

THE MIDDLE AGES

by

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FADE IN ON

A dusty room mid-renovation. Sunlight cuts through the haze revealing fancy architectural details. Could be a sitting room in a mansion or maybe a president's study.

A soft grunt.

WOMAN (O.S.)
That's it, baby... right there.
Don't move...

Another grunt, then

FAP... FAP... FAP!

Muffled, pistol-like pops.

WOMAN (O.S.)
That's better.

On a ladder working above a picture window, JOEY ALTEN wrangles a huge piece of arched molding. In baggy overalls and a ponytail, she looks much younger than her 39 years.

She pulls a nail gun from her well-worn tool belt--

FAP... FAP!

--hops off the ladder, blows on the muzzle of the nailer and re-holsters it with the finesse of Wyatt Earp.

Joey looks up at the arch and grins, happy with her work. She's pretty cute, if you look past the sweat and grime.

MRS. HOOBLER hobbles in. Age-wizened and Jeopardy-sharp, she checks out Joey's handiwork.

MRS. HOOBLER
Classy. It reminds me of Iris
Goldman's living room.

JOEY
Good eye, Mrs. Hoobler. This is a
similar profile. Yours will look
more like Mrs. Winthrop's library
when I'm done, though.

MRS. HOOBLER
But fancier, right?

JOEY
Much.

Joey smiles at the blank walls, seeing what they'll become.
Mrs. Hoobler smirks at a RAMSHACKLE HOUSE ACROSS THE STREET.

MRS. HOOBLER
In your eye, Winthrop.

REVERSE ANGLE on MRS. HOOBLER'S LITTLE OLD HOUSE.
Framed by the picture window, Mrs. Hoobler blows a RASPBERRY.

EXT. HIGHRISE - DAY

A cement tomb of an office building. Establishing.

INT. LAW OFFICE - DAY

Busy phones trill MUTED SOUND BUBBLES. CLIENTS and LAWYERS wait in the lounge area. A FRAZZLED MOM tries to quiet her SCREAMING BRAT. DINGING elevators add to the cacophony.

Sitting in a round receptionist's desk, Joey's the nucleus of this circle of Hell.

JOEY
(on headset)
Thank you for holding, may I help you? I'm sorry, he's on a call right now. I'll put you through to his voice mail. Good morning, law offices... Yes, I'll connect you.

CHASE (40s), a SMARMY LAWYER rushes off the elevator, then detours to lean nonchalantly against Joey's desk. He doesn't even pretend not to stare as--

--AMBER (19), the sexy-punk law clerk squats, filing papers in the long bank of cabinets nearby.

CHASE
Hey, Joey.

Joey gives him the "just a second" finger -- not the one she'd prefer to give.

JOEY
(on headset)
Good morning, law offices. One moment please...
(to Chase)
Did you need something?

CHASE

No.

Joey follows his eyes to Amber's butt cleavage.

JOEY

(to Chase)

She could be your daughter.

CHASE

I hadn't thought of that.

He seems to *like* the thought of that.

Joey's sorry she mentioned it.

JOEY

(on headset)

I'm sorry, she's not back from court, yet. Would you like her voicemail? I'll transfer.

CHASE

Why aren't you married? You're pretty enough.

JOEY

Flattery will get you nowhere.

CHASE

You must want kids someday, right? A minivan and the whole nine?

The Screaming Brat kicks his mom in the shin.

SCREAMING BRAT

I HATE YOU! HATE YOU HATE YOU!

JOEY

Who wouldn't?

CHASE

You should get on it. Sure, you can have kids in your forties, but what is this, the third world?

The PHONE RINGS again.

JOEY

(on headset)

Good morning, law offices. May I help you? One moment please.

(to Chase)

Speaking of marital bliss...

CHASE

Why does she have to bother me at work? Tell her I'm taking a dump or something. I'll call her later.

He cleans out Joey's candy dish and ogles Amber again.

Joey scowls at his retreating back.

JOEY

(on headset)

Thanks for holding. He's taking a dump or something, but I'll let him know you called. Okay. Buh-bye.

She juggles another burst of calls--

JOEY

(on headset)

Good morning, law offices, please hold...

LINDSAY (30s), a pregnant paralegal, walks in with a LADY IN A NECK BRACE who's been rode hard and put up wet. We know this 'cause her T-shirt says so.

LINDSAY

...and we'll be in touch as soon as we have a court date.

SCREAMING BRAT

Nana!

To everyone's relief, the Screaming Brat and his mom leave with the Neck Brace lady.

Lindsay sags against Joey's desk. Stifles a belch. They have the easy camaraderie of old friends.

Joey automatically hands her a roll of TUMS. Lindsay forces herself to eat a few.

LINDSAY

(chewing the chalky Tums)

Fuck my glamorous life.

JOEY

(on headset)

Good morning, law offices, may I help you? One moment.

JOEY

Linds, you got Judge Herman's office on two.

LINDSAY
 Seriously? Gimme a minute to waddle
 back to my office.

SAME SCENE - LATER

JOEY
 (on headset)
 Good afternoon, law offices, may I
 help you? One moment.

Joey absently scrolls through email. One gets her attention--

INSERT: EMAIL FROM CHS CLASS OF '96:

*Congrats to Class of '96 Grad
 Derek Bastion on his recent promotion to
 Chief of Radiology at Good Samaritan Hospital.*

Joey stares at the PHOTO of handsome Dr. Bastion laughing
 with his beautiful wife and gorgeous kids.

SYLVIA (O.S.)
 Is that Derek?

SYLVIA (60s) leans over Joey's shoulder, nipped and tucked
 like Skeletor in lipstick and Juicy Couture.

JOEY
 (startles)
 God! I didn't see you come in.

SYLVIA
 You should've married him.

JOEY
 He never asked, since we only went
 out for like a month in high
 school. What are you doing here?

Sylvia eyes a SLICK LAWYER pacing with his phone.

SYLVIA
 Sightseeing... Is he on TV?

JOEY
 Sh! His ads run during your soaps.

SYLVIA
 He'd be a catch... but what are you
 wearing? You look stunning in that
 clingy knit I got you--

JOEY
Ten years ago, maybe.

SYLVIA
You've got the body. Wear the knit.

Slick Lawyer glances at Joey but finds no evidence of a body.

SYLVIA (CONT'D)
Get your bag. I had a brilliant
idea and I'm taking you to lunch.

JOEY
Mom, I can't just leave whenever I
feel like it. They need me here.

SYLVIA
Fine, I'll tell you later. No, I
can't wait. I'll tell you now: I'm
buying you a breast lift for your
birthday.

Ambient noise having died down at that very moment, Sylvia's
idea rings loud and clear, thanks to the acoustic properties
of marble and wood. All eyes turn to Joey's chest.

JOEY
I don't need a-- one of those.

SYLVIA
Honey. You're forty. That figure
you're hiding won't last forever.

Joey crosses her arms, a subconscious attempt to block a
lifetime of programming.

The PHONE RINGS.

JOEY
Can we talk later? I'm working.
(on headset)
Good afternoon, law offices...

Sylvia walks to an open elevator, calling--

SYLVIA
At least start the Botox! This is
the beginning of the end if you're
not careful. You have no idea what
it's like to become invisib--

The elevator door shuts, cutting her off.

SAME SCENE - LATER

Joey shuts off her computer, gathers her things. COWORKERS wave and chat on their way out.

The PHONE BUZZES.

CHASE (FILTERED)
Hey Joey? Can I see you a sec?

Really?? Joey stomps her foot like a frustrated toddler.

JOEY
Be right there.

INT. CHASE'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Chase chats with a GORGEOUS GIRL (20). Joey enters.

JOEY
What's up?

INT. BLUES BAR - LATER - EVENING

Authentic blues dive in the basement of a funky joint that's two clubs in one. There's an ECLECTIC CROWD, from rheumy, old black dudes to uptight suburbanites in pressed jeans.

Joey drinks at a tiny table with Lindsay and MAUREEN a/k/a MO (40s, momish).

MAUREEN
But you've been there ten years!

JOEY
Yeah. And after all those shitty annual raises, I'm "too expensive."

LINDSAY
My fat ass.

JOEY
The new girl's got no experience, so she probably comes cheap.

MAUREEN
I'm sure she's cheap.

JOEY
She seems sweet. Not her fault she's young and gorgeous.

LINDSAY

I hate that misogynist cockknocker.

JOEY

Oh, and in related news, my mom has a "brilliant" idea for my birthday. A *breast lift*.

No reaction.

JOEY (CONT'D)

Y'know, like a boob job with ropes and pulleys... It's funny. Why aren't you laughing?

MAUREEN

That's a nice gift.

LINDSAY

Very generous.

JOEY

You're killing me. What happened to "Sylvia's batshit crazy?"

LINDSAY

She is. But she's not stupid.

MAUREEN

They ain't getting any perkier.

JOEY

Thanks Mo. It's not like I'm tucking them into my waistband.

LINDSAY

Yet.

JOEY

Shut up. When have I ever been a youth-and-beauty chaser?

MAUREEN

You never had to be.

That terrifies Joey a little. She tries to cover but kinda loses her shit, instead--

JOEY

Really? I'm getting this from you guys, too? I'm turning forty! So fucking what? It's a birthday. It's not the apocalypse.

LINDSAY

Well, I'm glad you're not freaking out about it.

Joey chugs the rest of her drink.

A DRUNK BITCH in a sorority sweatshirt taps Lindsay's shoulder as two of her SORORITY SISTERS look on.

DRUNK BITCH

'Scuse me, can I bum a cig?

LINDSAY

Smoking's bad for you. Don't they teach you that in college?

DRUNK BITCH

So's drinking alcohol when you're pregnant, Trailer Hag!

The Sisters think that's terrifically funny. So does Lindsay.

MAUREEN

She's drinking plain orange juice!

DRUNK BITCH

She still has no business out in a bar with a baby.

Joey slips away unnoticed.

LINDSAY

You're picking a fight with a pregnant lady? Really?

ON JOEY

She moves through the crowded bar. Spots some CUTE GUYS eye-fucking a PRETTY YOUNG GIRL and mutters to herself--

JOEY

Pigs.

Self-conscious now, she tugs at her clothes, fiddles with her hair and realizes she's BLINKING BACK TEARS.

The BLUES MUSIC FADES and BLENDS WITH 80s POP, as she makes her way to the rest rooms at the crossroads of the two clubs.

INT. LADIES ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

SOME SEXY INTERNS laugh, gossip and primp.

Joey exits a stall and washes her hands. The Sexy Interns stumble out the door leaving Joey alone.

She looks in the mirror. For the first time ever, she notices crows feet and laugh lines. She checks out her boob profile from the side. Lifts them and lets them fall... Lift. Drop. Lift. Drop. *Sylvia was right?!*

JOEY
What the fuck, girls?

EXT. LADIES ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Joey exits wearing lipstick and a fresh coat of uncertainty.

She's *about to head left* into the Blues Club, when a CATCHY 80s SONG comes on -- the kind you can't *not* listen to.

She *turns right* and wanders into the

80S CLUB

Finds an unobtrusive place to lean and enjoy the song.

A WAITRESS hands her a bottle of beer.

WAITRESS
Empty hands, can't have that.

JOEY
Thanks, but--

WAITRESS
They're a sponsor. Enjoy.

She moves on before Joey can tip her.

Joey knocks back half her beer and people-watches, wistful. *They're all so young and cool.* And for some reason, one of them -- a GREAT-LOOKING GUY -- is smiling and walking over...

NOAH
Don't think I've seen you at one of these things before. I'm Noah.

He's so dizzyingly gorgeous, it fries Joey's brain a little.

JOEY
Oh. Hi. Joey. *I'm* Joey.

She shakes his hand and tries to figure out what "one of these things" might be.

She spots a pretty girl dressed like the OFFICE TART teetering in sky-high heels on a chair to fix a fallen banner. It reads "*Young Professionals Association.*"

Joey perks up -- *he thinks she's young!*

NOAH

I thought I knew all the Young Pros. Where've you been hiding?

JOEY

Usually under a layer of paint chips and plaster dust.

(off his confusion)

I restore and renovate historic buildings. I'm kind of a mess by the end of the day, so I don't go out much after work. How 'bout you?

NOAH

Well, except for the occasional leaky ink cartridge, I'm usually pretty clean at the end of the day.

Joey chuckles at his lame joke.

NOAH (CONT'D)

Engineer. Software, not trains.

A SHRIEK

Office Tart almost falls off the chair, then steadies herself. Her laugh is bubbly and contagious.

NOAH

Freakin' Vanessa...

JOEY

Your girlfriend?

NOAH

She's just one of the gang. We're all pretty tight, but most of 'em are content not to strive too hard.

JOEY

It's easy to get complacent.

NOAH

Right? My greatest fear is waking up in the glue factory.

JOEY

In the what?

NOAH

Y'know when a horse was too old to race anymore, they used to--

JOEY

--send him to the glue factory.

NOAH

Some of my best friends are glue. They're thirty, thirty-five and got nothing to show for it.

JOEY

That *is* scary.

Her smile looks sickly.

NOAH

So, are you with a firm, or...?

JOEY

Actually, I just left the day job. Gonna hang out my own shingle soon.

NOAH

That's awesome.

JOEY

We'll see. I'm still trying to bend the numbers to my will.

NOAH

You should go out for the Young Entrepreneurs Grant.

JOEY

Think I've heard something about that, but I've, um, got a few irons on the fire. I wouldn't feel right taking grant money.

Noah studies her.

NOAH

Pride... Yeah, you're different. It's kinda sexy.

Joey blushes, stammers.

NOAH

Shit. I embarrassed you. Sorry. I'm an idiot. I take it back.

JOEY

N-no, you're sweet. It's just late
and I have an early morning. Those
old walls don't plaster themselves!

She backs away and he follows her.

NOAH

It's dark. I'll walk you out.

MUTED BLUES MUSIC begins to MERGE WITH THE 80s POP.

JOEY

Thanks, but I'm okay. It was great
meeting you and maybe I'll see you
at the next... one... of these.

NOAH

Joey, wait a sec--

Joey rushes off, past the rest rooms, muttering--

JOEY

He's just a kid. Just a gorgeous
kid who thinks I'm young and sexy.
(scoffs)
Easy on the free beer, kid.

BACK IN THE BLUES CLUB

Maureen checks her watch for the umpteenth time. Lindsay's
asleep in a head-lolling, mouth-breathing pregnancy coma.

Joey returns, breathless and looking over her shoulder.

JOEY

You guys ready to go?

EXT. PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER - NIGHT

Joey struggles to rush Lindsay and Maureen to the car.

JOEY

C'mon, I don't wanna see him...

MAUREEN

I do!

LINDSAY

You need to get your ass back in
there and fuck him. We'll wait.

JOEY

He's a kid! Who am I, my dad?

She unlocks the doors and they all get in.

MAUREEN

He wears a tie to work and he's in a bar. How young can he be?

JOEY

I dunno. Maybe twenty-five?

MAUREEN

That's a fun age...

LINDSAY

Joey was twenty-five last time anyone touched her vag without billing insurance.

MAUREEN

Really?

JOEY

No.

She starts the car -- SCREEEECH! The already-started car.

JOEY (CONT'D)

It's irrelevant. Would I like to climb into Noah's lap and squirm around a while? Yes, I would. And if I was twenty-five, I'd probably be doing that right now. However, I'm almost forty with lots of bills and no income and getting laid is just not a big thing.

She drives out of the lot. Then Lindsay stage whispers--

LINDSAY

Bet Noah's got a big thing.

She and Mo giggle.

JOEY

Grow up.

She tries not to laugh. Fails.

INT. JOEY'S APARTMENT - DAY

Cheerful paintings hang and lean on the walls, a couple works-in-progress on easels.

Joey works on an old desktop PC. Pastes her resume into the box on Monster. It screws up the formatting. She throws a TANTRUM -- *this has been going on a while.*

Joey checks banking online. Accounts are low, bills are late. She absently folds and refolds an OVERDUE BILL...

And almost like magic, she turns the bill into a COOL ORIGAMI HOUSE. She adds it to a shelf with DOZENS OF ORIGAMI HOUSES.

INT. LINDSAY'S TOWNHOUSE - NURSERY - DAY

No furniture, but lots of plaster and dust. The ceiling has been torn out, revealing ugly support beams.

Lindsay watches Joey tack a string bisecting the room from the top of one wall to another.

LINDSAY

What did you expect? You were supposed to pick up your last check like a week ago.

JOEY

I like knowing it's there. Makes me feel less unemployed.

LINDSAY

Dude, you've got options. Temp work. Drive-through, just to stay caught up.

JOEY

I'd have to work 80-hour weeks to make rent.

She checks her wall measurements with a laser gadget.

JOEY (CONT'D)

I'm not qualified to do anything that pays real money.

LINDSAY

So you say. I think you should be doing restoration professionally.

JOEY

It's a male-dominated industry and
I'm a woman with the wrong degree
and no professional experience.

LINDSAY

But you're better!

JOEY

Doesn't matter.

LINDSAY

Maybe you could be a pole dancer.

JOEY

Don't be droll. You're better than
that.

She hops off the ladder.

LINDSAY

No I'm not.

JOEY

(emotional)

Know what's really fucked up? I
actually considered that for a
minute, 'til I realized the issue
wasn't whether I could do it, but
that without a birthday breast-lift
nobody would want me to!

LINDSAY

Could you do it?

JOEY

Not while Sylvia's alive.

LINDSAY

So regardless of the reason, you
won't be dancing naked for money.
What's the problem?

JOEY

I'm almost forty and I've got
nothing. No husband, no kids, no
career. I'm gonna be glue!

Lindsay has no idea what that means.

LINDSAY

I see we're a little raw.

JOEY
You'd be raw too, if you woke up
with a time bomb strapped to your
saggy chest.

Lindsay hugs her with a half-assed pat on the back. Joey
hangs on when Lindsay lets go.

LINDSAY
I should probably say something
supportive now.

Pat, pat.

JOEY
That's usually how it's done.

LINDSAY
Okay... You're not forty yet. A lot
can happen in a couple months. How
was that?

JOEY
Eh.

EXT. HIGHRISE - DAY

Joey stops on the sidewalk and scowls up at her old office.
In a ratty ponytail and a vintage T-shirt from a concert she
actually went to, she looks like a college kid.

JOEY
(mutters)
Who sleeps for ten years?

A BUM dozing on the sidewalk raises his hand.

NOAH (O.S.)
Hey -- Joey, right?

He's even more ridiculously hot than Joey remembered.

JOEY
Oh... Hi.

NOAH
It's Noah.

JOEY
I remember.

NOAH
I'm not staring-- Sorry, I *am*
staring, but that is a great shirt.

JOEY
(re: the band)
Thanks. You like them, too?

NOAH
Yeah, I love vintage stuff. And
that looks like the real deal.

JOEY
(ouch)
Good call.

Hyper-aware of the unforgiving daylight. Time to 'fess up--

JOEY (CONT'D)
Um, y'know when we met the other
night? At the, uh...

NOAH
Young Professionals Social.

JOEY
Right. "The Young Pros." Well, see,
the reason you'd never run into me
there before...

She realizes she's lost her audience. Noah -- and every other
male in the city -- is watching Joey's Gorgeous Replacement
Receptionist bounce along the sidewalk.

Joey deadpans to the Universe. *Really?*

The Gorgeous Replacement disappears into the building and
Noah's back with Joey like he never left.

JOEY
She's my replacement.

NOAH
That girl? No, she isn't.

JOEY
Yuh-huh. I trained her myself.

NOAH
She may have your old job, but she
could never replace you.

Joey rolls her eyes at his attempt at flattery.

JOEY
All these guys with new whiplash
injuries would disagree.

NOAH
You think you don't cause whiplash?

JOEY
Did you see that girl?

NOAH
I've seen you leave a trail of
dangling conversations. Twice.

Joey blinks while that fails to compute.

NOAH (CONT'D)
I did it again, didn't I?
Embarrassed you?

JOEY
No, I've just never been that girl.

NOAH
Which girl?

JOEY
Whiplash girl. That's not me.

NOAH
See? That's why you're that girl.
You got bigger things on your mind
than how hot you are...

Joey's biological time bomb is *diffused*. Her world is rocked
by the unexpected reprieve.

NOAH (CONT'D)
Like shingle-hanging. How goes it?

JOEY
Meh. Rough. Probably should've
tried for that grant after all.

NOAH
You're not too late, yet.

Joey's decision practically makes itself.

LINDSAY (V.O.)
No fucking way.

INT. OFFICE LADIES ROOM - LATER - DAY

Joey makes a face at her paycheck, stuffs it in her bag.

JOEY

You're right. I can't do it.

LINDSAY

The hell you can't! You'd have to lie, but so what? Nobody deserves this break more than you.

JOEY

What if I got caught? I would die.

LINDSAY

Don't get caught.

JOEY

I once missed a crucial party in high school 'cause I was afraid to sneak out of the house.

LINDSAY

This is a lot more crucial.

JOEY

They still talk about that party...

She shakes off twenty years of regret, then--

JOEY (CONT'D)

You don't think it would make me a terrible person?

LINDSAY

(pats her belly)

I got this off a drunk-fuck with an ex I haven't talked to since. Not really in a position to judge.

JOEY

Say I do this, and I somehow pull documentation out of my ass to show I'm twenty-five... what if they like me?

LINDSAY

Isn't that the point?

JOEY

But if I'm a finalist, they'll want to interview me and I'll have to pretend I'm twenty-five in person!

LINDSAY

An interview's like an hour. You
can do anything for an hour. You
can do this. We'll get you a fake
ID, if we have to.

JOEY

(snorts)

Where would I get a fake ID?

Amber, the sexy-punk law clerk enters.

AMBER

What it do, ladies?

JOEY

Good.

LINDSAY

Nothing.

They look at each other and shrug.

Amber checks the mirror, applies more black eyeliner.

Lindsay gives Joey a pointed look. Joey shakes her head.

LINDSAY

Amber, you live in the dorm, right?

INT. DORM ROOM - DAY

Centerfolds taped to the walls. Colorful boxers shoved
hastily under ratty, unmade beds. This isn't Amber's room.

Precarious on a saggy bean-bag chair, Joey's way out of her
element, chatting with Amber and two boys: XIANG, an EMO
ASIAN kid and a DREADLOCK JEWSTA in a Grateful Dead skull
yarlmuke with "GARY" embroidered on it.

Xiang sucks smoke from a vaguely-phallic blown-glass bubbler.
He offers it to Joey, but she shakes her head. Amber takes a
hit and passes it to Gary.

XIANG

Then she shows this movie, right?
Of this chick reading a book and
doing herself on a lab table.

AMBER

Oh my god, it was so crazy.

JOEY

This was in a class? For credit?

GARY
Heh, same thing my mom said.
(offers her the bubbler)
Sherlock?

Joey starts to decline again... then reconsiders.

JOEY
Hate to miss a party.

She's awkward, but it turns out it's just like riding a bicycle. She takes a hit and passes it on.

JOEY
(holding her smoke)
Your bong looks like a penis.

XIANG
(giggles)
You've seen some fucked-up penises.

GARY
They didn't have Human-Sex classes
back in your day?

Joey exhales smoke and tries to ignore the ageist slur.

JOEY
Not like yours.

XIANG
It was probably all about, like,
dinosaur cocks and shit.

GARY
It's a *human* sex class, dumbass.

JOEY
Yeah. It was all about *caveman*
cocks and shit.

Dead silence for a beat, then they all bust a gut laughing.

GARY
Okay, okay... she's cool.

AMBER
So? Can she get what she came for?

JOEY
What? I thought we're waiting for
the other guy, the ID guy.

GARY
(to Amber)
For sure.

JOEY
You're kidding.

GARY
(Jewish shrug)
It's business.

SAME SCENE - LATER

Xiang sets up a background and Joey sits against it.

JOEY
I'd convinced myself it was just a
state of mind...

Amber fixes Joey's hair while the guys get the camera ready.

AMBER
Isn't it?

JOEY
Not when you gotta walk around in a
forty year-old body.

XIANG
You don't seem forty.

AMBER
Yeah, I thought you were like
twenty-nine.

JOEY
I need to get down to twenty-five.

GARY
On the ID, you mean?

JOEY
And everywhere else.

XIANG
Huh?

JOEY
I can trust you guys, right?

Joey tells all as Gary takes pictures, uploads to his Mac.

She's still talking while he photoshops her picture onto an ID and enters the date to make her 25 years old.

She wraps up her story as the ID rolls out of the laminating press. She hands Gary some cash and takes her ID.

JOEY

And I know it's not just the weed.
I was paranoid before I got here.

AMBER

Well, you can chill now. We're
gonna help you.

JOEY

That's sweet, but how?

XIANG

(into his phone, a la John
McClane)
Bibbidi-Bobbidi-Boo, motherfuckers!

JOEY PREPARES FOR THE BIG INTERVIEW MONTAGE

-- Joey's hair is restyled and Amber's giving her a makeover. She did a good job -- Joey looks a lot younger.

-- Joey fills out the grant application. Hesitates before writing "25" on the line beside "Age."

-- Xiang contemplates Joey's old Honda.

-- Joey sifts through impressive before-and-after photos of restoration projects. Slides some into a portfolio.

-- Joey Googles "How to Write a Business Plan."

-- Gary sets up an Instagram for Joey. Loads it with duck face selfies of Joey wearing Amber's clothes.

-- Joey circles answers in the "Self-Assessment" section of the grant application.

END MONTAGE

DORM ROOM

Amber gives Joey a baby carrot.

AMBER

Current season of Love Island?

JOEY

Four. And I cried when Niall left.

She frowns at the carrot then STICKS IT UP HER NOSE.

AMBER

This is gonna look so great.

Joey watches Amber come at her face with a huge safety pin.

DORM ROOM

Gary paces like a professor giving an oral exam.

GARY

How big is a floppy disk?

Joey makes a square with her fingers.

JOEY

About five by--

Xiang makes a "fail buzzer" sound.

AMBER

(raises hand)

What's a floppy disk?

XIANG

Ding-ding-ding!

Joey smacks her forehead.

GARY

I love dubstep, especially the new
Skrillex.

JOEY

(heavy scorn)

Skrillex is *not* dubstep.

Gary golf-claps. Amber and Xiang give her fist-bumps.

PARKING GARAGE

Joey's Honda is now COVERED in GIRLY GRAPHICS.

She slides behind the wheel -- a young woman in a young car.

JOEY

How can I ever thank you guys?

XIANG
Well... I'm a virgin...

Joey freezes. Xiang can't hold it in, snorts a laugh.

AMBER
Xiang, you fuckstick.

Joey laughs, relieved. Gary locks and shuts her car door.

GARY
Just be rad.

They all watch her drive away.

INT. DONOVAN CAPITAL - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Joey holds court for a dozen EXECUTIVES and two empty seats. She wiggles her nose, unused to the little diamond there.

Awkward, polite silence.

EXECUTIVE #1
Lovely weather today.

JOEY
Yes, it is. Um, totally.

More awkward silence... Then the door opens, and in walks--

MR. DONOVAN (quixotic, ancient). He smiles and pats shoulders making his careful way toward Joey.

MR. DONOVAN
(to the room)
Bill's coming. He couldn't keep up.

The executives chuckle politely, not sure if he's kidding.

EXECUTIVE #2
(as if Donovan's demented)
Mr. Donovan? This is Joey Alten.
She's one of our grant finalists.

MR. DONOVAN
Is she? I'll be damned...
(checks his iPhone)
That's what it says here, too!

Joey grins and shakes the old man's hand.

MR. DONOVAN
I've looked forward to meeting you,
young lady.

JOEY
Likewise.

MR. DONOVAN
Okay folks, set phasers to silent.

He silences his phone. Smiles at Executive #2, who seems to be having trouble doing the same.

And just when Joey starts to relax a little--

--enter BILL COLLINSWORTH: 40s and sexy in an outdoorsy way that doesn't jibe with his well-cut suit.

BILL
Didn't mean to keep you all
waiting. My call ran long.

MR. DONOVAN
Miss Alten, meet Bill Collinsworth,
our CEO.

Bill and Joey shake hands.

JOEY
It's good to meet you.

BILL
You say that now.

Joey sits, tries not to look terrified.

BILL
Jumping right in, let's talk about
your business plan.

They all refer to their copies.

Joey focuses on the proposed dream in her hands. Confidence returns and panic subsides.

BILL
The niche strategy looks solid, but
we're concerned that your growth
projections are overambitious.

JOEY
Could you be more specific?

BILL

Financials on page three. You've underestimated your overhead for the first few months. There's no margin for equipment or labor.

JOEY

Oh. Actually, those numbers should be pretty accurate.

BILL

How do you figure?

Mr. Donovan watches Joey closely, interested in her response.

JOEY

Well, I already own the power tools I'd need for most jobs.

BILL

Like what?

JOEY

I've got a couple air nailers, paint spray guns, sanders and a decent-sized air compressor.

Bill starts to talk but she's not done--

JOEY (CONT'D)

A wood planer, a table saw, a circular saw, a jigsaw...

BILL

(skeptical)

You currently own and can operate all of those things?

JOEY

Some of it was my grandfather's. We did a lot of woodworking projects when I was a kid. It was our thing.

The Executives smile, nostalgic. Bill, not so much.

BILL

And labor?

JOEY

I'll just do all the work myself, until the business grows so much I have to hire a crew.

Bill bestows an indulgent smile.

BILL

Uh-huh. And what makes you think
that's the smartest corner to cut?

Bristling at his tone, she blurts without thinking--

JOEY

Experience.

--and instantly regrets it.

Bill's surprised -- a rare occurrence. The room goes dead
quiet as everyone waits for his response.

Joey knows she just fucked this whole thing up. Nothing else
to do, but--

JOEY

Have a look.

She slides her portfolio down the table to him.

INT. LINDSAY'S TOWNHOUSE - NURSERY - DAY

Joey sets up a table saw beside a stack of 2x4s.

Lindsay leans in the doorway.

JOEY

I was *this* close to achieving
something before my birthday. But
after all that, I'm still glue.

LINDSAY

You're too hip to be glue, now.
Look at yourself.

JOEY

Those baby carrots are bigger than
you realize. Seriously.

LINDSAY

So pissed I didn't see that.

JOEY

So pissed I fucked it up. I learned
a lot though. Look.

(off phone)

Now I've got an Insta and a Finsta--
they're the same, I don't really
get it. Oh, and watch this...

She takes a Snapchat selfie with a bunny filter, adds text and shows Lindsay.

LINDSAY

"Sad bunny will work for food." I don't know whether to clap or cry.

JOEY

Maybe someone will hire me for my mad social media skills.

LINDSAY

Meh. You couldn't pay me to type on a phone. Phones are for talking.

Joey's PHONE RINGS. "Unknown Caller."

JOEY

I can do that too.
(answers phone)
Go for Joey.

Lindsay rolls her eyes at that.

INTERCUT WITH

INT. DONOVAN CAPITAL - BILL'S OFFICE - DAY

Mr. Donovan and Bill have Joey on speaker. They're confused.

BILL

Gopher what?

JOEY

(laughs, to Lindsay)
He thought I said "gopher!"
(on phone)
Sorry, there's nobody here but us squirrels.

BILL

We're trying to reach Joey Alten.
Is this the right number?

JOEY

Depends. Who's this?

BILL

Tell her it's Bill Collinsworth and Quincy Donovan.

Oh *SHIT*. Joey has to play it off--

JOEY
Okie-dokey, Smokey.
(calls)
Hey Joey! Phone!

LINDSAY
(plays along)
Who is it?

JOEY
Bill Commonwealth and Quincy Jones.

Bill clenches his jaw, losing patience. Mr. Donovan chuckles.

LINDSAY
Oh my god! Give me that!

JOEY
(puts the phone in her
other hand)
Hi, it's Joey, now. Sorry about my
roommate...

BILL
(seething)
No problem.

MR. DONOVAN
Miss Alten, we've been reviewing
your application materials and have
some concerns.

JOEY
Oh. What sort of concerns?

BILL
We'd like to discuss it in person.

Joey makes eye contact with Lindsay, mimes a throat slit.

INT. DONOVAN CAPITAL - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Joey's dressed steampunk-professional, courtesy of Amber's closet. Tries to gauge how much trouble she's in.

BILL
It's obvious you came from outside
the usual pool of grant applicants.

JOEY
I know and I'm sorry--

MR. DONOVAN

We were quite impressed with your ingenuity and grassroots approach to building your business.

Joey's surprised, covers--

JOEY

I'm... sorry I didn't apply sooner. Thank you.

MR. DONOVAN

However, while you are our clear choice to receive the grant, it is not without reservations.

JOEY

Oh.

BILL

The results of your self-assessment were incongruous with what we liked about you. Specifically, your risk-aversion score was almost twice the average for people your age.

JOEY

That seems like a good thing. Isn't risk-aversion just common sense?

BILL

Not for you. A score this high points to someone who lives on the sidelines, waiting for an engraved invitation to join the game.

(lets that sink in, then)

And when you do play, you play it safe without considering the opportunity cost.

(off her blank look)

What it ultimately costs you *not* to take the greater risk.

JOEY

Okay...

BILL

In other words, you settle. And the Donovan Foundation doesn't award grants to people who settle.

JOEY

I understand.

She puts on a brave face and stands up to leave.

MR. DONOVAN
Which is why Bill has agreed to
work with you one-on-one until your
new venture is up and running.

Bill nods and Joey's jaw drops.

JOEY
Wait. What?

Mr. Donovan beams -- he lives for this moment each year.

MR. DONOVAN
Congratulations, Joey.

JOEY
Thank you. I'm... wow.

Joey shakes both men's hands.

BILL
Good. We're expecting "wow."

INT./EXT. LINDSAY'S TOWNHOUSE - LATER - DAY

Lindsay opens the door before Joey even knocks. Hugs her.

LINDSAY
You did it!

JOEY
But I've gotta stay like this 'til
I book my first job!

LINDSAY
Okay, at least you're not glue.

JOEY
I'm still fucked. I was only
prepared to be twenty-five for an
hour. What do I do now?

LINDSAY
You go deep.

INT./EXT. LIMO - NIGHT

POP! Champagne erupts from a bottle.

Joey went flirty with her make-up and she's showing some skin for a change. With breathless excitement and the twinkle in her eye, she's vibing 25.

NOAH

To Joey!

Everyone CHEERS. Noah pours for Joey, Vanessa and the rest of the Young Pros gang.

EXT. HOTTEST CLUB IN TOWN - LATER - NIGHT

Vanessa leads Joey past the line of PEOPLE WAITING. She kisses the BOUNCER'S cheek and introduces him to Joey.

INT. HOTTEST CLUB IN TOWN - LATER - NIGHT

Wall-to-wall BEAUTIFUL PEOPLE. A GIRL IN A MINISKIRT sails overhead on a rope swing, giving everyone a show.

Half-naked GUYS AND GIRLS dance in cages -- including LUCIEN, an exotically-handsome, washboard-abbed dwarf.

ANGLE ON

Joey and Vanessa on the dance floor. Vanessa moves like the world's most graceful pole dancer. She's kinda mesmerizing. Joey just sort of sways in place -- she's got neither the prowess nor the lack of inhibition to keep up with Vanessa.

Vanessa dances closer until their bodies touch. Joey keeps her game face 'til Vanessa skims her hands down Joey's arms and up the sides of her boobs.

Joey takes a startled step back, but Vanessa stays with her.

JOEY

Um, that's really not my thing...

Vanessa presses close and murmurs against Joey's ear--

VANESSA

Mine, either. But it's theirs.

Joey looks up to see--

Noah and his Young Pro buddies enjoying the show... along with every other guy here. Some cheer, some comment to their friends, a few thank the lord in their own silent way.

Feeling like a juicy steak in a lion's den is a hot rush--

JOEY

Oh...

VANESSA

Straight guys love dance-floor
lesbians. They don't even care if
we really eat pussy, they just like
to think we do.

JOEY

You are a very smart girl.

VANESSA

Duh, I've got an MBA.

Joey gets into it, dancing and showing off, allowing herself
to enjoy 25 in a way she never could when she was 25.

SEXY DRUNKENNESS MONTAGE

--Joey and the gang holler something incomprehensible and
swallow colorful shots.

--Joey dances in a cage.

--Noah licks salt off Joey's neck, downs a tequila shot and
sucks a lime out of Joey's mouth.

--Noah and Vanessa wave up at Joey, SWINGING OVERHEAD.

--Joey licks salt off Lucien-the-sexy-dwarf's killer abs.

END MONTAGE.

INT./EXT. LIMO - LATER - NIGHT

VANESSA

Where to now?

NOAH

Joey, it's your night. Wanna stick
a fork in it or keep going?

Joey's half-asleep on Lucien's shoulder. She slurs--

JOEY

No fork! The night is young and so
am I. My peepers are tired, though.
Just gonna rest 'em a minute...

SMASH CUT

Joey's eyes snap open. She struggles to sit up, holding the pieces of her skull together.

INT. JOEY'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - MORNING

Joey pulls herself up and looks in the mirror -- a hungover train wreck in last night's clothes and runny makeup.

JOEY

Oh no... I'm Keith Richards. Ow...

She digs out the unopened jars and tubes of face creams Sylvia's given her all these years. Scans the labels and sniffs a few, clueless. Desperate, she dials the phone--

JOEY

Hi, it's me. I need your help.

INT. BOTOX CLINIC - DAY

Joey's in the hot seat, trying not to look at the tray of needles hovering near her face.

Sylvia leans over her, filling her vision. Points--

SYLVIA

I'm thinking frown lines here and here... the laugh lines have to go.

The BOTOX TECH nods.

JOEY

Not too much. I wanna look natural.

Sylvia and the Botox Tech laugh.

BOTOX TECH

To start, I'm going to rub a numbing agent into your skin...
(digs in cabinets)
...if I can find it...

Sylvia gets back in Joey's face.

SYLVIA

Honey, I am so proud of you.

JOEY

I'm still not sure, but I had to do something before it was too late. I can't believe how much time I've wasted...

SYLVIA
Well, you're making up for it now.

JOEY
You really think I'll pass for
twenty-five?

SYLVIA
Eh, thirtyish.

JOEY
(like a whiny child)
MOM!

SYLVIA
Relax. Plenty of men go for thirty
year-old women.

JOEY
I'm talking about the grant!

SYLVIA
Right, I forgot about that.

JOEY
Jesus. I wouldn't subject myself to
this for a man.

Botox Tech opens a drawer.

BOTOX TECH
Aye! There's the rub!

EXT. INDUSTRIAL OFFICE PARK - DAY

Joey and Bill exit an "Office for Rent" and wave goodbye to
the LEASING AGENT. Joey's disappointed. Bill's exasperated.

JOEY
Sorry you wasted your day on this.

BILL
It's not a waste. I said I'd mentor
you and I'm sure this ties into
your risk-aversion issues somehow.

JOEY
M'kay.

INT./EXT. BILL'S RANGE ROVER - DRIVING - MOMENTS LATER - DAY

BILL

I don't read minds and probably
wouldn't bother even if I could.
So what was wrong with that one?
Right square footage, right price.

JOEY

Nothing. It's the same as the
others.

BILL

You hesitant about signing a lease?

JOEY

No.

BILL

'Cause this is the time of your
life to take chances. Tee it up for
when you're my age.

JOEY

(ouch)

Yeah, totally. I just hate those
metal buildings. I wanna see what
else is out there.

She stares out the window, watches the world go by--

- A sidewalk cafe, where CAREER WOMEN drink wine with lunch
and TOAST THEIR SUCCESS.

- A playground, where HAPPY MOTHERS enjoy every moment with
their PERFECT CHILDREN.

- AN ABSURDLY-SEXY MAN wearing a BABY in a chest carrier
takes his LABRADOODLE for a walk.

- A construction site where a FEMALE GENERAL CONTRACTOR looks
over blueprints with SUBCONTRACTORS.

Joey makes an ANGRY NOISE.

BILL

What was that?

JOEY

(bitter)

You're right. I've settled. A lot.
I played it safe and got scared off
too easily.

(MORE)

JOEY (cont'd)
And I'm not gonna do that anymore.
And I'm not gonna look at any more
ugly work spaces.

She finds a page of office rentals, many of which have been crossed out. She violently crosses off another one.

Bill stares at her a beat.

BILL
Good.

He takes the list from Joey, crumples it into a ball and tosses it over his shoulder into the backseat.

BILL (CONT'D)
We'll try again when you have a
better idea what you want.

Bill turns down a narrow road.

JOEY
Okay... Where are we going?

BILL
House I picked up in foreclosure.
Long as we're out this way, figured
I'd get your opinion.

JOEY
(flattered)
Great.

BILL
It's a dilapidated piece of shit.

JOEY
What was the attraction?

BILL
Location. Enough room for a six-car
garage. And it's on a lake. I've
been keeping my boat there.

He shrugs it off, but he really loves that lake.

JOEY
Sounds nice.

BILL
Was gonna level it and rebuild, but
if the house is livable it might
make more sense to flip it.

He stops the car in front of--

AN OLD HOUSE

Probably quaint and gingerbreadish 100 years ago, it's now a dilapidated piece of shit.

INT. OLD HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER - DAY

Heinous decor made worse by years of neglect. Joey examines millwork and plaster with a professional eye.

Bill opens shutters to let some light in. *One falls off.*

BILL

Like I said. It's a piece of--

JOEY

Sh... No, it isn't.

BILL

Did you just *shush* me?

Joey ignores that. Wanders around, loving what she sees.

JOEY

(murmurs)

You sure were a beauty, weren't you little house?

BILL

Don't know what the hell you're looking at...

Joey grins at him, lit up with passion for her craft.

JOEY

See that crown molding?

BILL

What about it?

JOEY

Look at the profile. Very rare. And did you notice the floors?

BILL

Yeah, they're a mess.

JOEY

They're antique maple. You can't buy new wood like that.

BILL

Says who?

JOEY

Patina like this takes time. That glow you see deep in the grain? It comes from age and wear.

BILL

Huh.

Joey smiles, proud to have earned his respect.

BILL (CONT'D)

Glad I brought you by here. I'll be sure to rip the floors out first.

JOEY

Wait-what?

BILL

And the molding. To sell, before I level the place.

JOEY

No. Let me restore it. I won't even charge you labor--

(has an idea)

Better yet, rent it to me. I'll move in and fix it up and there's plenty of room for my work space--

BILL

Nah, I've got plans for the land.

JOEY

What, a garage? You can build your mid-life toy-box anywhere!

Bill's impressed, despite himself.

BILL

You've got a lot of balls for a young woman.

JOEY

They're big on my dad's side.

SAME SCENE - WEEKS LATER

Joey's on a ladder, phone in one hand, paint brush in the other. Paint splattered on her Forever 21 tank top.

Bill enters, looks around. Blinks at Joey's DAISY DUKES.

JOEY
(on phone)
Nuh-uh, I'm sticking with Plan A.
You can't have a Gothic nursery
without flying buttresses.

A beat of lingering eye contact.

JOEY
Listen, I've gotta go, but we've
got plenty of time. Promise.

She pockets her phone, climbs down the ladder.

BILL
The hell's a flying buttress? Never
mind. I don't wanna know.

He accidentally notices the paint on her tiny shirt.

JOEY
How's it look?

Bill looks at anything that isn't Joey.

BILL (CONT'D)
Nice. Good. It's coming along.
(then)
I have a client who bought an old
church in a downtown revitalization
area. Needs a lot of work, so I
recommended you.

JOEY
(wistful)
Wow, thanks. I'd love to take on a
project like that.

BILL
But?

JOEY
But nothing. It'll be good practice
writing a proposal for a job that
size.

BILL
Just the proposal?

JOEY
Well, yeah. They won't hire me.

BILL
Why's that?

JOEY
I've only done residential.

Bill shakes his head.

JOEY
And I'm not established.

Bill gives her a flat look.

JOEY (CONT'D)
I need to build a reputation on
smaller jobs first.

BILL
You really gonna let this
opportunity scare you off?

Joey makes a face.

BILL (CONT'D)
Great. I'll set up a meeting. Don't
forget your balls.

Joey watches him exit. *Those jeans look good on him...*

JOEY
Thanks. Nice "dad" jeans.

JUST OUTSIDE THE DOOR

Bill pats his pockets and looks himself over, trying to
figure out what's wrong with his jeans.

INT. DONOVAN CAPITAL - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Bill and Mr. Donovan look on as Joey confers with an INTERNET
WHIZ-KID MILLIONAIRE. As usual when immersed in her craft,
Joey is passionate and confident. She refers to a sketch--

JOEY
Then to make the most use of the
open area in the middle, we can
build some partitions...

WHIZ-KID
Nah, I'm just gonna throw in a
bunch of cubes.

JOEY
You don't wanna do that.

WHIZ-KID
I don't?

JOEY
Unless you're going for that
"generic office park" vibe.

WHIZ-KID
Hell, no.

JOEY
It'd be cooler to fabricate half-
walls to match the architecture.

WHIZ-KID
Huh. Yeah, I can dig that... Yeah.

He watches her add to the sketch. Nods, enthusiastic.

JOEY
Okay, what else are you thinking?

WHIZ-KID
That I want you to start next week.

Bill gives Joey a tight "told you so" smile.

JOEY
Oh. Yeah? I'd love to. But just to
be clear, I'm not an architect, so--

BILL
Next week is perfect. *Right, Joey?*

JOEY
Yep. That'll work.

Mr. Donovan watches like it's the Finals at Wimbledon.

BILL
Fantastic. Next week it is.

He stands and everyone else does the same, as intended.

WHIZ-KID
This is gonna be so awesome.

JOEY
Totally.

She returns Whiz-Kid's fist bump like a pro. Bill and Mr. Donovan... not so much.

Soon as Whiz-Kid's gone, Joey flops into her chair.

MR. DONOVAN
That was... interesting.

JOEY
Really.

BILL
(ready to strangle her)
You know what else is really interesting? I took a risk and bet on you. Quincy here anted up, and the Whiz-Kid just raised. The only one not betting on you is you! So why is that? I thought you had your father's balls.

Awkward moment, then Joey mutters--

JOEY
Not *literally*.

Bill facepalms. Nods to Mr. Donovan and is gone.

Joey blinks at the empty doorway, chuckles to Mr. Donovan.

JOEY
He takes cranky to a whole 'nother level sometimes.

MR. DONOVAN
Do you have to rush off?

EXT. DONOVAN BANK BUILDING - ESTABLISHING - DAY

Majestic, historic and in disrepair.

MR. DONOVAN (V.O.)
My family, my Board, they all want me to level it.

INT. DONOVAN BANK BUILDING - LATER - DAY

Despite broken bricks, boarded windows and crumbling plaster, it really is magnificent. Joey's in love.

JOEY

I don't blame you for wanting to restore it. It needs a lot of work but it's a beautiful structure.

MR. DONOVAN

I didn't make the Forbes list by shying away from a lot of work.

JOEY

Have you owned it a long time?

MR. DONOVAN

Not really. Just since the bank was chartered in 1915.

(winks)

Time is relative, my dear.

JOEY

Good point.

MR. DONOVAN

We sold the bank some years back to one of the nationals that gobbled everyone else up then rolled over and died. Held onto this building in the deal. My grandson was paid a generous salary to maintain it...

He brushes dust off some marble trim. It falls off. Joey catches it before it hits the floor.

MR. DONOVAN (CONT'D)

Spoiled little shit.

JOEY

Well, I don't think you'll have to have it condemned. This can all be restored or replaced.

MR. DONOVAN

I'm relieved to hear that. I've always wanted to fix it up and move the foundation offices here.

JOEY

You should!

MR. DONOVAN

My family thinks I'm crazy.

JOEY

Why?

MR. DONOVAN

They say I spend too much money and time on a write-off. But the foundation is more than that. It was my dream, even as a young man.

JOEY

I dream of buildings like this...

She traces the scrollwork in a tarnished brass railing.

MR. DONOVAN

Joey.

JOEY

Hm?

MR. DONOVAN

I own the place. Ask.

Joey's perplexed.

JOEY

Mr. Donovan... this is a *huge* project. I don't even have a crew.

His response is a disappointed sigh.

JOEY (CONT'D)

I'd love to restore this building. You have no idea how much, but you can't hire me -- your family would have you declared incompetent!

He gives her a sad smile and moves slowly toward the exit.

Joey takes one last look around, reluctant to leave.

JOEY (CONT'D)

Sounds like a lot of people in your life are seriously lacking vision. This place could be beautiful again. Better than new, even.

Mr. Donovan turns to her.

MR. DONOVAN

You don't know how long I've waited for someone else to see that.

He continues walking. Joey catches up--

JOEY

Fine! Here I go. I'm asking: Mr. Donovan, may I please submit a bid on this project?

Mr. Donovan smiles, proud of her.

MR. DONOVAN

We'll see.

The little pat he gives her shoulder is a challenge.

Joey grins. Finds her phone and texts Noah:

JOEY - TEXT

Need cheap construction crew!! Know anyone??

JOEY

Wait up!

She jogs after him.

INT. OLD HOUSE - JOEY'S OFFICE - LATER - DAY

Joey types a materials list for Whiz-Kidz.

An EMAIL ALERT pops up from CHS CLASS OF '96. She opens it--

*Congrats to Class of '96
Homecoming Queen Alexa Zotti-Moss
on the birth of baby #3...*

JOEY

(to self)

Alexa "You Can't Sit With Us"
Zotti, you've been popping 'em out.

She enlarges the PHOTO: Frazzled Mom with overworked hair, an ugly-baby and two angry toddlers who look like their father.

Her phone BUZZES.

NOAH - TEXT

I got ur crew.

JOEY - TEXT

Yeah?

NOAH - TEXT

*Roomies in grad school need pt
work. RU on site tmrw?*

EXT. WHIZ-KIDZ - ESTABLISHING - DAY

Boarded-up old church.

INT. WHIZ-KIDZ - DAY

Joey inventories materials against her list. From her pigtails to her wife-beater tank to her holey old jeans, she looks every inch the sexy 25 year old she's pretending to be.

NOAH (O.S.)
Someone order a construction crew?

JOEY
I'm in here!

Noah enters, followed by a bunch of HUNKY BEEFCAKES.

JOEY
How many roommates do you have?

NOAH
Just these two, Ethan and Connor.
The rest are grad school buddies.

JOEY
Oh. Hi. Hello...

The Hunks nod, murmur greetings and check Joey out -- some discreetly, most not.

CONNOR
Hey, Noah, I thought you said this was gonna be work.

The other guys laugh.

NOAH
(elbows him)
Dude.

Joey eyes Connor as thoroughly as he did her.

JOEY
You work out a lot, huh?

CONNOR
Yeah. Can you use me?

ETHAN
He's getting his Masters in Subtlety.

Joey indicates a pile of bags. Bats eyelashes at Connor--

JOEY

Would you mind moving this plaster
into the back room? I can only
carry one at a time and it took
hours to get them this far...

CONNOR

No problem.

Ethan moves to help, but Connor waves him off.

Connor wraps his arms around three of the bags and nearly
ruptures something trying to lift them.

Noah snickers. Joey smiles sweetly.

Connor adjusts his grip to only two bags. He hoists them up,
staggers a couple steps then drops them again.

ETHAN

Heh. Jackass.

JOEY

That was fun. Now, lets actually
move the bags, okay?

Connor laughs, good-natured about being shown up.

SERIES OF SHOTS

The Hunks bucket brigade the bags out the door.

Joey demonstrates the use of a miter saw to cut molding.
She's pretty impressive with a power tool.

One of the Hunks enjoys the view from a ladder down Joey's
shirt. She notices when Noah throws a wet sponge at his head.

Connor and Ethan install a ceiling medallion. *Not bad...*

Joey and Noah chat and laugh while plastering a wall.

INT. OLD HOUSE - JOEY'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Joey works on a painting, something reminiscent of Whiz-Kidz
church building. She's also halfway through a bottle of wine.

Her phone BUZZES.

NOAH - TEXT
Well??? Did you do it??

JOEY - TEXT
Yes!!

Her phone PINGS a FACETIME REQUEST. She laughs, answers.

INTERCUT WITH

INT. NOAH'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

NOAH
 Well? Let's see it.

JOEY
 (snorts)
 It's not really in a "public" area.

NOAH
 Oh c'mon... I'll show you mine if
 you show me yours...

Wine-buzz + newfangled confidence = Joey's easily swayed.

JOEY
 Okay, fine.

Tugs her top down a few inches to reveal a KANJI SYMBOL
 TATTOO just inside her bra.

NOAH
 Nice.

JOEY
 Your turn.

NOAH
 All right...

He shows her a tiny FRAT TAT on his ankle.

JOEY
 That's it? I've gotta be honest,
 that does not meet or exceed my
 expectations.

NOAH
 It's the only one I have!

JOEY
 You catfished me.

NOAH
 (laughs)
 I'm sorry. I'll even things up...

He pulls off his shirt. We are *not* disappointed. Joey pours more wine and pretends to yawn.

JOEY
 Meh.

NOAH
 (wicked grin)
 You want the pants, too?

JOEY
 (ya, right)
 Sure, go for it.

NOAH
 Just restoring balance...

He tips the camera toward his lap for a second and JOEY GETS AN EYEFUL. She chokes on her wine and squeaks--

JOEY
 That did *not* restore balance!
 Balance is *not* restored!

Noah's laughing his ass off.

JOEY (CONT'D)
 God! Where do you even buy pants?!

INT. MEDICAL BUILDING - BIRTH CLASS - NIGHT

Joey, Lindsay and a DOZEN PREGNANT WOMEN AND THEIR PARTNERS breathe rhythmically while balancing on birthing balls.

JOEY
 They're much more open with their bodies than I was at that age.

LINDSAY
 And you didn't get a screenshot.

A DORKY HUSBAND sitting on a ball eavesdrops.

JOEY
 Sorry! I was caught off-guard.

LINDSAY

Some best friend. If you loved me,
you'd fuck and suck this boy 'til
his cock cried uncle, then report
back to me with every juicy detail.
And maybe a photo collage.

WHOMP! *Dorky Husband falls off his ball.*

EXT. WHIZ-KIDZ - DAY

Joey and Bill bicker on the sidewalk. Connor and Ethan scrape
off old paint and pretend not to listen.

JOEY

I'm working within a budget. Is
that such a radical concept?

BILL

Hiring guys from the Delta house to
crew your first and maybe last job?
Yeah, that's radical in my book.

JOEY

Better than risk-aversion.

BILL

How 'bout negligence?

That pisses her off.

JOEY

If I called you an ass, would I be
out of line?

BILL

More like *next* in line.

JOEY

With all due respect, this isn't
your field, so I'm gonna get back
to work before I negligently stab
you in the neck with a screwdriver.

Bill absently rubs his neck, watches her disappear inside.

CONNOR

Don't do it, man.

That jolts Bill for a sec. Then he follows her in.

INT. WHIZ-KIDZ - CONTINUOUS - DAY

Bill passes busy Hunks working their tight buns off.

HUNK #1
You looking for Joey?

BILL
She go this way?

HUNK #2
If you're the one who put her in
this mood, you probably wanna go
back out the way you came.

BILL
Oh, gimme a friggin--

JOEY
Can you not bother my crew?

She's cute in her pigtails and tiny next to the Hunks... but
imposing, nonetheless.

BILL
I want to finish our discussion.

JOEY
Bullshit. You wanna see if I'm
screwing up.

BILL
You caught me.

JOEY
Well look around. Am I?

Arms crossed, she leans a hip against the wall and waits for
Bill to squirm. Instead, he smirks.

BILL
You're leaning in wet paint, there.

Joey jumps away from the wall.

JOEY
God dammit!

BILL
But aside from that, no.

JOEY
No what?

BILL
You're not screwing up.

JOEY
I know!

She walks away, exasperated.

BILL
You didn't win that hand. I bet on
you, remember?

He and the Hunks watch her stomp off.

HUNK #1
If I didn't have a girlfriend...

HUNK #2
Yeah, same.

BILL
(scowls at them)
She'd kick your asses just for
thinking about it.

HUNK #1
Like you aren't.

BILL
Of course not, she's half my age.

Annoyed, he stalks back out the way he came.

INT. LINDSAY'S TOWNHOUSE - NURSERY - NIGHT

Nothing new here. The ceiling still yawns dark and ugly and
dusty chaos reigns supreme.

Lindsay sits on the pile of lumber, cranky and uncomfortable.

Joey frowns at complicated plans for the buttressed ceiling.

JOEY
This might be a little harder than
I thought...

LINDSAY
You're shitting me.

JOEY
I just need a few of my guys, but I
can't pull them off the job, yet.

Lindsay's phone BLEEPs.

JOEY
(exaggerated shock)
Is that a text?!

Lindsay deletes the text message without looking at it.

LINDSAY
It was. If you don't wanna talk to me, don't bother me. Everybody knows that, but the damn thing still bleeps all the fucking time.

JOEY
Hormonal much?

LINDSAY
Just a little frustrated 'cause, y'know, I could give birth any fucking minute and my kid has nowhere to sleep and all his shit's stashed in my closet 'til I can have his furniture delivered.

JOEY
Sorry, Linds. I didn't realize. I've got space if you wanna bring it over.

LINDSAY
(about to blow)
No! I just want it done already. Can you try to finish this weekend?

Joey hesitates, embarrassed.

JOEY
I'm co-hosting a bikini car wash for charity. I'd blow it off if I could, but I already committed...
(off Lindsay's look)
I know I committed to you too, but--

LINDSAY
Different levels of commitment. And a middle-aged lady wearing a bikini in public... well, that's pretty fucking committed!

Joey sucks in a breath.

LINDSAY (CONT'D)

I know the other job has to come first and I'm happy for you. I am. This was a cool idea and a generous gift, but it's not working out. All I want right now is to fold a bunch of little clothes and put them in little drawers and sit here in a rocker I don't have yet and look forward to finally meeting this little person!

Joey hugs her.

JOEY

Right after the car wash, I'll come fix the ceiling and get the rest of this shit cleaned up, okay?

Lindsay nods.

JOEY

Can I still be your birth partner, even if I'm a clueless idiot?

LINDSAY

Yeah. You fit in great with the rest of the dads.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

Discordant CAR HORNS and WOLF WHISTLES.

Vanessa dances on the sidewalk in a micro-bikini and stiletto pumps, holding a "CAR WASH!" sign overhead. Cars dutifully pull in to be washed, whether they need it or not.

With a T-shirt over her bikini, Joey collects money from the cars in line. She cranks the MUSIC and stuffs cash in a box.

MALE DRIVERS happily remain in their cars as GIRLS IN BIKINIS soap 'em up and hose 'em down.

Vanessa jogs over to Joey--

VANESSA

Trade places for a while? My arms are killing me.

JOEY

I'm way too sober for that. Hang on, I'll grab somebody...

Vanessa takes the box and cranks the music even louder.
Drivers waiting in line crane their necks for a better view.

Joey taps a SOAPY GIRL, one of Noah's gang, and points--

JOEY
Hey! Can you...?

Soapy Girl shoves her sponge in Joey's hands.

SOAPY GIRL
Thank you! I've had to pee for like
an hour!

And she's gone.

Vanessa yells across the lot--

VANESSA
Joey! Hurry!

The line of cars is dwindling. All the other girls are busy.

JOEY
Oh, come on.

With no other choice, she heads back toward Vanessa, grabs
the sign and takes her place on the--

SIDEWALK

Joey holds the "CAR WASH" sign high, T-shirt rippling in the
breeze. Cars stream past, but none turn in to be washed.

JOEY
IT'S FOR CHARITY, PEOPLE!

IN THE PARKING LOT

A few of the girls stand around in their bikinis and soap
suds, waiting for cars to wash.

BACK ON THE SIDEWALK

JOEY
Jesus. Fine.

She drops the sign and yanks her shirt over her head. Checks
that the scraps of her bikini are covering what little
they're supposed to...

...and before she can even pick up the sign again, a car pulls into the lot.

JOEY

Cool.

A COUPLE OF CUTE COLLEGE GUYS in a topless Jeep slow down.

CUTE COLLEGE GUY #1

I'd pay to see you wash my car.

JOEY

I'm on sidewalk duty, but my girls give really great sponge.

CUTE COLLEGE GUY #2

I bet you do, too...

JOEY

(blushes and laughs)

You guys in or out?

CUTE COLLEGE GUY #1

We're in, but we're settling.

He winks and they pull into the lot.

Joey grins and holds up the sign. Sways her hips a little.

JOEY

(to self)

All right, I can do this.

Then another car pulls in. And another...

SMASH CUT TO:

SAME SCENE - LATER

Sign held high, Joey dances around and sings to herself--

JOEY

*Car wash... workin' at the car wash
yeah. Car wash... I dunno the words
to this song... car wash, yeah.*

The line of cars is out to the road and the lot is packed with cars getting washed and rinsed. Shiny vehicles HONK at Joey as they drive away.

Disregarding society's code of conduct for women her age, Joey's having fun and rockin' that bikini like a 25 year-old.

Another car gets in line, slowing traffic. Behind it, a RANGE ROVER inches along...

Joey stops dancing when she spots BILL watching her over his steering wheel. She waits for his eyes to meander their way up and meet hers. A *charged moment* -- then he swerves around the line of cars and drives off.

PARKING LOT - LATER

Joey and Vanessa pack signs and supplies in their car trunks. Joey's got her shirt back on but Vanessa's still baring all.

GUYs pumping gas across the lot stare. A couple HORNS HONK.

VANESSA

Of course he stared. You looked totally hot out there.

JOEY

Dunno. He seemed... angry.

VANESSA

Weird.

JOEY

Probably thought I was being unprofessional. He's always giving me crap about stuff like that.

Vanessa makes a rude noise.

VANESSA

Hot older guys should not be as uptight as the fuglies.

JOEY

Who said he's hot?

VANESSA

I met him. He's hot.
(closes her trunk)
C'mon, I'll drive.

JOEY

I can't, I'm behind on a side job.

VANESSA

Just come for an hour.

INT. DIVE BAR - LATER... WAY LATER - NIGHT

Joey's sauced -- she's been keeping up with Vanessa, Noah and the GANG. One guy SUCKS A CIGARETTE like the MARLBORO MAN.

Joey squints at her phone: two MISSED CALLS from Lindsay.

And a text:

WHIZ-KID - TEXT

DdU gt my Emsg? Wadya tnk?

JOEY

You guys got any bars? I gotta check email and this piece of shit won't let me connect.

NOAH

Will it let you Facetime?

JOEY

Not with you, you... *tripod!*

Everyone laughs -- apparently the story got around.

VANESSA

Here girl, use mine.

She hands Joey a CUTTING-EDGE iGADGET.

JOEY

This thing's cool...

She LOGS IN. Skims the EMAIL from Whiz-Kid. Half-listens to--

VANESSA

Not as cool as winning the grant,
but it's all right.

MARLBORO MAN

Nice little prize for runner-up. I came in third and got *diiiiiiiick*.

Joey catches that. Hands the iGADGET back to Vanessa.

JOEY

You went out for the grant, too?

VANESSA

A few times.
(shows off the iGadget)
Never placed Second before, though!

Fuck. Joey realizes she stole the grant from Vanessa.

JOEY
(to Marlboro Man)
Can I bum one off you?

MARLBORO MAN
(passes it to Joey)
It's a vape, but...

Joey takes the VAPE pen. Hits it like a film noir femme fatale, only really, really awkward.

NOAH
(to Marlboro Man)
What's up with your prototype? Did you get the money from your pops?

MARLBORO MAN
Nah. He was a prick about it, so I'm getting a loan. Had to fudge a couple dates but they approved it.

NOAH
Uh... Isn't that a felony?

At that, Joey HITS THE VAPE TOO HARD. COUGHS violently.

MARLBORO MAN
Shit. Is it?

VANESSA
Yeah, it's fraud. Don't take that money. You can get five years if they find out you lied.

Joey SNEEZES OUT HER NOSE DIAMOND. Everyone watches it bounce off the table and CLING to the METAL NAPKIN DISPENSER.

Marlboro Man slides the napkin dispenser to Joey.

MARLBORO MAN
Gesundheit.

Joey retrieves the MAGNETIC STUD and sticks it in her purse.

JOEY
Thanks.

INT. DONOVAN CAPITAL - BILL'S OFFICE - DAY

Joey knocks on the open door. Bill hardly glances at her.

BILL
Did we have an appointment?

JOEY

I just wanted to talk to you about something. And to apologize.

BILL

For what?

JOEY

When I saw you-- when you saw me yesterday? That wasn't me.

BILL

Looked like you.

JOEY

Of course, but--

BILL

I've seen women in bikinis before and my ticker still handles it fine. Is that all?

JOEY

That's the thing. I never wear bikinis -- especially not at major intersections -- because I'm--

BILL

You're not typical of girls your age, got it. Listen, I don't have time for whatever this is.

JOEY

Sorry. I'll be quick--

BILL

Joey. I'm busy. Go... play. Leave the gravity for geezers like me.

Joey hesitates.

JOEY

Speaking of gravity--

BILL

G'bye.

EXT. MEDICAL BUILDING - NIGHT

Establishing.

INT. MEDICAL BUILDING - BIRTH CLASS - NIGHT

Joey and Lindsay and the other pregnant couples struggle to diaper baby dolls. Joey tries to modulate her freak-out.

JOEY

I'm sorry I keep flaking, and I'm sorry if it sounds like I'm blaming you, but *you should've told me*.

LINDSAY

You always knew it was wrong. Why flip out about it now?

JOEY

I didn't know it was a felony!

LINDSAY

If I'd told you, you wouldn't have done it, would you?

JOEY

Of course not.

LINDSAY

And you've been happy, right?

JOEY

I was. Now I just want out. I tried to tell Bill--

LINDSAY

Are you on crack?!

JOEY (CONT'D)

--but he was in a pissy mood.

LINDSAY

Good. 'Cause all that would do now is fuck you in the ass.

JOEY

But Vanessa--

LINDSAY

--will be fine. She's still young.

...and you're not. Joey chews on that a moment.

JOEY

I feel like karmic pigeons have been shitting on my head, ever since I showed Noah my Kanji--

LINDSAY
You WHAT?!

Joey flashes her tattoo.

LINDSAY (CONT'D)
Right. What does that even mean?

JOEY
Vanity.

LINDSAY
For real?

JOEY
No. This vanity... it's like a
genetic disease. All these years
it's been dormant, now suddenly
I've got a terminal case.

The average, middle-aged BIRTH INSTRUCTOR announces--

BIRTH INSTRUCTOR
Okay, now switch partners.

Joey pulls the diaper off the doll and passes it to Lindsay.

JOEY
I see middle-aged women, with their
middle-aged skin and bodies. And
that's natural and I shouldn't care
that that's gonna be me soon, but I
am *freaking the fuck out*.
(wipes tears, disgusted)
I hate myself for even thinking
these things.

LINDSAY
Don't worry. I'll stake you if you
start turning into Sylvia.
(off the doll)
I got this. Go mop up.

INT. MEDICAL CENTER HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER - NIGHT

Joey exits the ladies room, wiping her eyes. Runs smack into
a hard body. Noah steadies her.

NOAH
There you are.

JOEY
Noah? How'd you find me?

NOAH
Snapchat. That okay?

Joey leads him down the hall to an

EMPTY WAITING AREA.

JOEY
Actually, I'm helping a friend with
a project, but I can hang a minute.

NOAH
Good, 'cause I think I figured
something out, and I needed to talk
to you about it.

SHIT. Joey knows she's busted... She coughs a nervous laugh--

JOEY
Yes, I chickened out on the nose
ring. But my tat's real, I swear!

NOAH
I know it is -- I stared at it long
enough. I kept a screen shot.
(then)
Um, it's not as pervy as it sounds.

JOEY
It isn't?

NOAH
Sort of goes with the territory --
I've got a pretty mad crush on you.

JOEY
Oh...

NOAH
That was weird, wasn't it? I just
wondered... Don't be upset, it's
cool if you don't feel the same.

JOEY
(emotional)
It's just been a rough couple days.

Noah hugs her and she melts against him.

NOAH
It's all right to lose it a little,
you've been working so hard.

JOEY

Yeah...

Noah nuzzles her hair... her neck... her face. And when he kisses her, she kisses him back.

NOAH

That's why your dreams are coming
true -- 'cause you *earned* them.

He goes to kiss her again, but Joey pulls away.

JOEY

I should get back there.

Noah nods, gives her another quick kiss and a dimpled smile.

NOAH

'Night kiddo.

Joey watches him go.

BACK IN BIRTH CLASS

Joey returns as everyone's doing a stretching exercise.

LINDSAY

You okay?

JOEY

Yeah. Don't know why I'm so
emotional lately.

LINDSAY

(snorts)

Maybe you're pregnant.

JOEY

That's not funny.
(points to Lindsay's boob)
Uh, lefty's leaking.

LINDSAY

Jesus. Why is this even a thing?

INT. WHIZ-KID'S OFFICE - DAY

Nearly finished, now.

Noah arrives in office clothes, rolling his sleeves to pitch
in. Jokes with some of the beefy crew en route to Joey.

Joey measures the distance between half-wall partitions.

JOEY

Fuck!

She THROWS THE TAPE MEASURE, punching a hole in another wall.

The guys all shut up and get back to work.

NOAH

Hey-hey, what's wrong?

JOEY

This wall's off by six inches.

NOAH

Who did it? I'll break his arm.

Joey offers her own arm.

JOEY

I was hung over, screwed up the measurements.

Noah takes her arm, puts it around his waist.

JOEY (CONT'D)

I've got no time for do-overs.

NOAH

Relax. You don't have to get all uptight and "grown-up" over this.

JOEY

Pardon?

NOAH

It's just a deadline. Nobody expects you to be done by then.

JOEY

I didn't know it was like that.

She lets that alternate reality sink in.

NOAH

Good girl... That's better. Think you were scaring the guys.

He rubs her shoulders and Joey pulls away.

JOEY

Noah, I can't do this now.

NOAH
Of course not. Especially not here.

JOEY
I mean, I can't do *this* -- you and me -- now.

NOAH
Yeah, no. This is your opportunity. You gotta stay focused. I get that.

Joey nods, taps her clipboard--

JOEY
Right. I've still got a punchlist a mile long, and the freaking--

NOAH
--ribbon-cutting's next week.

JOEY
Exactly!

Noah reaches for the clipboard. Joey hands it to him, watches him read over the punchlist.

NOAH
How do you find your Zen?

JOEY
My wha-- Huh?

NOAH
When you chill, what do you do?

JOEY
Um, listen to music, I guess. Or paint. Why?

NOAH
'Cause I'm kicking you out.
(before she can interrupt)
We can fix the walls and do most of this other stuff without you.

JOEY
But--

NOAH
You're a mess. This job's too important for you to stick around like that.

Joey knows he's got a point, but...

NOAH (CONT'D)
You need to re-center, so take a
mental health day. Or I could just
show you my dick again.

Joey laughs.

EXT. LAKE - LATER - DAY

Joey walks along the lake with paints and a blank canvas, in
search of a subject. She looks down the dock and grins.

SAME SCENE - LATER - DAY

A GORGEOUS ANTIQUE WOODEN BOAT rocks gently on her mooring.

Joey sits back from her PAINTING. The boat has a lot of
personality, and Joey captured it beautifully on the canvas.
She stiffens when she hears--

--FOOTSTEPS ON THE DOCK which stop short... then keep coming.

Joey forces herself not to turn around, even when the
footsteps stop right behind her.

Ignoring the intrusion, she methodically adds unnecessary
details to the painting.

Bill waits for her to acknowledge his presence-- perplexed...
then annoyed... then incredulous when she doesn't.

It's "THE FIRST ONE WHO TALKS LOSES," and Bill finally gives--

BILL
How much you want for it?

Joey quirks a little victory smile at the canvas.

JOEY
I'd take a nickel.

BILL
Five hundred?

JOEY
Five cents.

BILL
You don't just give away work
anymore. We talked about this.

JOEY
If you like it, it's yours. It's
your boat.

BILL
Grandma.

At that, Joey turns around.

JOEY
Your grandma?

BILL
That's her name. She's almost
ninety years old.

JOEY
She's beautiful.

BILL
Yeah, I know.

They watch Grandma bob as a wake ripples past.

BILL
Well, I just came out to, uh...
Didn't expect you to be, er...
I'm taking her out. You can come if
you want.

JOEY
Are you insane?

Bill shrugs, disappointed.

BILL
Probably.

JOEY
I've been staring at her for hours.
If I knew how to get her started,
we'd have been long gone by now.

Bill's got a well-honed poker-face, but it's still obvious
that's the answer he wanted. And feared.

EXT. LAKE - MOMENTS LATER - DAY

Joey settles into Grandma's shotgun seat. Her eyes dance.

Bill fires up the engine and away they go.

The wind whips around them as the boat zips along the lake...

Joey catches Bill watching her. She grins.

He doesn't. He guns the engine faster, faster, *faster...*

Joey's hair flies around her face.

Bill takes a sharp turn over the wake and the boat bounces.

Joey squeals with laughter -- eyes sparkling, face flushed.

Bill slows the boat to a crawl and kills the engine.

Joey wipes her eyes, catches her breath.

It's beautiful out here. No sound but a few distant birds and Grandma's gentle rocking.

Bill settles into his seat. Closes his eyes and tips his face toward the sun.

Joey studies him.

JOEY

This is nice.

He doesn't respond. She tries again--

JOEY

Surprised you don't do this more often.

Still nothing.

JOEY

If I'd known we were coming out here, I'd have worn my bikini.

Is he pretending to be asleep? WTF??? Now Joey's annoyed--

JOEY

Anyone ever tell you you're a stellar conversationalist? No? That's surprising...

More silence. Then Bill scowls.

BILL

When did I become an asshole?

JOEY

I haven't known you that long.

BILL

I was being introspective.

JOEY
Keep working on that.
(off his glare)
If it makes you feel any better,
the guys on my crew think you're
cool for your age.

Bill grunts.

JOEY (CONT'D)
I docked their pay, of course.

BILL
Getting old sucks.

JOEY
(rude noise)
Not for men. Paul Newman was
bangable 'til the day he died.

BILL
Huh?

JOEY
Lines don't "add character" to a
woman's face. We can only stave off
the inevitable for so long... then
it's just concede the fight and let
the... tits fall where they may.

BILL
I wouldn't know anything about
falling tits...

Joey gigglesnorts.

BILL (CONT'D)
...but you don't have to worry
about wrinkles. Just get Botox like
the other old bags.

Joey grins and splashes him.

JOEY
You are an asshole.

Bill splashes her back -- DRENCHING HER head to toe.

BILL
I know.

Joey sputters and shrieks through laughter--

JOEY
That's freezing!

She smacks more water at Bill. He ducks most of it.

BILL
Is it?

Joey growls, then reaches over the side and scoops deep, ready to drown the bastard where he sits.

Bill ROCKS THE BOAT so Joey loses her balance. She teeters on the edge for a second, then starts to fall toward the water. Bill catches her waistband--

BILL
I wouldn't really let you--

--but Joey grabs him and drags them BOTH OVERBOARD.

Bill's startled YELP carries across the lake... as does Joey's triumphant WAR WHOOP when she surfaces. They both swim to the boat and hang onto the side, panting.

BILL
Kinda caught me off guard, there.

Joey laughs at him. *Ya' think?*

Bill's struck mute. *He should be pissed, right?* He grins.

JOEY
Does Grandma have a ladder?

BILL
No. I'll give you a--

In one strong move, Joey hoists herself back into the boat.

BILL
--boost.

Joey reaches out a hand to help him up.

BILL
No, thank you. I got it.

Joey hides a smile.

Bill climbs back into the boat and drops, squishing and dripping, onto the seat. He tosses Joey a towel.

JOEY
Do you need to get home? Wouldn't
want your wife to worry.

BILL
Where'd you get the idea I was
married?

JOEY
You're not? A cool old guy like
you? Charming... Never moody...

BILL
I liked you better underwater.

Joey laughs. Bill's glare softens and they have a "MOMENT."

BILL
(intimate)
You're kind of a pain in the ass.

JOEY
Takes one to know one.

Another LOADED BEAT, then she looks away, breaking the spell.

JOEY
Bill... there's something I need to
tell you.

BILL
Oh yeah? What's that?

Anxious, Joey risks a quick glance at his face, sees his eyes
crinkled with a sexy smile. *She can't do it.*

JOEY
I knew you weren't married.

BILL
Mm-hm.

JOEY
Any near misses?

BILL
A couple, a while back.

JOEY
Same.

BILL
(scoffs)
You're barely out of college.

JOEY
That's not true.

She makes eye contact again, struggles to find the words.

BILL
It's true enough.

The late-afternoon sun dips lower. Joey shivers.

BILL
Back to real life.

Bill starts the engine, and Grandma's on the move again.

MEANWHILE...

INT. VANESSA'S CAR - EVENING

Singing off-key vixen pop, Vanessa stops at a light.

BLEEP!

EMAIL ALERT from CHS CLASS OF '96 pops up on her iGADGET.

VANESSA
(to self)
What the--? Oh.

She realizes JOEY NEVER LOGGED OUT of her email. Naturally-nosey, she opens it and smiles:

*Congrats to Class of '96 Grad
Joey Alten on Opening her own
Building Restoration Firm!*

VANESSA
(confused)
Class of *ninety-six*?

Then the significance of Joey's grad date hits her.

It pisses her off... but what to do about it?

Angry HONKS behind her -- it's a green light.

Vanessa flips a bird over her shoulder and peels out.

BACK TO JOEY AND BILL

Joey waits in the boat as Bill ties it up to the dock. Her hair's a mess and her wet clothes are cold and clinging.

Bill takes her hand to help her out. Sparks fly.

She steps up onto the dock, but he doesn't move back. They're standing too close, but neither is ready to budge. The air between them is charged...

Bill finally steps aside.

Disappointed and relieved, Joey gathers her paint supplies. She gives Bill the painting.

BILL
You sure?

JOEY
You got my five cents?

Bill digs in his pocket and hands her a nickel. She pockets it and they walk back toward the house.

JOEY
Try not to drip on it.

INT. WHIZ-KIDZ - DAY

Ethan and Connor watch Joey inspect their work.

ETHAN
Well?

They relax when she grins.

JOEY
Good job.

CONNOR
Good teacher.

He tries for a hug. Joey chuckles and dodges it.

JOEY
There's still a ways to go. We need
to get on the stick.

Connor chokes on an inappropriate rejoinder.

JOEY (CONT'D)
See what I did there?
(off his nod)
But seriously, back to work.

Connor watches her ass as she walks away.

Ethan punches Connor in the dick--

ETHAN

Penis.

ON JOEY

She joins Noah showing Vanessa around.

JOEY

What's up?

VANESSA

I wanted to see your handiwork.

NOAH

She's pretty amazing, huh?

VANESSA

Incredible. I can't believe some of the things she's done.

Her pointed tone makes Joey nervous.

JOEY

Thanks. You gonna make it to the ribbon-cutting?

VANESSA

Duh. It's gonna be epic.

Her smile is kinda terrifying.

NOAH

Yeah, it will.

VANESSA

Thanks for the tour, Noah. I'll let you *kids* get back to work.

She winks at Joey and exits, flirting with some of the guys along the way.

JOEY

Fuck.

NOAH

What's wrong?

JOEY

Did Vanessa say anything about me?

NOAH
Like what?
(takes her hand)
Your hands are freezing.

He rubs her hands, threads their fingers together.

JOEY
I need to tell you something I hope
you'll be really understanding
about...

NOAH
The job comes first. I get that.

JOEY
No, there's something else I--

BILL (O.S.)
You've been busy.

Before Bill sees them, Joey tugs her hands from Noah's.

NOAH
(quietly)
That's what you wanted to tell me.

JOEY
What? Oh. Noah, no, that's not it.

Noah gives her a sad smile and walks off, nodding to Bill.

Joey hides her guilt behind a confident facade.

JOEY
Bill.

BILL
Miz Alten.

JOEY
Here to see if I'm screwing up?

Bill's eyes crinkle with his warm grin.

SAME SCENE - FUTURE DAY

Bill's still grinning as he follows Joey, Mr. Donovan and the Whiz-Kid through the fully-restored building.

WHIZ-KID
You done good, little sister. Who
knew it'd be this schwanky?

I did. JOEY MR. DONOVAN
Joey did.

Mr. Donovan catches Joey's eye. They grin.

WHIZ-KID
Y'all have insiders. That's cool.

MR. DONOVAN
I should find my seat now, lest I'm
still shuffling when the confetti
falls.
(to Whiz-Kid)
Young man, would you walk me there?
I get so lost at times...

Joey stares at him, incredulous. He winks at her, then lets Whiz-Kid lead him outside.

Joey starts to follow them, but realizes Bill hasn't moved.

JOEY
What's wrong?

BILL
You had me second-guessing for a
while, but I'm proud of you.
Congratulations, Joey.

He offers a hand. Joey swats it away and HUGS him.

JOEY
Thanks. That means a lot.

The impromptu hug breaks a barrier. Bill hesitantly puts his arms around her. Their eyes lock and they both move almost-imperceptibly forward...

Then Bill pulls away.

BILL
Shit. I'm sorry.

JOEY
For what?

BILL
I was about to kiss you.

JOEY
Yeah. I noticed.

BILL
I'm too old for you.

JOEY
Maybe I could be the judge of that.

BILL
You're too young for me.

JOEY
Is that a joke?

BILL
(frustrated)
I know guys my age are expected to screw around with younger women in a last, pathetic clutch at the fountain of youth... You could say I have issues with that.

JOEY
Oh.

BILL
Besides, my name's on your grant. We'd stir up a shit storm of ethics questions if this happened.

JOEY
I hate it when you're right.

BILL
I know you do.

Joey leans her forehead on his chest. Mutters--

JOEY
Such an asshole...

BILL
That's been established.

He toys with the ends of her hair.

JOEY
What if I were ten years older?

BILL
We'd never have met.

JOEY
Say we did. And I was.

Bill lets his hands wander down her back... up to her shoulders... and reluctantly sets her away from him.

BILL
Then things would be very
different.

He starts toward the door, but she doesn't follow.

JOEY
Bill...

BILL
You're gonna miss your first ribbon-
cutting.

JOEY
I'm almost for--

The Whiz-Kid flings the door open--

WHIZ-KID
Let's do this thing!

CHEERS erupt from the CROWD behind him.

BILL
You heard the man!

He grabs Joey's arm, pulls her out the door.

EXT. WHIZ-KIDZ - CONTINUOUS - DAY

The CHEERS get louder when Joey steps out. She waves weakly.

At the front of the CROWD, Noah and the Hunky Crew holler Joey's name. Mr. Donovan and the Board of Directors clap politely from their folding chairs.

Bill leads Joey to the ribbon, where PHOTOGRAPHERS and NEWS CREWS shoot the Whiz-Kid wielding a huge pair of scissors.

WHIZ-KID
It's happening!

He makes room for Joey in the shot. She hesitates and Bill murmurs in her ear--

BILL
You did this. Now get on in there.

He gives her a little push and takes a seat by Mr. Donovan.

Joey holds the scissors with Whiz-Kid, poses for pictures.
She keeps looking at Bill.

PHOTOGRAPHER #1
Over here please!

PHOTOGRAPHER #2
Look here next... Ma'am?

PHOTOGRAPHER #3
Joey, over here. Remember me? Doug
Albert from CHS. We had homeroom
together.

JOEY
Oh yeah. Hi...

PHOTOGRAPHER #3
It was short notice, but I was able
to pull together a little Class of
ninety-six cheering section.

Joey pales when she sees TWO DOUGHY MIDDLE-AGED CHEERLEADERS
with a big banner: **"Congrats Joey Alten - CHS CLASS OF '96!"**

DOUGHY MIDDLE-AGED CHEERLEADERS
When I say Joey you say Alten!
Joey! Alten! Joey! Alten!

The crowd starts CHEERING, too.

WHIZ-KID
(yells)
Okay, y'all, we cut on three!

Helpless, Joey watches Bill add 2+2 and come up with 40.

WHIZ-KID/CROWD
ONE!

Bill looks at Joey and he's PISSED. She's miserable.

WHIZ-KID/CROWD
TWO!

Bill says something to Mr. Donovan, then walks away.

Joey drops her half of the scissors and runs after Bill.

WHIZ-KID
Joey?

CROWD
THREE!

Joey reaches Bill just as Whiz-Kid cuts the ribbon. The CHEERS crescendo and CONFETTI falls all around.

JOEY

I'm sorry. I tried to tell you.

BILL

The hell were you thinking?

JOEY

I thought the grant was my last chance so I did a terrible, stupid thing, but I'm gonna fix it.

BILL

It's called a felony! And I signed off on it, so congratulations. You've jeopardized my license and everything I've ever worked for.

He storms away.

Joey pushes through the crowd toward Mr. Donovan, but all the chairs are now empty. She drops into one.

Vanessa steps up to block her view.

VANESSA

You must be so proud.

JOEY

(stands)

I am so, so sorry. You have no idea how upset I was when I realized...

(off Vanessa's look)

Right. Of course you do.

Noah joins them. He scowls at Joey, hurt and disgusted.

Joey's never felt uglier.

NOAH

I've been used by women before, but there's usually more in it for me.

JOEY

Noah, I swear it wasn't like that. I didn't know you, and I was desperate and selfish and stupid.

NOAH

You stole twenty grand.

JOEY

I didn't spend any of it. Well, I paid some bills, but put it all back when I started this job...

VANESSA

Give her another award.

JOEY

I felt awful even before I found out it was supposed to be you, V. And then... I was planning to give you the money somehow... Pretend we won the lottery, or invent you a rich, dead uncle... Hadn't figured that part out, yet. Obviously.

She catches herself rambling. Sees that nothing she says will make a difference.

JOEY (CONT'D)

Not an excuse. There *is* no excuse. I just wanted you to know.

VANESSA

Cool. Hope you feel better now.

NOAH

Let's get out of here.

He leads Vanessa away--

JOEY

You guys, I really am sorry...

--leaving Joey alone among the dwindling crowd and stomped-on confetti, all that remains of her dream.

INT. GENERIC CUBICLE - LATER - DAY

Joey talks on the phone, wilted and depressed.

JOEY

I missed you at the ribbon-cutting.

INTERCUT WITH

INT. LINDSAY'S TOWNHOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Hugely-pregnant and uncomfortable, Lindsay has her phone on speaker as she folds baby laundry and stacks it around her.

LINDSAY
Oh, was that today?

JOEY
I know I said I'd be by later, but--

LINDSAY
Know what? Don't worry about it.
Today's not great for me, either.

She smiles a little when a MALE HAND offers a glass of juice.

JOEY
Linds--

LINDSAY
It'll get done when it gets done. I
gotta go. Talk to you later.

She snaps the phone closed and drinks her juice.

BACK TO JOEY

An intimidating POLICE WOMAN looms over her. Joey tries to
turn toward her, but her HAND IS CUFFED TO THE DESK.

JOEY
Ow...
(off handcuff)
Is this really necessary?

POLICE WOMAN
Not anymore.

She jingles her keys toward an empty jail cell.

A GREASY PERVERT in the next cell leers at Joey.

GREASY PERVERT
A new neighbor? Just so happens I'm
feelin' real neighborly today.

He rubs his crotch.

Police Woman unlocks Joey's cuff. Joey snaps it closed again.

JOEY
Actually, I kind of like this desk.

POLICE WOMAN
So do I.

She unlocks the cuff again.

GREASY PERVERT
Whatcha in for, sugartits?

JOEY
(scary bitch)
I castrated my neighbor with a belt
sander.

Police Woman looks impressed.

JOEY
(sotto to Police Woman)
I didn't just, like incriminate
myself, did I? Am I allowed to
bluff in here?

Police Woman locks the cuff again.

POLICE WOMAN
Did you need to make another phone
call, hon?

INT./EXT. SYLVIA'S CAR - DRIVING - LATER - DAY

Sylvia taps manicured nails on the wheel. Joey rides shotgun
and hopes to die.

SYLVIA
I'm sure they won't mind if we
swing by your house to get a few
things.

JOEY
It's Bill's house and I'd rather
not go back to jail, thank you.

SYLVIA
That's just a scare tactic.

JOEY
Jesus, Mom. Did you even read the
bond you signed?

SYLVIA
(chuckles)
Ironie, isn't it?

JOEY
What?

SYLVIA

If you were really twenty-five, you
could've flirted your way out of
this mess.

INT. SYLVIA'S HOUSE - JOEY'S CHILDHOOD BEDROOM - LATER - DAY

Joey drops her purse and bail bond document on the dresser.
Looks around at the faded photographs and mementos of her
youth like they belong to someone else.

Sylvia enters with--

SYLVIA

I found a new toothbrush. And this
one's day cream, this one's night
cream. Face, neck and décolletage.
And you can have this thong--

JOEY

Mom!

SYLVIA

What? It's clean. I wore it for all
of ten seconds and couldn't dig it
out of my ass fast enough. And I
washed it after.

JOEY

Still. It's second-hand underpants.

She grudgingly takes the thong.

SYLVIA

You should've let me stop at
Nordstroms on the way home.

JOEY

I'll make do for now.

Sylvia hugs Joey tight, holds and rocks her a moment.

SYLVIA

I'm sorry, sweetheart. I know how
much it meant to you.

JOEY

What? Oh right. The grant.

SYLVIA

I wish you'd stop beating yourself
up, though. It's bad for your skin.

She kisses Joey's forehead and exits.

Joey tries to fold the bail bond into an origami house, but screws it up. She crumples it in a ball, tosses it.

She looks through dresser drawers, pulling out clothes from her high school days. Holds up an awful top.

JOEY

Heinous.

She shoves it back and opens another drawer. Expecting clothes, she's surprised to find PHOTO ALBUMS, SCRAPBOOKS and other memorabilia.

She opens a photo album. Smiles at silly pictures of her 20 year old self with TWO GIRLFRIENDS: dorky self-portraits; costume parties; drunk on margaritas.

As she flips through the pages, one FRAT BOY appears often, obviously a boyfriend at the time.

She stops on an AMATEUR MODELING SHOT and stares at her young self. Slides the picture out for a closer look.

College-girl Joey had a dewy complexion, a confident smile and gorgeous legs in a micro-mini even Vanessa wouldn't wear.

JOEY

...wasted on the young.

INT. SYLVIA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - LATER - DAY

Joey enters, dressed in sweats she wore in high school.

JOEY

Can you believe I still fit into--

The table is set with a little birthday party for two: party hats, balloons, cake.

SYLVIA

Surprise!

JOEY

Thanks, but my birthday's tomorrow.

SYLVIA

I've got the Blackjack and Booze
Cruise tomorrow night.

She dumps Chinese take-out on paper party plates.

JOEY
The cake looks yum.

She swipes a fingertip of frosting and pops it in her mouth.

SYLVIA
You can have as much as you want.
It's fat-free and sugar-free.

Joey makes a face, gags a little. Sylvia hands her a card.

SYLVIA
Joyeux anniversaire, mon cher Joie.

JOEY
Thanks, mom.

She opens the card -- a self-conscious, flowery thing that makes no mention of age. Inside is taped a PLASTIC SURGEON'S BUSINESS CARD. And written below it,

Good for one breast lift (two breasts!)
Love always, Mom

SYLVIA
Don't wait too long to book it.

JOEY
I'll call Monday.

They break apart the cheap wooden chopsticks and eat.

SYLVIA
Do you have any plans tonight?

JOEY
Nope. Thought maybe we can make popcorn and watch TV, just like--

SYLVIA
I'm sorry, hon, it's my night to host Bunco.

JOEY
Oh. Well, that's okay. I'll just hang out then, I guess.

SYLVIA
Do you mind staying upstairs while the girls are here? You can watch TV in my room, if you're quiet.

JOEY
What?

SYLVIA
 (stating the obvious)
 I can't introduce you. They think
 I'm early fifties.

JOEY
 Yeah. Sure, no problem.

Joey's shittiest day ever just got worse.

INT. SYLVIA'S HOUSE - JOEY'S CHILDHOOD BEDROOM - LATER- NIGHT

The SOUND of DRUNKEN BUNCO LADIES drifts in from downstairs.

The plastic surgeon's card now holds a position of prominence in the mirror frame.

Joey sits on the floor amid a MOUNTAIN OF MEMORABILIA. She flips through a scrapbook from college, remembering parties and concerts and vacations.

She frowns at her old modeling pic, perched on the dresser. Confident, leggy young Joey smiles back with her whole life ahead of her.

She picks up a yearbook, exposing a DIARY beneath it.

JOEY
 (to the modeling pic)
 I had a diary?

She flips through pages, skimming the girlish handwriting--

"...out for my b-day... lucky to have such great friends!"

"...realized he loves me, so we're back together!"

"...need to choose a major. Think I'd love building restoration but who wants to wear a tool belt to work?"

"...says we're BF4E, but acts like a total bitch."

"...walking to class and he oh-so-casually dropped my hand when we passed this chick with totally fake boobs..."

"...need to start using the face stuff mom gave me. I'm literally the ugliest girl I know."

"I feel so invisible."

A KITSCHY WALL CLOCK STRIKES MIDNIGHT.

Joey remembers the night cream and jumps up to get it,
SINGING The Ting Tings' *"Happy birthday... Happy birthday..."*

She opens the cream and looks at her old picture again.

That pretty smile looks more brave than confident, now.

JOEY

Who said I was ugly? I wasn't ugly.

She looks in the mirror to goop up her face... *AND IT DAWNS:*

JOEY

I'm not old.

(realizes)

I'm not glue!

With her whole life ahead of her, Joey wipes the crap off her hands. She plucks the PLASTIC SURGEON'S CARD from the mirror. Rips it into confetti and sprinkles it over the trash can.

Her PHONE RINGS -- It's Lindsay. Joey's touched--

JOEY

Hey...

INTERCUT WITH

INT./EXT. TAXI - NIGHT

The DRIVER anxiously checks on Lindsay in his rearview.

LINDSAY

Happy birth--

She GROANS, curled in the back seat, phone to her ear.

JOEY

The fuck was that? Was that you?

LINDSAY

Baby's coming.

JOEY

But his room's not done!

LINDSAY

Don't think he cares.

JOEY

Oh my god, I'm freaking out. Stay there! I'll be right--

LINDSAY
No, no -- I'm in a cab.

JOEY
Are you okay?

LINDSAY
(godawful moan, then)
Besides, y'know, the labor, yeah.

JOEY
Linds, I'm so sorry about
everything. You have no idea.

LINDSAY
Can we talk later? Kinda busy...

JOEY
Right. Meet you at the hospital.

She yanks on a pair of jeans. Grabs her purse and FREEZES
with her hand on the doorknob. *Shit.*

SAME SCENE - MOMENTS LATER

Minutes after coming of age on her 40th birthday, Joey SNEAKS
OUT THE WINDOW of her childhood bedroom.

Downstairs, the Bunco Ladies GIGGLE like schoolgirls.

INT./EXT. JOEY'S CAR - LATER - NIGHT

Joey speeds down the road when her PHONE RINGS. She answers--

JOEY
You there yet?

INTERCUT WITH

INT./EXT. TAXI - LATER - NIGHT

Same car and driver, Lindsay sitting comfortably in the back
seat. The driver looks kind of annoyed, though.

LINDSAY
Turn around, false alarm.

JOEY
How do you know?

LINDSAY
'Cause I farted and the
contractions stopped.

JOEY
(laughs)
I'll meet you at your place.

LINDSAY
No! Just go home, I'm fine!

JOEY
Shut up.

INT. LINDSAY'S TOWNHOUSE - LATER - NIGHT

Joey and Lindsay sit on the couch. Lindsay's anxious and jumpy. She exaggerates a yawn. Keeps glancing at the door.

LINDSAY
I wasn't even gonna call, but it's
your birthday and the spawn kinda
put other stuff in perspective...

JOEY
Birthdays and babies will do that.

LINDSAY
You don't have to stay. Aren't you
tired? You must be tired.

JOEY
I'm in no rush to leave. I'm
staying with my mom.

LINDSAY
Whoa, what the fuck happened?

JOEY
Well, I got busted and spent four
hours in jail with a serial
masturbator, I'm being sued for
fraud, I realized I'm not old,
which is nice, but I'm wearing
Sylvia's underpants, so... Oh-- and
I think I'm in love with Bill.

LINDSAY
Asshole Bill? How'd that happen?

JOEY
Think I was triggered when I kissed
Noah.

LINDSAY

You kissed-? Jesus, I missed a lot.

Someone KNOCKS ON THE DOOR.

Lindsay desperately tries to get off the couch.

LINDSAY

Fuck! I'm a goddamn Weeble!

Joey's already halfway across the room--

JOEY

Who shows up at somebody's door in
the middle of the night?

LINDSAY

Joey, stop! It's Drew.

Joey skids to a halt.

LINDSAY

He texted me and I texted him back
and we've been hanging out again.

Joey's jaw drops. Lindsay rushes to fill her in--

LINDSAY (CONT'D)

He wanted to get back together even
before he knew about the baby and
he's been really sweet, taking care
of me, and I was dying to tell you,
but didn't want you to think I was
rubbing your face in it, since
you've been so obsessed over the
glue thing...

Another, LOUDER KNOCK.

JOEY

I can't believe you're texting.

Lindsay laughs and they push and shove in a race to the

DOOR

It's Joey by a nose. Lindsay yanks her close, whispers--

LINDSAY

I didn't tell Drew about the fart.

Joey mimes locking her lips, tossing the key. Then she swings
the door open and GRINS at--

DREW, disheveled and anxious, holding a bag of gas station groceries. He's sweet-faced and preppy and the last guy you'd imagine with Lindsay, which makes him kinda perfect for her.

JOEY

Hi. I was just leaving.

INT. DONOVAN CAPITAL - BILL'S OFFICE - DAY

Bill looks out his penthouse window. Down below, people rush along the sidewalk passing JOEY'S CAR, parked at the curb.

His PHONE BLEEPs: Voice Mail Alert. He listens--

JOEY (FILTERED)

Surprise, it's me -- the liar, the cheat, the felonious painter of boats... You sure make it hard to apologize. Don't worry, I won't drop by again. One security-guarded escort off the premises is plenty. Only tried 'cause it's my birthday and everybody's supposed to be nice to you on your birthday. Guess you missed the memo...

Her car pulls into traffic and continues down the street.

JOEY (FILTERED)

I won't ask you to forgive me, but I have to explain why I did it, even though you probably already deleted this message... All the missed opportunities and the lost confidence and invisibility, they finally caught up with me, so I... did what I did. Then you hit me with the risk-aversion and I didn't want to hear it, but you were right. I know, you know that. What you *don't* know is I've got my whole life ahead of me again, even starting over with nothing, like I am. And thanks to you, I'm more excited than scared about that. So... that's it.

Bill watches her car disappear in the distance.

JOEY (FILTERED)

I'm sorry. G'bye, Bill.

EXT. DONOVAN BANK BUILDING - DAY

Joey cups her hands to block the sun and presses her face against one of the few windows that isn't boarded up. Sighs.

Mr. Donovan appears behind her. Clears his throat.

Joey steps back and wipes her prints off the window.

JOEY

Mr. Donovan. Thanks for seeing me.

MR. DONOVAN

Daring thing you did, phoning an angry old man.

Joey's eyes light up as he unlocks the great old doors.

INT. DONOVAN BANK BUILDING - CONTINUOUS - DAY

Joey admires the broken-down old bank like it's a palace.

JOEY

It was worth the risk to try to set things right.

MR. DONOVAN

You've already paid restitution.

JOEY

Yes, but I owe you more than money.

Mr. Donovan watches her pick up a broken bit of marble trim. She rubs it like a worry stone.

JOEY (CONT'D)

You taught me so much and you believed in me... I could never write a big enough check for that. And you *get* me. We get each other.

MR. DONOVAN

I thought so. What I don't "get" is why you did it.

JOEY

Short answer: I was scared.

She fits the broken piece of marble back where it belongs.

JOEY (CONT'D)

I fell asleep during college and when I finally woke up, I was forty with nothing to show for it but the specter of invisibility, and a coupon for a free breast lift.

Awkward silence. Then--

MR. DONOVAN

Obsolescence is a bitch, eh?

Joey's surprised.

MR. DONOVAN (CONT'D)

My family treats me like a doddering fool.

JOEY

But you built... like, an empire.

MR. DONOVAN

I'm the same man I've always been, but all they see is that my suit's grown wrinkled.

JOEY

You wear it well, sir.

Mr. Donovan smiles, a glimmer of their former connection.

MR. DONOVAN

We've transferred the grant to Vanessa.

JOEY

Good. She'll make you proud.

Another awkward beat.

MR. DONOVAN

Well, Miss Alten, it was nice to see you again. Thank you for touching base and righting wrongs--

JOEY

There's one more thing.

MR. DONOVAN

Bill?

JOEY

What? No, this building.

MR. DONOVAN

Yes?

JOEY

I lied about my age. I never lied about my ability to work magic in places like this. If you still want to restore it, you need to hire me.

Mr. Donovan raises bushy eyebrows.

JOEY (CONT'D)

People will say you're crazy after what I did, but it's a big job and I'm the best man for it.

MR. DONOVAN

They wouldn't stop at crazy. They'd have me declared incompetent.

JOEY

They could *try*.

A challenge. Mr. Donovan smiles.

MR. DONOVAN

Send me a proposal next week.

He holds out his hand. Joey ignores it and kisses his cheek.

JOEY

I hope I'm lucky enough to be as doddering as you when I'm your age.

MR. DONOVAN

Thank you. I hope you are, too.

INT. DIVE BAR - NIGHT

Joey and Noah at a pub table, drinking whatever's on draft.

JOEY

There's no twelve-step program for selfish assholes, so I'm kinda winging it, here.

Noah's stone-faced. He's not making this easy.

JOEY

The night we met, when we talked about the glue factory? I was about to turn forty and had accomplished exactly nothing.

No reaction from Noah. She presses on.

JOEY

I didn't waste two years at a job I hated. I wasted ten years. And I didn't quit. They canned me to plug in a supermodel. I was desperate. That's not an excuse. I won't ask you to forgive me, and I don't blame you if you never wanna see me again. But I hurt you, and I hoped, maybe understanding why I did it would make it feel less personal.

NOAH

(stoic)

It does.

JOEY

Good.

NOAH

I forgive you, Joey.

JOEY

(relieved)

You do? Thank you.

NOAH

(teases)

Sure, now it makes sense why you're hot for the grumpy old man.

JOEY

What? No I'm not!

NOAH

(not buying it)

Okay. Still, it's probably best for everybody if we just forget I ever showed you my dick on FaceTime.

They laugh.

JOEY

Yeah... that's unlikely.

INT. DONOVAN BANK BUILDING - DAY

Alone in the huge, echoey space, Joey inspects pallets of building materials, checks inventory against a list.

BILL (O.S.)
Quincy? You in here?

Joey freezes. *What the hell...?*

Bill walks into view, stops short. They're surprised and confused to see each other.

JOEY
Um. Hi?

Bill stubbornly tries not to look at her.

BILL
Hi. Have you seen Quincy?

JOEY
I don't expect him here today--
birthday party for one of the...

Annoyed, Bill paces with his phone. It rings on SPEAKER.

MR. DONOVAN (FILTERED)
Quincy Donovan here.

BILL
(on phone)
Hey Quincy. It's Bill.

INTERCUT WITH

EXT. SUBURBAN ESTATE - DAY

An extravagant CHILD'S BIRTHDAY PARTY.

Mr. Donovan sips iced tea in the shade, close enough to see the CHILDREN PLAY, far enough away not to hear the shrieking.

He GRINS into his phone, eyes twinkling.

MR. DONOVAN
Well, hello, Bill. What may I do
for you this fine afternoon?

Joey pretends to look at her list, but she's listening.

Bill tries not to sound as frustrated as he looks.

BILL
You'd asked me to meet you here at
the bank building.

MR. DONOVAN
(spacey, senile)
Oh no. Was that today?

Joey makes a confused face at her clipboard.

BILL
I believe so.

Bill sneaks a glance at Joey. She appears to be working.

MR. DONOVAN
My apologies. I must have looked at
the wrong date in my calendar. It's
my great-grandson's birthday today,
and we're having a party!
(snickers)
What was it you wanted to discuss?

BILL
Quince, you wanted to--
(stops short)
Never mind, we'll talk Monday.

He disconnects, sighs. Joey's openly watching him, now.

BILL
He played me.

JOEY
Yep.

Joey laughs. Bill can't help but crack a smile.

BILL
Should've seen it coming. The
manipulative old bastard's been
hounding me to see you.

JOEY
(bristles)
Well now you have, so...

She crosses her arms, leans on the wall.

BILL
I didn't want to see you. You
fucked with my head.

He walks toward her.

JOEY
I know. I'm sorry.

BILL
You're doing it now.

He closes the distance between them.

JOEY
(sassy)
Then I don't know what to tell you.

Bill CHECKS HER OUT, slowly, blatantly. *Because he can.*

JOEY
(breathless)
Now you're fucking with my head.

BILL
Good. That goddamn bikini almost
gave me a heart attack.

Joey grins. She brazenly LOOKS BILL OVER.

JOEY
Those jeans look good on you.

Bill moves into her space, backs her against the wall...

And THEY FINALLY KISS! *Hallefuckin'glujah!*

They kiss again... and again... and the CONVERSATION
CONTINUES BETWEEN KISSES...

BILL
You said they were "Dad" jeans.

JOEY
I didn't say *which* dad. David
Beckham's a dad. Gavin Rossdale...
Brad Pitt...

BILL
You really gonna keep saying these
guys' names into my mouth?

Joey laughs, tugs him down onto a pallet of cement bags.

And they're all over each other...

BILL
You sure you're forty?

JOEY
Pretty sure, why?

She climbs into his lap, squirming around like a 25 year-old.

BILL
(groans)
You don't *feel* forty.

JOEY
Well, it *is* the new twenty-five.

They keep kissing, making up for lost time...

A MAN passes outside the window above them.

REVERSE ANGLE on Marlboro Man.

He walks down the sidewalk, typing on his iGADGET.

Takes a Snapchat selfie and types: *n dats d Nd...*

THE END.