

FIGHT BELLE

by

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FADE IN:

EXT. MACINTOSH ESTATE - SAVANNAH, GEORGIA -- DAY

Wedding GUESTS in hoop skirts and morning suits roam about.

INT. MACINTOSH ESTATE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY -- DAY

Ten BRIDESMAIDS clad in fuchsia primp and gossip. A FLOWER GIRL frolics amidst balloons.

INT. MACINTOSH ESTATE - DELILAH'S BEDROOM -- DAY

The room of the consummate beauty pageant contestant. In a white hoop skirt stands belle of the ball DELILAH MACINTOSH, early 20s.

Tending to the bride are: mother MIRABELLE, a domineering matriarch; bridesmaid CHARLENE, Delilah's older, heavier sister; and bridesmaid MARNEY, fetching and shallow.

DELILAH

I can't believe my weddin' day is finally here. In an hour, I'll be married to the man o' my dreams. Somebody pinch me.

Charlene pinches her, hard.

DELILAH

Ow! I meant, figuratively.

CHARLENE

I pinched your figure, didn't I?

DELILAH

(pirouettes)
How do I look?

MARNEY

Like you crap diamonds.

MIRABELLE

Marney. I don't appreciate such language in my house.

MARNEY

Sorry, Mrs. M. It just sort of...
(eyes Delilah in mirror)
slid out.

Delilah holds... then bursts into giggles.

MIRABELLE

(stamps her shoe)

Enough of that! This is your wedding day for heaven's sake. Not some tawdry night in a cheap motel. Charlene, doesn't your sister look beautiful?

CHARLENE

(admitting defeat)

Yes, Momma.

She crouches to adjust Delilah's skirt.

MARNEY

I feel like a whale in this thing, just waiting to be harpooned.

CHARLENE

Tell me about it.

MIRABELLE

(pats Marney's arm)

You're not a whale, Honey.

She brushes past Charlene, who reddens.

DELILAH

It's only for a few hours. Then y'all can get naked, hop on an usher, and jump in the pool.

MIRABELLE

They will do no such thing.

DELILAH

I'm just teasin', Momma. Try and relax. You're makin' me nervous.

MIRABELLE

A bride is supposed to be nervous on her wedding day.

CHARLENE

Like it's a law or something?

MIRABELLE

It is a law. Your family comes bearing gifts. Don't you want to make a good impression on them?

MARNEY

How many candle holders you figure you'll get?

DELILAH

Enough to start my own cathedral.

MARNEY

I'll tell you what I'd want... a Naloni Bucintoro watch. That's right.

DELILAH

Aren't you forgettin' somethin'?

MARNEY

What?

DELILAH

Your husband, the guy you'd be marryin'. Aren't the gifts s'posed to be for both of you?

MARNEY

Oh please. How much enjoyment is he gonna get out of a china bowl, or a crystal flute sitting in a cabinet? So he might as well be not enjoying something that makes me happy.

MIRABELLE

We have a philosopher among us. Any idea when your big day will come?

MARNEY

I kicked Trent to the curb two months ago, so it probably won't be in the next few weeks.

Mirabelle gives Marney a look of disdain.

DELILAH

Serves him right for what he done.

CHARLENE

What'd he do?

MARNEY

Made a pass at my mother. I'm still surprised she told me.

DELILAH

Should've set the bastard on fire after somethin' like that.

CHARLENE

That's not the answer. Living well's the best revenge.

DELILAH

Oh? Is that what you did after Howard?

Charlene narrows her eyes at Delilah and marches out.

MIRABELLE

That was a bit below the corset,
don't you think?

DELILAH

I'm sorry, Momma. After today, she'll
have two weeks to get over it.

(to Marney)

'Fore I lose another bridesmaid, you
mind takin' one o' the programs down
to Kelvin?

MARNEY

Sure. Getting a little humid in
here.

She meanders to the bureau. Ogles the program.

MARNEY

Oh no. Did he have to pose?

INSERT PROGRAM

Delilah stands next to her bridegroom. He puts up his dukes.

INT. MACINTOSH ESTATE - GUEST ROOM -- DAY

The bridegroom shadowboxes in front of a mirror. KELVIN
WINGFIELD, 30, the body of a flyweight, the ego of a
heavyweight. A pencil moustache outlines his upper lip.

KELVIN

You want some o' this? Huh? You
want some o' this, Bitch? Cuz I
know you can't handle some o' this.

The BEST MAN, 20s, trades barbs with three ushers: BUCK,
CHUCK and TUCK. They all swig longneck beers.

BEST MAN

Kick that chump's ass, Kel.

The ushers laugh. A knock on the door.

KELVIN

Beers. Finish 'em. Now.

The groomsmen guzzle, toss bottles in the trash. Kelvin
fixes his hair in the mirror.

KELVIN

Come in.

Marney sashays in.

MARNEY

Delilah wanted me to give you this.

KELVIN

What is it?

MARNEY

The program. Can you get with it?

KELVIN

Bring it here. Let me see it.

He motions to his entourage to leave. Marney stomps over. Best Man shuts the door on his way out.

KELVIN

I didn't get a chance to see it.

(admires his picture)

What do you think of it?

MARNEY

Pretty weak if you ask me.

KELVIN

Weak? There's a word I don't like.

Especially from someone so... eye-grabbing.

MARNEY

Please. I feel like Orca coming out of the closet in this thing.

KELVIN

(chuckles)

No, I mean it.

MARNEY

You're a good liar. I can tell.

KELVIN

I'm a fighter, Marney. I can't stand for lies and I can't stand for weakness. I pride myself on my strength.

(puffs out chest)

My agility.

(gyrates like a
Chippendale dancer)

And my ability to... move things.

(presses his junk
against her)

Marney lets out a little squeak. They lock lips, grope at each other like teenagers in a back seat.

Kelvin spins Marney around, lifts up her skirt.

KELVIN

These hoop skirts were a great idea.
Surprised there even was a war.

INT. MACINTOSH ESTATE - DELILAH'S BEDROOM -- DAY

Delilah's alone, admiring her engagement ring.

FLOWER GIRL (O.S.)

Let go!

BOY'S VOICE (O.S.)

Big Baby!

FLOWER GIRL (O.S.)

Stop it! I'm telling!

Delilah scoots into the

UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

just as Flower Girl slaps the RING BEARER, the seed of Chucky
but a smidgen taller, in the face.

DELILAH

Hey! Stop it you two!

Ring Bearer slaps Flower Girl back, knocking her down. She
immediately cries.

DELILAH

Shame on you! Don't you ever do
that again!

Ring Bearer farts with his mouth at Delilah and scrams.

DELILAH

Come back here, you! Don't you ever
hit a lady! You hear me?!

She stoops to Flower Girl, whose face is puffy pink.

DELILAH

Hey, Sweetie. It's alright. Wanna
come with me? Come on, let's go.

She helps her up, escorts her into

DELILAH'S BEDROOM

On the way in, Delilah swipes a hairbrush and a tissue off
her bureau. She directs Flower Girl to a small platform
that stands before an ornate full-length mirror.

DELILAH

We're gonna fix you up, good as new.
(hands tissue)
Here you go, Sweetie.

Flower Girl wipes her eyes. Delilah stands behind her, brushing her hair.

DELILAH
Wanna know somethin'?

FLOWER GIRL
(sniffling)
What?

She looks up at Delilah's reflection.

DELILAH
I ain't ever seen a prettier flower girl in my entire life. You know that? 'Deed, it's true. Look at this hair. Bet it drives all the boys wild. They're just not sure why yet. Wait until it gets long. You'll have to beat 'em off with a curlin' iron. There. All better. Now, wanna come see me get married?

EXT. MACINTOSH ESTATE - BACKYARD - WEDDING TENT -- DAY

The Guests chat boisterously on rows of folding chairs, separated by an aisle of manicured grass. A brass QUINTET occupies the final row.

TUBA
Try not to screw it up this time.

FRENCH HORN
Blow it out your arse.

CENTER STAGE

The MINISTER, 50s, emerges in a gray suit and red bow tie. Smiles at the large gathering.

Kelvin appears, looking a bit disheveled, buttons his jacket. The Quintet plays PRELUDE MUSIC.

KELVIN
How's it going?

MINISTER
Good. Thank you for asking. Feeling a bit nervous?

KELVIN
No, actually. I'm quite relaxed.

MINISTER
Splendid.

The PROCESSION begins.

Buck escorts Mirabelle and KELVIN'S MOM, 50s, a museum of silicone and collagen, to their seats in the front row.

Best Man follows, arm in arm with the Maid of Honor, Charlene. He waves like he's just arrived on Oscar night.

Chuck and Tuck strut down the aisle.

CHUCK

You and Jezebel thinking of getting married?

TUCK

Her name's Jesselyn, jackass.

CHUCK

Jesselyn Jackass. I like it.

The Bridesmaids, including a ruffled Marney, parade in pairs.

Behind them, the Ring Bearer, looking sweaty and confused.

And then, the Flower Girl. She freckles the aisle with magnolia petals.

Ring Bearer turns and gives her a dirty look. She proudly produces her tongue for him.

A pregnant pause. Anticipation builds amongst the Guests.

The Quintet strikes up Mendelssohn's WEDDING MARCH.

Delilah appears with her father, SAMUEL, 50s, silver hair and a downward smile, a keeper of many secrets. The bride carries a bouquet of pink magnolias.

They proceed down the aisle. Flashbulbs and smiles light up the tent. Kelvin steals a look at Marney, who blushes.

CHUCK

(whispers)

Think they did it?

BEST MAN

Course they did, look at her. She's as pink as a baboon's ass.

The Minister turns to the Best Man, shocked.

BEST MAN

Sorry, Your Honor.

Kelvin sneers at Mirabelle and Charlene, both looking bloated and uncomfortable as they fan themselves.

Delilah and Samuel arrive at the altar.

MINISTER

Who gives this woman in marriage?

SAMUEL

I do.

Samuel kisses Delilah's cheek, puts her hand in Kelvin's. He takes a seat next to Mirabelle.

MINISTER

Dearly Beloved, we are gathered together here in the sight of God to join together this Man and this Woman in holy Matrimony. If any man- or woman- can show just cause, why they may not lawfully be joined together, let him- or her- now speak or forever hold their peace.

Marney has a COUGHING fit. A murmur ripples through the crowd. Delilah scowls at her.

CHUCK

Is she gagging on something?

BEST MAN

But he's standing all the way over here.

BUCK

Shut up.

Kelvin and Delilah face each other.

MINISTER

Kelvin, wilt thou have this woman as thy wedded wife, to live together after God's ordinance in the holy estate of Matrimony? Wilt thou love her, comfort her, honor, and keep her in sickness and in health; and, forsaking all others, keep thee only unto her, so long as ye both shall live?

KELVIN

I... been doing some thinking.

GASPS from the crowd nearly bring down the tent.

USHERS

Woops.

DELILAH

What?

KELVIN

Look...

Delilah's eyes bug as Kelvin searches for the right words.

KELVIN

I'm a fighter, Delilah. I can't stand for lies and I can't stand for weakness. I pride myself on --

DELILAH

What in God's name are you talkin' about?

KELVIN

I think I got a few more good rounds in me. And I just don't think I'm ready to hang up my belt. Capeesh?

DELILAH

I'll show you capeesh.

She swings at him with her left. Kelvin slips her punch.

A right from Delilah. He slips it again.

She winds up and delivers a roundhouse left. Kelvin slips her punch for a third time, only this time, Delilah trips on her train and collapses. She CLONKS her head on the stage.

GUEST

My God! Is she alright?!

Mirabelle faints. Delilah's out like a light. The Minister stoops down to assist. He peers up at Kelvin but he's gone.

The bridegroom leaves with his entourage.

BEST MAN

Another TKO from the K-man.

The Guests stand with their mouths agape. Some shout: "Where are you going?" And "You forgot your bride." Children BOO.

LATER

Mirabelle holds smelling salts under Delilah's nose.

DELILAH

(opens her eyes)

Yeckh, what is that? Get that thing away from me.

MIRABELLE

A little gratitude would be nice. I've never done this before.

Delilah sits up. Nearly everyone has left. It begins to sink in: The Wedding That Never Was.

Charlene and Marney sit in the first row looking despondent. Samuel approaches Delilah, kneels down next to her.

SAMUEL

Are you alright, Honeybee? Let me help you up.

MIRABELLE

Leave her be! She needs to do it herself.

Samuel backs off.

DELILAH

(slowly stands)
What happened?

MIRABELLE

You mean you don't remember? He left you. The one wearing the tuxedo.

DELILAH

Thanks, Momma. That helps.

SAMUEL

I think Delilah could do without the snide remarks right now.

MIRABELLE

What do you know about it? Do you know what went into putting on this wedding day?!

SAMUEL

I think I do. I paid for it.

MIRABELLE

That's just marvelous. And what did I invest? Nothing at all, right?! Only the fancy wedding invitations, and the registry, and that Godforsaken rehearsal dinner --

SAMUEL

I just think --

MIRABELLE

Those God-awful programs, and the fittings, and the million alterations on those bloody hoop skirts, and the guest list, and the thank you cards --

SAMUEL

Don't you think --

MIRABELLE

And the photographer, and the videographer, and the caterer, and the minister, and the florist, and the band, and that fat slob chauffeur brother of yours, AND a five thousand dollar cake that nobody ate!

SAMUEL

Yes, but, this wasn't Delilah's fault.

Mirabelle huffs and storms off. Samuel watches her leave. He takes a seat, dizzy and disconcerted.

Delilah turns to her sister and Marney.

DELILAH

This isn't really happenin', right?

MARNEY

I'm sorry, Honey.

A hint of a smile appears on Charlene's face. She looks away, trying to hide it.

DELILAH

Is somethin' funny?

CHARLENE

No.

DELILAH

Then why are you smilin'?

CHARLENE

Nothing. It's nothing.

DELILAH

I bet I look pretty funny, huh?
 "When Beauty Queen Weddings Go Wrong."
 Right? Fox is gonna be all over my
 ass now. Real funny, Charlene.

Charlene can't hold it any longer. She bursts out laughing.

CHARLENE

I'm sorry, Delilah.
 (scampers away)

DELILAH

Some family.

Samuel gives her a pained look. Delilah sits next to Marney.

DELILAH

This was so humiliatin'. There ain't no comin' back from somethin' like this.

MARNEY

You will, Sweetie. Might not feel like it now, but... you'll see. The sun will come up tomorrow, right? Isn't that what the li'l orphan girl says?

DELILAH

I just wanna beat him senseless.

MARNEY

You could do that. But that'll just get you thrown in jail for assault 'n battery. It's not worth it.

DELILAH

How could he do that to me?

MARNEY

Honey, men like Kelvin are a dime a baker's dozen. Crying over somebody like that, well... that's just foolish if you ask me. You can do better.

Delilah spies the wedding cake in the corner of the tent.

MARNEY

I swear to you...

Delilah charges at the cake like a belle out of hell. She flails at it, stirring up a whirlwind of icing.

DELILAH

(mocking Kelvin)

You been doin' some thinkin', huh?! You couldn't think up a brain fart! I'll give you somethin' to think about!

Strawberry mousse splatters all over her hoop skirt as she punches away. Samuel buries his head in his hands.

Delilah snatches the figurine of Kelvin atop the cake and flings it into the trees.

DELILAH

Smallest pecker I've ever seen!

Marney raises her eyebrows, confused by the comment. Delilah looks down at herself, thoroughly covered in cake. Perhaps a moment of clarity. Then, shamelessly, she licks herself.

Mirabelle and Charlene pop back into the tent. They get an eyeful of Delilah going to town on the cake. Her indulgence verges on pornography.

MIRABELLE

(aghast)
Oh my word.

CHARLENE

(salivating)
Oh my word.

INT. MACINTOSH ESTATE - DELILAH'S BEDROOM -- DAY

Remnants of a wedding cake and dress decorate the floor. Delilah lies dormant on her bed, face first into her pillow.

The ALARM CLOCK goes off: the sound of a Boxing Fight Bell. Delilah reaches her hand out and shuts it off.

SUPER: ONE WEEK LATER

Delilah, still in bed. One-gallon buckets of ice cream have been hollowed out. They sit sadly on the floor by the bed.

Her phone rings, Delilah reaches for it.

DELILAH

Hello.

BRIDESMAID (V.O.)

Delilah? It's me, Cassandra. How're you holding up?

DELILAH

I'm fine.

An empty pint of ice cream falls off the end of the bed. A silver spoon rattles on the floor.

BRIDESMAID (V.O.)

Listen... I'm not gonna be able to make it to that picnic on Sunday...

DELILAH

But we've been plannin' that for a month.

BRIDESMAID (V.O.)

I know, but... something just came up, and uhh... I'm sorry, but I can't.

DELILAH

Oh. What came up?

BRIDESMAID (V.O.)
 Umm... I'm just not comfortable
 talking about it.

DELILAH
 Okay. Bye...
 (hangs up)

SUPER: ONE WEEK LATER

Delilah, still in bed. Pizza boxes have joined the empty ice cream containers on the floor. One box, half-eaten, sits squarely on Delilah's wedding dress.

Her alarm clock goes off. Delilah flings it across the room. She returns her face to the pillow and shuts her eyes.

Slowly, her eyes open again. They focus on a

FRAMED PICTURE

of Kelvin boxing in the ring.

Delilah picks it up and studies it. An epiphany.

DELILAH
 Assault 'n battery, my hot ass.

From under her bed, she pulls out the Yellow Pages.

INT. MACINTOSH ESTATE - KITCHEN -- DAY

Delilah saunters in. Her hair a tangled, greasy mess. Mirabelle and Charlene eat breakfast at the table.

DELILAH
 Mornin'. How y'all doin'?

CHARLENE
 We're okay. How are you?

DELILAH
 (strolls to counter)
 I feel rejuvenated. 'Deed, I do.
 There's a renaissance goin' on in my
 pajamas as we speak.

CHARLENE
 Okaaay.

She turns to her mother like Delilah might be nuts.

MIRABELLE
 Delilah, I didn't raise you to talk
 like that.

Delilah pours herself a glass of orange juice.

DELILAH

You know somethin', Momma? You are ab-so-lute-ly right. You taught me to speak proper, act like a lady, drown all my sorrows in iced tea, and take action when the need calls for it. And you know what? That's exactly what I'm gonna do.

MIRABELLE

What are you talking about, for heaven's sake?

DELILAH

(downs her juice)

Y'all are lookin' at the first female boxer in all the MacIntosh family.

Mirabelle EXPLODES with laughter. Charlene looks at her mother terrified.

DELILAH

That's right. You laugh. But I'm tellin' you right now... I'm gonna box my way up the ranks and beat the bejesus outta his skinny-little ass. Give 'im a taste of humiliation he won't soon forget.

CHARLENE

You're saying you're gonna box Kelvin.

DELILAH

That's exactly what I'm sayin', O Sister O' Mine.

CHARLENE

That's insane. He'd kill you.

DELILAH

That's where you're wrong, my sweet li'l dumplin'. Hell hath no fury like a beauty queen scorned. You just remember that.

EXT. TANDY'S BOXING GYM -- DAY

Delilah parks her pink 1970 Mini Cooper in the lot. She wears a fuchsia sweat suit and matching makeup.

INT. TANDY'S BOXING GYM -- DAY

The THUMPING of heavy bags, the STACCATO hammering of speed bags. A few weight benches sit in a far corner.

In an 18' x 18' ring, female boxer SLICE, 30s and lean with reddish hair, spars with an OPPONENT.

Ringside is TANDY BURROWS. She's 30, buff with a harsh Boston accent, her glinty eyes have seen more than their share.

TANDY

Christ, Slice, keep your chin down!

Delilah flits in carrying her fuchsia purse. Unsure where to go, she approaches Tandy.

DELILAH

Excuse me. Where do I --

TANDY

Can't you fuckin' see I'm busy?

DELILAH

Oh, I'm... sorry.

TANDY

Go pahk your ass ova there.

Delilah ambles to the opposite side of the ring. Many of the GYM-GOERS give her the once-over. TWO of them snigger as they toss a medicine ball back and forth.

In the ring, Slice is throttled by two left hooks. Delilah looks on as Slice retaliates, hammering her Opponent.

TANDY

Take it easy, you're losing your shit!

Slice doesn't seem to hear, or care. Throws a rabbit punch.

TANDY

Time!

She enters the ring livid, stomps straight over to Slice.

TANDY

What did I tell you about keeping your cool?

SLICE

I wasn't pissed off.

TANDY

Bull-shit. You lost it. I already told you. If you get mad, you get crazy, and if you get crazy, you're gonna end up in a hospital. I'm not having that here. This ain't about emotion. It's about heart. You better learn the difference.

One more hard look through Slice and Tandy exits the ring.
A look of concern sweeps over Delilah's face.

TANDY

If you're looking for the mall, you
head straight down Fahm, then --

DELILAH

I'm aware where the mall is, thank
you.

TANDY

Whaddya want, then?

DELILAH

Is this your gym?

TANDY

Better fuckin' believe it.

DELILAH

My name's Delilah MacIntosh. It's
nice to meet you.

She puts out her hand, comes up empty.

TANDY

You running for office?

DELILAH

Nope. I'm campaignin' to be a boxer.

TANDY

Good God No.

INT. TANDY'S BOXING GYM - OFFICE -- DAY

On the walls, a tribute to the female boxer. Tandy sits
with her feet up behind a desk, squeezing a tennis ball in
each hand. Delilah fills out an application on a clipboard.

DELILAH

I never got your name.

TANDY

Tandy. So what brings a girl like
you to boxing?

DELILAH

Well... I'm a graduate of Norton
Beauty College. I've got my
manicurist license, as well as my
cosmetology license.

(MORE)

DELILAH

I won the Miss Georgia beauty pageant two years ago. And um, this year, I'm the Magnolia Princess.

TANDY

So... what brings a girl like you to boxing?

DELILAH

Oh. I wanted to change career paths. Uh huh. I mean, beauty's only skin deep, right? That's what they always say. 'N who knows, maybe they're right. Workin' in an office is just not my thing. I'd die if I had to sit in a cube all day, wouldn't you?

Tandy looks dizzy, rubs the confusion from her eyes.

TANDY

You married?

Delilah covers her engagement ring.

DELILAH

No. Still single.

TANDY

Well, Delilah, I gotta warn you. Boxing's a far cry from doing the friggin' catwalk. Ya follow me? It can get pretty brutal out there.

DELILAH

Dangit! An eyelash got in my eye. Just a sec.

Slyly, she slips off her engagement ring, drops it into her pocketbook, and takes out her compact.

DELILAH

Lately, my eyelashes seem to have a mind o' their own. I dunno what's goin' on with them.

TANDY

Yeah, I can see how that might be hard.

She smirks at Delilah as she fishes for an eyelash.

DELILAH

(closes her compact)

Miss Tandy. I don't wanna
inconvenience you, truly I don't.
But I do know that if I'm gonna box,
I'm sure as hellfire gonna need
someone to train me.

TANDY

Amen to that.

DELILAH

So if it's not too much trouble...
you think you might be up for it?

TANDY

Why me?

DELILAH

Why you?

TANDY

Yeah, why'd you pick me?

DELILAH

Well um... I heard you were the best,
so... why would I settle for somethin'
less?

Tandy raises an eyebrow.

DELILAH

Is my hair a mess? I'm sorry. It
was real windy on the way in here.

TANDY

Delilah, your resume's pretty damn
impressive, I'll give you that. But
I don't see how beauty pageants and
a manicure license qualify you as a
boxer. Boxing's about discipline.
Not how pretty you look. I think
you should stick with what you're
good at. You're just not cut out
for something like this.

DELILAH

You know what? That's where you're
wrong. You have any idea what it
takes to win a beauty pageant? Do
you? A million miles on the
treadmill, all the food you can't
eat, can't drink, can't smoke, don't
smile too much or you might get laugh
lines, takin' vitamins every day,

(MORE)

DELILAH

minerals, herbs, flaxseed, grapeseed, whatever-seed, and still try to find a way to sleep eight hours a night when all you can think about is that chocolate fudge cake sittin' in the fridge. Don't let the mascara and eyeliner fool you, Miss Tandy. I'm all about discipline. Now are you gonna train me or what?

Tandy stares at Delilah in silence. She pulls out a notepad and pen, scribbles.

TANDY

There's things you're gonna need. You can pick 'em up at Jesse's around the corner. Be here tomorrow at eight. And when you get here, could you be a little less... pink?

INT. ATHLETIC STORE -- DAY

Delilah pushes a shopping cart loaded with neon sweats and t-shirts. She swipes a salmon sweatshirt off a shelf.

DELILAH

Nope. Too pink.

A SALESPERSON, 20s, with a bump on his nose, approaches.

BUMPY

How might I help you, ma'am?

DELILAH

Oh, hi. I need a big bag.

BUMPY

A what?

DELILAH

A big bag. You know, for boxin'.

BUMPY

Oh, you mean a heavy bag.

DELILAH

That's right.

BUMPY

Right. Follow me.
(rolls eyes)

Delilah follows him down an aisle.

DELILAH

I'm gonna be a boxer. Isn't it great?

BUMPY

Um, yeah. Good for you.

He stops in front of a row of black and brown heavy bags.

BUMPY

We have these here. They're well-manufactured and --

DELILAH

Do you have anythin' happier?

BUMPY

Happier.

DELILAH

Yeah. I mean, look at these. They're all so dull-lookin'.

(points to brown one)

This one looks like King Kong had an accident. Who wants to see that?

BUMPY

Miss, I hope you don't mind my asking, but, why boxing? I mean, look at you. You're a knockout.

DELILAH

Ha!

BUMPY

Guess I stepped into that one. Look, I'm sorry, but I'm afraid we don't have any happier-looking heavy bags.

DELILAH

That's too bad.

BUMPY

Can I interest you in a slam, ma'am?

DELILAH

What?!

She PUNCHES him in the nose.

BUMPY

Ow!

He keels over, blood trickles from his nose.

DELILAH

How could you say a thing like that
to me?

BUMPY

You heard me wrong. I said a
SlamMan.

DELILAH

Oh. Huh?

MOMENTS LATER

Delilah stands face to face with a SLAMMAN, a freestanding heavy bag shaped like the head and torso of a man.

Bumpy holds a pink t-shirt to his nose. Delilah gives SlamMan the evil eye.

DELILAH

I'll take 'im.

INT. TANDY'S BOXING GYM -- DAY

Delilah strides in wearing yellow sweats. She carries an oversized gym bag.

INT. TANDY'S BOXING GYM - LOCKER ROOM -- DAY

Delilah sidles past THREE SWEATY WOMEN on their way out.

SWEATY

No breakfast, and she comes in looking
like a banana split.

SWEATIER

Heh. Watch out.

SWEATIEST

I got Cool Whip at home.

Delilah crams her gym bag into a locker. She turns to leave and on the wall she notices a

SIGN: People Steal So Use Your Head.

Delilah frowns, turns the dial on the combination lock. She pulls out her gym bag, removes her pocketbook from inside. Takes out her engagement ring. She studies it, debates whether to pocket it. Tosses the ring into the locker.

EXT. TANDY'S BOXING GYM - PARKING LOT -- DAY

Delilah jumps rope. Tandy supervises.

The rope gets tangled up in her feet and she tumbles.

DELILAH

Darnit!

TANDY

Rope's too long for ya. Stand on it
with both feet and pull up.

Delilah steps on the rope, the ends touch her shoulders.

TANDY

Let me see it.

She takes the rope and shortens it.

TANDY

Now try.

Delilah skips. Better this time.

DELILAH

Why aren't we boxin'?

TANDY

You ain't in no fuckin' shape to
box.

DELILAH

What? I'm skinny.

TANDY

Don't talk, Goldilocks. Just jump.

EXT. TRACK -- DAY

Delilah scampers around the track, breathing heavily. Tandy
sips a Coke as she strolls along the grassy center.

DELILAH

You know. I just have to say. That
is pretty tacky. You sippin' a soda
while I sweat my mammaries off.

TANDY

I'm gonna go grab some rum from my
trunk. Be right back.

Delilah growls. Tandy strides away.

MOMENTS LATER

Tandy glides toward the track. Delilah's doubled over,
searching for air.

TANDY

Looks like we got quite a fuckin' ways to go, don't we. Why were you running so fast? Your pantalets on fire? You gotta pace yourself.

Delilah stands upright. Dark mascara streams down her cheeks.

TANDY

Fuckin' fright night.

EXT. PARKING LOT -- DAY

Tandy idles in her Mustang. She revs the motor. Delilah trudges toward her, her cheeks still streaked.

TWO BELLES look on from a parked Lexus.

INT. LEXUS -- DAY

They slurp milk shakes.

VANILLA

You hear about what happened to her?

STRAWBERRY

Yup. It's a shame.

VANILLA

Sure is.

STRAWBERRY

Never thought she'd go Goth though.

INT. TANDY'S BOXING GYM -- DAY

Delilah drags in behind Tandy and heads for the locker room.

TANDY

Where ya going, Goldilocks?

DELILAH

Home.

TANDY

We're not done yet. Get your ass over here. I want ya to meet some o' the regulars.

Tandy leads Delilah over to HANK, 20s, Korean heavyweight, a perfect gentleman but in no danger of making the cover of GQ; and ROMEO, 20s, African-American, with flamboyant trunks. Hank fields Romeo's punches with focus mitts.

TANDY

Guys, this here's Delilah.

Slice sneers at Delilah as she destroys the heavy bag.

SLICE
You takin' in strays from the Junior League?

TANDY
I'm training Goldilocks here to box.

SLICE
Yeah, and I'm training my dog to shit in the toilet.

DELILAH
So nice to meet you.

HANK
Don't let her bother you. I'm Hank.

He offers a gloved hand to Delilah, and in the process misses a punch from Romeo to the kisser. It barely registers.

DELILAH
It's a pleasure. Didn't that hurt?

HANK
It's no problem. He misses all the time.

ROMEO
Oh hush. My name's Romeo. I could never wear that color yellow, but it looks divine on you.

DELILAH
Thank you so much. I like your shorts. Where'd you find that color? I didn't see any like it at Jesse's.

ROMEO
Oh, I made these myself. I'd be happy to make you a --

TANDY
(claps)
Alright, ladies. This ain't a friggin' fashion show. I gotta teach Delilah here some basics. C'mere.

Slice bares her teeth at Delilah, hits the bag with a flurry of punches. Delilah blanches and scurries over to Tandy.

TANDY
Stand in front o' the mirror so you can see what you're doing. Put your feet like this.

(MORE)

TANDY
 (demonstrates)
 You're a rightie, so lead with your
 left. Feet shoulder-width apart.
 Put your fists up.

Delilah crouches like she's got a load in her pants.

TANDY
 Don't bend so far. You're not in
 the bathroom. We're gonna start off
 slow. Just jab with your left,
 (jabs)
 punching straight out from your chin.

Delilah clenches her fists and punches wildly.

DELILAH
 Like that?

TANDY
 Don't clench your fist. Keep your
 fingers relaxed.
 (jabs in slow-motion)
 Straight from the chin. Then squeeze
 right before ya reach your target.

Delilah jabs again. A little better.

TANDY
 Okay. Now this time, turn your fist
 a little when you punch.
 (shows her)
 Like that. So ya go from holding
 your fist vertical to horizontal.

DELILAH
 (jabs again)
 Better?

TANDY
 Just keep doing it. Watch yourself
 in the mirror. I'm sure you can
 manage that.

Slice stalks over to Tandy as Delilah jabs away.

SLICE
 Why you humoring the poor girl?

TANDY
 There's something there. It's just
 buried under a pile o' grits.

INT. TANDY'S BOXING GYM - LOCKER ROOM -- NIGHT

Vacant. Delilah treks in alone. She opens her locker and pulls out her gym bag.

No sign of an engagement ring. A little grin.

INT. MACINTOSH ESTATE - DELILAH'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Delilah slogs in, flicks on the light. Sticking out like a sore thumb in the center of the room is SlamMan.

She drops her gym bag on the floor, notices a STICKY NOTE on SlamMan's forehead: "We Need To Talk."

INT. TANDY'S BOXING GYM -- DAY

Delilah, in a sea foam green sweatsuit with matching sweatband, practices her jab in front of the mirror. No makeup today. Romeo passes on his way to the ring.

ROMEO

Looking good there.

DELILAH

Thanks!

Tandy emerges from her office, frowns at Delilah's form.

TANDY

Keep your chin tucked, Goldilocks.
This ain't no beauty pageant. Snap
it out and pull it back.

She stands next to Delilah in the mirror, demonstrates.

TANDY

Snap it out. Pull it back. Fast.
Let your punch hang and you'll fuckin'
get pummeled.

Delilah picks up the pace.

TANDY

You're gonna throw this punch the
most, so ya sure as shit better make
it count. Now show me your right.

Delilah swings a roundhouse right.

TANDY

What are ya, breaking up a bar fight?
Throw the punch straight. That's
why they call it a straight right.
(demonstrates)
This time, the power's not coming
from your arm.

DELILAH

It's not?

TANDY

Nope. It's coming from your torso,
(places her hands on
Delilah's torso)
and from your right foot when ya
pivot.

Delilah tries a few straight rights.

TANDY

Put your back into it.

Delilah adds more oomph.

TANDY

Good. Explode 'n pull back. Think
you're ready for the heavy bag?

DELILAH

Oh, I'm ready.

TANDY

(pulls out wraps)
Gimme your hands.

Tandy starts wrapping Delilah's hand. Stops, inspects
Delilah's long, perfectly manicured nails.

TANDY

Follow me. We're going on a field
trip.

DELILAH

Really?

TANDY'S OFFICE

Tandy pulls out a pair of tiny scissors from her desk.

TANDY

Those claws gotta go.

DELILAH

(hides her hands)
Bite your tongue. You know how much
work it takes to keep my hands lookin'
like this? I been cultivatin' these
nails since I was fourteen.

TANDY

You wanna farm or you wanna box?

Delilah stands her ground.

TANDY

Alright. But no boxer I know's got
nails like that.

(puts scissors away)

I guess you know best...

DELILAH

Fine, you win.

She holds out her hands, shuts her eyes.

DELILAH

But be quick about it.

Tandy cuts Delilah's nails. Pink half-moons fall to the
floor.

Tandy gets to work wrapping Delilah's left hand.

TANDY

Hook your thumb, wrap your wrist,
your knuckles, then back to your
thumb. Cross over, wrap your knuckles
again, and tie it off at the wrist.
You do your right.

Delilah gives it a shot. She doesn't use enough tension,
the wrap droops from her hand.

TANDY

You're a little too loose.

DELILAH

No I'm not.

TANDY

I'm talking about the wrap.

DELILAH

Oh.

Tandy takes hold of Delilah's right hand. Wraps it snug.

TANDY

Now put your gloves on.

Delilah slides her hand into a bag glove.

TANDY

Dig your hand in there deep. Like
you're fishing for change.

DELILAH

(pushes in deeper)

Oh. What is that?

TANDY

What?

DELILAH

I think I found a quarter.

TANDY

Let's go.

She leads Delilah back out to a

HEAVY BAG

next to one Slice is pounding on.

TANDY

We're starting with jabs. Remember your stance. Make sure ya hit the bag with the front of your fist, not the top. That'll hurt like a son-of-a-bitch.

Delilah jabs at the bag once, then again while the bag tails away. She loses her balance and tumbles. She starts to get up, embarrassed, and the bag hits her FLUSH on the way back.

SLICE

(laughs)

You really showed him.

Tandy helps Delilah up, glares at Slice.

TANDY

Mind your own business.

(to Delilah)

Wait 'til the bag swings back before ya hit it again. Make it work for you, not the other way around.

DELILAH

Like this?

(wallops the bag)

Take that!

(again)

And that!

TANDY

Good. But don't get so pissed off. Clean out your ears, cuz this is important. A boxer who goes in mad, comes out hurt. Ten times out of ten. Boxing's about discipline. This ain't the WWF.

DELILAH

World Wildlife --

TANDY

Forget I said it. It's all about control. Control, and skill. That builds discipline. Capeesh?

Delilah's eyes GLOW with the last word. She unleashes a diabolical flurry of punches on the heavy bag. Everyone stops and gawks at Delilah's demonstration. Except Slice.

EXT. SAVANNAH STREET -- DAY

Still in her green sweatsuit, Delilah jogs. Exhausted, but smiling, on a high from hitting the bag.

She nears a fruit stand where fresh peaches are on display. Snags one as she passes by. Grins at the startled VENDOR.

DELILAH

Oh no! I'm stealin' a peach. Better call the fuzz.

The Vendor gapes at her as she runs away. Delilah turns...

DELILAH

Catch!

She hurls the peach back, but misses the Vendor by a mile.

DELILAH

Oops. Sorry!

She trots back to him. Fishes a dollar from her fanny pack.

VENDOR

Where I come from, throwing food is a sin.

Delilah hands him another dollar.

DELILAH

Promise you'll light a candle for me?

INT. TANDY'S BOXING GYM -- DAY

Delilah, in bright orange sweats and a halter top, works the heavy bag. She appears tight. Tandy sidles up to her.

TANDY

Can I ask you something? Why are ya holding your breath?

Delilah stops, exhales a gust of wind. Tandy steps back, waving her hand in the air to redirect the odor.

TANDY

Somebody bring this girl a Tic Tac.

DELILAH

Sorry. Too many shallots on my grits.

TANDY

Whatever. Ya still wanna breathe,
right? Breathe out when ya punch.
Short little wheeze. Like this.

She wheezes for Delilah.

DELILAH

Should I call someone? Sounds like
you're havin' a heart attack.

TANDY

Do it with me.

Delilah wheezes quietly. Tandy beckons for more. She takes
it up a notch. Or two. Or three.

The two begin to wheeze in harmony, and the Gym-goers find
it impossible to resist. EVERYONE begins to wheeze, until
it sounds like the entire gym may enter into cardiac arrest.

Tandy holds up a stop sign with her hand, the wheezing stops.

TANDY

We're taking another field trip.

She waves two tickets, tucks them into Delilah's halter top.

TANDY

There's a local tournament tonight.
It's a good idea for you to watch.
Learn how it goes down in a real
fight.

DELILAH

That's so sweet. Y'all're comin'
with me?

TANDY

How many tickets ya see there?

INT. ARENA -- NIGHT

FIGHTERS trade punches in the ring. The crowd is subdued.

TANDY

The guy in blue's got a mean fuckin'
left hook. Ya get yourself one o'
those and you'll be dangerous.

DELILAH

I like how he dances.

TANDY

It's called long rhythm. We'll cover that later.

DELILAH

So, Tandy, what brought you to boxin'?

Tandy's eyes are fixed on the fight.

TANDY

I needed a new fuckin' trail. Or path. Or whatever.

DELILAH

What were you doin' before?

TANDY

I was a snake-charmer.

DELILAH

A *what*?

TANDY

What's done is done.

The fight BELL dings, ending the bout. Delilah spots Marney in the crowd.

DELILAH

Marney!

Marney turns, more alarmed than surprised. She slinks over.

MARNEY

Hey, Delilah. What're you doing here?

DELILAH

I'm here with my trainer. She's teachin' me how to box.

MARNEY

Wow, so you were serious about that?

DELILAH

You know it. What about you?

MARNEY

Oh, um, I just wanted to try something different. I'll see you later, okay?

She turns on a dime and skedaddles.

DELILAH

That sure ended in a hurry.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

Our next bout is in the flyweight division. In this corner, wearing red trunks, weighing in at one hundred and eleven pounds, Beau Sommers.

(crowd cheers)

And in this corner, wearing green trunks, weighing in at one hundred and ten pounds, Sir Kelvin Wingfield.

Delilah's head whips around.

DELILAH

That bastard.

TANDY

What?

DELILAH

Oh. Um... the one in green.

TANDY

What about 'im?

DELILAH

I bought that same color the other day, that... copycattin'... jackass.

TANDY

(chortles)

Whadda you care? Afraid you might clash?

DELILAH

No. I'm not afraid.

INT. TANDY'S BOXING GYM -- DAY

Hank holds the heavy bag as Delilah, in electric blue sweats, slugs away. Tandy looks on. Delilah's getting better, mixing in some left hooks and uppercuts with her jabs.

TANDY

More power with the uppercut. Punch from your legs.

Delilah dips and thrusts a whopper of an uppercut.

TANDY

Good! Show me another hook.

She delivers a few ineffectual left hooks.

TANDY

Let me show ya something.
 (steps up to the bag)
 Take the ball of your left foot, and
 plant it like you're putting out a
 cigarette.

DELILAH

Good idea. I hate cigarettes.

TANDY

Then pivot your body to the right.
 Legs, hips, back. All of it. Like
 a gate swinging from a post.
 (throws a few hooks)

She steps out of the way and Delilah takes a crack at it.

TANDY

Don't worry about looking funny.
 Tuck your hand to your chest when ya
 come around. Snap it out, and
 recover. Don't leave yourself open.

Delilah generates more torque as she practices her hook.

Romeo jumps rope on the platform.

ROMEO

You go, darlin'!

DELILAH

Oh Romeo, Romeo... what for ow thou...
 I dunno, whatever...

TANDY

Okay, let's talk defense.

She leads Delilah to the

RING

and pulls on gloves. Tosses Delilah her headgear.

DELILAH

We're fightin'?

TANDY

Hell no. We're gonna practice slips.
 I'm gonna throw some punches, and
 you're gonna avoid them. If ya can.

Delilah puts on her headgear.

TANDY

Cinch it on tight.

(assists her)

Now, I want ya to watch my body.
Every punch your opponent misses,
costs her some energy, right? See
where my next punch is coming from,
then move your head outta the way.

She throws a soft jab at Delilah's head, she evades it.

TANDY

Good. Keep your eyes on mine.

Throws a left hook, Delilah steps out of the way.

TANDY

This ain't dodgeball. Don't use
your feet. Only your head.

She throws more punches, a little faster now.

TANDY

The idea's to avoid the attack, but
use as little energy as possible.

Delilah's into it, bobbing her head back and forth.

DELILAH

This is kinda fun.

Tandy puts a little more power behind her punches and POPS
Delilah in the mouth.

DELILAH

Owwwwwwwwww!

(falls to her knees)

TANDY

Oh shit.

She squats next to Delilah, pulls her hand away from her
mouth. Blood pours from a cut on Delilah's lip.

TANDY

Somebody get me a towel!

INT. HOSPITAL -- DAY

Delilah sits on a gurney, enclosed by a privacy curtain.
She holds a white towel to her lip.

She looks down at her hand and notices the impression left
by her engagement ring. Delilah brings the towel down and
tries to wipe away the mark.

The curtain opens wide and in walks Doctor NATE MORE, 30s, widowed, and hasn't combed his hair since.

NATE
Are you here for stitches?

DELILAH
Oh God, please no. I've never had stitches 'fore in my life.

NATE
Hold on. Let's have a look.
(pulls up a stool)
I'm Doctor More. Delilah, is it?

DELILAH
That's right.

NATE
That's a little intimidating. I haven't had a haircut in months.

Delilah makes a scissoring motion with her fingers.

NATE
(chuckles)
So what brings you here?

DELILAH
I was involved in a boxin' accident.

NATE
A boxing accident.
(walks to counter)

DELILAH
Uh huh. I was learnin' how to do The Slip, and I zigged when I should've zagged.

Nate drips solution onto a cotton ball.

NATE
That's too bad. I've got some good news for you though.

He leans in and cleanses the wound.

DELILAH
What's that?

NATE
No stitches.

Delilah unabashedly hugs Nate's head, he nearly tumbles.

DELILAH
That's so great! Thank you so much.

NATE
(nose to nose)
Be sure to keep it dry.

INT. MACINTOSH ESTATE - DELILAH'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Delilah turns on the light, tosses her gym bag on the bed.

She steps in front of her full-length mirror and inspects her face. A thin adhesive strip rides her upper lip.

DELILAH
Oh yuck. I look like him.

MIRABELLE (O.S.)
What do you think you're doing?

Delilah turns. Mirabelle stands in the doorway, arms folded.

DELILAH
What're you talkin' about?

MIRABELLE
Oh my God! What is that?!

She hoofs it across the room, dodging SlamMan.

MIRABELLE
Is that a cut? Is it deep?

DELILAH
It's just a tiny one.

MIRABELLE
How did you get it?

DELILAH
I already told you.

MIRABELLE
You haven't told me anything. I hardly see you anymore. Where've you been going?

DELILAH
(mocking her)
You mean you don't remember?

Mirabelle searches the files in her head.

DELILAH
The other mornin'. You were havin' breakfast. There was a lot of laughter, as I recall.

MIRABELLE

If you're telling me you've taken up boxing, I'm gonna go ballistic.

DELILAH

Momma, you're already there.

Mirabelle pulls at her own hair, SCREAMS like a banshee.

DELILAH

I'm sorry if that upsets you. If you need somethin' to hit, try the SlamMan.

MIRABELLE

I want that monstrosity out of here!

She punches SlamMan in the head. Breaks a nail.

MIRABELLE

Good heavens. Now look what you've done. This is all your fault!

DELILAH

My fault?!

MIRABELLE

You must have done something. Said something stupid that upset him for him to do that to you.

DELILAH

Did you just call me stupid?

Mirabelle inches backward.

DELILAH

Step back, Momma. Let me show you how it's done.

She throws on her bag gloves, goes off on SlamMan. Mirabelle looks on in horror. Races out clutching her hand.

INT. TANDY'S BOXING GYM - RING -- DAY

Delilah spars with Slice, both in headgear. No sign of Tandy. Delilah bounces around like she's at a disco. Slice toys with her, arms down, smiles ugly through her mouthguard.

SLICE

That Band-Aid looks like a moustache.

DELILAH

Must stink to know I'm still prettier than you.

Slice STINGS her on the side of the head.

DELILAH

Maybe I oughta grow a full beard so
you can catch up.

Slice ZINGS her on the other side of the head.

SLICE

Keep talking, SilverSpoon. I'm kinda
enjoying this. Shouldn't you be in
a ball gown somewhere, cookin' up
some grits?

DELILAH

As a lady, I'm prone to wearin'
dresses. Where do rednecks normally
shop?

Slice laughs.

DELILAH

Did you get your three squares today?
I didn't notice any Slim Jim wrappers
in the trash.

As Delilah sweats, her skin strip begins to peel off.

DELILAH

Is that a new perfume you're wearin'?'
I never tried Raid.

Slice swings, but this time, Delilah slips her punch.

SLICE

Such a sweet li'l thing, coming in
here to learn how to box. Should be
married 'n pregnant by now...

Tandy hustles into the gym carrying a grocery bag.

DELILAH

Aren't you married? Or don't you
have a brother?

Her skin strip falls. Slice unloads and CONNECTS on Delilah's
cut, dropping her flat on her back.

TANDY

Slice! You sloppy shit-bitch!

She drops her bag and hops into the ring.

TANDY

Get away from her!

Slice edges out of the way. Blood pours from Delilah's lip.

DELILAH
(groggy)
I let you down.

Tandy uses the bottom of her shirt to press down on the cut.

INT. HOSPITAL - HALLWAY -- DAY

Delilah sits on a gurney, a towel to her mouth, her eyes a bit swollen. Tandy leans next to her as TRAFFIC passes by.

DELILAH
It's gonna be stitches for sure this time.

TANDY
Don't worry. You'll still be the prettiest one at the gym.

DELILAH
You really think so?

TANDY
I know so.

DELILAH
Why're we sittin' out here anyway?

TANDY
Because they ran out of room.

Nate turns the corner, sees Delilah.

NATE
I should've stayed in sales with all these repeat customers.

DELILAH
The cut opened, Doctor More.

NATE
Uh oh. Another boxing accident?

DELILAH
Uh huh.

Nate smiles, he glances over at Tandy and all of a sudden Tandy feels like she's intruding on a private conversation.

TANDY
I'll see ya back at the gym.
(goes, stops)
Wait. I'm your ride.

DELILAH

That's okay. I'll just call a cab.
It's not that far.

TANDY

Okay. Bye.
(leaves)

DELILAH

(calling)
Thanks for drivin' me.

She lets go of her towel, Nate inspects her lip.

NATE

You're lucky, Miss Delilah. A little
Dermabond should do it. But that's
two strikes. Your eyes look swollen
to me, too.

He rips open a peroxide towelette and cleanses the cut.

DELILAH

Smells nice. Like lemons.

NATE

You know what goes good with that?

INT. HOSPITAL - CAFETERIA -- DAY

Delilah squeezes lemon into a cup of tea. A topical skin
adhesive highlights her upper lip.

NATE

(sips coffee)
So you're gonna beat the grits out
of your ex-fiancé?

DELILAH

'Deed I am.

NATE

Why?

DELILAH

He embarrassed me. And I'd like to
return the favor.

NATE

Would they even allow that?

DELILAH

They're gonna have to. Boxers must
be good for business, wouldn't you
say?

NATE

I'd like not to think of it as a growth industry.

Delilah notices his wedding band.

DELILAH

Is your wife a doctor, too?

NATE

No, actually. She passed away.

DELILAH

Oh, I'm really sorry to hear that. She must've been young.

NATE

Too young.

DELILAH

Do you have any kids?

NATE

One daughter. Abby.

DELILAH

Does she look like...?

NATE

Isabel. They have the exact same eyes.

Silence. Both at a loss what to say next.

DELILAH

There's a um... Charity Ball goin' on at the Convention Center on Saturday night. If you think you might be up for it, it'd sure be nice to have a doctor in my corner. You know, in case I get into any fist fights.

NATE

I dunno. Saturday... I think I might have something going on.

DELILAH

That makes one of us.

NATE

What's the charity?

DELILAH

Southern Belles With Fat Lips...
Foundation.

INT. MACINTOSH ESTATE - KITCHEN -- NIGHT

Mirabelle stands with the fridge door open, glaring at Samuel.

MIRABELLE

I won't stand for this. It's bad enough we spent thousands of dollars on her wedding and have nothing to show for it. But now she's got this cockamamie idea in her head that's gonna threaten her only asset which is her looks. I won't stand for it. You have to talk to her.

DINING ROOM

Charlene eavesdrops.

SAMUEL (O.S.)

Maybe it's just a phase she's gotta work herself through.

BACK TO KITCHEN

MIRABELLE

We're not talking hula hoops and yo-yos, Samuel. She's one facial scar away from bagging groceries at the Piggly Wiggly.

(slams fridge door)

Is that what you want?

INT. MACINTOSH ESTATE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY -- NIGHT

Samuel meanders in the dark toward Delilah's bedroom, her light is on.

DELILAH'S BEDROOM

Samuel raises his hand to knock, peeks in.

Delilah hunches in a blue ball gown, whimpering in front of her full-length mirror. Her back to Samuel, she wipes tears from her eyes.

A sad look from Samuel and he sneaks away.

INT. CONVENTION CENTER - LOBBY -- NIGHT

Elegant, refined. A HOST of tuxedos and ball gowns.

Delilah emerges through a revolving door looking impeccable, aside from her TWO BLACK EYES.

Her appearance garners her an unfamiliar sort of attention, which shows on her face when she spots two of her Bridesmaids directing their BEAUS toward a more dignified place to mingle.

Smiling her way and dressed to the nines, is Nate. He holds out his hand, she takes it.

NATE

You did say "boxing," didn't you?

DELILAH

(sigh of relief)

Yes, I did. I ran out o' concealer.

They stroll through the crowd of onlookers.

INT. CONVENTION CENTER - DINING HALL -- NIGHT

Delilah and Nate eat dinner at a table with six other GUESTS. A few find it difficult not to stare at Delilah's bruises.

DELILAH

(sips wine)

So how old's Abby?

NATE

Thirteen. Eighth grade philosopher.

DELILAH

You have a picture?

Nate takes out his wallet, an accordion of pictures unravels. Straight down into his soup.

NATE

Jeez! I'm an idiot.

DELILAH

Hurry, she's drownin'!

(hands him her napkin)

Nate wipes off the pictures, Delilah leans over to see.

DELILAH

My God, she is just beautiful. Even with minestrone in her hair.

NATE

Yes, she is.

DELILAH
What's she like?

NATE
She's a good egg. With a double
yolk, you might say.

DELILAH
Whaddya mean by that?

NATE
She's definitely got two sides to
her. There's the side I hear on the
phone a lot with her friends. And
then there's sort of a long-distance
Abby. That's the one that normally
shows up for dinner.

DELILAH
Has this been goin' on since...

Nate nods. They share a forlorn look.

Back to eating. Delilah raises her fork, looks up at a

TABLE ACROSS THE WAY

where Kelvin and Marney dine, laughing and smiling.

DELILAH'S EYES

glow fuchsia. She puts her fork down.

DELILAH
Would you excuse me for a minute?

NATE
Sure.

DELILAH
Thank you. I won't be long.

She gets up and glides across the dining hall to

KELVIN & MARNEY'S TABLE

They see her drawing near, and freeze with fear.

DELILAH
(addressing table)
How're all y'all doin' tonight?
Havin' a nice time?

The Guests turn, startled, as Delilah beams a smile at them
through her black eyes.

DELILAH

Please forgive my appearance. I don't mean to interrupt, I know all y'all're enjoyin' your meal. Isn't it just delicious?

Kelvin and Marney trade looks, unsure where the exits are.

DELILAH

Raise your hand if you got the sea bass.

She looks around the table, a TIMID COUPLE raises their hands.

DELILAH

Itn't it scrumptious?

TIMID HUSBAND

Very scrumptious, thank you.

DELILAH

Gooooood. All y'all've had a chance to meet Mr. Wingfield here?

She gestures to Kelvin, the Guests nod.

DELILAH

Flyweight boxer. Handsome for his size, don't you think? But I never seen those Peter Jackson movies. What you probably don't know - all but one - is that he left me at the altar. And my guess is, for the woman seated to his left.

(Guests gasp and turn)

Itn't she sweet? Anyone know who she is?

TIMID WIFE

Marney, right?

DELILAH

That's right. Marney Cobb. She was my best friend.

(Guests gasp again)

'Deed, she was. But look at her now. An up-n-comin' homewrecker. Itn't that precious? Now all y'all go on 'n enjoy your dessert. 'Nite...

INT. CONVENTION CENTER - BALLROOM -- NIGHT

Delilah and Nate gaze at each other as they dance.

NATE

You're a natural.

DELILAH

I should be. Started when I was five.

NATE

How many years ago was that?

DELILAH

You're askin' a lady her age?

NATE

(Jimmy Stewart)

A pox upon me for a clumsy lout.

DELILAH

(giggles)

Thanks for comin' with me to this.

NATE

Don't mention it. I plan on giving a fat check to the Fat Lip Foundation.

DELILAH

I'm sure they'd... swell with pride.

NATE

Naturally.

DELILAH

You ever been to somethin' like this before?

NATE

Yes, I have. A little over two years ago.

DELILAH

Feels sort o' surreal, doesn't it? Funny. I was expectin' my next dance to be with someone 'bout six inches shorter than you.

NATE

I can slouch if you like.

DELILAH

No, don't do that. I don't want you to do that.

Nate spins Delilah.

DELILAH

What do you do when the happier times all start feelin' surreal?

NATE

I hold on.

DELILAH

Until when?

NATE

Until the ride's over. And you have
to get off.

Delilah looks up at him.

DELILAH

It hurts when I smile. Maybe I should
stop.

NATE

Delilah, if you stop smiling, it'll
be the end of all of us.

DELILAH

I'll trade you. One painkiller for
every smile.

NATE

That sounds about right.

INT. ARENA - RING -- NIGHT

SUPER: FOUR MONTHS LATER

The sound of a fight BELL.

A leaner Delilah springs out of her corner. Her helmet is
color-coordinated with the rest of her outfit.

Her opponent, VALERIE VENDETTA, 30, snarly redhead, dances
over with confidence.

They trade jabs. Valerie throws a couple of straight rights
that Delilah parries.

Delilah tries a straight right, misses, loses her balance.
Valerie makes her pay for it with a wicked shot to the ribs.

TANDY

(slaps the mat)

Snap 'n back! Snap 'n back! Don't
leave yourself open!

Delilah bobs erratically east to west. Valerie connects
with a left uppercut.

Delilah delivers three left jabs, dropping her opponent back.

A left hook from Valerie that Delilah slips, she retaliates
with one of her own, surprising Valerie and her right temple.

Delilah loses her balance when she tries for a left uppercut,
but enough so to miss a vicious straight right from Valerie.

The BELL. Delilah retreats to her corner. Tandy, Hank and
Romeo enter the ring.

IN THE CROWD

Samuel sits alone, his Panama hat pulled down low.

BACK TO RING

Hank rubs Vaseline under Delilah's left eye.

DELILAH

Is that non-comedogenic?

HANK

Sure. What?

Romeo gives her a swig of water.

TANDY

You're all over the place out there.
Did Slice stick a curling iron down
your shorts?

DELILAH

Yes, she did. I'm still gettin'
warmed up.

(smiles up at Romeo)

Romeo laughs, until he sees Tandy's look.

TANDY

This girl's just waitin' for ya to
lose your balance so she can knock
the shit outta ya. Make the bitch
wait.

HANK

You can do it, Delilah.

DELILAH

Thanks, Hank.

The BELL. Delilah comes out of her corner, bobbing less.

Valerie starts in with two right uppercuts to Delilah's ribs.
Not ready for them, she stiffens up.

Delilah comes back with a jab and a straight right, Valerie
parries them both. She counters with a combination of her
own, landing both.

Delilah's back to moving helter-skelter. Conscious of her
left ribs, she lowers her guard. Valerie lets loose a
straight right that drops Delilah flat.

TANDY

Shit!

REFEREE starts the countdown. Delilah doesn't budge an inch.

IN THE CROWD

An ashen Samuel stands up.

ACROSS THE WAY

Nate looks sick to his stomach.

BACK TO RING

Delilah's counted out. Tandy, Hank and Romeo scramble in.

TANDY

Delilah!

The RING PHYSICIAN, 50s, enters, stoops down to Delilah.

RING PHYSICIAN

Can you hear me?

He checks her airways, tilts her head back.

TANDY

COME ON...

RING PHYSICIAN

Can you hear me, Miss MacIntosh?

DELILAH

I do. I do. I dooo...

Her eyes slowly open, she looks up at the Ring Physician.

DELILAH

(wistfully)

That's all he needed to say.

Ring Physician and Tandy look at each other quizzically.

INT. ARENA - DRESSING ROOM -- NIGHT

Dimly lit, a few lights have been punched out. Delilah sits on a bench, showered and dressed, morose and lost in her thoughts. A welt surrounds her left eye.

Tandy appears in the shadows, Delilah doesn't need to look.

DELILAH

Sometimes I just don't know who I'm
foolin'.

(beat)

Am I foolin' you?

TANDY

'Bout what?

DELILAH

Me. As a boxer.

TANDY

If boxing was easy, God wouldn't have invented championship belts.

DELILAH

Can I ask you somethin'?

TANDY

Okay.

DELILAH

Do you think... I have what it takes?

TANDY

No.

Delilah turns to face her.

TANDY

When ya do, ya won't have to ask.

INT. NATE'S HOME - KITCHEN -- NIGHT

Nate sets a big bowl of spaghetti on the table. His daughter ABBY, 13, anxious eyes and nondescript clothes, adds silverware and napkins. Nate turns off the TV.

ABBY

I hope you didn't put too much oregano this time.

NATE

There's no such thing as too much oregano. Just add more basil.

ABBY

(snags a breadstick)

If you say so.

NATE

Doing anything this Saturday?

ABBY

I dunno, why?

NATE

There's someone I'd like you to meet.

ABBY

Who?

NATE

Her name's Delilah.

ABBY

Do I know her?

NATE

If you did, I wouldn't ask you to meet her.

Abby looks away. Round One goes to Nate.

ABBY

Where's she from?

NATE

Savannah.

ABBY

No, I mean how'd you -- never mind.

NATE

She came into the emergency room one day with a busted lip.

ABBY

Someone beat 'er up?

NATE

Sort of.

ABBY

Sort of?

NATE

She's a boxer.

ABBY

Huh. That's sorta dangerous.

Round Two to Abby. She whips out her cell phone.

NATE

Do you have to do that now?

ABBY

(punching buttons)

What're you doing with her?

NATE

Whaddya mean, what am I doing with her?

ABBY

You know.

NATE

No I don't.

ABBY

Dad, you're a doctor. And today we were putting condoms on plantains in sex ed class. You do know.

NATE

So now you're gonna hold my degree against me? I screwed up the sauce. At least let me keep my degree.

Abby smirks at her dad.

NATE

Plantains?

Split decision.

INT. TANDY'S BOXING GYM -- DAY

Delilah, in neon green, practices slips by dodging the weighted end of a swinging rope. Romeo jumps rope nearby.

ROMEO

Did you catch Project Runway last night?

DELILAH

Never miss it.

ROMEO

Man, that guy Vernon's crazy. He had his nose so far up that judge's ass, if she sneezed he would've died.

DELILAH

Oh I don't like him. I like Alysha. Ev'ry week she makes somethin' different.

HANK (O.S.)

I like Inga.

Delilah turns toward Hank and gets clonked in the head.

DELILAH

Ow!

Romeo swings his rope around to Hank, who does situps.

HANK

She always knows how far to push it before the judges get pissed off.

Tandy shows, holding a boom box.

TANDY

Ya done bonkin' yourself in the head?

DELILAH
For today, yes.

TANDY
Good. Come with me.

She leads Delilah to the

RING

and sets the boom box down.

TANDY
We need to find you a rhythm. Long
one's too mellow for ya, and the
short one almost gotcha killed. Ya
said you've been taking dancing
lessons since you were born?

DELILAH
Give or take a few years.

TANDY
You remember the box step?

DELILAH
It's been a while.

Tandy turns on WALTZING music.

TANDY
Dance with me. You wanna be the man
or the woman?

DELILAH
Which would you rather be?

TANDY
I asked you first.

DELILAH
Well then I guess that makes you the
man.

They assume a Closed Position, Tandy as the man. She brings
her left foot forward, Delilah brings her right foot back.
The box step is underway.

TANDY
Is it coming back to ya?

DELILAH
Pretty much. 'Cept I don't hear my
Momma screamin' in the background.

TANDY

Good. Ya don't want your opponent to get a read on ya. If they predict where you're going before ya even get there, you're as done as dinner.

DELILAH

We don't want that.

TANDY

If ya think they are getting a read on ya, I want ya to switch genders.

DELILAH

That'd be awful expensive, don't you think?

TANDY

No. I mean, dance the man's part.

DELILAH

Oh. Okay.

Tandy shakes her head, a flicker of a smile as they waltz. Meanwhile, the Gym-goers have congregated outside the ring.

A flustered-looking Slice emerges from the locker room.

SLICE

What in Holy Hell's she done to this place?

EXT. PARK - FOUNTAIN -- DAY

Delilah, in electric red, jumps rope.

A COUPLE bickers nearby. They appear lost. The Wife approaches Delilah, the Husband lags behind eyeing a map.

LOST WIFE

Excuse me, Miss. We're not from around here. Can you tell us how to get to Benny's Cafe?

DELILAH

I sure can. Where you visitin' from?

LOST WIFE

Minnesota.

DELILAH

Well, welcome to Savannah! Glad to have you.

LOST WIFE

Thank you. Very much. We're so glad to -- Harold, put that map away for God's sake! Can't you see this nice woman is trying to help us?

He puts it away, smiles condescendingly at Delilah.

DELILAH

Benny's is sooo good. You have got to try their oysters. They are ab-so-lute-ly out o' this world.

LOST HUSBAND

We would ab-so-lute-ly like to try them. Sooner rather than later.

DELILAH

Well, that's easy. You head straight down River Street, take a sharp left on Bay by Cromwell Theatre. That's where they had that awful fire twelve years back. Oh, and it was such a shame, too, cuz at that time it was the oldest theatre in all o' Georgia. They redid it nice 'n pretty, but it's just not the same. When you reach the end o' Bay, you wanna turn left onto Matlin and a quick right onto Acorn. You'll see Ernesto's Cafe on the corner. It used to be Henry's Diner, but when Henry's wife caught 'im cheatin' with the hostess, poor man lost everythin'. Benny's is just two more blocks from there. Straight shot, you can't miss it.

The Wife seems more ready to have an aneurysm than an oyster.

LOST WIFE

Thank you.

The Couple turns and leaves.

LOST HUSBAND

(takes out the map)

Told you.

Delilah practices her box step, jabbing as she goes.

Nate and Abby turn up. Dad's smiling, daughter's frowning.

NATE

Hey, Punchy.

DELILAH

There you are. Thought you might've skipped town.

NATE

Abby, this is Delilah. Delilah, Abby.

DELILAH

So nice to finally meet you.

Abby forces a smile.

DELILAH

My, you're even prettier in person.

NATE

And this is from a beauty pageant winner.

ABBY

So... why are you boxing?

DELILAH

Why not? Girl doesn't have to be one thing, does she?

ABBY

Yeah, but, boxing can ruin your looks.

DELILAH

Uh huh. Just like stress, 'n second-hand smoke, 'n my favorite, Father Time. Besides, it's fun. Look!

She jabs with her left, a right cross, a left uppercut.

DELILAH

Works the kinks out. C'mon, let me show you.

Abby rolls her eyes, mopes over to Delilah.

DELILAH

(demonstrates)

Line up your right heel and your left toe. Flex your knees, bend your hips a little, tuck your elbows in, and put up your dukes.

Abby caves, she assumes the boxer's stance.

DELILAH

Now jab.

Abby jabs with her left.

DELILAH
(joins in)
Good. Now try your right.

Nate grins as they punch away in harmony.

NATE
I've really done it now.

DELILAH
Snap it right out. Good. This is
the punch you'll use in case you're
ever in a street fight. Or if you
just wanna beat up the class clown.

ABBY
What about bullies?

DELILAH
Them, too.

Nate gazes at Abby. She steals a look back at him.

NATE
Abby, is there something you wanna
tell me?

ABBY
No. It's not a big deal.

NATE
What's not a big deal?

They stop jabbing. Abby sulks.

ABBY
It's just this jerk in my math class.
Tommy Willis.

NATE
What about Tommy Willis?

ABBY
He's been... snapping my bra. I
can't get him to stop.

NATE
How long has this been going on?

ABBY
A month.

NATE
A month? Why didn't you tell me?

ABBY

We all have to fight our own battles.
Isn't that what you said?

NATE

This is different.

ABBY

Why?

NATE

Because you're my daughter. That's
why.

DELILAH

Might I offer a suggestion?

NATE

What?

DELILAH

The combination punch!

NATE

Delilah, please... let's be realistic.

DELILAH

Hear me out. Is this boy bigger
than you?

ABBY

Yeah, he's pretty big. And fat.

DELILAH

Don't you worry 'bout that. That's
just hormones 'n poor eatin' habits.
Come with me.

She leads them to a

GRASSY AREA

NATE

Delilah, what are we doing?

DELILAH

What are we doin'? We're puttin'
arrows in your daughter's quiver.
That's what we're doin'. Three to
be exact. And you're gonna be the
honorary guinea pig. Is that okay
with you, Abby?

ABBY

Uh huh.

Delilah sets Nate in front of her.

DELILAH

Now. Make like you're Tommy Willis.

NATE

What do you expect me to do?

DELILAH

Improvise.

Nate puffs out his cheeks like he's a hundred pounds overweight. He raises his arms up like a monster, aims for Delilah's bra. Abby giggles.

DELILAH

Now just watch me, Abby.

(demonstrates in slow-motion)

Left jab. Then a straight right.

Then finish 'im off with a left hook.

ABBY

Got it.

(pulls out a tiny notepad and pen)

Left, right, left.

DELILAH

Right. I'm gonna do it a little faster this time, okay?

ABBY

Okay.

Delilah delivers the combination on Nate. She pulls the punches a bit, but truth is, she didn't like the comment about being realistic. Nate falls heavily on his keester.

Delilah hovers over Nate menacingly. A WOMAN in a pink sweater approaches.

PINK SWEATER

Miss MacIntosh?

DELILAH

Yes.

PINK SWEATER

I knew it was you. I'm Sheila Reynolds. I work over at Channel 3. How would you feel about coming on *Good Mornin'*, Savannah tomorrow?

DELILAH

(duh)

You're askin' me if I wanna be on TV?

INT. CHANNEL THREE STUDIOS - MORNING TALK SHOW -- DAY

The STUDIO AUDIENCE whips up a frenzy. Talk show host KIP, 40s, salt-and-pepper hair with a scary-white smile, sits alongside MINDY, 28, perky brunette with dimples.

KIP

And we're back. Hello again, everyone, and welcome to *Good Mornin', Savannah*. Our next guest has taken makeovers to an absolute extreme. She's won two beauty pageants right here in our beloved state of Georgia, including this year's Magnolia Princess. And then what does she go and do? She puts on boxing gloves. I mean, can you believe it? Whaddya say, should we bring her out here?

STUDIO AUDIENCE

YES!

KIP

Well alright, then. Everyone, please welcome to our show, the Beauty Queen turned Boxer... Delilah MacIntosh!

The Studio Audience goes NUTS. Delilah waves as she strides across the stage, she kisses Kip and Mindy on the cheek.

DELILAH

G' Mornin'!

KIP

And Good Morning to you, Delilah. May I call you Delilah?

DELILAH

Well that's my name, isn't it?

KIP

(obnoxious laugh)

Yes, it sure is. So tell us, Delilah, what on earth happened? Why trunks instead of an evening gown?

DELILAH

You mean you didn't hear?

KIP

Hear what?

DELILAH

Raise your hand if you heard about me.

Nearly everyone raises their hand, including Mindy.

KIP
 (gesturing to Mindy)
 Even she heard. What didn't I hear?

DELILAH
 I was stood up at the altar.

The crowd BOOS.

DELILAH
 Uh huh. I agree.

KIP
 (more comical than
 angry)
 Why don't you tell me these things?!

MINDY
 I thought I'd leave it up to her to
 bring it up. I didn't want to say
 anything to embarrass her.

DELILAH
 Thank you for that. You're so sweet.

KIP
 So now it's all beginning to make
 sense. Wait a sec. No it isn't.
 Some jerk jilts you, and you put on
 boxing gloves? I don't get it. How
 long ago was this?

DELILAH
 Comin' up on five months. Did I
 mention my ex- is a boxer?

KIP
 No, but... Hold it. Are you saying
 what I think you're saying?

DELILAH
 Uh huh. I'm gonna box his ass blue.

INT. KELVIN'S BEDROOM -- DAY

ON TELEVISION

Delilah on *Good Mornin'*, Savannah.

KIP
 Oh my God! You can't be serious.
 Is she serious, folks?

DELILAH
 Go on, tell 'im.

STUDIO AUDIENCE
 YES!

KIP

Well, I'll be... you heard it here first. But what about bygones bein' bygones? Don't you believe in that?

DELILAH

Oh please. I was jilted in front o' all my friends, my family, everyone. No self-respectin' belle's gonna stand for such nonsense.

(directly into camera)

Itn't that right, Kelvin?

BED

Kelvin sits up watching TV with Marney.

KELVIN

She's flipped her fritters.

MARNEY

Poor thing.

BACK TO TELEVISION

KIP

So, Delilah, you've obviously turned things around for yourself. Is there someone new in your life?

DELILAH

There sure is. His name's Nate. And he's a doctor.

The crowd cheers.

KIP

Wow, look at you. So many changes in such a short period of time...

DELILAH

And he is the sweetest man I have ever met. So kind, and considerate. The type I used to think belonged only in fairy tales...

INT. TANDY'S KITCHEN -- DAY

Tandy sits at the table watching *Good Mornin'*, Savannah. She appears lost and disappointed. Her breakfast, untouched.

INT. ARENA - RING -- NIGHT

A sold-out CROWD looks on as Delilah battles GLADYS THE GRAVEDIGGER, 36, spiky blonde hair, the bizarro Delilah.

Delilah throws three lightning lefts- each of them, strikes.

Gladys returns fire with a straight right that clears Delilah's sinuses. She adjusts her headgear.

A one-two combination from Delilah throttles Gladys, but she's late returning to guard and pays for it in spades.

Delilah's rhythm turns haphazard again. Gladys sees that she's off balance and capitalizes with a mean left hook.

The BELL. Hank sets down a stool and goes to work applying Vaseline, Romeo waters down Delilah.

HANK

You're doin' good, you're doin' good.

ROMEO

Kick her ass, Delilah. This one's got no sense of style whatsoever.

Tandy takes her sweet time entering the ring.

DELILAH

I did better the first two rounds, didn't I?

TANDY

What are you asking me for? Don't you know when you're getting your ass kicked? Or do I need to draw you a map?

DELILAH

What am I doin' wrong?

TANDY

If you wanna forget everything we talked about, that's your business. I'm not your boss, and you're not my secretary.

The BELL.

DELILAH

What's with you?

Coming full speed ahead is Gladys. Right cross. POW!

Delilah falls back against the turnbuckle. She bobs and weaves like mad, trying to evade the flurry of punches.

Then, Delilah GROWLS at Gladys. Her opponent steps back. Delilah struts out of her corner like a cat on the prowl.

Gladys swings and misses. Another one, misses. Delilah's full-on into her box step, throwing rapid jabs as she goes.

When Gladys tries for a right hook, Delilah sidesteps. When she lunges forward, Delilah drops back out of harm's way.

Just when Gladys thinks she's got a read on her, Delilah switches genders on her box step. Not only does Gladys miss, but she leaves herself wide open. Delilah CONNECTS with a left hook that sends her opponent spiraling down to the mat.

DELILAH

Oh my God.

Outside the ring, Romeo jumps up and down, high-fives Hank.

As the REFEREE counts, Gladys slowly rises to her feet. Delilah beams with confidence, swaggers as she throws everything but the kitchen sink at her opponent. Gladys tries to shield herself from the barrage. The BELL.

Hank and Romeo storm the ring.

HANK

I knew you could do it!

ROMEO

(hugs Delilah)

She looked just like you. Except older, fatter, and on crack.

DELILAH

(laughs)

Thanks.

She gets caught up in the moment.

IN THE CROWD

Samuel, in his Panama hat, stands and applauds his daughter.

BACK TO RING

ANNOUNCER

Ladies and gentlemen, we have a decision. Judge Duane Savage scores the fight forty to thirty-five. Judge Matt Anderson scores the bout forty to thirty-six. Judge Fred Karnicky scores the fight forty to thirty-four. And the winner by unanimous decision -- Delilah MacIntosh!

DELILAH

I did it. I DID IT!

Hank and Romeo hoist Delilah up. She smiles ear-to-ear.

HANK AND ROMEO
 (chanting)
 DELILAH...

It finally dawns on Delilah that Tandy's not in the ring. She scans the arena. Her smile wilts when she spots Tandy heading down the aisle toward the showers.

INT. ARENA - DRESSING ROOM -- NIGHT

Tandy washes her face in the sink. Gym bag at her feet.

Delilah appears looking hot, sweaty and bothered. Tandy ignores her, fixes her hair in the mirror.

DELILAH
 Where were you?

TANDY
 When?

DELILAH
 Whaddya mean, when? When I won my first fight in like -- forever.

TANDY
 (mocking Delilah)
 These cowlicks are drivin' me ab-so-lute-ly bonkers, I tell you what...

DELILAH
 (folds her arms)
 Is there somethin' you're not tellin' me?

TANDY
 Oh now that's rich.

DELILAH
 What's rich?

TANDY
 You asking me if there's something I'm not telling you.

DELILAH
 Look, I'm too hot 'n smelly to play hide 'n seek. Just tell me what's wrong.

TANDY
 All that baloney about beauty pageants and changing career paths. Magnolia Princess... you really had me going.
 (off Delilah's look)
 You think I don't own a TV? I hope you guys are real happy together.

DELILAH

Wait. Who're you...? Are you talkin'
'bout *Good Mornin'*, Savannah?

TANDY

Adios.
(heads for the exit)

DELILAH

So that's it? I win my first fight
and my trainer quits on me?

TANDY

I don't think you'll have a problem
finding a new one. Just use your
charm. You'll do fine.

INT. MACINTOSH ESTATE - DELILAH'S BEDROOM -- DAY

A melancholy Delilah sits at her vanity brushing her hair.
She leans closer to the mirror, notices some nicks and bruises
on her face.

DELILAH

Good God, woman, what're you doin'
to yourself?

Charlene raps on the door and enters holding a box of cookies.

CHARLENE

Hey.

DELILAH

Hey.

Charlene sits Indian style on the bed.

CHARLENE

(gesturing to SlamMan)
Sort of getting used to the idea of
him being here. A lot easier than
talking to Momma.

Delilah sets down her brush.

CHARLENE

Del, I just wanted to say how sorry
I am about what happened with Kelvin.
Shouldn't've waited this long to say
it. And me laughing... I've just
felt bad about it ever since.
(studies her socks)
When my relationship with Howard
ended... I dunno... it's just been
real hard finding the person I was
before.

Delilah ambles over to her sister. Gently, she pries the box of cookies from her hand.

DELILAH

How do you expect to find her if you keep on buryin' her?

Charlene looks at the box of cookies, then up at Delilah. It's a look they haven't shared since they were children running around in the backyard.

INT. MACINTOSH ESTATE - KITCHEN -- DAY

Mirabelle pours a cup of coffee for a WOMAN seated at the table: 40s, white pantsuit, and a pretentious scarf.

PRETENTIOUS

Thank you. Smells delightful.

MIRABELLE

So is this something that would pay per assignment, or would she receive an annual salary?

PRETENTIOUS

It's per assignment. But, trust me, it's quite lucrative, just the same. I suppose if I talk to some people --

MIRABELLE

I think she might be coming.
(nonchalantly)
I am so glad I tried this brand of coffee. Isn't it heavenly?

Delilah saunters in, ignoring the people seated at the table. She rests the box of cookies on the counter.

MIRABELLE

Oh, Delilah. There's someone I'd like you to meet. This is Ms. Williamson. She works for Ciao Belle magazine.

Pretentious stands and extends her hand with a flawless smile. She towers over Delilah.

PRETENTIOUS

It's so nice to meet you.

Delilah shakes her hand, more than a little suspicious.

PRETENTIOUS

Please, won't you join us?
(takes a seat)

DELILAH

I prefer to stand, thank you. What's this about?

MIRABELLE

How does a dream come true sound?

DELILAH

Like it's dark out and I'm asleep.

MIRABELLE

Oh you wouldn't want to sleep through this, Honey. Please, fill my daughter in on all the details.

PRETENTIOUS

Delilah, our magazine is currently in need of a new fashion model. One that fits your specs to a tee. I can tell immediately that --

DELILAH

My mother put you up to this?

PRETENTIOUS

Well, um... I'm the newest member of her bridge club and --

MIRABELLE

How does one hundred thousand a year sound for having your picture taken?

DELILAH

What's the catch?

MIRABELLE

Oh now that's the best part. You won't have to box anymore. Isn't that right, Kaleena?

Delilah reaches for the box of cookies, stuffs her face.

PRETENTIOUS

That's true. We strongly encourage our models to participate in rigorous physical activity, but with minimal risk. Stationary bikes, rowing machines, treadmills...

Her cheeks puffy, Delilah looks a little like Dizzy Gillespie.

MIRABELLE

What in God's name are you doing?

Delilah TALKS but every word is indiscernible.

MIRABELLE

I didn't raise you to be this disrespectful.

Delilah tries for a REPLY, but again it's incomprehensible.

MIRABELLE

Go on, leave. Now! Go box yourself into a corner, why don't you?

Delilah delivers an elaborate curtsy and departs with a beauty queen wave.

INT. NATE'S HOME - KITCHEN -- DAY

Nate mixes a protein drink in a blender. Delilah sits at the table, gazing blankly out the window.

NATE

Maybe she'll come around.

DELILAH

I dunno. She seemed pretty hurt.

NATE

At least now we won't have to meet in the ER. That's a relief.

DELILAH

I guess.

Her brooding comes to an abrupt halt.

DELILAH

Wait. Are you sayin' you feel relieved about all this?

NATE

Maybe a little.

Delilah cocks her head back like: "I didn't just hear that."

NATE

Okay more than a little.

DELILAH

How could you say a thing like that? I've invested my whole life in this.

NATE

You think it's easy for me, watching people take swings at you?

DELILAH

No, but, this is my future we're talkin' about.

NATE

If being concerned about you makes me selfish then I'm plumb out of ideas. I'm not in a real hurry to lose someone I care about.

A moment of silence. Nate pours the protein drink. On the countertop, he glimpses the Sports section. Headline: "Delilah Buries the Gravedigger!"

DELILAH

I'm just not sure it was all because I didn't tell her about Kelvin.

Nate sets the drink on the table, sits across from Delilah.

NATE

What do you mean?

DELILAH

She said: I hope you guys are real happy together. Lord knows she couldn't've have meant him.

NATE

Maybe she meant us.

DELILAH

I s'pose.

NATE

Do you think she might be --

DELILAH

I dunno... I don't think so. We waltzed once but we were just practicin' my footwork.

NATE

Maybe you were.

DELILAH

Is it gettin' hot in here or is it just me?

NATE

No, it's getting hot. Very hot. Smokin' hot, as a matter of fact. C'mon.

Delilah follows him out.

LIVING ROOM

Nate collapses on the sofa. Delilah curls up in a ball.

DELILAH
How's Abby doin'?

NATE
Better, actually. She's not
disappearing as fast after dinner.

DELILAH
That's a start. She upstairs
studyin'?

NATE
Nope. She's got piano, Tuesdays.

DELILAH
Interestin'.

NATE
Wanna know something?

DELILAH
What's that?

NATE
I didn't even know she was wearing a
bra.

DELILAH
Well maybe she is. But I'm not.

INT. MACINTOSH ESTATE - DELILAH'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Delilah slugs away on SlamMan, sweat flicking off of her.
Mirabelle appears in the doorway, carrying a photo album.

MIRABELLE
Can I show you something?

Delilah stops abruptly, in no mood for Momma's bullshit.

DELILAH
What?

MIRABELLE
I came across it this morning.
Thought you might wanna have a look.

She sidles up to Delilah, and opens the

PHOTO ALBUM

Pictures from all of Delilah's beauty pageants.

MIRABELLE
Do you remember? We took you to so
many...

DELILAH

How come I haven't seen a lot of these?

MIRABELLE

They're for special occasions. Just like this. So many years, so much energy and hard work, you devoted. I just want to say... how proud I am of you.

(off Delilah's
perplexed look)

I mean it. How many people do we know come up with one goal today, just to forget about it tomorrow? That's why New Year's resolutions are such a joke. And that's why... it pains me to see you slide.

DELILAH

Who's slidin'? I'm not slidin'.

MIRABELLE

I never stopped to consider just how traumatic an experience it must've been for you. To be left standing there. That's my fault. I should've known better. It's understandable you'd want an escape route of some kind. And you chose boxing.

DELILAH

Momma. It's not just an escape route.

MIRABELLE

Honey, who could blame you for wanting to beat the bejesus out of that boy? I couldn't. It's just awful what he did. But do you really want to throw away everything you worked for?

DELILAH

This isn't even about me, is it.

MIRABELLE

What? Of course it is.

DELILAH

No it isn't. It's about you. And how you're always lookin' for a return on your investment. Well sometimes it just doesn't happen, Momma!

(MORE)

DELILAH

Sometimes a stock tanks and you just gotta take it like a lady!

(paces)

You know what I think? I think this was about you from the very beginnin'. Ever since I was five.

Mirabelle yawns.

DELILAH

And to see you come in here holdin' your precious photo album, tryin' to forge a Hallmark card outta nothin'... well that's just tacky, Momma.

MIRABELLE

(red alert)

Don't you ever use that word on me.

DELILAH

I just did! Tacky, tacky, tacky. Want a Tic Tac, Momma?

MIRABELLE

You know what the real shame is in all this?

DELILAH

I'm sure you're gonna tell me.

MIRABELLE

Charlene. That's right, your sister. You remember her? God knows she's been neglected far too long. I'm just gonna have to find a way to make it up to her.

(stretches)

Lord knows I'm not gonna be around forever.

She heads for the door.

DELILAH

That's exactly how you operate, isn't it, Momma? Ulterior motives and veiled threats. Before you know it, you've got the whole world on a yo-yo. Well, you know what, Momma? Keep your money. I hope it keeps you warm at night.

She glides past her mother and out of the room.

INT. ARENA - DRESSING ROOM -- NIGHT

Kelvin throws on a leather jacket over his gaudy shirt and tie. Milling about are Best Man, Buck, Chuck and Tuck.

BEST MAN

You kicked that bitch's ass tonight.

KELVIN

That's what I do.

He adjusts his tie and spits on the floor.

KELVIN

Let's blow this Popsicle stand.

He leads the way out down a

LONG HALLWAY

BUCK

What's next for the K-man?

KELVIN

(pumps his fist as he
farts)

That's what's next. I say we grab
ourselves some high-quality snapper.

CHUCK

I had fish two nights ago.

TUCK

He means pussy, you dumbass.

KELVIN

Chucky, haven't you gotten laid yet?

BEST MAN

Hey, maybe we should start a charity.

BUCK

The Fuck Chuck Fund. Whaddya think?

BEST MAN

More like the Upchuck Fund.

TUCK

For as little as fifty-two cents a
day, you can send Poor Chucky here
to a prostitute.

The entourage laughs its way through the exit doors.

EXT. ARENA -- NIGHT

Kelvin and the gang are greeted by some flash bulbs. A REPORTER, 30s with super thick hair, approaches with a mike.

REPORTER

Mr. Wingfield, I wonder if I might have a word with you.

KELVIN

Stop wondering and ask away.

REPORTER

Obviously, another victory tonight. Superb performance. But the question that's really on people's minds involves your ex-fiancée, Delilah MacIntosh. On *Good Mornin'*, Savannah the other day --

KELVIN

(raises his hand like a stop sign)

I'm aware of the interview. There won't be any fight. So let me stop you right there. I have too much respect for women to start throwing punches at them, I thank you very much.

REPORTER

So there's no chance of that happening.

KELVIN

You catch on quick.

REPORTER

You go by the name Sir Kelvin. Now, were you actually knighted by the Queen?

KELVIN

Is that actually your hair?

REPORTER

Toupee.

(flinches)

Touché. With all due respect, Mr. Wingfield, it sounds like your ex-means business. Are you aware that she upset Gladys the Gravedigger?

KELVIN

No, I wasn't aware. But I can't say
it surprises me either.

INT. MALL - RESTAURANT -- NIGHT

A suspended television is tuned into Kelvin's interview.

ON SCREEN

Kelvin and the Reporter walk and talk.

REPORTER

So you feel that your ex-fiancée
does have enough talent to --

KELVIN

No, I mean it doesn't surprise me
that the judges would squeeze her
through.

REPORTER

But the decision was unanimous.

KELVIN

Look. She's real friendly with
people. And she likes to have a
good time. I guess it pays to make
yourself available that way.

REPORTER

Just a sec. Are you suggesting there
was some impropriety on the part of
Miss MacIntosh?

KELVIN

We're just talking. But let me ask
you this... have you ever known a
pretty woman to not use looks to her
advantage?

RESTAURANT

Delilah watches the TV, her eyes crimson with rage. She
does an about-face and stomps out of the restaurant.

INT. MALL - FORMAL WEAR SHOP -- NIGHT

Delilah barges in, surprising a small SALESCLERK, 50s, with
a distinctive white moustache. He drops a box of hangers.

SALESCLERK

(composes himself)
May I help you, madam?

DELILAH

Yes, I need a tuxedo. Size thirty-eight short. Verrrrry SHORT.

Salesclerk looks scared. He positions himself behind a rack.

INT. MACINTOSH ESTATE - DELILAH'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Delilah stands in the center of her room, drawing on something. She steps back a few paces to get a better look.

SLAMMAN

Now decked out in a tuxedo and a white bow tie. A pencil moustache, drawn in permanent marker, lines his upper lip.

Delilah eyes SlamMan with perfect fury. Slowly, she slides on her bag gloves.

DELILAH

This is gonna hurt you a lot more than it's gonna hurt me.

She unleashes hell.

INT. TANDY'S BOXING GYM -- DAY

Delilah slinks in wearing shades. As she pulls them off, she spots Tandy. They exchange injured looks.

INT. TANDY'S BOXING GYM - LOCKER ROOM -- DAY

Delilah marches over to the

SINKS

and sets her gym bag on the counter. She pulls out a brush.

As Delilah brushes her hair, she spots Slice two sinks over, applying makeup. She wears a pale purple blouse.

Slice scowls at Delilah through the reflection.

DELILAH

Must be hard.

SLICE

What?

DELILAH

Hatin' someone you don't even know.

SLICE

You mean *you*?

DELILAH

Uh huh.

SLICE

I know enough.

DELILAH

Where're you goin' all fancied up?

SLICE

What's it to you?

DELILAH

Just makin' conversation. If you'd rather stand here and grimace at each other, I guess that's fine.

(wraps her ponytail)

Got a lunch date?

Slice looks at Delilah askew.

SLICE

Hank's taking me to that Thai restaurant that opened up.

DELILAH

Oh the one on Hanover? I been meanin' to try that one. By the way, that blush is all wrong for you.

(zips up her gym bag)

SLICE

No it ain't.

DELILAH

Course it is.

She folds her arms like a professor eager to pontificate.

DELILAH

Makeup one-oh-one. You're either cool, cool, cool or warm, warm, warm.

SLICE

What?

DELILAH

You've got auburn hair. Nice auburn hair, as a matter of fact. That was a compliment, don't let it fluster you. Your colorin' is both warm and intense. So guess what? You want your makeup and clothes to match. Warm, warm, warm.

(MORE)

DELILAH

That blush is too light for you.
Makes you look harsh. And you don't
need any help with that. Let me
see, I might just have somethin'...

She unzips her gym bag and dumps a cornucopia of makeup onto
the counter.

DELILAH

(sifting through it)
That one's too light. No, not that
one. HERE. This'll work. Autumn.
It won't wash you out. Now go on
and rinse that stuff off your face.

Slice hesitates.

DELILAH

Go on, now. You don't wanna go on a
date lookin' like Casper the Friendly
Ghost, do ya?

Slice washes her face.

DELILAH

Here's a towel.
(tosses one from her
bag)
Nothin' I like more than a clean
slate. Now, is that the only shirt
you got?

SLICE

I usually wear one at a time.

DELILAH

I'll see what I got in the car.

She skedaddles. Slice watches her leave. She looks over
the abundance of makeup, glimpses herself in the mirror.
She's just not accustomed to this level of attention.

INT. JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

Abby walks with her friend, MELISSA. Both carry backpacks.

MELISSA

I can't believe Mr. Hogan is having
us do a paper on snails. I mean,
what do you say... they're slow, and
slimy, and French people eat them.
Case closed.

ABBY

At least we don't have to dissect them. That would really suck.

EXT. JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL -- DAY

They exit the building.

MELISSA

Call me if you're not doing anything later. I'll come over and show you those boots I got.

ABBY

Later.

She veers course, cutting across the playground.

The sound of RUNNING footsteps behind her, culminating with the SNAP of Abby's bra.

ABBY

Cut the shit, you asshole!

TOMMY WILLIS has got about a hundred pounds on Abby, with rosy cheeks. His THREE BUDDIES are skinny and pale.

TOMMY

(mocking)

Cut the shit, you asshole.

The Buddies laugh hysterically.

TOMMY

Why don't you make me?

Abby thinks about it. She removes the backpack from her shoulder and drops it casually to the ground.

ABBY

Okay.

She raises her sleeves and puts up her dukes.

Tommy looks at his Buddies befuddled: you really think I should fight this girl?

He turns to face Abby, raises his fists.

BUDDIES

(chanting)

TOMMY...

Tommy bends his head forward, pumps his fists. He peeks at Abby through his eyebrows. An evil grin spreads out over his face.

They move in a circle. Tommy throws a few weak punches, thinking it will intimidate Abby. It doesn't.

He decides to go for the stomach. Mistake. Abby catches Tommy with an UPPERCUT that brings him to an upright position. This sets her up nicely for a ONE-TWO that drops him on his ass. The Buddies double over laughing.

BUDDIES
(chanting)
ABBY...

ABBY
Come on. Get up, Bubbalicious.

Tommy is more staggered than he'd like to admit. He can't quite make it to his feet.

A final crowd-pleaser: Abby reaches into her shirt and undoes her bra. The Buddies jump about like they're auditioning for Springer.

Abby approaches Tommy from behind and manages to clasp the bra around his enormous torso.

ABBY
You're gonna need a bigger cup size.

INT. TANDY'S BOXING GYM -- NIGHT

Delilah, alone in the corner, affixes iron plates to a barbell. By the looks of her, she's been at it all day.

She lies down to bench press. Manages to lift the bar up. Squeezes out three reps.

She goes for a fourth, brings the weight down to her chest. But that's it. She's on empty. Delilah struggles but she can't get the bar off her chest. Deep breath, one more try.

DELILAH
Motherfuckin' horseshit cocksucker
fuckin' piece of shit asshole
motherfuckin' shitstain bitch!

The Gym-goers are not accustomed to hearing this language from Delilah. They look on in sheer horror as she adds complexity to her litany of profanity.

Tandy emerges from her office.

TANDY
(to Gym-goers)
Are you fuckin' BLIND?

She races over and snags the barbell, sets it on the rack.

TANDY

Trying to kill yourself, Goldilocks?

Delilah's too spent to reply. She sits up, gasping for air.

TANDY

Should I look outside and see if the moon's blood red?

DELILAH

Huh?

TANDY

I never heard you swear like that.

DELILAH

I save it. Special occasions only.

TANDY

I see. How's the hunt for a trainer going?

DELILAH

It's goin'. No, that's a lie. Tell you the truth, I haven't been lookin'.

TANDY

Why not?

DELILAH

I wouldn't wanna put anyone else through the trouble.

TANDY

Whaddya mean?

DELILAH

There's only so many people you can let down 'fore you start feelin' ashamed o' yourself.

(lies down on bench)

A lot easier this way.

TANDY

Why didn't you tell me about wanting to fight Kelvin?

DELILAH

I heard what you said to Slice. The day I walked in here. I figured...

(fighting herself)

It's still no excuse for lyin'.

TANDY

What makes you think he would fight you? After all this, he could just say no.

DELILAH

I s'pose he could. Already done it once. Guess I didn't think that far ahead.

TANDY

Or worse, what if he did fight you and kicked your teeth in? Say Goodbye to Magnolia Princess. And how's that for embarrassing? Getting beat up by the guy who left you at the altar.

DELILAH

Never said it was gonna be easy. But that's how I know it's right.

TANDY

You feel like getting outta here for a while?

EXT. RIVER -- DAY

Delilah and Tandy in a rowboat. Delilah does all the work.

DELILAH

This was a great idea. Nice to be out for a change.

TANDY

(fixes her hair)

So how does your boyfriend -- Nathan, is it?

DELILAH

Nate.

TANDY

How does he feel about you boxing Kelvin?

DELILAH

He's very supportive.

TANDY

Isn't he worried you might get hurt?

DELILAH

I s'pose so. Anything happens, at least he's a doctor.

TANDY

Yeah, that's right. The way you two met. You got yourself a story right there. All this time spent trying to hook up at the bar... I shoulda tried the ER.

DELILAH

(chuckles)

So uh... do you have a boyfriend?

TANDY

No. I don't.

An uncomfortable silence.

TANDY

You two have gone out quite some time, haven't you?

DELILAH

'Bout five months.

TANDY

You think he might be the one?

DELILAH

Sure feels like it.

TANDY

How do you know?

DELILAH

(mulls it over)

Because I don't have to ask.

Tandy realizes that's checkmate. She curls her frown of discontent into a smile, for Delilah's sake.

TANDY

You know, you're gonna need to attract more attention if you wanna get Kelvin in the ring with you. And for that, you need a gimmick.

DELILAH

You mean like a silk jacket with my name sewn on the back?

TANDY

Hell no. Everyone's got that. We need something bigger.

INT. ARENA -- NIGHT

With Tandy at her side, Delilah makes her way toward the ring in a RED HOOPSKIRT. The CROWD loves her.

MONTAGE

- 1) Delilah glides toward the ring in a GREEN hoopskirt.
- 2) She electrifies the crowd as she knocks out her OPPONENT.
- 3) Another bout, Delilah in an ORANGE hoopskirt.
- 4) Delilah, Nate and Abby sit on a park bench eating ice cream.

DELILAH
So how'd it go again?

ABBY
(miming)
Uppercut, jab, straight right.

DELILAH
Good girl. Has he bothered you since?

ABBY
I'm not sure we still go to the same
school.

- 5) Delilah at her locker. She notices that her engagement ring has been returned, spots Slice sneaking away.
- 6) Delilah enters Tandy's office. Tandy sits at her desk.

DELILAH
Do you keep a Lost 'n Found?

TANDY
Back here, in a box.

DELILAH
Can you add this to it?

She hands her the engagement ring.

- 7) Romeo sews a YELLOW hoopskirt as Delilah skips rope.
- 8) Delilah enters the ring in a YELLOW hoopskirt and matching parasol.

INT. OFFICE WAITING AREA -- DAY

Tandy sits rigidly in a chair, eyes a magazine on a table. Behind the desk, a buxom RECEPTIONIST, 20s, without a bra.

BRALESS
Miss Burrows, Mr. Naddle will see
you now.

INT. MR. NADDLE'S OFFICE -- DAY

Tandy enters.

TANDY

Mr. Naddle.

MR. NADDLE, 40s, is a slippery fucker - no really, he is - his pomade starts just above his eyebrows and ends somewhere around the back of his collar. His smile reveals an assortment of unhealthy colors. His suit is circa Seventies.

MR. NADDLE

Ms. Burrows. What brings you here?

He leans back in his swivel chair and props up his feet. Wouldn't you know, he's wearing beach sandals. Eight toes, and only seven of them are equipped with an ingrown nail.

TANDY

(looking away)

My client would like to formally challenge your fighter, Mr. Wingfield, to a three-round bout.

She turns to look him in the eye, but his grin snaps her back into shape.

MR. NADDLE

I'd be happy to run the idea past him...

Tandy gives in to temptation again. She catches an eyeful of Mr. Naddle slipping his hand down the front of his pants.

TANDY

(jerks away)

God.

MR. NADDLE

Is something the matter?

TANDY

No. I just...

She looks up, in time to see him sniff his excavating hand.

TANDY

(trying not to heave)

You can let me know. I don't want to be late for my pap smear.

INT. BAR -- NIGHT

Delilah sips a mint julep in a corner booth. Tandy arrives.

TANDY

Sorry I'm late. Had a fight with my landlord.

DELILAH

That's okay.

TANDY

Whatcha drinking there?

DELILAH

Mint julep. Want one?

TANDY

No thanks.

(to WAITRESS)

Sam Adams, please. And another julep for her.

DELILAH

Thanks.

TANDY

Don't mention it.

DELILAH

(eager for info)

So?

TANDY

Oh right. I guess one of the tenants complained that I was blasting k.d. lang all day. And I'm like, Grits-for-Brains, I'm at the gym all day. So it couldn't be me. Besides, I don't even like k.d. lang. So what does this asshole do? He starts searching my apartment for k.d. lang. Tossing pillows, moving furniture. I felt like Tim Robbins in that -- what was that prison picture?

DELILAH

Shawshank Redemption.

TANDY

Right. Can you fuckin' believe that movie didn't win a single Oscar?

DELILAH

No, I meant, what'd you find out? Did you hear back from his manager?

Tandy turns solemn. The dog and pony show's over.

TANDY

I'm sorry, Sweetie. He said No.

The bottom falls out from under Delilah.

DELILAH

Why not?

TANDY

Probably cuz he's scared. But I'm sure he'll tell his society friends something different.

DELILAH

That's awful. You mean all this was just...

TANDY

I can see how it feels that way. But look at you, you're in the best shape of your life. You started something that six months ago you probably thought you'd never do. You met some new people...

DELILAH

I know but...

TANDY

(disappointed)

Should count for something.

DELILAH

It does but... I'm not sure where I'm at if the fight doesn't happen.

TANDY

You're in a bar. Having a drink. With me.

She props her elbows on the table, dejected.

DELILAH

(stirs her drink)

Can I ask you somethin'?

Tandy tilts her head.

DELILAH

What do you do when it feels like you're just out there, twistin' in the wind?

TANDY

I pretend like I'm flying.

Delilah's eyes drift to a burn mark on the inside of Tandy's forearm.

DELILAH
What happened there?

Tandy brings her arms down to her lap.

TANDY
It's nothing. Just my ex-. He could be pretty creative sometimes.

EXT. DRIVE-IN -- NIGHT

Delilah finds comfort on Nate's shoulder. They watch a grainy black and white film.

NATE
You can always go back to beauty pageants, can't you?

DELILAH
Think I'm done tryin' to look the part of someone perfect. Smiled so darn much, it hurts when I don't.

NATE
Doesn't have to be a bad thing.

DELILAH
This might've been the first thing I ever wanted, that I'm sure came from me. My mother had nothin' to do with it.

(beat)
Wanna hear somethin' funny?

NATE
Definitely not.

DELILAH
Kelvin 'n Marney are gettin' married this Saturday. Saw it in the paper.

NATE
Funny pages?

DELILAH
Naturally.

NATE
We weren't invited?

DELILAH
Course we were invited. We'll be sharin' a table with three porn stars and the Easter Bunny.

NATE

Festive.

They share a laugh.

DELILAH

God, we have really gone off our pecan, haven't we?

NATE

Seriously though, they should have invited you.

DELILAH

Are you out o' your cotton ball pickin' mind?

NATE

You sort of brought those two lowlifes together, didn't you?

Delilah makes like she's gonna punch Nate in the arm, then...

DELILAH

(light bulb)

You're right. I did bring those two lowlifes together.

INT. RECEPTION HALL -- NIGHT

Large group of FOLKS. At the head table, Kelvin and Marney smooch. Best Man steps up to the mike.

BEST MAN

Hello, everyone. Good night. Er um, I mean, Good evening. Shoot. I already screwed up.

Kelvin shares a chuckle with the Folks.

BEST MAN

Just wanna say... how proud I am to be Kelvin's best man. I can still remember the first time I met Marney.

Marney's fake smile shrivels a tad.

BEST MAN

She just had... so much energy. You know? Tons and tons of spunk. Inside of her. And um, I just think the decision is unaminous. I mean, unaminous. No wait. Unaminous. Sorry. U-nan-i-mous.

A few mock cheers.

BEST MAN

They're just made for each other.

The Folks applaud. A lean FIGURE ambles toward the mike. She wears a bonnet and funky fuchsia shades.

DELILAH

Good evenin'. How y'all doin'?

The disguise comes off.

BUCK

Get down! She's got a bomb!

In a loud, ugly rumble the Folks hit the deck.

DELILAH

Don't be silly. I don't have a bomb. Or did you just say, *she's the bomb*?

She laughs, the Folks make their way back up to their chairs.

DELILAH

Honestly, you should move to Hollywood with an imagination like that. Kelvin and Marney, so nice to see you...

(waves)

I'm sorry to startle you nice folks. I don't make a habit of crashin' weddings. But I needed a large group of understandin' people, and naturally this is the first place I thought of. I'd like all y'all to meet my boyfriend, Doctor Nate More.

Nate offers a brief wave from the back of the room.

DELILAH

Doctor More works over at County Hospital. And for those of you who don't know, the hospital's in need of more space. But they lack the necessary funds. Some o' the patients there wind up gettin' treated in the hallway. It's happened to me. Raise your hand if this's happened to you.

The Folks look at each other bewildered.

DELILAH

Go on, don't be shy.

Some of the older Folks raise their hands.

DELILAH

See, Nate 'n I didn't care for that. So we went ahead and started up a charity drive. It's called Room to Grow. Now why am I tellin' you nice folks this? Well, I'd like to take this opportunity to invite Mr. Wingfield here to join me in the ring.

Kelvin smirks at his constituency, wags his finger at Delilah.

DELILAH

All proceeds from the bout would go toward expandin' the hospital. 'Fore you know it, y'all won't have to leave your flowers out in the hall when you go visit Grandma after she falls 'n breaks her hip. Or when Grandpa throws out his back. Wouldn't that be nice?

Nods and murmurs of agreement.

DELILAH

I can't speak for Kelvin, but I find boxin' to be empowerin', ya know? It's changed my life entirely. And I just think if there's a way of improvin' someone else's life, by golly I'm gonna do it. Amazin' what throwin' a few punches can do. Wanna try it with me?

She throws a slow series of left and right jabs, alternating.

DELILAH

Come on now. It's just me.

Some of the Folks begin to jab. One "misfire" and Best Man falls flat on his back.

DELILAH

Itn't it fun? Everybody! You, too, bridegroom.

(chants)

KELVIN... KELVIN... KELVIN...

The number of Folks jabbing, and chanting, grows and grows. Until the only ones left silent are Kelvin and Marney. Delilah grins from ear to ear as she punches away. She mouths to her ex: "See you in the ring."

INT. KELVIN'S HOUSE - KITCHEN -- DAY

Kelvin broods over the society pages. A topless Marney plops down in a chair, holding a small gift. Bites into her toast.

KELVIN
Whatcha got there?

MARNEY
Delilah's present. Handed it to a
bridesmaid on her way out.

KELVIN
She's a clever one, isn't she?

MARNEY
Always was. Ever since we were kids.
Any idea when the fight would happen?

KELVIN
They're supposed to get in touch
with Nads tomorrow. If she wants
the fight so bad, then who am I to
stop her?

MARNEY
(unwrapping gift)
Think it's poisonous?

KELVIN
Point that thing away from me. It's
probably radioactive.

Marney opens the box.

A NALONI BUCINTORO WATCH

shines bright from inside. Marney quickly shuts the box.

She looks down at herself like it just dawned on her that
she's half naked. Rushes out of the room with box in hand.

KELVIN
So... what'd she get us?

MARNEY (O.S.)
Nothing special. I'm gonna go get
dressed.

INT. MACINTOSH ESTATE - KITCHEN -- DAY

Delilah and Samuel eat breakfast at the table. Mirabelle
washes dishes.

SAMUEL
So how would it happen?

DELILAH

Well, it wouldn't be sanctioned, so I guess we'd have to raise the money ourselves to rent out a club.

Mirabelle chortles her disapproval.

SAMUEL

I can think of at least two places that would give you a good rate.

MIRABELLE

People should know when they're making total fools of themselves.

DELILAH

Thanks, Daddy. I appreciate you doin' that.

SAMUEL

My pleasure, Honeybee.

MIRABELLE

You're unbelievable, you two. I think you may have retired a bit too early, Samuel. You have far too much time on your hands.

SAMUEL

You know what? I think I might have a better idea.

DELILAH

What's that?

SAMUEL

Why not have it here?

DELILAH

Really?

MIRABELLE

ABSOLUTELY NOT.

Mirabelle turns the water off.

SAMUEL

Why not? I think we have the space, we could rent another tent.

DELILAH

That would be fantastic, Daddy!

She leaps up and kisses her father on the forehead.

MIRABELLE

You can ignore me all you want. But there will be NO boxing match at this house. Is that understood? I won't stand for it.

SAMUEL

No. You will stand for it. This is our house. And this is something our daughter wants. If you don't want to be part of it, that's your prerogative. And your loss.

Mirabelle SMASHES the dishes in the sink and scampers away.

DELILAH

Was that a rebuttal?

SAMUEL

I don't know. The conversation sort of tailed off when she ran away.

They look at each other askew... then burst out laughing.

INT. TANDY'S BOXING GYM -- DAY

Delilah batters a speed bag senseless.

DELILAH

Kiss My GRITS.

MONTAGE

- 1) Delilah whales on a heavy bag that Hank holds.
- 2) She spars with Romeo who fears for his life.
- 3) Slice applies makeup in the mirror. Behind her, Delilah nods her head approvingly.
- 4) Delilah does incline presses. Tandy spots her.

TANDY

Bring it home, Goldilocks!

DELILAH

(straining)

You said you weren't gonna call me that.

- 5) She skips rope in the gym parking lot.
- 6) Delilah practices slips using the weighted rope.

ROMEO

Is our show on tonight?

DELILAH

It's a repeat.

ROMEO

Those bastards!

7) With MUSIC playing, she waltzes with Tandy in the ring. Slice waltzes with Hank outside the ring.

8) Delilah thrashes SlamMan, still in his tux.

9) She jogs through the streets of Savannah, passes Vendors selling vegetables. Delilah swipes a peach.

She turns, throws up a Hail Mary. The peach hits the Vendor in the chest, all over his white shirt. He's tickled pink.

10) Delilah's jog continues. She tails away from the crowd, from the noise, from just about everything, chasing a sunset.

FADE TO BLACK

TITLE CARD (IN RED): FIGHT NIGHT

The BELL tolls.

INT. MACINTOSH ESTATE - GUEST ROOM -- NIGHT

Kelvin, in red trunks, shadowboxes in front of the mirror.

Buck, Chuck, Tuck and the Best Man, all dressed up, toss around a Nerf football.

BEST MAN

Never thought I'd see the inside of this place again.

BUCK

Yo Kel, you're battin' a thousand in this room, eh?

KELVIN

Damn straight.
(blows snot on floor)

A knock. Kelvin motions to Chuck, he answers the door.

CHUCK

(stage whisper)
It's Mitzi.

Kelvin searches the few files in his brain: Mitzi... Mitzi... He turns to the mirror and combs his weeny moustache.

KELVIN

Okay, let her in.

INT. MACINTOSH ESTATE - DELILAH'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Delilah stands in her bathrobe before the full-length mirror. Tandy and Charlene wrap her hands.

CHARLENE
Am I doing it right?

TANDY
You're doing great.

DELILAH
Have you been workin' out?

CHARLENE
Yup. Started on the treadmill.
Lost seven pounds.

DELILAH
Good for you, it shows.

CHARLENE
Thanks.

Tandy smiles at Charlene, turns to Delilah.

EXT. MACINTOSH ESTATE -- NIGHT

Marney climbs out of her black Beamer. TWO PAPARAZZI appear.

PAPARAZZO ONE
There she is. Homewrecker
extraordinaire. Smile for us, Babe.
(snaps picture)

MARNEY
Fuck off.

PAPARAZZO TWO
Surprised she'd show her face here.

MARNEY
It's for charity, Jerk-offs.

Flash bulbs light up the night.

INT. MACINTOSH ESTATE - HALLWAY -- NIGHT

Marney glides along with a scowl, turns a corner and spots

A WOMAN

running in the opposite direction. Vanishes around a corner.

Marney places her hand on the doorknob to the Guest Room,
and the door bursts open. Kelvin and his entourage high-
five each other as they exit. They walk right by Marney.

MARNEY
Hellooo. I need to talk to you.

KELVIN
 Hellooo. Boxing.
 (punches the air)
 Ring a bell?

Marney stands with her mouth agape as they strut away.

CHUCK
 Does this mean I'm not a virgin no
 more?

BEST MAN
 No way, dude. That's cheatin'.

CHUCK
 Why is that cheating?

BUCK
 Cuz it is, pencildick.

TUCK
 But we'll give you an E for effort.

EXT. MACINTOSH ESTATE - BACKYARD - TENT -- NIGHT

Balloons, streamers, confetti. It could pass for a wedding.

Kelvin and his gang make their way down the aisle. A sold-out crowd of FANS greet them with RASPBERRIES and CATCALLS. Mr. Naddle joins the procession, clad in a leopard-skin suit. He smiles at the unruly Fans, scaring some of the children.

IN THE CROWD

Nate and Abby nosh on fried dough. Abby wears a pretty dress, and it looks like Nate has gotten himself a haircut.

RINGSIDE

A TALL WOMAN in black sits next to Marney. Her smile reveals a snaggletooth. Marney flinches, looks down at her new watch.

SNAGGLETOOTH
 My, that's purty.

EXT. MACINTOSH ESTATE - RING -- NIGHT

Kelvin bounces up and down in his silk jacket, loosening up. The Minister, now dressed in a tux, straightens his bow tie.

MINISTER
 (into mike)
 Dearly Beloved... Good evening, and
 WELCOME... to the ENGAGEMENT OF
 ENRAGEMENT.

The Fans HOOT and CHEER.

MINISTER

In this corner, wearing red trunks,
weighing in at one hundred and twelve
noble pounds... SIR KELVIN WINGFIELD.

BOOS fill the tent. Kelvin's clan disses the Fans. Mr.
Naddle finds solace in his pants.

The lights suddenly go out.

A spotlight appears at the

ENTRANCE TO THE AISLE

The brass Quintet plays the opening bars of Mendelssohn's
WEDDING MARCH.

Stepping forward into the light are...

DELILAH AND SAMUEL

Samuel in a tuxedo, and Delilah in a WEDDING DRESS and VEIL.

IN THE RING

Kelvin's EYES widen in terror.

The bride and her father walk proudly, smiling at each other.

Team Delilah follows: Charlene, Tandy, Slice, Hank, Romeo,
and the Flower Girl, scattering magnolia petals.

MINISTER (O.S.)

Ladies and gentlemen, weighing in at
one hundred and eight pounds... The
Jabbing Julep... The Bride Who
Cried... The Belle From Hell...
DELILAH MACINTOSH.

The crowd ERUPTS. Team Delilah takes the

RING

by storm. Jumping, hopping, dancing, whatever you like.

Delilah meets Kelvin in the center of the ring for the

STARE DOWN

Delilah pushes her veil out of the way, stares through Kelvin.

KELVIN

I'll go easy on you, don't worry.

DELILAH

Don't make promises you can't keep.

Kelvin does his best to hide his fear.

DELILAH'S CORNER

Tandy takes delight in tearing off Delilah's dress.

DELILAH

That's as close as I came to a
honeymoon.

KELVIN'S CORNER

Kelvin puts in his mouth guard.

BEST MAN

Watch out, Kel. Here Comes the --

BELL. Delilah charges at Kelvin, THROTTLES him with a right.

BEST MAN

Bride.

Delilah unleashes a flurry of jabs that backs Kelvin into a corner. He covers up.

Kelvin then surprises her with a right uppercut.

KELVIN

You like that? I was savin' it.

Delilah drops back to the center of the ring.

KELVIN

I'm glad we have this time to catch
up. Get ready to be whooped,
Honeybunch.

He lands a double jab.

DELILAH

I'd throw a low blow, but that
wouldn't do any good.

She throws a body shot, but he parries it. Kelvin counters with a one-two that stuns her.

KELVIN

By the time I'm done with you, you
won't be able to model for Fangoria.

He delivers a triple jab.

DELILAH

I bet you say that to all the ladies.

TANDY (O.S.)

Keep your cool, Delilah!

Kelvin slips her left hook and counters with a right cross.

Kelvin rains down punches. Delilah's saved by the BELL.

DELILAH'S CORNER

Hank sets down a stool. Romeo and Slice tend to her eyes.

TANDY

What's all this talking? This ain't therapy. Keep your guard up and your mouth shut.

SLICE

Don't waste any o' your energy talking to that scumbag.

ROMEO

This guy takes it in the ass, Delilah. Believe me.

They all turn to look at Romeo.

KELVIN'S CORNER

Mr. Naddle rubs Vaseline under Kelvin's eyes.

MR. NADDLE

You don't owe this girl nothing. Take her out in the second so we can all get hummers and go home.

The BELL.

Delilah walks straight into a combination by Kelvin.

She counters with a body shot that makes him laugh.

KELVIN

You never could go down, could you.

Delilah throws a triple jab but he slips all of them easily.

A straight right opens Delilah's left eye.

KELVIN

Ohpp. Somebody got a booboo.

Delilah downshifts to her box step, throwing up weak jabs.

KELVIN

Are we dancing now? Is that what we're doing?

An uppercut throws her off balance and out of rhythm. Delilah sneaks a peek at Tandy who for the first time looks worried.

She turns back and Kelvin drops her with a right cross!

DELILAH'S HEAD SWIMS

As the Referee counts, a FLASHBACK of Delilah winning her first beauty pageant. Mirabelle sneers from the audience.

Delilah struggles to her feet at the count of seven.

Kelvin charges, right into a juicy LOW BLOW.

REFEREE

Nothing below the belt.

DELILAH

(smirks)

I agree.

The BELL. Kelvin worms back to his corner.

RINGSIDE

Charlene spies Mirabelle peeking from Delilah's bedroom window. Mirabelle backs out of view, tripping over SlamMan.

Meanwhile, Snaggletooth sucks on a cigar. She blows a smoke ring toward Kelvin.

SNAGGLETOOTH

Man, his butt sure dudn't quit, does it? Some thangs never change...

MARNEY

You know him?

SNAGGLETOOTH

You could say that. Him AND that cast of characters he hangs around with. Not a single one of 'em knows how to satisfy a woman, but together they sure do make music.

MARNEY

What do you mean?

SNAGGLETOOTH

I like to think of it as group therapy. Now -- Kelvin -- he's the smallest one o' the bunch.

She uses her cigar as a visual aid.

SNAGGLETOOTH

But let me tell ya... that boy... he
can really shoot.

(wipes her mouth)

Marney pulls back in disgust.

MARNEY

How long ago was this?

SNAGGLETOOTH

(eyes Marney's watch)

I dunno, what time you got?

DELILAH'S CORNER

Blood trickles from her eye. Slice presses down on it.

TANDY

This guy humiliated you in front of
everyone. You remember? Now's your
chance to make it right.

DELILAH

I thought you said boxin' wasn't
about anger.

TANDY

Who said anything about getting angry?

The BELL. They meet in the center of the ring.

REFEREE

Touch gloves and fight.

DELILAH

I ain't touchin' him. He's probably
been with ev'ry woman here. And
Marney, too.

Kelvin grins. They stand toe-to-toe, eyeing each other.

KELVIN

I have a confession to make.
(jabs)

DELILAH

Erectile dysfunction is highly
treatable these days.
(jabs)

KELVIN

Marney and I fucked on our wedding
day.
(left hook)

DELILAH

Well lollipops to you. Did you do her in the reception hall or in the rectory?

(right cross)

KELVIN

No I mean we fucked on OUR wedding day.

While he's busy gesticulating "me and you", Delilah deposits a straight right, right in the KISSER.

KELVIN

Hold on now.

A FLASHBACK of Delilah swinging and missing on her wedding day. BACK TO PRESENT. Same punch. She CONNECTS.

KELVIN

Take it easy, Honeybunch.

Another FLASHBACK of another miss. BACK TO PRESENT. She ROCKS his world.

DELILAH

Still think you're gonna whoop me?

KELVIN

I do.

DELILAH

What was that?

KELVIN

I DO.

DELILAH

Now was that so hard to say?

She unloads a LEFT HOOK that spins her ex-fiancé like a top.

Down to the mat! The Fans GO NUTS!

DELILAH

(standing over him)

Capeesh?!

A Trumpeter plays TAPS as the Referee counts down Kelvin.

He's OUT!

Team Delilah rushes the ring.

Charlene places a pageant tiara atop her sister's head.

CHARLENE

No sense having it collect dust.

They hug. Samuel ruffles Delilah's hair.

SAMUEL

I'm proud of you.

DELILAH

Thanks, Daddy. You, too.

Meanwhile, Hank and Romeo stir the Fans into a frenzy, chanting: DELILAH, DELILAH... Even Slice joins in.

Delilah turns and Tandy KISSES her full on the lips.

TANDY

I mean... Congratulations!

DELILAH

(blushes)

Thanks!

As she waves to the crowd, Nate and Abby enter the ring. Nate taps the Minister on the shoulder.

Kelvin begins to snap out of it, just in time to see Nate get down on one knee in the center of the ring with mike in hand. The crowd goes APESHIT.

It dawns on Delilah to turn around and see what all the hubbub is about. Her eyes POP.

NATE

Miss Delilah, will you marry me?
(brandishes the ring)

DELILAH

'DEED I WILL.

Nate slides the engagement ring onto her

FINGER

It covers the mark left by the old one. She beams.

They kiss. Confetti fills the air surrounding them.

FADE OUT

THE END