

UNTITLED ERIN FOSTER SHOW

Written by
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Based on,
The only good decision she ever made.

STUDIO/NETWORK DRAFT
October 31, 2023

Steven Levitan Productions
3 Arts Entertainment

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INT. LYNN'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM/PODCAST ROOM - AFTERNOON

JOANNE (34) and MORGAN (36) sit on a couch recording an episode of their podcast. There's a professional-ish recording setup (and a small camera recording video), but it's still casual and comfortable. On the wall behind them, a sign hangs with their podcast title: "NOBODY ASKED US."

JOANNE

(into the mic)

So we've established that no one can judge you for having sex with two people in one day, as long as it happened accidentally.

MORGAN

You've established that. I'll continue to judge.

JOANNE

As is your right.

(back to audience)

Okay, I think that wraps us up. Next week, we have a great show--

MORGAN

Wait, you're skipping the surprise guest.

JOANNE

We don't have one for this week. I don't have one for you.

MORGAN

Well, I found one. For you.

JOANNE

Oh fuck my life.

Morgan pushes a few buttons on her computer.

ANONYMOUS GUY

--Hello?

Morgan tries to stop herself from laughing.

JOANNE

Oh God, hello?

ANONYMOUS GUY

Hey, Joanne. What's up?

JOANNE

Hi, sorry, I can't tell who this
is... say something else?

She looks at her sister for help, but Morgan just starts
laughing. It makes Joanne start laughing too.

ANONYMOUS GUY

It's Josh.

JOANNE

(totally blank)
Josh? Umm... Josh.

ANONYMOUS GUY

Yeah, Josh Kraus... we went out
last week?

Joanne gasps and throws something at Morgan, who's laughing.

MORGAN

(sarcastic)
I'm sorry. Game's not fun anymore?
This is what you get for bringing
on my plastic surgeon.

JOSH

Am I supposed to stay on?

JOANNE

Yes, hi, sorry!
(to Morgan)
I'm going to murder you.
(back to Josh)
Okay, Josh. Hi! I'm so sorry my
sister did this to you. Let me
collect myself, I'm extremely
uncomfortable.

Morgan is laughing so hard she can barely speak.

MORGAN

Okay, let's catch everyone up. You
and Josh met a few weeks ago and he
asked for your number. Josh, feel
free to chime in if I retell it
poorly.

JOSH

So far so good.

JOANNE

(interrupting)

Okay, so then we texted and he asked me out for the following Thursday, I think?

JOSH

Yup, we had dinner plans, but then--

MORGAN

I'm dying to hear what happens next.

JOANNE

Bitch, you already know the story.

JOSH

Anyway, the night before our date, she texts me pretty late asking if she could come over. I was confused cause we had a date for the next day.

MORGAN

So what did you say?

JOSH

I mean, I said, yeah, she came over.

MORGAN

And what happened?

JOSH

Umm, am I allowed to say what happened?

MORGAN

Josh, this is a safe place. Continue...

JOSH

We had sex? And then she left, and then the next day, she said she couldn't make our date. Which was pretty whack.

MORGAN

Joanne, why don't you explain why you texted him. Radical honesty, that's your thing, right?

Joanne hesitates. Takes a deep breath.

JOANNE

I dunno... I mean, I felt like we had really good chemistry when we met, you're obviously super cute... I guess... you just kept asking what type of food I like, and I started to feel like maybe we weren't gonna be a match?

JOSH

Because I asked you where you want to eat?

MORGAN

Because you were *too* nice Josh, that's what she means.

JOANNE

No! That's not true.

(beat)

I mean, it's a little true. You kept sending restaurant options, and I kind of just wanted you to *tell me* where we were eating.

MORGAN

Was the sex bad?

JOANNE

He could've pulled my hair more.

JOSH

This is bullshit. Girls say they want to be treated with respect, and then I do it and you think I'm a pussy? Fuck you.

JOANNE

Okay, that sort of turned me on.

MORGAN

(to Joanne)

He hung up.

INT. JAVIER'S RESTAURANT - ENTRANCE - NIGHT

A bustling night. NOAH (38, handsome, confident, charming -- knows exactly what he wants and how he wants it, but also badly wants to people-please) breaks his way through the crowd waiting to be seated, holding the hand of REBECCA (mid 30s, naturally beautiful, a brunette Jewish dream girl).

HOST

Noah! Your table just got set up.

Noah gives Rebecca a kiss on her bare shoulder and they follow the host, chatting with her as they go.

NOAH

Came to our favorite restaurant for a special night.

REBECCA

It was my birthday on Friday. We couldn't celebrate cause this one was working.

Noah makes eyes with the host and points to an engagement ring box in his hands. The HOST winks and mouths "I gotchu."

INT. JAVIER'S RESTAURANT - DINING ROOM - SOON AFTER

Rebecca types on her phone. Noah takes a sip of his water. Rebecca looks up.

REBECCA

(re: phone)

I'm sorry-- just seeing if my mom wanted any of my migraine pills, but she said she's just gonna try to sleep it off.

NOAH

All good. Tell her hi.

The WAITER approaches Noah and Rebecca with their chips and salsa. Rebecca finishes typing, puts down her phone.

WAITER

Are we ready to order?

REBECCA

Yes, we are. I'm gonna have the ground beef tacos, and he'll have the chicken burrito.

NOAH

Beck, I can order for myself.

She holds her hands up in surrender. The waiter looks to him. Noah slowly scans the menu.

NOAH (CONT'D)

How are the fajitas?

WAITER

They're popular.

NOAH

Yeah, okay...

(still scanning menu)

Ya know what, I'm gonna do... the *burrito*. But let's add chicken to it. Not a *chicken burrito*, but a burrito with a side of chicken. And you can just put that chicken right in the burrito.

WAITER

(fist bumps Noah)

I see you. Stay strong.

He leaves them, and Rebecca smiles at him. He smiles back, something starting to crack a bit.

REBECCA

What does it matter if I ordered for you? You get the same thing every single time we're here.

NOAH

No, yeah, all good. It's just that I thought I wanted something different, and I don't know--

Rebecca shakes it off and pivots.

REBECCA

Tomorrow afternoon I blocked some time out for you to do some spring cleaning.

Noah takes a bite of chips and salsa.

NOAH

What do you mean? I have meetings all day tomorrow.

REBECCA

I blocked out time with your assistant. You said the other day how much you need to get rid of old jeans you don't wear and stuff like that. So, we're doing it tomorrow from three to five.

Noah looks like he's gonna lose it.

NOAH

That's just something people say: *I need to go through my closet*. Then you don't do it for another year.

REBECCA

Okay Noah, order your burrito with a side of chicken, keep your old jeans. You're being weird.

NOAH

Yeah, I feel weird. Ignore me.

He gulps down some water as the waiter puts down guacamole.

REBECCA

(to waiter)

When you get a sec, can we have more water?

NOAH

Rebecca, it's fine. I'm good.

REBECCA

(raises her eyebrows)

Re-becca? You haven't called me that in a long time.

Noah tries to shake off the moment.

NOAH

Sorry, let's reset.

REBECCA

Yes, let's *No-ah*.

He grabs a chip and some guacamole. As he chews, he looks over at a COZY COUPLE nearby, lovingly chatting as they sit on the same side of a four top.

NOAH

How's that thing going with that girl at work who keeps taking you off those email chains? Jessie? Jordan?

As he's talking, he's trying to furtively put the ring box back into his pocket. But it doesn't go in easily.

REBECCA

Sarah.

(then)

What is that? What are you doing?

NOAH

What? Nothing. What do you mean?

REBECCA

Did you just put a ring box in your pocket?! I saw that!

NOAH

What do you have hawk eyes?! No, I didn't, that's insane.

REBECCA

Show me what's in your pocket.

NOAH

I'm an adult, you can't just ask me what's in my pocket!

She death stares him. He stares back at her.

NOAH (CONT'D)

Okay fine, it was a ring. It still is a ring.

REBECCA

So, why were you shoving it back in your pocket?!

NOAH

I don't know, it just didn't feel right-- *the moment* didn't feel right. Something was off with us.

REBECCA

The moment didn't feel right, what does that mean?

NOAH

(defeated)

I don't know.

Rebecca is close to tears. At the end of her rope.

REBECCA

Okay Noah, well let me know when you do, because *it's been SIX YEARS*. And now you 'don't know'? Because, what? I knew you wanted a chicken burrito?! It makes no sense. I can't keep doing this.

She stands up.

NOAH
You're leaving?!

The WAITERS arrive with flaming margaritas, singing Happy Birthday. The sound disappears into the background, and they sing and clap in slow motion as we focus on Rebecca and Noah looking at each other. She blows out the flames still in slow motion, and she walks out, leaving Noah.

INT. R&D CAFE - LATER

Joanne and Morgan sit at a booth with their parents, LYNN (60, intense, ethereal) and HENRY (58, opinionated, gay and owning it). The WAITER walks up to the table.

LYNN
Can we get a few pieces of your
cheesecake with a candle?

WAITER
Of course. Special occasion?

HENRY
It's our anniversary!

WAITER
Aww.

JOANNE
Of the day they got separated. Why
do we do this every year?

MORGAN
As a divorcée, I find this
celebration refreshing. Some
divorces are meant to be
celebrated.

LYNN
Oh stop it, you were married for
like three weeks.

MORGAN
Mmm, two years.

HENRY
Worth it, he was hot.

Everyone grimaces.

LYNN

(fake aside, to waiter)
Meanwhile, this one and I were together for thirty-two beautiful years. We only separated because he was a bit *confused* about his sexuality. It's very trendy to be gay these days.

HENRY

Not confused. *Love you*. Not confused.

JOANNE

Mom, can you not tell our whole life story to this poor man?

WAITER

I'll be back with your desserts.

LYNN

(dramatic)
I forgot to tell you all, I went to the doctor the other day, and she discovered something awful.

Henry gasps and covers his mouth.

HENRY

I could see it the moment you walked in, your skin is this awful blue!

LYNN

My skin?!

She opens the camera on her phone to look at herself.

MORGAN

Mom, tell us what's wrong!

Lynn snaps out of it and puts the phone away.

LYNN

(close to tears)
Well I went to see Birch--

JOANNE

--Who the fuck is Birch?

MORGAN

Oh my God, Birch is her sound therapist. She is not a doctor!

JOANNE

Jesus Mom, we thought you had cancer!

LYNN

She is a voice biologist, and she discovered that when I speak I am missing the note C. The note C is directly related to your colon. And the colon is directly related to deep sadness.

Joanne's phone starts to ring.

HENRY

(to Lynn)

Honey, I was joking about the blue skin thing by the way. I just panicked!

Joanne looks for her phone and grabs it.

JOANNE

(to Morgan)

Oh my God, it's a NEW YORK NUMBER!

MORGAN

Oh my God.

JOANNE

(to their parents)

It's Spotify, about the podcast!

MORGAN

Well, go answer it!

Joanne is pushing her way out of the booth.

JOANNE

I'm trying to!

(to Henry)

Move!!!

Joanne scrambles and pushes Henry out of the booth, his butt lands on the floor. Morgan throws her bread at her mom, and both girls hurry out.

INT. R&D CAFE - ENTRANCE - MOMENTS LATER

Joanne and Morgan stand in a corner, the phone on speaker. They are speaking to JAMES, who is very business-like.

JOANNE

Yes, hi James, I can hear you, hi.

JAMES (ON SPEAKER)

Hi Joanne. Should we grab your sister?

JOANNE

No, who cares about her. Kidding, she's right here with me.

MORGAN

Hi James!

JAMES (ON SPEAKER)

So we've been tracking your podcast numbers since we last spoke, and saw you have been hitting the thresholds we've been looking for, which excited the guys in Analytics.

JOANNE

Love those guys.

Morgan mouths to her to be cool.

JAMES (ON SPEAKER)

Yes, they're good at their jobs. And they think it's time we made a formal offer to acquire your podcast and bring you into the family.

JOANNE

Oh my god!

MORGAN

Really?

Joanne shoots a look at Morgan.

JAMES (ON SPEAKER)

Everyone over here loves your dynamic and how you engage with your fans, so keep that up and your downloads should keep rising.

JOANNE

We will! And you won't be sorry. This show has legs for spinoffs and book deals. I have ideas for other shows we could produce under our deal--

MORGAN

Do we get nice offices?

JAMES (ON SPEAKER)

Okay, I've gotta jump. We'll set a time soon for you to come meet the team, talk next steps. These things tend to move slow. Talk soon.

CLICK. The sisters jump up and down, celebrating like crazy. A HANDSOME GUY walks past. Joanne keeps celebrating, but Morgan immediately stops, gives him a "cool nod."

MORGAN

Hey.

INT. ROKHLAN HOUSE - KITCHEN - NEXT MORNING

Noah timidly walks in, where his mother BINA (62) is plating some bagels and lox, his father ILAN (65) is on the floor playing with MIRIAM (12, earnest, not the best with social cues), Noah's sister-in-law ESTHER (39) is leaning on the counter texting, and his older brother SASHA (39) sits at the table with a cup of coffee. They look up when he walks in.

NOAH

Hey guys.

Sasha gets up and pats his brother on the back.

SASHA

Morning my bro.

NOAH

Mom, thanks again for letting me stay over.

Noah seems a bit nervous to see his mother. He gives her a kiss on the cheek. She stiffens a bit when he does.

BINA

Breakfast is ready everyone.
(putting food on table)
Esther, please put your phone away.

Noah feels the cold front. Esther subtly rolls her eyes.

NOAH

Hey, while we're eating, I wanted to talk to you all about something.

ESTHER

Sasha already told us.

NOAH
(to Sasha)
Bro, are you serious?!

SASHA
They thought you proposed to her!
Mom had a whole obnoxious balloon
thing planned with a bunch of
swans.

BINA
*It was two swans! Kathy had them at
her 60th and everyone loved it.
Very majestic.*
(then, devastated)
Anyway, doesn't matter... I
canceled them.

NOAH
Mom, I'm sorry about the swans.
(he sits)
Listen, yes, I was going to
propose, but it all just got messed
up, and I got overwhelmed. Then she
walked out on me.

ESTHER
As she should! You took the ring
out *in front of her*, and then
bailed!? You humiliated her!

BINA
For her?! How about for me? I'm the
one who's been humiliated here!
It's almost as bad as when Esther
got pregnant before she and Sasha
were even engaged.

ESTHER
Yep, did it all by myself. Just to
mess with you.

SASHA
Can we focus back on Noah, who
finally F'd up for once?

BINA
Don't use that language.

SASHA
I said *F'd*.

MIRIAM
Should I leave?

ESTHER

I'll leave with you.

BINA

Oh, stop it, everyone. Esther you know I love you, but that was not how I wanted that to unfold.

ESTHER

(sarcastic)

Really? You've never mentioned it.

MIRIAM

Okay, but we're all happy I'm here now, right?

BINA

Of course we are, you are the absolute light of my life.

(to Noah)

Noah Israel Rokhlan, you can and will fix this. You and Rebecca are meant to be together.

ILAN

It's bashert.

(then)

What got into your head?

NOAH

It was dumb honestly. We were at Javier's and she ordered for me--

SASHA

--Chicken burrito.

NOAH

Not what I got actually.

ILAN

Sasha, don't interrupt your brother. Let's hear what happened.

NOAH

The only way I can explain it, is that I had the ring out and then I... hesitated. And wondered if we've just been coasting, not really checking in with each other, but just growing next to each other, at the same time, if that makes sense?

ILAN
It absolutely does.

BINA
It does not.

INT. JOANNE'S APARTMENT - DAYTIME - WEEKS LATER

Joanne sits on her bed, writing on her computer. She answers a FaceTime from ASHLEY (33, Joanne's no-nonsense, lesbian brand agent who doubles as her best friend. The professional boundaries are blurred), who appears on Joanne's iPhone sitting in a corporate office setting.

ASHLEY
What are you doing?

JOANNE
Working.

ASHLEY
It looks like you're in bed.

JOANNE
The world is my office Ashley.

ASHLEY
Must be nice, I'm here in my cubicle working on our business plan for the Spotify acquisition.

JOANNE
Seems like you could do that in bed, but we all have our own process.

ASHLEY
I'm not sending this contract out unless you come to my dinner party thing tonight.

JOANNE
Tell me who will be there. Just a bunch of lesbians?

ASHLEY
Not as many as usual. Some potentially interesting guys for you: a divorcé with three kids, a finance guy, and a rabbi.

A beat.

JOANNE

Oh, I thought you were starting a bad joke. They all sound terrible. I'll be there.

ASHLEY

Perfect, dress like a huge slut.

JOANNE

Great, I'll borrow something from your mom.

ASHLEY

My mom's dead and you know it ya bitch, byeeeeeeeeee!

JOANNE

You didn't even like her, Byeeeeeeeeee!

INT. ASHLEY'S HOUSE - LOS FELIZ - LATE AFTERNOON

A cute house with a nice view of the city. A small crowd of people snack and mingle. The door opens and Joanne walks in wearing a long, '80s fur coat and holding a bottle of wine.

JOANNE

Honey, I'm home!

Everyone turns and looks, including Noah. Joanne leans in to kiss Ashley on the mouth, and Ashley pushes her off.

ASHLEY

Eww, not gay for you. What are you wearing?! It's disgusting.

JOANNE

Two words: Chin. Chilla.

(then)

Hi everyone, I'm Joanne, you can relax, it's fake.

She waves, and people look at her confused, then go back to conversation. Noah smiles at her, but she doesn't see it. She moves towards the bar area. On her way, she notices a MAN in his early fifties with a beard. He smiles. Joanne nods her head to him politely--

JOANNE (CONT'D)

Rabbi.

He looks confused and she keeps walking.

INT. ASHLEY'S HOUSE - BAR AREA - CONTINUED

Noah stands there, wiping up some wine he spilled. Joanne approaches, holding her bottle of wine.

NOAH

Hi.

JOANNE

Hey. Do you mind handing me that corkscrew?

NOAH

Give me the bottle, I'll open it for you.

She smiles, and he starts to open it for her.

NOAH (CONT'D)

Are you sure you should be drinking? You seem to be going through something.

She looks down at her coat.

JOANNE

Oh I'm fine, I'm just in constant need of attention.

NOAH

I respect that. I never admit it, but I like attention too. I always say I don't, but I do.

JOANNE

Doesn't it feel good to just say it?

NOAH

Sorry, I'm cute and I like when people notice.

JOANNE

Oh, you're totally cute, I noticed.

NOAH

I know!

JOANNE

It also feels good to point out something you're embarrassed about right when you meet someone. I'll go first.

(points to her face)

(MORE)

JOANNE (CONT'D)

I got this clear mole removed for no reason, no one ever noticed it. Anyway, it left me with this scar which is way worse than the original mole. I always feel people staring at it. And I have to live with that decision.

NOAH

It was the first thing I noticed when you walked in.

She narrows her eyes at him.

NOAH (CONT'D)

I'm kidding! But yeah, I see it.

She smacks him and waits for his admission.

NOAH (CONT'D)

Okay, my turn-- Yeah, I guess I'll just say it. I'm dying to try on that coat.

(he pets the coat)

Oh, that is shockingly synthetic.

He pours a glass of wine from the bottle he just opened, and hands it to her. He grabs his tequila.

NOAH (CONT'D)

Cheers--

JOANNE

Joanne.

NOAH

Joanne. Old fashioned name, I like that. I'm Noah.

They clink their glasses together.

JOANNE

Noah. Very... Biblical?

NOAH

I'm cut less from the English Protestant Noahs and more from the neurotic Hebrew ones.

JOANNE

Like the one who built that big ass boat?

NOAH
That's my guy.

JOANNE
Oh, that reminds me, there's a
rabbi here.

NOAH
No shit. Where?

She scans the room and can't see the guy with the beard.

JOANNE
I don't see him, but he has a beard
and is judging me.
(then)
Are you in finance?

NOAH
If I seem like a finance guy, then
I have some soul searching to do.

JOANNE
How do you know Ashley?

NOAH
I barely know her. We're in this
neighborhood watch group together.
So, we're both basically Karens.

JOANNE
Very cool.

NOAH
I think she only invited me cause
I'm kinda going through... a little
break-up thing, and I think she
felt bad for me.

He pours himself another and tops off Joanne. She tries to do
the math on who he is. Ashley gets everyone's attention.

ASHLEY
Dinner is ready! Grab some food and
bring it to the table outside.

NOAH
Okay Joanne, you're monopolizing my
time and I'm gonna try to get
attention from some other people.

JOANNE
Don't let me stand in your way.

They head off in different directions. He turns back to look at her, but she's already talking to someone else. She turns to look at him, but he isn't looking at her anymore. Ashley comes up to Joanne.

ASHLEY
Having fun?

JOANNE
I'm into divorced guy.

ASHLEY
Of course you are, he's a horrible person. It's perfect for your podcast. Go for it.

Joanne is disturbed by that.

JOANNE
Wait, what's wrong with him?

ASHLEY
He's full of himself, condescending, and thinks he's famous. I honestly don't know why I invite him to things. I just felt bad he's getting divorced.

Joanne is confused.

ASHLEY (CONT'D)
Are we done with the coat?

JOANNE
Never. But fine.

She takes it off, revealing tight black jeans and a little cardigan. Noah watches her intrigued.

EXT. ASHLEY'S HOUSE - PATIO - LATER

They sit at beautiful, long tables set up with candles and family style food. Besides the people we already know, the group consists of GARY (52, the perceived rabbi, but actually the divorced guy), KEVIN (32), ZARA (31), and CLAIRE (36). Joanne and Noah sit next to each other. On the other side of Noah sits Ashley.

ZARA
Not to fan out and be lame, but Joanne, I listen to your podcast every week.

ASHLEY

Oh, she loves a fan.

JOANNE

Zara, I knew I liked you. You have a very cool name and great taste. What do you love about it?

ASHLEY

You're embarrassing yourself.

JOANNE

Thank you.

ZARA

You did this episode about how bad of an idea it is to sleep with an ex, and it basically saved my life.

We see Noah paying attention.

JOANNE

If I had to have sex with a few exes to save your life, I say it was worth it.

Noah nudges Ashley to talk to him quietly.

NOAH

Who's your friend?

ASHLEY

I know, her bad personality is weirdly charming, but she's into Gary for some reason.

She gestures to Gary.

NOAH

No chance she's into that guy.

ASHLEY

Sorry, she has terrible taste.

NOAH

Don't be sorry, I don't care! I'm not asking about her for myself.

(then)

Is she Jewish?

ASHLEY

Look at her.

NOAH

Yeah. But could be half.

ASHLEY

Negativo. There isn't a Jewish bone in her body. Unless you put one in her.

They return their attention to dinner. Kevin finishes rolling a joint, lights it, takes a hit. As he passes it:

KEVIN

...100% if I knew my friend was being cheated on I would tell them.

ASHLEY

Yeah, but we're not *that* close, and part of me worries that maybe she already knows and doesn't want me to know. But, like, who knows where this dude has been?

JOANNE

I don't know anyone you're talking about, but I once told my sister a guy was cheating on her and she stopped talking to me for a month. The messenger got shot.

CLAIRE

This feels like rabbi territory. Rabbi, what do you think? Be our ethicist.

Claire and the rest of the table all look at Noah, while Joanne looks in the opposite direction at Gary. She realizes no one is looking at Gary.

Zara takes a drag of the joint, coughs, and passes it to Ashley. Noah clocks Joanne's confusion but answers confidently.

NOAH

Judaism doesn't exactly have guidelines on exposing a cheater.

Joanne whips her head around and sees Noah answering.

JOANNE

Wait, why are you talking?

ASHLEY

That's so rude!

JOANNE

No, sorry I just mean, isn't he the rabbi?

She points to Gary.

GARY

The fuck? I'm not a fuckin' rabbi. I've written three #1 New York Times best sellers. Ever heard of "The Umbrella Effect" by Gary Sendell? You have.

JOANNE

Oooh, you're the asshole.
(turns to Noah)
And you're... the rabbi?

Ashley passes the joint to Noah, who is taking his time answering. Everyone watches what he does. He takes in a big drag of the joint and blows it out.

NOAH

I'm the rabbi.
(then)
So, your dilemma here is respecting someone's private life versus preventing harm. This *specific* situation touches on the thing in Judaism that I hold most dear: we are a community -- a living organism that depends on our fellow brothers and sisters to survive. We must not sit idly while our neighbor bleeds -- that flies directly in the face of what we as a people value most.

(then, to Ashley)

On the flip side, Judaism frowns on gossip -- which my mom and her friends are not happy about. And let's be real, we get a little rush when we tell someone their life isn't what it seems. You need to make sure you're telling her for the greater good and not just meddling for that rush.

ASHLEY

So... what should I do?

NOAH

That's what's fun about Judaism. You decide what's right or wrong.

(MORE)

NOAH (CONT'D)

We don't even do heaven or hell.
Which is good news for our friend
Gary over there.

(Gary looks up)

Just kidding Gar, I'm sure you're a
great guy deep down.

The table laughs, then breaks into their own debates. Joanne
turns to Noah, intrigued.

JOANNE

A real life rabbi.

NOAH

Hot, right?

JOANNE

I've honestly never thought about
it before.

NOAH

(to Joanne)

Do you and your sister talk now?

JOANNE

Yeah, she's my best friend, and my
worst enemy. And she was thankful I
got her to dump the guy before he
gave her chlamydia.

NOAH

See, you did the right thing.

They take each other in. She sips her wine.

JOANNE

I think... I'm gonna head home.

NOAH

Feels a bit anti-Semitic.

JOANNE

No! Oh my God, no-- You're in some
sort of gray area, which in my
experience means getting back
together. And I'm in a good place,
not emotionally attached to anyone
or anything. I don't really need to
rock the boat right now.

NOAH

That sounds healthy. Can I walk you
out?

JOANNE

Oh my God, you're obsessed with me.

NOAH

I was actually about to leave too.

EXT. ASHLEY'S NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Noah and Joanne walk. He's wearing Joanne's fur coat.

NOAH

It feels so good. But my eyes are burning?

He pulls it off and drapes it over her shoulders.

JOANNE

You get used to it.

(then)

Sorry, I couldn't find a spot close. I'm all the way on Blue Jay.

NOAH

Perfect, me too.

JOANNE

So, can you have sex?

NOAH

Like, right now?

JOANNE

No, in general.

NOAH

Yes. That's priests. We're just people.

(beat)

Are you Jewish *at all*? An aunt, a great grandmother, a forged document?

JOANNE

Nope. Why?

NOAH

Rabbi-Gentile. Hard to pull off. Trying to repopulate a people, ya know?

JOANNE

Plus, I don't believe in God. Is that offensive to say to a rabbi?

NOAH

You can say anything you want.

(beat)

Also, not that it matters, but baked into the Jewish experience is wrestling with what God is or isn't, and not knowing.

JOANNE

Really? I didn't know that. People seem so clear about what they imagine God is, and I could never find anything that felt right for me.

He nods, understanding. They continue walking.

JOANNE (CONT'D)

You feel like someone whose parents are still married.

NOAH

Forty-one years. You?

JOANNE

My dad is gay. My mom is still in love with him. She's currently at home micro-dosing mushrooms.

NOAH

So, not together.

JOANNE

You know I have a podcast where I talk openly about my life, and people I've had sex with?

NOAH

Am I crazy or are you highlighting our differences?

JOANNE

Guess I'm just testing you, seeing if I can say something that would scare you.

NOAH

Oh, don't get me wrong Joanne. You scare me.

JOANNE

I do?!

NOAH

Yes, you're terrifying. You're this complicated, unfiltered, totally not consumed with pretenses, vulnerable, beautiful woman, who doesn't let anyone dictate who she is.

She stops walking.

JOANNE

I'm not vulnerable.

NOAH

(laughs)

Walking into a party wearing a fur coat because you're scared to not be seen as special or different? Sorry babe, you vulnerable.

Joanne doesn't know what to say. No one's read her like that.

JOANNE

What the fuck.

He starts laughing. She shoves him.

JOANNE (CONT'D)

What the fuck!! What are you, some kind of mind reader?!

NOAH

Yep, and I read your mind at dinner when you were looking at me and it was very inappropriate.

She rolls her eyes and stops at her car.

JOANNE

This is me. Where's your car?

NOAH

Oh, I found a spot right in front of Ashley's. God likes me.

She narrows her eyes at him.

JOANNE

You're pretty smooth for a rabbi.

NOAH

Just being a good citizen, making sure you're safe.

JOANNE

Any chance you're wrestling with your faith and thinking of giving it all up? With all the fucks and the flirting... You don't *feel* like a rabbi.

NOAH

Nah, I play up the Torah bad boy vibe, but I'm all in on this thing. I'm a believer.

(then)

I swear I'm a real rabbi. Temple Israel. Look me up. Known for my Friday night sermons.

(holds out hand to shake)

I want to thank you. You helped me with something tonight.

JOANNE

I did?

NOAH

You did.

She looks at him, wanting to know more, but doesn't ask.

JOANNE

Say something rabbinical.

NOAH

Never pay retail.

Joanne laughs and shakes her head.

JOANNE

Don't be funny. It's not helping.

She gets in her car. He closes her door and walks back to the house in the opposite direction.

FADE TO BLACK.

MONTAGE:

- Noah plays basketball with his brother and friends. He has the ball but just stands there, not taking a shot. Sasha smacks him to wake up, and he snaps out of it.

- Joanne's alarm goes off, but she's already awake, lying in bed, staring at the ceiling. She shakes it off and gets up.

- Joanne and Morgan record an episode of their podcast:

JOANNE

--Oh I would love to meet Andrew Tate. Put me in a room with that little bitch. I would just ask him, if women are only here to service you, to stay virginal for you, to be the recipient of your abuse...

- Cut to Noah in his office with a smirk on his face. He's listening to the podcast.

JOANNE (ON PODCAST) (CONT'D)

...then please explain why we're built to experience pleasure from sex. Why are women designed to have big ol' screaming orgasms, just like guys!

Two thirteen year old boys stand in the doorway with their mouths open. Noah quickly shuts off the podcast.

- Joanne is at a bar, holding a glass of wine, while some douchebag hits on her. She is glazed over.

- Noah and Rebecca sit on the couch. Rebecca is at her wits end.

REBECCA

If you're done, then just say it. Don't make me break up with myself.

NOAH

I don't want you to hate me.

REBECCA

Well, it's too late, I do. You're a friggin' child who always needs to get his way.

NOAH

I'm sorry, Beck.

- Joanne is in a different outfit, on a date with the douchebag who was hitting on her the night before.

DOUCHEBAG

Can I show you and see which one you like better?

She barely nods. He pulls out his phone to show her.

DOUCHEBAG (CONT'D)

This is the one I use for commercial auditions, and this one you've probably seen on my Raya profile. But I think I face-tuned it too much? You must do some tuning, right?

She barely cares enough about this guy to be offended.

- Noah gets dressed in a suit, looking sharp. He looks in the mirror, a weight lifted off of him.

- Joanne zones out while her date flirts with the waitress. She goes on her phone, looking at Instagram. She gets a text from Ashley, "*What did you say to the rabbi? He broke up with his girlfriend.*" Joanne puts her phone away, gets up and walks out, not looking back.

- Noah is at temple greeting people for Shabbat service. Mothers push their daughters on him.

- Joanne walks out on the sidewalk and jumps in an Uber.

INT. TEMPLE ISRAEL - MAIN SANCTUARY - NIGHT

All the clergy are on the stage, including Noah. The cantor finishes one of the prayers...

CANTOR

[Last lines of Hebrew prayer...]

(then)

Thank you. Now I would like to pass it over to Rabbi Rokhlan for our Shabbat sermon.

EXT. STREETS - SAME

Joanne runs, following a map on her phone. She passes a building, and doubles back, checking the address. She enters.

INT. TEMPLE ISRAEL - MAIN SANCTUARY - MOMENTS LATER

Noah gets up from his seat and stands at the podium. The room is silent.

NOAH

Shabbat Shalom.

The room replies, *Shabbat Shalom.*

EXT. TEMPLE ISRAEL - MAIN SANCTUARY - MOMENTS LATER

Joanne arrives at the temple's main entrance, out of breath. She opens the doors and walks in.

INT. TEMPLE ISRAEL - MAIN SANCTUARY - CONTINUOUS

Joanne enters the sanctuary. She looks around at the large room with its vaulted ceilings and hundreds of people focused on Noah. She takes a seat in the back. Noah doesn't see her.

NOAH

Once I was having dinner at a restaurant with friends, and a man started choking at a table nearby. People started yelling out asking if there was a doctor in the room. *There wasn't.* Then someone at my table said, very loudly, "We have a rabbi!" Suddenly the whole room looked at me like I was connected to God, or the universe, and had an ability to heal this guy. Or at the bare minimum, that the Heimlich Maneuver was taught in rabbinical school. *It isn't.* I felt helpless, like everyone else in the restaurant. But, I pushed back my chair thinking I would wing it. Before I could even try, the man who was choking got behind a chair, threw himself over it, and popped the Brussels sprout out from his throat. Not a vegetable worth dying for in my opinion.

The room laughs. Joanne smirks. Noah spots her for the first time. He stumbles, but then recovers.

NOAH (CONT'D)

I'm human just like the rest of you. I forget someone's birthday. I look at my phone at a stop light, while someone honks. I've walked paths that were safe instead of following my heart.

(he looks at Joanne)

Following your heart is scary.

(beat)

But my biggest mistake was that I forgot the thing I'm always preaching to you. You don't make the plans. God makes the plans.

(MORE)

NOAH (CONT'D)

Mann Tracht, Un Gott Lacht. We have an idea of how our life will look, we think we know what's meant for us. But we don't know. We talk to people who see the world the same way we do. We're drawn to groups who remind us of ourselves. We reject someone who pushes back on our world view. But why? Because it's comfortable. You can learn a lot about yourself by embracing someone who is completely different from you.

(looking at Joanne)

If you think God is supposed to feel like something specific, and you've never felt it and you wonder if we're all in on some secret you aren't in on, let me tell you, you're in on it. God can be a bearded man sitting on a cloud if that feels right. She can be a tree. Or the feeling when you meet someone and know nothing will be the same again. We have to listen for signs when it's time for the plan to change. God doesn't knock on your door, he's that feeling in your heart, in your gut. So I may be the rabbi you look to for guidance, but if you're choking, you might need to save yourself. And I have full faith that you can.

(beat)

Shabbat shalom.

The room is moved. Joanne is in awe.

INT. TEMPLE ISRAEL - MAIN SANCTUARY - AFTER SERVICE

Noah walks down in the pews. He sees his family first.

BINA

That was a weird sermon.

NOAH

Thanks mom.

He's swarmed with people, some old yenta's pushing their way to him with their daughters. He scans the room for Joanne.

YENTA #1

Rabbi, I want you to meet my
daughter Alissa, she just graduated
from hospitality school--

As she shoves her in his face, another yenta interrupts.

YENTA #2

Rita, you're suffocating him.
Rabbi, you remember my niece Isabel
from Rosh Hashanah service, she
just beat thyroid cancer and--

Noah spots Joanne standing patiently outside the mob.

NOAH

Excuse me ladies, I'm sorry I'll be
right back.

He pushes past them and finally breaks through, approaching
Joanne. She smiles.

JOANNE

Rabbi.

NOAH

Joanne.

They look at each other. It's deep, and lasts. The camera
spins around the room with them in the center, while people
mingle around them, some staring, and plenty of disappointed
women looking on.

INT. TEMPLE ISRAEL - MAIN SANCTUARY - CONTINUOUS

Bina, Esther, Ilan, and Sasha stare in shock.

ESTHER

Who the fuck is that?

BINA

A *Shiksa*.

THE END