

FADE IN:

EXT. APARTMENT COMPLEX -- NIGHT

A well-lit night on a quiet street.

A moving truck rounds a bend, pulls into the front parking lot of the building.

A HUSBAND and WIFE, 20s, get out, walk to the back of the vehicle, open the roll-up door of the truck.

The Husband climbs into the back of the truck, disappears into the belly of the vehicle.

Seconds later, he SCREAMS, runs out, jumps to the ground, holds his Wife.

A low GROWL comes from the back of the vehicle. The Husband and Wife look at each other, then back into the truck.

The GROWL gets louder and louder, until a small BEAGLE DOG jumps out. The Husband SCREAMS, hides behind his wife.

The couple watches the dog run off.

The now-embarrassed Husband climbs onto the truck, while the Wife smiles, holds back her laughter.

INT. CAR (MOVING) -- SAME TIME

Mousy-cute KATE VALENTINE, 28, long brown hair, brown eyes, sits in the passenger seat, while her date, 30, drives like a maniac.

Kate looks like she's been crying. Her irritated Date looks fed up.

KATE

Sorry for unloading all that stuff  
about Darryl on you.

The Date rolls his eyes, looks even more annoyed.

KATE (CONT'D)

It's just, today would have been our  
five-year anniversary.

DATE

Long time.

Kate SCOFFS.

KATE

Marriages are supposed to last  
forever.

DATE

Didn't you say it's been a year since  
you got divorced?

KATE

Nine months, one week.

The tires SQUEAL as they go around a bend.

DATE

(sarcastically)

Did you ever think to maybe "let go"  
or "move on" or... "give it up"?

Kate puts her face in her hands, WEEPS. The Date looks at  
her, totally fed up.

DATE (CONT'D)

Before you start with the waterworks  
again, I gotta be honest.

Kate lifts her head, wipes her eyes.

DATE (CONT'D)

This has got to be the worst date  
I've ever been on.

The Date flies around another bend, causing them both to  
lean left in their seats. Kate really CRIES.

KATE

Well, this is the worst ride home  
I've ever been on!

They almost wreck. Kate SCREAMS.

KATE (CONT'D)

Let me out. I'll walk.

DATE

Like I'm gonna leave a lonely,  
desperate, crying woman on the side  
of the road.

KATE

"Lonely"?

The Date floors it, as an oncoming car approaches.

From the right, the Beagle runs out in front of them.

KATE (CONT'D)

Look out!

The Date swerves to miss the dog, and drives into the path  
of the oncoming car.

The other car's DRIVER's eyes are huge. Kate looks right at him, seems to recognize him. Her eyes light up.

KATE (CONT'D)

Darryl?!

Tires SQUEAL, as the Date drives off the road and lands the car in a ditch. The other car stops momentarily, then drives off.

Both the Date and Kate jump out of the vehicle.

Kate points to the road where the other car drove off.

KATE (CONT'D)

That was Darryl!

The Date's eyes go wide. He look at Kate as if she's crazy.

Kate looks around, while the Date inspects his car.

KATE (CONT'D)

The dog -- did you hit him?!

DATE

Screw the dog! My car's in a ditch!

KATE

Here, doggie!

The Date tries in vain to push the car out of the ditch. He YELLS a few choice words at his predicament.

Kate now looks at him as if he's crazy.

KATE (CONT'D)

I'm gonna look for that dog, then just walk home from here.

DATE

Knock yourself out.

The Date pulls out his cell phone. Kate CALLS the dog, as she walks away.

INT. KATE'S APARTMENT (LIVING ROOM) -- LATER

A small, cozy apartment, with tons of photographs on the walls, tables and bookshelves.

Kate walks in, turns on a light and hits the answering machine button.

A FEMALE VOICE speaks on the machine.

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)

Hey, Kate. Diane from work. Just wanted to let you know the transfer back to your old job went through, so you'll be set to start as soon as you move back. And you're not gonna believe who I think I saw today.

Kate looks at the machine, excited.

KATE

Darryl?

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)

Darryl.

KATE

I knew it!

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)

I'm not totally sure if it was him.

KATE

Oh, it was him.

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)

Anyway, gimme a call.

The machine BEEPS off. Kate picks up a picture.

CLOSE ON the picture: It's Kate and a handsome, smiling man, obviously Darryl.

KATE

Happy Anniversary.

Kate plops down on the couch and CRIES. A SCUFFLING SOUND at the front door interrupts her. A look of hope, still mixed with sorrow, crosses her face.

KATE (CONT'D)

Darryl?

Kate rushes to the main door, yanks it open.

No one is there. She looks out the window of the screen door, into the street.

KATE (CONT'D)

Oh, Darryl.

An unseen dog BARKS. Kate looks down, sees the Beagle on her porch. A look of complete joy overtakes her face.

INT. KATE'S APARTMENT (BEDROOM) -- NIGHT

TITLE CARD: THREE WEEKS LATER

A LOUD STORM BREWS outside, as Kate sits on a mattress and box springs on the floor. A beauty magazine in her lap, she leans back against the wall.

The flickering images on the muted television set reveal a FIGURE in the bed next to Kate.

Cardboard boxes are stacked all around the room. A dismantled bedframe leans against one wall. There are no curtains, pictures or decorations.

Kate's eyes are about to close behind her reading glasses, when a CLAP OF THUNDER jolts her awake and sends the magazine flying across the room.

The Figure in the bed stirs.

KATE

Sorry, Honey.

Kate reaches over, strokes the figure where the head would presumably be.

Another THUNDER CLAP, this time accompanied by a RINGING PHONE, makes Kate jump again.

She relaxes, LAUGHS at herself, takes a deep breath, answers the phone.

KATE (CONT'D)

Hello?

INT. SMOKEY'S BAR & GRILL -- SAME TIME

A busy bar, filled with PATRONS.

Gorgeous MARY PIGEON, 28, tall, blond, sexy, sits at the bar and talks on her cell phone.

MARY

Let me guess. You're in bed already?

INTERCUT BETWEEN THE APARTMENT AND THE BAR:

KATE

Yes, Ms. Pigeon. Did you forget I'm moving into the apartment below you bright and early tomorrow?

MARY

Of course not, Ms. Valentine. But may I also venture to guess you're alone this fine evening?

Kate bites her lip, doesn't reply.

Mary SIGHS.

MARY (CONT'D)

Your last night before moving back here -- I thought you would have at least hooked up with the guy in 3B you've been drooling over for the last year.

KATE

I've only been drooling over him for the past ten months. Anyway, I'm not alone.

Mary's eyes light up.

MARY

Are you serious?

Kate whispers...

KATE

There's a guy in my bed.

Mary shouts...

MARY

Oh, my God! Who?!

Kate looks over at the lump in the bed, still whispers...

KATE

Darryl.

The lump stirs.

MARY

Who? Speak up, Kate. I'm in a bar.

Kate reluctantly answers louder...

KATE

Darryl.

MARY

Your ex-husband?

KATE

No.

Mary looks confused for a second, then a look of realization takes over her face.

MARY

Katie, Sweetie?

KATE

What?

MARY  
Darryl's a dog.

Kate looks back at the lump.

MARY (CONT'D)  
And I don't just mean your ex-husband,  
because he fits that description,  
too. But that stray mutt you named  
after him for some odd reason? That  
doesn't count as having someone in  
your bed.

Kate pulls the covers back to reveal "DARRYL," the Beagle.  
He wakes up and wags his tail.

KATE  
(in a baby voice, to  
Darryl)  
Mary's just jealous because her  
goldfish is ugly.

Mary looks confused.

MARY  
Did you call me ugly?

KATE  
Yeah. Listen, I have to get some  
sleep. It's a three-hour drive, and  
it's gonna take a little longer since  
I'll have to make stops for Darryl.

The dog BARKS.

MARY  
You're bringing him with you? He's  
not even your dog.

KATE  
Hey, I had those flyers posted for  
weeks. What am I supposed to do?  
Leave him here?

MARY  
(matter-of-factly)  
Yeah.

KATE  
Mary...

Kate SIGHS.

KATE (CONT'D)  
This dog was here for me on one of  
the worst nights of my life.

MARY

So why punish him by naming him after  
an idiot?

KATE

I really have to go.

MARY

All right. I'll be down in the  
morning to help you unpack. I'm so  
glad you're moving back here!

Kate's voice is not as enthused...

KATE

Me, too. Bye.

Kate hangs up the phone and looks at Darryl, who lies on his  
back, spread-eagle.

NOTE: Darryl has a very distinct heart-shaped marking on his  
belly.

Kate LAUGHS.

KATE (CONT'D)

(re: his spread-eagle  
position)

You really are like Darryl.

The dog BARKS. Kate shuts out the light, closes her eyes.

EXT. APARTMENT COMPLEX -- MORNING

A moving truck, which tows a car, pulls up in front of an  
apartment complex. There are exterior steps that lead to  
the main building entrance and interior steps that lead to  
the apartments.

Mary sleeps on the steps outside.

INT. MOVING TRUCK -- SAME TIME

Kate puts the truck in park, sees Mary, HONKS the horn.  
Mary jumps, swings and kicks at the air in defense.

Kate LAUGHS, gets out of the truck.

EXT. APARTMENT COMPLEX -- MOMENTS LATER

Kate walks over to Mary, who's still slightly disoriented  
and ready to strike.

Kate makes "Karate Kid" hand motions.

KATE

Wax on, wax off.

Mary presses her hands together and bows to Kate, who does the same. They LAUGH and hug.

MARY

Ms. Valentine, I've missed you.

KATE

Likewise, Ms. Pigeon.

They fake kiss each other on each cheek. Kate stretches, rubs her eyes.

MARY

So what took you so long? You called and said you were five minutes away, so I came down to wait for you.

KATE

And... I'm here. It only took me five minutes from when I called.

Mary looks to where a watch should be on her wrist. Kate wipes some smudged mascara from under Mary's eyes.

KATE (CONT'D)

Rough night, Mary-san?

Mary bows again.

MARY

Night was fine. Rough morning after. So where's the bitch?

Kate nods toward the truck.

KATE

He's sleeping. And he's a "he," so he's not a bitch.

MARY

What's a "he"-dog called? Wait--

BOTH

Darryl.

Darryl stands up in the truck, looks out the window, BARKS.

Kate and Mary LAUGH.