How To Be Alice

an original screenplay by

Alison Joy

Alison Joy
14 Dumbarton Oaks
Stratham, NH 03885
(603) 205-1354
alisonjoy@comcast.net
1. INT. HIGH-RISE OFFICE BUILDING - DAY.

A luxurious penthouse office in midtown Manhattan:

WORKER BEES type hurriedly from within their cubicles, FLUSTERED INTERNS flit about with cardboard Starbucks trays, and stacks of memos seem to fly through the air.

A sign at the back tells us in bold red typeface that this is the home of 24/7 Magazine.

A YOUNG WOMAN sits in her corner office, brows furrowed, as she holds a phone to her ear with her shoulder and types furiously into her Blackberry at the same time.

She's DAISY MOSS and she gets shit done.

Growling into her phone...

DAISY
The May issue's set to print at the end of the week, then we've got Jessica working on the cover design for June.
(beat)
It's a little late for that, Susan!
(beat)
I'll do what I can!

She slams the phone down and tosses back her sharp angled tresses.

Daisy looks like the type who's got it all together. Her black sheath dress is oh-so New York chic and her perfectly manicured nails tip and tap as they strike the cool glass of her desk.

She doesn't look up as an INTERN hurries in with her coffee.

Daisy extends her hand to accept it wordlessly.

The intern stands nervously at the edge of Daisy's desk. She pulls out a stack of pages from under her arm and hands them forward as an offering.

INTERN
Ms. Moss, I was wondering if you'd be able to look at a piece I wrote. You're such an inspiration and I'd love -

Daisy holds a hand up as a "stop right there" signal and points downward.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

DAISY
Leave it there.

The intern's face lights up with controlled excitement.

She follows the direction of Daisy's finger, trying to decide if she's pointing at the corner of the desk, or the trash can.

She panics. Hoping for the best, she leaves it on top of a stack of papers.

As Daisy's intern retreats, she is quickly replaced by a WOMAN in stilettos and scarlet lips.

CHARLOTTE
Daisy, they need you in Studio B.

DAISY
What now?

CHARLOTTE
Something about the end of the world, nothing's going right, yadayada...
Same old, same old.

DAISY
Is everyone here incompetent?

CHARLOTTE
Everyone except you and me.

DAISY
Sometimes I wonder what they would do without us.

CHARLOTTE
Hey, knock on wood!

DAISY
Oh come off it, Charlotte.
Superstition is for people who are scared or stupid.

Daisy rises, picking up a stack of memos and knocking the intern's pristine purple folder onto the ground.

As they stride out of Daisy's office, we re-enter the chaos of cubicle city.
INT. 24/7 OFFICE - CONTINUOUS.

The frantic workers and panicked phone calls don't phase either of these two women whose powerful glides seem almost feline.

Daisy doesn't look up from her Blackberry or stack of notes as the two continue to chat.

CHARLOTTE
So how are the wedding plans coming along? Feeling in over your head yet?

DAISY
Oh, fine, fine. Kent has been especially affectionate lately. Flowers, dinners, jewelry. I don't know what's gotten into him.

CHARLOTTE
Ooooh!

DAISY
But planning the wedding is at the end of my list. We've been so busy here.

Charlotte's face drops a bit. She raises her eyes to the ceiling knowingly.

CHARLOTTE
Well, maybe some free time will open up. It's your wedding, you want it to be perfect.

DAISY
Yeah, but I'm a modern woman, I can console myself with the knowledge that if this one doesn't go perfectly, the next one will be better.

CHARLOTTE
You are depressingly realistic.

DAISY
Thanks.

They reach Studio B and Daisy pulls open the door to reveal a photo-shoot in full swing.

CUT TO
INT. STUDIO B - DAY.

Spotting Daisy, a swarm of distressed PRODUCERS dressed all in black flock to her, their queen bee.

Their walkie talkies echo through the spacious hall.

Daisy doesn't stop, click-clacking her heels across the tiled floor to the edge of the matte backdrop.

EXECUTIVES with clipboards are hovering around an angry PHOTOGRAPHER and a lanky MODEL.

DAISY
Who messed up this time?

They crowd around her, all bickering and looking to her for answers.

CUT TO

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - AFTERNOON.

Daisy sits at the end of a long glass table, flanked by her coworker ELLEN with cat-eye glasses and tight glossy curls.

She picks at a spinach salad, scanning a memo as her friend speaks.

ELLEN
Did you hear about Max?

DAISY
What about him?

ELLEN
He got fired the other day. Had a total meltdown - knocked his desk over and stormed out.

Daisy's eyes move from her stacks of paper to Ellen.

Her eyes narrow.

DAISY
Well, the guy was kind of washed up.

ELLEN
But he knew what he was doing... Head of an entire department and he's just gone. I heard whispers that there's going to be an entire company restructuring because our

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)
ELLEN (CONT'D)
circulation numbers are dropping.

DAISY
How many execs can they let go before the entire magazine loses its direction?

ELLEN
I don't know, but I don't think I'd brush it off. It's not just us either, Daisy, it's the entire medium. It's bigger than us.

DAISY
We'll be fine, 24/7 has always been good at adjusting to change. And I just put together that editorial piece that Jacob loved.

ELLEN
If you say so. I have to get back to work. Can't waste any time here anymore now that we're under a microscope.

She exits and Daisy gives her a mock salute.

DAISY
(under her breath)
Well, I'll be fine...

She stabs forcefully at her salad.

CUT TO

EXT. BUSY MANHATTAN STREET - EVENING.

The sun has set. Hundreds of yellow taxi cabs fight their way through rush hour traffic.

Daisy emerges from a BLACK SEDAN.

She tips the DRIVER and glides out.

CUT TO

INT. LOBBY OF HIGH-RISE CONDO BUILDING - CONTINUOUS.

Daisy strolls in, shoulders slouched. It's been a long day.

The DOORMAN gives her a nod.
CONTINUED:

DOORMAN
   Evening, Ms. Moss.

She gives him a polite smile but her stride is unwavering. She has places to be.

CUT TO

INT. ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS.

Daisy gives a sharp tap to the button labeled PH. We glide up smoothly as she hums along to the inevitable muzak.

The doors open with a DING.

Daisy shuffles out, eyes glued to her phone.

CUT TO

INT. PENTHOUSE APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS.

The door opens to reveal a Pottery Barn catalog brought to life.

Two empty beers sit on the round glass coffee table in front of a blanched white couch.

Daisy sets down her bag, frowning.

She gathers them together, glass clinking, and adds them to the growing pile under the sink.

   DAISY
   I'm home!

She hears a grunt from the other room.

The opening of a door, a shuffle, and then the grunt's owner is revealed.

KENT, 34, looks like a former Abercrombie model ten years after the fact. He's wearing the remnants of workday attire - dress pants, a crisp button down, and a loosened tie hanging slack around his neck.

   KENT
   Hey you.

Kent pours himself a glass of whiskey, plunking a cold stone into the crystal tumbler and swirling it around.

   DAISY
   How was your day?

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

KENT
Eh. Same old.

He throws himself onto the couch, going limp. The whiskey glass sweats onto the table.

Daisy's manicured hand reaches to place a coaster underneath and we see the massive rock on her ring finger. The glare: it burns!

DAISY
Sweetheart, could you just be a little more careful in our beautiful home? Carla just finished decorating, after all.

KENT
What's the point of having all this stuff if we can't enjoy it?

DAISY
It's nice to have pretty things.

KENT
Yeah, that's what I've got you for.

Daisy rolls her eyes but her lips curve into a half-smile. She obviously takes this as a compliment and not a quip.

Kent snuggles further into the couch, sliding a silk pillow under his neck as Daisy moves to the kitchen, pouring herself a glass of Evian water and slicing an apple into delicate wedges.

DAISY
So Max got fired.

KENT
That dick who hit on you at the Christmas party?

DAISY
That's the one. He was a great editor. Maybe now I've got a shot at his job.

KENT
Or maybe you're next! Ooooooh!

DAISY
Why would you say that?

(CONTINUED)
KENT
Well... would it really be the end of the world if you got the axe?

DAISY
I love my work.

KENT
Believe me, I know.
(beat)
But think about it. You could concentrate on the wedding. Have some time to yourself. And you know... take care of our future children.

DAISY
You want me to stay at home?

She raises her eyebrows. This obviously sounds like the end of the world to our all-work no-play protagonist.

KENT
No, no. Forget I said it, babe.

DAISY
And now I'm "babe?" What is happening to the world!

KENT
I honestly wouldn't worry about it. You know you're good at what you do.

Her lips curve into another tight smile and she puts down her knife, bringing the plate of apple wedges to the couch.

She sits next to Kent.

DAISY
I know.

He turns to kiss her.

DAISY (CONT'D)
(shaking her head)
Lipstick.

CUT TO

INT. DAISY'S BATHROOM - LATER.

MONTAGE:
-WATER POURING FROM A FAUCET INTO A JETTED TUB

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

-A WHITE TOWEL ON SMOOTH SKIN
-HANDS COMBING THROUGH HANGERS IN A LARGE CLOSET
-A SPRITZ OF PERFUME ONTO DAINTY WRISTS
-A BRUSH RUNNING THROUGH SILKY BROWN HAIR

INT. RESTAURANT BAR - NIGHT.

Daisy and Charlotte are perched at a sleek chrome bar, $20 cocktails in hand.

Charlotte wears an aubergine silk dress. Her waves of chestnut hair are neatly coiffed and just brush her smooth ivory shoulders. Daisy wears a boat-necked emerald cotton dress, a single pearl shining from each ear.

DAISY
(glancing at her watch)
They should be here soon.

CHARLOTTE
Nervous?

DAISY
No, I have a feeling I know what's coming. Now that Max is out, they need someone to fill his slot.

She gestures at herself, coy, then clinks Charlotte's glass. Charlotte looks less certain.

CHARLOTTE
Oh, that's them walking in now.

She makes a signal to the BARTENDER who brings over the tab. Daisy grabs it first.

DAISY
Let me.

She grins and leaves a bill on the bar.

DAISY (CONT'D)
Shall we?

Charlotte follows her lead.
INT. RESTAURANT TABLE - LATER.

Daisy, Charlotte and TWO MEN in suits sit around a table, a bottle of wine in the middle of the table nearly empty.

DAVE, mid 50s, has a mane of black hair, slicked back with pomade. His partner, PHIL, has a thick mustache and a David Beckham hairdo. They both wear obnoxiously large Rolex watches.

A waiter approaches, entrées in hand. Roast chicken breast for Dave, a T-bone for Phil, Ahi tuna for Charlotte and a lemony filet of sole for Daisy.

PHIL
Wonderful, just wonderful.

Daisy inspects her fish.

DAISY
(quietly to waiter)
Could you send this back at the proper temperature? It's cold.

The waiter nods, apologetic.

DAVE
So, we should talk business.

CHARLOTTE
That's why we're here.

Charlotte shuffles around in her bag. She whips out three card-stock magazine covers.

The first has a black-and-white portrait of Cate Blanchett with bold typeface in red spelling "24/7" just as we saw on the office wall. It's striking, but harsh.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)
Our numbers are telling us that our two main competitors are steadily increasing in circulation each month as we steadily decline.

The second cover has a glossy white background and a laughing Jessica Biel in pink taffeta. The type reads: "Modern Woman" in a matching pink sans serif.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)
Our readers, mainly women aged 30-50, seem to be finding their recipes for success elsewhere.

(CONTINUED)
The last features cherub-faced Mark Zuckerberg sitting in a backwards chair, arms folded over the wooden pegs. His cover is emblazoned with bold white letters spelling "Mogul."

PHIL
That's exactly what's got us worried.

Daisy looks a little irked. She's heard this before. She's got it under control.

DAVE
What have you got for us, Charlotte?

CHARLOTTE
Well, if you ask me, this isn't a problem that will go away on its own. This is something that calls for a massive overhaul of our brand and some new people in charge. I'm talking fresh ideas, creative minds, but seasoned in the magazine industry. This magazine needs to be sleek, sexy, fast, hard, cold, cutthroat...

Daisy doesn't like where this is going. Her eyebrows knit even tighter. The waiter brings back her fish, now heated to her liking.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)
I think the first motion of business is for you to promote me to Managing Editor so I can implement this restructuring from a position of greater authority.

Daisy chokes on a bite of sole.

DAISY
I'm sorry, Charlotte, did you forget that I'm Managing Editor?

CHARLOTTE
That's the thing though, Daisy. You're a smart, powerful woman. But your ideas are stale.

Phil nods. Dave shrugs. They can't seem to get a word in.

DAISY
I'm a vision of success! How could I not run a magazine built on SUCCESS?

Charlotte looks smug. She's getting under Daisy's skin.

(CONTINUED)
DAISY (CONT'D)
I'm wearing $400 shoes!

CHARLOTTE
Daisy, you know I respect you immensely, but it's time you gave up the throne to someone who knows what to do with it. Someone like me.

Daisy is bright red. She didn't see this coming. She breathes deeply to collect herself.

PHIL
Well, Charlotte, you do make a very strong presentation, and the numbers are too hard to ignore.

DAVE
Our stockholders are getting upset.

PHIL
Very upset.

DAVE
It's difficult to make these kinds of decisions, but I think we're on the same page, don't you? You know... based on what we discussed earlier in my office.

Charlotte looks at him knowingly.

PHIL
I think we are.

Daisy can't stand their bullshit chatter. She clasps her hands together and speaks slowly.

DAISY
Listen, we have a fundamental problem with the branding of this magazine. Forcing me out in favor of the first person to claim they can fix all your woes is a little premature. (turning to Charlotte) Charlotte, you don't move up the ranks by forcing out your friends of all people.

Charlotte arches a perfectly shaped eyebrow.
DAISY (CONT'D)
At the end of the day, you want the person in charge to represent what your publication stands for. I've got that! I'm the smart powerful woman you see on our covers. I've worked my way up, I've toiled long and hard, and I've made the money. Isn't that what we're all striving for? Isn't that why people read our magazine? Isn't it because, really, deep down, they just want to be like me?

Charlotte emits a sort of half-scoff half-chuckle.

CHARLOTTE
Numbers don't lie.

PHIL
She's got a point!

DAVE
She does.

PHIL
Daisy, I think Dave and I are going to have to ask you to step down from your position at 24/7.

DAVE
As Charlotte has so eloquently stated, you aren't what we need right now.

PHIL
We need to go in a new direction.

DAVE
But we wish you all the best in your future endeavors!

Daisy's jaw has dropped to the floor at this point. Her bubble of self-reassurance hasn't prepared her for this complete and total annihilation.

Charlotte smooths her skirt. Her job is done. Rather than walk out gracefully in humiliation, Daisy pipes up.

DAISY
No. You know what? You can't fire me.

Phil and Dave look up from their plates.
DAISY (CONT'D)
I quit.
(beat)
You don't know a god damn thing about success.

She stands up.

DAISY (CONT'D)
Phil, you're an idiot. You've always been an idiot. And Dave, everyone is just too afraid to tell you your mustache looks like an animal died on your face.

She pauses, then stares at Charlotte.

DAISY (CONT'D)
You of all people. I thought you were my friend.

Now it's the three of them who have their jaws on the floor.

The audacity!

As she grabs her bag and struts to the door, she takes the card-stock copy of 24/7's cover and tucks it under her arm.

DAISY (CONT'D)
You'll be begging to have me back.

The three of them stand there, cemented to the floor as she makes her way out of the restaurant.

Seemingly confident, Daisy seems to be taking this abrupt life change rather well.

CUT TO

INT. HIGH-RISE CONDO BUILDING - EARLY EVENING.

Daisy shuffles in her bag for the key, and turns the knob of her apartment door.

DAISY
Hon-

She freezes.

Kent is shirtless on the couch.

Two glasses of red wine sit on the coffee table. One of the glasses lies horizontal and forlorn on the table, rolling
slightly with the curve of the table as burgundy droplets fall onto the white carpet below.

KENT
(dumbfounded)
You're home early.

Daisy doesn't say anything. Her lips form a thin line.

From the hallway, a blonde curl emerges. Daisy turns to look at her. It's the intern.

INTERN
Oh!

DAISY
Oh.

Kent opens his mouth and then shuts it again. Shrugging his shoulders and raising his hands to wave the white flag.

KENT
I wasn't expecting you...

INTERN
Did you have a chance to read that piece I gave you?

Daisy is taken aback.

DAISY
Why on earth would this be the appropriate time to ask me that?

INTERN
(as she buttons her blouse)
I'm just trying to keep things professional.

Daisy turns back to Kent.

DAISY
Do you know how lucky you were to have me? Do you know how many men would have killed to be you?

KENT
Dais-

DAISY
I'm moving out!

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: (2)

She turns on her heel and the door slams with an exaggerated echo.

CUT TO

INT. ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS.

Before we know it we're right back in the elevator. Until this point, Daisy hasn't shed a tear.

She presses the circular "L" button and we glide downwards.

CUT TO

INT. LOBBY OF HIGH-RISE CONDO BUILDING - CONTINUOUS.

The elevator doors swiftly part and a spattering of well-dressed city dwellers spill out.

At the back, there is Daisy, who at this point is trying her hardest to choke back tears and seriously failing.

Her mascara is running, her eyes are red, and her chin is quivering frantically. She turns to the doorman.

DAISY
(strained)
Would you call me a car?

DOORMAN
Of course, Ms. Moss.

She strolls to the front entrance, aggressively pushing the revolving door.

EXT. OUTSIDE OF HIGH-RISE CONDO BUILDING - CONTINUOUS.

Daisy plops down on a bench, propping the cardstock print up next to her like a child.

Then the tears pour out.

FADE TO BLACK

INT. EMPTY APARTMENT - MORNING.

Daisy strolls around an apartment on the Upper East Side. It's large and airy, with a lot of character. She looks pleased. A BROKER stands next to her, looking bored.

DAISY
I'll take it!
CONTINUED:

BROKER
Great. Congratulations. I'll need first and last, plus a security deposit.

She whips some papers out of her bag.

BROKER (CONT'D)
Sign here. (beat)
And here. (beat)
Initial here.

Daisy does as asked. She takes out a checkbook and signs with a flourish.

BROKER (CONT'D)
I'll get back to you if there are any problems. Enjoy the new place.

CUT TO

EXT. CAFE - LATER.

Daisy sits with a steaming latté. Her phone rings.

DAISY
Hello?

She takes a sip of her coffee but starts to choke.

DAISY (CONT'D)
What do you mean the check bounced?

CUT TO

INT. OFFICE - AFTERNOON.

Daisy sits in a leather chair, twiddling her thumbs. Across from her sits a MAN who looks tired and washed-up, thoroughly unamused. The nameplate on his desk tells us he's "DANA FLAGGERTY, FINANCIAL ADVISOR."

He crunches numbers, typing at a snail's pace into his computer. An angry beep, and then:

DANA
Well, it doesn't look good.

DAISY
How bad?

(CONTINUED)
18 CONTINUED:

DANA

You're broke.

Daisy's eyes bug out.

DAISY

I had thousands!

DANA

In stocks, not in savings. Most of your assets were liquid. Like water. They evaporated! Gone. Dried up.

DAISY

Yes, thank you. You don't have to rub it in.

(beat)

This was always Kent's thing...

Dana shoots her a blank gaze. He speaks in monotone.

DANA

Well, let's discuss where to go from here.

DAISY

I need an apartment. What are my options?

DANA

Let's just say you're not going to be hitting the PH button in the elevator anymore.

He chuckles dryly to himself. Daisy glares.

DANA (CONT'D)

Okay, okay.

(thinking)

Well, my daughter just graduated from NYU and she's got a couple of months left on her lease. It's dingy, but it's yours if you want it. And - it's cheap.

19 INT. DIRTY STAIRWAY - MORNING.

A symphony of sounds echoes through the thin plaster walls of a post-war walk-up.

Babies WAIL, pots and pans CLASH and CLANG, and fragments of a lover's QUARREL can be heard...

(CONTINUED)
MARCO (O.S.)
For the last time Jeanine, I don't want you seeing him!

JEANINE (O.S.)
Nothing happened, Marco! It's not what you think!

Daisy rolls her eyes.

The paneled walls are coated with mint green paint that's hard to see underneath the hand-printed layers of dirt.

Moaning and grunting, Daisy mounts the narrow stairway.

Wrapped in her arms is a large TV, cord dangling precariously in front of her feet.

From each of her wrists dangles a canvas bag spilling over with a random assortment of knick-knacks.

We're just waiting to see her tumble.

She feels her way up the stairs slowly. Halfway up she leans against the wall to catch her breath and tries to blow a stray curl out of her face.

Daisy continues to huff and puff, and she's almost at the top when all of a sudden...

SHE GOES TUMBLING DOWN!

Sliding face first down the steep incline, the TV rolls after her and lands with a THUD, crushing the canvas bags with a CRUNCH.

Daisy doesn't even bother shouting, she just arches an eyebrow and frowns.

She leaves the TV, grabs her bags, and trudges up.

CUT TO

INT. DAISY'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS.

Daisy swings open the heavy metallic door to reveal HER NEW APARTMENT.

It's shabby. It's dirty. And it's small.

Pushing the television out of her mind, Daisy flops onto a faded damask couch.
She exhales and pushes the hair out of her face, eyes bugging out.

Then a KNOCK at the door, slightly ajar.

DAISY
Hello?

A scruffy beard emerges as the door slides open.

A MAN peeks in. He's short, dressed in flannel and paint-splattered cargo shorts.

BOB
Hey, is this yours?

He reveals the TV, tucked under his arm.

DAISY
Oh. Yeah, thanks for getti-

BOB
Can I have it?

Daisy is silent. It's probably worth $10.

DAISY
Uh.

(beat)
I guess so.

BOB
Sweet. You rock!

He raises his fist in the air and slowly retreats, walking backwards and bobbing his head to imaginary music.

BOB (CONT'D)
Oh, I'm Bob by the way! Welcome to the building!

DAISY
(perplexed)
Thanks, Bob!

He's a strange guy, but he's friendly enough.

Daisy looks perplexed.

She gets up to go to the stove and puts on a pot of tea.

The sink gurgles as water streams into the glass pot, and Daisy looks out the window to the street below.

(CONTINUED)
The apartment may be shabby, but the view seems alright...

Until Daisy looks closer and realizes it's just a decal stuck to the glass. She peels it back, stripping the print of Tompkins Square Park to reveal the real view: the neighbor's roof, home to a trash heap covered in pigeon shit.

Daisy grimaces. She hurriedly re-sticks the decal to the window.

All of a sudden we see...

A FIGURE STANDING IN THE KITCHEN DOORWAY.

ALICE
Howdy neighbor!

Daisy jumps and shrieks, dropping the tea kettle with a THUD in the sink.

Her visitor's eyes widen and she shrieks in return.

She's older, maybe 65, and she's dressed like a Hollywood starlet of decades past.

A long, silky dress floats down to her ankles and cinches at her waist.

A string of pearls adorns her neck and ends in a flapper-style knot. Her ears sport matching pearl wreath studs.

Her hair, faded white from age, is tied back with a scarf.

After a second, their shrieks turn into nervous laughter.

ALICE (CONT'D)
I'm so sorry, darling! The door was open!

DAISY
So you just decided to barge in?!

ALICE
I do apologize. You just sit down. I'll make the tea for you - I owe you that much!

DAISY
No, you really don't have to...

But Alice wordlessly picks up the tea kettle and begins to rinse it.
The woman turns the dial on the gas stove, which emits three soft CLICKS and lights, gleaming white hot. She places the heavy pot on the heat and steps back.

DAISY (CONT'D)
So we're neighbors, I take it?

ALICE
I'm just down the hall! Nice to get some fresh meat in here - the building dynamic was getting stale. Speaking of which, you probably met Bob already.

DAISY
He seemed nice.

ALICE
A lot of people seem nice at first. Heaven help me with that boy.

Daisy mulls this over.

DAISY
I'm sorry, I don't think I caught your name?

ALICE
Oh good god, you're probably wondering who this strange woman in your kitchen is! I'm Alice!

She extends her hand. Daisy reluctantly shakes.

DAISY
Daisy.

ALICE
And what brings you to Alphabet City, Daisy?

DAISY
Some... unexpected life changes.

Her eyes start to water.

ALICE
You can tell me all about it?

DAISY
No, no. No. I'm fine.

She's not fine.

(Continued)
ALICE
Oh dear, oh dear!

Daisy moves to the kitchen table.

ALICE (CONT'D)
You just sit right there and I'll get you some nice hot tea.

Alice goes to fetch the now-whistling kettle and flits about the kitchen as if she's right at home. She whistles a happy tune.

ALICE (CONT'D)
Milk or sugar?

DAISY
Neither.

ALICE
Atta girl. Good tea doesn't need anything but a long steeping!

She brings the two mugs over to the table, sliding one in front of Daisy.

She hesitates, but accepts.

ALICE (CONT'D)
Now I have nothing to do for the day - I was just going to take a stroll when I saw your door open - so you go ahead and take up as much time as you need, you poor dear. Tell me everything.

DAISY
We just met.

ALICE
So let's get to know each other! I'm Alice, 59, devastatingly beautiful, and still going strong! (quietly) I've broken a lot of hearts in my day.

Daisy looks down uncomfortably. She stares at her mug in silence, waiting for Alice to move on.

ALICE (CONT'D)
Well, another time I guess.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)
ALICE (CONT'D)
You know, Daisy, it's always humbling
to be knocked down, but it's how you
hoist yourself back up that really
shows who you are.
(beat)
We may not know each other, but I
have a special gift of reading
people's energy.

Daisy looks dubious. Alice squints her eyes in concentration.

ALICE (CONT'D)
Yours is a lovely violet color...
Full of passion and drive but
obstinate and unmoving.

DAISY
I'm violet?

ALICE
Yes dear, that's what I just said!
The loveliest shade of purple!

She opens her eyes.

ALICE (CONT'D)
I was trained to read energies by a
Chilean masseuse who had a real knack
for it. But that was years ago...

She sighs, reminiscing.

ALICE (CONT'D)
Ah. Well then, I really should be
going. Time to take that stroll - I
feel awfully cramped up in this little
building, and, after all, there's so
much to see in this world!

She gathers their mugs and deposits them into the sink.

DAISY
(uncertainly)
Goodbye!

Alice smiles and flits out the door.

It slides shut with a creak, and Daisy stares at the ghost
of Alice's form.

She moves to the bedroom and rests her weight on the
windowsill.
Outside, she sees Alice gallivanting down the sidewalk with the spring in her step of a much younger woman. She seems to glow.

DAISY (CONT'D)
(to herself, perplexed)
Violet?

FADE TO BLACK

INT. DAISY'S APARTMENT - MORNING.

Bright and bubbly alt-rock plays over Daisy's morning routine.

MONTAGE:
-THE ROAR OF THE SHOWER
-A BRUSH THROUGH BROWN LOCKS
-A SWIPE OF RED LIPSTICK.
-A CURLING OF EYELASHES.
-A NUDE PUMP SLIDING ONTO MANICURED FEET.
-A BLAZER BEING BUTTONED.

CUT TO

EXT. BUSY MANHATTAN STREET - CONTINUOUS.

The alt-rock is muddled with the sound of New York's urban jungle.

Daisy crosses the street with a confident stride, her pace lining up to the beat of the song.

We follow her as she walks towards a sleek skyscraper, pushing through the revolving door with force.

CUT TO

INT. LUXURIOUS OFFICE - CONTINUOUS.

A MAN in a navy Armani suit sits at a mahogany desk, hands crossed.

EXEC 1
I just don't think we have a place for you here.
A WOMAN with tight curls and a purple silk blazer leans back in an office chair. Her words blend aurally into those of the man before her.

EXEC 2
Not what we're looking for.

Another MAN, another suit.

EXEC 3
Not hiring.

The last word of each exec blends into the first of their on-screen successor, creating a never-ending flow of rejection.

EXEC 4
You're not for us.

EXEC 5
Really don't have a use for you.

EXEC 6
(Lips)
Don't have a use for your skill-set.

EXEC 7
(Bigger lips)
Your experience doesn't line up with our demographic.

EXEC 8
(Even bigger lips)
Nothing for you.

Daisy sits nervously. The office is enclosed by glass walls, and all the furniture is a bright white. A bouquet of yellow roses adorns the otherwise sterile room.

FRANK sits across from her in a chrome office chair, looking over a stack of memos. He's in his late 40s, Korean, and dressed to the nines with a bow tie, suspenders, and bright red glasses.

FRANK
You know, I hated working as your old assistant.

(MORE)
FRANK (CONT'D)
(beat)
But you gave me a job when no one else would. Maybe I could slip you into one of our newer projects.

Daisy instantly straightens her posture, eyes widening.

DAISY
What did you have in mind?

FRANK
Well, as you know, it's getting more difficult to rely on our revenue from print sales, so we've been expanding our digital division. We need bloggers stat. Interested?

DAISY
Well, I'm really more useful for big-picture managerial projects.

FRANK
Good luck finding one of those positions.

DAISY
Ha. Yeah.

FRANK
We have a how-to blogging position that needs filling. It's yours if you want it. Just get back to me by Friday.

DAISY
Oh. Okay.

She nervously shakes Frank's hand, and backs out, smoothing her skirt.

DAISY (CONT'D)
Thank you for your time.

He has already moved back to reading a memo, and lifts a hand in salutation without looking up, an incarnation of Daisy's former self.

CUT TO

INT. CAFE - DAY.

Daisy waits in line with a phone pressed to her ear.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

She opens up her wallet as she moves towards the counter. There is a one dollar bill surrounded by a few loose pennies. She looks at the BARISTA sheepishly and mouths: "Just a water, please." He glares.

Barking into her cell phone:

DAISY
It's just seems so beneath me. Should I take it?

The barista hands her the water. She moves to a corner table.

A series of horns beep angrily. Daisy's gaze moves to the lines of traffic as she lets out a sigh.

CUT TO

EXT. SIDEWALK - DAY.

Daisy strolls home, her pace more leisurely than usual.

A cute bookstore catches her eye. She stops.

Looking around warily, she decides to turn, and pushes the door open with a gentle shove.

CUT TO

INT. BOOKSTORE - CONTINUOUS.

THE TINKLING OF BELLS signifies her entry, and a FRIENDLY CLERK shoots her a smile.

Daisy smiles back and walks into the aisles stacked with books of all shapes and sizes.

Her fingers graze their bindings, gliding along the battered ridges of vintage encyclopedias and across the smooth untouched edges of the latest bestsellers.

She picks one out and opens it, flipping through.

Daisy settles on a page and starts to read, bringing the book closer and closer to her eyes.

All of a sudden...

ALICE (O.S.)
Hello, darlin'!

Daisy jumps, the book falling to the floor.

(CONTINUED)
DAISY
Oh dear god!

ALICE
Whoops, didn't mean to scare you, dear.

DAISY
Do you always have to do that?

Alice gives her a sheepish look. She picks up the book, turning it over. Daisy collects herself and tosses her hair back.

ALICE
Jane Eyre. Are you a Brontë fan?

DAISY
Of course. She's the reason I wanted to be a writer.

ALICE
You're a writer?

DAISY
Well, no, not really. I had to find some way to monetize the dream, so I went into magazines and worked my way up. I guess plans change.

ALICE
You can always change them back!

DAISY
The goal is to get back to where I was. Sooner or later, those idiots at 24/7 are going to come crawling back when they realize I was the best exec they ever had. I just have to find something in the meantime.

ALICE
Well that shouldn't be too hard for a smart, pretty lady like you. Anyone biting yet?

Daisy glances at Jane Eyre, holding it tighter to her chest.

DAISY
(lying)
I've got a bunch of offers. Just trying to sort through which one I'm going to take.

(continuing)
ALICE
Well goodness, why didn't you say something? The dream lives! Allow me to congratulate you.

She grabs the book from Daisy, waving to the store clerk.

ALICE (CONT'D)
Put this one on my bill, Joann!

The woman behind the counter nods. She's used to Alice's exuberance.

DAISY
(reluctant)
Thanks.

Alice beams.

CUT TO

INT. LAUNDROMAT - NIGHT

Daisy watches her darks churn in circles through the glass door of the washer.

Her cell phone buzzes, and she reaches into her pocket. On the screen, we see Kent's name and his message underneath:

"HOW HAVE YOU BEEN? PLEASE CALL."

Her face looks void of expression.

DAISY
(incredulous)
How have I been?

She starts to type:

"LIKE YOU EVEN CARE."

She frowns and deletes.

"SO GREAT! THANKS FOR ASKING."

Nope. Daisy deletes again, the backspace click-clacking violently. She sighs.

CUT TO
31. INT. DAISY’S APARTMENT – LATER

Daisy slides the door open and drops her laundry bag on the floor. She has a pile of mail tucked under her arm.

Feeling her way through the darkness, she finds her way to the couch and turns on a lamp. The bulb casts a dull orange light and long shadows.

Daisy flops down, coat and shoes still on. She tears open the first envelope: it's a rent bill. She throws it down next to her. The next envelope reveals a cell phone bill. The next, a cable bill. They form a pile next to her.

Daisy turns on the TV but finds black and white static. The bill is unpaid. It hums underneath the gentle roar of a subway car passing below the building.

DAISY (to herself)
Jesus, I need a job.

Her copy of Jane Eyre sits haphazardly on the coffee table. She trades the bills for the hardcover and flips to Chapter One. Daisy reads aloud.

DAISY (CONT'D)
There was no possibility of taking a walk that day. We had been wandering, indeed, in the leafless shrubbery an hour in the morning; but since dinner (Mrs. Reed, when there was no company, dined early) the cold winter wind had brought with it clouds so sombre...

Her voice fades away.

FADE TO BLACK

32. INT. DAISY’S KITCHEN – MORNING.

The stone counter tops and white linoleum floors are bathed in cool light.

Coffee gurgles as it is poured into a porcelain mug.

A cascading plant graces the windowsill, craning its flower buds toward the sunlit warmth.

Daisy holds her phone to her ear with her shoulder as she rinses a pan. She speaks hurriedly:

(CONTINUED)
32 CONTINUED:

DAISY
I'll have the first post to you tonight. Thank you again for the opportunity.
(beat)
Buh-bye.

Daisy sticks the pan in the rack to dry. She gathers her waiting coffee mug with both hands and moves to the adjacent breakfast nook table where her open laptop beckons, screen glowing.

DAISY (CONT'D)
Alright, let's bust this out.

She taps her fingers on the keyboard, unsure where to begin. She types:

"HOW TO GET IN ON THE TRENDIEST WORKOUT CRAZES: KICKBOXING FOR BEGINNERS."

She presses the period with an extra flourish, smug that she's gotten this far.

Then she brings her hands back to the keyboard, realizing the article remains unwritten. Her smug smile drops.

After a few more seconds of tapping, she pushes the laptop aside and moves to her living room.

CUT TO

33 INT. DAISY'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS.

Daisy lifts her hands and clenches them into fists. Her eyes narrow.

She throws a punch through the air. Another punch. And another. She breathes heavily.

She hears a rustling behind her and turns. Bob is sitting at her table drinking her coffee.

BOB
Whatever you're doing, I don't think you're doing it right.

DAISY
How did you get in here?

(CONTINUED)
BOB
Your door was unlocked. I was gonna say hi, but you looked like you were in your element.

DAISY
What is it with you people? Did anyone ever tell you about personal boundaries?

BOB
Did anyone ever tell you to lock your door? We're all friends here anyway. By the way, that TV you gave me is total crap.

DAISY
Oh heaven forbid, the TV was crap!

BOB
(oblivious)
It's cool. So what is... all this?

He motions, alluding to her stance on the floor.

DAISY
I'm writing a piece on kickboxing for a very prominent magazine.

BOB
Oh, we got a big shot over here, huh? Ok, let me read what you've got.

Bob slides the laptop over. Daisy opens her mouth to object.

BOB (CONT'D)
Nada. So I've caught you in the middle of the writing process! Awesome, we can do this together.

DAISY
Do you know anything about kickboxing?

BOB
Nah, seems like a waste of time to me. I think Alice does though. She's always up to something like that - kickboxing, zumba, synchroni-

She cuts him off.

(CONTINUED)
DAISY
Thanks, Bob!

She runs out.

DAISY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
I guess you can help yourself to the rest of the coffee!

Bob's face is already completely engulfed in the coffee cup as he drains the mug of its contents.

CUT TO

INT. APARTMENT STAIRWAY - CONTINUOUS.

Daisy hesitates, biting her lip, but then knocks on the door rapidly. As she stands on tip toes to peek through the keyhole, Alice yanks open the door.

ALICE
Good morning, Daisy!

DAISY
Morning.

ALICE
What's the occasion?

DAISY
I'm writing.

ALICE
Fabulous! Did you drop by just to let me know?

DAISY
No actually, I need your help. Do you have a minute?

ALICE
Well, I was just in the middle of a good book, but I suppose you need me more than Simone de Beauvoir does.

DAISY
I'm writing a piece on kickboxing. Bob tells me you practice?

Without missing a beat, Alice lights up.
ALICE
Oh, all the time! I'll take you to my studio!

She runs out of the entryway to grab a tote bag. Daisy is wide-eyed.

DAISY
(to herself)
She has a studio?!

Alice grabs her by the arm, and they're off.

CUT TO

INT. KICKBOXING STUDIO - AFTERNOON.

Alice and Daisy creep through the door into a small but airy studio. Red punching bags hang every 5 feet from the ceiling and bamboo planks line the floors, their natural gleam covered by black rubber mats at each workout station.

The room is flooded with natural light from enormous windows that look out over the Hudson. The eclectic art and greenery of the Chelsea High Line can be seen through the glass.

ALICE
And voilà! I teach classes here every other morning.

DAISY
What don't you do?

ALICE
Ha! Ok, first things first: Slacks off. You aren't at the office anymore, honey.

DAISY
This is how I always dress.

ALICE
My studio, my rules!

She throws a pair of yoga pants and a breezy tank to her.

Daisy complies and moves to the corner to change while Alice continues. She tries to cover as much of her body as possible, squirming.
ALICE (CONT'D)
Kickboxing, as you know, is a combat sport. A form of martial arts. It is useful as a form of self defense AND it'll give you a cute tush, so when the boys whistle as you walk by, you'll know how to sock it to 'em.

Daisy rejoins her tutor, looking unfamiliar in her loose cotton and spandex attire.

ALICE (CONT'D)
Much better! As I was saying... Kickboxing is derived from muy thai and muy boran, both forms of clinch fighting that test one's physical discipline. It's relatively new, gaining momentum in the 1960s, but it seems to have taken off with you young folk looking for new ways to stay in shape. I guess anything's trendy if Angelina Jolie says so.

Daisy's eyes scrunch as she realizes something.

DAISY
Alice, why do you have workout clothes in my size?

ALICE
I always keep a pair handy in case my daughter ever wants to join me. She's about your age. Same build.

DAISY
I didn't realize you had a daughter.

Alice's gaze glazes over. She switches gears.

ALICE
Mimic my stance, dear. We're about to begin.

Daisy does as told. Daisy hands her a pair of gloves.

ALICE (CONT'D)
Alright, gloves on. Feet apart like so. Hands up in a defensive stance. We're going to start with two hits: a jab and a cross.

She punches:
ALICE (CONT'D)
Left jab.
She punches again.

ALICE (CONT'D)
Right cross.
Daisy tries to follow along.

DAISY
Like that?

ALICE
Put a little more force into it!

Daisy perfects her stance.

ALICE (CONT'D)
Left jab.

DAISY
Left jab.

She hits hard.

ALICE
Right cross.

DAISY
Right cross.

Daisy turns around, looking for approval.

ALICE
Nice! Okay, now we're going to do the same thing, but in rapid succession. This would be a good time to think of whatever's got you riled up and let it all out.

DAISY
Perfect.

ALICE
Alright. Match my stance. Ready?

DAISY
Ready.

ALICE

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: (3)

Daisy hits the punching bag at the wrong angle, her wrist twisting unnaturally.

ALICE
Oh lord.

DAISY
ARGHHH!

Her eyes bug out. She looks to Alice for help.

ALICE
You didn't even last four jabs!

DAISY
No. No more of this. Ow.

Alice goes to a mini-fridge and whips out an ice-pack. She tosses it to Daisy who fumbles to catch it. It lands in her bad hand and she winces.

ALICE
Suit yourself. I'm gonna crank this up a notch and do some hot yoga instead.

Alice goes to turn on several humidifiers and slides the knob on the heat all the way up.

She starts to strip, revealing wrinkled sun-soaked skin.

Daisy's eyes widen.

DAISY
Alice!

ALICE
(laughing)
Come on in, the water's warm!

She bends over in a downward-facing dog position that has her backside waving up in the air, almost taunting Daisy and her prudishness.

Daisy grabs her business casual clothing, and gets up, cradling her hand.

DAISY
I'll see you at home. Thanks!

She practically runs out.

CUT TO
36. INT. 4 TRAIN - MOMENTS LATER.

Daisy stands, though the blue benches are wide open. She stares straight ahead at the tunnel walls passing by, blurred glimpses of white tile.

A BABY starts to cry, its MOTHER hushing and cooing, but Daisy's patience is being tested. She slips in earbuds and blasts "CROWN ON THE GROUND" by SLEIGH BELLS.

CUT TO

37. EXT. AVENUE A. CONTINUOUS.

The lights of Alphabet City, now glowing in the fading evening light.

Daisy finds a sleek bar (as sleek as they come here in Alphaville) and charges through the door.

CUT TO

38. INT. BAR - CONTINUOUS.

Daisy goes straight to the BARTENDER.

DAISY

Whiskey ginger, please.

The bartender nods and goes to work.

Daisy slumps on her bar stool and sighs, whipping out her Blackberry.

She refreshes her email.

Nada.

Her whiskey arrives and she practically gulps the whole thing down.

DAISY (CONT'D)

You're gonna wanna keep these coming.

She swirls the whiskey around, then looks back at the bartender.

He's kind of cute. Late 20s, early 30s, a layer of scruff and thick tortoiseshell glasses.

(CONTINUED)
DAISY (CONT'D)
Hey, have you ever tried kickboxing?

BARTENDER
Yeah, twice a week. Great way to start the day. Seems to be all the rage, huh?

DAISY
I don't think I like it.

BARTENDER
Fair enough. How many times have you tried?

DAISY
Just once.

BARTENDER
Just once? And you've already ruled it out?

DAISY
I'm entitled to my own opinion.

BARTENDER
Sure. Another whiskey?

Daisy's drained the first.

DAISY
Yes, please.

She watches him mix the drink.

DAISY (CONT'D)
So how many times should I have tried and been unsuccessful before it's deemed acceptable to not enjoy it?

He laughs.

BARTENDER
That's an interesting way to approach it. I don't think failure is quantifiable.

Daisy shrugs.

BARTENDER (CONT'D)
Anyhow, it's all about mindset. You have to want to like it. Embrace it.

(Continued)
DAISY
Then that's where I went wrong.

BARTENDER
You should try again. You seem tense. One really good kickboxing session will be a better release than all those drinks you're guzzling down. But then again, you're the one keeping me employed.

He grins, leaning in.

Daisy takes another deep gulp.

DAISY
So how long have you been working here?

BARTENDER
Almost two years. Started as a way to pay the bills while I worked on my music.

DAISY
You're a musician?

BARTENDER
I guess so. I kind of spend the majority of my time here now though. It's hard to make money doing what you love.

DAISY
Do you think you'll ever quit and play music full time?

BARTENDER
Who knows? For now it feels good to keep dreaming.

Daisy looks a bit distraught.

She guzzles the rest of her drink, then jumps up, alarmed.

DAISY
What time is it?

BARTENDER
10:00pm.

DAISY
Balls. I'm going to miss my deadline.

(CONTINUED)
38 CONTINUED: (3)

She slaps some bills on the bar, gathers her stuff in a hurry and saunters towards the door.

BARTENDER
Good luck with the kickboxing!

DAISY
Good luck with the music!

And out the door she goes.

CUT TO

39 INT. DAISY'S BEDROOM. NIGHT.

Daisy sits at a desk, illuminated by an architect's lamp.
A digital clock glares an angry red: 11:58pm.
A stack of books about meditation teeters beside the chrome MacBook Pro.

DAISY
(singing a made-up tune)
This is complete shit.

She glances at the clock.

With one minute to spare, we hear the 'whoosh' of an email being sent.

Daisy closes her laptop, rests her head on her elbows and conks out.

FADE TO BLACK

40 INT. DAISY'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Daisy's eyes flutter open.

Her window is ajar, and the slight breeze is coupled with the city soundtrack.

But there's another sound, and it doesn't seem to be coming from outside.

Daisy rubs her eyes, stretches, and makes her way to...

41 INT. DAISY'S KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

...the kitchen, where a humming Alice is standing at the stove, spatula in hand, apron tied around her waist.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:
Pancakes line a griddle, bacon sizzles in a pan, and a cornucopia of fruit lines a bowl on the counter.

ALICE
Good morning, sleepyhead! Thought you could use a nice brunch.

Daisy is too tired to process.

ALICE (CONT'D)
I was going to invite Bob, but he tends to sleep all day. He's really no good until after 2pm. What a goof!

DAISY
(rubbing her eyes)
Alice, you didn't have to do all this.

ALICE
Of course, I didn't have to! But I've always loved a good breakfast, and it's so much nicer to share good food with good people.

She comes over to Daisy and puts a hand on her cheek like an affectionate mother.

ALICE (CONT'D)
(eyes lighting up)
I hope you're hungry!

Daisy grabs some Advil from the cabinet as Alice returns to her pancakes.

Alice makes a plate stacked high for Daisy, who sits at the table with her Advil and a glass of water.

Daisy looks at the food and gags, grasping her forehead.

ALICE (CONT'D)
How did that article come out, dear? Did our session help?

DAISY
It might be in the top five worst things I've ever written.

Daisy downs the water with her Advil and then goes to pour herself a cup of coffee.

DAISY (CONT'D)
Praise the lord for caffeine.

(CONTINUED)
ALICE
Oh, I made you decaf. You really shouldn't rely on caffeine, darling. It's not good for you.

Daisy's eyes bug out. She pushes away the coffee and grabs a banana.

ALICE (CONT'D)
So. Your first article was a no-go. That just means your second will have to be phenomenal!

DAISY
If they even keep me around for a second.

ALICE
With that attitude, they won't.

DAISY
This just isn't me. I'm good at this stuff. I had it all figured out: the handsome fiancé, the gorgeous apartment, the high-powered job. I feel like I'm trying to find my way back to my old apartment and my old office and my old life but I'm far away and I'm exhausted and I just want some god damn caffeine!

ALICE
Whoa now. Deep breaths. Eat some bacon.

DAISY
I can't eat bacon! It will go right to my ass!

ALICE
You don't have an ass.

DAISY
BECAUSE I DON'T EAT BACON! WHAT DO YOU NOT UNDERSTAND?

Alice shrinks. She looks defeated.

ALICE
I'll go.

She slinks out. Daisy's face is guilt-ridden.
CONTINUED: (3)

Alone, Daisy whips out her phone.

She scrolls through her email. There's one from her boss:

NOT YOUR BEST WORK. I'VE READ YOUR OLD STUFF - I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE CAPABLE OF. REVISE AND SEND BACK BY 3PM. SEND MORE PAGES BY MIDNIGHT TOMORROW. EDITOR WANTS A PIECE ON LOCAL CULINARY TRENDS.

She closes her eyes, breathing deeply, then scrolls through her contacts to Kent's name.

She pauses, glances to the side as if to check if anyone is watching, and presses call.

Ringing...

And then the sound of Kent's voicemail:

KENT (V.O.)
You've reached Kent. You know what to do.

The phone beeps, and Daisy gasps, quickly hanging up and tossing her phone to the other end of the table.

It spins and sputters to a stop.

DAISY
Oops.

CUT TO

INT. DAISY'S SHOWER - MOMENTS LATER.

Daisy lifts her face to the stream of hot water, running her fingers through her hair.

Out of nowhere, she begins to sob.

The weeping subsides as she takes deep, calming breaths and clears her throat.

She hops out into a towel, wiping her eyes.

CUT TO

EXT. AVENUE B - EARLY AFTERNOON.

Strolling down the street, a bright bodega catches Daisy's eye.

Outside the storefront are rows of flowers in neat bouquets.
CONTINUED:

Daisy takes her time sifting through and absorbing the aromas of each bunch.

She lifts a bundle of purple irises and hands a bill to the CLERK.

CUT TO

INT. DAISY'S APARTMENT BUILDING - MOMENTS LATER.

Daisy stands timidly outside Alice's door in the hallway.

She looks down at the flowers, clears her throat, and raises her hand in a fist, ready to knock on the door.

Before she makes contact with the door, it swings open.

Alice peeks out.

    ALICE
    Yes?

    DAISY
    Hi. Were you waiting for me to come by?

    ALICE
    I felt strange about this morning.

    DAISY
    Me too. And I want to apologize.

Alice is silent. Her gaze moves to the flowers.

    ALICE
    Are those for me?

    DAISY
    Yes. Can I come in?

Alice doesn't say anything, but the door swings open a little wider.

Daisy steps in.

INT. ALICE'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS.

Alice glides to the kitchen and Daisy stands awkwardly by the entrance.

It's the first time we've seen Alice's apartment.

(CONTINUED)
Bookshelves line almost every wall, filled to the brim with richly bound titles.

The room glows with the warm light of ornate vintage lamps, and an assortment of musical instruments take up an entire corner of the living room.

The Victorian-style couch is covered with a vibrant red damask and sits perpendicular to two leather wingback chairs.

Daisy moves through the room gazing at the trinkets that lie sprawled on tables and in between the stacks of books.

A COLLECTION OF ANTIQUE PERFUME BOTTLES.

A PICTURE WITH HILLARY CLINTON.

A WATERCOLOR OF A FIELD OF POPPIES WITH WHAT LOOKS LIKE HER SIGNATURE IN THE CORNER.

And then Daisy comes to a pile of medals and trophies for assorted sports and contests. They all bear the name "Emily Goodman."

Alice's voice echoes from the kitchen and Daisy's gaze is interrupted.

    ALICE
    Tea?

    DAISY
    Yes, please.

She awkwardly takes a seat on the couch.

Alice enters with two steaming mugs. Daisy takes one.

They sit in silence as they sip until...

    ALICE
    You wanted to apologize?

Daisy looks up from her tea with fearful eyes. She doesn't do this often.

    DAISY
    I'm sorry. I shouldn't have acted like that this morning. Or at your studio. You've been nothing but kind to me and all I've done is push you away.

    (MORE)

    (CONTINUED)
DAISY (CONT'D)
And the truth is, I can't figure out what's wrong with me; so few people have been genuinely kind, and all I've done is wallow while Kent is probably living it up with whatever girl is foolish enough to tag along, and someone I thought was my friend is doing my old job and I'm stuck here, failing miserably. And here I go again, making this entire apology about me!

(beat)
I guess what I really want to say is thank you. I don't know why you stuck with me, but I'm glad you did. I felt like I had a real friend.

(beat)
A friend who wasn't afraid to give me a kick when I started to go off again.

Alice chuckles quietly.

ALICE
You turned that around nicely, dear.

(beat)
And you HAVE a friend. Present tense. I'm not that easy to get rid of!

Alice reaches her hand out and squeezes Daisy's knee.

Daisy's gaze moves to a stack of books on the coffee table.

ON FOOD AND COOKING FOOD: THE HISTORY OF TASTE
THE JOY OF COOKING
THE SCIENCE OF GOOD COOKING

DAISY
ALICE! Please tell me you have read these.

ALICE
Of course I have. They're on my coffee table, for Pete's sake!

DAISY
I know that I haven't exactly been the most stellar pupil but... I'm on thin ice with this writing gig. I need a piece on NYC culinary trends.
ALICE
Say no more. If it's food you want to know about, I've got just the place.

She goes to the door to grab her coat and purse.

ALICE (CONT'D)
You coming?

DAISY
Now?

ALICE
Don't you work on deadlines?

Daisy follows.

CUT TO

INT. Q TRAIN - MOMENTS LATER.

Alice and Daisy hustle onto a subway car. It's full to the brim.

A YOUNG MAN motions to offer Alice his seat. She beams at him.

ALICE
Oh no thank you, dear. I'll stand while I still can!

He smiles back and returns to his book.

ALICE (CONT'D)
Now Daisy, dear, I'm taking you to Brooklyn. Williamsburg, to be exact. Doesn't get much trendier than that.

DAISY
Brooklyn? But I never leave the island of Manhattan...

ALICE
You are today! We're going to Smorgasburg! It's a flea market meets food festival and it's here every weekend. We're gonna eat some crazy shit, Dais.
DAISY
If you say so.

EXT. SMORGASBURG - AFTERNOON

Daisy stumbles behind Alice who leads her into a parking lot lined with rows of white tents. The Manhattan skyline gleams in the distance over the blue of the East River.

Before Daisy can even object, Alice has stuck her head under the shade of a Colombian food tent, locking eyes with the WOMAN taking orders.

ALICE
Two of the ginger lemonades please, Luz.

LUZ hands her two ice cold cups. Alice slips her a bill and gives her a wink. She takes a gulp.

ALICE (CONT'D)
Delicious as always!

Alice slips a cup into Daisy's hand. Daisy takes a sip as well.

DAISY
Mm, thank you!

She continues to stumble along behind Alice, the mother hen. Crowds of hipsters swarm around them as the hot sun beats down.

EXT. SMORGASBURG FLEA MARKET TENT - MOMENTS LATER

Alice strolls up to a clothes rack bursting with vintage floral dresses, plush fur coats, and acid-washed jeans.

She puts on a fur coat and grabs a pair of oversized sunglasses.

ALICE
What do you think, dahhhhling?

DAISY
Hmmm... not quite.

She grabs a chunky costume necklace and throws it over her.

DAISY (CONT'D)
There we go. Marvelous!
Alice and Daisy sit at a picnic table wedged into a small opening among the tents. Around them lie an assortment of discarded plates, wrappers and pieces of wax paper.

Daisy nibbles at the last of a shrimp spring roll, dipping it into a thick miso sauce. She groans in delight.

DAISY
You know, before I moved into our building I'd never been below 42nd street.

ALICE
How on earth did you manage that?

DAISY
Never had a reason to go any further down.

ALICE
(gesturing)
Isn't this reason enough?

DAISY
You don't have to tell me twice.

They pause and sip the last of their drinks, the lack of liquid resulting in that empty slurping sound.

DAISY (CONT'D)
I don't think I can move. You're going to have to roll me home.

ALICE
Oh, we're not done. That was just the warm-up stage. There's someone I want you to meet.

She grabs Daisy's hand.

Alice leads Daisy past a never-ending line of TWENTY-SOMETHINGS, all moaning and groaning in the heat.

ALICE
Excuse me! Coming through!

They glare. Daisy looks embarrassed.
Alice catches the eye of HARUTO (muscular, early 30s) underneath the tent flipping burgers. He lights up.

HARUTO
Alice! You're back!

ALICE
Haruto! Didya miss me?

HARUTO
How could I not?

He notices the groaning customers.

HARUTO (CONT'D)
Here, hurry back here before someone takes you out. People will do crazy shit for these burgers.

They scurry back.

EXT. NOODLE PATTY KITCHEN SET-UP - CONTINUOUS

Daisy and Alice take refuge behind Haruto's grill. The groaning subsides.

Haruto continues to flip burgers as he speaks to them. He air kisses Alice on both cheeks.

He reaches for Daisy to do the same. She is startled, but quickly mimics his greeting.

ALICE
(shouting over the roar of the burgers steaming on the grill)
This is my good friend, Daisy! She's writing an article about New York food trends!

DAISY
Pleasure to meet you!

Haruto grins.

HARUTO
You've come to exactly the right place. I've been cranking these things out left and right for three hours and the line is still a mile long.
The SOUS CHEF approaches Haruto from the opposite side of the tent. He's dripping in sweat, staunched by a handkerchief tied around his forehead.

**SOUS CHEF**

We're running out of buns and I'm stuck on food prep. Could you fry some more up, boss?

**HARUTO**

On it!

He turns back to Daisy and Alice.

**HARUTO (CONT'D)**

You ladies want to help me out? I'm swamped! And Daisy, this will be gold for your article.

Her eyes light up. She nods enthusiastically. Alice chuckles.

**START MONTAGE:**

- Haruto grabs steaming ramen from a boiling pot and rinses it under cool water
- He whisks the ramen together with an egg
- Haruto shows Daisy how to mold ramen into a bun form. Alice follows suit.
- The buns fry on the grill top. Daisy flips each one and reveals a perfect golden brown crust. Haruto looks on with pride.
- Alice chats with the sous chef as they chop bok choy together
- Haruto cracks egg after egg on the grill top next to Daisy. As they fry, he shows her how to plate each burger.

**END MONTAGE**

Daisy and Haruto chat.

**DAISY**

So how did you and Alice meet?

**HARUTO**

We took a computer programming night class together at NYU. I used to work in tech. I think she just likes learning and keeping busy.

(Continued)
DAISY
(shouting to Alice on the other side of the tent)
You know computer programming?

ALICE
(shouting back)
You don't?

She rolls her eyes.

CUT TO

EXT. PICNIC TABLE BEHIND FOOD TENT - LATER

The crowd has dissipated. The sous chef finishes cleaning up the food prep area while Haruto, Alice and Daisy sit back, cold beers in hand. The remnants of a noodle patty feast surround them.

DAISY
That should not have been as delicious as it was.

HARUTO
Started as a drunk craving. Turned into New York's must-have food item. Lucky coincidence.

ALICE
I'll say!

HARUTO
Don't pretend you've never cooked up something absurd.

She beams at him devilishly.

HARUTO (CONT'D)
So I know all about the fabulous Alice... What do you do Daisy?

DAISY
Well I'm kind of in an interim stage. I've been writing a how-to blog.

HARUTO
Nice, so you're a writer.

DAISY
Well, not a real one.
ALICE
How's that?

HARUTO
You're writing about me, and you are what you do. Don't discredit yourself so easily.

DAISY
But my last piece was so miserable.

HARUTO
You know, the first thing I ever cooked set on fire. My mother just looked at me and laughed. Then she showed me what to do.

ALICE
Patience, my dear. Nothing good ever comes easily.

She mulls this over.

DAISY
Haruto, when did you know that you'd really made it? I feel like I'm treading water. Your version of my life sounds so liberating, but when we finish these beers, I'm going home to curl up in bed alone and think about how I can stretch my paycheck until the end of the month.

Haruto smiles.

DAISY (CONT'D)
I had a plan, I had a goal, I had a life. How do you start over once it's all gone?

HARUTO
First of all, you're the only one who can figure out what it even means to "make it." All you can do is keep your head up and your heart open.

(beat)
And you listen to wise ladies like Alice who have stumbled through life and somehow made it out alive.

(CONTINUED)
ALICE
You know, I've been fired from over ten different gigs.

HARUTO
(pointing at himself)
33 years old and on my fourth career change.

ALICE
You've just gotta roll with the punches, sweetheart. Forget whatever plan you thought you had. Success comes when you crawl into bed feeling full to bursting with joy.

HARUTO
That's nice. Full to bursting.

ALICE
All we're saying is: fuck what you know. You don't know anything.

DAISY
Ouch.

ALICE
The important thing to realize is that no one else does either. We're all figuring things out together. Uncertainty is possibility, and the rest of your life is yours to claim. Make it worth living.

Haruto raises his bottle to Daisy's and clinks it. Alice does the same.

DAISY
I'll cheers to that.

The all sip at the same time.

CUT TO

INT. DAISY'S APARTMENT - LATE THAT NIGHT

Daisy sits in her bed, illuminated by the city glow streaming in from the window.

She types furiously, attaching a word document and a folder of pictures to an email.

(CONTINUED)
She presses send, and closes her computer after the gentle WHOOSH signals it’s gone through.

Daisy crawls into the covers.

She scrolls through her contacts. Kent's name glares at her, challenging her.

She dials.

    KENT
    (O.S.)
    Hi, you've reached Kent. You kn-

She hangs up and throws her cell phone to the far end of the bed.

    DAISY
    Full to bursting.

She closes her eyes with a grimace.

FADE TO BLACK

INT. DAISY'S APARTMENT - MORNING

A phone rings.

Daisy opens her eyes, groggy.

    DAISY
    Hello?

    FRANK
    Daisy! We need to talk about your piece.

    DAISY
    Okay.

She rubs her eyes, sitting up.

    FRANK
    I don't know where you found that guy, but he's great. What a difference from your last piece.

    DAISY
    Thanks!

(CONTINUED)
FRANK
Listen, I'm sending it back with notes. Clean it up a bit. We don't need something for another couple of days from you. Why don't you try pitching some articles on your own.

DAISY
I'll make the edits and send it right back.

FRANK
Nice. Good writing, keep it coming.

She hangs up, smiles, and bites her lip.

CUT TO

EXT. UNION SQUARE FARMERS MARKET - LATER

Daisy and Alice stroll through the farmers market, canvas totes full of produce.

ALICE
So you're in the clear. He liked your piece.

DAISY
Seems like it. I just have to keep interesting stories coming.

ALICE
(playfully)
Thank heavens for old Alice! I've got enough stories to fill up an encyclopedia.

DAISY
You'd be willing to help me out?

ALICE
Of course! I have to be at the studios in the mornings, but I'm all yours afterwards, darling.

Daisy stops walking. She grabs Alice's arm, smiling.

DAISY
I will repay you in food and companionship!

Daisy sticks a piece of celery in her mouth like a rose in a tango.

(CONTINUED)
She snaps her fingers.

DAISY (CONT'D)
Mi amor!

ALICE
What more could a gal want!

They hear a voice.

BOB
Ladies!

Bob appears, holding an ice cream cone and guitar case.

BOB (CONT'D)
I see you're also getting your grocery on!

Alice wraps him up in a hug. Daisy looks hesitant.

ALICE
What a lovely surprise, seeing you out here!

DAISY
Hey, Bob!

He punches her on the shoulder. She looks pained.

BOB
You guys are just in time to catch my set!

He finishes the last of his ice cream cone and pulls out his guitar, along with a folding seat.

He places his hat on the ground in front of him.

Bob looks at the two women with a grin, and begins to play.

BOB (CONT'D)
(singing)
After you've gone and left me crying
/ After you've gone, there's no denying / You'll feel blue, you'll feel sad / You'll miss the dearest pal you've ever had.

Halfway through, Alice pulls a recorder out of her purse and begins to play along. They attract the attention of the shoppers. (CONTINUED)
BOB (CONT'D)
There'll come a time, now don't forget
it / There'll come a time, when you'll
regret it / Some day when you'll
grow lonely / Your heart will break
like mine and you'll want me only.

Daisy, at first uncomfortable at being left alone, begins to sway to the music.

BOB (CONT'D)
After you've gone, after you've gone
away / After I'm gone, after we break
up / After I'm gone, you're gonna
wake up / You will find you were blind
/ To let somebody come and change
your mind.

All of a sudden, out of the corner of her eye, Daisy spies Kent, arm in arm with another WOMAN. The two of them laugh.

BOB (CONT'D)
After the years we've been together
/ Through joy and tears, all kinds
of weather / Someday blue and
downhearted / You'll long to be with
me right back where you started /
After I'm gone, after I'm gone away.

Daisy's tosses change into Bob's hat and turns to leave.

Alice sees her and hesitates, still playing. She sighs and follows after, halting the melody of her recorder much to the chagrin of her listeners. She follows Daisy while Bob continues playing.

ALICE
What is it, sweetheart?

Daisy shakes her off. She turns back to look at Kent.

Still there.

Alice follows her gaze and sees the couple, laughing and sitting at one of the lime green tables in the square.

ALICE (CONT'D)
Hey!

DAISY
I'm going home.
ALICE
Don't let that asshole get to you.
Give him a show.

Alice yanks Bob up.

BOB
Wha-

She threads Daisy's arm through his, fluffs Daisy's hair, and gives Bob's hair a tousle.

Then she gives them a shove and starts them walking right through Kent's line of sight.

Daisy looks timid, but Bob commits to the role.

Just as they stroll in front of Kent and his companion, Bob dips Daisy and plants one on her.

She gasps, but keeps her cool.

They keep walking while Alice runs along behind them at a distance.

Once they've walked out of sight, Alice runs up, clapping her hands.

ALICE
Oh, maaaaaarvelous! He's not going to be able to get that out of his head!

Daisy bursts out laughing.

Bob looks confused, but laughs out of solidarity.

They collect themselves and begin to walk together, heading back to their Alphabet City abode.

CUT TO

INT. ALICE'S APARTMENT - THAT NIGHT

Bob wears an apron and stirs a pot of sauce.

Daisy grates a wedge of cheese.

Alice sets the table and pours a bottle of wine.

There's a knock at the door, and Alice goes to open it, welcoming the downstairs neighbors Jeanine and Marco inside.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

She takes their coats and motions to the table.

MONTAGE

-The group sits at the table, passing food family style.

-Alice and Daisy laugh as Jeanine and Marco bicker.

-Bob stuffs his face, oblivious.

-The bottle of wine empties. The guests filter out, and Daisy sits on the couch, cracking open one of Alice's books.

-She falls asleep and Alice throws a blanket over her, turning off the light.

END MONTAGE

FADE TO

INT. ALICE'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Daisy cracks open her eyes and sees a wide awake Alice staring at her.

She shrieks.

DAISY

WHY?!

ALICE

You looked so beautiful while you were sleeping.

DAISY

Alice, that is beyond creepy.

ALICE

I have to head to kickboxing. You can come with me if you want?

DAISY

I guess it couldn't hurt to try.

ALICE

You know what else won't hurt...

Daisy arches an eyebrow, waiting.

ALICE (CONT'D)

Some bacon!

(CONTINUED)
DAISY
Dear god, you are relentless.

Alice pushes a plate of breakfast towards her, boasting two eggs over-easy, toast, and 3 strips of gleaming bacon.

Daisy purses her lips but accepts, nibbling on the end of one of the strips.

She groans, almost sexually.

DAISY (CONT'D)
(to the bacon)
How did I go so long without you?!

CUT TO

INT. BAR - LATER

Daisy strolls into the bar, clad in spandex, hair up in a messy bun.

She spies her bartender friend and goes to sit on a stool nearby him.

BARTENDER
You again! I thought I was rid of you.

DAISY
Not quite!

BARTENDER
Workout gear. You tried kickboxing again?

DAISY
I did.

And?

BARTENDER
...Not terrible.

BARTENDER
Well, that's some progress. One day you will be a boxing master, young padawan.

She smirks.

He hands her a whiskey ginger.

(CONTINUED)
You know my drink order?  
He looks at her intensely. She backs off.

DAISY (CONT'D)  
How's the music going?

BARTENDER  
It's alright. Booked a couple of gigs. I'm playing here next weekend - you should stop by.

DAISY  
Yeah okay, it'd be nice to see you in action.

BARTENDER  
Good.  
(beat)  
I've been meaning to ask - what do you do when you're not...  
(he gestures to her workout clothes)

DAISY  
I write.

BARTENDER  
Anything I might have read?

DAISY  
Probably not.

BARTENDER  
Why do you say that?

DAISY  
I'm just writing for this magazine online. I don't think anyone reads it.

BARTENDER  
You'd be surprised. And I wouldn't be so quick to downplay your writing. You seem like you've got it together.

Daisy laughs.

DAISY  
That's a refreshing read. I thought I'd lost it!

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: (2)

She raises her glass to him and takes a sip.

DAISY (CONT'D)
I've gotta run. I promised my friend
I'd help her with something. I'll see you around?

BARTENDER
I'll be here.

She gives him a shy grin and exits.

CUT TO

INT. ALICE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Alice drops a stack of books into a cardboard box, sealing it with packing tape and labelling it with sharpie.

Daisy shouts from the other room.

DAISY
Do you really need three copies of Singin' in the Rain?

Alice thinks for a second.

ALICE
I guess not...

DAISY
Man, you're kind of a hoarder.

ALICE
I prefer the term "expert collector."

DAISY
Duly noted. I'm out of boxes. Do you have any more?

ALICE
I'll go grab some from Jeanine downstairs. She said she had some extras earlier.

Daisy moves into the living room as Alice heads downstairs. Joni Mitchell croons from a record player in the corner. Daisy moves towards the stack of records piled next to it.

Shuffling through reveals a plethora of classic folk albums, most of them signed by the artists with a personal message to Alice. No surprise there.
CONTINUED:

Daisy starts to slide a record free of its case when Alice's home phone rings and she freezes.

It continues to ring over the strumming guitar until the voicemail kicks in.

ALICE (ON MACHINE) (CONT'D)
You've reached Alice! Leave your message on the machine and I'll call ya back in a jiff!

EMILY (O.S.)
Yeah, Mom, I told you to stop calling. I don't want to hear from you and I don't want you around. I just need you to understand that this is my life and I'm getting really tired of your meddling.

At this point, Alice walks back in, triumphantly holding a new stack of boxes.

She hears the voice on the machine and her face drops.

EMILY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
I'm sure there are plenty of other people you can shower with unwanted attention, so leave me alone.

The machine beeps. The record has ended, eschewing only the empty sound of its spinning.

Alice collects herself.

ALICE
Where were we? Ah yes, the movies. Alright Gene Kelly, I guess I have to let a few of you go.

DAISY
Alice, are you alright?

She looks up, a bit startled.

ALICE
Just grand, dear. Why do you ask?

DAISY
You just... you never told me about you and your daughter.

(CONTINUED)
ALICE
She's made it abundantly clear that
I don't have a daughter.

For the first time, Alice sounds pained, vulnerable.

DAISY
Do you want to talk about it?

ALICE
What is there to talk about? Not
everyone is as fond of me as I'd
like to think.

DAISY
I'm sure it's not that simple.

ALICE
Mothers and daughters are supposed
to love each other. That's the way
the world works. Heaven knows where
I went wrong.

DAISY
Well have you tried making amends?
Maybe she just needs to know you
care.

ALICE
You don't know the first thing about
it! You've never met my daughter!
She looked me directly in the eyes
and said with complete and absolute
mirth: "I have nothing to learn from
you."

Alice's eyes brim with tears. She throws the boxes down,
frustrated. Then she moves to the door, heading out
dramatically.

Daisy looks pained.

DAISY
Alice, wait!

She hears a tumble and then a wail.

Daisy runs after her. She's fallen down the stairs.

Alice lies in a heap, her legs twisted at an uncomfortable
angle, her hair out of place. Her face looks pained.
Daisy whips out her phone to call 911 and pushes Alice's hair out of her face. She tucks it under her ear maternally.

**DAISY (CONT'D)**
Yes, I need an ambulance at East 6th and Avenue B.

Alice moans.

Daisy shushes her calmingly, stroking her hair.

**DAISY (CONT'D)**
As quickly as you can!
(to Alice)
It's going to be alright. I'm right here. I'm right here, Alice. Shhh, shh, I'm right here.

Alice squeezes her hand weakly.

**FADE TO BLACK**

**60**
**INT. STARK HOSPITAL HALLWAY - MORNING**

Daisy strides through the hall with a bouquet of irises. She glides into...

**61**
**INT. ALICE'S HOSPITAL ROOM - CONTINUOUS.**

Alice lies in her bed sleeping.

Daisy moves to the corner and places the flowers in a vase. She fluffs and rearranges until they're to her liking.

She then moves to Alice's side. She looks smaller.

A **DOCTOR** enters.

**DR. CHEN**
Good morning. I'm Dr. Chen.

**DAISY**
Morning. Daisy.

They shake hands stiffly.

**DR. CHEN**
Are you Alice's caregiver?

**DAISY**
Yes.

(Continued)
DR. CHEN
Alright, well there are a few things I'd like to talk about with you. For starters, Alice has a compound fracture in her lower back that is going to take some time to heal. She's going to be in a lot of pain when she wakes up.

DAISY
Her spine is broken?

DOCTOR
Fractured. But still very serious. I'm a bit concerned though - a fall of that nature shouldn't have been so aggressive. I'm going to have to do some additional testing to evaluate why her bones are so weak and what we can do to help her. It's too early to tell what kind of treatment we're going to proceed with.

DAISY
Is there anything I can do for her?

DOCTOR
When she wakes up, we'll assess. She'll probably want to go home, but she'll need quite a bit of help.

DAISY
Okay. I'll figure something out. Thank you, Dr. Chen.

DR. CHEN
Let me know if you need anything.

He exits.

Daisy turns to the window, her face blank. When she turns back around, Alice's eyes are wide open.

ALICE
So, I've got weak bones, huh?

DAISY
Have you been awake this whole time?

ALICE
Well sure. A gal's got to hear the honest truth, and they sure as hell aren't gonna give it to me straight.

(CONTINUED)
DAISY
Alice... What are we going to do with you?

ALICE
Well I'm sure as hell not staying here. Go tell the nurse I'm going home.

DAISY
You should rest a few more hours. They've got you so sedated.

ALICE
Oh, I took the drip out hours ago.

DAISY
Behave yourself!

ALICE
Never!

Daisy laughs weakly.

DAISY
I'm sorry about last night. That was none of my business.

Alice's mouth forms a thin line.

DAISY (CONT'D)
Do you want to talk about it?

ALICE
What's left to talk about?

Daisy moves back to the side of the hospital bed. She hesitates, but puts her hand on top of Alice's underneath the blanket.

Alice starts to pull away automatically, then loosens.

DAISY
I'm going to get some fresh air. Try to go back to sleep and I'll be back.

Alice complies and her head drifts to the window, eyes glazed over.

CUT TO
INT. CAFE - LATE AFTERNOON

Daisy stands in line, scrolling through her phone. A voice calls out from behind her:

KENT
Daisy?

She whips her head around, then seeing Kent, turns around just as quickly. She shuts her eyes, in mini-freakout mode.

DAISY
(to herself)
Not. Happening.

He cuts the line to catch up with her. The others waiting moan and groan but shut up when he flashes them a shiny grin.

KENT
How have you been?

DAISY
Really good. Really busy.

He waits, expecting more.

KENT
I'm glad. Have you been trying to call me?

DAISY
No.

KENT
Because I think I've gotten some voicemails from you.

DAISY
Definitely not me.

KENT
Okay. Well I thought I saw you in Union Square the other day.

DAISY
Maybe, I wouldn't know.

KENT
Jeez, okay. Icy. You seem different.
CONTINUED:

DAISY
What? Were you expecting me to be
glad to see you?

Kent looks defeated.

KENT
Can I at least buy you a coffee?

DAISY
(hesitant)
Fine.

INT. CAFE CORNER - MOMENTS LATER

Kent and Daisy sit in the corner by the window, talking. She seems to have defrosted a bit.

KENT
The apartment's gone to shit since
you've been gone. I try to keep
things in order, but no one can do
it like you can.

Daisy keeps her eyes down, unsure of how to accept the compliment.

DAISY
It doesn't take a genius to clean an
apartment, Kent.

KENT
Sheesh.
(beat)
Ok well, what have you been up to?
Have you been seeing anyone?

DAISY
Why? Have you?

KENT
Not really.

He reaches for her hand.

She furrows her eyebrows and pulls away.

KENT (CONT'D)
I'm sorry. Sorry. I fucked things
up, I know.

She looks up at him again.
DAISY
It's been really rough, to say the least.

KENT
For you and me both. Our... the apartment feels so lonely.

DAISY
Why are you doing all of this? What's the point?

KENT
I miss you. I'm not myself.

She tries to digest this for a moment.

DAISY
I miss you too. But not enough to want to bring this back from the dead.

Her phone rings.

DAISY (CONT'D)
I should get that.

She reaches into her bag, fingers shaking.

DAISY (CONT'D)
Hello?
(beat)
Whoa, slow down, slow down.
(beat)
I'll be right there.

She gets up wordlessly. Kent follows.

CUT TO

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - AFTERNOON

Daisy bursts in, out of breath. Kent is still trailing along behind her. He enters the room but stays far back, just in front of the doorway.

DAISY
Alice!

Daisy runs to her side. Alice looks exhausted, her face is streaked with tears.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

DAISY (CONT'D)

What did they say?  What's wrong?

Alice clears her throat.  Her breathing is relaxed.

ALICE

It's blood cancer.

Daisy chokes.

ALICE (CONT'D)

It's advanced.  Stage III.

DAISY

That's okay, you're strong.  We can fight it.

ALICE

Honey, I don't think it's that simple.

DAISY

Alice, don't talk like that.  You'll do chemo.  It'll be hard, but you can do it.  This is just another hurdle.

Alice smiles at her weakly.

ALICE

That's one way to look at it.  Well, I'll give it a hell of a try.  But some things are bigger than us.

She notices Kent.

ALICE (CONT'D)

Who's this looker?

KENT

I'm Kent.  Daisy's...

DAISY

(interrupting, oblivious)

How can you be so nonchalant?  I'm scared to death and you're talking like you're ready to die tomorrow!  That's not fucking fair, Alice!

Alice looks stunned, then she bursts out crying.

Daisy looks guilt-ridden.  She immediately embraces Alice, bringing her head to her chest.

(CONTINUED)
They cry together. Kent slips out.

ALICE
You weren't even here when they gave me my diagnosis.

DAISY
I'm so sorry. I'm so sorry, Alice. I didn't know.

ALICE
2-6 months.

Daisy wails.

ALICE (CONT'D)
2-6 months! That's chump change!

Daisy tries to calm her breathing.

DAISY
It's not fair.

ALICE
No.

They sit there, quiet.

Daisy wipes her eyes, then curls up against Alice in the hospital bed.

They weep together, silently.

Kent re-enters with two green teas in hand. He places them on Alice's side table silently. The two women notice and wipe their tears.

DAISY
Thanks.

ALICE
Just what the doctor ordered.

They sip and sigh in relief simultaneously. This makes them giggle.

CUT TO

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - EVENING

Alice sits up in her bed, reading glasses on, Sudoku in hand. Kent is by her side, looking awkward and a bit out of place, but happy that he hasn't been told to leave yet.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

Daisy is out of the room.

ALICE
So you and Daisy were engaged, huh?'

KENT
Yes, ma'am.

ALICE
But you cheated on her?

KENT
Technically, yes.

ALICE
Why'd you do it?

KENT
It's complicated.

ALICE
Doesn't sound like it to me.

Daisy enters the room. She looks excited.

DAISY
They said I can take you home now!

ALICE
Lovely.

Daisy notices the tension in the room.

DAISY
What were you two talking about?

KENT
How great you are.

ALICE
Precisely.

Daisy laughs and shakes her head knowingly.

CUT TO

EXT. HOSPITAL ENTRANCE - LATER

Daisy wheels Alice out of the automatic hospital doors with a NURSE by her side. Kent stands, talking to the DRIVER of a town car waiting out front.
KENT
You're the best, Marty.

He runs back up to Alice and Daisy.

KENT (CONT'D)
He'll take you wherever you need to go.

DAISY
Thanks, Kent.

Kent and Alice lock eyes.

KENT
Get better, Alice.

She sighs. He moves to the side, still feeling out of place.

Daisy wheels Alice over to the car door. Alice weakly tries to get out of the chair herself, but looks back to Daisy for help. She eases her into the car and the nurse takes the chair with an apologetic look.

Daisy starts to open the passenger door, but Kent puts a hand on her shoulder.

KENT (CONT'D)
Daisy, wait.

She turns.

KENT (CONT'D)
I had Marty bring me these.

He holds up an envelope.

DAISY
What's that?

KENT
Our honeymoon. We booked the flight for two months from today. It's all paid for.

DAISY
What is this?

KENT
I'm not asking you to take me back right here and now. Just think about it. I know you don't want these to go to waste.

(CONTINUED)
DAISY
Trying to appeal to my utilitarian side?

KENT
I figured it couldn't hurt. Don't shut me out, Dais. We were good. Really good.

DAISY
I really loved you.

The past tense weighs heavy in the air.

DAISY (CONT'D)
But a lot has changed.

KENT
Evidently.

Daisy hears Alice cough from within the car.

DAISY
I'd better go.

Kent hands her the envelope.

KENT
Think about it.

DAISY
Okay.
(beat)
Take care of yourself.

He smiles, sadly. She gets in the car and Marty drives away.

CUT TO

INT. DAISY'S APARTMENT - AFTERNOON

Daisy sits with the TV on, occupied with needle and thread and some fabric.

There's a knock at the door and Bob comes in. He sits next to Daisy wordlessly and she sets down the fabric.

BOB
I just checked on Alice.

DAISY
Yeah? How's she doing, Bob?
BOB
Tired. Those pain meds have got her in a weird place.

DAISY
She seems kind of like herself, but -

BOB
Foggy.

DAISY
Yeah.

An awkward pause.

BOB
What are you making?

DAISY
It's a heating pillow. You stick it in the microwave. It'll help her with the back pain - and I can squeeze another blog post out of it.

(beat)
Bob, do you think she's going to be okay?

He shrugs, uncharacteristically quiet.

DAISY (CONT'D)
It's just that... I've never really had someone like Alice. My mom died when I was little. I don't really remember her.

(beat)
I'm trying to mentally prepare myself for what life would be like without Alice, as dark as that is, and I can't seem to fathom it.

BOB
We shouldn't have to fathom it. She's not ready to go yet.

They both sigh together. Bob gets up to leave.

BOB (CONT'D)
I gotta go to ultimate frisbee practice. You gonna be okay to check on her?

DAISY
I'll be here.

(CONTINUED)
He smiles and closes the door. Daisy goes back to her pillow, humming "I Got The Sun In The Morning" from Annie Get Your Gun.

INT. BAR - EARLY EVENING

Daisy sits with her laptop open and a drink by her side. The bartender leans over, trying to see what's on her screen. She giggles, and pulls it down.

DAISY

Hey!

BARTENDER

What?!

DAISY

I'm still in the middle of writing! I don't want you to see!

BARTENDER

(playful)

You writing about me?

DAISY

Maybe, maybe not!

He grins.

BARTENDER

Hey, how's your friend doing?

DAISY

Alice?

He nods.

DAISY (CONT'D)

You remembered. (beat)

She's alright. As alright as you can be.

BARTENDER

That's rough. My mom had blood cancer too.

DAISY

Is she okay?

He looks uneasy.

(CONTINUED)
DAISY (CONT'D)
You can tell me.

BARTENDER
She died. Five years ago.

DAISY
I'm sorry.

BARTENDER
Me too.
(beat)
I'm here for you.

She smiles weakly as he comes around to the other side of
the bar. He sits next to her and hesitantly puts an arm
around her. He pulls away quickly.

DAISY
I'm not radioactive.

He laughs and gets closer. They sit together like that.
She puts her head on his shoulder.

The sound of the door opening forces them out of their
reverie. The bartender gets back to work. Daisy clears her
throat and starts tapping at her keyboard. She smiles to
herself.

CUT TO

INT. ALICE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Daisy sits in a wingback chair. Her battered copy of Jane
Eyre is cracked open but her eyes wander.

She gazes at Alice's sleeping figure. She's hooked up to a
tube to help her labored breathing, but it looks more like a
torture device than a medical instrument.

She coughs, pained, but stays asleep.

Daisy turns the book to the page where an envelope sits,
lodged like a bookmark: the honeymoon tickets. They're
labelled "Thailand" in neat print.

She strokes the paper delicately and scrunches her face in
indecision.

She's about to open the envelope when Alice starts to gasp
for air.

(CONTINUED)
Alice extends her hand in Daisy's direction, and Daisy instantly drops the book onto the seat cushion to spring to her side.

She brings a cup of water to Alice's lips and smooths her hair back from her sweaty brow.

The envelope lays forlorn on the ground.

Daisy turns back to sit her chair and sees the envelope. She goes to pick it up, and as she's bending down, sees a journal and an address book stuffed under the bed.

The journal has a half-written apology note from Alice to her daughter. The address book is dog-eared to open to Goodman, Emily.

Daisy pockets the address book, and places the journal back under the bed, delicately.

CUT TO

INT. ALICE'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Daisy's eyes crack open to the bright light of day. She's spread haphazardly across the chair, hair disheveled, a spot of drool dark against the suede upholstery.

She sees Alice awake, reading her copy of *Jane Eyre*.

ALICE

Mornin' sunshine

DAISY

You're up.

ALICE

Didn't want to sleep the day away. Gotta make the most of it.

DAISY

How are you feeling?

ALICE

A little bit better than yesterday. Not great. (beat) You know what I could really go for right now?

DAISY

What?

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

ALICE
A big stack of flapjacks drenched in maple syrup, and a tall glass of OJ.

DAISY
Yum. But you know you're supposed to stick to bland foods.

ALICE
Well I know that, but I was hoping you'd forgotten.

Daisy spies the envelope on the floor. She hesitates.

DAISY
Alice?

ALICE
Yes, dear?

DAISY
I'm in a bit of a quandary.

ALICE
If you want my advice, I'll accept diner food as payment.

Daisy hesitates.

DAISY
You win this time.

CUT TO

INT. DINER - LATER

Alice sets down her silverware. She still has half a waffle sitting there, drenched in syrup.

Daisy's plate is empty, though there is evidence of eggs and hash browns now consumed.

ALICE
That fucker is asking you to go on your honeymoon?

DAISY
I think he's trying to spin it as a therapeutic... forgiveness trip?

ALICE
That's horse shit. Pardon my French.

(CONTINUED)
DAISY
Well. I'm not as convinced as you are. Maybe he's what I need after all.

ALICE
All things end for a reason. A fantasy trip to Thailand isn't going to change whatever was eating away at your engagement in the first place.

DAISY
That's what my head tells me, but you've been the one teaching me to think with my heart. What if my heart is telling me to take a chance and see what happens?

ALICE
Tell your heart to shut up.

She digs back into her waffles.

Daisy mulls this over.

DAISY
What if I were to leave and... something happened to you?

ALICE
What if? I can tell you one thing for sure - my entire life is becoming a series of what ifs. What if I never see my daughter again? What if I die tomorrow?

Daisy's eyes widen.

ALICE (CONT'D)
What's the point in thinking like that? For now, I've got buttermilk waffles. I've got you. Maybe I'm being selfish by telling you not to go, but I just don't get it, honey. (beat)
Live for you. You've been so good at that lately.

Daisy ponders this. Then she takes a fork and digs into Alice's waffles.

They laugh quietly, but Alice's soft laughter turns into a cough that continues and become violent.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: (2)

Daisy runs her to the bathroom.

CUT TO

INT. DINER BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS.

Alice makes it to the toilet just in time to vomit up her waffles. Daisy holds back her hair, but pieces of it fall out into her hand.

CUT TO

INT. ALICE'S BATHROOM - LATER

Alice sits stoically in front of the bathroom mirror as Daisy shaves her head.

INT. ALICE'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS.

Daisy leads a now bald Alice into her bedroom. She goes to the closet and picks out a bold scarf. Alice accepts it, and ties it around her head.

CUT TO

INT. DAISY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Daisy's sits at her desk, churning out another blog post. The clock glows red next to her: 11:32pm.

A stack of books teeters next to her: *The Feminine Mystique*, *A Room of One's Own*, *Sister Outsider* and the like.

Her phone, lying on the desk next to her, lights up.

Kent: "Dinner tomorrow? Need to confirm hotel. Let me know."

Daisy: "8pm?"

Kent: "It's a date."

She smirks, then tosses the phone over her shoulder to land softly on the bed.

Daisy chugs away on her article.

CUT TO

INT. DAISY'S KITCHEN - NEXT MORNING

Daisy shoves a printed copy of her article into a manila envelope.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

She licks it, and seals it shut, then turns it over as she runs to grab her bag.

The manila envelope reads: EMILY GOODMAN, 48 BUSHWICK AVE, BROOKLYN, NY 11211.

She comes back, bag slung around her neck, and grabs the envelope hurriedly.

CUT TO

INT. APARTMENT STAIRWAY - CONTINUOUS.

She frantically locks her apartment door, papers starting to spill out from her bag. She cradles the envelope.

Bob pops his head out his own door at the end of the hallway.

BOB
You gonna be around today to help Alice out?

DAISY
I have a jam-packed day, Bob. Do you mind?

BOB
No, I can cancel. You look busier than me.

DAISY
I'm so sorry, I know I said I'd do it. I got called in for a meeting with my editor, and then I have this dinner thing...

BOB
Don't sweat it.
(beat)
Good luck.

Daisy shoots him a nervous smile, then runs out the door.

CUT TO

EXT. EAST VILLAGE SIDEWALK - CONTINUOUS.

Daisy deposits the envelope in a blue postal box on the corner. She says a silent prayer, lifts her head up, and scurries off.

CUT TO
INT. OFFICE - MORNING

Daisy sits in her editor's office, twiddling her thumbs nervously. She slumps in her chair. Frank takes off his glasses and rubs his eyes.

FRANK
So I called you in here with a mix of good and bad news. Which do you want first?

DAISY
(without hesitation)
Bad.

FRANK
We don't want you writing on the blog anymore.

DAISY
(to herself)
Fuck me.

FRANK
What?

DAISY
Good news?

FRANK
We want you in print. In the magazine.

Daisy's mouth falls open, and her bag starts to slide off her lap. She catches it right as it falls.

FRANK (CONT'D)
You're too good to be online. Your stuff's more high brow. So let's talk about your options.

DAISY
I have options?

FRANK
This Alice character from your last post - is she for real?

DAISY
She's for real.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

FRANK
She's too good. Too good. We like her.

DAISY
Me too.

FRANK
She seems like she's got enough juice for a longer piece. We're talking monthly installments. Multi-issue.

DAISY
No kidding.

The gears in her brain are turning:

DAISY (CONT'D)
So... does this mean I'm a staff writer?

FRANK
If you pull this off with as much finesse as your other pieces, I think you've got a real shot at sticking around.

Daisy is trying not to burst out of her chair screaming.

Frank picks up a stack of papers and shuffles them together. He hands them to Daisy.

FRANK (CONT'D)
I had legal whip this up. Just a quick contract stating it's a work-for-hire... outlining copyright. Look it over, think about it, get back to me ASAP.

DAISY
Will do.

A LANKY WOMAN walks over to Frank's door and taps her watch.

FRANK
I'd love to stay and chat, but duty calls. Call me with any questions.

DAISY
Thank you so much, Frank.

They shake hands. Daisy exits, and moves to the elevator. The light comes on and dings. She moves inside.

(CONTINUED)
As soon as the doors close, she lets loose a scream.

CUT TO

INT. MEMENTO RESTAURANT - LATER

Daisy strides into "Memento," the latest and greatest in NYC's dining scene. It's low-lit and screams romance. The hostess takes her coat and points to a table. Daisy heads in that direction.

Seated is Kent, wearing suit pants, a crisp button-down, and a sport coat with pocket square - dressed to impress.

He's got his phone pressed to his ear, but Daisy doesn't notice. She's on Cloud Nine.

    DAISY
    Hi! I just had the be-

Kent holds his finger up as if to silence her. The smile slides off her face. She sits.

    KENT
    Uh huh. Uh huh.
    (beat)
    Ok, I gotta go. I gotta.

Daisy fiddles awkwardly with the menu.

    KENT (CONT'D)
    Yeah, yeah. We'll talk.

He hangs up, then shoots Daisy a smoky grin.

    KENT (CONT'D)
    Sorry. What were you saying?

    DAISY
    I had a really great meeting.

    KENT
    Nice. I already ordered for you.

Daisy frowns. She sees a WAITER passing by, and catches his eye.

    DAISY
    Cabernet?

The waiter nods and goes to grab a bottle.

(CONTINUED)
80 CONTINUED:

DAISY (CONT'D)
(trying to contain her excitement)
My editor wants to publish a piece I wrote in American Writers magazine. He hinted at bringing me on as a staff writer.
(beat)
I don't know what I'm going to do yet, I have to talk to Alice first.

KENT
American Writers, huh? You can do better than that. I'll make some calls and get you back at 24/7. The CFO of their media group is a buddy of mine.

The waiter arrives with Daisy's wine. He pours.

DAISY
That's kind of dismissive.

KENT
Dismissive? I'm helping you out.

DAISY
Helping me out by waving your magic wand? Like my life is your project?

The waiter glares at Kent. He gives Daisy an extra splash of Cabernet.

KENT
I didn't mean it like that. Forget it. Let's enjoy our dinner together - like old times?

DAISY
It's not like old times at all.

KENT
Okay then like new times. A new chapter.

He mimics opening a book and flipping the pages, then smiles sheepishly. Daisy melts a bit.

DAISY
So this trip...

KENT
Is soon.

(CONTINUED)
DAISY
I know. What are you thinking?

KENT
You know what I'm thinking. I want time with you. I want to make it up to you.

DAISY
And what makes you think two weeks in paradise is going to fix very real problems?

KENT
I don't know - think about it. You... me... the exotic beaches of Thailand... dinner and dancing...

DAISY
You're just proving my point.

KENT
Well then there's the more practical stance. We spent $4,000 on flights alone. You want to let that go to waste?

DAISY
Ah.

KENT
I know I don't deserve it.

An awkward pause.

Just then the food arrives. A waiter unloads a juicy filet in front of Kent and a salad with scallops in front of Daisy.

DAISY
You ordered me scallops?

KENT
Yeah. I know you like to eat light. How'd I do?

DAISY
I'm allergic to scallops.

KENT
Oh, I'm sorry. Here, have some of my steak.

He starts cutting. Daisy looks down. Something's hit her.

(Continued)
DAISY
No. I know where I need to be. It's not here. It's not with you in Thailand.

She gets up to go.

KENT
What? Dais?

She turns back.

DAISY
Alice is the one who has been here for me. She's the one who has stuck by me, taught me... loved me. She's my family now.

Daisy strides away. The waiter who poured her wine stands with her jacket ready. He gives her a discreet high five.

EXT. MIDTOWN STREET - CONTINUOUS.

Daisy walks along as a LOVING COUPLE passes. They hold hands and talk in hushed voices, giggling.

She finds a bench and slumps down. Turning her phone back on, she sees she has a voicemail from Bob. She raises the phone to her ear.

Her face drops with each passing second. Phone still to her ear, she hails a cab and crawls in:

DAISY
6th and Avenue B! Step on it!

INT. STAIRWAY - LATER

Daisy knocks hurriedly on Bob's door. No answer.

She moves to Alice's door. Still no answer.

She moves back downstairs and knocks. Jeanine opens the door.

JEANINE
Yeah?

DAISY
Do you know where Alice is?

(CONTINUED)
JEANINE
Yeah, she's sick, right? I think an ambulance came to take her to the hospital. It was real noisy - I was dead asle-

Daisy runs out the door while Jeanine is mid-sentence.

JEANINE (CONT'D)
(to herself)
Chick is crazy.

INT. HOSPITAL - LATER

Daisy runs through the hallway to the ICU. She picks up the phone outside the sealed entrance.

DAISY
Yes, Alice Goodman.
(beat)
No, I'm not family.
(beat)
You don't understand, I'm her caregiver.
(beat)
How dare you - I'm the only family she's got!
(calmer, confused)
What do you mean?

CUT TO

INT. HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM - LATER

Daisy sits in a cushy arm chair, a cup of burnt hospital coffee in her hand.

A woman about her age sits across from her. It's EMILY GOODMAN, Alice's daughter. She's got sleek blond hair, pulled back in a tight ponytail. Her lips are a subtle mauve and her eyes gleam bright blue. She's dressed in a maxi skirt and many layers - denim shirt, thermal, cardigan...

EMILY
Apparently I was still her emergency contact. I told her I would never see her again. Maybe this was her twisted way of making sure she had the last laugh.

DAISY
She's your mom. You can't cut her off that easily.

(CONTINUED)
EMILY
Apparently not. I don't think I would have come at all if I hadn't gotten your letter in the mail with that article. You're a good writer.

Daisy looks at her sheepishly.

EMILY (CONT'D)
How did you meet Mom again?

DAISY
We're... neighbors. She's been so helpful to me - so warm and caring. An angel, really.

Emily laughs.

DAISY (CONT'D)
What's funny?

EMILY
I just can't believe we're talking about the same person.

DAISY
I'm not sure I understand.

EMILY
Let's just say I distanced myself for a reason. She had something to say about everything I did. Finally, I couldn't take it anymore. I packed everything up, told her I had nothing left to learn from her, and I left.

Emily shrugs. Daisy looks bewildered.

DAISY
She really misses you, you know.

EMILY
I miss her too. But it's easier this way.

DAISY
I don't think it's ever easier to be without your mom.

EMILY
To each her own.

(CONTINUED)
DAISY
Don't be selfish. Losing you is her biggest regret.

Daisy walks away from the waiting room. She strolls until she reaches the ICU entrance. She picks up the phone.

DAISY (CONT'D)
Alice Goodman.

They buzz her in.

INT. ALICE'S HOSPITAL ROOM - CONTINUOUS.

Daisy moves to Alice's room. She's hooked up to a breathing tube, her chest moving rapidly but weakly.

Daisy sits by her side, holding her hand.

DAISY
Alice, I need to ask you something.
(beat)
I really think you can hear me.

Alice squeezes her hand. Daisy smiles, her eyes pained.

Daisy (CONT'D)
My editor wants to publish something I wrote. About you. About how beautiful you are.
(beat)
I don't want to sign the contract unless I know it's what you want too.

Alice starts to cough slightly. Daisy panics, running for water.

She takes the breathing mask off, pouring the water into Alice's mouth carefully. She struggles to swallow.

When she regains control of her breathing, Alice turns to Daisy, her eyes full of tears. Alice smiles weakly and squeezes her hand.

ALICE
(a hoarse whisper)
I would be honored.

Daisy laughs and cries. She kisses Alice on the cheek.
INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS.

Emily stares in, eyeing Daisy cautiously. She looks crestfallen.

FADE OUT:

INT. DAISY'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Daisy rifles through her desk looking for a pen. She finds a stack of old business cards from her days at 24/7. Into the garbage they go...

She grabs a pen, and brings it to her contract. She signs with a flourish.

She walks through the kitchen, where Bob wears a bright pink apron and matching oven mitts.

DAISY
I'm headed over to Alice's to fax some paperwork over to the office. I'll be right back, Bob! Don't burn the brownies!

BOB
Aye aye, cap'n!

INT. APARTMENT STAIRWAY - CONTINUOUS

Daisy crosses the hallway, and unlocks the door with her spare key. She moves into...

INT. ALICE'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS.

She looks over the document, walking through without raising her eyes. When she's into Alice's office, she looks up.

Emily is sitting at the computer. Daisy shrieks! Emily shrieks in return!

DAISY
What are you doing? Stop it! Why? Argh!

EMILY
What are you doing? Stop it! Why? Argh!

DAISY
How'd you get in here?

EMILY
I could ask you the same thing!

DAISY
I have a key.

(CONTINUED)
EMILY
I have a bobby pin.

DAISY
Jesus, that's all it takes? I gotta talk to the landlord.

EMILY
I'm just fucking with you. I jacked Mom's key from her bag at the hospital.

DAISY
Oh, so you're a klepto too?

EMILY
Runs in the family.

They stare each other down for a second.

DAISY
Well I came over to use the fax machine.

EMILY
Be my guest.

She motions towards it. Daisy glides ahead and faxes her paperwork. The fax machine beeps.

DAISY
Well. I guess that's it.

Emily gives her a sarcastic smile. Daisy turns to leave. After a few paces, she turns back around.

DAISY (CONT'D)
I know some part of you deep down wants to make peace with your mom.

Emily meets her gaze, eyes cold.

EMILY
You're probably right. But I've already tried years of therapy and that's gotten me nowhere - I don't see how one last half-assed attempt is going to do it.

DAISY
Talk to me. I can help. We can fix this.

(CONTINUED)
EMILY
I'm not sure that's a good idea.

DAISY
Neither am I. But it can't hurt to try.

Emily looks reluctant but slides her chair towards Daisy.

MONTAGE:
-Emily and Daisy talk in Alice's apartment.
-They move to Daisy's place, where Bob serves them brownies, still in his pink apron.
-They meet one morning in a coffee shop.
-They meet at Daisy's favorite bar, her bartender friend serving them Bloody Marys as Daisy writes furiously in her notepad.
-Daisy sits at her desk, typing furiously onto her laptop
-Emily sits reading a book in a chair by Alice's hospital bed. Alice is unconscious.
-Emily dusts Alice's books and picture frames, pausing to look at a photo of them together placed in front of all her old school trophies.
-Daisy and Emily watch as the bartender and his BAND play a gig. He shoots Daisy a wink.
-Daisy enters Alice's hospital room, hands behind her back. She pulls out a JOINT and a LIGHTER. Alice's eyes light up and she bursts out laughing. Alice teaches her how to blow smoke rings out the window.
-Daisy talks rapidly on the phone; we see Frank on the other line, equally excited.
-Emily feeds Alice ice chips. Daisy enters with a NURSE, who comes to check Alice's monitors and up her pain meds.

END MONTAGE

CUT TO

INT. OFFICE - MORNING

Daisy slams a thick stack of paper onto Frank's desk.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

FRANK
It's done?

DAISY
It's done.

FRANK
I'll have notes for you by tomorrow.
I'm excited about this.

Daisy runs out the door.

DAISY
(over her shoulder)
Not as excited as I am!

CUT TO

INT. ALICE'S APARTMENT - LATER

Daisy rushes into the apartment. Emily is sitting on the couch with a large cardboard box that's been opened.

DAISY
Hi! I just delivered the pages.

Emily doesn't say anything back. She stares at Daisy.

EMILY
This came for you. The delivery man said they'd been waiting for you to pick it up. They tried to deliver it to your midtown address, but it got forwarded here.

Daisy moves to the box. Inside are three bridesmaid's dresses. Underneath is her wedding dress.

She pulls it out. It's magnificent: beautiful beading and vintage lace. Delicate and elegant, sophisticated and sweet.

EMILY (CONT'D)
Do we have to talk about it?

DAISY
Nope.
(beat)
Wanna try them on?

CUT TO
INT. ALICE'S APARTMENT - 30 MIN LATER

Daisy is in her wedding dress, Emily wears one of the bridesmaid gowns, a deep indigo.

Emily takes a swig from a bottle of wine and then passes it off to Daisy. An angsty break-up song blasts from the speakers.

They scream-shout the chorus, just as Alice's home phone rings. Emily runs to shut off the music.

DAISY
(tipsy and joking)
Alice Goodman's residence. Daisy speaking.

Emily giggles.

DAISY (CONT'D)
Oh. Okay. I'll be there soon.

EMILY
Mom?

DAISY
Mom.

They grab coats, purses and keys and run out, still in their wedding attire. Daisy makes sure to grab her magazine pages.

CUT TO

INT. HOSPITAL ICU - LATER

Daisy and Emily run through the ICU doors. The nurses and doctors shoot an assortment of weird looks at their outfits.

Alice's nurse recognizes them.

NURSE
You're here. And you're... getting married?

DAISY
Long story. Actually not so long. But...

NURSE
Won't ask.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)
NURSE (CONT'D)

(beat)
I do need to warn you: she does not look so good. You'll notice some yellowing of the skin. She's also had a lot of trouble talking today because the respirator is causing some bruising. We think this might be the end.

They choke.

EMILY
Can we see her?

NURSE
Whenever you're ready.

Emily looks back to Daisy, who gives her a reassuring look.

EMILY
(to Daisy)
 Fuck.

They walk in together.

INT. ALICE'S HOSPITAL ROOM - CONTINUOUS.

Alice lays in bed, a withered version of herself. Her arms are covered in bruises from her drip. Her skin is a sickly pallid color. Her eyes are hollow.

Her voice is weak, but audible.

ALICE
(singing)
My girls, my girls, my girls, talkin'
bout...

She starts to cough, pointing at Emily and Daisy to finish.

DAISY
My giiiiirls

EMILY
My girls!

Alice tries to laugh but starts coughing again.

ALICE
Are you two getting married? That seems like borderline incest.

(CONTINUED)
They ignore her attempt at a joke.

**DAISY**

Oh, Alice.

She kisses Alice's forehead and takes her hand.

Emily stands to the side, awkwardly.

**EMILY**

Hi, Mom. I don't know if you remember me being here. You were kind of in and out.

**ALICE**

I thought so. I couldn't tell if it was just a wonderful dream.

Emily moves closer. She takes Alice's other hand.

**EMILY**

Mom, Daisy wrote something for you.

I tried to help.

**ALICE**

This is the piece that's being published? Let's hear it.

Emily starts to sob.

**DAISY**

Are you sure?

**ALICE**

Of course, darling. Read it to me.

**DAISY**

It's long.

She clears her throat.

**DAISY (CONT'D)**

Alice Goodman was far from ordinary. In fact, she was what most would consider extraordinary. Where others walked, Alice floated. Where others spoke, Alice sang. Where others dreamed, Alice lived.

Daisy looks up. Alice's eyes are closed. Her lips are curled up in a half smile. She realizes Daisy has stopped, and she opens her eyes to goad her on.

(Continued)
DAISY (CONT'D)
Alice's only regret in life was the loss of her daughter, Emily. Emily was stubborn. She resented her mother's take on life, her vibrancy, her philosophy. Emily found her taxing, abrasive. Alice couldn't understand what she had done wrong. Emily left and did not come back for many years. But when she did, the world fell back into place.

Daisy draws breath as if to go on, but Alice stops her.

ALICE
The world fell back into place.

Emily and Daisy hold their breath, not sure whether or not to go on or say anything.

ALICE (CONT'D)
What's it about exactly?

DAISY
Well, it's fiction really. But it's based on you. And it's based on Emily's memories of you. And whatever you've told me. Emily helped me to go through your contacts and collect stories from all the places you've been and the people you've seen.

ALICE
That's beautiful, darling. I want to read it all.

DAISY
You will.

ALICE
I'm just glad you're both here with me.

(beat)
Emma, are you still there?

EMILY
Yes.

ALICE
So quiet for once.
EMILY
I don't know what to say. I'm just so profoundly sorry.

ALICE
Now I can die happy. I'm sorry too, darling.

DAISY
What about us? What do we do?

ALICE
You don't need me. Look at you - you're getting published and you're... engaged?

DAISY
No.

ALICE
Everything's as it should be.

EMILY
It's kind of hard to feel happy. I missed out on so many years.

ALICE
(pointing at Daisy's manuscript)
And now you've got them all back in those pages. What a beautiful gift.
(beat)
Now, my throat is absolutely killing me. Would you get me a cup of water, Em?

She nods and walks out as Alice starts a coughing fit. Her eyes water from the stress of the wretching.

DAISY
It's all going to be okay.

Alice calms a bit. She turns to Daisy, focused.

ALICE
I love you so much.

DAISY
More than words can say.

Warm silence.

(CONTINUED)
Suddenly, Alice starts coughing again. She looks apologetic. Her eyes roll back and her monitor starts beeping frenetically.

Daisy gets up and desperately presses the call button on the side of the hospital bed.

DAISY (CONT'D)
Alice, no! God, no!

Alice's eyes roll back, pleading. She looks almost feral. Then suddenly she is still.

The nurse opens the door, Emily behind her. They see Alice's body, limp.

Emily drops the cup of water as Daisy wails.

FADE TO BLACK

INT. CHURCH - AFTERNOON

A huge congregation sits in the pews, all in black. A slide-show of Alice's life plays, the Beach Boys crooning along to the visuals.

Many of the FUNERAL GOERS weep. Daisy sits next to Emily, holding her hand. She looks up at the screen, smiling at Alice's memories, then turns to look over her shoulder.

The bartender sits behind her. He shoots her an encouraging look.

Bob puts his arm around Emily. Her breathing slows.

DAISY
Shhhh, shhh.

CUT TO

INT. CHURCH RECEPTION ROOM - LATER

Daisy and Emily stand at the end of a long line of GUESTS. They each saunter forward to offer a hug and condolences.

SOFIA, 39, blonde and busty, strolls up, planting a kiss on both of the women.

SOFIA
My sincerest condolences. Alice was very dear to me.

(MORE)
SOFIA (CONT'D)
I flew here from Finland, knowing that she would have done the same for me. You were lucky to be with her.

She walks away, eyes heavy.

Another man, CHANDRAJ, strolls forward. He's in his sixties, his dark hair streaked with grey, his belly protruding. He shakes both their hands.

CHANDRAJ
Alice was a shining star at my ashram in the Panchagiri hills. I have never seen anyone in all my years possess such a fervent spirituality and religious thirst. My heart aches for you.

He notices Emily.

CHANDRAJ (CONT'D)
And you must be Emily. I recognize you still. Your mother showed you off to everyone in the village. All the girls wanted to play with your blond hair.

Emily smiles, though her eyes water.

EMILY
Thank you for coming.

He nods, then turns.

The line stretches out the door, full of people from all over the world, their dress varied and their languages overlapping in an international chorus.

Daisy and Emily greet the next guest.

CUT TO

EXT. CEMETERY BEHIND CHURCH - SUNSET

Daisy and Emily walk together among the endless rows of tombstones. Emily takes Daisy's arm.

EMILY
I'm glad we decided to cremate her. She wouldn't want to be packed down under all that dirt.

(CONTINUED)
Daisy smiles.
DAISY
Finally free.

EMILY
Wasn't she always?

They pause and turn to watch Bob behind them. He chats with the rest of the funeral-goers, overly-friendly as always.

DAISY
I miss her.

EMILY
I'm realizing I've missed her for years.

Emily starts to cry again.

She leans her head on Daisy's shoulder, and Daisy accepts it, squeezing her arm even tighter.

The church bells begin to chime.

FADE OUT:

INT. ALICE'S (NOW DAISY'S) APARTMENT - MORNING

Daisy has taken over the space, her keepsakes melding with those of Alice's that she's kept.

On the bookshelf is a photo of Daisy and Alice laughing. Daisy places her copy of *Jane Eyre* next to it as she speaks on the phone.

**DAISY** (INTO PHONE)
Great, thanks so much Frank.
(beat)
I know, can you believe it? A book deal!
(beat)
Exciting stuff.

She packs Emily's old trophies into a box.

**DAISY**
We'll talk soon.
(beat)
Yeah.

She takes the last one off the table. In its place, she puts a photo of her and Emily. Emily is smiling complacently. Daisy laughs, her arm draped around Emily's shoulder.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

DAISY (CONT'D)

Buh-bye.

Daisy sits on the Victorian couch. She lets out a sigh. Things are back in place.

She looks at the bouquet of irises on the coffee table, adjusting them. Her eyes well up a bit, but she brushes back the tears.

All of a sudden, there is a frantic knocking on the door.

EMILY (O.S.)

LET ME IN! LET ME IN!

DAISY

Relax, I'm coming!

She unbolts the lock. Emily bowls her over.

EMILY

It's out!

DAISY

What is?

Emily holds up the latest issue of 24/7. The cover has a bold graphic advertising the "40 Under 40 Issue."

DAISY (CONT'D)

What's this?

EMILY

You're in it! You're on the list!

Daisy's eyes bug out. They both burst out laughing hysterically.

DAISY

Gimme that thing!

Emily hands it over. Daisy walks out of the apartment with Emily following.

EXT. EAST RIVER - MOMENTS LATER

Daisy and Emily are out of breath. They've power-walked to the riverside.

Wordlessly, Daisy hurls the magazine into the water. She lets out a sigh of relief.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

She still looks unsatisfied. She rummages in her pocket, whips out her Blackberry and tosses that too.

EMILY
Are you crazy?

DAISY
I can finally breathe.

Emily smirks.

A COP comes towards them on his bike, shouting.

COP
Did you just throw a cell phone into the river? I could write you up for littering!

Emily and Daisy exchange a glance. They both bolt at the same time.

Their laughter echoes. The cop just watches from atop his shiny blue bicycle.

COP (CONT'D)
(to himself)
Not worth it.

INT. ALICE'S (NOW DAISY'S) APARTMENT - EVENING

Bob, Emily, the bartender, Jeanine, and Marco sit around Daisy's table. She serves each a plate of food, the matriarch of the bunch.

They look at her affectionately. Though we can't hear it over the soundtrack, their conversation seems boisterous.

They are an eccentric family, but a happy one.

Daisy moves to...

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

She puts the pot of food back on the burner to warm.

Leaning on the counter, she stares out the kitchen window, dreamily.

She breathes heavily. It's not a sad sigh, but a hopeful one. Everything is as it should be.

FADE TO BLACK