

START

ACT ONE

1

INT. LOFT. DAY. (D1)

1

Jess wipes off an antique hutch. Schmidt enters from his room.

SCHMIDT

Ohhh. Jess. Look at that. That goes with... nothing.

JESS

Can you believe I found this on the street this morning? Who could have thrown this away?

SCHMIDT

I don't know, Jess. A blind man who suddenly recovered his sight?

(suddenly serious)

Get rid of it. Pine has no place in this loft. It's the wood of poor people and outhouses.

JESS

I'm going to fix it up! I need a place to show off all the amazing artwork Toby makes me.

~~2~~

~~INT. JESS' CLASSROOM. FLASHBACK.~~

~~2~~

~~Jess sits at her desk, covered in odd art projects. TOBY, an off-kilter student, offers her a large painted branch.~~

~~JESS~~

~~Toby... another painted tree branch. This is your best yet.~~

~~She puts the branch in a large pile of painted branches and logs on the floor, about the equivalent of a small tree.~~

~~TOBY~~

~~I have a lifetime of branches for you if you accept my offer.~~

3

BACK TO PRESENT: (D1)

3

SCHMIDT

Absolutely not. It makes me sad, Jess. It makes me wish we still had acid rain.

JESS

Then where am I gonna put my painted sticks?

SCHMIDT

In a safe? Behind some UV-resistant glass? In a room protected by a web of lasers?

JESS

No, Schmidt. It's going in the living room. I've lived here long enough. I let you veto my framed poster of Laura Ingalls Wilder.

SCHMIDT

Oh good lord.

JESS

I pay rent. That gives me the right to add a few things to this--

SCHMIDT

Wrong! I clean, I cook-- I make the big decisions. I decide the color palette, the play of light and dark, the irony barometer. Which devices are and are not allowed on "Charger Island." So, no. My answer is no.

A tense moment passes between them, then Jess takes a stand:

JESS

Okay. Well. I'm not getting rid of this hutch, Schmidt.

SCHMIDT

Then put it in your room.

JESS

What if I--

SCHMIDT

In your room! Don't push me, Jess. I'm about to tell you what I really think of your clothes. Do you want me to re-instate my ban on high-waisted shorts?

JESS

All right, all right...

She begins wheeling off her hutch, sneering at Schmidt.

4 INT. BATHROOM. SHORT TIME LATER. (D1)

4

A hung over NICK splashes water on his face as a groggy WINSTON enters, swigging from a beer bottle.

END

SCHMIDT

Cece, the only thing that gets me more aroused than you is my finely-crafted daily routine. I refuse to go on with this a minute more until we coordinate our calendars.

CECE

No. Get out.

SCHMIDT

Yes, fine.
(taking off his loafers,
giving them to Cece)
Take care of these for me. I can get a tetanus shot, but there's no cure for damaged suede.

Upset, Schmidt gets out of the car without his shoes on. He tiptoe-runs past the homeless Guy, terrified.

A9 INT. LOFT. LATER. (D1)

A9

Schmidt enters. The hutch is back. The apartment has been filled with various pieces of antique bric-a-brac: A giant birdcage with a stuffed bird, four old typewriters, an old dressmaker dummy, etc. Schmidt looks around, stunned.

SCHMIDT

Wha... Okay, what happened here? Do we live in a pawn shop?

Jess enters.

JESS

Oh, hey, Schmidt.

SCHMIDT

Where did all this come from?

JESS

Well, that afghan was in a supermarket parking lot.
(pointing to art)
Found that in a dumpster next to the animal shelter.
(then)
And that lamp was under the afghan.

Schmidt notices the kitchen for the first time. Not happy.

START

SCHMIDT

We have limited counter space.
There's no room for your quesadilla
maker. Or your- what is this?

JESS

It's a curly fry cutter.

SCHMIDT

And I'm guessing these are your
spices jammed in with mine. I don't
want your non-Tahitian vanilla
touching my Tahitian vanilla.

JESS

They're doing more than touching:
(picks up two bottles)
"Stroke my label. Yeah, right on the
tiny drawing of Tahiti." "Careful. My
lid is very sensitive."

SCHMIDT

Where's my burr coffee grinder?

JESS

You'll have to find a permanent
home for it, but for now...

Jess gestures to the hutch. Horrified, Schmidt spots the
grinder and looks like he's about to get physically ill.

SCHMIDT

That hutch has been on the street.
What's wrong with you?

JESS

It's a coffee grinder. It'll be okay.

SCHMIDT

It's a top of the line conical burr
coffee grinder! It doesn't smash
the beans to bits like a blade
grinder! It actually grinds them
for a deeper, richer, more
satisfying flavor profile!

JESS

I've used it repeatedly to make
homemade crayons. Can you taste
THAT in your coffee, Schmidt?

Schmidt goes to open the hutch, can't bring himself to touch
it. Heads to the kitchen and digs through a drawer.

JESS (CONT'D)

If you're looking for your oven mitts, they're now in the top drawer of the hutch.

Schmidt tries to open the hutch with his elbows. No dice. He signals for Jess to help. Jess rolls her eyes and opens the drawer. Schmidt puts the mitts on, removes the coffee grinder, then starts to push the hutch toward the door.

SCHMIDT

Say goodbye to your hutch.

JESS

My hutch isn't going anywhere.

Jess starts pushing back the hutch from the other side. They struggle for a few beats. It's a stalemate.

SCHMIDT

Fine. It can stay.

JESS

Thank you.

Schmidt walks away, apparently giving. He turns and with fury, charges the hutch. He grunts as he gives the hutch a huge push. It starts to tip. Jess moves away just in time, as the hutch topples. They take in what happened for a beat.

JESS (CONT'D)

Schmidt. I think you have a problem.

OFF Schmidt's face.

END OF ACT ONE.

~~END~~

ACT TWO

A10 EXT. VENICE BOARDWALK. A LITTLE LATER. (D1)

A10

A happy Jess and an overdressed, queasy Schmidt walk the boardwalk, which bustles with colorful VENICE DENIZENS.

JESS

I love the beach. Isn't it better than fighting over a hutch? It's a great place to talk out your problems.

SCHMIDT

Yeah, if you like hanging out on the rim of a giant fish toilet.

(then)

I can't believe you brought me here.

JESS

My mom used to take us to the shore whenever we got crabby. 'Til one time, we were sitting in the sand, talking out our problems and a real crab crawled up and pinched her on her privates. Weird day.

An over-joyous DANCING SKATER circles Schmidt then skates off.

SCHMIDT

(reacting frantically)

I'm in a bubble! I'm in a no-skating bubble.

(then, after skater exits)

Okay. This sucks.

JESS

What? That's crazy. You got the birds in the sky...

SCHMIDT'S POV: A cat licks a dead bird laying in the sand.

JESS (CONT'D)

...the sea and the sand...

SCHMIDT'S POV: A hypodermic needle juts out of the sand.

JESS (CONT'D)

...and the wind in our hair.

A kite dive-bombs INTO FRAME and clocks Schmidt in the head. Panicked, he fights the kite off as if it was a giant bat.

START

SCHMIDT
 (yelling off)
 You lost your kite! Have fun flying
 your string!

He breaks the string on the kite and tucks it under his arm.

JESS
 (calling off)
 I'm sorry. He hates being hit in
 the face with a kite.
 (then)
 Schmidt, you're so uptight. C'mon,
 let's go have some fun.

She grabs his hand and pulls him OUT OF FRAME.

B10 EXT. VENICE BOARDWALK. BIKE PATH. DAY. (D1) B10

Jess rides INTO FRAME steering a tandem bike. REVEAL Schmidt
 on the back with napkins between his hands and the
 handlebars, plastic bags on his feet. He's not enjoying this.

C10 EXT. VENICE BOARDWALK. SHORT TIME LATER. (D1) C10

Schmidt and Jess eat ice cream. REVEAL a kid eating a melting
 chocolate cone. It runs down his arm. The kid licks it off
 his arm. Disgusted, Schmidt chucks his cone in the trash.

D10 EXT. VENICE BOARDWALK. SHORT TIME LATER. (D1) D10

A HUMAN STATUE. Jess urges Schmidt to tip him. Schmidt does.
 The statue moves, scaring Schmidt, who reacts instinctively,
 punching the Human Statue, knocking him off of his box.

E10 EXT. VENICE BOARDWALK. SHORT TIME LATER. (D1) E10

A frustrated Jess sits with Schmidt as he tries to take off a
 pair of rented skates only using his feet.

JESS
 Wow. I don't know how I missed
 this: You're completely nuts.

SCHMIDT
 We're all a little nuts, Jess.

JESS
 No, I mean, you are coo-coo,
 bonkers, bat-poop crazy.

Schmidt peels off his socks, revealing he's wearing a second
 pair of socks.

SCHMIDT

It's my mother's fault. She used to make me wipe down all my toys with rubbing alcohol before I went to bed. And my feet. Every morning, she'd make me throw out the underwear I slept in and get a fresh pair from a new pack.

JESS

My mom made all our underwear. Out of old bedsheets. Nothing in our house was ever wasted. My sister and I shared a retainer. She had day, I had night.

SCHMIDT

The only thing I controlled was the food I ate. That's why I got fat.

JESS

I got fat 'cause I ate Concord grape jelly right out of the jar. Using a candy bar as a fork.

(then)

It's lonely in Oregon.

SCHMIDT

No. It's because you didn't have any structure. That's what happens when you don't have any rules.

JESS

What about these people...

Jess motions to the beach-full of joyful, free-living masses.

JESS (CONT'D)

That lady is the color of a leather bag and look how happy she is. These people don't seem to have any rules. Especially that guy. He could actually use a few rules. Those are lady's bikini bottoms.

SCHMIDT

I'm not like these people. I stopped wearing headbands three years ago with the rest of the civilized world. How do they relax? Just tell themselves to relax? It's not that easy.

JESS

You sure about that?

~~END~~

She picks up the skates and EXITS to return them. Beat, as Schmidt considers this. WE HEAR the sounds of a DRUM CIRCLE. He turns to see where the sound is coming from.

SCHMIDT'S POV: A large gathering of drummers gathered on the beach wail away on drums. Within the circle, several GORGEOUS, FREE-SPIRITED WOMEN dance and drum. One makes eye contact with Schmidt, smiles and beckons him to join them.

ON SCHMIDT: Who, me? This is more his speed. Tantalized, he stands and crosses to the women, grooving to the beat.

13 EXT. PARK. SHORT TIME LATER. (D1)

13

Nick and Winston are eating sandwiches at a table.

NICK

Thanks for getting the sandwiches.
Can't believe I forgot my wallet.

WINSTON

I said, "don't forget your wallet."

NICK

I know and I still forgot it! We're
gettin' older, huh?

WINSTON

Okay. This is a good segue.

Winston takes out a sheet of paper and reads from it.

WINSTON (CONT'D)

The subject of this talk is the
debt of money between us. I feel
that I have communicated to you--

NICK

Wait, this is just about the poker
money? I was worried this was about
something important. Relax, I'm
going to pay you back--

WINSTON

(then, reading)

If I am reading this section, then
I can only assume you have told me
to relax. Let me assure you, I am
very relaxed, though I have good
reason not to be, as you owe me a
very large sum.