

My Daughter and The Exterminator

Greta Keating

## Cast of Characters

ANNA: 28 years old. Tall and beautiful, intimidating aura. The type of girl you love to be liked by but fear to be hated by.

MARIELLA: 45 years old. Calm, soft spoken.

PHIL: 23 years old. Tall and Lanky, big enthusiastic eyes.

TADALIA: 20 years old. Small but tough.

VIRGINIA: 52 years old. British accent, walks with a sense of entitlement and never one place at one time. Always thinking about something negative.

SCENE 1

*Wealth that looks like the first snow. Untouched and taken care of. White, grand, elegant. High ceilings and shining floors, books that haven't been read, on modern book shelves that slant side ways on purpose. A leather couch, a fur blanket. A glamorous looking puppy that lay on the fur, watching out for-cockroaches. Virginia runs out of her bedroom. She's zipping up her pants, putting on her boots, getting ready for work. She turns on a coffee machine. She moves with a confident masculinity; as if she could punch something. She goes into a bathroom and applies eyeliner. As she is doing so she notices a cockroach passing by on the wall. She has a prim and proper British accent, which is often exaggerated when she is telling someone how to be.*

VIRGINIA

EW! Everywhere! They're everywhere.

*She walks back into the living room; pouring herself a cup of coffee and downing it in a matter of seconds.*

VIRGINIA

Tadalia?

*She stammers her way into another room.*

*It's Tadalia's room. It is a mess of clothing and books, pizza boxes, beer cans. In a gigantic bed, sits a tiny body covered by blankets.*

VIRGINIA

Tadalia?

*She waits.*

VIRGINIA

Tadalia?

*She waits.*

VIRGINIA

Tadalia?... Tadalia?.... Tadalia?... Tadalia?... Tad-

*Tadalia pulls her head out from under the blankets weakly.*

TADALIA

STOP!

VIRGINIA

It's the only way you listen.

TADALIA

If you want me to kill myself keep doing it. Really.

*A long silence where Virginia looks at Tadalía like "You did not." Finally she speaks.*

VIRGINIA

So insensitive. Really. How can you say that kind of thing to me... and before work? Now I won't be able to focus. I'll be so horrified that my baby girl is.. Harming herself.

TADALIA

Sorry.

VIRGINIA

Don't forget your medicine.

TADALIA

I never forget.

VIRGINIA

It's just when you go saying things like that...

TADALIA

I didn't mean it.

VIRGINIA

Now I'm worried.

TADALIA

No you're not.

VIRGINIA

How can you say that?

TADALIAH

You're worried because you think you should be worried. Because it's the thing to do. But you're not actually worried.

VIRGINIA

That's a very unfair statement.

*Tadalía looks in a different direction, thinking.*

TADALIA

Don't you ever just think about the possibility. Not that you would actually do it, but just say, when you're waiting for the subway, or when your shaving your legs? Just the possibility that you could jump or... you know use the razor...and your whole life would be over? Not that you want that.

VIRGINIA

No. I don't rejoice in the thought of ending my life, and the fact that you do-

TADALIA

No no no, It's not a happy thought. It's sad. It's an emotional feeling. We don't do it, I mean, some of us do, obviously. But it's like eating a carrot. We could chomp down on a finger just as easily as a carrot but we don't; because it's hard to do.

VIRGINIA

Are you doing that thing? That dark humor thing.

TADALIA

What? No. I'm serious.

*Virginia sits down next to Tadalialia. She puts an uncomfortable palm on Tadalialia's head and rubs it like a puppy.*

VIRGINIA

Do you really mean these things?

TADALIA

Don't worry I wouldn't... do it. I wouldn't kill myself. It's the carrot analogy. I can't manage chomping down on my own finger.

VIRGINIA

Okay. Good.

*Virginia is thinking about something else.*

TADALIA

Hello?

VIRGINIA

Oh... hello?

TADALIA

Where did you just disappear to?

VIRGINIA

Nowhere?

TADALIA

What were you thinking about that's so much more important than me.

VIRGINIA

I was here, with you.

TADALIA

What was it?

VIRGINIA

I was- I was- I was thinking about the cockroaches... Okay! You got me. You got me. I was thinking about the colony of cockroaches. And how every single time I go away on a business trip I come back to a dozen more. And how now it feels like a city of cockroaches. With a market, and a motel, and a theatre. I see little tiny ones, babies. I see teenage ones. I see moms and dads and grandmothers and grandfathers. An entire city of cockroaches and I can't. Handle. It.

TADALIA

Go to work.

BLACKOUT

## SCENE 2

*A gentle room. A big picture of the beach is framed on the wall. Subtle violin melodies play. Virginia lays on her stomach, with her face pressed against the air hole of a massage chair. MARIELLA (30, calm collected, short hair and loose clothing)*

VIRGINIA

Knead more. KNEAD. A little harder still.

*Mariella's hand floats above Virginia's back. Almost touching but not.*

MARIELLA

How is that?

VIRGINIA

Still a little pathetic.

MARIELLA

Well that's a strong word, don't you think.

VIRGINIA

You know me Mar, I don't need you to be gentle. That is the least of my concerns.

MARIELLA

I think we all need a little gentleness sometimes.

VIRGINIA

Not me, it irks me. Harder! Harder. Do you ever just stand on peoples backs? I'm so tense I think I could use that.

MARIELLA

Virginia, I'm an energy healer. That's a whole different kind of thing than what I'm trained to do.

VIRGINIA

I need you to push all the shit out of my body. I don't want to feel a thing after I leave.

MARIELLA

What about feeling better? Don't you want to feel better after you leave?

VIRGINIA

I'd take nothing over better.

*Mariella continues pressing into Virginia's back.*

VIRGINIA

I didn't mean to come off aggressive. I just-my daughter... she hasn't left the house in 2 months.

MARIELLA

Oh wow.

VIRGINIA

Can you even imagine?

MARIELLA

It must be hard. You are very tense.

*Mariella takes a little vile of Lavender and drops a couple drops on her hand. She then begins to massage it into Virginia's back.*

MARIELLA

I just put some drops of lavender on you, hopefully it'll help calm you down.

VIRGINIA

Today she threatened me with suicide.

MARIELLA

Oh. That's not good.

VIRGINIA

I know she won't do it though. I hope. I mean I've seen a suicidal person. I know what it looks like.

MARIELLA

Hmm. Well People experience things differently than others.

*Mariella begins to massage at Virginia's neck. She slowly moves up towards Virginia's head, gently massaging her scalp.*

VIRGINIA

Oh my god, something about the way you do that. It, well for just one moment I don't think about anything.

MARIELLA

I'm just at the top of your crown chakra. You've got a lot of tension up here.

*Mariella picks up a pair of scissors. She cuts away invisible threads of negative energy.*

VIRGINIA

AH! Are you giving me a hair cut now?

MARIELLA

No, I'm cutting away strands of negative energy that have been holding you down. So after you leave you may feel more connected to the universe.

VIRGINIA

I don't really understand what your saying. I'm not the biggest fan of this... that wishy washy spiritual mushiness.

*Mariella takes a deep breath quietly, she shakes her head a little as she exhales (as if to release Mariella's bad energy.)*

*A slight softness comes over Virginia's eyes.*

VIRGINIA

Do you think Tadalia, really...could?

MARIELLA

What?



VIRGINIA

I love her. She can be a real burden but.. I do love her. And genetically. Well I don't know. Do you think she could bite the carrot.

MARIELLA

Hmm?

VIRGINIA

End her life?

MARIELLA

I didn't mean to worry you. I mean when people say that kind of thing it can mean a lot of different things. I just think it's always important to validate other people and their feelings. I mean it traces through all of our minds. It would be odd if we didn't consider our mortality. I wish it were possible to avoid those thoughts but it's part of being human. When it stems from a darker place, though, it's important to know that it's real and it's serious.

*Virginia sits up from the massage chair abruptly. Mariella stops massaging her. She looks her in the eyes.*

VIRGINIA

I don't know why she's doing this to me. I don't know why people do these kinds of thing to me.

MARIELLA

Well sometimes, Virginia, things aren't happening "to you" they are just happening. Plain and simple.

### SCENE 3

Tadalia is home alone. She stays curled under the blankets, drowning in comfort until it is no longer comfortable. The sheets feel stale, the air is weak making. Tadalia peaks her head out. She slowly pulls herself out of bed with lethargic movement. She mocks her mothers accent.

TADALIA

Tadalia? Tadalia? Tadalia?

*She stands up, for a moment holding the side of the bed as she regains balance from that lightheaded feeling that sometimes happens after one gets up to quickly.*

*She notices a cockroach crawling on the wall. She wanders over to it slowly. She puts her finger to it and lets it crawl onto her. She holds it up really close to her face.*

TADALIA

Hi little cocky roachey.

*She stares at it.*

TADALIA

Who decided that lady bugs would be loved and you, despised.

*She lays on her bed. She puts her finger to her stomach. She lets the cockroach crawl all over her body. She then bends down and looks under her bed. She does something under it for a moment or two that we cannot see. There is always a tiny shuffling sound in her room.*

*She hears the front door shut. She hops back into bed and covers her head again.*

ANNA(O.S)

Mom? Tadaliala?

*High heeled footsteps are heard clanging their way to Tadaliala. The door opens vivaciously. Anna stands behind it. She's got long straight hair and an obvious lip job. She's wearing a long pink peacoat, with purple lipstick, and fashionable boots. She's got bags on bags all hanging off her arms.*

ANNA

Tadaliala?

*Tadaliala pulls her head from the blanket.*

TADALIALA

I was sleeping.

ANNA

No you weren't.

TADALIALA

How would you know?

ANNA

You weren't snoring.

TADALIA

I've stopped snoring.

ANNA

I don't believe you. People don't just stop snoring. Sometimes they get surgery if they like have a deviated septum or whatever, and then they stop. Otherwise it's impossible to be a snorer that spontaneously stops being a snorer. And how would you know if you're asleep when you snore. Where's mom? Work?

TADALIA

She's at her reiki healer.

ANNA

What the fuck? And you aren't?

TADALIA

I know right.

*Anna laughs. Tadalía smiles. Tadalía likes Anna. They are so different they can admire one another with honesty.*

ANNA

Can I show you some dresses? Or is that insensitive?

TADALIA

Why would that be insensitive?

ANNA

Wellllll... cause I'm getting married and you're stuck in bed.

TADALIA

But it's not a competition and even if I weren't in bed I wouldn't be getting married because I think marriage is stupid and to be honest I think the way my brain works I would immediately fall out of love the moment I was on my honeymoon. But that's just me. So show me the dresses.

ANNA

Okay. So don't tell mom because I kind of did a ridiculous thing.

TADALIA

Oh no.

ANNA

So I really hate trying thing on in the store, cause the mirrors are always so close and closed in and I feel like I want to walk around in the thing and really

(MORE)

ANNA (cont'd)  
get a feel for it, you know? And I mean this is my wedding, that's a huge deal. I wouldn't want my wedding dress decision to be made in a small little box of a room.

TADALIA  
Gettttt to the point.

ANNA  
I bought five wedding dresses.

TADALIA  
What!?

ANNA  
I'll return the 4 once I pick the 1.

TADALIA  
I don't want to know how much that cost.

ANNA  
Then I won't tell you. But I used my own card. Except for one of the dresses. Which is on Mom's.

TADALIA  
The greed is killing me.

ANNA  
You're just as rich. We are rich.

TADALIA  
Yes, but I hate being rich.

ANNA  
Poor people would hate you more than me if they knew you "hated" being rich.

TADALIA  
Just get dressed.

*Anna places the bags down and slips her clothes off. She puts the first one on. She walks like she were a model in a fashion show.*

TADALIA  
Woah... That's cool.

*It's long a white, and tight.*

ANNA  
I know mom will hate it.

TADALIA

But what doesn't she hate?

ANNA

I really don't know..

TADALIA

Exactly.

*Anna walks back in forth in the room, slowly,  
performative.*

ANNA

So just sit there and imagine you're on the the beach,  
and you didn't know I was coming, and then boom! There  
I am. Your big sissy. Walking down the AISLE.

TADALIA

Yes. This dress is perfect.

ANNA

It's not...slutty?

TADALIA

What qualifies as slutty to you again? I never get it.

ANNA

Oh stop you know slutty.

TADALIA

Well I can tell you have a good butt in it. Is that not  
allowed?

ANNA

Mom's gonna hate it.

TADALIA

Well maybe part of growing up is saying "FUCK MOM"!

ANNA

Let me show you the others.

*She takes off the current dress and pulls out a  
much more traditional dress from a bag. She puts  
it on and shows it off to Tadalialia.*

TADALIA

I hate this one.

ANNA

This is the one mom reserved.

TADALIA

God you should have made me guess and I would have known. This one is boring. It's not you.

ANNA

Yeah but me... would me really be getting married?

TADALIA

I don't know what you mean.

ANNA

Well the real me, that you see, isn't the most lovable. You know?

TADALIA

No... cause that's the one I love. I don't think I can handle any more superficialness right now.

ANNA

But there's 3 more.

TADALIA

Another day. It's getting to me.

*ANNA (mockery)*

*It's triggering you?*

TADALIA

Yes, actually it really is. What kind of world takes something like love. Fucking love. They take it and they capitalize on it. They capitalize on everything! It honestly makes me want to die.

ANNA

You're so melodramatic.

TADALIA

You can't see what I mean? At all?

ANNA

I don't see how making wedding dresses is a crime. I don't mind spending money on something that I'll wear on one of the most important days of my life.

TADALIA

Yea you don't get what I'm saying at all. Can you leave? I need to go back to sleep.

ANNA

Okay see you in another two weeks, in your bedroom as always. Great hang.

*She slams the door.*

SCENE 4

Virginia sits at a table across from Anna. Virginia devours sessame chicken from the takeout container. Anna watches.

ANNA

You okay Mom?

VIRGINIA

Yea, why?

ANNA

You're kind of eating that like an animal.

VIRGINIA

It is an animal, it was an animal.

ANNA

Huh?

VIRGINIA

The chicken.

ANNA

You seem weird.

VIRGINIA

Maybe it's because of my healer. She told me that often times after a session people get really hungry. It's hard work, being healed.

ANNA

Wow. Yeah, you hadn't mentioned the reiki thing. Tadalía told me about it.

VIRGINIA

Oh right, I hadn't seen you in a while then I guess. You talked to Tadalía today?

ANNA

Yep.

VIRGINIA

I haven't even bothered since I've been home. She's really triggering, do you find that?

ANNA

Now you sound like her.

VIRGINIA

OH no!! Please no!

*Anna and Virginia begin to laugh.*

ANNA

I'm not worried about her.

VIRGINIA

You're not?

ANNA

Not in the slightest. She's just a big old drama queen.

VIRGINIA

She always has been.

*Virginia slows her eating.*

VIRGINIA

Did you pick up the dress today?

ANNA

Yeah I did!

VIRGINIA

Isn't that once badass dress!? That's the dress of an empowered woman. A successful lawyer getting married, not some ditsy dress.

ANNA

For sure!

VIRGINIA

You don't like it?

ANNA

I didn't say that!

VIRGINIA

I can hear it in your vocal fry.

ANNA

In my what?

VIRGINIA

What is it?

ANNA

I'm just considering a couple of options.



VIRGINIA

Okay. I mean it was a lot of work reserving that dress. Work and money, but that's okay. You'll have to show me this other dress.

ANNA

Sure, but another time would be better. I'm tired of trying things on. EW

*A cockroach wanders down the table. She jumps up and so does Virginia.*

VIRGINIA

JESUS CHRIST. This is getting out of hand!

ANNA

How has it gotten so bad!?!!

VIRGINIA

I don't know Anna. It is getting ridiculous at this point. I can't handle it. I'm calling an exterminator. Tonight.

BLACKOUT

SCENE 5

Tadalia is in her bed, snoring. A buzzer rings. Then another buzzer. It happens over and over until suddenly Tadalia jolts awake.

TADALIA

What?

*She rushes out of bed, half asleep. Overwhelmed, they don't usually have guests. She's in her underwear and an oversized shirt. Her hair is in severe tangles. She peeks her head out of her bedroom door. The front door buzzes again.*

TADALIA

WHAT DO YOU WANT?

*She screams into the abyss.*

*Another Buzz.*

*She tips one toe out of the room, like putting a toe into a lake to see how cold it is before diving in. She makes her way out of the bedroom how someone may make their way past crashing waves at the beach. With focus and precision slowly, yet somewhat chaotically.*

*Another buzz.*

*Finally and impulsively, she just runs to the door.*

*She peeks through the peephole.*

TADALIA

What the fuck?

*She opens it ajar There stands Phil. He is tall and lanky looking. Dimples in his cheeks, an interesting haircut. He's dressed like a ghostbuster. Equipped with all the cockroach busting essentials.*

TADALIA

Hello?

PHIL

Howdy! Are you Virginia Oconnally?

TADALIA

Nope.

PHIL

Oh... Is she here?

TADALIA

She's not. Who are you?

PHIL

Phil. The exterminator.

TADALIA?

What?

PHIL

Did no one tell you I was coming?

TADALIA

I think there may be a mistake.

PHIL

Hmm..

*He pulls out a daily organizer.*

PHIL

Cockroach extermination 3/10 at Virginia Oconnally's house 209 West Banks street.

TADALIA

Well, I think maybe you should leave because we don't have cockroaches.

*Phil watches as two pass by on the wall.*

PHIL

I just saw three.

TADALIA

You're hallucinating.

PHIL

Oop, there went the fourth, and the fifth, wow six!

TADALIA

Fuck.

PHIL

Unfortunately my boss would get mad if I left without doing my job.

TADALIA

Fuck your boss!

PHIL

I would. I mean he's a very sexy man, with long hair and a creepy moustache but he pulls it off.

TADALIA

I don't like your humor.

PHIL

I guess I could tell my boss that my client would prefer Jeremy. He's a stand up comic on the side.

TADALIA

So you're not gonna leave until you... kill them.

PHIL

Yea.

TADALIA

Dammit. Wait one second.

*She shuts the door and runs to her room. She leaves Phil standing and waiting.*

*She runs back to the front door, wearing pants now. She opens it and lets him in.*

*He follows. They sit on a little bench near the door, kind of awkwardly in the house but not fully.*

PHIL

Nice house!

TADALIA

Does it hurt?

PHIL

Huh?

TADALIA

Does it hurt them when you kill them?

PHIL

Well, I'm not really sure. They haven't done any studies.

TADALIA

Of course they haven't.

PHIL

Yeah. I guess it is kinda mean. It sucks in a lot of ways.

TADALIA

It probably hurts.

PHIL

But it's a poison. So maybe it's like dying from drinking too much?

TADALIA

Or ODing?

PHIL

Yes, like that!

TADALIA

Poor little guys.

PHIL

It is sad. God you've got me thinking about how sad it is now. This is my job! You're ruining my job- What's your name?

TADALIA

Tadalia.

PHIL

That's pretty. You're ruining my Job Tadalia!

TADALIA

And you're, Pete the exterminator?

PHIL

Phil!

TADALIA

Ah, yes!

*They sit in a little silence. Until Phil feels awkward and he stands.*

PHIL

It seems like an appropriate time to begin the process.

TADALIA

Wait!

PHIL

Why?

TADALIA

You made me leave my room with all your buzzing.

PHIL

Oh, Sorry about that.

TADALIA

You woke me up from my nap and It really messes my whole day up to go right from a deep interrupted sleep into a massive cockroach genocide so can we just give it a little moment before you begin killing innocent lives?

PHIL

Sure. But you should know that I get very uncomfortable in silence. So if it's gonna be a silent couple of moments I don't know if I'll be able to handle it.

TADALIA

Why? Do you get uncomfortable?

PHIL

I don't know. It's just how it's always been. And I already know you hate my humor. So not being able to make a joke in the silence is gonna make it even harder.

TADALIA

It's not a date. You don't have to entertain me. You're about to kill a lot of bugs, it's not the most romantic thing in the world, so you really don't have to entertain me.

PHIL

Okay.

*They wait in silence. Phil squirms in a little, finally talking.*

PHIL

What do you like to do?

TADALIA

You couldn't handle it, the silence?

PHIL

I really couldn't.

TADALIA

I wonder why.

PHIL

Well it doesn't help that my family kinda, they see me as a mediator in alotta ways. So I'm used to just keeping the dinner table full of conversation, you know?

TADALIA

Then you should change your business to mediating. Mediating conflict, that's a much kinder profession.

PHIL

But I don't like doing it.

TADALIA

And you like killing cockroaches?

PHIL

I don't "like" it. I do like wearing this stuff though.

TADALIA

It looks stupid.

PHIL

That's why I like it.

*She doesn't respond. Phil watches something.*

PHIL

I saw two more. You guys have got it bad.

TADALIA

Yea... So? Why are humans so greedy?

PHIL

Oh I don't know.

TADALIA

I think it's sort of stupid to live on land and expect not to see other creatures.

PHIL

Yea.

TADALIA

And I hate how much they pick and choose. Some bugs are hated, some are loved. A hamster is a pet, but if a rat, an animal that looks SO SIMILAR to a hamster comes into the house...everyone goes ballistic.

PHIL

People like to choose favorites and least favorites of things I guess.

*Another silence.*

PHIL

Okay, I hate to break it to ya... but I really should start the extermination.

TADALIA

What if I protested it. What if I chained myself up to your killing equipment.

PHIL

I feel like you've already sorta done that with your presence and I'm not gonna lie protesting never works.

TADALIA

What??? It's how revolutions are made. It does too work.

PHIL

I gave up in it recently.

TADALIA

The point is that you don't ever give up.

PHIL

Well you sure as hell are showing off that point.

TADALIA

I'm sorry.

PHIL

It's okay! I didn't mean to come off mean.

TADALIA

It was a little mean sounding.

PHIL

Oh, Sorry.

TADALIA

Sorry I'm just a little sensitive. I haven't seen anyone my age really, except my sister in a very long time. My mom doesn't really listen to me talk she just batters me with criticism and then when I finally open up she's never listening. So I'm a little loopy, or in a weird mood talking to you.

PHIL

It's okay. You don't seem that loopy. I wasn't expecting to meet someone cool today so I am pleasantly surprised.

*Tadalia smiles, then she realized something.*

TADALIA

Did you see me in my underwear before?

PHIL

Huh?

TADALIA

Okay good.. Never mind.

PHIL

What?

TADALIA

I said never mind.

PHIL

But now you're doing the thing where you almost say something and then you take it away. I hate when people do that. They're the same kind of people who like to break hearts.

TADALIA

What are you talking about?

PHIL

They almost give it to you, and then they take it away.

TADALIA

Like when a girl says no?



PHIL

NO! Like when you are seeing a person and you really like each other and everything is going well and then they just leave. But what were you saying...before?

TADALIA

I just realized that for a good portion of our meeting each other I was pant less. But I guess I had the door covering my lower half.

PHIL

Really!?!? That's so funny! How did I not know?

TADALIA

I don't know but I am relieved.

PHIL

Why weren't you wearing pants?

TADALIA

Okay, don't get any weird ideas. It was cause you woke me up and I was overwhelmed with all the buzzing so I just sorta ran to the door and came too once I had already opened the door without pants on.

PHIL

I see.

TADALIA

Yes.

*Another silence.*

PHIL

So what do you like to do?

TADALIA

You already asked me that.

PHIL

But you never answered.

TADALIA

I guess that's true. Well for a while I liked drawing recreations of what I would look like under different circumstances.

PHIL

What do you mean?

TADALIA

Self portraits sorta.

PHIL

Yeah, I get that... but what do you mean "under different circumstances"?

TADALIA

Like me if I grew up in the countryside. Same genetics and stuff, like my eyes are the same but my body is different because I only eat natural food from my farm.

PHIL

That's a funny idea!

TADALIA

Thanks.

PHIL

Do you make them for other people?

TADALIA

I made one for my mom. It was her if my dad had never left. That didn't go over well.

PHIL

What did she look like in that?

TADALIA

Well she was heavier because people are always fatter when they have someone to love. Cause they can relax and like watch T.V with someone and binge ice cream together; and if they accept you...you feel sort of off the hook to eat however you please. But even though she was fatter her eyes glowed more and she wasn't uptight. She looked prettier. I painted it so that it looked like she was glowing an aura of orange.

PHIL

Can I see it!?

TADALIA

She threw it out.

PHIL

What?!

TADALIA

Yeah she hated it. I didn't think it was offensive but I kinda get it now.

PHIL

But still you.. Made it.

TADALIA

That's not how everything works. Sometimes what you make offends people... even though you made it.

PHIL

I guess that's true... Would you ever be down to make me one?

TADALIA

Oh... uh... Yeah. I guess. I haven't done it in a while. Cause I've been kind of depressed.

PHIL

Maybe it would help you feel better.

TADALIA

Uh... maybe. What circumstances would you like changed?

PHIL

Me if I were a famous musician.

TADALIA

That's lame.

PHIL

What do you mean!? I actually write songs so it's not entirely unrealistic.

TADALIA

You write songs?

PHIL

Yeah.

TADALIA

Are they good?

PHIL

I don't mind em.

TADALIA

Well the thing with you being a famous musician is it's just not specific enough.

PHIL

I don't get it then. How is you growing up on a farm any different.

TADALIA

It's more specific. A huge part of who I am comes from growing up in a city. It changes very specific parts of me to not. Like my body image problem is much less around trees instead of private school girls.

PHIL

Okay...

TADALIA

I'll get more specific for yours. Hmm, How about it's you on a tour through mid Europe with your first album that's quickly becoming a huge hit... so quickly that you've never had to kill a cockroach in your life for money. But also at the same time , you're losing your current girlfriend because you're never around enough. I could totally paint this version of you.

PHIL

That ones kinda sad and happy. Why can't I be successful and in a relationship.

TADALIA

That's rare.

PHIL

Is it really?

TADALIA

Very rarely do you get to have two good things at once, at least I think so.

*The door opens with a loud kerplunk. There stands Virginia.*

VIRGINIA

TADALIA!

TADALIA

Yes mother?

VIRGINIA

YOU'VE RISEN!!!! YOU'RE OUT OF YOUR BED!!!! YOU'RE OUT OF YOUR ROOM. Who is this?

TADALIA

The exterminator that you so kindly never told me about.

*Virginia runs to Tadalialia and holds her in an overbearing hug.*

VIRGINIA

My baby is on the other side. She has fought and survived a major depression; and the exterminator is here! WOOOO HOOOOO!

TADALIA  
Mom stop.

PHIL  
It's okay, it's kind of sweet.

TADALIA  
It is definitely not sweet.

*She pulls away, and looks at Phil very seriously.*

VIRGINIA  
So has it been done?

PHIL  
Uh what?

VIRGINIA  
Have you destroyed our population of repulsive  
little creatures of disgust.

*Phil waits for one moment.*

PHIL  
Yes I have!

VIRGINIA  
Hooray! Hooray Hooray!

*Virginia picks Phil up and begins to do an odd  
little dance with him.*

*Tadalia and Phil have a moment of eye contact, she  
winks at him.*

*BLACKOUT*

*scene 6*

We're in Mariella's healing room. Eerie meditation  
music plays. Mariella sits with her eyes shut. Virginia  
holds a crystal near Virginia's body, but not touching.  
She drifts it across her body.

VIRGINIA  
I don't think it's working.

MARIELLA  
You don't have think. This kind of process is beyond  
the intellect.

VIRGINIA  
Nothing is beyond my intellect. I know everything and I  
know that I don't think I like this.

MARIELLA

Well you don't even have to like it.

*Mariella continues moving the crystal across her side.*

VIRGINIA

They still exist; everywhere. It's a nightmare of mine, a nightmare.

MARIELLA

The cockroaches?

VIRGINIA

Yes, what else?

MARIELLA

It's not unlikely that you might need the exterminator to come a couple more times.

*Mariella floats the crystal above Virginia's head for a good long minute. She knows what she's doing. The movements feel powerful. There is a gravity to the way she floats the crystal from chakra to chakra.*

VIRGINIA

Have to have him come AGAIN. WHY is that!? That is just so strategic isn't it? I'm sure that they have a way to rid the house completely the first and only time but they hold it back so that they can make a little extra dough. Ridiculous.

MARIELLA

Or maybe it's just hard to get rid of them completely, the first time. You know it's funny to think of, but exterminating the cockroaches... it's sort of like healing the negative thoughts we carry around in our heads. You don't completely heal on the first therapy session with me, but the more you come, the more you heal.

VIRGINIA

Or, you have the capability of healing me the very first visit but you don't, because you want the money.

MARIELLA

Oh Virginia, if I had the solution I would have certainly given it the first time you came to me.

*Virginia quiets for a couple moments.*

MARIELLA

Are you thinking about something that worries you? I can feel a major blockage right at your connection from heart to earth.

VIRGINIA

What?

MARIELLA

I sense you're thinking about something new.

VIRGINIA

Oh! Yes. You're right. My daughter.

MARIELLA

The older or younger daughter?

VIRGINIA

Tadalia. It's never Anna. Anna is doing fine and well, except for some potential wedding dresses that are a bit disturbing and make me question her sanity, I mean why would you want to get married looking like a harlet?

MARIELLA

Maybe that's what she likes.

VIRGINIA

Well that's not what I like, and I am her mother after all. But Yes Tadalia. She came out of her room.

MARIELLA

What???? That is such a beautiful thing to hear Virginia.

VIRGINIA

And then she went right back into it.

MARIELLA

It's like her little snail shell of sorts. It's bound to outgrow her at some point; just give it time. Why did she leave her room in the first place?

VIRGINIA

The exterminator.

MARIELLA

Hmm.. Well if the exterminator didn't get the cockroaches to leave at least he got her too!

VIRGINIA

I hadn't thought about it like that.

MARIELLA

How'd he do that?

VIRGINIA

Well she was the only one home and he needed to be let in so I guess he buzzed the buzzer over and over until she let him in, which sounds a bit obnoxious, but then I came home and there they were.

MARIELLA

Is he young?

VIRGINIA

Yea he's practically a kid. I have a neighbor who is very fond of him, otherwise I'd get a different one. But I suppose I could use the three strikes policy.

MARIELLA

And what is that?

VIRGINIA

I use it when I am employing people. If they do one thing wrong they are marked down, a second time they are marked down again, and a third time they're fired.

MARIELLA

That's a very...extreme way of dealing with things.

VIRGINIA

Well it's business, it's different then let's say... reiki healing. You couldn't get rid of a client even if you wanted to!

*She bursts out into laughter. Mariella forces an uncomfortable laugh.*

#### SCENE 7

*Anna and Tadalía sit in Tadalía's room surrounded by wedding invitations. Anna applies lipstick and then kisses each card until she needs to apply it again for a stronger kiss mark. Tadalía lays across the floor, an extra whiff of joy in her aura.*

TADALIA

You sure you don't need help?

ANNA

No offense, but your lips aren't as voluptuous as mine, people would probably be able to tell.



TADALIA

None taken. Isn't it funny? All this work you're doing for your own celebration?

ANNA

What do you mean?

TADALIA

Nobody is really gonna take huge notice of the kiss mark on their invitation.

ANNA

Wow, thanks for the great support.

*Anna kisses another card.*

TADALIA

I'm not saying it's bad. I'm just saying it's funny.

ANNA

Sure.

TADALIA

Is Mark good in bed?

ANNA

Why are you in such an obnoxious mood?

TADALIA

HE'S NOT!?

ANNA

I didn't say that. I said you're being weird and it's annoying me.

TADALIA

I don't know I just, we never talk about it? I feel like it's a good thing for us to talk about.

ANNA

Not me. I in no way want to talk about sex with you.

TADALIA

Okayyyy.

*Tadalia sits up. She walks over to a mirror and looks at herself.*

TADALIA

You know you are in my room. By the way.

ANNA

I know, cause your room is already a mess so it won't bother me to bring a messy task into it.

*Tadalia combs through a gigantic Mat in her hair.*

TADALIA

I think I'm getting better Anna.

ANNA

Were you ever not well?

TADALIA

Oh no... I was just fine. Are you kidding?

ANNA

Yeah I'm kidding.

TADALIA

Okay.

*Tadalia gets back into her bed. She covers her face with a blanket.*

ANNA

Really? Are you serious?

TADALIA

What?

ANNA

Back into bed you go.

TADALIA

You and mom are fucked up, do you know that?

ANNA

You're fucked up. To be honest.

TADALIA

I would just like to connect a little in a real way, but if you're incapable, you're incapable.

ANNA

I'm not incapable of connection. I mean I am getting married for gods sake. When's the last time you were in a relationship?

TADALIA

Is that the only form of connection that you think exists?

ANNA

It's the one that makes babies exist in the world.

TADALIA

Thats so... heteronormative of you.

ANNA

Oh shut up.

TADALIA

YOU shut up.

*Anna jumps onto Tadalía on the bed and slaps her across the face.*

TADALIA

WHAT THE FUCK!?

ANNA

You just needed that. Sorry.

*Anna gets back on the floor and looks over the her wedding invitations.*

TADALIA

No one needs a slap.

ANNA

Some people need a little physical thing to happen to wake them up from their one internal bullshit.

*They stare at one another.*

TADALIA

I started this whole conversation cause I wanted to tell you something exciting.

ANNA

Really!? What is it?

TADALIA

Definitely don't trust you at all anymore to tell you.

ANNA

Come on! You cant do that thing. I hate that thing. You can't almost tell me something and then not.

TADALIA

I can do whatever I want.

ANNA

Tell me!

*Anna gives Tadalía a good long look of curiosity. Tadalía crosses her arms. She looks away from Anna. Holding it back.*

TADALIA

I have a crush.

ANNA

On who!? How is that even possible.

*Anna stands up and looks out Tadalía's window.*

ANNA

Is there a hottie who lives across the way and gets undressed with the curtains open or something.

TADALIA

No. Don't mock me.

ANNA

I just don't understand how the girl who never leaves her room could have a crush.

TADALIA

The exterminator. He's kinda cute.

ANNA

NOOO...

TADALIA

Yea he's a little dork and I kinda liked his vibe.

ANNA

But he's an exterminator.

TADALIA

so?

ANNA

You don't really hear of people like us...dating anyone like that. It's like dating a plumber. It might be worse than dating a plumber actually.

TADALIA

You're elitist. I'd date a plumber and I'd date an exterminator.

ANNA

But you're actually smart and kind of pretty and a little bit intelligent, even if you don't use it at all.

TADALIA

Use what?

ANNA

Your intelligence.

TADALIA

What would "using my intelligence" look like?

ANNA

I feel like you would understand that life isn't forever and that we only have a certain amount of years before we're old and frail and because of that we must do whatever we can to achieve big great things, especially as woman! To prove that we are capable. To make money, to live a good life.

TADALIA

I do too know that life is finite, that's actually exactly why I act the way I do for your information.

ANNA

That doesn't make sense to me.

TADALIA

I follow my instinct. I try to connect to the animal in me. If I need to hibernate because I'm too sad to do absolutely anything then that's what I'll fucking do. You know I have gone through some pretty intense shit. You have gone through it too! So has mom! But no one fucking talks about it and it's honestly absurd. It's like gas lighting of the heart.

*Anna takes a big deep inhale, exhales it and then speaks with a repressed calm.*

ANNA

Life ends, so we have to make the most of it. We can't dwell in sad things. Dad's gone. It's sad. It was his choice. He was selfish, story over.

*Tadalia gets really quiet.*

TADALIA

Is that really what you think about it?

ANNA

Well of course I cry about it. Sometimes in the shower I sit on the floor and let out like ugly ugly cries but then I get up and go to work because I am an adult.

TADALIA

Well I guess I'm just a little slow or something.

ANNA

I guess so.

*Tadalia watches as a cockroach crawls by on the wall. She walks over to it. She lets it crawl onto her skin. Anna see's.*

ANNA

EW! EW EW EW! What are you doing?

TADALIA

You wanna give it a little pet?

*Tadalia gets close to Anna. Anna stands up and runs across the room.*

ANNA

PUT IT DOWN!!! GROSS!!! THAT LITTLE FUCKER IS DISGUSTING.

TADALIA

It's just a little tiny bit of life that exists. It's so much smaller than you.

ANNA

But its's slimy and has a hard back and probably eats shit for dinner!

TADALIA

You're ridiculous.

ANNA

Put it down!!!

*Anna is as dramatic as one might be to a gun being pointed at them.*

ANNA

PUT IT DOWN!!!

*Tadalia smiles at Anna a real creepy devilish grin then she finally places her hand against the wall and lets it crawl away.*

ANNA

You are a fucking weirdo, do ya know that?

TADALIA

Yeah.

BLACKOUT

SCENE 8

*Anna sits on the couch with her legs laid out on the coffee table. She's reading a cosmopolitan and sipping on one too. The door buzzer buzzes.*

ANNA

Finally.

*She goes over to the door and presses a button, waits a moment or two, and then opens the door to reveal Phil in all his gear and holding a big lunch box.*

ANNA

Hi.

*She walks back to her couch and picks up the magazine.*

PHIL

Hi! Who are you?

ANNA

Excuse me?

PHIL

I just, I didn't see you last time.

ANNA

Yes, I've heard. My mom isn't very happy about the fact that you did such a shit job.

PHIL

They're tough creatures to kill those cockyroacheys. You know if a nuclear bomb were to go off-

ANNA

Yes, they wouldn't die. I'm a lawyer.

PHIL

And?

ANNA

Lawyers know that kind of thing.

PHIL

I guess that makes sense. Where is... Tadaliala?

ANNA

In bed for life.

PHIL

She's here?

ANNA

She's never not here.

*She looks back at her magazine.*

PHIL

Can I go say hi?

ANNA

Say hi?

PHIL

Yeah. I uh- I had a nice time talking to her last time, I'd like to say hello.

ANNA

I mean, sure.

PHIL

Cool.

*Anna watches him from behind as he slicks back his hair. He walks down the hall with nervous hesitancy to the only shut door. He knocks twice, then again.*

TADALIALA (FROM BEHIND DOOR)

Leave me alone.

PHIL

It's Phil.

TADALIALA

Come in.

*Phil opens the door. She's under the covers as per usual. It's a mess too, as usual.*

PHIL

You okay?



TADALIA  
Yeah.

*He walks towards her, then plops on the ground.*

PHIL  
So the bad news is I really gotta do it this time.

TADALIA  
Fuck.

PHIL  
The good news is I brought you sandwiches.

*He pulls out one for himself and one for her. He places it next to her.*

PHIL  
Yours is vegetarian.

TADALIA  
I'm not a vegetarian.

PHIL  
Really? Why do you care so much about the cockroaches,  
I just sorta figured.

TADALIA  
I'm a hypocrite.

*She sits up in bed and grabs the sandwich. Like a nervous puppy given food.*

TADALIA  
Thank you, though, this is nice.

*She takes a bite.*

TADALIA  
Yum. It tastes like meat.

PHIL  
Portobello mushrooms are super good at being fake meat.

*She eats a bit faster now.*

TADALIA  
It's so good.

PHIL  
Thank you.

*They sit in a moment of silence as they eat. Phil shakes his leg*

PHIL  
I'm practicing not talking.

TADALIA  
But you're talking.

PHIL  
People don't just graduate from defense mechanisms immediately.

TADALIA  
What do you mean?

PHIL  
I have to practice until I'm good at it.

TADALIA  
I always want things to happen right away, then I give up.

PHIL  
Like getting out of bed?

TADALIA  
Uh, no. Don't you try telling me what to do.

PHIL  
What do ya mean!?

TADALIA  
Please don't mention that I am in bed, or what the world outside of me is like or try to push at all okay.

PHIL  
Okay.

*Paul looks down at his sandwich and pokes at it nervously.*

PHIL  
Are you in your room a lot?

TADALIA  
Huh?

PHIL  
Your sister said... and then you just got defensive and I was trying to make a joke, but I'm sorry about that... If it upset you.

TADALIA  
Okay long story short the last time I was outside it was hot out.

PHIL

Woah. Okay. Like that random warm winter day?

TADALIA

...no.

*He looks uncomfortable.*

PHIL

Is there anything I could do to help?

TADALIA

What? I told you not to push and you like completely are pushing. I always go right back to bed when I feel pressured or pushed.

PHIL

I'm sorry!

TADALIA

It's okay. I'm sorry. I'm really sorry. You brought me a sandwich for fucks sake and I'm being an ass. I'm really really sorry.

PHIL

Don't worry about it.

*Tadalia holds her breath and then lets out a deep sigh. Then she talks really quick.*

TADALIA

Just to get it out in the open and to stop being so vague and mean I have just been really depressed and I haven't left my room in a long time. I haven't left the house in 2 months and I hadn't left my room until you buzzed a thousand times when you were last here.

PHIL

Oh shit... really?

TADALIA

Yeah, so thank you actually.

PHIL

Oh you're welcome! So you're sorta in the process of recovering. Sorta?

TADALIA

I don't really know.

PHIL

It's like my silence.

TADALIA

Huh?

PHIL

I practiced a little and then I talked. You left your room to get me the last time I was here and then you went back to bed. We're practicing getting better. How are you?

TADALIA

I'm okay.

PHIL

Have any sweet dreams?

TADALIA

I had one weird one.

PHIL

What happened?

TADALIA

I was a dude. And I was also the dudes downstairs neighbor. So I got to like, have sex with my girlfriend, in the dream. But I also kept shape shifting into his downstairs neighbor, hearing the banging and reacting to it. Weird dream.

PHIL

That sounds fucking awesome.

TADALIA

It was cool.

PHIL

How'd you like having a dick?

TADALIA

I've always wanted one. A dick for a day.

PHIL

Yeah I'd like to be a lesbian woman for a day.

TADALIA

Oh come on.

PHIL

What?

TADALIA

Why not fuck a dude? You can't do that?

PHIL

No I didn't say that. I just think it would be cooler to have a vagina if I could have really good sex, and I've heard lesbians, they have really good sex. I wouldn't want to do it with a guy who just cums and it's over. I'd want it all night long you know. If I had the body part that allowed for all night long sex, I'd want it.

TADALIA

These are crazy assumptions Phil.

PHIL

I'm not saying them as fact or something. They're just my opinions.

TADALIA

Let's move on, from this subject.

PHIL

Sorry! I didn't mean to say something weird.

*TADALIA says nothing.*

PHIL

Are you lesbian?

TADALIA

I said can we move on?

PHIL

Sorry.

TADALIA

Why do you care?

PHIL

I'm not sure.

TADALIA

Is it because if I'm not you feel a little off the hook but if I am you feel like you offended a lesbian?

PHIL

Um. No.

*Weird Silence.*

TADALIA

Thanks for the sandwiches.

PHIL

Of course!

TADALIA

Where'd you get them?

PHIL

I made them.

*She freezes.*

TADALIA

Really!?

PHIL

Yeah.

TADALIA

This sandwich could be as much as 22 dollars without a tip at the cafes around here.

PHIL

Thanks! It's a passion of mine.

TADALIA

Sandwiches?

PHIL

Yeah. I've always been good at it. Since I was little. It sounds funny, being a good sandwich maker because in a lot of ways it's "simple" so they say. But it isn't "simple" it's much harder to master then it might seem.

TADALIA

I make shitty sandwiches. So I get what you're saying.

*Silence. Tadalialia puts her hair into a pony tail.  
Phil watches.*

PHIL

So your mom hates me.

TADALIA

I don't listen to the words that come out of her mouth.

PHIL

She told my boss that it's the three strikes you're out policy if I don't get them gone completely she's gonna make an online complaint.

TADALIA

GOD SHE IS SUCH A BITCH.

PHIL  
She's a little bitchy.

TADALIA  
She's a ginormous bitch.

*Phil lets out a little giggle.*

PHIL  
So I really gotta do it this time. I know I already said that, but I just had to say it again.

TADALIA  
I have a secret.

PHIL  
What?

TADALIA  
I don't want you to judge me.

PHIL  
I feel like you judge half the words that come out of my mouth.

TADALIA  
That's a little bit true.

PHIL  
What is it?

TADALIA  
Do you smell something weird in here.

PHIL  
Cockroach poop. It's usually more subtle than this, but I can smell it wherever I am. I have a cockroach poop radar. It may not be the sexiest skill a person could have but shit I have it good.

TADALIA  
Yeah it's pretty gross.

PHIL  
Is that your secret?

TADALIA  
Yes.

PHIL

I don't get it. It's not really a secret.

TADALIA

Don't tell me what's a secret and what's not a secret.

*Phil lays down on the ground. He turns to the side. And notices something under the bed.*

PHIL

What's that?

TADALIA

Huh?

PHIL

Under the bed what is it?

*Tadalia takes a deep breath. She surrenders. She stands up from under the covers. She's in her underwear. Phil looks from the thing under the bed to her butt, it's a cute butt. He cares more about the butt than the thing now; but she really cares about the thing. She walks over to the other side of the bed. She bends down.*

TADALIA

This was the secret.

*She picks up a fish tank with no water. In this fish tank a heap of cockroaches run around chaotically. Phil's eyes widen; he stands. The fish tank versus the exterminator.*

PHIL

WHAT THE FUCK!?

TADALIA

I know you're judging me.

PHIL

WHAT WHY!?

TADALIA

Please don't judge me. People don't judge you for killing them why should they judge me for keeping them alive.

PHIL

You're the reason for all the cockroaches?



TADALIA  
No.

PHIL  
But you're the reason there are so many.

TADALIA  
No! They came naturally. At first it was one or two and then they had sex and made babies and those babies had babies and they created their little colony of them! It all happened naturally. And then my mom started flipping a shit; acting like she wasn't a baby cockroach once; who grew up and had sex and made babies.

PHIL  
Your mom was a cockroach once?

TADALIA  
NO. I mean symbolically. Like once she was a little tiny fetus and she grew into a baby and that baby grew up and that grown up made babies. I just didn't like how she monsterized these little creatures. So I started small. Made a little kingdom for them; and it's been growing. I'm gonna set them free one day. When I get the courage.

PHIL  
You are fucking crazy.

TADALIA  
FUCK you!

PHIL  
It's awesome.

TADALIA  
You think so?

PHIL  
Yea!

*She starts to get a little dizzy. Overwhelmed dizziness. She sits on the bed.*

TADALIA  
Sorry I feel like I'm gonna faint.

PHIL  
Oh no! Should I get you something? Are you okay?

TADALIA

My water bottle is on the bedside table.

*Phil grabs the water bottle and opens it. He tries to pour it in her mouth.*

TADALIA

I can still drink, I'm not dying. This happens sometimes.

*She takes a couple slow sips from her water bottle. She takes deep breaths.*

TADALIA

This sounds weird but can you hold me?

PHIL

It doesn't sound weird at all.

*He jumps on the bed and wraps his hands and arms around her back. He rubs her back. It's a type of nurturing she has never once experienced.*

TADALIA

I'm feeling better.

PHIL

Good!

TADALIA

Sorry about this.

*She pulls away and sits up.*

TADALIA

I just can't believe you don't think I'm a freak.

PHIL

You're definitely a freak.

TADALIA

I know, but like. See if Anna or my mom saw this, which they never would because they are literally oblivious to everything but the little world in their heads. But if they saw the fish tank they'd be super freaked out.

PHIL

It looks really scary and it smells bad and is for sure a worst nightmare of people and there could totally be a weird show about you on like a small news channel but your intentions are really sweet.

TADALIA

Want to know another secret?

PHIL

Are there centipedes in your closet?

TADALIA

Huh?

PHIL

It was a joke.

TADALIA

No.

PHIL

What is it?

TADALIA

My dad jumped out of his skyscraper office window when I was six years old.

PHIL

What? I'm so sorry, jesus christ.

TADALIA

So I uh, I think. Or I know that these cockroaches are him reincarnated.

PHIL

Woah.

TADALIA

And when I set them free I'll be setting him free.

PHIL

That's, that's insane.

TADALIA

You're the first person I've ever told, both things to.

PHIL

Well, thank you for, for... telling me.

TADALIA

I don't know what it is about you but I feel inclined to be a little more myself with you, without being ashamed.

PHIL

I know what you mean. I feel the same.

*They sit in silence*

PHIL  
Shit, well I feel conflicted.

TADALIA  
About what?

PHIL  
If I kill the cockroaches I'm like killing your dad for the second time.

TADALIA  
Mhmm.

PHIL  
But If I don't your mom is gonna get me fired, and this is a good job, I need this job.

TADALIA  
Never get a job you can't quit.

PHIL  
It's a little easier said coming from you.

TADALIA  
What do you mean?

PHIL  
Well it doesn't really seem like you have a job... but never mind.

TADALIA  
I am depressed.

PHIL  
Is that your job?

TADALIA  
Huh?

PHIL  
Sorry I don't know what I'm talking about.

TADALIA  
No... what do you mean?

PHIL  
You're really rich is what I'm saying. Sorry for not just being out right blunt with it.

TADALIA  
I know but It's not like I have the best life in the world.

PHIL

I know. That's obvious. I'm sorry.

TADALIA

I think you should go.

PHIL

Wait, fuck I'm an idiot. I didn't mean to, I'm sorry.

TADALIA

Please leave. Please. I just like shared a really fucking traumatic thing with you and you're making me feel bad. And everyone in this house is always making me feel bad. I hate being this victimy little brat but I don't have a dad anymore and I think, I know that I remember being so small and pretending to be asleep on the couch so that he could carry me to my bed. I remember that so much. You know this house is so clean. We have a cleaning lady who comes three times a week. THREE. And my mom cleans for the cleaning lady even. We have everything. We have too much of everything. I know it's absurd. I'm sure like one of the carpets in the living room could feed like 100 people. But between the floor boards, in the cracks. Underneath the bathroom tiles, in the pipes, from the corners of my ceiling these cockroaches came. And I was feeling really dark, and they started showing up everywhere. And you know someone else may have thought it was really creepy or something. Like a ghost movie where ants start pouring out of her eye lids or some shit. But I actually saw these little forms of life and they seemed more real and natural than my whole family put together. I'm sorry. I didn't mean to freak out. I need to go to sleep.

*Tadalia gets into her bed. She closes her eyes. Phil watches her. He tries to speak but can't. He stares at her. He stares at the fish tank. He tip toes out of the room, backwards. Watching her as he goes. Out of the bedroom to find Virginia, in high heeled boots, messy bun on her head and a wrinkle between her forehead aggressively chatting to Anna in the kitchen.*

VIRGINIA

Hi there.

*Phil freezes.*

VIRGINIA

What in the hell are you doing in Tadalia's bedroom?

PHIL

We're uh... friends?

VIRGINIA

Friends?

PHIL

*I'm sorry I know it's not the most professional. I came back to do another treatment on the apartment and I wanted to say Hi to her before I did it.*

VIRGINIA

That doesn't make much sense to me.

PHIL

We became friends the last time and/

*Virginia walks over to him with a look like she could attack.*

VIRGINIA

Can you explain to me why your last treatment ended up going so terribly?

PHIL

Sometimes its just such a bad infestation that/

VIRGINIA

Excuses, excuses. TADALIA?

*No response.*

VIRGINIA

Is she okay?

PHIL

She's fine, she's a little sad but she's okay.

VIRGINIA

Why would she be sad?

PHIL

I don't know, I have to go.

ANNA

Not so fast.

*Anna walks over to both of them now too.*

ANNA

I have a feeling about this whole thing.

VIRGINIA

What is it?

*The two of them are like wild hyenas surrounding Phil.*

ANNA

I don't think he did any cockroach exterminating at all...

VIRGINIA

WHAT? Why do you think that?

ANNA

Because I think he's been too busy taking advantage of Tadaliala's vulnerability to do his job... going to her room, making her like him. She likes him do you know that mom? Like likes, she called it a crush.

PHIL

She did?

VIRGINIA

She does?

ANNA

Yeah.

PHIL

I didn't think she liked me like that.

VIRGINIA

Well hooray for you then!

ANNA

I guess you worked your little shady games on her well.

VIRGINIA

Disgusting.

PHIL

Huh?

ANNA

I know boys like you. I dated one in high school. A fire man's son. Sweet "humble" allergic to peanuts and milk. Peanuts AND milk. You can't eat much of anything when you're allergic to the both. He told me I was his first love and then he left me for a retail salesman. He said I was too "ambitious". What a mysogonist prick.

PHIL

I'm sorry to hear that but I wouldn't, I'd never tell someone they're too ambitious.. I think it's cool to have passion.

ANNA

That's what you think now, while you've got yourself a little crush on the girl who DOESN'T DO ANYTHING. It's a little easier said that done when you're interested in someone who never leaves her room, showers once a week, and gets triggered at the drop of a god damn feather.

PHIL

Woah. That's just mean.

VIRGINIA

Okay Anna this seems to be getting a little too personal. There is one thing this kid is good for and it's killing these little fuckers, I want to know why they're still here, in the thousands.

PHIL

I am here to do another treatment, isn't that all that matters? I'll talk to my boss and make sure he doesn't charge you for this time.

VIRGINIA

Is Anna right?

PHIL

About what?

VIRGINIA

You haven't even tried to exterminate our cockroaches. Because you're too busy trying to seduce my daughter.

PHIL

I don't know! I'd like to think she's right.

VIRGINIA

I paid two hundred and fifty dollars twice to have you do NOTHING? This warrants more than just an online complaint. This is completely inappropriate behavior.

PHIL

No I mean two things can be true! I like Tadaliala AND I did the extermination.

*Tadaliala walks out her room a strut in her steps.*



TADALIA

Can you guys calm down? You're interrogating the poor guy.

PHIL

I'm sorry about what I said Tadalialia.

VIRGINIA

What did he say?

TADALIA

Nothing, it's fine. Now is not the time.

ANNA

Was he an ass to you? I'll beat up anyone who messes with my little sis.

TADALIA

Oh come on! Chill out! Shut up!

VIRGINIA

All I want to know is if I have been cheated out of my money.

TADALIA

Jesus christ mom, are you serious?

VIRGINIA

Uh.. yes I am Tadalialia.

TADALIA

We are so loaded. I think we could afford to be cheated out of a couple hundred dollars.

VIRGINIA

Says the girl who hasn't worked a day in her life.

TADALIA

Phil, help me with something?

PHIL

Uh sure?

*He follows Tadalialia into her room.*

VIRGINIA

What's happening?

ANNA

I have no idea.

*Inside the room Tadalialia angrily puts pants, then shoes, then a jacket.*

PHIL

What are we doing?

TADALIA

We're gonna free my dad from this blood sucking place.

PHIL

I'm sorry about what I said.

TADALIA

No you were right. I'm just ashamed of the truth.

*Tadalia and Phil walk out into the living room  
lugging the fish tank.*

VIRGINIA

What is this?

*Tadalia rips the sheet off the fish tank.*

VIRGINIA

WHAT IN THE HELL IS THIS?

ANNA

DISGUSTING.

*They both scream.*

TADALIA

I was keeping them alive under my bed.

VIRGINIA

No you were not.

TADALIA

Yes I was.

VIRGINIA

No... No no no no no.

TADALIA

They have little lives mom. Families and brains and ambitions...just like us. The only difference is they don't seem to spend their whole lives in pain. They just scurry about crawling up nooks and crannies. They are like us, and they aren't. Because we think too much and we feel too much. So much that we decide to stuff it all down. I can't stuff down how much I miss dad anymore. I want to talk about it him, I want to miss him with you guys. Otherwise.. well this probably won't make sense to you. Otherwise the only earthly thing that feels real in this house are the cockroaches. And I'll keep staying in bed, and I'll keep collecting them.

*Anna sits down, looking faint. Virginia shakes her head back and forth hysterically.*

TADALIA

But don't worry, Phil is gonna help me take them to the park.

*They all stand their stunned. Anna and Virginia besides themselves. Phil watching with confusion. Tadalialia with a strength in her stance, through confident eyes.*

SCENE 9

Tadalialia and Phil sit in the grass of a park. Their cheeks are rosy from the cold. They sit with the big fish tank in front of them. Tadalialia looks like a deer caught in the headlights.

TADALIA

It's really cold out here.

PHIL

It's kind refreshing though right? I love when it's cold. It's kind a like a slap in the face in a good way.

TADALIA

I forgot what cold air felt like. The last time I was outside it was...warm.

PHIL

That was a while ago.

TADALIA

Yes I've just been sitting in the same stale air. It's been recycled air. This air is like an air of a whole new range of possibilities.

PHIL

Humans need air and sunshine. It's a proven fact.

TADALIA

Cockroaches too probably right?

PHIL

Them not so much, I feel like they like the little tiny spaces.

TADALIA

Do you think this will disorient them?

PHIL

What? Putting them in sunshine?

TADALIA  
Yea.

PHIL  
I think they'll love it! They may not need it like you needed it; the sunshine. But nobody hates it. Not even cockroaches.

TADALIA  
Okay good.

*They sit in silence. Tadalialia closes her eyes underneath the sunshine and cool breeze.*

TADALIA  
It's kind of an emotional thing, getting rid of these little ones.

PHIL  
It must be!

TADALIA  
It feels like good emotional though. Like letting go of a friend that doesn't make sense for you anymore or cutting off hair that you might think you like but it's gotten too long and there are tons of split ends and stuff.

PHIL  
Yea.

*Another silence. Phil breathes into his hands to warm them.*

PHIL  
Are you okay?

TADALIA  
Yea. Yeah I am.

PHIL  
I know it must be really...over stimulating out here.

TADALIA  
It is a lot. Before I even met you though I started feeling this feeling that I wanted to be outside I really did. I didn't want to do it to prove anything to anyone though. Like I didn't want my mom to know cause she'd make it all stupid. I felt like I needed a gentle hand that wouldn't put too much pressure on me but would inspire me to leave my house. So thank you. Cause you've kinda been that to me.

PHIL

Anytime.

TADALIA

It's just funny you know, I hate being home; and I chose to always be home. It's kinda like those kids in highschool who hate school the most. They're always talking shit about it and failing classes. But then they finally graduate and then the next year you get out of school and there they are out front smoking cigarettes. Stuck in it. It's like they love to hate it, so they'd rather be stuck hating it then to move on.

PHIL

Oh my god I totally know those kids. They suck.

TADALIA

I don't want to be like them.

PHIL

Are you ready?

TADALIA

For what?

*Phil points at the tank.*

TADALIA

I'm not sure.

PHIL

I'm just... kind of cold.

TADALIA

Well fuck you then.

PHIL

I'm kidding!

TADALIA

Can we just be slow about it all.

PHIL

Of course.

*They sit in silence. Phil yawns. He stretches his arms up; and like in an old fashioned movie he inhales a sense of confidence and exhales as he hesitantly wraps his arm around Tadalía. For a moment she stiffens up; nervous. The warm body heat and the kind place where it derives from temps her in. She closes her eyes and slowly tips*

her head into the crevice of his shoulder. He closes his eyes and smiles. She opens one eye and looks up at him. He feels this and opens his eyes; she shuts hers quickly so he doesn't see that she was looking at him. He did see. He keeps looking at her cute face with the roseiness. She feels his eyes now and opens hers and they fall into one another's gaze. And then with almost synchronized movement they slowly move closer and closer into a kiss. Then they are kissing. The kissing is innocent and sweet at first but impulsively (Like Tadalialia can be) she jumps on top of him. They start making out. She pushes him to a lying position on the ground. They roll around on the grass getting dirty and muddy; their aggressive bodies knock the fish tank over. Out pour thousands of cockroaches. They both peak their heads up and look. They don't get up. They just stare for a moment, then they begin to laugh hysterically. Tadalialia's laughing turns as elegantly as one can into a hysterical sob. Sobbing and sobbing and laughing and sobbing. Phil rubs her back in a circular nurturing motion. Every cockroach exits. Only a few stay in the tank. Tadalialia sits up. She looks around her.

TADALIALIA

They are free.

Blackout