

# No Heroics.

pilot episode:

"The Birthday Party"

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ACT ONE

EXT. NEW YORK STREET - EVENING

Four friends in everyday clothes walk along a street in the Lower East Side: Pete (handsome, lovable loser), Callie (feisty, lead-singer-cool), Nigel (dry, British), and Sandy (quirky, a bit heavy). We drop in on their conversation:

PETE

...So, you still okay to drive me to my gig tonight?

CALLIE

Stop calling it a "gig." It's a small girl's birthday party.

NIGEL

Brrr, I hate children. The teeth, the noises, their tiny hard little feet...

SANDY

I think you're mixing up children and goats.

PETE

Hey, it's not like I enjoy whoring myself out to eight-year-olds. But it costs a fortune these days just to stay in the game. The costumes, the agent fees, the gym membership...

SANDY

Not to mention the medical bills every time some Russian megalomaniac in a robot suit smashes you against a building.

CALLIE

God, that's the worst.

PETE

Tell me about it.

NIGEL

Sometimes being a superhero is a right pain in the arse.

MAIN TITLE:

**CAPTION: A normal city.** The familiar New York skyline.

**CAPTION: With one small difference.** A pair of superheroes, middle distance, fly through frame.

**CAPTION: There are superheroes.** We TILT DOWN to the sidewalk, where costumed heroes blend in with the unfazed crowd. One is lined up at the ATM. Another crushes garbage and throws it into a dumptruck. A homeless hero fires up his hand pathetically near a crude sign which reads "Will flame on for cash."

**CHILLOUT - freeze powers.** Pete is in his apartment, apparently on a date, holding a margarita glass in each hand. He concentrates -- his hands are suffused with a BLUE GLOW -- the glasses FREEZE... and he passes one to his date: a teddy bear wearing a small "Chillout" T-shirt.

**CROSSFADE - short-term invisibility.** Callie approaches a pair of rest room doors. There's a long line outside the ladies' and none at all at the men's. She surveys the scene for a beat -- then promptly TURNS INVISIBLE and strolls into the men's room. The door slams.

**BRAINSTORM - reads minds\*** \*within three meters. Nigel is in a backroom poker game. He cocks his head and -- WHOOSH -- reads his opponent's thoughts. Then tosses in his hand and leaves the table. His opponent lays down a full house.

**SLAMAZON - superstrength.** Sandy is at dinner, laughing too hard at one of her date's jokes. She accidentally flicks a pea off her plate. It hits the guy in the forehead LIKE A BULLET and THROWS HIM BACK out of his chair. On his pitiful O.S. sobs...

TITLE CARD: **NO HEROICS.**

EXT. NEW YORK STREET - CONTINUING

Still walking along, the friends laugh at Sandy's story.

SANDY

Don't laugh. Do you know how it feels to make a man cry on the first date?

NIGEL

Yup. 2003. Paratrooper named Clive.

PETE

Gross.

SANDY

Men just can't handle a strong woman. That's why the only ones who ever hit on me are creepy submissives. I wish I could meet a nice guy...

CALLIE

There are no nice guys. That's why I date boys like Darkfist and Death

(MORE)

CALLIE (CONT'D)

Rattle. He cheated? He didn't call?  
Surprise! He's a supervillain.

SANDY

I couldn't do that. Supervillains  
have terrible breath.

PETE

It's all that coffee they drink. Late  
nights, master plans...

They approach a dingy walkdown with a gate: "Manhattan  
Watchmenders." Nigel's pager BEEPS. He irritably turns it off.

NIGEL

Ugghhh. Stop stalking me.

CALLIE

Ex-boyfriend?

NIGEL

Police. They want help with some  
boring life-or-death hostage situation.

SANDY

Nigel, remember that talk we had about  
being a superhero? About powers, and  
responsibility?

NIGEL

Yeah, yeah, don't worry. I've got a  
plan.

SANDY

Great.

NIGEL

Ignore the hostage, buy some beer, get  
completely wanked.

Under a small neon sign, "The Watchtower," a door reads "NO  
MASKS, NO POWERS, NO HEROICS." Nigel knocks, and the peephole  
slides open to reveal the chubby face of doorman Horseforce.

HORSEFORCE

Password?  
(noticing Sandy, bashful)  
Oh, hey, Sandy.

PETE

Come on, you know us, Horseforce.

CALLIE

We all bullied you in college.

HORSEFORCE

Yes, yes, you did. But now I am the gatekeeper of the city's only super-secret superhero bar, so --

Nigel casually cocks his head and -- WHOOSH -- reads Horseforce's thoughts.

NIGEL

The password's "Sugarlump."

HORSEFORCE

Dammit! No powers in the Watchtower! Don't make me summon my stallions!

PETE

You wouldn't.

Horseforce BRAYS MADLY into the night for a really long time. Sandy just looks at him, waiting for him to finish, then...

SANDY

How long's it take the stallions to get here once you've summoned them?

HORSEFORCE

Two, two and a half hours. Depends on the traffic. Not that my horses would be a match for a big, strong girl like you. I mean, look at those arms. They're like hams!

SANDY

(aside to Callie)

See what I mean? Creepy.

They push past him and head inside. He calls after:

HORSEFORCE

Sexy hams! That's an expression, right?

INT. THE WATCHTOWER - MAIN ROOM - CONTINUOUS

They enter a bustling speakeasy. We catch glimpses of superpowers -- a glowing finger, someone levitating.

CALLIE

Whose round is it?

NIGEL

Sorry. Only got British money.

SANDY

You've lived here fourteen years.

NIGEL

I've been busy.

He and Sandy head off to a table, leaving Callie with Pete.

PETE

Don't look at me.

CALLIE

Why would I? The last time you bought me a drink was in college, and that was only 'cause you were trying to make me too sleepy to fight you off.

PETE

Ah, our sweet time together. Our epic romance. Three weeks of chilled bliss you clearly haven't forgotten.

CALLIE

That's 'cause I still can't get the taste of your snowballs out of my mouth.

ANGLE ON the bar, where Bradley (a boorish alpha male) and his group of acolytes are watching, on the bar TV, the red-carpet arrivals at a glitzy gala.

TV REPORTER (ON TV)

...where tonight, the Mayor will honor our city's most dedicated servants -- the teachers, the firemen, the nurses...

BRADLEY

Blah blah blah. Get to the good bit!

TV REPORTER (ON TV)

...and of course, our favorite costumed hero -- the mighty Ultimatum.

A shot of Bradley in his ULTIMATUM costume. The acolytes cheer.

BRADLEY

Who's that handsome bastard? Oh, it's me!

He spots Pete and Callie approaching.

BRADLEY (CONT'D)

Hey, the B-list is in the house!  
(holding up drink)

Plop some ice in this for me, willya, Chillpill?

PETE

My cape name, as you know, is Chillout.

BRADLEY

Your own mother doesn't know your cape name. Guess how I know that?

PETE

I think I can probably --

BRADLEY

I'm banging her.

The sycophants laugh hysterically at the lame joke.

CALLIE

Bradley, his mom's actually dead.

The sycophants stop, chastened. There's a pause, then:

BRADLEY

Dead tired from all the banging!

The sycophants laugh hysterically again. As Pete leans in to order drinks, Bradley focuses on Callie.

BRADLEY (CONT'D)

Interesting. Before, I only had you down as 80% do-able. But tonight, you're rocking an 85. Care to accompany me to this little shindig?

CALLIE

I'd rather eat a garbage bag full of cold puke.

PETE

FYI: that's a no.

They take their drinks and start off. Bradley calls after:

BRADLEY

Suit yourself. But you're turning down a one-time ticket to the biggest show in town.

(she keeps walking)

And by "the biggest show in town," I mean my penis!

They laugh hysterically again. Pete and Callie reach the table.

NIGEL

I'm not doing it.

SANDY

Come on. Just mind-read those guys at the bar and tell me if any of them are boyfriend material.

CALLIE

Oh, we're playing this game again?

PETE

Awesome. I liked when we found out Tinfoil was a Scientologist.

SANDY

Please, Nigel? Please?

NIGEL

Ugh. For god's sake, woman...  
(casually does a read; then)  
Mummy's boy, Maroon 5 fan, closet shirt-lifter -- and stay away from the Arab fella, he's got a fantasy about making out with Princess Diana in a speeding Parisian limousine.

PETE

Hot.

The last man, BUTCH, is at the end of the bar, his back to them.

NIGEL

Oh, and the one with the shiny coat?  
He's got --

SANDY

Actually, stop, leave a little mystery. Let me think there's still a chance I can find one nice, normal guy. Until then, I need the next best thing.

PETE

A male prostitute?

SANDY

A bowl of pretzels.

She exits. Pete goes for his beer and sees Callie's swiped it.

PETE

Hey, ease up. You're supposed to be driving me tonight.

CALLIE

Pete, I'm sitting down, I've got a beer... It's essentially impossible

(MORE)

CALLIE (CONT'D)  
for me to leave at this point.  
(tossing him cash)  
Here, take a cab.

PETE  
Yeah, see, that won't work. I kind  
of... implied you'd be there, too.

CALLIE  
(with an edge)  
Okaaay. How did you imply that, exactly?

Pete gingerly holds up the invitation, which shows Callie as a young, Disney-Club-esque 14-year-old superhero.

PETE  
By putting your name in enormous  
spangly letters across the top of the  
invitation, then surrounding it with  
clip art?

CALLIE  
"Former star of *The PowerPixie Club*"?!  
I can't believe you! You know I hate  
being reminded of that!

PETE  
Oh, boo hoo, Callie was a child star.

CALLIE  
You weren't there. It was awful. Like  
Vietnam, but with dance routines.

NIGEL  
That actually sounds quite fun.

PETE  
They wanted a bigger name! Do you  
know how that feels? To want to be a  
world-famous superhero, then find out  
you're not big enough to headline an  
ice cream party in Fort Lee?

CALLIE  
Oh, boo hoo, Pete's not living the dream.

PETE  
Screw the dream, I need cash! We can't  
all be trust fund babies like you!

Callie stares at Pete, stung. Nigel makes an "ouch" face. Then she menacingly begins folding up the invitation.

CALLIE

"Trust fund baby," huh? I think you may have to hitch a ride with someone else tonight. I've got other plans.

She stalks off to the bar. Nigel's pager BEEPS. He checks it.

NIGEL

"Insane hostage-taker about to blow up half of midtown." Sod it, could be a laugh...

He gets up and grabs his coat. Callie stomps up to Bradley.

CALLIE

You're on for tonight. But not for the penis part. And if we don't leave this second, there's no way I'm still going to be angry enough to do this.

BRADLEY

Say no more. Hop on, arm-muffin.

As Callie takes his arm, she smiles acidly at Pete. Behind her, Bradley makes a lascivious hand gesture. Pete calls after her:

PETE

Callie! Come on! There's gonna be make-your-own mini-pizzas. Yum-yum!

But they're gone. Pete tentatively turns to Nigel.

PETE (CONT'D)

I don't suppose you'd...

NIGEL

Pete, given the choice between the smell of a roomful of eight-year-olds and the stench of my own bomb-scarred, melting flesh... Well, you can guess.

PETE

Wow. British people really hate children.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

EXT. SUBURBAN BACKYARD - LATER

A fairy-lit kids' party with a makeshift stage. Pete, now in full costume, is backstage with the birthday girl's dad. Pete peeks out at the crowd of expectant, sugar-high kids.

PETE

Are any of them biters? Because I've had trouble with biters before.

DAD

Not that I know of, Chillaxe.

PETE

Chillout. I mean, it's fine if there are. But maybe we could have a little muzzle standing by? A little makeshift muzzle, just in case?

DAD

Where's the invisible girl you promised?

PETE

What can I say? She disappeared!

Pete laughs uproariously at his joke. The dad does not.

PETE (CONT'D)

Yeah, she's not coming.

DAD

So what am I getting for my money? You gonna do some flying?

PETE

Well, no, flying's not really on the menu. But you can expect a cavalcade of frozen fun and sub-zero sensation!

DAD

You make crap out of ice?

PETE

I make crap out of ice.

DAD

Listen, don't mess up my baby girl's big day, okay? She's got it hard enough, being in a wheelchair.

PETE

Really? Oh, man, that's terrible.

(beat)

My three best disabled jokes just went  
right out the window.

INT. WATCHTOWER - BAR - SAME TIME

Sandy loads up on pretzels. Watching her, Horseforce ventures:

HORSEFORCE

Sandy, when I said "hams" before,  
about your arms... You have to  
understand: I love ham.

SANDY

(picking up bowl)

Save it, Horseforce.

She turns away -- and BUMPS right into BUTCH, the man with the  
shiny leather jacket, sending him flying spectacularly.

SANDY (CONT'D)

My pretzels! I mean, are you okay?

Butch hops back up with a smile, trying to play down the pain.  
Sandy's gaze meets his kind eyes. He has a Brad-Pitt-in-Thelma-  
and-Louise Texas accent.

BUTCH

Hardly felt a thing.

He painfully pops his shoulder back into place.

BUTCH (CONT'D)

All my fault for gettin' in your way,  
little lady.

SANDY

(melting)

Did you just call me "little"? 'Cause  
if you did, that's the nicest thing  
anyone's ever said to me.

BUTCH

Well, then you just ain't been hangin'  
'round the right heroes. Name's  
Butch.

SANDY

I'm Sandy.

They shake hands for a lingering beat.

BUTCH

Nice to meet you, little lady.

SANDY

(girlish giggle)

You said it again.

Horseforce has observed all this. He is not pleased.

INT. LIMO - SAME TIME

Bradley reclines as Callie looks out the window.

BRADLEY

I know it's tacky, but I still think you should've let me fly us to the gala.

CALLIE

Thanks, but the last thing I need is someone trying to goose me at fifty thousand feet.

BRADLEY

Don't knock it 'til you've tried it.

CALLIE

(laughs, almost charmed)

You are an unbelievable douchebag.

BRADLEY

Oh, I know. Champagne?

CALLIE

Is there Rohypnol in it?

BRADLEY

Would you like there to be?

CALLIE

Bradley, you even think about cape-rage, and I'll disappear your testicles right up into your lungs.

BRADLEY

(beat)

Just so you know, you just went up to 90% do-able.

CALLIE

Ironic, really, because you just dropped to a ten. You're going down.

BRADLEY

I was thinking exactly the same thing.

EXT. "THE FLAP" FLAGSHIP STORE - SAME TIME

Cops and gawkers ring the entrance of a skyscraper whose upper floors are still under construction. As Nigel AKA Brainstorm approaches the police line, an officer roughly blocks his path.

COP

Stop right there. ID and cape name.

NIGEL

I left my wallet at the bar, and my cape name's Policemen Have Tiny Balls. Catchy, right?

ANGLE ON the TV reporter, who's interviewing the Police Captain. IN THE B.G., Nigel and the cop are getting increasingly heated.

TV REPORTER

...So what do we know about the hostage-taker?

POLICE CAPTAIN

Well, she's a sweater-folder gone rogue, and she's got the store manager tied up on the roof with a bomb.

Bored, Nigel CASUALLY HEAD-BUTTS the cop, who falls to the ground. Nigel steps over him and heads toward the Captain.

TV REPORTER

What's she so angry about?

POLICE CAPTAIN

He made her some promise that now he doesn't even remember, so she's going to blow up the store. But don't worry, we've called in an expert mind-reader.

Nigel walks into their shot.

NIGEL

Just so you know, Officer Bennett's a bleeder. Which way to the stairs?

POLICE CAPTAIN

You're the psychic -- you tell me.

NIGEL

No way I'm going inside your brain. It smells of porn and Cheetos.

ANOTHER COP

Hurry! She's cut the power!

NIGEL

Okay, business time. I'm going to need a pint of milk, a quart of vodka and a regulation nightstick.

(off the Captain's look)

What? Do I tell you how to do your job?

EXT. SUBURBAN BACKYARD - LATER

Backstage, Pete is with the girl's father, jogging in place, warming up. Pete hands him a small cassette player.

PETE

This'll fire 'em up. Hit it.

The father presses play. Pete beams as his theme song plays:

PETE (ON TAPE) (CONT'D)

*Who's the coolest cape around?*

*Born just east of Parry Sound?*

*Chillout's sweet like yogurt's frozen*

*Ladies, try and keep your clothes on!*

There's a pause as the man looks at him.

DAD

Made that yourself, huh?

PETE

Yeah! How'd you guess?

(then)

Okay, let's do this!

He bounds onstage. Katherine, the birthday girl, is in a wheelchair at the front.

PETE (CONT'D)

Hey, kids, I'm Chillout. Who's heard of me?

(no response)

Not everyone. And who likes superpowers?

(they cheer)

Great! 'Cause I have powers aplenty.

Check this out...

He powers up his hand, then opens to reveal a small ice object.

SHORT KID

What's that?

PETE

It's a duck. A tiny frozen sculpture  
of a duck.

TALL KID

Looks like an ice cube.

PETE

No, no. It's a duck.

FAT KID

Where's its head? And its wings?

PETE

You know, your eyes are very young.  
They haven't formed properly yet.

KATHERINE

Can you make my name with your ice  
powers?

PETE

I sure can, birthday chair. Girl!

Pete powers up his hand again, and reveals... another ice cube.

PETE (CONT'D)

Ta-da! That is a tiny, icy sculpture  
of the word "Katherine."

KATHERINE

It looks like another ice cube.

PETE

Hey, if you don't believe me... take  
my word for it!  
(offering it to her)  
Take it.

KATHERINE

Don't want it.

PETE

Take the ice sculpture, Katherine.

KATHERINE

No. It looks cold.

She bursts into tears. The kids start to boo.

KATHERINE (CONT'D)

Dad! Why couldn't you get me a real  
superhero?

PETE

Aw, don't say that. Kids can be so cruel.

(then, still trying)

Hey, how 'bout this? Who wants frostbite? Katherine?

EXT. FLAGSHIP STORE - UPPER FLOOR - SAME TIME

A partially-constructed upper floor with open sides. Store manager Steve is tied to an wheeled office chair with a variety of scarves from the store's inventory. Jill has brought up several stacks of clothes and folds them compulsively.

JILL

Six hundred twenty-one, six hundred twenty-two...

STEVE

Stop folding chinos and let me off this chair, you crazy bitch!

JILL

Not 'til you remember what you promised. And dammit, you made me lose count.

NIGEL (O.S.)

Interesting.

REVEAL Nigel in the doorway, stirring a White Russian with a regulation nightstick. He delicately tastes a drop off the base of the nightstick and nods -- it's good.

NIGEL (CONT'D)

Less a White Russian, more a milky vodka. Still...

He knocks it back. Jill retreats, picking up the detonator.

JILL

Don't come any closer! This is a detonator!

NIGEL

Yup. Gussed that.

He advances on Jill. Steve chuckles, goading her.

STEVE

Oh, you're dead now. They finally sent a costume. What're you gonna do, Superhero? Chop her arms off with

(MORE)

STEVE (CONT'D)  
your eye-lasers? Blast her off the  
edge with some kind of tornado?

NIGEL  
My name's Brainstorm. I read minds.

STEVE  
(smugly pleased)  
Ha-HA!

NIGEL  
...within three meters.

STEVE  
What? That's it? That's the lamest  
power I've ever heard.

NIGEL  
Everyone's a bloody critic.

He edges toward Jill. She backs away.

JILL  
Stay back! I'm still trying to do the  
metric conversion!

STEVE  
Go get her, dumbass!

Nigel stops and cocks his head to do a read.

STEVE (CONT'D)  
What are you doing?? She's way more  
than three meters!

NIGEL  
See, that's your mistake, "dumb arse."  
It's not her I was reading.

Without turning, he SLAMS his elbow into Steve's shocked face.  
Steve reels for a moment, then slumps forward, unconscious.

INT. LIMO - SAME TIME

The limo approaches the red carpet. Crowds of fans, paparazzi.

CALLIE  
Looks like it's a pretty big deal.

BRADLEY  
Looks like I'm a pretty big deal. You  
know, you could have all this if you  
wanted. Invisibility's a blue-chip  
power.

CALLIE

Yeah, been there, done that, had my face on a lunchbox. Fame's just a bunch of phony, shallow idiots sucking up to you all the time.

BRADLEY

Exactly! It's fantastic! And you could have it again. All you'd have to do is dump Fruity Mind-Reader, Chunky Spinster and Sniveling Icebox.

CALLIE

Yeah, those are my best friends you're talking about.

BRADLEY

Who crapping cares? Sweetheart, when you're on the A-list, you can buy best friends.

Callie's face clouds. Suddenly, the car judders to a halt.

BRADLEY (CONT'D)

Hey, chauffeur, where'd you learn to drive? Tiananmen Square?

He climbs out -- the crowd roars. Callie mutters to herself:

CALLIE

Screw this.

She TURNS INVISIBLE. Bradley calls from outside:

BRADLEY (O.S.)

Come on, then -- arm-muffin time.

He sticks his head back in -- and sees the empty limo.

BRADLEY (CONT'D)

Knew it. Lesbian.

Then he spots the party invitation on the seat.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

EXT. SUBURBAN BACKYARD - LATER

Pete struggles to control the increasingly angry kids.

FAT KID

You're not a real superhero! You don't even have a secret base!

PETE

I have an apartment. And you don't know where it is, so it's kind of a secret.

TALL KID

What about a special car?

PETE

Ah, yes, the Chillmobile. It's in the shop right now, but it's a pretty high-end Mazda.

Callie enters, unseen, and pauses to enjoy Pete's flailing.

FAT KID

In a fight between you and a lion, who would win?

PETE

Hmm. Is it a big one?

FAT KID

Yes.

PETE

Probably the lion.

FAT KID

Your powers are gay, and you suck!

Other kids chime in with a chorus of boos. Callie DISAPPEARS.

PETE

Okay! I'd kill the lion! Is that what you want to hear? I'd freeze that stupid lion to death --

He realizes the kids have gone silent and are gaping at him.

PETE (CONT'D)

...What? Why are you staring at me? Have I got something on my face?

KATHERINE

You... you can fly.

PETE

Oh, very funny. How'd you like if I went, "You can walk"?

Pete looks down... to see he's RISEN two feet off the ground!

PETE (CONT'D)

Oh my god! I can fly!

CALLIE (O.S.)

You can certainly eat burritos, fat boy.

PETE

(whispering)

Callie?

CALLIE (O.S.)

What am I lifting here, 300 pounds?

PETE

Thank you so, so much...!  
(then, to kids, casually)  
Yeah, this is me flying. I can fly now!

They cheer. Pete looks to Katherine:

PETE (CONT'D)

How ya like me now, Hot Wheels?

INT. WATCHTOWER - DARTS AREA - SAME TIME

Sandy and Butch are preparing to play. She's schoolgirl-giddy as he places three darts in her hand.

SANDY

I don't know... I'm not sure I'm very good at this game.

BUTCH

Relax. Your paws were made for darts. Such sensual, confident, ladylike thumbs.

Sandy giggles and fires a dart, which flies off wildly.

MAN (O.S.)

Hey!

SANDY

God, I'm so sorry!

BUTCH

Aw, don't worry, darlin', that's just Claymaster.

ANGLE ON the man, who smiles and waves it off as he pulls the dart out of his face and smudges over the hole.

BUTCH (CONT'D)

Lucky you didn't hit the fella next to him, though.

He points out another man, who's very round and shiny.

BUTCH (CONT'D)

I'd still be pickin' bits o' Balloonatic out your hair at breakfast.

SANDY

(blushes)

Oh, gosh, breakfast. Right. Let me get us some more drinks.

As she heads off to the bar, Butch SCRATCHES HIS EAR COMPULSIVELY as if there's a flea there. It's pretty odd. Sandy reaches the bar, where Horseforce has been watching.

SANDY (CONT'D)

Two beers, please. For two.

Horseforce SNORTS. Sandy acts like she just noticed him.

SANDY (CONT'D)

Oh, hi, Horseforce. Any sign of your ponies?

HORSEFORCE

Stallions. Still about forty minutes away. Pile-up in the tunnel.

Sandy smiles, takes her beers and walks away.

EXT. FLAGSHIP STORE - UPPER FLOOR - SAME TIME

Nigel's absently tying scarves together as Steve comes to.

STEVE

Ow... What the hell was that for?

NIGEL

(taps Steve's head)

Here's what I saw in there: Office party. You fed her drinks. Promised she could be the new face of The Flap.

(MORE)

NIGEL (CONT'D)

Then took nudie photos of her in a cupboard. Ergo, you are a twat.

STEVE

That's it? That's why we're up here?

JILL

I told my whole family I was going to be fifty feet tall on the front of this shop with a Christmas hat and a reindeer bikini!

STEVE

Is it my fault you've got a big mouth?

JILL

It's your fault I've got a hundred-dollar back-alley Mexican boob job!

Nigel pulls taut one more scarf knot and mutters:

NIGEL

Should be enough.

He bends down to tie the scarf chain to the base of Steve's chair. Steve doesn't notice -- he's still talking to Jill.

STEVE

Okay, what do you want, an apology? I'm sorry your breasts are two different sizes. Can I go home now?

NIGEL

Jill, I'm British. I'm used to an incredibly intense level of sarcasm. Did that sound sincere?

JILL

Not really.

NIGEL

Okay, then.

Without turning, Nigel violently BACK-HEELS Steve's chair, which speeds toward the edge. Steve SCREAMS as Nigel lets the chain of scarves run through his hand, not even looking.

STEVE

I'm sorry!

NIGEL

Bit windy up here. Did he say something?

STEVE  
(speeding away)  
I'm sorrrrrryyyy!!

NIGEL  
Is he crying yet?

JILL  
Little bit.

NIGEL  
I like that.

STEVE  
(even further away)  
I really am sorry!!

NIGEL  
Okay. Sincere enough.

Nigel snaps his hand closed, grabbing the scarf, and Steve's chair STOPS just short of the edge.

STEVE  
What was that?? I thought superheroes were supposed to use their powers responsibly!

NIGEL  
(reeling Steve in)  
God, everyone's always bollocking on about that. But don't worry, I've got a plan.

STEVE  
Well, thank God.

NIGEL  
Jill, would you hand me that charming little detonator? And Steve, I'm going to have to insist you take off all of your clothes.  
(off his terrified look)  
Seriously. Chop-chop.

EXT. SUBURBAN BACKYARD - LATER

Pete is still "flying," playing to the crowd of admiring kids.

PETE  
Wheeee! Look! I can fly to the left!

He slowly moves a few inches to the left. The kids cheer!

PETE (CONT'D)

I can fly to the right!

He slowly moves a few inches to the right. They cheer again!

CALLIE (O.S.)

Wrap it up. I'm running out of invisible juice.

PETE

I can fly really high up!

CALLIE (O.S.)

No, Pete, you really can't.

Suddenly, the kids STOP cheering. Pete doesn't notice at first.

PETE

Come on! Higher! High into the sky!

CUT WIDE to see a NOW-VISIBLE CALLIE struggling to hold him up.

KATHERINE

You can't fly! An invisible girl was carrying you around!

CALLIE

Pete -- I'm gonna drop you --

PETE

What?

She staggers and they FALL SPECTACULARLY onto the present table.

KATHERINE

This is the worst birthday ever.

BRADLEY (O.S.)

Well, let's see what we can do about that, shall we, Katherine?

The kids turn to see ULTIMATUM casually yet heroically standing in the back of the yard, holding the invitation.

BRADLEY (CONT'D)

I'm Ultimatum. Who's heard of me?  
(they cheer)

'Course you have. Now, who wants to try on a medal made of pure gold?

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

INT. WATCHTOWER - DARTS AREA - SAME TIME

Sandy and Butch are still flirtatiously playing darts.

BUTCH

Tell you what, little lady. You hit a number, any number at all, and I'll give you a kiss.

Still gazing in his eyes, Sandy SLAMS the dart at the board, hitting a double ten and splitting it clean off the wall.

BUTCH (CONT'D)

Don't say I didn't warn ya....

He goes in for a kiss -- and Sandy loves it. Then something changes, and she pulls away, slobber all over her chin.

SANDY

Whoa. Butch... what did you have for lunch?

BUTCH

Same as always. Bit of meat, bit of marrow. Then I needed to puke, so I went outside and ate some grass.

SANDY

Oookay. Butch, would I be right in thinking you've got canine-based powers?

BUTCH

Ya got me. Dogstar's the cape name. And you ain't never gonna find a boyfriend more faithful than me. Stroke my hair.

He leans down and Sandy strokes his head.

SANDY

Gosh, it's so soft!  
(then, catching herself)  
But wait. Are there any downsides I should know about?

BUTCH

Hmm. I do get ringworm.

SANDY

Oh.

BUTCH

But you've wormed a guy before, right? Plus sometimes, when we're in the street, if I see a pretty gal, I might start humpin' her right there and then. Oh, and after I visit the bathroom, I may need to drag my butt around the carpet for a little while --

SANDY

Okay, this isn't going to work.

BUTCH

But you're my girl now! I ain't never gonna leave you!

Sandy looks around helplessly for a moment. Then breaks an antler off a deer-head on the wall and sighs.

SANDY

This is over. Get lost, Butch.

She tosses it, and Butch happily lopes off. As Sandy gazes dolefully after him, a smirking Horseforce saunters up.

HORSEFORCE

Oh, did your date not work out? Guess somebody bet on the wrong horse.

INT. SUBURBAN BACKYARD - SAME TIME

Pete is with the birthday girl's dad, who's quite annoyed.

DAD

...You lied to me, you made my daughter cry, and you got three kids so angry they messed their pants. So, no, you're not getting a tip. You're not getting a penny from me, Chillout.

PETE

Finally! You got my name right!  
(then)  
Mind if I grab some of the leftover mini-pizzas?

ANGLE ON Ultimatum, surrounded by adoring children.

BRADLEY

...So I'm at the Mayor's Gala, and it's full of bigwigs, supermodels, Dennis Quaid, and then I thought... where is a superhero really needed? A sweet little girl's birthday party.

(MORE)

BRADLEY (CONT'D)

(then)

You've got three minutes, then I'm going back.

KATHERINE

But why me?

BRADLEY

You know what, Katherine?

He looks past her to Callie.

BRADLEY (CONT'D)

Every little girl should get a chance to spend a night with a real hero.

He gives Callie a sleazy wink. She smiles thinly and holds up the back of her fist.

CALLIE

(aside to Pete)

Think he can see which invisible finger I'm holding up?

Ultimatum addresses the kids:

BRADLEY

Okay, time's up. But before I go -- who wants to help me fight crime?

KIDS

Me! Me!

BRADLEY

(re Pete and Callie)

Well, see those two losers over there? They're actually supervillains. And what do we do with supervillains?

KIDS

Kill them!

BRADLEY

Yeah! I mean, I was actually going to say "get them," but I like your plan more!

As the children rush them, Pete gapes, horrified.

PETE

God almighty! It's a stampede! Callie, do something!

CALLIE

Yeah, I've carried you way too much  
for one day, Pig-Out. See you back at  
the Watchtower.

She TURNS INVISIBLE as the kids descend on Pete. He screams and goes down.

PETE

Arrr! Not the face! Please stop  
biting my face!

EXT. FLAGSHIP STORE - ENTRANCE - SAME TIME

Nigel emerges, escorting Jill and carrying shopping bags.

POLICE CAPTAIN

That was quick.

NIGEL

'Course it bloody was -- I'm a  
professional.

POLICE CAPTAIN

Aren't you forgetting something?

NIGEL

Oh, yeah, the hostage. Here he comes.

Steve, still tied to the chair but stripped to his underwear, bursts out and wheels himself screaming toward them.

POLICE CAPTAIN

Geez, is he all right?

NIGEL

He is now, but he won't be if he  
doesn't get a move on. You see --

BOOM! A huge explosion. Steve goes flying but is unharmed.

NIGEL (CONT'D)

(not missing a beat)

-- You see, the bomb was on this  
fiddly little timer, and I couldn't be  
arsed to work it out. Anyway, I'm off  
to the pub.

POLICE CAPTAIN

Wait a second. I got a happy  
terrorist, a wrecked building, and --

(re Steve)

-- that guy wasn't naked before!

NIGEL

Again: do I tell you how to do your  
job?

INT. WATCHTOWER - LATER

Pete enters, disheveled and limping. He passes Horseforce and indicates outside.

PETE

Just so you know, some of your horses  
just attacked a guy's Prius.

He joins the other three at their table.

SANDY

Oh my gosh, Pete, what happened to  
your face?

PETE

They're tread marks. Vicious little  
bitch.

ANGLE ON the bar, where Bradley is once again watching TV with his acolytes.

TV REPORTER (ON TV)

...And on a night when he was  
receiving our city's biggest accolade,  
Ultimatum still found time to make a  
child's birthday wish come true.

They CUT to the backyard, where Ultimatum is lifting a delighted Katherine -- in her wheelchair -- over his head one-handed.

ULTIMATUM (ON TV)

Take that, cystic fibrosis!

The kids and parents cheer. In the bar, Bradley beams.

BRADLEY

And you want to know the best thing  
about kids' parties?  
(producing phone numbers)  
Horny big sisters...  
(producing more numbers)  
...and their horny moms!  
(off their laughter)  
Hey, I'll do them on separate nights,  
I'm not an animal.

At the table, Pete is watching this.

PETE

Look at him. I will never be that famous.

He turns back to the other three and waits a beat.

NIGEL

Oh, sorry. Were we supposed to contradict you?

CALLIE

Fame's overrated anyway. All it does is bring you money, recognition, and lots of hollow, empty sex.

(beat)

It's not as good as I just made it sound.

PETE

If I'm never going to be more than a sideshow at kids' birthday parties, maybe I should just give up the dream and quit.

SANDY

You can't quit, any more than I can stop looking for my one perfect guy.

NIGEL

Or I can forget the cold, dead eyes of that rent-boy in Tangiers.

PETE

But what if I did quit? I'm more than my powers. There's lots of other things I can do.

CALLIE

Really?

PETE

Sure. I can bake, I have a pleasant phone voice... Maybe I could even rededicate myself to my music.

Beat.

SANDY/CALLIE/NIGEL

Do not give up your dream. / That's just wrong. / You're a bloody hero.

PETE

You're right. It could still happen. After all, I'm just one small, local,  
(MORE)

PETE (CONT'D)  
heat-based emergency away from  
stardom.  
(then)  
Thanks, guys.

There's an O.S. WHINNY. Sandy looks off.

SANDY  
Do you think he's ever going to move?

REVEAL BUTCH in the corner, gently panting with big puppy eyes,  
the antler at his feet.

CALLIE  
He has been sitting there for ages.

PETE  
Imagine how long it is in dog years.

They react to something else Butch is doing.

NIGEL  
On the plus side, it looks like Butch  
can lick his own undercarriage.

CALLIE  
Sandy, when you kissed that guy -- did  
he use his tongue?

Sandy winces. The others laugh.

FADE OUT.

END OF SHOW