

LIGHT YEARS

"Pilot"

by
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ACT ONE

OVER BLACK we HEAR an enthusiastic voice:

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

FADE IN:

EXT. SEATTLE - EARLY MORNING (D1)

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

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

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

And their voices take us to:

INT. KWASH 101 - BOOTH - CONTINUOUS (D1)

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

RYAN

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

(turning to Cate)

Guess that's why your "A Date a Day
in the Month of May" segment didn't
yield much in terms of results.

CATE

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

RYAN

Uh... with a guy you refuse to call
your boyfriend. And you can't say
"basically monogamous." That's
like saying "kind of pregnant."

CATE

We're just... hanging out.

RYAN

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

CATE

FYI? Don't say FYI.

RYAN

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

CATE

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

RYAN

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

CATE

I'm never telling you anything again.

And Cate and Ryan's banter takes us to:

INT. POINT 08 BAR - EARLY MORNING (D1)

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

BAZE

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

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

JAMIE

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

BAZE

You have to stop drinking to get a hangover.

MATH, a big teddy bear-type, walks out from the back.

MATH

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

JAMIE

Bachelorette party. Duty called.

MATH

You had sex with the bride?

JAMIE

And her sister.

Baze shakes his head, we HEAR:

RYAN (PRELAP)

Linda makes a valid point...

INT. KWASH 101 - BOOTH - MORNING (D1)

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

RYAN

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

CATE

Linda, what's your favorite meal?

LINDA (O.C.)

Eggplant parm.

CATE

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

(beat)

Linda?

RYAN

Yeah, Linda's hung up.

CATE

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

(then)

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

RYAN

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

CATE

Love you people!

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

ALICE

It's "slow and go" on the 5 with the right express lane blocked --

CATE

"Clinically insane?"

*
*
*

RYAN

"Basically monogamous?"

CATE

"Moderately lovable?"

RYAN

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

CATE

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

And now we realize they're dating. From the other booth:

ALICE

This traffic report is bought to
you by Zales. Need a diamond ring?
(breaking down)
Try Zales.

BAZE

Dumped again.

CATE

See? Heartbreak. So not worth it.

And we HEAR: A DOORBELL.

EXT. ROW HOUSE - DAY (D1)

Baze, wearing a "MILF: It Does a Body Good" t-shirt, opens
the door to reveal: LUX, a fifteen year old girl.

LUX

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

BAZE

We've got all the Thin Mints we
need. Thanks.

Jamie and Math come to the door.

JAMIE

Samoas. Two boxes of Samoas!

MATH

Get Trefoils. Love those.

*

*

LUX

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

All the color drains from Baze's face.

JAMIE

Dude. It's not a Girl Scout --

MATH

-- It's a girl.

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

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

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

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

LUX

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

BAZE

I got that part.

LUX

Now I'm applying for emancipation --

BAZE

From your adoptive parents?

LUX

I was never adopted. From foster care.

MATH

She just told us. Keep up, dude.

BAZE

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

JAMIE

Gotta work on that paternal instinct, bra.

Baze shoots them both annoyed looks. Lux continues.

LUX

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

MATH

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

BAZE

Dude!

LUX
Basically, until you sign this
sheet of paper, you're still
legally my dad.

What? Baze looks around, trying to remain calm.

BAZE
Is there a pen?

And we HEAR:

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

LUX
(joking)
Mommy?

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

He grabs her but Lux wriggles free from his grasp.

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

Baze signs and hands the form back, hurried.

BAZE
Cate Campbell. That's your mom.
Cate with a "c." Think you can
climb out the window?

LUX
Wait -- what?

MATH
Cate Campbell, from high
school?

*

LUX

Like the one on the radio Cate
Campbell?

BAZE

Not like her. That's her.

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

LUX

That Cate Campbell is my mom?

JAMIE

That's why that Morning
Madness crap is always on?

*
*

MATH

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

BAZE

Okay, can we talk about this later?

MATH

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

Suddenly:

TRACEY (O.C.)

Who's Cate?

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

TRACEY

Are you hiding... a teenager behind
you?

Jamie beelines for the door.

JAMIE

What up, Trace.

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

BAZE

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

MATH

Like impregnating the president of
the Latin Honor Society.

BAZE

Hey, she wanted to sleep with me!

TRACEY

(horrified)

Oh my god. You got this girl pregnant?

LUX

Okay, ew.

BAZE

Not her! This is, um...
um...

LUX

Lux.

BAZE

Right. I knew that.

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

LUX

Like a Bandaid. Just rip it off.

BAZE

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

LUX

"Took care of it?"

TRACEY

Wait -- this is your...

BAZE

Yeah. Daughter.

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

LUX

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

BAZE

My hair is not thinning.

LUX

-- I just need you to help me track down Cate Campbell.

BAZE

What am I supposed to do? Call her up and say I'm with the daughter I never knew about?

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

BAZE

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

TRACEY

Get what over with? Helping your daughter?

TRACEY

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

BAZE

That's not what I meant!

*
*
*
*
*

TRACEY

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

BAZE

What do you think I'm trying to do?

*
*
*
*

TRACEY

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

BAZE

It's the shirt, isn't it?

TRACEY

You know what, Nick? Grow up.

She walks out. There's silence, then:

LUX

Your hair is thinning.

Off Baze, his life in chaos...

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

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

RYAN

So... debate team, huh? I should've guessed...

CATE
Oh, god. Give me that.

RYAN
"Most Likely to Succeed."

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

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

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

RYAN
I agree.

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

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

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

He pulls out a ring box and opens it.

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

RYAN
Will you marry me?

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

RYAN
Ow! What's wrong with you?

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

RYAN
Well, I tried to do it last night.
Remember? Candlelit dinner?
(MORE)

RYAN (CONT'D)

Veuve Cliquot? The Tivo remote
hurtling toward my forehead?

CATE

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

Ryan snaps the box closed. Stands.

RYAN

This isn't going well.

CATE

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

RYAN

We've been together for two years.

CATE

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

RYAN

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

(beat)

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

A beat. Cate's touched.

CATE

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

RYAN

No!

CATE

Ryan!

RYAN

Okay, fine. Cate, will you --

CATE

Yes! Yes, yes, I'm an idiot, yes!

RYAN

You're really lucky I love you.

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

CATE MACHINE

Hey, it's Cate. Leave a message.

And we hear BAZE'S VOICE.

BAZE'S VOICE

Hey, it's Baze from, um...

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

CATE

Hello?

We INTERCUT with:

INT. ROW HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS (N2)

Baze paces in the kitchen.

BAZE (INTO PHONE)

Cate? Hey, it's um, Nick Basile.
We kinda'... did it that time.

Cate hangs up. Ryan gives her a look.

RYAN

Who was that?

CATE

Wrong number.

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

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

INT. ROW HOUSE - DEN - NIGHT (N1)

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

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

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

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

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

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

LUX
Whatever. It's fine.

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

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

BAZE
Dude!

LUX
I just need to chill for a sec.

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

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

(MORE)

LUX (CONT'D)

I hate High School Musical.

(then)

This is exactly why I want to get emancipated -- so I'll never have to rely on jerks like you for anything ever again.

(realizing, re: the DVD)

Wait -- do you own this?

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

LUX

You three are seriously disturbed.

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

INT. ROW HOUSE - DEN - LATER (N1)

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

LUX

Okay, so maybe "hate" was a little strong.

BAZE

What about "jerk"?

LUX

That, too.

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

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

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

BAZE

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

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

BAZE

What?

LUX

Plan B.

And we HEAR:

RYAN (PRELAP)

Okay, we're here at 7:53 talking
high school nicknames, people.

INT. KWASH 101 - BOOTH - MORNING (D2)

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

RYAN

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

CATE

(pressing a button)

We've got Lux on the line. Lux,
what was your high school nickname?

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

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

CATE (ON THE RADIO)

Lux? You there?

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

BAZE

Cate?

And we INTERCUT:

CATE

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

BAZE

-- No, it's Baze, again. From high
school.

A look of panic flashes across Cate's face.

RYAN

High school?

BAZE

I really need to talk to you.
Right now.

*

*

*

RYAN

Wow. Maybe you can shed some light
on Cate's teen years. When's the
last time you saw her? Smoking
cloves behind the dumpster?

RYAN
 Campaigning against the
 patriarchy that is senior
 prom?

CATE
 We actually have another
 caller --

*
 *
 *

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

Ryan nearly chokes on his coffee.

RYAN
 Excuse me --

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

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

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

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

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

BAZE
 Okay, just calm down.

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

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

CATE
 Oh, now you want to talk? When you
 need something? Remember when I
 needed something, like, I don't
 know, maybe support --

BAZE

Hey! I offered to pay for half!

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

BAZE

Sorry about that.

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

BAZE

Cate, meet Lux. Our daughter.

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

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

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

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

CATE

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

(oh god)

Sorry. Um... how are you?

LUX

I'm fine. And proportional.

Cate laughs, nervously. Lux, too.

LUX

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

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

BAZE

You have something she needs to sign...

LUX

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

CATE

Emancipated? Like, from your parents?

BAZE

From the foster care system. She was never adopted.
(quickly adds)
At no fault of her own.

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

LUX

It's a long and pretty boring story.

Cate signs the paper and hands it back.

CATE

Is that it? That's all?

LUX

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

CATE

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

LUX

That's be great.

BAZE

I was going to.

CATE

I don't mind.

BAZE

Neither do I.

(not wanting Lux caught in the middle, to Lux)

But, yeah, you should go with Cate.

LUX

Are you sure?

BAZE

Yeah. Totally.

Lux smiles. That's what she wanted.

LUX

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

BAZE

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

LUX

Okay. Thanks.

Lux gets her stuff and leaves with Cate. Off Baze, torn, watching her go...

INT. CATE'S CAR - DAY (D2)

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

LUX

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

CATE

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

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

LUX

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

Cate swerves to avoid a car. Turns to Lux.

CATE

You really do listen to the show.

LUX

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

CATE

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

LUX

I was born with this heart thing.
A hole. And had to have a bunch of
surgeries. A baby on the operating
table's not exactly a big selling
point to prospective parents.

(then)

I was fine but after everything, I
was almost three. Most people,
they want a baby... I mean, not
everyone... obviously.

Cate feels terrible. She doesn't know what to say.

CATE

So this emancipation thing, it sounds complicated.

LUX

It's pretty simple, actually.

CATE

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

LUX

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

CATE

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

LUX

There it is. On the right.

As Cate pulls up to the building.

CATE

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

LUX

(a little defensive)
I'm almost sixteen --

CATE

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

Lux hardens. *Who does Cate think she is?*

LUX

No offense but I haven't had a mother in fifteen years. I don't need one now. Thanks, though.
(then)
For the ride.

She gets out of the car and SLAMS the door. And off Cate feeling like that couldn't have gone any worse.

INT. CATE'S HOUSE - DAY (D2)

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

CATE

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

Ryan's not laughing.

RYAN

This is a lot more than not flossing.

Cate hardens at his tone.

CATE

Ryan, it happened fifteen years ago --

RYAN

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

CATE

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

RYAN

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

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

CATE

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

RYAN

I didn't say that...

CATE

I mean, this the whole thing -- it was your idea. *

RYAN

I just want to talk about it.

CATE

To play a round of twenty questions about decisions I made fifteen years ago? No, thanks.

RYAN

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

CATE

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

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

RYAN

Fine. You want to call this off, call it off. I'm an adult. I can handle it. But your daughter, she's just a kid. So if you're ever going to grow up, now would be a good time. For her sake.

(beat)

Or better yet, for yours.

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

JUDGE (PRELAP)

Am I correct that this minor is choosing to represent herself?

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

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

LUX

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

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

JUDGE

I see you turn sixteen... tomorrow.

LUX

Yes and I'll be old enough for
emancipation. I can get my GED,
get a job...

Cate slides into a seat. She whispers to Baze.

CATE

What're you doing here?

BAZE

What does it look like?

CATE

Is she winning?

BAZE

It's a hearing, not a hockey game.

CATE

I hate you.

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

JUDGE

Is your caseworker present?

LUX

(distracted)
I'm sorry?

CASEWORKER

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

JUDGE

Seven foster homes. I see.

LUX

That's not really my fault --

JUDGE

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

LUX

(taken aback)
No, I mean, I -- I wanted a good
home. The state of Washington just
hasn't provided me with one.

JUDGE

So it's the state's fault now?

Lux begins to unravel.

LUX

No, no, I'm not saying that --

Cate and Baze exchange worried looks.

JUDGE

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

LUX

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

JUDGE

You're going to afford an apartment? With what income?

LUX

I have three thousand dollars in the bank --

JUDGE

And who will be co-signing your rental agreement?

LUX

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

JUDGE

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

Suddenly, Cate and Baze jump up simultaneously.

CATE

I'll co-sign, your Honor.

BAZE

I'll do it.

They look at each other, annoyed.

BAZE

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

JUDGE

I'm sorry. Who are you people?

Cate and Baze are silent. Lux is forced to admit:

LUX

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

BAZE

Lux and I -- we go way back.

CATE

To when? Yesterday?

BAZE

We bonded.

CATE

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

BAZE

You think she remembers any of that?

CATE

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

BAZE

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

CATE

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

BAZE

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

The Judge gestures to the Caseworker.

JUDGE

Let me see those files.

The Caseworker hands them over. The Judge scans the files.

JUDGE

So... you own your own business...
and you're a radio talk jockey.

(reading)

I see here you both have steady
incomes... no criminal records...
each in possession of a working
vehicle...

LUX

Wait, what's going on?

A beat. The Judge turns to Lux.

JUDGE

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

(then)

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

LUX

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

JUDGE

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

CASEWORKER

She stole it, your Honor. Off my
desk.

LUX

I prefer to think of it as being
proactive.

CATE

(to Baze)

Stealing. She gets that from your
side of the family. Nice.

The Judge continues.

JUDGE

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

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

JUDGE

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

Lux looks stunned. The Judge bangs his gavel.

JUDGE

Case dismissed.

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

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

INT. COURTHOUSE - LOBBY - DAY

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

BAZE

This is all your fault.

CATE

My fault?

BAZE

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

CATE

Do you really want to go there, because if you'd just used a condom that hadn't been in your wallet for two years --

(catches herself,
remembering Lux)

-- but that's not the point. The point is what's done is done. Now we need to figure out what to do.

Dead silence from Baze. Cate sighs.

CATE

Like the living situation, for example.

BAZE

Doesn't it just make more sense for Lux to just crash at your place?

(admits)

It took me two months to convince the guys we should get a new Ikea futon. A fifteen-year-old's probably going to take a little more arm-twisting.

LUX

Almost sixteen.

Cate looks at Baze, with totally loathing.

CATE

You're unbelievable. But why should I be surprised?

(MORE)

CATE (CONT'D)

I mean, this is what you do, right? You stand up in front of the judge, acting like some good guy... but when it comes to really doing something, you want it pawn it off on someone else?

BAZE

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

CATE

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

BAZE

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

The fight escalates. Lux notices people staring.

CATE

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

Cate suddenly stops, catching herself.

BAZE

What meathead quarterback? Me?

CATE

(yes)
No!

BAZE

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

CATE

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

BAZE

Then why're you getting so upset?

CATE

Because that's what you do. Upset
me!

BAZE

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

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

EXT. COURTHOUSE - DAY

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

BAZE (PRELAP)

We are the worst.

INT. ROW HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT (N3)

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

CATE

Unfit to be parents.

They toast and drink.

CATE

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

BAZE

We blew it. Bigtime. How stupid
are we?

CATE

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

Baze pours more shots.

CATE

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

Baze looks at her, shocked.

BAZE

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

CATE

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

BAZE

Stomach pumping's a big turnoff.

CATE

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

BAZE

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

CATE

You lured me in. With Zima. And The Cure. Disintegration.

BAZE

Didn't you provide the Zima?

CATE

What's a party in the nineties without a good "malternative" beverage?

BAZE

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

CATE

Skills? We only made it through the chorus of "Pictures of You."

BAZE

Yeah, well...

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

BAZE

Listen, Cate... I'm sorry.

CATE

Don't feel bad. The chorus was like seven minutes long.

BAZE

No, not for that. Although, I should be.

(then)

I'm sorry for how I treated you. I don't have an excuse except that I was in over my head. I was afraid it would mess up my life...

(then)

Thank god that didn't happen. Otherwise, I wouldn't own my "loser bar."

CATE

Sorry about that.

BAZE

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

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

CATE

Wait, you think I'm beautiful?

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

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

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

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FIVE

ACT SIX

FADE IN:

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

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

EXT. ROW HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER (D4)

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

CATE
Jesus! Crap!

LUX (O.C.)
Cate?

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

CATE
Oh my god, you're here!

As Lux sits up...

LUX
So are you. What are you doing?

CATE
You know, the usual. Ruining things with the guy I love, sleeping with the guy I hate.
(realizing, whoops)
Slash, being a completely inappropriate parent. Have you been out here all night?

LUX
Sleeping on doorsteps is kind of my thing... and I didn't really have anywhere else to go.
(then)
Guess I should've waited until after the hearing to tell my chain-smoking foster mom and her perv boyfriend to suck it.

CATE
Is it really that bad with them?

LUX
Worse.

Cate sits down, feeling terrible.

CATE

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

LUX

It's not your fault.

CATE

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

LUX

No, Cate. You don't realize -- you were there. On the radio. While everything else in my life kept changing, I could count on you. Everyday. You were always there.

(then)

People, they're scared to just tell the truth. Instead, it's like, "Don't worry, it'll all work out." "Someone's going to adopt you." But you -- you put it all out there, you say it.

A beat. Cate takes this in, then:

CATE

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

Lux smiles at the word "family."

LUX

Okay.

CATE

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

LUX

You don't know that.

Another beat.

CATE

Yeah, I do.

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

LUX
The sun's coming up.

A beat.

CATE
So what does Lux mean anyway?

LUX
Light.

And we HEAR the MORNING MADNESS INTRO play...

INT. KWASH 101 - BOOTH - MORNING

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

CATE
So now's the time.

He looks at her.

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

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

A beat.

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

RYAN
What exactly are you proposing?

CATE

I'm proposing to you. Marry me.

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

CATE

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

RYAN

Thanks, Juno.

CATE

...who better never call me that
again.

RYAN

Sorry, Jamie Lynn.

CATE

I guess you think you're pretty
funny, don't you?

A beat.

RYAN

Yes.

Cate doesn't get it.

CATE

FYI? You're not.

He looks at her.

RYAN

Cate. Yes.

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

EXT. SEATTLE - DUSK (D4)

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

EXT. CATE'S HOUSE - EVENING (N4)

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

CATE

So it's kind of a mess. Of course,
you were at Baze's all day so this
is probably a step up.

Cate opens the door for Lux.

CATE

Go ahead.

INT. CATE'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS (N4)

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

THE GUYS

Surprise!

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

LUX

What's going on?

CATE

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

Lux is taken aback, fighting tears of happiness.

LUX

I don't know... No one has ever really remembered...

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

CATE

Nice face.

BAZE

Yeah, Jamie's a dead man.

JAMIE

What makes you think it was me?

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

BAZE

No way.

Suddenly, he notices Cate's engagement ring.

BAZE

Wow. Congratulations.

Cate looks down, self-consciously, a lot between them. Math brings the cake over. Candles are lit.

MATH

Hurry. You gotta' make a wish.

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

CATE

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

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

LUX

It already has.

And on Lux's wish come true, we:

FADE OUT.

END OF SHOW