TROPHY WIFE

written by

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COLD OPEN

EXT. HOUSE PARTY - BACKYARD - NIGHT

CHYRON READS: 2009. Colorful Chinese lanterns sway over backyard packed with HIPSTER 20-SOMETHINGS. An amateur DJ spins ironic hip-hop remixes.

A homemade sign reads "HAPPY 25th BIRTHDAY KATE!" Over the music, we hear:

CHANT (O.S.)
KATE! KATE! KATE!

KATE, the birthday girl, hot, dressed to party, hops into frame. She raises her fist and lets out a --

KATE
Wooooo!!! I want to thank my sister Meg for letting us ruin her backyard!

The crowd cheers. MEG, 21, who makes Kate look tame, records Kate on her camera phone.

MEG
It's a rental! Woo!

KATE
Keg stand!

The crowd hoots its approval as Kate walks over to the keg.

Two FRIENDS grab her feet. The spout is placed in Kate's mouth. Meg repositions to get a clear shot on her camera phone. As the Friends tip Kate downward --

Kate's blouse flies up, REVEALING THE FACT THAT KATE ISN'T WEARING A BRA [note: blurred where appropriate].

MEG
Woo!

INT. MEG AND KATE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

CHYRON READS: 2010. A chill party - a small group of friends sits around Kate and Meg's living room. Kate exhales a plume of smoke. A GUY next to her inhales it. Everyone giggles.

KATE
Usually this makes me paranoid, but I'm feeling very mellow tonight.

MEG
(stoned)
You guys, I just figured out how to end homelessness in America --

Three loud knocks interrupt Kate. She bolts upright and is immediately paranoid.

KATE
SHHHHH!

Another knock.

KATE (CONT'D)
(freaking out)
Cops! Run!

Kate runs out of the room. No one follows.

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Kate clambers out her window onto a fire escape. Kate looks down, sees a dumpster below.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Meg opens the door to find an ELDERLY MAN, holding laundry detergent.

ELDERLY MAN
You left this in the laundry room. Again.

MEG
Thank you, Mr. Friedman.

EXT. FIRE ESCAPE - CONTINUOUS

She edges to the front. She looks back, then -- JUMPS!

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Landing on a stage. Kate immediately jumps up again.

KATE
(singing)
Jump!

CHYRON READS: 2011. It's karaoke night. Kate is on-stage with Meg and ANOTHER FRIEND, singing the Pointer Sisters' "Jump (For My Love)."

MEG AND FRIEND
(singing, joining in)
Jump for my love!

The bar patrons are mildly amused by this, especially a group of middle-aged BUSINESSMEN, seated near the stage. And especially, BRAD HARRISON, 47, handsome. He smiles as he watches Kate sing her heart out.

KATE
(singing)
I know my heart can make you happy!

Kate JUMPS again, losing her balance. She CRASHES into the table of Businessmen, spilling their drinks and slamming her mic HARD into Brad's nose.

BRAD
Ah, dammit!

KATE
Oh my god! I'm so sorry!

Brad looks up at Kate. She smiles meekly.

KATE (CONT'D)
(into mic)
Can I get a round of drinks over here for these handsome gentlemen?
(then, apologetic)
It's my birthday.

BRAD
Happy Birthday --

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

CHYRON READS: PRESENT DAY. Brad, in briefs and a ratty t-shirt, sings "Happy Birthday" a la Marylin Monroe. He holds up a chocolate cupcake with a candle in it.

BRAD
(singing)
-- Mrs. Presideeeeent. Happy Birthday to you.

Kate laughs gleefully. She's enjoying this. We see that she is wearing a WEDDING RING - Brad is now her husband. He's about to kiss her when the door swings open --

BERT (O.S.)
I peed my bed! I peed my bed!

BERT, 7, runs into the room.

KATE
Hey, buddy!

She kisses him on the forehead.

HILLARY (O.S.)
Dad, I need an advance on my allowance. It's an emergency.

Kate and Brad turn to find HILLARY and NELSON, 15, the odd couple of twinhood. Hillary is smart, confident and entitled. Nelson is a sloppy space cadet.

BRAD
Hey, guys! It's Kate's birthday!

HILLARY
(exiting)
This is time sensitive, dad. I'll be in the kitchen.

NELSON
Happy Birthday, Kate. Are you gonna eat that cupcake?

Without waiting for a response, Nelson takes the cupcake. Bert snatches it from him.

BERT
That's Kate's!

Nelson chases him. Bert jumps onto the bed. Nelson grabs Bert's foot. Bert falls onto the bed, smashing the cupcake onto the sheets.

Nelson eats what's left of the cupcake off of the bed.

NELSON
I think I got most of it.

BRAD
(singing)
"And many more!"

END COLD OPEN

ACT ONE

INT. HARRISON HOUSE/KITCHEN - EARLY MORNING

CHYRON READS: SIX MONTHS LATER. Kate, in pajama pants and a tattered band t-shirt, folds laundry while HILLARY and NELSON have breakfast. Nelson plays with a WOLVERINE CLAW.

KATE
Wolverine, drink your juice.

Nelson uses the Wolverine claw to lift a piece of laundry out of the basket - specifically, KATE'S THONG.

NELSON
What is this? Is this your *underwear*?

Kate quickly grabs the thong and puts it back.

KATE
No. It's a headband.

HILLARY
Gross. Inappropriate.

Hillary fiddles with the toaster as Brad walks in.

HILLARY (CONT'D)
Dad, the toaster's being weird.

Brad reaches out and grabs the plug.

BRAD
Behold, a plug. We take the plug, put it into the wall, and voila. The toaster is no longer "weird."

HILLARY
Okay, I get it. You don't need to do like a whole play about it.

Brad pours himself a cup of coffee and kisses Kate.

HILLARY (CONT'D)
Gross. Inappropriate.

BRAD
Hil, that's enough with the "gross and inappropriate."

HILLARY
Fine. It's revolting and indecorous.

BRAD
That's my girl.

He exits. Hillary brings her toast back to the table.

KATE
So, Hil, you excited for the concert?

Hillary shrugs.

KATE (CONT'D)
Okay, good talk.

NELSON
She's going with Chelsea Trassen!

KATE
Who's Chelsea Trassen?

NELSON
This junior with a nice butt.

HILLARY
Shut up, Nelson.

As they talk Kate butters Nelson's toast and gives it to him. Nelson tries to stab it with his Wolverine claw.

KATE
Y'know, I used to go to concerts all the time.

Hillary pulls out her cell phone and starts texting.

HILLARY
Wow, you're the coolest.

KATE
When I was in high school, I followed Stone Temple Pilots for a whole summer.

NELSON
Our principal loves Stone Temple Pilots!

KATE
I remember, this one show... it was insane. Just as "Plush" came on, it started raining.

NELSON
No way!

KATE
And everyone was moshing in the mud, totally drunk....

HILLARY
(suddenly interested)
What do you mean you were drunk? Did you have a fake?

KATE
(matter-of-fact)
We put vodka in our water bottles. Y'know, to get past security.

Hillary nods, but clearly has never heard of this.

HILLARY
Oh, right.

KATE
So anyway, it stops raining and the biggest rainbow ever --

HILLARY
A rainbow?! Wow! Our ride's here.

Hillary turns abruptly and leaves, followed by Nelson.

KATE
Nelson!

Nelson stops. We see he is now wearing Kate's THONG on his head. Kate walks over and grabs it off.

NELSON
My headband!

KATE
Not today, buddy.

Nelson exits. Kate puts her thong back in the laundry basket.

INT. HARRISON HOUSE/BATHROOM - DAY

Kate steps into the shower and turns the water on. She closes her eyes, then turns - and is surprised by Brad.

BRAD
Shower police. Word is, you haven't been washing your boobs very well.

KATE
Shower police? I thought I married a lawyer.

BRAD
Lawyer by day. Shower police when I'm working from home.

Brad kisses her and they start making out. His CELL starts RINGING.

BRAD (CONT'D)
That can wait.
(then)
Where was I? Oh right: ma'am, you have the right to remain sexy.

The LAND LINE starts ringing. They stop kissing.

BRAD (CONT'D)
Well that was fun.

INT. HARRISON HOUSE/BEDROOM - MINUTES LATER

Brad and Kate are both in towels. Brad is on the phone.

BRAD
(cupping telephone)
It's the school. Nelson's teacher needs me to come in. And his mom's in surgery all day.

KATE
Why don't I go? You have work to do... and, fun fact, I am also a parent.

BRAD
You sure?

KATE
I got this.

BRAD
(back into phone)
My wife will be coming. Nelson's step-mom. No, I don't need to ask Diane's permission. I am Nelson's father.

Brad hangs up, looks to Kate.

BRAD (CONT'D)
It's all yours.

KATE
I'm gonna make this parent-teacher conference my bitch.
(then)
Question: where is the school?

INT. MEG'S APARTMENT - DAY

Meg is still in bed. We hear soft guitar music in the background. The phone RINGS. She answers.

MEG
'Lo?

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - SAME

Kate talks to Meg as she gets dressed.

KATE
I need you to do me a favor and take Bert to orchestra today at three -- what's that music?

We reveal the source of Meg's music: a NAKED DUDE, standing by her bed, strumming the guitar.

MEG
Neighbor.

KATE
Ohh, not the guy you met on jury duty.

MEG
He was found not guilty.

KATE
Anyway, Jackie's dropping him off, Brad has a deadline, and I have to -

MEG
Wait, I thought her name was Denise.

KATE
Diane is the twins' mother. Jackie is Bert's mom. Keep up, Meg.

MEG
You know who else had a lot of wives? Osama bin Laden.

The Naked Dude starts to do an Elvis hip swivel to Meg.

KATE
Are you gonna help me out or not?

MEG
Today's really bad for me.

Meg strums the guitar with her toes.

KATE
I'll let you borrow that green top.

MEG
I'm in.

Meg hangs up. The Naked Dude stops dancing.

MEG (CONT'D)
Who told you to stop?

INT. HIGH SCHOOL CLASSROOM - DAY

Kate enters, dressed professionally. She greets MRS. STEINBERG, 60's, the kindly English teacher.

KATE
Hi, Mrs. Steinberg. I'm Kate Harrison, Nelson's step-mother. What a lovely classroom.

MRS. STEINBERG
You're so young. You could practically be a student here.

KATE
(false modesty)
Yeah, right. Maybe a senior.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL/PARKING LOT - DAY

A late-model MERCEDES pulls in next to Kate's car. Two shapely legs emerge. The license plate reads 92SLVR.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL/HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The legs march down the hall. Confident, type-A legs. The legs stop. They turn left, coming closer and closer to -

INT. CLASSROOM - CONTINUOUS

The door swings open, surprising Kate and Mrs. Steinberg.

KATE
Diane! I didn't think you were coming.

DIANE BUCKLEY, 40's, former Olympic Swimmer, current Orthopedic Surgeon, intimidating, looms in the doorway.

DIANE
Of course I was coming. Nelson is my son. Where's Bradley?

KATE
He had a work thing, so I'm here.

DIANE
Well, I postponed a knee replacement surgery, but you don't see me making a federal case about it.

KATE
Well, it actually is a federal case.

DIANE
(to Mrs. Steinberg)
Let's begin.

EXT. HARRISON HOUSE - DAY

Meg sits on the front stoop as a car pulls into the driveway. BERT, 7, and his mother JACKIE, late 30's, hop out. BERT lugs a large saxophone case.

JACKIE
Meggo!

MEG
Hey Jackie, I'm taking Bert to orchestra today.

BERT
(quietly)
Nooooo.

JACKIE
Wish I could do it myself, but my day is bananas... Have fun with Aunt Meg!

Jackie gives Bert a big kiss on the cheek, hops in the car and waves goodbye as she backs out. Meg and Bert walk toward her dented, scratched 1997 BMW.

MEG
Don't touch anything. I just had it washed.

INT. MEG'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Meg drives. Bert and his saxophone are in the back.

MEG
So, saxophone, that's your thing?

BERT
I don't know. I like soccer and I like science and I like legos.
(MORE)

BERT (CONT'D)
I’m saving my allowance to buy Lego hospital. It’s one hundred and six dollars.

MEG
And how much do you have?

BERT
Eight.

MEG
(laughs)
Good luck with that. By the time you can afford it you’ll be over Legos.

BERT
I’ll never be over Legos.

Meg turns into the parking lot of a dive bar.

BERT (CONT’D)
Are you taking me to a bar?! I won’t go in.

MEG
You’re right. You’re staying here.

She rolls his window down a crack, then steps out. She locks the car with her fob. Bert calls after for her.

BERT
I have to be there by three. If we’re late, I don’t get to solo!

MEG
Relax, Kenny G, I’m picking up my paycheck. I’ll be back in ten seconds.

Bert looks over and sees a dog in the car next to him staring back through a partially cracked window.

EXT. HARRISON HOUSEHOLD - LATER

The Harrison house stands quiet, peaceful.

Jackie’s car pulls back into the driveway. Jackie gets out, looks to make sure no one is watching, and walks up the driveway.

INT. HARRISON HOUSE/OFFICE - DAY

Brad sits at his desk. He hears the front door open and jerks his head up.

BRAD
Kate?

No response. Brad quietly gets up. He listens as footsteps climb the stairs. He then cautiously steps out of the office.

INT. HARRISON HOUSE/BERT'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Brad throws the door open. He's brandishing a tennis racket.

BRAD
Jackie?! What the hell are you doing?!

Jackie stands next to Bert's hamster cage, looking guilty. In each hand she holds a hamster... one DEAD, and one ALIVE.

JACKIE
I can explain. It's not what it looks like.

BRAD
What does it look like?!

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Diane is getting a little impatient.

DIANE
What do you mean an "unusual" passage?

MRS. STEINBERG
Typically Nelson's creative writing assignments aren't so... "colorful."

KATE
Maybe if you just read us what he wrote?

Diane nods. Kate enjoys this small shred of approval. Mrs. Steinberg hesitates - then starts to read from the journal.

MRS. STEINBERG
"Magneto lay dead on the floor. Wolverine rushed into the damp wet cave. And there she was. 'You're here' she said."

DIANE
I'll admit his prose is stilted...

Mrs. Steinberg holds up her finger, like "one minute."

MRS. STEINBERG
"Wolverine moved in to kiss her. 'I'm too old for you,' she said, her breasts heaving like milky grapefruits."

Kate laughs. Diane shoots her a look.

KATE
Sorry. That is not okay.

MRS. STEINBERG
"'Age is just a number,' said Wolverine. And then he dropped to his knees and licked her ankle tattoo until it was glistening."

Kate looks grossed out.

MRS. STEINBERG (CONT'D)
"Wolverine could wait no longer. His adamantium erection ripped through his jeans --"

DIANE
That's enough.

Mrs. Steinberg quietly shuts the journal.

DIANE (CONT'D)
How could he have thought this was appropriate?

KATE
I'm as shocked as you are, Diane.

MRS. STEINBERG
(leaning in, squints)
What's that on your ankle?

KATE
What's what?

Diane looks down. Kate's eyes go wide as they both stare at the CHINESE CHARACTER TATTOO ON KATE'S ANKLE.

DIANE
It's you!

<u>END ACT ONE</u>

ACT TWO

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Diane stares icily at Kate.

KATE
You know the story might not be about me. Lots of people have tattoos and are older than Nelson. And let's be real--
(indicating her breasts)
These are not grapefruits. These are peaches. Haven't gotten any complaints, not relevant -- but they are not grapefruits.

Diane is not swayed. Mrs. Steinberg is slightly horrified.

DIANE
Fruit size not withstanding, I don't know what goes on in that. I don't know how you behave, what you say, what you wear.

KATE
Pajamas. I wear pajamas.
(to Mrs. Steinberg, explaining)
I'm a freelance music writer.

DIANE
(to Mrs. Steinberg)
She's a blogger.

KATE
Nelson is a fifteen year old boy. A strong gust of wind could give him a boner. Erection.

DIANE
I am a doctor, so please don't give me a biology lecture. I've forgotten more about erections than you'll ever learn.

MRS. STEINBERG
Why don't we discuss how we'd like to proceed?

KATE
Clearly we'll have to speak to Nelson about this. But let's just make sure that when we talk to him, we don't make him feel like --

DIANE
Considering the circumstances, I think it would be best if you didn't speak to Nelson. I will handle it.

Diane gives her a stern look. Kate, chastened, stands to go. She turns back.

KATE
You know, that was pretty creative of Nelson. And, uh, there's actually a huge market out there for erotic fiction.

Mrs. Steinberg nods enthusiastically.

KATE (CONT'D)
I'll leave now.

INT. HARRISON HOUSE/BERT'S ROOM - DAY

Jackie and Brad are seated on the edge of Bert's bed.

JACKIE
Last month Bert's goldfish died, and he just had all these questions about death, so I told him about reincarnation and he had so many questions about reincarnation that I almost started to question it myself. I can't go through that again. So, since the hamsters are twins...

She makes a little "switcheroo" gesture with the hamsters.

BRAD
(exasperated)
Just to be clear: instead of talking to your son, you chose to break into my house, kidnap my hamster, replace it with your dead hamster and make me deal with it?

JACKIE
Correct. But I didn't break in. I used the hide-a-key.

BRAD
We don't have a hide-a-key.

JACKIE
I do. I put one outside. But don't worry. It's hidden.

Brad lets out a sad, weird noise.

I/E. MEG'S CAR - DAY

The car clock reads: 2:58. Bert looks out the window and sees Meg flirting with a MALE BARTENDER. He brings his saxophone to his lips and plays a mournful version of "When the Saints Go Marching In."

INT. HARRISON HOUSE/BERT'S ROOM - DAY

Brad, pacing, chides Jackie, who still holds the hamsters.

BRAD
Jackie, I know you like taking shortcuts --

JACKIE
Thank you --

BRAD
-- Wasn't finished. But you can't do it with Bert. You can't just run away from your problems.

JACKIE
Of course I can! Remember when we were having problems and I ran off to Santa Fe?

BRAD
Yes, I filed for divorce.

JACKIE
Exactly. So I think we're saying the same thing.

BRAD
Look, Jackie, I understand you may not want to answer any more of Bert's questions about death, but sometimes you have to do things you don't want to do.

JACKIE
Like have this conversation.

Brad has had it.

BRAD
Just give me Sylvester.

JACKIE
No.

Brad tries to grab Sylvester out of Jackie's hands, but she pulls away, accidentally dropping Sylvester to the floor. Brad and Jackie watch as Sylvester scurries away.

BRAD
Great. Perfect. Now I get to spend the entire day looking for a -

SPLAT. Jackie gasps. In a single step, Brad has FLATTENED Sylvester. He looks down, then lifts his leg to see beneath his shoe to confirm.

BRAD (CONT'D)
No no no no no no no --

JACKIE
Well, when I'm done explaining death to Bert, you can explain murder.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY

Kate walks down the hallway. Something catches her eye. She looks up to see an enormous photo of Diane in a US Olympic swimsuit, lifting herself out of a pool, making a warrior battle cry, one arm raised in the air in triumph.

On the wall a sign says THE DIANE BUCKLEY POOL (CLASS OF '84, '92 OLYMPIC MEDALIST), with an arrow pointing down the hall.

KATE
(imitating Diane)
"I know everything about erections. I won a silver medal."
(then, as herself)
Well, you didn't win a gold.

As Kate continues down the hall she spots Nelson, getting a candy bar from the vending machine. She looks around for Diane, who's nowhere in sight. Kate approaches Nelson.

KATE (CONT'D)
Hey buddy. Weren't we trying to cut down on your sugar?

NELSON
You came all the way here to tell me that?

KATE
No, I was here to... meet with Mrs. Steinberg.

NELSON
Why?

KATE
(considers)
Listen, I think it's really cool that we both like the same things: Lord of the Rings, Jay-Z --

NELSON
Hawaiian pizza.

KATE
Exactly! And when you have a lot in common with someone, you can maybe develop feelings for that person. You know?

Nelson shrugs. Kate sighs deeply, thinks.

KATE (CONT'D)
For example, when I was your age, I had the biggest crush on my history teacher, Mr. Burrows. I was obsessed with Lewis and Clark, and he knew everything about Lewis and Clark, which was very sexy to me. But even though we had the same interests, there was a twenty year age difference between us.

NELSON
Like you and my dad.

KATE
(stymied)
Well, yes, but we're older and it's fine. Anyway, even though it seemed like Mr. Burrows and I were meant for each other -- we both adored "Lewis and Clark," he was in a loveless marriage -- it never would've worked. Do you understand what I'm saying?

Nelson reflects. He takes a bite of the candy bar.

NELSON
I think so. Lois loved Superman, but Clark loved Lois -- but he was really Superman?

KATE
...No, <u>Lewis</u> and Clark.

NELSON
(gently)
It's pronounced <u>Lois</u> and Clark.

Kate sighs.

INT. PET STORE - DAY

CLOSE ON a hamster cage.

JACKIE
Perfect. They look identical.

BRAD
I can't believe you were trying to steal my hamster when every single hamster in the world looks alike.

INT. PET STORE - MOMENTS LATER

A clerk finishes ringing up a BURNOUT who's carrying a snake and several mice. He walks off.

CLERK
Next.

Brad and Jackie put two hamster travel cages on the counter.

CLERK (CONT'D)
Alright, that's going to be $34.99 for the two of 'em.

Jackie starts rummaging through her purse.

JACKIE
Oh, we're paying separately. We're divorced. He does give me alimony, but I also make my own money.
(off the clerk's blank stare)
I design jewelry that has medicinal benefits.
(looks into purse)
Sorry, so much stuff in here.

Jackie starts pulling items out of her purse. Keys, phone, a dead hamster in a zip-lock bag. The clerk freezes in horror.

CLERK
What is that?

JACKIE
Oh, this is nothing. You should see the one he killed.

The Clerk immediately takes the hamsters back.

CLERK
Get out.

BRAD
Wait! Hold on. I just saw you sell mice to a man with a snake! What do you think is going on there? A Pixar movie?!

Jackie pulls Brad away.

JACKIE
Okay, okay.
(then, to Clerk)
Sorry, he's taking these deaths really hard.

INT./EXT. MEG'S CAR - DAY

Meg comes out of the bar and hits her remote to unlock the car. Now sitting in the driver's seat, Bert immediately presses the "lock" button.

MEG
Let me in.

BERT
I'm late. Now I can't solo.

MEG
You can solo next week.

Meg unlocks the doors. Bert quickly locks them. She unlocks again. He locks just as swiftly.

MEG (CONT'D)
I'm your aunt and I command you to open this door!

BERT
You're not my real aunt. You ruined my day!

MEG
Bert, I'm sorry. I'll make it up to you.

BERT
How?

MEG
Let me think...

She quickly unlocks the door, hoping to catch him off-guard. He quickly locks it.

BERT
Nice try.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL PARKING LOT - DAY

Kate heads towards her car, when she spots: Hillary, with three popular girls. One of the girls hands Hillary a WATER BOTTLE. She furtively looks around and then slides the bottle into the side pouch of her backpack. Kate stops in her tracks.

KATE
Hillary!

Hillary looks up, startled. The girls scatter like pigeons. Kate walks over, notices the water bottle.

HILLARY
What are you doing here? You subbing?

KATE
That better not be what I think it is.

HILLARY
(faux innocence)
Water? I'm allowed to drink water.

KATE
I'm not joking, Hillary. That was a story, not a piece of advice.

DIANE (O.S.)
Hillary!

They turn to see Diane emerging from the school with Nelson, who eats from a bag of trail mix. Hillary goes pale.

KATE
Give it to me or I'm telling your mom.

Diane spots them and heads in their direction.

HILLARY
Oh my god, you can't tell her. Take the vodka, but please don't let my mom find out. You know how she is. She'll ground me for the rest of my life.

Kate takes the water bottle as Diane walks up.

DIANE
Hillary, let's go. I can take you and Nelson home.
(then, to Kate)
Have Bradley call me this evening.

Nelson dumps the rest of his trail mix into his mouth.

NELSON
I'm thirsty now. I need a soda.

DIANE
You're not having soda.
(seeing bottle)
Kate, give Nelson your water.

Kate looks at Hillary, who looks pleadingly back at Kate.

DIANE (CONT'D)
Kate. The water bottle.

KATE
It's warm.

DIANE
What difference does that make?! He's thirsty.

Diane grabs the bottle. Hillary looks to Kate, panicked. Kate snatches the bottle back.

DIANE (CONT'D)
What are you doing?!

KATE
I'm thirsty, too!

Kate opens it and GUZZLES DOWN THE VODKA. She swallows hard, trying not to make a face.

Diane, Hillary, and Nelson watch, astonished as Kate's face reddens.

Kate grimaces, bends at the waist, and dry heaves.

KATE (CONT'D)
("that was refreshing")
Aaaaahhhh.

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. DIANE'S CAR - DAY

Diane drives. Hillary rides shotgun. Nelson and Kate sit in back - Nelson's oblivious as usual. Kate's shitfaced but trying to hide it. She keeps closing one eye.

DIANE
(to Kate)
I don't understand how a person just loses their car keys. I've never lost anything.

KATE
Well, you're perfect.

HILLARY
(urgent)
Kate, do you want some mints?

Hillary passes Kate a box of mints. Kate takes a handful and starts chewing them all. Nelson looks at her strangely.

Kate lets out a HUGE belch.

KATE
NELSON!

Diane shoots an angry look at the backseat.

DIANE
Nelson! Behave yourself.

NELSON
I didn't do anything!

Hillary shakes her head "oh my god".

Kate drunkenly giggles. She blows on the window to make condensation and draws a smiley face.

EXT. PARKING LOT - LATER

Meg sits on the curb, talking to Bert who's still in the car.

MEG
How about I buy you ice-cream?

BERT
How about you buy me a Lego Hospital?

MEG
("Cruella Deville")
...Sure. That seems fair. Just let me in the car and we'll drive to the toy store.

Bert extends his arm and points. Meg looks off, down the road -a long walk away- there is a TOYS R' US.

BERT
I think you can walk.

EXT. ANOTHER PET STORE - LATE AFTERNOON

Jackie sits on the curb. Brad walks out of the store.

BRAD
All their stupid hamsters were brown.

JACKIE
What are we going to tell Bert?

BRAD
We're gonna tell him the truth. And whatever questions he has about death, we answer them. No matter how difficult.

JACKIE
Because parents don't take shortcuts.

Brad nods, emphatically.

EXT. HARRISON HOUSE - NIGHT

Diane's car pulls into the driveway, followed by Meg's car. Kate stumbles out of the car.

KATE
Thanks for the ride, Doctor Pepper.

DIANE
I'm coming inside. I need to speak with Bradley.

Bert hops out of Meg's car, holding his Lego Hospital.

KATE
Hey, buddy! Watcha got there?!

BERT
Meg bought me Lego Hospital!

He races past her. Meg approaches, sweaty and tired.

MEG
You owe me one hundred six dollars.

There is a BEEP and they turn to see Jackie's car pulling up. Jackie waves to everyone. Diane walks up to Brad, who's holding a jacket in his arms.

DIANE
Bradley, we need to talk!

JACKIE
Brad and I need to talk to Bert first. It's not a competition, Diane.

BERT
(still holding Lego box)
Talk to me about what?

BRAD
About your new puppy!

Brad dramatically throws off the jacket, revealing an ADORABLE PUPPY.

Bert shrieks and throws the Lego aside, racing to the puppy.

BERT
Ahhh!

Everyone starts talking simultaneously. It's total noise.

DIANE
Bradley, we have a very serious issue to discuss -

KATE
I'm afraid of dogs, FYI.

NELSON
If Bert has a puppy can I have his hamster?

HILLARY
If Bert gets a puppy, I want a car!

BRAD
Okay, everyone inside!

INT. HARRISON LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

More commotion, just now behind closed doors. Bert plays with his new puppy.

BERT
You guys are the best parents ever!

Brad and Jackie share a smile. Kate messily sucks on a flavored freezer pop. Meg watches her, suspicious.

Diane turns to Brad.

DIANE
(impatient)
Bradley, ihr Sohn, Wolverine, schrieb eine erotik geschichte mit deiner frau, Kate.

BRAD
(in broken German)
Fick mich.

KATE
I know what you're talking about! And it's not my fault -- I wear pajamas!

The DOORBELL rings. Jackie jumps for it.

JACKIE
I'll get it!

Nelson tenses as Jackie escorts CHELSEA, 17, into the room. Her breasts are HUGE. The size of grapefruits.

NELSON
(beet red, nervous)
Hey, Chelsea. Are you excited for Daylight Savings?

CHELSEA
(good-natured)
Sure.

Kate and Diane look at Chelsea -- then at the red Nelson.

KATE
(whispers, to herself)
Milky grapefruits.

Kate walks over to Chelsea, examines her closely. She gets down on the ground and pulls up Chelsea's pant leg -- revealing an ankle tattoo.

KATE (CONT'D)
Look at her ankle! Look at her ankle!

CHELSEA
Am I in trouble or something?

KATE
Not at all, Chelsea Lately. Diane, I think I <u>demand</u> an apology.

Kate tries to lean against a book shelf, but MISSES by several feet and FALLS to the floor.

KATE (CONT'D)
Ow.

CHELSEA
(to Hillary)
Is your nanny drunk?

KATE
(getting to her feet)
How dare you? I am not the nanny. I am one of the wives.

DIANE
I knew you were acting erratic! She's a secret drinker!

BRAD
Kate, what is going on?

Hillary looks at Kate, tense. Kate dramatically covers for Hillary by adopting a melodramatic 1950s housewife tone.

KATE
...It starts in the morning. When I have cereal... instead of milk... I use kahlua... I brush my teeth with gin. I --

HILLARY
Okay, stop. It's my fault.

Everyone turns to Hillary. Hillary turns to Diane.

HILLARY (CONT'D)
I was trying to sneak vodka in my water bottle, which I know was wrong, and Kate caught me and took it away. And I didn't want you to find out because I knew you'd send me to rehab and I don't even drink.

CHELSEA
(unconvincing)
Yeah, I don't drink either.

HILLARY
Kate drank it to protect me. Sorry, Kate.

KATE
(overcome with emotion)
Come into these arms!

Kate bear-hugs Hillary.

HILLARY
Okay, that's... please let go.

DIANE
Well you're not going to the concert! And maybe you should go to rehab!

JACKIE
Ooh, go to Promises. You'll meet a celebrity.

BRAD
No one's going to rehab. Hillary, you are in big, big trouble and your mom and I will discuss the punishment.

CHELSEA
The concert's in an hour. Who am I supposed to go with?

ANGLE ON a plastic Wolverine claw rising into the air.

NELSON
I'll go with you, Chelsea Trassen.

CHELSEA
Um... Okay.

Nelson beams.

INT. HARRISON HOUSE/BATHROOM - LATER

Kate is in a bubble bath. Brad enters.

BRAD
Hey. Are you still drunk?

KATE
I wish.

Brad sits down.

KATE (CONT'D)
I have no idea what I'm doing. A year ago, I was living with Meg in a crappy apartment eating ramen. We had one plant -- and it died.

BRAD
That story is very sad.

KATE
How am I supposed to take care of your kids if I can't take care of a cactus?

BRAD
You know that they don't even need to be watered.

KATE
I do now.

BRAD
Look, your heart was in the right place. Better my wife is drunk than my daughter.

Kate smiles.

BRAD (CONT'D)
So whadd'ya say, can you stick it out a while longer?

KATE
Why not? I mean, you're so old, how long could it be?

They kiss.

END OF ACT THREE

TAG

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Kate and Brad are sleeping.

BERT (O.S.)
Dad! Dad!

Brad and Kate wake up. Brad turns on a lamp.

BERT (CONT'D)
Sylvester's not in his cage.

Brad sits up and gestures for Bert to come on to the bed.

BRAD
Bert, I've got some bad news. Sylvester passed away today. He lived a long and happy life and he loved you very much. Now he's in heaven. Hamster heaven.

BERT
...Is that why you got me a dog?

BRAD
Yup. And I know that you're going to give him the same love you gave Sylvester.

BERT
...I understand. He was old.
(then)
At least I still have Mr. Skittles.

BRAD
...Exactly.

BERT
(hugging Brad)
Night.

Bert leaves. Kate rolls over.

KATE
You know you're going to hell, right?

BRAD
Yes.

KATE
Hamster hell.

END OF SHOW *