

DOWNTOWN:

EPISODE ONE: "The Move"

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ACT ONE

INT.- REPRO MAN COPY SHOP- DAY

ALEX is bullshitting with GOAT (who is holding an envelope).

GOAT

...so then I used my no-fail, all purpose seduction line.

ALEX

"Wanna see God?"

GOAT

Nah, "Can I come up and use the bathroom."

ALEX

Did it work?

GOAT

(proudly) I got a hickey that looks like The Crab Nebula!

Alex doesn't want to look.

Goat takes a piece of artwork out of the envelope and shows it to Alex. Alex looks perplexed.

GOAT (CONT'D)

It's the label for Goat's Kick-In-The-Ass Macro-Malt. I make it in the bathtub. (pointing) That's me, as the god Pan, riding a Harley.

ALEX

I don't think the color copier can pick up metallic ink. (BEAT) Since when does the god Pan wear chain mail and no pants?

CHAKA comes in.

ALEX (CONT'D)
Hey, sis, what's up?

CHAKA
Make me a copy of this invite on card
stock so it looks real. (noticing art)
Why is that naked cartoon guy porking a
monkey?

Goat grabs a pencil and starts changing his drawing.

ALEX
(inspecting invite)
Don't you have a final tomorrow?

CHAKA
Thanks for reminding me, *Mom*, but
Tuesday night is the new Saturday night
for anyone who's even remotely cool.
Saturday night is only Saturday night
for bridge-and-tunnel crowd.

ALEX
You went out Saturday night, too.

CHAKA
Just to prove I'm not a snob.

ALEX
If you don't watch out, the old man'll
ship you off to Catholic school this
fall.

CHAKA
I'll die before I wear plaid!

GOAT
(fist in air)
Fight the power!

CHAKA
You're just jealous because YOU don't
have a life.

ALEX
Yeah...well...that's all gonna change.
Sunday is moving day.

CHAKA

Your own place. What a waste. You'll STILL spend all your time playing video games. Well, at least I'll have somewhere to crash.

ALEX

It's MY new apartment...not Chaka's Motel Six.

CHAKA

Whatever...

ALEX

And anyway, if I can't scrounge up van money, I'm not going anywhere.

GOAT

I'VE got an idea...

ALEX

Legal?

GOAT

Well...no...

CHAKA

You wouldn't HAVE this problem if you didn't spend so much on toys. Your room is full of Star Wars crap and Hot Wheels...it looks like a six year old boy lives there. Wait, I take that back. A six-year-old boy wouldn't have a collection of Spice Girl's dolls.

GOAT

I like the Spice Girls.

ALEX

Spice Girls rule.

CHAKA

(shaking her head) You should sell some of that junk. It's gotta be worth something to other geeks like you.

ALEX

Never!

CUT TO:

INT.- STARBASE 12 COMIC SHOP- DAY

A group of COMIC BOOK GEEKS are huddled together near the "New Titles" section, absorbed in a heated debate.

GEEK ONE

You're saying that Yoda would beat
Wolverine in a fight?

GEEK TWO

Yes, I am confident that it is so.

GEEK ONE

I am afraid that you are thinking with
your heart, not your head, my friend.

CUT OR PAN TO: FRANCIS (FRANK), an excessively muscular black man wearing a weight lifting belt, who is working the register. SERENA, an exotic and beautiful goth babe, mans the bag check. They roll their eyes.

SERENA

God bless "The Wednesdays". All pumped
up for their weekly superhero fix.

CUT OR PAN TO: Alex, in the back of the shop, selling a shopping bag full of action figures to MATT.

ALEX

Since the prequel came out, the book
value on these has gone through the
roof.

MATT

This one is missing an arm.

ALEX

It's a very rare one-armed Japanese
import. Even rarer than "Yak Face."

Skeptical look from Matt.

MATT

I'll give you a hundred for the mess of
'em...uh...Alex?

ALEX

Sure...sure...OK.

Alex is staring at Serena. He is mesmerized.

DISSOLVE TO: Alex's fantasy. He walks up to the bag check. He hands Serena his heart, dripping blood on the counter. Serena nonchalantly clips a playing card to it with a clothes pin and tosses it into one of the numbered boxes. She hands him the matching playing card.

CUT BACK TO: Alex, snapping out of his dazed state. Matt writes something out on a piece of paper.

MATT

Take this to Frank. (BEAT) Her name's Serena. (BEAT) Not that you asked.

Alex, red-faced, goes up front to get his money. He walks past the geeks, who are still arguing.

GEEK ONE

...even if he DID convert to the dark side of The Force, he'd have no chance against adamantium claws AND mutant healing powers. Hey, Alex, Yoda versus Wolverine--what say you?

Alex sees Serena eyeing the geeks with mild disdain.

ALEX

Sorry, I have no idea what you're talking about.

The geeks are taken aback. Alex pushes past them to the counter and hands Matt's note to Francis.

FRANCIS

OK...a hundred bucks even.

Francis hands Alex the money.

CLOSE-UP: A talking Mr. T action figure on a high shelf. Music sting. The object glows. It's beautiful. Maybe even more beautiful than Serena.

CLOSE-UP: Alex's face. A look of longing and desire.

ALEX

Uh...how much is that talking Mr. T?

FRANCIS

50. You gonna buy it or drool over it?

Alex looks at the money in his hand. He is torn.

ALEX

I'm seriously in the market.

Francis tries to reach for it, but then winces in pain.

FRANCIS

Goddamn! Hey, Serena! Get that for me?
I threw my back out again lifting. Damn
deltoid...

Serena walks over. Alex gets noticeably nervous.

Serena climbs up on a stool. Her skirt has a slit, which opens up. Alex is in shock: He can see her leg way up to the top of her fishnet thigh highs. Serena pulls the string on the toy.

MR. T TOY

Whatcha looking at, fool?

Serena hands him the "toy".

SERENA

Here.

ALEX

Thanks. (gulp!)

Francis takes back most of Alex's money.

CUT TO:

INT.- ALEX'S ROOM IN HIS PARENT'S APARTMENT- DAY

It *does* look like a 6-year-old lives there. Alex and JEN are packing up Alex's belongings.

JEN

...another one of your hopeless goth girl fixations? Checks bags, right? And owns 94 pairs of shoes...all black. I bet you haven't even talked to her.

ALEX

Have so!

FLASHBACK TO: Last scene.

SERENA

Here.

ALEX
Thanks. (gulp!)

CUT BACK TO: Alex and Jen packing. Jen is holding up a plastic dinosaur.

JEN
Do you want to take your plastic dinosaur collection?

ALEX
Nah...that's kid stuff.

Alex picks up an excessively detailed Spawn figurine.

ALEX (cont'd)
Hand me the bubblewrap, will ya?

JEN
(making the dinosaur talk)
Alex! Don't leave me! I want to go with you and the Gillian Anderson play-set. I know I can bag her if you just put us on the same shelf.

ALEX
Hey, when I move into my new place, I'm gonna be the Mack...or at least a normal human being.

JEN
But when you start dating plastically-enhanced starlets and strippers, who will keep me from blowing my brains out with a shotgun?

ALEX
Don't worry. I'll always be there for you. Like you'll be there for ME...on moving day...with 50 bucks for the van.

JEN
You've obviously forgotten my motto: neither a borrower or a lender be...or a voluntary participant in a poetry slam, or a woman wearing a sweatshirt decorated with glitter or...

ALEX

You don't like many people, do you,
Jen?

JEN

No... and that should make YOU feel
extra special.

Alex picks up his old clarinet and forces out a few
SQUEAKS.

JEN (CONT'D)

Oh God, spare me.

ALEX

Come on. Is your heart made of coal?
Doesn't this bring back fond memories?

DISSOLVE TO FLASHBACK: Jen and Alex in band practice, about
13-years old.

JEN

Sure. I was emptying the spit valve on
my trumpet, and this clarinet reed came
flying through the air and hit stuck-up
flute-playing Stacey "prissyface"
Barsella in the back of the neck.

STACEY reacts to being hit--who did it? Jen turns and makes
eye contact with Alex and they both laugh.

JEN (CONT'D)

And after school we went to the
Mastori's and made them give us a bowl
of gravy to dip the french fries in and
we realized how much we both hated her
guts and made up the nickname "Barf-
fella" and we became friends through
shared animosity.

ALEX

Uh...Jen...actually...I LIKED Stacey
Barsella. That's why I threw things at
her. That's what boys *do*. That
and...well...you know...let's just say
she provided enough fantasy material
for me to get through Junior High
without ever having to actually *talk* to
a girl--except for you, of course..

ALEX (CONT.)
...and she had those cute pigtails and
perfect teeth and...

JEN
Alex?

ALEX
Yeah?

JEN
Why can't you let me enjoy my hate?

CUT TO:

EXT.- ALEX'S PARENT'S APARTMENT BUILDING- EARLY MORNING

Alex, Chaka, MECCA, Jen, and Goat are packing the van.
"Gowanus Canal Cookie King" is painted on the side. Jen and
Alex work hard. Goat is drinking a beer.

ALEX
(to Goat)
Damn, bitch! Lend a hand, will ya?

GOAT
As soon as I finish my breakfast.
(Burp!)

Chaka and MECCA are jabbering.

MECCA
So then he puts his arm around me and
goes "This here's my next
hoochie!"...but he didn't really mean
it in a bad way.

CHAKA
Mecca, if someone did that to me, I'd
be "And here's your next operation!"
HA!

Chaka mimes kicking a guy in the crotch.

MECCA
Shouldn't we be helping or something?

Cut to: Alex, Jen, and Goat.

JEN

So, how did you find this apartment?

ALEX

I lucked out. The landlord came into work to copy legal forms...

CUT TO: Close up of eviction notice. Reveal Alex, standing in a hallway with the LANDLORD, who is knocking loudly on the door. The PREVIOUS TENANT refuses to open up.

LANDLORD

It says OUT THIS MONTH!!!

The tenant opens the door a crack, but keeps the chain on. Alex tries to get a peek inside the apartment.

LANDLORD

I never liked your face, you NO GOOD BUM!

PREVIOUS TENANT

Rot in housing court, you BLOOD-SUCKING LEECH!

CUT BACK TO: Alex and Jen.

JEN

You didn't see the INSIDE?

ALEX

No...but...but...(BEAT) I HAD to grab it... this is NEW YORK!

Jen gives Alex an "I'm so sorry for you" look.

JEN

There are eight million overpriced hovels in the Naked City. Looks like you've got one of them.

DISSOLVE TO: A bit later. The van is almost all packed up. Jen and Alex bring out a huge Victorian couch with claw feet.

JEN

Make way for ugly furniture!

MECCA

Where'd you get THAT?

ALEX

A housewarming gift from my parents.

CHAKA

Check out the claws. This couch needs a
pedicure bad.

CUT TO:

EXT.- ALEX'S NEW BUILDING- DAY

Alex is trying to park the van in front of his new
building. He rarely drives and really sucks at it.

ALEX

Today I am a man! Y'know, this whole
changing-my-life-deal is gonna work out
fine, I'm sure of it...

SFX: Horrible sound of METAL BEING CRUSHED.

ALEX

What was that?

MECCA

The fire hydrant.

JEN

Today you are a stupid man.

CHAKA

Just double park already. I want to see
the apartment!

CUT TO:

INT.- ALEX'S APARTMENT- DAY

Alex and his gang climb up the rickety stairs.

JEN

What a dent. You took the optional
insurance, right?

ALEX

Shut up.

They arrive at the door of Alex's apartment. Alex puts the
key in the lock.

ALEX

Welcome to my low-down love shack. My
supersonic sin bin. My Space Age
Bachelor Pad!

Chaka pushes past him and into the apartment.

CUT TO: Interior. It's a complete dump! There are obscene
comments about the landlord painted on the walls. A
disgusting beige sectional sofa takes up the entire room.
There's ugly, stained, orange wall-to-wall carpet and the
windows have been left open, so that a bunch of skinny cats
have taken up residence. One bats around a dead pigeon.

JEN

Houston...we have a problem.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT.- ALEX'S APARTMENT- DAY

Alex is dumping the dead pigeon in the trash. Mecca is trying to coax the last cat out the window, but it won't budge. It's scrawny, but cute--practically a kitten.

MECCA

Go, kitty, go! She won't go!

Mecca picks up the cat.

MECCA

She loves me! I guess you're mine now,
smush-face.

Chaka is checking out what serves as a kitchen.

CHAKA

Oh look! You've got a microwave!

ALEX

That's the refrigerator.

Everyone takes a seat on the huge sectional couch. Flies BUZZ. The cat MEOWS.

GOAT

Did I ever tell you about the time I
lived in an air shaft?

ALEX

Was that before or after the bank
vault?

Jen points to the "third window"--it is bricked up.

JEN

Look! It's a window AND a metaphor for
your existence!

CHAKA

(sniffing couch)
This couch smells like a litter box.

JEN

It's got that 70's porno movie look so
popular with today's youth.

CHAKA

Where have YOU been? We're already up to the 80's.

ALEX

I guess we should chuck it. It's sure gonna be a pain getting this mother down the stairs.

GOAT

It would be easier to throw it out the window.

JEN

Goat, your devotion to laziness astounds me.

GOAT

(crossing two fingers) Me and laziness...like that.

ALEX

It's worth a try. Chaka, you and Mecca go stand out front, OK? Make sure no one gets in the way. You think you can handle it?

CHAKA

God, Alex, you act like I'm irresponsible or something.

CUT TO:

EXT.- ALEX'S BUILDING- DAY

Chaka and Mecca are on the sidewalk, acting as lookouts. Mecca holds the kitty. The van is still double parked.

CHAKA

You're cool! No one's coming!

Alex, Jen, and Goat start tossing pillows and cushions out of the window.

GOAT

You can fly! You can fly! Be free!

JEN

It's a miracle! Saints be praised!

Chaka runs around and catches them. So far, so good.

ALEX

Here comes the mother lode! Move out of the way!

As Chaka and Mecca do so, Chaka starts gossiping.

CHAKA

Oh, I forgot to tell you, Jimmy swears up and down that Cyan FORCED him to go out with her...

CUT TO: A dog spots Mecca's kitty and starts to GROWL. No one notices it yet.

ALEX

Are we in the clear?

CHAKA

(not paying attention)
Yeah...sure...do it!

The dog starts running towards the cat, right into the line of fire. Chaka is too busy talking to notice.

A section of the couch comes flying out of the window.

SFX: SMASH!

The couch nearly misses the dog, which runs off WHIMPERING.

Chaka and Mecca SCREAM!!!

ALEX

Smooth move, Chaka. Do you want the ASPCA on my ass? Pay attention and stop yakking!

Chaka pulls the sofa piece over to the curb.

CHAKA

Chill out, dork. I'm on top of it. You've got TONS of room.

ALEX

Stand back. This could be dangerous!

Alex, Jen, and Goat hoist a large piece out the window, then let go.

GOAT

The first transport is away!

Chaka and Mecca see some friends who are going by on the other side of the street. They turn to greet them.

CHAKA AND MECCA

Hey! Hi! Where ya going? What's up!
etc.

Just then, a car pulls into the spot next to the (semi-crushed) fire hydrant. Chaka is waving to her friends and doesn't see it in time to warn Alex. The couch section lands on top of the car.

CUT TO: Alex in window, head in hands.

CUT TO:

EXT.- ALEX'S BUILDING- DAY

Alex is talking to the driver of the damaged car. Jen is gathering up pieces of the couch.

ALEX

(walking over)

He copied down all my ID. I'll have to pay the repair bill out of my own pocket.

GOAT

I TOLD you to establish multiple identities.

ALEX

It's all your fault, Chaka.

CHAKA

It was an accident!

Jen has the Victorian sofa half out of the van.

JEN

When I drop dead from a heart attack, could someone please inform my next of kin?

ALEX

Sorry, Jen. I'll help. (to Chaka and Mecca--skeptical) Can I trust you two to watch the van while we take stuff upstairs? I don't wanna get ripped off.

CHAKA

(overly dramatic)
I'll guard your Hulk shower curtain with my life.

GOAT

Grab the futon and let's move out! I'll hold the door!

CUT TO:

INT.- STAIRWAY- DAY

Jen and Alex are trying to carry his futon up the stairs, but it keeps unfolding. Goat "supervises".

GOAT

Lift your end a bit, Jen.

JEN

Is that a come on?

GOAT

Uh...yeah...sure.

JEN

Damn, you're easy!

Goat LAUGHS and GULPS more beer.

JEN

Alex, switch sides. I'm stronger. I should be on the bottom.

Goat smirks, thinking dirty thoughts.

GOAT

Dear Sir: "I was a 98-pound weakling. But then I sent for your amazing device..."

JEN

"The Pec-O-Toner"...

ALEX

Shut up! I CAN HANDLE IT! This whole thing is turning into one big pain in my butt. And it doesn't help that YOU'RE annoying and YOU'RE useless...

Alex struggles under the weight of the sofa. But it's too much for his spindly little arms and he loses control...

ALEX

Whoooooah!!!

Alex tumbles backward. Jen loses her grip. Alex ends up pinned against the wall. Then the futon unfolds completely.

ALEX

(meekly)

Help me.

JEN

Did you just call me ANNOYING?

GOAT

(Loud belch)

CUT TO:

EXT.- SIDEWALK- DAY (A BIT LATER)

We see Jen, Alex, and Goat taking another load up the stoop, while Mecca and Chaka laze around on the sofa.

CUT TO: POV of FRUITY and MATT, approaching.

FRUITY

Hey, there's Chaka and Mecca. Y'know, I think that Chaka wants to get with me.

MATT

You're deluded. Anyway, she's off the hook. And her friend tends to chew up the ear. Girls like that aren't worth the trouble.

FRUITY

She may be a chickenhead, but hey, she's also kinda cute. Ok, now watch me be all suave and crap...

Fruity and Matt approach Chaka and Mecca. Fruity takes the lead and goes right up to the girls. Matt hangs back.

FRUITY
Hey ladies, how ya doing?

Matt takes out a marker and starts tagging the U-Haul with his graffiti name, "SUB".

CHAKA
Quit it, Matt! That's Alex's van.

MATT
Alex is "The Cookie King"?

CHAKA
Nah...he's using for a move.

FRUITY
Room for three?

Fruity plops down between Chaka and Mecca. The cat HISSES.

MATT
Fruity knows all about moves.

Fruity puts his arms along the back of the sofa, like he's going to make a pass at both girls at once.

DISSOLVE TO: About a half-hour later. The girls are talking a mile a minute. The boys are restless and bored.

CHAKA
So me and Mecca were looking for this club and we both had to pee simultaneously...

MECCA
We were in synch...like twins...

CHAKA
We duck into this movie theater and this guy's like "No, you can't come in here da da da da da, you can't use our toilet..."

MECCA
Like we were going to steal a toilet...

CHAKA
Go blame Mother Nature...

MECCA
It's a normal bodily function...

FRUITY
(cutting in)
You know, I live a few blocks from
here, just around the...

CHAKA
(ignoring him)
So he goes, "How do I know you're going
to come back, do you have any ID?" And
this guy is looking at it...

MECCA
He's trying to figure out whether it's
hers...

CHAKA
And I'm like, "You have NO RIGHT to
look at MY name!" He goes "Chaka
Zuberman" and he's checking out my card
and I'm like "Who ARE you? You're like
a vending person at the movie theater!"

FRUITY
(trying again)
I thought maybe later we could all go
over to my place and...

SFX: SCREECH!!!

All of a sudden, the van takes off.

Chaka and Mecca look over and see the van peel out. We can
vaguely see that someone is driving--not Alex.

CHAKA
Oh, damn!

Chaka takes off down the block, screaming after the van.

CHAKA
Stop! Come back!

Mecca takes off after her, cat on her shoulders.

MECCA
Chaka! Wait up!

Matt plops down on the sofa, next to Fruity. Fruity and Matt look at each other, confused.

FRUITY
What just happened?

MATT
Your sauve made them run away.

CUT TO:

INT.- APARTMENT- DAY

Alex and Jen are carrying boxes. Goat has a few small items.

GOAT
Where do you want the spatula?

ALEX
(to Jen)
Don't shake the box. Can't you read?

CLOSE UP: The box says "Fragile." Jen shakes it on purpose.

JEN
(singing)
Shake shake shake...shake shake
shake...shake your booty...

ALEX
(he IS annoyed)
You is a laugh riot.

Alex goes to the window.

ALEX (cont'd)
How much stuff is left outside, anyway?

He looks out and sees that the van is gone. He looks toward the coach-- Fruity and Matt are sitting on it...where are the girls?

ALEX
The van! Chaka...I'm gonna KILL YOU!!!

Cut to: Matt and Fruity on the couch. Long awkward pause.

MATT

I don't think they're coming back, man.

FRUITY

(confident)

Trust me, B, they always come back.

CUT TO:

EXT.- EAST VILLAGE STREET- DAY

Chaka and Mecca are searching for the van. Chaka is running--Mecca struggles to keep up (with the cat on her shoulder).

CHAKA

Stupid Alex and his stupid stupid being right...!

CUT TO: The van, stuck at the intersection. Gridlock!

MECCA

Look! There it is!

CHAKA

Hey! You! Over here!

The driver, TOBY, turns his head around. He's younger than Chaka and Mecca--a troublemaker, but not scary. He sees Chaka waving. He waves back. Chaka starts to strut over to the van.

MECCA

No way...you're crazy. You can't get into a van with a stranger. He could be some nutcase who makes clothes out of people.

CHAKA

(cocky) I've got pepper spray!

Chaka walks over to the driver's window and starts to flirt.

CHAKA

Cool van. Is it yours?

Toby is attracted to Chaka, but in the middle of a stealing a vehicle, which means he's a bit distracted. He keeps impatiently TAPPING his finger on the wheel and HONKING.

TOBY

(nervous and jumpy)

Of course it's mine. (honk honk)(to
other driver) STOP BLOCKING THE BOX!
(back to Chaka) I'm driving it, ain't
I? I'm Toby. What's YOUR name?

CHAKA

(steamroller)

Chaka. Listen, can I have a ride? And
my friend Mecca? And her cat? Thanks!

Chaka goes to get in.

TOBY

No...wait...I'm kinda in the middle of
something...

Chaka gets into the van and Mecca follows. They SLAM the
door. Toby shrugs. The gridlock clears, he hits the gas,
and they take off--VROOM!

END OF ACT TWO

INT.- ALEX'S APARTMENT- EVENING

Alex and Jen sit in Alex's new place. The futon and endless boxes seem to fill the entire room.

JEN

You wouldn't need floor space if you'd just learn how to hover four feet off the ground.

ALEX

I guess we oughta leave that weird old sofa on the street. There's no room for it in here.

JEN

What if Queen Victoria drops by and you want to put the moves on?

ALEX

What the hell are you talking about? How likely is THAT?

JEN

About as likely as YOU bagging that spooky chick from the comics shop.

SFX: DYSFUNCTIONAL PLUMBING NOISES.

Goat comes out of the bathroom. He is still holding a beer.

JEN

How's the john? Bigger than a breadbox?

GOAT

The toilet is broken, so I went in the sink. (BEAT) If I could just figure out how to brew beer that doesn't make you piss.

JEN

(pointing to third window)
I'll paint a nice idyllic country scene on that window. Some cows. A barn. An approaching tornado.

ALEX

(breaking out in panic)

Damn, what was I THINKING? What if I've made the wrong decision? I had it phat back home: no rent, no responsibility, all the pizza rolls I could eat...

JEN

...no sex, no self-esteem, no hope of ever leading a so-called normal life. Alex, even if you DID make the wrong decision, you've got to make the best of it now. (BEAT) And then spend decades complaining about your crummy apartment like every other New Yorker who isn't a millionaire.

ALEX

(weakly defending himself)

I *had* sex...I did...really...

GOAT

The lady's right, good sir. You CANNOT give up. You MUST NOT look back. Come hell, high water, or giant fire-breathing lizard, a man must follow through and confront his destiny!!!

Goat's watch CHIMES. (Star Trek watch if we can clear)

GOAT

Gotta go. Happy Hour. Since you're getting rid of stuff, can I have the life-size cardboard Xena?

CUT TO:

EXT.-VAN- LATE AFTERNOON

We see the van from above: it's weaving in and out of traffic in a reckless way.

CUT TO: Interior of van. Chaka is sitting on Toby's lap; she's driving. Mecca sits in the other seat with her seatbelt on, clutching the cat to her chest. Chaka is driving erratically and over the speed limit.

CHAKA

Where are the brakes again? Oh, yeah...

Chaka BRAKES. We hear CARS HONKING and vague CURSING. She takes off once more.

Chaka spots one of those double decker tourist buses up ahead. She decides to pass it.

CHAKA

Outta my way, you big metal tourist
taco!

MECCA

Chaka...don't we have to get back?

CHAKA

Mecca, don't go all parental on me.

MECCA

But what about Alex?

TOBY

Who's Alex?

CHAKA

(thinking quick)
The cat!

MECCA

He gets carsick.

CHAKA

(trying to distract)
I know, let's race that cab!

CUT TO:

EXT.- OUTSIDE ALEX'S BUILDING- EVENING

Goat comes out of Alex's building, carrying the giant Xena cut-out. He sees Serena reclining on the sofa dramatically. Fruity and Matt are standing and talking to her.

FRUITY

So then they ran away due to the fact
that they were overwhelmed by my
charm...

MATT

...and your eau de desperation.

SERENA

This couch is so perfectly decadent!

GOAT

(butting in)

You can have it for fifty bucks. It was my great grandmother's.

SERENA

Well...I'm not sure...

GOAT

(trying to entice her)

She was a madam in a whorehouse. Down N'awlins way. Drank absinthe.

SERENA

I don't believe you, but the claws are cool. Reminds me of my last boyfriend.

GOAT

I'll even deliver it for free.

SERENA

Sold!

GOAT

(whispering to the boys)

I'll give you ten bucks each to help.

CUT TO: Interior of apartment. Jen looks out the window and sees what's going on.

JEN

Hey! That goth babe you're so worked up about is taking off with the sofa.

Alex runs to the window.

ALEX

(calling after them)

Don't let him up if he asks to use the bathroom!

Alex sees Goat and pals walking off. Fruity and Matt are lugging the sofa, while Goat carries the cardboard Xena.

SERENA

Who's yelling?

GOAT

Some crazy guy. Didn't I seen your picture recently in "Corset Cuties"?

Back to Alex.

ALEX

Damn! (looking around) And still no sign of the van. Chaka doesn't even have license...at least not a real one. Where the hell are they?!

CUT TO:

EXT.- BELOW THE PALISADES- EVENING

Chaka, Mecca, and Toby are sitting on the edge of a pier, on the Jersey side of the Hudson, looking at the city skyline. The sun is going down. The van is parked nearby.

Toby and Chaka sit close to one another. Mecca is definitely the odd-gal-out.

They are in the middle of a "fantasy game", which also serves as a FUGUE.

MECCA

What are the rules again?

CHAKA

You can be anywhere, with anyone, doing anything. Unlimited money. Be specific.

MECCA

OK. I'm with this guy and he's really sensitive and smart--not in the sense of going to school--but thinking about the universe and totally getting what other people are about almost instantly, and we're in love and...

CHAKA

Where do you live? What kind of house?

MECCA

I don't know. It doesn't matter. So, we're having this seriously deep connection on an almost cosmic level and...

CHAKA

What are you wearing? Do you have a boat? Is there champagne? God, you don't know how to play this game at all!

TOBY

I'D live on a private island...

CHAKA

...me too. And I'd wear a solid gold bikini 24/7, because it would always be exactly 85 degrees...

TOBY

We'd eat steak and ice cream every night...

CHAKA

Massage three times a day...AROMATHERAPY massage...

TOBY

Horses, a race car, a marble swimming pool out back...

CHAKA

...and a casino on the roof. Oh, and don't forget the private jet with disco dance floor. See, Mecca? THAT'S how you play the game.

CUT TO:

INT. ALEX'S APARTMENT- NIGHT

Jen and Alex are near the door. Jen is about to leave.

JEN

Think of the window as a conversation piece. And be glad you've got a broken toilet IN the apartment, not down the hall.

ALEX

Thanks for trying to cheer me up, but I'd prefer to wallow in my misery.

JEN

Copycat. (BEAT) I will now return to MY apartment--featuring unreliable hot water, slutty roommate, and plaster chips that fall on my head.

Jen leaves, CLOSING THE DOOR behind her.

Alex looks around at his "castle." He collapses on the futon.

CUT TO:

EXT.- WEST SIDE HIGHTWAY- NIGHT

It is after dark. The van is heading back Downtown.

CHAKA

You were right about City Island. They have the best lobster. It was lucky you had all that money on you. Those new hundred dollar bills are weird looking. (BEAT) Hey, it's only midnight. We should go out or something. What d'ya say, Mecca?

Mecca is asleep. She SNORES lightly.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT.- A CITY STREET- NIGHT

CUT TO: The van pulling up to where Mecca lives.

CHAKA

Wake up. You're home.

MECCA

(Yawn) Thanks for the ride. Bye, Toby. See ya, Chaks! Mr. Peepers says "night night."

Mecca holds the cat's paw and makes it wave good night She gets out of the van. Chaka moves into the seat Mecca was in.

SFX: Car door slam.

Toby turns to Chaka.

TOBY
I thought the cat's name was Alex.

CHAKA
She's tired.

TOBY
OK. Where to now?

Chaka pulls out her pepper spray and points it at Toby.

CHAKA
Just follow my directions carefully and
no one gets hurt.

TOBY
You know, you're a really weird girl.

CUT TO:

INT.- ALEX'S APARTMENT- NIGHT

Alex is still collapsed on the futon, taking in his surroundings.

DISSOLVE TO: Alex fugue: The walls are closing in. His possessions grow to reach the ceiling. Alex is squashed and unable to breath. The plumbing sounds become deafening. Maybe giant pigeons, rats, and roaches add to the excitement...

SFX: DOORBELL.

Alex is jerked out of his hallucination. He goes to the intercom and pushes "listen."

CHAKA
It's meeee!

ALEX
Chaka?

Alex buzzes her in.

SFX: Footsteps.

As we hear Chaka climbing the stairs, Alex gets madder and madder. By the time she reaches the door, he is ready to explode.

CHAKA

Oh God, I am soooo beat. Don't worry, I can sleep on the floor, no problem...

ALEX

CHAKA, WHERE'S THE VAN? WHERE THE HELL HAVE YOU BEEN?

CHAKA

(rapid fire-no breath)

Don't freak. This guy stole it and I tracked him down and spent the whole day with him so that he wouldn't suspect anything and then I held the pepper spray to his head and forced him to bring it back and it's parked right out front in a legal spot so thank me, will ya?

ALEX

God, Chaka. You really are a brilliant liar.

CHAKA

So don't believe me. Can I stay anyway?

ALEX

Yeah, all right. I'm too tired to argue.

Chaka gives him a peck on the cheek.

CHAKA

You are the best brother! I'll make you coffee in the morning...uh, but don't wake me before noon, ok?

Chaka looks around.

CHAKA

It IS a dump, isn't it?

ALEX

Yeah. (BEAT) Soooo... I guess this is real life.

CHAKA

It ain't pretty. But it's probably better than staying a kid all your life.

ALEX

Suppose so.

SFX: KNOCK on the door.

Alex opens the door. It's Toby. He's been waiting in the hall the entire time.

TOBY

Hey, Chaka, I'm sick of waiting downstairs. (to Alex) Sorry about the van, man. Your sis is cool.

CHAKA

Toby, THIS is Alex. I told Toby he could crash here too. That's ok with you, isn't it, Alex? Alex?

On Alex's shocked expression, we...

FADE OUT:

THE END!