

MATCHMAKERS

Written by  
Rebecca Weiser

rweiser75@gmail.com  
617-633-8485

INT. MIDDLE SCHOOL - DAY

POPPY PEARSON (human, late 20s, bubbly but slightly delusional) stands in front of a classroom of human and alien MIDDLE SCHOOL CHILDREN.

POPPY

A hundred years ago, three brave men ventured into space. Two of them safely landed on the moon.

EXT. THE MOON (1969) - FLASHBACK

NEIL ARMSTRONG and BUZZ ALDRIN plant the US flag on the moon.

NEIL ARMSTRONG

One giant step for man. One, uh, giant-er, step for mankind.

BUZZ ALDRIN

Nailed it.

POPPY (V.O.)

But the third astronaut, a man named Sonny Fates, never made it.

INT. SONNY'S SPACESHIP (1969) - FLASHBACK

SONNY FATES (slob) drips HAMBURGER SAUCE on his spaceship dashboard. While trying to clean it up, he accidentally hits the EMERGENCY EJECT BUTTON.

SONNY FATES

Uh oh.

After a second, his spaceship explodes.

EXT. DISTANT PLANET (1969) - FLASHBACK

POPPY (V.O.)

He crash-landed on a distant planet, where he found something even better than the moon.

Sonny slowly opens his eyes, where the swirling dust reveals XINA (a beautiful alien woman).

SONNY FATES

A sexy woman?

POPPY (V.O.)  
That's right. Love.

SONNY AND XINA MONTAGE:

...Sonny and Xina kiss at their wedding  
...Sonny and Xina lead a march for intergalactic love  
...Sonny and Xina cut the ribbon for the Fates Consulting  
...Wedding invitations and stacks of money roll in

POPPY (V.O.)  
Sonny and Xina spent their lives  
fighting to normalize intergalactic  
love. Years later, they founded  
Fates Consulting, where they helped  
thousands of humans and aliens find  
their soulmate. No matter how many  
light years away.

INT. MIDDLE SCHOOL - DAY

Poppy beams in front of the disinterested class.

POPPY  
And that's where I come in. Hi! My  
name's Poppy Pearson, and I'm a  
Fates matchmaker!

CECE (snotty) raises her hand.

CECE  
You work for my mom?

POPPY  
I do. And it's been so rewarding!

CECE  
So, you work for me! I own you!

The class LAUGHS. Poppy is un-phased.

POPPY  
Ooh, transitive property. Someone  
loves math!

CECE  
Do you even have a boyfriend? I  
have seven. One for each day of the  
week.

Seven SULLEN BOYS sit in the corner. The TEACHER interjects.

TEACHER  
Cece, stop bullying every person  
who comes in for Career Day!

POPPY  
That's okay! I wouldn't call him my  
boyfriend. But only because he  
won't let me. Yet!

The LAUGHTER grows, as the Teacher ushers Poppy to leave.

CECE  
OMG, she's so pathetic!

TEACHER  
Class! Stop laughing at the dating  
expert for being in an  
unfulfilling, ambiguous hookup  
thing! Can't you see her life is  
hard enough?  
(to Poppy)  
Don't worry, girl, we've all been  
there.

POPPY  
Did my message come through? About  
love and acceptance?

TEACHER  
Absolutely. Now, Cece! Get off of  
Tyler! You can't mount him just  
because it's "his day."

**TITLE: MATCHMAKERS**

EXT. NEW YORK CITY - DAY

A FLYING BUS zooms through NEW YORK CITY, passing  
stratospheric buildings, flying vehicles, and jet-packing  
commuters.

It stops outside a bright pink building - this is FATES  
CONSULTING. Poppy hops off.

INT. FATES CONSULTING, LOBBY - DAY

A sleek and modern lobby. LILITH (alien, early 20s, goth)  
answers the phone.

LILITH  
 Fates Consulting. Finding you love  
 in all the right spaces. Lilith  
 speaking. How may I help you?

Poppy rushes in, waving enthusiastically. Lilith ignores her.

LILITH (CONT'D)  
 And to honor how priceless love  
 truly is, our "Love is Priceless"  
 package starts at 460K.

INT. FATES CONSULTING, AMANDA'S OFFICE - DAY

An immaculate corner office. PORTRAITS of smitten human/alien couples line the wall with AMANDA FATES (human, mid 50s, loves being the boss) standing center.

Poppy sits beside her team: BARRY (human, 30s, gay and stylish) and FRAN & JAN (a squat, sage, alien couple).

AMANDA  
 Okay, cupids, it's your favorite  
 time of the week. Client updates.  
 And before we get started, let me  
 say this: we need a big win.

Poppy writes the word "WIN" in big letters in her notebook.

AMANDA (CONT'D)  
 We're the most renowned matchmaking  
 firm in the galaxy, but our client  
 satisfaction is lower than ever.  
 Even with the welcome gift!

Amanda holds up a copy of her BOOK: *Men Are From Mars, Women Are From Venus, and Honey, You're Still Single?*

AMANDA (CONT'D)  
 I'm very upset. There's nothing  
 more important than our clients'...

Amanda COUGHS. Poppy chimes in.

POPPY  
 Satisfaction?

AMANDA  
 Savings account. Which they are  
 draining, in order to increase  
 their satisfaction. So Barry -  
 (now warm and friendly)  
 (MORE)

AMANDA (CONT'D)

- My favorite, handsome nephew!  
Start us off. What's the good news?

BARRY

Amanda, stop! You're my favorite.  
And not just because you're signing  
my checks!

Amanda laughs too loud at this.

BARRY (CONT'D)

Things are going a-maz-ing with my  
sexy client, Divorcee Dan. After  
weeks of intensive research, we  
realized: he doesn't just like tall  
guys. He also likes...short guys.

AMANDA

What a breakthrough.

Fran and Jan interject.

FRAN

Human love. So limited. So simple.  
Meanwhile, we've been wandering  
time and space, locating 50 matches  
for our polyamorous clones...

JAN

And we only need 50 more, so they  
can transform into a single,  
omnipotent entity...

FRAN

An entity one could only describe  
as "God"...

Amanda cuts them off.

AMANDA

Just make sure all 100 clones leave  
a review before they amalgamate,  
okay Fran and Jan? I don't want to  
get ripped off by this God guy.

JAN

(under their breath)  
We pray that He is merciful.

AMANDA

And I pray that he's loaded. Poppy,  
what's new with you?

Poppy sits up in her chair.

POPPY

My client, Princess Strabina of Planet Stralbo, has her first blind date tonight. I've been working with her parents to find a "politically aligned match." I'm really excited! And I can tell, because my stomach is making these really cool sounds!

Poppy's stomach emits a noise like a MUFFLED SCREAM.

FRAN / JAN

Sounds like our climax. Jinx. You owe me a Coke. Double jinx. I owe you oral.

BARRY

Ugh, I could go for some oral.

AMANDA

Hey! Focus! We could all go for some oral. But we have work to do. So let's go out there and close these deals. It's not about love. It's about business. Capiche?

FRAN

Caprese.

AMANDA

Oh, and Poppy! How was career day?

POPPY

Wonderful! Your daughter is such a...strong willed young woman.

AMANDA

Ha! Yes, thank you. She is a bitch.

INT. FATES LOBBY - DAY

Barry buys a snack from the vending machine. Poppy appears behind him.

POPPY

Congrats on honing in on your client's tastes, Barry! That's a huge milestone.

BARRY  
 (suspicious)  
 Are you messing with me because I'm  
 sleeping with Divorcee Dan?

POPPY  
 (genuinely shocked)  
 You're sleeping with Divorcee Dan?

Lilith joins the line.

LILITH  
 Of course he's sleeping with  
 Divorcee Dan. How long does it take  
 someone to learn they like tall  
 guys and short guys? Idiot.

BARRY  
 Don't tell Amanda. I can't lose  
 this job, especially since I got  
 fired from my last job as a  
 barista, and my job before that as  
 a freelance barista, and my job  
 before that as a stay at home  
 barista/son.

POPPY  
 I'd be honored to keep your secret.  
 I've always wanted a "work  
 husband."

BARRY  
 (begrudgingly)  
 Ugh. Fine.

Poppy WOOS in delight. Lilith steps in front of her.

LILITH  
 This place sucks. Kill me before I  
 hire a company to find me a date.

BARRY  
 So then quit?

LILITH  
 I can't, I'm saving up for a  
 thoroughbred poodle.

POPPY  
 Lilith, I hear you, I see you, and  
 I hold your heart in my heart, but  
 Fates is a dream come true! We're  
 helping people find true love.

(MORE)

POPPY (CONT'D)

The most beautiful thing in this  
and every universe!

LILITH

Starting at nearly half a million?

BARRY

So slave away on one of the  
millions of apps with the rest of  
the peasants. We get to party with  
hot, rich people. It's fun!

LILITH

It's class warfare.

POPPY

Not true! We're helping real, down-  
to-earth people! People who want to  
be happy! People just like us!

INT. STRALBO PALACE, GREAT ROOM - DAY

An exorbitant, medieval palace. The walls are lined with  
amputated heads.

Poppy walks in with KING and QUEEN STRALBO (grandiose,  
slender aliens with large black eyes).

QUEEN STRALBO

So Poppy. Remind us how you got  
into this "matchmaking" business.

POPPY

Funny story! My dad left my family,  
and my mom got so depressed, I  
thought she was going to hurt  
herself. Finally, I asked a teacher  
to take her out to -

KING STRALBO

- To kill her? But of course.

POPPY

To a nice, romantic dinner...

KING STRALBO

Ah.

POPPY

And I know it's nuts, but that date  
made her happy. And I realized I  
needed to do that.

(MORE)

POPPY (CONT'D)  
 (verging on desperate)  
 I needed to make her happy.

Awkward beat.

KING STRALBO  
 Well! That is a hilarious story.

QUEEN STRALBO  
 But lest we get carried away with  
 giggles, may we present our  
 daughter...

A VASE is flung at them and SMASHES near Poppy's head.

QUEEN STRALBO (CONT'D)  
 The magnificent Princess Strabina.

PRINCESS STRABINA (19, tiara, mini dress) rages on the other  
 side of the room.

QUEEN STRALBO (CONT'D)  
 She's pissed because she wants to  
 travel. Like an American!

POPPY  
 (trying to connect)  
 Oh nice! Traveling is awesome. I  
 studied abroad during my junior  
 year -

STRABINA  
 (wailing)  
 So even the help gets to go out and  
 do things? It's not fair!

KING STRALBO  
 It doesn't matter what's fair. You  
 come of matrimonial age next week!

POPPY  
 I'm sorry. I-I though Strabina was  
 totally on board with this?

QUEEN STRALBO  
 (pleading)  
 Please, daughter. If you don't get  
 married, our rule will collapse  
 entirely.

POPPY  
 And-and why's that?

Strabina picks up another plate -

STRABINA  
 You didn't learn that in your  
 "study abroad"??

KING STRALBO  
 Because Stralbo can only reign when  
 a married couple takes the throne.

- and SMASHES it to the floor.

QUEEN STRALBO  
 It's been this way since the dawn  
 of time.

KING STRALBO  
 The future of our planet rests on  
 Strabina. And on you, Poppy.

Poppy starts to sweat, when her phone RINGS.

POPPY  
 Wow, what an exciting opportunity!  
 I just need to take this call real  
 quick. You are my number one  
 priority. I...love you?

Poppy rushes out. Strabina glares at her parents.

STRABINA  
 I want to experience the world! I  
want HPV!

QUEEN STRALBO  
 Strabina.

INT. PLANET STRALBO, HALLWAY - DAY

A cold stone hallway. Poppy answers her phone, opening a  
 HOLOGRAM of GARETH (early 30s, stoner), playing video games.

GARETH  
 How's the most beautiful woman in  
 the Milky Way?

Poppy blushes.

POPPY  
 Aw Gareth. You're the most  
 beautiful woman in the Milky Way.

GARETH  
 (not listening)  
 So can we push tonight back to  
 like, three?

POPPY  
 Three in the morning? Isn't that  
 late, Gareth? For a date?

GARETH  
 Never said it was a date.

POPPY  
 Well, obviously!

GARETH  
 But I'd really like to see you. I  
 have something important to ask.

Poppy perks up.

POPPY  
 Really? Is it about...us?

GARETH  
 It might be.

POPPY  
 Seriously?? Gareth! I'm so excited!

Gareth, not listening, screams at his video game.

GARETH  
 GET OFF THE FOAM! Sorry, Pops,  
 gotta go. See you later. Bring your  
 mouth!

Gareth hangs up and the hologram disappears. Confused, Poppy  
 touches her mouth. Then she gets it.

POPPY  
 Right. For kisses!

INT. MERV'S BISTRO - NIGHT

An upscale restaurant, with a variety of CHIC ALIEN  
 CLIENTELE. Waiters finish dishes with BIG PEPPER GRINDERS.  
 Poppy and the Stralbos stand at the entrance.

STRABINA  
 I'm underwhelmed.

POPPY

What! Merv's Bistro is the hottest spot in all Andromeda! The waitlist is decades long. Plus, it's a neutral zone, so all different species can mix and mingle.

Strabina turns to her parents.

STRABINA

Remember I'm only doing this because of what you promised.

KING STRALBO

(resigned)

Yes, we got you another planet.

STRABINA

Good. I need a place to dump all my shoes that I hate but won't throw out. Because fashion is cyclical???

POPPY

That's right! Bermuda shorts are back, I hope! But let's not keep your handsome date waiting. Drumroll!

Poppy does a drumroll. Nobody joins.

POPPY (CONT'D)

Nice drums, Strabina! I like how they are silent. Introducing Prince Grunk of Planetoid Gurd!

GRUNK, a very ugly, scabbed-over alien, sits in the corner.

STRABINA

(close to gagging)

That's my date?? That festering wound??

POPPY

Nothing some concealer can't fix.

KING STRALBO

Don't be so vain, Strabina. We've always wanted to colonize Planetoid Gurd.

QUEEN STRALBO

When Grunk exploits his resources and betrays his people, our exports will skyrocket. Good work, Poppy.

POPPY

No problem! I knew all of this and I'm totally cool with everything you just said.

INT. MERV'S BISTRO - LATER

Strabina and Grunk sit in silence. Grunk SLURPS his drink.

STRABINA

So that's your thing? Slurping?

Poppy watches uneasily from the bar. Nearby, King and Queen Stralbo are drunk. Further down, a few GURD GUARDS (also ugly and scabbed) chat amongst themselves.

POPPY

I'm just gonna check on them.

Poppy grabs an employee apron. She approaches their table.

POPPY (CONT'D)

Hi guys! How are we doing?

GRUNK

I'll do another bucket of pus.

STRABINA

Poppy, we're fine. Go away!

GRUNK

That's your thing? Being rude to waiters?

STRABINA

No, she works for my parents!

Poppy scratches her nose. Grunk stands up.

GRUNK

Did you just scratch your nose?

POPPY

What?

GRUNK

Did you just scratch your nose at me?

POPPY

Oh, I -

Strabina laughs at Poppy's shocked face.

STRABINA

Are you stupid? That's the worst thing you can do to a Gurd.

POPPY

No, no, I just had an itch. It's a fancy spot! There are so many pepper grinders!

The restaurant goes silent. A WAITER stops grinding pepper.

The Gurd Guards and King and Queen Stralbo appear.

KING STRALBO

What's going on?

GRUNK

You set me up with your entitled daughter, then you ravage my people with your hideous gesture. You've looked down on us for millennia, Stralbo. But no more!

POPPY

No, I promise. I just inhaled too much freshly cracked pepper!

GRUNK

You think I haven't heard that before? "Freshly cracked pepper" is the oldest trick in the book.

POPPY

(nervously)

Great, so you both love reading!

GRUNK

Guards! Get them!

The Gurd Guards descend upon Strabina. Chaos erupts. Poppy crawls under a table. Cowering, she watches the fighting. Every so often, someone falls to the ground.

After a moment:

QUEEN STRALBO

Strabina! Where's Strabina?

Poppy slowly emerges. The restaurant is a mess.

KING STRALBO

STRABINA?

POPPY  
I don't see her.

QUEEN STRALBO  
She's gone!

**ACT TWO**

INT. FATES CONSULTING, LOBBY - EVENING

Amanda walks to Barry, eating a very involved yogurt bowl.

AMANDA  
(mouth full)  
What are we getting up to tonight?

BARRY  
Divorcee Dan! We have a little date  
- uh, date-ing - coach session.

AMANDA  
Perfect! I haven't wingwoman-ed in  
forever. I could use a stiff drink.  
And a stiffer man, if you catch my  
drift.

BARRY  
(forcing a laugh)  
I do! That was very vivid. But you  
know what? I don't know if tonight  
is the best night for drinks.

AMANDA  
(jokingly)  
I'm your boss, so you can't say no.

LILITH  
Amanda, you're busy tonight. You  
have that brand thing for the  
Single Women Over 50 Intentional  
Dodgeball League.

BARRY  
"Intentional" dodgeball?

LILITH  
They're not just throwing balls at  
each other. They're also throwing  
balls at...their insecurities.

BARRY  
Right.

AMANDA

God, why must I spend the last hot years of my life telling women with a violent hobby they're inadequate? I need a different kind of ball, if you catch my drift.

BARRY

Yes, I catch your drift!

Fran and Jan walk in, 100 CLONES trailing behind them. Fran stops momentarily, addressing the scene.

FRAN

Apologies in advance for the goo.

INT. MERV'S DINER - NIGHT

King Stralbo holds a SOBBING Queen Stralbo. STRALBO GUARDS stand watch. Grunk and his men stir, gagged and tied in the corner. Poppy helplessly sweeps up the mess.

QUEEN STRALBO

I can't believe she ran away! All we did was try to force her into a marriage so we could overtake another planet and reach unparalleled levels of financial domination! Am I a bad mother?

KING STRALBO

Of course not, darling, I'd love for you to be my mother.

POPPY

I know this is a bad time, but this all could've been avoided. You can't force marriage. You can't force love!

King and Queen Stralbo stands up tall, their eyes blazing.

KING STRALBO

Then explain Chapter 4 in Amanda's book: *You Actually CAN Force Love*.

QUEEN STRALBO

Why in all of Andromeda are you still here? You are terminated from your post.

They move in on Poppy. She slowly backs up.

KING STRALBO

Are you delusional? How could you possibly think you still work for us? This entire mess is your fault.

QUEEN STRALBO

You're lucky we took care of those filthy Gurdy for you. After that little act you pulled.

KING STRALBO

Scratching your nose! What's next? Rubbing your tummy!?

King Stralbo nods. A BUFF STRALBO GUARD grabs Poppy's arm.

POPPY

Wait, no. I can help! I-I need to help! Doesn't the fate of your planet rest on Strabina? On me?

KING STRALBO

That's no longer your concern.

He drags her to the door, and throws Poppy outside.

INT. DIVORCEE DAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Barry and DIVORCEE DAN (turtlenecked, middle-aged alien) sit on the couch. His home is cozy, filled with books and plants.

Poppy frantically paces in front of them.

DIVORCEE DAN

Who is this again?

BARRY

Sorry. She called me sobbing. I hope it's fine that she's here.

DIVORCEE DAN

Uh, sure. It's just that this is our night.

POPPY

All I know is that she has a planet full of shoes, loves America, and wants HPV. So she's either there, at that planet, or, I'm thinking, somewhere with a lot of HPV. But where could that be?

BARRY

You're looking at it, sweetie.

DIVORCEE DAN

One in four.

BARRY

Why are you even trying? Your client fired you. You're free!

POPPY

Because it's the right thing to do! Because she's scared and lost! And because, if I find her, maybe I'll be un-fired. And I'll get that big win for Amanda. And my mom - I mean everyone - will love me again!

DIVORCEE DAN

I'm going to fetch a sparkling yuzu. Barry, care to join?

POPPY

I just have to be back in the city by 3AM. I'm seeing...someone.

DIVORCEE DAN

A "special friend"?

BARRY

Ugh, "special friend" is what my mom called all my boyfriends. And it's like, they were never special. Our sex was totally average!

POPPY

Actually, Gareth is asking me to be his girlfriend!

DIVORCEE DAN

Well, if I'm not needed -

Poppy pulls herself together.

POPPY

Let's try the shoe planet first.

BARRY

Fine. Divorcee Dan, you're driving.

Divorcee Dan SIGHS, but grabs his keys anyway.

DIVORCEE DAN

I told you. It's just "Dan."

EXT. SHOE PLANET - NIGHT

A tiny planet that feels like the inside of a mall. Poppy, Barry, and Divorcee Dan sift through piles of junk.

BARRY

There's no way she's here. This place is a storage unit.

POPPY

You never know! Keep looking for clues!

Poppy picks up a pair of clown shoes.

POPPY (CONT'D)

Oh Strabina. I would've found you a match who would never make you throw away your clown shoes.

BARRY

OUCH!

Barry winces.

BARRY (CONT'D)

Oh my God...is that a church?

He looks closer.

BARRY (CONT'D)

Look! There are people down there!

A town of TINY ALIENS emerge from a tiny church, making an unintelligible, high-pitched DIN. Poppy rushes over.

POPPY

Hello! Have you seen this girl?

She shows a PHOTO OF STRABINA on her phone. The tiny aliens respond in an incomprehensible flurry. Poppy leans in close.

POPPY (CONT'D)

She's the devil incarnate? She destroyed your entire village? There are hundreds dead? With the body count rising everyday?

Poppy turns to Barry.

POPPY (CONT'D)

Yikes.

BARRY

I know. That wasn't helpful at all.

Divorcee Dan calls from a pile of clothes. He's holding a BAND T-SHIRT with the word GROTESQUE on it.

DIVORCEE DAN

Hey, kids? I think I found a clue.

INT. HALLWAY, LECHER NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

A hip nightclub full of HOT CLUGBOERS. Divorcee Dan walks confidently ahead as Barry and Poppy hurry behind.

POPPY

So, why do you think she's here?

DIVORCEE DAN

Because. She's a grote-scrote

He stops and holds up the BAND T-SHIRT he found.

BARRY

I'm sorry?

Divorcee Dan keeps moving. Barry and Poppy rush to catch up.

DIVORCEE DAN

A fan of the hot-boy-pop-punk band, Grotesque. Used to be one myself. Followed them everywhere. Told my ex-wife I was visiting my dying mom. Meanwhile, I was grote-ing out with my fellow scrotes.

BARRY

I didn't know your mom died. So sad, so tragic, why am I turned on?

POPPY

But this shirt...didn't Strabina throw it out?

DIVORCEE DAN

What else could she do? Keep it at home with her dictator parents? No, being a grote-scrote is hardcore. You don't even buy their merch if you're not a die hard.

Poppy looks at the PHOTO OF STRABINA on her phone. She appears to be wearing the same shirt.

POPPY

Way to go, Divorcee Dan!

DIVORCEE DAN

I knew they were playing Lecher tonight. It's their favorite venue.

POPPY

You can take the scrote out of the grote, but you can't take the grote out of the scrote!

BARRY

Is anyone else's mouth like, totally watering?

INT. DANCE FLOOR, LECHER NIGHTCLUB - CONTINUOUS

A dance floor packed with raving CLUBGOERS. The band GROTESQUE (four hot guys) play on an elevated stage.

POPPY

I've never been anywhere like this. Have you, Barry?

She looks around. Barry and Divorcee Dan have disappeared. A HUGE ALIEN bumps into Poppy, pushing her into the crowd.

HUGE ALIEN

Hey, watch it!

She tries to catch her footing, but gets pushed deeper in.

POPPY

BARRY??

Finally, she spots them on the far end of the dance floor. Divorcee Dan, Barry, and a LIZARD MAN are making out and grinding.

POPPY (CONT'D)

BARRY! OVER HERE!

Poppy fails to push through the partiers. She takes out her phone and shows a PHOTO OF STRABINA to another clubgoer.

POPPY (CONT'D)

Excuse me, have you seen this girl?

Ignored. She turns to another.

POPPY (CONT'D)

Have you seen this girl?

Poppy frantically searches the club, until she sees her:  
Strabina dancing in the front.

POPPY (CONT'D)  
Oh my God. STRABINA! DON'T MOVE!  
KEEP DANCING, QUEEN! BUT DON'T  
MOVE!

Poppy takes a deep breath and shoves through a WALL OF  
PARITERS. They're dancing, doing drugs, setting up  
furniture...It's like drilling through a tunnel.

POPPY (CONT'D)  
Excuse me! So sorry! If I can just  
squeeze! Sorry! Cool shirt! Pardon!

Finally, with her hair a mess and clothes ripped, Poppy  
stumbles to the front of the club.

POPPY (CONT'D)  
Strabina! I did it! I saved you!

"Strabina" turns around only for it to be a RANDOM GIRL.

POPPY (CONT'D)  
Oh no.

RANDOM GIRL  
Oh hey! Are you here to make Lecher  
more inclusive?  
(gesturing to her face)  
I love asymmetrical representation.

RANDOM GIRL'S FRIEND pops out next to her.

RANDOM GIRL'S FRIEND  
Yeah, they made that scholarship  
fund for busted people! It's so  
important to mingle with 4s and 5s.

POPPY  
(frantically)  
Where could she be?? Where in the  
galaxies could she be!?

Suddenly, her phone RINGS.

INT. REC CENTER - NIGHT

Amanda presses the phone to her ear mid-dodgeball game with  
middle aged human and alien WOMEN.

AMANDA

What the hell is happening Poppy?

As the ladies hurl dodgeballs, they also scream insecurities.

WOMAN #1

My eczema!

AMANDA

King and Queen Stralbo just called.  
You lost their daughter? If she's  
not found by tomorrow morning,  
don't even bother coming to work.

A middle aged woman hurls a dodgeball.

WOMAN #2

My sister makes more money than me!

AMANDA

Don't step one foot into my office  
unless it's to collect your things  
and quit the matchmaking industry  
entirely. Do you understand? I will  
not let Fates take a hit like that.

The dodgeball narrowly misses Amanda, and instead knocks  
another WOMAN flat on her back. Amanda hangs up.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

Ooh, way to take a hit like that,  
Stacy. We'll find you someone with  
good insurance.

EXT. SMOKING AREA, LECHER NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

POPPY

Wait. Amanda. You don't understand.  
I'm going to find her.

The line drops.

POPPY (CONT'D)

Hello? Amanda?  
(with growing desperation)  
NO. Don't hang up! I'm gonna get  
that big win! I'm gonna make you  
love me!

CLUBGOERS look at Poppy. Agitated, she searches for a  
familiar face. The room starts spinning...

GARETH (V.O.)  
Woah, Poppy Pearson, is that you?

Gareth comes into focus. Poppy quickly smooths her hair.

POPPY  
Gareth! Hi! What are you doing here?

GARETH  
My new gig. I wring out the grotescrote's wet t-shirts and sell their sweat to fans. I'm their new Fluids Manager, baby!

POPPY  
That's amazing! You always wanted to work in music.

GARETH  
I'm pumped you're here. Now we don't have to go all the way back home to do this.

POPPY  
"Do this?" Is "this" happening?

Poppy's eyes shine with anticipation. Gareth takes her hand.

GARETH  
Poppy, you are so great. I love how I can do whatever, and you don't care at all.

POPPY  
Yes! I love that you can be yourself around me. It's what makes our relationship so good.

GARETH  
Ahh, R-word!

Poppy LAUGHS, a little manically.

GARETH (CONT'D)  
But I'm older now, Pops. I have a real job.

POPPY  
I can't wait to evolve with you -

GARETH  
And I need someone who, I dunno, respects herself.

POPPY  
That's my favorite thing to do to  
myself!

Gareth clears his throat.

GARETH  
So the important question I wanted  
to ask you is...Poppy, will you  
stop texting me?

Beat.

POPPY  
You prefer calls?

GARETH  
Ha! No. I'm breaking up with you. I  
didn't want to say that because we  
were never really together but -

Gareth HIGH FIVES Poppy. She's devastated.

GARETH (CONT'D)  
Yeah! Good talk! Let me know if you  
ever want a vial of sweat.

Gareth walks away, WHISTLING, leaving Poppy speechless.

A moment later, an UGLY ALIEN approaches her.

UGLY ALIEN  
You got the busted scholarship too?

POPPY  
I'M NOT A FIVE!

### **ACT THREE**

INT. FATES LOBBY - THE NEXT DAY

Still disheveled from the night before, Poppy throws her  
things into a cardboard box.

Barry walks in.

BARRY  
There you are! I've been calling  
you all night! What's going on?

POPPY  
 (angrily)  
 Beating Amanda to the punch.

BARRY  
 You're giving up?

Poppy throws a plant into the box.

POPPY  
 Thanks for your help by the way.

BARRY  
 Divorcee Dan and I danced for like  
 two minutes and then you were gone!

POPPY  
 Yeah, it really looked like you  
 were just dancing.

BARRY  
 We wanted to help, but we couldn't  
 find you, Poppy!

POPPY  
 That's convenient! Should I tell  
 Amanda what you and your "client"  
 got up to? Would that be helpful?

LILITH  
 Amanda isn't coming in today. She's  
 obviously concussed from dodgeball.

Fran & Jan walk in. Barry rushes over.

BARRY  
 Fran! Jan! What about your  
 omnipotent God? Can he find  
 Strabina?

Fran & Jan look sadly at each other.

FRAN  
 He is on His honeymoon. Making love  
 to a black hole.

JAN  
 They say when you climax from a  
 black hole, the explosion is so  
 intense, it creates a new Big Bang.

FRAN

Perhaps a consolation? That somewhere, in another universe, you have found Strabina, retained your dream job, and are not questioning the merit of love in its entirety?

POPPY

Of course that's not a consolation, Fran! Can't he take a snack break for five minutes, and use his almighty power to help me -

Lilith cuts her off.

LILITH

She's in midtown.

Poppy stares at her.

POPPY

What?

LILITH

Your client Strabina? She's in midtown. At that giant shoe warehouse. She posted a few minutes ago.

Lilith shows Poppy the SOCIAL MEDIA POST.

POPPY

What? She's on the run!

LILITH

It's this new app. No one can see it if they're over 23.

Poppy looks at Barry. He's also shocked.

POPPY

GODDAMIT -

INT. METEOR SHOE-WER - DAY

A giant shoe store. A happy GREETER waves hello.

GREETER

Welcome to Meteor Shoe-wer! What are your feet craving today?

Poppy pushes past the Greeter, and shoves past CUSTOMERS.

GREETER (CONT'D)  
 Running Shoes are Aisle 1000B! And  
 manners are in Aisle "Who Raised  
 You?"

Poppy sprints into the maze. After a few wrong turns, she finally spots Strabina, trying on a pair of stilettos.

POPPY  
 Strabina!

Strabina looks up. She hobbles away in her heels.

POPPY (CONT'D)  
 STRABINA!

Panting, Strabina knocks over a STACK OF BOXES. Poppy trips.

POPPY (CONT'D)  
 You posted your location online!?

STRABINA  
 How do you know about that?? I  
 thought you were 40!

POPPY  
 Okay, you know what, I'm calling  
 your parents.

STRABINA  
 Oh yeah? You're gonna rat on me?

Strabina throws a pair of CLOGS at Poppy.

POPPY  
 OUCH!

Poppy holds the phone up to her ear.

POPPY (CONT'D)  
 It's ringing!

Strabina's face goes dark. It's no longer a game.

STRABINA  
 Poppy, seriously, hang up right  
 now. Just give me another day.  
 Another hour? Please!

Strabina tries to grab the phone from Poppy's hand.

POPPY  
 I lost my job over this, so I'd  
 really rather not.

Strabina gets more agitated with each attempt.

STRABINA

Please! My parents are crazy!  
They'll kill me!

POPPY

Yeah, I met them! Geez, this is a  
long ring tone.

STRABINA

No, you don't understand. They're  
going to force me -

POPPY

Hello? Queen Stralbo?

Strabina SHRIEKS and throws the phone in a pile of shoeboxes.

POPPY (CONT'D)

Strabina! This is for your own  
good!

STRABINA

None of this is for my own good.  
Don't you get it? They're going to  
force me to marry Grunk...And I  
can't. I can't get married. I can't  
marry someone I don't love.

Strabina crumples.

STRABINA (CONT'D)

I just can't.

Queen Stralbo answers from Poppy's phone.

QUEEN STRALBO (O.S.)

Hello? Poppy?

INT. CAFE - DAY

Poppy and Strabina sip coffees at a cafe.

STRABINA

I stole a spacecar back at the  
restaurant. And I knew I'd get  
caught. But it was just too much.  
Not just Grunk. Everything. They  
never let me decide anything.

POPPY

I get it.

STRABINA

Planet Stralbo is so backward. It's so far behind. And when I met you, I was so...angry. Why did she get to do things? Why did she get to decide? Why did my parents hire her to ruin my life?

POPPY

Hey. I'm not your parents, okay? I would never force you into anything. And if it makes you feel any better, I'm barely in charge of my own life. I was fired and dumped in the same day.

Strabina looks up, curious.

STRABINA

You were dumped? By a guy?

POPPY

Yeah. By a guy. And the worst part is...I never got to tell him how much he sucks. No closure.

STRABINA

In Stralbo, closure is when we execute someone in the main square.

POPPY

That sounds really healing. But look, Strabina. I don't know what's gonna happen when you go home...But I do know that things are going to be okay.

STRABINA

Yeah. Whatever.

POPPY

No, listen! You're gonna make so many decisions, and travel, and date lots and lots of people. And if at some point, you do want to get married, then you will find someone you truly love. Okay?

Strabina looks up, barely smiling. Poppy nudges her.

POPPY (CONT'D)

Okay!?

STRABINA

Okay! I get it! God. You're so annoying.

POPPY

I know. But you survived! You survived Poppy's Pep Talk!

Strabina GROANS. They both LAUGH.

STRABINA

So. This guy...

POPPY

Yes. What do you want to know?

STRABINA

Does he...have a house?

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE OF GARETH'S APARTMENT - DAY

Poppy KNOCKS on Gareth's apartment door.

POPPY

Gareth! You home?

STRABINA

Don't be so polite. Louder!

Poppy knocks harder.

POPPY

GARETH!

STRABINA

Remember how he made you wait outside so you wouldn't meet his friends? Louder!

Poppy knocks even harder.

POPPY

I SMELL YOUR VAPE! I KNOW YOU'RE HOME!

Gareth opens the door, stoned.

GARETH

Poppy? What the hell?

POPPY

Listen up, Gareth, you were a shitty person to date.

(MORE)

POPPY (CONT'D)

I pretended you weren't but you were. And now I have some things I wanna say! So you sit your tush down and listen.

Gareth blinks. Poppy takes a deep breath.

POPPY (CONT'D)

Merriam Webster defines "trust" as -

Gareth eyes fall on Strabina's.

GARETH

Hold on. Who's this?

Poppy waves her hands. Gareth and Strabina are locked in.

POPPY

Don't tell me to "hold on"! That is the Princess Strabina of the truly horrifying Planet Stralbo. So you better back all the way off.

Strabina pulls Poppy away from the door.

STRABINA

Poppy, wait. You didn't mention he was like, sexy hot.

POPPY

What? No, he's the bad one.

Gareth leans against the door frame.

GARETH

Strabina? That's Greek, no?

Strabina GIGGLES.

STRABINA

Maybe...

POPPY

Of course it's not Greek!

GARETH

Has anyone ever told you that you're the most beautiful woman in the Milky Way?

STRABINA

(laughing)

Ohmigod, stop you're so funny!

POPPY

Wait, what is happening here -

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. STRALBO PALACE, WEDDING RECEPTION - DAY

Strabina and Gareth's wedding. They sloppy kiss.

Hundreds of STRALBIANS clap as the WEDDING MARCH plays. Queen Stralbo wipes away tears.

EXT. STRALBO PALACE, WEDDING RECEPTION - LATER

Poppy stabs a fork into a slice of cake. King & Queen Stralbo and Amanda walk up.

AMANDA

Congratulations on your first client wedding, Poppy!

KING STRALBO

Thank you for returning our daughter, safe and alive, but more importantly, with a husband.

POPPY

(overly cheerful)

You're so welcome! Can you imagine if I brought her back single?

Queen Stralbo LAUGHS. Poppy joins in, even louder.

QUEEN STRALBO

No! I'd rather she was dead.

KING STRALBO

And you'll be pleased to know that we colonized Planetoid Gurd through brute force alone! Happy days!

POPPY

The good news never ends!

Amanda pulls them away.

AMANDA

Now, you were saying...an endowment for Fates? I love that idea.

Barry brings over two glasses of champagne.

POPPY

You know, I'm not even upset. As a matter of fact, I think they might be perfect together.

BARRY

A 20 year old and an underemployed gaslighter? Sonny Fates couldn't have done better himself.

An ATTRACTIVE WOMAN sits nearby. She opens a DATING APP.

BARRY (CONT'D)

Well, there's nothing like the post-breakup rebound.

POPPY

You're not interested?

BARRY

Nah. I'm busy with Divorcee Dan.

Poppy considers it, then joins the Attractive Woman's table.

POPPY

Sorry, can I ask what dating app you're on? I don't mean to pry. My name's Poppy. I'm a matchmaker at Fates Consulting, and I was just curious...

Poppy glances at Strabina and Gareth, cutting the cake, then back to this potential client.

POPPY (CONT'D)

Are you happy with your love life?

**THE END**