



MY BIG FAT GREEK WEDDING

by

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FADE IN:

EXT. CHICAGO STREET - EARLY MORNING, 1984

SUPER - CHICAGO, 1984

It's 6:00 am on a deserted Chicago street. A lone car plods through a heavy snowstorm.

CUT TO:

I/E CAR INTERIOR - SAME TIME

CLOSE-UP on TOULA PORTOKALOS, 20, a slightly pudgy, frumpy woman, miserable that she's not at home under a quilt. Her thick glasses fog and unfog with every breath. Driving the car is her father, GUS PORTOKALOS, late 40's, an amiable, goofy, hard-working Greek immigrant, who's always putting his foot in his mouth.

Gus keeps looking over at Toula's 'bed-head' and scrunched-up, barely-awake face. She yawns. He winces. He looks again.

GUS

(thick, Greek accent)

You better get married soon because
you're starting to look old.

Toula stares straight ahead.

EXT. CHICAGO STREET - CONTINUOUS

Car continues down street.

TOULA (V.O.)

The first time my dad said that to
me...I was twenty.

(imitates accent)

"starting to look old". Y'see, nice
Greek girls marry young. And nice
Greek girls are expected to do
three things: marry Greek boys,
make Greek babies and feed everyone
until the day we die. A nice Greek
girl named Toula Portokalos does
not make up her own mind, rebel
against tradition and marry Ian
Miller, the whitest man alive.

MAIN TITLES.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, LUNCH AREA - DAY, 1970

TOULA (V.O.)

When I was growing up, I always
knew that I was...different.

Fair-skinned, light-haired CHILDREN, at tables, laughing. Chubby, swarthy Toula, 6 years old, walks by the group of PRETTY GIRLS, dressed in Brownies outfits as they unpack the same Wonder bread sandwich from brown paper bags. Toula sits alone at a table, pulls a large Tupperware container from a sack, struggles with the lid and it peels back with a moist burp. A girl turns around and stares at the concoction.

GIRL

What's that?

TOULA

It's moussaka.

GIRL

(loud)

Moose Caca?!!

She and other Brownies laugh and point. It echoes. Toula tilts her chin down and eats.

TOULA (V.O.)

All the NORMAL girls got to go to
Brownies where they won neat merit
badges for birdcalls and stuff. Not
me. I had to go to Greek School.

CUT TO:

INT. GREEK SCHOOL - EVENING

TOULA and ten HEFTY GREEK KIDS sit at desks facing the chalkboard, in a cramped, dark, dusty, makeshift classroom. The TEACHER is speaking and pointing to the chalkboard.

TEACHER

Endaxi tora. Katalavainaitai? [All
right now. Understand?]

He motions to them and they begin to drone

TOULA (V.O.)
Where I sat translating "If Nick
has one goat and Maria has nine,
how soon will they marry?"

CUT TO:

INT. FAMILY KITCHEN - EVENING

Athena, Toula and Nick sit at the table doing their Greek
school homework. Maria, now 34, cooks and watches over them.

TOULA (V.O.)
My mom was the typical Greek
mother, cooking up dishes filled
with warmth and wisdom. And always,
that side dish of steaming hot
guilt.

Toula stops working and looks at her mom.

TOULA
Mom, why do I have to go to Greek
school?

Maria turns and gives her a look...

MARIA
(Greek accent, pious)
Oh Toula, I wanted to go to school
but there was the war and my mother
needed me to help. Every morning I
would take our eggs, I would walk
three miles to the next village and
I would trade them for potatoes and
milk.

Toula sighs and puts her forehead down on the table. Maria
snaps out of her reverie

MARIA (cont'd)
Besides..in a few years, when you
get married, don't you want to be
able to write your mother-in-law a
letter?

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE NEIGHBORHOOD - DUSK

A normal street in suburbia.

TOULA (V.O.)
 We lived in a typical Chicago
 suburb - whitebread and middle-
 class. Neat lawns, picket fences...

*
 *

Each house looks the same. Then - the Portokalos home is
 twice as large with blue and white stripes.

TOULA (V.O.)
 ...and our house. The paint job - a
 tribute to the Greek flag.

Plastic lace curtains adorn the windows and gold statues
 grace the front lawn. A huge, black Cadillac is parked in
 front. Gus stops cleaning his windshield, looks at the back
 of his hand...

TOULA (V.O.)
 My dad believed in only two things:
 that Greeks should educate non-
 Greeks on being Greek, and, that
 any ailment, from psoriasis to
 poison ivy, can be cured by Windex.

*

CLOSE-UP: a wart on the back of his hand. He sprays it with
 Windex.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. FAMILY KITCHEN - MORNING, 1976

SUPER - 1976

MARIA, now 40, is serving breakfast as GUS, now 40, eats with
 ATHENA, TOULA and NICK, (and soaks his elbow in Windex).

TOULA (V.O.)
 Okay, six years later. I was 12,
 Athena, my older perfect sister,
 was 15 and my brother, Nick was 11.

For no reason at all, Gus leans down and smothers Nick with
 kisses.

TOULA (V.O.)
 Every morning my dad would lecture
 us on the "history of our people,
 the greatest civilization, The
 Greeks".

GUS
 Name three things the Greeks did
 first.

NICK
The Olympics!

ATHENA
(by rote)
Astronomy, Philosophy and
Democracy.

Toula eats.

GUS
Good. The difference between the
Parthenon and the Acropolis is...?

Athena's hand shoots up. Toula glares.

ATHENA
(perky and perfect)
The Parthenon is the actual
structure, while the Acropolis is
the area.

GUS
Okay, now give me a word, any
word...

CUT TO:

I/E CADILLAC INTERIOR - LATER THAT DAY

Toula, and TWO FRIENDS ride in the car. Toula is squirming
with embarrassment. *

GUS
...and I show you how the root of
that word is Greek.

Silence.

GUS (cont'd)
OK, how about.....arachnophobia.
OK, 'arachna' comes from the Greek
word for spiders and 'phobia' is
'phovia' which means fear, so..fear
of spiders, there you go.

More silence.

GUS (cont'd)
See... every word is a Greek word.
Gimnee a word..

A whole lotta silence.

FRIEND # 1

(attitude)

OK, Mr. Portokalos, how about the word 'kimono'?

Gus's eyes widen at the challenge and he chuckles.

GUS

'Kimono' comes from the Greek word 'himona', which means winter, and what do you wear in the winter to keep warm? Your ROBE. There you go.

Gus will walk a mile to prove his little theory. They pull up to the school and the girls scramble out. Toula doesn't even look at him.

GUS (cont'd)

Toula...Toula...

She goes back to the car.

GUS (cont'd)

Toula...you should be proud to be Greek.

TOULA

I'm American.

She sulks off, leaving behind her bewildered father.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. DANCING ZORBA'S - EVENING, 1980

SUPER - 1980

TOULA (V.O.)

Okay, now four more years have zipped by. As usual we were at our second home. Most Greek families have a second home: their Greek restaurant.

CLOSE-UP on the restaurant sign - a fisherman kicking his heels in mid-air - DANCING ZORBA'S.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. DANCING ZORBA'S - CONTINUOUS

ATHENA brings a couple to a table. She's wearing a spiffy Seating Hostess jacket and as always, there's a spring in her step.

TOULA (V.O.)

Ugh, Athena, still a major brown-noser, was 19. And married.

Athena whisks past her swarthy husband, YIANNI, 20's, who eyes her from his table.

TOULA (V.O.)

Yianni, her husband, was a shepherd from my dad's village. Need I say more? Meanwhile, I was...

She passes by pudgy TOULA, who sullenly takes an order.

TOULA (V.O.)

...16 and going through an...awkward phase. Nick at 15 was...

Toula calls out to him. NICK, sticks his head through the short-order window and waves.

TOULA (V.O.)

...the hairiest Greek in Chicago.

GUS, now mid 40's, greets customers, beams at his busy restaurant.

TOULA (V.O.)

My dad had worked as a dishwasher, busboy, waiter, then manager and in 1975, when Mr. Christakos the owner retired, my dad bought the restaurant. Did I mention he came to this country with eight dollars in his pocket?

GUS

(to Customer)

I came to this country with eight dollars in my pocket.

CUT TO:

INT. FAMILY HOME - DAY

Gus and Maria escort YIAYIA (GRANDMA) into the living room. She is four feet tall, dressed completely in black and has a face like an apple carving.

TOULA (V.O.)

Then my dad decided to bring his mother over from Greece to live with us because we weren't weird enough.

Yiayia is giving out mean looks. She's senile and doesn't know what's going on. But she can take care of herself; she's not pathetic.

YIAYIA

*Keeta tho, xero eesastai Toorkee
kai mai peeratai mai apoyoyee.*
[Look, I know you're Turks and have kidnapped me.]

Gus laughs, reaches out to hug Yiayia, she karate chops him in the neck, runs out of the room and they follow.

TOULA (V.O.)

My grandma slept with a knife under her pillow. She was on Turk Watch.

INT. NEXT DOOR NEIGHBOR'S HOUSE - DAY

MRS. WHITE. Age? - hard to tell. She's the neighborhood gossip, wearing curlers, fuzzy slippers, cigarette in one hand, lime rickey in the other - we all know her.

MRS. WHITE

(on phone)

Doreen White here. Is this Carol Greenwood? How are you?

(looks out her window to the left, waves her ciggie)

I'm right beside you. Helloooo! I just wanted to say welcome to the neighborhood and we'll be expecting you at our fourth of July barbecue.

(paces, listens)

A Potato Chip Casserole? Terrific. Recipe please.

She flips opens the curtain on her right: Yiayia is glued to the window like a Garfield-the-cat Stick-Up. Mrs. White shrieks.

MRS. WHITE (cont'd)
Jesus-Murphy-on-a-stick.

Gus runs over and tries to peel Yiayia off the window. Big cars pull into the driveway: the ever-present relatives get out carrying the ever-present children and trays of food. Yiayia sees the children and runs over to play.

Mrs. White flips her curtains shut and scurries away from the window, receiver still at her ear.

MRS. WHITE (cont'd)
I am so very sorry about that. It's
The Greek Family. Those people
break plates y'know, uh huh, saw it
on PBS.

TOULA (V.O.)
I hated Mrs. White...

Outside, all hell breaks loose as relatives try to hug Yiayia and she fights them off. They chase her in a circle around Toula, who looks nauseated at the spectacle that is her life

TOULA (V.O.)
...but I still wanted to live at
her house.

CUT TO:

INT. DANCING ZORBA'S - EVENING

FAMILY BOOTH:

The PRIEST and Gus drink coffee. AUNT VOULA, late 40's, Maria's sister, is 'reading' a fortune from a coffee cup as they listen to her meek soft-spoken husband, UNCLE TAKI, late 40's. Toula brings the sweets.

TOULA (V.O.)
My Aunt Voula, my Uncle Taki, the
Priest.. they'd spend hours
discussing the problems of the
world and, more important than
that: the crumbling family.

UNCLE TAKI
He was always such a good boy, but
now...

PRIEST

...he looked Spiro right in the eye
and said "I don't want to be a
baker".

They all gasp and cross themselves.

GUS

What will they do with the bakery
now?

UNCLE TAKI

Sell it.

They all gasp again and cross themselves. They sit for a
moment and mull this betrayal over. Toula is fed up.

TOULA

Well, maybe the son will be
happier. Why shouldn't he go out in
the world and find out what he
wants to be? I'd love to try
something new-

Gus bursts into tears.

GUS

Why would you want to leave me?

They stare at her, mouths hanging open.

TOULA (V.O.)

And that's when I realized that I
had to do something, anything with
my life.

END MAIN TITLES

*

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. DANCING ZORBA'S - EARLY MORNING

SUPER - 1984

Toula comes in, takes off her coat, puts on her waitress
apron, stands at the window, looking out at the snow.

TOULA (V.O.)

But four years later there I was,
20, "starting to look old", and
still working at Dancing Zorba's.

She HEARS a noise from the kitchen and calls over her shoulder.

TOULA

Nick?

NICK, at 19: hairy and stocky, comes out of the kitchen, holding a jacket.

NICK

Hey, Toula. Guess what? You got a promotion. Athena got knocked up, so now you get to be the seating hostess.

He leaves the jacket and goes.

Toula doesn't move for a moment, then, her shoulders sag a bit, and without a word, she slips off her apron, and puts on the seating hostess jacket. She stands at the front window looking out at the snow.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. DANCING ZORBA'S - MORNING, 1994

SUPER - (TEN YEARS LATER)

TOULA, at 30, is standing in the exact same place, doing the exact same thing. NICK, 29, and now bald, comes out of the kitchen.

NICK

Hey, Toula, where's my spatula?

Toula turns to the kitchen. She's still frumpy and plain. Thick glasses cover half her face.

TOULA

Dishwasher.

TOULA (V.O.)

Then one day, I was 30. It's like that awkward phase never ended and my whole life had just passed me by.

MARIA and AUNT VOULA, now late 50's and early 60's, come in stomping their feet to get the snow off their boots.

MARIA

Toula, you closed last night and you're opening this morning?

TOULA

(wryly)

Hmmm. It's nice when even your ma knows you have no life.

Maria takes Toula's face in her hands. She searches Toula's face for some sign of happiness...or trouble.

MARIA

You talk to me sometime, eh?

TOULA

You're gonna make me swallow my tongue.

AUNT VOULA

Where's Nikki?

Nick sticks his head out the short order window.

NICK

What?

AUNT VOULA

No. My Nikki. She was supposed to come over to curla my hairs.

MARIA

Nick, did you check the meat before you signed for it?

NICK

Dad checked it.

Maria sighs and hurriedly puts her things down.

MARIA

It better be fresh. And who ordered so much cheese? Tell Gongo next week less dry outsides and more soft insides.

NICK

He said-

MARIA

Never mind. I call him. Voula, have something to eat before you go to work.

Maria goes into the kitchen. Aunt Voula sees her husband and crosses the room towards him.

FAMILY BOOTH:

GUS, now late 50's, and UNCLE TAKI, now early 60's are in heavy discussion. Aunt Voula shrieks at her husband and they jump.

AUNT VOULA

Taki, you couldn't wait for me?
Five minutes! My sister has to pick
me up?

UNCLE TAKI

Sorry, sorry.

AUNT VOULA

Don't sorry me!

She scratches at her elbow.

AUNT VOULA (cont'd)

And lookit this.

She shows them a slight redness on her elbow.

AUNT VOULA (cont'd)

Rash! Somebody gave me the mati.

Seemingly out of nowhere, Gus pulls out a Windex bottle -

GUS

Eh, put some Windex on it.

- and squirts Aunt Voula's elbow. She impatiently pushes the bottle away.

AUNT VOULA (cont'd)

Gus!

GUS

Voula. It works. Last night, my toe
was as big as my face.

Aunt Voula interrupts and turns to her husband.

AUNT VOULA

So why you no wait for me?

UNCLE TAKI

Gus, he wants to talk.

AUNT VOULA

(instantly interested)

Oh?

She sits. Gus looks over his shoulder at Toula, turns back. *

GUS
Anyway...so I tell her I'll send
her to Greece to look for someone-

UNCLE TAKI
-she's not too old-

They pause, then all turn to check out Toula.

FRONT COUNTER:

Toula absentmindedly picks fuzz-balls off her sweater.

FAMILY BOOTH:

A beat. They turn back.

GUS
She's OK.

UNCLE TAKI
Yeah.

Pause.

UNCLE TAKI (cont'd)
In Greece, don't tell anyone how
old she is.

GUS
She won't go.

UNCLE TAKI AND AUNT VOULA
She won't go??

Gus leans toward his in-laws.

GUS
(confiding)
It's like she don't want to get
married.

Gus smacks the table to make his point and leans back. *

FRONT COUNTER:

Toula watches as ATHENA, now early 30's, comes in pulling on
her three screaming boys, ages 5, 6, and 9. They yell toward
the short order window.

BOYS

Theo Nicko, Theo Nicko!

Nick shoots out of the window, wearing bacon on his face -

NICK

ARRRGGGHHHH!!!

The boys shriek with delight and pile into the kitchen. Athena takes off her coat, revealing her ever-present frilly homemaker's apron and happily chatters away to Toula.

ATHENA

Just a quick coffee. I have to drop the boys at hockey and I gotta get to the Jewel - panty-hose are on for 99 cents- and then the priest is coming to bless the new house, so I have to make *diples*, can you believe I'm out of honey?

Toula makes a 'NO!' face. The sarcasm is wasted on Athena, who gulps down her coffee as she crosses the restaurant

FAMILY BOOTH:

ATHENA (cont'd)

Thea Voula read my fortune.

Aunt Voula nods and Athena turns the cup onto the saucer.

FRONT COUNTER:

NIKKI and ANGELO, early 30's, come in:

Angelo, truly gorgeous, wears a silk shirt, open to reveal his welcome mat of a furry chest and Nikki, boobs galore, blood-red fake nails and teased enormous Jackie-O-on-crack hairdo, are arguing.

ANGELO

Nikki, it's not big.

NIKKI

Angelo, all I'm saying is...if I was gonna draw a picture of your wife's ass, I would trace a pie-plate.

Toula automatically pours two coffees, places two coffees on the counter. They take them.

ANGELO

You know what? Your husband has a big head.

NIKKI

(sarcastic)

Oh you got me. You want a do-over on that one?

ANGELO

Shuddup.

They put a ton of cream and sugar in their coffees and head for the family booth. *

TOULA (V.O.)

My cousins, Angelo and Nikki, are always fighting. And by the way, not that it matters...it's true...Angelo's wife has a big butt and Nikki's husband has an abnormally large skull. *

FAMILY BOOTH:

Athena peers as Aunt Voula reads her cup.

AUNT VOULA

Nikki, how come you no come to curla my hairs this morning?

NIKKI

Aw Ma, I had to drop Dimos at work.

Aunt Voula grunts and goes back to the cup. Nikki finishes her coffee.

NIKKI (cont'd)

I gotta go open the dry cleaners because some jag-off and his big-ass wife are too busy. *

ANGELO

Ma - tell her I open every day and it's about time - *

NIKKI

What are you talking about? My husband - *

Uncle Taki grabs his head. *

UNCLE TAKI

(shouts)

Enough!

They are all quiet and turn to him in awe. Then...Aunt Voula smacks him.

AUNT VOULA

Taki, don't do that again.

UNCLE TAKI

Sorry.

Nikki heads to Toula.

FRONT COUNTER:

Nikki leans in to Toula.

NIKKI

Wait. I have got the biggest scoop.
Yesterday at church, George
Spiracopoulos was looking at you
and he told me you look so much
like his dead mother.

TOULA

(vacantly)

Before she died or now?

Nikki smacks her arm.

NIKKI

Fine.

She leaves.

FAMILY BOOTH:

Aunt Voula puts Athena's cup down with a flourish.

ATHENA

So..?

AUNT VOULA

You're coming into money.

ATHENA

God willing. Thanks, Thea. Boys!
Let's go.

She crosses to the...

FRONT COUNTER:

...as Nick pushes the boys out of the kitchen. Athena tries to dress her kids. Maria comes out of the office and shushes the boys.

MARIA

Athena, when did you come? You're going?

ATHENA

Hi Ma, bye Ma. I'm going to the Jewel. I'll get you panty-hose.

MARIA

No Queen size. They make me look fat.

Maria turns to go back into the office, sees Yiayia squatting beneath a table.

MARIA (cont'd)

Yiayia, tee yeenaitai [what are you doing?]

Yiayia looks up. *

YIAYIA

(deadpan)

Toorkee. [Turks].

MARIA

We are not Turks. And the war is over. Turks and Greeks - we're friends now. *

Maria gives up, goes into the office.

Toula, her back to everyone, cleans the pie stand. Athena notices something wedged behind the cash register.

She yanks it out. Several Dancing Zorba's Take-Out menus, cascade from her hand.

CLOSE-UP menus: Covered in imaginative and creative pen drawings.

ATHENA (cont'd)

Nick!!

Nick, through the window sees the defaced menus and nods his head, chagrined. His lips move to mimic her:

ATHENA (cont'd)
Menus are expensive.

Athena sees something else and pulls it out from behind the cash register. Nick watches with interest.

ATHENA (cont'd)
Toula, what's this?

Toula turns, sees the item in Athena's hand and freezes.

CLOSE-UP on a very well-worn Community College pamphlet.

ATHENA (cont'd)
(demanding)
Toula, what is this?

TOULA
(lying)
I don't know.

Athena shrugs her shoulders, crumples the paper, tosses it into the garbage bin. Nick ducks out.

ATHENA
Don't forget, I need *diples* AND a
pastichio for the Papa tonight.

She reaches into her pockets for her gloves and pulls out a piece of paper.

ATHENA (cont'd)
Oh look. Five dollars.

She waves it at Aunt Voula, who nods sagely from the booth and they leave, the youngest saying "I wanna drive". Toula watches them go...then leaps on the bin and retrieves the pamphlet.

FAMILY BOOTH:

Gus and Taki have resumed their discussion.

UNCLE TAKI
Gus, I know it is very bad...she
don't want to be married, but..I
think...well, it looks to me that
she is...maybe okay with her life.

Nick, with breakfast for him and Angelo, slides in.

AUNT VOULA

Toula don't want nothing else more.
Look, Athena is married, with the
three boys now-

NICK

And I'll get married. I promise.

Gus pats his cheek.

GUS

You have lots of time.

The ultimate double standard.

UNCLE TAKI

-and you'll always have Toula to
run the restaurant.

AUNT VOULA

It's true. Toula will never leave
you.

They don't see that Toula has come up behind them. She stands
there, coffee pot in hand, wearing a hurt and confused
expression.

TOULA (V.O.)

What a nice feeling to know that I
was the loser of my family.

INT. DANCING ZORBA'S - NEXT DAY

There are many customers, some Greek, some not. Two old men
play backgammon in the corner booth. Toula re-fills their
coffee cups. They exchange some pleasantries.

TOULA (V.O.)

Well, what I didn't know was that
things were about to change...big
time.

In one booth sits IAN MILLER, early 30's, tall, handsome and
charming in that dorky-guy-next-door way. He's finishing
breakfast with his friend and colleague MIKE. Toula walks
toward their table...sees Ian...and time stands still. She
stops and stares. There is no sound. *

TOULA (V.O.)

My mother once told me that the
minute she met my father, she knew,
she just knew she was going to

(MORE)

TOULA (cont'd)
marry him. (beat) Yeah. I didn't
know.

Time moves again and Toula approaches their table. Mike and
Ian don't notice her as they sort through photos. *

MIKE
I'm telling you, you missed a
pretty good party.
(points to a photo)
Look. Look at her. That could have
been you with that arm around her.

Ian looks more closely.

MIKE (cont'd)
Ah, see? You want me to set you up?

CLOSE UP: THE PICTURE - a group of people at a birthday
party. CLOSER: The woman is pretty in an unexceptional
way...perky, blond - typical.

IAN
You've already set me up with her.

Mike looks again at the photo.

MIKE
Lauren?

Ian shrugs.

IAN
At the Henson's picnic.

MIKE
No, no, that was Pamela.

Ian peers again.

IAN
They look the same.

MIKE
Well maybe. You want me to fix you
up with Lauren?

Ian shrugs again.

IAN
They look the same.

MIKE
So?

Ian sighs.

IAN

They're all the same, Mike.

They look at each other for a moment...then notice Toula standing so close to their table.

MIKE

Hi?

Toula snaps out of it.

TOULA

Hi. Sorry. Um, my brain uh,
y'know...stopped. You ever have one
of those days? Here I am - I'm just
standing here - like your own
private greek statue.

Ian looks up at Toula and laughs. She almost faints and goes to leave.

MIKE

'Scuze me, could we get some more
coffee?

He holds out his cup. Toula, flushed, turns back. Ian is smiling at her, but she doesn't look at him. She pours coffee into his cup and skulks away. Mike waves his still - empty cup, then sets it down. Ian watches her go. Mike picks up Ian's coffee cup, gulps it.

MIKE

Let's go.

They get up to leave.

IAN

I love the spice they put on those
potatoes. I wonder what it is...

MIKE

Come on. I'm giving a pop quiz and
I can't wait to hear the groans.

IAN

Man, you have got some mean streak.
I'm giving a test on Hamlet, but I
gave fair warning.

Mike gives a silly 'whatever' grin as they walk through the restaurant.

Toula watches Ian from behind the cash register: she has crouched low and pretends to be looking below for old menus. He moves toward her, past her and out the door.

MIKE

Yeah...hi.

She looks up. Mike stares down at her. Then...drops the check, cash and leaves. She looks away sheepishly.

The sounds of the restaurant seem louder now. She watches Ian out on the street.

TOULA (V.O.)

And I thought...right, he's cute, cultured and appealing...what would he ever see in me? It's not just that I needed a makeover, contact lenses and a serious moustache bleach. I just wasn't anybody.

CUT TO:

INT. DANCING ZORBA'S STORE ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Toula sits on a pile of old files.

TOULA (V.O.)

I mean, who was I? Toula. Toula Portokalos. Greek girl working at Greek restaurant. I smelled like garlic bread.

A few moments go by. Her face is clouded over and then...she cries. She searches in her pocket for a tissue, instead finds the college pamphlet. She crunches it up and goes to throw it, then....slowly unfolds it again.

CUT TO:

INT. DANCING ZORBA'S BACK OFFICE - NEXT DAY

Maria sits in the corner paying bills. Toula stands in front of the desk, watching Gus and Nick go over the check stubs. Then Nick shows Gus a drawing.

NICK

You like this? For the new menu.

GUS

Where you get that?

NICK

I drew it, dad.

*
*

Gus grunts and goes back to the paperwork. Nick goes into the kitchen.

TOULA

Uh, Dad, I've been going over our inventory and we've been doing a lot of unnecessary ordering so, um, I've been thinking that we should update our system to avoid these mix-ups. Like, get a computer. Remember, in high school, I got A's in computers, but now there's all new stuff, so...if you want, I'll go to college

(hands him the brochure)
and take a few courses.

Gus stares at Toula blankly...then lets out a blubbery, snot-filled wail.

GUS

Why do you want to leave me?

TOULA

I'm not leaving. Don't you want me to do something with my life?

GUS

Get married, have babies! You look so old.

TOULA

I'll just be gone a few hours a day.

GUS

I need you daytime.

TOULA

I'll take night courses.

GUS

Night-time, out walking the streets?!? Take a correspondence course.

He picks up a matchbook whose cover advertises plumbing and taxidermy classes and waves it wildly at her, then slams it down on the desk.

GUS (cont'd)
But first get married and have
babies!!!

He walks out of the office. Toula sits and puts her head on
the desk. Maria comes over and strokes her hair.

MARIA
I know what you want. You have
a...how you say...a spirit.

Toula looks up at her.

MARIA (cont'd)
You want to see things, to
learn...I know. You're from my
side. I talk to him, you'll see, I
fix it. Don't you worry, you'll go
to school.

TOULA
But you know dad - he's so
stubborn. What he says, goes.
(imitates him)
"The man is the head of the house."

Maria smiles knowingly.

MARIA
Let me tell you something Toula.
The man is the head...but the woman
is the neck - and she can turn the
head any way she wants.

She holds Toula in her arms.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HALL - LATER THAT EVENING

Toula listens at the door to her parents' bedroom.

CUT TO:

INT. PARENTS BEDROOM - SAME TIME

Gus and Maria argue.

MARIA
-and what's wrong with her going to
school downtown?

GUS

-there's drugs downtown.

MARIA

What are you saying? That Toula
will get involved in drugs?!

GUS

No. But you know your daughter,
she's naive, someone will say to
her 'take this bag to the bus
depot'...and she'll do it!!!

MARIA

She's not stupid. She's smart.

GUS

See! Then why does she have to go
for more school? She's smart enough
for a girl.

Maria recoils and just stares at him.

MARIA

You think you're smarter than me?!?

GUS

No, I mean-

MARIA

I run the restaurant and I cook and
clean and wash for you and raise
three kids AND I teach Sunday
school. Lucky for me I have you to
tie my shoes!!!

She walks out the bedroom door and slams it, leaving a
befuddled Gus behind.

CUT TO:

INT. HALL - A SECOND LATER

Maria winks. Toula is in awe.

TOULA (V.O.)

In the river of life, the Greek
male is the jagged rock and the
Greek female is the water that
flows over it until it's a smooth,
harmless pebble.

CUT TO:

EXT. COLLEGE BUILDING - DAY

Music under. Toula stands, grinning, in the courtyard of the campus, looking up at a sign that says "Robert Morse Community College". Younger, hipper students are all around. She takes off her hat and flips it into the air a la Mary Tyler Moore. It sticks in a tree. She is still smiling.

CUT TO:

INT. CLASSROOM AUDITORIUM - DAY

The song continues. It's a few weeks later and Toula, dressed a little more stylishly, hair pulled off her face, is called upon in class. She stands and answers the question, somewhat brilliantly and some students turn to look at her. She says something funny and everyone laughs. She sits down, triumphantly, A STUDENT pats her on the shoulder.

CUT TO:

INT. DANCING ZORBA'S KITCHEN - NEXT DAY

Same music. Toula sits at the family booth doing homework. Maria plunks down a platter of moussaka and a salad. Toula takes the salad but pushes the moussaka away, continues working. Her mother frowns and takes the tray away.

CUT TO:

EXT. FAMILY HOME - DAY

Toula, stands at the top of the stairs, dressed head to toe in new exercise gear, and grins. Suddenly she runs to the end of the street, stops, grabs at a post, gasping for air. She turns to head home, pauses, turns back and continues jogging...slowly.

CUT TO:

INT. TOULA'S BEDROOM - EVENING

The song continues as Toula, looking a little less frumpy, finishes putting on a really red shade of lipstick then experiments with new hairstyles, vamping in the mirror.

CUT TO:

INT. COLLEGE DORM ROOM - EVENING

The music continues. It's a party and Toula's having a great time. She looks better, is dressed hipper, no glasses. She

blinks the foggy blink of the new contact lens wearer and
drinks a beer...smokes a cigarette...dances....

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL CAFETERIA

Toula sits with SEVERAL PRETTY GIRLS. They each unwrap a
Wonderbread sandwich. So does Toula. They smile at her. She
smiles back.

CUT TO:

INT. COLLEGE HALLWAY - DAY

The music fades as Toula, is reading various items on the
bulletin board.

CLOSE-UP on "SEMINAR TONIGHT- COMPUTERS AND TOURISM". Toula
rips a flyer from the board and runs off.

CUT TO:

EXT. OLYMPIC TRAVEL AGENCY - DAYS LATER

Maria and Aunt Voula listen to Toula.

TOULA

I'm not going to pretend this is
something I've always wanted to do,
Thea...it's just that it's
different, and...don't take this
wrong, ma, but I would rather stab
myself in the eye with a steaming
red-hot poker, than work in the
restaurant for the rest of my life.

Maria and Aunt Voula look at each other.

MARIA

(with irony)

Now she is too good for us.

AUNT VOULA

(dryly)

I wonder where she get it from.

(to Toula)

In the *horio* [village], when we
walked to the market, your mother
would ride the donkey.

MARIA

I'm the oldest.

AUNT VOULA
Finally she admits that.

Toula claps her hands.

TOULA
Okay. Me. Me. (beat) Thea, I would run all the newest programs and applications. Your business would double, triple...and you'd be able to be with Theo Taki more, you could take a vacation, I could book it for you - Thea please, will you hire me?

AUNT VOULA
(simply)
Of course.

Toula stops. Did she just hear that? ..then grabs Aunt Voula, they jump up and down with glee. Maria stops them.

MARIA
Gus.

They all sigh and sit down. Slowly Maria looks up, her face set with determination. She's brewing a plan.

CUT TO:

EXT. DANCING ZORBA'S - MOMENTS LATER

The three women stride resolutely down the street and into the restaurant.

INT. DANCING ZORBA'S - MOMENTS LATER

Gus circles 'favorites' on a racing form when - they sit with* him at his booth, and he hides the paper. Toula pours coffee.*

MARIA
(faux casual)
So, Voula, how is business?

Voula's acting is even worse.

AUNT VOULA
Oh, woe to me. Business is bad.

They've got Gus's attention.

GUS

What?? What happened?!?! Do you need money?

Aunt Voula panics and gapes at Maria to help.

MARIA

No, no. She means that with the two businesses, she suffers. She has to be at Olympic Travel alone because they need to have everyone else working at the big Dry Cleaner store.

AUNT VOULA

Yeah, yeah, I make Taki be at the Dry Cleaner store too and now I have no time with him.

GUS

So, send Angelo or Nikki to run the travel place.

AUNT VOULA

Yes, that would be good. *

She stares again at Maria.

MARIA

No, that's no good. Angelo and Nikki don't know how to use the computer-

Aunt Voula is getting it now. She jumps in.

AUNT VOULA

-and that's why that no work.

They all sit and contemplate this problem. Aunt Voula keeps looking up at Maria, who makes a face at her to be quiet and let Gus mull it over. Suddenly his brain puts it all together and he bangs on the tabletop. Everyone jumps.

GUS

I know! Toula will work for you at Olympic Travel and you send Nikki to work for us!

They all exclaim and congratulate him on his brilliant idea. He gloats.

TOULA (V.O.)

I'm not saying my father is stupid,
not at all. But against the will of
three Greek females...the Greek
male doesn't stand a chance. And...

CUT TO:

INT. OLYMPIC TRAVEL - DAY

Toula's at her desk speaking into her headset and tapping
away at a computer keyboard. She's in her glory.

TOULA (V.O.)

...a few weeks later, there I was.
I had my own computer, and little
Post-It notes and my own key to the
executive bathroom - even though I
was the only one working there.

TOULA

(into headset)

Hello, Mrs. Todd? Thanks for
holding. Well, your request flew up
confirmed so it is now PNR'D. OK
then, please hold again.

(presses Hold button and
then other line)

She pushes away from her desk on her roller-chair and glides
to the filing cabinet.

TOULA (cont'd)

Hi United? OK, hard tic that.
Reading Alpha, Bravo, Foxtrot,
Charley, Roger, copy that.

She roller-glides back to the phone, presses the first line.

TOULA (cont'd)

OK, Mrs. Todd, your tickets are now
in the mail and...oh, well, thank
you...oh, Mrs. Todd, I'm glad
you're pleased, no, my aunt will be
full-time at their other business,
uh-huh, Olympic Dry Cleaners and
Party Supplies.

She takes off her headset.

TOULA (V.O.)

I had re-organized the whole office
and set up all sorts of
(MORE)

TOULA (cont'd)
 applications that could practically
 run themselves. I knew the names of
 our customers, where they were
 traveling to, I just loved my job.
 And then it happened -

She glides to the water cooler, looks out the window and
 skids to a stop.

TOULA (V.O.)
 There he was. That guy from the
 restaurant....

CUT TO:

EXT. PITA STAND ACROSS STREET FROM TRAVEL AGENCY- CONTINUOUS

IAN MILLER, yes, that guy that was having breakfast at the
 restaurant, stands on the street, finishing a sandwich.

TOULA (V.O.)
 And I thought, it's that guy. That
 guy.

He tosses the wrapper, looks around and finally notices Toula
 across the street.

TOULA (V.O.)
 And he's looking at ME.

Ian smiles.

INT. OLYMPIC TRAVEL AGENCY - CONTINUOUS

Toula sees him smile and ducks.

EXT. PITA STAND - CONTINUOUS

Ian checks his watch and heads off.

INT. OLYMPIC TRAVEL AGENCY - CONTINUOUS

She gets up and presses her cheek against the glass, watching
 him all the way down the street.

EXT. FAMILY HOME - EVENING

CLOSE-UP on a bedroom window. A rope made of bedsheets is
 tossed out. The bedroom is on the ground floor, so the rope
 lamely hits dirt. A lone figure climbs out of the window and
 shimmies down the three feet to freedom. It's Yiayia. She
 runs off into the night.

CUT TO:

INT. FAMILY HOME LIVING ROOM - SAME EVENING

Toula, sits between her parents as they watch Zorba The Greek*
on television. The doorbell rings and Gus gets up. *

CUT TO:

INT. FRONT DOOR - SAME TIME

Gus opens the door to find a pissed off Mrs. White returning
an equally pissed off Yiayia.

YIAYIA

Sihamainee Tourkee ! [Bloody
Turks].

MRS. WHITE

Did you lose this?

GUS

Oh, Mrs. White. You find my mother
again. You know, she comes from
Greece.

(way too proud)

The country I come from, too.

MRS. WHITE

Oh-for-Gods-sakes I KNOW! Now
listen, keep your mother off my
lawn, out of my basement and away
from my roof. *

GUS

(he can win her over)

Mrs. White, give me a word, any
word and I show you how the root of
that word -

Mrs. White firmly pushes Yiayia through the door, spins on a
heel and leaves.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - SAME TIME

Gus enters with a now docile Yiayia. He turns to Toula.

GUS (cont'd)

There are two kinds of people:
Greeks. And everyone else...who
wishes they were Greek.

Toula gets up and walks out.

TOULA
Yes, yes we know !!!

Gus is once again, bewildered as she runs upstairs. *

INT. TOULA'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS *

She rushes in and lays across her bed. *

TOULA (V.O.)
I don't know why I was all weird.
It's not like I was ever going to
see him again. *

CUT TO:

EXT. TRAVEL AGENCY - DAYS LATER

Toula works at her desk as Ian casually walks by the window.
Toula looks up.

TOULA (V.O.)
Okay...there he was. And I
thought...
(screams)
Oh-my-God.

She shyly looks away. He walks by again, smiles and tries to catch her eye but she won't look up. Then, she covers her face with one hand and watches him through her fingers, smiling. He loves it. The phone rings and she puts on her head set, and turns away to attend to her customer. Then..he's really short - he squat-walks by, waving his arms trying to get her to look, but she doesn't see him and then.. he walks right into a little old lady's crotch and she smacks the shit out of him.

INT. DANCING ZORBA'S - SAME DAY

It's mid-afternoon and the restaurant is pretty quiet. Gus is in a corner booth, paying bills. Nikki, wearing the Seating Hostess jacket, seats two customers. Angelo comes in.

ANGELO
Hey, Nikki, did you see the eclipse
today?

Nikki comes over to him.

NIKKI
No, really?

ANGELO

Yeah, when your husband moved his head and blocked out the sun.

Nikki smacks him.

NIKKI

Shuddup, Angelo. You miss me so much at the cleaners you gotta come here and give me grief?

ANGELO

Shuddup, Nikki. I came to talk to Nick. Nicko!

Nick leans out the short-order window. He's been drawing on bread with mustard. He imitates Angelo's inflection.

NICK

Ugly!

Angelo smooths back his beautiful hair.

ANGELO

Yeah. Did your connection come through on my VCR?

NICK

(rhetorical)

Hey, am I connected or what?

Angelo stares at him: he doesn't get it.

NICK (cont'd)

Yeah, I'll go get it.

Nick goes into the office.

Angelo waits at the counter. Yiayia furtively stuffs bread rolls under her sweater. Angelo watches. She turns, sees him, stops...then continues, the look in her eye daring him to stop her. Amused, Angelo shakes his head. Yiayia scampers off as Nick steps out of the office, holding a box.

Angelo opens the VCR box. He looks inside and grabs Nick.

ANGELO

I pay for a VCR and I get a box fulla pork chops.

Nick, surprised, peers into the box. A beat.

NICK
Shuddup, that cost you like what,
fifty bucks, shuddup.

Another beat. Angelo's expression reads: fifty bucks? Not bad for a box of chops, he shrugs, picks up the box and turns to leave. Nick goes back into the kitchen. Angelo passes Toula as she comes in.

TOULA
Hey Angelo.

Angelo whistles as he walks out.

ANGELO
Looking good, Toula.

Toula smiles as Nikki comes back to the Hostess Stand. *

TOULA
Hi.

NIKKI
Hi!

Toula looks her up and down.

NIKKI (cont'd)
What?

TOULA
That jacket looks good on you.

NIKKI
Wait. You are such a liar. Look at this color. Olive skin in brown? I look the same naked.

TOULA
Yeah, thanks for telling me how good I looked for ten years.

They laugh.

NIKKI
No but seriously, of all of us who've worn this jacket, you looked the worst in it.

TOULA
Yeah thanks, Nikki, I got it.

Toula sits at the counter. Nikki pours coffee. Maria comes from the kitchen holding a box of lettuce. She goes to Gus.

MARIA

(angry)

Did you sign for this?

GUS

(knows he's in trouble)

Noooo...yyyess

She goes back into the kitchen, muttering under her breath. Toula and Nikki shake their heads, smiling.

NIKKI

(a beat) Hey, you want some baklava?

TOULA

Nah.

NIKKI

I got it right here. Fresh.

TOULA

Thanks, that's okay.

NIKKI

None?

Toula shrugs. Nikki keeps eyeing her.

NIKKI (cont'd)

Is that how you got so skinny?

Toula grins.

TOULA

You think I'm skinny?

NIKKI

Well, yeah. What's going on with you? Besides being anorexic, you look pretty good. Like your face is all shiny. Wait. You got somebody!

Toula blushes.

TOULA

Well, there is this guy...

Nikki drops everything and leans in.

NIKKI

I knew it. I got my mom's psychic powers. So, what's his name? Do we know him?

TOULA

I don't know...I um, haven't met him, I just saw him...a couple of times and...

Nikki leans in.

NIKKI

Wait. You haven't met him! Let me fix that. Who is he and I'll set you up.

TOULA

Noooo....

NIKKI

Come on, where'd you see him, our church, Saint Spiridon picnic, the Saint Basil's Youth Drive, here...?

TOULA

Never mind...uh, you may not know him.

NIKKI

Not know him...Toula...he's Greek right?

Toula pauses, then sighs.

TOULA

Nikki, what does it matter? I don't even know who he is.

*
*

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. TRAVEL AGENCY - NEXT DAY

Toula's at her desk speaking into her headset, and looking at her computer monitor.

TOULA (V.O.)

Then one day was just a little different. Something happened...something really great, super cool, great, great, great...

Ian comes in. He has a small bandage across the bridge of his nose. He stands shyly by the door. Toula's engrossed in her monitor, barely looks up.

TOULA (cont'd)
Be with you in a moment.
(on headset))
Yes, I have your Mastercard number
on file...uh, huh...sure...

Ian fidgets by the door. Should he go? Finally, Toula presses the disconnect button, stands up and faces Ian.

TOULA (cont'd)
May I help you?

She is momentarily stunned. It's him.

They share an electric moment. Ian snaps out of it.

IAN
Hi.

TOULA
Hi.

Then Toula feels stupid. Surely he's here for travel plans. She gets down to business.

TOULA (cont'd)
Um, did you want to see some
brochures?

She steps away from her desk but..she forgot she's still wearing her headset. Suddenly her head is jerked back and she is yanked off her feet.

IAN'S POV

Toula is lying on the floor.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. TRAVEL AGENCY - LATER

Toula has a bandage just like Ian's on her forehead. They laugh as Ian imitates Toula's wipe-out.

IAN
...and then whoosh, you're just
gone. I thought you fainted.

TOULA

(teasing)

Oh yeah, I was swept off my feet by
your extremely cool opening line of
"Hi".

He laughs. They take a moment and just look at each other.

IAN

So...Toula...

He says her name like he's trying it out, and likes it.

TOULA

Yes, Ian. (teasing) Ian Miller?

They smile.

IAN

Toula..uh..Porlo..Parka..
OK...Toula.

*
*
*

TOULA

OK, then.

There is an ease here. They smile.

TOULA

Biker fight or nose job?

IAN

Yep.

TOULA

No, really.

IAN

You don't wanna know.

TOULA

I dunno...if I survived an old lady
ass-kicking, I'd brag about it.

Ian's face drops: she saw it. Toula reaches over and pokes
his band-aid.

IAN

Ow. Jesus.

IAN

Want to have dinner with me?

TOULA

Yes.

CUT TO:

INT. TOULA'S BEDROOM - EVENING

Toula in a terrific mood, hums as she dresses for her date. She puts on a low-backed sweater and studies herself in the mirror. On an impulse, she turns the sweater around so it lays really low in front. Gus walks by her door.

GUS (O.S)

You're gonna catch cold. Put on a undershirt.

Toula rolls her eyes. Gus pokes his head in.

GUS (cont'd)

Don't do that. In my village that means epilepsy. (a beat) Where you going?

Toula hesitates, then...

TOULA

I'm taking a pottery class.

Gus grunts and walks away.

GUS (O.S.)

The Greeks invented pottery.

CUT TO:

INT. COZY BISTRO - LATER THAT EVENING

Toula and Ian share Thai food and laugh.

TOULA

So, you don't eat any meat at all?

IAN

No, but it's not a political thing with me, I just don't like the taste of it. I like spicy food, though. Hey, I've eaten at your family restaurant, y'know.

TOULA

I saw you...
(catches herself)
I think.

IAN

You saw me?

Toula acts nonchalant.

TOULA

I think it was you. Anyway...

He peers at her. Toula is uncomfortable.

IAN

You're the waitress.

Toula's face falls. He knows.

TOULA

Seating Hostess. Uh yeah...the travel thing is new -

He's staring. Toula wants to run away.

TOULA (cont'd)

I was uh, going through a bad time,
um, my life...was, I didn't know
what I wanted to do, I felt..um...I
was...kind of dowdy, huh?...and...

IAN

(gently))

Hey, hey...don't...

TOULA

I was frumpy-girl.

IAN

I remember you...but...

(sweet)

...I never saw frumpy-girl...

He smiles. Toula smiles.

TOULA

Yeah, nice.

They laugh. It's over.

IAN

Hey, so what's that spice you put
on the potatoes?

TOULA

At the restaurant?

IAN

Yeah. I love it. It's really spicy.

TOULA

Paprika.

Paprika? IAN

Yup. TOULA

That's paprika? IAN

Yup. TOULA

They sit back and just look at each other.

So...do you like me so far? IAN

Yup. TOULA

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. TRAVEL AGENCY - DAY

Nick walks into the office.

Hey, guess what? Athena's knocked
up again. NICK

Toula is distracted. She stares dreamily out the window.

Yo, Toula...hello. NICK

He claps his hands in front of her face and she recovers.

What? I heard you. Athena's
pregnant. Again. TOULA

Where are you? You're like, all
weird. NICK

(brushes him off)
I've got a lot of work to do. TOULA

Oh. OK. NICK

He plops his butt on the edge of her desk and looks around.
He's a bit edgy - like he's got something on his mind.

A world map hangs on the wall - a large, copper etching with a raised texture. Nick runs over to it.

NICK

Cool. A bumpy map! I love these!
(runs his fingers over)
...these would be great for blind people.

Toula looks out the window again.

NICK (cont'd)

Hey, Toula?

He walks around and stands in front of her.

NICK (cont'd)

...how come you went to college? I mean...you didn't hate being with me and all of us, did you?

He searches her face.

TOULA

(taken aback)

Hate? No...no...I just wanted to be-
(catches herself)
-do something else..that's all.

Nick's face brightens.

NICK

Yeah, yeah. There's nothing wrong with a person wanting to expand one's horizontals.

TOULA

(gently)

Horizons.

NICK

Yeah, yeah. (a beat)
So, what's that mean?

TOULA

You know, just seeing what else there might be out there for you.

Nick smacks his forehead.

NICK
Right! Gotta go.

He runs out the door, leaving Toula to dream of Ian.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. PARK - LATER THAT EVENING

Ian is telling a story and Toula is laughing.

TOULA
So, go on. Christmas of '74...

IAN
Yeah, yeah, as usual we went up to
the cottage

TOULA
(savoring the words)
...cottage...

IAN
...and, it takes forever to get
there, my father drives so slowly.
The man actually pulls over and
puts the car in park to change the
radio station. Plus we had to stop
and cut some pine boughs for the
hearth-

TOULA
...hearth...

IAN
-and pick up extra cranberry
preserves.

TOULA
Did all your cousins go up, too?

IAN
What? No. I only have two cousins
and they live in Wisconsin.

It's obvious that Toula loves this.

TOULA
So you had the place all to
yourself?

And that Ian hates it.

IAN

Yes, it was awful. I had this enormous bedroom. It was so big, with a huge moose head staring down at me, sometimes I tried to stay awake all night because I just knew it was waiting to get me, and you know...eat my face. Well, one night, I had to...uh...use the facilities and I waited and waited until I was sure I'd given myself a bladder infection. Finally, I got up the nerve, yanked myself out of bed and darted to the bathroom. Only it was really dark, and I accidentally ran into the closet where my mother's fur coat was hanging. My forehead brushed up against it - I thought it was the moose - I went 'nyaaaaah....'

He imitates himself freaking out. They're laughing really hard.

IAN (cont'd)

I mean, I wet my pyjamas and pretty much anything else that was in that closet.

They squeal.

TOULA

How old were you?

IAN

(deadpan)

Seventeen. But I did get extra marshmallow in my cocoa for a week.

Toula stares. Cocoa, hearths, preserves. It's too much.

IAN

Enough, enough, tell me about your family.

Toula's been dreading this.

TOULA

Um.

IAN

C'mon, what are your parents like?

TOULA

Well...

IAN

Well..what? Describe, please.

Toula doesn't know where to start.

IAN

OK, Christmas. What do you all do for Christmas?

TOULA

My mom makes roast lamb.

IAN

With mint jelly?

TOULA

Not exactly.

IAN

And then...?

TOULA

And then...and then...

(erupts)

Look. I'm Greek. So, what happens is...my dad and my uncles fight over who gets to eat the lamb brain and my Aunt Voula forks the eye and chases me around telling me I'm missing out - it's a delicacy and will make me smarter.

Ian sits back in his seat, slightly pale.

TOULA (cont'd)

I have 27 first cousins and my whole family is big and loud and everyone sticks their noses in everybody else's lives and they all work together in our family businesses and eat a lot and everyone marries a Greek, Greeks marry Greeks, so that they can breed more Greeks to be loud breeding Greek eaters.

She too sits back, fully expecting him to bolt out the door. She studies him; his expression reveals nothing.

IAN

So....?

TOULA

So...my family is weird and..really Greek. I'm warning you. If they even see us on a date...my father has connections...and your supply of white bread and mayonnaise could be cut off like that. (snaps her fingers)

IAN

So...?

She leans forward and gently takes his hand.

TOULA

So...I'm different from you. No one in my family has ever gone out with a non-Greek before.

She just can't do this anymore.

TOULA (cont'd)

And you..are great, you're ...just wonderful...but I don't think this is going to work out.

Ian pulls his hand away.

IAN

(peevd)

Work out? What's there to work out? We're not from different species, you know. You're a person, I'm a person. We're people!!! We have hair and teeth, we speak the same language. What is the problem?

(softer)

Look...yes, we come from different backgrounds, and hey, here's some news about my life up to now - it was boring. Then I meet you and...You're interesting and beautiful and fun. And you know what? You like me too, so there. Who cares if you have a weird family, who doesn't? I want to spend time with you.

(gently)

(MORE)

IAN (cont'd)

I just want to spend some time with you.

Toula tries to conceal her delight. There's no more to say, it's too late to stop it now. Ian leans forward, takes both her hands in his and tenderly kisses them. *

TOULA

(flirting)

Hey...before, when you were all, y'know, Mr. Yell...did you say I'm beautiful? *

Music fades up.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. TOULA'S STREET - SAME NIGHT

Same music. A car pulls over to the corner and stops.

DISSOLVE TO:

I/E CAR INTERIOR - CONTINUOUS

Music under. Ian pulls Toula toward him and gives her one gentle kiss. They look at each other. Then, she looks furtively over her shoulder.

TOULA

(whispering)

Goodnight.

IAN

(whispers)

G'night.

She gets out of the car, looks both ways, then darts down the street past three houses and slips into the door of her home.

DISSOLVE TO:

I/E CAR INTERIOR - ANOTHER NIGHT

Music under. Ian pulls Toula toward him. They kiss for a long time. It's getting pretty hot and heavy. Toula pulls away and looks furtively over her shoulder.

TOULA

(whispering)

OK, goodnight.

IAN
(whispers)
G'night.

She gets out of the car, looks both ways and then darts down the street.

I/E CAR INTERIOR - AGAIN, ANOTHER NIGHT

Music under. Toula and Ian are making out like crazy. Toula reluctantly pulls away.

TOULA
(whispers)
Goodnight.

IAN
(whispers)
G'night.

He goes to pull her close. She pulls away, stumbles out of the car, looks both ways and wobbles down the street.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - LATER THAT EVENING

Same music under. Ian and Toula pull up outside.

TOULA
What's this? Where are we?

Ian smiles.

IAN
My apartment.

Toula looks uncertain.

IAN (cont'd)
Would you like to come up?

Toula smiles. Music soars.

TOULA (V.O.)
In every relationship, there comes
a time...

They walk into his building. CAMERA follows their path up.

TOULA (V.O.)
...when a couple must decide to
take that next step.

They get to his floor, we SEE them, in silhouette, enter Ian's apartment and face each other.

TOULA (V.O.)

And the next step.

Suddenly Toula leaps on him, kissing him with the full force of a woman unleashed, and he falls onto a side table. He struggles to get up as she clumsily rips his shirt open, runs her hands over his chest and covers it with kisses. He tries to stand and she pushes him backward onto the couch and pounces. A lamp goes down.

TOULA (V.O.)

Sometimes, they can spend an entire night taking step after step after -

Two pillows fly up from the couch and a picture falls off the wall.

TOULA (V.O.)

...you know what? This is none of your business.

Toula reaches over Ian's head and closes the curtains.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. THE FAMILY KITCHEN - LATER

Maria and Yiayia sit at the kitchen table folding Nick's laundry. Toula comes in singing "I'm Just A Girl Who Can't Say No". She puts fresh garden flowers in a vase.

MARIA

Happy today, again.

TOULA

Oh. Yeah...

MARIA

You look good. Now, every time I see you, you have a big smile.

Toula shrugs. Nick comes in, takes a shirt from the bottom of the pile.

MARIA (cont'd)

Nicko, wait, I put 'em in your room.

Nick shrugs and leaves, Toula goes to leave with him.

MARIA (cont'd)
(innocent)
And your class? You like your new
class?

Toula, turns, looks at her...recovers.

TOULA
My pottery class? Yes.

Toula has to look away.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. TRAVEL AGENCY - DAYS LATER

Ian caresses Toula's neck and she smiles up at him. Suddenly,
cousin Nikki comes flying through the door. They both look at
her - busted. *

NIKKI
Wait! MR. POTTERY CLASS! Nice to
meet you. *

Ian can't take his eyes off Nikki's huge hair.

TOULA
Um, Ian..this is my cousin, Nikki.

IAN
(extends his hand)
Well...it's nice to finally meet a
member of Toula's family.

NIKKI
Yeah well, I'm the least of your
worries.

She checks him out from top to bottom. Then - *

NIKKI (cont'd)
(to Toula)
Listen...the family knows. *

Toula grabs Nikki.

TOULA
What?

NIKKI
OK, I have got the biggest scoop.
But it's about you. Last night,
Vicki Pavlopoulos saw you sucking
(MORE)

NIKKI (cont'd)
the lips off his head in the
Denny's parking lot...and...she
told her ma, who told my ma who
just looked at your ma and SHE
KNEW.

CUT TO:

INT. FAMILY KITCHEN - LATER

Maria and Toula sit quietly at the table. Yiayia's in a corner.

TOULA (V.O.)
So I took Ian home to meet my dad.
(wryly) It went really well.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY - SAME TIME

Gus rants at Ian.

GUS
...and I never see you come here to
ask me if you can date my daughter-

IAN
(flustered)
-I'm sorry, ASK you if I "can date
your daughter"?? She's thirty!

GUS
(exasperated, whiny))
Well...I'm the head of this house.

IAN
(as if to a child)
All right fine. May I date your
daughter?

GUS
(what-are-you-nuts?)
No.

They stare at each other. Finally Ian turns and leaves.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - SAME TIME

Ian walks through the kitchen and touches Toula's shoulder as he goes toward the back door.

TOULA
(whispering)
See you tomorrow.

He grins at her. Maria mutters "oh, boy" under her breath.
Gus enters. *

GUS
Didn't I say it is dangerous to
educate women, but no one listens
to me and now we have a boyfriend
in this house. Not a good boy who
lives in his parents house. A
Greek? No. Not Greek! A Xeno. Xeno.
[Foreigner. Foreigner.]

Yiayia smacks him. He storms out. Maria takes Toula's face
into her hands. *

TOULA
Ma, I'm so sorry I lied to you.

MARIA
(softens, smiles))
OK, maybe you are having a little
romance-
(tough)
-But end it now.

Toula looks sick and pries her face from Maria's grip.

TOULA
Ma? I'm..in love with him.

Maria groans.

MARIA
Oh Toula, eat something.

Toula smiles at her, Maria sighs - she may as well face the
fact that Toula is going to see Ian again. She pulls her
chair even closer.

MARIA
Now listen to me...you can let a
boy...kiss you...and you can let a
boy...touch you here...

Maria points to her breasts. Toula is horrified - it's The
Sex Talk.

MARIA (cont'd)
But never, never let him touch you
DOWN THERE-
(points to her crotch)
- because once he feels IT, he
wants IT.

Toula grimaces, turns her head - and faces Yiayia who's
nodding wisely.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. MILLER TOWNHOUSE - EVENING

Ian and Toula pull up to an elegant house in a normal suburb.

TOULA (V.O.)
(with irony)
Meeting MY parents was such a
treat, that Ian decided to take me
home to meet his parents.

Ian takes Toula's hand.

IAN
Don't worry. They'll love you.

CUT TO:

INT. MILLER TOWNHOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Ian and Toula stand in the front hall: a small, simple home,
decorated in muted tones. Toula is delighted.

They're greeted by HILLARY and RODNEY MILLER, late 50's,
refined, trim and cultivated.

IAN
Mom, dad...this is my girlfriend,
Toula.

HILLARY
Hillary Miller. A pleasure, dear.

RODNEY
Rodney. Nice to meet you.

Toula gazes at The Millers.

TOULA
(gushing)
Hello, hello. It's just wonderful
to meet you.

HILLARY
(pleasant, but reserved)
Oh, aren't you sweet.

RODNEY
Who'd like a cocktail before
dinner?

HILLARY
Yes, let's have a drink in the
sitting room.

TOULA
Let's have a drink in the sitting
room.

She takes Ian's arm and floats.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MILLER'S DINING ROOM

Hillary, Rodney, Ian and Toula have just finished a quiet
dinner. In fact, it's very quiet. Hillary clears her throat.

HILLARY
Tooo-lah. Now that's not a name you
hear everyday. Does it mean
anything in your language?

TOULA
Well, my Greek name, Fotoula, means
'light of God'.

Hillary and Rodney blink. Toula feels like she's just said
something uncouth.

HILLARY
Interesting. Who would like coffee?

Toula looks at Ian and he touches her hand, encouragingly.

RODNEY
So...you're Greek then? What's your
last name?

Toula blushes.

TOULA
Portokalos.

Hillary and Rodney digest this tidbit.

RODNEY
Puertok...what?

HILLARY
Potalaka?

RODNEY
Pootoloos?

TOULA
(apologetic)
Portokalos. Yeah, it's..um..really
Greek.

They don't answer. Ian tries to help.

IAN
In Greek it means orange.

HILLARY
(politely, but not
caring)
Oh?

TOULA
...as in orange that you eat...with
a peel...

HILLARY
Rodney, didn't you once have a
Greek receptionist?

RODNEY
No, Hillary. She was...ah...just a
minute now...ah-

Hillary carries a dessert from the sideboard.

HILLARY
Oh, no she was Armenian.
(to Toula)
Is Armenia close to Greece?

RODNEY
No, no, she was...ah...ah...

TOULA
(to Hillary)
Well, not exactly-

RODNEY
...what was she?

HILLARY
Who?

RODNEY
My secretary...ah...

HILLARY
Everyone like cheesecake?

RODNEY
Guatemalan!

HILLARY
That's right dear!
(to Toula)
She was Guatemalan.

Ian glances at Toula. Hillary hands her a slice of cake.

HILLARY (cont'd)
Well now dear, where do your
parents summer?

Toula and Ian lock eyes. *

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. FAMILY DINING ROOM - EVENING

Toula sets the table.

TOULA (V.O.)
Back at my house, a few days later,
I was setting the table for dinner
when I realized I had an extra
place setting.

Maria stands behind her.

MARIA
(deadpan)
Your father has a friend for
dinner.

Toula sighs.

CUT TO:

INT. FAMILY DINING ROOM - LATER

Music blasts.

Gus, Maria, Nick and Toula seated around the table. Directly across from Toula is the typical GREEK GIGOLO: Greased back hair, gold chains, wide laped shirt and hairy chest. He leers at Toula and licks his spoon suggestively.

CUT TO:

The music continues. Same scene but the gigolo has been replaced with an older ACCOUNTANT-TYPE GUY. He uses his napkin to wipe his bald head. Nick goes to do the same and Maria smacks him.

CUT TO:

The music kicks in again and the CAMERA CIRCLES the table: Gus is trying to be jolly, Maria looks perturbed, Toula looks downward, Nick passes food and the NEW GUEST has one eyebrow. The CAMERA CIRCLES around again and again, each time revealing another suitor, each one worse than the last....THIS GUY wears a full Greek costume as he strums his bouzouki and THE NEXT GUY has a ventriloquist's dummy on his lap. Finally, the CAMERA RESTS on Toula. She quietly puts her napkin on the table and leaves the room. The music fades.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. IAN'S APARTMENT - LATER THAT NIGHT

Music plays.

Toula and Ian lie on the floor sipping white wine. It's obvious they've just made love.

TOULA (V.O.)

We loved being together, but our being together was driving my family crazy. Ian could feel it. It's not like his parents were overjoyed either...Mrs. Miller hadn't exactly called me up for a lunch date. The tension was there. The pressure was there. I was just waiting for him to break up with me.

Ian puts his glass down and sits up, suddenly serious.

IAN

I really do love you.

Toula's eyes widen..oh no...

TOULA
(too quickly)
I know and I really, really love
you, Ian

He crawls closer and clumsily falls on top of her.

TOULA (cont'd)
(confused)
Are you drunk?

IAN
Nope. Head rush.

He has a strange look on his face. Toula sits up.

TOULA
Oh...what?

IAN
Um, I don't know how to say this...
Toula, will you marry me?

TOULA
(screams)
Yes!!!

Ian reaches beneath a cushion and pulls out a very small box.

IAN
(screams)
Oh good. 'Cause then you can have
this!!!

They jump up and down.

TOULA (V.O.)
Okay, so he didn't dump me. I was
wrong about that. Maybe I would be
wrong about how my family would
take the news.

CUT TO:

INT. FAMILY LIVING ROOM - LATER THAT EVENING
Gus and Maria sit. Toula faces them.

TOULA
I love Ian and he loves me. He
asked me to marry him. I said yes.

Gus bursts into tears and runs upstairs. Maria puts her head *
in her hands.

TOULA (V.O.)
No. No. That time I was right. *

CUT TO: *

INT. HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY - NEXT DAY

Toula stands outside Ian's classroom and paces. The bell *
rings and students walk out past her. He sees her and comes *
out, as his next class of students files in. *

IAN
(pleasantly surprised)
Hi! What are you doing here?

She doesn't answer, just snuggles into his neck.

IAN (cont'd)
Are you all right?

Toula puts her hand on his cheek, gazes into his eyes. Then -

TOULA
Can we go to Vegas?

IAN
What?

TOULA
How about Niagara Falls? Or Fuji...? *

Ian laughs.

IAN
Sure -

Toula takes his hand and begins to walk down the hall.

TOULA
Okay, let's go.

IAN
All right. What's the matter?

Toula turns and stops.

TOULA
Oh Ian....oh my God, we can't get
married. Not like this. Oh God,
when I'm with you I'm so happy but
(MORE)

TOULA (cont'd)

my family is so...unhappy and I
don't want them to make us unhappy
and then our wedding will be this
terrible thing, so let's just go,
let's go and get married somewhere
else, I heard you don't even have
to be sober to get married at the
Elvis Chapel or we could go to
Canada, everyone's really nice
there, it's just a whole country of
pleasant people, please, please
let's just go...

He watches her, slightly amused, then takes both her hands.

IAN

Take a breath.

She does. A deep breath.

IAN (cont'd)

I love you. Do you love me?

TOULA

Yes.

IAN

Then believe me when I say that you
cannot run away from your family.
And we will not skulk off somewhere
and get married as if we're ashamed
of ourselves. Whatever happens, I
can handle it. And so can you.

(a beat)

All right?

Toula smiles and slyly looks up at him.

TOULA

Did you say 'skulk'?

The tension is gone. He holds her in his arms but she
continues as he smiles -

TOULA (cont'd)

Nice choice of word there. Very
scholarly, aren't you? Should we
ask your students if -

*
*

She's suddenly muffled because he's kissing her. His students*
whoop and holler.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - NEXT EVENING.

Gus still sits in the dark, sulking. Maria comes in and turns on every single light.

MARIA

Enough.

He moodily gets up to leave.

MARIA (cont'd)

Don't you walk away from me! You sit down.

Gus obediently sits.

MARIA (cont'd)

(gently)

They love each other. It's done.

Gus shakes his head back and forth.

GUS

How could she do this to me?

MARIA

Gus, she didn't do this to you or me. She fell in love. It happens.

GUS

That's what Taki says.

MARIA

You talked to Taki?

Gus nods.

MARIA (cont'd)

What did he say?

GUS

Eh, you know. What could he say? Is he a good boy? I don't know. Does he come from a good family? I don't know. Is he respectful? I don't know, I don't know. Because nobody talks to me about nothing nomore.

MARIA

Toula is not stupid. She would not let someone bad into her heart. We have to trust her.

GUS

He doesn't even have a religion.

They both exclaim and cross themselves.

MARIA AND GUS

Panagia mou. [God have mercy]

MARIA

(reasoning)

But Gus, ...Toula told me...he
wants to be baptized in our church.

Gus interrupts.

GUS

Yeah, yeah -

(realizes what she said)

Baptized...eh? Greek Orthodox...

(ponders the idea, back
and forth, back and
forth...makes up his
mind)

You know...that Ian ...he looks
Greek.

CUT TO:

INT. FAMILY LIVING ROOM - NEXT EVENING

The room is stuffed with festive Easter decorations. Toula
straightens Ian's tie.

TOULA (V.O.)

So...suddenly Ian is 'in' and
meeting the family.

TOULA

Okay, now for Happy Easter,
everyone will be saying *Hristos*
Anesti. And then you say it back.

IAN

Chreesto Antsy.

Toula stares.

TOULA

Good enough.

Gus walks by with a bowl of dyed-red eggs. He eyes Toula,
sets them down on the table. Toula looks at Ian.

IAN

Uh. Mr. Portokalos, Chreesto Antsy.

Gus doesn't look up.

GUS

*Xeno, otan ee Eleenes yrafan
filosofia, esees kremosastan apta
thendra.*

[Foreigner when my people were
writing philosophy, your people
were still swinging from the trees.]

*
*
*
*

He walks away. Ian looks at Toula.

TOULA

He likes you.

The door swings open as Aunt Voula, Uncle Taki, and other relatives arrive.

AUNT VOULA

*Hristos Anesti! Toula, Toula,
you're engaged! We think it would
never happen for you. Never! Taki!
Didn't we say that?*

UNCLE TAKI

We never think this day will come.
Never.

TOULA

...Okay...

AUNT VOULA

Is this him?

TOULA

Everyone, this is Ian.

IAN

It's nice to-

Everyone surges forward and kisses him. Several times. Aunt
Voula and Aunt Frieda standing behind, wheel on Toula.

AUNT VOULA

Oh, he's very handsome. But he's
not Greek, eh?

TOULA

No, Thea, he's not.

They pause.

AUNT FRIEDA

He looks Greek.

Maria comes in with appetizers and Aunt Voula shrieks.

AUNT VOULA

Eee ora kali, athelfee mou!! [Good times are upon us, sister.]

They hug. Everyone sees food, tramples over Ian to get to it.

Nikki, Angelo and their spouses arrive. They're fighting.

ANGELO

Shuddup, Nikki.

NIKKI

No you shuddup.

She sees Toula and hugs her.

NIKKI (cont'd)

Hristos Anesti. The hair. Watch the hair.

ANGELO

Yeah, you might cut yourself.

NIKKI

Shut up, Ugly.

ANGELO

No you shuddup.

Nikki grabs Toula's hand.

NIKKI

Wait. Lemmee see The Rock.

Nikki squints at Toula's ring: not up to her standards.

NIKKI (cont'd)

Oh. Well, it's cute. And...you have small hands.

ANGELO

Shuddup Nikki.

The relatives crack eggs, some eat, some have begun to Greek-dance, *Kalamatiano*, and Ian watches with interest. Nick pulls him into a corner.

NICK
You like that dance?

IAN
Yes, it's very -

NICK
Listen, I've never seen my sister
so happy,
(leans in menacingly)
if-you-hurt-her-I'll-kill-you-and-
make-it-look-like-an-accident.

Ian's face drops.

NICK (cont'd)
(laughing)
Ah, I'm just kidding. Jeez. Look at
your face. It's a joke.

Ian brightens. Nick changes again.

NICK (cont'd)
(in a low, scary
whisper)
No, but seriously, I will cut your
throat-
(shifts his mood again)
hey, got ya, c'mon now, it's a
joke, why the long face, whaddya
think we are here a bunch of
gangsters-
(shifts again))
'cause I got a gun and I will jam
it up your
(shifts)
hey, gotcha again, c'mon Ian
lighten up, man,
(shifts)
I'll lighten ya, when I take out
your kidneys,
(shifts)
Oop, one more time, hey Angelo!-

Angelo raises his drink from the other side of the room.

ANGELO
(cheerfully)
Hey, Ian. We're gonna kill you!

Nick swaggers off. Ian suspects he may have wet his pants. He
retreats to a corner, tries to catch Toula's eye. Aunt Voula
is waving a drumstick in her face.

AUNT VOULA

You're too skinny. Too skinny.
 (grabs Toula's
 collarbone and jiggles)
 I could snap you like a chicken.

Ian hears a noise and looks down: Yiayia is wedged between the TV and the wall. She leaps at him.

Ian screams. Nobody notices. Yiayia beckons him to come closer, closer. He leans down. She takes his face in her hands, points to Toula and smiles. Ian smiles back; she knows what's going on. They share a moment, she reaches up and kisses his forehead. Then she takes off her dress, gives it to him and scurries away.

Toula sidles up to Ian and searches his face for his reaction to her family.

TOULA

So...?

Ian holds up Yiayia's dress. Suddenly Aunt Voula backs them into the corner.

AUNT VOULA

When you come to my house, I cook for you.

Toula and Ian exchange a look.

TOULA

Thea, that may be a problem

AUNT VOULA

What problem? I the best cook in the family. Tell him.

Toula hesitates.

TOULA

Yes and we'd love to come but um, I should tell you...Ian is a vegetarian, he doesn't eat meat-

AUNT VOULA

(shrill)

HE DON'T EAT NO MEAT?

Everyone stops and stares. Forks stop in mid-air, jaws drop.

TOULA (V.O.)

Greeks are people who don't really understand vegetarianism. I mean, these are generations of people who survived wars and famine by believing if you can catch it, you should eat it.

AUNT VOULA

WHADDYOU MEAN HE DON'T EAT NO MEAT?

TOULA

I'm sorry...

AUNT VOULA

That's OK, that's OK, I'll make lamb.

TIME DISSOLVE TO:

Later that evening...all the guests have left and Maria, Toula and Ian survey the room.

TOULA

Ma, go to bed, we got this.

Maria nods, kisses her and wearily goes up the stairs. Ian gathers glasses and puts them on a tray that Toula carries. She is nervous, keeps looking at him.

TOULA

So...was that awful?

Ian looks up at her - his face is aglow.

IAN

Are you kidding? They're great.
I've never been in a louder room.

She's relieved.

IAN (cont'd)

You're kidding, right? I mean,
everyone has so much...personality.

TOULA

(begrudgingly)

Yeah....they're okay.

Ian hugs her.

IAN
(teasing)
Yeah, they're okay...

INT. MILLER TOWNHOUSE - TWO WEEKS LATER, EVENING

Total quiet. They've just finished dinner and Hillary pours coffee for Rodney, Ian and Toula. Toula catches Ian's eye, then points to her ear and whispers with irony...

TOULA
Ah, silence!

Hillary looks up.

HILLARY
Hmmm?

TOULA
Delicious.
(nervous)
Mr. and Mrs. Miller? One night we'll have dinner at my house so you can meet my parents.

RODNEY
Well, that sounds nice.

HILLARY
Before or after we go up to the house in Door County?

TOULA
(too-quickly)
After.
(catches herself)
When you come back...uh, plenty of time.

IAN
Mom, do you have a calendar? We've narrowed the big date down to sometime at the end of June to mid-July.

HILLARY
Thank you for reminding me. I've checked with the club and they have three weekends open.

TOULA
The club?

HILLARY

The North Shore Country Club. For the wedding, of course.

Toula looks at Ian.

IAN

Well, we're going to get married in Toula's church. I mean, OK, we're not religious but Toula's family is.

(pauses)

Really is.

(to Toula)

And...uh, honey, do you have that brochure?

Toula nods and takes a massive binder out of her bag.

TOULA

(apologetic)

My cousin Nikki gave me this.

CLOSE-UP on the binder: PLANNING THE PERFECT WEDDING!

IAN

And after the wedding, the reception is going to be...um, there's this banquet hall called Aphrodite's Palace.

Toula takes a colorful brochure from the binder and hands it to them.

TOULA

One of my uncles owns it.

Hillary and Rodney open the brochure, their eyes get huge.

TOULA

(off their look)

The Parthenon backdrop is optional.

A long moment as the Millers stare at Toula.

IAN

They have all their family weddings there. All the cousins...

TOULA

...we get a deal...

CUT TO:

INT. DANCING ZORBA'S - TWO WEEKS LATER, MORNING

Toula and Maria sit fretfully at the counter, watching Ian alone in a booth. Gus stands at the end of the counter ignoring everyone. Maria goes over and pokes him. He grunts again, looks over at Ian, reluctantly goes to the booth and pours some wine. *

GUS

Drink. Put some hair on your chest.

Ian drinks. Gus smirks. Ian drinks more. They stare at each other. What do they have in common? Toula tries to help.

TOULA

Y'know Dad, Ian is an English Literature teacher...Shaw, Shakespeare-

GUS

(interrupting irritably)

-Plato, Sophocles, I KNOW.

He pops a piece of meat into his mouth, chews loudly, coolly staring Ian down, then leans in until their faces are inches apart.

GUS (cont'd)

So...you are going to get baptized tomorrow, eh?

Ian nods.

GUS

Good, good. It's a lucky day for you. Nikki will be your godmother.

Ian looks over at Nikki who stands at the front counter rearranging her cleavage.

GUS (cont'd)

Did you know the word baptism comes from the Greek word vaptisia?

Suddenly, he laughs. Ian jumps.

GUS (cont'd)

Heh, heh, you're not going to fit in that thing where they put the babies. Heh, heh, you're not going to fit.

He suddenly stops laughing and stares at Ian

CUT TO:

INT. GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH - NEXT DAY

Incense, candles, icons and Ian, in his bathing suit, standing ankle-deep in a Mr. Turtle pool. Chanting fills the air. The PRIEST clips four ceremonial pieces of Ian's hair. Nikki stands nearby holding a vat of oil. The priest gets in the pool, anoints Ian's forehead, chin and cheeks with the oil, then pushes him to his knees, pours the entire contents over Ian's head. Suddenly, without warning, he tips Ian back and holds him under the water. Moments later, he brings a stunned and spitting Ian to the surface.

Toula, Maria, Gus and Nick watch from the back of the church. Nick leans over and whispers to Toula.

NICK
Not so bad, huh?

TOULA
Are you kidding? Any minute now
he's gonna look up and say, "oh,
right, you're so not worth this".

The PRIEST dunks Ian again.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH - LATER

Ian and Toula are alone. She watches him, in his fresh white shirt, as he studies the new, gold cross around his neck. He looks up - his hair still soaking wet and plastered to his head from the oil - and grins.

IAN
I hope you're taking me for dinner
now.

Toula kisses his greasy head.

CUT TO:

INT. GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH - SAME TIME

The priest sits in his office. Maria hands him a small envelope, thanks him and turns to leave. He calls out to her.

PRIEST

(petulantly)

Maria..I do the marriage in Greek.
Greek only.

MARIA

But-

He holds up his hand to silence her. Out of respect, she lowers her eyes and leaves.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. DANCING ZORBA'S - MUCH LATER

The restaurant is closed. Gus and Maria quietly sit at the counter. Ian and Toula come in. Maria gets up and walks toward Ian. She gazes up at him. Suddenly, she reaches out, hugs him and holds him for a long time. Gus hesitates for a moment, then walks over, pats Ian on the back, and walks away. Ian smiles. Toula smiles.

TOULA (V.O.)

And I thought, "hey, the worst is over, maybe this will be fun now."

CUT TO:

INT. FAMILY KITCHEN - NEXT DAY

Athena, very pregnant, makes her husband YIANNI a sandwich while her three screaming sons, faces maimed with Scotch tape, chase Nick out of the kitchen. Toula and Ian are in a daze, as Maria and Gus argue over 'the list'.

GUS

Yes, yes, yes. Maria! If we invite the Demacopoulos family, then we have to have the Adamopoulos'.
They're cousins.

TOULA

Dad please, we just want a small cocktail party. You'd rather go bankrupt than insult anyone from the church.

Toula and Ian are making the *boubounieres* for the wedding: they scoop sugar-coated almonds into square pieces of lace, connect the four corners and tie them off with a ribbon.

GUS

The whole Greek community is gonna say I can't afford a wedding? Ian, do you want to embarrass me?

IAN

No, I-

TOULA

But this is our wedding-

GUS

(melodramatically)

I came here with eight dollars in my pocket, to make all this for you. (pause) Who knows how long I'm gonna be alive?

TOULA

(sighs)

Let me see that list.

Nick comes in with his three nephews hanging off him. *

NICK

Okay, time out. No more punching Theo Nicko's 'nads.

Maria grabs the eldest, Foti, pops an almond into his mouth and hugs him tight.

MARIA

Look at you, how big you are.

She spits on him. *

MARIA (cont'd)

Too'soo, Too'soo. *

Ian nudges Toula.

IAN

(whispering)

Is your mom spitting on your nephews?

TOULA

Uh, yeah. It's for good luck. It keeps the devil away.

Nick doodles on a napkin. The three kids start to fight again. Yianni munches his sandwich and watches soccer on TV.

TOULA (cont'd)
Hey, Yianni, could you take your
kids into the living room? The
noise.

YIANNI
Get used to it.

He winks at Ian and takes the kids out. Nick grabs papers
from the counter and shows the one to Gus.

NICK
Dad, you like this?

GUS
Where you get that?

NICK
I drew it, dad. For the new menu,
remember? *

Gus grunts and goes back to the list.

NICK (cont'd)
Ma, I'm hungry.

Maria jumps up and begins to cook for him.

MARIA
Ian, are you hungry?

IAN
Uh, I already ate.

MARIA
OK, I make you something.

NICK
Jimmy Pappas says his band will do
it for five thousand but they get
dinner.

MARIA
Of course, are we peasants?

NICK
Or we could get the Diacos Dancing
Brothers Band from Minneapolis.

GUS
(not looking up)
I like the new menu.

There is a pause. No one says anything. Nick stares at his father. Then -

NICK

Thanks.

Gus stares down at the table. A moment passes. Gus looks up.

GUS

We're going to hire the band from Minneapolis.

He slams his hand down.

GUS (cont'd)

(to Ian)

Did you know that 'polis' comes from the Greek word for 'city' ...

(to Toula re: list)

and for sure John Cassimatis-

TOULA

(exasperated)

Dad, I wouldn't know John Cassimatis, if he was sitting on my face.

Ian, shocked, looks at her. Nick grins at him.

NICK

(whispering slyly)

The beauty of having a parent whose second language is English. It's

(runs his hand over his head)

WHOOSH.

(winks at Ian)

Hey, dad...pass me that twat of milk.

Gus looks up, nods and hands Nick the container. Nick and Ian giggle and nudge each other.

Maria puts huge plates of steamed dandelion greens in front of Nick and Ian. Ian touches the plate and burns his hand.

IAN

Owww.

Without missing a beat, Gus reaches under the counter, pulls out a Windex bottle and squirts Ian's hand.

NICK

OK, I have got the greatest connection for your invitations-

TOULA

NO. NO WAY. I don't want any of your 'cash-only' connections involved in our wedding.

NICK

What's your problem?

TOULA

Nick, I don't want -

MARIA

I order your invitations two weeks ago.

Silence. Yiayia laughs from the corner. Toula turns to Maria.

TOULA

Ma, I never saw a wedding invitation.

Maria, missing the point, hops up from her chair.

MARIA

(excited)

Oh, OK, I go get them.

Ian and Toula look at each other. Toula takes his hand. Gus gives Ian a look and he lets go.

Maria comes back in carrying several boxes and hands out the invitation. CLOSE - UP: It is an 8" X 8" card - blue and white striped (to match The Flag, of course). In the middle of the invitation is a big black tacky mylar bow.

Ian takes a closer look.

IAN

Um, my parent's names are Rodney and Hillary.

They all lean forward.

TOULA

Rodney and Harry?

They all turn to look at the three boxes of invitations. Nick slaps Ian on the back.

NICK

Hey, I didn't see it, so I bet they won't.

Nikki bursts in.

NIKKI

(one hand in the air,
the other on her hip)

Wait. I have got the biggest scoop.
Look at these earrings I found to
match the bridesmaids dresses.

She holds up a bag of cheap, hideous earrings in turquoise-blue - Ta da - and hands it to Toula.

NIKKI (cont'd)

We have this customer at the dry-cleaners and I remembered that she does custom jewelry and I showed her the fabric because she doesn't speak English, she's from Holland and I don't speak a word of Hollandaise but I showed her the fabric and-

TOULA

What do these match? Not that fabric you showed me last week?

NIKKI

You said you liked it.

TOULA

I said I'd think about it.

NIKKI

Right! And I said you just couldn't visualize it.

Nikki rips her coat open. Underneath, she is wearing a frightening poofy-sleeve multi-layered concoction of a turquoise-blue bridesmaid dress.

NIKKI (cont'd)

And now you can!

Everyone exclaims at how beautiful it is. It's not. And that's clearly written across Toula's face.

TOULA

Nikki, I -

NIKKI

- you don't have to do a thing.
I'll make sure everyone gets
fitted. And my mom and I saw the
best dress for you. It's like this,
but with more bows...and of course,
white.

MARIA

Yes a big beautiful dress. We go
try.

TOULA

Ma, I'll probably choose something
simple.

MARIA

Why?

Toula looks at her mother and realizes she'll never win.
Nikki notices the invitations.

NIKKI

Ooh.

She taps the black bow with one of her long fingernails. It
makes a clicking sound.

NIKKI (cont'd)

That is classy.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - FEW DAYS LATER

Ian, Toula and Mike sit on the grass eating lunch.

TOULA

So, he's gotta be Greek Orthodox
and so...

MIKE

So...?

IAN

So, I can't ask you to be my best
man. I mean, technically, you are,
but in the eyes of the church-

MIKE

Whoa, whoa. You were going to ask
me to be your best man?

IAN

Well, yeah.

MIKE

I am touched, truly. I had no idea you had so few friends.

IAN

Anyway, it's going to be Toula's brother.

MIKE

Okay, don't worry about it. (a moment) Man, they say 'jump' and you say 'how high'. You get baptized, you have this huge crazy family, no offense Toula, telling you what you can and can't do for your own wedding.

Ian looks up at Mike and smiles the smile of a man truly in love. Mike sighs and leans back.

MIKE

Ahhh, my life is shit.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL PARKING LOT - LATER

It's the end of the day. Ian and Mike walk to their cars.

IAN

(almost teasing)

Hey Mike, if you want...Toula has a lot of cousins. I could set you up.

MIKE

Ohhhh shut up.

Mike gets in his car and leaves. Ian walks, waves here and there to a student or two and unlocks his car.

NANCY (O.S.)

Hi, sorry to bother you, I'm lost.

Ian looks up. An absolutely beautiful woman stands before him. Ian stares. Some students stop and stare.

NANCY (cont'd)

I'm Nancy Lauder, the new music teacher? I start tomorrow. Could

(MORE)

NANCY (cont'd)
you just point me in the direction
of the office?

Ian finds his tongue.

IAN
Oh, yes, of course. Go in that door
and turn right.

She giggles.

NANCY
So, I just go in that door and make
a right?

She punctuates the word "right" with a hip-bump.

IAN
Uh...

Nancy pulls a boom box out of her bag and hits a button. Loud
R&B music pounds, she begins to dance and peel off her
clothes.

Students stop in their tracks and then run over. Ian tries to
get in his car, but she bumps the door closed with her behind
and pulls him close with his tie. Behind her, behind the
crowd, Ian sees Nick and Angelo drive by, killing themselves
laughing. More students come over.

IAN
(mortified)
Alright, I can't really do-

He tries to put the stripper's shirt back on her. She pushes
against him.

IAN (cont'd)
Thank you, no really, but I can't-

Students are dancing, the stripper is peeling, Ian is re-
dressing her. Angelo and Nick high five and drive off.

TOULA (V.O.)
I guess I should have warned Ian:
there was no way my brother and
cousin would ever let him marry
into our family without some sort
of initiation, some rite of
passage.

CUT TO:

INT. TRAVEL AGENCY - TWO WEEKS LATER, LATE DAY

TOULA (V.O.)
And speaking of pagan ritual..the
best was yet to come.

Toula, dressed nicely, hurries to close the office. She puts
on her headset and dials.

MARIA (O.S.)
Hallo?

TOULA
Hi, ma, it's me. Tee kanees [how
are you] Ian's coming to pick me
up, we'll go get his parents, and
we'll be there in an hour, OK?

MARIA (O.S.)
Good, good.

TOULA
(nervously)
So..is everything all right. Ma...?
What are you doing?

CUT TO:

INT. FAMILY KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

MARIA
Sorry, sorry, I'm busy. I peel the
potatoes.

TOULA (O.S.)
Peel the..., I peeled some before I
left this morning.

MARIA
Ya..we need more.

CUT TO:

INT. TRAVEL AGENCY - CONTINUOUS

TOULA
How much are you cooking for these
people?

CUT TO:

INT. FAMILY KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

MARIA
It's a lotta people.

CUT TO:

INT. TRAVEL AGENCY - CONTINUOUS

TOULA
(confused)
There's three of them.

CUT TO:

INT. FAMILY KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

MARIA
And us.

CUT TO:

INT. TRAVEL AGENCY - CONTINUOUS

TOULA
And us makes seven.

CUT TO:

INT. FAMILY KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

MARIA
(simply)
And the family.

CUT TO:

INT. TRAVEL AGENCY - CONTINUOUS

Toula looks like she's going to pass out.

TOULA
(panicky)
The family?! You invited the whole
family??!!!

MARIA (O.S.)
(matter-of-fact)
Of course.

TOULA
(horrified)
Ma, I invited them over for a quiet
(MORE)

TOULA (cont'd)
dinner. I said come for dinner and
meet my parents.

MARIA (O.S.)
Well, they might as well meet
everyone, right? I gotta go Theo
Taki's here.

Maria hangs up, leaving Toula gaping. Outside, Ian beeps his
horn. She runs out.

CUT TO:

INT. FAMILY KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Maria, surrounded by mounds of potatoes and chicken heaped in
roasting pans, opens the kitchen door. Uncle Taki trudges in
carrying two slaughtered lambs. Maria squeals with delight.

CUT TO:

EXT. FAMILY HOME - MOMENTS LATER

Gus and Nick are setting up a spit in the front yard. Mrs.
White, doing yard work, watches with curiosity.

The front door opens, Maria and Taki comes out. Mrs. White
sees the two dead lambs, screams and runs into her house.

We SEE through Mrs. White's window: she's barking into the
phone. Up the street: several doors open, NEIGHBORS poke
their heads out, look, doors slam. *

The family continues their fun. Yiayia comes out of the house
slugging back a beer.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. FAMILY HOME - LATER: DUSK

Ian's car comes up the driveway. Ian's driving with a very
tense Toula beside him. In the back seat are Rodney and
Hillary Miller.

CUT TO:

I/E CAR INTERIOR - SAME TIME

Rodney looks like he's being dragged to a tax audit. Hillary
wears a grimace. On the seat between them: A fresh bundt
cake.

CUT TO:

EXT. FAMILY HOME - SAME TIME

Every light is on at the opulent and garish Portokalos home. The front door is open and we HEAR Greek music blasting. There are fifty Greeks on the front lawn, drinking and dancing around two skewered animals.

Toula, Ian and his parents get out of the car.

ECU of the Miller's tight smiles - like when new missionaries are about to greet a tribe.

Gus, holding a long barbecue fork, turns around, sees them.

GUS

Eerthanai! [They're here!]

All the relatives turn, en masse, look at the Millers...then LEAP at them, hugging and kissing, screaming "kalos eerthatai" [welcome].

OVERHEAD SHOT: the Millers being swallowed up into the group.

GUS

This is my brother Ted and his wife, Melissa, and their kids Anita, Diane, and Nick, and my brother Tommy, his wife Angie, and their kids Anita, Diane and Nick, my brother George, his wife Frieda and their kids Anita, Diane and Nick, eh, Carrie, Voula, Taki, Sophie, Nick, Nick...Nick, Nick, Nick, Nick, Nick, Nick, Nick...eh,....Nikki, and I AM GUS!

He holds out his arms, waiting for a big hug.

The Millers are huddled together, eyes wide, hair and clothes slightly askew.

Gus pounces and bear hugs them both at the same time.

MARIA (O.S.)

No one tell me..where, where?

Maria comes down the front stairs, smiling graciously. No one moves to let her in, so she elbows her way through and arrives face to face with the Millers.

MARIA (cont'd)

Hello, I am Maria Portokalos, welcome to our home.

Hillary mutely hands over the bundt cake.

MARIA (cont'd)
Oh...what is this?

HILLARY
It's a bundt.

MARIA
Bun...?

HILLARY
BUNDT.

MARIA
Bunee...T?

HILLARY
(yelling)
BUNDT! BUNDT!!

Rodney shushes her.

UNCLE TAKI
Eina! cakee, moree. [Hey, it's a
cake.]

Maria recovers and is gracious.

MARIA
Oh, it's cake, yes, I know. Thank
you, thank you -

She retreats into the house with Aunt Frieda. Maria turns to
her.

MARIA (cont'd)
There's a hole in this cake.

As everyone begins to head into the house, Ian sidles up to
Nick...

IAN
(sweetly)
Thanks for the stripper.

...and punches him really hard in the arm. Nick goes down.
Nick grins mischievously, gets to his feet and points.

NICK
You wanna thank Angelo too?

Ian grins and walks toward Angelo.

CUT TO:

INT. FAMILY LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

AUNT VOULA

Come in, come in. I am Toula's Aunt Voula.

The Millers walk in and look around.

The over-stuffed living room is an interior designer's nightmare. The rug is bright green, the furniture is gold.

AUNT VOULA (O.S.) (cont'd)

My sister, she has nice house, no?

On the tables: white marble figurines of Zeus and Athena, on the walls: collector plates of the Island Churches. Aunt Voula's finger taps one of the plates.

AUNT VOULA (O.S.) (cont'd)

This is where we from - Mykonos - the most beautiful island.

A lamp is a waterfall, a clock is a map of Greece.

AUNT VOULA (O.S.) (cont'd)

You like 'em? I make 'em!

Aunt Voula shoves them down into a couch and leans in to them.

AUNT VOULA

Because you are now family. (beat)
OK. All my life I had a lump on the back of my neck. It was here, always,

(points to an area
beneath her hairline)

...a lump. But then I start the menopause and the lump got bigger, from the hormon-ees, it started to grow. So, the doctor, he did the Bia-, eh, Beeo-,...Biosee, yes Biosee, and inside the lump they found teeth and a spinal column, yes inside the lump was my twin.

Aunt Voula's POV: The Millers are not breathing.

Aunt Lexy comes in carrying a huge tray of spinach pies. Aunt Voula grabs two pies.

AUNT VOULA (cont'd)
Spanakopita!! You hungry?!?

Not waiting for an answer she shoves two pies at them.

Aunt Lexy smiles down at them. The light shines off her gold tooth. Toula gets through the crowd with Ian behind her.

TOULA
(to aunt)
*Tora eerthanai, Thea mou. As tous
na katheesoona leeyo.* [They just
got here. Let them settle in.]

Ian hugs her from behind and leans in to her ear.

IAN
I love it when you speak Greek.

Toula looks back at him, what? Can't he see what's going on?

IAN (cont'd)
Hey, it's pretty sexy.
(a beat)
Don't worry, they'll be all right.

Toula realizes that he's not really bothered by the fact that his parents are being suffocated. Are they? She looks again at her family and sees... they're only being friendly. She smiles wanly and pats Ian's hand. AUNT FRIEDA comes in with a bottle. She smiles revealing HER gold teeth.

AUNT FRIEDA
Ouzo!

We HEAR the call for "OUZO!" resounding through the house. Several relatives come running carrying more bottles of ouzo and drinking glasses. Gus and Maria step forward, each offering a glass. The Millers politely accept and sip gingerly. The relatives lean in for their reaction. Rodney recognizes the taste.

RODNEY
(delighted)
Licorice!

Hillary likes it, too. She speaks slowly, as if to mentally challenged patients.

HILLARY

It's dee-li-cious.

The relatives are pleased and cry out "Y'iamas, y'iamas", [to our health] and down their drinks in one gulp. The Millers look around, and do the same. Their glasses are instantly re-filled, Toula jumps in.

TOULA

No no!

IAN

Yes!

(to Toula)

It can only help.

Rodney and Hillary, in an effort of goodwill, down them again, to a chorus of "Bravo!". Big mistake.

MILLER'S POV

Everything is hazy and just a bit more surreal than before:

Athena's three sons scream through the living room pulling Yiayia in their little red wagon. She shakes her fist menacingly at the Millers.

YIAYIA

Toorkee, Sihamainee Tourkee!!
[Turks, Bloody Turks!!]

Uncle Taki comes in and hands them fists full of roast lamb, hot off the spit.

AUNT NOTA arrives to exclamations of "from Canada!"

AUNT VOULA

It's Nota! She came from Canada.

Aunt Nota turns to Ian.

AUNT NOTA

Hello, I am Nota from Regina.

She turns to the Millers.

Hillary and Rodney's HAZY POV:

AUNT NOTA

Hello, I have no vagina.

CUT TO: Rodney and Hillary's expression: Did they just hear that? They're offered more ouzo, they both hold up their hands, NO.

Maria enters with a flourish.

MARIA

And now - the BUN CAKE.

ECU on the bundt. Maria has put a potted geranium in the middle. Maria whispers to Toula.

MARIA

I fix 'em.

Toula and Ian lock eyes.

CUT TO:

INT. TOULA'S BEDROOM - STILL LATER

It's a hot humid Chicago summer night. Toula lies in bed, trying to sleep as mosquitoes buzz around her head. She's upset. We HEAR Gus, in his room freaking out.

GUS (O.S.)

I TRIED! YOU TRIED! We all nice to them and you see it - they look at us like we from the zoo. This no work, I tell you. They different people. So...dry. That family is like a piece of toast.

(warming to his metaphor, he expands)

Yeah, toast. No butter. Toast. No honeys, no jams. Just dry. I try to put some marmalade, but nooo, they like themselves all dry and cracky. I don't know. I don't know. I just never, ever think this could happen to us. My daughter, MY daughter is going to marry Ian Miller, a xeno. [foreigner]

Toula shifts positions then sits up and looks out her window to the backyard. Yiayia, escaping again, runs through the back yard - the sprinklers go on - she runs back to the house. *

Toula flops onto her bed. Gus and Maria are still talking. She covers her head with the pillow. *

DISSOLVE TO: *

INT. TRAVEL AGENCY - NEXT DAY

Toula, not looking so good, sits at her desk. She looks out her window. Nick stands there, his cheek plastered against the window. He comes running in.

NICK

I was like that for five minutes.
(pause) You OK?

Toula smiles weakly.

NICK (cont'd)

Hey, you're not having second thoughts, are you? Toula, we just ordered the baby seal ice sculptures and I'll have to break Tommy Papajohn's knees to get that deposit back.

TOULA

I'm tearing the family apart.

NICK

Nah.

TOULA

Dad's walking around with a face like someone ate the last piece of baklava...in the world...ever. Mom keeps trying to hold everything together but I swear every time I see her, I've added new wrinkles to her forehead. Athena, and her pious 'well-if-this-is-what-you-really-want' face, boy Athena, if she could just stop being so perfect, she's a Greek baby breeding machine.

(tries to take a breath)

Well, I better get some work done.
Did you want something?

NICK

(pauses) Nah.

He gets up to leave, then sits back down.

NICK

You know what you are? You're brave. You decided to do something different with your life and then...you did it. I know there's

(MORE)

NICK (cont'd)
nothing wrong with working at the
restaurant and being a good Greek
kid, but it doesn't have to be ALL
we are, right?

(hesitates a moment,
then pulls a piece of
paper from his pocket)

Look.

CLOSE - UP: the papers. It's Nick's registration to college.

Toula is astonished.

NICK (cont'd)
Now, I'm gonna start slow. One
Night Course, y'know, at a
time...but I just wanted to know
more about painting and...art and
stuff. So...

TOULA
(pleased)
Nick...I...you're... I am so proud
of you.

NICK
Huh. You started it.
(gently)
Toula, don't let your past dictate
who you are, but let it be a part
of who you will become.

TOULA
Nick! That's...beautiful.

Nick pulls a newspaper from his back pocket, waves it at her.

NICK
Yep. That Dear Abby. She knows what
she's talking about.

He touches her shoulder and leaves.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. DANCING ZORBA'S - SAME TIME

Gus, Taki and the Priest sit in a booth having coffee. The
priest clears his throat.

PRIEST
My sister's girl, eh, my niece, she
goes to school, eh, law school and
I say to her, well, good, when you
(MORE)

PRIEST (cont'd)
 get married, if something ever happens to your husband, God forbid, you'll have something to fall back on, and she looks at me and she says 'no, I want to be a lawyer, for me'. (pauses) I go to these other churches and I see now they are all sending their kids to be lawyers and doctors and they have nobody to run the family businesses no more.

Gus stares at him.

GUS
 And that's bad....right?

The priest pats Gus on the shoulder. He sighs.

PRIEST
 I don't know now. It's one thing to preserve traditions. It's another thing to live in the past.

They all think that over for a moment.

UNCLE TAKI
 Does that mean...maybe you will do the wedding ceremony in English?

PRIEST
 (are-you-nuts?)
 No.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. TOULA'S BEDROOM - SAME TIME

The room is filled with various wedding gifts, including a baby crib with a big bow. Toula sits on her bed looking out the window. Maria pauses by the doorway, then, sits on the bed. *

TOULA (cont'd)
 Ma...is my marriage killing dad?

Maria leans back, thinks this over.

MARIA
 Your father is...eh, your father.
 He just wants you to be happy.

TOULA
 But I am happy.

Maria pulls up onto the bed and they lie side by side. She does not speak for a long time. The song '*Simera yammo yeeneatai*' [Today there is a wedding] begins to play. Finally, she takes a deep breath and says-

MARIA

My village saw many wars. Turkish, Germans, they all made a mess. (sighs) And then I saw it myself. When the soldiers came and we ran and hid in the mountains, when I saw what they did to our village - they burnt every house, every store, burnt to the ground, and I was so-

Her mouth twists with bitterness but she will not cry.

MARIA (cont'd)

And my mother said, 'we're lucky to be alive' and I thought no, we're not alive while they're here, because they're telling us where we can live, what we can eat and no one has that right to- ...and I see you and Athena and Nicko and the life we made for you. We came here for you so I have to let you live. I gave you life for you to live it.

She pats Toula's hand, and they lie there for a while.

TOULA

(softly)

Ma, I appreciate that, I really do...and I know that it's important to you that I carry on this family heritage. I know the traditions, I know our history.

*
*
*

MARIA

Let me ask you one thing...do you know who you are?

Toula, perplexed, looks at her mother for a moment...

Yiayia comes in carrying a small chest and the three generations open it and pull out old photographs, small keepsakes and then at the bottom, wrapped in tissue - an ancient pair of *steffana* [wedding crowns]. Yiayia places them on Toula's head and she looks at herself in the mirror.

TOULA (V.O.)
 And that's when I realized.....I
 was the bride...the Greek woman
 getting married...in a traditional
 Greek wedding.

Toula smiles.

SLOW DISSOLVE TO:

INT. FAMILY HOME - MORNING

The phone is ringing. And ringing.

CLOSE - UP on Toula, asleep. She groans, bolts out of bed and
 groggily weaves her way down the hall, answers the phone.

TOULA
 H'lo? Nai, nai, mia stigmi, ohi,
 eemai ee Toula. Nai endaxi. Na
 pereemainaitai ekee, endaxi? [yes,
 yes, one moment, no, I'm Toula.
 Yes, all right. Wait there, OK?]

She hangs up and goes downstairs, calling out.

TOULA (cont'd)
 Hello? Ma? The band is here and
 needs to be picked up at the
 airport.

She turns a corner into the kitchen.

Chaos. Instant noise and busy activity as relatives bustle
 back and forth carrying flowers, dresses and trays of food.
 Ten bridesmaids sit with their hands in the air, drying their
 nails. Aunt Lexy sees Toula and shrieks.

AUNT LEXY
 She's awake!!! The bride!!! The
 bride!!!

She smothers Toula with kisses. All the aunts and cousins, in
 various states of undress, run over to kiss and hug Toula.
 Suddenly Aunt Frieda points to Toula's cheek.

AUNT FRIEDA
 What's that?

Toula touches her cheek, gasps and runs back up to her
 bedroom. All the aunts and cousins FOLLOW. Toula looks in the
 mirror.

ECU of Toula's cheek: A golf-ball of a zit-like thing.

AUNT LEXY
It's a mosquito bite!!!

COUSIN JENNIE
(shrieking)
I have cover-up!!!

Cousin Jennie dashes downstairs to get it. There's a FLASH of a Polaroid camera. Everyone screams.

AUNT LEXY
Nick!!! Give me that!!!
(takes the camera)
And get out!!! No boys!!!

She shoves him, he falls out the bedroom door and bumps into Gus, who's holding two tuxedos. They both fall to the floor. Everyone screams.

GUS
Hey, come on now.

Everyone helps them to their feet. Gus sees Toula and points to her cheek.

GUS (cont'd)
What's that?

ALL THE COUSINS
IT'S A MOSQUITO BITE!!!

GUS
Put some Windex on it.

NICK
Dad, is that my tuxedo?

Aunt Voula enters the bedroom. She grabs Gus and Nick.

AUNT VOULA
Why you here? You suppose to change
at my house, get out!

They trip over each other to get away from Aunt Voula. Toula calls down the stairs.

TOULA
Nick, go pick up the band at the
airport.

NICK (O.S.)

OK.

Aunt Voula surveys the room.

AUNT VOULA

Toula, where your mother? I have to pluck her chin.

Maria enters, sets a huge platter of food on the bureau and tries to pull Toula aside.

MARIA

I need to talk to you.

TOULA

Now?

MARIA

Yes. Tonight is a very special night. You have your duties. Before my wedding night, my mother said to me - "Greek women, we may be lambs in the kitchen, but we are tigers in the bedroom."

*
*
*

TOULA

Ew. Please let that be the end of your speech.

(a beat, they stare)

MARIA

Good. Now eat something so you don't faint at the altar-

AUNT VOULA

-like your cousin Georgia-

TOULA

But she was pregnant.

The entire room gasps and crosses themselves.

ALL THE COUSINS

Panagia mou!

Cousin Jennie runs in with the blemish concealer.

COUSIN JENNIE

Got it!!!

Maria hold up a piece of lamb.

MARIA

Toula, please...

She tries to put it in Toula's mouth. Aunt Voula takes out a pair of tweezers and gets to work on Maria's chin.

A baby's cries cut through the air. Athena squeezes into Toula's bedroom. She is fully dressed for the wedding, but the front flap of her bridesmaid's dress hangs open as she breast-feeds her newborn.

ATHENA

What's going on? Why isn't anyone ready? The photographer's here.

Everyone screams.

Maria shoves Toula into the shower and runs out. Dresses, shoes, earrings and flower bouquets are passed back and forth* from bridesmaid to bridesmaid.

Everyone's yelling, pulling at clothing, tossing shoes and spraying hair.

ECU of leg being squeezed into panty-hose.

ECU of corn pad being put on toe.

ECU of deodorant being rolled into armpit.

Toula emerges from the shower and is attacked. All the aunts, carrying blow-dryers, curling irons and hairclips move in on Toula and she disappears from view.

The makeup concealer is passed, hand to hand, over everyone's heads to Aunt Voula. The phone is ringing constantly, the baby cries, the cousins yell.

Maria comes back, dressed and ready, and hands the wedding dress to Nikki, who passes it to Lexy, who passes it to Marianthi, who passes it over the aunts' heads and it too, disappears from view.

Athena, still breast-feeding, shouts orders at the bridesmaids.

ECU of Aunt Voula's mouth, screaming-

AUNT VOULA

SHE'S READY!!!

Everyone is suddenly quiet. They all turn to look.

CLOSE - UP on Toula. She is a vision: Her face is too heavily made-up; across her cheek is a dark beige smudge of concealer. Her hair is huge - mercilessly teased a foot high. Her headpiece and dress are layers of tulle, chiffon, ribbons and lace. She looks like a big squirt of icing. She stares at herself in a full-length mirror. *

TOULA
(close to tears)
I'm a snowbeast.

She's bawling her eyes out. They misinterpret her tears for happiness, run and smother her in kisses.

CAMERA TRAVELS to the window: A thunderclap and pouring rain.

CUT TO:

EXT. FAMILY HOME - LATER

Still raining. Hard. A powder-blue limousine sits outside, covered in cheesy prom-like bows. Toula miserably stares out the window.

Nick, tux over his head, runs toward the limo, opens one of the doors and we SEE all ten bridesmaids crammed in there with Toula. Marianthi's dress has an 'iron burn' on the front.

NICK
Howr'we doing here ladies?

COUSIN MARIANTHI
(snippy)
I thought we had three limos.

NICK
Uh, yeah, my connection had a funeral. Gotta go.

He slams the door and takes off. Part of Toula's dress hangs out the door.

CUT TO:

INT. GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH - LATER

The Bride's side is packed and overflowing. The Groom's side: three people - Hillary, Rodney, and Mike - sit uncomfortably.

In front of the altar are ten swarthy groomsmen standing awkwardly in their rented tuxedos, cummerbunds and bowties dyed to match that turquoise-blue.

Organ music fills the air and everyone turns to the back of the church.

TWO FLOWERGIRLS, CATRINA and HEATHER, in miniature bridesmaids dresses, walk up the aisle sprinkling rose petals. They get impatient and begin to chuck handfuls.

Athena's three sons, follow, carrying pillows: the rings and steffana [head-wreaths of flowers] They begin to fight, Aunt Voula leans, ricochet-smacks the three of them in the head, they straighten up and proceed.

The bridesmaids, squeezed into their identical outfits go down the aisle, in all their turquoise glory. Marianthi's earring has fallen off and stuck to the side of her big hair.

The organ plays "Here comes the Bride" and everyone stands.

Gus, and a wet, muddy Toula on his arm, walk stiffly up the aisle.

All the relatives smile, then spit on her to ward off the devil. The Millers look like they're watching a live kidney transplant.

Reaching the altar, Gus removes the veil from Toula's face, kisses her on both cheeks, reluctantly hands her over to Ian. He's a little shocked at what he sees, but nothing can erase the happy grin from his face.

For the first time that day, Toula smiles.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH - STILL LATER

The ceremony is in progress. Foggy incense clouds the room as the priest and CHANTER drone on and on ...in ancient Greek.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH - EVEN LATER

More ceremony as they are 'crowned' with the steffana, by Nick. Hillary leans over to Rodney. * *

HILLARY

Well, how are we supposed to know what's going on?

RODNEY

Yup. It's all Greek to me.

HILLARY
Oh, shut up, Rodney.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH - COULD IT BE ANY LATER

Ian turns to Toula.

IAN
Are we married yet?

The Chanter sings "*Eee the yenee, na foveetai ton andra*".

TOULA
(mutters)
English, please.

The Priest hears her and nods.

PRIEST
AND THE WOMAN SHALL SERVE THE MAN.

Hillary gasps. Rodney grins.

MIKE
Cool.

Cousin Marianthi hears this, turns and gives Mike a big
flirty grin. Mike gulps.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH - HANG ON, ALMOST THERE

Nick holds the *steffana* on their heads. Toula, aglow, smiles *
at Ian.

TOULA
This is it.

IAN
What?

TOULA
We take our first steps as husband
and wife. This is it. Ready?

Ian's eyes hold the glow of a man truly-madly-deeply in love.

IAN
Ready.

The newly 'crowned' couple is led around the altar three times. Toula slips on the hem of her soggy dress, Ian gets tangled in tulle and altar ribbons - they never stop smiling.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH - IT'S OVER

Suddenly, without fanfare, the ceremony ends and the priest turns to the congregation and attempts sincerity.

PRIEST

Eh, I think you all know...that
this wedding was possible because
Ian, now his name is Iouanni, was
baptized and-

Hillary stands.

HILLARY

WHAT?!?

Rodney tries to calm her. Suddenly Ian grabs Toula's hand and they run out of the church.

CUT TO:

EXT. GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH - MOMENTS LATER

The church doors burst open: Toula and Ian escape. They run towards the waiting limo. It's hailing and Toula slips and fall backwards into the limo.

CUT TO:

I/E LIMOUSINE INTERIOR- SECONDS LATER

Toula and Ian laugh hysterically. Her hair is messed up and makeup runs down her face. Ian hands her a handkerchief and she tries to repair the damage.

IAN

Don't dab. Wipe. Wipe off.

Toula begins to remove her heavy makeup.

TOULA

That's better. My face can breathe.

IAN

Did the aunts do that makeover?

Toula nods.

IAN (cont'd)
 Hmmm, drag queens could get a few
 tips from your aunts.
 (looks around the limo)
 Hey, we need champagne!
 (opens a compartment,
 reaches in)
 Oh, well good enough.

He pulls out two diet Pepsis, pops the tabs and hands one to
 Toula. Without the makeup and headpiece she's looking a bit
 more human. She reaches around and removes the bustle and
 train attachments, rolls down the window and tosses them out.

CUT TO:

EXT. LIMOUSINE - SAME TIME

Mounds of fabric rolling down the wet, muddy street.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. APHRODITE'S PALACE BANQUET HALL - LATER

The limousine pulls up to the entrance.

CUT TO:

I/E LIMOUSINE INTERIOR - SAME TIME

Ian and Toula are having a great time when they realize
 they've arrived.

TOULA
 Do we have to go in?

IAN
 It's too late to elope. Let's go.

Toula pulls out a compact and inspects her cheek.

TOULA
 Hmm. Going down, thank God.

IAN
 What?

TOULA
 Oh, I woke up with a golf ball on
 my cheek.

Ian laughs.

IAN

I had a huge zit, too.

Toula peers.

TOULA

Where?

Ian points to his forehead.

IAN

Right here, but it's gone. (shrugs)

I put some Windex on it.

He scrambles out of the limo as Toula reacts.

CUT TO:

INT. APHRODITE'S PALACE BANQUET HALL- LATER THAT EVENING

The band plays loudly.

Ceiling-high plaster-of-paris Hellenic columns adorn the walls. Green plastic vines drip purple grapes and wind along the columns. Beneath an arch sit two baby seal ice carvings, balancing real fruit baskets on their noses.

Everyone sits at blue and white tables surrounding a roped off dance floor.

The wedding cake is five layers high with a gold-glitter plastic staircase winding its way from the top to bottom. A tiny plastic bride, groom and twenty attendants perch on the stairs as a fountain of champagne shoots up through the cake and runs in rivulets down the handrail.

Yiayia hides silverware in the many folds of her dress.

Aunt Voula joins the Miller's table. She gives Hillary a good-natured smack on the back. Hillary coughs for a full minute.

We HEAR the painful squeak of a microphone being turned on. The band stops playing.

CLOSE - UP on Gus. He stands at the end of the head table, looking a bit lost and holding onto the podium.

Everyone quiets down and gives him their full attention.

GUS

(hesitant)

Eh...sas efharisto...I thank you
all for coming. Welcome Portokalos
family, eh, we have our cousins

(MORE)

GUS (cont'd)

Anna and Andreas from Thrymos, we
have Uncle Christo and Uncle
Georgeo from Patra, eh...welcome to
the Miller family...eh, yes,
eh...welcome...

Gus stands at the podium looking dazed and unhappy...he just
doesn't have the heart to go on and slowly turns to go back
to his seat.

Maria calmly stands, gently pushes Gus back to the podium and
clasps his hand. The microphone picks up her words.

MARIA

(very gently)

Why don't you tell everyone what
you thought of last night?

Gus numbly looks at her, she nods reassuringly.

GUS

Oh...eh, yes. I was thinking, last
night, on the night before my
daughter is going to be married to
Ian Miller, that, eh...well...the
root of Miller...is a Greek word.

The close relatives laugh - they know Gus's favorite pastime
only too well. The Millers smile appreciatively and appear at
least interested, which is all the encouragement Gus ever
needs.

GUS (cont'd)

Yes, eh..Miller comes from the
Greek word "millo" which means
apple...so there you go.

Many people nod and laugh. Aunt Voula grabs Rodney's forearm.

AUNT VOULA

That's true!

GUS

(on a roll)

-and listen to this now...OK, and
as most of you know, our name,
Portokalos comes from the Greek
word "portokali", which means a
orange and OK, so here tonight, eh,
so we have apples and oranges...we
may be different...but in the end,
eh, we are all fruit.

Everyone applauds wildly. Rodney gives the jaunty ol' thumbs up. Gus shrugs.

GUS (cont'd)

Well, we all come from the same earth. Listen...Ian is a good boy and he makes Toula very happy-

MARIA

-and we love them both.

GUS

And we love them both.

Everyone applauds again. Maria leans in to Gus, whispers. He turns to Toula and Ian and everyone goes silent.

GUS

We have a gift...eh...here. *

Aunt Voula whispers to Mike and the Miller family. *

AUNT VOULA

This is what we do. The parents -
they give a gift. *

Gus holds out some papers to them. Ian and Toula get up, unfold the papers, and gasp. Ian turns to Toula. *

IAN

My God, they've bought us a house.

Everyone applauds again and Gus leans in to Ian.

GUS

No apartment. No more.

Aunt Voula turns to the astonished Miller family and shrugs.

AUNT VOULA

Why do we work so hard, eh? To make
a better life for our kids.

Gus is looking at Toula with such love. Then, he looks at Ian and...just shakes his head. He turns away, but not before Toula sees him smile. Maria and Gus go toward their seats.

The band begins to play. Ian whispers something to Toula and she nods. Ian goes to her parents. Toula goes to the Millers as Nick is handing them glasses of ouzo. *

RODNEY

Well, well, what a nice wedding.

Hillary leans in to Toula.

HILLARY

Well...Toula Miller. Now, that has a nice ring, doesn't it?

Toula squeezes her hand.

TOULA

Thank you. That's really sweet of you. But...if you don't mind, I'm thinking, well, I'm going to keep my own name.

Hillary tilts her head, as in why?

HILLARY

I thought you were embarrassed...I'm sorry, it's really none of my business, but even you said your name was really Greek.

Toula grins at her.

TOULA

(wryly)

Yeah. It is. So am I.

A moment. Toula gestures toward the dance floor. *

HILLARY

Oh, I think I'll need a little more of this ouzo.

Toula waits, then Hillary realizes that she's not going to get away with not going. She downs her drink, and Toula drags her and Rodney to the dance floor. Nick and Athena follow.

NICK

(yelling over the noise)

Hey, Athena. I'm gonna be a painter.

ATHENA

(not getting it)

Good. Start with our fence.

Ian has led Gus and Maria and the rest of the wedding party to the dance floor. They all join hands in a long line. Toula

gently pushes Ian to the front of the line. Everyone is watching him. What is he doing? He turns to Toula and she nods encouragingly.

TOULA

Count, OK? Ready?...one, two...

Ian takes a step forward and they all begin the official wedding party Greek dance. Ian is leading the line: the entire ballroom sees this, everyone gets up on their feet and starts clapping and whistling and cheering him on. All the relatives go nuts.

Gus and Maria are beaming at Toula.

Nick calls her name and waves a white napkin in the air.

Nikki nudges Athena and she actually smiles at Toula. Yianni picks up their youngest, bobs him up and down to Toula, as in "and now have one of these."

Yiayia jumps out from under the tablecloth, catches Toula's eye, picks up a dinner plate and smashes it on the floor.

YIAYIA

Opa!!

She grabs another one - the STAFF chases her.

Aunt Voula, Uncle Taki, Angelo, and the spouses stand to the side and raise their glasses. Aunt Voula turns to Uncle Taki.

AUNT VOULA

(through tears)

Oh Taki...he looks Greek.

With a romantic flourish, Uncle Taki kisses Aunt Voula, leads her to the dance floor and they join in.

As Cousin Marianthi dances around in the circle, she leans out and yanks bewildered Mike into the dance.

Toula grins and just shakes her head. Like it or not - this is her family.

Other relatives join in encircling the wedding party.

Ian catches Toula's eye. They smile.

A WIDE SHOT of the dance floor.

An OVERHEAD SHOT of all the people dancing in lines as they weave in and out and around each other.

SLOW DISSOLVE TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY (THE PRESENT)

Toula speaks directly TO CAMERA.

TOULA
So, you see, that's how it all
happened...honey...

REVERSE POV

We see that all this time, Toula has been speaking to her six year old DAUGHTER, PARIS....chubby, knock-kneed, glasses-wearing dork.

TOULA (cont'd)
..and that's why you have to go to
Greek School.

Her daughter stares petulantly as Toula zips up her coat.

PARIS
But, mom, I want to go to Brownies.

TOULA
I know, I know.

She kisses her.

TOULA (cont'd)
But, I promise one thing...you can
marry anybody you want.

Ian comes into frame and kisses Toula.

IAN
Well, thanks sweetheart.

Toula hugs Ian and squeezes him against her. He opens the front door and they all go outside.

We SEE that the Portokalos home is next door. Gus is working on his car. Yianni and the four boys, aged 6 to 15, play soccer in the yard as Nick paints a mural on the garage. Maria and a very pregnant Athena come out with a tray of steaming baked goods and they all descend on her. Yiayia, off to the side, is using a sword to trim the front hedges. Ian, Toula and Paris wave and she angrily shakes the sword at them. They continue walking, pass Mrs. White's house and she

is spying from her usual position, peeking through her curtains. They wave to her and she quickly closes the curtains. They laugh and continue on down the street, walking as a family, as we slowly...

FADE OUT: