

**"THE INTERESTINGS"**

Pilot Episode

Written by

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EXT. COUNTRY ROAD, BELKNAP, MASSACHUSETTS - SUMMER (1974)

"AT SEVENTEEN" by Janis Ian, plays on a car radio.

In the darkness --

A GIRL'S VOICE  
Turn it off!

ANOTHER GIRL'S VOICE  
What are you? The fucking music  
Czar?

FADE IN:

A dented Dodge Dart turns onto a rough, scenic country road past a sign that reads "*Welcome to Belknap, Massachusetts!*"

A WOMAN'S VOICE  
*Language, Ellen.*

INT. DODGE DART -- CONTINUOUS

ELLEN JACOBSON, 17, a suburban teenager with too much makeup, turns up the volume on the eight track tape player while her mother, LOIS JACOBSON, 41, recently bereaved and a tad shell-shocked, struggles to read the map as she drives.

Cringing in the backseat is her sister, JULIE JACOBSON, 15, intelligent and sensitive with blotchy skin and a bad reddish perm. She has yet to emerge from her awkward stage.

JULIE  
Please! This song *cannot* be  
playing when we drive up.

ELLEN  
What's wrong with it?

JULIE  
Ellen, I'm begging you! It's like  
announcing you're a loser.

ELLEN  
Great. Then you'll fit right in  
with the other weirdos. I don't  
get what you're doing at a  
*creative arts* camp, anyway.  
Aren't you supposed to have some  
sort of talent?

LOIS  
I thought she was a hoot in "*Bye  
Bye Birdie.*"

ELLEN

She played the Mayor's Wife. She had no lines. All she had to do was faint and spread her legs.

LOIS

She was very inventive.

ELLEN

Please. The only reason Mrs. Liebman recommended her for this stupid scholarship was because she felt sorry for her that daddy died.

JULIE

Fuck you, Ellen. At least I'm not working at Carvel, hanging out at the mall and stealing lip gloss --

LOIS

Enough! Both of you. Turn it off, Ellen.

Julie breathes a sigh of relief and gazes out the window as Ellen pulls the tape out and pouts in the front seat.

LOIS (CONT'D)

Your sister's trying something new.

(then)

Besides, after the year we've had, someone in this family should have a little... fun.

EXT. ENTRANCE TO SPIRIT-IN-THE-WOODS - CONTINUOUS

As they pull into the parking area, we get our first look at Spirit-In-The-Woods -- a rustic summer camp dotted with pine trees and lush rolling hills. The MAIN LODGE, which houses the Office and Dining Hall is prominently situated on the great lawn. In the distance, scattered around the wooded acreage, large teepees, instead of cabins, can be seen with numbers painted on them.

ELLEN

Gross me out.

Julie looks around at the assorted campers, some lugging musical instruments, others dressed with an artistic flair. All of them seem considerably more well-to-do than the Jacobsons, as they emerge from their late model luxury cars and run shrieking into the arms of other colorful alumni. Julie, suddenly feeling out of place, adjusts her Peter Pan collar shirt and smoothes her over-permed hair.

ELLEN (CONT'D)  
 Wow. What a freak show. Check out  
 Paddington Bear at ten o'clock.

Julie looks over and sees ETHAN FIGMAN, 15, fat, in a floppy hat, hugging returning campers, greeting them like long lost friends.

ELLEN (CONT'D)  
 There's your hot summer romance.

JULIE  
 (lifting her duffle bag)  
 Shut up.

LOIS  
 Ellen, help your sister shlepp  
 the duffle bag to her wigwam.

JULIE  
 Tee-pee. And I don't need any  
 help.

LOIS  
 Maybe we should ask that strong  
 boy over there.

Lois motions to GOODMAN WOLF, an astonishingly handsome, Greek God of a teen, who is surrounded by a crowd of fan girls. Julie's jaw drops at the sight of him.

ELLEN  
 (enjoying this)  
 Oh, yes, Julie. Why don't you go  
 over and ask *him*.

A BOY'S VOICE  
 Hi. Need a hand?

Julie turns to see Ethan Figman, hat in hand. Ellen stifles a giggle as Julie shoots her a dirty look.

JULIE  
 No, thanks. I can do it.

Ethan hears his name called. He waves to a GROUP OF CAMPERS who are clearly thrilled to see him.

ETHAN  
 Cool.

He starts to leave and turns back.

ETHAN (CONT'D)  
 The name's Ethan Figman. If you  
 need anything, I'm at your  
 service.

As he bows chivalrously and runs off, Ellen makes a kissing sound. Julie ignores her then glances back at Goodman Wolf, still being mobbed by dozens of female campers.

JULIE

Look mom, it's five hours to Underhill. And you'll have to stop for lunch and --

ELLEN

She wants us to go, mom.

Lois looks at Julie, who shrugs. It's clear to Lois that her daughter wants to be on her own. She goes over and gives her a hug that lasts longer than Julie would like.

LOIS

You have fun, okay? I love you.  
(convincing herself)  
First time away from home. You'll adjust. It just takes time.

She touches her daughter's hair lovingly.

LOIS (CONT'D)

See? I told you that perm wouldn't look so dandelion-y after a few weeks.

Ellen snorts derisively. Julie gives her the finger.

EXT. DINING HALL -- DUSK

Campers congregate outside the hall before dinner. As Julie surveys the various cliques, her attention is drawn to a group whose self-assuredness and physical beauty (all except Ethan's) clearly marks them as special. Julie's dazzled by their glamour, Goodman's in particular.

A GIRL'S VOICE

Think he'd let me sculpt him?

Suddenly, SANDY SNYDER, 15, Julie's tee-pee mate, a depressed visual artist, plops down beside her.

SANDY

I mean, *naked*?  
(then)  
This guy on the swimteam says his dick is so big they nicknamed it Ex-calibre, you know, like the "Sword in The Stone?"

JULIE

Thank you, Sandy. Now I will never be able to listen to Camelot without imagining King Arthur pulling his penis out of a rock.

Sandy laughs. Julie remains transfixed by Goodman and his crowd.

SANDY

(knowingly)

It's not that they *think* they're better than everyone. They just sort of are, you know?

JULIE

You make them sound like they're royalty or something.

SANDY

Well, they are, sort of.

(then)

Okay look, here's the thing -- everyone comes here with big dreams, thinking they have some great talent... *until* Ash Wolf blows them away on stage...

ANGLE ON: ASH WOLF 15, a waifish, open-hearted beauty with long straight, brown hair and sad eyes -- who drapes herself on her equally sensitive and beautiful, long haired boyfriend, JONAH BAY, 15, as he plays and sings OHIO, an "ode" to Kent State.

SANDY (CONT'D)

...or hear Jonah Bay's songs, which are like *twice* as good as his mother's...

JULIE

(trying to appear nonchalant)

Susannah Bay's his mother?

SANDY

Yeah, she's good, but he's gonna be *twice* as huge.

Julie, secretly thrilled to be so close to a celebrity, tries to appear blasé as she nods towards CATHY KIPLINGER, 15, blonde, sensuous and bodacious, who stretches her dancer's body beside Goodman, who teasingly tries to cop a feel.

JULIE

Speaking of *huge*...

SANDY

..."Nipples Kiplinger?" Don't let the mammaries fool you.

(MORE)

SANDY (CONT'D)

Her geenormous boobies disappear  
once she starts to dance.

JULIE

Wow. And does she also pull a  
rabbit out of her ass?

SANDY

Make jokes. Everyone does. But  
mostly it's out of envy. Deep  
down everyone knows that these  
guys are the only ones who are  
really gonna *do* it. Not just as a  
hobby or for a summer, but for  
*life*.

JULIE

So what's "ex-calibres" big  
talent?

(then)

I mean... his *other* big talent?

SANDY

Does he need one?

Both girls laugh as the bell rings and they line-up to enter the  
dining hall. As they pass "the group," Jules tries to avoid  
looking at Goodman -- not easy to do considering the sunset  
behind him emits a glow that literally makes him shine.

INT. GIRLS BATHROOM -- NIGHT

Julie is washing her face at the sink when Sandy enters with  
JANIE ZELL, 15, a punk guitarist, to brush their teeth.

SANDY

Ooh, what smells so nice?

JULIE

(showing her the bottle)

It's "*Gee Your Hair Smells  
Terrific.*"

(then)

Too bad it *looks* like a Brillo  
pad.

JANIE

Fuck the magazines. You don't  
have to be their slave. Embrace  
your look.

JULIE

You're right. I *love* my hair.

(like a TV announcer)

It's perfect for removing rust,  
stripping paint, scouring pots...

The girls laugh, toothpaste dripping out of their mouths.

JULIE (CONT'D)

(on a roll)

My mother took me to her beauty salon -- which was formerly a dog groomers. I think they specialized in poodles. When I went outside, someone threw me a biscuit.

SANDY

(spitting toothpaste)

Stop!

JULIE

So I peed on him.

SANDY

(still laughing)

Ouch. Stop. Seriously. My guts hurt.

As their laughing subsides, Janie wipes her mouth --

JANIE

Tessa's cramming her first plug -- A Super *plus*. Gotta make sure she gets it in the right hole. Cheering section?

JULIE

Be right there...

(as the TV announcer)

Just as soon as I remove this stubborn rust from these nasty faucets!

Sandy and Janie exit, giggling. Julie stares at herself in the mirror, her face falling in despair, when she hears a shower stall open. Ash Wolf appears wrapped in a terry cloth bathrobe, her hair in a towel. She lights a cigarette. Julie is suddenly self-conscious in the presence of such a beauty.

ASH

Do I still smell horsey?

She approaches Julie, who's taken aback, unsure how to talk to royalty.

ASH (CONT'D)

I love to ride, but I can't stand taking so many showers.

JULIE

(sniffing)

Nope. No trace of Trigger.



Ash laughs.

ASH  
You're funny.

JULIE  
It's the hair. I got it from a clown.

ASH  
(laughing, holding out her hand)  
I'm Ash Wolf.

JULIE  
I know. I mean, I'm Julie. Jacobson.

ASH  
I know.

JULIE  
You do?

ASH  
You're in my improv class. You were hilarious in that elevator exercise yesterday -- when you fainted and your legs fell open? I nearly peed myself laughing.

JULIE  
Thanks. It just came to me.

Julie stands self-consciously wishing she had something funnier to say.

ASH  
Listen, if you're not doing anything later -- I'm getting together with some of the others. Maybe you'd like to join us?

Julie looks at her with utter shock, her face dripping water.

JULIE  
(covering, nonchalantly)  
Yeah. Sure. Cool.

ASH  
Great. After lights out -- my brother's tent, teepee three?  
(with a wink)  
It's the one that reeks of weed.

She starts to exit then turns.

ASH (CONT'D)  
 And I don't think you look  
 remotely poodle-ish.

Julie barks as Ash exits, laughing. She then turns and looks at herself in the mirror, unable to believe she's been invited to the ball.

GOODMAN (O.S.)  
 Gunter Grass is basically *God*.

INT. BOYS TEEPEE 3 - NIGHT

A cheap, single-bulb-lit conical wooden structure, with bunk beds and a screened-in door. Julie sits cross-legged in a corner, trying to appear invisible as Ethan sits nearby, a record album on his lap, rolling a joint. Jonah faces them, strumming his steel-stringed guitar as Ash nestles close to his body, stroking his hair as he plays. Cathy mixes VODKA AND TANG cocktails, aka V&Ts, in a pitcher, while Goodman, sprawled provocatively on the top bunk in shorts and a tank top, smokes a joint.

Julie tries to hide her obvious attraction to him. She sits motionless, listening, trying not to call attention to herself.

ASH  
 I think Anais Nin is God.

GOODMAN  
 (passing the joint)  
 Anais Nin? Yuck. She is so full of pretentious, girly shit. She's literally the worst writer who ever lived.

ETHAN  
 Anais Nin and Gunter Grass both have umlats. Maybe that's the key to their success. I'm thinking of getting one for myself.

JONAH  
 Figman, increase the velocity;  
 the natives are restless.

As Ethan licks the rolling papers, Jules can't help but notice the eczema scars crawling like a spider up his arms.

ETHAN  
 (proudly holding the joint)  
 Voila!

He lights up and takes a toke then, smiling, passes it to Julie who smiles back, grateful for his welcoming gesture. She inhales and holds it, listening to what she surmises to be "banter."

CATHY

What were you doing reading Anais  
Nin in the first place, Goodman?

GOODMAN

Ash made me. And I do everything  
my sister says.

JONAH

Maybe Ash is God.

Jonah takes the joint from Julie, inhales, then shotguns it perfectly into Ash's waiting mouth. Julie watches fascinated, thrilled by their intimacy and sophistication.

GOODMAN

Ash is definitely not God. She's  
too much of a perfectionist.  
She'd never let a mistake like  
Dick Nixon go unchecked.

ASH

The thing is, he's such a bad  
actor. He's so *obvious*. Why can't  
people see when they're being  
lied to?

JONAH

They don't *want* to see. Look at  
My Lai.

GOODMAN

You sound like your mother.

JONAH

Fuck you, Goodman.

ASH

At least Susannah uses her music  
to tell the truth.

(buzzed)

That's what art is for, right?  
That's what *Spirit-In-The-Woods*  
*is all about* -- to use your  
talent to tell the truth to the  
world. I mean, that's the whole  
reason to be an artist, right?

GOODMAN

Gosh, Ash, maybe you are God.

Everyone laughs. Julie, amazed, has never heard people her own age talk this way. Stoned, she watches Goodman in SLO MO as he jumps down from the upper bunk, his manly frame causing the teepee to shake. He grabs another V&T with one hand, and encircles Cathy's waist with the other, rubbing his body suggestively into hers.

ETHAN

More?

Julie snaps out of her reverie and takes the joint from Ethan, who smiles at her sweetly. It's clear he's attracted.

CATHY

I don't know. I just dance because I love it. It's the only thing I've ever wanted to do. Even though I'm probably fucked with these...

(indicating her boobs)  
...sacks of mail.

GOODMAN

(fondling her)  
I doubt your bodacious ta-tas will stand in your way.

CATHY

It's not funny, Goodman. How many ballerinas do you know with big tits? What am I supposed to do? Quit?

ETHAN

Of course not. Nothing should stand in our way. We should all try to do whatever we want to in life. I mean, what is the point otherwise?

As if to illustrate the point, Jonah improvises a riff on his guitar, his deft fingers flying over the strings. Everyone watches impressed, especially Julie. He finishes with a flourish. Then --

GOODMAN

So, Jonah, have you given any thought to a career?

They laugh at the shared recognition that Jonah's professional trajectory is pretty much an inevitability. A silence descends as the group contemplates their own futures. Julie looks around, suddenly nervous that they might be waiting for *her* to say something. Luckily --

ASH

There's a girl in our cousin's school in Pennsylvania named Crema Seamans.

CATHY

You made that up.

GOODMAN

Trust me, Ash never lies. That's one of the most irritating things about her.

ETHAN

Crema Seamans. It's like a soup made from various strains of semen. A *medley* of semen. It's a flavor of Campbell's soup that got discontinued immediately.

CATHY

Ethan, you're being totally graphic.

GOODMAN

Well, he *is* a graphic artist.

Goodman grabs Ethan's sketchbook and displays his latest cartoon drawing --

GOODMAN (CONT'D)

Who's the guy with the top-hat and the hard-on? Another character from planet Figland?

ETHAN

That, sir, is the "President-Erect."

Everyone laughs, including Julie.

JONAH

The world according to Ethan Figman.

Julie, now quite stoned on weed and vodka, decides this is her moment to speak. Summoning her courage, she takes a breath and --

JULIE

I think we should all observe a moment of silence for Crema Seamans.

The group looks at her -- an unexpected contribution from the heretofore silent visitor.

GOODMAN

The girl from Long Island speaks.

ASH

Goodman, you're being elitist.

GOODMAN

Jacobson knows I'm kidding. Right, Long Island?

Julie ignores the label and all it implies, unwilling to allow anything to deter her from her purpose -- to become one of them. She raises her glass and intones dramatically:

JULIE

O Crema Seamans, wherever thou art, your life will be tragic. It will be cut short by an accident involving... animal desemenizing equipment.

The group breaks into gales of laughter. Julie opens her eyes, warmed by their approval.

ASH

See? I knew there was a reason I invited her in.  
(to Julie)  
"Desemenizing." Go, Jules.

CLOSE ON Julie, beaming as she's rechristened "Jules," a name she will now keep for the rest of her life.

ETHAN

Here ya go, Jules.

Ethan holds out a joint, smiling, smitten.

ASH

You know every summer we sit here like this. We really should call ourselves something.

GOODMAN

Why? So the world can know just how unbelievably *interesting* we are?

ETHAN

How about the "Unbelievably Interesting Ones."  
(off their looks)  
What? Too much?

ASH

"*The Interestings*." That works.

ETHAN

(raising a cup)  
From this day forward, because we are clearly the most interesting people who ever fucking *lived*, because we are just so *compelling*, our brains swollen with intellectual thoughts, let us henceforth be known as "*The Interestings*."

GOODMAN

And let everyone who meets us  
be blinded by the glare of our  
brilliant, scintillating lives.

CLOSE ON JULES: dazzled by these new friends -- all destined for greatness. And now she is forever one of them. She exuberantly clinks glasses with the others, toasting the glorious future that awaits.

A WOMAN'S VOICE (PRE-LAP)

Someone didn't flush their doodie  
down the toilet!

INT. JULES AND DENNIS HOUSE - NIGHT (1995)

**Twenty years later.**

JULES, now 35, older, fuller but still pretty, flushes the toilet then looks in the mirror of her teeny tiny bathroom. She sprays some de-frizzer on her hair, and smooths it down. Some things never change. She crosses through the --

-- LIVING ROOM of her cramped, one bedroom apartment, where RORIE, 5, an irrepressible tomboy, bounces up and down on the couch as she sings along with SESAME STREET on TV. Jules stands in the doorway of her claustrophobic BEDROOM.

JULES

You sure you won't come? We could  
still get the sitter. It might do  
you some good.

REVEAL DENNIS, 37, handsome but unkempt. He reclines on the unmade bed, absently thumbing through a copy of *Technology for Diagnostic Sonography*.

JULES (CONT'D)

Sometimes it helps to get out  
there and just see people.

DENNIS

I see people everyday in the park  
with Rorie. I'm on a first name  
basis with every Nanny and  
alcoholic mom on the Upper West  
Side.

JULES

Everyone's going to be asking for  
you.

DENNIS

Jules?

They've had this fight before.

JULES

Fine.

She crosses back into the livingroom and gets ready.

DENNIS

I just want to veg. Tomorrow's a big day.

JULES

Don't worry about it. It'll be a big bore anyway. You know how Ethan goes on at these things. I wish *I* could stay home and veg.

Dennis watches her, feeling badly. It's one of many issues between them.

DENNIS

You look nice.

JULES

You can't see that it's ripped in the shoulder?

DENNIS

Not at all.

JULES

Great. Thank God for safety pins.

DENNIS

Say hi to the gang. Tell them we'll have dinner soon. *I'll* cook.

Jules nods. How many times has she heard that?

DENNIS (CONT'D)

(upbeat)

And don't worry about the dishes. When you come home, it'll look like elves came and cleaned. Promise.

Jules goes over to Rorie.

JULES

Be good and do everything Daddy says and no more sugar. I'll be home when you wake up.

Jules gives her a kiss. As she starts for the door --

RORIE

You didn't kiss daddy!



Jules stops and turns. Dennis is in the bedroom doorway. He and Jules look at each other awkwardly.

RORIE (CONT'D)  
Kiss him. Kiss daddy!

Jules looks at her daughter, impressed by her intuition. She walks over to Dennis and gives him a kiss. An awkward stilted one. Dennis closes his eyes, wishing it could be more intimate as Rorie claps her hands in delight.

INT. SUBWAY - LATER

Jules stands nose to nose with PASSENGERS in a crowded subway car. Her eyes light on a POSTER above, advertising the new fall season of FIGLAND! The cartoon figures are more sophisticated version of the ones we saw earlier in Ethan's sketchbook.

INT. GIRL'S TEE-PEE 5 -- NIGHT (1974)

**Twenty years earlier.**

Ash sits on Jules's bunk bed as Cathy, in her undies, stretches provocatively in the background.

JULES  
Ethan's a genius, I know. Nobody is denying that.

ASH  
And he's funny. And supportive --

CATHY  
So was Yoda, but I wouldn't want to fuck him.

They laugh.

ASH  
You're horrible. I'm serious.

CATHY  
It's not personal. It's the truth. People are attracted to their own levels of... attractiveness. Like me and your brother. You and Jonah. Ethan'll probably end up with someone brilliant and badly disfigured.

ASH  
(to Jules)  
She's horrible.  
(then)  
Seriously, you wouldn't go out with him if he asked you?

JULES

I don't know. I don't think so.  
Would you?

CATHY

Ash and Ethan? It'd be like  
"Beauty and the Beast."

ASH

(ignoring Cathy)  
I don't know. I can't ever  
imagine being with anyone other  
than Jonah. We're just so...  
right together, you know?

JULES'S VOICE (PRE-LAP)

Jesus, Jonah, get a room.

EXT. ETHAN'S TOWNHOUSE - NIGHT (1995)

**Twenty-years later.**

Jules approaches JONAH, 35, still handsome but older with less artistic flair, as he's locked in a passionate kiss with his very macho, very buff boyfriend, ROBERT TAKAHASHI.

ROBERT TAKAHASHI

Guess who finally agreed to move  
in with me?

JULES

Oh my God. It's about time. It's  
only been, what?

ROBERT TAKAHASHI

Three years, five months and two  
weeks, but who's counting?

JONAH

Some things can't be rushed.

JULES

(to Robert)  
Well, I applaud your  
perseverance. If he'd let you go,  
we were all ready to have an  
intervention.

(to Jonah, knowingly)  
Again.

ROBER TAKAHASHI

(to Jonah)  
You've got such fabulous friends.  
God bless that faggot camp you  
went to.

JULES

Is it safe to enter? Or are they still shaking down the guests?

JONAH

We haven't been up yet.

ROBERT TAKAHASHI

Two years ago they raised a quarter of a million for Aids research. I begrudge him nothing.

JULES

I hear ya.

JONAH

Okay, ready, set... get your checkbooks out!

As they go inside, Jules smiles, inwardly shamed that her support will be *non-financial*.

ETHAN'S VOICE (PRE-LAP)

So congratulations to the winners of our silent auction...

INT. TOWNHOUSE - NIGHT

ETHAN FIGMAN, now 36, is addressing an elegant crowd in cocktail attire as waiters pass drinks and hors d'oeuvres around his artfully decorated, five-story townhouse in Greenwich Village.

Ethan now sports fashionable attire, and while this frog has not yet metamorphosed into a prince, his style, at least, has greatly improved.

ETHAN

...especially the new owner of the life-size Wally Figman action figure... what every home needs!

(then, sincerely)

But even if you go home with nothing but our gratitude, know that what you're doing tonight is making a real difference.

He smiles at Jules, Jonah and Robert, thrilled to see their friendly faces among the crowd's elite.

ETHAN (CONT'D)

Just ask the true conscience of the Figman Foundation, my beautiful wife... Ash Wolf...

He motions to Ash, off to the side, and we now see that Beauty did indeed marry the Beast.

Ash, who at the ripe old age of 36, has only grown lovelier and more elegant than she was at 15. She nods graciously, acknowledging the crowd's polite applause.

ETHAN (CONT'D)

Ash has seen, first-hand, what Doctors Without Borders is doing in Bosnia and how desperately they need our support.

Ash nods and raises her glass in solidarity as Robert, Jules and Jonah watch her in silent admiration.

ROBERT

(to Jonah)

I can't believe you guys were a thing.

JULES

They were both so gorgeous. We used to joke they were in their own Zefferelli Film.

JONAH

It was never that sexual. We were more like --

JULES

Sisters?

JONAH

I was gonna say lesbians.

Jules catches Ash's eye, who's looking at her, indicating with a nod of her head that she should duck out and meet her in the hallway. Jules nods back in the affirmative. As Ethan continues--

ETHAN

Last but not least, I just want to thank the gang at *FIGLAND* for their generous support.

JULES

Pardon, good sirs. The Mistress of the Inn seeks my company.

(slipping away)

I shall return, anon.

As she sneaks out, Ethan brings his comments to a close.

ETHAN

So, make sure you eat the food courtesy of Chef Daniel Boulud. I can personally recommend the tiramisu....

INT. ETHAN'S OFFICE - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

The door bursts open and Jules and Ash enter, sneaking in like naughty teenagers. Ash shuts the door as Jules look around Ethan's cluttered office, an outward manifestation of his brilliant but chaotic mind.

Emmys and Golden Globes line the shelves, the walls filled with Figland posters and framed photos. Jules studies one of Ethan with PRESIDENT CLINTON.

JULES  
(admiringly)  
This one's new.

ASH  
That was last summer at the  
Vineyard.

JULES  
(reading, impressed)  
"If only I were President of  
Figland -- With respect, Bill."  
(wistful, lost in the photo)  
Wow. Great picture of Ethan. He's  
beaming.

ASH  
(quietly desperate)  
I have to go to Iceland.

Jules looks at her, suddenly concerned.

ASH (CONT'D)  
Goodman's in trouble.

JULES  
What's going on?

ASH  
He's really fucked up, Jules. He  
has no money. For all I know he's  
living on the street.

JULES  
Shit.

ASH  
And he sounded really confused. I  
think he's using again --

JULES  
Are your parents going?

ASH  
They can't. The doctor says my  
mom can't travel. And my dad  
doesn't want to leave her.

JULES

Fuck. I am so sorry, Ash.

ASH

(agonized)

I don't know how my parents have managed. And now with mom sick...

(fighting emotion)

She's just so desperate to see him. It's so sad.

(then)

I told Ethan I had to go to Bali to research these masks for that production of "Midsummer" I'm directing at La Mama.

JULES

(in disbelief)

You told him you had to go to *Indonesia* to get masks for a play set in *Greece* that you're doing in lower *Manhattan*?

ASH

I know. I said it was part of my "concept."

(then)

Anyway, I feel badly I'm missing this Museum of Broadcasting thing they're throwing in his honor.

(delicately)

I told him I'd see if you could go in my place.

JULES

Jesus, Ash.

ASH

I know. I'm sorry.

JULES

I hate this. I really do. He's your husband. Just fucking tell him already.

ASH

(adamantly)

I can't, you know that. He'd be devastated.

JULES

You should've told him before you got married. Or *I* should've told him.

ASH

We couldn't take the chance. You know how he is.

Jules looks at Ash, the agony she's in, etched in her face.

JULES  
Fine. I'll go with him. What's  
one more lie among friends?

There's a KNOCK on the door. It opens.

ETHAN  
Was I *that* boring?

JULES  
No! If I had any money to give  
away I would have stayed until  
the hat was passed. But I hate  
passing up a passed hat.

ETHAN  
(an old game)  
I forgive you. You get a pass for  
passing up the passed hat. As  
long as it's in the past.

ASH  
I hate when you guys do this.

ETHAN  
I know.  
(grabbing her)  
That's what makes it so much fun!

He squeezes her affectionately from behind. Ash laughs.

ETHAN (CONT'D)  
(to Jules)  
I wish she'd agree to let me  
auction *her* off.

ASH  
(enjoying him)  
That sentence is so wrong on so  
many levels --

ETHAN  
Strictly look but don't touch.  
Just dinner and drinks with the  
most beautiful woman in  
Manhattan. We'd make a killing.  
Never have to throw one of these  
awful things again.  
(nuzzling her)  
What do you say? Take one for the  
team?

He kisses her neck. She squirms but she loves it -- loves him.

ETHAN (CONT'D)

(then to Jules)

Where's Dennis? I thought he was coming?

JULES

(lying)

Rorie has a cold. He sends his love.

ASH

(to Ethan, excited)

Guess what? Jules can go with you to the Museum of Broadcasting.

ETHAN

Really? That's fantastic. It'll be like old times. Just the two of us.

(then)

And afterwards we can eat at that new place Robert DeNiro keeps talking about -- the one Ash has been dying to go to --

ASH

(feigning upset)

Nobu? No fair!

ETHAN

(teasing)

It'll serve you right for having the gall to choose *your* career over *mine*.

(to Jules)

Who goes to Indonesia to get masks for a Greek play she's doing in the village?

JULES

It's a concept.

ASH

(changing the subject)

We better get out there while there are still a few pockets to be picked.

ETHAN

These fundraisers are going to kill me.

(re: Ash)

That's what I get for marrying a damn saint.

He leaves. Ash looks sheepishly at Jules, mouths "Thank you," and follows. Jules takes a beat, angry at having to be complicit in Ash's lie yet again.



DETECTIVE MANFREDO (PRE-LAP)  
The law is very clear.

INT. WOLF HOUSE - NIGHT (1978)

**Seventeen years earlier.**

GIL and BETSY WOLF, once a beautiful couple in their 40's, now worn by stress and strain, sit hand in hand in the LIVING ROOM of their sprawling upper east side apartment as DETECTIVE MANFREDO, a weary veteran in his 40's, and his younger partner, DETECTIVE SPIVAK, 20s, wrap up their interrogation. Ash and Jules sit nearby at the DINING ROOM table, within earshot of the detective's warnings, Jules's arm around Ash for moral support.

DETECTIVE MANFREDO  
Anyone who *hinders* or *delays* the discovery of Goodman Wolf's whereabouts is guilty of harboring a fugitive.

BETSY WOLF  
Detective, if we knew where my son was, we would insist that he turn himself in.

DETECTIVE MANFREDO  
Good. Because it's only going to get worse for him. Fugitive warrants never expire. Ever. Until he comes back to stand trial he'll remain a wanted criminal.

GIL WOLF  
Listen, did it ever occur to you that we've just lost our son? We don't know if he's alive or...  
(breaking off)  
Please just try to have a little compassion.

DETECTIVE MANFREDO  
I'm sorry, Mr. Wolf. I can see you're a close family. Which is why I think you'll probably hear from Goodman soon... if you haven't already.  
(as a warning)  
Just bear in mind that when you *do*, you're legally required to contact us. If you don't, you *will* go to jail.  
(turning to Jules)  
And that goes for his friends as well.

He and Detective Spivak leave. Betsy starts to quietly sob, as Gil holds her and rubs her back.

JULES  
Fucking gestapo.  
(to Gil and Betsy)  
Instead of barging into your home  
and intimidating you, they should  
be out trying to find your son.

GIL WOLF  
It's okay. They're just doing  
their job.

JULES  
It's been weeks and they haven't  
come up with anything.  
(to Ash)  
Did you get in touch with the  
Wunderlichs?

Ash shoots a quick glance towards her father. Then to Jules --

ASH  
He's not at Spirit-In-The-Woods,  
Jules.

JULES  
Well, maybe it's time to hire a  
private investigator. I have a  
cousin --

GIL WOLF  
(firmly)  
We can handle this, Jules.  
Thanks.

ASH  
(losing it)  
No we can't! I can't. I can't  
live like this anymore. You've  
got mommy to talk to but who do I  
have? I walk around with this  
time bomb inside me like I'm  
going to explode.

BETSY  
She's right, Gil. We have our  
other child to consider. It's not  
fair.

GIL WOLF  
She's just being melodramatic.

ASH  
You have no idea what I'm going  
through.  
(then)

(MORE)

ASH (CONT'D)  
 Jules is family. We can trust  
 her. Can't we, Jules?

JULES  
 Of course. How can you even ask --

ASH  
 (blurting it out)  
 We've been in touch with Goodman.  
 We know where he is.

Jules looks at her, speechless, aghast.

GIL WOLF  
 Jesus Christ, Ash! I hope you're  
 happy. Our lives are now in the  
 hands of a sixteen year old!

JULES  
 I'll be careful, Mr. Wolf. I  
 promise.  
 (to Ash)  
 You didn't tell Ethan?

ASH  
 I couldn't. You know how he is.  
 He has all these ideas about  
 what's ethical and what's not.  
 The whole "code of the road" he  
 lives by. If he found out, he  
 might think he had to report it  
 or something --

GIL WOLF  
 You're the only one. Nothing  
 leaves this room till we can  
 prove Goodman's innocent. However  
 long it takes.

BETSY WOLF  
 (losing her composure)  
 He had such a bright future. Like  
 all of you. And now, God knows  
 what's going to happen to him.

She starts to cry. Ash takes Jules's hand and squeezes it. Jules  
 squeezes back, never imagining that being part of Ash's family  
 would come at such a cost.

INT. JULES'S APARTMENT - NIGHT (1995)

**Seventeen years later.**

Jules, returning from Ethan's fundraiser, opens the door to her  
 apartment. Rorie's asleep on the pull-out couch in the far  
 corner of the living room in front of the TV.

Dishes are piled in the sink. She goes over to the TV and shuts it off, then kisses Rorie and tucks her in.

Chagrined, she walks to the doorway of her bedroom and peers in: Dennis is asleep.

INT. BEDROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

Jules climbs into bed next to Dennis, careful not to wake him.

DENNIS  
How was it?

JULES  
You didn't miss anything.  
(then)  
I thought you'd be asleep.

DENNIS  
I'm too wound up.

JULES  
Makes sense. Big day tomorrow.

DENNIS  
I know. Shit.

Jules deliberates for a beat. She knows what he's asking for.

JULES  
You want me to give you a  
little...?

DENNIS  
Only if you want to.

Jules doesn't, but she slides her hand inside his pajama bottoms anyway. She touches him lightly, arousing him slowly. He closes his eyes. Miles apart from each other, she continues giving Dennis a handjob --

PRE-LAP the sounds of a rollicking ORGASM building --

INT. DENNIS'S APARTMENT - MORNING (1985)

**Ten years earlier.**

A tiny apartment, tricked out to utilize every square inch of space. Madonna's "LIKE A VIRGIN" plays on a boom box on the floor. We follow the sounds of sex up a ladder to a loft bed where DENNIS BOYD, 24, large, strong and athletic, forcefully brings Jules, now also 24, to a rocking orgasm.

Exhausted and spent, Dennis rolls off her. Jules stretches, happy and sated.

JULES

Is it just me, or is sex so much better than it was when you were in college?

DENNIS

It's definitely you.

JULES

No, I mean, you're amazing -- you have serious skills, but there are other factors you have to take into account.

DENNIS

Okay. Like what?

JULES

Well, look at us.

DENNIS

(enjoying what he's seeing)  
I'm looking...

JULES

No, seriously. I mean, our bodies may not be *perfect* perfect, but probably *more* perfect than they'll ever be at any other time in our lives.

DENNIS

Okay, that's really depressing, Jules.

JULES

No, but it's true, right? And we're not fumbling around or all insecure like when we were in college.

DENNIS

Well, I've been practicing a lot since graduation.

(moving closer)

And you know what they say about practice...

He starts in for a second round.

JULES

I can't. I'm gonna be late for work again. I gotta get going.

She gets out of bed and starts to dress. Dennis watches her, amused and totally smitten.

DENNIS

So when am I going to see you again?

JULES

(evasive)

I don't know. I have to see what my work schedule is. And I've got to prepare this thing for acting class.

DENNIS

You are one busy girl.

(then)

I really admire you, Jules. Working your butt off, going after your dream.

JULES

(casually)

Hey -- you're doing the same thing, right? I mean, it's not like you're going to be a lab technician your whole life.

Dennis gets out of bed, naked, and walks to the kitchenette. He fixes himself a glass of milk with Bosco.

DENNIS

I don't know -- the work's pretty cool and the hours are great. I get to spend time with my friends and play ball with some of the guys at work. I think I actually lucked out.

Dennis's lack of aspiration is clearly a problem for her.

JULES

I think it's great that you're so... *content*. I mean, if a lab tech's what you want to be --

DENNIS

It's not what I want to *be*, Jules. It's just what I'm *doing*, for *now*. It's my job. Maybe one day I'll want to do something else, but for the moment, it really makes me happy, you know?  
(putting his arms around her)  
We can't all be Hackneys.

JULES

Who?

DENNIS

The guy whose exhibit we went to  
who paints all those swimming  
pools?

JULES

Hockney. David *Hockney*.

DENNIS

Right. We can't all be Hockneys.  
(sexily)  
Or Jacobsons. Some of us have  
other gifts.

He kisses her. She fights his ardor, irritated that he doesn't  
know a Hackney from Hockney. But his growing erection brings her  
back to his physical charms.

JULES

You're terrible.

DENNIS

It's your fault. You and your  
perfect body.

Jules gives him a quick kiss and breaks away. She grabs her  
coat.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

Come by the park tomorrow. We got  
a game in the late afternoon.

JULES

I don't know. I'll try.

DENNIS

Well... we'll be thinking of you.

Jules looks back to see Dennis saluting her, his erection at  
full salute as well. She smiles. His joy is contagious. If only  
it weren't.

DENNIS (PRE-LAP) (CONT'D)

So what do you think?

INT. JULES'S AND DENNIS'S APARTMENT - DAY (1995)

**Ten years later.**

Jules stops packing Rorie's lunchbox and looks up. Dennis is in  
the doorway looking stiff and uncomfortable in a new pair of  
slacks, dress shirt and sportscoat. He's nervous but upbeat.

JULES

(relieved)  
Fantastic.

DENNIS  
Not too much?

JULES  
I think you look great.

DENNIS  
It's weird, going out and buying  
clothes for, like, one interview.

JULES  
You'll get a lot of use out of  
them. You can wear them to work.  
You'll have to get a whole new  
wardrobe.

DENNIS  
You don't think I'm too  
overdressed? Maybe I should just  
wear jeans. Except I don't have  
any that don't have holes in  
them.

JULES  
I think you look really nice.  
Very professional.

DENNIS  
As long as I don't look  
desperate.

JULES  
You don't. Because you're not.  
It's just an interview. If it  
isn't this one, it'll be the next  
one.

Dennis looks at her.

DENNIS  
What's that supposed to mean?

JULES  
Nothing. I'm just trying to help  
you not be so nervous.

DENNIS  
I wasn't.

JULES  
Great. Cause you shouldn't be.  
You're gonna be great.

DENNIS  
I know. I *am*. This job has my  
name on it, you know?



JULES

I do know.

DENNIS

Too many things about it are just so right. I mean, the clinic's on the west side, right off the C; I'm great with sonographic scanners, and the fact that they're looking for someone who's had experience with obstetric and gynecologic ultrasounds --

JULES

(for the 100th time)

It really does sound perfect.

DENNIS

Plus they said the schedule was flexible, which means I can still take Rorie to the park so we won't have to hire someone to come in eight hours a day and basically pay them what I'd be earning which would make my going back to work seem pretty pointless.

(then)

Shoes or sneakers?

JULES

Shoes.

DENNIS

You sure? Sneakers might say I don't care that much, might be a little cooler.

JULES

I like the shoes.

DENNIS

Shoes it is.

He slips them on and ties them.

JULES

They'd be lucky to have you, Dennis. Really. The past is... past. Just keep breathing and be yourself.

(then)

You look great.

DENNIS

I'm gonna nail this fucker.

RORIE'S VOICE  
You said the 'F' word.

They turn and see Rorie at the door.

JULES  
Call me.  
(to Rorie)  
C'mon, don't be a wisenheimer.  
Kiss daddy and wish him good-  
luck.

Rorie runs to Dennis who picks her up and hugs her. She thrusts a baggie of colored cereal in his face.

DENNIS  
Yum! A snack for the ride home?

RORIE  
No silly! Lucky Charms! You put  
'em under your pillow so the  
leprechaun will find 'em and your  
wish comes true.

Jules and Dennis exchange a smile. They have one cute leprachaun of their own.

DENNIS  
Tell you what-- you go do it for  
me. That way I won't forget and  
eat them by accident.

Dennis buries his head in her neck as if he's eating her, she laughs and squirms hysterically. Jules watches, moved by what a loving dad he is.

JONAH (PRE-LAP)  
I can't do this.

\*  
\*

INT. UPPER EAST SIDE CONDO - DAY

\*

Jules looks around at a vacant two bedroom apartment as Jonah paces nervously.

\*  
\*

JONAH  
It's too small. There's no place  
to go if we want to escape --

\*  
\*  
\*

JULES  
You haven't even moved in  
together and you're already  
looking for an emergency exit.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

JONAH  
I know, I know. Oh, God...

\*  
\*

JULES  
It's beautiful, Jonah. You can  
almost see the river.

JONAH  
It's only got one bathroom.

JULES  
It's New York City. Just be happy  
it's not in the kitchen.

JONAH  
I can't live with someone and  
have only one bathroom.

JULES  
Jonah, everybody poops.

Jonah looks out the window, clearly stressed.

JONAH  
(confessing)  
Yesterday we were talking and I  
suddenly realized I can't *stand*  
the sound of his voice.

JULES  
You're panicking.

JONAH  
Or the way he eats. Or brushes  
his teeth. Or does laundry.

JULES  
It's normal to be nervous. It's a  
big change.

JONAH  
I just don't get what was wrong  
with the way things were. We were  
fine.  
(then)  
Well, I was anyway.

JULES  
Were you?

Jonah looks away. She knows him too well.

JULES (CONT'D)  
Look, everything new is a risk.  
But if you don't take that risk,  
you're just passing time  
repeating yourself. And that's a  
waste.  
(then)  
Do it, Jonah. Let someone in.

JONAH  
It's not that easy for me, Jules.

JULES  
It's not that easy for anyone.  
(then)  
Being with someone is an act of  
faith. You just cross your  
fingers and move forward.

ASH (PRE-LAP)  
So when are we gonna meet him?

INT. CAFE LA FORTUNA - DAY (1985)

**Ten years earlier.**

An old Italian coffee shop on the Upper West Side, with an outdoor garden, opera music and the city's best cannolis. Ash and Ethan sit at the counter as Jules works behind it, busily making espressos, foaming milk for cappuccinos, etc. --

ETHAN  
What's wrong with him? Is he  
married?

JULES  
No.

ETHAN  
Deformed?

ASH  
Ethan...

ETHAN  
Republican?

JULES  
Jesus! He's a... fuck-buddy,  
okay? Sorry to be so crude, but  
that's all he is.

Ethan nods. We're not sure if he's jealous or relieved.

ASH  
No one cares, Jules. It's just  
you've been seeing him for like  
three months which surpasses the  
official fuck-buddy time limit.

JULES  
What are you talking about?

ASH

It's impossible to allow someone access to your vagina for three consecutive months without developing some feelings for them.

JULES

Look, he's a very nice guy -- but we have zero in common. He is a lab technician, okay? The guy who squirts jelly on your belly and takes x-rays. Not exactly Proust, if you know what I mean.

ASH

I've never read Proust.

ETHAN

Me either.

JULES

Okay, neither have I. But the point is, we *could*.

ETHAN

So he's blind?

ASH

Ethan!

ETHAN

Hey -- he's part of your life, Jules. For however long. Since when do we keep secrets from each other?

Jules exchanges a furtive glance at Ash, who looks away sheepishly. If only Ethan knew.

ASH

Bring him for dinner next week when we're celebrating Ethan's first pay check.

ETHAN

Yeah. I've never met a bonafide Fuck-buddy before.

JULES

Look, when you bring someone home to meet the family, you're saying this guy is somebody special. And he's just... not.

(then)

I know I sound like a big fat snob, but I think I can do better, okay?

(MORE)

JULES (CONT'D)

I want someone who wants to do something important with his life. Right?

ASH

I'm playing a mermaid for one week outside the New York aquarium.

JULES

You're being paid to *act*.  
(to Ethan)  
And *you* just got a job on a network television show.

ETHAN

It's an animated piece of shit, Jules. Have you seen it?

JULES

The point is, you're going somewhere. And so am I. Okay, I'm not getting there as fast as you two, clearly, but I'm aspiring. And frankly, I don't want to be with someone who isn't. I'm not going to be steaming cappuccinos forever.

A BOY'S VOICE (PRE-LAP)

I am the *ANGEL OF DEATH*.

INT. CAMP "THEATER" - NIGHT (1974)

**Ten years earlier.**

A BRAWNY TEENAGED BOY, 13, in swim trunks, addresses JULES, who sits in a sandbox, in the center of a makeshift stage in the camp dining room, made up like an old WOMAN (in Edward Albee's "THE SANDBOX). As she buries herself in sand, she looks at the "angel," and with impeccable comic timing, waits just long enough before delivering her next line:

JULES

(as Grandma)

Gee, if I had known you were going to look like that, I woulda' croaked years ago.

The audience howls. Jules waits for the wave of laughter to subside, then winks at the Angel seductively.

JULES (CONT'D)

So, you got a name, handsome?

TEENAGED BOY

Umm... Angel... of Death?

JULES  
 (as Grandma)  
 Angel. Nice. By the way, you're  
 doing very well.

Shrieks of laughter from the audience.

ANGLE ON: Jonah, Ash, Ethan, Cathy and Goodman in the center of  
 the audience, laughing, eating her up.

JULES (CONT'D)  
 (as Grandma)  
 I mean it.  
 (like a talent agent)  
 You've got "a *quality*."

The room erupts at Jules's "show-biz agent." Suddenly, the  
 "Angel" places his hand on Jules's head. Her breathing becomes  
 increasingly more labored as she struggles to speak.

JULES (CONT'D)  
 I'm telling you, Angel. You've  
 got a future ahead of you.

The audience's guffaws subside as they watch Jules weaken,  
 suddenly aware that this is more than just a comedy. Jules can  
 feel them in the palm of her hand. She turns back to the Angel  
 and says with heartbreaking simplicity --

JULES (CONT'D)  
 I had a future once, Angel.  
 (lost)  
 I just can't recall what I did  
 with it.

She closes her eyes as the Angel lifts her up and carries her  
 offstage. The audience sits in silence, moved, her words  
 resonating. As the lights go down, they start to applaud. Jonah,  
 Ash, Ethan, Cathy and Goodman join the others, chanting and  
 stamping: "Jules, Jules, Jules!" As she steps forward for her  
 bow, Jules glances at her circle of talented friends, the only  
 opinions that truly matter. She beams when she sees their  
 exuberant faces, especially Goodman's, who nods and gives her a  
 thumbs up. Elated, she looks up at the lights, her future writ  
 large: Jules Jacobson -- actress.

MALE VOICE (PRE-LAP)  
 What about your tits?

INT. ACTING STUDIO - DAY (1984)

**Ten years later.**

Dingy and shabby, as most of these places are - empty except for  
 a few pieces of rehearsal furniture.

The CLASS, mostly in their 20s, sit in rapt silence like scientists observing a potential cure for cancer as Jules stands in front of them pretending to take a shower. She washes her armpits with an imaginary bar of soap, self-conscious, feeling thirty pairs of eyes on her, boring into her, judging her. As she rubs the "bar of soap" on her stomach, a sonorous male voice booms out:

MALE VOICE (O.S.)  
Under your tits. Your nipples.

The loud and imperious voice belongs to MICHAEL HOWARD, 50's, acting coach extraordinaire. Clocking in at 5'3," he embodies a classic Napoleonic complex.

MICHAEL HOWARD  
You do know where your nipples are, don't you?

Jules, embarrassed, can feel her face turning red. She dutifully rubs the imaginary bar of soap over her nipples as she glances at Ash, also in the class and sitting in the front row, her face pained by her friend's humiliation.

MICHAEL HOWARD (CONT'D)  
Don't look at Ms. Wolf. She can't help you. You're the one in the shower.  
(then)  
Feel the water on your face?

Jules closes her eyes and lifts her head to the imaginary spigot. She feels like an idiot.

MICHAEL HOWARD (CONT'D)  
Make it hotter. Feel it sting all over your body.

Jules tries. She can't imagine how she must look.

MICHAEL HOWARD (CONT'D)  
Now take the soap and wash your asshole, your pussy...

Ash turns around and shoots Michael a look.

MICHAEL HOWARD (CONT'D)  
(unfazed, amused)  
Oh, excuse me. Your *vagina*.

Jules tenses as Michael moves closer --

MICHAEL HOWARD (CONT'D)  
Please tell me you *do* wash your private parts on occasion?



Jules, unable to bear the ridicule and humiliation, rescues herself by "going for the joke," broadly miming scrubbing her butt. The class erupts in laughter. Finally Jules can relax, having won their approval.

MICHAEL HOWARD (CONT'D)  
 (to the class)  
 You think she's funny? Do you? I don't. I think she's sad.

A current of mortification shoots up Jules's spine.

MICHAEL HOWARD (CONT'D)  
 (pontificating grandly)  
 You want to be actors? Why? To become stars? Or to hold a mirror up to nature? To show what it means to be *human*. That's what this exercise is about. To be willing, to be brave enough to be *private in public* -- to risk revealing your own humanity.

Jules swallows hard, fidgeting uncomfortably in front of the class.

MICHAEL HOWARD (CONT'D)  
 The audience *pays* you to show them who they are *inside* because most of them are too busy or frightened to look. But if you walk on stage, looking for *their* approval -- you're cheating them. You're not *acting*. You're *begging for attention*.  
 (directly to Jules)  
 You, Ms. Jacobson, are a beggar. You don't want to be seen... because you're ashamed of yourself, of your body, of who you are inside. You just want to be liked. You're an approval junkie. And that to me is sad.

THE CAMERA PUSHES IN on Jules, fighting tears.

JULES'S VOICE  
 You're an approval junkie.

INT. THERAPIST'S OFFICE - DAY (1995)

**Ten years later.**

CLOSE ON Jules.

JULES

You care too much about what others think of you.

PULL BACK TO SEE Jules is now a SHRINK, and a modestly successful one judging by her less than spacious office. Her patient, SHAUNA SAMSON, 40's, sits across from her, listening patiently.

JULES (CONT'D)

It's what you think that matters. You need to find your own voice and trust it.

SHAUNA

I'm leaving you.

Jules is taken completely by surprise.

JULES

I'm sorry?

SHAUNA

I don't think talk therapy is all that effective. For me, at least. I think it's time to try something else.

A beat. Jules is hurt, but tries not to let it show. Then, of course, there's the financial loss--

JULES

Well, I think it's interesting that you want to leave just when you're starting to understand the underlying issues --

SHAUNA

What good is understanding *why* you're miserable if you're still miserable? Understanding's like a booby prize.

JULES

I don't agree, Shauna. I've seen tangible behavioral improvement in you. You've been so much more confident and optimistic these past few weeks --

SHAUNA

I'm taking *Prozac*.

Jules looks at her, taken aback.

SHAUNA (CONT'D)

My doctor prescribed it for me.

JULES  
 (remaining professional)  
 Okay... I wish you had told me.  
 (then)  
 And you obviously think it's  
 helping?

SHAUNA  
 Well, you noticed the difference,  
 so... yeah.  
 (then)  
 It gives you confidence, keeps  
 you from bottoming out, you know?  
 Like if I weren't on it, I don't  
 think I'd have the guts to leave  
 you.

Jules hides her feelings of impotence and defeat with a calm steady voice.

JULES  
 Look, why don't you take a week  
 and think about it. Then on  
 Tuesday, if you still feel like  
 taking a break, I won't charge  
 you for the session.

SHAUNA  
 That's nice of you, but I don't  
 need to think about it, actually.  
 (searching her purse)  
 Oh shit. Listen, I forgot my  
 checkbook again. It's all right  
 if I send it to you?

JULES  
 (smiling)  
 Of course.

Off Jules, hoping her acting is more convincing than it used to be.

INT. LIQUOR STORE - NIGHT

Jules, demoralized from losing yet another client, checks prices on bottles of champagne.

OWNER (O.S)  
 Can I help you?

Jules turns and shows the grizzled store OWNER a bottle she's holding.

JULES  
 Is this good?

OWNER  
Good for what?

JULES  
A celebration. New job.

OWNER  
Is it paying six figures?

JULES  
No.

OWNER  
Good enough.

Resigned, she hands the bottle to the store owner -- if only "good enough" were good enough.

A WOMAN'S VOICE  
Julie Jacobson?

Jules turns to see a very stylish and attractive WOMAN, late 30's, immaculately coiffed and svelte.

WOMAN  
You don't recognize me? Maybe if I were mixing a couple of Vodka and Tangs?

Jules tenses at the sudden realization that it's CATHY KIPLINGER; a ghost that's haunted her for years.

JULES  
(awkwardly)  
Oh my God. Cathy. I didn't...  
wow. You look great.

CATHY  
(coldly)  
Thank you. I guess I'm just  
blessed with good genes.

She notices Jules glancing at her chest.

CATHY (CONT'D)  
Oh, I trimmed those mailbags down when I was dancing with Paul Taylor's company. Didn't make the big difference I was hoping for though. I'm in finance now, but I don't miss them, although he might.

She indicates a very good-looking guy, expensive business suit, obviously uber-successful.

CATHY (CONT'D)  
 (off his look)  
 My big tits.

He laughs, rolls his eyes.

CATHY (CONT'D)  
 This is Julie Jacobson. We were  
 at camp together.  
 (pointedly)  
 She was part of that group.

HANDSOME GUY  
 Huh.

Jules's discomfort is growing at a rapid rate.

CATHY  
 So you and Ash are still best  
 buds.

JULES  
 (taken aback)  
 I don't know about that. We still  
 speak occasionally.

CATHY  
 According to Ethan it's more than  
 occasionally.  
 (off Jules's surprise)  
 He calls me every now and then.

Jules looks at her, shocked by this little piece of information.

CATHY (CONT'D)  
 It's been a few years, but... at  
 least one of you had the decency  
 to care.

JULES  
 (guilt-ridden)  
 It was a very complicated time.

CATHY  
 Bullshit. But then it must be  
 very hard to see clearly with  
 your lips glued to Ash's ass.

JULES  
 I'm sorry you feel that way.

CATHY  
 No, you're not. You don't give a  
 shit how I feel.

Jules knows it's pointless to protest.

CATHY (CONT'D)  
So no one's ever heard from  
Goodman?

JULES  
(awkwardly)  
I don't think so, no.

CATHY  
(not buying it)  
Amazing, huh? He just  
disappeared. No body found, he's  
never made contact with anyone...  
not even his nearest and dearest.

JULES  
I guess not.

CATHY  
Hmm. Well... doesn't mean he  
won't, does it? I know you were  
all goo-goo over him. Maybe he'll  
show up one day and carry you off  
into the sunset. Or maybe he'll  
just fuck up your life like he  
did mine.

HANDSOME GUY  
You ready, hon?

CATHY  
Yeah, let's get outta here.

Jules sees he's just purchased a bottle of Crystal.

CATHY (CONT'D)  
(rubbing it in)  
We're celebrating my big  
promotion. First woman Senior  
V.P. at Cantor-Fitzgerald.  
Crashing through the proverbial  
glass ceiling.

JULES  
(genuinely impressed)  
Wow, doesn't sound like you're  
too fucked up to me.

CATHY  
(with deep disdain)  
You never did understand, did  
you? Or maybe you'll just never  
have the guts to think for  
yourself.

Cathy takes her husband's arm and leaves. Off Jules, overwhelmed  
by guilt and self-loathing.

EXT. JULES'S APARTMENT - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Jules, apprehensive, stands outside her apartment door, bottle of champagne in hand. She takes a breath and enters --

INT. JULES'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

She sees Rorie on her bed, coloring and singing along with her Panasonic discman. There's a partially eaten slice of Pizza left in the box also on her bed. Jules gives her a hug.

JULES

Bite?

Rorie offers her slice to Jules, who takes a bite.

JULES (CONT'D)

Yum. Pepperoni.

RORIE

Daddy said I could stay up and watch TV till you came home. He has a headache.

Jules can see Dennis sprawled on the bed, his new clothes scattered on the floor.

JULES

Ten minutes and then wash up, okay?

She gets up and enters the --

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

-- and closes the door. She sees a bottle of vodka on the floor. Not a good sign. Dennis stirs.

JULES (CONT'D)

I'm guessing it didn't go so well.

DENNIS

It was a fucking disaster.

JULES

What happened?

DENNIS

She asked me why I left my last job and what I'd been doing in the interim.

JULES

Well, you thought that would probably come up. You were prepared.

DENNIS

It was the *first* thing that came up. The *only* thing that came up. I went in, I sat down. I looked like a fucking geek all dressed up like I'm going to the prom instead of an interview for some jerkoff job that doesn't even require a college degree.

JULES

It requires extensive training which you --

DENNIS

Stop, okay? Stop with the fucking patronizing cheerleader shit! Just fucking stop.

JULES

Sorry.

DENNIS

She takes one look at my resume, sees the huge gap in my employment record, how could she not, and asks me why I left MedCare and what I'd been doing? I told her I left because I wanted to take some time off to be with my daughter while my wife worked. She asked me who my boss was when I was there, if it was Karen Wallace, whom she knows very well, she told me, basically letting me know that she'd call Karen and find out what happened so I might as well just tell her, which I then proceeded to do.

He goes out into the

KITCHEN

-- to get some ice. Jules follows.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

I told her about what happened, the reason I was fired --

JULES

(to Rorie)

Okay. Wash up now, sweetie. Go.

RORIE

Five more minutes!



JULES  
 (losing it)  
 Go. Now.

Rorie puts the discman down and scurries into the bathroom.

DENNIS  
 You should've seen her face. It  
 was like a wave of revulsion  
 washed over her. You would've  
 thought I killed a baby and  
 wanted a second chance to do it  
 again.

JULES  
 (delicately)  
 What did she say?

DENNIS  
 She said thank you for coming in.  
 And for being so honest.

He pours himself another drink.

JULES  
 I think it's great you went in.

Dennis rolls his eyes.

JULES (CONT'D)  
 I do. You got back out there  
 which is a huge accomplishment  
 and I think you should feel good  
 about that.

DENNIS  
 Is that how you talk to your  
 patients? Like they're fucking  
 twelve years old? It's like I'm  
 some disabled child you're  
 helping get through the day.

JULES  
 That's not how I feel.

DENNIS  
 Well that's how it sounds. And I  
 fucking hate it.

He stops and closes his eyes in deep despair.

DENNIS (CONT'D)  
 I never should've married you.  
 You should've trusted your  
 instincts.

He crosses into the bedroom and closes the door. Jules goes  
 over to the bottle of vodka, and pours herself a glass.

JULES (PRE-LAP)  
Can I have another?

INT. MARVIN GARDENS RESTAURANT - NIGHT (1985)

**Ten years earlier.**

Jules guzzles the rest of her vodka and hands it to a WAITER as she sits with Ethan, Ash and Jonah at a table in a trendy upper west side restaurant. Jonah, now 26, is still a beauty, even though his golden locks are now shorn and he's dressed more conservatively than we would have guessed.

ASH  
Slow down, Jules. It's going to be fine.

JULES  
(a nervous wreck)  
I should never have invited him. It was a mistake. Seriously.

JONAH  
Relax. We're not going to eat him alive.

JULES  
It isn't fair to *him*. It sends the wrong message.  
(then)  
Oh God, he's here. Shit. I was afraid he'd wear that.

Dennis approaches in casual attire, which for him is a tee, crew neck sweater and clean jeans.

JULES (CONT'D)  
Hey, you made it.

DENNIS  
Sorry I'm late. I was like glued to the tv.  
(excited)  
Gooden just shut-out the Phillies with thirteen, count 'em -- *thirteen* strikeouts! With pitching like that the Mets could really go all the way. "Ya gotta believe," right?

They look at him like deer in headlights. Baseball? What's that? Off Jules, in agony. TIME CUT:

CLOSE ON a bottle of VEUVE CLICQUOT being poured, to a rowdy round of AD LIBBED "congratulations" --

PULL BACK to see Ethan pouring glasses all around. Everyone's laughing, enjoying a raucous celebration, except for Jules, who looks ill at ease, hoping Dennis makes a good impression.

JULES

Well, here goes your first week's salary!

ETHAN

Fuck it.

(to a passing waiter)

Another bottle, please. Veuve Clicquot.

DENNIS

That is very cool, Ethan. Very generous.

ETHAN

Thank you, Dennis. It's nice to finally meet ya... buddy.

(toasting)

It's not the champagne you get drunk on but the friends you get drunk with.

Everybody clinks and AD LIBS: *"Here! Here! To us..."* etc.

DENNIS

I can't believe you guys have all stayed friends for so long. I mean, I went to boy scout camp and I can't remember a single name. Then again, no one at Camp Neyati exactly stood out -- except maybe for one kid who could burp for ten straight minutes without barfing.

The group laughs. Jules looks around nervously trying to gauge their reaction to Dennis and suddenly seeing him through what she imagines to be their judgemental eyes.

JONAH

Ten straight minutes? And you forgot his name? How the great are soon forgotten!

DENNIS

(suddenly remembering)

Chris Gunther. That was his name!

(to Jules)

Like that guy you keep bugging me to read... Gunther Grass?

Jules, mortified, helps herself to another drink, embarrassed by how she knows Dennis must be coming across.

ASH

Forget it, Dennis. Unless you're jonesing for a six-hundred page book about a German child with an unnatural attachment to a toy drum and a voice that shatters glass in pre-war Germany --

DENNIS

Whoa. I guess I'll miss it -- unless Ethan makes it into an animated movie.

Everybody laughs. Jules stiffens at what she thinks is their polite response. She's in hell.

JONAH

So Dennis, Jules says you're an ultrasound technician.

DENNIS

I am.

JONAH

That sounds pretty cool. How'd you get into that?

DENNIS

I just sort of fell into it, actually. After college I didn't really know what I wanted to do, and I saw this ad on the subway about becoming a lab technician and it seemed like something I could be good at.

JULES

Geez, Dennis, you make it sound like you flipped a coin. You must've given it a little more thought than that.

DENNIS

Not really.

ASH

(to the rescue)

It must be pretty interesting, getting to see inside people, what's happening under the surface.

DENNIS

It is. There's a whole world in there most of us know nothing about.

JULES

Dennis is the go-to guy in the clinic for obstetric and gynecological ultrasounds.

DENNIS

Actually, there are four of us and we rotate. That way we can trade shifts if we need to.

Jules pours herself yet another glass of champagne.

JULES

Well, I bet the other three don't have your hands, and I can attest from personal experience --

(to the others)

-- he knows exactly what to do with them.

ASH

(warningly)

Jules --

JONAH

(to Dennis)

Do you like it?

DENNIS

I do, actually. The other "techies" are great, we've got our own baseball league, and the doctors are cool. And it's in Chinatown surrounded by these amazing vendors. I like to cook so sometimes on my way home I pick up these really bizarre ingredients like star anise or these twisted roots that look like wizard's hands.

JONAH

It sounds great.

JULES

(changing the subject)

How's your job, Jonah? Ready to give it up yet and go back to the family business?

(to Dennis)

His mother's Susannah Bay?

DENNIS

Oh, right, Jules was telling me what an amazing musician you are. I'd love to hear you play sometime.

JONAH

(to Jules, annoyed)  
I guess she forgot to mention  
that was in a former life.

(brightly, to Dennis)  
Actually, I design tech  
innovations for the disabled.

DENNIS

Really? Cool. Like what?

JONAH

(proud, excited)  
Well, we just got approval for a  
device that allows a paraplegic  
to take a shower on his own and --

JULES

(drunk and on a roll)  
I just can't understand how you  
can walk away from all that  
talent? Your music was like a  
part of you.

JONAH

A part. But not the *only* part.

JULES

You could've been a huge star.  
Like James Taylor huge.  
(to Dennis)  
You should've heard him.

DENNIS

There's more to life than being  
famous, Jules. At least I hope  
so, or the rest of us are  
screwed. Besides, I don't think  
recognition has much to do with  
happiness. Like we say at the  
clinic, "it's what's inside that  
counts."

JULES

Words of Wisdom from an  
Ultrasound Technician.

And the party comes to a crashing halt.

JULES (CONT'D)

(guiltily)  
Sorry. That was supposed to be  
funny.

DENNIS

(calmly)  
Excuse me -- I have to use the  
rest room.

Dennis gets up and leaves the table. There's a tense moment of silence --

JONAH

He's great, Jules. *You're* an asshole, but he's great.

JULES

I know. God, I had no idea I was such a mean drunk.

ASH

He's real, Jules. You could use someone like that in your life.

ETHAN

You know what I think the problem is? He likes you. Maybe you'd like him better if he treated you like shit.

Jules looks at him, then shamed, downs the rest of her drink.

EXT. SPIRIT-IN-THE-WOODS - DAY (1975)

**Ten years earlier.**

As visiting day comes to a close and parents and campers hug each other good-bye, Jules stands apart from the cacophony, staring into the DINING ROOM.

Her eyes are glued on Goodman, whom she spies through the screened window, sitting alone in the deserted hall. She watches him for a beat, then enters.

INT. DINING HALL - CONTINUOUS

She stands in the doorway as Goodman sits alone at a table by the window, his head half-leaning against the screen, lost in thought. After a beat --

JULES

Your parents leave?

GOODMAN

An hour ago. Right after Ash's big show.

JULES

So... what are you doing in here?

GOODMAN

Fuck if I know.

Feeling a point of connection, she moves in closer. They stare out the window at the departing parents.

GOODMAN (CONT'D)  
They should fucking outlaw  
visiting weekend.

JULES  
Really. Except *your* parents seem  
so...

GOODMAN  
Charming? Intelligent? Cosmo-  
fucking-politan?

Jules senses there's something deeper at play. She waits,  
patiently, hoping he'll open up to her.

GOODMAN (CONT'D)  
I showed them my urban planning  
project. My mother smiled, sorta  
confused. She told me it was  
"very nice." My father asked me  
if I'd figured out how to keep  
the buildings from collapsing.

JULES  
I'm sure he didn't mean --

GOODMAN  
He meant it.  
(then)  
Great expectations suck, lemme  
tell ya. Hard to live up to.  
Unless you're Ash.

JULES  
You'll have the last laugh, you  
know. You're gonna be another  
Frank Lloyd Wright. There's not a  
doubt in my mind.

He looks at her, as if he'd never actually seen her.

GOODMAN  
You're funny, Jacobson.

He moves in closer for a better look.

GOODMAN (CONT'D)  
And you made it into the inner  
circle. Not many do.  
(moving in still closer)  
Good for you.

Her breathing quickens, as he leans in, his mouth pressing  
against hers. She instinctively closes her eyes and lets her  
lips part, his tongue hungrily exploring the inside of her  
mouth. She groans. The kiss heats up --



CATHY (O.C.)  
 Goodman? Where the fuck are you?

Goodman stops -- backs away. Then shouts --

GOODMAN  
 Keep your tits on! I was just  
 giving a pep talk to Jacobson.  
 (then firmly)  
 This never happened.

As Goodman saunters out, Jules stands motionless, paralyzed.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - BLEACHER - DAY (1985)

**Ten years later.**

A baseball game's in progress. Dennis is running hard and slides home. His BUDDIES, a diverse group of working class guys, cheer and slap him on the back. RACK FOCUS to see Jules in the bleachers watching him. Dennis grabs a beer from the cooler and looks up and spots her. They lock eyes. He deliberates for a beat, then grabs another beer and makes his way to where she's sitting.

He offers her the beer. She takes it. They drink for a moment in silence.

JULES  
 Nice slide.

DENNIS  
 Thanks.

JULES  
 (after a beat)  
 You haven't returned any of my  
 calls.  
 (off his silence)  
 My friends really liked you. At  
 this point I think it's safe to  
 say they like you a lot better  
 than they do me.  
 (then, plaintively)  
 I am so sorry, Dennis. I was  
 awful to you at dinner. I don't  
 know what came over me, I just --

DENNIS  
 I do.  
 (compassionately)  
 I'm not the right guy for you,  
 Jules. You want this big life,  
 and you deserve it. And you  
 deserve the right guy to go with  
 it and that guy just isn't me.

JULES

Dennis --

DENNIS

Let me finish, Jules. Please.

(after a beat)

I'm... regular, you know? And you're...

JULES

Irregular?

DENNIS

Special. With big dreams. I'm just an ordinary guy, Jules. I'm never going to read Gunter Grass.

She looks at him surprised --

DENNIS (CONT'D)

I looked it up.

(then)

I can't offer you this *extraordinary* life. Just a real one.

(simply)

I've worked really hard for my sanity, and I'm grateful for every day I feel good.

(looking at her)

But I don't know if that's going to be enough for you. I don't think life with me is the life you want. And I don't think you should settle.

Jules swallows hard as she tries to find the words.

JULES

You know what I really want, Dennis? I want to be like you. I want to be able to walk into a room full of strangers and be okay with myself. To know that who I am is good enough.

(fighting back tears)

The thing is... the only time I feel like that is when I'm with you.

(then)

All I know is that "real" is looking pretty "extraordinary" to me right now.

She hands him a small box from her purse. He hesitates, then takes it and opens it up. He can't help but chuckle as he takes out a small bobble-head doll of Dwight Gooden.

JULES (CONT'D)  
 I mean, any guy with 268  
 strikeouts and a 1.53 ERA  
 deserves to be immortalized in  
 plastic, right?

Dennis looks at her, surprised and impressed.

JULES (CONT'D)  
 What? You're not the only one  
 with an encyclopedia.

He squeezes her hand. She leans her head on his shoulder -- and  
 closes her eyes, relieved.

INT. DENNIS AND JULES APARTMENT - BATHROOM - NIGHT (1995)

**Ten years later.**

CLOSE ON: A ravishing cocktail dress, fit for the Oscars. Pull  
 back to see Jules staring at herself in the mirror -- thrilled  
 by her appearance. This is the Jules she once envisioned for  
 herself. She takes a breath and emerges from the bathroom into  
 the --

INT. LIVINGROOM - CONTINUOUS

-- where Dennis is serving Rorie dinner. She tries not to draw  
 attention to herself, and continues to get ready to go.

DENNIS  
 Wow. You look amazing.

RORIE  
 You look like a famous actress,  
 mommy.

JULES  
 But thank God I'm not cause  
 they're all miserable and  
 unhappy.  
 (kissing Rorie)  
 Money doesn't buy you happiness.  
 Remember that. Go wash up.

Rorie exits to the bathroom --

DENNIS  
 (trying to sound casual)  
 That's quite some dress.

JULES  
 (lying)  
 Thanks. I got it at Alice's  
 Underground. It was practically  
 brand new.

She empties her purse, cleaning it out for the evening.

JULES (CONT'D)

I figured if I have to go to this thing, might as well try to get in the spirit. Ash owes me, big time.

DENNIS

I can't believe she still hasn't told Ethan about her brother. That they've lived with this gigantic lie between them all this time.

JULES

(focusing on her purse)  
I know. It's pretty shocking.

Dennis comes up behind her, puts his arms around her waist.

DENNIS

We may have our problems. But at least what we have isn't built on lies.

(then)

I'm going to get better, Jules.

JULES

I know you are. They'll figure it out. Prozac isn't for everyone.

DENNIS

I don't want to lose you.

He kisses her neck. The moment is interrupted by the INTERCOM BUZZING. Jules breaks away to answer it.

JULES

Hello?

ETHAN'S VOICE

Your date has arrived.

JULES

I'll be right down.

Dennis is at the window looking out. He tries to cover just how threatened he is by the whole evening.

DENNIS

A limo. Wow. Beats the subway.

JULES

They're perks he's given. I don't think he really cares about them.

Jules grabs her coat.

DENNIS

Have fun. Of course I know how much you'd rather stay home and play "Legend of The Sword and the Fairy..."

JULES

I would, actually. I'm not looking forward to a night of bloated, self-important people congratulating themselves on how rich and successful they are.

DENNIS

You could've said no.

They lock eyes. She knows their communication is fraught with depths of feeling that neither can acknowledge.

JULES

No, I couldn't, Dennis. Ethan's my *friend*. I can give up one night home for a *friend*.

(then)

I should go. He's waiting.

She gives Dennis a quick kiss then heads for the door.

DENNIS

(with all his heart)

I love you.

JULES

(brightly)

Love you, too. Tell you all about it in the morning!

She exits. Dennis, his face etched with sadness, crosses to the window and watches as Ethan greets Jules affectionately, so happy to see her. As Jules gets into the limo and it pulls away--

PRE-LAP THE SOUND OF A FILM PROJECTOR, circa 1974.

JULES (PRE-LAP) (CONT'D)

Oh my God, Ethan. It's amazing.

INT. SPIRIT-IN-THE-WOODS - ANIMATION SHED - NIGHT (1974)

**Twenty years earlier.**

Jules and Ethan watch as a crude animated film, a Simpsons-like precursor to what will one day become "Figland," is projected onto a makeshift screen -- a sheet hanging on the wall.

They watch the ending of Ethan's animated short. A puffed-up politician is waving at a podium, as a BAND plays "God Bless America" and balloons drop onto the convention hall.

REVEAL the delegates: actual SHEEP dressed up in silly outfits waving American flags and "baa-ing" their approval. Jules laughs uproariously.

As the credits roll --

JULES  
This could be in a movie theatre  
or on TV right now. Seriously,  
Ethan, it's brilliant.

ETHAN  
(thrilled)  
Thanks.  
(then)  
I had a feeling you'd get it,  
that we shared a certain...  
sensitivity and you might like  
it.

JULES  
I love it.

As the film ends, the projector's reels continue spinning, with Ethan and Jules's silhouetted profiles lit by the projector's light.

ETHAN  
Wow. What do you know? *Jules  
Jacobson loves it.*

Ethan steps forward, presses his body against hers and kisses her. Jules's eyes open wide, caught unawares.

JULES  
Wait, what are you doing?

Feeling his erection, she takes a giant step back. Ethan's embarrassed to have so misread the signs.

JULES (CONT'D)  
I'm sorry. I just --

ETHAN  
No. My mistake. Forget it.  
Really.

He shuts off the projector, turns on the lights --

JULES  
I feel terrible.

ETHAN  
(covering)  
You have nothing to feel terrible  
about, Jules.

(MORE)

ETHAN (CONT'D)

I think I'll find a way not to  
commit suicide because you didn't  
want to make out with me.  
Seriously. It's not a big deal.

(opening the door)

We should go.

EXT. CAMPGROUNDS - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

They trudge back up the hill in an awkward silence.

ETHAN

Look, seriously -- I don't want  
this to come between us. People  
have been rejected by other  
people since the dawn of time.  
We're just riding the wave of  
history.

JULES

I've never rejected anyone before  
in my life.

(then)

Although I've never accepted  
anyone before, either. What I  
mean is, it's never come up.

And the unintentional double entendre lays there between them as  
they continue walking. Ethan stops.

ETHAN

Maybe the reason you don't want  
to do this with me isn't even  
because of me.

JULES

What do you mean?

ETHAN

You say you haven't rejected or  
accepted anyone before. You are  
one hundred per cent  
inexperienced. So maybe you're  
just nervous. Your nervousness  
could be masking your real  
feelings.

Jules looks at him -- his pudgy, flattened face, his arms  
covered with eczema, his body overweight.

JULES

(so no)

Maybe.

ETHAN

(overly worldly)

It happens to girls sometimes.

(MORE)

ETHAN (CONT'D)

(then)

I have a proposition for you.  
*Reconsider.* Spend more time with  
 me and let's see what happens.

She looks at his eyes, his ardent feelings for her so in the open. She doubts his theory, but likes him too much to close the door.

JULES

All right. Sure. Why not?

ETHAN

(beyond thrilled)

Excellent. To be continued.

As she watches Ethan turn and disappear down the hill --

ETHAN (PRE-LAP) (CONT'D)

You look sensational, Jules.  
 Really.

INT. LIMO - NIGHT (1995)

**Twenty years later.**

JULES

It's hard *not* to in Givenchy. I  
 can't imagine what this cost.

ETHAN

Ash was adamant. She picked it  
 out before she left for Bali.

JULES

Well, it was very sweet. Of both  
 of you.

Ethan pulls a bottle of VEUVE CLICQUOT out of an ice bucket. Jules looks at it, shakes her head.

ETHAN

Hey, it's a tradition. For  
 special nights.

He pops the cork. Pours two glasses.

JULES

You've gotten a million awards.  
 Why is this one special?

ETHAN

Because *tonight*, I'm spending it  
 with my oldest and dearest  
 friend. No kids, no spouses --  
 just the two of us, like old  
 times.

(MORE)



ETHAN (CONT'D)  
 (toasting her)  
 To us, Jules. Two old friends,  
 sharing our lives together!

He clinks her glass and drinks. Jules looks away, closes her eyes, fighting back tears. Ethan noticing, puts his glass down.

ETHAN (CONT'D)  
 Jules?

She opens her eyes, turns to him.

JULES  
 I don't think Dennis and I are  
 going to make it.

She looks straight ahead, letting the momentousness of what she's said settle. Ethan takes the hand of his beloved friend. She glances down at it, her eyes welling up. Ethan's short, pudgy, *steady* hand -- always there for her -- a branch to hang onto to keep her from going over the falls. As she squeezes his hand with gratitude.

JONAH (PRE-LAP)  
 I'm coming. Robert! Oh God!

INT. ROBERT AND JONAH'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

CLOSE ON: A Keith Haring SAFE SEX painting of two men jerking each other off. PULL BACK to REVEAL: Jonah and Robert lying in bed, in their ultra chic, minimalist apartment -- both visibly spent.

Robert looks over at Jonah and touches his face, as if to make sure he's real -- that this is really happening. Finally, Jonah opens his eyes --

ROBERT  
 Where'd you go?

JONAH  
 To another fucking planet. Jesus.  
 Where did you learn *that*?

ROBERT  
 (grinning mischievously)  
 A little "welcome home" surprise.

Jonah laughs and sinks back into the pillow, more relaxed now than we've ever seen him. He sighs contentedly.

JONAH  
 What?

JONAH (CONT'D)  
 I was just thinking how different  
 everything seems right now.

ROBERT

Huh. Is it sort of a feeling deep  
in your soul, says you were half  
now you're whole?

Jonah stares at Robert in mock horror.

JONAH

Just so you know -- I'm moving  
out the second you start quoting  
The Wizard of Oz.

ROBERT

(ignoring the comment)  
Seriously, why do you think your  
friends are all so happy that you  
found me?

JONAH

You don't exactly suffer from  
self-esteem issues do you?

ROBERT

It's because, they can finally  
stop worrying about your lonely  
ass.

JONAH

They weren't worried about me.

ROBERT

Married people are always worried  
about their single friends.  
(reaching beneath covers)  
But now when they see you, they  
can relax, because they'll know  
you're just as happy as they are.

Jonah looks over at Robert and smiles -- he *is* happy. Happier  
than he's ever been. As he reaches for Robert --

GOODMAN'S VOICE PRE-LAP

Mom and dad must have paid a  
fortune for these.

INT. JFK AIRPORT - CORRIDOR TO CUSTOMS LINE - DAY

Ash, suitcase in tow, nervously follows the signs to CUSTOMS --  
beside her, a charismatic, handsome man, mid-30s, with a beard  
and glasses. He looks admiringly at his Passport and Visa as  
they walk briskly apart from the crowd. They speak in hushed  
tones.

ASH

Will you keep your voice down?

GOODMAN

They're *really* good. How did they even know where to go?

ASH

Dad invested something for someone once. I don't know. He was owed a favor.

GOODMAN

"Raymond Price." I like the name. It suits me, kind of.

ASH

Can we not discuss this now?

GOODMAN

Chill out, Ash. You're acting like a fucking criminal.

ASH

I am a fucking criminal. You're not the only one who'll go to jail if we're caught. You know that, right, Goodman?

GOODMAN

I'm touched, Ash. Really. It's fucking noble of you. And it's Raymond.

They finally reach the entrance to --

INT. US CUSTOMS -- CONTINUOUS

They get in the line for U.S. Citizens, which is short and moving quickly.

ASH

I'm doing this for Mom. You're all she talks about. I couldn't bare the thought of her not seeing you before she...

Their mother's impending death resonates between them, as they move in silence to the front of the line --

GOODMAN

How long? Do they say?

She looks at Goodman, pained, unable to answer.

GOODMAN (CONT'D)

Does Jacobson know? About me coming back?

ASH

No. She doesn't. And neither does Ethan. And you won't be here long enough for either of them to find out.

GOODMAN

You still haven't told him about me?

(in disbelief)

That's fucking impressive, Ash.

CUSTOMS OFFICER (V.O.)

Next in line!

Ash steps up to the Customs Officer who checks her documents, and wordlessly stamps her passport.

CUSTOMS OFFICER

Welcome home, Mrs. Figman.

ASH

Thank you.

Ash passes through, her heart pounding, trying not to look back at Goodman.

CUSTOMS OFFICER

(calling)

Next!

As she waits on the other side, Goodman steps up to the officer and hands him his passport. He tries to smile nonchalantly, but his nerves show. The officer scrutinizes the document, looking at the photo, then at Goodman.

CUSTOMS OFFICER (CONT'D)

Business or pleasure, Mr. Price?

GOODMAN

What?

CUSTOMS OFFICER

Your trip? Was it business or pleasure?

GOODMAN

Pleasure. I... always wanted to see Iceland.

The officer looks closely at Goodman's face, then makes a decision.... handing Goodman back his passport.

CUSTOMS OFFICER

Welcome back, Mr. Price.

Goodman takes the passport and jauntily passes through. He joins a faint-hearted Ash on the other side.

As the two of them continue walking, they pass a BILLBOARD advertising the new season of "FIGLAND." CLOSE ON Wally and his gang sitting around a campfire, oblivious to an ominous shadow approaching. Underneath the cartoon: *"Something big's coming to Figland. Their lives will never be the same."*

END PILOT