

EXT. SASHA & PENNY'S - DECK - DAY

JENNA

What the hell do you mean "Smith doesn't know she's sick" - that's insane. She has to tell him.

JENNA is on her feet, hot faced. A gray gloom presses on the horizon behind her. Looks like rain.

DEE, MAX, and REX sit around a table resplendent with an HP Cafe feast. They all look anywhere but at -

PENNY. Who keeps complete composure.

PENNY

She absolutely does not.

JENNA

You can't be serious.

PENNY

Didn't you cheat on him?

JENNA

No, Penny. I didn't cheat on him. We were never a couple.

PENNY

Oh please. You knew one hundred percent proof positive that he didn't see things that way.

DEE

Come on, Jenna. Sit down.

Jenna stands for a few seconds more for an emphasis that has entirely no effect on Penny.

PENNY

Why are you losing your shit? They've only been dating a month or so.

JENNA

You know that dude as well as I do. He's probably written like three different versions of his wedding vows. He falls in love. It's pretty much his only hobby.

PENNY

That doesn't change the fact that it's her illness. Hers, lady. All the decisions are hers.

JENNA

Guys, back me up. You can't keep something that huge from someone you're in a relationship with, right? You just can't do it.

Penny looks at her pals, confident that they'll disagree with Jenna. Their shuffling around shows her they don't.

She looks at Max.

MAX

Sorry. This is above my pay grade. I just make the snacks tasty as Eff.

She looks at Rex.

REX

Yeah, I dunno. They spend a lot of time together. It's not like a food allergy or being a secret Yankee's fan. It's kind of a big deal.

She looks at Dee. Dee squirms the most.

DEE

Look. I do think she should tell him. Her treatment is a big, huge part of her life right now. Keeping that from him feels like a pretty big lie.

PENNY

You're all nuts.

EXT. SMITH'S HOUSE - BACKYARD - DAY

Sasha fixes her makeup in a compact. She sits at a small table with a festive table cloth.

DEE (V.O.)

I'm not saying someone else should tell him. Just that she should.

JENNA (V.O.)

I'll damn well tell him if she doesn't. He has a right to know.

Smith approaches with a covered pot. He makes a great flourish when he whips the towel off & puts it on the table.

PENNY (V.O.)

Lady, I will slap the eyebrows right off your face if you so much as think about saying anything. This is the happiest she's been since she got diagnosed. I won't let you do a damn thing to take that away from her. And christ. You shouldn't want to.

Sasha peeks in the pot with as much of a flourish.

SASHA

It's soup.

SMITH

My gal likes soup, my gal gets soup. You eat a lot of soup.

SASHA

Sigh.

He serves them. She holds her hand up after a single ladle.

SMITH

So, I was thinking.

SASHA

Is that what that creaking sound was?

SMITH

Let's go away for the weekend. We could go camping -

Her face makes an "I smelled something bad" face.

SMITH

- or. Or. We could hop in the car and drive to a city we haven't been to and just see what happens.

She leans over the soup on the table and holds his face in both her hands.

SASHA

You.

They kiss. She slides back to her side of the table.

SASHA

But no, I can't do that.

SMITH

Too soon?

SASHA

For the heart? No way, mister. But for the wallet and the deadlines and the rent and such? Yes.

SMITH

You know what's great? We got this thing called time. And there's plenty of it. Dig in.

He gets in to the soup. Sasha droops a little when he says the word "time."

SASHA

Hey.

He looks up at her. She smiles. Kind of maudlin.

SASHA

Sooner rather than later, OK?

SMITH

Sho nuff.

SLURP. Man. Dude likes his soup.

INT. SASHA & PENNY'S - KITCHEN - DAY

Penny fumbles with the dishes in the sink. The water runs. A dish is in her hand. But nothing gets clean.

PENNY

I can't be the crazy person here. I feel like I am, but I know I'm not.

Max leans on the counter, eyes on the sink.

MAX

I dunno. You did threaten to smack Jenna in the face.

PENNY

Am I crazy?

MAX

I don't know. And I don't mean "I don't want to weigh in." I mean I really don't know. Big stuff.

Penny lets a glass filled with soapy water overflow. She watches the water pour over her hand.

PENNY

Sasha's the one that's sick. This is all happening to her. It's not happening to me or Smith or fucking Jenna or anyone else. Just her.

She puts the glass down but leaves the water running. Her posture sags away from the sink.

She leans on the opposite counter. Max slips in and takes over doing the dishes.

PENNY

I mean. She might fucking die.

Max turns off the water and turns around. They face each other, leaning on opposite counters.

Max looking her in the face is about all the comfort she can muster. And it's more than enough for Penny.

PENNY

The worst part?

EXT. OUTPATIENT CLINIC - DAY

Sasha - hair pulled back, baseball cap, huge sunglasses - creeps to the door to a small clinic.

Her movements are furtive. She looks over her shoulder, she looks down the block.

PENNY (V.O.)

I know why she hasn't told him.

She slips in to the clinic.

INT. OUTPATIENT CLINIC - TREATMENT ROOM - CORNER - DAY

Sasha sits in the far corner of a room filled with chairs. An IV DRIP DRIP DRIPS chemo into her veins.

She pulls the hat way down over her face and tries not to look at anyone else in the room.

The STERILE HUM of machines is the only thing that breaks the silence. Sasha takes out her phone.

She looks through pictures of food. Great big feasts of amazingly sleazy food. Bacon. Pork shoulder. Grits.

A TEXT pops up from Smith. Something dopey-cute & romantic. She gets in a more comfortable position and reads it.

INT. CAR - DAY

Penny sits in the backseat of an Uber. She studies a script on her lap. Her eyes dart to her phone at regular intervals.

It rings. A picture of Sasha fills the screen. The phone is at Penny's ear before the first ring is done.

PENNY

Yo yo yo.

SASHA (V.O.)

Yo yo.

PENNY

Yo.

EXT. FIGUEROA AVENUE - DAY

Sasha walks down the street with a spring in her step.

SASHA

I'm on my way home. You want I should pick you up something I can watch you eat? Mega super duper burger? Gross fast food? Pork belly Kale salad?

PENNY (V.O.)

It's crafty for me tonight, Lady. Night shoot.

SASHA

(stage whisper)

Night...shoot.

PENNY (V.O.)

You on Fig?

SASHA

Yeah. I don't want to go home yet. I'm all amped up from the steroid. I think I'll even walk up the hill.

INT. CAR - DAY

Penny watches Figueroa Avenue speed by the windows.

PENNY
I'm in a car heading down to the
park. I must have just missed you.

SASHA (V.O.)
Wave anyway.

Penny waves out the window.

SASHA (V.O.)
You did it, didn't you?

PENNY
Yeah.

SASHA (V.O.)
Idiot.

PENNY
How are you feeling?

SASHA (V.O.)
Starving. But I'll live. Probably.

Penny winces.

EXT. FIGUEROA AVENUE - DAY

Sasha stops to look in the window of a clothing store.

SASHA
How are you fixed for shoes these
days? Can I buy you a pair of shoes?

PENNY (V.O.)
Knock yourself out.

SASHA
Terrific.

PENNY (V.O.)
OK, I'm pulling up now. See you
later?

SASHA
Yes please. Come get in bed with me.

She walks into the store.

INT. CAR - DAY

The car stops at the corner of Sycamore Grove Park. Penny opens the door but doesn't get out.

PENNY
Will do. Love you.

SASHA (V.O.)
Love you too. Go act the shit out of
some acting. Bye.

Penny draws a deep breath.

EXT. SASHA & PENNY'S - FRONT STEPS - EVENING

The light swirls sunset yellows and blues in the sky. Sasha walks up a steep incline, a whistle on her lips.

She stops a few feet away from her front steps. Jenna sits there, a harsh expression on her face.

The harshness fades to a sympathetic resolve. Sasha senses this isn't a friendly How Do? Her steps slow.

Jenna gets to her feet.

INT. SASHA & PENNY'S - LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Penny sits on the couch in a cozy morning outfit. Glasses. Hair pulled back. Jammy-Jams of some kind.

She glances at Sasha's closed bedroom door. Her hand lifts her phone a few inches away from her mouth.

She talks loudly, so Sasha can hear her.

PENNY
Siri, call Sasha.

BRING BRING. She puts the call on speaker.

INT. SASHA & PENNY'S - SASHA'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Sasha lies spread eagle on top of the covers. She stares at the ceiling. She hears Penny talk to her phone.

She answers hers when the call comes through.

SASHA
 (totally normal)
 Hey. What's up?

Penny's voice is audible through both the phone & the door.

PENNY (V.O.)
 You've been hiding in there for like three days. Any plans to come fool around with me out here in the real world or should I start looking for a new roommate? It says very specifically in our lease that fooling around is required. At least twice a week.

SASHA
 Is it cool if you back off the goofy shit for a second? I really don't feel well.

STEP. STEP. STEP. CREAK. Penny lets herself into the room.

PENNY
 No, it's not cool.

SASHA
 Penny. I'm not in the mood.

Penny sits on the edge of the bed.

PENNY
 I know you're not. That's the problem. You always find a way to be in the mood. Spill.

Sasha rolls on her side.

SASHA
 I broke up with Smith, OK?

EXT. SMITH'S HOUSE - BACKYARD - DAY

Smith sits on the steps of his back porch, sipping a beer. He FLINGS the bottle cap across the yard.

Jenna sits a couple of steps above him.

JENNA
 She didn't say why or anything?

SMITH

Nah.

He farts around on his phone in between sips.

JENNA

And that's just cool with you?

SMITH

What am I supposed to do? Dumped is dumped, right?

She stares at his back. His shoulders slump. He swipes through things on his phone without looking at them.

JENNA

Since when does "dumped" mean anything to you? You didn't let me dump you, and we were barely even dating.

SMITH

Sasha's different. All I want is what she wants, and what she wants is not to be together. Pushing the issue doesn't seem fair.

JENNA

But what if there's a reason that's not really a reason and you can figure it all out?

SMITH

Jenna. Just. Let it be.

He opens a game with extremely annoying sound effects on his phone. A guilty expression crosses her face.

The guilt turns to anger. More at herself than anything else, but she's not even completely aware of that fact.

She hops down the steps and snatches his phone.

SMITH

Hey. Gimme.

JENNA

Not until you do something. Write a love letter or build a sculpture or hire a plane to sky write Beatle's lyrics over her house. Any kind of over the top Smith thing.

SMITH

Please give me my phone.

He holds his hand out but doesn't move. He doesn't seem to care one way or the other if he gets the phone back.

Her fists clench. She runs halfway across his yard and chucks the phone as hard as she can over the fence.

It disappears in the driveway of the next house over. When she turns around Smith is on his way inside.

Her eyes fill with tears.

INT. SASHA & PENNY'S - SASHA'S BEDROOM - LATER

Sasha cries on Penny's chest. Penny rubs her back and plays with her hair.

SASHA

I just - Penny, I'm so embarrassed and ashamed.

PENNY

Of what, being sick?

Sasha nods her head. Penny lifts her head.

PENNY

Baby, that is the stupidest thing I've ever heard in my life.

SASHA

Hey. Wait. What? You're supposed to be comforting me here, lady.

PENNY

You have nothing to be ashamed of. You have nothing to be embarrassed of. You know that, don't you?

Sasha shakes her head.

SASHA

I'm so weak and I puke all the time and I can smell it on myself. You know? All the time. I can smell the rot and the...the medicine.

PENNY

That's your body. That's your cells. It's not who you are. It's not Sasha.

SASHA

But what if I never get any better
and this is just what my life is? I
can't ask someone to be part of that.
It's so ugly. And it's not fair.

PENNY

It's not fair for you to decide that
for him. Just like it's not fair of
anyone else to tell him you're sick
if that's not what you want.

SASHA

Jenna said -

Penny sits bolt upright.

PENNY

Jenna what now?

INT. SMITH'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Smith lies on his back and stares at the ceiling. A common
trope these days, apparently.

He sits up and looks around the dark room. The only light
comes from the street outside.

He picks up a few things from his bedside stand. Two movie
ticket stubs. A photo-booth strip of he and Sasha.

A small bag of unopened oyster crackers. A folded note. The
top of the note reads "Smith, Dear." He opens it.

The inside reads "Farts - XOXO Sasha."

SMITH

(mutters)

God dammit.

He hops out of bed.

EXT. THE HP CAFE - BACK - DAY

WHAMMMM. Penny slaps Jenna full across the face. A huge
batch of empty catering trays CLATTER to the ground.

Penny seethes and breathes heavy. Jenna nods her head.

PENNY

I fucking told you.

JENNA

I know, I know. I know...

Her shoulders shake. She takes a step forward. Penny takes a half step back. Her hand cocks back.

Jenna falls forward on to Penny. Crying.

JENNA

I know I know I know I know...

After a moment Penny comforts her.

INT/EXT. SASHA & PENNY'S - FRONT DOOR - EVENING

DING DONG. Sasha slides her slippered feet across the room to the front door. She looks through the peephole.

A fish-eyed Smith pushes his face as close as he can to the peephole. Sasha backs away and holds her breath.

SMITH

I know you're in there. I can hear you breathing. You think I don't know how you breathe?

SASHA

Go away. What do you want? Hi.

SMITH

Open the door.

SASHA

Shan't.

SMITH

Pretty sure you want to.

SASHA

Now's really not a good time. I'm in the bath.

THUNK. He leans his head on the door.

SMITH

Look. If you really want me to split, I'll split. I just. It's you, you know? I had to try...I dunno. Something. You're you. Do you want me to split?

SASHA
Never. But split anyway.

SMITH
Can I ask one question?

SASHA
Will you go away and pretend you
never met me if I say yes?

SMITH
No way.

She peeks through the peephole. His forehead completely
covers it on the other side.

SASHA
OK. OK. OK.

SMITH
OK?

SASHA
Not you OK. Me OK.

SMITH
Um. Huh?

SASHA
OK.

Smith doesn't say anything.

SASHA
No no. OK, you can ask me your
question. But I might not answer it.
Just so you know.

SMITH
Open the door.

She takes a series of quick breaths.

SASHA
OK. I'm opening the door.

She swings the door open. Smith stands there in a GAUDY
TUXEDO. He holds a CORSAGE IN A PLASTIC CASE.

A LIMO idles on the street behind him.

SMITH
Will you go to prom with me?

She's speechless. Which is pretty fucking rare. He holds up the corsage and jerks his head at the limo.

She's speechless long enough he feels the need to explain.

SMITH

You know. You dropped out of high school, so I figured you never got to go to your prom. I wish I had been able to take you to mine. Get it?

She blinks. She rubs her arms. She tries to to explode with how much she loves his dopey romantic gesture.

His face is all earnest and proud of itself. She throws her arms around his neck and they kiss real proper.

She pulls out of it and makes pointed eye contact. Before he even gets the chance to smile she blurts out -

SASHA

I totally have cancer.

CUT TO BLACK: