

FREAKY FRIDAY
By Heather Hach

Based on the book "FREAKY FRIDAY"
By Mary Rodgers

WALT DISNEY PICTURES/
GUNNfilms

Second Draft

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FADE IN:

INT. TEENAGE BEDROOM - MORNING

A cluttered room with an unmade bed, scarves cover the lamps. If Stevie Nicks ever actually went to high school, this is probably what her room would have looked like.

Framed family photos of a young girl and her father dot the room, including many with the girl, a mom and little brother.

ANNA COLEMAN, around 15, spies out her window with binoculars, balancing a phone under her chin. Anna's clearly not caught up in the Britney-sexy thing, she sports baggy clothes, funky glasses, dark hair up in a sloppy hair clamp. But she's still utterly adorable.

There is a beep as a fax finishes running through a fax machine and falls into a tray marked **Gwen Stefani "SENT"**. Anna looks away long enough to mark the date on a log sheet.

MADDIE (O.S.)

And?...

ANNA

Today it's flannel shirt. Jeans...

Anna strains to see.

ANNA (CONT'D)

...And work boots.

Anna's POV through binoculars: HEATH BRENT, 17. Think young Johnny Depp, complete with tattoos. In a chain link kennel at the house across the street, he pours food for a dog.

INT. MADDIE'S BEDROOM - THAT MOMENT

Best friend MADDIE paints her toes black, also balancing a phone under her chin.

MADDIE

He could single-handedly bring back grunge.

INT. ANNA'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Anna's POV: Heath wields a Pooper Scooper.

ANNA

He even scoops poop beautifully.

MADDIE (O.S.)

Okay, now you are officially scaring me.
Will you please go talk to him already?

Unannounced, a little Alex P. Keaton clone walks in. This is HARRY, Anna's eight-year-old brother.

HARRY

Guess what?

ANNA

They found the DNA necessary to prove
once and for all we're not related?

HARRY

(ignores this)

Alan Greenspan lowered the interest rates
again by half a point!

ANNA

And this pertains to me how?...

Anna pushes Harry out of her room, shuts the door on him.
She goes back to the business of watching this Adonis across
the street. As she is raising the binoculars to get another
look, she sees Heath staring right back at her, he gives a
small wave.

Panicked, Anna drops the binoculars and lets out a little
scream, moves quickly away from the window.

MADDIE (O.S.)

What?

ANNA

He saw me!

MADDIE (O.S.)

Of course he saw you. You're *neighbors*.
Why don't you use this gift of proximity
and go talk to him?

ANNA

Maddie, you know I cannot talk to Heath!
I cannot trust myself to *form sentences*
in his presence!

INT. MADDIE'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

MADDIE

Oh, but you do seem weirdly at ease
stalking him.

INT. ANNA'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Anna's stung by that and cautiously looks out the window.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - A BEAT LATER

Anna limply carries an entirely too small trash bag to the curb. She's focused on Heath, who still plays with the dog. He then notices Anna approaching.

HEATH

Morning.

Anna freezes in her tracks, actual Heath contact is too much.

HEATH (CONT'D)

(good-naturedly) I saw you with your binoculars. Have ya taken up bird watching, there?

ANNA

(bright red)

Yes! Yes. I'm a... bird... watcher. Birdwatcher. See? A robin.

Anna points to the very ordinary and lackluster robin perched in a nearby tree.

ANNA (CONT'D)

The red-breasted, all-American... robin. (desperate to switch the subject) So... how are you liking Grover so far?

HEATH

(Jack Nicholson voice)

Seven high schools in seven states and the only thing different was my locker combination...

Anna laughs a little too hard.

ANNA

That's great!

HEATH

It's from the movie "Heathers."

ANNA

Of course. Right, right...

HEATH

So. What are you doin' this weekend?

Anna is thrown and thrilled, mind scrambling when --

TESS (O.S.)

Anna!

Anna ignores her mother's call.

ANNA

I'm, uh, going to the No Doubt concert.

HEATH

You're kidding! I couldn't get tickets --

ANNA

Tell me about it; we had to camp out --

TESS (O.S.)

-- Anna!

ANNA

(calling)

In a minute --

Before she can finish that sentence, a late-thirtysomething mother, TESS, appears on the Coleman driveway.

TESS

Anna, I need to speak with you. Inside.

Tess spots Heath.

HEATH

Hey, Mrs. Coleman.

TESS

Good morning, Heath.

Anna is beyond humiliated.

ANNA

(to Heath) I guess, I'll, uh, see you later, you know, at school...

Heath nods. Anna and Tess walk inside, Tess whispers:

TESS

How do you know Heath Brent?

ANNA

Maybe the fact that he's lived next door to us for three months has something to do with it?...

TESS

Listen Anna, I've had numerous conversations with his father about the trouble they've been having with him. I think he has serious authority issues.

ANNA

So?

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

TESS

So, he's off-limits.

ANNA

From what?

TESS

From everything.

ANNA

You're kidding me, right?

TESS

Anna, he's 17... you're 15. Think about it. What could you possibly have in common?

ANNA

It's not like I'm eleven years old here --

TESS

-- I talk to 17 year old boys all day, and I know exactly what they are interested in. You know, I have a lot on my plate right now, and I'd just assume not worry about you too. Let's just be mature about this, okay?

ANNA

(beyond irritated)
Anything else?

TESS

Actually, yes. I just had an interesting call from Maddie's mother.

ANNA

(starting to look nervous)
Yeah?

TESS

She asked me if I could pick you two up
after the No Doubt concert tomorrow.

Tess waits a beat. Anna doesn't respond.

TESS (CONT'D)

So I guess it just slipped your mind that
tomorrow night happens to be my *rehearsal*
dinner...

ANNA

You're busy, I get it. We'll get another
ride.

TESS

The ride is not the point! --

ANNA

-- I'll be at the wedding. This is just
dinner...

TESS

-- It's not just *dinner*! It's my
rehearsal dinner, and it's very important
to me. You're my maid of honor! --

ANNA

-- But, Mom, it's No Doubt!

TESS

-- Anna, it's *my wedding*!

Silence. Then Tess glances at her watch.

TESS (CONT'D)

Look, I'm late... But this case is
closed, Anna. You'll be there.

ANNA

But, I --

TESS

(very definitively)
Closed.

Tess takes a deep breath and gathers her things.

TESS (CONT'D)

I'm off.

ANNA

Off? Mom, I need a ride to --

TESS

-- I've mentioned several times I have an interview this morning on "A.M. San Diego". I even left a note on your Message Board for you to arrange another ride to school... Communication is a two-way street, and I need you to be more present when we talk. Vice Mr. Riley . . . Riley even said that he thinks --

ANNA

-- Give me a break. Riley totally has it out for me and anyone else who doesn't fit his perfect image of --

TESS

Anna, I think you're exaggerating.

ANNA

Whatever. Besides, I have to DJ this morning.

Harry appears with his backpack on and a smug smile in place.

HARRY

Let's be honest. You do the announcements.

ANNA

I also play music.

HARRY

Yeah. In between the announcements. Mom, you don't want to be late for your big TV appearance. I'm ready to go.

ANNA

You can't give me a lift but you ~~do~~ have time to drop off the dork?

TESS

I've asked you not to call him that. Besides, his school is right by the TV station.

ANNA

What am I supposed to do, then?

HARRY

I've got one word, sister --

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. BUS STOP - A BEAT LATER

A school bus screeches to a halt, kicking up dust. The door swings open and a very sour Anna stares up to see --

A dead ringer for BEA ARTHUR.

BEA ARTHUR BUS DRIVER
Welcome to the caravan of merriment.

Anna takes a big bitter step onto the bus.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. SCHOOL PARKING LOT - A BEAT LATER

Anna steps off the bus.

Anna's POV: She spots a true caravan of merriment pulling into the parking lot, a Mustang convertible. It's packed with screaming, wildly happy girls, music blaring. At the helm is STACEY HINKHOUSE, a 16-year-old Melrose Place clone. Girls spill out, entirely too enthused for Anna's tastes.

Anna sighs and heads into school. On her way in, she meets up with PEG (teen vegan) and JACKIE (thrift store chic borderline nerd).

INT. A.M. SAN DIEGO TV SET - THAT MORNING

Tess sits in an overstuffed chair on a sound stage in her most stylish suit. Next to her is smiley DOTTIE ROBERTSON, the host of "A.M. San Diego." The theme music swells, cameras are rolling. Dottie is cued they're on.

DOTTIE ROBERTSON
Rise and shine, it's time for "A.M. San Diego"!

The audience erupts in applause.

DOTTIE ROBERTSON (CONT'D)
We're here today with Dr. Tess Coleman, author of *"Beyond Juliet: O! Woeful Day and Other Teenaged Calamities."*

Polite laughter from the audience.

DOTTIE ROBERTSON (CONT'D)
Tell us more about the title.

TESS

Well, it's obviously a reference to Shakespeare's Juliet, who believed so direly in the gravity of her problems. She exemplified the earnestness with which teenage girls feel their personal drama. And we should not diminish that pathos.

DOTTIE ROBERTSON

And you have a teenage daughter as well?

TESS

Yes, I do.

DOTTIE ROBERTSON

Can I go out on a limb and ask if the often cited "Abigail" is your daughter?

More polite laughter.

TESS

Oh no... I've treated hundreds of adolescents over the years and Abigail is merely --

DOTTIE ROBERTSON

-- But having one in the house is the greatest education of all, that I know! The correlation between Abigail's late bed-wetting phase and her current fear of actual romantic involvement is utterly fascinating.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL MR. RILEY'S OFFICE - A BIT LATER

A/V DORK #1 and A/V DORK #2 await Anna's arrival and can barely contain themselves when she appears.

A/V DORK #1

Ah! She approaches!

A/V DORK #2

It is the east, and Anna is the sun.
Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious
moon -

Anna does her best to ignore them.

A lone microphone sits on a desk near secretary MRS. BUCKNER (think Edie McClurg). Anna reaches for it.

ANNA
I'll just be in the booth...

MRS. BUCKNER
What was that, honey?

Anna points to a closet door that is festooned with photos of rock icons.

ANNA
I'll be in the booth.

MRS. BUCKNER
Oh, right-io! The "booth." Here's this morning's announcements.

Mrs. Buckner hands her a list, and she enters the closet and shuts the door in the A/V dorks' faces.

INT. CLOSET - A BEAT LATER

Clutter and supplies abound as Anna plugs in the microphone. Posters litter the walls (several feature No Doubt and lead singer Gwen Stefani).

Just then, a grungy Ichabod Crane-type JANITOR enters.

ANNA
Hey, I'm working here --

The janitor ignores her, searches the shelves, finds what he needs. He thrusts a bottle marked **VAMOOSE** into her face, as if to explain his presence.

JANITOR
Some freshman tossed their cookies again.

And he's gone. Anna can't believe the indignity of it all. There is another **tap on the door**.

MRS. BUCKNER (O.S.)
You're on, kiddo.

Anna flicks a switch, speaks into the microphone and reads the announcements.

ANNA
A box is now available in the library for donations to the Annual Coat Drive...

Anna flips to another index card, reads in a somewhat bored tone:

ANNA (CONT'D)

Get amped, Wildcats, as Grover High takes on Middleton High tomorrow, concluding Spirit Week.

She flips another card.

ANNA (CONT'D)

Finally, in honor of the 40th anniversary of Sylvia Plath's death, I'd like to read an excerpt from "The Bell Jar": (Anna clears her throat) *How did I know that someday - at college, in Europe, somewhere, anywhere - the bell jar, with its stifling distortions, wouldn't descend again?*

Anna takes a moment.

ANNA (CONT'D)

On that note, here's a classic from the Smiths:

Anna fires up the CD; it's "Please Please Please Let Me Get What I Want" by the Smiths.

We then follow the music to --

INT. HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY - THAT MOMENT

-- the hallway as the sound spills out of an intercom system.

Mustang driver STACEY HINKHOUSE grimaces at the music.

STACEY

Thanks for calling the teen crisis hotline...

All her friends laugh, go about their giddy business.

CAMERA PANS TO:

Down the hall, Maddie is talking to a group of girls and they collectively nod their heads in the direction of the speaker.

MADDIE

Oh, boy... looks like our girl is definitely in one of her moods.

INT. TESS' OFFICE - LATER THAT MORNING

Tess sits across from a GLUM TEEN BOY (CHARLIE), who is droning on and on.

GLUM TEEN

So I'm at this stop light with my mother.
And this convertible pulls up next to me
with Mr. Toothpaste and his girlfriend.

TESS

Mr. Toothpaste?

GLUM TEEN

The guy had those crazy-white, straight
teeth.

Tess nods in agreement, of course.

GLUM TEEN (CONT'D)

And I look at them, and they're smiling
away, happy, happy, happy. And I'm
thinking, how come that's not my life?

Tess ponders, about to answer, when her assistant Julia opens
a door behind the GLUM TEEN, unseen to him.

Julia does the phone gesture and points to a framed picture
of a man on Tess' desk and mouths "Ryan," indicating he's on
the line.

Tess, very nonchalantly, mouths back, "Not now." And Julia
silently exits.

TESS

First, by designating this person "Mr.
Toothpaste," you are placing an external
value on him and making an assumption
based on his appearance.

GLUM TEEN

Huh?...

TESS

What I'm trying to say is we should
analyze why you feel that because he
drives a fancy car or has movie-star
teeth, you feel his life must be less
stressful than your own. No one -- even
those with big bank accounts and magazine-
perfect hair -- is above the complexities
of life.

GLUM TEEN's face falls.

GLUM TEEN

Oh. But I'm pretty sure a convertible might help.

INT. BAND CLASS - A BIT LATER

Anna sits in first chair, wielding a French horn. Maddie's next to her, also plays the French horn. The class teems with students, it's general chaos.

ANNA

First she gives me the "Heath Brent is a bad element" speech. Then, my dreams of seeing No Doubt were all but pulverized.

MADDIE

Can't you reason with her? Doesn't she realize this is No Doubt?

ANNA

Believe me, I tried. It's as if this rehearsal dinner holds the key to world peace or something.

MADDIE

It's a travesty.

ANNA

I mean, what are we rehearsing, anyway? How pathetic our family will be when Ryan's an official member?

Next to her sits ABE. He's the class clown and so wound up, the letters A-D-D come to mind.

Abe stands on a chair, blows his trumpet entirely too loudly, gets a lot of laughs. In particular, Maddie laughs extremely hard.

Anna, however, is not impressed. Abe catches her "sit down, moron" look, which he does.

ABE

(whispers) Sorry. I had Skittles again for breakfast.

The band teacher, MR. SPOON, who's been losing his hair since 1974, enters.

ABE (CONT'D)

(whispers again)

Hey, I caught your mom being interviewed
on "A.M. San Diego" this morning.

ANNA

Don't remind me...

ABE

You've never read her stuff, have you?

ANNA

Bubonic plague, boy bands, my mother's
books: I try to avoid all three...

ABE

Well, start crackin' some spines.
There's this case study of "Abigail"...
well, I don't want to say too much, but
you may recognize her. She wet her bed
until she was seven.

Anna screams, covers her mouth. The room falls silent. Mr.
Spoon clears his throat, irritated.

ANNA

I'm sorry, Mr. Spoon. I'm sorry. I,
uh... I swallowed a bug.

MR. SPOON

A what?

ANNA

A... bug.

MR. SPOON

(beat, we're moving on) Okay then. Just
a couple more hours, folks, until Career
Day and our (middle-aged man trying to
sound hip) *smokin'* intro.

No reaction. He then raises his conducting baton, and the
music begins. The lame strains of Donna Summer's "She Works
Hard for the Money" gasp to life.

INT. CAFETERIA - A BIT LATER

Anna, who still looks distracted and wounded, is congregated
at a lunch table with Maddie, Abe and friends. Maddie fawns
over Abe, but he's entirely oblivious.

Anna spots Heath sitting alone reading "Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance." Stacey Hinkhouse stops to chat with him. Anna takes a giant defiant bite of her sandwich at the sight.

In the cafeteria, a sign hangs that reads: **YEARBOOK HANDOUT TODAY!**

ANNA

This time she's really gone too far.
Exposing my bleakest moments in her
books? (considers) Hey, can you legally
divorce a parent?

There's an A-H yearbook distribution line that snakes through the cafeteria. Stacey gets in line to help hand out yearbooks. Next to her is an adorable counterpart CLARISSA who handles I-M. The girls talk animatedly throughout.

The A-H line ends right where Heath is seated, who is now focused back on his book. Anna looks at Heath wistfully.

PEG

Well, onto a happier note, I cannot
believe you're going to interview the
actual manager of No Doubt tomorrow for
the school paper!

ANNA

You know, I'm sure in some parallel
universe, there's a way for my Mom to
completely botch that, too...

Anna's still a tad distracted by Heath. Maddie spots what Anna is focusing on and her eyes light up.

MADDIE

Operation Yearbook. Let's move.

She abruptly pulls Anna out of her seat, and marches her to the back of the line and almost shoves her into place, which is conveniently located right next to Heath. Anna puts two and two together, gets massive waves of teen angst.

ANNA

(whispers) Maddie, god...

Maddie laughs really loud, as if responding to something hilarious Anna has said. Heath looks up.

MADDIE

I'm sorry. She is hilarious! You slay
me, Coleman! Gotta go.

And Maddie's gone. Anna weakly smiles, gets bright red.

HEATH

Hey, neighbor. Spotted any birds recently?

Anna's eyes dart, she gestures toward:

A table populated with loud meathead football players. A JOCK claps a paper bag, **making an explosive sound.**

ANNA

The dodo.

HEATH

Oh.

Heath can see Anna's face fall.

HEATH (CONT'D)

No, that was funny. Don't worry; I rarely laugh out loud.

ANNA

Oh, right. Right. Me neither.

HEATH

Hey, I meant to tell you, I had a long conversation with your mom the other day.

ANNA

Oh god, I'm sorry...

HEATH

No, she was fine. I'm pretty sure she'd been fully briefed by my Dad about my "behavioral problems." But she was walking your Akita, so we kept the conversation to that. I love that dog.

Anna speaks too fast, she's gotta say something:

ANNA

Yeah, well, my brother Harry begged my mom to get a guard dog if she wouldn't allow a gun in the house for protection.

HEATH

Really?

ANNA

We call him "Mr. Second Amendment."

HEATH

Your dog's name is *Mr. Second Amendment*?

ANNA

Oh, no, no, no -- my brother. He's Mr. Second Amendment. I mean... his name is Harry but he believes very strongly in the right to bear arms. He's also the founder and sole member of his school's "Young Young Republicans" club.

Heath laughs.

HEATH

Isn't he, like... eight?

ANNA

Yeah.

HEATH

Interesting. Well, I might as well get my yearbook now, too.

ANNA

Sure, yeah.

Back at the lunch table, all of Anna's friends shrewdly assess this as if they're unraveling the Cuban Missile Crisis. Anna's struggling to stay cool. They get to the front of the line. There sits Stacy and Clarissa.

STACEY

Here you go, Heath.

Stacey hands Heath his yearbook and just stares at Anna.

ANNA

Uh, Stacey. It's Anna... Anna Coleman?

STACEY

Right, Anna. I'm sorry! You must have done something different to your hair.

CLARISSA

(sotto)

Yeah... she washed it.

Stacey hands Anna her yearbook and turns her attention to Heath.

STACEY

So, Heath. There's a wicked rumor flying around the school that you're in a band.

HEATH

Well, the band's in its infancy...

STACEY

Look, I'm on the Prom Committee, and we're always looking for new music. If you have a tape, just let me know, okay?

Stacey offers a magazine-perfect smile and Anna wilts and inches away, humiliated. After a beat --

Heath gently grabs her arm, stops her in her tracks.

HEATH

Anna?

ANNA

Yeah?

HEATH

We should exchange yearbooks. Seeing that we're neighbors and all.

ANNA

Oh, yeah. Absolutely. Yeah. Here.

In slow-motion, Anna and Heath exchange yearbooks, and you can almost hear the angels singing in Anna's head.

ANNA (CONT'D)

When should I get it back to you?

HEATH

Take your time. I can pick it up tomorrow before school. Why don't I just come over and give you a lift?

ANNA

Yeah... (considers) I mean... No.

HEATH

No?

ANNA

Yeah. No.

HEATH

Oh, well. Okay...

ANNA

I mean, yes, yes, but no to coming over. Trust me, avoid my house.

(MORE)

ANNA (CONT'D)

My grandparents arrive tonight, so unless you want a two-hour lecture on the joys of boating, I'll be outside waiting at eight.

HEATH

Great.

Heath starts to walk away, turns back around.

HEATH (CONT'D)

Hey... I loved the musical selection this morning. Very retro.

INT. TV STUDIO DRESSING ROOM - A BIT LATER

Tess gathers her things post-interview when DOTTIE ROBERTSON swoops into the room.

DOTTIE ROBERTSON

Great job out there, today! Just super!

TESS

Why, thank you --

DOTTIE ROBERTSON

-- Listen. I have a 14 year old myself. Laura. She's always been such a dear, but lately... well...

TESS

Fourteen is a difficult age for even the most well-adjusted girl.

DOTTIE ROBERTSON

Recently she faked mono for three weeks. Even the doctor was fooled.

TESS

Oh my.

DOTTIE ROBERTSON

I was suspicious when I found out she'd eaten five Bear Claws in one sitting. And then what really tipped me off was what she wrote in her journal.

TESS

You read her journal?

DOTTIE ROBERTSON

I was... dusting. It practically fell into my lap.

TESS

I don't encourage such invasions of privacy. Laura needs a safe arena to vent, and it could shatter your trust.

DOTTIE ROBERTSON

But, it... it fell into my lap!

TESS

Right. Alright. Well, what did it say?

Dottie narrows her eyes as if she's a master sleuth:

DOTTIE ROBERTSON

It said: "I've been faking mono for three weeks."

INT. STUDY HALL CLASSROOM - A BEAT LATER

Anna sits at her desk, surrounded by the token study hall slackers. She looks up Heath's senior quote and picture in her yearbook, still heady from the Heath encounter.

TIGHT ON: Heath's senior picture. No bad sweater, no horrible stiff pose. Just a small, perfect smile.

His senior quote reads:

ANNA

(we hear her read) They paved paradise
and put up a parking lot.

Anna places a hand on her heart and **sighs**.

Anna shakes her head, suggesting she must reclaim her focus, and pulls out her History textbook and notes, starts reading with an intent furrowed brow. Then after a couple of seconds, she breaks out a clean notebook.

We hear her thoughts throughout this scene.

ANNA (CONT'D)

Dear Heath --

Anna scratches it out. She starts to write again.

ANNA (CONT'D)

Heath --

Anna smiles, much better. She continues writing.

ANNA (CONT'D)

How's it goin'?

Another scratch. She begins anew on a clean page, scribbles:

ANNA (CONT'D)

*I've loved you since the moment I first
saw you mow your lawn, and I hope on our
first date we discover our common love of
obscure music, and we fall desperately in
love and you'll write me songs and call
me your Yoko...*

With that, Anna tears the sheet out, crumpling it.

QUICK DISSOLVE TO:

The bell rings as study hall is over. Anna has filled the notebook with various yearbook entries. Crumbled paper surrounds her.

INT. AUDITORIUM - A BIT LATER

There's a packed assembly of students in the bleachers. A sign across the main stage reads: **CAREER DAY 2002!** Featured speakers are gathered on stage.

Anna sits with her band members off to the side.

She plays her French horn with the band to "She Works Hard for the Money." And this version isn't any better than the first time we heard it. The song awkwardly concludes.

Vice principal MR. RILEY (think Eugene Levy) takes to the podium.

MR. RILEY

That song was (reading from a cue card)
"She Works Hard for the Money," and I'll
tell ya what, our Grover High Band is
working hard for all of us!

Almost zero reaction. His smile fades.

MR. RILEY (CONT'D)

Okay. Welcome, students, to Career Day!
We have some dynamo speakers here to talk
with you all today. And in terms of your
own future careers, it just may inspire
you to *think outside the box*. Let's see,
we've got Les Hendricks, manager of two
Home Depots in the area --

Les waves to the bored crowd.

MR. RILEY (CONT'D)

-- and Lynwood McDouglas, a city council member and owner of a successful hair salon, Lynwood's Locks --

Lynwood waves a hand with the sunshine of Miss Idaho.

MR. RILEY (CONT'D)

-- and Ryan Morris, a book editor with Triton Publishing!

Anna's face falls as Ryan beams to the crowd and waves.

A BIT LATER:

Ryan is at the podium, concluding his Career Day speech.

RYAN

... And so I encourage you all to find your passion, to (profound statement) *suck the marrow out of life* --

ANNA

(to herself) Oh please...

RYAN

You know, a career in a publishing house has its perks, but life, when distilled to its very core --

Anna rolls her eyes as Ryan shares his deep thoughts.

RYAN (CONT'D)

-- is about personal relationships. I had the good fortune to meet my fiance at work, and I've edited her past three books. I'm sure you're aware of adolescent psychologist and bestselling author Tess Coleman, who is the mother of Grover High's very own Anna Coleman!

Silence. Anna is literally sliding under her chair. There are murmurs throughout the auditorium, "Who?"

RYAN (CONT'D)

Anna, would you mind standing up?!

Ryan places a hand above his eyes to apparently help him spot her. But Anna's frozen, doesn't move.

RYAN (CONT'D)

Anna?

After an excruciating pause, Anna has to face the inevitable. She slowly rises, only to fall over the music stand in front of her. **Laughter erupts.**

She reassembles the music stand and quickly takes her seat. Ryan says quickly to cover --

RYAN (CONT'D)

She's, um, already building a journalism career by helping with your school paper -

MEATHEAD FOOTBALL HENCHMAN

(screams) *And it sucks!*

There's uncomfortable laughter. Mr. Riley scurries to the microphone to say --

MR. RILEY

Okay, watch it, Keith. Watch it.

INT. HALLWAY - A BIT LATER

The halls are packed with students and general chaos. Maddie and Anna get their stuff out of their lockers.

MADDIE

I can't wait until Abe sees the dress I got for your mom's wedding.

ANNA

Don't remind me...

Just then, a touchy feely guidance counselor, MR. FRISK who's convinced rainbow suspenders never went out of fashion, stops Anna in the hall. Attached to his suspenders, a button reads: **"Got Hugs?"** He beams down at her.

MR. FRISK

Anna Coleman.

ANNA

(none too pleased) Mr. Frisk.

MR. FRISK

All this time I've been your guidance counselor, and I had no idea you were the daughter of the great Tess Coleman! None! How can that be?!

Anna gets slammed in the shoulder by a student hurrying to class; she feels like a big artery clog in the hallway.

ANNA

I really should get to class...

Mr. Frisk shadows Anna and Maddie as they continue down the hall.

MR. FRISK

Your mother's a genius! But I'm sure you know that... right, Abigail?

Mr. Frisk winks and Anna is horrified.

MR. FRISK (CONT'D)

I would love to meet your mother some day... maybe you could get her to sign her new book for me.

ANNA

Yeah... sure... gotta go. (to Maddie:) Please make this day end.

INT. TESS' CAR - A BIT LATER IN THE DAY

Tess tears into her driveway.

INT. GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

Home from school, Anna whales on her French horn. A copy of "Beyond Juliet" sits nearby with a cracked spine. We sense this is more of a "tension release" exercise than practice.

Harry pops his head into the garage.

HARRY

Could you keep it down, please? I'm trying to watch "Crossfire."

Anna only blows her French horn louder in Harry's face.

HARRY (CONT'D)

Democrats. You have no civility.

He slams the door to the garage shut.

Then the garage door half-way opens. And closes. And opens again. Tess pulls in, comes to a brisk halt and piles out of the car with her groceries and miscellaneous bags.

TESS

Hey... Could you give me a hand please?

Anna defiantly stays put.

TESS (CONT'D)
Anna? A little help?

ANNA
How could you?!

Tess is thrown.

TESS
How could I what?...

ANNA
Write about me like that! Use me as your
"Abigail"? You know, part of me wanted
to believe you couldn't possibly be that
cruel, but clearly I was wrong.

Anna picks up "Beyond Juliet" and defiantly reads from it:

ANNA (CONT'D)
Exhibit A: *Abigail's self-esteem was
crippled at age 12 when she not only had
to wear full head gear but also suffered
from occasional nocturnal enuresis -- "*

TESS
Anna, lots of girls wear headgear and
battle with chronic bed-wetting...

ANNA
Exhibit B: *Abigail's confidence was
severely bruised when she was repeatedly
mistaken for a boy at age 13*

TESS
Ab --

Tess puts a hand over her mouth, horrified.

ANNA
Ah ha! You almost called me Abigail! I
am Abigail!

TESS
No, no, I --

ANNA
How dare you invade my privacy like that?
You think I want people to know about my
bed wetting or being repeatedly called
"son" by the FedEx guy?

Tess takes a deep breath as Harry pops his head in the garage.

HARRY

Mom --

TESS

-- Harry, honey, give us one moment --.

Harry assesses after a beat and shuts the door.

TESS (CONT'D)

It's completely valid to feel these
coincidental parallels --

ANNA

-- Coincidental parallels? You should
have just titled your book "Anna
Coleman's Top Ten Worst Moments"!

Harry pops his head in yet again.

HARRY

Mom, I really --

TESS

(finally snaps)
What is it??!

ANNA

What??!

Behind him, GRANDMA and GRANDPA appear.

HARRY (CONT'D)

Grandma and Grandpa are here.

GRANDMA

Tess, darling. Is now not a good time?

Tess is utterly thrown.

TESS

Mom... Dad... Um, no, it's -- (looks
at her watch:) But it's only... Uh,
what are you doing here now...?

GRANDPA

We somehow managed to get to the airport
five hours ahead of schedule, so we took
an earlier flight! Surprise!

Awkward hugs abound as Tess leads them back into the house.

INT. GREAT ROOM - A BEAT LATER

GRANDMA

Anna, don't you look pretty!

Grandma spins around Anna, taking her in. Then her face falls when she spots the back of her hair. There's a Kool-Aid red streak in the back.

GRANDMA (CONT'D)

But this is simply not becoming. Why it looks like you have a head wound, dear.

Harry laughs and Anna smacks him out of view.

ANNA

At least it's *Stanford* red, Grandma.

GRANDMA

That's a valid point.

GRANDPA

So, how old are you now, Harry? Twelve?

HARRY

I'm eight.

GRANDPA

Eight. Well then. You're old enough to make me a scotch. Make it neat.

TESS

Daddy, didn't you hear him? He's eight. He doesn't know what 'neat' means.

HARRY

Yes, I do. It means without ice.

TESS

Wonderful. Here, I'll make that scotch...

GRANDMA

Bruce, I don't know if you should have a scotch so early in the day... You also need to take your medication.

GRANDPA

I know. Tess is getting it now.

Tess leads everyone into the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Tess goes to make the scotch, trying to mask the weirdness and tension in the air.

TESS

So. How was your flight?

In Tess' haste, she accidentally dumps the scotch bottle onto Anna's backpack. Anna calls out in disgust and pulls out her wet textbooks.

ANNA

Great! When you get a call from Mr. Riley that my textbooks reek of booze, could you tell him this was your fault?

Anna runs upstairs with her things. Tess calls to her:

TESS

Anna, all I ask --

A door slams before she can finish that sentence.

Tess collects herself, attempting to diminish that outburst.

TESS (CONT'D)

Well. You two can go unpack and freshen up. Our dinner reservations are at seven. Ryan's so excited to meet you...

GRANDMA

Tess, you didn't spill the contents of the entire bottle, there, did ya?...

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. CHINESE RESTAURANT - A BIT LATER

Grandpa nodding off. Everyone's seated, staring at menus, sitting in weird silence.

RYAN appears at the main entrance of the restaurant, looks around. Tess lights up, as does Ryan when he spots her. Ryan approaches, carrying flowers. Tess and Ryan kiss. Harry shakes Ryan's hand very officially and Anna sulks.

TESS

Mom, Dad... this is Ryan. Ryan Morris.

Grandpa is almost startled awake.

RYAN
Hi, everybody.

Ryan offers Grandma flowers, she blushes and is charmed.

GRANDMA
How pretty... Thank you.

RYAN
It is so great to finally meet you both.
Grandpa eyes Ryan suspiciously.

GRANDPA
Not very tall, are ya?

RYAN
Excuse me?

GRANDPA
Tess always described you as "tall."
What are ya? 5'6"?

ANNA
(under her breath)
5'5"?

GRANDMA
Bruce, that is extremely rude...

RYAN
It's alright, Mrs. Linden. I'm around
5'10". With the right shoes.

Ryan winks and sits down, smiles a bit awkwardly.

HARRY
Did you know that George Washington was
almost 6'3", which in his day, was an
almost unheard of height? Scholars think
his height really affected his strong
leadership abilities.

Tess is eager to switch the subject:

TESS
Say, Ryan spoke at Anna's school today
for Career Day! And Anna got to play her
French horn with the school band to
introduce the speakers. Didn't cha, hon?

Anna responds by taking a liberal swig of soda from a straw.

TESS (CONT'D)
So, how'd it go, Ryan?

Ryan and Anna lock eyes.

RYAN
Oh, well. It was... great. Nice
school... wonderful kids... what a
library!

Ryan's eager to make the mood light and cordial.

RYAN (CONT'D)
So... Mr. Linden. It sounds like you
and I have something in common. Tess has
told me about your interest in boats.

GRANDPA
You boat?

RYAN
I do indeed.

HARRY
Grandpa says life vests are for wimps.

Grandpa laughs as if that statement can't possibly be true as
Grandma shoots him a look.

RYAN
I absolutely love to sail.

Grandpa's face falls.

GRANDPA
Can you go eighty miles an hour on a
sailboat?

RYAN
(cautiously) No...

ANNA
Yeah, what's your top speed, Ryan? 12?
13?

RYAN
Well, I do enjoy the serenity of sailing.

TESS
(eager to make this pleasant)
We really enjoy getting out on the water
most weekends!

Ryan weakly smiles. Grandpa's eyes narrow, boring into Ryan. Anna just wants to get out of there, snaps her menu shut.

ANNA

So? Is everybody ready to order?

LATER IN THE MEAL ---

The plates are cleared. Only the bill remains. Everyone grabs their fortune cookies, opens them up and reads them.

GRANDPA

Know what mine says?

HARRY

No, what?

GRANDPA

"He who sails has much to learn."

Anna cracks up, Tess nudges her. Tess looks uncomfortable.

Anna and Tess both read their fortunes out loud.

ANNA

*Walking in another's shoes is
bound to enlighten.*

TESS

*Walking in another's shoes is
bound to enlighten.*

Tess and Anna stare at each other, almost spooked, silent.

HARRY

Hey, you got the same one!

Ryan pulls out his fortune.

RYAN

Well, mine's a bit different: *You are to
marry the woman of your dreams.*

Tess melts. Anna rolls her eyes.

TESS

Oh, Ryan, that's so sweet.

They kiss.

ANNA

(under her breath)
Save it for the honeymoon.

TESS
 You know, I knew from the moment I saw
 Ryan that he was the one.

Tess takes Ryan's hand, looks into his eyes.

Anna audibly snorts and bolts from the table, headed for the
 bathroom. After a beat, Tess follows.

TESS (CONT'D)
 Excuse me, please.

Silence follows.

RYAN
 (to waiter)
 Check, please.

INT. CHINESE RESTAURANT HALLWAY - A BEAT LATER

Anna is fuming, arms crossed, leaning against the wall. Tess
 approaches, on edge.

TESS
 Excuse me! Hey!

Anna ignores her as Tess tries to get into her face. A
 little old lady sees this exchange on her way to the rest
 room, Tess realizes and smiles regretfully at her.

Once the little old lady is safely in the rest room, she
 grabs Anna by the arm and drags her into --

INT. CHINESE RESTAURANT KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

An elderly Chinese woman chops vegetables nearby and pretends
 to ignore them. But we can clearly see she is paying acute
 attention to this meltdown.

TESS
 Young lady, you are skating a very fine
 line here --

ANNA
 (mocking) *Skating a very fine line here?*
 Come on, Mom. You're a reknowned
 adolescent psychologist. You can do
 better than "skating a very fine line"...

Tess is becoming unglued.

TESS

Listen. I realize you have residual anger over the disagreement we had prior, but you are being highly inappropriate -

ANNA

Residual anger? You're clueless! You really think because you write some book about teen angst you've got being a teenager all figured out, don't you? That you can have a "discourse" with me and have grand insights into my reality! Well, I'll tell you something -- you have no idea!

Tess' nerves are frayed, but she collects herself.

TESS

Anna, please calm down...

ANNA

Calm down? You are single-handedly out to destroy my life!

TESS

I am trying so hard to respect your anger, but your penchant for drama --

ANNA

-- You don't respect anything about me! A mother who respected her daughter wouldn't expose all her embarrassing secrets in her bestsellers! And you know what, since you find it so hard to respect what is important to me, you can count me out of the stupid rehearsal dinner tomorrow night.

TESS

I beg your pardon?

ANNA

You heard me. I'm going to the No Doubt concert, and there is no way you're going to stop me. Maybe I'll ask Heath if he wants to come.

TESS

(through gritted teeth)
I'm sorry that you're upset, but I am the mother. And as your mother, let me be clear on what you're doing this weekend.

(MORE)

TESS (CONT'D)

You are going to grow up, and you are going to be at my rehearsal dinner, or else...

Anna holds her mother's stare.

ANNA

Or else what?

The stare-down continues. Just then, the elderly Chinese lady forcefully smacks her knife onto her chopping block, causing both Anna and Tess to jump.

The elderly Chinese lady just smiles in apology after seeing them react.

TESS

Excuse us.

INT. CAR - A BIT LATER

Everyone is packed into the car, driving home from dinner. They pass by Anna's high school as Tess points it out.

TESS

(enthusiastically)

Say, there's Anna's school, Grover High...

ANNA

Yeah. It's where I get to experience the magic and pathos of being an adolescent on the brink of discovering my true inner self.

Tess glares at Anna in the rearview mirror, and they lock eyes, equally frustrated.

FADE TO:

(NOTE: FROM NOW ON, TESS THE MOTHER AND ANNA THE DAUGHTER HAVE OFFICIALLY SWITCHED PLACES. THE ACTRESS PLAYING TESS WILL BEHAVE AS THOUGH HER DAUGHTER IS TRAPPED IN HER BODY AND WILL EXPRESS HER DAUGHTER'S VIEWPOINT. LIKEWISE, THE ACTRESS PLAYING ANNA WILL ACT AS THOUGH HER MOTHER IS TRAPPED IN HER BODY, AND EXPRESS HER MOTHER'S PERSPECTIVE.

FOR EXAMPLE, WHENEVER TESS IS SPEAKING, IT IS ACTUALLY ANNA EXPRESSING HERSELF. WHENEVER ANNA TALKS, IT IS ACTUALLY TESS VERBALIZING.)

INT. TESS' BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING

Tess stirs under the covers of her bed.

INT. KITCHEN - EARLY MORNING

Anna's eyes groggily open. Her head is on her History textbook at the kitchen table, drool collected on the page, having fallen asleep studying. She places a hand on her aching neck.

INT. TESS' BEDROOM - MORNING

Tess scratches her head, stretches. Then she notices her fancy Piaget watch on her wrist. What? She studies it -- doesn't recognize it.

She inches out of bed, sensing something, and stares in the mirror, **and lets out a little scream**. She then stifles it by covering her mouth in horror. She's in a feminine, frilly nightgown. She touches the fabric, uncertain, inches closer to her reflection -- almost as if it might lurch out and bite her.

She then backs up from her visage, terrified, and peers down the front of her nightgown, curious. She turns sideways in the mirror to eye her more voluptuous offering. She nods "not bad," then goes back to the business of freaking out.

INT. KITCHEN - A BEAT LATER

Anna stares at the bulky G Shock watch on her wrist, not recognizing it. Looks around, doesn't know where she is. Sees she's wearing sweatpants and is utterly confused.

Anna rises from the table --

INT. TESS' BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Tess stares into the mirror. She splashes water on her face, inspects her face close-up.

TESS

(to herself, panicky)

Okay. I am having a nervous breakdown.

I am having a nervous breakdown.

Iamhavinganervousbreakdown.

She begins pacing.

TESS (CONT'D)

It's a dream. It's a dream. A dream...

INT. COLEMAN KITCHEN - MORNING

Anna with a befuddled "there's no way" expression on her face, makes her morning coffee. She shakes her head and almost laughs. Pours herself a mug and --

In the reflection of the oven glass, she sees her daughter's image being reflected back to her.

She spits out her coffee that sprays everywhere and **screams**.

INT. TESS' BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Tess can barely breathe and has her head between her legs, trying to get some air. She hears Anna's scream. Her eyes bulge and follow the direction of the sound of the scream.

INT. COLEMAN KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Anna is frozen, paralyzed in front of her reflection in the oven. She's dropped her mug and stands in a puddle of coffee.

Tess inches into the room, uneasy with every step. Anna and Tess' eyes are locked in complete and utter panic. Their eyes bore into each other's souls at this impossibility. They slowly creep toward one another, speak in hushed, freaked tones.

TESS

You're not...

ANNA

Are you?...

TESS

This cannot...

ANNA

No way...

Harry appears at the doorway, having overheard some of this stilted exchange. He goes for his morning cereal, "Wall Street Journal" in hand.

HARRY

It's called *forming a sentence*.

Grandpa now enters the kitchen, a robe barely covering his expanding middle, responds to Harry's comment:

GRANDPA

No, it's called "what's for breakfast?"

Anna authoritatively grabs Tess by the arm and pulls her outside, shuts the door to the patio with a **slam!**

EXT. OUTDOOR PATIO - CONTINUOUS

Anna attempts to pull it together, to focus and be the adult. Tess, on the other hand, is losing it.

ANNA

Okay.

TESS

Okay what?

ANNA

Okay. All right. It appears... (as if this is somehow logical) it appears we may be experiencing a *stress-induced hallucination* --

TESS

-- *A stress-induced hallucination?!*

Grandpa taps on the glass door, pointing to a carton of eggs.

Tess points to Grandpa, ignores his question.

TESS (CONT'D)

(screaming, freaking)

-- *How come Grandpa didn't catch the "stress-induced hallucination"!*

Grandpa opens up the patio door, displaying the eggs.

GRANDPA

Tess, you've got a starving senior on your hands...

ANNA

Not now, Daddy, we need a moment. And can't you fix them yourself?

GRANDPA

Actually, no. (beat) And did you just call me "Daddy?"

ANNA

Grand... daddy.

Grandpa eyes her suspiciously and **thuds** the door shut.

TESS

See? Grandpa's still Grandpa! And
Harry's fine! So's Grandma!

ANNA

Okay, I realize that --

TESS

(finishing that thought) -- People don't
just switch?!

Tess' eyes dart about the back patio, focuses in on the
potted geraniums. She grabs two pots and switches them.

TESS (CONT'D)

There, that's a switch!

She picks up a dog bowl and watering can and switches their
places.

TESS (CONT'D)

Voila! Another switch!

ANNA

-- Okay. Okayokayokay.

Anna puts her fingers to her temples.

TESS

Okay what?

Tess is almost hyperventilating.

ANNA

I have no idea.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Harry, Grandma and Grandpa watch this odd exchange through
the glass patio window, transfixed.

GRANDMA

Maybe this is one of Tess' new
communication techniques. They do seem
to be expressing themselves.

They continue watching Anna and Tess freak out, practically
screaming at one another and gesturing wildly. We can barely
make out what they're saying through the patio door, it's
inaudible - just **weirded-out barks**.

In the backyard, even the family Akita stares with a bemused expression at the two bickering back and forth.

HARRY

Sometimes it's a burden to be the lone voice of reason in the house.

EXT. BACK PATIO - CONTINUOUS

Tess and Anna turn their heads, revealing --

TESS AND ANNA'S POV: Grandpa, Grandma and Harry look curiously at them through the glass door, almost like they're observing zoo animals.

Anna grabs Tess by the arm and enters the house, storming past the curious bystanders, retreating upstairs.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Grandma's watches BEEPS!, reminds her of something.

GRANDMA

Time for my some cardio!

Grandma heads out the door for her daily walk in a sweatsuit.

When she's gone, Harry places a hand on Grandpa's shoulder.

HARRY

Don't worry, Grandpa. I'll feed you.

Upstairs, a door slams.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Anna paces and **mumbles to herself**, Tess jumps up and down in full-throttle anxiety.

TESS

Oh my god, oh my god, oh my god --

Harry knocks on the door and pokes his head in.

TESS (CONT'D)

What??

ANNA

What??!

HARRY

I wanted to see if you wanted breakfast.
I'm making pancakes.

No response.

HARRY (CONT'D)
I'm making them in the shape of famous
Republican majority leaders...

Tess slams the door in Harry's face.

INT. KITCHEN - A BEAT LATER

Harry enters the kitchen. Grandpa already has a bib on.

HARRY
Negative, admiral.

Grandpa shrugs his shoulders.

GRANDPA
Say, there wouldn't happen to be any
bacon we can add to that skillet, would
there?

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

The two continue freaking out.

ANNA
Okay, we must come up with a plan...

TESS
Yeah, let's consult the I-Just-Switched-
Bodies-With-My-Daughter manual.

ANNA
Alright, sarcasm will get us nowhere...

TESS
-- Oh, excuse me if I happen to forget my
manners this morning, but I'm having a
bit of a crisis!

INT. KITCHEN - A BIT LATER

Grandpa's plates are clean.

Grandma enters back from her walk, a bit flushed. She stops
the timer on her sports watch.

GRANDMA
There! I just added seventeen minutes to
my life expectancy.

Grandpa stares at his empty plate.

GRANDPA

Good news for you -- I just took fourteen
off of mine.

GRANDMA

Oh, Bruce... Say, what smells so good?

HARRY

Pancakes.

Harry carefully lifts a pancake, displaying it for her.

HARRY (CONT'D)

See? It's Trent Lott!

Grandma is almost terrified.

GRANDMA

Isn't that sweet.

SFX: Doorbell rings.

HARRY

I'll get it...

Camera follows Harry to the front door.

INT. FOYER - CONTINUOUS

Harry answers the door only to find Heath.

HEATH

Hey, Mr. Second Amendment...

Harry sizes him up.

HARRY

We're only as strong as our freedoms.

HEATH

Right. Hey, is Anna here? I've been
waiting for awhile, and I'm supposed to
give her a ride to school today...

HARRY

Just a minute.

Harry shuts the door in Heath's face.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Harry puts his ear to the door and hears:

TESS (O.S.)
 I just don't see how *evil fortune cookies*
could have done this, Mom...

Harry snaps open the door and asks:

HARRY
 Did you just call her "Mom?"

TESS
 Umm... no. Ma'am. I called her ma'am.
 And whatever happened to knocking?

HARRY
 Since when do you use the word "ma'am"?

ANNA
 What is it, Harry?

Harry looks at Anna in amazement -- she's actually
 acknowledging him with civility.

HARRY
 That delinquent from across the street is
 here for you. To give you a ride.

Tess squeals.

TESS
 Oh my god! I forgot! Heath's here!
Heath Brent is actually at my door and --

Harry stares incredulously as Tess realizes.

TESS (CONT'D)
 -- Oh my god. I can't... I'm, uh...
 no. I can't. Not today. I'm sick.
 Tell him to just go.

HARRY
 He's not here for you...

ANNA
 Tell him I'll be right down.

Tess stares at Anna, freaked. Anna's got a small smile in
 place, she's obviously formulating some plan.

Harry's flummoxed, studies the two of them.

TESS
What???

ANNA

I think it would interesting to have a few words with Heath Brent in his own environment.

Harry looks as if they've completely lost their minds.

TESS

That is perhaps the most *insane* thing I've ever heard --

ANNA

It's an ideal opportunity to find out what his real intentions are...

Tess wigs out, pacing, almost talking to herself.

HARRY

It's a *ride to school* here, people, not the cure for cancer.

ANNA

Please tell him I'll be right down.

Harry goes to tell Heath and exits.

Tess grabs Anna by the arms and pulls her close, stares intently into her eyes with life and death urgency.

TESS

I'm begging you. Please. Do not. *Mess. With. My. Life.*

ANNA

Someday you'll thank me --

TESS

For what? Deliberately sabotaging my chance to spend time with the only passable guy at school?

ANNA

-- Anna, I'm not sabotaging anything. I'm simply going to probe for more information. Trust me, I'm a professional.

TESS

You can't!

ANNA

I can. After all, I am your mother.

Tess flops onto the bed.

EXT. COLEMAN DRIVEWAY - CONTINUOUS

Heath sits against his car, waiting for Anna to come out.

Harry appears on the driveway.

HARRY

I was told to tell you to please wait.

HEATH

Okay.

HARRY

But I'll warn you now. Somebody's taken a spring break from sanity.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

TESS

Oh my god! And today is my No Doubt interview! Today! Great! Could this be more of a nightmare?? I've only been working on getting this for the past year. I am so screwed --

Tess collapses onto the bed again.

TESS (CONT'D)

-- Just shoot me now.

She covers her face with a pillow.

ANNA

Being dramatic isn't helping --

Tess peers at her from behind the pillow.

TESS

-- You're right. I should be calmer. In fact, I don't know what lulls me to sleep faster: Soaking in a lavender bath or switching bodies with my mom?!

ANNA

Please just trust me on this, okay? But you stay here. I'll cancel my sessions and have Ryan go in my place for the interview with the *San Diego Tribune* this morning. After I get back, I promise we'll go down to the House of Chen together and figure this out --

TESS

-- How many times do I have to say:
this is bigger than fortune cookies!

INT. HOME OFFICE - A BEAT LATER

Anna is on the phone.

ANNA

Julia, hi. It's T -- I mean, it's Anna.
My, uh, my mom wanted me to let you know
that she won't be coming in today.

INT. TESS' OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Tess' assistant JULIA reacts.

JULIA

Won't be coming in?

ANNA (O.S.)

Yeah, you'll have to cancel her
appointments. She's sick. And have Ryan
take her place for the interview.

JULIA

I need to speak to her.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

ANNA

She, uh, can't come to the phone.

Anna holds the phone far from her face and makes wheezing
coughing sounds.

JULIA (O.S.)

But I --

Tess snatches the phone.

TESS

-- Thanks, Julia, you're a peach.
Talktoyoulaterbye --

Tess slams down the phone.

INT. ANNA'S BEDROOM - A BEAT LATER

Tess takes Anna's hair and puts it up in a clamp. It's a bit
messy but looks cool. Anna checks out her reflection.

ANNA

It looks like a family of squirrels live in there!

TESS

Mom, it's cool! Trust me! If you insist on actually driving to school with Heath, at least you're going to look decent...

She opens the closet only to find a sea of strewn clothes -- it's as if a bomb went off in here. Anna reacts to the mess.

ANNA

Oh, for the love of God, Anna...

TESS

Now is so not the time for the hygiene talk.

Harry pops his head into the room.

HARRY

Anna, Heath is *still* waiting.

TESS

Out, dork.

Anna elbows Tess.

ANNA

Honey, she didn't mean to call you that. And I'll be right there.

Again, Harry is massively confused and can't believe all this civility Anna is bestowing upon him. He stares in disbelief, frozen.

Anna's eyes search the closet.

ANNA (CONT'D)

Where is that adorable dress Grandma bought you?

TESS

Are you insane?

Tess grabs her cool retro cowboy shirt and hands it to Anna.

TESS (CONT'D)

Here.

Anna retreats to the adjoining bathroom to put on the shirt as Tess spots Harry is still standing in the doorway with a completely puzzled expression on his face.

TESS (CONT'D)

Aren't you late for school or something?

HARRY

Uh huh...

TESS

What about the bus?

HARRY

Come and gone. But Grandpa told me he'd -

Anna exits the bathroom adjusting her shirt, reacts to Grandpa's offer to drive Harry:

ANNA

Not since that golf cart incident, he's not...

Anna looks in the mirror, adjusts herself with the authority of a little business woman. Harry's jaw is on the floor.

ANNA (CONT'D)

You can ride with me and Heath.

Tess' at the end of her rope.

TESS

Fine! Take him! What do I care? My life is over anyway!

She storms out, Harry watches, incredulous.

ANNA

It's a... pre-matrimony stress disorder.

EXT. COLEMAN DRIVEWAY - A BEAT LATER

Tess approaches Heath who still waits.

TESS

Heath, I just want to warn you, Anna is really not feeling like herself today... So please don't make any, you know, premature judgments about her, okay?

Tess nervously laughs and Heath smiles, unsure about that.

HEATH

Okay...

TESS

Hey, that tattoo is so cool!

Heath inspects his arm, can't believe she's saying that.

HEATH

Yeah, my parents freaked when I got it...

TESS

Ha! Parents. What do they know?

Tess chuckles and Heath's a bit flummoxed.

Anna finally appears.

TESS (CONT'D)

There she is! Okay!

HEATH

Hey, Anna!

ANNA

Good morning, Heath...

Anna and Tess share a look as Anna's about to climb into the car.

ANNA (CONT'D)

I'm sure my mom told you all about giving my brother Harry a ride, too, right?...

Tess is in physical pain as Heath nods "sure."

TESS

Have a good day at school, honey...
(leans in to whisper:) *Keep the talking to an absolute minimum. Please? And before class, go to the office for the announcements.*

ANNA

I thought it was DJing...

TESS

Not funny.

As the door is about to be closed, Harry grabs it, mid-shut, and jumps into the front seat.

HARRY

Shot gun!

ANNA

Thanks so much. He goes to Wilson.

Tess buries her head in her hands.

INT. HEATH'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Harry inspects the plush environs of this Toyota 4Runner.

HARRY

Nice car...

HEATH

One of the perks of divorced parents.

ANNA

Right, the Demeritorious Divorced Dad Syndrome...

HEATH

Excuse me?

ANNA

Demeritorious Divorced Dad Syndrome.
When guilty parents bestow extravagant
gifts on their children to compensate for
dismantling the family unit.

HEATH

Right... So... Did ya get a chance to
sign my yearbook?

ANNA

Uh... no.

HEATH

Oh ... well. Don't worry. Take your
time. I can get it later today.

ANNA

So. Would you say that your parent's
divorce has left you particularly
rebellious or maladjusted in any way?

HEATH

Well... I wasn't happy about it.

ANNA

Uh huh...

HEATH

But it's not as if I routinely take a baseball bat to my father's cherished Porsche or anything.

ANNA

(feeling a tad foolish) Right.

Heath sniffs the air.

HEATH

Have you been drinking?

ANNA

No. No, why?

HEATH

I swear I can smell scotch...

ANNA

Oh. Right. My, uh, my mom accidentally spilled a drink on my backpack yesterday.

Anna considers, leashes out:

ANNA (CONT'D)

Here's a moral dilemma. Suppose your parents go to Europe for three weeks. Do you raid the liquor cabinet and have a party?

HEATH

No.

ANNA

No?

HEATH

Everyone knows high school parties are pretty lame...

Anna's surprised.

ANNA

Which is why you prefer bars and having a fake ID, that sort of thing, right?...

HEATH

I'm not really a drinker. And if you're trying to figure out if I know someone who can get you a fake ID, I'm sorry --

ANNA

-- Oh, no. No. No.

HARRY

Anything wrong with buying American?

HEATH

What was that?

HARRY

This car. Anything wrong with buying American?

HEATH

Uh, no, not really... like I said, I didn't buy it.

Harry considers.

HARRY

So what are your future plans?

Heath laughs.

HEATH

Future plans? I must say, the Colemans certainly are inquisitive...

HARRY

(sincere)

Thank you.

HEATH

To answer your question, I got into Stanford --

HARRY

-- Excellent.

HEATH

Thanks. And I also got into the Berklee School of Music. My dad wants me to go business, but music is my passion. But he seemed to see things more my way when I threw a Chinese proverb in his face.

Heath stops the car at Harry's school.

HARRY

What proverb?

HEATH

"Do what you love and you'll never have to work a day again in your life."

Harry hands Heath something.

TIGHT ON: A SMALL AMERICAN FLAG PIN.

HARRY

The 60s, my friend, are over.

Harry jumps out of the car as Heath stares in curious amusement at the pin in his hand.

INT. FAMILY ROOM - A BEAT LATER

Grandma and Grandpa watch the "Today" show. Tess paces in the background in the adjoining kitchen, on the phone.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

ASIAN-AMERICAN MAN

(on message machine)

You've reached the House of Chen, and no one's here to take your call. Please leave your name and number, and we'll get back to you.

BEEP!

Tess leaves a message.

TESS

Yes, hi, my name is An -- I'm, uh, Tess Coleman, and I was in your restaurant last night. I really need to discuss something with you... it regards your, um, fortune cookies. So if you could call me back, it's very urgent -- 555-9248. Thanks.

Tess hangs up. Grandma looms in the background with a puzzled look on her face.

GRANDMA

Tess, dear, is everything all right this morning?

TESS

Umm... next question...

GRANDMA

Because I have to be honest, both you and Anna seem --

TESS

-- I cannot believe she went off with Heath Brent!

GRANDMA

Don't worry, sweetie. If she's half as awkward as you say she is, what sort of trouble could she possibly get into?

Tess is stunned by these words, as Grandma pats her arm maternally and exits.

Still reeling, Tess looks down and spots --

TIGHT ON: Tess' appointment book. She flips to today's entry, scans the appointments.

Tess almost does a double-take when she spots the name:

STACEY HINKHOUSE, 12:00.

TESS

(to herself)

No way...

Tess stops in her tracks, gets an idea, takes a beat.

TESS (CONT'D)

(to herself)

You wanna ruin my life? Fine. Two can play at that game.

She dials the phone.

TESS (CONT'D)

Hi, Julia, it's Tess. Listen, I'm feeling much better and I think I will be coming in after all... Yeah. And where is that breakfast interview again?

INT. GROVER HIGH SCHOOL - MORNING

The halls buzz with people as Anna enters the school for the first time. She's amazed with all the activity.

Some jocks have each other in headlocks and wrestle. The cheerleaders are congregated together, speak in animated voices. The metalheads stroll by blaring a loud boom box. Anna is dumbfounded. She spots --

Jocks take a small FRESHMAN NERD and shove him into a locker.

FRESHMAN NERD
(from inside the locker)
*Someday when I get my late growth spurt,
you'll regret this!*

Anna opens the locker. The nerd stumbles out.

FRESHMAN NERD (CONT'D)
(quietly) Thanks...

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - A BEAT LATER

Tess opens up her closet and stares disapprovingly, shaking her head at the organized display of Talbots suits as she munches on a Bear Claw pastry.

She reaches for --

INT. FAMILY ROOM - A BEAT LATER

Tess strides through the room wearing casual jeans, a tight and funky halter top, carrying car keys.

TESS
See you later!

Once she's exited the room, Grandma observes:

GRANDMA
Now this "Casual Friday" notion has gone
entirely too far.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY - A BEAT LATER

Anna stands still, almost bowled over by the activity in the frenetic hallway. In a tizzy, the A/V dorks approach.

A/V DORK #1
Good morning, fair maiden! For the hand
of the clock doth chime, and thou art
most tardy...

ANNA
What?

A/V DORK #2
You're late...

They start dragging her away.

INT. MR. RILEY'S OFFICE, NEAR "THE BOOTH" - A BEAT LATER

Anna stares at the postings on the closet door. Mrs. Buckner wields the announcements and microphone, thrusts both into her hands.

MRS. BUCKNER
Looks like this robin won't be gettin' . .
her worm this morning!

ANNA
Huh?

MRS. BUCKNER
(all business)
You're on in seven seconds.

EXT. STREET - A BEAT LATER

Tess is behind the wheel of the convertible, cautiously shifting. The car lurches, stalls. To say Tess is an uncertain driver is beyond an understatement.

Tess hits a button and the convertible top dismantles. She screams, flustered. She screeches to a halt. And proceeds cautiously again.

A crosswalk GUARD shakes his head as he sees the car approaching with the top coming down. He points to his eyes, suggesting "I'm watching you."

She inches away and accidentally hits the radio, No Doubt's "I'm Just a Girl" springs to life. Instantly Tess is thrilled and blares the music as she guns the engine, speeding away, singing full-throttle. Maybe this getting to be an adult business isn't that bad after all.

INT. RADIO BOOTH/CLOSET - A BEAT LATER

The A/V Dorks quickly plug the microphone in and hand her the announcements. Anna's suddenly very freaked.

There's a **tap at the door.**

MRS. BUCKNER (O.S.)
Kiddo, you're on.

Anna stares at the A/V Dorks, who have turned the system on. She's silent. They stare at her expectantly.

A/V DORK #1
(whispers)
Go ahead.

Anna takes a big gulp of air and cautiously reads from the card into the microphone.

ANNA

(uncertain)

The Annual Car Wash for the Blind is happening this Sunday at 11 a.m. For more info, there's a sign-up sheet in the library.

Not so bad. Anna is pleased and relieved, looks to the A/V Dorks who offer big enthusiastic thumbs ups.

ANNA (CONT'D)

(confident, springy)

For those of you who still aren't aware, this week is Spirit Week! So go Wildcats! And let's see those school colors in the hallways!

The A/V Dorks stare at each other, utterly befuddled with her rah-rah turn.

Anna concludes her announcements, thrilled with her enthusiastic performance. Just then, Maddie dashes in.

MADDIE

Oh, my god, there you are! I've been dying to know how the ride went!

ANNA

Heath drove me to school. End of story.

MADDIE

But I've heard he's *never given a girl a ride at this school before.*

ANNA

Meaning?

MADDIE

Meaning you're actually closer to dating that hottie! I mean, you've loved him since the moment his moving van pulled up across the street...

FOLLOW THE SOUNDS TO:

INT. HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Some students react to the **entire exchange that was broadcast at volume eleven over the PA.**

CHEERLEADER

Like that freaky radio girl could date
Heath... Right!

EXT. SWANK RESTAURANT - A BIT LATER

Tess races into the valet parking station and comes to a
screeching stop. A young VALET STUD leaps out of the way.

TESS

Sorry!

INT. HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY - A BEAT LATER

Anna struggles with her locker over and over.

ANNA

(to herself)

24.... 12... 8...

Heath approaches, leans up against the locker, smiling.

HEATH

Hey, Anna.

Her locker finally opens, she gets out her books.

ANNA

Hi.

HEATH

So... I, uh, heard the morning
announcements...

ANNA

Oh, yeah, I'm sorry about that.

HEATH

No, it's okay. You know, it was good to
hear. I was... well, I was wondering if
you wanted to go out sometime.

Anna's got all her stuff, starts to head off.

ANNA

I just don't think that's a good idea.

Heath watches her go, utterly confused.

INT. GIRLS' LOCKER ROOM - A BIT LATER

Anna's in a swimsuit, stares at her butt in a mirror.

MADDIE

Come on, there must be some details! You gotta tell me more than that...

Anna just nods, still hypnotized by her posterior.

MADDIE (CONT'D)

No future plans, no hint of anything? "

Anna slowly nods "no," never taking her eyes off her reflection. Maddie just sighs.

ANNA

Well, he did ask me out...

MADDIE

He what? --

Anna ignores that and pushes a finger into her firm toosh.

ANNA

Look! It's practically levitating!

Anna beams into the mirror and Maddie doesn't know what to think.

MADDIE

Heath is making you certifiably insane.

ANNA

Trust me, Heath Brent is not making me insane. Besides, I think Abe would be a much better match for me, don't you?

Maddie is stung by her words; Abe is her love.

MADDIE

I cannot believe you.

Anna's fixates on her fine posterior. Maddie's in shock.

MADDIE

(CONT'D)

I'm going.

Maddie exits, Anna continues her curious inspection.

ANNA

(to her reflection) I've missed you, my adorable tenth-grade ass...

EXT. OUTDOOR RESTAURANT COURTYARD - A BIT LATER

Tess enters the swank, flower-filled patio and spots Ryan chatting with a woman at a table.

Ryan spots her and waves her over. Tess gingerly approaches. Ryan gets up when she reaches the table and kisses her on the lips, Tess almost grimaces.

RYAN

You made it! Did you have trouble parking?

TESS

Actually, today I had trouble driving.

Both the woman and Ryan laugh at this unintentional joke. The woman offers her a hand. It's JUDITH RESNICK, reporter with the *San Diego Tribune*. They shake hands.

JUDIITH

Please, have a seat. I'm Judith, we spoke on the phone... So. Ryan's was just telling me about how your working relationship has evolved into marriage.

TESS

(with disdain) Right...

An uncomfortable silence. Tess isn't going to elaborate.

JUDIITH

Well. Congrats on both fronts: your wedding and your book. "Beyond Juliet" is really a contribution. I re-read it again last night.

TESS

Wow, that's cool. Thanks.

JUDITH

And since we already discussed your background prior, do you mind if we dig right in with the questions?

Judith sits poised with a pad of paper and pen. Tess gestures to go ahead.

JUDITH (CONT'D)

Tell me more about Chapter Five, "Drowning Just as Fast as I Can," in which Abigail's self-esteem plummeted upon turning 13 --

TESS

-- Let me set some things straight about Abigail. First of all, do you know what it's like for a teenage girl when even your uncle refers to you as his "favorite nephew"? Do you know what it's like when your mom *finally* takes you bra shopping and the sales lady insists that you really do not need a bra yet?

RYAN

-- I think what Tess is trying to say is that the preteen psyche is malleable --

TESS

-- That's not what I'm trying to say.

Ryan is thrown, backpedals.

RYAN

Well, maybe not malleable per say, but I think --

TESS

-- That I wrote the book and you didn't, cowboy? Is that what you were thinking?

Ryan looks down, uncomfortable. Awkward silence follows.

JUDITH

So. And the wedding's *this* weekend for you two lovebirds?

INT. SWIMMING POOL AREA - A BIT LATER

Students thrash in the pool as a stern, whistle-wielding GYM TEACHER bellows instructions.

Anna stands in her suit on a cell phone.

INTERCUT with Grandma on the phone at home.

GRANDMA

Anna, where are you?

ANNA

I'm in gym class. Listen, is Mom around?

GRANDMA

She went into work.

ANNA

She what?

GRANDMA

(almost screams) *She went into work...*
You teenagers listen to your music so
loud, it's no wonder you're all going
deaf. I saw it on "Dateline."

ANNA

-- (ignoring that) -- I told her
specifically to stay right -- (realizing)
so, uh, she's feeling better, eh?

GRANDMA

I suppose. She's always been such an
amazing worker. But she pushes herself
so hard...

Anna smiles, touched.

ANNA

I know, Mom.

GRANDMA

What?

ANNA

I mean, I know I have to talk to Mom --

The GYM TEACHER spots Anna on the phone.

GYM TEACHER

(barks)

*Coleman!! This is gym, not a game of
telephone! Get your butt in the pool!*

ANNA

I gotta go. Tell her I called.

Anna hangs up, relishing taking this butt to the pool.

INT. CAR - A BEAT LATER

Tess drives down the road, having left the interview and
spots a CD store. She makes a quick turn into the parking
lot, cutting off some cars who **honk** at her.

INT. CD & RECORD STORE - A BEAT LATER

Tess juggles about 50 CDs in her arms. A timid, teenage
STORE CLERK approaches.

TEENAGE STORE CLERK

Could I help you with that?

Tess unloads the CDs into his frail arms.

TESS

Thanks. I haven't even hit the import section yet.

TEENAGE STORE CLERK

(drowning under the CDs)

Um... buying gifts for the holidays?

Tess laughs.

TESS

No. Just sweetening my collection, you could say.

Tess flashes a gold card.

TESS (CONT'D)

One word. Plastic.

INT. TESS' OFFICE - A BEAT LATER

Tess enters the office while aggressively tearing off the plastic wrapper of a CD with her teeth. Julia spots her --

JULIA

There you... are...

Julia stops in her tracks, shocked by Tess' plunging neckline and the visual of her Jaws of Life CD opening.

Tess triumphantly displays the CD as she spits out the plastic film.

TESS

I'm so psyched -- the new "Badly Drawn Boy" is out!

Julia is beyond thrown, distracted:

JULIA

Jason's... already... arrived. I was going to run to Starbucks... you want anything?

TESS

No, but I could totally use a Blue Icee!

And Tess enters her office.

INT. TESS' OFFICE - A BIT LATER

Tess listens as a vaguely pretty TEEN GIRL talks. Tess also has both feet up on the table.

TEEN GIRL
Seriously, I'm like the teen Jackie O.

TESS
Clearly...

TEEN GIRL
And my allowance does so not even cover my basic needs. I mean, hello?, Diesel jeans are, like, \$125 alone! So, it's, like, really hard not to... just take a couple dollars from my mom's purse now and then --

Tess peers at her file.

TESS
-- It says here you racked up five thousand dollars on your Mom's gold card!

TEEN GIRL
Well, I know it's wrong --

TESS
-- (uber-sarcastic) Gee, do ya think? If you were my kid, you'd be grounded for life!

INT. HIGH SCHOOL CAFETERIA - A BIT LATER

Anna is on a pay phone.

INTERCUT with Julia at Tess' office.

ANNA
Julia, it's Te -- it's Anna, and I have to talk to my Mom --

JULIA
Anna, she's in right now with a client --

ANNA
-- a client??!

JULIA
Yes, that's generally how it works.

ANNA

Julia, this has gone far enough... I need to talk to --

JULIA

-- Anna, you know the rules; she doesn't like to be interrupted while she's --

ANNA

-- But this is an emergency. It's a grave emergency.

JULIA

Is that right? And what's the emergency?

Punk rock teens amble by; Anna focuses on a pointy-haired kid with a GIANT MOHAWK. Anna watches them walk by.

ANNA

Hair... issues.

And Julia hangs up on her.

INT. TESS' OFFICE - A BIT LATER

Tess swivels in her chair a bit too much as a TENSE TEEN GIRL sits in a chair, talking. She takes a big sip of her Blue Icee.

TESS

Is your father nuts?! Princeton's not a "safety school"! It's impossible to get into! If you miss one math question on the SAT, they practically ban you...

Tess places a hand on her forehead.

TENSE TEEN

What's wrong?

TESS

Sorry. (displaying her Icee) Wicked brain freeze. So... have you told your father how insane he is?

TENSE TEEN

Well... no... not really...

TESS

Well, then, I will.

Tess reaches for the phone.

TESS (CONT'D)
What's his number?

A big smile breaks out on the girl's face.

TENSE TEEN
You know, I always knew you were a really good therapist, but I had no idea you were *this* good.

Tess beams in response.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY - A BIT LATER

Anna holds a surreptitious cell phone up to her ear.

SPLIT SCREEN: INT. HOUSE OF CHEN - CONTINUOUS

The middle-aged ASIAN-AMERICAN MAN who served the family at the restaurant the night before is on the line.

ANNA
Hi, I was in your restaurant last night, and we got some fortune cookies --

ASIAN-AMERICAN MAN
(sarcastic)
-- Of course, fortune cookies. How could I forget you?

ANNA
Well, you see, me and my daughter got the *same* fortune, and that's where we --

ASIAN-AMERICAN MAN
-- *Daughter?* (beat) How old are you?

Anna gets a forceful tap on her shoulder.

ANNA
(to whoever tapped her)
Hold on one second...

Anna turns back to the phone call.

ANNA (CONT'D)
It's very important that I --

Another powerful tap.

Anna turns around and looks up, only to see the very disapproving face of MR. RILEY, Vice Principal.

ANNA (CONT'D)

Gotta go. I'll call you back.

Anna clicks off.

MR. RILEY

Not on this phone you won't.

Mr. Riley extends an open palm. Anna places the cell phone in his palm, and he dramatically snatches it away.

INT. MR. RILEY'S OFFICE - A BEAT LATER

His office is littered with motivational posters.

Mr. Riley points to one with an airborne bald eagle. Underneath it reads: INTEGRITY.

MR. RILEY

You see this?

ANNA

Yes.

MR. RILEY

And what does it say?

ANNA

Integrity?...

MR. RILEY

Precisely.

Mr. Riley admires the poster, takes a deep patriotic breath.

MR. RILEY (CONT'D)

God, I love that poster. (beat) And that is precisely what is lacking here.

ANNA

What, a bald eagle?

Mr. Riley's face is growing red.

ANNA (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, that was a bad joke. But to be perfectly honest, I wasn't aware there was a no-cell phone rule. But I completely support it.

MR. RILEY

Huh?

ANNA

But maybe just this once, we can look the other way...

MR. RILEY

Oh, so the rules just don't seem to apply to you --

ANNA

-- I'm not saying that --

MR. RILEY

-- I have had it up to here with your continued anti-social behavior! You're officially on probation.

ANNA

But I --

MR. RILEY

Do not get mouthy!

ANNA

I'm not trying to be mouthy. If you'd only listen, I can explain --

Mr. Riley gestures for silence, amazed she's still trying.

MR. RILEY

Ah, dah, dah --

ANNA

It's really just a misunderstan --

Mr. Riley's at wit's end, signs zipping his lip.

MR. RILEY

Bah! Dah, dah!

ANNA

But I --

MR. RILEY

-- Dah! Now let's work on that personal integrity and just go forward, how's that?

INT. TESS' OFFICE - A BIT LATER

Convertible fan and glum teen CHARLIE sits in the chair.

Tess is animated talking to him, and sits on the couch opposite him, cross-legged.

TESS

Oh, I'm tellin' ya, my Saab 9-3 Turbo convertible rocks!

CHARLIE

I knew it!

TESS

Hey, do you want any Sour Patch Kids? I can have my secretary go get anything I want. Watch this --

Tess hits a button on the phone next to the couch.

JULIA (O.S.)

Yes, Tess?

Tess and Charlie smile conspiratorially at one another.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL CLASSROOM - A BIT LATER

Anna plays with her hair, her face is furrowed and she is painfully confused as she stares at the History midterm before her.

Her paper is entirely blank when she spots --

A/V DORK #2 waving at the window by the door, triumphantly holding something in his hand. The HISTORY TEACHER spots this distraction and opens the door to inquire about what he wants. Anna sees him excitedly tell the teacher something.

HISTORY TEACHER

Anna Coleman... You've got thirty seconds.

Once in the safety of the hallway, Anna needily grabs the collar of A/V Dork #2, desperate for info.

ANNA

Please. Help me. What's the Monroe Doctrine?

A/V DORK #2

Whoa, fair maiden, for this most unseen --

ANNA

-- No Shakespeare. Monroe Doctrine.

A/V DORK #2
 (spoken very fast) James Monroe's momentous address marked America's last step to independence which had begun in the Revolution and moved through post-independence foreign treaties, the Louisiana Purchase, the War of 1812 and the postwar agreements.

Anna stares in confusion.

ANNA
 Never mind. What do you want?

A/V DORK #2
 I'm supposed to give you this.

Anna snatches it and walks back to her classroom, not bothering to read it.

A/V DORK #2 (CONT'D)
 Does the fact that it grants you an interview with Gwen Stefani interest you?

Anna stops again.

ANNA
 Not unless she knows something about the Monroe Doctrine.

A/V Dork #2 dies laughing, not realizing Anna is serious.

A/V DORK #2
 Apparently the manager couldn't make it, but Gwen heard about your daily faxes and felt bad! She's agreed to a brief interview! Today, 4:30, at the Four Seasons. Just you and Gwen.

ANNA
 Alright, but I really can not believe you pulled me out of class for that...

Anna turns on her heels to go back to her test-taking, and A/V Dork is confused -- did that really happen?

INT. TESS' OFFICE - A BIT LATER

Tess hits the "Julia" blinking intercom button on her phone.

JULIA (O.S.)
 Tess, Stacey Hinkhouse just arrived.

TESS

Great! Send her in! (sings to herself)
Send her in, send her in...

Popular queen bee Stacey walks into her office.

TESS (CONT'D)

Stacey! Have a seat.

Stacey sits down. Tess is relishing this.

TESS (CONT'D)

Stacey Hinkhouse. My, my, my.

Stacey just stares as Tess takes a moment and soaks this in.

TESS (CONT'D)

Are you comfortable? Can I get you something?

STACEY

No, I'm --

TESS

-- How about a new Mustang convertible?
Or how about some Prada sunglasses?

Stacey's confused as Tess opens her file.

TESS (CONT'D)

Let's just see what hell on earth you've been experiencing lately. Was it too hard to decide which of the three Prom invitations to accept?

Stacey's irritated, with measured calm says:

STACEY

You know, I did really well this week.

TESS

I'll bet!

STACEY

I did everything you told me to do: I journaled, I went for a couple of runs... And didn't throw up once.

Tess is frozen with that.

TESS

Excuse me?

Tess flips through the file, searching. She's reeling.

STACEY

I didn't throw up once last week.

TESS

Ah... Wow. Good for you for... uh, for stopping the madness! Right here, right now!

Stacey's confused, takes a beat.

TESS (CONT'D)

But you know what? This... this whole thing is wrong. This is... serious. I don't know, I mean, if you should be, uh, talking with me about this...

STACEY

What? You've been helping me for the past three months, and everything you've said has totally helped.

Tess stares, shocked.

TESS

But why would you do that to yourself? You have everything.

STACEY

Well... like I've said, my mother's a former ballerina, and she freaks out if I so much as gain half a pound.

TESS

But you're... you're still growing!

STACEY

My mom seems to think I'm only growing in one direction.

Stacey blows out her cheeks, mimicking an overweight person.

TESS

But... you can do whatever you want.

STACEY

No I can't. I'm not like Anna.

TESS

What?

STACEY

I mean, that red streak in her hair? My friends would never allow that.

Stacey almost laughs at the thought.

STACEY (CONT'D)

But you know, their version of "alternative" is listening to Creed.

TESS

Oh, that's so lame.

STACEY

Tell me about it.

A beat. Tess knows she should say something:

TESS

But you're so involved and on all those committees and everything...

STACEY

Yeah, but I don't feel like we ever really do anything.

TESS

Hey... remember in 4th grade when we... when you made a paper maché mask, and you made that amazing zebra head?

Stacey is remembering, caught up a bit in reverie.

STACEY

Oh yeah... yeah, it turned out so cool! You remember that?

TESS

Oh, sure. Anna, uh, made one, too. Except hers was of an unfortunate dung beetle. But that's beside the point. They displayed yours in a trophy case for a whole year because it was so beautiful. Why'd you give up art?

STACEY

I don't know.

TESS

You should get back into it.

STACEY

Yeah, well... I don't know. The kids in the art club wouldn't let me step within 20 feet of their cooler-than-thou club.

TESS

Why don't you give them a chance? They might just do the same for you.

Stacey and Tess smile at one another, bonding.

STACEY

Okay. I'll try.

TESS

Excellent. Hey, do you feel like getting a pizza? 'Cuz I'm starving.

Stacey breaks into a big smile.

STACEY

That'd be great.

Tess hits the Julia button on her phone.

JULIA (O.S.)

(more weary)

Yes, Tess?...

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL PARKING LOT - DAY

Anna is resolutely walking away from the school with a backpack on. She keeps looking over her shoulder compulsively, making sure she's in the clear. When she peers over her shoulder, she walks straight into --

MR. RILEY.

MR. RILEY

Let me guess. Getting some exercise?

ANNA

Do I have a tracking device in my backpack or something?...

MR. RILEY

(sarcastic) I don't want to disturb you. I didn't realize you had off-campus plans.

ANNA

You know, I think there are other students at this school who have far more delinquent tendencies than I do.

MR. RILEY

Again, you seem to be the expert.

ANNA

You may find this hard to believe, but I understand --

MR. RILEY

-- that you have detention? Yeah, I'm in charge here, sweetheart.

Mr. Riley places a pedantic arm across Anna's shoulder and starts leading her back toward the school.

ANNA

But, I --

Mr. Riley sniffs the air, moves his nose in the direction of her backpack.

MR. RILEY

Is that alcohol I smell?

INT. CAFETERIA - A BIT LATER

Anna sits at a table, distracted, picks at a school lunch. Peg dashes up, excited and beaming, beside herself with glee. All the friends appear and sit down, equally animated.

PEG

I just heard! I cannot believe you didn't tell me!

ANNA

Oh, I know. It's so humiliating.

JACKIE

Humiliating?

ANNA

(as if it's cancer) *Detention.*

PEG

Detention? I'm talking about *Gwen*.

ANNA

Oh. That. You know, I've got bigger problems than No Doubt...

The girls all stare at each other, baffled.

ANNA (CONT'D)

Hey, Maddie. We're best friends, right?

MADDIE

Well, right now that's debatable...

ANNA

Is Mr. Riley always on my case like this?

MADDIE

Yeah. He's Mr. Riley. Unless you want to be Stacey Hinkhouse or any of the other glee girls, he's going to ride you.

ANNA

You know, Stacey Hinkhouse has very real problems, too.

Maddie can't believe what she's hearing.

MADDIE

What in the hell is going on with you? Now you suddenly care about Stacey Hinkhouse? I knew something was up when you were "whatever" about a ride with Heath, but the tip-off to your complete mental breakdown was when you told me Abe -- my crush since I was, what? 7? -- was a good match for you.

The other girls gasp.

ANNA

-- Wait, wait, you like Abe?

MADDIE

Hello! Where have you been the last half of my life?

ANNA

Have you ever gone on a date with him?

MADDIE

Please don't throw that in my face.

ANNA

Oh, well... what I meant to say was simply that Abe would be a great match-up for any of us, as he's such a good guy. Right? But clearly, he's great for you. (beat) I don't get it.

(MORE)

ANNA (CONT'D)

You're smart, pretty, fun... Abe would adore you. I'm sure he just doesn't know!

MADDIE

You cannot tell him!

ANNA

Tell him yourself! If you want anything to happen in life you've got to take the initiative. Don't relinquish your power to him -- be bold! Just ask him out. What's the worst that could happen?

MADDIE

He says no!

ANNA

He'll say yes. And if he says no, he says no. Worst tragedies have happened. At least you'll know how he feels.

She does have a point.

MADDIE

I'll think about it...

ANNA

That's all I can ask.

Just then, Heath approaches the table holding Anna's yearbook. All the girls (minus Anna) melt.

HEATH

Hey, Anna. All the school's buzzing about your interview with Gwen Stefani. Nice work.

ANNA

Yeah, well...

He offers her yearbook.

HEATH

Here you go. I signed yours.

She takes it.

ANNA

Thanks.

Heath just stands there, obviously wanting more contact.

HEATH

I don't suppose you signed mine yet?

ANNA

Let me check...

Anna digs through her backpack and finds Heath's yearbook. She flips through and sees page after empty page.

ANNA (CONT'D)

Just a sec...

She haphazardly scrawls an entry and hands it back to him in a nanosecond.

ANNA (CONT'D)

There you go!

HEATH

(confused) Thanks... And listen, about before...

ANNA

Yes?

HEATH

If I was too forward or something --

ANNA

Oh, no. I just think you should focus on people your own age.

He takes the yearbook and almost stumbles away.

MADDIE

Oh my god! Is this, like, some "be coy" technique?

ANNA

No.

MADDIE

What did you write?

INT. HALLWAY - A BEAT LATER

Heath opens the yearbook and we hear him read:

HEATH

(we hear his voice)

Heath: Thanks again for the ride. You seem alright. Your neighbor, Anna

Heath's utterly baffled as he **slams** into a jock, so distracted by reading this entry.

INT. TESS' OFFICE - A BIT LATER

Stacey gives Tess a big hug. We can see half a pizza remains in a pizza box in the background.

STACEY

Thanks so much.

TESS

Oh, you bet.

Julia taps on the door, pops her head in the office.

JULIA

Tess, Anna's on line one.

Stacey and Tess say their good byes.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL CAFETERIA - A BIT LATER

In an adjoining hallway, Anna is on a pay phone. There's a line of people behind her. She's speaking, finally, to Tess.

INTERCUT with Tess, who picks up the phone.

TESS

Hello, dear. And how's school?

ANNA

I told you not to leave the house!

TESS

Well, duty calls...

ANNA

It's extremely unethical what you've done, posing as me and --

TESS

-- I think I did just fine. Nobody's exactly jumping off a bridge here.

ANNA

Say, just how exactly did you get to my work, anyway?

TESS

(cautiously) I drove?...

ANNA

Anna!

TESS

You know, your life's not that bad, actually. I mean, people told me all their secrets, I went shopping, I had a very enlightening conversation with Ryan:

ANNA

-- What?

TESS

It was during the interview for the San Diego Tribune. It's really annoying when he talks for you. He was a total dork.

ANNA

He does that when he's nervous. It's endearing.

Behind her, some people are getting restless in the line.

PERSON IN LINE

Hey, come on! Hurry up!

TESS

Whatever. Have you ruined anything in my life besides Heath Brent?

ANNA

Well... I acknowledge maybe Heath Brent isn't as bad as I first thought. He did seem to take to my suggestion he find a girl his own age.

TESS

He what?

ANNA

Oh, and you may need to redo that history test.

TESS

I ace history!

ANNA

Not anymore.

PERSON IN LINE

Let's go!

ANNA

I have to get off the phone.

TESS

-- Okay. But **please** don't screw up my No Doubt interview...

ANNA

Oh, that's off.

TESS

Off?

TESS (CONT'D)

They cancelled. I'm supposed to interview Gwen Stephanie instead --

TESS (CONT'D)

-- **WHAT??!** Hold on. Did you just say I get to interview Gwen Stefani instead?

ANNA

Yes.

Tess screams uncontrollably. Anna holds the phone away from her ear.

Anna gets almost shoved in the shoulder by someone in line. Hard. Meanwhile, Tess is practically hyperventilating.

TESS

When? Where? How? I mean, I --

Julia runs into the office having heard the scream.

JULIA

Everything okay here?

TESS

(mouths)

Fine. Just fine.

ANNA

-- The interview is at 4:30. Unfortunately, you can't go because I -- because you have detention. And you may have a point about that Mr. Riley.

TESS

I told you he has it out for me!

ANNA

Well, it all started with the cell phone -

TESS

What is this? Cruel Candid Camera?
(beat) Okay, listen to me. Meet me at
my guidance counselor's office at 3:00.

ANNA

Why?

TESS

Just do it. I am **not** missing this.

ANNA

And you know what I'm not planning on
missing? **My wedding!** You do realize,
don't you, that I am supposed to be
getting married tomorrow??!

TESS

Yeah, I know, I know. That fact has not
escaped me... I mean, what are we gonna
do if we're like this tomorrow?
Because... I, for one, *am not getting*
married at 15. I mean, I'm not even
knocked up!

Anna sighs in exasperation at that.

ANNA

Just meet me at three.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL MR. RILEY'S OFFICE WAITING ROOM AREA - DAY

Anna sits outside of Mr. Riley's office, looking anxious.
Next door to Mr. Riley's name placard is Mr. Frisk's office.
It's decorated with lots of positive affirmation posters.

Tess walks into the area, looks for Anna and spots her.
She's carrying several books in her arms. Anna points to Mr.
Frisk's door.

ANNA

He's expecting you...

Tess knocks on the door.

MR. FRISK

(behind the door)

The doctor is in!

Tess enters, Anna follows.

INT. MR. FRISK'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Mr. Frisk's smile is all-consuming when he sees Tess.

TESS

Mr. Frisk, I'm Tess Coleman, Anna's --

MR. FRISK

-- No need for formalities, I know perfectly well who you are!

He gets up, shakes her hand aggressively, causing her to almost drop her books. He's glowy in her presence.

MR. FRISK (CONT'D)

It is such an honor -- *such an honor* -- to meet you! I was telling Anna, I had no idea she was related to the great Dr. Tess Coleman!

TESS

Well, thank you ...

MR. FRISK

Let me tell you, I don't pretend to understand what it's like to be a girl --

Anna and Tess exchange side glances.

MR. FRISK (CONT'D)

-- but after reading "Beyond Juliet," I have such a better idea! You've helped make me the sort of guidance counselor I always knew I could be.

Anna stifles a laugh as Tess presents him with a few copies of her book.

TESS

For you. For being such a great support for Anna.

He opens the jacket and stares at her scrawl as if it's the Holy Grail.

MR. FRISK

This is more than an honor. Are my eyes moist?

Mr. Frisk does appear to be on the verge of tears.

TESS

Now it seems there's some difficulty today with Anna regarding this detention.

MR. FRISK

Well, I spoke to Mr. Riley --

TESS

-- It's just that Anna has a very important interview with her favorite singer, *Gwen Stefani*, and it can only happen today. Certainly you of all people understand the importance of positive female role models and their effect on girl's self-esteem --

MR. FRISK

-- Oh, certainly. Chapter six: "But I Don't Feel Pretty"!

TESS

Precisely. I knew you'd understand.

MR. FRISK

But Mr. Riley won't budge.

TESS

Maybe I could have a word with him.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. MR. RILEY'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON

Mr. Riley submissively sits in his office chair as Tess stands over him, berating him. Anna stands with a smirk. Mr. Frisk is blown away.

TESS

Your motto here should be: Low Expectations! Give mediocrity a chance!

MR. RILEY

Well, I --

TESS

-- It's like you actually want your students to fail or screw up! Like you get off on it or something!

MR. RILEY

Never, I, I --

TESS

-- Punish Anna when she doesn't conform to your ideals of how she's supposed to sound on the announcements?

MR. RILEY

She can be a bit dour.

MR. FRISK

She also reflects another viewpoint from the myriad of experiences our students are undergoing.

TESS

Thank you, Mr. Frisk.

MR. FRISK

Certainly, Dr. Coleman.

TESS

I'm afraid Anna can't attend detention today. As a Ph.D. in adolescent psychology, I trust that you will leave her discipline in my capable hands.

MR. RILEY

(stammering)

Of course.

TESS

Very good. Thank you, gentlemen.

Tess and Anna walk out the door with their heads held high.

MR. RILEY

What the hell just happened there?

MR. FRISK

I believe you just had your, as the kids would say, "butt kicked."

Mr. Riley shoots him a look. Just then, Tess pops her head in.

TESS

And one more thing. Anna is not Abigail.

INT. FOUR SEASONS HOTEL - A BIT LATER

Anna and Tess sit in a plush living room area in a hotel suite. The place buzzes with people coming and going. Tess is beside herself, so proud.

ANNA
That was genius.

TESS
Thank you.

ANNA
Seriously. I was impressed.

They smile at one another.

TESS
Thanks.

She hands Anna a few note cards.

TESS (CONT'D)
Okay, here are the questions to ask her.
And remember, stick to the note cards,
alright? And here's the tape recorder.
Hit these two buttons --

ANNA
-- I know how to operate a tape
recorder... I cannot believe I'm wasting
my time interviewing a pop singer when I
should be preparing for my rehearsal
dinner.

It's as if this reality is truly hitting Anna for the first
time.

ANNA (CONT'D)
*Dear god. Tonight is my rehearsal
dinner.*

She buries her head in her hands.

ANNA (CONT'D)
Tonight! (panicky, barely audible:) And
I'm -- I'm -- my daughter!

She collapses further as a very hip woman LANE GIBSON
approaches.

LANE
Hey, are you Anna Coleman?

Anna looks up, red eyes, near tears.

ANNA
What?

LANE
(suspicious) Anna Coleman?

TESS
She is just so excited about meeting
Gwen...

LANE
I'm Lane. I do PR for the band.

TESS
I'm Anna's mother, Tess. Tess Coleman.

LANE
Sorry that it didn't work out with the
interview today with the band's manager,
Dave --

TESS
-- Are you kidding? It's fantastic we
get to --

Gwen Stefani enters the room wearing a robe, looking
fabulous. Tess falls silent in shocked near-reverence.

GWEN STEFANI
Hey, I'm Gwen.

Gwen offers a hand. Anna shakes it nonchalantly.

Tess knocks Anna over in an attempt to shake Gwen's hand,
almost stumbling to the floor. Gwen moves to help her.

GWEN STEFANI (CONT'D)
Whoa... careful...

Gwen helps Anna steady. Tess is oblivious, in her own world.

TESS
Ohmygod! Hi, I'm An -- Tess! Tess
Coleman!

GWEN STEFANI
Wow, usually parents don't get this
excited --

TESS
Oh, I am a **big** fan. Huge. Your Beacon
Street Collection, totally changed my
life --

GWEN STEFANI
Not as many people mention that one.

TESS

And "Rock Steady" is genius! (starts singing) *Hey baby baby baby, baby Hey!*

Gwen doesn't quite know what to think.

GWEN STEFANI

Wow... thanks.

TESS

And you're... you're... even more beautiful in real life! You know, I thought about dying my hair platinum, but then I thought: Who am I kidding? There's only one Gwen Stefani, and you're all about, you know, being yourself, and -

Anna slyly elbows Tess to quiet her and Tess falls silent with a giant smile in place.

GWEN STEFANI

Thanks. And you must be Anna.

ANNA

One would think.

LANE

Now, Gwen only has a couple of minutes...

GWEN STEFANI

-- Hey, I wanted to let you know I thought it was really cool how you didn't give up and kept faxing me. Lane showed me you sent over 100 faxes! It kinda reminded me of myself when we were first struggling with the band --

TESS

You're kidding??!!!

GWEN STEFANI

Oh yeah. Believe in yourself, and everything else will follow.

Anna nods in agreement and pulls out her cards, but is obviously still tortured about the upcoming rehearsal dinner.

Tess is at her side, beaming ear to ear.

ANNA

Okay. I have just a few...

A chic STYLIST walks into the room and displays a seductive dress for Gwen's perusal. He doesn't seem to mind interrupting.

STYLIST
This just came in from Versace... it
would be perfect for the MTV Video
Awards, yes?

Gwen gives the outfit a once over.

TESS
(thinking out loud) Cool!

GWEN STEFANI
I have to try it on, but I love it --

The stylist exits.

ANNA
Is that it?

GWEN STEFANI
What do you mean?

ANNA
I mean is that the whole dress? My dish
towel has more fabric.

Tess buries her head in her hands, humiliated. But Gwen
bursts out laughing. Tess can't believe it.

GWEN STEFANI
That was funny.

Tess' relief is palpable.

ANNA
Thanks. I am curious... do you think
what you wear -- or, in particular, what
you don't wear -- influences your younger
female fans?

Tess stifles a horrified whimper.

GWEN STEFANI
I don't know. I'm just Gwen. I wear
what I like.

TESS
Which... you should continue to do.
Absolutely.

(MORE)

TESS (CONT'D)

Because if you didn't, then, who would you be? Not Gwen. And Gwen is so fabulous, everyone knows --

ANNA

-- Tell me about your education.

GWEN STEFANI

Well, I went to Cal State Fullerton --

TESS

I know. You are setting such a good example!

Tess grabs the note cards and flips to some more appropriate questions, hands them back to Anna.

ANNA

You're what I refer to as (reading the card) "The Unintentional Diva." Would you agree with the title?

Gwen smiles.

GWEN STEFANI

The Unintentional Diva... I like that. Yeah, I always say I've fooled everyone. I'm a dork at heart.

Anna nods, impressed. Lane enters the room.

LANE

I'm sorry, but that's all the time Gwen has...

GWEN STEFANI

We were just getting started...

LANE

Gwen, you have more than fifteen other interviews today...

GWEN STEFANI

I'm sorry this was so short. Are you going to the show tonight?

TESS

I was! I was until she banned me...

Gwen doesn't quite follow.

GWEN STEFANI

I could give you all tickets and we could talk backstage...

TESS

Are you for real?! We are so there! Oh my god, no one will even believe that --

ANNA

-- Unfortunately, Mom, you have a rehearsal dinner tonight... She's getting remarried tomorrow --

This hits a chord.

TESS

I am *not* getting remarried. I'm supposed to be getting *married*. People who were divorced get remarried, which I never was. He passed away. A fact I *seem* to be recovering from quite easily.

A beat. Okay...

GWEN STEFANI

Well, congratulations -- (to herself) I think. Or... I'm sorry.

TESS

Can we have just one moment, please?

Gwen nods and Tess pulls Anna over to the side.

TESS (CONT'D)

You're emotional, I'm emotional. If we weren't, then something would *really* be wrong. But please, help me out here: Mom... I cannot miss *backstage passes* to *No Doubt*!

ANNA

Anna, please not this again. I think I've been more than --

Gwen looks at them curiously, half-smiles. Tess sees Gwen is watching, and pulls Anna a bit further away. **Their argument continues in hushed voices.** After a few beats, they return. Tess sulks.

ANNA (CONT'D)

It was so wonderful to meet you. Thank you so much for taking the time, it means a lot.

Gwen hands them an envelope.

GWEN STEFANI

It was my pleasure. Here's tickets and passes if you get the chance. You two have a nice vibe, lots of honesty.

Tess takes them, momentarily buoyed.

TESS

You've made my year, you have no idea...

GWEN STEFANI

Well, thanks. Good luck with your wedding.

TESS

Whatever. I guarantee it will not be as awesome as the concert! Guarantee it!

Lane starts leading them out. Tess continues watching Gwen, moony with admiration.

TESS (CONT'D)

And thanks again! Thanks so much! Good luck with the --

Anna pulls her out of the room, Tess attempts to cling on.

After they're gone, Gwen comments to Lane.

GWEN STEFANI

Now that is one enthusiastic mom.

INT. CAR - A BIT LATER

Tess and Anna argue while driving to the House of Chen.

TESS

This could have conceivably been one of the best days of my entire life. Granted, I got to meet Gwen Stefani, but do I get to use the **tickets and backstage passes she gave me?** Oh, nooooo!

ANNA

-- Anna, please --

TESS

-- And the ride to school with Heath? *Missed it!*

ANNA

I know this is hard to believe, but there truly are lots of boys in the world --

TESS

-- I'm fairly certain there will never be another Heath Brent.

ANNA

You know, my day hasn't exactly been a bed of roses, either...

TESS

(as if she can't fully comprehend this notion) *Hanging out backstage with Gwen Stefani...* Are you kidding me?

ANNA

Well, I --

TESS

-- My god, I can't even enjoy feeling bad about Stacey Hinkhouse, for god's sake!

They pull into the House of Chen parking lot. Anna snaps to a brisk stop, ready to explode.

ANNA

-- I have had it with your attitude. I had no idea I'd raised such a selfish child. And Anna, I know what's really behind all this. I know you miss your father. We all do. Do you think I like the fact that it's been so long since he's been gone that I have to stare at old pictures so that I can remember the details of his face? You think I like that the clothes of his I kept so I could always smell him have long since faded? Supposing I could bring him back, right now, do you think there's anything I wouldn't do to make that happen? I can't do it, Anna, I'm sorry. But he's not coming back.

Anna takes a deep breath as Tess' eyes fill with tears.

ANNA (CONT'D)

Now I've been alone for **eight years**, eight years. And I know one thing: I know he would have wanted me to be happy. So now, finally, I've met someone new. Someone who has made me believe all over again... Me, Tess Coleman, who used to say no one could **ever** make me feel like David did.

(MORE)

ANNA (CONT'D)

And now I may have to cancel my own wedding, my own new chance at this happiness, because I'm in my daughter's body!

Tess remains silent.

INT. HOUSE OF CHEN - A BEAT LATER

Anna and Tess enter, and the mood between them is much more respectful. The Asian-American man who Anna spoke to prior on the phone is setting up for the night.

ANNA

Hi, we're the Colemans --

ASIAN-AMERICAN MAN

Yes, of course. The fortune cookie people.

TESS

Yes. We needed some information about them. You see (whispers): *We both got the same fortune last night.*

The Asian-American man reacts with big, impressed eyes.

ASIAN-AMERICAN MAN

You got the same one? That is something. You wanna see something? Follow me.

INT. KITCHEN OF HOUSE OF CHEN - A BEAT LATER

A giant box of fortune cookies sits in a box. He digs his hand in and offers a teeming fist of fortune cookies.

The ELDERLY ASIAN WOMAN cooks, listens in, curious.

ASIAN-AMERICAN MAN

Here they are. Let's see what we've got.

The Asian-American man snaps a cookie open, reads it:

ASIAN-AMERICAN MAN (CONT'D)

You will soon find yourself in an exotic port of call.

He opens another, reads it as well:

ASIAN-AMERICAN MAN (CONT'D)

You will soon find yourself in an exotic port of call. What do you know? They're the same!

TESS

No, you see, ours --

He snaps another open.

ASIAN-AMERICAN MAN

-- *Be true to yourself* --

He opens another.

ASIAN-AMERICAN MAN (CONT'D)

-- *Kindness is the most important
medicine* --

And yet another.

ASIAN-AMERICAN MAN (CONT'D)

-- *And finally: Unexpected romance will
knock upon your door.*

He claps his hands together.

ASIAN-AMERICAN MAN (CONT'D)

That's it -- those are the only four
fortunes we've got.

ANNA

But ours was "Walking in another's shoes
is bound to enlighten."

ASIAN-AMERICAN MAN

We don't have that one.

TESS

Look, we're not making this up --

From the back of the kitchen, the **ELDERLY ASIAN-AMERICAN WOMAN** speaks in Chinese.

When she's finished speaking, she winks at Anna and Tess.

ANNA

What did she say?

ASIAN-AMERICAN MAN

Oh, nothing.

ANNA

No, no -- what did she say?

TESS

She knows! She must know! She even saw
us arguing before!

The Asian-American Man almost rolls his eyes.

ASIAN-AMERICAN MAN

She said, "Only enlightenment can return you to your shoes."

ANNA

Please could you just ask her again what that means...

ASIAN-AMERICAN MAN

I'm sorry if I can't help solve the case of the Curious Fortune Cookie with you, but Friday night is my busiest night, and I'm kinda in the middle of --

ANNA

(desperate)

Please? Could you please just ask her what that means? You have no idea how important this is to us. Please.

The man relents and asks a question to the elderly woman in Chinese. She just smiles and wags a finger "No," winks.

ASIAN-AMERICAN MAN

She says that is not for her to reveal.

TESS

See? Again, she knows! Shoes and enlightenment...

ANNA

She has to tell us.

TESS

She knows!

ASIAN-AMERICAN MAN

Lady listen, last week, she had a two-hour conversation with her ferns.

The elderly woman slightly smiles and winks at the Colemans.

INT. TESS' BEDROOM - EARLY EVENING

Anna sits on her bed, looking at an old photo album.

There's a knock at the door. Tess opens the door.

TESS

Hey...

ANNA

Hi.

Tess enters and shuts the door, sits down on the bed.

ANNA (CONT'D)

These pictures are amazing.

Anna shows her a stilted old Prom picture with a beaming, young couple.

ANNA (CONT'D)

Just look at your father and me... we were so young... And so happy...

TESS

Well, you are young again.

Anna doesn't laugh.

TESS (CONT'D)

Sorry. That wasn't funny.

ANNA

It's okay. You know, it's ironic: My whole professional life has been based on helping people understand and heal their lives. And now when it comes to myself, I really have no idea what to do.

TESS

I know. (beat) Hey, I'm really sorry about how I've been acting.

ANNA

It's okay. If I had had the chance to meet Sean Cassidy when I was your age, I probably would have been just as hyper.

TESS

Sean who?

Anna just quietly laughs.

TESS (CONT'D)

Mom...

ANNA

Yes?

TESS

Are we going to be like this forever?

Tess strokes Anna's hair.

ANNA

No. I don't know. God, I hope not.

TESS

Because, you know... I really can't go through with this if we're still switched tomorrow. I mean, think of the wedding night.

Both Tess and Anna simultaneously get the heebie-geebies.

ANNA

I know. I can't even get past the 'you may now kiss the bride' part --

TESS

-- Enough said.

ANNA

Can you please just tell me what it is you dislike about Ryan so much?

TESS

Well... I don't know.. I don't *dislike* him. But he's, he's a dork. He was totally talking for me at lunch --

ANNA

-- I told you, he does that when he's nervous. He's sweet. And you know what? He doesn't want to replace your dad. He really doesn't. But he is a good man. He treats me so well, Anna. And he really wants to be part of this family. With all of us. (beat) Okay?

Anna puts an arm around Tess, who is trying hard to be defiant and look down.

ANNA (CONT'D)

Okay?

TESS

Okay.

They smile at one another; Tess is still a tad bit reluctant.

ANNA

Can you do me a favor?

TESS

What?

ANNA

Could you try to dress a little like me tonight?

TESS

I was just going to ask you the same thing.

INT. COLEMAN FOYER - THAT NIGHT

Anna is dressed up for the rehearsal dinner, clutching car keys.

ANNA

Harry! Grandma, Grandpa -- let's go!

Anna stares into a nearby hallway mirror, tortured.

ANNA (CONT'D)

(to her reflection)

Keep it together. Keep it together.
Keep it together.

Harry appears at the top of the stairs in a smart suit, Anna turns her attention to him.

ANNA (CONT'D)

Harry, aren't you handsome?

Harry's incredulous as he makes his way down the stairs.

HARRY

Could you repeat that?

ANNA

I said, aren't you handsome...

HARRY

So *that's* what it feels like for you to actually give me a compliment...

Anna lovingly tousles Harry's hair.

HARRY (CONT'D)

Can I have a word with you?

Harry pulls Anna aside.

ANNA

Yes, Harry?

HARRY

I want you to know I'm on to you.

ANNA

Onto me how, exactly?...

HARRY

Well, first of all, you've been nice to me all day. And then mom kept calling me dork...

ANNA

Well, you can be kind of a dork sometimes, Harry.

Harry's wounded.

ANNA (CONT'D)

I'm kidding, I'm kidding! Harry, what are you getting at?

HARRY

I don't know. Something's going on here.

ANNA

Alright, Harry. You've figured us out. Aliens came down, and Mom and I magically switched bodies.

Even Harry can now see that sounds utterly ridiculous.

HARRY

Oh. Right.

Grandma and Grandpa appear in their Sunday best.

ANNA

And don't you two look nice?

GRANDPA

Is there going to be an open bar?

ANNA

It's a rehearsal dinner, not a frat party...

Grandma stops near a hallway mirror to apply lipstick.

ANNA (CONT'D)

(calling upstairs)

Come on, we're going to be late!

Tess walks down the stairs, looking quite beautiful and pulled together. Anna reacts, touched. She reaches for Tess who is still smarting, attempts to give her a small hug.

ANNA (CONT'D)
You look just beautiful...

TESS
Yeah, yeah...

Anna jangles her keys.

ANNA
Okay. We're off.

GRANDMA
You're driving, Anna?

ANNA
Oh... well... I have a learner's permit.

GRANDPA
What are ya now, 12?

ANNA
I'm fifteen.

GRANDPA
Right.

INT. POSH RESTAURANT - NIGHT

It's packed for the rehearsal dinner.

Grandpa looks to be very sleepy and his head bobs. Grandma gestures the barkeep for another glass of wine.

Harry sits next to Anna at the head table. Tess and Ryan are center stage.

Anna takes Tess' wine glass away, shoots her a disapproving look when she sees perhaps some is missing.

A **ding, ding, ding** of someone tapping their knife against a glass fills the air. The room quiets.

JULIA
As Tess' assistant and good friend for the past 10 years, I am so happy to be here tonight to share this night honoring an -- dare I say? -- annoyingly perfect couple.

Polite laughter. Julia lofts her glass.

JULIA (CONT'D)

Here's to you both! I have every confidence in your complete happiness.

Everyone aaahs, takes a drink and toasts. Ryan puts an arm around Tess, moves to kiss her. She's uncomfortable, thrusts a cheek into his face, he kisses that.

There's a building sentiment:

CROWD

Speech, speech, speech, speech...

Ryan gets up, beaming, lofts a glass. Everyone quiets.

RYAN

Alright, alright. I've been thinking about what I was going to say tonight for a long time, because by the second date I had with Tess, I knew she was the one.

Everyone looks at Tess, who offers an uncomfortable smile.

Anna is melting, hand on her chin, moonily looking at Ryan.

HARRY

(whispers to her)

Are you okay?

ANNA

Shhh...

Harry notices her weird behavior, looks into her water glass to make sure it's not wine.

RYAN

And I literally could spend the entire evening telling you all about Tess' charisma, her heart, and how much joy she brings me. But, I realize there's only so many hours left in the day, and tomorrow is officially the day this woman is doing me the honor of making me the happiest man alive. I know everyone says that, but I have actual scientific evidence to back it up.

Laughter.

Anna is bawling over these sentiments. Tess herself just gnaws a straw.

RYAN (CONT'D)
To my bride-to-be, thank you for
embarking on this journey with me. I
love you.

Tess almost rolls her eyes. Ryan moves down to kiss her, she
offers tense lips.

The crowd waits for Tess to give her speech. Tess just
smiles uncomfortably, takes another bite of food, unaware.

People are looking around a bit awkwardly. Then Tess
realizes all eyes are on her, she should speak.

TESS
(through a mouthful of food) Oh! Do you
all want a toast?

Everyone bobs their head 'yes.' Tess attempts to swallow
what's left of her bite of food.

RYAN
Go ahead, honey.

Reluctantly, Tess realizes she must speak, rises, takes
Ryan's glass of wine (as she has none of her own).

TESS
Okay, here goes. Well. I'm not really
good at these things, but Ryan does a
good job at publishing. So thanks
everybody for showing up.

Ryan's smile suggests that's not what he'd planned on.

TESS (CONT'D)
And, you know, he sure is... sanitary.

Everyone's confused. *Sanitary?*

TESS (CONT'D)
And, oh yeah, how could I forget? Anna
and I got to meet the one and only Gwen
Stefani of "No Doubt" today, so way to
go, Anna! Wooo!

Tess lofts her glass. Is that it?

TESS (CONT'D)
Oh, and one more thing --

Palpable relief in the crowd.

TESS (CONT'D)
Marriage is about sacrifice.

Knowing nods from the crowd, now we're back on track.

TESS (CONT'D)
And I've certainly learned a thing or two
about that today. Unfortunately, Anna ...
and I are missing backstage passes to be
here tonight, but I guess you can't have
everything...

GRANDMA
(whispers to Grandpa)
Oh my god, she's drunk.

GRANDPA
That makes two of us.

EXT. OUTDOOR COURTYARD - A BIT LATER

Twinkley white lights populate this charming outdoor patio
adjoining the restaurant. Ryan leads Tess into the area,
they sit down on a bench.

TESS
What's up? Because I've still got the
passes and we probably --

RYAN
-- Tess, I really think --

TESS
-- Come on, be spontaneous! Throw
caution to the wind! Live a little!

Ryan looks up, exasperated.

RYAN
Alright, Tess, I'm just gonna come right
out and ask. Are you sure you want to
get married to me tomorrow?

TESS
What?

RYAN
Maybe we decided too quickly this is what
we want... maybe we should have waited.

TESS
What are you talking about?

RYAN

Well, today at the interview, I thought you were sending me some pretty strong signals. And, Tess, I mean, what was that toast all about? I'm sanitary? --

TESS

Yeah! (weakly) Aren't you? ..

RYAN

Yes, sure, but --

TESS

-- Ryan, I --

RYAN

-- Just let me finish.

Ryan grabs her hands, looks into Tess' eyes.

RYAN (CONT'D)

You know I love you. But this is not about that. Anna's always resented me, maybe she needs more time. I can't replace her father --

TESS

-- Anna... oh, you know Anna --

RYAN

-- I cannot jeopardize my relationship with her. I need us to be a family. If we just have a big party instead tomorrow, so be it. Being a part of this family is more important to me than a fancy ceremony.

Tess is almost touched.

RYAN (CONT'D)

I only want this if you're absolutely certain it's what you want to do. Because I know how seriously we both take this commitment.

TESS

Well... sure...

RYAN

Tess. (beat) Do you love me?

Tess takes a moment.

TESS
I'd assume so...

That visibly wounds Ryan.

RYAN
I want you to do more than assume so.

TESS
Well, geez, Ryan, I... I, um...

RYAN
You don't have to say anything now. Just think about it tonight and let me know in the morning. But, Tess, this has got to be right. You know that, and I know that.

Tess is reeling from the gravity of his words.

TESS
(serious) Sure. Okay.

INT. ANNA'S BEDROOM - THAT EVENING

Tess is laying on the bed, staring at the ceiling. No Doubt, of course, plays on the CD player.

There's a knock at the door.

TESS
Come in...

Grandpa pops his head in.

GRANDPA
Harry said you were up here. What are you doing in Anna's room?

TESS
It's just comfortable, I guess.

Grandpa sits down on her bed.

GRANDPA
Your mom thought it might be a good time for you and I to have a "serious talk."

Tess almost laughs.

TESS
Like mother, like daughter...

GRANDPA

Boating's my strong suit. Not talking.

They both grin at each other.

GRANDPA (CONT'D)

Is everything alright?

TESS

What do you mean?

GRANDPA

Well... both your mother and I agree we haven't seen you this happy in years.

TESS

Really?

GRANDPA

Not since David. And you know I don't like to meddle, Tess... but is everything okay? I mean, really okay?

Before Tess can respond:

GRANDPA (CONT'D)

That toast tonight was ... well, downright peculiar, and your sudden passion for this rock and roll group --

TESS

-- I've, I've just got a lot to deal with right now.

Tess leans forward.

TESS (CONT'D)

Can I ask you something?

GRANDPA

Nothing's stopped you before.

TESS

What do you think of Ryan? I mean, do you like him as much as you liked Dad -- I mean, David?

Grandpa ponders, takes a big breath.

GRANDPA

Well, let's see. Lord knows I loved David like a son. We all did.

(MORE)

GRANDPA (CONT'D)

And Ryan... well, I suppose he can develop an appreciation for motorboats.

Tess laughs.

GRANDPA (CONT'D)

But I do know David would really like Ryan.

TESS

You think?

GRANDPA

Absolutely. He loves the kids, seems supportive -- actually, he reminds me of him.

TESS

Wow. I had no idea you felt that way.

GRANDPA

Tessy, I don't say it enough, but you've done a great job raising Anna and Harry on your own. They can both be a bit strange at times, but they're good kids.

Tess smiles.

GRANDPA (CONT'D)

I am so happy you've found somebody again. Somebody like Ryan.

INT. HALLWAY - LATER THAT EVENING

Tess walks in the hallway, brushing her teeth in her PJs, headed for Anna's room. Harry is in the hall, too.

TESS

(through toothpaste)

Night, Harry.

Anna strolls by, almost runs into him, flossing her teeth, headed for Tess' room.

HARRY

Excuse me for a moment!

Both Anna and Tess stop in their tracks, reaching for their respective door knobs.

ANNA

Harry, what is it?

HARRY

Since when do you sleep in Mom's room?
And since when do you sleep in Anna's
room?

Anna and Tess share a look and realize, cross the hall to
their designated rooms.

HARRY (CONT'D)

(to himself, scoffs)
Switched places...

He then stops at the thought, studies the two closed doors.

HARRY (CONT'D)

Nahh...

And he continues walking.

INT. TESS' MASTER BEDROOM - MIDDLE OF THAT NIGHT

The clock reads 3:47 and Tess is wide awake, pacing. She's
tossing a tennis ball in the air and catching it. She
accidentally drops it and the ball rolls under the bed.

Tess gets on all fours and looks under the bed for it. While
digging, she finds a mound of papers.

TIGHT ON: Gallies for Tess' new book, "And Then There's
Desdemona" by Dr. Tess Coleman, Ph.D.

Curious, Tess flips through the pages. They're marked up
with notes. Most are glowing -- *Excellent, lyrical passage!* -
- etc., from Ryan.

We hear what Tess is reading:

TESS

(hear her thoughts)
*Let's discuss reliance on "Abigail" as
case study... Anna could -- and
rightfully so -- bristle at parallels.*

Tess reads it again:

TESS (CONT'D)

*Let's discuss reliance on "Abigail" as
case study... Anna could -- and
rightfully so -- bristle at parallels.*

Tess is shocked, sits down on the floor, takes a beat.

INT. ANNA'S BEDROOM - LATER THAT EVENING

Anna's wide awake, too. She's looking at Anna's yearbook, finds Anna's picture.

TIGHT ON: ANNA'S MILDLY DORKY SOPHOMORE PHOTO.

She flips to Brent, Heath.

TIGHT ON: HEATH'S DEVASTATING SENIOR PHOTO. Next to the picture, someone has written: SEE PAGE 4.

Anna flips to page four and finds this entry from Heath:

ANNA

(we hear her read)

Anna: *I realize I don't know you that well, but I must admit you've completely fascinated me since we moved next door. It's rare to meet someone in high school who is so comfortable being who she truly is, you're eons beyond your fellow Wildcats. (Go Wildcats! Just kidding.) I'd like to know you better: Something tells me I may not be the only one at school with a penchant for the Sex Pistols and film noir. Please stop by this summer. I mean it. Love, Heath*

Anna smiles. She then sniffs something, grabs the boozy-smelling backpack in question, remembers spilling scotch on it. She looks through Anna's text books, caught up a bit in nostalgia and finds her notebook, curiously scans some notes.

She discovers the Heath yearbook trial run entries and sees she's scrawled his name about 482 times. We hear her thoughts as she reads to herself:

ANNA (CONT'D)

I've loved you since the moment I first saw you mow your lawn, and I hope on our first date we discover our common love of obscure music, and we fall desperately in love and you'll write me songs and call me your Yoko...

Anna snaps it shut, she shouldn't have seen that. But she's touched.

For the first time, she gets it. First love is magic.

ANNA (CONT'D)
Oh, what have I done?

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. TESS' BEDROOM - MORNING

Early morning light pours through the window. Tess puts a pillow over her head. Realizing, she bounds out of bed and dashes to a mirror to inspect her face.

INT. ANNA'S BEDROOM - SAME MOMENT

Anna careens out of bed, jumps in front of the mirror. She, too, scrutinizes her features.

INT. HALLWAY - NEXT MOMENT

Anna's door and Tess' door open at the same time. They look at each other and can read their minds -- Yup. Still switched.

ANNA
There's something I've gotta do.

TESS
Me too.

Both doors slam shut.

INT. FAMILY ROOM - THAT MORNING

Tess strides through the room with purpose, headed for the door. Grandma and Grandpa sit nearby reading the paper.

GRANDMA
Tess, where are --

TESS
(spoken very fast)
No time to talk, gotta run, bye --

The garage door is shut, she's already gone.

GRANDPA
Good god, she's like a whirling dervish.

Anna now strides through the room with the same focus.

GRANDMA
Anna, dear, we should --

ANNA

(all business)

No time to talk, see you later, gotta go -

She's out.

GRANDPA

Make that two whirling dervishes.

EXT. HOUSE - MORNING

TESS rings a doorbell. Ryan answers the door.

TESS

I need to talk to you.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. FOUR SEASONS HOTEL - THAT MOMENT

Anna is at the front desk speaking with the FRONT DESK PERSON with needy intent. **We can't hear what she's saying**, but we gather she's clearly not getting anywhere.

The front desk person shakes her head "No, can't help you" again and again, and Anna is growing more desperate.

Just then, No Doubt's PR manager LANE GIBSON strolls through the lobby.

Anna **squeals** at the sight of her and dashes to her side. She grabs Lane by the shoulders, eyes boring into her.

ANNA

I have got to talk to you.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. RYAN'S LIVING ROOM - THAT MOMENT

Tess embraces Ryan. He pulls away and attempts to kiss her.

Just as his lips are to meet hers --

She places two not-so-fast fingers on his lips.

TESS

Let's hold that for the ceremony...

INT. FOUR SEASONS HOTEL - THAT MOMENT

Anna is bear-hugging Lane, over-the-top thrilled.

ANNA

Oh, my god, I could kiss you right now!

Lane stares, a bit freaked.

CUT TO:

EXT. COLEMAN HOUSE - A BIT LATER

A cab pulls up to a brisk stop in front of the house. Anna climbs out and spots --

Heath, washing the car across the street, in all his glory. Anna waves but Heath ignores her.

Anna stops waving and takes a beat. Then she starts to head in his direction, calling to him --

ANNA

Say, Heath, can I talk to you for a minute? --

CUT TO:

EXT. COLEMAN DRIVEWAY - A BIT LATER

Harry stoops to pick up his "Wall Street Journal" on the driveway.

Tess careens into the drive like a bat out of hell, almost crashing into Harry. He leaps out of the way onto the lawn.

No Doubt blares from the stereo and is snapped silent.

TESS

Sorry!

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - A BIT LATER

Tess is in her low-key and elegant wedding dress, Grandma fusses over her. Tess stands before a mirror, investigating her reflection. She's working really hard to remain calm.

Grandma hugs her from behind. We see both of their faces in the mirror.

GRANDMA

You're as beautiful today as you were the first time you were a bride.

TESS

Thank you...

Anna enters the room, both turn to acknowledge her. Anna's in an exquisite dress and looks smashing.

TESS (CONT'D)
You're gorgeous!

Anna smiles.

ANNA
And you... are smokin'!

GRANDMA
I'll just give you two a moment.

Grandma exits and Anna soaks in this visual of Tess in her gown. She hugs Tess.

They both look in the mirror, make eye contact in the reflection.

TESS
Well... look at it this way, I bet you never thought you'd be a teenage bride.

They both laugh.

TESS (CONT'D)
I just wanted you to see what it would look like.

ANNA
Thanks...

TESS
There's something I want to say. I know I've given Ryan a hard time, and I haven't been fair. I know that now. I want you to have happiness again. And so would Daddy.

Anna is beyond moved by these words.

TESS (CONT'D)
Especially with someone like Ryan.

They embrace, both teary.

Tess looks out the window and sees the backyard teeming with people awaiting the ceremony. It's tastefully decorated, flowers abound and chairs are set up. Tess spots --

Heath Brent chatting with Maddie, holding a program!

Tess goes to the window.

TESS (CONT'D)

Oh, my god, it's Heath! Heath Brent is here?!

Anna follows her to the window. As they're looking out, Heath looks up and Anna pulls her away from the window, almost giggling.

ANNA

It's bad luck for someone to see us!

TESS

What's he doing here?!

ANNA

I may have done a little behind-the-scenes work.

Anna winks. Then the reality settles in.

TESS

Mom... you know we can't actually go through with this.

ANNA

(quietly) I know.

TESS

I thought maybe somehow... somehow we'd... (can't finish that thought) I'm so sorry...

Anna starts to cry, but she's still trying to be strong.

ANNA

I'll just... get Ryan and tell him we'll postpone today. We'll have a party instead. And it will be okay.

There's a **knock** at the door.

ANNA (CONT'D)

I hope that's not him? It's bad luck, you know --

HARRY (O.S.)

-- It's Harry.

ANNA

Oh.

Anna opens the door, finds Harry looking quite smashing in a tux, one hand behind his back.

ANNA (CONT'D)

Harry! You look so adorable --

Harry enters the room, gives her a surprised look...

HARRY

Two compliments in one 48-hour period?

He moves his hand from behind his back, revealing a Chinese take-out container!

HARRY (CONT'D)

Some old Chinese lady stopped by and insisted I give this to you. She said you'd understand. Must be some kind of Chinese good luck or something.

Both Anna and Tess have hands over their mouths, utterly shocked with moon eyes.

Harry is still offers the take-out container.

HARRY (CONT'D)

Aren't ya gonna take it?

Deliberately and with caution, Anna reaches for the box and gently takes it from Harry's hand.

ANNA

Harry... Could we please have a moment?

Harry's not getting their freaked reaction.

HARRY

Sure. I'm used to you two kicking me out of the room, anyway.

Harry exits.

Anna and Tess stare at the box, mesmerized by its potential.

TESS

Do you think?...

ANNA

I mean, I could be...

Carefully, Anna opens the Chinese take-out box and both peer inside as if the very secrets for world peace lie in the box.

ANNA AND TESS' POV: The box contains two fortune cookies wrapped in cellophane.

TESS

Oh my god...

They lock eyes.

ANNA

This is it.

TESS

I think it is, too...

Both reach for a cookie and carefully unwrap the cellophane. They each wield a cookie in their hand, almost nervous to go any further.

ANNA

Okay.

TESS

Okay.

ANNA

On the count of three.

They nod in agreement.

TESS

One... two... three...

ANNA

One... two... three...

On the count of three, both crack open their cookies --

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. BACKYARD WEDDING ALTER - DAY

Ryan and Tess are locked in a passionate kiss, just having exchanged their vows. Anna stands next to them in the maid of honor position, beaming, tears in her eyes.

The witnesses all cheer at the sight as the kiss goes on.
And on. And on.

From the audience, Heath and Anna lock eyes, smiling ear to ear.

EXT. TENTED CANOPY - A BIT LATER

Tables are filled with people as everyone eats this wedding feast. Lights and flowers abound, there's a real sense of celebration.

Anna, Heath, Harry and Grandpa sit at a table, taking in all the activity.

HARRY

What's interesting about Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs is that he contends the basic foundations of food, clothing and shelter are mandatory to allow for self-actualization --

GRANDPA

-- Needs, huh? (almost to himself, looking around the room for some help) Well, I need another drink...

HARRY

-- So without economic growth, the very tenets that liberals embrace -- art, culture, etc. -- would be moot without the cornerstone of capitalism.

Grandpa's not sure what to say.

GRANDPA

Ever been to the Moot House? They make a fine piece of steak.

Just then, a radiant Ryan and Tess approach. They're ebullient.

Heath rises --

HEATH

Congratulations, Mrs. --

TESS

-- Coleman Morris.

HEATH

Mrs. Coleman Morris.

Heath kisses her on the cheek.

HEATH (CONT'D)

I'm so glad Anna invited me. This is really a great party.

Heath shakes Ryan's hand, offers his congratulations.

Anna approaches Ryan and gives him a big bear hug. He's almost taken aback, but hugs back tightly. She releases --

ANNA

Welcome to the family, Ryan.

RYAN

Thank you, Anna. I'm happy to be here.

Just then, we hear what sounds like electric guitars being plugged in and mike back feed fills the air.

Everyone turns to find the source of the sounds, only to see Gwen Stefani taking the stage and setting up her microphone!

Anna reacts, along with Heath and Maddie, and squeals with delight and awe.

GWEN STEFANI

(re: the backfeed) Sorry about that...
hot mike, hot mike.

Anna leans over to Tess, thrilled:

ANNA

Did you do this?

TESS

I may have talked to a few people...

Anna embraces Tess.

ANNA

You're the best!

GWEN STEFANI

Um, excuse me...

The curious crowd comes to a silence.

GWEN STEFANI (CONT'D)

Thanks. First of all, a big congrats is in order for the happy couple, Tess and Ryan.

Everyone applauds, Ryan and Tess kiss again.

GWEN STEFANI (CONT'D)

We're No Doubt --

All of the younger members at the wedding respond with cheers.

Heath leans over to Anna.

HEATH

I cannot believe your mom got Gwen Stefani!

Anna nods excitedly back, beaming.

GWEN STEFANI

-- and we thought we'd stop by to perform a number for 'Ryan and Tess' first dance. I had the chance to meet Tess earlier, and she is perhaps the coolest mom I've ever met.

The audience laughs and raises their glasses to that.

GWEN STEFANI (CONT'D)

And... I understand her daughter Anna is a pretty big fan, too.

Anna screams from the back of the room, people laugh.

GWEN STEFANI (CONT'D)

This one's from one of my favorite artists, Etta James, and it's called "At Last"... Tess and Ryan?

Tess and Ryan take to the dance floor as No Doubt starts up a funky version of "At Last". Gwen is really belting it out, she sounds amazing.

Tess and Ryan slow dance, utterly caught up in this moment, completely in love. After a bit, Tess and Ryan gesture for everyone to join them on the dance floor.

Anna virtually glows as she watches her mother and Ryan. Heath taps her on the shoulder --

She turns, faces Heath, all smiles.

HEATH

Can I have this dance?

Anna nods as Heath leads her to the dance floor. Some other couples are now dancing with them.

Anna dances with Heath, beside herself with utter joy. She then spots --