

UNTITLED MARGARITA

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FADE IN:

INT. SMALL COLORADO GYM - DAY - 2006

A BLACK SCREEN.

PANTING. WEIGHTS CLATTER to the floor. Some GRUNTS from strained athletes. SHOES HITTING the TREADMILL. BIKE MACHINES WHIR.

BEEP. BEEP. BEEP. BEEP.

Someone is increasing the speed of a treadmill.

A FLUSHED RED face of MARGARITA, 26, with an atrocious underbite and fluffy red hair flying madly about as she runs, fills the screen.

We begin to slowly PULL OUT.

She continues to increase her speed on the treadmill. All of a sudden her LOUD THUDDING SNEAKERS begin to rhythmically GALLOP.

The further we pull out we reveal her HORSE GRAPHIC Tee and unflattering bike shorts pulled up around her middle, creating a picturesque camel toe.

As she continues to GALLOP the POUNDING of her feet on the treadmill has caused many other gym-goers to stare at the chaos occurring on the treadmill.

She keeps increasing her speed, galloping faster and faster. Her breathing is labored. Her cheeks are as red as her hair.

She GALLOPS faster and faster and faster.

All of a sudden, she TRIPS on her own feet, falling to her hands and knees. She slides off the treadmill onto the floor with a SONIC BOOM that causes every person in the gym to look. Some gasp.

She has disappeared out of frame.

SUPERIMPOSE: HORSEGIRL

Margarita slowly sits up from the floor. Hot tears drip down her face. She forces her underbite of a mouth into a smile, shouting loudly.

MARGARITA

I'm fine!

EXT. SMALL TOWN STREETS - COLORADO, DUSK

A PLUSH HORSE HEAD

Is mounted to a purple bicycle.

MARGARITA rides her bicycle down the streets. Her fluffy hair, slicked to her forehead with sweat, flies madly behind her. She balances her horse tote bag on her arm.

As she rides, she sings to herself at the top of her lungs, a song she has written about herself.

MARGARITA

Fast...she's fast...the fastest  
girl in the world...she's good and  
she's great and she's fast...

As she rides, she shuts her eyes, beginning to coast down the hill. At the last second she opens her eyes, she dodges a GRUFF MAN on the sidewalk, practically smashing into him...but she clears it.

GRUFF MAN

Use the bike lane- fuck!

Margarita doesn't even notice, she's entirely in HER OWN WORLD. She continues on riding.

Suddenly a HEAVENLY CHOIR begins to break into SONG, the exact lyrics she was singing before. The SOUNDTRACK fills her mind, it's ethereal and epic.

CHOIR

Fast...she's fast...the fastest  
girl in the world...she's good and  
she's great and she's fast...

EXT. SMALL TOWN STREETS - MARGARITA'S WORLD.

In MARGARITA'S WORLD, sounds are **AMPLIFIED**. Colors are **SATURATED**. The leaves seem to **LIFT** off the ground as she rides. The CHOIR continues to SING.

Margarita begins to FLOAT while riding her bike. The bike begins to move as if it's galloping. Her hair floats upwards, the blood drips from her knees begin to float off her knees.

Margarita hangs on tight as the wind blows her hair back.  
She's free.

She SEES:

Leaves, faces, shadows, reflections, birds.

She HEARS:

Her tires, the wind, the leaves crunch, people's voices, and horse hooves.

Her bike touches back down to earth again. She coasts down the hill in complete bliss.

She pedals on.

INT. CHEMOTHERAPY ROOM - DAY

PEPPERMINT PINK WALLS and paintings of FLOWER GARDENS.

The rhythmic BEEPS of machines.

FLUID DRIPS through IVs.

SANDY, mid 50's with curly brown hair and a face filled with freckles, sits in a chair receiving chemo. Sandy is in the middle of telling an animated story as a couple other cancer patients listen.

All patients seem to be middle-aged women. Many don't have hair and some wear masks.

Sandy is one of the few who still has hair and life left in her.

SANDY

So of course, he lifts me up and, he deadman carries-- no he fireman carries, what's the word? I don't know what it is, you know where they throw you over their shoulder-- you know, you know... Anyways he has me over his shoulder because I am so piss drunk off G&T's and tequila shots and whatever else they served us that night...So, he's still carrying me, I manage to convince him we should sleep out on the trampoline...because it...I don't know why I thought it- but I thought we wouldn't wake up our kid...so we, we go sleep on the trampoline.

DEBBIE, the woman sitting next to her, also still with hair and looking livelier than some of the other women, chimes in.

DEBBIE  
And how was it?

SANDY  
Fucking freezing.

The ladies burst out in laughter. Sandy's stories always lighten up the room. KIM calls out from across the room.

KIM  
Your husband's a keeper. Better hang on to that one.

Sandy fakes a smile, shaking her head. She's hiding something.

BANG.

The door to the chemo room is THROWN open.

In comes the TORNADO that is **MARGARITA**. She has blood dripping down her knees. Sandy's face drops.

MARGARITA  
(too loudly)  
Hey ladies how's it going.

Margarita walks straight towards Sandy. Sandy's mood has changed as the attention of the room switches to Margarita.

SANDY  
Hands-

Margarita stops abruptly.

MARGARITA  
Ahhh...

She gives herself a "I'm so stupid" clonk on the head. She walks to the sink to wash her hands.

Margarita begins talking over the sink.

MARGARITA (CONT'D)  
So I was practicing my gallop-

SANDY  
-Face me when you're talking-

Margarita turns off the faucet. She wipes her hands on her bike shorts, turning around to face Sandy. The other women try to turn back to their reading.

MARGARITA  
So I was practicing-

SANDY  
-Practicing what?

MARGARITA  
-My galloping. I was on the  
treadmill and--

SANDY  
Volume.

MARGARITA  
(bringing her yelling  
down)  
I was on the treadmill going super  
fast which was good but I think my  
shoelace got caught in the thingy,  
I tripped and I fell and then blah!

She points to her knees. She starts laughing.

MARGARITA (CONT'D)  
But I didn't even cry. You would  
have been proud...I just stood up I  
was like I'm good! I'm okay! And  
the guy at the gym came to check on  
me and I was like I'm good!

She keeps laughing.

SANDY  
Did you say thank you?

Margarita walks up to one of the framed paintings on the  
wall. It's a Thomas Kincaid style over-the-top flower-y  
garden painting. She taps it.

MARGARITA  
Did I what? Hey...this is new...

SANDY  
Say thank you?

MARGARITA  
Yeah I think I said thank you. I  
liked the beach painting better.  
This one doesn't fit right.

DEBBIE  
(smiling)  
My mother painted that painting,  
Margarita.

MARGARITA

I don't like it. I liked the beach painting more. Mom, after this can we get taquitos?

She scratches at her crotch. Most of the women can't help but watch at this point. Sandy motions at Margarita to stop.

Margarita doesn't catch the hint. She TROTS over to her mom.

MARGARITA (CONT'D)

So taquitos or no?

SANDY

Sit down...your hair is in your face.

Margarita sits down in front of Sandy as she begins to pull Margarita's hair into sections to braid. Margarita begins to HUM under her breath. Her long red hair is pulled into a braid.

CUT TO:

INT. LOS AMIGOS - NIGHT

MARGARITA'S BRAID is complete. As we CIRCLE around her head, we see NEON PINK AND BLUE LIGHTS reflecting on her face.

Margarita chews with her mouth open. Her gaze is focused intently forward.

REVEAL a shitty karaoke stage in front of her.

Sandy and Margarita sit in a booth together at a hole-in-the-wall Mexican Restaurant.

Margarita dips her taquito into sour cream, shoving the rest of it in her mouth. Sour cream drips off the side of her mouth. She wipes it with the back of her hand, dragging some of it into her hair.

Sandy works on a plate of enchiladas next to her, not paying any attention to the singer on stage.

All of a sudden, the SOUND of the ROOM floods in.

KARAOKE M.C.

Give another hand for Mike. Up next we have our very own Miss Margarita singing-

Margarita abruptly stands up, walking straight for the stage. She reaches the microphone, talking with her mouth up against it.

MARGARITA

My name is Margarita and tonight I will be singing American Pie by the late great Don McLean. HIT IT.

She looks over at Sandy, giving a thumbs up. She hides her nerves with overconfidence.

Margarita closes her eyes, exhaling loudly. The crappy KARAOKE TRACK crackles on.

Sandy takes a deep breath. Here we go.

Margarita's voice comes in TOO LOUDLY and a beat too late. She grips the mic, white knuckling it. She begins to do small hand motions along with the song.

She knows it by heart. As the chorus begins to come in, she eases up.

She takes the microphone off the stand and begins to strut the stage, still nervous, but *f e e l i n g* it more.

A waiter walks to the table directly in front of the stage, delivering tequila shots. About ten people at the large table raise their shot glasses laughing loudly.

Margarita watches them, forgetting to keep singing.

She looks over at Sandy, who motions for her to keep going. Margarita's face grows red. She's overstimulated. She looks back to the table of ten tequila takers.

She bonks a GIRL sitting at the table on the back of the head with the microphone.

**THWUMP**

The girl turns around angrily.

GIRL

What the hell?

Margarita throws her hands up in annoyance.

MARGARITA

I'm singing right now! You're being rude, you don't think you're being rude right now? Cuz I think you are.

Sandy drops her face into her hands.

CUT TO:

INT. MARGARITA'S HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

HANDS DANCING, WRISTS ROLLING.

We follow the hands down to find Margarita. She's fresh out of the shower, hair wet, and in a horse night gown. She interpretive dances as she watches the TV. Her interpretive dancing includes galloping, contemporary, hip-hop, and ninja movements.

A HORSE DOCUMENTARY from ANIMAL PLANET plays on the television. Margarita talks along with it, almost word for word.

NARRATOR

Once the foal comes out, the mare will chew on the membranes and placenta to prevent the foal from suffocating and lick the newborn foal to help blood circulation.

MARGARITA

...mare will chew on the membranes and placenta...foal from suffocating...foal to help blood circulation

\*

Sandy groans. She's laying behind Margarita with a trash can on the floor next to her. She looks nauseous. She breathes in.

SANDY

Margs, can we watch something different? Please?

Margarita continues to interpretive dance in front of the TV.

MARGARITA

No I wanna watch this.

SANDY

I don't wanna watch horses giving birth...I can't look at that right now.

She swallows hard.

MARGARITA

It's not gross it's the circle of life.

She does a slow spin as she sings.

MARGARITA (CONT'D)  
 Circle of liiiiiifeeee.

Margarita spins FASTER. FASTER. FASTER.

Her world SPINS.

SANDY  
 Can I have the remote?

MARGARITA  
 Wait look how fast I'm spinning  
 right now...woah woahwoahwoah-

Sandy squints, looking nauseous. She shuts her eyes.

SANDY  
 Christ.

Sandy rolls on her back shutting her eyes. A HORSE NEIGHS loudly as SQUELCHES of FLUID FALL LOUDLY. Sandy puts her hand over her mouth, suppressing vomit.

MARGARITA  
 WOAHHWOAHHHHHH

Sandy puts her hands over her ears as the SQUELCHING NOISE from the television plays as a horse gives birth.

SANDY  
 Will you change the FUCKING CHANNEL-

Margarita stops spinning all at once. The room continues to SPIN in her VISION.

MARGARITA  
 Why are you being such a bitch?

Margarita is gearing up for a meltdown. She stomps, heading straight for the front door.

MARGARITA (CONT'D)  
 UGHHHHH!

She THROWS the front door open and SLAMS it shut. The NARRATOR's VOICE continues on.

NARRATOR  
 And just shortly after birth...the  
 young horse is able to run.

Sandy rolls over with a heave, grabbing the trash can.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREETS - NIGHT

Margarita rides her bike out of town towards the stables. She pedals fast. She listens to AMERICAN PIE in her headphones.

She sings really loudly and angrily off key. She cuts in and out of singing between her panting.

MARGARITA

While the king was...looking  
doooooownnnn....the Jes-- stole  
his...croooowwwnnn...

She races past street lamps, her face flushed from the cold night, her hair still wet from the shower.

Finally, she brings herself to a stop with her feet on the dirt path. She begins to walk her bike down a steep hill.

EXT. STABLES - NIGHT

Margarita wades through the tall grass, dragging her bike along through it.

She drops her bike, approaching a large wooden fence surrounding some stables.

She leans on to the fence. She WHISTLES out into the darkness. Nothing.

MARGARITA

Pssst. Hey! Hey!

She CLICKS her mouth. Finally, some HORSE HOOVES are heard approaching from the distance. Margarita smiles.

She keeps her voice soft.

MARGARITA (CONT'D)

Hey...hello...hello...I know, it's  
been a while...too long...I missed  
you.

A large brown horse approaches gently. Margarita reaches the back of her hand out to the horse. It sniffs, then pushes into her hand. She begins petting it.

We're back in HER WORLD.

EXT. STABLES - NIGHT - MARGARITA'S WORLD.

She feels the SOFT MUZZLE. The WARM BREATH of the HORSE.

She SEES the GLASSY EYES that stare back at her.

FIREFLIES glow around her, swirling in little bulbs of light.

She strokes the horse's muzzle over and over again. She slowly leans her head onto the horse, connecting her face with the muzzle.

She takes in a deep breath, closing her eyes. Holding for a moment longer. Her world feels peaceful and still.

She puts her hands up, curling her wrists, beginning to dance again. Her movements are soft and contemporary. The music in her head CRESCENDOS.

Her world is full of beautiful LIGHT and SOUND.

Suddenly, a mans VOICE SHOUTS out in the darkness from the stables, breaking out of MARGARITA'S WORLD.

VOICE

Hey! You can't be petting the horses...This is private property!

Margarita, startled, yells back defensively.

MARGARITA

Oh my goddd I'm going, I'm going...

She turns to go then yells back.

MARGARITA (CONT'D)

It's a free country though!

BANG

A SHOTGUN RINGS out into the sky. Margarita SCREAMS and laughs, toppling over the fence.

She grabs her bike from the grass, awkwardly running it back up the hill she came down.

MARGARITA (CONT'D)

(calling over her  
shoulder)

Bye horse!

EXT. SMALL TOWN STREETS - NIGHT

Margarita pedals back, BREATHING hard. She passes closed shops, her silhouette illuminated under the street lamps. A few cars pass by as she rides.

Suddenly, Margarita brings her feet to a stop on the pavement with a loud SKID.

She stops outside of a DANCE STUDIO. The lights are still on. A large front facing window illuminates the street with it's bright tungsten lights.

Many awkward and lanky bodies move inside of the dance studio, bouncing shadows off the street from where Margarita watches.

Her eyes are wide with curiosity as she watches the girls inside.

INT. DANCE STUDIO - NIGHT

IN SLOW MOTION:

Pre-pubescent girls ages thirteen to fifteen-ish gallop around the dance studio. Each girl has her own horse head attached to a wooden stick between her legs.

They mimic the horse movements as they gallop back and forth across the studio.

It's an epic display of awkward as the girls practice galloping, leaping, and sprinting across the studio.

MARG POV: CLOSE on details of:

Tiny cami tank tops, booty shorts with tights, and leotards. Wide smiles filled with braces.

COACH, a large 50-something year old man with a beer belly and white-gray beard, stands at the front of the room as the girls gallop about.

He CALLS out commands to them as they move in synchronism across the floor, clapping his hands in time to the music.

COACH, after a moment, notices Margarita's face peering into the window. He catches her gaze.

Margarita, once entranced, realizes that she's been spotted. As quickly as she can she mounts her bike, pushing off, and takes off into the night.

INT. MARGARITAS HOME - NIGHT

Margarita comes to a stop on her bike.

MARGARITA

Woahhh...

She talks like it's a real horse. She sets it down on the dirt in the front yard. She walks up to the porch.

From the window she sees Sandy at the kitchen table, deep in thought. She runs a hand back and forth through her hair.

Margarita watches her mother. She's never seen her look fragile like this. She opens the front door.

INT. MARGARITA'S HOME - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Margarita walks in loudly, kicking off her shoes into the shoe closet. Sandy looks up quickly, snapping out of her daze. She gathers some receipts and coupons into a pile that she was looking at.

SANDY

You gotta get a job again Margs.

MARGARITA

No thanks.

Margarita walks to the fridge.

MARGARITA (CONT'D)

Where's the Coke Zer-

SANDY

-Side door.

MARGARITA

Nice.

She cracks one open, shutting the fridge door. She chugs it. Burps. She walks over to her mom.

MARGARITA (CONT'D)

Are you mad at me? I don't want another job. People are always mean to me.

She sits down at the table.

SANDY

You shouldn't drink those so late at night...I'm sure there's a shit ton of caffeine in it.

MARGARITA

It's zero. There's zero things in it. That's why it's Coke Zero. Why are you mad at me?

SANDY

I didn't say I was mad at you.

MARGARITA

I can just tell.

Margarita stands up and starts playing with Sandy's hair. Sandy shuts her eyes.

MARGARITA (CONT'D)

You should get bangs.

She holds up a chunk of hair to shape bangs around her face.

SANDY

No my face looks fat with bangs.

MARGARITA

Dye it blue then.

Sandy laughs.

SANDY

That would be something. I think you need to get back out there. Get a job. Be independent. It will really help us right now Margs.

MARGARITA

Maybe I can work at the stables.

SANDY

No, we've talked about this. You know you can't, that guy is gonna file a restraining order against us if you keep jumping his fence. Besides, Rachele's daughter got kicked in the face by a horse and now she's ugly.

Margarita LAUGHS. Sandy SMIRKS.

MARGARITA

If I get a job can I take riding lessons?

As Margarita plays with her hair, she notices a large bit of hair stays behind in her fingers. She stares at it.

SANDY  
(sighing)  
Don't do that to me. I need you  
here. At home. With me.

Margarita is fixated on the loose hair in her hands. She thinks for a moment, then, gently places it back on her mom's head.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Margarita brushes her teeth. Sandy sits on the toilet reading a magazine. Margarita spits. A large glob of spit lands in her hair.

MARGARITA  
Fuck. Really?!

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Margarita holds her arm up as Sandy shaves her armpit.

INT. MARGARITA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Margarita's bedroom is lined with HORSE POSTERS, HORSE CALENDARS, her bed is filled with PLUSH HORSES.

Margarita gets into bed, carefully maneuvering around each horse as to not knock any off the bed.

Sandy stands by the door, hand hovering over the light switch.

SANDY  
All good?

MARGARITA  
Yep.

SANDY  
Alright. Good night.

Sandy flips off the light switch.

MARGARITA  
Mom?

SANDY  
What?

MARGARITA

What if I just ride a pretend horse.

SANDY

(end of her rope)

You already do that with Cheeseburger right? That's why we got her.

MARGARITA

Okay. So if I ride a pretend horse then that's okay?

SANDY

(sighing)

Yes that's okay. Goodnight.

MARGARITA

Goodnight.

Margarita lies awake, staring at the ceiling. Car headlights from the streets below bounce across her wall.

INT. MARGARITA'S BEDROOM - **MARGARITA'S WORLD**

Margarita watches the lights go past and disappear into the darkness. Slowly, the plush horses around her bed begin to float, as if the whole room has lost gravity.

Margarita begins to lift out of her bed. She closes her eyes, smiling as she drifts off into sleep, floating above her bed.

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. DANCE STUDIO - DAY

Margarita's face.

Margarita stands outside the dance studio she spied on the night before. She's straddling her bike, gripping the handles tightly.

Inside the studio, the same girls are stretching in synchronized movements. COACH, the large man from last night, is at the front of the room calling out movements yet again.

She musters all her courage as she grabs the door handle and-

YANKS.

The door doesn't budge. It makes a CLATTER as she tries again to open it. Every head turns to look at her.

Margarita, flustered, notices a sign above the door. "PUSH".

INT. DANCE STUDIO - CONTINUOUS

She pushes, walking straight into the dance room. Every pair of eyes is now on her. Her confidence has entirely left her. She looks around the room uncomfortably.

COACH

Can I help you?

He calls out over the music. Margarita, terrified, just looks around, taking in the room.

A couple of the girls snicker while the rest continue to stare. Margarita looks around at them. Their laughter feels amplified. She yells out over the music.

MARGARITA

Can I?

Coach folds his arms. He's expressionless. His voice is slow and direct.

COACH

Can you what?

Margarita points out to the girls. She starts to get frustrated by Coach.

MARGARITA

I don't know.

COACH

I don't think you can if you don't know.

The girls all laugh. Most of them are ass-kissers. Margarita's eyes are beginning to fill with embarrassed tears. She fidgets slightly.

MARGARITA

Can I please do this horse class thing Jesus Christ.

COACH

There you go. That wasn't hard was it? Next time no swearing.

Coach turns to look back at the girls, not paying any attention to Margarita. Margarita is annoyed.

She stands a foot above the girls, sticking out like a sore thumb.

Coach calls out over to the girls, snapping them back to attention.

COACH (CONT'D)

Ladies. Did I tell you to stop? I have no problem taking away our matching bracelets if we aren't here to work.

All the girls find their way back into their synchronized stretching, frightened. Coach weaves around the girls.

COACH (CONT'D)

Madison, hair back- I've told you.

He pulls a scrunchie off his wrist and begins to tie her hair back harshly, yanking it back into a bun.

Coach stares at Margarita, who stares back at him, unmoving.

COACH (CONT'D)

You wanna join then you gotta join, Come on!

Margarita, angrily, yells back.

MARGARITA

I don't...don't know it!

COACH

(mimicking)

Well then learn it.

Margarita looks over at one of the girls, PINKY, who is touching her toes. Margarita attempts to copy her. She can't touch her toes.

PINKY

Woah...your legs are so hairy. Jean Marie look at her legs.

The girls heads turn as they all stare at Margarita.

Margarita looks down at her legs, for the first time noticing the thick, dark hair on her legs.

COACH

Ladies, get your horses.

All the girls stand up running to the back of the room. Their horses hang on the racks on the wall. Margarita follows. She grabs a horse off the rack.

JEAN MARIE  
That's my horse!

MARGARITA  
Oh shit sorry, sorry.

She gives the horse to Jean Marie who yanks it from her hand. All the horses are gone. The girls continue to stare at her.

PINKY  
Did she just try to steal your horse?

MARGARITA  
(defensive)  
Oh my god no I didn't!

JEAN MARIE  
She totally just did.

MARGARITA  
No I didn't you, liar!

She stomps her foot. Jean Marie gasps.

PINKY  
You're supposed to bring your own horse, sweetie.

Margarita is breathing hard. Her face is beat red. We're uncomfortably close to her face.

She storms out of the dance studio, SLAMMING the door shut behind her. Coach watches as she leaves.

Some of the girls already begin to jitter with gossip.

COACH  
Show's over. Line up for across the floor, let's go.

The girls run to a corner of the room, forming a line.

He continues to watch Margarita as she pedals away down the street.

EXT. MARGARITA'S HOME - FRONT YARD - AFTERNOON

Margarita chucks her bike down. She storms in the house.

INT. MARGARITA'S HOME - CONTINUOUS

She walks straight past the bathroom door where Sandy stands at the counter. Both barely notice each other.

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sandy stares at herself in the mirror. Margarita RUSTLES through drawers in the kitchen.

She heads back outside with scissors and a broom in hand.

EXT. FRONT YARD - CONTINUOUS

Margarita begins to pull Cheeseburger's head off the bike. She yanks and saws at it with the scissors. She GRUNTS loudly as she does it, taking out all her frustrations.

She finally RIPS the head off. She holds it in her hands.

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sandy opens a drawer in the bathroom. Men's deodorant, nail clippers, hair gel, and an electric razor.

Sandy takes the cap off the deodorant, smelling it. She instantly smells her husband.

She opens her eyes, looking at herself in the mirror. Stupid. She caps it and places it back in the drawer. She takes out the electric razor. It BUZZES to life as she turns it on.

EXT. FRONT YARD - CONTINUOUS

Margarita wraps the broom stick with duct tape, she begins to tape the horse head to the top of the stick.

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sandy takes a large swipe across the center of her head. She stares at herself, trying to feel any emotion. Nothing. She swipes again. Still nothing.

She rubs her freshly shaved patches, rubbing her hands over the loose bits of hair that fall off.

SLAM.

Margarita storms in holding the new and improved Cheeseburger in her hand. Sandy turns to see her standing in the doorway.

SANDY

What did you do to Cheeseburger?

Margarita doesn't answer, she's stopped dead in her tracks. She furrows her eyebrows at her mom.

MARGARITA

What the hell are you doing?

Sandy looks back at herself in the mirror. She laughs a little.

SANDY

What you don't like it?

Margarita doesn't take the sarcasm.

MARGARITA

(blunt)

No. I don't. I hate it.

SANDY

(defensive)

Okay, okay. It will look fine once-

She raises the razor above her head. Margarita drops Cheeseburger. She charges forward trying to knock the razor out of her hands.

MARGARITA

STOP IT!

SANDY

MARGARITA. DO NOT HIT ME.

MARGARITA

Stop shaving it-

SANDY

Why? Why? Stop-

Margarita wrestles the razor out of Sandy's hands. Sandy fights back.

MARGARITA

You look ugly- you look ugly! I HATE it.

Sandy turns off the BUZZING razor. She looks Margarita directly in the eyes.

SANDY

You really think I look ugly?

Margarita is breathing hard, shaking. Her fists are balled up. Her eyebrows are furrowed. She tries not to cry.

MARGARITA

I don't like you without hair.

SANDY

Well I don't either.

She looks up at herself in the mirror. She still has large chunks of hair on her head.

She breathes out of her nose, laughing a little.

A beat.

Margarita looks up. She looks at her mom in the mirror.

MARGARITA

Why are you laughing.

Sandy laughs harder. She runs her hand through a chunk of her hair.

SANDY

Should I keep it like this?

She laughs again. It feels good. She snorts.

MARGARITA

No...

SANDY

Why not, I can still braid it.

She laughs again, leaning on the counter. Margarita cracks a smile.

MARGARITA

You look like one of those ugly dogs that win the ugly dog contest.

Sandy bursts into a deep, deep laugh. Margarita laughs with her.

MARGARITA (CONT'D)

Can I try?

Sandy hands over the razor.

SANDY

Just be careful, don't put your fingers near the blades.

It BUZZES to life again. Margarita jumps a little. She nervously reaches towards her moms head. She gently runs the razor over one of the patches with hair.

SANDY (CONT'D)

That's good. Yeah, just like that. You can press down a little more it doesn't hurt.

Margarita swipes another large chunk of hair off Sandy's head. Very quietly, she talks.

MARGARITA

I'll get a job.

Sandy looks at her through the mirror, proud.

WE CUT WIDE as the SOUND DISAPPEARS.

To the two figures in the bathroom. Sandy puts her hand on top of Margarita's helping her glide the razor over her head.

CUT TO:

INT. MARGARITA'S HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Sandy is sitting on the couch as Margarita dances in front of the TV. They watch the same Horse Documentary from before. Margarita pauses dancing to drink a Coke Zero, watching intently.

She turns around to look at Sandy, now entirely bald. Sandy is asleep on the couch. Margarita tip toes out of the living room.

CUT TO:

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

The bathroom door is shut. A sliver of light from inside leaks through the crack of the door and spills across the living room.

The BUZZ of the RAZOR is heard. Margarita HUMS from inside the bathroom.

EXT. THE BEST HALLOWEEN STORE - NEXT DAY

Margarita stands outside a janky-looking Halloween store. Just a large NEON BANNER stands as a sign above the door.

"BEST HALLOWEEN STORE...NOW OPEN!!!"

A "NOW HIRING" sign is hung up directly below it.

Margarita wears a turtleneck underneath a denim dress, and striped leggings. Her fluffy hair is pulled back in a headband.

She clutches a piece of paper in her hand. She turns around nervously to look at Sandy who sits in the minivan parked out front. Sandy has a scarf around her head.

Sandy gives her a thumbs up. Margarita nods, giving her a shaky "rock on" sign. Sandy motions to her cheeks to smile. Margarita forces a smile. Not her best smile.

She turns to the store and walks in.

INT. THE BEST HALLOWEEN STORE - CONTINUOUS

Margarita looks around the store. It's a complete mess of costumes, masks, boxes, and accessories. Every aisle is overflowing with unorganized Halloween paraphernalia.

Margarita timidly walks through the store. She sees SUMMER, a girl with heavy eye makeup and straightened side bangs, hanging up costumes on racks.

MARGARITA

Excuse me do you work here?

SUMMER, wearing a "BEST HALLOWEEN STORE" Vest with buttons on it that say "Ask me about a 25% discount" and "Spooky deals" turns to look at her.

SUMMER

No, I just felt like wearing this fugly vest and hanging up costumes.

MARGARITA

Oh okay cool. Do you think you could help me find someone that works here then?

SUMMER

(rolling her eyes)

No, I work here. What do you need.

Margarita, hands shaking slightly, nervously laughs. She hands her resume to Summer. Summer, confused, takes it.

MARGARITA

Oh sick, cool, cool. I would like to get a job here actually.

She laughs again. Summer looks at the resume. It reads

SKILLS: good communication, hard worker, diligent, good customer service, can make change, clean, punctual, good attitude.

WORK EXPERIENCE: MARTMAX'S Clothing Department. 2001-2002.

Summer looks back up at Margarita who is nervously wringing her hands.

SUMMER

Why'd you quit MARTMAX's?

MARGARITA

I didn't quit, I got fired because I was accused of verbal harassment for calling my manager Toby a dickhead when he wouldn't let me work the register. He wouldn't let me work the register he said I was too slow to work the register so I called him a dickhead.

SUMMER

Woah.

MARGARITA

Yeah I had to get a lawyer and everything. He was saying, like, I was slow like I didn't give change back fast enough but....you know...I knew he meant slow like. So yeah, anyways, I'm a really hard worker and I definitely am fast enough on cash registers.

A beat.

SUMMER

Kay. Go find Hank. He's the short Indian dude. He owns the store you can talk to him. Not sure if we need anymore workers though...just a warning.

Margarita looks nervous. She takes her resume back. She nods quickly.

MARGARITA

Okay...cool, cool...no worries, totally. I love your eye makeup by the way. It's really awesome. I wish I could do my makeup like that.

Summer is putting in headphones.

SUMMER

Okay.

Summer turns back to hanging clothes as if Margarita isn't there. Margarita nods, giving a slight wave, then waddles her way down the store aisles.

She looks down an aisle- an animatronic ghoul lights up, giving a robotic CACKLE.

Margarita JUMPS, then laughs. She points at it, laughing. She looks around to see if anyone else saw. She laughs again, amused by the moving ghoul with light up eyes.

She continues on down the aisle, looking at the different halloween decor. She spots a small Indian man in a vest, HANK, walking quickly past an aisle looking at a clipboard.

Margarita follows after him.

MARGARITA

Excuse me...excuse me...

He's distracted, looking at his clipboard. His walkie RINGS. He takes it off his hip.

HANK

Yeah, I'm coming, I'm just checking inventory.

MARGARITA

Hey Hank?

He turns around, confused how she knows his name. He looks at her, still holding his walkie.

HANK

Can I help you?

MARGARITA

Oh hey, I was wondering if I could work here?

HANK

What?

She holds up her resume to him. He looks down at it then back up at her. He takes it from her hands.

HANK (CONT'D)

I...Sorry...Did you...email me an application?

MARGARITA

No.

He looks at her again.

HANK

Normally, I need applicants to fill out an online application first then we can set up an interview.

His walkie RINGS again. He answers.

HANK (CONT'D)

Yeah, sorry I'm on my way.

He begins to walk.

HANK (CONT'D)

Just email me.

Margarita follows after him, trotting to keep up.

MARGARITA

Well I'm already here so I figured we could just interview now.

He keeps walking. He tries to shake her off as he walks faster.

HANK

Well...I don't normally...that's not how I... What's your name?

MARGARITA

Margarita.

HANK

Margarita?

MARGARITA

Yeah, like the drink. My mom and dad named me after it because they were super drunk on margaritas the night they conceived me.

HANK

Oh...wow.

MARGARITA (O.S.)

Wait, look at this!

Hank turns to look and sees that Margarita is walking back down the aisle they came from.

She heads straight towards a MOTHER and SON looking down the aisles of the HALLOWEEN DECOR.

MARGARITA (CONT'D)

Wait, did you guys see this one?  
Look, look.

She walks up to the ANIMATRONIC GHOUL. She walks in front of the GHOUL. It **LIGHTS UP** and **CAKLES**. She JUMPS, grabbing at her chest in genuine fear.

MARGARITA (CONT'D)

Ah! See isn't that great? You could put it by your door and it could scare trick-or-treaters. It's so awesome. I think I'm gonna buy it for my house. Look at it's eyes! Did you see the eyes?

The Mother, LISA, is laughing. DANNY (6, small with huge glasses), excitedly looks up at her.

DANNY

Can we buy it?

Margarita is walking past it again as it LIGHTS UP and CACKLES. Margarita jumps with excitement yet again.

MARGARITA

Ah! It's so funny, right?

Danny is cracking up and playing along with her.

LISA

Okay, okay. You sold us.

DANNY

YESSS!

Hank watches with his jaw dropped. Danny is trying to lift the animatronic ghoul.

MARGARITA

Here, got it? I can help.

Margarita lifts up the ghoul, it's still moving and **CAACKLING** in her arms. She walks straight up to Hank.

MARGARITA (CONT'D)  
Where's the register?

Hank points to the front of the store, his jaw dropped.

MARGARITA (CONT'D)  
Thanks.

She turns to start, then turns back to Hank with another idea.

MARGARITA (CONT'D)  
Oh...do you guys sell wigs?

HANK  
(in awe)  
Aisle four.

MARGARITA  
Thanks.

She walks towards the front of the store. As Danny and Lisa pass, Lisa jokes to Hank.

LISA  
You should give this girl a raise.

Hank watches as the three of them parade to the front of the store. He jogs after them, calling out.

HANK  
Margarita?

CUT TO:

EXT. THE BEST HALLOWEEN STORE - LATER

Margarita BURSTS out of the front of the store.

MARGARITA  
I DID IT! I DID IT I DID IT BABY!

She jumps up and down, dancing excitedly. Sandy looks up from the car. She gets out of the car, running to Margarita.

SANDY  
What, you got it?

MARGARITA

I'm a working woman! I got a job!  
He hired me! Oh my god...I'm  
awesome. I'm so awesome. I'm so  
excited!

SANDY

(excited)

Honey that's amazing! When do you  
start?

Margarita is still dancing.

MARGARITA

I dunno!

SANDY

Do you need to do training?

MARGARITA

I dunno!

SANDY

Did he tell you what you would be  
doing?

MARGARITA

(sincerely)

Yeah! I'm working there! PFT.

Sandy looks back at the store. She looks at Margarita, still  
dancing around, pumping her fists.

MARGARITA (CONT'D)

Can I go ride Cheeseburger? Please?  
I gotta go ride like the WIND I  
feel so GOOD!

SANDY

Yes...Hey...we should get some  
celebration dinner Margs. What do  
you think? We could do Sizzlers?

Margarita pumps her fists in the air.

MARGARITA

SIZZLERS! APPS! APPS AT SIZZLERS.  
OH my god woman you are a GENIUS. A  
goddamn genius. SHE'S A GENIUS AND  
SHE'S MY MOM!

Margarita is shouting it to the passerby's on the street.  
Sandy is laughing, trying to calm her down.

SANDY  
Okay, shhh, okay. Here.

She hands Margarita some cash from her purse. They talk over each other.

SANDY (CONT'D)  
Order some apps for us...not all of them, just some-

MARGARITA  
-I knowwww...

SANDY  
I just need to pick up some meds from the pharmacy, I'll meet you there.

MARGARITA  
Oooh drugs. You won't be mad at me if I go ride Cheeseburger?

SANDY  
Yes, my drugs. What? Of course not.

MARGARITA  
Cool! Good I'm gonna go ride around then we can eat Sizzlers. BYE!

As she talks she's already pulled Cheeseburger out of the van. She straddles Cheeseburger and begins to gallop down the street. Sandy watches her, slightly embarrassed.

A couple walking down the street holding hands lets go as she gallops right through them.

Sandy turns back to the Halloween Store.

INT. THE BEST HALLOWEEN STORE - CONTINUOUS

Sandy turns down a narrow aisle and finds Hank hanging up masks. She clears her throat.

SANDY  
Excuse me...Are you the manager?

Hank turns around to see Sandy. His eyes dart to the scarf wrapped on her head. He looks back to her.

HANK  
I am. Hank-

He reaches his hand out to shake her hand. Sandy doesn't shake.

SANDY

It's okay, I...my daughter was just in here. Her name is Margarita.

HANK

Yes, she's quite the saleswoman.

Sandy nods, giving a polite fake laugh.

SANDY

Yes. She...I think you need to know she is a very capable young woman.

HANK

(genuinely)

Yes, that's why I hired her.

Hank begins to move down the aisle, continuing to hang up masks as Sandy talks. Sandy moves with him.

SANDY

She's very smart...she actually has a college degree.

HANK

That's wonderful.

Sandy continues to shuffle down the aisle as Hank organizes.

SANDY

Just, make sure you're clear with instructions...and she doesn't really pick up on sarcasm...She also may need to have things explained a couple of times and if you give her a chance she can do the register. She can talk back but she's not being disrespectful, she just speaks her mind.

HANK

Ma'am, I have no doubt your daughter is a hard worker. You shouldn't worry about her. She'll be fine.

SANDY

I'm not worried.

Her face says otherwise. Folding her arms. Hank turns back to her once more.

HANK

You should be very proud of her.

Sandy nods with a polite smile.

HANK (CONT'D)

Have a good day.

He walks back down the aisle and turns the corner, disappearing from sight. Sandy adjusts her scarf self-consciously. Deep in thought, she looks down at the GHOUL on the floor. It sits unmoving.

EXT. SMALL TOWN STREETS - LATE AFTERNOON

Margarita, still GALLOPING on Cheeseburger, begins to slow as she sees the dance studio. She takes a deep breath.

She YANKS the door. CLATTER. She remembers. She PUSHES.

INT. DANCE STUDIO - CONTINUOUS

Inside, most of the girls are huddled up talking. Margarita places Cheeseburger onto the back rack holding the horses.

It rolls off, hitting the floor with a CLACK. All the girls turn to stare at Margarita.

MARGARITA

It's fine! I'm fine!

She reaches up to place Cheeseburger on the highest rack.

She takes off her ankle-length dress, still leaving the turtleneck on. She pulls her leggings off, struggling to get them over her large sneakers. The girls all watch.

From beneath the dress and leggings, she reveals a pair of tiny short-shorts underneath. Her legs are covered in band-aids and scabs from shaving.

She shoves the dress and leggings into her horse tote. She yanks a wedgie out of her butt.

Her short shorts say "BOOTYLICIOUS" on the back of them.

She pulls her hair back into a messy pony with a scrunchie.

All the girls continue to stare. Margarita walks towards them.

MARGARITA (CONT'D)  
So what are your guys' names?

No one answers. She points at one of the girls, PINKY.

MARGARITA (CONT'D)  
What's your name?

Pinky looks at the girls, laughing a little.

PINKY  
My name is Pinky. It's not my **real** name but Coach gave me a nickname because I have pink streaks in my hair, see?

She points to her clip in streaks.

MARGARITA  
Those are awesome. Are they real?

PINKY  
(lying confidently)  
Yeah.

MARGARITA  
Oh...they look  
like...they're...not.

Margarita reaches out for her head. Pinky quickly throws her hands onto her hair.

PINKY  
Don't touch them!

She looks at Margarita, confused by her forwardness.

MARGARITA  
Oh. Okay. Sorry.

Margarita laughs uncomfortably. Pinky folds her arms.

PINKY  
Yeah...Coach only gave me a nickname though. Everyone else just goes by their real names.

Pinky begins to go down the line, pointing at each of the girls as she says their names.

PINKY (CONT'D)

That's Madison, that's Jean Marie,  
Sarah M., Sarah B., Rachael,  
Kristina, Paige, Jess, Melissa,  
Nikki, and Kelsey. Normally  
Madeline is here but she threw up  
at Best Buy yesterday so I don't  
think she's coming.

Margarita nods, awkwardly smiling and waving at each of them  
as they're introduced. She waits for them to ask her name.  
They don't.

Silence.

MARGARITA

Okay cool, cool...Well, I'm  
Margarita.

JEAN MARIE

(chiming in)  
Wait...It's Margarita?

MARGARITA

Yeah! My mom and dad named me after  
the drink...you know...  
margaritas...because they were  
drinking them the night they  
conceived me.

PINKY

Pfffttt!

JEAN-MARIE

Ewww!

Some of the girls giggle, others gasp. Pinky is eating it up.  
She puts her hand over her mouth dramatically. Her eyes widen  
as she looks back at the other girls who all mimic her  
reaction in some form.

PINKY (CONT'D)

Oh my frigging god...that's so  
embarrassing.

She looks around giggling, amping up the other girls. She  
looks down at Margarita's legs.

PINKY (CONT'D)

Oh my god...Margarita...What  
happened to your legs?

Margarita looks down at the scabs and band-aids.

MARGARITA

Oh...I just...fell down...like a  
couple of times. On the treadmill.

(MORE)

MARGARITA (CONT'D)

I work out at the gym. Do you guys go to the gym?

Pinky sees right through it.

PINKY

Ohhh...I thought you just didn't know how to shave your legs.

MARGARITA

(laughing)

What? No...that's so fr-frigging embarrassing.

SARAH M.

(calling out)

My mom doesn't let me shave my legs!

Pinky rolls her eyes.

PINKY

Yeah, clearly Sarah M.

The girls laugh again. Margarita joins in with the laughing, going along with it. She laughs extra loud.

MARGARITA

That's funny.

SARAH M.

Why is that funny?

All the girls look, waiting for an answer. Sarah M. Stares at her looking hurt.

MARGARITA

Oh uh...I don't know.

Suddenly, the door PUSHES open. Coach walks in, immediately changing the tone of the room. His HEAVY BOOTS THUD across the wooden floor.

All the girls turn, facing the mirror, spreading out quickly. Margarita watches him.

COACH

Don't waste my time...I let you come in early to stretch, I wanna see you stretching not chatting, girls.

He heads straight to the front of the room where the CD player connected to a speaker sits. He pulls a CD out of his book bag, setting it into the player.

MUSIC BURSTS through the SPEAKERS. All the girls immediately begin to stretch in synchronism. Margarita covers her ears in reaction. She looks around, slowly lowering her hands.

Coach looks at her, shouting over the music.

COACH (CONT'D)

Welcome back, Red.

Pinky immediately looks up, throwing her an angry look. Margarita smiles, she nods, giving a small wave. He motions to her.

COACH (CONT'D)

Come here.

Margarita walks over to him. He pulls out a coffee stained folder filled with loose papers. He finds the paper he's looking for, flipping it to the top.

CLOSE UP ON:

#### HOBBYHORSE REGISTRATION

Margarita begins to scribble her name on the line. She pauses at the column AGE(12-18)

She scratches 18.

She hands the folder back to him. He looks down at it, then looks back at her. He looks back to the sheet and begins to file it into his folder. He talks in a long run-on sentence.

COACH (CONT'D)

It's \$25 a week or \$100 at the end of the month cash or check. You pay up front now or end of this week. We practice Monday through Thursday from four to six. I don't accept tardiness. **Beat.** Since you're not a minor I don't need a guardian signature but I do expect you to compete on my team at the regionals competition next month. I need more in my upper division. Sound good?

Margarita, completely zoned out and not catching a word.

MARGARITA

Okay.

COACH

Good. Now catch on.

He motions to the rest of the girls warming up.

Margarita looks around. All the girls are running in place. She holds her boobs as she runs in place. Coach looks away.

COACH (CONT'D)

Where's Madeline?

PINKY, SARAH M., KELSEY (IN UNISON)

She threw up at Best Buy!

Coach nods. They bend down to touch their toes. Margarita catches on (slightly) quicker this time.

COACH

Across the floor, let's go!

All the girls run to the back of the room, grabbing their horses off the rack. Margarita runs too, pulling down Cheeseburger. She reaches over half the girls to the top shelf.

The girls split in half, lining up at opposite diagonals of the room. Margarita tries to mesh in line.

JEAN MARIE

No cutting!

MARGARITA

Oh shit. My bad, my bad.  
Sorrrysorrrysorry.

She heads to the back of the line. Coach places a wooden crate in the middle of the room.

COACH

(clapping)

5...6...5678!

One after the other, alternating from opposite sides of the room, the girls trot on their horses and hurdle over the box. Each girl lands it.

Margarita watches intently. Her turn approaches quickly. She awkwardly run-trots and stops at the box. She disrupts the flow. She looks at Coach.

COACH (CONT'D)

Jump!

MARGARITA

Hang on...I'm gonna try again.

She runs backwards back to the line. She gears up again.

RACHAEL

Hurry up!

Margarita turns around, annoyed.

MARGARITA

I am, just shut up.

She turns back, furrowing her brows. She runs straight at the box. She jumps too early, her feet hit the box. It slides. She falls to the floor.

BOOM.

MARGARITA (CONT'D)

Fuck!

The girls GASP. Coach is unphased.

COACH

Shake it off, Red. Get back up. No swearing, I told you that last time.

Margarita looks up at him, slightly shell shocked from the fall. She looks at her hands that are stinging. She slowly gets back up. Cheeseburger's head hangs loosely off the pole.

Margarita limps to the back of the line, trying to hide her pain. One of the scabs on her legs has opened back up.

MARGARITA

Shit.

She smears the blood off with her hands, then wipes it on her shorts.

She looks down at Cheeseburger, assessing the damage. She attempts to re-tape it. Pinky leans into her ear.

PINKY

Some advice...probably buy a real horse next time.

MARGARITA

(defensive)

Yeah okay I will, hop off.

Margarita's face is red with embarrassment and frustration. She puts her hands over the tape, trying to hide it. She turns back to the room as it SLOWS DOWN.

INT. DANCE STUDIO - **MARGARITA'S WORLD**

**IN SLOW MOTION (MARG POV):**

FEET TROTting. HANDS GRIPPING THEIR STICKS. BRACES WITH RUBBER BANDS FLASHING AS THEY SMILE. HORSE HEADS. PINK HAIR CLIP INS. CHARMS ON SHOELACES.

Margarita takes in everything, captivated by the girls.

IN SLOW MOTION:

The girls line up across the room facing the mirror. They raise their horses in a final "performance routine" choreography that Coach is rehearsing with them.

ZOOM IN on Margarita as she stands completely still, starring at herself in the mirror. She doesn't try to catch on.

SCABBY LEGS. BOOBS. HAIR. GUT. Nothing about her resembles these girls.

INT. SIZZLERS - NIGHT

ZOOM IN ON

SANDY. She sits at a booth, an untouched plate of appetizers sits in front of her. She stares straight ahead.

WAITRESS

Do you need a box?

SANDY

No.

EXT. STABLES - NIGHT

Margarita dramatically runs down the hill with Cheeseburger in her horse tote bag.

She reaches the fences to the stables. She takes Cheeseburger out of her bag, chucking her on the ground.

She crumples to her knees. She begins to hit herself in the head with her fists.

MARGARITA

You stupid. Fucking. Bitch. Cunt.  
Stupid. Fuck. Fuck. Fuck.

She lets out more angry sobs.

HMPHH

She looks up to see her large brown horse staring at her with its gigantic glassy eyes. Its warm breath is visible in the cool air.

She looks up at it. The horse is unmoving. It stares at her.

Margarita stands to her feet. She walks towards the horse slowly. She wipes the snot on the back of her sleeve.

MARGARITA (CONT'D)

I'm okay. I'm fine.

She gently walks towards the horse, stretching her hand out to pet it. She brings her head right up to its muzzle. She leans in, closing her eyes.

MARGARITA (CONT'D)

(whispering)

We're okay...We're okay...we're  
okay.

She looks over at a crate near the fence. She drags it out from under the wooden fence. Taking a deep breath, she backs up, running straight for the box.

She LEAPS over it. She lands. She turns back to go again.

INT. MARGARITA'S HOME - PORCH - NIGHT

Sandy sits on the porch in a rocking chair. She wears a knit beanie and her husband's sweatshirt. She's bundled in a blanket.

Finally, Margarita appears from the darkness. Her dress and leggings are back on. She sees Sandy and freezes.

MARGARITA

(smiling)

Hey, you're in Dad's rocking chair-

SANDY

-Where were you.

Margarita cautiously walks forward, trudging up the steps to the porch. She opens up the front door, speaking quickly.

MARGARITA

I told you I was riding around.

Sandy stands up, following after her. Margarita doesn't hold the screen door, it SLAMS shut in Sandy's face.

INT. MARGARITA'S HOME - CONTINUOUS

SANDY

This whole time you were riding around?

Sandy follows her to the kitchen. Margarita opens the fridge, looking for food.

MARGARITA

Yeah, I was...just riding around and I wasn't hungry...so I didn't go to Sizzlers.

SANDY

(seething)

Yeah I know you didn't go to Sizzlers. I waited for you the whole time.

MARGARITA

(face buried in the fridge)

Did you bring me home apps?

SANDY

Oh...I thought you weren't hungry.

MARGARITA

Well I wasn't then but now I am. Did you even bring me home anything?

Sandy moves into the fridge, shoving Margarita out of the way. She pulls out a large glass Tupperware.

SANDY

Now you're hungry? Here, let me make you some food, please, allow me, your sick mother, to serve you. How selfish of me...to not bring you home food...How silly of me...

She SLAMS a plate onto the counter. She rips off a sticky note from the Tupperware. It reads "The Rigoli's are praying for you".

She rips open the foil, taking a giant wad of cold lasagna with her bare hands and chucks it on to the plate in a messy heap.

SANDY (CONT'D)

Bone appetit!

Margarita stares at her mom. Margarita looks down at the wad of lasagna confused.

MARGARITA

It's cold.

SANDY

You know how to use a microwave.

Margarita, eyes on her mom, lifts the plate up, carrying it over to the microwave. She places the plate inside, shutting the door. She feels Sandy's eyes on her back.

She types in a number and hits ENTER. The microwave BEEPS back.

She tries again. It BEEPS back. She tries again. It BEEPS back. She tries again. It BEEPS back.

Sandy SLAMS her hand on the kitchen table.

SANDY (CONT'D)

You enter the time then the power level then start. I've told you this. It's time. Power. Start. Time-power-start. What are you going to do when I'm not here to help you?

Sandy walks over, she SLAMS the microwave door shut. She enters it in for Margarita. She hits the start button.

BEEP. BEEP. BEEP. WHRRRRRR

She stares at Margarita. Margarita stares back. The MICROWAVE still WHIRS as the lasagna spins inside.

Neither move.

Finally, Margarita turns around. She gets her tote bag from the kitchen table. She pulls out a plastic bag from it, dropping it on the table.

MARGARITA

I got you a present.

Margarita walks out of the kitchen. A moment later, her bedroom door SLAMS shut.

**A beat.**

Sandy walks over to the plastic bag on the floor. Inside is a blue bobbed wig. Sandy holds it up in her hands.

BEEEEEP. The microwave dings.

INT. MINI VAN - DAY

Sandy wears the blue wig. She looks straight ahead at the road.

Margarita is nodding off in the car, her mouth hanging open. Her head hits the window with a CLUNK-

CUT TO:

INT. PEDIATRIC OFFICE - DAY

Margarita sits in the waiting room with Sandy. Margarita's arms are folded. She kicks her feet forcefully.

She faces away from her mom, still mad at her. A friendly looking nurse comes out to the waiting room in bright scrubs.

NURSE

Margret?

Margarita stands up, cutting her off.

MARGARITA

It's fucking Margarita GOD.

She storms past the nurse down the hall. Sandy follows behind, too tired to care about Margarita's behavior.

INT. DOCTORS OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Margarita sits on the paper-covered table. She shifts uncomfortably. She stares at the wall of mediocre paintings of butterflies and trees. She imagines them FLYING AWAY, LIFTING off the wall.

DR. LELAND, a thin man with a long hook nose is writing down things on a clipboard.

DR. LELAND

Last day of menstruation?

Sandy pulls out her pocket calendar from her purse. She puts on her reading glasses. Margarita stares at the wall.

SANDY

Hang on, I have this...it was...Sunday the fourth. Yeah. Maybe the fifth. But if it was it was probably light.

Dr. Leland writes it down.

DR. LELAND

Great. Anything different, any discomfort, cramping, heavier period, loose stools, anything like that?

Sandy thinks.

SANDY

I wouldn't say so, she didn't mention anything. Right Margarita?

Margarita snaps back into the room. Butterflies back on the wall.

SANDY (CONT'D)

Nothing weird?

Margarita shakes her head no. Her arms are folded across her chest.

SANDY (CONT'D)

She does have a bit of IBS so loose stools isn't uncommon for her.

Dr. Leland gives a nod. He finishes up scribbling on his clipboard. He stands up, heading towards Margarita.

DR. LELAND

Okay, I'm just gonna take a look inside those ears-

As he approaches her with the tool, Margarita shoves him away. Dr. Leland stumbles backwards.

SANDY

(harshly)  
Margarita.

DR. LELAND

Ope! I'm sorry I should have warned you.

He laughs again politely. Margarita breathes hard. Her fists ball up tightly. She squirms on the table. She looks back to the butterflies. They're stagnant on the wall.

DR. LELAND (CONT'D)

It's okay. You know what? Let's get the hard part over with first, okay? That might work better for us today.

MARGARITA

No.

The doctor laughs a bit. He turns to a drawer, opening it. He pulls out a needle and extracts medicine from a small vile.

DR. LELAND

Lucky for you, This is a quick one. It's important you have it so that mom doesn't get sick. We gotta make sure everyone is healthy for her.

MARGARITA

No.

Margarita crawls backward on to the table, shrinking into a ball in the corner.

SANDY

Come on, we do this every time can you please let him-

MARGARITA

I don't want him to touch me.

Margarita glares at Sandy, her words piercing through her.

DR. LELAND

It's an easy one Margarita. It will be over in a couple of seconds.

MARGARITA

No.

Sandy drops her head into her hands. She's done. The doctor tries a softer approach.

DR. LELAND

It's okay, just close your eyes and count to three. It will be over just like-

MARGARITA

(yelling)

I don't wanna fucking COUNT.

SANDY

Margarita!

The doctor suddenly becomes stern. Sandy is livid and stands to her feet.

DR. LELAND

I'm gonna need your help Sandy...if you're able to help me.

Sandy sighs, pissed. She stands up. She gets behind Margarita, who has already begun to kick and squirm.

MARGARITA

NONONONONONOOOOOO

Sandy pins her down as best she can.

SANDY

Margarita you need to hold still.

Dr. Leland wipes her with the alcohol wipe. Margarita SCREAMS bloody murder.

DR. LELAND

I haven't even...that was just the wipe. Your mom does this almost every-

MARGARITA

(screaming)  
I don't care!

Sandy shoves Margarita hard into the table, forcing her to sit down.

MARGARITA (CONT'D)

You're hurting me! You're hurting me! She's hurting! Child abuse!

SANDY

YOU'RE NOT A CHILD!

Dr. Leland approaches. Margarita SCREAMS into his face. He stretches out the skin on her forearm. Margarita flails an arm loose. It whacks Sandy in the face.

THWACK

SANDY (CONT'D)

FUCK!

Sandy grasps her hands to her face. A stream of blood instantly pours from Sandys nose. Sandy grabs at her nose.

DR. LELAND

Oh Sandy, let me get you some ice.

Sandy, hands covered in blood, wraps her arms around a distracted Margarita, gripping her tightly..

SANDY

Just give her the FUCKING SHOT.

Dr. Leland sticks the needle into Margaritas arm.

EXT. WAITING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Patients, kids and their moms, look up towards the hallway where Margarita's SCREAMS ECHO.

INT. DOCTORS OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Margarita gently groans as the doctor puts a bandaid on her arm. Sandy holds a bloody paper towel to her nose. Blood drips stain her shirt as well as Margaritas.

MARGARITA

Ow ow ow....ow it's still hurting.

DR. LELAND

That wasn't so bad, right  
Margarita? Quick and easy.

Margarita doesn't respond. She continues to "ow". He writes up a prescription for Sandy.

DR. LELAND (CONT'D)

...It's just a mild muscle relaxer,  
it should help with the teeth  
grinding you were telling me about.  
Let me know if you think we need to  
run some tests for any sort of mood  
disorders, it's not uncommon for  
patients like her.

Margarita throws Dr. Leland a dirty look at the idea of "patients like her".

MARGARITA

I'm not crazy. You're crazy.

Sandy throws her a look to shut her up. Sandy takes the note from him with her clean hand. She avoids his gaze.

SANDY

(coldly)  
Thank you.

EXT. WAITING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sandy and Margarita head towards the door. Margarita, tears streaked down her face with a lollipop in her mouth, and Sandy, holding a bloody towel to her nose in a blue wig. All eyes on them.

INT. PHARMACY - DRUG STORE - LATE AFTERNOON

Margarita and Sandy stand at the counter as the pharmacist rings them up. Sandy's nose has stopped bleeding. Margarita has calmed down.

The pharmacist finishes ringing them up. Margarita is looking up at the clock. It reads **3:52 pm**.

MARGARITA

Are we almost done?

Sandy doesn't pay attention. She's reading the instructions on the prescription. She looks up at the pharmacist, smiling.

SANDY

Thank you.

As they turn to go, a girl, LACEY, with electric PURPLE hair and THICK makeup stops them.

LACEY

Would either of you beautiful ladies want to get your makeup done?

Margarita is trudging past her.

MARGARITA

No we don't, I have to go ride my horse.

Sandy stops, looking at the makeup counter.

SANDY

Oh...that could be fun...Margs, you wanna get your makeup done?

MARGARITA

No. I want to ride Cheeseburger.

SANDY

You know what? We don't have anywhere to be. I would love to.

LACEY

(beaming)

Well great, let me have you take a seat right here.

She pulls up a tall chair as Sandy excitedly sets her purse down.

LACEY (CONT'D)  
I love your hair.

SANDY  
Oh thank you, I love yours.

Sandy gives a coy smile and shrug at Margarita. Margarita is awry.

MARGARITA	LACEY
Mom, I <u>need</u> to go ride	Close your eyes for me, hon.
Cheeseburger. I need to come	
onnnnn...	

\*

Sandy closes her eyes as Lacey applies blue eyeshadow to Sandy's eyelids.

SANDY	MARGARITA (CONT'D)
Oh my GOD fine fine, fine,	Pleasepleasepleasae Mom
fine! Shhh...	PLEASE

\*

LACEY  
Keep your eyes shut.

SANDY  
Fine...Margs shhh. You HAVE to be home for dinner.

MARGARITA  
Really?! Really?! THANKYOUSOMUCH I LOVEYOU MOM YOU'RETHEBESTMOMEVER

SANDY  
If you're not at home I'm calling the police.

LACEY  
(joking)  
My mom was overprotective too.

Sandy smiles. Margarita is slinging her tote over her shoulder.

SANDY  
I'm learning to let go.

LACEY  
That's good! She won't be young forever.

Lacey winks at Margarita. Margarita tries to wink back.

SANDY  
(opening her eyes to look  
at Margarita)  
See you at home.

MARGARITA  
OKAY SEE YOU THEN BYEBYEBYE-

Margarita is halfway to the door as Lacey begins to rub foundation on Sandy's face. Margarita practically crashes into an aisle of cereal.

EXT. CITY STREETS - DUSK - **MARGARITA'S WORLD**

Margarita gallops through the small town streets. She feels so incredibly fast, and so free. Her smile overtakes her face.

MARGARITA  
She's fast...she's fast...the  
fastest girl in the world-

The **CHOIR** has already begun to **SING** with her.

She practices her jumps. Over, and over, and over. She refuses to give up. She mixes her dance moves in.

EXT. DANCE STUDIO - DUSK

Margarita arrives outside the dance studio, SCREECHING to a stop. All of the girls are standing outside in their coats with their bags and horses. Coach is locking up the studio.

MARGARITA  
(breathless)  
What's happening?

Coach turns around.

COACH  
Field trip.

He begins to walk down the street. All the girls excitedly begin to follow after him.

CUT TO:

INT. DRUG STORE - CONTINUOUS

Lacey struggles to put mascara on Sandy's non-existent eyelashes. Lacey is a bit of an air-head in an endearing way.

LACEY  
Does she still live with you?

SANDY  
Yeah...She needs to.

LACEY  
I remember when I first moved  
out...my mom freaked...but you  
know, eventually she got used to  
it.

SANDY  
Good for her. She must be very  
proud of you.

LACEY  
(laughing)  
God, I hope so right?

She begins to draw on Sandy's thin eyebrows.

LACEY (CONT'D)  
I still have to call her when I  
cook chicken though.

They both laugh.

SANDY  
Chicken?

LACEY  
I never think it's cooked all the  
way! It's so hard to tell. Okay,  
I'm just using a pencil first then  
I'm going back to fill in with a  
matte cream-

Sandy's cell phone RINGS.

SANDY  
Oh! Sorry...I need to take this,  
I've been waiting on this call.

Sandy stands up, turning her back to Lacey. Only one eye of  
eyeshadow and one eyebrow are done.

SANDY (CONT'D)  
Hello this is Sandra. Hi Dr. Pacek,  
I'm doing okay how are you?

CUT TO:

INT. HIGH SCHOOL GYMNASIUM - EVENING

All the girls nervously gather on the side of the arena. It's large and empty. Their sneakers SQUEAK on the gym floor. Coach stands in the center of the arena.

COACH

At the end of this month you will be performing in this exact spot.

His voice ECHOES through the vast arena. Margarita whispers to Jean Marie.

MARGARITA

What does he mean?

JEAN MARIE

(whispering)

There's a big hobbyhorse competition that we all compete in here. It's really fun and they give out prizes to the winners. There's judges and scores and trophies and cash prizes and kettle corn and stuff.

Margarita looks around the gymnasium again.

MARGARITA

Woah...

COACH

I want each of you to line up behind me.

The girls line up. Pinky is first. (Of course). Margarita takes her place in the back. She steps in a wad of gum.

MARGARITA

Aw, shit...really? God dang it.

She stretches her shoe up as the gum string out from the floor. She's distracted by the gum.

COACH

As some of you know, Miss Maggie always said the number one thing standing between you and winning, is yourself.

Margarita whispers again to Jean Marie.

MARGARITA

Who's Miss Maggie?

JEAN MARIE

She was our old coach. She's  
Coach's wife.

Margarita looks at Coach. She never thought about him as a  
person with an outside life.

Pinky SHUSHES Jean Marie and Margarita. Margarita furrows her  
brow, looking at Coach.

COACH

So if your fear is standing in the  
way of yourself winning...let's  
take that fear down right here and  
now.

The girls smile and giggle excitedly.

MARGARITA

(whispering)

So why isn't Miss Maggie coaching  
now?

JEAN MARIE

She died last year.

Margarita is stunned.

COACH

Now. I want you to scream.

Silence.

Coach begins to PROJECT, taking up the stadium with his  
BOOMING voice.

COACH (CONT'D)

Fill this **whole** arena. Scream as  
loud as you can. You own this  
space. If you can't fill this  
space, you can't win your  
competition. Who's first?

The girls laugh, embarrassed. Pinky steps up bravely. She  
stands in the center of the gym. She looks around.

COACH (CONT'D)

Scream.

Pinky gives a girly shriek. She immediately covers her face  
laughing. All the girls giggle nervously. Coach presses on.

COACH (CONT'D)  
That's not a scream. Come on!  
Scream. Scream.

Rachael, next in line, shuts her eyes and lets out a tiny YELP. Rachael bursts into giggles. Coach turns towards them.

COACH (CONT'D)  
Come on now...Red. Come here.

Margarita emerges from the line nervously. She drags her shoe on the floor, still trying to get the gum off.

SKRnk. SKRRREEK. SKREEK.

She drags her foot on the floor until she reaches Coach.

COACH (CONT'D)  
Show them.

Margarita turns around looking at the girls.

COACH (CONT'D)  
Don't look at them. Don't pay any  
attention to them.

Margarita looks back at Coach, studying his face.

COACH (CONT'D)  
Scream.

Margarita takes a DEEP BREATH IN. She shuts her eyes, balling her fists up.

INT. DRUG STORE - NIGHT

SANDY'S FACE

In the magnifying mirror. She holds the phone to her ear, staring at her reflection of BLUE EYESHADOW, CARTOON EYEBROWS, PINK LIPSTICK, and ORANGE FOUNDATION.

A SCREAM.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL GYMNASIUM - CONTINUOUS

Margarita, eyes shut, is SCREAMING with every ounce of power in her. Her scream REVERBERATES off the walls of the gymnasium. The lights in the gym FLICKER and CHANGE COLORS.

All the girls jaws are dropped. Coach watches Margarita intently.

Margarita finishes screaming. The last bits of her voice ECHO throughout the gym. The lights return to their normal tungsten.

She opens her eyes, coming back into the room. She blinks a couple of times. Coach smiles, looking to the rest of the girls.

COACH

That's a scream.

INT. MARGARITA'S HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Margarita bursts in through the door out of breath. She kicks her shoes off, tossing the tote bag into the closet.

She turns the TV on as fast as she can, turning on the horse documentary. She tries to catch her breath as best she can. The garage door opens as Sandy comes in with a full face of makeup.

Sandy puts her hands over her face.

SANDY

Don't look.

MARGARITA

Nothing I've just been home-what?

SANDY

It looks so bad.

Margarita turns to look at her. Sandy's hands cover her face. Margarita realizes she's not in trouble.

MARGARITA

(laughing)

Lemme see.

Sandy laughs, crumpling over.

SANDY

It's bad bad.

MARGARITA

Let me see!

Margarita stands up, running over to Sandy's face. She tries to yank her hands off her face. Sandy tries with all her might to hide her face.

SANDY  
(laughing, groaning)  
No, no...don't

MARGARITA  
I wanna see!

Sandy finally shows her face. The makeup is over-the-top and bright against Sandy's sallow face.

MARGARITA (CONT'D)  
Woah.

Sandy laughs, throwing her hands up again, embarrassed.

SANDY  
I told you! It looks so bad-

MARGARITA  
-You look beautiful.

Sandy looks at her.

SANDY  
Really?

Margarita nods. She touches her mom's face, running her hands over the makeup.

MARGARITA  
Yeah...you look like the ladies on  
the magazines.

SANDY  
(laughing)  
No.

MARGARITA  
Seriously, mom. Like, really,  
really. Can I do makeup? Can I have  
my makeup done?

Sandy stares at Margarita for a long time, taking her in. She smiles. Margarita gently runs her fingers along Sandy's smile lines. Sandy looks at Margarita's face as they share a moment.

SANDY  
Did you eat?

MARGARITA  
No.

Sandy makes her way to the kitchen, calling behind her.

SANDY

Do you know how to make chicken?

Margarita laughs.

MARGARITA

No...

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

TSSSSSSSSSS

Raw chicken SIZZLES on the skillet. Sandy moves about the kitchen, collecting the items she needs.

Margarita watches the **popping oil** on the stove, entranced.

SANDY

So...Dr. Pacek called me today.

Margarita continues to watch the oil.

SANDY (CONT'D)

Margarita did you hear me? Dr. Pacek called me.

MARGARITA

Who's that.

SANDY

My oncologist, remember?

MARGARITA

Oh right, right, right...so what'd she say? How much more chemo? I don't wanna keep going to the chemo room it makes me sad.

Sandy turns to face Margarita. Margarita still watches the pan.

SANDY

No. No more chemo actually.

Margarita perks up. She turns around to face Sandy.

MARGARITA

What?

Margarita's entire face is lighten up. She looks eager. Sandy smiles.

SANDY

I...yeah...no more chemo for me.

She laughs.

MARGARITA

Are you fucking kidding me?! MOM this is HUGE we have to throw our party-remember?! Remember we were gonna throw our party it was-It was a FUCK CANCER party right? WE HAVE TO MOM WE HAVE TO

SANDY

We don't have to...I mean...we can celebrate-

MARGARITA

NO WE GOTTA THROW A FUCK CANCER PAR-

INT. LOS AMIGOS - NIGHT

Margarita and Sandy wear paper crowns. Scribbled on both in sharpie says "FUCK YOU CANCER". Sandy is wearing her blue wig under the crown.

Margarita CHOWS DOWN on her taquitos. Sandy eats her enchiladas. They're talking and laughing. The neon lights dance

CUT TO:

Margarita and Sandy sing "American Pie" loudly on stage.

BOTH

So bye bye Miss American  
Pie...maybe later someday later and  
something later...laterlaterlater-

They're both messing up the words and laughing, making each other laugh. Margarita blurts out, pointing to Sandy.

MARGARITA

She doesn't have her cancer anymore!

The whole bar CHEERS. Margarita is JUMPING up and down, so thrilled to have people cheering for them. Sandy laughs.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE BEST HALLOWEEN STORE - NEXT DAY

Margarita is unbuckling from the passenger seat in her work uniform, shoving ego waffles down.

MARGARITA

And then everyone was like WHOOOOO  
and they were cheering and then you  
were like hey I can drink  
margaritas cuz I don't have cancer-

SANDY

No...it's cuz I'm not on the  
medication anymore-

MARGARITA

-Right yeah! And then everyone was  
cheering for us. That was so fun.  
So much fun.

Margarita burps.

SANDY

That's gross.

MARGARITA

You're gross.

Margarita gets out of the car, leaning into the door.

MARGARITA (CONT'D)

Best day EVERRRRR.

Her happiness is contagious. Sandy smiles at her.

SANDY

Okay, get in there! I don't want  
you to be late! Go, go!

MARGARITA

Okay... I love you! I love you so  
much WHOOOOO!

Margarita runs into the store. Sandy HONKS her horn loudly as Margarita screams back laughing.

INT. THE BEST HALLOWEEN STORE - CONTINUOUS

Margarita immediately runs down an aisle. She throws off her uniform quickly. She's shoving her clothes into her tote bag, revealing her "BOOTYLICIOUS" shorts and leotard underneath.

INT. ONCOLOGY CENTER - DR. PACEK'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Sandy sits in the dark room as Dr. Pacek puts X-rays up on the light boards. Sandy watches and nods, the light reflecting in her eyes. Her eyes hold no happiness from before.

INT. CHEMOTHERAPY ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sandy hugs each woman from before. Each give her an intimate goodbye. Kim gives her a bouquet of flowers.

She turns back around to see Dr. Pacek watching her from her office door. Dr. Pacek nods with a reassuring smile. Sandy takes a deep breath in. She nods, turning to the door.

One of the nurses stands by a BELL mounted on the wall by the door. She motions for Sandy to ring it. Sandy's face drops. She shakes her head no. All the women cheer her on to ring.

Her warped reflection on the bell smiles back at her.

CLANG! CLANG! CLANG! CLANG!

CUT TO:

INT. THE BEST HALLOWEEN STORE - CONTINUOUS

The BELL on the front door CLANGS as Sandy strides in. Felix, a worker with Down Syndrome and a wide smile, greets her at the door.

FELIX  
Hi, welcome!

SANDY  
(smiling)  
Thank you. Is Margarita around?

FELIX  
Nope.

SANDY  
Is she in the back?

FELIX  
She's not here today!

SANDY  
Yes she is. I dropped her off this morning. Is...Hank around?

Summer appears from one of the aisles, holding a large box.

SUMMER

Who are you looking for?

SANDY

Margarita. I'm her mom. I-

SUMMER

-Ohhhh right. She said you had cancer.

Sandy is caught off guard. Summer takes a headphone out of her ear.

SUMMER (CONT'D)

Yeah, Margarita doesn't work on Thursdays because of her horse thing.

SANDY

Her what?

SUMMER

You know...her thing at the dance studio with the girls and the horses on sticks.

Sandy is silent. She stares at Summer.

SUMMER (CONT'D)

(realizing)

Oh shit you don't know.

INT. DANCE STUDIO - AFTERNOON

Margarita stands in the line as each of the girls gallop and jump over a real rod-obstacle.

This time, Margarita clears the jump perfectly, and doesn't disrupt the flow. She smiles to herself.

Jean Marie holds up her hand for Margarita to high five it. Margarita, confused by the gesture, takes a second, then goes to high five her.

Jean Marie pulls her hand away.

JEAN MARIE

Too slow!

A couple of the girls laugh. Margarita laughs along with them innocently.

Coach CLAPS his hands together to get the girls to spread out and face the mirror.

COACH

Performance piece, let's go.

All the girls line up in formation. As the music begins, the girls start their contemporary dances with their horses.

Margarita is in the zone.

From outside the studio window a minivan SCREECHES up to the sidewalk. Sandy storms up to the studio, looking into the window. She presses her face against the glass. She watches as the girls all raise the horses up.

SANDY

(muffled from outside the window)

SHIT!

Sandy storms up to the door, pushing it open.

INT. DANCE STUDIO - CONTINUOUS

All of the girls heads turn to see SANDY standing at the back of the studio, stunned. Margarita turns around, her face drops.

COACH

Can I help yo-

Sandy stomps straight towards Margarita. The girls part from her path like the Red Sea.

SANDY

What in the-

MARGARITA

How'd you find-

SANDY

They said you haven't been to work in two weeks. **Two.Weeks.** What is this? Why have you been lying to me?

MARGARITA

No, mom, it was a surprise because I was gonna compete in the competition and you would be really proud of me!

(MORE)

MARGARITA (CONT'D)

I was gonna surprise you! Remember?  
You said I could ride a fake horse.

Sandy looks around at the girls. She looks up at Coach. Coach hits pause on the speaker system as the room drops to uncomfortable silence.

SANDY

Who the hell are you?

MARGARITA

That's Coach, mom.

Sandy marches right up to him. He towers over her.

SANDY

What on earth have you been doing  
with my daughter?

Coach calmly explains in the same level voice.

COACH

We're just practicing for our  
hobbyhorsing competition. Your  
daughter is a great addition to our  
team. You should watch her, I think  
you'd be quite impressed with-

SANDY

-No. Stop. Don't do that. Don't  
tell me that. I don't need another  
man pretending to see the potential  
in my retarded daughter.

MARGARITA

(panicking)

Mom! You're being crazy! STOP!

SANDY

I am not crazy I am your Mother.  
BE QUIET.

Sandy whirls back around to face Coach. Her voice is low and shaky. She jabs a boney finger into his large chest.

SANDY (CONT'D)

You have no clue. You don't get to  
say anything to me about how  
inspiring my daughter is. You wanna  
play horsie for an hour with her?  
That's fine. But don't act like you  
know her better than me.

(MORE)

SANDY (CONT'D)

Unless you're the one shaving her armpits and driving her ass around, you don't say anything.

Margarita has begun to cry into her hands.

MARGARITA

Mom. Mom please.

Coach nods his head solemnly.

COACH

Okay. I hear you. Thank you.

Sandy wasn't expecting his response. She studies him. She turns back around to all the girls watching with wide eyes. Margarita stands a foot over them, crying into her hands.

Sandy turns back around to look at Coach. She sighs.

SANDY

She...She's twenty-six.

She drops her arms at her side, shaking her head. She turns to Margarita. Some of the girls are looking at Margarita.

SANDY (CONT'D)

Margarita we're going.

MARGARITA

(begging, frantic)

No please. Mom please. I wanna stay and I wanna compete. I have to compete. I paid the money to compete-

SANDY

You gave him MONEY?

COACH

Red...I'm sorry I didn't realize...you can't compete if you're that old.

Margarita's face drops into a bigger upset.

MARGARITA

(sputtering)

No. No, no. I want to compete. Please it's the only thing I want. Please.Please.Please.Please.

Some of the girls are whispering as Sandy grabs Margarita by the arm, firmly. Margarita continues to beg like a child.

SANDY

You don't say a WORD. Don't ever give ANYONE your money-

Sandy is already yanking her out the door. Coach watches the two. He calls out to her.

COACH

I lost my wife to cancer last year.

Sandy looks up at him with a "How dare you?" Look. She just shakes her head in disgust, and pulls Margarita out the door.

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS

Margarita is slapping herself in the head repeatedly as she cries. Her sobs are guttural. Sandy starts the car, throwing it into drive.

SANDY

You lied to me. How dare you lie to me? WE. DON'T. LIE.

MARGARITA

I didn't lie! I told you I wanted to ride Cheeseburger. I wanted to show you I could do something by myself!

SANDY

Margarita, God...I was proud of you. You had a job and we were gonna learn to make chicken-

MARGARITA

-I don't like my job!

SANDY

-No one does! That's life! That's part of growing up.

MARGARITA

You always say I need to be independent and I was trying to be and you won't let me! You don't let me do anything I love. You never want me to be happy!

SANDY

All I ever do is try to make you happy.

(MORE)

SANDY (CONT'D)

My whole life revolves around you  
and giving you everything you ever  
want.

MARGARITA

But you won't let me ride horses or  
do hobbyhorsing or have friends!

SANDY

Those girls are not your friends.

MARGARITA

(yelling)

Yes they are! You're just jealous  
because you don't want me to have  
friends. You only want me to be at  
home with you all day.

SANDY

No. Those girls will hurt you  
Margarita...They don't see you as  
their friend. Those types of girls  
are mean to people like you.

MARGARITA

No they're not! You don't know-

SANDY

I do know. I know they will laugh  
at you and it will kill you  
Margarita. It will kill you-

MARGARITA

Mom!

SANDY

-Fuck!

CRASH.

AIRBAGS DEPLOY.

GLASS SHATTERS.

IN SLOW MOTION:

MARGARITA'S FACE IS SURROUNDED BY THOUSANDS OF PIECES OF  
GLITTERING GLASS as ALL IS SLOWED AROUND HER. She doesn't  
have time to move.

Her hair floats forward as the world seems to flip upside  
down in SLOW MOTION.

INT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Margarita is getting her arm wrapped in a cast. She sits motionless, staring ahead at the television. ANIMAL PLANET plays on the old television hanging on the wall.

MARGARITA

(word for word)

Horses' anatomy enables them to make use of speed to escape predators and they have a well-developed sense of balance and a strong fight-or-flight response.

NURSE ROSE, 30-something with a round face, smiles as she continues wrapping.

NURSE ROSE

I take it you've seen this one before.

Margarita looks at her, annoyed for interrupting.

MARGARITA

Yeah. I have.

Nurse Rose smiles back up at her.

NURSE ROSE

You have quite the memory.

Margarita looks down at her cast.

MARGARITA

Do I get to pick a color for this thing or what.

Margarita picks up a plastic juice cup, throwing it back.

MARGARITA (CONT'D)

Do you guys have Coke Zero?

From two curtains down, Sandy receives stitches on a deep gash above her eyebrow. She looks absent. Some yellow bruises have already begun to form around her eye.

A gentle KNOCK from the doorway.

Sandy turns to see Dr. Pacek in the doorway. She's smiling warmly.

DR. PACEK

You just couldn't stay away could you?

Sandy closes her eyes. A small smile lifts on the corners of her mouth.

SANDY  
Apparently not.

Dr. Pacek walks into the room, taking a seat on the bed next to Sandy. The Nurse stitching her up cuts the stitch, tying it off.

Dr. Pacek inspects Sandy's cut.

DR. PACEK  
You really did some work didn't you? Think she's gonna make it?

Dr. Pacek nods over to the nurse who finished her stitches. The nurse nods, cleaning her hands.

NURSE  
Evidently so. I'll give you guys a minute.

DR. PACEK  
Thanks.

Dr. Pacek keeps her eyes on Sandy.

DR. PACEK (CONT'D)  
I heard a rumor you brought your famous daughter with you on your little E.R. Trip.

SANDY  
Oh yeah. Well, she's decided we're not on speaking terms.

Dr. Pacek nods, understanding.

DR. PACEK  
I see. Not taking the news well.

Sandy is silent. She looks down at her hands, twisting her mouth. Dr. Pacek watches her.

DR. PACEK (CONT'D)  
Does she know?

Sandy slowly shakes her head no. Dr. Pacek figures it out.

DR. PACEK (CONT'D)  
Why does she think you stopped treatment?

SANDY  
(avoiding eye contact)  
She thinks I stopped  
because...I...didn't need it  
anymore.

Dr. Pacek inhales deeply. Her shoulders drop slightly as she nods her head slowly.

DR. PACEK  
I think both of us know  
that...that's not going to work.

SANDY  
-No, I know. I know. I just...can't  
find a good time-

DR. PACEK  
I don't think there will ever be a  
good time.

They both sit in silence. From down the way, Margarita can be heard talking along with the television. Dr. Pacek smiles.

DR. PACEK (CONT'D)  
Bet you guys have watched this show  
more than once.

SANDY  
You have no idea.

They laugh. **A beat.**

SANDY (CONT'D)  
I don't want to say I gave up. I  
don't want her to think I'm  
abandoning her.

DR. PACEK  
It won't be easy but, I think  
she'll come around. It's ultimately  
your decision.

SANDY  
Yeah well...it's a little different  
in my case.

DR. PACEK  
I don't think any parent wants to  
leave their child.

A beat. Sandy nods.

SANDY

It's funny...I kinda thought I would look back on my life at the end and think, like, "Wow. My life...was important". Like it was meaningful, you know? But this...I don't know.

DR. PACEK

Who decides what a meaningful life is?

Sandy finally looks up at Dr. Pacek.

DR. PACEK (CONT'D)

I better get going. Let me know if there's anything else I can do for you Sandy.

Sandy nods. Dr. Pacek puts her hand on Sandy's knee. She gives it a squeeze, then stands and exits the room.

INT. LOS AMIGOS - NIGHT

Margarita awkwardly tries to feed herself a taquito with her right hand fully casted. Some thin band aids line Sandy's cheek and eyebrow. Both have hospital wristbands on.

Margarita is completely closed off to Sandy. She chomps angrily on her food. She doesn't look at Sandy.

SANDY

How's the taquitos tonight?

Margarita doesn't answer.

SANDY (CONT'D)

Margarita I need to tell you something. I need you to listen to me because you need to know.

The Karaoke M.C. From before grabs the microphone as the lights change to a swirling colorful disco ball.

Margarita perks up, looking over at the Karaoke M.C.

KARAOKE M.C.

It's that time of night folks!  
We're asking any and all to come up  
and sing a little karaoke with us.  
Just grab a song request form from  
Kenny over here-

Sandy leans forward, talking loudly over the M.C.

SANDY

Margs, look at me. I need to tell you because I don't want you to find out any other way. Look at me.

Sandy grabs Margarita's chin, trying to turn her face towards her. Margarita swats her hand away, annoyed.

MARGARITA

Ow...what?

SANDY

At the end of this week Uncle Patrick is going to be staying with us.

MARGARITA

What? Why?

SANDY

He's going to be coming down...you know...he wants to uh, see us. See both of us-

The M.C. Breaks in again.

KARAOKE M.C.

Alright, let's get this show on the road, shall we?

Margarita looks over to the M.C. She turns back to Sandy.

MARGARITA

Last time Uncle Patrick came over was when Dad died.

SANDY

That's...not true he--

MARGARITA

--No it is true. He came over and you wouldn't tell me why he was here and then you told me Dad was in a car accident. Why is he coming? What's happening?

KARAOKE M.C.

--Make sure everyone has an extra large "Macho-sized" margarita in front of them...now at happy hour prices...

MARGARITA

Don't lie to me. Don't lie.

SANDY

I stopped treatment because the cancer spread. Not because I was better.

KARAOKE M.C.

Starting us off tonight we have our favorite performer singing her classic "American Pie" ladies and gentleman help me in welcoming up Miss Margarita to the stage.

MARGARITA

You lied.

Sandy looks at Margarita with pleading eyes. It's all falling into place. Margarita's face drops.

KARAOKE M.C.

Come on up here Margarita!

Margarita, eyes still locked on Sandy, shakily stands to her feet. She approaches the stage, grabbing the mic with her casted-hand. Her eyes watch Sandy.

She doesn't say anything. No intro. She just grips the mic.

The CHEAP instrumental of AMERICAN PIE BLARES through the speakers. Margarita begins to sing. Her voice is caught in the back of her throat.

MARGARITA

A long, long time ago...I can still remember...

She stops singing. She continues to stare at Sandy. Sandy motions for her to come back to the booth. Margarita shakes her head no.

MARGARITA (CONT'D)

And I knew if I had my chance  
That I could make those people  
dance...And maybe they'd be happy  
for a while-

Margarita blinks as a tear falls down her cheek.

## MARGARITA (CONT'D)

I can't remember if I cried  
 When I read about his widowed bride  
 Something touched me deep inside  
 The day the music died.

She barely squeaks out the last word. The chorus hits as the bar continues to sing. Margarita stands motionless, staring at Sandy. Sandy looks back, wiping tears from her own cheeks.

## DRUNK BAR GO-ERS

Bye, bye Miss American Pie  
 Drove my Chevy to the levee but the  
 levee was dry  
 And them good ole boys were  
 drinking whiskey and rye...Singin'  
 this'll be the day that I  
 die...This'll be the day that I  
 die.

EXT. HALLOWEEN STORE - 3 WEEKS LATER - AFTERNOON

A large sign on the front of the store reads:

"AFTER HALLOWEEN SALE! EVERYTHING MUST GO!"

INT. HALLOWEEN STORE - CONTINUOUS

Margarita is sweeping the store. Many of the shelves are bare. HUGE discount signs saying "75% OFF" are taped everywhere.

Felix is holding the dustpan that Margarita sweeps into. She tries her best to sweep with her cast.

## FELIX

Maybe after this we can go to my  
 house and I can show you my guitar.

## MARGARITA

Maybe.

SUDDENLY, the front door of the store opens. In comes Pinky, the Sarahs, Rachael, and Jean Marie.

Margarita drops the broom, ecstatic to see her friends.

## MARGARITA (CONT'D)

Hey! Oh my gosh you guys!

She excitedly calls out to them, a huge smile on her face.

MARGARITA (CONT'D)

Pinky! Pinky! Jean Marie! Hey guys!

Margarita starts walking towards them. Pinky whispers to the other girls.

PINKY

Go, go, go!

The girls run down an aisle to hide from Margarita. Margarita chases after them.

MARGARITA

Guys! Guys, hey! What are you-

As she rounds the corner of the aisle they ducked behind, she sees the last bit of Sarah M. disappearing into the next aisle after the girls.

MARGARITA (CONT'D)

(smiling)

I totally saw you guys!

Margarita runs to the next aisle. They're not there.

She runs to the next aisle. Just missed them.

Next aisle. She jumps out in front of them, making the animatronic ghoul CACKLE and move.

MARGARITA (CONT'D)

Gotcha!

Margarita is laughing. All the girls are awkwardly huddled, pretending to be looking at a costume. Pinky turns around with a fake smile.

PINKY

Oh my god...hey Margarita...we didn't even see you!

MARGARITA

What are you guys doing here?

Pinky looks back at the girls. Jean Marie pipes in with a lie.

JEAN MARIE

We were just...looking for stuff for our costumes for the competition. Like, glitter and false eyelashes and stuff.

MARGARITA

Did you guys already try CVS?  
They...normally sell makeup there  
I'm pretty sure. My mom got her  
makeup done there a couple weeks  
ago and she looked awesome...they  
have good makeup there I think.

The girls are starring at her as she talks. Margarita awkwardly fidgets with her hands. Suddenly, Felix appears with the broom.

FELIX

Hey, we aren't done sweeping-

He sees the girls. Jokingly, he wiggles his glasses.

FELIX (CONT'D)

Well helloooo ladies.

Margarita laughs. Pinky looks offended, folding her arms. The rest of the girls notice and re-act similarly.

MARGARITA

Felix, these are my friends from  
hobbyhorse. That's Pinky, that's  
Jean Marie, that's Sarah M., Sarah  
B. that's-

PINKY

-Margarita...you quit hobbyhorse.

Margarita stops. She thinks for a second.

MARGARITA

Well...I mean I had to because my  
mom...I mean, actually...I meant to  
tell you guys that I was gonna come  
back-

PINKY

-I don't think that's a good idea.  
Coach was pretty mad about you  
quitting...plus it's so close to  
competition...and you're not  
competing...

MARGARITA

Yes I am.

Pinky raises her eyebrows in surprise.

SARAH M.

Since when?

MARGARITA  
I never said I wasn't.

PINKY  
Yeah...except you're twenty-six  
so...Not sure how you're gonna fit  
into an age bracket.

Margarita's face drops. She furrows her eyebrows, trying to think. Jean Marie is the only one who looks a little sorry for her.

FELIX  
I'm twenty-nine!

The girls look at him. Pinky talks to him like he's a three year old.

PINKY  
Wow...that's so cool...I love your  
shoes.

He's wearing sneakers with superheroes on the side.

FELIX  
Thanks! I love superheroes. My  
favorite is Spiderman.

Pinky looks back to Margarita.

PINKY  
Well I'm really glad you found  
people your own age to hang out  
with...you know, other than your  
mom.

Margarita is grinding her teeth. Summer rounds the corner, annoyed.

SUMMER  
Margarita! Get back to work. I  
swear to god you literally can't do  
one job without getting distracted.

MARGARITA  
No-

PINKY  
Don't worry...we were just going.

SARAH B.  
Yeah, my mom's outside we gotta to  
practice.

Margarita opens her mouth to say something.

PINKY

Also...we're not your friends, so maybe don't tell people that next time.

Summer shoos the girls off. She eyes Margarita, giving the "I'm watching you" signal with her fingers.

The girls follow behind Pinky towards the door. Margarita turns to watch them go. She's boiling. She watches the girls climb into the minivan outside.

FELIX

Your friends are so awesome.

EXT. THE BEST HALLOWEEN STORE - CONTINUOUS

Hank is washing paint off the window. He reaches one of his many fliers taped up.

Someone scribbled underneath the "NOW HIRING" sign in sharpie. The sign reads:

"NOW HIRING! RETARDS"

He RIPS it down. As he crumples it, Margarita throws the door open. She's taking off her work vest, chucking it to the ground. Hank watches her.

MARGARITA

I'm leaving early. You can fire me if you want.

HANK

Oh boy.

He watches her SPRINT down the street.

EXT. CITY STREETS - EVENING

Margarita SPRINTS through the streets, attempting to run from every single thought in her mind. She dodges a biker.

MARGARITA

Use the bike lane-- fuck!

She runs, and runs, and runs.

She stops outside of the dance studio. The girls are inside practicing. Margarita heads straight for the door.

She pulls. Pushes.

INT. DANCE STUDIO - CONTINUOUS

Coach stops talking as soon as he sees Margarita. All the girls turn around.

Margarita, panting, tear-streaked cheeks, stands with her fists balled up at her sides.

MARGARITA

(in between breaths)

I know you don't like me. I know you all don't like me. You didn't like me the day I came in. I know it's because I'm different. But that doesn't mean I'm stupid or that I don't notice when you guys make fun of me...or...you don't talk to me...and...You didn't even give me a chance. None of you. You didn't even let me carpool with you. Melissa we live two houses away from each other...like...come on.

She looks around at the wide eyes. Coach is watching her, his expression still stoic. She takes a couple more labored breaths, wiping some sweat from her forehead.

MARGARITA (CONT'D)

And...you all didn't stick up for me. Not once...You didn't even try to be my friend...So I hope...I really hope that you guys...are nicer to people in the future...Because all of you are such cunts.

The girls GASP. Coach's eyebrows raise.

MARGARITA (CONT'D)

Especially you Pinky. You're the biggest cunt-

COACH

-OUT.

Margarita throws her hands up.

MARGARITA

I know...I'm going.

Margarita turns for the door. As she leaves she chucks up a "rock on" sign behind her.

EXT. DANCE STUDIO - NIGHT

Margarita walks away without looking back.

She notices every stare she gets as she walks by. Every pair of eyes that pretend not to be looking at her when she catches their glance.

Children, teenagers, adults. Every single person she passes can't help but stare at her. Just like they always do. Like they always do.

Margarita lifts up her chin. She holds her head high, for the first time, not giving a fuck about the staring eyes.

EXT. SMALL TOWN STREETS - NIGHT - **MARGARITA'S WORLD**

Margarita continues to walk quickly. Her red hair flaps behind her. She wipes her nose. She pulls her shoulders back.

She looks different from the girl we first met. She closes her eyes as she walks. She feels at home in her body.

COACH (O.S.)

Red!

**Back to reality.**

Margarita turns around to see Coach in his beat up car driving slowly beside her, his window rolled down.

Margarita continues to march down the street as Coach creeps alongside her in his car.

MARGARITA

I'm not sorry.

COACH

You don't need to be. Just get in the car.

MARGARITA

No.

He continues to drive alongside her as she marches down the sidewalk. After about ten seconds of this,

COACH

Please, Margarita.

Margarita stops. She turns to look at him. She's never heard him say her name.

EXT. STABLES - NIGHT

Margarita and Coach stand in the tall grass side by side. Each of them hold small rocks in their hands. They take turns tossing the small rocks at a metal can that sits on a tree branch high above them.

Margarita grunts as she tosses one. Misses.

COACH

You were right. About everything you said.

He tosses one. Misses.

MARGARITA

I don't really...remember a lot of what I said. I kinda...blacked out I think.

Coach laughs a little. Margarita smiles. She tosses. Misses.

MARGARITA (CONT'D)

I'm sorry about your wife.

Coach tosses.

COACH

Thank you. Who told you?

MARGARITA

Jean Marie.

Both toss. Both miss.

COACH

I couldn't let those girls...I wanted them to keep going.

Margarita tosses.

COACH (CONT'D)

And I want you to keep going.

MARGARITA

I can't.

Margarita tosses. She hits it. The can CLINKS. Both Coach and Margarita celebrate.

MARGARITA (CONT'D) COACH  
 YESS! OH HO HO! \*

COACH (CONT'D)  
 Why isn't it falling? How did that-

MARGARITA  
 -My dad nailed it up to the branch  
 so we wouldn't have to climb back  
 up and re-set it when we hit it.

Coach turns to look at her.

COACH  
 Oh.

They gather up more rocks. They continue to throw.

MARGARITA  
 She lied to me. She said she  
 stopped chemotherapy because she  
 didn't have cancer anymore. She  
 just stopped chemotherapy. She  
 still has cancer. She's just gonna  
 die.

Coach looks at Margarita as she takes another toss.

MARGARITA (CONT'D)  
 She gave up. It's stupid. It's  
 fucking stupid.

Coach slowly sits down to the ground. Margarita continues to toss her rocks.

MARGARITA (CONT'D)  
 And I'm not going to apologize for  
 calling them cunts.

Coach shakes his head.

COACH  
 Don't have to.

MARGARITA  
 Good. Cuz I'm not.

She scoops up some more pebbles, still tossing them, with a bit more aggression.

Coach picks up a piece of grass. He blows on it. It WHISTLES.

Margarita stops, turning to look at him.

MARGARITA (CONT'D)

How'd you do that?

Coach waves her to sit down. She sits beside him, setting down her pebbles. He picks her a piece of grass, handing it to her.

COACH

Now hold it between your thumbs.

He reaches for her hands to correct them, she flinches away.

She gently puts her hands back out. He takes them, folding them around the grass.

COACH (CONT'D)

And you hold it firmly.

He brings his blade back up to his mouth.

COACH (CONT'D)

And blow on it.

His whistles. She tries. A lot of spit comes out. She keeps trying. He talks over her as she keeps blowing on the grass.

COACH (CONT'D)

Maggie did the same thing. She stopped chemotherapy. It was the best decision-

MARGARITA

Who's Maggie?

COACH

My wife.

MARGARITA

Oh yeah.

She keeps blowing on the grass.

COACH

It's not giving up. It's accepting and living. I think it's just as brave as fighting.

Margarita keeps SPITTING and BLOWING on the grass blade.

COACH (CONT'D)

You should keep going with her.

PHVVVVVVVVVV

The grass blade WHISTLES.

MARGARITA

I got it! Did you hear that?

COACH

I heard it.

Margarita smiles. She blows again. It doesn't work.

MARGARITA

Aw man, I had it.

She keeps trying.

COACH

You should head home. Your mom's probably missing you.

Margarita looks at him, her fingers still pursed at her lips.

COACH (CONT'D)

She loves you.

MARGARITA

(defensive)

Yeah, I know.

Margarita gets to her feet. She looks down at him. He looks up at her.

MARGARITA (CONT'D)

Bye Coach.

COACH

Bye Red.

Margarita waddles off back up the hill they came down.

INT. MARGARITA'S HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Margarita opens the front door. All the lights in the house are off. She gently tip toes to her mom's bedroom. She creaks the door open.

INT. SANDY'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Her mom is laying in a hospice bed, surrounded by meds. The bed is tilted upright. She's sleeping, her mouth hanging open slightly. Her hair has grown back in a bit more.

Margarita gently tip toes over to her. She kicks off her shoes, sliding into bed beside her mom.

Sandy stirs softly. She rolls over, opening up her arms.

Margarita wriggles in, resting her head on Sandy's neck.

SANDY  
(whispering)  
I love you.

MARGARITA  
I love you too.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

PATRICK, Margarita's UNCLE, (Sandy's brother) is making toast and eggs in the kitchen. Simultaneously, he's scrubbing the cabinets clean of finger prints.

Sandy is sitting at the kitchen table. She looks out the window. Her movements are slow. Patrick notices Margarita padding in to the kitchen.

PATRICK  
Good morning Margarita, how did you sleep?

He talks to her as if she is a baby. Margarita walks straight past him.

MARGARITA  
Hi Uncle Patrick.

She sits down next to Sandy at the table.

MARGARITA (CONT'D)  
Mom, I was thinking today we could go see a movie.

Sandy smiles, her eyes wrinkle up. She nods her head.

PATRICK  
Today we are getting the new remote for the bed installment. We have the hospice worker coming at noon.

The toast POPS up out of the toaster. Patrick grabs it and begins to layer scrambled eggs on top of it.

MARGARITA  
Mom, do you wanna go to the movies with me?

Sandy gives her a soft smile. She lays her hand on top of Margarita's. She gives it a small squeeze.

PATRICK

She needs to rest, Margarita.  
Remember, she doesn't have the same  
energy she used to.

Margarita rolls her eyes. Sandy winks at her. She crosses her eyes, sticking out her tongue at Patrick's back. Margarita laughs.

As Patrick turns back around Sandy drops the face.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

So what are your plans for the day,  
Margs?

Margarita, eyes still on her mom, gives a shrug.

MARGARITA

I dunno. Probably just gonna hang  
out here.

PATRICK

Cool, cool...maybe we can watch  
that horse documentary you were  
telling me about.

Margarita rolls her eyes.

MARGARITA

Yeah...that would be cool.

INT. LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

Patrick is SNORING loudly on the couch as the HORSE DOCUMENTARY plays on the television. Margarita tip toes from the couch into Sandy's bedroom.

She creaks the door open to see Sandy is wide awake, starring ahead at the television. A home decor show is playing quietly.

She turns to see Margarita. She smiles.

MARGARITA

Hey mom, how's it going.

Sandy smiles.

SANDY  
(whispering)  
How good do I look?

MARGARITA  
You look sexy.

SANDY  
I know.

Sandy adjusts herself weakly to sit up more. She looks at Margarita.

SANDY (CONT'D)  
Will you give me a bath?

Margarita laughs.

MARGARITA  
A bath?

SANDY  
It sounds so nice.

Margarita laughs.

MARGARITA  
Okay.

INT. SANDY'S BATHROOM - TUB

Margarita washes Sandy's frail and withering body. She gently rubs a sponge up and down her back.

She washes Sandy's short hair. Sandy closes her eyes, melting at the feeling. She helps shave her armpits. Margarita gently rinses her head with a bowl of water.

INT. GUEST BEDROOM - EVENING

Patrick SNORES in the guest bedroom. Soft giggling is heard from the other room.

INT. LIVING ROOM - LATE NIGHT

Sandy wears her blue wig. She's putting eyeshadow on Margarita's eyelids. Sandy's hands shake horribly.

SANDY

(whispering, giggling)  
You gotta hold still...And then,  
you always wanna make sure to just  
do the top eyeliner, no  
bottom...you'll look like a  
raccoon.

Margarita looks at herself in the mirror.

MARGARITA

Hmm. Cool. I like it. I look really  
awesome.

Sandy drinks from a glass of wine.

SANDY

Okay, what's next.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Margarita and Sandy watch an adult film on the TV. Margarita is captivated. Sandy wears her glasses, dissecting the film like a critic.

Some MOANING comes from the TV. Margarita's eyes widen. The MOANING increases louder and louder.

SANDY

Okay, that's another thing. There's  
real, and there's faking it...these  
girls are *always* faking it. No one  
sounds like that in real life. You  
tell them what works for you.

MARGARITA

Yeah why wouldn't you just tell  
them. Seems dumb.

Sandy looks back to the screen, as does Margarita.

INT. SANDY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Margarita and Sandy sit in her bed together. Sandy shows Margarita the scrapbooks she's been keeping in her room.

SANDY

This was the day Dad climbed into  
the tree and nailed that can into  
the tree branch...do you remember  
when he did that?

MARGARITA

I remember that.

They flip through the pages of the book.

EXT. PASTURES - NIGHT

Margarita pushes Sandy up to the fence. Sandy is in a wheel chair, bundled tight in blankets and a beanie. Margarita approaches the fence.

The large brown horse approaches Margarita.

MARGARITA

Hi...hi, I missed you...You can pet him. Just reach the back of your hand out first.

Sandy, caught up in watching her daughter, shakily stands from her wheel chair. Sandy extends a hand. The horse takes a moment, then very gently leans into her hand.

SANDY

Oh wow.

MARGARITA

Isn't he amazing?

Sandy gently pets the muzzle.

SANDY

He is.

Sandy continues to watch Margarita with adoration.

INT. MARGARITAS HOME

Margarita and Sandy eat ice cream from the tub. Sandy moans.

MARGARITA

(laughing)

You sound like the lady from the porn.

SANDY

This is real too.

INT. MARGARITAS HOME - BATHROOM

Margarita helps her mom throw up into the toilet.

INT. GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

Sandy shows Margarita the breaker in the back.

SANDY

It looks confusing but it's not.  
I'll label everything. Go get me  
the label maker let's do it right  
now.

MARGARITA

No I got it...

SANDY

No you don't, you're gonna forget,  
come on just five minutes it will  
take five minutes don't be a lazy  
ass.

Margarita throws her head back in a groan, sulking into the house.

EXT. TRAMPOLINE - NIGHT

Margarita and Sandy lay on the old trampoline in the back.  
Both are bundled in blankets.

They both look up at the stars. A breeze rustles through the trees as they both watch the leaves fall from the branches.

Sandy sighs, closing her eyes.

MARGARITA

Just like this?

SANDY

Yep. He laid there, and I laid  
here. We were so drunk.

They both laugh. A beat.

MARGARITA

Mom, I'm gonna go tomorrow. I'm not  
gonna give up okay.

SANDY

Go where?

MARGARITA

I'm gonna go compete in the  
hobbyhorse competition.

A beat.

SANDY

Do it.

MARGARITA

Really?

SANDY

Yes.

MARGARITA

What if they laugh at me? Like you said...they could laugh at me.

SANDY

Fuck them. Fuck everyone. Show them how good you are.

Silence.

MARGARITA

Are you scared?

SANDY

I was scared to have you. I was scared to raise you. I was scared to raise you alone. Death's got nothing on me.

MARGARITA

I'm scared. I don't want you to go.

Sandy rolls over to face Margarita.

SANDY

You are so much bigger than all the things to be afraid of.

Margarita looks into Sandy's eyes.

SANDY (CONT'D)

You gave my life meaning. (**Beat**) No one can determine what a meaningful life is. I think only we can...but I had one. We have one.

Sandy takes in another breath, much slower. Margarita watches her carefully.

MARGARITA

We have one. We have one.

Sandy's eyes are shut. Margarita begins to drift off, closing her eyes. The still night begins to take over her thoughts.

## EXT. TRAMPOLINE - SUNRISE

Margarita rolls over. Her nose is pink from the cold. She sees a bird land on the tree branch overhead. The sun is just barely peaking over the horizon.

Everything is quiet. Only the wind and the leaves and the birds are heard. Margarita closes her eyes again, putting her head against Sandy's.

She pulls away realizing how cold her mom's face is. She puts her hand on her mom's cheek.

She looks at her moms face for a long time. She traces her fingers along the smile lines of Sandys mouth. She touches her moms lips. She rubs her hand across her bald head. She lays her head on Sandy's chest. Silence.

From high above the trampoline, we see two figures, lying side by side.

## INT. GUEST ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Patrick sleeps on the guest bed, his mouth hangs open. Margarita walks straight up to the bed. He stirs slightly.

MARGARITA  
Hey Uncle Pat.

He startles awake, yanking the covers over his torso.

PATRICK  
Jesus...Margarita...is everything  
okay? Where's Sandy?

MARGARITA  
Everything's fine. She's out on the  
trampoline.

He sits straight up, practically leaping out of bed.

PATRICK  
What?!

He yanks a sweatshirt over his head, still in his boxers. He beelines for the door.

MARGARITA  
It's okay...she died in her sleep,  
just like she wanted to. Hey, I  
gotta go to my to my  
competition...do you think you  
could give me a ride?

Patrick runs straight out the backdoor.

MARGARITA (CONT'D)  
(calling after him)  
Why are you running? She's already  
dead.

He sprints out the backdoor, leaving it open. Hysterical screams come from outside.

CUT TO

EXT. BACKYARD - MORNING

Margarita stands, leaning against the back porch wall. She watches as EMT workers rush out of the ambulance with a stretcher and bags.

Patrick stands by the trampoline, helping them on to the trampoline.

An EMT worker approaches Margarita with a blanket.

They begin to wrap her in the blanket. She pays no mind to them. She watches as EMTs begin to try and lift her off the trampoline.

Patrick talks with one of the workers near the ambulance.

Margarita notices as a butterfly flies past her. She watches it disappear into the sky.

The EMT and PARAMEDICS pull Sandy's body off the trampoline and onto the stretcher. They cover her up. Margarita calls out to them.

MARGARITA  
She needs her wig.

An EMT responder standing next to Margarita turns around.

EMT RESPONDER  
Excuse me?

MARGARITA  
Her wig.

Margarita points to the blue wig, still lying on the trampoline. The responder looks at the wig. She calls out to the EMT members by the stretcher.

EMT RESPONDER

Hey guys...She uh...Can you get her wig?

A couple of them give a "what the?" Look. One of the responders reaches through the net, grabbing the wig. He calls back.

EMT RESPONDER 2

Got it.

The EMT Responder by Margarita turns back to her.

EMT RESPONDER

They got it.

MARGARITA

Thank you.

Another responder tries to get Margarita to walk along with them to the ambulance.

RESPONDER 3

Come with me please.

MARGARITA

No I can't, I have a competition I need to go to.

RESPONDER 3

(confused)

We...uh...need family present.

MARGARITA

My Uncle Patrick can go. Do you need both of us?

The responder hesitates. He looks at the female responder standing next to Margarita. The female responder shrugs.

RESPONDER 3

I mean...that's...fine.

MARGARITA

Okay cool. I'm gonna go to the competition then. Do you think one of you guys can give me a ride maybe?

The responder is dumbstruck. Suddenly-

HONK.

HONK.HONK.HONK.HOOOOOONK.

A Responder round the side yard.

RESPONDER 2

Hey...Margret...they're saying your ride is here.

Margarita, confused, makes her way to the front yard.

EXT. FRONT YARD - DAY

Hank has his window rolled down, the car still running. He's parked behind the ambulance.

HANK

Come on cowgirl, you're late.

MARGARITA

What?

HANK

Your mom, she called me last night...she said you needed a ride to some horse riding thing today.

Margarita looks at him in disbelief. She looks to the backseat. She notices Felix sitting in the backseat. Felix waves.

HANK (CONT'D)

He wanted to come.

FELIX

I love horses.

HANK

(shrugging)  
He loves horses.

Hank looks at Margarita, leaning forward to open the passenger door.

HANK (CONT'D)

Shall we?

INT. HOBBY HORSE COMPETITION - DRESSING ROOMS - EVENING

Pinky's mom, a classic stage mom, powders makeup on to Pinky's face. Other moms help their daughters get into costume and curl their hair. The room is alive with nervous energy.

No one notices the backdoor of the dressing room opening. Margarita enters. No hobby horse, no costume, no makeup bag. Just a camel toe.

She finds an empty chair near one of the makeup mirrors. She looks at herself in the mirror. Her hair is a rats nest, her face is bare. She looks around the room.

She catches Pinky's eye mid glance. Pinky, a flash of fear on her normally cocky face, looks away quickly.

Margarita turns to BERNADETTE, the girl sitting next to her. She's chubby, probably the chubbiest one in the room. She has a terribly short bob, flushed cheeks, and the biggest smile of anyone there.

MARGARITA

Hey...do you have any lipstick I could borrow.

BERNADETTE turns, excited that someone is talking to her.

BERNADETTE

Uh doy. I have like one hundred lipsticks.

Margarita smiles as Bernadette begins dumping lipsticks out of her horse bag.

MARGARITA

Your bag is awesome.

BERNADETTE

Thanks. I like your hair.

Margarita runs her hand over it.

MARGARITA

You do?

BERNADETTE

Yeah. I think red hair is the coolest hair of any of the colors. I'm Bernadette.

MARGARITA

I'm Margarita.

BERNADETTE

Wait...your name is Margarita?

Margarita slumps a little, ready for the jokes.

MARGARITA

Yeah.

BERNADETTE

That's so freaking cool!

Margarita perks up. Bernadette hands her an orange-colored lipstick.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)

Do this one. It matches your hair.  
It's gonna look so pretty on you.

Margarita puts it on her lips. She smacks her lips together, looking at herself in the mirror.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)

Oh my god...I knew it would look amazing. Do you want some blush?

Margarita shrugs, overwhelmed by the kindness.

MARGARITA

Okay, ya sure.

Bernadette spreads bright pink blush on to her cheeks. Margarita, looking slightly crazy with the colors on her face, stares at herself in the mirror.

BERNADETTE

You look incredible.

MARGARITA

Yeah...I look really good. I just gotta...

Margarita begins to attempt to braid her own hair with her cast. She rips it apart, trying to separate it and twist it amidst the knots.

BERNADETTE

Ooh I love braids. That's cool you can braid your own hair. My mom always does it for me.

Margarita, stretching her hands behind her head, struggles.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)

What are you wearing for your costume?

Just then Margarita hears a VOICE BOOM over the sound speaker.

HOBBYHORSE MC (O.S.)  
 And in just a short moment we have  
 our fifteen to eighteen age  
 division.

Margarita's eyes jolt open.

MARGARITA  
 Fuck!

Bernadette jumps. Heads turn. Margarita drops her hands from her hair and begins to sprint out of the dressing room. She turns back to Bernadette.

MARGARITA (CONT'D)  
 Where's backstage?

Bernadette, stressed, shrugs her shoulders.

MARGARITA (CONT'D)  
 Ughhhhhh

Margarita sprints out of the dressing room, SLAMMING the door on her way out. All the girls and their moms stare.

INT. HALLWAY OF THE ARENA - CONTINUOUS

Margarita is overwhelmed by the senses. LOUD SOUNDS. GYM SMELLS. GIRLS and STAGEHANDS crowd the hallways, pushing past each other.

Margarita, mumbling under her breath, practically slams into a Tiny Blonde.

TINY BLONDE  
 Watch it!

Margarita stumbles towards some curtains that block off backstage from the arena. Margarita is beginning to melt down.

INT. BACKSTAGE - CONTINUOUS

She's trying to hold back tears. She paces around backstage. Her hands keep flying up to her hair. She continually tries to braid.

The STAGE MANAGER, a flamboyant and way-too stressed man, keeps interrupting her thoughts with questions.

STAGE MANAGER  
 Are you in this category?

MARGARITA

Yes my name is Margarita spelled  
just like the drink.

He begins to scan his list.

STAGE MANAGER

I'm not seeing your name...you said  
Marguerite?

MARGARITA

It's Margarita, oh my fuck!

Margarita is getting agitated. She ties a scrunchie around  
her shitty braid. The Stage Manager stares at her.

MARGARITA (CONT'D)

Do you know where Coach is?

STAGE MANAGER

Which Coach?

MARGARITA

My Coach...I think he's supposed to  
be back here...

STAGE MANAGER

Honey it's not my job to keep track  
of everyones' coaches...

Margarita growls in the back of her throat. She sits down,  
putting her head between her knees, trying to block out the  
world. She begins repeatedly hitting herself in the head.

Suddenly, a pair of large hands gently place themselves on  
the back of her shoulders.

COACH

Need a horse?

Margarita turns around to see Coach. Same sweatshirt, same  
faded jeans, same demeanor.

He pulls Cheeseburger out from a golf club bag full of  
horses. It has a blue bow in it's hair and is taped back  
together quite professionally.

Margarita nods at him, her eyes filled with tears.

COACH (CONT'D)

Why you crying?

MARGARITA

I can't braid my *fucking* hair. I can't do it. I can't do it.

Margarita begins to hyperventilate.

COACH

Turn around.

Margarita turns around, showing her wonky braid, its a twist with a scrunchie barely hanging on to the end.

COACH (CONT'D)

What are you talking about, Red?  
That's a great braid. Suits you.  
Did you do that by yourself?

Margarita, through sniffles, nods.

COACH (CONT'D)

I'm very impressed. You'll have to show me how to do it sometime.

Margarita laughs, wiping her snot on her sleeve.

MARGARITA

I don't have a costume.

COACH

You don't need one. All that's just for show. You'll stand out just fine--

HOBBYHORSE MC (O.S.)

--Ladies and gentleman...we have our final race of the afternoon, our Upper Division category.

Some CHEERING. Coach gives Margarita a pat on the back.

COACH

Knock em dead, Red.

MARGARITA

How do I know when to go out? Are they gonna say my name?

Coach has disappeared to the wings. Margarita takes a deep breath.

Margarita walks out on stage. She opens the curtain herself and heads straight for the HOBBYHORSE M.C.

INT. STAGE - CONTINUOUS

A CLOSE UP ON A PURPLE CAST.

In shaky permanent marker is written "FUCK EVERYONE. LOVE, MOM". A butterfly is drawn next to it.

She wears a striped turtleneck, ill-fitting jeans, a messy braid, and too much colorful makeup.

She awkwardly walks straight up to the HOBBYHORSE MC, a "MISS AMERICA" host of a man with fake white teeth and hair plugs.

HOBBYHORSE MC

Oh, and it looks like one of our competitors doesn't wait for anyone!

Margarita stands right next to him. She taps him on the shoulder. He tries to brush her off until finally he can't ignore her anymore.

He laughs awkwardly. She battles to grab the mic. He tries to keep it away.

HOBBYHORSE MC (CONT'D)

Okay, okay...she demands to be heard, ladies and gentleman here is...

Margarita grabs the mic forcefully from his hands. She speaks too close to the microphone.

MARGARITA

Ladies and gentleman my name is Margarita I will be racing today to...in honor of my mom Sandy who died about two hours ago on my trampoline in my backyard. I'd like to thank Hank and Felix for taking me here, my new friend Bernadette for her lipstick, Coach for fixing Cheeseburger but most of all I'd like to thank my mom for teaching me to fuck everyone- hit it!

The judges are completely horrified. Audience members GASP. Coach hits play on the speaker system.

*AMERICAN PIE* BLASTS through the arena. Coach gives her a rock on. She throws him a "rock on" back.

Margarita picks Cheeseburger dramatically raising her over her head.

Margarita takes her stance at the beginning of the race head. She takes a deep breath in. She begins to interpretive dance with her horse for the beginning of the song.

As the song amps up to the first *"So bye bye Miss American Pie"*

Margarita begins to TROT around the ring. She receives a couple HOOTS and HOLLERS, mainly from Felix and Hank.

Her scrunchie falls out, her fluffy hair falls over her shoulders.

She gallops past the first few obstacles. She turns back around. She leaps over one, two, three...she knocks over the third. Her big shoes catch on the pole.

She stands up, dusting off her knees. She step claps from side to side, trying to get the audience to clap along too.

Doesn't work. Except Felix and Hank, they're clapping with her.

Margarita mounts her horse again. As she builds back up into a gallop, she notices a couple of audience members standing up to leave.

She gets distracted watching them. Coach, from the sides of the arena calls out to her.

COACH

Margarita!

MARGARITA

(yelling back to him)

They're leaving!

She points to the people sneaking out. She looks at Coach for help. She starts to back up, taking the horse out from between her legs. A couple audience members BOO.

She mouths the words "I CAN'T" to Coach. Coach stares back. She looks to the judges who are extremely uncomfortable. Every face in the audience is uncomfortable. No one knows what to do.

Coach looks down at the iPod, he stops the song. Margarita looks back out at the audience. The arena goes SILENT.

Margarita lets out a couple GASPING BREATHS. She wipes her nose. She clears her throat.

She turns to Coach, then back to the crowd. She closes her eyes, taking in a deep breath.

MARGARITA (CONT'D)

Wait- no I can do it. I'm okay. I'm fine. I'm fast. I'm fast...the fastest girl in the world...I'm the fastest girl and the world...and fuck everybody else.

CHOIR

FUCK EVERYBODY ELSE...SHE'S FAST...SHE'S FAST...THE FASTEST GIRL IN THE WORLD...

AN EPIC AND ETHEREAL CHOIR FILLS THE STADIUM.

IN SLOW MOTION:

She raises Cheeseburger to the sky.

All of a sudden, COACH, BERNADETTE, HANK, FELIX-

AND SANDY

Are next to her on stage. Margarita looks at them. They all lift her into a carry as the choir BUILDS.

They support her. She rolls her wrists as she reaches to the sky.

She gently is set back down by her friends.

As she does her same routine that she has done every night in front of the TV, Coach, Bernadette, Hank, Felix, and Sandy all do it with her. Each is in perfect synchronization.

Sandy gives Margarita Cheeseburger. Margarita takes Cheeseburger, smiling. She looks forward at the audience. Her friends have disappeared.

Hank and Felix are back in the audience. Coach is on the sideline. Margarita preps.

She gears up taking off in a final gallop. As she runs, her feet begin to lift off the floor. She's floating above the hurdle, then she floats above the audience, the judges, the arena.

A long PUSH IN on her face as she continues to float above the crowd. She gives a huge smile. She takes a deep breath in, closing her eyes.

Finally, she opens her eyes.

FADE OUT.