Little Black Book

by

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FADE IN:

ABOVE A COUPLE

Curled into the classic "spoon" position, deep asleep beneath a pillowy down comforter. We are:

INT. BEDROOM - DAWN

The digital alarm clock next to the bed reads "5:55 a.m." We can barely see the man's features by the early morning light, but this is NATE GOODMAN (33). The sleeping woman next to him is TARA O'CONNOR (22). We hear a faint BUZZING sound, her eyes POP open.

Tara rolls away and pulls back the covers to reveal a pager hooked to her underwear. She scrambles to turn it off.

Tara leans over the bed, extracts a lighted mirror and quickly applies some non-makeup-looking-makeup, gulps a travel-sized bottle of mouth wash, swishes, and realizes there's no place to spit. She grimaces, swallows.

Checking that Nate is still asleep, she lies back down and expertly draws a lock of blonde hair across her eyes. Tara is really pretty, but leaves nothing to chance.

The real ALARM sounds. Nate rolls over and turns it off, facing Tara, he watches her "awaken". He gently brushes the hair out of her eyes. We now see why she bothered, he's a keeper.

NATE
You always look so beautiful...
especially in the morning.

Tara smiles her thanks. They begin to kiss.

CUT TO:

INT. CHAT MAGAZINE OFFICE - MORNING

Tara RACES past the receptionist's desk. DANA SMALL sits above it all, neat and petite, up to the minute fashion and hair.

DANA
SHE'S NOT HERE YET --

Tara visibly relaxes and walks back. Dana slides a Starbucks coffee across the reception desk.

TARA
Thanks, did she call?

DANA
I told her you were in the bathroom.
(giving Tara the once-over)
Am I having Deja Vu?

Tara nods. Dana unbuttons her cardigan, After a moment, Tara does the same. They take off their sweaters and EXCHANGE.

TARA
Saving me from the walk of shame and coffee, too! Oh booba, what would I do without you?

DANA
You'd be a tired, fired, slut.

CUT TO:

TARA'S DESK - SEA OF CUBICLES - DAY

Tara is buried beneath a pile of papers. She answers multiple lines, types, swivels around to check on her boss AUDREY LANFORD, who is now in her office on the phone. Tara's desk is directly across from Dana's. The Phone RINGS.

TARA (INTO PHONE)
Audrey Lanford's office.

DANA'S VOICE
So...did he say it?

Tara turns her attention to Dana who also wears a headset. If they just raised their voices they could talk normally.

TARA (INTO PHONE)
No. But he's giving me a drawer.

DANA (INTO PHONE)
Sounds like love to me.
(holding up a list)
Here's the final list of all the people coming. I got a hold of James Linfield this morning. He sounded cute.

Tara checks him off her list.

DANA (INTO PHONE) (CONT'D)
Is he?

TARA (INTO PHONE)
I haven't met him...I haven't met any of these people.

DANA (INTO PHONE)
How did you get their numbers?

TARA (INTO PHONE)
Work...his secretary, his phone book.

DANA (INTO PHONE)
You just randomly went through his phone book?

TARA (INTO PHONE)
Yeah...what?

Dana gets up and crosses over to Tara.

DANA
What if you invited *ex-girlfriends?*

Tara looks at the list as if for the first time.

TARA
I'd be okay with that, I guess.

DANA
Not you...*him.* Here are all your ex-girlfriends from the past five years!
(beat)
SURPRISE!!!

TARA
He hasn't had any serious relationships here...he's never mentioned anyone.

DANA
He's a good-looking, single, straight money maker in Manhattan. Obviously if you've never heard even a name of an ex, you just haven't had *that talk* yet.

Tara suddenly looks worried.

TARA
When are you supposed to have *that talk*?

MAN'S VOICE
Never.

Tara glances over to the cubicle next to hers.

TARA
Just pretend you can't hear us.

DANA
When the relationship gets serious.

TARA
We're serious.

DANA
But you haven't said "I love you" or talked about moving in together or marriage --

Dana is interrupted by an EXPLOSION OF APPLAUSE AND CHEERS. They turn to see --

GROUP OF MALE CO-WORKERS "high fivin'" each other as a CALVIN KLEIN BILLBOARD goes up across the street. It's a panel the size of a football field of a woman's thigh leading to her Barbie doll waist.

TARA
I might not know every little detail about Nate's past, but I do know he isn't into pre-pubescent, anorexic, airbrushed, fake fantasy models.
(looking at slobbering men)
I'm finally in a relationship where I don't have to be suspicious and worried all the time.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE RUSSIAN TEA ROOM - NIGHT

A cozy table by the window. Nate and Tara lean into one another, talking. A WAITER comes to the table carrying a BIRTHDAY CAKE with a candle. Nate leans across the table and kisses her.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. OUTSIDE OF NATE'S APARTMENT - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Nate tries to unlock the door while unbuttoning the hundred tiny pearl buttons down Tara's back.

NATE
I'm not going to get this off of you until midnight --

Tara wriggles around to face him.

TARA
Careful, it's vintage...

NATE
So am I.

TARA
It's early...we haven't *really* celebrated your birthday, we could go dancing?

NATE
I'm just looking forward to being *alone* with you.

Nate kisses her while pushing open the door...

INT. APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Flicks on the light --

EVERYONE
SURPRISE!

Nate grabs Tara as DOZENS pop out of nowhere. He quickly looks around to see all his FRIENDS and CO-WORKERS. He smiles at Tara, shaking his head.

DISSOLVE TO:

APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - LATER

Tara and Dana stand off to the side, watching late GUESTS arrive. Beautiful WOMAN after beautiful WOMAN walk through the door. Dana nudges Tara as they greet Nate.

DANA
That was casual...

A tall, BLONDE brushes Nate's cheek with a "hello", a BRUNETTE waits her turn. They hug.

DANA (cont'd)
That was a little warmer than just co-worker, don't you think?

TARA
Dana --

But you can see that Tara is evaluating each and every woman the same way. She straightens her dress self-consciously.

TARA (cont'd)
I better get their coats.

CUT TO:

HALLWAY - LATER

Nate talks with a slick-looking, Wall Street-type, ALEX MERNIT.

ALEX
All I know is she's back and she's asking about *you*.

NATE
I'm in a relationship, Alex.
(shrugging)
Tara's only twenty-two...but she doesn't play mind games, she knows who she is.
(taking a drink)
I'm the fucked up one.

ENTRANCE TO HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Tara staggers forward carrying a huge PILE of COATS.

ALEX
But aren't you even a little curious to see her?

Tara FREEZES. She cranes her neck around the coats, realizes they haven't seen her yet.

NATE
No.
(beat)
So...how is she?

ALEX
See...see, you are. You think about her, too. Don't deny it!

Tara quickly steps all the way into the closet, closing the slatted door behind her.

CLOSET

Tara presses her face against the slats, watching Nate.

NATE
Things are going well with Tara --

ALEX
You've only been going out with her a couple of months --

CLOSE ON TARA

TARA
(whispers)
Six --

ON NATE AND ALEX

ALEX
You're not married, you're not even living with her --

Tara watches on in horror.

NATE
I'm not calling her.

ALEX
You two were a great couple --

NATE
And then she dumped me and moved to London --

ALEX
And now she's back --

NATE
What do you care?

Alex crosses his arms.

ALEX
I just think there might still be something there between you two. When you two got engaged, you were the envy of every guy I knew --

Tara's mouth drops open.

ALEX (cont'd)
She's so smart, and beautiful...incredible --

NATE
So, you ran into her?

ALEX
No, I heard through George that she's still talking about you.

NATE
It's all in the past, now. I'm going to get a drink.

Nate walks away. Alex follows.

ALEX
I just want you to be sure about this.

Tara follows them with her eyes, unaware as a MAN opens the closet door. Tara BURSTS forward, FALLING ON TOP OF HIM, burying him under coats.

CUT TO:

LIVING ROOM - LATER

The party is over. Dozens of glasses cover every surface. Ashtrays and wine bottles and general post-party disarray. Tara follows Nate, collecting glasses.

TARA
So you liked everyone that came...and no one was missing?

NATE
No, in fact, there were a few people I wouldn't expect at my birthday party.

TARA
Oh?

NATE
My accountant...uh, my dentist and my plumber all assured me that they had a great time.

TARA
I wasn't sure from your phone book...
(laughing)
But that was alright?

NATE
Great. I'm scheduled for a free cleaning next week, my taxes will be done early this year and if we ever have a blockage, we can call Phil at home.
(kissing her)
Thank you.

Nate picks up more glasses, heading for the kitchen. Tara follows.

KITCHEN

TARA
You have so many nice friends...George and his wife Sandy, you know, the newlyweds...they seem so happy. Of course I've never been close to getting married, so I wouldn't know about that.
(beat)
What about you?

NATE
Marriage? Not really.

TARA
Did you ever feel like proposing...looked at rings, that kind of thing?

NATE
Why are you asking?

TARA
I don't know...I just realized after talking to all your friends...and people from work, that there's a lot of stuff I don't know. Like...were any of your ex-girlfriends here tonight?

NATE
No.

TARA
So, do you see any of your ex-girlfriends, are you still friends with any of them?

NATE
Absolutely not.

TARA
It would be fine if you were, I'm just asking. Is there anyone you would like to keep in contact with?

NATE
Did Dana put you up to this?

TARA
What? No.

NATE
I wouldn't take advice from a woman who can't even commit to a long distance carrier --

TARA
I just realized we haven't had this talk yet.

NATE
You mean the interrogation?

TARA
I can tell you about my ex-boyfriends --

NATE
No thank you.

TARA
I just mean I can share --

NATE
I don't think the past has anything to do with us, with what we have right now. Look, things are going well, right? You're happy?

Nate takes Tara's hands in his.

TARA
Yes, but I don't like the idea of other people..acquaintances of yours, knowing more about you than I do --

NATE
If something came up that was about one of them, something relevant --

TARA
We're talking about it. It's relevant --

NATE
Why do you want to know this stuff?

TARA
To bring us closer together.

Nate pulls her into an embrace.

NATE
I can think of better ways of bringing us closer together.

TARA
(smiles)
Alright...I'm letting you off the hook now, but I do want to talk about it...later, because I want to know you better and because...

She stares into his eyes...and she can't stop herself.

TARA (cont'd)
I love you.

There, she said it, blurted it, really.

Nate stares deeply back into her eyes. They stay this way for what feels like forever.

He pulls her close and then kisses her...*on the forehead.*

CUT TO:

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

DANA
On the forehead?

Tara nods sullenly.

DANA (cont'd)
Oh my God. Tara, what did I tell you? Never, ever, ever, ever say it first --

TARA
Too late.

DANA
Look, it's so basic. We're animals, just watch dogs. It's the males who go around sniffing our butts, not the other way around --

TARA
I think it's a little more complicated than that --

DANA
Is it? Rudge broke up with me because I made it too easy for him. I liked him and let it show, and what did he do to repay me? He went back to his bitchy ex-girlfriend who treated him like shit.
(MORE)

DANA (cont'd)
I treated him like a God and to repay me he skated. By telling Nate you love him, you've disturbed nature's balance.

Tara puts her head on the table.

TARA
Please...I can't breathe...

Dana lowers her face to Tara's level.

DANA
Let's just go over what you heard again.

Tara sits up.

TARA
She was the most intense relationship he ever had. He almost married her. Everyone wanted her. He was in love with her and so was everyone else --

DANA
Got it. So, you may be the rebound.

TARA
Rebound...oh God, that's gotta be it.
(beat)
And he wouldn't tell me about her last night because...he's still in love with her. Dana, what if that's it? He thought this woman was out of his life, and now she's back...and he can't stop thinking about her. That's why he didn't say he loved me back.

Tara starts to cry. Dana hands her a tissue, patting her on the shoulder.

DANA
Hold on. Maybe not. Let me think...

Tara wipes her tears, hopeful.

DANA (cont'd)
(long beat)
On the forehead?

Tara lets her head drop back onto the table.

CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE - EVENING

Everyone else has left except for Tara and Dana who walk out together. They step onto:

ELEVATOR - SAME

DANA
You're going to go back there, act like nothing is wrong. Act confident. They sense that. He may just be waiting for an appropriate time to tell you he loves you. Don't sweat it. Confidence.

Tara nods to her coach, straightens her coat.

TARA
Confident.

CUT TO:

INT. NATE'S APARTMENT - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Tara KNOCKS. After a moment Nate answers the door. He kisses her right away.

TARA
Hey...I thought I'd stop by...on the way home from work.

NATE
Great. C'mon in...
(beat)
You want something to drink...eat?

Nate heads back to the kitchen. Tara wanders around the apartment, passing the bedroom. She STOPS in her tracks when she sees a SUITCASE on the bed, PACKED.

TARA
Nate...where are you going?

Nate appears.

NATE
I tried to tell you before the party...

Nate looks at Tara.

NATE (cont'd)
I have a job interview in San Francisco. It's for a non-profit...a friend set me up with these people...I wasn't looking.

TARA
San Francisco? That's in a different time zone.

Nate takes Tara's hands in his.

NATE
I haven't even thought this through. I...I'm just going to see...

He hugs her, but doesn't say any more.

CUT TO:

INT. FRONT DOOR - MORNING

Nate hands her a key.

NATE
I'll be gone for a week...if you could feed Uncle Pussy. Make sure you feed him twice a day, he'll scavenge if you don't...make sure he doesn't have people food.

Nate gestures over to a fat CAT sitting on the window sill.

NATE (cont'd)
Uh...plants are fake...except the orchid on the table, but I just watered it...uh, bring in the mail...you don't have to answer the phone, I'll retrieve my messages.

TARA
What if you want to call me?

NATE
I'll ring once, hang up, then call right back.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. NATE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Tara is dressed in an oversized sweater of Nate's. She smells it periodically, staring at two WOMEN selling rhinestone jewelry on the home shopping network. The BUZZER rings.

Tara gets up and heads for the intercom.

DANA'S VOICE
Hey, freaklet. It's us.

TARA
I don't feel like going out.

DANA'S VOICE
That's why we're coming in! Hurry up, it's fucking freezing!

CUT TO:

COUCH - LATER

JAMES, great-looking, tight T-shirt, gay, and RICHARD, her cubicle mate, standard Gen X uniform of worn corduroys and bowling shoes, bookend Tara. The television is a Sony flat screen, huge. Dana and James play a reality video game - BOXING.

RICHARD
You shouldn't take it personally, there are no casual conversations about exes when it comes to women --

TARA
We have them all the time --

RICHARD
But we're not sleeping together. Men know not to share any of that stuff with women, they remember everything. It's amazing, really, the recall. Every little detail, every name, every single thing is stored up like ammo, all to be used for future fights.

TARA
I'm not like that.

RICHARD
You think you're not like that.

TARA
But...aren't you curious to learn what her ex-boyfriends were like?

RICHARD
What, so I can hear about what great sex they used to have?

JAMES
GET UP, BITCH. BITCH, GET UP!

Dana throws down the controls, reaching for her wine. James gets up and writhes around in a victory dance.

JAMES (CONT'D)
This deserves a celebration!

He reaches in his bag, presenting a page of stickers to the group.

TARA
Why would we want Bugs Bunny stickers?

JAMES
It's acid, Laura Ingalls.

Tara throws them back at James.

TARA
We're not dropping acid on a school night, you freak.

JAMES
Ecstasy?

TARA
How is it that you never have any money to go out to eat, but you're a walking drug lord?

The BUZZER rings.

TARA (cont'd)
Who's that?

JAMES
I invited some people to come up --

TARA
We're not having a party here, James.

JAMES
But this apartment is so great --

TARA
No. No. No --

But as she is saying "no" James is buzzing them up.

JAMES
I can't leave them out in the cold like that.

TARA
(to Dana)
Did you know about this?

DANA
(yes)
No.
(beat)
But you do have all that alcohol left over from Nate's party...

CUT TO:

KITCHEN - SAME

Uncle Pussy, the cat, sits by an empty bowl. He leaves the kitchen, heading for the:

LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

He sniffs around the empty pizza boxes, his nose leading him to James' bag. We see Uncle Pussy find the ACID TABS, and begin to lick them. PEOPLE arrive, Tara never notices Uncle Pussy.

DISSOLVE TO:

APARTMENT - LATER

The MUSIC blares. Tara follows a drunk-looking GUEST around, finally extracting his glass of red wine out of his hand. She takes a cigarette out of someone else's in one deft maneuver. We see there are at least a DOZEN PEOPLE here now.

Tara gets to the stereo and turns it off.

TARA
PARTY IS OVER. Good night.

There are various moans and groans, but PEOPLE obey.

TARA (cont'd)
BYE, BYE...A LITTLE FASTER, THANK YOU.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Tara puts on Nate's robe. Uncle Pussy lays on the bed. As Tara passes, Uncle Pussy turns his head left to right to watch, and then repeats this a dozen times. Tara stops and stares as Uncle Pussy continues to do this.

TARA
Uncle Pussy?

Uncle Pussy lies on his back, waving a paw back and forth in front of his face. He does this over and over, first one paw, then the next...watching the paw "trail."

TARA (cont'd)
What are you doing?

Tara gasps, covering her face.

TARA (CONT'D)
Uncle Pussy?

Tara looks down on the bed to see only half a page of the acid left.

TARA (cont'd)
Oh my God! Oh my God!

CUT TO:

EXT. CITY ANIMAL HOSPITAL - DAWN

Establishing.

INT. VET'S OFFICE - DAY

Tara RACES in, straight up the desk. She holds a cat cage with Uncle Pussy inside. An eager INTERN greets her.

INTERN
Good morning! Did you sign in?

TARA
I have an emergency -- my cat ate a couple of tabs of acid.

INTERN
Okeydokey, acid as in...

TARA
Drugs. As in hallucinogenic drugs --

The intern leans down to the cage and waves his hands.

INTERN
He's trippin'? Whoa...that's kinda cool --

TARA
Please --

INTERN
(snaps back up)
Sorry. Name of pet?

TARA
Uncle Pussy.

INTERN
Soprano fan, uh?
(off Tara's nod)
Last name?

TARA
Goodman.

He does some rapid typing.

INTERN
No Uncle Pussy Goodman here.

TARA
Well...this is his vet.

INTERN
(typing)
I can do a Pussy search. Yeah...okay, we have two Pussies. But not all uncles...oh, yeah, here it is.

Tara nods, relieved.

INTERN (cont'd)
It was under your name, Jessica...
(trouble pronouncing it)
Fuka - Fukunaga?

He looks up at Tara.

TARA
That's not it.

INTERN
2306 West 84th Street?

He slides the piece of paper over to Tara who stares at the information.

TARA
That's it...that's the address.

INTERN
We have the owner listed as a Jessica Fukunaga...at that address.

Tara's completely lost, staring at the woman's name.

INTERN (CONT'D)
Oh, here it is, in case of an emergency contact Nate Goodman, same address.

TARA
This must be her...

The guy waves his hand in front of Tara's face, she fails to react. He tries to take the piece of paper back. Tara won't let go.

INTERN
I can update the info --

TARA
I'll do it.

INTERN
Alrighty then.
(looking at Tara)
I didn't think you looked like a...Fukunaga -- bdum, dum.

Tara looks up from the paper.

INTERN (cont'd)
So...how did this little guy score the acid anyhow?

Tara freezes him with an ice cold stare.

CUT TO:

INT. NATE'S APARTMENT HALLWAY - DAY

Tara puts the key in the door and enters Nate's apartment.

LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Tara places the cat cage down gently. Tara opens the door. Uncle Pussy runs out, and Tara follows the cat with her eyes.

Tara looks around the apartment as if entering it for the first time. Tara notices the carefully selected art prints on the walls.

The low mahogany coffee table with a fresh, white orchid growing out of a ceramic pot.

Linen curtains that match the throw pillows.

Suddenly, it's so obvious. This is not the apartment of a lonely bachelor. Tara is overwhelmed by jealousy as she takes it all in.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
Nate? Sweetheart, is that you?

Tara turns around slowly to see a beautiful, JAPANESE WOMAN come out from the bedroom. Her long, black hair hangs below her waist. She wears a short, red silk kimono.

Nate catches up to her, KISSING HER NECK. They slowly sink to the floor, making out just inches from Tara.

Tara turns her head, only to see them coming through the front door with groceries, LAUGHING AND KISSING.

Tara RUNS to the kitchen, and there they are making Sunday morning waffles together.

She turns and runs past the dining room where they are painting the walls "drop of green".

JESSICA FUKUNAGA IS EVERYWHERE.

Tara walks to the balcony, opens the sliding glass doors to get some fresh air. But there is no escaping it; there they are, sitting on the chintz pottery barn love seat, Jessica's head against Nate's shoulder. Nate takes her face in his hands.

NATE
Jessica...I love you. I love you so much...

Tara shuts the door, leaving the apartment immediately.

CUT TO:

INT. CHAT MAGAZINE OFFICE - DAY

Tara rushes in, glancing at Dana. Dana runs a finger across her throat, pointing at her boss's office.

EXT. AUDREY LANFORD'S OFFICE - DAY

Tara knocks on the door, enters.

AUDREY'S OFFICE

Tara gently closes the door behind her.

TARA
I'm so sorry. My boyfriend's cat --

AUDREY
So many of your excuses start with my boyfriend. My boyfriend this and my boyfriend that --

TARA
It was his cat. I'm watching his place and the cat...got sick. I couldn't --

Audrey puts her hand up. Tara shuts-up.

AUDREY
(putting her hand down)
How old are you?

TARA
22.

AUDREY
Ah...22...what a wonderful age. I remember what twenty-two felt like...confident, that kind of confidence where you know exactly what you want and exactly how to get it. The energy, enthusiasm, optimism...you haven't been disappointed by life...yet. It's all ahead of you. I envy you!

Tara, wary, nods her head.

AUDREY (cont'd)
I know this boyfriend of yours seems to be the center of your world...but years from now, believe it or not, when you are staring across the breakfast table at someone else...you will wonder why you ruined a wonderful opportunity at Chat Magazine for someone who turned out not to be the one. You still want to write for this magazine, Tara?

Tara nods again, afraid to speak.

AUDREY (cont'd)
If you want a career in the magazine industry, work always comes first.

Audrey waits to see that Tara has taken this all in.

AUDREY (CONT'D)
You're officially on probation. You arrive to this office later than nine or leave before seven, you're fired. There is a line around the block of college graduates waiting to fill your job...

Tara turns to leave.

AUDREY (cont'd)
Uh...Tara?

Audrey holds up coffee cup without looking.

CUT TO:

INT. DINER - DAY

Tara and Dana sit at the counter, squeezed in with the lunch crowd. The piece of paper from the vet's lies between them.

TARA
This must be her...this must be the woman they were talking about. Why didn't he tell me he lived with someone? *Last year*?

Dana takes the piece of paper.

DANA
You could call her. Her work number is right there.

TARA
Why should I call her?
(beat)
I'll just ask him about it.

DANA
You already tried that, remember?

TARA
I wonder if this is the woman he almost married...I wonder why it didn't work out?

DANA
There's one way to find out.

TARA
No, you know, that's totally creepy. I don't even know what I'd say.

DANA
Why is Nate looking for work in other cities?

TARA
He's just not happy in his job...

DANA
(looking at Tara)
Or maybe it's more than that...

Tara balls up the piece of paper.

TARA
I'm going to be an adult about this and just talk to Nate about what I know. Lay it out.

Dana dangles the wad of paper in front of Tara's face.

DANA
Then...you won't need this.

Tara snatches it back, stuffs it in her purse.

CUT TO:

INT. NATE'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Tara lies in Nate's bed, the phone cradled to her ear.

TARA (INTO PHONE)
I miss you, too. How are you?

CUT TO:

EXT. CITY STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT

Nate stands outside of a restaurant on his cell phone. INTERCUT:

NATE
Damp. Kinda mis -- ble he -- act- lly.

TARA
Oh no...you're breaking up --

NATE
Tara...I'm sorry about how I left things. I meant to talk to you about this job offer earlier...to include you --

CUT BACK TO:

BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Nate's cell phone cuts out.

TARA
Hello? Nate...hello?

CUT BACK TO:

SAN FRANCISCO - STREET

Nate is unaware that the cell phone has died. The wind is pretty loud.

NATE
I LOVE YOU, TARA.

Silence.

NATE (cont'd)
Tara?

CUT BACK TO:

INT. NATE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Tara DUMPS out the contents of her purse.

TARA
Where is his cell phone number, what is the stupid cell phone number -- ugh --

The phone RINGS. Tara picks it up immediately.

TARA (CONT'D)
Hello?

GUY'S VOICE
Jessica? Hey, it's Gordon. I'm so glad you guys are back together! I couldn't make it the other night, but I wanted to wish the old guy happy birthday!

CUT BACK TO:

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO STREET - NIGHT

BUSY SIGNAL. A group of SUITS sit at a table in front of Nate. A GUY raps on the glass, pointing to the WAITER who stands at their table.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. NATE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Tara begins stuffing back the contents of her purse when she picks up the CRUMPLED PIECE OF PAPER: Jessica Fukunaga's work number in front of her. She stares at it.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CHAT MAGAZINE OFFICE - MORNING

The sheet of paper is now on her desk at work, staring back at her. Tara hunches over the phone. It rings.

WOMAN'S VOICE
Well Health Center.

TARA
Hi...

Tara looks down at the wrinkled piece of paper from the vets office.

TARA (cont'd)
Hi...do you have a Jessica Fukunaga there?

WOMAN'S VOICE
Dr. Fukunaga? Would you like to make an appointment?

Tara takes this in.

TARA
Doctor...*doctor Fukunaga*...wow.

WOMAN'S VOICE
I'm sorry, ma'am?

TARA
Yes. I'd like to make an appointment...

CUT TO:

INT. WELL HEALTH CENTER - DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Tara sits nervously on the edge of a Doctor's table, fully clothed. The door OPENS, and a big, UNATTRACTIVE WOMAN dressed in blue scrubs ENTERS. Tara's eyes go wide. She stares at every move the woman makes. The woman picks up a blood pressure gauge, wrapping it around Tara's arm.

TARA
(relieved)
Oh...you're just the nurse.

The nurse gives her a "fuck you" look, PUMPING up her arm.

TARA (cont'd)
Ow...that's tight.

She releases the pressure. Tara sighs, looking around.

The nurse opens a drawer at the base of the table, attaching the STIRRUPS.

CLOSE ON TARA'S FACE

As she realizes what kind of doctor Jessica Fukunaga is. The nurse tosses a blue gown at Tara.

TARA
I won't need this...I just have a few questions --

NURSE
Open to the front.

And with a stern look, she is gone. Tara STARES at the stirrups.

DISSOLVE TO:

ROOM - LATER

Tara nervously clutching the front of her gown. Tara looks at her watch, reaching for her clothes. Just as she is about to bail, DR. JESSICA FUKUNAGA walks in briskly, glancing at Tara as she picks up the chart. She is pretty, her black hair cut in a Louise Brooks bob. Her big, brown eyes are kind, taking everything in.

JESSICA FUKUNAGA
Hi, I'm Dr. Fukunaga, nice to meet you.

They shake hands.

TARA
Nice to meet you.

JESSICA FUKUNAGA
(marking on clipboard)
How are you feeling?

TARA
Great. Really great. I'm just here for a couple of questions...*not* an exam, just a few questions.

JESSICA FUKUNAGA
(noting her nervousness)
About...?

Tara looks around the room and spies a poster advertising a brand of birth control pills.

TARA
Birth control. It's all so confusing...the choices.

JESSICA FUKUNAGA
Well...I can't administer any birth control without an exam first. What are you currently using?

Tara stares at Jessica.

TARA
Uh...condoms.

JESSICA FUKUNAGA
That's good. And are you currently in a monogamous relationship?

TARA
Yes.

JESSICA FUKUNAGA
Well then, if you've both been tested for HIV, you might want to consider birth control pills or a diaphragm. When was your last pelvic exam?

TARA
Really recent...August.

JESSICA FUKUNAGA
Two months ago?

TARA
Last August.

JESSICA FUKUNAGA
That's more than a year. You're due.
(washing her hands)
I'll do a breast exam first and then --

TARA
(bargaining)
How about a breast exam *today*, and then I'll make an appointment for more later?

JESSICA FUKUNAGA
The breast exam comes with the package, we usually don't separate them.

TARA
It's just...I'm on my lunch break and --

JESSICA FUKUNAGA
Then let's get started. Just loosen your gown.

Jessica Fukunaga approaches Tara, she complies, undoing her robe. Jessica Fukunaga places her hand on her breast. Tara JUMPS about a foot off the table.

JESSICA FUKUNAGA (cont'd)
Sorry, are my hands cold?

TARA
A little.

Tara sighs, looking the other way as Jessica Fukunaga performs the breast exam.

Jessica Fukunaga steps back from Tara.

JESSICA FUKUNAGA
Everything's fine. Why don't you lie down, scoot to the end of the table and put your feet in the stirrups.
(beat)
You can keep your socks on.

TARA
(sotto voce)
Oh good.

Tara takes a deep breath, STARING at the STIRRUPS. She closes her eyes and quickly lies down.

TARA (cont'd)
I just took my cat into the vet yesterday...do you have a cat?

Jessica Fukunaga swivels the lamp around, sitting on a stool in front of Tara. She places a paper blanket over Tara's legs.

JESSICA FUKUNAGA
I used to.

TARA
So...what happened?

JESSICA FUKUNAGA
Can you spread your legs a little wider?
I...had to leave him with my boyfriend.

TARA
So, you two aren't together anymore?

JESSICA FUKUNAGA
No...my residency ended my relationship with both my cat and my boyfriend.

Taking some instruments off the cart.

JESSICA FUKUNAGA (cont'd)
I'm going to use this to separate the walls of your --

TARA
Whatever you have to do.
(looks to the ceiling)
So, do you miss him? Do you think about him?

JESSICA FUKUNAGA
You're going to feel some pressure...just relax.
(looking at Tara)
I do miss him...I wonder if he would still remember me?

Tara frowns.

TARA
You lived with him, of course he'd still remember you --

JESSICA FUKUNAGA
The cat...not the boyfriend.

Jessica Fukunaga stands up, applying some KY to the end of her gloved fingers. She looks at Tara over her knees, concentrating.

JESSICA FUKUNAGA (CONT'D)
I'm just going to make sure everything is alright, you'll feel some pressure...yeah, he was a great cat. His name was Uncle Pussy --

TARA
After the Sopranos.

Jessica nods.

JESSICA FUKUNAGA
Yeah, and my boyfriend at the time thought because of my profession...

TARA
Oh, yeah.

JESSICA FUKUNAGA
That it would be an appropriate name. So, he called him Uncle Pussy first, then --

CUT TO:

OUTSIDE OF EXAMINING ROOM

Another PATIENT is led to the room next door. As they pass the room they can hear --

JESSICA FUKUNAGA'S VOICE
Big pussy, little pussy, sweet pussy, and just plain pussy.

The NURSE shrugs, opening the door for her.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. EXAMINATION ROOM - SAME

TARA
Oh, that's cute. So, did you want to leave --

JESSICA FUKUNAGA
No, I didn't want to leave Pussy behind.

TARA
Not your pussy, I'm asking about the guy, did he ask you to leave?

JESSICA FUKUNAGA
No, it was mutual --

TARA
Were you engaged first?

JESSICA FUKUNAGA
No, we were never engaged.

TARA
Oh. You're sure?

JESSICA FUKUNAGA
I think I would remember the whole down on one knee thing, no, I was busy...he was busy.

TARA
So, you were never madly in love?

Jessica shakes her head.

JESSICA FUKUNAGA
I was very fond of him...but I guess it was just...convenient. I mean, we were fond of each other --

TARA
But, you must have said those words, *I love you*, right? You can't share a bed and a life and, and a *cat* without love, right?

Jessica Fukunaga quickly takes off her gloves, looks at Tara like she's insane.

JESSICA FUKUNAGA
You can get dressed now.

TARA
He might still be pining away after you.

JESSICA FUKUNAGA
(exasperated)
Last I heard he was dating a model. I'm sure he's recovered.

DANA (O.S.)
A model.

CUT TO:

INT. NATE'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM CLOSET - NIGHT

Tara nods. Tara and Dana sit on the floor, the box of PHOTOS in front of them. Tara manically rummages through them.

TARA
They're all beautiful...they could all be models --

DANA
You don't have a name?

TARA
Just...model.

DANA
Let's assume the worst. Hot, sexy, perfect body and skin, you know...our worst nightmare.

Tara DEVOURS one after another.

PHOTO OF A WOMAN with long, dark curly hair standing on a beach holding two coconuts in front of her breasts. Her smile is wide, beautiful.

Nate and a pretty REDHEAD golfing.

THIN BLONDE IN A BIKINI

THIN BLONDE IN FRONT OF CHRISTMAS TREE

THIN BLONDE, THIN BLONDE, THIN BLONDE

TARA
This must be her...

Dana leans over her shoulder.

DANA
She's a nightmare, alright. Is there a name on the back of any of these photos?

TARA
No.

Dana picks up a few more photos out of the box -- a LITTLE BLACK BOOK sits nestled in the pile. Dana pounces on it.

DANA
So this is why you didn't invite any of the exes...the infamous little black book, and look, it literally is his little black book.

Tara snatches it away.

TARA
Don't, we shouldn't be doing this.

Dana snatches it back again.

DANA
You've already gone to third base with one of his ex-girlfriends --

TARA
A medical exam that you pushed me into --

DANA
You've gone as far as you can go, so what's stopping you?

Tara sits back.

TARA
Because I don't see how it's going to help me keep Nate.

DANA
(dangling book)
Because they hold the answers. These women are his past and your possible future. What if this woman did simple things to make him happy? Things you aren't doing.

TARA
Like?

DANA
Sex...cooking...things that are within your reach.
(pausing dramatically)
They hold the answers...think of this book as the Rosetta Stone, once you meet his girlfriends, you will be able to speak his language...interpret every word and gesture.

Tara leafs through the worn, black book.

DANA (CONT'D)
There's a woman within those pages who made Nate love her so much he wanted to marry her. A woman he still thinks about. Don't you want to know why it ended?

CUT TO:

THE PHONE

Tara stares at it, Dana paces behind her.

TARA
How am I going to find her? There must be dozens of women in this book.

DANA
I think you'll be able to tell pretty quickly...like with Jessica Fukunaga.

TARA
But...what do I say?

DANA
Maybe honesty...

TARA
Hi, I'm Nate Goodman's current girlfriend and I just have a few questions about your relationship?

DANA
I see your point...okay, I know, you can pretend to be calling about a survey...like those sex surveys for Cosmo except you can pretend you're calling from CHAT MAGAZINE with a survey about women and the men they've loved! That's perfect. Oh, oh dial --

TARA
I'm not doing it.

DANA
I'll do it. We'll just start with page one.

And before Tara can stop her she dials and then hands the phone to Tara, leaning into the receiver to listen.

TARA
But I thought you --

ANSWERING MACHINE
(singing)
Please leave a message after the tone, if you don't leave a message, we won't know you phoned.

Tara HANGS up.

TARA
Answering machine.

DANA
So you can call back later --

TARA
It's a sign --

The PHONE RINGS. Tara and Dana JUMP, startled. Dana lunges for it. Tara slaps her hand away, Dana reaches with the other hand, Tara YANKS Dana's hair, Dana grabs a fist full of Tara's hair.

DANA
LET GO -- get the phone --

TARA
YOU LET GO -- Nate gave me a code, that's not the code --

The machine picks up.

NATE'S VOICE ON OUTGOING
Please leave a message.

BEEEEEEEEP -- Tara and Dana, still holding each other's hair, stand still to listen.

WOMAN'S VOICE
(raspy/sexy/accent)
Hi...Nate, are you there? Look, I know you're there...I have caller I.D...c'mon, pick up. Typical.
(sighs)
I have to say I'm surprised you called. And curious. I...really can't imagine why you called. Maybe it's because you're in between relationships and horny, is that it? Okay...I'm home. Oh, there's an opening Saturday night in Soho, at Gallery 57...you should come. Okay, bye-bye.

Click. Silence. Tara and Dana release their hold on each other. Dana holds up the book, looks at the number.

DANA
That was Pippa Anders.

CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE - SAN FRANCISCO

A plush office with all the trimmings and a view of the The Golden Gate Bridge. Nate is going through a rigorous interview, but looks completely distracted.

BOSS MAN
May I ask why you are seeking a position in the non-profit field when you will never earn the salary you currently take in?

NATE
Because...this isn't about money for me anymore. I mean, money is important, but now it would be about --

Nate's CELL PHONE RINGS. He tries to ignore it -

NATE (cont'd)
It would be about...raising money for others --

The Boss Man stares at Nate's jacket pocket as it continues to ring.

NATE (cont'd)
I'm sorry, I forgot --

BOSS MAN
No, please, go ahead.

Nate grabs the phone, swivelling his chair away.

NATE (INTO PHONE)
Hello...Jessica? What are you -- are you kidding? We've been over this. We agreed that I was the best one to take care of him.
(raising his voice)
When you were working ninety hour work weeks and then moved out, that's - he's comfortable with me. I can't talk now, I'm in a job interview.

Nate hangs up, swivels around.

NATE (cont'd)
Sorry, really. Custody battle.

BOSS MAN
(sympathetic)
Your child?

NATE
No, a cat.

The man looks disgusted.

BOSS MAN
I'm more of a dog man, myself. Okay, so you want to work in non-profit --

NATE
Yes. I...I want to help people. I...I like people, and I think people...
(searching)
Who need people --

BOSS MAN
(singing)
Are the luckiest people in the world.
(beat)
Big Barbara fan.

Nate stops, surprised, laughs. The Boss Man joins him until Nate's cell phone begins to ring again.

BOSS MAN (cont'd)
Why don't you take five son and come back when you're ready.

CUT TO:

HALLWAY - DAY

Nate picks up the phone, resumes SCREAMING.

CUT TO:

EXT. GALLERY 57 - NIGHT

Lots of "wearing all black types" spill out onto the street, smoking. Dana and Tara ENTER:

GALLERY - NIGHT

Techno blares throughout the space, throngs of PEOPLE move in and out of rooms displaying art. Tara searches the space.

TARA
How am I going to know who she is?

DANA
I brought some pictures.

Dana produces a few photos. Tara sifts through them.

TARA
This just seems...impossible.

DANA
C'mon, we're just here to look at art like everyone else.

They walk into:

GALLERY A - NIGHT

Lots of paintings on the walls. They wander around, looking more at the people than the art.

TARA
She could be here...right now, watching us.

They wander into the next

NEXT SPACE

PENISES. A room filled with plastic, sculpted, towering multi-colored penises. They walk to the wall and look at the artists' name.

DANA
(grabbing Tara)
This is her. This is her stuff!

Tara looks around the room. They walk past a fish tank with motorized penises zig-zagging through the choppy waters.

DANA (cont'd)
It's kind of fun.

TARA
The woman is obsessed with penises...

Dana stops in front of a bobbing metal see-saw penis.

DANA
Don't be a prude.
(nodding towards see-saw)
C'mon, let's try it.

Tara grabs her hand, leads her away.

TARA
She's here...somewhere...

They turn around to face a series of bronzed penises on the wall. Each placard has a name beneath it.

Dana clamps her hand over her mouth. There, in the center of the display is NATE'S PENIS. Tara checks it out, yep, it's his.

TARA (cont'd)
Don't look at it --

DANA
It's art, Jesse Helms. I have a right.
(tries to turn her head)
You never told me he was that --

Tara starts to drag her towards the exit.

TARA
C'mon, we're going.

The sound of CLAPPING and CHEERS as a WOMAN enters the gallery. She is dressed in a cowgirl outfit and fishnets. Her maroon hair tucked beneath a black cowboy hat. A few "bravos" from friends, she bows. This is PIPPA Anders.

DANA
That's her...

Tara watches her carefully. Pippa scans the room, watching the ENTRANCE like a hawk.

TARA
She's looking for Nate.

CUT TO:

BAR AREA - LATER

It's boxed wine and mini quiches, but it's free, and it's where all the artists are hanging out, talking to prospective buyers and fans.

Dana flirts with a guy who is covered in tattoos, they clearly are getting along.

Tara watches Pippa from the wings. Pippa hangs with a GUY. Various people come up and give their congratulations. Tara nudges her way through the crowd, waiting for Pippa to grant her audience. Pippa leans into the guy, giggling.

TARA
Hi, excuse me...I just wanted to say I thought your work was really great.

Pippa turns and gives Tara the once-over.

PIPPA
But let me guess...they don't really go with your decor.

The Guy she's with laughs.

TARA
Uh...I'm not here to buy, I just wanted to ask where the idea --

Pippa's glance slides off Tara and fixates on someone behind her.

PIPPA
JAKE -- Hey, honey!

A new GROUP approaches, all lovey-dovey with Pippa - Tara is pushed out of the way.

CUT TO:

EXT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Tara and Dana stand outside. They are joined by the guy Dana hooked up with.

DANA
Okay, don't wait up.

TARA
Have fun.

They jump in a waiting cab and are gone. Tara sighs, about to hail her own cab when she sees Pippa stumble out of the warehouse, clearly drunk, with another GUY. They argue.

PIPPA
I'm not ready to leave, it's my fucking opening, I want to stay --

GUY
You just said you wanted to go --

PIPPA
Well, now I want to stay.

The GUY hails a cab, he pulls her towards the curb.

PIPPA (cont'd)
Rick, let go --

But he doesn't, in fact, he shakes her roughly, holding on tight so she can't get away.

Pippa attempts to kick at him, but she's no match for this guy. A cab pulls up. She tries to TWIST out of his grasp, but he pulls her hair.

GUY
Just get in --

TARA
LET HER GO --

The Guy looks over at Tara.

GUY
Mind your own business, bitch.

Tara, as if in a trance, steps forward. She PULLS a STUN GUN out of her purse - holds it out in front of her.

TARA
I'll use this --

The GUY turns around slowly, still holding onto Pippa's hair.

GUY
You're not going to use that --

TARA
My Dad gave it to me for Christmas, he'd be disappointed with me if I didn't.

The guy sees the zapping electricity and the look of steely determination on Tara's face. Clearly, she's not backing off.

The Guy laughs, but let's go of Pippa, backing away --

GUY
I'll see you, later.

He jumps into the cab and it pulls away. Pippa stares at Tara, her mascara running down her face.

PIPPA
(shaking)
You better put that away.

They look at one another, bursting into nervous laughter. They calm down, Pippa puts out a shaking hand.

PIPPA (cont'd)
Thank you.

CUT TO:

EXT. NATE'S APARTMENT - ENTRY WAY - MORNING

Tara and Dana walk past the DOORMAN with a nod. Tara carries a grocery bag, Dana a tray of coffees.

TARA
I don't know where I got the adrenaline rush, or the courage, it was like when you hear about those women whose babies are trapped beneath cars and then get that super human strength --

DANA
You lifted a car?

TARA
No. But this was a big guy. And now Pippa and I are going to have dinner. I have to admit, I was amazing. And there's this *bond* now between us...I feel like we could really be friends.

DANA
But, is she the love of Nate's life?

TARA
Probably not, but I'll find out stuff, maybe she'll know who this model was. I don't know, I'm almost afraid to say it, but meeting his ex-girlfriends is easy --

Tara looks outside to see JESSICA FUKUNAGA talking her way past the DOORMAN. She carries an empty cat cage.

TARA (cont'd)
Oh my God. It's Jessica Fukunaga --

Tara looks around as the elevator door finally opens. Tara pushes Dana

INSIDE ELEVATOR

Tara manically pushes the CLOSE button. The doors come together and Tara sighs with relief. Suddenly, a FOOT jams into the door. Jessica Fukunaga steps on. Tara, too late, lifts her grocery bag in front of her face.

Jessica glances at Tara for a beat, then turns forward. After a moment, she turns back.

JESSICA FUKUNAGA
You look really familiar...oh, oh, you were --

Tara lowers the groceries.

TARA
A patient, hi, how are you?

JESSICA FUKUNAGA
Good, wait, so you live here? I saw your form, it didn't list --

TARA
I'm moving. My friend lives here.

They all nod, glancing ahead. Jessica sees the only floor lit is number 3.

JESSICA FUKUNAGA
Wait, you live on the third floor? I used to live on the third floor.

Tara pushes Dana slightly.

TARA
She lives with her boyfriend...on the third floor.

JESSICA FUKUNAGA
Oh...God, this is so embarrassing. It's not, Nate Goodman by any chance?

TARA
Oh my God --
(shoving Dana)
What a coincidence!

DANA
(rubbing her arm)
Yes. Well, I don't know what to say --

Dana shoots Tara a look.

JESSICA FUKUNAGA
Nate's not back from his business trip?

Dana looks at Tara, then back to Jessica Fukunaga. The elevator doors open. They all step out to:

THE THIRD FLOOR

DANA
No...no, still away. So, why are you stopping by?

JESSICA FUKUNAGA
I know this is a really weird question, but could I come in and see the cat?

Tara looks down and stares at the EMPTY CAT CAGE.

TARA
No --

They all look at Tara.

TARA (cont'd)
He's not here. Remember, remember how he is out being groomed? He's a long hair --

JESSICA FUKUNAGA
I know. Oh. Well.

Tara stares at Jessica's cat carrier.

TARA
So, why the cat cage?

Jessica looks down at it guiltily.

JESSICA FUKUNAGA
(handing it to Dana)
It's silly to have a cat cage...and no cat. I just thought I'd...give it to you.

Dana accepts the cage. Jessica backs away.

JESSICA FUKUNAGA (cont'd)
Don't tell Nate I stopped by.

They watch her run to the stairwell. Tara puts her hand over her heart.

TARA
Was she crying?

CUT TO:

INT. SUSHI RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Pippa downs an oyster out of the shell. Everything she does is sensual.

PIPPA
In an alley, in the back of a cab, in the movie theater on Beaker street, the women's bathroom of TGI Fridays, the diaper changing station...we broke it and every time I go in there I feel guilty, it's still on the floor.

TARA
He likes TGI Fridays?

Pippa shrugs.

PIPPA
(offering her sushi)
Sea urchin?

Tara shakes her head.

TARA
All those public places? He liked that?

PIPPA
Look to gay men if you ever have a question about what straight men like. Gay men like hot looking guys with perfect bodies, right?

TARA
Yeah...I guess.

PIPPA
Well, so do straight men. Even ugly little trolls that don't deserve to see the light of day like their women to be hot. And sex...gay men love sex in public places...hello, road side stops, public bathrooms, theaters, parks? You sprinkle in a few new tricks like that into your relationship and that man is yours.

TARA
Wow. But you're no longer with that guy...uh...?

PIPPA
Nate?

TARA
(nodding)
Were you engaged?

PIPPA
Engaged? Ha! He called me the other night, probably for a quickie. That's the problem with being great in bed, you often get the lonely late night call just to see if you're up for it.

TARA
Has he called you for those?

Pippa thinks about it.

PIPPA
No...come to think of it.
(sighs)
He was different. I guess he was different.

Pippa throws back another shot of saki. She suddenly looks very sad and very drunk.

PIPPA (CONT'D)
In fact, he broke up with me because he didn't feel right sleeping with me when it wasn't emotionally going anywhere. Well, whose fault was that? I wanted it to go somewhere, it wasn't me who wasn't moving it forward --

TARA
Maybe it was for the best --

PIPPA
Maybe it's what ruined my life.
(tears up)
There was no closure. It was just over.

Tara awkwardly pats her hand.

TARA
You're so talented, Pippa...you could use these feelings in your work...create the closure that you need.

Trying to focus on Tara.

PIPPA
Yeah...maybe.
(sighs)
Do you know what it's like to love a guy so much...do everything you can to keep him, and then he leaves you?

TARA
I...can imagine it.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Pippa leans on Tara, unable to stand on her own. Tara opens the door to the cab, gently depositing Pippa.

TARA
Okay, tell the driver where you live.

PIPPA
Where?

TARA
I...don't know, where do you live, Pippa?

PIPPA
In that big place...by that thing.

Tara stares at Pippa for a long time. Pippa starts laughing.

CUT TO:

INT. DANA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Tara drags Pippa into the apartment. She attempts to be quiet, but Pippa drunkenly stumbles around, pulling down a lamp as they enter.

Dana suddenly appears in pajamas.

DANA
Oh no, no, Tara...this isn't good.

TARA
She doesn't remember where she lives. I had no choice.

Dana rights the lamp, Pippa twirls around, knocking it to the floor before she lands beside it.

DANA
This was my Grandmother's, please.

TARA
Just stay there, Pippa. Don't move.

Tara quickly runs around the apartment, taking down photos of Nate. She stashes them in the hall closet, Dana follows.

DANA
She's not a puppy, Tara, you, you can't have her stay here. That's crazy --

TARA
(whispers)
I can't take her to Nate's. Right?

Tara walks back to Pippa, dragging her towards her bedroom.

DANA
Not cool. Totally un-cool.

Dana watches Tara struggle with Pippa's limp form, sighs, and then pitches in. They drag Pippa into

TARA'S BEDROOM

Depositing her on the bed.

DANA
Well...did you learn anything?

TARA
Yeah, he likes to have sex in public places --

DANA
Really?

PIPPA
Who doesn't?

Tara takes off Pippa's cowboy boots, throws a blanket on top of her, shutting the door.

TARA (CONT'D)
Thanks, Dana. I knew you'd understand --

DANA
Whoa, whoa, whoa...where are you going?

TARA
I've got to go back to Nate's place, feed Uncle Pussy.

Dana blocks the front door with her body.

DANA
You're not leaving her here with me. She could be a total fucking psycho.

TARA
She's not.

DANA
Okay, I think this is officially getting out of hand. Today with pretending to be Nate's girlfriend and then --

Tara pries Dana away from the door.

TARA
You encouraged me to do this, you've got to help me out here just a little.
(beat)
When you leave for work tomorrow, just get her up and tell her she has to leave. I'm sorry I have to do this, but I can't starve Uncle Pussy.

Tara kisses Dana on the cheek and bolts.

CUT TO:

EXT. NATE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Tara lies in bed on the phone, Uncle Pussy next to her.

NATE'S VOICE
I've been trying to phone you for two days. I did the code, you didn't answer...

INT. HOTEL ROOM - SAN FRANCISCO - DAY

Nate sits alone on the hotel bed. INTERCUT:

NATE
Is everything alright, you are spending nights there, right?

TARA
Yeah, I was just --

NATE
Is Uncle Pussy alright?

CUT BACK TO:

INT. NATE'S APARTMENT

TARA
Yes...why do you keep asking --

NATE
Has anyone come by and tried to take him...?

Tara is silent a moment.

NATE (cont'd)
Tara?

TARA
What are you talking about?

NATE
It's just I've retrieved some strange messages from...someone, and she said she met you, but it didn't sound like you --

TARA
I...have no idea what you're talking about. Nate, what are you talking about?

NATE
It's...an old girlfriend, she wants Uncle Pussy back. It could get ugly.

Tara sits up straight in bed.

TARA
I'll take care of it.

NATE
What?

Tara gets out of bed, begins pacing.

TARA
Time will take care of it --

NATE
This cell phone service sucks --

TARA
What?

NATE
(beat)
I said...I miss you so much.

TARA
When are you coming back?

NATE
I was going to come back early, but my firm wants me to check out a company in Los Angeles. You're not mad?

TARA
No...just...take whatever time you need, everything here is fine.
(beat)
Nate...are you happy with our sex life?

NATE
Yes...aren't you?

TARA
Yes...but...is there anything else you want to do...would you like to...that I'm not doing...I don't know, try something different?

CUT BACK TO:

NATE'S HOTEL ROOM - SAME

He closes his laptop, the bed is littered with paper work.

NATE
Are you trying to torture me, here? I haven't seen you in days, I'm all alone in a hotel room. I hope you're bringing this up because you want to have phone sex.

CUT BACK TO:

TARA IN BED

TARA
Would you like that?

NATE
Uh...would you like to...?

Nate lies back down on his bed. Tara giggles nervously.

TARA
How do we start?

CUT TO:

INT. ANIMAL SHELTER - MORNING

Rows and rows of cats in cages. Tara points to one. The LAB TECH gets it out of its cage. It is a long hair cat, similar to Uncle Pussy. Tara holds it, kisses him.

INT. WELL HEALTH CENTER - DOCTOR'S OFFICE - MORNING

Tara stands at the counter, pushing it towards the RECEPTIONIST, a note attached to the cage. The Receptionist pushes it back.

RECEPTIONIST
This is a doctor's office, not a vet --

TARA
But Dr. Fukunaga is expecting this, trust me --

Tara begins to walk away.

RECEPTIONIST
You cannot leave this here --

TARA
There's a note, believe me, she will want this cat. Now, I have to go back to work.

Tara RUNS out before she can catch her.

ELEVATOR - MOMENTS LATER

Tara repeatedly presses the down button, when Jessica Fukunaga appears carrying the cat cage.

JESSICA FUKUNAGA
Uh...excuse me, excuse me -- what is this all about?

TARA
Oh...hey, I just dropped off the cat for you --

JESSICA FUKUNAGA
Why?

TARA
I know you were pretty upset about your old cat, so I found the same cat that you described...uh, I work part time for animal rescue, that cat was going to be --
(draws hand across throat)
So, enjoy --

Jessica Fukunaga looks completely confused.

JESSICA FUKUNAGA
I don't know if I can take this...uh...

TARA
Tara --

JESSICA FUKUNAGA
(saying name over)
Tara...oh, Ms. O'Connor, I was to call you today...you need to make another appointment. Your Pap Smear came back abnormal.

Tara turns to face her.

TARA
Abnormal? What, what does that mean?

CUT TO:

INT. JESSICA FUKUNAGA'S OFFICE - DAY

Jessica gets out her file.

JESSICA FUKUNAGA
It's often times a lab error...

TARA
And other times?

JESSICA FUKUNAGA
It's probably a lab error.

TARA
Oh my God...do you mean *cancer*?

JESSICA FUKUNAGA
It could be just a clump of pre-cancerous cells. If caught this early it shouldn't pose a risk --

TARA
Oh my God. I'm going to die.

JESSICA FUKUNAGA
You're not going to die. And please, you can take the cat back --

TARA
Please...

Tara takes the sweet cat out of his cage, puts him on her lap.

TARA (cont'd)
It's my dying wish that you take this cat. He needs a good home.

The cat nuzzles Jessica. She melts, hugging him back.

CUT TO:

INT. CHAT MAGAZINE OFFICE - TARA'S DESK - MORNING

Tara rushes into the office. Dana GLARES at her, Tara walks past, oblivious.

DANA
She's still there.

Tara stops, backtracks.

TARA
Who's still there?

DANA
Pippa...*still there.* Did you give her a key?

TARA
Uh...I told her to just put it under the mat. I'll...

Tara looks over and sees Audrey yelling at someone on the phone.

TARA (CONT'D)
I'll go back at lunch and make sure she's out.

DANA
(sotto voce)
If you still have a job.

OUTSIDE AUDREY'S OFFICE - MORNING

Tara knocks lightly, then enters.

AUDREY LANFORD'S OFFICE - SAME

Tara ENTERS Audrey's office. It looks out over Times Square. The view from the window behind her shows the billboard in progress. TINY MEN hang from scaffolding, finishing the work. Half of the model's face eerily stares ahead.

TARA
Uh...Audrey...I'm sorry I was late, I had a doctor's appointment that ran over.

AUDREY
(still typing)
You're only twenty minutes late. Why bother apologizing at all?

Tara winces, watching her continue to type. The phone rings, Tara reaches for it, but Audrey beats her to it.

AUDREY (CONT'D)
Audrey Lanford's office. Oh, Henry, hello...it's me, Audrey.

Audrey swivels her chair away from Tara. Tara walks back to:

HER DESK

Where Pippa sits behind it. Tara gasps, surprised.

PIPPA
Hey.

Tara casually takes a framed photo of Nate off the edge of the desk, pocketing it.

TARA
How did you know...

PIPPA
You mentioned you worked here.
(beat)
To thank you for letting me crash, I brought some things to help you out with your sexual problems.

Pippa says it rather loudly. Dana stares at the whole thing from across the way, as does a few of her office neighbors.

TARA
(whispering)
I really don't think this is the place --

Pippa stands, dumping a bunch of SEX TOYS onto Tara's desk.

PIPPA
Okay...this boyfriend of yours. Does he like you to put your finger up his --

TARA
Pippa - *please.*
(glancing around)
I've never done that.

PIPPA
Oh, honey. Guys love that...remember the whole gay sex conversation we had? *Love it.*

Pippa dangles a dayglow, wiggly plastic thing.

PIPPA (cont'd)
This looks like a soap dish, but I'm telling you, have him wear it and it will drive you *crazy*.

Audrey comes up to the desk, peers over it.

TARA
I'm coming --

PIPPA
You will once you start using these --

TARA
Uh...Audrey, I'm working on a story idea for the magazine about...
(looking down at sex toys)
Pleasing your man by...pleasing yourself.

Audrey turns on her heel.

TARA (CONT'D)
Sorry, very busy here Pippa...uh, I'll talk to you later?

PIPPA
Sure, just, thanks for letting me crash.

Pippa walks away. Dana gets up and stares at her back as she leaves. Dana yells over to Tara's retreating form.

DANA
Those better not be my shoes she's wearing - can she afford Manolo Blahniks?

Dana gets up and tries to catch her before the elevator doors close.

AUDREY'S OFFICE - SAME

Tara is about to sit down when she looks out the window to see that the final piece of the Calvin Klein billboard jigsaw puzzle is now in place. Staring back at her is the WOMAN FROM NATE'S PHOTOS - Tara GASPS, dropping her coffee and spilling it all over Audrey's desk.

AUDREY
This desk is teak -- my papers --

Tara SWIPES everything off the desk top and onto the FLOOR. Completely rattled she takes off her sweater and begins to mop up the mess. The phones start ringing off the hook.

Dana walks in.

DANA
Dan Albright on line two -- *is that my sweater?*

TARA
I'll get it dry-cleaned.

Dana gives her an icy stare and retreats.

TARA (cont'd)
(after Dana)
Sorry --
(to Audrey)
Sorry.

AUDREY
Just...get out.

TARA
But I can --

AUDREY
OUT.

CUT TO:

OFFICE LOBBY - DAY

Tara leads Dana over to the window. They stare out together.

DANA
What?

TARA
The billboard. It's her. That's --

Tara extracts a PHOTO from her pocket, holding it up to the glass.

DANA
Nate's model.

TARA
I'm sure this is the one he was in love with. *Look at her*...she's perfect.

Dana pulls Tara away from the window.

DANA
Don't you think you've learned enough? It was an experiment, it didn't work.

TARA
But Dana, I haven't met the woman he was in love with yet. Once I talk to her, I don't need to meet any more of his ex-girlfriends.

Tara turns, stares straight into the model's face.

TARA (cont'd)
That's her. I *feel* it.

CUT TO:

EXT. FERRY TO ALCATRAZ - MOVING - SAN FRANCISCO - DAY

The Boss Man and Nate stand on the deck, Alcatraz looms in the distance.

BOSS MAN
You can't come to San Francisco and not see Alcatraz.

NATE
Quite a sight, sir.

BOSS MAN
So what do you think, are you going to come work for us?

Nate looks off to Alcatraz.

NATE
I need to think it over, can I have a week?

BOSS MAN
Sure. You're staying through the weekend, right?

NATE
I'm actually going to go home early, surprise my girlfriend.
(beat)
(MORE)

NATE (cont'd)
We have a lot to talk about when I return.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - DANA'S APARTMENT

Pippa instructs two MOVING MEN who carry her see-saw penis sculpture off a truck.

PIPPA
Careful, careful...

She props open the door, standing aside. They stagger beneath the weight.

MOVER #1
You can't hold it by the shaft, hold it by the balls --

MOVER #2
Man, if you think it's so easy, you hold it by the balls. The tip is much easier, so shut the fuck up.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL BALLROOM - NIGHT

GORGEOUS MODELS work the catwalk. The most outrageous fashions from the world's top designers.

BULLPEN

MEDIA MONGRELS climb over each other, hungrily snapping at the models who pass by, jostling Tara and Dana about.

TARA
I don't stand a chance. If she is asking about Nate and wants him back, I'm through.

Dana, still pissed, stares straight ahead at a MODEL.

DANA
You're right. Let's hope she doesn't.

TARA
Really...is that what you think?

Dana shrugs.

TARA (cont'd)
I'm going to lose him. I'm going to lose him to a woman who is perfect.

Dana finally looks at Tara, sees she's falling apart.

DANA
Look at that model, she looks like she's straight from a concentration camp. These women are <u>not</u> perfect, and neither is this Kate Cates.

The Model is now close enough to hold onto.

DANA (cont'd)
See, it's all airbrush. Bags under her eyes, all sunken in, skin is sallow...her looks says "I'm starving, please feed me". I'm surprised flies aren't buzzing around her head.

This makes Tara smile.

TARA
You're right -- you're so right!

An ERUPTION OF APPLAUSE. The BEST saved for last...

A DOZEN WHITE DOVES fly from back stage and from it emerges --

KATE CATES

IN A SEE-THROUGH DRESS, a thin gold wire birdcage descends from around her Disney-eighteen-inch waist. Wild flowers braided through her golden locks. She is THE MOST BEAUTIFUL WOMAN ALIVE.

TARA

As if she'd swallowed a Molotov cocktail.

DANA
Ohhhhh, see, that can't be real.

Tara swallows hard as Kate Cates approaches. Squinting - looking for flaws. NOT FINDING ANY. VENUS REBORN.

TARA
(whispering)
No...*she's flawless.*

A VOLLEY OF FLASHBULBS. Kate Cates caught in an electric storm of media adulation. She winks, and sashays away.

The spell is momentarily broken. Dana looks at her friend. Tara is *crushed*.

Dana grabs Tara's arm, crossing her eyes, she sticks out her tongue pretending to choke. Tara looks at her quizzically.

DANA
Dumb as a post.
(winks)
Betcha.

INT. HOTEL BALLROOM - BACKSTAGE - LATER

Tara and Dana watch KATE CATES answer reporters' questions.

In *French*.

Italian.

Japanese.

TARA
She's a supermodel with Einstein's brain. Why did he let her go?

DANA
I'm sure she knows a few pat answers in different languages, that doesn't make her a genius.
(beat)
What's that clucking noise she's making?

TARA
I think it's Swahili.

DANA
You better go talk to her --

TARA
She's in the middle of a press conference --

DANA
(flashing pass)
You want to be a reporter, here's your chance.

Tara looks at what Dana is waving. It says AUDREY LANFORD, CHAT MAGAZINE.

TARA
You took Audrey's pass, oh my God, I'm so fired --

Tara takes the press pass and steps forward but is halted by several MEATY BODYGUARDS. Kate's MANAGER steps in the way.

MANAGER
Kate Cates is through giving interviews, thank you.

Bodyguards ESCORT Kate Cates away.

EXT. HOTEL - LATER

Tara waits in a taxi watching the EXIT DOOR like a hawk.

KATE SLIPS OUT of the back of the hotel and into a stretch.

IN THE CAB

Tara leans forward, nudging the DRIVER.

TARA
Follow that limo.
(looking back at Dana)
I'll see you at home.

They peel out from the curb.

EXT. CAB - MOVING

The cab follows closely. They pass glamorous club after glamorous club.

INT. CAB - SAME

Tara stares at the expensive boutiques and glamorous hot spots that they pass - expecting the limo to pull over at any minute...

The limo finally pulls over to:

EXT. MANHATTAN MONTESSORI PRE-SCHOOL - LATER

Tara gets out of the cab and crosses the street just as Kate Cates disappears inside. Tara stops, surprised, looking at the sign for the pre-school one more time before entering.

INT. MANHATTAN MONTESSORI PRE-SCHOOL - LATER

CHILDREN run everywhere. TEACHERS give chase. PARENTS pick up their PRODIGIES.

Tara SEARCHES, spying Kate talking to a TEACHER in the corner of the room. She holds a LITTLE BOY who struggles in her arms.

He drops to the ground playing with a Tonka truck, making "vrrrroooooommm vrrrooooom" noises.

Tara DROPS to the floor and crawls through the maze of toys and remaining children. She scoots past Kate's child, stops and takes a good look. He looks like a MINIATURE NATE.

Tara wildly looks around, there's no place to HIDE. Spying a large PLASTIC TOWNHOUSE with a roof, she crawls into it. She *just* fits, completely hidden within the structure.

MRS. WILLIAMS (O.S.)
He's too much for us to handle --

Tara opens a shutter, peering up at --

KATE CATES AND TEACHER

Kate towers over the tiny troll of a woman, yet looks vulnerable. The TROLL calmly sips a glass of water.

KATE
He's a smart little boy, he just needs --

MRS. WILLIAMS
More attention. We agree.

KATE
Look, it's really hard raising him on my own...

TARA

EYES grow to the size of SAUCERS. Hearing a light knocking, Tara opens the opposite shutter. Baby Nate holds out his cupped hand.

Tara places her finger to her lips: "shhhhhh".

MRS. WILLIAMS (O.S.)
We're finding it difficult to control him. We found him in the bathroom with a set of magic markers drawing shapes onto Lucy and Sarah's *bottoms*.

Kate BURSTS out laughing.

MRS. WILLIAMS (O.S.) (CONT'D)
I'm glad you find that so amusing.

BABY NATE holds out his curled fist again. Tara sticks her open palm out through the tiny window.

BABY NATE
Sushi.

He performs the hand-off, Tara looks down:

A GOLDFISH WRIGGLES IN HER HAND.

Tara looks up to see Baby Nate standing on two chairs and a stack of Encyclopedias, EXTRACTING yet another fish from the tank.

Tara opens the opposite window, looks up at Kate Cates.

MRS. WILLIAMS
...He said he was giving them tattoos *just like his mothers'*. Now it's not my place to judge --

Kate crosses the room to her son.

KATE
Oh, but you already have.

Kate takes her son off of the tier of chairs, looks back.

KATE (cont'd)
You know what, I don't want my son in such a limiting environment. There are plenty of schools in this city.

Tara, still peeking out from within the confines of the playhouse watch Kate and Baby Nate leave. Tara looks up at...

TEACHER WITH GLASS OF WATER

Tara slips the live goldfish into the glass. Turning, she looks up to see...

Baby Nate waving "goodbye".

CUT TO:

INT. DANA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Tara walks in, flipping on the light. PENISES are EVERYWHERE. Tara SCREAMS. Pippa appears from the bedroom.

PIPPA
Oh my God, you scared me.

TARA
I scared you...oh my God, Pippa, what is this?

PIPPA
I had a fight with the guy who I share warehouse space with, he was going to throw my work onto the street. Now, I arranged --

TARA
No, no, no, no. You can't...has Dana been home, has she seen this?

PIPPA
I don't think so...she called, there's a message on the machine saying she'd be out late.

TARA
Are you wearing her clothes?

PIPPA
I couldn't get back home --

TARA
Change immediately - quick, grab a penis, we can't have this stuff here when she gets back.

PIPPA
I had to pay two moving men to get this stuff here --

TARA
Will it fit in my room?

PIPPA
You can't pile them up --

Just then Dana walks in with James. She stares at everything, then to Tara.

DANA
This shit can't go on any longer --

TARA
I didn't know this was going to --

DANA
Tara, this is worse than the time you brought home that puppy that ate my Prada boots. This is worse. This shit has to go *now* --

PIPPA
I won't be able move it until I find another warehouse space --

DANA
Oh my God, will you listen to that?
(to Tara)
My Dad is coming over tomorrow to give me this month's mortgage payment. He approved of Pottery Barn for the apartment he's paying for, not items from the catalogue of "Up My Ass Digest."

James laughs.

PIPPA
Hey, that's not fair --

Tara clamps a hand over Pippa's mouth.

TARA
It will be, I promise.

DANA
(looking at Pippa)
Are you wearing my clothes --

Dana LUNGES at Pippa, pulling at her clothes and hair. Tara and James step in, pulling them apart.

TARA
Dana, I'm sorry.

James drags Dana to the door.

DANA
No, I'm sorry, you're going to have to find a new place, Tara.

CUT TO:

INT. AUDREY LANFORD'S OFFICE - DAY

AUDREY
You're fired.

TARA
I have an amazing idea --

AUDREY
I've already heard that you were at the Calvin Klein show...reporters working for this magazine saw you in the VIP room, and then I started to wonder how could that be? I search around in my little desk and low and behold...no press pass.
(standing)
Good luck elsewhere, I'm not sure you'll want a reference from me --

Tara silences her by HOLDING UP HER HAND. Audrey stops, shocked.

TARA
Models with Toddlers, kind of an exposé on working models with children...their challenges, we always think of models being these sex goddesses, perfect bodies, but how do they handle the challenges of motherhood and --

Audrey backs Tara out of her office. RICK JENKINS, Audrey's boss, comes to the door, listens.

AUDREY
You'll have to train the new hire --

TARA
Think of it, Cindy Crawford, Christie Brinkley, this new model Kate Cates, have you heard of her --

RICK JENKINS
That is a great idea, Audrey. Women are always complaining about how sexist our interviews are, but that idea should appeal to a lot of women.

TARA
I was hoping to make that my first story, sir --

RICK JENKINS
Great idea. Get to it.

Audrey looks at Tara and scowls. Tara smiles.

CUT TO:

INT. WORKOUT CLUB - STEP AEROBICS CLASS - NIGHT

Countless MODELS, ACTORS and BEAUTIFUL BODIES leap and kick in unison to a throbbing techno beat. Except...

TARA

STEPS right when everyone else steps LEFT. She's WATCHING KATE CATES in the mirror. Tara turns, slamming into --

AMAZON ON HER RIGHT
Get the fuck off my step --

XENA SHOVES Tara into the AMAZON ON HER LEFT, who SHOVES BACK.

AEROBICS INSTRUCTOR
(into headset microphone)
You, in the second row, beginners step is next class.

Tara, red-faced, ducks out.

HALLWAY - LATER

Tara now slumped against the wall, waits...sees Kate EXIT.

Tara pushes through the SWEATING MASSES --

TARA
Hi, hi Kate Cates...excuse me...I'm Tara O'Connor from CHAT MAGAZINE.

Kate looks at her blankly. She is SO BEAUTIFUL.

TARA (cont'd)
The article, "Supermodel Mommies"?

KATE
God, I don't even remember...that.
(sighs, looking at watch)
I'm going to work out for another hour, but maybe you can interview me while we work out.

Tara tries to look enthusiastic.

PUNCHING BAG STATION - LATER

Tara holds the huge bag. Kate punches and kicks it.

KATE
I could have -- an army of people --
(punch, punch, kick)
looking after Joshua, but I want him to be a part of my life.
(kick)
I had him because I wanted him. But his father...

Kate UNLEASHES HER RAGE --

KATE (cont'd)
...is too immature to handle fatherhood.

TARA
Who is he...the father?

TREADMILLS - MINUTES LATER

Kate RUNS like the BIONIC WOMAN. She shows no signs of tiring. Tara on the other hand...

KATE
I don't want to talk about him --

TARA
(panting)
But...who...is...he?

Tara looks worried.

KATE
I was never one of those women who wanted to be a single mom, either. I don't think it's necessarily hip, it's hard.

TARA
I'm sure you do a great job.

ALPINE SKI-ANTI-GRAVITY-THING - MINUTES LATER

They slalom back and forth.

TARA
So...did the father not want to take responsibility, or...?

KATE CATES
To be fair...he doesn't know.

TARA
Oh my God --

Kate turns on Tara quickly.

KATE CATES
What, are you going to judge me, too?

TARA
No, it's just...how do you know he doesn't want to be the father?

KATE CATES
You wouldn't say that if you knew him --

TARA
That's not fair. I'm sure he would take responsibility.

KATE CATES
He was only interested in me because I was a model --

TARA
No way, you're an incredible person.

Kate smiles at Tara.

KATE CATES
You're good for my ego!

HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

TARA
What if the guy, the father, doesn't want to date you, but wants to participate --

Kate's PAGER goes off, beep, beep, beep...

KATE
I've got to pick up Josh from the sitter.
(carefully looks at Tara)
Look, I'm sorry I told you my whole life's story, I didn't even give you anything you can print - it's just...you're the first normal adult I've talked to in months.

Kate's PAGER goes off again.

KATE (cont'd)
I mean it. Models are real head cases.
(beat)
I gotta book, but oh, we haven't finished. I'll...I'll call you at your office.

Kate jogs away down the hall and is gone.

CUT TO:

INT. WALL STREET - SOLOMON SMITH BARNEY - DAY

Tara sits across from Alex Mernit, Nate's best friend and co-worker. His office is pretty posh, city view. He looks tense.

ALEX
Whoa. You're sure?

TARA
Positive.

ALEX
How old's the kid?

TARA
Two...three, I'm not sure, but what I do know is that it's Nate's son...and she hasn't told him and doesn't plan to.

ALEX
She said that?

TARA
Yes. What are you going to do?

Alex gets up and shuts his door.

ALEX
What am I going to do?

TARA
You're his best friend --

ALEX
You're his girlfriend --

TARA
That's right, so why is it my job to tell him his ex-girlfriend had his baby?

ALEX
How do you know this stuff?

TARA
I'm a reporter --

ALEX
I thought you were a receptionist.

TARA
Look, I suggested this story on models with children, and she came up, and I did the research and there you have it. She had Nate's child, he doesn't know.

ALEX
I just thought she took off so fast because of her modelling.
(turns to Tara)
You're sure about all this?

TARA
She left for London because she didn't want to face him.

ALEX
Wow. I had no idea.

TARA
Yeah, either did Nate apparently.

Alex looks out the window, rubbing his face. He slowly looks back at Tara.

ALEX
Why are you doing all this...you know this might screw up your relationship.

TARA
Because...what if he's only with me because he thinks he can't have her? And...after meeting Kate and her son, I just want them to have a chance to be together...if that's what they all want.

ALEX
You're amazing Tara, you know that? Really, you're doing the right thing.

TARA
Thanks, Alex. Well, I better get going.

Tara turns to leave.

ALEX
Oh, Tara --

Tara turns back.

ALEX (cont'd)
How is she...otherwise?

TARA
She's good. She's doing well.

Alex nods.

ALEX
Okay, I'll uh...tell Nate when he gets back.

CUT TO:

INT. BEAUTY SALON - NIGHT

Tara sits in a chair facing Kate as she gets her hair done.

TARA
So, you've been modelling for how long now?

KATE
(yawning)
Feels like my whole life...

Kate turns her attention to Tara, looks her over. Kate turns to the stylist, RON.

KATE (cont'd)
Ron, look at all her thick hair...are you thinking what I'm thinking?

Ron stops fluffing Kate's hair and stares at Tara.

RON
I'm starting to...robe please!

A GUY appears. He places a robe around Tara. The STYLIST looks at her carefully in the mirror, leaning in to listen to Kate. Kate gets up, standing behind Tara.

TARA
I just had a trim --

KATE
See, she has beautiful bone structure, but all this...

Kate leans forward and picks up Tara's long hair.

KATE (cont'd)
...sorority hair...obscures her beauty.

Tara makes a face.

TARA
I just got a trim --

STYLIST
(to Kate)
You are right...this lifted and look at what is exposed! Juan, Ben, Shawnie, hurry, my supplies!

TARA
I really don't want a *short* haircut --

KATE
Tara, relax, you are in the hands of a *genius*, and this is my treat for listening to all my sad stories!

Kate leans down and squeezes Tara.

KATE (cont'd)
Isn't this fun?

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - LATER

Tara and Kate walk down the street looking like an odd version of the Bobsey Twins...Tara's hair is cut exactly like Kate's. Tara pulls at her short bob, looking into a window.

KATE
You look fabulous --

TARA
That's what you both kept saying.

Kate stops and looks at Tara, surprised, hurt.

KATE
You don't like it?

Tara can see she feels bad, instantly tries to take it back.

TARA
It's not that I don't like it...I mean, it looks *fantastic* on you, but you are a model...I'm...not.

Kate looks at Tara carefully, her gaze dropping from Tara's face to the rest of her.

KATE
You're right...but not because of the haircut, it's your clothes, your clothes are all wrong.

TARA
I don't think that's it.
(beat)
What's wrong with my clothes?

CUT TO:

INT. KATE'S APARTMENT - CLOSET - DAY

ROWS AND ROWS OF CLOTHES.

KATE
You hide beneath these baggy, funky clothes...that's fine for college, but you are a working girl now. You want to be noticed, you have to put yourself out there. Say good-bye to thrift stores and hello to a wardrobe that shows off your style --

TARA
But that is my style...

Kate throws a fun, sequined party dress up against Tara.

TARA (CONT'D)
See, where would I wear this?

Tara turns and looks at herself in the mirror, and likes what she sees, she twirls slightly, smiling.

TARA (cont'd)
Wow, is this Prada?

KATE
Of course and it will look fabulous on you...here, I have a sewing machine in the back bedroom --

Kate takes the dress, Tara follows her. She stops in the hallway when she sees a black and white PHOTO OF NATE. He stands shirtless, looking incredibly handsome.

TARA
Wow...I love that photo --

KATE
And I loved that man...

They both look at him together.

TARA
Have you tried to call him since you got back?

KATE
No...

TARA
What are you waiting for?

Kate smiles, nods.

KATE
You give me confidence to do things I would never do...you know, maybe I will.

She holds the dress up against Tara again.

KATE (CONT'D)
There's this great party I thought we could go to tonight, Josh is going to be at his Grandma's all night...

CUT TO:

INT. LIMO - MOVING - NIGHT

Tara is in the middle of a coterie of MODELS. She is dressed exactly like them, slip dresses beneath fur, stilettos, and champagne flowing. Tara has obviously had a lot. One of the MODELS opens the sunroof to the car and pokes her head through. She pulls Tara and Kate up with her. They scream and wave.

EXT. HALO - NIGHT

A line around the block. The limo pulls up and the girls get out. Tara looks at her watch.

TARA
Is this Halo?!! I've never been able to get into this place --

KATE
You will now!

Tara and the rest of the models pour out of the limo and waltz right past the BOUNCER.

INT. HALO - LATER

Tara dances in the middle of the models, looking like one herself...

CUT TO:

INT. NATE'S APARTMENT - MUCH LATER THAT NIGHT

Tara lets herself into Nate's apartment. She calls out into the darkness.

TARA
Hey Uncle Pussy...hey kitty, kitty --

Tara reaches for the light switch but stumbles over something in the dark -- FALLS TO THE FLOOR.

Suddenly the LIGHTS go ON. Tara SCREAMS. Tara looks up to see Nate peering down at her. He wears his pajamas. Tara has fallen in the middle of his suitcases.

TARA (cont'd)
Oh my God, Nate! Nate, you're home early!

NATE
And you're drunk...where have you been?

Nate extends his hand, helping her to her feet. Tara adjusts her dress, self consciously tugging on her hair.

TARA
I was out with Dana and then --

NATE
Where has all your hair gone? My God, you look like a completely different person.

Nate walks around Tara, who teeters on her three inch heels.

TARA
You like it?

NATE
You look beautiful - where did you say you were again?

The questions, the surprise, the alcohol coursing through her veins, Tara lunges into his arms, kissing him all over.

TARA
WELCOME HOME!

They stumble back towards the bedroom, knocking over every lamp and piece of furniture on the way.

CUT TO:

NATE'S BEDROOM - LATER

Nate turns on the light, Tara pulls back, hiding beneath the blanket.

NATE
I just wanted to make sure it was still you --

TARA
What?

NATE
Where did you get that gadget?

TARA
Did you like it?

NATE
And that position...that, that defied the laws of gravity --

TARA
You didn't like it?

NATE
How could anyone not like *that*...although, I don't know if I should move.

Tara giggles, swats at him. Nate turns over and stares at her for a long moment.

NATE (cont'd)
You seem...different...and I don't think it's just the hair...
(looking at her carefully)
How long was I gone for?

Nate pulls her close.

NATE (cont'd)
I missed you, Tara. I missed you so much.

Tara smiles into his chest.

NATE (CONT'D)
And...I'm sorry I did that, left like that...without talking to you first.

TARA
It's okay, please, you don't have to explain.
(looking up at him)
Nate...I have something to tell you --

NATE
Wait, I want to say something first. I should have said this a long time ago...

Nate pulls back, looking at Tara.

NATE (cont'd)
I'm not taking that job in San Francisco, I haven't told them yet, but I will Monday.

Tara smiles.

TARA
Great --

NATE
But what I really want to tell you is...

Nate takes her face in his hands.

NATE (cont'd)
I love you.

Tara clasps her hands over her mouth.

TARA
You do?
(tearing up)
You already know this, but I love you, too!

They come together and begin kissing passionately.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

They sleep deeply...the alarm clock next to the bed reads "10:00 a.m." Tara and Nate are intertwined. Nate rolls over and faces Tara. She awakens, he smiles.

NATE
So beautiful...

Tara's hand flutters to her face.

TARA
But I don't have any --

NATE
You don't need makeup...I love your freckles...I'm going to kiss each and every one...

And he begins to do just that when the DOORBELL rings.

NATE (cont'd)
Go away --

It keeps ringing.

NATE (cont'd)
Ugh...don't move.

Nate gets up and throws a robe on, Tara burrows beneath the covers, smiling.

Tara listens to the doorbell ring once again. POPS up in bed...thinking...wondering...worrying...

CUT TO:

DOORWAY - HALLWAY - MORNING

Nate opens the door to reveal KATE, bundled up, holding a tray with two coffees and a bag of bagels.

CUT TO:

BEDROOM - SAME

Tara wraps the sheet around her, stumbling to the door, she peeks through and sees Kate.

NATE
Look, Kate, this really isn't the time --

KATE
Just tell me you have someone here, tell me you're with someone, I'm not pathetic.

NATE
Can we talk later? *Please* --

KATE
Forget it --

Kate turns on her heel and leaves, he watches her.

NATE
Don't be mad, Kate --

He watches her go, softly closing the door behind him. He turns around to face Tara.

TARA
Who was that?

NATE
An old...friend, girlfriend. Alright, an old girlfriend...I didn't know she was going to stop by, I haven't seen her in years.

TARA
If you want to talk to her, go ahead, you could still catch her --

Tara walks to the window and looks out.

TARA (cont'd)
She's there, she's just leaving.

Tara goes to open the window, Nate walks over and stops her.

NATE
No. I haven't seen you in a week. You're the one I want to spend my Saturday with.

He envelopes her in an embrace.

NATE (cont'd)
I thought we could go to Manny's for lunch and then --

TARA
(remembers)
Shit. I can't. I have plans.

NATE
Can't you cancel them?

Tara extracts herself from Nate, heading for the bedroom.

TARA
I didn't know you were coming home early...and...

BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Tara quickly gets dressed back into her party dress from the night before.

NATE
I want to spend the day with you. Who are you meeting --

TARA
Work. It's Audrey...we can spend the evening together?

NATE
Since when do you work on a Saturday?

Tara turns from him, Nate pulls her back.

NATE (CONT'D)
Is there something you want to tell me?

TARA
(searching his face)
About...?

NATE
Nothing...it's just...you aren't upset about her...showing up, are you? Because I had nothing to do with that --

TARA
No...I know. But if you want to talk to her, an ex-girlfriend, that's fine with me.

Nate looks at her with newfound admiration.

NATE
God, you're so...centered. So...*secure*. You know what a turn on that is?

Nate begins to kiss her once again, reaching around for the zipper. Tara steps back firmly.

TARA
I'll see you tonight.

CUT TO:

INT. WELL HEALTH CENTER - DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Tara sits up from the table, wrapping the paper gown around her.

JESSICA FUKUNAGA
I'm sorry we had to do that again...

Tara stares straight ahead.

JESSICA FUKUNAGA (cont'd)
Thanks again for the cat, he's great.

TARA
Great, I'm glad.

JESSICA FUKUNAGA
You okay?

TARA
Well...I've been lying to my boyfriend...

Looks at Jessica.

TARA (CONT'D)
And some other people...it seems like I'm finally getting what I want, but...never mind.

JESSICA FUKUNAGA
If you want to talk to someone...we could grab a coffee, or, you play tennis? I have the courts reserved for next Saturday.

TARA
Oh, thanks, but...I'm moving.

JESSICA FUKUNAGA
Oh that's right...out of my old place.

Tara nods. Jessica pats her shoulder, looking down at her chart.

JESSICA FUKUNAGA (CONT'D)
Everything will be fine. Your results will be back in a week, but don't worry.

CUT TO:

INT. NATE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Nate and Alex play reality boxing video.

NATE
How did you know Jenny was cheating on you?

ALEX
Don't try and distract me man, I'm winning --

Nate KNOCKS out his BOXER. Alex throws down his controls.

ALEX (cont'd)
Bullshit, that's bullshit and cheating.

NATE
How did you know?

ALEX
She started acting different. She changed her hair...started dressing differently, and working out more. You recognize the signs.

Nate sighs, picking up the controls. Alex picks his up, they start a new round. Nate's boxer throws a few punches, almost knocks Alex's boxer down.

ALEX (cont'd)
Ha, take that bitch.

He finally KNOCKS OUT Nate's boxer.

ALEX (cont'd)
PUSSY, HA, HA, HA LOSER!
(beat)
What...you think Tara might be cheating?

NATE
I don't know...she's acting really strange.

Alex stops Nate.

ALEX
I don't think she's having an affair, man. Look, I know why, she actually came and told me something while you were gone...

Nate looks at Alex.

ALEX (cont'd)
Nate, Kate had a baby...the kid is now almost three, it's your kid.
(MORE)

ALEX (cont'd)
When she left for London she left because she didn't want you to know.

NATE
Oh my God.

ALEX
I know, pretty wild.

NATE
But...how does Tara know?

ALEX
She was doing this story, or research for some story on models with kids, and found all this stuff out --

NATE
That must be why she came over, and Tara was...Jesus, I have a kid, a, a --

ALEX
Little boy. Congratulations, man.

NATE
Wow...I've got a son.

CUT TO:

INT. RESTAURANT - DAY

Kate and Tara sit at a table with Joshua in a high chair.

TARA
Kate...what is it? You haven't said two words since I got here.

KATE
Men are so...disappointing.

Josh throws up his hands. Suddenly going spastic, he moves all his food onto the floor. They both laugh.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - LATER

Tara and Kate walk along, Joshua fusses in his stroller. They are about to pass FAO Schwartz.

TARA
Come on, this place always cheers me up, and now I have an actual excuse to go in.

Tara pulls Kate into the shop.

CUT TO:

INT. SHOP - CONTINUOUS

Kate lightens up, taking Joshua out of his stroller. Tara takes him out of her arms. They begin to wander through the aisles.

KATE
So, do you want to go camping next weekend?

TARA
Oh...I can't...I'm, I'm actually moving in with my boyfriend.

KATE
Wow, I haven't even met this mystery man.

TARA
Yeah, I know. About that --

Suddenly Joshua runs down an aisle.

TARA (cont'd)
I'll get him --

Tara takes off after Joshua who heads for a train display. She gets onto her knees, playing at the table with him.

TARA (CONT'D)
C'mon, let's go back to your Mom.

Tara picks him up as he kicks his protest, bumping into a WOMAN.

TARA (cont'd)
Sorry, I --

WOMAN
Tara?

Tara looks at the woman and sees that it is Audrey. Joshua smiles a big, bright smile at Audrey. Audrey returns the smile and this is the first time we've seen it.

AUDREY
What a beautiful boy! What's his name?

TARA
Joshua.

Joshua turns and looks at Tara, kissing her. Audrey smiles again.

AUDREY
Tara, I have to apologize, I feel so embarrassed...I had no idea you were a mother --

TARA
No, I'm --

AUDREY
I was a single mother, too. And that was back in the day when that wasn't so popular, but let's face it, fashion or not, it's not easy.

Tara smiles, trying to explain again.

TARA
He's not --

AUDREY
That much work? Oh, c'mon. Look, I want to really talk to you at length on Monday about supermodel mommies, how's it going? Are you able to do the work and be at my desk --

TARA
It's hard --

AUDREY
Well then, let's get a temp in there and give you some real time to pursue this. If it works out, you can help me hire your replacement.
(to Joshua)
It was nice to meet you, little man.

Audrey squeezes Josh's arm and disappears. Tara looks at Josh who smiles as if he knows he just helped her out.

INT. DANA'S APARTMENT - DAY

Tara lets herself in. No penises anywhere.

TARA
Dana...

No answer.

TARA (cont'd)
Pippa?

CUT TO:

INT. NATE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Nate faces Tara on the couch.

NATE
I know everything --

TARA
You do?

NATE
I talked to Alex, he told me I have a son...Kate's son. I had no idea, really --

TARA
I know you didn't.
(beat)
So, are you going back to her?

NATE
No. Wait, oh, Tara, is that what you thought? Did you think I wanted to get back together with her?

TARA
Well...

NATE
I want to take responsibility for our child. I want to see him, be his father, but I don't want to be back together with her, *that way*. I want to be with you. I'm in love with you.

Tara smiles with relief, which is then quickly replaced by FEAR.

TARA
So...you're going to talk to her?

NATE
Yes, but I just wanted you to know all of this beforehand. And Tara?

TARA
Yes?

NATE
Will you move in with me? I don't want to live apart from you any longer.

Tara wells up. Nate pulls her into an embrace.

CUT TO:

INT. DANA'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Dana and Tara struggle awkwardly towards the door with an overstuffed couch. By the look of it, they've been at this for hours, however there's still tons of boxes and shit everywhere.

DANA
It's never going through that doorway --

TARA
It got in didn't it --

DANA
Not through that door it didn't --

TARA
Just tilt it --

Tara pushes Dana through the door, Dana stumbles backwards.

DANA
Stop shoving --

TARA
Lower your end --

Dana DROPS the couch.

DANA
WHY AM I THE ONLY ONE HERE?

TARA
Nate is coming, he just had to drop by the office first - what is your problem?

DANA
My problem? My problem is that I'm the *only one* helping you...and none of this would have happened if you hadn't let that psycho stay here --

TARA
I would still be moving in with Nate, and it's amazing to me that you forget your part in this whole girlfriend thing --

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
Tara? Tara...hey --

They stop arguing and look to the doorway to see KATE CATES and a huge GUY watching them.

KATE CATES
I came to help you move, and I brought a friend...this is Joe, my personal trainer.

TARA
(truly touched)
You brought your personal trainer to help me move? That's so sweet!

DANA
(sotto voce)
I'm going to be sick.

Tara quickly looks at her watch, realizing what that means.

TARA
But -- we really don't need your help, I have some other people coming --

DANA
Bull shit --

TARA
Dana, please --

DANA
With their help, we could finish this in an hour --

CUT TO:

EXT. OUTSIDE - DAY

Joe the trainer carries the couch out the rest of the way on his back while Kate, Tara and Dana follow with boxes. Kate and the trainer disappear back inside. Tara pulls Dana aside.

TARA
Nate is going to be here any second --

Dana pulls away.

DANA
I'm not talking to you --

Tara grabs her.

TARA
Once again, this is your fault.

DANA
Let go, or I'll do damage.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - LATER

Tara nervously loads Kate up with boxes.

TARA
Just take this down, and then you can leave --

KATE CATES
We just got here!

Kate stumbles forward with the boxes just as NATE WALKS IN THE FRONT DOOR. Tara PULLS HER BACK through the kitchen. All Nate sees is a body with boxes in front of it.

TARA
The hallway is blocked, the bed thing, uh...could you take them down the fire escape, the door is there, at the back --

KATE CATES (CONT'D)
Okay...

She teeters towards the fire escape, disappearing as Nate ENTERS the kitchen.

NATE
Who was that?

TARA
Her, oh, a friend from work.

NATE
And that huge guy downstairs?

TARA
Her...boyfriend.

Nate hugs her, kissing her neck.

NATE
Great, you got some help after all. I brought Alex.

Alex POPS his head in.

ALEX
Hey, Tara.

TARA
Hey - we're starving, can you go and get some breakfast...please, I feel like I'm going to faint --

NATE
(kissing the tip of her nose)
Okay...

TARA
GREAT!

NATE
But we'll get the bed first. No point leaving without taking something.

They disappear into Tara's bedroom. Tara follows into the living room just as PIPPA enters through the front.

PIPPA
Tara, thank God you haven't finished moving --

Tara lunges on Pippa, covering her mouth with her hand.

TARA
You can't be here.

Tara drags her into the:

KITCHEN - SAME

PIPPA
I know this is all my fault and that's why you have to let me help --

TARA
No. Dana wants to kill you --

PIPPA
Fine --

Pippa heads for the living room, but Tara pulls her back.

TARA
You should leave this way --

PIPPA
Then I'll take a few boxes --

TARA
HURRY. JUST THROW THEM DOWN AND DON'T COME BACK --

Tara throws a few boxes at her, turning, she sees Alex and Nate backing into the kitchen HOLDING THE MATTRESS.

TARA (cont'd)
You have to take that down the front --

NATE
I thought you just said --

TARA
NO. Joe has the desk down there and he has a bad knee, it's slow, please, the front the front the front, go, go GO --

LIVING ROOM - WINDOW - MOMENTS LATER

Tara RACES to the window and watches as Kate is about to ENTER the front of the building.

TARA
(shouting down)
KATE --

Kate looks up.

TARA (cont'd)
Can you meet me on the fire escape, I have some more boxes --

Kate gives her the thumbs up and heads for the back stairwell just as Nate and Alex emerge with the mattress.

CUT TO:

EXT. FIRE ESCAPE

Kate passes Pippa on the fire escape. They say "hey" as they pass.

Kate ENTERS through the kitchen.

KATE CATES
Now, what do you need?

TARA
Uh...Kate, I need...I need...

Tara leads Kate back into the living room, wildly looking around.

TARA (cont'd)
The bathroom...can you clean my bathroom? I'm sorry to ask but...

KATE CATES
No, no that's cool. No problem.

Kate disappears through to the bathroom just as JESSICA FUKUNAGA ENTERS.

TARA
Jessica? What are you --

JESSICA
Great place! I brought you a housewarming gift, it's only a plant, but, really cute little place. I can help bring some stuff up --

TARA
No, no, that's okay, I have *plenty* of help --

JESSICA
You've still got a ton of boxes down there, I'm staying until you're finished.

TARA
(small)
Oh...I think I'm finished.

Jessica EXITS.

Kate Cates ENTERS the room.

KATE
Is your mop still in the kitchen?

Tara nods, Kate disappears INTO THE KITCHEN.

NATE AND ALEX APPEAR with the bagels and coffees. Nate hands them to Tara.

NATE
I've just got to wash my hands.

Nate heads for the bathroom.

ALEX
Are there still boxes in your bedroom?

Tara can only nod.

Dana stares in disbelief as they all just miss each other. Dana turns and shakes her head at Tara.

DANA
The laws of gravity say, what goes up...

KATE CATES EMERGES from the kitchen with the mop just as ALEX EMERGES FROM THE BEDROOM.

PIPPA ENTERS through the kitchen.

JESSICA FUKUNAGA ENTERS carrying a huge potted palm.

NATE RE-EMERGES FROM THE BATHROOM.

They all STARE at one another in disbelief, various parties recognizing each other, EVERYONE recognizing disaster. SILENCE. Everyone turns on Tara.

CUT TO:

EXT. APARTMENT - STREET - LATER

Jessica Fukunaga walks briskly from the building.

Followed quickly by Pippa, who turns and yells over her shoulder.

PIPPA
And you think I'm fucking nuts! Whew, you take the case --

Kate Cates EXITS, Tara on her heels.

KATE CATES
(turns)
I really thought we were friends, I trusted you, Tara. What, was all that friendship just some kind of a fake out? Did you do all of that just to get to know my little secrets about Nate?

Finally Dana, Nate and Alex emerge sheepishly, trying not to look at this painful fight.

TARA
(choking up)
No, Kate...I want us to remain friends --

Audrey steps out of a cab carrying a gift wrapped in baby paper.

KATE CATES
I don't see why --
(to Alex)
And by the way, you're the father of my baby. I left for London because I was embarrassed that I cheated on Nate.
(glaring at all of them, and then Tara)
SATISFIED?

Kate Cates runs down the street. Alex, stunned, looks after her.

ALEX
I'm a father? I'm someone's Dad and I didn't even know it --
(running after Kate)
KATIE, wait up -- I want to meet him, I WANT TO MEET MY SON -- WAAAAIIIIIITTT!

AUDREY
Wait, Tara...that wasn't your baby?

TARA
No, I tried to --

AUDREY
What you won't stoop to, unbelievable!

Audrey turns and walks away.

This leaves Dana who looks at Tara sympathetically and slowly walks back inside, leaving Tara and Nate to face one other. The only sound is the dead leaves blowing across the sidewalk.

TARA
I don't know what to say.

NATE
I don't know if I want to hear it.

TARA
Okay...well, we found out you're not a father...that's good, right?

Nate shrugs.

NATE
That would've been okay.

TARA
Well then, what? Say something...anything.

NATE
Why? Why did you do this behind my back?

TARA
It just sort of happened.

Nate looks at as if to say, "you'll have to do better than that."

TARA (cont'd)
I...I heard about Kate...and then I found out she was a model...I was worried I wouldn't measure up. You've been with all of these interesting women.

NATE
Tara --

TARA
I know. I know.

NATE
What happened to honesty...and trust?

TARA
I guess I honestly wanted to know something that you didn't trust me with.

Nate turns and walks away. Tara goes to speak, her voice cracks.

TARA (cont'd)
And you didn't trust me Nate, you didn't...or you would have told me about your past.

And without waiting for a response, Tara quickly turns and disappears back into the apartment.

SUPER: TWO WEEKS LATER

INT. CHAT MAGAZINE - DAY

Tara hovers above a young woman, JANET, who now trains for her job. She is clearly nervous. Tara in comparison is composed, the seasoned veteran. Two lines ring at once.

TARA
Go ahead.

JANET (INTO PHONE)
Audrey Lanford's office. She's not in right now, may I take a message?

Janet searches the desk for a pad to write on, Tara supplies her with the phone log.

TARA
(whispers)
Ask to put them on hold --

JANET
Can you hold please?

Tara punches the second button. Janet takes down the messages.

CUT TO:

AUDREY LANFORD'S OFFICE - LATER

Tara staggers a half dozen newspapers on Audrey's desk.

TARA
She likes them in this order, New York Times, San Francisco Chronicle, Financial Times and then the Columbus Dispatch, she's from Ohio. Coffee, no cream or sugar, on the upper left hand corner. Phone calls or faxes on her chair so she can't miss them. When she walks in she likes the first ten minutes to collect her thoughts unless her boss, Jenkins, is on the line --

Tara is unaware of it, but Audrey stands at the door watching.

TARA (cont'd)
She always wants to know when her mother or boyfriend Roger is on the phone, but she has two sisters, she usually will take Rhonda's call, but take a message from Carla --

Audrey enters, nods.

TARA (cont'd)
Good morning.

Audrey nods her hello. Tara and Janet brush past.

OUTER OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

TARA
Don't bother telling her anything important until she's had two cups of coffee, she won't retain it.

CUT TO:

TARA'S DESK - LATER

Tara packs the very last of her belongings. She carefully puts a framed picture of Nate on top.

JANET
I have something to ask you...

TARA
Yeah, anything.

JANET
You're so amazing at this job. Can you tell me what you did to get fired, so I won't repeat it?

Tara slips on her coat and picks up her box.

TARA
Trust me, there's no chance of that. Good luck, I'm sure you'll do a great job.

CUT TO:

DANA'S DESK - LATER

Tara and Dana hug.

DANA
I feel awful. I kicked you out of our apartment, you and Nate broke up, and now you've been fired.

TARA
I know, and it's all your fault.

Tara pulls away.

TARA (cont'd)
I'm kidding.

DANA
You know, you don't have to move out now. You can stay...

TARA
Thanks.

DANA
Have you called him...at all?

TARA
No. I don't think he ever wants to hear from me again.

DANA
It's been a couple of weeks...you should try.

Dana's phone starts ringing, she runs around to the other side of the desk. Tara hoists her box up, and walks out.

ELEVATORS - DAY

Audrey catches Tara just as she is about to get on.

AUDREY
Tara, hey. I just wanted to give you this.

Audrey hands Tara a chit of paper.

AUDREY (cont'd)
She's expecting your call. I would do it today if you can.

Tara looks down at the piece of paper.

TARA
Beth Brown, the editor of GIRL POWER magazine?

AUDREY
That's right. I fired her years ago. Most of the top editors in this town were once employees of mine.

TARA
Thank you, Audrey. But why am I calling...I mean, is it for an assistant position...or?

AUDREY
A writer...I think you're a terrible assistant. If I were you I would stick to the creative side of things. Good luck.

TARA
But, does that mean you read my --

Audrey walks away, stops.

AUDREY
I'm printing your article about exes, it'll be in this months magazine in our true stories section.

Tara squeals and runs back to Audrey, about to hug her, Audrey puts up her hand to stop her.

AUDREY (cont'd)
Please, no physical contact.

Audrey turns on her heel and walks away, a ghost of a smile crosses her face.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - DAY

Tara exits the building. She looks up to see they are replacing the Calvin Klein billboard. Only half of Kate Cates face looms above Times Square. Tara stares at it as PEOPLE jostle her about.

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON THE REAL KATE CATES. WE ARE:

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - DAY

Her face as lovely as ever, but there is something different about the way she looks, happy and peaceful. We hear laughing, and we now see who she's been watching...

ALEX AND JOSHUA

running after each other in the park. Alex falls down and Joshua leaps on top of him, pummelling him.

They cover each other in the fall leaves, Josh's laugh contagious...Kate runs to join them.

CUT TO:

INT. JESSICA FUKUNAGA'S APARTMENT - DAY

Jessica sits at her kitchen table, working. She stops when her cat jumps into her lap, putting a paw on her shoulder. She strokes the cat, looking out the window.

Jessica kisses the cat and then picks up the phone and quickly dials.

JESSICA (INTO PHONE)
Hi, I was just calling to get the lab results of one of my patients. Yes, a Tara O'Connor...

CUT TO:

INT. ART STUDIO - DAY

Pippa is hard at work on a sculpture made of papier mache. She works quickly, completely into what she is doing.

CUT TO:

EXT. BROWNSTONE - BROOKLYN - NIGHT

Tara and Dana walk out of a cute building on a street filled with cute buildings.

DANA
Are you sure you want to live way the hell out here?

TARA
Brooklyn's not that far out. Besides, I can't afford to live by myself in Manhattan.

DANA
I just feel so guilty that I kicked you out in the first place...and had James move in --

TARA
No. I think living on my own is a good idea.

DANA
But you're going to be *all alone* --

TARA
I'm going to be *on my own*, there's a difference.
(beat)
And when I get my shit together, I'm going to get Nate back. I miss him so much.

Just then a BLONDE WOMAN strolling a baby carriage passes them going in the opposite direction. Tara spins around --

TARA (cont'd)
Kate -- Kate, it's Tara -- KATE!

Tara takes a few running steps in the woman's direction. The woman finally turns around, but it's not Kate. Tara puts up her hand in apology, slowly turning to face Dana.

DANA
It looks like Nate isn't the only one you miss.

CUT TO:

INT. KATE'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

Tara knocks on the door. After a moment Kate answers the door.

TARA
Before you slam the door in my face, which you have every right to do, I just want to tell you I'm sorry --

Kate lunges forward and gathers Tara up in an embrace.

CUT TO:

INT. WELL HEALTH CENTER - ROOM - DAY

Tara sits on the edge of the table. Jessica Fukunaga walks in.

JESSICA
I just wanted to let you know in person --

TARA
Am I dying?

JESSICA
You're normal. Completely healthy, like I said, we just had to do a second test to be sure.

Tara breaks down crying. Jessica puts her arm around her.

JESSICA (cont'd)
And even though it was completely insane, I understand what you did. I think we all understood. I would never do that myself, but it was kind of wild that you did.

They hug.

CUT TO:

INT. DANA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Tara stands at the door, sifting through mail. She gets to a rather large manila envelope and opens it. We look down to see an invitation to PIPPA ANDERS NEW WORK AT STUDIO 4. Tara smiles.

CUT TO:

INT. ART GALLERY - NIGHT

Tara and Dana enter the packed gallery. Photographers, celebrities, rich and starving artists all mix and mingle.

Tara scans the room looking for Pippa, jumps when she turns around and sees Nate -- or what looks like Nate. In fact, it is a room FILLED WITH NATES.

CARTOON PLASTER AND METAL REMAKES OF NATE being SWALLOWED, TORTURED, FRIED. Duplicates of Nate everywhere being devoured and reshaped. The plaster Nates all look alike, except for their cause of death.

Tara looks up to see:

NATE SUSPENDED FROM THE CEILING...over to...

NATE BEING TAKEN DOWN BY A PACK OF WOLVES...

NATE DROWNING IN QUICKSAND.

Finally, a LARGE STEEL JAW that rests in the middle of the floor. A tiny man TRAPPED inside, covered in a slime-like substance. A tinny recording of a blood curdling scream repeats endlessly.

Walking up to the steel jaw, both Dana and Tara lean in simultaneously to read the placard. The neat black on white, understated print reads, DIGESTING NATE.

Tara is transfixed. She looks up to see Jessica and Kate Cates as well as Alex all standing around looking at it as well. Alex whistles. Pippa joins them.

PIPPA
Well...what do you think? The exhibit is called CLOSURE...thank you, Tara, for helping me with the idea.

TARA
You're welcome...it's great, really, amazing work Pippa.

They hug briefly.

TARA (cont'd)
I wonder if Nate is coming...is he coming?

Tara looks at Pippa and then Alex adjusts his tie.

ALEX
Uh...didn't you know, Tara?

TARA
What?

ALEX
He took that job...in San Francisco.

TARA
Oh?

Tara instantly deflates. She tears up, everyone looks at her.

TARA (cont'd)
But I thought he turned them down...I thought --

ALEX
They still wanted him. So, he said yes.

TARA
But I was going to try and, and see him...it's too late. How could he be gone?

ALEX
He's not.

Tara looks up hopefully.

ALEX (cont'd)
Well...he leaves tonight.

TARA
When, what time?

ALEX
(glancing at watch)
His flight takes off in two hours.

Tara looks at everyone.

TARA
I need to stop him...I'll never get there in time - oh God.

Just then a good-looking, built GUY wearing a police uniform comes up and puts his arms around Pippa's waist.

GUY/OFFICER BILL
Hey, how's it going?

Pippa smiles, turning to look at her new beau.

PIPPA
Maybe we *can* get you there in time.

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE CAR - MOVING - NIGHT

Tara, Dana, Kate and Jessica are crammed in the back of the cop car. Pippa is in front with her guy OFFICER BILL, they're practically making out. The SIRENS going.

DANA
Isn't this illegal...I mean, using a police vehicle for something --

OFFICER BILL
You'd be surprised how often we do this --

TARA
Can you go any faster?

Officer Bill puts pedal to the metal, they all SCREAM.

CUT TO:

EXT. JFK - NIGHT

They pull up at drop-off.

KATE
Now remember, Nate likes an honest apology, sincerity --

JESSICA
Also, don't try and turn it back on him, he doesn't like to be wrong --

PIPPA
And an offer of a blow job on the way home may not be a bad idea --

EVERYONE
Pippa --

PIPPA
Okay, okay, but just keep it simple. You fucked up, no one is permanently damaged, you're sorry.

TARA
Right. Thanks guys...I love you!

Collective hug.

CUT TO:

EXT. TERMINAL - NIGHT

Nate pulls up in a cab a few cars down from them. He gets out and heads inside.

INT. TERMINAL - NIGHT

Tara looks around wildly, heading for the American Airlines check in.

SECURITY - NIGHT

Nate heads straight for the baggage check-in. Goes through.

Tara appears, sees him right in front of her. She runs to go through and is stopped by a security agent.

SECURITY AGENT
Ticket, please.

TARA
I don't have one, I'm just --

SECURITY AGENT
Sorry, no ticket, no entry into the gangway --

TARA
See that guy, I have to see him before he leaves, please -- can't you stop him?

SECURITY AGENT
No.

Tara gives him a dirty look.

TARA
(screams)
NATE -- NATE GOODMAN, NATE --

A few PEOPLE turn around, but her voice sounds small and quickly disappears.

SECURITY AGENT
Are you going to be a problem, because I don't want to have to call back up if I don't have to.

CUT TO:

BANK OF PAY PHONES - MOMENTS LATER

Tara quickly dials.

CUT TO:

STARBUCKS - TERMINAL - SAME

Nate stands in line, checks his watch. The phone rings.

NATE (INTO PHONE)
Hello?

TARA'S VOICE
Nate, hi, it's me...don't hang up. I'm here at the airport, they won't let me through without a ticket.

Nate steps up one more in line.

NATE (INTO PHONE)
What are you doing?

TARA'S VOICE
Apologizing...

CUT BACK TO:

PAY PHONES - SAME

TARA (INTO PHONE)
I don't want you to leave. I want to be with you. I know what I did was insane. Nate, I'm sorry, I'm so --

NATE'S VOICE
Caramel Macchiata, no foam --

TARA (INTO PHONE)
What?

NATE'S VOICE
Nothing...I'm ordering a coffee...

TARA (INTO PHONE)
Aren't those a little sweet? I thought you took your coffee black --

NATE'S VOICE
When I'm at a Starbucks I splurge.

TARA (INTO PHONE)
Oh.
(beat)
See...I didn't know that about you....please don't leave. I love you so much...I can't just let you leave.

CUT BACK TO:

STARBUCKS - SAME

Nate looks back to the general area that Tara is standing in. The following is INTERCUT:

NATE (INTO PHONE)
I'll call you when I get to San Francisco.

TARA (INTO PHONE)
(chokes up)
You're going?

Nate visibly softens.

STARBUCKS EMPLOYEE
CARAMEL MACCHIATA NO FOAM --

TARA (INTO PHONE)
Well...that's you.

Nate starts running back to the main part of the terminal.

NATE (INTO PHONE)
Yep...

ANNOUNCEMENT
Now boarding American Airlines Flight 263 bound for San Francisco, now boarding...

TARA (INTO PHONE)
That's you too, uh?

MAIN PART OF TERMINAL

Nate runs through to the terminal, searching all of the phone booths...he finally spies Tara, curled into the phone, facing away from him. He stops, slowly walks towards her.

NATE (INTO PHONE)
Did I ever tell you about Missy Hogan?

TARA (INTO PHONE)
Who?

NATE (INTO PHONE)
From kindergarten, my first girlfriend.

Nate now stands about ten feet from Tara, he watches her through the crowd.

TARA (INTO PHONE)
(laughing)
No...so, was she hot?

NATE (INTO PHONE)
Incredible...strawberry blonde, freckles like you have...she used to stick gum in my hair. She smelled of gum and Tinker Bell perfume...and then there was Dolly in first grade --

TARA (INTO PHONE)
What happened to Missy?

Nate steadily approaches.

NATE (INTO PHONE)
I caught her kissing someone else in the cloak room, then it was all over...but Dolly, she was a hot little number.

TARA (INTO PHONE)
I'm jealous...

Nate now stands inches from Tara.

NATE (INTO PHONE)
See...that's why I never wanted to talk about ex-girlfriends...

Tara, hearing him, feeling him, turns around. They face each other, still holding their phones. He leans in and kisses her...it is a classic, romantic comedy end of the movie kiss. Then...Nate pulls away.

NATE (cont'd)
I've got a plane to catch --

He kisses her quickly and starts to turn away. Tara follows.

TARA
Are you kidding, what, you're --

NATE
I'm still taking the job, honey, I accepted, I have an apartment, my plane is boarding now, I have to --

Tara, flabbergasted, tries to re-group.

TARA
But, I thought --

NATE
Look, we're going to try and make this work...it will be long distance and it will be hard, but we have weekends...and then we'll see. Just trust that it will work...I think we have a pretty good chance.

TARA
Trust...

They kiss again quickly and Nate stares deeply into her eyes.

NATE
I'll call you as soon as I get there --

TARA
Call before...on one of those airplane phones.

Nate turns and runs back through security, leaving Tara alone in the terminal. He turns and waves just before he walks through and disappears...but not for good.

INT. DANA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Tara sits curled up on the couch, cradling the phone.

NATE'S VOICE
That's when I was fourteen. God, was she beautiful. She was French. And then the next summer, I was a camp counselor...Monique, she was older and --

Tara nods.

TARA
Okay, okay, I think I got the picture.

NATE'S VOICE
We haven't even gotten out of high school yet.

TARA
Well...maybe we should just talk about them when it's...relevant.

Tara laughs as he begins to protest.

FADE OUT:

THE END.