

Nobody Nothing Nowhere

written by

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EXT. DOWNTOWN MINNEAPOLIS - DAY

Rush hour in this small but bustling city. A groovy Harry Nilsson-esque tune plays.

A sea of people bob up and down, commuters in a crowded city. We track DAVE (30's), a boyish blond, lost in thought, as he wades through the crowd.

A few steps behind him, is a SHORT CURLY HAired WOMAN (30's), just minding her own business.

EXT. COFFEE CART - CONTINUOUS

Dave stops at a coffee cart. While he waits, he makes funny faces with a 4 YEAR OLD who is on her's FATHER's shoulders.

That same curly haired woman WALKS PAST AGAIN, going the other direction now.

EXT. BOARDED UP BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

Dave strolls with a coffee and a danish. Something catches his eye: painted-over graffiti, a tan square on tan brick.

He doesn't notice the curly haired woman, who is now loitering across the street.

EXT. CITY PARK - CONTINUOUS

Dave crosses the plaza to a small park with a pond. He drops his change in a old hunched HOMELESS WOMAN's cup and then tears off some of his danish for the ducks. They love it!

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

Dave heads into work, but first he graciously holds the door open for a lady with packages. Then gets stuck holding it for a half-dozen more people, before finally disappearing inside.

A beat. Then:

All the people on the street suddenly STOP what they're doing. The other commuters, the father with his daughter, the homeless woman, they all drop their actions and affectations.

Faces blank, they slowly shuffle out of the area.

The whole block is completely empty. Life has come to a halt.

EXT. CITY PARK - CONTINUOUS

Across the street, the curly haired woman is now alone.

She bends to get a better look at one of the ducks, which is LYING DORMANT ON ITS SIDE with its feet sprawled out. She looks at it intently. This is RUTH.

Ruth walks to a decorative planter, reaches down and lifts up A CHUNK OF IT ALONG WITH A PATCH OF GROUND. It's a trapdoor.

She crawls inside, into darkness, shutting it behind her.

NO WORLD - TUNNEL - CONTINUOUS

Ruth crawls down the dark tunnel. As she progresses, it becomes brighter and bigger until she can stand. The walls around her glow purple but have no discernable edge.

Around her are a few other people from the street. The homeless woman, now with a totally upright posture. The father and daughter, now acting like strangers to each other.

This is the NO WORLD, and this is Ruth's non-life: colorful, abstract, dimensionless. An echo of the real world.

NO WORLD - TIMECLOCK ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Monochromatic shapes float in the background. There are objects - a desk, a filing cabinet - but they lack detail. They are more like shadow-puppets of everyday items.

Ruth gets in line to stamp her timecard, shuffling along.

At the end of the line waits the ADMINISTRATOR, a tall androgynous being in a rubbery extra long t-shirt and no pants. She's carrying a large stack of printouts and speaks unshakably at her own pace.

ADMINISTRATOR
Something's not right.

Ruth grabs her card and stamps it in the timeclock.

ADMINISTRATOR (CONT'D)
Show me.
(looking at the card)
There it is again. Your timecard
keeps coming up late.

She looks down at Ruth, who is oblivious. Then she sighs.

ADMINISTRATOR (CONT'D)

It must be an error with the
stamper. But just to be safe I'm
sending you back to training. You
know where to go?

Ruth's scrunches her face. The Administrator points to the
left and Ruth floats up and away. Gravity works differently
here. Some people float, most just walk.

NO WORLD - TRAINING AREA

Ruth float-walks through an endless arena with many colorful
halls going in all directions, left, right, and upside down.
It's like a coral reef in human scale, teeming with activity.

All around her, NON-PEOPLE (who look like just regular
people) float or walk to their specific training sessions.
The TRAINERS are easy to spot in their long shirt/no pants
uniforms. They're all rehearsing the minutia of real life:

Ruth walks past A LITTLE KID REHEARSING A TEMPER TANTRUM and
then arrives at her training.

NO WORLD - TRAINING AREA, CITY SIDEWALK

In the middle of an all pale blue infinity space is a
REALISTIC CITY SIDEWALK. The WALKING TRAINER, a soft-spoken,
genderless little bald man is instructing the class.

WALKING TRAINER

Very simple, you're minding your
own business, head down. You've got
places to go, and also you've got
people to see. But most
importantly, you just keep moving.

He demonstrates, taking a few steps across the "sidewalk",
checking his watch.

WALKING TRAINER (CONT'D)

Now give it a try.

The first three non-people attempt to imitate. They're pretty
bad at walking, like they just got their legs.

WALKING TRAINER (CONT'D)

Adequate, adequate, very
satisfactory.

Ruth follows along, this is too easy for her. She SIGHS.

WALKING TRAINER (CONT'D)

(re: Ruth's sigh)

No need for loud breathing. It's too subtle.

(to everyone)

Remember, you're a blower: you just blow by. You are peripheral. If we do our jobs right, Dave won't even notice you.

The trainer pulls Ruth aside.

WALKING TRAINER (CONT'D)

You've got the mechanics down pat, but there's something about your face...

He nudges her chin slightly down towards her neck.

WALKING TRAINER (CONT'D)

That's it. That makes more sense. Just a regular day, nothing special.

Behind her, a non-person struggles to lift her feet correctly and is pumping her arms instead.

WALKING TRAINER (CONT'D)

Let's take it back a smidge, we'll start with the basics.

(shakes his legs)

These tubes, these are your legs. They bend in three places. Try bending some of the places.

The non-people all bend their legs in different ways. One of them tips over.

Ruth takes this opportunity to sneak away. As she leaves, we can see that the sidewalk is a carefully constructed imitation using FORCED PERSPECTIVE.

NO WORLD - TRAINING AREA, IRISH PUB

Ruth glides into an upside-down pub decorated with beer signs and tchotchkes. There are a few non-people dressed as waiters, patrons, bar backs, etc, all training.

She creeps up along the wall until our perspective flips and the pub is right-side up. Then she tiptoes close enough to listen in. She passes a NON-PERSON HOST reading into an unplugged microphone.

NON-PERSON HOST

...Crab Louie with 25, Bonanzataz,
22, and in the lead, Miracle Mile
with 32 points.

In the center of the pub, A RESTAURANT TRAINER demonstrates.

RESTAURANT TRAINER

Well I can see you hated it!
(laughs at her own joke)
Another round guys?

A non-person WAITER tries to copy her.

WAITER

Well I can see you hated it!
(GARBLED attempt at
LAUGHING)
Anotter Roond Gize?

Ruth, watching, tries out laughing quietly to herself.

RESTAURANT TRAINER

Better not, thanks. Just the check.

ALL THE PATRONS

(repeating)
Bet Not, just thachak.

RESTAURANT TRAINER

Now who knows what happens next?
Any guesses?

One non-person raises her hand.

PATRON

Thachek?

RESTAURANT TRAINER

That's right! Very good talking.
Now we're going to try some
alternatives.

Ruth casually snags a chicken wing from an unattended plate,
and slinks away.

RESTAURANT TRAINER (O.C.) (CONT'D)

Being a Show-er means showing up
and interacting with Dave, which
means being flexible.

NO WORLD - TRAINING AREA, SUBURBAN HOME

Ruth meanders past a living room set where a NON-BABY is learning how to behave from a BABY INSTRUCTOR. Babies don't cry in no-world, and they're not cute.

The instructor tries peekaboo with the baby, no reaction.

BABY INSTRUCTOR

Great, but you're excited to see me now. When I cover my face, pretend like I've disappeared from existence and then when I remove my hands, you're just thrilled that my face has returned.

The instructor does peekaboo again. The baby goes apeshit.

BABY INSTRUCTOR (CONT'D)

Great! Let's split the difference.

NO WORLD - ROLODEX RESTING QUARTERS

Ruth paws at a large spinning mechanism, which looks like a GIANT ROLODEX. She tugs the handle and a tall, narrow drawer slides out. She crawls in, FOLDS HERSELF UP like a shirt and pulls the drawer lid shut.

NO WORLD - IN THE ROLODEX DRAWER

Ruth takes a nibble of her chicken wing, which is inedible rubber. She spits it out, disappointed.

INT. DAVE'S OFFICE - DAY

Back on Earth, Dave is in his shared office, a grey, mid-century high-rise with nice light but no view. Not horrible.

He's reading from a printout.

DAVE

Seashell Breeze. Soft Stucco.
Margarine. Uncle Kenny's Tan
Sweater. Unbleached linen.

His coworker, ADA, 55, looks over a dozen BEIGE PAINT SWATCHES taped to the white board.

ADA
Uncle Kenny's Tan Sweater? I told
you that one doesn't make any
sense.

DAVE
It does if you know my Uncle Kenny.

ADA
Dave.

DAVE
Okay, okay.

He confidently holds out the printout for her.

DAVE (CONT'D)
I ended up doing four per swatch,
some fun ones and some safe ones.

ADA
You're really proud of yourself,
aren't you.

He blushes.

ADA (CONT'D)
The rest of these are fine. Ok,
I'll let you know how it goes.
You'll have the pamphlet copy ready
by four, right?

DAVE
Yup. It'll be the very next thing I
do.

She leaves. He switches on the TV- It's the local weather.

SHELLY THE WEATHERMAN (ON TV)
That's right, Rachel, we've had a
nice streak of good weather here in
Minneapolis, but looking into the
10-day forecast you can see a low
pressure system moving in slowly.
Sorry folks, it's not gonna be
pretty.

INT/EXT. DAVE'S CAR - DUSK

Dave stops at a red light in front of a big two-story gym,
where people run on treadmills in the brightly lit windows.

He idly watches a CHILD throw a temper tantrum on the sidewalk - the same tantrum we just heard in the No-World.

There's a HONK. The light changed and he's holding up traffic. He speeds off.

INT. GYM - CONTINUOUS

Upstairs in the gym, Ruth rides the elliptical, her back to the window. She glances outside to see Dave's car drive off.

Once he's out of sight, the other non-people GYM-GOERS file out of the room through a tunnel. Ruth watches them go, then walks out the actual door.

EXT. DOWNTOWN MINNEAPOLIS - DUSK

Ruth dawdles around town, totally alone. It's her "me time".

She touches the cement wall of a department store.

She sits on a fire hydrant.

She pushes on shop doors to see which will open. Nothing, nothing, But then! A real door!

INT. PUBLIC LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

Ruth walks through the stacks, drinking it in. In the science section she leafs through "The Miracle of Life". The pages are all blank.

She tries to grab a book in the arts section, but the giant bookshelf is just ONE BIG FACADE that nearly squishes her.

Finally, she's found something in the reference section, a real book with real text. It's a RHYMING DICTIONARY. Inside the front cover Dave's name is written in kid handwriting, last checked out in 1988.

INT. IRISH PUB - NIGHT

This dive bar is a real life version of the one in the training area, all the details are filled in.

It's trivia night. The TRIVIA MASTER reads into a mic.

TRIVIA MASTER
 ... Crab Louie with 25, Bonanzataz,
 22, and bringing up the rear
 Miracle Mile with 16 points.

Dave is at a table with two COLLEGE BUDDIES, one of whom
 seems a little disgruntled.

DISGRUNTLED BUDDY
 Embarrassing. Dave, I thought you
 knew about sports?

AFFABLE BUDDY
 Dave only knows about sports circa
 1995.

DAVE
 That was a good year.

The WAITER comes over, FORMERLY THE TRAINEE IN THE NON-WORLD.
 She takes their empty plates.

WAITER
 Well I can see you hated it.

She laughs. Dave gives a chuckle.

WAITER (CONT'D)
 Another round guys?

Dave glances at his disgruntled buddy.

DAVE
 Sure, why not. It's on me!

WAITER
 You got it.

AFFABLE BUDDY
 Thanks old buddy Dave. I'll get you
 next time.

TRIVIA MASTER (O.S.)
 Ready round 8. The category is
 "Places with Faces".

DISGRUNTLED BUDDY
 Mt. Rushmore!

Groans all around.

EXT. BASEBALL CARD STORE - NIGHT

Ruth is alone on a deserted street. She lets herself in.

INT. BASEBALL CARD STORE - CONTINUOUS

The kind of shop that fascinates kids, full of novelties, baseball cards, retro doodads and a FRAMED PORTRAIT OF BABE RUTH. It hasn't been used for years, since Dave was a teen. Ruth has turned it into her clubhouse.

She's collected all of the real books she could find, plus interesting objects that she found in the world. She plops down onto a baseball-themed beanbag chair.

EXT. IRISH PUB - NIGHT

DAVE
(to his friends)
Goodnight guys!

Dave walks home, whistling.

From a bird's eye view, we see how the city COMES TO LIFE in the four block area around where Dave is walking, and GOES DARK when he's gone.

INT. BASEBALL CARD STORE - NIGHT

Ruth reads a book by flashlight. Then a streetlight comes on.

She hears noises of life; teenagers laughing and cars on the road. She rushes to the window just as Dave ambles by, scrambling to turn off her light. Did he see her?

EXT. BASEBALL CARD STORE - NIGHT

Yes, Dave saw her - the curly-haired woman in the store window - though he doesn't seem to think much of it.

INT. DAVE'S HOUSE, BEDROOM - NIGHT

Nicely decorated for a bachelor. Dave talks on the phone while his big furry dog, COOKIE, nips at his feet.

DAVE
I guess that's why they call it a
piggy bank, not a birdy bank.
(listening)
(MORE)

DAVE (CONT'D)
 Because birds have smaller
 appetites. Or they're thought to.
 (listening)
 Yes, of course I'll call her
 tomorrow and I'll send the check.
 Ok goodnight Mom, I love you too.

INT. DAVE'S HOUSE, BEDROOM - LATER

Dave is asleep in bed with Cookie. Cookie is a blanket-hog.

NO WORLD - ROLODEX RESTING QUARTERS

The rolodex SPINS. The door opens on Ruth, folded up.

ADMINISTRATOR
 Limber up. You're in the dream.

RUTH
 I am?

NO WORLD - HALLWAY TO THE SUBCONSCIOUS

Ruth tries to keep up with the long-legged administrator as they speed down the hall.

ADMINISTRATOR
 Take the second dream door from the
 left. You'll get the signal when
 it's time to wrap it up.

RUTH
 Don't I need more than that to do
 it with more than that?

ADMINISTRATOR
 What?

Ruth squints her eyes and thinks hard, she's still learning how to speak sentences.

RUTH
 Don't I need more... guidance?

ADMINISTRATOR
 There's no training for a dream.
 That's what makes it a dream.
 You're free to do whatever.

RUTH
 Free?

NO WORLD - THE DREAM DOOR - CONTINUOUS

They arrive at the DREAM DOOR, which is a giant, silver coil. The administrator grabs the center of the coil and it pulls out into a cone shaped VORTEX.

ADMINISTRATOR

The dream techs are sniffing out Dave's subconscious. They'll help push you along.

Ruth cautiously pokes her head through the opening, then her whole body is sucked inside.

DREAM - DAVE'S YARD - NIGHT/DAY

A place in between No World and Earth. It looks exactly like the exterior of Dave's suburban house at nighttime, but the sky about it is strangely the bright blue of broad daylight.

Ruth is gently carried across the darkened lawn by two DREAM TECHNICIANS in black turtlenecks that reach up to their eyes.

There are lots of them moving swiftly through the shadows. Their moves are beautifully choreographed and expertly agile, but they have the blasé demeanor of old union stagehands.

The Techs slide Ruth into position on a set of bleachers outside of Dave's window. They hand her a flashlight.

Inside the house, Dave is about to get into fisticuffs with a coat rack, which is being puppeteered by a Dream Tech.

DAVE

I thought you were my friend!

As Ruth watches him, amused, the Dream Techs are bringing over more and more NON-PEOPLE TO FILL UP THE BLEACHERS.

DREAM - DAVE'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Dave is jumping around like an old-timey boxer.

DAVE

You come at me left, you're gonna regret it. You come at me right, it's LIGHTS OUT.

The coat rack is duckin' and weavin'.

DREAM - DAVE'S YARD - CONTINUOUS

The crowd is attentively watching Dave's battle, responding with OOHs and AHS. Ruth turns to the person next to her.

RUTH
Free? Me, free? Right?

NON PERSON
(stage whisper)
Peas and carrots peas and carrots.

Ruth stands up. She tentatively takes a step to the house, pausing to check the group's reaction. Nobody cares.

DREAM - DAVE'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Ruth lets herself in through the front door. This is the closest she's ever been to Dave and she is wowed by how much detail is in the room.

She starts opening drawers and feeling every object.

RUTH
So much tiny tiny.

Dave is shouting through the window at the crowd on his lawn. They look like a sitcom audience.

DAVE
I'm sorry. I can't help you now.

They LAUGH like a laugh track. Ruth covers her ears.

RUTH
So loud!

A Dream Technician replaces the fighting coat rack with a BIG CUTE BEAR. Dave turns back, surprised.

DAVE
Hey there little buddy, what can I do for ya?

RUTH
(quietly repeating)
Hey there little buddy.

There's a tap on Dave's shoulder. It's the TV Weatherman, Shelly.

SHELLY THE WEATHERMAN
Time to die.

DAVE

Shelly the weather man, it's so nice to finally meet you.

Shelly is EATEN IN ONE CHOMP by the bear's giant head.

SHELLY THE WEATHERMAN

(from inside the mouth)

Save your family!

Dave KARATE CHOPS the bear who collapses into a pile of fur.

A bit of the fur brushes against Ruth's arm. She shivers - a new sensation!

For a moment, Dave is triumphant. But then the dream techs literally pull the rug out from under him. He starts to sink.

DAVE

Shelly call the doctor!

Meanwhile Ruth opens the fridge and hits the motherload.

She grabs a leftover sandwich and sniffs it. It smells real. She cautiously takes a nibble. Oh yeah, that's the stuff!

Dave struggles to escape the sinking floor while Ruth raids his fridge. She's having the time of her non-life.

EXT. DOWNTOWN MINNEAPOLIS - DAY

A new day dawns on the Mighty Mississippi. It's raining.

NO WORLD - WARDROBE AREA

The giant closet for No-World, with clothes on infinitely long racks, like a dry cleaner designed by M.C. Escher.

Ruth is in a line of non-people. At the front, a WARDROBE TECH hands out rain gear: a yellow raincoat to a GRANDMA, a poncho to a CHILD, a canvas jacket to a BEARDED HIPSTER.

WARDROBE TECHNICIAN

You're a tough guy, you don't use an umbrella.

Ruth, still beaming from her dream adventure chats up the Homeless Woman.

RUTH

Have anything fun last night?

The lady is confused; non-people never make small talk.

RUTH (CONT'D)
I was in the dream. You ever do that?

HOMELESS LADY
Yes.

RUTH
Do you know what you did to get it the time you got to get it?

No response.

RUTH (CONT'D)
All kinds of looks and sounds and touches happening in there. You rub one thing - ouch. Who knew?

Ruth is handed a raincoat, umbrella and a couple of full grocery bags. She walks off, marveling at her new gear.

The homeless lady is handed some dirty garbage bags.

NO WORLD - ASSIGNMENT DESK - CONTINUOUS

They follow the line to the Assignment Desk, where ASSIGNMENT TECHNICIANS give out the assignments.

Ruth is still bugging this homeless lady.

RUTH
And food, do you know about food? Not the fake stuff they have out here, but the real stuff. For your mouth. You know what I'm saying.

HOMELESS LADY
Yes.

RUTH
I just figured it out.

She reaches the head of the line.

ASSIGNMENT TECHNICIAN
Enter at Tulip Street and wait for the number ninety-nine bus. And there's a note on your file-

RUTH
Can I go do another dream?

ASSIGNMENT TECHNICIAN

There's a note on your file to make sure you clock out at the correct time. So make sure to do that.

RUTH

But can I change to doing a dream? I want to do more of that.

ASSIGNMENT TECHNICIAN

Dreams aren't assigned here, that comes straight from Deep Brain.

RUTH

Why.

ASSIGNMENT TECHNICIAN

You wait for the number ninety-nine bus.

RUTH

Why is that, that way?

ASSIGNMENT TECHNICIAN

(with a disinterested grimace)

That's how we do things because that's how we do things.

She begrudgingly takes the BLOWER TIMECARD.

EXT. BUS STOP - DAY

It's raining. Ruth, in her new raincoat, waits under a bus stop shelter, inconspicuous.

Across the street, Dave's car pulls up at the DRIVE-THRU COFFEE STAND.

EXT. DRIVE THRU COFFEE STAND - CONTINUOUS

The COFFEE BOOTH BOY hands Dave his order. They both smile politely. He drives off.

With Dave gone, RUTH SPRINGS INTO ACTION.

She runs to the little window. It's a bit too high for her.

RUTH

Oh hi there.

The Coffee Boy is about to leave through his trapdoor.

COFFEE BOOTH BOY
Who said that?

Ruth jumps, her head pops up into view for a second.

RUTH
I just wanted to say hi.

COFFEE BOOTH BOY
Oh. Ok.

Ruth manages to hoist herself up onto the counter.

RUTH
Wow, look at all this, this, this.
Is that real?

She points to a donut.

RUTH (CONT'D)
Is that food? Is that for Dave? He
eats that?

COFFEE BOOTH BOY
It's food. Food's pretty much all
he ever eats... I think.

RUTH
Do you- are you going to eat that?

The boy thinks about this.

COFFEE BOOTH BOY
No.

RUTH
Only Dave, right?

Beat.

COFFEE BOOTH BOY
Dave's mom got a yogurt muffin.

RUTH
What's that?

In the background, the ninety-nine bus pulls up.

COFFEE BOOTH BOY
Dave's mom. When she comes with him
she gets a something to eat too.

RUTH
Mom?

She sees the bus.

RUTH (CONT'D)

Uh oh.

She runs off to catch it.

NO WORLD - ROLODEX RESTING QUARTERS

Ruth spins the rolodex and opens a drawer.

RUTH

Mom?

The non-person inside is an OLD MAN.

OLD MAN

No.

She shuts his drawer, spins to the next one, opens it.

RUTH

Mom? Dave's mom?

This one is a WEIRDO TEENAGER.

WEIRDO TEENAGER

What?

Ruth moves on to the next drawer. It's a CRABBY CABBIE.

RUTH

Mo-

CRABBY CABBIE

Growers are in the grower zone. No growers here.

RUTH

How's that?

He slams his drawer shut.

NO WORLD - SUPPLY ROOM

This space looks like an infinity factory, storage for everything and anything. Items like mailboxes and cars are stacked in every direction, upside-down and sideways.

A STACKER TECHNICIAN is UNFOLDING A CAR. Ruth approaches.

RUTH
Grower room?

The Stacker Technician points vaguely over his shoulder.

NO WORLD - GROWER ROOM

Ruth is in a huge warehouse with several gigantic swimming pools. Above them hangs a crisscross of machinery. It resembles an industrial fish hatchery.

In the center of the room, DAPHNE (30's) wearing workout clothes, sits on a steel table while SHE IS AGED by three Grower Technicians, aka BLUE SMOCKS, wearing blue rubber smocks over their already smock-like T-shirts.

One Blue Smock PULLS at the skin on Daphne's arm, making it flab. Another TUGS on the skin around her neck, WADDLING it. The third SMIZES HER EYES. Daphne sits patiently through it all - just part of the job.

Ruth leans in.

RUTH
Dave's mom?

Daphne ignores her. Ruth steps further into her eyeline.

RUTH (CONT'D)
Excuse me? Are you Dave's mother?

DAPHNE
Oh I didn't realize you were talking to me.

RUTH
You're not Dave's mom?

DAPHNE
No.
(to the Blue Smocks)
Ok you guys better hold off, I'm only supposed to be 33 - not ninety.

BLUE SMOCK #1
Almost done. Just a couple more laugh lines.

RUTH
But you know Dave?

BLUE SMOCK #1
(to Ruth)
You're in the way.

Blue Smock #2 steps in and starts SLAPPING Daphne's calves.

DAPHNE
I'm his ex. I mean, I was. But I'm
being sent back in. So I guess I'll
be the girlfriend again.

RUTH
So you've been around a lot, long
assignments. Doing stuff?

DAPHNE
A lot, a lot.

Ruth is mesmerized by the eye-bag massage that's happening.

RUTH
What does the girlfriend do?

DAPHNE
At first you have fun and act cool
and eat different types of foods
and have sex. Then later you do a
lot of listening and eat the same
types of foods.

RUTH
There are different types?
(beat)
How'd you come to get to be the
girlfriend?

Daphne shrugs, somehow without moving her shoulders.

RUTH (CONT'D)
Is there a place where you and Dave
would eat where other people are?

DAPHNE
Honestly, the last couple years
Dave would just eat in front of the
television. Hours and hours of
television. We'll probably get back
into that this time around too.

RUTH
Television...

BLUE SMOCK #1
You're done.

The Blue Smocks STACK THEMSELVES NEATLY on the table behind her.

DAPHNE
Could you move.

Ruth takes a small step aside. Daphne hops off.

DAPHNE (CONT'D)
Back to the slog of life.

EXT. LAKEWOOD PARK - DAY

DAPHNE
Oh my god, Dave!

Daphne is a bubbling ball of enthusiasm.

Dave is at a picnic birthday party for a baby in a lovely lakeside park. A small group of adults chat, children play in the grass. A golden "1" balloon is tied to the table.

He stands to greet Daphne as she bounces up to him, wrapped gift in hand.

DAVE
Daphne!

They're not sure if they should hug. Then they do.

DAVE (CONT'D)
Wow, you didn't have to get me a gift.

DAPHNE
Ha ha, very funny.

ELAINE (O.S.)
Daphne! You made it!

Dave's mom, ELAINE, mid-60's rocks up from behind the potato salad for a hug.

DAPHNE
Hiiiiii. Elaine, so sorry I'm late.
Where's king baby?

ELAINE
You mean the prince, my beautiful grandchild? Who knows. Oh there he is.

Baby Quinn (1), is playing peekaboo with his mom DAVE'S SISTER. He's the SAME BABY FROM THE NO WORLD TRAINING.

DAPHNE
Such a cutie patootie.

DAVE'S SISTER
(calling out)
Mom??

ELAINE
(to Julie)
Oops I have his binkie.

Elaine flounces off.

DAPHNE
So are you loving being an uncle?

DAVE
(indignant)
I used to be the baby of the family. But it's fine.

Daphne laughs. Which makes Dave smile. Which makes Daphne blush. Which makes Dave blush.

NO WORLD - TUNNEL ENTRANCES

Good morning Viet-non-world!

All sorts of non-people head into their assigned tunnels.

Ruth walks alongside her regular group of commuters. As the group turns to enter the tunnel, she casually steps the other direction. She watches them leave without her.

She quietly follows a new group into a different tunnel.

INT. DAVE'S OFFICE BUILDING, ELEVATOR - DAY

Dave runs for the elevator. A coworker holds the door. They're both carrying paper lunch bags.

DAVE
Thanks. Burrito? Me too. Happy burrito day.

NO WORLD - TV TOWN - SHRINKER

Ruth tries to act like this is all old hat. She waits in line behind some generic non-people and also recognizable TV personalities, like KELLY RIPA and JASON BATEMAN.

Kelly Ripa steps inside the CYLINDRICAL MECHANISM, not unlike an airport scanner.

The panel walls of the cylinder squeeze in with a SPLAT. Then the top and bottom smash together with a SQUISH.

The pneumatic plates retract. Kelly, exactly the same as before but now ONLY 4 INCHES TALL, walks out of the machine.

INT. DAVE'S OFFICE - DAY

Dave takes off his coat and sits down at his desk. While his computer is booting up, he turns on the TV.

He flips through channels: a Friends rerun, a fishing show, a reality show about yard sales...

TV TOWN - STREET SET - DAY

A tiny, perfectly realistic Minneapolis street.

Shelly the Weatherman waits with his microphone, about to do a man-on-the-street report. He practices the toss to himself.

SHELLY THE WEATHERMAN
-t's right Alex... -t's right Alex.

Behind him, Ruth slowly edges into the shot.

PRODUCER (O.S.)
We're on in five, four, three...

INT. DAVE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Dave flips to Shelly's show. Ruth is there, right behind him.

SHELLY THE WEATHERMAN (ON TV)
-t's right Alex. We're here with
our Tuesday Pickle Challenge..."

From inside the TV, Ruth can see Dave! She's struck with excitement as he unwraps his burrito.

RUTH
Hi!

At that exact moment, Dave's phone RINGS. He MUTES the TV.

DAVE
 (into phone)
 Hello, Dave speaking.

TV TOWN - STREET SET - CONTINUOUS

Shelly mouths his words silently. Ruth is surprised to find no sounds are coming out of her mouth either. It's captioned.

RUTH
 (silent/captioned)
 What gives?

INT. DAVE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Dave isn't even looking at the screen anymore. He puts down his burrito right IN FRONT OF THE TV.

DAVE
 (into phone)
 Oh it's okay. It's a little nostalgic, just receiving a call from you. In a good way.
 (pause)
 Yeah. I was thinking about calling you but I wasn't sure if you wanted me to.

On the TV, Ruth is shouting wordlessly.

SHELLY THE WEATHERMAN
 (silent/captioned)
 Ma'am we're in the middle of a live broadcast here.

Ruth runs up to the glass, staring at the burrito. She bangs with both hands. It makes a little TINK TINK noise.

DAVE
 (into phone)
 You are? I'll come down right now.

Dave hangs up the phone and walks out of the office.

TV TOWN - STREET SET - CONTINUOUS

Ruth watches him go, upset. Shelly is stunned at her outburst. He turns to her menacingly.

SHELLY THE WEATHERMAN
 (silent/captioned)
 Get her out of here!

Ruth takes the hint, and scoots out behind the curtain.

TV TOWN - BACKSTAGE

Disappointed, Ruth walks out of the street set, through the backstage where the non-people actors are patiently waiting, and onto the set of the FISHING SHOW

She walks on top of a lake. Two FISHERMEN in a boat watch her, confused. A fish jumps out the water and she kicks it.

NO WORLD - TV TOWN - UNSHRINKER

Ruth exits a giant black box, the back of Dave's TV.

She unknowingly steps onto a RED PLUS SIGN painted on the ground. A TV TECHNICIAN with a shiny yellow BIKE PUMP CONTRAPTION does a big PUMP.

There's a WHOOSH sound as Ruth's body is INFLATED. She quickly EXPANDS TO HER ORIGINAL SIZE, except her left leg which is still tiny.

It's now clear that she's standing back at:

NO WORLD - TUNNEL ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Balancing on her big leg, she looks down at the tiny TV Tech.

RUTH
 What about the rest of me?

TV TECHNICIAN
 Next!

She hops out of the TV Town and bumps directly into the Administrator. They're both startled.

ADMINISTRATOR
 Ah!

RUTH
 Ah!!

ADMINISTRATOR
 Did you just pop out of TV Town?

RUTH

Oh hi. Yeah, I got lost?

ADMINISTRATOR

You got lost.

RUTH

I-

-Her LEG POPS back into full size, knocking her over.

ADMINISTRATOR

I checked your timecards again and there's no error with the stamper. It's obvious what's going on.

Ruth panics.

ADMINISTRATOR (CONT'D)

Being a blower is too difficult for you. You'll be downgraded to a Semi. It's more basic, strictly far distance background, in crowds and stadiums. Much further from Dave.

RUTH

No! I mean... I just had a tech send me the wrong way. Good tech though. Don't blame the tech.

(aside)

It was a car tech. The short one.

ADMINISTRATOR

Don't worry. Semi's don't even have legs. Without legs there's less room for error all around.

RUTH

But. The thing is. Wait.

ADMINISTRATOR

It's easy. Just report immediately to the Semi Zone, they'll chop off those legs for ya.

Ruth supresses the urge to hyperventilate.

RUTH

Or: my legs work fine. It would be a shame to waste perfectly good legs...right?

ADMINISTRATOR

We recycle everything here.

RUTH

Ha. But also, but, but, it would be a waste of all the good blower training I did do already.

ADMINISTRATOR

I suppose it would take extra time to retrain another blower.

RUTH

Totally up to you. But it seems like the simplest thing is not to remove my legs from my body, but just keep them intact, like so, and keep everything just the way it is.

ADMINISTRATOR

Listen. Every misstep creates a lot of extra work for everyone, but especially me.

RUTH

It won't happen again.

The Administrator considers this for exactly one second.

ADMINISTRATOR

Fine. This conversation has taken way too long. Just do another round of blower training and we'll see if it sorts itself out. This is the very last time.

RUTH

(overwhelmed with terror
and relief)

Ok.

NO WORLD - TRAINING AREA, SIDEWALK

Ruth is back in the same beginner class. The Trainer sits on a park bench, three other BLOWER TRAINEES watch attentively.

WALKING TRAINER

These tubes are our legs. And these tubes, anybody?

BLOWER TRAINEE

Upper legs?

WALKING TRAINER

These are our arms.

The non-people repeat him with "ohhhh" or "aaarms".

WALKING TRAINER (CONT'D)

What are arms good for? They're good for lots of things. Waving hello. Grabbing a door handle. Gently nudging a friend....

Ruth stands behind him, bored out of her mind. She pulls her fingers through her hair and then slowly down across her face, distorting her expression into a SILENT SCREAM.

NO WORLD - GROWER ROOM

A JAUNTY CLASSICAL TUNE plays as we witness the miracle of non-life. We're inside a giant tank, empty except for:

A blob. The beginnings of a face.

An unfinished humanoid, propped up on a steel table.

Blue-gloved hands dig into buckets of blobby body parts.

The hands fly across the frame, squishing the new parts on the body. A human liver, an arm.

A pair of hands pump a set of shiny silver bellows - the body is FLUFFED UP, full of air.

And the final touches - a nose is hooked on, a mouth, and two eyeballs popped in the sockets.

The eyes blink. This is SALLY, a new non-person in her 40's.

INT. DAVE'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - MORNING

Dave is dressed for the day, frying an egg. Daphne walks in from the bedroom wearing Dave's pajama top and no pants.

DAVE

Hope you like 'em scrambled.

She sits at the table. He serves her a plate of eggs.

DAPHNE

This is star treatment. Aren't you having some?

DAVE

I can't be late. New boss starts today.

DAPHNE
Oh right. Yeah, good luck, I bet
she'll love you.

He slides a key across the table.

DAVE
Do you mind locking up on your way
out?

DAPHNE
Is this for me to keep?

DAVE
Only if you want it.

She smiles and gives him a big kiss.

EXT. DAVE'S HOUSE - DAY

Dave drives away. Moments later, Daphne steps outside. She locks the door, then lifts the front step revealing a trapdoor.

She's startled to see Ruth's face looking up at her.

DAPHNE
Ah!

RUTH
Hi! Oh sorry.

Ruth scoots over a little so Daphne can crawl inside.

NO WORLD - TUNNEL - CONTINUOUS

Ruth rushes through the tunnel and catches up to Daphne.

RUTH
Ok well the TV thing didn't work,
the food was there but I was on the
wrong side of the glass! Also I was
very smaller, even smaller than
usual. So then I was thinking, Mom
gets to eat, how about sister? I
could be Dave's sister?

DAPHNE
Dave already has a sister.

RUTH

Ok I thought that might not work so I thought maybe I could be your sister. And we could have a store that sells clothes that Dave likes, and Dave could come over every day and buy clothes, and then we could eat lunch.

DAPHNE

I don't have a sister.

RUTH

But you could. It could be me.

DAPHNE

In fact, it could not. Could you step back a bit, you're giving me tremors.

RUTH

Oh.

DAPHNE

Listen. You can't just decide something to be true. That's not how it works. It has to be true. It has to happen naturally. There has to be a connection.

RUTH

But-

DAPHNE

I'm the girlfriend, you're nobody, that's the way it is.

(then)

Please walk slower or faster. I don't wanna walk with you.

RUTH

Ok.

Ruth slows down. Then she changes her mind and stomps ahead.

RUTH (CONT'D)

I'll walk faster.

INT. SALLY'S OFFICE - DAY

Dave knocks on the open door. Sally, now all put together and human looking, is at her desk. Her office is bigger and nicer than Dave's. She looks burnt out on life.

DAVE

Hello?

Sally looks up and puts on a smile.

SALLY

You look like a Dave.

DAVE

I am Dave!

SALLY

Great to meet you, call me Sally,
which is my first name.

They shake hands.

DAVE

Welcome to the office, I hope
everyone has been nice and making
you feel at home.

SALLY

Yes, and aren't you nice to say
that. Have a seat. Have you lived
here long? In Minneapolis?

DAVE

Not really, only thirty-four years.

Sally almost smiles.

SALLY

I don't know what you've already
heard about me, but I'll give you
the condensed version. I just moved
up here from Chicago. I was at
Ogilvy for a decade.

DAVE

Wow, yeah. I hear Chicago's great.
Sorry, I interrupted.

SALLY

Yeah, well. I just woke up one day
and realized - what was I doing?
Was this how I was supposed to
spend my time on Earth? Chained to
my desk, moving semicolons around a
half page glossy spread? I'm not a
word processor, I'm a human being.

DAVE

Clearly.

SALLY

So long story short, I cashed out, packed up, and here I am. Ada's told me you're very creative and easy to work with, so I'm hoping it's smooth sailing from now until early retirement. How does that sound to you?

DAVE

Oh that sounds good.

SALLY

Dave. Let me tell you something, full disclosure. I've done my time and I'm ready to relax. If you think I'm staying until 10pm, you're thinking of you, not me. If you make it to June I'll make it worth your while. Payday. It ain't my money.

DAVE

I guess this is the land of 10,000 lakes so hopefully I'll be able to find my sea legs.

SALLY

Well ok.

There's an awkward pause.

SALLY (CONT'D)

How about you get me up to speed on the newsletter?

EXT. BASEBALL CARD STORE - DAY

Ruth walks her regular commuter route, but then ducks into the Baseball Card store.

INT. BASEBALL CARD STORE - DAY

Her clubhouse of mundane artifacts. Ruth hurriedly grabs her favorite items - books mostly and stuffs them in her pockets. She tucks a book up each sleeve and two down her pants.

EXT. BASEBALL CARD STORE - DAY

Moments later, she's back on the street and walking like nothing happened.

NO WORLD - TIMECLOCK ROOM

Ruth clocks out. She gives a friendly nod to the Administrator.

NO WORLD - ROLODEX RESTING QUARTERS

Tucked away in her private space with her stacks of stolen books and things, Ruth reads an old copy of "Moby Dick".

RUTH

Poor Queequeg....

She tosses the book aside and picks up another, the rhyming dictionary from the library.

RUTH (CONT'D)

Scheme, dream, seam, ream.

She flips a page.

RUTH (CONT'D)

*Delicious, ambitious, nutritious,
suspicious.*

CUT TO:

Ruth reads "The Sopranos Family Cookbook".

RUTH (CONT'D)

*2 large garlic cloves, finely
chopped. Cook until golden. Stir
in. Two ounces thinly sliced
prosssss-ciutto.*

CUT TO:

She's reading "The Übermensch", a superhero comic.

In the comic: The mustachioed superhero apprehends a criminal on the street. A girl swoons into his arms.

Ruth thinks hard.

EXT. DOWNTOWN MINNEAPOLIS - EVENING

The after-work commute. Non-people go about their business. Ruth waits on a corner, she's watching Dave's office.

She sees him exit his building and springs into action. Ruth pushes down an OLD LADY and steals her purse.

OLD LADY

Ah!

She lunges at a COLLEGE STUDENT walking nearby and shoves the purse into his hands. She takes a step back.

COLLEGE STUDENT

Ow!

RUTH

Stop thief!!

Ruth tackles the college student, yelling fiercely.

RUTH (CONT'D)

POW! BAM!

From down the block, Dave sees the commotion and nonchalantly crosses the street to avoid it.

Ruth easily retrieves the purse from the stunned student and hands it back to the old lady.

RUTH (CONT'D)

Here you go ma'am, I told him to scam. No need to thank me.

She looks around for Dave, but he's not where she expected. She realizes he's across the street - he definitely saw her.

NO WORLD - TIMECLOCK ROOM

Ruth floats towards the clock, pleased with herself, when she is intercepted by the Administrator, flanked by the Old Lady and the College Student. They are not pleased.

OLD LADY

That's her.

RUTH

Oh hi. That was crazy out there, wasn't it?

COLLEGE STUDENT

You're telling me!

ADMINISTRATOR

I'll have to write you up for this. You almost interfered with Dave's life.

RUTH
I didn't, I wasn't. I was way
across the street like my
assignment said.

ADMINISTRATOR
Then why am I hearing complaints
about you?

RUTH
Who me?

Ruth has a big dumb smile on her face.

ADMINISTRATOR
What are you doing? What are you
doing with your face?

RUTH
Nothing.

ADMINISTRATOR
I'm sending you down to Semi level.

RUTH
But no. If anything, the problem is
I'm too advanced. I want to get
Show-er training.

ADMINISTRATOR
Since when are you wanting things?
You'll be sent-

The Administrator sniffs the air.

ADMINISTRATOR (CONT'D)
Wait. I'm getting a message from
Deep Brain.
(final sniff)
You're back in the dream again.

Ruth can barely contain her delight.

ADMINISTRATOR (CONT'D)
I guess you made an impression on
Dave's subconscious. We'll deal
with your retraining later. And
stop doing that with your face.

Ruth tries her best to stop smiling.

DREAM - DRIVE IN MOVIE - NIGHT

Dave and Daphne are cuddling on the bench seat of an old car. All around them are the Dream Technicians, moving and changing things to achieve dream-like object impermanence.

Ruth, with a concessions tray over her shoulder, walks between the rows of cars. She's looking for Dave.

RUTH
Popcorn, candy, snacks. Uh,
burgers, pinwheels, bananas.

DAVE
Do you want anything?

DAPHNE
Maybe some wax lips.

They smooch.

Ruth spots Dave's car. She rushes over and interrupts them.

RUTH
Hi, I'm the hero from the street.
Do you want to be my girlfriend?

DAVE
You've gotta be kidding. Can I get
some jujubes?

Two Dream Technicians seamlessly slide Daphne out of the car window. Simultaneously another two Techs hoist up Ruth and plop her through the moonroof, landing right next to Dave.

A tech gently lifts Ruth's arm and places it around Dave.

RUTH
This is me very close to you now.

DAVE
I like what you've done with your
hair.

Ruth's hair has been dream-teched into a big cotton candy. She feels it, "how fun!", and they each take a bite.

Ruth notices something below Dave's belt. She jumps up, terrified.

DAVE (CONT'D)
Oh no.

RUTH

What is that?

A giant, cartoon-like phallus is jutting out against his khakis, a HUGE PANTS TENT. It swings at her head. She ducks.

It SMASHES through the roof of the car. The car SPLITS OPEN like a pistachio shell and falls apart around them.

The Technicians dart around, moving in walls and furniture until they've changed the setting to:

DREAM - DAVE'S OFFICE - CONT

Dave is swiveling his hips trying and failing to avoid Ruth with his huge inflated pants phallus. She swats it away.

RUTH

What are you going to do with that thing?

DAVE

Be my girlfriend.

He not-quite-accidentally bops it on her head. Ruth is freaking out.

RUTH

Ah! I don't want it!

With a flourish of TRUMPETS, Sally is carted in on a dolly.

SALLY

Cocktail weenie?

She feeds Dave a small pickle. He coughs.

DAVE

That was spicier than I was expecting.

Dave bats her with his willy. She playfully bops it back. It swings across the room, knocking over a stack of files and a potted plant.

SALLY

I'm going to need you to do all the work, and I'm going to take all the credit.

DAVE

Whatever you say, Sally. You're the boss.

Ruth cowers away from the dong.

RUTH
Yeah Sally, you're the boss.

SALLY
Don't you forget it, baby boy.

DAVE
Sally, oooh la la. Sally!

Sally pulls his pants tent until it is long, like a rope.

Ruth is relieved to be out of the hot seat, but she can't look away from Dave and Sally. She slowly backs out of the room, confused and grossed out.

Sally jumps Double Dutch over Dave's now two long dongs. (A Dream Tech expertly handles the other end of the "jump rope")

INT. DAVE'S CAR - DAY

Dave yanks the parking break. He smiles: another great morning. He hops out.

NO WORLD - ASSIGNMENT DESK

Ruth is on line to get an assignment. She puts on a cool, calm and collected demeanor as she's called up.

ASSIGNMENT TECHNICIAN
You're not on this list. The Semi desk is right over there.

He points to another desk where there's a long line of SEMI NON-PEOPLE being carted around on a long wagon. They only have bodies from the waist up, their faces are blank, their outfits have no detail. They're basically vegetables.

ASSIGNMENT TECHNICIAN (CONT'D)
And I'll have someone escort you to get those legs chopped off.

RUTH
Oh, that's funny. No, I don't belong there. Look how much detail I have.

ASSIGNMENT TECHNICIAN
(hesitantly)
You are a little more lively than the a regular Semi.

RUTH
Can you double check?

ASSIGNMENT TECHNICIAN
But that's extra work for me.

RUTH
Or you could just let me go in.
That would be the easiest thing.

ASSIGNMENT TECHNICIAN
Yes, let's always do the easiest
thing.

The assignment tech hands her a BLOWER TIMECARD. Ruth takes it, no big deal, but then when she's turned away let's out a big sigh of relief.

She charges toward the tunnel. A lady with a plan.

EXT. DAVE'S OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

Dave crosses the plaza and into his office building.

Moments later, Ruth zips around a corner and follows him in.

INT. DAVE'S OFFICE BUILDING, LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Ruth bursts into the building just as the elevator doors close on Dave. She freezes. This is new territory.

The lobby clears out as the other non-people exit through trapdoors. Ruth approaches the elevator, confused.

Ruth gently knocks on the steel door. Nothing happens.

RUTH
Sally? Boss Sally?

She nervously knocks again, a bit louder.

The doors open. Amazing! She walks in.

INT. ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

Ruth is pleased with herself until the doors close behind her. She's trapped in this thing. She starts knocking on all the walls, touching everything, except, somehow, the buttons.

INT. DAVE'S OFFICE BUILDING, LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Ruth manages to pry open the elevator and let herself out, finally! The lobby is empty now.

CUT TO:

THE STAIRWELL

Ruth shuffles up the stairs. She reaches the second floor and takes a moment to compose herself.

She opens the door. There's nobody there. Empty floor. Womp.

CUT TO:

She runs up to the next floor, again composes herself, and opens the door... Nobody. Womp. Womp.

CUT TO:

Next floor, she bursts right in... This floor is full of office chairs and a CHAIR GUY who is making them "worn in" with his butt.

CUT TO:

Ruth is exhausted from hiking all the way to the 17th floor, but she's as determined as ever. She takes a deep breath, stands up straight and opens the door to...

INT. DAVE'S OFFICE, HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Finally, the real office! There are sounds of light chatter, phones, a copy machine. Ruth wipes the sweat off her forehead and tiptoes in, checking to see if anybody saw her. Clear.

She passes an OFFICE WORKER in the kitchen, tossing an orange up and down, mumble-speaking gibberish aloud.

She passes Dave & Ada's office, where Ada is standing alone, blankly, holding the phone while she touch-types.

RUTH

Sally?

Ada frowns. Ruth goes two more down. A whiteboard outside the office reads "Happy Birthday Sally!" with a doodle of a giraffe with it's tongue out.

INT. OFFICE HALLWAY, OUTSIDE CONFERENCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Dave holds the door open for Sally as they both exit the conference room. They walk and talk.

SALLY

Well that was a disaster. Dave, next time you get an email from those guys just send it straight up to Barbara. We are not dealing with those clowns.

DAVE

Uh, ok. For what it's worth, I didn't really get such-

SALLY

What time is? I've got a lunch meeting with a Skype date in Waukegan.

Dave looks at his watch, but Sally has walked into her office and closed the door before he can answer.

DAVE

It's twelve twenty-six.

INT. SALLY'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Sally, now alone in her office, drops her disgruntled attitude. She waits a beat and then pulls down a trapdoor from a ceiling panel, unfolding a set of stairs.

Just then, Ruth hops out from behind her desk.

RUTH

Sally, Boss Sally?

SALLY

(startled)

Ah!

RUTH

Did I scare you? Sorry.

SALLY

Yeesh.

RUTH

Do you remember me? From the dream?

SALLY

Oh yeah. Hey that was fun, I like getting to ad lib. Well see ya.

Sally starts to climb out through the ceiling.

RUTH

Wait, can I talk to you?

Sally pops her head back down.

SALLY

Why?

INT. CEILING TRAPDOOR IN SALLY'S OFFICE - DAY

Minutes later, Sally and Ruth are sitting on the stairwell to No-World, with their feet dangling from the ceiling of the office and the empty tunnel hallway behind them.

RUTH

What if you could do stuff like that all the time? Not just in dreams?

SALLY

But I can't.

RUTH

But what if you just *did*. There's a lot you can do since you're so close to Dave.

Sally is thinking it over.

SALLY

I don't think so. Can I?

RUTH

I think so. Like if you had Dave in for a lunch meeting, you would get to eat lunch.

SALLY

What would I eat?

RUTH

Anything. I'm not sure. Spaghetti with meatballs? Veal parmigiana?

SALLY

Hot fudge sundae.

RUTH

Now we're talkin'. That's a food? Right. If Dave has some "hot fun sunny" you can reach over and have some too.

SALLY

No, that'd be too close for the boss. The boss doesn't do that.

RUTH

Oh right. Of course.

Ruth has no idea.

SALLY

You learn these kinds of things in Show-er training. Things you do and things you don't really do. And things you definitely don't do.

RUTH

Definitely.

SALLY

Anyway, bye.

Sally starts to get up.

RUTH

Wait!

SALLY

Ok.

She sits back down.

RUTH

What if you were more than the boss?

SALLY

But I'm the boss and that's what I am. I'm the boss. I'm Sally.

RUTH

But what if you were more? You got called into his dream because you have a connection. Didn't you like it?

Sally is perplexed. It's blowing her non-mind.

SALLY

Did I like it? I did like it.

RUTH

He definitely liked it. You can work with that. You could get close to him, and when you're close to Dave there's more to see and smell and look at.

SALLY

And feel.

RUTH

And it has to happen naturally. But then, you could do lots of things. Swimming, ping pong, you could look at a dog.

Ruth feels awkward about this part.

RUTH (CONT'D)

You could do the, the touching things you were doing in the dream.

SALLY

I could be his girlfriend.

RUTH

Yes. I think so.

SALLY

I could get a vagina installed.

RUTH

If that's what you want to do.

Sally considers the situation for an excessively long time.

SALLY

Is that what you're trying to do? Be his girlfriend?

RUTH

Me? No. Ha Ha. No. I just want to be not nobody. I could be your friend.

SALLY

Yeah...

RUTH

Yeah? Yes? Really?

SALLY
Sure. I think we can be friends.
I'm thinkin'...

FADE TO:

INT. PAINT FACTORY - DAY

A PUFF OF DRY PIGMENT BURSTS PINK INTO THE AIR.

Another puff, this one is BRIGHT YELLOW.

There are colors cascading on conveyor belts in every direction. A giant vat of green paint gurgles and splashes as it is mixed. It looks like magma erupting in ancient Earth.

Giant rotating cylinders flatten the yellow paint. A hand in a work glove touches the mixture, it has the texture of clay.

The hand belongs to Dave. He shows the paint sample to three CORPORATE CLIENTS. Sally is there too.

The room is loud, we can't hear what they're all saying as they continue on the tour of the factory.

DAVE
(Shouting over the din)
And here we get the final stage,
the gallons are filled by weight
and the lid is stamped on by 300
PSIs of pneumatic pressure. You see
that piece there, the stamper?
(pause for effect)
We call that Sasquatch.

The clients laugh. Sally is lost in thought, looking at Dave's crotch.

INT. PAINT FACTORY EXIT - DAY

Dave hands each client paint chip samples. Sally shakes everyone's hands and the clients leave.

DAVE
How do you think that went?

SALLY
Do you drink, Dave?

EXT. COCKTAIL BAR - NIGHT

A classier joint than Dave's usual haunt. Dave parks his car.

INT. COCKTAIL BAR - NIGHT

Dave's a little bit dressed up.

DAVE
(to hostess)
I'm going to be two, please.

HOSTESS
Right this way.

NO WORLD - ASSIGNMENT DESK

Sally confidently leads Ruth up to the assignment desk. Ruth looks a little timid.

ASSIGNMENT TECHNICIAN
You'll enter in the taxi at 8:37pm,
and return anywhere within three
blocks, anytime between eleven and
midnight.

The Assignment Tech hands Sally her timecard.

ASSIGNMENT TECHNICIAN (CONT'D)
Who's this?

SALLY
She's with me.

The Assignment Tech hands Ruth a timecard too. Ruth tries to be cool about it, but she's clearly pumped.

ASSIGNMENT TECHNICIAN
(with major shade)
Is that what you're wearing?

NO WORLD - WARDROBE ROOM

Ruth and Sally are alone in front of the endless clothes rack, trying on different outfits and chatting. Sally's in a gown. Ruth is in mechanics coveralls.

SALLY
Is this right? I haven't been
dressed for nighttime yet?

RUTH
Ooh straps!

CUT TO:

Sally's in a cocktail dress. Ruth steps out in a new look.

RUTH (CONT'D)
This is so soft! My regular clothes
are never this soft.

SALLY
That's a bathrobe.

CUT TO:

Sally's in a sexy dress. Ruth's in a mariachi jacket.

SALLY (CONT'D)
I wonder if I'm going to do kissing
with him right away.

RUTH
I don't get how any of that stuff
works.

SALLY
It's just sucking lips and licking
tongues. I had to do it for photos
with my late husband.
(then)
How much time do we have?

The wardrobe tech, who's been there waiting, chimes in.

WARDROBE TECHNICIAN
You have about five Dave Seconds
until your assignment starts.

SALLY
Oh that's plenty of time. I'm gonna
try these hot rollers.

EXT. COCKTAIL BAR - NIGHT

A taxi pulls up.

INT. TAXI - CONTINUOUS

The taxi is parked over a trapdoor. Sally and Ruth crawl into
the cab and then out onto the street. They're all dolled up.

EXT. COCKTAIL BAR NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Through the window, Dave is exactly where we left him, about to sit down at the table for two.

INT. COCKTAIL BAR - CONTINUOUS

Dave stands to greet Sally. Ruth trails shyly.

DAVE

Hi there. Wow, you look really-

SALLY

Don't you clean up nice. Oh there's the gang.

Behind him, there's a table of SALLY'S FRIENDS waiting.

SALLY (CONT'D)

Hi gang. Dave, you sit next to me.

She and Dave take the two empty seats. Ruth drags over a stool.

SALLY (CONT'D)

That's Tom, we went to school together, his wife Cheryl, Linda and Roy, from my tennis club. Everyone this is Dave.

Dave shakes hands around the table. He ends on Ruth, who is extremely nervous - she's never seen Dave up close before!

RUTH

(too loud)

Hi!

DAVE

Hey there. Let me guess, you two play on the same water polo team?

Ruth looks to Sally for help.

SALLY

Who, us? I can't believe I haven't mentioned her before. We're old besties from way, way back in the day. Basically she's the reason I moved up here. My rock.

RUTH

Best rocks forever.

DAVE

Great to meet you, what was your name?

Sally looks at Ruth, panicked. Nobody has ever asked Ruth's name before.

RUTH

Call me Ruth.

DAVE

Ruth. Dave.

They shake hands. Ruth doesn't know how to do it, she grabs his whole hand.

The WAITRESS comes over. Ruth digs into the menu.

WAITRESS

Hi guys, can I get you started with any drinks?

SALLY

I'll take a vodka martini, bring it in a regular lowball glass please. Or else I'll knock it all over the table and you'll have to get me a second one.

WAITRESS

Of course. Sir?

DAVE

I'm not quite as hardcore as you. I'll have an aperol spritz.

The waitress comes around to Ruth's side.

SALLY

Dave tell me honestly, did you pick that because it's a pink drink?

DAVE

You got me.

WAITRESS

(to Ruth)

And for you miss?

RUTH

Wow there are so many choices. I don't know what to pick. Everything sounds so good. I guess I'll take the Courcage Fey.

WAITRESS

Which one? Oh that's the corkage fee. It's actually not a drink.

RUTH

That sounds great!

The waitress looks around the table for help. Nada. They're all busy talking.

WAITRESS

Can I start you off with drink?
Drink for you? What can I get started for ya?

RUTH

Uh, how about the... that one.

She points to someone else's cocktail.

WAITRESS

(dryly)
Great choice.

The waitress leaves. Ruth breathes a sigh of relief. She takes a look around, amazed at every detail.

She touches her water glass - cold! She tries to grab the table candle. Yikes, it's hot!

Meanwhile Sally and Dave are giggling and having a nice time.

The waitress returns with the drinks. Ruth sniffs it, takes a sip. It's gross.

INT. COCKTAIL BAR - NIGHT

Dave gets up to get another round. Ruth and Sally sidebar.

RUTH

It's been 49 minutes! I've never been around for this long in one stretch before. How long do you think we can make this last?

SALLY

I wonder what he looks like under that tie. He's really got a body, you know?

RUTH

I like the smell of the hot meat.

SALLY
I feel funny. This is fun.

RUTH
We're having fun!

Dave catches Sally's eye from the bar. He's seeing her in a new light.

EXT. COCKTAIL BAR - NIGHT

Dave, Sally and Ruth step out into the fresh night air. Sally's friends wave goodbye and grab a cab.

DAVE
(a bad smell)
Ooph! Is that a skunk?

Sally steps plants a big kiss on Dave. He's way into it.

SALLY
We should keep this on the hush
hush at the office. I can't give
you any special treatment.

DAVE
No, of course not.

He kisses her. They lose their balance and it turns into a full on make out session.

Ruth stands a few feet away, relishing the evening breeze. She gazes at all the lights in the city. Is this heaven?

NO WORLD - TIMECLOCK ROOM

Sally is getting a talking to from the Administrator, who hovers a foot in the air. Literally talking down to her.

ADMINISTRATOR
Your assignment was to come into
work with a hangover. Nowhere were
you instructed to invite Dave to
the source of the hangover.

SALLY
That was specifically approved by
my trainer.

ADMINISTRATOR

And that kiss? Yes, we know about it. Deep Brain has been replaying it all night.

SALLY

I followed the logic of the evening.

Behind them, Ruth punches her timecard. She's eavesdropping.

ADMINISTRATOR

It means we'll all be scrambling, as I'm sure you know. And I'm sure you know we don't prefer scrambling.

SALLY

Everything I did out there was well within parameters.

ADMINISTRATOR

(re: Ruth)

And how did she end up in the mix?

Ruth looks up like "who me?".

SALLY

Do I need to justify every choice I make out there? Are you trying to make this extra difficult?

ADMINISTRATOR

That's just categorically incorrect. I am here explicitly to keep difficulties at zero.

(then)

She has not had Show-er training. She needs the appropriate training before that kind of proximity.

SALLY

Well that sounds easy enough.

Ruth is VERY excited at the prospect of new training.

ADMINISTRATOR

I guess she's your friend now.

UPBEAT MUSIC kicks in and carries us into...

EXT. RIVERWALK STREET FAIR - DAY

Dave and Sally lick ice cream cones as they stroll through the fair. They're with a group of friends, including Ruth, who is eating an ENORMOUS SUNDAE while she walks.

INT. ITALIAN RESTAURANT - NIGHT

On a double date with Dave, Sally, and Dave's college buddy, RUTH TRIES SPAGHETTI.

INT. BRAZILIAN RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Ruth, Dave and Sally at Tom and Cheryl's anniversary dinner. A waiter cuts another piece of BRAZILIAN STEAK for Ruth. She's obviously very full, but takes a bite.

RUTH

Ah. I'm full of salt.

EXT. NATURE TRAIL - DAY

Sally and Dave are on a group hike with a NATURE GUIDE. They're sweating and feeling alive.

DAVE

Look at that hawk!

SALLY

Where? Wow!

Ruth is thirty feet behind them on her hands and knees intently watching some ants.

INT. MOVIE THEATER - NIGHT

Sally sits between Ruth and Dave. The lights dim. Ruth is a little scared.

RUTH

(whispering)

I didn't realize it'd be so dark.

SALLY

(whispering)

These are just previews. It won't be scary.

Sally holds her hand. Ruth blushes.

Dave grabs a big bite of popcorn. Movie time!

NO WORLD - PARK CAFE TRAINING AREA

In the middle of a void are a park bench, a tree, a little path - just enough details to make it resemble a city park.

Ruth is at a cafe table practicing basic human behavior with the Restaurant Trainer.

RESTAURANT TRAINER

I want you to feel safe, there's no wrong answers here. If you say something strange, that's ok. Humans are strange. The message from Deep Brain is that Dave finds you peculiar, which gives you even more wiggle room.

Ruth is very excited to be here.

RUTH

OK.

RESTAURANT TRAINER

The easiest way to do it, when you're first learning to converse with Dave, is to make up something that

(air quotes)
"you want".

RUTH

Uh huh.

RESTAURANT TRAINER

That's a stumbling block for a lot of new Show-er's. What does wanting feel like? See, the way I usually try to understand-

RUTH

-I want to touch a squirrel.

The trainer cocks his head.

EXT. DAVE'S HOUSE - DAY

Moving Day. Ruth helps Sally carry a dresser into Dave's house. Dave is on the floor, plugging in their new TV.

He crawls out from under the Entertainment Center and flips on the TV. Shelly the Weatherman is on.

DAVE

Nice.

SALLY

No. I want it over there.

DAVE

You're the boss.

The phone RINGS.

DAVE (CONT'D)

I'll get it.
(picks up)
Hello?

Dave not-so-casually moves into the bathroom to talk.

DAVE (CONT'D)

Oh hi. How's it goin'?

Ruth puts down a heavy box near the TV. Shelly the weatherman looks up at her from inside the screen.

SHELLY THE WEATHERMAN (ON TV)

Get away from me, ya huge bitch.

Ruth FLICKS the glass right in Shelly's face. He jumps back.

INT. DAVE'S HOUSE, BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Dave is awkwardly tucked in the bathroom, talking quietly.

DAVE

Yeah, it's been a while yet. I've been meaning to call. So, thing is actually, that, I've been seeing somebody and I-

(listening)

Yeah, and I realized that while, you and I had reconnected as friends, I also didn't want to add complications for-

(listening)

Yes, well I guess I always thought of us as friends first. Which I still hope-

NO WORLD - YELLOW PHONE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Close up on Daphne, on the phone to Dave, holding back tears.

DAPHNE

-I just thought we had a good thing going again, you know. I thought maybe this time, we were being good to each other. I'm just... I mean we sleep together for 7 months and then just nothing. You're making me sound crazy! I mean when did this change for you?

DAVE (O.S.)

Oh yeah sure. Sure. Oh Daphne, I am sorry.

(he quiets himself)

I'm so sorry. Really I'm sorry. I should have gotten in touch sooner.

Daphne's on a big, red Dr. Seuss looking phone, connected to a long, red pole sprouting from the nebulous floor.

DAPHNE

Are you with her right now?

(beat)

Oh! Oh! Ok. Really, I'm sorry to bother you.

DAVE (O.S.)

Please don't be mad.

DAPHNE

Don't tell me how to feel.

DAVE (O.S.)

No no. That's not what I meant. It's just that it was all unexpected and I didn't quite know how to handle it, to be honest. I'm excited that we reconnected and I consider you to be a true friend.

DAPHNE

Oh course, Dave. Glad to be your FRIEND. Hey, I'll see ya around I guess... Sorry-

Daphne is about to burst into tears. She hangs up.

As soon as she slams down the phone, her emotions do an immediate 180. She's as happy as a clam. She springs into the air and clicks her heels together.

As she leaves the phone area, she passes ELAINE, Dave's mom.

ELAINE
How'd you take it?

DAPHNE
Like a champ.

The phone rings.

NO WORLD - TRAINING AREA, STREET SET

Ruth is working with the Show-er Restaurant Trainer.

RESTAURANT TRAINER
OK. Conflict. How do you react. How
have you reacted in previous
conflicts. There are lots of ways.
Let's try rapid fire—
(pointing to nothing)
There's a dad being mean to his kid
over there!

Ruth "rapid fire" responds.

RUTH
Hello.

RESTAURANT TRAINER
You don't have to limit yourself.
You can respond to the conflict
directly. You can hide, which is
Dave's preference. But no matter
what, you should have some
emotional precedence, something
from your "past" that informs your
behavior.

RUTH
(shouting)
Stop that reekitizin'!

The trainer looks at his notebook.

RESTAURANT TRAINER
That's not on any of our lists.

RUTH
I made it up.

RESTAURANT TRAINER
Well obviously you can't just make
up a word.

(MORE)

RESTAURANT TRAINER (CONT'D)

(then)

Let's pivot to non-verbal
communication.

INT. DAVE'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - DAY

Ruth is hanging out on the carpet with Cookie the dog, all smiles. Sally and Dave come out of their room with suitcases.

DAVE

(to Cookie)

Are you gonna miss me, Cookie? Are
you gonna? Are you gonna?

Dave kneels down and aggressively plays with Cookie. Cookie is very excited.

SALLY

Don't get her all riled up. She'll
pee.

Instead Dave amps up his dog antics, scratching her belly.

DAVE

(doggie talk)

A buhbuhbuhduhduh. A bububududu.

SALLY

(to Ruth)

Thanks again for dog sitting.

(to Dave)

Dave! We're going to be late.

DAVE

(wrestling with Cookie)

Cookie! Cookie! Cookie! Uh oh,
she's peeing.

SALLY

Dave! It's the same every time.

RUTH

It's fine! It's fine! I got it. You
guys go.

DAVE

Ok, sorry Ruth, there's paper
towels under the sink.

SALLY

See you in a week!

Dave and Sally get out the door.

Moments later Cookie stops being cute. She stands on her hind legs, gives Ruth a salute with her little paw, and walks through a small trapdoor in the radiator.

RUTH

See you in a week, Cookie.

Still, Ruth is happy she got to pet a dog at all.

NO WORLD - TRAINING AREA

The ORCHESTRAL SCORE SWELLS as Ruth DANCES around the training area with unadulterated joy.

She STAMPS past a group learning to push a stroller while talking on the phone. Nobody pays her any mind.

She LEAPS from one boulder to another, while a BOULDER TECHNICIAN sticks on the granite-pattern wallpaper.

She GLIDES through a cascade of colorful autumn leaves that are being blown toward a tunnel.

She SCAMPERS under the legs of non-people learning to sneeze. The SCORE HITS A FINAL CHORD. Ruth strikes a pose and then there's a big AH-CHOO!

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Sally is a sloppy drunk.

SALLY

Woo!

Ruth is laughing along. It's freezing out. Dave trails behind them. He's ready to call it a night.

Sally stops at a brick wall.

SALLY (CONT'D)

Ok here's good, yeah, yeah.

RUTH

Here?

DAVE

We could go back to the lounge, they'll let you in.

SALLY

(ignoring Dave)

Yeah, yeah cover me.

Ruth spreads out her arms, using her coat to hide Sally while she crouches and pees on the wall.

DAVE

Oh come on, you're going to get arrested.

RUTH

It's getting on your feet.

DAVE

We're too old for this.

SALLY

Speak for yourself!

RUTH

It's coming toward my feet.

Sally zips up.

DAVE

Can we go home now?

SALLY

I think Dave needs a drink.

DAVE

Yeah. A glass of warm milk.

The women drag him down the block.

INT. DIVE BAR - NIGHT

It's very late. All of the sane people have gone home for the night. Dave is drunk and barely awake, sprawled in a booth.

Sally and Ruth are on the dance floor, drunkenly professing their best friendship over the loud music.

RUTH

No, you're the best. I was always so intimidated by you --

SALLY

Shut up, you're the coolest. I was so nervous about being your friend!

RUTH

You, it's you who are so impressive! You have such a fancy job and...

Dave rests his head on his shoulder and FALLS ASLEEP.

The MUSIC DIPS, the LIGHTS GO SOFT AND GREY. A WEIRDO in the corner stops swaying her hips. The BARTENDER opens his NO-WORLD HATCH behind the bar, ready to peace out.

RUTH (CONT'D)

Hey!

SALLY

He's not asleep. Dave, wake up!

She shakes him awake.

The MUSIC SPEEDS BACK UP. The weirdo gets back into swaying like a sad creep. The bartender closes the hatch.

Dave sits up totally dazed, but maintains his sense of humor.

DAVE

What happened. I'm awake.

SALLY

Party's still going babe.

RUTH

Party babe.

DAVE

(being cute)

I'm so tirrorred.

Ruth thinks it's hilarious. Sally joins her on the "dance floor" and starts flinging her hair like a wild man. Ruth is just hopping up and down, almost to the beat. Party time!

Dave nods off again. The MUSIC DIPS, LIGHTS SHIFT. Weirdo is paused. Bartender is halfway into his hatch.

SALLY

No nononono.

This time she picks him up under the armpits. His eyes open and EVERYTHING COMES BACK IN FULL SWING. The bartender, slightly perturbed, shuts the hatch again.

Sally gets Dave on his feet and starts dancing with him. She's basically puppeteering him. He's loopy, but smiling.

DAVE

Salsaaaaaaaaaaaa.

INT. DAVE'S HOUSE, BEDROOM - NIGHT

Dave is fast asleep, BREATHING LOUDLY. Sally lies next to him, wide awake, frazzled in that 4AM kind of way.

She tiptoes out of bed.

NO WORLD - ROLODEX RESTING QUARTERS

Ruth is writing in a blank "The Miracle of Life" book that she's repurposed as a journal. There's a KNOCK KNOCK.

Ruth opens her drawer to find a red eyed Sally.

SALLY

Can I come in?

Ruth makes room. Sally squeezes in.

RUTH

Rough night?

SALLY

He just keeps breathing.

Sally closes her eyes. Ruth gets back to journaling, happy.

INT. DAVE'S MOM'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

DAVE (O.S.)

(whisper shouting)

Now, Sally, now!

Sally flips off the lights while throwing back a cocktail.

Grandma enters with a giant cake, with birthday candles. The room is packed with toddlers and parents.

EVERYONE

(singing)

Happy Birthday...

The cake is set in front of the oblivious two year old. The candle illuminates his face. All eyes on him.

Ruth, standing by Sally, is enchanted by the scene. She watches him intently, yearning.

Sally pours herself another drink.

INT/EXT. DAVE'S CAR - NIGHT

Dave drives. Sally's in the passenger seat, completely zoned out. Ruth is in the back.

RUTH

What if the thing you're trying to name isn't just one color. There's shapes and tones and the way the light bends around it.

DAVE

I guess I kind of like take all that stuff, texture, mood, and all that, of a pigment and then simplify it into one simple thing, a name. So people can refer to it as easily as possible. And buy it and paint their house with it. But that's really a small part of my job, I mostly write copy for the catalogue.

RUTH

Simpler? But why? Why reduce when you could expand?

SALLY

He's a simple man, Ruth.

RUTH

Like, I was thinking about the candles on Quinn's birthday cake. They had this glow, it wasn't exactly orange. It was warm. Not just because it was on fire. It was this glow radiating from all of the family singing and loving and focusing their attention on him because it was his special moment.

DAVE

Maybe it seems like that when you're a little kid. But then you get older and you learn you're not special, and nobody is thinking about you.

Sally sighs heavily.

RUTH

Sally?

She reaches out and touches Sally's shoulder. Sally flashes Ruth a smile, then returns to her dead eyed stare.

RUTH (CONT'D)
Maybe I'd call that color
fantoosha.

NO WORLD - TIMECLOCK ROOM

Sally clocks out. The administrator floats up behind her.

ADMINISTRATOR
(to Sally)
You, report to the Grower Zone for
aging.

SALLY
Really? Are you sure?

ADMINISTRATOR
Really. The order from Deep Brain
is to prep you for the next 15-25
years on this thread.

SALLY
But we've only been dating a few
months. That's a helluva
commitment.

ADMINISTRATOR
Dave's not likely to change course.
You may have noticed, he likes his
routines.

Sally is visibly shaken, like a criminal defendant hearing her sentence.

SALLY
15 to 25 years.

ADMINISTRATOR
Before you go: there have been
reports that you're acting a bit
erratically in there. It would be
nice if you could adhere to your
training from here on out.
(unshakable eye contact)
No more fartin' around.

NO WORLD - MAIN AREA - CONTINUOUS

Sally slinks out of the timeclock room. Behind her Ruth is sitting crosslegged, waiting.

RUTH

Hey. I'm here. Because I waited. So we could walk together.

She catches up to Sally and puts her arm around her. Sally does the same.

They walk together, passing through multicolored light beams and crossing shadows. They are silhouettes, climbing the arc of a jumbled-up rainbow.

EXT. RIVERSIDE PALISADE PARK - DAY

A perfect spring day, the late afternoon sun sparkles on the river. Across a grassy lawn, Dave is walking Cookie the dog.

Ruth and Sally, both in nice dresses, are sitting on a bench. Sally looks completely detached.

RUTH

Gorgeous. Don't you love sunsets? It's got every color.

SALLY

There's no green.

RUTH

...if you squint.
(then)

I just feel like things are finally going the way I want. I get to have it all: emotional depth, distinct flavor profiles, all the smells, things at different focal distances for my eyes, a dog I get to pet at least three times a month-

SALLY

Yeah, I think I'm done.

RUTH

Sorry I didn't mean to rattle on.

SALLY

Yeah, I'm gonna go back to not doing this.

RUTH
What?

SALLY
See ya.

She starts to walk away. Ruth runs after her.

RUTH
Wait, I thought you liked it here.

SALLY
This was an ok experiment but nah
I'm done.

RUTH
You can't just leave though. You're
in Dave's life. It doesn't make any
sense.

SALLY
So I'll break up with him. I can go
back to being his boss and only
alive 40 hours a week.

Ruth starts getting short of breath.

RUTH
But he'll be devastated. He really
cares about you. You're the love of
his life.

SALLY
I don't know what I was thinking.
Dave... is... maddening. He has
nothing to say. He has no
personality. He's an empty
cavernous void that is sucking me
into oblivion.

RUTH
But but but on the other hand, you
get to do all the good stuff.
Talking and dancing and that sex,
uh, sex stuff. Then you could have
a kid and watch him grow up.

SALLY
Sex, hmm, yeah. I tried it, I liked
it... I think I'm going to pass.

Dave peers at them from a distance. He waves. Sally smiles
genuinely and waves back.

SALLY (CONT'D)
I'll just do it right now, you can watch.

She walks towards him. Ruth follows, hustling and hyperventilating.

RUTH
Wait!

SALLY
What?

RUTH
If you leave him, what happens to us? We'll never see each other again.

This gives Sally pause. Ruth gets quiet, she's discovering what she's feeling as she articulates it.

RUTH (CONT'D)
There will never be a reason for us to spend time together. We'll just be nobody again. I mean, I'm not in love with Dave either but I'm doing it because I want to be here with you. We're in this together.

SALLY
Yeah...

RUTH
Don't break up with Dave, or it all goes away.

Sally cracks. She softens.

SALLY
Oh Ruth, of course.

They hug.

EXT. RIVERSIDE PALISADE PARK - CONTINUOUS

Sally and Ruth walk over to Dave. As we get closer we see he's in a very nice suit. The dog is wearing a bowtie.

DAVE
Ready?

SALLY
One last thing.

She grabs him and passionately kisses him.

DAVE
That's bad luck.

They are so in love. Dave steps away. Sally wipes his spit off her face.

A piano starts playing a BEATLES LOVE SONG. Sally picks up a bouquet that's resting on a bench. She turns around a hedge.

It's their wedding.

EXT. OUTDOOR WEDDING - CONTINUOUS

There are about 20 guests in folding chairs. At the end of the aisle, Dave is waiting with his mom and a LADY OFFICIANT. Cookie the dog is the ring bearer. They all stand for Sally.

Ruth, still freaked out from their talk, joins the other bridesmaids. She looks at Dave's kind, smiling face.

Sally heads down the aisle.

EXT. RIVERSIDE PALISADE PARK - DAY

The party is bumpin. Everyone's eating shrimp.

Sally and Dave pose for wedding photos. Sally is ecstatically happy. A little too happy?

PHOTOGRAPHER
How about a cute one.

Dave wraps his arms around Sally, almost a chokehold.

PHOTOGRAPHER (CONT'D)
As long as you both shall live.

Ruth catches a glimpse of Sally's deranged smile. Oh no.

PHOTOGRAPHER (CONT'D)
Let's get mom in there, groom and his mommy.

Sally, grinning like a banshee, steps aside next to Ruth.

RUTH
Next we'll have champagne. Your favorite.

SALLY
Gotta kill him.

RUTH
What?

Sally smiles warmly at a wedding guest.

RUTH (CONT'D)
Sally.

SALLY
I've gotta put everyone out of
their misery. I mean look at him.
Even his mom hates him.

Dave and his mom are being lovely and endearing as they pose
for their picture.

RUTH
You can't do that!
(hushing herself)
You can't do that.

SALLY
I'm the only one who can do it.
Nobody else.

Dave comes over, happy as can be.

DAVE
I think that's enough photos. I'm
pretty sure we'll remember the
occasion!

Sally laughs, oh so genuine.

DAVE (CONT'D)
What I would like now is to take my
beautiful bride up on that hill and
watch the sunset.

Sally takes his arm.

RUTH
No! It's getting dark soon, might
be a bad idea.

SALLY
Bride and groom only, Ruth.

Sally and Dave walk off up the wooded path, giggling.

Ruth is left standing there. The rest of the guests stop dancing and instead stand motionless staring into space making abstract mouth sounds.

Ruth takes a look around at all the zombie-like non-people, then breaks out into a full sprint into the woods.

EXT. CLIFFSIDE HIKING TRAIL - SUNSET

Dave and Sally hike easily up the hill.

DAVE

These are pine. This one here, is a fir. You know how I can tell? It's-

SALLY

Ooh this is a nice rock.

She picks up a big rock to see how heavy it is.

DAVE

You're really into rocks today.

SALLY

Nah.

She tosses it down.

DAVE

Anyway, if a twig bears needles in groups of two, three, or five, you can safely call it a pine. But if -

He stops because Sally has wandered off the path. She is pulling at a huge stick.

DAVE (CONT'D)

Sweetheart? Whatcha doing there?

She swings the stick a few times in practice. Then decides to drop it when she finds an even bigger rock.

SALLY

Right behind you, kitten.

Sally steps out of the brush with the rock hidden behind her back. She grips it tightly.

SALLY (CONT'D)

You're right Dave, taking this hike was a good idea.

(MORE)

SALLY (CONT'D)

I really appreciate how you always give me beautiful gifts. Hey, Dave. I'd like to give you a gift.

DAVE

Ooh la la.

SALLY

Close your eyes.

DAVE

I guess we have to consummate this thing sometime.

He closes his eyes with a grin. Sally raises the giant rock, ready to bash him in the skull...

...but just then, Ruth comes running up the trail.

RUTH

(Shouting)

Stop that reekatizin'!

She pushes Dave out of the way. He trips and falls to the ground, narrowly dodging Sally's rock.

SALLY

Oh come on.

RUTH

Buddy why don't we wait and think about it!

Dave dusts off his suit.

DAVE

(smiling)

Ouch?

Sally goes for the rock again, rambling madly. Ruth doesn't know what to do.

SALLY

I'm sick of thinking. I hate all this thinking. And talking. And doing. I'm around way too much. At work. At home. At night in the bed. It's torture.

She gets the rock and steps toward Dave. Ruth jumps in front of her, holding her back.

SALLY (CONT'D)

And then I'm called into the dreams
and even the dreams are boring! I
hate it! I've never hated anything
before and I don't like it!

DAVE

Sweetheart, are you ok?

Dave walks towards them. Ruth goes on one foot, pushing Sally with her arms and kicking Dave back with her other foot.

DAVE (CONT'D)

Ruth, I think this is borderline
inappropriate.

SALLY

Get outta the way, Ruth. I wanna
have a special moment with my
husband.

RUTH

Nnnnnn-no!

DAVE

Ladies, are you fighting over me?

Sally is taller than Ruth, she overpowers her. But Ruth wraps her arms around Sally, bear-hugging her torso and arms. Sally drags her around like dead weight.

SALLY

Let go of me, Ruth!

DAVE

Hey Ruth, let go of her.

RUTH

(face smooshed into Sally)
Run, Dave! Flee!

Sally tries to throw the rock again but with Ruth's tight grip on her arms, it's a really weak throw. Dave catches it.

DAVE

What is going on?

Sally spins around until Ruth loses her grip and falls.

SALLY

(to Ruth)
You! You're the one who got me into
this in the first place.

RUTH

Who me?

She starts advancing on Ruth terrifyingly.

SALLY

I never would have done any of this. I was fine the way things were, I had my part.

Ruth scrambles to her feet, retreating.

RUTH

You wanted to do it! You were lusty!

SALLY

You tricked me into it, because you were afraid of his ding dong!

DAVE

Sweetheart, Ruth, let's just calm-

Dave puts his arm on Ruth's shoulder. It catches her off-guard, creeps her out. She reacts with a violent shrug, PUSHING him off her.

Dave stumbles backward, losing his balance, and falls into the brush...

...And then he keeps falling, tumbling right off THE EDGE OF THE CLIFF.

Ruth rushes to the edge to look.

RUTH

Uh oh.

SALLY

Where did he go?

It's a beautiful sunset on a cliff overlooking the river, and Dave is rapidly falling to the bottom of the palisade.

EXT. BOTTOM OF CLIFF - CONTINUOUS

Dave is badly hurt, he lies bleeding with his limbs mangled.

DAVE

I didn't realize we were so close to the edge.

His eyes go blank AND HE DIES.

The world becomes silent. First birds and crickets stop chirping. Then the wind stops.

EXT. CLIFFSIDE HIKING TRAIL - CONTINUOUS

Up on the hill, Sally closes her eyes, accepting the end.

SALLY
Oh thank God.

Ruth is lost.

RUTH
I thought we were besties.

SALLY
Ruth, you don't understand
anything. We were never besties.
You can't be besties with nobody.

A cataclysmic HUM washes through the fabric of the universe. It becomes deafening, like when you hear your own eardrums.

Gravity fails. Grass and rocks are lifted.

THE WORLD IS EXPLODING IN SLOW MOTION

"I've Got Time on my Hands" by The Stylistics plays as everything comes apart.

Ruth and Sally drift apart from each other, then their bodies begin to drift apart from themselves.

In the chaos, a squirrel floats past Ruth. She reaches but it's just out of her grasp. Her outstretched arm COMES OFF, then her hand comes off her arm.

Her parts all break apart into a beautiful abstraction as we stop being able to identify what used to be here.

This anti-gravity ballet ends when a FUTURISTIC VACUUM CLEANER glides into frame, operated by a CLEANUP TECHNICIAN.

The hose sucks up all the things: body parts, clumps of trees, wedding decorations etc.

We follow Ruth's eyeball as it is SUCKED DOWN A LONG HOSE.

NO WORLD - SORTING ROOM

A place for sorting out all the molecules of the universe, it resembles an automated seafood processing factory.

The other end of the vacuum hose spits out its contents onto a conveyor belt. Everything from Dave's Earth is sorted into tubs. The mechanism is slow and rhythmic.

Ruth's eyeball and other body parts are collected in one tub.

A gigantic mechanical sensor hangs above the conveyor belt, scanning each tub with a DING and a WHITE LIGHTBULB.

Ruth's tub goes through and instead gets a HONK and RED LIGHTBULB.

The Administrator walks in, out of nowhere. She grabs the Ruth bin and looks inside.

ADMINISTRATOR

Found you. Well that was quite an inconvenience.

NO WORLD - THE STORAGE OF DEFECTIVE THINGS AREA

The Administrator dumps out Ruth's collection of parts into a glass box. She SQUEEZES the glass flat, locking Ruth into the glowing, silver two-dimensional rectangle.

ADMINISTRATOR

We've never had to deal with something this defective before. We're not set up for this. You'll stay here until further notice.

She slides compressed Ruth onto a storage shelf. Ruth's picasso'ed face looks out forlornly from her glass prison.

The Administrator walks away, her footsteps getting softer and softer in the distance.

NO WORLD - TRAINING ROOM

The place is silent and empty.

NO WORLD - TIMECLOCK ROOM

The clock has stopped ticking.

NO WORLD - SUPPLY ROOM

All the world's fire hydrants are flattened and stacked.

NO WORLD - PLANT ROOM

All the plants are drooped. A tree falls into the middle of the room, dead.

There is a quiet TAPPING sound coming from far away.

CUT TO:

Much later. All of the plants are dead now. There's a spark that CATCHES FIRE. The room blazes. The smoke billows, filling everything.

The far away tapping is more sparse.

CUT TO:

Much, much later. The plants are quietly growing. A tree has sprouted.

The tapping is even more sparse.

CUT TO:

Even later still. Many trees are grown back to full size. Slowly, some noise seeps in. A colored shadow crosses the frame, then another. The non-people must be back at work.

Just one tap... and then another.

NO WORLD - THE STORAGE OF DEFECTIVE THINGS AREA

Ruth's little dismembered finger taps on the glass of her 2-dimensional prison. TAP... She's been at it a long time.

...TAP, and there's a CRACK. Then a BREAK.

Her little finger reaches out, then a second finger. Her two fingers move in a "walking" sort of way, slowly dragging her little prison to the edge of the shelf.

It topples over the edge and SHATTERS on the ground.

She's free! But her body is pancaked flat. It starts to RE-INFLATE like when you open a vacuum seal bag.

Pumped back to full size, she's achy and discombobulated, with contorted features. She stands up.

NO WORLD - MAIN AREA

Ruth's feet are on backwards but she manages to do a floppy thrust to move herself forward through the nothingness.

She passes two UNSTACKER TECHS unfolding a BANK OF PHONE BOOTHS. The main training sets are up and running. Non-people practice opening doors and grocery shopping. Non-kids learn to play tag.

NO WORLD - GROWER ROOM

Ruth flops into the Grower Room, where there is a line of non-people waiting to be helped. She gets on the end of the line, behind a LITTLE GIRL about 6 years old.

LITTLE GIRL

Hi.

RUTH

Smgalkhdf.

LITTLE GIRL

I already know how to talk. I used to be the scooter girl, I was always scooting, scooting. But now I get to be Dave's neighbor girl and they gave me hair plugs.

RUTH

Marr.

Two Grower Techs in PURPLE SMOCKS lift the little girl up and bring her to a table.

PURPLE SMOCK #1

Quiet.

The little girl puts her finger to her lips. Shh.

The Purple Smock SLAPS her on the back of the head and she gets freckles.

PURPLE SMOCK #2

Next!

Ruth hops up. The Purple Smock looks at her impassively.

RUTH

Mrrgh mrrg?

He flips Ruth's mouth over so it's back in the correct place.

RUTH (CONT'D)

Dave is alive?

He's not listening, already busy at work fixing her body.

PURPLE SMOCK #2

We're gonna need the big saw.

Ruth's eyes light up with terror at the truly giant saw.

NO WORLD - HALLWAYS

Ruth is back bay-bee! Her body is as good as new and she's got a cute new haircut. She struts down the colorful hallway.

NO WORLD - ASSIGNMENT DESK

All the non-people are heading to their tunnels. Ruth looks to see if anyone's watching her. Nobody is.

She steps up to the assignment desk, nervous. But the Assignment Tech doesn't even look up.

ASSIGNMENT TECHNICIAN

Two laps around Third Street, exit
at the barbershop.

He hands her a timecard, which she takes, relieved.

EXT. DOWNTOWN MINNEAPOLIS - DAY

Ruth emerges onto the city street full of people minding their regular city business. She looks around for Dave, but doesn't spot him.

Trying to stay inconspicuous, Ruth casually speedwalks down the street, searching for Dave.

She gets to his office building and pushes the revolving door, but it DOESN'T MOVE. This building is not in use, IT'S JUST A FACADE NOW.

Confused, Ruth walks back the way she came. To her left, non-people are returning through the trapdoor at the barbershop.

She pauses, deciding. Then she heads to the right.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

Ruth walks through town looking for Dave.

The streets look a little different from before. Cars are an older style. There are more phone booths. She passes a movie theater with "Rhinestone" on the marquee.

EXT. BASEBALL CARD STORE - DAY

Ruth is surprised to see an "Open" sign at her old clubhouse.

She looks through the window - all her stuff has been cleared out. The place is reset as a comic book store now. The window has a big poster for the TV show "Dinosaurs".

A bird flies by - Dave must be nearby! She follows the bird.

EXT. CITY PARK - DAY

Ruth jogs into the park, out of breath. She doesn't see Dave anywhere. She's about to give up.

A MOM (O.S.)
Dave! Careful up there!

Ruth follows the voice to the playground where some toddlers are running around. A little boy of about 4 has climbed precariously high on top of the jungle gym.

A MOM (CONT'D)
Dave. Pull your knee outta there.
You're gonna get stuck.

The 4 year-old DAVE 2 is ignoring her.

His mom is standing below, vaguely concerned. She is the homeless woman from the previous world, but cleaned up and very mom-like, with an 80's haircut and outfit.

RUTH
(to herself)
Dave?

The mom catches Ruth staring from outside the playground. She gives her a funny look. Does she recognize her? Or is she just scornful of childless adults hanging around the jungle gym.

Ruth bee-lines outta there.

NO WORLD - TIMECLOCK ROOM

Ruth walks up to the clock, but instead of stamping it she shoves the timecard in her pocket.

NO WORLD - TRAINING AREA

Ruth walks around as non-people are training. Nobody seems to notice her or care. She loosens up a bit.

She goes up to a FINGER PAINTER TECH who is hard at work and taps them on the shoulder.

RUTH

So, uh, Dave is looking a little small lately.

FINGER PAINTER

He's average for a four year old. The Daves usually get their growth spurt during adolescence, which won't be until the mid to late 90's.

RUTH

When's that?

FINGER PAINTER

10 to 12 years. Dave years.

RUTH

What am I gonna do with some boring kid until then?

FINGER PAINTER

Who are you supposed to be?

RUTH

Never mind, I'll find something. Nice art by the way.

FINGER PAINTER

It's a doggie.

NO WORLD - GROWER ROOM

Close up on Ruth, mid story.

RUTH

So at the beginning of the book, Ishmael says he and Queequeg share a bed like that every night until the end of his life. Which is like, wow, best friends! They really made it work, ya know?

(MORE)

RUTH (CONT'D)

But then actually what happens is, eighteen months later the entire ship is destroyed and everyone dies, including Queequeg! But not Ishmael, he writes the book.

I guess the point is, you can think somebody is your friend, but the only one who matters is the white whale himself. And if I want to harpoon the whale, I have to be prepared to do whatever it takes. Even if, in my case, that might mean getting face to face with Dave's... the thing that changes size unexpectedly. I hope it doesn't come to that, but I need to be prepared.

(grimaces)

So anyway, I'm here for a vagina?

Reveal Ruth is chatting away to a very confused TAN SMOCK, who is just trying to clean a giant tube.

TAN SMOCK

What?

RUTH

I'm here to get a vagina put in.

TAN SMOCK

We don't have any of those scheduled quite yet.

RUTH

I know it's early but just in case, I'll need some time to learn how to use it.

TAN SMOCK

Uh, I'll have to check.

RUTH

What do I have to do, to get you to put me in a vagina today?

NO WORLD - GROWER ROOM - LATER

Ruth hops off the Grower table victorious. Though we don't see it, she definitely has a new vagina.

NO WORLD - O'KEEFFIAN COLORSCAPE

She floats, up up up, feeling new feelings and rejoicing in previously unknown sensations coming from her crotch area.

It's an abstract mini-musical sequence, a symphony of pleasing colors and yonic shapes.

NO WORLD - CLOUD ROOM

The place where they store all the clouds. Ruth wakes up serene on a fluffy cumulus. She yawns and stretches.

EXT. DAVE 2'S HOUSE, FRONT DOOR - DAY

Ruth walks up and rings the DOORBELL.

A MIDDLE AGED WOMAN in a blazer answers the door. She's talking as if on the phone, but there is no phone.

MIDDLE AGED WOMAN
 (on the "phone")
 Hold a second, would you.
 (to Ruth)
 Yes?

RUTH
 Is Dave home?

MIDDLE AGED WOMAN
 Who are you?

RUTH
 Uh, babysitter.

The woman is confused, but busy, she lets her in and goes into another room, talking business.

INT. DAVE 2'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - DAY

As she enters, Ruth passes some FRAMED PHOTOS of a AFFABLE BLOND MAN spanning the decades. She notices one old wedding photo of him and his bride, with the inscription "Dave and Alice, Lake Superior, 2011".

In the living room, an OLD MAN lies on a hospice bed. His GRANDSON, 20's, gawky, sits beside him. Ruth waltzes in.

RUTH
 Dave?

The old man in the bed looks at Ruth. He can't speak.

RUTH (CONT'D)
 (re: the old man)
 That's Dave?

The grandson nods dumbly.

RUTH (CONT'D)
 Oh cripes, I overshot it. What year
 is this?

Before she can get an answer, a 3D hologram floats across the room with DAVE 2'S DAUGHTER, 60s, on it - she's a female version of Dave 1's buddy from trivia.

DAVE 2'S DAUGHTER (ON HOLOGRAM)
 Who are you? How do we know you?

RUTH
 Whoops, I'll get out of your hair.

A second hologram comes into the room with DAVE 2'S SON, 60s.

DAVE 2'S SON (ON HOLOGRAM)
 Sorry I'm late, I came as soon as I
 could.

Ruth backs out of the room.

DAVE 2'S SON (CONT'D)
 Dad, I wanted to sing a song for
 you that I learned from a spirit
 guide in Toronto.
 (to the granddaughter)
 Can he hear me?

He starts thumping a beat with his fist on his chest.

DAVE 2'S SON (CONT'D)
 (singing)
 Ooombah-

His hologram flickers off, replaced by text that says,
 "SIGNAL ERROR NO SIGNAL".

EXT. DAVE 2'S HOUSE - DAY

Ruth walks out the front door, but before it shuts behind her, the Grandson grabs it.

GRANDSON
 You.

Ruth, startled, looks up at him. He has a wholly different demeanor now, standing extremely erect and eerily calm.

GRANDSON (CONT'D)

You. Are not. To be here now.

He slouches back into Grandson mode and heads back inside. Ruth is creeped out.

NO WORLD - TUNNEL ENTRANCES

Ruth emerges from a tunnel, behind two NON-PEOPLE.

NON PERSON 1

Watch yourself, I heard the Ruth was spotted again.

NON PERSON 2

Who was?

NON PERSON 1

The Ruth, the Dave killer. We all need to watch yourself.

Ruth skirts behind them, making herself small.

NON PERSON 2 (FROM A DISTANCE)

She'll need to be fertilized. I'm sure she'll be found and fertilized upon finding.

Ruth slinks her head down into her shoulders and pivots away.

She maneuvers across the non-world landscape, ducking and hiding behind things. She overhears other snippets.

HUSKY NON VOICE (O.S.)

... the Ruth, vicious, thirsty, bloody...

NASAL NON VOICE (O.S.)

...torturing Daves for generations...

THICKLY NON VOICE (O.S.)

...she doesn't know her place...

Ruth is shaking. She turns away from them, only to spot the Administrator. They make eye contact. The Administrator speaks, her voice booming in Ruth's head...

ADMINISTRATOR

You.

Ruth somersaults out of her line of sight and scurries away.

NO WORLD - DARKNESS - CONTINUOUS

Ruth rushes away from the light of the training sets, back into the shadowy distance.

The sound of her name, "Ruth" has transformed into a blur of sounds - UUUUU-RRRRR-THTHTHTH - and it's haunting her.

Her SHADOWS MULTIPLY, like an infinity mirror and then collapse on themselves.

She waves her arms to GATHER UP THE DARKNESS AROUND HER, until she's buried in it. Just her eyes peek out.

NO WORLD - DARKNESS - TIME MELTS ON

She does not blink. She overhears echoes of conversation.

TRAINER (O.S.)
Attention, Attention: Dave has
died. I repeat, Dave has left the
building.

A FLAT HUM sound fades in. Dave 2's Death washes across the universe, then peters out.

ANOTHER TRAINER (O.S.)
Attention, Attention: Spermy Dave
is on its way to the egg.

THUNDER! Then some DISSONANT CHIMES.

THIRD TRAINER (O.S.)
Dave is born. Eyes up on infant
Dave.

A TIMELAPSE OVER RUTH'S UNBLINKING FACE AS YEARS FLY BY.

We can hear all the preparations for the new Dave's life, echoing and melding into each other. A soundscape of:

BABIES CRYING. Then,
CHILDREN PLAYING. Then,
A HOUSE PARTY. Then,
ADULTS LEARNING FRENCH. Then,
THE CRACK OF A BASEBALL BAT.

And with that, Ruth's timelapse is over, she's catatonic.

And then a huge SAND STORM sweeps in. Sand in all directions.

NO WORLD - SAND LAND

The darkness is BLOWN AWAY and Ruth is covered in sand so that the outline of her body becomes visible.

She coughs and blinks, shaking the sand out of her curls.

Out of nowhere A GIANT BLACK BULLDOZER rolls through, pushing the great pile of sand and Ruth along with it.

The bulldozer shoves the sand and Ruth through a giant SILVER GARAGE DOOR...

DREAM - SANDY DESERT - CONTINUOUS

...and deposits her and the sand in an endless desert.

Ruth has been tumbled upside down, her feet in the air. She kicks around until she's right side up.

Dusting herself off, she looks around. Nothing but sand in all directions... except for the EMPIRE STATE BUILDING PLOPPED inexplicably in the middle of this vast desert.

There's a window-washer cart hanging off of a high floor.

RUTH

Alright, here we go again.

DREAM - EMPIRE STATE BUILDING WINDOW WASHER CART - DAY

In it, are a MAN, mid 40's, bearded and handsome, and a WOMAN, broad shouldered and athletic, in her late 20's. She's holding a swaddled baby.

MAN

I'll take her.

The woman hands the bundle, which we now see is a glass of water in a baby blanket. They handle it very slowly and protectively, like a baby.

MAN (CONT'D)

Careful now. I got her.

(to the water)

Hey there little buddy.

HARD BREATHING, not from either of them. And some SHUFFLING. Ruth has scaled the building, like a tiny King Kong.

RUTH

Um. Hi.

She heaves herself up into the window-washer cart. The man clutches the water close to his chest.

RUTH (CONT'D)

Do you... know me?

Blank stares.

RUTH (CONT'D)

Not important. Okay, what's the scenario? Are we washing windows or just flopping around. You guys growers, show-ers, semis?

MAN

(to his glass of water)

There there.

RUTH

Wow. My thighs are burning. Have you ever been alone for so long you forget about entire body parts? I think that's why sad puppies lick their paws. So where's Dave at? Is he at work behind this window?

MAN

(to woman)

What's she getting at?

The man turns around to look in the window. While his back is turned, two Dream Techs lift Ruth up and out of the cart. A third jumps on, slowly shoving her back to the ground. In her place they put a small FLUFFY DOG. The man turns back.

FLUFFY DOG

That was rough.

RUTH

(while falling slowly)

If you see Dave, tell him I'm looking for him. Nothing's worse than nowhere and I'm not going back.

MAN

(to the woman)

I think they're looking for me.

WOMAN

You can run, but you can't fly.

She gestures grandly, outward toward the sky. The Man takes a step off the window-washer cart. Four Dream Techs swoop in to grab his arms and leg. They help him "fly".

Ruth softly lands in the sand far below and watches the man fly. She realizes her mistake.

RUTH

Oh, hi Dave.

INT. FABULOUS OCEAN VIEW APARTMENT - DAY

The man, DAVE 3, wakes up in bed. He's a different person than the previous Daves, but still has a strong Dave vibe. The woman from the dream, MALLORY, is already awake and sipping coffee. She is French, but not the cool kind.

DAVE 3

I had a crazy dream.

MALLORY

Mmm?

DAVE 3

I was protecting Lulu from an urban spelunker who had a huge birds nest of hair. But Lulu was a glass of water.

MALLORY

(French accent now, and from now on)

Zat is crazy. I dreamed that my teeth crumbled in my mouth. It was horrible!

They hear A BABY GURGLE.

DAVE 3

Does she need a bottle?

MALLORY

Quite ze opposite.

DAVE 3

Ok, I'm all over it.

He stretches and climbs out of bed. The apartment is beautiful but there are moving boxes all over.

INT. BABY'S BEDROOM - DAY

Dave 3 finishes changing the baby, LULU, who is about eight months old. Mallory comes up behind him affectionately.

DAVE 3
She didn't cry. When was the last
time she cried?

They both look at the baby nervously.

MALLORY
She looks fine, right? She's fine.

DAVE 3
Heck if I know. Lulu, are you fine?

The baby does not answer.

DAVE 3 (CONT'D)
Lulu, do you want something? Do you
want a bottle? Do you want a pony,
Lulu?

MALLORY
She made your face, Dave. You make
zat exact face when you are trying
to remember someone's name.

DAVE 3
She did?

INT/EXT. DAVE 3'S HOUSE, FRONT DOOR - DAY

Mallory is leaving for the day. Dave, holding Lulu, kisses her goodbye.

DAVE 3
I think I'll bring Lulu to the game
later.

MALLORY
Don't. The babysitter's already
booked.

DAVE 3
She loves to watch you play.

MALLORY
She has no idea what's going on.

DAVE 3

Good thing we got that sitter,
because I've got big plans. Big
plans today. 43 years old,
unemployed...

MALLORY

Bye, Lulu.

DAVE 3

(to Lulu)
Say bye bye Mommy.

MALLORY

I love you, mes petites.

Mallory climbs into her Jaguar.

EXT. DOWN THE STREET - CONTINUOUS

A team of GARDENERS are trimming, weeding and blowing.

Standing with them is Ruth. She has a huge pair of hedge
trimmers and is trying to get a glimpse of Dave 3.

RUTH

(yelling over leaf blower)
He's married? Well there goes that
plan.

The gardners don't care. Dave 3 goes back into his house.

NO WORLD - TIMECLOCK ROOM

Ruth crouches behind the timeclock. A RACQUETBALL MAN clocks
in and heads to the tunnels.

She follows him.

NO WORLD - TUNNEL

The racquetball man notices Ruth.

RACQUETBALL MAN

Who are you?

RUTH

I'm the new crosser. Yeah, I cross
the street here.

RACQUETBALL MAN
You're in the wrong place.

INT. RACQUETBALL COURT - DAY

Ruth emerges from the trapdoor and is in the middle of a fast paced racquetball game. FOUR MEN are whipping the ball all over the glass-walled court, shouting and grunting.

RACQUETBALL MAN
Watch out lady!

Ruth ducks a swinging racket and then dodges a speeding ball. She flees back into the trapdoor.

Just as she's gone, Dave 3, in gym clothes, walks past.

NO WORLD - TUNNEL ENTRANCES

Ruth scurries out of one tunnel. She's drawing the attention of a few non-people and trainers near the Timeclock Room.

RESTAURANT TRAINER
(faintly)
She was spotted here earlier, the
Ruth. She's not clocking in!

A non-person sees Ruth across the hall. She GASPS. The crowd looks up.

Ruth sneaks into a different tunnel just in time.

EXT. PARTY BOAT - DAY

She emerges onto a party boat. It's a daytime booze cruise. A bunch of SEMIS flopping around making odd sporadic loud sounds and hums. It's a very peculiar scene up close.

Ruth looks around for Dave. She sees him across the water. He is walking with a stroller on the boardwalk.

RUTH
How do I get off this thing?

PARTYGOER 1
Woo!

RUTH
Woo.

Ruth ducks back into the trapdoor.

NO WORLD - TUNNEL ENTRANCES

She hops out of the tunnel. There's a larger group of Techs & Trainers waiting for her now, more confused than angry.

UNFOLDING TECH 1

Is it her?

TRAINER

The Ruth!

RESTAURANT TRAINER

She's out of control.

There's an awkward pause. They're not sure what to do next.

TRAINER

Should we... stop her?

RUTH

Ok one minute I'll be right with you.

She dives to the side and frantically runs into a tunnel.

UNFOLDING TECH 1

That's not good.

INT. GOURMET CANDY STORE - DAY

Ruth pops up behind the jellybean display. WOW! She looks around - truffles! Caramel! But Ruth doesn't have time.

RUTH

Not now, candy!

Outside the window, Dave walks by. Ruth runs to the glass, but he's gone.

RUTH (CONT'D)

(like "dang it")

Crabs.

She turns to a SALESMAN.

RUTH (CONT'D)

Do you know where he goes next?

The Salesman just flaps his lips like a puppet.

Ruth hurries out of the store.

EXT. BEACH MAIN STREET - CONTINUOUS

We're in a charming, upscale beach town, very different from the dark cement streets of Minneapolis. Ruth runs, searching for signs of Dave. Confused people watch her go by.

A WOMAN HANDING OUT FLIERS tries to stop her by handing her a flier. Ruth dodges her and runs into the street, barely avoiding a TEEN on a mini-bike.

MINI-BIKE TEEN

Whoa man!

Down the street Ruth sees Dave 3 walking briskly.

Ruth flags down an OLDER LADY in a convertible.

RUTH

I need a ride, it's an emergency?

OLDER LADY

<sound of a car honking>

Ruth hops in the passenger seat, almost crushing a small dog.

RUTH

Driver, follow that pedestrian!

The lady drives just as she was, slowly. Up ahead Dave is disappearing around the corner.

RUTH (CONT'D)

Left, take a left.

Instead, the lady stops at the stoplight.

RUTH (CONT'D)

Come on, I gotta go left!

She shoves the lady and, with some struggle, manages to get the door open and push her out onto the pavement.

The car is still in drive and begins DRIFTING FORWARD into the intersection. Other cars have to break hard and swerve.

Ruth gets in the driver's seat. She has no idea how to use this thing. She starts pushing buttons and pulling levers but doesn't know about the pedals.

At 5 mph she CRASHES the car into an ATM.

She's created quite a big scene. People on the street are staring at her, some shouting to the best of their ability.

TEEN
 (at Ruth, angry)
 I got a B!

FLOWER SELLER
 (at Ruth, angry)
 Love tulips!

They start coming towards her, forming a crowd.

Ruth can't figure out how to open the car door so she just jumps over it (it's a convertible) and runs down the street.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

Ruth rounds the corner and SMACKS RIGHT INTO DAVE 3'S BACK. She flops to the ground.

DAVE 3
 Oh now! Are you ok?

He helps her up, she tries to compose herself.

RUTH
 I don't know.

DAVE 3
 Are you, are you following me?

RUTH
 Buddy you're following me.

DAVE 3
 Was I? I don't think so.

RUTH
 Hard to say, isn't it?

DAVE 3
 But really, are you ok? Do you need something.

RUTH
 I think I am.

DAVE 3
 Sorry, I haven't had my coffee today.

RUTH
 Yeah me neither.

Dave considers saying a polite goodbye, but then...

DAVE 3

Can I buy you a coffee? As an apology for breaking your solar plexus just there.

RUTH

No, no, that's ok.

DAVE 3

Please? It would really make me feel better.

RUTH

Well sure alright, if you insist.

DAVE 3

Oh here's a place, right here.

They head for the corner coffee shop. While Dave is holding the door for Ruth he takes a hard look at Ruth's face.

DAVE 3 (CONT'D)

I'm going to say this and I don't want you to think I'm running some kind of scam on you or anything, but I think you were in my dream last night.

RUTH

Get in line, buddy.

He laughs.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

The BARISTA is surreptitiously replacing fake scones with real scones.

Dave 3 and Ruth sit on a sofa drinking coffees, their backs to a large window. Dave 3 is mid-story.

DAVE 3

I knew it had salt in it of course but I wasn't expecting it to have such a distinct aroma.

RUTH

That's that sea air I've been reading about.

Outside, a WOMAN and her DAUGHTER walk by, staring at Ruth.

DAVE 3

It's really nice. In the midwest all we have is lakes, and those suckers can sneak up on you. You turn a corner and out of the blue, BAM, there's a lake you weren't expecting. I like that the ocean warns you in advance, gives you a little notice.

RUTH

Like hey I'm a significant body of water over here.

They laugh. Dave gets an idea.

DAVE 3

Were you maybe on the Daddy and Me group trip to the zoo last Tuesday?

RUTH

No. Not a daddy.

DAVE 3

And you didn't go to U of M, right?

RUTH

I don't think so. Because I don't know what that is.

DAVE 3

Dang, well we must've met somewhere before. I don't look familiar to you?

RUTH

You do, actually. But I think you might just have that kind of face. No offense.

DAVE 3

None taken. You ever have this problem, like a dream so vivid you think it really happened? And then I spend all week upset about an argument I never had.

RUTH

I don't have dreams. I mean I never remember them.

DAVE 3

That's kind of sad, isn't it.

A server walks over with a scone.

SERVER

Sorry this took so long.

Outside the window, a MAN collides into ANOTHER MAN and they fall to the ground.

DAVE 3

Are you from around here?

RUTH

No, I'm just visiting. From Chicago.

DAVE 3

Oh Chicago, I love Chicago. So you know about the sneaky lakes.

RUTH

Yeah. I'm an expert on sneaky. I'm in town here visiting family.

DAVE 3

How's that going for you?

RUTH

It's good to see them, it's so good to see them in person and talk to them. Which I never get to do. But also it's difficult.

DAVE 3

You look like you wanna talk about it.

RUTH

They maybe don't approve of some of the things I've chosen to do, my family. I just want to live my life, you know. I just want things the way I want them.

DAVE 3

I understand exactly what you're saying.

RUTH

You do?

DAVE 3

Yeah. I don't know about your exact situation, but I feel like I have to pretend to be the person my family expects me to be, instead of the person that I think I am?

RUTH

Right. And it's not fair.

DAVE 3

In their defense, they believe I'm a better person than I do. So I'm forced to act like less of a schmuck.

RUTH

Well I have no expectations for you, so feel free to be full schmuck for at least the rest of this coffee.

He chuckles.

DAVE 3

And most of the time I'm not even conscious of what I'm doing. Like Mallory, my wife, gets this great opportunity, I'm so happy for her, but then, I'm like where am I? We moved to California? I guess I chose this? It's so easy to be swept into the flow.

RUTH

Stupid flow always pushing me around.

DAVE 3

I gotta remind myself: Dave, it's all good. We're here together. You've got someone to live through it all with. That's what matters.

Ruth's eyes are welling up. Dave sips his coffee.

DAVE 3 (CONT'D)

Is it... Are you okay?

Ruth blinks and is surprised to notice a tear on her cheek.

RUTH

What the. That's embarrassing.

DAVE 3
It's alright.

RUTH
I didn't even realize I had
functioning tear ducts. This has
never happened.

Dave laughs.

DAVE 3
It's none of my business. But since
I happen to be a complete stranger,
you can feel free to... spill the
beans.

Ruth smiles, trying to blink away her tears.

RUTH
I was just thinking of an old
friend. She's been gone for a long
time. I think I forgot the feeling
of her until right now. You're the
first person I've been able to talk
to.

He offers a napkin. She sniffs and wipes the tear away.

RUTH (CONT'D)
I'm just as surprised as you!

He checks his watch.

RUTH (CONT'D)
You have to go? You probably have
places to be.

DAVE 3
Well, I'm unemployed, I've got no
friends in this town, and, the
babysitter doesn't like me around.
(then)
But you're on the way to see your
family.

Ruth looks at her watch-less wrist.

RUTH
I've got some time...
I've never seen a beach.

DAVE 3
Let's do it.

RUTH

Really? You don't mind? Ok, how do we get there?

He stands up.

DAVE 3

Follow your nose.

They have a laugh as they head for the door.

Behind them, a non-person DUDE pokes his head out from under the couch cushion they were just on. A bunch of other non-people peer out from behind him.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

Ruth and Dave 3 walk along the rocky beach. They watch a sail boat whiz across the expanse.

RUTH

Look at that one go! That looks like a fun one.

DAVE 3

My wife is a big sailor. When she was a teenager she was captain of the sailing team. She took me out once when we visited her parents in Nice. I threw up the whole time.

RUTH

I've been on a boat before too. We have a lot in common.

He laughs.

DAVE 3

(re: the beach)

So what do you think...

RUTH

I think I keep chasing the things that I think I want, the things that are going to make me feel like a real person. Only as soon as I get something I realize I'm not even close, it's not enough.

DAVE 3

I meant the beach.

RUTH

Oh. It's nice and loud, like a highway.

DAVE 3

But I get what you're saying. And the more stuff you absorb into your little world, the more complicated it gets.

Dave considers going deep on this thread, then he does.

DAVE 3 (CONT'D)

I have this memory from when I was a kid, a few weeks after my parents told me they were getting divorced. I was sitting in the car, with my Dad and we were just about to drive somewhere. And before he turned on the car, he paused for second and he said, "Life's a bitch and then you die". And I remember thinking like, "what? what does he *mean*?" I had no clue, because even though I was a sad kid at the time and knew life wasn't perfect, I had never had to confront any of the really hard stuff in life. Not yet.

Ruth is having a revelation as Dave carries on.

DAVE 3 (CONT'D)

So now, when I'm totally in over my head and depleted or just lost... I try to remember that moment of hearing him say that, and how nice it was just being completely oblivious.

RUTH

Yeah, that's definitely wrong.

DAVE 3

Haha. What?

RUTH

Well what you're saying is that you want to go back to the nothing, but that's gotta be wrong. If you don't do the pain, you don't get the opposite, right? The good stuff? You know how empty you'd be if you stayed oblivious?

(MORE)

RUTH (CONT'D)
I can tell you it's not pretty. Am
I making sense here?

DAVE 3
(unsure)
Huh.

RUTH
That dad bitch moment was you
waking up. That's the good stuff,
buddy. The meat of life.

DAVE 3
(into it)
Huh.

A frisbee lands next to them.

FRISBEE THROWER (O.S.)
Little help?

DAVE 3
I got you!

He bends down to pick up the frisbee and in that moment a
half dozen other frisbees fly at Ruth. She dodges each of
them silently, unbeknownst to Dave 3.

Dave throws the frisbee back, but it catches some wind and
blows way left.

DAVE 3 (CONT'D)
Whoops!

He runs to try again. A BEACH CHICK appears next to Ruth.

BEACH CHICK
(whispering)
You need to leave now. You're
disturbing Dave's life.

RUTH
Oh hi there.

BEACH CHICK
(whispering)
We know who you are.

RUTH
Well, nice to meet you.

Dave turns back to Ruth. The Beach Chick doesn't know what to
do, so she flashes the peace sign and dives into the water.

RUTH (CONT'D)

This is a very friendly area.

DAVE 3

Oh geez, what time is it? I actually do have somewhere to be now.

RUTH

Oh yeah, I'm very late too.

DAVE 3

Mallory, my wife, she's got a game. I said I'd be there. Wait, do you like baseball?

RUTH

I love baseball.

DAVE 3

Oh then maybe this will impress you. Mallory's on the Missiles.

He waits for a reaction.

RUTH

She's on a missiles?

DAVE 3

The Santa Cruz Missiles. She's the shortstop. Major league baseball?

RUTH

Oh right, that's very... impressive. I love baseball.

DAVE 3

Are you just being polite?

RUTH

I don't even know how to be polite, ya dirtbag.

He laughs.

DAVE 3

Alright, alright. Would you want to come to the game? Unless you have to go meet your family.

RUTH

No, I mean, not for a while.

DAVE 3

So you want to? I have good seats
because I'm a player's wife.

RUTH

Yeah!

INT. BASEBALL STADIUM, VIP ENTRANCE - DAY

Dave 3, with Ruth behind him, shows his tickets at the security entrance and walks through the turnstile. The SECURITY GUARD stops Ruth.

RUTH

Um Dave, Dave!

Dave turns back to her.

DAVE

She's my plus one.

SECURITY GUARD

Need ID.

Dave waves his VIP pass at the guard. He ushers Ruth inside.

DAVE

Here ya go. She's my guest.

INT. BASEBALL STADIUM, HALLWAY - DAY

Dave leads Ruth through a windy hallway in the back of the stadium. A nicely dressed OLDER COUPLE bump into them at one of the turns.

OLDER WOMAN

Oh hi!

DAVE 3

Miranda, Jake. How's it going?

Dave 3 walks around the corner, chatting with the couple, leaving Ruth alone for a moment.

Suddenly two PAINTED SPORTS FANS appear in front of her. They LUNGE at her. She scampers to catch up with Dave 3.

OLDER MAN

We'll see you in the stands.

The couple walks off. Dave 3 turns back to Ruth.

DAVE 3
Sorry about that.

RUTH
You seem like a decent Dave. What's your secret?

DAVE 3
Oh it's easy. You, uh, you just accept that your life is completely meaningless and nothing you do will ever matter and then... here's the trick, you just smile at everyone for exactly one second.

RUTH
One second of smiling. No more, or you're a creep. No less, or you're a jerk.

DAVE 3
Exactly. Wow, how'd you learn all the Dave trade secrets?

RUTH
I'm well studied.

INT. BASEBALL STADIUM, CONCESSIONS AREA - DAY

Ruth and Dave 3 enter the main food hall.

DAVE 3
Our seats are through there, I'm gonna make a quick pit stop at the restroom. I'll meet you right back here.

RUTH
Okay.

He leaves for the men's room. As soon as he's out of view, FOUR NON-PEOPLE in the crowd turn to Ruth menacingly.

Ruth sees she's about to get pummeled and runs after Dave 3.

INT. MEN'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Ruth dashes into the men's room and is immediately sorry she did. There are weiners everywhere!

Luckily Dave 3's back is to her. She crouches behind a urinal stall trying to will herself to be invisible until he zips up and exits.

She follows him out.

INT. BASEBALL STADIUM, CONCESSIONS AREA - CONTINUOUS

Dave 3 turns around to catch Ruth coming out of the bathroom.

DAVE 3

Were you just in the men's room?

RUTH

Ha ha. That'd be weird.

INT/EXT. BASEBALL STADIUM, STANDS - DAY

Ruth and Dave 3 walk through the crowded stands to their seats. The game is about to start in the packed stadium as the Star Spangled Banner plays.

RUTH

Wow, everyone must be in here.

Dave 3 finds their seats in the VIP section right behind third base.

DAVE 3

We're over here.

Dave 3 shakes hands with a MAN and WOMAN wearing Missiles team gear sitting behind them in VIP.

DAVE 3 (CONT'D)

Hey, how's it going? Nice to see you.

He turns back to Ruth.

DAVE 3 (CONT'D)

Sorry about that, I'd introduce you but I don't want to get trapped talking to them all game.

RUTH

Oh yeah, I hate that. Hey Dave, How'd you get to be you?

DAVE 3

Now that's something I actually think about all the time.

(MORE)

DAVE 3 (CONT'D)

Especially since my daughter was born. Just nothing, and then a bunch of cells and then more, and then more, and then boom - she's a tiny person. I really have no idea why it all works. And you know what I think? Nobody deserves it. Life. Not me, not anybody. This random assortment of atoms. It just happens.

RUTH

You get born and then here you are.

DAVE 3

Like, what a miracle it is that my body doesn't disintegrate into a billion little pieces at any moment, let alone motor function, let alone walking around eating chicken fried steak!

THEME MUSIC plays and the announcer lists the players' names as they run onto the field. The team is co-ed, though otherwise looks just like regular pro baseball.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

And introducing your Santa Cruz Missiles! Julio Mcevers, Marge Odegee, Moishe Ray Banananana....

RUTH

This is fun. Go Sports!

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

Mallory Renault.

DAVE 3

That's her. Woo! Go Mallory!

Ruth looks around at the stadium. She notices that many of the fans are not watching the field but are GLARING AT HER.

Dave 3 notices too and looks back behind him to try to figure out what these people are looking at.

The organ plays CHARGE and the game begins. The crowd cheers.

INT/EXT. BASEBALL STADIUM, STANDS - LATER

The game is heating up, fans are standing and cheering.

HOT DOG VENDOR (O.S.)
 Red hots! Get your red hots! Iced
 cold beer!

DAVE 3
 Want a dog?

RUTH
 Yes.

DAVE 3
 (calling out)
 I'll take two hot dogs over here.

RUTH
 But what I really want is
 everything.

DAVE 3
 (calling out)
 One with everything, one just with
 ketchup.

Mallory catches a ball - third out. Everyone cheers.

WOMAN SITTING BEHIND THEM
 Way to go, that's your woman!

DAVE 3
 Yeah! Go Missiles!

RUTH
 But only one person can have it.
 And it's not me.

A box of food is passed through the stands.

DAVE 3
 (calling out)
 This is only one, I asked for two.
 Sir? Sir? Where's the one with
 everything? Excuse me? Hello?

On the field, the Missiles are at bat. The crowd around Ruth
 and Dave 3 start booing and heckling the pitcher. It's loud,
 Dave can hardly hear Ruth at all.

WOMAN IN CROWD (O.C.)
 Hey Pitcher, are you pac man? Walka
 Walka Walka!

RUTH
 But why not? Why can't I be the me?

MAN SITTING BEHIND THEM
I've seen snakes with better arms!

MAN IN CROWD (O.C.)
We want a pitcher not a glass of
water!

The Missiles fans TURN TO FACE RUTH, now YELLING AT HER
instead of the pitcher. It's a menacing display.

HECKLER
Try throwing it with your eyes open
this time!

HECKLER 2
Hey, how 'bout some sauce on that
meatball!

Dave 3 is growing concerned at the heckling.

DAVE 3
It's a real rowdy crowd today.

WOMAN IN CROWD
Boo!

MAN SITTING BEHIND THEM
Boo!

They're all booing Ruth. Dave 3 looks at her, "what the?"
A heckler just a few rows away turns to Ruth. IT'S SALLY.

SALLY
You stink!

RUTH
Sally?

SALLY
I've seen better arms on a beanbag
chair!

There's a CRACK of the bat and a ball whizzes into the
stands, KNOCKING RUTH RIGHT IN THE HEAD.

The crowd cheers!

Ruth is knocked unconscious. Dave 3, panicked, tries to help
her amid the noise.

DAVE 3
Ruth! Ruth! Are you ok?

Out on the field, Mallory runs the bases - apparently it's a home run! Fireworks! Music!

EXT. BASEBALL STADIUM PARKING LOT - NIGHT

The noise of the stadium blends with the chaos of SIRENS and FLASHING LIGHTS in the parking lot. A team of EMT's load Ruth's unconscious body into the back of an ambulance.

Dave 3 fights through the scrum of rubberneckers to talk to the POLICE.

DAVE 3

Can't I can ride with her? I'm her friend.

POLICE OFFICER

You'll have to meet her at the hospital.

INT. AMBULANCE - CONTINUOUS

The door slams shut and Ruth is alone with the two EMTs. She slowly comes to.

She starts to sit up groggily. The EMT pushes her back down.

EMT

Oh no you don't.

The EMTS flip open a trapdoor below the van. They each grab an arm and a leg and toss Ruth into the tunnel.

JELLO HOLDING AREA

Ruth is trapped in lime jello. Outside of her mold, some huge, unseen animal STOMPS by. The jello shakes.

She takes a bite. It's not bad, actually.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Meanwhile, Ruth's "body" is in a coma in a hospital bed. Dave 3 is sitting at her bedside with Mallory, who is growing impatient. Dave is obviously troubled.

MALLORY

Davey, the babysitter is only booked until 6.

DAVE 3
Can we just wait a minute? Until
her family gets here?

The DOCTOR comes in.

DOCTOR
Hi folks, sorry to interrupt.

DAVE 3
That's ok, Doctor. Any positive
news?

DOCTOR
Actually I'm not the attending
today. I was just hoping I could
get an autograph? My kid's a huge
Missiles fan.

MALLORY
Of course.

She signs the doctor's RX pad. That doctor leaves, passing a
second doctor, who we recognize as Shelly the TV Weatherman.

DOCTOR
Oh hi Shelly.

SHELLY THE DOCTOR
(big smile)
Hey Joanny, great haircut.

DOCTOR
Thanks!

Shelly turns to Dave 3, composing himself soberly.

SHELLY THE DOCTOR
You must be the friend who brought
her in? That was very kind of you.

DAVE 3
Hi, yeah.

SHELLY THE DOCTOR
Unfortunately, the patient is all
but gone. Her brain is hemorrhaging
badly. It's very, very unlikely she
would ever be able to recover.

MALLORY
She'll never wake up.

SHELLY THE DOCTOR

For insurance reasons, doctors never say never. But you catch my drift.

DAVE 3

I'm really surprised none of her family has shown up looking for her. She was in town visiting family.

MALLORY

I guess they did not care about her.

DAVE 3

She seemed like one of the good ones, you know?

MALLORY

Or she made them up? I don't know. You don't even know this person. She could have been a serial rapist for all you know.

DAVE 3

Sheesh, Mal. I thought she was a very nice lady.

SHELLY THE DOCTOR

I'll just need you to sign here.

The doctor presents a clipboard to Dave 3.

DAVE 3

What's this now?

SHELLY THE DOCTOR

Since there's no family to speak of, you've been designated the next of kin. So officially, Dave, you're the one making the decision.

MALLORY

The decision to end her life.

DAVE 3

Oh boy, ok, wow, I wasn't expecting to- well, she did say that she hates doing nothing. I don't think she'd be very happy being stuck in that bed, in limbo. But on the other hand, well- can I just take some time to think this through?

MALLORY
The babysitter.

SHELLY THE DOCTOR
No.

DAVE 3
Oh, ok.

Dave 3 takes a deep breath and a long stare at Ruth. He is torn up. He signs the paper.

SHELLY THE DOCTOR
Say nighty night.

The doctor reaches over and removes Ruth's IV and respirator. He switches off the heart monitor just as it starts to FLATLINE.

DAVE 3
It was nice meeting you.

Mallory takes Dave 3's arm and gently guides him out.

Once they're gone, Shelly pulls out one more secret valve which DEFLATES Ruth's fake body.

WORSE THAN NO WORLD

Ruth has eaten her way out of the Jello. It has made her skin green. She's very full. Two gigantic JELLO TECHNICIANS escort her, like security guards.

NO WORLD - TIMECLOCK ROOM

Ruth waddles through, flanked by the Techs. She passes some of her former Blower colleagues, who stare, aghast.

HOMELESS LADY / DAVE 2'S MOM
(whispering)
They caught her, the Ruth!

NO WORLD - ADMINISTRATOR'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Ruth waddle-charges into the Administrator's office, a surprisingly bland cubicle. The Administrator looks up from some paperwork.

RUTH
I'd like to file a complaint.

ADMINISTRATOR
You!?

RUTH

I was deliberately attacked for no good reason.

ADMINISTRATOR

Oh I know what you've been doing. You are the complaineer not the complainer.

RUTH

And I was prevented from eating a hot dog. That Dave was going to buy for me.

ADMINISTRATOR

You were not supposed to be anywhere near Dave. You were not supposed to be doing any of this. You've thrown the whole thing way off course, again. It's been very inconvenient for me.

RUTH

Well it's all about you, is it?!

ADMINISTRATOR

No. This is what you don't seem to understand. It's all about Dave.

The Administrator opens the cabinet behind her and pulls out a pair of white cotton gloves.

RUTH

What are those for?

Then the Administrator shoves the cabinet out of the way, opening up another room behind her office.

NO WORLD - RECYCLING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

There's a large SHREDDING MACHINE, like a giant plastic version of a wood chipper. The Administrator flips it on and it makes a loud WHIR.

RUTH

What's that for?

With one hand, the Administrator picks up Ruth by the ankle and guides her into the big slicer machine.

RUTH (CONT'D)

Don't I get a last meal? It doesn't have to be the hot dog.

She starts to be CHOPPED INTO BITS from the feet up.
Ruth-chips shoot out the other end of the machine.

ADMINISTRATOR

I don't know what went wrong when
we built you.

1/4 chopped...

RUTH

Can I ask you something? I've been
thinking about it and I can't
figure it out.

ADMINISTRATOR

You were never supposed to be
curious.

The Administrator turns the chipper up to 10.

RUTH

(louder)
Where do you make the Daves?

ADMINISTRATOR

You were never supposed to have
feelings.

Mostly chopped...

RUTH

I can't hear you!

ADMINISTRATOR

You were a fluke, the bad kind.

As she's decimated...

RUTH

Where do Daves come from!?
(then)
Well, nuts.

Ruth gets in one last epic eye-roll before she is totally
chopped up.

"Superman" by Barbara Streisand plays.

The final Ruth-chips are shot into a bin and the
Administrator flips off the machine.

She picks up the bin, which resembles Dave 1's paint chips,
and pours it into a second machine. She hits another switch.

This one is a PULVERIZER. Two large pounders PUMMEL the chips into dust.

The Administrator sweeps it up into a wheelbarrow.

NO WORLD - PLANT ROOM

A TECH wheels what's left of Ruth into the plant room. She sprinkles the Ruth-mulch on the plants.

A PLUME OF DUST floats up into the air. The camera gets closer and closer to the dust, MAGNIFYING 400X until we can see a SINGLE RUTH CELL.

CELLULAR WORLD

This curly, plucky, zygote-type Ruth Cell floats through the magnified cellular No-World, passing by unidentifiable blocks of colors, textures, and squiggles.

She goes left, pauses, then goes right.

She goes up to a giant paramecium, and then goes around it.

She goes up and up and up and then IN, right at us.

We spin around following the Ruth Cell at high speeds traversing cellular chaos: bands of color stretch into infinity, spider-blobs whiz by, a vibrating prism refracts light beams.

It's a long journey for such a small being. It's outside of time and inside of space.

EXT. WOMB - CONTINUOUS

The Ruth Cell zips right up next to a gigantic semi-translucent pink wall. She SLAMS INTO IT. Nothing.

She slams again. Still nothing.

A third time... and she breaks through the barrier!

INT. WOMB - CONTINUOUS

A few dozen SPERM are trying their darndest to get into an EGG. One of them, the DAVE SPERM, nuzzles its way in. The rest fizzle out and go limp.

The Ruth Cell is watching.

The DAVE EGG swells, getting bigger, and then with mitosis - POP - divides into two cells.

Another SWELL, another POP, and it's four Dave Cells.

The Ruth cell starts to divide as well. POP and SPLIT. And then again. The Ruth Cells are splitting and growing more quickly than the Dave Cells, until she dwarfs him in size.

Then the Ruth Cell cluster starts to grow again, but instead of dividing it turns into a Pac-Man shape and CHOMPS THE DAVE CLUSTER.

Thus, the Ruth Cells have absorbed the Dave cells.

The Ruth cell continues to grow. The cells start to form an embryo. A brain forms. It's all very abstract.

Then there's a foot.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

The hospital room is full of extras we have seen before, now reassigned a DOCTOR, NURSES and a MOTHER giving birth.

The Mother is breathing and pushing and breathing and pushing. And then... Baby Ruth is born.

DOCTOR (O.S.)
It's a beautiful baby... girl?

Babs's "Superman" hits the orchestral high point.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - DAY

A NURSE carries the newborn Ruth into the nursery.

INT. HOSPITAL NURSERY - CONTINUOUS

A room full of silent NON-BABIES. Just before the door opens they all spring to life, with a CHORUS OF CRYING.

Baby Ruth is carried in.

Close on Baby Ruth as she is laid down, screaming with life.

THE END.