

READY TO MINGLE

"GOD'S WORK"

EPISODE 1

Written by

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FADE IN:

INT. THE NOVA PRESS OFFICES - MODERN DAY

The Nova Press is just one large room split in half by a long communal desk. A cluster of MILLENNIAL JOURNALISTS crowd around it, working on their next round of clickbait-y articles.

MILLIE (30, chubby, stern) seethes at her workspace. ROSA (mid-20s, hot, enough energy to power a small country) sits opposite her, enthralled by the teaser for the 25th season of *Ready to Mingle* that plays on her computer, sans headphones. Around her is a conspiracy-theorist level of notes about the show and a massive bottle of lotion.

Millie sighs and opens up her email, her inbox filled with messages about various peoples' problems.

ROSA

What do you think of this guy?

Millie looks up at a headshot of some RIDICULOUSLY HOT MAN.

MILLIE

Like, in what way?

ROSA

Like if you had to rate him on a scale of 1-10 of bangability, what would you pick?

MILLIE

Is this for the *Ready to Mingle* column?

Rosa looks up at Millie with a blinding smile while furiously rubbing a rash on her arms with lotion.

ROSA

Yep! I'm doing a piece on the hottest cast members from this season. Giving people a taste before I start covering the new season.

MILLIE

And the behind-the-scenes of *Ready to Mingle* is news... how?

ROSA

Because it's iconic! 25 years couples finding love!

(MORE)

ROSA (CONT'D)

How often do you get to document something this monumental?

Rosa bends over to rub lotion onto the rash on her legs, missing Millie's eye roll.

ROSA (CONT'D)

Did you know that they're still using the same algorithm since season 1? And that all of the winning couples are still together? *That's* amazing. No other show has that kind of track record.

MILLIE

(sarcastic)

Would love to see the data on that.

ROSA

I've been reading this book, *The Ready to Mingle Story: How to Manifest Your Own Love Story: The Hank Marigold Story*. It's actually really interesting, it's how they pitched the show and developed the algorithm. It was created by psychologists, real psychologists, like you!

MILLIE

(zoning out)

Mhm, a million years ago.

ROSA

You should read it! Here, the show sent me a few copies so you can just have this one! Maybe you can consult on the sciency stuff. Ooh! Group project!

Rosa slides the book across the table. Millie grabs it with a tissue and stares at it in distaste.

MILLIE

Um, yeah, sure... Thanks.

ROSA

How's everything over in self-help land? I just wish we could, y'know, hug away all that sad.

Millie opens up her email, her inbox filled with messages about various peoples' problems.

MILLIE
Yeah imagine that.

ROSA
Well they're lucky to have you,
Mill. You're doing God's work.
God's work.

Millie's face softens just a tad.

MILLIE
Thanks.

Millie refreshes her inbox and scrolls through her newest emails with subject lines like: "IN LOVE WITH MY BEST FRIEND'S WIFE," "I THINK I'M BEING CATFISHED BY MY COUSIN," and "NOBODY HAS ASKED ME TO PROM." She frowns at that last one and hovers the cursor over it until she spots a PHOTO on Rosa's desk.

MILLIE (CONT'D)
Is that one of the contestants?

Rosa perks up and picks up the photo of adult Chris.

ROSA
Yeah! Chris Anton. Isn't he just dreamy? I just wanna lick him!

MILLIE
What are they saying about him--

ALINE SHAPIRO (50s, boss-ass bitch with anger issues) emerges from the lair that is her office. Everyone goes quiet. Aline affixes the room with a cold stare as she begins to circle the table. She eyes the laptops and work spaces, occasionally scoffing at a post-it or tutting at a written piece.

ALINE
Crap... Nope... Holy shit, what even is that? No one wants to read about orphans dying in Bulgaria, Alissa.

Finally Aline stands behind Millie. She glances at the emails and takes a deep, soothing breath.

ALINE (CONT'D)
Not terrible, but drop the prom one. I need juicy shit, Millie. Incest is good angle though.

Aline continues on with her assessment of her sweating staff. Millie shrinks into her chair.

INT. JUST AN OK CHAIN RESTAURANT - EVENING

Millie sits tense on one side of a booth and fiddles with the too-low neckline of her blouse. Her eyes dart to the door of the restaurant and her phone anxiously.

A text comes in from PENNY (Millie's twin sister) that reads: "Having fun?"

Millie picks up the phone and starts typing out a response.

MILLIE

(muttering)

I'm just having the best fucking
time sitting at this table like an
idiot for some late douchebag.

Millie sends back a text that reads: "He's running a little late but feeling good!"

IRIS

Watch your language, young lady.

Millie squeals and turns around. At the booth behind her sits IRIS (60s, a skeleton), her mother, in incognito mode.

MILLIE

Mom?! What the hell?

IRIS

Mildred!

MILLIE

Why are you here?

IRIS

You haven't been on a successful
date in years. So I thought I'd tag
along to see what you're doing
wrong.

MILLIE

(to herself)

I'm asleep. This is all a nightmare
and I'm asleep.

IRIS

Oh hush, this will be good for you.
You just need a more feminine
insight.

The door opens and Millie spies her date, LOUIS (30s, tall, dark, sexy Zumba instructor). He strolls through the door.

MILLIE

I don't need a peer review! When you told me you were setting me up with your Zumba instructor I didn't realize you'd be the third-fucking-wheel!

IRIS

So dramatic.

MILLIE

Now, mom. Go now. Right now aaaand here he is.

She beams up at Louis. He gives her a polite, albeit awkward, grin. It falters just a bit with every moment he soaks her in.

LOUIS

Uh, Millie?

MILLIE

Yeah, um, hi! Lots of traffic or something?

LOUIS

No.

Millie waits for him to elaborate but it never comes. Instead, he holds eye contact until Millie finally turns to look over a menu.

MILLIE

So I'm sorry about this. My mom can be a bit pushy. She doesn't always know her place.

LOUIS

Oh, it's alright. I didn't have anything else going on.

MILLIE

Mm, I don't know this neighborhood too well. I live across town... Kind of a schlep to come out here for a diner. Food here must be pretty good, then.

LOUIS

Eh, it's just alright.

Millie nods. Her eyes beg him to say anything more, literally anything, but he remains way too invested in the menu.

IRIS
 (whispering)
 Remember to laugh at his jokes. Men
 like that.

MILLIE
 (whispering)
 He hasn't said anything.

LOUIS
 What?

MILLIE
 What?

A WAITRESS rushes over to them like a godsend, NOTEPAD and
 PEN in hand.

WAITRESS
 Have we decided?

LOUIS
 I'll have the house salad.

WAITRESS
 Anything else?

LOUIS
 I think that'll do it.

Louis hands her the menu and then leans forward, elbows on
 the table, watching Millie way too attentively. Millie
 shrinks back and glances at the menu, eyes darting across it
 and not taking anything in.

MILLIE
 Oh, um, the reuben. Thank you.

IRIS
 (under her breath)
 We'll have to talk about that.

WAITRESS
 Great choice. Anything to drink?

Millie opens her mouth but Louis steps in.

LOUIS
 Just water is fine.

The waitress takes her menu and hurries to the kitchen.

LOUIS (CONT'D)
 A reuben, huh?

MILLIE

Yeah, you know. Nothing better than cheese, bread, and meat.

LOUIS

Mm, I wouldn't know. I've been vegan since birth.

MILLIE

Oh, wow. What a way to live.

LOUIS

I value my health. I've been running a 5k every morning since I was 8 years old.

MILLIE

... Ok.

LOUIS

Did you know that every hot dog you eat takes 36 minutes off your life?

MILLIE

Oh, ha, I think I've seen that Onion headline.

LOUIS

This isn't a joke, Millie. Imagine how much time that sandwich will take off your life. You should really watch what you eat.

MILLIE

Yeah, uh-huh, yep. Excuse me.

Millie yanks their waitress' wrist as she passes them.

MILLIE (CONT'D)

Can I get a glass of wine?

WAITRESS

Of course.

MILLIE

Like, a really big glass of wine.

WAITRESS

Absolutely.

MILLIE

Any kind of wine is great.

WAITRESS

(tense)

On it!

The waitress wrestles herself away from Millie.

LOUIS

You definitely look like you could benefit from a vegan lifestyle. I can send you some articles, help you build a schedule...

Louis continues to drone on but his voice fades into the background, replaced by ringing in Millie's ears.

INT. MILLIE'S STUDIO APARTMENT - NIGHT

Millie walks into her apartment, slamming the door behind her. She opens Penny's contact on her phone and presses the call button, putting her on speaker as she kicks her shoes off.

PENNY

(over the phone)

Well? Did you love him?

Millie huffs.

MILLIE

Our mother is never allowed to set me up again. Scratch that, she's never allowed to talk to me ever again!

PENNY

(over the phone)

What? Why? What happened?

MILLIE

He was an asshole, Pen! A complete dick! He was rude and condescending and fucking vegan. And I haven't even told you the best part.

Penny stifles her laughing over the phone.

PENNY

(over the phone)

Oh my God what.

Millie yanks her jeans off, letting them fall to the ground far away from her.

MILLIE

She was on the date!

PAULINE

(over the phone)

WHAT?

MILLIE

Said she wanted to "give me notes."
I don't know, I've become a master
of tuning out half of what she says
to me. But this? I can't take this.

PENNY

(over the phone)

I'm sure her heart was in the right
place.

MILLIE

No her heart was in the "I'm gonna
use a sexy Zumba guru to bully her
for me" kind of place.

Millie paces around the room, getting more and more amped up.

PENNY

Want me to talk to her for you?

MILLIE

(annoyed)

No, I don't need you to "talk to
her for me." I don't want to have
any part in your little girls club.

PENNY

(over the phone)

We don't have a girls club.

MILLIE

You so do. You're like two
gossiping old ladies with nothing
better to do than talk about poor,
fat Millie!

PENNY

(over the phone)

Okay just because you're pissed at
mom doesn't mean you get to take it
out on me.

Millie takes her blouse off next so she's only in her
underwear. As she drops her blouse into her hamper, she
catches sight of her nearly-naked self in the mirror and
frowns.

MILLIE

I'm sorry. I just, she doesn't see me the way you do. You're everything she wanted us to be and I'm just the one the world left behind.

PENNY

(over the phone)
Millie, stop that. You're beautiful! The universe is sending you someone soon, I can feel it!

MILLIE

Yeah, or maybe the universe only put enough love in this world for one of us.

Millie turns away from the mirror and takes her bra off.

PENNY

(over the phone)
Well... Maybe I know someone. Oh! We just switched pediatricians and this guy is just amazing. Funny, great with the twins, a jawline that could cut steel. You'd love him.

MILLIE

I don't know if I really want to go through all this again.

Millie rummages through her dresser, pulling out a large t-shirt to sleep in.

PENNY

(over the phone)
Millie, it was one date. Not to mention, your first first-date since college.

MILLIE

My whole life has been a series of bad first dates. I thought maybe after I took a break--

PENNY

(over the phone)
A ten year break.

MILLIE

A break nonetheless, that I would
be ready, or that guys would be
ready for me. But I guess
somethings are just a constant.

PENNY

(over the phone)
Look, you're smart and beautiful.
The right guy is out there, just be
patient.

Millie stops just before she puts her pajama shirt on,
looking in the mirror one more time at herself.

MILLIE

(murmuring)
But I don't feel that way.

PENNY

(over the phone)
Huh?

Something bangs from Penny's end of the line.

PENNY (CONT'D)

(over the phone)
Oh shit, I gotta go. Ramona just
woke up and now everything I own is
broken. I love you, I'll call you
tomorrow.

Penny hangs up before Millie can say anything else.

Millie stares at herself in the mirror, eyes critical of
every roll and dent.