

Minx

by

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INT. PULITZER PRIZE AWARDS CEREMONY - NIGHT

An elegant ballroom. 1970's Intelligentsia applaud JOYCE PRIGGER, 20s, who speaks from a podium on the dais.

JOYCE

Thank you, Pulitzer committee, for this honor. My dear friend Gloria Steinem once asked me, Joyce, did you ever dream your magazine would break out from the cluttered newsstands, elevate womankind and change the world forever? Oh Gloria-

MAN'S VOICE

SHOW ME YOUR TITS!

EXT. PEDESTRIAN CROSSING - LOS ANGELES STREET - DAY

Joyce snaps out of her daydream and faces her reality - getting cat-called by a CONSTRUCTION WORKER as she waits for the light to change, sweating in a polyester pantsuit.

CONSTRUCTION WORKER

Gimme a look at them funbags, baby.

Joyce takes a calming breath and approaches the cat-caller.

JOYCE

Hi! I'd love to discuss your use of cat-calling to communicate with women on the street? I'm sure this was acceptable when you were coming up in the construction industry, but it's the 70s now and times have changed. If you want to meet a woman, simply introduce yourself with a handshake and a name!

The construction worker slowly reaches out a hand.

CONSTRUCTION WORKER

I'm Mike.

JOYCE

And I am Joyce.

CONSTRUCTION WORKER

Cool, Joyce. So, you gonna sit on my face or what?

As a look of defeat crosses Joyce's face, we SMASH TO:

TITLE CARD: MINX.

A TITLE SEQUENCE of phallic imagery in 1970s LA set to My Ding-A-Ling, the song Chuck Berry wrote about his dick.

EXT. LOS ANGELES CONVENTION CENTER - DAY

December 1971. Signs advertise the Southern California Magazine Pitch Festival. Joyce waits in an ALL-MALE LINE outside. A PERKY EVENT ORGANIZER addresses the crowd.

EVENT ORGANIZER

Welcome to our fourth annual Pitch Festival, where we connect the magazine creators of tomorrow with the publishers of today!

Joyce listens intently. Her reverie is interrupted by a CLOUD OF SMOKE wafting over. As she hacks up a lung -

DOUG (O.S.)

Sorry, honey.

She turns to see DOUG RENETTI, 40, a charming but low-rent hustler, wearing leather everything, smoking a cigarette.

DOUG (CONT'D)

They got some rules about smoking inside, like it's a fuckin' hospital or some shit.

He offers her his pack of cigarettes. She edges away.

JOYCE

Allergic to nicotine.

DOUG

First pitch fest?

JOYCE

Yes. So. I'm trying to listen.

DOUG

Don't get your hopes up.
(off her incredulous look)
Everyone and their mama's trying to sell a magazine nowadays. For every Cat Fancy that finds its perfect niche audience, there's a thousand Cat-Tastics that crash and burn.

JOYCE

Thanks for the recap on the booming magazine industry. But I'm not Cat-Tastic or any other imitator. I've been working on my idea for years.

DOUG

Yeah? Then come pitch to me.

He heads inside, handing her a card. It's black and gold with a logo of two sexy silhouetted women sitting back to back.

JOYCE

Bottom Dollar Publications.

She flips the card over. On the back, a list of Doug's publications. GIANT JUGGS. TINY TUSHIES. MILKY MOMS. *Ew.*

Up front, the organizer opens the door to the main hall.

EVENT ORGANIZER

Go forth and conquer!

The MEN race inside like they're running with the bulls in Pamplona. Joyce narrowly avoids being trampled.

INT. MAIN ROOM - LOS ANGELES CONVENTION CENTER - DAY

Joyce walks past monitors playing industrial videos about the history of the Linotype machine and the rapidly growing magazine industry, to enter a huge room buzzing with energy and the din of CREATORS pitching an impressive roster of PUBLISHERS, everyone from Hearst to Forbes to Conde Nast.

Joyce takes a deep breath, steadying herself. She's got this.

INT. MAIN ROOM - LATER

Joyce pitches her heart out, showing PUBLISHERS images from popular women's magazines: An article from SEVENTEEN - a *BASHFUL YET SEXY TEENAGE GIRL in knee socks and pig tails.*

JOYCE (READING THE TITLE)

"The Blush Factor: Coping With
Everyday Embarrassment."

Then, from BRIDES - a *SAUCY BRIDE, winking over the shoulder of her husband and showing off her huge ring.*

JOYCE (CONT'D)

"From Date to Mate: You Too Can
Snag A Spouse!"

Last, COSMO - A "*before shot*" of a *FRUMPY WOMAN frowning at a scale; an "after shot" of the same woman in a low cut red bathing suit, holding two grapefruits, one over each boob.*

JOYCE (CONT'D)

"The Grapefruit Diet: Find Your
Thin Within."

Joyce sets down her last poster-board.

JOYCE (CONT'D)
Can you guess what these articles
have in common?

CUT BETWEEN multiple publishers, grinning and playing along.
This sounds like just what they're looking for.

FLIRTY PUBLISHER
They're sexy and fun.

OLD PUBLISHER
With pictures of pretty gals.

CIGAR-CHOMPING PUBLISHER
The kinda stuff my old lady reads
in the tub.

JOYCE
What they have in common is...
they're the EXACT OPPOSITE of the
stories I'll have in my magazine.

The publishers stop smiling. A determined Joyce presses on.

JOYCE (CONT'D)
This country treats women like
second class citizens. We're
overlooked, underpaid, overwhelmed.
We deserve a magazine that inspires
us - that shows us how to fight!
Gentlemen, this is your chance to
be on the right side of history.

She unveils a mocked up cover of her magazine. Articles about
gender discrimination, domestic violence, lesbian rights. A
stark image of a grim woman, her fist raised in protest. And
then there's title:

JOYCE (CONT'D)
The Matriarchy Awakens.

Pin-drop silence. One publisher finally asks, re: the cover:

OLD PUBLISHER
Why is she so angry?

JOYCE
I believe I covered that in my
presentation?

BUZZ! A three minute timer goes off.

EXT. ELEVATOR - NIGHT

An unhappy Joyce stands in the elevator, clutching her huge cardboard box. As it closes, Doug gets on. Ugh. *This guy.*

DOUG

Cat-Tastic! You forgot to find me inside. How'd it go?

JOYCE

My pitch needs a smidge of work.

DOUG

I know, I overheard you at Conde Nasty. If it were me, I'd stop saying how different I am from the most successful women's magazines in fuckin' ever. I'm just like 'em, but with a twist.

This mansplaining is the last straw. Joyce smiles, snooty.

JOYCE

Thanks for the advice, but you're not my target audience.

DOUG

Oh, what am I the target audience for, Goombah Scumbag Weekly?

JOYCE

Another one of your publications?

DOUG

Ho ho, some mouth on ya, honey. For your information, I've got four mil in circulation, a dozen titles on the rack-

JOYCE

A dozen pornography titles.

DOUG

You think that's easy?

JOYCE

Breasts, more breasts, oh look, bigger breasts. If you have to do porn, at least be original. Do a magazine with naked old people. Or, I don't know, a magazine of nude men. Maybe you can be the first centerfold. See how *you* like being objectified for once.

The elevator opens. Joyce tries to make a dramatic exit, then bumps into a bench, sending copies of her magazine flying all over the lobby. She gathers them up and walks off in a huff.

Doug spots one of the magazines caught behind the bench. On a whim, he picks it up and stuffs it in his back pocket.

EXT. THE FLATS OF BEVERLY HILLS - NIGHT

Joyce drives up to her crappy apartment building to find IRA, 20s, preppy and handsome, waiting outside in a suit. Shit.

INT. JOYCE'S CRAPPY APARTMENT - NIGHT

Joyce tries to put on a party dress while carrying on a conversation with an irritated Ira.

IRA

I told you about this two weeks ago. I wrote it down. In Sharpie.

JOYCE

(dress over her head)

Three hundred new titles out last year, everyone's looking for the next big thing, and STILL, no one will publish me.

IRA

My parents already think you hate them -

JOYCE

I don't hate them, I hate their politics.

IRA

- and you know how my mom gets hung up on this holiday party.

JOYCE

That's what happens to smart women who don't work. They still have these big brains so they use them on things that don't matter.

(then)

Is that a story idea?

She jots it down. Ira watches her. Thinking. Deciding.

IRA

I can't wait around anymore.

JOYCE
Just one minute.

IRA
Not tonight. I mean, I can't wait around for you to get this magazine out of your system.

JOYCE
Out of my system? You've been waiting for me to give up?

IRA
Two years we've been together. Two years it's made you miserable. But you keep on going. I don't get it.

JOYCE
Of course you don't. You rose through the ranks of a national magazine writing about cashmere sweaters and Hi-Fis. My stories are political. No one wants to touch them. I *have* to do it myself.

Ira recognizes her frustration. He says this gently:

IRA
I love you. I want a normal life together. Double dates with other couples, road trips on weekends. Don't you want that too?

Joyce hesitates, knowing their relationship hinges on her answer. But she can't not be true to herself:

JOYCE
I do. But I want this more.

EXT. JOYCE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Ira drives off. Joyce shuts the blinds with a deep sigh.

INT. JOYCE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

The bedroom of a girl who lives and dies for magazines. Neatly organized stacks are everywhere, arranged by category. The walls are plastered with images and articles ripped out of iconic publications.

Joyce studies early versions of her magazine. We can tell how long she's been working on it from the content. There's stories about the unfairness of girls having to take Home Ec. while boys take Shop, advice for girls who want to skip prom.

Joyce looks at these old issues wistfully. She loves what she's made. Why doesn't anyone else? But enough wallowing. She starts a new story: "When Breaking Up Is For The Best."

EXT. BEVERLY HILLS - DAY

Swank office buildings and high-end stores featuring elaborate Valentine's displays. A cherry red PLYMOUTH BARRACUDA zooms up and parks in a loading zone.

CHYRON: SIX WEEKS LATER

INT. TEEN QUEEN MAGAZINE - DAY

We follow SNAKESKIN BOOTS through offices decorated like Marcia Brady's wet dream, all shag rugs and baby pink.

INT. THE SUBSCRIPTIONS DEPARTMENT - TEEN QUEEN - DAY

OFFICE GIRLS field phone inquiries about subscriptions while their sweaty supervisor CORY gives shoulder massages and looks down their shirts. He hovers over his current target, a sweet girl named WENDY, while she talks on the phone.

CORY

Ohhhhh yeah. That's a sweet spot right there. You should do this for your boyfriend, get him real hot.

She giggles nervously and shifts her arm over her blouse, trying to get out of his eye-line without making waves.

CAMERA FINDS Joyce deep inside the room, typing up customer information while talking on the phone.

JOYCE (INTO PHONE)

You'll get the first issue next week. I hope your daughter likes it.

(whispering into phone)

But if she's as political as you say, I'd recommend a Newsweek subscription instead. There's a revolution on the streets and we're still publishing puff pieces about David Cassidy.

AHEM. The sound of a throat clearing. It's Doug, standing above her, a big smirk on his face.

DOUG

Hiya, honey.

INT. TEEN QUEEN LOBBY - DAY

Joyce has a heated but whispered exchange with Doug, trying to hide from any nosy co-workers who might see her.

JOYCE
How'd you find me here?!

DOUG
Ehhh ehhh I came to kidnap you. You put where you work in your magazine, dummy.

JOYCE
You read my magazine?

DOUG
You think I'm illiterate or something? It's not Proust.

JOYCE
It's pronounced "Proost."

DOUG
Do people enjoy your company?

JOYCE
Not really. Look, you have to go, my co-workers are G-rated, they own sweater sets and pearls.

DOUG
Those sweater girls are freaks on the inside, trust me.
(as he walks off)
Melvyn's diner, one o'clock.

JOYCE
Do you think I'm just gonna show up for some mystery meeting at a diner like I have nothing better to -

INT. MELVYN'S DINER - DAY

Yeah, she went. Doug's mid-story. Joyce reluctantly listens.

DOUG
So we're on Lake Havisu, shootin' two chicks for the cover of Asian Asses, workin' a sexy Vietnam rice paddy angle, when my fagola makeup guy Richie knocks the bag of film in the water-

Already weary, Joyce rubs her eyes.

DOUG (CONT'D)

We shut down while he runs back to town. These girls start bitching, it's cold out, how long is this gonna take. Guess what I did?

JOYCE

Re-evaluated your entire existence?

DOUG

Gave 'em the only shit I had to read in my car. Your magazine.

JOYCE

Your centerfolds read The Matriarchy Awakens. Huh.

DOUG

Also not illiterate.

JOYCE

Did they like it? Out of curiosity. Not that it matters. But-

DOUG

It blew them away.

JOYCE

It did?

DOUG

It's been three weeks and they're still talking about the articles. One just hit me up for a raise because of some shit you wrote about the "pay gap."

Joyce processes this, flattered despite her best intentions.

DOUG (CONT'D)

I gotta a lotta readers. Men. They write me, tell me shit's changing. Chicks are changing. I've been trying to figure out what to do with that, what's next. But maybe it's not about talking to the men. Maybe we gotta talk to the women.

JOYCE

I already am. I have been for years. But it's a matter of finding the right partner.

DOUG
Got a lot of prospects, do ya?
(off her look)
Fuck 'em. They got no vision. I
know quality and this is good.

JOYCE
I appreciate that.

DOUG
You do have one challenge. The
vibe, it's kinda shouty. Feels like
a teacher yelling at you.

JOYCE
This isn't about feelings. It's
about making people think.

DOUG
You gotta hide the medicine. Like
when you dip a pill in peanut
butter for a dog. Question is,
what's our peanut butter?

A beat.

JOYCE
Are you waiting for me to answer
because I don't-

DOUG
Nude men.

JOYCE
...did you say nude men?

DOUG
Not like a schvantz in your face.
Classy. With the smart articles and
your modern lady point of view.

JOYCE
Are you mentally ill?

DOUG
You're the one who came up with it.

JOYCE
That was a conversational *bon mot!*
Do you even understand what I'm
trying to do here?

DOUG

Duh, feminism. Making shit fair and equal for chicks. So tell me this. How is it fair and equal that guys have a dozen places to see titties, and gals have no way to see dong?

JOYCE

Gals don't want to see dong.

DOUG

How do you know?

JOYCE

Because I am one!

DOUG

Want to put money on it?

JOYCE

Like a bet?

Doug grins.

DOUG

No, honey. Like a magazine.

INT. SHELLY'S KITCHEN - LATER

Joyce and her sister SHELLY, 30s, a kooky housewife, drink Riunite on ice. Through the window we can see Shelly's nerdy husband LENNY playing with her TODDLER BOYS in the backyard.

SHELLY

He wants to give you an office and a staff and fund your first three issues? Didn't you tell me that costs over a hundred grand?

JOYCE

Maybe.

SHELLY

Joycie! That's a LOT of money.

JOYCE

It comes with strings. Big ones. Wrapped around peckers.

SHELLY

PeckerS or pecker? I thought we were talking about just one.

JOYCE

We didn't get into the details.

SHELLY

What if it's a single tiny weenus
hidden in the back. Say page 106?

JOYCE

Why are you trying to talk me into
this?

SHELLY

I hate to see you spinning your
wheels. You've been at this for so
long.

JOYCE

Look, I know it's a good
opportunity... an opportunity...

SHELLY

The only opportunity.

JOYCE

Why does it have to come from this
guy? He's just so... wrong.

SHELLY

Do you think Lenny had all the
qualities I was looking for in a
husband? I wanted someone who loved
to travel, not someone who gets
diarrhea from looking at Chinese
food. But he takes care of me and
he's a great dad. No, I didn't get
everything I wanted, but I'm happy.

Joyce is torn. Shelly takes her hands, passionate.

SHELLY (CONT'D)

Take his money. Write your stories.

JOYCE

Even if I wanted to, do you think I
could pull this off? The... nudity?

SHELLY

Why not?

JOYCE

I'm not some sexy cool girl. I went
to Vassar.

SHELLY

That's what this guy wants from
you. That Seven Sisters polish...
all over his magazine of knobs.

JOYCE

Shelly! Don't be disgusting.

SHELLY

Me? You're the pornographer!

Joyce shoves Shelly, who shoves her back. The girls crack up.

INT. JOYCE'S BATHROOM - DAY

Joyce gets ready for her first day. What do you wear to a
porn office? She puts on sunglasses. Nope. Takes them off.

INT. JOYCE'S CAR - DAY

She's back in her pantsuit, driving, singing to "I am Woman."

INT. JOYCE'S CAR - ONE HOUR LATER

She's passing an obscene bookstore and a theater playing Mona
the Virgin Nymph. Where the hell is she? She makes accidental
eye contact with a man leaving the theater. Locks her doors.

INT. JOYCE'S CAR/EXT. BOTTOM DOLLAR PUBLICATIONS - DAY

Joyce pulls up to a seedy building on a seedy street. She
gets out, briefcase in tow, and walks to the entrance. She
continues singing the song from the car under her breath.

JOYCE

I am strong... strong...
I am invincible... invincible...

She pushes the door open...

INT. BOTTOM DOLLAR PUBLICATIONS - DAY

Walls lined with MAGAZINE COVERS of NUDE WOMEN in sexy poses.
A CLEAVAGEY RECEPTIONIST reads "LUSTY LATINAS". A MUSTACHED
DUDE walks with a box of something called PUSSY POCKETS.

JOYCE

...I'm in Gomorrah.

She shakes off her doubts and approaches the receptionist.

JOYCE (CONT'D)

Good afternoon, I'm here to see
Doug Renetti, I'm Joyce -

BAMBI (O.S.)
Joyce Prigger? Is that you??

Entering the lobby: BAMBI FEATHER, 20s, a blonde in hot pants and fur. She envelops Joyce in a hug that won't end.

JOYCE
Hello, hi - Have we met?

BAMBI
I'm Bambi, I model for Doug. Most recently in Busty Blondes? I was Miss May, June and July?

JOYCE
Sounds like a busy summer.

BAMBI
So glad that's behind me. Thank you, truly, for the opportunity.
(off Joyce's confusion)
Didn't Doug tell you? I'm working for the magazine. I'm your new "centerfold coordinator."

INT. BULLPEN - CONTINUOUS

Bambi pulls Joyce inside the open offices. The decor is 70s man-cave meets Vegas Casino. Sex permeates every inch of space, from the inspiration images on the cubicle walls to the super short skirts on the secretaries.

BAMBI
Tour time! So, we're basically like any regular old office. Accounting. Editorial. Art Department.

ACCOUNTING smokes a joint. EDITORIAL sleeps off a buzz with a typewriter on his lap. ART DEPARTMENT files nude headshots.

JOYCE
Is he rouging that woman's breasts?

We follow her gaze to a photoshoot in progress. RICHIE GONZALES, 20s, gay, wry, puts blush on a MODEL'S breasts.

BAMBI
Nips don't read pink under hot lights. I wonder if that'll happen to- Richie! Will we have to put makeup on dicks?

RICHIE
One can only hope.

BAMBI

That's Richie, our makeup guy. But he's your photographer on account of no one else will shoot weiners.

RICHIE

Don't worry, I know my way around a camera, I've been photographing my lovers for years.

BAMBI

(whispered)

He's just out of the closet and feeling real free...

JOYCE

Got that from context...

RICHIE

Love your pantsuit.

JOYCE

Enchante.

The trio walks down the hallway to:

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Doug has his feet up at the head of the table. TINA, 30s, judgmental, a bit terrifying, pours water in all the cups.

DOUG

Look who made it! Honey, you look beat. Long drive? Want a coffee?

JOYCE

(to Tina)

A cup of tea would be divine.

TINA

I'm not the secretary. I'm just black.

Joyce's eyes open wide. The most awful faux pas imaginable.

JOYCE

I'm SO sorry. It was actually how you were pouring the waters that-

TINA

Reminded you of the help at your tennis club?

JOYCE

No! Well we did belong to a tennis club. But the waitstaff was mostly Latina.

Doug and Tina burst into laughter.

DOUG

She's just fuckin' with ya, honey. Tina's my secretary going on ten years.

JOYCE

That... was... not nice.

TINA

(under her breath)
Racist.

DOUG

All right fuckers, fun-time's over.

As everyone sits, Doug reveals a chalkboard with writing.

DOUG (CONT'D)

Here's our timeline, lean and mean.

JOYCE

A week to produce a test issue?
That's way too fast.

DOUG

We gotta jam if we wanna be the first ones outta the gate.

JOYCE

You think there's a second nude feminist magazine in the works?

DOUG

If there's not now, there will be. Centerfold ideas, shoot.

Bambi shoots her hand up in the air.

BAMBI

I was thinking, what's the number one thing women find sexy?

JOYCE

Intelligence.

BAMBI (CONT'D)

Motorcycles.

Oops. Joyce didn't realize that was a hypothetical. Bambi makes a little grrrrrrr revving noise.

BAMBI (CONT'D)

Picture this. A tricked out Harley, muscley naked model, big fat boner draped on the throttle.

DOUG

What's the caption?

Bambi doesn't know. Richie spits out a slew of ideas.

RICHIE

"Wild Hog." "Grease Me Up."

TINA

"Rode Hard and Put Away Wet."

Obviously the best idea. The room responds accordingly.

BAMBI/RICHIE/DOUG

Love. Yes. That's fuckin' genius.

Doug turns to Joyce, pleased with himself.

DOUG

Nailed it in one take?

JOYCE

It's not quite what I had in mind.

TINA

What's wrong with it?

JOYCE

It's just, how do motorcycles relate to feminism? Are erections consistent with our philosophy? If our goal is to level the playing field between the sexes, should our penises be ready to assault? Or should they be approachable and unassuming, draped gently on a thigh, tucked away, under a throw?

DOUG

You're missing the point of a centerfold. No one cares about philosophy. Does it turn you on?

JOYCE

A question for the ages. We could debate this for months.

DOUG

We don't want to do that.

JOYCE

We don't want to rush into things either. Let's give this magazine the thought it deserves.

She reaches into her briefcase and pulls out handouts.

JOYCE (CONT'D)

An optional but highly recommended reading list. Lady Chatterly's Lover, the Kinsey Report Volumes 1 through 3, and last summer's best-seller, Our Bodies Our Selves. There's an informative section on vulvas, page ninety three.

EXT. BOTTOM DOLLAR PUBLICATIONS - MAGIC

Joyce drives off, waving at Doug. Great first day! He bums a cigarette from Tina, who smokes outside with the other staff.

DOUG

She'll be jacking off to this brainy shit for months if we let her.

BAMBI

We don't have to read the books?

DOUG

No we're not reading books. We're getting Joyce outta her own head.

INT. JOYCE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Joyce compiles a list of new story ideas. "Interviewing a Misogynist." "Exploring Sexual Harassment at Work." "Vaginal Orgasms: Myth Or Misconception?"

INT. JOYCE'S CAR/EXT. BOTTOM DOLLAR - NEXT DAY

Joyce drives up to see a line of HOT MALE MODELS snaking around the corner, headshots in hand, flexing for each other.

INT. DOUG'S OFFICE - BOTTOM DOLLAR - DAY

Joyce and Doug argue.

JOYCE

We agreed to take our time.

DOUG

We got momentum, honey. You don't get in front of a moving train.

JOYCE

If we want forward motion, I have ideas for big splashy stories. I could go undercover at an abortion clinic. I could collect first-hand accounts of rape.

DOUG

You could also walk up and down Sunset, shouting our idea into the windows of other publishers.

JOYCE

The obsession with getting scooped-

DOUG

Has farting up your own ass gotten you anywhere in life?

JOYCE

I was the salutatorian of my-

DOUG

Bah! No one cares. Try it my way. Coupla days, it's all I ask.

EXT. BOTTOM DOLLAR PARKING LOT - DAY

The whole crew is there. Joyce looks at the crowd, touched.

JOYCE

It's actually kind of inspiring. So many men willing to be physically vulnerable to further the cause.

DOUG

Yeah... they don't know about the nakey part yet.
(off her dirty look)
We needed a big pool of candidates. Go ahead, tell 'em now.

Joyce claps her hands, calling for attention.

JOYCE

Welcome to auditions for a unique publication that exists at the intersection of egalitarianism and feminine desire. Let's begin by reading a short passage together.

Joyce takes the book *Under A Glass Bell* by Anais Nin out of her briefcase and reads aloud:

JOYCE (CONT'D)

"When she saw that he was dissolved with pleasure, she stopped, divining that perhaps if she deprived him now he might make a gesture towards fulfillment. With her two hands she encircled his sexual parts. He leaned over with gratitude, tenderness, and murmured, 'You are the first woman, the first woman, the first woman...'"

The male models are very confused. Doug takes over.

DOUG

We're lookin' for models for a nude dude magazine. You will be butt ass naked, yes that means dick. If that's a problem, you fuckin' pussies, get lost. If it's not, the door's over there.

Some men start to leave. Doug whispers in Bambi's ear. She gets the men's attention with a whistle.

BAMBI

I promised myself I wouldn't take my clothes off for money anymore... but I didn't say anything about taking my clothes off for free. I show you mine, you show me yours?

She flashes the crowd. The men cheer. A bunch turn around and come back. Joyce is appalled.

INT. OUTSIDE THE CONFERENCE ROOM - BOTTOM DOLLAR - DAY

Paper has been hung to block the windows for privacy, but several CURIOUS SECRETARIES try to peer in through the glass. Inside the conference room, the auditions have begun.

INT. INSIDE THE CONFERENCE ROOM - BOTTOM DOLLAR - DAY

A MODEL HOPEFUL in his underwear. Our group confers.

BAMBI

Digging the chest hair.

RICHIE

Love the stache.

JOYCE

(off his resume)
College student. Engineer.

(MORE)

JOYCE (CONT'D)

A definite maybe!
 (to the model)
 We'll be in touch.

TINA

Aren't you forgetting something?
 (to the model)
 Panties off.

The model is about to go for it when Joyce starts to spiral.

JOYCE

Wait! I mean... Uh...
 (to the group, whispered)
 Does this not feel predatory to
 you? Why do we need to see his...
 thing... before the photoshoot? I'm
 sure it's lovely. Well, as lovely
 as they get. I mean. They're all
 basically the same. Right?

Doug scratches his chin, then turns to the group.

DOUG

You ladies want to handle this?

BAMBI

Not all weiners are the same,
 babes. There's shorties, fatties,
 long ones, flatties.

RICHIE

Playful, shy, jaded, bored.

TINA

Are you naming dicks or the seven
 dwarves?

Bambi looks at the color draining from Joyce's face.

BAMBI

You *have* seen a dick before?

JOYCE

Of course I've seen dicks. So many
 dicks.

(then)

One and a half. In dim lighting.

Joyce manages to squeak out:

JOYCE (CONT'D)

You may now disrobe.

The male model drops his pants, proud. CLOSE ON our magazine crew as they all tilt their heads to the far far left.

JOYCE (CONT'D)
(whispered)
Point taken.

HEY IT'S A DICK MONTAGE

Dicks. All the dicks, in every color. Tiny, huge, curved, straight, cut, uncut. One so hairy it gets lost. One that kinda looks like the Virgin Mary's face. One man does tricks - early puppetry of the penis.

INTERCUT between said dicks and our magazine crew:

Richie snaps Polaroids, surreptitiously taking a couple for personal use. Bambi cheers everyone on, trying to be a positive presence. Tina's resting bitch face scares the men. Doug enjoys torturing them with the interview portion.

DOUG
What's your biggest turn on?/What's
your sexual pet-peeve?/Are you now
or have you ever been a homosexual?

Joyce starts out uncomfortable, peeking through her hands. Doug nudges her to put her goddamn hands down and be professional. Then, she gets used to the onslaught of dicks. Before long, she's interviewing naked men with no shame.

JOYCE
What is your favorite virtue?/If
you were to die and come back as an
inanimate object, what would it
be?/What living female do you most
admire? And do not say "my mom."

The male models struggle to answer her questions.

MODELS
What's a virtue?/A bra, so I could
hold up boobs./My... aunt?

JOYCE
Pull up your boxers.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - NIGHT

Auditions have ended. The group looks through Polaroids. Doug holds one up. A HAPPY MORON gives a thumbs up.

DOUG
This guy was a sweetheart.

JOYCE

He was an adorable idiot. A Golden Retriever in human form.

DOUG

You're being a tiny bit picky...

JOYCE

Whomever we choose will have to do press, sell the philosophy behind the magazine. If he's not an intellectual, how are we any different than Milky Moms?

DOUG

I know this is gonna come as a surprise, but we don't get many Harvard grads in here auditioning.

KNOCK KNOCK. The door opens a crack and SHANE, devastatingly handsome, extremely stupid, peeks in, out of breath.

SHANE

Sorry I read the time wrong, I thought you started at 12 am.

JOYCE

What audition starts at midnight?

SHANE

Rats, I know, I'm always getting my AM and PM confused.

Shane walks in, wearing a fireman's jacket on top and naked from the waist down. The women react.

TINA

Ohhhh shit. Wasting no time.

RICHIE

Did you strip down in our hall?

SHANE

The receptionist told me to do it. Was that not right?

Joyce sighs to herself while Richie and Tina crack up.

DOUG

(yelling to the
receptionist)
Not cool, Linda!

Bambi gives him a sympathetic smile.

BAMBI

That's happened to me a million times. So, tell us about yourself!

SHANE

I'm Shane. I'm a fireman.

They wait. Shane gives them a smile. He has a lot of teeth.

JOYCE

Is that it?

SHANE

Uh... I grew up in Malibu. Played football at Pali. Go Dolphins!

Joyce shakes her head, wanting to get rid of him.

JOYCE

We'll get back to you -

Suddenly, the room starts to shake. Shane jumps into first responder mode.

SHANE

No one panic. This shaking you're feeling is an earthquake.

JOYCE

We all know what an earthquake is, we live in Los Angeles.

THWACK! A heavy lamp falls on Doug's shelf and rolls off, headed for Joyce's head.

A pant-less Shane comes to the rescue! He DIVES IN and grabs the lamp at the last minute, falling on top of Joyce in the process. They land on the couch together, him on top of her.

SHANE

Are you all right, Ma'am?

Joyce experiences a moment of unexpected sexual attraction. She gazes up at Shane's perfectly symmetrical face.

JOYCE

I'm good. And... um... thank you?

SHANE

Just doing my job. We should stay here a sec, in case of aftershocks.

They lay there for a beat. Suddenly, Joyce's eyes grow wide. Shane glances down, then back up at Joyce, turning beet red.

SHANE (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. That's not professional.
You're just so so so pretty.

Now it's Joyce's turn to blush.

BAMBI (PRE-LAP)

Joyce has a boyfriend, Joyce has a
boyfriend!

INT. DIVE BAR - NIGHT

The crew toasts to a successful audition day. Everyone's a
bit sloshed. Bambi and Richie give Joyce shit for Shane.

RICHIE

He loves you, he wants to put
babies in you -

DOUG

Vassar's gonna bone our first
centerfold.

JOYCE

I never said he was our centerfold.

TINA

You're a white bitch. We want white
bitch readers because they have
money. If you want to fuck him, the
other white bitches will too.

JOYCE

I don't want to "F" him.

DOUG

You just about creamed on my couch.

JOYCE

EW. I may have found him desirable.
But it's not my fault. Evolution
has conditioned women to be
attracted to rescuers. It's up to
us to overcome our animal desires.

DOUG

Why?

JOYCE

So we can do better. Be better.

DOUG

That's no fun.

JOYCE

I guess I'm no fun then.

DOUG

I think you are. But you're scared of that part of you, like it's gonna make you weak. You know you can be more than just one thing.

JOYCE

Maybe for a guy, but a woman can't lose focus.

DOUG

Either way, its a good idea for a story.

JOYCE

Huh. That *is* a good idea. Did you just think of that?

DOUG

Guess I'm not one thing either.

Joyce can't help seeing Doug in a new light. A WAITRESS slams down a tray of flaming Dr. Peppers in front of the group.

JOYCE

Right on cue...

Doug winks. Richie and Bambi clink glasses, holding one out for Joyce. They start a chant.

BAMBI/RICHIE

Fireman! Fireman! Fireman!

JOYCE

I give up.

Everyone cheers. Joyce chugs the drink.

INT. TAXI/EXT. JOYCE'S APARTMENT - EARLY MORNING

Joyce stumbles out of a cab, still pretty liquored up. She finds Ira waiting at her door again, a duffel bag in hand.

JOYCE

Now what do you want?

IRA

I'm dropping off some stuff you left at my place. I thought you'd be getting ready for work.

JOYCE

I took the week off.
 (triumphant)
 I'm getting my magazine "out of my
 system" and into the world.

IRA

Oh, are you?

JOYCE

I'm developing The Matriarchy
 Awakens with a prominent publisher.

She tries to say this as haughtily as possible, but can't
 help slurring her words a little. Ira starts to laugh.

IRA

All those nights, hidden away in
 your room working. The parties you
 missed, the friends you never made.
 For what? To be a porn queen?

JOYCE

How do you...

IRA

How do I know? Everyone knows! This
 isn't a secret you can keep. I knew
 you were ambitious but wow. This is
 low.

JOYCE

It's artistic. And anyway, it's
 just a small part of the magazine.

IRA

A small part... You know the story
 of McGregor?

JOYCE

Who?

IRA

A drunk starts talking to a tourist
 in a Scottish pub. He says, "You
 see that dock out there? Built that
 myself, stone by stone. But do they
 call me McGregor the dock builder?
 No! You see that bridge over there?
 Built it too, through rain, sleet,
 scorching heat. But do they call me
 McGregor the bridge builder? No!

(beat)

But you fuck one sheep..."

JOYCE
You're a real jerk, you know that?

IRA
And you're a sell out. Good luck
with the magazine.

He walks away. Joyce starts to spin out.

INT. PULITZER PRIZE AWARDS CEREMONY - NIGHT

Joyce onstage, disheveled in a torn dress and smeared makeup. Bright lights blind her as she speaks from the podium.

JOYCE
Compromising your vision. It gets a
bad rap. But should it? I say -

THWACK! She gets hit in the face with a tomato. REVEAL GLORIA STEINEM in the audience, holding a basket of rotten fruit.

JOYCE (CONT'D)
Gloria Steinem? My darling friend?

GLORIA STEINEM
Compromise is for those who lack
the will to fight. You've made a
mockery of us all.

The audience joins Gloria in pelting Joyce with fruit. Joyce tries to shield herself from their fury. O.S., a LOUD RING.

INT. JOYCE'S BEDROOM - DAY

Joyce wakes up in a panic. Is she making a giant mistake? She fumbles to answer her ringing phone.

BAMBI (OVER PHONE)
Babes, we've been calling all
morning. The photoshoot's a go. We
start at five.

Joyce checks her clock. 4:02 PM. Shit.

EXT. FIRE STATION - DAY

Joyce pulls up to a photoshoot in progress, a CREW carrying in props and lights. With a pit in her stomach, she enters:

INT. FIRE STATION - DAY

Richie shoots Shane, who wears his fireman's jacket and poses sexily with a pole. Bambi touches up his body oil while Tina directs the guy holding the reflector.

Joyce approaches Doug, who sits in a director's chair.

DOUG

Look who rolled outta bed.

JOYCE

Who plans a photoshoot in one day?

DOUG

It's looking great.

JOYCE

It looks like a Playboy Pictorial from 1963. It's cheesy and embarrassing and meaningless. We're supposed to be saying something.

DOUG

Like what?

JOYCE

I don't know yet! I've barely had time to think.

DOUG

We can't read your mind, honey.
We're doing the best we can.
(puts an arm around her)
C'mon, take a minute to enjoy this.
Look at all these people, working hard to make your dream come true.

JOYCE

You think this is my dream?? My dream is a pot of delicious, healthy soup. What you're doing is adding a tiny little turd to it, stirring it in, hoping no one'll notice.

DOUG

Is that right?

JOYCE

This isn't just some piece of business for me. It's my life's work. Why should I have to compromise it for someone else?

DOUG

Because grow the fuck up. You think you're doing me a favor here? I'm a goddamn success story, honey, I'm the American dream.

(MORE)

DOUG (CONT'D)

You've been at this for years and you've never had a bite of interest before me.

JOYCE

People are cowards.

DOUG

Or maybe, just maybe, your magazine isn't as good as you think - yet.

JOYCE

Who are you to determine that?

DOUG

I'm the money.

JOYCE

Maybe your money costs too much.

DOUG

That's too bad. 'Cause I'm the only one who sees what you can do.

He walks off. Joyce watches him leave, upset, not sure she did the right thing. Poor Shane looks around, confused.

SHANE

Um guys? Am I draping my penis over a fire pole or what?

EXT. JOYCE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Joyce pulls up. Finds a construction site across from her house. As she storms her way to her building, ANOTHER CONSTRUCTION WORKER cat-calls her.

ANOTHER CONSTRUCTION WORKER

Hey sexy lady, I like them gams!

Joyce turns to him, a red hot ball of rage.

JOYCE

FUCK YOU!!!

INT. JOYCE'S BEDROOM/LIVING ROOM - DAY

A week later. Joyce takes down the magazine images from her bedroom wall, on a tear. The DOORBELL rings. She walks over and opens the door. Shelly's there with two Easter baskets.

SHELLY

I stole the kids' baskets and blamed The Easter Devil.

(MORE)

SHELLY (CONT'D)

That's a new character I created.
You're not the only artist in the
family.

Shelly hands Joyce a basket.

SHELLY (CONT'D)

Here. Chocolate makes it better.

JOYCE

I'm okay.

Shelly lets herself in, taking stock of the messy apartment.

SHELLY

Why aren't you answering my calls?

JOYCE

I've been busy. Rethinking my life.

SHELLY

Have you been to a newsstand
recently? Say a research trip?

JOYCE

I'm done with all that. I'm never
creating a magazine again. I'm
going to do what Ira does. Sit
tight at Teen Queen, write about
eyeliner, get promoted.

SHELLY

You're meant for bigger than that.

JOYCE

I don't want to be bigger. I just
want to be.

SHELLY

Well too bad. You don't get to pick
your destiny.

JOYCE

Look, Shell, I know you want this
for me. But I'd rather never
publish a magazine than capitulate
to someone else's bad idea.

SHELLY

What if this isn't a bad idea?

JOYCE

A magazine full of naked men? It's
deeply, inescapably silly.

SHELLY

The women of America disagree.

Joyce doesn't get it.

SHELLY (CONT'D)

Look in your goddamn Easter basket already.

Joyce reaches in and pulls out the April 1972 issue Cosmo Magazine. The banner reads: AT LAST A MALE NUDE CENTERFOLD.

She opens it to find the iconic image of Burt Reynolds naked on a bear skin rug in front of a fireplace.

JOYCE

...people like this?

SHELLY

Joycie. It's a sensation.

ARCHIVAL NEWS FOOTAGE

Of the controversy and publicity surrounding Burt and Cosmo. The magazine selling off the shelves. Johnny Carson joking about it in his monologue. Burt hounded by paparazzi.

EXT. BEVERLY HILLS - DAY

Joyce walks to work. No matter where she looks, she can't avoid that issue of Cosmo.

AN OLD BIDDY at the hairdressers, hiding it inside a stack of other magazines, examining the centerfold with curiosity.

AN EXHAUSTED MOM walks her baby in a stroller, the Cosmo magazine open inside the bassinet. She leers at the centerfold with unbridled lust.

INT. TEEN QUEEN MAGAZINE - SUBSCRIPTIONS DEPARTMENT - DAY

Even the SWEATER GIRLS are in on the action. They gather at Wendy's desk, looking over her shoulder at the magazine, giggling. Joyce watches them as she finishes up her call.

JOYCE (INTO PHONE)

That's right, cancel any time...

Cory comes over and puts his hands on Wendy's shoulders.

CORY

Whatcha lookin' at, gals?

A beat. Then Wendy opens the magazine to Burt's spread. She smiles up at Cory, emboldened.

WENDY

You should do this for your girlfriend, Cory. Get her real hot. Right in her sweet spot.

Wendy and the girls burst into laughter. Cory reddens.

As Joyce watches an embarrassed Cory take his hands off Wendy, something clicks for her. She's finally seeing the possibilities of this magazine...

EXT. DOUG'S HOME - DAY

Joyce pulls up to Doug's home and walks up to his front door. She looks around the street, surprised. It's very family-friendly. White picket fences, strollers, the whole deal.

Doug's on the front porch, marking up a proof of a magazine. He looks up, surprised to see Joyce.

DOUG

Cat-tastic...

JOYCE

Your street is lovely. Not where I pictured you.

DOUG

It's the kind of place I wanted to live when I was a kid. So now I do.

He looks at her, waiting. What does she want?

JOYCE

I... assume you've seen Cosmo?

DOUG

Whole country's seen Cosmo.

JOYCE

It was a cheat, he was barely naked. And still, women went crazy for it. Just like you said they would.

(beat)

It got me thinking, maybe we should give this another shot. I know, "male erotica" is in the zeitgeist now, but we're still ahead of the curve. We could be on the newsstands before anyone else.

Doug puts down his proof and gives her a hard look.

DOUG

I go to any one of my magazines, people are dying to hear what I think. But you act like I'm a fucking clown. Until some asshole at Cosmo throws Burt Reynolds on a bearskin rug. Then I get your stamp of approval?

Joyce makes a final plea.

JOYCE

This magazine has been a part of me for a long time. It was my friend growing up, when no one else would be. It was my comfort every time a teacher told me to stop talking so much, every time a boy told me I was ugly. I didn't know how hard it would be to let it go out into the world and become a living, breathing thing.

On Doug, more sympathetic now.

JOYCE (CONT'D)

I thought you were a tacky salesman with a cheap gimmick. But I need you. Not your money, you. You know something I'm just figuring out. A magazine has to make you feel something. And seeing a naked guy does that to women. Whether they're curious or turned on or just wanting to laugh at him. The ability to look makes women feel powerful. That's not a gimmick. That's what our magazine is all about. Or, it could be, if you'd give me one more chance.

DOUG

I'll think about it.

JOYCE

Don't think too long. I've got a killer idea for a centerfold.

(teasing)

You wouldn't want me to walk up and down Sunset shouting it into our competitor's windows...?

EXT. A CONSTRUCTION SITE SET - DAY

Joyce's new photoshoot. Shane's dressed as a nude construction worker, being cat-called by MODELS dressed as businesswomen on the street, including a reluctant Tina and an enthused Bambi. Richie calls to the models.

RICHIE

I need more! Be dirty, let it rip.

The models start cat-calling Shane, unleashing some inner wellspring of female rage.

MODELS

Look over here, baby!/Hot ass!/You know you want it!

BAMBI

SHOW US YOUR DICK!

SHANE

Jeez. Being a woman is intense.

CLICK! Richie captures that image with his camera.

Camera finds Joyce and Doug in side by side chairs. Doug gestures to the scene they're playing out in front of him.

DOUG

Gotta hand it to you with this centerfold. You pulled a rabbit out of a hat.

JOYCE

Let's see how it prints.

DOUG

Look at you, talkin' like a real editor. I'm proud of you, honey. You've come a long way.

Yes she has. But not so far that she won't quote Anais Nin.

JOYCE

"The day came when the risk to remain tight in a bud...

He finishes the quote.

DOUG

"...was more painful than the risk it took to blossom."

Joyce is shocked and touched.

JOYCE
You read my books.

DOUG
You asked me to, so what? I liked
'em. She's got a way with words,
that Anais Nin.

JOYCE
(can't help it)
It's pronounced "Anays Neen."

DOUG
Asshole.

Joyce laughs. Doug turns back to watching the photoshoot.

DOUG (CONT'D)
So honey. Big question. What are we
gonna do about the name?

JOYCE
Of the magazine? Nothing. What's
wrong with The Matriarchy Awakens?

DOUG
It's poon poison. Chicks hear it,
they dry right up into a crusty
bowl. We need a wet pussy title.

Off their argument, one of many to come, we CUT TO:

EXT. LAD MAGAZINE - DAY

A men's magazine, an imitator of Esquire and GQ.

INT. LAD MAGAZINE - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

A creative meeting in process. A SUIT holds up the latest
issue of the magazine, lambasting a room full of EDITORS.

SUIT
Ten percent drop in circulation,
advertisers jumping ship. We can't
afford to be complacent any longer.
I want fresh concepts, big swings -

CAMERA FINDS Ira, looking at the Cosmo magazine under a stack
of other publications in front of him. He addresses the room.

IRA
I might have an idea.

FADE TO BLACK.