

THE WISH COW

BY

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FADE IN:

INT. POSSUM PETE PERFECT PIZZA - DAY

A Chuck E. Cheese-style environment only bland, decrepit, unloved; actually pretty much the same.

Sat near the stage around a molded plastic banquette, a family:

JILLIAN ACKER, 16, redhead, sits with her 'Sweet Sixteen' crown on. A cute girl but trying hard not to be - with full-on bottle glasses to suit.

She watches an ANIMAL ANIMATRONIC BAND jerk back and forth with considerable horror, wracked with embarrassment.

Jillian looks across the table to her best friend, BELA RAMPERSAD, a 16-year-old Indian-American, usually dryly funny but right now sporting a vacant expression. She lifts her head for two seconds from her smartphone.

BELA
(whispers)
Omg. This place.

JILLIAN
(whispers back)
I know.

The eyes of the band's ANIMATRONIC GUITARIST fall out.

BELA
It's somehow both ironically
terrible and just ordinarily
terrible.

GREG, late 40s, Jillian's dad, slender frame with laid-back demeanor, the kinda guy you'd be confident in asking for directions, gives Jillian a quick kiss on the top of the head.

Jillian tilts her head back, and whispers 'love you'.

A POSSUM COSTUME zooms past on roller skates balancing a pizza with a candle in the middle.

Loud cheers from the table behind her... It's full of eight year olds.

Next to Greg sits Jillian's brother AUSTIN, 18 years worth of attitude. He leans closer to Greg.

AUSTIN

How long do I need to be here? I
have places to be.

Greg gives Austin a stern look. Austin plumps on his chair,
and stares at--

Grandpa HENRY (Greg's father), 85, who snores loudly at the
head of the table although his eyes are open. Next to him--

Grandma SUSAN (Greg's mother), 82, grins an endless smile
with her false teeth in a glass before her.

Jillian looks around, and sighs upon laying eyes on the woman
pacing the floor around the table--

ASHLEY, mid-40s, Greg's fiancée, pretty in a flawed,
accessible way, but uptight and controlled. She looks
extremely focused, bluetooth attached to her ear.

She glances over at Jillian momentarily whilst in mid-
conversation, smiles a smile that barely reaches her eyes.
Jillian returns the favor.

Ashley approaches the table.

ASHLEY

(to Greg)

Remember that house on Cherrie
Lane? Might finally have a buyer.
Gotta meet them as soon as this is
over... so if we can--

She makes a hand gesture indicating they should wrap this up
ASAP.

GREG

We haven't had the cake yet.

Ashley, not used to not getting her own way, does her best to
remain sweet-natured.

ASHLEY

How long might it be?

Ashley realizes Jillian has overheard and tries to make more
of an effort.

ASHLEY (CONT'D)

Are we having fun, honey?

JILLIAN

Best time ever. Thanks, Ashley.

ASHLEY

Sweet sixteen! I remember my party.
Mom and Dad hired a yacht, we had a
DJ, my dress alone cost six hundred-

-

Jillian rolls her eyes. Ashley realizes she's said too much.

ASHLEY (CONT'D)

Anyway. Happy birthday, honey.

Jillian lowers her head as Ashley approaches. Ashley kisses her on the top of her head, but Jillian flinches away.

AUSTIN

Sour sixteen more like it.

Jillian growls, Bela lets out a laugh only to stop herself.

Ashley grabs the Possum from the table behind.

ASHLEY

Excuse me, but we're waiting on a
cake here?

The possum starts dancing. Everyone laughs except Ashley.

ASHLEY (CONT'D)

I asked you a question. Or do you
only speak rat?

POSSUM

Ma'am, I'm a possum. I'm Percy
Possum. It's literally the name of
the restaurant.

ASHLEY

Excuse me?!

POSSUM

I guess they never taught you to
read in Karen School.

Jillian and Bela laugh out loud.

Annoyed, Ashley grabs the Possum.

ASHLEY

How dare you--?

Greg intervenes and pulls Ashley back.

GREG

Honey, it's okay. Let the possum go.

Ashley lets go immediately.

Jillian watches on, wanting the ground to swallow her up... or Ashley.

The Possum clutches his heart, begins to theatrically fall down, and plays dead.

The eight-year-olds cheer and rush in to kick him.

They wait for the Possum to stop play-acting. He doesn't move.

BELA

Is this actually happening?

AUSTIN

I heard these guys never break character.

GREG

Well, they never met Ashley.

Ashley looks at him. He mumbles.

GREG (CONT'D)

He just-- he said. Sorry, honey.

Another Possum arrives, and drags the collapsed one along the floor and into the store room.

GREG (CONT'D)

Shall we do presents?

Jillian's face lights up with excitement. Grandma Susan hands Jillian her first gift; it's wrapped in "Barney the Dinosaur" paper. Her excitement level lowers slightly.

GRANDMA SUSAN

That's from me and your grandpa.

Jillian rips it open -- It's a cowgirl outfit that looks two sizes too small.

JILLIAN

You shouldn't have, grandma.

GRANDMA SUSAN

Oh, it's no problem, dear.

BELA

They really shouldn't have.

Grandpa snores louder as Bela snickers in the corner, Jillian flashes her a "shut up" look.

Bela waves her hands in front of Grandpa's face.

BELA (CONT'D)

How is he asleep with his eyes open?

JILLIAN

Stop it, Bel.

BELA

But he's looking right at me and doesn't even see me.

Bela shrugs her shoulders.

Austin stands up with a gift in hand.

AUSTIN

Yo.

Austin hands her a present. Jillian cautiously takes it. She tears open the paper with little anticipation.

JILLIAN

What is it?

AUSTIN

The traditional way of finding out is to open it.

Jillian looks inside, she gives Austin a withering look.

JILLIAN

The legacy of Stone Cold Steve Austin on Blu-Ray.

AUSTIN

Limited edition.

JILLIAN

You're so thoughtful.

AUSTIN

I mean, if you don't want it--

She hands it to him. He grins.

AUSTIN (CONT'D)

For me? You're the best, sis.

As Jillian's mood plummets, you could cut the tension with a knife. Greg steps in.

GREG

This is from me.

JILLIAN

Thanks, Dad.

Jillian opens the gift. It's a clam-shell cell phone-- clearly not the newest model.

She tries to hide her disappointment, and glances at Bela's brand-new one.

Jillian is too embarrassed to meet Bela's eyes.

GREG

Sorry it's not the latest, but I get by with mine.

Austin lets out an exaggerated cough.

AUSTIN

Nice phone. Alexander Graham Bell used the same one.

JILLIAN

Shut-up.

GREG

Just too much technology in those new phones, and there's a lot of scary people out there, and you're my little girl...

ASHLEY

I offered to lend him the money for a new one, but you know your dad. Too proud for words.

Jillian lowers her head; worst birthday ever.

GRANDMA SUSAN

You should be grateful for what you get, honey.

JILLIAN

I am grateful, Grandma.

GREG

When I find a new job, I promise things will be different.

JILLIAN

It's okay, dad. This is great. Thank you. Really.

Jillian senses her Dad's pain. She hugs him ever so tightly. He returns the favor.

He releases her and looks into her eyes.

GREG

We might not always see eye to eye.

GREG AND JILLIAN

But always heart-to-heart.

Ashley saunters around in the background talking on Bluetooth, breaking the moment. Jillian rolls her eyes.

Greg gets an idea.

GREG

Ashley hasn't told you what she's giving you yet.

He calls over.

GREG (CONT'D)

Ashley!

ASHLEY

(into her earpiece)
Have to go. Yeah. Some family thing.

Greg bristles at the dismissive way she said 'family thing'. It isn't lost on Jillian.

Ashley strides over.

GREG

You haven't told Jillian about the shopping trip you're taking her on.

ASHLEY

(news to her)
Shopping trip?

She looks at him blankly. He gives her an imploring look, and she catches up.

ASHLEY (CONT'D)

Yes! I'm going to buy you a real phone! A brand new one!

JILLIAN

Seriously?

ASHLEY

Yep!

Ashley nods, then looks at Greg. He looks crestfallen, that nobody likes the gift he bought.

ASHLEY (CONT'D)

Nope! But I will buy you something nice.

Jillian glances at her Dad as he gives Ashley a thumbs up. Jillian isn't buying the situation.

JILLIAN

It's okay. Don't you have a house sale to deal with?

Greg gives Ashley a tiny shake of the head.

ASHLEY

It can wait.

JILLIAN

No, really, it's fine, Ashley.

Ashley glances at Greg; *What should I do?*

GREG

I need to get Mom and Dad home anyway, so you two go have fun.

Ashley turns to Jillian straight-faced in a monotone.

ASHLEY

We'll have some quality girl time.

Jillian smiles politely but tightly. Bela gives her a raised eyebrow; *Good luck.*

JILLIAN

You're coming too.

Bela dramatically drops her head.

Greg smiles hopefully at Ashley and Jillian, desperate for them to get along.

With another big snore from Grandpa, Grandma fights her teeth back into her mouth.

EXT. MAIN STREET - NIGHT

Ashley, Jillian, and Bela march along a dimly lit street, plastic bags and garbage swirling around them in the breeze. Jillian's mood has improved.

ASHLEY

Your father will kill me if he ever finds out you wore me down.

JILLIAN

I won't tell him you bought me a phone. I promise.

They approach an electronics store. The door shuts in their faces, a MAN flips the sign to 'closed.'

JILLIAN (CONT'D)

Ah c'mon! Please.

She holds up her phone.

JILLIAN (CONT'D)

This is only good for talking into and typing messages at an exceedingly slow rate.

BELA

Who wants to talk on the phone?

Ashley rolls her eyes.

The man shakes his head, turns around, and walks away.

The sky starts to open, raindrops fall hard.

JILLIAN

Let's just go home.

ASHLEY

But I promised your father.

BELLA

There has to be somewhere open.

Ashley looks around, notices the stores closing one after another... except one.

ASHLEY

Come along.

She pulls her sweater up over her head, and they all run to--

EXT. ANTIQUE STORE - MOMENTS LATER

Ashley peers into the window.

ASHLEY

The lights are on. At least we can
get out of the rain.

JILLIAN

I'd rather take my chances on the
wet stuff, but sure. Why not?

INT. ANTIQUE STORE - NIGHT

It's small and cluttered, a seemingly random assortment of
dusty old bric-a-brac; taxidermy animals, terrible outsider
art, tasteless ornaments...

Jillian, Bela and Ashley browse the shelves, neither Ashley
nor Jillian wanting to be here with the other.

Bela turns her nose up at a particularly poorly stuffed fox.

There's a pile of old, tattered books stacked haphazardly on
a table. Some are bound in cracked leather, while others have
faded covers with illegible titles.

Bela turns the handle on an antique music box, which plays an
eerie, haunting tune.

BELA

Nothing says "we've got the latest
smartphones" like an old junk
store.

The top opens suddenly, and a hideous, moldering, jack-in-the-
box pops up.

Bela lets out a tiny squeal. She hurries over to Jillian,
rattled.

BELA (CONT'D)

Thanks for dragging me along. This
place is great. I'm having such an
amazing time.

JILLIAN

I sense sarcasm.

BELA

What, me? Nooo. I just feel bad for getting in the way of your quality girl time. Fake momma and all.

Jillian scoffs.

JILLIAN

I needed moral support.

BELA

So I'm guessing this is where your dad bought that phone?

JILLIAN

Probably. I don't think there's anything in here newer than a thousand years old.

Ashley comes over, impatient as ever.

ASHLEY

Find anything yet?

JILLIAN

This place isn't really my style. Then again I don't know whose style it is.

ASHLEY

Well, if you don't find a smartphone, at least find something so we don't go back empty-handed.

JILLIAN

Look, Ashley, I appreciate you trying and all, but we both know this is agony for both of us.

ASHLEY

I don't know what you mean.

JILLIAN

The whole mom thing doesn't come naturally to you--

Ashley recoils, stung.

JILLIAN (CONT'D)

And that's fine. We can just go home. I know how important your money is to you.

Jillian turns towards the door, but Ashley stops her, grabs her arm.

ASHLEY
Jillian, wait!

Jillian looks down at Ashley's hand, she releases her grip.

ASHLEY (CONT'D)
It's been two years. I know I'll
never replace your Mom... but I do
love your dad. So much.

Jillian sighs, and realizes she's right.

JILLIAN
Okay. I'm gonna look over here.

Jillian wanders away. Bela hurries after her, so as not to be left alone with Ashley.

INT. ANTIQUE STORE - BACK AREA - MOMENTS LATER

It's even more cramped and cluttered back here. The air is musty, and the atmosphere heavy with the weight of time.

Jillian and Bela pass a dusty display case filled with various curiosities; animal skulls, old medical equipment, strange trinkets. Each item seems to hold a dark and mysterious history.

BELA
Is it just me, or is this place
giving off a whole 'one of us is
gonna get murdered' vibe?

JILLIAN
That's just Ashley.

BELA
So what do you think about the
whole phone thing?

JILLIAN
Whatcha mean?

BELA
Why didn't she buy you a smartphone
in the first place? Doesn't she
share with your Dad?

JILLIAN

I dunno. She has her account and Dad has... whatever he has. She doesn't like spending money. He doesn't want to rely on her.

Bela shrugs, then spots an ornate but ugly COW STATUE on a shelf.

BELA

Hey, my Auntie has one of these in her shrine.

JILLIAN

What is it?

BELA

Cow goddess.

JILLIAN

I swear you guys have the coolest deities.

BINDRA (O.C.)

Can I help you?

A man appears abruptly from behind a display-- BINDRA, Indian American, gaunt, wild, staring eyes.

Jillian and Bela GASP with shock. Jillian stumbles backwards. She bumps into a shelf. Ornaments sway back and forth.

JILLIAN

Holy Cow!

BELA

Dude, don't creep up on people like that.

The cow statue teeters on the edge.

BINDRA

You break it, you pay for it.

Jillian grabs the shelf, steadies it.

JILLIAN

I didn't break anything. See?

And then the cow statue topples off!

Bela dives for it. It hits her hand, bounces off and then--

Jillian dives for it. It bounces off her hand, and ever so slowly HITS the floor.

Jillian winces, then picks it up.

JILLIAN (CONT'D)

It's fine! It's still ugly but it's fine, look!

Jillian picks up the cow statue, and holds it out to Bindra. He snatches it off her, inspects it.

There's a FINE CRACK along it.

BINDRA

You broke it. See? Ruined. This, one-of-a-kind, priceless piece--

BELA

Dude, my auntie has the exact same one.

JILLIAN

And that crack was already there.

The commotion draws Ashley close. She appears, agitated.

ASHLEY

What's going on?

JILLIAN

Nothing. Everything's fine...

BELA

All good in the hood. We're just two girls dancing.

Bela starts to dance randomly.

BINDRA

Why are you dancing?

BELA

It's my thing.

BINDRA

But there's no music.

Jillian joins in the dance. Then, she stops and looks at Ashley.

JILLIAN

C'mon, Ashley. A little dance might help loosen up your stress.

ASHLEY

I don't dance, and I'm not stressed.

Bindra waves the cow in Ashley's face. Ashley shrieks.

BINDRA

Pay for the cow!

ASHLEY

Get that outta my face!

BINDRA

She broke this.

He shows her a tiny, barely visible crack in the cow's ear.

ASHLEY

It doesn't look broken.

Bindra throws on the melodrama.

BINDRA

Cracked. Ruined. Disaster. This fine, historic--

BELA

Mass-produced--

BINDRA

--piece, so valuable and precious. Ruined! Oh, how will I ever feed my family now?!

Bela rolls her eyes at Bindra.

BELA

Nice try, dude, but we're not falling for it.

BINDRA

You people come in here like bulls in a China shop, smashing and crashing--

ASHLEY

Alright, alright. Enough. How much?

BINDRA

My dear, I cannot let this go for less than a thousand dollars. It is an antique--

ASHLEY
Can't be worth more than ten.

BINDRA
Thousand?

ASHLEY
Ten. Ten dollars.

BINDRA
Thirty.

ASHLEY
Twenty.

BINDRA
Thirty-five.

ASHLEY
I'm not giving you thirty-five
dollars for that thing.

BINDRA
Thing?! This is Kamedhenu, the
sacred cow goddess.

BELA
S'right. She grants wishes to those
most deserving. Only, the real
Kamedhenu probably wasn't poured
out of plaster.

ASHLEY
(to girls)
Come on. We're leaving.

Ashley turns to go. Bindra sobs theatrically.

JILLIAN
Just buy it, Ashley.

ASHLEY
He's ripping us off.

A whistling noise replicating a Mogwai from the Gremlins
movie can be heard from a box next to Bindra.

BELA
What is that?

Bindra places his hand on the box.

BINDRA

This is a one of a kind creature.
It's got special rules though, you
can't feed him after mid--

Jillian and Bela break into another dance, ignoring Bindra.

BINDRA (CONT'D)

You girls have the attention span
of a mosquito on crack.

ASHLEY

Just give me the damn statue.

Grumbling, Ashley pulls out the money, and hands it to Bindra.

She takes the cow statue, and forcefully slaps it into Jillian's hands.

ASHLEY (CONT'D)

Happy freaking birthday.

JILLIAN

(sarcastic tone)
Best fake mom ever!

They leave the store as the noise continues from the box.

INT. ACKER'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

A humble home that seems well-kept.

Greg sits at the kitchen counter, filling out an online job application.

Ashley and Jillian walk in.

ASHLEY

We're home.

Greg quickly shuts his laptop.

GREG

Did you have fun?

ASHLEY

No, we got conned.

JILLIAN

And I got this out of it.

Jillian holds up the Wish Cow statue. Greg frowns at it.

GREG

Hmm. Okay...

Austin enters, checks out the cow statue.

AUSTIN

The hell is that?

JILLIAN

A wish cow.

ASHLEY

What did he call it? Cow.. Man...

JILLIAN

Kamendhenu.

Austin bursts out laughing.

AUSTIN

I kinda love it.

JILLIAN

Here. You have it.

Jillian offers the cow to Austin.

GREG

Jillian! Ashley bought you that.

JILLIAN

It's not like she wanted to. And it's not my idea of the perfect birthday present either...

ASHLEY

Well, I didn't want to be humiliated either, but you and your little friend danced around that store, knocking things over left and right--

JILLIAN

For God's sake, just get over yourself, Ashley.

GREG

Jillian!

ASHLEY

Excuse me?! Get over YOUR-self!

JILLIAN

Great comeback, Karen.

Austin sniggers.

ASHLEY

Oh, that's getting original.

Greg gets up, and gets in between Jillian and Ashley, who stare each other down.

GREG

Woah, woah. Let's all calm down a little here.

JILLIAN

How about she calms down a lot? The woman is set permanently to maximus bitchus.

Ashley is stung.

GREG

Jillian! You do not talk to your future Mother like that! Especially not in Latin.

Jillian recoils. Tears well up in her eyes. Greg immediately realizes he's crossed a line.

JILLIAN

She's not gonna be my mom, dad. She will never be my mom. She doesn't even belong here. This is our house.

The room goes eerily silent.

Ashley marches over to the closet, grabs her coat.

ASHLEY

Well, your wish is my command. I'm outta here.

She storms out the door.

GREG

Honey - honey, wait!

Greg sighs and lowers his head.

They hear a car screeching away, and Greg runs out after Ashley.

Austin glances at Jillian, shakes his head.

AUSTIN
Sometimes, sis. Sometimes...

He then walks upstairs.

Jillian stares at the front door and then looks at the living room, where her grandparents watch TV.

She turns, and storms up to her room, Wish Cow in tow.

INT. ACKER'S HOUSE - JILLIAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

A brightly colored and cozy bedroom, a wall covered in posters of Jillian's favorite bands, movies, and TV shows.

Jillian walks in, sets the Wish Cow down on her dresser, and plops onto her bed, pouting and still simmering with anger.

She notices the cowgirl outfit at the foot of her bed with a note that reads: *"Can't wait to see you try it on. Grandma."*

Jillian sighs.

INT. ACKER'S HOUSE - STAIRS - NIGHT

Jillian walks downstairs in the cowgirl costume, her face red, barely able to breathe.

JILLIAN
Grandma, I'm coming down!

INT. ACKER'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jillian enters. Grandma Susan perks up.

GRANDMA SUSAN
Well howdy, cowgirl. Don't she look pretty?

She nudges Grandpa Henry, who stares at the TV. Looks like some murder mystery. He jolts up.

GRANDPA HENRY
Very nice, dear.

He turns his head back to the TV.

GRANDPA HENRY (CONT'D)
Did you stand in some cow shit?

JILLIAN
 Sorry, Grandpa, what are you
 talking about?

ON THE TV:

An actor plays a detective.

ACTOR
 Did you stand in some cow shit?

BACK TO JILLIAN AND GRANDMA:

Grandma Susan rolls her eyes.

GRANDMA SUSAN
 He watches these episodes over and
 over. He knows every line, who's
 done it from the start. I don't
 know...

Jillian smiles.

GRANDMA SUSAN (CONT'D)
 I appreciate you putting on that
 outfit. Now go get into something
 more comfortable. Your face is as
 red as your hair.

JILLIAN
 Thanks, Grandma... about earlier...

GRANDMA SUSAN
 Don't explain, dear. I know what
 you're going through. Your father,
 too. He's trying his best.

JILLIAN
 Sometimes I think he forgets mom.

GRANDMA SUSAN
 Oh, honey. He will never forget
 her. She was the love of his life.

Jillian leans in, and kisses both of her grandparents.

JILLIAN
 Love you.

GRANDMA SUSAN
 Love you, too.

GRANDPA HENRY
 If only the cow could talk!

Jillian stands back with an eyebrow raised.

ACTOR (O.S.)
If only the cow could talk.

Jillian giggles.

GRANDMA SUSAN
Why don't you go to bed? Everything
will be better in the morning.

They exchange a smile.

INT. ACKER'S HOUSE - JILLIAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jillian lays back on her bed, and exhales. She looks across at the Wish Cow statue, and switches off her light.

JILLIAN
I wish you were a real wish cow.
Then you could bring my mom back.

EXT. PARK - NIGHT

Ashley sits on a park bench under a streetlight. A small river flows just a few feet from her. She leans down, picks up a stick, and tosses it in. It catches the current and floats downstream.

GREG (O.S.)
The bench where we met, eh? Not
like you to be so sentimental.

Greg approaches the bench, and sits down next to Ashley.

ASHLEY
I thought you were a weirdo
stalking me.

GREG
I was, and I still am.

Ashley smiles. Greg leans in.

ASHLEY
I'm not cut out for this. I'm not a
parent. I've never had children.
I'm a businesswoman.

GREG
Oh, stop. You're a natural.

ASHLEY
A natural disaster.

GREG
Okay, so you just have to work at
it. That's all.

ASHLEY
I don't know what you see in me.

GREG
What do you see in me? You're so
successful, and I'm, well, not. And
I've got so much baggage that--

ASHLEY
Most of the guys I dated in the
past were like a male version of
me. When I first met you here, in
ten minutes, you made me laugh more
than I had in years. And you're a
great dad. Those kids love you. Me,
not so much.

GREG
It'll happen, Ashley.

Greg leans in for a kiss as Ashley's phone vibrates. She
pulls back, and checks it.

ASHLEY
I gotta take this. The price of
dealing with a buyer in another
time zone.

Ashley stands up to answer the phone. She walks away.

ASHLEY (CONT'D)
Mr. Semanov. Yuri! What time is it
in Moscow?

Greg looks dejected. He picks up a stick, and throws it in
the river. It hits the riverbank, and stays put.

He lets out a huge sigh.

INT. ACKER'S HOUSE - JILLIAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jillian looks soundly asleep, when suddenly--

A low, pulsing, MAGICAL RUMBLE fills the darkness.

On Jillian's dresser, the Wish Cow statue emits an eerie blue light through the crack, as tendrils of smoke curl up around it, and--

The statue SPLITS OPEN!

An impossible vortex of GLOWING MIST spreads out from inside it, which seems to shoot and bounce around the room.

The mist soars around Jillian's bedroom, and begins to coalesce into some sort of SEMI-HUMAN FORM.

Jillian stirs, but does not wake.

INT. ACKER'S HOUSE - JILLIAN'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Jillian wakes up to sunlight peering through her window. She strains to open her eyes, stretches, lets out a yawn, then notices the broken cow statue on her dresser. Weird.

Then she hears a noise, and realizes--

There's something - or someone - in her closet. Clothes are being tossed out.

JILLIAN

Dad?

No answer.

JILLIAN (CONT'D)

Austin, get the hell out of my room!

Austin shouts through the closed bedroom door.

AUSTIN (O.S.)

Stop being weird!

Jillian grabs a pillow, and throws it into the closet. The clothes-tossing stops abruptly.

Jillian gets out of bed, tentatively.

She walks over, pulls the closet door wide, and reveals--

A COW, standing on hind legs, and wearing Jillian's clothes.

Jillian SCREAMS.

The Cow emits something half-scream, half moo; a sort of terrified lowing.

Jillian stumbles backward, falls over her bed, and collapses on the floor, tangled up in bedding.

The Cow runs out of the room.

Jillian throws off the bedding, gets to her feet, breathless, and runs after it.

INT. ACKER'S HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Jillian bursts out of her room. She hears the Cow's hoof-steps receding, and gives chase.

Glances left and right into the open doorways... No Cow.

She reaches the top of the stairs, and barrels down them.

INT. ACKER'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Austin eats breakfast, as he plays a game on his phone.

Jillian bursts in, eyes wide, panting. Austin looks up.

AUSTIN

...What?

JILLIAN

Where did it go?

AUSTIN

Where did what go?

JILLIAN

Didn't you see it?

AUSTIN

See what?

JILLIAN

There was-- It was--

Jillian takes a deep breath, gathers herself.

JILLIAN (CONT'D)

Austin. Listen to me very carefully. When I woke up just now... There was a cow in my bedroom.

Austin looks at her blankly-- then bursts out laughing.

AUSTIN

There's so much I want to say, but
you'd kill me.

JILLIAN

I wasn't looking in the mirror.

AUSTIN

For the record, you said that, not
me.

He doubles over with laughter. Jillian grunts in frustration,
looks away.

JILLIAN

This is why I won't tell you
anything.

AUSTIN

Hey!

JILLIAN

What?

AUSTIN

Listen. You could have said a bird
flew in through an open window. A
spider on your wall. Even a monster
under your bed. But... a cow.

JILLIAN

It was on its hind legs.

Austin slaps his own forehead.

AUSTIN

What are you smoking up there? Cuz
I want some.

Jillian, clearly upset and angry, storms off as Austin laughs
behind her.

INT. ACKER'S HOUSE - GARAGE - DAY

Jillian looks in-- but no Cow.

INT. ACKER'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - DAY

Jillian looks in-- no Cow.

INT. ACKER'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Jillian looks in-- still no Cow.

She stops, exhales; *is she going mad?*

Ashley and Greg come downstairs; both look dressed for work, their mood is buoyant, wanting to present a united front after the previous night.

GREG

Hey, honey.

ASHLEY

Good morning!

Ashley suddenly notices Jillian is still in her pajamas, her hair a mess. She tries to refrain from blowing up on her.

ASHLEY (CONT'D)

Jillian, could you hurry up and get dressed? You don't want to make your dad late for his interview.

Jillian stops looking around for the Cow, and turns to her dad.

JILLIAN

What interview?

GREG

At the slaughterhouse.

JILLIAN

(confused)

Right...

Jillian goes back to looking around. Greg looks at her, worried.

GREG

Honey? Are you okay?

JILLIAN

(not looking up)

Everything's fine.

Ashley looks at the time.

ASHLEY

Jillian, seriously, you can't make your dad late. Chop chop. Or you can walk to school.

Jillian rolls her eyes, and heads upstairs without even looking at them.

Greg sighs.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

Kids file into the school, all the usual cliques.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - HALL - DAY

Jillian and Bela walk, but Jillian looks oblivious to her surroundings, or the other kids. And whatever Bela is babbling about.

BELA

Have you ever noticed how dogs tilt their heads when you talk to them? Like, they're trying to understand you, but they just can't quite figure it out. What is that even about?

JILLIAN

Dunno.

BELA

What's the matter with you today?

JILLIAN

Huh? Oh. Nothing.

BELA

You're not even listening to me.

JILLIAN

I need to tell you something. But I need you to really listen to me. I know I sound crazy, but--

LILY (O.S.)

Ugh, you totally got in my shot!
Cut!

Jillian and Bela stop in their tracks--

The school's popular girls clique - LILY (queen bitch), TAISSA (loyal lackey) and CARLINA (the muscle) - stare at Jillian and Bela with rage in their eyes.

Taissa looks down at the phone she used to record Lily, and shakes her head.

LILY (CONT'D)
Aren't you going to apologize?

BELA
The hall is public property.

Carlina gets up in Bela's face.

CARLINA
This is our part of the hall.

BELA
Call off your dogs, Lily.

Carlina and Taissa lunge towards Bela-- but Jillian steps between them.

JILLIAN
Woah, woah. Everyone, cool it.

Carlina shoves Jillian-- hard.

Jillian stumbles backward, and collides with a teen boy--

JACK, a good-looking geek type carrying a boba tea. It bursts all over the both of them.

Laughter from the teens all around them.

JILLIAN (CONT'D)
I'm so sorry.

JACK
My fault. I-- I wasn't looking where I was going.

Jack locks eyes with Jillian; a flicker of attraction from Jack, clearly reciprocated by Jillian.

Jillian pulls out a tissue, tries wiping down Jack--

JILLIAN
Let me--

Jillian gets a bit too close to his crotch. He flinches away; it's the closest a girl has ever come to him.

LILY
You know, if you want to grope him you could just ask him out.

Lily and her posse burst into laughter.

Jillian looks completely embarrassed.

Jack smiles, shyly.

JACK
It's fine--

JILLIAN
I'm sorry! I don't! I can't--

Jillian runs off. More laughter ensues.

Bela stares at Jack, apologetically, then runs after Jillian.

Lily turns to Taissa.

LILY
Did you get that?

TAISSA
Totally.

The trio snickers-- Taissa filmed the entire thing.

INT. ACKER'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Jillian walks in, and slams the door behind her.

Greg sits on the sofa in sweatpants and a t-shirt, watching TV. A half-eaten pizza sits on the coffee table.

GREG
Hey. Want pizza? It's still lukewarm.

JILLIAN
I'm good.

She turns to head upstairs, but realizes Greg doesn't look in a good way.

JILLIAN (CONT'D)
You didn't get the job, did you?

GREG
No, honey, it wasn't for me.

Jillian walks over, and sits down next to Greg.

JILLIAN
What happened?

GREG

I dunno. I mean, they showed me this sort of gun that shoots a metal spike into -- Actually, never mind.

He grabs a slice of reheated pizza full of meat toppings. He stares at it, picks off the toppings, then puts it in his mouth.

JILLIAN

Can I ask you something?

GREG

Sure, sweetheart, anything.

JILLIAN

Do you miss Mom?

GREG

With every breath I take. I see her every day though. Every time I look into your eyes, she's there.

Tears well up in Jillian's eyes.

JILLIAN

I want her back.

Greg holds her tight, he nods. Jillian composes herself.

JILLIAN (CONT'D)

What do you think she'd say if she were here now?

GREG

Probably "Greg, you need to get that dead raccoon off the roof."

JILLIAN

Yeah. I've got used to the smell now. I started calling it Austin 2.

GREG

Your poor brother. He had a shower last month.

Jillian smiles, but there's a sadness to it.

JILLIAN

Hope you find a job soon.

GREG

Me too. I can't stay cooped up in here doing nothing.

JILLIAN

You could get the raccoon off the roof.

GREG

There's your mother right there.

Jillian laughs, then gets up.

JILLIAN

I better go do my homework.

Greg nods.

GREG

Love you, kiddo.

Jillian smiles at him, then heads upstairs. Greg watches her go, full of sadness and love.

INT. ACKER'S HOUSE - JILLIAN'S BEDROOM - DAY

Jillian enters, closes her door, throws her bag down, and jumps onto her bed.

She opens her laptop, and her screen fills with notifications.

She clicks on them and tentatively opens up a video of her colliding with Jack, then trying to mop down his crotch.

The screen fills with laughing emojis.

Jillian slams her laptop closed. She throws her head back, and groans.

COW (O.S.)

Psst. Jillian.

Jillian looks up; *what was that?*

COW (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Don't be alarmed.

JILLIAN

Who's there?

COW (O.S.)

I am hiding beneath your bed.

JILLIAN

I've got a gun. I know how to use
it, probably.

She winces; that was a dumb thing to say.

Jillian looks around for some sort of weapon.

COW (O.S.)

I'm going to come out in three...
two... one...

And then the Cow sort of slithers ungracefully out from
beneath the bed, wearing one of Jillian's t-shirts.

Jillian looks utterly terrified. She watches as the Cow gets
to its feet, cracks its neck.

It pulls the t-shirt down over its udders, self-conscious.

COW (CONT'D)

That's better. Hi!

JILLIAN

Have I gone insane? I've literally
gone insane. I am now insane.

She closes her eyes, then reopens them again--

The Cow is still there. She speaks with a female voice that's
at once scatty, hyperactive, yet somehow regal.

COW

Hope you don't mind me borrowing
some of your clothes, but even a
wish cow such as I have standards.

JILLIAN

A wish cow?

COW

You wished for me, did you not?

JILLIAN

Huh?

COW

Last night, you wished I was real.
Well... ta-dah! I am at your
service.

Jillian gets to her feet, paces back and forth, trying to
take it all in.

Jillian stops and stares at the Cow, intently.

COW (CONT'D)

Is this the first to blink?

The Cow opens her eyes wide.

JILLIAN

I'm losing it, everyone has finally pushed me over the edge. There's a talking cow in my bedroom.

The Cow mimics her, and stomps around the room.

COW

OMG, there's a talking girl, all up in my beef.

The Cow lies down on the floor.

COW (CONT'D)

Hard work being a cow.

JILLIAN

Ok. Let's just say for the moment you're real.

COW

Thank you.

JILLIAN

Why? How? Where? I mean-- what?!

The Cow points to the statue with one hoof. Jillian picks it up off the dresser.

JILLIAN (CONT'D)

So a two thousand pound cow came out of this tiny statue?

COW

I'm a sixteen hundred-pound cow, actually, but yes, the statue thing is right.

JILLIAN

So can you go back in? Because that would be great for my sanity right now...

COW

As I told you, you wished--

JILLIAN

For you. Right, right. That's not an explanation! You don't just wish for things and they happen.

Jillian unravels.

JILLIAN (CONT'D)

This isn't real. This can't be real.

COW

Breathe with me. In and out... in and out...

Jillian, with the Cow's instruction, tries to control her breathing.

COW (CONT'D)

There. Is that better?

Jillian nods.

COW (CONT'D)

I know this is a lot to take in. People of your time seem to have lost their connection with magic.

JILLIAN

You've not seen David Blaine.

COW

Who?

JILLIAN

So, what, are you Kamenhadu?

The Cow looks seriously offended.

COW

I'm not *that* old. She was my mom, thank you very much.

JILLIAN

Of course she was. Of course!

Jillian searches the room, looking for hidden cameras.

JILLIAN (CONT'D)

Is this a prank? Am I on YouTube?

COW

Please, what is a YouTube?

JILLIAN

Where are the cameras?

Jillian grabs the Cow's head-- and tugs.

COW

MOOO--Ow!!!! Seriously? My head's attached to my body, just like yours is!

Jillian falls back onto the bed, staring at the Cow.

JILLIAN

You're real.

COW

And you really hurt me.

The Cow rubs her neck, then rises to her full height, towering over Jillian. Somehow imposing now, her magical presence fills the room with a golden glow.

COW (CONT'D)

I am Nandini, cow daughter of Surabhi-Kamedhenu, cursed by the sage to be trapped on earth forever.

Nandini and Jillian look over at the broken statue.

NANDINI

Until you freed me, Jillian. Now I belong to you, and will grant your every desire.

Jillian stares at her, confused.

NANDINI (CONT'D)

Anyhoo. Yadda-yadda, etcetera etcetera. You get the idea.

JILLIAN

So, if I want you to do my chores, you have to, like, do whatever I say?

NANDINI

I think we can get a little more creative than that. Try it. Ask for something.

Jillian sighs. She looks around, and picks up a hairbrush.

JILLIAN

I wish this was made from
chocolate.

Nandini closes her eyes, and MUTTERS in an ancient tongue.

And before Jillian's eyes, the brush turns to chocolate,
bristles and all.

JILLIAN (CONT'D)

No way!

Jillian takes a bite.

Her mind reels at the possibilities.

JILLIAN (CONT'D)

What else can you do?!

NANDINI

What do you most desire?

Jillian hesitates, glances at a photograph of her with her
mom in happier days.

NANDINI (CONT'D)

I can do anything within reason.
After all, I've never done this
before.

JILLIAN

Never done what before?

NANDINI

You're my first gig, as it were.
Being a wish cow was always more my
mother's area of expertise. Between
you and me, I am way out of my
depth here.

Nandini chuckles.

JILLIAN

You just turned my hairbrush into
chocolate.

NANDINI

A simple transmogrification wish.
It's the bigger stuff that's a
risk. Like ending world suffering,
or... I dunno. Bringing people back
to life.

Jillian looks at Nandini, sadness in her eyes.

NANDINI (CONT'D)

A wish of such magnitude could have unforeseen and deeply dangerous consequences. So maybe let's start small until I'm up to speed.

Jillian glances from the photo of her mom to her laptop.

JILLIAN

I want a million followers on Instagram.

NANDINI

Uh...?

JILLIAN

Instagram? Hello? TikTok?

NANDINI

Please, I'm thousands of years old.

JILLIAN

Look, just give me a million followers.

NANDINI

I wish--

JILLIAN

I wish I had a million followers, and they all loved me and were never mean about me.

NANDINI

So be it.

Nandini closes her eyes, MUTTERS in some ancient tongue, then opens them again.

NANDINI (CONT'D)

It is done.

JILLIAN

Just like that?

Jillian goes to open up her laptop, but then--

A NOISE rises up-- a cacophony of voices, all chanting the same thing: "JILLIAN! JILLIAN! JILLIAN!"

Jillian walks to her window-- the direction of the sound.

OUT THE WINDOW

The entire street is filled with ONE MILLION PEOPLE chanting Jillian's name.

JILLIAN (CONT'D)
What have you done?!

NANDINI
What you wished for.

A Man in the crowd sees Jillian, and points.

MAN
There she is!

WOMAN
Jillian!

MAN
We love you, Jillian!

There are screams, people fainting-- it's like Beatlemania (or Jillianmania).

Austin pushes through the crowd, baffled.

AUSTIN
Get out of my way! I just want to get home!

MAN
Jilliaaaan!

The man screams, high-pitched, like a girl at a rock concert.

Austin looks at the man, baffled.

BACK TO JILLIAN'S BEDROOM

Jillian turns to Nandini, terrified.

JILLIAN
Make them go away...

NANDINI
So you 'wish' me to--

JILLIAN
I wish I didn't have a million followers! And that everyone forgets this ever happened.

EXT. ACKER'S HOUSE - SAME TIME

The people VANISH, leaving Austin - and a few neighbors - looking around, baffled; *how did they get out here?*

Austin carries on his way as if nothing happened.

INT. ACKER'S HOUSE - JILLIAN'S BEDROOM - SAME TIME

Jillian turns to Nandini.

JILLIAN

That isn't what I meant. I was talking about social media.

NANDINI

Again, no idea what that is.

JILLIAN

Like, on the Internet? On my laptop? My phone, well not MY phone. Hello?!

Nandini shrugs, baffled. Jillian waves her phone in Nandini's face.

NANDINI

Ooh, what a pretty shell. Does it contain a pearl?

JILLIAN

It's a cellphone. Got it? While we're at it, can you wish me up a new cellphone?

NANDINI

I could try, but, well, the way I see it, we've got two problems.

JILLIAN

Which are?

NANDINI

Problem one. I've been stuck in a statue for thousands of years. I don't know a thing about your era, and thus do not have a frame of reference for a 'new cellphone'.

Jillian sits on her bed, puts her head in her hands.

JILLIAN

Great.

Jillian glances at a photo of her mom.

NANDINI

I do not wish to run before I can walk. Although this I can do.

Nandini does a handstand.

Jillian shakes her head. She has another idea.

JILLIAN

What if I could wish for you to look like a human girl my age?

NANDINI

If you could provide just a little more context...?

Jillian looks around, then grabs a photo from her mirror-- it's of BELA.

JILLIAN

Can you make yourself look like that?

EXT. ACKER'S HOUSE - DAY

The sun rises over the Acker's house.

INT. ACKER'S HOUSE - STAIRS - DAY

Jillian and Nandini/Bela walk down the stairs. Nandini/Bela wears Jillian's jeans and sneakers, as well as a baseball cap.

JILLIAN

You know, I didn't mean for you to look exactly like my best friend.

NANDINI/BELA

Gotta be a little more specific in your wishes.

JILLIAN

This is very creepy. How will I know the difference?

Nandini/Bela rolls out her giant tongue.

JILLIAN (CONT'D)

You've just out-creeped the creepiness.

INT. ACKER'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Austin sits at his usual spot on the breakfast bar, playing something on his phone.

Greg types something on his laptop.

Jillian enters with Nandini/Bela. Austin and Greg look over, assuming it's the real Bela.

AUSTIN
(re: Bela's outfit)
Yo, Bela. You don't have your own clothes?

GREG
Bela? Did you stay over?

NANDINI/BELA
Yes. I am Bela.

GREG
I hope so. Otherwise I've been calling you the wrong name for years.

NANDINI/BELA
I am not a cow!

Nandini/Bela laughs a little too loud that a moo pops out.

AUSTIN
What's with all the cow stuff with you two?

Jillian quickly grabs Nandini/Bela's hand.

JILLIAN
We're, er, we're going to the mall.

AUSTIN
Have an udder good time.

Greg high-fives Austin.

GREG
Good one!

JILLIAN
It didn't even make sense.

GREG
I'll give you a lift.

JILLIAN
It's ok, Dad. We need the fresh
air.

NANDINI/BELA
I am Bela, Jillian's human best
friend, a normal teenage girl.

Jillian keeps a fixed smile.

AUSTIN
Cool.

Jillian ushers Nandini/Bela away.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - DAY

Jillian strolls along a suburban neighborhood with
Nandini/Bela next to her.

JILLIAN
Can you try being, like, a hundred
percent less weird?

NANDINI/BELA
I'm normal for a cow.

JILLIAN
No. You're not. Real cows don't
grant wishes.

She turns a corner, and walks straight into someone.

JILLIAN (CONT'D)
I'm sorry--

It's Jack. He holds a 5-YEAR-OLD GIRL's hand.

JACK
It's fine. Glad you don't have
another Boba tea on you.

JILLIAN
I wasn't looking where I was going.

JACK
Don't worry about it.

So--

JILLIAN

So--

JACK (CONT'D)

JILLIAN (CONT'D)
You go first!

JACK
No, you go.

JILLIAN
I've actually forgotten what I was
going to say.

JACK
Me too.

They stare at each other... no words, just awkward
attraction.

Nandini/Bela nudges Jillian. She snaps out of it.

Jack finally notices Nandini/Bela.

JACK (CONT'D)
Hey, Bela.

NANDINI/BELA
I'm Bela, Jillian's teen friend.

Jack looks confused.

Nandini/Bela stares at Jack, oblivious.

Jillian sets her eyes on the little girl.

JILLIAN
So, who's this cutie?

JACK
This is Tara, my sister.

Tara offers her hand to Jillian, and they shake.

JILLIAN
Please to meet you, Tara.

JACK
Weird. She's normally more shy
around new people. She must like
you.

Jack lowers himself to her level, and talks to her in sign
language.

Tara looks up at Jillian, and smiles. Jillian notices the
hearing aid she's wearing.

JACK (CONT'D)
She said you seem nice.

JILLIAN
Is she always such a terrible judge
of character?

Jack chuckles.

JACK
Where you guys off to?

NANDINI/BELA
We're going to see a mole.

JILLIAN
The mall.

Jillian winces.

JILLIAN (CONT'D)
Listen, Jack. That video. The one
of me and you, uh--

JACK
What video?

Jillian looks down, embarrassed.

JILLIAN
The one that everyone's been
sharing. From the other day.

Jack shrugs, unbothered.

JACK
They'll have moved onto some new
gossip in a month, and I don't do
social media. I'd rather read a
book than be plugged into all that
noise 24-7.

Jillian smiles at him.

JACK (CONT'D)
Anyway, I gotta get Tara home. I'll
see you around, Jillian.

Tara waves goodbye, and they head off.

Jillian stares right at Jack, and sighs.

As they walk away, Tara turns her head back, looks right at
Nandini/Bela, and:

TARA
Moo.

NANDINI/BELA
Moo-moo-moo-moo.

Jillian looks over and realizes Nandini/Bela has laid down on some grass... and hungrily chews at it.

Some PASSERSBY stare at Nandini/Bela and gossip as Jillian tries to pull her up.

JILLIAN
(to the passerby) You know these vegans when they gotta eat.
(To Nandini/Bela)
Come on, we gotta go. We'll find something a little more tasty at the mole, I mean mall.

EXT. BUS - DAY

A city bus heads along the street.

Nandini/Bela looks out of the window, awed by the city racing past.

INT. BUS - DAY

Jillian and Nandini/Bela sit next to one another, Nandini in the window seat, looks out, grinning madly.

NANDINI/BELA
Jillian, I have decided I like buses.

JILLIAN
Listen, you remember that whole wish thing about not running before you can walk...?

NANDINI/BELA
Indeed.

JILLIAN
What would happen if I wished for my dad to have a job? Too big?

NANDINI/BELA
It is hard to say. I am still so inexperienced.

JILLIAN
On second thought, forget it. Let's keep the training wheels on.
(MORE)

JILLIAN (CONT'D)

Besides, he's gotta figure it out for himself. I just want him to be happy, y'know.

NANDINI/BELA

I do know. I am very happy right now.

Nandini/Bela looks up at the height of the buildings, gasps.

NANDINI/BELA (CONT'D)

There are so many miracles in your time.

JILLIAN

So where did you come from? I mean, originally.

NANDINI/BELA

I don't remember much. During my imprisonment, time and memory became irrelevant.

JILLIAN

Don't you remember your family?

NANDINI/BELA

My mother. Slightly. I remember her face. Her eyes.

JILLIAN

Yeah... Same.

NANDINI/BELA

You knew my mother?

Jillian lowers her head.

JILLIAN

My own mom.

A small tear trickles down Jillian's face. Nandini/Bela wipes it away.

NANDINI/BELA

Tell me more about this place we are going to.

JILLIAN

It's where we will teach you everything about the modern world.

The bus pulls up at a stop. A SHADY-LOOKING GUY in a filthy hood, hands in his pockets and head down, boards the bus.

The second he's aboard, he pulls out a GUN, and waves it around.

ROBBER
Nobody moves!

Gasps and screams from the passengers.

ROBBER (CONT'D)
Hands up.

The passengers and DRIVER put their hands in the air, including Jillian.

Nandini/Bela sits passively, smiling, taking it all in.

JILLIAN
Nandini! Do something.

NANDINI/BELA
What do you wish me to do?

JILLIAN
Get rid of his gun.

NANDINI/BELA
What's a gun?

JILLIAN
That thing in his hand. I wish that thing he's holding was, I dunno, something - anything - else!

NANDINI/BELA
So be it.

Nandini/Bela closes her eyes, and the Robber's gun turns into a LIVE SNAKE.

He immediately screams, freaks out, and tosses the snake into the Driver's lap.

The Driver screams, and throws the snake over her shoulder where it lands on an ELDERLY FEMALE PASSENGER.

Everyone screams and freaks out, and tries to rush to get off the bus.

JILLIAN
Nandini!

NANDINI/BELA
What?

JILLIAN

The snake!

NANDINI/BELA

That you wished for.

JILLIAN

And now I wish I hadn't.

The snake turns back into a gun in the Elderly Female Passenger's lap. She takes a moment, reeling.

And then she picks up the gun, and points it at the Robber.

ELDERLY FEMALE PASSENGER

Freeze, asshole!

The Robber slowly puts his hands in the air.

Jillian exhales, looks at Nandini/Bela.

JILLIAN

You're like an actual, real-life,
super-hero.

NANDINI/BELA

Sure. Whatever that is!

INT. MALL - ENTRANCE - DAY

The mall is a massive, three-story building, with rows upon rows of windows gleaming in the sunlight.

The entrance is a grand archway, flanked by two towering pillars, with the mall's name emblazoned in bold letters overhead.

Bela and an awed Nandini/Bela walk in.

JILLIAN

This is the mall. The epicenter of
American culture.

Followed by Jillian, Nandini/Bela walks forward, taking in the sights and sounds around her. People of all ages and races rush past her, their arms filled with shopping bags.

NANDINI/BELA

This must be the wonder of your
world.

Nandini/Bela's gaze falls upon a towering escalator, beckoning her upwards. She hesitates momentarily, taking in the dizzying height of the moving stairs.

NANDINI/BELA (CONT'D)
Your staircases move! If we had these in our time... Cows can't bend our knees, you know.

JILLIAN
Pretty sure you were doing a handstand in my bedroom.

Nandini/Bela's curiosity gets the better of her, and she steps onto the escalator, holding on tight as it carries her upwards.

She lets out a laugh, getting a few curious looks.

She starts running down the up escalator, getting nowhere and loving the novelty of it.

Eventually, Nandini/Bela and Jillian reach the second floor.

INT. MALL - SECOND FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

Nandini/Bela gasps at the sight before her-- The space is even larger than the first floor, with a dizzying array of stores and restaurants.

She sees people wandering around, taking in the sights and sounds with a look of wonder on her face.

People shopping in stores, a massive food court filled with people, each one eating and chatting with friends. She sees children playing in a soft play area.

Nandini/Bela looks overwhelmed. Total sensory overload.

JILLIAN
In our time, this is the closest most people get to religion.

NANDINI/BELA
I can see why.

Nandini/Bela sniffs the air.

NANDINI/BELA (CONT'D)
What is that aroma?

Nandini looks around-- She sees a PRETZEL STAND, and gasps.

NANDINI/BELA (CONT'D)

I want one of those.

JILLIAN

Can't you just wish one up?

NANDINI/BELA

I am not allowed to wish for myself. It is our most strict rule.

JILLIAN

Rules schmules. Fine! I wish Nandini had a pretzel.

Nandini/Bela closes her eyes. When she looks down, she is holding a pretzel.

She looks at it momentarily, unsure of what to do, before taking a cautious bite.

She savors the taste, eyes closed, mooing slightly. The taste is unlike anything she has ever experienced before. She chews slowly, trying to make sense of the flavor and texture, then--

She shoves the entire thing in her mouth, getting some strange looks from passersby. She groans in ecstasy, and shouts at passersby with her mouth full of pretzel.

NANDINI/BELA

You have to try one of these!

JILLIAN

We gotta teach you some manners.

NANDINI/BELA

Another! More!

JILLIAN

Wait until you hear about ice cream!

NANDINI/BELA

Ice... cream?!

MOMENTS LATER

Nandini/Bela holds an ice cream in her hand, and licks it in ecstasy.

NANDINI/BELA (CONT'D)

However do they make such a treat?

JILLIAN

It all starts with milk.

Nandini looks down at herself.

NANDINI/BELA

Wow! Is each one a different
flavor?

She suddenly gets brain freeze, groans in pain, and grips her nose. Jillian laughs.

JILLIAN

That's called brain freeze. C'mon.
We're not done yet.

BEGIN MONTAGE:

-- Nandini/Bela tries a slice of pizza and burns her mouth. She blows on it frantically.

-- Jillian explains the concept of money to Nandini/Bela, showing her different bills and coins.

-- Nandini/Bela magically fills Jillian's wallet with more money; Jillian's eyes go wide, then she gets up, and pushes Nandini/Bela towards a store.

-- Nandini/Bela tries on a coat, and struggles to put it on. She accidentally puts it on backwards and looks at Jillian in confusion.

-- Jillian and Nandini/Bela walk out of the store with multiple bags, wearing some of their new designer outfits, including sunglasses.

-- At an Apple Store, Jillian buys a new phone. Her face lights up as she takes a selfie with Nandini/Bela, who sticks her tongue out... huge as a cow's tongue.

END MONTAGE.

INT. MALL - SEATING AREA - DAY

Jillian and Nandini/Bela sit and eat another pretzel. Jillian looks over at a MOM and her DAUGHTER, walking along happily, holding hands; a pang of longing.

Nandini/Bela does the same.

NANDINI/BELA

You are thinking of your mother.

JILLIAN

Yeah.

NANDINI/BELA

Me also.

JILLIAN

We used to come here together. We'd get lunch, then she'd give me pocket money, and take me to the toy store. I used to collect these Beanie Baby things.

Jillian smiles sadly.

JILLIAN (CONT'D)

I was just a kid when... y'know.

NANDINI/BELA

I miss my family also. You have reminded me of a memory about my Mother.

JILLIAN

Oh?

NANDINI/BELA

I recall my sister being born.

JILLIAN

You have a sister?

NANDINI/BELA

I have many sisters.

JILLIAN

Are they wish cows too?

NANDINI/BELA

Like me, they were born from the divine belch of Daksha after he drank ambrosia created by the churning of the Kshirasagara, the cosmic milk ocean.

Jillian just stares at her with blank eyes.

JILLIAN

That's the thing about us two-- we've got so much in common.

NANDINI/BELA

I know!

Nandini/Bela stands up quickly, anxiousness on her face.

NANDINI/BELA (CONT'D)

It's probably not appropriate to drop dungs on the mall floor but I really have to go...

JILLIAN

Oh, boy!

(pointing)

The restroom is over there. You can drop your dungs in there.

Nandini/Bela sets off quickly to the restroom, holding herself as she runs.

JILLIAN (CONT'D)

Not on the floor!

Then Jillian's face drops, as she spots--

Lily, Taissa and Carlina, drinking smoothies while walking straight toward her.

LILY

Jillian!

Jillian can't get away, but stands, looking for an exit. Soon enough, she is surrounded by the three popular girls.

JILLIAN

We were just leaving.

LILY

Who's we?

Jillian looks around for Nandini/Bela. Her eyes open wide as she sees--

The real Bela, in a cute dress, walking towards her.

BELA

There you are! I went to your house and your dad told me you were here... with me.

JILLIAN

He's a little confused. Must have meant you will be with me when you get to the mall.

Bela shrugs. She eyes the popular clique up and down.

BELA

Surrounded by the plague, I see.

Jillian grabs Bela's hand and starts to leave. The popular girls block her path.

LILY
(to Jillian)
Wait. I need to thank you.

JILLIAN
For what?

LILY
That video of you covered in boba,
and trying to touch Jack's crotch?
Totally the biggest thing on my
channel. Blew up epically.

JILLIAN
I'm so happy for you. Bye.

Taissa clocks the shopping bags on Jillian's arms.

TAISSA
Been doing some shopping?

LILY
Where are you getting the money?
Isn't your dad, like, outta work?

The other two popular girls laugh.

BELA
Back off, Lily.

LILY
Back off yourself. I'm talking to
Jillian. I know we've not always
exactly been best friends--

JILLIAN
Or friends at all.

LILY
Right, but imagine how cool it
would be if we made a follow-up.

TAISSA
Like a sequel.

LILY
A sequel would slay.

TAISSA
A slayquel.

The popular girls laugh.

BELA

Was that meant to be humor?

Taissa rolls her eyes.

TAISSA

You are such a disease.

JILLIAN

Thanks, Lily, but I'd rather stick
forks in my eyes. C'mon, Nandini.

Dragging Bela, Jillian pushes past the popular clique, and leaves them cackling in her wake.

BELA

Did you just call me Nandini?

JILLIAN

(lying through her teeth)
No. Now I'm confused... family
trait.

As Jillian and Bela walk past the restroom, women retch and waft smells as they walk out of it.

Nandini/Bela walks out of the restroom proudly with a big smile, still zipping up her pants, followed by an ELDERLY WOMAN, who throws up.

Jillian glances over, then back to Bela.

JILLIAN (CONT'D)

We gotta move.

Nandini/Bela walks towards them.

NANDINI/BELA

Jillian! I dropped my dungs on the
floor, just like you suggested!

Bela stares at Nandini/Bela. Nandini/Bela follows Bela's movements like a mirror.

BELA

Am I tripping right now?

Lily, Taissa and Carlina look over, stunned.

LILY

Oh, my days. Bela has a secret
twin.

Bela stands dumbfounded, as Lily and the other two popular girls crowd around, looking Bela and Nandini/Bela up and down.

TAISSA
That is so weird.

JILLIAN
(whispering to Bela)
Yep. Your twin has shown up. Just nod your head. I'll explain later.

Bela nods. Nandini/Bela copies her nod.

Jillian drags Bela and Nandini/Bela away quickly, but--

A smoothie cup CRASHES into the back of Jillian's head, covering her, Bela and Nandini/Bela in the smoothie.

Jillian clenches her jaw, and turns around to face the three popular girls, laughing-- Taissa once again filming her.

LILY
Oopsie. It just slipped out of my hand.

Nandini/Bela licks the smoothie off herself with her giant tongue, which looks highly bizarre to Lily and her friends.

Bela pulls out her own tongue and looks down at it.

JILLIAN
Nandini...

NANDINI/BELA
Yes, Jillian?

JILLIAN
I wish you could do to those three what they just did to us.

Instantly, three smoothie cups come out of nowhere and HIT Lily, Taissa and Carlina in the head.

Passersby look up at the sky, confused, and cover their heads just in case.

Then they look at the popular girls, who seethe with anger, and burst into laughter.

Some passersby take out their phones, and take pictures and video of the popular girls covered in smoothies.

Jillian smiles, and gives a matter-of-fact shrug as she tries to repress her laughter.

JILLIAN (CONT'D)

Oopsie.

BELA

Jillian, what the freak is going on?!

LILY

Get them!

JILLIAN

Hoof it outta here.

Jillian, Bela and Nandini/Bela run, as Lily, Taissa and Carlina give chase.

They weave through crowds of shoppers.

Jillian, Bela and Nandini/Bela reach the top of the down escalator, and barrel down it.

NANDINI

Going down this one is so much easier!

Lily and the other two popular girls reach the top of the escalator gaining on them.

Passersby follow the chase, recording everything while laughing.

Jillian looks back over her shoulder.

JILLIAN

I wish Bela was at home, and forgets she was ever here.

BELA

Huh?

Nandini/Bela nods, then Bela VANISHES.

JILLIAN

Now I wish we were home too.

Jillian and Nandini/Bela VANISH, much to the astonishment of Lily, Carlina and Taissa.

They reach the bottom of the escalator and look around, bewildered.

LILY
Where did they go? They were right
here.

INT. BELA'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

Bela crashes onto her bed. She lays back, eyes wide open. She touches her hair, puzzled to find some smoothie on it.

INT. ACKER'S HOUSE - JILLIAN'S BEDROOM - DAY

Jillian and Nandini - back in cow form - reappear with their shopping bags.

Jillian flops onto her bed, and rolls around laughing.

JILLIAN
Did you see their faces when the
smoothies came out of nowhere?!

NANDINI
I think I deserve another pretzel.

JILLIAN
You can have all the pretzels.
Nandini, you're incredible!

Nandini swells with pride.

JILLIAN (CONT'D)
This was the best day I've had
since ever.

Jillian hugs Nandini.

NANDINI
Same, my friend.

INT. MANSION - LIVING ROOM - DAY

An opulent and modern living room, reflecting wealth and luxury. It is sleek and stylish. And screams 'money'.

There is modern art on the walls, and floor-to-ceiling windows looking out over a spectacular view, beyond a pool deck.

Ashley shows this sprawling mansion to a prospective buyer, the billionaire Slavic businessman, YURI SEMANOV.

They look at the view across the city, beyond the outdoor swimming pool.

ASHLEY

Between us, I don't think I can hold the place much longer. Not with views like that.

SEMANOV

(with hard accent)
I understand.

ASHLEY

We've got a lot of interested parties.

SEMANOV

Of course. I give you ten million.

Ashley looks taken aback-- can't believe her luck.

ASHLEY

That's-- You do know that's considerably over the asking price, right?

SEMANOV

If you don't want money...

Ashley looks caught out, reeling; *she needs this*. She tries to play it cool.

ASHLEY

Of course I want it!

SEMANOV

I make you good deal. If we exchange today, I pay cash.

ASHLEY

Cash?

Ashley lets out a little high-pitched chuckle; *is this really happening?*

SEMANOV

Take or leave.

ASHLEY

You drive a hard bargain, Mr. Semanov. I'm sure we can arrange that.

Then Ashley groans.

ASHLEY (CONT'D)

Oh, shoot. I left the paperwork at my office.

SEMANOV

Unfortunate. No matter. I have other places.

Semanov turns to go.

ASHLEY

No. Wait. It's fine. Don't go! I-- I can call my assistant! Don't go anywhere. One minute.

Ashley pulls out her phone, and goes off to a quiet corner to dial.

INT. ACKER'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - SAME TIME

The phone RINGS.

INT. ACKER'S HOUSE - AUSTIN'S ROOM - SAME TIME

A typical teenage boy's room; clothes and posters. Austin, with headphones on, plays a video game online with friends. He hammers the buttons of his controller.

The phone rings. And rings. It's virtually within reach of Austin. He lowers his headphones. Eventually:

AUSTIN

Jillian, the phone's ringing!

INT. ACKER'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - SAME TIME

Jillian runs downstairs and answers the ringing phone with a huff.

JILLIAN

Hello?

BEGIN INTERCUT BETWEEN JILLIAN & ASHLEY:

ASHLEY

Jillian. It's me. Ashley.

JILLIAN

Ashley?

(taps her head)

Could you be more specific?

ASHLEY
Your dad's fiancée.

Jillian groans.

JILLIAN
Ashley, right! I know who you are.
I was kidding.

ASHLEY
Right, yes. Funny. I need a favor.
Go into the office, and look on the
desk. Is there a red file there?

Jillian sighs, then walks through into:

INT. ACKER'S HOUSE - OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Jillian looks around the minimalist office; there is indeed a red file on the desk.

JILLIAN
Yeah, I see it.

ASHLEY
I need you to bring it to me.

JILLIAN
Like I don't have anything better
to do?

Ashley takes a deep breath.

ASHLEY
Jillian, please. I know we have our
differences, but I really need
this.

Jillian rolls her eyes.

ASHLEY (CONT'D)
I'd ask your dad, but he's out on
another job interview. I don't want
to bother him.

Jillian sighs, understanding.

JILLIAN
OK.

Ashley sighs, relieved.

ASHLEY

Great. I'll owe you one. Call a Lyft. I'll pay you back. Just be quick, please! I'm sending you the address now on your cell. Hopefully it works on that phone.

Jillian looks at the cellphone in her other hand; a brand new iPhone.

JILLIAN

I'm sure it will.

ASHLEY

Sending it now.

Jillian's new phone PINGS with an address.

She picks up the folder, glances over to Nandini in the doorway, munching on a pretzel.

Jillian smiles, has an idea.

END INTERCUT.

INT. MANSION - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Ashley walks back over to Semanov.

ASHLEY

All sorted.

SEMANOV

Your assistant come here?

ASHLEY

Yes. Well, technically, my fiancé's daughter. I'm sure she won't screw this up for me. Ha ha.

Ashley fiddles with a pen.

SEMANOV

You seem nervous. You not trust this girl?

ASHLEY

Teenagers. I mean, she's a good kid, but--

SEMANOV

You are wicked stepmother?

ASHLEY

Something like that. It's like we just speak a completely different language. I've tried so hard, but we're on alien wavelengths.

INT. MANSION - COAT CLOSET - DAY

Jillian - clutching the red file - and Nandini - back to Bela form - materialize in the cramped closet. She still holds a pretzel.

Jillian looks around, then whispers to Nandini/Bela.

JILLIAN

Well done, genius. We're in a closet.

Jillian peers through the gap in the door-- She sees Ashley and Semanov talking.

OUT IN THE LIVING ROOM

Ashley produces a bottle of Champagne and two glasses.

SEMANOV

I have step-daughter also. She hates me. But who cares - feeling is mutual. She is all this.

He flaps his hand, imitating a yapping mouth.

ASHLEY

Right.

SEMANOV

Fortunately, her mother has huge, you know--

He mimes a large pair of breasts.

SEMANOV (CONT'D)

So... worth it.

ASHLEY

Got it. Yep. Lovely. Straight from the heart.

SEMANOV

Exactly.

BACK IN THE CLOSET

Jillian listens in. She looks back to Nandini/Bela, who is about to munch loudly. She puts her finger to her lips "Sssh."

Jillian peeks out again.

OUT IN THE LIVING ROOM

Semanov points to himself.

SEMANOV (CONT'D)

You must take care of number one.
Forget stupid kids.

Ashley opens the champagne, and pours.

ASHLEY

Maybe you're right. I'll never live up to the pedestal they've put her mother on. It's not like I ever wanted to be a mother. But people will do crazy things for love, and they come as part of the package unfortunately.

BACK IN THE CLOSET

Tears of anger prickle Jillian's eyes, now a mix of rage and hurt. She turns to Nandini/Bela.

JILLIAN

Let's have some fun.

INT. MANSION - FOYER - DAY

The doorbell RINGS.

Ashley, confused, goes to answer. She opens the door to reveal--

Jillian, standing there. She hands Ashley the red file.

ASHLEY

That was quick.

JILLIAN

The least I could do for you, Ashley. I know how much this sale means to you.

ASHLEY

Right. Yes. Well, thank you.

JILLIAN

No, thank YOU for all the sacrifices you've made to be part of our family. I know you never wanted to be a mom.

Ashley frowns. Jillian smiles sweetly.

JILLIAN (CONT'D)

Best to not keep the Lyft waiting.

Jillian walks off. Ashley closes the door, puts Jillian's strange mood out of her mind, and returns to Semanov, opening the file.

ASHLEY

Well, here we are. I have a pen.

INT. MANSION - COAT CLOSET - DAY

Jillian, already back in the closet with Nandini/Bela, peers out at Ashley.

JILLIAN

Now.

INT. MANSION - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Ashley lays the paperwork out for Semanov, and pulls out the pen.

She clicks the top, and her body spasms. She frowns; *what was that?*

She clicks the pen once more-- Her body spasms again and again.

Semanov notices.

Ashley tries to control her involuntary twitches.

SEMANOV

What is the matter?

ASHLEY

I don't-- I don't know. I've just got this urge to-- to dance.

Ashley throws shapes, her body dancing to a beat that nobody can hear.

She strides across the room rhythmically.

ASHLEY (CONT'D)

Stop it! Stop it! I can't stop!

She performs a series of complicated dance steps, twirls, and spins, using the furniture and the decorative items in the living room as props.

SEMANOV

This not funny.

But Ashley keeps going, and the dance becomes more and more elaborate.

She jumps on a couch, slides under a table, and even climbs up on a shelf--- all while dancing.

ASHLEY

I'm not doing it on purpose! I don't know what's going on! I don't dance!

She performs a series of clumsy and silly dance moves-- she hops on one foot, she spins around, and she does a bizarre chicken dance.

Semanov watches blankly.

IN THE CLOSET

Jillian stifles a laugh.

BACK TO THE LIVING ROOM

Semanov follows as Ashley's dance routine spills from the living room into the dining room.

INT. MANSION - DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Ashley hops onto the table, and does a series of pirouettes, while balancing a decorative vase on her head.

Semanov watches in disbelief as Ashley's legs kick up plates and silverware.

Ashley gets off the table, grabs a long rope with tassels holding the curtains, and twirls it around her body, like a burlesque dancer.

She performs a sultry, slow-motion dance routine, but Semanov just looks away, uncomfortable.

Finally, Ashley finishes her dance with a dramatic pose and a bow, as she slides onto her knees in front of Semanov. He just stares at her with a blank expression.

Ashley looks at him breathless, pleading, desperate, utterly humiliated and lost for words.

Ashley realizes her mistake and tries to play it cool, but she looks clearly embarrassed.

There's an awkward silence as Semanov and Ashley stare at each other.

Suddenly, a burst of LAUGHTER breaks the silence.

Ashley, confused, tracks the source back to the--

INT. MANSION - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Ashley approaches the coat closet, swings the door open, and reveals--

Jillian and Nandini/Bela, who can no longer contain their laughter.

Ashley stares at them, stunned, furious, and confused.

NANDINI/BELA

(to Jillian)

Want me to wish away her memory of this?

JILLIAN

Nah. I want her to remember everything.

Trying to keep it together, Ashley turns to Semanov.

SEMANOV

Sale is off.

ASHLEY

What?! No!

Semanov walks away. Ashley glares at Jillian, face like thunder.

INT. ACKER'S HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

A guilty Nandini/Bela leans over the banister, listening in to a heated conversation happening below--

INT. ACKER'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - SAME TIME

Greg, on the sofa, clutches his head, as Ashley paces, furious.

Jillian sits, admonished, but defiant. Tensions are high.

ASHLEY

Do you have any idea what you've done?!

JILLIAN

I said I'm sorry.

ASHLEY

You and your weird little friend spying on me like that? How that must've looked? I'd have canceled the sale too.

GREG

I'm sure there's an explanation.

JILLIAN

Not really.

ASHLEY

I don't know how, but you must've dosed me up.

(to Greg)

You need to check her room for magic mushrooms or something.

JILLIAN

Are you serious?!

ASHLEY

How else do you explain that amazing dancing I was doing?! I never dance.

Greg nods.

JILLIAN

You somehow danced all over our lives.

ASHLEY

Oh, boo-hoo. Your dad was a mess before he met me.

JILLIAN

Dunno if you've been keeping up, but he's not doing so hot since, either.

GREG

Okay, okay. Everyone keep it down. Please. Enough is enough.

Austin comes in from the kitchen, drawn by the noise.

AUSTIN

The hell is going on in here?

JILLIAN

Get lost, Austin.

AUSTIN

What have you done now?

JILLIAN

Oh, that's right. Assume everything is my fault.

GREG

Jillian, Ashley is part of the family. We're all in this together, and you need to accept that.

JILLIAN

What was it you said, Ashley? "His kids come as part of the package - unfortunately."

Ashley's eyes open wide. She stops pacing around.

AUSTIN

What is that supposed to mean?!

GREG

Ashley?

ASHLEY

I... I-- that's out of context! No! I was just saying what the buyer wanted to hear.

JILLIAN

Yeah, well, he wasn't the only one who heard it.

Greg winces, pained.

ASHLEY

That sale would have saved this family, and you've ruined everything for all of us.

JILLIAN

Oh, please. As soon as you'd taken your commission, you'd have been off, leaving Dad in the dust.

ASHLEY

That isn't true. I was doing this for all of us.

JILLIAN

We don't want you here.

She looks at Austin. He lowers his head.

GREG

(loudly)

That is ENOUGH! You don't speak for this family.

Silence falls. Jillian fumes, and locks eyes with Ashley, who tries hard to control how hurt she is.

JILLIAN

I wish my dad had never met you.

GREG

Jillian, stop.

INT. ACKER'S HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Nandini listens intently.

JILLIAN (O.S.)

And I don't care about the consequences. I just wish you were gone.

Nandini sighs, and closes her eyes...

EXT. ACKER'S HOUSE - DAY

The sun rises over a beautiful day, but something is off; the house seems beaten up somehow-- Peeling paint, hanging gutters.

The grass in the front yard is patchy, and in need of a mow.

INT. ACKER'S HOUSE - JILLIAN'S BEDROOM - DAY

Jillian wakes up.

She stretches, yawns, pulls back her curtain.

JILLIAN
Morning, Nandini.

No reply.

JILLIAN (CONT'D)
Nandini?

Jillian gets out of bed.

JILLIAN (CONT'D)
Nandini? Where are you?

She looks under the bed-- No Nandini.

She goes to the closet, opens it-- Nothing.

Jillian frowns.

INT. ACKER'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Jillian walks downstairs, tentative.

Something has changed-- The house is a mess. It's unloved, uncared for, unmaintained.

There's a well-thumbed adult magazine open on the sofa. She looks around, fearing the worst.

INT. ACKER'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Jillian enters.

The place is a state-- There are dirty dishes in the sink, piled up on the sides. There are half-empty take-out cartons on the table.

JILLIAN
(to herself)
Oh, no...

Greg enters with a yawn. He looks exactly like the kind of person who would live in a house like this-- Disheveled, unshaven, a mess. And he's got a split lip; a fresh cut.

GREG

Well, hello stranger. You actually came home last night then?

JILLIAN

Huh?

GREG

Normally you're over at whassisname's place.

JILLIAN

Who?

GREG

Jake. No. Jack.

JILLIAN

Jack? Jack from my school? Why would I be at Jack's house?

GREG

Hey, that ain't something a dad wants to think about, y'know.

He takes a beer out of the fridge, finds an opener, opens the bottle, and takes a swig.

JILLIAN

Why are you drinking beer this early? And what happened to your face?

GREG

(re: split lip)

Oh, this? It's nothing. Just a little disagreement at Cory's last night. You should see the other guy! Not a scratch.

JILLIAN

How will you find a job if you're having beer for breakfast?

GREG

We've been over this a hundred times or more--

JILLIAN

Where's Ashley?

GREG
Who?

JILLIAN
Ashley-- your fiancée!

GREG
(baffled)
What?

JILLIAN
I'm calling grandma and grandpa!

GREG
Honey, are you feeling okay?

Jillian looks scared.

GREG (CONT'D)
They're not with us anymore,
remember?

Tears prickle Jillian's eyes.

Suddenly, the back door is kicked open, and--

TWO TOUGH-LOOKING GUYS burst in. One of them, the Robber from the bus.

Both Greg and Jillian flinch.

GREG (CONT'D)
Hey, guys!

Greg tries to get in front of Jillian, but the Robber grabs him, and pins him roughly against the wall.

Jillian stares at the tough guys, anger in her eyes.

ROBBER
Where's my money, Greggy?

GREG
I told you, it's on the way. Just a temporary cash-flow situation--

ROBBER
Yeah, I heard that before.

GREG
Did you get a haircut, Bo?

ROBBER
My cousin did it. What's it to you?

The other tough guy glares at Jillian, trying too hard to look mean.

ROBBER (CONT'D)

Listen to me, Gregg, you're running out of chances, and I'm running out of reasons not to really, really, really--

Jillian SMASHES an empty beer bottle over the Robber's head.

He drops to his knees, letting Greg go.

ROBBER (CONT'D)

That really hurt.

JILLIAN

That was kind of the idea.

The other tough guy is slow to react. Jillian waves the broken bottle at him.

JILLIAN (CONT'D)

You want some too? Do you?

ROBBER

(to the Tough Guy)

C'mon.

(to Greg)

We'll be back when your little girl ain't here to protect you.

They leave.

Greg slumps to the floor.

GREG

I can't even stick up for myself anymore.

Jillian sighs, then sits down at the kitchen table, straight onto a take-out carton. She tips it off the chair, retakes her seat, then puts her head in her hands.

JILLIAN

This is all my fault.

GREG

What is?

JILLIAN

This. All of it. Every last thing. Where's Austin?

EXT. STATE PENITENTIARY - DAY

A young offender's institution.

INT. STATE PENITENTIARY - VISITING AREA - DAY

Greg and Jillian sit on the opposite side of a glass partition to Austin, who wears prison overalls.

GREG

It should be me in there, not you, son.

AUSTIN

Dad, we both knocked off that Antique store.

JILLIAN

What Antique store?!

GREG

Sssh! Honey, keep it down. You know how tough times got after your mom, well, y'know. It hasn't been easy. It was the only store open on main street.

Jillian puts her head in her hands again, can't believe what's happening.

AUSTIN

Look, I was just dumb enough to get caught, and dad got away. No sense us both going down for it.

JILLIAN

I caused all this.

GREG

You having a guilt-complex isn't going to change anything.

AUSTIN

Besides, I made some friends in here. When I get out, we're gonna form a new crew.

GREG

I'm proud, son.

Jillian despairs.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

Jillian waits near the entrance.

Bela arrives and heads towards the main steps. Jillian spots her.

JILLIAN

Bela!

Bela glances, rolls her eyes, and keeps walking.

Jillian catches up to her.

JILLIAN (CONT'D)

Bela, stop.

BELA

I've got nothing to say to you.
We're done.

JILLIAN

Bela, wait. It's me.

Bela keeps walking.

BELA

Leave me alone!

JILLIAN

Please. I just want to talk. I've
obviously upset you, and I'm sorry
for whatever I did.

Bela softens, stops. She turns to face Jillian.

JILLIAN (CONT'D)

I've just been going through a lot.
Please give me ten minutes to
explain.

LILY (O.S.)

Hey, girl!

Jillian looks completely taken aback when a hug and an air
kiss from Lily suddenly envelop her.

Then Carlina and Taissa join too.

LILY (CONT'D)

Taissa's folks are away this
weekend, so she's having a house
party.

Lily looks at Bela, pointedly.

LILY (CONT'D)
Elites only, sorry.

Bela shrinks away. Carlina looks down her nose at Bela.

CARLINA
What are you even doing talking to
this shrub?

JILLIAN
Don't call her that.

TAISSA
You came up with it.

BELA
It's true. You did.

JILLIAN
Whatever. If any of you go within
five feet of either of us ever
again, I will literally break your
noses.

Lily, Taissa and Carlina look taken aback.

Bela looks surprised and impressed.

JILLIAN (CONT'D)
Let's go, Bela.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - BLEACHERS - DAY

Bela and Jillian sit at the top of the bleachers looking out
at the school athletics field.

BELA
You're telling me Kamedhenu is real
and has been granting you wishes?

JILLIAN
Not Kamedhenu. Her daughter. Who's
also a cow.

Jillian shakes her head.

JILLIAN (CONT'D)
Now that I've said it out loud, it
does sound crazy.

BELA

If anybody should be getting wishes from a Hindu cow-goddess, it really should be me. Talk about cultural appropriation.

JILLIAN

Yeah. Sorry.

BELA

Look, the Jillian I know wants one thing more than anything else.

Jillian looks away, knows what she's talking about.

BELA (CONT'D)

So why didn't you wish for that?

JILLIAN

It's complicated. Look what happened when I wished my Dad had never met Ashley.

BELA

You've heard of the butterfly effect, right? It's like how one tiny change can have huge ramifications.

Jillian sighs.

JILLIAN

What do I do?

BELA

Are you asking me as a friend or as a Hindu?

JILLIAN

Can it be both?

BELA

I dunno. Wish for everything to go back to how it was?

JILLIAN

I don't have Nandini anymore. Ashley took me to that store, and it was because of her that I found the wish cow in the first place.

BELA

Sounds like you need to find Ashley.

Jillian sighs, stressed.

JILLIAN
Why did we fall out?

BELA
He's standing right over there.

Bela nods over to where Jack lingers at the foot of the bleachers.

He gives Jillian a wave and a smile.

JILLIAN
I stole... your boyfriend?

Bela shrugs.

JILLIAN (CONT'D)
Ugh. The me in this timeline is such a bitch. I really gotta find Ashley. Can I borrow your phone to look her up?

EXT. MORGAN REALTY - DAY

The towering edifice of MORGAN REALTY - a luxury real estate company.

Outside of this is an imposing billboard of ASHLEY MORGAN, CEO. In this reality, she has her own company.

Jillian looks up at it with a shake of her head.

INT. MORGAN REALTY - LOBBY - DAY

Jillian walks up to the reception desk.

There are screens playing promo videos of Ashley walking around a luxurious mansion.

ASHLEY
Our properties are more than just a place to live; they are works of art, designed to cater to the most refined taste.

Jillian stops to watch.

ASHLEY (CONT'D)

So, whether you're searching for a stunning oceanfront mansion, a private island retreat, or a sleek penthouse in the heart of the city, we have the perfect property for you.

Ashley flashes a dazzling smile before the camera fades to the company logo.

Jillian walks up to the RECEPTIONIST.

JILLIAN

I need to speak to Ashley Morgan.

RECEPTIONIST

Do you have an appointment?

JILLIAN

No. I'm her-- I'm family.

The receptionist sizes up Jillian and then makes a call.

RECEPTIONIST

I have someone here to see Ashley. She says she's family.

The receptionist nods her head.

RECEPTIONIST (CONT'D)

What sort of family?

JILLIAN

Just tell her... tell her I know she doesn't dance.

RECEPTIONIST

You know she doesn't dance?

JILLIAN

I know it sounds crazy. But that's literally the only thing I know about her.

Jillian ponders, lowers her head.

The receptionist frowns, curious.

JILLIAN (CONT'D)

Forget it.

Jillian turns to leave. Then the Receptionist exchanges some words into the phone, and calls after Jillian.

RECEPTIONIST

Wait up! She'll see you.

Jillian looks utterly surprised.

INT. MORGAN REALTY - ASHLEY'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Jillian sits in a crisply sterile office, opposite Ashley - business-suited - behind a huge desk.

Outside the glass-fronted office are TWO SECURITY GUARDS.

ASHLEY

I'm not someone who appreciates surprises, young lady, but I can't resist a mystery. So, let me ask-- Who the hell are you exactly?

JILLIAN

I'm your boyfriend's daughter from an alternate time-line.

Ashley glares at Jillian, and lets out a snort of laughter.

ASHLEY

Security!

Ashley clicks her fingers to summon the guards.

JILLIAN

Wait. I need your help... Please.

Jillian gives her puppy dog eyes.

Ashley waves away the guards.

JILLIAN (CONT'D)

Are you in a relationship, Ashley? Married, boyfriend?

ASHLEY

I don't see what business it is of yours, but no. I sacrificed all that for my career.

JILLIAN

Sounds lonely.

ASHLEY

I'm too busy to get lonely.

JILLIAN

Really? Only, I just thought if maybe you'd met the right guy, you'd sacrifice all this.

ASHLEY

Why would I sacrifice all this?

JILLIAN

People will do crazy things for love. Or so I once heard.

Ashley frowns, curious.

ASHLEY

Okay. Time for you to leave.

She summons the guards again.

The guards enter.

ASHLEY (CONT'D)

Escort her out.

The guards lift Jillian to her feet.

JILLIAN

Wait! I need you to meet my dad! Gregory Acker! He's the one you sacrificed all this for.

ASHLEY

(to guards)
Get rid of her.

JILLIAN

Please, Ashley-- I need you! He needs you!

Ashley looks on with a frown as the guards drag Jillian away.

EXT. MAIN STREET - DAY

Jillian walks, head down, kicking her heels, utterly lost and defeated. And then she realizes where she is. She looks up at the building in front of her--

She's standing in front of the Antique store.

INT. ANTIQUE STORE - DAY

Jillian opens the door, and the bell DINGS.

It's as dark, dusty, and cramped as she remembers it. But somehow seems emptier and more eerie in the milky daylight.

Jillian walks around. The floorboards creak beneath her feet.

JILLIAN

Hello?

Bindra pops up from behind a display.

BINDRA

How are you?

Jillian shrieks.

BINDRA (CONT'D)

My apologies.

JILLIAN

Do you do that to everyone?!

BINDRA

It sustains me.

Jillian frowns; *huh?*

BINDRA (CONT'D)

Is there something particular you're looking for?

JILLIAN

Do you happen to have a statue of Kamendhu, the sacred wish cow?

BINDRA

Oh. You know your pieces. I am impressed.

JILLIAN

I'm something of a collector.

Bindra looks intrigued.

BINDRA

Is that so? Please, follow.

He wanders off into the back of the store. Jillian follows.

INT. ANTIQUE STORE - BACK AREA - DAY

Bindra scans the shelves.

BINDRA

Let me see, let me see...

And then he finds what he's looking for: the statue of the wish cow, there on a shelf.

BINDRA (CONT'D)

Ah, yes. Here we are. Such an exquisite piece.

JILLIAN

If you don't mind me asking, where did you get it?

BINDRA

I inherited this shop from my parents, who inherited the collection from their grandparents. Some of the items in here go back generations in our family.

Bindra hands the statue to her. She runs her hands over it, and weighs it up.

JILLIAN

So, what are we saying-- thirty dollars?

BINDRA

Thirty-thirty dollars? For that?

Jillian nods.

BINDRA (CONT'D)

My dear, I cannot let this go for less than a thousand. It is one-of-a-kind, an antique--

Jillian throws the statue on the ground-- It SHATTERS.

Bindra GASPS. But nothing happens.

Jillian locks eyes with Bindra.

JILLIAN

Where's the real one?

Bindra shrinks away; Jillian looks manic.

INT. ANTIQUE STORE - STOCK ROOM - DAY

A scared Bindra opens a door onto a room full of identical statues.

Jillian looks in, shocked.

JILLIAN
Which one's the original?

BINDRA
None of them are. They're just replicas.

JILLIAN
It's here. It has to be here.

BINDRA
I buy them wholesale from my supplier in Jaipur. A dollar a piece. There is no original.

JILLIAN
No. That isn't true. One of these - it was - there was a talking cow living in it. A cow that granted my wishes.

Bindra pulls a face, looks at her like she's crazy.

BINDRA
I'm calling the cops.

Jillian pulls over racks of the statues. Bindra howls.

The statues fall, and smash on the ground.

She pulls over another shelf-- SMASH!

BINDRA (CONT'D)
Stop! What are you doing!?

Jillian stamps on any statues that aren't broken, and makes sure they're reduced to fragments.

JILLIAN
Where are you?! Nandini, I need you!

Jillian smashes more statues, picks one up, and throws it at the wall.

Bindra ducks, shields himself to avoid the shards.

BINDRA
I'm calling the cops!

Bindra runs out. Jillian stops smashing things.

She leans against a wall, and slides down it, looking at the devastation she has wrought.

She starts crying. It's all too much.

And then she notices one last, un-smashed, statue, near her feet.

She picks it up.

She closes her eyes, and:

JILLIAN

I wish you were a real wish cow.

She throws the statue at the wall, and--

It FLIES through the air in slow motion, and smashes against the wall, in an exploding vortex of mist, which sweeps through the room and merges in the familiar form of none other than-- Nandini.

NANDINI

I am Nandini, cow daughter of Surabhi-Kamedhenu, cursed by the sage to be trapped on earth forever.

JILLIAN

I know who you are.

Nandini looks down.

NANDINI

Oh, jeez. I'm naked. Don't look at my udders.

Jillian hugs her.

JILLIAN

I've missed you.

INT. ANTIQUE STORE - DAY

Bindra speaks into his phone.

BINDRA

There's a crazy girl in my store and she's smashing all my--

Jillian and Nandini walk through the store.

NANDINI
(to Bindra)
Stop checking out my udders, you
pervert.

Bindra watches them, jaw slack, drops the phone, and passes out.

Nandini and Jillian leave the store as SCREAMS can be heard outside.

INT. ACKER'S HOUSE - JILLIAN'S BEDROOM - DAY

Jillian paces as Nandini searches through her wardrobe.

JILLIAN
Okay, we've got one shot at this. I
have to get the wording right,
right?

Nandini holds up a sweatshirt.

NANDINI
You think this is my color?

JILLIAN
Focus.

Nandini drops the sweatshirt.

JILLIAN (CONT'D)
How about: I want my dad and Ashley
to get back together?

NANDINI
You changed the universe with your
wish. I can't restore something
that never happened.

JILLIAN
Okay, so how about... I want my
brother not to be in jail, and for
my dad not to be... whatever he is
now, and for-- I just want everyone
to be happy.

Jillian flops down.

JILLIAN (CONT'D)
This is so hard.

NANDINI

Jillian, when you first wished for me, what did you want most in the world?

Jillian glances at the photo of her with her mom.

JILLIAN

I wanted my mom back. I-- I wanted her to have never died.

NANDINI

May I ask, why have you not wished for that?

JILLIAN

I don't know. I want it so bad. So, so, so bad. If she'd never gotten sick, everything would've stayed the same.

Tears well up in Jillian's eyes.

JILLIAN (CONT'D)

I just felt if I had brought her back, she would have gotten sick again, and we would go through it all over again.

NANDINI

Nothing stays the same forever, Jillian. Take it from an immortal wish cow.

Nandini sits down next to Jillian.

NANDINI (CONT'D)

My Mom once told me that lives flow like water. The landscape around them influences the paths they follow. You can no more control the course of a life than you can a river.

JILLIAN

The time I had with her, can never be taken away. Whatever came afterward, that will always be there.

NANDINI

Yes. And so will her love. Love endures; it lives on. The loss you feel is a reminder of that love.

Jillian nods, understanding.

JILLIAN

I wasn't responsible for what happened to Mom, but this is all my fault... I know that Ashley loved my dad, and he loved her. Taking that from him, it feels like I've done something terrible. I don't have the right to take that from someone. I know what I want to wish for.

NANDINI

Say it, and it shall be so.

JILLIAN

I don't want to feel this guilt anymore. I wish for whatever is causing this guilt to be resolved.

Nandini nods. She stands, closes her eyes-- And the room swirls with magical energy.

It grows ever more intense. Jillian shields her eyes against it as a fantastical wind whips at her hair.

INT. ACKER'S HOUSE - JILLIAN'S BEDROOM - DAY

Jillian wakes up on her bed, where she must've passed out.

JILLIAN

Nandini?

Nandini pops her head up, dazed.

NANDINI

Whew. That was a big one.

JILLIAN

Did it work?

NANDINI

Go find out.

Jillian runs out.

INT. ACKER'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Jillian runs down the stairs. She stops in her tracks when she sees Greg on the sofa.

GREG

Hey, honey.

Jillian runs to him. Gives him a big hug.

JILLIAN

I love you so much and I want you
to be happy no matter what.

Greg holds on tight.

GREG

I love you, too. What brought this
on?

JILLIAN

Nothing. Everything. I just wanted
you to know.

Austin wanders in, eating a snack. Jillian breaks away from
Greg, and hugs her brother. He reacts with surprise.

AUSTIN

Get off!

JILLIAN

I'm glad you're not in prison.

AUSTIN

Uh - no. I don't think so.

Jillian turns to Greg.

JILLIAN

Dad, just--

She throws herself around her father, and he hugs her in
return, kissing her head.

GREG

Honey, there's something I want to
tell you. Both of you in fact.

Austin and Jillian exchange a concerned look.

GREG (CONT'D)

I got a job.

JILLIAN

Seriously?!

AUSTIN

Go, Dad! Where?

GREG

It's weird. I walked into that old Antique store on Main Street, just browsing, and the owner looked a little shaken up.

Jillian smiles.

JILLIAN

Really?

GREG

Yeah. I asked him if he was ok, and he replied that he needed a rest and, well, we got talking. He's gone back to India, and left me in charge of the store.

Greg shrugs. Jillian reels as she takes this in.

GREG (CONT'D)

And the other strange thing... I found a box full of those cow statues in the back... You would think they were authentic.

JILLIAN

That's a lot of wish cows to go around.

Jillian looks around the house.

JILLIAN (CONT'D)

Where's Ashley?

EXT. PARK - DAY

Ashley sits on the same bench. She picks up a stick, and throws it into the river. It hits the riverbank, and stays put.

Suddenly, a stick flies over her head into the river. It catches the current, and flows downstream.

Ashley glances around, surprised, as Jillian sits down next to her.

ASHLEY

I don't have the strength for another argument, Jillian.

JILLIAN

I'm here to apologize. I'm so sorry for everything. I can be a bitch.

ASHLEY

That goes for us both.

JILLIAN

I know Dad doesn't forget Mom.

ASHLEY

And neither should he, and neither will you.

JILLIAN

I think I just thought you were trying to replace her.

ASHLEY

I could never replace her. But maybe we could just be friends? Maybe that's all we need to be.

Jillian's eyes well up with tears. She takes a deep breath.

JILLIAN

I know what you've given up to be with us, and I want you to know I appreciate it... I see how happy you make Dad.

Ashley looks taken aback.

They both stare at each other for a moment.

JILLIAN (CONT'D)

Could I-- Could I give you a hug?

Ashley freezes... then nods.

Jillian wraps her arms around Ashley.

Unsure how to reciprocate the hug at first, Ashley starts to soften and leans into it.

Ashley's phone vibrates. Jillian lets go.

JILLIAN (CONT'D)

You should answer that. I know how important your job is to you.

Ashley checks her phone.

ASHLEY
Ugh. It's Semanov.

Jillian sighs. Ashley takes the phone, and throws it in the river.

ASHLEY (CONT'D)
Screw that creep.

Jillian and Ashley both burst into laughter.

INT. ACKER'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Greg brings his parents some dinner as they watch TV. He puts a tray down in front of his Mom.

GRANDMA SUSAN
They'll be ok, dear.

GREG
I wish I had your positivity.

The front door bursts open. Ashley and Jillian walk in, laughing and giggling.

Greg looks a little freaked out.

GREG (CONT'D)
Is everything ok?
(to Ashley)
I did try calling you.

Ashley plants a big kiss on his lips.

ASHLEY
I threw my phone in the river.

GREG
That would do it.

ASHLEY
Jillian told me the news. I'm so proud of you.

GREG
Did your sale go through?

ASHLEY
No. But it's fine. I didn't want to take his dirty money anyway.

GREG
I'm sorry, honey.

The landline RINGS. Ashley picks up.

ASHLEY
 (into phone)
 Mr. Semanov... Yes, I understand...
 No, I threw my phone into the
 river... I see... Yes... Yes. I
 understand... Thank you for
 informing me.

Ashley hangs up-- She looks both confused and excited.

JILLIAN
 What is it?

ASHLEY
 That was Mr. Semanov. Wasn't I just
 saying how much I liked him? He
 changed his mind. He, uh, suddenly
 realized how much he'd enjoyed my
 dance routine, and now wants to buy
 the house.

GREG
 That's amazing.

ASHLEY
 No-- he wants to buy the house
 and... give it to us.

They all remain silent for a moment as they let this sink in.

Then the whole family SHRIEK and celebrate.

INT. ACKER'S HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - SAME TIME

Nandini smiles to herself as she listens to the family's
 celebrations. She looks up.

NANDINI
 Well, Mom, what are rules there for
 if you can't break them once in a
 while to make a family happy?

She munches on a pretzel.

NANDINI (CONT'D)
 Rules schmules.

EXT. MANSION - DAY

A SOLD sign stands on the impressive front drive.

Several WORKMEN carry boxes and furniture out of a moving van and into the house.

A car pulls up, and Greg exits the driver's side. He opens the backdoor where Grandpa Henry sleeps in the back, snoring with eyes open wide.

GREG
Dad, we're here.

Ashley and Bela get out of the opposite side.

Ashley opens the passenger door, and helps Grandma Susan out.

GRANDMA SUSAN
It's even bigger than you said it would be!

JILLIAN
Room for all of us, Grandma.

Greg gets a wheelchair out of the trunk, and unfolds it.

GREG
You girls go on. I can manage.

INT. MANSION - LIVING ROOM - DAY

It's a hive of activity as the furniture is placed, and boxes are unloaded.

Ashley supervises the workmen.

ASHLEY
No, don't put that there. It goes over here. Be careful with that.

Jillian and Nandini/Bela enter.

JILLIAN
Hey, Ashley. Need any help?

ASHLEY
I've got it under control, thank you.

Ashley looks distracted by a workman carrying a heavy lamp.

ASHLEY (CONT'D)
Don't drop it there!

Ashley turns to Jillian and Nandini/Bela.

ASHLEY (CONT'D)
Hey, girls. Watch this!

She breaks out in a random awkward dance.

The two girls laugh.

JILLIAN
Way to go, Ashley.

Jillian glances at Nandini/Bela.

NANDINI/BELA
Nothing to do with me.

The two girls leave Ashley to it, and walk through the sprawling mansion.

INT. MANSION - JILLIAN'S NEW BEDROOM - DAY

Jillian closes the door behind her and Nandini/Bela, who now MORPHS into Nandini.

They look around-- The huge new room is a work in progress. There's a bed in there already, but there are several boxes, still packed, dotted around.

NANDINI
This will make a fine home for your family.

JILLIAN
Thanks to you.

NANDINI
I'm just a conduit for your wishes. And they came from the heart.

JILLIAN
Very Hallmark. Should I get my oversized Christmas sweater?

NANDINI
Would you like to wish for one?

JILLIAN
Nah, I'm kind of wished out.

NANDINI
How do you mean?

JILLIAN

Life would be pretty boring if I got everything I wanted through wishes. I just want to live life the way it's supposed to be.

Nandini nods, but there's a hint of sadness there.

NANDINI

I understand.

JILLIAN

It has been great though, hasn't it?

NANDINI

I will miss the pretzels.

Jillian sits down on her bed. She pats the bed next to her, and gestures for Nandini to sit.

She rests her head on her lap.

NANDINI (CONT'D)

Jillian, was I a good wish cow?

JILLIAN

Your mom would've been proud of you.

NANDINI

Thank you.

Jillian takes the original Wish Cow statue out of a box-- It has been repaired with glue and tape.

NANDINI (CONT'D)

I shall return to my eternal prison until someone else needs me.

JILLIAN

Actually, I've got one last wish before you go.

NANDINI

Whatever you desire, Jillian.

JILLIAN

I wish for you to be reunited with your family.

Before Nandini can react to Jillian's wish, the room's walls fall away, and the two fall through open air.

EXT. ETHEREAL PLANE - DAY/NIGHT

Jillian and Nandini tumble through space, stars whipping past them, before they come to an abrupt stop, landing hard on...

A cloud?

Nandini helps Jillian to her feet.

JILLIAN

Where are we?

A vast expanse of white mist seems to extend endlessly in all directions.

The atmosphere is calm and tranquil, and the only sound is the breath of the wind.

Ahead of them is a majestic palace made entirely of shimmering crystals.

The palace towers high above the misty landscape, and the sunlight dances off its faceted surfaces. Its ornate towers are decorated with symbols formed from precious stones.

NANDINI

Home. My home.

The doors of the palace open, and a dazzling light spills from the interior.

A dozen or so GOLDEN COWS walk forward, backlit, majestic.

Nandini's eyes light up upon seeing them. Nandini looks down at Jillian, overwhelmed, and embraces her.

NANDINI (CONT'D)

I shall miss you.

JILLIAN

I'll miss you, too. Don't keep them waiting.

Nandini runs to be with her family.

She reaches them, and gives them all a pretzel each.

As Nandini turns around, time and space fall around Jillian, and she tumbles away into darkness.

EXT. DARKNESS - CONTINUOUS

Stars and neon clouds swirl around Jillian.

And there, among the stars Jillian sees the face of a WOMAN, just glimpsed in the moment, but then made clearer to her--

JILLIAN'S MOM.

JILLIAN

Mom?

Jillian reaches out.

INT. MANSION - JILLIAN'S NEW BEDROOM - BACK TO REALITY

Jillian finds herself back in her new room, the Wish Cow statue beside her on the floor.

She picks it up, and places it carefully on a shelf next to the picture of Jillian and her mom-- the only decoration already laid out in her new room.

FADE OUT.

THE END