

United States of
Tara

"Intervention"

by
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"INTERVENTION"

INT. GREGSON KITCHEN - MORNING

MAX sits at the table with a PILE OF BILLS splayed out in front of him. MARSHAL ENTERS wearing a FEDORA tipped down over his right eye.

MAX
(raises hand for a high
five)
Marshal! My main man. Up top.

Marshal sets his VIDEO CAMERA down on the counter, and opens the fridge, and keeps his face turned to the left.

MARSHAL
Do you know how many millions of
germs are transmitted from hand to
hand contact?

MAX
Hey! I'm clean.

Marshal begins fixing breakfast.

MAX (CONT'D)
(re: fedora)
I like this new look, Moosh. Super
fly.

INT. KATE'S BEDROOM - SIMULTANEOUS

KATE comes out of the bathroom in her STEWARDESS UNIFORM. Max and Marshal's voices drift up from down stairs.

MARSHAL (O.S.)
Nobody says "fly" any more, Dad. Or
"super" unless it's for the
superlatives page of the yearbook.

Kate checks her E-MAIL. There is one addressed to PRINCESS VALHALLA HAWKWIND.

KATE
Ugh. May the gods of comic creation
send you back from whence ye came.

Kate SCROLLS THE CURSOR OVER THE DELETE BUTTON, but in doing so catches sight of the SUBJECT LINE, which reads "\$3000 FOR PARTY APPEARANCE!!!"

KATE (CONT'D)
Whuuuuut? Are they for reals about
them bones?

Kate opens the e-mail excitedly.

KATE (CONT'D)
(claps her hands)
BOO-YA!

BACK TO:

INT. GREGSON KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

MARSHAL
And further more, accidentally
confusing my grade point average
for the interest rate on your Visa
does not constitute a Freudian
slip.

MAX
Where is the love today?

TARA comes in carrying grocery bags.

TARA
Good morning.

MAX
There's my sugar mama.

Max grabs Tara around the waist and gives her a big kiss.

TARA
(to Marshal re: fedora)
Is it hat day again?

MARSHAL
Just a look I'm trying.

KATE ENTERS with her usual mix of malaise and pep.

KATE
He just doesn't want anyone to see
his raging case of--

MARSHAL
Kate. I will kill you.

KATE

Pink eye.

She ruffles Marshal's hat out of place revealing MARSHAL'S RIGHT EYE. It is INFLAMED with an unfortunate case of pink eye. Tara gingerly inspects the problem area.

TARA

Ahw, Moosh, do you want me to take you to the doctor before school?

MARSHAL

(batting her hand away)
It's not that big a deal.

KATE

Since when is the unhygienically sound sexual exploits of uncloseted teenage homosexuals not a big deal?

MAX

(re: mail in hand)
WHOA!

They all look at Max.

TARA

What is it?

MAX

You tell me... Buck.

TARA

What?

Max hands Tara a piece of OFFICIAL STATE MAIL.

TARA (CONT'D)

A DUI? Jesus, Buck.
(to the kids)
Don't you kids ever drink and drive. It is reckless and irresponsible and --

MAX

And your license is going to get revoked if Buck keeps this up.

TARA

I know. I have to do something about this.

MAX

You sure do. If you can't drive, I'm liable to get inducted into the soccer dad club where it's required that I own a mini van, develop male pattern baldness, and a yen for tangerine flavored Capri Sun.

TARA

Right, because I'm such a soccer mom.

KATE

Can we go on *Intervention*?

MARSHAL

Great. Let's put Mom and all her problems on TV.

TARA

Intervention? For me?

KATE

For Buck.

MAX

He would make a great story of caution for the disaffected youths of America.

KATE

Or a role model for the button-up types like Moosh here.

Marshal, "Yeah, great idea." But Tara seems to be taking the idea to heart.

TARA

You know, aside from the whole airing our dirty laundry on cable TV thing, I think you're onto something, Kate. Buck signed the contract, he should be willing to cooperate.

MARSHAL

Can we not? Bring Buck out? Or confront him on anything? He always starts trouble.

SHOSHANA (O.C.)

He's got a point. Buck is one to kavech.

CAMERA PANS OVER TO TARA'S ALTER **SHOSHANA** standing with her arms crossed next to Tara. Of course, only Tara is aware of her presence.

SHOSHANA (CONT'D)
Especially if you go after his much
lauded sepia toned fire, without
which Buck's still just a cowardly
lion in here.

Shoshana gently pokes Tara's heart.

SHOSHANA (CONT'D)
And how would you feel if someone
pulled the yellow brick road out
from under *your* feet?

TARA
I don't get it. Am I Dorothy?

Max, Marshal, and Kate all arch an eyebrow at Tara. CAMERA PANS OVER - Shoshana is gone.

TARA (CONT'D)
(to family)
You know, I think I remember
reading somewhere that you can
reach alters by addressing them
directly.

MAX
What, like subliminal messages?

TARA
Sort of like that. But the point is
that it's *direct*.

MARSHAL
Are we seriously considering this?

KATE
Why are you such a buzz kill this
morning?

MARSHAL
Can't you see where this is going?
Every time the family gets
together, chaos ensues. Can't we
just dump all the alcohol in the
house?

KATE
Because obviously Buck can't just
go and buy more.

MAX

Well, not if I make up some fliers
and then hand them out to all the
bars and liquor stores in town.
Tell them not to sell to my
handsome, gun slinging friend here.

Max hugs Tara around the waist and gives her a kiss on the neck.

TARA

Would you do that?

MAX

Sure. Why not? We've got to do
something. Might as well do
everything.

MARSHAL

I have to go to school.

Max gets up.

MAX

I'll take you.

Max gives Tara a kiss good bye, then he and Marshal head out for the day.

TARA

What are you doing today?

KATE

Same old, same old. Looking for a
job, money or a secret tunnel full
of money and jobs that leads
straight out of Kansas. I've picked
up the scent on one.
(inhales deeply)
It smells like freedom.

Kate hops upstairs. Tara looks around and sees Marshal's VIDEO CAMERA on the counter top. She accidentally pushes play and is startled to see what's through the CAMERA POV.

CAMERA POV: Marshal walking and talking with LIONEL (who holds the camera) down a hallway at school. TWO BIG BULLIES come up and ruffle Marshal's hair.

MARSHAL

No, that's not what Nietzsche meant
by the eternal return of the same.

BULLY 1
Hey, gay boy.

MARSHAL
Leave me alone, muscled homophobe.

BULLY 2
Aw, did we hurt the little girl's
feelings?

Then they grab Marshal and drag him toward the BOY'S
BATHROOM. Marshal kicks and tries to get away.

LIONEL (O.C.)
Let him go guys, seriously.

BULLY 1
(exaggerating lisp)
Sssserioussssly, guysss. Shut up,
pillow muncher.

Bully 1 smacks the camera out of Lionel's hand. It lands with
a CLATTER on the bathroom floor. We see three sets of feet
struggling toward the TOILETS.

MARSHAL
Unhand me, you dastardly bullies,
or --

BULLY 1
Or what? You're gonna spooge all
over me from the excitement of
being touched by another dude,
faggot?

The Bullies pick Marshal up, flip him over and proceed to
give him A SWIRLY. He sputters and gasps for breath. The
video cuts out.

TARA
My baby.

Tara sways backward, her eyes flutter. When she comes to she
is no longer Tara but **BUCK**.

BUCK
Cookie-fed mother fuckers. Nobody
bashes on Marsha but me.

Bucks unceremoniously drops the camera down and struts out of
the kitchen.

EXT. LOCAL PARK - MORNING

CHARMAINE and NEIL are walking the baby in the stroller.

CHARMAINE

(signing)

Hush little baby don't you cry --

NEIL

I just don't see why the room can't be blue.

CHARMAINE

She's a little girl, Neil.

NEIL

That's gender stereotyping.

CHARMAINE

We have enough confusion in our family, we don't need Wheels growing up with gender dysphoria disorder, or gender identity disorder or whatever they call it these days. You really want her thinking she's a boy? Look at Tara and Buck.

Neil stops and turns to Charmaine.

NEIL

Did you just say our family?

Charmaine smiles. Mommy and Daddy have a tender moment.

NEIL (CONT'D)

What about Robin's Egg Blue? Like a Tiffany's box.

Charmaine leans down into the stroller to stroke the baby's cheek.

CHARMAINE

(singing)

Mama's gonna buy you a mocking bird. And if that mocking bird don't sing, Daddy's gonna buy you 4 carat, Peruzzi Cut diamond earrings with flawless clarity from your favorite store also known as Tiffany's.

Just then TWO WOMEN who are running past stop to admire the baby.

WOMAN #1
Awww, she is so precious.

WOMAN #2
Such a pretty little girl you are.
It's a girl, right?

NEIL
Is that a question?

The women see Neil for the first time and eye him up and down.

WOMAN #1
Uh... She sure does take after her mother. How lovely... for you.

CHARMAINE
What the fuck is that supposed to mean?

WOMAN #1
Nothing! Just an observation.

The women high-tail it out of there.

CHARMAINE
(giving them the finger)
Observe this!

Charmaine's phone rings.

CHARMAINE (CONT'D)
It's Max. Hello?

EXT. KINKO'S COPY CENTER - SAME

Max stands by his truck outside the store. His hand rests on a stack of FLIERS with BUCK'S PICTURE on them.

MAX
(overly bright)
Charmaine! What are you and Neil doing tonight?

EXT. LOCAL PARK - CONTINUOUS

CHARMAINE
Why?

She listens to the other end of the line. Meanwhile, Neil coos to the squirming baby.

NEIL
Daddy's gonna buy you enormous
fugazi earrings --

The baby cuts in with a loud cry.

NEIL (CONT'D)
Okay, okay. Daddy's gonna buy you
delicate .2 carat yellow diamond --

The baby cries harder. Neil lifts her out of the stroller and gently bounces and shushes her.

NEIL (CONT'D)
You do take after your mother.

CHARMAINE
(into phone)
Alright. Fine. No, of course I'm
not a willing participant, but if
Tara loses her license who will
take me to Mommy-Me Yoga on
Wednesday's when Neil is at his
colon rejuvenation sessions?

NEIL
Charmaine!

EXT. KINKO'S COPY CENTER - CONTINUOUS

MAX
That's very altruistic of you,
Char, thanks.

Max hangs up.

EXT. LOCAL PARK - CONTINUOUS

Charmaine puts her phone away. Neil looks to her for an explanation.

CHARMAINE
You in the mood to get into a fist
fight tonight?

INT. MARSHAL'S HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - LATER THAT MORNING

Marshal and LIONEL are walking out of class. Lionel points his chin at a BOY in the distance.

LIONEL
What do you think of Dean Allison?

MARSHAL
Think of him, how?

LIONEL
Do you think he's gay?

MARSHAL
Can't he just be a guy?

LIONEL
I think he's nouveau bisexual.

A beat, then off Marshal's "A what?" look...

LIONEL (CONT'D)
You know, a guy's guy but one who isn't afraid to share his emotions, and who might, after enough Jungle Juice at a party, be convinced into making out with his best guy friend during finals round of Olympic Spin the Bottle.

MARSHAL
Can we change the subject?

LIONEL
Aww, is someone still sore?

Lionel is referring to Marshal's eye, but the implication is decidedly sexual.

MARSHAL
Why do you do that?

LIONEL
Do what?

MARSHAL
Make everything about sex. I mean what about pink-eye screams gay sex?

LIONEL
Do you even hear yourself? *Screams* gay sex?

MARSHAL
I just don't like how everything has to be about whether or not sex is gay or not. Sex is sex.

LIONEL

Is it?

MARSHAL

Okay, so maybe I've never had gay sex, but I wish people - especially my own family - wouldn't be so presumptuous all the time.

LIONEL

Right? Don't they know what a high premium we gays
(off Marshal's look)
Sorry. *Guys like us* put on personal hygiene?

Marshal guffaws, but they butt shoulders jovially.

INT. KATE'S BATHROOM - THE SAME TIME

Kate, still in her uniform, applies the finishing touches to full blown Princess Valhalla Hawkwind make up. She nods at her reflection approvingly, then heads to her closet.

INT. KATE'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Kate jams her clothes to one side, clearly looking for something that should be in a specific spot. But it's not.

KATE

Shit.

INT. TARA AND MAX'S BEDROOM - SIMULTANEOUS

CLOSE ON A FAMILIAR PAIR OF BOOTS as they are laced up. CAMERA PANS UP TO REVEAL BUCK in his usual garb. He nods approvingly at his reflection, then grabs a BOTTLE OF SCOPE off the floor and CHUGS.

BUCK

Oo-wee! Nothing like swishin' n'
spittin' with peppermint schnapps.
(swallows)
Ahh!

EXT. GREGSON HOUSE - A FEW MINUTES LATER

CLOSE ON MOTORCYCLE HANDLEBARS as they are revved up by Buck.

BUCK
Get ready to rumble, fuck-wads.

Buck takes off down the street at an unsafe speed.

EXT. CAT FIVE'S - AN HOUR LATER

Max pulls up outside the bar. He looks at the door and sighs with heavy resignation, then kills the engine.

INT. CAT FIVE'S - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

PAMMY is wiping down the bar when MAX ENTERS. She spots Max lingering in the doorway: she folds her arms over her chest.

PAMMY
What are you doing here, Max?

MAX
I'm here about...

Max takes a hesitant step forward, and hands Pammy a flier. She quickly peruses it.

PAMMY
What's this all about?

MAX
Family's trying to do an intervention for Buck, so I came by hoping you would do me a solid and not serve him if he comes on in here.

She hands him back the flier.

PAMMY
I haven't seen Buck in a long time.

MAX
Okay. That's cool. I got it.

Max walks slowly backwards toward the door. He waves.

MAX (CONT'D)
Say, uh, take care of yourself, Pammy.

PAMMY
Hey, Max. I'll keep an eye out for Buck.

MAX
Thanks.

PAMMY
And Max?

Max stops.

MAX
Yea-up?

PAMMY
Do you...? Do you think it would
help if *I* was there? At the
intervention.

Max is saved by his PHONE RINGING. He holds it up to Pammy.

MAX
It's Marshal. Gotta take this.

Max steps outside...

EXT. CAT FIVE'S - CONTINUOUS

MAX
(into phone)
'Lo?

INT. MARSHAL'S SCHOOL - HALLWAY - SIMULTANEOUS

Marshal is rushing down the hall past a wall of WINDOWS
OVERLOOKING THE PARKING LOT.

MARSHAL
Dad, I think we've got a potential
situation here. Buck is at school.

CAMERA STAYS BEHIND AND FOCUSES ON BUCK as he approaches the
TWO BULLIES from the video.

Marshal hangs up and BURSTS THROUGH THE EXIT DOORS.

EXT. CAT FIVE'S - CONTINUOUS

MAX
Marsh? ...Marsh?

Max checks the connection - Yep, it's dead. In a huff, he
flips his phone closed.

MAX (CONT'D)

Ah, shit.

EXT. LYNDA P. FRAZIER'S GARAGE HOUSE - AROUND THE SAME TIME

Kate paces outside, trying to steel her nerves.

KATE

(to self)

Hi, Lynda, it's Kate. Uhg, that's so stupid. Obviously she can see that it's me. Okay. Hi. Lynda. I'm really sorry that the last time I saw you I basically called you a bitch, well, a stupid bitch...

Just then, the GARAGE DOOR OPENS, LYNDA EXITS. They lock eyes for a tense moment, but then Lynda waves Kate inside.

LYNDA

Come on, little girl, let's go talk like grown ups.

EXT. MARSHAL'S SCHOOL - MOMENTS BEFORE

Buck struts toward the bullies.

BUCK

So you like to beat up little girls, do you?

The two guys look thoroughly confused. Buck spits. In the distance, MARSHAL rushes outside.

MARSHAL

Buck! Stop! You don't understand!

BULLY #1

What's going on?

BUCK

(raising fist high)

It's fist sandwich for lunch, boys.

Marshal jumps in front of the bullies, protective. BUCK'S FIST STOPS a mere inch from Marshal's face.

MARSHAL

Thanks for trying to help me and all, Buck, but I can handle them.

BUCK
Sure didn't look like it on that
video I seen.

MARSHAL
Well, you sure look like the guy in
the fliers my dad is handing out
all over town.

BUCK
What fliers?

MARSHAL
The ones telling everyone not to
sell or serve you alcohol.

BUCK
Bull shenanigans.

MARSHAL
He's planning an intervention for
you.

Buck hitches up his jeans.

BUCK
Well, shit. I guess I got some
drinkin' to do.

He makes a menacing throat slitting gesture at the bullies.

BUCK (CONT'D)
Until next time, gentlemen.

Buck struts off.

INT. LYNDA P. FRAZIER'S GARAGE HOUSE - LATER

Kate fidgets nervously under Lynda's hard stare. Lynda rolls
a joint.

LYNDA
So tell me, to what do I owe this
unexpected pleasure? Just stop by
to tell me that you're still one
step ahead of me?

KATE

(bursting)

Look you were right and I was wrong, and well, I wasn't totally wrong because *I did* settle for a costume instead of adulthood, but then I gave the costume back, and now I've changed and grown and I'm so sorry, so so sorry, and I'm here to make amends, and you're going to say, "It's okay, Kate. We all make mistakes," and then pass me the peace pipe, because that's what adults do when one of them is mature enough to admit that they've been wrong. And I was wrong. ...Yeah.

LYNDA

That's it? That's all you came here to say?

KATE

No. I was hoping I could borrow the Princess Valhalla costume for a night.

LYNDA

Mmhmm. Though so.

KATE

It's 3,000 dollars. *Which* I will totally split with you.

LYNDA

Mmhmm. Thought so.

Lynda lights up the joint then passes it to Kate.

LYNDA (CONT'D)

If what you're saying is true, you're gonna need this.

Kate takes it.

KATE

Is this a peace pipe or a joint?

LYNDA

What do you think?

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. RESIDENTIAL ROAD - AN HOUR LATER

Kate, wearing the full PRINCESS VALHALL HAWKWIND regalia, weaves her Vespa down the empty street. She tries NO HANDS.

INT. CHARMAINE & NEIL'S BEDROOM - AROUND THE SAME TIME

Neil, kneeling between Charmaine's legs, puts his hands behind his head and thrusts.

NEIL

Look. No hands.

Charmaine leans over to the night stand where AN ALMOST EMPTY BOTTLE OF WINE rests.

CHARMAINE

Look. No hands.

She grabs the bottle with just her mouth and tips it back.

CHARMAINE (CONT'D)

(around the bottle)

Ta-da!

The bottle falls out of her mouth. Neil stops thrusting.

NEIL

What the fuck, Charmaine?

INT. CAT FIVE'S - THAT AFTERNOON

Pammy is getting ready for the night shift. BUCK ENTERS and saddles up to the bar.

BUCK

Darlin.' Ain't you a sight for sore eyes.

PAMMY

What do you want, Buck?

BUCK

That there bottle of Jack will do.

PAMMY

No, I mean, what do you want? From me.

Buck takes her hand and kisses it sweetly.

BUCK

Aww, Pammy, you know if I were a free man that we would never be apart.

Pammy smiles despite herself.

BUCK (CONT'D)

So how about you go on and get ol' Bucky that drink.

PAMMY

I'm sorry, Buck. I promised Max I wouldn't.

BUCK

Aw, shucks. You don't mean that, do you, darlin'?

Pammy folds her arms over her chest, and nods.

INT. GREGSON KITCHEN - 20 MINUTES LATER

Buck kicks his way through the back door.

BUCK

What has America come to when a man has got to drink alone in his own house?

He opens a cabinet. Not what he's looking for. He opens another. Nothing again.

O.S. MAX'S TRUCK REVS.

BUCK (CONT'D)

Max! I'm a git you!

EXT. GREGSON HOUSE/INT. MAX'S TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Max parks in the driveway. He see's BUCK'S MOTORCYCLE.

MAX

Fuck.

He starts the engine, but Buck JUMPS OUT OF NOWHERE AND GRABS MAX BY THE THROAT.

BUCK

Max, you fucking dog-boner! Give me back my booze!

MAX
 (choking)
 I'm not going to argue with you
 about this, Buck.

BUCK
 You better not'a dumped it all or
 Persephone and I are gonna put a
 hurtin' on you tonight.

Buck roughly lets go of Max's throat.

MAX
 (rubbing his neck)
 It's all gone.

BUCK
 Oh, you're gonna regret that.

Buck points threateningly at Max as he backs up toward the house, then disappears inside.

MAX
 Fuck. Fuck, fuck, fuck, fuck, fuck.

He guns the engine and takes off.

INT. TARA AND MAX'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Buck plows through the room to Tara's walk-in closet, grabs his GUN, "PERSEPHONE," out of its hiding spot and cocks it.

He rushes to the window, but is too late. Max is already turning away down the block.

BUCK
 Fuck nuts.

Buck glumly returns the gun to the closet. Angry, he punches out at Tara's clothes. ONE OF ALICE'S DRESSES FALLS, Buck picks it up and smiles devilishly.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL ROAD - EARLY EVENING

Kate YAWNS hugely and momentarily loses control of the Vespa, which then hops the curb.

A COP IN A PATROL CAR witnesses the "incident," turns on his sirens, and pulls up behind Kate.

KATE
 Uhg. What now?

The cop, OFFICER SCHLUBE, a chubby guy with adult acne, approaches Kate in an all business manner.

OFFICER SCHLUBE
License and registration, please.

She opens the teeny tiny glove box and pulls out her papers. Schlube pulls out his walkie talkie.

KATE
Excuse me, Officer Sh-LOOB-EY --

SCHLUBE
It's Sh-loob.

KATE
Officer Shloob, I know to someone on the outside of what's really a funny story, I know I must look, well, more than a little crazy. But the fact of the matter is, I'm on my way to an intervention right now -- well, first I'm going to a party, and then I'm going to an intervention -- but the point is that I really need to get going, so if you could just wrap this up as quickly as possible I would really appreciate it.

SCHLUBE
It says here your name is Kate Gregson.

KATE
Yup. That's me.

SCHLUBE
Well, then we have a problem here because I know that you're really Princess Valhalla Hawkwind.

Kate's frowns. Schlube falls to his knee and puts one hand over his heart.

SCHLUBE (CONT'D)
Hark! Princess, I am but a humble servant of your royal realm. Many nights and days I have searched for the missing princess, most beautiful and benevolent in all the land.

KATE

Soo...you're not going to give me a ticket?

SCHLUBE

Nay, fair princess. Lo' as guardian of the Kingdom of Fredwyrd, I have but one request I must beseech of you. Will ye knight me?

KATE

I'm sorry, but that's just not me any more.

Schlube gets up and takes out his TICKET PAD.

SCHLUBE

Oh no?

KATE

Okay! Okay! It's me!

EXT. LOCAL LIQUOR STORE - EARLY EVENING

CLOSE ON a hand hitching up the waist of a FLORAL DRESS. TRACK with Buck as he fidgets and fusses with the dress as he walks across the parking lot.

He is doing a pretty terrible impersonation of Alice, and it's obvious that his jeans are rolled up underneath the dress. He scowls, SPITS OUT HIS CIGARETTE, and pushes through the door into...

INT. LOCAL LIQUOR STORE - CONTINUOUS

BUCK ENTERS trying to be smooth, but he trips on the high heels. A CLERK eyes him quizzically as Buck grabs a bottle of WHISKEY. When Buck reaches the counter, FOCUS ON A FLIER with his mug shot and the words "Do Not Sell To" on it.

CLERK

I.D.

Buck pulls it out, and hands it over to the Clerk - CLOSE ON to see it is TARA'S I.D.

CLERK (CONT'D)

This you?

BUCK

Yeah --

He remembers about his voice and clears his throat.

BUCK (CONT'D)
 (falsetto with Southern
 accent)
 Why my apologies. I seem to have a
 frog in my throat today.

The clerk points to the flier.

CLERK
 That you too?

BUCK
 Surely I have never seen that man,
 though he is a handsome young buck.

The clerk shrugs, sniffs and hands back the I.D. He rings up
 the sale.

EXT. PARKING LOT - SUNSET - AN HOUR LATER

Buck sits by his motorcycle in a weird blend of his and
 Alice's clothing. He swigs Whiskey from the fast emptying
 bottle, and takes in the lovely SUNSET. He looks down at his
 feet:

CLOSE ON a pair of high heels. He CLICKS HIS HEELS TOGETHER.

BUCK
 Well, shit, Dorothy, I figured I'd
 be a pickled elephant before I'd be
 a man in a dress.

He takes one last long swig, then tosses the bottle in the
 bushes. He wipes his face, smearing lipstick everywhere, then
 gets on his bike and drives away.

EXT. GREGSON HOUSE - EVENING - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Buck gets off his bike and walks across the lawn toward the
 house. As he goes, he pulls off the last of Alice's clothes,
 leaving them strewn about the lawn.

INT. GREGSON KITCHEN - EVENING - A FEW MOMENTS LATER

Buck makes a bee-line to the fridge. Max quietly comes up
 behind him and grabs his butt. Buck wigs out Nam style.

BUCK
 You wanna lose a hand, friend?

Max recognizes Buck.

MAX

Buck. Hey man. I'm surprised to see you here. I mean, *glad* to see you here. Want to hang out with me tonight?

Buck cracks open a CAN OF COLA.

BUCK

Dunno. You goin' to this intervention thing?

MAX

You know about that?

BUCK

Yup.

MAX

And you're here? Drinking soda?

BUCK

Yup.

CHARMAINE (O.C.)

Hello! Were you guys having sex on the front lawn?

CHARMAINE AND NEIL (carrying Wheels) ENTER.

CHARMAINE (CONT'D)

There are clothes *everywhere*.

Marshal ENTERS the kitchen. He doesn't look at anyone, but grabs the VIDEO CAMERA off the counter.

MAX

Hey, Marshal. How was your day?

MARSHAL

I'm in a bad mood, and I don't want to talk about it.

MAX

Okay. Well, look who's here.

Max nods to Buck.

BUCK

Hey, tough guy.

MARSHAL
May I be excused?

MAX
No, you may not. We're going to get started in a sec. Once the gang's all here.

Charmaine looks around.

CHARMAINE
Where's Kate?

EXT. ICE RINK - AROUND THE SAME TIME - TO ESTABLISH

Kate hops off her Vespa. As she walks toward the rink, she smooths out her costume and her nerves.

INT. ICE RINK - EVENING - MOMENTS LATER

KATE ENTERS to find herself dwarfed by a HUGE, FIVE-TIERED PINK CAKE. VINCE, late-30s, a wannabe bro, runs up to Kate.

VINCE
Yo, Prin-cess. S'up?

He waits for a fist-pump, which Kate awkwardly gives.

VINCE (CONT'D)
You ready for the cake dive of your life?

KATE
Uh...

BIRTHDAY BOY (O.C.)
Whooooooooo! PVH is in da' house!

Kate looks over to see the BIRTHDAY BOY and a dozen of his fantasy football-type LOSER FRIENDS sitting around a table decorated for a child, eating pizza and drinking pop.

KATE
This is too weird.

INT. GREGSON HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - THE SAME TIME

The whole family, sans Kate, sits around the living room. Marshal wrings his hands, Neil bounces the fussy baby, Max and Charmaine conference in whispers. Buck sits back, relaxed, sipping his cola. He points at Neil and the baby.

BUCK
Who brings a baby to an
intervention?

NEIL
Thank you, Buck.
(to Charmaine)
I told you we should have got a
sitter.

Charmaine gives Neil the stink eye, then whispers something
to Max.

BUCK
Oh, just fucking say something
already. I'm here ain't I.

SHOSHANA (O.S.)
He sure is.

CAMERA PANS OVER to the corner where Shoshana and Tara stand,
both with arms crossed, observing the scene.

TARA
Do you think this is going to work?

MAX
Buck, you know I love you --

BUCK
No homo.

Marshal looks up.

BUCK (CONT'D)
No offense, Marsha.

MARSHAL
None taken.

MAX
As I was saying, you know I love
you as a part of Tara --

CHARMAINE
That's right, and even though *I*
don't really like you -- well, at
all -- I still love Tara, so I
wrote you a letter.

She pulls out a piece of note paper.

CHARMAINE (CONT'D)

Dear Buck, Please stop fucking with Tara's life, destroying her liver, getting drunk and starting fights with people, and hitting on anything with a pussy - is it okay to say pussy at an intervention?

MARSHAL

He's not a sex addict.

CHARMAINE

Anyway, please stop driving drunk otherwise Tara is going to lose her license, and I'm going to have to totally rearrange my Wednesdays.

Charmaine hiccups. Neil snatches the letter away from her.

NEIL

Like you're one to talk, drunkie.

CHARMAINE

I am not drunk.

She hiccups again.

MAX

Seriously, Charmaine, you came to an intervention drunk? What's wrong with you?

Buck laughs and smacks Marshal on the knee.

BUCK

This is getting good.

TARA

(to Shoshana)

This is all wrong. They're all confronting each other and not Buck.

SHOSHANA

Look who's talking.

TARA

What?

SHOSHANA

Nobody wants to go toe to toe with Buck. Why do you think he's so useful to you?

(MORE)

SHOSHANA (CONT'D)
But like I said earlier, he's still
a cowardly lion in here...
(points to Tara's heart)

TARA
What is with this cowardly lion
thing?

SHOSHANA
Just an analogy from a more
innocent time. Real courage means
acting in the face of fear, Tara.
You could have pulled Buck aside
and talked to him yourself -- made
him submit to the contract -- but
instead you decided to let your
family do the dirty work.

Tara looks guiltily at the chaos she has caused.

INT. ICE RINK - SAME TIME

Kate stands off to the side with Vince.

KATE
I don't know how I feel about this.

VINCE
It's not like you haven't done it
before.

KATE
Not in public, and not with a cake
that's taller and pinker than a My-
Size Princess Barbie.

VINCE
PVH, baby, come on.

INT. GREGSON HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

MAX
Marshal, do you have something
you'd like to say?

Everyone looks at him with anticipation.

INT. ICE RINK - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Kate primes herself over the huge CAKE, her butt high in the
air as she tries to balance on a railing.

KATE

Uh...when do I get the three thousand?

Vince whispers something to the birthday boy. They laugh meanly.

INT. GREGSON HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

MARSHAL

I don't think it's fair to single Buck out for his drinking. Mom drinks. T drinks. And we all know Alice drinks. Shouldn't they *all* be here?

NEIL

He makes a good point.

CHARMAINE

Oh shut up, Neil.

NEIL

Hey, I'm not the one who got drunk in order to have sex during the bright light hours of the day because she values the opinions of strangers more highly than her own feelings about the father of her beautiful baby girl.

MARSHAL

This is ridiculous.

Marshal runs upstairs. Buck rubs his hands together, clearly enjoying the show.

MAX

Marshal!

NEIL

You know, that kid is the only one who's said or done anything that makes sense all night. I'm outta here.

NEIL (with baby in arms) EXITS in a huff. Max stands.

MAX

Oh come on guys. Where is everybody going? Kate isn't even here yet. Where the hell is Kate?

INT. ICE RINK - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

Kate hovers even closer to the cake.

BIRTHDAY BOY

Hey, hot cheeks! Come back to earth
and land your fine self on that
cake already!

KATE

Kate Gregson does not sit on cakes!

She kicks the top tier off the cake then hops down off the railing. In a blaze of glory, she storms out of the ice rink leaving a party of baffled losers in her wake.

INT. GREGSON HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Max collapses back down on the couch. Bucks leans over.

BUCK

You know what this intervention
needs?

He makes the universal glug-glug motion. Max nods. He reaches behind the couch and produces two airplane-sized bottles of RUM. Buck nods approvingly at Max, takes the rum and pours it into his coke.

CHARMAINE

(re: Neil)

Can you believe him? Just leaving
like that in the middle of an
intervention?

Max cracks his bottle and is about to swig when Buck swaps his can for the little bottle. They cheers and drink. Tara and Shoshana observe this.

SHOSHANA

You're going to have to stand up to
him one of these days. Why not
start with baby steps, Tara?

Tara takes a deep breath. Buck tips his head back to swig, but his head rolls back. **TARA RETURNS**. She looks at the bottle with distaste and puts it down.

MAX

Tara?

TARA

Yeah.

MAX

That's great! The intervention...

Max looks around the room - the only other person left is Charmaine, who is pulling at her hair and muttering about Neil.

MAX (CONT'D)

Or whatever, must have worked.

TARA

Uh, well...

CHARMAINE

Tara, nice to see you and my apologies for co-opting your intervention, but please never need a favor ever again. Okay? I'm going to go see if I still have a father figure willing to stick around at least until my child's eighteenth birthday.

EXIT CHARMAINE.

TARA

Speaking of kids, I should go check on ours.

MAX

That's going to be a little difficult. The female one never showed.

KATE ENTERS in a flurry of fake hair.

KATE

Kate Gregson is in da' house!

She smiles brightly and runs upstairs.

TARA

I guess she's back.

INT. GREGSON HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - MINUTES LATER

Tara slowly comes upstairs. She eyes her children's closed bedroom doors. She sighs, then knocks on Kate's door.

INT. KATE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

TARA ENTERS without waiting for a response. Kate bounces around in too good of a mood to mind.

TARA
Where were you tonight?

KATE
Triumphantly reclaiming my identity and saying goodbye to a part of my past that I should have let stay in the past, but instead I let come crawling out while I was temporarily blinded by the sight of a lot of zeroes.

TARA
Well, okay then. Good night.

KATE
Night!

TARA EXITS without closing the door behind her. After a beat, TARA RE-ENTERS.

TARA
How do you do that?

KATE
Do what?

TARA
I don't know. Compartmentalize or whatever it is that you're doing.

KATE
I dunno. I just have parts of myself that I wish I could get rid of, like the anatomically incorrect preserver of geeks' virginity in all the land, but I know I can't, so I just keep all those less than "Kate" aspects of myself together in the back of my mind where they don't bother me so much.

TARA
I should try that.

KATE
What are you talking about? You're the queen of compartmentalizing.
(MORE)

KATE (CONT'D)

Buck, T, Alice - those are all parts of yourself that, like Princess Valhalla, you cringe to have to cop to. But *you* let them wander around as free and naked as jay birds instead of stuffing them as far down into your psyche as possible.

Tara nods in understanding.

INT. MARSHAL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Tara pushes open the door, and hovers on the threshold. Marshal lays on his bed, staring at the ceiling.

MARSHAL

I'm disappointed in you, Mom.

TARA

I want to thank you. For bringing Buck out today.

MARSHAL

You're not welcome.

TARA

Why didn't you tell me you were being bullied at school?

MARSHAL

Mom, I'm not being bullied.

TARA

It's okay. You can talk to me. I'll make sure Buck stays out of it. I doubt he'll want to come out for a while after tonight's festivities anyway.

MARSHAL

No, Mom, seriously, I'm not being bullied. The video was an assignment for class.

TARA

(confused)
An assignment?

MARSHAL

On gay-bashing in high schools. You know, relevant cultural topics of the day dramatized for the entertainment of others.

TARA

(relieved)
An assignment.

Tara wraps Marshal in a big hug.

TARA (CONT'D)

Oh my god, I'm so relieved.

MARSHAL

Yeah, well, speak for yourself. I feel like I just sold my artistic integrity to the Devil. The worst part is that my AV teacher thinks the idea - his, by the way -- is so great, but that Lionel and I are the only one's who can touch it.

TARA

Because you're gay.

MARSHAL

Exactly. But why does that mean I have to be gay all the time? And make gay movies? And always be seen as the gay kid who only does gay things? I just want to be treated like everyone else - like a regular person.

TARA

So...you want to be treated like shit?

Marshal rolls away from Tara - this conversation is over.

MARSHAL

Can I be alone?

She takes one last loving look at him, then closes the door.

INT. GREGSON HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Tara comes down the stairs and over to Max. He grabs her by the waist and pulls her down into his lap.

TARA
Time for bed.

MAX
Hold on, mama. I've been getting
walked on all day by Buck. I need
to know this intervention did
something, or whether I should go
have my ego repaved.

Something about what Max said catches Tara's attention.

TARA
What did you say?

MAX
That it might be time for my ego to
be repaved since Buck spent all day
walking all over me.

TARA
(a-ha!)
You're the yellow brick road.

MAX
What?

TARA
Just something Shoshana said. I
still don't really get it, unless
I'm Dorothy *and* the lion.

Max sniffs Tara's mouth region.

TARA (CONT'D)
Forget about it. I think the
intervention did work, Max, at
least a little. I'm sorry if Buck,
or I have been walking all over you
lately.

She wraps Max in a warm hug. A tender moment.

KATE (O.S.)
Mom? Where's my Sailor Moon tennis
uniform?

TARA
It's at the dry cleaner, honey!

Tara gets up, Max takes a swig of his drink, and life in the
Gregson house returns to "normal."

FADE TO BLACK.

