

INT. ANNE'S APARTMENT - LATER THAT EVENING

Anne's opens the door to a cautious Lydia. Lydia nods, self-consciously, as if to say, "Yeah, I'm here".

ANNE

Hello... welcome... Come in.

Lydia enters, subtly inspecting the apartment.

LYDIA

I've never been in an apartment above a store. You always pass them on the street but you never think anyone really lives in them.

ANNE

(raising an eyebrow)

Can I get you anything...coffee...
tea...a little tequilla?

LYDIA

No, thank you.

LYDIA sits at the formica table, already set up with nail care paraphernalia - with the gleaming steel nail files it looks a bit like surgery equipment.

LYDIA

Will it hurt?

ANNE

(threateningly)

That all depends on you.
...Sure you don't want a drink?

LYDIA's a little nervous about this attempt
at nail beauty.

ANNE is seated at her formica table opposite
LYDIA. SHE delicately holds one of LYDIA'S
hands, carefully applying the stars to her
nails. LYDIA sips her tequilla with one
hand. ANNE'S glass is almost empty as she
talks non-stop;

ANNE

...So he says to me, "you'll never find
another man like me"...I said, "please,
men like you have one hand on their
dicks and the other hand on their
mother's leg... I said, there's
the door - take a trip.

LYDIA

(paying close attention)
You threw him out?

ANNE makes a confident nod. LYDIA sips.

LYDIA

My parents were divorced.

ANNE

It's an awful thing, let me tell you.
My Aunt used to say,
(emphasizing)

"divorce is the sister-in-law of death".

ANNE nods knowingly. LYDIA squints as she considers this.

ANNE works on LYDIA'S other hand, as LYDIA sips her tequila from a straw.

ANNE

...SO...anybody special in your life?

LYDIA

(defensive)

Do I look like I have someone special?

SHE moves to pick up her tequilla with the manicured hand but ANNE eyes her down.

ANNE

Well, don't say it like that. It's not so...ya know, crazy an idea.

You are a healthy woman... You hold a steady job. Ya not crossed eyed or anything...

LYDIA

Well, there's nobody special!

ANNE

Fine.

LYDIA

(pause, then:)

I mean, it's not easy in this day and age.

ANNE

What?

LYDIA

Meeting ... people.

ANNE

Tell me about it. I've been dating longer than I've been driving. I can't believe that.

LYDIA

I never really...went through a... dating period.

ANNE

It's a disgusting process. You haven't missed anything.

LYDIA nods in agreement, but her face tells us she feels she has missed a great deal.

LYDIA is a little more loose and talkative now as ANNE refills her glass, then takes LYDIA'S other hand to apply the stars.

LYDIA

(deadpan)

...My mother calls every week.

Like a recurring nightmare.

"So, have you met anyone?"... "No mom" ..

"So what's going to happen?"...

"I don't know Mom"...

I only thank God I moved out.

ANNE

I can't believe you lived with her for that long. If I had to live with my mother, I'd stab myself six times.

LYDIA

I think some people are meant to be alone.
(she takes a slug)

Maybe I was a man in a former life and I used women for pleasure so now I'm paying for it - which would be fine, if I could just remember some of the pleasure parts...
(drinks)

ANNE

I don't understand you. What is the problem?

LYDIA

I don't feel like I make any impression on people...At office parties I spend my time re-arranging the hors d'oeuvres as people eat them, so the platters will always look full. I don't start conversations because I have no idea how to end them...I think I'm just meant to live in the background of things.

ANNE

That's not true...You gotta ease up... Conversations have a life of their own. You gotta just go with it...We're having a lovely conversation.

LYDIA

(bluntly)
I'm paying you.

ANNE drops her hand. SHE's pissed.

ANNE

You know, let me tell you something!
I'm not that kind of person. I don't
do people favors. If I talk to you
it's because I want to. So we're not
all ...uh...Jerri Hall...Big deal...

What a boring world if we were.
You do the best you can with what you got.
You're not so so invisible, ya know...
You want make an impression? Try this;
you can be a real bitch.

LYDIA

(her face lights up)
Really?

ANNE

Yeah!

LYDIA smiles at the thought of having such
an impressionable personality..

ANNE and LYDIA share a drink....

ANNE

It's hard being a woman. I don't care what
anybody says...People say we have choices -
we have no choices...My grandma used to
say that, for a woman in this world, behind
every door there's either death...or
husband.

LYDIA cracks up laughing.

LYDIA

"Sister-in-law of death"...That's wonderful.

SHE takes another sip as JACK knocks on the door and enters with PARRY.

JACK

Anne...!

(to LYDIA)

Oh hi? How's it going?