

THIN ICE

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WHITE SCREEN

MUSIC CUE: A nasty hip-hop song. The nastier the better.

EXT. MCMURDO STATION. ANTARCTICA. DAY

The camera moves, and we see that the white screen is actually SNOW KICKED UP from A PARTY raging in the midnight sun. Drinking. Dancing. It's like spring break if spring break were attended by very successful scientists wearing snowsuits.

Nearby, TWO SNOWMOBILES sit side by side, revving up. A woman wearing a bikini over her Arctic snowsuit holds a flag up, and then drops the flag. The SNOWMOBILES ARE OFF.

EXT. FROZEN FIELD. MOMENTS LATER.

A PENGUIN walks across an empty, frozen expanse. Total quiet.

All of a sudden, a SNOWMOBILE come FAST over the ridge.

EXT./INT. FIELD/SNOWMOBILE. INTERCUT.

CLOSE ON the surprised, dumb face of the penguin.

CLOSE ON the surprised, dumb eyes of the driver, barely visible through the ski goggles.

A SPLASH of blood hits the windshield.

INT. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION. KITCHEN. THE NEXT DAY.

We're now in Virginia, at the National Science Foundation, and CLOSE ON the face of a woman whose life didn't turn out how she thought it would. This is LOU (30). She is messy, a little dead inside, wearing a dirty sweater over a pair of soccer shorts with water sandals on her feet. A SINGLE MARIGOLD sits on her desk in a small pot. She stares at it.

LOU (INTO THE PHONE)

Hello, this is the National Science Foundation.

(a beat, then:)

We did receive your grant application. It's under review.

(a beat, then:)

I don't know. It's under review.

(a beat, then:)

Wait, it was just rejected. Nah, kidding. It's still under review.

(a beat, then:)

Well, I thought it was funny. Don't sass me.

(MORE)

LOU (INTO THE PHONE) (CONT'D)
 It's not a good color on you, sir.
 What are you eating right now? A
 turkey sandwich? What's on it?

Lou watches as an EMPLOYEE dumps a large STACK OF PAPERS into the recycling bin, then walks away. Lou's face flashes with excitement. She HANGS UP, and wheels her chair over to the bin, and looks down at the proposal. It reads: ETHNOBIOLOGY IN TAGETES ERECTA. She wipes off some yogurt stains, ignores the RINGING PHONE, and starts to read. After a beat, she looks up to see ARUN (40s) looking down at her.

LOU (CONT'D)
 I was... just tying my shoe...

Lou pretends to tie her water sandals. Arun stares.

INT. NSF. ARUN'S OFFICE. MOMENTS LATER.

Arun sits at his desk, which is covered in family pictures and geodes. Lou sits across from him.

LOU
 My name is Lou by the way. It's too bad we're meeting under these circumstances-- I mean, I'm assuming I'm being fired--

ARUN
 Our receptionists don't usually enjoy reading science research grant proposals so much that they read them out of the trash-- What did you do before this job?

LOU
 Nothing, I was in school--
 (off his face)
 I was on track to get a PhD in plant pathology and microbiology, but there were some issues.

INT. LAB. FLASHBACK.

Lou looks into a microscope, focused. TERRANCE BLACK (50s) pretends to pick up a pen and stops at her butt. She freezes.

LOU
 Did you just smell my butt? You did, didn't you? Look at your face! That's the face of a man who just smelled a butt! No! Just, no! When you watch porn on your computer, I put headphones on.

(MORE)

LOU (CONT'D)

When you change for the gym in front of me, I look in the microscope. But I will *not* let you smell my butt! You're going DOWWWNNNNN! Everyone saw you: Anuj. Matt G. Matt S. Matt W. Matt C. And I am reporting you to the university and we will SEE WHAT THEY DO, YOU SICK MOTHER--

BACK TO PRESENT.

LOU (CONT'D)

He had tenure, the university did nothing, I lost my job, and no other lab would hire me.

ARUN

Wow, I'm sorry--

LOU

No! I'm fine. I didn't really want to be a plant pathologist anyway. What's the point of it? "Look, the protein reduced the electron transport rate after we shot it with high light! Let's take our pants off and party!" Who cares? I've got a lot of things I can do. Like... swords?

ARUN

Just swords? Making swords?

LOU

Making swords. Yeah. I didn't think of that. I'll do that. I'm just working here til I can get science out of my system. Any day now.

ARUN

Hey. Take a look at this.

Arun turns his computer around. ON SCREEN: A PENGUIN with one wing bandaged is being kissed by TWO ATTRACTIVE WOMEN.

LOU

Okay. No. I just told you what happened to me, and now you're going to show me some kind of penguin porn? *Penguins*? What kind of sick man are you?

ARUN

No, Lou--

LOU

What do you-- go home, take your pants off, put in *Mr. Popper's Penguins* and just go to town?

ARUN

Um. Right. Okay. This penguin was injured last night in our polar research facility in Antarctica.

LOU

Oh. I'm-- I apologize--

ARUN

We have incredibly important research happening down there on how to, you know, *save the world*-- but these pictures make it look like some kind of orgy house--

LOU

What's an "orgy house"?

ARUN

It's the house where the orgies happen? The point is: Do you know how crazy people get about penguins? Penguins and pandas are the number one and number two reasons anyone gives a shit about the environment. I need someone to go find out who did this and bring that person home before Congress cuts funding. What do you think?

LOU

Wait. Are you asking me?

ARUN

I'll be honest. Everyone else said no. They have families or boyfriends-- you're single, right? I just assumed because you're wearing water sandals--

LOU

Oh, I am very single. Couldn't be more single.

(MORE)

LOU (CONT'D)

I've been very very very very angry at men in a very unproductive way for about a year-- I mean I just yelled at you about penguin porn for no reason--

ARUN

Lou. If you find me someone to blame for this-- when you come back, I'll try to get you working in biology again. No more phones.

A flash of excitement crosses her face, then disappears.

LOU

I told you. I'm done with science.

ARUN

Hm. Well, if you don't go, you're fired because you're the worst receptionist we've ever had, and you're wearing Umbros right now.

LOU

Okay. I'll go. But only because I'm totally broke and I'm saving up for a cat.

ARUN

Yes! Good! You don't have any ECW gear, right?

LOU

What's ECW?

ARUN

Oh. Um. Extreme Cold Weather?

EXT. AIRFIELD. DAYS LATER.

Out of a blinding white snow, Lou APPEARS, now head to toe in bulky government-issued red Arctic gear. It's freezing.

LOU

Hello?

TITLE CARD: THIN ICE

INT. IVAN THE TERRABUS. LATER.

A man in mismatched polar gear is in the driver's seat of a large red bus with "Ivan the Terrabus" painted on the side. This is GUNNAR (30s, Icelandic, amazing). "Killing In the Name Of" by Rage Against the Machine blares. He sings, happy:

GUNNAR

*Now you do what they told you, now
you're under control! Now you do
what they told ya--*

EXT. AIR FIELD. CONTINUOUS.

Gunnar stops the bus and hops out without turning it off-- so the LOUD ROAR CONTINUES. Lou appears. Her goggles and hair are COVERED IN ICE CRYSTALS. She is shaking from the cold.

GUNNAR

HELLO! I'M GUNNAR! WHAT'S UP, BABY?
WELCOME TO ANTARCTICA! I HOPE YOU
LIKE FUN BOYS!

LOU

It- hurts- when- I- breathe-

INT. IVAN THE TERRABUS. MOMENTS LATER.

Gunnar drives the bus with Lou in the passenger seat, staring at him, not sure what to make of any of it. R. Kelly's *Bump N Grind* blasts. He sings along, happy.

GUNNAR

*My mind's telling me no, but my
body, my body's telling me yes!
It's romantic, yes?*

LOU

No. Where are you from, Gunnar?
Your English is so weird.

GUNNAR

Iceland baby! The land of elves and
killing yourself! You want to know
why I come to Antarctica?

LOU

I mean, not especially--

GUNNAR

I come to Antarctica because I have
a lover who murders me, you know? I
am sad little dead boy. I love
love, you know?

INT. SMALL ICELANDIC APARTMENT. FLASHBACK.

Gunnar sits on a couch under a blanket knit with TINY ELVES. He is crying and drinking Icelandic schnapps. ON SCREEN:
"Love Actually" DUBBED INTO ICELANDIC. Gunnar mouths along.

GUNNAR
No Laura Linney! No!

BACK TO PRESENT.

Gunnar continues.

GUNNAR (CONT'D)
But then I come here and forget
this person so fast because I have
fallen on someone else. She don't
love me back though. It's okay. I
will win in the end maybe. Love is
beautiful! I'm sorry I cannot be
your boyfriend, bitch.

LOU
Can you turn the music off?

GUNNAR
Up? YEAH!

Gunnar turns the music up as they pass a sign: WELCOME TO
MCMURDO STATION, ANTARCTICA.

EXT. MCMURDO STATION. MOMENTS LATER.

The research station at the end of the earth is a series of
warehouses. Lou shivers and runs after Gunnar, who carries
Lou's bag. He high-fives people. Everyone's happy to see him.

GUNNAR
Party on, Tyler! You are so cute to
me today I want to hit you on the
face! Is good weather today, yes?
Only 10 below! VEGAS NEVADA BABY!

Lou makes a run for the door, but slips on the ice. Gunnar
laughs and cheers. Everyone else around does too.

INT. MCMURDO STATION. HALLWAY.

Gunnar and Lou walk into the main hallway. There's an ATM,
barbershop, a bank of computers, and a shop.

GUNNAR
People think, "What are you going
to do in Antarctica, Gunnar? Is so
cold and boring." Shut up, person,
because we have everything: Bar,
shop, place for hairstyles, like,
"very important science labs," but
also bars, dance class--
(seeing something)
Oh boy, that's the woman I love.
(MORE)

GUNNAR (CONT'D)

Is my hair okay-- does it make you
feel sexual? Don't tell me!

Lou looks, and we REVEAL MRS. BROOKS (60s). She's sweet,
determined, with a striking earthy beauty. When Gunnar gets
close enough, he immediately kneels as if she were royalty.

LOU

What are you-- are you bowing?

GUNNAR

Mrs. Brooks.

MRS. BROOKS

Oh get up, Gunnar! You're going to
hurt your knee!

GUNNAR

I care nothing for my knee, you are
most beautiful person in a world of
trash, I want you to sit on my head--

MRS. BROOKS

I think you mean "face" and no
thank you. I'm a retired science
teacher-- I don't do things like
that. Hi! I'm so glad we have
another woman!

Mrs. Brooks throws her arms around Lou. Lou is uncomfortable.

LOU

Oh. Okay. We're hugging now.

MRS. BROOKS

Isn't this place amazing? I've been
trying to get here my whole life.

INT. MRS. BROOKS' HOUSE. FLASHBACK.

Mrs. Brooks sits an empty house, finishing a phone call. She
hangs up the phone call. Looks up to a MAN'S FEDORA hanging
on a hook. She fights through what she feels.

MRS. BROOKS

Hey. I'm finally going.

She lets out a HOLLER, and STARTS DANCING LIKE CRAZY.

MRS. BROOKS (CONT'D)

I'M GOING TO ANTARCTICA!

BACK TO PRESENT.

MRS. BROOKS (CONT'D)
 Oh this is important. If you get drunk and naked and go outside, you have to protect your nipples--

LOU
What?

MRS. BROOKS
 Your nipples will just shrivel up and die, I've seen it happen--

LOU
 I'm not doing that--

GUNNAR
 Yes! You will get those breasts out for sure, big guy!

LOU
 No! I won't! Because I'm here from the National Science Foundation to look into the injury of a penguin due to the unauthorized use of a government issued vehicle--

Gunnar pulls up. Mrs. Brooks walk-runs away fast.

INT. ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES. BULLPEN. MOMENTS LATER.

Lou knocks on the door of an office that reads "Andrew Weyland." She knocks again. She lets herself in.

ANDREW WEYLAND (30s) wears headphones at his desk. He panics when he sees Lou, pulls the headphones out of the computer-- The room fills with the sound of A PORN. He turns it off, then reaches out his hand to shake hers.

ANDREW
 Hi, Andrew Weyland. Station manager. I thought you were a man, since your name is Louis--

LOU
 Lou. My name is Lou.

ANDREW
 Right. Okay, well. I told Arun we don't know what happened to the penguin, but he sent you down here anyway... So. Have I met you before? In Washington? My father's Jim Weyland, Senator from Virginia--

LOU
 Yeah, no, I don't care who your dad
 is, all I need to know is who hit
 the penguin, and then I can leave
 this place.

ANDREW
 Yikes. You're "intense."

Andrew offers Lou a Toblerone candy bar.

ANDREW (CONT'D)
 (mispronouncing)
 Toble-roon? It's triangular candy
 from the mountains of Switzerland.
 Look, I know you don't have a lot
 of experience managing people, but
 there's a delicate relationship
 between a manager and an employee--

LOU
 Cool, so I'm gonna find out myself.

INT. MEDICAL CLINIC. MOMENTS LATER.

Lou stands in front of a medic with a tough, slightly haunted
 face. This is PETE (30s). She is attracted to him, but trying
 not to be. Andrew stands nearby, looking skeptical.

LOU
 Hello. I'm investigating the injury
 of a penguin--

PETE
 One piece of advice: If you get
 drunk and go outside and take your
 shirt off, you have to protect your--

LOU
My nipples are going to be fine!

INT. LAB. MOMENTS LATER.

Lou speaks to some scientists. Andrew watches, amused.

LOU
 So if any of you know anything
 about a penguin--

An alarm goes off. The scientists rush over to a tray of
 samples and ignore Lou. Andrew grins.

INT. "COLD ONES" BAR. CONTINUOUS.

ON Andrew and Lou looking at something.

ANDREW

I told you: No one's going to talk.
This is our second most popular
bar.

REVEAL: It's chaos. People are making out. Waving money in the air. Bikinis. Boobs. Butts. A bear costume. Lou takes it in. Holy shit. A YOUNG WOMAN (20s) offers her a beer.

YOUNG WOMAN

You want a beer? I'm Isis.

LOU

What do you mean you're Isis!?!?

ISIS

It's my name. You want a beer?

Suddenly, a craggy older man in full Arctic gear runs towards Andrew. This is BILL (60s). He throws a large CLIMBING ROPE over Andrew and hits him with a snowshoe.

ANDREW

Stop hitting me, Bill. Stop
hitting me, Bill.

LOU

Okay! Stop! Stop!

Lou turns on the light. People groan.

LOU

Everyone. I'm from the National
Science Foundation, and we pay for
this place, so I think this party
is over now, okay?

(to a nearby couple)

That means you have to stop
thrusting, sir.

MAN'S VOICE

Lou?

Lou turns to see TERRANCE BLACK (the scientist from the flashback earlier) with a beer in his hand. Lou freezes.

LOU

Terrance?

Someone throws a plastic cup of beer at her. It lands on her head, soaking her. She steps outside the door of the bar...

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO**INT. LOU'S ROOM. THAT NIGHT (MIDNIGHT SUN).**

A small and nondescript dorm room. Lou lies in bed with all her ECW gear on-- she's freezing, and the sun blares through the window. She checks a clock in her room: It's 3am. She's on a Sat Phone.

ARUN
How's it going?

LOU
Hey, yeah, going great! Small thing: The man who had me fired and ended my career in science is down here. So I'm hoping we can catch up on some memories--

INT. ARUN'S OFFICE. DAY.

Arun sits at his desk, which now has Lou's MARIGOLD on it.

ARUN
What? The connection is horrible! I'm speaking to someone from Congress tomorrow, and I need a name by tonight--

LOU
(shivering)
My tonight? Or your tonight? There's an 18 hour time difference, and it's across the International Date Line--

ARUN
What?

Lou hangs up the phone and throws it down the bed.

INT. LOU'S ROOM. LATER THAT NIGHT.

QUICK CUTS over MUSIC of Lou trying to warm up: She does jumping jacks. Push-up's. She puts on all her clothes.

INT. HALLWAY. MOMENTS LATER.

Lou, wearing all her gear, knocks on the neighboring door.

LOU
Hey. I'm sorry, but I'm freezing. Do you have a blanket or... hello?

She notices the door is a little open, and opens it.

INT. PETE'S ROOM. CONTINUOUS.

REVEAL Pete-- in tightey-whiteys and a winter hat-- MAKING OUT with a WOMAN in UNDERWEAR and A LAB COAT. He sees Lou.

LOU
Oh shit! Shit! Be safe!

INT. LOU'S ROOM. MOMENTS LATER.

Lou sits, defeated. She reaches into her suitcase and takes out a plastic egg. She presses a button, and it starts to vibrate. She tries to turn it off, but it vibrates faster and JUMPS out of her hands. Suddenly, THE DOOR OPENS. It's Pete, a blanket draped over him. Lou TOSSES the egg ON THE GROUND.

LOU
I'm sorry I barged in, but I'm so cold, and I honestly don't know how you deal with how cold it is...

Pete walks over to her windowsill. Their bodies are inches apart. He reaches down and makes a small adjustment. A HEATER IMMEDIATELY COMES TO LIFE.

LOU (CONT'D)
I, wow, turns out I have a heater.

PETE
Do you hear something?

LOU
No.

PETE	LOU
It's like a buzzing sound.	No, I don't hear anything. I
it's coming from down here...	don't think it is, I...

Pete bends down and pulls out the VIBRATING EGG.

LOU (CONT'D)
What is that? That's-- how did that get there? Must be a... clock or...

Pete grins. The woman in the lab coat appears in the doorway.

LAB COAT WOMAN
Pete? I'm getting cold.

Pete nods, hands the egg to Lou. She reluctantly takes it. He calls over his shoulder to her, on his way out the door:

PETE

If you use it enough, does it hatch?

LOU

You know what, I'll just make sure this gets back to its owner!

Lou dives onto her bed in embarrassment.

LOU (CONT'D)

NOOOOOHHHHGODDDD!

She puts a pillow over her head...

MATCH CUT to Lou with the pillow still over her head. A BEAM of sun hits her. She looks up from the pillow, disoriented.

LOU (CONT'D)

Wha-- what's happening? Who...?

REVEAL Isis sits on the end of her bed with two CUPS OF TEA. She speaks quickly, in almost a monotone.

ISIS

Morning. I brought you tea. Did you sleep at all? You look terrible. You literally look like Alec Baldwin. Do you want to be my friend?

LOU

No. Definitely not.

ISIS

Fine.

Isis leaves the room. Then immediately Isis comes back.

ISIS (CONT'D)

I don't care what you want. There are only 330 women on the base, and two are nice to me, and one of those two actually thinks I'm someone else. So now we're friends.

LOU

Maybe no one is nice to you because you break into people's rooms.

ISIS

Or maybe because I'm a lesbian marine parasite specialist named Isis.

A beat, then Lou starts laughing.

LOU
Oh god, I'm sorry I'm laughing--

ISIS
And I'm a virgin.

LOU
No! What?

ISIS
Yes. I got close once, but no dice.

INT. CAR. FLASHBACK.

Isis kisses A PRETTY GIRL, but she's A TERRIBLE KISSER.

PRETTY GIRL
You know, when you kiss people, you
can breathe through your nose?

ISIS
Cool. Cool.

Isis now kisses her with weird SNORTING SOUNDS.

BACK TO PRESENT.

Isis starts laughing now too, and for a beat, they are both laughing. Lou pulls up:

LOU
No, but seriously, out of my room.

ISIS	LOU
You really should take a	
shower, you've got like a	Out! Out! Out!
deep butt smell--	

INT. MCMURDO STATION. ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES. MOMENTS LATER.

Isis walks Lou to the administrative office bullpen.

LOU
Why are you still talking to me?

ISIS
We're friends now. Anyway, our lab
is studying the photosynthetic
behavior of a single-celled
organism that lives in the anus of
a whelk. In other words: *awesome*.

(MORE)

ISIS (CONT'D)

The PI is famous, Terrance Black,
you know him?

LOU

I-- yeah. I used to work with him.

ISIS

Wow. I'm basically a younger
version of you, except I like girls
and have more personality problems.

LOU

Why aren't you with Terrance right
now in the field?

ISIS

He says women are a liability in
the field. He won't give me any
real work to do. Did he give you
real work?

From Lou's face, we know he didn't. She's reached Andrew's
office. She takes a deep breath to steel herself, as Isis
heads out.

ISIS (CONT'D)

(calling to a woman)

What's up, Shani? You're looking
good today. You want to get some
soup?

The woman looks weirded out and shakes her head, "No."

ISIS (CONT'D)

That's cool, that's cool. Keep
doing what you're doing.

INT. ANDREW'S OFFICE. CONTINUOUS.

Lou enters the office, more determined than before.

LOU

So. Andrew, what are we going to--

Andrew suddenly comes up from behind the desk. He is holding
a crowbar.

ANDREW

Louis. Hi.

LOU

Were you just hiding behind your
desk? Is everything okay?

ANDREW

Yeah! Great!

LOU

Because I saw a man tie you up and hit you with a snowshoe last night.

ANDREW

Bill? Nah. Not worried about Bill. We have a little disagreement, but he knows what's up, believe me. I chose to spend some funds to buy some lightly moisturizing soap that happens to have a beautiful rose scent, and he believes I should've spent those funds on "science stuff." Scientists just don't get the business world like I do. They're literally like--

(robot voice)

"I. Need. Microscopes."

(then)

It's just like: If everyone had microscopes, *there would be no microscopes*. That's the kind of shit you learn on Wall Street. Worked there for five years, but wasn't a good fit for me.

INT. GOLDMAN SACHS BULLPEN. FLASHBACK.

Andrew, his nose covered in white powder, totally wasted in a conference room in front of men in suits.

ANDREW

Happy Halloween!

MAN IN SUIT

It's December.

Andrew throws up all over him.

BACK TO PRESENT.

ANDREW

My dad wanted me to get out of the country for a little bit when he was trying to get re-elected--

LOU

So he sent you to Antarctica. Right. Okay. Here's what I want you to focus on: *I need to get out of here.*

(MORE)

LOU (CONT'D)

There's a man I hate more than
anyone else in the world down here--

ANDREW

Ooo, an ex?

LOU

No.

ANDREW

I bet it's an ex--

LOU

Andrew! You don't want me here! I
don't want to be here! This is a
cold, dead place, where nothing
grows-- there isn't a single plant
growing on this continent, and I
haven't slept in 24 hours and this
morning I pissed crystals.
Beautiful mystical crystals.

ANDREW

Ew.

LOU

So just tell me who injured the
penguin! I'll pretend I figured it
out on my own--

ANDREW

No. But would you like some gently
carbonated water from France?

Andrew cracks open a bottle of Badoit. It sprays everywhere.

LOU

Okay, I need everyone who runs a
department. Now.

INT. MCMURDO STATION. BULLPEN. LATER.

Andrew and Lou stand in front of a group, which includes
Gunnar, Mrs. Brooks, Pete, and Isis.

ANDREW

So that's Pete, Gunnar, my main man
in the poo poo department, Mrs.
Brooks, do you know Lil Sweet Pea
in supplies? Not a morning person.

LIL SWEET PEA, a large imposing man, does not look amused.

ANDREW (CONT'D)
And that's Swiss Julie--

SWISS JULIE, a pretty blonde woman, looks annoyed.

SWISS JULIE
I'm not Swiss. And I've told you to
please address me as Reverend.

ANDREW
"Okay." And Bill. Hello, Bill.

ON Bill, giving Andrew a death stare. Andrew tightens his
grip on the crow bar behind his back.

ANDREW (CONT'D)
Bill studies rocks--

BILL
I'm a geologist, you fetus.

ANDREW
Bill's been studying rocks in
Antarctica for five straight years.
And somehow you stayed totally
normal. Just kidding. You went
batshit, didn't you?

Bill starts to run at Andrew, but Pete holds him back.

ANDREW (CONT'D)
And Isis! You're not allowed to
come to these meetings--

ISIS
I'm bored.

ANDREW
Well, I'm asking you to leave.

ISIS
No.

ANDREW
Sounds good. Now let's play a
little round of the name game--

LOU
I don't care what your names are.
Who hit the penguin?

GUNNAR
Why don't you ask him?

A PENGUIN WITH A BANDAGED WING suddenly walks up to Lou. She screams. Everyone laughs and cheers Gunnar on.

GUNNAR (CONT'D)

Tell Louis who hit you, R Kelly.

LOU

Oh my god! No. Go away, sir. I don't want you here. God, penguins stress me out. I don't trust the way they move. How is he even walking? Where are his feet? Just tell me who did it, guys.

PETE

Fine. I did it.

LOU

Perfect. Thanks. Then we'll put you on the next flight--

MRS. BROOKS

No! It was me. I was driving.

GUNNAR

No! I am driving. It's me.

LIL SWEET PEA

(surprisingly high pitch)

I was driving. It was me.

SWISS JULIE

I was driving.

BILL

I was driving.

ISIS

Sorry, Lou, but I was driving.

Everyone is now saying "I was driving."

LOU

We're doing Spartacus? Really?

PETE

No, seriously, it was me.

A chorus of "No, seriously, it was me."

ANDREW

No you guys, stop. Let's be serious for a second... It was me!

The room erupts in cheers.

LOU
Andrew! What are you doing?

ANDREW
Trying to make you mad?

LOU
Okay. You guys all have each other's backs. That's nice. But maybe let's not hit the showers just yet because I didn't hear the buzzer, the ball's still bouncing, and I don't know enough about sports to continue this-- If I don't get a name, by the end of the day, I'm just going to pick someone. Yeah. That's right! This just got real! VEGAS NEVADA BABY!

INT. CANTEEN. LATER.

Lou sits by herself, eating. People glare at her. Pete picks up his tray and sits down across from her.

LOU
You don't have to sit with me.

PETE
I know.

They eat in silence. Suddenly, Terrance walks up, with members of his RESEARCH TEAM-- ice cowboys, with cool arctic gear, and MATCHING WINTER HATS. Lou just glares up at him.

TERRANCE
Hey Lou. How've you been? It's too bad you didn't end up at a new lab. You had a lot of promise. Listen, good to see you.

Terrance rolls his eyes at his guys, who chuckle as they walk away. Lou looks after him, falling apart a little. Pete watches her.

PETE
What happened with him?

LOU
It's a long story. I won't bore you with it.

PETE
Thanks.

Pete goes back to eating. Lou rolls her eyes.

LOU

I was on track to get my PhD in plant pathology and microbiology, and I worked in his lab studying photosynthesis in cyanobacteria--

PETE

Cyanobacteria is my sister's name.

LOU

Wait, really?

PETE

No. Continue.

LOU

So I reported him for sexual harassment, and then I lost my job. It's okay. I decided not to be a scientist. I don't need your pity.

PETE

Oh you don't have it.

LOU

Excuse me?

PETE

He was a dick to you, and you just gave up on science?

LOU

I gave up? Didn't you? Why are you down here?

PETE

I was a medic in Baghdad and Afghanistan for ten years, and then I came here.

This pulls Lou up. She makes a face. Pete laughs.

PETE (CONT'D)

Your face right now! You're so freaked out that I said I worked in Iraq and Afghanistan--

LOU

No, I'm not! Tell me again.

PETE

I was a medic in Afghanistan--

Lou makes an even crazier face. Pete laughs. Lou does too.

PETE (CONT'D)
It wasn't all bad. I gave a lot of
eye exams.

INT. ARMY CLINIC. FLASHBACK.

Pete, now in camo, holds up an EYE CHART to a A BIG SOLDIER.

PETE
It's an E, man. I don't know what
to tell you.

BIG SOLDIER
No! I don't need glasses! This is
nuts! I'm outta here!

Big Soldier opens a large cabinet and tries to walk inside.

PETE
That's not the door, buddy.

BACK TO PRESENT.

LOU
Why didn't you go home afterwards?
Why did you come here?

PETE
Homes are overrated.

LOU
No they're not! My home's amazing.
I can just lie on my side and watch
Carpool Karaoke and just bite
directly into a large block of
cheese. And, more importantly, I
know that I'm always five minutes
away from something growing.

PETE
Hey. Come with me.

LOU
Seriously? Why? I don't totally get
your vibe yet, if you're messing
with me, I'll probably start
crying, and that'll get weird--

PETE
You talk a lot. Come on.

INT. HYDROPONIC GREENHOUSE. MOMENTS LATER.

Lou and Pete stare at the inside of a LUSH, GREEN HYDROPONIC GREENHOUSE-- the only way to grow anything here.

PETE

You are five minutes away from something growing.

LOU

This is... I didn't think anything could grow here.

Lou is overwhelmed. She moves along the row of plants, looking at every single one, like a kid in a candy store.

LOU (CONT'D)

Wow. Of course, you can't use soil! What nutrients are in this liquid--

PETE

(laughing)
I have no idea--

LOU

Oh my god.

ON a clump of AZTEC MARIGOLDS, the kind Lou had on her desk.

LOU (CONT'D)

Tagetes Erecta. Aztec Marigolds. This was the first plant I ever grew. I was six years old.

Lou looks up Pete for a moment, then back at the plant.

LOU (CONT'D)

Thank you. I... I missed this.

Pete nods. Something passes between them.

LOU (CONT'D)

So who was that woman last night?

PETE

She's a medic. We have sex sometimes. Why? Are you jealous?

LOU

What? No!

PETE

Because if you wanted to-- I can leave my door open--

ACT THREE**INT. HALLWAY. LATER THAT NIGHT.**

CLOSE ON Lou knocking. A door opens. It's Mrs. Brooks. Her eyes are red.

LOU

Hi. I just wanted to... I thought you might need some wine? They only let you buy two bottles at the store, so I paid Lil Sweet Pea five bucks to get an extra bottle--

Mrs. Brooks smiles at her.

MRS. BROOKS

How'd you know wine is the way to my heart?

LOU

Someone should tell Gunnar.

Mrs. Brooks suddenly lets out A BIG WARM LAUGH.

INT. MRS. BROOKS' ROOM. LATER.

Mrs. Brooks and Lou sit on the floor drinking wine out of mugs. Lou's mug reads: "*GREEN HILL HIGH SCHOOL SCIENCE CLUB. Photosynthe-SCIENCE!*" A poster of Shackleton stares down from the wall. A map of Antarctica. Smoke hangs in the air.

MRS. BROOKS

So this man-- Terrance someone-- did this to you, and nothing happened to him, but you lost everything you'd been working for your whole life and you're telling me that you do *not* want to smoke ganja right now?

Mrs. Brooks hands Lou a COMICALLY LARGE JOINT. Lou laughs.

MRS. BROOKS (CONT'D)

Are you sure? It's excellent canabis. Just dank dank chronic.

LOU

It does look dank, but I'll pass. Anyway, yeah, after it happened, I just got *angry*.

MRS. BROOKS

Of course you did!

LOU

I never used to be so angry! I used to be just a nice person who liked plants and the occasional man--

MRS. BROOKS

Honey. I was a woman in the sixties. You think I don't know what it feels like to get pissed off because life isn't fair? You just have to keep going. You have to figure out how to fall in love with the world again.

LOU

What's this?

Lou picks up the fedora hat from the flashback.

MRS. BROOKS

That's my Alexander's hat. He taught math. I lost him last year. A stroke, but, you know, quick. We were cute. Big nerds, but cute.

LOU

I'm so sorry I have to send you home--

MRS. BROOKS

Hey, if I were you, I'd send me home too. I broke a rule.

MUSIC can be heard. Mrs. Brooks and Lou go to the window.

OUT THE WINDOW: A heartbroken Gunnar plays a guitar and sings a beautiful acoustic version of R. Kelly's "Ignition: Remix."

GUNNAR

It's the remix to ignition, fresh and hot out the kitchen!

(seeing her)

MRS. BROOKS! I LOVE YOU!

Mrs. Brooks shakes her head. Motions for him to leave.

MRS. BROOKS

You know what? I've got nothing to be sad about. I've had an amazing time. I had a tall Icelandic man tell me I'm beautiful. I got to see Shackleton's hut. I got to see the Mountain of Erebus. I wanted to be an explorer my whole life.

(MORE)

MRS. BROOKS (CONT'D)

Some people never even get close to their dreams. I got six weeks. I can't believe you want to leave. You should stay!

LOU

I'm not a scientist anymore. I'm done with it.

MRS. BROOKS

Yeah. I was done with it after my husband died. I was so mad. I couldn't care about something again. I couldn't do it. Then, I don't know, I came out of it. Lou. I want you to know-- it doesn't matter what's happened to you, it's never too late for anything.

GUNNAR (O.S.)

AND AFTER THE PARTY, IT IS THE AFTER PARTY! AND AFTER THE AFTER PARTY, IT IS THE HOTEL LOBBY!

MRS. BROOKS

He's not usually so flat. Someone should go check for hypothermia.

INT. HALLWAY. LATER THAT NIGHT.

Lou leaves Mrs. Brooks' room, and immediately runs into Andrew, being closely followed by Bill, who chucks BARS OF SCENTED SOAP at his head.

ANDREW

Bill, I asked you to stop this. Stop, Bill.

BILL

No. I'm never going to stop.

Lou considers ignoring this, then stops and calls out.

LOU

Okay. Bill? Yeah, you. No, the other guy throwing bars of soap at a man's head. If you injure Andrew even a little bit, you're going home with me tomorrow. Andrew: buy Bill a microscope, because there's no way you were authorized to get--

Lou picks up a bar of soap from the ground, reads it:

LOU (CONT'D)

"Artisanal soap" which is, mother of god, eleven dollars a bar?

ANDREW
But seriously, smell it--

LOU
Are we done here?

BILL
In ten years, the world will be
water.

Bill then just walks off, leaving Andrew.

ANDREW
I mean, I had that under control.

LOU
Did you?
(smells it)
Okay, this smells *wonderful*, and I
am, in fact, going to keep it.

INT. THE MAIN HALLWAY. THE NEXT MORNING.

Lou, back in her ECW gear, stands with her duffel, waiting to
leave. Isis comes up to say good-bye.

LOU
Have you seen Mrs. Brooks?

ISIS
No. But anyway. Bye? I don't hate
you as much as everyone else does,
and it's not just because you being
here means I'm only the second
least popular person on the base.

LOU
Is Terrance still not letting you
out in the field?

ISIS
No, but I'm almost halfway done all
the paperwork he left for me.

This clearly irks her, but she shakes it off. A butch TRANSP
WOMAN walks in from outside. Isis likes her.

ISIS (CONT'D)
Um, hi, I'm Isis.

TRANSP
WOMAN
What? You're *what*?
(to Lou)
(MORE)

TRANSPO WOMAN (CONT'D)

Listen, not sure you're getting out today, we've got weather coming in--

LOU

Come on, is it snowing a little?

TRANSPO WOMAN

Wind speed is 80 miles per hour.

LOU

It doesn't matter, we're leaving! I've got to get out of here.

TRANSPO WOMAN

Then we're going to need to go now.

OFF Lou's panicked face.

INT. HALLWAY. MOMENTS LATER.

Lou, now fully panicked, opens the door to Pete's room. He's KISSING a NAKED Swiss Julie.

LOU

Pete! Oh. Sorry, Reverend. I can't find Mrs. Brooks-- I checked her room-- and the plane has to leave--

PETE

What about Shackleton's Hut? She hangs out there sometimes. I'll go when the weather clears.

LOU

No! We have to get out of here, I'll just go--

PETE

No. You're not going out in that. Are you insane? I'll go.

SWISS JULIE

But we were literally--

PETE

See you in church.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE STATION. MOMENTS LATER.

The weather is getting worse-- almost a WHITE-OUT. Pete, now in gear, HEADS OUT in a snowmobile. Lou watches him, worried.

MRS. BROOKS (O.S.)

Bad weather to go out in.

Lou turns to see MRS. BROOKS, in arctic gear with a duffel.

MRS. BROOKS (CONT'D)
 Hey, sorry I'm late, Gunnar locked
 me in the linen closet so I
 couldn't leave, and then it was
 cosy, and I fell asleep--

LOU
 Oh my god. PETE! PETE!

INT. COLD ONES BAR. MOMENTS LATER.

A group has gathered: Isis, Gunnar, Andrew, Lil Sweet Pea,
 Swiss Julie. The Transpo Woman talks into a sat phone.

TRANSPO WOMAN
 Pete? Do you read me? Pete? Weather
 might be too rough to get through.
 I think we just have to wait.

Lou makes a decision. She grabs a map off one of the tables
 and SLIPS OUT OF THE ROOM, unnoticed.

EXT. OUTSIDE MCMURDO. MOMENTS LATER.

Lou walks through a TOTAL WHITE-OUT. The wind is whipping.

LOU
 I- AM- SO- DUMB-

Lou makes it into a snowmobile, and manages to shut the door.

INT. SNOWMOBILE. CONTINUOUS.

She is trying to drive with almost no visibility.

LOU
 Don't die. Pete. Don't die. Can you
 hear me? Don't die.

Suddenly, A LOUD CRASH. It looks like the snowmobile may have
 hit ANOTHER SNOWMOBILE, but she can't see.

She tries to start the snowmobile again, but it won't start.
 She's starting to really panic, when the SNOWMOBILE DOOR
 opens. It's PETE. He has CRYSTALS ON HIS MASK. He's FROZEN.

LOU (CONT'D)
 Pete! Oh my god, I'm so happy--

PETE
 Move over.

Lou moves over on the seat, as Pete starts to undress.

PETE (CONT'D)
Take your clothes off.

LOU
I mean, this is extremely
flattering, but I'm not--

PETE
I'M HYPOTHERMIC, GET NAKED!
NOW! NOW!

INT. SNOWMOBILE. LATER.

A NAKED LOU lies on top of a NAKED PETE. Their faces are inches apart. Pete looks pale, cold. A little awkward.

LOU
So. Where are you from?

PETE
Boston.

LOU
What part? HA! Sorry. The hair on
your leg was--

Pete smiles, still shivering badly.

PETE
You know, I don't really have
hypothermia.

LOU
What?

PETE
I'm kidding! Look at me! Of course
I do!

LOU
Hey. I'm so glad you're alive...

The door to the snowmobile opens, revealing GUNNAR!

GUNNAR
ARE YOU ALIVE? YES! YES! THE MEAN
GIRL SAVED PETE! How are your
nipples, baby?

INT. MEDICAL CLINIC. LATER.

A medic (the woman in the lab coat from Pete's room earlier) makes notes on a clipboard.

LOU

Don't speak. Don't open your mouth. I want you to know that you took something from me-- And for about a year, I thought I was done. I was just... blank. And then I came here, and I realized that you're the one who's done. Because now I know a guy who knows a guy who has the email of a guy who can make your life miserable down here. Yeah! That's right! No more extra cash! No more matching hats! So you're going to do something for me. You're going to let Isis go into the field, and you're going to give her some real work, and I swear to god, if I ever hear you laid a hand on her, I *will put you inside a polar bear's mouth.*

Isis beams. She raises her hands to celebrate, and forgets she's holding a BEAKER that splashes another guy in the face.

TERRANCE

There actually aren't polar bears in Antarctica--
(rolling his eyes)
Fine. Isis can go in the field.
Just remind me, when do you leave?

The guys laugh. Lou stares at him, furious. Lasers shooting out of her eyes.

LOU

Oh, I'm not leaving. I just decided. I'm staying. I'm staying, and I'm going to make sure you do everything I just said.

TERRANCE

You're being a little rash--

LOU

Oh yeah! Big time! I'm honestly probably still delirious from the hypothermia and I haven't really slept in 48 hours, and this is not a good life choice, but I'm staying! Because if it makes you even a little bit uncomfortable, it'll be worth it. I'll do my own research. I'll figure it out. Because I am not done. Do you understand me? I'm not done.

Terrance nods. OVER MUSIC: Lou heads out and grabs one of the team's matching hats, and puts it on. She can't stop smiling.

INT. ANDREW'S OFFICE. THE NEXT DAY.

Andrew is walking Lou through the bullpen.

LOU

I slept last night for 16 hours, woke up, and realized that I'm probably making a huge mistake! Huge! But, haha, it's too late now. Anyway, sorry I had to blame you for the penguin-- Arun said you were excited to work with me as your deputy--

ANDREW

Oh def, def. Here's your office.

Andrew opens the door to a TINY CRAMPED ROOM that's almost totally FROZEN OVER.

ANDREW (CONT'D)

We've been having some problems with the heat, so we started using it as cold storage. From the smell, I think it's mostly fish...

(leaning in)

Payback, ese! Wall Street!

Lou stares as Andrew walks away, laughing. She turns to look at her new office, the full implication of her insane decision hitting her:

LOU

Oh my god. What did I do?

Suddenly, Gunnar, Mrs. Brooks, Pete, Swiss Julie, Lil Sweet Pea, Pam, and even Bill crowd into her small office.

MRS. BROOKS

You need some help?

Lou smiles at her. Gunnar turns on A SONG: The same hip hop song playing in the beginning... As MUSIC PLAYS, Lou continues dancing, drinking, laughing, moving in.

END OF SHOW