

FF Comedy

2 Female

ACT ONE

SCENE A

INT. OUTER OFFICE/DANNY AND NOAH'S OFFICE - MORNING (DAY 1)
(DANNY, NOAH, MELANIE, TESSA)

AN OFFICE. TWO DESKS. ONE OF THEM IS EMPTY. AT THE OTHER SITS MELANIE, 33, A HOT GIRL WHOSE FATHER IGNORED HER JUST ENOUGH SO THAT SHE DOESN'T REALIZE SHE'S A HOT GIRL. MELANIE IS MUCH BETTER AT ORGANIZING OTHER PEOPLE'S LIVES THAN HER OWN. SHE'S IN THE MIDDLE OF AN INTERVIEW WITH TESSA. TESSA IS 23, PRETTY, ENTITLED, RAISED IN L.A.

TESSA

...and I'm like, "You have to be nice, Brandon. You fat skank. You smoker. You can't do this to my best friend. I know you had your ears reduced and pinned, you Schnauzer. She's your girlfriend, okay? So you are getting your dad's plane and we are going to visit her in rehab. And if you sweat me on this, so help me dog, I will go straight to your MySpace page and post all that weird stuff you make Jordana do to you with coffee!" (THEN) So we went. And Jordana hasn't barfed for ninety days. (PLEASED) La-la-la.

MELANIE

Yeah, um... Let me repeat the question: Why do you feel qualified to be an assistant?

TESSA

I'm a people person.

MELANIE

(STARES AT HER; THEN) Listen, Tessa --

SFX: CELL PHONE RINGS.

Start

MELANIE (CONT'D)

One sec...

MELANIE RUMMAGES THROUGH HER PURSE UNTIL SHE FINDS HER PHONE. SHE ANSWERS QUICKLY AND WITH GREAT ANTICIPATION.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

(INTO PHONE) Hello...? Yes... yes...

(THEN, DISAPPOINTED) Oh. O-kay.

Well, then give her a flea bath.

Thanks. Don't hurt her. I'll pick her up after work.

TESSA

Who did you think that was gonna be?

MELANIE

What?

TESSA

You were all nervous. You totally thought that was going to be someone else. Who? A guy? Are you pregnant? You are. Don't wig. My friend, Adrie, is a baby mama and she totally loves it. But she has, like, a gazillion nannies.

MELANIE

I was not waiting for a guy to call, and baby mama-hood is not in my near future.

TESSA

Then who was it?

MELANIE

Um, it was your business. And they called to say "none of... (REALIZES

(MORE)

MELANIE (CONT'D)

THIS JOKE IS A BUST; SHE WANTS TO DIE)
your business..."

TESSA

Good one. No, seriously, who did you
think it was going to be?

MELANIE

Why on earth do you think I would tell
you something like that?

TESSA

It's the weirdest thing. People just
do.

MELANIE

Well, not this person.

THEY STARE AT EACH OTHER FOR A LONG BEAT.

TESSA

Go on.

MELANIE

Here's the thing: I thought that was
going to be a job offer. Nobody knows
this, but I'm not really hiring a
second assistant. I'm hiring someone
to replace me.

TESSA

Why? Do you suck at this job?

MELANIE

I'm flawless at it. That's the
problem. I don't want to be a
flawless, unmarried assistant.
Because in five years I'll be a
flawless, unmarried assistant who's
five years older.

TESSA

How old are you now?

MELANIE

Why the hell would I tell you something like that? (BEAT; THEN) Thirty-three. (THEN) Listen, Tessa, you seem like a really --

TESSA

Oh, no, don't. No. You're not allowed to.

MELANIE

What?

TESSA

You can't dump me yet.

MELANIE

I'm not dumping you, this is a job inter--

TESSA

Yes, you are, you totally are. Look, I know I got this interview because of my dad, but I'd be good here. Please don't dump me yet. You don't even know me.

MELANIE

(SIZING HER UP) Have you ever even been dumped?

TESSA

I'm told it's a bummer.

MELANIE

No, my eighteen-year-old cat crapping on my pillow is a bummer. Getting

(MORE)

MELANIE (CONT'D)

dumped by someone you see a future with is soul crushing. Because it's personal. It's someone saying, "I'm good enough for you, but you're not good enough for me." And the difference here is... is... it's just... (THEN, REALIZING IT'S THE SAME) What do you know about the job?

TESSA

I'd be working for the guys in that office.

MELANIE

And what do you know about the guys in that office?

TESSA

They wrote a really famous book.

MELANIE .

Actually they wrote three really famous books.

TESSA

What are they about?

MELANIE

Are you kidding me?

TESSA

I read different kinds of books.

MELANIE

Called "magazines?"

TESSA

(IMPRESSED) Okay, who totally gets me?

MELANIE

(SIGHS; THEN) They wrote a fantasy trilogy called The Journey of the Yeleds. It's about two boys who journey to a mythical -- Why am I telling you this? Read the books. Like everybody else in America.

TESSA

I promise I'll read them. I'll buy the CD today.

MELANIE

What else do you know about them?

TESSA

They're gay.

MELANIE

Actually, just one of them is gay.

TESSA

The cute one?

MELANIE

Wrong question. They're vain and insecure, so they're both cute. Get it? (THEN) This office is purely personality-driven. I mean, you have to be able to use the computer and answer phones, but pretty much everything is about how you handle the boys. We call them "the boys." It's not a pervy thing. It's just a thing thing.

TESSA

("THONG SONG") Thing-tha-thing-thing
thing. (THEN) Remember that song?

TESSA / MELANIE

From junior high? / From college?

MELANIE (CONT'D)

Anyway, writers are weird and these
two are no exception. They've known
each other since they were kids. They
make up words, they have weird
bathroom things, and they often come
to work wearing the same outfit. This
is something you never mention when it
occurs. It's very upsetting for the
gay one.

TESSA

Do you know "gay" used to mean happy?

MELANIE

Every day at eleven forty-five you
have to ask them what they want for
lunch. They'll act like they're
deciding, but it's always going to be
the same thing: Danny gets tuna on
wheat toast, Noah gets chicken salad
on wheat toast. When you bring it to
them, they're going to offer each
other a half of their sandwich. This
seems to please them.

TESSA

But wouldn't it be better to, like, make the switch before you give it to them?

MELANIE

Never make the switch yourself! These guys need rituals to convince themselves that they're living authentic lives.

TESSA

So, what, are they, like, exactly alike?

MELANIE

They're nothing alike. Danny is a guy's guy. Into sports, puts a joke wherever a feeling should be, reads a lot, kind of unreachable, but every now and then he shows you that he's...

IF SHE REALLY THOUGHT ABOUT IT, SHE'D SAY "PERFECT FOR ME,"
BUT SHE DOESN'T THINK ABOUT IT.

TESSA

What about the other one?

MELANIE

Noah is a piece of work. Not the easiest man to work for. Doesn't really get the whole you're-at-home-and-the-work-day-has-ended thing. Never met a boundary he didn't cross. Confrontation is his friend. He's a bitch. He's too emotional. He's hyper-critical --

TESSA

You don't like him, huh?

MELANIE

He's my best friend. I've known him my whole life. His mom was my dad's secretary. Anyway, they roll in at the crack of 10:30. Or Danny does. Noah's always late. Danny's always annoyed about it. Noah lies about why he's late. Danny accepts. The day begins.

TESSA

Rituals.

MELANIE

Exactly.

TESSA

So do they just spend most of the day writing?

MELANIE

(LAUGHING DERISIVELY) Y-y-yeah.
That's what they do. Incredible discipline. Like eye surgeons.

DANNY ENTERS. HE'S IN HIS MID-THIRTIES, WEARING GOOD, WELL-WORN JEANS, A BLUE V-NECK SWEATER OVER A CRISP WHITE T-SHIRT.

DANNY

You know what's a really bad combination? Mint body scrub and your balls. (THEN, NOTICING TESSA) Oh. Hello.

MELANIE

Tessa, this is Danny. Danny, Tessa.