

TO US

By Eric & Sophia Conger

"Shit Show" - Adapted From The Stage

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Soft classical scherzo over blackness.

Within seconds, it picks up pace.

1 INT. OFFICE SPACE - MODERN DAY - DAY

OPEN ON the lower WAISTS of two individuals, a MAN and WOMAN, both dressed in business attire. They stand facing each other, four inches apart.

Murmurs. Uncomfortable shifts in the woman's body movements. A timid laugh.

Then: the man grabs the woman's butt. And squeezes. Firmly.

CUT TO: the waists of two individuals wearing different clothes. Same man. Different woman. ANOTHER BUTT GRAB.

CUT TO: two individuals wearing different clothes. Same man. Different woman. BUTT PAT.

CUT TO: two individuals wearing different clothes. Same man. Different woman. HAND TRACING LOWER BACK.

CUT TO: two individuals wearing different clothes. Same man. Different woman. BUTT GRAB.

The music gets louder and louder, a cacophony.

The CUT TO's repeat. More and more BUTT GRABS - each one unique in its approach.

Suddenly, a final GRAB. The music cuts out. The woman backs away from the man.

THEN: a loud SLAP.

CUT TO BLACK.

2 INT. NEWSROOM - EVENING

A male ANCHOR speaks directly to the camera.

ANCHOR

Breaking news. Roger Glass, the popular anchor of ANC Newswatch, has been placed on indefinite leave after accusations of sexual misconduct with a co-worker. Sources say that senior executives at ANC were unaware of Glass's actions and would take

appropriate...

3 INT. GYM - EVENING - CONTINUOUS

PULL BACK TO REVEAL: An overhead screen on which the Anchor continues with the story.

GRACE, a middle-aged woman, straddles the belt on a treadmill, having seen the breaking news, and watches, stunned. She pulls her phone out and sees a notification which reads: "ANC News Fires Roger Glass After Multiple Sexual Misconduct Allegations".

Grace walks back on still running belt, loses her balance and falls off.

4 EXT. HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

Bare trees surround a lake. A small path leads down through the trees to a dock, where beach chairs are set up.

5 EXT. HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

JOAN, 75, tall and well-coiffed, looks out the window.

6 INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Joan stands by the stove and looks out the same window, lost in thought.

She fiddles with her wedding ring, takes it off and places it by the sink. She picks up a knife and slices beef tenderloin into slivers.

She pauses and drinks a sip of wine.

CAMILA, an older South American woman, puts dishes in the kitchen sink in the background.

The SOUND of the front door opening.

CAMILA (O.S.)  
Hello, Miss Grace!

GRACE (O.S.)  
Hi, Camila. How are -- ...Oh, you don't have to--

7 INT. FOYER - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Grace stands in the foyer, slowly removing her gloves.

Grace crosses the foyer, past immaculate shelves of framed family photos and "Reporter of the Year" awards.

8 INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Grace enters, looking around.

A small white DOG, perched on a leather divan, yips at her. Grace ignores it.

9 INT. KITCHEN - DAY - CONTINUOUS

JOAN

Hi, honey. How was your --

GRACE

(sternly)

Where is he?

JOAN

Out walking. He'll be here soon.

Grace hugs Joan perfunctorily. After, she slowly takes off her coat, scarf, and bag and drops them on a chair.

Grace moves back hesitantly towards the island.

JOAN (CONT'D)

What are you going to say?

GRACE

What is he going to say, Mom? That's the question.

Joan sighs.

Camila quietly walks into the room, Grace's suitcase in hand.

GRACE (CONT'D)

Did you know that he did this stuff?  
Be honest.

JOAN

He's done it for years. He's a squeezer.

GRACE

Oh my god.

JOAN

A hugger slash squeezer. He gets his

arms around them then grabs the butt. Usually when he's had a few. This happened in the afternoon so he must have had a couple of martinis at lunch. Or tee martoonies, as he likes to say.

GRACE

A squeezer. My father is a squeezer.

JOAN

He's not into legs or breasts, he just appreciates a good butt. He appreciated mine for years.

GRACE

Why didn't you tell me?

JOAN

That he liked my butt?

GRACE

That he touched women! Why didn't you tell me?

JOAN

I didn't think you'd want to know.

GRACE

Of course I would. He's my father! And a famous person! I saw it in the gym and fell of the treadmill. Almost broke my neck!

Joan realizes Camila is still standing there.

JOAN

(to Camila)

Oh, Camila, I'm sorry. She'll be in the back bedroom. Would you change the sheets and shake out the rugs? Thanks.

Camila nods and goes.

Joan pours wine for her and Grace. They drink. Joan begins to chop garlic and onions.

JOAN (CONT'D)

I thought he'd stopped. For Pete's sake, he's nearly 75 years old.

GRACE  
You saw him do it?

JOAN  
Sometimes.

GRACE  
When? Where?

JOAN  
At parties, mostly. I guess he figured  
if people were watching it was okay.  
And no one complained. Until now.

GRACE  
Did you? Please tell me you confronted  
him.

JOAN  
I said be careful, Roger, some day  
you're going to squeeze the wrong ass  
and you'll get a drink or a fist in  
the face. He got much worse.

GRACE  
You should have insisted, Mom. You  
should have fought --

JOAN  
Oh, come on, Gracie. This may come as  
a shock to you, but that kind of thing  
went on all the time in our day. You  
saw Mad Men. And there was much more  
than squeezing, I can tell you that.

GRACE  
And you didn't fight back? Any of you?  
You just took it?

JOAN  
Sweetheart, we didn't have the  
internet, we didn't have chat rooms.

Joan goes to a cabinet for a bowl.

JOAN (CONT'D)  
We barely had three-way calling. And  
we didn't work, remember? We depended  
on our husbands. The last thing we  
wanted was to see them lose their job  
because a boss or a colleague got

fresh.

As she gets up, Joan glances at a photo of her and Roger.

JOAN (CONT'D)

We handled that stuff privately.

GRACE

How?

Joan goes back to the island and resumes cutting.

JOAN

The third time Skip Klar trapped me in the pantry and planted his greasy lips on me, I said Skip, you're my husband's best friend. The next time you do that, I'm going to kick you in the nuts so hard you'll think you've died and gone to hell.

GRACE

Did he stop?

JOAN

Yes, and then he turned his attentions to Mollie Bainbridge, who would never speak to a man like that.

Grace crosses to a large sliding door across the room and looks out the glass.

JOAN (CONT'D)

She quit coming to parties because of him. What good did it do?

GRACE

I teach Feminist Theory to a roomful of militant young women who I can barely relate to on the best of days. Then... surprise! My own father. I have zero cred now. Zero! It's humiliating.

JOAN

Are they rude?

GRACE

No, they just stare or look away. It's more pity than anything. I've stopped office hours, re-assigned my advisees.

I can't face them.

JOAN

At least you're with people. We don't see anyone.

GRACE

Why not?

JOAN

Where would we go? The club? Church? Hah! The city? We wouldn't get ten feet down the street before someone yelled something. No one will invite us anywhere. It's changed everything.

Beat.

JOAN (CONT'D)

I'll find him staring at the coffeepot. Standing at the door with his hand on the knob. I'm afraid that one of these days he'll just walk into the lake and not come back.

GRACE

He's always been a drama queen.

JOAN

He doesn't deserve this, honey. Not like this. What he did was--

Grace walks back into the kitchen.

GRACE

Excuse me? It's exactly what he deserves.

JOAN

If he'd embezzled some money or run over a kid, at least there would be due process. This way it's just unresolved. The word of a nineteen-year old.

GRACE

Mom, twelve other women have accused him. He did squeeze the wrong butt and now he's paying the price. Enough is enough!



JOAN

It just seems like overkill.

GRACE

It's justice! It's been going on for millennia and the time is now. Stand up for us. Stand up for yourself!

JOAN

(upset now)

What do you want me to do? I can't just abandon him, he's my husband! And you're his only child. Neither can you!

Joan stops chopping and pushes the cutting board towards Grace. Joan looks away.

Beat.

GRACE

What are you making?

JOAN

Beef stroganoff.

GRACE

His favorite dish. Why?!

JOAN

I just told you. He's hurting, he's--

GRACE

We're all hurting and it's his fucking fault!

JOAN

You have to forgive him, Grace.

GRACE

Don't tell me what I have to do. This is not about me! It's about him, only HIM.

The dog in the living begins to bark.

GRACE (CONT'D)

I shouldn't be here.

She grabs her purse.

JOAN

Then go. Just go. We'll be fine  
without you.

GRACE

You're in a time warp!.....  
You have no idea what's  
going on around you..... Oh,  
really?....Ask Mollie  
Bainbridge if it's too much.  
I wonder how she's doing  
now? Any idea?

JOAN

Every little slight from a  
man, every innuendo subjects  
him to public humiliation.  
From women who are just  
waiting to pounce because  
all their friends are doing  
it. It's too much-

Boodger continues to bark.

GRACE

....Oh, I do! I've been  
harassed dozens of times! I  
finally spoke up. And guess  
what, this last one? He  
doesn't teach there anymore.  
Bye, bye. So you see, you,  
me, Mollie, we're all  
*survivors*.

JOAN

Worry about yourself, Grace!

JOAN

Survivors? Come on! Your life wasn't  
in danger. When you use terms like  
that, it hurts your cause.

GRACE

This isn't a cause.

JOAN

Your case.

GRACE

This isn't a case either! There aren't  
two sides to this problem. There's  
just The Problem. You are so fucking  
CLUELESS!

JOAN

And you're a 45-year old spoiled brat!  
When are you going to grow up?

The dog continues to bark.

JOAN (CONT'D)

Boodger! Shut your FUCKING MOUTH!

Silence.

Grace takes a drink. So does Joan.

10 INT. MUDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Grace and Joan put on coats and boots.

11 EXT. PATH TO DOCK - CONTINUOUS

Grace and Joan walk down the path, wine glasses in hand.

Camila shakes out a rug in the distance.

JOAN

It's all such a bummer.

GRACE

No one says that anymore, Mom. That went out in, like, nineteen-eighty.

JOAN

Really? I was just getting used to it. What do they say now?

GRACE

I don't know. Shit show?

JOAN

Oh, I like that. Shit show! What a shit show! Like that?

GRACE

Yeah. Like that.

12 EXT. DOCK - CONTINUOUS

They pass a fire pit and sit in beach chairs on the dock, collars rolled up against the cold.

JOAN

Did you know he was one month from retiring? With full benefits?

Grace stares out blankly.

JOAN (CONT'D)

We'll have to sell this place now. Put everything in storage. Let Camila go. After 35 years.

Grace looks back towards the house. We hear the SOUND of Camila shaking out a rug.

JOAN (CONT'D)

It gets worse.

GRACE

How?

JOAN

She was Steven Schein's daughter.

GRACE

The intern? Was the boss's daughter?

JOAN

It gets worse.

GRACE

How can it get any worse?

JOAN

You'll just get mad.

GRACE

I can't get any madder.

Beat.

JOAN

She's a lesbian.

Joan laughs despite herself.

GRACE

That's not funny, Mom.

JOAN

I know. It's not.

They both begin to laugh. Hysterically.

GRACE

(through laughter)

Men. White men. They can get a rocket to the moon but can't be nice to women. Or people of color. Or Muslims. Or each other.

JOAN

It's all about the dick.

GRACE  
Maybe in ten years we can laugh about  
it.

JOAN  
We're laughing about it now.

GRACE  
I mean without drinking.

JOAN  
Who's quitting drinking? I'm  
practically an alcoholic.

GRACE  
Mom!

Grace takes the glass of wine from her.

JOAN  
Oh, who cares? I'll be dead in ten  
years, God willing.

GRACE  
Mom!

JOAN  
Twenty. No more.

GRACE  
I'll take twenty.

They smile at each other softly.

GRACE (CONT'D)  
You'll tell him? What you're feeling?

Joan sighs.

JOAN  
If you forgive him.

GRACE  
Mom.

JOAN  
You'll forgive him?

Beat. Joan watches Grace.

Reluctantly, Grace holds her pinky finger out. Joan locks

pinkies with Grace.

GRACE

To us.

JOAN

To us.

Pause. They drink.

From far off, the sound of a MAN's voice.

ROGER (MAN) (O.S.)

Joan? Gracie? Is that you? Stay there,  
I'll be right down!

13 EXT. BACK DECK OF HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

LONG SHOT from the dock of ROGER, on the rear deck of the house, handing his boots to Camila. He goes down the deck and onto the path.

CAMERA stays on Camila as she puts his boots in the mudroom and resumes shaking the rug.

BLACKOUT