

MAN EATER

By

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1 INT. FANTASY DUNGEON - NIGHT

1

A kinky dungeon party unfolds under red lights and a haze of fog. Pulsing industrial music underscores the scene.

At the center of it all is Queen Dominatrix Supreme CHARISMA BAIRD. She is draped across a throne and being attended by MAN SERVANTS. One feeds her grapes; another licks her toes.

Suddenly the MUSIC shifts. Now it's a FIRE ALARM. Partygoers cover their ears. Some run away. Charisma's men walk off.

CHARISMA

Wait! Where are you going??

2 INT. CHARISMA'S BEDROOM - MORNING

2

Charisma struggles in the sheets as her husband THEODORE 'TEDDY' BAIRD strolls to her bedside stand and shuts off her phone ALARM, toothbrush in mouth. He strides off.

Charisma stares at the ceiling for a minute, adjusting to reality.

3 INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

3

Teddy puts the lid on his travel mug of coffee as Charisma shuffles out in a robe and slippers.

CHARISMA

Busy day?

TEDDY

Yeah.

He slings his messenger bag over his shoulder and fumbles for his keys.

TEDDY (CONT'D)

Apparently the graduate students' experiments all failed over night so I'm going in early to play catch up.

CHARISMA

Aww. Did the fish die?

TEDDY

Yeah.

Charisma pads over and kisses Teddy's cheek.

CHARISMA

I'm sorry.

TEDDY

Me too.

4 EXT. CHARISMA'S FRONT DOOR - MORNING

4

Teddy heads to the car and Charisma follows him out. It's a lovely spring morning in their well-kept suburb of Portville, Louisiana.

CHARISMA

Oh! We forgot to make reservations for tonight. Do you think it's too late to get a table at La Poisson Bleu?

TEDDY

Why don't we keep it simple? I have a feeling I'm going to be tired.

CHARISMA

(hiding disappointment)

Okay. I'll think of something.

TEDDY

Thanks.

Teddy backs the car out of the driveway. Charisma waves goodbye, accidentally slipping out of her silky robe in her vigor. She notices, quickly covers up, and dashes inside.

5 EXT. LOCAL GYM - DAY

5

Sounds of grunting and panting echo behind the cement walls of a small gym.

6 INT. LOCAL GYM - DAY

6

Flashes of hair and sweaty skin. Charisma lays on a mat and thrusts herself into a muscular punk with a pixie cut, JAZZ CARRINGTON, who holds her down.

JAZZ

Give it to me, Charisma! Give me all you've got!

Charisma engages maximum effort. She crunches her abs and rapidly punches a thick pad Jazz holds like a shield.

JAZZ

That's right! 10 more! 5 more! Done!

Charisma falls back on the gym mat, exhausted. Jazz hops up.

JAZZ

Great job. That's it for today.

Charisma props herself up on an elbow and reaches for her water bottle as the sound of GIGGLES draws her attention.

Charisma and Jazz look toward the front desk, where a man, VICTOR, and woman, SYDNEY, are flirting and holding hands. Jazz looks suddenly nervous and glances around like she's searching for someone.

JAZZ

Sorry, I'm the only one on duty right now. You good?

CHARISMA

Yeah.

Jazz jogs up to the desk.

Charisma watches as the woman hands Jazz a SACK LUNCH, the man hands her a SMOOTHIE, and both kiss her on either cheek.

This unexpected PDA surprises Charisma: she squeezes her water bottle too hard and slops water down her front.

When she looks up again, Jazz looks uncomfortable, but Charisma can't make out the conversation.

Jazz gives the man and woman quick hugs and shoos them out. As they go, the man puts his hand in the woman's back pocket. Charisma watches, sweaty and intrigued.

7 EXT. SALON LA ROUGE - AFTERNOON

7

Charisma, now looking chic and professional, heads to work. She opens the front door as a done-up septuagenarian exits the salon looking weather-proof.

CHARISMA

Looking lovely, Ms. Sharon!

MS. SHARON

Thank you, sweetheart!

8 INT. SALON LA ROUGE, LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

8

Charisma puts her apron on and walks into the lobby of stylish Salon La Rouge. Molly the receptionist hangs up the phone and scribbles on a day planner.

MOLLY

Tabitha Davis wants you to know she's very upset you can't do her highlights.

CHARISMA

Oh, I'm sure.

MOLLY

Looks like I'm gonna have to take one for the team.

CHARISMA

Good luck.

The door swings open and an over-dressed, over-Botoxed MATILDA FAYARD enters, swinging an extra-large latte.

MATILDA

Charisma, I'm ready for you to make me a new woman!

CHARISMA

Well, you're in the right spot!

She leads Matilda back to her station on the salon floor.

9 INT. SALON LA ROUGE, SALON FLOOR - LATER

9

The salon is an open floor-plan divided by rows of back-to-back, full-length mirrors with barber chairs on either side.

At the far side of the room another stylist, Suzie, gives a woman a short clipper cut.

Charisma capes Matilda at her chair and spins her around to face the mirror. She runs her hands through Matilda's hair.

CHARISMA

So tell me all about it.

MATILDA

I just finalized my divorce and I want a *Big Change*. The bigger the better!

She hands Charisma several magazine clippings of celebrities.

MATILDA(CONT'D)

I trust you. Work your magic!

10 INT. SALON LA ROUGE, SALON FLOOR - SEVERAL HOURS LATER

10

Charisma finishes Matilda's FABULOUS TRANSFORMATION with a spritz of hairspray and spins her around for the big reveal.

MATILDA

(caressing her hair)

It's everything I dreamed of!

CHARISMA

That's what I like to hear.

She removes Matilda's cape and tucks it away.

MATILDA

(still preening)

Oh, I can't just go home looking this good!

(She turns around.)

Am I your last client? Let me buy you a drink.

CHARISMA

Aw, you're so sweet. You are my last client, but I've got plans. It's actually my Anniversary tonight.

MATILDA

Aww, you're still with that old dud?

CHARISMA

(shocked laughter)

Matilda! I think the hair color got into your brain, ma'am.

Matilda giggles devilishly and sips her coffee.

MATILDA

I'm sorry, I'm jaded. And I may have a little kick in my coffee. Live your life to the fullest, that's all I have to say.

She hiccups, gives Charisma a matronly cheek pinch, and writes her a check. Suzie smirks in the background.

11 EXT. SALON LA ROUGE, LOBBY - LATE AFTERNOON 11

Charisma heads out for the day, passing Molly at reception and Suzie, who lounges in armchair and plays on her phone.

MOLLY

Have a good time tonight!

CHARISMA

Thank you!

SUZIE

Remind me when you're taking off for that bakery thing.

CHARISMA

Next week.

SUZIE

Okay cool, so you can still do my hair for the Tame Impala show?

CHARISMA

Yep!

SUZIE

Dope.

12 EXT. STRIP MALL PARKING LOT 12

Charisma approaches an old strip mall which houses *The Love Boutique*, an erotic retailer.

She peers through the window at mannequins in lingerie, display shelves of sky high heels, and of course dildos.

13 INT. CHARISMA'S HOUSE - NIGHT 13

Charisma sits at the table and sips a glass of wine. She's all gussied up. The take-out is ready and waiting.

Sounds of TEDDY'S CAR.

Charisma crosses her legs and adjusts a peek-a-boo GARTER BELT before smoothing down her dress and relaxing.

She checks the time on her phone as Teddy enters, slouching, and tosses his stuff aside.

TEDDY

Go ahead and eat, I might be a minute.

He heads to the bedroom and swings the door shut behind him.

14 INT. CHARISMA'S HOUSE - A FEW MINUTES LATER

14

Charisma's wine glass is empty when Teddy returns in PJs. He slumps into a chair and reaches for his plate.

TEDDY

You didn't have to wait.

CHARISMA

I know.

TEDDY

You look nice.

Charisma refills her wine glass.

CHARISMA

Thank you, I tried.

Teddy looks down at his own clothes.

TEDDY

Do you want me to change?

CHARISMA

You don't have to do that.

TEDDY

Because I'm really tired and this is comfortable.

CHARISMA

Makes sense to me.

TEDDY

And I said I wanted to keep it simple.

CHARISMA

I know, Teddy! It's fine. I didn't dress up to upset you, okay? I did it to make myself feel good.

TEDDY

Okay.

Charisma downs some wine. Teddy opens up the take-out boxes.



15 INT. CHARISMA'S HOUSE - LATER

15

Charisma and Teddy bring their plates back to the kitchen after dinner. Teddy BELCHES loudly.

TEDDY

Wanna play Alpine Risk Assessment? The latest expansion pack has a bunch of new rations.

CHARISMA

(not tempted)

Tempting.

(turning on the smolder)

Actually, I thought we could try something different tonight, since it's a special occasion.

He's interested. She leads him to the bedroom.

16 INT. CHARISMA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

16

Charisma produces the *Love Boutique* GIFT BAG from behind the bed and sets it on the bedspread. She sits on the bed beside it and loosens her top to reveal a peek of her NEW LINGERIE.

CHARISMA

I know you've been short-staffed at the lab and it's been stressing you out, so I took the liberty of grabbing us a few *playthings*.

She withdraws the contents of the gift bag: a beginner's BDSM kit complete with ROPE, WHIP, BLINDFOLD, and HANDCUFFS, a SEXY TRUTH OR DARE CARD GAME, and some FLAVORED LUBE.

Charisma undoes her top further to completely reveal her BUSTIER, but Teddy does not look thrilled.

CHARISMA

I'm not trying to pressure you, I just thought a little novelty might be... exciting.

TEDDY

What's wrong with the sex that we have?

CHARISMA

Nothing!

Teddy stares at the WHIP and CUFFS.

TEDDY

I have zero interest in hitting you,  
Charisma.

CHARISMA

(cheerful)

Hey, don't knock it 'til ya try it.

Teddy is far from sold.

CHARISMA

Okay, why don't we try the card game?

17 INT. CHARISMA'S BEDROOM - A FEW MINUTES LATER

17

Charisma and Teddy sit on the bed, cards in their hands.  
Teddy pulls a card from a central deck in between them.

TEDDY

Alright, this one's a truth or dare.

CHARISMA

*Dare.*

Teddy reads from the back of the card.

TEDDY

Remove one article of clothing.

CHARISMA

Too easy.

She shrugs off the remainder of her over-garments, revealing  
only her NEW LINGERIE.

CHARISMA

What was the Truth question?

TEDDY

Uh, would you ever try an Open  
Relationship?

CHARISMA

Ah.

She keeps a good poker face.

TEDDY

And?

CHARISMA

I don't have to answer.

TEDDY

You're supposed to say 'No'.

CHARISMA

I don't have to say anything. I chose  
*Dare*.

TEDDY

What's there to even think about??  
*We're married.*

CHARISMA

*Teddy Bear*, you're making something  
out of nothing. This is supposed to be  
fun.

Charisma draws a card.

CHARISMA

Truth or Dare.

TEDDY

*Truth.*

CHARISMA

How many times per week do you  
masturbate?

TEDDY

*Dare.*

Charisma makes a face.

CHARISMA

That often, huh??

TEDDY

No! I don't know. Who counts that?

Charisma shakes her head, teasing.

CHARISMA

All those long nights at the lab when  
I thought you were *hard at work*...

TEDDY

I have been!

Charisma giggles. Teddy looks miffed.

TEDDY(CONT'D)

Do you want me to play or not?

CHARISMA

Okay, okay, I'll read you the *Dare*, but it's rated 4 Spicy Peppers, think you can handle that?

TEDDY

Go ahead.

CHARISMA

You have to give me "5 minutes of *analingus*".

TEDDY

It doesn't say that!

Charisma shoves the card in his face playfully. It does say that.

TEDDY

That's not fair. I want a new card.

CHARISMA

(jokingly)

What? I showered! I'm clean!

TEDDY

That doesn't matter. That's not something you just *start out* with. That's going from 0 to 100.

CHARISMA

Seriously?

TEDDY

Seriously! I have my limits.

CHARISMA

Clearly.

Teddy gets up from the bed.

CHARISMA

What?

TEDDY

I'm sorry, this just is *not* what I

expected the night to turn into.

CHARISMA

You didn't expect me to want to have sex tonight?

Teddy swipes at the BDSM kit.

TEDDY

I didn't expect you to bring home whips and chains! To ask me to lick your- your-

CHARISMA

Ass?

TEDDY

This isn't me. This isn't what I want.

Charisma stares at the cards and doesn't look up.

CHARISMA

What about what I want?

TEDDY

What, an open relationship?

CHARISMA

I didn't say that. But you completely shut down at the slightest mention of kink! What am I supposed to do?

Teddy shrugs.

CHARISMA

So that's that, you won't even try?

TEDDY

I don't need to eat a fried candy bar to know that it's not healthy.

Teddy walks to the closet, grabs a suitcase.

TEDDY

I'm gonna go stay with Josh for a while. I'll call you.

He walks out with big loads of clothes under his arms. Charisma stares into the distance, undressed and devastated.

18 INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

18

Charisma shuffles into the kitchen at the sound of Teddy slamming the door shut. She wears a robe over her lingerie and pads over to the fridge.

She pulls out a homemade CHOCOLATE CAKE with icing words: HAPPY TEN YEAR ANNIVERSARY.

She stares at it then STABS it with a kitchen knife, carving out a chunk.

19 INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

19

Charisma settles in on the couch with her CAKE and a glass of MILK. Her LAPTOP sits idle on the coffee table before her.

She puts her food down and pulls a PIPE and STASH JAR out from a hidden drawer - Alas, the jar is empty.

Charisma pouts, pulls her CELLPHONE from her robe pocket.

20 INT. LIVING ROOM - LATER

20

Sounds of a clicking LIGHTER. Inhale. Exhale. COUGHS.

Charisma is now joined by her friend and pot dealer, OLYMPIA GOSPARD. They pass the pipe.

OLYMPIA

His loss, babe. You're a total catch.

Charisma fails to feel comforted.

CHARISMA

I'm a total idiot. Who has their sexual awakening in their thirties?

OLYMPIA

Lots of people.

CHARISMA

Really?

OLYMPIA

Yeah, and in their forties, fifties, and sixties. Better late than never!

CHARISMA

I still feel like I was supposed to get this phase out of the way in my

early twenties, or at least, like,  
before I got married.

Olympia grimaces.

OLYMPIA

I mean, like you said, this could have  
been something you and old boy  
explored *together*. That's on him.

Charisma sighs and mulls it over.

OLYMPIA

For real though, look at you!

She points out the GARTER peeking between the folds of  
Charisma's robe.

OLYMPIA(CONT'D)

You bought lingerie and got yourself  
all dolled up, you're doing the work  
and bringing the sexy. You deserve  
someone who will meet you halfway.

CHARISMA

Yeah, where do I find someone like  
that?

OLYMPIA

Umm, Fet-Fête, for a start.

CHARISMA

*Fet-Fête?*

OLYMPIA

Dot com. Go ahead!

She waves at the nearby laptop. Charisma complies. She looks  
happily surprised as the website appears, revealing happy,  
horny people in latex fetish-wear and accessories.

Olympia puffs the pipe and looks over Charisma's shoulder.

OLYMPIA

Add me to your friends' list and I'll  
invite you to my beginners' Shibari  
class.

CHARISMA

What's that?

OLYMPIA

It's the art of Japanese Rope Bondage.

Charisma looks intrigued and continues the sign-up process online. Olympia slides over the plate of cake and takes a big bite.

OLYMPIA(CONT'D)

Mmmmm! Did you make this??

CHARISMA

Yep. Is this an okay picture for my profile?

She shows Olympia a classic head shot.

OLYMPIA

Uh, do you have anything a little spicier? Like a sexy Halloween costume?

CHARISMA

No.

OLYMPIA

Hmm. What are you rocking now?

Charisma lets Olympia peek underneath the robe.

OLYMPIA(CONT'D)

Now, *that's* more like it. Give me your cell phone, let's do this.

21 INT. CHARISMA'S HOUSE - A MOMENT LATER

21

A stripped-down Charisma strikes various poses as Olympia plays photographer with very "*Yeah, Baby!*" Austin Powers-esque energy. Thumping club music bumps from the laptop.

OLYMPIA

Yeah, girl! You know you look good.

Charisma giggles.

OLYMPIA

Now give us shy Bambi.

(She snaps a few more.)

Nice! Okay, let's go to the kitchen and get some shots of you eating that delicious cake.



As they stroll toward the kitchen, the sound of the opening DOOR startles them. Teddy stands silent in the doorway.

CHARISMA

Hi, honey.

TEDDY

I forgot a jump drive I need for work.

CHARISMA

Gotcha.

He walks past them to the bedroom. The women share an awkward glance.

22 INT. CHARISMA'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

22

Charisma rerobes and approaches Teddy in their bedroom. He sifts through his top dresser drawer, becoming increasingly frustrated. He looks back.

TEDDY

Oh, don't cover up on my account.

CHARISMA

Can you please stop so we can talk about this?

TEDDY

Listen. I don't need or want to know what you were doing. Clearly it's very important to you if you couldn't wait a full *hour* after I left to get started.

He finds the JUMP DRIVE, shoves it into his pocket, shuts the drawer and bee-lines for the door.

TEDDY (CONT'D)

I hope it makes you very happy.

Charisma follows him half-heartedly and lingers at the bedroom door as Teddy leaves. As he passes Olympia, still waiting in the kitchen:

OLYMPIA

Good to see ya, Ted!

TEDDY

Fuck off, Olympia.

And he's gone.

23 EXT. CHARISMA'S HOUSE - THE NEXT MORNING, DAWN 23

Charisma heads out for her morning jog in the wee dawn hours.

24 EXT. CHARISMA'S HOUSE - MID-MORNING 24

A luxury sedan rolls into the driveway and parks. An elegantly dressed woman in her 60s, GERALDINE MEADORS, emerges from the driver's seat, looking like a cover-model for Southern Living magazine.

She bends gracefully and retrieves a large ornate VASE holding a stunning BOUQUET from the car. She carries it with her to the front door as Charisma jogs into view behind her.

CHARISMA

*Crap.*

Charisma runs to catch up with Geraldine.

CHARISMA

Hey, Momma!

Geraldine turns in surprise.

GERALDINE

Good morning! Happy Anniversary, my dear.

Charisma gives her a peck on the cheek and takes the flowers.

CHARISMA

Thank you.

Charisma opens the door for her mother despite her armful.

25 INT. CHARISMA'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS 25

CHARISMA

Sorry I'm late, it honestly slipped my mind that you were coming over.

GERALDINE

Well, that's unlike you! You and Theodore must have done a little extra celebrating last night.

CHARISMA

Ha, yeah.

GERALDINE

That's okay! You deserve it. If you can't cut loose on your ten year anniversary, when can you?

CHARISMA

Good question.

Geraldine pulls a notebook and pen out of her purse and flips through it.

GERALDINE

Now, I've made a preliminary list for the Bake-Off, but I know you'll tell me if I've forgotten anything.

She sets the notebook on the counter. Charisma scans over it.

CHARISMA

This is a lot. I'm already taking a week off of work.

GERALDINE

Plenty of time! It's nothing we can't handle together. Especially if Theodore can help out again.

CHARISMA

I don't think that's going to be an option.

Geraldine looks concerned.

CHARISMA

He's been really slammed at the lab.

GERDALINE

Sweet talk him a little, you'll win him over. Or bribe him! That always worked with your father.

CHARISMA

Mom.

GERALDINE

Don't worry, there's still time to figure it out. May I use your ladies' room?

CHARISMA  
 (still analyzing the list)  
 Of course.

Geraldine trots off. A second later:

GERALDINE(O.S.)  
*Charisma Jeane!*

Charisma looks up from the notebook in panicked realization.

CHARISMA  
*Crap!*

26 INT. CHARISMA'S BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

26

Charisma dashes into the bathroom where her mother is staring in shock at her WHIP and CUFFS.

CHARISMA  
 I'm sorry. You weren't supposed to see that.

GERALDINE  
 When I said cut loose that is *not* what I meant!

Charisma grabs the toys and hides them behind her back.

GERALDINE(CONT'D)  
 This was Theodore's idea, wasn't it??  
 I knew he was a deviant.

CHARISMA  
 Mom.

27 INT. CHARISMA'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

27

Charisma makes for the bedroom as Geraldine follows.

GERALDINE  
 You can tell me, I'm here for you. Has he been subjecting you to this for a long time? You know I worried about you when you said he wanted to take that job in San Francisco.

Charisma tosses the stuff on the bed, shuts the door, and turns to face her mother in the hall.

CHARISMA

Mom. Teddy is not a deviant. We're-  
figuring some things out right now and  
I need you to respect our privacy.

Geraldine looks deeply skeptical. They stare each other down.

CHARISMA

Didn't you have to pee?

28 EXT. CHARISMA'S FRONT DOOR - NOON

28

Charisma sees an overly stiff Geraldine to her car.

GERALDINE

Will I see you at the Planning Meeting  
today?

CHARISMA

Isn't that what we just did?

GERALDINE

There's an official Meet & Greet at  
4:00, at the church.

CHARISMA

But we already know everybody there.

GERALDINE

It's a tradition and you know it,  
Charisma.

CHARISMA

I'll have to check. I'm giving Olympia  
a ride to work later.

She opens the door for Geraldine, who gets in and says:

GERALDINE

I'll be there at three, wearing our  
team colors: Tiffany and cream. I hope  
you won't disappoint me.

Geraldine pulls the door shut and drives off.

CHARISMA

Too late.

29 EXT. DOWNTOWN HOTEL - AFTERNOON

29

Olympia and Charisma amble down the sidewalk toward the

entrance of a boutique hotel. They are both wearing long cover-up coats despite the warm weather.

CHARISMA

Thanks for coming with me.

OLYMPIA

No problem! I can rope in a few fresh faces for my class.

CHARISMA

Great.

She stops outside the entrance and fidgets with her coat.

CHARISMA

You promise I look okay?

OLYMPIA

You look fantastic.

CHARISMA

And we're not over-doing it?

OLYMPIA

Nah, there's always a few people that go all out. And that's who you want to meet, right?

CHARISMA

I guess?

They are about to head inside when:

GERALDINE(O.S.)

Charisma! Hold the door!

Geraldine moves briskly, carrying a tray of tea cakes decorated to match her ensemble of Tiffany blue and cream.

GERALDINE

I'm so glad you got my message about the change of locations. Oh hello, Olympia, I thought you had to work.

OLYMPIA

(befuddled)

I'm- here for moral support.

GERALDINE

Well, okay then! The more the merrier.

Charisma opens the door for Geraldine. Olympia whispers after Geraldine passes:

OLYMPIA

*Is your Mom coming to this?!*

Charisma shakes her head vehemently 'No'.

30 INT. HOTEL - CONTINUOUS

30

Charisma and Olympia hurry inside behind Geraldine who has stopped to admire the lobby.

GERALDINE

I just adore their updated motif.

She turns to Charisma and finally gets a good look at her.

GERALDINE(CONT'D)

Why are you in long coats? It's warm outside.

Charisma is lost for words. Olympia jumps in.

OLYMPIA

Maybe you're having a hot flash, Geraldine. Have you gone through the Change?

GERALDINE

Excuse me?

CHARISMA

She's kidding!

Charisma steps close to Geraldine to speak softly.

CHARISMA(CONT'D)

Mom, I'm sorry, I didn't get your message. I'm actually here for another meeting.

GERALDINE

Oh. Which one?

She casts about until she sees a conference DIRECTORY SIGN at the front desk. She squints to try to read it, but Charisma beats her to it.

CHARISMA

Fat Camp! I'm here for Fat Camp.

Geraldine turns back to face Charisma, much to her relief. She vamps for time.

CHARISMA

Yeah, I've just been falling off the wagon lately and my trainer suggested this, so I'm going to check it out.

Geraldine looks at Olympia for confirmation.

OLYMPIA

Yep! And I'm coming with her. Been feeling chubby lately.

CHARISMA

The long coats make you sweat to burn more calories.

GERALDINE

That's nonsense. You're a fine size; I wouldn't lie about that. Now take off that silly coat.

Charisma can't think of anything but to obey. She slips a vinyl-clad shoulder out as behind her, a handful of CHURCH LADIES filter in. Geraldine sees all of this and flips out.

GERALDINE

*Put it back on!*

Charisma obeys as Geraldine shoves her out of eyesight.

GERALDINE(CONT'D)

*What are you wearing?!*

Charisma is terrified. Olympia tries to be helpful.

OLYMPIA

They help you sweat.

GERALDINE

*Like hell they do! What are you really up to??*

The CHURCH LADIES sidle up to the trio.

MARTHA

Hi, Geraldine.

Geraldine pastes on her fakest smile.



GERALDINE  
Hello, ladies! How are you?

BERNICE  
Looking forward to those famous tea  
cakes!

GERALDINE  
Oh thank you!

BERNICE  
Wait, did you cook them, Geraldine, or  
did Charisma?

GERALDINE  
It was all me this time.

BERNICE  
Oh. Well I'll bet they're still good.

GERALDINE  
We'll find out! Let's get our seats  
before the best tables are gone.

She tries to usher the women away from her daughter.

MARTHA  
Are you coming, Charisma?

GERALDINE  
Oh no, she can't stay.

BERNICE  
Oh, that's too bad. Where are you off  
to?

GERALDINE  
(still pressing forward)  
Fat Camp! She better keep that figure  
so her husband will give me some  
grandbabies.

BERNICE  
Oh!

MARTHA  
(to Charisma)  
Do what makes you feel good,  
sweetheart.

CHARISMA  
Thanks, Mrs. Martha.

MARTHA  
I'll be calling you later for a  
haircut!

GERALDINE  
(in a furious effort to separate)  
Okay then, don't be late, sugar! Go  
sweat it out.

No need to be told twice, Charisma and Olympia jet.

31 INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - AFTERNOON

31

Charisma and Olympia finally make it to their destination: a  
paper sign by the buffet says FET-FÊTE MUNCH.

They look at each other for the OK then drop their coats:  
they are wearing head-turning fetish wear. Somebody WHISTLES.

JAZZ(O.S.)  
Hey hot stuff!

Charisma smiles to recognize the voice of her gym trainer,  
Jazz, who waves from a small table across the room. Sitting  
with her is the flirty COUPLE that showed up at her last  
workout. They are all dressed in business casual.

OLYMPIA  
What up J-Money?!

Charisma and Olympia make their way over to the table and  
take a seat. Olympia and Jazz do a special handshake.

JAZZ  
Look at you showing out.

OLYMPIA  
(primping)  
Always!

CHARISMA  
(looking all around)  
Yeah, I had hoped we wouldn't be the  
only ones.

OLYMPIA  
You'll get used to it. Standing out is  
a good thing, trust me.

VICTOR  
I second that. You both look  
spectacular.

CHARISMA  
(self-effacing)  
Thank you.

JAZZ  
Charisma, this is my boyfriend Victor.

CHARISMA  
Nice to meet you.

JAZZ  
And this is my girlfriend Sydney.

Charisma hides her surprise and smiles politely.

CHARISMA  
So nice to meet you.

JAZZ  
I didn't expect to see you here! How  
long have you two known each other?

OLYMPIA  
Knee high to a grasshopper.

JAZZ  
Ha, wow! Worlds collide, right?  
(to her partners)  
Charisma has to be my hardest working  
client. She lost a *hundred pounds* over  
the last two years!

Impressed reactions all around as Charisma flusters.

JAZZ(CONT'D)  
(to Charisma)  
I hope you don't mind me saying that.  
(to the others)  
But she kicks ass!  
(to Charisma)  
And now you're here! *Plus*, you came  
with Olympia, which means you must  
smoke weed. You're getting cooler by  
the minute.

Charisma is blushing like crazy. Olympia pulls a stack of  
flyers from her purse and passes them out.

OLYMPIA

Which is why you're *all* going to come to my beginner's Shibari class. Charisma is going to be my Rope Bunny.

CHARISMA

I am?

OLYMPIA

You are.

JAZZ

Fun! Can I get a discount if I buy you both a drink??

OLYMPIA

I'll consider a group rate. Two screwdrivers.

Jazz flashes two thumbs up and bounces to the bar.

OLYMPIA(CONT'D)

Thank you boo!

32 INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - LATER

32

The conference room hums with conversation. An array of patrons mingle, including a few more in fetish-wear. Olympia hands out her class flyers.

Jazz and Sydney chat together and Victor flirts with Charisma, who remains a bit bashful.

VICTOR

So how long have you been married?

Charisma looks down at her wedding band.

CHARISMA

Long enough that I forgot to take my ring off, apparently. Wow, that sounded awful.

VICTOR

We don't have to talk about it.

CHARISMA

It's okay. I should be honest. We're fighting. We separated.

VICTOR  
Is he Vanilla?

CHARISMA  
He prefers Chocolate.

VICTOR  
I mean he's not kinky?

CHARISMA  
Oh. No. Not unless you count an  
unhealthy level of passion for Alpine  
Risk Assessment.

Victor shrugs, missing the reference. Charisma twists the  
ring around her finger.

CHARISMA  
Gosh! I'm sucking the air out of the  
room like a *Dementor*!

She contorts her face and makes a guttural sucking sound.  
Victor doesn't get the joke. However, a nearby patron (LEO)  
does.

LEO  
Did someone say *Dementor*?

Victor points at Charisma.

CHARISMA  
Guilty.

Leo joins them.

LEO  
Finally someone at this party I can  
nerd out with! What house are you?

CHARISMA  
Ravenclaw.

LEO  
Sweet! Gryffindor.

CHARISMA  
Everybody thinks they're a Gryffindor.

LEO  
You don't.

CHARISMA

I try to be honest with myself.

LEO

That's a wonderful quality. I'm Leo.

CHARISMA

Leo as in lion? Okay you *might be* a Gryffindor. I'm Charisma.

VICTOR

Wow, it's like you two are speaking a different language.

CHARISMA

This stuff is right in your age bracket, how do you *not* know what we're talking about?

VICTOR

I was raised Amish.

CHARISMA

Oh!

LEO

That'll do it.

VICTOR

And I can't sit still long enough to read a book or watch a movie-

The background music changes tempo, as do the lights. People are creating an impromptu dance floor.

VICTOR(CONT'D)

Which reminds me, my ass is falling asleep. Who wants to dance?

He looks around the table for takers. His girlfriends are deep in conversation and wave him off.

VICTOR(CONT'D)

Charisma?

CHARISMA

I've got two left feet.

VICTOR

Your loss!

He mambos off to the dance floor solo. Leo gestures to the empty seat.

LEO

May I?

CHARISMA

Please.

He sits and stretches out his legs, he seems stiff and achey.

LEO

So you new in town or just new to the scene?

CHARISMA

Is it that obvious?

LEO

Oh no, but it's a small world and Keegan and I are here every week.

CHARISMA

Ah. Who's Keegan?

Leo points out a woman wearing high heels and a mini dress twirling on the dance floor. As they watch, she and Victor collide and laugh, then start dancing together.

LEO

(in an old British accent)  
That's *m'lady*.

CHARISMA

She looks fun.

LEO

Oh she's a kick and a half. So what brings you out today?

CHARISMA

Pure curiosity I guess.

LEO

Well, judging by your clothes, kudos for jumping in with both feet.

CHARISMA

Ha, thanks. I borrowed them, but I think I like them.

LEO  
They like you.

CHARISMA  
(lightly flustered)  
So, how long have you and your  
girlfriend been, uh, kinky?

LEO  
Good question. Pretty much the whole  
time, then we opened our relationship  
when I was in the service. How long  
have you been married?

CHARISMA  
(flexing her left hand)  
Ten years, yesterday. And I think  
that's about as far as that train  
goes.

LEO  
Oh, I'm sorry.

CHARISMA  
Thanks.

LEO  
So I guess he's not here in the crowd  
anywhere.

CHARISMA  
No. We're taking some time apart.

LEO  
I see.

Keegan struts over to Leo, drink in hand, and tries to tempt  
him away.

KEEGAN  
The DJ's gonna play our song next.

LEO  
Aw, baby, you didn't have to do that.

KEEGAN  
Come on! I wanna dance with you.

LEO  
My knee's acting up or you know I  
would.



Keegan pouts and sips her drink. Leo stares kindly up at her.

LEO

You go cut a rug with that man you almost knocked over. Y'all need practice.

Keegan pokes her tongue out playfully and flounces over to Victor, whispers in his ear. Victor gives a silly bow and whisks her away.

SYDNEY(O.S.)

Okay, now he's having too much fun.

Sydney and Jazz watch Victor put the moves on Keegan.

JAZZ

Do we need to show him how it's done?

SYDNEY

Yes, please.

They hit the dance floor. Charisma jiggles her feet.

LEO

You want to dance. You should go with them! Don't mind me.

CHARISMA

Oh no it's not that! I have to uh, "*visit the Ministry of Magic.*"

LEO

Oh! Restrooms are in the lobby.

CHARISMA

Great. Be right back!

33 INT. HOTEL HALLWAY - A MOMENT LATER

33

Charisma trots down the hall in her winter coat. She turns back quickly as the door right in front of her swings open and Church Ladies pour out, but it's too late.

She is spotted by Bernice, who trots after her.

BERNICE

Is that you, Charisma?

Charisma swings around, her hand on the doorknob of her conference room. She tries her best to stand in front of the

sign that says FET-FÊTE BDSM MUNCH.

CHARISMA  
(as sweet as can be)  
Yes ma'am!

BERNICE  
Your momma said you're gonna be baking  
up a storm!

CHARISMA  
Sure sounds like it, doesn't it?

BERNICE  
I can't wait! You're our best kept  
secret!

Bernice sidles in close and speaks low.

BERNICE(CONT'D)  
Listen, I hope Geraldine isn't  
pressuring you into this weight loss  
thing. You are beautiful exactly as  
you are.

CHARISMA  
Aww, thank you Mrs. Bernice.

Bernice pats her on the shoulder.

BERNICE  
I just wanted you to know that.

Charisma smiles at the genuine affection just as the door  
PULLS OPEN behind her and almost unbalances her. She pulls it  
shut as casually as she can.

34 INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

34

On the other side of the door, Olympia looks at the door  
handle with consternation.

OLYMPIA  
What the-

She pulls on the door harder. Charisma pops her head in.

CHARISMA  
Just a second!!

35 INT. HOTEL HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

35

Charisma slams the door shut. Bernice looks confused. Before she can say anything, Charisma wraps her up in a hug.

CHARISMA

Thank you Mrs. Bernice, you are so sweet!

Over Charisma's shoulder, Bernice squints at the FET-FÊTE BDSM sign, trying to make sense of the acronym. She tilts her head. When Charisma pulls away she opens her mouth to speak.

GERALDINE(O.S.)

Oh Bernice!

Geraldine shuts the door to the conference room down the hall, holding her nearly-full tea cake tray. She hastens over.

GERALDINE

(coy)

You're not after our secret recipes, are you? I would hate for you to be disqualified before the Bake-off.

BERNICE

Oh hush, you know my apple pie beats yours every time.

GERALDINE

We'll see!

Bernice rolls her eyes at Geraldine and winks at Charisma.

BERNICE

Good to see you, dear.

She leaves down the hall. Geraldine turns on Charisma.

GERALDINE

That's the last time I bail you out of trouble, young lady.

CHARISMA

Great.

OLYMPIA(O.S.)

*Charisma!!*

Olympia yanks the door wide open. Charisma stumbles and

reveals Olympia in her full Dominatrix-style glory.

OLYMPIA

Oh, hi Geraldine. Excuse me.

She struts down the hall.

GERALDINE

Oh, sweet Jesus.

CHARISMA

Olympia, wait! Please. There are a bunch of ladies from my church here.

Olympia stops half-way.

OLYMPIA

I don't go to your church.

CHARISMA

Yeah but they saw us come in together!  
They'll do the math!

Geraldine nods. Olympia points a wagging finger at the pair.

OLYMPIA

*Oh, no no no.* Y'all are *not* dragging me into this anymore. This is between y'all. I am living my best life.

She struts off just as a final straggling church lady (DORIS) leaves the far conference room. She sees Olympia and looks like she's been hit with a frying pan.

CHARISMA

I promise we'll talk about this later.

She dashes after Olympia. Geraldine calls after her.

GERALDINE

We sure will!  
(to herself)  
Us and the rest of town!

She stalks down the hallway, past DORIS, who still looks thunderstruck.

GERALDINE

Oh, shut your mouth, Doris.

36 INT. CHARISMA'S HOUSE - THAT NIGHT

36

Charisma and Olympia enter a dark house. Charisma flips the light on. Olympia gasps.

OLYMPIA

Girl, you've been *robbed*.

The place looks half cleared out. There's a note on the kitchen counter. Charisma examines it. It's from Teddy.

CHARISMA

Nope. Just dumped.

Olympia shakes her head.

OLYMPIA

That's ice cold.

CHARISMA

Got to admire the efficiency.

She wanders toward the bedroom, mumbling:

CHARISMA(CONT'D)

Hope he left me the bed.

37 INT. CHARISMA'S BEDROOM - THE NEXT MORNING

37

Charisma sleeps awkwardly on an AIR MATTRESS in the spot where her bed used to be. A KNOCK on the front door wakes her. She scowls.

38 EXT. CHARISMA'S FRONT DOOR - A MINUTE LATER

38

Geraldine is waiting on the front step. Charisma peeks out.

GERALDINE

Good morning.

Charisma slips outside, carefully hiding her home interior.

CHARISMA

Hi.

GERALDINE

Am I interrupting?

CHARISMA

Only my dreams.

GERALDINE  
You said we could talk.

CHARISMA  
I would have preferred a phone-call.

GERALDINE  
Well I'm here now.

CHARISMA  
I see that.

GERALDINE  
Are you going to invite me inside?

Charisma grudgingly obliges.

39 INT. CHARISMA'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

39

Geraldine looks in horror at the emptied out house.

GERALDINE  
I knew it.

Charisma trudges past her to the kitchen and starts making coffee.

GERALDINE(CONT'D)  
Theodore left you.

CHARISMA  
Sure looks that way.

GERALDINE  
Oh, *Charisma*.

CHARISMA  
What?? You think it's my fault??

GERALDINE  
After what I saw yesterday, I do!

CHARISMA  
*Give me a break.* Did you come over here just to fight?

GERALDINE  
I came to confirm my suspicions!

CHARISMA  
Well, suspicions confirmed! I'm a

freak, a kinky freak. I scared off my husband with my filthy needs.

GERALDINE

Good Lord.

CHARISMA

Better tell Martha and Bernice to pray for me!

GERALDINE

*Charisma Jeane.* Now, I know you are in pain, but do not mock the power of prayer. You clearly need it. *That's* the real reason I'm here.

Charisma raises an eyebrow.

GERALDINE

I want you to come to church with me tonight. It's the start of the Women's Lecture series.

CHARISMA

Pass.

GERALDINE

No, you won't pass. I'm putting my foot down.

CHARISMA

I am thirty-five years old. I make my own choices.

GERALDINE

And look where they've gotten you.

40 EXT. PARK - LATE MORNING

40

Charisma runs to clear her head and listens to music on her phone. She's hitting her stride when Teddy calls. She slows.

CHARISMA

Hey.

TEDDY(V.O.)

I talked to your Mother.

CHARISMA

Of course you did.

TEDDY

She thinks we should consider couple's counseling through the church.

Charisma snorts derisively.

CHARISMA

And you're down with that?

TEDDY

I- don't want to throw our marriage away without trying to fix it.

Charisma stops.

CHARISMA

Okay, seeing a therapist is one thing, but Pastor Ramona?

TEDDY

She's supposedly very progressive.

CHARISMA

Have you *met*-? Hang on. Am I on speaker phone? Is my Mom there right now??

TEDDY

How'd you guess?

GERALDINE(V.O.)

You should seek the wisdom of your elders! Both of you!

CHARISMA

Unbelievable!

She ends the call, peeved. But she smells something *delicious*. She looks up to see a Food Truck at the edge of a public park: it must be Heaven-sent.

41 EXT. PUBLIC PARK - MOMENTS LATER

41

Charisma indulges in a waffle-cone ice cream and strolls through the park. MEN'S VOICES up ahead pique her curiosity.

LARPER 1(O.S.)

What say you, Lord Sayid?

LARPER 2(O.S.)

Aye!



LARPER 1(O.S.)  
And you, Sir Darius?

LARPER 3  
Aye! A curse on their houses!

42 EXT. PUBLIC PARK - CONTINUOUS

42

Charisma rounds the corner of an enormous old oak and an unusual undertaking comes into view.

A group of Live Action Role Players, aka LARPERS, dressed in Medieval garb are immersed in a game. A man in a long cape throws back his hood: it's LEO from the FetFête Munch.

Charisma does a double-take and finds a nearby bench. She watches the action while pretending to focus on her snack.

The group is very athletic-looking and mostly men. Upon closer inspection, Charisma sees that a few are amputees.

Leo spots Charisma, face down in her cone. He grins.

LARPER 1  
What say you, Sir Leo?

Leo turns back to the group.

LEO  
Aye. This can only mean one thing:  
*Revolution.*

The group CHEERS in agreement and clank their swords.

43 EXT. PUBLIC PARK - DAY

43

Charisma finishes her waffle cone and wipes the crumbs away. She licks her fingers for good measure as Leo canters over.

LEO(O.S.)  
Hey there!

Charisma is pleased to see him. As he slows, he stumbles.

LEO(CONT'D) CHARISMA  
Ope! Oh!

Charisma springs up on instinct.

CHARISMA  
Are you okay?

Leo recovers fast but limps to keep off his right knee.

LEO(CONT'D)  
Oh yeah! Got too excited.

Charisma gestures to the bench. They sit. He rubs his leg.

LEO  
When you didn't come back to the  
Munch, I thought I must have made an  
ass of myself somehow.

CHARISMA  
Oh no! Something came up. Kind of a  
family emergency.

LEO  
Oh, I'm sorry.

CHARISMA  
(waving it off)  
Nobody's in the hospital.

LEO  
Good. So, I have a weird question.

Charisma nods.

LEO(CONT'D)  
Would you like to join us?

CHARISMA  
Really?

LEO  
The Game Master's wife was supposed to  
play, but she got called in to work.  
We've got all her garb, though.

Charisma chews on her lip.

CHARISMA  
I've never played before.

LEO(CONT'D)  
It's really no stress, she had a whole  
script written out so you wouldn't  
have to memorize anything.

Charisma checks the time on her phone. She looks at Leo.

44 EXT. PARK - MIDDAY

44

Charisma sports full fantasy regalia and commands the LARPERS with Leo at her right hand.

She reads from a scroll and really gets into character. The GAME MASTER consults a heavy tome behind them.

CHARISMA

And so shall we smite the Great Houses  
that exploit us, and reclaim the  
Shaman Stone for Monrovia!

EVERYONE

*For Monrovia!*

MONTAGE:

Charisma knights a kneeling LARPer.

The new Knight challenges another player to a duel.

Leo rolls dice on the Game Master's tome.

Charisma's Knight slays his opponent in the duel.

A LARPer with a large wooden staff runs to defend his fallen friend. He targets Charisma with a magical blast.

Leo kneels at a fading Charisma's side as the Game Master stands over them and rolls the die. It's a 1. Group cringe.

Leo passes his hands over Charisma's eyes. He rises solemnly, then leads the charge against the staff-wielder.

Playful chaos ensues. Charisma stops playing dead to watch.

45 EXT. PARK - AFTERNOON

45

Charisma returns the garb to the Game Master and shakes hands with the players as everyone packs up and heads home.

Leo walks beside her as she heads back the way she came.

LEO

Thanks for being game.

CHARISMA

It was great! I can't believe it took  
me so long to try it.

LEO  
You're welcome back any time.

CHARISMA  
I have been looking for new hobbies.

LEO  
I'd like to give you my number. No pressure. You don't have to give me yours.

Charisma reaches for her cell and unlocks the keypad.

LEO  
And don't worry, you don't have to go through me to get in on the game. We'll add you to the e-mail lis-

CHARISMA  
I'd love to call you.

Leo breathes a sigh of relief.

46 EXT. PORTVILLE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH - DUSK 46

Charisma quietly approaches the church as daylight fades. The parking lot is curiously empty.

47 INT. CHURCH - CONTINUOUS 47

Charisma walks down the hallway toward the Fellowship Hall. She passes by the Choir Room. The door is ajar.

GERALDINE(O.S.)  
*In here, sweetheart.*

CHARISMA  
It's so quiet! What time is the lecture?

She slips inside.

48 INT. CHURCH, CHOIR ROOM - CONTINUOUS 48

Geraldine, Teddy, Teddy's Mother LOUISE, and PASTOR RAMONA are all waiting for her. Charisma freezes.

CHARISMA  
Hi, everyone.

PASTOR RAMONA  
Hello, young lady.

GERALDINE  
Shut the door, honey.

CHARISMA  
(certain of the answer)  
Are you all here for the lecture??

Pastor Ramona rises and welcomes Charisma into the circle.

PASTOR RAMONA  
We're here for *your marriage*.

CHARISMA  
(She doesn't budge.)  
*Oh boy.*

PASTOR RAMONA  
Your mother and husband tell me you've  
been very troubled lately.

CHARISMA  
Is that right?

GERALDINE  
We thought you would be most  
comfortable in the Choir Room where  
you two met.

CHARISMA  
That's- oddly touching.

LOUISE  
A marriage problem is a *family  
problem*, children. We're here to  
support you.

Charisma stares daggers at Teddy. He looks smug.

RUSTLING. Pastor Ramona waves an old PAMPHLET labelled BDSM:  
THE DEVIL'S PLAYGROUND. She clears her throat.

PASTOR RAMONA  
And, the dangers of so-called Sado-  
Masochism are far worse than the  
curious uninitiated may imagine-

CHARISMA  
*Nope. Not doing this.*

She bolts. The others give chase. Pastor Ramona continues:

PASTOR RAMONA

-being at best a grievous bodily harm  
and a sin against the Creator, and at  
worst a direct pathway to demonic  
possession.

49 EXT. CHURCH - DARK

49

Charisma makes it out the front door and wheels around to face her pursuers, gathered in the doorway.

CHARISMA

I don't need an exorcist! I need an  
orgasm.

Geraldine nearly faints.

CHARISMA

I need a partner who doesn't shame me  
for my desires!

Teddy wedges his way out of the door to face Charisma.

TEDDY

Well I need a wife who respects my  
limits!

V.O. BERNICE

Pardon me!

Charisma and Teddy whip around to see Bernice waddling to the door with an armload of sheet music.

BERNICE

I see we have a full choir tonight!  
How exciting!

Everyone shifts to let her through. After she passes:

CHARISMA

What do you want from me, Ted? What  
would it actually take for us to move  
forward?

Ted pushes his way outside to face Charisma.

TEDDY

Admit that you're *wrong!* That it's  
wrong to choose whatever this *stupid*

*phase is over us!*

CHARISMA

I *don't* think I'm wrong for having sexual curiosity in my thirties. Can't you meet me half-way? We're married, not dead!

V.O. MARTHA

*Hel-lo!*

Martha toddles up with her music folder and water bottle. She slides in the door, past the Pastor and the mothers.

MARTHA

I heard Doris is bringing donuts!

Everyone smiles and nods as she passes through.

Louise steps forward to mediate.

LOUISE

A marriage is about so much more than sex. It is about the *children* that sacred union brings.

CHARISMA

Teddy doesn't want kids!

Teddy grimaces.

LOUISE

You said you were considering it!

CHARISMA

He was considering a vasectomy.

Geraldine flies into the circle.

GERALDINE

And why should we be surprised? You've clearly forgotten what it means to be a wife!

This really stings. Charisma scans everyone's faces and lands on Teddy's.

CHARISMA

You win. I'm the asshole. But I'm done begging other people for permission to be happy.

She takes a deep breath. Pastor Ramona joins their circle, clearing the entrance for the CHOIR MEMBERS that are trickling in.

CHARISMA(CONT'D)

(to Ted)

*I am sorry that I made a promise I couldn't keep: to live forever without a part of myself that I didn't know I needed.*

Ted scoffs, stares at the ground. Charisma gives everyone else a good hard look and walks away. She turns back to say:

CHARISMA(CONT'D)

*It's very challenging to know what kind of sex you like before you get married, when everyone in your community tells you not to think about sex at all before you're married! You're not doing anyone any favors!*

Squeamish choir members behind them scoot inside.

CHARISMA

And you know what? Screw this act you're putting on, Ted! Stop hiding behind our Mothers. You don't give a damn about Biblical Marriage! You've been an Atheist since you were *twelve!!*

Louise gasps. Geraldine is at wit's end. Charisma stomps to her car and doesn't look back.

50 INT. LOCAL GYM - NIGHT

50

Charisma sweeps into the lobby toting her gym bag. There's a NEW TRAINER at the Front Desk.

CHARISMA

Can I book a ninety minute session with Jazz?

NEW TRAINER

Ms. Carrington isn't here anymore.

CHARISMA

Really?



NEW TRAINER

I'm sorry.

CHARISMA

What happened?

The New Trainer checks that they're alone and says quietly.

NEW TRAINER

She was let go. Apparently she made some guests very uncomfortable with some *PDA*.

CHARISMA

No slap on the wrist? She was a great trainer.

NEW TRAINER

Apparently it was some-

(She leans in.)

*Alternative Lifestyle* situation.

(She leans back.)

Goes to show you never can tell with some people.

Charisma clenches her jaw and walks out, grabs her cell.

51 EXT. GAY BAR - NIGHT

51

Charisma cautiously approaches a well-worn but thriving Gay Bar. Leo stands by the door and waves her over.

CHARISMA

Hey! I promise I'm not a total clinger, it's just been a really weird day and Olympia's working.

LEO

Nah, I'm happy you called! It'll be nice to have someone to hang out with since Keegan performs all night.

CHARISMA

Is she in a band?

LEO

She's a Drag King.

Charisma looks politely puzzled.

LEO(CONT'D)  
You're in for a treat.

He ushers her inside.

52 INT. GAY BAR - CONTINUOUS

52

Charisma follows Leo into the busy bar just in time to hear a swell of APPLAUSE as a DRAG QUEEN bows and sashays away.

LEO  
Her drag name is "*Beaverton LaBuff*".

They sit at a small table behind the ring of people that circles the dance floor.

The music shifts and the audience buzzes as KEEGAN appears in a zoot suit and hyper-masculine caricature hair and makeup.

BEAVERTON(KEEGAN) enthralls with a saucy Lip Sync routine.

People press dollars into Beaverton's hands and tuck them into the folds of his clothes as he flirts and gyrates.

When he reaches Charisma and Leo, he winks knowingly.

53 EXT. GAY BAR - MIDNIGHT

53

Leo walks Charisma to her car after an entertaining night.

LEO  
And you're sure you're okay to drive?

CHARISMA  
Oh yeah. Tell Beaverton he's very talented. I wish I could do the splits like that.

LEO  
Me too.

Charisma unlocks the car, Leo opens her door for her.

LEO  
Call me any time. Meeting you has been refreshing.

CHARISMA  
Likewise.

They linger at the car, delaying goodbye.

CHARISMA

So I'm just going to say it, my life right now is a mess. Today makes me want to make up for years of lost time, but I know I can't.

LEO

It's never too late to start living the life you want.

CHARISMA

I find you really attractive and I want to kiss you.

LEO

(pleasantly surprised)

Oh! Very cool. One second.

Charisma looks confused. Leo whips out a MINTY BREATH SPRAY and spritzes his throat.

LEO

Would you like some?

CHARISMA

Um, yes, please.

She takes a couple of spritzes, swishes a little, hands back the bottle.

CHARISMA

Thanks.

Leo pockets the spray. Then, A MUTAL POUNCE. Friendly strangers WHISTLE.

54 INT. GYMNASTIC STUDIO - DAY

54

Charisma tiptoes into the gymnastics studio. Olympia sits on the floor, her SHIBARI ROPES and tools spread before her. The room is full of yoga mats.

OLYMPIA

Hey! Are you excited??

CHARISMA

I don't know!

She squats down beside Olympia and admires the ropes.

CHARISMA(CONT'D)

Is it going to hurt?

OLYMPIA

Only if you want it to. You're always in control.

CHARISMA

But I'll be all tied up.

OLYMPIA

Many people find it very relaxing.

CHARISMA

Like a massage?

OLYMPIA

("Not quite.")

Well...

55 INT. GYMNAS TIC STUDIO - LATER

55

Charisma wears hot pants and a sports bra and is tied in an elaborate design with silky purple rope. Olympia admires her work.

OLYMPIA

How does that feel?

CHARISMA

Fantastic, actually. This is for beginners??

OLYMPIA

Oh, hell no. This is to lure people back to the advanced class.

She gives Charisma a pat on the shoulder and turns to face the growing student body, all finding their respective mats.

OLYMPIA

(cheeky)

Everyone, this is my bestie, Charisma. I've been trying to lure her over to the dark side for years, so make her feel welcome.

Charisma peers at the class and spots Jazz and her partners. Jazz lays face down on the mat. Sydney and Victor kneel beside her.

Victor waves at Charisma and nudges the others. All wave. Charisma tries to wave too and manages a goofy wiggle. The others laugh wholesomely, but Victor checks her out.

As he ogles her, their eyes meet. Charisma blushes. He smirks. Behind them, Olympia strolls the perimeters.

OLYMPIA

Who needs extra rope?

56 INT. GYMNAS TIC STUDIO, HALLWAY - LATE AFTERNOON

56

Charisma stretches and rubs her recently unbound wrists as she walks to the restroom to change back into street clothes. Victor waits by the door, grinning like a Cheshire Cat.

VICTOR

Did you have a good time?

CHARISMA

(modest)

Oh yeah, just a little stiff.

VICTOR

Think you'll do it again?

CHARISMA

Yeah, if I get the chance.

VICTOR

Good.

(He bites his lip.)

I sent you a Friend Request on FetFête. You should hit me up when you're in the mood to get tied up again.

Charisma smiles and leans dreamily into the bathroom door.

57 INT. WOMEN'S RESTROOM - CONTINUOUS

57

Sydney and Jazz are washing their hands as Charisma walks in. She adjusts her expression.

SYDNEY

Hey.

JAZZ

(teasing)

So weird to see a bad-ass like you hog-tied by Olympia.

CHARISMA  
 (relaxing)  
 Look who's talking.

Jazz flicks Charisma with her wet hands.

SYDNEY  
 You were both naturals.

Jazz dabs her brow with a paper towel.

JAZZ  
 Thanks for talking me into it. I  
 really needed to unwind.

SYDNEY  
 I know.

CHARISMA  
 I looked for you at the gym last  
 night.

Jazz huffs and balls up her paper towel. Sydney squeezes  
 Jazz's shoulder.

SYDNEY  
 People suck.

CHARISMA  
 What am I supposed to do without you?

JAZZ  
 I'll come to your house if you want. I  
 still need to make a living.

CHARISMA  
 That could work. I've got lots of room  
 now.

58 EXT. GYMNAS TIC STUDIO, HALLWAY - DUSK

58

Charisma exits the restroom in her street clothes. A terse  
 conversation echoes down the hall.

V.O. SYDNEY  
 So tell us *why not*?

Charisma takes a few steps down the hall until she sees Jazz,  
 Sydney, and Victor arguing at the end of the corridor. She  
 hangs back.

VICTOR

I don't want to drop everything last minute. You didn't ask about *my* plans.

SYDNEY

We're asking *now*.

VICTOR

I'm still deciding! Don't rush me.

Jazz sees Charisma and shushes her partners.

JAZZ

Let's talk at home.

Jazz and Sydney leave. Victor gives Charisma a lingering glance and follows them out.

59 INT. CHARISMA'S HOUSE - BLUE HOUR

59

Charisma prepares the kitchen for a massive baking endeavor. She studies her mother's list of requirements and grabs a giant mixing bowl. She moves to place it on a scale but knocks it over when she sees TEDDY standing by the counter with a big mesh bag of laundry.

CHARISMA

Oh!!

TEDDY

Hi.

CHARISMA

What the hell??

She attempts to tidy the spilled sugar and flour.

TEDDY

Mind if I do some laundry?

CHARISMA

Can you not afford a laundromat?

TEDDY

This is way closer.

CHARISMA

I'm kind of in the middle of something.

She scoops the mess into the trash and wipes her hands.

CHARISMA(CONT'D)

In fact, since you already moved all your stuff out, now seems like a great time to give back that key.

TEDDY

You're really serious about this.

Charisma puts her hands on her hips. Teddy doubles down.

TEDDY (CONT'D)

I'm the one who should be upset!

Charisma returns to her task, pours fresh sugar in the bowl. Teddy looks around, desperate for some winning argument.

TEDDY

Where's Olympia? She hasn't *moved in* yet?

Charisma snorts and looks at Teddy.

CHARISMA

Did you think we were together? Olympia was taking my picture so I could- You know what? Never mind. Think whatever you want. You've made no attempt to understand me.

Teddy's shoulders tense in humiliation.

TEDDY

Just tell me one thing. All the times, all the years we were together: were you just pretending to be happy?

A needle to the heart. Charisma stops sous-cheffing.

CHARISMA

No.

The corner of Teddy's mouth twitch. He grits his teeth.

CHARISMA(CONT'D)

You're still the man I love. I'm just not the girl you married anymore.

Olympia, dressed for a night at the Dungeon, answers the door and welcomes an emotionally exhausted Charisma into her home.



OLYMPIA  
You poor thing.

She pulls Charisma into a tight hug in the foyer.

61 INT. OLYMPIA'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

61

Charisma vegetates on Olympia's plush living room couch, all bundled up under a cute throw blanket and oversized accent pillows.

Olympia brings her a bowl of popcorn.

CHARISMA  
I love you.

OLYMPIA  
I love you too. Sorry your night of baking was interrupted by emotional trauma.

She slips on her coat and grabs her keys.

OLYMPIA  
You know where everything is so have at.

She checks her phone.

OLYMPIA  
Crap.  
(She looks torn.)  
Hey could you do me a favor? Jazz is coming to pick up some bud, do you mind giving it to her when she gets here?

She points at a decorative box on the mantle. Charisma nods.

OLYMPIA(CONT'D)  
(On the way out.)  
You're the best. I'm gonna find you a man at the Dungeon!

CHARISMA  
You do that.

OLYMPIA  
And I'll sample *all* my selections to make sure you get the *finest quality!*

CHARISMA  
You're *such* a good friend.

OLYMPIA  
I know!

Olympia blows a kiss and exits.

62 INT. OLYMPIA'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - LATER 62

Charisma dozes on the couch. The DOORBELL rings.

63 INT/EXT. OLYMPIA'S FRONT DOOR - NIGHT 63

Charisma is surprised to see VICTOR at the door.

VICTOR  
Hey.

CHARISMA  
Hey. Are you here for the-  
She looks around, then mimes puffing a joint.

VICTOR  
(amused)  
Yeah.

Charisma lets him in.

64 INT. OLYMPIA'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 64

Charisma hands Victor the box from the mantle. He slips the contents into his back pocket, shoves a wad of cash inside the box, and puts it back on the mantle.

They stare at each other awkwardly.

VICTOR  
So, where's Olympia?

CHARISMA  
She's at the Grand Opening of some new Dungeon, apparently.

VICTOR  
Oh, I'm so jealous! They don't let single guys in.

CHARISMA  
Really?

VICTOR

Yeah. It sucks, I'm used to driving like three hours for anything resembling a dungeon.

(He eyes Charisma thoughtfully.)  
So why aren't you there?

CHARISMA

Uh, I didn't even know it existed until an hour ago. I'm supposed to be baking at home but my ex needed to do laundry.

VICTOR

That's nice of you to share.

Charisma shrugs it off.

VICTOR(CONT'D)

Wanna smoke?

65 INT. OLYMPIA'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - LATER

65

Charisma smokes out of Olympia's big blue bong. Victor bobs his head to music playing on Charisma's phone.

VICTOR

And this band has a lot of songs?

CHARISMA

They just put out their seventh album.

She scrolls through a long list of album covers.

VICTOR

Wow. There are so many artists I don't know.

CHARISMA

That's okay! It's easy to find new music these days.

They pore over her phone. Heads lean in close. Charisma hands Victor the bong. He takes a rip.

CHARISMA(CONT'D)

So, Sydney and Jazz won't come with you to the dungeon?

VICTOR

Nah, they're not into it.

CHARISMA

What part don't they like? They seemed to like Shibari class.

VICTOR

Oh yeah, they're cool with all that, they just aren't exhibitionists.

CHARISMA

Oh.

She mouths the word 'exhibitionists' to herself.

VICTOR

Have you ever been to a Dungeon before?

CHARISMA

Nope.

The million dollar question:

VICTOR

(eyebrow game strong)  
Do you want to?

CHARISMA

(coy)  
Do I have to have sex in public?

He leans in close enough to smell her weedy breath.

VICTOR

No.

Charisma sighs with relief.

VICTOR

But maybe we should practice, just in case.

They lock eyes. *Game on.* He presses her into the couch.

Her phone hits the floor, then her pants.

66 EXT. WAREHOUSE DISTRICT, DOWNTOWN PORTVILLE - NIGHT

66

Victor leads Charisma by the hand through a dark downtown alley to a nondescript metal door that looks like it's meant for unloading trucks. There's a small callbox to the side.

CHARISMA

Uh oh, is this the part where I get stabbed??

VICTOR

We did that already. Although I could go again.

He takes her by the face, kisses her deeply, sends her swooning. He leads her to the door.

VICTOR

If you'll do the honors.

Charisma presses a button on the Call Box. A VOICE buzzes in over INTERCOM.

V.O. BOUNCER

*Password?*

CHARISMA

Um.

She looks desperately at Victor, who shrugs. Hail Mary time.

CHARISMA

I'm- with Olympia Gospard?

Silence. BEEP. The door opens.

67 INT. "THE WAREHOUSE", FRONT ROOM - NIGHT

67

A big, bald goth BOUNCER stands behind a small desk by the door. Charisma and Victor hand over their I.D.s.

Charisma takes in her surroundings: the front room is big and open, though very dark.

A central bar hosts a smattering of flirting patrons. Small tables and booths line either side of the room where couples and groups huddle close.

BOUNCER

Locker Rooms are over there. Olympia's about to be on the main stage.

Music and fog pump through an open door at the far end of the room. Charisma and Victor disappear into the haze.

68 INT. THE WAREHOUSE, MIDDLE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

68

Olympia performs her craft on a raised stage in the second room. Charisma and Victor make their way toward her.

On stage, a blindfolded man in a speedo is strapped to a spinning BONDAGE WHEEL.

Olympia whips him while he spins, an apple in his mouth. A gathering audience cheers. Charisma and Victor join them.

Olympia turns and bows just in time to see them arrive. She beckons Charisma to the edge of the stage.

OLYMPIA

Hey! What are you doing here?

CHARISMA

I decided I couldn't miss your big night!

Olympia looks at Victor, who followed Charisma over.

OLYMPIA

(sly, to Charisma)

*Mmmhmm.* Glad you're feeling better.

She turns back to her victim and gives him a few good smacks.

69 INT. THE WAREHOUSE, MIDDLE ROOM - LATER

69

Charisma and Victor leave the stage area and explore the main room.

VICTOR

Her performance was very *inspiring*.

They pass through a Play Area featuring Slings, St. Andrew's Crosses, and Spanking Benches.

VICTOR

Want to give it a whirl?

CHARISMA

My intentions are good, but I need a little liquid courage.

In the back, a small VIP Bar gives patrons more privacy with an array of curtained booths.

As Charisma and Victor pass by the booths, a fluttering

curtain reveals some feisty oral sex. They giggle.

70 INT. THE WAREHOUSE, VIP BAR - MOMENTS LATER

70

Charisma and Victor approach the bar.

BARTENDER  
What's the name?

CHARISMA  
Charisma Baird.

The bartender checks below the bar.

BARTENDER  
I don't see anything here. What did you bring?

CHARISMA  
We didn't bring anything.

BARTENDER  
Sorry, it's BYOB.

CHARISMA  
Then why are you here?

The bartender indicates nearby patrons holding beer glasses.

BARTENDER  
I'm required to serve it to you.

Charisma furrows her brow. They turn away from the bar.

VICTOR  
Maybe you can charm someone out of a cocktail or two.

JANET(O.S.)  
Oh my God. Charisma!

Charisma and Victor turn to see JANET and RAFAEL (40s/50s).

CHARISMA  
Oh, Wow.

Janet whispers excitedly in Rafael's ear then comes bouncing over. Rafael lags a few paces behind.

CHARISMA  
 (to Victor)  
 They're my clients.

VICTOR  
 Is that *bad* or *really bad*?

Charisma doesn't have time to respond, Janet throws her arms around Charisma in a big, drunk hug.

JANET  
 Oh my god, I'm so glad you're here! I thought this night was going to be a complete bust! We got here way too early.

CHARISMA  
 Good to see you too! Victor, this is Janet and Rafael.

She smiles at Rafael too, who smiles back sheepishly.

CHARISMA  
 This is my friend Victor.

Rafael waves to Victor but Janet ignores him.

JANET  
 Look, I think it's fate that you showed up tonight.

CHARISMA  
 Why's that?

JANET  
 (acknowledging Victor)  
 Did you come with him? Are you two together?

CHARISMA  
 I mean, we *rode here* together. What's up?

JANET  
 I need to talk to you. Walk with me.

She wraps her arm around Charisma and leans against her, then abruptly turns to address Victor.

JANET  
 You're not stingy, are you? You're



good at sharing?

VICTOR  
Pretty good.

Janet pinches Victor's cheek.

JANET  
That's a good boy.

Victor looks questioningly at Charisma, who looks equally bewildered.

Janet leads her to a curtained booth. Rafael draws the curtain for them and waits outside.

71 INT. THE WAREHOUSE, CURTAINED BOOTH - CONTINUOUS

71

Beyond the curtains is a small table with booth seats on either side, like in a restaurant. The women slide into their respective seats.

JANET  
Okay, I hope I don't have to find a new hairdresser after this.  
(nervous giggles)  
It's my *birthday*, and my husband and I *both* have a *crush* on you, and we want to *play* with you. And it's *my birthday*.

CHARISMA  
(flabbergasted)  
Happy Birthday.

Janet loosens her top and gives Charisma an eyeful.

JANET  
So what do you say?

72 INT. THE WAREHOUSE, VIP BOOTHS - CONTINUOUS

72

Rafael and Victor wait around outside the curtains.

RAFAEL  
You two been together long?

Charisma slips out from the curtain and takes Victor aside.

CHARISMA  
Um. Hi.

She struggles for words. Victor looks back through a crack in the curtains: Janet is waiting with her blouse unbuttoned.

CHARISMA(CONT'D)  
Am I a terrible person?

VICTOR  
(teasing)  
I don't know. I don't know you that well.

She cringes. Victor lets her twist for just a second, then he brushes a bit of her hair from her face sweetly.

VICTOR  
Have you received a private invitation?

CHARISMA  
You only live once, right? Is that ok?

VICTOR  
You don't owe me anything, babe.

He kisses her on the cheek.

VICTOR  
Thanks for getting me in the door.

He pats Rafael on the back and slinks into the haze.

73 INT. THE WAREHOUSE, CURTAINED BOOTH - NIGHT

73

Janet and Rafael pull Charisma onto the table and position themselves on either side of her. Janet leans in to caress her.

JANET  
You don't know how happy this makes me. I've been bi-curious for a long time, but I've never tried anything.

Rafael takes off Charisma's shoes and massages her feet.

RAFAEL  
It means a lot to find someone we trust.

CHARISMA  
I understand. It's my first time too.

JANET

Really??

CHARISMA

Yeah. I went to a really boring college.

Janet gives Charisma a shy kiss.

They look at each other, gauging feelings. *Not too bad.*

They try again with more enthusiasm. Rafael gets handsy. Clothes peel off.

Charisma busies herself in Janet's cleavage while Janet and Rafael make out.

Then Rafael brings out the rope. He hovers over Charisma:

RAFAEL

Is this okay?

JANET

'Red light' means stop. Just say the word and it's hands off.

CHARISMA

Okay.

74 INT. THE WAREHOUSE, CURTAINED BOOTH - AN HOUR LATER

74

Charisma relaxes into her bindings. Janet toys with her.

CHARISMA

You know, I could get used to this. Everybody talks about finding *the one* but maybe we should think bigger.

JANET

That's the spirit. Now let me sit on your face while Raffy rails you.

That escalated quickly. Charisma thinks about it.

CHARISMA

*Green light.*

Janet looks at Rafael to make sure.

RAFAEL

You go first. I want to watch.

Janet climbs onto the table and kneels over Charisma's shoulders. Her skirt drapes over Charisma's face. She settles down. Charisma gives it the old college try.

JANET

*Oh my God.*

Rafael almost forgets to breathe.

RAFAEL

You're so damn sexy.

Rafael slips a condom on and joins the party with a loud moan. He grabs Charisma's thighs.

Janet freezes for a second, watching him. It takes her a moment to get back into the rhythm.

But Rafael is pounding away. He grab Charisma's hands which are tied down by her hips. Their fingers interlace.

Janet watches him. Charisma comes up for air, face emerging from Janet's skirt. She bucks her hips. Rafael whimpers.

V.O. JANET

*Red light!!*

Rafael and Charisma come back to Earth. Janet hops down.

RAFAEL

You okay, baby?

Janet puts her clothes back on. Rafael goes to her.

JANET

*What was that?*

Charisma waits patiently, tied to the table.

RAFAEL

What was what?

JANET

You were *really* into that. Like *really*.

RAFAEL

Is that wrong?

JANET

It made me feel like shit!

RAFAEL

I don't know what to say. This was your idea.

JANET

Don't be a jerk!

Charisma fidgets. Rafael puts his clothes back on too.

RAFAEL

Just tell me what you want.

JANET

I thought this was what I wanted!

She pouts.

RAFAEL

I think what you *really* want is a girlfriend, but you feel too guilty to say that.

JANET

So what if I do??

RAFAEL

Then just say that! Don't beg me for a threesome then get mad when I enjoy it!

Janet sobs. Charisma looks around for some kind of escape.

JANET

Why are you such an *asshole*??

RAFAEL

I came here for you!

JANET

Oh, like it was such a *sacrifice*!

RAFAEL

I knew you were too insecure for this!

CHARISMA

Can somebody untie me?

75 INT. THE WAREHOUSE, VIP BAR - MOMENTS LATER

75

Charisma bows out from the curtained booth and plods off, rubbing her wrists.

V.O. JANET  
-usually takes you 45 minutes!

V.O. RAFAEL  
It's not my fault. It's the novelty!

V.O. JANET  
You weren't even looking at me!

76 INT. THE WAREHOUSE, MIDDLE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

76

Charisma scans the crowd. Olympia and her prey have cleared the stage in the middle room. There's now a SPANKING CONTEST going on.

Charisma doesn't see Victor either. She heads up the staircase to the second story.

77 INT. THE WAREHOUSE, SECOND STORY BAR - CONTINUOUS

77

Upstairs, there's another bar and several cages where dancers gyrate and slaves in gimp suits perform for their masters. There are plenty of booths and places to sit here too.

Charisma winds her way through the dancers and dominatrices. Someone who looks like Victor slouches over a table in a far booth.

CHARISMA  
Victor?

The music is loud; the person doesn't respond. Charisma presses on until she gets a better view in the smokey dark.

CHARISMA  
Victor?

Victor pops his head up.

VICTOR  
Hey!

He fumbles under the table. Charisma sees someone on their knees down there, shuffling to reposition.

CHARISMA  
Oh! Sorry!

She hurries off. Victor watches her go.

UNDER-THE-TABLE STRANGER  
Do I need to come up?

VICTOR  
Nah, you're good.

The stranger resumes. Victor's eyes roll back.

78 INT. THE WAREHOUSE, FRONT ROOM BAR - NIGHT

78

Charisma slumps at the central bar amid the soft hum of casual flirtation.

She stares into her glass of water as if every reckless choice she's ever made were floating in it.

A MAN wearing nipple clamps sidles up next to her and whispers in her ear. She shakes her head, a polite no. He nods and backs away.

She drags out her phone. Puts it to her ear.

V.O. LEO  
Hey, this is Leo. Sorry I missed you.  
I've been thinking about last night.  
If you have some time this week, I'd  
love to see you.

She smiles.

79 INT. CHARISMA'S CAR - PAST MIDNIGHT

79

Charisma drives Victor home.

VICTOR  
Thanks again. The bus to my  
neighborhood stops at midnight.  
(He pulls out a vape.)  
Do you mind?

CHARISMA  
Go for it.

He takes a big pull, blows it out the window.

VICTOR  
Did you have fun?

CHARISMA  
It was a mixed bag.

VICTOR

I get it. Thanks for going, though.  
I've been feeling so restless.

(He stares out the window.)

There's just so much I never got to do  
or see or even *hear about* for so long  
that, now that I'm in charge of my own  
life, I don't want to settle down, not  
before I'm satisfied with what I've  
seen and experienced.

Charisma absorbs his words. Victor points at the upcoming  
driveway.

VICTOR

Right here.

Charisma slows down to turn. A few ornamental shrubs obscure  
the driveway.

VICTOR

Stop, stop, stop!

Charisma stops behind two vehicles parked in the drive.

CHARISMA

What??

VICTOR

Back up, back up!

CHARISMA

Why??

She cautiously backs up as beyond them, the house door SLAMS.

VICTOR

They were supposed to come home  
tomorrow!

CHARISMA

(dreading the truth)

And??

Victor bites his lip.

VICTOR

Don't get out of the car.

He proceeds cautiously to his front door where Jazz and  
Sydney are waiting, looking furious.



JAZZ  
*Oh Hell, no.*  
 (to Sydney)  
 Third strike, he's out.

Jazz stomps over to the car, followed by Sydney. Jazz blows past Victor who tries to intervene.

VICTOR  
 It's late, let's take it inside.

JAZZ  
 Charisma Baird, *get your ass out of the car!*

Victor looks confused. Charisma complies.

JAZZ  
 You think I can't recognize your car?  
 I've seen it three times a week for  
 three years!

CHARISMA  
 What's going on?

JAZZ  
 Well, I take it you aren't giving my  
 boyfriend a midnight haircut, are you?

VICTOR  
 Don't take it out on her.

SYDNEY  
 What happened to spending the weekend  
 meditating?

Victor doesn't have an answer.

JAZZ  
 We came home early because we *missed*  
 you and felt bad for how we left  
 things. But you-

Don't-  
 VICTOR

SYDNEY  
 You had to go sow your wild  
 oats! Is this just what you  
 do now? Is this how *all men*  
 get revenge?

VICTOR  
 Nobody cares that you were a Gold Star

Lesbian, Sydney. Get over yourself.

CHARISMA

I'm sorry, I'm confused. Aren't you all polyamorous?

Jazz laughs spitefully.

SYDNEY

That doesn't mean we just do whatever and *who-ever, whenever we want!*

JAZZ

We were supposed to be building a future together, building a *family*.  
(to Victor)  
*How is that not enough for you??*

She turns to Charisma with a look of disgust, then tears off to the house. Sydney attends her.

Victor gives Charisma a final, guilty look, then follows them inside like a whipped dog.

80 INT. CHARISMA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

80

Back home, Charisma takes her shoes off by the door and pads into the living room.

TEDDY snores lightly on the couch beside a stack of laundry, a pair of socks in his lap.

She watches him for a moment, then retreats the kitchen.

A moment later she walks past again, eating the nearly-whole ANNIVERSARY CAKE direct from the tray. She closes the bedroom door.

81 INT. CHARISMA'S MASTER BATHROOM - LATER

81

A messy fork and empty cake tray lay abandoned on the bathroom floor. Charisma wears PJs and pukes in the toilet.

82 EXT. CHARISMA'S FRONT YARD - A FEW DAYS LATER

82

A cardboard "YARD SALE" sign sways on Charisma's lawn. A couple of tarps are laid out on the grass, covered with random household items.

Charisma adds a set of HIS & HERS bath robes to a portable garment rack near the front door.

83 EXT. CHARISMA'S FRONT YARD - NOON

83

Charisma sits at a small folding table and takes cash from a NEIGHBOR WOMAN who carries a bundle of CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS.

NEIGHBOR WOMAN

Well, I'm sorry to see you go, but I wish you the best of luck!

Charisma is distracted by the sight of GERALDINE pulling in the driveway. She grimaces.

CHARISMA

Thank you.

Charisma watches GERALDINE get out of the car, looking very confused. Charisma stands to intercept her when someone else approaches her table.

SUZIE(O.S.)

We need to talk.

Suzie and Molly from Salon LaRouge clutch BEAUTY SUPPLIES: hair rollers, brushes, blow dryers, etc. Suzie leans in close.

SUZIE

Are you okay?? Why are you selling all this?

Molly waggles a high-tech blow-dryer.

MOLLY

Old track suits are one thing but this is like a month's rent.

CHARISMA

I know. That's why I called. Do you want it?

MOLLY

I mean, yes, but that's why we're concerned! You can't sell this at a garage sale.

CHARISMA

Not even to you?

SUZIE

Listen, I don't know what you're going through right now, but-

She drops the items on the table and cups Charisma's shoulders.

SUZIE

*You have a lot to live for.*

Charisma stifles a laugh, bites her lip. They're serious.

CHARISMA

Thank you.

(gently reassuring)

I'm not going to kill myself.

Suzie exhales in relief.

MOLLY

Then what's wrong??

In the yard, Geraldine plucks some ornate serving-ware from a tarp and strides to the table.

CHARISMA

Teddy and I split up.

SUZIE

Oh my God!

MOLLY

Why didn't you say so?

SUZIE

Yeah, that calls for a new hair color, or a tattoo or something!

MOLLY

Just don't shave her head.

SUZIE

Why not? She'd look super cute bald.

CHARISMA

You think so?

GERALDINE

Excuse me, ladies.

She means business. Molly and Suzie back away.

GERALDINE

Charisma. Your wedding china? Really?

CHARISMA

(faking a perky smile)

Hi, Mom!

GERALDINE

You've got the whole house on the front lawn! Aren't you being a little rash??

CHARISMA

It's great to see you too.

GERALDINE

I'm putting this back.

She tromps to the house. Charisma gives chase and blocks her from the door.

CHARISMA

If you put it inside, it's going right back out again.

GERALDINE

Some of those things are heirlooms!

Charisma is unmoved. Geraldine pleads, embarrassed:

GERALDINE

This makes no sense to me. Why are you throwing your life away?

CHARISMA

They are *things*, they're not my life. And I'm not throwing them away, I'm selling them.

GERALDINE

For what?  
(whispering)  
Are you in debt??

CHARISMA

I'm getting divorced, Mom!

Geraldine looks around, mortified. Charisma grabs the dish.

CHARISMA(CONT'D)

Look at this! Do you remember when you convinced me to put this on the registry, and I told you I would never use it, and you said do it anyway just in case?? Well guess what? Ten years later, never been used! It's time to get real.

Geraldine deflates. Suzie, Molly, and others are watching. Charisma sees them and softens her tone, a little guilty.

CHARISMA

If you want the dishes, take them.

GERALDINE

I don't want your wedding gifts, Charisma. I do struggle to understand your priorities.

CHARISMA

I know. I'm sorry.

GERALDINE

I'll get out of your hair. I only came to pick up the pastries.

CHARISMA

*Shit.*

84 EXT. PORTVILLE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH - AFTERNOON 84

The church parking lot is full of cars. People come and go carrying all manner of baked goods. Some snack as they walk.

85 INT. CHURCH, FELLOWSHIP HALL - CONTINUOUS 85

Many colorfully decorated booths, brimming with goodies sold by proud chefs, line the Fellowship Hall. Each represents a different charity, church, or non-profit.

A small podium decked with ballots and pencils is marked with a poster: "VOTE! FAN FAVORITE WINS \$1,000!"

Charisma enters looking sweaty and frazzled with flour in her hair, carrying two big trays of elaborate pastries. She beelines to her mother's booth: "PORTVILLE GARDEN CLUB".

Geraldine looks picture perfect in Tiffany blue and cream as she chats with a patron. Charisma slides behind the table and unloads her pastries.

GERALDINE

That's fascinating. I had no idea that was a form of therapy.

LEO(O.S.)

Yes ma'am. I lead sessions twice a week.

Charisma recognizes Leo's voice and whips around.

GERALDINE

Well, thank you for your service.

Leo's eyes light up as he recognizes Charisma.

LEO

Well, hello there!

CHARISMA

Hi!

GERALDINE

Are you two acquainted?

CHARISMA & LEO

Yes.

Geraldine waits politely for further explanation.

CHARISMA

I attended one of his role playing sessions.

GERALDINE

But you're not a disabled veteran, dear.

LEO

Eh, we're loose with the rules.

(sensing the danger)

I should get back to my booth. Nice to meet you!

GERALDINE

Wait!

Leo and Charisma look panicked.

GERALDINE

Try a pastry.

She puts one in a napkin and hands it to a relieved Leo.

LEO

Oh! Thank you.

GERALDINE

Charisma made them. They're Portville's best kept secret.

Charisma and Leo share a look and he returns to his booth.

CHARISMA  
Those are the last trays, so I'm gonna  
go.

Geraldine wheels around to face her.

GERALDINE  
You're not staying??

CHARISMA  
I'm a mess.

GERALDINE  
So tidy up in the bathroom.

CHARISMA  
I didn't bring a change of clothes.

Geraldine is tight-lipped. Charisma seizes the opportunity and walks away.

Leo watches her go as he sells fudge to BERNICE.

86 INT. CHURCH, HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS 86

Charisma shakes off the tension and wipes her flour-y face. The front door and freedom is in sight.

87 EXT. CHURCH PARKING LOT, CHARISMA'S CAR - AFTERNOON 87

Charisma makes it to her car and sees the APPLE PIE that she left in the back seat. She moans in frustration.

88 INT. CHURCH, HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS 88

Charisma trots back down the hallway with the pie and sees LEO about halfway down, walking slow with a slight limp.

LEO  
There you are.

CHARISMA  
Small world, huh?

LEO  
And getting smaller. Was that lady in  
there-



CHARISMA  
That's my mom.

LEO  
I got those vibes.

CHARISMA  
Yeah, sorry about that.

LEO  
All good. Anything I need to know?

CHARISMA  
Where to start?

LEO  
Gotcha. We'll table it for now. Did you, uh, get my message?

CHARISMA  
(an unsuppressable smile)  
I did.

LEO  
My shift at the booth just ended.

He grins. She flushes and looks down at the apple pie.

89 INT. CHURCH, FELLOWSHIP HALL - CONTINUOUS

89

Leo holds the door for Charisma, who returns the pie to Geraldine.

CHARISMA  
Almost forgot this.

GERALDINE  
Oh!

CHARISMA  
Couldn't let Bernice win again this year.

Geraldine almost chuckles.

GERALDINE  
We're already sold out of your pastries.

CHARISMA  
That's great.

GERALDINE

Why don't you stay? They're about to announce the fan favorites.

Charisma hesitates. She glances back at Leo by the door. He smiles. Geraldine squints at their exchange.

CHARISMA

I'm sure I'll hear all about it.

She bends down to hug Geraldine goodbye. Geraldine grabs her wrist and whispers.

GERALDINE

What do you think you're doing?

CHARISMA

I'm just *going home*.

GERALDINE

*With whom??*

Charisma is speechless. She yanks her wrist away. Geraldine stands up and gets in Charisma's face.

GERALDINE

I've learned to accept that what husbands and wives do behind closed doors is between them and God, but I'll be damned if I raised a *Jezebel* who lies to her mother in the middle of church! Now *sit down!*

BERNICE (O.S.)

*Geraldine!* What's the matter with you?

Bernice and Martha are gawking in front of the booth. Bernice puts a plate of her own apple pie on the table.

GERALDINE

Mind your own business, Bernice!

BERNICE

Excuse me?

MARTHA

Why don't you mind your manners?

GERALDINE

Did you come over to gloat about your damn pie?

Leo creeps over unseen, alert to the drama.

MARTHA

You need to calm down and stop  
harassing your daughter.

CHARISMA

Oh, geez-

GERALDINE

How dare you?

Charisma spots Leo on the periphery. She shakes her head  
'no', he stays put.

BERNICE

She's a grown woman!  
(to Charisma)  
Go on, honey.

Charisma backs away slowly. Geraldine sees Leo waiting to  
attend her.

GERALDINE

Charisma, I swear to God, if you leave  
with him, I'll tell Teddy everything!

CHARISMA

Tell him what??

GERALDINE

You're having an affair!

Stares all around. Charisma is mortified. Geraldine looks  
vindicated, then:

THWACK! Geraldine gets a face-full of BERNICE'S APPLE PIE.

Bernice stands poised with a dripping fist.

BERNICE

Get off your high horse, you  
hypocrite.

Geraldine's jaw hits the floor. Martha chimes in.

MARTHA

You may have been too drunk to  
remember college, but we weren't!  
(to BERNICE)  
Come on darlin', let's go home.

Bernice wipes the pie off her hand and takes Martha's arm.  
Geraldine SCREECHES with rage and storms out.

CHARISMA

(to Leo)

I'm so sorry. I'll call you.

Charisma dashes after Geraldine. Leo looks back at his booth, where the GAME MASTER from his LARPing group stands, gawking.

90 INT. CHURCH, WOMEN'S BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

90

Charisma enters the bathroom to the sound of WEEPING. Geraldine rinses off in the sink.

Charisma approaches timidly and hands Geraldine paper towels. Geraldine takes them, wipes her face, and blows her nose.

GERALDINE

I'm sorry.

Charisma hugs her mom. Geraldine holds her and confesses:

GERALDINE(CONT'D)

Before I met your father, I was a very different person. I made a lot of mistakes.

CHARISMA

Everybody does.

GERALDINE

Not like me. Charisma-  
(She pulls back to look at her.)  
I regret them every day of my life.  
And I don't want you to live with that pain.

CHARISMA

Mom. Do you love me?

GERALDINE

*Of course I love you!*

Geraldine slumps. Charisma supports her.

CHARISMA

Then *please*, keep loving me, even when I make mistakes.

91 EXT. PARK - GOLDEN HOUR

91

Leo and Charisma lay on a picnic blanket in the neighborhood park with a bottle of wine and their leftover baked goods.

CHARISMA

It's just a constant dance. Or battle.  
It's a constant dance-battle.

LEO

Ah, the mother-daughter bond. It's the  
stuff of legends.

CHARISMA

How is Keegan with her mom?

LEO

Keegan is estranged from her mom,  
actually.

CHARISMA

Oh, I'm sorry.

LEO

Yeah, happened before we met. My mom  
is still mad that I'm not dating a  
Black girl, so we kinda keep things  
superficial.

CHARISMA

Oh.

LEO

Families are weird. *Can't let other  
people's opinions stop you from being  
happy.*

CHARISMA

I quit my job.

LEO

Oh, wow.

CHARISMA

And I'm transferring ownership of the  
house to Teddy.

LEO

Okay, damn, big moves. So what's the  
plan?

CHARISMA

I don't have one.

Leo raises his eyebrows. Charisma takes a swig of wine.

CHARISMA

I do have a much clearer vision of what I *don't* want.

LEO

That's a start.

CHARISMA

So, any ideas where a kinky amateur baker with hairdo skills might find her niche?

LEO

*Actually...*

92 EXT. USED CAR DEALERSHIP - THE NEXT DAY 92

Charisma pulls in to a used car dealership and a slick looking SALESMAN bounces over to greet her.

93 EXT. USED CAR DEALERSHIP - A SHORT TIME LATER 93

Charisma shakes hands with the SALESMAN who hands her the keys to a "well-loved" RV.

She drives off. The salesman waves.

94 EXT. CHARISMA'S FRONT YARD - A FEW DAYS LATER 94

Charisma hauls bags and suitcases out to the RV. Teddy follows with her makeup kits.

95 EXT. RV - CONTINUOUS 95

Charisma steps out of the RV, free of her bundles. Teddy hands her the makeup kits and she stashes them away. She takes the house key off her key ring and hands it over.

TEDDY

I really do hope you find what you're looking for.

CHARISMA

Thanks. I hope you get what you need.

96 EXT. GOLD DOME PARKING LOT - LATER THAT DAY 96

Charisma drives into a concert hall parking lot packed with RVs and TOUR BUSES splashed with images of BEAVERTON LABUFF.

97 EXT. GOLD DOME PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

97

Charisma parks. Leo and Keegan motor over on a golf cart.

KEEGAN

Hey mama! Are you ready to join this gang of wonderful weirdos?

CHARISMA

If you'll have me.

KEEGAN

Oh, I need you!

(She primps her hair.)

It takes a lot of work to look this good. Can you handle it?

CHARISMA

I enjoy a challenge.

Leo beams at Charisma.

KEEGAN

(winking)

Welcome to the family.

LEO

You'll never be bored.

CHARISMA

That's what I'm looking for.

Keegan slaps the hood. They speed off, honking the horn. The caravan of tour buses begins to leave the parking lot.

Charisma grins and cranks the RV. Ready for anything.

THE END.