HART OF DIXIE
PILOT
by
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Studio Draft

12/9/2010
FADE IN:

EXT. GULF COAST HIGHWAY 180 - MORNING

The SUN SHINES over a quiet, exquisite stretch of Alabama coastline. Out on the water, FISHERMEN pull in the morning’s catch. A LONE PELICAN takes off from the water. We FOLLOW IT to a GREYHOUND BUS winding down the seaside road.

INT. GREYHOUND BUS - SAME

Not quite so exquisite. We’re in an UNSEEN PERSON’S POV as we watch TWO 12-YEAR OLDS fight over a Gameboy, AN OLD MAN spit chew into a Dr. Pepper can, and A FAT FISHERMAN sleep with his mouth wide open, as he DROOLS INTO FRAME... and REVERSE TO REVEAL we are in the POV of ZOE HART, 28, an adorable, spoiled New Yorker, who at that moment would rather be anywhere but on this particular bus.

ZOE'S VOICE
See the girl in the $2200 Chanel jacket now covered in Mountain Dew and Disease? That’s me, Zoe Hart.

As Zoe pushes her seat-mate off her shoulder, we PUSH TOWARD the BACK OF THE BUS, where A LARGE TEENAGER IN A CRIMSON TIDE SHIRT exits the bathroom, passing an OLD LADY on her way in.

LARGE TEENAGER
Wouldn’t go in there for a while if I was you, Ma’am. Had a bucket of Popeyes for breakfast.

The old lady sits back down. Zoe, disgusted, looks out the window, as scenes of Coastal Alabama peak through the trees. A ROADHOUSE advertises GULF’S BEST PO’BOYS AND COLDEST BEER. OLD MEN sit on a front porch, shooting the breeze and shooing flies. A sign out front of a CHURCH reads “SAVING ISN’T JUST FOR WALMART.” Over this--

ZOE’S VOICE
Yesterday I woke up on West 24th street, bought a tall skinny latte, took a cab to my job at the most prestigious hospital in the country.

A HUNTER hoists a deer carcass into the cab of his PICKUP.

ZOE’S VOICE (CONT’D)
But I guess I should start at the beginning...
EXT. JOHNS HOPKINS MEDICAL SCHOOL - FOUR YEARS AGO - DAY

It’s graduation day, proud near-doctors, prouder parents.

ZOE’S VOICE
Four years ago, I graduated from
Johns Hopkins Medical School at the
top of my class.

CLOSE ON a YOUNGER ZOE, poised, supremely confident, clearly
a star, making a commencement speech from a podium.

ZOE
The first time I held a scalpel, I
was nine. We were hosting a party
for some of my mother’s celebrity
clients. While the chef prepared
squab for Calista Flockhart and Bono,
my dad and I snuck off and dissected
ours. I was enthralled. My mother,
as you can imagine, was apoplectic...

As the AUDIENCE CHUCKLES, we FIND Zoe’s mom, CANDACE, a high-
powered publicist, with her young, vapid, MODEL BOYFRIEND.

MODEL BOYFRIEND
You were worried she’d cut herself?

CANDACE
I was worried about this. That my
beautiful daughter would follow in
the steps of her withholding, weasel
of a father. What kind of life is
surgery? Slicing people open a
hundred hours a week under florescent
lights? And lord knows what it’ll do
to her skin.

MODEL BOYFRIEND
Good point.

As Candace fixes his collar, AT THE PODIUM, Zoe concludes her
speech.

YOUNGER ZOE
It was a big night for me, because I
also got to meet my hero, Mets great
Dwight Gooden. I was nine, shy,
small talk was beyond me. But if Doc
Gooden were here today, I'd tell him
that being a great surgeon is a lot
like being a great pitcher.

(MORE)
YOUNGER ZOE (CONT'D)
To succeed you need to treat the
patient like a batter at the plate -
diagnose the conditions, focus on
precision... and do your best to shut
him out.

As we CUT TO a slightly bewildered crowd.

ZOE'S VOICE
Some future pediatricians might have
tought my speech was a little
callous.

DISSOLVE TIME as Zoe is congratulated by a group of young
surgeons - all slightly better looking, better dressed, and
more intimidating than the other graduates - including Zoe’s
HANDSOME BOYFRIEND, and BEST FRIEND...

ZOE'S VOICE (CONT'D)
But the real doctors, the surgeons,
totally got my point. And I even got
a groupie out of it.

As the graduates celebrate, a sweet Southern man, HARLEY
WILKES, 60, in bow tie and hat, calls out to Zoe.

HARLEY WILKES
Dr. Hart? That was quite a speech.
It showed a lot of... hubris.

ZOE
Thank you!

HARLEY WILKES
My name Dr. Harley Wilkes. I come
from BlueBell, Alabama.

ZOE
BlueBell? That’s adorable.

HARLEY WILKES
Have a small general practice there.
A great town with great people, and a
great place for a young doctor to
hone her craft under my mentorship.
I’d like to offer you a job.

ZOE
That’s incredibly flattering. And
I’m sure your town is lovely. But I
have a plan. After I complete my
surgical residency, I’ll get a
fellowship in thoracics go on to
become a cardio-thoracic surgeon.
(MORE)
ZOE (CONT'D)
My last name is Hart, it’s like
predestined. So, though your offer is
so sweet, dealing with diarrhea and
diaper rash just isn’t my thing. But
thanks! Really. Glad you liked my
speech.

A slightly hurt Harley watches as Zoe runs over to Candace
and her model boyfriend. Candace gives her a perfunctory hug
as Zoe looks around, hopeful --

ZOE (CONT’D)
So, where’s Dad?

CANDACE
Sorry, honey, you know him. Stuck in
Germany. Some diplomatic needed a
pacemaker put in. His assistant sent
you a congratulatory fax, though.

Zoe’s disquieted for a moment, but recovers as her BOYFRIEND
and BEST FRIEND join the group... She kisses them both as--

ZOE'S VOICE
I had it all: the most amazing
boyfriend and a kick ass BFF who were
just as driven as I was. Best part
was, the three of us all landed the
same residency program.

INT. GREYHOUND BUS  - MORNING

Back on the Alabama bus. Zoe’s seat-mate is now feasting on
cheese curls, kicking up a tiny cloud of orange dust.

ZOE'S VOICE
Well, it’s four years later and you
know I wouldn’t be in the middle of
nowhere, sitting next to a guy who
smells like Cheetos and chum, if it
had turned out like I hoped.

INT. ZOE’S APARTMENT  - A YEAR AGO  - NIGHT

The LIVING ROOM of her stylish apartment has been taken over
by medical stuff -- TEXT BOOKS and ANATOMICAL CHARTS. A
CLOSE-UP on a FRUIT BOWL reveals a weird assortment of
FRANKENSTEIN FRUIT that Zoe has been using to practice her
sutures.

In the DINING ROOM, Zoe and her BOYFRIEND sit at a beautiful
CANDLELIT DINNER. He gives her a long MOS SPEECH. As we
watch Zoe go from annoyed to surprised to heartbroken--
ZOE'S VOICE
Last Valentines Day, my boyfriend dumped me. And it wasn't just because I practiced mattress sutures on the Chicken Cordon Bleu he spent all day making me. He said that all I cared about was being the best. That I was too busy, too cutthroat, too self-involved for him. Which maybe I was, cause it seemed I was the last to know he replaced me with...

INT. MT SINAI HOSPITAL - DAY
Zoe’s NOW-EX BOYFRIEND walks through the hospital arm in arm with Zoe’s NOW-FORMER BEST FRIEND. ANGLE Zoe, watching--

ZOE'S VOICE
Sure, it hurt. It more than hurt--

INT. BARNEY’S - DAY
Zoe SOBS to her mother.

ZOE
-- it feels like someone pulled out my intestines and tied them around my throat!

CANDACE
Honey, go and compose yourself.

Candace looks around, hoping no one witnessed Zoe’s public spectacle.

INT. BARNEY’S DRESSING ROOM - CONTINUOUS
A more composed Zoe blows her nose as Candace enters.

CANDACE
I'll give you the same advice I gave Jennifer Aniston. Even if it feels like smiling will take every ounce of effort you have, you put on your makeup, you show those pearly whites and you get through the day.

ZOE'S VOICE
So I did.

INT. MT. SINAI HALLWAY - DAY
Zoe walks purposefully through the hall, reading charts, delegating to interns.
She passes a GROUP SURROUNDING HER EX-BOYFRIEND AND FORMER BEST FRIEND. Wondering what they're seeing, she looks and is blinded by AN ENORMOUS DIAMOND on her ex best friend's finger...

Zoe looks away, determined not to let it get to her.

ZOE'S VOICE
I kept strong. Held it together. I could, because I was about to leave those lovebird losers in the dust - I was a shoo in for...

CHIEF OF SURGERY (PRELAP)
...the Reuther fellowship in Cardiothoracic Surgery.

INT. NEW YORK PRESBYTERIAN/CORNELL WEILL HOSPITAL - DAY

A beaming, confident Zoe standing amidst a group of doctors as the chief of Surgery announces...

CHIEF OF SURGERY
We thought long and hard over this decision, but I am proud to say the new fellow is... Eve Coburn!

As Zoe’s EX-BEST FRIEND claps with delight, we CLOSE IN ON Zoe's mouth, as she let's out a PRIMAL SCREAM.

INT. NEW YORK/CORNELL HOSPITAL - CHIEF’S OFFICE - DAY

An indignant Zoe pleads with a placid Chief of Surgery.

ZOE
But I’m the best surgical resident in this hospital. I run the fastest whipstitch, already did a solo angioplasty. Plus, I’m legacy, my dad was a Reuther fellow before he went on to the be the most renowned heart surgeon in Europe.

The chief offers her some homemade cookies.

CHIEF OF SURGERY
Snickerdoodle?
(off her glare)
Zoe, you’ve got the best hands I’ve seen in thirty years. But if you want to be a heart surgeon, you need to work on your own.
ZOE
I do cardio five days a week.

CHIEF OF SURGERY
You know what I’m talking about. Last week, you ignored Mrs. Zuker when she asked you to sing with her.

ZOE
I was busy checking her vitals and preparing her for triple bypass. And Josh Groban? C’mon!

CHIEF OF SURGERY
We’ve received eight complaints about your bedside manner in the last twelve months.

ZOE
Chief, I need to be a cardiothoracic surgeon. I’ve worked my whole life... What can I do to get your recommendation for next year’s fellowship? I’ll do anything.

CHIEF OF SURGERY
Spend the next year working as a general practitioner.

ZOE
Come on. First of all, ew. Second of all, in case you haven't noticed, there's a job shortage. St. Vincent's shut down, the other hospitals are broke, I’ll never work in private practice without a specialty. There isn’t a single GP job in the whole city.

CHIEF OF SURGERY
(looks at her a beat)
That may be true, Dr. Hart, but there are other places besides New York.

As furious Zoe storms out...

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - DAY

As Zoe talks on the phone...a handwritten list of cities sits on her lap.
ZOE
So, to clarify, there’s no general practice jobs in the entire Baltimore area? Why’d I even go to your stupid med school?!
(then)
Sorry, dean.

Zoe hangs up, scratches off DC and Baltimore, the last cities left on her list. She SIGHS takes out her wallet and looks at a PICTURE of her, maybe 6, in a DOCTOR’S OUTFIT, sitting on her DAD’S lap, in his DOCTOR’S OUTFIT. She makes a call.

ZOE (CONT’D)
Gutan tag. Ich bin ein, Zoe. Kann ich mit mein Vater?
(as he gets on the phone)
Daddy! Hi. No... I didn’t get the fellowship. NO, it’s okay. Actually, the chief said I’m a shoo-in for next year... Just need to figure some things out first. I will! Trust me Dad, I’ll get it. Then look out - cause you might have a partner!
(then, chastened)
No, right. I know it’s not as easy as that... Oh, okay. You go. I lo--
(he hangs up. Dial tone)
--Love you, Daddy.

And off Zoe, looking down at the phone... She begins to walk.

ZOE'S VOICE
I was 28. Staring down the barrel at 30, the thing I’d worked for my entire life was in danger of never becoming a reality. I had no fiancé, no friends.

It begins to RAIN. Zoe, runs to the bus stop, SLIPS on the wet sidewalk and FALLS... And, NO ONE OFFERS TO HELP HER UP.

ZOE'S VOICE (CONT’D)
I was alone in New York City, the loneliest place in the world. Or maybe not exactly... alone.

INT. ZOE'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT
Sleeping Zoe sits bolt upright in her bed, screaming--

ZOE
BED BUGS!!
INT. ZOE’S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - LATE AT NIGHT

Zoe, in her pajamas, scratching, unable to sleep, looks at her mail...

    ZOE’S VOICE
    And then I saw it...

Zoe picks up a POSTCARD of idyllic BlueBell, Alabama.

    ZOE’S VOICE (CONT’D)
    Another postcard from that southern guy Harley, he'd been sending me them for the last four years, ever since graduation - my speech really must've inspired him.

She turns it over and finds a note which she reads aloud.

    ZOE
    Tark twins keep wrestling in poison oak. We’re real busy. Could use an extra, extra-talented, hand. Day you show up, the job is yours.

And with that, she makes a decision, picks up the PHONE.

    ZOE (CONT’D)
    Dr. Wilkes, it’s Zoe Hart, I know it’s the middle of the night... but you win... I’m on my way.

    ZOE’S VOICE
    It wasn't New York, but it was a step to becoming a heart surgeon.

EXT. BLUEBELL BUS STOP - MORNING

The bus pulls away, leaving Zoe and her Hermes luggage by the side of a cow field. A SIGN points down a narrow road, reading “BlueBell 3 Mi”

    ZOE
    And when I say it wasn’t New York, it REALLY wasn’t New York. Which is probably why there weren’t any taxis.

EXT. DESERTED ROAD - MINUTES LATER

Zoe rolls her suitcase down the road to town in her Prada heels and pencil skirt. It's hot, she sweats and swats at mosquitoes. A car pulls up beside her. Handsome, charming, GEORGE TUCKER, 30, rolls down the window.
GEORGE
Can I offer you a ride, ma’am?

ZOE
Thank you, but I have a strict policy about not letting strangers chop me up into a million pieces.

GEORGE
Sure, I get that. If it helps, I’m an attorney, not an axe murderer.
(off her scowl)
Suit yourself, but it’s 96 degrees out, and you have two more miles to go until you hit town.

ZOE
(relenting)
Don’t get any ideas.

And as she watches George Tucker gallantly open her door and take her bags--

INT. GEORGE’S CAR - MOMENTS LATER

George and Zoe drive.

GEORGE
So, lemme guess? New Yorker? I recognize the accent.

ZOE
I don’t have an accent. The Brearley school saw to that... But, yes, I’m from New York.

GEORGE
Where about? I lived in Tribeca for a while when I worked at Cravath.

ZOE
(seeing him in new light)
As in Cravath, Swaine & Moore, the most prestigious law firm in the U.S.? What are you doing in this dead zone? Some sort of white collar crime community service thing?

GEORGE
Take it you’re not in town for the crawdads?
ZOE
I’d never have left Manhattan. But I’ve been exiled. This is my purgatory.

GEORGE
Well, if you consider purgatory to be a place where neighbors take care of each other, every third Tuesday demands a parade, and the people spend their evenings dangling their feet in the water while sipping mint juleps... then call it what you want. But I call it home.

As they park... George helps Zoe out of the car.

EXT. BLUEBELL TOWN SQUARE - DAY

Zoe takes in the QUAINTE SMALL TOWN SQUARE. In THE GAZEBO, a GROUP OF WOMEN rehearse a SPANISH WALTZ in actual antebellum SCARLET O'HARA DRESSES.

GEORGE
I’d take a night here over a night at the Pierre any time. I’m George Tucker.

He holds out his hand, as they touch, Zoe’s flustered by the clear chemistry. She looks up in his deep blue eyes...

ZOE
Zoe, uh, Dr. Zoe Hart.

George reacts to the name... But decides not to go there...

GEORGE
Good luck, Dr. Zoe Hart. I hope you find what you’re looking for.

He smiles and walks away.

EXT. BLUEBELL - MAIN STREET - DAY

As Zoe comes upon an old-fashioned sign that reads, “Doctor’s Office” she takes out her phone, a deep breathe.

ZOE
Chief, Zoe Hart here. Day one of my GP job. I’ll see you in 365 days.... 365 days.

Zoe shakes her head, can’t believe it, and enters-
INT. DOCTORS OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

And straight into a Norman Rockwell Painting. A nurse – the no-nonsense MRS EMMELINE HATTENBARGER (aka Mrs. H) sits at the front desk.

ZOE
Hi, is Dr. Wilkes around?

MRS. H
You been under a rock the last four months? Harley passed away.

ZOE
(a beat, dumbstruck)
But... he just sent me a postcard.

Suddenly, Mrs. H comes alive... surprised and skeptical.

MRS. H
Are you Zoe Hart?
(off Zoe’s nod)
We been expecting you. Harley left you his practice.

Off Zoe's OMG.

END ACT ONE
ACT TWO

EXT. DOWNTOWN BLUEBELL - DAY

Mrs. Hattenbarger and Zoe walk through what amounts to downtown BlueBell. It’s super-cute, oozing with southern charm. Little shops. A town square with a bandstand and a statue of a Confederate hero. A stone’s throw from the fishing docks and Mobile Bay.

ZOE
Well, it’s beyond weird. Why would he leave me, a girl he met once, for like a minute and a half, his medical practice?

Mrs. H considers for a moment, she may know more but--

MRS. H
Harley never explained. His will said to keep sending you those postcards, that eventually you’d show up. Looks like he was right.

They approach the local watering hole, The Rammer Jammer.

ZOE
He may have been right. But clearly the man was one avocado short of a Cobb salad.... And speaking of which, I haven’t eaten since JFK. Maybe we can just get something to go?

MRS. HATTENBARGER
Quicker to eat in, Shelley can never figure out how to put together those cardboard takeout boxes.

They enter.

INT. RAMMER JAMMER - DAY

A cross between a road house and clam shack, jutting right out over the water. Picnic tables outside. A bar, pool table and dance floor inside. It’s lunchtime, and it’s crowded with a mix of upper crust Dixie and working-class South. As Mrs. H and Zoe find a table, they’re barraged by a group of extremely friendly locals including SHELLEY NG, crabby Vietnamese waitress, DASH DeWITT, landed gentry, 50s, Capote-esque, and TOM LONG, 23, instantly in love with Zoe.

TOM LONG
Hey, Emmeline, who’s your friend?
MRS. HATTENBARGER
This is Zoe Hart. She’s just moved to town from New York. Don’t pester--

DASH DEWITT
Zoe, I do a theater trip every April. Fela! rocked my world. I have the soundtrack if you’d like to pop by.

SHELLEY
New Yorker, huh? Perhaps you’d like to try our souvee’d lamb shank with a yuzu-mint gellee?
(off Zoe’s excitement)
Oh, whoops. We just ran out. We got catfish. It’s fried.

TOM LONG
(with pride)
Gutted it myself.

ZOE
You know? I’m good. I’ll sample the local delicacies later.
(stands, an announcement)
But if any of you people need medical care, you can come see me in Harley Wilkes old office.

And now, the crowd SILENCES. Finally, Tom bravely speaks up.

TOM
That’s okay. We all got a doctor.

And, as everyone moves away from their table.

ZOE
What’s he talking about?

MRS. HATTENBARGER
Technically, Harley left you half the practice. He shared it with Dr. Breeland. And Brick waited a long time to have BlueBell to himself...

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - MOMENTS LATER

Zoe pulls a power bar out of her bag as she purposefully strides back through town. An annoyed Mrs. H follows.

ZOE
So, I’ll just find this Brick... is that a name?!

(MORE)
ZOE (CONT'D)
Explain that I'm just going to be here for a year, and then he's free to be the big fish in the world's smallest pond.

MRS. HATTENBARGER
Brick's hunting. And this ain't the sorta news you tell an Alabama man when he's got his hog rifle locked and loaded.

As they walk past THE GAZEBO, where the GROUP OF WOMEN IN HOOP SKIRTS just finished rehearsing and sit, gossiping.

ZOE
Well maybe someone should tell the people of this town that it's 2010! Hunting's inhumane, immoral and... stupid! And dancing in celebration of the confederacy? Really?

Mrs. Hattenbarger doesn't think much of the Blue Belle's either, but she won't tolerate disrespect, whispering.

MRS. HATTENBARGER
Dr. Hart, the Blue Belles are an institution here. Elite young ladies chosen to keep our history alive. For better or worse, they're the closest thing we have to royalty.

ZOE
The Blue Belles? Emmeline, come on.

MRS. HATTENBARGER
You can call me Mrs. Hattenbarger. And mock all you want, but my husband got the satellite last year, we've seen every episode of The Sopranos. And believe me, that family's got nothing on these girls.

Just then, one of the Blue Belles, a beautiful young woman in a floofy yellow dress, LEMON BREELAND, waves and comes... overly effusive.

LEMON
When I heard there was a new lady doctor in town, I painted myself quite a different picture. You're pretty!

Zoe gives Mrs. H a look, 'See? They're nice.' Mrs. H smirks.
MRS. HATTENBARGER

Zoe. This is Lemon Breeland.

ZOE

Brick’s daughter? Nice to meet you. I’m dying to talk to your dad, I know he’s hunting or whatever, but you must have a way to contact him.

LEMON

Oh, there’s no need for that. He knows you’re here. And if I were you, I’d be gone by the time he returns. Daddy can be quite... imposing.

Zoe’s stunned, then angered, by the sweetly delivered threat.

ZOE

Well, you tell daddy that if my medical career hasn’t been killed by my mother - the second most powerful publicist on the East Coast, or the chief of surgery at New York/Cornell hospital, it most certainly won’t be by some Southern xenophobe dressed up like a stick of butter.

Zoe looks at Mrs. Hattenbarger, triumphant.

ZOE (CONT’D)

Now, let’s go see some patients.

HARD CUT TO: ZOE SITTING, BORED. As no patients come.

INT. HARLEY’S OLD OFFICE/WAITING ROOM - DAY

We SEE A QUICK MONTAGE of Zoe killing time
- giving herself the eye test
- constructing a house with Q-tips
- testing her reflexes.

Finally, she calls for Mrs. H.

ZOE

Mrs H! I’m starting to fatigue. Usually, at this time of day, a nurse brings me a vente soy latte.

MRS. HATTENBARGER

Nearest Starbucks is 11 miles away.
ZOE
(oblivious)
Thanks! That’s so nice of you!

Annoyed, Mrs. H leaves.

EXT. DOCTOR’S OFFICE. DAY

Mrs. H, muttering to herself, gets in her old Dodge and drives off as sweet OLD MAN JACKSON, 80s in an oversized sweater and glasses, enters the building.

INT. DOCTOR’S OFFICE. DAY

Zoe’s PHONE RINGS, she looks at the Caller ID, takes a deep breath, braces herself.

ZOE
Mom? Hey. Hi! I know I haven’t been answering. Actually, there’s something I need to tell you...
(no good way to say it)
I moved to Alabama.
(then)
Mom? Mom? Are you there?

As Old Man Jackson enters. Zoe HANGS UP.

OLD MAN JACKSON
Is Dr. Breeland around?

ZOE
He’s hunting.
(his PHONE RINGS again)
My mother. Just told her I moved here, she’s kind of freaking out.
(then)
Anyway, what’s up? You sick?

OLD MAN JACKSON
Oh I’m feeling as good as anyone my age would. Just, there’s been a little mix-up at the DMV. Don’t s’pose you’d just sign this form for me?

ZOE
Yeah, lemme give you an eye test first.

OLD MAN JACKSON
Don’t blame you...
She covers his eye as her PHONE RINGS again. She looks at it, torn, finally gives Old Man Jackson the ‘one second’ sign.

ZOE

Mom, no, I am not having a nervous breakdown!

OLD MAN JACKSON

E. F.P.TOZ.LPED.PECFD. EDFZP.

Zoe distractedly gives him a THUMBS UP and SIGNS HIS FORM, we can hear her mother SCREAMING over the phone.

OLD MAN JACKSON (CONT’D)

Thank you very much.

And he walks out...

INT. HARLEY’S OLD OFFICE - LATER

Zoe is asleep on the exam table as --

MRS. HATTENBARGER (O.S.)

Sorry to wake you. Perhaps a latte would’ve perked you up, too bad I drank it. But, we have a patient.

Zoe’s eyes pop open to see Mrs. H escort in COLLEEN, a forty-five year old shrimper with a HUGE HOOK in her arm and her obese daughter, MABEL, 25, in tow. Zoe hops into gear.

CLOSE ON Zoe’s hand, EXPERTLY REMOVING THE HOOK.

INT. HARLEY’S OLD OFFICE - A BIT LATER

Colleen sits on the exam table. Zoe stitches her up, boasts--.

ZOE

I’m using subcuticular sutures. There will barely be a scar.

COLLEEN

Lady, I’m a shrimper, that’s my sixth hook this year. Not like I’m gonna catch a fella now. Bet someone like you has to fight ‘em off, you’re so thin. Maybe you could give some tips to my daughter? You know that thing about the potato chips, can’t eat just one? Big Mabel feels that way about lunch.

Big Mabel sits there in pained silence, Colleen continues, as an uncomfortable Zoe stitches her up--
COLLEEN (CONT'D)
She was always chubby but she's put on another half ton ever since her boyfriend dumped her. Maybe she thinks the Oreos will fix the hole in her heart.

Zoe notices a DARK SKIN DISCOLORATION on Mabel’s face...

ZOEP
Mabel, the dark patches on your cheek? How long have you had those?

Mabel blushes as--

COLLEEN
Told her to wear sunblock.

Zoe’s decides not to press, it’s none of her business, and cuts off the thread as--

ZOEP
Sound advice. Nice to meet you both.

COLLEEN
No offense, but we’ll be seeing Dr. Breeland from now on, you understand.

Off Zoe, as she SIGHS.

ZOEP (PRELAP)
Guess no one else is gonna show.

INT. WAITING ROOM - EVENING

It’s dark, an exhausted Zoe approaches Mrs. H.

ZOEP
So, where’s the nearest hotel? I’m so tired I’d even take a Hyatt.

MRS. HATTENBARGER
I’d just as soon you slept on the first bus out of town, but that’s not how my mother raised me. So, I spoke with the mayor. You can stay in his carriage house.

ZOEP (PRELAP)
No way!!
EXT. THE MAYOR'S HOUSE - NIGHT

A huge ANTEBELLUM PLANTATION HOUSE. Zoe is met at the door by the mayor, LAVON HAYES, 42.

ZOE
Lavon Hayes? The linebacker? Two Super Bowls! Five pro bowls!

LAVON
Four, actually.

ZOE
Rounded up. You got robbed in '06.

LAVON
Lavon Hayes likes your math. C’mon in.

INT. THE MAYOR’S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Lavon takes Zoe on a tour of his amazing home: he’s tricked out the old mansion, MTV Cribs-style. A GIANT FLAT SCREEN pops out of a CIVIL WAR ERA ARMOIRE at the push of a button.

LAVON
And, I gutted the East Wing and put up a basketball court. Old south meets dirty south.

ZOE
Tara meets T-Pain.

LAVON
Exactly! Bought this place cause my mama told me the original owners once owned my great great-grandparents. The records are currently in dispute.

ZOE
Well, you being the mayor here is like the first thing about BlueBell I actually like. How’d that happen?

LAVON
After ten years in the NFL, I was a little lost. Who wouldn’t be after spending all that time being fawned over and making more money than I knew what do with? So Lavon Hayes moved back home. And having played for the Crimson Tide made me very popular around here. I ran, I won. (shows her a bathroom) (MORE)
LAVON (CONT'D)
This one’s got one of those Japanese Robot Toilets. But it’s late, I should show you to your quarters.

ZOE
Does the carriage house have a flat screen and remote control sauna too?

Lavon makes a “well....” look and we CUT TO:

INT. CARRIAGE HOUSE - LATER

It’s tiny and a little run down. But it’s super-charming, with a porch right on the water. Zoe looks around as Lavon fixes a light bulb.

ZOE
Well, it’s only for a year. I’ll order some stuff at Barney’s online to make it homey.

LAVON HAYES
Just don’t order anything perishable. The reptiles can smell it. Mail’s delivered by boat, postman almost lost a foot to a gator when a fan sent me Steak of the Month Club.

ZOE
(horrified)
Noted. Thanks.

LAVON HAYES
Now, you share a generator with the guy in the gatehouse who takes care of the place. Wade Kinsella. If you run your curling iron while his AC is on, could be trouble.

ZOE
No need to worry, I’m not curling anything tonight, I’m exhausted.

LAVON HAYES
Night, then. If you do wander, keep your eyes peeled for Don Johnson.

And before Zoe can ask what he means, he’s gone.

INT. CARRIAGE HOUSE - BATHROOM - LATER

As Zoe relaxes in her small claw foot bath, the POWER GOES OUT. Quickly, she hops out and puts on a ROBE.
EXT. GATEHOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Zoe KNOCKS as LOUD MUSIC comes from inside. Her knocks are ignored, so she opens the door.

INT. GATEHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

She finds WADE KINSELLA, gorgeous bad-boy fisherman, using a hot pot, blasting a fan and playing ROCK BAND with TWO SCANTILY CLAD GIRLS. He SMILES when he sees her, amused by her anger and outfit. They YELL over the MUSIC.

ZOE
You overheated the generator!

WADE
Nice robe.

ZOE
I was taking a bath!

WADE
I’m Wade. Sorry about the power. I’ll get on that right away. (then, flirty) Take it you’re the new neighbor. Let me know if you ever need a cup of sugar... anything.

ZOE
I’m sure that smile makes all the girls at the church social swoon, but it’s not gonna work on me. And I haven’t eaten refined sugar in six years.

WADE
Well if you’re not gonna be polite, I’m not gonna tell you where the fuse box is.

As she STORMS OUT, we hear the MUSIC get LOUDER inside.

EXT. PLANTATION PROPERTY - MOMENTS LATER

Furious, Zoe stalks back to her carriage house. And finds herself face to face with... AN ALLIGATOR!

Zoe SCREAMS. And walks backward. And SCREAMS... and falls in the water!

Suddenly, someone races to her rescue. He’s in the water with a splash and in one smooth motion swoops her up in his arms and deposits her on dry land.
In the moonlight, we realize it’s GEORGE TUCKER. Zoe GASPS. Then, speaking through her teeth, so as not to provoke it.

ZOE
Wasn’t drowning. There’s. An.
Alligator.

GEORGE
Excuse me, a what? Sorry, must have gotten some water in the ear there.

ZOE
(pointing at it)
An alligator!

GEORGE
An alligator! Why didn’t you say so?
This IS an emergency.

He positions himself between it and Zoe. Zoe clings to him, scared. As George speaks to the gator, friendly--

GEORGE (CONT’D)
Beat it, Don.
(off Zoe’s expression)
Don Johnson. Mayor’s pet alligator.
Lavon’s a big Miami Vice fan.

Don starts to walk away, as furious Zoe SHOVES GEORGE.

GEORGE (CONT’D)
Oh, c’mon Brearley. Just having a little fun.
(with a grin)
And I know you’re a New Yorker, but in Alabama, when someone interrupts their nightly jog to jump into the gulf to save our well-toned ass, we say ‘thank you.’

ZOE
(can’t help being charmed)
Fine. Thank you.

They stare at each other for a loaded beat. Then, George seems conflicted...

GEORGE TUCKER
Well, I should...

ZOE
Sure.

Zoe turns to walk away, George hesitates, then, catches up.
GEORGE TUCKER
Then, again, I am a Southern
gentleman, wouldn’t be right if I
didn’t offer to walk you home,
protect you from any other friendly
reptiles you might encounter?

Zoe nods, and they head towards the carriage house, walking
in silence for a moment on this perfect starry night. Then,

ZOE
Listen, uh... I’m not looking to make
friends. I’m gonna work, sleep,
maybe read a book. Hopefully, before
I know it, a year will have passed
and I’ll be happily on my way back to
New York. I don’t want distractions.

They arrive at Zoe’s front porch they have a long loaded
moment. George smiles, perhaps a little sadly.

GEORGE TUCKER
Got it. Work, sleep, possible book.

And, he leaves. Off Zoe, swooning a little.

ZOE (PRELAP)
Bluebell isn’t that bad.

INT. CARRIAGE HOUSE - NIGHT

Zoe, now in pjs, lies in bed, leaves her dad a message.
She’s vulnerable with him in a way we haven’t seen.

ZOE
...And if being here is what it takes
for me to be a cardiothoracic
surgeon, Daddy, I’ll stay. The
people are kinda, well, one in
particular is kinda... great. And I
think I can make a real difference
here. Oh, gotta go, the call
waiting’s ringing. Call me! Bye!

Zoe switches over to find an irate Mrs. H on the other line.

MRS. HATTENBARGER
Did you sign Old Man Jackson’s eye
test for the DMV today?!

ZOE
Yes. Why?
MRS. HATTENBARGER
Caused he just ran someone over!

Off Zoe, oh no...

END ACT TWO
EXT. DOWNTOWN BLUEBELL - NIGHT

Zoe, a sweater over her pajamas, runs to the doctor’s office.

INT. HARLEY’S OLD OFFICE - WAITING ROOM - NIGHT

Zoe enters and finds Mrs. H, who’s apoplectic-

MRS. HATTENBARGER
Can’t you tell a blind man when he’s right in front of your face?
Everyone knows Old Man Jackson has memorized the eye chart!

ZOE
Oh my God, I feel so bad.

MRS. HATTENBARGER
You should! He nearly killed George Tucker!

George?!?! Zoe races into--

INT. EXAM ROOM - CONTINUOUS

And finds a very battered looking George. Black eye, huge cuts on his face and arms. He GROANS, in tremendous pain. Zoe examines him, trying to make light--

ZOE
If you wanted to see me again, you could’ve just asked.

GEORGE
(then, with a groan)
My shoulder...

ZOE
It’s dislocated. I need to put it back in place. No big deal.

Zoe prepares a morphine shot as she guiltily explains--

ZOE (CONT’D)
So, George, look, eventually you’re gonna find out that this whole getting run over by a car thing, was kinda -

She INJECTS him with the shot.
GEORGE
WHAT THE HELL?!

ZOE
(awww cute)
Baby. The morphine should take effect any minute.
(rolls him on his side as)
Anyway, see Old Man Jackson came in and I gave him a test. I didn’t realize that –

Then, without warning, Zoe pops George’s shoulder back in. He SCREAMS LOUDLY-

GEORGE
OWWWWWWWWWWWWWWW. You just did it again! Have you ever heard of bedside manner?

That stings, coming from George. Trying not to show it:

ZOE
Why is everyone so obsessed with that?

GEORGE
Because sometimes it’s nice to have a little warning before intense, excruciating PAIN!

And, then he PASSES OUT. Zoe looks down at him, upset.

ZOE
George? George?

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)
OMG! It’s true!

Zoe turns to see Mrs H’s daughter, ROSE (14, cute, glasses) standing in her pajamas. Mrs. H follows her in.

MRS. H
Rose! You should be in bed.

ROSE
Mama, this is breaking news.

She whips out a digital recorder and holds it up to Zoe.

ROSE (CONT’D)
Rose Hattenbarger, BlueBell Beat Blogger for the otherwise torpid official town website.

(MORE)
ROSE (CONT’D)
So, how does it feel to be responsible for maiming George Tucker, town golden boy?

ZOE
He’s not maimed!

ROSE
O-kaaaaay. So, how does it feel to move to a town, and instantly become its most unpopular citizen?
(off Zoe’s look)
Yeah, well, I’m unpopular too, and it sucks.

MRS. H
I’ll go find a sling for George.

ZOE
Listen, kid, I’m not talking to you about this...

Mrs. H crosses off as--

ROSE (CONT’D)
But now, the real question – why would anyone ever leave New York?! New York is everything! And I know. Read the DailyIntel, own all the SATC DVD’s. I bet you’re a Carrie. I’m a Charlotte, but I wish I was a Carrie.

A beat, Zoe looks at Rose, warming to her.

ZOE
You people really like your classic HBO, huh? But... I’m a Miranda. Who also wishes she was a Carrie.

ROSE
Knew you and I were gonna be friends!

ZOE
(with a grin)
What are you, like twelve?

ROSE
I’m fourteen. But a lifetime as an outsider has given me an ancient soul.

ZOE
(beat, then a grin)
Well, I could use a friend.

As Mrs. H reenters, a “you’re in trouble now” look to Zoe.
MRS. HATTENBARGER
Yea, and a lawyer. Sheriff’s here.

ROSE
(oh shit, to Zoe)
I’ll see you later.

Rose leaves. Off Zoe, also oh shit.

INT. WAITING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Zoe, Mrs. H and the SHERIFF (50s, bald, quiet, closet knitter) sit. Outside, we can see Old Man Jackson in the backseat of a squad car.

MRS. HATTENBARGER
Merle Jackson has dementia, Lucas, he didn’t know what he was doing! If you need to arrest someone, arrest her.

The sheriff looks at Zoe.

ZOE
She’s right. It is my fault. I never should’ve signed his form. Please, don’t arrest him. You know, or me.

SHERIFF
Y’all, come on, Jackson came when he saw the new doc was alone. That’s not dementia. That’s pre-meditation. I’m taking him in.

MRS. HATTENBARGER
Then we’ll just see who’s getting any of my chicken fried steak tomorrow. Or ever, Lucas Hattenbarger!

ZOE
You’re married?!
(then, back to business)
Look, officer...sheriff, please...
There must be something we can do...

SHERIFF
That’s up to the judge now...

As he gets up to leave, BRICK BREELAND, 56, a Big Daddy type, walks in. Every bit as imposing as advertised.

MRS. H
Dr. Breeland! Thank God. You heard?
Brick nods to Mrs. H, and pats the sheriff on the back.

BRICK
Lucas, Old Man Jackson comes in every day looking to get me to sign that form. I always say no. Had no idea this little New York doctorette would come here and break my rules.

SHERIFF
Brick, he’s a danger.

BRICK
Not if he’s not gonna drive again. You have my word. You can release him to my custody till I get his daughter down here from Tuscaloosa.

(then)
We on for fishing Sunday?

The Sheriff can’t say no to this powerful man. He nods and leaves... Mrs. H follows him out.

Zoe turns to Brick, trying to make a good first impression.

ZOE
Wow, that was impressive. We haven’t met. I’m Dr. Zoe Hart.

And now he begins to unleash his full bear-like temper.

BRICK
Far as I’m concerned, you’re just the girl who nearly killed two of my patients and ruined my hunting trip. How dare you see my patients?

ZOE
Well, technically, Harley left his half of the practice to me. So half were mine.

(selling it)
But... the good news is, I’m only staying for a year!

BRICK
Miss Hart, I’m not going to share this office for one minute.

He walks into Harley’s exam room, Zoe follows.

INT. EXAM ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Brick gestures to the unconscious George.
BRICK
I see you’ve met my lawyer. When he’s conscious, the man doesn’t lose. We’ll be contesting the will. Harley wasn’t in his right mind. We figured Dr. Zoe Hart was his imaginary friend, that’s how nuts he was.

ZOE
I don’t think George will agree, he knows me.

BRICK
He’ll probably throw in a malpractice suit when he comes to!

ZOE
I made an honest mistake. But I graduated Johns Hopkins top of my class, did my surgical residency at New York/Cornell. I could do some good here.

BRICK
Things have been running just fine in BlueBell without any patronizing New Yorkers coming to do “Good.” We survived Katrina, we survived BP - you know how? We boarded up the windows, we piled up the sandbags and we kept the rot from coming in from outside and fouling our community. (in a fierce glare) It may take an hour, it may take a week, but believe me, Zoe Hart, we are gonna chase you away from our waters.

Zoe, humiliated, retreats out the door.

EXT. BLUEBELL - MAIN STREET - NIGHT
Zoe walks down the street... it’s deserted.

ZOE’S VOICE
Well, that sucked. BlueBell was my one last shot to be a heart surgeon, Brick was hellbent on driving me out. And who could blame him - I’d just gotten someone run over. In times like this, I find one thing really helps me through...
INT. THE PIGGLY WIGGLY - NIGHT

Zoe rushes into an old school grocery store.

ZOE
Please tell me you have a nice dry white!

MALE VOICE (O.S.)
Bad day?

Zoe turns and sees Wade Kinsella walking out with his girlfriends and a case of beer. She ignores him.

WADE
Everyone knows Old Man Jackson memorized the eye chart.

ZOE
Why don’t you go back to the rodeo or wherever you came from?

WADE
I see. Southern boy? Must be out ropin’ steer. Doc, seems you’re the one up on a high horse. But maybe if you came down, get to know people, listen a bit, you might keep yourself outta the kind of trouble you had tonight. You might find there’s more to this place than you think.

With that Wade and his girls leave. His words sting as Zoe grabs her wine, in a box, and marches up to the REGISTER, surprised to find the girl behind the counter is Big Mabel. She smiles shyly at Zoe, looks at the wine.

BIG MABEL
I’m having a bad day myself.
Actually, most of my days are.

Zoe looks at Mabel, feels guilty for not sticking up for her earlier. Wade’s words in her ear...

ZOE
Listen, um, Mabel, it’s not really my business, but... you have Melasma, darkened patches on your forehead and face... It’s a classic sign of...
(just coming out with it)
Are you pregnant?
Mabel, blushes, humiliated, then, after a long pause...

BIG MABEL
Don’t know. Never took a test.

ZOE
Bet you can buy one, right here.
Over by the slim-jims and duck calls.
(then, hearing her tone)
Bad day. Sorry. It’s okay...

Big Mabel hesitates. Then tears up, relieved she can unload.

MABEL
I didn’t think.... We only had sex once. He told me he wouldn’t do it with me if he had to use a condom.
And I didn’t want to lose him. And then, well, he left anyway...

And Zoe’s heart melts just a little bit.

ZOE
I recently had my heart broken too.
It’s hard to believe there are good guys out there after that. But you know what? Sometimes they turn up where you least expect them.
(scribbling her number)
You need a doctor. Apparently, I have terrible bedside manner, but if you want, you can give me a call.
Any time. I’m here for you, okay?

And, as Mabel nods, thankful, Zoe exits the Piggly Wiggly --

EXT. THE PIGGLY WIGGLY - CONTINUOUS

As Zoe steps onto the sidewalk -- a car SCREECHES to a halt next to her. An apoplectic Lemon gets out.

LEMON
How dare you show your face in this town after what you did? Do you realize my engagement party is tomorrow?! And what am I supposed to do? The photographs! The whole thing will be ruined!

ZOE
Seriously, Lemon, what are you blabbering about?
LEMON
Thanks to you my fiance was in a car accident!!
Zoe looks at her, no, it can’t be. Then, hopeful--

ZOE
You’re engaged to Old Man Jackson?

LEMON
Gross! I’m engaged to George Tucker.

CLOSE ON: Zoe’s shocked face.

ZOE’S VOICE
Once again, I’d been disgraced as a doctor... once again, the guy I... liked was with someone else.

EXT. BLUEBELL ROAD - NIGHT
Walking back home, she sees a CAR, WAVES to get a ride, but as it approaches she realizes it’s WADE AND HIS TWO GIRLFRIENDS, he winks at her and she waves away.

ZOE’S VOICE
Things were just as bad in Bluebell as they were in New York. Luckily, they couldn’t get worse.

INT. CARRIAGE HOUSE - LATER
Zoe enters her carriage house to find...

CANDACE
What the hell are you thinking?
Off Zoe, they just did...

END ACT THREE
ACT FOUR

INT. RAMMER JAMMER - LATE MORNING

Candace and Zoe are mid-conversation at the Rammer Jammer.

ZOE
...And then I saw one of Harley’s postcards. And it felt like a sign. So I came to BlueBell.

CANDACE
No offense, honey, your speech was great, but really why would this Harley try so hard to get you down here?

ZOE
I’m not sure. It’s possible he was nutballs. That’s what everyone else seems to think. Anyway, when I got here, I found out he died. So, I guess I’ll never know.

Candace blanches, clearly rattled.

ZOE (CONT’D)

CANDACE
Of course I’m not okay. I won’t be until you’re out of this place. The town smells like fishsticks drenched in Tween perfume. I don’t care what the chief said, nothing is worth you spending a year here.

(then, trump card)
And your father agrees.

ZOE
Wait, what? You talked to Dad?

CANDACE
He called as soon as he heard that message you left last night. How do you think I found you?

ZOE
(hurt)
He called you instead of me?

CANDACE
You know him, he can’t deal with complications. But, honey...
Candace hands her a FIRST CLASS PLANE TICKET.

CANDACE (CONT’D)
Sarah Jessica and Matthew are loaning you their Paris pied a’ terre for a year! You’ll go, you’ll meet someone rich, French and... ooh la la.
(then, sweetly)
In a year or so, if you still want to do something in medicine, we’ll buy a table at the Sloan Kettering gala.

JUST THEN, THREE OF THE BLUE BELLES, dressed up for Lemon and George’s engagement soiree enter LOUDLY--

BLUE BELLE #1
Y’all, Lemon wants us at the party early to work the door...
(spying Zoe)
Look, it’s Dr. NewYorkian.

As they notice her notice them, they smile fakely and wave.

BLUE BELLE #3
I love your haircut, it’s so brave.
You see so few non-lesbians with it.

They cross off, giggling. Zoe confesses to her mother.

ZOE
So, you know how after I didn’t get the fellowship I thought things couldn’t get worse? Wrong. I’m the joke of this town, I’ve lost my ability to make witty retorts, and that belle’s right about my hair! The humidity makes me look like 1999 Melissa Etheridge.

CANDACE
Hence, Paris. You can regroup among Dior and Degas. I’ll have Odile Gilbert to give you a blowout.

ZOE
(convincing herself)
Maybe you’re right...

Candace gives Zoe an uncharacteristic hug...

CANDACE
I knew you’d come to your senses. We can leave immediately.
ZOEE

Just need to take care of a couple of things first. Give me a few hours.

Candace is conflicted, clearly wants her out of here right away, but she’ll take what she can get.

CANDACE

I’ll go give Rihanna some face time, she’s in Mobile. Why don’t we meet there at 5? I have Sir Elton’s jet.

Zoe nods. Candace smiles, happy. CLOSE ON Zoe’s hand tentatively knocking on--

INT. GEORGE TUCKER’S OFFICE - DAY

-- George’s door. He’s still pretty banged up. As he lets her in, the conversation is stilted, though Zoe’s hurt, she tries to be upbeat, professional and cool.

ZOEE

Thanks for seeing me on a Saturday. I know you’re... busy, but this is time sensitive. Um, I’m moving to Paris. This afternoon.

GEORGE TUCKER

Paris? Wow. That’s one way of handling things...

ZOEE

Can you please just give me whatever papers I need to sign over my half of the practice to Brick?

GEORGE TUCKER

Of course. So... I heard about your run in with Lemon last night. I’m sorry. I should’ve told you...

ZOEE

(a tad overly casual)
What? That you’re engaged? Between the alligator and getting hit by a car, you had a lot going on last night. Besides, you don’t owe me any explanations.

GEORGE TUCKER

Still. I feel like...

And for reasons he can’t really understand, George opens up.
GEORGE TUCKER (CONT’D)
You should’ve known Lemon when we were younger. She was amazing. Funny, irreverent... Everyone wanted her light to shine on them, I was so honored when she chose me.
(then, with a sigh)
But after law school, I needed... change. I decided to go to New York.

George walks over to the window, looks out on the water.

GEORGE
I loved it in the city. The excitement, the electricity. I nearly stayed. But a few months ago, I woke up dreaming of the sunset, the sand beneath my feet, and I realized - BlueBell, Lemon are... who I am. I can’t be my best self without them...

Zoe just wants out of this room as quickly as possible.

ZOE
Wow, you’re a lucky guy.
(then, a light dig)
A girl you feel the same way about as a town. Anyway, the papers?

Formal, George opens a file cabinet and produces a file. He points to a dotted line. Zoe SIGNS.

GEORGE TUCKER
I can’t file til Monday. But I’ll let Brick know.

Zoe nods, terse, and heads out the door.

EXT. MRS. HATTENBARGER’S APARTMENT - AFTERNOON

Mrs. H opens her door (which is just upstairs from the Doctor’s Office) to find Candace, holding a cobbler.

MRS. HATTENBARGER
Can I help you?

CANDACE
I’m Candace Hart, Zoe’s mother. I bought you a cobbler. Figured it was the Southern thing to do. Can I come in for a moment?

Mrs. H is confused, but obliges.
INT. CARRIAGE HOUSE - DAY

Zoe is packing up the carriage house when Rose barges in.

ROSE
Traitor! Hope you know you’re condemning me to a life playing with weird glass animals.

ZOE
I’m sorry, Rose, I was about to come say goodbye--

ROSE
Without you, I’ll be the sole outsider. You realize you and I are like the only people in town not invited to Lemon and George’s engagement party!?

ZOE
Why on earth would you want to go to that? You’re fourteen, you should be renting Twilight and cyber-bullying or something.

ROSE
It’s the event of the year! Lemon’s sister Magnolia invited nearly everyone in our class. Except me. And I know it’s just cause she’s after Frederick.
   (dreamy-eyed)
Frederick Dean. He’s amazing. He likes comic books and history podcasts. And he and Magnolia have nothing in common, except she’ll let him get to third base.

ZOE
Oof, that’s rough. And I’d love to help you take those mean girls down. But I’m sorry, Rose. I can’t stay here. I’m moving to Paris--

ROSE
Paris? Shut up! You are so lucky.

ZOE
(knows Rose’ll like this)
Actually, I’ll be staying at Sarah Jessica’s place.

And now, Rose changes her tune. Flops on the bed.
ROSE

No!!! If I forgive you for
abandoning me will you send me a
Twitpic of SJP's loft? Please!

Zoe laughs as her PHONE RINGS. We INTERCUT with:

INT. BREELAND ESTATE - KITCHEN - INTERCUT

MABEL, in a catering outfit in the very busy kitchen of the
Breeland estate, where the engagement party’s underway. She
speaks in HUSHED TONES...

BIG MABEL
Dr. Hart? It’s Mabel, I don’t feel...
well. But I’m working at the
Breelands, and my mama’s here, I
can’t leave. Can you come? Please?

Zoe looks at her watch, oy, as Rose opens her closet and
tries on some of her clothes.

ZOE
Look, Mabel, I have to meet my mother
in Mobile in an hour. If you’re at
the Breelands, talk to --

BIG MABEL
Brick the dick? No way! He’s more
judgemental than my mother.
(then, pleading)
You said you’d be my doctor if I
needed you. Didn’t you sign an oath
or something?

Zoe SIGHS, what choice does she have?

ZOE
Crap. I’ll be there as soon as I
can.

She hangs up her phone and looks at Rose, who’s wearing one
of her cocktail dresses.

ZOE (CONT’D)
Good, you’re dressed. We have a
party to crash.

And we, HARD CUT to:

EXT. BREELAND ESTATE - AFTERNOON

The Blue Belles at the door, won’t let Rose and Zoe in.
ZOE
But I’m a doctor. This is a medical emergency!

BLUE BELLE #1
Silly, this is Brick Breeland’s house. He’s the Doctor.

ZOEE ROSE
What is wrong with you You don’t understand the people? situation --

BLUE BELLE #2
Rose Hattenbarger, we know the situation. You’re fixin’ to steal Magnolia’s date. You two are not getting in this door.

Zoe and Rose slump, defeated, when a voice --

MALE VOICE (O.S.)
Actually, they’re here with me.

Zoe and Rose turn to find Lavon Hayes, their savior.

LAVON HAYES
Lavon Hayes. Mayor. Think that entitles me to a plus two.

Off the stunned Blue Belles, who reluctantly open the door.

EXT. BREELAND ESTATE - HUGE BACKYARD - MOMENTS LATER

If Tennessee Williams were alive in 2010, he’d write about this. A huge fancy daytime engagement party. Mint juleps, croquet, outfits in differing pastels.

ANGLE the BACK DOOR as Zoe and Rose enter the party with Lavon. Everyone STARES and WHISPERS – the mayor has just entered with Public Enemies numbers 1 and 2. But Rose is used to it--

ROSE
Gonna look around for Frederick and try not to get pelted with anything.

She goes off to find him, while Zoe kisses Lavon’s cheek.

ZOE
You’re the best, I’ll go find Mabel...
LAVON
(looks around, loaded)
No need to thank me. I abhor
discrimination. Besides, this party
could use some shaking up. Lavon
Hayes needs a cocktail.

As Lavon heads toward the bar, stopping to shake hands with
various constituents, Zoe looks for Mabel... ANGLE ON
Colleen, Mabel’s mother, who’s also working the event,
obliviously serving hors d’oeuvres.

UNDER A MAGNOLIA TREE decorated in colorful lanterns, Lemon
and George talk privately.

GEORGE
I’m sorry about the photographs. I
know how hard you planned today.

LEMON
Sweetheart, I don’t care about the
pictures... That much.
(then, with a laugh)
I don’t know what’s become of me.
All the stress from the wedding has
turned me into a Bama beotch.
But... I love you. Nearly losing you
last night reminded me just how much.
So, I’m gonna try real hard to be the
same old Lemon you fell in love with.

And if George is having second thoughts, he doesn’t show them
here as Lemon KISSES him, LONG AND HARD.

Zoe, searching for Mabel, NEARLY CRASHES INTO THEM.

GEORGE TUCKER  LEMON
Zoe? I thought--  What are you doing here?!

ZOE
(cold)
Oh, I came with the mayor.

LEMON
(weirdly upset)
What do you mean?  Lavon?

George, so uncomfortable, tries to be friendly.

GEORGE TUCKER
Well, welcome. Bar’s by the pool.

Zoe nods with strained politeness and walks away.
LEMON
Thought you said she was leaving town.

GEORGE TUCKER
I thought she was...

ANGLE ON Zoe, as she spots Mabel, sitting on a chair in a private area looking pale. Zoe pushes her way towards her.

EXT. BREELAND ESTATE - BAR AREA - SAME

Rose has a soda, and nearly bumps into Frederick who stands with big-busted Magnolia Breeland. Teen angst city.

ROSE
Oh. Hey, Frederick.

FREDERICK
Oh, hi Rose! What’re you doing here?

MAGNOLIA
Yes, what ARE you doing here? I sent the invitations myself.

ROSE
Nothing. Just came with the mayor. Lavon Hayes. No big thing.

FREDERICK
He’s pretty cool, isn’t he.

Rose stares at him, tongue-tied, awkward.

ROSE
Yup... so Frederick, what’d you think of that final Scott Pilgrim book?

FREDERICK
I don’t know. I was pretty bummed. Kinda thought it’d set up a sequel.

ROSE
Yeah, me too!

MAGNOLIA
Who’s Scott Pilgrim?

As Rose and Frederick GIGGLE, off Magnolia Breeland, totally frozen out of the conversation.
INT. MRS. HATTENBARGER’S APARTMENT – CONTINUOUS

A modest, lived-in apartment cluttered with mementos. Mrs. H and Candace sip tea uncomfortably. Mrs. H slices the last of the cobbler.

CANDACE
No more for me or I’ll need an extra plane seat for my thighs!
(Mrs. H doesn’t laugh)
... But I wanted to thank you for all you’ve done for my daughter.

MRS. HATTENBARGER
Wasn’t me. Was Harley.

CANDACE
Yes. Harley. Tell me about him. What’s your take on the whole ‘leave my practice to a girl I only met once thing.’ Don’t you find it... odd?

MRS. HATTENBARGER
(inscrutable)
Harley did what Harley wanted. I gave up trying to figure that man out a long time ago.

CANDACE
It’s just surprising that he didn’t leave it to a child, a relative.

MRS. HATTENBARGER
(a beat, pointed)
Harley never married.

CANDACE
Never?

MRS. HATTENBARGER
(pointed)
Guess he never met anyone worthy.

A long strange moment between them, Candace rises-

CANDACE
Of course. So, I guess we’ll chalk up the gesture to my daughter’s astounding gift at first impressions? So sorry to pull her away from your little town. But... Ta ta.

And as Candace leaves this mysterious conversation...
INT. BREELAND ESTATE - KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

Zoe has found Mabel, who’s now sweating, in terrible pain.

BIG MABEL
Thank you so much for coming. I’m having these bad pains. Oh my God, there’s another one... They’re getting worse.

Mabel GROANS... Zoe seems confused. This can’t be happening.

ZOE
Mabel, exactly how long has it been since you had your period?

MABEL
Not sure. Awhile...

And suddenly SPLATT... Mabel’s water breaks.

ZOE
Your water just broke. You’re not just pregnant. You’re in labor. We need to get you to the hospital.

And as Mabel doubles over in pain, Zoe realizes--

ZOE (CONT’D)
Another contraction? Oh my God. We’re not gonna make it to the hospital. You’re having this baby NOW!

And OFF Zoe, realizing she’s about to deliver a baby.

END ACT FOUR
ACT FIVE

EXT. BREELAND ESTATE - MOMENTS LATER

As the party continues, Dash DeWitt runs out of the house, hysterical.

DASH
Brick! Someone get Brick! That Yankee doc’s about to deliver a baby in his trophy room!!

On Lemon Breeland, utterly horrified. She turns to one of her Blue Belles.

LEMON
Can she find more ways to ruin my party?
(covering, to guests)
But the soiree must go on! More champagne!

INT. BREELAND ESTATE - BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Zoe has moved Mabel to a huge guest room covered floor to ceiling in taxidermic animals... She examines her under a sheet as Brick Breeland rushes in...

BRICK
What’s going on here?

ZOE
Brick, thank God. She’s ten cms, ready to push... We have to deliver this baby!

BRICK
You mean I have to deliver this baby. Go get some towels. And have Emmeline bring my medical kit.

As Zoe gets up, Brick heads toward Mabel--

BIG MABEL
Oh no! Don’t come near me! Dr. Hart is my doctor.

Brick stops, confused as Zoe shrugs, the tables turned.

ZOE
You can tell Mrs. H my medical kit’s in the carriage house.
(off Brick’s ire)
(MORE)
Oh, and nice room. Are those elk horns Jonathan Adler?

As Brick leaves, Zoe kneels down in front of Mabel.

Alright, Mabel, are you ready? I’m gonna need you to start pushing...

And as Mabel nods, and grunts--

INT. BREELAND ESTATE – SAME

Lemon finds Lavon regaling some guests with a story.

Mr. and Mrs. Grayson, how lovely of you to come. May I just grab the mayor a moment? Obliged.

Lemon hooks her arm around Lavon’s and they step away. As Lemon smiles around at her guests, she casually asks--

So, Mr. Mayor? Is it true? Are you here on a date with that... Dr Hart?

Lavon stops, hurt, annoyed--

How is that any of your business? As I recall this is your engagement party, is it not?

Suddenly, Lemon seems vulnerable for the first time. She busies herself at the buffet, so no one can see her face, or the serious nature of this conversation.

Lavon, come on... you know how difficult this is.

Difficult never stopped me.

Lavon walks away. And off Lemon Breeland’s face, hurt and confused, we realize that these two used to be in love.

INT. BREELAND ESTATE – BEDROOM – LATER

Mrs. H has arrived, and dabs Mabel with a damp towel. On the couch, Brick reads a magazine, annoyed. As Zoe prepares to deliver a baby...
ZOE
I don’t see anything yet, but you’re doing great. Another contraction. Let’s push again. Count of three. 1, 2, 3--

Mabel PUSHES WITH ALL HER MIGHT, but Zoe notices --

ZOE (CONT’D)
Wait, stop!
(tries to keep calm)
Dr. Breeland. I see... feet.

And Brick leaps into action.

BRICK
Breach? At this stage? My God. Can you turn it...?

ZOE
I don’t know. Mabel, I need you to stop pushing, take a breathe as-- .

As Mrs. H puts her hands on Mabel’s shoulders to steady her, Zoe’s hands disappear underneath the sheet. They wait, until... Mabel SCREAMS. In pain. Zoe turns to Brick, ashen.

ZOE (CONT’D)
The head’s stuck in the pelvis.

BRICK
(also ashen)
Ambulance is on the way, they’ll have to do a c-section in Mobile.

ZOE
Isn’t that 20 miles?

BRICK
Yes.

Zoe and Brick exchange a look, Mabel and the baby aren’t going to make it. And Zoe makes a decision.

ZOE
Mabel, it’s going to be okay. Mrs. H, hand me my scalpel...

BRICK
What are you doing?

ZOE
An emergency symphysiotomy.
BRICK
What?! I can’t let you slice open
her pelvis. It’s too dangerous.

ZOE
What choice do we have?
(sotto, to Brick)
This fetus comes out now or we lose
both of them.

Brick is reeling as Zoe turns back to Mabel.

ZOE (CONT’D)
Mabel, this is going to hurt like
hell. But it’ll be quick. If you
stay still.
(to Mrs. H and Brick)
You two need to hold her steady until
the whole thing’s over, no matter
what else happens or we’ll rupture
the Sacroiliac joint. Then, I’m going
to have to close her up as soon as
possible, so Brick, the baby’s all
you. Are you with me?

Brick, snaps back. Sweating, but all business.

BRICK
I am.

As Mrs. H and Brick hold Mabel’s legs down, as Zoe begins to
bravely cut -

Mrs. H and Brick are sweaty, nervous messes, looking at each
other, holding Mabel’s legs down. But Zoe is all steely
focus. Mabel cries, in unbearable pain, but fighting to stay
still...

MABEL
I can’t. Please. It hurts. It hurts
too much...

ZOE
I know. Hang on. Please. I need you
to be still for one more second...

ANGLE ON Mrs. H and Brick exchanging a worried look.... as
Zoe finishes the cut and we see BLOOD HITTING THE FLOOR. And
now Mabel’s too weak to scream.

BRICK
(sotto, Zoe)
There’s too much blood!
ZOE
Mrs. H, clamp. Brick, I can do the fastest whipstitch in the tri-state area. Calm down. The incision’s done. Now we just need to deliver...

MRS. HATTENBARGER
Look at her, she can’t.

Zoe looks down at Mabel. She’s pale, done fighting. Too much pain and blood loss.

MABEL
Just... save my baby. Okay?

ZOE
Mabel, no! Don’t you pass out on me! Do you hear me? I need you to push. I know you’re tired, I know you’re in pain. But I need you to be strong. Stronger than you’ve ever been in your life. For me, for your baby, for yourself, okay? You can do this.

And, as Mabel weakly nods.

ZOE (CONT’D)
Okay, push....
(Mabel can’t)
Did you hear me? You CAN DO THIS!
Push, Mabel. Push. PUSH...

Mabel does... She’s weak... but suddenly Zoe pulls the baby all the way out and up and we hear the sound of an INFANT CRYING. Zoe’s stunned and, just as quickly, CRYING herself...

ZOE (CONT’D)
Oh my God. She’s... here. You did it! Oh my God...

She hands the baby to Brick, who’s all sweat and emotion. Mrs. H openly bawls. Zoe, wiping away a tear, clamps the umbilical cord and starts to sew Mabel up.

EXT. BREELAND ESTATE - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Colleen serves some cranky guests hors d’oeuvres.

COLLEEN
Mabel should be right up with your drinks. Lord knows where she ran off-

Just then Dash comes over, he pulls her aside, whispers in her ear... as we see Colleen turns ashen, worried.
COLLEEN (CONT’D)

My God. Where is she?

And as Colleen takes off for the house, dropping her hors d’oeuvres tray.

INT. BREELAND ESTATE - TROPHY ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Dr. Breeland checks over the baby...

MABEL

Is she... okay?

BRICK

Ten fingers, ten toes, lungs to make Carrie Underwood jealous. You’ve got yourself a healthy baby girl.

He hands the baby over to her weak but beaming mother. As Zoe smiles, happy. Brick approaches her.

BRICK (CONT’D)

Nice job. Maybe Harley wasn’t as daft as I thought. Too bad you won’t be staying. George told me you signed the papers...

(with a hint of triumph)

I’ll go tell the paramedics where to find us.

Brick exits. Zoe moves over to Mabel, looks at the baby...

ZOE

She’s beautiful. What you did for your daughter... You were amazing... Don’t ever forget how much strength you have.

Just then, Colleen rushes into the bedroom.

COLLEEN

Mabel! Where’s my daughter...?

ZOE

(blocking her)

I’ve got a patient recovering here.

MABEL

Dr. Hart, it’s okay.

Zoe lets Colleen through, Mabel speaks, strong.
MABEL (CONT’D)
Mama. Look. I’ve created a beautiful, perfect person. How she grows up, how she looks at herself... that’s on me now. I’ve tried so hard to please you. But it was never enough. And I’m not gonna expose my baby to that. So, please, get out.

Colleen staggers back, just as PARAMEDICS rush in to Mabel’s side. Zoe watches, HEARS HER WORDS...

EXT. BREELAND ESTATE - LATER

As the paramedics and Zoe load Mabel and the baby into an ambulance. ANGLE On Rose and Frederick, hitting it off--

ROSE
Oh, yeah, Dr. Hart? She’s like my best friend.

ANGLE On Magnolia scowling at them in the distance, surrounded by 14 YEAR-OLD MINI BLUE BELLES, determined to take her down..

EXT. BREELAND ESTATE/INT. AMBULANCE - LATER

Mabel and baby are all strapped in as--

ZOE
You call me anytime, okay? I’ve got an international plan.

Mabel waves goodbye, and the AMBULANCE DOOR CLOSES. As it drives away, Mrs. H comes up behind Zoe..

MRS. HATTENBARGER
I’ve been around doctors thirty years, don’t know if I’ve ever seen any of them do that... You can’t leave now.

ZOE
That’s surgery. Adrenaline, skill, power, it's what I excel at. And I came here because I'd do anything to not have to stop being one. The question is why.

(finally vulnerable)
I called my dad last night, opened my heart to him... he didn't even respond. I've spent my life trying to impress a man who could care less about me.

(MORE)
But maybe I can learn something from Mabel, maybe... the cycle can end. It’s time to admit, I’ve wanted this for the wrong reasons... I don’t belong here.

As Zoe walks away, Off Mrs. H, struggling with something.

ANGLE ON GEORGE, standing with Lemon, as he spies Zoe leaving, clearly conflicted, wondering...

EXT. LAVON’S PLANTATION/GATEHOUSE – NIGHT

A worn down cab has arrived... As the driver helps load Zoe’s stuff, Zoe looks at the gatehouse, makes a decision. She walks over, KNOCKS on the door. Wade opens it, surprised.

ZOE
So, I’m leaving. So, feel free to use every outlet in the place.

Wade smiles a rueful, sexy smile.

WADE
Shame. Heard what you just did for Big Mabel. She’s my second cousin once removed.

ZOE
You’re lucky. She’s... incredible.
(then)
Look, I’m sorry if I was rude earlier. I’m sure you don’t work in a rodeo. And, well, your rendition of Love Me Two Times was actually kinda good.

WADE
Thanks. Good luck, Doc.
(with a sexy smile)
Gotta admit I was looking forward to sharing electricity with you.

Zoe blushes and smiles, and gets in her cab.

INT. CAB/EXT. BLUEBELL MAIN STREET – MOMENTS LATER

Zoe rides through town, looking out the window, clearly torn about leaving. Suddenly, the driver SLAMS on the brakes. And we see Mrs. H standing on the road, blocking it. Zoe rolls down her window.

ZOE
Mrs. H? What are you doing?
MRS. H
There's something you need to see.

INT. DOCTOR’S OFFICE - MINUTES LATER

Zoe sits as Mrs. Hattenbarger gathers herself for a difficult speech.

MRS. HATTENBARGER
What you did with Mabel, that was more than surgery. That was being a doc. You asked me before why Harley left you this practice, well I didn’t tell you the whole truth.

Mrs. H opens her desk and hands Zoe a LARGE FILE.

MRS. HATTENBARGER (CONT’D)
I found this in Harley’s stuff.

Zoe flips through the file. It’s filled with her REPORT CARDS, RECITAL PROGRAMS, and PICTURES.

ZOE
(confused and freaked)
I don’t get it. Harley was stalking me?

And then, she flips to a PICTURE at the back of the pile. Standing on the deck of a CRUISE SHIP is a YOUNG HARLEY with his arm around a woman who appears to be ZOE’S MOTHER, CANDACE. There’s a scribbled date, April, 1982.

ZOE (CONT’D)
That’s my... mother.
(as it dawns on her)
Are you saying... that the reason Harley sent me all those postcards, came to my graduation...?

MRS. H
Yes, Zoe. I believe Harley Wilkes was your father.

Off Zoe, stunned.

END ACT FIVE
ACT SIX

INT. MOBILE PRIVATE AIRPORT - TARMAC - GOLDEN HOUR

Candace looks at her watch, annoyed. She spots Zoe walking toward her. Candace is overly relieved.

CANDACE
You’re here! Ready? There’s a great Sancerre chilling on board.

But instead of walking to the plane, Zoe whips out the picture of Candace and Harley.

ZOE
We need to talk.

CANDACE
Oh. Oh my God. Zoe, I can explain.

ZOE
What’s there to explain? That my entire life is a lie?!

(Candace is silent)

This is the answer to everything, isn’t it? Why Harley left me the practice, why dad... stopped loving me...

(as it dawns on her)

Because I wasn’t his to love, and he knew, didn’t he?

Candace looks away, can’t bear to have this talk.

ZOE (CONT’D)
When?! When did he find out? TALK DAMMIT!

CANDACE
You were ten. You fell off the swings, they thought you might need a transfusion. But... When he donated blood... He tried to stay in your life. But I guess, it hurt too much.

ZOE
That’s why he left?

Candace nods once. Zoe takes a moment to try and untangle everything going through her mind.

ZOE (CONT’D)
And why not tell me about Harley? Was he a psycho? A pedophile?
CANDACE
He was a... mistake. We met on a cruise.
(as she remembers)
It was Greece, he was gorgeous, smart, a gentleman. A fantasy. But I was engaged. To someone real.

ZOE
Did you... love him?

CANDACE
(yes, but)
That doesn’t matter. Because I didn’t belong with him anymore than my child belongs in a place like this. I gave you a father from our world. I was protecting you.

ZOE
That should’ve been my choice. My real father is dead - I'll never know him now. I'll never know what it would've been like to hold him, or have him read me a bedtime story. I'll never know what it would've been like to have a father who... loved me no matter what.

CANDACE
Zoe, I’m sorry. Okay? I am deeply, truly sorry. But, please, let’s get on the plane. We can go home, or go to Paris, and discuss this in therapy like normal people.

But Zoe walks away.

ZOE (PRELAP)
So, I decided to stay in BlueBell.

INT. LAVON’S FERRARI - NIGHT

Lavon gives Zoe a ride to town.

ZOE
Not because I’m having a nervous breakdown. But because I’ve gotten off track. And maybe following in the footsteps of my real father for a while will help me find my way.
LAVON HAYES
Well I'm glad to hear it. As a matter of fact, Don Johnson has something going on with his tail that I'm hoping you could take a look at.

ZOE
(laughs)
Are you TRYING to get me to change my mind.

LAVON HAYES
Well, if you're staying, you should probably get a car. And a license. And maybe learn to appreciate some of BlueBell's customs. It just so happens it's a full moon, which means a moon jam at the Rammer Jammer. You up for it?

ZOE
(a beat, then)
Sure. But can you drop me somewhere first?

LAVON HAYES
Long as we don't miss the crab shelling contest.

ZOE (PRELAP)
And that's how I ended up in Bluebell.

EXT. CEMETERY - NIGHT

There are generations of Breelands and Wilkes all around, as Zoe sits at Harley's grave. We realize the voice over we've been hearing the whole time is her, sitting here, talking to her dead father.

ZOE
Where all the food is fried, the whole town smells like mold, and clearly the sex education system is lacking. They could use a good doctor around here. I may not be one yet, but, maybe, even though you're gone, there are still some things you can teach me...

(choking up)
So, thanks. For the postcards. For... the faith. No one ever believed in me like you did.
Startled by FOOTSTEPS, Zoe turns to see Mrs. H, carrying flowers for Harley... She’s quiet, kind as--

MRS. HATTENBARGER
Harley was a great man, he would’ve loved to have known you.

Zoe turns her head away, embarrassed for Mrs. H to see her cry.

MRS. HATTENBARGER (CONT’D)
Honey, there’s no shame in tears.

Zoe can no longer help herself, she collapses into Mrs. H, crying like she never could with her own mother.

INT. RAMMER JAMMER - NIGHT

The RJ’s in full party mode for the moon jammer celebration. Twinkle lights are on. People dance, drink and play darts.

Zoe enters with Mrs. H. As Mrs. H finds some friends, Zoe spots Brick having a drink with George and Lemon. George nearly chokes on his drink when he sees her...

LEMON
Um...? This departure has lasted longer than our last hurricane.

ZO埃
(with attitude)
I’m staying. Turns out, I’m Harley’s daughter. Think that’s the reason he left me his half of the practice. Probably, the judge will agree. Good luck contesting his will now.

BRICK
You already signed the papers!

There’s a long silence, as Zoe absorbs that, then...

GEORGE TUCKER
Actually, I didn’t notarize them. Must have been all those drugs she had me on. I can’t file.

As Zoe gives George a look of confused thanks. Lemon and Brick turn to him, wtf?!

INT. RAMMER JAMMER - LATER

Zoe sips a mint julep at the bar as Rose comes up to her.
ROSE
OMGMD. My mom told me you’re staying.
This is the greatest news, like ever.
I need your advice on a million things. Like Frederick - what does it mean that he said, “See you later?” WWCBD?
(off Zoe’s look)
What would Carrie Bradshaw do?

ZOE
Rose, believe me, I’m the last person in this town to give you advice on guys. As a matter of fact, all I know for sure right now is that everything I thought I knew about everything... is probably wrong.

She gets up... winks at Rose, points to some boys wrestling in the bushes.

ZOE (CONT’D)
Besides, should probably get some sleep. The Tark twins are wrestling in some poison oak, tomorrow’s gonna be a long day.

JUST THEN, Wade’s band takes the stage. He looks into the audience, sees Zoe, SMILES - surprised.

WADE
Well, we got a special guest here tonight. A girl, I hope, is staying.
(he nods to the band)
This one’s for the doc.

And as he begins to play the PERFECT, HAPPY, MAGICAL SOUTHERN SONG, (possibly “If Heaven Ain’t A Lot like Dixie...”) Zoe SMILES at him, moved, intrigued.

ANGLE on George, who isn't thrilled by this exchange. Lemon comes to his side and pulls him to the dance floor by his good arm. ANGLE on Lavon as he watches them. Mrs. H pulls him to the dance floor. And Rose grabs Zoe.

And as our whole little community moves onto the dance floor. Dancing, and singing along. Zoe, at long last, home. We --

FADE OUT.

END OF SHOW