

MID RATS

Written by

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EXT. USS ENTERPRISE - ESTABLISHING SHOT - DAY

A humongous military aircraft carrier surges through open water.

SUPER: USS ENTERPRISE. THE PERSIAN GULF, 2009.

EXT. USS ENTERPRISE / FLIGHT DECK - DAY

A young navy flight deck technician waves a hand signal to the other end of the deck, timidly. Here is JESS VALENTINE, age 20. She looks uncomfortable in her vibrant turtle neck uniform, it's nearly swallowing her alive. We zoom in on her from the waist down.

CASH

But which one do you think is better?

CASH (20s) a pitiless, unprincipled ball of raw male energy crosses his arms, watching. He glances to:

YOUSEFF, (20s) his slightly less intrusive friend. His gaze whips over to another female sailor's behind.

YOUSEFF

That one. By far.

Across the deck is KACEY MQUEEN (20s) an adept and pretty navy brat trying hard to blend in. She does a similar gesture a few yards away. A deafening jet engine warms up in front of them.

KACEY

(to Jess)

You have to be bigger than that, or We won't see you!

Jess looks over her shoulder at Cash and Youseff, she knows they're talking about her. She tries again with the arms.

Some distance away on the deck PETTY OFFICER LEONARD SPERRY, (40s) towering in height, watches with a frown. He stands next TUCKER, a handsome aviator.

TUCKER

How you feeling about the new girl?

SPERRY

The same way you feel getting in a car with a drunk driver.

Tucker chuckles as the two look on. The engine grows louder, Jess watches Kacey intently, matching her arms.

The Jet takes off. BOOM. The Jet blast's power shoves Jess off her feet, SHE TOPPLES OVER THE FLIGHT DECK.

Shocked, disoriented, Jess lies caught in the safety net. She glances at the violent water crashing below her. The Crew fishes her out.

YOUSEFF

You weren't in the right spot.

CASH

I caught us some mermaid to have us some fun later, boys!

They all laugh. Cash pats her shoulder. Jess, still terrified, calms her breath.

JESS

Jesus--Fucking--Christ!

The Crew returns back to their spots, Kacey rolls her eyes to the boys.

KACEY

Bound to happen if you complain as much as she does.

Cash laughs. Tucker runs over to Jess. He helps her move further away from the edge.

JESS

I'm good, I'm good.

She hunches over holding her head in her hands, tending to her own fear and embarrassment.

TUCKER

You really okay?

JESS

Yeah, yeah I'm fine.

Tucker looks over at Jess's crew, they're still talking about her. He kneels down next to Jess.

TUCKER

With all due respect, standing up might prevent some future teasing if you get what I mean.

Jess nods, she stands up. She takes a deep breath.

JESS

Thanks. Honestly, I feel like the guys don't like me here at all yet. This sure didn't help.

TUCKER

Oh, they'll come around to you. They say the hazing comes from a good place. I'm Tucker.

JESS

I know. Jess Valentine.

They shake hands.

TUCKER

You know, I might have a way for to get on their good sides. Have you met the XO yet?

JESS

No. What would the Executive Officer want with someone like me?

TUCKER

How about acting?

JESS

Like the "friends, Romans, countrymen" stuff?

TUCKER

No like skits. The XO makes them, the crew goes crazy for it-- it's what we do on the Enterprise, it keeps everyone sane.

JESS

I used to do stuff like that at Comedy Sports, before I enlisted.

TUCKER

Comedy Sports? Sounds intense.

JESS

No, it wasn't, it was... stupid.

TUCKER

Well, I asked Kacey and she's coming too. You're friends right?

Jess glances across the runway at Kacey, preparing the launch cable for the next jet. Jess admires her beauty.

JESS
Yeah. I'm down.

TUCKER
Great. See you later, Jess
Valentine.

He jogs away towards the jet, he hops in to the cockpit.
Kacey races over to Jess.

KACEY
Getting attention from the cute
pilot, look at you.

Jess makes a face, truly uninterested. She stares off,
thinking.

JESS
How long did it take for PO Sperry
to warm up to you?

KACEY
You just gotta work harder.

INT. ENTERPRISE/ HALLWAY - DAY

Jess walks through a hallway, dozens of crew members pass by.
A very diverse array of people, yet uniform. Occasionally a
male sailor will look Jess up and down, whistle, attempt to
talk to her.

SAILOR #1
(to his friend)
There's like one female for every
20 guys, that means even the uggos
are gonna have guys trying to get
with them, that's why you can't be
picky--

SAILOR #2
Just even out the odds then. It
ain't gay if it's underway.

SAILOR #1
Shut up.

In the crowd is LOU, 20, She freezes at the sight of Jess.
Lou's a masculine girl who you can tell takes no shit. Jess
looks away and tries to speed past her. Lou makes a U-Turn
and joins Jess's side.

LOU
How was A-School?

JESS
 ...Hey. Wow... of all the carriers
 in all the sea... Hey.

LOU
 Poetic. Does that mean you wanna
 keep ignoring me?

JESS
 Sorry, I can't catch up, I'm
 actually on my way somewhere. I'm
 filming a video.

LOU
 The XO's?

JESS
 How'd you know?

LOU
 It's kinda a thing here. Are you
 sure you want to do that?

JESS
 Show off something I can actually
 do to get some respect around here?
 Yeah.

Jess increases her pace, Lou keeps up.

LOU
 (angrily)
 Jess... Jess!

Jess sighs and veers into a corner, stopping. She looks at
 Lou with a small amount of sympathy.

JESS
 Okay...How've you been? What
 deployment is this for you?

LOU
 My second. I work administrative in
 the day, do law classes at night.
 And I'm okay... Now.

Jess rubs her forehead, fighting her guilt.

JESS
 Look, I know it was horrible not to
 say anything to you. But I thought
 it was obvious, I can't, you
 know...

LOU

After two weeks you told me you loved me and wanted to buy a farm together. That's a lot Jess. That's not easy to just drop.

JESS

It was a bit of a jump, yeah. Bootcamp wasn't easy for me, I think I just needed--

LOU

And then you completely ghosted on me.

JESS

You're right the deaths of our future goats and chickens never got proper closure.

LOU

This isn't a fucking joke.

Jess glances around panicked at the passing by sailors.

JESS

Look. I'm sorry. I wish we could be friends here, but I wouldn't want anyone to assume.

LOU

I'm fine if it's different than what it was, but you need someone in your corner who get's it.

Jess goes stiff, Lou shakes her head.

JESS

I'm only interested in being friends with rule followers.

LOU

You hate the rules! I'm surprised you even got this far.

JESS

Wow. Thanks.

LOU

And everyone knows there's people that are *that way* here. They're just not allowed to say so.

JESS

Good for them. I'm not taking that risk. Have a good seven months. Really. Law classes. Kinda ironic.

LOU

Wait, okay. Whatever about all of that. I just really don't think you should do the video.

JESS

Bye. Going now.

Jess walks away. Lou's face turns a mixture of annoyance and hurt.

LOU

Fine. You got it Jess. I'll keep my distance.

INT. MEDIA CENTER - CONTINUOUS

A newly remodeled room lined with computers, shelves crammed with cords, wires. MARK OLLERMAN, (20s) a scrawny loner waiting for the day he can go rogue, plugs in a cam corder to TV, monitoring what its shooting live.

A mystery sailor walks into the room.

MARK

Camera's charged and ready, XO.

Mark pans the camera over to sailor: we finally see, Executive Officer TOM PORTER, (40s) a totally unselfconscious Navy Jim Carey with no off-switch.

TOM

And so am I, Marky Mark. Huh-huh!

Tom grabs the camera and thrusts his crotch into the camera. Mark gives him an absolute bare minimum smile.

MARK

Just be careful with it please.

INT. XO OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

An office with a desk completely decked out in Party City tropical decorations. It's bustling with a disorganized NAVY "FILM CREW", dozens of male SAILOR ACTORS stand by while some PA types paint their chests camo.

Jess enters timidly.

KACEY
Jess! Over here!

Kacey stands on the other side of the backdrop, putting her hair into pigtails, two coconut bras hang on her arm.

KACEY (CONT'D)
These are for us.

She hands Jess a coconut bra. Jess looks at it for a moment, then fastens it over the top of her uniform. Jess watches slightly cautious and fascinated at the chaos around her. She see's Tom rushing around the room, manning to every department.

JESS
Is that the XO?

KACEY
Yeah, why?

JESS
Is everything he runs this chaotic?
And what's the deal with these
videos?

KACEY
He shows them at his weekly check
ins where he goes over War ops. He
does characters, jokes about the
ship. He's kinda like a celebrity
on Enterprise.

JESS
Him?

Tom flips through a wrinkled script on his desk, a confused wreck, he points to the Camo Sailors.

TOM
(to assistants)
Are y'all almost done?

The Assistants take the make up from the boys and usher them out of the island backdrop.

They beckon Kacey and Jess to center. Tom looks at them, thinking.

TOM (CONT'D)

I think the joke would be better
if they were worn, just
themselves.

Jess looks down, he means the coconut bra. Kacey shrugs,
she begins to undress.

KACEY

Sure. Just like being in a
swimsuit, right?

TOM

(to Jess)
And you?

JESS

No thanks.

Tom's taken aback slightly, but a Sailor PA taps his arm.

SAILOR PA

You said to remind you about your
meeting in 15 sir?

TOM

Right. Let's get this thing done.
Boy's you know what to do when I
say 'Go'?

The Sailor Actors nod and mumble.

SAILOR PA

EVERYONE QUIET.

Tom presses the record button on the camcorder. Jess
copies Kacey's posing stance, not sure what to do.

TOM

Lesbo Island, Island Scene, Take
1... Go!

The sailors pounce onto the set like hungry monkeys,
Sailor actor #1 sees the women, he points at them.

SAILOR ACTOR #1

Les-BOS!

The sailors circle Kacey and Jess, hitting their chests
like king kong.

TOM

More, MORE BOYS!

A loud Sailor hoots into Jess's ear. He then grabs her by the shoulders and starts thrusting on to her.

TOM (CONT'D)

Perfect! Even more! Give it honk!
You know what I mean, Suppo!

A hand extends from the vague chaos and squeezes Jess's breast.

JESS

Hey, what the fuck--?

She glances over at Kacey, her chest also getting groped, but for some reason Kacey still smiles for the performance. Jess pushes the Sailor off. He stumbles back into a wall of sailors.

She storms out of the room.

It goes quiet.

TOM

Uh... I think we got it. Thanks everyone.

INT. CAPTAIN'S OFFICE - DAY

Tom walks into the office to see CAPTAIN WILLIAM RICE, 60s, sentimental, a figure of propriety. They shake hands.

CAPTAIN RICE

Tom.

TOM

Cap! Hey!

CAPTAIN RICE

How are your duties going?

TOM

Well, having been XO for a while now, I'm feeling honestly quite confident sir. The guy seem excited and well mannered for the seven month deployment. Crossing the equator soon, got everything lined up for Wog day.

CAPTAIN RICE

Ohhh boy.

TOM

Yessir. And you better hide or else I'm making you walk the deck on all fours like the rest of the wogs!

Captain Rice laughs. Tom LIVES for his laugh.

CAPTAIN RICE

That's good. That's very good to keep that going. So many of traditions fall victim to our modern age. Before we get carried away I have something serious I want to discuss with you actually.

TOM

Shoot.

CAPTAIN RICE

This may be my last deployment as Commanding officer of Enterprise.

TOM

Oh...

CAPTAIN RICE

And you probably expect to hear this, but I want you to take my place.

A huge grin overwhelms Tom's face.

TOM

Not gonna lie, I did expect that sir!

They HOWL laughing.

CAPTAIN RICE

But to be clear, you still have to earn the position. For me to be sure this deployment has to go smoothly.

TOM

Sure. You have nothing to worry about.

CAPTAIN RICE

Well...

TOM

What?

CAPTAIN RICE
It's a tough time right now, Tom.

TOM
How?

CAPTAIN RICE
In Iraq.

TOM
Right, well, of course.

CAPTAIN RICE
We're gonna be operating at an extremely intense level. How many crew man this Carrier Tom?

TOM
Four thousand six hundred souls, sir.

CAPTAIN RICE
And that's four thousand six hundred people, living in a tight space, working ten hours a day. A good XO has to be acutely aware of the ship's morale, not only to get work done but to be a good leader, on a personal level.

TOM
So agree, sir. In fact, I'm friends with many of the crew.

CAPTAIN RICE
Not friends... a trusted person. Has a member of the crew ever confided in your for suicide?

TOM
You mean my own?

This time the Captain doesn't laugh.

CAPTAIN RICE
This is what I mean, Tom. Now's not a good time fuck up.

TOM
You can 100% count on me sir. I Take my role very seriously as XO. I care about this command. I care about this country.

(MORE)

TOM (CONT'D)

And I think I've found something
that really works for everyone.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Jess sits scrunched up on the toilet, she cries. She dabs her red eyes with the scratchy toilet paper. Breathes. Gets up.

INT. FEMALE BIRTHING STATION/BUNKS - NIGHT

Kacey sits around the cramped sleeping area, three bunks to a wall, talking animatedly to MANUELLA OTAÑO, 20s, a homely sweet go-getter on board, and the other bunkmates. Jess approaches, trying to catch Kacey's attention.

KACEY

-- Yeah there was plenty of space
in his office, but I think it's
deserved based on the amount of
responsibility of the command.

MANUELLA

I still think it'd be nice if we
had more.

JESS

He had his own couches. And throw
pillows.

Kacey glances back at Jess, only slightly.

JESS (CONT'D)

Kacey, can we talk for a second?

KACEY

Yeah, what?

Kacey gets up, she veers Jess away from the bunk of girls.

JESS

Um, so, that was a bit intense
back there.

Jess waits, wanting Kacey to take over, Kacey looks at her dryly.

KACEY

I mean, yeah, it was a bit high
energy.

JESS

But are you okay?

KACEY

Yeah. I'm good. Why?

Jess stares at Kacey, not sure if she's playing dumb.

JESS

Kacey, it happened to both of us.
They fucking grabbed us.

KACEY

Oh, you mean that? Come on. If we
made a fuss over everything like
that we'd never get any work done.
Forget it.

JESS

What?

Kacey leans in closer.

KACEY

Forget it. You need to learn to
suck it up and carry on. I'm just
trying to help you.

JESS

Help me? You're making me look like
I'm crazy, you're acting like it
was fun and the XO was a great guy,
it's not the truth.

KACEY

I'm sorry you're not taking it
well, but seriously, get some
priorities, Jess. I'm trying to
move up to blue coats in a few
months, you're probably not even
passing training. I wanna lead a
command one day, make a real impact
on people. With the way you listen
to orders, what do you think you're
gonna do?

Kacey walks back to the bunk mates.

INT. ENTERPRISE - VARIOUS LOCATIONS

Jess walks through Enterprise. TV's mounted in the hallways
show a kind of news bumper of Tom posing with a stuffed
parrot.

TOM V.O

All crew should report to the Galley, 9pm this Friday... We've got a big deck to cover.

INT. GALLEY - NIGHT

BRIAN

Last Call! Midnight Rations!

Jess slithers through the food line, it's mostly empty. She covers her puffy face with her hoodie. BRIAN, late 20s, a friendly food worker with a mystifying quality scoops Jess some macaroni.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

Havin' a good night?

Jess doesn't answer. Before she turns away she focuses in on Brian's HAIRLESS EYEBROWS.

Jess sits down alone at a table. Across the room, Lou sits, also alone. They see each other. Jess contorts her body away from her, making herself unapproachable. Lou gets up anyways.

LOU

I was up studying, I didn't think anyone would be here so late. How are you?

Jess avoids looking at her as long as she can.

JESS

I didn't think anyone would be here either.

LOU

Are you okay?

JESS

Yeah, fine.

Lou searches Jess's face, she doesn't believe her at all.

LOU

How was the video?

JESS

Can you leave me alone, Lou? Why are you always in my business? I told you not to talk to me!

Jess tears up. She tries to cover her face. Lou sits down with her, unflinching. She waits.

JESS (CONT'D)

When we were filming the guys...
like... humped me. And another
grabbed me. They did it because the
XO told them too.

LOU

Oh my God, Jess...

JESS

Please, It's not a huge deal. I
won't even care in a couple of
days.

LOU

You need to say something to the
higher ups.

JESS

No, it's only the first month
underway, I don't want my command
to think I can't handle it.

LOU

But they can't do that to you.

JESS

Stop, Okay? I'm gonna be fine.

LOU

Jess, if you don't say something. I
will.

JESS

But what if they don't do anything?

Lou grabs her shoulders and looks at her firmly.

LOU

They have to. They may think it's
the same old Navy they grew up
with, but there are protections
now, not many, but a few.

JESS

I can't. I don't want that
attention.

LOU

Do you want this to happen to
someone else?

JESS
Of course not, but--

LOU
Go to your higher up. Tell them what happened. If they do it properly it should go all the way up to Captain. And if they try to dismiss it mention Tailhook, it scares the fuck out of them.

JESS
Okay. Okay.

Jess feels better for a second, she wipes some tears and chuckles. She looks at Lou, all intense, clutching her class notes.

JESS (CONT'D)
Law-school, huh? I guess you do know your shit.

LOU
(warmly)
Oh, shut up.

INT. HANGER DECK - NIGHT

Jess puts away the launch cable into its compartment. The rest of the crew has left. She sees Sperry cross the yard.

JESS
Petty Officer Sperry!

He turns around.

JESS (CONT'D)
Can I talk to you?

SPERRY
Yes. I also need to talk to you.
Uniform violation.

Jess looks down, her uniform looks fine.

SPERRY (CONT'D)
Hair.

JESS
Oh.

Jess's hair is a mess. She immediately tries to fix it up.

SPERRY

And your progress for On-the-job training. It's slightly behind.

She bites her lip, stifling disappointment.

JESS

Yes, sir. Thank you for the feedback, sir. What I was going to say was...

Sperry towers over Jess, listening, slightly aggravated.

JESS (CONT'D)

To be honest Petty Officer sir, I've been struggling. It's been impacting my work I think...I want to make a report.

SPERRY

On what system?

JESS

Actually, on another member of the crew?

SPERRY

Did this sailor have a problem with one of the systems?

JESS

No, sir... You're the head of my Command and I was told if anything out of line happened I was supposed to come to you.

SPERRY

Out of line? As in?

Jess nods. Sperry sighs and rubs his temples.

SPERRY (CONT'D)

Who was it?

JESS

I don't know.

SPERRY

You don't know?

JESS

I don't know! There were many...

SPERRY

Jesus Christ!

JESS

Oh, no, no, no, not like that.
It's more... complicated.

SPERRY

I just need to know if the Sailors
are in my command.

Jess thinks.

JESS

Yes and no? There was one kind of
directing them.

SPERRY

Are you reporting this individual
or the command?

JESS

The command. No, the individual?
The individual.

SPERRY

Well, who?

JESS

The XO.

SPERRY

The XO?

JESS

So can you do it? Can you go to his
higher up?

SPERRY

You mean the Captain?

JESS

Do I have to meet with him? Or do
you?

Sperry rubs his forehead.

SPERRY

Uhhh....

INT. ENTERPRISE CHAPEL - NIGHT

CHAPLAIN BENNET STAMFORD, 30s, overly eager man of god, sits in front of Jess. He's trying to listen but struggles, vulnerability makes him anxious.

CHAPLAIN

What you've told me is very tricky.

JESS

What do I do from here? What exactly is the procedure?

CHAPLAIN

Well, it depends on the...Situation. And you weren't forced, were you?

JESS

I certainly didn't grant them permission.

CHAPLAIN

Yes, but what I mean is...

Chaplain tries to speak but realizes he is not qualified in the slightest.

CHAPLAIN (CONT'D)

We can get you transferred?

JESS

No.

CHAPLAIN

What can I do to put you at ease, Jess?

JESS

I want to go to the XO's head of command and have him be... I don't know--

CHAPLAIN

But see, the XO's head of command is the Captain.

JESS

So why aren't we going to him?

The Chaplain shifts around awkwardly.

JESS (CONT'D)

It's impossible to operate in this kind of culture. What happens if people see that video on Friday? What if it make people think they can do that to me again?

CHAPLAIN

And you're sure you don't want to be transferred...

JESS

Why should I have to be transferred?

Jess sees that the Chaplain is still not quite convinced.

JESS (CONT'D)

I would just hate for this to be another... Tailhook.

INSERT: photos of TAILHOOK newspaper headlines.

Chaplain's face immediately drops. It indeed scares the fuck out of him.

INT. ENTERPRISE MEETING ROOM - DAY

Sperry and the Chaplain sit at a conference table, tapping their hands, checking their watches. Tom saunters in, a smile on his face. It melts at the sight of them.

TOM

Chaplain? Sperry? I thought they said this was a "very important meeting".

SPERRY

Did you think you were getting promoted just now?

Tom throws his hands in the air and sits down.

TOM

Fuck you. What's this even about?

CHAPLAIN

Your Broadcast?

TOM

The Big Deck Show. You excited for Friday?

CHAPLAIN

Well, no... a female sailor came to us concerned. She said she felt harassed by a video you made. And unfortunately we have to consider bringing this issue to the Captain.

TOM

What?

SPERRY

We know that broadcast isn't exactly in the Job description, Tom.

TOM

Oh you're just butt hurt cuz you didn't get laughs when I finally let you be in it. Look guys, I know it ain't orthodox. But I know what I'm doing. Whatever girl on the flight deck who has a problem with it doesn't fucking matter--

SPERRY

We never said where she worked--

TOM

Oh so you're just here to see me get grilled, Sperry?

CHAPLAIN

Okay, gentlemen can we take a breath? Tom, I'm not telling you what to do, but this is the procedure, to go to your direct line of command...

TOM

No. Nope. I'm not doin' it.

SPERRY

We'd be doing it.

TOM

This is so stupid! Who's she coming here telling us what we are and aren't allowed to do when we're having fun! Sperry you remember-- 1991 on the Destoryer, women weren't even allowed.

SPERRY

It was a different time.

TOM

You know you miss it. I know you think ships were better back then without... the new variables and all these rules and procedures!

Chaplain sighs.

CHAPLAIN

If we're not going to the Captain, it's only right we do something.

SPERRY

What about Wog Day?

TOM

What about it?

CHAPLAIN

Well, maybe it's cancelled this time.

TOM

Cancel Wog Day? We're crossing the line next week, all the guys have been waiting for the ceremony! It's a tradition!

INSERT: photos of "WOG DAY". Sailor Hazing. Crew on their hands and knees in their underwear getting sprayed with a firehose. Tom dressed up like King Neptune with a cardboard trident. A sailor throwing up.

SPERRY

Not everyone enjoys the tradition, Tom.

TOM

Spoken like a true pollywog.

CHAPLAIN

So it's settled. Wog Day's cancelled.

Tom crosses his arms. FUMING.

EXT. FLIGHT DECK - DAY

Tom stalks the flight deck. Crew people blur together. He narrows in on two women talking to Sperry: Jess and Kacey.

In the conversation he witnesses Sperry giving the two instructions. Kacey nods. Jess stays, asking for clarification, almost being difficult.

Tom smirks to himself. *That must be her.*

INT. NAVY SHIP/ MAILROOM HALLWAY - NIGHT

Tom stakes out a hallway, glaring. Unassuming, Jess passes by. He goes after her.

TOM
Seaman Jess Valentine? Flight deck
operations?

Jess stares at the XO. She knows this can't be good.

JESS
That's me, sir.

TOM
I wanted to see personally you
received this new work assignment.

He hands her a folder. She reads it. Tom hangs back a moment, eyeing her reaction.

JESS
This in addition to my flight deck
duties, sir?

TOM
That's correct.

JESS
But I'm still training.

He winks at her.

TOM
Yup, maybe it's a good thing.
Maybe.

JESS
Is that all?

Tom gestures nicely to her.

TOM
Heading to your Bunk?

JESS
Dinner, actually--

TOM

Me too, I'll walk with you.

They walk. Jess eyes him anxiously.

TOM (CONT'D)

How's the flight deck working out?
Heard Petty Officer Sperry was
having conflict within his
command.

JESS

I haven't heard any thing like
that.

TOM

Really? Because I can't stop
thinking, who would do that? Who
would go around talking to
everyone, causing drama all over
the ship?

Tom looks at Jess, expecting her to confirm.

JESS

Well whoever it was, I think
that's meant to stay confidential.

TOM

But come on, wouldn't you agree
speaking person to person is much
better than going to a Petty
Officer, and a Chaplain--

JESS

To know that wouldn't someone have
to extract information from the
Chaplain?

TOM

Well our Chaplain happens to have
a very good sense of humor, and
unlike some people, knows how to
take a goddamn joke.

A moment. They reach the end of the hallway.

TOM (CONT'D)

Well, anyways. Good luck with your
new assignment.

Tom turns to leave.

JESS

Is that really what you want? For you and that "person" to talk it out face to face?

TOM

It is.

JESS

Fine. I was the one who reported your stupid show.

TOM

I knew it! I knew it!

Tom celebrates and taunts, then settles.

TOM (CONT'D)

Alright. I accept your apology.

JESS

I'm not apologizing. You hide behind that broadcast as a way to hurt any one you want, Sailors in your own command.

TOM

Woah, Woah, "hurt"? The crew loves my show! And they're gonna love the Lesbo's Island skit. Who would be offended? The Lesbos?

Tom laughs for a moment to himself.

JESS

It's easy to harass female sailors when it's for a video, isn't it?

TOM

I don't know why you're saying that word, I didn't touch anybody--

JESS

Your show makes people think they can.

TOM

Makes them think? Oh! I'm sorry, you're right, I'm controlling people's thoughts.

JESS

I can't believe you're who the
Captain has in charge-- this is
all ridiculous, this isn't how the
world is!

Tom puts his hands on his hips. He looks at Jess almost
sympathetically.

TOM

I get it, you're looking for
someone to blame, but that's just
the Navy, Sweetheart, It ain't
always kind.

JESS

I just want you to stop the show.

TOM

Don't you get how this place runs?
Without someone to point and laugh
at we'd shoot each other.

JESS

So there's always gonna be someone
at the butt of it?

TOM

Always.

Jess looks at Tom. The dumb look on his face. The dumb
way he stands. Jess grits her teeth, but then changes her
posture.

JESS

"yeah boys, act like you're
grabbing her boobie, act like you
wanna bite it like a chicken wing"

TOM

(offended)
Is that supposed to be me?

JESS

Yes sir.

TOM

That is not what happened.
Exaggerating like that is really
dangerous--

JESS

"Oh please let me get promoted,
Cap'n!

(MORE)

JESS (CONT'D)

If I'm Cap'n, maybe then I can finally book Letterman! And Ma will give a damn!"

TOM

I never said I wanted to be on Letterman!

JESS

Still, dude, you're not even funny. You wouldn't make it even five minutes in a real club.

TOM

Yeah? "dude"? Well this is your last chance! Stop being difficult about this.

JESS

Giving me work assignments isn't going stop me from telling people you suck.

Jess walks away, no salute. She can't believe what she just did, She doesn't look back.

INT. GALLEY - NIGHT

Jess sits at a dining table, her knee bobbing anxiously. Lou and Manuella sits beside her.

MANUELLA

I'm excited to see you and Kacey in the XO's video.

Jess smiles politely to her.

LOU

(quietly, to Jess)
Don't worry. You went to the command, there's no way they're gonna show it.

Jess looks around awkwardly, thinking otherwise...

The lights in the Galley dim. Lou gives Jess a supportive glance. As if one cue, the crew starts to rap on the tables and stomp their feet.

MANUELLA

(to Jess)
It's better to just join in.

A TV lights up, a 70s type theme song plays, we the title:
THE BIG DECK SHOW.

The rooms cheers.

CREW
(chanting)
X-O! X-O! X-O!

The screen changes to show Tom sitting at his desk. The crew cheers in delight at his reveal. Tom on the TV pauses, like he expected this reaction.

TOM (ON T.V)
What's goin' on Enterprise!

TOM (ON T.V) (CONT'D)
As your XO, it's my job to see that
all the operations on board are
running smoothly... and the crew
too...

He mimes his hands like he's smoothing a woman's figure.

TOM (ON T.V) (CONT'D)
Oh yeah... very smooth.

In the galley, a member of the crew whistles.

TOM (ON T.V) (CONT'D)
On a serious note, now that we've
made it to the gulf, war operations
against the Iraqis will soon
commence. You guys are makin' the
country proud. Not to sound super
gay, but keep up the good work.

He gives a thumbs up.

TOM (CONT'D)
Now this deployments gonna be a
long one. I know how hard it gets,
but I promise if you're good, we
might take port at a certain
island... Lets see that!

The crew cheers. The screen transitions to the LESBOS ISLAND VIDEO.

Jess hangs her head as the scene plays out, edited like a spring break Girls Gone Wild video. And then it happens, the moment the crew member gropes her.

The video zooms in on Jess's face, a shocked, angry expression. It freeze frames. Jess's face bounces across the screen, flipping, spinning to the beat of the song. The whole Galley laughs hysterically.

Jess gets up from the table.

LOU
Are you okay?

JESS
How could you tell me this was gonna work?

LOU
It still could if we just--

JESS
No, leave me alone. It's done.

Jess shakes her head and leaves.

INT. GALLEY HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Brian, the food worker from before stands by the kitchen door eating off a plate. He watches Jess stomp past.

BRIAN
Where you going?

JESS
I don't know. Somewhere else.

BRIAN
There's dessert after the show. Tiramisu. You really shouldn't miss it. Even if you don't want it I'm sure someone would buy it off you for seconds.

Jess stops.

JESS
I'm Jess. I've seen you working before.

BRIAN
I'm Brian. And I saw you just now. Ouch. I hate his fucking show. For me personally, I just didn't find it very funny.

JESS

Well, you're the only one.

BRIAN

For a second I thought you were gonna be the one to say something actually good.

He hands over a chunk of tiramisu on a plastic plate. She reluctantly takes it. He beams at her while she takes small bites. She squints her eyes at him.

JESS

I... I want to ask you something but I don't want to offend you.

BRIAN

There's only one way to find out.

JESS

Are you... A drag queen? Only because you kind of remind me--

BRIAN

Oh my god! EW! Are you saying-- Are you saying I look like a woman? Like a -- gay-- boy? How dare you? How--

He stops running around, he touches her shoulder, laughing.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

Well good. Because I am one.

JESS

No way. A real one wouldn't just come out and say it like that just say it like that. Not here.

BRIAN

Maybe I trust you. You still don't believe me? Should I start voguing and do a death drop right here? A May West impression, what?

JESS

Okay, okay I believe you.

She's now in awe of him.

JESS (CONT'D)

And don't do May West... Because I do her. It's mine.

BRIAN

Oh, you got dibs on that?

JESS

Yeah. I never would have guessed someone like you would be here.

BRIAN

Here to travel the world. So you just so happen to know a lot of drag queens where you're from? Or is there something else we might have in common?

Brian stares her down playfully.

INT. BRIAN'S BUNK - NIGHT

Brian positions Jess's head at a weird angle, he's doing an elaborate makeup look on her.

JESS

...I was one of those Improv club kids at my high school, it was my whole personality, I loved it. And we would go to this club for shows, it was right next door to a Hamburger Mary's.

BRIAN

Of course it was.

JESS

Yeah, it's like the one thing gay that's allowed in the Midwest. And they did open mics, so I went. Me and this girl from another school met there, we... dated.

BRIAN

Beautiful.

JESS

When I graduated I tried to tell my parents about what I was doing, all of it, but... they didn't really take it well. They said I needed to get my life straighten out, literally, or else they wouldn't support me anymore. So.

BRIAN

Now you're in the Navy to learn some discipline.

JESS

Yeah. And I really need it too.

BRIAN

Do you ever miss performing?

JESS

All the time. But it's good to focus on work.

BRIAN

Very noble. But if I could do my art here, I would, you know?

JESS

Fun idea, but this isn't really the place to express yourself.

BRIAN

Sure it is. It could be like the XO's show. He's right about one thing, people here are going through it, they need entertainment, bad.

JESS

Ok, say I do some comedy here. That doesn't mean they'd like it. They like that... gross misogynist Navy shit.

BRIAN

Imagine how beautiful it would be for a funny little lesbian to take away that asshole's audience.

JESS

No. I'd be up against too much.

BRIAN

You don't believe in the quiet silent majority?

JESS

Fuck no.

BRIAN

The people need entertainment. I'd be with you. Think about it.

(MORE)

BRIAN (CONT'D)

As a cook on board, I've seen it first hand. People will eat whatever you give them... that is until they've tasted a true delicacy. That's you.

JESS

This ship hates women.

BRIAN

True.

JESS

And gays.

BRIAN

They only *think* they do. Give it a chance. It's a long ass deployment and you might want something fun to do. Make a comedy show with me.

He hands Jess a mirror. She looks at herself, laughs a bit. Brian's overdrawn everything like an LA barbie. She puckers her lips, speaks in a kind of Marilyn Monroe/Jenifer Coolidge impersonation.

JESS

(in character)

I don't know if percacet is a better name for a little dog or a baby.

BRIAN

(also adopting a character)

Oh yes, a beautiful name for a little dog, remind me, what other animals you have running around the estate?

JESS

Some peacocks named...

(thinking)

Bacardi, Vodka, and Nitroglycerin. A camel named... Camels. After the cigaret.

They crack up. Jess's eyes start to water. The first big laugh she's had on the ship. She gets serious.

JESS (CONT'D)

Brian... I'm scared here. Of Being seen at all.

(MORE)

JESS (CONT'D)

I'm scared if I slip up they're gonna kick me out and my parents will be disappointed all over again. Have you ever seen anyone get the dishonorable discharge? For the 'don't ask' violation.

BRIAN

Yeah. I have. But not as much the last few years. The way I see it is I can't let it scare me. It's baseless and stupid, and one day everyone will understand that. You know how the XO makes jokes about women and 'queers'? He gets to because there's no rule that says he can't, or that we can even exist here. I think this could be a way to fight that... Or it'll just give you something fun to do for seven months at sea. You decide.

Jess thinks hard.

JESS

Okay. Okay. I'll do a show with you. But only because I want to see the XO cry.

INT. MEDIA CENTER - NIGHT

Jess and Brian stand at the door, looking in at Mark, packing up a tripod.

JESS

How do you know we can trust him?

BRIAN

I have a sense for these kind of things. I heard He enlisted to afford tuition for NYU film school.

Jess enters the room, she rushes at Mark, more confrontational than Brian was expecting.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

Woah-- Jess!

JESS

(to Mark)

If you work in here does that mean you're the one who helps the XO make his videos?

MARK

No, no, no, definitely not.
Technically it's in my job title to assist the command in their media needs, but that show is not on the books.

JESS

What, like it's a secret from the Captain?

MARK

Yeah. Exactly that.

Jess nods to herself, like *good to know*.

INT. MEDIA CENTER - NIGHT

Mark clicks away aggressively at the computer- on the screen a poster with Vietnam Jungle graphics, Jarheads, Bazookas. It says "FULL METAL JACKET SCREENING, THIS SATURDAY NIGHT"

Brian catches a fresh poster from the print.

JESS

You know what to do.

INT. ENTERPRISE - VARIOUS LOCATIONS

1) Brian tapes on a ladder that ship CUSTODIANS stand on, working on a pipe.

2) Mark tapes on up in the gym where Kacey works out with multiple PILOTS.

3) Jess tapes a poster in a crowded hallway.

INT. REC ROOM - NIGHT

The room is filled with folding chairs. Sailors from all departments lean and chat.

Brian, Jess, and Mark stand off to the side, tense. They nod to each other like: alright. Let's do it.

DVD guy steps in front of the small TV. The sailors clap. The lights dim. The credits to Full Metal Jacket begin...

Until, GLITCH!

SAILOR #1

Hey-- what happened to the movie?

SAILOR#2

Shut up, I wanna hear what they're saying.

SAILOR #1

Well I wanna hear the movie!

The screen transforms into a video sketch:

INT. BRIAN'S BUNK - DAY

Jess wears her hair in an obnoxious pony-tail, Brian wears a matching wig. They prance around the small berthing area like MTV cribs.

JESS

Bessie, I'm so glad we're bunk mates.

BRIAN (AS BESSIE)

Me too. I think because our personal styles are so different we're really gonna stand out from an interior decorating perspective.

JESS

I was thinking we could put up this laundry hamper as a center piece, like a chandelier slash tying up meat so a bear doesn't get to it vibe?

BRIAN

Honestly I think it's hideous and not my style at all and I refuse to live with you if you put it up. Now shut up while I hang my garland of socks, do you have a tack?

Brian tries to hang a string of socks on the bunk.

JESS

If you hang that up, I refuse to live here.

BRIAN

We should really find an interior decorating compromise.

The girls look at each other.

JESS

How about a cup of water that leave
on our side table unattended for a
couple weeks?

Brian screams and punches a hole in the wall of the ship
(done with Mark's kind of good kind of shitty Special
Effects)

JESS (CONT'D)

Oh my god! A window! I love it!

BRIAN

I do too!

INT. REC ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The screen fades to black. Most of the crowd has walked out,
a small crowd stays in the back.

INT. BRIAN'S BUNK - NIGHT

JESS

That wasn't very good, was it.

BRIAN

Some people stayed.

JESS

Yeah, but it was the Fulies.
Everyone knows they're weird.

BRIAN

Hey. I was proud of it.

JESS

So was I, but it's not really
getting the XO back if people
aren't watching us.

Jess thinks.

JESS (CONT'D)

He did kind of get flustered when I
imitated him.

BRIAN

When on earth did you *imitate* him?

JESS

When he confronted me...

INT. GALLEY - NIGHT

Jess sits with her bunk. The TVs start up with the theme song for THE BIG DECK SHOW. On the TV:

INT. BERTHING - DAY

SEAMAN FANNY, played by Tom in a ratty wig and balloons for chest and ass sleeps in a bunk.

A Sailor taps her awake.

SAILOR

Seaman Fanny, emergency landing on
the flight deck!

Fanny shoots up to her top bunk, waking two male sailors spooning, in a mean impersonation of romance. The crew laughs.

TOM (AS FANNY)

Emergency Landing on the flight
deck!... Queers!

Fanny attempts to get out of the bunks, but her breasts and bum make it impossible to move through the cramped area.

EXT. FLIGHT DECK - DAY

Fanny waves blinking batons, trying to summon a plane. Tom, dressed normally, is also edited into frame.

TOM

What the fuck are you doing,
Seaman Fanny? Your tits and ass
are clogging up the landing strip,
we'll never get our aircraft down!

Fanny puts her hands on her hips. But then gets an idea.

FANNY

Landing strip?

EXT. FLIGHT DECK - DAY

Fanny lays at the tip of the ship. Like and aerobics teacher she spreads her legs to the sea.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - DAY

Control Op speaks into a headset. Smirking and speaking monotone like an inexperienced actor.

CONTROL OP
Do you see the target?

INT. COCKPIT - DAY

A pilot fiddles with the plane's controls.

PILOT
I can't see anything... Wait!

He looks in his monitor.

SUPER IMPOSE: image of playboy model's "landing strip".

PILOT (CONT'D)
I see it, I'm coming down!

There's cartoonish sound effects of a plane landing.

EXT. FLIGHT DECK -DAY

Fanny is covered in black skid marks, clothes torn up, wig askew.

TOM
Seaman Fanny, You saved the day.

FANNY
(Delerious)
I didn't get out of the way in time.

TOM
I think I know why, you didn't bend over far enough.

INT. GALLEY - NIGHT

BRIAN
(to Jess)
Oh Jesus, it's almost fucking camp.

Jess watches the laughing crew members around her, She looks at Brian. *An idea.*

INT. ENTERPRISE - VARIOUS LOCATIONS

JESS (O.S)
How much food can you make extra?

BRIAN
How much are you thinking?

JESS
Like... enough for everyone.

- 1) The kitchen, Brian and Jess stir violently.
- 2) The gym again, Mark hands out flyers to the sailors working out.

MARK
Free food! Seconds, thirds, and fourths!

INT. GYM - NIGHT

An amazing food display fills a fold out table. Some equipment has been moved to the side for a performance space. Jess, Brian and Mark wait anxiously.

INT. ENTERPRISE HALLWAY - NIGHT

Tom walks cheerily, he eats a protein chocolate bar. A sailor passes him going the opposite way.

TOM
Aye-- Galley's-a-this way.

Tom laughs. The Sailor keeps walking. Tom makes a face. *Weird.*

The Chaplain enters the Hallway.

TOM (CONT'D)
Hey, Chap-- I'm about to go peek on my show, wanna come?

CHAPLAIN
Oh! Yes, let's sneak. Back way?

He points to another hallway.

INT. GALLEY/KITCHEN - NIGHT

Tom and the Chaplain prance through the kitchen giggling. Food workers glance at them. They lean on the counters, bored. Full pots of food, unserved.

They peek out the serving station--

INT. GALLEY - NIGHT

The eating area is near empty. Tom's show plays on the TV. The only sound.

Tom and Chaplain look around, confused.

TOM

Where the hell is everybody?

CHAPLAIN

Maybe we're sinking?

INT. GYM - NIGHT

The gym is packed with sailors. Each has three plates of food, they laugh with each other.

Brian grabs Jess's arm, he whispers to her.

BRIAN

You got this.

Jess nods. She rushes in front of the chairs.

JESS

Okay, Okay, quiet please. Um..
Thank you all for coming. We are...
We actually don't have a name yet--
We're a comedy group, and lucky for
you, we're not the XO. And we just
want you all to enjoy yourselves
tonight.

The video starts up...

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Jess stands over Brian, Jess has a mustache and age lines drawn on her face, Brian is dressed like a legitimate drag version of Seaman Fanny.

JESS

Fanny, I have a mission for you.

BRIAN

What is it, XO A-Hole?

JESS

The nuclear power generator is broken, only you can fix it. I could too, but I'm lazy.

BRIAN

What do I fix it with?

JESS

Fanny, I want to use your boob power to run the ship.

BRIAN

I won't do it, XO A-hole.

INT. REC ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sailor #1 stands up. He walks out of the Rec room, a few people follow. Half of the room trickles out.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

JESS

An order's an order, Seaman Fanny. Unless it's my dinner, then the order's desert, appetizer, and vegetables last.

Fanny looks around, cautiously. She sees a heavy book. Grabs it and fwacks it into XO a-hole's face. Shocked, she looks down at the book.

BRIAN

Nuclear power for beginners. Huh.

STUDY MONTAGE.

Fanny reads the book. Writes complicated equations. Experiments with scientific cylinders.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

I've got it.

INT. GENERATOR ROOM -DAY

DVD GUY

XO A-hole, we're heading for a whirlpool, we have to turn around.

JESS "XO A-HOLE"

Sorry. It's broken. I don't know.
By the way, wanna hear my impression of Goofy licking his own--

BRIAN "FANNY"

I can fix the Generator!

Fanny poses, wearing a crew jumpsuit. She begins to work. There's sped up footage of Fanny hammering away at the generator. It glistens like new.

DVD GUY

It's working again! You saved us Seaman Fanny.

Brian winks at the Camera.

BRIAN

That's professor, Doctor, Seaman Fanny to you.

The video ends.

Silence for a moment. Someone in the room stands up clapping. It's Lou.

Other members of the crew discuss with each other. A few males sailors chuckle a bit. Lou persists clapping, eventually it catches on.

LOU

Stand up! Stand up!

The crowd listens to Lou. Brian and Jess look at each other. A standing ovation.

JESS

Do we deserve this?

BRIAN

You said it yourself, the audience doesn't lie.

The two of them bow. Mark passes out DVDs to the audience.

INT. XO OFFICE - DAY

Tom sits at his desk, sulking. Other crew members rush behind him working.

SAILOR #1

XO, Sir, you're appointment with flight deck crew is ready to begin.

TOM

My what?

SAILOR #1

The one you scheduled two weeks ago?

Tom scoffs, about to cancel, he swivels this chair around to see Kacey.

INT. XO OFFICE - DAY

Tom sits Casually talking to Kacey. She's in work mode, he's trying to charm her.

TOM

I honestly forgot this was happening. No offense.

KACEY

None taken, sir. I know you have very demanding responsibilities.

TOM

Thank you for saying that. But, since you're here, what's going on? How are you doing?

Kacey doesn't break her professionalism.

KACEY

Operations are running smoothly, sir.

TOM

Oh I know that. Because you're a superstar.

KACEY

Thank you, sir.

TOM

You know, I really see you being an officer one day, do you ever think about that?

KACEY

It is my long term goal.

TOM

Splendid. What if we did a little mock interview, I would be honored to mentor you through that.

KACEY

Sure.

Tom pretends to conduct an interview, changing his persona.

TOM

So, when looking for potential officers, we like to get to know them on a personal level, not just professional, so what can you tell me about yourself?

KACEY

Well, I'm from a big family, My Dad was working on submarines in the 90s. He actually worked on the Destroyer with you? Ken Mqueen?

TOM

You're Ken's kid? Legitimate?

KACEY

Yes...

Tom isn't getting the answers he wants.

TOM

That's all so great. What about you're recreational life on the ship. For example, what's everyone doing on a Friday night these days?

KACEY

Nothing that exciting.

TOM

Come one, what about last Friday night?

Kacey shifts in her seat.

KACEY

Well, it really wasn't much, but someone in my bunk put on a little show.

TOM

Okay? And that's where everybody was?...I Assume.

KACEY

Yeah it was packed.

TOM

That must mean they all liked it. Nice. Who did it by the way?

Kacey frowns.

TOM (CONT'D)

What is it? This isn't fun to talk about? Never let your interviewer see that, tip number one.

Kacey is thinking.

KACEY

Honestly, sir, I think I have something you might want to know. But I don't want her to get in trouble. And I don't want it to hurt your feelings.

Tom laughs.

TOM

My feelings? What do you mean?

INT. XO OFFICE - NIGHT

Kacey stands over Tom at his desk. He watches the DVD of Jess's show.

KACEY

I'm really sorry.

TOM

No, you did the right thing.

Kacey looks at her feet.

KACEY

Um... XO sir, I'm trying to make rank in a couple months, and I really want to make myself useful in the mean time...

TOM

What? Pfft-- it's not like this a major problem I want to my eyes on, that would be blowing it out of proportion. That would...

Tom sighs and shuts his laptop.

TOM (CONT'D)

You know, maybe you could keep tabs for me on this issue. I could see you making rank soon... for other reasons.

KACEY

Yes. I can do that for you, sir.

INT. XO OFFICE - NIGHT

Later. Tom stares at his computer screen. He's been watching for hours. Full of rage.

SUPPO, 30s, incharge of support for the ship, as well as Tom's ego, joins him.

TOM

Ugh, I mean, pathetic, right? She's playing out some power fantasy and the guy, don't get me started on the guy.

SUPPO

What about the guy?

TOM

Don't you think what he's doing... is kinda gay?

SUPPO

Yeah, but that's what makes him funny.

TOM

It isn't funny. And a sailor shouldn't be embarrassing himself like this.

SUPPO

But, Tom you put on girls clothes too.

TOM

I know, but that's very different.

SUPPO

Because only Captains are allowed to wear girls clothes?

TOM

No! Because when he does it he's very... he's too-- Talented. He 's serious when he does it.

SUPPO

You're talented too, XO. You could look that realistic too if you wanted to.

TOM

That's not the point. I just think there's something off about this guy. And the girl... She's trying to start a mutiny.

INT. FEMALE BIRTHING STATION/BUNKS - NIGHT

Jess sleeps in her bunk. A large ALARM SOUND wakes her up.

The rest of the females sailors shoot up, strapping on their uniforms, rushing out of the room.

INT. GALLEY - NIGHT

The entire groggy eyed crew sits in the Galley. Tom stands before them.

TOM

My broadcasts are mandatory. If you don't know our mission objectives, how are we as a ship supposed to band together to fight the enemy? Tell me. Tell me that.

Brian and Jess glance nervously at each other.

TOM (CONT'D)

We cannot lose focus. If anyone misses my broadcasts on Friday nights you'll receive a mark. No exceptions.

INT. ENTERPRISE HALLWAY -DAY

Jess jogs up to Brian in the hallway. She's in her flight deck uniform. They walk together.

JESS

What if we did Thursdays instead of Fridays?

BRIAN

What? Would there even be time?

JESS

I would make time. Can you believe he smoked us like that? Must mean we bruised his little ego.

BRIAN

But Jess, we'll be so busy.

JESS

And without it we'll be bored. Come on. I'm in this, Brian. You're the one who wanted to be disruptive.

Brian nods at her.

BRIAN

Fine. I love it. Thursday.

She nods. And runs off towards the flight deck.

INT.LIBRARY - NIGHT

Jess sits at a table, scribbling pen on paper. Kacey sits with her, reading. Lou browses a bookshelf behind her. Jess pretends to ignore her.

LOU

So, what are you doing here?

JESS

Just working on my show. You?

LOU
Studying.

JESS
Right. Well... Goodluck with that.
It's this Thursday by the way.

Lou sits at a table across the room. Jess glances up at her in between scribbles. Kacey flips a page of her book, trying to look preoccupied.

INT. OFFICER BREAK ROOM - DAY

Tom fills up his coffee, angry. A wall phone rings.

TOM
What?

KACEY (ON PHONE)
Sperry called off training on the deck today, high winds, freezing rain.

TOM
Who is this?

KACEY (ON PHONE)
Seaman Mcqueen... I just mean, Seaman Valentine doesn't do well with intense weather, she's kind of fragile like that.

TOM
Oh...

Tom absentmindedly hands off his coffee to Suppo, who instantly drinks it. Tom thinks. He rushes off.

SUPPO
(touched)
Thanks for the coffee, XO!

INT. XO OFFICE - DAY

Tom sits with his feet on the desk, giggling into his phone. On his desk is Jess's file.

TOM
Sperry, I really think today would be an ideal day for intense weather training on the deck. Yes.
(MORE)

TOM (CONT'D)

Those on-the-job enlisted folks
will thank you for it.

EXT. FLIGHT DECK - DAY

Jess's entire body shakes, freezing and wet, her rain coat lapping in the violent wind. Her tense arm tries to motion to the far end of the deck.

Jess gazes up to the observation tower. A silhouette, Tom, stands watching.

TUCKER

Knarley out, isn't it?!

Tucker stands, about to climb into his aircraft. Jess looks at him and then looks away.

INT. SICK BAY - NIGHT

A blanket covers Jess as she sits on an examination stool. A female NURSE sticks a thermometer in Jess's mouth.

She takes it out.

NURSE

We don't want this spreading.
We'll put you into one of our
rooms in the sick bay.

INT. QUARENTINE DORM - NIGHT

Jess paces by a glass door. Imprisoned. Brian passes by Jess's window. She taps furiously at him. He stops. Shakes his head at her.

BRIAN

Oh, Jess...

JESS

The XO got me sick, Brian. This is
biological warfare.

BRIAN

Or maybe your body needs a rest,
Jess. You've been doing so much.

JESS

They won't let me leave! Did you print out the scripts? You have to play all my parts tonight.

BRIAN

That's what I came here to tell you-- they put me on Officer dinner tonight, it's too big, I can't get out of it.

JESS

What? That's too much-- he's going to put me in here and put you up there, forced to watch them eat their warm, outrageous meal, while we have a show to do!

BRIAN

I'm sorry, babe, but I don't think the show's happening tonight.

Jess slams on the door, but then starts coughing. She hacks into a trashcan. She surrenders, blows her nose.

JESS

Okay... good luck with the dinner.

Brian taps on the glass sympathetically.

BRIAN

I'll tell you if he does anything weird.

INT. COMMAND DINING - NIGHT

Suppo, Tom, Captain Rice and other prestigious men sit around a table. Brian serves them Turkey. Suppo and Tom watch him intently, fascinated. He pours gravy over Tom's piece. He moves on. Suppo leans into Tom.

SUPPO

(whispering)

Didn't seem like he poured the gravy in a particularly gay way.

INT. QUARENTINE DORM - LATER

Jess sits on the bed. There's a tap on the other side of the glass. It's Lou.

JESS

I'm really not in a good mood.

LOU

I was counting on that.

JESS

Thanks for the visit, but I'm really tired.

LOU

Okay. What if I told you the show went really well tonight.

JESS

But we couldn't have the show...

Lou smiles and shrugs.

JESS (CONT'D)

Did you put it on?

LOU

The only way you were ever gonna let me perform is if you were put in jail, so, I had to seize the opportunity.

JESS

You did!? What- who were you, what did you do?

LOU

Tried on my XO A-hole voice.

Jess laughs powerfully.

JESS

Well? Did they mind that they had the off-brand version of me?

LOU

I don't think so. Not that you can be replaced.

Jess sits back in disbelief.

JESS

How many people?

LOU

The gym was filled. People from all division. Flight deck guys were there.

JESS

I'm sorry about that.

LOU

I don't know, have you ever thought of asking them to be in it?

JESS

That wouldn't work. It would be just like the XO's stuff.

LOU

Not if you wrote it, and got them to do something smart, meaningful. Imagine what the affect would be.

JESS

Like the only person they could ever listen to is someone like them.

LOU

No. It's an expansion of allied forces.

JESS

I don't think so.

Lou sighs at her.

LOU

Since the Thursday show went so well, I made you this.

Lou takes out a folded note book Paper drawing. It's a logo that says MID RATS.

JESS

What is this?

LOU

It's you guys.

JESS

Midnight rations? You named us after Midnight rations.

LOU

Yeah because you're always sneaking around after hours putting on shows.

JESS

Spoiled 2am macaroni would've worked too, then.

LOU

And it kinda reminds me of ASSCAT.

JESS

You know Second City TV?

LOU

Yeah, cause you told me about it.

JESS

Why do you remember everything?
Lou!

Lou gets up. She trots away smugly.

LOU

I guess I'm really observant for some unknown reason. But, like you said. I'm not apart of your group.

JESS

Lou, wait.

She turns back around. Jess stands eyes level through the glass, reluctant, but nice.

JESS (CONT'D)

Okay, I like it... And you're in.
If you really want.

Lou pauses. Hiding deep happiness.

Lou turns away. Jess blushes for a moment. She climbs into bed and holds her pillow.

INT. NURSE OFFICE - DAY

The Nurse takes Jess's temperature again. Jess's face has regained some color.

NURSE

Looks like you're all better.

JESS

Great.

The nurse throws away her gloves. Jess starts to put on her shoes.

There's a framed photo leaning against the wall facing backwards. Jess turns it over, seeing an Image of the ship's nurses giving prostate exams to a line of sailors, Tom being one of them, looking at the camera, hamming it up.

JESS (CONT'D)

Did the XO give you this?

The nurse turns it around embarrassed.

NURSE

(humiliated)

Oh... we helped him out in a video last year and he framed it for us. They really love the rectum jokes.

JESS

I've noticed.

NURSE

It get's really, really old.

JESS

And they probably ask you to do things like this a lot for the videos?

NURSE

All the time.

Jess get's an Idea.

JESS

This is going to sound crazy but what if you made something with me that would put an end to all of that.

INT. GYM - NIGHT

A Mid Rats show. Good numbers. Jess and the Nurse stand on stage in lab coats, they speak in dry Boston accents.

NURSE

We are nurses that specialize in rectum examination.

JESS

Just because we specialize in it does not mean it is special to us.

NURSE

Despite misconceptions, nurses have the capability to feel hatred for their patience, especially the one's who make jokes during rectum examinations. We wish robots could do our jobs.

JESS

If you do this, the next time you're wondering "do I have prostate cancer?" The answer will be "maybe" and you'll have to live with that.

The nurse starts to crack up on stage.

NURSE

We thinks robots should do our jobs and we don't care about the moral or societal consequences.

INT. XO OFFICE - DAY

Kacey, Suppo, and Tom watch the Nurse sketch on his Laptop.

TOM

We need something big for next week's show, Suppo.

SUPPO

Alright, great. What's the idea?

TOM

Fuck. I don't know.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Jess walks with Brian.

JESS

What if we just start going department by department? They want something personal, they don't want to be associated with how the XO has joked about them before.

BRIAN

Even the plumbers? What if it's just Potty humor.

JESS
I guess we could ask.

INT. PIPE HALLWAY - DAY

Plumbers stand crossing their arms, they are dirty, no nonsense workers, unimpressed with Jess, Brian, Lou, and Mark.

PLUMMER #1
So, what, you want us to do another shit video?

JESS
Um, no, not exactly?

PLUMMER #2
Shitting video?

BRIAN
No, we just thought, we'd ask if you wanted to make something funny, but not... like that.

The plumbers whisper to each other. One of them giggles.

JESS
What's that?

PLUMMER #1
Oh, nothing.

LOU
No, what is it.

PLUMMER #1
It's dumb as hell, but uh, one of our guys Barry has a thing where pretends to be a sewer cat.

The Plumbers start to crack up, the whole group of them, it's an intense inside joke. Lou nudges at Jess.

JESS
I love it.

INT. XO OFFICE - DAY

Tom, Suppo, and Kacey still trying to generate ideas.

TOM
Did you call the plumbers?

SUPPO

They said they're too busy.

TOM

What? I make their damn schedules!
Call again.

SUPPO

Maybe... they're just not
interested.

TOM

What about the Fulies.

SUPPO

Also no.

TOM

This is insanity. I'm the second in
command for christ's sake.

SUPPO

Saftey department, controll room,
Engineering, dental, all no,
Administrative, weapons, no--

TOM

Suppo... are there any 'maybe's?

SUPPO

Oh. Pilots are still Maybe's.

TOM

Okay, thank god.

INT. LIBRARY - NIGHT

Another night. Lou and Jess working.

JESS

You can sit next to me. If you
want. If it's not too distracting.

Lou sits next to her with her big law text book. Jess tries
to keep working but her leg bobs aggressively.

INT. GYM - NIGHT

The plumbers perform a little skit in front of everyone,
BARRY, a big guy with a very theatrical sewer cat
character hops around the stage area.

The plumbers chase it with a plunger, all of them wheezing and cracking up, which causes most of the audience to also wheeze and crack up.

Tom lurks in one of the doors, wearing a cap and aviators to conceal himself.

Jess runs on stage and pats the plumbers on their backs, she starts an applause. As the crowd applauds, she glances at the door and squints her eyes at Tom. He scurries away.

INT. REC ROOM - DAY

A filmed sketch shot under confrontational interview lighting. Jess is dressed as XO- A-HOLE, Lou as reporter. They sit intensely in front of each other.

LOU (AS REPORTER)

Thanks for sitting down with me today, XO A-HOLE. I'm sure you have much better things to do, so I appreciate it.

JESS (AS XO A-HOLE)

There's nothing better to be done than setting the record straight.

LOU (AS REPORTER)

Well alright. Let's get into it. People have made accusations against you.

Jess blinks sensitively.

JESS (AS XO A-HOLE)

They have, they have.

LOU

What do you say that?

JESS (AS XO A-HOLE)

I say... Why does the word "accuse" have to be so negative? It almost sounds like A... Cute. Accuse. A Cute? Cuteness. It'd be nice to say I'm a Cute-ness. I think I'm cute. Ok? I'M CUTE.

Lou keeps quiet.

JESS (AS XO A-HOLE) (CONT'D)
 Why not a positive spin like the
 word murder sometimes has, right?
 Like "I murdered that plate of
 cookies"?

LOU (AS REPORTER)
 Right. Speaking of snacks. People
 are calling you the "snack
 snatcher" of the USS Enterprise.

JESS (AS XO A-HOLE)
 I don't see why they'd say that.

LOU
 You've been asking people who work
 for your for snacks.

JESS
 No I haven't.

LOU (AS REPORTER)
 We have quote here, "XO AHOLE
 repeatably asks me 'do you have
 chips?- Any kind of chip- seriously
 anything crunchy is good, I'll chew
 on plastic if I have to, anything
 slightly better than rocks will do,
 please just one chip."

JESS
 Not saying I said that, but If I
 did, I have no problem with people
 thinking I'm a hungry guy. The
 manliest one's are.

LOU
 So you deny all of this?

JESS
 I triple deny it. I deny that I
 even have to deny it.

Lou is silent. XO A-HOLE shifts around, making a SQUEAK--
 SQUEAK.

LOU
 What was that?

JESS (AS XO A-HOLE)
 Uh-- nothing.

The camera zooms into Jess's seat, She's sitting on a bag of
 chips.

LOU
Is that my lunch?

Jess panics and pops open the bag. Chips fly everywhere as a distraction. The scene freeze frames mid-gettaway. Music and Credits role.

CUT TO:

VARIOUS LOCATIONS

Sailors watch the sketch on DVD PLAYERS, TVS, DESKTOP COMPUTERS. They like it!

Sailors high five Jess. Wave to her in the hallway.

INT. XO OFFICE - DAY

Tom slouches at his desk, thinking.

TOM
I think now's the right time to do
it--

SUPPO
We're not even half-way through
deployment Tom, don't you think
you should save it?

Tom thinks.

TOM
No.

SUPPO
But we--

TOM
No.

INT. XO OFFICE -DAY

Tom sits at his desk, he looks down, rearranging headshots.

SUPPO
So, with our budget we're
between... these two.

There's a photo of WANDA SYKES on one side of the table and ROBBIE ROWE, a bald guy, onstage holding a microphone and a crude expression.

Tom holds up Robbie's picture.

SUPPO (CONT'D)

I vote Wanda.

TOM

No, we're obviously going with Robbie Rowe. Seriously Suppo? What do you even have in common with a Gay Black Lady?

Suppo shrugs. Tom excitedly types on his computer.

SUPPO

I don't know...

INT. GALLEY - DAY

Jess moves through the line. Brian pulls her aside.

BRIAN

Did you hear? Reggie Rowe is coming onboard.

JESS

To do stand up?

BRIAN

Unfortunatley. It's definitely the XO trying to pull something. What?

Jess shifts, withholding something.

JESS

I'm actually... a fan.

BRIAN

You? But he's friends with Dane Cook.

She shrugs.

JESS

He's got charming crowd work. It could be good. As long as the XO doesn't get credit for it.

INT. COMMAND DINNER - NIGHT

Robbie Row sits with Tom, Brian serves.

TOM

Finally, someone else on board to bring the funny, we're happy to have ya Robbie.

ROBBIE

The network passed on my Pilot, so I'm happy just to be working. Nobody wants to watch "the hoes in Robbie's house".

TOM

Ahhh no fuckin' way man, they're fools to pass on that.

ROBBIE

No, no, that was the idea they pitched me. My show was about my brother that passed away.

Tom sits in awkward silence. Brian serves them.

ROBBIE (CONT'D)

By the way, you know of anyone who could open my set for me, I'm not an opener, I'm here to headline, that's important on my contract.

TOM

Oh, I didn't know that. You know, actually, I do a bit of comedy myself. You probably didn't notice cuz I've been letting you take all the zingers tonight.

Robbie nods and chews his food, trying to hide his annoyance.

ROBBIE

Okay, that's a possibility. But, yeah let me know if anyone else on board has experience with that.

Brian's eyes go wide. He rushes to pour Robbie's water. He intentionally spills.

BRIAN

I am so sorry. Let me go get you a napkin.

Tom chews his food.

TOM

Robbie, let me pick your brain on this:

As Tom tells his story Brian cleans up Robbie's place.

BRIAN

A fresh napkin for you, sir.

Brian throws down a napkin in front of Robbie, he's written on it in sharpie: JESS VALENTINE. Robbie squints at it and then back Brian. Brian nods at Robbie. Robbie nods back.

ROBBIE

(To Tom)

Yeah, dude, what an idea.

INT. FLIGHT DECK - NIGHT

A Hundred of fold out chairs line the flight deck, it's crowded with sailors sitting and standing, flood lights project onto a small stage where Tom paces.

TOM

Alright Enterprise, you ready for someone super funny? Someone who's gonna knock your crusty splooge-filled socks off? The funniest guy I know...

Jess walks on stage. The crowd is already cheering. Dumb founded, and extremely hesitant, he hands her the microphone. Jess smiles at him.

JESS

What? They didn't tell you I was opening?

Still in shock Tom skirts off the stage. Glaring.

Jess shuffles to a spot on the stage, clutching the mic.

JESS (CONT'D)

I'm Jess. Most of You probably think my name is A-HOLE.

A good chunk of crew laughs. She nods to herself. Confident, enjoying it.

JESS (CONT'D)

Has anyone ever noticed... [write a really good stand up set that everyone loves]

The crew claps. Jess exits the stage beaming. Tom refuses to look at her.

Robbie returns to the stage.

Jess squeezes into the front row with Brian, into the same chair.

Tom weaves through the back of the crowd, glaring at the happy sailors.

ROBBIE

This is so hard-- I don't want to start asking people where their from-- I'm used to doing cities, you know-- what the hell am I supposed relate it too, I have so much material about Boston but none about the non-descript Persian Gulf-- what are the good restaurants around here anyways?

The crowd likes him. Robbie scans the front row. He sees Jess and Brian

ROBBIE (CONT'D)

Who do we have... You guys are crazy, this girl's practically sitting on this guys lap. What is this, are you guy's together, is that allowed?

Jess shakes her head.

JESS

No!

Robbie Row laughs.

ROBBIE

She says 'NO!' Sorry dude, that's rough, you're being a chair for her.

The deck laughs. Brian shrugs.

BRIAN

It's okay with me.

ROBBIE

You say that it's OKAY WITH YOU?
BRO. You don't need to pretend to
be strong. I'll slip you some
Kleenexes later. "It's okay with
me"??

The crowd really likes this bit. Tom pokes his head out
of the crowd.

TOM

And-- And Maybe it's because she
looks like my grandmother!

The crowd goes silent. Robbie squints to the back of the
seats.

ROBBIE

Yo, what did you say? Did he say
she looks likes a grandmother?...
Dude, shut the fuck up-- you don't
get to call things out at my show.
She looks like a Grandmother? Shut
The fuck up! Navy chick like her,
She could probably beat your
fucking ass-- show us some damn
respect, man! Don't interrupt my
show and let their weird ass lap
sitting relationship be, you
dumbass mother-fucking heckling
freak!... Now where are those
tissues for my guy.

The sailors start to clap. Tom turns beat red.

Lou weaves her way through the crowd. She stops next to Jess,
she leans on her a bit.

LOU

Cool it I stay here a bit?

JESS

Sure.

Lou goes for Jess's hand.

INT. LIBRARY - NIGHT

Jess hands Lou a cup of coffee.

JESS

Define administrative law.

LOU

Body of law created by federal or state administrative agencies to implement their powers and duties in the form of rules, regulations, investigations, orders, and adjudication of a particular industry or issue.

JESS

Correct. Adjudicate.

LOU

To hold a formal hearing about an issue and then decide it; making a decision (being a judge).

Jess kisses her.

JESS

... You got it right... Next one. Affirm.

LOU

I care about you so much, Jess.

Jess gets so flustered.

JESS

I meant... um, can you define "affirm"?

LOU

Nope.

Lou links her legs with Jess under the table. Jess is burning up red.

JESS

You know how when I got here, I said I wasn't going to ... I was gonna embrace it here, I was gonna follow the rules.

LOU

mhmm.

JESS

Well I think... I'm okay with breaking a few of them now.

CUT TO:

INT. FAN ROOM - NIGHT

Jess and Lou making out, quite passionately.

INT. ENTERPRISE HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Tom prowls the lower deck hallways, passing by sailors. He waves to them. But their faces seem... questioning. Not giving him much validation at all.

Tom frowns.

Just then the loud generators and machines clug to stop. Tom looks around perplexed.

INT. FAN ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Lou and Jess break away from each other, they look around at the sound.

JESS
What was that?

INT. XO OFFICE - NIGHT

Tom sits at his desk, existential, with one of those little fans.

SUPPO
XO, I saw your message. We checked out the system, we can't fix it for at least a couple weeks. Sir?

XO
These are dark days, Suppo. Very dark days. She's funnier than me.

SUPPO
Oh...

XO
Well maybe she isn't funnier than me but they like her more than me.

SUPPO
Everyone seems happy, just like you wanted.

XO

Well they're not gonna be happy
when it get's over 105 degrees in
here and people start blaming me
for their ball's melting off!!

BLACK OUT.

EXT. USS ENTERPRISE - ESTABLISHING SHOT - DAY

Extremely sunny. The Enterprise does not surge, it floats,
still, in the water. Baking.

SUPER: USS ENTERPRISE, OCTOBER, 2009, Persian Gulf.

MISSION: BIG DECK SHOW: FIX GENERATOR... AVOID MUTINY.

MISSION: MID RATS: SHOW NO MERCY TO TOM PORTER UNTIL WE HAVE
AC AGAIN.

INT. MEDIA CENTER - DAY

Jess and Lou sit at a DIYed 'weekend update' looking desk.
They stare piercing glances into the camera, Mark steers it
on a tripod.

LOU

Lou and Jess are back with Mid Day
Mid Rats. The ship's HVAC system is
still broken.

JESS

And it's important for all crew
members of enterprise to know that
this ship is a boiling couldron and
we are little ingredients for XO
Tom Porter's witch-soup.

LOU

That is true.

Brian leans into Mark's ear.

BRIAN

(whispering)

It's cute watching them, like think
they're fooling anybody.

MARK

I know right.

EXT. HANGER DECK - DAY

Tom's rival "man on the street" segment. He wears a mustach or something to disguise himself. He walks up to a sailor with his mic.

TOM

Hey, so what do you think of the XO? Do you think he's doing a good job?

FRAT SAILOR

Uh, sure.

TOM

And what about his show? You think it's funny?

FRAT SAILOR

I think the gay jokes are funny.

Tom turns to the camera.

TOM

I'm legally not allowed to say anything to that!

JESS V.O

Command would also like to request That we keep the flight deck clear today, they'll be extremely using the deck to fry pancakes, shaped like mickey mouse.

LOU V.O

If you're feeling a little down, that's valid. We're practically the XO's dehydrated pet hamster he hasn't fed in months.

JESS V.O

But it't to teach him responsibility!

Tom approaches FED UP SAILOR.

TOM

So how are you handling this heatwave?

FED UP SAILOR

I enlisted to fight the Taliban in Afganistan, why the fuck are we in Iraq?

(MORE)

FED UP SAILOR (CONT'D)

It's all one big money fucking imperialistic bullshit with buffoons on the fucking steering wheel--

TOM

Alright, thank you so much.

INT. GYM - NIGHT

Jess, Lou, Brian, and Mark roll up to the gym. Jess tries the door, it's locked. It has a sign on it. Lou rips it off.

LOU

"Due to extreme heat and over occupancy the gym will be closed until further notice?"

MARK

Where are we gonna do the shows now?

INT. CHAPEL - DAY

A sweaty chaplain fans himself with made in china fan. He sets out chairs. Jess trails him.

JESS

Please, if any thing we ONLY do clean material, VERY PG and very NICE, it's our whole thing.

CHAPLAIN

I'm just not sure it's right to have non - Church related events in the Chapel.

JESS

But you host scrabble here too.

CHAPLAIN

We only get points if we count biblical names. Last night I won using 'Zebulon'. Not easy.

JESS

We want the same thing, it's recreation, fun times, and if we can do our shows here more people will associate the good feeling with the Chapel--

CHAPLAIN

How many people will be in here?

JESS

Plenty.

CHAPLAIN

Even the aviators?

JESS

Uh... no. Not yet.

CHAPLAIN

That's a shame. I have this sermon where I compare a plane's fuel to that of Jesus feeding the multitude. It really deserves more ears.

JESS

What about plumbers and nurses?

CHAPLAIN

Bless you, but --

INT. REC ROOM - DAY

JESS

It's not happening.

BRIAN

Well if the pilots are what's gonna get us the space, then we need to get the pilots.

LOU

Luckily we have a connection on the flight deck.

JESS

I don't talk to them, I just set up the runway.

LOU

Kacey talks to the pilots...

INT. FLIGHT DECK - EVENING

JESS

Hey, you working out after this?

KACEY

Yeah.

JESS

Mind if I join? I want to bulk up.

KACEY

We wouldn't have anyone to spot you, odd number, sorry.

Kacey walks off with the pilots.

Jess glances at the rest of her flight crew: Brady, Cash, and Usef.

INT. HANGER DECK - EVENING

The flight decks guys stare at a wimpy basketball hoop.

USEF

So XO thinks a little middle school height hoop is gonna stop us from burning up in here?

CASH

I still wanna play something.

USEF

But we're uneven--

CASH

So? Would you rather play fuckin' HORSE.

JESS

I could fill in. Just until someone better comes along.

They play. Jess and Usef against Cash and Brady. Usef tries to run the ball without passing to Jess. The other side takes it. Cash taunts after her scores.

It happens again.

JESS (CONT'D)

You don't have to pretend I'm not here, I've played before, you know.

Usef shrugs, like he didn't know he was purposefully not passing to her.

USEF
No, I meant to, I--

CASH
Let's go--!

Next round. Usef dribbles for a while. He glances at Jess, open. He passes to her.

She shoots. Swish. She celebrates loudly.

Usef hands her some water.

INT. HANGER DECK - NIGHT.

Usef and Jess sit by an aircraft. Usef looks like he's thinking about something.

USEF
We watch your videos sometimes.
Cash would never say it, but he
thinks you're really funny.

JESS
Coming from him that doesn't mean
much.

Jess stops. She sips her water, changing.

JESS (CONT'D)
Sorry, I mean, before, I didn't
expect you all to like that kind
of thing. More like, team... Big
Deck Show.

USEF
The two factions?

JESS
No, no, I know, it's not that
simple.

USEF
The show is, the show. Some people
like it.

JESS
You know, that's what everyone
says, "some people", I haven't met
one. Well, one, his name's Tom
Porter.

USEF

Most people don't know how to think more than one way.

Jess sits up, intrigued.

JESS

And you do?

USEF

Well, yeah.

He wants to stop. But decides to explain.

USEF (CONT'D)

I grew up half Muslim I guess. My Grandparents are Iranian. So.

He says this with some surprising shame.

JESS

Oh. What do your friends think of that?

USEF

They don't know. I mean, I'm sure they think I'm something, but I've never directly said "oh, you know those Muslims we always talk about? I actually grew up kinda like one".

JESS

Well, it's definitely not something you should feel bad about.

USEF

It's hard to stick out, is all.

USEF (CONT'D)

Being here, does make me a little curious, though. Not that I could ever ask to, I don't know, connect, or research it.

JESS

I think you should, if that's what you want to do. Don't let what everyone else thinks stop you.

(MORE)

JESS (CONT'D)

There was-- There was a time I wanted something similar, to understand a part of myself better, and when I immersed myself in the community, the history, the way we live.. It was the happiest I ever was.

USEF

Thats beautiful. What group?

JESS

I-- doesn't matter, the Navy is my group now. So... I guess bad comparison.

USEF

They don't even have a Quran in the Chaplain's office.

JESS

What do you mean?

USEF

They're supposed to, religious freedom and all, but on the Enterprise, they just don't have one.

Jess thinks.

JESS

Are you close with any Aviators?

INT. HANGER DECK - NIGHT

A week later. Usef has arranged a basketball match between the flight deck and the aviators.

Jess arrives.

Cash pulls Usef aside.

CASH

Seriously, her?

USEF

She helped me win.

They play against the Aviators. Jess stares down Tucker.

After a few rounds. Jess and Tucker stand off for the jump ball. Jess gets it.

She passes it to Usef who takes it down the court. He passes it to Cash, he scores.

INT. HANGER DECK - LATER

Tucker walks up to Jess drinking her water.

TUCKER
Good game.

JESS
You too.

He keeps standing in front of her. She watches him.

TUCKER
Can we talk somewhere?

EXT. FLIGHT DECK - EVENING

JESS
Well?

TUCKER
I don't really know where to start.

JESS
That technically is a start. What else.

TUCKER
I'm so sorry. It's my fault you got roughed up in that XO video. He told me to go looking for females, new recruits. I completely regret it. And I know who was there that day, so I can go to command get those guys disaplined--

JESS
Thanks but I'm not exactly trusting of the command right now.

TUCKER
Well, either way, I want to make it right.

JESS
I was hoping you'd say that.

INT. MEDIA CENTER - NIGHT

The Mid Rats circle around Tucker. He drinks Gatorade. They watch him closely. He finishes it .

TUCKER

Thank you so much. So.. What are we doing here?

JESS

We think it'd be good for you to be in our group. People like you.

TUCKER

I'd be happy to, what do you have in mind?

JESS

Whatever you want--

BRIAN

What do you think of Gay people, Tucker?

Silence.

JESS

Brian, what the hell?

Tucker shifts in his seat.

BRIAN

No, it's alright Jess, I just want to see what he says.

TUCKER

Well... Everyone knows there's gay sailors aboard the Enterprise. As long as they keep it to themselves and get their work done nobody really has a problem with it... It's also a known fact that... Mid Rats is kinda gay.

JESS

Who says that?

BRIAN

Chill.

(To Tucker)

You've been in XO's videos quite a lot, what do you think about that?

JESS

Is this an interrogation?

TUCKER

No, it's alright, I get what he means. Look, I know the XOs stuff isn't the cleanest or the nicest, but weirdly enough I think his reason for making it is...Valid?

LOU

You think he's funny?

TUCKER

Sometimes. He trained Top Gun like me. We have an understanding that not many people share, even some people in the Navy. Like...Sometimes I wish I could laugh at, I don't know, Looney tunes like I used to but, my brain is just different. Some of these guys, they need to joke about the death -- the fucked up mess they've seen.

LOU

What but who's at the expense of that? You can't just assume that all the Crew come from the same experience. Sure, you probably justified the Lesbo's island sketch because it would "cheer people up" But what about Jess? You brought her there knowing it wasn't safe.

TUCKER

I know. It was wrong. And I want to make it up to you, Jess. All of you.

BRIAN

Splendid.

LOU

People say it's "okay" to gay in the navy, but there's not actual protection, there's abuse and discrimination-- I want to actually see what people do with authentic representation, where we're not the butt of the XO's jokes.

JESS

What do you mean "authentic representation"?

LOU

Tucker, You have Aviator privilege, it means you can say things we can't.

TUCKER

What exactly do you want me to say? What's the idea?

LOU

Lesbo's Island.

JESS

Lou...

LOU

A retrospective. Calling out that sketch, from someone who can.

JESS

Still, won't that hurt us just by even saying it?

BRIAN

I mean, if Tucker's here we should use him for something big. You know you could write something so good, Jess.

LOU

Tucker, you in?

TUCKER

If it'll help like you say. I'll do anything.

LOU

Let's have a vote. Who's in favor?

All the Mid Rats and Tucker raise their hands. Jess looks around, she finally raises her hand.

LOU (CONT'D)

Amazing.

Lou leans over to Brian.

LOU (CONT'D)

I actually really like him.

BRIAN
Me too. Sweet guy.

INT. XO OFFICE - DAY

Kacey enters with a hand full of snacks. Tom naps with his head on his desk, Kacey drops the snacks on his head, he wakes up.

KACEY
I saw Tucker hanging out with the Mid Rats.

TOM
That's not possible. He does my videos. Maybe he was bullying them.

KACEY
No it looked friendly.

TOM
Oh my god, if I could snap my fingers and get rid of all of them I would. I need you to get something for me. I need you to record what they say, they act like "oh we're just joking about the XO for fun" I know they have some greater scheme to take me down -- to disrespect our military, maybe they're even breaching information, tyrannical whistle blowing shit.

KACEY
You thinks so?

TOM
Yes. Can you do that? Anything.

KACEY
I can, sir.

INT. REC ROOM - DAY

Brian pats Jess on the back.

BRIAN
It's really good, Jess. Don't be worried.

She nods and smiles stiffly.

Mark films Tucker. The mid rats sit in a circle of chairs. Tucker addresses the camera.

TUCKER

I was raised by a coven of women who loved other women. By my numurours mother figures I was taught to respect others. In what Tom Porter calls a "skit" titled "Lesbo's Island", he extremely inaccurately depicted my way of life, my culture. So, for the price of one pair of Birkenstocks you can access my educations series of :
HOW TO PORTRAY SAPPHIC WOMEN IN
NAVAL CROSS MEDIA.

INT. FAN ROOM - NIGHT

Lou and Jess makeout sesh. Jess breaks away.

LOU

Is everything okay?

JESS

Yeah... I think I'm just nervous about the video.

LOU

You don't have anything to worry about. If anything happens Tuckers there to sheild us from any bullshit.

JESS

It kind of caught me off guard, I thought we'd just be making something funny.

LOU

And we did. But maybe it can do soemthing good too.

JESS

What you said to him impressed me.

LOU

I'm used to debating my point. I've gotten good at it.

JESS

It makes me wish... one day I could have a talk with my parents like that.

Lou looks at her. Understanding.

LOU

Yeah. I hope you do one day.

JESS

I'm really sorry if I get weird at times...

INT. XO OFFICE - DAY

JESS (RECORDING)

... I wish I liked myself for being gay as much as I liked myself for being funny. I wish I was like you guys.

Kacey stands, Tom sits with Suppo, a small recording device on the desk between them.

KACEY

So yeah. I got it.

TOM

Thanks Kacey... Good job.

Tom crosses his hands, deep in thought.

KACEY

So does that mean we're done here?

TOM

Uhh, sure. Have a good night.

KACEY

No, what I meant was...

Tom's spaced out.

KACEY (CONT'D)

My commanding officer promoted this guy Cash up to blue coats today?

TOM

Oh.

KACEY

I thought I would be included too.
But why the hell would I think
that, right?

Kacey huffs and leaves. Tom and Suppo sit awkwardly for a moment.

SUPPO

The recording was... quite sad
actually, XO, sir.

Tom grimaces, staring at the recorder.

TOM

People have been discharged on this
basis a million times before...

SUPPO

They have.

TOM

I just... I care about my crew, all
my crew, Suppo. I just don't know.

Tom taps on the recorder.

TOM (CONT'D)

Yep... let's just forget about
this.

He slams it in his desk drawer.

INT. CHAPEL - DAY

Jess, Tucker, and Usef walk through the door. The
Chaplain is playing an acoustic worship song on stage,
practicing.

CHAPLAIN

Um, Hi..?

He sees Tucker. He climbs down from the stage.

CHAPLAIN (CONT'D)

Oh, Tucker, Hello! How was the sky
today, how was--

JESS

Chap, we all know there are
religious freedoms on board that
you've been ignoring.

(MORE)

JESS (CONT'D)

We also know your meetings aren't getting the numbers you want.

CHAPLAIN

I don't understand.

Tucker pulls out a catalog. And a list.

TUCKER

We're doing a show here next week, many, many people will be attending. In order for it to go through, I'm requesting these items be added to the Chapel, sir.

The Chaplain glances at the list, he scoffs.

CHAPLAIN

The book of Islam? Prayer matts? This is very funny.

TUCKER

And we expect you to research these texts incase a Sailor comes to you seeking guidance.

JESS

If you do, Tucker will join us here on Thursdays for our show. You're welcome.

CHAPLAIN

These are radical demands.

Jess and Tucker look at each other.

JESS

Alright then.

They turn to leave.

CHAPLAIN

Wait, wait! What I meant was...

He turns into a surfer dude.

CHAPLAIN (CONT'D)

These are radical demands, dude, come on in!

Usef and Jess smile to each other.

INT. GALLEY - NIGHT

Tom steps in front of his crew. They don't cheer for him.

XO

We know the ship has been a little hot and bothered lately. We've heard your complaints and I've convinced the Captain... to let us have a PORT VISIT.

INT. MEDIA CENTER - NIGHT

Jess is editing a video. Tom reveals himself.

TOM

White flag.

Jess inches closer to him.

TOM (CONT'D)

How about we call it?

JESS

What do you mean?

TOM

This back and forth, it's getting messy. We both want the same thing. Times are tough right now with this whole generator mess -- but that's not the same as the other stuff. Make fun of me for being "disgusting" sure -- but with the generator I'm trying my best!

JESS

I'm only joking about what the ship is experiencing.

TOM

Really? I don't believe that.

Tom shifts in his seat.

TOM (CONT'D)

I've come into some information about the Mid Rats, and I know for a fact that your next video will not be so topical, it will be... niche.

JESS

Niche? A, I supposed to understand what that means?

TOM

Something you could get in trouble for, so I'm suggesting we call it. It will do both of us a favor.

JESS

Did you come here to try and intimidate me?

TOM

No! This is me at my most approachable.

JESS

People don't hate you because of me. They hate that you gave them a basketball hoop to make up for a shitty HVAC system.

TOM

You're not hiding it well, Valentine.

JESS

What?

TOM

You know what I mean. You're not hiding it well. You're not gonna last much longer here anyways, so please, give me my ship back.

Jess shuts off her computer and leaves.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Jess rushes through the hallway. *He knows he knows someone knows about me.*

INT. REC ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Brian, DVD guy, and Lou stand waiting for her. Jess enters. This is an Initiation.

LOU

Jess. You did some real good today.

JESS
what's going on...

BRIAN
We want to show you something.

INT. REC ROOM - NIGHT

They scroll through the OUT SERVE facebook group.

LOU
Since we're coming into port...

MARK
And we have internet access
again...

BRIAN
And you showed great leadership
today, we wanted to invite you
into the group.

JESS
What group?

Brian shows her a Laptop, the screen has a facebook page
open: OUTSERVE.

JESS (CONT'D)
What's Outserve?

BRIAN
Hundreds of gay service people,
all connected. They're working
towards a Don't ask Don't tell
repeal. It's been a group for a
couple years now.

JESS
How did you guys find out about
this?

Jess looks at Lou.

JESS (CONT'D)
You showed them?

LOU
If you would've talked to me
sooner, maybe you would've heard.

Lou smiles playfully, Jess doesn't respond. She scrolls.

JESS

So that's it, it's just a facebook group?

LOU

Yeah, but it keeps us connected to each other so we don't feel drowned out.

JESS

I get it-- but, people can see what facebook groups you're in if they go through your computer, what if someone in the group leaks all the members, then what?

BRIAN

Jess, these people want the same thing you do. I thought you would be into it.

JESS

When did you guys hear about this, why am I the last to know?

LOU

Well... actually, Jess, we all met through it, probably a year and a half ago.

JESS

You didn't just meet each other?

BRIAN

We have to be discreet.

JESS

With me?

BRIAN

Jess, you're not exactly wanting people to be out, you've told us--

JESS

But-- I can still feel lied to! Do you even care about the shows, or are those just a means to an end for you?

LOU

Jess, I'm sorry you're upset, but a lot of people need this group.

(MORE)

LOU (CONT'D)

I really needed it when we broke up, Brian helped me through a lot of that.

JESS

You told some stranger our business?

(to Brian)

And then you come up to me in the Galley out of 'chance'? You wanted me to be your mouth piece this whole time!

BRIAN

It's been both, Jess. And I think deep down you feel the same way.

JESS

You're going to get us all kicked out.

LOU

There's enough of us to really change something.

JESS

Change what?

Jess storms outs.

INT. ENTERPRISE - VARIOUS LOCATIONS

Crew getting ready for port.

INT. CAPTAIN'S OFFICE - DAY

Everyone has left for port. Jess stakes out the Captain's office. Rice emerges from a door.

JESS

Commanding officer, sir, I need to tell you something.

BLACK OUT.

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY - NIGHT

Port Visit. A hotel in some undisclosed middle eastern country. Jess walks up to a door. She's in civilian clothes. She's about to knock...

BRIAN

Lou's is the next one to your left
actually.

Jess looks at Brian. He's somewhat solemn, he wears a hotel
robe.

JESS

Oh. Thanks... Did you see any
sights?

BRIAN

Isn't she still upset with you?

JESS

That's why I want to see her.

BRIAN

It's none of my business but, it
takes a toll on her when you don't
know what you want.

JESS

Well... Okay Brian. It really isn't
your business.

BRIAN

Bitch...

Brian laughs, somewhat shocked. He almost becomes enraged but
instead tenderly gives Jess a hug.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

You poor kid.

He walks away, leaving Jess somewhat stunned. She finds Lou's
door. She breathes, knocks. Lou opens. She stares at Jess
dryly.

JESS

Hi...

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Jess and Lou sit on a massive hotel bed, eating room service
ice cream.

JESS

Fuck! No offence to Brian but...

LOU

No I get you-- finally some food
that isn't stirred by the rocking
of ocean waves.

JESS

This place is so strange, there's
no barfing after every meal.

LOU

Yeah there's something very solid
about the ground and walls here.

They laugh. Then quiet.

JESS

Do you realize this is first place
we've been where we're actually
allowed to be together?

LOU

Not true. I think it's criminalized
here.

JESS

Well, in this room, I mean.

Jess kisses Lou.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - LATER

Jess and Lou lay under the blankets, entangled in each
other's arms but both emotionally elsewhere.

JESS

I told the Captain.

LOU

What?

JESS

About the Big Deck Show. Right
before we left. I think it's gonna
matter this time. It's over.

Jess rolls over, hugging her. Lou stares.

LOU

What do you mean over?

JESS

Mid rats. It's not like we have to
put out the Tucker sketch now.

LOU

What?

JESS

I said it before. It's a big jump and it makes it easy for people to make assumptions about us. So, Problem solved.

LOU

Problem not solved, Jess. Maybe you got what you wanted but I haven't yet. What about everyone else? Do you think all this bullshit stops just because one guy loses his job?

JESS

I don't like being used for whatever your guys's big plan is.

LOU

Using you? What are you talking about? You're one of us! You wanna talk about being used? What about you selling your fucking soul to an institution that makes you hide who you are?

JESS

So are you.

LOU

It's not the same. Once I'm out of here, I'm taking it the fuck down.

JESS

That what I'm talking about! Do you hear yourself? There is no taking it down.

LOU

And you're using me. You'll just blame me once you feel ashamed again. We are your friends and we want you to be happy. Don't you understand that the rules we operate under don't apply in the real world? You can have a relationship. You don't have to take orders. You have to give people a chance to accept you.

JESS

You really, really think that people can change at the flip of a switch? Yeah, Lucy, I'm sure your new-age hippy parents were really hard to convince.

LOU

I'm not saying it's easy. I'm just saying you shouldn't have to lie.

JESS

Lou, I'm asking you. Don't release the video.

LOU

No.
I want you to remember what happened at bootcamp. Who would you be if I hadn't come out to you. There are so many people like us. And since you won't let me help you, I'm gonna help them.

JESS

So you're choosing that over me?

LOU

You're not even choosing me.

JESS

If that's how you feel, I can't be with you.

LOU

Yeah. I agree. Get out of my room please?

Lou gets up.

JESS

Lou, wait.

LOU

When I'm out of the shower I better be alone.

She shuts the bathroom door.

INT. XO OFFICE - DAY

Tom returns from port in a Hawaiian shirt, Sunburnt. The Captain sits in his chair.

CAPTAIN RICE

Sit down.

Tom sits. The Captain plays the Big Deck Show on the laptop.

TOM

I can explain-- uh... It's Suicide prevention-- us military men have a dark sense of humor--

CAPTAIN RICE

How long have you been using the broadcast for personal gain?

TOM

I wouldn't say it's for personal gain!... Since the ship was recommissioned last year.

The Captain puts his head in his hands.

TOM (CONT'D)

Honestly, Honestly sir, the people making a fuss about this don't have the right to judge how we live at sea.

CAPTAIN RICE

And a female sailor reported sexual harassment with documented evidence that you showed to the crew?

TOM

She's the one who told you?

CAPTAIN RICE

How could you be so goddamned stupid?

TOM

Like you're all for these new rules? All these-- these-- sensitivities!

CAPTAIN RICE

You could at least hide it better. Our Leadership is held to an extreme standard. Tell me why that is. What happens if Americans hate our military? What happens? Tom?

TOM

Does this mean my careers over?

CAPTAIN RICE

...I need to think. You've put me
in a shitty position, Tom.

Tom sits down, genuinely defeated. The Captain breaks out
a bottle of whiskey from Tom's drawer. He takes a sip.

CAPTAIN RICE (CONT'D)

I'm so fuckin' disappointed in you.

INT. XO OFFICE -DAY

Tom storms into his office, huffing, eyes watering. He swipes
all the paper off his desk in a rage. He pushes over his
desktop computer, the desk shakes a drawer open... Tom see
the recorder he stashed inside.

He picks up the recorder. Stares at it for a moment.

He brings his computer upright again. Powers it on.

We see him select every single one of his 'big deck show'
video files and clumsily drag them into his desktop trash.
Empty trash. Empty trash. Empty trash. He takes a second...

Tom type rapidly on his keyboard. DADT VIOLATION.

He waits by his printer.

He faxes.

EXT. FLIGHT DECK- DAY

The flight deck crew works, Kacey looks at Jess nervously,
guilty. Tucker waits by, about to hop into his Jet.

JESS

So yeah, thanks for your help, but
we're broken up now so it won't be
necessary.

TUCKER

You and--?

JESS

The Mid Rats.

TUCKER

Oh. I'm sorry to hear that. I was having fun.

A new person, OFFICER NOZEK, a tall older woman walks over to Sperry.

NOZEK

PO Sperry? I'm from legal. Sorry to interrupt, but I believe Seaman Jess Valentine serves under your command?

SPERRY

Yes ma'am, she's out on the deck now.

NOZEK

Would you be able to relieve of her daily assignments so she can speak with me, it's important.

Sperry nod. He calls Jess over.

JESS

Yes?

NOZEK

Seaman Valentine, I'm here to inform you you're being summoned to disciplinary for a Violating the Don't Ask Don't Tell policy. Your hearing will be later this week to decide if you can remain an active member of our U.S Military. Do you have any questions?

JESS

No ma'am. Wait-- Is anyone else being summoned?

NOZEK

(yes)

I'm not at liberty to say.

SPERRY

Thank you Ma'am. We need the deck clear now if you don't mind.

She nods. Exits.

SPERRY (CONT'D)

Is there anything I can...

JESS
No Sir. Thank you sir.

Tucker runs up to Jess.

TUCKER
What happened?

JESS
They're calling me to mast. All of
us I think.

TUCKER
For... They wouldn't really do that
would they?

JESS
Yes. They are doing it. Oh God.

TUCKER
Let me talk to someone. I'm in the
group too and they're not calling
me to mast. I can do something.

JESS
Not now, you have to fly out.

TUCKER
I can't fly and think about you
guys like this.

JESS
Please, just forget about it until
you get back. We'll be fine.

Tucker hugs her. He rushes off to his jet.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - NIGHT

Control ops stare at their radar screens, following the
pilots. A dot goes out. A Control Op gestures to the others
to come have a look.

INT. XO OFFICE - NIGHT

Tom naps on his couch. He's shaken awake. Captain Rice towers
above him.

TOM
I've been good sir, on desk duty
just like you said.

The Captain's face hangs low.

TOM (CONT'D)
What's wrong?

INT. GALLEY - NIGHT

The crew gathers in the Galley, chatting with each other. Jess sits with Manuela.

MANUELLA
Does anyone know what this is about?

Scattered throughout the room we see Mark, Brian, Lou. All with very low faces.

Captain Rice leads Tom up to the platform, practically steering him by his collar.

TOM
Sir, I really don't think I should be the one...

Rice shoves him in front of the crew.

TOM (CONT'D)
I know you're probably not very happy to see me... um...

The crew is quiet. Tom is so nervous, he's never had to be serious like this.

TOM (CONT'D)
We received some bad news today. Um... So... I'm sad to announce one of our Jet's went missing today, we believe our Aviator Tucker Mulhern was shot down in action while supporting the ground forces... um...

Silence.

SAILOR
He's dead?

TOM
Yes. He is dead. So. That's all I wanted to say.
(MORE)

TOM (CONT'D)

Maybe one last thing, We kinda fell behind in operations today so we'll really need to push it tomorrow to get back on track. Alright.

The room starts to erupt in conversations-- groaning? Crying? Angry yelling?

Jess's head crumbles, in disbelief. She searches around the Galley, it's blurry, she briefly make eye contact with Brian and Lou, Distressed. Everyone in the Galley is making noise.

TOM (CONT'D)

Alright, let's calm down! Hey!

Captain Rice pulls Tom away.

CAPTAIN RICE

You have a way with words, Tom. It really moves the people.

TOM

Fuck!

INT. BERTHING - MORNING

Jess slides out of her bunk. She buttons up her uniform. She slicks her hair. Her eyes are red.

Kacey, in her bunk, has her eyes cracked open. She watches Jess leave.

INT. LEGAL/CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Jess sitting down at a table with Officer Nozek.

NOZEK

Have you ever in your life before or currently as an active duty military member identified as homosexual.

JESS

No.

NOZEK

While serving in the military have you ever had a sexual relationship with a member of the same sex?

JESS

Absolutely not. No.

INTERCUT Lou, Brian, and Mark in the same setting, reacting to the question. Mark shrugs. Brian chuckles a bit. Lou stares at Nozek, unflinching.

INT.XO OFFICE/DINNER QUARTERS -DAY

Tom and The Captain sit alone at a nicely dressed table with napkins in the collars. They cut up a piece of turkey.

TOM

You have realize I've only been trying to keep people happy, I've just had some bad luck, the generator, we don't usually lose someone this important--

CAPTAIN RICE

It's usually some enlisted cog no one gives a shit about jumping off the side of the boat, is that right?

TOM

Sir, I know I fumbled it back there, but this ship needs something right now, people are hurting, I can see that, please let me do something to help, let me fix everything.

CAPTAIN RICE

What are you suggesting?

TOM

Crossing the line ceremony.

EXT. HANGER DECK - DAY

Jess sits solemnly in the hanger deck, it's opened. She stares at the water. Sperry walks up to her.

JESS

So what'd they say?

SPERRY

You're staying.

Jess exhales, relieved. Sperry hands her a bottle of coke.

JESS

What this?

SPERRY
They're passing them out for Wog
day.

JESS
So that's where everyone is.

SPERRY
I don't really like Wog day.
Officer Nozek wanted me to give you
this, guess she had some sympathy
for your friends.

He hands her a document. She reads it.

JESS
This says they're getting
discharged today. What-- what does
that mean, can't they just wait
till our next port?

Jess stands, rushing in unknown directions.

SPERRY
Check the Helicopter pad!

EXT. FLIGHT DECK - CONTINUOUS

WOG DAY. Tom conducts a line of Wogs, just crazy frat hazing
behavior, the air reeks of piss, shit, and old food.

Jess rushes through the chaos. A chunk of CEREMONY MUCK is
flung through the air, it hits Jess on the side of her head.

Many of the characters we've seen on board in a total dissent
into madness.

EXT. HELICOPTER PAD - CONTINUOUS

Lou hands her sack of belongings to a Helicopter op.

JESS
Where's Brian and Mark?

LOU
Already gone.

JESS
Lou. I'm so sorry. I thought you
would deny it too.

LOU
I wasn't gonna do that.

Lou looks back at the chopper. It get's loud. Lou laughs slightly. Heartbroken.

LOU (CONT'D)
(Yelling)
You have to promise me something!

JESS
Yes, yes, anything!

LOU
Promise me... you won't tell
stories about me in your stand up!

JESS
I promise.

Lou climbs into the chopper.

INT. XO OFFICE - DAY

Tom walks in, his shirt is covered in muck. He's glowing with Wog day energy. Captain Rice sits in his chair, he's clearly drunk.

TOM
Captain. Hello, Sir. What is--

CAPTAIN RICE
Tommy, I've made my decision.

TOM
Ok. Let me have it.

CAPTAIN RICE
Wog Day. To Mourn a death. I've
never seen that before.

TOM
It was a little strange, yes, but
they have to put the emotion
somewhere I was thinking...

CAPTAIN RICE
I'm done. Seven months of whatever
the fuck... I'm done.

TOM
Are you feeling okay Cap?

CAPTAIN RICE

Why didn't you ever ask me to be in the videos? I'm funny! And I sure as hell need to let lose more than you do!

TOM

I'm-- sorry sir, it didn't cross my mind.

CAPTAIN RICE

It's just so confusing these days, who's right who's wrong! I never thought I'd get so tired of bombing the middle east, but here we are. My whole career just bombing the same mountains! I always looked at it like the country's billions dollar hobby. For what, I'm still a bit unsure So uh, instead of firing you...

He pours a bottle of brandy out for Tom. He hands it to him with a big grin, Tom is shocked.

TOM

I get my Captaincy?

CAPTAIN RICE

Aye fuckin'Aye.

TOM

But, I was awaiting disciplinary, and we just lost a pilot under my command, I discharged multiple company members--

CAPTAIN RICE

(genuine affection)

And I think you'll do great. Because here's a secret Tommy. To do this job, you need to have no fucking soul. Bomb. Bomb.

(starts singing)

bomb, bomb, bomb, bomb!

TOM

Sir, what's the next step, what's our strategy?

CAPTAIN RICE

I don't give a fuck. I'm dropping myself off in Croatia, I hear the girls there go for older guys much easier than American girls. We'll have the ceremony before then.

EXT. USS ENTERPRISE - EXTREME WIDE -DAY

The Ship pulls into its American port.

EXT.FLIGHT DECK - DAY

Jess and all other sailors dressed in their formal navy whites, salute. This is Tom's promotion ceremony. Family members in formal attire watch.

Jess spots her MOM and DAD, very midwestern, in their sixties, kind of awkward.

MOM

Look at you. You really look like a sailor.

DAD

We're so proud of you.

MOM

Can you introduce me to your Captain? I love his hat--

JESS

Mom--

MOM

Excuse me!

She taps Tom the shoulder.

MOM (CONT'D)

Congrats on the promotion! Do you know my daughter? I know you have a lot of people to look after.

TOM

Of course I know Seaman Valentine. Most people here do.

MOM

I need to get a picture of you both.

Tom and Jess pose stiffly while her mom uses a tiny digital camera. Tom smiles.

TOM

I wanted to say that... Our aviator
was a tremendous loss.

JESS

It sure helped you, Captian.

INT. NAVY OFFICE (LAND) - DAY

Two years later, 2011. Jess works at a messy desk. Her manner more defeated. A few years have passed.

Manuela swings by her a coffee in hand.

MANUELLA

You'll never be able to guess who's
on TV.

She clicks it on. Other navy workers in the office gather around.

On the TV we see Lou, Brian, and Mark speaking at a podium at a conference, a crowd of people behind them.

LOU (ON TV)

We're calling for complete and
permanent repeal of Don't Ask Don't
Tell.

Jess looks at Manuella.

JESS

What do you think of all that?

MANUELLA

They were already here anyways. I
don't know if the administration
will budge. They don't think
there's anything wrong with the way
things run.

Jess's flip phone starts to ring. She looks down at the ID, surprised, she asners as she rushes out of the room.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Jess and Kacey in civilian clothes, drinking beers.

JESS

I was surprised to hear from you.

KACEY

This is going to sound crazy but...I have everything. I wrote it all down. Everything. Every file. Every video. Every off-hand comment. I saved it.

JESS

Of all the shows on Enterprise? Why did you do all that?

KACEY

Because I'm obsessive about the rules. When I knew it was obvious how much Tom Porter broke them I started.

JESS

I had no idea.

KACEY

If you're a woman who has a problem with authority you better have concrete proof, otherwise no one will give you the time of day.

JESS

I don't remember you being too friendly.

KACEY

I thought in order for them to respect me I had to distance myself from the other girls.

JESS

Why are you doing all this now?

KACEY

I forgot I felt that way until I saw Lou on TV... I guess I got desensitized. I'm a big coward. And I did think you were funny. I'm very sorry. But I'm getting ahead of myself. I want you to do something.

JESS

What?

KACEY

I want you to be the one to expose him.

JESS

What?

KACEY

Think about it. It's the right time. It will push the repeal and the repeal will push him.

JESS

You really think it's the right time for people to hear this? If I do expose him, and the repeal doesn't pass, I'll get discharged like everyone else.

KACEY

I have a friend at a news network. I could get you in. But you should know something... it's a conservative network.

JESS

Why are you suggesting I go on there!??

KACEY

Because I've seen you. And it'd be funny as fuck. It's your choice. I just thought you might want to be the one to take the final shot.

INT. TOM'S HOME -NIGHT

Tom sits on a nice white couch. His wife wears expensive WASP clothing. His teen daughter KAILYN, plants herself on the couch.

TOM'S WIFE

Turn on Housewives. You promised.

TOM

I'm just checking the score first.

He changes the channel. He sees himself on the News.

BROADCASTER

Apparently, the Executive Officer hid this video series from the Captain and the Admiral, Now, mind you, the video we're about to show is extremely offensive, viewer discretion is advised.

Both Kailyn and Peggy watch. Horrified. Kailyn turns to Tom... slow. Full of rage.

KAILYN

Dad... what the actual fuck?

Tom clicks off the TV. He turns to Peggy, terrified.

TOM

How about a board-game instead?

INT. NEWS STUDIO - NIGHT

CHRISTY JAMESON, 30s, a blonde done-up anchor woman wearing a crucifix and acrylic nails, approaches Jess being fitted with a mic-pack.

CHRISTY

Nervous?

JESS

A little.

CHRISTY

You'll be great. Basically I'm just gonna ask you how you felt on the ship, I'm gonna ask about PC humor, not get too political.

JESS

Heard. And I'm ready to defend my Captain, Ma'am.

CHRISTY

Great. Break a leg.

The lights dim. Jess is rushed to a chair. And they're LIVE:

CHRISTY (CONT'D)

You've probably seen by now footage emerging from a Navy Aircraft carrier called USS ENTERPRISE, video shows the now Captain then Executive Officer participating in some pretty racy material. But why are we focusing on the Navy's interpersonal problems, when frankly, they have much better things to do, like defend our country. Today, we bring Jess Valentine, a Sailor who worked as a flight deck technician during this period, to answer some of our questions. Jess, How are you?

JESS

Christy, I'm gay.

Jess pauses. Christy is lost for words. Jess just basks in the awkwardness.

CHRISTY

I'm sorry?

Jess smiles. She begins to speak rapidly.

JESS

I accept your apology. You see, when I was serving on the USS Enterprise homophobia was very common, as you can see in Tom Porter's videos. And I'm happy to be here today to discuss it because, right now we're looking at a potential repeal of Don't Ask Don't Tell--

CHRISTY

That's actually not what we're discussing today.

JESS

Maybe you're not, but I will be. Where should I start... These videos have annoyed me far longer than any of you realize. But I'm not here to dawg on Tom Porter, he is merely a product of an institution that hates people with style, culture and creativity, AKA, gay people.

CHRISTY

I don't even know what-- so you're saying you defend his actions?

JESS

That's what you got? Okay, fine maybe I do defend him-- what's more hilarious is how many people let him get away with everything -- the Captain for one, because I told him myself, so claiming he didn't know is straight up lying.

CHRISTY

I think we're going to commercial--

JESS

Wait, wait, wait---If we let things like this exist that means they can abuse us, it means we have no protection! My friends were kicked out of the service the same time these videos were being made, and I could get discharged literally five minutes from now. Not everyone in the Military is gay, but we are all different, and the one's that command us think they have all the say in who are, but we have the power. We have the power-- Together!

CHRISTY

If you hate our country and military so much why do you work for them?

JESS

Finally, a question. I don't hate our country, I just hate homophobic cunts like you, Christy.

A producer waves violently to Christy behind the camera.

JESS (CONT'D)

For some reason I think your producer is saying you have one more question.

CHRISTY

Uhh... if you could say one thing to Captain Tom Porter right now, what would it be...

JESS
Probably. Good luck. The Lesbians
are coming for you. I'M GAY. REPEAL
DON'T ASK DON'T--

The broadcast is cut off.

EXT. TOM'S HOME -NIGHT

A doorbell. Tom comes out to his porch to find dozens of reporters yelling questions, flashing bulbs from their cameras.

REPORTER #1
Tom! Do you have a statement about
the videos from the Enterprise--

COUNTER REPORTER #2
Do you stand by your content--

Tom glares at them.

TOM
Oh, Fuck off.

INT. GAY BAR - NIGHT

Brian sings on stage holding a bright pink acoustic guitar. He wears a rodeo queen dress, a stunning auburn wig. This is the first time we see him in "real" drag. He does a kind of vaudeville/stand up hokey comedy routine, he sings too.

Jess stands in the crowd. Her hair is down, this is the first time we see her as a civilian.

EXT. GAY BAR - NIGHT

Brian steps out for a smoke break. The door creaks open.

JESS
Good job back there.

Brian sees her. He's flooded with shock, confusion. Jess leans on the building, she points to his cigarette.

JESS (CONT'D)
No longer contraband.

Brian chuckles, not quite open with her yet. Still looking away her extends his box of menthols to her. She takes one. He takes small glances at her.

BRIAN

...Bangs?

Jess laughs.

JESS

Well It's not really fair to judge my look when I'm standing next to you. And I'm trying out a queer cut now that I can.

BRIAN

You're out?

JESS

Yes! Didn't you...

Brian starts to laugh, he's messing with her.

BRIAN

I can't give you Lou's number.

JESS

No, I know she has a girlfriend. I'm here for you. I had some real fucked up priorities back then.

Brian exhales, and blinks away tears violently through his big lashes.

BRIAN

Oh, yes you did.

JESS

And in some ways, I still do. Because deep down, all I really want is to do is make a show with you. What do you say?

Brian laughs.

BRIAN

You think you can just waltz into my club, compliment my drag, cuss out a few people on TV, get a Billie Jean King haircut and we'll be good?

JESS

You want me to go back on TV and cuss out a few more? You can take it out on me. Whatever you need to, I get it.

BRIAN

Bitch! Why do you have to be so difficult?! You don't know how to listen!
I just-- I can't, I can't! I can't go back to how things were, Jess.

JESS

I know. I don't want to try to convince anybody, I'm not trying to stick it to anyone. We can make whatever we want, for whoever we want. It's our boat.

BRIAN

It's our boat.

Brian shifts around. A moment between them.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

I'm gonna hug you now.
But we should do some material about how they need to give us back our benefits.

JESS

Sure.

EXT. ENTERPRISE/VIRGINIA PORT - DAY

Winter time. Jess walks along a naval marina. She watches the Enterprise being scrapped for parts.

THE END.