

The Family Trap

Pilot

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And

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INT. L.A.X. - DAY

ANNIE (Mandy Moore) and BEN (early thirties, a guy's guy), newlyweds, make their way through the terminal. Annie goes to step on the people mover. Before she can, Ben stops her.

BEN

Annie - wait, wait. Our first people mover!

ANNIE

Honey, please stop carrying me over things. We've been married three months - people are going to think my legs don't work.

BEN

But it's fun - plus this way I get to grab your ass in public.

Ben picks her up and they step on the people mover.

ANNIE

Next time I'm picking you up and grabbing your ass.

Ben and Annie kiss, and he puts her down. Ben grabs his phone.

BEN

(typing)
Checking in, L.A.X.

She swats the phone out of his hand, and it drops on the people mover. Ben picks it up.

ANNIE

Do not check in! My family thinks we're moving here next week. I built in a buffer.

BEN

Your buffer is now about fifty feet.

They look up to see her family - BARBARA (58, the matriarch, dressed up for the occasion), STEVE (60, J Crew dad, very fit for his age), KATE (34, A-type, pulled together without looking like she tried) holding her four-month-old POPPY, SARAH (30, not pulled together) and ZACH (26, stocky, failed attempt at a hipster) waiting for them at the end of the people mover.

ANNIE

How are they here? How did they know? I covered all my tracks.

BEN

I may have checked in at JFK.

ANNIE

Do you think they've seen us?

Annie's family waves at them.

ANNIE

Dammit, we're made.

BEN

How did they get through security? That's kind of impressive.

ANNIE

My mom buys refundable tickets. She found a loophole in the Patriot Act.

Annie starts to walk backwards on the people mover, dragging Ben with her.

ANNIE

I don't know if I'm ready for this.

Annie and Ben are backing into people walking the other way.

ANNIE

Excuse me, sorry, family emergency.

BEN

It's gonna be fine.

ANNIE

Don't be so sure about that. My family can be a handful. A couple handfuls.

BEN

I've met your family. They factored prominently in our wedding.

ANNIE

Not like this, you haven't. Not in their own habitat.

BEN

(re: her family)
Look at them. They're happy, they're waving!

ANNIE

They're signaling a kill.

A large group prevents Annie and Ben from walking back any further.

ANNIE

Okay, listen up, there's not much time.

The people mover pulls them inexorably to her family.

ANNIE

Here's how it's gonna go down.
They're going to invite us over.
We'll say no, we're too tired from
the flight. They'll act like they
didn't hear us. We'll talk louder.
You'll think it's too loud - trust
me, it isn't.

BEN

I got it.

ANNIE

Good luck. I'll always love you!

They kiss as they finally reach the end of the people mover and are swarmed by her family, ad-libbing hellos.

BARBARA

We're so happy you're here! Grab
your bags, you're coming over for
brunch.

BEN

(super-loud)

No! We're too tired from the
flight!

BARBARA

(deeply disappointed)

Ohhhh.

ANNIE

We'll come over, Mom.

Annie smiles at Ben, guilty.

END OF COLD OPEN

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

EXT. BARBARA AND STEVE'S BACK PATIO - A LITTLE LATER

A big warm Spanish house right out of a decorating magazine or a Nancy Meyer's movie. Everyone is gathered around eating and talking. Baby Poppy naps on Kate in a Bjorn.

BARBARA

All my children together in one place. Do you know how long I've been waiting for this day?

ANNIE

Yes, mom, seven years.

KATE

Three months --

SARAH

And two days.

Sarah crosses through to refill her glass of Chablis.

BARBARA

I can die happy now.

SARAH

(mid-gulp)
And yet she won't.

STEVE

So, guys, tell us about this new restaurant of yours.

ANNIE

It's not ours, Dad. Our friend Bobby owns it - we're just gonna run it for him.

STEVE

Working together, huh? And for a good friend. You want me to draw up a legal agreement of some sort? These things have a tendency to end badly.

BEN

I think we'll be okay. We've always wanted to work in the same kitchen. Her the pastry chef, me the real chef. Little inside joke.

(more)

BEN (cont'd)

(off her look)

That only one of us thinks is funny.

(off her look again)

That none of us thinks is funny.

BARBARA

Is this Bobby with the money handsome?

SARAH

Mom --

BARBARA

What? You're divorced and living at home.

SARAH

Which you keep reminding me of. And every time you say it I take a drink.

(takes a sip)

Which is why I'm drunk. It's fun - anyone else want to play?

BARBARA

I just think you need to put in a little effort, unless you're planning on marrying your brother --

ZACH

(to Sarah)

You wish.

SARAH

I'm out.

Sarah grabs the bottle of Chablis and exits.

STEVE

Zach, if you weren't her brother, she'd be very interested.

BARBARA

If you had a decent job. And lost a little weight.

STEVE

(sincere)

Other than that, Catch City.

ZACH

(fist bump)

You know it, Pops.

ANNIE

So Kate, where's Veronica?

KATE

She's performing a triple by-pass.

BARBARA

I'm so happy you married a doctor.
Even if she is a lady doctor.

KATE

That implies something else, Mom.

BARBARA

I'm sorry, I didn't want to use the
word "lesbian".

KATE

And yet, here we are.

ZACH

Hey, got any lesbians for me?

ANNIE

You can't really do that.

STEVE

Zach can do anything he sets his
mind to.

ZACH

(fist bump)
Thanks, Pops!

EXT./INT. BEN AND ANNIE'S L.A. APARTMENT - LATER

Annie and Ben carry their bags into a small but sweet
furnished apartment.

ANNIE

Hey - not so bad for an online
rental with "picture unavailable."

BEN

Finally alone. You thinking what
I'm thinking?

ANNIE

We are newlyweds.

BEN

It's kind of our job.

ANNIE

Let's break in this couch and not think about how many other people have broken it in before us.

They kiss. Just then there's a knock at the door. Then the doorbell. Then incessant knocking. Ben opens the door. It's Zach. And he's carrying a bag.

ZACH

Did you guys get my e-mail?

ANNIE

No.

ZACH

That's right. I didn't send it. 'Cause it's harder to say "no" in the flesh. So, would it be cool if I crashed here for a few days, weeks, whatever? Mom and Dad's house isn't working for me right now. It makes me feel like a loser. Like Sarah.

(looking around)

I can sleep anywhere - except for that couch. That thing looks gross.

ANNIE

Listen, Zach. Ben and I just got here and --

BEN

The place is really small...

ZACH

Look, I could make a very compelling argument that starts with Feudalism and ends with why we really didn't land on the moon but I'm sleepy so I'm gonna cut straight to the begging - please please let me stay.

ANNIE

Fine. But just for a day or two.

Zach drops his bag.

ZACH

Awesome. You guys are the bomb. You won't even notice me. I'll be as quiet as a mouse.

Zach takes a seat on the coffee table. Immediately the glass shatters underneath the weight of his hefty behind.

ZACH

Call Kate - I need the lady doctor!

INT. RESTAURANT KITCHEN - LATER

BOBBY (late thirties, new money, old hairstyle) gets things set up in the kitchen as Ben and Annie enter.

BEN/ANNIE/BOBBY

Heyyy!

They embrace.

BOBBY

Good to see you guys!

BEN

You too! The place is looking great.

ANNIE

(looking around)

Wow - you spent a fortune here.

BOBBY

Don't sweat it. Ever since I sold my app, I've got money to burn. No, seriously, I'm burning some right now. Anything you want, it's yours.

ANNIE

I wouldn't mind a blast chiller for frozen desserts.

BEN

And we'd both like floor seats for the Lakers.

BOBBY

Hey, remember when we were all poor together in New York? That was fun.

ANNIE

You mean, like, six months ago?

BEN

And how Annie and I still are?

BOBBY

Not for long, guys. We play our cards right, this place is gonna take off. I got a hot hand right now - everything I touch turns to cash. Speaking of which - Sunday, little pre-opening dinner.

BEN

You mean, tomorrow, Sunday? Like we have one day to prepare? In a brand new kitchen?

BOBBY

Just eight of my high school friends who need their noses rubbed in my success. Doesn't need to be fancy, just perfect. Like I want them to cry. Okay, I'm out. This is your place. Enjoy. Play. Create.

Bobby exits.

BEN

Wow, tomorrow. We've got a lot of work to do.

ANNIE

But it's great, right? You and me together, living the dream.

Annie's cell rings. Caller ID reads: Mom.

ANNIE

Hey, Mom, Ben and I are a little buried right now - what's up?

INT. BARBARA AND STEVE'S HOME - INTERCUT

Barbara walks up the staircase.

BARBARA

I'm really worried about Sarah. She locked herself in her room. And she won't come out. I think she's cutting.

SARAH (O.S.)

(through the door)

I'm not cutting, Mom! I just don't want to talk to you! God!

ANNIE

Okay, I'll be right over.

BARBARA

You're so good, Annie. Thank God
you're home.

Annie hangs up and grabs her purse and turns to Ben.

ANNIE

See, they're sucking me in already.
This won't take long. I'll be back
as soon as I can.

Annie gives Ben a kiss and starts out.

BEN

Don't sweat it. I'll just be here
enjoying. Playing. Who knows, I may
even create.

Bobby crosses back in on the phone.

BOBBY

I can only get floor seats for the
Clippers. Hope that's not a deal
breaker.

INT. SARAH'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Annie enters to find Sarah rapping along to Salt n' Peppa's
"None of Your Business," unaware that Annie has entered.

SARAH

*"If I wanna take a guy home with me
tonight/It's none of your
business/And she wanna be a freak
and--"*

Annie turns off the music. Sarah turns.

ANNIE

How you doin' there, G.?

SARAH

A lot better, actually. I know
living here is making me regress.
But I don't care. I'm embracing it.
It's fun.

ANNIE

(re: Sarah's hair)
New bangs?

Sarah fiddles with her new BANGS.

SARAH

You like 'em? Mom says they make my nose look better. Which she thought was a compliment. Hey, remember Dave Foster from high school? (OFF ANNIE'S BLANK LOOK) Party Dave?

ANNIE

Right. Right. Kinda cute, got that DUI your senior year.

SARAH

Only made him sexier. Anyway, I called him. He took me to this party. It was so killer. They had a keg, Annie. I miss kegs. My marriage was keg-free.

ANNIE

A lot of 'em are. Listen, I gotta get back to work. Why don't you come with me? There's an ice cream machine. You can put beer in it...

SARAH

That sounds cool. But I'm gonna go see what Dave's up to.

Sarah reaches under the bed and pulls out a CONDOM she had taped beneath the frame.

ANNIE

How old is that thing?

SARAH

Does it matter?

ANNIE

Yes! Yes! It matters a lot.

Before Annie knows what's happening, Sarah goes to the WINDOW and starts to CLIMB OUT.

ANNIE

What the hell are you doing?

SARAH

It's just easier than explaining everything to Mom.

Sarah is out. Annie runs over and watches as Sarah climbs down the TRELLIS thick with vines.

ANNIE
This is insane?! You're thirty!

SARAH
(CLIMBING DOWN) Not spiritually!

Annie reaches for Sarah. Her phone falls out of her shirt pocket and gets caught in a vine halfway down the trellis.

ANNIE
Sarah, can you get my --

But Sarah is already gone.

ANNIE
Come on! Really?!

Annie climbs out the window. She's not as good at it as Sarah. When she gets to the phone, it rings. She answers it.

ANNIE
Hi, Kate.

INT. KATE'S HOUSE - INTERCUT

CLOSE on Kate.

KATE
I think I have a baby emergency. Or not an emergency. I need you to decide. Just come over.

Annie hangs up and looks down to see BOB THE POOL MAN looking up, holding his skimmer.

BOB THE POOL MAN
Hey, Annie.

ANNIE
(NONCHALANT) Hey, Bob.

BOB THE POOL MAN
Need help?

ANNIE
Nah, I'm good.

BOB THE POOL MAN
Welcome home.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. KATE & VERONICA'S BABY NURSERY - SAME TIME

It's a perfectly furnished nursery. Kate holds baby Poppy, while Annie stands beside her.

KATE

Does Poppy's right ear look puffy?

ANNIE

Why didn't you have Veronica look at it? She's a doctor.

KATE

First of all, she's a heart specialist.

ANNIE

I'm sure they covered ears at some point.

KATE

She's saving lives - I don't want to bother her with "Is this ear puffy?"

ANNIE

It doesn't look puffy to me. But let's take her temperature just to be safe. Where's your thermometer?

KATE

It's in the guest room. Stay with Poppy, I'll get it.

ANNIE

No, I'll get it.

Annie starts out of the room. Kate follows after her.

KATE

I need to get it.

ANNIE

Why do you need to get the thermometer?

KATE

Why do you need to get the thermometer?

Kate and Annie stare each other down for a beat. Kate bolts for the guest room. Annie chases after her.

INT. GUEST ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Kate and Annie stand staring at the room for a beat. It's a disaster area. Baby clothes strewn everywhere, snake-like Diaper Genie bags filled with diapers, empty pizza boxes, adult clothes to be dry-cleaned, Us Weekly magazines - it's a wreck. Annie instinctively covers baby Poppy's eyes to shield her.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

Oh my God. What is going on here?

KATE

Look, it's been a very bad morning.

ANNIE

All this happened today?

KATE

Okay, fine! It's been a bad three months. I just thought I'd be better at this. I mean, I was a lawyer. And you know, I'm good at everything.

ANNIE

(heard it a million times)
I know, I know. You learned Portuguese in a day.

KATE

I mean, if you're gonna have a layover in Lisbon... but ever since I gave birth to Poppy --

ANNIE

Three pushes, no epidural.

KATE

-- I don't know how people do this? I'm not sleeping, and I'm emotional, and I'm not sleeping --

ANNIE

You already said that one.

KATE

I know. I'm losing it. I don't know how Mom did this four times. It could explain a lot. I can't even do laundry. And you know I'm great at laundry! I just keep ordering more and more onesies to replace the dirty ones.

(more)

KATE (cont'd)

I put a lock on the door. Veronica doesn't even know about this.

(deadly serious)

And you can't tell her. You can't tell anyone.

ANNIE

(re: phone)

Just one picture for Sarah. It'll give her so much hope.

KATE

No! You're the only one who's allowed to know. And it feels so good to tell you. I'm so glad you came back.

Kate, still holding Poppy, sighs deeply and sits down on top of a pile of clothes.

ANNIE

Let me help you clean up before the dirty diapers form into some creature that can only be stopped by love or a nuclear bomb.

Annie grabs an arm-load of clothes and carries them out to the hallway.

ANNIE (O.S.)

Let's just put all the clothes out here to start.

Annie walks back in to see Kate completely passed out and snoring. Poppy smiles at Annie. Annie delicately takes Poppy out of Kate's arms.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

(softly to Poppy)

Hi. I guess I'm not going to work just yet. Hopefully it won't upset Uncle Ben.

(realizing)

Oh, that's funny. Uncle Ben. You have an Uncle Ben.

(then, explaining)

Not the black rice guy. Although he seems like he'd be a good uncle.

INT. RESTAURANT - LATER

Barbara and Steve wait in the dining area as Ben comes out from the kitchen.

BEN

Hey, guys.

BARBARA

Hello, Ben. Where's Annie? I thought she'd be here.

BEN

Oh, she texted me earlier. She said she ate a mouse. Which I think was AutoCorrected from "she's at Kate's house." Either way, she's not here.

BARBARA

We were just in the neighborhood --

STEVE

--because we drove here from our house.

BARBARA

Well, we weren't doing anything.

STEVE

(for the hundredth time)
Building a ship in a bottle is doing something.

BEN

(to Steve)
You do that? Can I watch you do that?

BARBARA

Don't encourage him. Anyway, I was thinking, now that the whole family's back in town, and my birthday's coming up, that we could do a family photo this coming Sunday.

BEN

You mean, tomorrow, Sunday?

BARBARA

That's the one.

BEN

Actually, that's gonna be tough. We have a big dinner for eight of the owner's friends--

BARBARA

Dinner. The photo will be done long before then.

BEN

We have prep to do--

BARBARA

You'll make it work. I once gave a dinner party for sixty people on two hours' notice. You know who was there? Henry Winkler. It can be done.

Ben sees he's not going to win this fight.

BEN

I'll talk to Annie about it.

BARBARA

Great. We're all wearing the same thing - jean shirts.

STEVE

And before you think it's going to be lame, the guys are wearing black turtlenecks underneath, Steve Jobs-style. R-I-P.

INT. BABY POPPY'S NURSERY - LATER

Annie is changing baby Poppy's diaper on the change table.

ANNIE

This is my first time doing this, so go easy on me.

Annie grimaces as she wipes.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

Okay. Butt is clean. Now I just need a diaper.

(then looking around)

And... where the hell are the diapers?

INT. KATE & VERONICA'S GUEST ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Annie carries a naked Poppy into the room. She looks around for diapers and spots a box on the floor.

As she bends over to pick up the wipe, (and the baby's bare butt is now facing out like a mini-cannon) she hears a fart come from Poppy.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

Nice one. You sound like your uncle Zach.

Annie stands up and realizes it wasn't just a fart. Poppy just projectile pooped all over a beautiful pale pink dress laying on a pile of laundry.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

Whoa. No. That's not good.

Poppy starts crying.

ANNIE

No. Not you. You're good. It's not your fault.

Kate wakes up from the crying and immediately zeros in on the destroyed dress.

KATE

Oh no. That's Veronica's favorite dress. I was supposed to take it to the cleaners last month.

ANNIE

Okay, so I'll take it to the dry cleaners.

KATE

But what if it doesn't come out? She'll know I'm a failure. I think it's pretty clear what we have to do here.

ANNIE

It is?

KATE

We have to burn it.

EXT. KATE & VERONICA'S BACKYARD - MOMENTS LATER

Kate and Annie stand over a BBQ grill, remnants of the dress smolder inside. Annie shields Poppy from the smoke.

KATE

(to Poppy)

Don't tell Mommy what other Mommy did.

INT. ANNIE & BEN'S LIVING ROOM - LATER

Ben enters to find Zach kneeling next to the coffee table (with a new glass top).

ZACH

Hey, dude. Where's Annie? I've left her twenty-three messages.

BEN

Which explains why her mailbox is full. I don't know where she is, why?

ZACH

Okay, I'll preface this by saying, my intentions were pure. I tried to fix the coffee table by screwing the glass onto it.

BEN

You tried to put screws through glass?

ZACH

I've seen screws go through glass before. It's a thing. A thing I don't know how to do. So Plan B was to use Super Glue.

BEN

And lemme guess. You Super Glued your pants to the table?

ZACH

You are good. Can you please help me? We're five minutes away from a significant bathroom situation.

BEN

Take your pants off.

Zach does - and is magically not stuck to the coffee table anymore.

ZACH

Holy crap, dude. The genius just flies from you.

BEN

Yeah, but now I'm looking at you with no pants, so how smart can I be?

ZACH

You and me, we're brothers now. And that's unconditional. For instance - you murder someone, I'm there.

BEN

I'm pretty sure I'm not gonna murder someone.

ZACH

That's what everybody thinks. But if you do - and no judgment - I'm your first call. I'll get that dead body out to the desert so fast, no one'll know what happened. I'll pick up a twelver of Diet Coke, some Glad bags, and we'll bury that corpse way out past J-tree.

BEN

What's the Diet Coke for?

ZACH

The drive, bro. It's dry out there.

INT. ANNIE'S CAR - LATER

Annie talks to Ben on the Bluetooth while she drives.

ANNIE

And the next thing I knew, we were burning a dress. Which took longer because then we had to bury the ashes.

INT. BEN AND ANNIE'S LA APARTMENT - SAME TIME

Ben is on the phone with Annie.

BEN

What is it with your family and burying things?

ANNIE

Did Zach gives you the desert speech? It means he really likes you.

BEN

Look, I know that your family relies on you, but you missed a whole day. We're in pre-opening. This is the fun time.

(more)

BEN (cont'd)

I locked Bobby in the walk-in for ten minutes, it was hilarious.

ANNIE

I am sorry I missed that. I promise tomorrow we'll lock someone in together.

Annie parks her car.

BEN

About tomorrow. Your parents came by and your mom wants us at a family photo tomorrow at their place. I tried to tell her we can't make it because of the dinner, but she wouldn't listen to me.

ANNIE

Don't worry, I'll get us out of it.

BEN

Says the person who spent the whole day taking care of her sisters.

ANNIE

Are you mad at me?

BEN

Are you outside the door right now?

ANNIE

I am. And I'm only coming in if you're not mad at me.

Ben opens the door and lets her in. He kisses her. Zach enters, wearing basketball shorts.

ZACH

Okay, I get it. Baby making time. That's cool, Mom's taking me pants shopping. On account of the coffee table incident.

INT. ANNIE & BEN'S BEDROOM - MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT

Annie and Ben are asleep. The phone rings. Annie grabs it.

ANNIE

(into phone, groggy)
Hello?

BARBARA (O.S.)

Sarah hasn't come home, she's not answering her phone and it's three in the morning. I'm worried sick.

ANNIE

It's fine, Mom. She's out with Party Dave.

BARBARA

You think that's fine? His first name is "Party"!

ANNIE

Okay, Mom. I'm on it.

BARBARA

I knew you'd help. Thanks, Annie. Now I can rest easy. Good night, sweetheart.

The phone clicks. Annie gets out of bed and starts getting dressed.

BEN

Let me guess. Someone in your family needs your help.

ANNIE

I have to go find Sarah. She's a disaster, out there somewhere with a ten-year-old condom.

Ben starts getting dressed, too.

BEN

Wait, did you say a ten-year-old's condom?

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. BEN'S CAR/EXT. VAN NESS PARK - WEE HOURS OF THE MORNING

Ben slowly drives as Annie talks on the phone.

ANNIE

(into phone)

Okay, we're approaching the park.
Where are you? Sarah, focus. No, do
not sing Party Rock Anthem. Please.

BEN

(pointing)

Top of the jungle gym.

Annie looks out the window and sure enough Sarah is sitting
at the top of the jungle gym. Ben parks.

ANNIE

Come on, let's go get her.

(noticing)

Hey, Party Dave got a speedboat.

In the corner of a lot, hitched to a 1997 Subaru is a
speedboat with "Party Dave" airbrushed across its side.

EXT. PARK - SAME TIME

Sarah is standing at the very top of the jungle gym with a
fifth of vodka in her hand. Annie and Ben approach.

ANNIE

Sarah! Why in the world are you
drinking in a park?

SARAH

Because I can.

BEN

You actually can't. It's against
the law. There's, like, signs
posted everywhere, specifically
saying you can't. Look, there's one
right there.

SARAH

Suck it, sign!

Sarah throws the vodka bottle at the sign. She misses it by a
mile.

SARAH

This is kind of embarrassing but could you get that for me?

ANNIE

No! Get down from there.

SARAH

Come up and get me.

Annie sighs and starts toward the jungle gym. Ben notices that PARTY DAVE is passed out on the see-saw.

BEN

What happened to Party Dave?

SARAH

I don't know, he was so awesome in high school and now, you get ten, twelve beers in him, and he's worthless.

Annie gets to the top of the jungle gym.

SARAH

Isn't it amazing up here? I can see the top of the swings.

ANNIE

Yeah, really makes you think. Now let's get down and go home.

SARAH

No way. I'm not leaving until I see the sunrise. Party Dave promised.

ANNIE

Party Dave might be dead.

They all look over at Party Dave who suddenly sits straight up and punches a fist in the air.

PARTY DAVE

Whoo-hoo!

He immediately passes out again.

BEN

All right, come on, Sarah, seriously. We've got a big day ahead of us. The farmer's market opens in an hour. Just get down from there.

ANNIE
(taking Sarah's arm)
Here, I'll help you.

Sarah stand up and leaps off the jungle gym towards Ben, expecting him to catch her. He does not.

INT. ANNIE AND BEN'S CAR - THE NEXT MORNING

Ben drives. Annie rides shotgun, the car packed with bags and crates full of food from the farmer's market.

BEN
Once you get the shortcakes in the oven, do you think you could help me de-bone the fish?

ANNIE
Definitely. Hold on, just got a text from Bobby.
(reading)
He'd like gold leaf to somehow factor in the dessert. And really, in as much of the dinner as possible.

BEN
Wow, he literally wants to shove his wealth down their throats.

Annie's cell phone rings. She picks it up on speaker.

ANNIE
Hello?

BARBARA (O.S.)
Hey, Annie. On your way over to the house, could you pick up Zach's pants from the tailor? I don't want him wearing shorts in the photo. Too much flesh.

ANNIE
(remembering)
Oh, right. The photo!

Ben pantomimes "What the fuck?" to Annie.

BARBARA (O.S.)
You're still coming, aren't you?

ANNIE
Yeah, yeah, yeah - we'll be there.

Annie hangs up.

BEN

You said you were gonna talk to her. We can't go. We have this dinner. We're expected to make people cry.

ANNIE

We can do both. We'll do some prep work, go do the photo - it won't take long.

BEN

Just like yesterday didn't take long? We came here for us not for them.

ANNIE

I know, but they make it impossible. I told you - my family is nuts.

BEN

That doesn't mean you have to be nuts. You can say "no" to them.

ANNIE

I actually don't think I can. Why do you think I moved three thousand miles away? Geographical buffer!

BEN

Well, the buffer's gone. We live here now. So you need to figure out how to set some boundaries with them.

ANNIE

Can I figure it out after we take the picture? Then, I'm going hardcore. Drawing that line.

BEN

Well, I'm drawing my own line. I'm skipping the photo and going to the restaurant. Right after we return Party Dave's boat.

WIDEN TO REVEAL: Ben and Annie are towing Party Dave's speedboat.

EXT. BARBARA AND STEVE'S BACKYARD - LATER

Everyone is present in jean shirts, and the dudes with their turtlenecks underneath. VERONICA (34, gorgeous, intimidating) is even here. But Ben is not. Sarah comes out of the house. She looks awful.

BARBARA

(to Sarah)

Can you at least brush your hair
for the picture?

SARAH

I gave up.

She turns around and we see a hairbrush tangled in her hair.

ZACH

Word on the street is, Party Dave
has a sweet boat. Should there be a
booze cruise in the near future,
call me. Full disclosure, I get
violently seasick, but I'm willing
to drink through it.

Steve comes out of the house with a camera and a tripod.

STEVE

I should wear turtlenecks more
often. They're very flattering.
That Diane Keaton is really onto
something.

BARBARA

Okay, everyone, places - wait,
Annie, where's Ben?

ANNIE

At work. Where I should be.

BARBARA

Well, we can't take a family photo
without Ben. It defeats the
purpose. Just call him.

ANNIE

I'm not calling him, Mom. Let's
just do this.

BARBARA

Fine. But please note that I'm
disappointed.

EVERYONE

(dully)
Noted.

BARBARA

(getting excited)
Okay, now: I know the suspense has
been killing you.

SARAH

Sheer torment.

BARBARA

And trust me, I almost spilled it
twice. But the pose for this year's
picture is -- wait for it --

STEVE

It's a human pyramid!

BARBARA

God damn it, Steve - that was my
moment!

KATE

(to Annie)
They're all her moments.

ANNIE

Okay, Mom. I know you have a plan.
Tell us where you want us to go.

BARBARA

Thank you. Bottom rung: Dad, Zach,
Annie.

ZACH

Why do I have to be on the bottom?

SARAH

(re: his size)
Look at you.

ZACH

What's that supposed to mean?

STEVE

It means you're sturdy and strong.

SARAH

That's not what it meant.

Zach, Annie and Steve take position on all fours.

BARBARA

Okay, next - Kate and Sarah.

ZACH

There's a ladybug on me! Get it off!

STEVE

I got you, buddy.

Steve brushes it off of him as Kate and Sarah climb on.

BARBARA

Okay, now me and Veronica - wait, this doesn't work without Ben. The numbers are all off.

ANNIE

Just take the picture already. I have to go.

BARBARA

It's not just about you, Annie.

ANNIE

It's never about me!

SARAH

Stop moving, you're hurting my knees.

ANNIE

You're on my back!

BARBARA

Annie, do not ruin this picture for me.

Annie, fed up, gets up, knocking the rest of her family to the ground. They react.

ZACH

Dude? New pants!

ANNIE

Do you know why Ben isn't here? Because he's at the restaurant, doing something that's important to us. Which is where I should be. But instead I'm here, because I didn't want to let anyone down.

BARBARA

Well, if you didn't want to be in the photo, you could have said no.

ANNIE

No. I can't say no to you - to any of you. Well, this is me drawing some boundaries. Kate, be honest with your wife. Tell her you're overwhelmed. Tell her you need more help. Show her your shame closet!

VERONICA

Shame closet?

KATE

It's more of a shame room. I also might have burned your dress and buried it.

ANNIE

(plowing on)

Sarah, I know your life is hard right now. But kegs and Party Dave - and I'm just going to say it - those bangs are not the answer!

ZACH

Bangs are never the answer.

ANNIE

And you, Zach!

ZACH

Oh, just 'cause I spoke?

ANNIE

You may be the youngest, but you're not the baby anymore. Get a job, find an apartment - own more than one pair of pants!

STEVE

Easy there, Annie.

ANNIE

No, Dad - he needs to hear it!

STEVE

You're right. He's my only son. I probably coddle him.

ZACH

Don't beat yourself up, Dad. It's only natural.

ANNIE

And Mom, I know I'm living in the same city as you now, but I'm not here for you. I love you guys, and you're my family, but I have a new family now and his name is Ben. And I should be with him. De-boning his fish! And no, that's not sexual.

And with that, Annie is out the door. Everyone is silent for a beat.

BARBARA

I'm very proud of Annie for speaking her mind. And I hope none of us ever do it again.

INT. RESTAURANT KITCHEN - LATER

Ben is doing prep work in the kitchen. Annie bursts through the doors.

ANNIE

You were right. I get sucked into their crazy stuff but that's on me. And I'm sorry.

BEN

I'm feeling like the cool move here would be for me not to say "I told you so."

ANNIE

Yeah, that would be the cool move.

A beat. Then out of the side of his mouth:

BEN

I told you so.

ANNIE

You're such a nerd.

Annie gives him a kiss.

ANNIE

You should have seen me, Ben, I told them all off.

(more)

ANNIE (cont'd)

And it felt good. Scary. But good.
And I think I can get better at it.

BEN

That's awesome. I'm proud of you.
Now let's gut some fish together.

Annie smiles. She grabs the knife and gets to work.

INT. RESTAURANT DINING ROOM - LATER

The dinner is over. The table mostly cleared. Annie and Ben sit with Bobby enjoying a victory glass of wine.

BOBBY

(lifting his glass)
To you guys. The goal was to make my friends insanely jealous. I heard Scott Hall sobbing in the bathroom. Mission accomplished.

BEN

You just wait until we open this restaurant.

ANNIE

We're going to make people jealous every day.

BOBBY

Get ready. Next week, my college friends.

Bobby crosses off.

BEN

To you and me. Living the dream.

Ben and Annie toast and drink. Just then, Barbara, Steve, Sarah, Kate, and Zach enter.

BARBARA

Before you say anything, we feel like we should apologize.

SARAH

She does.

KATE

The rest of us were forced in the car.

ZACH

I thought we were going out for ice cream.

BARBARA

We heard you, Annie. And we understand you have Ben now. And your own life. And you feel like you have to choose between us. But, sweetheart, we will always be here. Forever. There is no choice.

ANNIE

Thanks, Mom. I know you probably didn't mean that to sound as scary as it did.

STEVE

It sounded very good in the car. Although being able to hear the score of the UCLA game would have been better.

BARBARA

Now make your brother some ice cream. I don't want to be called a liar.

Annie starts to get up. Ben stops her.

BEN

Sit. I got this.

Ben gets up to go make the ice-cream. Sarah turns to Annie.

SARAH

BTW, I convinced Zach to move out of your place. So I can move in.

ANNIE

That's not happening.

SARAH

Sleep on it.

And as the family helps themselves to the wine, we...

FADE OUT.

END OF SHOW

*