

LOSING IT!

"The Cabbage Problem"

Genre:

Half Hour Comedy

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

1 INT. MANDI'S OFFICE- DAY

Meredith bursts through the door, just as Mandi is rummaging through her 'goodie' drawer. Mandi looks up surprised, followed by a look of guilt at having been caught.

MANDI

What are you doing here?

MEREDITH

Get out of that drawer this instant! You already have a double chin. Are you working on a third?

Mandi lifts her hand and feels her chin with a grimace on her face and then looks down at the open drawer and grabs a bag of chips and opens it.

MANDI

Want one?

MEREDITH

No, Thank You! And you put that down. You need to put a lock on that drawer!

MANDI

It wouldn't do any good.

she says this while stuffing a chip in her mouth

MANDI CONT'D

Besides, I need this for my next patient. By the way, where is Annie?

MEREDITH

I don't know. She wasn't at her desk, so I took the liberty and let myself in.

MANDI

Mere, I am a Psychologist! What if I had been in a session with a patient?

MEREDITH

You weren't.

(CONTINUED)

MANDI

That's not the point! How did you know that I wasn't?

MEREDITH

Because..(pause) I listened through the door before I entered.

Mandi throws the bag of chips back in the drawer and slams the drawer shut.

MANDI

Why are you here, Meredith?

MEREDITH

(distracted)You didn't just throw that open bag of chips back in that drawer, did you?

MANDI

I did. They will keep for later. Again, why are you here?

Meredith's expression quickly changed from disgust to cheerfulness.

MEREDITH

I just wanted to show you my new Forehead!

Meredith points to her forehead with a big goofy smile on her face.

MANDI

New? What happened to the old one?

MEREDITH

It got botoxed! See? No more Wrinkles!

Mandi leans in to get a closer look.

MANDI

Looks the same to me. I never Noticed any wrinkles before. By The way, who did it?

MEREDITH

Dr.Morrison. He is fantastic!

(CONTINUED)

MANDI

Is he the same Doctor that lifted  
The twins?

Mandi points to Meredith's breasts.

MEREDITH

Oh, no. That was Dr.Perelli.

MANDI

My goodness, Meredith, you have Had  
your doctors see more of you Than  
your husband. What does Todd Think  
of all of this?

MEREDITH

He doesn't care. He just wants me  
Happy. Anyway, I also came by  
Because I have a new diet to tell  
You about.

MANDI

Why, Meredith, you don't need to Go  
on a diet. You are no bigger Than a  
toothpick!

MEREDITH

Funny! And Thank you, but Not for  
me. For you!

MANDI

Not another one! You always have  
Some new trend for me to try that  
Is so crazy and unbelievable and It  
usually does NOT work!

MEREDITH

Well, I promise that this one Does  
work. Cecile, at my gym, told Me  
all about it this morning and Her  
cousin's niece has been doing It  
and has lost twenty-two pounds  
Already and she has only been on It  
for two weeks?

Mandi looks at Meredith with raised eyebrows and a look of  
'yeah right'.

MANDI

Twenty-two pounds in two weeks!  
That sounds way too good to be true  
And highly unlikely and unhealthy.

(CONTINUED)

MEREDITH

Mandi, what could it hurt to try  
It? So, you may only lose ten  
Pounds in two weeks, that is Still  
fab results! And you can Stop  
whenever you are happy With the new  
you.

MANDI

And just what is wrong with the  
Current me?

MEREDITH

Listen, you are the one who asked  
Me for help. I have bent over  
Backwards trying to find just the  
Right thing for you. I love you,  
But you are the one who is unhappy  
With herself!

MANDI

I asked you for help when we were  
In college! I don't even want to  
Think about how long ago that Was.

MEREDITH

Yes, and nothing has worked for The  
long haul, but I don't give up On a  
challenge. However, if you no  
Longer want my help...

MANDI

No, No... I will try it. Like you  
Said, what could it hurt? Just get  
Me the instructions.

MEREDITH

Oh, that's the easiest part. Lots  
Of cabbage! Not much to it, just  
Eat as much raw cabbage as you can  
And steamed when you just can't  
Handle the raw. It will be a piece  
Of cake! No pun intended. Well, I  
Best be going. Todd and I have This  
fund raising dinner to go to  
Tonight and I have to get  
glamorized!

MANDI

Well, That shouldn't take much. You  
always look glamorous.

(CONTINUED)

Mandi walks Meredith to the door. As they reach the exit, Meredith acts as if she just remembers something very important and she pushes back past Mandi.

MANDI (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

Mandi calls after her, but Meredith ignores her and opens the 'goodie' drawer and starts emptying the contents into her Prada bag.

MANDI (CONT'D)

Oh, No you don't! Stop! I need those!

Mandi rushes over to Meredith and tries to stop her from grabbing everything, then she grabs Meredith's bag and pulls.

MEREDITH

You said that you would try the cabbage diet! You can't do that and have all the chocolate and chips you want!

MANDI

Well, you have your shopping! We All have our vices!

The two girls continue struggling against each other and are getting louder and louder.

MEREDITH

Yes, but at least shopping is Exercise... running from store to Store... lifting all the heavy Shopping bags. It doesn't put Weight on me.

MANDI

But I am self-medicating and it's exercise too. Hand..to..mouth. I Can't live without my Peanut Butter Cups!

2 INT. MANDI'S WAITING ROOM -DAY

The struggle continues on inside Mandi's office and the scene cuts to the lobby where Mandi's next patient is waiting and Annie is sitting at her desk. They look at each other with concern. The young girl looks confused and worried.

(CONTINUED)

ANNIE

Don't worry, Honey. They are just  
Role playing. It's therapy.

The patient widens her eyes in confusion as the door to the office opens and Meredith walks out of the room straightening her skirt then smoothing her hair. She has a look of triumph on her face. Meredith looks over at Annie.

MEREDITH

Annie, it's so nice to see you  
Again.

Meredith then turns to the young patient

MEREDITH(CONT'D)

And good luck to you!

Meredith disappears down the hall.

3 INT. MANDI'S OFFICE- DAY

The scene cuts to Mandi standing in her office straightening her suit. The intercom buzzes and Annie's voice is heard.

ANNIE(O.S.)

Dr.Cartwright, Your next  
Appointment has arrived.

Mandi leans over and presses the respond button

MANDI

Thank you, Annie. Please send Her  
in.

A moment later, a teenaged girl walks into the room. Mandi stands and walks over to greet her. She shakes her hand.

MANDI(CONT'D)

You must be Margo. I am Dr.  
Cartwright. Please take a Seat.

MARGO

Thank you.

Mandi picks up the clipboard off her desk and sits down in the seat opposite her patient.

MANDI

So, What may I help you with Today?

FADE OUT

(CONTINUED)

END OF ACT ONEACT TWO

4 FADE IN:

5 INT. MANDI'S APARTMENT- NIGHT

Mandi arrives at the door of her apartment. She unlocks the door and walks in. She is promptly greeted by her large mastiff, Marshall.

MANDI

Hi, Baby, How are you?

She pets his head, then flings her briefcase and purse onto the couch and plops down into her oversized leather chair. Marshall walks over to her, sits in front of her and lays his large head in her lap, looking up at her. She starts to pet him when suddenly Ian walks into the room from the kitchen and startles her.

IAN

Hey!

Mandi jumps out of her chair and spins around to face him

MANDI

What are you doing here? Was There some kind of emergency?

IAN

No emergency. Unless you call a new recipe a cooking emergency!

He says with a smile

MANDI

Ian, I gave you that key for emergencies only and so you could take Marshall out.

IAN

Yes, I know, but I just got so excited about this new recipe that I had to come and fix it for you. you are my best critic.

MANDI

Does this look like it needs a New recipe to you?

she points to herself.

(CONTINUED)



IAN

You look perfect to me!

MANDI

Well, that either proves that You are blind...or that you have Great taste.

IAN

I prefer to think the latter.

Mandi gives him a small smile and then exhales sharply.

MANDI

Well, since you are determine To cook for me, I have a request.

Ian looks at her questioningly.

IAN

Really? What is it?

MANDI

Cabbage!

IAN

Cabbage? That's it?

MANDI

Well, Sort of. I think you can Get a little creative. At least, That is what I am hoping for.

IAN

I am sure that I can come up with Something, but why cabbage?

MANDI

Meredith asked me to try this new weight loss plan and it's main ingredient is cabbage. It has some kind of special weight loss powers or something. Anyway, I promised her that I would try.

IAN

I hope you don't want to get skinny like her?

MANDI

No, but do you really even think I have a remote chance of that? I mean, be serious!

(CONTINUED)

IAN

I hope not. I like my women with  
meat on their bones.

MANDI

Women. What women?

IAN

Sorry, I mean woman and you're it!

MANDI

You are hilarious, Ian. I knew  
there was a reason I let you hang  
around.

Ian shakes his head

IAN

Well, I don't know about the diet,  
but I am sure I can come up with  
something. But, until then, I have  
a real treat for you tonight.  
Roasted quail with red wine and  
garlic reduction, baby potatoes and  
creamed spinach.

A look of excitement crosses Mandi's face.

MANDI

Seriously! That sounds amazing!

IAN

"As you know, If I ever hope to get  
promoted from sous chef to head  
chef, I have to work on my  
signature recipes."

Ian claps his hands together and ushers her towards the  
hall.

IAN(CONT'D)

So, why don't you go change into  
Something more comfortable while I  
Set the table?

Mandi obliges and walks toward the bedroom

MANDI

Okay, sounds great.

She pauses and turns back to look toward Ian and says to  
herself,

(CONTINUED)

MANDI (CONT'D)

Wow, my two best friends Are total opposites!

6 INT. MANDI'S KITCHEN- NIGHT

Mandi is sitting at the kitchen table dressed in a sweat suit with her long hair in a loose pony tail. Ian is sitting across from her. She takes the last bite of food from her plate, eats it then leans back in the chair and exhales from satisfaction.

MANDI

That was delicious, Ian. I Actually feel like I just finished A meal from a five-star restaurant. I feel so completely under dressed!

Ian stands up and gathers the plates with a smirk on his face.

IAN

Thanks, I was hoping you Would like it.

MANDI

Like it? I loved it! And it Wasn't just delicious, it was beautiful too!

IAN

Taste is not everything in the restaurant business. Plating is just as important. I have to make it look just as good or even better than it tastes.

Mandi sighs and then proceeds to lay her head directly on the table.

IAN (CONT'D)

What's wrong? Bad day at work?

Mandi sits up and looks over at Ian, who is loading the dishwasher.

MANDI

"You could say that. I have a new patient and just take a wild guess at what she needs my help with?"

(CONTINUED)

IAN

"I have no idea, but should you be telling me this?"

MANDI

I won't tell you who she is or any specifics, so I am not breaking any kind of doctor, Patient confidentiality.

IAN

Alright, so what is her problem?

MANDI

She has food issues!

IAN

O...K...? Why is that a problem? You have helped lots of people with all kinds of issues.

MANDI

I must not have thought my whole career path through. When I chose child Psychology, I really thought that the extent of the problems I would be dealing with would be mommy/daddy issues or the, ever-faithful, low self-esteem issues. If I had truly thought this through thoroughly, I would have realized that the low self-esteem would be the very thing that leads to eating disorders. The thought never really crossed my mind. Did you know that ninety percent of my practice consists of eating disorder patients?

IAN

Well, you may think that is a bad thing, but I actually think that you are the best person to handle those kinds of issues.

MANDI

Really? Why?

IAN

Because you are an expert on the Subject.

(CONTINUED)

MANDI

True. I have been there, done that and eaten the t-shirt. The real problem is , I am still there and have already had to buy and even larger t-shirt.

IAN

I really hate when you put yourself down. You are beautiful, kind and caring. You have a lot to offer and you have a successful practice to show for it. You have helped a lot of people with all kinds of problems including eating disorders before. So why are you second guessing yourself now?

MANDI

I don't know. I guess sometimes I feel like a fraud.

Mandi stands from the table and walks over to Ian.

MANDI (CONT'D)

I guess this is the real reason I keep you around. You are my counselor. I am so lucky to have you as a friend.

Mandi leans in and hugs Ian with her head on his chest.

IAN

I wish I was a lot more than that.  
(under his breath)

MANDI

What?

IAN

Oh, nothing. I'm just happy that I could help.

Mandi leans back into Ian's chest and just stays there while Ian is looking out into space with a sad smirk.

FADE OUT.

**END OF ACT TWO**

(CONTINUED)

ACT THREE

7 FADE IN:

8 INT. MANDI'S OFFICE- DAY

Several days later, Mandi is in her office with a patient. The patient is talking, but Mandi is so uncomfortable. She is squirming in her chair, crossing and uncrossing her legs and sweating profusely.

CIERRA

Are you alright, Dr.Cartwright?

MANDI

"Uh, yes, Cierra, go on...Why do You think that your mom lashes out at you? Do you think that maybe It's because of your attitude towards her?"

Mandi tries to keep her composure, but her stomach is now making very loud noises and she is growing more and more uncomfortable by the second. Cierra keeps talking, but Mandi is unable to focus. Suddenly, she jumps from her chair and throws the clipboard that she was holding on her desk.

MANDI

Please excuse me, Cierra. I will be right back.

Mandi says while she is making escape from the office. She rushes past Annie's desk as Annie looks up with a confused expression.

ANNIE

Dr.Cartwright, is everything alright...?

Without answering, Mandi rushes to the bathroom down the hall and the door closes behind her. After a couple of moments, two women rush out of the bathroom with scrunched facial expressions and slightly gasping for air.

WOMAN#1

That was awful!

WOMAN#2

Disgusting!

The two women say as they disappear down the hall. After another moment passes, the sound of the toilet flushing is heard and then the sound of the sink faucet being turned on

(CONTINUED)

then off again. The bathroom door flings open and Mandi steps out into the hall. She smooths her skirt then calmly walks back to her office. She stops at Annie's desk.

MANDI

Annie, please cancel the rest Of my sessions for the day. I am not feeling so well.

ANNIE

Sure thing, Dr.Cartwright. Don't you worry about a thing.

Mandi walks back into her office to speak to Cierra.

MANDI

Cierra, I apologize for the disruption, but I am not feeling all that well. We will have to continue next week, if that is all right? There will be no charge for today.

CIERRA

Whatever, Doc. My parents are forcing me to come anyway.

Cierra exits the office. Mandi sits down behind her desk and a moment later Meredith enters the room, all too bubbly.

MEREDITH

Hey, Skinny!

MANDI

Hey, yourself. What's up? What are you doing here?

MEREDITH

I am here to take you shopping. It has to be close to time for Your lunch hour, right?

MANDI

Seriously! You have got to be kidding?

MEREDITH

No, Silly. You have been on your Diet for a week now, and I think It is time for the retail therapy Part of the program to start.

(CONTINUED)

MANDI

Shopping is part of the cabbage diet program?

MEREDITH

Shopping is part of the Meredith Coleman Diet and Exercise program.

MANDI

Oh, well I don't think that is Such a good idea today, Mer.

MEREDITH

Oh, but it is, see, the premise is this, for every five pounds you lose, you buy yourself something new. You treat yourself. This keeps you motivated.

MANDI

I see your point, and it's not that I don't think that it's a great idea. You know how I love fashion, but I just don't think it is a good idea for me to go out today.

MEREDITH

Why not? Shopping is always a good idea.

MANDI

Not when cabbage has taken over my life and is causing me to take way too many trips to the bathroom. Besides, I have eaten so much of the stuff, that I swear my skin smells like I have on cabbage perfume.

MEREDITH

Let me check. I mean you may just think that you are smelling it because you are always around it.

Meredith walks closer to Mandi's desk and leans down as Mandi extends her forearm for Meredith to take a whiff. Meredith makes a slight grimace.

MEREDITH (CONT'D)

Well, you do smell a little like the stuff, but hey, a lot of people love cabbage!

(CONTINUED)



MANDI

Meredith, They eat it. They don't want to wear it! Anyway, That's why I cannot go shopping with you.

Meredith stands straight up and puts her perfectly manicured hands on her hips.

MEREDITH

Oh come on! The stores have bathrooms. And I promise, it will make you feel better, especially when you discover that you have probably already gone down a dress size!

Mandi stares blankly at her friend for a moment and then exhales sharply. She stands from her chair and walks around her desk toward Meredith.

MANDI

What could it hurt? I don't think that I have anything left to get rid of anyway.

MEREDITH

Eww, but great! You will not regret this! I promise.

Mandi gathers her things and the two women walk out of her office together.

9

INT. MANDI'S APARTMENT-LATE AFTERNOON

Mandi and Meredith walk into Mandi's apartment with several large bags in tow. They are laughing and talking about a snooty sales woman. The girls plop their bags onto the couch just as Marshall walks in. Mandi leans down to pet him and kisses the top of his head.

MEREDITH

You so need a man!

MANDI

Marshall is all the man that I need.

Ian walks into the room from the kitchen.

IAN

Well, Hello!

He says while only looking at Mandi.

(CONTINUED)

MANDI

Hi! I thought that I smelled something wonderful when I walked in.

MEREDITH

Hi to you too, Bilbo Baggins!

Meredith says sarcastically as she notices that Ian is ignoring her.

IAN

Oh, I see that you brought Malibu Barbie home with you!

He says. Again, only speaking to Mandi.

MANDI

Come on, you two. At least try to get along! For my sake?

IAN

I don't play well with plastic toys. They tend to melt when it gets too hot in the kitchen.

He smirks at Meredith and then turns his back to her and returns to the kitchen.

Meredith yells back at him

MEREDITH

Ha Ha, very funny!

Mandi looks back to Meredith

MANDI

Just ignore him. I really don't understand why you two don't like each other.

MEREDITH

Well, He thinks I am a freak and fake and I think he is a leach and totally infatuated with you.(pause)  
Yep, That pretty much sums it up.

Mandi looks at Meredith like she just said something totally crazy.

MANDI

That's ridiculous! Ian and I are just friends and neighbors. He is

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MANDI (cont'd)  
younger than me and looks at me  
like a sister, nothing else.

MEREDITH  
Come on, Mandi, don't be dense! He  
is totally in love with you! You  
just don't see it, but it's written  
all over his face when you walk in  
a room. But, that doesn't matter,  
you and he would never work, so  
just forget it."

Mandi contemplates what was just said for a second and then  
shakes it off.

MANDI  
Well, that is ridiculous, but  
whatever. We need to talk about  
something before You leave, so  
please sit down.

Mandi gestures toward the chair beside the couch and  
Meredith reluctantly drops into it.

MANDI (CONT'D)  
First, I want to thank you for  
today. The retail therapy really  
helped lift my spirit and I really  
do feel much better.

Meredith smiles and looks very satisfied with herself.

MEREDITH  
I told you that it would! It always  
makes me feel better.

MANDI  
Yes, But...

MEREDITH  
But, what?

Meredith asks with a confused look on her face.

MANDI  
But the cabbage part of the program  
is not working for me!

MEREDITH  
"What do you mean, it is not  
working for you? You have already  
lost a dress size! It looks like it

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MEREDITH (cont'd)

is working...really well, in fact! You are not going to give it a fair chance, are you? You always do this, Mandi! You try but never follow through!"

MANDI

I have given it all the chance that I am going to give it, not because I don't want to follow through, I do, just not with this. Do you have any idea how negatively this has affected my life?

MEREDITH

No, but I am sure you are going to tell me.

MANDI

First, I had to walk out..no, run out on my very first patient this morning and I was gone for twenty-two minutes! Luckily, I could smooth it over with him by not charging for the Session at all. Second, I had to cancel an early afternoon appointment yesterday because my office needed 'airing Out'. Thirdly, most of my day was spent running back and forth to a room that I don't frequent more than three times on a regular day. I had to cancel all my afternoon appointments. And this was all because of the cabbage! Does this give you any clue as to how this is affecting my professional life?"

MEREDITH

So...you're just going to throw in the towel? Quit?

MANDI

No! I didn't say that. I have lost a dress size and I don't want to gain it back, but I have to do something different...and you may not like what I am about to do.

(CONTINUED)

MEREDITH

Why? What are you about to do?

MANDI

I am going to ask Jean for help.

MEREDITH

Jean? Isn't that the weird lady who has an office in your building? She's the one that practices food therapy, or something? You might as well restock your goodie drawer!

MANDI

Jean is not weird! She is a little eccentric, maybe, but she just so happens to be a certified nutritionist and she is the one I recommend to my patients. I believe that she can help me as well.

Meredith looks at Mandi with hurt and confusion. She stands and turns her back to her.

MANDI (CONT'D)

I didn't mean...

Meredith interrupts

MEREDITH

Oh yes you did! You are saying that I can't help you. That I don't help you! That for all these years, I have been making it worse for you!

MANDI

I did not say that and most certainly did not mean that, Meredith. I appreciate everything that you have done for me.

MEREDITH

Well, what does this Jean have that I don't?

MANDI

A college degree and many years of experience.

MEREDITH

Well, how can I compete with that? I guess you have made your choice clear.

(CONTINUED)

Meredith grabs her bags from the couch and heads to the door. Mandi rushes after her.

MANDI

Mer, please don't leave. I am not replacing you. I just think that she can help me with an eating plan that won't disturb my work schedule, that's all.

Meredith turns to face Mandi. She has a look of indignation on her face.

MEREDITH

"Listen, Mandi, just admit it. You don't want my help anymore. You can't handle anything that requires a long commitment. You always flake out on everything I bring to you. You are this way with everything from diets to relationships. You scare easily... especially when things are headed in the positive direction, like say...losing a dress size in one week...

Mandi gasps as Meredith sends verbal jabs at her. She starts to speak, But Meredith stops her.

MEREDITH (CONT'D)

No, I don't want to hear your excuses and you can call your precious, Jean, if you want to. I am glad that you are asking someone else for help. That means that they can have their hearts broken next time.

Meredith proclaims with over exaggerated drama, as she turns, walks out of the apartment and slams the door behind her. Mandi stands there with an expression of shock on her face. Ian walks back into the living room from the kitchen.

IAN

What was that all about?

Mandi snaps out of her shock and turns to Ian, who looks concerned.

MANDI

Cabbage, I think? I upset her, although I feel like she just threw some really hard jabs at my entire

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MANDI (cont'd)  
life. All I did was tell her that I  
couldn't do the cabbage diet  
anymore and I was going to call  
Jean and ask for her help with what  
foods to eat.

Ian lifts his eyebrows in understanding.

IAN  
Well, that was your problem. You  
should not have told her that you  
were going to go to someone else  
for help.

MANDI  
You are saying that I should have  
lied to her?

IAN  
No. I just think that, in her case,  
omission wouldn't have been such a  
bad idea. She has a controlling  
personality and you just took her  
control away, which seems to be her  
happy juice.

Mandi sits back down and sighs heavily.

MANDI  
I guess you are right, Ian.  
Meredith and I have been friends  
since grade school and she has  
always been the one to pout or  
throw a fit when things didn't go  
her way. Several times she even  
ignored me for weeks at a time for  
not doing what she wanted. It's  
been a pattern for her. I just  
thought that, or hoped that she  
would have matured a little.  
Instead, she threw some really low  
blows.

IAN  
What did she say?

MANDI  
It's not important, it doesn't  
really matter.

(CONTINUED)

IAN

I can see that it really does matter and it's bothering you so please tell me what she said that hurt you.

Ian sits in the chair opposite Mandi and leans toward her. Mandi looks up at him.

MANDI

She said that I quit everything as soon as things start looking good. Not just diets, but relationships too. The sad thing is, she's right. I do quit everything, but I usually have a good reason."

IAN

Sweetie, you do not quit everything! Yes, you do usually quit Meredith's diets, but that's because they are ridiculous and they don't work! She means well, but she sets you up for failure. None of those plans are for long term. And as far as quitting relationships, I know, for a fact, that is not true. After all, she must have forgotten about the longest relationship that she, herself, has ever been in. With you!"

Mandi looks up at Ian and smiles.

MANDI

Thanks, Ian, but I don't think that she meant that kind of relationship.

IAN

Well, that relationship has been the most challenging one that you have ever had and you have managed to hold it together. Through ups and downs, craziness and drama. And Besides, you should never feel badly about ending a relationship with a guy. That just means that he must not have been the right one for you.

(CONTINUED)



MANDI

I guess, however, I haven't ended any of my relationships. They ended them with me.

IAN

Then why did Meredith say that you always bail?

MANDI

Because I never told her that they broke up with me...I didn't want her to know. I was ashamed.

Mandi looks at Ian with an expression of embarrassment

IAN

Really? You lied to her about that?

MANDI

Yes. I'm awful, right?

IAN

No, you're not awful, but you shouldn't feel like you have to lie to your best friend.

MANDI

You're right.

IAN

I know I am, but I also selfishly think that this is good news for me.

Ian looks at Mandi with a mysterious smirk on his face as Mandi questions his remark.

MANDI

How so?

IAN

You are always very open with me and, as far as I know, you have never lied to me. So, I think this means that I may actually edge Meredith out of the BFF slot. I'm just saying!

Mandi starts to laugh at Ian's obvious ploy to make her feel better.

(CONTINUED)

IAN (CONT'D)

There it is! The smile that I was looking for. Hey, I have prepared a delicious meal for you, so how about some dinner?

Mandi's expression changes back to a more serious one

MANDI

Well, I hate to break this to you, but as you heard, I am no longer on the cabbage diet because of reasons I do not wish to verbalize. So, if cabbage is involved, I will not be eating it. even though, it smells wonderful.

IAN

Cabbage is part of it, but I can remedy that without a problem. Just give me a few minutes and dinner will be served. I promise, you will love it.

MANDI

Okay, then I can't wait to see and taste what you have for me tonight. I am going to go change.

10 INT. MANDI'S KITCHEN- NIGHT

Mandi exits her bedroom and walks toward the kitchen when the door bell rings. She turns to walk to the door. He is now dressed in a sweat suit with her hair pulled back in a loose pony tail.

MANDI

I knew it wouldn't take her long and she would be back.

She says to herself as she reaches the door to open it. To her surprise, It is not Meredith, but her Twenty-one year old college student neighbor, Mason.

MANDI

Hello, Mason.

MASON

Hi there, Hot Stuff. You got a Minute?

He says as he walks right past her and plops down on her sofa.

(CONTINUED)

MANDI

Of course! For someone who showers me with compliments like that, anything. What's up?

She shuts the door and walks over to sit in her over-stuffed leather chair opposite Mason.

MASON

Well, considering that you are a shrink and all, and you are supposed to know all about the human mind, and you , yourself, are in fact a girl...um, I mean, a woman. I thought I could get some advice from you?

He asks expectantly, but with a little hesitation.

MANDI

Well, sure, but it depends on the subject matter. I mean, I don't come cheap you know.

Mandi says seriously, but with a joking undertone, until she notices the look of shock cross Mason's face.

MANDI (CONT'D)

I'm just kidding. I would love to help you if I can. So what is this about?

MASON

Girls, well, particularly one girl. Her name is Amber. I need to know what I can do to win her over?

Mandi giggles a little and Mason looks irritated.

MANDI

Mason, I am not a dating expert. And, come on, you have been my neighbor for a year and have you seen me go on even one date in that time? I mean, It's been a while. (She hurries through, suddenly Uncomfortable) I don't think that I am the one you need to ask about this. I have never met Amber. Why, all of a sudden, do you need help? You have never had trouble winning girls over. You always have girls around you. You

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MANDI (cont'd)  
have very few, if any, dateless weekends. What is so different about this girl that warrants you needing my advice?

Mason takes a deep breath and looks away from Mandi and down at the floor, then looks back at Mandi with a serious expression. He bites his bottom lip and sighs.

MASON  
Well, she's different from the other girls I have dated. She is not a party girl, she is more serious. My good looks and popularity seem to have no effect on her at all. Which is frustrating because that's all I have ever needed to impress a girl. Impressing girls, that's easy. Impressing a woman, that's a whole new stratosphere for me. I just figured that since you and I are friends, you could help me here. You are the only woman that I respect enough to ask for help.

Mandi stares at this utterly handsome twenty-year old college student that is sitting in front of her and she is fighting the urge to run away. She is being asked by the most popular guy in his sophomore class at the local university for dating advice. This should be relatively easy considering she does have an extensive knowledge of human behavior and nature, but this is dumbfounding to her. She contemplates going into a lengthy discussion of the different class structures among individuals and the accepted behaviors in each, but she knows Mason did not come to her for a lecture. He came to her for an easy fix. One that he fully thinks that she is qualified to give him. She stands and starts to pace back and forth in front of him, all while he is watching her with great expectation. She suddenly stops and faces him.

MANDI  
"Wait! You are telling me that, instead of asking one of your many female, age-appropriate counterparts for advice, you came to me? I still don't understand. I am a , well at least I think of myself, as an expert on human behavior, but this has me thrown. I mean, I know that I haven't

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MANDI (cont'd)  
answered your questions yet, but I  
just can't get past this. Why me?  
Why are you asking me, of all the  
people you know, for dating advice?

Mason stands up in front of her and puts his hands on her shoulders as he looks her straight in the eyes. He is kind of short, but slightly taller than her with a stocky, muscular build. He has blonde hair and crystal blue eyes and teeth so white they could blind you. He reminds Mandi of a live version of the Ken doll only shorter. With sincerity, he speaks.

MASON  
Mandi, you are the coolest, older person that I know! You are the only female that I know who can help me with this. I happen to think I am extremely lucky to have an expert as a friend and I need your help. I don't care that you haven't dated in a while. That just shows me that you have standards, because I know it's not because you aren't a great catch, cause you most certainly are. Any man would be lucky to have you as his girlfriend. And besides, Amber is smart like you. She is beautiful too. The girls I usually date are just out to have a good time. Every time that I try to get serious with them, they flake out on me. Amber is not like that, or at least, I don't think she is.

As if coming out of a trance, Mandi suddenly becomes alert and knows exactly what to tell Mason.

MANDI  
Oh, so you think that I am cool! I can work with that. Alright, so here is what you need to do...

11 INT. MANDI'S KITCHEN- NIGHT

Mandi, Ian and Mason are sitting at her kitchen table with plates of food, mostly cleared, sitting in front of them.

MANDI  
That was magnificent, Ian. I am so full!

(CONTINUED)

MASON

Yeah, man, that was great! And thanks for inviting me to stay for dinner. The only food I have at my place right now is canned cheese, crackers and beef sticks. This was a major treat.

IAN

What do you mean, right now? That's all you ever have at your place! And I know that you aren't exactly an expert on five-star cuisine, but I will take that compliment. Thanks and you are welcome.

MANDI

You guys are the best! I am so blessed to have both of you in my life. You make me feel so good about myself!

IAN

Are you getting mushy? Is she getting mushy right now? (he looks to Mason) I think we better clear the kitchen and go play some video games before this turns into a tear fest.

MASON

I think you are so right, Man! This is getting too deep for me.

They both quickly start to leave the table and go into the living room . All the while, Mandi is protesting that she is not getting mushy, just appreciative. She stands to call after them as they exit the room. She yells .

MANDI

Alright, I guess I am stuck with dish duty then!(pause, she to herself) I guess I can't have everything all the time.

FADE OUT.

END OF SHOW