DAWN  
There's a familiar sight.

JEFF  
My case got a continuance, so I  
don't have to be back in the  
city until tomorrow night.

Adam comes down the stairs, with an overnight bag slung over his shoulder.

DAWN  
Where are you going?

ADAM  
Irwin and his parents are  
picking me up. We're going to  
see the midnight Rocky Horror  
show.

DAWN  
Oh yeah.

A carhorn BEEPS.

ADAM  
There's my ride. (to Jeff)  
Dude, good timing. You're  
gonna have the whole house to  
yourselves. Rock!

Adam exits and a constipated expression takes hold of Dawn's facial muscles.

AMANDA  
Isn't this great? Gosh, it's  
so lucky we didn't leave. I  
would have missed him.

INT. RUFF KITCHEN - TEN MINUTES LATER

Dawn arranges the flowers in a vase when Jeff comes in.

JEFF

Grandma Izzy said you wanted to  
show me something.

Putting the vase down, Dawn moves to the knife block on the counter. She retrieves the long metal sharpener, followed by the carving knife. She slowly scrapes the knife against the sharpener. Jeff's eyes stay fixed on her movement as if hypnotized.

DAWN

Did Amanda ever mention that my  
father was a butcher?

JEFF

Uh...yeah, I think so.

DAWN

That man knew everything about  
knives a person could know.  
Did you know that when this is  
sharpened to perfection I can  
slice through anything in a  
matter of seconds? Doesn't  
matter what—skin, bone.

Dawn stops scraping and puts the sharpener down. She motions in the air with the carving knife. Jeff's worried eyes follow the tip.

DAWN

I can go from neck to navel—  
swish—like it was melted  
butter.

JEFF

(squeaks)

Really?

DAWN

Watch this.

Dawn takes an apple from the fruit bowl and centers it on cutting board. In one fluid motion she sections the apple into six parts. Jeff gulps. Dawn waves the knife casually.

DAWN

Now, Amanda's grandmother and I  
are going out tonight. But  
this is my house and that's my  
daughter. Tonight, you need to  
think of me as still here even  
when I'm not.

(leans toward Jeff)

Keep the banana in its peel,  
understand?

Jeff nods, as the point of the knife moves up and down with  
his head.

DAWN

Good.

Dawn picks up a section of apple and takes a bite.

DAWN

Delicious.

She plops the knife on the cutting board and leaves a pale  
Jeff behind.

EXT. RUFF HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Dawn and Izzy walk down the front steps toward the car.

IZZY

Did you sharpen the knife the  
way your father taught you?

DAWN

Yup!

IZZY

(smiles)

Good girl.

INT. PEARL PLAZA FOYER - NIGHT

Dinner ATTENDEES in cocktail clothes mill about, while Max  
stands at a table straightening seating cards. Nearby a  
sign reads, "Welcome Garden State Bakery Association."  
Howard slips in behind Max and picks up a card.

HOWARD

Johnson goes before Kraus.

MAX

Don't you have anything better  
to do than look over my  
shoulder?

HOWARD

I came to tell you that Sid  
called and he can't make it to  
next week's hockey game. Alice  
made plans for them, blah,  
blah, blah and he can't go.

MAX

He can't do that! We have  
center ice seats! I paid a lot  
for those tickets. You wanna  
go with me?

HOWARD

I can't. We have an event that  
night.

Howard sees Izzy enter and tilts his head in her direction.

HOWARD

What about her?

Max follows the imaginary line Howard has drawn and waves  
his hand dismissively.

MAX

Are you crazy?

HOWARD

Why not? You said she was  
nice.

MAX

Just because a person's nice  
doesn't mean I want to run off  
with them.



HOWARD

I should be so lucky, Pop. I'm not talking about running off, just someone to sit with at the game. Someone to share a pretzel with.

MAX

I'm sure we have nothing in common.

HOWARD

Sure you do.

MAX

Like what? And don't say we're both old.

HOWARD

She's a widow and you're a widower.

MAX

So we can be in the same Jeopardy category under depressing labels that begin with "W". I've got three words for you: for-get-it!

Dawn and Izzy walk up to them and a grin stretches across Howard's face. Max squirms.

HOWARD

Hello, Dawn. It's good to see you again. I don't believe you met my father when you were here. Max Pearlman, this is Dawn Ruff. Her daughter is getting married here in July.

DAWN

Nice to meet you.

Max nods.

HOWARD

And this is her mother,  
Isabelle Ruff.

IZZY

We met actaully. Good to see  
you, Max.

Max begrudgingly nods again.

HOWARD

Ladies, maybe you can help my  
father and me. We were just  
debating if a woman can be as  
big of a hocky fan as a man.  
Now are either of you hockey  
fans by chance?

DAWN

Not really.

IZZY

I'm afraid I'm not much of a  
sports fan.

MAX

(blurts out)

Ha!

Izzy and Dawn give him a queer look.

IZZY

But my late husband was a huge  
fan.

DAWN

Oh yeah! My father loved the  
Devils.

HOWARD

A Devils fan!

(to Max)

Isn't that amazing?

Howard slaps Max on the back. Max shakes him off.

IZZY

Remember, Dawn? Every so often  
your father would take me to  
the games. I had fun at them.  
I know it's terrible to admit,  
but I loved the fights.

HOWARD

Really? How about that, Pop?

MAX

So what? You want me to give  
her a medal for that!

Max stalks off, leaving Izzy and Dawn bewildered. Howard  
smiles awkwardly.

HOWARD

I'm so sorry. Pop's on new  
blood pressure medicine. He  
gets these flashes. Excuse me.

Howard goes after Max. Izzy glares at Dawn.

IZZY

Medicine my ass.

INT. PEARL PLAZA BALLROOM - NIGHT

After finishing their dinners, about 80 Attendees are  
seated at tables listening to a SPEAKER announce award  
winners from the podium microphone at the front of the  
room. Izzy and Dawn are seated at a table in the middle of  
the room.

SPEAKER

Now before the final award of  
the evening, I just want to  
mention a few items. We're  
going to have a workshop next  
month on carbs-how to make your  
customers see them as friend  
not foe. And also if anyone is  
having trouble with the sugar  
from Martin's Supplies, let me  
know. Like the baker's dozen,  
we have power in numbers.

The Attendees chuckle.

SPEAKER

And don't forget that we've hired a DJ, so after the awards, I want to see you all up and dancing. Now for the last award in the small retail unit category. This year's nominees are, Dawn Ruff owner of Donuts at Dawn in Springfield, Matt Klein owner of Just a Pinch in Clark and Celia Maccianelli of Mangia in Summit. Okay, this year the award goes to...(checks note card)...once again, Matt Klein and Just a Pinch.

Everyone claps as MATT, 47, a tall pale man, walks to the podium and shakes the Speaker's hand. Izzy leans over and whispers to Dawn.

IZZY

I told you it's fixed.

DAWN

It's not!

IZZY

Pshaw!

Music plays and the Attendees get up from their tables and head onto the dance floor. A preening Matt manuevers through the crowd to Dawn.

MATT

Dawn, I was sure this was your year.

Dawn hides her disappointment by waving him off.

DAWN

Nonsense. Your bakery deserves it...again. What is this the fifth time you've won?

MATT

Who counts? Come dance with  
me. No hard feelings.

Dawn turns to Izzy with a "get me out of this" look in her  
eyes.

DAWN

I shouldn't leave my mother.

Izzy stands up with a mischievous twinkle in her eye.

IZZY

I'm going to take a walk.

Dawn jumps up.

DAWN

I'll go with you, Ma.

IZZY

Nonsense! Dance, dance.

Matt beckons to Dawn by pinching the air with his fingers.  
She struggles to keep a polite smile on her face as Izzy  
whispers in her ear.

IZZY (cont'd)

If he pinches you, knee him in  
the nuts.

INT. PEARL PLAZA HALLWAY - NIGHT

Izzy meanders through the empty hallway when Max rounds the  
far corner. Seeing her, he whirls around and heads the  
other way. She follows after him. Max checks over his  
shoulder and ducks into the Men's Room.

INT. PEARL PLAZA MENS ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Max crosses to the sinks and faces the mirror.

MAX

You're acting like a shmuck.

He washes his hands and smooths his hair back. Opening the Men's Room door, Max finds himself face-to-face with Izzy's fuming mug.

IZZY

Did I do something to you?

MAX

No.

IZZY

Because you were very rude!

MAX

(humbled)

I know. I'm sorry. Do you mind if I step out now, because it's not as if I can ask you in.

Max waves a hand toward the urinals and Izzy takes a step away from the door.

INT. PEARL PLAZA HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Max steps out of the Men's room and takes a deep breath.

MAX

I'm sorry I was rude.

IZZY

Apology accepted.

She walks away and he hustles after her.

MAX

Don't you want to know why I was rude?

IZZY

Not in particular.

MAX

You know in some cultures, walking away when someone is apologizing could be deemed criminal.

Izzy stops walking and faces him.

IZZY

I doubt that.

MAX

I really am sorry.

IZZY

Apology accepted again. Now,  
I'm going to find my daughter.

Izzy turns to go as Max blurts out his question.

MAX

Do you like hockey?

Izzy stops and turns toward him.

IZZY

If I answer are you going to  
storm away again?

MAX

No.

(pauses)

I'll ask if you'd like to go  
with me to a hockey game next  
weekend.

(rambling)

I understand if you can't, or  
maybe your busy, or...

IZZY

(matter-of-factly)

Is it the Devils?

Max is caught offguard by the question.

MAX

Yeah.

IZZY

Who are they playing?

MAX

The Flyers.

Izzy looks him over a moment. She nods as if a business deal has been finalized.

IZZY

I accept.

MAX

You do?

IZZY

Yes, I do.

A weary looking Dawn appears at the end of the hallway holding their coats.

DAWN

Ma, there you are. Let's go home. I'm tired.

IZZY

(calls back)

One minute.

Izzy looks at Max and smiles.

IZZY

Okay?

Max smiles in return.

MAX

Okay. I'll call you.

Max watches Izzy join Dawn at the end of the hallway.

DAWN

(yawning)

What was that all about?

Izzy takes her coat and starts walking away, calling back over shoulder.

IZZY

He asked me out on a date for next weekend.



DAWN

A date?

Izzy walks out the front door. Dawn and Max stare each other down in the empty hallway like gunslingers on a dusty road, until Max gulps and turns away.

INT. BUS STATION - DAY

Amanda storms away from Jeff.

AMANDA

I can't believe you didn't tell me this last night.

JEFF

I didn't want to ruin our night. I knew you'd freak out.

He grabs her arm.

JEFF (cont'd)

Don't run away. We need to talk about this.

AMANDA

Of course I'm freaking out. You gave some guy who books bands in nightclubs your money for school? What the hell were you thinking?

JEFF

It was Haley and he said he was opening his own club. He promised if I invested in it, I'd double my money by the end of the summer.

AMANDA

And I've got a bridge in Brooklyn to sell you.

JEFF

How I was supposed to know he was about to get busted for dealing? I didn't even know he was doing that shit.

AMANDA

Tell him to give back the money.

JEFF

I did. He said he doesn't have it. The police confiscated it.

AMANDA

What about your parents?

JEFF

They refuse to bail me out. Would your Mom help me?

AMANDA

She doesn't have that kind of money.

JEFF

I have an idea. I can get financial aid to cover part of my tuition and...

AMANDA

And what?

JEFF

I thought maybe you would postpone school and work.

Amanda turns her head away.

JEFF (cont'd)

Just for a few years, until I finish. And then I'll pay for you to go.

AMANDA

You fuck up and I'm the one  
who's supposed to put off  
college?

JEFF

Not forever. Just for a few  
years. Amanda, my program is  
really competitive. I have to  
take this slot. It's not like  
social work. What does it  
matter if you start a few years  
later?

AMANDA

God, you're like my mother.  
Everything revolves around your  
plans.

JEFF

Hey, that's not true and you  
know it. Couples do this for  
each other all the time.  
Didn't you say a relationship  
is sacrifice? For Christ's  
sake, your mother wielded a  
knife at me last night. Just  
think about it. Kay?

AMANDA

(nods reluctantly)

Your bus is here. You better  
go.

Jeff gives her a kiss.

JEFF

This will work out.

Amanda watches him get on the bus and whispers to herself  
as it pulls away.

AMANDA

Yeah, but for who?

INT. MALL - DAY

Izzy and Rose are dressed in warm-up suits as they walk briskly around the mall.

ROSE

Did Amanda find a dress yet?

IZZY

Last week. It should be in by the end of May. I'll tell you though, Amanda hasn't seemed quite like herself this week.

ROSE

Is she pregnant?

IZZY

What are you talking crazy?  
No! Bite your tongue.

Izzy and Rose feign spitting on their fingers.

ROSE

It's just jitters. It's to be expected. By the way, another unit came up in my complex. It's not as nice as the other one, but you should look.

IZZY

(shakes her head)

I can't. Not now, not with Amanda about to get married. If I move out, it would push Dawn over the edge.

ROSE

Honey, your daughter doesn't need a push, she needs a good kick in the ass. I swear sometimes I think she's got raspberry jelly running through her veins, instead of red hot blood. She's a young woman, doesn't she have needs? When

(MORE)

ROSE (cont'd)  
are you gonna stop her from  
making you live like you have  
one foot in the grave?

IZZY  
Rose, if I had a penny for  
every bit of nonsense you  
utter, I'd be a millionaire.  
And keep your voice down. The  
whole world doesn't need to  
know my business.

ROSE  
You should be so lucky to have  
business to tell.

IZZY  
I have business.

ROSE  
Like what?

IZZY  
I have a date this weekend.

ROSE  
Yeah, where are you and Dawn  
going?

IZZY  
I'm going to a hockey game with  
a gentleman whose name is Max  
Pearlman. You know him.

ROSE  
(stunned)  
You have a date with Max  
Pearlman? The Max Pearlman  
that lives at Meadowlark?

IZZY  
That's right.

ROSE

He's quite a catch. Good for you, Izzy. You need to come in the shop tomorrow so we can find you something to wear.

(pauses)

By the way, how's Dawn taking this date of yours?

INT. DONUT SHOP KITCHEN - DAY

Dawn opens one cupboard after another, slamming them closed when she doesn't find what she's looking for. Amanda walks in carrying coffee carafes.

DAWN

Dammit! Have you seen the big container of powdered sugar?

Amanda puts the carafes in the sink.

AMANDA

No. I'm sure Gram will know.

DAWN

Where the hell is your grandmother? I can't believe she made a hair appointment while we were still open and left me here alone.

AMANDA

Ah-hem! You're not exactly alone. Besides, she's excited about her date.

DAWN

Oh please! Ridiculous, that's what that is.

A bell RINGS signaling the door opening in front.

INT. DONUT SHOP FRONT - MOMENT LATER

Dawn rushes in.

DAWN  
Well it's about time...

Mike Weinstein smiles at her.

DAWN (cont'd)  
Oh, it's you.

MIKE  
Good afternoon, Mrs. Ruff.

Amanda enters.

MIKE  
Hey, Amanda.

AMANDA  
Hey, Weinstein. Come in back,  
I've got the donuts all ready  
for pick-up.

Mike follows Amanda toward the kitchen as Izzy walks in.

DAWN  
There you are.

Izzy shows off her hair.

IZZY  
What do you think? She made it  
a little shorter on top.

DAWN  
It's fine. Where did you put  
the powdered sugar? I've  
looked all over.

Izzy breezes past Dawn to the kitchen and comes back with a  
container of powdered sugar. She shoves it at Dawn.

IZZY  
There you go. I'll see you  
later.

Amanda walks in, followed by Mike carrying a big box.

MIKE

Hey, Miss Izzy.

IZZY

Hello, Mike. Nice to see you again.

AMANDA

Gram, did you cut your hair?  
You're stylin'.

IZZY

Is that good?

AMANDA

Oh yeah.

DAWN

Can we move on from the hair?  
Where are you goin' Ma?

IZZY

I'm going to Rose's shop to  
find something to wear on my  
date.

DAWN

What about the clean-up?

IZZY

Amanda can help you.

Izzy grabs her purse and heads out before Dawn can say another word.

MIKE

Miss Izzy has a date? That's  
great!

Dawn heads to the kitchen. Seconds later, the sound of slamming cabinets travels up to the the front of the store.

INT. ROSE'S STORE - LATE AFTERNOON

Izzy searches through the racks, pulling out a pair of pants with fringe at the bottom. Rose walks over.



ROSE

There's a shirt that goes with that. It's perfect.

IZZY

It's too...come on, fringe? At my age?

ROSE

I have customers who are eighty with one foot in the grave and they wear fringe. In fact, Myrna Watkins wore that to her own funeral last week.

IZZY

I don't want to look like Elvis. I need something dignified and casual. We're just going to a hockey game.

ROSE

Go in the fitting room and I'll bring you things.

IZZY

Fine, but remember nothing metallic and no beading.

ROSE

Killjoy.

INT. FITTING ROOM MONTAGE - DAY

Izzy steps from the dressing room in several outfits all featuring loud colors and rhinestones. Izzy crinkles her nose at all of them. Finally, she comes out wearing a pair of trousers and a green sweater set.

ROSE

(whining)

It's so plain.

IZZY

So am I.

ROSE

One minute.

Rose walks away and comes back with a small colorful scarf. She knots the scarf at Izzy's throat.

ROSE (cont'd)

I picked this up at a resale shop. It's vintage.

IZZY

(appreciates reflection)

That's good, because so am I.

INT. DAWN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Izzy faces the mirror wearing the outfit she bought at Rose's store. Her hands fumble trying to tie the scarf. Dawn is putting clothes away in her bureau.

IZZY

I can't seem to tie this thing.  
Dawn, come help me.

Dawn wears an annoyed expression as she ties Izzy's scarf. Izzy flinches.

IZZY

Are you trying to choke me?

DAWN

You asked me to tie it.

Dawn finishes and Izzy scrutinizes her reflection, with Dawn standing behind her.

IZZY

You did a good job. You  
haven't said if you like my new  
outfit.

Dawn goes back to putting her things in the bureau.

DAWN

It's fine.

IZZY

That's it?

DAWN

It's too green. You look like  
the Jolly Green Giant.

IZZY

(indignant)

You know what you are, Dawn?  
You're frustrated and you have  
no spirit! They talk about it  
on Oprah all the time. That's  
what's bothering you.

Dawn slams the drawer shut.

DAWN

Dr. Ruth, you want to know  
what's bothering me? It's your  
blatant disrespect for my  
father. You're making a  
spectacle of yourself with this  
date business, and it's an  
insult to his memory.

Izzy turns ashen.

IZZY

(tight voice)

When you speak to me like that,  
it's you who insults your  
father's memory. I know,  
because he didn't raise a  
daughter who talks to her  
mother like that.

Izzy walks out, leaving Dawn shaken.

INT. RUFF HOUSE KITCHEN - LATER THAT NIGHT

Dawn sits at the table with a pad and pencil. Adam enters.

ADAM

Gram just left. Hey, do you  
think Max takes Viagra?

Dawn shoots him a warning look.

DAWN

I don't think the situation  
with Gram is something to joke  
about. She's too old to get  
hurt and she has a bad heart.

ADAM

She looks okay to me.

DAWN

You're too young to understand.  
Don't you have a video game you  
can go play?

ADAM

Huffy. Oh!

(remembering)

Amanda called and said she's  
gonna take the bus back from  
the city tomorrow night. She  
wants someone to pick her up.

DAWN

(writing)

Okay.

ADAM

(points to pad)

What's that?

DAWN

The wedding list. I have to  
finalize it.

ADAM

Do I get to invite my friends?

DAWN

Yes, to your own wedding,  
preferably when you're forty.

ADAM

Great.

Adam skulks out. Dawn begins writing names on the pad, but after a moment she puts the pencil down, leans back in the chair, and begins to cry.

EXT. CONTINENTAL AIRLINES ARENA - NIGHT

Max and Izzy leave the hockey game wearing and carrying all sorts of New Jersey Devils paraphernalia. They walk through the parking lot laughing.

MAX

I thought you were going to get  
put in the penalty box.

IZZY

That referee had to be blind to  
make that call.

MAX

And you said you weren't really  
a sports fan.

Max unlocks his old Buick and holds Izzy's door open.

IZZY

Well fair is fair. Was I too  
loud?

MAX

You were terrific!

She dips into the car smiling shyly.

EXT. MANHATTEN STREET OUTSIDE THEATER - NIGHT

Amanda charges out of the theater with Jeff trailing behind her.

AMANDA

The administration office!

JEFF

It pays well, and that way we'd  
get a break on my tuition.

She spins around on her heels.

AMANDA

A secretary in the administration office? That's the job you want me to take to put you through school? Maybe you should write out what you want me to eat for breakfast every morning before I go!

JEFF

Who knows if you'll even get it? But at least call the guy. For me.

AMANDA

Everything right now seems to be for you. I haven't even decided if that's what I'm going to do.

JEFF

(annoyed)

I know. Yesterday your mother asked a million times how come the school hasn't asked for your deposit.

AMANDA

She's going to go nuts.

JEFF

(mocking)

Little Amanda always living for Mommy.

AMANDA

That's not fair.

JEFF

Isn't it? Do this for us, Amanda. Did you think you were going to volunteer in a shelter and pay our rent? It's takes sacrifice.

AMANDA  
(head snaps up)  
What's your sacrifice?

JEFF  
Dealing with your family.

Amanda turns away from him, but he pulls her back.

JEFF (cont'd)  
Amanda, I'm sorry. You know I  
feel terrible about you  
deferring school. If I could  
defer mine, I would.  
(lifts her chin)  
Will you talk to the guy this  
week?

AMANDA  
Fine.

JEFF  
Don't worry, your turn will  
come.

Amanda nods, but her face shows that she is unconvinced.

JEFF  
Let's go grab something to eat.

AMANDA  
No, I feel nauseous. Let's  
just walk for a while.

Jeff opens his mouth to speak, but she cuts him off.

AMANDA  
Quietly.

Jeff reaches for her hand as she walks, but she pulls away.  
He tries again and she gives in.

INT. PEARL PLAZA BALLROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

Max leads Izzy into the ballroom with her eyes closed.

IZZY  
Can I open them?

MAX  
Just another minute.

Max positions her at the edge of the dance floor.

MAX  
Okay! Open your eyes.

Izzy opens her eyes and her breath catches in her throat.  
In the center of the dance floor is a romantic candlelit  
table for two.

IZZY  
How'd you do all this?

MAX  
Don't forget, you're out with a  
caterer. It's like being  
Superman with a kitchen.

He holds out her chair. Izzy sits and he snaps a napkin  
open across her lap. Max lifts the silver lid off her  
plate.

MAX  
A lox, eggs and onion omelette.

IZZY  
Will I need Alka-Seltzer when  
I'm done?

Max sits down.

MAX  
I can't make any promises.

They laugh. Izzy takes a bite of her omelette.

IZZY  
Delicious, Max.

MAX  
I'll pass your compliments to  
the chef.



IZZY

My son-in-law used to make a great omelette. (beat) I haven't thought about him in ages.

MAX

Amanda and Adam's father?

IZZY

Yeah.

MAX

Does he come around often?

IZZY

Depends. How often is never?

MAX

When was the last time they heard from him?

IZZY

Not since Amanda was eight. He was supposed to come to her birthday party. Amanda invited her whole class. She was so proud her father was going to be there. But not every story has a happy ending. He didn't show and it wasn't the first time. Dawn told him she didn't want child support anymore and that he should stay out of their lives for good. It's the only time she asked him to do something and he did it. Dawn went to court the next month and had all their names changed back to Ruff.

MAX

It couldn't have been easy doing it alone for so long. Does she date at all?

IZZY

Not much really. And not in years.

Max nods and then jumps up from the table.

MAX

I almost forgot!

Max goes to the stage and puts a CD in the boom box. Big band music fills the room. He holds out his hand.

MAX

When I was a young man, my father told me when you take a girl out on a date, make sure you take her dancing. Besides a meal without music isn't really a meal.

IZZY

You want to dance here?

MAX

I promise I'm a lot looser than the broom.

Izzy joins Max and they dance.

IZZY

This is nice.

MAX

My late wife loved to dance.

IZZY

How long ago did she pass away?

MAX

Seven years ago from lung cancer. She had one of those little oxygen tanks that we schlepped around where ever we went.

(fondly)

If you asked her about it,

(MORE)

MAX (cont'd)  
she'd wave it off and tell you  
'everyone has them.' Like it  
was new a purse. What about  
your husband?

IZZY  
Heart attack five years ago.  
He'd just retired, too. We  
were gonna catch up with the  
times. Albert wanted us to  
take a computer class together.

MAX  
Sophie wanted us to take  
dancing lessons.

IZZY  
You could still do that.

MAX  
Know anyone who would want to  
be partnered with a crotchedy  
old guy like me?

IZZY  
You're not so crotchedy.

MAX  
You don't think so?

IZZY  
Not with these moves, fella.

MAX  
(grips her waist)  
Hang on, cause you ain't seen  
nothin' yet.

Max spins Izzy around and their mingled laughter creates  
music all its own.

EXT. RUFF HOUSE - SAME NIGHT

Max and Izzy stand at the front door. Izzy holds all the  
hockey paraphernalia.

MAX

I had a lot of fun, Izzy.

IZZY

Me too, Max.

MAX

So, should I look into those  
dance lessons?

IZZY

Yeah. And I'll check on that  
computer class.

Max glances up at the sky.

MAX

A lot of stars tonight.

Izzy looks up.

IZZY

I hadn't...

Max plants his lips on hers. Finally they pull back, as  
Izzy's voice changes to a whisper.

IZZY

...noticed.

Max's eyes twinkle.

MAX

Who'd have thought at our age?

Izzy puts a finger to his lips.

IZZY

Let's not give ourselves a  
canahora.

Max smiles, acknowledging her superstition.

MAX

Good night, Izzy.

IZZY  
Good night, Max.

Izzy goes inside. Max dances back to his car.

INT. DONUT SHOP - DAY

Dawn slams the register as a CUSTOMER walks away. Izzy glides around straightening coffee cups and napkins. Amanda sits on a stool reading a magazine.

DAWN  
Any more days as slow as this  
and I'll be out of business.

IZZY  
It's not so bad.

DAWN  
I'm surprised you heard what I  
said over all your humming.

IZZY  
I'm in a good mood and you're  
not going to spoil it.

Amanda throws down her magazine.

AMANDA  
I'm going in the back to box up  
stuff for the food shuttle.

Amanda leaves. Dawn wipes the counters. Izzy throws a glance toward the kitchen and moves close to Dawn. She speaks in hushed tones.

IZZY  
I've been meaning to ask you.

DAWN  
What?

IZZY  
Are you inviting Joe to the  
wedding?

DAWN

No! What made you think of  
Joe?

IZZY

Max and I were talking and...

Dawn throws down her rag.

DAWN

Max! You know Ma, tell your...I  
don't even know what the hell  
to call him. Tell him to mind  
his own damn business!

Dawn storms out the front door.

MONTAGE. - PASSAGE OF TIME

The winter passes into spring with scenes of Max and Izzy at dinner, dance lessons and computer classes. Izzy opens Max's refrigerator and gestures skeptically to the Styrofoam containers. Later, she opens the refrigerator for him and it is packed with fresh food instead of the containers. The wedding plans move forward with Amanda and Dawn picking out flowers arrangements, Amanda and Jeff listening to wedding bands and Dawn mailing out wedding invitations.

INT. MAX'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Max paces outside the closed bedroom door.

IZZY (O.S)

(calls from inside)

Okay, come in.

Max opens the door. Izzy stands next to the bed in a tasteful negligee.

MAX

I think I have the wrong room.  
Are you sure you're over  
eighteen?

IZZY  
(teases)  
Get over here, fella.

MAX  
With pleasure, madam. With  
pleasure.

Max closes the door.

INT. MAX'S BEDROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

Max and Izzy lay in bed talking.

MAX  
You know what I did to the  
steak the customer sent back?

IZZY  
I'm afraid to ask.

MAX  
I stepped on it.

IZZY  
You didn't!

MAX  
Then I picked it up and put it  
back on the plate. He ate  
every bite. Even said how he  
never had such a tender steak  
before!

They laugh.

IZZY  
How long ago was that?

MAX  
Thirty years.  
(shifting)  
Are you comfortable, Izzy?

IZZY  
Very.

MAX

Me, too.

IZZY

Can I ask you something?

MAX

Shoot.

IZZY

There are a ton of women lining  
up for a widower like you.  
Yet, you never asked any of  
them out. Why me?

MAX

Why not you?

IZZY

That's not an answer. It's  
another question.

MAX

I liked your spunk when I saw  
you twirl that broom around the  
dance floor.

(hesitates)

Can I ask you something?

IZZY

Sure.

MAX

Will you marry me, Izzy?

Izzy sucks in a short breath.

IZZY

Marry?

MAX

We're not getting any younger.

IZZY

(teases)

You call that a proposal?



MAX

Talk about answering a question  
with a question. How about  
this? I love you.

Max kisses her.

MAX (cont'd)

Say yes, Izzy!

IZZY

I need to think about this,  
Max.

Max rolls away and Izzy spoons up next to him.

MAX

What's to think about?

IZZY

It's not just about us, Max.  
We both have families.

MAX

Grown kids, Izzy.

IZZY

I just need a little time to  
get used to the idea.  
Everything seems to be going so  
quickly.

Max turns to her.

MAX

Do you love me?

IZZY

I do. Can you be patient with  
me?

MAX

Patient. Yeah, okay.

IZZY

And to keep the peace with  
Dawn, don't say anything to  
anyone about this. Promise?

Max nods. Izzy gives him a peck.

INT. DONUT SHOP - MORNING A FEW WEEKS LATER

Izzy and Dawn help CUSTOMERS. Amanda walks in from the  
kitchen with a tray of jelly donuts.

AMANDA

Do you want these on the shelf?

DAWN

Yeah. Oh Amanda, the bridal  
shop called and your dress is  
in. I thought we could go over  
on Friday afternoon. Ma,  
you're coming right?

Amanda puts the tray down. Izzy hands her Customer a bag  
and change.

IZZY

Yup. Oh...Max and I were going  
to drive down the shore Friday  
morning. I'll just make sure  
we're back by...

DAWN

Four.

IZZY

Four.

Amanda heads to the door with a gloomy expression on her  
face.

DAWN

Where are you going?

The door closes without her answering.

EXT. STRIP MALL - A MOMENT LATER

Amanda walks out of the donut shop and knocks into Mike.

MIKE

Hey, where's the fire?

AMANDA

Hi, Weinstein. I'm not in the mood to listen to them bicker. What are you doing here? It's not your pick-up day.

MIKE

I'm on lunch, so I thought I'd swing by and bring some donuts back to the office. The nurses will think I'm a hero. Where you off to?

AMANDA

There's a park up the block. I thought I'd go sit for a bit.

MIKE

Feel like company?

AMANDA

Sure.

EXT. SOFTBALL FIELD AT PARK - ONE HOUR LATER

Amanda and Mike sit in empty bleachers sipping Snapples and staring out at the field.

MIKE

...three years old and he tells me he's getting married.

AMANDA

What did his mother say?

MIKE

She says, 'honey who are you gonna marry?' And the kid says, 'Mama, I'm gonna marry my  
(MORE)

MIKE (cont'd)  
sister, Wendy." I tell him,  
'son, where I come from that's  
not so strange.' His Mama got  
a good chuckle out of that.

AMANDA  
I bet she did. So is that what  
you do down in North Carolina,  
marry your sisters?

MIKE  
I guess. That must be why I'm  
still single. I only have  
brothers.

They laugh. He looks at the field and she looks at him.

MIKE (cont'd)  
So, do they have little league  
games here?

AMANDA  
In the summer. I played when I  
was nine. My team was the  
Tigers. My mother was the  
coach, of course.

MIKE  
I bet she was a force to  
reckoned with.

AMANDA  
Yeah, not much has changed  
there.

MIKE  
How are the wedding plans?

AMANDA  
Fine. I guess.

MIKE  
You must be excited to start  
school again.

AMANDA

Yeah, well, I'm putting that off. Jeff ran into some financial trouble and I got a job lined up in the university's administration office. It's a good job and we'll get a break on Jeff's tuition.

MIKE

Is that what you want?

AMANDA

Couples sacrifice for each other all the time...

(sweeps hand  
over bench)

Ooww!

MIKE

What is it?

Amanda inspects her hand.

AMANDA

I got a splinter.

MIKE

Let me see.

AMANDA

It's nothing.

MIKE

Runny noses and splinters are my bread and butter. Come on, let Dr. Weinstein take a look.

Amanda gives him the hand. He scans her palm and touches the spot with the splinter. She flinches.

AMANDA

Ouch!

MIKE

Hold still, I'm not gonna hurt  
ya'.

Amanda closes her eyes and Mike pinches her palm.

MIKE

That's it, all done.

AMANDA

(peeks over)

I didn't even feel it. You  
have quite a bedside manner  
there, Weinstein.

Their eyes lock on each other.

MIKE

Thanks.

He leans in and so does Amanda, but before contact she  
suddenly jumps up.

AMANDA

Okay...well...thanks. Ah...I'm gonna  
head back now.

Amanda hops down the bleachers. Her foot catches on the  
last one and she ends up splayed out on the ground. Mike  
calls to her.

MIKE

You all right?

Amanda smiles up at him sheepishly.

AMANDA

Are you going sit there or are  
you going to come down and help  
me up?

He stands up and smiles.

MIKE

Comin', dear.

EXT. ASBURY PARK BOARDWALK - DAY

Izzy and Max stroll along the edge of the surf. Izzy checks her watch.

MAX

It's twelve o'clock, Izzy.

IZZY

I know. I just want to make sure I'm not late. Remember, I have to be back by..

MAX

Four! I know. You've told me forty times.

IZZY

My granddaughter is being fitted for her wedding dress. It's a big day.

MAX

I know it is, Izzy. Now, have you thought about the big question I asked you?

IZZY

(bristles)

Don't push me.

Max becomes defensive.

MAX

Who's pushing? I'm just reminding. You know, if it's because of Dawn, I could talk to her for you. You don't have to do it alone.

IZZY

Now is not the time.

MAX

When is the time?

IZZY  
Just a little longer.

She pecks his cheek.

IZZY (cont'd)  
Let's drive over to Bradley so  
I can beat you at a game of  
miniature golf.

Izzy walks ahead toward the steps with Max following slowly.

INT. PEARL PLAZA FOYER - A FEW HOURS LATER

Dawn hands Howard a check.

DAWN  
I'll have the final guest list  
for you next week.

HOWARD  
That's fine. And you didn't  
have to make a special trip to  
drop the check off. I should  
have had my father pick it up.  
After all, we're almost family.  
If your mother gives him an  
answer soon, we can make it a  
double wedding.

DAWN  
(snaps)  
Answer to what?

HOWARD  
(cringes)  
Uh-oh.

DAWN  
Did your father ask my mother  
to marry him?

HOWARD  
You didn't know?

Dawn shakes her head and her face flushes with anger.



DAWN

Excuse me. I have to go take  
care of the details for the  
wedding I do know about!

Dawn hurries out.

HOWARD

Shit!

INT. BRIDAL SHOP FITTING ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

Amanda stands on a platform facing Dawn. Behind Amanda is  
a wall of mirrors that reflect Dawn's pacing in triplicate.

DAWN

Four-fifteen! I knew your  
grandmother was going to do  
this.

AMANDA

I hope nothing happened. It's  
not like her to be late.

DAWN

Nothing happened! She's just  
inconsiderate.

The SALESWOMAN, 40, walks in carrying a tiara and veil.

SALESWOMAN

(sing-songs)

Here it is.

AMANDA

Should we wait for Gram?

DAWN

No! Put it on.

The Saleswoman perches the tiara and veil on Amanda's head  
and Dawn's agitation gives way to a smile.

DAWN

Oh, Amanda. You're beautiful.

Amanda turns to face the mirrors and the color drains from her face. She clutches her stomach.

AMANDA  
Where's the bathroom?

SALESWOMAN  
First door on the right.

Amanda rushes out.

DAWN  
Amanda, where are you going?

INT. BRIDAL SHOP HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Dawn and the Saleswoman stand outside the bathroom door.

DAWN  
Amanda, unlock the door.  
What's going on?

Dawn and the Saleswoman hear Amanda throwing up inside. They jump back from the door.

SALESWOMAN  
Tell her not to throw up on the dress.

DAWN  
(knocking)  
Amanda, don't throw up on the dress.

AMANDA (O.S)  
(retching from  
beyond the door)  
I know!

Dawn turns her head and finds the Saleswoman hovering over her shoulder.

DAWN  
A little space please! Your chin's practically flattening my shoulder pad.

EXT. GARDEN STATE PARKWAY - MINUTES LATER

Max's old Buick rests on the shoulder with steam rising up from the engine. Max stands next to Izzy, who is fuming even more than the car.

IZZY

Didn't you check the engine  
before taking such a long  
drive?

MAX

The engine was fine. There was  
nothing to check.

Izzy looks at her watch in disgust.

IZZY

I'm missing Amanda's fitting.  
This is unbelievable. Why  
didn't you check the engine?

MAX

There was nothing to check!

INT. BRIDAL SHOP HALLWAY - HALF HOUR LATER

Dawn leans against the bathroom door.

DAWN

Amanda, you've been in there  
for almost an hour. Come on,  
unlock the door.

The lock clicks. Dawn stands up and opens the door, her head reeling back from the stench. Amanda sits on the floor in a puddle of crumpled satin.

INT. BRIDAL SHOP BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Dawn wraps Amanda in her arms, patting her matted hair.

DAWN

I promise I won't get mad, just  
tell me what it is. You're not  
the first bride to be pregnant  
at her wedding.

AMANDA  
(weakly)  
I'm not pregnant.

DAWN  
What is it then?

Amanda speaks as if each word is robbing her of oxygen.

AMANDA  
Jeff lost most of his money for  
school and he's asked me to  
work and support us.

DAWN  
What about your degree? What  
about social work?

AMANDA  
He said I can go in a few years  
when he's done. And I don't  
know if I want to do that. I  
love him, but, everything  
between us feels so one-sided.  
Please don't say I told you so.

DAWN  
I won't.

Dawn moves the stray hairs out of Amanda's face. She rips  
off toilet paper and wipes around her daughter's face.

DAWN  
If supporting him is what you  
choose to do, I'm not going to  
stop you.

AMANDA  
What if it's not what I want?

DAWN  
Then you need to decide that  
and tell him.

Amanda gags. She hurls over the toilet, this time with Dawn holding her hair back. The salesclerk appears at the door.

SALESCLERK

All better?

The Salesclerk reels back, waving her hand in front of her nose.

INT. AMANDA'S ROOM - THAT NIGHT

Amanda is in bed with Dawn perched at her side rubbing her back.

DAWN

Jeff left another message. Do you want me to call him back for you?

AMANDA

Okay. Tell him I have food poisoning and I'll call him tomorrow.

(yawning)

I'm going to sleep.

DAWN

I'll check on you later.

Dawn heads to the door. Amanda props up.

AMANDA

Mom.

DAWN

(turning)

Hmm?

AMANDA

Thanks for not giving me a lecture.

DAWN

Get some rest.

Amanda snuggles into her pillows.

AMANDA

Kay.

INT. RUFF HOUSE KITCHEN - LATER THAT NIGHT

Dawn sits at the table doing the newspaper crossword puzzle when Izzy walks in.

IZZY

I don't want to hear it. I know I missed her fitting, but Max's car broke down on the Parkway. Where's Amanda? I want to apologize.

Dawn taps her pencil on the paper, ignoring Izzy.

IZZY

Accident's happen, Dawn.

DAWN

What's a four letter word for unreliable? It starts with I? Hmm? Oh, I know. Izzy.

Dawn writes on the newspaper.

IZZY

Oh my god! So much drama. I missed an appointment. Nobody died!

Dawn throws the newspaper down in disgust.

DAWN

No, nobody died. But your granddaughter is dehydrated. She started throwing her guts up in her wedding gown. Thank goodness, Mike Weinstein came over and prescribed something. Otherwise I think I would have had to take her to the emergency room.

IZZY

Is it that nervous thing she  
used to get as a kid?

DAWN

Mike said it's stress induced.  
What nervous thing?

Izzy gives Dawn a pointed glare.

IZZY

Don't you remember when Joe  
didn't show up at her birthday?  
She threw up for a week. She  
couldn't even go to school.  
And that time in high school  
when she was running for...

DAWN

...class President. She starting  
vomiting two days before the  
vote. She lost because of it.  
She was so dissappointed by  
that.

IZZY

No she wasn't! She only ran  
because you pushed her to. She  
really wanted to head up that  
food drive for the mudslide  
victims instead. Is this  
because of the wedding?

DAWN

Apparently, Jeff lost his  
tuition money in some shady  
financial deal. He's pressured  
her into putting off school and  
working to support them both.  
She's miserable.

IZZY

(suspiciously)  
What'd you say to her?

DAWN

(defensively)

I told her I'd support her no matter what she does. What'd you think I said?

IZZY

I don't know, but I'm glad you said what you did.

DAWN

Yeah, well, she could have used her grandmother there, too. So could I.

(tone is caustic)

And when were you going to tell me Max asked you to marry him?

IZZY

Who told you that?

DAWN

Howard slipped.

IZZY

He asked, but I haven't answered him yet.

DAWN

Maybe when you do, I won't be the last one to find out.

IZZY

(angrily)

You don't exactly make it easy for me to tell you things. If for once you'd put your own shit aside, maybe Amanda and I wouldn't be so afraid to talk to you.

Dawn's voice shakes and her eyes glisten with tears.

DAWN

My daughter is not afraid to talk to me. We're close. We are!



Dawn bows her head and begins to sob.

DAWN (cont'd)  
Why does everyone want to leave  
me, Ma? First Joe. Now  
Amanda's ready to marry Jeff  
just to get away from me. And  
now you...I just want my family  
close.

Izzy hugs Dawn.

IZZY  
Come on, don't cry. The Ruff  
girls don't cry. It's not in  
our nature to fall apart.

DAWN  
I'm just so tired.

IZZY  
It's going to be all right.  
You just, you have to learn not  
to squeeze so tight just  
because you're afraid you might  
lose someone. If you do, you  
end up pushing everything good  
out until there's nothing left  
inside.

DAWN  
I don't know how to be any  
other way.

IZZY  
Remember when you were a kid  
and Daddy was teaching you how  
to hit a baseball? You  
couldn't hit a thing because  
you were choking the bat. What  
did your father tell you to do?

Dawn cracks a smile.

DAWN  
Loosen my grip.

IZZY

And then you were swatting the balls out of the park. It's the same with people. If you loosen your grip, you'll find that you didn't have to hang on so tight after all. Understand?

Dawn snuffles and nods. Izzy rocks her in her arms.

IZZY (cont'd)

That's my girl. We're going to be okay. All of us.

INT. AMANDA'S ROOM - A FEW DAYS LATER

Izzy walks in carrying a bed tray. Amanda sits up in bed.

IZZY

I made you some toast and a little apple juice.

AMANDA

Thanks, Gram.

Izzy puts the tray down in front of Amanda.

IZZY

Can I get you anything else?

AMANDA

No. Hopefully this will stay down. Why aren't you at the shop with Mom?

IZZY

We both thought it would be best if someone stayed home with you.

AMANDA

How is Mom managing the shop on her own?

IZZY

Your brother's out of school,  
so he's helping. Jeff called  
again. You're going to have to  
talk to him eventually.

AMANDA

I know. I just don't know what  
I'm going to tell him.

The front doorbell RINGS.

AMANDA

Oh my god! What if that's him?

IZZY

He just called from the city.  
It's not him.

Amanda moves the tray and runs into her bathroom. Izzy  
hears her throwing up again.

IZZY

(calls out)  
I'll get the door.

AMANDA (O.S.)

(calls from bathroom)  
Okay!

EXT. RUFF HOUSE FOYER - DAY

Max rings the doorbell again. Izzy opens the door.

IZZY

(annoyed)  
What are you doing here?

MAX

I came to take you to lunch.

IZZY

We don't have plans. I told  
you on the phone I need to be  
here with Amanda.

MAX

It's been four days. She's not  
still throwing up, is she?

The sound of Amanda VOMITING travels down the stairs.  
Izzy cocks an eyebrow at Max.

MAX (cont'd)

So I'll come in and visit a  
bit.

Izzy steps out on the porch and pulls the door closed.

IZZY

That's not a good idea right  
now. Don't you see what's  
going on in my life? My  
family.

MAX

Of course I see. But Izzy,  
what about us?

IZZY

What are you talking about?

MAX

You barely talk to me when I  
call. I know you blame me for  
the car breaking down. And  
I've been waiting over a month  
for you to tell me if you'll  
marry me. When are you going  
to start living for us and not  
just for Dawn and Amanda?

IZZY

They're my family, Max. People  
don't come in tidy Stryofoam  
containers, with everything  
separated neatly. We're messy.  
Our lives spill over into each  
others. I am my family and we  
have problems.

MAX

You can say that again.

IZZY  
(insulted)  
How dare you!

MAX  
(remorsefully)  
Izzy, I didn't mean...

IZZY  
I want you to leave, Max!

Max stands his ground.

MAX  
Not without an answer. I  
deserve an answer.

IZZY  
You want an answer! Well  
everything isn't about what you  
want, you...you craggy ass old  
fool!

MAX  
Is that your answer?

IZZY  
No, this is!

Izzy walks in the house and slams the door in his face.

INT. BANK PRIVATE VIEWING ROOM - TWO DAYS LATER

Amanda and Izzy sit in the room. A safety deposit box is  
on the counter.

AMANDA  
I don't know why we're here,  
Gram. I made my decision. I'm  
meeting Jeff in the city this  
afternoon to give his ring  
back.

IZZY  
I know. But you need to see  
this first.

Izzy opens the box. Slowly she removes the papers on top, revealing the stacks of bills underneath.

AMANDA

Oh my god. There must be...

IZZY

Just over forty thousand.

AMANDA

Where on earth did you get this money? Does Mom know?

IZZY

Your mother doesn't know. I started saving it years ago, when your grandfather and I were first married. It was my mad money, only I never went mad.

AMANDA

Why didn't you just keep it in a bank account?

IZZY

I didn't want to answer to anybody about what I spent. Your grandfather was pretty tight. My mother used to give me money sometimes to help us out. She kept it in a mattress. Some of that money I put here. I've been adding some of my social security money and now I have all this.

AMANDA

What are you going to do with it?

IZZY

I thought I'd buy an apartment at Meadowlark, but Max is there. And I'm fine living with your mother. I want you to have the money.

AMANDA

I can't take your money,  
Grandma. What if you need it?

IZZY

I want you to have it. This  
could help you and Jeff, right?

AMANDA

I don't know what to say.

IZZY

Amanda, you're young and you  
have your whole life in front  
of you. If the only reason  
you're calling off this wedding  
is because of money then here,  
take it!

AMANDA

What if money isn't the only  
reason?

IZZY

Then you need to know that...  
(taps her chest)  
...in here. That way when you  
get to be my age and you look  
back on your life, you won't  
have any regrets.

Amanda looks between Izzy's face and the money. She shakes  
her head and closes the safety deposit box.

AMANDA

No thanks, Gram. I don't want  
the money.

INT. AMANDA'S BEDROOM - TWO MONTHS LATER

Amanda is packing. Izzy comes in carrying the scarf she  
wore on her first date with Max.

IZZY

I thought you might like this.  
It's vintage.

Izzy hands the scarf to Amanda.

AMANDA

This is the scarf you wore on  
your date with Max. I can't  
take it.

IZZY

What do I need for? It's  
yours.

Izzy shuffles out of the room, as Dawn breezes in carrying  
a laundry basket.

DAWN

Okay, freshly washed and all  
ready for SUNY Albany.

AMANDA

(pensively)

Thanks, Ma.

DAWN

What's the matter with you?

AMANDA

I'm worried about Gram. She  
seems so depressed lately.

DAWN

Well, she's been worried about  
you. We all were.

AMANDA

It's not that and you know it.

DAWN

Oh, him?

AMANDA

Max. His name is Max. And she  
loves him. He made her laugh  
and dance. Don't you see that?

DAWN

But it's been over for two  
months. What can I do?



Amanda puts the scarf in Dawn's hand.

AMANDA

I don't know, Ma. What can you do?

INT. HOWARD'S OFFICE PEARL PLAZA - NEXT MORNING

Howard is talking on the phone as Max walks in. Howard signals Max to stay quiet by holding up his hand.

HOWARD

Yeah, the check's ready. I'm sorry it took so long. (beat) Please send Amanda our best.

Max rolls his eyes.

HOWARD

He's doing okay.

MAX

(whispering)  
I'm doing terrific!

HOWARD

I'll do that. That's a great idea. (beat) You, too. Take care.

Howard hangs up and Max eyes him suspiciously.

MAX

What's a good idea?

HOWARD

That was Dawn. Since the wedding's off, I owe them a check.

MAX

(sarcastic)  
I'm sure she's doing cartwheels over that.

HOWARD

Don't be so sure. I think she's learned from this. Anyway, she thought maybe you'd like to bring the check over to the shop later.

MAX

(shakes his head)

Me? I don't think so.

HOWARD

Why not?

MAX

It's a long drive and my poor old car can't afford any more miles.

HOWARD

I think that car still has a lot of life left in it.

Howard taps the check on his desk.

HOWARD (cont'd)

You know Pop, when you were with Izzy, that was the happiest I've seen you since before Mom got sick.

MAX

(indignantly)

You think so, huh? Well it's too late. That woman said my...

HOWARD

I know, I know, your ass was craggy and she called you a fool. You know Pop, pride and foolishness often go hand in hand. And if you let your pride throw away what you and Izzy had then she's right, you are a fool.

MAX

You need to mind your own  
business!

HOWARD

I will, only after today.  
You've been moping around here  
all summer. And according  
Dawn, so has Izzy.

Howard waves the check in front of Max and places it on the  
desk.

HOWARD (cont'd)

I'm going to leave this on my  
desk. Your car is outside and  
if you want to bring them the  
check, here it is. In the  
morning if it's still there,  
I'll put it in the mail. Only  
that would be a shame, now  
wouldn't it?

Howard walks out. Max calls after him.

MAX

You should mail it because I'm  
not...

His words trail off as he eyes the check.

INT. DONUT SHOP - SAME DAY

Dawn hangs up the phone as Rose and Izzy walk in.

ROSE

I've been unpacking wool pants  
and jackets all day. I'm  
shvitzing like a pig.

IZZY

I can't believe summer's almost  
gone.

DAWN

Good riddance. We always do  
better in the winter.

Amanda walks in from the kitchen.

AMANDA

I'm gonna take off. Adam's  
outside with the car.

DAWN

Okay. I'll be home at three  
and then we should leave for  
the airport.

ROSE

Going back to B.U.?

AMANDA

Nope. Albany. They have a  
great program for social work.

DAWN

(preening)

One of the top schools for an  
MSW!

Rose smiles, obviously approving of Dawn's new outlook.  
Amanda glances at the clock.

IZZY

You better go. If he stops in  
we'll tell him you said good-  
bye.

Amanda nods and walks out, however reluctantly.

ROSE

Who now?

DAWN

Mike Weinstein.

ROSE

The food shuttle guy. And  
you're okay with this?

DAWN

I'm a very open minded woman,  
Rose.

ROSE

Okay, someone get me a donut  
before I faint.

EXT. STRIP MALL PARKING LOT - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Adam is waiting by the car as Amanda walks over. Mike  
calls out from the sidewalk.

MIKE

Amanda!

She spins around. He is making his way between the cars to  
reach her.

AMANDA

Hey, Weinstein. I thought you  
weren't gonna make it.

MIKE

I got hung up with three ear  
infections. I wanted to ask  
you before you go. Do they  
have good skiing up there in  
Albany?

A smile oozes across her face.

AMANDA

Ever hear of Lake Placid?

MIKE

I believe I have.

AMANDA

I didn't know you ski.

MIKE

I don't, but I was fixin' to  
give it a try. Maybe in the  
beginning of December when I  
have vacation. Know anyone up  
there in Albany who'd want to  
take a southern boy skiing?

AMANDA

I might.

MIKE

Okay then. Well, have a good trip.

They hug awkwardly. Mike turns to go.

AMANDA

Weinstein.

He turns and she falls into his arms. They kiss as their arms wrap around each other. The car horn BLARES.

ADAM

Amanda, let's go!

She pulls back smiling broadly.

AMANDA

You know, I might have exams in early December.

MIKE

That's all right. I don't mind waitin' for you to be done.

They kiss again. Reluctantly they pull apart and Amanda gets in the car. She waves as the car moves away, leaving Mike with a Cheshire cat grin on his face.

INT. CAR DRIVING - A MOMENT LATER

Adam drives while Amanda stares dreamily out the window.

ADAM

So did he cop a feel?

Amanda smacks Adam in the back of the head.

INT. DONUT SHOP - THAT AFTERNOON

Izzy is emptying the coffee filters, while Dawn sits at one of the tables reading catalogs.

IZZY

I could use a little help cleaning up over here.

DAWN

In a minute, Ma.

IZZY

What are you looking at?

DAWN

The business course catalog  
from Rutgers.

IZZY

Don't tell me your going to  
force it on Adam now. Didn't  
you learn with Amanda?

DAWN

Yes I did. These are for me.  
If I can afford it, I figure I  
can take three courses a  
semester and finish in six,  
maybe seven years. Then Mrs.  
Fields, watch out.

Izzy smiles slyly.

IZZY

Somehow I think you'll afford  
it.

The door opens and Max walks in. Izzy catches her breath,  
but recovers quickly.

IZZY

We're closed.

MAX

I have a check for Dawn.

Izzy turns to go, but Dawn steps in front of her.

DAWN

I have to box things for the  
food shuttle. Ma, you can help  
Max? Nice to see you, Max.

Dawn whisks toward the kitchen before Izzy can say a word.

MAX

Hello, Izzy.

IZZY

So where's the check?

Max reaches in his pocket and hands it to her.

IZZY

Thanks.

MAX

Okay, I...so how've you been?

IZZY

Fine! I'm fine. And you?

MAX

Lousy.

IZZY

Well, I'm sorry to hear that.

Max steps closer to her.

MAX

Then take me back.

IZZY

Just like that? I haven't  
heard from you in two months.  
You have a lot of nerve coming  
here.

MAX

It took all of my nerve to get  
me here. I love you Izzy and  
I've missed terribly.

Izzy is silent, but the hardness in her eyes softens.

MAX (cont'd)

Have you missed me at all?

IZZY

Of course I have. But it  
didn't work between us, Max.



MAX

But it did, Izzy. Don't you see that?

IZZY

We said all those horrible things to each other.

MAX

I love you. Those are the words you need to remember.

IZZY

(tenderly)

I do remember.

He takes her hands.

MAX

I was wrong to push you. I know how important your family is to you and so they're important to me, too. Because you're important to me, Izzy. I want you and Dawn and Amanda to spill over into my life and I'm not going to let my pride stand in the way of our being together. I want to marry you, but if waiting is my only choice, I'll wait as long as it's beside you.

Her eyes shine fondly.

IZZY

Max, you always make me feel like I'm a kid again with my whole life in front of me, instead of behind.

MAX

Izzy, I'd ask you to grow old with me, but we're already old. So grow young with me, while we still can.

IZZY  
Okay, Max. Okay.

They embrace and kiss with passion and tenderness.

INT. DONUT SHOP KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Dawn spies at them from the doorway.

DAWN  
(whispers)  
Good for you, Ma. Good for  
you.

FADE OUT:

THE END