ACT ONE

OVER BLACK we HEAR an enthusiastic voice:

FEMALE VOICE (V.O.)
Good morning, Seattle.

FADE IN:

EXT. SEATTLE - EARLY MORNING (D1)

We PAN OVER the city, the rush hour commute beginning.

FEMALE VOICE (V.O.)
It’s 6:23 and if you’re just waking up, screw you. Ryan and I have been up since five.

MALE VOICE (V.O.)
And, as usual, arguing since six.

And their voices take us to:

INT. KWASH 101 - BOOTH - CONTINUOUS (D1)

...where CATE CAMPBELL, 32, and her co-host, RYAN SCOTT, 35, are ON AIR.

RYAN
For those of you just tuning in to “Morning Madness”, Cate and I are in a rousing game of “Sex, Marry, Kill.” I did the Jessicas -- sex Biel, marry Alba, kill Simpson -- and now Cate refuses to play, on the basis that she wouldn’t marry anyone.

(turning to Cate)
Guess that’s why your “A Date a Day in the Month of May” segment didn’t yield much in terms of results.

CATE
Why are people trying to get me to date? Why does no one believe that I’ve been basically monogamous for the past two years?

RYAN
Uh... with a guy you refuse to call your boyfriend. And you can’t say “basically monogamous.” That’s like saying “kind of pregnant.”
CATE
We’re just... hanging out.

RYAN
FYI, when people are on the brink of cohabitation, that’s more than just hanging out.

CATE
FYI? Don’t say FYI.

RYAN
So what’d he do to freak you out this time? Give you a compliment? Tell you he loved you?

CATE
No... he talked about spending the rest of our lives together.

RYAN
What? I hope you gave it to this guy. I hope you did something crazy or slightly violent -- like hurl a remote at his forehead.

CATE
I’m never telling you anything again.

And Cate and Ryan’s banter takes us to:

INT. POINT 08 BAR – EARLY MORNING (D1)

Inside, NICK BASILE, “BAZE”, 32, a cute but scruffy-looking former frat boy, serves a ROUND OF BEERS to a motley crew of five GUYS. “Morning Madness” plays on the radio.

BAZE
Last call, everyone. (off all the GROANS)
C’mon. It’s six thirty.

JAMIE STONE, too good-looking for his own good, notices Cate’s voice on the radio.

JAMIE
God, this voice -- it’s making my hangover worse.

BAZE
You have to stop drinking to get a hangover.
MATH, a big teddy bear-type, walks out from the back.

MATH
That bathroom’s disgusting.
There’s puke in the papertowel
dispenser and two used condoms on
the floor.

JAMIE
Bachelorette party. Duty called.

MATH
You had sex with the bride?

JAMIE
And her sister.

Baze shakes his head, we HEAR:

RYAN (PRELAP)
Linda makes a valid point...

INT. KWASH 101 - BOOTH - MORNING (D1)

Ryan argues with Cate. A caller, LINDA, is on the line.

RYAN
Does it bother you that you’re
thirty-two years old and don’t have
a maternal bone in your body?
Where’s the biological clock?
Where’s that desire to do more than
make Ramen noodles and dry toast?

CATE
Linda, what’s your favorite meal?

LINDA (O.C.)
Eggplant parm.

CATE
So does your ability to make
eggplant parmesan ensure that
you’ll snag yourself a husband that
you’ll love, honor, and cherish,
even when he gets fat and his back
gets hairy and he still leaves you
for his twenty-four-year-old
assistant? No, of course not. It
ensures leftovers.

(beat)
Linda?
RYAN
Yeah, Linda’s hung up.

CATE
So I don’t feel obligated to make
eggplant parm for anyone. Then no
one feels obligated to eat it.

(then)
I learned it early. The truth is
the only person you can count on in
this world is yourself. If you
expect anything else, you’re just
setting yourself up for heartbreak.

RYAN
And on that uplifting note, I’m
Ryan Scott with my clinically-
insane but moderately lovable co-
host Cate Campbell. We’ll go to
Alice with one more look at
traffic. And thanks for listening
to “Morning Madness” on KWASH 101.

CATE
Love you people!

As ALICE, a teary-eyed traffic girl, starts her report, Cate
turns to Ryan, as they take their headphones off.

ALICE
It’s “slow and go” on the 5
with the right express lane
blocked --

CATE
“Clinically insane?”

RYAN
“Basically monogamous?”

CATE
“Moderately lovable?”

RYAN
That’s what you get for nearly
decapitating me with a remote last
night.

CATE
That’s what you get for talking
about spending the rest of our
lives together. I don’t even know
what I’m doing tonight.

And now we realize they’re dating. From the other booth:
ALICE
This traffic report is bought to
you by Zales. Need a diamond ring?
(breaking down)
Try Zales.

BAZE
Dumped again.

CATE
See? Heartbreak. So not worth it.

And we HEAR: A DOORBELL.

EXT. ROW HOUSE - DAY (D1)
Baze, wearing a "MILF: It Does a Body Good" t-shirt, opens
the door to reveal: LUX, a fifteen year old girl.

LUX
Hi, um, I need to get a signature
from someone...
(reading his shirt)
...not you.

BAZE
We’ve got all the Thin Mints we
need. Thanks.

Jamie and Math come to the door.

JAMIE
Samoas. Two boxes of Samoas! 

MATH
Get Trefoils. Love those.

LUX
I’m looking for my biological
father. Nicholas Basile? I think
he lives here.

All the color drains from Baze’s face.

JAMIE
Dude. It’s not a Girl Scout --

MATH
-- It’s a girl.

And on Baze in a state of complete and utter shock, we:

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE
ACT TWO

FADE IN:

INT. ROW HOUSE - DEN - MOMENTS LATER (D1)

Baze, Jamie and Math sit on the couch, stunned, as Lux paces in front of them, explaining her situation... again. Slowly.

LUX
Okay, one more time for the cheap seats. You and someone had a kid. You gave up that kid. I’m that kid.

BAZE
I got that part.

LUX
Now I’m applying for emancipation --

BAZE
From your adoptive parents?

LUX
I was never adopted. From foster care.

MATH
She just told us. Keep up, dude.

BAZE
It’s just hard to keep up when I didn’t even know she was born.

JAMIE
Gotta work on that paternal instinct, bra.

Baze shoots them both annoyed looks. Lux continues.

LUX
So I was putting together the paperwork for my hearing and it turns out that no one ever signed a permanent release of rights.

MATH
Yeah, you may want to dumb it down. He only speaks stoner.

BAZE
Dude!
LUX
Basically, until you sign this
sheet of paper, you’re still
legally my dad.

What? Baze looks around, trying to remain calm.

BAZE
Is there a pen?

And we HEAR:

TRACEY (O.C.)
Nick? You here?

LUX
(joking)
Mommy?

BAZE
Shit, no, my girlfriend. You gotta
get out of here --

He grabs her but Lux wriggles free from his grasp.

LUX
Listen, Nick, Baze, whatever you go
by -- I don’t want to be here as
much as you don’t want to have me
here. But my emancipation hearing
is the day after tomorrow -- and if
I don’t get these signatures, both
signatures, I’ll have to spend
another three years being bounced
around crappy foster care, with
Scope-drinking moms and creep dads
who hit on you, which, to be blunt?
Blows. So if you could just sign
this and rifle through the memory
banks of teenage girls you
impregnated --

Baze signs and hands the form back, hurried.

BAZE
Cate Campbell. That’s your mom.
Cate with a “c.” Think you can
climb out the window?

LUX
Wait -- what? MATH
Cate Campbell, from high
school?
Like the one on the radio Cate Campbell?

Not like her. That’s her.

A beat as it dawns on Lux, Math and Jamie simultaneously.

That Cate Campbell is my mom? That’s why that Morning Madness crap is always on?

You’re the guy who got Cate Campbell pregnant in high school?

Okay, can we talk about this later?

She was number one in the class. She despised you. There’s no way Cate would’ve slept with you.

Suddenly:

Who’s Cate?

Everyone turns to see TRACEY, late 20s/school teacher cute, standing in the doorway. Baze quickly steps in front of Lux.

Are you hiding... a teenager behind you?

Jamie beelines for the door.

What up, Trace.

Baze takes a deep breath. Math heads out, too.

Tracey, let me just start by saying, I love you. And people, they make mistakes --

Like impregnating the president of the Latin Honor Society.
BAZE
Hey, she wanted to sleep with me!

TRACEY
(horrified)
Oh my god. You got this girl pregnant?

LUX
Okay, ew. Not her! This is, um...
um...

BAZE

LUX
Lux.

BAZE
Right. I knew that.

Now Baze is so nervous, he’s almost hyperventilating.

LUX
Like a Bandaid. Just rip it off.

BAZE
It was high school, it was a one night thing. I always assumed this girl, Cate, took care of it.”

LUX
“Touched care of it?”

TRACEY
Wait -- this is your...

BAZE
Yeah. Daughter.

Tracey looks as though she’s been punched in the gut.

LUX
For the record, I’m just as horrified as you are. Look, you two are clearly having a moment. I’d be more than happy to get out of your obviously thinning hair --

BAZE
My hair is not thinning.

LUX
-- I just need you to help me track down Cate Campbell.
BAZE
What am I supposed to do? Call her
up and say I’m with the daughter I
never knew about?

Off Tracey’s look, that’s apparently exactly what he’s
supposed to do. He’s not happy about it.

BAZE
Fine. Let’s just -- find her
number and get this over with.

TRACEY
Get what over with? Helping your
daughter?

TRACEY
Does it bother you at all
that you’re incapable of
taking responsibility for
your own daughter --

BAZE
That’s not what I meant!

TRACEY
-- or that your maturity
level came to a grinding halt
at age twenty-five?

BAZE
What do you think I’m trying
to do?

TRACEY
Or that there’s a teenager standing
in front of you who’s more mature
than you are?

BAZE
It’s the shirt, isn’t it?

TRACEY
You know what, Nick? Grow up.

She walks out. There’s silence, then:

LUX
Your hair is thinning.

Off Baze, his life in chaos...

INT. CATE’S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT (N1)

At least half of Cate’s life is in boxes. She’s hard at work
packing when Ryan walks out, perusing her YEARBOOK.

RYAN
So... debate team, huh? I
should’ve guessed...
CATE
Oh, god. Give me that.

RYAN
"Most Likely to Succeed."

CATE
It’s a nice way of saying Type-A.

RYAN
It’s better than being... who’s this guy scratched out? Class Clown? Nicholas something?

CATE
(grabbing the yearbook)
Okay, we need to have a serious discussion.

RYAN
I agree.

CATE
About closet space. As in, how much of yours am I getting?

Suddenly, Ryan gets down on one knee. Cate looks concerned.

RYAN
Cate...
CATE
Did you lose a contact --

He pulls out a ring box and opens it.

CATE
Wait. What are you doing?
Seriously. What are you doing?

RYAN
Will you marry me?

A beat. She punches him in the arm. Hard.

RYAN
Ow! What’s wrong with you?

CATE
What’s wrong with you? Everything’s in boxes, we’re in the middle of moving --

RYAN
Well, I tried to do it last night.
Remember? Candlelit dinner?
(MORE)
RYAN (CONT'D)
Veuve Clicquot? The Tivo remote
hurtling toward my forehead?

CATE
That’s what you were doing last
night? When you started talking
about spending the rest of our
lives together?

Ryan snaps the box closed. Stands.

RYAN
This isn’t going well.

CATE
I’m sorry. It’s just... this is
crazy. It feels sudden.

RYAN
We’ve been together for two years.

CATE
We haven’t even lived together yet.
You barely know me. I never floss,
I wear footy pajamas and a
mouthguard when you’re not around.
Did you know that?

RYAN
Yes, I know that! Jesus, Cate. Do
you really think I don’t know you?
I know that you’re allergic to hay.
I know you hate toes, the word
“moist”, and buying ingredients.
And I know that you pretend you
don’t want things so you don’t get
hurt when they don’t work out...

(beat)
The only thing I don’t know is what
happened to you to make you this
screwed up! And that was not the
speech I prepared!

A beat. Cate’s touched.

CATE
Okay, do it again. Just...
propose.

RYAN
No!

CATE
Ryan!
RYAN
Okay, fine. Cate, will you --

CATE
Yes! Yes, yes, I’m an idiot, yes!

RYAN
You’re really lucky I love you.

He puts the ring on her finger and they kiss. Suddenly, her home phone RINGS. The machine picks up.

CATE MACHINE
Hey, it’s Cate. Leave a message.

And we hear BAZE’S VOICE.

BAZE’S VOICE
Hey, it’s Baze from, um...

Cate’s eyes go wide. She lunges for the phone. Grabs it.

CATE
Hello?

We INTERCUT with:

INT. ROW HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS (N2)

Baze paces in the kitchen.

BAZE (INTO PHONE)
Cate? Hey, it’s um, Nick Basile. We kinda’... did it that time.

Cate hangs up. Ryan gives her a look.

RYAN
Who was that?

CATE
Wrong number.

And as she covers, looking at her ring, forcing a smile, we:

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO
ACT THREE

FADE IN:

INT. ROW HOUSE - DEN - NIGHT (N1)

Lux paces, as Baze, Jamie and Math watch SportsCenter.

LUX
So you’re just giving up? Don’t you have a Plan B?

Jamie takes a hit off a pipe, then hands it to Baze.

BAZE
I’m not giving up. I just need to chill for a sec. I think better that way.

LUX
Be sure to tell that to your fast-diminishing brain cells.

BAZE
I’m starting to see why you were never adopted.
(realizing what he said)
I’m sorry, I shouldn’t have said --

LUX
Whatever. It’s fine.

BAZE
No, I’m sorry. Obviously, you’ve been hosed --

She reaches for the pipe. Baze rips it out of her hand.

BAZE
Dude!

LUX
I just need to chill for a sec.

BAZE
If you want to chill, text someone. Post an inappropriate video of yourself on YouTube.
(grabbing a DVD case)
Here, watch High School Musical.

LUX
I don’t want to watch High School Musical.

(MORE)
LUX (CONT'D)
I hate High School Musical.
(then)
This is exactly why I want to get
emancipated -- so I’ll never have
to rely on jerks like you for
anything ever again.
(realizing, re: the DVD)
Wait -- do you own this?

The boys look at each other. Lux laughs, despite herself.

LUX
You three are seriously disturbed.

As they all settle in to watch, we TIME DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ROW HOUSE - DEN - LATER (N1)

High School Musical is ending. Math has gone to bed. Lux
softly sings along. Baze gives her a look. She admits:

LUX
Okay, so maybe “hate” was a little
strong.

BAZE
What about “jerk”?

LUX
That, too.

They notice Jamie’s passed out on the floor. They share a
smile. And we SMASH TO:

INT. ROW HOUSE - DEN - MOMENTS LATER (N1)

Lux writes “Sucker” across Jamie’s forehead with a black
Sharpie; and Baze draws a picture of a penis on Jamie’s
cheek, pointing toward his mouth.

BAZE
This is the best way to get
someone. Gotta’ ambush them. When
they least expect it.

On Lux, suddenly getting an idea. Baze looks at her.

BAZE
What?

LUX
Plan B.

And we HEAR:
RYAN (PRELAP)
Okay, we’re here at 7:53 talking
high school nicknames, people.

INT. KWASH 101 - BOOTH - MORNING (D2)

Cate and Ryan are mid-show. Ryan presses a button.

RYAN
Hosette, I mean Cosette. Thanks
for calling in. Try to stay out of
those janitor’s closets, will ya?

CATE
(pressing a button)
We’ve got Lux on the line. Lux,
what was your high school nickname?

EXT. KWASH 101/INT. BAZE’S CAR - CONTINUOUS (D2)

Lux and Baze sit in his car, parked in the KWASH parking lot.
She’s on his cell phone. On the radio, we HEAR:

CATE (ON THE RADIO)
Lux? You there?

She freezes at the sound of Cate’s voice talking to her.
Baze saves her, grabbing the phone.

BAZE
Cate?

And we INTERCUT:

CATE
Cate, wow. Sounds like you’ve gone
through some big changes since --

BAZE
-- No, it’s Baze, again. From high
school.

A look of panic flashes across Cate’s face.

RYAN       BAZE
High school? I really need to talk to you. *
Right now. *

RYAN
Wow. Maybe you can shed some light
on Cate’s teen years. When’s the
last time you saw her? Smoking
cloves behind the dumpster?
RYAN
Campaigning against the patriarchy that is senior prom?

CATE
We actually have another caller --

BAZE
Actually, the last time I saw Cate, she was two months pregnant.

Ryan nearly chokes on his coffee.

RYAN
Excuse me --

BAZE
Cate, I’m outside the station. I really need to talk to --

Cate hits a button, hanging up. She rips off her headphones and beelines for the door. From the other booth:

ALICE
That guy sounded hot. Think he’s single?

EXT. KWASH 101 - PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER (D2)

Cate bursts through the doors, rushing toward Baze, who’s gotten out of the car. He’s taken aback by how pretty she is, then fear kicks in:

BAZE
Okay, just calm down.

CATE
Is that how you get someone to calm down? By calling them at work and humiliating them in public? You haven’t changed a bit... except you’re balding.

BAZE
I am not balding! Why does everyone keep saying that? (then) I just need to talk to you --

CATE
Oh, now you want to talk? When you need something? Remember when I needed something, like, I don’t know, maybe support --
BAZE
Hey! I offered to pay for half!

Baze sees that Lux has gotten out of the car. He gives a little wave.

BAZE
Sorry about that.

A beat. Cate turns around, confused. Who’s he talking to? She sees: LUX is standing right behind her. Lux gives a slight smile, looking like very much a little girl. Baze introduces them.

BAZE
Cate, meet Lux. Our daughter.

And on Cate and Lux, seeing each other for the first time in fifteen years, we:

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE
ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

EXT. KWASH 101 - PARKING LOT - DAY (D2)

Cate, Baze and Lux stand there. Cate’s reeling.

CATE
I just can’t believe this -- that you’re standing here. You’re so...
big. I mean, not big, like unusually big, you’re completely proportional, you’re height and weight...

(oh god)

Sorry. Um... how are you?

LUX
I’m fine. And proportional.

Cate laughs, nervously. Lux, too.

LUX
I’ve listened to your show forever. I’m a huge fan.

Another beat, as they just take each other in. Baze nudges Lux.

BAZE
You have something she needs to sign...

LUX
Right. That’s why I’m here. There was some mistake, I can’t get emancipated without this, so --

CATE
Emancipated? Like, from your parents?

BAZE
From the foster care system. She was never adopted.

(quickly adds)

At no fault of her own.

Lux holds out the paper. She doesn’t want to go there.

LUX
It’s a long and pretty boring story.
Cate signs the paper and hands it back.

CATE
Is that it? That’s all?

LUX
Yeah, I just need to get this to Social Services and hopefully by tomorrow, I’ll be free.

CATE
Is there anything else? I could give you a ride.

LUX
That’s be great.

BAZE
I was going to.

CATE
I don’t mind.

BAZE
Neither do I.
(not wanting Lux caught in the middle, to Lux)
But, yeah, you should go with Cate.

LUX
Are you sure?

BAZE
Yeah. Totally.

Lux smiles. That’s what she wanted.

LUX
Well... thanks for everything. It was fun hanging out.

BAZE
Well, don’t forget. There’s HSM two and three. Stop by anytime.

LUX
Okay. Thanks.

Lux gets her stuff and leaves with Cate. Off Baze, torn, watching her go...
INT. CATE’S CAR – DAY (D2)

Cate drives, badly, swerving to avoid a car turning left. Lux hangs on for dear life.

LUX
You’re not going to get in trouble?
For leaving the show?

CATE
No, no. After the bomb Baze dropped, I should lay low. It’ll be harder for Ryan to ask for the ring back that way.

Lux looks at Cate’s left hand, then realizes:

LUX
Wait, Ryan? That’s who you’re dating? You guys are getting married? Watch the road --

Cate swerves to avoid a car. Turns to Lux.

CATE
You really do listen to the show.

LUX
Every day. Except when I lived in Olympia. I didn’t get the station. It’s literally why I asked for a new placement. Well, that and I think my foster parents were, like, dealing drugs.

CATE
I don’t understand. When I gave you up, the social worker said they’d find you a good home, that they’d have no trouble placing you, that there were waiting lists...

LUX
I was born with this heart thing. A hole. And had to have a bunch of surgeries. A baby on the operating table’s not exactly a big selling point to prospective parents. (then) I was fine but after everything, I was almost three. Most people, they want a baby... I mean, not everyone... obviously.
Cate feels terrible. She doesn’t know what to say.

CATE
So this emancipation thing, it sounds complicated.

LUX
It’s pretty simple, actually.

CATE
Yeah, but wouldn’t you rather hold out for someone to adopt you? I mean, if there was a chance?

LUX
No one’s going to take me unless I come with a government check attached. If no one wants three year-olds, how many people do you think want teenagers?

CATE
I’m sorry. I probably don’t know what I’m talking about --

LUX
There it is. On the right.

As Cate pulls up to the building.

CATE
It’s just I thought I knew everything at fifteen, too.

LUX
(a little defensive)
I’m almost sixteen --

CATE
There are so many things you probably haven’t even considered. Like how you’d make money, where you’re going to live, school --

Lux hardens. Who does Cate think she is?

LUX
No offense but I haven’t had a mother in fifteen years. I don’t need one now. Thanks, though.

(then)
For the ride.
She gets out of the car and SLAMS the door. And off Cate feeling like that couldn’t have gone any worse.

INT. CATE’S HOUSE - DAY (D2)

Cate walks in, drained. Ryan’s there, waiting. She tries to lighten things up.

CATE
So I probably should’ve mentioned the whole “pregnant valedictorian” chapter of my life before the “not flossing part” but I warned you there was a lot you didn’t know about me.

Ryan’s not laughing.

RYAN
This is a lot more than not flossing.

Cate hardens at his tone.

CATE
Ryan, it happened fifteen years ago --

RYAN
Yeah, I kind of deduced that by the fifteen-year-old kid appearing out of nowhere --

CATE
-- who’s only memory of me is going to be of slamming the door in my face. It’s been a really bad day.

RYAN
So what? Because she’s upset with you, I can’t be?

Cate’s defensives go up. She knows where this is going.

CATE
Fine. So what, you want to not move in together now? You want to not get married?

RYAN
I didn’t say that... I mean, this the whole thing -- it was your idea.

RYAN
I just want to talk about it.
CATE
To play a round of twenty questions about decisions I made fifteen years ago? No, thanks.

RYAN
I just want you to be honest with me. Is that too much to ask?

CATE
You want honest? Fine! This is who I am, okay? I’m your bitter unlucky-in-love sidekick who got knocked up at seventeen. I don’t trust people. I don’t want to commit. And this is exactly why I didn’t want you to give this to me.

Cate takes off the ring and hands it to him. Ryan can’t believe it.

RYAN
Fine. You want to call this off, call it off. I’m an adult. I can handle it. But your daughter, she’s just a kid. So if you’re ever going to grow up, now would be a good time. For her sake.
(beat)
Or better yet, for yours.

Ryan leaves. And off Cate, upset, we HEAR:

JUDGE (PRELAP)
Am I correct that this minor is choosing to represent herself?

INT. COURTHOUSE - COURTROOM - THE NEXT DAY (D3)

Cate sneaks into a relatively empty courtroom, where Lux stands in front of a middle-aged, tough JUDGE. Her CASEWORKER sits nearby.

LUX
Um, yes, your Honor. I figured it was a waste to pay a lawyer to tell you what I could for free.

As the Judge looks over her petition, Cate is surprised to see Baze in the back. The Judge continues.

JUDGE
I see you turn sixteen... tomorrow.
LUX
Yes and I’ll be old enough for emancipation. I can get my GED, get a job...

Cate slides into a seat. She whispers to Baze.

CATE
What’re you doing here?

BAZE
What does it look like?

CATE
Is she winning?

BAZE
It’s a hearing, not a hockey game.

CATE
I hate you.

Lux looks back at the noise and is surprised to see them both. The Judge continues:

JUDGE
Is your caseworker present?

LUX
(distracted)
I’m sorry?

CASEWORKER
I am, your Honor. I’ve only been with Lux for a few months. She tends to change hands often.

JUDGE
Seven foster homes. I see.

LUX
That’s not really my fault --

JUDGE
Whose is it? The seven different families who tried to take you in?

LUX
(taken aback)
No, I mean, I -- I wanted a good home. The state of Washington just hasn’t provided me with one.
JUDGE
So it’s the state’s fault now?

Lux begins to unravel.

LUX
No, no, I’m not saying that --

Cate and Baze exchange worried looks.

JUDGE
So as of today, you have no permanent place of residence?

LUX
As soon as my petition is granted, there’s a studio, not far from my school --

JUDGE
You’re going to afford an apartment? With what income?

LUX
I have three thousand dollars in the bank --

JUDGE
And who will be co-signing your rental agreement?

LUX
The whole point of getting emancipated is that I won’t need it co-signed.

JUDGE
No landlord is going to rent an apartment to a minor unless --

Suddenly, Cate and Baze jump up simultaneously.

CATE BAZE
I’ll co-sign, your Honor. I’ll do it.

They look at each other, annoyed.

BAZE
You gave her a ride, let me sign the thing.

JUDGE
I’m sorry. Who are you people?
Cate and Baze are silent. Lux is forced to admit:

LUX
They’re my birth parents. They’re just here as, um... character witnesses.

BAZE
Lux and I -- we go way back.

CATE
To when? Yesterday?

BAZE
We bonded.

CATE
Over “High School Musical?” I carried her for nine months -- you want to bond, be attached by an umbilical chord.

BAZE
You think she remembers any of that?

CATE
If she did, she’d remember what a unaccountable bottom-feeder you were --

BAZE
So sue me for having dreams and goals I wanted to accomplish --

CATE
What goals? To own a loser bar with a stupid name? Well, congratulations.

BAZE
Did you Google me? And sorry, we can’t all be self-indulgent radio celebrities who ramble about crap no one cares about.

The Judge gestures to the Caseworker.

JUDGE
Let me see those files.

The Caseworker hands them over. The Judge scans the files.
JUDGE
So... you own your own business...
and you’re a radio talk jockey.
(reading)
I see here you both have steady
incomes... no criminal records...
each in possession of a working
vehicle...

LUX
Wait, what’s going on?

A beat. The Judge turns to Lux.

JUDGE
I’m going to be straight with you,
young lady. I’m not granting you
emancipation. You have no income,
no permanent residence, you filed
for a fee waiver to cover your
court costs. If you can’t even
afford the cost to get emancipated,
what are you going to do when you
are? However, I take seriously
that you feel the foster system has
failed you.

(them)
Now, as far as the state is
concerned, Catherine Campbell and
Nicholas Basile are still legally
your parents...

LUX
Uh, actually, they’re not. I got
the paper signed.

JUDGE
Those signatures were neither
witnessed nor notarized. And from
what I hear you obtained Mr.
Basile’s address illegally.

CASEWORKER
She stole it, your Honor. Off my
desk.

LUX
I prefer to think of it as being
proactive.

CATE
(to Baze)
Stealing. She gets that from your
side of the family. Nice.
The Judge continues.

JUDGE
Unless anyone here has an objecion, based on this file, your parents' clear, vested interest, and their presence here today, I am releasing you back into their temporary joint custody.

The Judge looks at Cate and Baze, who both look at each other. Neither wants to be the one to speak up.

JUDGE
Pending a home visit, this will be your living situation until we find a family willing to legally adopt you or you turn eighteen.

Lux looks stunned. The Judge bangs his gavel.

JUDGE
Case dismissed.

Cate and Baze look at each other in a state of shock. And on their realization of what their arguing has just gotten them, we:

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR
ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

INT. COURTHOUSE - LOBBY - DAY

Lux sits on a bench, as Cate and Baze argue on either side of her.

BAZE
This is all your fault.

CATE
My fault?

BAZE
If you hadn’t jumped up. If you’d just let me co-sign --

CATE
Do you really want to go there, because if you’d just used a condom that hadn’t been in your wallet for two years --
(catches herself, remembering Lux)
-- but that’s not the point. The point is what’s done is done. Now we need to figure out what to do.

Dead silence from Baze. Cate sighs.

CATE
Like the living situation, for example.

BAZE
Doesn’t it just make more sense for Lux to just crash at your place?
(admits)
It took me two months to convince the guys we should get a new Ikea futon. A fifteen-year-old’s probably going to take a little more arm-twisting.

LUX
Almost sixteen.

Cate looks at Baze, with totally loathing.

CATE
You’re unbelievable. But why should I be surprised?
(MORE)
CATE (CONT'D)
I mean, this is what you do, right? You stand up in front of the judge, acting like some good guy... but when it comes to really doing something, you want it pawn it off on someone else?

BAZE
I’m sorry. Which one of us has been helping Lux from the beginning?

CATE
Which one of us wouldn’t even admit she existed? Which one of us denied we slept together?

BAZE
God, Cate. What did you want me to do? Propose? Marry you? You know, last time I saw you, you didn’t exactly want a kid either.

The fight escalates. Lux notices people staring.

CATE
I didn’t want a lot of things when I was seventeen. I didn’t want to take Calculus, I didn’t want to dress out for gym... and I didn’t want to have a thing for some meathead quarterback who --

Cate suddenly stops, catching herself.

BAZE
What meathead quarterback? Me?

CATE
(yes)
No!

BAZE
Because the back of my mom’s minivan... I always thought that was some fluke...

CATE
It was. I’m just a sucker for wood paneling and multiple cup holders.

BAZE
Then why’re you getting so upset?
CATE
Because that’s what you do. Upset me!

BAZE
God, it was high school! Get over it! Lux is and she’s still in it!

He looks to Lux for confirmation and suddenly realizes... she’s gone. They both look around, shocked.

EXT. COURTHOUSE - DAY

They run outside and look around. She’s nowhere to be found. And we HEAR:

BAZE (PRELAP)
We are the worst.

INT. ROW HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT (N3)

Cate and Baze sit at the table. He pours tequila shots. It’s not their first.

CATE
Unfit to be parents.

They toast and drink.

CATE
Clearly.
(then)
There’s no way she’s coming back here.

BAZE
We blew it. Bigtime. How stupid are we?

CATE
We got pregnant at seventeen. No one ever said we were Rhodes Scholars...
(then)
Although I was.

Baze pours more shots.

CATE
What do you think pushed her over the edge? The blaming, the fighting... the knowing her mother got deflowered in the back of a Dodge Caravan.
Baze looks at her, shocked.

BAZE
Deflowered?  Wait, was that was your first time?  After Homecoming?

CATE
Well, technically during.  If I remember right, your date got medevac’d away pretty early.

BAZE
Stomach pumping’s a big turnoff.

CATE
At least your date didn’t hook up with Jimmy McDoogell.

BAZE
No way!  Math owes me ten bucks.
  (then)
So how’d we end up in that minivan anyway?

CATE

BAZE
Didn’t you provide the Zima?

CATE
What’s a party in the nineties without a good “malternative” beverage?

BAZE
I thought you couldn’t resist my mad skills and rockin’ tape deck.

CATE
Skills?  We only made it through the chorus of “Pictures of You.”

BAZE
Yeah, well...

He holds up his shot.  They toast and drink.  A beat, then:

BAZE
Listen, Cate... I’m sorry.
CATE
Don’t feel bad. The chorus was like seven minutes long.

BAZE
No, not for that. Although, I should be.
(then)
I’m sorry for how I treated you. I don’t have an excuse except that I was in over my head. I was afraid it would mess up my life...
(then)
Thank god that didn’t happen. Otherwise, I wouldn’t own my “loser bar.”

CATE
Sorry about that.

BAZE
Hey, we can’t all be as successful and talented and beautiful as you are. Some of us peak in high school.

A beat. Cate focuses on the most important part of that sentence.

CATE
Wait, you think I’m beautiful?

She looks at Baze. Both can feel the chemistry... and the alcohol between them. Suddenly, he kisses her.

INT. ROW HOUSE - BAZE’S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER (N3)

Cate and Baze burst into his bedroom, kissing, ripping off each other’s clothes and drunkenly falling into bed. He reaches up and snaps the lights OFF, and we:

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FIVE
ACT SIX

FADE IN:

INT. ROW HOUSE - BAZE’S BEDROOM - NEXT MORNING (D4)

Cate wakes up, groggily, and comes face to face with BAZE, sleeping next to her. Horrified, Cate jumps out of bed.

EXT. ROW HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER (D4)

Cate rushes outside and trips over a large LUMP on the doorstep.

CATE

Jesus! Crap!

LUX (O.C.)

Cate?

Lux is curled up with her duffle bags on the doorstep.

CATE

Oh my god, you’re here!

As Lux sits up...

LUX

So are you. What are you doing?

CATE

You know, the usual. Ruining things with the guy I love, sleeping with the guy I hate.

(realizing, whoops)

Slash, being a completely inappropriate parent. Have you been out here all night?

LUX

Sleeping on doorsteps is kind of my thing... and I didn’t really have anywhere else to go.

(than)

Guess I should’ve waited until after the hearing to tell my chain-smoking foster mom and her perv boyfriend to suck it.

CATE

Is it really that bad with them?

LUX

Worse.
Cate sits down, feeling terrible.

CATE
I’m so sorry you’ve had to go through any of this.

LUX
It’s not your fault.

CATE
It is my fault. It’s my fault you’re here in the first place. And I should’ve been there --

LUX
No, Cate. You don’t realize -- you were there. On the radio. While everything else in my life kept changing, I could count on you. Everyday. You were always there. (then) People, they’re scared to just tell the truth. Instead, it’s like, “Don’t worry, it’ll all work out.” “Someone’s going to adopt you.” But you -- you put it all out there, you say it.

A beat. Cate takes this in, then:

CATE
So can I do that? Can I tell you the truth? Without you getting mad or doing that snarky, sarcastic thing that runs in our family?

Lus smiles at the word “family.”

LUX
Okay.

CATE
Don’t worry. It’ll all work out. Someone’s going to adopt you.

LUX
You don’t know that.

Another beat.

CATE
Yeah, I do.
Lux smiles, realizing what she means. Cate’s going to adopt her. They sit in silence for a moment. Then, Lux notices:

LUX
The sun’s coming up.

A beat.

CATE
So what does Lux mean anyway?

LUX
Light.

And we HEAR the MORNING MADNESS INTRO play...

INT. KWASH 101 - BOOTH - MORNING

A dishevelled Cate slides into her seat, right next to Ryan.

CATE
So now’s the time.

He looks at her.

RYAN
Wow. You look...
(horrible)
...good.

CATE
I’m tired of doing what I do. I’m sick of pushing people away before they do it to me. I don’t want to sabotage and screw things up, I don’t want to do that anymore. Especially not with you.

A beat.

CATE
That’s why, even though I’ve killed every gerbil and goldfish I’ve ever owned, I’m doing it. I’m going to take care of Lux. Or at least I’m going to try.
(adds)
And I hope maybe you’ll want to try with me.

RYAN
What exactly are you proposing?
CATE
I’m proposing to you. Marry me.

Before Ryan can answer, the INTRO ends. Cate jumps in.

CATE
Good morning, Seattle. Cate Campbell here with my illustrious co-host Ryan Scott...

RYAN
Thanks, Juno.

CATE
...who better never call me that again.

RYAN
Sorry, Jamie Lynn.

CATE
I guess you think you’re pretty funny, don’t you?

A beat.

RYAN
Yes.

Cate doesn’t get it.

CATE
FYI? You’re not.

He looks at her.

RYAN
Cate. Yes.

Cate’s face breaks into a wide smile. MUSIC UP:

EXT. SEATTLE - DUSK (D4)

Cars head home, Drive Time Radio plays, and the sun sets.

EXT. CATE’S HOUSE - EVENING (N4)

Lux and Cate carry Lux’s bags up to the house. Cate unlocks the door.

CATE
So it’s kind of a mess. Of course, you were at Baze’s all day so this is probably a step up.
Cate opens the door for Lux.

    CATE
    Go ahead.

INT. CATE’S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS (N4)

As Lux walks in, Cate flips on the lights. Baze, Math and Jamie jump out. Baze has the faint, scrubbed off remains of “Baby Daddy” scrawled across his forehead.

    THE GUYS
    Surprise!

Lux jumps back, startled. She looks at Cate, confused.

    LUX
    What’s going on?

    CATE
    It’s a party. You didn’t think we’d forget your birthday, did you?

Lux is taken aback, fighting tears of happiness.

    LUX
    I don’t know... No one has ever really remembered...

Suddenly, she notices Baze’s face. Cate does, too.

    CATE
    Nice face.

    BAZE
    Yeah, Jamie’s a dead man.

    JAMIE
    What makes you think it was me?

Jamie shoots a look at Lux, who can barely contain her smile.

    BAZE
    No way.

Suddenly, he notices Cate’s engagement ring.

    BAZE
    Wow. Congratulations.

Cate looks down, self-consciously, a lot between them. Math brings the cake over. Candles are lit.
MATH
Hurry. You gotta’ make a wish.

Lux looks at Baze. She takes a deep breath and blows out fifteen candles.

CATE
You gotta’ get that last one, or it won’t come true --

Lux blows out the last candle. Smiles and locks eyes with Cate.

LUX
It already has.

And on Lux’s wish come true, we:

FADE OUT.

END OF SHOW