



Splitsville

**Written by
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FADE IN:

SHOT ON VIDEO:

EXT. UCLA - DAY

PAUL, 28, looking perfect in a worn t-shirt, and ROB, boyishly handsome and funny - both talk TO THE CAMERA as they stroll down Bruin Walk. The guys are clearly familiar with one another, and having a good time. They stop in front of SPROUL HALL.

ROB

Here's where we first met Toby.

PAUL

It was like the second day of college, and we were late for Continental Drift and Sea Floor spreading -- and then we see this hot girl race up the steps in front of us, and Rob shoots me this look -

ROB

I didn't know Paul was gay yet.

PAUL

I didn't know I was gay yet.

ROB

Are you gay?

PAUL

(both charming and earnest)
It's a little unclear.

ROB

Anyway, we followed her into her Dante class - and blew off Sea Floor Spreading - and then I got myself partnered with her to do a oral presentation for a class I wasn't in. And - we've all been friends ever since.

PAUL

After she rebuffed your persistent and awkward advances.

ROB

Naturally.

INT. DORM HALLWAY - DAY

CATTER, 27, cute with a voice that carries. She talks to the camera, as well.

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CATTER

Toby lived here - and I lived here -

She points to TWO DOORS directly across one another.

CATTER (CONT'D)

My roommate was constantly making this foul smelling bean soup in a crock pot under her desk - so I started spending more time in Toby's room. And we just became really close.

INT. PIKE FRATERNITY HOUSE - DAY

MOLLIE, 28, pretty and a little conservative, picks her way around beer cans, pieces of clothing, etc. There is clearly a stench.

MOLLIE

Toby and I first met here. I had just started dating Rob. I was still on the fence about him because he kept impersonating Christopher Walken when he couldn't think of stuff to say - but Toby assured me that he was a good guy.

CUT TO:

A PHOTO. Five tan, smiling college kids, in a boat, docked on a lake. Paul, Rob, Catter, Mollie and TOBY, 21 in the photo - a cute, slim brunette.

PAUL (V.O.)

By the time we all went to my folks' lake house, senior year, we were all pretty close -

ROB (V.O.)

Very close. There is a naked, post-skinny dipping version of this photo which has been omitted.

PAUL (V.O.)

But then -

THE CHEESY, OMINOUS "DUHN, DUHN, DUHN" CHORDS -

PAUL (CONT'D)

Toby went to journalism grad school.

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STILL PHOTO OF USC CAMPUS

ROB (V.O.)
Here at USC. The enemy. Where she met
Wes. Also the enemy.

PAUL (V.O.)
We hated that guy.

CLOSE ON CATTER:

CATTER
That guy was a dick.

CLOSE ON MOLLIE:

MOLLIE
Yeah, no one liked that guy.

EXT. SWEETZER AVE. - DAY

Paul and Rob sit on the steps in front of a cute duplex
on an LA street.

PAUL
I guess we kind of hated him because Toby
started spending all kinds of time with
him.

ROB
And we were jealous of his clothes.

PAUL
He has good clothes.

ROB
But when they moved in here together, we
all just started inserting ourselves into
all of their plans -

PHOTO MONTAGE OF:

WES, TOBY, PAUL, ROB, MOLLIE AND CATTER - ALL IN PAJAMAS
MAKING PANCAKES IN WES AND TOBY'S KITCHEN.

THE GANG HAVING A BBQ IN BACK -

THE GANG ALL SQUASHED ON WES AND TOBY'S FUTON, WATCHING A
LAKER GAME -

PAUL
And then, he really became one of us when
we all went back to the lake -

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PHOTO OF THE OLD GANG, PLUS WES, IN THE BOAT AT THE DOCK OF PAUL'S LAKE HOUSE.

PAUL (CONT'D)

And Wes came, too.

EXT. SWEETZER DUPLEX - SAME

Rob and Paul are still on the front steps. Rob pulls out a magazine.

ROB

Of course, now they're big shots.

Rob holds up a copy of NOISE, a glossy men's magazine, and then flips to an advice column inside: "DON'T F*CK IT UP".

The byline reads: WRITTEN BY TOBY PULLMAN AND WES BROWN. And there is a PHOTO of the two of them above the column, Toby smiling, Wes' middle finger blurred out as he flips off the camera.

PAUL

Giving questionably helpful - but certainly entertaining - relationship advice to the lovesick and twisted of our great nation.

CLOSE ON CATTER:

CATTER

Their relationship is amazing. I've never had a boyfriend who's lasted more than five months - including a protracted two week break up process - and they manage to love together, and work together -

CLOSE ON MOLLIE:

MOLLIE

Yeah. Working together. Amazing. Once, right after we got engaged, Rob and I tried to move a sofa together. We couldn't even do that.

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CLOSE ON SANDRA, 58, TOBY'S MOM AND JIM, 62, TOBY'S DAD:

SANDRA

The first time Toby brought him over to the house, they sat on the living room floor with me and helped me organize a scrapbook. He was just -- in.

JIM

As Toby's dad, I guess I should welcome Wes to the family, but he's already a part of it. I hope he knows that.

EXT. SWEETZER DUPLEX - DAY

Paul and Rob are still seated on the front steps. Paul is uncorking a bottle of merlot, and hastily pouring two glasses, handing one to Rob.

PAUL

So, here's to Wes and Toby.

WE SEE A QUICK PHOTO MONTAGE OF:

WES AND TOBY IN A POOL, HE'S TRYING TO LIFT HER IN A LAME FIGURE SKATING MOVE - THEY'RE LAUGHING--

WES AND TOBY IN THEIR GRADUATION CAPS AND GOWNS --

A PUBLICITY STILL FROM THEIR MAGAZINE COLUMN --

HALLOWEEN, AS ADAM AND EVE IN FLESH COLORED BODYSUITS --

HARD AT WORK IN THEIR OFFICE AT NOISE --

EXT. SWEETZER DUPLEX - SAME

Rob and Paul lift their glasses.

ROB

You guys are an inspiration to us all.

As the image of Rob FREEZES and flickers, we

CUT TO:

SHOT ON FILM:

EXT. CAFE DES ARTISTES - NIGHT

A beautiful night on the patio in the Hollywood restaurant. Wes and Toby's rehearsal dinner is in full swing.

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ROB AND PAUL, now dressed in suits, flank a huge video screen, where Rob's image still flickers. Applause rolls in from the few tables surrounding them. We realize we've been watching Paul and Rob's "video speech".

Paul steps forward.

PAUL

So, again - to Wes and Toby. And to their last night of singlehood.

Paul lifts a glass of champagne. We scan the rest of the crowd as they do the same. We see WES AND TOBY, surrounded by all their friends and family. CATTER to Wes' right, and MOLLIE to her right. Toby's parents JIM AND SANDRA to her left and her brother KIP, 30 and odd, to their left. Everyone could not seem happier.

As everyone downs their champagne, Wes leans over and kisses Toby on the forehead. She puts her head on his shoulder.

EXT. PARKING LOT - LATER

Wes and Toby say the last of their good-byes to everyone. Wes walks toward the car as Toby finishes hugging Catter and Mollie. Toby jogs to catch up with Wes. They walk to the car - Wes takes her hand. He unlocks the doors and they both get in.

INT. CAR - LATER

Wes and Toby drive down Beverly Blvd. toward their apartment. Wes tries to change some CDs while driving, causing him to stop and start inappropriately, mixed in with some swerving. Toby is used to this, she seems unfazed.

EXT. GAS STATION - NIGHT

Wes' old BMW pulls up and stops at the pumps. He gets out, and as we follow him around the front of the car, we land on Toby's face, staring forward. As out of focus Wes goes about his business in the background, Toby's face visibly alters. We can literally see her thinking. Her mouth tightens, her pupils dilate, and, finally, her eyes well up.

Wes comes back around the front of the car and gets in. Before he starts the car -

TOBY

(quietly)

I can't do this.

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WES

Hmmm?

TOBY

Tomorrow -

WES

We're getting married.

TOBY

I can't.

Wes takes this in:

WES

Are you busy?

TOBY

I love you but I can't marry you.

WES

You're just freaking out.

TOBY

I know. But I've been freaking out for months and I thought it would go away but it hasn't. You don't want me to marry you if I have doubts, do you?

Wes considers this.

WES

Yes. I do. You have doubts when you order McNuggets instead of a cheeseburger. I think we'll be OK.

TOBY

No. We won't. This is different.

Wes looks at her for a good, long time.

WES

Get out.

TOBY

Wes -

WES

I'm serious.

He reaches over her and opens the door. She starts to get out.

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TOBY

Wes, you tried this on me when we had that fight at the Beverly Center about that suit.

WES

That suit was hot.

TOBY

All I'm saying is that you're just going to pull away and then come back for me in ten seconds.

WES

Really.

TOBY

Yes.

WES

Are we getting married tomorrow?

Wes looks at Toby for an answer. She looks back at him, wishing she had one, but says nothing.

WES (CONT'D)

OK. Shut the door.

Toby looks him in the eye. He doesn't flinch. She shuts the door.

Wes pulls away. Toby stands and watches as his taillights fade into the distance. She watches him drive, expecting to see him turn around. He just keeps driving. She waits some more. And more. It starts to sink in - he's not coming back.

CUT TO BLACK.

END OF TEASER

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ACT I

CLOSE ON: AN ALARM

As it goes off - 6am on the nose.

INT. WES' (& TOBY'S) APARTMENT - MORNING

We reveal Wes, wide awake, still laying in bed. He gets up, doesn't even bother shutting off the alarm, and heads out of the bedroom.

The sound of the beeping alarm DISSOLVES INTO:

INT. NOISE OFFICES - SAME

The sound of a HUGE TRUCK BACKING UP, startling Toby awake. She is asleep on the couch of what is obviously her office, still in her dress from the rehearsal dinner.

She groggily gets up, makes her way to her desk and signs on to her COMPUTER.

SPLIT SCREEN WITH:

INT. WES' (& TOBY'S) APARTMENT - SAME

Wes, now in his home office - sitting down at his computer doing the same thing.

As we cut close on both computer screens, we see Wes and Toby open the same email - titled ARTICLE 433 LETTER.

As they both open the emailed letter, we begin to hear it in VO:

MAN'S VOICE (V.O.)

Dear Wes and Toby: I'm a guy, I'm 28,
and I'm in love with a beautiful, kind,
wonderful woman.

UNDERNEATH THE VO WE SEE QUICK CUTS OF AN ATTRACTIVE
WOMAN HAVING SEX WITH ALL SORTS OF DIFFERENT MEN:

IN A TINY RESTAURANT BATHROOM

IN HOTEL BEDS

ON COUCHES

ON TABLETOPS

EVEN ROOFTOPS

MAN'S VOICE (V.O.)

She's also a call girl. My call girl.
I've been seeing her for the last five
years.

NOW WE SEE QUICK CUTS OF THE SAME WOMAN HAVING SEX ALL
OVER THE PLACE - BUT ALL WITH THE SAME MAN - THE WRITER
OF OUR LETTER.

MAN'S VOICE (V.O.)

Here's the thing - I don't know how to
make the switch. I want to marry this
woman, but to her I'm just another
customer. I need you to help me share
my heartfelt feelings with my high class
hooker. Signed, John.

FREEZE FRAME OF THIS MAN, AS HE PLACES AN ENVELOPE
(OBVIOUSLY FULL OF MONEY) ON THE DRESSER, WITH TITLE:
JOHN

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. GOLF COURSE - LATER

CLOSE UP OF WES -

With the almost exact opposite look on his face. He
stands, in his version of golf attire (shorts and a t-
shirt), near the club house, bag of clubs on his back.

He looks to the first tee and sees the group of guys
gathered - Paul, Rob, Jim, Kip, and a few others. He
steels himself and makes his way over.

As he gets closer he sees what awaits him - Paul's mixing
drinks on the golf cart and everyone's wearing "Toby and
Wes 2003" golf hats. They all turn and greet Wes
enthusiastically as he approaches.

PAUL

Wesley James Brown. Welcome.

Paul quickly shoves a drink in Wes' hand.

PAUL (CONT'D)

We're next on the tee so drink up.

Wes looks at the drink, shrugs and then downs it in a
matter of seconds. They all start to make their way up
to the tee box.

Rob walks next to Wes and puts his arm around him.

ROB

So how you feeling? Are you nervous?

WES

Nervous? Not really nervous.

Jim walks up beside them.

JIM

What has he got to be nervous about?

WES

Exactly, Mr. Pullman. Exactly my point.

Wes presses on to the tee box with the rest of the group. He looks around at everyone. Just looking at them, saying nothing. He's starting to freak them out.

WES (CONT'D)

Well, before we start, I'd like to just say a few words.

PAUL

Go on you big sap.

Wes takes a breath and smiles.

WES

There'll be no wedding today. Or at all. Toby has called it off. Should I do the honors?

With that, Wes puts his tee in the ground with his ball on top of it, grabs his club, and takes a full swing at the ball - making great contact. No one can believe what he just said. Wes watches the ball fly - straight as an arrow.

WES (CONT'D)

That'll work.

Wes picks up his bag and starts walking down the fairway - leaving all of the guys in stunned silence.

INT. ESTILO SALON - DAY

CLOSE ON TOBY:

She sits in a salon chair, her hair in an elaborate updo, her makeup impeccable. ROAN, the hairdresser, is setting a beaded hairband, with veil attached, into her hair. Catter, Mollie and Sandra stand around her, beaming, as the veil gets attached.

CATTER

You look perfect.

TOBY

I don't know. I feel like the hairband
is a little high.

She YANKS on it, a little violently. Roan stops her and
adjusts it himself.

TOBY (CONF'D)

You don't think it looks a little high?

SANDRA

I think it looks pretty perfect.

Sandra looks at Toby, in her veil, and starts to cry.

TOBY

Mom, please don't cry. Seriously -- it's
not necessary.

SANDRA

Toby, I'm gonna cry. I only get to see
my daughter get ready for her wedding
once in my lifetime.

Toby takes a look at herself in the mirror.

TOBY

(softly)
Possibly twice.

Everyone looks at Toby. Uncomfortable silence envelops
everyone, including Roan.

CATTER

(trying to be calm)
PARDON??

Toby takes a long, slow exhale.

TOBY

I'm not getting married today.

Catter starts to hyperventilate and walk around in
circles.

CATTER

What is she saying? Mollie, ask her what
she's saying. WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?

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MOLLIE

Toby, sweetie, what are you saying?

Toby looks at them for a moment, and then begins. Her tone leaves little doubt.

TOBY

I'm calling it off. I just - I realized that it just didn't feel right, and that Wes has taken such good care of me, but I think - I mean I know - what I really need to do is take care of myself. To see what is me when it's just me. So, I just can't do it.

Stunned silence still fills the room. Toby tugs violently on the hairband again.

TOBY (CONT'D)

I don't know, I still think this thing is a little high.

Toby continues to re-adjust the hairband, as Roan and the ladies look at her in stunned silence.

EXT. GOLF COURSE - DAY

The guys are all in the middle of the fairway. Rob's CELL PHONE RINGS. He grabs it.

ROB

(into phone)

Hey.

INTERCUT WITH EXT. ESTILO SALON - SAME

Mollie stands outside on her cell phone, in a panic.

MOLLIE

(into phone)

What the hell?

Rob sneakily tries to walk away from the guys.

ROB

I know.

MOLLIE

So he told you?

ROB

Barely.

MOLLIE

And they can just do that?

ROB

Apparently.

MOLLIE

I don't like it and I'll tell you why. It devalues engagement. It devalues our engagement. No one said you could un-engage.

ROB

Mollie - please. I think there are other things to worry about now.

Mollie thinks about this.

MOLLIE

You're right. How's he doing?

Rob looks back and sees Wes, in the sandtrap, taking multiple swings at a ball. He's making no contact at all. There's just sand flying around him.

ROB

He's about 250 over par right now.

MOLLIE

He's going to act like everything's fine.

ROB

Yep.

MOLLIE

It's not.

ROB

I know.

Rob's still looking at Wes, who finally gets the ball out of the trap. It's a high arching, beautiful shot. Wes throws his arms in the air in victory.

INT. JIM & SANDRA'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON

A big, comfortable, cluttered house in Hancock Park. Which is now filled with wedding favors and catering trays and flowers.

Jim, Sandra, Kip and Toby sit at the dining room table. Sandra, in sweatpants, cradles the phone with her shoulder as she pours herself some wine.

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SANDRA

No. Yeah. Whole thing. We may as well still do the brunch tomorrow. That's my other line again. I'll call you back.

The family just watches in silence as Sandra works the phone.

SANDRA (CONT'D)

Hello. Oh yeah, is that right? I don't know, we'll look into that later. Yeah, Toby's here. We're going to have a little dinner..

Sandra hangs up.

SANDRA (CONT'D)

Toby, that was your grandmother. She wanted us all to know that she would have been leaving right now for the first wedding of a grandchild, but instead she's watching Access Hollywood. And she doesn't think she'll be able to return the girdle that she bought special for this day because it was on sale.

TOBY

Maybe I should just go -

JIM

Where are you going to go? You are not sleeping at that office again. You are staying here with us until you find a new place.

KIP

What? After grad school, I wanted to move back in and live here forever, and you guys wouldn't let me.

SANDRA

We wanted you to have your own place so you'd have some shot at finding a relationship.

KIP

Toby got her own place - and look what happened there.

Jim sees the conversation going south, and tries to save it.

JIM
So, who's hungry?

Sandra gets up and peruses the catering trays.

SANDRA
Well, we've got 128 stuffed chicken breasts, and 162 beef filets. Who wants what?

TOBY
I think I'll just make myself a sandwich later.

Toby stays seated at the table as her family helps themselves to outrageous portions of beef and chicken. They all sit back down and start to eat, silently, until Kip comes up for a breath.

KIP
This is crazy. How are you going to do this? Don't you guys have a contract at the magazine? Together? How do you expect to see each other every day after this?

Silence. Toby has no idea what to say. Finally, the PHONE RINGS and Sandra grabs it.

SANDRA
(into phone)
Hello. Yes, the only thing we couldn't cancel was the food because they already started the prep work. No - I think we got everything - the band, the bartenders, most of the flowers -

As Sandra rattles off all of the things that didn't happen today, we close in on Toby, definitely unsettled.

INT. WES' (& TOBY'S) APARTMENT - LATER

Wes sits in front of the TV, ostensibly watching M2, but it is clear his mind is elsewhere. His and Toby's fat cat SLIM sits on the back of the couch behind him.

And then there is a KNOCK. Wes goes to the door. ARK, 27, a large Russian man in a black blazer stands there, expectantly.

ARK
Hello. I am Ark. I'm a little late.

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Wes clearly has no idea who this man is.

WES

Ark, I am so pissed off about that.

ARK

Sorry. The dispatcher tells 8364 not 8346.

Wes looks out to the street, and sees a stretch LIMO.
Wes looks at the limo, and back to Ark.

WES

Let me ask you something, Ark. You've already been paid for tonight?

ARK

Of course. The parents of the bride arranged weeks ago.

A small smile starts to grow on Wes' face.

INT. PAUL'S HOUSE - DAY

A mid-century, cool, Beachwood Canyon pad. Paul sits at the long kitchen table with Catter, Rob and Mollie. Several other people mill about which gives us the feeling (rightly so) that there is often a party of some kind going here.

Paul wears his telephone headset and takes calls as the groups chats.

CATTER

What about the Holiday Pot Luck Secret Santa Party? And the lake - what about going back to the lake this summer?

MOLLIE

What about every weekend for the rest of our lives?

PAUL

Maybe we just call them both and let them figure out who comes to what.

ROB

I'm picking Toby.

MOLLIE

We have to pick together.

ROB
Then you're picking Toby, too.

The phone RINGS.

PAUL
(into phone)
Yeah. Brunch is still on at the
Pullmans. Yeah, come on over if you
want.

CATTER
Wes was jilted. I should pick Wes.

PAUL
You're like Toby's best friend.

CATTER
I still think I should take him.

Paul shoots Catter a scolding look.

PAUL
(serious)
Catter, you're not taking Wes.

ROB
(to Paul)
Then you take him.

PAUL
I don't want him.

MOLLIE
I think we should take him.

The phone RINGS again.

PAUL
(into phone)
No. No problem. The hotel should still
give you the rate. Yeah, absolutely come
by.

CATTER
Seriously, you guys, what do we do about
birthdays? Or when one of them starts to
date someone.

MOLLIE
What about our wedding? I don't want
either of them.

ROB

What?

MOLLIE

They got dis-engaged. I don't want that kind of cautionary tale lurking around my wedding.

Just as Mollie is finishing her thought, they all look up. And fall silent. Toby is standing there. It's awkward. They're not sure how much she heard.

TOBY

Hey. I just - I saw the lights on and some people inside so I just -

Paul hops up and tackles Toby in a hug. He just keeps hugging her, smashing her face into his chest.

TOBY (CONT'D)

(a little muffled)

Are you guys pissed?

PAUL

Yes.

TOBY

Seriously?

CATTER

Yes.

TOBY

For real?

ROB

Yes.

TOBY

I'm sorry.

Paul keeps hugging her.

INT. LIMO - NIGHT

The limo is parked. Ark sits in front, staring out the windshield. Wes opens the door and gets in the back.

WES

Thanks for making the stop, Ark.

Wes reaches into the front seat and hands Ark a white bag.

WES (CONT'D)

I got you a double double.

ARK

Thank you.

WES

No problem.

Wes and Ark both start to eat their double doubles, as Ark pulls out onto Sunset.

ARK

I take it, we are not arriving at the wedding.

WES

No, Ark. We will not be arriving there.

ARK

That is fine.

WES

Is it?

ARK

Is it not?

WES

What?

ARK

I do not understand.

WES

She told me last night that she couldn't go through with it. It's crazy, I'm supposed to rethink my entire life in like twelve hours. Everything that I thought was -- isn't.

Ark is listening and nodding with deep sympathy.

ARK

Yes, man, Wes. I understand. I know what you need.

He looks at Wes with a deep, abiding knowledge.

INT. CHEETAH'S - NIGHT

Wes and Ark both slam a SHOT with a beer chaser as STRIPPERS gyrate behind them. Ark looks to be holding his liquor well, Wes is swervy and loaded.

Ark points to one of the strippers.

ARK

That is Angie. Nice girl. Her little girl is spelling champion. Give her ten dollars.

Wes does as he's told.

WES

(to Angie)

You're doing a fabulous job.

Ark hands Wes another shot. He slams it, and tucks some more money in Angie's g-string.

WES (CONT'D)

(to Angie)

So, Angie, do any of the ladies here do a little hooking on the side?

Angie shoots an ANGRY LOOK at Ark.

ARK

I am sorry Angie. His wedding did not arrive today and he is drunk. Perhaps we go.

WES

No, not for me. Not for me, hookers. For my article. This guy wants to marry his hooker, and I thought I could ask her the hooker perspective.

Ark starts to lift Wes out of his seat. Ark tucks some more money into Angie's g-string.

ARK

Tell Diane good luck for spelling bee.

Ark helps a very drunk Wes to the door.

INT. PAUL'S HOUSE - LATER

A FULL HOUSE PARTY has developed. Paul, wearing an apron with the TORSO OF A NAKED MAN printed on it, serves drinks and manages the party like a pro.

THE CAMERA follows Paul as he weaves through the crowd, until he stops at CATTER. She smiles as he hands her a drink. Paul is like magical - he always has a drink to give.

CATTER

You know I was going to take two Ativan to get through their wedding. That's what it takes now - two pills per wedding.

PAUL

Why? Weddings are a bold statement of hope in our crazy world. With booze.

Paul downs his drink happily.

CATTER

I feel compelled to start the count-back at every wedding.

PAUL

The what?

CATTER

The count back. See, if you work backwards, even if I met my future husband in the next fifteen seconds, we'd still have to date a year - minimum - before a proposal, probably eighteen months - and then a year engagement - so the very soonest I could be walking down the aisle is two and half years from now. And that's if the guy is standing in your kitchen. It's pathetic.

Catter downs her drink.

PAUL

So, you should be happy that Wes and Toby called it off. Two more miserable single people like you.

CATTER

No - see that's the thing. That depresses me, too.

PAUL

How is that possible?

CATTER

Because it goes to show how unjust it all is.

(MORE)

CATTER (CONT'D)

There are girls like Toby who get great guys and toss them back, and then there are girls like me who only seem to date guys who play bass and live at home and fear commitment.

PAUL

Guess you're screwed.

Paul smiles at Catter, kisses her on the head, and moves off to continue hosting.

Catter stands there, alone. She walks to a tiny alcove near the kitchen and pulls out her CEL PHONE. She scrolls through until she lands on the name TOBY/WES. She hits SEND. She waits as the phone rings. And rings. Finally - the machine picks up. It's Wes' voice.

WES (O.S.)

Hey - we're not here - leave a message.

Catter hangs up. She stands for a second. She then walks to the kitchen - and as she passes them we stop:

WITH ROB AND MOLLIE - Both seriously explaining something to Paul. Paul nods along in between sips of his drink.

ROB

So, we're kind of screwed. Most people - they buy china, pots, towels. They work from the registry.

MOLLIE

We got creative.

ROB

First mistake. I don't think you can return scuba lessons.

MOLLIE

That's like returning fruit.

Paul considers their problem.

PAUL

So you can't return it. Let's take this so-called negative and spruce it up. Are either of you schooled in the art of scuba?

Rob and Mollie shake their heads no.

PAUL (CONT'D)

There you go.

With that, Paul leaves - and the camera follows him as he walks toward

TOBY - who sits on the kitchen counter, alone, taking it all in. As Paul walks by her, he hands her a drink.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Drink up momma.

He continues on, but we stay with Toby. She takes a huge sip of her drink. As she brings it down, she notices her hand. Actually, she notices her ENGAGEMENT RING, which she's still wearing. She plays with it for a second, spinning it around, before surreptitiously taking it off and putting it in her pocket.

EXT. PAUL'S HOUSE - SAME

The limo pulls slowly up to the curb in front of Paul's.

INT. LIMO - SAME

Wes now sits in the front seat with Ark. He is drinking directly out of a bottle of Kettle One, and he is loaded. They both gaze inside at the party through Paul's front window - the sounds of MUSIC and LAUGHING carrying from the party into the open limo window.

WES

That used to be my life in there that I'm not invited to.

Ark isn't sure how to respond.

WES (CONT'D)

I gotta piss.

With that, Wes gets out of the limo.

EXT. PAUL'S HOUSE - SAME

Wes makes his way up onto Paul's lawn, vodka in hand. He finds a tree to shield him from the street, and PEES. And PEES. And PEES. It seems to go on forever.

INT. PAUL'S HOUSE - SAME

ROB looks out the window, and sees something. It's WES. He tells Mollie. Word starts to spread.

EXT. PAUL'S HOUSE - SAME

Wes is still peeing, but now a CROWD of people has started to form on Paul's stoop. Wes finally finishes. And looks up. He is caught. He looks down at the vodka bottle in his hand and - in a moment of drunken genius - lifts the bottle in the air.

WES

I came by - to make a toast. I worked hard on this toast and it probably won't be applicable in a lot of other situations, and I didn't want to waste a good toast. So - here goes. I hope you'll indulge me.

Wes takes another slug of vodka. Wes pulls a slip of paper from his pocket and begins to read it to the crowd.

WES (CONT'D)

Here's to all of you, my dearest friends, who have traveled from every corner of the globe to be here tonight. I hope you're all having a wonderful time, because I've certainly had a wonderful time having each of you in my life.

Paul, Rob, Mollie and Catter all exchange concerned looks. Wes presses on.

WES (CONT'D)

And, of course, let's all raise our glasses to my beautiful bride-NOT-to-be -- I don't know what I would do without you.

The crowd is PERFECTLY SILENT. Even Wes seems a little surprised by what has just come out of his mouth. He - finally - feels a little awkward.

WES (CONT'D)

So - ummm - have a great time. I hope everyone really is - happy. Goodnight.

Just as Wes is about to turn and walk back to the limo, HE AND TOBY MEET EYES. She is standing, one small girl in the big crowd, looking at him. He lets his eyes linger on her, and then turns away and gets into the limo. The crowd starts to disperse, but Toby stays on the porch, watching the limo fade into the distance.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT I

ACT II

INT. NOISE OFFICES - WES & TOBY'S OFFICE - DAY

Wes sits at his desk, at a loss, as he watches JUDY, 22, sitting across from him, her face buried in her hands.

Wes comes around the desk and sits next to her. He hands her a glass of water.

WES

It's OK. It's going to be OK. Take a little sip of water.

Judy slowly lifts her face, and takes a sip of water. She looks at Wes. Her face is blotchy from crying.

JUDY

I don't understand. You guys are so great together.

WES

I gotta be honest, Judy, I don't quite understand either.

JUDY

Now what's going to happen? Are you still gonna work together? Am I still going to be an assistant to both of you? Am I going to have to pick one of you over the other? Am I fired?

WES

Well, we have a lot of things to figure out.

JUDY

This is not right. I've always aspired to have what you guys have - both personally and professionally. And it was all a lie.

WES

I don't know if it was a lie exactly -

JUDY

IT WAS TO ME! I BELIEVED IN YOU!

Judy begins to cry again, and her face goes back into her hands. Wes just sits there, completely helpless.

INT. NOISE OFFICES - LOBBY - SAME

The elevator doors open. Toby, looking a little tired, steps off the elevator and warily makes her way down the hall.

Out of the corner of her eye she spots VIRGINIA KEMP, 40's, very skinny and passive/aggressive. Toby speeds up, but Virginia is quickly in step with her.

VIRGINIA

(bitchy)

You're in kinda late.

TOBY

I had a - kinda - rough weekend.

VIRGINIA

(false compassion)

Oooh. Yeah. I heard about that. Is everything OK with that?

TOBY

It happened the day before yesterday, Virginia.

VIRGINIA

Yeah. That's rough.

TOBY

Yes. It is.

VIRGINIA

Rough stuff.

TOBY

Yes.

Toby stops walking, and looks Virginia in the eye.

TOBY (CONT'D)

You don't really care about how this is affecting me emotionally, do you?

VIRGINIA

Not a lot.

TOBY

You're concerned how the writing team you hired is going to continue producing for you.

VIRGINIA
It has crossed my mind.

TOBY
Can you give us a little time to feel
things out?

VIRGINIA
Yes.

TOBY
Cool. Thank you.

Toby starts toward her office.

VIRGINIA
We have lunch with the owner of this
magazine at 12:30. That gives you over
three hours.

TOBY
Perfect.

VIRGINIA
Listen, Toby. You are the brains of that
operation. I've always known that. I
trust that you will figure this out.

Toby is not sure whether to be flattered or frightened as
she turns and walks toward her office.

INT. NOISE MAGAZINE - TOBY AND WES' OFFICE - SAME

Toby enters the office just as Judy is leaving. Judy
stops, grabs Toby in a big hug.

JUDY
I still love you both.

Judy leaves. Toby slowly enters.

TOBY
Hey kid.

Wes doesn't look up.

WES
Hey.

Silence. Toby walks over to her desk (their desks face
each other) and sits down.

TOBY

So. Nice showing with the speech the other night.

WES

Yeah. I really felt like I nailed it.

Toby laughs.

TOBY

That's funny.

She laughs a little more.

TOBY (CONT'D)

Funny.

WES

It wasn't that funny.

TOBY

Wes, I was just trying to -

WES

Don't.

He gets up and hands her some papers.

WES (CONT'D)

Here's my pass at the hooker advice letter. Look at it when you can.

Toby takes it, seems a little surprised.

TOBY

Wes, you know, I'm really glad to see you. I wasn't sure you'd come in today, or ever, and I know we need to -

WES

I'm going to get some coffee.

TOBY

You don't drink coffee.

WES

I know.

Wes averts Toby's eyes as he exits the office. She sits there for a second, stung. Then she turns to the papers and starts to read:

WES (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Dear John, Here's something I've learned quite recently: girls suck. You meet a girl who seems normal - she has a real job and she seems totally acceptable to your friends and family and everything - and then she turns out to be a freak. A total nutcase.

Toby's not sure how to take this.

WES (CONT'D)

So I think you're on to something here. A prostitute. Why not? She'll never cheat on you, except for having sex with hundreds of guys. And I'm sure she'll never leave you. I think it's a solid plan.

Toby spins her chair around to her computer, and starts to type. As she types, we hear her voice over and we go

SPLIT SCREEN WITH:

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY - NIGHT

John, the writer of our letter, strides down the hall, reading from a copy of NOISE MAGAZINE that he holds in one hand. He holds a bouquet of flowers in the other.

TOBY (V.O.)

This may be hard to believe, John, but I agree with Wes' advice, if not the sentiment. You really have nothing to lose.

FULL SCREEN AS: John slips his KEY CARD into a door.

TOBY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

If you come clean about your feelings, at worst, you'll spend a couple of weekends "comparison shopping" for a new call girl.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - SAME

John enters to find MELISSA, early 20's, a beautiful and voluptuous woman in a revealing teddy, lounging on the bed, eating candy from the mini-bar.

TOBY (V.O.)

And at best, you'll have found yourself a new girlfriend who puts out.

John sits down on the bed next to Melissa.

JOHN
You look fantastic.

MELISSA
Thanks, baby.

He sits, holding the flowers, just staring at her. She starts to remove his shirt.

JOHN
I wanted to get something for you -

He hands her the flowers. She takes them, and puts them on the bedside table.

MELISSA
You didn't have to do that. You already bought me a Grey Goose and a Toblerone from the mini bar.

She shows him the empty mini-vodka bottle and candy wrapper, with a sly smile.

JOHN
You are so cute.

MELISSA
So are you.

He looks at her, smiles, and TACKLES her on the bed. They laugh and wrestle, until they are both a little out of breath. Then, John looks at Melissa.

JOHN
Melissa, I want to ask you something.

She unbuckles his belt.

MELISSA
Mmm-hmmm.

He steels himself. And he takes the plunge.

JOHN
I really like you, and you are so beautiful and fun and I - I just want to know if you'd consider being my girlfriend.

Melissa stops what she's doing. She pulls back from John, and looks into his eyes.

MELISSA

I would love to be your girlfriend, baby.

JOHN

Yeah?

Melissa looks at him, touches his cheek, and smiles.

MELISSA

Yeah.

We see John's expression turn from one of anxiety to one of PURE BLISS as Melissa grabs him and pulls him down on the bed on top of her.

INT. PAUL'S HOUSE - DAY

Paul and Catter sit on the floor of the living room. The contents of Paul's liquor cabinet, which is EXTENSIVE, are spread around them.

PAUL

Are you sure you are sticking to the system?

Catter smiles, a little bit drunk.

CATTER

Yes, Paul. I know the system. Organize all liquors alphabetically and by brand within categories. And drink anything less than a shot left in any bottle.

Paul pounds what is left in a bottle of tequila.

PAUL

Just making sure.

They continue to sort and drink, sort and drink.

CATTER

(trying to sound nonchalant)
So, have you talked to Wes?

PAUL

Mmm-hmmm.

CATTER

Is he - you know - how's he doing?

PAUL

OK.

CATTER

Do you think maybe I should stop by or
make him some -

Paul empties another bottle and looks Catter in the eyes.

PAUL

Catter - DON'T. I know you've always had
a weird thing for him -

CATTER

I have not!

PAUL

You told me when you met him, and I quote
"I have a weird thing for him."

Catter's busted.

CATTER

That was 6 years ago. We've been friends
now for 6 years. I just want to make
sure he's all right.

PAUL

Please don't. OK?

Catter polishes off a bottle of vodka and doesn't answer.

INT. LE DOME - DAY

Toby, Wes, Virginia and LUCIUS THOMSON, 50s, sit at a
round table in the middle of the posh, crowded
restaurant.

THOMSON

I cannot believe that you two have been
writing a column for my magazine for
years, and this is the first time we have
shared a proper meal together.

TOBY

Please. You have a gagillion dollar
industry to - you know - manage -- or
whatever.

He laughs.

THOMSON

Listen, I read the column every month,
and from what I hear the book deal for
your volume of collected articles is
coming together very quickly -

VIRGINIA

It's true - we hope to have it out by summer.

THOMSON

But most of all - I like the story behind the story.

Virginia's face goes pale.

VIRGINIA

Did you read last month's advice to that born again virgin? It was -

Thomson totally ignores Virginia and barrels on -

THOMSON

I mean, you two are these smart, hip kids, who are totally in love and committed to each other, giving relationship advice - it's perfect. You are still irreverent and smart-assy - which I love - but people also believe that they can do it, because you guys are doing it.

Wes and Toby sneak a look at each other.

WES

Yeah, umm - that's not all that accurate.

SILENCE. Virginia is now fully panicked. She and Toby both look at Wes, just waiting.

WES (CONT'D)

Because, in all honesty, Toby's not that smart.

TOBY

And Wes is unbelievably un-hip.

WES

She mostly has to "sound it out" if the word is more than four letters.

TOBY

He likes the Olive Garden for both the food and the ambience.

Thomson laughs as he opens his menu. Both Toby and Virginia seem relieved that Wes has decided to play ball. The WAITER walks by. Wes stops him.

WES
Excuse me - how are your stripes
prepared?

WAITER
Ummm -

TOBY
He means ribs.

WAITER
Oh, they're braised.

WES
Thanks.

The waiter leaves. Thomson and Virginia are confused.

TOBY
Wes won't call them ribs.

WES
It's too - bodily.

TOBY
So I made up stripes.

WES
It gives some distance between me and the
animal.

Thomson looks at Wes and Toby with wonder.

THOMSON
You guys are quite a team.

Wes and Toby look at each other and force a smile.

INT. JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER - POOL - DAY

Rob and Mollie, in sweatpants, with towels over their
shoulders, enter the indoor pool area.

ROB
Mollie, I promise. You're overthinking.
When we introduce ourselves you're Toby
and I'm Wes. That's it. Then we don't
have to deal with it again.

MOLLIE
I don't know. We're engaged, Rob. I
feel like it's bad luck to pose as a
couple who didn't go through with it.

ROB
I don't. I think it's good luck.

MOLLIE
What? Why?

Rob is trapped. He has no answer.

ROB
Listen, maybe we won't even have to lie.
I had to tell the woman in the office we
were Wes and Toby. But the instructor
probably won't care who we are.

MOLLIE
Yeah?

ROB
Yeah. I'm sure they won't know it was a
wedding present.

MOLLIE
Yeah. Probably not. I have always
wanted to scuba.

ROB
Exactly. It's going to be fine.

Rob and Mollie make their way over to the small group at
the far end of the pool.

As they get closer, they see that there are TWO WETSUITS
remaining, on hangers. On one of them is a BIG BRIDAL
VEIL and on the other are a BOW TIE and TAILS. Mollie
now GLARES at Rob as MITCH, 30, greets them.

MITCH
And you must be Wes and Toby, our
newlyweds!

The class breaks out into spontaneous clapping and cheers
as they beam at Rob and Mollie. Mollie is displeased.

INT. LE DOME - DAY

Lunches are finished, and Virginia and Thomson listen as
Toby is mid-story. Wes taps his fork.

TOBY
So we get the cat back to our apartment -
it's like eight weeks old - and we hear
this crazy ruckus upstairs.

(MORE)

TOBY (CONT'D)

We go up there - and there's a bird - a huge crow - flying around our bedroom. I mean - it was like massive, right?

She turns to Wes, who's sort of out of it.

WES

(recovering)

Right. Right. So I put on this -

TOBY

Windbreaker - and he pulls the hood up so only his eyes are showing. And grabs a tennis racket.

As Toby continues on, we can see Wes' eyes get further and further away. He's not even listening anymore. He looks around the restaurant - at all the couples eating, people laughing. He turns back and looks at Toby as she's telling the story. She's very animated - gesturing as she talks. And then he notices it. His eyes go wide.

IN SLO-MO Toby's left hand, gesturing, with NO ENGAGEMENT RING ON. She's taken it off. Wes can't believe it.

TOBY (CONT'D)

- instead of turning on the light he flips the ceiling fan switch. So now the bird is going nuts.

Wes quickly stands up.

WES

I ummm. Excuse me.

Wes abruptly leaves the table.

EXT. SUNSET BLVD - DAY

Wes exits the restaurant and just starts walking. And walking. Either really fast or extremely slow - it's hard to tell. Then his CEL PHONE RINGS.

WES

Hello.

JUDY (O.S.)

It's Judy. Where are you? They said you went to the bathroom and never came back.

WES

Umm -

JUDY (O.S.)

They're still waiting for you. And your
aunt called. And Catter called for you..

WES

You mean for Toby.

JUDY

No, for you.

A flicker of confusion passes across Wes' face.

WES

Listen, Judy, could you just put me
through to Toby?

JUDY (O.S.)

No problem. Hold on.

Judy puts Wes on hold. Hold music comes on. But it's
that Tina Turner song that goes "We don't need another
hero..." It's like nails down a chalkboard. The song
gets louder and louder and begins to consume Wes as he
stands on Sunset Blvd. in front of Chin Chin. People
continue to walk by as things get blurry - Wes is barely
keeping it together, things start to spin. Finally, the
song is cut off by:

TOBY (O.S.)

Wes? Where are you?

WES

I can't do this, Toby. I quit.

Wes looks at the phone in shock, as if the phone itself
had just said those words. He then slips his phone into
his pocket and - out of sheer inertia - keeps walking.

EXT. WES' (& TOBY'S) APARTMENT - LATER

Wes, still dazed, comes walking up to his front door to
find - Catter. Sitting on the stoop. She seems - drunk.

CATTER

Hey.

WES

Uh - hey.

CATTER

Paul made me help organize his liquor
cabinet.

WES

Alphabetize the bottles. Drink up the dregs.

CATTER

I gave it my all.

WES

You're a good friend.

She stands, looking at him. He heads toward the door.

CATTER

So, I just wanted to come by to see if you were OK.

Wes is unlocking the door. He turns to her.

WES

I don't think so. Not yet. I have to figure some shit out before I'm actually OK.

CATTER

Right.

Catter keeps looking at him. He might cry. Or she might cry. But instead -- CATTER KISSES WES. For a moment, Wes doesn't resist. And then:

WES

Catter, Jesus, you're the maid of honor.

Catter stares at him - beginning to realize what she's done.

WES (CONT'D)

I think you better go.

Wes turns and goes inside, closing the door behind him.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. WES' APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - MORNING

CLOSE ON: A PHOTO OF TOBY AND WES

They are both laughing and drinking from 40 oz. beers.

We reveal Wes holding the photo, standing in the middle of his living room. There is a CARDBOARD BOX next to him, filled with various CDS, BOOKS, etc. He takes the picture and expertly tosses it into the box. He looks around, satisfied.

Then, he reaches over to the coffee table and grabs what looks like an ELECTRIC RAZOR.

He looks at it, and adjusts something. He then lifts it up to his head and we see - it's not a razor - its a HAIR CLIPPER.

Without even looking in the mirror, Wes shaves a clean, stripe through his hair. And then another. He continues shaving his head, hair falling around him on the couch, until he is completely bald.

He puts down the razor, feels his newly shorn head, and allows himself a small SMILE.

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

Toby, work bag over her shoulder, slips through the revolving door of the Noise offices, and onto sunny Wilshire Blvd.

INT. DELI - SAME

Toby walks into the small deli like she owns the place.

TOBY

Bradley, I'm borrowing your People.

Toby reaches behind the register and grabs a People magazine, as BRADLEY, 40s, comes out of the kitchen.

BRADLEY

Hey, Toby.

Toby takes a seat and starts to read her People magazine. A CUTE GUY, late 20s, smiles at Toby. She smiles back, and continues reading her People. Bradley arrives with two sodas.

BRADLEY (CONT'D)

Cream soda for the lady and Arnold Palmer
for my main man -

TOBY

Wes won't be - uhh - joining me today.

BRADLEY

Oh, yeah?

Bradley is unfazed. He simply takes Wes' drink, and starts to drink it himself as he heads back to the kitchen.

Toby goes back to reading her People magazine. The cute guy watches her as he eats his sandwich. She notices, and gives him another awkward smile.

CUTE GUY

So, where is he?

TOBY

Hmmm?

CUTE GUY

The guy - where's the guy?

Toby just looks at him, confused.

CUTE GUY (CONT'D)

That guy you're always in here with.
I've seen you two. I'm Craig. I work at
Schwab - sixth floor.

TOBY

Oh.

CUTE GUY

So, he's your, what, your business
partner?

TOBY

Uhhhh -

CUTE GUY

Your boyfriend?

TOBY

Ummmm -

CUTE GUY

Your boss? Your grandad? Your pipe
fitter? What?

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Toby smiles.

TOBY

He's my former fiancée, my recently resigned writing partner and, right now, my smallest fan.

CUTE GUY

Your smallest fan?

TOBY

Opposite of biggest fan. I thought maybe it was smallest fan. Whatever -- he's not a fan.

The cute guy smiles.

CUTE GUY

Well, that makes one of us.

Toby looks up, blushing. She is clearly out of practice with the flirt.

TOBY

Oh - ummm -

CUTE GUY

Have a drink with me after work. Just to help you drown your sorrows. Nothing weird.

Toby looks at him, sizing him up.

CUTE GUY (CONT'D)

Listen, I can't make it weird, because then I'd have to find a new deli, and I really like the number three no onion, so that's like a guarantee that it will be unweird.

Toby - almost despite herself - smiles, which is as good as "Yes."

INT. OFFICE BUILDING LOBBY - DAY

A very modern, spare office building in Santa Monica. Wes, with his newly shaved head and a funky tan suit, approaches the security desk. MARTY, a beefy black guy, sits at the desk.

WES

Hi. I'm Wes Brown. I'm here for the interview -

(MORE)

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WES (CONT'D)

(he points to a blow up of an
Interview magazine cover on
the wall)

- uhh - interview.

Wes laughs nervously. Marty does not. He just punches
some keys on his computer.

MARTY

They got you up in here as Dave.

WES

Uh, I'm Wes.

MARTY

They got you up in here as Dave.

Wes just shrugs in acceptance.

WES

OK.

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON: A NAMETAG, WITH THE NAME "DAVE"

INT. OFFICE - DAY

We pull back to reveal Wes, wearing his nametag, sitting
on a couch in a large, spare office. DANIEL, 40s, sits
across from him.

DANIEL

I really think your column is well-
written, or I wouldn't even be
considering you for the position -

WES

Thanks -

DANIEL

However, I also need to know if you have
confidence in your talent as an
interviewer as well as a writer.
Interviewing requires a whole different
skill set than what you are used to using
for your column at Noise.

WES

You know, it's funny, because in grad
school that's what Toby and I wanted to
do.

(MORE)

WES (CONT'D)

We imagined that we would be this interview team - and we worked out this whole "good cop, bad cop" deal that we thought would get everyone to reveal themselves to us. But our first interview at the USC paper was with Matt Dillon, and Toby had been obsessed with him when he was in the Outsiders and had this poster of him from Rumble Fish that she wanted him to sign. So we go to interview him, and she's supposed to be the bad cop, but she starts good copping, and I really suck as the bad cop, but evidently she can't flirt as the bad cop -

Wes is enjoying his own story, but sees that he should bring himself back to the question.

WES (CONT'D)

Anyway, yes. I can do interviews.

DANIEL

And how did you and Toby break down the writing duties in your partnership? Who exactly did what?

WES

You know, also very funny. Because we get asked that question all the time, and Toby would always field it. Oh man, what exactly did she say? She has this really funny metaphor that she always used -

Wes is trying desperately to remember, and taking way too long to do so. He looks at Daniel, and realizes this interview is going south - fast.

WES (CONT'D)

Well - enough about Toby. We're not here to interview Toby. We're here to interview me.

He looks at his nametag.

WES (CONT'D)

Dave.

Daniel cracks a smile. Wes takes a deep breath and tries to move on.

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EXT. PAUL'S HOUSE - DAY

Catter, dressed in a horrible polo shirt and hat that both say GOURMET COURIER, makes her way up Paul's long driveway with a huge WARMER BAG in her arms. She gets to the front door and just opens it and goes in.

INT. PAUL'S HOUSE - SAME

Catter makes her way into the living room to find Paul, Rob and Mollie sitting on the couch. Paul is expertly wielding his remote control at the TV. Catter drops the bag on the table and sits.

CATTER

What's up?

MOLLIE

Paul's TiVo only tapes him Will and Grace.

CATTER

So, your TiVo knows you're gay?

PAUL

I think it's profiling. Homo-profiling. My TiVo homo-files me.

Catter reaches into the warmer bag, pulls out some cartons of food and lays them out on the coffee table.

CATTER

Pizza with gorgonzola, pounded chicken, penne arrabiatta. Oh, and you guys bought me fusili with pancetta and cream sauce -

Catter takes her carton, and plops onto the couch. Paul looks at her WARMER BAG still sitting on the floor.

ROB

Don't you have other food in that thing that needs to be delivered?

CATTER

Yeah. They can wait.

Catter heads into the kitchen.

CATTER (O.S.) (CONT'D)

So, who's drinking what?

INT. PAUL'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - SAME

Paul follows Catter into the kitchen. She grabs some glasses out of the cupboard, and turns around to find herself face to face with Paul.

He looks her in the eyes. She looks away. He keeps looking at her, but her eyes remain glued to the floor.

PAUL

No. You didn't.

Catter just stands there, holding two glasses, eyes on the ground.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Catter, please tell me you didn't.

CATTER

(very softly)

I did. It was just a kiss. I just -

Paul turns away from her. He is clearly PISSED.

PAUL

Do you have any respect at all for the little group we have established here? I mean, I know you do the count back, and think you're going to be single forever, and continue to date wildly inappropriate men who will never marry you - but you cannot take those frustrations out on your friends. We cannot go around kissing each other's fiancées. I'm not sure about the you, but I don't have any other friends. So, I'd appreciate it if you didn't fuck this up.

Catter looks like she's going to cry. Paul is unmoved.

CATTER

I shouldn't have done it.

PAUL

Brilliant analysis.

Tears spill from Catter's eyes.

CATTER

(softly)

I'm sorry.

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The tears continue to flow, as Catter runs out of the kitchen.

INT. PAUL'S HOUSE- LIVING ROOM - SAME

Catter tears through the living room, grabs her warmer bag, and runs out the door. Rob and Mollie watch her - stunned. Paul emerges from the kitchen, expertly carrying three glasses of wine.

ROB

What the hell?

Paul passes out the wine.

MOLLIE

I'll just have a soda or -

PAUL

Trust me, in a moment, you'll want the wine. Or Vicadin.

Rob and Mollie look at Paul, their interest definitely piqued.

SPLIT SCREEN WITH:

CLOSE ON JOHN'S FACE - as he strides through a group of people with MELISSA (THE HOOKER) on his arm. He can barely contain his pride. Under this we hear:

TOBY (V.O.)

So, our advice to you, John, is - start acting like a boyfriend. Take her out on real dates, introduce her to your friends-

We go FULL SCREEN TO:

INT. HOLLYWOOD HILLS HOUSE - NIGHT

A COCKTAIL PARTY, of well dressed folks in their twenties and thirties, is well underway. John and Melissa make their way through the party.

WES (V.O.)

- try to sleep with her best friend - you know, boyfriend stuff.

PETE, late 30's, approaches John and Melissa.

JOHN

Pete! I didn't know you were going to be here.

PETE

Yeah, I'm back in LA to stay this time.

JOHN

Really? We should get together, play tennis or something.

PETE

Definitely.

A beat. Pete looks awkwardly at Melissa. Melissa just looks at John. John realizes his faux-pas.

JOHN

Oh my god, I'm sorry. Sweetie, I'm so sorry. Pete, this is Melissa.

PETE

Nice to meet you.

MELISSA

It's really nice to meet you, too, Pete.

An awkward pause.

MELISSA (CONT'D)

Well, I'm gonna hit the little girl's room.

JOHN

OK. I'll be here.

Melissa leaves. John turns to Pete.

PETE

Wow. Where'd you find her?

John smiles.

WITH MELISSA - As she winds her way back to the bathroom. As she goes, she takes in the whole party. Well dressed people laughing, smoking, drinking - clearly with money to burn. She's feeling a bit out of place.

She gets to the bathroom - there are a few girls waiting by the door. She decides not to wait and turns around.

She works her way back to John, and as she nears, she can overhear the conversation he's having with Pete.

PETE (CONT'D)

No shit.

JOHN

I know.. It's really unbelievable. She's
- amazing.

PETE

Wow. I didn't know you could make that
transition.

John just shrugs. Pete takes a swig of his drink.

PETE (CONT'D)

She doesn't look like a hooker.

John turns and sees Melissa standing there - she heard
that last remark. She's not happy. She quickly makes
her way out of the party. John follows.

INT. HOUSTONS - EVENING

Toby sits, sipping a martini with Craig, the cute guy
from the deli.

CRAIG

So, are those letters for real? Or do
you guys write them yourselves?

TOBY

No, they are totally real.

CRAIG

So, do you have to read through hundreds
of them to find the good ones?

TOBY

Well, I usually let Wes do that.

There is a tiny uncomfortable silence, but Toby presses
on.

TOBY (CONT'D)

I used to read through the letters with
him, but it started making me so sad
about - like - the human condition, you
know. I mean, what has transpired in
these poor peoples' lives that they want
to marry their hookers or have three ways
with their UPS and FEDEX guys, you know?

CRAIG

You don't find those things a little
funny?

TOBY

A little. But after a while, it would just make me profoundly sad. So, Wes started reading all the mail, and just giving me a few choice letters. He would wade through all the sad stories for me, so I wouldn't have to get so down.

Toby seems struck by what she just said. It's like she has just started to realize what she's done.

CRAIG

He sounds like a great partner to have.

Toby considers this and nods.

TOBY

Yeah.

Then, a waitress approaches, placing an ENORMOUS PLATE OF RIBS in front of the man sitting next to Toby at the bar.

TOBY (CONT'D)

Wow. Those are some nice looking stripes.

CRAIG

Hmmmm?

TOBY

Stripes. We call them stripes because - you know - ribs - it's so body-part-specific. Like ordering toes or femurs or something, you know?

Toby laughs at her own observation. Craig doesn't get it. Another moment of uncomfortable silence.

TOBY (CONT'D)

You know what? Thank you so much for the drink, and this is about to be the rudest thing I've ever done - well, not the rudest because I did just call off a wedding and all - but I think I better just - go.

Toby gets up, pulls out some cash and leaves it on the bar.

TOBY (CONT'D)

See ya at the deli. Number three no onion.

Toby doesn't even wait for a reply before she's out the door.

INT. JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER - POOL - EVENING

Mollie and Rob, along with the rest of the class, are all suited up. Rob looks a little freaked.

MITCH

So, Wes and Toby - you're up.

Mollie gets up and walks toward the pool. Rob doesn't move.

MITCH (CONT'D)

Wes, you ready for this?

Rob, clearly forgetting his name is Wes, looks off absently and doesn't respond at all.

MITCH (CONT'D)

Wes?

ROB

Right. Me. Wes. I'm Wes. And ready.

Mitch looks at him oddly.

MITCH

Now remember, you are practicing using your "buddy air." You and Toby are going to go down, she is going to take out her own air supply - which will be pretty scary at first - but then you are going to give her your buddy air, which feeds off of your tank - and the two of you will ascend together.

ROB

Yep. Got it. Wes. I'm Wes.

Rob and Mollie start to get into the pool. Mollie gives Rob a disapproving look.

MITCH

You know, it's actually a perfect exercise for newlyweds. When one of you loses their own air, the other can share their air, and vice versa. You should do great.

Rob looks nervous as he gingerly slips into the water. Mollie smiles and goes under, too.

UNDER WATER IN THE JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER POOL:

Mollie, smiling and giving Rob the thumbs up, takes out her air supply - she is now HOLDING HER BREATH. She swims over to Rob.

Rob is breathing from his tank, but looks TOTALLY PANICKED. Mollie motions for Rob to give her his buddy air. Rob just looks at her, panicked. She motions again and then - with no warning - ROB LEAVES HER THERE AND SWIMS TO THE SURFACE.

ON THE SURFACE

Rob breaks the surface, taking out his breathing apparatus and gasping for air, dramatically. He spazzes over to the side.

ROB

Oh man. Man that was - crazy.

The whole class is looking at him - where's his new wife? Mollie finally breaks the surface, really gasping for air.

MITCH

What happened?

ROB

Dude - you get down there and it's like - who knows?

Even Rob doesn't seem convinced by this story.

MOLLIE

I took out my air supply and motioned for Wes to give me his buddy air, but he panicked.

MITCH

You realize, of course, if we had been on an ocean dive, you would have just killed your new bride.

Mollie shoots daggers at Rob. Rob tries to lighten the mood.

ROB

So, in terms of it being a good exercise for newlyweds, how'd we do?

Mollie walks away, leaving Rob alone on the side of the pool.

EXT. WES' (& TOBY'S) APARTMENT - NIGHT

Wes sits on the balcony, smoking and staring into space.

GIRL'S VOICE

Hey. Smokey.

Wes looks down onto the sidewalk, where Catter stands, in her Gourmet Courier shirt, looking tired.

CATTER

Can I come up?

WES

I'm scared of you.

CATTER

I won't touch. I promise.

WES

Yeah. Come on up.

Wes waits. Catter emerges onto the balcony with two beers, handing one to Wes. She takes a seat next to him. Wes takes an awkward drag off of his cigarette.

CATTER

So, smoking is part of the "New Wes", I'm guessing?

WES

Yep.

CATTER

Looks pretty dumb.

WES

Still working out the kinks.

Catter summons her courage and turns to Wes.

CATTER

Wes, I need you to know that I'm incredibly sorry about what happened the other night. I don't know what's wrong with me.

WES

Clearly, I'm irresistible.

CATTER

Yeah, something like that.

They sit in silence for a moment.

CATTER (CONT'D)

OK, maybe I do know what's wrong with me. I'm insane. I rented Notting Hill recently, and I had to turn it off because I was jealous. Jealous of the love of two FICTIONAL CHARACTERS, Wes. I watch A Wedding Story on the Learning Channel religiously, and get constantly incensed that all of these freaks have found the perfect other freak -- and I haven't. I just want to find someone already so I can stop obsessively tweezing my eyebrows and fake laughing and just relax. I shouldn't have kissed you, but I was full of rum and possibilities - and I'll just freak if Toby finds out -

Wes smiles.

WES

Your secret is safe with me.

CATTER

Thank you. Awesome. Moving on. Let's talk about you.

Wes nods as he flicks his ashes into the ashtray.

WES

Did you see that flick? That was a nice, natural flick.

CATTER

It was a nice flick.

Catter looks at Wes.

CATTER (CONT'D)

Anything else on your mind, perhaps?

Wes looks back at her, all seriousness.

WES

(his voice a little shaky)
I don't know how I'm going to make it alone, Catter.

Catter is clearly moved by his admission.

CATTER

Wes, I know this is incredibly hard for you. It's hard for all of us. We all love both of you. We all feel like we're losing something. And we don't want to have to choose between you -

WES

You don't have to choose. Toby and I -

Catter puts her hand on Wes' hand and squeezes.

CATTER

I choose you.

Wes looks at her, unsure how to respond.

INT. TOBY'S CAR - NIGHT

Toby, straight from her ill-fated date, is on the cell phone.

TOBY

(into phone)

Kip, it's me. Your sister. Pick up.

Nothing.

TOBY (CONT'D)

Seriously, it's an emergency. Pick up.

Nothing.

TOBY (CONT'D)

I met this girl I want to fix you up with-

A MAD CLAMORING THROUGH THE PHONE, as Kip picks up.

KIP

Yeah?

TOBY

What if I'm still in love with him?

KIP

Mom just sent me home with eight thousand chicken breasts.

TOBY

I'm serious, Kip. What if I never connect with anyone the way I connect with him?

ACT IV

INT. CATTER'S HYUNDAI - DAY

Catter, in her Gourmet Courier t-shirt, jerkily drives the stick shift. Toby rides shotgun, with a big warmer-bag full of food on her lap.

CATTER

We haven't done this in so long -

TOBY

(no love)

Yeah.

CATTER

Remember that time you were delivering with me, and we delivered to Dean Cain and we just stayed there and ate all of those spring rolls that we just delivered and -

TOBY

(still no feeling)

Yeah. That was fun.

Catter looks at Toby, nervous.

CATTER

Is something wrong? I mean, of course something's wrong, you just called off your wedding - but I mean -

TOBY

I saw you with him, Catter.

Total uncomfortable silence. Catter's expression turns to HORROR.

CATTER

Toby, I - am - so - sorry. Jesus, Toby, I don't know what to tell you.

TOBY

Tell me why.

CATTER

What?

TOBY

Tell me why - if you are my best friend - I drive over to find you hanging out with Wes on his balcony last night.

CATTER

Last night?

The color starts to return to Catter's face.

CATTER (CONT'D)

(very relieved)

Right. Yes. Last night. We were just -
you know - just hanging out. As friends.

TOBY

I know you're just friends. That's not
the point.

CATTER

So, what exactly is the point?

Toby looks at Catter, takes a breath, and lets it out.

TOBY

You're supposed to pick me.

CATTER

What?

TOBY

In the split. You're supposed to pick
me. We were friends in college before
either of us even knew Wes.

CATTER

So, you go with the one you've known
longer?

TOBY

Yes.

CATTER

Always? In every circumstance?

TOBY

I don't know, Catter. But in this case,
yes. This is a really weird time for me,
and I need your support as my friend.

Catter looks at Toby, and in one non-graceful move,
inspiring a few honks, pulls over to the curb and jams
the car into park.

CATTER

OK, here's the thing, Toby. And I know this sucks to hear, because it really sucks to say, but I gotta be honest. I think you're making a huge mistake.

TOBY

What? This is just wrong -

CATTER

Wes is a great guy. And the life that you guys have built for yourselves, people dream about that shit. I can't understand why you would just - chuck it.

TOBY

I shouldn't have to defend myself to you. It just didn't feel right, Catter. That should be enough. It just didn't feel right.

CATTER

Are you're still sure it isn't right?

Toby considers this. Although we see a little doubt starting to creep in, her answer is:

TOBY

Yes. I'm sure. I'm pretty sure.

Though neither Catter or Toby seem totally convinced.

INT. WES' APARTMENT - AFTERNOON

Wes sits on his couch, alone. He's deep in thought. He's listening to the long opening to "At Dawn" by My Morning Jacket. As the song kicks in, everything seems to SLOW DOWN and he hears faint voices.

He turns and sees a YOUNGER WES and TOBY, sort of ghostlike, as if they're PROJECTED ON THE WALL, struggling to carry a futon up the stairs. Toby, going backwards, is very serious as she keeps falling. Younger Wes can't stop laughing.

IN THE BATHROOM - Wes peers in, where he sees Toby, standing behind younger Wes, dying his hair. SLIM, now just a little kitten, runs around on the sink, getting dye all over himself.

IN THE BEDROOM - Wes walks up the stairs goes in, where all around him Younger Wes, with a windbreaker pulled tight over his head, tries unsuccessfully to shoo a bird out of the window. Toby hides in the closet and intermittently looks out at the proceedings. The bird swoops all around the room, narrowly missing the ceiling fan and Wes' head.

IN THE LIVING ROOM - Wes then plops back down onto the right side of the couch. Younger Toby and Wes sit, cuddled up, on the left side of the couch. Older Wes sits back and closes his eyes tightly. Slowly, the song fades out, as do the images of Young Toby and Wes.

Then it's silent. Wes opens his eyes, and he seems - OK.
THE PHONE RINGS. Wes goes to pick it up.

WES

Hello. Yes, Daniel, of course, from Interview.

A beat.

WES (CONT'D)

Wow - I'm surprised. I mean, and thrilled. You have the authority to do that, right, just offer me the job? Right, of course you do. Wow. Wow.

Wes looks around, and takes a deep breath.

INT. ROB AND MOLLIE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Mollie sits at the breakfast room table, alone. Rob enters, in full scuba gear, grabs himself a coke out of the fridge, and joins her at the table.

MOLLIE

You can change at the pool, Rob. Everybody changes there.

ROB

Yeah. They make you wear that Speedo under. No one needs to see that.

MOLLIE

Well, I'm not going today, anyway.

ROB

Because I won't change my clothes in front of other men at the Jewish Community Center?

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MOLLIE

No. Because we may as well admit it.
It's not going to work. I knew posing as
a married couple was going to screw us.

ROB

I feel like I should go change.

Rob gets up and starts to waddle to the hallway.

MOLLIE

You killed me under the sea.

ROB

It was just practice. So now I will know
how to not kill you under the sea.

MOLLIE

It was supposed to be a test of how we
could help one another and you suck.

ROB

And you honestly want to break up over
this?

Mollie just looks at him.

MOLLIE

You bailed on me under there, Rob.

ROB

I panicked, Mollie.

MOLLIE

Well, how do I know you won't panic
again? And bail. Like Toby did to Wes.
I didn't think that could ever happen to
us, but maybe it can.

Rob finally gets it. He sits back down with her.

ROB

Mol, I love you. Listen, it's true - I'm
a terrible, frightened swimmer. And I'm
a little neurotic about changing in front
of other men. And I guess I can be a
little cheap sometimes. But the point is
- I WILL NEVER BAIL ON YOU. Toby and Wes
couldn't make it work. And I'm sorry
about that. I really am. But we can. I
have no doubt in my mind. This is it for
me.

Mollie studies his face. A big smiles spreads across her's.

SPLIT SCREEN WITH:

CLOSE ON MELISSA - as she tries to navigate her way down a steep driveway in heels. She's really upset.

WES (V.O.)

So good luck, John.

We go FULL SCREEN TO:

EXT. HOLLYWOOD HILLS HOUSE - NIGHT

John, trailing Melissa, finally catches up to her.

TOBY (V.O.)

The only thing we have left to say to you is -- don't f*ck it up.

JOHN

Melissa, wait. What is going on?

MELISSA

Nothing.

JOHN

You're not pissed?

MELISSA

What? Nooo. I was just a little warm, so I thought I'd storm out of the party and down a hillside to get some fresh air.

She continues to storm away.

JOHN

You're pissed because I told my buddy what you do for a living?

MELISSA

You think?

JOHN

Melissa -

MELISSA

I actually started to believe that - I don't know - I was your girlfriend or something.

(MORE)

MELISSA (CONT'D)

But you just want to tell your little pals that it's cool that you brought some hooker to a party.

JOHN

No.

MELISSA

Then why did you tell him?

JOHN

Honestly? Because I thought lying was worse. Lying would mean I'm ashamed to be with you. And that is so far from the truth. I am so proud to be with you - and I really don't give a shit what you do for a living.

She looks at him, silent. He clearly means what he's saying.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Melissa, we've known each other for five years. And I've met a lot of women in those five years. But I have always held each of them up to this imaginary standard of beauty and wit and grace -- and not one of them has been able to measure up. And then one day I realized - that standard was not imaginary. That standard was you. I love you. And no one, no matter what she does for a living, could ever compare.

Melissa looks at him - not sure whether she should smile or cry. She kinda does both.

EXT. WES' (& TOBY'S) APARTMENT - NIGHT

Wes sits on the patio, smoking. Toby appears behind him.

TOBY

Hey. I thought there was strange bald smoking man loitering on your balcony.

WES

Nope. Just me.

TOBY

I, ummm, you know, I just stopped by to get some of my stuff.

Toby turns to go back inside. But stops.

TOBY (CONT'D)

I didn't really come by to get my stuff.
I mean partly, but not entirely.

WES

OK.

TOBY

Did we make a mistake?

WES

We?

TOBY

Me. Me - did I fuck it up?

Wes looks at her for a very long time.

WES

No. I don't think you did.

This is not the answer that Toby was expecting.

TOBY

Really?

Wes measures his words.

WES

Tob, I've spent the last few days alone
in this house. And every spoon or
printer or doorknob has a story - we have
like years of memories packed into every
square inch. But the more I thought -
the more I realized that's all I thought
about - the past. And what we had was
perfect. For then. But it might not be
perfect for now.

Toby looks at Wes - he really means this.

WES (CONT'D)

We grew up together. We've always had
each other. But I don't think either of
us ever got to see what it would be like -
what we would be like - if we didn't have
that.

TOBY

Right. That's what I was trying to tell
you before.

WES

But now you're going back on it?

TOBY

I was getting scared.

WES

I'm scared, too.

Toby sits down as the two of them silently contemplate this admission.

WES (CONT'D)

Toby - I got a job offer today.

TOBY

Wow. Well, god - congratulations. God - that was - fast, but -

WES

I don't want it.

TOBY

Well, then keep on. Look for something better.

WES

I want to keep working with you, you dork.

TOBY

Oh. OK. How, umm, how is that going to work, with us?

WES

It just will. You're my best friend.

Toby smiles.

TOBY

Yes.

WES

Which is why I'm going to tell you -- Catter kissed me.

TOBY

Come again?

WES

Catter kissed me. She apologized. Everyone thinks she was just -

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She opens it warily, and pulls out a VELVET POUCH. Curious, she reaches in and pulls out a HUGE ENGAGEMENT RING. She grasps it tightly, relieved and ecstatic. She lays back down - a smile spreading across her face.

INT. PAUL'S HOUSE - NIGHT

A view from outside Paul's big bay window. Inside we can see the group gathered - Paul, Catter, Rob and Mollie - all sitting in the kitchen, eating dinner. Paul's continually up and down, filling people's glasses with wine. They're having fun but the group seems - small.

INT. WES' (& TOBY'S) APARTMENT - NIGHT

Wes and Toby are in the living room - she's packing up boxes, he's laying on the couch watching TV. She plops on the floor and starts watching too.

ON TV - they're watching the video from their rehearsal dinner. The still picture montage - their lives up until this point.

Wes and Toby watch this, together. Not happy, not sad, just ready for what's to come.

FADE OUT.

END OF SHOW