



WONDERFALLS

"Safety Canary"

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Air #109

Final Shooting Script

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WONDERFALLS

"SAFETY CANARY"

TEASER

OVER BLACK: The rhythm of "Love is in the Air" builds and the DARKNESS breaks as JAYE opens her closet door. We are:

1 INT. JAYE'S TRAILER - CLOSET - DAY 1

CAMERA in amongst the clothes. Jaye applies deodorant as she rifles through, considering her options. The VOICE we HEAR is soft-spoken and has affection for its subject matter:

PENELOPE (V.O.)

(soft-spoken)

Lauren, our wild-caught female can be an unwieldy... some might say "destructive" bird. A lovely, lovely creature, she will chew through just about anything given half a snowball's chance. Woodwork like door frames and trim, as well as sheetrock walls.

She pulls a shirt out, holds it up to see if it's the one.

2 INT. THE BARREL - BACK ROOM - DAY 2

ERIC holds up a shirt to see if it's the one. He's in pajama bottoms and a t-shirt digging through an open suitcase on a cot (situated behind a stack of boxes to maximize privacy).

PENELOPE (V.O.)

Sometimes even a prospective mate. Um, her new friend was domestically bred in an aviary and hand-raised by humans. Hi, Humphrey. Humphrey's not so rough and tumble.

CAMERA stays on Eric as he tosses his clothes on the cot. He grabs a waste can.

PENELOPE (V.O.)

And probably not too, um, aware of what he's gotten himself into with, ah, Lauren here.

Eric perches on the edge of the cot. He clips his toenails over the waste can.

(CONTINUED)

PENELOPE (V.O.)
Humphrey previously paired with another Macaw but rejected that bird so he's very eager now, um, to mate. Lauren appears to be, ah, responding to his advances, ever so cautiously allowing him to feed her nuts and berries...

3-4 OMITTED 3-4

5 INT. PARKING LOT - DAY 5

SHARON moves through the lot toward her car. She glances in her compact as she applies lipstick around the lit cigarette in her mouth.

PENELOPE (V.O.)
...but her mercurial mood swings tend to complicate the courtship.

A GUY accidentally bumps her shoulder, the lipstick jags across her cheek. She stops, goes calm, tries not to lose it.

6 INT. BETH'S LOFT - DAY 6

BETH combs her hair as she crosses to her purse. She throws the brush in the bag next to a couple of condoms. She considers the rubbers, then tosses them in the garbage -- won't be needing those on this date.

PENELOPE (V.O.)
We're all hoping Lauren will very soon be grooming Humphrey's amazing plumage, and not just her own. But sadly, their love has no guarantee.

ANGLE - INSIDE GARBAGE CAN

The condoms fall, filling the frame.

ANGLE - INSIDE PORN SAFE

A short stack of dirty magazines. We are:

7 INT. TYLER HOUSE - AARON'S PORN SAFE - DAY 7

AARON reaches in, takes a dirty magazine off the top, sighs.

PENELOPE (V.O.)
You see, although these Macaws tend
to be found in pairs, there are
exceptions. Some are slower to
mature and may never bond.

Aaron shuts the porn safe, plunging us back into DARKNESS.

INT. NIAGARA ZOO - AVIARY - DAY

PENELOPE (late 20's/early 30's, bookish, soft-spoken)
continues her lecture about the TWO HYACINTH MACAWS perched
next to her. RUFUS, a Zoo custodian, leans against his broom
pining for Penelope as she lectures.

PENELOPE
...which naturally contributes to
the decline of this rare,
endangered, and, ah, really,
really, just neat animal.

CAMERA PULLS BACK TO REVEAL THREE ASIAN TOURISTS. They
squint as they attempt to decipher what Penelope is saying.

PENELOPE (CONT'D)
You can see by their smiles these
little comedians are an endless
source of light, always doing funny
things.
(re: motionless birds)
Well, not always. But from time to
time...

CAMERA CONTINUES TO PULL BACK until we find Jaye and Eric
connected at the mouth in the back row. They continue to
kiss for a long beat. Then --

ERIC
You taste good.

JAYE
I do?

ERIC
Mmm-hmm. I read this thing about
saliva and saliva compatibility.
If someone tastes good, you have
compatible saliva. If someone
tastes bad you, um, you probably
shouldn't be kissing them.

RUFUS

Shhhhhh.

Jaye and Eric glance at Rufus, Jaye lowers her voice for:

JAYE

I love that you brought me to the
zoo on our first official date.
All the animals are safely penned
and none of them talk.

He leans in and as they kiss some more:

PENELOPE

There's been no bill-contact and
Lauren and Humphrey have yet to
groom each other in the cloacal
area to remove some of the dense
down which can inhibit successful
fertilization. This could mean
they've lost interest in mating.

ERIC

What was that about not mating?

SAFETY CANARY

Take a picture, it'll last longer.

Jaye sighs, turns to the SAFETY CANARY sign that reads:
"Please no flash photography."

JAYE

I can't.

ERIC

Why? What are you afraid of?

JAYE

Afraid? I'm not afraid...

SAFETY CANARY

Take a picture --

JAYE

(re: Eric, off Canary)
-- though maybe you should be.

ERIC

Why would I be afraid of you?

The Canary spreads his tail feathers in front of the "no" so
the sign reads: "Please flash photography."

SAFETY CANARY

Take a picture. Take a picture.

JAYE

Alright, alright. Gawd.

She reaches around one of the Asian Tourists, points the Tourist's camera at random and clicks. The FLASH POPS! One of the Macaws BEATS ITS WINGS and SQUAWKS.

JAYE (CONT'D)

Happy?

ERIC

Uh...

Before Eric can get anything else out, the Macaw launches itself at Jaye in a FLURRY OF FEATHERS. OFF the Asian Tourists staring in horror as Jaye is attacked...

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

9 INT. WONDERFALLS - DAY

9

Jaye's at work. She has tiny scratches on her face from her bird attack. She's on the phone, having a private conversation. Smiling and laughing softly and speaking low. We know who's on the other end.

SHARON enters and approaches the register with a small pharmacy bag. She plunks it down in front of Jaye. Jaye sobers, says her good-byes, and hangs up.

SHARON

Your prescription. The folks are going out of town for the weekend and asked me to drop it by. Mom said be sure to take it with food.

JAYE

It's a topical ointment.

SHARON

She thinks you're too thin. How'd you do that to yourself, anyway?

JAYE

I was on a date.

SHARON

(suddenly protective)
Did you report the bastard? You can't let a guy get away with that. Think of the next woman.

JAYE

I am the next woman. He didn't do this to me. In fact, he was great. Wow, you really are a man-hater.

SHARON

No, I'm not. And you should talk.

JAYE

Meaning what?

SHARON

You're a man-eater.

JAYE

You lie.

(CONTINUED)

SHARON

Do you have any idea how many of your discarded boyfriends I ended up consoling when I lived at home? Uri, that poor exchange student from Prague still writes me. So whoever this new guy is, please don't give him my number when the inevitable happens.

JAYE

What if I gave his wife your number instead?

SHARON

He's married?

JAYE

Only technically. But I'm sure you could take care of that. You could recruit her into your lesbian lifestyle like you did Beth.

SHARON

I didn't...

JAYE

Oh, look. Isn't that your girlfriend's husband now?

Sharon turns and sees: THOMAS. He's in his EPS uniform and maneuvers his dolly through the front door.

JAYE (CONT'D)

Boy, this is gonna be awkward, huh?

Sharon spins to escape. Her coat gets tangled on a key-chain display. It CRASHES to the floor. She tries to yank free.

THOMAS (O.S.)

You okay, ma'am?

The man helping her up is of course Thomas.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

Sharon.

SHARON

Thomas. Hi. The throat looks... really good.

THOMAS

Oh, yeah. The goiter. Thanks.
You can hardly tell it was there.

SHARON

No flare ups?

THOMAS

No. Not since our... date.

SHARON

Good. So you've been avoiding the
penis. PEANUTS! Peanuts. Because
you're allergic. And there could
be swelling. In the throat. It
was, peanuts right? Peanuts?

THOMAS

Yeah. That was kind of a bad
night.

(then)

Though I guess it worked out pretty
well for you. So how is Beth? Are
you two still girlfriend and...
girlfriend?

SHARON

Beth. Beth! Yeah. She's great.

THOMAS

Good. Because I want her to be
happy.

SHARON

She is. We both are.

THOMAS

Oh. Uh-huh. Well. I guess if for
Beth to be happy it means the woman
who turned her lesbian gets to be
happy, too, well -- I bless you
both.

SHARON

Hey! I didn't... She wasn't --
(blurts)
She's not even a lesbian!

THOMAS

She's not?

SHARON

No.

THOMAS

My wife left me for another woman
and she's not a lesbian? Weird.
'Cuz whenever I think of you two
together...

(off her look)

Not that I think of you toge...

(moves off with:)

I have a thing to deliver.

Sharon flees to the exit. Thomas moves to Jaye. He pauses
and CALLS back to Sharon, past several customers:

THOMAS (CONT'D)

But you're still a lesbian, right?

Sharon pauses at the door. Reacts to the people staring at
her, then bolts. A confused Thomas, still weighing
everything, turns back toward Jaye. A somewhat awkward
moment as he now seems to see her. Hands her his clipboard.
She's not sure what to say, so as she signs, she says:

JAYE

So, uh... how's the nurse?

Thomas makes that choked up noise.

JAYE (CONT'D)

Oh. Sorry.

She hands back his clipboard. He hands her a large-ish box,
bites his lip and tries not to cry as he says:

THOMAS

Have a good day.

And he turns and exits. She watches him go.

JAYE

Poor bitch.

Jaye turns with the package, and in her face is:

RUFUS

You know what happens when a
fairy's wings lose their dust? The
fairy dies, that's what.

JAYE

Rest rooms are for customers only.

RUFUS

What? No. I don't need to use the rest room. I mean, I do, actually, but that's not why I'm here. I'm Rufus. I work at the zoo. Remember? With Penelope?

Throughout the following, Jaye is opening the package:

JAYE

The bird lady?

RUFUS

The elephant lady, now.

JAYE

Huh?

RUFUS

Because of you they've got her mucking out the elephant pen. She's been banned from the aviary. They say she can't control the birds.

JAYE

I'm sorry.

RUFUS

She's the fairy I was talking about. And the birds, the birds are the dust on her wings.

JAYE

(working on package)

Look... Zoo Guy. Sometimes these things happen for a reason. Being moved to the elephant pen could be the best thing that ever happened to her.

RUFUS

It's not. It's the worst thing. Those birds are her life. And she's theirs. Without her, they'll die.

JAYE

I'm sure the birds'll be fine.

RUFUS

No. They won't. They're endangered. She was trying to get

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

RUFUS (CONT'D)
 them to breed. Without her, their
 love will die. And without the
 birds, she will.

Over that, Jaye has finally opened the box, pulls something
 out -- a Lovesick Ass doll. It says to her:

LOVESICK ASS
Save the lovebirds.

RUFUS
 You have to do something.

Jaye looks from him back to the doll in her hand. It nods
 and gives a knowing look -- weird guy's right. Jaye stuffs
 the doll back in the box amongst the packings as WE GO TO:

EXT. NIAGARA ZOO - DAY

Penelope sweeps up animal droppings -- amongst other things --
 within the confines of an animal pen. An elephant grazes in
 the next pen over. There's the sound of a THROAT BEING
 CLEARED. Penelope turns to see Jaye.

JAYE
 Hi. I don't know if you remember
 me, but...

An OFF-CAMERA monkey SCREECHES and pelts Penelope with
 something dark and drippy. Jaye winces.

JAYE (CONT'D)
 Ew. Did that monkey just throw its
 food at you?

PENELOPE
 In a way.

JAYE
 (under her breath)
 Good arm.

Penelope's chin trembles as she musters a little dignity,
 grabs a cloth off her cleaning cart and wipes it off.

PENELOPE
 Why don't you take a picture of
 this, too?

JAYE
 Yeah. Sorry. I heard you got
 banned from your birds, so I was...

(CONTINUED)

PENELOPE

"Please no flash photography in the aviary." I said it three times.

JAYE

I know. I'm sorry.

PENELOPE

Those birds are traumatized. And now they have nobody to talk to.

JAYE

Those birds talk?

Penelope half turns away and says to herself:

PENELOPE

They talk to me. You wouldn't understand.

JAYE

I wish I didn't.

PENELOPE

They're in the infancy of their relationship and the bond is very delicate. But now... now they're migrating toward extinction like it's northwestern Paraguay, thanks to you!

JAYE

Hey. I'm the one who has to put on topical ointment.

PENELOPE

The female saw a flash of white. I'm sure she thought you were a Snowy Owl and she's hardly gonna be presenting herself for mating if she thinks she's being attacked by a Snowy Owl! Those poor birds. You killed their love. You really are a Snowy Owl.

The ZOO MANAGER, SAVAGE, a serious bureaucrat, approaches from behind Penelope, sees her being snippy with a visitor.

SAVAGE

Penelope... I thought we made it clear that for the time being you wouldn't be interacting with --

(MORE)

SAVAGE (CONT'D)
(off Jaye, realizing)
Aren't you the young lady who -- ?

PENELOPE
Yes! She's that awful woman who
was tormenting the macaws!

SAVAGE
(to Jaye)
Excuse us a moment please.

He guides Penelope gently by the elbow a few steps away, but not out of earshot of Jaye. She hears him whisper:

SAVAGE (CONT'D)
The zoo is about people, Penelope.
And that seems to be the one
species you can't get along with.

PENELOPE
I told you not to put me with the
customers. Just let me go back to
my birds. They need me.

SAVAGE
They're not "your" birds. They
belong to the zoo. And you don't
work for the zoo anymore. You're
fired.

Penelope turns and scowls at Jaye as she pushes past:

PENELOPE
Snowy owl love killer.

Off Jaye, feeling like monkey shit --

Jaye sits brooding. MAHANDRA is next to her, just staring.
Eric is in the distance working the bar, out of ear shot.

MAHANDRA
You're not a Snowy Owl.

JAYE
And I'm not a love killer.
(off the telling silence)
What?

MAHANDRA

Actually, the bird lady's kinda right about that. Well, half right. You don't just kill love. You stalk it, you toy with it -- then you kill it. You are the huntress, and love is your prey.

(off Jaye's incredulous look)

I mean... look at him.

Mahandra nods toward Eric at the bar. Whistling. Totally happy. He spots them, a special smile for Jaye. Jaye smiles back. Lordy but she likes that boy. Yummy.

JAYE

I am.

MAHANDRA

Like a wounded gazelle. Run, little gazelle! Run! There's danger at the watering hole!

JAYE

That's crazy. He's not a gazelle. He's more like a fuzzy bunny. I don't kill fuzzy bunnies.

MAHANDRA

Fuzzy love bunnies. You're in the toying stage. I can almost hear that clicking noise my cat makes.

JAYE

It's not serious enough for there to be toying. We only just found out our saliva's compatible. There's no love to kill yet.

MAHANDRA

(taken aback)

What did you just say?

JAYE

Ssaallliva...?

MAHANDRA

"Yet." You said "yet." Three little letters and the most romantic thing I've ever heard fly outta your mouth. And also the most terrifying. It's the sound of a fuse being lit.

(CONTINUED)

JAYE

It is not.

MAHANDRA

Better not be. After everything that boy's already been through, I'm not sure his heart can take that thing you do.

JAYE

I don't do... a thing...

She's gazing at smiling Eric as she trails off...

Eric's smile goes slack, he looks down to his chest... his shirt is EXPANDING. He pulls open his shirt and -- his HEART SHOOT'S OUT OF HIS CHEST AND INTO JAYE'S HAND.

SMASH BACK TO REALITY:

JAYE (CONT'D)

Ohmygod...

MAHANDRA

What?

JAYE

Nothing. He's safe with me. So safe. I'm reformed.

MAHANDRA

You'd better be.

JAYE

I am. Honest. I'm not a love killer. I'm...

The STUFFED BASS on the wall ANIMATES:

STUFFED BASS

Save the lovebirds.

Jaye eyes it and winces.

JAYE

I'm a love... saver. Evidently.

Off Mahandra's dubious, raised eyebrow...

SMASH CUT TO:

12

EXT. NIAGARA ZOO - NIGHT

12

Eric and Jaye sneak into the zoo at night.

ERIC

This is so sweet. Picking up our date where we left off.

JAYE

Yeah.

ERIC

But you, uh, don't maybe want to come back when it's open? I'm pretty sure sneaking in is against the law...

Now Penelope appears, coming up behind them.

PENELOPE

(as she pushes past)

We answer to a higher law.

ERIC

We do?

JAYE

Love. Love is our higher law. And we're here to save it. Not that it was ever in any danger. From me.

BLACK OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

(CONTINUED)

ACT TWO

Jaye and Eric back in the aviary.

ERIC

So... this isn't really a private showing?

JAYE

Uh, no. Not so much a private show as a federal offense. We're here to steal an endangered species and then force them to have sex.

Penelope appears, rolling a large plastic garbage bin, poking holes in the top with a screwdriver (or some such) as she does:

PENELOPE

Not steal. Liberate.

She stops in front of the bird window, fumbles for her keys.

PENELOPE (CONT'D)

Hello, Humphrey. Hello, Lauren. I missed you, too. Yes, it is the Snowy Owl girl. I know she did.

As Penelope rolls the bin behind the display and off camera:

ERIC

You know, you kinda do that sometimes.

JAYE

Ha-ha. This all must seem a little odd. But as a person who champions love at every turn, I'm here to say it's really not all that...

ERIC

(cuts her off)
I don't think it's odd.

JAYE

You don't?

ERIC

It's the most romantic thing I've ever heard of.

JAYE

Really? My love-saving nature doesn't bother you?

He takes a step closer, turned on:

ERIC

Define "bother."

JAYE

Just so you know, this is not an isolated incident. Things like bird attacks and abduction happen to me all the time. And if it's not birds, it's a lion or a monkey and then there's that fish --

Eric pulls her into a long kiss.

JAYE (CONT'D)

So what I'm saying is that there are constant interrupti --

He pulls her into another kiss. She steps back, studies him.

JAYE (CONT'D)

I don't scare you?

ERIC

Only in a good way.

Suddenly they're hit with BLINDING LIGHT from a high powered FLASHLIGHT. The FIGURE holding it is obscured by the glare. Eric and Jaye startle.

JAYE

It's the Feds.

Eric's arms shoot into the air.

VOICE (O.C.)

Who is that?! What are you doing?!

ERIC

Um... what are we telling people?

JAYE

Put your arms down, it's the guy who picks up garbage.

It is Rufus, armed with a whisk broom and keys.

RUFUS

You -- what are you doing here?

PENELOPE

Um, hello. Uh, they're with... me.

Penelope enters with the birds in the bin. Rufus instantly becomes love-struck.

RUFUS

I heard you got fired.

PENELOPE

I did.

(innocent)

Are you with human resources?

RUFUS

I used to clean your paddock. My name is --

PENELOPE

No time. You gotta help us. These birds need me. They need me to mate. Their bond is very delicate.

RUFUS

Of course it is. They're in the infancy of their relationship.

Just then security jeep HEADLIGHTS poke over the horizon. Its HIGH POWERED BEAMS dance on the glass walls.

JAYE

Is that the Feds?

RUFUS

Security. Uh, um... follow me.

They all follow Rufus as he shows them to a side door, Penelope and Eric pushing the birds in the bins.

RUFUS (CONT'D)

Use the Tikki Path, it's the fastest way to the parking lot. I'll try to distract --

But Penelope's already out the door. Eric follows her, pushing his bin.

13

CONTINUED: (3)

13

JAYE
Um, "thanks."

RUFUS
Sure. Okay.

Jaye follows them out. Off Rufus --

14

EXT. NIAGARA ZOO - WALKWAY - NIGHT

14

As they run. As best they can, considering the giant bin.

ERIC
Where we gonna go?

JAYE
(to Penelope)
Where we gonna go?

Eric grabs Jaye and Penelope, pulls them and the bin behind some shrubs just as Security Jeeps speed down the path. From their hiding place, in whispers --

PENELOPE
I have three cats.

ERIC
I sleep in dry storage.

JAYE
My trailer's messy.

ALARMS SOUND behind them. Our bird-loving cat burglars jump to their feet.

JAYE (CONT'D)
Oh. I know.

They run to --

14A

EXT. NIAGARA ZOO - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

14A

Jaye, Eric, Penelope and their precious cargo are piled into Eric's truck. As they tear out of the parking lot we PRE-LAP a DOORBELL CHIME -- BING-BONG...

15

EXT./INT. TYLER HOUSE - NIGHT

15

The door opens -- Aaron is standing there in his boxers with (cute/manageable) bed-head. He blinks at:

(CONTINUED)

JAYE

Mom and Dad are gone for the weekend, right?

AARON

Yeah --

JAYE

Good. We need a place to mate.

As Jaye, then Penelope, then Eric and the plastic bin push past a bleary-eyed Aaron --

Jaye leads everyone into the kitchen and over to the laundry room area. Penelope checks it out.

PENELOPE

Good, good. Should work well.

AARON

What the hell is going on?

JAYE

Nothing. Go back to bed or find some pants.

AARON

Who's mating?

JAYE

The birds --

AARON

Did the cow creamer tell you to do this?

JAYE

(piss off)

No. The stuffed donkey did.

PENELOPE

If we turn the dryer on, let it vent into the room, maybe that will help simulate their native environment.

JAYE

Or kill everyone in the building.

PENELOPE

Help me make room.

JAYE

(helping arrange area)
So... what do you think will happen
to Rufus?

PENELOPE

I don't know any birds called
"Rufus."

JAYE

He's not a bird. He's the guy who
helped us escape?

PENELOPE

His species isn't endangered so we
can't worry about that right now.

Now Mahandra enters the kitchen with a plastic garbage bag.

MAHANDRA

Do I even want to know why I spent
the past half hour gathering worms
and tree branches for you?

ERIC

Jaye's spear-heading an effort to
save an endangered species. Isn't
she great?

Eric takes the bag of twigs and such over to Penelope.

PENELOPE

My birds don't eat worms.

JAYE

(to Mahandra, apologetic)
Oops. My bad.

MAHANDRA

(sotto to Jaye)
I'm not cleaning up your mess.

JAYE

I'll take care of the worms.

MAHANDRA

Not that mess.
(re: Eric)
He only liked you before.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

16

CONTINUED: (2)

16

MAHANDRA (CONT'D)

Now he's worshipping you. Better
be careful.

Jaye reacts to that, troubled as we

QUICK POP TO:

16A

INT. THE BARREL - NIGHT - JAYE'S FANTASY

16A

Quick images of Jaye's previous fantasy. She catches Eric's heart. Only this time she throws it down, steps on it (off camera.) Eric, behind the bar, looks pained and drops --

JAYE

(off her stomping)
Somebody stop me I can't help
myself!!!

16B

INT. TYLER HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

16B

Right where we were. Jaye snaps out of it, sort of, still troubled she moves back to help Penelope and Eric. Mahandra feels Aaron's eyes boring into her. She looks at him.

AARON

Why would anyone worship my sister?
Is she a cult figure?

MAHANDRA

You're not wearing pants.

AARON

I was about to get some.

MAHANDRA

"Get some?" Well you're certainly
undressed for it.

Is she flirting? Penelope opens the bird bins. The BIRDS start SQUAWKING HORRIBLY and beating their wings. It's kind of frightening, actually.

JAYE

What's the matter with them?

PENELOPE

Must be the change of environment.
I don't think they recognize each
other.

(CONTINUED)

16B CONTINUED:

16B

BETH (PRE-LAP)
Who are you?

17 OMITTED

17

17A INT. BETH'S LOFT - NIGHT

17A

Several full and a few half emptied grocery bags on the counter. Beth and Sharon in the process of unloading them. Beth is holding up a jar of peanut butter. We've come in on a moment of accusation:

BETH
Why would you sneak peanut butter into my groceries?

SHARON
There was no sneaking. I noticed you were out.

BETH
You said that at the store when you pointed to the shelf and said, "look, peanut butter." I told you I don't eat peanut butter. We were next to each other the entire time, I don't even know how you...
(pulls out:)
...here's another one. You snuck in two jars of peanut butter?

SHARON
Chunky and smooth.

BETH
What are you doing?

SHARON
So you'd have a choice. You like choices, right?

BETH
Not if I'm choosing between two things I don't like.

SHARON
When was the last time you had peanut butter?

(CONTINUED)

BETH

I don't know. Before I married
Thomas, I guess.

SHARON

Right! But you're not married
anymore... so...
(holds up both jars)
Choose.

Beth grabs both jars and tosses them in the garbage.

BETH

Now we're back to no peanut butter.
See how that works?

SHARON

I'm beginning to.

Beth eyes Sharon as she fishes the peanut butter out of the
trash and places them back on the counter.

BETH

You're trying to pick a fight.

SHARON

I am not. How about a peanut
butter and banana sandwich? It was
Elvis' favorite. You like Elvis.

Their voices are growing louder and more tense.

BETH

Is this your bad side?

SHARON

At least I'm choosing a side.

BETH

What d'you want me to say? Chunky?

SHARON

That is so mean. You know I'm self-
conscious about my weight.

BETH

I meant the peanut butter.

SHARON

Oh. Of course. Of course you'd
say chunky. Of course you would.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

SHARON (CONT'D)

Well, if you want chunky, there's no point in keeping a jar of smooth in the cupboard. 'Cause smooth can't compete with chunky, can it?

Sharon tosses the jar of smooth into the garbage.

BETH

God help us if our cycles sync up.

SHARON

Don't blame this on my period.

BETH

Is this what it's like to date a woman?

SHARON

Yes, it is and if you don't like it you should go back to dating men.

BETH

You're some piece of work. You want me to say I'm gay? Well, I can't. That would be a lie. And you may be comfortable lying about your sexuality but I'm not.

SHARON

I don't lie about my sexuality. I just... you don't know what it's --
(looks at watch)
Oh, gee, look at that. It's time for you to start dating peanut-allergic men again.

She grabs her purse and heads for the door.

BETH

I guess it is.

SHARON

And there you go.

BETH

There you go.

Sharon pauses at the door.

SHARON

Thank you for allowing me to be a rest stop on your road to heterosexual bliss.

BETH

You're welcome.

And with that Sharon slams the door and is gone. Beth's chin starts to crumple.

We're on a wide lens looking up at FIVE BIG HEADS all frozen and staring off camera... we may notice that Jaye seems to be entering a fugue state of distracted introspection. Or we may not. Mostly it's just a funny frame.

AARON

They're not doing anything...

REVERSE - THE MACAWS just stand there, staring back. The laundry room has been transformed into a (rather elaborate) tropical rain forest habitat.

PENELOPE

They will. Be patient. We've created the perfect mating environment for them.

MAHANDRA

You don't suppose they're waiting for the five giants to stop leering at them, do you?

JAYE

She's toying with him.

They all look at her -- she's being weird.

JAYE (CONT'D)

Look at her. What a tease.

ERIC

Seems like she's just ignoring him.

JAYE

It's a ploy. She's making him want her more. That way he won't see it coming when she bites his head off.

PENELOPE

Birds don't do that. Though in some species of praying mantis the female will eat the male headfirst during mating.

JAYE

God, love can be cruel.

ERIC

And beautiful.

JAYE

But cruel. I mean, I'm not saying it's her fault. She can't help what she is. But look at that beak -- it was made for peckin'.

PENELOPE

That's the male.

JAYE

Whatever! Point is, the only thing endangered here is Humphrey's heart. God, why doesn't he just run? Run, Humphrey! Run!

Before anyone can ask Jaye why she's being so freakin' weird... Aaron reacts as Penelope has started sniffing him. He tries not to look at her. Doesn't move a muscle.

AARON

Um, she's smelling me.

MAHANDRA

Hey. Stop it. Don't sniff him.

PENELOPE

I know what it is! I know why the birds aren't mating! It's all the male pheromones! Humphrey won't mount Lauren when he senses the pheromones of another male. He views it as a threat.

(to Eric and Aaron)

You'll have to leave. Both of you. The birds need a Y-chromosome-free environment.

JAYE

Yes! Right! Good call! Boys, out! You're getting your pheromones all over everything!

Jaye starts giving the boys the bum's rush.

AARON

Hey! Stop it! Get off!

MOVING THROUGH THE HOUSE

We STEADI-CAM with them as they go, moving out of the kitchen, through the hall, toward the door.

AARON (CONT'D)

You can't throw me out! Mom and Dad put me in charge!

JAYE

Oh waaa. Just go.

(to Eric)

I'm really sorry. We'll do it again some other time.

ERIC

I don't mind waiting.

JAYE

You could be waiting a long time. I mean, these birds only mate like once every five years -- and we don't really know when it was they last got any. Probably better if you just...

MAHANDRA (O.S.)

They're mating!

JAYE

What?

Mahandra and then a very excited Penelope appear running out of the kitchen.

PENELOPE

Lauren's cloaca is fully engorged!

MAHANDRA

They're totally doing it.

As Jaye pushes past them on her way to check this out:

PENELOPE

(off the boys)

What are they still doing here?

AARON

I wanna see an engorged cloaca --

PENELOPE

You can't! I told you, your
powerful sexual chemistry is too
distracting!

AARON

I get that a lot, actually.

JAYE (O.S.)

OH MY GOD! WHAT HAPPENED?!

Everyone reacts to that, turns to run back to --

18A

INT. TYLER HOUSE - KITCHEN/LAUNDRY ROOM - CONTINUOUS

18A

Mahandra, Penelope then Aaron and Eric come around the corner
to see --

-- Jaye stands in the laundry room looking wicked guilty.
The window is open and there are a few feathers drifting down
past her. The birds are gone --

JAYE

Um. Who left the window open?

Off that --

BLACK OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

19 19 INT. TYLER HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT 19 19

Jaye, Eric and Mahandra all gathered around Penelope trying to console her. Penelope's crying. Jaye's hating herself.

PENELOPE

Humphrey's never been out in the wild! And Lauren's been in captivity most of her adult life. They'll die out there!

JAYE

We'll find them. Eventually...

Aaron hands Penelope a glass of water. Mahandra takes Jaye, pulls her aside and around the corner for some privacy.

MAHANDRA

What are you doing?

JAYE

Trying to save the lovebirds.

MAHANDRA

Then why'd you let them go?

JAYE

(attempts indignation)
What? I can't believe... I didn't... you...
(oh, fuck it)
That obvious, huh?

MAHANDRA

What's obvious is that you're using these birds to avoid Eric. Why?

JAYE

Because! I am a Snowy Owl love killer! I'm a man-eater. I just... I was hoping it would be different with Eric. I thought maybe I could just nibble. But a natural predator can't just nibble!

MAHANDRA

Oh. My. God. Jaye, you cannot do this to him. You promised.

(CONTINUED)

JAYE

I know! I'm trying to save him. By avoiding him. So I can be with him. But I can't go near him or I'll destroy him, so if I can just manage to stay away from him maybe we can be together. Please don't repeat that back to me.

MAHANDRA

You have to nip this in the bud right now. Get it over with. Show some mercy. Take him out into the woods and put one painlessly in the back of his head.

JAYE

It's such a cute head.

MAHANDRA

Cap him.

JAYE

You're right. That's what I have to do...

Suddenly there's an O.C. SLAM of the front door.

SHARON (O.S.)

JAYE!

Sharon blows in -- holding a battered child's shoe in one hand. She is out of breath.

SHARON (CONT'D)

JAYE! Oh my God. I found this outside in the gutter. It could be a clue.

(to the others)

I came as soon as I got the message about the missing children.

(off Penelope's tears)

Are you their mother? Aw, those babies. We will find them.

AARON

They're birds.

JAYE

(off Sharon's look)

Yeah. I, uh, probably shouldn't have said babies so much as... birds. It is a "b" word...

(CONTINUED)

SHARON

I can think of another b-word.
 (turns to leave)
 If you see a wolf, don't bother to
 call.

PENELOPE

Wolf! Oh, god! Predators!

ERIC

Lauren and Humphrey are smart
 birds. Maybe they'll come back.

PENELOPE

They're Hyacinth Macaws, not homing
 pigeons!

Sharon stops in her tracks, turns around --

SHARON

Hyacinth Macaws? There was a big
 spread on them in the November
 National Geographic. They're
 endangered --

PENELOPE

Um, yeah! You'd be endangered too
 if your wings were clipped and you
 could only cover eight hundred feet
 of ground per hour while the
 estimated flight speed of a Snowy
 Owl is...

ERIC

But that's good. It means they can
 only be a mile from here at most.

SHARON

The woods behind the house. Let's
 start there.

ERIC

We should split up.

JAYE

Yes... split up. We have to...
 split... up....

Jaye looks at Eric. That face. That innocent face looking
 back... She can't stand it. Can't go through with it:

JAYE (CONT'D)

So! Sharon, you go with Penelope.
Mahandra, you come with me.

MAHANDRA

NOBODY MOVE!

Mahandra goes to her knees, feels around on the floor.

MAHANDRA (CONT'D)

I lost a contact.
(waving him forward)
Eric, you go with Jaye.

Eric moves to join Jaye. She looks back at Mahandra who pretends to search for her nonexistent lost contact. Mahandra makes a gun with her fingers, puts it to the back of her head. Mouths: "Back of the head." Off Jaye --

Jaye and Eric hunt for the birds in the woods.

ERIC

Humphrey! Lauren!

Jaye lets him get a little ahead of her as she's watching...

...THE BACK OF ERIC'S HEAD as he calls for the birds and searches. It's a very "Miller's Crossing" moment. Suddenly he turns, faces her, he startles! She's coming at him! And she attacks him -- with a kiss. A deep good one. As they disengage, he's breathless, taken aback.

ERIC (CONT'D)

Don't mean to look a gift mouth in
the mouth... but what was that for?

JAYE

It was uh... for the birds.

ERIC

The birds?

JAYE

I thought maybe your pheromones
were chasing them away again, so I
figured if we dissipated them...

ERIC

Oh. Good theory --
 (leaning in)
 For the birds...

JAYE

(as his mouth stops hers)
 The birds...

And as they continue to kiss --

Mahandra leafs through a magazine on the couch. Aaron leans against the doorway.

AARON

What is she doing with those birds anyway? Is she gonna use their babies in a ritual?

MAHANDRA

Only thing that's gonna get sacrificed tonight is the heart of a certain unsuspecting bartender.

AARON

Aww. Right. He did seem like a man marked for heartbreak.

MAHANDRA

You saw it, too?

AARON

Well, I mean -- he was with her.
 (as he sits next to her)
 Why does she do that to them, anyway? You know that exchange student from Prague still e-mails me about her.

MAHANDRA

She's like a bug zapper. Long as I've known her guys have been throwing themselves at her. Maybe if she was more like some of us less magnetic types she wouldn't be so quick to throw 'em back.

He looks at her; she leafs through the magazine. Finally:

AARON

I think you're magnetic.

MAHANDRA

(she laughs)

Yeah, well, for all my "innate magnetism" I haven't really been attracting a lot of the brothers in the greater Niagara region lately.

AARON

(studies her, a beat)

I'm somebody's brother.

MAHANDRA

Yeah, right. My best friend's brother. Like that's gonna happen.

They both laugh. Even as they're trailing off:

AARON

Why not?

MAHANDRA

(does a take)

Well, for one thing if we ever even tried to kiss we'd both never stop laughing.

AARON

Bet we could get through it.

MAHANDRA

Doubtful.

AARON

(leaning slowly)

I challenge you. I challenge you to a kiss.

She's being drawn into the bedroom eyes. It might just happen. A delicate, suspended moment, then:

MAHANDRA

Shut up.

She turns back to leafing. Off Aaron...

Penelope and Sharon, also looking for the birds.

PENELOPE

Humphrey! Lauren! Oh, god. Their story can't end like this. It just can't! It was such a beautiful story!

SHARON

It was?

PENELOPE

Oh, it had everything. Humphrey so handsome and, um, charming - the perfect match for our sweet, unattached Lauren.

SHARON

Awww.

PENELOPE

And Humphrey was even starting to get over his former partner.

SHARON

Humphrey had an ex?

PENELOPE

Bridget. But she was no good for him. They fought all the time. So we brought in Lauren. But then Humphrey just pined away for his old flame!

SHARON

Isn't that always the way...

PENELOPE

But Lauren's a scrappy bird. Wild born. She wasn't about to let the ex stand in her way. So she did something about it.

SHARON

She did?

PENELOPE

Mmm-hmmm. One morning we found Bridget at the bottom of her cage, pecked to death. She had over sixty beak wounds to her body.

SHARON

Birds are so interesting.

PENELOPE

I know. Of course, getting rid of Bridget didn't solve all of Lauren's love problems. There was still one more female standing in Lauren's way...

SHARON

(totally absorbed)
Who?

PENELOPE

Lauren!

SHARON

(confused)
She was standing in her own way?

PENELOPE

She'd been on her own for so long she was having trouble allowing Humphrey to establish dominance.
(then, sadly)
Until tonight... but now... their bond was so fragile. Who knows if it can survive this complication?

SHARON

(not without horror)
Oh god.

22A

INT. BETH'S LOFT - NIGHT

22A

Beth is sitting on her couch crying inconsolably. BING-BONG. She wipes away her tears as she goes to answer the door. She's fully expecting Sharon; as she opens the door. It's not Sharon. It's Thomas. Beth reacts, surprised. Then:

BETH

Hi.

THOMAS

Hi.

He stares at her, lost in her face for a moment, then:

THOMAS (CONT'D)

I'm really sorry about the drop-by, but I found this in a box and it didn't look like mine so I figured it had to be yours.

(CONTINUED)

BETH

It's a button.

THOMAS

Uh-huh.

BETH

It's your button. From your tweed jacket. Did you cut this off?

THOMAS

I know it's over. I do. I understand that and I don't expect that to change. I mean, I've been seeing other women... and so have you, and...

(suddenly noticing)

Have you been crying?

(beat)

Did she make you cry?

(off Beth's silence)

How -- how could she do that? What can I do?

BETH

Don't do anything.

He steps forward and gives her a big manly hug. She melts just a little, starting to cry again. He tries to comfort her:

THOMAS

I'm sorry. I'm sorry.

BETH

Stop saying that.

THOMAS

What do you want me to say?

She looks up at him as he holds her in his arms. There's still chemistry between them.

BETH

Don't say anything.

Jaye and Eric. Oh my lord, they're still kissing. As they disengage, still forehead-to-forehead, breathless, dreamy...

ERIC

So... how are the pheromones?

JAYE

Good. Salty good.

He takes her hand, puts it on his heart.

ERIC

Feel that?

JAYE

It's your heart... It's beating.

ERIC

Know what that means?

JAYE

Um, you're not dead?

ERIC

Exactly. My life's not over. I thought it was after Heidi. But I don't think I've ever felt as alive as I do with you right this second.

She holds her hand there for a beat or two (literally), then:

JAYE

It's a good heart. Strong. And we should keep it right where it is...

He's not sure what she meant by that, and he frankly doesn't care. She takes her hand away. She regards him for a beat.

JAYE (CONT'D)

I like you. I like you a lot. Of all the boys... men... well, boys, actually, that I've liked... I may like you the most. In fact, I'm pretty sure I do. You're sensitive, but not at all creepy. You're slightly damaged, and that's always a plus. And your smile...

(trails off)

...your smile....

ERIC

(with that smile)

Yeah? My smile?

JAYE
 (sad, almost to herself)
 Is about to fade...

ERIC
 (the smile remains, but
 confused)
 What?

JAYE
 Run. Run now and don't look back.

ERIC
 What are you doing?

JAYE
 Letting you escape.

ERIC
 I don't want to escape.

JAYE
 You need to. You need to. Now.
 Before you have to chew off your
 own leg to get free.

ERIC
 (incredulous)
 Are you breaking up with me?

JAYE
 No! God. We're not even together!
 So we can't really break up... And
 this way, we'll never have to. I'm
 keeping you safe.

ERIC
 Oh. Thank you.
 (then, building)
 You don't know me at all, do you?
 Do I seem like a guy who's looking
 for safe? That's your excuse?
 Well it's total crap. You don't
 want to be with me, that's fine.
 But don't tell me it's for my own
 good.
 (leans in)
 It's not me you're protecting.

It's Jaye's turn to be stunned. Eric turns and walks away.

26

EXT. FOREST/TYLER HOUSE - NIGHT

26

Eric emerges from the woods. Jaye is not far behind. Eric moves to his truck, gets in. She doesn't know what to do. Call after him? She just told him to leave.

But he's fired it up and is pulling out. Jaye stands there. Lets him go without trying to chase him down. Jaye reacts now as Sharon appears, emerging from the woods. Sharon's clearly on a mission, pulling her keys from her purse. Now Penelope appears, chasing after her.

JAYE

Where are you going?

SHARON

To be dominated --

Penelope appears now, running out of the woods --

PENELOPE

Hey! Wait! Blonde woman! We still haven't found the...

HEADLIGHTS FLARE and wash over them. The markings on the side identify it as an official Niagara Zoo vehicle. Savage and Rufus step out of the car.

SAVAGE

Well! There you are, Penelope. Now where are the damned birds?

Off their looks...

END OF ACT THREE

(CONTINUED)

ACT FOUR

27 INT. TYLER HOUSE - FOYER - NIGHT 27

Jaye, Sharon, Mahandra, Aaron, Penelope are with their accusers, Savage and Rufus. Sharon is itching to leave. Penelope is in Rufus's face.

PENELOPE

I can't believe you! You squealed on us! You... person! Do you think animals would do that to each other?

RUFUS

It wasn't me! The Zoo's surveillance cameras got the whole thing on tape.

SHARON

The Zoo? You stole those Macaws from the Zoo?

JAYE

Liberated.

RUFUS

(re: Savage)

He promised he wouldn't call the Feds. All you have to do is give the birds back.

SHARON

Hi. I'm an attorney and I fully understand the magnitude of what's happened here.

(then)

I can't be a part of this. Review the tape. You'll see I'm not on it. Excuse me. I have someplace to be.

Sharon marches out the door. Savage turns to Penelope.

SAVAGE

Where are my birds?

PENELOPE

They're, um, they're not here.

(CONTINUED)

SAVAGE

You leave me no choice.
 (reaching for his cell)
 No one else leaves this house --

There's a BLOODCURDLING SCREAM from outside. Everyone blows past Savage. He follows to:

Sharon is at her SUV as the others run up. Sharon points dumbstruck to her car -- and the two Macaws in there going at it.

SHARON

H-h-how'd they get in?

AARON

Window's open.

PENELOPE

(overjoyed)
 They're mating! I told you!

AARON

(looks to Mahandra)
 Huh. And here I thought they didn't want to...

She looks at him. They hold the look. She doesn't have a witty retort, can't hold the gaze, feeling the heat and becoming uncomfortable. She looks away. Back to the birds.

SAVAGE

How unusual that they'd choose a car...

MAHANDRA

Why? That's where I first did it.

Aaron smiles at Mahandra, who still won't look back at him, but knows he's looking. Penelope sniffs.

PENELOPE

There's a very strong female musk scent.

Jaye turns pointedly to Sharon.

SHARON
That's patchouli.
(then)
What?

PENELOPE
Their love is so beautiful.

MAHANDRA
And acrobatic.

Sharon stares in fascination, cocks her head with:

SHARON
God. Look at 'em go at it.

SMASH CUT TO:

29 INT. BETH'S LOFT - BEDROOM - SAME TIME 29

Beth and Thomas are locked in impassioned, highly athletic coitus.

WE POP TO:

29A FILMSTRIP 29A

Close-up of a health-class filmstrip showing a battalion of sperm swimming left to right.

29B INT. SHARON'S SUV - NIGHT 29B

CLOSE ON - MACAWS

They nuzzle each other, affectionate. SNAP WIDE TO REVEAL Humphrey and Lauren are still inside Sharon's SUV. SNAP EVEN WIDER TO REVEAL we are:

30 INT. NIAGARA ZOO - AVIARY - CONTINUOUS 30

Sharon's SUV is parked inside the aviary, now part of the Macaw exhibit. Jaye, Sharon, Savage and Penelope look on.

SAVAGE
Thank you for the donation, Ms.
Tyler.

(CONTINUED)

JAYE

And thank you for not calling the police.

SHARON

It's a loan. That means temporary. When can I get my car back?

Savage looks to Penelope.

PENELOPE

There's a 28 day incubation period.

SHARON

I'll be back in a month. I want it cleaned and vacuumed upon return. That's a custom leather interior.

PENELOPE

Leather's dead flesh.

SHARON

(moving off, dialing cell)
I want my dead flesh cleaned.
(into phone)
Armstrong Taxi, please.

And Sharon is gone.

SAVAGE

I have to say, I never did expect these birds to mate. I'm still amazed.

PENELOPE

Does this mean I get my job back?

SAVAGE

Are you kidding? It's clear they just needed a moment away from you. You're still fired.

And he moves off. Penelope's face falls.

JAYE

Hey. Cheer up. At least they're doing it. That's what you wanted, right?

PENELOPE

Yeah, I guess.

JAYE

What do you mean "you guess?" I've never seen anyone work so hard to get someone else to mate in my entire life. You're like the total mack daddy bird pimp.

PENELOPE

Thank you?

JAYE

(off bumping birdies)
See how happy they are?

PENELOPE

Uh-huh. And I know I should be, too... but I'm not sure I am.

JAYE

Again, I go back to the working really hard to get someone else to mate thing. The payoff is never gonna be as great for you as it is for them. Doncha' think you've been using these birds to avoid interacting with your own species for long enough?

Penelope looks at her.

PENELOPE

You think that's what I do?

JAYE

I do. Yes. Yes, I do. I mean, human interaction is scary. And it's unpredictable and you have to interact with other, well, humans. And that's always messy. You're probably scared and that's why you're using your animals as an excuse to avoid risk.

(suddenly turning away)

I have to go.

And Jaye is gone. Penelope looks over, sees Rufus picking up a bucket and mop or some such, passing or exiting out of the aviary. Off Penelope...

Thomas, bathing in post-coital glow, walks toward his car.

31

CONTINUED:

31

ANGLE ON:

Thomas' car. Thomas gets in and drives off. We HOLD on the parking spot -- not two seconds pass before Sharon's cab SCREECHES into the exact same spot.

Sharon hurries out of the cab, then remembers she forgot to pay. She fumbles through her purse, finally throwing a handful of bills at the driver.

SHARON

Keep it!

She runs up toward Beth's door.

32

EXT. NIAGARA ZOO - ELEPHANT PEN - NIGHT

32

(This can play in the aviary if need be and I'll revise, but this is better. Just sayin'. I work for camera.)

Rufus sweeps. Penelope approaches. There is an elephant nearby.

PENELOPE

Hello, Rufus.

RUFUS

Penelope. Hi.

PENELOPE

I, um, wanted to thank you.

RUFUS

Oh. Okay. Sure.

PENELOPE

You went out on a limb for me. And the birds. Thank you.

RUFUS

Birds like limbs.

PENELOPE

Will you... look in on them from time to time?

RUFUS

Of course. I'll make sure they name one of the chicks after you. So they don't forget.

(CONTINUED)

32

CONTINUED:

32

She smiles. Okay. Well. She turns to go. He wants to say something. And then he does.

RUFUS (CONT'D)

Penelope?

She turns to him.

PENELOPE

Yes, Rufus?

RUFUS

I love the Macaws. But they're not the only animals in the zoo.

They hold a look between them as...

33

INT. JAYE'S CAR - NIGHT

33

Jaye speeds along the highway. We can see the tension in her hands as she clutches the steering wheel, urging her car to go faster.

JAYE

C'mon...

(then)

He's smarter than you, you know.

Jaye tosses a glance at the passenger seat.

The LOVESICK ASS rolls around in the seat. His empty, beady eyes stare out at nothing.

JAYE (CONT'D)

Smarter than both of us. He knew I was putting something between us. Making excuses. Avoiding. I'm lucky he called me on it. I'm lucky he's smart, sensitive, and confrontational.

(then)

'Betcha he wouldn't let some stuffed ass push his cute butt around. Whaddaya think of that?

No response from the Ass.

JAYE (CONT'D)

'Thought so.

34

INT. BETH'S LOFT - NIGHT

34

The DOORBELL RINGS. Beth answers it. She reacts, surprised to see Sharon standing there. An awkward beat of silence, then:

SHARON

Hi.

BETH

Hi. Listen, I have to tell you --

SHARON

I don't want to be a rest stop on your road to heterosexual bliss.

BETH

Uh...

SHARON

I want to be one of those spiked mats they use in high-speed chases.

BETH

Sharon...

SHARON

(moving closer)

I wanna rip the rubber off your hubs. I want your car to spin out of control and into my arms and I don't ever want to let you go.

BETH

You don't?

SHARON

Huh-uh. Because I'm ready to stake my claim. You're mine, and I'm willing to peck to death any other bird that gets in the way, and I know that's a car and a bird metaphor, also I think there may have been a mining reference in there, but all of them hold. I'm not afraid anymore.

They look at each other. Beth opens her mouth to speak --

SHARON (CONT'D)

No. Don't say anything else. Just -- dominate me.

(CONTINUED)

34 CONTINUED: 34

Beth opens her mouth to speak, but Sharon throws herself at her, stopping her mouth with an impassioned kiss. Way to be "dominated"...

34A OMITTED 34A

35 INT. THE BARREL - BACK ROOM - NIGHT 35

Eric reads on his cot. OFF CAMERA in the bar, a DOOR OPENS and FOOTSTEPS cross the empty floor. Puzzled, Eric looks up.

35A INT. THE BARREL - NIGHT 35A

TIGHT ON - A WOMAN'S HAND presses a button. A LASER BEAM ignites a compact disc. A SEXY OLDIE (or maybe not so much an oldie but a wicked promotable alt rock song) begins.

35B INT. THE BARREL - BACK ROOM - NIGHT 35B

Eric reacts. Curious. Rises from the cot, as...

36 INT. TYLER HOUSE - NIGHT 36

The doorbell RINGS. Aaron, bleary-eyed in his boxers, answers the door. It's Mahandra. She looks tiny and vulnerable.

AARON

What'd they lose now, an alligator?

MAHANDRA

I accept your challenge.

He reacts. Smiles. Okay, then. He steps forward. She lets him. They come together. It is sweet and tender and soft. He disengages. They look at each other. Beat.

MAHANDRA (CONT'D)

(quiet)

I'm not laughing.

AARON

(gently)

No. You're trembling.

He touches her face. She lets him take her hand. He leads her inside. The door closes.

37 INT. NIAGARA ZOO - ELEPHANT PEN - NIGHT 37

Rufus gently takes Penelope's hand and guides it up to the elephant's trunk. Together they stroke it. It's very sweet and gentle. And I was really hoping for some sex imagery here. Oh, well.

37A INT. THE BARREL - NIGHT 37A

The song continues to play. Eric emerges from the back room, looks out into the bar...

38 INT. BETH'S LOFT - BEDROOM - NIGHT 38

Beth and Sharon are locked in impassioned, highly athletic coitus, ideally in the same position as Beth and Thomas before. CAMERA finds an OPEN JAR OF PEANUT BUTTER on the night stand. A hand reaches in, takes it out of frame...

POP TO:

38A FILMSTRIP 38A

Close-up of a health-class filmstrip showing a battalion of sperm, this time swimming right to left.

39 OMITTED 39

40 INT. THE BARREL - NIGHT 40

CLOSE - ERIC backs up against the bar. She presses up against him.

A SERIES OF SHOTS: Her hand on his shoulder, moving down his arm... Her other hand, moving down around to his ass... His hand on her shoulder, sliding down to her upper arm, his fingers squeezing her a bit... ON ERIC as she moves in for the kiss. He lets her. Then pulls away, reacting to something over her shoulder --

ERIC'S POV

Of Jaye standing in the doorway, watching. Stunned. Eric still looking over the other woman's shoulder at --

ERIC

Jaye...

(CONTINUED)

The WOMAN TURNS, looks back at Jaye.

ERIC (CONT'D)

This is Heidi.

(then)

My wife.

Oh, that's who that is. Jaye can't respond. Off her surprise, horror and despair...

END OF SHOW