

WONDERFALLS

"Pink Flamingos"

TEASER

1 INT. DAD'S CAR/EXT. TYLER HOUSE - DAY

1

Carrying a small stack of mail, DAD exits the house, pauses at the mailbox. Reveal Jaye sitting in a CLASSIC MERCEDES CONVERTIBLE parked in the drive. She watches Dad impatiently. Sticks her head out the passenger window, call:

JAYE

They stop serving breakfast at eleven!

He sifts through the mail as he moves to the car. As he slides into the driver's side:

DAD

Oh. This came for you -- "Can't wait, save the date. Rooster Class of '98."

JAYE

(takes mail from him)

Oh, god. More?

DAD

Maybe it's time you put in that change-of-address with the post office.

JAYE

If I do that these people would know where I live.

DAD

Lots of people live in trailer parks. There's no shame in it.

JAYE

Who said I was ashamed?

DAD

Good. Then there's no reason for you to skip your ten-year reunion.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JAYE

Right. Because it's only been six-and-a-half-years. I don't miss any of these people yet. And I don't think that's a problem time can solve.

He starts backing up, but JERKS the car to a sudden STOP.

DAD

Those sons-a-bitches.

JAYE

I know, huh?

Now she sees what he means: GARBAGE CANS block the driveway.

JAYE (CONT'D)

Oh.

He unbuckles his seat belt, climbs out to start hauling cans:

DAD

We don't leave garbage bins in the middle of the driveway, why do they? You know how much these sanitation jokers make a year?

JAYE

A lot?

DAD

Enough to have a little pride in a job well-done. This is just sloppy. There's no pride here.

JAYE

It is garbage.

Dad drags a garbage can by the passenger window:

DAD

I have to say, Sharon really enjoyed her reunion.

JAYE

Sharon also enjoyed 4-H.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Jaye tosses the envelopes into the garbage can Dad's holding. He gets the hint, continues up the driveway. As he WIPES FRAME... REVEAL A PINK LAWN FLAMINGO standing off the driveway next to Jaye's side of the car.

It ANIMATES and cranes its neck to face Jaye. She startles. Dad reappears at the passenger window, blocking the Flamingo.

DAD

I just hate to see you miss out,
that's all.

JAYE

Yeah. I can wear my smock from the
store. It already has my name
stitched into the vest. I won't
have to wear a sticker.

DAD

Do not denigrate what you do.

JAYE

I sell plastic canoes and
refrigerator magnets.

DAD

(moving off)
It's only temporary.

As he moves away, The Lawn Flamingo nods toward Dad with:

PINK FLAMINGO #1

Get off your ass.

JAYE

(sotto, to Pink Flamingo)
He's fine.
(as Dad drags another by)
You're fine, right?

DAD

(passing, winded)
Just two more to go. I'll manage.

JAYE

(sotto, to Pink Flamingo)
See. He's managing.

Dad heads back for more.

(CONTINUED)

PINK FLAMINGO #1
Get off your ass.

Jaye glares, rolls up the window. As she does, there's MOVEMENT THROUGH THE OPEN DRIVER'S SIDE DOOR. It's OUT-OF-FOCUS, but definitely PINK in color. Jaye senses it, turns. RACK TO REVEAL: FOUR MORE PINK LAWN FLAMINGOS as they crane their necks around the open driver's side door.

PINK FLAMINGO #2
Get off your ass.

She reaches over to shut the driver's side door, but bumps the emergency brake. The car starts to roll. Jaye desperately fumbles with the gear shift and the brake, as:

DAD (O.S.)
There're many ways to measure
success. And you're not the...
Car's rolling. Sweetheart.
Sweetheart? The car's rolling.
The car's --

The Mercedes slides OUT OF FRAME. WE HOLD on a now utterly inanimate Flamingo. There's a sickening O.S. THUMP, then Dad's pained SCREAMS.

DAD (CONT'D)
Oh, God! Ow! Oh, God!

CUT TO BLACK.

END OF TEASER

(CONTINUED)

ACT ONE

2 INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

2

Jaye, MOM and SHARON gather around Dad in a hospital bed. One leg is in a plaster cast, his arm in a morphine drip. Dad looks over his own X-Rays as an annoyed NURSE waits.

JAYE

How many fractures before it's multiple?

DAD

Two.

JAYE

How many do you have?

DAD

Seven.

SHARON

And people say you're an underachiever.

MOM

(to Jaye)

This isn't a criticism --- I'm just curious -- how do you run someone down from the passenger seat?

DAD

(to Nurse, off x-rays)

I don't see the left side view of the tibia. What's Ken doing down there? Developing vacation photos?

Jaye glances anxiously at the Pink Flamingo on a mylar balloon bouquet tethered to a coffee cup. The dialogue bubble exclaims, "GET OFF YOUR ASS!" Jaye does a double take and it now reads, "GET WELL SOON!" Jaye turns the balloon arrangement around so the Pink Flamingo is no longer visible.

SHARON

Maybe she did it on purpose. Could be an attempt at an early inheritance.

MOM

Your sister's not capable of cold-blooded murder. She's never been a planner.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JAYE

It was an accident.

SHARON

Technically it was contributory negligence.

JAYE

I feel really bad. Can't we just pretend this didn't happen?

MOM

That's what the morphine's for.

SHARON

I hear morphine's a constipator.

DAD

(nods)

If you're on a drip we usually give you a stool softener...

(to Nurse)

...which I haven't been given, by the way. And I don't need them charging me for this.

Dad disconnects his blood pressure monitor and gives it a shove toward the door. It rolls a few feet, then stops.

SHARON

Hey. That cart stopped all by itself and didn't have to hit anybody to do it.

Jaye notices Dad shifting uncomfortably.

JAYE

(off leg)

Is this supposed to be elevated?

Jaye gathers up extra pillows, but Dad waves her off.

DAD

It's fine. Honey --

(snapping)

Don't touch it! Leave it alone!

A stunned and hurt Jaye backs off.

MOM

That's the pain talking. Do you want more narcotics?

(CONTINUED)

DAD
What I want is a pudding parfait
from the cafeteria.

JAYE
I'll get it.

But the Nurse is anxious to get out of there.

NURSE
Let me.

DAD
(to Nurse)
Don't go running off before I get a
look at that blood panel.
(but she's gone)
Damn.

MOM
Well, I guess we'll leave you in
good hands.
(kisses him)
I'll stop by later with some clean
underwear.

Sharon follows her out the door.

SHARON
Bye, Dad.

Dad waves goodbye, but is more concerned with his chart.
Jaye doesn't move.

JAYE
Can I stay? We could still have
breakfast. I can go get waffles.

DAD
I'm having pudding parfait. You
should go to work.

Jaye fidgets, struggling with her guilt.

JAYE
Do you hate me?

DAD
I don't hate you, sweetheart. I
know when you're careless, it's not
because you don't care.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

DAD(CONT'D)

(focuses on x-rays)
These things happen with you.

Off Jaye, stung --

3 EXT. HOSPITAL PARKING LOT - DAY

3

Sharon walks up to her S.U.V., is about to put the key in the driver's door, when: There's the HONK of a car horn, and BETH (PILOT) drives up.

BETH

Hi.

Sharon has a nervous breakdown at the sight of her.

SHARON

What are you doing here?

BETH

The last thing you said before you hung up was, "My sister killed my father I'm going to the E.R." Are you okay?

SHARON

Ohmygod. I'm so sorry. He's fine. I mean, he's in pain, but he's fine. It's just a broken leg.

BETH

Does that mean we're still on for tonight?

SHARON

Absolutely. Wouldn't miss it. Drive away.

BETH

What?

SHARON

(starting to panic)
Drive away. Drive away.

Beth doesn't have time to respond as --

MOM (O.S.)

Sharon!

Mom walks briskly toward them, waving a flier.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MOM (CONT'D)

I saw this on my way out. It's an
in-patient Smoking Cessation
Clinic. I thought it could be fun.
(already been eyeing Beth)
Hello, I'm Karen Tyler. Sharon's
mother.

BETH

Hi, I'm Beth.

SHARON

I don't know her.

MOM

I thought you two were talking.

SHARON

What I said was I didn't know I'd
see her here. This is Beth.

MOM

I heard. How do you know each other?

Beth looks to Sharon, allows her to do all the talking.

SHARON

We, uh... We...

JAYE (O.S.)

Carpool.
(now joining them)
They carpool together.

Sharon shoots her sister a grateful look.

MOM

Carpool?
(suspicious)
Have you gone Green?

JAYE

I think she's a closet
environmentalist.

SHARON

I'd love to have this conversation
another time.

MOM

(to Beth)
It was nice of you to drive Sharon.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MOM(CONT'D)

I'm sure she was in a state. She has anxieties.

BETH

Anything for Sharon.

Sharon waits for Mom to leave. Mom waits for Sharon to leave. Jaye gives a sneaky head-nod to Beth's car. Sharon has no option. She gets in. Mom waves as they drive off:

MOM

Have a wonderful day!

With a backward glance, Jaye notes Sharon's parked S.U.V. behind her. She quickly joins Mom in the waving.

MOM (CONT'D)

That Beth seems like a sweet girl.

Bet she has a boyfriend.

(glances at her watch)

Now half the day is gone. I'm never going to get pages off to my editor by noon.

JAYE

Wanna ride?

Mom laughs like that's the cutest thing she's heard all day.

MOM

You don't need anyone else in your car right now. I want you to concentrate on the road. A passenger could distract you.

3A EXT. NIAGARA FALLS - DAY

3A

Beauty shots and Viewmaster-Cam take us to:

4 INT. WONDERFALLS - DAY

4

Jaye pushes into the store. ALEC, the mouth-breathing assistant manager, swoops down from a display of ponchos.

ALEC

You're late.

JAYE

My father had an accident.

(CONTINUED)

ALEC
Your father doesn't work here.

Alec follows Jaye into --

5 INT. WONDERFALLS - MANAGER'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS 5

She grabs her time card and is about to punch in when --

GRETCHEN (O.S.)
Jaye!

JAYE
This isn't happening.

CAMERA ZOOMS IN ON - GRETCHEN SPECK (Pilot), oozing positivity and blonde highlights. She sits at the desk and holds up a "wait one second" finger as she works the phone.

GRETCHEN
I looked over the menu, Brice, and can I just say? Major concerns.

Jaye is frozen next to the time-card machine. Alec stands behind her and stares longingly at Gretchen.

GRETCHEN (CONT'D)
We're following the letter of dietary law. We Jewish people represent the largest minority in our graduating class. I want *brachas* and *hekhshers* on every cracker, crudites and knish. Got me? Fantastic.

She hangs up, shoots a blinding smile at Jaye.

GRETCHEN (CONT'D)
How fun is this?
(to Alec)
Could you excuse us a sec?
(beat)
Leave.

ALEC
Thank you.

He goes. Giddy, Gretchen launches herself out of the chair.

GRETCHEN
Surprise! I'm your new manager.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Jaye's too stunned to respond. Gretchen bursts out laughing.

GRETCHEN (CONT'D)

Can you imagine? Please. No, silly, I'm in town for the six-and-a-half-year reunion.

JAYE

You couldn't wait three-and-a-half more years?

GRETCHEN

I'll be pilgrimaging in Israel by then. And as Senior Class President, there is no reunion without me. Besides, life is grand -- the marriage, the conversion -- I couldn't wait three-and-a-half-years to share that even if I had to. Which I don't. But there's just one problem -- I've got no one to help. The class officers are all so busy with their careers and families. So naturally I thought of you.

JAYE

Time for my break.

Having never let go of her time card, Jaye punches out and beats a path for the exit. As she does:

GRETCHEN

Jaye, you have to help me!

JAYE (O.S.)

No I don't --

GRETCHEN

(following, moving o.s.)
Yes you do --

6 EXT. QUAD - DAY

6

Jaye crosses the quad toward the fountain, Gretchen trailing.

GRETCHEN

Not only is helping with the reunion an honor, it's a responsibility!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JAYE

I'm not the kind of potato salad
you want at your picnic.

GRETCHEN

I've read about how you feel. A
lot of people had a tough time in
high school. Look at this reunion
as a second chance. An opportunity
to be a joiner, to get involved,
and most importantly, to put an end
to the nasty rumors that you live
in a trailer.

JAYE

I do live in a trailer.

GRETCHEN

You're so hilarious. But
seriously, isn't it time to wrestle
those demons to the ground? I'm
sure they're haunting you. Aren't
they haunting you? Hey! A
fountain! I'm making a wish.

JAYE

Please don't.

Gretchen tosses a coin into the fountain.

GRETCHEN

I made a wish and now you have to
help me. Because that's my wish.

JAYE

No, I don't.

GRETCHEN

Yes, you do.

JAYE

No, I don't.

7 INT. THE BARREL - NIGHT

7

Jaye and Gretchen sitting at the bar, their conversation
seamlessly continuous from above.

GRETCHEN

Yes, you do.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JAYE

No, I don't.

GRETCHEN

Yes, you do. I wished it.

JAYE

Stop saying that.

MAHANDRA approaches. She gasps at the sight of this twosome. She heads straight for Jaye.

MAHANDRA

(re: Gretchen)

You stepped in something and dragged it all the way in here for us to smell. Thank you for that.

GRETCHEN

(noticing Mahandra)

Oh my god! I can't believe you two still hang out! Janet, you look fantastic!

MAHANDRA

It's Mahandra.

GRETCHEN

You changed your name.

MAHANDRA

No, I didn't.

GRETCHEN

I changed mine, too!

Gretchen hands Mahandra a business card.

GRETCHEN (CONT'D)

I'm Mrs. Robert Horowitz now.

THE CARD: A glossy picture of Gretchen and her husband, ROBERT. She has a huge smile, him, not so much.

GRETCHEN (CONT'D)

That's our Couple's Card. Amy Grant and Vince Gill have 'em. So do Reese and Ryan. I read about it in "InStyle." Robert owns his own escrow company. Went to Cornell. You'll meet him tomorrow night.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

GRETCHEN(CONT'D)

He's much more Jewish than I am,
mostly 'cause he was born that way.
I'm sort of a Christmas and Easter
Jew.

Mahandra hands the Couple's Card to Jaye, who uses it to
dispose of her gum. Gretchen pulls out a notebook and pen.

GRETCHEN (CONT'D)

So, Jaye, how 'bout I put you down
for "Unstacking Chairs and Tables?"

MAHANDRA

What is she talking about?

JAYE

The Reunion.

Mahandra bursts out laughing. ERIC appears, wiping a glass.

ERIC

I loved high school.

MAHANDRA

'Course you did. Why don't you go
then?

ERIC

I am.

Mahandra and Jaye look at him oddly.

JAYE

To our reunion?

GRETCHEN

He's working the bar.
(they Look at her)
This bar.
(then)
We're having it here.

MAHANDRA

(bristling)
That's the private party tomorrow
night?

Before anyone can react further to this clear attempt to keep
acts three and four stage-bound, Gretchen jumps in with:

(CONTINUED)

GRETCHEN

Okay. I'm gonna sweeten the deal.
You can be "Balloon Filler" and use
the helium tank. You always
enjoyed that sort of thing.

JAYE

I can't help you. My father's in
the hospital. I wouldn't feel
right having so much... fun.

MAHANDRA

Your father's in the hospital?

JAYE

He got run over.

Mahandra puts a supportive hand over Jaye's.

MAHANDRA

I'm sure you didn't mean to.

GRETCHEN

(dog with a bone)
It's going to be beautiful.
Chinese lanterns. A memory lane
with photos. We're even
reproducing the seal from the gym
floor in contact paper.
(pointing)
It's going right over there... or
there...

Lost in thought, Gretchen steps away from the bar with her
party floor plans.

Before Jaye can protest again: FROM THE BAR COMES --

SINGING VOICE (O.S.)

"Celebrate good times, come on!"

Jaye sees: A PLASTIC SINGING TROUT that twitches, grooves and
continues to sing from its perch next to the cash register.
Jaye glares at it, horrified. Eric clocks her reaction --

ERIC

Yeah. Kind of horrible, isn't it?

JAYE

Ohmygod. You hear it, too?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

ERIC

It also does "Islands in the Stream."

Eric takes the plastic trout off the wall and removes the batteries. Jaye tries to recover from the disturbing moment.

GRETCHEN

(returning to bar)

Please. Please, please, please, please, please, please. I need nine balloon arches. If I could do it without you I would. Believe me. Please.

JAYE

(off Gretchen's hectoring)

My cell phone's ringing.

MAHANDRA

You don't have a cell phone.

JAYE

(to Eric)

Can I use your phone?

Eric hands it to her, she moves off. Gretchen calls after:

GRETCHEN

I made a wish!

ON JAYE - The phone is to her ear.

JAYE

Hi. How are you?

INTERCUT WITH:

8 INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

8

Dad is in bed on the phone.

DAD

Fine.

JAYE

So... what time are you checking out? I wanna give you a ride.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAD

I don't need a ride. I'm not checking out tonight.

JAYE

Why? What's wrong?

WIDEN TO REVEAL - THE HOSPITAL ROOM - Dad is in the midst of a poker game with FIVE DOCTORS.

DAD

Nothing. They're holding me overnight for some routine tests. I'll be out tomorrow.
(sotto, to Doctors)
I'm in for five.

There's a BEEP as the call waiting sounds on Eric's phone.

JAYE

Call waiting. Hold on.
(clicking over)
Eric's phone. Who's calling?

WOMAN'S VOICE

His wife.

Jaye glances over at Eric behind the bar. He attempts a "Cocktail"-esque bottle toss, but botches it.

JAYE

His cheating wife? The one who broke his heart?

WOMAN'S VOICE

Who is this?

JAYE

Sorry. Eric can't talk right now on account of where I'm sitting.
(clicks back to Dad)
Want me to stop by the house and pick up that Sounds of the Rainforest Sleep Machine?

DAD

Don't worry about me. I'm fine.

JAYE

At least let me give you a ride home tomorrow.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DAD

Already covered. Sharon's going to do it.

JAYE

Sharon?

DAD

Her car's bigger.

JAYE

Oh.

(beat)

You're not gonna have waffles with her, are you?

Dad notices the PIZZA DELIVERY GUY standing in the doorway.

DAD

We'll talk later. The nurse just brought my dinner.

CLICK. Dad hangs up. Rattled, Jaye moves back to the bar. Absently hands Eric back his cell phone. He notes her distress. (Eric's already exists, Jaye's new line would be a single of her at the bar from Eric's POV.)

ERIC

Everything okay?

JAYE

I think my sister just took my place because I refused to get off my ass.

GRETCHEN

(gathering her things)

You know what? You're not into this. I can tell. It'll be a lot of work, but I'm sure I'll manage.

Gretchen starts for the door. Mahandra picks up a tray of dishes, leans to Jaye:

MAHANDRA

(sotto)

Takes some people long enough to get the hint, doesn't it?

Before Jaye can respond to that:

(CONTINUED)

STUFFED BASS (O.S.)
Get the hint --

Jaye looks to a STUFFED BASS above the plastic singing trout. It has ANIMATED. Flicks its tail and is looking right at her as it says:

STUFFED BASS (CONT'D)
Get off your ass.

Jaye's blood runs cold as the words echo in her ears.

JAYE
(sotto, horrified)
What'd you say?

STUFFED BASS
Get off your --

JAYE
(blurting)
Okay!

Jaye whirls toward the exiting Gretchen who has turned back at that --

JAYE (CONT'D)
(forcing the bile back)
I'd love to help you with the
reunion.

Jaye gives a half glance back to the Stuffed Bass. Mahandra drops the tray of glasses. Off this --

CUT TO BLACK.

END ACT ONE

(CONTINUED)

ACT TWO

9 OMITTED 9

10 INT. JAYE'S TRAILER - DAY 10

A HAND glues a PHOTO OF JAYE onto a NAME TAG which reads "REMEMBER ME? I'M JAYE TYLER! CLUBS: NONE. SPORTS: NONE. HONORS: NONE." Jaye cuts apart a yearbook. Next to her: a sea of craft supplies, a laminating machine and an incredulous Mahandra. As Jaye makes tags:

MAHANDRA

Gretchen Speck is the Antichrist, and you're helping her throw a reunion. You're throwing a reunion with the Antichrist.

JAYE

C'mon. Could be fun. Seeing long missed friends. Ribbing each other about the "old days." It'll be like a beer commercial. You like beer.

MAHANDRA

Have you been huffing puff paint? Because this just isn't like you.

JAYE

(a nerve touched)
Why does everyone keep saying that? What do you mean, "like me?" There is no "like me." I'm not "like" anything. And if I were, it certainly wouldn't be me.

MAHANDRA

Why are you doing this?

JAYE

I don't have a choice, I'm a puppet. The Universe sticks its hand up my butt. If I don't dance, people get hurt.

MAHANDRA

Is this because you tried to kill your father?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JAYE

I don't know. Maybe. Maybe that
is why. Come on. Go with me.
It'll be hilarious. We'll just
goof on everybody.

Mahandra's looking at the stack of R.S.V.P.s.

MAHANDRA

Lucy Simpson. She's going.
Remember her? She's a City
Councilwoman, now.

JAYE

Really?

MAHANDRA

The cocktail waitress and the
retail clerk are gonna goof on The
Honorable Councilwoman. Oh --
(holds out another one)
-- and the Astronaut.

JAYE

Who?!

MAHANDRA

Kent Rylander.

Jaye grabs the R.S.V.P.s, starts rifling through them.

JAYE

This whole early reunion thing has
really thrown off my timetable. I
was counting on those three-and-a-
half-years to maybe invent
something. Become an overnight
success.

(then)

Think people would believe me if I
said I was a spy? That'd explain
why there's no paper trail.

MAHANDRA

Oh, god.

Mahandra has picked up her own name tag. Looks at it. IN
THE YEARBOOK PHOTO her eyes are red from crying. Her stare
is vacant. Her 'fro is out of control.

(CONTINUED)

MAHANDRA (CONT'D)

This was the week Gretchen Speck
put activator in my shampoo.

JAYE

God. You're right.

(a beat)

It was a good look for black
history month.

MAHANDRA

Until it all fell out.

JAYE

She really was horrible to you.

MAHANDRA

(stares at tag, muses)

I'm going.

JAYE

What?

MAHANDRA

I'll go to your little shindig.

JAYE

You will? Great!

(offers list)

Here's the list Gretchen gave me.
You can have "place settings."
Look, she's got "super fun" written
right here in the margin.

MAHANDRA

Oh, no. I've got my own list of
things-to-do. And at the top of
it? Destroy Gretchen Speck. You
may be the Universe's butt puppet,
but I'm its right hand fist of
fate. And tonight -- accounts are
comin' due.

11 INT. TYLER HOUSE - FOYER - DAY

11

The front door swings open, revealing Dad (on crutches) and Sharon. They step into the foyer. Sharon helps navigate him to the couch.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SHARON
(calling)
We're back! Mom?!

DAD
(winces at the volume)
Sharon. She's not here.

As he lowers himself with her help onto the couch:

SHARON
She knew you were coming home this
afternoon, didn't she?

DAD
I didn't see any reason to bother
her. She's been looking forward to
that reunion for... six and a half
years, I suppose. She would've
cancelled if she knew I was coming
home. I don't want that.

SHARON
Wait. Mom's going to Jaye's high
school reunion?

DAD
Your mother was very involved with
Jaye's graduating class. She was
always down at the school, helping
with the paper and the yearbook.
She loves those kids.

SHARON
Evidently. What about your foot.

DAD
What about it?

SHARON
It's supposed to be checked every
forty-five minutes in case it
starts turning blue.

DAD
(arching up)
I can see it from here. It's
connected. I'm fine.
(as he settles in)
Thanks for getting me home, honey.
I appreciate it.

(CONTINUED)

SHARON
(relaxing)
Not a problem. Court was dark
today anyway.
(then)
Alright. Need anything before I
go?

DAD
Wouldn't say no to a soda.

She smiles, moves off to the kitchen. While she's gone, he starts straining forward for the TV remote on the coffee table. Sharon returns with a can of soda. Grabs the remote, hands it to him along with the soda.

DAD (CONT'D)
Thanks, sweetheart.

She kisses him, hefts her bag onto her shoulder.

DAD (CONT'D)
Honey? Could I maybe get some ice
in a glass?
(off can)
Warmish.

A beat. She starts for the kitchen --

DAD (CONT'D)
(calling back)
And maybe a cookie.

Sharon shrugs off her bag without slowing. Dad clicks on the OFF SCREEN TV.

12 INT. THE BARREL - DAY

12

Jaye and Mahandra, dressed to work, enter. The bar's been closed for this private party. Before them, several VOLUNTEERS decorate for the reunion.

MAHANDRA
So how does this work?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JAYE

I'm not sure. I've never actually volunteered for anything before.

A REUNION VOLUNTEER putters past with some folding chairs.

VOLUNTEER

Jaye Tyler! Hi! I had no idea you'd be here! I still laugh every time I think of that hilarious thing you wrote in my yearbook. I'll see ya 'round tonight, okay?

He gives her a "thumbs up" and moves on.

MAHANDRA

Any idea at all?

JAYE

No clue.

Gretchen zooms over, buzzing like a housewife on diet pills.

GRETCHEN

It's the "Two J's!" Janet, can't thank you enough for pitching in.

MAHANDRA

Mahandra.

GRETCHEN

Shalom!

JAYE

Who are these people? I thought you didn't have anyone to help?

GRETCHEN

Brainstorm. I got hold of the marching band list. The response was so overwhelming I had to turn away anything with a spit-valve. Okay, so, two things --

(points to tank)

-- there's your helium. And B, Robert's flying in early tonight, so I'm throwing a little a pre-party bash at our hotel. Just so the posse can meet him before all the craziness starts. But it's strictly A-list, so --

(low, waving her hand)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

GRETCHEN(CONT'D)

None of these people. None of them.

JAYE

(sees no choice)

We'll be there.

GRETCHEN

Great!

Gretchen sashays off. Mahandra watches her go as she absently fills a balloon with helium...

MAHANDRA

Oh, she is gonna pay. She's gonna pay, then she's gonna pay some more. And after she's done paying - she's gonna owe me a check.

JAYE

Just keep the details to yourself, okay? I told you. I can't actively participate in any Gretchen Speck sabotage. There could be consequences.

Mahandra inhales from her balloon. Then:

MAHANDRA

(helium voice)

You suck.

13 INT. TYLER HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

13

Sharon's on the phone in the kitchen: before her some bubbling pots. She's now full-on cooking.

SHARON

(into phone, a whisper)

Hi, it's me.

INTERCUT WITH:

14 INT. BETH'S WORK - DAY

14

A sterile cubicle.

BETH

Sharon? Why are you whispering?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SHARON

You know how we had plans tonight and I said I wouldn't miss them? I have to miss them. My dad's home from the hospital and I got roped into baby-sitting. My family assumes I have no life, so everything gets dumped on me.

BETH

Well, they don't actually know anything about your life, so in a way it's not really their fault.

SHARON

Are you defending them?

BETH

No. I just... I guess I'm disappointed, that's all.

SHARON

I'm sorry. But things are complicated.

BETH

I know. Look, maybe if sometime down the line things get less complicated, you can call me.

SHARON

Are you blowing me off?

BETH

Uh, you called to blow me off.

Sharon lets that sink in. There is some silence. Sharon sees DAD'S BOTTLE OF PERCOCET sitting innocently on the counter. She picks it up.

SHARON

I think things just got less complicated...

15 INT. HOTEL CORRIDOR - NIGHT

15

The door to the suite opens REVEALING Jaye and Mahandra both in formal wear. They smile thinly at Gretchen, glammed and beaming.

(CONTINUED)

GRETCHEN
Hi hi hi! Join, join!

As they enter, Gretchen anxiously eyes the corridor beyond.

GRETCHEN (CONT'D)
(eyes on corridor)
You two look great!

16 INT. HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT

16

Music plays. A table displays food trays. The only thing missing is other guests. Except for one -- Jaye reacts when she sees Mom, dressed to the nines, sipping champagne.

JAYE
Mom!

MOM
(picks lint from Jaye)
You made the "A" list, dear. I'm so proud.

JAYE
What are you doing here?

MOM
Oh, honey. I've been on the "A" list since you were a sophomore.

JAYE
(getting it)
You're going to my reunion. Of course you are. Why wouldn't you? You went to my prom.

MOM
As a chaperone.

As Gretchen pours flutes of bubbly for the new arrivals, Mahandra eyes the emptiness of the suite.

MAHANDRA
So is this it? Where's your posse?

GRETCHEN
Whaddy mean? You are my posse!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Mahandra looks horrified, but covers as Gretchen turns, offering them full glasses.

MAHANDRA

(smiles, takes drink)

Thanks.

GRETCHEN

Sure thing, girlfriend!

Now Mahandra looks more horrified.

JAYE

What about all those girls you used to hang out with in high school?

GRETCHEN

Oh, we don't need them. Mindy Franklin didn't even bother to R.S.V.P. She's a size twelve now, but draw your own conclusions. So, question: do we start the photo albums now, or wait until Robert gets here?

MAHANDRA

(aside to Jaye)

Those are our choices?

GRETCHEN

Oh! You know what? He can look at these any old time he wants to.

She grabs a biggie, plunks down, cracks it open.

GRETCHEN (CONT'D)

Sit, sit.

(as they gather)

Our wedding. Very traditional.

JAYE

Why are those pilgrims carrying you on that folding chair?

MOM

Jaye stop teasing. You saw "Fiddler." Oh, is that Robert?

GRETCHEN

That's my mensch.

(CONTINUED)

MOM
He's very distinguished. Excellent
teeth.

GRETCHEN
Family of orthodontists.

The ROOM PHONE rings.

GRETCHEN (CONT'D)
Oh! Probably him now. 'Scuse me.

Gretchen hands the album over to Jaye as she rises to answer
the phone. Jaye casually flips it forward a few pages to
speed things up. Mahandra leans to Jaye with:

MAHANDRA
I do not want to be in this woman's
posse. Not unless it's the one
that's gonna be hunting her down.

GRETCHEN
(into phone)
Pook! Hi! We were just talking
about you. Are you in the lobby?
(turns away, lowers her
voice)
What? But we discussed this.
You promised. Uh-huh.
(forced cheer)
Okay! Bye.

She hangs up. Goes back to her seat, forcing perkiness.

MOM
Everything okay?

GRETCHEN
Great. He's not coming. So where
were we? Honeymoon already? Okay.
So, Bora Bora. I guess it was a
volcano or something once. Now
it's a resort.
(as cracks start to show)
So here we are having bona fide
Polynesian cuisine. Here we are
spear fishing. And here you can
see Robert doesn't love me.

She makes a single sob noise. Mom is sympathetic.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

MOM

Oh, I'm sure that's not true.

GRETCHEN

No. It is. If he loved me he'd be here right now. He promised. But Robert makes lots of promises. He promised we'd have sex again. But he hasn't touched me in months.

MOM

Well... that happens. Men have patches where they lose interest. Especially career-minded men.

GRETCHEN

He knew how important this night was to me. And he didn't care enough even to make an effort. I've done everything to please him. I changed religions, for godssake! (a simple fact)
I'm not going to heaven now. (and the water-works)
What more does he want?!

Gretchen bolts from the couch, runs into the bathroom crying.

JAYE

Poor bitch.

MOM

Honey, you should go in there.

JAYE

Me?

MOM

Otherwise I'll have to.

MAHANDRA

Your mom's right. Someone's gotta snap her out of this or her destruction's gonna be meaningless.

17 OMITTED

17

18 INT. HOTEL SUITE - BATHROOM - NIGHT

18

Gretchen dabs her eyes, sniffles as Jaye enters.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JAYE

Hey --

GRETCHEN

God. I'm so embarrassed. I promised myself I wouldn't do this in front of friends.

JAYE

Oh, we're not... it's fine.

GRETCHEN

What everyone must think of me!

JAYE

Nobody thinks of you. Badly.

GRETCHEN

(because she does know)

Really? People don't see me as this pathetic blonde who peaked in high school and is so desperate to recapture her past glory that she moved the ten-year-reunion up by three-and-a-half-years?

JAYE

Ummm...

GRETCHEN

I just thought if I could get my mojo back, recapture some of the old magic... then Robert could see me the way I was -- and then he'd love me. Pitiful, huh?

JAYE

No. It's just... Gretchen, you don't seem all that different.

GRETCHEN

(brightening)

Really?

JAYE

Really...

GRETCHEN

You're just trying to make me feel better.

This registers with Jaye -- in fact she is.

(CONTINUED)

JAYE
(genuinely curious)
Is it working?

GRETCHEN
(smiles, actually moved)
Jaye Tyler. Look at you. Getting
my mind off my troubles by taking
my pain and making it about you.

JAYE
It's a gift.

GRETCHEN
It certainly is. And I accept.

Gretchen spontaneously hugs Jaye. Jaye goes all stiff.

JAYE
Oh. Good.

GRETCHEN
(disengaging)
And you're right. I'm not going to
let Robert spoil this night for me,
or for any of the people who've
been looking forward to seeing me!

JAYE
That's the spirit.

GRETCHEN
Rooster Spirit!

A beat. Gretchen drops the phoney cheer for just a moment.

GRETCHEN (CONT'D)
I really wish he was here.

JAYE
(not without kindness)
I know. But let's go party our
asses off, anyway.

Gretchen chokes back the emotion, nods, turns to the mirror,
fixes her face.

GRETCHEN
Just let me do a little damage
control here.

She opens her jewelry box, pulls out a hair pin.

(CONTINUED)

GRETCHEN (CONT'D)
(hands back pin)
Would you mind?

Jaye takes the pin. As Gretchen gathers up her hair for pinning. Jaye suppresses a laugh when she looks at it -- A CERAMIC ROOSTER.

JAYE
It's a chicken.

GRETCHEN
It's my pin from Spirit Club. My
Booster Rooster. You were never
really part of any clubs, were you?

JAYE
No.

As Jaye fastens it, Gretchen meets her look in the reflection. An actual moment of mutual connection. Small smiles.

GRETCHEN
You're a real friend.

While I won't go so far as to say Jaye is moved by this, she does smile, and it's not pained. She's certainly okay with it. Now she looks back to the ROOSTER PIN. Suddenly it flutters its wings, SQUAWKS.

ROOSTER
Destroy Gretchen!

Jaye startles. Gretchen spins back around, a new woman.

GRETCHEN
How do I look?

JAYE
(covering)
Great.

GRETCHEN
Thanks.

And she flounces toward the bathroom door. Jaye dares to look after her, and at the Rooster Pin --

ROOSTER PIN
Destroy her!

(CONTINUED)

WONDERFALLS "PINK FLAMINGOS" 1AHM01 (3rd BLUE) 10/24/03 36.
CONTINUED: (4)

SQUAWK. Off Jaye's apoplectic look...

CUT TO BLACK.

END OF ACT TWO

(CONTINUED)

ACT THREE

19 INT. THE BARREL - NIGHT 19

A HANGING BANNER declares: "WELCOME BACK CLASS OF '98!"
Twenty-somethings cut a rug to 50 Cent's "In Da Club."
CAMERA ROCKETTS TO THE FRONT DOORS where we find a freaked-out
Jaye standing with Mahandra, Mom and Gretchen.

GRETCHEN
(to herself)
I can do this. I can do this.

Which just makes Jaye all the more uncomfortable. Now
there's an O.S. GREETINGS CHEER. Jaye turns to see a group
of REUNION-GOERS moving toward her in a welcoming fashion.

MOM
Look, sweetheart. Aren't those
your friends from English lit?

JAYE
I didn't have any friends in --

The rush of REUNION-GOERS passes Jaye and swarms Mom. They
AD-LIB GREETINGS as they sweep her away.

JAYE (CONT'D)
Oh.

Gretchen eyes the crowd, wills up her inner strength.

GRETCHEN
I faced these people for four long
years without a husband. I can
certainly go solo for a few hours.

JAYE
Or even a half hour. I mean, we
don't have to close the place down
or anything.

Gretchen looks to Jaye, takes her hands. Eye contact.

GRETCHEN
I'd be a puddle on the floor of
that luxury suite if it weren't for
you, Jaye Tyler. Thank you.

Jaye forces a smile, feeling nauseated.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GRETCHEN (CONT'D)

Here goes.

(looks to crowd, to O.S.)

Ohmygod! Cindy! Shalom!

With that, Gretchen pushes off bravely into the crowd. Just as the back of Gretchen's head passes Jaye:

ROOSTER PIN

Destroy Gretchen! Destroy!

JAYE

(spinning to Mahandra)

So regarding the destroying --

MAHANDRA

Spare me the lecture. Gretchen Speck may be your new best friend, but to me she's still the --

JAYE

I'm in. Let the destruction begin. Pig blood shower. Chop her hair off in the ladies' room. Whatever. I mean, we probably shouldn't hurt her physically. At the very least we should avoid scarring. So what exactly did'ya have in mind?

MAHANDRA

Oh, lord.

JAYE

What?

MAHANDRA

Is that really what I sound like?

JAYE

What do you mean?

MAHANDRA

Okay, you can put the mirror away. I get it. That is not the Janet I want to be.

(looks to crowd)

You know what? You're right. This might not actually altogether suck.

(calling to O.S.)

Yo! Judy! What's up?

Mahandra pushes off into the crowd.

(CONTINUED)

Jaye stands alone for a beat, isolated now in what must be done. She moves off. WE HOLD on the entrance as...

...A CREW CUTTED GUY NAMED CHUCK enters. He's nervous, gawky despite his Marine uniform. He looks to the reunion-goers. Makes as if to flee, screws up his courage, squares his shoulders and:

CHUCK
(under his breath)
I can do this. I can do this.

20 INT. THE BARREL - BAR AREA - NIGHT 20

Jaye walks up to the bar, slams down some bills.

JAYE
Vodka. Hemlock chaser.

As Eric pours a Vodka and soda for her, he pushes her money back:

ERIC
This one's free.
(off her happy look)
Your friend Gretchen's getting everybody's first round.

JAYE
(losing the happy)
Oh, Gretchen. She's great. I have to destroy her.

ERIC
That's too bad.

JAYE
Yeah.

Jaye absently glances out to the party. Lost in thought.

ERIC
Do you know all these people?

JAYE
Huh-uh. I know...
(starts pointing)
...that guy. And that guy. And her. And her and her and him. And him. ...and you. Everyone else may as well not exist.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JAYE(CONT'D)

Not that I'd wish death on any of them, it's just... I guess you knew everybody in high school since you love it so much.

ERIC

Actually I didn't know anyone. But I knew their names and how many letters were in their names. It's a borderline autistic thing.

JAYE

How many letters in my name?

ERIC

Nine.

JAYE

Boutros Boutros Ghali?

ERIC

Nineteen.

JAYE

Super cali fragilistic expiali docious?

ERIC

Thirty-four. But people ask me that all the time. So how you gonna destroy your friend?

JAYE

Oh, she's not my friend. But I thought I'd drink this, stumble over and slur something derogatory at her. Maybe make her cry.

(changing gears)

Oh. That reminds me. Your wife called when I was on your phone.

ERIC

Heidi?

JAYE

Uh-huh.

(hate to say it, but)

She kinda sounded like a bitch.

ERIC

What'd she say?

(CONTINUED)

JAYE

She wanted to talk to you but I
said you were servicing me
sexually.

Eric reacts as if Jaye just turned into light.

ERIC

Really?

JAYE

Yeah. Was that inappropriate?

He practically swoons, struck speechless.

ERIC

Huh-uh.

Jaye glances back to the crowd, distracted again by what the
universe and a plastic fowl has demanded of her:

JAYE

Wish I could destroy Heidi instead.
Least I think she'd deserve it.

With that she wanders off with her bottle. Eric watches her
go, smitten. CAMERA ROCKET ZOOMS INTO HIS EYE and it DILATES
in response to his attraction to Jaye.

SMASH CUT TO:

21 INT. TYLER HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT 21

EXTREME CLOSE ON - STOVE BURNER: the gas erupts into flame
beneath a pan.

EXTREME CLOSE ON - MILK IN PAN: tiny bubbles start to form
as the milk is heated.

EXTREME CLOSE ON - PRESCRIPTION PILL BOTTLE: Two percocet
tablets slide out onto the tile surface of the kitchen
counter. A SPOON ENTERS FRAME and flattens the pills into
chalky crumbs.

EXTREME CLOSE ON - BOTTOM OF GLASS: the chalky crumbs hit
bottom. They dance and ricochet off each other and the sides
of the glass.

EXTREME CLOSE ON - RIM OF GLASS: a tidal wave of warm milk
CRASHES DOWN from above.

(CONTINUED)

REVEAL: SHARON taps the spoon on the side of the glass.

Then... QUICK CUTS:

EXTREME CLOSE - A POP-N-FRESH ROLL smacks open.

EXTREME CLOSE - A steaming sheet of hot fresh cinnamon rolls are pulled from the oven.

22 INT. TYLER HOUSE - FOYER - NIGHT 22

Dark. The kitchen door opens, casting light into the room. Sharon ENTERS, her shadow stretching across the floor. She shuts off the kitchen light and ascends the shadowy staircase holding the glass of milk, not unlike Cary Grant in "Suspicion." The milk has a subtle incandescent glow. The tasty cinnamon rolls lie on the tray as well....

23 INT. TYLER HOUSE - DAD'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 23

Dad lays in bed reading "Made In Texas: George W. Bush and the Southern Takeover of American Politics." Sharon pushes the door open and hands him the glass of milk.

DAD
Thanks, sweetheart. My toes blue?

SHARON
No. Goodnight.

DAD
Goodnight.

Sharon pulls the door shut, eyes on the glass the entire time.

24 INT. THE BARREL - BACK ROOM - NIGHT 24

A downtrodden Jaye watches the party from a small window in the door, deep in her own turmoil. Eric appears with vodka and soda bottles. Jaye holds out her cup without saying anything. As he freshens her drink:

ERIC
So how goes the destruction of
Gretchen Speck-Horowitz?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JAYE

You know her whole name?

He holds up several of Gretchen and Robert's "couple cards."

ERIC

These are all over the floor.

JAYE

She'll soon be destroyed. I'm just workin' out a few details.

ERIC

You don't seem like you're really into it.

JAYE

I'm not. But it's expected of me.

ERIC

Oh. Right. I get that. Certain people see you a certain way, these people are all from a particular time in your life, so when you're around them you're compelled to act out psycho dramas that have nothing to do with who you are now.

JAYE

And the chicken in her hair told me to.

(before he can comment)

Gawd! She's just so tragic. She used to tell everybody the girl with muscular dystrophy was a drunk. You know why? Because she thought she was a drunk.

ERIC

So if she's that tragic maybe she'll just destroy herself.

JAYE

Frankly, I think that ship has already sailed.

(then, pain)

God. Oh, god... Pity. I'm having pity for Gretchen Speck.

ERIC

(laughs)

Is that really such a bad thing?

(CONTINUED)

JAYE

It is if I'm supposed to destroy her!

ERIC

So don't destroy her.

JAYE

But it's more than that -- I actually want to help her! And it's making me sick.

ERIC

Than help her.

JAYE

But... the chicken.

ERIC

(with authority)
Defy the chicken.

JAYE

Seriously?

ERIC

Honestly, I'm not quite grasping the poultry reference. But then I didn't go to your high school.

JAYE

So I should just... follow my gut?

ERIC

Without a doubt.

JAYE

What if my gut says I should somehow get her no-good husband here so she can have her perfect, pathetic night?

ERIC

Sounds like a perfect, pathetic solution.

JAYE

(considering the
simplicity of that)
Yeah.
(fueled with resolve)
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3) JAYE(CONT'D)

Screw the chicken! I'm gonna save
that bitch's marriage.

As she moves off on a mission --

25 INT. TYLER HOUSE - FOYER - NIGHT 25

BING-BONG. The DOORBELL CHIMES. Sharon crosses through the room toward the door, but pauses at the stairs. She calls up:

SHARON

Dad?
(louder)
Dad?

26 INT. TYLER HOUSE - DAD'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 26

The empty milk glass and a half eaten crescent roll looms ominously in foreground as Dad sleeps deeply in the background.

SHARON (O.S.)

(louder still)
Dad?

Nothing but Z's.

27 INT. TYLER HOUSE - FOYER - NIGHT 27

Sharon listens for a response. Nothing. BING-BONG. Sharon finally opens the door REVEALING Beth. She's stunning.

BETH

Hi.

SHARON

(beat)
Wow.
(calls upstairs)
Dad?

BETH

Is the coast clear?

SHARON

(listens, then)
Yep.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BETH

Good.

And with that, Beth moves in, practically tackling Sharon OUT OF FRAME and slamming the door behind her. Off this --

28 INT. THE BARREL - NIGHT

28

We're watching Gretchen from a bit of a distance. She's chatting animatedly with some REUNION GOERS, keeping up the brave face. We are in the POV OF --

CHUCK

The nervous Marine. He can't take his eyes off Gretchen. He clearly wants to approach her, but she's a flower with many bees buzzing around her at the moment. Chuck looks for an opening...

Gretchen says bye-bye to the group she was talking with, moves toward the buffet table. Chuck steels himself. Takes one step in Gretchen's direction when:

JAYE

(pushing past)

'Scuse me.

And Jaye gets there first, snagging Gretchen, turning both their backs to Chuck. Chucks sags at that. Shit.

JAYE AND GRETCHEN

JAYE (CONT'D)

How you holding up?

Gretchen feels free enough to lower her defenses slightly.

GRETCHEN

(nearly saintly courage)

It's hard. Everyone keeps asking about Robert.

JAYE

You should probably stop handing out those couple's cards. I need to use your phone.

GRETCHEN

Huh? Oh, sure.

(as she digs for it)

Everything reminds me of him.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GRETCHEN(CONT'D)

I look at those potato latkas and I
see his face.

JAYE

(takes the phone)
Well. Try to be brave.

Gretchen nods. Jaye moves away.

CELL PHONE DISPLAY

scrolling and landing on the entry: "Robert's Cell."

JAYE

being all sneaky, dials the number and anxiously listens to
the RINGING on the other end.

INTERCUT WITH:

29 EXT. ROAD/INT. ROBERT'S CAR - MOVING - NIGHT 29

ROBERT HOROWITZ, handsome professional, is at the wheel. On
the passenger seat is a huge box of candy and some flowers.
He's actually eating the candy. His cell phone CHIMES.
Robert scoops it up, reads the display -- "Princess."

ROBERT

I'm on my way, alright? So please,
no more with the guilt. I get
enough of that from my family, I
don't need it from you, too.

JAYE

Um --

ROBERT

Okay, okay. That was
inappropriate. I'm sorry. God,
three seconds in and I'm already
apologizing.

JAYE

Uh --

ROBERT

Look, you know the only reason I
suggested I skip this thing this
weekend was so that you would have
a good time.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROBERT (CONT'D)

I know how important it is to you
and it just seems we never get two
words out anymore before we're
fighting.

All this as he digs through the assorted chocolates and
selects a nice one.

JAYE

Geez. How does she ever get two
words out?

ROBERT

(chewy-candy-mouth)
Who is this?

JAYE

You better be coming with flowers
and candy, buddy. That's all I
gotta say. You got me?

A little stunned, Robert takes the bitten-into piece of
chocolate and puts it back in the open box. In doing, he
takes his eyes off the road for a second --

HEADLIGHTS WASH OVER him. He looks up, reacts to something
in the road O.S. Too late --

STAY WITH JAYE

As she HEARS the FILTERED SCREECH OF TIRES and the hideous
sound of IMPACT.

JAYE (CONT'D)

Um... Hello?

CUT TO BLACK.

END OF ACT THREE

(CONTINUED)

ACT FOUR

30 INT. THE BARREL - BAR AREA - NIGHT

30

Jaye clutches Gretchen's cell phone as she wanders dazed through the crowd. In the background, Gretchen can be seen on stage giving out reunion awards. Jaye steps up to the bar. Eric's busy pouring a drink. He sees her. Smiles.

ERIC

So. Didja defy the chicken?

She looks blankly towards him, blinks.

JAYE

Uh-huh.

ERIC

And how'd that work out for you?

JAYE

I think I may have killed a man.

ERIC

Oh.

(beat)

So not as well as we'd hoped, then?

JAYE

I need to start expecting it. Like my family does. Even when I try to help, it's a disaster. I need a drink --

He reaches for the vodka, but she makes him pause with:

JAYE (CONT'D)

No. Something froofy.

ERIC

Froofy..?

JAYE

Anything that'd leave a good stain.

He's clueless, but her servant. He sets about making a Mai-tai. She's looking off toward the awards ceremony.

JAYE (CONT'D)

I'm done fighting. From now on,
I'm fate's bitch.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He sets the drink in front of her. She grabs it without looking, moves off with:

JAYE (CONT'D)

Thanks.

31 INT. THE BARREL - STAGE - NIGHT

31

GRETCHEN is on the stage, mid-awards ceremony.

GRETCHEN

The next award proves how far a person will go to run from their past -- literally. The winner of "Traveled Furthest" currently resides in Sacramento, California where he manages a swine containment facility -- Mr. Eddie McCarthy! Wow, Eddie, you should be running from your present, but c'mon up here and get your award anyway.

A STOCKY GUY grabs his award and clears the stage.

GRETCHEN (CONT'D)

(into mic)

Next up: "Best Fashion Sense."

And the winner is...

(opening envelope)

"Karen Tyler!" Where are you, Mrs. T.?

Mom steps up onto the stage. Starts to move toward Gretchen to receive her award... but Jaye appears, zombie-walks right past Mom up to Gretchen and limply tosses the drink on her.

JAYE

I destroy you.

The crowd GASPS. Gretchen is soaked, ruined. She just stands there with her arms out like "Carrie." Jaye absently takes the awards envelope from her before she rushes off stage. Jaye turns to her stunned mother. Hands her the award envelope.

JAYE (CONT'D)

Congratulations.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Jaye walks off. Mom takes a confused beat, notices she's on stage, looks to the crowd with egg on her face, mortified, as --

32-33 OMITTED

32-33

34 INT. THE BARREL - BATHROOM - NIGHT

34

Gretchen is at the sink, trying to get the stain out of her dress, tears of rage and pain.

GRETCHEN

(muttering to herself)

It was all a trick! Worming your way onto my decorating committee. You will rue the day, Jaye Tyler. I will get you back. So hard.

CHUCK

Havin' a good time?

Gretchen startles. Chuck, the jarhead, has appeared.

GRETCHEN

What? No. Look at me! My make-up's ruined. I'm covered in --
(smelling her hands)
-- some rum-based fruit drink.

CHUCK

(takes a step forward)

Mai-tai.

GRETCHEN

(backs away)

Might you what?

CHUCK

No, I think it was a mai-tai.

GRETCHEN

Whatever it is, Jaye Tyler owes me a new dress.

CHUCK

And I guess I owe her. I've been trying to talk to you all night, but you haven't been alone long enough. Until she did this.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GRETCHEN

Well, nice to meet you, but this dress is beyond ruined.

CHUCK

Doesn't matter. You're still the most beautiful woman here. I thought maybe you'd peaked in high school but you're more amazing now than you ever were.

GRETCHEN

You're sweet. Who are you?

CHUCK

Chuck Aronson.

GRETCHEN

Did we have any classes together?

CHUCK

I was in all of your classes. Senior year I rearranged my schedule so I could be near you.

GRETCHEN

(flattered)

Oh, wow.

(then)

That's so creepy.

CHUCK

I know. I don't want it to be creepy, but I know it is. It's just... I love you. I've loved you from the first moment I saw you. I haven't stopped thinking about you in six-and-a-half years.

GRETCHEN

So flattering. And yet, somehow not less creepy.

CHUCK

No matter how many times I played this out in my head I always come across as a stalker. Even to me.

GRETCHEN

The Travis Bickle haircut, not helping.

(CONTINUED)

CHUCK

I tried everything. Dating other women. Joined the military. I thought if I went deeper into my own spiritual journey with meditation... But I can't shake you from my thoughts.

GRETCHEN

Wow. You're, like, obsessed. It's been a long time since anyone's been obsessed with me.

CHUCK

What about your husband?
(holds up couples card)
These are all over the floor.

GRETCHEN

Oh, Robert's not the type. I mean, he's great. If I was gonna make a list of the things I wanted in a husband... which I did actually... well! Robert is that list.

CHUCK

So he's the man of your dreams --

GRETCHEN

He's the man of my list.

CHUCK

Do you love him?

GRETCHEN

(she stares for a beat)
I'm sorry. What did you say?

CHUCK

Do you love him.

It's a long beat of stunned, staring realization, then:

GRETCHEN

No. I don't.
(saying it out loud)
I don't love my husband.
(looks to Chuck)
Did I ever?

Chuck shrugs. He doesn't know.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

GRETCHEN (CONT'D)

I mean, I converted for him.
That's a lot of work. There's like
tests and stuff. Why would I do
that for a man I didn't love? And
why am I just now realizing this?

CHUCK

Maybe nobody's ever asked you the
question before.

GRETCHEN

You'd think I would have asked
myself... I shoulda put it on the
checklist. I guess I was so busy
worrying that he didn't love me, I
never once considered whether or
not I loved him.

(looks at Chuck)

Poor Robert.

CHUCK

If he's losing you, then, yeah.
Poor Robert. And lucky me.

(moves closer)

Are you feeling the connection
here?

GRETCHEN

There's no connection.

(brings up:)

There's mace. But there's no
connection.

34aA INT. THE BARREL - BACK ROOM - NIGHT

34aA

(In the current version of our final cut, this scene would
play directly after Sharon and Beth's last scene and be a
lead-in to the Gretchen/Chuck bathroom scene.)

Jaye hiding out in the back room again. She looks up and
sees Mom making her way through, the area unfamiliar to her.

JAYE

Mom...

Mom looks over, sees her daughter hiding back here. She
reacts, maybe a little surprised to find her here.

MOM

Sweetheart.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JAYE

I guess you're pretty mad at me,
huh?

MOM

Don't be ridiculous.

JAYE

I ruined your moment. I'm sorry.

MOM

This night's not about me, dear.
And I think I understand why you
did what you did.

JAYE

You do?

Mom sits next to her, moves some hair from Jaye's face.

MOM

It's my fault. I somehow gave you
the impression that I wanted a
daughter like Gretchen Speck.

JAYE

Uh...

MOM

Confident, motivated, blonde --

JAYE

You just described Sharon.

MOM

-- well-married.

JAYE

Okay, so not Sharon.

MOM

But that girl's miserable.

JAYE

Sharon?

MOM

Gretchen. She's trapped in her
perfect life. That's not something
I want for you.

(CONTINUED)

JAYE
Wouldn't worry about that.

MOM
I do worry. But that's just me
being a mother. And as your
mother, I don't care what those
people out there may think of you
now, because in my heart, you'll
always be head cheerleader.

JAYE
Awwww.

Jaye smiles at her mom. Mom smiles back. Without breaking
the moment:

JAYE (CONT'D)
You're looking for the back door,
aren't you?

MOM
Is there one?

Jaye points.

JAYE
Right over there.

MOM
Thanks.

Mom scurries off. Off Jaye:

34A INT. TYLER HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

34A

AN EMPTY FRAME just above the couch. Sharon BOLTS UPRIGHT
into it. Listening.

SHARON
What was that? Did you hear
something? A shuffling?

Now Beth rises up too. They're both disheveled, make-up
smeared. They've been making out.

BETH
I didn't hear anything.
(off Sharon's intense
listening)
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BETH(CONT'D)

Look, maybe this wasn't such a great idea. I mean -- your parents' house. You're tense enough about them as it is.

SHARON

Tense? I'm not tense. I'm so far from tense. I'm past-tense.

BETH

It's okay for this to be stressful for you. It is for me, too.

SHARON

(grateful)

It is?

BETH

Of course. This isn't easy for me, either. Up until quite recently I was married, living with a man.

SHARON

Right, no, of course. I'm sorry. I can relax. Promise.

They gently go down OUT OF FRAME. As they do:

BETH (O.S.)

I can't imagine how much more stressful things would be for me if I were actually gay.

A beat. Sharon sits BACK UP INTO FRAME.

SHARON

Aren't you?

Beth sits up INTO FRAME.

BETH

Well, I mean, not exclusively. I like men.

SHARON

I'm not a man.

BETH

Yeah, I noticed. Like pretty specifically noticed...

(CONTINUED)

Beth starts to make a move, stops off Sharon's look of slight concern.

BETH (CONT'D)
Is this going to be an issue?

SHARON
What? No, it's not an issue. It's a full subscription. Ha ha. No.
(then)
But you have... been with a woman before?

BETH
I was in a Sorority.

SHARON
Yeah, so was I. I never got any.

BETH
Have you ever had sex with a man?

SHARON
Sex? With a -- ? God, no. No.

BETH
Does it bother you?

SHARON
That I never--

BETH
That I did.

Sharon considers this.

SHARON
Will you again?

BETH
I don't know...
(leaning in for a kiss)
You tell me.

Just before their lips touch... Sharon freezes..

SHARON
Oh, god.

CONTINUED: (3)

Because Dad has suddenly appeared at the doorway in his percocet-induced stupor, wearing nothing but his BVD's and a fiberglass hip-cast. All three freeze for an awkward beat. Then Dad lurches on by. Disappears into the kitchen.

BETH
Your father?

SHARON
His toes weren't blue, were they?

BETH
I don't think so...

SHARON
Then don't worry about it.

Sharon gently leans forward and they both GO OUT OF FRAME --

34B INT. THE BARREL - BACK ROOM - NIGHT

34B

Jaye hides in the back room. She's guilt-ridden. Mahandra appears. Looks at Jaye. Stares. After a beat:

MAHANDRA
I don't know what you've become.

JAYE
Fist of fate, thy name is Janet --
remember that?

MAHANDRA
Janet was just venting. You've
been channeling Tonya Harding. You
plan on ever coming out of here?

JAYE
Haven't decided yet.

MAHANDRA
Well, word is you're about to be
voted Most Spiteful.

JAYE
They can't add a category!

Mahandra just gives her a raised eyebrow, they did.

JAYE (CONT'D)
Great. And you're mad at me, too.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MAHANDRA

You made me feel sorry for Gretchen
Speck. And I'm not sure I can
forgive you for that.

*

They both react now to, coming over the PA SYSTEM:

GRETCHEN (O.S.)

(amplified, feedback)
Jaye Tyler? Jaye Tyler!

MAHANDRA

She's calling you out.

Off Jaye, knowing she must face this --

35 INT. THE BARREL - NIGHT

35

The crowd is silent. There is no dancing.. Jaye emerges through some swinging doors. The crowd makes a clear path. And at the end of that path -- is Gretchen Speck on the stage, her look trained on Jaye. Stand off. A balloon drifts by like a piece of tumbleweed. Gretchen's WORDS ECHO around the room on the cheap sound system.

GRETCHEN

There you are. Good. There's something I wanted to say to you before I leave this place -- And that's: thank you, Jaye Tyler.

Gretchen takes the microphone out of the mic stand.

GRETCHEN (CONT'D)

Thank you for being you.

MAHANDRA

(aside to Jaye)
Is she gonna sing?

Gretchen steps down off the stage --

GRETCHEN

It's because of who you are,
because of all the little things
that make up the fundamental core
of your character...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She passes by the bar, picks up a drink. Continues moving toward Jaye --

GRETCHEN (CONT'D)
-- the petty jealousies. The lying. The general negative behavior -- because of all of that, I've learned a little something about myself tonight.

And now they're toe-to-toe. Gretchen brings up the drink. Mahandra takes a step back. The air is charged with electricity. Gretchen drinks the drink, tossing it back. She looks at Jaye.

GRETCHEN (CONT'D)
I'm bigger than you. And I'll always be bigger.
(to the crowd)
Any of you holding Speck-Horowitz couples cards, toss 'em! They no longer apply. I'm losin' the hyphen and keepin' the ring!

Gretchen hands the mic to Jaye, then turns on a heel, goes to the doors, pushing them open and letting them shut with a BANG behind her.

TWO SHOT RE-SHOOT, Jaye and Mahandra looking after Gretchen: *

MAHANDRA
What a bitch.
(then, surprised)
Is it wrong that I like her now? *

Jaye considers that with a small smile, realizing: *

JAYE
Guess she's not trapped anymore... *

MAHANDRA
Feel kinda sorry for her husband, though. *

JAYE
Let's hope he's dead. *

36 EXT. ROADSIDE ACCIDENT SCENE - NIGHT

36

The aftermath of Robert's accident. He ran into an 18 WHEELER TRUCK. EMERGENCY VEHICLES are in evidence.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

POLICE and PARAMEDICS go about their business. Wearing a neck brace, Robert sits nearby. He slams the side of his cell phone, but he can't get a signal. He can't even get power.

A TOW TRUCK pulls up. The female TOW TRUCK DRIVER approaches Robert. She's dressed in overalls and a baseball cap.

TOW TRUCK DRIVER
This your vehicle?

ROBERT
(preoccupied with phone)
What's left of it. You wouldn't have a cell phone, would you? I can't seem to get ahold of -

The Tow Truck Driver pulls off her hat, and BEAUTIFUL LONG HAIR falls out. Robert drinks in her beauty.

ROBERT (CONT'D)
...my wife.

They hold a gaze. Robert and the Tow Truck Driver come together in a fifty-fifty, instant mutual attraction as one of the emergency worker's FLASHBULBS FLASHES and we SEE:

37 MONTAGE - A LIFE TOGETHER (FX SHOT) 37 *

[a] ROBERT & BRIDE are suddenly side by side - ala AMERICAN GOTHIC -- and the image becomes a FRAMED WEDDING PHOTO. Robert and his Bride are wearing traditional wedding attire. Everything goes very stylized (think a kind of heightened Terry Gilliam cut-out stop animation). The WIFE pivots to a three quarter front view.... and FLASH!

[b] FLASH! ROBERT & BRIDE. Their wardrobe MORPHS (or pops- to in that simple Gilliam-esque way) to a plain house dress and her STOMACH IS VISIBLY PREGNANT!

[c] FLASH! ROBERT & BRIDE. Her stomach shrinks and now she's holding a baby.

[d] FLASH! ROBERT & BRIDE. Her stomach expands -- pregnant again! -- with her first born, now a TODDLER, at her feet.

[e] FLASH! ROBERT & BRIDE. Stomach vanishes, she's holding a baby (maybe two? Twins?) And the toddler is holding Daddy's hand.

[f] FLASH! The couple's WARDROBE CHANGES from REFORMED to CONSERVATIVE. Robert sprouts a beard.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The BABIES become TODDLERS playing at the family's feet and the former-toddler becomes a little BOY.

*
*

[g] FLASH! Robert and Wife's clothing MORPH (or pop) -- a bit more orthodox. Robert's wearing a traditional HAT and SIDE-LOCKS and a longer beard. His Bride is suddenly wearing a HEAD COVERING. Oh, and she's pregnant again.

*
*
*
*

RAPID SERIES OF FLASHES -- QUICK CLOSE UPS OF THE ENTIRE FINAL CLAN. Then reveal the tableau:

*
*

[h] Robert and his Bride HAVE AGED -- his BEARD and her HAIR now GRAY. The CHILDREN are YOUNG ADULTS and ADULTS. Some are ORTHODOX and others are SECULAR. (One of them should be a bit punked out with purple hair and many piercings, I should think.)

*
*
*
*
*

[i] FLASH! CLOSE ON Robert and his Bride -- OLD and SEATED (he leans on a cane between his knees in his seated position). They are surrounded by family off screen on all sides. Big smiles. Their hands are entwined. FLASH. FREEZE FRAME.

*
*
*
*
*

We FADE OUT on this image and FADE UP ON:

38-39 OMITTED

38-39

40 EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY

40

Dad sits on a bench outside the hospital, his leg still in the cast. Jaye's car pulls up. She hops out, worried.

JAYE
What's wrong?

Dad rises with the help of his crutches.

DAD
Nothing's wrong. Just a simple follow-up. Needed a ride.

JAYE
You needed a ride... and you called me?

DAD
Of course. You owe me breakfast.

Dad starts trundling to the car. Jaye moves to assist.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JAYE

You said it was urgent.

DAD

(as he lowers himself into
passenger seat)

It is. They stop serving in twenty
minutes. So I hear you went to
your reunion?

JAYE

You talked to Mom.

DAD

Yeah, we sleep together. I'm sorry
if you felt pressured to go because
of me.

JAYE

Oh, please.

(beat)

I forgive you.

Jaye shuts his door, moves to the driver's side, gets in.

41 EXT. HOSPITAL/INT. JAYE'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

41

As Jaye slides in, puts her key in the ignition:

DAD

So you didn't have fun at all?

JAYE

I think it's fair to say you had
more fun when I ran you over.

(then)

But I'm glad I went.

DAD

And I'm glad you ran me over.

JAYE

Ha ha.

DAD

Really. You're my good luck charm.

She looks him, questioningly.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAD (CONT'D)

Those pointless, routine tests they
held me for? They found a blood
clot in my leg, deep in a vein.
Coulda killed me. But thanks to
you, we found it in time.

A beat as the full weight of that registers with her, then:

JAYE

So you're gonna be okay?

DAD

I'm great, I'm having breakfast
with my daughter.

Now Dad positions himself in his seat, looks forward saying:

DAD (CONT'D)

Use your mirrors.

Jaye looks at him for a beat. She smiles, starts the car.
As the car rolls OUT OF FRAME:

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

Say. Did you know our basic cable
comes with lesbian porn?

Off the OFFSCREEN CRASH we...

FADE OUT.

END OF SHOW