

Tough Cookie

Pilot

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TEASER

TIGHT ON a glossed MOUTH as an iPhone is brought to the lips. A dictaphone app is running as the lips start to say:

FEMALE VOICE

Keep your mouth shut. It's my
personal philosophy and...

PULL OUT to find the lips belonging to the gorgeous LILLA SPENCER (32), sitting in a hair chair revealing we are:

INT. CHIC SALON - DAY (1)

Lilla is getting her hair highlighted as she takes dictation.

LILLA

...the foundation of my success.
Thankfully, most people don't know
when to shut up which is why I'm in
business. Ya see, I'm not just a
publicist, I'm a master of
perception.

The HAIR STYLIST shows Lilla a strand of grey hair. Lilla nods and the stylist takes to the grey with peroxide.

LILLA (CONT'D)

I know how to spin the truth. And
while spinning...

As the stylist spins her in her chair we SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. WIRED MAG EVENT- RED CARPET - EVENING (1)

LILLA (V.O.)

...I manipulate the reality of any
given situation. Like a magician.

Behind the step and repeat, Lilla steadies a YOUNG MALE NERDY CLIENT (19) (ala Mark Zuckerberg before Facebook went public). As she pulls a flask from the kid's jacket, he smiles a shit-eating grin and sways.

LILLA (V.O.)

With my magic, I brilliantly take
the lemons I'm dealt and don't just
create mere lemonade, but rather,
make one helluva lemon martini.

In a series of rapid shots: Lilla puts eye drops in the kid's eyes, makes him chug water, sprays him with Febreze. Lilla steadies him, gives him her shit-eating grin then pinches him hard. As he yelps, she sprays him with breath spray.

Suddenly, the blinding flash of a camera takes us to:

EXT. WIRED MAG EVENT - RED CARPET/PRESS LINE (1)

Lilla and the kid are on the red carpet talking to reporters.

LILLA (V.O.)
I'm both lifeguard and lifesaver.
Heroically covering up each mess
with methodical...

As he starts to sway, Lilla feels his forehead.

LILLA (V.O.)
...spontaneity. It's an art. And as
an artist, I deftly paint each lie.

She shakes her head, he's "sick" and leads him to safety.

EXT. WIRED MAGAZINE EVENT- BACK ENTRANCE (1)

LILLA (V.O.)
So the lie becomes the truth.

The kid pukes by a limo as Lilla clocks a HANDSOME DUDE smoking a cig. She meets the Dude's suggestive gaze. He motions her over. She smiles then, declines with a head shake as she returns her attention to her client and pats his back.

LILLA (V.O.)
But my truth is simple: my job is
my life and my life is my job. And
I have no regrets.

The kid goes for the limo door, he stumbles and his flask falls out of his jacket. As it does, a PAPPARAZZO appears about to take a picture. With ninja like precision, Lilla shoves the camera into the guy's face making him flail backward, losing the shot. As he hits the ground, she sprays the kid with breath spray and safely puts him into the limo.

PAPARAZZO
You're a bitch.

LILLA
Thank you. That reminds me--
(into iPhone)
I'm also a bitch. The biggest one
in town. Nothing fazes me.

As Lilla wipes frame...

MATCH CUT TO:

ACT ONE

An ELEVATOR OPENING revealing Lilla, decked out. We are...

INT. EAST MEETS WEST PUBLICITY- LOBBY- SAME

Lilla enters into the lobby.

RECEPTIONIST

Lilla, you have a visitor.

The receptionist nods toward an ATTRACTIVE MAN (35). A Lilla turns on the charm and flirtation. Before he can say a word:

LILLA

Good morning! I wasn't expecting you just yet but if you give me a few minutes, I'll have my assistant transcribe the little bullet points I dictated last night to make the article flow in a more streamlined way.

ATTRACTIVE MAN

Article?

LILLA

The 30 under 30 power players article. That you're interviewing me for.

ATTRACTIVE MAN

But you're 32.

Lilla turns red. Her sweet demeanor disappears.

LILLA

Excuse me? I'm Lilla Spencer and...

ATTRACTIVE MAN

...the mother of a daughter you gave up at 20 who is now 12 and in the system again. That makes you 32 and possibly old enough to reconsider taking her back?

Lilla silently takes this in. The man extends his hand.

ATTRACTIVE MAN (CONT'D)

Seth Whitfield, San Francisco
Department of Children's Services
and...

LILLA

Completely off the mark. I thought you were a journalist. I never had a...

SETH

Eleanor.

LILLA

Eleanor?

SETH

The child.

LILLA

It's awful.

SETH

It is awful for a kid to be...

LILLA

No. Her name. It's awful. Have you ever thought about changing it? Might make her more desirable.

SETH

She wasn't undesired. Her adoptive mother was elderly and died.

LILLA

So she's been in a foster home?

SETH

She's been in ten.

LILLA

(concerned)

Oh. Is she ugly?

As Seth reacts a flustered gal, AMY, calls to Lilla.

AMY

Lilla, we need you! We have a crisis.

LILLA

Sorry. I gotta go.

As Lilla walks away Seth calls after her.

SETH

I get it. Her dad broke your heart.
(she stops in her tracks)

(MORE)

SETH (CONT'D)

So you gave her away thinking if you didn't have to look at her, you wouldn't have to think about him. Did it work? Did you stop thinking about him? Or do you now think about both of them?

LILLA

(she turns; wind knocked out of her)

You...you have the wrong person.

SETH

Actually, I'm pretty sure I have the right one. And by the look of it, she's lying. To me and herself.

LILLA

Well, by the look of it, you're another example of the incompetency of our government and the lies they spread. Ya know, my driver's license says I'm 117 pounds but clearly I'm not even a buck ten.

SETH

What's it list as your birth date?

LILLA

It lists November 18th, in the year of get the hell out of my office.

SETH

Good luck. Maybe someday you'll acknowledge the truth.

He heads out as she calls after him.

LILLA

The only truth I need to acknowledge is my age. Which is 29!

As he exits, we PUSH IN on Lilla, fazed.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY (2)

Lilla, dazed, enters into a chaotic meeting as her CO-WORKERS talk over each other. On the TV screen hanging on a wall is a gif of the nerdy kid from the teaser, TYLER, humping the hood of a cop car. Slick and serious, BOB (40's), panics.

BOB

Tyler was just arrested for a public act of indecency.

MICKEY

Jesus, she's having a mental break.

HEIDI

In the three years we've all lived together she's never cried. She's made me cry but she doesn't cry.

(Lil sobs unintelligibly)

And yet she is. This is bad.

(as if she's deaf)

Are...you...dying?

Lilla continues her jibberish rant.

MICKEY

When did you last take a shower?

HEIDI

(attempting to translate)

Ba da boo boo. She's speaking baby.

MICKEY

Have you washed any part of your body? Hands count.

Lilla's lips start to quiver as she makes sense.

LILLA

I cracked. I made an impulsive, emotional decision because I was fazed. Am I ever fazed?

HEIDI AND MICKEY

No.

LILLA

Exactly. And yet, there I was-- fazed-- leading me to do what I've never done: bailing in a crisis. Now no one's returning my calls. My career and life are ruined. Know why?

(they shake their heads)

Because I'm a terrible person.

HEIDI

Not all the time.

LILLA

Ya know how I totally made your life by being your friend? Well, I also made a life by a being a mother. I have a kid.

(off their shock; rapid)

(MORE)

LILLA (CONT'D)

I got knocked up in college, went abroad and gave up the kid before anyone knew the difference. That's why I'm a genius at helping other people hide the skeletons in their closets cuz the biggest one... was already hidden in mine.

MICKEY

You procreated?

LILLA

Yeah.

MICKEY

God.

LILLA

God wasn't involved. It was a guy named Jim.

HEIDI

This is fate intervening.

LILLA

No, it's called karma and she's a bitch. Like me.

HEIDI

You're getting a do-over.

LILLA

Heidi, there are no do overs. Just push overs and I'm not one of them. Unless...this IS a sign.

(Heidi nods)

Giving her away was the defining moment of my life. The moment I became a liar. Maybe this is a chance to redefine my life and become a better, honest person.

(it clicks)

Ya know, I don't need my old job back. I need my old kid. We have to get her. Getting her will be the first step in righting my wrongs. Even if it takes months...or years. Or...who am I kidding? I can't raise a kid.

MICKEY

Agreed.

HEIDI

We can do this. Getting a kid is like getting a puppy.

MICKEY

I dunno. Feels hasty.

HEIDI

She's out of diapers, Mickey, which means no one has to pick up poop.

MICKEY

This is a lot to take in.

LILLA

We can do this.

INT. CHILDREN'S SERVICES - HALLWAY - DAY (5)

Lilla is hyperventilating and overwhelmed.

LILLA

We can't do this.

Heidi and Mickey hold bags of supplies from Target. They slowly pull her along and boost her up.

HEIDI

Just think about all the fun we're gonna have getting mani pedis.

MICKEY

And like you've promised, we can sleep in on Wednesdays when she takes out the trash.

Suddenly, Lilla picks up the pace and her enthusiasm.

LILLA

Holy shit! I'm about to meet my daughter and change her life like the year-round christmas angel I was always meant to be. She's gonna be my cutie patootie, my pre-teen mini me who's gorgeously anorexic and...

They arrive at Seth's office and look in the glass window with elation. ANGLE ON the friends, their excited faces drop.

ANGLE ON their POV through the glass to see ELEANOR (12), a hot mess of adolescence and the cutie they had in mind. In other words, she's a little jacked. As one, Lilla and friends scoot to the side, to sidebar.

LILLA (CONT'D)
I don't know about this.

MICKEY
She might have sticky fingers.

HEIDI
I bet they'd give her a flea bath
if we asked. We can't back out now.

LILLA
This is a mistake. That child looks
nothing like me and thus, can not
be mine.

HEIDI
At first glance, I'd have to agree.

MICKEY
She does look sweet.

LILLA
Exactly. This is a mix-up.

INT. SETH'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER (5)

Lilla knocks as she enters the office with Seth and Eleanor.

LILLA
Excuse me for intruding.
(to Eleanor, saccharine)
Hi, sweetie.
(to Seth)
Can I speak to you in the hall?

EXT. SETH'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER (5)

Outside the office, Lilla talks in hushed tones with Seth.

LILLA
Thank you for your interest in my
motherhood but that's not my kid.

Before Seth can respond, Eleanor opens holding a juice box.

ELEANOR
Douchebag! A warm juice box won't
cut it if you want me to entertain
myself while you suck up to a slut.

Lilla looks at Mickey and Heidi. They look at her.

LILLA
That's my kid.

ACT TWO

INT. SETH'S OFFICE - DAY (5)

Eleanor and Lilla sit face to face. Lilla smiles awkwardly as she rambles. Eleanor gives nothing.

LILLA
...and we live in a good part of
town despite some smelly homeless.

ELEANOR
Pass.

LILLA
Pass?

ELEANOR
Pass.

LILLA
You're only passing on me because I
originally passed on you!

ELEANOR
Real mature.

LILLA
I'm just trying to speak your
language.

ELEANOR
I don't speak batshit.

LILLA
This isn't going to work out.

ELEANOR
Agreed.

They purse their lips in unison. Seth tries not to smile.

SETH
Come on, you're not even trying.

ELEANOR
She can't handle me.

SETH
Why can't she handle you?

ELEANOR
I'm a lot of woman.

LILLA
 You're a lot of something but woman
 wouldn't be the first thing that
 comes to mind.

Eleanor gives Lilla the death stare.

SETH
 How about a trial? We'll keep it
 short.

ELEANOR
 24 hours tops.

SETH
 Five days.

LILLA
 How about two?

SETH
 72 hours.

Mother and daughter groan and shift their hips identically.

ELEANOR/LILLA
 Fine.

INT. LILLA'S APARTMENT - EVENING (5)

Back at the apartment, Mickey, Heidi and Lilla give Eleanor a tour. They land in a semi-private, sad little spruced up space with a kid-sized cot next to the treadmill.

MICKEY
 And... this is your room slash
 exercise nook.

She looks next to the nook into Heidi's room.

ELEANOR
 I like that room.

HEIDI
 Oh sweetie, I would never want you
 to sleep on my floor.

ELEANOR
 Don't worry, I'll take the bed.

Heidi is confused as Lilla pulls everyone to the kitchen.

LILLA
 Family time! I'm making dinner.

MICKEY

You cook?

LILLA

Never. But since this is a special occasion, I'm making an exception.

They're now all in the open kitchen. She pulls out random ingredients, multiple cookbooks and box of mac n'cheese.

LILLA (CONT'D)

So, I've been thinking.

ELEANOR

A first.

LILLA

We should give Eleanor our own special pet name. Something sweet. Or just more palatable like... 'Cookie.'

ELEANOR

'Cookie'? I love it. I really do. I love it so much that while you call me 'Cookie', I'll call you 'Mom'.

Mickey and Heidi try not to laugh but can't help themselves. Off Lilla's death stare we CUT TO:

INT. DINING ROOM - HOURS LATER (5)

The clock reads almost ten thirty. The roommates and Eleanor sit at the table and stare at what looks like a massive mess.

LILLA

Bon Appetit.

ELEANOR

Pass.

LILLA

I just cooked for hours and you're not even gonna try it?

ELEANOR

Are you?

LILLA

I don't eat.

ELEANOR

In this case, neither do I.

HEIDI
I say we all don't eat.

LILLA
Eat it!

ELEANOR
I don't eat things that look like
they came out of my butt.

MICKEY
I just lost my appetite.

ELEANOR
See no one wants your poo poo
platter. Including you.

LILLA
Smartass.

ELEANOR
Skank.

MICKEY
Ladies....

ELEANOR/LILLA
Shut it.

Lilla and Eleanor scowl at Mickey in the same way.

MICKEY
(under his breath)
DNA is crazy.

LILLA
Look at the time. It's ten thirty.
Time for Eleanor to go down.

ELEANOR
I don't "go down". I go to sleep.
At midnight.

LILLA
Like a Gremlin.

MICKEY
Actually, a Gremlin doesn't...

LILLA
Kids don't go to bed at midnight.
You're trying to pull a fast one.

ELEANOR
No, actually that would be you and
your poorly constructed nose job.

Lilla GASPS IN HORROR then, impressed:

LILLA
(under her breath)
Touche'.

DING DONG. They're saved by the bell.

INT. LILLA'S APARTMENT- FRONT DOOR - MOMENTS LATER

Lilla opens the door to find ALEJANDRO (35, gorgeous Spanish)
who sweeps her up into his arms with a sexy kiss.

ALEJANDRO
Cariño.

Mickey and Heidi pull her aside.

MICKEY
Was dinner a ruse so you could eat
and run and abandon us to babysit?

LILLA
Honestly, it wasn't. With all the
life redefining, reclaiming kid and
truth telling mumbo-jumbo I forgot
Alejandro was in town and didn't
cancel. But I'll cancel now.

MICKEY
No. Go. Hang with Alejandro.

LILLA
I can't. I want to make a real
effort or at least pretend to. I
genuinely don't want to hurt
Cookie's feelings.

They look at Eleanor giving Lilla a death stare.

HEIDI
Something tells me you won't.

MICKEY
You need time to warm up to this
whole mother thing. Or at least get
room temperature on it.

HEIDI
Don't worry. We gotcha covered.

INT. LIVING ROOM - LATER (5)

HEIDI

Pizza!

Mickey, Heidi and Eleanor sit on the couch a pizza laid out in front of them as Mickey passes out slices.

ELEANOR

Pass.

MICKEY

You don't like pizza?

ELEANOR

I'm in more of an ice cream mood.

MICKEY

You can have some ice cream but first you gotta eat something healthy.

ELEANOR

Cheese on bread has never been defined as 'heart smart'.

She reluctantly takes a slice as Mickey wipes around her.

MICKEY

Bet you're anxious to get to know us.

ELEANOR

Not really.

MICKEY

So, Heidi is pretty and is supported by her parents.

ELEANOR

Are they worried you'll turn to prostitution if left to your own devices?

HEIDI

No...yes.

MICKEY

And I'm a Scorpio by date but a Virgo by demeanor. I'm single...

ELEANOR

Because you're weak.

MICKEY

I'm not weak.

ELEANOR

Really? Cuz as I see it you live in an apartment with two hot chicks and you've never tried sleeping with either one of them.

MICKEY

We're just friends.

ELEANOR

Keep telling yourself that.

Heidi laughs as she scarfs her pizza.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)

Don't laugh, free loader.

(Heidi stops laughing)

You might wanna consider settling down before your parents die or you lose your looks. Which, by my estimation, will happen in the next three to five years based on how fast you're eating.

HEIDI

(she puts down the pizza)

I'm sorry.

MICKEY

So, uh, do you have a boyfriend?

Mickey reaches across Eleanor to wipe crumbs on the couch.

ELEANOR

Lay off perv. I'm not on the menu.

(off his horrified look)

What? First you ask about my sex life then you inappropriately touched me.

MICKEY

I didn't touch you.

ELEANOR

I'm a foster kid. I know touching. And you're a toucher.

MICKEY

I'm not a toucher.

ELEANOR

You are.

MICKEY

How 'bout some ice cream?!

INT. KITCHEN- LATER (5)

Mickey and Heidi watch Eleanor from afar with intrigue and horror as she finishes her ice-cream by licking out the bowl. As they watch Eleanor touching things with her sticky fingers, Mickey is falling apart. He talks quietly, stressed.

MICKEY

I can't handle this anymore. She has to take a bath.

ELEANOR

I'll take a bath but I'm scared of water so I need someone with me.

(she eyes Mickey)

Five bucks says you wanna volunteer.

MICKEY

No I don't.

Mickey looks at Heidi who then sweetly turns to Eleanor.

HEIDI

I'll help you.

EXT. BATHROOM- MOMENTS LATER (5)

O.S. water stops running in a bath. Heidi opens the door.

HEIDI

Ready.

Eleanor enters as Heidi gives Mickey a thumbs up before closing the door. Mickey lets out a sigh as he wipes up Eleanor's mess. It's quiet...then, a crazy commotion is heard inside the bathroom. A SPLASH. A SCREAM. Mickey runs to the door as Eleanor walks out -untouched by water- followed by a soaking wet Heidi. Eleanor looks at the clock, it's midnight.

ELEANOR

Time for bed.

Eleanor heads to the nook until she takes a hard left into Heidi's room and shuts the door. Mickey looks to Heidi.

HEIDI

I'm sorry.

EXT. BATHROOM- MORNING (6)

Eleanor exits Heidi's room past Heidi asleep on the treadmill (the cot's too small). She stops, turns around to Heidi and turns on the treadmill which slides Heidi off and startles her awake. Then, Eleanor heads to the bathroom, opens the door and is met with TWO SCREAMS inside the bathroom with the shower running. One female, one male. Then, Eleanor SCREAMS.

INT. KITCHEN- MOMENTS LATER (6)

Lilla, now in a robe and traumatized, sits across from an equally traumatized Eleanor.

LILLA

So, when you're a mature woman and you meet a special fella...

ELEANOR

Spare me. You guys were boning.

LILLA

Then why're you so shocked?

ELEANOR

(whispering; freaked out)
Where's your hair?
(beat)
And his?!

ANGLE ON Alejandro next to Lilla.

ALEJANDRO

Que?

ELEANOR

(genuinely concerned)
Is pubic balding genetic? Cuz my womanly mane only recently started to sprout.
(to Alejandro)
Eres mi padre?

ALEJANDRO

(in broken English)
Bye-bye.

Alejandro heads out as Eleanor looks to Lilla with sass.

ELEANOR

He's not comin' back.

LILLA
 (frustrated)
 Children should be seen, not heard.

Eleanor flicks her off as Lilla follows Alejandro out.

LILLA (CONT'D)
 Don't go. She's just being curious
 and... Should I call you later?

ALEJANDRO
 I call you.

Lilla's CELL RINGS. She picks up as Alejandro exits. Lilla's starting to reel with exasperation.

LILLA
 Jennifer. Hey. Don't worry, I've
 stopped trying to get my job back.
 (beat)
 You can get me into Tyler's party?!
 That means I can corner Bob, grovel
 and maybe get my job back! I NEED
 my job back. It's cold out here.
 (beat)
 Tonight? Oh.
 (she looks at Eleanor)
 No problem. I'll meet you outside.

Lilla hangs up and rushes to Mickey's room where Mickey and Heidi are eating breakfast on TV trays.

LILLA (CONT'D)
 Why're you guys holed up in here?
 Whatever. Doesn't matter. Because I
 have a potential answer to my
 despair. Ya see, a caterer I know
 can get me into Tyler Preston's
 celebration tonight which would
 give me the opportunity to make
 good with Bob. Can you guys watch
 Cookie? Thanks.

MICKEY
 I'm afraid that can't happen.

LILLA
 Why?

MICKEY
 Because I'm afraid. Cookie is a
 monster.

LILLA

Oh come on, I know she looks like a little troll but I was with you til ten thirty. Nothing could've happened in an hour and a half.

MICKEY

A lot happened.

HEIDI

A lot.

MICKEY

If you need someone to watch her, you should hire someone with a license to taser.

HEIDI

Yeah, you're gonna need more than a babysitter.

LILLA

But I have more than a babysitter. I have both of you. We're raising her together, remember?

MICKEY

No can do. I have a date.

HEIDI

And I have a something.

LILLA

Fine. I'll find somebody else.

INT. LILLA'S BEDROOM- EVENING (6)

LILLA

(begging)

Pleeeeeease... you're my last resort.

INT. SETH'S APARTMENT - INTERCUT- SAME (6)

SETH

The trial is supposed to be for you to get to know each other, not for me to babysit. Take her with you.

LILLA

It's not a great option given her limited outfit selection. And also there's this other thing called "being difficult". Alejandro ran away in fear this morning.

SETH
Who's Alejandro?

LILLA
My lover.

SETH
Did he do something to provoke her?

LILLA
No. She just saw us naked.

SETH
A little advice: you might not want to reveal stuff like that to me or anyone from my department. Ever.

LILLA
I didn't invite her into the shower with us.

SETH
I'm getting off the phone now.

LILLA
(desperate)
I can't handle her on my own. I need you to bail me out.

SETH
By pretending I never got this call, I just did. Good night.

With that, Seth finally hangs up. Lilla's annoyed.

INT. LIVING ROOM- EVENING (6)

Mickey and Heidi head out as Eleanor calls out.

ELEANOR
Yo, shortie, heard you had a date.

She hands him a torn off piece of paper.

MICKEY
What's this?

ELEANOR
My number. You're gonna need it.

MICKEY
I'm not going to call you.

ELEANOR
Trust me. You will.

Eleanor nods for him to pocket it. He does.

LILLA
(entering; super sweet)
Alright princess, it's time for a
bath and makeover.

ELEANOR
Not happening.

LILLA
Fine. I'll just wipe you down.

She grabs a CANNISTER OF CLOROX WIPES.

ELEANOR
You wouldn't dare.

The look in Lilla's eyes say it all: Try me.

INT. BATHROOM- LATER

Eleanor sits on the side of the tub in an oversized robe next to Lilla as the water runs. Eleanor stares daggers at Lilla.

LILLA
Believe me, I wish I didn't have to
take you either. Wait, can I leave
you home alone?

ELEANOR
I'm too young. It's illegal.

LILLA
We don't have to tell anyone.
(Eleanor shakes her head)
You're a buzz kill.

ELEANOR
I know. So what's the plan?

LILLA
The plan is for me to eat my words
with Bob and get my job back.

ELEANOR
So you regret what you said?

LILLA
Nope. I don't have regrets.

ELEANOR

Then why are you gonna pretend you regret it?

LILLA

'Cause I've got mouths to feed and..it's much easier to lie.

ELEANOR

You're lazy.

LILLA

And you're annoying. Can you just pretend to be cute and fun for the next few hours? Please.

ELEANOR

That's a lot of work.

LILLA

Will this shut you up?

Lilla flashes her a hundie. Eleanor nods.

INT. PARTY - COUCHES- NIGHT (6)

Lilla drops Eleanor off to a couch with some grub while she scans the room for Bob. She spots him across the way.

LILLA

Be good and more of this...
 (she flashes more green)
 ...is coming your way.
 (Eleanor grabs the money
 but Lilla holds firm)
 Don't offend anyone. Try.

INT. PARTY - COUCHES - MOMENTS LATER (6)

Eleanor is in convo with a group of women, one who has serious plastic surgery face.

ELEANOR

I got it, it's a cat. You're trying to make your face look like a cat.

The woman is insulted. Eleanor's cell rings. Eleanor puts her finger up to "give her a moment". INTERCUT WITH:

INT. RESTAURANT - SAME

MICKEY

I think she's playing hard to get.

ELEANOR

How so?

MICKEY

She left but before she did, she suggestively licked her lips. I just called her but she didn't pick up so I'm gonna call her again.

ELEANOR

Don't. You're a small guy and small guys need to pretend they have balls.

MICKEY

I have balls.

ELEANOR

Then let's see them.

(silence)

Exactly. Don't call me back til you grow a pair.

(hangs up; to the women)

My new roomie. He's totally not getting laid tonight.

INT. PARTY - BAR - LATER (6)

Lilla is almost to the bar when Bob spots her. She smiles. Motions for them to talk just as he motions to TWO BEEFY SECURITY GUARDS and points them in her direction. Shit.

INT. PARTY - COUCHES - MOMENTS LATER (6)

Eleanor's chatting with a MODEL in a sheer dress.

ELEANOR

You're really pretty.

MODEL

Thank you.

ELEANOR

But that's not why everyone's staring.

(beat)

We can see your coochie.

As Model reacts, Lilla quickly ducks down next to Eleanor.

LILLA

Mission aborted. We gotta skiddatz--

(Bob shows with security)

-- before we get kicked out.

ACT THREE

INT. PARTY - COUCHES- SAME (6)

We pick up directly where we left off. Lilla blathers.

LILLA

I'm not trying to make a scene I
just wanted to...

BOB

I don't want to hear it. You left
us with a mess. Escort her out.

ELEANOR

(to the guards)

One sec. Bob, can we talk turkey?

(they sidebar)

Listen, Lilla hasn't been of sound
mind these days. Ya see, I was
brought into her life unexpectedly
and it got her off her game so I'd
appreciate if you hear her out and
not make that bullshit bath I took
go to waste. Cool?

(disarmed, Bob nods)

Tell 'em, Lil.

LILLA

So, I just wanted to say that I
regret um...

(she whispers to Eleanor)

How do you feel about little white
lies?

(Eleanor shakes her head)

How 'bout the itty bitty, teeny
weeny, off white variety?

(Eleanor shakes her head)

You're exhausting.

ELEANOR

Thank you.

BOB

I'm losing patience.

ELEANOR

And hair. Settle down, Bobby.

LILLA

Yeah, I'm growing a conscience and
it's telling me that I regret...

(she closes her eyes)

...nothing.

(MORE)

LILLA (CONT'D)

I don't want to lie for a living anymore. It's no way to live.

(to the guards)

You can take me now.

MALE VOICE (O.S.)

Wait.

Lilla and Eleanor turn around to find Tyler.

TYLER

You're right. Lying is no way to live and I've been kidding myself thinking I can be irresponsible and still run a billion dollar business. I need a grown up to keep me in line. Especially now that I have so much to lose. I want you back on my team.

Tyler looks at Bob. Bob reluctantly nods.

BOB

You can come back.

LILLA

Eh. No thanks.

TYLER

What about another firm?

ELEANOR

She doesn't really play well with others. In total candor, she'd be at her best working for herself but she can't because it's expensive.

LILLA

Excellent points, Cookie.

(to Tyler; proud)

She's my kid.

TYLER

I'll fund your company as long as I'm a client.

LILLA

I don't know.

ELEANOR

(to Lilla)

Don't be an asshole.

LILLA
Okay. Fine.

ELEANOR
We'll be in touch.

As Eleanor shakes hands with Tyler we....

SMASH CUT TO:

A CELEBRATORY MONTAGE on the cue of a kick ass song:

INT. LIQUOR STORE - NIGHT (6)

Lilla and Eleanor bust into the store with tons of swagger.

Eleanor throws down a hundie on the counter.

Lilla grabs a couple bottles of wine.

Eleanor grabs a couple liters of soda.

Together they grab gobs of candy.

INT. LILLA'S APARTMENT- LATER (6)

Lilla and Eleanor dance.

Lilla and Eleanor chug from bottles of wine and soda.

Lilla throws up in the toilet. Eleanor holds back her hair.

Lilla and Eleanor dance.

Lilla and Eleanor eat gobs of candy.

Eleanor throws up in the toilet. Lilla holds back her hair.

Lilla and Eleanor jump on Lilla's bed and then both fall back onto it, passing out. END MONTAGE

INT. LILLA'S ROOM - MORNING (7)

It's day break. We BOOM UP from the floor to the edge of the bed to find Lilla spooning Eleanor. Eleanor wakes up and is awkwardly confronted by the mother/daughter "one night stand" of sorts. She slowly moves out from underneath Lilla's arm, waking Lilla who also is totally taken aback by the PDA. They greet each other like lovers who know that the night before got a little dirty and crazy. And they're now sober and mortified.

INT. APARTMENT- MOMENTS LATER (7)

Together they make a mutual walk of shame out of Lilla's bedroom to the kitchen in front of Mickey and Heidi, who quietly get out of dodge. They both grab the juice.

ELEANOR
Is there pulp? I don't like pulp.

LILLA
Neither do I.

Lilla smiles and studies her daughter as she pours them each a glass until she catches her reflection in the toaster.

LILLA (CONT'D)
Damn, I look wrecked.

ELEANOR
You did three round offs in a row.

LILLA
Three? I vaguely remember one.

ELEANOR
That's cuz you ate it...

ELEANOR/LILLA
...on the coffee table.

LILLA
(they crack up)
Oh yeah. I blacked out for awhile
after I hit my head.

ELEANOR
It's gonna be a night to remember
and the best way for us to go out.
(Lilla's caught off guard)
Cuz while last night was fun we're
clearly not a match. Right?
(she's testing Lilla)
You don't really want me. Right?

Lilla doesn't get she's being tested and takes Eleanor at her word. Too proud and vulnerable to disagree, Lilla agrees.

LILLA
Right. Right. So tonight will be
our last night and I'll have Seth
come get you in the morning.

ELEANOR
Thanks.

INT. ELEANOR'S NOOK- EVENING (7)

It's late. Eleanor is now in her nook, on the cot, looking through an OLD PHOTO ALBUM when Lilla stops by to check in.

LILLA
Have any questions?

ELEANOR
These are your pictures from college?

LILLA
Yeah. Mostly from around the time you were conceived. I thought you might like to get a sense of your roots before we part company.

ELEANOR
Interesting. And I have a question.
(off a pic with dudes)
Were you a slut?

LILLA
Were. Are. It's all relative.

ELEANOR
Do you know who my dad was?

LILLA
(offended)
Yes.
(beat; reflecting)
He was the love of my life. And you have his eyes.

ELEANOR
Is he in here?

Lilla shakes her head as Eleanor hands the album back along with a small pink blanket. Lilla hands the blanket back.

LILLA
You can have it.
(Eleanor looks confused)
It's your first woobie. I kept it.

Eleanor looks at it then gives it back to Lilla.

ELEANOR
You keep it. It doesn't mean anything to me.

LILLA

O-kay.

Lilla turns to go then stops and turns back.

LILLA (CONT'D)

Remember when I said that I had no regrets? I lied. I regret giving you away.

(she swallows hard)

You're the only person who knows what my heart sounds like from the inside.

They look at one another. Silent. Then heads to her room.

INT. LIVING ROOM- LATER (7)

Mickey and Heidi watch TV as Eleanor comes into the room. Immediately, they brace themselves.

ELEANOR

Stand down. I come bearing apologies.

MICKEY

What's the catch?

ELEANOR

No catch. Just truth talk. Since it's my last night, I want you to know I admired your attempts to make me feel comfortable.

(to Heidi)

I'm sorry I took advantage of your mental shortcomings.

HEIDI

(slight not registering)
Thank you.

ELEANOR

(to Mickey)

And I know you're not a perv. You just need to grow a pair especially when you ask this hot slice out.

(she hands him a card)

Name's Tiffany. Met her at the party and she's a sure thing.

MICKEY

How do you know?

ELEANOR
She wears Egyptian musk.

MICKEY
What's that?

ELEANOR
The scent of a whore.

Mickey smiles. Nice.

EXT. LILLA'S ROOM- LATER (7)

As Eleanor walks back toward her nook to hit the hay she passes by Lilla's room- the door slightly ajar and catches Lilla holding Eleanor's woobie and a photo, crying.

ANGLE ON the photo - it's of a Lilla and a dude. Their arms around as she sits on his lap. Could it be Eleanor's dad?

ANGLE ON Eleanor, still peeking in the crack of the door with a look we haven't seen on her face before: regret.

EXT. LILLA, MICKEY AND HEIDI 'S APARTMENT - MORNING (8)

Mickey helps Eleanor with her bag and puts it into the trunk as Seth turns to Lilla.

SETH
I appreciate you giving her a chance.

LILLA
And I appreciate you giving me one.
(holding back tears)
It was a gift.

Mickey closes the trunk as Eleanor readies to go.

ELEANOR
Thanks for not sucking too hard.

MICKEY
We try.

She puts out her hand to shake hands with Mickey, Heidi and when she gets to Lilla, Lilla smiles. It's warm, motherly.

LILLA
It was nice to meet you.

ELEANOR
You too.

Lilla puts out her hand but is surprised to get a quick hug in return. Then, Eleanor jumps into the car.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)
Come on, douchebag. Let's go.

INT. SETH'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER (8)

Seth starts the car and pulls away as Eleanor watches Lilla and the roomies getting smaller and smaller in the distance.

SETH
I'm glad you gave it a try. Now
you'll have no regrets.

ELEANOR
Stop.

SETH
What?

ELEANOR
The car. Stop the car.

He stops the car. She turns to him.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)
I need to stay. Not for me but for
them. They're children and they
need an adult around. And that
adult is me.

A smile creeps across Seth's face.

SETH
You sure?

ELEANOR
Sure.

Something catches Seth's attention in the rear view mirror. He turns to look behind him as does Eleanor. And there in the distance is Lilla, running after them, in her heels.

SETH
Should we back up and save her the
trouble?

ELEANOR
Nah. Make her run to the car.

FADE TO BLACK