

DIFFICULT PEOPLE

"Phony Business"

INT. D'S CAFE - DAY

JULIE sits at a table with her laptop open. BILLY approaches with a carafe. Julie's phone woofs and she looks at it.

JULIE
It's live! Hold the coffee and
bring me your most affordable day
wine.

BILLY
When you think about it, can any of
us truly afford day wine?

JULIE
I can't afford not to, even without
your employee discount.

DENISE walks by. She doesn't look over.

DENISE
You don't get Billy's discount.

BILLY
Ah, then this must be the curious
incident of the dog awards show in
the night-time.

JULIE
This video is only thirty-five
seconds long. Make it two day
wines.

BILLY
Thirty-five seconds. Uh-oh.

MATTHEW appears out of nowhere.

MATTHEW
thirty-five second uh-ohs were my
specialty that month I was a cam
boy.

BILLY
You know Matthew, it's not often
that I find myself agreeing with
Mr. Mel Gibson outside of his love
for Jodie Foster, but you make me
sympathize with his stance on
homosexuals outside of his love for
Jodie Foster.

Denise comes to the table with four glasses of wine.

DENISE
On the house.

JULIE
What? Really?

DENISE
The look on your face tells me this
video is going to be worth it.

Julie takes a slug of wine and plays the video.

ON THE SCREEN

Red carpet. Puppies wearing bow ties and top hats. Julie is wearing a TIGHT MERMAID GOWN. She asks AMY POEHLER a question.

JULIE
A dog awards show seems a little
low-rent for you. But then again,
"Sisters" didn't exactly set the
world on fire.

A Beat. Amy Poehler shifts her HEAVY GIFT BAG from one hand to the other.

AMY POEHLER
That's not ... Where is my
publicist?

JULIE
Did you have to get drunk to attend
this?

AMY POEHLER
(Who does seem drunk-ish)
Stop talking to me.

JULIE
You gonna try to smuggle one of
these puppies home in your dress?

AMY POEHLER
Enough!

Amy Poehler whirls away. Julie jumps back to avoid being hit by the gift bag, falls, struggles to get up and keeps falling back down. In the background, Amy Poehler shoves a puppy in her gift bag and stalks away. Julie closes the laptop as the video transitions to slow-motion replays and a trap remix.

BILLY

Well. You met Amy Poehler. And ...
Boo?

Denise and Matthew recover from laughing and clink glasses.

DENISE

Wine well-spent.

JULIE

And now the lucrative famous animal
beat is closed to me forever.

DENISE

The what?

JULIE

You know, covering dog awards
shows, goat Twitter, pig Snapchat.
Cute critters are big business.

BILLY

Amazon has a Golden Globe-winning
show that is nothing but kittens
eating kibble.

JULIE

It's called Eating Pussies. Jill
Soloway is a genius. Hey, don't you
have an audition for an Amazon show
coming up?

BILLY

Yes, and I have no time to work on
my character. They want Curb Your
Enthusiasm-style improv, but my
character is Southern.

MATTHEW

I'll cover for you. Then if you
book it, you'll feel obligated to
take me to the wrap party.

BILLY

I can't. As fun as potentially
stiffing you on the wrap party
sounds, I need the money.

JULIE

Southern improv, huh? Just do your
Kevin Spacey.

BILLY
 (In a bad Kevin Spacey
 House of Cards accent)
 My Spacey is rusty as the fabled
 trombone.

DENISE
 Don't you dare do that here. You're
 scaring the customers.

BILLY
 (In a slightly better
 Kevin Spacey accent)
 Oh come on now. Everyone loves a
 Southern gentleman.

JULIE
 Ahh, the perfect mix of Foghorn
 Leghorn and Colonel Sanders.

DENISE
 Aren't those the names of your
 creepy, dead-eyed little doggies?

JULIE
 No their names are ... oh my god!

MATTHEW
 I had a gerbil named oh my god!

JULIE
 Senator Jellybeans and Greg! I
 don't need to cover other people's
 famous animals when my kids can be
 stars!

MATTHEW
 You have kids?

BILLY
 (still doing the accent)
 Matthew my boy, you are as sharp as
 a bowling ball.

INT. JULIE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Julie's place is trashed -- props, costumes and food are
 everywhere. She sits on the floor with her BASSET HOUNDS.

JULIE
 I just wanted to take pretty
 pictures of you.

The dogs just sit there, half-wearing and half-eating their clown costumes.

JULIE (CONT'D)

Betrayed by my own children. This is some Mommie Dearest shit. Oh, no, I'm sorry puppers, you can't help it. You yam what you yam.

ARTHUR enters the apartment.

ARTHUR

I'm sorry I couldn't come home right away. We're dealing with a nationwide tote bag shortage and I snapped at Gaby --

JULIE

It's fine. I'm giving up. You wouldn't have made a difference, anyway. These two refuse to work.
(to the dogs)
I was gonna make you stars!

ARTHUR

Oh, Noodles, I don't think you were ready to be a stage dog mom. It can be hard to motivate someone to work when they don't want to.

JULIE

Can it?

ARTHUR

I meant the dogs.

JULIE

Did you?

ARTHUR

Forgive me, String Cheese. Seems my filter is broken today. Actually, after my outburst with Gaby, HR recommended I try therapy.

JULIE

You're forgiven, Crackers. It's been a bit of a dog day afternoon for both of us. Wait. PBS is springing for therapy?

ARTHUR

A reasonable facsimile, no bank robbery required.

(MORE)

ARTHUR (CONT'D)
It's an app on my phone where I can
chat with a therapist. Strictly
confidential.

Arthur walks over to the kitchen and starts fixing himself a
drink.

JULIE
Strictly cheap-ass. I bet it's not
even a real therapist on the other
end.

ARTHUR
Maybe not, but it's all public
television can afford -- that
filthy Downton Abbey lucre is long
gone.

JULIE
My mother says those apps are a
scam but I think that's because you
can't triple bill insurance through
them.

ARTHUR
Your mother's opinions aside, I
should probably take HR's advice.
Let me consult my regular shrink.

Arthur drinks.

JULIE
I'm beat. Time for my disco nap.

Julie retreats to the bedroom. Arthur looks around at the
mess, then types on his phone.

INT. MARILYN'S BROWNSTONE - DAY

MARILYN picks up her phone and reads a text message.

MARILYN
Snapped at your boss and your
girlfriend in the same day?

MARILYN'S PATIENT
I didn't say that. Are you texting
during my session?

MARILYN
As a matter of fact, I'm not. I am
introducing you to the latest
therapeutic technique. Here.

Marilyn hands the phone to the patient.

MARILYN (CONT'D)

It's. Uh. Simulations of another person's problems. By virtually helping them you're learning to help yourself.

MARILYN'S PATIENT

That sounds impossibly advanced, I had no idea they were using artificial intelligence in therapy.

MARILYN

What? Oh. Oh yes. Artificially intelligent. We're on the vanguard, you and I.

MARILYN'S PATIENT

I'll try it!

MARILYN

Wonderful. I'm going to go make some tea so you can concentrate.

MARILYN'S PATIENT

Tea sounds great.

MARILYN

Doesn't it? I will return by the end of your session. Don't walk off with my phone.

INT. D'S CAFE - DAY

Billy is waiting on a large group. He's getting laughs and smiles with his Southern shtick.

BILLY

I'll be back in two shakes but just give a holler if you need anything before then!

CUSTOMER

Thank you, Billy! I think we're done. This is for you.

The customer hands over a generous tip.

BILLY

Y'all are too kind! Thank you!

Billy walks back to the bar area with the tip still in his hand.

MATTHEW

Well, well, well -- our little Southern belle sure is cleaning up today.

BILLY

Yes I am. However this wad of cash is just from my last table over there. Who knew being friendly was the key to success?

DENISE

In the service industry? Literally everyone. Service with a smile?

BILLY

Doesn't sound familiar.

DENISE

This Southern gentleman garbage seemed to be just another pathetic Billy thing, but hey, if the customers are happy, I'm happy.

BILLY

Well butter my butt and call me a biscuit!

DENISE

Nope. Save that discount Dr. Phil nonsense for the customers.

Denise and Matthew watch as Billy grabs a carafe and refills coffee. He gets another big tip and a laugh. He passes a table and they call him over for a refill. More laughter.

MATTHEW

That's my table! What's that bitch think she's doing?

DENISE

Relax baby bear. That bitch is raising our Yelp score.

One customer at the table hands Billy the check and money, while the other slides something into his back pocket.

MATTHEW

That should be my tip!

Billy comes back to the bar and hands the check over to Matthew.

BILLY

This is yours. You're welcome.

MATTHEW

Right, thanks for stealing my table. This is quite a Shakespeare in Love moment.

BILLY

I am definitely the Gwyneth to your Winona, but your tip is there, girl interrupted.

MATTHEW

Fine, Goop, but I saw them put something in your back pocket.

BILLY

Oh yeah!

Billy pulls out a slip of paper wrapped around a \$20.

BILLY (CONT'D)

A phone number and a tip. Well I declare! Going South continues to be good to me.

MATTHEW

Slut.

Matthew slams the cash register shut and clips his finger, leading to an outsized freakout. Billy walks away, Denise rushes to Matthew's aid.

INT. JULIE'S APARTMENT - THE NEXT DAY

Julie sits on the couch, scrolling on her phone.

JULIE

Look at this dog.

Julie holds her phone out to her dogs.

JULIE (CONT'D)

This dog has five million followers on Instagram. This dog made his mommy rich. Don't you want to be like this dog?

The dogs don't seem to want to be like that dog.

JULIE (CONT'D)
 Uh! This cat! This beautiful cat
 has nine million followers and just
 became the face of Dior!

A faint meow comes from somewhere.

JULIE (CONT'D)
 Who meowed? If one of you can meow
 all is forgiven. That's a talent
 you can take to the bank!

Another meow and a scratching sound. Julie opens her door. A blonde Persian cat with blue eyes looks up at her. Julie picks it up and closes the door.

JULIE (CONT'D)
 What kind of monster lets a pretty
 kitty like you roam free?

Julie checks the name tag. Blondi.

JULIE (CONT'D)
 Blondi? Why does that sound
 familiar?

Julie picks up her laptop and Googles. She reads.

JULIE (CONT'D)
 Blondi the German Shepherd.
 Hitler's dog.
 (to the cat)
 You must be the Nazi neighbor's
 Aryan uber-meow-nch. How would you
 like to be a star, Blondi?

EXT. NYC SIDEWALK - DAY

Billy and Julie walk and talk on their way to brunch.

BILLY
 Almost unbelievable. People really
 do love a Southern gentleman. I am
 drowning in tip money.

JULIE
 You're just that good of an actor,
 Billy. You can play anything. That
 role is yours.

BILLY
 It just might be. Don't jinx it.

Julie and Billy pass a storefront filled with Dolly Parton costumes and wigs.

JULIE

Oh my god, the Dolly Parton auction! Can you imagine owning one of those wigs? Once this Blondi money starts rolling in, I'll be able to bid on things like that.

BILLY

Aren't you worried that Hermann Goring is going to realize you're using his cat for your personal gain?

JULIE

Nope. He's too old for social media. He's got a nine to five job and he lets his cat out almost every day.

BILLY

What a way to make a livin'.

JULIE

For him or me? I'm pretty sure he's just following orders.

Julie and Billy arrive at a newish brunch spot called Acme. It's very busy, with many people waiting to get in.

BILLY

(to Julie, in the Southern accent)

Allow me, m'am.

Billy walks up to the hostess stand.

BILLY (CONT'D)

Pardon me, darlin'. I need a small favor.

INT. ACME CAFE - MOMENTS LATER

Billy and Julie are at a great table and already have drinks. A waitress appears and drops off a basket of baked goods.

WAITRESS

This is from the hostess.

Billy turns to the hostess and smiles. She winks. The waitress walks away.

JULIE
Okay what the shit just happened?

BILLY
This is how Kentucky fried Billy
lives. The world is his bucket.

JULIE
You are human fried chicken.
Everyone loves fried chicken.

BILLY
Exactly. I'm gonna get that part.

JULIE
You're gonna get that part.

INT. MARILYN'S BROWNSTONE - DAY

Marilyn is going through her closet.

INT. JULIE'S APARTMENT - SAME

Julie is setting up a photo with Blondi. The apartment is
still trashed. She makes a call.

INTERCUT - TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

JULIE
Mom. Did you find it?

MARILYN
That's how you greet your mother?

JULIE
We spoke an hour ago. I know how
you are.

MARILYN
Things change, Julie. Did you know
I had to have all my rings re-
sized? They kept falling off. I try
to keep the weight on, but it just
won't stick.

JULIE
Wow, how do you cope with hardships
like that?

MARILYN

I took a page out of your book and began eating a midnight snack, but wouldn't you know, it just made my metabolism faster.

JULIE

So, did you find it?

MARILYN

Julie.

JULIE

Mom!

MARILYN

No, I haven't found it yet. What do you need my homecoming queen tiara for, anyway? Some ironic hipster thing where you make fun of the popular people you never were?

JULIE

No. I'm doing a social media fashion shoot with an up-and-coming animal model named Blondi.

MARILYN

Blondie like the band you liked as a girl or Blondi like the dog Hitler loved as a Nazi?

JULIE

Blondi no "e" like Hitler's dog. But it's a cat.

MARILYN

You're working with a Nazi cat.

JULIE

Don't judge me, we don't know for sure the cat is a Nazi or even a sympathizer.

MARILYN

Well, I don't like it.

JULIE

Noted. You're against der furball.

MARILYN

What ever happened with that other nice, non-Nazi animal thing you were working on?

(MORE)

MARILYN (CONT'D)
You were so excited about that
shiny Morticia Addams dress.

JULIE
Ooh, you know what, mom? Gotta go.
Talk later.

Julie hangs up as Marilyn finds the tiara.

MARILYN
But Julie I ...

Marilyn puts the tiara on and admires herself in a mirror.

MARILYN (CONT'D)
The queen has arrived.

INT. D'S CAFE - NIGHT

Billy walks up to a table.

BILLY
(in the Southern drawl)
Hi, I'm Billy. What can I do ya
for?

SOUTHERN CUSTOMER
Well first off, you can stop with
the ridiculous accent.

SOUTHERN CUSTOMER 2
Big city boy, making fun of the
hicks, huh?

BILLY
No, no, not at all. I ...

SOUTHERN CUSTOMER
Maybe we should go.

BILLY
(in his normal voice)
No! Wait. I didn't realize you were
Southern. I usually only offend
people on purpose. Is my accent
that bad?

SOUTHERN CUSTOMER 2
It ain't good.

BILLY

If I give you a free dessert, will you help me work on it? It's for a part on an Amazon show.

SOUTHERN CUSTOMER

So it's true, all New York waiters are actors!

BILLY

Uh. Yeah. Pretty much.

Billy gestures across the restaurant to Matthew, who has a napkin around his head and is performing some weepy scene for Denise, who claps enthusiastically.

SOUTHERN CUSTOMER 2

One dessert, one appetizer.

BILLY

Done.

SOUTHERN CUSTOMER

OK! For starters ...

INT. JULIE'S APARTMENT - A FEW DAYS LATER

Julie and Billy sit on her couch. The apartment is still a mess.

JULIE

So, it's the big day!

BILLY

Yep. I've been holed up in my apartment concentrating on nothing but this character for two days.

JULIE

You're ready. Go ahead, hit me with some of that Southern comfort.

BILLY

(in a more authentic
Southern accent)

Your wish is my command, sugar.

JULIE

Whoa. Wait. That's completely different. Did you hire a voice coach? You're post-Spacey. You're all the way to McConaughey.

BILLY

I had some customers who were actually from Texas. They gave me pointers. Is it too subtle?

JULIE

It's very real. Isn't Amazon looking for real?

BILLY

According to my agent, yes.

JULIE

Then you can't lose. Ah! So guess whose cat-ster race pictures are finally bringing in some sponsorship interest?

Julie opens Instagram on her phone and hands it to Billy.

BILLY

Blonde AmBitchin', nice. A hundred thousand followers!

JULIE

We've already got offers to promote belly flattening tea, protein shakes and lip gloss.

BILLY

How very Kardashian slash Jenner.

JULIE

I know, right? Not sure how a cat's endorsement of any of those things means anything and frankly my dear, I don't give a damn.

BILLY

Pretty sure that's my line. So what's with your apartment?

JULIE

Making a cat a star is messy business, but Arthur's stressed and his housekeeping game is suffering.

BILLY

If he's stressed maybe you should pick up the slack.

JULIE

I was going to, but then Arthur snapped at me and I can't have that! I'm the snap-er, not the snap-ee.

BILLY

Gotta have limits. Like me, for instance: twins, yes; triplets, no.

JULIE

Ah yes, the old rule of three. Anyway, Arthur's pouting in the bedroom for now.

BILLY

I would love to give you boyfriend advice but unfortunately it's time for me to go. And I know you'll work it out. You always do.

Julie walks Billy to the door.

JULIE

Break a leg! Break two!

INT. JULIE'S BEDROOM - DAY

Arthur has his phone in one hand and a drink in the other.

INT. MARILYN'S BROWNSTONE - SAME

Marilyn is opening a stack of mail. Her phone pings.

INTERCUT - TEXT CONVERSATION

MARILYN

(to herself)

If my patients weren't doing most of the work on this text therapy, I'd have already dropped it. Let's turn those notifications off.

Marilyn picks up the phone but stops short as she reads.

ARTHUR

My girlfriend and I had another tiff about the Nazi cat and the mess it makes of our apartment.

MARILYN

(to herself)

Arthur? What are the odds? There can't be more than fifty Nazi cats in New York. Sixty, tops.

(texting)

Is there something else worrying you? One slob cat with questionable values wouldn't send you to therapy.

ARTHUR

No, I'm doing this blasted therapy because I snapped at my boss at work.

MARILYN

Why do you think you snapped at your boss?

ARTHUR

Maybe because I'm trying to be extra cautious around my girlfriend, who recently suffered a bit of public humiliation in a mermaid dress.

MARILYN

(to herself)

Public humiliation? Oh, Julie. Of course you didn't tell me. Damned Morticia Addams dress.

(texting)

And that's why you're holding back about the cat mess?

ARTHUR

Yes. I don't want to add to her stress.

MARILYN

That's noble, but what if you snap at your boss again? Talk to her. Work it out. Compromise. You deserve to be happy at home.

ARTHUR

You're right, of course.

MARILYN

And just a little food for thought: if the Nazi cat goes away, its mess goes away, too.

ARTHUR

That seems a little diabolical for
a therapist.

MARILYN

Text therapy is different. We don't
fuck around.

INT. AUDITION ROOM - DAY

A CASTING DIRECTOR sits at a table chatting with JAN, an
actress. Billy walks in.

BILLY

Billy Epstein, here for the role of
Bo.

CASTING DIRECTOR

Wonderful. Billy, this is Jan, your
scene partner. She just accepted a
role on the show and we're
thrilled.

BILLY

Hello Jan, great to meet you -- and
congrats!

Billy holds out his hand to shake Jan's and she takes a
moment before she does. She's not smiling.

CASTING DIRECTOR

So in this scene, Bo needs to charm
the hostess at an exclusive
restaurant to get a table.

BILLY

I can do that.

CASTING DIRECTOR

And this hostess is tough. She's
seen it all.

JAN

I'm not going to make it easy on
you.

BILLY

That's what improv's all about! If
it were easy, everyone would be
funny all the time and we wouldn't
need comedy clubs.

CASTING DIRECTOR
Right. Whenever you're ready.

BILLY
(in the natural Southern
accent)
I was wondering if you could help
me, m'am.

JAN
Do you have a reservation, sir?
We're booked.

BILLY
I do not. That's why I need your
help.

JAN
My help?

BILLY
Yes. A small favor. A table for
two. I can't offer you --

CASTING DIRECTOR
OK I'm going to stop you right
there. Billy. Did your agent tell
you we were casting for a Southern
charmer?

BILLY
Yes, I've been working on my accent
and presentation all week. I am
literally wearing a bible belt
right now.

JAN
I barely heard an accent, and I
have really good ears.

BILLY
Actual, real-life human Southerners
helped me with that accent.
(a beat)
But it's fine! I have another! Let
me just --

CASTING DIRECTOR
It's not just the accent. I mean,
come on, a small favor?

JAN
What kind of dumbass asks a hostess
for a small favor?

BILLY

That is exactly what I did a few days ago to get a table at Acme!

CASTING DIRECTOR

Acme? Really?

JAN

It's a little late to be improvising a story, kid. Pro tip: always tell the hostess she's hot.

BILLY

It's real! It happened! All of it is real!

CASTING DIRECTOR

Sorry. You've got something. But this isn't what we're looking for right now. You can go.

BILLY

But --

CASTING DIRECTOR

You can go.

Billy almost says something else, but doesn't. He walks away.

JAN

Um, hi, he should have told me I'm hot.

CASTING DIRECTOR

That would have been the smart way to play it.

INT. JULIE'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Julie is walking toward her apartment, struggling with a LARGE, UNSEALED CARDBOARD BOX. The NAZI NEIGHBOR opens his door as she passes.

NAZI NEIGHBOR

Pardon me. Have you seen my Blondie?

JULIE

Blondi? Is that your girlfriend? Good for you!

NAZI NEIGHBOR

Of course not. Blondie is my cat.
She is a Persian cat. Blue eyes.
Mostly white with a little yellow
in the fur.

JULIE

You have a cat? How nice. I'm so
sorry, I haven't seen your cat, and
if you'll excuse me, this box is
awfully heavy.

NAZI NEIGHBOR

I can help.

The Nazi Neighbor reaches to help with the box but Julie
whips away.

JULIE

No! Nope, I got it. It's fine. My
apartment's right over there.

Julie starts walking again.

JULIE (CONT'D)

I'll let you know if I see Ghandi.

NAZI NEIGHBOR

Blondie.

JULIE

Blondie. Like the new wave band.

NAZI NEIGHBOR

Yes. Exactly so.

JULIE

Right.

The neighbor retreats and Julie gets to her door. She puts
the unsealed cardboard box down to unlock the door and one of
the small desk calendars of Blondie as Blonde AmBitchin' falls
out. Julie does not notice. Arthur opens the door.

ARTHUR

Corkscrew! Welcome home! Let me get
that for you.

JULIE

Thanks!

Julie walks into the apartment, leaving the box for Arthur.
He sees the calendar on the ground, picks it up and pauses.

ARTHUR

This is my chance. Forgive me,
Noodles. This is for us ... unlike
that cat, we don't have nein lives.

Arthur sneaks down the hall and drops the calendar where the Nazi Neighbor is sure to see it the next time he goes out. He heads back and takes the box into Julie's apartment, then he pulls out his phone.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

(reading his text aloud)
I believe I've solved the Nazi cat
problem. Things are looking up.
Your counsel is appreciated.

Arthur's phone makes a strange alarm sound. He stares at it.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

Out of credit? Ugh. PBS will pay
for only ten therapy texts. Yeah.
Sounds about right.

JULIE (O.S.)

What, Arthur? Hey -- do we have any
of that ice cream left?

ARTHUR

(mostly to himself)
We had goddamned better.

INT. JULIE'S APARTMENT - LATER

Julie is setting up a photo with Blondi, a sash and Marilyn's tiara. There's a knock at the door and she looks out the peephole.

BILLY

(in the broad Southern
accent)
Hello m'am. Have you accepted Jesus
Christ into your life?

JULIE

Nope, but I once nailed a guy named
Jesus, and Christ he was an
asshole.

Julie opens the door.

BILLY

Men named after religious figures
do tend to be assholes ...
(MORE)

BILLY (CONT'D)
and men who dress like religious
figures always want to cuddle,
like, far longer than necessary.

JULIE
Well thank God you got here, it's
almost Nazi quittin' time and I
need someone to hold this tiara
steady.

BILLY
I finally get to add "tiara
wrangler" to my resume.

Billy's phone beeps.

JULIE
Billy! Please! I just need a
minute.

BILLY
That's my agent's beep. I gotta
answer.
(on phone)
Hey. What? Half an hour? Well, I
can try. Yeah. Text me the address.

JULIE
Oh no, do you have to go?

BILLY
No, I need you to film me, like,
fast. That casting director
requested a last-minute video
audition of my real fake Southern
accent.

JULIE
Billy that's amazing! Yes, of
course. Do you need time to
prepare?

BILLY
I sure do, but we only have a half
hour. Will you be my scene partner?

JULIE
Of course. Aw, shit. I better let
that cat out. We'll do your beauty
queen shoot tomorrow, Blondi.

Julie opens the door a crack, and the cat leaves, then comes
right back and curls up on the couch, which Julie and Billy
do not notice as they primp Billy for the video.

BILLY
Here goes nothing.

Julie starts filming with a camera on a tripod, then walks over to Billy.

JULIE
And -- action! I love saying that.
OK. OK. Let's Go. And -- action!

BILLY
(in the broad Southern
accent)
Well hello there, darlin'. I need a
small favor.

JULIE
A favor? Do I look like the type of
girl who does favors for strangers?

A faint call can be heard from the hallway. The door opens wide.

NAZI NEIGHBOR
Blondie? Blooooooondie!

Julie walks over to the Nazi Neighbor.

JULIE
Your Blondi is not here.

NAZI NEIGHBOR
Maybe not now, but what is this?

The Nazi Neighbor has the Blonde AmBitchin' calendar.

JULIE
That is a very nice calendar. Did
you buy that at the newsstand down
the street? I think I saw them
there.

NAZI NEIGHBOR
This. Is. My. Blondie.

JULIE
Is it?

NAZI NEIGHBOR
Without a doubt. You forgot to take
the name tag off in November's
photo, see?

The Nazi Neighbor shoves the November picture in Julie's face.

JULIE

What? Me? Why would you think I'm responsible for this calendar?

The Nazi Neighbor reaches down into the almost-empty box of calendars on the floor and pulls another out.

NAZI NEIGHBOR

Because you have a box of them. You cannot profit off of my Blondie.

JULIE

Who says I'm profiting?

The Nazi Neighbor pulls out his phone.

NAZI NEIGHBOR

Blonde AmBitchin' on Instagram.
Five hundred thousand followers.
Tea ads.

JULIE

Shit. I knew I shouldn't have listed Instagram on the calendars.
Damned cross-promotion!

BILLY

Um, I'm sorry, but we're right in the middle of something. Can you sort this out later? My career sort of depends on it.

Just then, the cat jumps off the couch and moves right to where Billy is. The Nazi Neighbor walks over and picks the cat up, ending up in the frame of the still-filming video.

NAZI NEIGHBOR

This is my Blondie.

The cat yawns or something adorable.

JULIE

OK, well, I might have used another man's cat for my own personal gain but who names a cat after Hitler's dog?

NAZI NEIGHBOR

Hitler's dog? No. Blondie. Deborah Harry? Rapture? The Tide is High?

BILLY

The cat is named after a band?

NAZI NEIGHBOR

Yes. I saw them at Max's Kansas City before you were born.

JULIE

But Blondie has an "e" at the end.

NAZI NEIGHBOR

The tag company messed up. They're sending a new one. This is a blonde Persian cat. Blondie.

BILLY

That makes a lot of sense, actually. Color me your color, baby.

NAZI NEIGHBOR

Blondie has a grooming appointment. We are going. This is not over.

JULIE

Of course it isn't.

(a beat)

Oooh may I suggest one of those cute lion's tail haircuts? Probably not.

The Nazi Neighbor walks out, stopping to grab the box of calendars as he leaves.

EXT. NEW YORK CITY STREET - DAY

Julie and Billy walk and talk.

JULIE

So, yeah, Blondie still comes over to visit the dogs, but any picture I take of her I have to surrender to my neighbor, who now gets all of Blonde AmBitchin's profits.

BILLY

At least he didn't sue you or something.

JULIE

Sue me for what? Pussy grabbing?

BILLY
Well not that, obviously.

JULIE
He actually let me keep everything
I'd made so far because I started
Blondie on her way. She has two
million followers now.

BILLY
Incredible. But I'm sorry you lost
your kitty.

JULIE
It's fine. I don't want to make
some Persian cat famous. I want to
make me famous. And not infamous
for falling on my ass at a dog
show.

BILLY
Eh, no one remembers that anymore.

JULIE
Thankfully.

BILLY
You know, Matthew and Denise were
so inspired by Blondie's story,
they started an Instagram account
of their mommy/son photo shoots.

JULIE
Why keep those private, when they
can share them with the world?

BILLY
They already have close to a
million followers.

JULIE
Are you fucking kidding me?

Billy's phone makes the agent ring.

BILLY
My agent. Hello? Yeah. Really?
That's great! Thanks. I will.

JULIE
You got the part?

BILLY
A part. A small one.

JULIE

I'm sorry we had to send in the video with my Nazi neighbor and Blondie.

BILLY

(in realistic Southern drawl)

It's alright, alright, alright!

(in regular voice)

They liked my chemistry with Blondie -- and Blondie got a big part.

JULIE

That darn cat! And are you still using your down-home Southern charm at D's Cafe?

BILLY

Nah. I know I can do it in a pinch, but I'd rather the clientele hate me on my own merits. I don't want to be a good waiter, I want to be a good actor. Or at least a working one.

JULIE

And now you sort of are!

BILLY

Can't quit my day job.

JULIE

But still!

Both Julie and Billy's phones ping. It's a text with a picture of Matthew and Denise from one of their mommy/son photo shoots. They're wearing Dolly Parton wigs. The caption reads "\$\$\$\$\$\$."

BILLY

They just use your mind and they'll never give you credit.

JULIE

It's enough to drive you crazy if you let it.

END.