

Female Female Comedy

21.

CHIARA

I mean, usually it wouldn't even matter.
It's just that I might not be home
tomorrow. We're disrupting a hearing.

(beat)

So if I don't come home, it's because I'm
in jail.

She waits for Laura to press, but she keeps working.

CHIARA (CONT'D)

And these dishes have just been sitting
here for awhile, so.

They ignore her. Jackie finishes a letter.

JACKIE

Okay, just finished my last letter for
the Senator. I love saying that!

(Laura smiles)

This one's good, I added a lot of
personal touches. "If not for my Mid-
Atlantic regional pride, I'd tell you
your wife's Oregon crabcakes were the
best I'd ever had."

LAURA

Get in there with the wife reference.

JACKIE

Totally. Even though she's a total
beard. I googled this Congressman I'm
writing to. Queer as folk.

Chiara SCOFFS, offended, and returns to the kitchen.

LAURA

She's militantly PC. When she said that
in her Craigslist ad, I thought she was
kidding.

JACKIE

Want to go get a drink when you're done?

LAURA

Ugh, if I'm ever done. I'm working on
this child welfare legislation proposal
for my boss...it's due at the end of the
week and I'm already so burned out.

JACKIE

You might focus better if you give
yourself a night off.

LAURA

I really shouldn't, I'd never forgive
myself if this bill doesn't pass.

Jackie nods, giving up. Laura continues her research for
a moment...then suddenly pushes away from her desk and
picks up her bag. Faux-exasperated:

LAURA (CONT'D)
 God, Jackie, I really wish you wouldn't
force me to go out tonight...
 (Jackie lights up)
 I mean...tequila?! On a weeknight? Ugh,
fine. Just this once.

JACKIE
 It'll never happen again.

INT. LOUNGE 201 - NIGHT

Start Jackie leads the way into a crowded dark bar with lots of
 TURQUOISE and DARK PURPLE, and LEATHER STOOLS with
 LEOPARD-PRINT FAUX-FUR upholstered tops. Turns to Laura.

JACKIE
 Love the 1991 vibe we have going on here.

LAURA
 I've actually never been here before.
 The House has its own bar.

JACKIE
 Ugh, this West Side Story shit with the
 Senate and House is so ridiculous. You
 guys are all losers. That's like having
 a bar where all the geologists go versus
 one where the molecular biologists go.

Jackie notices the giant FLATSCREEN TV behind the bar,
 playing CSPAN on MUTE. On screen, SENATOR KAHN speaks.

JACKIE (CONT'D)
 Hey, that's my boss!

She smiles, then surveys the scene at the bar: preppers
 of all ages. A sea of trench coats and Burberry scarves.

JACKIE (CONT'D)
 Okay, so what's the deal with everyone
 here?

LAURA
 Well, it's a weeknight, so most people
 are here to network. Which in this town,
 pretty much doubles as dating life too.
 I'm sure that's what's happening in
 there. Resume speed-dating...

She gestures to a PRIVATE ROOM, where 20 and 30somethings
 in SUITS mill around, stonefaced. A sign outside tells
 us it's an event for the PENNSYLVANIA STATE SOCIETY.

LAURA (CONT'D)
 FYI, if a guy tells you he knows someone
 who can help you with whatever you're
 working on and you guys should "grab
 dinner and discuss," it's a date.

Jackie laughs and struts toward a corner. Since no one else is dressed to attract attention, she's the immediate center of it. As they sit, she notices a couple of OLDER MEN (40s) huddled in booths, stealing glances their way.

JACKIE

And what about these older guys?

LAURA

If he's not wearing a wedding ring, he's probably never had a serious relationship because he always put work first. If there is a ring, his marriage is probably falling apart because he's here doing work drinks every night. Unless he was lucky enough to find someone as obsessed with power as he is. Like Exhibit A...

She gestures to a booth, where an INTENSE MAN and WOMAN in power-suits sit on the same side, having a serious conversation. There's no sign of intimacy. Jackie laughs. Then Laura NOTICES SOMEONE ELSE and GASPS.

LAURA (CONT'D)

That's Fred Movius.

(Jackie's blank)

Director of Legislative Affairs in the White House! Oh my God...

Jackie looks at the bar: FRED (46), a DISTINGUISHED man with GREYING HAIR, holds court with three other guys.

LAURA (CONT'D)

I can't believe he has time to go to a bar. He's like--

JACKIE

He's cute! It's so weird how mid-40s doesn't seem that old anymore. I mean, I'm starting to find 40-year-olds hot now. (~~I guess that means we're getting~~ old. Come on, let's go over there.

LAURA

(panicking)

No! I'm sure he's in the middle of a really important meeting. Seriously, that is the man your boss and my boss spend all day trying to get on the phone. He's the gateway to the president--

JACKIE

Whatever, he's a guy in a bar. He's open to being distracted.

Before Laura can protest, Jackie FLAGS DOWN THE WAITRESS.

JACKIE (CONT'D)

Could you get that man over there in the red tie a shot of McCallan 10, neat?

LAURA

Jackie, don't--

JACKIE

Tell him it's from the undecided super-delegate in the corner.

Laura obscures her face, freaking out as the waitress approaches Fred with the scotch. As she relays Jackie's message, Fred GLANCES AROUND THE BAR. When he makes eye contact with JACKIE, she grins. Fred grins back and WAVES TO HER, BECKONING THEM OVER. Jackie smirks and nudges Laura to look. Laura's mouth drops open.

Jackie SHAKES HER HEAD to Fred and beckons back: you come to us. It works. The guys make their approach.

INT. LOUNGE 201 - LATER

Fred and his three colleagues - none of whom are wearing wedding rings - are now fully integrated into the girls' table. Fred's TWO POLITICIAN FRIENDS (45) talk to Jackie the only way they know how.

POLITICIAN 1

...And I told the press secretary, "Nice one, but try to keep it under 15 minutes next time."

POLITICIAN 2

Sounds like my last conversation with Dan Glickman at the MPAA...

They chuckle. Jackie nods. Deadpan:

JACKIE

I ran Italy in the late 90s.

Fred's friends exchange an annoyed look, realizing she's mocking them. But Fred laughs.

FRED

I thought I recognized you. Great work over there.

JACKIE

Yeah, people are really liking the thin crust. That was all me.

FRED

Where are you visiting from?

JACKIE

What makes you think I don't live here?

FRED

You're attractive.

JACKIE

That would be more of a compliment if my competition weren't all in pleated pantsuits from St. John. I just moved here. I'm an intern.

(beat)

(MORE)

INT. TACO BELL - NIGHT

A still-drunk Jackie and Laura discuss Laura's hookup over greasy comfort food, the only patrons at this 24-hour Taco Bell.

LAURA

I can't believe that just happened. You don't understand, I never do anything like that.

JACKIE

Well, you should! We have to do shit like that now, before we lose our looks.

She stuffs half a chalupa in her mouth at once.

LAURA

Now can we talk about how you totally blue-balled the White House LD? That's gotta be a first for that guy.

JACKIE

I can't get stuck in another relationship.

LAURA

I don't think he's looking for a relationship, Jackie.

JACKIE

Whatever, I guess I'm just trying to stay celibate for a second. I just got out of a three year thing.

LAURA

Yeah, what was the story there?

JACKIE

He just wanted to settle down for real. And I don't know, Mike was great, he was just...not quite enough for me. He's like...70 percent of what I want.

LAURA

How so?

JACKIE

Oh, you know. His jokes were like 70 percent funny. He was cuter than roughly 70 percent of most guys. And it kinda rubbed off on me, around him I became about 70 percent of what I could be. I didn't feel like I had to get that hot for him. I started telling stories that were, you know...sort of interesting.

LAURA

Ugh. You deserve better than that.