

The C Word
Pilot Episode

by
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EXT. CATHY'S HOUSE/BACK YARD - MORNING (D-1)

Cathy (prettier than she realizes, tendency to apologize for no reason, dry sense of humor) stands in her modest back yard with BRADLEY, a burly, early 40's contractor.

BRADLEY

You want me to put a pool in this yard?

CATHY

Yes. Please. Yes, please.

BRADLEY

(laughing)

Unless you want to tear that fence down and ask your neighbors to go in halves with ya, I don't think it's going to fit.

CATHY

I know it's small but--

BRADLEY

'Cause once you get your patio around it--

CATHY

I was thinking--

BRADLEY

And that's a nice shade tree over there so you'll wanna leave that.

CATHY

I don't care about--

BRADLEY

By then you'll have to make it so narrow that you wouldn't want to go any deeper than three feet and Hell, if you want to get wet that bad, I'd tell you to save your money and take a bath.

Beat.

CATHY

(disappointed)

I'm sorry I wasted your time. I guess--

BRADLEY

What you oughtta do is let us bump out your deck here, put in a sunken hot tub and a little bbq pit over here, and I think that'd be nice. An outdoor living room if you will.

CATHY

(hesitant)

Okay, that's fine. Just do that. How fast could you finish it?

BRADLEY

Well, it's the first day of summer, our busy season--

CATHY

I'll pay extra.

BRADLEY

I still got three jobs ahead of you-

CATHY

I'll pay double.

BRADLEY

I'll have a crew out here in the morning.

CATHY

Sounds perfect.

They shake hands.

CATHY (CONT'D)

Happy first day of summer.

BRADLEY

And to you.

Bradley heads up the driveway and gets into his truck with a "COOL POOLS" sign on the side of it. As he pulls away, CATHY'S HUSBAND PAUL (kid at heart, irresponsible but lovable) rides up on his Vespa.

PAUL

Is that your new lover? Is that why I'm sleeping on my sister's couch? (singing) *Everybody's Cooler with a Pool! Be cool with Cool pools!* Is the Cool Pool's guy filling your pool, Cathy?

CATHY

I'm going to bump out the deck and put in a hot tub.

PAUL

I thought you wanted a new backsplash for the kitchen. I don't know who you are anymore.

CATHY

Shouldn't you be at work already?

PAUL

I came by to get the heating pad you use for your cramps.

He turns his back and puts his hand on his shoulder.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Feel this.

She does.

CATHY

That's a big knot.

PAUL

Lisa's couch is giving me adult onset scoliosis. I'm going to have to start making my own shirts with an extra sleeve in the back. Could you just rub it for one second?

She does.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Oh yeah. Really get in there.

He's hunched over, leaning into the rub.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Oh, I miss this. I miss you. You've gotta tell me what's going on so we can fix this, Cathy.

She stops rubbing.

CATHY

I'm sorry. I have to go, Paul. I have an appointment with the dermatologist.

PAUL

Can we have dinner tonight? So we can discuss the fate of our marriage or at the very least decide what we're going to tell Adam tomorrow? Because right now my story is--Adam, your mom's a meanie.

CATHY

Okay. Dinner.

PAUL

Good. Where's the heating--

CATHY

In the linen closet.

PAUL

Which one's the linen--

CATHY

In the hallway.

PAUL

I love you.

He heads into the house. Cathy notices her ELDERLY NEIGHBOR SITTING ON THE PORCH OF HER RUN DOWN HOUSE ACROSS THE STREET. She has a faraway look and a scowl on her face. Grass is growing up around her TIRED OLD BASSET HOUND who lays in the yard. Cathy smiles and waves at the old woman.

CATHY

Happy first day of summer!

The old woman gets up and goes inside.

CATHY (CONT'D)

(to herself) Okay, then.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - LATER (D-1)

Cathy sits on an exam table in a PAPER ROBE talking to young handsome DR. TODD who listens patiently.

CATHY

We didn't really have that much money growing up but we did have a pool in our back yard and my brother and I would stay in it all summer making up dives. My signature was the Banana Split and Dive.

DR. TODD
Sounds fun.

CATHY
Except when Sean would hold me
under the water and fart on my
face.

She glances down to see that her paper robe is slightly open
in the front.

CATHY (CONT'D)
Oh, hello breast. How long has
that been happening?

DR. TODD
I didn't notice.

CATHY
Well, screw you. Anyway, in regard
to your question, I don't think I
want to do that.

DR. TODD
Not at all?

CATHY
I just have always liked my hair.
I cry every time I get it cut.

DR. TODD
You won't necessarily lose your
hair.

CATHY
My nose is another story. If you
told me I was going to lose my nose-

He hands her A BROCHURE.

CATHY (CONT'D)
What's this?

DR. TODD
Some information on alternative
treatments.

CATHY
Oh, crap. I thought it was a cure.

DR. TODD
How does your husband feel?

CATHY

He has a knot in his back from sleeping weird. He's using a heating pad. Is that what you'd recommend? (off Dr. Todd's look) I haven't told him yet.

Dr. Todd is clearly taken aback.

DR. TODD

I grew up with parents who perfected the art of talking about each other in front of each other but not actually to each other, and still, you've shocked me.

CATHY

I'm just kind of a private person. Except around you. I can't seem to shut up around you.

He hands her ANOTHER BROCHURE.

DR. TODD

Here are some tips on how to tell your loved ones. A lot of people find it difficult.

CATHY

Are you married?

DR. TODD

No. But I think I'd want to know.

CATHY

I planned to tell him. But when I got home that day, he had trapped a mouse under a skillet and was standing there waiting for me to come do something about it and I just found myself saying "I need to be alone for a while."

He hands her yet ANOTHER BROCHURE.

DR. TODD

Some support groups you might be interested in.

CATHY

I just got an image of when you do get married, you and your bride standing at the altar passing brochures back and forth.

DR. TODD

Don't you think you should be honest with your family?

CATHY

Honesty is overrated. White lies can really keep a marriage together. You're single so you still romanticize the idea of a symbiotic relationship with no secrets.

DR. TODD

Can you tell your brother?

CATHY

I'm afraid he'd just try to squeeze in one last attempt to fart on my face for old times sake.

DR. TODD

I don't have a brochure for that.

CATHY

Then are we done?

He hands her a prescription.

DR. TODD

As needed for discomfort.

CATHY

Wow. I should get in touch with my college boyfriend and see if he still has his bong.

DR. TODD

You don't have to. You can get it in cigarettes, tea, cookies, brownies...

CATHY

Can I mix and match?

DR. TODD

I believe you can.

CATHY

I believe I will.

DR. TODD

Tell someone, Cathy.

Beat.

CATHY
Can I tell you?

Dr. Todd smiles and exits. Cathy looks at the prescription in her hand.

CATHY (CONT'D)
Cookies, huh?

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. CAR - LATER (D-1)

Cathy eats A BIG POT COOKIE as she drives and sings DELTA DAWN along with the radio.

EXT. GROCERY PARKING LOT - LATER (D-1)

SEAN, (LATE 20'S, POSSIBLY HOMELESS, ATTRACTIVE IN THAT HEROINE CHIC WAY, SKINNY, LONG HAIR) is jumping rope in front of the store. His rope is made of plastic shopping bags tied together, a stone tied to the middle of it for weight. He's proselytizing to shoppers as they exit with groceries.

SEAN
It takes one plastic bag two hundred years to disintegrate in a land fill! When you carry your eggs home in a plastic bag you might as well put it over your child's head and suffocate them with it because you're destroying their future!

Cathy pulls up in front of him and lowers her window.

CATHY
Did you go to business school to learn to appeal to people like that?

SEAN
No, I went to Shut the Fuck Up Technical Institute.

CATHY
I bet you were first in your class.

SEAN
No, but I slept with her.

CATHY
Lovely. Get in the car.

SEAN
Come back and pick me up on a bike.

CATHY
I have something to tell you.

SEAN
Go tell it on a mountain.

CATHY
Get in the damn car, Sean.

Beat. Sean reluctantly rolls up his jump rope like a garden hose and gets in.

SEAN
You could at least buy a hybrid.

CATHY
You could at least take a shower.

Cathy holds her breath and leans out the window as they drive off.

INT. MCDONALD'S - LATER (D-1)

Sean waits calmly next to a trash can as a DAD WITH THREE KIDS approaches with their garbage.

SEAN
I'll take that for you, sir.

DAD
(confused) Oh. Okay, thanks.

He hands over their trays and exits with his kids. Sean picks up a half eaten burger and shoves it in his mouth as he joins Cathy at a table. She has a mountain of food in front her.

CATHY
Gross.

SEAN
I know you are.

CATHY
I would have bought you a meal.

SEAN
We throw away a ton of food in this country every single day. And not a figurative ton, an actual ton.
(MORE)

SEAN (CONT'D)
(re: Cathy's tray) Besides, I
wouldn't want to take food out of
the mouths of all those tape worms
you're feeding.

CATHY
Never comment on a woman's meal.

SEAN
You've never been a woman to me,
Cathy. (then) So what did you want
to tell me?

Cathy stares at him for a beat.

CATHY
You're an asshole.

Cathy takes a check out of her purse and hands it across the
table.

CATHY (CONT'D)
Here.

SEAN
I don't want this.

CATHY
Just some money to tuck away--

SEAN
(robotic) I. Do. Not. Want. It.
(normal) Have we met?

CATHY
Look, you don't have to spend it,
just put it in savings and if you
decide to get an apartment or stay
in a hotel for a while, if it gets
cold out--

SEAN
I feel like I'm on a train in
Europe and you're a little German
man and I'm me and we're sitting
across from each other and we're
talking but neither of us can
really understand the other one.

CATHY
I understand that you love shocking
people and you think the way you're
living is a good idea right now.
(MORE)

CATHY (CONT'D)

But...just take it as a favor to me.

SEAN

Fine. I'll give it to the Salvation Army.

Beat.

CATHY

Fine. If you don't want it I'll keep it.

She takes the money order back.

SEAN

Okay, wait a minute. So you want me to have it as long as I do what you want me to do with it.

CATHY

I want you to spend it on yourself! I want you to be happy.

SEAN

No, YOU want to be happy and you think this will do it for you. This isn't about me. I'm friggin' ecstatic. I wish you knew what that felt like.

CATHY

What does that mean? You don't think I'm happy?

SEAN

Look, I don't want to be a judge because that's your thing, but eight out of the ten times I saw you last year all you could talk about was whether you were going to buy a couch from Crate and Barrel or Pottery Farm--

CATHY

Barn.

SEAN

Like I care. One was cheaper but the other one had a nicer fabric and ultimately you decided to stick with the one you already had because it's a safe neutral with a few good years still left in it and the cushions are reversible so if you turned them over you really couldn't see that stain. Oh God am I glad you worked through that! Meanwhile, I still close my eyes at night and see color swatches with names like Harvest Light and Crimson Rose!

CATHY

That doesn't mean I'm not happy.

SEAN

Oh, good, then you're just really fucking boring.

CATHY

Well, at least I don't smell like feet.

SEAN

I know you're embarrassed of me, Cathy. You don't have to make little jabs about it because they hurt you more than they do me. But I'm embarrassed of you, too. Because somewhere along the way my fun, interesting, kooky sister got boring. And even more than embarrassed that makes me sad.

Cathy is speechless as she takes this in. Suddenly, Sean jumps up and cuts off a GUY HEADED TO THE TRASH. Sean takes a drink out of his hand.

SEAN (CONT'D)

May I have this if you're just going to throw it away?

The guy hands it over as Cathy quietly passes them and exits.

INT. FANCY RESTAURANT - NIGHT (N-1)

Cathy stares at Paul as the WAITRESS writes on her pad.

WAITRESS

Great. I'll be right back with those drinks.

She exits. Paul looks through the menu.

PAUL

I'm craving pasta but I also love their chicken so if you were going to get pasta, maybe I'll get the chicken so we can share--

Paul looks up to see Cathy staring at him.

PAUL (CONT'D)

What? I know you wanted to tell me something but I thought we'd order first--unless you want to tell me now.

CATHY

I wanted a new couch because you spilled fruit punch while you were bouncing on the cushions.

PAUL

Not bouncing. Dancing. Do you want me to just order for both of us?

CATHY

What forty year old man dances on a couch sober?

PAUL

I can't be the only one.

CATHY

And now I have to reverse the cushions to hide the stain and I used to lie awake at night upset about that because even though you couldn't see the stains I knew they were there.

PAUL

I told you to go ahead and pick out a new couch.

CATHY

I don't want to be the one who picks out the new couch. I want to be the one who spills the Fruit Punch.

PAUL
You're not the Fruit Punch type.

CATHY
Because I read that high fructose
corn syrup is so bad for you.
(then) Do you think I'm boring?

PAUL
(hesitant)
Just tell me how to get back in the
house.

CATHY
You do. You think I'm boring.

PAUL
It's not a bad thing. It's just
the way our personalities break
down. I like to do fun things and
you like to do things that some,
let's say a majority people might,
if they were forced to categorize
them, might consider boring.

CATHY
Like what?

PAUL
Like clean and organize.

CATHY
That's what I like to do?

PAUL
You live for it.

CATHY
(getting angry)
I tried to be the fun one. I
wanted to buy the house with the
pool so I could teach Adam the
Banana Split and Dive but you
wanted to be closer to your job so
you could Vespa to work.

PAUL
You said that was probably a better
idea because so many people die in
pools.

CATHY

People die everywhere. I said it was a better idea because you threw a tantrum in front of our realtor.

PAUL

I made my point in an emotional way, sure.

CATHY

You made your point in a childish way.

PAUL

(getting annoyed)

Well, it's hard not to act like a kid when every time we leave the house you ask me if I need to pee.

CATHY

Well it's hard not to treat you like a child when every time I make you a sandwich you ask me to cut the crusts off your bread.

PAUL

Oh sue me. I love a crustless sandwich.

CATHY

Well, I love onions but I haven't been able to eat them for five years because you say they're stinky poo poo. And now Adam doesn't like onions and he's never even tried them.

PAUL

They are stinky poo poo. Stinky poo poo yuck yuck! (laughing; then) Come on, Cathy, am I really sleeping at my sister's because you want to start cooking with onions?

CATHY

Yes, Paul. That's it. I want onions to be a major part of my life in the next year.

PAUL

Well, first of all, you're whacked and second of all, I hope you feel better because I feel like shit.

The Waitress returns with drinks.

WAITRESS
Are you ready to order?

CATHY
I'm just doing desserts.

EXT. CATHY'S HOUSE - LATER - NIGHT (N-1)

Cathy puts her key in the front door.

INT. CATHY'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

She enters the dark house and turns on a light. As she does, someone, out of nowhere, screams and jumps on top of her.

MUFFLED MALE VOICE
Your money or your life!

Cathy yells and flails and runs into the corner of the room.

CATHY
Don't kill me don't kill me don't
kill me! Jewelry's in the bedroom!
I have a child!

Laughter.

MALE VOICE
Hey, Mom. Did you miss me?

ADAM, CATHY AND PAUL'S THIRTEEN YEAR OLD SON (GOING ON EIGHT)
turns on another light.

CATHY
Adam! I told you! Stop doing
that! Stop it stop it stop it!
That's not funny!

ADAM
It was kind of funny from this
side. Aw man, I should have taped
it. I could send it in and win
something. Aw, man.

CATHY
Why are you home?

ADAM
Brent's parents just drove really
fast. Some vacation. They fought
the whole time.
(MORE)

ADAM (CONT'D)

Brent thinks they're going to get a divorce. He's all, fine, twice the stuff.

CATHY

Why didn't you call and tell me you were coming?

ADAM

I didn't think of it. We taped a bunch of their fights. Brent's going to make a documentary about his life.

Cathy shakes her head in bewilderment.

ADAM (CONT'D)

Where's Dad?

CATHY

Um...he's staying at Aunt Lisa's.

ADAM

Why?

CATHY

We're just--sometimes adults just need a little breathing space.

ADAM

Jesus, what did you do?

CATHY

What does that mean? And don't say Jesus.

ADAM

Jesus. Are you getting a divorce, too?

CATHY

Honey, it's going to be fine. We're building a deck on the house with a hot tub so you and your friends--

ADAM

I don't like hot tubs.

CATHY

You don't?

ADAM

You said they're like sitting in a petrie dish, everybody's germs crawling up in your butthole.

CATHY

I'm pretty sure I didn't say butthole. (then) But speaking of butthole, what's that smell?

She tracks the smell over to his duffel bag.

CATHY (CONT'D)

What's in there?

ADAM

I don't now. My clothes.

CATHY

You were gone a month, they didn't have a place for you to do laundry?

ADAM

They said something about it. But I didn't see anything.

CATHY

You're tired. Go to bed.

ADAM

Geez.

He goes to his room. Cathy opens his duffel bag and gags.

EXT. BACK YARD - THE NEXT MORNING (D-2)

Construction workers are building the deck. Cathy approaches Bradley who is talking on his cell phone.

CATHY

I want a pool. Not a hot tub--a pool.

BRADLEY

(into phone)

Let me call you back, Brian.

He hangs up the phone.

BRADLEY (CONT'D)

(to Cathy) What do you want?

CATHY

I want you to dig a hole as deep and wide as you possibly can. Everywhere there's yard now there should be pool. Dig up the shade tree. Rip off the deck. And dig right up to the house so I can dive into my pool from the porch. I'll pay you overtime to work through the night. If you don't want the job, I'll find somebody else to do it. No skin off my nose. I have no loyalty to you. We just met.

Bradley chuckles at this.

BRADLEY

Hey, lady, if that's what you want. I'll get a digger out here this afternoon.

CATHY

Great. Get your digger out here. The bigger your digger the better.

She heads back to her house.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - CONTINUOUS (D-2)

As she does, she notices the old woman across the street sitting on her porch. The Basset is asleep in the yard.

CATHY

I'm Cathy. It's weird that I've lived across the street from you for over a year and I never got your name. I apologize for that. (re: dog) You know, there's a dog park pretty close to here. I don't know if your dog likes other dogs or not. Or parks. But I could get my son to--

The old woman gets up and goes inside.

CATHY (CONT'D)

(sotto; to herself) Well, guess who is not going to swim in my pool.

INT. SCHOOL/CLASSROOM - LATER - (D-2)

Cathy sits at her desk eating a POT BROWNIE. She's shops online at her computer looking at CAMPING EQUIPMENT, TENTS, SLEEPING BAGS, ETC. The high school students sit at their desks staring at her, confused.

STUDENT

Are you going to teach us anything today?

Beat. Cathy looks up at them.

CATHY

Have I ever taught you anything? Really? This is summer school so I guess the answer is obvious.

She gets a DVD out of a file cabinet and holds it up.

CATHY (CONT'D)

Anybody ever seen The Patriot?

STUDENT 2

I think I saw that. Oh, wait, no.

She puts the DVD into the player.

CATHY

It's depiction of the American Revolution is about twenty per cent accurate at best but if you understood this version as truth you'd still know more about that time in history than ninety nine per cent of Americans. And Mel Gibson is medium good. Enjoy.

She presses play as the door opens and her OVERWEIGHT STUDENT ANDREA ENTERS. Andrea has a tough, don't mess with me attitude about her and the size to back to up.

CATHY (CONT'D)

You're late again, Andrea.

ANDREA

Yeah, sorry about that. But I figured that since you usually spend the first ten minutes of every class trying to get to your point, I probably didn't miss anything.

Andrea launches into a dead on impression of Cathy saying a series of "I'm sorry" that has the class in stitches.

CATHY

Funny. Come get your test.

While the class fixates on Mel Gibson, Andrea meets Cathy at her desk.

CATHY (CONT'D)

(Soto)

You can't be fat AND mean, Andrea.

ANDREA

(taken aback)

What?

CATHY

You heard me. If you can dish it out you gotta be ready to lick it up. Fat people are jolly for a reason. Fat repels people but joy attracts them. Get it? I know these people are laughing at your cruel jokes but nobody's asking you to prom. So you can either be fat and joyous or a skinny bitch. It's up to you. I know what I'd choose.

Andrea just stares at her in shocked silence.

CATHY (CONT'D)

Sit down. We're watching a movie.

Andrea sits. Cathy goes back to her online shopping. She pulls up a picture of a sleeping bag. She reaches for a pen when something outside catches her eye. She looks out the window and has to turn her head to see PAUL standing up against the side of the school, staring at her with puppy dog eyes that are pouring with tears as he eats a GIANT RED ONION like an apple. Cathy breaks into a smile and immediately exits her class.

INT. SCHOOL/HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Cathy heads down the empty hallway toward the exit.

PAUL

Wanna bite?

She turns to see Paul, still eating the onion, standing in an empty classroom.

CATHY
You're a freak.

PAUL
Uh huh.

He takes a bite.

CATHY
Stop that! I get it.

She takes the onion away and he pulls her to him.

INT. CLASSROOM - CONTINUOUS

PAUL
Please kiss my big onion mouth.

CATHY
Oooh, no.

PAUL
See, they're stinky, aren't they?
Admit it.

They kiss.

CATHY
(through kisses; laughing)
They are. They're stinky poo poo
yuck yuck.

PAUL
(spitting out onion)
It's going to be all about you now
Cathy. For as long as it takes,
forever, it's all about you.

He shuts the door and locks it and kisses her neck.

CATHY
I'm at school.

PAUL
Good. I'm going to teach you
something. How to have fun.

He sits her on the teacher's desk and kisses down her body as
we FADE OUT.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET - LATER (D-2)

Sean is chained to a WATER DELIVERY TRUCK parked on this
residential street.

SEAN
Poison delivery! Poison delivery!
Sign up for your poison delivery!

A couple walks by and eyes him suspiciously.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET - CONTINUOUS (D-2)

Cathy drives up beside Sean and lowers her window.

CATHY
I have something for you.

SEAN
I want for nothing. The air is my
food, the sun is my roof.

She pushes a sleeping bag through the window. It lands at
his feet.

CATHY
I get it. You don't want to take
up any space or resources on the
planet. But I figured you could
still get a good nights sleep. A
hundred per cent organic. I know
you're impressed.

He points to the tags with his foot.

SEAN
What's that?

CATHY
Oh, it's just the tags. Tells you
about it's features and how to
clean it.

SEAN
Oh, my God, you bought it new?

Beat. Cathy blanches.

SEAN (CONT'D)
We are being suffocated by stuff in
this country. So much so that
there's a bill in Congress right
now to send rockets full of our
crap into space--ha! Space--ironic,
isn't it.

CATHY
I thought--

SEAN
You just don't get it.

The TRUCK DRIVER comes out and approaches Sean.

TRUCK DRIVER
You gotta get off my truck, man. I gotta move.

SEAN
I thought I'd go with you on your poison delivery today. Go ahead if you must. I'll run along behind.
(shouting) Poison delivery!

Cathy shakes her head and drives away.

EXT. CATHY'S BACK YARD - EVENING (N-2)

A bull dozer digs a hole in the back yard, tearing up the landscaping.

INT. CATHY'S HOUSE -- KITCHEN (N-2)

Freshly showered, hair still wet and in a robe, Cathy is in the kitchen cutting up vegetables when Adam enters.

ADAM
I'm starving my face off.

CATHY
Help me cut. I'm making chili.
Your favorite.

ADAM
Chili's not my favorite anymore.
We had sushi on vacation. It was awesome.

She hands him a knife and some carrots. He wields the knife around in a figure eight.

ADAM (CONT'D)
(weird voice)
I am a warrior. This is my weapon.
I will teach you many things.

CATHY
Dad's coming over for dinner.

ADAM
Ew. Are you guys dating now?

CATHY

Adam, everything's going to be okay. We all love each other and that's what matters.

Suddenly Adam screams and grabs his hand.

CATHY (CONT'D)

What's wrong?

ADAM

I cut my damn finger off! Oh my Jesus! I cut it off!

Cathy looks at the cutting board and sees the SLIGHTLY BLOODY FINGER TIP. She flies into action, handing Adam a tea towel and grabbing ice from the freezer.

CATHY

Hold your finger tight with this. Get in the car. I'll put the tip on ice and they can sew it at the hospital! Go go go!

She puts the finger in a baggy with ice and heads out the door. Beat. She re-enters and stares at Adam who is laughing his head off and holds up his finger--intact. She looks at the rubber finger in the baggy, then throws the whole thing at him.

CATHY (CONT'D)

That wasn't funny.

ADAM

Let's take a vote.

CATHY

We're going to discuss your punishment with your dad at dinner tonight.

ADAM

I don't want to be a third wheel on your stupid date.

Cathy walks into the bathroom, then comes right back out.

CATHY

Did you not flush the toilet?

ADAM

It won't flush.

CATHY
Did you try to plunge it?

ADAM
No.

CATHY
Well, plunge it.

ADAM
You plunge it. I'm going to eat at
Brent's.

He exits. Cathy stares after him. Suddenly she hears
sirens.

EXT. CATHY'S BACK YARD -- MOMENTS LATER (N-2)

A COP CAR with lights spinning sits in the driveway. The
workers have stopped working. Cathy comes hurriedly into the
backyard and approaches a police officer.

CATHY
What's the problem?

POLICE OFFICER
This your house?

CATHY
(sarcastic)
No, I live in the next town over, I
just take walks around here in my
robe.

POLICE OFFICER
Well, tie your belt 'cause your
boob's hanging out.

He's right. She wraps her robe tighter and ties her belt.

POLICE OFFICER (CONT'D)
You don't have permits for this
job.

CATHY
So? I'm not bothering anybody.

POLICE OFFICER
One of your neighbors complained.

CATHY
Which one?

EXT. THE OLD WOMAN'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER (N-2)

Cathy rushes up to the front door, and without knocking, walks right in.

INT. THE OLD WOMAN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS - (N-2)

She sees the old woman sitting in front of the TV. As Cathy crosses the threshold into the living room, she trips on the basset hound lying there.

CATHY
(to dog)
Oh, God! Are you okay?

OLD WOMAN
You can't just walk into my house.

CATHY
You have no idea what I can do.

OLD WOMAN
You're a pain in the ass.

CATHY
You're a fucking cunt.

OLD WOMAN
Get out.

CATHY
You have never said hello to me, you have never even smiled even a little bit. You sit out there scowling at everybody who goes by in your run down house that looks like shit and smells like chicken that you fried twenty three years ago. And then I do one small construction project, and you have to go behind my back...(getting suddenly emotional) And I really wanted to teach my son the Banana Split and Dive and I have very little time left...because summer in Minneapolis isn't very long. It's here and then it's over. It's just over. And that makes me so fucking mad I can't even tell you!

Beat. She turns to go and trips over the dog again.

CATHY (CONT'D)
Oh God! I am sooo sorry!

OLD WOMAN
My husband built this house.

This gets Cathy's attention and she turns back.

OLD WOMAN (CONT'D)
And he just loved puttering around,
putting a new coat of paint on this
or that and working in the yard. I
accused him of loving that lawn
more than me once.

CATHY
Let me guess--

OLD WOMAN
--he died five years ago. And all
my friends are dead. So I just sit
out there and wait until I can see
them again. Sorry I'm not in a
better mood.

Beat.

CATHY
Well, if you think you're going to
be waiting at least another day
then do your neighbors a favor and
mow your fucking grass.

Cathy exits.

EXT. CATHY'S HOUSE - A MOMENT LATER (N-2)

As she heads back to her house, Paul is pulling up on his Vespa. She inadvertently cuts him off. He swerves to miss her and topples over.

PAUL
Sorry I'm late.

He picks himself up and pulls up his pant leg to reveal a scraped knee..

I could sure use a band aid and a
lollipop.

Off Cathy's blank stare we CUT TO:

INT. CATHY'S HOUSE - LATER (N-2)

Cathy gets the first aid kit and tends to Paul's knee.

PAUL

Do you remember Angel from work?

CATHY

Yep.

PAUL

He got engaged to that girl who we met at that party and she made that snotty face when you talked to her that made you feel like you had bad breath. I took him out for a drink to celebrate but then the game was on and it was really close so I stayed til the end. (re: knee) On behalf of all the soldiers, thank you so much Mrs. Nightingale. Where's Adam?

CATHY

Doing his charity work.

PAUL

That's nice.

SFX. The PHONE RINGS. Cathy puts the first aid kit away and let's the machine get it.

PAUL (CONT'D)

What charity is it again?

DR. TODD (V.O.)

Hi Cathy, it's Dr...Smilovic. Dr. ...Todd. It's Todd. This isn't business it's, just personal. Anyway, I was thinking about...you... I can't seem to stop thinking about you actually. If I'm being honest. I know you go either way on honesty (he chuckles)... Anyway, I want to make sure you have my cell number--

PAUL

(suspicious)

Who's that?

CATHY

I've been meaning to talk to you about something--

PAUL

Are you fucking kidding me? So this is why you need your space?

(MORE)

PAUL (CONT'D)

But what, you want to see if it works out before you let me go completely? What, a computer geek with a heart of gold doesn't do it for you anymore? What kind of fun were you really looking for, Cathy? Trips to the Riviera? Well, am I right? (beat; emotional) Are you having an affair?

She doesn't respond.

PAUL (CONT'D)

I need to be alone for a while.

He grabs his jacket and exits. She stares after him for a moment, then turns to the phone and plays Dr. Todd's message again.

EXT. OUTDOOR CAFÉ – THE NEXT MORNING (D-3)

Cathy has three pieces of cake in front of her. Dr. Todd picks at an omelet.

DR. TODD

So who have you told so far?

CATHY

You're like a dog with a bone about that.

DR. TODD

Eventually you'll have to tell them.

CATHY

Maybe not. Maybe I'll just leave a Post It on my front door that says-- heard Morocco was great this time of year.

DR. TODD

Morocco's so random.

CATHY

Maybe you should tell them for me. After all, you have more practice with giving this sort of news. Does it get easier? Do you kind of like it? Does it give you a bit of a God complex?

DR. TODD

You're my first.

Beat.

CATHY

Really?

DR. TODD

I mean...I've been in on other diagnoses, with other doctors when I was in training--

CATHY

How old are you?

DR. TODD

Thirty-one.

CATHY

(teasing)

Holy Shit. (sarcastic) Shows you how good my insurance is. I got the new guy. What if I'm healthy as a horse and you just got caught up in youthful exuberance?

DR. TODD

That's what second opinions are for.

CATHY

So, as your first, how was I?

DR. TODD

The first thing you said was, "It's okay." Like you were more worried about me.

CATHY

That's a bad habit of mine. It takes twenty eight days to break a habit, right? I have that.

DR. TODD

So how was I?

CATHY

(thinking)

Very matter of fact and professional but detailed. You dumbed it down just enough to be clear but not insulting. And underneath it all you seemed sad, and I appreciated that.

(MORE)

CATHY (CONT'D)

But after you left the room I heard you joking with a nurse about putting the donuts too close to the urine samples and was that what you were supposed to wash them down with.

DR. TODD

(horrified)

You heard that?

CATHY

Made me question your sincerity.

DR. TODD

Well, I can't just fall apart in the hallway at work.

CATHY

Couldn't you though? I would have appreciated a little screaming to the heavens on my behalf.

DR. TODD

They discourage that in med school.

CATHY

You asked my opinion.

DR. TODD

I did. And...thin walls. I'll remember that.

CATHY

You'll remember more than that.

DR. TODD

I will?

CATHY

Of course. Because you always remember your first.

They share a smile. The WAITER approaches.

WAITER

How are you all doing?

CATHY

I don't know about him but I'm almost finished.

The WAITER nods and exits. Cathy winks at Dr. Todd.

CATHY (CONT'D)
That was a double entendre.

INT. SCHOOL/CLASSROOM - LATER (D-3)

Cathy presses play on another Mel Gibson movie.

STUDENT
Wow. This went from being my least favorite class to my most favorite.

CATHY
Oh, good. Another dream came true for me this week.

Cathy takes something out of her desk drawer and leaves the classroom.

EXT. SCHOOL - MOMENTS LATER (D-3)

Cathy steps outside, leans up against the wall of this secluded area of the school and starts to light one of her pot cigarettes. As she does, she sees Andrea come out of another door and take something out of her purse.

CATHY
Andrea?

Andrea turns, startled, and hides something behind her back.

CATHY (CONT'D)
Are you skipping my class?

ANDREA
Are you skipping your class?

Cathy approaches her.

CATHY
What are you-- Are you smoking?

ANDREA
Are you?

Cathy grabs her arm and wrestles a cigarette pack from Andrea's hand and crushes it.

CATHY
(re: cigarettes)
Think of every one of these you smoke as taking six months off your life.

(MORE)

CATHY (CONT'D)

So with every one of these you can say goodbye to your mom, your brother, your dog, your husband you might have someday, your--

ANDREA

I'd rather die young and skinny than be fat forever.

This stops Cathy's rant.

ANDREA (CONT'D)

What can I say? Fat camp didn't work.

CATHY

Yeah, well, there's gotta be--

ANDREA

The protein diet, the blood sugar diet, the starvation diet, the pretending I don't care strategy. You'd be mean, too.

CATHY

(stammering)

Well...you just...you need motivation.

ANDREA

Oh, thanks. I'm healed. I should have come to you sooner Mrs. Jamison.

Beat.

CATHY

I'll pay you a hundred dollars for every pound you lose.

Andrea is stunned. Cathy takes a roll of bills out of her pocket.

CATHY (CONT'D)

Here's a good faith hundred. We meet in the gym every Friday at two for weigh ins. If you smell like a cigarette the deal's off.

ANDREA

(elated)

This skinny bitch'll see you Friday.

She exits. Cathy uncrumples the pack and lights a broken cigarette.

EXT. CATHY'S DRIVEWAY - AFTERNOON (D-3)

As Cathy gets out of her car, she sees Marlene waiting for her.

OLD WOMAN

My name's Marlene. My dog's name is Thomas. He doesn't like walking, but thanks for your offer.

CATHY

It's nice to meet you, Marlene.

MARLENE

Could I borrow your lawn mower? Mine's dead. Add it to the list.

CATHY

Sure. It's in the garage.

Cathy motions to the garage and Marlene heads in.

CATHY (CONT'D)

Marlene.

Marlene turns.

CATHY (CONT'D)

If you were ready to go, did you ever think about--just going?

MARLENE

Why? Does a friend of yours want to buy my house?

Cathy shakes her head. Marlene goes into the garage. Cathy looks at THOMAS lying in Marlene's yard.

CATHY

(to Basset) Don't look so miserable. Nobody else's day is any better than yours.

INT. CATHY'S HOUSE - LATER (D-3)

Through a series of DISSOLVES we see Cathy at home.

*She smokes a pot cigarette and watches a funny movie.

*She puts a stack of hundred dollar bills into an envelope and labels it "Andrea".

*She writes something on a Post It and sticks it to the front door.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Paul pulls up to Cathy's house with Adam. Adam is in the passenger seat playing a video game on an iphone.

PAUL

It doesn't matter if I'm at work,
any time of day, call me whenever
you want to. Call me when we're
together if you want to. Call me
right now.

Adam ignores him and continues to play the game.

PAUL (CONT'D)

It's a phone, too, you know.

ADAM

I know.

Adam gets out of the car and heads to the house.

PAUL

I love you, buddy.

Adam ignores him and heads to the house.

EXT. CATHY'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Adam looks at the Post It that reads--I LOVE YOU. He pulls it off and enters.

INT. CATHY'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

The house is mostly dark.

ADAM

Mom! (beat) Mom!

He glances in the kitchen. Not there. He sees the light on in the bathroom and the door half open. He opens the door completely and looks in.

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

In the brightly lit bathroom, Cathy is lying in the bathtub, filled with water bright red with blood.

One arm hangs over the tub revealing a slit wrist and the blood from that wound drips onto the floor.

ADAM
(in shock; Sotto)
Mom? Mom?

Adam goes ballistic. He starts screaming like a lady and running in panicked circles. He looks for the phone, but it's not on it's base. He starts to run out the front door when Cathy, in a robe, appears at the bathroom door.

CATHY
Why aren't you laughing?

This stops Adam. Then he instantly goes ballistic again.

ADAM
No! No! No way! You suck! You
suck! You suck!

She grabs him and pushes him against the wall.

CATHY
Someday I am going to be dead and
as a courtesy to the world, I don't
want to leave them the guy who
doesn't know how to get his shit to
flush. And let me be clear, your
dad isn't living here because I
only wanted to raise one kid, and I
chose you. So from now on, I'm
going to raise you so hard your
head's going to spin. Now come
here.

She pulls him into the bathroom where she has a crock pot of the leftover chili sitting in the sink. She dumps its contents into the toilet.

ADAM
What are you doing?

CATHY
Sorry it's not sushi.

She hands him the plunger.

CATHY (CONT'D)
The instructions are in the name.
(enunciating) PLUNGE-HER.

She exits the bathroom and holds the door shut.

ADAM (O.S.)
Let me out!

She pulls a heavy trunk in front of the door. She then notices Adam's iphone.

CATHY
Where did you get this phone?

ADAM (O.S.)
Dad bought it for me.

CATHY
Yeah, I don't think so.

She takes the phone with her and exits.

EXT. GROCERY STORE - DUSK - (N-4)

Sean is standing silently in front of the store, holding a rope made crudely from plastic bags around his neck like a noose. Cathy pulls up and lowers her window.

CATHY
I brought you some chili.

SEAN
I want for nothing.

CATHY
It's leftovers. I was going to throw it away.

Sean lets the noose dangle around his neck and takes the bowl and spoon from her.

CATHY (CONT'D)
It has onions in it.

SEAN
Yum.

Cathy leans on the open window and watches him eat.

SEAN (CONT'D)
Take a picture it lasts longer.

She takes the IPHONE out of her purse and takes his picture.

SEAN (CONT'D)
Are you wearing a robe?

She stares at the picture she just took.

CATHY

I've never noticed what a handsome guy you are. No wonder my friend Holly had such a crush on you in high school. She'd come over to hang out and I'd catch her in your room staring at your clothes.

SEAN

You never told me that.

CATHY

It grossed me out to think of you with my best friend so I told her you were gay.

SEAN

Oh well. I guess she thinks she lost her virginity to a gay guy then.

CATHY

No way!

SEAN

Way!

Cathy starts to leave.

CATHY

Oh, I'm burning my couch in the back yard on Friday if you want to come over for a bonfire.

Beat. Sean smiles.

SEAN

You're starting to get your weird back, Sis.

CATHY

You have no idea.

She smiles back and drives away. She turns up the radio and sings loudly to DELTA DAWN as we FADE OUT.

EXT. CATHY'S BACK YARD - NIGHT (D-5)

Cathy sits on a couch, emotional, sharing her secret.

CATHY

...and they could do chemo but I have the rare kind that comes back a hundred per cent of the time.

(MORE)

CATHY (CONT'D)

Which is weird, because I never win anything. So I'd just be buying a little more time and it would mean a lot of people...taking care of me. And that's not my thing. Plus, you know, quality of life. I had a sinus infection once and thought--I'd rather be dead. Seriously. You know what makes me feel better though? If I'm being honest? It makes me feel better to think that we're all dying. And when you have a kid, you expect that you'll die before they do even if you try not to think about it. I mean, you hope to God you will because the opposite is inconceivable. So if I think about it that way--hey, I'm living the dream! (she laughs at herself) Come on, that's pretty funny. Gotta give it up for me a little bit. Death comedy. I'm here all year. Performing at Stage Four. I'm just warning you that this laughter might turn into a sob in a minute. (it does) Yep, there it is. As long as I'm being raw and vulnerable here, I might as well tell you that I'm feeling very much in love with you right now. It could just be gratitude. Who knows. Who cares.

REVEAL that she's actually pouring out her heart to THOMAS who sits next her on the couch which sits in the pool hole. He stares at her with compassionate Basset eyes.

As Cathy alternates between laughter and sobs WE PULL UP AND AWAY and the woman and dog get smaller and smaller until they disappear and all we can see is the hole and then nothing at all and **WE FADE OUT**.

THE END