LAST PORT

Episode 2

"Lunges and stowaways"



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INT. BEDROOM — EVENING

We follow laughter down a hallway to a bedroom.

A decade-younger INNA and HERBIE lie in bed, post-coital. Inna plays with Herbie's chest hair.

INNA
It's a pretty depressing business for such an upbeat guy— with your personality, you should've been a film producer or a restaurant owner!

HERBIE
Nah. Those are horrible investments. Everybody dies— and everyone needs a good send-off. A shrink once told me I was trying to make up for my parents'—

INNA
You had a shrink?!

HERBIE
Oh yeah— I had her a couple of times— in the car, at her house, behind a theater, in an elevator—

Inna bursts out laughing.

INNA
You were banging your shrink? Of course you were! I can't see you sitting in an office listening to a—

HERBIE
She was right. This whole thing— my business, Fox Funerals— is because I couldn't give my parents a decent burial—

INNA
It wasn't your fault. You were a kid, a broke kid. And it doesn't matter where or how you're buried. You're dead already! I mean, seriously— all this obsession with spending money on funerals? Spend it while you're alive. Why bury your hard-earned cash?

Herbie sits up.

HERBIE
What did you just say?

INNA
I'm just saying— spend the money while you're above ground. Why bury your—

HERBIE
Why bury your hard-earned cash?! You're a frickin' genius! That's it— that's my billboard right there! Oh my beautiful, brilliant, sexy woman!

Herbie grabs Inna's face, peppering her with kisses. She laughs, tumbling back onto the pillows for round two.

EXT. PACIFIC OCEAN — DAWN

The SHERRY cruises along. Sun glistens on the water as a funky version of "*Row, Row, Row Your Boat*" plays. Birds wheel overhead. Idyllic.

INT. INNA'S CABIN — DAWN

Inna wakes. Lies still for a moment, taking in the remnants of the dream.

She rises slowly, crosses to the window, peers out.

EXT. YACHT — DAWN

The deck is empty except for LIAM, seated in a deck chair, head in his hands.

INT. INNA'S CABIN — CONTINUOUS

Inna watches Liam. She sighs, grabs a robe from a nearby chair.

EXT. YACHT — DAWN

Inna, still in her robe, approaches Liam and hands him a cup of coffee.

INNA
I hope black is okay?

Liam takes the cup, nods.

INNA (CONT'D)
You weren't at the welcome dinner— you alright?

LIAM
Yeah. Sorry— haven't been around people for a while. I'll dip my toe in soon. Promise.

INNA
No need to apologize. I don't blame you. People can kill your spirit—

She sits in the chair beside him.

A beat.

INNA (CONT'D)
If you Google me now, most of what comes up is about my acting career, my marriage. That's because my husband, Herbie, had some techie kid scrub a bunch of stuff. A decade ago— it was mostly nude photos of me. Mainly my butt.

LIAM
I'm listening—

INNA
Yeah, that got your attention. Nothing nefarious— or even interesting. Early in my career, I did an off-Broadway production of Antigone. We performed nude. No costumes—

Liam's eyes widen.

INNA (CONT'D)
It was a big hit— put me on the map. But critics called it a gimmick. It wasn't; it was a *metaphor*. Anyway, some asshole snuck in a camera one night, and once the internet was born— every mention of me came with a naked photo. From behind. It reduced my entire life, my career, everything— to just my bare ass.

A beat. Liam nods.

LIAM
I can relate.

Beat.

LIAM (CONT'D)
Was it a good ass, at least?

INNA
Are you kidding me? I was young! You could crack an egg on that ass. Yes— it was a good ass. It was a *great* ass.

Liam allows himself a small smile.

INNA (CONT'D)
I should get dressed. But it was nice sharing my shame with you.

She stands, then turns back.

INNA (CONT'D)
I'm not going to force you to join us for meals. This is your trip— but I do think it might be good for you. Besides— I doubt this crowd knows much about soccer anyway.

Liam raises an eyebrow.

LIAM
You Yanks have always underestimated the power of footy.

INT. ED AND PAUL'S CABIN — MORNING

Paul points to a video on his laptop; Ed squints at the screen.

PAUL
You remember this, come on, love! It was everywhere! That's the fellow we saw getting on *this* boat, I'm telling you!

Paul points to the video; it's Liam missing a goal during the World Cup, it plays over and over in a meme with commentary from an angry football fan. Ed looks closer at the screen.

EDWARD
2002? I was filming Mission Impossible and in rehearsals for *The Crucible*— I don't remember this at all—

PAUL
Well— I remember it clear as day, people thought the world had ended— everyone drunk for weeks. Poor guy, they slaughtered him— *annihilated* him in the press. No wonder he's hiding in his room—

EDWARD
—and that is precisely why we have been so *private*. The British press!

Paul laughs.

PAUL
Oh darling, there isn't a soul alive who thinks we're "*just friends*"! The press is only kind to you because you're a *national treasure*.

Paul looks at the video again, shakes his head.

PAUL (CONT'D)
We should be nice to this fellow— poor thing's been a hermit for the past 20 years.

Ed looks closer, pokes his finger at the screen.

EDWARD
Look at the glee in that man's eyes— see how he is positively *relishing* in Liam's misfortune? Here's a young man who probably spent every hour of the day practicing football, and he was good enough to make a world-class team— and *one* mistake, *one* kick, ruined his life. It's *disgusting*— this social media, online access to everyone's pain!

Paul calmly walks over to a small table with two place settings and a silver chafing dish, raising the cover; he smiles brightly.

PAUL
Would scrambled eggs and caviar help?

EDWARD
God yes!

Paul serves Edward a plate of eggs.

PAUL
I saw you eyeing that hot tamale, Lenny—

EDWARD
Me?! If you flirted anymore, we'd be canceled!

PAUL
I think he'd be keen to get to know us a bit better—

EDWARD
What are you getting at?

PAUL
Darling, we're on a cruise to determine how we might want to handle your demise— it's not a subject I enjoy thinking about. A little diversion might help soften the proverbial blow?

Paul winks again; Edward looks clueless.

PAUL (CONT'D)
A certain something we've never entertained in our 40-plus years together? Might be just the thing to make this whole endeavor more palatable?

Edward's eyes dart around the room.

EDWARD
Are you suggesting a *threesome*? Is this the type of *diversion* you are alluding to?

Paul smiles at Edward; Edward laughs out loud.

EDWARD (CONT'D)
Is this something one does before getting married?

PAUL
Why not?

EDWARD
Ha! Why not indeed? Well then, a cup of tea might be in order!

Paul brings Edward a cup, kisses him.

PAUL
It'll be an adventure, darling!

EDWARD
Is that sort of thing *allowed*?

Paul shrugs.

PAUL
Consenting adults?

EXT. YACHT — MORNING

Inna and Pete argue outside the wheelhouse. Inna is scrolling through her phone, half listening.

PETE
I spoke to the Coast Guard— we gotta get rid of him at the next port, but I'm having issues getting permission to dock—

INNA
They don't know he's here, so what's the big deal in letting the guy have a good time for a few days?

PETE
Everything you've worked for is the *big deal*. And they *do* know he's here— hey, stop texting.

Pete waits until he has Inna's attention, takes a deep breath.

PETE (CONT'D)
There is a manifest; there are laws. Lance told the rehab facility he was taking Alfredo out to lunch; at this point, it's kidnapping—

Inna puts her phone in her pocket, scoffing.

INNA
Oh, for God's sake, Pete, it's not kidnapping; Lance is his nephew!

PETE
And he's not even here! He dumped his uncle on us and ran back to his life! I've reported him; all I'm asking is that you have someone meet us at Crescent, that's *if* I can get dockage—

INNA
Okay, okay. I'll talk to Alfredo, and I'll call Lance to pick him up. But let him have some fun for a day, yeah? I mean, isn't that what this is supposed to be about, fun?

Pete's face says it all.

INT. JUDITH AND HAROLD'S CABIN — MORNING

HAROLD
This is not fun for me, Judith! We are lying to these people, and I do not like it. Not one bit. You have to tell them— today!

JUDITH
What do you want me to say? I had a bad diagnosis, thought I was gonna die— but it turned out the hospital made a mistake, and now I just want to have a nice time on this gorgeous yacht?!

HAROLD
Yes! That's exactly what I want you to say. It's not fair. There are seriously ill people here. Did you see the lady in the turban? You think she's gonna be happy when she finds out you're just *playing* sick?

Judith clutches her heart and plops into the nearest chair.

JUDITH
I have palpitations again! You're killing me, Harold! The stress— you know I have a weak heart!

Harold kneels in front of her, takes her hand.

HAROLD
What I know, Judith, is that my wife is a hypochondriac— and there must be a reason for it—

Harold strokes Judith's hair. She looks away.

HAROLD (CONT'D)
I also know that I love her very much. And I'll do whatever it takes to make her feel she deserves to be healthy.
(then)
All I'm asking is that you come clean— so we can have a good time without lying our way through the whole trip.

Judith wipes a tear, fusses with her hankie.

Harold kisses her forehead.

She sniffs dramatically, then nods.

INT. THERAPY ROOM — MORNING

BERNICE WILSON (50s), death doula, MD, therapist, psychedelic guide — sits across from Margo and Lucy.

LUCY
I fully understand what the prognosis is for my mother; I'm not in denial, and I am not unaware that this could happen to me too—

MARGO
Lucy has her mastectomy and hysterectomy scheduled; she's on top of it. Chloe unfortunately—

LUCY
Chloe lives in another dimension. I don't think I've had a real conversation with her since she got her first toddler tablet—

Margo looks at Lucy, eyebrows raised.

MARGO
In any event, my daughters need to be on the same page, and they need to be communicating—

Bernice considering this.

BERNICE
Then why are you here without her? Shouldn't Chloe be part of this conversation?

LUCY
Oh, she will be; we just wanted to brief you first—

BERNICE
And you think that's fair to Chloe? Seems to me like you're setting the stage instead of allowing things to happen organically. And I don't need to be *prepped* before a therapy session— this ain't my first rodeo.

Margo and Lucy shift in their chairs.

BERNICE (CONT'D)
Do you two always team up? Might be contributing to Chloe's sense of isolation— why don't we get her in here?

Beat.

LUCY
Sure, I'll get her.

Lucy looks to Margo, who nods; she leaves. Bernice smiles at Margo.

BERNICE
How you holding up?

Beat.

MARGO
I like to think of myself as an intelligent person— but the reality is that I wouldn't be in this situation if I did what Lucy is doing, preventative surgeries—

Bernice nods, listening.

MARGO (CONT'D)
My mother died of the same aggressive breast cancer, and so did both of my sisters.
(MORE)

MARGO (CONT'D)
I watched them die, all of them— and I never thought I'd be next? To say I'm feeling like an idiot is an understatement. I thought yoga and green tea were going to help me dodge this bullet? Truly stupid.

BERNICE
It's normal to think your outcome will be different. You had a lot to live for—

MARGO
Their ends were awful, I mean beyond awful. I figure the least I can do is spare them that, and spare myself—

BERNICE
You're opting for a planned death?

Margo nods.

BERNICE (CONT'D)
When?

MARGO
To be honest— I wanted to check this cruise out to see if it was an environment I'd be comfortable in. I haven't determined that yet. I mean— the owner seems like she cares, there's attention to detail— but it's a big decision. I might want to die at home— I have no idea. I'm also feeling pretty good right now so—

BERNICE
So you have time to think about it all, that's good. What do you hope to achieve on this cruise?

Margo lets her breath out.

MARGO
I just want my girls to get along; they're going to be alone when I'm gone, they're all they have. I want there to be peace between—

The door flies open, Lucy eye-rolls in and takes her chair with a huge sigh. Chloe follows, eyes glued to her phone, a large backpack flung over her shoulder.

She closes the door and stands, playing a video game, head down.

Bernice clears her throat; no reaction from Chloe.

Bernice stares at Chloe until, finally, Chloe looks up.

CHLOE
Oh, hi—

Bernice motions to a chair; Chloe sits.

BERNICE
Why don't we all start by putting our devices away? This is a safe space, so no recording, photos, or video. Thank you.

Chloe shoves her phone in her backpack.

BERNICE (CONT'D)
This is a short cruise. You've booked four sessions. So I'm going to cut to the chase. Your mother is exploring her options for when her end comes. She's doing this now, while she can still make decisions for herself. Before the pain takes over.

A beat.

BERNICE (CONT'D)
Any questions so far?

Lucy and Chloe shake their heads, stunned into silence at Bernice's directness.

BERNICE (CONT'D)
Good. As a death doula and therapist, I've seen a lot of bad deaths and a lot of good deaths. A good death happens with good communication. This is not the time to hold back or tuck things away— you are not serving yourself or the others if you do that. A good death happens when the person who is passing has said everything they need to say and heard everything they need to hear. With that peace of mind, they can then release the shell— the body.
(MORE)

BERNICE (CONT'D)
I want your mom to have a *good* death, and I want you both to be able to say goodbye to her with the knowledge that you expressed your thoughts, fears, and love. I'd like to start with your fears. Chloe, what scares you most about your mom passing?

Chloe just stares at Bernice.

CHLOE
Well, it's not like she's dying right now, right?

Lucy scoffs.

LUCY
What part of "we're planning mom's death" do you not understand? Did you think this was a *pleasure* cruise? Sheesh!

Chloe's eyes drift away.

BERNICE
Lucy, please— let Chloe answer. Chloe, what scares you the most about all of this?

Chloe grabs her backpack, heads to the door.

Turning around, she points at Lucy.

CHLOE
That I'm gonna be left with just her.

Beat.

CHLOE (CONT'D)
That's what scares me the most.

Chloe leaves. Margo sighs.

BERNICE
I think we're gonna need to book a few more sessions, ladies.

CUT TO:

INT. LIAM'S CABIN — MORNING

Liam is watching a video describing the Death with Dignity Act. The presenter (60s) is clearly reading from a TelePrompTer.

PRESENTER
—the mixture of diazepam, digoxin, morphine sulphate and propranolol is self-administered in most cases—

The video cuts to a man lying in bed, surrounded by weeping loved ones.

He lifts a paper cup in a "cheers" gesture, then downs the cocktail and lies back smiling, eyes closed.

PRESENTER (CONT'D)
The individual will fall asleep, then gently drift into a deeper sleep; then they will stop breathing. It is at this point—

Liam slams the laptop closed. He makes a decision, exits his cabin.

EXT. YACHT — CONTINUOUS

Liam approaches the bow of the yacht, looks around; there's no one nearby. He peers over the edge and starts climbing over the railing.

A voice stops him.

CHLOE (O.S.)
Drowning is a shit way to die, trust me—

Liam turns to see Chloe sitting under a bench, tablet in hand, leaning on her backpack.

Liam scuttles off the railing, gives it a little polish as if he was just enjoying the view.

LIAM
How do you know that?

CHLOE
Research—

LIAM
For educational purposes, or?

Beat.

CHLOE
Or.

LIAM
I see.

Liam squats down across from her.

He clears his throat, sticks his hand out. Chloe, mid-game, looks up and quickly shakes his hand.

LIAM (CONT'D)
Liam Putter.

CHLOE
Chloe Dennis.

LIAM
What are you playing?

CHLOE
WoZ.

Liam looks clueless.

CHLOE (CONT'D)
World of Zephyr. It's a game. It's my thing.

LIAM
I see. What do you do in the game?

CHLOE
Live.

Liam nods.

LIAM
Sounds nice—

Chloe looks at him, moves closer to share her screen.

CHLOE
It is. Right now I'm in the Keeper's croft—

Liam looks at her screen.

LIAM
Looks exotic—

CHLOE
Yeah. I've been kinda obsessed with this game since it came out.

Liam notices something on her screen, points.

LIAM
Is that your *ranking*?!

Chloe ducks her head, shrugs.

CHLOE
Yeah, but it's not that big of a deal—

LIAM
Number 2? Is that in the *world*?

Chloe nods, tucks her head shyly.

LIAM (CONT'D)
Wow! You're famous, I bet, a goddess in the world of nerds— a nerd goddess! Or would it be geek goddess? I like that better, yeah? *Geek goddess*?

Chloe smiles; Liam looks at his shoes, reties a lace. They sit in silence for a beat. Liam stops fussing, looks at her.

LIAM (CONT'D)
I wasn't going to jump you, you know—

Chloe keeps playing, not looking up.

CHLOE
I was—

Beat.

CHLOE (CONT'D)
—but I didn't wanna lose my ranking.

Liam stifles a laugh. Chloe winks at him, goes back to playing.

INT. DINING ROOM — MORNING

Judith and Harold are pantomiming their way through an argument. Harold is jerking his thumb and mouthing "*go!*" toward a table where Inna and Doris huddle.

Judith shakes her head no, violently; Harold jerks his thumb again emphatically.

They have a stare-off. Finally, Judith sighs, gets up and grumbles her way across the room, Harold trailing behind.

INT. DINING ROOM — CONTINUOUS

Inna gulps coffee, scans the lists and menus scattered on the table.

DORIS
I ordered branzino and King salmon for the pickup in San Francisco, trying to avoid shellfish since we have two allergies on board— which is a shame, cause I wanted to make my lobster pasta—

INNA
Herbie's favorite! God, he loved your cooking— every single time we went out to eat, he'd say, "Doris can cook this chef into humiliation!"

Doris is mouthing the well-known words along with Inna; she puts her hand on Inna's.

HAROLD (O.S.)
Mrs. Fox! My wife wants to talk to you!

Inna stands, smiling as Judith and Harold approach.

INNA
Mr. and Mrs. Leiber! How are you? Is everything to your satisfaction? Be honest— this is our inaugural cruise, so feedback is welcome!

Judith stares, mouth open, but nothing coming out. Harold prods her from behind.

HAROLD
My wife has something to say to you, Mrs. Fox—

JUDITH
Yes! Yes, Mrs. Fox, erm— I am so sorry for your loss!
(MORE)

JUDITH (CONT'D)
We heard about it and were just amazed that you're doing all of this so soon after losing your husband. You must be grieving! Don't you think you should have taken more time off?!

Harold drops his head, hands up in the air. Inna's smile drops.

INNA
Ah, thank you— I am, ah-

JUDITH
Did you sit shiva?

HAROLD
Judith!

JUDITH
What?! I'm just asking because—

INNA
No, I did not sit shiva. My husband didn't want anyone to sit shiva—

JUDITH
Well, he may have *said* that but—

Doris gets between Inna and Judith. Sticks her hand out.

DORIS
I'm Doris Vahey, your chef. I've been wanting to talk to you both— how have the gluten-free options been for you so far? Any feedback for me?

Inna gives Doris a grateful look.

INNA
Will you excuse me, please? I'm late for a— a meeting.

Fighting tears, Inna hurries away.

HAROLD
Thank you, Doris. Everything has been delicious, and to be honest, I think Judith is faking being gluten intolerant— just like she fakes everything else!

Harold marches away in a huff, passing Bernice on her way in. Bernice warily approaches the women.

BERNICE
Judith Lieber?

Judith nods.

BERNICE (CONT'D)
I've been looking for you. I'm Dr. Wilson, Bernice. You and your husband haven't booked any sessions. Do you have a minute?

She motions for Judith to sit at a nearby table. Bernice slides into a chair, takes brochures and a laptop out of her bag.

Judith picks up a brochure, avoiding Bernice's eye.

BERNICE (CONT'D)
Lemme schedule you in now that I have you. Do you want a one-on-one, or a session with your husband present?

JUDITH
Ah, we aren't really therapy kinda people; we're here mostly to just be together— you know, time away and all that—

BERNICE
Yes, of course that's important, but with what you're both facing, it might be beneficial to have a safe place to discuss things? I can help people navigate the—

Judith sees something in the brochure and interrupts, pointing.

JUDITH
Mushrooms!

BERNICE
Sorry?

JUDITH
Mushrooms, the magic mushrooms— I want to do those. It says right here I can do that!

BERNICE
Yes, of course you can; it's quite a journey— have you ever done psychedelics?

Judith nods vigorously, eyes wide, clearly lying.

JUDITH
Oh gosh yes, Harold, and I were wild childs, hippie dippies, new agey shaman-like people—

Bernice's eyebrows lift.

BERNICE
Okay— it's your decision, of course. We'll need to do a quick physical, a therapeutic evaluation.

Bernice opens her laptop, scrolls.

BERNICE (CONT'D)
Can I see you at four this afternoon?

JUDITH
Sure! I'll be there. Thank you, gotta run and find Harold, bye, thank you—

Judith gets up, nodding, smiling, waving her way out of the dining room.

Bernice offers up a professional smile, watching her go.

EXT. YACHT — DAY

Chloe and Liam sit on deck chairs, drinking coffee.

CHLOE
The surgeries and stuff don't scare me. First of all— I don't ever want kids, no way, and I don't really think about my boobs, you know?

Liam looks away. Chloe laughs.

CHLOE (CONT'D)
For a guy, that sounds insane, right? All guys think about are boobs!

Liam starts to speak, then stops, starts again.

LIAM
Oh bugger it— it's not like I can get in any more trouble than I already am, yeah? So here are my thoughts. First of all— it's not just kids; it's your hormones, and stuff are gonna get all outta shape, and you're so young— just seems like an awful lot. Second— I would think about your boobs. If I were *you,* I mean— *you* should think about your boobs. Oh for chrissakes, none of this is coming out right—

Liam drops his head and sighs.

CHLOE
No, it's okay! I get it. Really. Thank you. It's just— it's been drilled into me since I was tiny, you know— my grandma died of it, my aunts, my mom is dying of it. They think I'm in denial or something but I'm not, I just choose to not talk about it all the time, you know? They're like *obsessed!* My sister has planned for her surgeries like it's her *wedding* or something, she made a fricken' playlist already— for her *recovery party*! I just don't want to be part of the insanity, you know? My sister is such a control freak— she thinks she can control this? She can't!

Beat. Liam looks around.

CHLOE (CONT'D)
Sorry I'm talking too much— you're just easy to talk to.

LIAM
I am? That's funny, I've spoken to exactly two people in the past 20 years— my therapist and the Amazon delivery guy—

CHLOE
Why?

Liam looks at her like she's nuts.

LIAM
Don’t you know who I am?

CHLOE
Of course I do, but what’s the big deal? You missed a kick, and it made you as famous as Taylor Swift— so go with it! Rebrand yourself as a *survivor*— I can see a whole anti-bullying campaign built around you. You have so much potential. I’m surprised nobody ever reached out to you about this—

Liam looks into space, remembering.

FLASHBACK — LIAM’S FRONT DOOR

- KNOCK. Liam cowers behind the door.

- Another KNOCK. He peers through the peephole.

- Another face. Another KNOCK. On and on, more KNOCKS more faces.

END FLASHBACK

Liam snaps back, looks at Chloe.

LIAM
Nope, can’t say they did— hey, I don’t think you have to assume you’re going to die the same way your mum is. You can fight it, like your sister’s doing. Maybe both of you have a good chance?

Chloe looks up briefly, locks eyes with him, shrugs. Liam looks at his phone.

LIAM (CONT’D)
Look, I’m gonna go to a therapy thing but— see you later, at dinner maybe?

CHLOE
Sure. Good luck!

Liam leaves. Chloe quickly logs back into the game, looks up briefly to watch Liam walk away, a tiny smile on her face.

INT. RECORDING STUDIO – DAY

RYAN and PAMELA sit across from the “Taking Care of Business!” podcast hosts – JOE (40s) and CAMMIE (30s).

Their biggest career credits: dinner-theater Godspell and brief stints at The Cheesecake Factory.

Behind them, a large poster shows the duo back-to-back in a Charlie’s Angels pose.

The set is small – a round table, four mics, logoed coffee cups.

Joe leans in. Dramatic.

JOE
–but you do admit that Inna Fox was integral in shaping the business?

PAMELA
Well, she contributed some ideas–

JOE
So why would she walk away from it all? Is it because of her new business, Sundown Cruise Lines, which looks interesting by the way–

Pamela eye rolls and cuts him off.

PAMELA
She’s flighty. She tried her hand at acting– then she threw herself into Herbie’s business for a while but lost interest. She’s flaky!

JOE
“Tried her hand at acting”? Wow.

Cammie perks up, chiming in.

CAMMIE
Oh my God! Her “*Cat On A Hot Tin Roof*” was amazing! My mom took me to New York to see it when I was twelve– incredible performance, look at my arms– chills!

PAMELA
Well, she hasn’t exactly been lighting up any stages in the past, what, 20 years?

RYAN
Total *has been*!

Ryan laughs alone. Cammie stares at her fingernails; Joe clears his throat.

PAMELA
Off the record— we could no longer trust Inna with the business, so we *insisted* on buying her out—

JOE
Ah— this is a *live* podcast; there is no "*off the record*"—

CAMMIE
Why couldn't you trust her? I totally believed her on stage—

RYAN
She wanted to turn Fox Funerals into a suicide cruise line!

JOE
What do you mean by "*suicide cruise line*"?

RYAN
That's the business she just launched— she's charging a shit load of money to kill people at sea!

Joe and Cammie stare at Ryan, mouths open.

RYAN (CONT'D)
I know, crazy!

Pamela leans into her mic.

PAMELA
We're actually quite concerned about her— she's had a history of, well, let's just say "*struggles*". Alcohol, nudity, exhibitionism—

Ryan grabs his mic.

RYAN
That's just the tip of the iceberg—

PAMELA
But we want everyone to know that we intend to honor Herbie Fox and his unique vision from this day forward, as a family.

Ryan leans in even closer, lips practically wrapped around the mic.

RYAN
And on that note— in honor of my beloved father's passing— we are offering the "*Golfer's dream funeral*". A *swinging* deal at only $499 all in!

JOE
Wow. Classy.

Beat.

JOE (CONT'D)
Hang on— you're saying that Sundown Cruises is a *suicide* cruise line?

Pamela and Ryan nod; Ryan throws his arms up.

RYAN
She's desperate, man; what can I say? She's lost her marbles!

Joe and Cammie share a look; Cammie leans into her mic.

CAMMIE
We'll be back after this commercial break. Get your questions ready for Ryan and Pamela Fox of Fox Funeral Homes!

The hosts switch the mics off, Joe turns to Ryan.

JOE
Those are some pretty big accusations you made there, buddy—

RYAN
It's all true, *buddy*!

Cammie looks at her screen, eyes widen.

CAMMIE
Wow— we have a heck of a lot of people calling in for questions. Hope you can stay a while?

PAMELA
We will stay and answer all of their questions about funerals. After all, we care— that's why we're here.

Joe and Cammie share a doubtful look, fake smiles all around as they put their headphones back on and get ready for the Q&A.

INT. INNA'S CABIN — BATHROOM

Inna stares into the bathroom mirror, pats her puffy eyes, and puts on some lipstick.

A knock at her door startles her.

INT. INNA'S CABIN — CONTINUOUS

Inna opens the door to Doris, who immediately takes Inna in her arms. Inna starts to cry again.

DORIS
That was rough—

INNA
Yeah, but there's a little truth to what she said—

DORIS
We all know you rushed into this, but that's who you are! You have one speed, *go*! This is your baby, your dream— maybe to the average person, it might look like you jumped into work a little too quickly— but you are not an *average* person.

Doris holds Inna at arm's length, looks her in the eye.

DORIS (CONT'D)
Do you wanna stop the cruise? We can, you know— it's not a big deal, give them their money back and go home?

INNA
Are you outta your fuckin' mind?

DORIS
You channeling Herbie now? Good!

INNA
No, I don't wanna quit or stop or— no! I just miss him, you know? I go to text him about ten times a day, and then I remember— I wake up looking for him, then I remember. I keep thinking if I stay on this boat long enough— if I do enough cruises, help enough people have good deaths that maybe, maybe—

Inna stops herself, turns back to Doris.

INNA (CONT'D)
I can't go home. He's not there. As long as I'm here, I'm in a sort of *other* place— a place where maybe he'll find me— does that make any sense?

DORIS
Not really— but death is complicated, sweetie. You need time, and I actually think that working through your grief is a good way for you to process it. You sitting at home with a couple thousand bottles of Bordeaux doesn't sit well with me. Plus, you got me and Petey here with you— your family.

Inna wipes her tears.

INNA
Thank you. You know me best, and you're right. I'm not avoiding thinking about Herbie— I'm avoiding another relapse. I need to be busy.

Inna looks at her phone and gasps.

INNA (CONT'D)
Shit! The wedding meeting, the guys! I'm late!

INT. WASH CARVER'S OFFICE — YACHT — DAY

WASH sits behind his desk, EDWARD and PAUL sit opposite him.

Wash hands two passports back to the men.

WASH
I gotta say, gentlemen— you made my job easy. Very organized, the both of you.

Ed and Paul nod, smile.

WASH (CONT'D)
When we get back to Coos Bay, the other passengers can disembark, and we can stay aboard and have a nice, simple ceremony as per your request.

Beat. Ed and Paul fidget, silent for a change.

WASH (CONT'D)
Nervous?

PAUL
Can you tell? We've been together 42 years, but I feel like a blushing bride!

WASH
Funny you say that, most of the long haul couples I've married are the most nervous— and excited.

EDWARD
Probably afraid it will change an already perfect thing— but for us, for *me* mostly, it's peace of mind. I want Paul to have the respect he deserves when I'm gone—

PAUL
God knows I deserve respect! Joking darling—

Edward, smiling, takes Paul's hand.

EDWARD
You most certainly do.

Edward turns to Wash.

EDWARD (CONT'D)
This man waited for decades for me to finally come home for good. He's also attended hundreds of the most mind-numbing events imaginable— and somehow made them fun! Never complained. Not once.

PAUL
Well, there was that one horrible *awards* thing in the Philippines— what a nightmare! The *sand castle* photos, dreadful!

The men laugh at the memory. Beat.

PAUL (CONT'D)
This is just icing on an already beautiful cake. We have had the *best* life together, truly.

Wash smiles.

WASH
It'll be an honor to marry you two.

Wash fidgets a little. Beat.

WASH (CONT'D)
I know this is wildly unprofessional— but I'm retired, and we're on a yacht, so what the hell— Ed, my grandkids would lose their minds if they knew I met you. Those dragon movies? I stood in line for the books, took them to every film; they are huge fans—

Edward, rising, smiles graciously.

EDWARD
Paul, would you do the honor, please?

Paul jumps up, Wash hands him his phone.

WASH
Really? I never would have asked, but I'll take it. Oh man, I'm gonna be cooler than Drake—

Paul takes the photo, the door flies open, and Inna stumbles in.

INNA
Oh gosh, did I miss the whole thing? I am so sorry, I—

PAUL
It's no problem! Mr. Carver has been a delight.
(MORE)

PAUL (CONT'D)
Ed and I have our vows written— the paperwork is in order, and we are sorted!

INNA
Oh, thank goodness, okay.

Inna hands Paul an envelope.

INNA (CONT'D)
Here are some menu and music options and a few other little things to have a think about; we can chat about them later? Whew! Exciting!

EDWARD
It is, and we're especially happy that it will be a simple affair—

INNA
No paparazzi, I promise!

Inna smiles; the guys shake Wash's hand and exit.

Inna plops into a chair, breathing heavily.

INNA (CONT'D)
Well, that went well despite—

WASH
It's all good, Inna, breathe. How you holdin' up?

Inna shrugs, pats her chest.

WASH (CONT'D)
Herbie was a huge presence; he's bound to leave a *huge* void.

Inna meets his eyes, nods.

WASH (CONT'D)
I remember when I married you two nutballs, never seen two happier people, laughing the whole time, dancin' around like fools— count your blessings— you experienced true love.

Inna tears up.

INNA
I sure did, Wash, I sure as hell did—

Beat. Wash brings something up on his laptop.

WASH
I have a little uncomfortable news I need to share with you— put a fire out before it catches flame.

INNA
What do you mean? What happened?

WASH
Pamela and Ryan are what happened—

Inna jerks up, on high alert.

Wash turns his laptop toward her.

An article fills the screen — a younger, naked INNA looking over her shoulder, her butt unmistakable.

The headline screams:

“ALCOHOLIC ACTRESS LAUNCHES SUICIDE CRUISE LINE!”

Inna’s mouth drops open.

INT. YACHT — DINING ROOM — EVENING

A table has been set in the middle of the room for a group dinner.

A few guests are looking furtively around, checking their phones. Some are huddled together, nervously chattering.

Waiters fill water and wine glasses quickly.

Alfredo is the only one who looks calm, nibbling away at a breadstick, smiling at everyone.

Inna walks down the long table, finally reaching her chair. Everyone stops what they’re doing, looks at her; it’s awkward as hell. Inna clears her throat.

INNA
Thank you all for joining me at this impromptu group dinner— I felt it was necessary to address a few things that have happened.
(MORE)

INNA (CONT'D)
First of all— I'd like you to meet Alfredo Lorrie.

Alfredo waves his breadstick around like a baton.

INNA (CONT'D)
Mr. Lorrie's nephew rescued him from a rather unpleasant facility and brought him to us. I felt strongly that by allowing him to stay, I was living up to my mission to help people— even if it could lead to legal issues. I said *yes* because it seemed like the right thing to do, to show him a good time after his months of misery— and horrible food—

Alfredo nods enthusiastically.

INNA (CONT'D)
If it's okay with you, the paying guests— I'd like Mr. Lorrie to stay for now, so he can have a little fun before going back to the facility. If that's a problem with any of you, I'm happy to discuss it. I wanted to be transparent about his presence here, with all of you, because you deserve the truth— which brings me to the next piece of business—

Inna takes a big breath, looks around the table.

INNA (CONT'D)
Today, a podcast hosted my stepson and his mother, who both said some pretty outrageous things about me and about this cruise—

Inna brings up an article on her phone.

INNA (CONT'D)
This one kinda sums it up— "Addict funeral home widow launches sex, drugs and suicide cruise line!"

Inna looks around the table. Some guests meet her eyes. Others look away.

The waiters stand frozen, water carafes mid-air, waiting for Inna to continue.

INNA (CONT'D)
Yes, I had a drinking problem in my 40s. I was sober for over 20 years, and I recently relapsed after my husband died. It was a one-day event and will not be repeated. That said— this unwanted press does make me want a very large glass of red—

The group relaxes a little, some chuckle.

INNA (CONT'D)
—it's also true that we do offer people the opportunity to do the Death with Dignity act on board— and it is true that some people have asked for more information on it. But no one is being coerced into doing it— and in order to do it, a person has to go through a lengthy process that involves oral requests, a written request, a special prescription and a mandatory wait in between. It's not something you can decide on a whim— it is not a service we offer up like dessert or a massage. It is a serious decision to be taken as a last resort. Any questions so far?

Judith raises her hand, Harold's face lights up, hopeful.

JUDITH
The drug allegations— I mean, the mushrooms and stuff you have are legal, right? It's good quality? Safe?

Inna nods to Bernice who puts her glass down and turns to Judith.

BERNICE
Measure 109 legalized psilocybin for therapy, and we are the only floating service center in the world— thanks to the incredibly hard work of Ms. Fox and Mr. Carver. The product we use on board is from Oregon's licensed psilocybin service providers. So yes— we *are* legal, and we use legal products.

Harold stares open-mouthed at Judith, who nods her thanks, takes a piece of bread, and reaches for the butter.

INNA
Anyone else?

ALFREDO
I'm happy to address the sex allegations. I ain't havin' any sex, and *I'm mad as hell, and I'm not going to take this anymore*!

The guests laugh; Margo turns to Edward.

MARGO
Did you like that movie?

EDWARD
Network? Absolutely! That's when American films were superb— Albert Finney, marvelous actor— we did a little independent film together *years* ago, delightful man.

Inna raises her arm, getting everyone's attention.

INNA
Launching the first of anything is nearly impossible— but here we are. You are all groundbreakers, the first participants in an experiment to prove that facing our last act can be beautiful— that we can overcome our fears and issues to earn the peace we deserve.

Beat.

INNA (CONT'D)
No one on their deathbed wishes they worked one more day or made one more deal; they ask for their brother to forgive them or for their mother to remember them. I want you all to have healing *now* so you can live your best days from today onwards. I want all of us here to face death with a clean slate, with love in our hearts and peace in our minds. I'm so proud of all of you, truly.
(MORE)

INNA (CONT'D)
Thank you for being here, thank you for being so open and kind to each other. Thank you.

A few people raise their glasses to Inna.

Waiters start serving the first course; the guests resume chatting.

Just as Inna sits down, Alfredo clinks his glass with his knife, clears his throat.

ALFREDO
I actually have one more thing— one question, one that's been on everyone's mind, I'm sure. After seeing these horrible articles online, the gossip *and* the *shocking* photos that accompany said articles, I have to ask—

Inna waits expectantly. Alfredo milks it, looking serious; he holds his phone up for all to see.

ALFREDO (CONT'D)
How the hell did you get an ass like that?! Squats? Lunges?!

Laughter erupts. A few whoops and whistles.

Inna laughs, hurls a piece of bread at Alfredo.

A jazzy version of Pearl Jam's "Oceans" plays over the following:

MONTAGE — DINNER ON THE YACHT — EVENING

- Guests eat beautiful food. Wine and cocktails flow. Low candles glow along the table.

- Captain Pete makes a toast. The guests fall silent, listening. Applause. He beams at Inna.

- Lenny, Paul, and Edward sit together at one end of the table, sharing dessert, flirting.

- Harold feeds Judith a bite of his food. She grimaces, chews, then smiles. They kiss.

- Liam and Chloe huddle in a corner, playing World of Zephyr, giggling. Lucy and Margo watch them, nudging each other, whispering.

- Outside the yacht, the table glows through windows and doors. Candlelight reflects off silver and crystal.

Happy faces. Laughter. The water sparkles with moonlight as the yacht drifts beneath the stars.

END MONTAGE

THE END