

DECK THE HALLS 3

Ep 1 "Jackie"

Setting: a pub-trivia singles event in Houston.

WE HEAR: drinks being poured, a marker squeaking out team names on a white board.

WE HEAR: Jackie's phone ring. She pulls it out of her purse.

JACKIE
(sotto)
Ugh, god. No, Bernie.

WE HEAR: Jackie send the call to voice mail.

JOYCE, the MC, speaks through a microphone. (Most lines mixed at a distance w/ filter.)

JOYCE THE MC
(over mic)
Come on in, don't be shy! Find your name tag and your color team's table! Red's up here by the stage, pink's at the window, green by the bathrooms, blue by the jukebox, orange by the pool tables!

WE HEAR: a pool cue break, to underscore the mention of a pool table.

JOYCE THE MC (CONT'D)
Ooh! Hahaha, okay. Watch your heads there. Let's maybe scotch in the orange table a bit.

WE HEAR: table scoot, the light jostle of a crowd. We start to hear Jackie's phone ringing again.

JACKIE
(low)
Take a hint.

WE HEAR: Jackie send the call to voicemail again.

Jackie walks up to Joyce's name tag table.

JOYCE THE MC
(no mic)
Name?

JACKIE
Jackie.

JOYCE THE MC
Jack. Jack... Jack Nguyen? Oh!
Jackie Yang.

WE HEAR: Jackie's cell phone buzz twice.

JACKIE
Jacquelyn Von Hammersm-- never
mind. I got it.

JOYCE THE MC
Team blue! Over by the jukebox.
Have a fun, sexy time, you sassy
single!

JACKIE
That's fine.

JOYCE THE MC
Okay.

WE HEAR: Jackie peel her name tag off the wax paper and put
it on. She walks away from Joyce, juggling her purse and
dialing her phone.

Jackie walks to a quieter part of the bar.

WE HEAR: Emma's voicemail message through the phone. Beep!

JACKIE
Em, head's up. Bernie's been
calling looking for you. I got a
random 2am hang-up last week, and
another on Saturday morning around
ten, but today the voicemails
started coming in. I have to turn
my phone off for a little while.
Key's in the frog if you need to
come hide out for a night.

WE HEAR: the phone buzz angrily again.

JACKIE (CONT'D)
Jeez. Bernie again. I'm hanging up.
Run for it.

WE HEAR: Jackie hang up and turn off her phone.

Jackie slides into seat at a table with CHAD, ROYAL, and
GRETCHEN.

Chad is solely focused on winning this trivia game. Royal is
has permanent bedroom voice. Gretchen and Jackie get along
like old pals... turns out that's for a reason.

CHAD
 Hey, blue!
 (to table)
 There's another one.
 (to Jackie)
 Blue! The waitress is leaving!

JACKIE
 I'm coming, I'm coming. Hi.

CHAD
 Lager?

JACKIE
 Jackie.

CHAD
 To drink. Lager. Lager. IPA.

JACKIE
 G+T, ice and lemon.

CHAD
 (over Jackie)
 We're ordering a pitcher!

JACKIE
 Gin and tonic.

ROYAL
 (a little louder)
 Gin and tonic. Ice.

JACKIE
 And lemon.

ROYAL
 And lemon. Two.

JACKIE
 Thank you.

CHAD
 What's our team name.

GRETCHEN
 The Stage Planks.

CHAD
 No one gets that. Multiple Choice.

GRETCHEN
 Essayists.

ROYAL
That's Chad.

CHAD
I'm Chad. A-Team.

GRETCHEN
Ed Sheeran's Greatest Hits.

ROYAL
That's Gretchen.

GRETCHEN
Hey! Gretchen.

JACKIE
Oh! Jackie. Gretchen.
(vague recognition)
Have we met?

GRETCHEN
Maybe. I work at the bank on Milam
and Webster?

CHAD
Laser Cats.

GRETCHEN
The Mock Turtlenecks.

CHAD
Freudian Slut.

JACKIE
Gross.

GRETCHEN
Eugh.

JACKIE
United Fruit.

GRETCHEN
Ooooh!

ROYAL
Ominous.

CHAD
I don't get it.

GRETCHEN
Government Bananas.

JACKIE
(laughs)
Better!

ROYAL
And I'm Royal.

JOYCE THE MC
(mic)
Captains, please bring your team
names up to the front table.

CHAD
I'm writing down Laser Cats.

JACKIE
Come on!

JOYCE THE MC
All right, soon-to-be lovers! While
we're getting these names in, turn
to the person sitting on your right
and ask what their favorite movie
is!

GRETCHEN
United Fruit was better.

ROYAL
(clears throat)
I'm Royal.

JACKIE
Oh, sorry. Jackie.

ROYAL
Hi Jackie. Nice to meet you.

JACKIE
Royal. Really?

ROYAL
Don't worry. It fits me.

JOYCE THE MC
Now ask the person on your left
what their favorite food is.

JACKIE
Ah, craprockets.

GRETCHEN
Hot Pockets?

ROYAL
I'm more of a grilled cheese guy.

JACKIE
Peaches.

GRETCHEN
Tater tots.

CHAD
(coming back)
Indiana Jones!

GRETCHEN
We're on food.

JACKIE
I'd eat Indiana Jones.

GRETCHEN
With ice cream.

ROYAL
It's the hat, isn't it?

CHAD
I dunno. Ribs, then.

JACKIE
Ooh! Adam's Rib. Great movie.

ROYAL
I don't know that one.

JACKIE
Or maybe Dinner at Eight?

ROYAL
Hard Boiled is mine.

CHAD
What, like eggs?

ROYAL
Or Seven Samurai. I collect vintage
Seven Samurai posters.

JACKIE
Uh huh.

CHAD
I saw 13 Samurai.

GRETCHEN
I'd rather watch Bringing Up Baby.

JACKIE
For Grant or Hepburn?

ROYAL
Why not both?

JOYCE THE MC
Round 1! Food!

JACKIE
Are we eating?

CHAD
Shh!

WE HEAR: a plate put down.

ROYAL
I ordered taquitos.

JACKIE
Can I steal one?

ROYAL
Ladies first.

JOYCE THE MC
Question 1: Popular with street vendors and sold by the can, Beondaegi is the name for what boiled Korean snack?

CHAD
What?

ROYAL
Sausages. Or... meatballs.

CHAD
Shh!

The group lowers their voices when pitching answers.

JACKIE
She said "boiled".

GRETCHEN
It's gotta be something weird, like eel or octopus.

JACKIE
Again, you wouldn't boil it.

GRETCHEN
Would anyone eat nachos?

JACKIE
What an oddly existential question.

Royal laughs too hard at this.

CHAD
I need an answer!

ROYAL
Dumplings.

CHAD
You're sure?

JACKIE
Wait. Soybeans.

CHAD
Wait, are you sure?

JACKIE
No. Obviously.

JOYCE THE MC
Question 2! Fanta, the popular soft
drink, was introduced in 1940. In
what country was it invented?

ROYAL
America.

CHAD
America.

JACKIE
Canada?

GRETCHEN
Germany.

CHAD
Fanta.

GRETCHEN
1940. The Nazis couldn't get Coke,
so they made their own soda.

JACKIE
And the original flavor wasn't
orange!

ROYAL
(loud, for the other
tables)
Canada! Right! I forgot that Fanta
was flavored with maple sugar!

CHAD
What?

ROYAL
(hiss)
Write down Germany.

JACKIE
I'm having the weirdest de ja vous.

CHAD
Wait, did she say invented or
manufactured?

JOYCE THE MC
Question 3...

ROYAL
Director! Number 2, did you say
invented or manufactured.

JOYCE THE MC
Invented.

The Blue team makes noises of "Oh, well of course."

Conversation continues over/around the MC's questions.

JOYCE THE MC (CONT'D)
Question 3. The first food eaten in
space was applesauce packed in an
aluminum tube aboard the Friendship
7 in 1962. What was the first solid
food eaten in space?

JACKIE
I swear I've had that conversation
with someone. Someone was telling
me about Nazis loving orange soda.

ROYAL
I thought Fanta was what clowns
drank. The rap clowns.

CHAD
 (regarding the question)
 Peanut butter.

GRETCHEN
 Do you mean the Insane Clown Posse?

ROYAL
 Yes!

JACKIE
 Would peanut butter count as a
 solid?

CHAD
 That's Faygo.

JACKIE
 That's practically Fanta.

ROYAL
 Peanut butter counts if it's a
 sandwich.

JACKIE
 Sandwich is good, can we just write
 down sandwich?

CHAD
 You have to be specific.

ROYAL
 Then put peanut butter sandwich.

CHAD
 Turkey sandwich.

While the boys list sandwiches, Gretchen talks to Jackie.

GRETCHEN
 I used to go out with a guy who
 would *not* drink Orangina because he
 thought that was what the Nazis
 drank and I was like No, a) it was
 Fanta and b) it wasn't even orange,
 it was COLA, so god, if you're
 going to pick a fight about
 beverages, at least be accurate--

JACKIE
 Oh my god, you're Gretchen Tucker.

GRETCHEN
 (gasp)
 Bridal Jackie.

ROYAL
 ROAST BEEF.

CHAD
 SHH!

WE HEAR: murmurs from other teams, chuckles, scribbling pencils.

JOYCE THE MC
 Last question in round 1: The Fool's Gold Loaf is made by the Colorado Mine Company and is famed for being a favorite of Elvis Presley's. What is a Fool's Gold Loaf made of?

Jackie and Gretchen are markedly silent.

ROYAL
 Ah ha! Easy. Peanut butter and bananas.

CHAD
 Wait wait, it can't be that easy. It's the last question.

ROYAL
 Peanut butter and bananas, that's what Elvis ate.

CHAD
 Elvis died on the toilet. He wasn't eating bananas.

ROYAL
 Peanut butter and bananas.

JACKIE
 (surfacing)
 Bacon. It has bacon on it.

CHAD
 Now *that* makes sense.

JOYCE THE MC
 Bonus question: what tree nuts am I allergic to? What tree nuts am I allergic to?

ROYAL
In a hollowed out loaf of bread.

CHAD
Peanut butter, bananas, bacon, loaf
of bread. Is that it? No honey?
Honey's gold.

ROYAL
You want to put it on?

CHAD
I don't know, I don't know.

JOYCE THE MC
Team captains, bring over your
answers!

ROYAL
Put it down.

WE HEAR: Chad writing.

JOYCE THE MC
Last call for team answers.

CHAD
I don't know, I don't know. Okay,
go! Fingers crossed.

WE HEAR: Chad rip off the paper and rush away.

ROYAL
You girls need another drink?

GRETCHEN
I'm not feeling so well, actually--

JACKIE
Yes. Why don't you let the girls
get the next round? Beer this time?

ROYAL
They've got a pineapple IPA.

JACKIE
I'll ask them to put a parasol in
it. C'mon Gretch!

WE HEAR: Jackie drag Gretchen out of her chair and over to
the bar.

Long strained beat. (Audibly search for words.)

JACKIE (CONT'D)
Jackie Von Hammersmacht.

GRETCHEN
I remember you.

JACKIE
Gretchen Tucker.

GRETCHEN
It's Weiss now.

JACKIE
So you did get married.

GRETCHEN
No.

JACKIE
Then who is Weiss?

GRETCHEN
It's a family name.

JACKIE
Who's family?

GRETCHEN
Grandmother's maiden name. After
CNN and everything, I couldn't even
get a job. As a bank teller!

JACKIE
You did fake your own kidnapping.

GRETCHEN
Not on purpose! I fell asleep in
the cab!

JACKIE
Passed out.

GRETCHEN
Fell asleep. And anyway, I never
told that driver to cross the state
line.

JACKIE
I woke up at 3am. You were gone.
9am, you're all over the news and
they've got three helicopters
swinging over a Prius.

GRETCHEN

I gave him some cash and said
"drive as far as you can," that
means the outlet mall or San
Antonio, not Mexico!

JACKIE

Eight thousand dollars in cash.

GRETCHEN

It was the catering money.

JACKIE

I know.

GRETCHEN

I panicked.

JACKIE

We had to pay out the catering
staff from our own deposit.

GRETCHEN

I woke up and I had to pee and your
roommate was in the bathroom and
suddenly I realized, "Oh my god, I
don't have anywhere to go!"

JACKIE

Your fiance canceled the final
checks and his mother sent a
collections agency to demand a
refund!

GRETCHEN

So I got in a cab and first we went
to a Texaco, but then we started
driving and I kept thinking I'd
come up with a plan--

JACKIE

\$300 in overdraft charges, and then
your mother took all the gifts home
with her and wouldn't send them
back--

GRETCHEN

Then I woke up and there was desert
all around and the cab driver
wouldn't tell me where we were!

JACKIE

He spoke Tagalog!

GRETCHEN

Everyone kept shouting! The driver, the border patrol. I only called 911. The dispatcher is the one who called the Feds.

JACKIE

A German Shepherd bit your Lyft driver in the calf on national television.

GRETCHEN

He won that lawsuit.
(turn)
People hate me. They sent death threats.

JACKIE

Well.
(stiff)
No one deserves that.

GRETCHEN

Thank you.
(beat)
I could have sued the rideshare company too. My parents wanted to, they brought the lawyer out and everything, but I didn't do it.

JACKIE

Saint.

GRETCHEN

You're not going to tell them?

JACKIE

Who?

GRETCHEN

My mother. Or Jackson.

JACKIE

Oh. I don't exactly have occasion to see them.

GRETCHEN

But a friendly little concerned email, you'll never guess who I bumped into, Dear Mrs. Tucker, I know if I was a mother--

JACKIE

Jeezus. Chill! I'm morbidly curious but I don't "care".

GRETCHEN

It's not like I'm in hiding.

(weak joke)

I didn't even leave the state this time.

JACKIE

You didn't leave the state last time either.

WE HEAR: Joyce get back on the mic, rattling off answers while the girls talk. The crowd groans and cheers lightly in response.

JOYCE THE MC

(intermittently mumbling)

Round 1, answers! Beondaegi is a snack of Silkworms, very popular, sold in cans, restaurants, and from street vendors! Fanta was invented in Germany in 1940 as a result of an embargo on Coke syrup from the US. The first solid food eaten in space was a corned beef sandwich, purchased from a deli in Cocoa Beach, Florida in 1965. Astronauts John Young and Virgil Grissom only took a few bites before giving up because the crumbs were getting everywhere. And a Fool's Gold Loaf is a hollowed out loaf of bread filled with peanut butter, bacon and GRAPE JELLY. And the bonus question: lychee nuts. I am allergic to lychee nuts.

JACKIE

(beat)

I hardly recognize you with the hair.

GRETCHEN

I never liked being a blonde.

JACKIE

Is that part of the new identity?

GRETCHEN

I wanted hair like Morticia Addams.

JACKIE
 'Tish didn't have to live with
 humidity.

GRETCHEN
 I buy really good conditioner.
 (trailing off)
 It's like \$40 an ounce.

JACKIE
 Good. So you're doing fine. Black
 hair, bull ring. French tattoo?
 (to bartender)
 Pitcher of pineapple ipa, six
 umbrellas, three glasses.

GRETCHEN
 Four. Four glasses.

JACKIE
 Carry it yourself.

WE HEAR: the bartender pouring drinks, setting out glasses,
 Jackie pulling money from her wallet and smacking it on the
 bar.

JOYCE THE MC
 Teams, get ready for round two! Pop
 culture! 'Fore we start, turn to
 your neighbor and ask 'em to tell
 you a sexy secret.

WE HEAR: Gretchen grab some glasses and follow Jackie.

GRETCHEN
 It's not French.

JACKIE
 Your elbow says "la victoire".

GRETCHEN
 Oh. Right. That one's French. I
 also have the Morton's salt girl, a
 Kodak film canister, and some
 horses on my...

WE HEAR: Jackie pause, the glass rattling halts.

GRETCHEN (CONT'D)
 Uh, foot.

JACKIE
 Bully for you.
 (to the table)
 (MORE)

JACKIE (CONT'D)

Pineapple beer! Four parasols for you.

ROYAL

Ma'am.

JACKIE

Gentleman.

CHAD

Okay, that was a bad first round, but we can still get it back. Everyone but orange duffed the space question.

ROYAL

(low, to Jackie)

Have you got a sexy secret?

JACKIE

What?

ROYAL

The icebreaker question.

(confidential)

I'm wearing neon green briefs.

JACKIE

Uhhh... all of my ice molds are penis shaped.

ROYAL

Really.

CHAD

I like vanilla lotion candles.

JACKIE

What?

ROYAL

What?

GRETCHEN

Lotion *and* candles?

JACKIE

Lotion candle.

CHAD

It keeps my feet smooth. It's a fancy spa thing, my sister gave me a gift card before her wedding. They put your feet in bags of wax.

GRETCHEN
A paraffin treatment?

CHAD
That's what. Costs thirty five bucks and I said hell no! I can go to Bed Bath and Beyond and get more pretty wax than the whole town of Chicago for \$29.95 with my coupon.

JOYCE THE MC
Question 1: How old is Brad Pitt?

CHAD
Aw, crap, I hate actor questions.

JACKIE
Hold on. You use a candle. As foot lotion. A physical candle.

CHAD
About this big. Like a Coke can.

JACKIE
And... you rub it on your feet.

CHAD
No. You have to light it first.
When was Brad Pitt's first movie?

ROYAL
Seven Years in Tibet?

GRETCHEN
Thelma and Louise.

CHAD
Was that like 1991?

JACKIE
CHAD. You light the candle? And then what?

JOYCE THE MC
Question 2: What animated film, released in 2010--

CHAD
I NEED AN AGE.

JACKIE
FIFTY FOUR.

ALL

Shh!

WE HEAR: a mild stop to the background noise, like everyone stopping to look at Jackie, then resume background.

JOYCE THE MC

Ahem. Question 2. What animated film, released in 2010, cost an estimated \$260 million dollars, giving it the dubious distinction of the 7th most expensive movie ever made?

ROYAL

Avatar.

GRETCHEN

No!

CHAD

You let the wax melt a little, then you pour it over your feet and peel it off.

JACKIE

You pour hot wax on your feet?

CHAD

It used to hurt some, but you get used to it.

JACKIE

You must have so much nerve damage.

CHAD

But look. My feet are all pink and smooth. They don't even sweat anymore.

WE HEAR: Chad take off a shoe and plop his foot on the table.

Royal, Gretchen, and Jackie react.

JACKIE

So hairless.

JOYCE THE MC

SIR. Feet off the table!

WE HEAR: Chad take his foot off the table.

CHAD

Men are allowed to spoil themselves a little.

JACKIE

You could just light the candle and take a bath.

CHAD

Do you know how much water that wastes?

GRETCHEN

(very low)

Oh my god.

JOYCE THE MC

Question 3: What iconic 1977 song, sung by a family trio, has been used in 37 films and television shows making it one of the most frequently used songs in modern cinema?

ROYAL

(low, to Jackie)

You wanna see my feet?

JACKIE

I have to go to the bathroom.

CHAD

(hiss)

While you're in there, google high budget animated movies.

JACKIE

That's cheating.

CHAD

So? We need one. No one's going to get that question anyway.

JACKIE

It's Tangled, dude. Tangled. Take a BuzzFeed quiz once in a while.

WE HEAR: Jackie get up and walk to the bathroom. Joyce's voice gets more distant.

JOYCE THE MC

(distant)

Question 4: Name the short lived
sitcom that resulted in the much
more popular spin-off Saved by the
Bell?

WE HEAR: Jackie open a slightly creaky bathroom door. Mild
female chatter dims.

JACKIE

Is there a line for the stalls or
are y'all just hiding out?

GIRL IN THE BACK

(distant)

Hiding out.

JACKIE

At ease, soldiers.

WE HEAR: Jackie let the door close. Joyce be heard again,
very distant.

JOYCE THE MC

Bonus question, name another film
or television show that Hayley
Mills appeared on.

JACKIE

I miss pay phones.

WE HEAR: Jackie rummage through her purse and turn on her
phone. Royal walks up.

ROYAL

You're not sneaking out already,
are you?

JACKIE

Why, are you following me?

ROYAL

(warm)

Not intentionally. But our new
friend Chad is about two wrong
questions away from a burst blood
vessel. I'd hate for you to miss
it.

JACKIE

Aghh. You pulled me right back in.

ROYAL
Did you notice he's wearing colored contacts?

JACKIE
He's wearing glasses.

ROYAL
Contacts are underneath the glasses. They're purple.

WE HEAR: Jackie walk a few steps forward to peek at Chad.
Her laugh confirms that he's wearing violet contacts.

JACKIE
How do you know him?

ROYAL
I only just met him tonight. He says he's an "aspiring firefighter", but he's got a bunch of pictures on his phone of car accidents.

JACKIE
Jesus.

ROYAL
I mean. Y'know, if you were thinking of going home with him.

JACKIE
Wasn't.

ROYAL
Didn't think so. But just in case. How do you know the other girl on our team?

JACKIE
Gretchen?
(think it over)
I organized a wedding she was supposed to be in.

ROYAL
Suspiciously worded.

JACKIE
The wedding evaporated.

ROYAL
Expensive?

JACKIE

90K.

ROYAL

Jeesh.

(low, giddy)

She's not the bride. Is she?

JACKIE

(lying)

Oh, no. Bridesmaid. But she had a front row seat. It was not a proud day for any of us, professionally.

ROYAL

Even on a good day, a wedding's a manicured train wreck.

JACKIE

Through no fault of my own.

ROYAL

You're a real mercenary. Right price, you'll chuck the kids down the aisle to their death.

JACKIE

Wouldn't that make me more of a general?

ROYAL

You're funny. You really came here on your own? No friends? No armor?

JACKIE

I got off early and there are no good movies out this week.

ROYAL

Oh, now that's not true. You got that thriller thing with that English guy all the girls love.

JACKIE

I hate intruder movies.

ROYAL

Or that Bradley Whitford thing.

JACKIE

I'm not in the mood for Oscar bait.

ROYAL

That's it. Oscar Issac.

(beat)

I'd go to the movies with you. Sit in the back row. Touch your fingers in the popcorn bucket.

JACKIE

Well.

ROYAL

Theatre on Rosemont sells Cheetos popcorn.

JACKIE

(considering it)

Oooooof.

ROYAL

C'mon, you gotta tell me something about you or it's just gonna be cheesy lines for the rest of the night.

JACKIE

I'm... 5'1". I have a weird tooth that catches everything. I'm only in Houston for a year.

ROYAL

How long has it been?

JACKIE

Six months.

ROYAL

I think it takes six months to get used to anywhere. Another six to feel like you live there.

JACKIE

That's pretty accurate.

ROYAL

Seems like a shame to go home as soon as you get comfortable.

JACKIE

Maybe.

ROYAL

I get chills when you roll your eyes. Anyone ever tell you that?

JOYCE THE MC
Last call for round 2 answers.

CHAD
Hey, hey, hey! Raylan! Girl! Blue team!

ROYAL
I thought we were the Laser Cats.

CHAD
Where the friggin' crap have you been? I'm looking at a sheet with only two half-assed guesses on it and BLANK BLANK BLANK SPACE.

JACKIE
Are we still playing?

CHAD
I need a Hayley Mills feature, a non-Batman Frank Miller, and the first Hong Kong film shot internationally!

JACKIE
Sorry, what's your name again?

CHAD
CHAD. IT IS CHAD. Hayley Mills, Frank Miller non-Bat, OVERSEAS HONG KONG MOVIE.

JACKIE
Parent Trap.

ROYAL
300.

JACKIE
Was he also Sin City?

ROYAL
Oh yeah.

CHAD
HONG KONG MOVIE.

ROYAL
OH. Way of the Dragon.

CHAD
(ecstasy)
Ahh!

WE HEAR: Chad run off.

JACKIE
 (calling)
 How do you not know Frank Miller?

CHAD
 (very distant)
 I read Archie!

JACKIE
 I should really get Chad's number
 before some other hot young single
 snatches him up.

ROYAL
 I knew you were on the hunt.

JACKIE
 I know a good thing when I see it.
 Skin tags and giant silk shirts.
 Mama like.

ROYAL
 Nobody special waiting for you back
 where you came from?

JACKIE
 I didn't say that.
 (beat)
 And you. You're single?

ROYAL
 Eternally. It's complicated.

JACKIE
 Big heartbreak?

ROYAL
 The opposite. I've never really
 been in love.

JACKIE
 Have women been in love with you?

ROYAL
 I get along better with women who
 don't love me.

JACKIE
 That is a hell of a line.

ROYAL

It's the truth, though, isn't it?
Life is long, people change. Trying
to cling to one emotion for fifty-
odd years, it's futile.

JACKIE

How old are you?

ROYAL

How old are you?

JACKIE

32.

ROYAL

38.

JACKIE

And you've never been married?

ROYAL

No. I don't really think about it.

JACKIE

That's probably why you get along
better with women who hate you.

ROYAL

I didn't say they hate me. More
like... amused by me. I do my best
work when HBO is between series.

Joyce's MC announcement starts bright, then is folded into
the white noise of the bar. Jackie stays in the foreground.
Applause and cheers follow the end of Joyce's list of scores.

JOYCE THE MC

(very distant)

Round 2 answers! Brad Pitt is 54.
Tangled is the third most expensive
film ever made. The Bee-Gee's
"Staying Alive" is that 1977 song.
Hayley Mills films that were named
correctly: The Parent Trap, That
Darn Cat, and Pollyanna! Let's see
four teams got "300" for Frank
Miller's non-Batman work. Oh and we
have one big, big fan! Daredevil,
Elektra, Ronin... I'm sorry, we can
only give you one point but very
impressive!

(MORE)

JOYCE THE MC (CONT'D)

And the first Hong Kong film to be produced internationally, the Bruce Lee hit Way of the Dragon!

JACKIE

(to self)

Jesus.

(to Royal)

Were you ready to roll out these talking points for whoever got matched on your team or is there something in particular about me that says "Fast Pass?"

ROYAL

I didn't think you were fast--

JACKIE

She seems mean and aloof, let me lead with a lame military metaphor about the heteronormative wedding complex and the meaninglessness of human relationships--

ROYAL

I never said they were meaningless.

JACKIE

--then maybe I'll close the deal by telling her about my absent father and functional alcoholism.

ROYAL

I don't have a drinking problem. I do have a problem with razor-backed wedding hawkers biting my head off for trying to be honest about myself and my limitations.

JACKIE

You... that's... bullshit that's honesty. That's a Harry and David catalogue.

ROYAL

(dopey)

Durr my name's Royal I'm never going to get married, dya wanna date for six months before you decide you need something more serious?

(resume normal voice)

Excuse me for trying to dress it up a little.

JACKIE
Go home with the ambulance chaser.

JOYCE THE MC
(distant)
Round 3 ice breaker! Ask someone,
what's your favorite food to eat
after midnight?

WE HEAR: crowd noise, Jackie walks off.

ROYAL
(calling)
What's your favorite food to eat
after midnight?

JACKIE
Cheese.

ROYAL
(very distant)
Liar.

WE HEAR: Jackie walk off.

JOYCE THE MC
(distant)
Teams Cardiac Attack and the
Herbert Hoovers are tied for first
place. Laser Cats are nipping right
behind them! And... erm. The Butt
Flaps and Tainted Love are tied for
last with zero points.

WE HEAR: raucous cheers.

CROWD DUDE
Woo! Butt Flaps!

WE HEAR: Jackie plop down.

JACKIE
Which glass was I drinking out of?

GRETCHEN
Here. Royal never drank his.

WE HEAR: Jackie lift it, then pause.

JACKIE
He's not drinking?

GRETCHEN
No.

WE HEAR: Jackie move two other glasses.

JACKIE
Did he drink either of his other
cocktails?

GRETCHEN
Not that I saw.

WE HEAR: Jackie pour the drink into the almost empty beer
pitcher.

JACKIE
(sigh/groan)
Forget it. I'm switching to water.

GRETCHEN
(long beat)
What's your favorite food after
midnight?

JACKIE
Knock it off.

GRETCHEN
Fruit salad.

JACKIE
I don't eat fruit salad.

GRETCHEN
Yes, you do.

JACKIE
What do you know what I eat? Where
is Chad?

GRETCHEN
You eat it enough to hate honeydew.

JACKIE
Because it's like biting through
ice cubes. I don't *like* fruit
salad. It was just.... Handy.

GRETCHEN
And cold.

JACKIE
Handy and cold.
(terse beat)
You could have called.

GRETCHEN
You never called.

JACKIE
(low)
Because that was *the most*
unprofessional thing I've ever
done. And I lied and told everyone
I hadn't seen you and then the
police showed up to the church and
I lied to them too and I couldn't
just "*call you*".

GRETCHEN
It's not the FBI, they wouldn't
have a wiretap.

JACKIE
God, that is such a... suburban
thing to say.

GRETCHEN
I'm not suburban.

JACKIE
The most suburban.

GRETCHEN
Not anymore.

JACKIE
Basic suburban Methodist Diet Coke
hypocrite.

JOYCE THE MC
Round 3, sports!

WE HEAR: Chad hustling back. (slapping flip flops?)

CHAD
Oh god oh god oh god!

JOYCE THE MC
Question 1: what former NBA player
is known colloquially by Chinese
fans as The Gang Boss?

CHAD
Sports! Oh god. Where is Raylan?

GRETCHEN
Royal.

JACKIE

He didn't come back from the bathroom?

CHAD

We're screwed. We're so screwed. I've never gotten a sports question in my life!

GRETCHEN

Why do you assume we won't know any of these?

CHAD

You know the answer?

GRETCHEN

No.

JACKIE

It's trivia. Guess.

CHAD

You don't *guess* in trivia! Auuugh. The only basketball player I know is Michael Jordan!

JACKIE

Fine. Write it down.

CHAD

That's not the answer!

JACKIE

How do you know?

CHAD

BECAUSE. Why would it be?

JACKIE

Why wouldn't it be?

CHAD

Because if I know him... he's not trivia!

JACKIE

Give me the pencil.

WE HEAR: Jackie writing.

JACKIE (CONT'D)

Michael Jordan. There.

CHAD

Don't, we can't think of a different name.

JOYCE THE MC

Question 2: Fans of the Nashville Predators have taken to throwing catfish onto the ice during games. Some say they were inspired by the Red Wings' fan tradition of throwing what?

CHAD

They throw fish? What? Oh god.

JACKIE

What's the first thing that comes to your mind?

CHAD

Ice.

JACKIE

Something else.

CHAD

Ice. Ice.

GRETCHEN

Babies.

JACKIE

Stop that.

GRETCHEN

Fish. Flounder. Salmon. Trout. Tuna. Eels.

CHAD

Salmon?

GRETCHEN

So expensive.

JACKIE

It's a perfectly respectable guess. Writing it down.

JOYCE THE MC

Question 3: The first Kentucky Derby was in 1875, won by American Thoroughbred Aristides. What was the length of the race?

CHAD
In what, miles?

JACKIE
Let's assume.

WE HEAR: Royal walk up, set down two drinks.

ROYAL
It's a mile and a quarter.

JACKIE
Royal!

CHAD
Shhhhhhh!

ROYAL
(whisper)
A mile and a quarter.

GRETCHEN
It's a mile and a quarter *now*.

CHAD
Was it the same in 1875?

GRETCHEN
When would they have changed it?

ROYAL
You think it was shorter?

JACKIE
Longer or shorter. Probably not the
same as now.

CHAD
(hissing)
The question implies it!

GRETCHEN
How far can horses run?

JACKIE
I bet the first one was an absurd
horse marathon.

ROYAL
26 miles?

JOYCE THE MC
Question 4--

CHAD
Just.. Say... Two miles. Two miles!
Write it down!

JACKIE
Now you're getting it!

WE HEAR: Jackie scribble.

JOYCE THE MC
-- Oscar Swahn is the oldest
Olympic medal winner. At the age of
72 years and 280 days, he took home
a silver medal in what event?

Beat.

JACKIE
Shooting.

GRETCHEN
Shooting.

ROYAL
Something equestrian.

CHAD
(hesitating)
Shooting.

JACKIE
Do you know or are you guessing?

CHAD
Guessing.

JACKIE
There's our guy!

WE HEAR: Jackie write the answer down.

A relieved laugh rolls out of Chad.

CHAD
Good. Good!

JACKIE
We're almost there.

JOYCE THE MC
 Question 4: Which tennis star surprised fans and family with Swarovski studded sneakers at her 2017 wedding to Reddit co-founder Alex Ohanian?

JACKIE
 Tuh!
 (shout)
 Is that the best question you have to ask about Serena Williams?

ALL
 Shhh!

JOYCE THE MC
 Ma'am, can we *not* shout the answers...

JACKIE
 What shoes did Pete Sampras wear to his wedding?

WE HEAR: a few other women in the crowd boo.

JACKIE (CONT'D)
 Right? New question! New question!

GRETCHEN
 New question! New question!

JOYCE THE MC
 Uh. All right. Um. One second. One second.

WE HEAR: the "ask google" bing.

JOYCE THE MC (CONT'D)
 (still kind of on mic, but low)
 Okay Google. Show me Serena Williams records.

WE HEAR: the google "bing" again and the automated voice start talking.

GOOGLE ASSISTANT
 Over the course of her career, Serena Williams has won a total of--

WE HEAR: Joyce turning down the volume quickly on her phone.

JOYCE THE MC
 Okay. Okay. Ahem! Beginning in
 1999... how many Grand Slam singles
 titles has Serena Williams won?

Beat.

CHAD
 Well? How many?

JACKIE
 Oh, I don't know.

ALL
 Auugh!

JACKIE
 It was the principle of the thing.

CHAD
 Give me the pencil.

JACKIE
 C'mon, Chad. I can still--

WE HEAR: Chad rip the paper pulling it out of Jackie's hand
 and scrawl out an answer.

CHAD
 (low)
 We had that question. We had it.

JACKIE
 Did you know what kind of shoes she
 wore to her wedding?

CHAD
 No, but you had it! We're a team!
 WE had the answer and you threw it
 away!

JACKIE
 It's one question.

JOYCE THE MC
 Question 5: In baseball, what does
 "a can of corn" refer to?

Chad talks over the question.

CHAD

One question we had in the pocket when we're in second place and getting further behind every question! One point! It was one easy point! One point and now we'll have zero! Zero points! Because you **had** to ruin the girl question--

GRETCHEN

A fly ball. A can of corn is an easy fly ball.

CHAD

--it... it is?

GRETCHEN

Yeah.

CHAD

Ah.

WE HEAR: Chad write down the answer. Chad drop the pencil and get up to go turn in the answers.

CHAD (CONT'D)

Right. I'll just...
(drifting away)
Turn this in.

Beat.

ROYAL

How about tequila shots? Tequila shots? Tequila shots?

JACKIE

That's okay--

ROYAL

Tequila shots!

WE HEAR: Royal jump up and jog to the bar.

WE HEAR: A long beat.

GRETCHEN

It was a stupid question.

JACKIE

They always do that.
(despondent impression of
announcer)
Here's one for the ladiessss.

WE HEAR: tie buzzer (pow-pow-pow-pow-pow) as if on cue.

JOYCE THE MC

Round four ice breaker! Get close
and tell someone the craziest stunt
you ever pulled on a date.

Uncomfortable beat. Jackie chuckles until Gretchen responds.

GRETCHEN

It wasn't on purpose.

JACKIE

I don't care. I don't care.
Whatever your intentions were.
Whatever your life is now. Your
fate is obviously not as dramatic
as I imagined it and... whoever I
knew and "liked" back then is a
projection of my own desires.

GRETCHEN

Woah.

JACKIE

Therapy. We had one night. You
"explored." You bailed. No reason
to make it a big thing.

GRETCHEN

What... what were you imagining?

JACKIE

Intimacy. I've had real friends.
I've had intense sex. Or, at least,
fun sex. Or really hot making out.
Or once, I made this passionate
unbroken eye contact with the guy
playing John Laurens in the Chicago
run of Hamilton.

GRETCHEN

Jackie.

JACKIE

I've never had both at once, with
anyone.

GRETCHEN

Neither have I.

JACKIE

You don't get it. I... made life decisions based on this imaginary relationship.

GRETCHEN

So did I.

(beat)

Jackson still wanted to get married when I came back. Even with all those nasty letters to the editor and Gayle King laughing about it on CBS This Morning. I was ready for it. I liked Jackson. He was fine. He was a good... boyfriend. If it had just been one night I could have gotten on with it, but it wasn't the one night. It wasn't the sex.

JOYCE THE MC

All right, round three answers. Michael Jordan is known by his Chinese fans as Gang Boss.

CHAD

(distant)

YES. OH MY GOD. I said that!

JOYCE THE MC

Red Wings fans are known for throwing octopus on the ice!

CHAD

(pained)

Auuuuugh.

Joyce continues reading answers, melting back into crowd noise after a few lines, allowing Gretchen to proceed.

JOYCE THE MC

The first Kentucky Derby was a mile and a half. 72 year old Oscar Swahn was on the Swedish shooting team. Serena Williams has 23 Grand Slam titles. And a can of corn is a flyball!

GRETCHEN

(beat)

I've thought about you and tried not to think about you so many times. I fantasized about texting you when I got my own apartment.

(MORE)

GRETCHEN (CONT'D)

When I dyed my hair, when I traded
in my car, when I got my new job.
Once a customer yelled at me until
I was about to cry and then I
imagined you shouting back at him.
And I stuck up for myself.

(beat)

I quit facebook and instagram, but
sometimes I still see you on
twitter.

JOYCE THE MC

Final round! Flush the toilet, it's
potpourri!

WE HEAR: Royal and Chad return.

CHAD

I quit.

ROYAL

We promise to take it seriously.

CHAD

No, I quit.

WE HEAR: Royal puts a fistful of shot glasses on the table.

ROYAL

Come on, now. Let's take a peace
offering. Ladies. Chad. We all
promise to-- are you crying?

GRETCHEN

No.

JACKIE

No.

ROYAL

Chad!

CHAD

I didn't mean to make them cry!

JACKIE

(crying)

We're not crying!

CHAD

I'm sorry I yelled. It's only a
game.

GRETCHEN

No. I'm sorry I didn't take your feelings as seriously as I should have. You were open and totally sincere and I wasted a real chance for happiness because... I didn't know how to reciprocate.

JACKIE

Maybe we can start fresh.

GRETCHEN

From a more honest place.

CHAD

Wow. That means so much to me. Thank you. Thank you so much!

WE HEAR: Chad bury his head on Jackie's shoulder and cry.

JACKIE

Hey, buddy.

CHAD

(crying, muffled)
I haven't spoken to my father in three years.

JOYCE THE MC

Is team Laser Cat okay?

JACKIE

Just fueling up. Cheers everybody. Team Blue!

WE HEAR: glasses clink.

JOYCE THE MC

Question 1: In which five cities are the busiest European airports located?

GRETCHEN

Ooh! Um. Berlin.

CHAD

London. Paris.

GRETCHEN

Switzerland?

ROYAL

You and your old friend make up?

JACKIE

I think so. And hey, I'm sorry for biting your head off before. You're entitled to your own boundaries. I can't judge you for being up front about what you need in a relationship.

ROYAL

Thank you.

WE HEAR: Royal drink.

ROYAL (CONT'D)

You know, I live with a pretty open-minded gal. We're not "non-exclusive", but she's usually awake about now and if you and I stop off at the mini-mart for some Redi-whip and a canteloupe--

JACKIE

Hey, Gretch, wanna go to the movies?

GRETCHEN

Yes, immediately.

WE HEAR: Jackie and Gretchen grab their bags and climb over the table to exit.

JOYCE THE MC

Question 2: What meme-ified subtitle was first pinned to the 1984 movie "Breakin' 2"?

WE HEAR: Jackie yank open the bar door, horns/traffic outside.

JACKIE

(distant)

ELECTRIC BOOGALOO!

WE HEAR: Jackie slam the bar door.

CHAD

COME ON!

FIN