

THE RULES OF FLUSHING

by

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FADE IN:

INT. HIGH SCHOOL GYM - EARLY EVENING

In the dark, a couple slow dances to a sappy pop ballad playing from a cellphone. ABBY AUSTIN, 16, neat and studious in a bright white oxford, snuggles against her boyfriend's shoulder.

CHASE BARCLAY, 17, adorably nerdy, bumps into the gym's bleachers.

CHASE

Did I squish you?

ABBY

No. But if I have to lose a foot, dancing beats landmines or frostbite.

CHASE

Don't forget sharks. That's why I never swim in the ocean.

ABBY

It's just a fish toilet anyway.

They giggle and kiss. She moves closer, looking at him coyly.

ABBY (CONT'D)

Are those your keys?

CHASE

(clueless)

I can put them in my back pocket.

ABBY

You're so flunking sex ed.

CHASE

You're the one afraid to touch it.

ABBY

After Ms. Marx taught us the concept of wiener goo.

CHASE

In a school full of sluts, I pick the only penophobic.

ABBY
I'm not afraid... And it's
phallophobic. Learn your word
roots. The SATs are next week.

They kiss again. Suddenly, a flying volleyball slams into the back of Chase's head.

CHASE
Ow, shit!

Lights go on. There's nobody else in the gym. The ball rebounds off Chase's head and hits his phone.

The BOYS VOLLEYBALL TEAM stands in the doorway. TUCKER QUIGLEY, 17, the hottest guy in school, rolls his eyes.

TUCKER
Get a stairwell! We have to
practice.

CHASE
Sorry, Tuck.

Chase picks up his phone and leaves. Abby follows, giving Tucker the stinkeye.

INT. BOWMAN HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

ABBY
Since when do you call Tucker
Quigley "Tuck?" That's like calling
God "G-Dawg."

CHASE
I tutor him in trig. Anyway, sorry
your first fake school dance was
cut short. Sure you can't go to the
real one tonight?

ABBY
Only if my mom gets invaded by body
snatchers from Planet of the Cool
Parents.

EXT. BOWMAN HIGH SCHOOL - CONTINUOUS

A yellow minibus in front of the school, double-parked on a typical Manhattan street. Three scantily clad girls walk by. Abby waves to a stunning blonde, SHELBY CARDWELL, 16, decked in Prada.

ABBY

Hey Shelby.

Shelby ignores her to chat with her clones.

ABBY (CONT'D)

Chase, can you take me on the subway? This minibus makes me such a social reject that my lab partner shuns me in public.

CHASE

You want me to go to Flushing with you?

ABBY

You make it sound like it's a giant toilet where all the bad kids from New York get flushed into the sea.

CHASE

Just tell your mom that I took you. Everyone else's parents let them commute alone.

ABBY

Screw it. I'll take the dorkmobile.

CHASE

Forget Shelby. I think you're cool.

CODY FERTITTA, a junior who looks all of 8 years old, whips a metal figurine out of his backpack.

CODY

Chase, I just posted some My Little Pony fanfic on my blog.

CHASE

You're so cool, bro.

Abby rolls her eyes and gets on the bus.

INT. YELLOW MINIBUS - LATER

It's filled with 13 and 14-year-olds destined to become the kids even the nerds beat up. Abby sits alone. Behind her, two male dweebs engage in one-upmanship.

NERD 1

I can't have gluten anymore.

NERD 2

That's nothing. If I have table
salt I go into anaphylactic shock.

Abby stares out the open window as the bus drives over the
Queensborough bridge, leaving Manhattan behind.

Two cute guys look up from their Mustang convertible. Abby
locks eyes with the passenger, who waves to her.

MUSTANG DRIVER

Come on Brent, leave Short Bus
alone.

He yells up to Abby.

MUSTANG DRIVER (CONT'D)

Can you count to potato?

Humiliated, Abby rolls up the window. The guys laugh and
speed off.

INT. ABBY'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Tiny. Cluttered. Bars on windows. Grandma's hand-me-downs and
flimsy IKEA furniture. A small piano seems out of place.

MARLENE AUSTIN, 40-ish, hot mom, gesticulates in front of
Abby in a paisley silk blouse.

MARLENE

We're between ourselves! And
presently we shall be naked as
newborn babies.

ABBY

It's "babes." And don't wave your
hands so much. You look like a sign
language interpreter.

Marlene studies her script, "No Exit" by Jean-Paul Sartre.

MARLENE

"Babies" makes more sense. They
like to see improv anyway.

ABBY

Whatev. I don't feel like running
lines. I want to go to the dance.

MARLENE

No. Now tell me how mature you are so I can say no again and we can move on.

ABBY

But there are teachers chaperoning to keep us drug-free virgins and torture us with 80's music.

MARLENE

You're not at that genius school to make friends. A dance has no relevance to your future.

ABBY

What about social skills?

MARLENE

You're pretty enough not to need them. Your SATs are next week. That's where your head needs to be.

ABBY

Just because you never have fun--

MARLENE

I had to give up things like "fun" to pay for your bus to school.

ABBY

I can take the subway like the normal kids.

MARLENE

And the homeless. The subway's dangerous. There's a warning sign in every car.

The doorbell rings. Abby looks at Marlene quizzically.

MARLENE (CONT'D)

Since it's my job to feed you, I ordered Korean. Get the door.

She disappears into the bedroom to get her wallet. Abby opens the door. The delivery boy hands her a bag of food. A flicker of recognition passes between them.

ABBY

Nick Agnelli? It's me, Abby. From Mrs. Chu's fourth grade class.

Nick, 17, unkempt, with teen idol good looks. Videogame t-shirt, ripped jeans.

NICK
You got your braces off.

ABBY
I thought you moved to Long Island.

NICK
It was lame. I missed Flushing. Got my own place here.

MARLENE (O.S.)
Abby, can you find the coupon?

ABBY
(calls out)
It expired. I threw it out.

MARLENE (O.S.)
Why? Those delivery kids are too stupid to check.

Abby notices Nick's annoyed look. She's embarrassed.

ABBY
Excuse my mom. We're fighting about my school dance. I go to the biggest nerd school. Like I'm gonna bone down with the Chess Club.

NICK
Wait 'til she's asleep and sneak out on the fire escape.

ABBY
Fat chance. She's nocturnal. Like a fruit bat.

Marlene comes out, changed into her bathrobe. She hands Nick some cash, then checks the contents of the bag.

NICK
It's all there.

Marlene abruptly slams the door on Nick. She hands Abby a container and puts the rest of the food into the fridge.

MARLENE
I have a headache, so I'm just gonna go to sleep. Don't turn the light on when you go to bed.

Marlene goes into the bedroom and shuts her door. Abby get a picture texted from Chase at the dance. "Everyone's here."

The fire escape beckons. She ponders her conservative clothes. Puts on Marlene's abandoned stilettos. Too big. She stuffs a napkin in the toe.

She sneaks into the bathroom and puts on Marlene's makeup. Eyeliner, lipstick, blush. All overly dramatic.

In the living room. She opens the window bars and steps onto the fire escape. Her right shoe falls off, landing on a protruding air conditioner one floor below.

ABBY
Craptastic.

She carefully heads down the rickety fire escape stairs to the landing below. She reaches across the air conditioner and tries to yank the heel out of the grate. A light turns on.

The window opens. A VIETNAMESE MAN points a gun at her.

MR. PHAM
Burglar! I kill you!

ABBY
I'm not a thief. Just want my shoe.

Abby pulls the shoe. The heel's stuck. She pulls harder. It suddenly dislodges, almost sending Abby off the fire escape.

Abby notices that the stiletto's heel is almost broken off.

ABBY (CONT'D)
Shit!

Mr. Pham points the gun upward. Abby follows his gaze and sees Marlene looking down at her with a furious gaze.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - SCIENCE LAB - MORNING

Students paired up at lab stations dissect fetal pigs. Abby stands alone, watching Shelby gossip with her friend CHELSEA.

KESTREL BALLARD, 16, joins Abby and stares at Shelby with disapproval. Kestrel's a festively plump girl with wild hair.

KESTREL
Let's bail on fourth period and go ice skating. We can get milkshakes.

ABBY

You know we're not twelve anymore.

Abby preps the pig by spreading out its limbs.

KESTREL

Still bummed about that stupid
dance? I didn't go and I survived.

Shelby chats with Tucker and flips her hair. Kestrel notices.

KESTREL (CONT'D)

Then again I hate everyone at this
shitty school. Can you dissect your
stupid lab partner?

ABBY

I thought Wiccans were supposed to
be tolerant of other people.

KESTREL

Hellooo--it's still a religion.
Anyway, just eighteen months until
college.

Abby works, jots down notes.

ABBY

I'll never make it. I wish they had
an Ivy League school on Venus. My
mom has supersharp hearing, but she
can't breathe carbon dioxide.

INT. SUBWAY - PLATFORM - SAME TIME

Marlene wears the stilettos Abby broke the night before. She
peeks over the tracks to see the oncoming train. Her heel
breaks.

ON TRAIN

The brakes SCREECH.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - SCIENCE LAB - ONE HOUR LATER

CLOSE ON fetal pig. Abby makes a u-shaped incision.

SHELBY

Just slice the damn thing open. The
smell is killing me.

ABBY

If it's a straight cut we can't
peel it back to diagram the organs.
Science is about following rules,
or else everything falls apart.

SHELBY

Rules are for losers. And I don't
touch pig fetuses.

Abby narrows her eyes at Shelby.

SHELBY (CONT'D)

Come on. You love doing this shit.
That's why we make such a kickass
team.

ABBY

We're so kickass you can't even say
hi to me in front of your friends?

Abby has the pig's innards exposed. She jots down notes.

SHELBY

I'll invite you to my Sour
Seventeen party next month.

ABBY

No deal. My mom will never let me
go.

SHELBY

Your loss. I'm getting Shattered
Image--the band that does that
"Smokin' Hot Shelby" song. Listen.

Shelby offers Abby her phone.

ABBY

Maybe later. But you reminded me I
have to take the brain out.

Abby cuts the pig's scalp. MAX FIELD, mid-40's, the school
guidance counselor, enters the classroom. Everyone looks up.

SHELBY

I bet they found the ecstasy in
Blaine's locker.

Max walks by an ashen BLAINE. But he stops in front of Abby.

MAX

Abby, come with me please.

ABBY
Can it wait until the dissection's
over? I'm mid-pericardial sac.

INT. COUNSELING OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Abby's on a couch, staring at a shelf of self-help books.
"Seven Habits of Highly Effective Teens", "Seven Things Smart
Teens Do," "Seven Ways To Raise Confident Girls."

MAX
I have some terrible news.

ABBY
I didn't get into AP Bio? Ugh. That
ribosomes question was a trap.

MAX
Your mother's... passed away.

They stare at each other in silence.

SFX: FIRE ALARM

Suddenly the fire alarm goes off. Abby hesitates, then stands
up.

MAX (CONT'D)
Don't worry. It's just a drill.

ABBY
The fire or my mother being dead?
Is this some funky personality test
to see how we react to stress?

MAX
She was hit by a train. A witness
said she lost her balance.

ABBY
No, she just packed my lunch this
morning. I'll get her records from
our dentist. Some suicidal mugger
probably stole her purse before he
jumped in front of the 7 train.

Abby takes out her phone.

ABBY (CONT'D)
My mom always answers when I call.
I'm clearing this up now.

Abby listens to her phone ring for a few beats. She sinks into the couch, stunned.

MAX

This is the denial stage of grief.

Max places a box of Kleenex on the coffee table.

MAX (CONT'D)

Let it out, Abby.

AMIT SINGH, 13, an overzealous eighth grader, barges in. He wears an orange emergency vest.

AMIT

Fire drill. You must evacuate.

MAX

This isn't a good time, Amit.

AMIT

But I'm the fire marshal. And the school's theoretically on fire.

Max shuts the door on Amit. Abby seems lost in the dull strains of the fire alarm. Max looks at her strangely.

MAX

Abby? It's OK to be upset. This is a safe place for your emotions.

Max holds out a tissue.

ABBY

Mr. Field, can you please stop waiting for me to cry? I don't need the pressure right now.

MAX

Want me to call someone for you?

ABBY

Let's see... my dad died when I was a baby. I don't have grandparents, no family friends. I have an uncle somewhere that I've never met. I'm be perfect candidate for the CIA.

MAX

There's always a next of kin.

Abby lets the news sink in.

ABBY

So...what happens to me now?

MAX

To be honest, I have no idea what to do in your situation.

ABBY

Really? If I made meth in the science lab I bet you'd have a plan.

MAX

The worst I see at Bowman are custody battles. I need to talk to a colleague at an urban school.

ABBY

Manhattan isn't urban?

(realizing)

Oh, it's code that I'm more like a poor black kid. Racist, much?

Impatient, Amit bursts through the door.

AMIT

The fire marshal can't leave until all civilians are evacuated. The bylaws allow me to use force.

Amit assumes a fighting stance as Abby and Max stare at him.

AMIT (CONT'D)

Common sense dictates I cannot overpower you both.

Amit turns to leave.

AMIT (CONT'D)

But don't cry to me when the burn unit has to graft the skin from your buttocks to your faces.

Amit takes off down the hall. Max shuts the door again.

MAX

This might help.

Max hands her a book entitled "Dude, Where's My Mom? A Guide To Teen Grief." The teenage girl on the cover cries a melodramatic tear.

ABBY

Let me guess. It has seven ways to
get over your dead parent.

INT. SUBWAY - CAR - DAY

Abby slumps on a seat, scared. She studies the sign above her: "Aviso! La via del tren subterraneo es peligrosa." She reads the English translation: "Subway tracks are dangerous."

INT. ABBY'S APARTMENT - LATER

Silence. Abby sorts through a stack of mail. Bills. Some are final notices. She blasts music on an old clock radio. At the computer, she Googles "Jewish Funeral." The phone rings.

ABBY

Hello?... No, this is her
daughter... There isn't a good time
to call back...Because she's
dead... No, she won't be sending
you a check what with the being
dead and all.

She hangs up. There's a knock at the door. Abby looks through the peephole then opens it. MRS. LEVINE, an elderly woman rocking a floral housedress, stands there, annoyed.

MRS. LEVINE

Abby, can you turn the music down?

ABBY

(shouting over the music)
My mother's dead.

Mrs. Levine stares, confused. Abby turns the music off.

ABBY (CONT'D)

Sorry. My mother--

MRS. LEVINE

I heard you, honey. You don't have
to say it again. She was so skinny,
was it the cancer? You know the
drug companies have the cure, but
they'd lose too much money--

ABBY

She had an accident.

MRS. LEVINE

Oh, don't tell me. I don't want any bad pictures in my head. Are you alone? You shouldn't be alone.

ABBY

My boyfriend's coming. He's picking up my mom's things at the morgue.

MRS. LEVINE

Do you have anybody to help you with the funeral?

ABBY

I wish. I don't know how to plan a funeral. Do I send out an Evite? What do I do with her body?

MRS. LEVINE

Oh good God, stop. My cousin Libby works for a charity. She'll make the arrangements.

ABBY

Should I invite my uncle? I found him on the internet.

MRS. LEVINE

Marlene had a brother? You'll go live with him then. If he's single, try to set him up with my daughter. I'll give you a picture.

ABBY

I've never met him. When my grandma died they had some fight over her commemorative World's Fair spoon and never spoke again.

Mrs. Levine gives her a hug.

MRS. LEVINE

We have a plan! You look for the spoon. I'll make you some kugel.

EXT. CEMETERY - MORNING

It's the no-frills area. Graves close together, most don't have headstones. Kestrel, Chase and Mrs. Levine comfort Abby, who wears a loose black dress.

A plain wooden box lies at the bottom of a grave. The plain wooden FUNERAL DIRECTOR taps Abby on the shoulder.

FUNERAL DIRECTOR
Would you like to say a few words?

ABBY
I wrote three drafts of a eulogy
last night, but it didn't have
enough zing. I can't sum up my
mom's life in a few paragraphs.

NORTON PRESSMAN, 45, neatly dressed in a dark suit, walks up
the hill to join them. They watch him approach.

MRS. LEVINE
Abby, did you find the spoon?

Abby whips it out of her purse.

ABBY
World's Fair, 1964. Must be the
Holy Grail of commemorative spoons.

Chase scrutinizes the spoon.

CHASE
Silverplate. It's worth a whole
five bucks on eBay.

ABBY
Maybe the Beatles once used it to
stir their tea.

KESTREL
(whispers)
Or your uncle's a douche.

Norton joins them. He couldn't look unhappier to be there.

UNCLE NORTON
Are you Annie?

ABBY
Abby. You must be Uncle Norton.

Norton answers his iPhone, giving Abby the "I'm on the phone"
wave. Kestrel and Chase exchange a look.

UNCLE NORTON
Pressman here... Randy, I looked
into your home office deduction...

FUNERAL DIRECTOR
Any more people coming?

ABBY

My mother didn't have a lot of friends. She was kind of unhappy. Her husband died. Her acting career never happened. She made friends and then got mad at them over something stupid. It wasn't like she hated people, she just didn't trust them.

FUNERAL DIRECTOR

OK. Now we'll finish up by taking turns covering the coffin.

He shovels some dirt in. Abby moves to stop him.

ABBY

That wasn't my eulogy. I'm supposed to say stuff like she was my best friend and tell some cute story about how we went to the circus and she promised to buy me an elephant if I got all A's on my report card.

FUNERAL DIRECTOR

I'm working for free. This is all you get.

Abby gives up. She turns to Norton, who's typing something into his phone. Abby takes him aside, holding the spoon behind her back.

ABBY

I'm so glad you made it.

UNCLE NORTON

She was my only family.

ABBY

No, she wasn't. You have me.

Kestrel and Chase watch them walk away.

CHASE

He's not gonna help her.

KESTREL

My parents won't let her stay with us. They're fighting and they don't think she has good energy now.

CHASE

My dad's so uptight, he'd never let my girlfriend move in.

KESTREL

Like he has to worry. You guys
haven't even done oral yet.

CHASE

Anything she doesn't tell you?

ON ABBY AND NORTON

UNCLE NORTON

I feel for your situation. But I
was stuck with three kids when I
got remarried. I need less kids in
my life, not more.

ABBY

But I have nowhere to go.

UNCLE NORTON

Aren't there orphanages?

He notices Mrs. Levine staring at him as TWO GRAVEDIGGERS
finish shoveling. Norton reluctantly takes out his wallet and
hands her a twenty dollar bill.

Abby hands it back, and slips the spoon back into her pocket.

ABBY

You might have to tip a valet. I
couldn't live with the guilt.

Abby rejoins her friends. She fights back a tear as she
throws the spoon into the grave. Kestrel puts a comforting
arm around her.

KESTREL

Maybe her next life will be better.

ABBY

I'm not crying for her. I'm crying
for me. How could she leave me with
nothing and nowhere to go?

INT. ABBY'S APARTMENT - LATER

Abby rants into the phone.

ABBY

Maxed out? I just want fried rice.
My mom ordered from you for the
last 10 years...hello?

She slams the phone down and goes into the kitchen.

The bare fridge holds only condiments. Abby pours ketchup into a bowl, adds water and shoves it in the microwave.

The doorbell rings. Abby opens the door. Mrs. Levine barges in. She places a large candle on the table. Encased in glass, adorned with Hebrew lettering.

MRS. LEVINE
I brought you a shiva candle.
You know what shiva is?

ABBY
The Hindu god with the third eye?

MRS. LEVINE
It's the Jewish week of mourning.

ABBY
We weren't religious.

MRS. LEVINE
You should sit shiva, honey. It'll
help you get through this.

Mrs. Levine hands her a yellowed shiva booklet.

MRS. LEVINE (CONT'D)
You can't leave your home, shower
or change clothes for seven days--

ABBY
I'm out. I don't need to add killer
B.O. to my list of problems.

MRS. LEVINE
Do it for your mother.

ABBY
My life is a mess because of her. I
don't see how burning a candle and
being smelly solves anything.

MRS. LEVINE
Just think about it, dear.

EXT. ABBY'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - LATER

Abby makes piles of her mother's clothes, arranged by color.

KESTREL
Which stage of grief is OCD?

Abby dumps out an underwear drawer. A VIBRATOR rolls out.

CHASE

Is that... Would it go to Goodwill?

ABBY

This is a more disturbing mental picture than the one of her being hit by a train.

KESTREL

We need gloves and a garbage bag.

Kestrel picks up a brown shopping bag. Chase grabs it away.

ABBY

Is that my mom's? From the morgue?

Chase nods. Abby dumps out its contents. A purse and two stiletto pumps. A broken heel. Abby looks ashen.

ABBY (CONT'D)

I killed my mother.

SHIVA: DAY 1

INT. ABBY'S APARTMENT - LATER

Abby lights the candle and places it on the table.

MRS. LEVINE (V.O.)

Some believe the shiva candle helps the soul ascend to heaven. Never let it go out. It burns itself out when shiva's over.

Abby covers up the bathroom mirror with a sheet.

MRS. LEVINE (V.O.)

All mirrors have to be covered. Good thing, because you can't shower or wear makeup for the week.

Abby unplugs the TV. The frayed cord breaks and the plug stays in the outlet. She throws the TV in the trash.

MRS. LEVINE (V.O.)

No homework, no TV.

Abby throws a couch cushion on the floor.

MRS. LEVINE (V.O.)
You have to sit on something low
and uncomfortable. That's why it's
called "sitting" shiva.

Mrs. Levine appears before Abby.

MRS. LEVINE
Doll, I have to rend your garment.

Mrs. Levine takes a sewing scissors from her housedress.
Squinting, she holds it dangerously close to Abby's breast.
Abby winces as Mrs. Levine cuts too large a hole in the
material.

The knit material unravels, revealing a large portion of
Abby's bra.

MRS. LEVINE (CONT'D)
I'll sew it later. Looking like a
prostitute isn't part of shiva.

ABBY
Now what happens?

MRS. LEVINE
People come over and pay their
respects. And bring deli platters.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

A man walks down the hall. BLATTA, 50's, with a snarl and
thick foreign accent, looks at Mrs. Levine with annoyance.

MRS. LEVINE
Mr. Blatta, I need my oven fixed. I
have to make soup for Abby in 3C.
Her mother died and she's alone.

BLATTA
Marlene, she die? Girl's there now?

Blatta turns around, then walks towards Abby's apartment.

MRS. LEVINE
What about my oven?

BLATTA
You don't like, you move out. I
rent for ten times what you pay.

INT. ABBY'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Abby reads her shiva instructions. She notices a business card used as a bookmark. It reads: HANNAH LEVINE, ATTORNEY AT LAW. Blatta comes in and closes the door behind him.

BLATTA

Your mama, she owe me rent for three months.

His eyes rest on Abby's exposed bra. She crosses her arms.

ABBY

There's no money. She hadn't worked in six months.

Awkward silence, mercifully interrupted by the doorbell. Abby opens the door, never happier to see Shelby, ASPEN, Chelsea and CHLOE. They carry grocery bags. Blatta leers at them.

BLATTA

Slumber party in panties. Nice.

Shelby slams the door in his face.

SHELBY

Abby! The party starts at 7:30 and you're not even showered?

ABBY

I can't shower and this isn't a party. I'm sitting shiva.

ASPEN

You can do yoga later. A parent-free zone on a Thursday night? You can't hold out on us.

Chloe eyes Abby's shapeless dress.

CHLOE

Your mom's not dressing you anymore. You can wear something from this century.

ABBY

Chase likes the way I dress.

SHELBY

Don't dress for the guy you have. Dress for the guy you want.

Abby starts to rebut, but Shelby waltzes past as Chloe reads a text message.

CHLOE

Sweet! The Dalton Lacrosse team is on their way over. With rum!

ABBY

Exactly how many people are coming to watch me mourn?

SHELBY

Don't know. I have six hundred Twitter followers. Then again, five hundred ninety-nine wouldn't be caught dead in Flushing.

ABBY

No way. Kestrel invited a few of my friends to help me get through this.

Shelby shoves a bottle of vodka at Abby.

SHELBY

This'll help you get through anything.

ABBY

I don't drink. This isn't right.

Kestrel and Chase come in carrying a deli platter. Kestrel stares daggers at Shelby.

KESTREL

Abby's mother just died and you have the nerve to bring your skank--

Kestrel notices Tucker enter, accompanied by other JOCKS.

TUCKER

Hey, Kestrel.

KESTREL

You know who I am?

Tucker flashes her a smile and heads to the booze table. About ten more Bowman kids walk in, dressed in party attire.

KESTREL (CONT'D)

Tucker's inexplicably your friend. Can you tell him that I like him?

CHASE

You don't have a shot with him. Not even with one of your love potions.

KESTREL

Idiot, Wiccans aren't allowed to manipulate others through magic. I prefer more mainstream methods.

She punches him in the arm. He winces. Shelby glugs Smirnoff from the bottle. Kids bring in a keg.

ABBY

Get them out of here. I'm supposed to be grieving.

SHELBY

Abby the wallflower died with your mom. Now you're the girl who threw the most amazing bash in our school's history. Until mine.

ABBY

I don't care. I feel like I'm celebrating my mother's death.

SHELBY

My Dad's Irish. We have wakes to celebrate people's lives. But if you want to mourn with your candle and your tit hanging out, suit yourself.

Abby clutches her torn dress. Chase comes by, beer in hand.

ABBY

Since when do you drink? You said beer tastes like fermented pee?

CHASE

It's an acquired taste.

Chase chugs the bottle. Abby goes into the bathroom. Shuts the door, raises the sheet on the mirror and looks at the mess she is. Kestrel knocks and enters.

ABBY

I finally get to go to a party and I feel too guilty to enjoy it.

KESTREL

Do you want me to get rid of them?

ABBY

The shiva rules are vague on visitors. Clearer on banning meat, shoes and furniture.

KESTREL

Maybe this is what the universe
thinks you need now.

Kestrel dumps a beer over herself.

KESTREL (CONT'D)

I'm pretending I'm drunk so Tucker
can take advantage of me.

ABBY

Why don't you just ask him out?

KESTREL

Actual dating might lead to
meeting my freakazoid parents.
Making out with guys who don't like
me is the plan until college.

ABBY

Genius.

INT. ABBY'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Abby rejoins the party, now wall-to-wall wasted teenagers.
Kids smoke weed. She spots Nick in a corner.

ABBY

What are you doing here?

NICK

I heard there was a raging kegger.
You know your dress is ripped?

ABBY

I'm sitting shiva. My mom died.

NICK

Oh wow. I'm sorry. Are you OK?

ABBY

I'm a lot of things. OK is not one
of them.

A few of his friends join him. A stark contrast to the
sophisticated Manhattan crowd.

NICK

Abby, this is Tony, Richie, Pete,
Mikey and Angelo.

TONY

Look at all this fucking jailbait.

Aspen opens the hall closet door and pukes in it. Abby sighs.

ABBY

Shiva rules say I can't clean that
up. Where's Chase? Chase!

She scans the room, no sign of him. Just wall to wall people.

Abby opens the bedroom door. Completely dark, except for the shiva candle. In the dim light, she sees Tucker on the floor with his pants pulled down, getting a blow job.

ABBY (CONT'D)

Kestrel?

Tucker scrambles to pull his pants up. He jumps out of the way, revealing that his act is being performed not by Kestrel, but by Chase. He looks up, fumbling for words.

ABBY (CONT'D)

Get out. Both of you. NOW.

Abby ducks into the bathroom to be alone, but Chelsea's passed out topless in a puddle of barf.

Abby wanders back into her living room. Kestrel comes over.

KESTREL

I saw Chase leave. Everything OK?

ABBY

I turned him gay. I walked in on
him blowing Tucker.

KESTREL

You can't turn someone gay. There
must be an explanation.

ABBY

Like Tucker was naked and Chase
fell mouth first on his penis?

Abby chugs from a vodka bottle, then makes an uck-face.

ABBY (CONT'D)

Why do people drink this? It tastes
like nail polish remover.

KESTREL

Eat something before you get sick.

ABBY

I had some pizza. I think it made me sick. The mushrooms tasted like shit. Literal shit.

Nick and Pete stumble over. Nick picks up the empty box.

NICK

Fuckin' liar. You ate them all.

PETE

I shroomed two slices for you.

ABBY'S POV:

The room spins and gets blurry. Kestrel morphs into Marlene, colorless complexion, blue lips and skin patches missing from her cheeks and hands.

MARLENE

Ungrateful brat. I'm not even in the ground for a day. Who told you to have a party?

ABBY

My guardian. Oh, wait. You didn't bother to find me one.

MARLENE

Don't use that tone. I'm dead, but I'm still your mother. I sacrificed my career to raise you.

ABBY

If you'd had a job maybe I wouldn't be in this situation now. You didn't tell me we were this broke.

MARLENE

I didn't tell you lots of things. I knew Chase was gay. Why else would I let you date him?

ABBY

You were a mean mother, and you're even worse as a zombie.

MARLENE

You saw the shoe. You did this to me. And now's the part where I eat your brain.

Everything goes black.

TITLE: SHIVA DAY TWO

INT. ABBY'S APARTMENT - EARLY MORNING

F-5 tornado level damage. Chairs tipped over, broken bottles. Kestrel picks up debris with salad tongs. She pokes Abby.

KESTREL

Good morning, starshine.

Abby looks around at the devastation. She notices a hole where the floorboard's pulled away from the wall.

ABBY

What fucktard broke my apartment?

KESTREL

Nick's friends were re-enacting
some MMA fight -- wait...

Something in the hole catches Kestrel's eye. She takes out a pile of papers in a rubber band. She hands Abby the bundle.

ABBY

My mom and Dad's marriage license.

Kestrel looks on as Abby opens one of the envelopes.

ABBY (CONT'D)

It's a letter she wrote to him last
year. Why would she write to a dead
guy?

KESTREL

She's either a medium or your dad's
alive. But the other side tends not
to scribble "return to sender."

Abby tears open a letter and reads aloud.

ABBY

"If you get this letter, pick up
the New York Times. Abby made
National Merit Semi-Finalist."

KESTREL

That was last year. He's totally
alive. I hope he's not a total
Massengill like your uncle.

She stares at the address on the letter, incredulously.

ABBY

He's in Manhattan. I can meet him.

Kestrel picks a letter up from the floor. It has the Manhattan address crossed out and reads: NO FORWARDING ADDRESS. She hands the letter to Abby, who's crestfallen.

KESTREL

You might have to wait a bit.

ABBY

Why would my mother lie to me?

KESTREL

Everyone has secrets.

INT. ABBY'S APARTMENT - LATER

Abby sits on the floor, still holding the letter. The apartment looks almost back to normal. She sighs, bored, watching the candle burn. A tear streams down her face.

INT. HALLWAY - LATER

Abby waits for the elevator. Mrs. Levine exits the trash room.

MRS. LEVINE

You're not supposed to leave.

ABBY

I was literally bored to tears. Anyway, shiva's gonna have to be portable. The SAT's are tomorrow.

MRS. LEVINE

You're not excused? I'll write you a note. Even with my arthritis.

ABBY

I have to take this test. It's what my mother would've wanted.

Mrs. Levine contemplates this and sighs.

MRS. LEVINE

I was going to bring you some whitefish for lunch. At least come for Friday night dinner. You've met my daughter Hannah? She's coming.

ABBY
I'll be there.

INT. SCHOOL - COMPUTER LAB

Abby and Kestrel share a computer. Abby performs a search.

ABBY
It's weird not knowing anything
about him except his name. And that
he lives somewhere he can pick up
the New York Times.

KESTREL
She didn't specify it was the print
version. You can get it online.

ABBY
I don't want to go around the world
in eighty dads. Can we start with
the New York metro area? It's
confusing enough.

KESTREL
That's why the Earth Goddess gave
us Google.

Kestrel types and waits. Two NERD GIRLS enter, whispering and pointing at Abby. She notices and gives them an angry look.

ABBY
Kim, you're gossiping about me? In
eighth grade you ate your boogers.

One girl storms out. The other follows, disgusted. Kestrel reads off the computer screen.

KESTREL
So, ruling out anyone born before
1900, we've got an Olympic High
Jumper in Ithaca.

ABBY
No, I hate gym too much.

KESTREL
In Manhattan, a research physicist,
a life insurance salesman and a
child molester.

Abby looks at the computer screen.

ABBY

A physicist? Cool, I'm fluent in dweeb.

(pause)

What if he's the kiddie fiddler?

KESTREL

Then you're too old for him.

Chase comes over, sheepishly holding a workbook. He taps Abby on the shoulder. She moves away, annoyed.

CHASE

Wanna go over some SAT math? I can help you nail those word problems.

ABBY

I've got one. A train leaves New York at 10:35 AM and kills my mother. How many hours does it take my boyfriend to humiliate me?

Abby leaves angrily. Chase follows, but Kestrel pulls him back.

KESTREL

Let her go. She's got bigger guy problems right now.

INT. SUBWAY CAR - LATER

Kestrel reads a novel, while Abby looks at a map on her phone.

ABBY

I made a map. It's like a walking tour of all of Manhattan's Charles Austins. Think we can hit all seventeen in one afternoon?

KESTREL

I can't do this all day. I have to finish stupid Ulysses by Monday. And it's really boring. It takes me like an hour to read each page.

ABBY

I can't go alone.

KESTREL

Why can't you just call them? There must be hundreds of Charles Austins in the New York Times metro area.

ABBY

If I call it sounds like a prank. I
have more credibility showing up.
Especially if there's a family
resemblance.

Kestrel glances at Abby, ripped dress, greasy hair, still
holding her shiva candle.

KESTREL

You're not exactly making the best
impression in person.

INT. UPSCALE APARTMENT BUILDING - LATER

Abby and Kestrel stand in a doorway. PROFESSOR CHARLES
AUSTIN, 42, is inside his apartment.

PROFESSOR CHARLES AUSTIN

I didn't know a Marlene. Sorry.

He hands them a box of Girl Scout cookies.

ABBY

Cookies and a professor at
Columbia. I'm REALLY sorry you're
not my dad.

He hands her his business card.

PROFESSOR CHARLES AUSTIN

If you apply to Columbia, let me
know.

He smiles and shuts the door. Kestrel grabs the cookies.

KESTREL

He was nice. And cute. And single.

ABBY

There's my science project. I'll
clone my mom and make him my
stepdad.

INT. NASTY APARTMENT BUILDING - LATER

HIPPIE CHARLES AUSTIN closes the door on Abby and Kestrel.
Abby breathes a sigh of relief.

INT. ARTIST'S LOFT - LATER

GAY CHARLES AUSTIN laughs and shuts the door on them.

INT. TOWNHOUSE - LATER

CHARLIE AUSTIN, surrounded by his ANNOYED WIFE and a house full of young CHILDREN, shuts the door on them.

INT. DENTIST'S OFFICE - LATER

Dentist CHUCK AUSTIN shakes his head and ushers the girls out of his office, but gives them each a lollipop.

INT. SEEDY APARTMENT - LATER

BONDAGE CHARLES AUSTIN comes to the door with a ballgag in his mouth. Abby and Kestrel run away.

INT. RENT CONTROL BUILDING - LATER

QUADRIPLLEGIC CHARLES AUSTIN opens the door in a wheelchair.

QUADRIPLLEGIC CHARLES AUSTIN
Sorry. I physically couldn't be
your father.

ABBY
Because of your injury?

QUADRIPLLEGIC CHARLES AUSTIN
Until last year I was a woman.

EXT. BROWNSTONE - LATER

A weary Abby and Kestrel wait in front of the door.

ABBY
This Charles Austin is the one.
He's the same age as my dad and he
went to my mom's high school.

KESTREL
Remind me to change all my privacy
settings.

The door opens. CHARLES AUSTIN, African-American, looks at them questioningly.

ABBY
Is Charles Austin here?

BLACK CHARLES AUSTIN
That's me.

ABBY
Is there anybody else in your
household named Charles Austin?
Charlie? Chuck? Chaz? Chip?

BLACK CHARLES AUSTIN
Just me. Can I help you?

ABBY
Did you know a Marlene Pressman in
high school?

BLACK CHARLES AUSTIN
The name sounds familiar.

KESTREL
Did you know her...like in the
Biblical sense?

He shuts the door on them.

ABBY
Let's call that a no.

As they leave, Abby grabs the cookies away from Kestrel. They
walk up the pretty Manhattan street and sit on another
brownstone stoop.

KESTREL
That was number seventeen. There
has to be a better way.

Abby looks through her papers.

CLOSE ON

The marriage license application. There's a social security
number next to Charles Austin's signature.

ABBY
Can you get someone's address if
you have a social security number?

KESTREL
I can't. But I know who can.

INT. CODY FERTITTA'S APARTMENT - LATER

Cody's room is cluttered, full of books, video games and action figures. He lounges in front of a giant computer setup. Abby and Kestrel both stand as far away from him as they can and still be in the room.

CODY

You can background check people online. It's like thirty bucks.

ABBY

I don't have thirty bucks. Or a credit card. Can you do it?

CODY

A first grader can do it. I'll just need payment up front.

He types a few commands onto his keyboard. A "searching" window pops up.

ABBY

I told you I don't have any money.

Cody looks her up and down, settling on the bra peeking through her black dress.

CODY

I accept tits.

ABBY

You're not touching me.

CODY

I'll take a handy.

ABBY

(turning to go)

I'll find thirty dollars somewhere.

CODY

Wait. I'll touch them over your clothes.

Abby turns around. Maybe she can endure that.

KESTREL

You don't need to be traumatized more. Cody, you can grope me instead.

CODY

Sorry, no fat chicks.

KESTREL

Fuck you.

Kestrel glares at him fiercely. Abby stands in front of him.

ABBY

Just get it over with.

Cody gleefully puts both hands out. He slowly moves one hand towards the hole in her dress. She cringes. Suddenly, the door opens. Cody drops his hands.

An elderly woman pops her head in.

WOMAN

I made chocolate pudding. Without the skin, the way you like it.

She notices the confused girls.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

I didn't know you had friends over.

Cody looks very uncomfortable.

CODY

Well, I do. So get out.

KESTREL

Don't talk to your grandmother like that.

WOMAN

I'm not his grandma. I'm Cody's baby-sitter.

She leaves. Abby and Kestrel burst out laughing. The screen notifies them it's found a match. A print button comes up.

KESTREL

OK, print it and we're outta here.

CODY

We had a deal.

ABBY

Print it or every girl at Bowman will know about Mary Poppins over there.

CODY

I'm not the only kid with a nanny.

KESTREL

You're the only one with a baby-sitter. Waaaaaah.

He prints the address and shoves it at them. Abby takes it and leaves. Kestrel lingers and twists Cody's nipple.

CODY

Ow!

KESTREL

That's for the fat chick comment.

INT. MRS. LEVINE'S APARTMENT

HANNAH LEVINE, late 30's, studiously chic, sits across from Abby at an old table. Lace tablecloth and a plastic cover. Mrs. Levine takes a dish out of the oven.

ABBY

So I'm going to Rochester tomorrow after the SATs.

HANNAH

Does your dad know you're coming?

ABBY

I decided not to call. Didn't want to lose the element of surprise.

MRS. LEVINE

What'll I do without you? Hannah never has time for me. But she has time to go to bars and drink like a sailor.

HANNAH

Mom, I keep telling you to move into the city. It's safer and I can see you more often.

Mrs. Levine brings a large plate of meat over and sets it down.

MRS. LEVINE

You work until midnight.

HANNAH

Only when it's busy. I'm usually out by eight.

MRS. LEVINE

That's midnight for me.

She serves Abby some meat.

MRS. LEVINE (CONT'D)
Abby, don't work all the time like
Hannah. That's why she can't get a
boyfriend.

Hannah rolls her eyes at Abby.

ABBY
This looks delicious. What is it?

MRS. LEVINE
Kishka. It's intestines stuffed
with meat and blood.

ABBY
I'll just have the potatoes.

Mrs. Levine picks up the baking dish. She recoils as she
burns herself.

MRS. LEVINE
Ooooh!

Hannah and Abby rush over to the kitchen.

MRS. LEVINE (CONT'D)
It's just a little burn. I'll put
some butter on it.

Hannah takes a stick of butter out of the fridge.

ABBY
Don't put butter on a burn! It
holds the heat in and makes it
worse.

Abby holds Mrs. Levine's finger under the water faucet.

HANNAH
Mom, why didn't you use the oven
mitts I got you?

MRS. LEVINE
They're too bulky. You don't cook
so you don't know. Too many salads.
You'll get anemia. Or the rickets.

HANNAH
This is why I don't come see you.

Abby stands up, uncomfortable with the brewing argument.

ABBY
 I should go study for the SATs.
 I'll stop by tomorrow. Goodnight.

Hannah grunts at her, about to resume her argument.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Abby stops in front of her door. It's padlocked shut.

INT. HALLWAY/BLATTA'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Abby walks past two POLICEMEN standing in the lobby. Mr. Blatta opens the door in a tank top. It's nearly covered by his chest hair. He puffs it out a little when he sees Abby.

BLATTA
 We've been waiting for you.

He motions for the cops to come over.

BLATTA (CONT'D)
 (to cops)
 This is the girl.

COP 1
 Where are your parents?

ABBY
 My mother just died. My father's in Rochester.

COP 1
 Then you're going to live with him?

ABBY
 Yeah. I think so.

BLATTA
 I knew her mother. Father's dead.

ABBY
 He's not anymore. I mean, he's not reanimated or anything, he's just suddenly alive.

COP 1
 Can I get his phone number?
 We have to talk to him about your situation.

ABBY

I don't have it. I've never
actually met him.

COP 2

So he could be dead?

ABBY

No. I don't know. I don't think so.

Abby turns to Blatta.

ABBY (CONT'D)

I thought we were working something
out with the rent? You can't evict
me without a month's notice.

COP 1

A minor child can't live alone.
You have to come with us.

ABBY

I'm not going anywhere. The SATs
are tomorrow.

BLATTA

Let's talk.

He takes her inside the apartment, shutting the door on the
police.

BLATTA (CONT'D)

You pretty like your mother.

ABBY

I can get a job, and pay you the
rent money. Don't throw me out.

BLATTA

Your mama was very nice to me. When
she had no rent, she come to my
apartment when my wife go to her
mother's every weekend. Better than
money.

ABBY

My mother slept with you for rent?
Sick perv!

Blatta's offended, but shrugs it off.

BLATTA

I let you stay. You take me in
apartment and be nice like your
mama.

ABBY

I'd rather live on a park bench.

BLATTA

OK. So you will.

(beat)

What did your mama die from?

ABBY

AIDS.

As Blatta's jaw drops, she opens the door and goes back to
the cops.

ABBY (CONT'D)

Where are you taking me?

COP 1

To people who can find you a
family.

ABBY

Can I get some things from my
apartment?

INT. LOBBY - LATER

Abby exits the elevator. She now has her candle, a small box
of personal effects, and an overstuffed knapsack. Mr. Pham
sees her walk towards the cops.

MR. PHAM

Burglar! She break air conditioner!
Arrest her now!

EXT. MORNINGSTAR HOME FOR GIRLS - MORNING

A drab brick building almost blends in with the overcast sky.

TITLE: SHIVA DAY 3

INT. MORNINGSTAR HOME FOR GIRLS - MORNING

Girls of all ages and ethnicities walk through cheery yellow
halls, dressed in matching pink polo shirts and khakis.

INT. MORNINGSTAR DORM ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Abby, still wearing her black dress, wakes up to find a fresh pink shirt and khakis at the foot of her bed. Along with another copy of the "Dude, Where's My Mom?" book.

ABBY
I'm in hell.

She goes back under the covers. PEPPER, a small 10-year-old girl, gets out of the neighboring bed and pokes her awake.

Pepper glances at Abby's candle. She points to the Hebrew letters.

PEPPER
What does this say?

ABBY
Hmmm. I don't know. "Sucks to be Abby?"

PEPPER
We're not supposed to have candles or matches. Mr. Nunez says yours is special cause it's religious.

ABBY
(groggy)
My mom died. Have to burn it for a week.

PEPPER
I can pray with you.

ABBY
I'm not... I'm burning it because it's my fault she died.

PEPPER
You killed your mother?

Abby suddenly bolts out of bed.

ABBY
Shit, what time is it?

Pepper, scared, runs away. HECTOR NUNEZ, harried social worker, late 30's, enters with a caring smile.

HECTOR
Abby, I'm Hector Nunez. Come with me.

Abby looks at Hector's watch. The time is 8:20 AM. She looks around for her backpack.

ABBY

I have a half hour to get to the SATs. What did you people do with my number two pencils?

HECTOR

I spoke to your school. You're excused from taking them.

ABBY

I don't want to be excused. I've been studying for this frickin' test for a year and a half.

HECTOR

You have more important issues right now--

ABBY

No I don't. I gotta go.

INT. MORNINGSTAR HOME FOR GIRLS - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

She runs past Hector. A GUARD blocks her path.

ABBY

Am I in some sort of jail? You can't hold me against my will.

HECTOR

It's against the rules for Morningstar residents to leave the building unsupervised.

Hector leads Abby down the hall in the other direction.

ABBY

Where are you taking me? A chain gang?

HECTOR

We're going to do something called intake, where a doctor will ask --

ABBY

A psych evaluation? You might want to wait until the murderous rage passes.

HECTOR

OK, take your time. Anyway, before you talk to Dr. Boothe, you should shower and change.

Hector stops in front of a bathroom.

ABBY

Yeah, about that...

INT. DR. BOOTHE'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

DR. BOOTHE, early 30's, an angular woman in a suit from the softer side of Sears, looks through a large book and reviews some forms. Abby sits in a couch across from her.

DR. BOOTHE

I'm a little concerned about your intake questionnaire, Abigail. Your reply to whether you get along with your siblings was "no."

ABBY

That's "n.a." for not applicable.

DR. BOOTHE

And why would you write that?

ABBY

Um..because they don't exist.

DR. BOOTHE

Your descriptions of your family seem to change on your whims. Your father's dead, then he's alive -

ABBY

I know that's not the direction parents usually go, but you have to believe me.

Dr. Booth shows Abby a form from her file.

DR. BOOTHE

Your school faxed this over. You wrote deceased under your father's name. It's from two weeks ago.

ABBY

That's when he was dead. He's alive now.

DR. BOOTHE
So you believe your father's a
zombie?

ABBY
No no no. I just found out he's
alive.

Dr. Boothe scribbles furiously. She returns to the big book.

DR. BOOTHE
And Hector said that you refused to
shower or change your clothes. And
you covered up the mirror in the
dorm room.

ABBY
That's a religious thing.

DR. BOOTHE
Your questionnaire said that you
aren't religious.

ABBY
I'm not except for shiva. This is
the jewiest thing I've ever done.

Dr. Boothe makes a final note and closes her book.

DR. BOOTHE
I'm going to help you.

ABBY
Why do I think this help doesn't
involve getting me to the SATs or
finding my father?

DR. BOOTHE
You have Body Dysmorphic Disorder.

ABBY
You gotta be kidding me.

DR. BOOTHE
You put pressure on yourself in
school, but your body can't live up
to those expectations.

ABBY
(staring incredulously)
Wow. Just wow.

DR. BOOTHE

I know. It took some sleuthing on my part. From your avoidance of social situations and refusal to undress I thought it was anorexia.

ABBY

Right.

DR. BOOTHE

But according to Hector you eat like a truck driver. BDD is still a very dangerous disease.

ABBY

Mmm hmm.

Dr. Booth opens a notebook.

DR. BOOTHE

Do you often think about suicide?

ABBY

Not until now.

INT. MORNINGSTAR HOME FOR GIRLS - COURTYARD - MOMENTS LATER

Hector leads Abby across a courtyard. A FEMALE GUARD opens the door and waves a metal detecting wand over Abby. Hector hands the guard Abby's candle.

HECTOR

Can you keep this up here, Linda?
It's important to her religion.

FEMALE GUARD

Better not be Santeria. Y'all don't pay me enough to clean up chicken heads.

Behind them, ADRIENNE, pregnant and 16. The Guard stops her.

FEMALE GUARD (CONT'D)

No cell phones, Adrienne.

Adrienne takes a phone out of her maternity pants. The guard throws it in a drawer.

ABBY

If I'm not adopted within a month
do I get euthanized?

HECTOR

I hope you're joking. Some families prefer teenagers.

ABBY

Right. Foster families get paid. So older kids are less work for the same amount of money.

HECTOR

Some people are just nice. They're out there.

ABBY

Right now, I find it easier to believe in unicorns.

They step into a room. Stark with bars on the windows.

HECTOR

You're seeing Dr. Reilly, our psychiatrist, tomorrow at nine.

LUISA, a frail girl of 15, steps out of the bathroom, brushing her teeth vigorously.

LUISA

I have Reilly, too. Are you anorexic or bulimic?

ABBY

Apoplectic. What's with the bars on the windows? Are we in a bad neighborhood?

LUISA

They're not to keep people out. They're to keep us in.

ABBY

How sturdy are they?

LUISA

Very. I tried.

Luisa's frail arms shake a bar.

ABBY

This place is horrible.

LUISA

It's actually not that bad. Beats going to school.

ABBY
Yeah, having options in life sucks.

LUISA
I know, right.

She look around and whispers.

LUISA (CONT'D)
The worst thing is our roommate,
Crylene. She likes to hit things.

ABBY
By things, do you mean people?

LUISA
You're so smart!

Pepper appears in the hall and motions for Luisa to follow her. She whispers in Luisa's ear. Luisa gives Abby a strange look and walks down the hall with Pepper.

INT. MORNINGSTAR DORM ROOM - LATER

Abby reads her fetal pig lab report. Luisa sheepishly enters. Newspaper covers the mirror.

LUISA
Why did you do it?

ABBY
I'm not supposed to see my
reflection.

LUISA
Like a vampire? Did Satan make you
kill your mother? Pepper said you
told her.

CRYLENE, 17 and built like a linebacker, comes in. She rips the newspaper down, ready to smack Abby.

CRYLENE
If you messed up my mirror I'm
gonna beat your ass.

Abby pours on some fake confidence.

ABBY
(to Luisa)
Yeah, Pukebreath. I killed my
mother. Bitch was asking for it.

CRYLENE
(backing down)
You're the motherkiller?

Abby can't believe this. She puts on her best tough girl act.

ABBY
I'm down with matricide.

LUISA
You can't kill a mattress.

ABBY
(sighs)
It means mother-killing.

CRYLENE
You're lying, bitch. How'd you do
it?

ABBY
With an axe. Gave her forty whacks.

Crylene's not quite sold on this.

LUISA
That seems excessive.

CRYLENE
Why didn't you just stab her?

ABBY
I don't know. I was holding the
axe.

The girls looks at each other and nervously shrug.

CRYLENE
Why'd you kill her?

ABBY
Satan told me to.

CRYLENE
Hell to the no! Satan didn't tell
you shit.

LUISA
I believe her. What else did he
tell you to do?

ABBY
That's between me and Satan.

INT. MORNINGSTAR DORM ROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

Abby sleeps peacefully in her bed, candle burning. Both Luisa and Crylene sit up in their beds, scared, watching her.

INT. MORNINGSTAR HOME FOR GIRLS - RECEPTION AREA

TITLE: SHIVA DAY 4

Abby tries to get the RECEPTIONIST to notice her, but she's entranced watching a Youtube video of a monkey doing kung fu.

ABBY

Abby Austin to see Dr. Reilly.

RECEPTIONIST

Damn. I was supposed to find you.
Your uncle is here to pick you up.

ABBY

My who?

In the corner, a disheveled bearded man, WAYNE, eats a handful of candy out of the dish.

WAYNE

You Abby? I'm your Uncle Wayne.

EXT. MORNINGSTAR HOME FOR GIRLS - CONTINUOUS

Abby's full of questions as they walk up the street.

ABBY

My mom never mentioned you. Are you
on my Dad's side?

WAYNE

He's my little brother.

ABBY

What's he like?

WAYNE

He sings opera so the government
can't hear him. They put a two-way
radio in his head, just like mine.

Abby's excitement fades as she realizes that he's not only a phony, but a little insane. Wayne turns the corner. He walks up to a grinning Nick, leaning against a car.

NICK
Thanks, Wayne.

Nick hands Wayne some bills. Wayne crosses the street.

ABBY
Sorry about the answering machine
message of despair. That place
thinks I'm psycho.

NICK
You might be. At your party, you
thought someone was trying to eat
your brain.

ABBY
It wasn't a party, and I'm not used
to drugs in my food. My mom didn't
even let me have Splenda.

Across the street, Wayne rummages through garbage cans.

ABBY (CONT'D)
Wait. The Department of Orange Is
The New Black will never let some
random homeless guy walk in and
bust me out.

NICK
Not without a letter from your
mother's fake attorney naming Wayne
your guardian. Oh, and this.

Nick takes out a birth certificate.

ABBY
How'd you get my birth certificate?

NICK
I work with illegal aliens. They
have a guy that does birth
certificates, passports, whatever.

ABBY
Good for me, bad for Homeland
Security.

Abby scrutinizes the papers.

ABBY (CONT'D)
My middle name isn't Bucky.

NICK

That's what I called you in fourth grade. Remember your overbite?

ABBY

I hate you. Next time I'm busting myself out. If I have to rip those bars off the window myself.

NICK

You have superpowers I don't know about?

ABBY

I'm really good at science. Maybe I can dose myself with gamma radiation like the Hulk.

NICK

I'm kind of afraid of you now. You're like...braingerous.

Abby playfully socks him. A bus pulls up to the stop.

NICK (CONT'D)

My ride's here. You coming or what?

ABBY

They're going to figure out the fake uncle thing. I have to get to my dad's place before they release the orphan-sniffing dogs.

NICK

And you're getting there how?

INT. NICK'S APARTMENT - LATER

One bedroom. Three guys. Six bongos. Hasn't been cleaned since they moved in. Abby's shiva candle burns on a milk crate.

Nick sits on a stained couch. Abby observes shiva on the floor. Mikey plays a violent video game on his Xbox. Nick opens a beer and offers it to Abby.

ABBY

No thanks. My head's a mess as it is. I keep waiting to miss my mother, and I just don't.

MIKEY

I can't believe your mom got mashed by a train. Did you see it?

Abby shoots him a disgusted look.

MIKEY (CONT'D)

I bet it was fuckin' cool. I saw this movie at the Japanese theater on Northern Boulevard. These 50 hot Japanese schoolgirls jump in front of a subway and all this fuckin' blood and shit hits the platform.

NICK

Dude, shut up. You'd be pissed if one of those girls was your mom.

MIKEY

Yeah, cause she'd be fuckin' hot and I couldn't fuck her cause she'd be my mom and shit.

Annoyed, Abby drinks Nick's beer. She makes a face.

ABBY

It tastes like your floor smells.

NICK

You're not one to lecture on hygiene.

ABBY

In a few days I'll be clean. You'll still be living in squalor.

MIKEY

We live in Flushing, Einstein.

NICK

You can't use big words around my roommates.

ABBY

Squalor isn't a big word. Or even an SAT word.

NICK

It has a Q. That's worth 10 points in Scrabble.

ABBY

You play Scrabble?

NICK

No, I'm just an illiterate fuck who likes to chew on wooden tiles.

Abby shoots him a look.

MIKEY

Dude! Once I went to the emergency room cause I shoved the hat from Monopoly up my nose.

NICK

Mike's orifices are home to a wide variety of foreign objects.

Mikey's video game character dies a bloody death.

MIKEY

I'm gonna smoke a fatty, then go to O'Halloran's. That skank I boned in the bathroom last week's gonna be there. Nick, you comin'?

NICK

We're just gonna watch some TV.

ABBY

I'm not allowed to watch TV.

Mikey takes a joint out of his bag and tosses it to Nick.

MIKEY

We're even for the brews.

Mikey leaves. Nick and Abby stare at the blank TV screen.

ABBY

How often do you smoke? You were always so smart in school.

NICK

And now I'm a loser pothead?

ABBY

No, you're a cannabis connoisseur.

NICK

Hey, genius, I had you believing that some dumpster-diving homeless guy was your uncle.

Abby suddenly turns serious, mulling something over.

ABBY

I need to get to my Dad's in Rochester. Can I borrow bus fare? One way.

NICK
That's awfully optimistic
considering the guy blew you off
your whole life.

ABBY
He might not even know about me.

NICK
(pondering)
I'll borrow a car. If we drive
you'll have a way back when things
blow up in your face.

ABBY
Why are you being so nice to me?
You don't even know me.

NICK
Yes I do. I had a huge crush on you
in fourth grade, remember?

ABBY
We hated each other. You used to
put gum in my hair.

NICK
That's what fourth grade boys do
when they're in love. It was either
that or bash you in the head with
my Power Rangers lunch box.

Nick puts his arm around her. They make out for a beat. He
puts his hand through the hole in her dress, under her bra.

ABBY
Not here. No offense, but your
apartment is a mood killer.

NICK
Pete's fat cashier from Waldbaum's
doesn't think so.

ABBY
Maybe she has different taste in
screensavers than I do.

Abby points to a computer. The screensaver features two hot
naked lesbians making out and rubbing their breasts together.

NICK
That's Mikey's computer. Wanna go
to O'Hallorans?

ABBY

Ick. Let's try someplace new.

NICK

I have an idea. But it depends on what you mean by "new."

EXT. BOWNE HOUSE - NIGHT

A small Anglo-Dutch house surrounded by a high fence. A plaque reads "Bowne House: Built in 1661." The historic landmark has been shut down for renovations.

The front door is boarded up. Nick pries a loose board from the door frame and motions for Abby to enter.

NICK

After you, Madame.

INT. BOWNE HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Low ceilings and original 17th century furniture, much smaller than today's.

ABBY

My mom used to take me here when I was a kid. It's like the only point of interest in Flushing.

Abby's silent and sad for a moment, remembering.

NICK

Don't forget the Quaker Meeting House. Mikey thinks that's where they invented oatmeal.

Abby follows Nick down a hallway, where they climb over a three foot wooden barrier into the historically preserved bedroom. Nick plops down on the bed.

ABBY

This is so wrong. We're not even supposed to touch this stuff.

Nick pulls a bottle of Jagermeister out of Abby's backpack.

NICK

New game. Every time you think you're doing something wrong, you have to do a shot.

Abby takes a drink. They stare at each other. He takes her dress off and she nearly falls off the teeny bed.

ABBY
Check out this bed. America was
settled by Leprechauns.

He takes a condom out of his pocket.

ABBY (CONT'D)
You sure about this. I haven't
showered in a few days.

NICK
Neither did the Dutch settlers.
We're being authentic.

They kiss and disappear under the ancient dutch linens.

INT. NICK'S APARTMENT - EARLY MORNING

TITLE: SHIVA DAY 5

Abby wakes up alone on the living room couch. She checks to make sure the candle still burns. She makes a phone call.

ABBY
Kestrel, I know it's 6 AM, but
three things. One, I'm totally over
Chase. Two, I'm not a virgin
anymore. And three, Nick's taking
me to see my dad today so I'm not
taking the math quiz.

She checks the phone. There's some old gum on it. Ick.

ABBY (CONT'D)
I'll call you later.

Nick opens the door. He has some Dunkin Donuts coffee.

ABBY (CONT'D)
When do you want to hit the road?

NICK
I don't know. Stop nagging me.

ABBY
Don't get all udgy with me.

She tries to kiss him and he turns away.

ABBY (CONT'D)

Did I turn another boyfriend gay?

NICK

Listen, you need a guy who can take care of you and that's not me. It's better we stay friends.

ABBY

You're a crappy friend, getting me drunk at the lowest point of my life just so you could get laid.

NICK

C'mon, it's not like that.

She grabs her candle and heads for the door.

ABBY

It's exactly like that.

INT. SCHOOL - MORNING

Abby and Kestrel sit in math, nervously waiting for their test. Abby looks the worse for wear. Chelsea takes an empty seat next to her, crinkles her nose, then gets up to move.

CHELSEA

Take a shower, corpse flower.

ABBY

(to Kestrel)

Where were you last night?

KESTREL

My Dad had his stupid drum circle over until midnight so I didn't hear the phone.

ABBY

I've been locked in a looney bin and tricked into sex by a delivery boy with a Quaker meeting house fetish.

KESTREL

Speaking of nut jobs, my parents said you could stay with us for a few days until my Aunt Helen comes to visit. They have to focus all their attention on stopping her from baptizing me.

ABBY

That's OK. I want to head up to Rochester after school today. If I borrow five dollars from fifteen people I can buy a ticket.

Shelby walks in. Chelsea hugs her hello. Shelby steps back.

SHELBY

Drugs, not hugs.

CHELSEA

You were all about hugging last week. It's so much work being your friend.

Chelsea stomps off. Shelby turns her sights on Abby.

SHELBY

You're taking this mourning thing seriously. You even smell like a dead person.

She takes out a small perfume bottle and aims it at Abby.

ABBY

I can't wear perfume this week.

SHELBY

Old ladies wear perfume. I wear fragrance.

MS. SCHULTZE, 60's with a German accent, slaps the quiz on their desks. She takes in all that is Abby.

MS. SCHULTZE

Girls, shush, the test has begun.

She leans over and whispers in Abby's ear.

MS. SCHULTZE (CONT'D)

A little spritz will not kill you.

INT. SCHOOL - HALLWAY - HOURS LATER

Abby and Kestrel walk past Ms. Schultze, who shakes her head.

KESTREL

I want to hear all about your wild night of sex and trespassing. Forget the breaking and entering, just tell me about the entering.

ABBY

I don't want to talk about Nick.

KESTREL

What else is there? The Bowne's
collection of 17th century pottery?

Max catches up with them.

MAX

Abby, come with me.

ABBY

Oh neat-o, another chat. Look how
well the last one turned out.

HECTOR (O.S.)

Hi, Abby.

Abby nearly crashes into Hector, then jumps back.

ABBY

I'm not going back to Morningstar.
I'm with my uncle now.

HECTOR

This morning, I found your "uncle"
peeing on my car.

ABBY

It doesn't matter. My father's
alive. I have his address.

HECTOR

If this is true, our staff has to
verify it. And he'll have to come
pick you up. Until then, you belong
to the state. We have to keep our
kids safe.

KESTREL

Until then she's staying with me.

MAX

Problem solved!

He leaves, quickly fleeing the scene.

HECTOR

(to Kestrel)

Not so fast. Are your parents
prepared to take over temporary
guardianship?

Kestrel nods. Hector takes a form out of his briefcase.

HECTOR (CONT'D)

Have them sign and notarize this.
And Abby, you'll have to come back
to Morningstar with me until the
paperwork's done.

ABBY

I just have to get something from
Kestrel's locker.

HECTOR

What is it?

KESTREL

She's feeling not so fresh.

Abby and Kestrel duck around the corner. Abby stands in front
of the boy's bathroom.

ABBY

Hector will never find me here.
Knock when the coast is clear.

KESTREL

They'll look for you at my house.

ABBY

I'll stay at Mrs. Levine's tonight.
Maybe she can lend me bus fare.

INT. BOY'S BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Abby's startled to find Chase washing his hands.

CHASE

What are you doing in here?

ABBY

I got a sex change to win you back.

CHASE

We should talk about what happened.

ABBY

Why? Our relationship was a lie.

CHASE

Not the friendship part. We always
had so much in common. We both like
Kerouac, we both like horror
movies...

ABBY

We both like penises.

Chase rolls his eyes.

ABBY (CONT'D)

If we did it, maybe you'd switch back. How can you say you don't like something you've never tried?

CHASE

It's kind of like pickled pig's feet. You know some people enjoy them, but they just gross you out.

ABBY

So my ladyparts remind you of a dismembered farm animal.

CHASE

I'm sure they're perfectly normal. And they'll be quite popular in the straight guy community.

CODY (O.S.)

I'd inspect Abby's baby cannon.

Supernerd Cody Fertitta exits from the bathroom stall where he's been eating his lunch. Abby looks disgusted.

CODY (CONT'D)

And Chase, if it's any consolation, I was gay for Thor in the issue where he fights the Silver Surfer.

Abby sighs. There's a knock on the door.

KESTREL (O.S.)

Hector's gone.

ABBY

Can you lend me eighty bucks?

CHASE

I only have a five.

CODY

I'll give you eighty dollars if I can watch you pee standing up.

Abby and Chase exit the bathroom. Kestrel hands her the candle.

KESTREL

And thanks for putting an open
flame in my locker.

Shelby walks by, pretends to take a photo of Chase and Abby.

SHELBY

Awkweird!

EXT. ABBY'S APARTMENT BUILDING - LOBBY - LATER

Abby waits for the elevator, holding her candle and some flowers. Mr. Blatta comes out of the stairwell. Abby ducks behind an ugly plant.

The elevator opens. Two EMTs burst out, wheeling a gurney. Hannah chases after them. Abby tries to get her attention.

ABBY

Hannah? What happened? Is she OK?

HANNAH

She had a bad fall and broke her
hip. She can't live here anymore.

Hannah jumps in the ambulance. Abby watches them drive away. She tosses her flowers into the ugly plant's planter.

INT. QUEENSBOROUGH PUBLIC LIBRARY - EARLY EVENING

Abby reads a book, candle beside her. The LIBRARIAN looks at her suspiciously. A HOMELESS MAN sleeps on a couch.

A WOMAN uses the computer. Her back faces Abby. She has Marlene's hair and wears the paisley blouse from Act I.

ABBY

Mom?

The woman turns around. She's withered and obviously homeless. She gives Abby a toothless grin.

ABBY (CONT'D)

I...I thought you were...

HOMELESS WOMAN

That's OK. Sometimes I think I'm
someone else, too.

Abby checks the library hours. Closing time is 6 PM. The clock reads a few minutes before 6. Abby uses the pay phone.

ABBY

Kestrel, I need a place to stay tonight. Even if they're looking for me. I'll call you later.

Abby hangs up. The Librarian sprays Lysol on the phone.

LIBRARIAN

It's six o'clock. We're closed.

ABBY

I'm waiting for my friend to call.
I don't have anywhere to sleep.

The librarian points at the homeless woman in Marlene's blouse, wheeling her shopping cart away.

LIBRARIAN

Sandra can tell you where the shelter is.

EXT. FLUSHING STREET - EVENING

Abby wanders through the streets with her knapsack and candle. Downtown Flushing resembles Chinatown, with Asian language signs dominating the landscape.

She stops at a fast food Chinese restaurant. Looks at the menu's English translations. She shows one to the CASHIER.

ABBY

This is supposed to be "bowl" of soup, right?

The menu reads "BOWEL OF SOUP." The cashier points to a styrofoam bowl and Abby, relieved, puts a dollar down.

EXT. FLUSHING STREET - LATER

Abby continues wandering on a residential street. Ahead, a MASKED THUG snatches a purse from an ASIAN WOMAN. He slams into Abby as he runs away, knocking her candle to the ground.

ABBY

No!

She picks it up from a front lawn, checking the glass for cracks. It's fine. She wipes the dirt off it with her dress.

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

Abby spies an abandoned Buick. She climbs into the back seat. Placing her candle in the cupholder, she shuts her eyes...

INT. BUICK - LATER THAT NIGHT

Abby awakens to the sound of the car being ripped apart. She peeks out the window to see an Asian gang stripping the car.

ABBY

Not my car. Knock yourselves out.

GANG LEADER

Do you live here?

ABBY

No. My other home is a Ferrari. You wouldn't happen to have a gang headquarters where I can crash?

GANG LEADER

We're Asian and commit crimes, so you just assume we're a gang? That's kind of racist.

ABBY

My mother just died and I'm really tired. You probably want to beat me up, but just let this one go, OK?

They say nothing as she gets out of the car.

ABBY (CONT'D)

I'm leaving, so resume your criminal activities... or your arts and crafts project, whatever.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - LATER

Abby passes a home. The lawn's covered in streamers and deflated balloons. In the backyard, there's a bouncy castle.

Abby sneaks into the backyard. Places the candle on a patio table and crawls into the bouncy castle. Sinks into the inflatable floor and looks through the home's window.

A young MOM and DAD tuck a LITTLE GIRL in. Abby takes Nick's joint out of her backpack and lights it with the candle.

Abby rummages through her backpack and finds a bottle of her mother's vicodin. She empties the entire bottle of pills out into her palm and contemplates them.

Across the street, a taxi pulls up and drops a SKANKY WOMAN off. Abby runs over. The DRIVER pulls his window down.

ABBY

I'm going to Bayside. I don't have any cash, but I can give you this.

She holds out the joint. He motions for her to get in.

INT. KESTREL'S HOME - LATER

An occult bookstore meets Pottery Barn. Candles, Celtic symbols, and New Age books are everywhere. Abby and Kestrel sit under a pentagram tapestry typing on a laptop.

ABBY

I've known you four years and this is the first time I've been here.

KESTREL

See why I can't date? Imagine bringing a guy home and the 'rents are casting spells in the nude.

ABBY

If I had parents, I wouldn't care if they were naked, pierced and covered in Aerosmith tattoos.

KESTREL

Sorry. But on the bright side, using the orphan angle will get you into any college you want. That and A's from Bowman--you'll have Yale and Princeton fighting over you.

ABBY

Intriguing. Except I have a dad. And I'll be in a Rochester public school when I apply. Or technically Irondequoit, the actual suburb.

KESTREL

You really want to live in a place called Irondequoit? That's so not you.

ABBY

And Flushing is me? Thanks.

KESTREL

You'll always be from Flushing.
Hey, somewhere there's a girl from
Crapo, Maryland wishing she was
that lucky.

Abby makes a face. A knock at the door. Abby flinches.

KESTREL (CONT'D)

Promise you won't hate me.

Kestrel opens the door and lets Nick in.

ABBY

What's he doing here?

NICK

I was worried about you. Kestrel
promised to call me when you got
here. I said I'd drive you. You
shouldn't go alone.

KESTREL

I'm in if we can stop by school so
I can pick up my chem book.

Nick picks up a pentagram chalice. Kestrel slaps his hand.

ABBY

Thanks for doing this. You were
probably right about staying
friends. I'm moving upstate anyway.

NICK

It's a mistake. If I were you--

ABBY

You're not. You can go home any
time. Finding my dad is my only
chance at having a real family.

NICK

I don't think he wants to be found.

ABBY

Just because you hate your Dad
doesn't mean that mine is a loser.
He might be a college professor.
Though not at Columbia.

KESTREL

Professor Dad was hot. I totally
would've hit that and been your
stepmom.

ABBY

Don't talk like that about the
random professor who'd be my dad if
life was fair.

Kestrel scribbles down a number off her computer.

KESTREL

I have a phone number that matches
your real dad's address.

She hands Abby a phone. Abby hits a few buttons and hangs up.

ABBY

What if I get his machine? Do I say
"Hi, this is the daughter you
forgot about, please save me from
the loony bin."

NICK

Or, "Hey Deadbeat Dad, you owe me
sixteen years of child support."

ABBY

I have to see my dad in person.
Once he sees his own child, he'll
get that paternal hormone rush.

NICK

You really are nuts.

ABBY

Nuh-uh. It's called Prolactin. It
forces fathers to take care of
their offspring. They did studies
on fish and monkeys.

EXT. SCHOOL - EARLY MORNING

TITLE: SHIVA DAY 6

Nick, Abby and Kestrel park in front of the school in Nick's
borrowed CHEVROLET MONTE CARLO. Chase runs up to meet them.

CHASE

I'm coming with you.

ABBY

You don't have to cut school for
me. I've got Kestrel for moral
support. And Nick brought tequila.

Chase pulls Abby aside, giving Nick the stinkeye.

CHASE

You barely know this guy. He might try to take advantage of you.

ABBY

He already did.

Chase is speechless for a moment, then composes himself.

CHASE

Please tell me you used a condom.
You can get gonorrhea in your eyes.

ABBY

That's not how straight people have sex.

Abby notices how hurt Chase looks. She caves.

ABBY (CONT'D)

OK, come with us. Every girl needs a gay BFF.

Shelby gets out of a taxi and joins them.

SHELBY

Wow, seven in the morning. What are you doing here all bright-eyed...

She yanks Kestrel's frizzy ponytail.

SHELBY (CONT'D)

...and bushy-haired? Ditching school for a road trip?

KESTREL

Don't you have somewhere to go? The fat kids aren't going to bodyshame themselves.

SHELBY

Where are you going?

ABBY

No place on your radar. Rochester.

SHELBY

Shut up! Shattered Image is playing in Rochester tonight. It's their last New York appearance. Until my party of course. I have to go.

ABBY

They'll never play your stupid party and you're not coming.

SHELBY

The SATs were a stressfest. I need a road trip. You got to skip them.

Abby glares. Shelby takes out her MasterCard.

SHELBY (CONT'D)

Going to a school where everyone else is broke...priceless.

EXT. SHELBY'S APARTMENT BUILDING - LATER

A doorman building on the Upper East Side. The DOORMAN helps Shelby with a huge Louis Vuitton suitcase.

KESTREL

(whispers to Abby)

Remind me that if I put a curse on her it'll come back threefold.

EXT. CHEVY MONTE CARLO - MORNING

The car winds through New Jersey. They exit at a rest stop.

INT. DENNY'S - LATER

They all sit at a booth, finishing breakfast, Abby's candle the centerpiece. Shelby shoves a Vogue under Chase's nose.

SHELBY

OK, it's down to the Alberta Ferretti empire dress or the Dolce & Gabbana ruched tulle?

CHASE

Was that a question or is your brain generating random words?

SHELBY

Use your Queer Eye to pick my party dress.

ABBY

Just because he blew Tucker doesn't make him a Project Runway judge.

CHASE
I think they're both butt-ugly.

SHELBY
You're the worst gay in ever.

Shelby storms off. The WAITER leaves the check.

KESTREL
Shelby forgot to leave us her
credit card.

NICK
Let's ditch. We'll pretend we're
going to the gift shop, then run.

Nick and Abby leave the table, then run outside. Chase gives Kestrel a concerned look, then takes out his wallet.

CHASE
My people don't do well in jail.

EXT. DENNY'S - MOMENTS LATER

Nick and Abby sit in the car. Shelby puts a package in her suitcase.

ABBY
You bought something at Denny's?

SHELBY
An ironic T-shirt for my meeting
with MTV about live-streaming my
Sour Seventeen.

EXT. CAR - LATER

They enter Pennsylvania. A sign tells them so. Shelby sleeps, squishing Kestrel who reads a book. Chase is on his cell.

CHASE
(into phone)
Gotta go, Dad. Yeah, we're heading
upstate now. When Abby and I get to
the campground I'll call you.

He hangs up. Abby turns around.

ABBY
Am I your beard? Just tell your
parents we broke up.

CHASE

My Dad will freak so I need it to be the right time.

They pull up to a rest stop. Nick gets out.

NICK

Gotta piss.

Nick and Kestrel take off for the rest rooms.

ABBY

I'll wait here.

CHASE

Me too. This place is serial killer central.

ABBY

You think everyone's a serial killer. If you were right, New York would have a population of three.

Shelby gets out of the car. Abby puts her feet up on the dashboard. Shelby looks disapprovingly at her flip-flops.

SHELBY

Your toenails are an atrocity.

Shelby tosses her some pink nail polish. She walks off.

CHASE

They're gonna find Shelby's head in Nick's freezer. We should find out who this car is registered to--

Chase opens the glove compartment and a gun falls out. Abby picks it up and examines it.

CHASE (CONT'D)

How much do you know about Nick?

ABBY

It's probably for protection.

She opens the nail polish and paints pink flowers on the gun.

ABBY (CONT'D)

Daisies or roses?

CHASE

I know you've been through hell, but drinking, the dine and dash, this isn't you.

(MORE)

CHASE (CONT'D)

Things you do now could ruin the whole rest of your life. You're stronger than this.

ABBY

A lecture on strength from the guy afraid to come out to his dad.

INT. REST STOP STORE - SAME TIME

While the cashier isn't looking, Nick slips some snacks under his coat. As he leaves, the cashier eyes him suspiciously.

EXT. CAR - AFTERNOON

They pass into New York State, through the Poconos. From out of nowhere a police car turns its sirens on. Nick floors it.

NICK

I knew that cashier was gonna call the cops. I stole the Cheetos.

KESTREL

Since when does Cheeto-lifting get you a high speed chase?

NICK

I may have also stolen the car. Abby, take the wheel.

ABBY

I don't know how to drive!

Abby grabs the wheel as Nick takes the gun out of the glove compartment and hides it under his seat. Chase rips off his undershirt and waves it out the window.

CHASE

I surrender! I'm a hostage!

Frightened, Abby tries to steer. She gets on the highway going in the wrong direction. Cars swerve to avoid her.

NICK

Can't you read signs?

ABBY

"Wrong Way" can mean anything!

Nick grabs the wheel and gets them off the exit ramp. He takes the car into a wooded area and shuts off the lights.

ABBY (CONT'D)

You said you borrowed this car.

NICK

I did. I just didn't tell my dad.

CHASE

What if the cops find us again?

SHELBY

Don't worry about them. I'll flirt.
It got me through my klepto phase.

ABBY

You can't flirt your way out of a
crime.

SHELBY

When you cross your arms, it lifts
your boobs up. Works every time.

Shelby crosses her arms. Kestrel rolls her eyes and gets out.
She spies something next to the wheel.

KESTREL

I think we hit something.

She picks it up a small creature.

KESTREL (CONT'D)

It's a baby possum. He's alive.

SHELBY

Awww. Every animal has cute babies
except humans.

ABBY

Looks like a broken leg.

NICK

This is ridiculous. Something's
gonna eat it anyway. Let's go.

KESTREL

No. It's our responsibility to take
care of all living creatures.

NICK

It's a possum. It doesn't
contribute anything to the world.

KESTREL

Neither do you. If you broke your
leg we wouldn't leave you to die.

Shelby takes a swig of Nick's tequila.

SHELBY

Let's call him Jose Cuervo.

KESTREL

Sorry, Jose, I don't have my
healing herbs.

Abby takes a roll of tape, handy for shiva mirror-covering,
out of her bag. She grabs Shelby's tequila, using it to
sterilize Jose's leg. She tapes the injury, forming a cast.

SHELBY

How do you know how to set his leg?

ABBY

When we had cable my mom watched
all the plastic surgery shows. I
could give Jose a mean boob job.

INT. DINER - GENESEE FALLS - EARLY EVENING

The candle is on the table. Jose Cuervo is curled up next to
Kestrel. The waitress, SUZETTE, 40-ish and pear-shaped,
refills their water. Chase, on the phone, wanders away.

Shelby points at Suzette's disproportionately large rear.

SHELBY

It looks like her ass is pregnant.

KESTREL

Do you have to be so shallow?

SHELBY

Sorry, I forgot that you have butt
babies, too.

Kestrel throws a ketchup bottle at Shelby's face.

SHELBY (CONT'D)

A cheeseburger wasn't enough? Now
you have to eat my face?

Nick gets up.

NICK

This is the first time I've ever
been turned off by a girlfight.

EXT. DINER - ROCHESTER - PARKING LOT- CONTINUOUS

A view of the river, with the waterfall nearby. Nick takes the license plates off the Monte Carlo.

ABBY

Not that I doubt your ability to evade arrest, but if I'm caught in a stolen car I'm the one who gets locked up.

Nick playfully puts his arm around her as a gust of wind blows. She clutches the candle closer.

NICK

You're shivering. Sit in the car.

They get in, Abby in the driver's seat. He hands her the key.

NICK (CONT'D)

Want a driving lesson?

ABBY

Aren't you gonna hot-wire it?

NICK

Wise ass. Put it in drive.

The car moves at about 5 mph around the parking lot.

ABBY

I'm driving! How am I doing?

NICK

Great. For a 90-year-old.

They drive to the other side, a slope overlooking the river.

NICK (CONT'D)

Just stop the car. We'll leave parking for another time.

She shifts the gear. Nick smiles.

NICK (CONT'D)

When you concentrate, you get these little furrows on top of your nose.

ABBY

Yay. Future wrinkles.

She opens her eyes really wide to combat the wrinkles.

Chase holds the shiva candle, Shelby holds a paper bag and Kestrel holds Jose Cuervo. They walk toward the car. In the b.g., the waitress locks up the diner.

SHELBY

I have to get to my suitcase.

Nick opens the trunk. She shoves a bag in her suitcase.

SHELBY (CONT'D)

Shattered Image is on at Cooper's
Bar in a half hour.

ABBY

Tough. We have to get to my dad's.

SHELBY

Your father will be there tomorrow.
My band won't.

She points to her purse on the backseat.

SHELBY (CONT'D)

I'll leave you cab fare.

Abby leans against the car, standing up to Shelby.

ABBY

We're going to my father's.

Suddenly the car starts to roll.

NICK

Watch out! It's in neutral!

Nick and Chase hold onto the doors, but it's too late. The car falls into the river and heads to Genesee Falls.

The group runs alongside the river, only to watch the Monte Carlo go over the falls and into the rapids.

NICK (CONT'D)

FUCK! Why wasn't it in park?

ABBY

I thought Neutral meant it didn't
move forward or back.

NICK

How can you be such an idiot? Did
you even put on the parking brake?

ABBY

What's a parking brake?

EXT. DINER - ROCHESTER - HALF HOUR LATER

Abby and Nick sit on a curb, glaring at each other.

ABBY
Think they found a phone?

NICK
We're all out of batteries and the
chargers were in the car.

Lights come up the pitch black road. A car pulls up into the parking lot, driven by an ELDERLY MAN and an ELDERLY WOMAN.

ELDERLY MAN
Is the diner closed?

Nick suddenly pulls his gun.

NICK
Get out of the car!

The terrified couple get out. Nick sees the pink flowers.

NICK (CONT'D)
What the fuck did you do to my gun?

ABBY
Put it away. This is crazy.

NICK
Hold it while I get their keys.

ABBY
I won't hold a gun on them.

NICK
Then you take their keys.

Abby doesn't move.

NICK (CONT'D)
You've played by the rules your
whole life. Where did that get you?

Chase, Shelby and Kestrel return. Chase holds the candle. Abby looks back and forth between Nick and Chase. Her eyes settle on the candle, flickering in the breeze.

CHASE
Abby, are you stealing a car?

ABBY
Yes. Gun, please.

Nick hands the gun over to her.

NICK
Good girl. Insurance covers it,
nobody loses here.

Abby walks over to the driver's side of the vehicle. The old woman holds out her keys. Abby puts the gun in her backpack.

ABBY
Go on, old people. Get out of here.

Nick glares at her. The elderly couple peels out of the parking lot at 80 mph. Nick loses it.

NICK
That car was our only way out.

ABBY
Grand Theft Auto? This is our
lives, not a video game.

NICK
Give me the gun.

ABBY
Pry it from my cold dead hands.

NICK
Don't give me attitude. Not now.

ABBY
What about your attitude? Poor Nick
has a shitty drunk Dad. A
convenient excuse to drop out of
school and lay around your crappy-
ass apartment with guys so stupid
they actually make you feel smart.

NICK
You won't survive here without me.

ABBY
Don't flatter yourself. You were
just my ride.

Nick storms off into the woods. Abby sadly watches him go.

EXT. ROCHESTER DINER - LATER - NIGHT

They all sit in front of the diner, dejected.

KESTREL

Maybe the waitress will give us a lift when she gets in.

SHELBY

I didn't drive for six hours with you losers to miss Shattered Image. According to their last tweet, they left the Holiday Inn Schenectady at seven tonight. If they drive 65--

ABBY

And we care because...?

SHELBY

They pass over the bridge in five minutes. We'll have to run four miles per hour to intersect them.

KESTREL

And I thought your only math skills were converting european shoe sizes into American.

SHELBY

My Dad was a professor at MIT before he invented that schmegeggy that made him a millionaire.

CHASE

You're the one ruining the bell curve in Schultze's trig class?

SHELBY

A girl can't be good at math? Sexist.

CHASE

Homophobe.

EXT. ROCHESTER STREET - FIVE MINUTES LATER

Out of breath, Abby struggles to keep up.

SHELBY

Hurry up! We're gonna miss them.

ABBY

Come on, I'm carrying hot wax.

SHELBY

Then wax your facial hair. It'll make you more aerodynamic.

Abby touches her upper lip.

CHASE
You can only see it in the sun.

Abby shoots him a look and puts her thumb out.

SHELBY,
If you want guys to stop, that's
not the body part that works.

They see headlights in the distance. Shelby takes off her top. Chase stares at Shelby's breasts, then shrugs.

CHASE
Yup, I'm gay.

SHELBY
Kestrel, hide behind that tree.

KESTREL
Why?

SHELBY
I'm a ten and Abby's a seven. Men
average out the attractiveness of
women, so you being a three brings
our hotness level down.

KESTREL
Watch it. We have a firearm,
wilderness and two people who'll
cover for me.

A tour bus comes along, covered in a large Shattered Image logo. Shelby tries to flag them down. The bus keeps going.

SHELBY
Kestrel ruined it.

KESTREL
Did you ever think that a crazy
naked chick in the wilderness
creeped them out?

SHELBY
They don't brake for bad hair.

Kestrel pulls back to punch Shelby and Abby catches her.

ABBY
Stop it! Kestrel, calm down.
Shelby, get dressed. We have to
figure out how to get to my dad's.

KESTREL

There's a gas station a half mile
from the diner.

SHELBY

Cooper's is in the other direction.

ABBY

Then you go. I don't care.

Abby steps about a foot away. Kestrel joins her. Chase
hesitates, then joins them. Shelby grabs Abby's candle.

SHELBY

I'm not walking there alone.
You go with me to Cooper's, or I
swear I'll blow this out.

ABBY

I misjudged you. I thought the
bitch thing was just an act.

EXT. COOPER'S - LATER

A trendy bar, across from the Genesee River. A long line in
front, manned by a BOUNCER. They stand outside the bar,
dejected.

SHELBY

I can't believe that guy didn't let
us in. What've they got to lose?

CHASE

Their liquor license.

Shelby glares. In the alley, a door opens. A goth-looking
guy, MILOS, steps out and lights a cigarette.

KESTREL

That guy totally doesn't look 21.

SHELBY

That's Milos. He's the drummer.

Kestrel gets up.

SHELBY (CONT'D)

Forget it. He has bodyguards.

Kestrel flips her off and approaches him. She points to a
tattoo on his arm, a sun flanked by two crescent moons.

KESTREL

We match.

She pulls up her jeans. The same tattoo is on her ankle.

MILOS

Symbol of the Goddess. Wicked.

KESTREL

My parents made me get it when I
was six. That's child abuse, right?

Kestrel waves them over. A BOUNCER intercepts.

MILOS

It's OK, they're with the band.

Kestrel pulls Abby over.

KESTREL

She's with me, and so's the guy.
I don't know who the bimbo is.

SHELBY

I'm smokin' hot Shelby. You wrote
that song about me.

MILOS

I wrote it about my dachshund.

CLARK WILKES, lead singer and band sex symbol joins them.

CLARK

Paul's wife just went into labor
and he took off to the airport.

SHELBY

Patti that he met in a guitar
store? She's having twins, naming
them Schooner and Puck.

CLARK

You're seriously creeping me out.

MILOS

We can't play without keyboards.
Tell Frank we're canceling the gig.

SHELBY

Will Paul be back next month? I
want you guys to play my Sour
Seventeen party.

CLARK
We don't do kids parties.

SHELBY
(fed up)
Your music is derivative and you're
not nearly as hot in person. I'm
getting a DJ.

Shelby walk away and flips them off. Chase shrugs and follows her. Abby hands Jose Cuervo the possum to Chase.

CLARK
Cute Chihuahua.

MILOS
That is a white-eared opossum.

Kestrel smiles at him. She crosses her arms, practically thrusting her breasts out of her shirt.

KESTREL
Can we get a ride to Abby's dad's
place? We're stranded. I won't bore
you with the details.

MILOS
Sure. And you could never bore me.

Kestrel and Abby exchange a look. Abby stifles a giggle.

EXT. COOPER'S - MOMENTS LATER

Chase, holding Jose Cuervo, sits next to Shelby by the river. Suddenly, Chase notices a Louis Vuitton bag float by.

CHASE
Isn't that your suitcase?

SHELBY
Let it go.

Chase leans over the river, as if he's waiting for luggage at baggage claim. He lifts it out, splashing himself with mud.

CHASE
Can I borrow your Denny's T-shirt?

Chase starts to unzip the bag and Shelby kicks it away.

SHELBY
Get away from my bag.

Chase quickly zips open the bag. No clothes or souvenirs, just ziploc bags filled with greenish-yellow liquid.

ABBY
Is that puke?

Horrified, Shelby turns around to see Abby, Kestrel, Clark, and Milos staring at her barf-filled suitcase.

INT. TOUR BUS - CONTINUOUS

Abby joins Shelby in the back of the bus.

ABBY
Morningstar has people you can talk-

SHELBY
I don't have a problem. I'm trying to lose weight before my party.

ABBY
Why do you carry the bags with you? That's kind of gross and crazy.

SHELBY
I toss them once a week at the dumpster on 63rd and Lex.

ABBY
You're really sick, you could die.

SHELBY
If this gets out at school I'd rather be dead anyway. Go away.

Milos exits the bus restroom across the aisle. He zips up his pants. Kestrel follows, buttoning her blouse. She walks over to Shelby, who braces for revenge. Instead, Kestrel hugs her.

KESTREL
Who knew that the most useless person in my life would lead me to my soulmate?

EXT. TOUR BUS - HALF HOUR LATER

A row of small, well-kept houses. Abby holds her candle and backpack. Kestrel, Chase and Milos stand with her.

CHASE
It's after midnight. We can wait.

ABBY
I've come this far.

CHASE
What if it doesn't work out?

ABBY
He's my Dad. He might not turn out to be the best, but we'll figure it out. After all he's a brilliant scientist, or Olympic track star.

KESTREL
What if he's the child molester? Do you still have Nick's gun?

Abby pats her backpack.

CHASE
It could accidentally go off.

ABBY
I can't be afraid of everything. It's too much work.

CHASE
You're right. Milos, can I borrow your phone?

Milos hands over the phone and Chase makes a call.

CHASE (CONT'D)
(into phone)
Oh, hi Dad. Sorry to call so late. Just wanted to say I'm gay...Not happy gay, the sex with guys kind... Hello?

Chase gets back on the bus. Kestrel points to a covered car.

KESTREL
That's a Porsche under there. Some incentive to learn to drive.

They hug goodbye.

KESTREL (CONT'D)
We can wait. Make sure everything's-

ABBY
Go home. I'll be fine. I know it.

EXT. CHARLES AUSTIN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Abby watches the bus turn around the corner. She rings the doorbell. Each second is an eternity. A light goes on. Finally the door opens.

CHARLES AUSTIN, 45, sloppy and aging badly. He sees Abby in her filthy ripped dress, holding her candle, and is a little frightened. Groggy, he rubs his eyes.

ABBY

You don't know me, but I'm your daughter.

CHARLES

Abigail?

ABBY

You got my name right. Dad one, Uncle Norton, zero.

He motions for her to come in. The house is messy, with unwashed dishes and unmatched furniture.

Abby looks at photos hanging in a montage. Charles in Hawaii. Charles golfing with bald, chubby men. Charles, a young boy and girl, and Santa Claus.

ABBY (CONT'D)

Sorry to ambush you. I thought it would be weird to call. As opposed to randomly turning up in the middle of the night.

CHARLES

It's OK.

ABBY

Are those photos of your kids?

CHARLES

Eric and Lucy. They live in New Mexico with their mom.

He sits at the dining room table. Abby joins him.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

So what kind of pop would you like?

ABBY

You know, someone who's fun, smart, would teach me to play catch --

CHARLES

I meant soda. We call it pop here.

ABBY

Um. No on the carbonated beverage.

Charles nods. Abby notices him staring at the candle, now on the table. She holds it up jokingly.

ABBY (CONT'D)

Hey, look, I'm Diogenes searching for an honest man.

CHARLES

You're who?

ABBY

Just took mythology. He carried a candle and invented cynicism. He rocked.

CHARLES

I know it's a shiva candle. My mom was Jewish.

ABBY

As am I! Other fun fact? I usually smell better than this. I bathe often. But not enough to waste water, because I care about the planet. Are you eco-friendly?

CHARLES

Not particularly.

ABBY

Good. I'm actually allergic to the environment. I recycle because of peer pressure.

Charles just stares. He couldn't be more awkward.

ABBY (CONT'D)

Ummm...new topic. Any diseases run in the family? I always wondered about my medical history.

CHARLES

Diabetes, and my mother died of colon cancer. So eat fiber.

ABBY

There's something we have in common. The shiva's for my mom.

CHARLES

I'm sorry.

ABBY

It was an accident. I'll spare you the gory details. Which they literally were.

CHARLES

As you know, we weren't that close. I didn't even tell her I moved back here.

ABBY

She said you died when I was born.

CHARLES

Your mother and I got married when she found out she was having you. She thought if you knew I left, you'd have issues with guys.

ABBY

I think dating guys causes my issues with guys.

There's another moment of awkward silence.

ABBY (CONT'D)

So, what kind of work do you do?

CHARLES

I sell computer equipment.

ABBY

Education?

CHARLES

Rochester Community College.

ABBY

Can I come live with you?

CHARLES

My life is very complicated. My second wife's lawyer hosed me on the child support. I can't take on another expense.

ABBY

You could sell your Porsche.

CHARLES

Never! That's my baby.

ABBY

As opposed to...?

CHARLES

It's not just the money. My kids visit every summer. After a week, I'm ready for them to go back.

ABBY

Here's the thing. If you don't step up, I go back to the group home. There was a huge mix-up and they think I belong in the psycho ward.

Charles looks nervous.

ABBY (CONT'D)

Great. Now you think I'm an escaped psycho and if I live here I'll make some giant skin suit out of you. But if I go back there, I can't finish high school. I've worked too hard. It's not fair.

CHARLES

Lots of things in life aren't fair.

Abby looks at the sink full of dishes.

ABBY

I can take care of the house for you. I excel at laundry.

Abby gets up and pleads her case.

ABBY (CONT'D)

When your kids visit, I can take them to all the lame kid things so you can hang with your golf buddies or pick up chicks.

CHARLES

(pondering)

OK. We can give it a trial run.

She notices a framed baby picture on the sideboard.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

That's you. People always tell me what a beautiful daughter I have.

ABBY

Thank you for this. And I'll follow every rule you have in your house.

CHARLES

The only rule is don't drive my car.

ABBY

I'm not the car-stealing kind of girl.

CHARLES

I know. They said you were a good kid.

Abby stops in her tracks.

ABBY

Who told you that? My school?

CHARLES

After your mother died they called me. She put me down as your emergency contact.

ABBY

Did you know about the group home? Getting kicked out of my apartment?

Charles says nothing.

ABBY (CONT'D)

My guidance counselor didn't tell me you were alive.

CHARLES

I told him not to. I didn't want to get involved.

Abby looks at her picture, then at Charles.

ABBY

The group home is one of the worst places I've ever been. But at least people pretended to care about me. And I'm taking my picture.

Charles picks it up before she can grab it.

ABBY (CONT'D)

Give it to me. I'm your daughter. But you'll never be my father.

CHARLES

I can't. It means a lot to my kids.

ABBY

You tell them I'm dead, too?

Abby runs to her backpack and pulls out the gun.

CHARLES

Shit! What are you doing?

ABBY

Maybe I am psycho. Hand over the picture.

Charles notices the pink flowers on the gun. He's relieved.

CHARLES

For a minute I thought that was a real gun.

Abby fires, breaking the glass. Charles drops to the floor.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

You almost shot my hand off! What do you want? Money?

ABBY

No.

She grabs the car keys dangling from a hook.

ABBY (CONT'D)

I will take your Porsche. And if you call the cops I'll say you molested me. There's already a Charles Austin in the system. Talk about making life complicated.

EXT. ROCHESTER STREET - CONTINUOUS

Abby gets into the Porsche. But she can't drive a stick, so she goes nowhere. Frustrated, she gets out. She picks up a baseball bat from the kid paraphernalia by the garage.

She smashes the windshield.

ABBY

This is for being abandoned by my father twice.

She breaks a headlight.

ABBY (CONT'D)

For my mother being irresponsible.

She breaks another.

ABBY (CONT'D)
For falling through the cracks.

Smash. The back taillights.

ABBY (CONT'D)
For always feeling like I'm not as
good as everyone else.

Smash. Dents the hood.

ABBY (CONT'D)
For Mother's Day, Father's Day,
Thanksgiving and every other
fucking family holiday.

Smash. The hood. Harder.

ABBY (CONT'D)
For nobody to give me away at my
wedding.

Smash. The hood pops open.

ABBY (CONT'D)
For nobody to be proud of anything
I ever do.

Abby attacks the engine. She notices a fuel hose has
ruptured, leaking gas across the engine.

With an eerie calm, she picks up a twig, uses her candle to
light it, and tosses it into the hood. She walk away.

As the car explodes in the background, Abby's expression
turns to sadness. She can't stop the tears. She crumples to
the ground, completely breaking down after the hellish week.

Cops pull up. SIRENS BLARE.

TITLE: SHIVA DAY 7

INT. MORNINGSTAR HOME FOR GIRLS - DR. BOOTHE'S OFFICE - LATER

Dr. Boothe sits across from Abby and Hector.

DR. BOOTHE
The rules in our psychiatric
facility are a little different. No
visitors, no phone calls.

ABBY

I can never see my friends?

DR. BOOTHE

You're lucky. Your father agreed to drop the charges if he could terminate his parental rights. Otherwise you'd be in jail.

HECTOR

Abby, it's not so bad here. We have math, english, science classes--

ABBY

You don't even have a science lab.

HECTOR

You don't need one for your GED.

ABBY

And the Ivy League acceptance rate?

DR. BOOTHE

Drug use, destruction of property, carjacking? College will be too stressful. But we have classes in medical billing -- even air conditioning repair.

Abby gets up and walks out into the hall.

INT. MORNINGSTAR HOME FOR GIRLS - HALLWAY - LATER

An angelic blonde girl, JENNY, 5, sits sadly in front of a classroom. Abby puts a comforting hand on her shoulder.

ABBY

It'll be OK. You'll find a nice family to adopt you in no time.

JENNY

Fuck you, stupid ugly whore!

She bites down hard on Abby's forearm, then runs away. Abby dashes into her room, wincing in pain.

INT. MORNINGSTAR HOME FOR GIRLS - ABBY'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Abby runs cold water on her bite. She sits down on her bed.

She looks at the freshly pressed black shirt and khakis on her pillow. The candle's almost down to the wick. A note taped to it reads: "Don't tell them I let you keep this. H."

Abby contemplates the bars on her windows. With a sigh, she sadly gets into bed. A mouse dashes across the floor.

MARLENE (O.S.)

You look awful.

Zombie Marlene stands over Abby, more decayed and dressed like a Japanese schoolgirl. Abby sits up, startled.

ABBY

At least my eyes are in their sockets. They're right. I am crazy.

MARLENE

Don't plead insanity. You turn into a drunken slut the minute I'm dead.

ABBY

Don't play the death card with me. You lied about my father. And kudos for picking that winner--

MARLENE

That's why I said he was dead. I was worried about your future.

ABBY

Newsflash! I have no future. I'm stuck here at psycho orphan jail. I'll never go to college.

MARLENE

So stop shiva and stop punishing yourself. It wasn't your fault.

ABBY

But I broke your heel.

MARLENE

I fell. Forgive yourself. Then you'll think of something.

ABBY

You're a figment of my imagination. You can't know things that I don't. Anyway, there's a guard 24/7 and bars on the windows. I can't walk through the wall. I'm not a zombie.

MARLENE

Those are ghosts. I have to rely on
my superhuman strength.

Marlene tears the door out of its frame and lumbers out.

MARLENE (CONT'D)

Bored? Read your shiva booklet.

Abby snaps awake for real. She takes the shiva booklet out of
her backpack. Hannah Levine's card flutters out.

ABBY

Thanks, Mombie.

INT. MORNINGSTAR HOME FOR GIRLS - MOMENTS LATER

Abby approaches the guard, gently holding a mouse.

ABBY

Can I put it in the science lab?
Animals have a calming effect on
violent personalities.

The guard hands Abby a key off her chain.

GUARD

Don't steal nothin'.

ABBY

Like the microscope that's two
magnifying glasses taped together?

INT. MORNINGSTAR HOME FOR GIRLS - ABBY'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Wearing lab goggles, Abby holds the red-hot coil from the
stolen electric BUNSEN BURNER against one of the window bars.

With another hand, she follows a dog-eared page from her lab
textbook. She splashes a cup of water onto the bars.

She wraps the unworn khakis around one of the bars and pulls
with all her strength. The metal bar breaks.

INT. SCHLIEF RULAND WRIGHT SEGAL GINSBERG LAW FIRM - LATER

Hannah's in her office having a cell phone argument.

HANNAH

Ilse, please stay. I know my mother's difficult, but how can a bedridden woman hurl a teacup--

Her ASSISTANT enters.

ASSISTANT

There's some homeless girl to see you. Her candle's gonna set off our smoke alarm any minute now.

Hannah hangs up the phone.

INT. HANNAH'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Abby sits in a comfy couch across from Hannah's desk.

HANNAH

Your only option is to become an emancipated minor. But you'll need proof of a job so you can support yourself.

ABBY

What if I stay with my friends?

HANNAH

Social workers never accept that. Girls get emancipated to move in with their boyfriends, then break up and wind up out on the street.

ABBY

You have to help me. You went to Bowman. That got you into Princeton, which is how you got into Stanford Law and graduated at the top of your class.

Hannah looks weirded out.

ABBY (CONT'D)

I'm not a stalker-- your mom talks about you a lot. She's really proud. Except you should have kids before you're a dried up old prune.

HANNAH

That's my mother. Before the accident anyway. She can't take care of herself, but she's still feisty.

ABBY

Isn't that good?

HANNAH

No. My mother's fired three night nurses and the agency won't send us any more.

ABBY

She always did so much for other people, it's probably hard for her to be taken care of.

HANNAH

She's getting back at me for making her leave Flushing. Only she would be attached to a place named after a toilet. I need to distract her. Now I see where grandkids would come in handy.

INT. MORNINGSTAR HOME FOR GIRLS - CONFERENCE ROOM - LATER

Hannah and Abby sit at one end of a conference table. Dr. Boothe, Hector, and TREVOR HIGGINS, from the Department of Child Welfare, sit on the other side.

HANNAH

Abby's a smart, motivated young woman. Keeping her in a home like this will ruin her future.

DR. BOOTHE

She's broken out of our facility twice. By forging documents and damaging property. Alcohol, drug use...she needs the structure of this home to build life skills.

ABBY

Sure I had to lie and steal. Do normal people lie? My school lied to me about my father being alive. Do people steal? My landlord evicted me and stole my furniture. Sure I used drugs. My friends are on everything from Ativan to Zoloft. Without health insurance I can't get a prescription.

HIGGINS

But this hearing isn't about your friends. It's about you.

HECTOR
I actually think Abby's fine.

DR. BOOTHE
Hector, we just need to know what's
in the file, not what's floating
around in your head.

HIGGINS
Abby, your argument's compelling.
But it would be irresponsible of me
to grant this petition when you
don't have a place to go.

Abby nods, devastated. Hannah can't take it.

HANNAH
She's going to be my mother's night
nurse and live in my apartment.

DR. BOOTHE
Ridiculous. She's not a nurse.

ABBY
I'll be pre-med. And I took CPR.

HANNAH
My mother would never fire you. She
likes you more than she likes me.

HIGGINS
I don't know about this.

HANNAH
Abby was a model student before her
mom's death. With the stability of
a job and a home, she'll be fine.

DR. BOOTHE
Abby's mentally ill. She hasn't
showered or changed clothes--

HIGGINS
It's shiva. Don't you see the
candle? Dr. Boothe, you should be
ashamed of yourself, making these
kids crazier than they already are.
Ms. Austin, go be emancipated.

Abby jumps up and hugs Hannah. Hector takes her aside.

HECTOR
You can take the SATs this Sunday.

ABBY

Sunday?

HECTOR

For the Jewish kids who couldn't
take it last Saturday for religious
reasons. Shiva qualifies.

EXT. MORNINGSTAR HOME FOR GIRLS - LATER

Abby joins Chase, Shelby and Kestrel. Shelby hands her an
invitation.

SHELBY

I have to go to some stupid bulimia
clinic the next day, so I'm only
having a few people over.

ABBY

Which means the cool crowd bailed?

KESTREL

I'm dating a rock star. We are the
cool crowd.

CHASE

We should celebrate your parole.

ABBY

No can do. I have to take Mrs.
Levine to physical therapy.

Kestrel notices that they're in front of a Thai restaurant.

KESTREL

Can we at least get a spring roll?

ABBY

Sure. I'll even pay for myself now
that my criminal past is behind me.

INT. THAI RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

They all walk up to the counter. Mr. Pham spots Abby.

MR. PHAM

Burglar! We being robbed! Call
police! She break air conditioner!

INT. HANNAH LEVINE'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

A beautifully decorated apartment, spacious for Manhattan. Mrs. Levine is propped up in bed. Abby fluffs her pillows. The candle is next to Mrs. Levine's bed. It's almost out.

ABBY

What do those Hebrew letters mean?

MRS. LEVINE

It says "shiva candle." What did you think it said, "Made in China?"

ABBY

I guess I was hoping for something more spiritual. Or comforting.

MRS. LEVINE

You'll feel better after you take a bath tonight. Did you see Hannah's fancy bathroom? I thought it had two toilets. I almost went number two in the wrong one.

ABBY

My mom dated this guy who had a bidet. She called it a buttwash.

Suddenly a tear streams down Abby's face.

MRS. LEVINE

I'm not so bad. You'll be OK here.

ABBY

I'm not crying for me. I'm crying for her. I really miss her.

MRS. LEVINE

I know. But doctors don't cry. They tell you you're dying and it's like they're saying you have food in your teeth.

Abby wipes her eyes.

ABBY

She'd be happy. She always wanted me to get out of Flushing.

MRS. LEVINE

Why? I lived there my whole life. It's the best place in the world.

ABBY

How many painkillers have you had?

MRS. LEVINE

When my parents moved there,
everyone came from Poland, Ireland,
Italy. With nothing. Their children
made money and moved to the
suburbs. And the new people came.

ABBY

I know. It's the place you always
try to leave.

MRS. LEVINE

Listen. The Chinese, the Indians,
all the rest, they came to do what
my parents did. The people changed,
but the rules were the same.

Mrs. Levine takes Abby's hand.

MRS. LEVINE (CONT'D)

Why do you think you work so hard?
You grew up in a place where you
can make something out of nothing.

Hannah comes in, wearing a sexy cocktail dress.

HANNAH

I don't know why I had to dress up
for you to take me to dinner. You
can't even afford to split a taco.

ABBY

I never said I was taking you.

The doorbell rings.

INT. HANNAH LEVINE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Hannah opens the door. It's Professor Charles Austin, the dad
reject from Columbia. She's shocked.

PROFESSOR CHARLES AUSTIN

You must be Hannah?

HANNAH

And you must be the date I didn't
know I had until now.

The Professor smiles at Abby. Hannah leaves with her date.

MRS. LEVINE
(calling out)
Is he Jewish?

INT. HANNAH LEVINE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - LATER

Abby studies. The doorbell rings. Nick with a bag of food.

ABBY
I didn't order any boiled goat.

NICK
I quit today. Kestrel told me where
you were. Anyone here?

ABBY
Shelby's shopping, Kestrel's with
Milos, and Chase was grounded for
being gay. Are you here to rob me?

NICK
You were right about everything you
said the other night.

ABBY
I couldn't have made it through
this week without you. But I don't
want to live like you. I have to
work. And study. And pay for stuff.
No wonder my mom was so stressed.

They stare at each other for an awkward moment.

ABBY (CONT'D)
Why are you here?

NICK
I'm done delivering Boyang Tang and
going out with my diptard roommates
trying to fuck some girl from the
yogurt store. You make me want to
do something with my life.

He fidgets awkwardly.

NICK (CONT'D)
I'm not the guy with the words and
the feelings. I mean you're used to
being with a gay guy.

Frustrated, he takes his gum out and sticks it in her hair.
She's speechless. They kiss as if it's their first.

ABBY

I promised Hannah no sex here.

NICK

Ick. You haven't showered in a week. I need help with the GED.

ABBY

Help me study math first. Imaginary numbers give me a headache.

NICK

It's a complex number whose squared value is a real number not greater than zero.

ABBY

None of those words even make sense.

NICK

If you multiply something by zero--

ABBY

When am I ever going to multiply something by zero? Why even multiply it? That's just stupid.

PULL OUT to reveal the shiva candle on the entryway table. Just metal and a wick left. It flickers, then burns out.

FADE OUT.