

BEN / ANNIE (FKA ABBY)

ACT ONE

BLACK. Music slowly fades in...it's "The Weight" by The Band. It's sturdy, warm, and comforting like a well-worn jacket.

* PLEASE READ ALL THE
SELF TAPE DIRECTIONS

INT. A BAR -- NIGHT

A wide angle of an empty bar. The location looks vaguely familiar? ANNIE (30's) enters. She sits staring into camera, nervous. Then leaves again, remembering something.

Suddenly the shot of the bar shrinks 50%, now only taking up the left side of the screen -- the other half taken over by:

INT. BEN'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

BEN (30's) sits at his computer, looking into the camera, confused. We realize we're watching a Zoom-like video conference...and that the "bar" Annie is in is just a digital background she is using.

START

BEN

Hello?

Annie pokes her head back into frame, now holding a large drink, the familiar bar behind her. She also looks confused.

ANNIE

Oh! Hey, it's not eight-thirty yet.

BEN

Oh! I thought you said eight-fifteen!

ANNIE

No, eight-thirty, eight-thirty.

BEN

Ugh. Apparently I'm losing my mind.

ANNIE

Don't worry about it. Actually, I--

BEN

Wait, then why are you here?

ANNIE

Because, I...suck at technology and ever since I missed that happy hour last week cuz I couldn't unmute myself I've been showing up for everything fifteen minutes early like a loser-person.

1/7

"CONNECTING"

SARA ISAACSON CASTING

~~ANNIE~~

~~"hey...coach...get norm an...old
fashioned."~~

They share a laugh.

BEN

Oh man. I would kill for an Old Fashioned. I did not think my shopping through, I just panic-bought toilet paper and water.

ANNIE

Why is everyone buying water?! They're not turning off the taps, man! It's not that kind of disaster!

BEN

I know. I also bought a lotta flour. But it turns out you need other ingredients to bake.

ANNIE

For real? You don't have, like--

BEN

Everyone wearing a decent mask was grabbing flour, I thought they knew something.

ANNIE

I don't feel like any of us are thinking real clear. I just bought a whole display box of Warheads.

BEN

The sour candy?

ANNIE

I don't even like Warheads, I just suddenly got very worried I'd never see Warheads again. I got very emotional.

*(popping a Warhead
and squinting)*

I'm just gonna eat one a day and if this isn't over by the time they're all gone I'm gonna kill myself.

Ben laughs.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

How you holding up with the whole...the whole you and--

417

BEN

The whole Paz breaking up with me
right before none of us could ever
touch a new person ever again thing?

ANNIE

Yeah...that whole thing.

BEN

Not great! If I'm being honest.
Weird time to be super-extra-alone.

ANNIE

I hear ya.

BEN

Yeah, but you've been single for
forever, at least you're used to it.
That came out wrong.

ANNIE

(smiling shock)
It sure did!

BEN

I didn't mean--

ANNIE

It's fine. Being alone sucks.
Especially now.

BEN

Hey, you know what I was thinking
about today?

ANNIE

Money? Live music? Human touch?

BEN

Chicago.

ANNIE

The musical?!

BEN

Yeah, I was thinking about *Chicago*
the musical.
(off her laugh)
No, the city. You and me, remember?

ANNIE

(smiling)
Yeah, I remember.

Then:

517