

NEW HORIZONS

by

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(Open Scenes of Pilot Episode)

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Teaser

FADE IN:

INT. LUXURY CONDO. BEDROOM (LOS ANGELES, CA) - LATE AT NIGHT

ALEXANDRA (ALEX) FORRESTER, 40, attractive, fit, out-spoken pessimistic-type, wraps her fraternal twin sister's birthday present-- one half of a heart-shaped silver charm that hangs from a silver chain-- in it's accompanying signature Tiffany's box happily.

The trendy decorated bedroom shows almost no signs of a couple except for the fact that two designer "His and Her's" suitcases are laid out on the bed. Only the "Her's" one looks packed and ready to go.

Her handsome, arrogant, artsy-type husband, JULIUS LA VEEN, 45, looks somber as he enters the room.

ALEX

(excited)

Thank God-- I thought I was going to have to ask the plane to stop and pick you up on the way.

She points to the empty "His" suitcase as she packs the gift and a couple of last minute things into her carry-on tote bag without noticing his mood.

ALEX

Pack your London Fog-- the weather channel indicated only a ten percent chance of rain back East-- which of course means it will rain all weekend long--

JULIUS

I'm not going.

She stops short, shocked.

ALEX

What?

JULIUS

I can't.

She's obviously upset, but also doesn't look surprised.

ALEX

(annoyed)
 What should I say *this* time? I already used the "he just got another big film job" excuse at Christmas-- and even my family knows it's practically impossible to have luck like that strike twice in one year in this business. So what can I possibly say to them as an excuse for why you can't make me and my sister's fortieth birthday party which you've only known about for say-- the last five years my parents have been planning it?!

JULIUS

Do you remember the night we shared our life lists?

This takes her completely off guard.

ALEX

What?

JULIUS

Our "life lists--" we went over them on our first date.

ALEX

(now confused)
 Yeah-- I remember, why bring this up now--

He takes out a folded-up piece of paper from his wallet, opens it, and shows her a now-faded, written-out list of 40 things he wants to do before he's 40.

JULIUS

I still want to do number four.

He points to it on the list.

It READS: 4. FALL IN LOVE. His wedding band shines on his finger right next to where he's pointing.

Alex is speechless and completely taken back as she sits down on the bed, still confused.

ALEX

Aren't we still in love?

JULIUS

No, at least, I'm not, and I don't know if I ever was-- I just wanted to do number twelve when we met.

Alex looks down at the paper and READS: 12. GET MARRIED BEFORE TURNING 40.

JULIUS

I was thirty-nine, and we got along so great at first that I thought that would be enough for me and it would maybe even eventually turn into love--

She looks at him with tears in her eyes.

ALEX

But it didn't.

He shakes his head no sadly, then perks up as he continues explaining.

JULIUS

But since now they're saying fifty is the new forty it's like now we have an extra whole decade so I think I still have time to find my one true love-- *if* I start right now.

ALEX

Have you already?

He knows he can't hide it from her any longer. His look of guilt tells her he definitely has been with someone else already-- whether it was "true love" or not.

Alex turns away as the realization of this sinks in...

ALEX

Oh my God...

He takes out a folder from a lawyer's office from his trendy man-bag workcase and shows her the legal papers from it.

She feels as if this must be a dream...

JULIUS

I've already filed the paperwork for legal separation, and don't worry-- I plan to give you half of everything without protest.

(MORE)

JULIUS(cont'd)

And since we never had kids or any
pets there really isn't much else
to decide. I just want our divorce
to be quick and amicable, Alex.

ALEX

(sarcastically)

Great... then apparently it will be
just like our marriage.

She grabs the papers and throws them into her tote bag
without even looking at them-- or him-- again as she grabs
her suitcase and leaves.

FADE OUT:

END OF TEASER.

ACT ONE

INT. FARMHOUSE, KITCHEN (MAIDSTONE, VT.) - NEXT MORNING

CHRISTINE (CHRIS) WILKINS, 40, a pretty, fit, sentimental optimistic-type, comes downstairs and is shocked-- but delighted-- to see the modern, country-styled kitchen completely decorated like a bad prom with balloons, streamers, and a large sign telling all she's now the "BIG 4-0."

Her youngest child, BAILEY WILKINS, 8, a cute, energetic, over-achiever and academically gifted-type, jumps out from behind a doorway dramatically.

BAILEY

(yells)
SURPRISE!

CHRIS

Thank you Bailey, though isn't it a little early? I'm still only thirty-nine.

BAILEY

Yeah, but only for two more days! And then Gram and Gramp are throwing you and Aunt Alex a party you both already know about on your real birthday-- so I wanted to give you a surprise one just for you so you'd have something special to remember about this milestone.

CHRIS

Milestone?

BAILEY

That's what Great-Granddad called it when I asked him to help me count out enough candles.

She leads her towards the table where a stack of at least ten Egg-o waffles have been nuked and are ready for consumption. 40 candles stick out from the tops and all sides of them.

Chris looks taken back by how many candles there are. Bailey reaches for a lighter.

BAILEY

Should I light them all now?

Chris takes the lighter from her hand.

CHRIS
No, I think I get the point--
where's your brother?

BAILEY
Feeding the horses.

Without asking Chris yells up the stairway in the usual ritual.

CHRIS
(yells)
MANDY! HURRY UP-- THE "BUS" IS
LEAVING IN LESS THAN FIFTEEN
MINUTES!

Just then MARK WILKINS, 16, an attractive, very athletic, hard-working, quiet observer-type, enters through the mudroom and takes off his boots, changing into sneakers.

The family's faithful sable and white collie, LADY, follows his every step.

Chris approaches him.

CHRIS
(to Mark, whispers playfully)
Did you have anything to do with
this?

She refers to the streamers and sign.

MARK
(plays back)
I might have partaked in some of
the vadalism.

She looks towards the mudroom door expectantly.

CHRIS
Isn't your father coming in?

MARK
He and his truck were already gone
when I got up, so he must have had
somewhere to be pretty early today.

Chris looks surprised, then suddenly notices a folder with a note attached to it on her messy desk in the corner of the kitchen. She seems suspicious, but tries to hide it from the kids as she grabs it while going up the nearby stairs to wake up Mandy.

Mark notices her concern with the folder, but doesn't seem to want to make a big deal out of it in front of Bailey.

INT. HALLWAY, OUTSIDE MANDY'S ROOM

Chris knocks on the closed door loudly.

CHRIS
 (yells sternly)
 MANDY! COME ON-- you can't be late
 again this year!

A GROAN of teenage angst is heard in response, but the sound is enough for Chris to know she's heard her.

She goes into a spare

GUEST BEDROOM, NEXT DOOR

Chris opens the folded note and reads the first line: "I HOPE YOU CAN FORGIVE ME, BABY..."

Without reading the rest she opens the folder and finds a foreclosure notice for the farm from the bank. She's shocked--

Then AMANDA (MANDY) WILKINS, 13, an average-looking, awkward outsider and loner-type, enters, startling her even more. She wears her dyed, dark-purple hair in a very strange style almost like a pony-tailed mo-hock-- which is obviously new even to Chris.

Chris tries to hide the folder's contents from Mandy's view, though Mandy-- being a self-absorbed teen anyway-- takes her startled reaction as a response only about her hair. She seems braced for a lecture.

MANDY
What? You want me to go change it?

Chris knows this is not a battle worth fighting at the moment.

CHRIS
 No, it looks... "fine." Come on or we'll be late.

Chris puts the folder on the nightstand and they head down the stairs.

CUT TO:

INT. 747 AIRPLANE

Alex sits in business class beside two empty seats. She's one of the only passengers awake as the sun shines brightly through the window beside her. In fact, it looks like she never even slept at all as she glances at the closest empty seat next to her both longingly and sadly.

She takes out the legal papers from her tote bag and looks at them as if to make sure they are what Julius had said they were.

READS: LEGAL SEPARATION NOTICE TO TERMINATE MARRIAGE BETWEEN ALEXANDRA FORRESTER AND JULIUS LA VEEN.

"IRRECONCILABLE DIFFERENCES" is checked in the box as to why.

Now it hits Alex its for real-- it really is what he meant...

A zealous MALE FLIGHT ATTENDENT, 20's, approaches her.

MALE FLIGHT ATTENDENT
Would you like anything special to
drink this morning, ma'am?

ALEX
(with definite innuendo)
Oh, yes... and a lot of it.

CUT TO:

INT. VERMONT BANK, PAUL'S OFFICE - LATER

A now very concerned Chris holds the folder as she talks to a heavy-set, well dressed, male banker, PAUL (nicknamed "TUCKER") TUCK, 45, who she obviously knows well, in his small, private, modest office.

CHRIS
Come on Tucker-- I know you know
how this happened!

PAUL
It's "Paul" in here Christine, and
I'm sorry, but I promised Tom I'd
let him tell you.

CHRIS
Then tell me where he is so I can
ask him!

Paul looks taken back by her comment.

PAUL
He's gone?

CHRIS
Well he's not at home, so I thought
maybe he got up early to go have
breakfast with you at the diner.

PAUL
No, it was my turn to carpool.

CHRIS
Then where *is* he?

Suddenly a FEMALE VOICE comes on over the speaker phone next to him.

FEMALE VOICE (CARRIE, V.O.)
(upset)
Tell her Tucker!

Paul now looks upset as he yells towards the phone.

PAUL
Carrie! Are you listening in on me
again?

CARRIE (V.O.)
Well how can I not if you just
"happen" to be left on intercom?

Paul hits a button on the phone to take them off of intercom just as CARRIE WINDER, 38, a plain, pudgy, gossipy, busy-body teller, enters the office.

Chris looks more concerned about finding out more information than upset over this invasion of privacy.

CARRIE
(to Paul)
If you know where he is then tell
her, Tucker-- I mean, "Paul." She
deserves to know the truth after
all this time.

CHRIS
After all what time?

Carrie looks at Paul almost threateningly. Paul and Carrie both realize she doesn't have a clue as to what's been going on. Paul feels bad, both for her and for ratting out his best friend, Tom...

END OF SAMPLE PAGES