

INT. DARK VIRTUAL SPACE - EARLY EVENING

FADE IN to SIERRA on the full screen with her eyes closed in Lotus position, incense burning. She's relaxed and centered as VALERIE *POPS UP* to her right, moving various things around her desk. She sees Sierra and lights a cigar.

VALERIE

Seriously, you do it to piss me off... Just be honest, I won't get angry.

Sierra smiles and then opens her eyes, moves her neck around.

SIERRA

I'm not falling for that one again; and that look in your eye says the opposite.

Valerie lets out a long breath of cigar smoke.

VALERIE

You're not wrong kid, you're not wrong.

SIERRA

(half smiling)

So cigars eh? Really upgrading the rush to downgrade your lungs.

Valerie actually laughs at that, shakes her head.

VALERIE

It's like ten cigarettes in one, and I don't have to feel like some jerk off who vapes and thinks they're "helping" the environment.

SIERRA

True, and cigars are biodegradable, but do you really want such foreign substances entering your body?

VALERIE

(shrugs)

Believe me, I've had worse...

(stops a second)

And speaking of.

BLAKE then slides down next to Valerie, running his hand through his hair and putting a hat on.

BLAKE
What I miss?
(Val makes a face)
What; Sierra's never seen my post
sex hair before.

SIERRA
(laughing)
It kind of looked like your regular
hair.

BLAKE
(confidently)
Yeah, but sexier.

VALERIE
(disgusted sound)
Oof, so thirsty dude.

Blake shrugs, Sierra repositioning herself and grinning.

SIERRA
So what, you two just get finished?

Blake smiles and Valerie takes another drag from her cigar.

VALERIE
Oh I finished about five minutes
in; the other twenty was for needy
over here.

Sierra cracks up at that, Blake looking stunned.

BLAKE
Woe woe woe, let's not paint an
inaccurate picture over here... But
like, you did finish right?

Valerie's eyes go wide, shakes her head.

VALERIE
What did I just say about being
thirsty?

She hands him the cigar and gets up for a moment, Blake
considers smoking it but puts it down.

SIERRA
Wait, you two just had sex, but you
won't share a cigar with her?

BLAKE
(lowered voice)
No no no, Blakey doesn't have a
death-wish... Plus you know, with
the virus and all.

Sierra laughs at that, takes a long drink of water.

SIERRA
Well if there's one great way to
pass the time with the latest lock-
down, you both nailed it... See
what I did there?

Blake looks around to see if he's alone, moves in closer.

BLAKE
Between us, this friends with
benefits thing with Val... I gotta
tell you, not exactly what I
thought it would be like.

SIERRA
(surprised)
Really? But you've wanted this for
a long time.

BLAKE
Oh no I know, but like, I guess I
was just anticipating it for so
long that I assumed it'd be
different... Or at least, not
mediocre.

Blake exaggerates the last word, Sierra's mouth falling open.

SIERRA
Just. Wow.

Valerie comes back into view, Blake leaning back.

VALERIE
I think the Uber Eats guy is
here... Make sure he got it correct
this time; because if I have to do
it again, well, fill in the blank.

Blake's eyes go wide and he gets up and leaves.

SIERRA
So you guy's tested negative?

Valerie re-lights her cigar a few times.

VALERIE

For the Coivd; yes. For whatever
the frig else is floating around in
his balls, TBD.

Sierra laughs, nods at that.

SIERRA

I take it you're less than enthused
with the current setup?

Valerie just shrugs at that, leans back, Sierra silent.

VALERIE

(surprised)
Oh wait, that shrug wasn't enough
of an answer?

Sierra looks away with a laugh, back with a smile.

SIERRA

Oh you two... Well, Cooper and I
are still negative, so that's good.
(Val nods at that)
How about Niles; I haven't heard
from him in a couple days.

VALERIE

He's still negative too; just busy
in his *super awesome quarantine*
time, which I think is another way
of saying he gets to do more
cleaning and organizing at home.

Sierra smiles at that as a new screen *POPS UP* under both of
them, black at first with just the name VEE-NAP.

SIERRA

(confused)
Who's VEE-NAP?

Valerie seems confused for a second too, begins to shake her
head as she realizes what it might be, NILES then appearing.

NILES

Hey, everybody still good?

SIERRA

Yep, we were just talking about
that; all still negative.

NILES

Very good... And how about that
whole co-workers with thumping
rewards with you and Blake, Val?

Sierra looks *OFF CAMERA* laughing, Valerie blowing smoke
directly into her laptop this time.

VALERIE

How is it that a grown man can mix
friends with benefits and slam
piece up like that?

NILES

(perplexed)
Wait, slam what now?

SIERRA

(smiling)
Exactly... We miss you Niles.

NILES

(genuine)
Miss you all as well.

Valerie leans in looking at Niles' video feed.

VALERIE

Did you redo your home office?

Niles looks around, shakes his head no; is about to answer
but stops when he talks to someone *OFF CAMERA*. Valerie looks
deadpan and Sierra makes a face.

SIERRA

(exaggerated tone)
Ohhhhh boy, think that question's
just been answered.

VERONICA then sits down next to Niles, putting her long hair
up and smiling beautifully.

VERONICA

(fake accent)
Hey y'all, don't you two just look
like this side of beautiful.

Valerie instantly looks up, takes in a long breath, Sierra
snickering at that.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

Sorry, we've been working on
different accents and can't seem to
nail the right one.

VALERIE

(sarc)

Oh I bet you're trying to nail the right...

SIERRA

(interrupting)

Hey, so, what's the deal with VEE-NAP?

Niles smiles at that, lifts himself and crosses his legs.

NILES

Oh that's her initials and mine;
we're thinking about starting a
podcast together... Similar
interests but different approaches.

Valerie leans in a moment like she's listening to something.

VALERIE

(sarc)

So that's what millions of
downloads sounds like.

Niles rolls his eyes at that and half smiles, Veronica making a face, then drinks a smoothie from a tumbler with a straw.

VALERIE (CONT'D)

And clearly this needed to be done
in person, because video
conferencing can't handle such
heavy lifting?

VERONICA

Well, with the latest round of lock-downs and all...

She trails off as Valerie leans back crossing her arms, blowing more smoke at her laptop.

NILES

It just made sense for us to
strategize in person; and with
helping VEE move into her new place
which is also closer to mine, it
just made sense.

Sierra immediately smiles at that, gets excited.

SIERRA

Oh wait, guy's, is that the place?!

Veronica smiles from ear to ear, Niles nodding and drinking from her tumbler, Valerie instantly noticing, stunned.

VERONICA

We wanted it to be a surprise, but who knows when the lock-down will end, and...

(looks at her phone)

Sorry, our Uber Eats driver is here, and she wanted to clarify our order in person before she gets it.

Veronica takes another sip from the tumbler, gives it to Niles who then does the same. Valerie now looks very annoyed, Sierra not noticing.

SIERRA

Wait, they do that?

NILES

(smiling)

Evidently... VEE surprised me two nights ago with an all vegan dinner; but they had messed it up and felt really bad, so this is their way of making it up.

SIERRA

Oh wow, how cool is that?

VALERIE

Lot of driving you must be doing there Niles, back and fourth between your places and all.

NILES

Oh for sure, which is why it was just easier for me to stay here.

Sierra's eyes go wide, she waiting for Valerie, who stares.

VALERIE

(long sigh)

Oh sure, makes total sense.

NILES

Eh, yes and no. My back is a little tweaked from sleeping on her couch; so we've been switching on and off with her on the couch and me using her bed and vice versa.

Valerie closes her eyes, shakes her head.

VALERIE
California King?

NILES
Wait, how'd you know?

Just then Blake comes back into view, nods to Niles.

BLAKE
Yo dude what's up? And who's got a
California King? You can bang in
like every position on those
things... Super comfy too.

Sierra laughs out loud at that, Niles smirking and rolling his eyes. He looks *OFF CAMERA* a moment, holds up his finger that he'll be back and leaves.

BLAKE (CONT'D)
What's a VEE-NAP?

VALERIE
Trust me, it's nothing, which I
notice you have.

BLAKE
Oh yeah sorry about that; they
messed up our order again and...

He stops when Valerie throws her hands up, cracks her neck.

VALERIE
(annoyed)
Okay, it's so go time and honestly,
this couldn't be happening at a
better time.

She takes her cell phone and walks *OFF CAMERA*.

BLAKE
Yikes; better them than me.

Sierra nods at that as Niles comes back into view.

SIERRA
So Niles, now that Val isn't here
for the moment, tell us about this
sleeping situation again?

Blake immediately perks up at that, leans in, Niles waving it off with a smirk.

NILES

We just separately alternate
between her bed and couch each
night, which is great of her to do.

BEAT

BLAKE

(sighing)
Just, dude, come on.

Blake's head falls a little as Sierra laughs at that.

NILES

No no, now I know what you're going
to say...

BLAKE

(interrupting)
I'd be stunned if you're even
halfway correct.

Niles tils his head, makes a face.

NILES

Wow, nice... You're probably
assuming that we'd be changing her
sheets every time.

BLAKE

(without pause)
Knowing you, yes.

NILES

Did the thought cross my mind? Yes.
But then I considered that this is
VEE and all, so no worries.

Blake looks around the room ironically, Sierra smiling and
repositioning herself in her chair, Niles leaving once again.

BLAKE

(stunned)
It's like a caveman, standing in
the freezing cold with a lighter
gasoline and a pile of wood.

SIERRA

(nodding)
What are you saying; that it's all
right there, and you want to tell
him, but you're also curious to see
how long the insanity can go on.

Blake throws his hands up and falls back in his chair, half spinning around, shaking his head to himself.

BLAKE

The question is, why doesn't she?

Sierra clears her throat, Blake noticing and leaning in.

BLAKE (CONT'D)

Come on, what do you know?

She re-lights her incense, takes in a breath of it.

SIERRA

I'll only say, as she's indicated
to me at least, that she wants
Niles to come to the realization on
his own.

Valerie comes back into view, drinking some wine.

VALERIE

(satisfied)

Okay, that wasn't that bad...
Nothing a little light threatening
can't fix... So what's this about
Niles coming?

Just then another screen *POPS UP*, a chapped STC appearing with a long beard and winter gear on.

STC

Aww come on, I've been gone for
less than a fortnight in the
Alaskan tundra and I'm missing orgy
time? I told you I'm on prep!

Blake and Sierra laugh at that, Valerie shuddering.

VALERIE

Why did you go there again?

STC

I told you, to help find and refine
the cure. I got the idea from the
first episode of *The Last Ship*.

VALERIE

Dude, that was set in the Arctic.

STC

Well my frequent flier miles would
only get me here, so I thought it
fate and started digging around...

(MORE)

STC (CONT'D)
I think I'm about to lose two
fingers!

He holds up his hand to his phone and two of his fingers are
very dark looking.

BLAKE
Oh buddy, you know there's a
vaccine right?

SIERRA
Multiple actually.

STC moves to a quieter area, takes his sun goggles off.

STC
(slightly stunned)
Wait, that wasn't fake news?

They all shake their heads no.

STC (CONT'D)
(slightly disappointed)
Is everything like *I Am Legend* yet?

BLAKE
Nope, and we're all hoping it won't
be, like ever.

STC
Oh no, yeah, I mean that would be
bad of course... And it's not like
I'm totally planning on that
happening or anything.

Awkward silence hangs in the air for a moment.

SIERRA
Well, at least you're trying, so
that counts... Right Blake?

Valerie rolls her eyes, Blake nodding his head in support.

BLAKE
Definitely, I mean a cure would
still be great too.

STC takes in a long breath, perks up.

STC
So all wouldn't be lost, which is
good because my assistant has
already lost both his pinky toes
and like twenty pounds.

VALERIE

There you go Dr. No-Hattan, always looking at the bright side of things.

STC

I've always fancied myself an optimist at heart.

VALERIE

(sarc)

Have you, have you really?

STC smiles shaking his head vigorously, Valerie downing her glass of wine.

CUT TO:

INT. DARK VIRTUAL SPACE - LATER THAT EVENING

FOUR VIDEO FEEDS are open. BLAKE and VALERIE in her living room, SIERRA still in her bedroom, NILES and VERONICA in her home office, STC in a cave with a fire.

STC

...so wait, Sierra, it can be anything? Guy's literally pay to watch you eat anything?

Sierra nods with a smile, half shrugs.

SIERRA

I mean yeah, it hasn't gotten crazy, and thank god because I hate seafood... And it's not just guy's, but anyone who would be interested.

Valerie shakes her head while Niles and Veronica talk. STC wipes at his chapped face, clears his throat.

STC

So let me get this straight... If I wanted to watch you eat a big mac with chipotle sauce, spiral fries with pepper, and chase it down with Old Kentucky, you would?

About to answer, Sierra pauses a second, then nods yes.

SIERRA

Umm yeah, why not... And I'm sure I could talk about the Kentucky paired with the...

STC
 (interrupting)
 Nope, no talking needed, trust me.

They all shudder, STC looking insulted.

STC (CONT'D)
 What, I figure all the other
 assholes want her to talk, and this
 way she could just enjoy it!

BLAKE
 But dude, why so specific?

VERONICA
 (smiling)
 I hope your eating habits aren't
 that unhealthy, Sierra.

Valerie points at her laptop.

VALERIE
 Sure, especially considering you've
 got something healthy your "new
 cohost" would just love to eat
 everyday.

Niles looks confused, everyone else registering various
 states of surprise. Blake quickly takes the rest of Valerie's
 box of wine away from her as she waves it off.

VALERIE (CONT'D)
 I'm sorry, seriously, that's just
 Blake's cheap Franzia talking.

Blake makes a face, shakes his head no behind Valerie.

SIERRA
 Well speaking of that... I mean not
 that, but the podcast you guy's
 might do; maybe you could talk
 about becoming a vegan Veronica.

Veronica and Niles look at each other and smile.

VERONICA
 It's a journey for sure.

NILES
 And one that's weirdly enough
 expanding my horizons as well,
 considering I've never been a
 foodie; I'm learning a whole new
 way of eating green.

Valerie nods at that, changes positions on the couch.

VALERIE

(casually)

Tell me Niles, how do you think
you'll like learning what the back
of her thighs feel like on the
front of yours?

Once again everyone is stunned, Niles perplexed, Veronica blushing and STC falling over with laughter. Blake gets up and gestures for Valerie to do the same.

VALERIE (CONT'D)

What? Just like I'm sure she just
can't wait to feel what it's like
to grab his chest as she rides him
with gusto.

Blake makes a face, gently gathers Valerie into his arms and walks *OFF CAMERA*. Niles looks at his own hands, puts them on his chest a moment, looks at Veronica who's still blushing.

NILES

Okay, I know this is when everyone
likes to bust ole Niles' chops, but
where would we be riding too?

SIERRA

(without pause)

Bliss?

STC

(without pause)

O-Ville, population dos.

Veronica looks at her hands as she speaks.

VERONICA

(without pause)

A state of full body mind and soul
transcendent alignment that only
twin-flames of our nature could
engage in, and...

(looks around)

Or, like, what now?

BEAT

Silence hangs on all *FOUR VIDEO FEEDS* for a moment.

STC

(grinning)

This chick gets it!

Sierra and Veronica crack up at that.

CUT TO:

INT. VERONICA'S BEDROOM - LATER THAT EVENING

NILES is packing up his things while talking to VERONICA who is *OFF SCREEN*.

NILES

...all I mean is it's quite the transition for everyone at *TAIM* now that Blake and Val are like, *engaging* in that way.

He shrugs to himself, looks around a moment.

NILES (CONT'D)

VEE, I'm not sure where but I may have misplaced one of my button down shirts.

The bedroom lights dim and he looks over, makes a double take, clears his throat.

NILES (CONT'D)

Ah; you're wearing it, and only it.

CAMERA PULLS BACK as Veronica *ENTERS FRAME*, mid body up, her long hair down with some of the buttons undone. She puts her hands on his chest and stares into his eyes.

VERONICA

(seductively)

I really hate that you have to go back to your place when it feels so great having you here, with me.

Niles stares a moment, adjusts his glasses.

NILES

Well like, in this workaday world and all, so connected with the internet and media... It's a head scratcher for sure.

Veronica laughs at that, her hands now around his neck.

VERONICA

Yeah, that doesn't make any sense.

NILES
(nervously)
You're not wrong, but considering I
can't remember my name and all, I
think I'm doing *aaaaaa-okay*.

She takes in a long breath, slowly nods her head.

VERONICA
Okay, Niles...

Veronica trails off, turns slightly away from the *CAMERA* and begins to undo the rest of the buttons. She then steps *OUT OF FRAME*, just her arm *IN VIEW* handing Niles his shirt.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
Here's your shirt back.

He looks at the shirt and back to her.

NILES
You know, it is late, and
especially considering you're
literal perfection in corporal form
and the like...

Niles begins to unbutton his shirt and walks *OUT OF FRAME*.

SMASH CUT:

INT. VALERIE'S BEDROOM - MIDNIGHT

VALERIE shoots up from a sound sleep, BLAKE stirring next to her. She takes her phone and looks at the time, throws it back down on the night stand, goes to light another cigar.

BLAKE
(tiredly)
Really just going ape shit over
those things aren't ya?

VALERIE
(sarc)
You're welcome sweetie.

She blows the cigar smoke toward the ceiling.

BLAKE
Bad dream?

VALERIE

(nods)

Absolute god damn nightmare if you ask me.

BLAKE

Wanna tell me about it?

Another long breath of cigar smoke out, she shakes her head.

VALERIE

Nah, but it did get me a little horned up, so...

Valerie trails off as Blake immediately perks up that, she rummaging through the night stand. He sits up smiling as she gets back next to him holding a sex toy.

BLAKE

I like where *this* is going.

VALERIE

(direct)

It's not for me.

Blake's smile fades as he stares at the toy. Valerie then gestures with her head at Blake.

VALERIE (CONT'D)

Come on, turn over.

Blake's eyes go wide and he begins to nod vigorously.

SMASH CUT:

INT. ALKASKAN TUNDRA CAVE - TIME UNKNOWN

ASSISTANT is on top of STC doing chest compressions, the latter regains consciousness. Assistant gets off as STC sits up with wide eyes and takes a deep breath.

STC

They're the best.

ASSISTANT

(incredulous)

Who, who are the best?

STC stands up and brushes himself off.

STC
My best friends in Cali... So what
was it this time? Starvation, frost
bite or shock?

Assistant begins packing their supplies up.

ASSISTANT
Does it matter at this point?
Anyway, I used the sat phone to get
help... They'll be here in an hour.

STC
(excited)
Oh cool, do you think they'll send
some wise cracking Sherpas with St.
Bernard's carrying casks full of
whiskey?

ASSISTANT
(deadpan)
No, I imagine they'll send state
troopers with summons and court
dates for breaking various laws.

Assistant walks away with a long sigh.

STC
(innocent)
With whiskey?

With that STC follows Assistant *OFF CAMERA*.

END SAMPLE