

BEN FOX IS MY MANNY

"Pilot"

written by

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COLD OPEN

INT. KATE'S DUPLEX - DAY/INT. BEN'S APARTMENT - DAY

We INTERCUT between two people, waking up:

KATE FOX, 26, lies asleep in her perfectly made bed. Her eyes pop open at 6:29 and she shuts off her alarm before it BEEPS. *

BEN FOX, 28, lies face down, fully clothed, on top of his *Star Wars* comforter. His alarm BEEPS on the bedside table -- it's a coffee maker. He reaches over and pushes a toaster button down. *
*
*

--Kate takes a shower.

--Ben watches TECH NEWS in bed. The toaster POPS. A piece of pizza comes out. He opens his bedside table (which is also a mini fridge) and takes out some OJ, drinks. *
*
*

--Kate puts on the Target version of a perfect J Crew outfit.

--Ben takes off his *Cheerios* T-shirt, airs it out, and puts it back on. *
*

--Kate brushes her teeth, then mouthwash, then floss.

--Ben reaches into a toothbrush holder and pulls out a pack of gum.

--Kate expertly packs a child's backpack.

--Ben hastily shoves things into a suitcase. The door slams. He rips an eviction notice off it. *

--A yoga DVD plays while Kate pays bills. WIDER REVEALS she's in downward dog.

--Ben goes running. WIDER REVEALS he's chasing a cab.

INT. KATE'S DUPLEX - MORNING

It's neat and homey, cobbled together from garage-sale finds. Kate puts the finishing touches on an elaborate emergency kit. Bins labeled -- FLOOD, FIRE, BIRD FLU, SWINE FLU. As Kate labels the last one: "PANDEMIC - OTHER," she steps back and smiles. Perfect.

Just then, Kate's daughter MADDIE, 5, enters, holding two identical shirts. *
*

MADDIE

This one or that one?

KATE

What's wrong with the one you have on?

MADDIE

This is my emergency shirt. In case something bad happens at school.

KATE

(kneeling down)

Oh, sweetheart, nothing bad is gonna happen, I promise. I have everything under control.

Kate blows Maddie a kiss. Maddie blows one back, machine-gun style and Kate falls to the floor, clutching her heart. Maddie laughs.

EXT. KATE'S DUPLEX - SAME

We see the back of a CREEPY GUY as he jiggles the back door. *

INT. KATE'S DUPLEX - SAME

Kate double checks the EpiPen in her emergency kit--

KATE

See you gotta make sure the EpiPen isn't expired otherwise boom -- reduced efficacy.

MADDIE

What am I allergic to?

KATE

Well, nothing yet. But you've got your whole life ahead of you.

Just then, the creepy guy climbs in through the French doors behind Kate. He gets tangled in the curtains. Maddie SCREAMS. Kate spins and stabs him repeatedly with the EpiPen. He spazzes out, beating away the curtains. *

MADDIE

Uncle Ben!

BEN

(to Kate)

What is wrong with you?!

Ben yanks the EpiPen out of his neck and throws it at Kate as Maddie jumps into his arms.

END COLD OPEN

ACT ONEINT. KATE'S DUPLEX - DAY

Ben Fox does adrenaline laps around the living room in his *Cheerios* T-shirt.

BEN

Fight or flight, fight or flight.
Why did you stab me with
adrenaline?!

KATE

Why did you break into my house?

BEN

I was trying to surprise you.

KATE

You know I hate surprises--

POP TO A *YOUNG KATE* sleeps in the top of a bunk bed as a
YOUNG BEN climbs in the window. Kate wakes, startled, and
SCREAMS. She immediately falls off the bed with a *THUD*. *
*
*

YOUNG BEN *
*

Hey, so I get top bunk tonight? *

BACK TO SCENE. *

KATE

What are you doing here?

BEN

I missed you guys. But I'm here *
for a reason. In fact, why don't *
you sit down? *

MADDIE *
*

(serious) *

This is a Ben-tervention. *

BEN *
*

That's a Maddie original, TM. *

KATE *
*

Have you guys been talking about *
me? Wait, an intervention for *me*? *

Wordlessly, Ben opens the closet to reveal her insane emergency *
kit. Then he ceremoniously snaps off her fanny pack. *

KATE (CONT'D) *

No.... I just wear it around the *
house.... *

POP TO *Kate wearing her fanny pack at the store, by the pool, over her gown at the OBGYN.* BACK TO SCENE. *

BEN *

We're all worried about you. You *

need to get out more. *

KATE *

Who's this "we"?

Just then BJ, 25, lets herself in. She's wearing a slutty *

dress, clearly on a walk of shame. She kicks off her shoes-- *

BJ *

I brought Spanx. You're definitely *

gonna need Spanx. *

BJ starts taking hers off as Kate turns to Ben-- *

KATE *

What is she talking about? *

BEN *

Listen... *

(opening his mouth) *

You can hear my heartbeat in my *

throat. *

BJ *

(eyeing Kate) *

I say we go for "sexy librarian" so *

the whole I've-given-up-and-there's- *

a-fanny-pack-where-my-vagina-used- *

to-be thing seems intentional. *

KATE *

Will somebody please tell me what's *

going on? *

BJ hands Kate the Spanx she was just wearing. *

BEN *

Remember that Ryan guy from High *

School? *

POP TO *the back of someone's head. Luxurious, bouncing hair. REVEAL it's a hot guy, RYAN. YOUNG KATE (frizzy hair, braces) stands at her locker. He passes, oblivious, as Kate takes his picture--* *

YOUNG KATE *

For yearbook? *

Kate opens her locker. There are a bunch of weird photos of Ryan inside. BACK TO SCENE. *

KATE
Vaguely. Barely. Whatever. Shut
up.

BEN
I set you guys up on a date!

KATE
You what?!

BEN
Come on, you're Most Likely to
Succeed...he's Best Hair.
(off Kate's look)
He asked about you last time I was
here. Well, he asked if you were
still a lesbian and I said you
never were, you just thought socks
with sandals were more comfortable,
and he said he always thought you
were cute but that you needed to
loosen up--
(then)
Am I having a seizure?

KATE
Ben, I don't need your help.

Kate opens the pantry and uses a broom to knock something off
the top shelf into her hands.

KATE (CONT'D)
Wait-- he knows who I am?

BJ
You haven't been on a date since
Maddie was born. And that was,
like, twenty six years ago.

MADDIE
I'm five.

BEN
It's not about the date. The
date's a metaphor, dude. It's
about you getting your life back on
track.

KATE
My life? What about you? What
ever happened to that office sleep
system you were working on?

POP TO *Ben demonstrates his sleep system (a multi-functional
travel pillow complete with fake files to hide behind).*

He "sleeps" in three different positions on a desk. BACK TO SCENE. *

BEN *

I just have to do a patent application but since I didn't follow through with the... *

(seeing something) *

...hey, is that hummus? *

Ben makes a lobster claw because he can't reach it. Kate pushes the hummus towards him-- *

BEN (CONT'D) *

This is the moment. You're teetering on the edge of cat lady.... It's now or never. *

KATE *

Look, this has been super fun, but I'm fine. And do me a favor and mind your own business. *

Just then, the DOORBELL RINGS. Kate opens it to see TOMMY, 28, standing there in his tennis whites with a sweatband on his long flowy blond hair. *

TOMMY *

Hello, Kate. I heard you have a date tomorrow. *

(as Kate walks away) *

It's just weird since I've been asking you out for six years.... *

(then, hugging Ben) *

Ben Fox is in the house! *

KATE *

Tommy, we had sex once during my

TOMMY

Hot phase.

KATE
Fat phase.

KATE (CONT'D) *

You need to let it go. *

Ben covers his ears and makes a loud noise as we POP TO Tommy hitting on Kate throughout the years: *

THANKSGIVING TOMMY *

How 'bout now? *

THANKSGIVING KATE *

No. *

CHRISTMAS TOMMY *

Now? *

CHRISTMAS KATE

No.

VALENTINES TOMMY

But you're in another fat phase
now...

Kate just looks at him. WIDER REVEALS she's pregnant. BACK
TO SCENE.

BEN

You're disgusting. Both of you.

TOMMY

It won't be disgusting once we're
married.

Maddie walks in, ready for school.

BEN

Okay, it's National Ben Day.
Maddie's gonna take the day off....

Maddie squeals happily and tosses her emergency shirts aside
as she gets her coat. Kate gives Ben a look.

BEN (CONT'D)

You'll take Tommy's car and I'll
take Maddie on some errands so you
can go to work then get your hair
fixed.

KATE

(a beat)

What's wrong with my hair?

BEN

Are you kidding? You look like you
just got out of prison.

KATE

I'm a single mom, I don't have time
for that kind of--

Kate stops, looking out the back door. There's A PILE OF
BEN'S STUFF there -- suitcases, boxes, a lamp.

KATE (CONT'D)

Did you stage a fake intervention
because you needed a place to stay?

BEN

Don't change the subject. Did I
get evicted? Yes.

(MORE)

BEN (CONT'D)

Am I having some legal issues that
prevent me from being in the state
of Arizona right now? Objection.
Hearsay. The bottom line is...you
need help. And I'm here for you.

*
*
*
*
*

As her friends look at her pityingly, Kate sighs, frustrated.

*

INT. TOMMY'S PERV-MOBILE - DAY

Kate struggles to drive BJ home in Tommy's stupid rape van:

KATE

I need help?! He's the one who's
homeless. I love how he just shows
up here with his *Cheerios* T-shirt
and his good-time Charlie routine
and he judges me! He had a carry-
on bag of fake tattoos! Every time
Ben Fox comes to town, something
bad happens.

*
*
*
*

BJ

Look out!

*

KATE

(swerving)
Ah! What?! What!

*
*
*

They hit the curb. A hubcap rolls across the street.

*

BJ

See, nothing bad happened.
(the bumper falls off)
I think I might still be drunk.

*
*
*
*

INT. KATE'S MOMMY-MOBILE - SAME

Tommy sits shotgun as Ben drives. Maddie's in back.

BEN

Hey Mad Hatter, you been practicing
your Pig Latin?

MADDIE

Veni vidi--
(she snorts like a pig)
Carpe-- (snort)

BEN

Nice work.

Tommy leans in, intense--

TOMMY

There's something I need to tell
you...I didn't know how to....

(a beat)

Darcy got engaged.

Ben pulls over, deadly calm.

BEN

When? When did it happen?

TOMMY

Um...

(counting on his fingers)

Approximately one year ago.

Ben hits him repeatedly with a newspaper then pulls back into
traffic, furious.

TOMMY (CONT'D)

I didn't know how to tell you! I
know how much she means to you.

BEN

Yeah, sure, why would I care what's
going on with the only woman I've
ever loved. The one I refer to
exclusively as Mrs. Ben Fox.

TOMMY

The wedding's in three days.

BEN

What?!

TOMMY

Just kidding, it's tomorrow.

BEN

I'm going. I've gotta go.

TOMMY

Yup, don't worry, we're gonna crash
this wedding. I've got a plan.

BEN

You had a year to think about it!

TOMMY

Drop me off at the Army Surplus
store. We're gonna need supplies.

INT. OTTER LODGE - DAY

It's that local bar that everyone comes back to when they're home. Kate and BJ work together in matching titty shirts. The BARTENDER puts cocktails on BJ's tray as Kate adjusts them for greater stability.

KATE

He doesn't save me. I save him!
(then)
Fine, so maybe I'm a little
controlling.

BJ

Nobody said that. To your face.

KATE

(taking BJ's tray)
Here, lemme do that for you.

As Kate serves BJ's table, BJ just shrugs and pours herself a stiff drink.

EXT. MINI MALL - DAY

Tommy gets out of the car in front of an ARMY SURPLUS STORE.

BEN

Whatever you do, don't tell K-A-T-E.

MADDIE

That spells Kate. Mommy's my best
friend. We have matching pajamas
and I'm not allowed to eat wheat.

Tommy leans into Maddie's window--

TOMMY

Don't you want a little half-
brother who's a natural blonde and
a great athlete?

As Ben peels away....

INT. GROCERY STORE - DAY

Maddie sits in the cart as Ben makes lunch for her out of grocery-store samples.

BEN

Nobody knows your mom like I do.
Trust me, she's in survival mode.
Did you see that emergency kit?
That's a cry for help.

MADDIE

What's a cry for help?

BEN

You know when somebody's about to off themselves so they give away their record collection because they secretly don't want to do it and they're hoping you'll try and stop them but you really just want the record collection?

(Maddie nods)

It's kinda like that.

INT. HAIR SALON - DAY

Kate's got foils on her head, still defending herself:

KATE

I get out. I get out all the time. What mom brought Amstel Light to the last PTA meeting? Can I get a what what?

(the HAIR GUY frowns)

I went to a sexy costume party the other day....

HAIR GUY

Oh yeah, what was the theme?

KATE

Yo Gabba Gabba.

(realizing)

Wow. Wow. Is he right...? No, if I can just get through this next year, I'll finally have some time for myself.

HAIR GUY

I used to say that.... I woke up ten years later with lady boobs and a second mortgage.

INT. HARDWARE STORE - DAY

Ben pushes Maddie in the cart. He hands her items and she chucks them into the cart. Their routine.

BEN

...And that was the moment I knew...Darcy and I were meant to be together forever. So...what's up with you?

MADDIE *
Not much. *

BEN
You still wearing diapers?
(Maddie shakes her head --
no)
You still afraid of the dark?
(Maddie nods -- yes) *
Me too. *
(REVVING a power drill) *
Maybe I should drill the moon into *
the ground so that it's never
nighttime.

MADDIE
(giggling)
NO!!!

INT. HAIR SALON - LATER

Kate gets up from getting her hair washed. She tries to get a signal on her baby monitor.

KATE *
Do you have wifi? I just need to make
sure everything's okay at home.

HAIR GUY
Isn't your kid, like, a thousand?

KATE *
She's five. And, yes, I live- *
stream video from a nanny cam in my *
kitchen and there's nothing *
obsessive and controlling about it. *

He looks at her sideways. Without a hint of irony--

KATE (CONT'D)
Ooh, hot spot!

Kate shows him the nanny-cam view of her kitchen, where she's surprised to see Ben and Tommy wearing Mexican wrestling masks. *

INT. KATE'S DUPLEX - SAME

BEN
I don't think we should wear masks.
Way too hot. And it makes my hair
itch.

INT. HAIR SALON - SAME [INTERCUT AS NECESSARY]

HAIR GUY

I didn't know your brother was gay.

KATE

What are they doing?

Kate watches as Ben and Tommy wrestle each other to the ground. *

BEN (ON MONITOR)

We're gonna crash the crap out of this wedding! *

Maddie runs by wearing night-vision goggles, screaming:

MADDIE

We're going to a wedding!! I GET TO BE THE BRIDE!!!

As Maddie smashes into the kitchen island and falls out of frame. Kate frowns then suddenly flies out of the chair, her hair wet and partially cut, and still wearing her smock. *

A beat then she comes back into frame, her wallet out: *

KATE

Should we pro-rate this? *

(a beat) *

Never mind. *

She throws some money at him and runs out. *

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO**INT. KATE'S DUPLEX - DAY**

Maddie stands on the front of the vacuum cleaner as Ben vacuums the house. Kate storms in, her hair like Bill the Cat. *

KATE

So now you're crashing a wedding?! *

BEN

What's wrong with your hair? *

KATE

Um, I had to leave early because my child was wearing night-vision goggles in broad daylight. *

BEN

Wow. Maternal instinct is insane. That's like ESP, man. *

KATE

No, you idiot, I was watching you on the Internet nanny cam I had installed in this fake cookie jar. *

BEN

Now who's the crazy one? What kind of monster makes a fake cookie jar? I've been trying to get into that thing since I got here.

KATE

I can't believe I actually thought you were worried about me. Have you ever done one truly selfless thing? *

BEN

Selfish? *

KATE

Selfless! *

BEN

Oh, I was gonna say. I do that all the time. *

KATE

And now I have this stupid date tomorrow and half a hairdo. *

Kate opens the pantry and a set of retractable steps pop out. She steps up and easily plucks something off the top shelf. *

KATE (CONT'D)

Oh my god you're a genius. I can't believe I never thought of that.

(then)

Wait-- I'm mad at you. *

(as Maddie runs off to
play) *

This is the same crap I've been dealing with my whole life. And I'm gonna do it this time. I am not gonna get sucked into one of your hair-brained schemes and end up spending all my baby-sitting money bailing you out of jail.... *

BEN

When did that ever happen?

POP TO A YOUNG KATE, sitting on telephone books so she can steer the car while Ben quietly pushes it out the driveway. CUT TO Ben joyriding through town while Kate covers her eyes. WIDER REVEALS they're driving backwards. A POLICE SIREN sounds.... BACK TO SCENE.

KATE *

Ben, I have a child. I'm a responsible adult and-- *

BEN

It's Darcy's wedding. *

Kate gasps, knowing what that means. She sits, deadly serious: *

KATE

Okay, show me what you've got.

(scanning his papers)

These specs are all wrong...where did you get your data?

Ben gestures to the couch. REVEAL Tommy, fast asleep.

KATE (CONT'D)

Ben, Tommy can't sleep on your couch.

BEN

Why?

KATE

'Cause you're sleeping on my couch.

BEN *

When I found out she was getting married, I just-- I always thought we'd find our way back, you know? *

Kate finds a piece of paper and reads:

KATE

"Stop. Don't get married. Boo. Remember how awesome I am?" Okay, I'll be rewriting that later.... Look, if we're gonna do this, no Maddie. She's a delicate kid -- she's still sleeping with the light on -- so just, keep her out of this, okay?

*

BEN

Absolutely.

Just then, Maddie emerges (out of Kate's view) wearing a full-blown NAVY SEAL outfit. As Kate looks down at the plans, he signals Maddie to retreat. Just then, the DOORBELL RINGS and Kate gets up to get it.

*
*

KATE

Alright, I'm gonna go get my hair fixed, again, and then meet you and Tommy to scout the location.

Ben opens the door to see a cute but awkward BABY SITTER, 25. He kisses her hand--

BEN

You must be the baby sitter.

KATE

No... Just-- No.

INT. COUNTRY CLUB - NIGHT

Ben, Kate, and Tommy sneak through the country club, trying to act casual.

*

INT. BALLROOM - NIGHT

*

The ballroom is decorated for the wedding. Kate snaps into theater-geek mode:

*

KATE

Okay, let's do this. Tommy, you be the bride. Ben-- do you have that speech I wrote for you?

(he pulls it out)

That was a trick question. You should be off book by now.

Tommy gets up on the altar as Kate crouches like a director:

KATE (CONT'D)

Alright, gang, speak now or forever
hold your peace.

Ben comes crashing through the doors:

BEN

Stop! Don't do it! *

(he stops)

I didn't love that. That felt
weird.

KATE

Yeah, let's take it again. And
this time, a little less rapey.

Ben tries again, walking towards Tommy, reading Kate's speech: *

BEN

"I know I don't have a job or
health insurance or a place to live
or even enough gas to get home....

(stepping up to the altar)

But can you honestly say that you
don't think about me? That you
don't secretly wonder if one day I
might come back. Take her hand."

Ben takes Tommy's hand.

KATE

Cut! That's the stage direction.
You don't have to read that part. *
I need you to focus. I'm not gonna *
be there to prompt you-- *

BEN

Wait, you're not coming? *

KATE

I support you and everything...but *
it might be illegal. Come on-- *

(stepping in for Ben) *

You gotta say it like you mean it. *

Like you're gonna die if you don't. *

(she takes Tommy's hands,

intense)

Can you honestly say you don't

think about me? That you don't

secretly wonder if one day I might

come back? *

(Tommy gets lost in her

big blue eyes)

Say it. Say you don't love me. *

As Tommy leans in for the kiss, Kate walks away, oblivious. *

KATE (CONT'D)
Okay, let's take it from the top.

EXT. KATE'S DUPLEX - THE NEXT DAY

The sun shines on the Spanish-style duplex.

INT. KATE'S DUPLEX - SAME

Ben and Maddie play RISK as Kate comes out wearing maternity jeans, a headset and her fanny pack with her cell phone in it. Her sports bra makes it look like she has one boob. She holds up two matching shirts: *

KATE
This one or that one?

MADDIE
(to Ben)
It's an emergency shirt. In case something bad happens on the date.

Ben looks up at her ridiculous outfit.

BEN
Take both. And no fanny pack. *

Kate plops down on a kitchen stool.

KATE
I'm not ready to start dating!

BEN
Dude, it's been five years. It's time to take off the maternity jeans. *

KATE
(lifting up her shirt)
But there's a stretchy panel and it expands when you eat and sucks in your jizzley-jazzley bits. *

BEN
Please never say "jizzley-jazzley bits" again. What happened to you? You used to be so cool. *

KATE
No, that was you. You used to take me everywhere and make me do fun things. I'm not cool without you.
(then, seriously)
I don't think I can do this. *

BEN

(sitting down beside her)
 You're just out of practice. The
 hardest part is stepping up to the
 cricket wicket. I know that if you
 never step up, you don't have to
 worry about somebody knocking your
 wicket over--

*
*
*
*
*

KATE

Exactly! I think....

*

BEN

But you gotta get back in the game.
 To show your daughter that's what
 you do.

*

MADDIE

You can do it, Mom. I believe in
 you.

Kate nods at her daughter, inspired.

KATE

Okay.

MADDIE

Yay! We're gonna play dress up!!

As Maddie follows Kate into her room--

*

BEN

And no *Eat, Pray, Love* pants --
 nothing with a drawstring!

*

INT. KATE'S DUPLEX - LATER

*

The DOORBELL RINGS. Kate comes out wearing a much better
 outfit. She opens the door to see the Baby Sitter:

*

*

KATE

Oh hey, thanks so much for coming.

But the girl just walks in, slaps Ben, and walks out.

BABY SITTER

I quit.

She SLAMS the door as Kate stands there, in shock.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREEEXT. KATE'S DUPLEX - EVENING

Kate and Ben walk to the car as Maddie trails behind.

KATE

How did you have time to sleep with the babysitter?!

BEN

It was this morning. I got nervous about crashing the wedding...one thing led to another.... I got her a water...

KATE

Your whole life you can't follow through on anything and all of a sudden you follow through on, like, ten bad things?

Ben shrugs.

BEN

I guess I'm just growing up.

KATE

No, Ben, you're not...and you need to.

BEN

Hello?! I know where the emergency kit is, I have all the numbers, and I watched your stupid earthquake video again.

POP TO a bad home video. The CAMERA shakes like an earthquake as Kate army-crawls under the kitchen table. Bad graphics pop up, pointing to exits. The camera drops and we see Maddie run under too. BACK TO SCENE. Maddie looks up at her mom:

MADDIE

You look like a movie star!

KATE

I forgot how good it feels to get dressed up. Well, my feet are killing me, but you know what I mean.

(to Ben)

Thanks for making me do this. And don't worry, I'll be back by five so you can crash your wedding.

(MORE)

KATE (CONT'D)

And hey, did I tell you I started a patent application for your kitchen steps? I'm calling them "kitchen steps" but it's just a working title.

*
*
*
*

BEN

Okay, now you're just stalling.

Kate flashes him a look and gets in her car.

INT. THE OTTER LODGE - EVENING

BJ's in uniform. Kate nervously rearranges sugars while playing video bar trivia and checking the door.

KATE

So what are the kids doing these days, you know, out there on the scene?

BJ

Well, first of all, we're doing our best not to call it "the scene."

KATE

I'm just nervous. The last person who saw my boobs was Maddie. And she quit breast-feeding without me asking.

*
*
*
*
*

BJ

Yeah, so maybe don't say that on the date.

*
*
*

KATE

(slumping on the bar)
I just want Maddie to know what a good relationship looks like.

*
*
*

POP TO *Young Ben and Kate sit at the dinner table as their PARENTS yell at each other in the other room. Kate's upset. Ben slowly slides under the table. A beat, then he pulls her under, too. They sit there, cross-legged. A beat. Kate smiles.* BACK TO SCENE. BJ puts her arm around Kate--

BJ

You'll get there.

Just then, their HOT BOSS, 40, comes out with money for the register. He nods at BJ.

*
*

BJ (CONT'D)

You'll find someone just like I did. Now he's kind of guy who'd be a great husband and father--

*
*
*
*

KATE
He is. To his wife and kids....

BJ
He's gonna leave her, he promised.

KATE
That's such a cliché.

BJ
Yeah, but it's a cliché for a
reason.

KATE
(a beat)
Because they never leave their
wives!

INT. KATE'S DUPLEX - SAME [INTERCUT AS NEEDED]

Ben hangs with Maddie, checking his watch.

BEN
Okay, so I may have told your mom
the wedding was a scosche later, so
that I could get her out of the
house.
(grabbing the keys)
We gotta go.

Ben and Maddie put on their fancy shoes.

BEN (CONT'D)
What's your cover?

MADDIE
I'm the bride!

BEN
Incorrect. You're a distant cousin
who doesn't speak English. And if
anyone tries to talk to you--

MADDIE
No hablo ingles.

BEN
Exactly.

Ben grabs the wireless baby monitor and turns up the volume.
Strangely, we can hear Kate, out on her date...

KATE (ON MONITOR)
Hey, Ryan, it's good to see you.

RYAN (ON MONITOR)
Yeah, you too.

As Ben and Maddie walk out with the baby monitor....

INT. OTTER LODGE - EVENING

Ryan and Kate sit down at a table. He looks around.

RYAN
This place looks exactly the same.
I can't believe you actually work
here.

KATE
I did a spreadsheet and figured out
that working here Thursday, Friday,
and Saturday nights, I can make the
most money and spend the least
amount of time away from my kid.

Kate shows him a picture of Maddie on her phone.

RYAN
Wow. That's like, a real kid. *

KATE
Yeah, I had her my Junior year of
college. I never really got a
chance to graduate.... *

RYAN
What happened to the father? *

POP TO *Kate telling her BOYFRIEND:*

KATE
I'm pregnant!

BOYFRIEND
I'll get the champagne!

We hear a SCREECH and his car takes off. BACK TO SCENE.

KATE
I don't know. He didn't leave a
forwarding address. *

Ryan just looks at her. Yikes. *

INT. KATE'S MOMMY-MOBILE - EVENING

Ben drives with Maddie in the back. He turns up the nanny
cam MONITOR on the dash: *

RYAN (ON MONITOR)
Sounds like a lot of work.

KATE (ON MONITOR)
What? Breaking up with me? Well
he could've just scribbled it on a
Post-It or sent me an email...

RYAN (ON MONITOR)
I meant taking care of the kid.

Ben frowns...

INT. OTTER LODGE - EVENING

Kate nervously sips her drink.

KATE
When my brother told me you asked
about me, I was really surprised.
I didn't think you knew I existed.

RYAN
I didn't. He showed me a bunch of
pictures and some earthquake video
and then I remembered...you were
that nerdy chick who always took
pictures of me for yearbook!

Kate laughs nervously.

INT. KATE'S MOMMY-MOBILE - DRIVING

Ben just shakes his head.

INT. OTTER LODGE - SAME

KATE
Well...I didn't exactly *work* for
yearbook. But I was Editor in
Chief of *Menses*.
(off his confusion)
The feminist literary magazine? We
won a few prestigious awards,
whatever....
(then)
Those pictures were mostly just for
personal use.

As BJ walks past, Kate takes a glass of wine off her tray,
downs it, and hands her the empty.

KATE (CONT'D)
Can I be honest with you?

INT. KATE'S MOMMY-MOBILE - DRIVING

BEN
 (grabbing the monitor)
 No! Don't be honest!

INT. OTTER LODGE - SAME

KATE
 My narcissistic, idiot man-child
 brother set this whole thing up.

INT. KATE'S MOMMY-MOBILE - SAME

BEN
 I'm sorry?

INT. OTTER LODGE - SAME

KATE
 After I got pregnant, I kinda
 got...off track. This is my first
 night out of the house without my
 fanny pack. I mean, I'm usually in
 bed by nine with a nice procedural
 and some Words With Friends, but I
 don't really have any, well, any
 who can spell...so mostly I just
 play against myself. And
 sometimes...late at night...
 (leaning in
 conspiratorially)
 I take Theraflu, even though I'm
 not sick.

Ryan looks at her -- totally overwhelmed. Kate freaks out--

KATE (CONT'D)
 Is it hot in here? I feel really,
 really hot.

Kate pulls off her sweater and it accidentally takes her
 shirt along with it. She's stuck, caught inside her shirt,
 flashing the entire restaurant.

KATE (FROM INSIDE SWEATER) (CONT'D)
 Oh my god. Can you see my boobs?

INT. KATE'S MOMMY-MOBILE - DRIVING

Ben grips the wheel.

BEN
 Come on, Maddie. Your mom needs
 us.

With that, Ben does a U-Turn and heads back. *

INT. THE OTTER LODGE - SAME *

Kate struggles, still inside her shirt-- *

KATE (FROM INSIDE SWEATER) *
I can't-- I've got to-- *
Please don't look at me. *

Kate finally pulls her shirt down. *

KATE (CONT'D) *
Will you excuse me? *

Kate gets up and hurries to the bathroom. The minute the *
door closes, Ryan gets up to bail. He's on his way out just *
as Ben walks in. *

BEN *
Hey dude, where're you going? *

Maddie runs over to play a video game. *

RYAN *
Oh, come on...you gotta be kidding. *
The waitressing job? The fanny *
pack? The kid? *

Ben Fox eyes him. *

BEN *
You're the same douche you always *
were. Only now you're just "Best *
Head." *
(a beat) *
And I didn't mean that sexually. *
Now why don't you get the hell out *
of here? *

Kate comes out of the bathroom. She sees Ben and Maddie *
playing a video game. REVEAL Ryan is gone. *

KATE *
What are you doing here? Did Ryan *
leave? *

BEN *
No, I kicked him out. *

KATE *
What are you talking about? *

BEN *
Hey, what do I know? I'm just your *
idiot man-child brother. *

KATE *
Wait-- How did you--? *

Ben opens Kate's purse -- THE NANNY CAM's inside. *

BEN *
He wasn't good enough for you. Not *
even close. I wasn't gonna let you *
sit here all night. *

A beat. *

KATE *
Thanks. *

It's a nice moment but then-- *

KATE (CONT'D) *
Wait, why are you all dressed up? *

BEN *
What do you mean? *

KATE *
(turning to Maddie) *
Were you going to the wedding? *

A beat. *

MADDIE *
No hablo ingles. *

Kate turns, about to yell at Ben, but then-- *

KATE *
You know what? Screw it. *
(taking Maddie's hand) *
Let's go crash that wedding. *

As they head out, BJ yelps excitedly, tearing off her apron. *

HOT BOSS *
Your shift's not over. *

BJ *
Yeah, neither is your marriage. *

As she tosses the apron at him.... *

EXT. COUNTRY CLUB - NIGHT

BJ pulls Kate's Mommy-mobile into the parking lot, screeching to a stop. Ben and Kate jump out, running in.

INT. COUNTRY CLUB - NIGHT

A few last-minute WEDDING GUESTS walk into the ballroom. Ben and Kate hurry up to an USHER:

BEN
Do you know where Darcy is?

USHER
Around the corner.

They run down the hall, around the corner, and see....

BEN
Darcy!

DARCY stands there in her wedding dress. She looks beautiful.

DARCY
Ben?

BEN
I love you. I always have. Please don't get married. Because....
(checking the smeared note on his hand)
So sweaty.
(wiping it on his pants)
Okay, now it's just gone.
(then)
Look, I can't remember what I'm supposed to say.

DARCY
Ben, stop--

KATE
(sotto)
Job, health insurance.

BEN
Oh right, I don't have a job or health insurance or any gas...

Ben looks at Kate, lost.

DARCY
I gotta go.

KATE

Wait a minute. This is my brother we're talking about here. I know he's been wearing the same shirt for the last ten years and he's only said he loved me twice -- once when he broke my arm and once when he broke my leg.... But he has the best heart of anyone I know. And he may have a Velcro wallet now, but we'll all be working for him someday.... So if you want to go ahead and marry that boring rich bald guy -- yeah, I got google -- and spend the rest of your life *not* laughing, then go right ahead. But if I were you? I'd bet on Ben Fox.

GROOM (O.S.)

Sweetheart?

Kate turns to see the GROOM (the boring bald rich guy), standing behind her.

DARCY

My wedding was an hour ago. This is my husband.

KATE

Exactly...which is why I came to give you this.

Kate reaches into her purse and pulls out--

DARCY

A fanny pack?

KATE

Yes. No. Actually...I should probably take that back.
 (they struggle with it,
 Darcy relents)
 But also...this beautiful wallet.
 (handing it to her)
 So thank you so much for inviting us...and congratulations!

Kate hugs Darcy. Then Ben hugs her, way too close. Darcy can't help herself, she melts a little. Ben holds her. It's inappropriate. Kate stands there awkwardly with the Groom:

KATE (CONT'D)

Mazel Tov....

As Kate pulls Ben away, we CUT TO.... *

INT. BANQUET HALL - LATER *

Kate sits alone at a small table in the back of the room as BJ dances with Maddie. Kate watches the party, melancholy. *

There's a sudden burst of activity as Darcy tosses the bouquet. Kate starts to cry happy tears but then -- the GIRL squeals and kisses her boyfriend -- and her tears turn real. *

From across the room, Ben clocks it. *

As Kate holds her head in her hands, Ben sits down across from her. She looks up, make-up running down her face, and shrugs, unable to speak. *

A beat, then Ben slides under the table. He pulls Kate under with him.

UNDER THE TABLE

They sit there, cross-legged, letting the world go by. *

KATE *

My date was terrible, I couldn't even help you stop the wedding....
One day back in the world and I screwed everything up. *

BEN *

Good.
(off Kate's look)
Straight A's in high school, straight A's in college.... You need to fail more. Look at me, I've been failing my whole life. I mean, I'm no slouch...I've got my ged. *

KATE *

You know it's pronounced G.E.D. right? And it's high school. Not college.

BEN *

Exactly. And you *still* think I'm gonna succeed. Why can't you do that for yourself?

KATE *

I like hiding. It feels safe. *

BEN
You know why I do stupid stuff like
blow things up and light fireworks?

KATE
'Cause you're an idiot.

BEN
Because it's fun. Sometimes just
knowing you could get hurt...
that's what makes it worth it.

Just then, Maddie pokes her head under--

MADDIE
What are you doing?!

BEN
You've only made one mistake your
entire life...and it's the best
thing that ever happened to you.

Maddie climbs onto Kate's lap. Kate squeezes her.

BEN (CONT'D)
What if I stay and help take care
of her so that you can get out
there and make some more mistakes?

KATE
You would do that for me?

BEN
I could move some things around,
clear up my schedule....
(then)
You've been bailing me out my whole
life. Let me bail you out for once.

MADDIE
He can sleep in my playroom.

Kate smiles.

KATE
Thank you. Even though I know this
is partly because you're avoiding
jail time in Arizona.

BEN
Objection. Cause for speculation.

Just then, Tommy puts his head under the table.

TOMMY

What are you guys doing?

*
*

As Tommy helps Kate out from under the table, she sees...

*

KATE

Are you wearing my maternity jeans?

*

Ben lifts up his shirt. He's wearing them too.

BEN

You weren't kidding about these things. They're extremely comfortable. I'm working on a new line for men. It's called Manternity--

(earmuffing Maddie)

It's extra stretchy in the nut part.

As they all react to his dumb idea, Tommy pulls Kate onto the dance floor with BJ, Maddie, and Ben. As FUN WEDDING SONG plays us out....

*
*
*

END OF ACT THREE

TAG**INT. MADDIE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Ben carries Maddie to bed as Kate pulls the covers over her.
Ben's about to shut off the lights when Kate stops him--

KATE

Don't, she'll freak out.

Ben holds up a finger and hands Maddie the night-vision goggles. Then he shuts off the lights. As Maddie cuddles them like a teddy bear....

INT. HALLWAY - KATE'S DUPLEX - NIGHT

As they close the door and walk back down the hall together--

KATE

You love me, admit it.

BEN

It's not gonna happen.

KATE

Oh, come on.

BEN

You want me to break the other arm?

A beat.

KATE

I love you too.

As he punches her hard, WE'RE OUT.

END OF SHOW