

AFTERBIRTH

"Pilot"

Written by

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OVER BLACK:

WOMAN'S VOICE (V.O.)

Every time a baby is born, a woman disappears.

OPEN TO REVEAL:

INT. SOMEWHERE - MAYBE A THERAPIST'S OFFICE?

TIGHT on a WOMAN'S FACE, resting on tufted black leather upholstery. This is LIZA (30ish, working really hard to hold it together).

LIZA

I mean, not literally. But that's how it feels. Like the person I used to be is dead. And there's no way to get her back. And now everyone else is like, over in the next room having a party for this new baby, while I'm all alone sitting shiva for myself.

(then)

You know what shiva is, right? The Jewish thing when somebody dies and you cover all the mirrors and sit on a hard box and everyone brings you cookies?

(then)

Wait, what was the question?

MAN'S VOICE (O.C.)

I just said it must be totally weird, having a baby.

LIZA

Oh, sorry. Yeah, it's pretty weird.

(then)

Is this going to hurt?

REVEAL she's actually on a couch in the back room of a tattoo parlor, talking to a PIERCER. He's wearing latex gloves, sterilizing Liza's upper earlobe with an alcohol swab.

PIERCER

Promise, I won't feel a thing.

(laughs at his own bit)

Don't worry, dude. It's gonna look so dope.

(then)

Now take a deep breath in, then slow breath out.

As Liza exhales, the hollow needle punches through her flesh, and a ripple of pain washes over her. Then, relief.

FLASHBACK TO:

**CHYRON: THREE DAYS EARLIER**

INT. LIZA AND BEN'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - AFTERNOON

Liza stands at the tiny sink in her giant underwear, hooked up to a breast pump, doing her makeup.

Her husband, BEN (late 30s, the picture you see when you look up "marriage material" in the dictionary), pops his head in, holding a glass of wine.

BEN  
Mother's little helper?

LIZA  
(off drink, pleased)  
How did you know?

BEN  
Because... you're my wife?  
(then)  
Don't worry, it's exactly four  
ounces. That's three points, right?

LIZA  
Nothing takes the fun out of wine  
like a measuring cup.  
(then)  
Thanks Ben, but I'll pass.  
Appreciate the reminder that I'm  
still fat, though.

He gives her an "I'm sorry" shrug, and kisses her head.

BEN  
You said you were back on Weight  
Watchers. Just trying to be  
supportive. But for the record, I  
think you're perfect.

He puts his hand on the small of her back, she shakes it off.

LIZA  
Don't even. I'm doughy and leaky--

BEN  
Don't forget Grumpy and Sleepy.  
(off her laugh)  
Come on, Liza, you just had a baby!

LIZA

Roz is four months old. I'd hardly call that "just."

BEN

Too bad you don't get to decide what I think is sexy.

LIZA

Well, restaurant people are... not as forgiving as you are. It's why there are, like, no other women sommeliers. And definitely not with kids at home.

(worried)

I'm going to totally fuck my daughter up.

BEN

So we'll save for college and for therapy.

LIZA

With what money? We can barely save enough for next month's rent.

BEN

It's going to be okay.

LIZA

How do you know?

Their conversation is interrupted by a BABY crying (O.C.).

BEN

I'll go. You finish getting ready.

LIZA

No, I'll nurse her. I'm already late anyway.

(unhooking breast pump)

And this juice just ain't worth the squeeze.

INT. RESTAURANT KITCHEN/DINING ROOM - EARLY EVENING

RESTAURANT STAFF preps for dinner service. Servers polish glasses, set out silver. Line cooks chop, stir, and sweat.

Liza stands at the expediting table tasting wines. SAFFRON (20s, actress-y), interrupts with a forceful hug from behind.

SAFFRON

You're back! I missed you so much!

LIZA

Hi, Saffron.

SAFFRON

How are you, how's the baby?! Lemme see a picture!

Liza takes out her phone and shows a photo to Saffron.

LIZA

She's good. We're all doing good.

SAFFRON

So cute!! It must be so hard to be away from her, right?

Before Liza can answer, ELEANOR (50ish, Liza's boss, a real See You Next Tuesday) appears.

ELEANOR

Sorry to interrupt... whatever this is. Saffron, the GM tells me you have 7 weeks of uncashed paychecks. Is that true?

SAFFRON

What are you talking about? I have direct deposit.

ELEANOR

We don't do that here.

SAFFRON

Then what are those envelopes I get every week?

ELEANOR

Those are actual, live checks, sweetheart. With money I presume you need for food and shelter.

SAFFRON

They are? I thought they were, like, receipts.

ELEANOR

There are no words.  
(then, to Liza)  
Nice to have you back, Liza. I hope you enjoyed your vacation.

LIZA

You mean my maternity leave.

ELEANOR

Ah, right. That explains why you look so pale and tired. Make sure you introduce yourself to the Lead Somm. He'll be in shortly.

LIZA

There's a new Lead Sommelier? You said you'd consider me for the job.

ELEANOR

I did consider you. And then I hired someone else.

Eleanor exits. Saffron turns to Liza.

SAFFRON

Oh em gee, are you okay??

LIZA

Um, are you? How did you not notice you hadn't been paid in two months?

SAFFRON

I know! I'm such an idiot!!

Saffron exits to the dining room, and BETH (30s, a toxic friend full of terrible advice), walks over to Liza.

BETH

Must be nice.

LIZA

What, to be that rich, or that dumb?

BETH

I mean, she clearly doesn't need the cash, so why is she working here? Is it all just an elaborate piece of performance art?

Liza laughs--Beth gets her. As Beth wanders off, we notice she's the only person in the kitchen not wearing a uniform.

*NOTE: Actually, there is no "Beth." She's not another waitress at the restaurant... she's a physical manifestation of Liza's postpartum depression. Ever heard the phrase "it wasn't me, it was the depression/booze/exhaustion talking"? Yeah, that's her. Spoiler alert!*

INT. LIZA AND BEN'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - SAME TIME

Ben and his neighbor CARLO (40s, odd, always with some intense new hobby) drink beers while Carlo stirs a huge pot

on the stove. Roz sleeps in a baby carrier on Ben's chest.

CARLO

Just look at that fucker. Passed out the second you put her in the backpack. See? Babies are easy.

BEN

Yeah. She loves this thing. I do feel bad I didn't stick to Liza's schedule, though.

Ben picks a handwritten packet of super detailed childcare instructions, from Liza.

CARLO

Lemme see that.

(He snatches the list away from Ben; reads it)

Um, these "instructions" are insane. "See Appendix 2 in Harvey Karp book for diagram of proper swaddling technique"? Hard pass. You're the dad. You know what you're doing.

BEN

Exactly. I'm the "dad." I'll never be the "mom."

CARLO

So?

BEN

So I'll "never understand," apparently.

(then)

And sometimes I think she hates me because of it.

CARLO

Look dude, you have a sleeping baby in one hand, a beer in the other, and you're about to eat a Thai brisket sandwich so spicy it's gonna make you weep. Shit could be a lot worse.

BEN

Yeah, no, I'm good. But she's... not. She seems fine, but that's not the same as good, you know?

CARLO

I think you worry too much.

INT. RESTAURANT KITCHEN/DINING ROOM - SAME TIME

Liza and Beth make their way over to the bar to pick up some drinks for one of Liza's tables. She stops dead in her tracks when she spots a man, ROGER (late-40s, English, not quite as handsome as he is charming).

LIZA

You've got to be fucking kidding me. Not today, of all days.

BETH

What? Who is that?

LIZA

It's Roger.

BETH

Like, Roger Roger? Roger the professor you had an affair with in culinary school Roger?

LIZA

Almost had an affair with. Before I met Ben. He's married. It was a really long time ago.

BETH

Well, I don't see a ring... maybe they got a divorce.

LIZA

Anything is possible, I guess. What's he doing in L.A.?

BETH

Only one way to find out!

LIZA

Beth, wait!

But it's too late. Beth walks over and taps Roger on the shoulder. He spins around, delighted.

ROGER

Well, hello there.

BETH

Why are you here?

ROGER

Nice to see you, too.

(to Liza; off her shirt)

Darling, you're a vision in  
standard issue non-iron poly blend.

LIZA

Are you in L.A. on... holiday?

Just then, Eleanor walks up.

ELEANOR

Good, I see you've all met.

BETH

Oh, we've met.

ELEANOR

Roger is our new Lead Sommelier. We  
thought it would be a perfect fit,  
considering your history.

LIZA

History?

ELEANOR

Weren't you his protégée?

LIZA

Oh, that. Yeah, I guess I was.

ELEANOR

I would have told you, but Roger  
insisted it should be a surprise. I  
don't enjoy surprises myself.

LIZA

Well... I'm definitely surprised.

ELEANOR

Good then. We'll leave you to it.

BETH

(not really)

So, so fun!

Eleanor heads off, leaving a shell-shocked Liza. Beth  
eavesdrops from behind the bar. Roger turns to Liza:

ROGER

Why do I get the sense you're not  
thrilled to see me here?

LIZA

No, it's not... it's just very...  
It's my first night back is all.

ROGER

Yes. Congratulations on the new  
arrival, by the way.

LIZA

Thanks. But why are you back in  
L.A.? I thought Emily would never  
leave the Bay Area.

ROGER

And she hasn't. We've separated.

LIZA

Oh, I'm sorry. I didn't know.

ROGER

How could you? We haven't seen each  
other in what, two years?

LIZA

Wow, that long.

Just as she's about to wade further into this conversation,  
her cell phone buzzes.

LIZA (CONT'D)

(to Roger)

Sorry, just a sec.

She reads a text from Cassie: *"Hey sis! We still on for yoga tomorrow? Time to get shedding for MY wedding LOL!"* Liza types a response, then looks up to find Roger has moved off to chat with some customers. Beth walks past with a tray.

BETH

See? Totes divorced.

As she goes, Beth reaches out, winks, and pops open the  
second button of Liza's blouse. Liza leaves it undone.

INT. CASSIE AND JAX'S APARTMENT - SAME TIME

CASSIE (mid-30s, a progressive princess) and her fiancée JAX  
(early 30s, butch and bossy) sit with their very straight,  
very white, very proper WEDDING PLANNER (70ish).

A text from Liza pops up on Cassie's phone: *"You bet! So excited."* After reading it, she sees some other notifications and continues to do bullshit on her phone until Jax notices.

JAX

Sweetheart, is there something more important you need to be doing?

CASSIE

Sorry, it's my sister. Jax, you know how she gets when I don't answer her.

JAX

And you know how I get when you're not fully present.

WEDDING PLANNER

Okay! So. Have you two given any more thought to the music question?

JAX

Yes--

CASSIE

We have?

JAX

Mmm hmm. String quartet for the processional, jazz combo for cocktails, and DJ for the reception. A partner at my firm represents Samantha Ronson, so we should start there.

CASSIE

Wow. Okay. I was thinking maybe a playlist on somebody's iPod?

JAX

This isn't a backyard barbecue, Cassie, it's our wedding.

CASSIE

It's just-- I've already done the "dream wedding" thing. The cellist, the big pouffy dress, the Nice Jewish Doctor. It didn't end well.

JAX

(taking Cassie's hand)  
And that's why you deserve a re-do, no expense spared. A celebration of our love, and of you, finally living in the light of your authentic truth.

CASSIE

Not sure that's exactly how my family sees it.

JAX

Who gives a fuck what they think!  
(then, to the Planner)  
Sorry, it's an emotional time.

WEDDING PLANNER

(Clearly flustered)  
No need to apologize. I've heard it all before.

CASSIE

Somehow I doubt that.

INT. LIZA AND BEN'S LIVING ROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

Ben sits on the couch, grading papers. The front door opens slowly and Liza creeps in, super quiet.

LIZA

Hi, baby.  
(takes in the scene)  
Wait, where's Roz? Did she actually go down in the crib on her own??

BEN

No, I had to wear her in the Ergo. But hey, at least she's sleeping.

LIZA

Oh, so you just did whatever. Cool.

BEN

I didn't do "whatever." I took care of my daughter and put her to bed.  
(then)  
Carlo made chili beef brisket, if you're hungry.

LIZA

Wow, you guys even had time to make brisket. Great. That's super great.

BEN

Yeah, it was fun. But how was work?? Tell me everything!

LIZA

It was good. Weird. But good.

BEN

Weird how?

LIZA

You know, just being back after all that time. My co-workers are idiots. The usual.

BEN

Did Eleanor say anything about the promotion?

LIZA

No, I guess they're still deciding.

BEN

You're gonna get it.

LIZA

(guilty)  
Thanks.

BEN

You totally deserve it. And we totally need the money.

LIZA

Yeah, I know. I know we do.  
(a beat, then)  
So, I'm gonna go crash. Love you.

She gives him a kiss and heads off to the bedroom. Ben sighs, shakes his head, and turns back to his work.

INT./EXT. YOGA STUDIO - THE NEXT DAY

In the back corner of a yoga studio, Cassie, Liza, and Beth move through a sun salutation sequence. Some of the other women are pregnant, some have their babies at the heads of their mats, all of them are in perfect pre/post birth shape. All are #momgoals. Well, all of them except for Liza.

YOGA INSTRUCTOR

And chatarunga, then push back into downward facing dog.

CASSIE

I can't believe you didn't tell Ben that Roger is back.

BETH

What's to tell?

YOGA INSTRUCTOR

Now hop, step or jump to the front  
of your mat.

Cassie jumps with perfect form to the top of her mat. Liza  
steps. Beth just stands there.

CASSIE

This is how it starts, you know.

LIZA

How what starts?

CASSIE

The distance. In every relationship,  
you're always either moving towards  
each other or away from each other.  
It's work to keep a marriage together.

LIZA

Yeah, I know. You think I don't  
know that?

CASSIE

I just don't want what happened to  
me and Jonah to happen to you.

Liza rolls her eyes.

BETH

Uh, I thought what happened to you  
was you had a lesbian awakening and  
nothing Jonah could have done would  
have changed that?

CASSIE

Well, yeah, but we had also been  
drifting apart.

They move into some complicated pose that Cassie nails cold.  
Liza and Beth struggle.

YOGA INSTRUCTOR

And remember, everyone, the goal  
here is not perfection. I don't  
want to see any A-plus yogis here.  
We're all C students today.

BETH

God I love postpartum yoga. It's  
like the worse I am at it, the  
better I am. But why would anyone  
bring their baby, though?

CASSIE

It's supposed to be a good bonding experience.

LIZA

Nothing makes me love my daughter quite so much as an hour away from her. Speaking of which, it just me, or does this class feel really long? It's an hour, right?

CASSIE

Ninety minutes.

LIZA

What?? I thought it was sixty! I gotta go! Ben's got a discussion section to teach!

CASSIE

When are they going to make him a full professor, already?

LIZA

When he finishes the dissertation.

CASSIE

He's still doing that?

LIZA

Yup. He wants it to be perfect.

CASSIE

Perfection doesn't pay the bills, Elizabeth. A salaried, tenure-track position with benefits, however--

LIZA

Knock it off, Cassandra.

Liza grabs her things and hurries out of the studio, Beth following close behind.

INT. BEN AND LIZA'S APARTMENT - A LITTLE WHILE LATER

Liza and Beth enter to find Ben stewing, while Roz sleepily chills out in an enormous plastic baby swing. Beth sits on the floor and pokes at the toys on the mobile to keep Roz entertained. Ben doesn't seem to acknowledge Beth's presence, which is weird, because why is she there?

LIZA

Sorry, sorry, I know. It was a longer class than I thought.

BEN

I had to cancel on two of my students.

LIZA

I said I was sorry.

BEN

Liza, this is my job.

LIZA

Well, "job" is a pretty generous word for "still in grad school."

BEN

I'm not having this fight again. I know you're having a hard time right now, but so am I.

LIZA

Oh no, you're going through a "hard time"? Because I can't spend all day sucking your dick any more?

BEN

When did you ever spend all day sucking my dick?

LIZA

(dripping with sarcasm)  
It's just been difficult to find the time between my full time job at the restaurant and my full time job as a mother--

BEN

I told you we should wait to have a baby. This is why.

LIZA

You're almost forty! How much longer did you want to wait?

BEN

I don't know. I guess I hoped we'd be a little more stable.

LIZA

And which one of us was supposed to be the "stable" one? Me, right? Because I'm the one with the boobs?

BEN

Jesus, Liza, if I could take more off your plate, I would. If I could breast-feed, I would!

LIZA

But you can't so it doesn't matter what you say you want to do. That doesn't make you some kind of hero.

BEN

I don't have time for this.

LIZA

So go!

BEN

Fine!

(then)

I'm sorry.

LIZA

Sorry for what? For saying what you really think? Or sorry because I have to stay home and act like a "good mother" for a few hours?

Ben doesn't respond.

LIZA (CONT'D)

That was supposed to be a joke.

BEN

(was it?)

Yeah, I know.

LIZA

You're supposed to laugh, and say sorry for being a dick, and tell me "of course you're a good mother."

BEN

You are a good mother.

LIZA

Oh my God fuck this. You need to go, so just go! We can fight some more when you get home.

Ben walks out, then walks right back in.

BEN

Oh, I hope you don't mind, my iPad is being weird so I took yours--

LIZA

Fine! Whatever!

BEN

It's just easier to read on. Okay,  
bye. Sorry. Bye.

He closes the door behind him. Liza picks Roz up out of her swing, carries her to the nursery, and puts her in the crib. Roz immediately starts crying, reaching her arms out to Liza.

LIZA

I'm sorry, sweetheart. I'm so  
sorry. I just can't. Mommy needs  
five minutes, okay?

The wailing intensifies. Liza walks out of the nursery, into her bedroom. She collapses on the unmade bed and sobs.

INT. FANCY COCKTAIL PARTY - EARLY EVENING

Cassie leans against the wood-panelled wall of some rich old dude's living room, fiddling with her ostentatious engagement ring while the TROPHY WIVES around her titter.

TROPHY WIFE #1

--well whatever you're doing is  
working. You're absolutely glowing.

TROPHY WIFE #2

Thank you so much! I try to cleanse  
at least once or twice a month,  
whenever I feel too toxin-y.

CASSIE

What is a toxin, actually?

TROPHY WIFE #1

What isn't, am I right?

(then)

Oh, Cassandra, I heard you and  
Jacqueline were having some issues  
finding a florist for the wedding--

CASSIE

You did, did you.

TROPHY WIFE #1

Well, I would love to send you to  
mine. He's a genius.

TROPHY WIFE #2

And he's gay too! How fun is that?

TROPHY WIFE #1

Amber!

TROPHY WIFE #2

Well he is!

Cassie fakes a laugh. A WAITRESS comes around with a tray of white wine. TROPHY WIFE #2 grabs a glass.

CASSIE

I thought you were on a cleanse.

TROPHY WIFE #2

("you're an idiot")

Um, yeah, I am. That's why I'm only drinking Chardonnay.

WAITRESS

(to Cassie)

Would you like a glass?

CASSIE

Thanks. I'll take two.

She grabs a glass, drinks the whole thing in one gulp, hands back the empty, and takes a second. She smiles apologetically at the waitress, who makes a judgy face and moves off.

TROPHY WIFE #2

(delighted)

Cassie, you're so bad!

We follow Cassie's gaze across the room, and land on Jax swilling scotch with a group of RICH OLD DUDES (they're partners at her law firm).

RICH OLD DUDE #1

I'm tellin' ya, Jax, it's the best.

RICH OLD DUDE #2

It's the kind of place you could take your wife, your kids, or your mistress.

JAX

(playing along)

Not all at once, though, right?

The Old Dudes all laugh heartily.

RICH OLD DUDE #1

I mean, never say never, right?

They all laugh again. Jax sneaks a glance over her shoulder at Cassie. Cassie makes a face that says "Seriously?!?", Jax shrugs and turns back to the Old Dudes.

We come back to Cassie and the Wives.

CASSIE

So, anyone want to let me guess who did what to their face?  
(off their shock)  
No? Your loss. It's a really fun game. Right, Justine?

Cassie takes another gulp of wine, winks, and walks off.

INT. BEN AND LIZA'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Liza has pulled herself together. She's nursing the baby, cuddling with her in a chair, TV on, mindlessly scrolling through Facebook and Instagram.

Beth enters carrying a huge cocktail. She offers it to Liza.

BETH

So I read that the best time to drink hard liquor is actually while you're breast-feeding.  
(off Liza's look)  
I went down a pretty deep internet Mommy Forum k-hole. Spoiler alert: do not look for advice on Mommy Forums unless you want to feel horrible about yourself.

LIZA

Don't really need much help in that department right now.

BETH

Whatcha lookin' at?

LIZA

Right now? Facebook. Sigh.

BETH

Sigh? What sigh?  
(facetiously)  
Ooooooh, because everyone you know has suddenly become a self-involved piece of shit?

LIZA

Yeah. And somehow they're all still doing it better than me. How is that possible?

Beth takes the phone and scrolls through Liza's news feed:

BETH

Let's see... self-congratulatory political rant, come see my play, deceptively flattering selfie, BuzzFeed quiz to find out what kind of nachos you would be--bookmark that for later, humblebrag about how tired you are now that you've been promoted, picture of a dead Syrian toddler, everyone at some birthday party without you--

LIZA

Wait, what? Let me see that.  
(she takes the phone back)  
They went to Palm Springs for Sarah's birthday? Why didn't I know about this?

BETH

(gestures at the baby)  
Well in all fairness, they probably thought you were a little busy.

LIZA

I mean, I am, but... Sarah was a bridesmaid in my fucking wedding. Now I'm not even invited to her birthday party?

Just then, a text pops up from Roger: "*Thrilled we'll be working together again. You're looking great, by the way.*" Liza texts back: "*You wouldn't say that if you could see me now.*" Roger: "*So send a photo. Preferably of your boobs.*"

BETH

He can see my boobs.

LIZA

What? No.

EXT. CARLO'S GARAGE - SAME TIME

Ben stands around, looking confused and awkward, while Carlo works on his motorcycle.

CARLO

Hand me that socket wrench?

Ben picks up what is clearly not a socket wrench.

BEN

Uh, this one?

CARLO

No.

Ben offers another.

BEN

This one?

CARLO

Still no. Come on, dude, you can do this! I believe in you.

BEN

OK, how about-- you know what, man? I appreciate you including me, but I am not awfully handy, so let's quit while we're ahead.

CARLO

How did your dad not teach you any of this?

BEN

(shrugs)

He taught me other stuff.

CARLO

Yeah, how to be a pussy, for starters.

BEN

I prefer "emotionally evolved."

CARLO

You say potato, I say you talk too much about your feelings.

BEN

Seriously, though, thanks for the hang. I really don't feel like dealing with Liza's crap right now.

CARLO

Well, man, if you're looking to take your mind off it, you're in the right place. Mi motorcycle garage es tu motorcycle garage.

BEN

I just don't know what to do anymore, man. She is so angry all the time.

CARLO

What does she have to be pissed about? You're a fucking saint.

BEN

I'm not, though. And one of these days I'm gonna snap.

CARLO

Well then you need to relax. My massage place does happy endings.

BEN

(lightbulb!)  
You're right!

CARLO

Cool, I'll text you the address.

BEN

No, not about that. Gross. About relaxing. Maybe Liza and I both just need a break. I'm going to book a weekend getaway. No baby, just us. Chill out, reconnect--

CARLO

Sounds way more expensive than my thing. And way less fun.

INT. RESTAURANT KITCHEN/DINING ROOM - THE NEXT AFTERNOON

Liza, in a terrible mood, stands in front a table presenting a bottle to a RICH COUPLE (all money, no class).

LIZA

Your Chablis.

Liza opens the bottle, pours a splash in his glass. He makes a big show of swirling, sniffing, and tasting it.

MAN

I'm sorry, this is not what I wanted at all. It's so... sharp?

LIZA

That's the acidity. It's what makes a Chablis such a fine wine.

WOMAN

I said I wanted Chardonnay. Did you bring us the wrong bottle?

(to her husband)

I told you she didn't know what she was doing.

LIZA

Not at all, ma'am. Chablis is Chardonnay. One of the very best.

MAN

Listen, sweetheart, we just wanted a nice, buttery wine with lunch.

LIZA

You mean a shitty wine.

WOMAN

Can you do that for us, honey? Or should we speak to your manager?

Beth clocks this as she walks by, and makes an impulsive decision to spring to Liza's defense. She's really always right there when Liza needs her, isn't she?

BETH

I'm the manager.

WOMAN

Oh. Well... I just don't understand why we should have to drink something we don't want!

BETH

Here, let me taste it.

Beth pours herself a full glass of wine, then throws it in the Woman's face.

BETH (CONT'D)

(theatrically)

Oh my, how clumsy of me!

The Woman leaps up in shock. The room falls silent as everyone turns towards the commotion. Eleanor walks over.

ELEANOR  
Is there a problem here?

BETH  
I don't know, is there?

ELEANOR  
Not anymore.  
(to both of them)  
You're fired.

LIZA  
But I didn't--

ELEANOR  
(threatening)  
Oh but you did. Walk away. Now.

Liza, fighting back tears, heads off to the kitchen, Beth close behind, fuming. Eleanor turns back to the Couple.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)  
Now, may I suggest a bottle that would be more to your liking? On the house, of course.

INT. RESTAURANT KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Liza and Beth burst into the kitchen, both in a rage. Liza throws her apron down on the counter.

LIZA  
God damn it!

Roger looks up from whatever he's doing.

ROGER  
What's this about, then?

BETH  
Eleanor is a cunt.

ROGER  
Tell me something I don't know.

LIZA  
Okay. Did you know she just fucking fired me?

ROGER  
(snapping into hero mode)  
I can get out of here in twenty minutes. Happy hour? Or four?

LIZA

I really shouldn't. Ben is expecting me at home, we're kind of mid-fight--

ROGER

Surely whatever you're arguing about can wait.

Beth gives Liza a look, then grabs Liza's phone and starts typing a text.

BETH

I'll handle it.  
(hits send, then)  
Now let's go get drunk.

ROGER

Your wish is my command.

INT. BEN AND LIZA'S APARTMENT - SAME TIME

Ben bounces a cranky Roz on his shoulder when his phone buzzes. He reads the text from Liza: *"Sorry, have to stay late to do inventory. Ugh. Be home as soon as I can."*

BEN

(to the baby)  
Okay, sweetheart, Daddy will make you a bottle. Then you can take your nap.

Ben goes to the freezer--no bags of breastmilk in there. Checks the fridge--a small two ounce bottle.

BEN (CONT'D)

Yeah, this isn't going to be enough. Thank God for Instacart.

He opens up the app and searches for "Organic Formula."

INT. WINE BAR - EARLY EVENING

Roger and Liza are getting sloppy drunk at a cozy wine bar on Melrose. A heated debate is underway.

ROGER

I don't think that's it at all.

LIZA

Are you kidding? It's all about control! The minute you pay a woman for work she's willing to do for free, she has a lot more choices.

(MORE)

LIZA (CONT'D)

And society is still not evolved enough to handle that. Cooking might be "women's work" at home, but the restaurant industry is always gonna be a boys' club.

ROGER

Sorry, love, but you've got it all wrong. The industry is dominated by men because it's demanding and brutal and lonely, and women are far too sensible to put themselves through it at the expense of their own happiness.

(off Liza)

Most normal women, that is.

LIZA

You're saying I'm not normal?

ROGER

It's why I love you.

LIZA

Don't.

ROGER

Don't what?

LIZA

Say stuff like that.

ROGER

Oh, darling, don't be so literal. I just mean I know you, is all. And I wouldn't have you any other way.

This hits Liza hard. Being seen. She hasn't felt seen in a really, really long time. Suddenly, Beth walks up to the table (maybe she was in the bathroom?) and interrupts.

BETH

OK, enough deep talks. I want to sing--do you want to sing??

INT. KARAOKE BAR - A LITTLE WHILE LATER - NIGHT

Beth is on stage, leading the crowd in call and response to The Doors' "People Are Strange".

BETH

*When you're straaaaange  
Faces come out of the rain*

CROWD

*When you're strange!*

BETH

*No one remembers your name--*

CROWD

*When you're strange!*

BETH

*When you're strange!*

CROWD

*When you're straaaaange!*

BETH

*Alright, yeah!*

As the outro plays, she dances over to where Roger and Liza are. Liza hands a shot to Roger.

LIZA

My dad used to sing me that song as a lullaby when I was a baby.

Roger raises his eyebrows, amused.

ROGER

No wonder you turned out the way you did. To dear old Dad, then.

They toast, and drink.

LIZA

God, I haven't felt so much like myself in years.

ROGER

Well, it's good to have you back.

LIZA

Too bad it's already over. Ugh, what am I going to do? I can't not have a job.

ROGER

What you can't do is give up. You're far too talented to waste on housewifery.

LIZA

You have no idea how much I needed to hear that.

ROGER

Well it's true.  
(then, shifting gears)  
Alright, so, what now?

BETH

Ooh, I know, let's pierce  
something!

ROGER

That sounds exciting.

LIZA

I always wanted to double pierce my  
ears, but my mom wouldn't let me.

ROGER

You're the mom now, aren't you?

LIZA

Yeah, I am. Fuck it, let's do it!

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. TATTOO PARLOR - A LITTLE WHILE LATER

Same scene as cold open, except this time reveal Roger and Beth both there, stupid drunk. Liza is lying on the table while the Piercer sterilizes her ears.

PIERCER

So, is it weird, being a mom?

LIZA

Yeah? No? I don't know. It's  
like... Every time a baby is born,  
a woman disappears.

ANGLE ON Roger and Beth's reaction.

ROGER

(to Beth)  
That's a little scary.

BETH

You don't know the half of it.

INT. LIZA'S CAR - LATER

Beth, clearly tipsy (okay, drunk), drives Liza home in Liza's car. Liza (also drunk) scrolls through texts on her phone.

LIZA

Are you sure you're good to drive?

BETH

Please, if people didn't drink and drive in L.A., no one would ever go anywhere. Or have any fun.

Liza looks up from her phone, then suddenly sees:

LIZA

Shit, red light! Red light!

Beth slams on the breaks. Another car barrels across the intersection a few feet in front of them.

BETH

That was close.

LIZA

It would be a real bummer if I died tonight.

The girls look at each other, freaked, then suddenly burst out laughing.

BETH

Dude, I can't believe you just got pierced! You look awesome!

LIZA

I know! I hope Ben likes it.  
(a beat, then)  
Oh shit, Ben. How am I gonna explain any of this to him?

BETH

Eh, that's tomorrow's headache.

The light turns green and Beth guns it down the street.

INT. LIZA AND BEN'S APARTMENT - LATER

Liza & Beth stumble through the front door. It's starting to feel really weird that Beth is always there.

LIZA

Shhhhhh!

BETH

Ooooooh God forbid somebody wakes up the baaaaaaby!

Beth gestures wildly, and knocks over a lamp with a crash.

LIZA

Oh shit!

Beth tumbles back away from the lamp, falls backwards into Liza, and they both land on the couch. Ben walks into the living room in his pajamas, rubbing his eyes.

BETH

Oh fuck, were you sleeping?

BEN

I was trying to. Are you drunk?

LIZA

I had a few drinks.

BEN

Did you drive like that?

BETH

Dude, it's fine.

BEN

Uh, no, not fine. You could have killed yourself, or someone else.

LIZA

Oh my God, give it a rest.

BEN

I'm not getting into it when you're like this. We'll talk about it tomorrow. Just... drink some water and come to bed.

He walks over and dutifully kisses Liza on the head. She barely reacts. He exits to the bedroom.

BETH

God what a buzzkill. You should tell Roger you got home safe. Here.

Beth reaches over, takes the phone, and starts typing a text to Roger. *"That was the MOST fun. Just like the old days."*

INT. LIZA AND BEN'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Meanwhile, Ben sits in bed with Liza's iPad, researching "Romantic Weekend Getaways" on a discount travel website. A text bubble from "Roger" pops up: *"There'll be lots more time for our secret adventures now that I'm here to stay."*

What the fuck?? Who is this from?? Confused, Ben opens iMessage, and Liza's response appears: *"It's just so nice to feel like there's someone who understands me, you know?"*

Ben can't help himself. He scrolls up and starts reading from

the beginning. "Working together again." "Show me your boobs." "Secret adventures." Ben's eyes go wide with pain.

INT. LIZA AND BEN'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Cut back to the living room, where we look past Beth and Liza, and see a reflection of Liza in the mirror. As we push in, we realize that she's actually sitting on the couch alone, sloppy drunk, typing another message to Roger. Because (remember?) Beth was never really there. It was Liza flirting with Roger. Throwing a glass of wine on a customer's face. Driving home drunk. Lying to Ben.

Liza puts down the phone and turns on the TV. The screen lights up with some *Real Housewives* re-run or something.

LIZA

Ugh, these people are the worst.

But she keeps watching, numb. She unbuttons her pants and sticks her hand in, trying to feel something good. Just as she starts to get comfortable, she hears Roz crying out.

LIZA (CONT'D)

Shit.

(a sigh, then:)

Alright, alright. Mommy's coming.

She stands, buttons up her pants, and heads to the nursery.

LIZA (O.C.) (CONT'D)

Come here, little girl. It's okay, it's okay.

Off the empty room with the TV still blaring, and the sounds of Liza trying to get the baby back to sleep, we...

END OF PILOT