

FADE IN:

INT. TARA AND NATALIE'S APARTMENT - MORNING

The first impression, a college dorm room. But it's not but just another messy and cheap two bedroom apartment with lots of fruit on the well-worn kitchen table.

TARA JOHNSON, 23, short hair, looks at her camera while MARY GOLDBAR, 20, dressed in goth, checks her makeup using her cell phone.

Tara's roommate, NATALIE LAMP, 23, plump wearing an oversized T-shirt with food stains, enters from an unseen bathroom.

NATALIE

That's the last time I have a hot pocket, sardines and a diet Dr. Pepper.

(burps)

Who are you? And what did you do with my roommate? My roommate hates other humans.

Mary gives a smile of acknowledgement. Tara gives her a look of disgust but then thinks.

TARA

Any leftover?

NATALIE

A little but no more Cheetos to add to it.

(to Mary)

Mary, are goth girls supposed to smile?

MARY

Why not?

NATALIE

Because you're goth?

MARY

It's goth right now to add to my portfolio. Next is anime for the comic-con convention. And it's free.

NATALIE

So Tara, I'm covering rent again? Since the travel photographer wannabe hates people.

TARA

Just half. But I've got dinner for the next two weeks and priceless additions to my portfolio. Thanks to this social media star, Mary.

(to Mary)

Got the shot. You can change.

Mary walks off and reaches for an apple --

TARA/NATALIE

Don't.

Mary stands frozen.

TARA

They're plastic.

MARY

That explains it. You two don't seem the health conscious types.

She leaves.

TARA

Natalie, was that an insult or compliment?

NATALIE

You know you have to charge some day. This is why we left Iowa to pursue our dreams.

TARA

Says the person who has two jobs.

NATALIE

What's wrong with working as a valet to unappreciative, rich snobs at an overpriced restaurant and a being a web designer to pay off the student loans and survive?

TARA

Add them up and what do you get?

NATALIE

Just me and you thanking god we don't live in a one-bedroom apartment with more wax fruit.

TARA

Better than taking pictures of animals to enhance your portfolio to be a travel photographer.

MARY (O.S.)

Can you take pictures of my cats?

TARA

No!

NATALIE

Shocking she has cats.

Tara snaps a picture of a reluctant Natalie.

TARA

If this one doesn't sell, I will look for a job and not just with a magazine or ad agency. And if worse comes to worse, I'll get a job at the pharmacy taking passport photos. And... I still have six months before I promised to move back.

NATALIE

And back to photo graphing cows and cron fields. Speaking of which, job time. You up for lunch tomorrow?

TARA

All I can afford at your restaurant is water and baskets of bread.

NATALIE

Still have to tip.

Mary reenters wearing a Japanese anime costume.

NATALIE (CONT'D)

Maybe all you can afford is just water.

(to Mary)

Hey Mary, Tara will take pics of your cats for a fee.

Tara glares at Natalie as Mary jumps for joy.

LATER

Several camera flashes as Mary, now dressed in steam-punk poses.

MARY

Did you get my good side?

TARA

Do you have a bad side?

MARY

I don't understand Natalie was saying  
how you hate people.

TARA

I'm just not comfortable shooting  
portraits or head shots.

MARY

But animals?

TARA

Give them a treat and they'll do  
anything.

Tara hands Mary a parasol.

MARY

Me like. Wait a sec...

Too late. More flashes as Mary shrugs and now poses with the  
open parasol.

MARY (CONT'D)

Are you single?

TARA

I hate being set up more than I hate  
people.

MARY

I am in the presence of a career  
determined woman who needs a real  
banana.

Tara glares as Mary laughs at her own insult.

MARY (CONT'D)

Should I beg for the next pose?

Only the shutter of the camera can be heard.

LATER

Tara sits at a chair and stares at an open magazine as Mary,  
now dressed as Harley Quinn, reenters with a paper bag in  
her hand.

MARY

Two salads and some real fruit for  
lunch. No charge as agreed upon.  
Amazing what you can get when you're  
dressed like a villain.

TARA

Yes, it's your costume.

Mary sits down and they eat.

MARY

My boss is waiting if you still want the job at the pharmacy store.

TARA

From eating ramen to canned soup? Such an incentive and do you think I could work in your section?

MARY

How about the photo counter?

TARA

I am qualified but I do appreciate it. Beauty section is also not my specialty and that's why I'm behind the camera and you're in front of it.

MARY

You gotta take risks, Tara.  
(notices magazine)  
Is that the new celebrity magazine?

TARA

Pictures are great.

MARY

If you try, you can date him.

TARA

Who?

INSERT MAGAZINE PHOTO

MATT TOKEN, 30, gorgeous as if Chris Hemsworth and Brad Pitt got together and had a baby.

BACK TO APARTMENT

MARY

You're kidding me, right? Like, he's an a-list actor, model and my baby making machine?

(off look)

That's Matt Token! He was just in that new movie? The one where the girl falls in love with him and then he falls in love with her? All the while being chased by rabid penguins?

Tara gives a blank face. Still no clue.

MARY (CONT'D)

He's sooo great. Discovered while he was waiting tables by a producer-- the same producer that he was going to have an audition with the next day! What a lucky break! From making minimum wage to commanding five-million dollar paychecks... a movie! And dating co-star, Sherri Keeney... omg! They broke up!

TARA

Omg! People still use that! And your chances went down to one in ten million.

MARY

C'mon Tara, wouldn't you want to "date" him for at least one --

TARA

I can see it now. The rich and famous, Matt Token, in love with me-- a loser.

MARY

Look, if you don't want to work with me and still get experience, my buddy Chad says his boss, Bob might be hiring photogs.

TARA

For what?

MARY

Not sure but I know it's taking pics of people. Maybe for ads?

TARA

I hate people?

MARY

Don't ads and travel mags have pictures of people? Or... you can continue taking photos of me. Need some boudoir pics --

Tara frantically waves her hand as in no way in hell.

MARY (CONT'D)

Texting you his number now.

TARA

I'm charging you next time.

MARY

When you shoot my wedding to Matt  
Token.

Mary slow dances with the magazine as Tara laughs.

EXT. COMMUNITY PARK - AFTERNOON

Away from the small crowd watching a kids soccer game, Matt and DAVID ARCH, 35, balding and dressed casually, sitting in folding chairs under the shade of a tree and eating lunch out of food storage containers.

Matt wears a ball cap, t-shirt and cargo shorts leaving no doubt trying to be incognito.

DAVID

This is really good. You really  
made this?

MATT

I was in culinary school, remember?

DAVID

How about you cook me a five course  
meal when you sign the next sequel?

Matt stops mid-chew.

MATT

How about a historical period romance?  
A soldier struggling with PTSD --

DAVID

How about pay your dues, build the  
bank account and then take the indie  
roles?

MATT

I just want to play what you have,  
David. Loving partner, kids --

A KID screams as her hair gets pulled from behind.

DAVID

Seriously?! How is that a penalty?  
(swallows)  
Is that why we're here?

MATT

We're watching your kid play. He's  
really good.

DAVID

She. Who coincidentally is a teammate of the child of a producer doing a hot historical romance project. And like her mom, has anger issues.

MATT

So we accidentally run into her and you do your magic and I be myself --

DAVID

Okay, I'm sorry. Again. You and Sherri were good for publicity and I honestly thought there would also be chemistry off screen.

(swallows)

You're now questioning not just your life choices but who you really are. But stalking producers to get what you really want is not the way. And using her kid?

The whistle is blown several times as KID 2 picks up the ball and runs with it.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Good job, honey! Seriously Matt, need that money for college. No way she's going on an athletic scholarship.

MATT

I still want the domestic life. Don't tell me you're not happy.

DAVID

I'm here with you on a Saturday afternoon screaming at my kid. I'd rather be closer but... you are a good babysitter. Just let me do the magic my way, okay? Maybe a guest role on a t.v drama first.

MATT

Fine. No dessert for you.

DAVID

Worst client ever --

MATT

(off look)

Paparazzi?

Matt use his sunglasses as a mirror to see a group of PHOTOGRAPHERS quickly approaching.



DAVID

Dam photogs. Somebody must have tipped them off. Bet you it's the ref looking for extra cash.

(rising)

Remember this when you meet your true love. Happy husband, happy life and can't bribe colleges anymore.

(walking away)

There's a side street alley behind that Filipino food truck. I'll be the politician and delay.

MAYT

You know you're more than my agent, right?

DAVID

So that's why I get free meals. Now go. And now you're baby sitting for me next Friday. Call it practice for the next role.

A brief hug before Matt puts back his sunglasses and sprints away as the photographers yell at him.

PHOTOGRAPHER1

Matt! Where's Sherri? How are you doing? Is she pregnant? Are you really gay?

EXT. STREET - AFTERNOON

Tara walks along the street taking photos of buildings, people and signs. There is joy all over pursuing her passion.

Tara notices across the street, a pregnant WOMAN(Claire Dons), bright yellow dress, texting, standing in front of a glass enclosed building. Quickly Tara holds up her camera.

TARA

C'mon. Turn for me.

Claire turns- but stops.

TARA (CONT'D)

Just a little more. Be that contrast. Be the contrast.

Claire turns and takes a step forward.

TARA (CONT'D)

Thank you.

She presses the shutter and takes several shots --

Claire looks up seemingly at Tara. Tara turns the camera away and up.

TARA (CONT'D)  
No lawsuit. No release. Just a  
tourist taking pictures of the sky.

Claire watches Tara for a brief second and continues walking. Tara spins and takes more shots of Claire.

TARA (CONT'D)  
Oh yeah. Oh yeah. Got the shot.  
I'm dancing. I'm dancing.

A stranger walking by notices.

STRANGER  
Here's five bucks. Please don't and  
take lessons.

TARA  
I'll take it.  
(thinks)  
Hey, I'm a professional photographer.

The stranger shakes her head and walks on.

EXT. COMMUNITY PARK - LATER

It's the same park but now the food trucks are gone and few people are cleaning up after the soccer game.

Tara sits on a bench near where David and Matt sat earlier, holding an energy drink.

BOB GAINLY, 36, short, slick back hair, dressed if as if he's stuck in the eighties, speaks with an Australian accent. He approaches and sits on the opposite end of the bench and stares straight ahead.

BOB  
Are you the one with the can?

Tara holds up the energy drink. No doubt she doesn't want to play this game.

TARA  
Are you the man?

Bob is giddy.

BOB  
With the van.

Tara sighs.

TARA  
The one who likes to tan?

Bob spins with a big smile.

BOB  
Now wasn't that exciting? Oh how I loved Saturday morning televisions shows when I was a kid.

TARA  
Yes, I love meeting strangers in parks.

BOB  
Stranger no more. Bob Gainly. Owner of Star Light Photos. Friend of friend of Chad?

Bob shakes Tara's limp hand.

TARA  
Tara Johnson. My friend, Mary said you were hiring.

BOB  
I am. In fact, that's why I asked to meet here. So short I was taking pics myself.

TARA  
I just want to be honest. I'm a quick learner and willing to learn. Even though I don't have much experience, my passion is taking pics. And I would to shoot sports --

BOB  
Slow down. Slow down. Maybe I should take the energy drink.

Tara takes out her camera.

TARA  
I'm so sorry. It's just when I start talking about photography, I'm a little excitable. Here's some street shots I took earlier.

Bob takes the camera and scrolls through the pictures. His jaw drops seeing the images of Claire Dons.

TARA (CONT'D)  
That one is just a shot of the building. Love the contrast.

BOB  
It's not the building I like.

TARA  
Sorry, I don't think she was happy when I took her picture. So that would explain the hand gesture.

Bob touches the screen until it's at max zoom.

BOB  
Is it? It can be... can i? It is! That woman is... Claire Dons!

TARA  
Sorry. I'm not good with people so I didn't get a model release --

BOB  
There was a rumor that she either gained a huge amount of weight or...

TARA  
Little harsh to call some who is pregnant.

BOB  
Knocked up by a crew member from her last pic. And this may be the... the very first picture and confirmation of it!

Bob smiles big at Tara.

BOB (CONT'D)  
You took this shot?

TARA  
It was of the building. She was a nice contrast.

BOB  
Quite a contrast for both color and size.  
(laughs to himself)  
This is Claire Dons. The actress.

Tara takes the camera back and looks at the screen.

TARA  
I didn't even realize it.

BOB  
Your hired.  
(MORE)

BOB (CONT'D)

I'll also give you the latest equipment... high end everything in exchange for this photo.

TARA

I don't know what to say.

BOB

Say, I'll start in a couple of days.

TARA

Wow. I've never taken action or sports shots. But I'm willing to learn.

Bob looks at her and breaks out in laughter.

BOB

Sports? Oh no. It'll still be contract work with a salary to cover expenses plus money per picture. But you'll be covering the stars-celebs that is.

Tara is in shock.

TARA

As in a paparazzo?

BOB

I like to think of it as a freelance journalist working in the entertainment industry. That's why I was here. Heard Matt Token was here along with a big shot producer who is also recently divorced.

TARA

But I'll be stalking them?

Bob rises.

BOB

I gotta go. Call me and we'll talk more.

TARA

I'm not sure.

BOB

About what? Chad said you needed the money and you said you needed to the experience. What more do you need to think about?

Tara opens her mouth --

BOB (CONT'D)  
Or you can continue to freelance  
with that ten-year old equipment.

Tara reluctantly nods as Bob walks off.

BOB (CONT'D)  
Talk to you later. The man with the  
van now needs go to the bathroom.  
Yeah I know that didn't rhyme.

Tara looks off into the distance.

TARA  
A deal with the devil would make  
this decision a lot easier.