LISTEN WITH YOUR HEART

by

The Unknown Comic

FADE IN:

INT. THE FIVE STAR RESTAURANT - NIGHT

The expensive and chic restaurant bustles with activity. GORDON (50s), the meticulously groomed chief steward, hovers by the

RESERVATION DESK

where several well dressed COUPLES wait impatiently.

Natalie Hawthorne (20s), small chin and nose, large eyes, enters. The waiting couples stare as the petite regal beauty glides by. Natalie allows a small smile.

GORDON

Good evening, Miss Hawthorne. Mr. Vanderbilt has been delayed and asks that you wait.

Her eyes flash at Gordon.

NATALIE

This is tiresome Gordon. Every Friday night.

GORDON

Perhaps if you could plan your entrance so Mr. Vanderbilt could be inspired by your couture.

NATALIE

(snaps)

I just did.

Gordon cringes like he should have known better. He seats Natalie at her usual

TABLE

and goes to the

KITCHEN

where BRIAN (20s), slacker handsome, flirts with one of the waitresses.

GORDON

Miss Hawthorne is here--

BRIAN

--And the ice princess is rather edgy so be prompt with her gin and tonic.

GORDON

Thank you, Brian.

Gordon dashes back to calm his line of cranky customers.

Brian goes to the crowded

LOUNGE

to pick up Miss Hawthorne's drink. Brian then weaves through the obstacle course of tables, waiters, food trays and customers before he arrives at Natalie's

TABLE

where Natalie rubs her necklace like worry beads.

NATALIE

Brian, about time my drink showed up. That better be Tanqueray.

BRIAN

A waiter never forgets, Miss Hawthorne.

NATALIE

That's what I like about you Brian.

BRIAN

Me? Oh, you're thinking of our rendezvous a few nights ago?

NATALIE

You wish. All you little suck ups are afraid that I'll--

Natalie snaps her fingers.

NATALIE

--and you'll be gone. Now, get me another drink.

Brian complies.

Natalie focuses on the African American COUPLE at the nearby table: BILLY (30s), not bad looking in a tuxedo, and JENNY (30s), not bad looking in her off-the-rack dress.

Billy stares at Jenny. The couple wafts of romance.

Natalie shows a hint of irritation.

Billy sweats and stutters.

BILLY

I... Jenny, I love you. You
know t-that...

Billy reveals the small box he had hidden in his tuxedo pocket. He opens it to show off the modest ring inside.

BILLY

Jenny, will you marry me?

Jenny glows as tears run down her cheeks.

JENNY

Yes. Oh yes. Billy.

Brian returns with Miss Hawthorne's drink. He smiles as the couple embraces.

NATALIE

It's not a ring unless I can see it from four tables away. Billy obviously doesn't make enough money. And Jenny you'll live an off-the-rack life just like that dress--

Brian pours the drink down the ample cleavage of Natalie's dress.

Brian winks at Billy. Billy recovers from his shock then cracks a smile back. Billy moves to console Jenny.

Natalie's breasts and dress glisten with the spilled drink.

Gordon hurries over.

GORDON

--Miss Hawthorne. I am so sorry. I have never seen Brian spill a drink. Brian will of course apologize.

BRIAN

I am deeply concerned regarding the condition of your décolleté, Miss Hawthorne.

Gordon glances at Brian as if to say "quit screwing around!"

GORDON

I regret to inform you that Randolph, Mr. Vanderbilt, called and said he won't be able to make it--

Brian shakes his head to warn Gordon.

NATALIE

--Stood up again! I am going to make his life Hell.

Gordon ignores Natalie and goes to sooth Billy and Jenny. He casts a malevolent eye back towards Brian.

Brian feigns innocence and shoots Gordon a "who me?" look.

Brian paws at Natalie's dress with a cloth napkin. Natalie grabs the napkin and rises.

As she walks away, her long dress swishes as a JUNGLE DRUM BEAT accentuates the rhythm of her well-toned derriere.

She approaches the

LOUNGE

where Natalie hears music and stops inside the entrance.

FRANK "FRANKIE" BLUE (50s), a tribute artist, performs an uncanny impression of Francis E. Sinatra.

FRANKIE

This is a personal favorite of mine: "Why So Cold?"

The synthesized piano music starts a mid-tempo ballad.

FRANKIE

(singing)

Girl, why so cold to me? What have you done to me? Does that chill in your voice, mean no one has a choice? Leave it all behind. See what else you can find.

Frankie gazes at Natalie. Her eyes glisten.

FRANKIE

(singing)

Naturally (sounds like "Natalie"), you won't listen to me. Please don't be mad at all you see...

Frankie continues the song. She rushes out of the lounge to the

POWDER ROOM

Natalie stands in front of the mirror adjusting her dress. She sobs. Mascara runs. Eyelashes lose their thickness.

Jenny walks in. She recognizes Natalie, pauses and enters a stall.

Natalie dries her dress and primps her hair.

A toilet FLUSHES. Jenny exits the stall and scrutinizes Natalie's face. Jenny washes her hands and reapplies her makeup.

JENNY

You brought this on yourself. You know that, don't you Miss Hawthorne?

NATALIE

What?

JENNY

I know who you are. I've seen you with Mr. Vanderbilt.

Jenny pauses and her face hardens.

JENNY

And I see "Randy Vandy" over on the east side at Tony's. A different woman every time. Beautiful women. Nice women.

Natalie pushes Jenny on the shoulder. Hard.

JENNY

Careful girl, I'll make you kiss your ivory ass.

Natalie ROARS like a lioness. [Note: Insert actual roar]

Natalie swipes at Jenny's dress with her fingers extended like claws.

Jenny's dress rips. She leans on the basin next to the soap dispenser.

Jenny squirts liquid soap on her hand and slides her hand in Natalie's face. Natalie screams.

Natalie counters with a shove to turn Jenny around into the mirror. Jenny's ebony face smoothes the glass and leaves a sloppy, ruby red lipstick smear.

Jenny reverses Natalie's hold. Natalie smoothes the glass and leaves a lovely pink lipstick smear.

The red and pink smears complement each other side by side.

Jenny pulls on Natalie's necklace and then pushes on Natalie's chest. Silicone squish.

JENNY

I knew it.

Natalie pushes back on Jenny. Jenny clings to Natalie as they both fall through the toilet stall door.

Jenny and Natalie lie in the stall. Rolls of paper rest on Natalie. Jenny pulls her arm out of the toilet.

BILLY (OS)

Jenny? Is everything all right in there? ...I'll be at the table if you need me.

The women try to evil eye each other and burst out laughing.

After they their dresses and fix their makeup, Natalie and Jenny exit back to the

TABLE

where Billy waits tapping a spoon on the table. Brian waits by the swinging door to the kitchen.

Natalie and Jenny stand before Billy. Arm in arm, they wobble but don't fall down. Both giggle as they recall the fight.

Natalie arches an eyebrow at Jenny.

NATALIE

"Randy Vandy?"

JENNY

Sorry. Cruel to be kind, right?

Brian looks over from the kitchen.

JENNY

Besides, you have an admirer. He watches you.

The women sit at the table. Billy goes to talk to Brian.

NATALIE

He has to or I'll go to Gordon and he'll be gone.

JENNY

No more Natalie.

NATALIE

Excuse me?

Jenny takes Natalie by the hair and slams her forehead to the table.

Ouch!

Brian and Billy cringe. Brian hides his laugh and knocks man knuckles with Billy.

JENNY

Listening?

Natalie groans.

NATALIE

(slurring)

I pledge allegiance to the biggest, toughest bitch in the room.

JENNY

No more complaining. No more disparaging remarks. No more condescending toward others.

NATALIE

Why?

JENNY

Why were you crying in the powder room?

NATALIE

I don't know!

Jenny reaches for the back of Natalie's head again. Natalie evades her grasp.

NATALIE

Alright! I am a queen bitch.

Natalie takes a big breath and looks Jenny in the eye.

NATALIE

My boyfriend stood me up, my drink was spilled on me, and I was wicked witch mean to you and Billy, and the song... That song.

Natalie gets up quickly. Jenny looks baffled. Natalie hurries to the

LOUNGE

where she spies Frankie standing at the bar. He laughs with several last call PATRONS.

NATALIE

Excuse me. Frankie. Mr. Blue. Why did you sing that song?

FRANKIE

Whoa, I sing for a living. Want to give me a clue?

NATALIE

It's a slow song. It starts
out (singing) "Why so cold to
me?"

FRANKIE

One sublime song.

NATALIE

Is there a line that refers to Natalie?

FRANKIE

Nope. People mix up lyrics all the time.

NATALIE

But I heard it. I did.

Frankie turns to face Natalie and sighs.

FRANKIE

Ol' Blue Eyes said "People should listen with their hearts not their heads."

Natalie accepts the wisdom and bows.

NATALIE

Thank you, Mr. Sinatra.

Frankie laughs and dismisses her with a wave of his hand.

She drifts back to the

TABLE

where Billy and Jenny wait. Brian hovers nearby.

BILLY

Good to go? Jenny and I have some celebrating to do.

Gordon waits at the

RESERVATION DESK

where RANDOLPH VANDERBILT (30s), every inch the perfect gentleman, enters the nearly empty restaurant.

GORDON

I thought it best if you could deal with Miss Hawthorne. She's quite upset.

RANDOLPH

I'll take it from here.

GORDON

Sir, you have a smudge on your collar.

Gordon takes a ruby red lipstick tube partially hidden inside a napkin and smears it on Randolph's collar.

Randolph pastes on his best smile and heads to Natalie's

TABLE

Natalie rushes to his open arms and hugs him warmly.

Brian and Billy exchange glances.

Gordon turns slightly towards Jenny. She discreetly accepts the lipstick tube and twitches a smile in return.

Natalie detects the lipstick stain. Her anger flares as she pulls away.

NATALIE

"Randy Vandy?"

Randolph surprises her with a defiant expression.

RANDOLPH

You always were a frosty one.

Natalie grabs Randolph by the groin.

RANDOLPH

You pitiful, irritating vixen...

Natalie releases her death grip.

Jenny flexes her fingers.

Randolph dodges out of the restaurant.

LATER

Natalie waves at Billy and Jenny as they leave.

Natalie looks for Brian but he's gone. Gordon shrugs.

A wistful look rests on Natalie's face as she exits.

INT. GORDON'S FIVE STAR RESTAURANT - NIGHT - ONE WEEK LATER

The redecorated and still expensive restaurant bustles with activity. Gordon waits at the

RESERVATION DESK

on jovial customers. His face lights up as Natalie comes in the door. Natalie smiles warmly at Gordon.

GORDON

Natalie so good to see you. Billy and Jenny are here...

NATALIE

So, you blackmailed Randolph.

GORDON

An opportunity did present itself.

Brian appears. Natalie runs and hugs him.

NATALIE

I thought you were (snaps fingers) gone.

She kisses Brian. Brian doesn't resist. Natalie turns to look at Gordon.

Natalie smiles.

FADE OUT.

Off screen, synthesized piano music starts a mid-tempo ballad entitled "Why So Cold?"

FRANKIE (OS)

(singing)

Girl, why so cold to me? What have you done to me? Does that chill in your voice, mean no one has a choice? Leave it all behind. See what else you can find.

Naturally, you won't listen to me. Please don't be mad at all you see. So be good to yourself. Or you're back on the shelf.

Girl, why so cruel to me? Why have you made a fool of me? Is your heart so sore, love doesn't matter anymore? So take my advice. Don't embrace the ice.

THE END