

FADE IN:

INT. DANCE STUDIO - AFTERNOON

KATE, 27, stands in front of a mirrored wall. She wears tights and toe shoes.

She is stretching, twisting her body into seemingly impossible and strangely provocative positions. She addresses us directly.

KATE

Sorry. I just finished an eight and a half hour rehearsal and I forgot to take my potassium supplement. If I stop, I'll be one giant cramp.

She brings one of her legs up straight until her chin is touching her knee. She grunts.

KATE

Does this turn you on? I can do both legs at the same time but I'm going to leave that to your imagination. I wonder if you'd still find it appealing if you knew that I could probably kick an iron stake through a telephone pole. Twenty-four years of dancing builds strength and gives you a high threshold for pain, if nothing else.

INT. SUBWAY CAR - AFTERNOON

Kate, now dressed in street clothes, stands in the packed subway. She holds up a snapshot of a little girl of three dressed in a ballerina costume and smiling.

KATE

That's me, three years old. You ask most of the girls I know, and they'll tell you their mother forced them into ballet. My father was the resident sadist in our family. His only little girl. "Dance for me, my little princess," he'd say. "Dance for me." Six years later he became the absentee sadist and I became obsessed with dance. You don't have to be Freud to see that connection. One giant neon neurosis flashing the words, "Seek help." But, hey, we must suffer for our art.

INT. DANCE STUDIO - AFTERNOON

MOLLY, 25, beautiful and lithe, rehearsing alone.

KATE (O.S.)
Beautiful, isn't she?

KATE AND MOLLY

Kate stands in the foreground, her back to Molly, who continues to dance.

KATE
Molly. Her father's an orthodontist and her mother's a plastic surgeon, so she didn't need good genes. She's catty, neurotic, and self-obsessed. We'd be great friends if she weren't a better dancer. She had principle rolls in our last five productions. In the latest, she gets to be a snow owl. I, on the other hand, am a leaf, a fox, and, in what will undoubtedly be the highlight of my career, a piece of moose dropping.

INT. KATE'S APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

Kate stands next to a small TV, upon which plays "Fantasia." Pink hippos dance.

KATE
You see, that's me, third hippo from the left. I've auditioned for principles and got rejected for every one. A sampling of those rejections.

INT. AUDITION SPACE - AFTERNOON

A quick-cut montage of various directors, seated behind a table, taking notes.

DIRECTOR ONE
You're very tall. Did you used to be a man?

DIRECTOR TWO
You're pretty but you're not... pretty. In a non-awkward sense.

DIRECTOR THREE
Your resume says you weigh one-ten. Have you gained since this was printed?

DIRECTOR FOUR

Technically, you're very skilled
but... you seem to lack any passion.

DIRECTOR FIVE

You're obviously passionate but your
technique is lacking.

DIRECTOR SIX

This coffee's cold. And your
nostrils aren't symmetrical.

KATE

She stands at the front of the rehearsal space addressing us.

KATE

My nostrils aren't symmetrical. My
nostrils.

(gestures grandly, as
if to say, "What the
fuck?")

I've thought about letting my ass go.
Just pack on ten or fifteen extra
pounds back there. I know it
wouldn't advance my career, but it
would make the rejections consistent.
"My God, your ass!" And that's all
they'd have to say. I shouldn't
complain. The third hippo from the
left has a regular gig and makes an
okay living, so long as okay means
having only one roommate in a one
bedroom plus study. And I got the
bedroom. That has to count for
something.

INT. KATE'S APARTMENT, STUDY - AFTERNOON

The entire study is basically a wide spot in a hallway,
barely big enough for a twin bed.

On that bed lies the naked, sleeping figure of GEORGE.
Though covered by a sheet, we can see that this man is carved
from the finest of the world's marble.

Kate sits at the foot of the bed, speaking to us.

KATE

My roommate, George. What does one
say about George? I used to live
with the fourth hippo from the left
(more)

KATE (cont'd)
 and George was living with... whoever
 it was he lived with before me. The
 fourth hippo got canned and had to
 pack it in back to Indiana. That's
 when George asked if he could move in
 here. I was shocked. He can
 certainly afford his own place. Even
 if he couldn't, with those looks it
 wouldn't take more than half a second
 for that abandoned puppy to be
 adopted into a much better
 neighborhood. But, hey, as long as
 he pays half the bills, whatever.
 Then he moves in this bed and that
 dresser, some clothes, and more skin
 care products than I've ever seen at
 Macy's, and that's it. He sleeps
 here maybe twice a week, he never
 steps foot in the kitchen, and he
 always smells good. The perfect
 roommate. Of course, there's that
 persistent rumor that he got the
 fourth hippo fired just so he could
 move in...

George raises up suddenly, jolted from his sleep. He squints
 at Kate.

GEORGE
 Could you narrate your life...
 somewhere else?

George flops back down on the bed, eyes closed. Kate frowns.

KATE
 Shut up, I'm talking about your
 favorite subject.
 (to us)
 He's ninty-nine-point-nine percent
 perfect. The point-one percent?

GEORGE
 I take it in the face.

KATE
 As my older brother would say, George
 is a homosexual sodomite.

GEORGE
 The genuine article.

KATE

I don't want to dwell on this point.
I only mention it so you have some
immediate focus for your disgust.
Because, see, I do some things later
that we'll call morally questionable
and I'm hoping that, in comparison,
I might escape your scorn.

GEORGE

Act Up is putting a bounty on your
head as I speak.

KATE

I'm surprised you're home.

George opens his eyes and grins.

GEORGE

Yeah, well, we ran into a little
logistical problem with the sleeping
arrangements.

KATE

We?

GEORGE

Me and Jeff.

KATE

Jeff?

GEORGE

Wilson.

KATE

(to us)

He's the moose. In the new... oh,
you'll see.

(to GEORGE)

Isn't he engaged to one of the stage
manager's assistants? Lola...
Lisa... L-something?

GEORGE

Jenny. She was the logistical
problem.

KATE

Right.

(back to us)

So... just keep that in mind. And if that's not enough, he's one of those freaks who looks better having just woken up than he does at any other point in the day. And with that kind of beauty, that's saying something.

INT. MUSIC REHEARSAL SPACE - AFTERNOON

Musicians, on a break, mill around the room. ROB, a lanky young man, 26, sits with a fellow CELLIST having an unheard but animated conversation. Kate stands in the foreground.

KATE

See the gangly guy with the dark hair and the cello? That's Rob. We dated for about five minutes when we were at Julliard, but he's a pothead so I had to break it off. High strung neurotics don't function well when our partners can't focus their attention toward our immediate pacification. And trying to get a pothead to focus his attention is like trying to teach a cat to land on it's back; frustrating and ultimately pointless.

Rob has made his way over to Kate.

ROB

Hey.

KATE

Hey.

Pause. Rob nods his head.

ROB

Hey.

KATE

(to us)

I love him. I really do. But can you imagine dating this?

(to Rob)

How'd everything go this weekend?

ROB

Huh?

KATE

Your big date with Christopher.

(to us)

I know what you're thinking. Yes, Rob turned out to be queer, which was not my fault, as has been suggested to me before. Anyway, he's not very good at it. He lives in the Bronx, he celebrates John Coltrane's birthday religiously, and he thinks Abercrombie and Fitch were explorers who discovered the source of the Nile. He's not exactly living the gay high-life. So don't to be too harsh.

(to Rob)

So?

ROB

Uh.... It was... fine.

KATE

Fine?

Rob shrugs.

KATE

What'd you do?

ROB

We went to see The Ray Brown trio down at Tone Deaf.

KATE

Oh. Well, I'm sure that was fun.

ROB

I thought so. But, Kate, I don't think he likes jazz.

KATE

Did I say he liked jazz?

ROB

Yeah. You said it was his favorite.

KATE

Oh. Well, I know his favorite movie is "All That Jazz." I guess that's not really the same thing.

ROB

No. It isn't.

KATE
Did you not have any fun?

ROB
Tom showed up.

Kate exhales deeply, pinches the bridge of her nose, and shakes her head.

ROB
What?

KATE
Tell me you didn't go home with him.

ROB
Christopher?

KATE
Tom.

ROB
Oh.

Silence.

KATE
Rob.

ROB
You should've seen him. He was jealous. He kept trying to get me away from Christopher.

KATE
And you let him.

ROB
Yeah. But, when we got back to his place... damn. We went at it all night.

KATE
You're an idiot.

Rob grins, shrugs, and walks away.

Kate turns to us.

KATE
Growing up, we had this dog, a big mutt, who used to catch mice in the
(more)

KATE (cont'd)
garage. He wouldn't kill the mice, he'd just play with them. He'd maul them until they were barely able to walk, and then, when they'd finally work up the energy to roll away, the dog would reach out with one paw and drag them back. We had to put the dog to sleep when I was in high school, but I'm pretty sure his soul transferred to Tom's body. And, in Rob, he's found a perfectly willing mouse.

INT. DANCE STUDIO - DAY

Molly is rehearsing a solo. CONNER, 45, stands downstage, watching. Kate sits on the edge of the stage behind Conner. She continues to speak to us.

KATE
Conner McElvy, the company choreographer/director/visionary. Another five minutes of my life, albeit five minutes that was spread out over six months. It was my first season with the company. I was young, stupid, and desperate to be something more than third hippo from the left. Not that I was trying to sleep my way to the top. I just thought it might be a nice perk.

CONNER
(to Molly)
No, no, no. Jesus, can we get a clydesdale in here? Something with a little more grace?

MOLLY
I'm sorry.

CONNER
Sorry isn't going to make the snow owl fly, is it?

MOLLY
I'll work harder.

CONNER
You're damn right you will. From the top.

KATE

Molly's the current fascination but that's waning. He gets really cruel toward the end. I doubt she even sees it coming. If it were anyone but Molly, they'd have my sympathies.

EXT. CAFE - AFTERNOON

Kate stands near the café door, looking at her watch, glancing around.

KATE

And that's not coming from a vindictive place. But, when Molly joined the company, we all warned her. And she still believes she's the special one who will change him. She's getting what she paid for.

(another glance
around)

I swear I spend half my life waiting for someone.

A tall, black DRAG QUEEN, looks to be in her 30s, dressed like Laura Petrie from her shag down to her Capri slacks, steps up to the corner, waiting for the light to change.

DRAG QUEEN

Honey, don't we all? Prince Charming, where are you and why won't you return my calls?

KATE

That's not what I meant.

DRAG QUEEN

Oh, we all know what you meant.

KATE

(to us)

This is why I love living in the Village. How many black Laura Petries could you see if you lived off Central Park?

DRAG QUEEN

Not a one, darling. Not a one.

With that she is off across the street. Kate lights a cigarette and turns back to us.

KATE

Don't say anything. I don't drink,
I don't do any drugs that aren't
prescribed to me, and I switched to
decaf. I'm allowed one vice.

George enters the shot, having arrived late. He kisses Kate
on the cheek.

GEORGE

Sorry. Have you been waiting long?

KATE

What do you think?

GEORGE

I think I'll buy you a double
chocolate banana shake and make it
all better.

KATE

(to us)

Two vices.

INT. CAFE - LATER

George and Kate sit on opposite sides of the booth. Kate is
finishing her shake, George has a cup of coffee.

GEORGE

Your alternate universe boyfriend
called before I left the apartment.

KATE

Philip? What did he want?

GEORGE

I don't know. He was babbling about
something. I told him you'd call.

KATE

Could you not answer the phone
anymore? I get more details out of
voice mail.

GEORGE

I was expecting a call from Marty.
She's supposed to have an audition
lined up for me.

KATE

Another insurance commercial?

GEORGE

No, some TV thing on one of those cop shows. Or some prison thing.

KATE

(to us)

George wants to be an actor. I don't understand this. He gets everything he wants handed to him and the only string attached is that he keep dancing. What's wrong with that?

GEORGE

I think actors get more respect.

KATE

Which maybe they do. I have no idea. And George could probably make it as an actor. But he can't act, so that kind defeats the respect argument.

GEORGE

Oh, what's his face called too.

KATE

What's his face?

GEORGE

You know who I mean.

EXT. MADISON AVE - AFTERNOON

Kate is walking, talking to us as she goes.

KATE

The problem is, I do know. George is referring to Daniel.

Kate stops in front of a department store window where DANIEL, 30, is completing a display.

KATE

That's him.

Kate taps on the window and Daniel turns around and waves.

KATE

He's a window designer. But he's single and straight. So far. I didn't mention him before because, well, to be honest, what's his face kind of sums it up. He's nice and all, just sort of... simple.

INT. KATE'S APARTMENT, KITCHEN - MORNING

Kate sits at the kitchen table, reading through the newspaper and sipping from a cup of coffee. Daniel stands at the counter, watching a bagel toast in the toaster oven.

KATE

There's a new exhibit opening at the
Gugenheim. Fortrem Carlston.

DANIEL

Who?

KATE

He's that multimedia artist, the one
who videotapes himself painting.

DANIEL

Like Bob.

KATE

No, not like Bob. Carlston is making
a statement about the process being
equally important as the end result.
He's not teaching people to paint
lonely little trees on windswept
mountains.

DANIEL

Oh. I like Bob.

The toaster over dings and Daniel moves to retrieve his
bagel, burning his fingertips in the process.

KATE

(to us)

It's not the perfect relationship,
but he has his finer attributes.
He's quiet, he's got a steady job, he
doesn't want to get married, and he
treats sex like a gymnastics event.
His routines deserve gold medals.

BEDROOM - LATER

The room is an absolute mess. The bed has been stripped and
the mattress is hanging off of the bedsprings.

Kate and Daniel, naked and wrapped in the bed linen, are
sprawled out on the floor in a corner. Daniel sleeps wrapped
around Kate, who sits up, smoking a cigarette.

KATE

It's worth it. Every time. He's
also very forgiving.

INT. DANCE STUDIO - AFTERNOON

Kate is watching Molly and IVAN dance. IVAN, 19, is
gorgeous, with elfin features and curly blond hair. Kate
speaks to us.

KATE

Last season George pulled a muscle in
his back and had to take some time
off. Conner got us that. Ivan
Gronjinski, barely legal, barely
speaks English, dances like a god and
looks the part. Molly, who was
pissed off at Conner for one or more
of a thousand reasons, was the first
to try and ride the Siberian express.

DANCE STUDIO - LATER

Molly, Kate, and a couple of other FEMALE DANCERS sit in the
corner.

DANCER

So?

MOLLY

Nothing. I don't think he's
interested in girls.

DANCER

But he went out with you.

MOLLY

He just wanted to spit off the top of
the Empire State Building. He was
very disappointed when he found out
you couldn't. Not that that stopped
him from trying. You don't know
humiliation until you've been kicked
off of the Empire State in front of
a thousand tourists.

DANCER

Oh, my God.

MOLLY

After that I can't say I was even
interested. He's still a little boy.

Kate looks back to where Ivan is standing in the opposite corner, drinking from a water bottle. Kate turns to us.

KATE

He may be a boy, but I don't think there's anything little about him. As for the gay theory, that was put to the test pretty quickly.

INT. KATE'S APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

Kate wonders in and stops, realizing she's not alone when she hears voices.

GEORGE (O.S.)

Oh, God, that feels good.

IVAN (O.S.)

Good?

GEORGE (O.S.)

Oh, yeah.

Kate withdraws but continues observing from the doorway.

GEORGE AND IVAN

George is lying face down on the floor. Ivan kneels down next the other man, rubbing George's back. Neither notice Kate spying in the doorway.

IVAN

I have bad... strain when I was younger.

GEORGE

You had a bad strain?

IVAN

Yes.

GEORGE

Where?

IVAN

My leg.

George rolls over and puts his hand on Ivan's inner thigh.

GEORGE

Here?

IVAN
No. Other leg.

GEORGE
Here?

IVAN
Yes.

George begins massaging Ivan's leg.

IVAN
It does not hurt now.

GEORGE
Good.

IVAN
Why do you do that? I told you, it
does not hurt.

GEORGE
I'm not trying to hurt you.

LIVING ROOM- LATER

George puts on his jacket as Kate watches.

GEORGE
I'm going out.

KATE
What about...?

Kate gestures to the couch.

IVAN

He sits slumped on the couch, looking confused and hurt and
doing his best to ignore George and Kate.

KATE AND GEORGE

George eyes Ivan with disdain.

GEORGE
Can you get him a cab back to his
hotel? He has money.

KATE
Fine.

GEORGE

I'll see you in a couple of days.

George kisses Kate on the cheek and leaves. Kate turns back to Ivan and sighs. She crosses to the couch.

KATE

Are you alright?

IVAN

I do not understand.

KATE

Are you... uh... okay? Feeling... okay?

IVAN

No, I do not... why George would...?

KATE

Yeah, George should come with his own little warning label.

Ivan looks at Kate, confused.

KATE

Like on cigarettes.

IVAN

I don't smoke. Is George... a friend to you?

KATE

I guess... in as much as anyone is George's friend, yes.

IVAN

Yeah?

KATE

Yeah.

IVAN

I am sorry.

KATE

So am I. Hey, do you like milkshakes?

IVAN

Milkshakes?

KATE

Uh... ice cream and milk all mixed up together.

IVAN

I don't know.

KATE

Oh. Well, we need to change that.

INT. KATE'S APARTMENT, KITCHEN - LATER

Kate and Ivan lay on the kitchen table, naked and entwined. The makings of milkshakes are strewn about and spilled around and on them.

Ivan licks the last bit of whipped cream from Kate's nose and then settles in to snuggle. Kate addresses us.

KATE

Okay, so he's barely legal but he is legal. And, yes, it turns out that I'm his first but I didn't know that until after. Well, okay, there were some indications during, but he's nineteen. Modern logic dictates that you'd have to go to a monastery in Nepal to find a nineteen year-old virgin.

IVAN

Kate?

KATE

Yes?

IVAN

I love milkshakes.

KATE

Good.

(back to us)

I am not going to feel guilty about this.

IVAN

Kate?

KATE

Yes?

IVAN

I love you.

KATE
(to us)
Alright, but I am not going to
apologize for this.

DANIEL (O.S.)
Kate?

Kate looks over to her left.

DANIEL

He stands in the doorway, a bag of groceries in his arms, a
stunned look on his face.

KATE AND IVAN

Ivan smiles and waves at Daniel. Kate looks back to us.

KATE
Alright, but I am not going to
apologize to you.

INT. MANHATTAN EATERY - NIGHT

Kate and Daniel sit at a corner table for two. Daniel
appears to be near tears.

DANIEL
I just always thought... of the
kitchen table as... you know, our
special place. I mean, we pulled
down the light fixture that one time.
You said it was the best ever. And
then walking in and seeing the two of
you there... I felt so betrayed.

KATE
So, what? You don't mind that I
fooled around with him. You're just
disappointed in my choice of
locations?

DANIEL
Pretty much, yeah.

Silence.

KATE
Am I the only woman you're seeing?

DANIEL

No. I thought... you didn't know that? I thought we had talked about that.

KATE

When?

DANIEL

That big argument we had a few months ago.

KATE

The last time we broke up?

DANIEL

Well, if you want to call it a break up.

KATE

What do you want to call it?

DANIEL

The argument we had a few months ago.

KATE

And what do you call the time in between that and when we started seeing each other again?

DANIEL

The time we didn't see each other for a while?

KATE

Daniel, we didn't see each other for eight months because you couldn't stop talking about this Elaine girl at work and how great she was and how much you two had in common and when I said you should start dating her you said, "I'm thinking about it."

DANIEL

Yeah, and then you flew off into some hysterical fit and stopped returning my calls.

KATE

Because you wanted to date someone else!

DANIEL

But I never took her to our spot in the park. I've never taken any other girl to that spot because that's special for us.

KATE

That's all this is to you? Just sex?

DANIEL

Really good sex.

KATE

The quality is hardly the point.

DANIEL

It isn't? Kate, what else is there between us? We don't share any common interests. When we talk, it's just sharing of mundane details from our lives. Every opinion I have you find disagreeable.

KATE

When you bother to form an opinion.

DANIEL

I bother. I just stopped vocalizing them when I realized all that leads to is an argument. I thought there was an unspoken understanding between us.

KATE

An understanding to do... what? Be fuck-buddies?

DANIEL

If that's what you want to call it.

KATE

I call it being used.

DANIEL

Oh, please. Used like every time you need a date to some function so I have to rent a tux and promise not to talk too much? Used like that? Kate... I don't... are you expecting one day that I'll drop to my knees and propose?

KATE

No.

DANIEL

Would you say yes if I did?

KATE

No.

DANIEL

Then how can we possibly mean more to each other than sex and friendship?

Silence. Kate turns to us.

KATE

Maybe the logic in his argument isn't immediately apparent, but he does have a point.

INT. KATE'S APARTMENT, KITCHEN - NIGHT

Daniel sits on the table, naked, his legs folded up underneath him. Kate, also naked, is wrapped around him from the front, her head hanging over his shoulder.

Daniel hangs on to the light fixture above them, pounding away and practically lifting them off of the table.

She speaks to us, breathless.

KATE

So, we reclaim the kitchen table. Ivan's a distant memory and going in for HIV tests regularly are the only reminders I have that, in my mother's eyes, if I ever told her, I am a whore. I never tell her.

The light fixture comes crashing down on the two and they tumble off the table.

INT. DANCE STUDIO - AFTERNOON

Conner is rehearsing with Molly, holding her aloft. George watches closely.

CONNER

You see, she has you but she's wounded.

Conner unceremoniously drops Molly to the floor.

MOLLY

Ow! Conner.

CONNER

Sorry. I thought you were ready.

(to George)

When you realize this, your first reaction is to take flight. But then you return. Why?

GEORGE

To make sure she's dead?

CONNER

No, because you have a relationship. True, she's your natural enemy but you have that bond. It's symbo-ionic.

MOLLY

Right. The whole circus of life thing.

CONNER

Circle, idiot. Circle of life. Jesus.

(to George)

This is the great, beautiful, wise snow owl. You are the rabbit. The two can't exist without one another.

GEORGE

Uh... that doesn't make any sense.

CONNER

You're just not seeing it correctly.

GEORGE

Okay.

They continue talking quietly as Kate steps in and addresses us.

KATE

I have the deepest respect for the Native American culture, but the Eskimo that wrote this was retarded. See, the snow owl hunts the rabbit but is injured in the struggle. The rabbit then goes on this journey to find the spirit of the woods, the great moose, to see if he can help

(more)

KATE (cont'd)
 the snow owl. Along the way he goes through a blizzard, almost gets eaten by polar bears, and learns to use his speed, agility, and brains to survive. When he finds the great moose, the moose explains that the owl is dead but there are other owls, just as the rabbit must die to make way for other rabbits. The moose then tramples the rabbit to death. In Conner's vision, the ballet ends with the spirits of the owl and rabbit locked in an eternal chase. All of this is Conner's answer to "The Lion King." And people wonder why dance isn't as popular as musical theater.

CONNER, MOLLY, AND GEORGE

CONNER
 That's what you need to be thinking.

GEORGE
 It just doesn't seem like very good motivation. If I were a rabbit, I'd run. Screw the owl. She wanted to eat me.

CONNER
 Okay, George, think of it this way. The rabbit secretly loves the owl.

GEORGE
 How could he? She wants to eat him.

CONNER
 People fall in love with people who are bad for them.

GEORGE
 People maybe, but not rabbits.

CONNER
 Goddamit, just do the fucking dance!

MOLLY
 I get it, Conner.

Conner walks off in a huff.

MOLLY
 I get it.

INT. ANOTHER MANHATTAN EATERY - NIGHT

A table for four by the window is occupied by Kate, George, PHILLIP, 29, and MARTY, a sharp-looking 45. Kate, George, and Phillip are laughing.

PHILLIP

Just do the fucking dance!

GEORGE

My acting teacher says that you shouldn't do anything until your motivation is clear. I just don't see the motivation.

KATE

Your motivation is your symbo-ionic relationship with a steady paycheck.

PHILLIP

In this great big circus of life.

Kate and Phillip snicker.

GEORGE

Money should never be an artist's motivation. Right, Marty?

MARTY

Absolutely, sugar-plum.

KATE

Don't encourage him. He needs to continue to pay his half of the rent.

GEORGE

With what we pay, I could get a job on Broadway in a chorus and still make rent easy.

KATE

If you could sing.

GEORGE

I'm working on it.

MARTY

Georgie's absolutely right. He needs to strike now while the iron's hot.

GEORGE

Marty got me two more commercial auditions for Friday.

MARTY

One of them's a lock. I've already talked to the director. And, of course, there's Phillip's exciting news.

KATE

Ohmygod, that's right. You got the space!

PHILLIP

I did.

GEORGE

Space for what?

KATE

Phillip's dance.

GEORGE

Your dance?

KATE

The Tragedy of Apollo and Orthia.

GEORGE

What is that? Some sort of Shakespeare thing?

PHILLIP

Greek gods. They believed that the sun was Apollo driving his great chariot across the sky and Orthia covered the world in a blanket of stars at night.

KATE

The dance is really brilliant. It's a love story.

PHILLIP

A love that can never be.

KATE

(to us)

Ouch. Okay, I'm going to take a minute to put my tongue back in my mouth and explain to you that Phillip is, in George's words...

GEORGE

Her alternate universe boyfriend.

KATE

It's true. We joined the company at the same time, we listen to the same music, we read the same books. He's beautiful, sensitive, and perfect. He's also married. To Marty. Marty... Martina, our agent. She reps at least half our company, two Tony winners, nine soap stars, and a host of local news personalities. I'd like to say her cheerful personality and conviction in her client's talents mask a heartless thug who's only in it for the money. Unfortunately, her concern for and belief in us really does appear to be genuine. She's turned down people who've gone on to do some great work.

MARTY

I said it then, and I'll say it now. I don't care how many Obies he gets, he's a flash in the pan.

KATE

I don't know how we rate. Or me, specifically. But she does seem to love us. Which makes it really difficult to plot the dissolution of her marriage. And, despite the age difference, they do seem really happy. That can't last, right?

GEORGE

(to PHILLIP)

Ballet?

PHILLIP

Some of it's influenced by ballet but it's more eclectic than that.

GEORGE

So, you've got the whole thing choreographed?

PHILLIP

Most of it, yeah. Kate's been helping.

GEORGE

What's Conner's take on this?

PHILLIP

I haven't... haven't said anything about it. I mean, I didn't even know it was going to happen. Really.

MARTY

That's because you have no faith in yourself.

GEORGE

So you're quitting the company?

PHILLIP

I hadn't planned on it. I mean, by the time we're actually in rehearsals, "The Snow Owl" will be up.

MARTY

You should quit.

PHILLIP

Marty, I'm under contract.

MARTY

Contracts are made to be broken. You leave that to me. So what do you think, Georgie?

GEORGE

What do I think?

MARTY

We need an Apollo.

PHILLIP

To Kate's Orthia.

Kate squeals. The others stare at her, surprised.

KATE

Sorry.

GEORGE

What about you, Phillip?

PHILLIP

No, no. I'm going to have my hands full. Besides, I'm a better choreographer. You're a much stronger dancer.

GEORGE

Huh. Well, thanks and all, but I'm trying to get away from dancing.

MARTY

Oh, George, you can do both.

GEORGE

No, I think... no offense, Phillip, but, you know, I've got the company if I'm going to continue to dance.

KATE

Yeah, you'll make a great bunny rabbit. Or whatever Conner dreams up next.

GEORGE

That's just not going to be me. I'm going to spend the next year really dedicating myself to my acting.

KATE

That's such a waste.

MARTY

You'll think about it.

GEORGE

No. Look I'm happy for you, Phillip. I really am. And you, Kate. It's a good opportunity for you. But this isn't what I want. So, thanks, but no thanks.

INT. DANCE STUDIO - MORNING

A COSTUMER fits Kate for her "moose dropping" costume as rehearsal commences around them. Kate speaks to us.

KATE

Here's the wrench George threw into the works.

Phillip, wearing a polar bear costume, approaches Kate.

PHILLIP

The producer won't put up the money without George attached.

KATE

Oh, sweetheart, I'm sorry.

PHILLIP

No, I'm sorry I got your hopes up.
Marty thought she could talk George
into it. She's still working on him,
but...

KATE

But.

Conner calls from off.

CONNER (O.S.)

Polar bears! Let's go!

PHILLIP

The master beckons.

Phillip walks away. Kate turns back to us.

KATE

He's breaking my heart. Which,
honestly, is why I'm not too
disappointed George said no. Helping
Phillip on weekends has been hard
enough. With the amount of time we'd
have to spend together to get the
show up.... It's not even a question
of what I would do. It's just trying
to anticipate the number of lives I'd
destroy in the process. Besides, a
dancing piece of moose dropping can
be just as elegant as a Greek
goddess, right?

THE REHEARSAL

Phillip, along with the rest of the "polar bears," are
dancing in the way polar bears might. They bob and weave
together, rolling around on the ground and acrobatically
lifting one another into the air. It's intentionally
amusing.

Conner, who is obviously not amused, turns off the tape and
the music cuts. The polar bears look to him.

CONNER

That's... that's great, boys. Just
out of curiosity, what the hell
happened to my dance? Anyone?
Anyone? Is this a silent revolt or
would someone like to own up to this?

PHILLIP
It was me, Conner.

CONNER
Hmmm. I'm shocked. Really.

PHILLIP
Look, we just thought...

CONNER
That's your first mistake. You're not paid to think. You're paid to dance. And that...

PHILLIP (OVER)
But you've got this great opportunity to lighten things...

CONNER
That is not what I told you to dance. I think, you dance. Is that clear?

PHILLIP
Yeah, it's clear...

CONNER
Good.

PHILLIP
You egomaniacal ass.

Silence. Conner turns slowly to face Phillip.

CONNER
What did you call me?

PHILLIP
You know, Conner, it doesn't matter. It's not like it would phase you even if I repeated it.

CONNER
I see. Is there anyone else here who shares Phillip's disdain for my vision?

PHILLIP
Lack of, you mean.

CONNER
I think we've heard enough from you. Anyone?

George steps in, dressed in his rabbit costume, complete with floppy bunny ears.

GEORGE

I'm still lost on my motivation.

CONNER

We'll talk about it later.

MOLLY

I don't really understand the end.
I mean, does the moose trample on the
rabbit because he's afraid of him or
does he hate him?

The MOOSE, a male dancer dressed in the moose costume, steps up.

MOOSE

Yeah, that doesn't make sense to me
either. I'm supposed to be the elder
spirit in the forest, right? Why
would I just kill him?

Kate steps up.

KATE

And the whole moose shit thing.
Don't you think people are going to
find that tasteless?

CONNER

It's an Eskimo legend. The rabbit
finds the moose by following the
trail of shit.

KATE

Fine, but does the shit have to get
up and dance?

CONNER

Ask the fucking Eskimo! That's it.
We're done for the day. Those of you
who want to be in my show, be back
here tomorrow morning at eight.
Those of you who don't, leave your
costumes with Maggie. You can pick
up your last check next week.

INT. KATE'S APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Music, classic jazz, something by Miles Davis, plays in the background.

Phillip sits on the sofa. George is sitting on the floor, a joint dangling from his mouth. Kate enters with a bottle of wine and three glasses. She sets them down on the coffee table and pours.

PHILLIP

What really burns me is that he's allowed to be that egotistical. The artistic director just lets Conner walk all over him because he's Conner McElvy.

KATE

I know.

GEORGE

His family's business funds the company.

KATE

What?

GEORGE

Yeah. Elgin Foods? His mother's great grandfather started it, like, a billion years ago.

PHILLIP

Well, I guess that would explain it.

GEORGE

Look, it's not like the guy has no talent. We've done some very good stuff there.

PHILLIP

Do you mind? I'd like to keep my anger festering a little while longer.

KATE

At least until eight am, huh?

PHILLIP

Oh, I'm not going back. There's no way.

KATE

Phillip, that's crazy.

PHILLIP

No way.

GEORGE

You're right. You shouldn't go back.

KATE

George, you're not helping.

GEORGE

That dance was great. You were right. It could be one of the high points of this whole stupid show. If Conner's going to be such a fuck-stain about it, screw him.

KATE

Oh, that's some big talk from the guy who will be right back in his bunny ears tomorrow morning.

GEORGE

Who said I'm going back?

PHILLIP

You're not?

GEORGE

Why? I don't need this shit. Marty's told me there have been other companies asking about my availability.

PHILLIP

Well, what...? If you're serious, why not Apollo and Orthia? You really are perfect for it. And you'd get to dance with Kate.

George considers this. Kate turns to us.

KATE

He'll say no. George is nothing if not vain. And his pride won't allow him to dance for a relative nobody. He looks like he's thinking it over, but he'll say...

GEORGE

Yeah, sure.

PHILLIP

Really?

KATE (OVER)

What?!

GEORGE

What the fuck? Count me in.

PHILLIP

Holy shit! I can't believe it.

GEORGE

Yeah. Is this Miles Davis?

KATE

Huh?

GEORGE

The music.

PHILLIP

Yeah, it is.

GEORGE

I thought so.

(stands)

I'm bored. I'll see you guys later.

George leaves.

PHILLIP

What about you?

KATE

Me?

PHILLIP

You're not going back, right? Now that we can get the funding, I can pay you. So, are you in?

Pause.

KATE

Sure.

PHILLIP

Sure?

KATE

Of course. Of course I'm in.

PHILLIP

Oh my God! It's really going to happen!

KATE

Of course it is.

Phillip kisses Kate.

PHILLIP
I've got to call Marty.

KATE
Of course you do.

PHILLIP
Can I use your phone?

KATE
Of course you can.

Phillip bounds off.

Kate looks to us, near tears. She wants to say something but finds herself incapable of speech.

She collapses into the couch, burying her head in the cushion. She then raises up quickly.

KATE
I am an idiot!

INT. KATE'S APARTMENT, KITCHEN - LATER

Kate sits with the phone in front of her. She dials as she talks to us.

KATE
Here's a prime example of why mother's are necessary. I'll call her, I'll explain what I'm doing, I'll become the object of her scorn, and then she'll guilt me into doing exactly what I know I should. It's an unhealthy relationship, and if I had the money for therapy, she's ninety-eight percent of what we'd talk about. But I don't have the money so I have.... Hi, Mom.... I know, I'm sorry. But I really, really need to talk to you.... Oh, it's such a long story....

INT. MOM'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - CONTINUING

MOM, 50, stands with the phone to her ear listening patiently. Three other women sit around the kitchen table playing bridge.

MOM

Well, Kate, I have to be honest with you, it does sound like a good opportunity.... Yes. Maybe it will force you to take some responsibility for the direction you've chosen in life. You're a dancer. Isn't the goal to be the lead dancer?... Well, there you have it.... As for this Phillip, you're going to have to put aside whatever feelings you have for him and act like an adult.... Yes, dear, act like an adult. We all know you're not quite there yet.... Well, if you didn't want my opinion, you shouldn't have asked.... I have to get back to my bridge game now. Call and let me know when you've made your decision so I can make the proper travel arrangements.

INT. KATE'S APARTMENT, KITCHEN - CONTINUING

Kate looks stunned.

KATE

Bye, Mom.

She hangs up the phone and turns to us.

KATE

My mother used to be a counselor at my high school. My entire graduating class has proven to be emotionally stunted. Is there a connection? You tell me.

INT. DANCE STUDIO, OFFICES - MORNING

Kate stands before the receptionist's desk, which is enclosed except for the open glass partition. SHELLY, a faded beauty of 70, sits on the other side.

Kate holds two dry cleaning bags containing her costumes. The few other DANCERS in the room eye her and whisper to one another.

KATE

Shelly, I need to return these.

SHELLY

What, dear?

KATE

I need to return these.
(holds up the bags)
My costumes. I need to return them.

SHELLY

Oh. Wrong size, dear?

KATE

No. I'm... I'm leaving the company.

SHELLY

You need some company?

KATE

I'm leaving the company.

SHELLY

Oh. Well... wait here.

Shelly disappears into the back office. Kate sighs and sets the bags on the desk. She lights a cigarette and turns to us.

KATE

I'm making the biggest mistake of my life. Personal and professional, I've got those bases covered. Maybe I should go for spiritual, the grand triple play. I'll just start cursing God at the top of my lungs. What's a little blasphemy now? There's one thing... one thing that could make this worse.

A door behind Kate opens and Conner steps out.

CONNER

Kate?

Kate twirls and looks away when she sees who it is. She turns to the receptionist's desk where Shelly has returned to her post.

Shelly looks slightly ashamed. Kate mouths the word "bitch" clearly.

CONNER

Can I see you for a minute?

INT. CONNER'S OFFICE - CONTINUING

The walls are lined with photographs from Conner's glory days as well as framed lobby cards from the past.

Conner sits on the edge of his desk, looking out the window at the city. Kate sits, uncomfortable, in a chair in front of the desk.

CONNER

I suppose this shouldn't surprise me. You and Phillip... you're both very good. And I think, over the years, I've shown appreciation for your individual talents. Have I not been fair, Kate?

KATE

Of course you have, Conner.

CONNER

I know that you work hard. Both of you. Phillip told me about his little show and I think... I think it sounds like a good opportunity for both of you.

KATE

Oh, well...

CONNER

When I saw Phillip earlier, I... I honestly thought I was going to try and talk him into staying. But then I saw the fire in his eyes. That passion. That, "Fuck you, Conner. I'm going out to be a pioneer" attitude and I... I nearly wept. Very nearly wept. It reminded me of me when I was his age. So I say, "Good for Phillip." And good for you. Go, be strong for him. Make a place for yourself. You don't need all of this.

KATE

I don't?

CONNER

Oh, Kate, I know it's all shit. Dancing shit. I can't... I can't think anymore. "What's Conner doing
(more)

CONNER (cont'd)
 now?" "What will Conner's next
 masterpiece be?" "God, can he really
 live up to his reputation?" Can he,
 Kate? Can he? I can't... I feel
 suffocated. How can I be expected to
 create under these circumstances?
 How?!

KATE
 I don't know, Conner. But, look, you
 know, if your a slump, why not
 interpret a classic?

CONNER
 I considered it. But what? What
 could possibly live up to my
 reputation? A celebration of Fokine?
 "Manon" for the thousandth time? An
 all-female version of "Sleeping
 Beauty?"

KATE
 Any of those would be more
 substantial than this Eskimo legend.

CONNER
 It's not even a real Eskimo legend.

KATE
 What?

CONNER
 I made it up. I made it up. I... I
 was watching one of those nature
 shows on cable and it was about
 arctic wildlife.

KATE
 Huh.

CONNER
 I tried to find an Eskimo legend
 that would fit but... my God, have
 you ever tried to read those damn
 things? Whales and blubber and ice.
 It was just easier to make it up
 myself.

KATE
 (to us)
 Ladies and gentlemen, the retarded
 Eskimo.

CONNER

I tell you all this with the confidence implied during an emotional outburst, of course. Not that it matters to you now, I'm sure, since you'll be leaving us.

KATE

Conner, I just feel like... I feel really bad about what happened yesterday. I can see you're in a fragile state and I don't want to know that I'm part of the cause of your... doubts. I think it's a great piece. I... I want to stay.

CONNER

Thank you.

KATE

Sure.

CONNER

Really. Thank you. But, no.

KATE

No?

CONNER

No. That young man... that young man with a dream needs you. Go be his star.

KATE

No.

CONNER

Yes. You have to do this.

KATE

No, I think...

CONNER

If not for yourself, Kate, then do it for me. Do it for the young man with a dream that used to be me.

INT. DANCE STUDIO, OFFICES - CONTINUING

Kate walks through the door to Conner's office as it closes behind her. She thinks for a moment, then looks to us.

KATE

That whole time he was talking about
Phillip and me, did you hear him
mention George once?

EXT. DANCE STUDIO - DAY

George, in full bunny costume, leans against the building,
squinting against the sunshine. His expression is
half-sheepish but also half-bored as he listens to a very
angry Kate rant and rave.

KATE

You unbelievable asshole! I can't...

GEORGE

Look, I was going to quit, okay? I
was sitting in his office, trying to
explain my situation and he told me
he'd sue for breach of contract and
I told him to go ahead. You know,
whatever.

KATE

And?

GEORGE

Then he told me that he's been
invited to produce a series of solo
pieces at the Lincoln Center this
spring.

KATE

Oh, my God. He bought you.

GEORGE

Yeah, well.... It's the Lincoln
Center. That's a fucking good price.

KATE

George, I just quit. Phillip quit.

GEORGE

Yeah, and you've got Phillip's show.
And Phillip can dance Apollo. He's
just as good as I am.

KATE

But his name isn't George Winston
Day.

GEORGE

Yeah?

KATE

You don't get it, do you? The only way Phillip can get the money is if you're in the show.

GEORGE

That's stupid. It'll be good without me.

KATE

Yeah? You want to go explain that to the people putting up the money? Maybe they'll be so overwhelmed by your enthusiasm for the show, they'll just hand us all the cash we need. Huh?

GEORGE

If you think it would help.

KATE

Do yourself a favor. Don't come home tonight.

GEORGE

Uh, well... I wasn't really planning on it.

KATE

Good!

Kate storms off.

INT. SUBWAY CAR - LATER

Kate is still fuming as she rants to us.

KATE

I have approximately four-hundred dollars in my checking account. In my savings account... oh wait, I have no savings! Rent's due in less than two weeks which my last check will nearly cover. This leaves me with a positive balance of approximately three hundred dollars. Three hundred dollars in Manhattan.

An old HOMELESS WOMAN, nearing 80, walking slowly, eyes down, mumbling to herself, and holding a dirty paper coffee cup in her hand, wanders down the isle past Kate's seat.

Kate watches as the woman goes by. The woman collects spare change from PASSENGERS.

KATE

I have five-point-eight days until I
am that woman.

INT. MARTY'S TOWNHOUSE, LIVING ROOM - LATER

The townhouse is a beauty of Victorian charm with crown molding running the length of the raised ceilings and fine hard wood built-in shelves. The furniture is bold in color but conservative in design.

Kate sits on the bright yellow Queen Ann, looking very small. Phillip paces near the piano. Marty sits on the edge of her red sofa, a lit cigarette in hand.

MARTY

Oh, that George. I have to say,
kids, and I don't want to step on any
toes, but he did the right thing.

PHILLIP

The right thing for himself.

MARTY

Well, sweetheart, that's what it's
all about, right? We'll just find
the money somewhere else.

PHILLIP

What about the space?

MARTY

We'll find a different space.
Really, Phillip, this is a little
setback. A month. Two at the most.

PHILLIP

Really?

MARTY

Sure. We'll have it all sewn up in
two months.

KATE

Um... I don't want to be the voice of
doom, here, but Phillip and I just
quit our jobs today. Is there any
chance we can get them back?

PHILLIP

I can't do that. I can't go crawling back now.

KATE

Then can I borrow your kneepads?

MARTY

It wouldn't do any good, Kate.

KATE

What? We just have to apologize to Conner. Bow to his genius and he'll...

MARTY

It's not that simple. You didn't quit.

KATE

Yes, I did. We both did.

MARTY

You were contractually obligated through the end of the season. Conner had to terminate those contracts.

KATE

Because we were leaving.

MARTY

And then he made an example out of you.

PHILLIP

What?

MARTY

Molly called earlier. Conner spent most of the rehearsal telling them that, if they didn't share his artistic vision, they would find themselves in the same position as the two of you.

KATE

Oh, my God. I am completely and utterly...

INT. KATE'S APARTMENT, BEDROOM - NIGHT

The room is a mess. The stripped mattress has been upended on the bed. A lamp lies broken on the floor. Clothes are everywhere.

Kate and Daniel lay slumped in a corner, naked and wrapped in the bed linens. Daniel is asleep, nuzzled against Kate's breast. She sits up smoking a cigarette.

KATE

I don't feel better. But I am exhausted and that's good. At least I'll be able to sleep. Not on the bed...

INT. KATE'S APARTMENT, KITCHEN - MORNING

Kate, now dressed and spoon in hand, retrieves a pint of ice cream from the freezer. She opens it and eats.

KATE

So, the morning after, everything still looks pretty bleak. Don't tell anyone but I've been listening to country and western music all night. My third vice. I don't know what it is about those simple songs and that twang, but it's comforting. Then Marty calls.

INT. AUDITION SPACE - DAY

Kate stands in front of a video camera, auditioning. The DIRECTOR and assorted CREW watch.

KATE

Nature's Own Cat Litter. One-hundred percent recycled newspaper for a one-hundred percent dust-free pan.

Pause. The director and crew discuss silently.

COMMERCIAL DIRECTOR

Yeah, that's good. Are you allergic to cats?

KATE

No.

COMMERCIAL DIRECTOR

Okay. We'll need you from six to noon on Friday. We'll call Marty with the details.

INT. KATE'S APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Kate and George sit on the couch. George writes a check.

KATE

You think you can buy your way out of trouble?

GEORGE

I know I can.

Kate frowns as George hands her the check.

GEORGE

That'll cover the bills, right?

KATE

You don't have to do this, George. Marty's getting me some work. I can pay my half.

GEORGE

If you feel weird about it.

George reaches for the check. Kate pulls it away.

KATE

Do you want to buy my forgiveness or not?

GEORGE

(grins)

Marty said you and Phil are working pretty hard on that... thing.

Kate studies George.

GEORGE

What?

KATE

If I didn't know any better, I'd say you just showed interest in something that doesn't directly concern you.

GEORGE

Fuck off.

KATE

It's going really well. Are you...
rethinking your decision?

GEORGE

No.

KATE

Then what's going on, George?
Really.

GEORGE

Are you fucking him?

KATE

What?! No. No.

GEORGE

That's the rumor.

KATE

I'm helping him with the dance.
That's all.

GEORGE

But you want to fuck him.

KATE

Can we be done with this
conversation?

GEORGE

I just think that would be a shitty
thing to do to Marty, is all.

KATE

A, when did you start caring about
the moral questions involved in
adultery? And, B, we're just
dancing. That's all.

INT. PHILLIP'S STUDIO - DAY

Kate and Phillip rehearse a beautiful duet, a dance of
lovers.

PHILLIP

I like that better.

KATE

Yeah. It feels more natural.

PHILLIP

Good.

KATE

So Orthia slows herself over time to spite Zeus's order.

PHILLIP

Until she and Apollo unite for one moment of passion, casting both the mortal and immortal worlds in darkness.

KATE

An eclipse.

PHILLIP

Yeah.

KATE

Is this an actual fable?

PHILLIP

Huh-uh. They were actually both Zeus's children.

KATE

Oh, so incest. That's always good for modern dance.

PHILLIP

You'd have a problem keeping your blood relatives straight if your dad slept around as much as Zeus.

KATE

He did. I'm pretty sure my oldest brother married one of our half-sisters.

Phillip laughs. Kate turns to us.

KATE

I'd tell him my entire family has been inbred for generations if I thought I could get him to laugh.

PHILLIP

Hey, you feel like getting out of here for a while? Maybe have a little fun?

KATE

Uh... okay.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK ZOO - DAY

Kate and Phillip watch the sea lions perform for their trainers. Phillip does an impression of the sea lions and

Kate rolls her eyes, walking away. Phillip jogs to catch up.

KATE

This is smaller than I thought it would be.

PHILLIP

The big zoo's in the Bronx. Have you been up there?

KATE

No.

EXT. ST. PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL - LATER

Kate and Phillip sits on the steps on the 5th Ave side. They both eat hot pretzels.

PHILLIP

How long have you lived here now?

KATE

Eight years. Almost nine.

PHILLIP

Have you ever ventured off the island?

KATE

When I was in school, I used to teach a beginners' class at a studio on Staten Island. Oh, and I dated a guy who lived in Queens. I went to his place a couple of times.

Phillip laughs.

KATE

What? Why is that funny?

PHILLIP

There's just a lot more to the city than Manhattan.

KATE

Oh, right, said the guy with the posh
upper west side address.

PHILLIP

Hey, I may live on the upper west
side, but I am still a Brooklyn boy
at heart.

KATE

When was the last time you were
there?

Phillip thinks.

KATE

Uh-huh. Has it been that long,
Brooklyn boy?

PHILLIP

Have you ever been out there?

KATE

I've heard stories.

Phillip stands and offers his hand.

PHILLIP

Come on.

KATE

No.

PHILLIP

Come on. I want you to see where I
grew up.

EXT. CONEY ISLAND TRAIN PLATFORM - AFTERNOON

The doors of the N train open and Phillip bounds out. Kate
steps out cautiously, looking around, taking in Brooklyn,
ugly and cold in the fading light.

PHILLIP (O.S.)

Welcome to Coney Island.

Kate turns and tries to get back on the train. Phillip grabs
her arm and drags her back on to the platform.

EXT. CONEY ISLAND BEACH - LATE AFTERNOON

Kate and Phillip walk along the beach, talking, watching the
the darkness creep up over the ocean.

PHILLIP

Let's see, we were.... Okay, you see that shack over there?

KATE

Yeah.

PHILLIP

Jessica Ryan let me feel her up behind that shack. Under the shirt, over the bra. First time.

KATE

Did she return the favor?

PHILLIP

Ha! No. I had to wait for college for that.

KATE

You were a virgin through high school?

PHILLIP

No. Junior prom. Mary Parker. Down that way, closer to the aquarium. But she wouldn't touch it. No guy in Brooklyn ever got a hand-job from a public school girl. You had to hit up St. Mary's or Our Lady of Roses for that.

KATE

See, in Minneapolis, hand-jobs were, like, self-defense for your virtue.

PHILLIP

You were a virgin through high school?

KATE

No. My hand got tired.

Phillip laughs. Kate grins.

INT. SUBWAY CAR - EVENING

The car is nearly deserted. Phillip sits next to Kate, his head on her shoulder, asleep. Kate is wide awake and speaking to us.

KATE

I am not... NOT... falling in love with Phillip. He's married. To my agent. I've already screwed myself out of one job. I can't afford to do it again.

INT. KATE'S APARTMENT, KITCHEN - MORNING

Kate sits at the table, the phone in front of her. She dials and then listens, speaking to us as she goes.

KATE

I need to talk to someone. But here's my problem; I have no friends. Available friends, anyway. George has dropped off the face of the earth, Rob has been busy for a month now, I can't talk to Daniel because it seems a little tasteless to discuss Phillip with the guy I fuck on a semi-regular basis. I certainly can't talk to Phillip or Marty about this. And I don't need my mother to tell me to grow up. Desperate times.... Hi, Molly?

INT. CAFE - AFTERNOON

Molly and Kate sit at a table for two. Kate has a cup of coffee from which she sips. Molly has an ice water with lemon.

MOLLY

Oh, my God!

KATE

I know.

MOLLY

Phillip? Martina's Phillip?

KATE

You don't have to put it like that.

MOLLY

Oh, my God. Have you...?

KATE

No. No, it's just... lustful thoughts at this point.

MOLLY

Is he lusting for you?

KATE

See, we kind of hit a gray area there. Sometimes, I really think he does. He's so complimentary. And so personal. I really feel like he's taken me into his confidence.

MOLLY

But has he tried anything?

KATE

Well, there was one little... incident.

INT. PHILLIP'S STUDIO - AFTERNOON

Phillip and Kate dance. Phillip twirls Kate into his arms and inadvertently grabs her breast. He smiles, embarrassed.

PHILLIP

Oops.

KATE

My fault. I came in too low.

PHILLIP

Yeah.

Phillip still hasn't taken his hand away. Kate looks at him.

PHILLIP

Is that a lump?

KATE

What?

Kate breaks away from him and feels her breast.

KATE

Oh. Oh, no. This bra bunches up.

PHILLIP

Maybe you should take it off.

KATE

Right.

PHILLIP

What? Wouldn't it be more comfortable?

INT. CAFE - AFTERNOON

Molly and Kate as we last saw them.

MOLLY

Wow.

KATE

Yeah?

MOLLY

He was definitely coming on to you.

KATE

That's what I thought. And then there's the naked thing.

MOLLY

The naked thing?

INT. PHILLIP'S STUDIO - EVENING

Phillip and Kate are both sweaty, having just finished rehearsing.

PHILLIP

No, that was right. I want a little jazz step there, with the hands and then the slide.

KATE

Okay.

PHILLIP

Are you hungry? There's no food in the house but we could do Chinese. My treat.

KATE

You'll get no arguments from the impoverished.

PHILLIP

I should probably take a shower.

Phillip begins stripping off his clothes.

PHILLIP

There's another full bath on the main level if you want to freshen up.

KATE

Okay.

Kate starts out but Phillip, now completely naked, stops her.

PHILLIP

Oh, hey, if we go uptown, Marty might be able to join us.

KATE

Sure, that's fine.

PHILLIP

Okay.

Phillip starts for the door. Kate stands her ground.

PHILLIP

Aren't you coming?

KATE

I just need to stretch out a little.

PHILLIP

Okay.

Phillip walks away, disappearing down the stairs.

INT. CAFE - AFTERNOON

Molly and Kate as they were.

MOLLY

He just stripped down right in front of you?

KATE

Uh-huh.

MOLLY

Well, I mean, we all do that, right? I can't count the number of boys who have seen me naked.

KATE

I don't doubt that for a second. But he could've gone down to his room.

MOLLY

Maybe.

KATE

At first I thought it was just a one-time thing, right? But lately, he does it every time we rehearse.

MOLLY

Is it... worth it?

KATE

Oh, yeah. Yeah. Phillip has every right to be proud.

MOLLY

Well, I mean, if you really want to know, just take off your clothes, too.

KATE

What?

MOLLY

When he starts stripping, you strip too. Then suggest that you take your shower together. That's what I'd do.

KATE

But he's married.

MOLLY

He must not be that married.

KATE

(to us)

Talking to Molly was a mistake for two reasons. One, she's offering the worst possible advice. Two, I really, really want to follow it.

INT. KATE'S APARTMENT, KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

Kate stands at the counter, the makings of a milkshake in front of her. She is scooping ice cream into a blender.

KATE

I've decided to take a defensive approach to this. I am going to let my ass swell to the size of Iowa. Then I definitely won't be taking my clothes off in front of Phillip. Or anyone else. Is that defensive or offensive?

The phone rings. Kate picks up the receiver and cradles it between her ear and shoulder, continuing to make the shake.

KATE

Hello?

ROB (FILTER)
Kate?

KATE
Rob! You shit! Where have you been?

ROB (FILTER)
Mars.

KATE
Oh, and I suppose there's no phone there? You didn't get the three billion messages I left?

ROB (FILTER)
I'm sorry. I'm sorry. Look, I really need to talk to you.

KATE
That's funny, Rob, because I needed to talk to you, too. Maybe I should stop answering my phone and returning calls. Maybe I'll get some sympathy then.

ROB (FILTER)
Kate, I'm sorry. I... I met someone.

KATE
(to us)
Great. Now I get to listen to someone talk about how incredibly happy he is. Lucky fucking me.
(to the phone)
Well, good for you.

ROB (FILTER)
Yeah, but it's... it's complicated. There's, ah, someone else.

Kate looks at us in disbelief.

ROB (FILTER)
Kate?

KATE
You've peaked my interest. Go on.

ROB (FILTER)
Can I... can we talk face to face?

KATE
Sure.

ROB (FILTER)
Are you alone?

KATE
God, yes.

ROB (FILTER)
George isn't there?

KATE
No. Come on over.

ROB (FILTER)
Thanks. I'll be right there.

Kate hangs up the phone. She puts the blender pitcher on the base and covers it while speaking to us.

KATE
I can't wait to hear this. The fact that Rob found someone is amazing. If that person's involved with someone else, it's tragic. If Rob's found someone else, it's a miracle. Either way, this will be worth it. Assuming, of course, the melodrama doesn't center around Tom.

LIVING ROOM - LATER

Rob slumps on the couch, a hangdog expression on his face, and empty glass in his hand. Kate sits next to him, refilling his glass with whiskey as he continues his story.

ROB
He just showed up at my door.

KATE
Mr. Wonderful?

ROB
Tom.

KATE
Oh, Christ.

Kate stops pouring, slams the bottle down on the table, and stands.

KATE
Get out.

ROB
No, Kate, it's...

KATE (OVER)
I'm serious, Rob. You finally meet
someone who sounds halfway decent....

ROB
He was really lonely. He seemed so
depressed. I thought he was
suicidal.

KATE
When that happens to someone like
Tom, you let him go with it.

ROB
That's really cruel.

KATE
He doesn't deserve kindness. Wait,
wait, are you telling me that you
chose Tom over Mr. Wonderful?

ROB
It wasn't, like, a choice, exactly.
I don't know. I didn't... I didn't
know exactly where I stood with this
other guy. I mean, yeah, we have a
great time together. No one's ever
made me feel the way he does. But he
can be really cold, too. Like he's
got this image that he needs to keep
up and I'm not a part of that. It's
been really confusing.

KATE
None of which explains why you'd
consider Tom a stable alternative.

ROB
I just told you, it wasn't like I was
choosing between the two. I just
knew what to expect from Tom. I knew
he'd be fine the next morning. It
was just nice to know that he needed
me that night.

KATE
And Mr. Wonderful found out about it?

ROB
I told him.

KATE

You what?!

ROB

Don't yell at me.

KATE

Why would you do that?

ROB

Because I wanted to get tested before we fooled around again. I mean, it was Tom.

KATE

Right. Urinals at football stadiums see fewer dicks.

ROB

I didn't think it would be any big deal. He hasn't acted like we're exclusive or anything. He barely even acknowledged me unless it was just the two of us. So there was this big fight, and now I don't know what's going on.

Kate sighs and sits down next to Rob, putting her arm around him.

KATE

It's not the end of the world.

ROB

It feels like it is. I can't believe how much I hurt him.

Rob cries into Kate's shoulder. She turns to us.

KATE

Rob is a slave to his sense of personal responsibility. My motto is, "Why blame yourself when everyone else is begging for it?" The good news is, I now have someone to be miserable with. And I don't have to be ashamed because his problem is just as shallow and self-created as mine.

BEDROOM - NIGHT

Rob, fully clothed, lays on the bed, curled up next to Kate, who wears a large t-shirt and flannel pants. She is awake and staring at the ceiling.

KATE

The best thing about tragedy is waking up the morning after having cried yourself to sleep because in that instant everything is fine. You were so emotionally exhausted, you slept like a rock and you wake up feeling genuinely refreshed. The worst thing about it is when reality crashes back in and you remember that you consumed an entire pizza, at least a quart of ice cream, something you think might've been a Ding-Dong, and three or four handfuls of M&Ms. I know. It makes me sick just thinking about it. But, it turns out, marijuana is a really good anti-naussiant.

(pause)

Unfortunately, I'm still hungry. I wonder if there are any Ding-Dongs left.

STUDY - CONTINUING

Kate quietly steps out of the bedroom and closes the door behind her. Moonlight streams in through the window, casting a pale blue light on the room.

Kate turns and is surprised to see George, naked, sitting in the window seat, looking out the window.

KATE

George?

GEORGE

Hey.

KATE

Giving the Chelsea boys a break for the night?

No reply.

KATE

What are you doing?

GEORGE

Thinking.

KATE

About?

GEORGE

What the fuck I'm doing here.

KATE

Well, that makes two of us.

GEORGE

Kate, do you ever get tired of being a bitch?

KATE

Excuse me?

GEORGE

Do you ever get tired of being unapproachable?

KATE

I am not unapproachable.

GEORGE

Whatever.

KATE

Is there a point to this or did you come home specifically to to take a few cheap shots at my ego?

GEORGE

I'm just tired of it, Kate. I'm tired of keeping my cool so people feel blessed when I'm attentive. I don't want to stop talking just because I don't want to give away anything about myself. I don't want to be untouchable anymore. I want to be touched.

KATE

Jesus, George, go back to Chelsea or... jack-off. Some people have real problems in this world.

(to us)

Okay, I may not be one of them, but I am not going to be topped by the Prince of Shallow's existential crisis.

KITCHEN - CONTINUING

Kate enters and goes for the fridge, foraging. She talks to us as she goes.

KATE

We passed maudlin about ten hours ago so I'm just going to skip to the end. Rob wakes up feeling more solid than he has a right to. His resilience is one of his more admirable qualities. George slipped out sometime in the night. I know I was a little harsh, but sometimes you really need to kick the beautiful people when they're down. I mean, honestly, sitting naked in a window seat, staring longingly at the moon, wondering why you're life is such a mess, but still looking absolutely gorgeous? It's unfair to the rest of us.

(she now has an
armful of food)

I awake feeling bloated and waddle down to the gym. Like every time before, the binge wasn't worth it. I still can't stop thinking about Phillip.

INT. GYM - MORNING

Kate and Molly jog side by side on separate treadmills.

MOLLY

Guess who's not going to make it to the alter? Mr. Moose and that assistant. Julie... Jane... whatever. Seems someone told her about the Moose's little fuck-fest with your roommate. Speaking of which, it seems that the emotionally unavailable George has become an emotional train wreck. I walked by his dressing room this morning and the door was open. He looked like he had slept there and I'd swear he was crying. Can you imagine? I thought his dick would have to fall off to get that kind of response.

KATE

(to us)

Molly's my new best friend. Apparently she was so touched by the fact that I turned to her in my "time of need" that we're now eternally bonded. Six weeks ago this thought would've sickened me. But she does keep me up on the good gossip. Even if she delivers it like a foul-mouthed Liz Smith.

INT. SAUNA - LATER

Kate and Molly lie back on the tile bench, towels wrapped around their bodies.

MOLLY

Don't you think that's a little unethical? I mean, it's one thing to take them to dinner, but to actually invite them to stay with you in the Hamptons? Sure, Conner's shows wouldn't get trashed anyway, but some of those reviews...

KATE

It explains a lot.

MOLLY

Hey... I've got a secret.

KATE

Not for long.

MOLLY

I don't know if I should tell you this, though.

KATE

Molly, has that stopped you yet?

MOLLY

Alright. Well, it seems Nel went down to Marty's office to drop off her headshot proofs and Marty's secretary was out to lunch. Marty was in her office and Nel heard her talking on the phone.

KATE

To?

MOLLY

Some guy in Albany. She was making plans to see him next week.

KATE

He's a TV reporter. She reps him.

MOLLY

How did you know?

KATE

Phillip told me, she's going up there to get him out of his contract so he can take a job at one of the local channels here. She's going to be gone for three days.

MOLLY

Well, that's not the only reason she's going up there.

KATE

What?

MOLLY

This trip is more than business. And that's all I'm saying.

KATE

Are you sure?

MOLLY

Positive. Marty was actually giggling. Giggling and telling him all of the things she was going to do to him. And that's all I'm saying.

KATE

Nel must've been mistaken. Marty's devoted to Phillip.

MOLLY

Maybe. But she's definitely fucking some reporter in Albany.

KATE

(to us)

And that's all she's saying.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - LATER

Kate sits on the bench, dressed in her street clothes and tying her shoes.

KATE

Is this possible? Marty cheating on Phillip. I mean, don't get me wrong, Marty's a... handsome woman. But she's older than Phillip.... A lot older than Phillip. And he's got everything going for him and he's in love with her and he's well endowed. What could this guy in Albany possibly have to offer? Now I'm faced with a moral dilemma. I have three options. One, I can say nothing to Phillip about it.

EXT. EIGHTH AVE IN THE VILLAGE - DAY

Kate, with her gym bag slung over her shoulder, as she walks.

KATE

Two, I tell him with the intention of undermining his marriage and getting him in the sack. Three, I tell him under the pretense of being a good friend but with the intention of undermining his marriage and getting him in the sack. I should leave it alone and not say anything.

The black drag queen, now dressed as Alex Forrest (Glenn Close in "Fatal Attraction") from her curly golden locks down to her power suit, passes Kate going in the opposite direction.

DRAG QUEEN

You know it, honey.

KATE

But that's not what I want to do.

The drag queen stops and looks at Kate.

DRAG QUEEN

And what makes you think this is about what you want, Miss Thing?

Kate stops and turns.

KATE

Why shouldn't it be? He's utter perfection and she doesn't even appreciate him.

DRAG QUEEN

And who are you to judge? I look at you and I see a girl who only wants what she can't have.

KATE

Oh, you're one to talk.

DRAG QUEEN

Just because I have a little extra swing in my step does not mean I am not all this. I am all this and more. The difference between you and me is that I believe in me. You, girl, are fooling yourself.

KATE

That's not fair. He's shown some interest.

DRAG QUEEN

Please. He is married.

KATE

And she's cheating on him.

DRAG QUEEN

So he's a little free-for-all for your benefit, is that it? She may not be in love with him, but he's still in love with her. You said it yourself.

KATE

I know.

DRAG QUEEN

I know, I know. Girl, pull your head out from between your cheeks and let him be.

The drag queen gives a little hair flip, turns, and walks on.
Kate turns to us.

KATE

I fucking hate the Village.

INT. KATE'S APARTMENT, KITCHEN - NIGHT

We see Daniel, naked, from behind. His legs are folded up underneath him and he has both arms hanging from the light fixture. Kate is wrapped around him, facing us. He pumps away like a champ but Kate looks, at best, disinterested.

KATE

He was here when I got home, ready to go. I wonder what would've happened if George had gotten home first? I wonder if that's ever happened?

(thinks)

I'll ask him later. Anyway, I thought it might be a good distraction but it's really just sort of annoying. The light fixture will remain firmly in place tonight.

INT. PHOTOGRAPHER'S STUDIO - DAY

Kate, in a pink ballerina's outfit complete with tutu, stands on an enlarged version of a child's alphabet block. A young man dressed as a TIN SOLDIER stands next to the block. A MAKE UP GIRL touches up the soldier's face. Kate speaks to us.

KATE

I manage to blow Phillip off for two days. Marty got me a couple of modeling jobs where they wanted girls who look like dancers. I guess I passed.

EXT. PHOTOGRAPHER'S STUDIO - DAY

Kate, dressed in street clothes, steps out of the building, putting her sunglasses on as she goes.

KATE

The third day, it gets a little harder to find an excuse that Phillip will believe. But he doesn't know I don't have a cat, much less a sick cat. By the fourth day, my excuses have gone the way of my resolve. Marty is in Albany, doing to her little newscaster what I want desperately to do to her husband. I run, literally, from the subway platform to his doorstep. Fortunately, I manage to compose myself and stop drooling before he comes to the door.

INT. PHILLIP'S STUDIO - AFTERNOON

Kate and Phillip finish the union of Apollo and Orthia. The music is light and gentle as the two envelope one another. This is the dance of repressed passions igniting, and both

participants seem lost in it.

It ends with Kate in Phillip's arms, a look of pure desire in their eyes as they face one another.

Phillip lets go and Kate nearly stumbles.

PHILLIP

Wow. That was amazing.

KATE

Yeah.

PHILLIP

See, that's exactly the level of intensity it has to have. The blood pounding in your ears, fire in your chest tension. You were... Kate, you were Orthia.

KATE

(flattered and
flustered)

Well, you... were Apollo.

PHILLIP

I'm so glad we taped that. Do you want to watch it?

KATE

Sure.

Phillip trots back to the video camera to retrieve the tape. Kate sighs.

PHILLIP

We can watch it on the big screen downstairs. I think you're going to be surprised at how good you really were.

KATE

You know, Phillip, I'm just going to freshen up a little.

Phillip, tape in hand, trots back.

PHILLIP

Yeah, I guess I'm pretty toxic too.
(strips)

Shower time. Anyway, the deal with that Canadian guy fell through but Marty thinks she might have another investor lined up.

KATE
(trying not to look)
Oh, really?

PHILLIP
Yeah. Get this. Elgin Foods.

KATE
Conner's family's company?

PHILLIP
Uh-huh. They have this artistic
outreach program that funds
experimental performance art. We may
not be all that experimental...

Phillip takes off his pants. Kate can't take it anymore.

KATE
Phillip, dammit, you have to stop
doing that.

PHILLIP
What?

KATE
Undressing in front of me.

PHILLIP
Wh...? This bothers you?

KATE
Yes.

PHILLIP
Gee, Kate, I'm sorry. I figured
you'd seen a naked man before.

KATE
Oh, very funny.

PHILLIP
This really bothers you?

KATE
Yes, Phillip, it really does. It
really bothers me when you look at me
like that, it really bothers me that
you can't seem to be anything less
than absolutely charming to me, it
bothers me when you touch me, and it
bothers me when you take off your
(more)

KATE (cont'd)
clothes in front of me.
(pause)
There. I think that covers... it.

PHILLIP
God, Kate, I don't know what to say.

KATE
Don't feel it necessary to speak.
You could put on your...

PHILLIP
I mean, I'm flattered. Really. If
I weren't married...

KATE
Pants, Phillip. Pants.

PHILLIP
Oh, yeah.
(putting on his pants)
But, I am married, Kate. I love
Marty.

KATE
Of course you do. It probably
wouldn't even bother you to know that
she's screwing that reporter in
Albany.

PHILLIP
That's... a vulgar way to make your
point.

KATE
I wasn't creating a hypothetical,
Phillip.

Silence.

PHILLIP
Well... you're wrong. Marty wouldn't
do that. She... she's faithful.

KATE
Of course she is. I don't know what
I was saying.
(to us)
I don't. I honestly don't. All I
know is, I wanted to hurt him. When
he was letting me down gently. I
wanted to spit the most hateful,
(more)

KATE (cont'd)
venomous poison at him. I think I
overshot my mark.

PHILLIP
I have to call her.

Phillip walks away, his pace quickening as he goes. Kate watches and then turns back to us.

KATE
Don't look at me like that. Molly
and Nel can't keep a secret to save
their lives and we travel in a small,
incestuous circle. He would've found
out anyway. Besides, it's better
that he finds out now. He could do
something. Stop it from happening
maybe.

(near tears)
God, I need a cigarette.

INT. THEATER - NIGHT

Kate, dressed for the occasion, sits in the crowded theater, awaiting the a preview of "The Snow Owl." Kate holds up her program deliberately so we can see what the show is. The seat to her right is empty.

KATE
A preview. I didn't want to come,
particularly since my date is on a
train to Albany to confront his
unfaithful wife. But I owe it to my
friends. That and these tickets were
free. God knows I don't want to have
to pay for this crap.

THEATER - LATER

In a montage, pieces from the dance unfold on stage,
including:

The bunny (George) chased by the snow owl (Molly).

The bunny disguised as an arctic fox to escape being eaten.

The bunny following the dancing moose feces.

Finally, the dance of the polar bears. This last has not
changed from the previous choreography.

KATE

She is livid.

KATE

That fucking thief. He didn't change
Phillip's choreography one step. I
lost my job over that dance and
Conner used it anyway.

(sigh of frustration)

I want to tell Phillip this. I'd
like to think that if I could bring
him this news, I could refocus his
anger away from me. But I know
better for oh so many reasons.

INT. KATE'S APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Kate, now dressed in sweatpants and a baggy t-shirt, stands
at her stereo, loading a CD.

KATE

My friends are absent again. Even
Rob has apparently forgiven himself
and moved on. So, it's just me,
Patsy, Dolly, and Reba tonight.

She pushes a button on the stereo and Patsy Cline sings from
the speakers.

KATE

Oh, Patsy. Where did it all go
wrong?

There's a knock at the front door. Kate starts for it.

KATE

That isn't a large sausage and
mushroom pizza from the Pizza King's.
Regardless of whatever you may see.

She opens the door.

Phillip, looking every bit the drunken, dejected husband,
leans against the door frame. He has obviously been crying
and looks as though he may start anew at any moment.

PHILLIP

You were right. You were... soooo
right.

KATE
(nods)
I know. I'm sorry, Phillip.

PHILLIP
I thought she loved me. I loved her.

KATE
I know you did.

PHILLIP
Am I not good enough? Is there
something wrong with me?

KATE
Ohhh, I'm so not the one you should
be talking to right now.

PHILLIP
I couldn't think of anyone else,
Kate. You're my best-friend. Can I
come in?

Pause. Kate turns to us.

KATE
You don't need to see this.

INT. KATE'S APARTMENT, BEDROOM - MORNING

Kate lays under the covers, a satisfied grin on her face. She stirs and rolls over, expecting to put her arm around a body but coming up with only air. The space next to her has been recently vacated.

Kate opens her eyes and looks around the room. She sits up slowly, pulling the covers around her.

KATE
Phillip?... Phillip?

Silence.

INT. GYM - MORNING

Kate and Molly on their treadmills.

MOLLY
You told him about the news guy?

KATE
That and more.

MOLLY
I shouldn't have told you.

KATE
Probably not.

MOLLY
How was it?

KATE
Hmm? Oh, good. Really good.

INT. KATE'S APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Kate and Phillip are making out on the couch as Patsy sings on in the background. Kate is obviously into the act, pulling at his clothes and mashing herself up against him.

Phillip breaks away and begins to cry.

PHILLIP
Marty.

KATE
Kate, honey.

PHILLIP
Oh, my God.

KATE
Focus, Phillip. Focus.

INT. GYM - MORNING

Kate and Molly as before.

KATE
Well, it was a little awkward at first.

MOLLY
It always is. If it helps any, Marty's living at the Plaza.

KATE
How could that help?

MOLLY
Phillip didn't let her come home. Maybe you still have a chance with him.

KATE

You think?

MOLLY

Why not? Men like Phillip can't take care of themselves. If he won't forgive her, why shouldn't you jump in?

INT. SAUNA - LATER

Kate and Molly, wrapped in towels, sit on the bench.

MOLLY

I think Conner wants to leave me.

KATE

Conner leaves everyone eventually.

MOLLY

He said I was different.

KATE

I'm sure he's never said that to anyone else.

MOLLY

He said he thought I could be the one.

KATE

(to us)

I was the one once, too. But what's the use in arguing?

MOLLY

But now he says he's busy all of the time when I want to see him. He is doing this thing for his family's company.

KATE

Elgin Foods?

MOLLY

Yeah. They're funding a bunch of weird art projects and Conner's reviewing the applicants. Still, he could spend some time with me. Especially after those awful things that fucking critic wrote about me.

KATE

(to us)

The Voice review trashed the show and got very personal where Molly was concerned. Someone didn't get his invitation to the Hamptons.

MOLLY

I don't know what I'll do if he leaves, Kate. I don't think I'll be able to dance anymore.

KATE

Well, we wouldn't want that.

(grins)

You know, Molly, if you really want to keep him, there's nothing like blackmail to keep the love alive.

MOLLY

Blackmail?

KATE

Hmm-hmm. You know about his summer retreats for his friends in the press. And you know about the Eskimo legend, don't you?

MOLLY

What? That he made it up?

KATE

Exactly. Information like that can be very helpful.

MOLLY

How?

KATE

Oh, well, I'll tell you. But I need a favor in return.

INT. KATE'S APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

Kate lays on the couch, the television remote in her hand. She flips channels as she talks to us.

KATE

What do I do now? Is Molly right? Do I still have a chance with Phillip? Is it even what I want? I find myself immobilized by fear of
(more)

KATE (cont'd)
answering that question. Well, that
and my impending doom. I'm almost
broke again and I don't think Marty's
going to be calling anytime soon with
job prospects. I sit in front of the
television and ponder my rapidly
approaching fate in the ever-growing
retail environment or, worse but more
likely, the exciting fast food
industry. Then Daniel calls.

INT. MANHATTAN EATERY - NIGHT

Daniel and Kate, dressed for a night out, occupy a cozy
corner for two.

DANIEL
Wow. I'm not usually one to drag out
the "c" word, but if the cunt fits...

KATE
Believe me, you can't come up with a
name I haven't already called myself.

DANIEL
Remorseless whore?

Kate laughs.

DANIEL
Self-serving, shallow little
princess?

KATE
(still laughing)
Stop it.

DANIEL
Conniving, duplicitous,
cold-hearted...

KATE
(serious but still
grinning)
Alright, enough. That wasn't a
challenge.

DANIEL
You can beat yourself up all you
want, but it won't undo what you've
done.

KATE

I'm not clinging to my guilt because I think it will heal the damage. But if I don't feel at all guilty about what I've done, then everything you just said about me is true.

DANIEL

Ah, Kate. Some of what I said is true anyway. That doesn't make you a horrible person. That means that you're a product of a youth-fixated generation who defines themselves by their individual victimizations so that they never have to take responsibility for their own actions. You manufacture guilt so you can live with yourself but the truth is you know you're not to blame because you believe the situation was completely beyond your control.

KATE

Can we go back to you not expressing your opinions? I don't think I'm ready for that level of Daniel-honesty.

DANIEL

Then maybe we should concentrate on distracting you from your woes.

KATE

No, no, no. That is the last thing I need tonight.

DANIEL

You're sure?

KATE

I'm sure.

DANIEL

Well, maybe we should just take a walk then. Around the park, perhaps?

Daniel grins. Kate sighs.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - NIGHT

Daniel helps Kate into a tree. Once he has lifted her to the first branch, he stands back, waiting for her to climb. He then hoists himself up.

IN THE TREE

Kate sits on a large branch ten to fifteen feet off the ground. Daniel pulls himself up to the branch, nearly slipping but catching himself.

KATE
Are you okay?

DANIEL
Too much wine.

They kiss. Kate giggles.

DANIEL
What's so funny?

KATE
How the hell did we do this?

DANIEL
Uh...
(looks around)
I don't... we're we... did we get
undressed before we got up here?

KATE
I don't think so.

DANIEL
Are we in the right tree?

KATE
I'm pretty sure.

Daniel shrugs and begins to pull his sweater over his head.

KATE
Careful.

DANIEL
If I'm going to fall, I'd rather do
it while I still have my pants on.

Daniel gets the sweater over his head and off. He hangs it on another branch and turns to Kate.

DANIEL
You're up.

Kate unbuttons and slips out of her blouse.

DANIEL
That was too easy.

KATE
Shut up. At least your pants are loose. It's going to take forever to wriggle out of these.

DANIEL
I'll help.

Daniel leans in and they kiss passionately. Kate reaches down and unbuckles Daniel's belt. He fumbles with the button above his fly. He breaks away and looks down at it, losing his balance in the process. He catches himself.

DANIEL
This is not going to be easy.

KATE
Keep kissing. I think that's the key.

They kiss again. Daniel continues to wrestle with his fly.

THE TREE

The leaves rustle. There's a startled yelp, and Daniel, nearly free of his pants, falls out of the tree, landing with a dull thump.

INT. KATE'S APARTMENT, BEDROOM - NIGHT

Kate, wearing her t-shirt and flannel bottoms, lies next to Daniel, dressed in boxers and a t-shirt. His bruised face has a few self-adhesive bandages placed over small wounds and a brace covers his right wrist. The two laugh.

DANIEL
It's not funny.

KATE
No, if you had broken your arm, it wouldn't be funny. Since you just got a sprain...

DANIEL
A bad sprain. He said a bad sprain.

KATE
You know, this is really going to hinder your acrobatic sex life.

DANIEL
Thanks for reminding me.

Muffled male voices are heard from the other side of the door.

DANIEL
Is that George?

KATE
Shhh.
(listens)
He's not alone.

The voices fade as they move away from the door.

KATE
Kitchen.

DANIEL
Something wrong?

KATE
He's never brought anyone back here.

DANIEL
Is it a problem?

KATE
I guess not. I don't know. It's a little weird. It's easier to accept the fact that he's gay without having to be a witness to it.

DANIEL
Keep the door closed.

KATE
I'm not going to go watch. But the walls are pretty thin.

DANIEL
You're homophobic.

KATE
I am not.

DANIEL
Come on. Just a little?

KATE

I don't think it's homophobic if you don't want to see two men going at each other.

DANIEL

Once again, I don't think they're going to break down the door and ask us to move over.

KATE

So you're completely comfortable with this?

DANIEL

Yeah.

KATE

Have you ever had sex with a man?

DANIEL

Not yet.

KATE

But you'd consider it?

DANIEL

I don't think so. The opportunity hasn't presented itself, but I think I'm too fascinated with breasts to give it a decent shot.

KATE

Well, maybe we could find you a nice fatty with a pair of d-cups.

DANIEL

I don't think that would be the same. What about you?

KATE

I have my own set, so the point is lost on me.

DANIEL

No. Have you ever munched a rug?

Kate laughs.

DANIEL

Huh? Any muff diving in your past?

KATE
(still laughing)

No.

DANIEL
No?

KATE
I kissed a girl. Katie. She was my best friend in seventh grade. Mostly because we had the same name. We were practicing.

DANIEL
That's it? Just kissing?

KATE
Well, open mouth.

DANIEL
What a wild woman you were.

KATE
And then there was the naked pillow fights and the mutual masturbation bubble baths. But that wasn't until we turned eighteen and our tits got ripe and firm.

Daniel cringes and laughs. Kate grins.

DANIEL
Liar. That's just mean.

KATE
Uh-huh. Good luck getting that mental picture out of your sick little mind.

DANIEL
Bitch.

Kate is taken aback by this name. Daniel continues laughing but Kate lays back on the bed, staring at the ceiling.

George can be heard moaning from the other side of the bedroom door.

GEORGE (O.S.)
Oh, yeah. Right there.

Kate sits up again. Daniel looks toward the door, grinning.

KATE
And here we go.

GEORGE (O.S.)
Don't move. Dontmovedontmove! Oh,
yeah.

Kate clears her throat loudly, deliberately.

DANIEL
I'm sure that'll make them stop.

The moaning continues.

KATE
Daniel... do you think...? I know
you were kidding, calling me a bitch.
But do you think... I am?

DANIEL
This is one of those times when I
shouldn't offer an opinion, right?

KATE
Well, it may as well be now.

Daniel chuckles.

KATE
Seriously. This whole youth-fixated
culture of victims theory you've
got... does that include being...
unapproachable?

DANIEL
I think that probably has more to do
with the fact that you're a single
woman nearing thirty who's never been
in a serious relationship.

KATE
I've been in serious relationships.
I thought I was in a serious
relationship with you until we got
our expectations synchronized.

DANIEL
Yeah, that's not really an argument
against my point.

GEORGE (O.S.)
Faster! Faster!

KATE

Jesus, George. We can hear you!

DANIEL

Hey, don't come down on him for enjoying himself just because you're frustrated. You started this.

KATE

Then let's call it finished.

DANIEL

What are you looking for here, Kate? Validation?

KATE

No.

(thinks)

Maybe.

DANIEL

You are a beautiful girl who will someday be a wonderful woman as soon as you start seeing beyond the end of your own nose. There's probably a big, fulfilling world out there for someone who is ready to make that leap. But I don't see you trying to wreck a marriage as proof of the maturity necessary to live in that world.

(yawns)

And don't think I'm judging you. The thought of leaving the narcissistic comfort of Never-Never Land terrifies me. But our days here are numbered. We should enjoy them while we still have the energy to justify our bad behavior. We can't ever go back, after all.

KATE

Why not?

DANIEL

I think once you've been in love, really been in love, then you've got a whole other set of expectations and, in hindsight, this was all time spent looking for that. And nothing less will ever do.

INT. KATE'S APARTMENT, STUDY - AFTERNOON

Afternoon sunlight streams in through the window, cascading gently over the two entwined bodies laying under the sheets on George's bed.

Kate's bedroom door opens and she stumbles out, rubbing at her left eye with the heel of her hand. She stops when she sees the two figures lying motionless.

Kate quietly steps over to the bed, leaning in to see the faces that are turned away from her. Her eyes narrow and a look of sharp anger crosses her face. She turns and storms off to the kitchen.

A few seconds pass.

Kate enters from the kitchen carrying a bucket of water. She turns to the bed, lifts the bucket, and starts pouring.

George, who takes the brunt of the attack, sits up with a start. Rob follows suit.

GEORGE

Kate, what the...?

Kate hits George in his face with the last of the water. He coughs and spits.

ROB

Kate!

KATE

I'm not speaking to you right now.

GEORGE

Well, you'd better be fucking speaking to me.

KATE

Oh, I've got plenty of choice words for you. What the hell do you think you're doing?

GEORGE

I was sleeping.

KATE

With?

GEORGE

Rob. Yes, I was sleeping with Rob.

George tosses the sheet back with dramatic flair, stands, and crosses to the bathroom.

KATE

Exactly. There were two things...
two things you were never to do! One
was to never, ever bring any Barbara
Striessand video or album into this
apartment. Two, you were...

George enters with two towels. He tosses one to Rob and begins drying himself with the other. Rob rises and begins drying himself as well.

This is too much naked male flesh for Kate. She is flustered and tries desperately to find another place to look.

KATE

You were never to sleep with Rob.

ROB

Why?

KATE

Because... you... I was trying to
protect you.

ROB

From George?

KATE

Yes. Rob, this is George. George...
of the... insatiable libido. Jesus
Christ, aren't any of you the least
bit ashamed of your bodies?!

Rob quickly finds his boxer shorts and slips them on. George doesn't move.

GEORGE

You know that's complete bullshit.
You can't tag someone off limits.

ROB

Kate, this is the guy.

KATE

George is the guy?

ROB

Yeah.

KATE
Mr. Wonderful? George?

ROB
Yeah. He said you'd flip if you knew.

GEORGE
He wanted to tell you. I can't imagine why I thought that would be a bad idea.
(pause)
Kate, come on. We're in love. This is monumental.

Pause.

KATE
I need a cup of coffee.

Kate wanders off to the kitchen.

George and Rob exchange a look.

The sound of a dish falling and breaking comes from the kitchen.

George starts off but Rob stops him. Rob walks into the kitchen alone.

KITCHEN - CONTINUING

Kate is on her knees, picking up the pieces of a broken coffee mug. Rob enters and kneels down next to her, helping her.

ROB
Don't cut yourself.

KATE
I can get it.

Rob stops and watches her.

ROB
Talk to me, Kate.

KATE
What's to say? You're in love. Good for you. Good for both of you.

ROB
Kate.

Kate suddenly throws the pieces of the mug across the room and cries out.

KATE

I can't believe I sat here and listened to you whine about this great guy your were losing because you fucked around with Tom. And it was George. George who probably didn't even give you a second thought after you told him.

ROB

That's not true.

KATE

Jesus, Rob, Tom wasn't bad enough? At least he could remember your name. When you walk out that door today, George will be referring to you as "that guy."

ROB

You're wrong. Weren't you listening to him? He said he loved me. Have you ever heard him say that before? About anyone?

KATE

The only person George loves is himself. I know that for a fact.

ROB

That's not true. Not anymore, anyway. I know. I just.... Can't you be happy about this?

KATE

He'll leave you. I know he will.

ROB

I gave him a really good reason to go, and he came back.

Rob takes her hands and she rests her head on his chest.

ROB

Be happy for us. Please?

KATE

I am. I am.

Rob kisses her on her forehead.

KATE

Just don't come crying to me when he
breaks your heart.

Kate chuckles. Rob grins.

KATE

You're sure about this?

ROB

I've never been more sure of anything
or anyone in my life. You have to
see him, Kate. He's capable of this
warmth... and he's so gentle with me.

KATE

Huh. He didn't sound so gentle last
night.

ROB

Oh, you... heard that?

They both laugh.

STUDY - CONTINUING

George sits on a dry corner of the bed, listening. He smiles
as laughter drifts in from the kitchen.

ROB (O.S.)

Yeah, he's kind of vocal.

KATE (O.S.)

He's a fucking drill sergeant. Don't
move! Don't move! Now, drop and
give me twenty!

They laugh.

INT. GYM - MORNING

Molly and Kate on their treadmills. Molly is showing off her
new engagement ring.

MOLLY

I want to have an October wedding in
this little chapel over off 75th on
the west side. It's got these great
big trees in front and the leaves
should be beautiful by then. We'll
have a morning wedding so, grey
tuxedos. I hate it when I go to
(more)

MOLLY (cont'd)
morning weddings and the men are in black. And the bridesmaid dresses are going to be really simple. You know, so the girls can wear them again.

KATE
What are your colors?

MOLLY
Teal and champagne.

KATE
(to us)
Green and pink. No one will ever wear those dresses again unless they're donated to a drag group trying to look like the Andrew Sisters. But this is good news. The first part of my plan has gone off without a hitch, which means the second must be underway.

INT. SAUNA - LATER

Molly and Kate sit on the bench, both wrapped in towels.

KATE
You talked to him about it?

MOLLY
It's all but done.

KATE
All but?

MOLLY
Formalities. Don't worry. It's going to happen.
(pause)
Kate, I need to ask you something.

KATE
What?

MOLLY
Will you be my maid of honor?

Kate, surprised, sits up.

MOLLY
It would mean a lot to me. You're the closest girlfriend I've ever had.

KATE

Won't that be a little awkward? I mean, Conner and I... have a history.

MOLLY

Oh, well, I won't have much of a bridal party if I start excluding people because they've slept with the groom. Will you?

KATE

Yeah, Molly. I'd be honored.
(to us)
I am. Seriously.

MOLLY

Good. Your first duty is to pick me up at the hospital on Monday.

KATE

Why are you going to be at the hospital?

MOLLY

I'm getting bigger tits. I found this great wedding dress but it doesn't quite hang right.

KATE

(to us)

And that's just the beginning. Before she actually says, "I do," she gets her hips liposucked, collagen injected in her lips, and her nose restructured to look more like her 1998 nose, which was the one she always thought she'd get married in. Something old, something new, something borrowed, something black and blue. Between the visits to the hospital and all the more traditional responsibilities of the job, Molly keeps me very busy. And, while I appreciate the distraction, my bank account tells me that I need a paying gig.

INT. MARTY'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON

Kate sits in front of Marty's desk. Marty sits behind the desk, the phone to her ear, in the midst of an animated conversation. Kate turns to us.

KATE

Do I look nervous? The only thing saving me from drowning in my own sweat here is the fact that Marty called me. I found out through the grapevine that she and Phillip are happily reunited. Maybe I'm forgiven? The future fry cook in me wants to believe that I'm here to discuss an audition. But the realist in me suspects that Marty will be trimming her client load by one.

Marty hangs up the phone and turns to Kate. Marty smiles, offers Kate a cigarette, which she accepts, and Marty lights one for herself.

MARTY

My little Katie-did. It's good to see you.

KATE

I'm glad to hear you say that. I know I'm not your favorite client at the moment.

Marty waves this away grandly.

MARTY

Sweetie, water under the bridge.

KATE

Marty, and I'm not just trying to save my ass when I say this, I am sorry. About everything.

MARTY

The important thing is that we're still friends, right?

KATE

Actually, I was just thinking the important thing here is to keep you from killing me.

MARTY

Well, the thought did cross my mind.

KATE

Oh.

MARTY

But that was months ago.

KATE

Months ago? But... Phillip and I didn't.... I mean, we weren't...

MARTY

I was losing him to you.

KATE

No.

MARTY

You don't know him as well as I do. I would've lost him, if I hadn't taken steps to insure that didn't happen.

Silence.

KATE

Oh, my God.

MARTY

Do you want to know the three most valuable things I've learned being an agent for twenty years? One, rumors are gospel. Two, no one will ever want you as much as when someone else is trying to get you. Three, if it's worth having, it's worth playing hardball to get. Or to keep.

KATE

So the man in Albany...

MARTY

Had nothing to do with this, except to provide me with an excuse for the trip.

KATE

Rumors are gospel.

MARTY

And Nel loves to preach.

KATE

Yeah.

MARTY

Now, I think you know me well enough to know I don't like to threaten people.

KATE

It'll never happen again, Marty.

MARTY

Oh, I know that. But if Phillip ever hears about the particulars, you may as well hop a plane back to Minneapolis, because you won't even be dancing in strip clubs here. I'll see to that personally. Understood?

Kate nods.

MARTY

Good.

(smiles broadly)

Now, we need to find you a job. I've got an interesting opportunity for you. It's a new company and the director needs someone who can learn quickly. He's auditioning male principles and he needs a woman for them to dance with. Interested?

KATE

Very.

(to us)

Even if nearly broke weren't a few dollars away from completely broke, I'm too afraid to say no to her now.

Marty hands Kate a piece of paper with an address and a few details. Kate reviews it.

MARTY

He's expecting you at three.

KATE

Could this turn into a permanent spot in the company?

MARTY

That, my dear, is completely up to you and your talent. Now, how's my George?

KATE

He's fine. In love.

MARTY

The whole world should be in love, shouldn't it?

INT. KATE'S APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Kate, George, and Rob sit on the couch, watching a movie on tv. George holds Rob tightly and Kate has a large bowl of popcorn on her lap. They are all laughing and Kate throws popcorn at the boys. She turns to us.

KATE

Should we all be in love? I don't know. I think about Marty and Phillip, and all I think, "Love's just acquisition and possession." But maybe it's not love until your resolve is tested. Then I look at these two and all I can think is, "Love's disgusting."

GEORGE

You're just jealous.

KATE

He has a point. I am a little envious of the idea of love. But the reality of love I find confusing and confining.

GEORGE

That's why you remain unavailable to all but the least obtainable.

KATE

He's so fucking smug now. It turns out a happy, content George is more insufferable than the aloof, predatory prick he was. Still, he makes Rob happy. Spending time watching them paw each other is a good lesson in tolerance for me. And he paid the entire month's rent again so I guess I have to put up with him. Which leaves me hoping this job pans out.

INT. AUDITION SPACE - AFTERNOON

Kate walks in and is greeted by a young, female STAGE MANAGER. She smiles as Kate drops her bag.

STAGE MANAGER

Kate, right?

KATE

Yeah. My agent said you were expecting me.

STAGE MANAGER

Yeah. Phillip'll be right back. He's trying to get something done about the heat.

KATE

Phillip?

PHILLIP (O.S.)

Kate.

Kate turns to see Phillip exiting an office at the far end of the room. Conner follows him out. Kate turns to us.

KATE

I spend half my life oblivious to the obvious. The other half I spend tripping over it.

PHILLIP

(dismissing the SM)

Thanks, Jen.

The stage manager nods and walks away. Phillip turns back to Kate who is speechless.

PHILLIP

So, you're okay with this?

KATE

A little stunned but, yeah. This is great.

PHILLIP

Stunned? Didn't Marty tell you?

KATE

She wasn't that generous with the details.

PHILLIP

Oh. Well... I've, ah, I've got to try and get a hold of building maintenance. This place is becoming a sauna. Why don't you stretch out and we'll run through what you're going to be doing when I get back.

KATE

Sure.

Phillip walks away and Kate watches him go, still stunned. She turns to Conner, who grimaces. Kate smiles.

CONNER

Don't look so smug. You didn't have anything to do with this. He presented the best piece, that's all.

KATE

I want to hear you say that when the wedding bells chime, Conner.

Conner, disgusted, turns and walks away.

INT. AUDITION SPACE - LATER

Kate and Phillip dance together, reviewing the pieces he'll use in the audition. Over this, we hear Kate.

KATE (V.O.)

It's strange, at first. But it doesn't take long for us to find the rhythm again. I wonder if it's possible that I confused deep feelings with just having a really good partner for the first time? I still feel a twinge of jealousy when Marty shows up, but what the hell? I came too close to adding homewrecker to my resume. I won't be repeating that mistake.

INT. CHAPEL - AFTERNOON

Molly's wedding. She and Conner stand at the alter, reciting their vows. The BRIDAL PARTY, including Kate, stands on the alter steps.

Kate turns to us.

KATE

I was wrong about the dresses. No self-respecting drag queen would be caught dead in this.

The black drag queen, now dressed like Veronica Lake from her platinum blonde peekaboo bangs to her sultry red gown, waves from her spot in the pews.

DRAG QUEEN
Amen to that, honey!

KATE
Still, it's a nice enough ceremony.
We should all be so lucky, right?

DRAG QUEEN
Girl, you ain't ready.

KATE
And I say amen to that.

INT. RECEPTION HALL - EVENING

The bride and groom are dancing slowly to "their song" as the band plays behind them.

Kate and Daniel stand at the edge of the dance floor, watching. Daniel turns and studies Kate.

KATE
What?

DANIEL
What are you thinking about?

KATE
Oh, I was just wondering if our wedding will be this beautiful.

DANIEL
Wh... what?

KATE
Relax.

DANIEL
Oh, God.

KATE
I was actually thinking about Apollo and Orthia.

DANIEL
Nervous about the opening?

KATE
No. I mean, yes, but that's not what I.... I meant the story.

DANIEL
Oh.

KATE

The tragedy, anyway.

DANIEL

That's understandable, given the circumstances.

KATE

No, I was thinking... maybe that's what I need. One really great, tragic affair that will make me realize that it's time to grow up. Maybe I just need the catalyst that will force me to reevaluate. If it had been different with Phillip, he might've been that. That dangerously passionate love that would devastate me. Leave me completely broken.

DANIEL

But he wasn't?

KATE

A few years of lusting culminating in one drunken, fumbling, tearful night of bad sex doesn't make for major tragedy, just a minor disappointment.

DANIEL

I think you need champagne. And lots of it.

Daniel starts off.

KATE

Hey.

DANIEL

What?

KATE

Thanks for coming. I really appreciate it.

DANIEL

Anytime you need some guy in a tux who won't talk very much...

KATE

You can talk as much as you want.

DANIEL

(grins)

Okay. Just remember, you gave me permission.

Daniel walks away. Kate looks to us and shrugs.

KATE

I'm not ready for this. I'm not ready for anything more permanent than, "What do you want for breakfast?"

Kate starts walking toward the dining tables.

KATE

I am the center of the universe and I'm not ready to give that up. Why should I? So long as my friends don't stop listening to me whine about my screwed-up life.

Kate arrives at a table occupied by George, Rob, and Marty. They are laughing and chatting. Phillip trots up behind Marty and kisses her on the cheek. Over this, Kate continues.

KATE

Someone has to be the living proof that they're the lucky ones. And, if worse comes to worse, I can always get new friends. Maybe my attitude should be cause for alarm. There is a small part of me that panics when I remember that I don't even know if I'll recognize love when I find it. If I find it. And that brings with it the realization that I might not even recognize the point when the days of hedonism need to end. These days are numbered, right? No one can sustain this and truly call themselves happy, right?

Daniel, with two glasses of champagne, appears behind Kate. He hands her one glass then embraces her from behind, nuzzling her neck and swaying slowly to the beat of the music. Kate smiles in appreciation.

KATE

But that is just a small part. The rest of me relies on fate.

He kisses her behind her ear and she closes her eyes,
allowing him to move her.

KATE

You can't ever go back, after all.

FADE TO BLACK