TOO SOON

Episode One: Totally Fine

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EXT. COFFEE SHOP, LATE MORNING

LOU HIRSCH, 43, female, men's Lakers hoodie with the name "HIRSCH" on the back, pops 3 pieces of Nicorette into her mouth. Her knees bounce up and down. The table shakes. LANDSBERG, male, 60's, shuffles his papers.

LANDSBERG
Honey. With the bouncing.

LOU
How long til we're officially broke?

LANDSBERG
I don't know what Max was thinking.

LOU
Me neither. That's why I called you.

LANDSBERG
You don't need this after burying him.

LOU
After cremating him. How long?

LANDSBERG
About a month. I'm sorry.

LOU
Me too.

LANDSBERG
The wedding should be nice.

LOU
Oh fuck. The wedding.

She kisses his head, takes his papers, rushes off.

CUT TO:

INT. PATRICE'S PALATIAL CLOSET- EARLY AFTERNOON

The closet gives way to its own dressing area, which holds a champagne fridge, myriad wigs, and a STYLIST, male, 50's. PATRICE HIRSCH, 60's, holds her cell phone faaaaar from her face, squints, knocking the STYLIST's hand away from her eye.

<u>Throughout this process, we only see her from the back.</u>

STYLIST
Oh for God's sake.

He takes his own readers off his face, hands them to her. As he teases her hair, she reads her email again.

PATRICE
Just checking.

STYLIST
You've checked three times.

PATRICE
She could reconsider at the last minute.

STYLIST
You keep telling yourself that.

PATRICE
Are we close? I need a drink.

STYLIST
Are you sure this is a good idea?

PATRICE
No. Ergo drink.

CUT TO:

INT. LOU'S BEDROOM

Lou, now in a bathrobe, hair and makeup done, smokes by an open window while re-reading Landsberg's paperwork.

LOU
Fuck.

She leans over the window, pours her Diet Fresca on her cigarette and drops it outside, calling after it..

LOU (CONT'D)
Bye, only remaining pleasure.

She strips off her sweatshirt, heads into her bathroom.

CUT TO:

INT. PATRICE'S CLOSET

From the back, we see that Patrice, now in a kimono and chignon, holds a print-out of a HUGE FONT email.

CU: EMAIL: *SUNDAY THE 11th at 5pm, THE LOUNGE, SILVER LAKE...*

She swigs her champagne, paces.

CUT TO:

INT. GRACIE'S ROOM

GRACIE HIRSCH, 12, CHINESE-AMERICAN, rips a paper into tiny pieces. Lou, now in a cocktail dress, enters.

LOU
GRACIE! What are you doing?

GRACIE
It's not good enough. I need more animal imagery and there have to be four examples of simile and I only have three. Go without me.

LOU
You're the junior bridesmaid.

GRACIE
Do you want me to lose my scholarship?

LOU
Do you want me to mail you back to China?

GRACIE
MOM!

Gracie starts to laugh. Lou grabs her and hugs her hard.

GRACIE (CONT'D)
It has to be perfect.

LOU
Your farts are more perfect than the other kids' best efforts and you know it. What is this about?

GRACIE
I don't think I can do it. This is my first big thing without Daddy.

LOU
We're not without Daddy. He'll be there, in spirit.

GRACIE
Are you sure?

LOU
With you in the wedding, and Sasha as the bride? 100% sure. Promise.

GRACIE
(considers)
‘Kay.

Lou now squats, holds a dress for Gracie to step into it.

GRACIE (CONT’D)
This dress is fucking hid.

LOU
What did I say about “fucking”?

GRACIE
We’re at home!

Lou sighs. Gracie smells her breath.

GRACIE (CONT’D)
Ew. Did you SMOKE?

LOU
For the last time.

GRACIE
You’ve said that before.

LOU
I can no longer afford cigarettes.

GRACIE
Sometimes poor can be good.

LOU
We’re not poor. We’re just broke.

GRACIE
So that’s better?

LOU
Way better. We’re fine. We’re good.

GRACIE
You should Febreeze yourself.

CUT TO:

INT. PATRICE'S CLOSET

She picks up a land line phone, presses a button.

MALE VOICE (O.C.)
Si Senora Hirsch?

PATRICE
I have an event at 5. How long does it take to get to a place called *Silver Lake?*

As she douses herself with an atomizer....

CUT TO:

INT. LOU'S LIVING ROOM/KITCHEN

Lou rushes Gracie out, makes her step into her ballet flats.

GRACIE
Is Sasha really called "the bride"? Because I mean, Rad is *also* the bride. Maybe it's like co-bride? I don't want to look like an idiot.

LOU
Well you *are* wearing that dress.

GRACIE
MOM!

Gracie smacks her. She's happy again.

LOU
Just ask your big sister when we get there. She'll be thrilled to enlighten us on the semantics of woke lesbian nuptials.

CUT TO:

INT. WEDDING VENUE RESTROOM, LATER

Lou, alone, pops into the bathroom and gasps. SASHA, 30, gothy, tats, in a very Princess-y wedding dress, shrieks.

SASHA
Oh my GOOOOOOD! Fuck I'm gonna cry.

LOU
Tilt your head back.

Sasha throws her arms around Lou. They hug-rock for a while.

SASHA
I'm so happy you're here!

LOU
I'm so happy for you, babe.

SASHA
Gracie sent me a selfie. I die.

LOU
She hates the dress.

SASHA
Well I warned her it was gonna be a motherfuckin' fairy tale.

LOU
I think she looks like a meringue.

SASHA
Well, you're not getting married.

It's obviously a joke. But just for a *second*, Lou flinches...

SASHA (CONT'D)
Oh shit. I'm sorry Lou....

LOU
He'd be pretty jazzed about today though, wouldn't he?

SASHA
Jazzed. He would totally say that.

LOU
You were his fairy princess.

SASHA
Well, before the dyke thing.

LOU
After, too.

SASHA
I wonder how he'd feel about me marrying a Ska-Dubstep-Hybrid MC?

LOU
I think he'd still be looking up all four of those words.

Sasha laughs.

SASHA
I was up all night, wondering if I'd made a mistake, going through with it. This fast, I mean.

LOU
Absolutely not. You know how many deposits you'd have lost if you'd pushed it this late?

SASHA
It's not always about money.

LOU
It's almost always about money.

SASHA
It's only been a month.

LOU
It's been a long month, Sash. I think he'd really want us to be happy. And together.

SASHA
I can't believe he's not going to walk me down the aisle.

LOU
Me neither. Did you invite Patrice or is she still an asshole?

SASHA
Mom's still an asshole. So.

LOU
I'm sorry, Sash.

SASHA
It's cool. You and G are the only family that matters.

LOU
See, now I'm gonna cry. Goddammit.

SASHA
Tilt your head back.

EXT. WEDDING VENUE, LATER

ON CROWD: AN ETHNICALLY, SEXUALLY, DIVERSE crew. Sequins to cargo pants. Veuve to PBR. Oh and joints. Lots of joints. A stunning LATINA DRAG QUEEN passes one to Lou.

LOU
I'm good, girl, thanks.

A TINY DRAG QUEEN in a VEILED HAT hesitates in front of Lou.

TIRES SCREECH. The TINY DRAG QUEEN stalks off into the venue.

ON DRIVEWAY: Out of a gold BENTLEY, steps TOVAH RUBIN, 30's (Zaftig Persian Charo), gold dress, gold shoes, gold clutch. She throws the keys, barely misses the VALET, runs up to Lou.

TOVAH
Sorry. Work disaster. Models are so fucking stupid. I think it's the starving. Their bodies consume their brains for fuel. You okay?

LOU
Yeah.

TOVAH
Sure?

LOU
I'm fine. Seriously. Totally fine.

TOVAH
(taking Lou's arm)
K. Do you think any of these people will think *we're* a couple? I'm just gonna tinkle. Meet you inside.

INT. GREAT HALL

Lou sits in the front row, gasps when she sees the empty chair next to hers. There's a white rose on it.

CU: CARD ON CHAIR: *IN MEMORY OF MAX HIRSCH. WE LOVE YOU*

As Lou tries to catch her breath, CLASSICAL MUSIC starts.

ON GRACIE: flower wreath in her hair, walks down the aisle.

CUT TO:

INT. DIFFERENT WEDDING VENUE- BEGIN FLASHBACK

Ella Fitzgerald and Louis Armstrong's duet of "Let's Call the Whole Thing Off" plays as YOUNGER LOU, late 20's, walk-dances down the aisle by herself, in a black dress, a glass of wine in her hand, waving at THE CROWD as she goes. Halfway down the aisle, she looks forward, and stops. She touches her heart, briefly, as she sees, at the altar...

ON ALTAR: YOUNGER MAX HIRSCH, 50's, winks.

END FLASHBACK

CUT TO:

INT. WEDDING VENUE, CONT.

Gracie finds her position near the "altar", looking like an angel. *Then she throws up the West Side Dub Sign.*

The CROWD jumps up cheering. *It's a SOUND CUE*!

SOUNDTRACK: "*REE-MIIX*!" rings out, before a bass-heavy Dub-Step Rendition of Mendelssohn's Wedding March starts.

The two brides bump down the aisle. Sasha is in her giant princess get-up, and RAD, mixed-race, 30's, dreads, wears a three-piece suit, Timberlands. Both women are radiant.

The music stops. Everyone sits. A OFFICIANT, female, East Indian, in long robes, starts to speak. Lou looks around:

ON Tovah in the back, weeping, but waving.

ON the TINY DRAG QUEEN'S FANCY VEILED HAT in the back row.

ON the back of a MAN'S head. White hair. Expensive suit.

Lou gasps as she looks at him. She can't move.

Lou's POV: GUS (*hair prematurely white, mid-40's*), turns around to say something to the WOMAN next to him, sees Lou staring. Gus notices that Lou is looking at him. A beat. Gus smiles encouragingly, waves. Lou looks away. Starts sobbing.

INT. WEDDING VENUE, CONT.

FEMALE OFFICIANT
And now, the exchanging of rings.

ON ALTAR: Sasha hands Gracie her flowers. From her Timberland boot, Rad pulls the rings.

Tovah crouch-walks past the guests in Lou's row, whispering:

TOVAH
Sorry. Sorry. Sorry.
(to Lou)
I saw your shoulders shaking, and I saw the extra seat, so I'll just...

Tovah reads the MEMORIAL FOR MAX in the empty seat by Lou.

TOVAH (CONT'D)
Oh fuck me. So, okay....

Tovah sinks regally into a squat at Lou's feet.

ON THE ALTAR:

FEMALE OFFICIANT
Do you, Rashida....
(RAD whispers to her)
RAD, take Sasha to be your lawfully wedded wife, to have and to hold...

Tovah lets out a loud sob. Lou pats her on the head.

CUT TO:

INT. RECEPTION, PHOTO BOTH

Lou, Gracie, Sasha, Rad, and Rad's mother, REVEREND CECILE, African American, 50's, pose holding moustaches on sticks, oversize lips, huge sunglasses, signs that say, "SHE SAID YES!" etc. They're all having a great time.

GRACIE
This is so awesome!

SASHA
I know, right?! We should get married every day!

CECILE
Long as y'all keep payin' for it...

LOU
To our new daughters!

Gracie holds up her phone to snap a selfie of the five of them. Looks at the photo on the phone.

GRACIE
It's weird.

RAD
(holding her phone up)
Here, mama. My arms are longer.

GRACIE
No, I mean... there are no men in the picture. Or, like, in life. I get that you don't have to marry one but there aren't any anywhere.

CECILE
So? Everybody here loves each other. Your daddy was about love. Now see *Rashida's* daddy is an utterly useless son-of-a...

RAD
Mama not tonight. Damn.

CECILE
The point, ladies, is love. Let us rejoice and be glad in it! Rashida, get me somethin' brown. We're about to tear this dance floor *up*.

INT. LADIES ROOM, LATER

Lou, sweating, washes her hands, checks to make sure nobody's around, then sticks the damp paper towels under her arm pits. The TINY DRAG QUEEN attempts to exit a stall. Her hat is so large she struggles to come out sideways. She loses the battle, has to remove the hat. Louise gasps.

LOU
Patrice!

Meet PATRICE HIRSCH, 60's, Max's first wife. Sasha's mom.

PATRICE
(as if pronouncing cancer)
Louise.

Lou reaches out, as if to hug Patrice, who recoils.

LOU
Yeah, no, that would be weird.

PATRICE
You look exhausted.

LOU
Yeah, well, my husband died.

PATRICE
Mine too. Though, to be fair, I wished him dead for years.

LOU
So, I'm gonna get back out there. Thanks for coming. I mean for Sash.

PATRICE
She doesn't know I'm here.

LOU
She... what?

PATRICE
(holding up the hat)
Figured I'd look like another of one of her tranny friends.

LOU
You can't say tranny!

PATRICE
LBG...T...

LOU
Why? Doesn't she know?

PATRICE
I wasn't sure if she'd want me.

LOU
You're her mother. It's her wedding day. She wants you.

PATRICE
She said if I couldn't love that "Rad," then I couldn't love her. She's so angry.

LOU
She's not angry. She's just sad you can't love her the way she is.

PATRICE
I do love her. Does the way she is makes it harder? Yes. I'm sorry but it does. And she can't forgive me.

LOU
She'll forgive you.

PATRICE
How do you know?

LOU
Because she does that. She forgives. Her father taught her.

PATRICE
That was a dig.

LOU
Yes. Yes it was.

A beat.

PATRICE
I'm sure I'll regret this, but I've been drinking since mid-day so... would you ever consider brunch?

LOU
Have you finished hating me?

PATRICE
I figure we're even.

LOU
Well, I lost my husband, so.

PATRICE
So did I.

LOU
He wasn't married to you at the time.

PATRICE
He was married to me when he left me.

LOU
But...

PATRICE
For you.

LOU
Yeah that's a hard pass on brunch.

PATRICE
You're awfully arrogant, Louise.

LOU
Says the woman who doesn't know her driver's name.

PATRICE
It’s not about you. It never was. I loved him, and he just disappeared.

LOU
I know the feeling.

PATRICE
No you don’t.

LOU
You’re equating your divorce with my husband’s death? And I’m the arrogant one. Cool.

Louise flings the bathroom door open, heads out.

PATRICE
Louise.

LOU
What.

PATRICE
Thank you for emailing me about today.

LOU
I did it for Sasha. Not for you.

PATRICE
That’s what I’m thanking you for. Putting her first. I should’ve. I didn’t. I would’ve missed my only child’s wedding. You spared me that. I appreciate it.

LOU
Oh. Well, you’re welcome.

Lou tries again with the hug.

PATRICE
No no no....

LOU
Yeah no it’s weird.

She leaves.

EXT. DANCE FLOOR

Tovah is the hit of the Hora. Lou runs in and grabs her hand.

TOVAH
You good?

LOU
Patrice is here.

TOVAH
Damn. I thought the Covid might've gotten her.

A WOMAN IN DRAG drag breaks off into a CONGA. The CROWD shifts from circle to line, with Lou in front of Tovah. In the conga line, Lou is AGAIN staring at the back of Gus's head. He turns and talks to her as they conga.

GUS
I'm sorry if I creeped you out earlier. I thought I was supposed to recognize you but I didn't, so I smiled to be nice.

LOU
Oh no, it's totally fine. I just... thought you were someone else....

The conga line dissipates, the two are left talking.

GUS
Sorry to disappoint.

LOU
Given the circumstances, I think it's probably better you weren't.

GUS
That bad a break-up?

LOU
Let's just say, if I saw him in a conga line, you'd have to cart me off in a straightjacket.

A beat.

LOU (CONT'D)
I'm not crazy.

GUS
Only crazy people say that.

LOU
That's fair. I'm Lou.

GUS
Gus. Can I buy you a free drink?

They head to the bar.

ANGLE ON GRACIE, watching Lou. Furious.

ANGLE ON PATRICE, watching Gracie.

CUT TO:

INT. BALLROOM

Sasha and Rad, hand in hand, head back to the Brides' table, when Patrice hesitantly taps Sasha on the shoulder, hat (quite literally) in hand.

SASHA
MOM?!

Sasha bursts into tears and hugs her mother. Patrice hugs her daughter, drops the hat. Rad picks it up, reverentially.

PATRICE
Oh, baby, you look so beautiful.

SASHA
Did you see me get married?!

PATRICE
I saw you.

SASHA
The whole thing?!

PATRICE
The whole thing. It was.... great!

Sasha remembers she's angry.

SASHA
So. Rad's my wife now.

PATRICE
I know.
(catching herself)
Congratulations!

RAD
Thanks, Patrice.

PATRICE
You're welcome. Rad.

Rashida hands Patrice the hat.

RASHIDA
Sick hat.

PATRICE
Thank you?

SASHA
This means the world, Mom.

PATRICE
To me too.

SASHA
I'm really sorry I didn't....

PATRICE
I'm here. That's all that matters.

RASHIDA
Fuck yeah!

Rashida picks Patrice up and swings her around in joy.

PATRICE
(horrified)
Oh my God.

RASHIDA
(puts her down.)
Oh, too much. My bad.

PATRICE
Well. I think I'll get a drink.

She smiles, stumbles off, very dizzy.

RASHIDA
(to Sasha)
Sorry, babe. She was just so...

SASHA
...motherly. I mean somebody-else's-mother-ly. I fucking love this night!

She wraps her arms around Rad for a long deep kiss.

ON PATRICE, stopped to steady herself against a palm tree. She watches the kiss, makes her face pleasant.

CUT TO:

INT. RECEPTION HALL, BAR AREA

Gus and Lou are deep in conversation.

GUS
Sooo I called her bluff and left for good, and that's The Story of My Split. How about yours?

LOU
We didn't split, per se...

GUS
Oh?

Lou looks away.

ON THE DANCE FLOOR: PEOPLE ARE MACARENA DRUNK.

GUS (CONT'D)
Look, Lou, I think you're funny, and bright, and not to objectify you, but fucking gorgeous...

LOU
Tell me more about that.

GUS
...but you're obviously still involved, on some level. I can't get mixed up in that. I'm not that guy.

LOU
You're really not.

She smiles, stands, weaves a bit. Realizes she's drunk. Goes.

INT. RECEPTION HALL, DANCE FLOOR, CONT.

The music winds down. Lou joins Gracie as Sasha and Rad make their way to the stage. Applause from the whole crowd.

LOU
How fun is this?

GRACIE
(re: the room)
This is fun.
(points at Lou)
This... is a shit-show.

LOU
Language. We're not at home.

GRACIE
Tough *shit*. See? Did it again.

LOU
What is the matter with you?

We hear Sasha start to speak on a mic in the background.

SASHA (O.C.)
Thanks everyone for coming out on this magical night!

GRACIE
What's the matter with *you*? I saw you! The whole thing! You just had, like, a date, in the middle of Sasha's wedding! Who does that?

SASHA (O.C.)
We have a special someone we need to thank cuz we couldn't have done it without her...

Gracie storms off. As Lou starts after her...

INT. BALLROOM, STAGE

SASHA
So Lou if you could just come up here real quick....

FUCK. Lou pastes on a smile, heads to the stage.

INT. LADIES ROOM

Gracie watches a FEMALE GUEST leave the Ladies Room. The woman has left her drink behind. Gracie sniffs it. Booze. She holds her nose and begins to tip it back. Patrice enters, champagne in hand. Takes Gracie's glass from her. Sniffs.

PATRICE
(re: the glass)
No. If you're going to steal, steal the good stuff. Here.

She offers Gracie her glass. She sips. Her eyebrows shoot up.

GRACIE
That's *good*.

PATRICE
I brought it from home. The girls can't afford a decent bar. But their strange friends seem to be enjoying themselves.

GRACIE
It was awesome. Til Mom ruined it.

PATRICE
Your mother's having a hard time.

GRACIE
Um, news flash! So am I!

PATRICE
Sometimes grown-ups just need to blow off some steam.

GRACIE
Well she should do it in private. If I can't say shit in public? She can't do THAT! It's embarrassing!

PATRICE
To whom?

GRACIE
To ME!

PATRICE
So this is *your* wedding.

GRACIE
No, obviously.

PATRICE
It's my daughter's wedding.

GRACIE
Please. You weren't even invited.

PATRICE
Your mother invited me.

GRACIE
Shut up.
(off Patrice's face)
Sorry, that doesn't mean, like *actually* shut up. It means, no way.

PATRICE.
Fascinating. How is your mother embarrassing you?

GRACIE
She's embarrassing *herself*.

PATRICE
Is this about the man she was talking to?

GRACIE
You saw it right? I'm so mad!

Gracie starts crying.

PATRICE
Grace. This is your sister's night. And it's a tricky night, because she just lost her father.

GRACIE
HI?! So did I!

PATRICE
Yes. So everyone's a little sad.

GRACIE
Except you.

PATRICE
Why would you say that?

GRACIE
Cuz you hated my dad.

A beat.

PATRICE
I didn't hate your father.

GRACIE
You were mean to him all the time.

PATRICE
I was mean to him because I loved him.

GRACIE
That makes no sense.

PATRICE
It will when you're older.

GRACIE
So you're mean to my mom because you love her?

PATRICE
No.

GRACIE
She *has* been really sad.

PATRICE
Well perhaps the pep rally my daughter's throwing for her out there will lift her spirits.

GRACIE
Are you jealous?

PATRICE
How about this. Be mad at her tomorrow. Tonight, just dance.

GRACIE
K.

PATRICE
Good.

Patrice takes a towel, dabs around Gracie's eyes.

PATRICE (CONT'D)
Also, a tip. Never cry with make-up on. People will know how you feel.

GRACIE
And that's a bad thing?

PATRICE
Yes.

GRACIE
Can I have another sip?

PATRICE
No.

INT. LADIES ROOM, CONT.

Lou opens the door to the Ladies' Room as Patrice starts to leave. Patrice slips by her, leaving Lou alone with Gracie.

GRACIE
I'm gonna be mad at you tomorrow. But tonight I just want to dance.

LOU
That sounds great.

GRACIE
Patrice says sometimes adults just need to blow off some steam.

Gracie heads out of the bathroom. Lou rushes into a stall. A beat. We hear vomiting.

CUT TO:

EXT. LOU'S HOUSE

Tovah gets out of the Bentley, takes off her giant gold heels, walks around to the front passenger side. She attempts to lift a sleeping Gracie out of the car, elbows her in the face, waking her up.

GRACIE
Ow.

TOVAH
I have to start working out.

LOU (O.C.)
Hello?

As Tovah guides Gracie to the porch, Lou gets out of the back seat, slides down the outside of the car onto the grass.

EXT. LOU'S FRONT PORCH

TORAH
Thank you for choosing Jew-ber.

GRACIE
Love you, T.

TOVAH
Love you, G. Oh. The fight you mentioned? Give her til tomorrow afternoon. Her morning's gonna hurt.

GRACIE
'kay.

Gracie, sleep-walking, pulls a key from under the door mat, lets herself in the house. We hear the door lock from inside.

Tovah sees Lou sitting by the car.

TOVAH
You need help?

LOU
I'm just gonna sit here for awhile.

TOVAH
You know you're not fine, right?

LOU
Yep.

TOVAH
I'm always for going off the rails, Lou. I'll even go off 'em with you. But Gracie can't see it. OK?

LOU
I can't have this talk right now.

TOVAH
OK. Pound some Advil, yeah?

Lou salutes her. Walks very slowly to the front door.

EXT. LOU'S FRONT DOOR

She's locked out. Rummages through her cocktail bag, drops it. The contents spill out. As she picks up the compact, phone, money...

CU: GROUND: A TATTERED MUSSO & FRANK'S MATCH BOOK

She picks it up. It knocks the wind out of her. She has to sit down by the door. She takes a deep breath, opens it.

ECU: MATCHBOOK: inside: MAX HIRSCH 310-516-1975.

Alone on the porch, she finally breaks.

CUT TO:

INT./EXT. PATRICE'S CAR, CONT.

Patrice, sunglasses on, hat in hand, exits the back seat of the Jaguar. She's steady on her feet, but her voice betrays her. Her driver, ROBERTO, stays in the car.

ROBERTO
Nice night, Mrs. Hirsch?

PATRICE
It was beautiful.
(a beat)
Roberto.

He’s stunned. She makes the long walk up to her estate.

CUT TO:

INT. GRACIE’S ROOM

Lou enters to find Gracie in pajamas, pacing, anxious.

GRACIE
I can’t get the make-up all the way off.

LOU
Just sleep in it.

GRACIE
It’s bad for your skin.

LOU
Your skin won’t go to hell for a couple more years.

GRACIE
It’s gonna go to hell in a....?

LOU
It’s fine. I swear.

GRACIE
But what if it’s not? They say you shouldn’t sleep in your...

LOU
Not *all the time.* You don’t normally even wear make-up, so if you take an average...

GRACIE
... I’m probably safe.

LOU
So safe. Night baby.

She kisses Gracie, turns out her light. In the dark...

GRACIE
We’re having a fight tomorrow. Afternoon.

LOU
Oh. Okay. Love you.

GRACIE
Love you.

CUT TO:

INT. LOU'S BEDROOM

ON THE WALL: A CLOCK READS 4 AM

Lou, now back in the Hirsch hoodie and panties, paces around like a caged animal. She's making audio notes in her phone.

LOU
(into phone)
Re-do resume. How to explain ten year gap? Ask Tove for help. Ask Tove for loan. Ask Tove to shoot me in the fucking face.

Finally she gives up, sits on the side of the bed, plugs her phone in on the bedside table. She turns off the light.

ON THE TABLE: A WEDDING PHOTO OF LOU AND MAX

Lou lies down. Stares at the ceiling. A long beat. She reaches inside her bedside table drawer. Pulls out a pink vibrator. Puts it under the covers, situates. BUZZ. A beat.

LOU (CONT'D)
Oh come ON.

She closes her eyes. A beat longer. The BUZZING continues. NOTHING. Exasperated, she turns it off, sits up and opens her eyes. Standing in front of her, is MAX, 60's, white hair, handsome. In a hospital gown. Lou shrieks and hides her face as if she's afraid, vibrator still in hand.

MAX
(re: the vibrator)
Oh good. You miss me.

LOU
Max...?

MAX
Hey baby doll.

He steps toward the bed. She shrinks back.

LOU
No no no no. You're not real.

MAX
How do you know?

LOU
Because you can't be here. And if you could, you'd be a bird or a deer or some shit. A symbol. Or a big column of light. I watched all those Oprah episodes about it that week that I only ate pop tarts.

MAX
Honey, it's me.

LOU
If you were you, you would not be in that gown with your ass hanging out. You *hate* your ass.

MAX
You called it the crack in my back.
(off Lou's shock)
If I know that, I must be real.

LOU
If you know that, you're a mirage brought on by the four vodkas I had at Sasha's wedding.
(a beat)
Oh! Did you see Sasha's....

He smiles.

MAX
See? You *do* believe in something.

LOU
No. You're not back. Are you?

MAX
Doesn't matter either way, unless you believe it. Do you?

CUT TO:

YOUNG SASHA (V.O.) (PRE-LAP)
I don't know!

INT. PATRICE'S BEDROOM

Patrice sits in custom ironed sheets, surrounded by chintz and monogrammed pillows, in custom satin pajamas and a face mask. She aims a remote at the foot of her bed, from which a giant flat-screen TV elegantly rises. She presses play.

SCREEN: HOME MOVIE, 1998, A CHILD'S BIRTHDAY PARTY. YOUNG MAX and YOUNG PATRICE, 30's.YOUNG SASHA, 7, opens presents, surrounded by OTHER KIDS in a middle-class home.

YOUNG PATRICE
Well, what do you *hope* it is?!

YOUNG SASHA
A Nerf SuperMaxx 3000 8-Shooter?

YOUNG MAX
Crap. I got you the complete set of Spice Girls Barbies.

YOUNG SASHA
DAD! Gross!
(opens the SuperMaxx Gun)
YES! Now you all die!

She rips the packaging off, loads the Nerf gun, opens fire.

YOUNG PATRICE
Sasha, these are your guests!

YOUNG MAX runs back into frame with other Nerf guns, passes them out to the other KIDS.

YOUNG MAX
Go crazy!

YOUNG SASHA
This is awesome!

YOUNG PATRICE
This is mortifying.
(to camera)
Stop filming, please. Now.

The screen goes black.

Patrice peels the face mask off. She's crying.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - THE NEXT DAY

Lou, sets French Toast Muffins on the table as Gracie enters.

GRACIE
Cute muffins.

LOU
Right? Pinterest.

Gracie checks her phone.

LOU (CONT'D)
No phones at the...

GRACIE
Tovah said to let you have til afternoon. It's 12:06. I'm mad.

LOU
At me.

GRACIE
Duh.

LOU
And am I mad at you?

GRACIE
No.

LOU
Why not?

GRACIE
Because I didn't do anything wrong.

LOU
But I did.

GRACIE
Do you need rehab?

LOU
No, I just need Advil.

GRACIE
You were talking to that man.

LOU
He looked familiar, and when he caught me looking at him, he talked to me, so I talked back. Manners.

GRACIE
I thought he was Daddy from the back.

LOU
Me too!

GRACIE
He wasn't.

LOU
No.

GRACIE
And you did this.

Gracie crosses her legs, throws her head back, laughs throatily. A freakishly good grown-up woman imitation.

LOU
Oh yeah! That's right!

Lou jumps up, stomps her foot, storms out. A beat.

LOU (CONT'D)
(coming back in)
And you did that.

GRACIE
I'm 12. You're 40. Get your shit together!

LOU
Mouth!

GRACIE
We're at home!

LOU
It's not the shit; it's the context! Why are you so mad at me?

GRACIE
How could you do that to Daddy? He was *right there*.

LOU
What?

GRACIE
You said he was there.

LOU
He wasn't actually...

GRACIE
So you lied.

LOU
I just...

GRACIE
Lied.

LOU
Stop.

GRACIE
Liar!

LOU
Goddammit Gracie...

GRACIE
You can't have it both ways! Either you cheated on Daddy by talking to that man or you lied about Daddy being there. Which is it?

LOU
It's neither! I didn't do either one of those things! On purpose. I'm sorry, Grace. I'm not perfect.

GRACIE
Why not? I am.

LOU
You don't have to be.

GRACIE
Yes I do. Or we'll be poor instead of broke and we'll live under the Hollywood off ramp and I'll get dumb because I won't have a school.

LOU
You don't control the world, baby.

GRACIE
Well who does? It's obviously not you! So just... try harder! Okay? I just need you to try harder.

LOU
Okay. I'll try harder.

GRACIE
Okay.

LOU
I'm sorry I fucked up last night.

GRACIE
It's cool. Patrice explained it all to me.

LOU
Um. What?

GRACIE
You seriously don't remember. You're really too old to party.

LOU
Wow.

GRACIE
She also told me you were the one who invited her. That was cool.

LOU
Of me.

GRACIE
Yeah. Keep up.

LOU
So, I don't *totally* suck.

GRACIE
No.

LOU
And I am, in fact, somewhat together.

GRACIE
Somewhat.

Gracie grins, takes a bite of a muffin. Meh. Puts it down.

GRACIE (CONT'D)
Can we go to Yogurtland later?

LOU
Sure.

Gracie leaves the muffin. Lou takes a bite. Nope. Gross.

CUT TO:

EXT. PATRICE'S MANSION, LATER

Lou stands in front of Patrice's giant house, the plate of muffins in her hands. She rings the doorbell with her elbow. CHIMES erupt in the tune of "Ode To Joy." Lou shrieks:

LOU
Fuck!

Patrice opens the door.

PATRICE
That's your opener?

LOU
It's better than Beethoven for the deaf.

PATRICE
All Beethoven is technically Beethoven for the deaf.

LOU
That's funny.

PATRICE
I'm funny.

LOU
So I brought you these muffins.

PATRICE
Oh, I've eaten for the day.

LOU
It's like 3.

PATRICE
Why are you here?

LOU
Now *I* need to thank *you* for last night. Gracie said you stuck up for me.

PATRICE
I tried to show her your side.

LOU
You did a better job with her than I did.

PATRICE
Well, you did a better job with Sasha than I did.

LOU
(re: muffins)
So I just wanted to thank you.

PATRICE
Next time thank me with champagne.

LOU
Your champagne is no longer in my budget. Hell, my champagne is no longer in my budget. It’s five dollar pinot from here on out.

PATRICE
You’re in trouble.

LOU
I will be soon. Go ahead. Gloat.
(a beat)
No? That’s good of you. Bye.

As she goes...

PATRICE
What about Gracie’s school.

LOU
What?

PATRICE
Don’t take her out of school.

LOU
Oh. She’s on scholarship.

PATRICE
Those Chinese are so diligent.

LOU
Jesus Christ.

PATRICE
Compliments aren’t racist.

LOU
Bye Patrice.

She offers the muffins. Patrice just stares at her. Lou crouches, puts them on the ground. Turns and walks away.

PATRICE
Louise?

LOU
WHAT.

PATRICE
If Gracie needs anything - you know, uniforms, piano lessons - enrichment of any kind - I would be willing to help. She deserves it.

LOU
She does. She really does.

Lou is about to break. Patrice sees it; saves her.

PATRICE
I guess I'm buying brunch.

For the first time, Patrice actually smiles.

LOU
You are the actual devil.

Lou storms off, gets in the car. As she pulls out...

PATRICE
How's Saturday? Polo Lounge?

Lou flips her the bird out the window. Patrice waves.

THE END