

SHEAR FANTASY

Written by

Amanda M. Darling

Contact: Jo-Ann Carol
Jo-Ann Carol & Associates Management
818.508.1310

Alternate contact: Amanda M. Darling
amanda.darling@gmail.com
206.697.7447

EXT. FIELD - DAY

Society for Creative Anachronism RE-ENACTORS walk and talk in costumes from the 12th-16th centuries. We might be in the Middle Ages until a rusty car with more holes in its muffler than hours in a day rumbles past. All conversations cease.

INT. CALI'S CAR - DAY

Inside the car are the driver, CALIDA "CALI" GATES, 19, and her sister LAUREL GATES, 17 and 3/4 -- a young 17 and 3/4. They wear medieval costumes too. Laurel's is new and princess-like. Cali's is second-hand. Cali rolls down the window.

CALI

Sorry about the noise!

LAUREL

Good maidens and sirs, I will join you forthwith!

INTERCUT BETWEEN FIELD AND CAR

Cali drives toward a series of tents. They pass a huge white canvas tent with sides tied back revealing long banquet tables, an awning covering two thrones, a wooden platform where DANCERS practice steps, three archery targets, a roped-off area where HEAVY FIGHTERS attack full-sized, costumed dummies, and a smaller area where FENCERS thrust and parry.

CALI

Do you see Robert?

LAUREL

Just look for Anna.

CALI

They're friends.

HEAVY FIGHTER ERIC spots them. He steps in front of the car. Cali brakes. Laurel sticks her head out the window.

HEAVY FIGHTER ERIC

Be this a dragon that has captured fair Lady Laurel and her chaperone? Shall I slay it and release you?

Cali rolls her eyes. Laurel eats it up.

LAUREL

Good sir, we are indebted for your consideration, yet this dragon is friendly and will soon be on its--

Cali hits the gas. Heavy Fighter Eric jumps out of the way.
Laurel sees another buddy.

LAUREL (CONT'D)

Pray tarry! I spy my dear friend
Swannoc.

CALI

Who?

LAUREL

Her mundane name is Amy.

That still doesn't help Cali. SWANNOC, 18, Latina, carries an
armful of campfire logs. She's always dressed in one-color
costumes that look both elegant and odd. This one is green.

CALI

So Swannoc's not her birth name?

LAUREL

Nope. Same for Darius and Gwommie.

CALI

Oh good. I didn't want to say
anything, but I thought with names
like those, no wonder they ended up
in the S.C.A.

Laurel leans out the window and waves to Swannoc.

SWANNOC

Good day Lady Laurel! Will you
pitcheth thine tent neareth my
dwelling place?

LAUREL

With the absoluteth of delight, my
bosom buddy Swannoc!

SWANNOC

Is that a new dress?

LAUREL

Yes! And it only cost four hundred
and twenty-one pieces of dog poop.

Swannoc doesn't even look fazed by this answer.

SWANNOC

Huzzah! We're over this way.

CALI

You might tell her you got a summer
job at a dog kennel.

Swannoc runs ahead of the car calling "Laurel's here!" OS.
Voices respond: "Hi Laurel!" "Good to see you milady!" Etc.

Swannoc's tent is a fire-engine red circus top sized for one.
DARIUS, 18, black, tall, and GWOMMIE, 18, Indian, short,
pitch their tent. It's a white canvas tent in an acceptably
medieval style. The boys have all the historic geek gear.

Swannoc drops the wood at the communal campfire.

SWANNOC

Milords, look who I found!

Cali parks the car. Laurel tumbles out gracefully. Darius and
Gwommie greet her like their long lost sister. Laurel basks
in the glow as Cali unpacks the trunk.

LAUREL

I'll pitcheth the tent if you'll
parketh the car in the loteth.

Cali gives Laurel a look for her not-quite-historic language.

CALI

The tent's faster with two.

LAUREL

I know, but your car's O.O.P.

CALI

O.O.P.?

LAUREL

Out of period.

CALI

But a purple nylon pup tent isn't?

LAUREL

Please.

Cali gets in the car. Laurel turns to Darius and Gwommie.

LAUREL (CONT'D)

Do you like my new dress? It only
cost me four hundred...

Cali drives off.

EXT. FIELD - LATER

The tent is pitched. JEREMY, 21, unconventionally handsome, arrives with a rapier (medieval sword). Laurel rushes over.

LAUREL

Will you be my dance partner this afternoon? Please, please? You're best at explaining the steps.

JEREMY

Sure. And Cali, I know at weekly practices you normally train with Robert, but I can give you a quick lesson if you'd like.

CALI

I'll grab my sword.

EXT. FENCING FIELD - DAY

Jeremy and Cali in fencing attire, including masks.

JEREMY

Attack!

Cali chases Jeremy down field. He blocks each of her hits.

JEREMY (CONT'D)

Good! Parry!

Jeremy chases Cali down field. She blocks most of his hits. Jeremy and Cali take off their masks at the end of the field.

JEREMY (CONT'D)

That was really good.

CALI

You got me three times.

JEREMY

One for every month you've been fencing. You're a fast learner. Show me your lunge.

Cali throws her foot out and lands in a deep knee bend.

CALI

As a kin major, being good at sports is practically mandatory.
(re lunge)
Is this deep enough?

JEREMY

It's great. Kinesiology, huh?
What's your plan with that?

CALI

I've got some ideas.

Jeremy waits. There's nothing more.

JEREMY

Okay. Give me another lunge, this
time, with a hit to the chest.

Jeremy motions to Cali's imaginary opponent's chest area.
Cali lunges again with a point attack in the air.

JEREMY (CONT'D)

Nice. Feint chest, hit thigh. It's
a tough target, but you can do it.

Cali does. Jeremy may or may not be checking out her ass.

JEREMY (CONT'D)

Good, but don't pull back your arm
to change targets. It's all in the
wrist. Again.

Cali obliges.

JEREMY (CONT'D)

Use your wrist. Again.

A gust of wind ruffles their hair.

JEREMY (CONT'D)

Perfect sailing weather. Use your
wrist.

CALI

I am using my wrist!

JEREMY

Use only your wrist. Again.

CALI

Do you have a boat?

JEREMY

My parents have a twenty-eight foot
Grampian. They bought it secondhand
instead of going on a honeymoon.
Call it their first child. Again.

Cali executes a perfect lunge-feint-hit-to-imaginary-thigh.

JEREMY (CONT'D)

Perfect!

Jeremy looks over at Laurel, dancing next to the fencing field, interacting with her imaginary partner.

JEREMY (CONT'D)

Will you still come to events when Laurel no longer needs a chaperone?

CALI

Sure.

JEREMY

As long as Robert comes.

Cali doesn't dispute the point.

JEREMY (CONT'D)

If you stop coming, what will you do to escape?

CALI

I'm sorry?

JEREMY

What do you do when you need a break from the real world?

CALI

Nothing.

She answered too fast. A lie. Cali raises her sword.

CALI (CONT'D)

What if I faint chest, hit head instead of hitting the thigh?

JEREMY

People are instinctively more protective of their heads, even when they're wearing masks. They block those attacks more quickly. Put on your mask.

Jeremy and Cali both put on their masks. Jeremy tries to hit Cali's head, but she blocks the shot more often than not.

JEREMY (CONT'D)

You try.

Cali tries to hit Jeremy's head, but he always blocks it. When she aims for his leg, sometimes she makes contact.

CALI

Thanks Jeremy. You're a good coach.

JEREMY

I've been teaching private sailing lessons for years. Put me through undergrad.

CALI

Let me guess. In medieval history.

JEREMY

Biomed technology. I'm about to start my Master's. Practice your lunge, feint chest, hit thigh combo, but only redirect to the thigh if I block your chest attack. Otherwise, hit my chest.

They cycle through the exercise. Occasionally, Cali's chest attack is so fast that Jeremy doesn't have time to block.

JEREMY (CONT'D)

Tell me about you.

CALI

Not much to tell. Why biomed research?

JEREMY

Because I hate bananas. I loved them, but then I got strep throat when I was two. My antibiotics were banana-flavored. My first memory is that taste. I want to invent technology to deliver antibiotics directly to the site of the infec--

Cali sees someone OS. She drops her rapier, pulls off her mask. It's ROBERT, 23, the classic tall, dark and handsome.

CALI

Robert!

Cali runs over. Cali and Robert kiss. Jeremy watches them.

INT. MEAL TENT - DAY

Seated at the long wooden banquet tables, Robert, Laurel, Cali and a hundred SCA DINERS finish the soup course.

CALI

I'm not saying it wasn't good. I'm just saying they should call it what it is: vegetable soup. They don't have to call it "potage of the equinoctial yield".

LAUREL

I like the name.

Their SERVER, in medieval attire, comes to clear their bowls.

SERVER

Sorry for the wait. We're understaffed.

Laurel scrambles to her feet.

LAUREL

I can help! I have waitressing experience.

Robert glances at Cali to verify the truth of this.

CALI

(to Robert)

She served dinner at our cousin's birthday.

SERVER

I'm not sure we budgeted for another server.

LAUREL

I'll do it for free. It'll give me a chance to meet new friends.

ROBERT

(to Cali)

She knows more people than I do.

The Server leaves. Laurel dashes to a nearby table.

LAUREL

Hi, I'm Laurel. I'll be your server as soon as I find out where the kitchen is!

The Diners point. Laurel scampers off.

MABEL and MORAG, 80s, act like tourists: Mabel with a camera and Morag with a pair of binoculars. They sit on (or carry) floral lawn chairs so old they might be medieval. They're off to the side on their chairs with a view of the whole tent.

MABEL
 (re Laurel)
 I'll bet you two Zantacs that
 Sunshine over there spills a drink.

MORAG
 You're on. But no tripping her.

The EVENT HERALD steps onto a platform and announces:

EVENT HERALD
 Second course: descendant of the
 red junglefowl in nectar from the
 wild bee and the allium.

Cali looks suspicious.

A SECOND SERVER lays plates for Cali and Robert. Cali tastes.

CALI
 Honey garlic chicken.

ROBERT
 Not even good honey. So, how was
 your shift yesterday?

CALI
 Not very interesting.

ROBERT
 I'm interested.

ANDY, 20, passes by Cali and Robert, talks to SCA Re-Enactor.

ANDY
 --was the longest week ever. And of
 course they want me to verify the
 marble's organic.

ROBERT
 Who does?

ANDY
 The wealth-sters in one of the
 condos I manage. We're building an
 Italian fountain in the courtyard.
 Nightmare. It all started at a
 board meeting when I asked "does
 anyone want some water?"

CALI
 You could become a professional
 matchmaker instead.

Cali gestures to herself and Robert: Andy introduced them.

ANDY

Tempting.

The sound of a drink being spilled. Glass breaks (OS).

LAUREL (O.S.)

(cursing)

Feudalism.

Morag gives Mabel two Zantacs.

ANDY

(to Robert)

So, word on the cobblestones is you're hoping to win the fencing tournament.

ROBERT

Planning. No one's ever won the Silver Dagger three years in a row. When I do, the king and queen agreed to make me a duke. Anna!

Robert jumps, greets ANNA, 23, Chinese. Anna's voice is high, her gestures girly. She wears a little red bow in her hair reminiscent of Hello Kitty. She makes boys feel like heroes and feminists feel like homicide. Anna embraces Robert.

MORAG

(to Mabel)

Hold on. I thought Valentino over there was with that girl.

MABEL

(re Cali)

Moonbeam, yeah, I thought so too. Looks like he's way into Bubbles. Three Decadrons says he kisses her by the end of the weekend.

MORAG

But she's wearing a wedding ring!

Cali notices Robert's hand lingering on Anna's back.

CALI

Your husband still in Botswana?

ANNA

He's moved on to Angola, actually. On our anniversary. We couldn't even Skype.

Anna waves her hand sadly, flashing a mega-sparkly ring.

ROBERT

It must be so hard being apart. All those evenings and weekends alone. I get sad just thinking about it.

ANNA

The S.C.A. helps. Events, training, costume fittings.

Anna gestures to her stunning dress as Laurel rushes over.

LAUREL

The best thing happened! Some people at a table I was serving invited me to learn Nine Men's Morris at their campfire, if it's okay with my chaperone. They're Danieli and Genevieve. So can I?

CALI

Sure. Be in our tent by midnight.

LAUREL

I'll be there by ten. I have a meeting with the herald tomorrow morning to design my device, and it'd be rude not to be well-rested.

Anna chats with another Re-enactor.

CALI

Whatever will I do until ten?

ROBERT

I have some mead back in my tent.

Cali gives Robert her hand. He pulls her up. Cali closes her eyes in anticipated delight. Anna watches them leave.

EXT. ISOLATED TROPICAL BEACH - SUNSET - FANTASY SEQUENCE

Cali and Robert sip champagne. They're in tropical attire. The sea sparkles behind them. They hand-feed each other pieces of fruit: grapes, canteloupe, strawberries.

Robert kisses Cali. The kisses grow more passionate. They stretch out on the beach. Clothes start to come off. Breathing becomes even more heated.

CALI

Am I doing this right?

ROBERT

Oh yes.

CALI

You'll tell me what to do if...

ROBERT

You're doing fine.

CALI

Then yes, tonight.

ROBERT

If that's what you want.

CALI

Oh yes.

ROBERT

Now?

CALI

Now.

Robert thrusts. Cali gasps. There's a loud cough (OS).

INT. ROBERT'S TENT - NIGHT

There's an empty bottle of mead and a wrapper from fruit-flavored candies next to Robert's retainer. Robert and Cali kiss on a sleeping bag so old a homeless guy would refuse it.

Robert pulls away from Cali. Anna coughs again (OS).

ANNA (O.S.)

Um. I've been asking myself this question for months: can you be married to someone and still want to be with someone else?

CALI

Oh my God.

ANNA (O.S.)

I can't keep denying my feelings for you, Robert. And if you love me, then I'll tell my husband we're through.

Robert doesn't seem to notice mostly-naked Cali next to him.

ANNA (O.S.) (CONT'D)
But if you're not interested, I'll
leave, and we can pretend this
never happened.

CALI
What a weirdo.

Anna starts to walk away (OS).

ROBERT
Anna, wait!

Robert rips himself apart from Cali.

CALI
Ow!

Robert grabs at his clothes and stumbles out of the tent. He
pokes his head back through. Cali gapes at him.

ROBERT
Sorry Cali.

And he's gone. Cali freezes, then scrambles into her clothes.
She's halfway out the tent flap when she leans back in and
snatches Robert's retainer. Now she's gone.

EXT. FIELD - NIGHT

Fighting tears, Cali runs past campfires and prying eyes.

INT. CALI AND LAUREL'S TENT - NIGHT

Cali enters. She taps sleeping Laurel who mumbles a protest.

CALI
Pack up. We're leaving.

LAUREL
What's wrong? Are you okay?

CALI
I said get packing.

Cali rolls up her sleeping bag and pulls out her keys.

LAUREL
But this is my birthday present.
Mom and Dad paid for the week.
(MORE)

LAUREL (CONT'D)

You're entered in the Silver Dagger tournament, and I'm meeting Herald Wagner tomorrow.

CALI

You can reschedule.

LAUREL

He's got a six-week wait list.

CALI

I'm your chaperone, and I'm telling you we're leaving.

Laurel reaches for her suitcase.

CALI (CONT'D)

Thank you.

Cali resumes her packing. She doesn't see Laurel pull out her cell phone and dial a number. She raises the phone to talk.

LAUREL

(to phone)

Mom?

CALI

Dammit, Laurel!

INT. CRUISE SHIP BEDROOM - DAY

MOM (Diane) and DAD (Bill), 50s, wear penguin costumes. Mom clutches the phone as Dad affixes his headdress plumage.

MOM

What's wrong, baby? Are you and Cali okay?

LAUREL (O.S.)

Cali wants to leave.

MOM

Is it because of the men's codpieces? They're creepy, but not worth leaving over.

INTERCUT CALI AND LAUREL'S TENT AND CRUISE SHIP BEDROOM

LAUREL

(to Cali)

Mom wants to know if you're scared of codpieces.

Cali gives Laurel a WTF? face.

LAUREL (CONT'D)

They're the pouch things men wear
near their --

Laurel gestures vaguely to the nether region.

NOTE: Darius & Gwommie wear codpieces. Robert & Jeremy don't.

CALI

I know what they are. I read the
S.C.A. welcome package. Why is Mom
asking about codpieces?

LAUREL

She thinks that's why you want to
leave.

CALI

Tell her -- it's not important.
She'll just have to trust me. It
was bad. She'd understand.

LAUREL

Was Robert's drink not very tasty?
I hear mead is an acquired taste.
(to phone)
Mom, she's still packing.

CALI

This was stupid. I should never
have agreed to come. What kind of
idiot dresses in costume and
pretends to be someone they're not?

Mom heard that. She transfers the phone to her other flipper.

MOM

(to phone)
Put Cali on.

Laurel holds the phone near Cali's ear.

MOM (CONT'D)

Young lady, we're not in the habit
of stomping on people's dreams.

Bill stomps his foam penguin feet for moral support. Cali
takes the phone from Laurel.

MOM (CONT'D)

You made a promise to Laurel, and
you're going to keep it.
(MORE)

MOM (CONT'D)

You can stay in your tent the whole time, but you're not leaving. Understood?

CALI

Look, Mom --

Dad turns around, presenting his zipper for Mom to zip up. She gestures that she needs both hands free. Dad takes the phone from Mom. Mom zips up Dad's costume.

CALI (CONT'D)

Robert and I have been dating two months now, and I really like -- liked -- him. So he was kinda, sorta taking my chastity when he broke up with me to be with another girl. Who's here.

LAUREL

I told you Robert was bad news.

CALI

Not now, Laurel!

Bill doesn't know what to say.

CALI (CONT'D)

Mom?

Cali yanks her suitcase zipper closed, wrenches it upright.

CALI (CONT'D)

(to herself)

Stupid heavy dresses.

DAD

Actually, it's Dad here. Mom's busy.

CALI

Mom handed me off while I bared my soul about half-losing my virginity?

Cali thrusts the phone at Laurel, unzips the tent and steps --

EXT. CALI AND LAUREL'S TENT - CONTINUOUS

-- out, almost on top of Jeremy, who looks around awkwardly.

JEREMY

Extra blanket? I thought you might be cold.

LAUREL (O.S.)

(to phone)

That's a great idea!

(calls to Cali)

Mom says I could deliver all your meals to the tent, so you don't have to see Robert. Hey, were you doing that thing where you imagine you're somewhere else? Like a castle chamber with a roaring fire? I can't imagine that a two-person tent was very romantic.

INTERCUT BETWEEN INT/EXT TENT AND CRUISE SHIP BEDROOM

Cali blushes. Could this moment possibly get any worse?

JEREMY

(to Cali)

A castle chamber hardly seems your style. Maybe a classic convertible with a view of the stars --

(checks Cali's expression)

Or a ski lodge on a mountain side --

(checks Cali's expression)

Or a private beach at sunset.

Jeremy sees on Cali's face he hit the mark. He grins.

JEREMY (CONT'D)

Did you imagine a blanket, too, or were you covered in sand? My first time was in the bush. We both got poison ivy.

Jeremy scratches at the memory. Cali offers a half-smile.

DAD

(to Mom)

Diane, if we don't get going, we won't get to pick up chicks.

Laurel overhears this. She looks surprised.

MOM

(to phone)

Baby, we have to go. You'll be okay?

LAUREL

I guess so. If Cali still wants to leave, I could swallow her keys.

Laurel looks ecstatic at this possible thought.

MOM

No, baby, just hide them. Love to you and Cali.

LAUREL

(calls to Cali)
Mom says she loves you!

EXT. FIELD - NIGHT

Cali's reaction says she could not feel less loved.

MOM (O.S.)

(through phone)
And from Dad too.

LAUREL (O.S.)

(calls to Cali)
Dad too!

Cali hangs her head.

JEREMY

That is so not right.

CALI

I know. They always take her side.

LAUREL (O.S.)

(calls to Cali)
Where's the water bottle? I need to swallow something.

CALI

(calls to Laurel)
In the snack bag.

JEREMY

You should hold your head high.

CALI

You should mind your own business. I know you're only interested because you like Laurel.

JEREMY

That's not true.

CALI

Whatever.

Cali storms back into the tent, lugging her suitcase.

Jeremy watches her go.

LAUREL (O.S.)

Who were you talking to?

CALI (O.S.)

Jeremy. He brought us an extra blanket in case we were cold.

LAUREL (O.S.)

That's so sweet!

Laurel pokes her head out. She sees Jeremy retreating.

LAUREL (CONT'D)

Jeremy! Sorry if Cali was rude to you.

CALI (O.S.)

I wasn't rude to him.

LAUREL

She's normally very polite. Mom would hate it if people thought we didn't have any manners.

Cali snorts (OS).

JEREMY

I understand.

LAUREL

I'd love that extra blanket if you don't need it.

Jeremy walks over and hands it to her.

JEREMY

The nights are chillier than you'd expect.

LAUREL

Are you sure you don't need it? I know you spend your nights alone.

No hint of innuendo from this babe in the woods. Jeremy nods.

JEREMY

I'm good. See you tomorrow.

Laurel sticks her head back in the tent.

CALI (O.S.)
I have an extra blanket in my car.

LAUREL (O.S.)
Nice try. I already hid your keys.
In a place you'll never find.

Jeremy chuckles quietly and walks off, shaking his head.

INT. CALI AND LAUREL'S TENT - DAY

Cali opens her eyes. The tent glows an exceedingly bright purple with the morning sun. Cali hides in her sleeping bag.

Laurel arrives with a plate of fruit and two boiled eggs, a glass of orange juice and a mug of coffee.

Laurel nearly spills the orange juice but rights the glass, as the eggs and fruit slide off the plate onto Cali's sleeping bag. Cali still hasn't emerged. Laurel shrugs and scoops everything back onto the plate.

LAUREL
I cracked your eggs for you.

Cali pokes her head out, reaches for a piece of fruit.

LAUREL (CONT'D)
It's good, right? Nice and fresh.

CALI
A little fuzzy.

Cali pulls a piece of fuzz from her mouth.

LAUREL
Do you want to borrow my blue dress today? It would look pretty with your eyes.

Laurel tries to put it on Cali, who still wears her pajamas.

CALI
What are you doing?

LAUREL
I went and got you breakfast, like I was supposed to do. But people asked where you were. I didn't want to tell them the truth, so I said you weren't feeling well.
(MORE)

LAUREL (CONT'D)

I wanted it to sound serious though, not like you were wussed out by a little runny nose, so I said I thought you had mono. Which if I'd thought about it, might not have been the best choice, since the medic's on his way to see you. Now.

CALI

What?

Cali dives for her hairbrush to make herself presentable. The fruit's back on her sleeping bag again.

LAUREL

Sorry. And you should probably know Robert and Anna were together at breakfast looking happier than kittens discovering a litter box for the first time, although Robert complained he must've forgotten his retainer and how it sucks because he gets headaches if he doesn't wear it at night. Is that it?

Laurel points at Robert's retainer amid Cali's things.

LAUREL (CONT'D)

Nice. Not for Robert, but still.

There's a rustle of feet outside the tent: the MEDIC (OS).

MEDIC (O.S.)

Calida? Are you in there? I heard you're not feeling well.

Cali scrambles into her dress. She pastes a grin on her face.

EXT. CALI AND LAUREL'S TENT - DAY

Cali unzips the tent. Behind the Medic are a dozen SCA Re-enactors, ready for fresh gossip, plus Morag and Mabel.

CALI

I'm perfect. My sister was mistaken. She heard mono, but I actually said "monocle". I need an accessory. For my persona. And the only thing cooler than seeing clearly out of two eyes is seeing only out of one.

The SCA Re-enactors seem to buy it. The Medic waffles.

MEDIC

I should take your temperature.

MABEL

(to Morag)

Two Glycolax says Moonbeam flirts
her way out of it.

MORAG

(to Mabel)

No way. Four Vasotecs says Sunshine
saves her ass.

MABEL

(to Morag)

Deal.

CALI

Really, I'm fine.

The Medic opens his health kit, the size of a laptop case.

CALI (CONT'D)

Never felt better.

Laurel exits the tent, eating Cali's fruit.

MEDIC

(discreetly, to Cali)

I get paid per incident, and I need
to write something in my
examination report.

CALI

There's no incident.

MEDIC

I carried my med kit all the way
across the field.

He gestures to the health kit as if it holds anvils.

CALI

Can't you just make something up?

MEDIC

That would be unethical. Open your
mouth.

CALI

This is tot--

The Medic sticks in the thermometer. Cali removes it.

CALI (CONT'D)
--ally unnecessary. I'm fine.

The Medic sticks the thermometer back in. Cali steams. Laurel eats more of Cali's breakfast.

MEDIC
I need to confirm that. If I give you the all clear then it turns out you're ill, I could be fired, or at least not hired for the next event.

The Medic removes the thermometer, checks it.

MEDIC (CONT'D)
Ninety-seven-point-one? That's bad. Did you drink last night?

CALI
I had some mead.

MEDIC
What was the alcohol content?
Closer to eight percent or twenty?

CALI
I don't know. It was homemade. Are we done?

MEDIC
Your temperature's low.

CALI
I've always run cool.

MABEL
(so only Morag can hear)
Flirt, flirt! What's wrong with young people these days?

CALI
I don't mean to be rude, but please go away.

MABEL
(so only Morag can hear)
No!

MEDIC
You're registered for the silver dagger tournament, aren't you? I can declare you medically unfit.

CALI
I'm dropping out of the tournament.

MEDIC
Because you feel sick?

CALI
No.

MEDIC
You were dating the guy who's now
draped all over the Asian girl,
weren't you? So you were only
fencing because of him. I get it.

There's a buzz of gossip from the voyeuristic Re-enactors.

Laurel steps forward. She honeys up her voice, peers at the
Medic beneath lowered lashes.

LAUREL
Cali loves fencing. She finds it
empowering.

CALI
Laurel.

LAUREL
(to Cali)
That's not a secret.
(to Medic)
My sister was really looking
forward to the tournament. Could
her temperature be low because it
was cold last night? She tossed and
turned a lot. I tried to keep her
covered in blankets, but I'd fall
asleep and she'd throw them off.

CALI
You did that?

LAUREL
(to Medic)
I promise to watch her and come get
you if I see signs of her feeling
unwell. That way you can get back
to your med tent and be prepared if
someone really needs you.

MEDIC
She seems unwell.

LAUREL
She seems pretty normal to me.

MEDIC
This stubbornness is normal?

LAUREL
Yup. After awhile you get used to it. Eventually, it's endearing.

The Medic's face shows he thinks Laurel needs to be examined.

LAUREL (CONT'D)
So, is that okay?

MEDIC
I guess. But isn't she supposed to be your chaperone?

LAUREL
Potato, potahto.

The Medic nods then looks confused. How is that relevant? Laurel packs his medical kit and hands it to him. He leaves. Laurel waves to the SCA Re-enactors, who disperse.

Mabel reluctantly hands four Decadrons to Morag, who grins.

CALI
How did you do that?

Laurel shrugs. She doesn't answer the question. Instead:

LAUREL
I ate all your breakfast. I think I'm going through a growth spurt.

CALI
I'm going back to bed. Or bag.

INT. CALI AND LAUREL'S TENT - CONTINUOUS

Cali crawls into the tent. Laurel follows.

LAUREL
But the tournament's starting soon.

CALI
I'm not up for it.

LAUREL
The medic will think I lied to him.

CALI
He won't even notice.

LAUREL
You'll miss all the fun.

Cali fluffs her pillow. It doesn't make much difference.

CALI
You'll enjoy it enough for both of us.

LAUREL
How long are you going to hide from the world this time?

CALI
I don't hide from the world.

LAUREL
When you came second in the all-state tennis tournament, you stayed in your room for five days. When you failed your drivers' test by one point, you hid at the cottage all summer.

Cali glares at Laurel but she climbs out of her sleeping bag.

LAUREL (CONT'D)
You'll have to change into your fencing outfit fast. At least your low temperature means you didn't sweat in my dress.

EXT. FENCING FIELD - DAY

Cali, Robert, Anna, Jeremy, Andy and forty FENCERS wear thick brown pants and thicker blue jackets that zip up the back. They hold modern fencing masks and gloves for both hands. Behind the KING and QUEEN, medieval-style pillars list first-round matches. The Event Herald unrolls a scroll and reads.

EVENT HERALD
Hear ye, hear ye. The silver dagger tournament will henceforth begin. A tip hit or slice hit to the head, chest, torso and blade hand will be considered fatal. Two tip hits or slice hits to the arms, legs or off-hand are worthy of victory. The off-hand may be used to block so long as it has not been hit even once.
(MORE)

EVENT HERALD (CONT'D)

The referee's ruling is final and binding in this single elimination tournament. Anyone not in agreement with these rules, raise your sword.

No one does. The King steps forward.

KING

Then by my fair queen's hand, let this tournament begin.

The Queen raises a white handkerchief and drops it. It flutters to the ground. The Fencers and REFEREES get to it.

Morag and Mabel snack on pills as if they're popcorn.

Cali's first match is Jeremy. She taps his blade amicably with her own and nods respectfully at their Referee. Then she glances toward Robert and Anna, who share a long, passionate kiss before they each run off to their matches.

ANNA

(calling to Robert)
Good luck, future duke!

Cali turns to Jeremy, fury in her gaze. She puts on her mask.

REFEREE

Allez!

Cali breathes deeply and closes her eyes.

INT. 28-FOOT GRAMPIAN SAILBOAT - DAY - FANTASY SEQUENCE

It looks like a perfect sailboat to an outsider, but a pro will see the lack of various ropes and winches. The jib-sheet is tight at the bow, but flutters untied close to the mast.

Cali and Jeremy, in fencing attire minus the masks, are suddenly on board, Cali near the mast, Jeremy at the bow.

JEREMY

What the --

Cali runs at him, sword extended. Jeremy blocks her shot, counters with an attack on his own. Cali jumps back to avoid.

When swords clash, we go SLOW-MOTION to best see the action.

Cali launches another attack. Jeremy blocks it, leaning over the bow, holding the jib-sheet with his off-hand for support. Cali aims for his hand. Jeremy blocks her.

JEREMY (CONT'D)
Is this supposed to be my parents'
boat?

His tone tells us Cali's imagination missed the mark.

CALI
I've never been on a sailboat
before.

Jeremy looks over the side of the boat, sees "GRAMPION".

JEREMY
You spelled Grampian wrong. And we
have a tiller, not a helm.

The ship steering wheel disappears, replaced by a tiller.

Jeremy lunges forward with an intended hit to the head. Cali blocks it. He aims for the thigh. Cali blocks that hit too.

JEREMY (CONT'D)
You learned my moves well.

Cali tries the combination on Jeremy. He blocks the hits.

JEREMY (CONT'D)
Hey now, with this much
imagination, you must be able to
come up with better moves.

CALI
Don't insult my moves.

JEREMY
You mean my moves.

Jeremy chases Cali to the stern. The mainsail is up but the boom is high, so Cali and Jeremy can see each other beneath.

CALI
You want imagination? Check this
out.

Cali leaps into the air and lands on the edge of the boom.

JEREMY
The boom doesn't actually extend
that far.

Cali looks down. The boom disappears from beneath her feet. She starts to fall, then tucks herself into a ball and rolls into a somersault on the main deck. Ta-da.

JEREMY (CONT'D)
Impressive. You forgot one thing,
though. Wind.

A gust of wind pushes the boat nearly sideways. Jeremy jams his sword into the rigging to hang on. Cali nearly gets wiped out, but Jeremy catches her with his off-hand.

JEREMY (CONT'D)
You're not getting out of this
match that easily. When I win,
it'll be my skill with a blade.

CALI
No way, Jeremy. You're going down.

JEREMY
As if you even know what down looks
like. I bet your hold is empty.

Jeremy gestures to the area below the deck. Is he flirting?

CALI
You're distracting me.

Cali launches an attack. Jeremy blocks it.

JEREMY
Don't think you can handle a little
distraction?

CALI
Fine. Tell me what I need down
there.

JEREMY
Benches and a fold-up table. A
toilet and sink. A bed so small
that only the most creative sailors
can use it for sex.

Jeremy looks around at Cali's imaginary world.

JEREMY (CONT'D)
You'd probably be fine.

Cali's distracted. Jeremy lands a hit on her inner thigh.

JEREMY (CONT'D)
Victory!

CALI
Not a chance. That's as much of me
as you're going to get.

Cali relaunches her attack. They fence up the starboard side of the boat and back down the port side. Clash-clash-clash.

The wind rocks them back and forth. Cali wobbles. Jeremy holds true. He lightens his attacks when Cali's least stable.

The wind suddenly changes directions. The boom swings.

JEREMY

Jump!

Jeremy backflips upwards until he lands on top of the mast.

Cali cartwheels on the edge of the main sail. Jeremy attacks, nearly grazes Cali's cheek. She spins, cartwheels back down. Jeremy runs on the edge of the sail after her. Cali laughs.

JEREMY (CONT'D)

Too easy for you? Let's set the jib. Gimme a winch here.

Jeremy touches the deck. A PROSTITUTE appears.

PROSTITUTE

(to Jeremy)

Hey sailor.

JEREMY

(to Cali)

Not a wench, a winch!

CALI

A what?

JEREMY

A crank!

A CRANKY OLD MAN appears.

CRANKY OLD MAN

In my day --

JEREMY

Cali!

Cali laughs. The Prostitute and the Cranky Old Man disappear, replaced by a winch with jib rope attached.

The wind roars along the sails. Jeremy throws open his arms.

JEREMY (CONT'D)

Don't you just love the wind?

Cali lands an attack on his off-hand wrist.

JEREMY (CONT'D)
That wasn't sportsman-like.

CALI
All's fair.

JEREMY
Is this love or war?

CALI
I do love fencing.

Jeremy launches an attack. Cali blocks every thrust.

JEREMY
Next hit wins.

CALI
I'm counting on it.

The boat rapidly approaches a narrow channel. Jeremy and Cali are still fencing: thrusting, blocking, stepping, lunging.

JEREMY
We're going to crash.

CALI
Temporary truce?

Cali and Jeremy lower their blades. Land looms on one side.

JEREMY
Loosen the jib sheet. I've got the
main sail.

Jeremy points to the rigging holding the front sail.

JEREMY (CONT'D)
Swing it across. Watch your head!

Cali ducks and pushes the jib from port to starboard.

JEREMY (CONT'D)
Winch it tight!

Cali cranks the winch.

JEREMY (CONT'D)
Harder, harder!

Cali cranks with all her might. Jeremy appears, cranks more.

They narrowly miss the rocky shoreline. Two shaky breaths.
The other shore blossoms closer and closer.

JEREMY (CONT'D)

Ready? Switch!

Cali lets the jib fly. She ducks as it swings back to port. She winches fast-fast-fast. Jeremy tames the main sail while keeping a firm hand on the tiller. The boat follows his lead.

JEREMY (CONT'D)

Good going! Three more tacks and we'll be clear. You're sure you've never sailed before?

CALI

You must be that good a teacher.

They're a well-oiled machine by the time they're through.

JEREMY

Whew! That was fun. Normally, in a small channel like that, I loosen the sails and navigate under power.

An outboard motor appears below the rudder. Cali sees it.

CALI

Your boat has an engine?! Why didn't you tell me?

Cali snatches her sword and launches herself at Jeremy. Weaponless, Jeremy defends himself with ropes and sails until Cali chases him to the bow. With nowhere to go, Jeremy jumps higher than the most playful dolphin, dives into the water.

In an instant, he's gleaming wet, sword-in-hand, right behind Cali. She's about to lose, then the wind changes direction. The boom swings. Cali ducks. Jeremy isn't quite fast enough.

Jeremy grabs hold of the boom and scrambles around the edge of the sail -- almost onto the point of Cali's blade. She's about to lunge that extra inch and finish him off when --

JEREMY

Wait! Don't you want to see the boat sail with its spinnaker?

CALI

Spinnaker?

JEREMY

The huge front sail. It makes the boat so fast you could waterski behind it.

CALI
Another truce?

Cali and Jeremy lower their blades.

CALI (CONT'D)
Are you cold?

JEREMY
A little.

Cali blinks. Jeremy's all dry but his hair's a little floppy.

JEREMY (CONT'D)
Thanks. You don't happen to have
any hair gel, do you?

CALI
Isn't that O.O.P?

JEREMY
We're on an imaginary boat. That's
pretty far from period.

Cali blinks. Jeremy's hair is perfectly coiffed.

Jeremy lifts the seat from one of the benches at the stern.
Inside is the spinnaker. Even folded up, it's massive. Jeremy
ties it to a line and hauls it up to the top of the mast.

JEREMY (CONT'D)
More wind, milady. Then hold on.

The wind picks up. Cali's swept off her feet. She's about to
go overboard. She grabs Jeremy's sword, pushes it through the
jib sail. She slices a ragged hole but stays aboard.

They practically fly. Water sprays up the sides while Jeremy,
as light of foot as ever, runs to untie the jib. Cali slides
down the mast, nearly onto her own sword, which Jeremy holds.

Staring contest.

JEREMY (CONT'D)
You know, I've been doing all the
heavy lifting around here. You
should contribute something.

CALI
Whose fantasy do you think this is?

JEREMY

All I'm saying is, my summer job involves teaching sailing, and I've taught you a thing or two today.

CALI

My summer job is at Seven-Eleven.

JEREMY

Exactly. Where's my Slurpee?

CALI

I could go for a Slurpee right now.

Slurpees appear in their off-hands. As Jeremy takes a gulp, Cali lunges. Jeremy tries to use the Slurpee as a shield, but Cali's sword slices the drink in two, spraying blood-red slush everywhere, and she lands a solid hit to Jeremy's side.

EXT. FENCING FIELD - DAY

Silence. Cali's in a deep lunge, her sword against Jeremy's side. The Referee and the few Fencers watching are stunned. The Fencers start buzzing with the news. Look at the newbie! Cali looks awestruck by her own victory.

REFEREE

Winner by fatal hit: Calida.

The Referee raises Cali's hand. Jeremy shakes her other hand.

JEREMY

You got me.

CALI

My first victory.

Cali sees Robert and Anna congratulating each other. Morag and Mabel are close enough to hear Robert and Anna.

ROBERT

Hot day.

ANNA

Want to go to the creek?

MABEL

(to Morag)

Three Ativans they skinnydip.

MORAG

That's what I was going to say. No bet.

Robert and Anna leave. Morag gets up to follow.

MABEL
No point if there's no bet.

MORAG
Okay. I'll watch them alone.

Mabel considers. She follows.

INT. MEAL TENT - DAY

Cali droops at the edge of a table. Laurel rushes over.

CALI
Hey Laurel.

LAUREL
I'm not Laurel! I'm Berthildis.

CALI
That sounds like a venereal
disease.

LAUREL
The herald helped me pick it.

CALI
Did you insult him?

LAUREL
No.

CALI
Are you sure?

LAUREL
Yes! Wanna hear my backstory?

Darius, Gwommie and Swannoc sit near Cali.

SWANNOC
Hi Laurel.

LAUREL
It's Berthidis. I was born January
twenty-seven, fourteen-sixteen in
the Republic of Ragusa. My father
was a German trader who spent one
night with my mother, a slave who'd
been captured from her little
French town by the sea.

CALI
That's awful.

A LUNCH SERVER delivers plates of meatloaf, carrots, salad.

CALI (CONT'D)
(to Lunch Server)
Is meatloaf medieval?

LUNCH SERVER
It is when you make it with beef
lung and almonds.

LAUREL
Keep listening. Ragusa was the
first European country to ban
slavery -- on the day I was born!
So Mom and I were free, but poor,
and she had to steal food from
pigeons to feed me. By the time I
was ten, her fingers had been
pecked to half their size!

Darius looks at his fingers. He blanches, puts down his fork.
Gwommie also looks a little green around the gills.

GWOMMIE
That's great?

LAUREL
I know! Our real mom would never do
that for me. Backstory mom lost her
whole hand when she protected me
from a wild dog, so I went to work
at age twelve -- as a dancer!

CALI
You know "dancer" is a euphemism
for...

LAUREL
Person who does what she loves
seven days a week.

SWANNOC
You didn't even get Sundays off?

LAUREL
Who needs time off from dancing?

CALI
I'm so happy for you.

Swannoc raises her metal water cup.

SWANNOC
To Berthildis.

Cali, Darius and Gwommie raise their metal water cups.

CALI, DARIUS, GWOMMIE AND SWANNOC
To Berthildis.

LAUREL
Yay. Gotta run. I'm helping the
wait staff for the week.

CALI
Are they paying you?

LAUREL
No. But I don't have to do dishes
or set the tables. The chef even
offered to share her recipes with
me. I'll be able to make descendant
of the red junglefowl in nectar
from the wild bee and the allium at
home!

Laurel runs off. Jeremy approaches.

JEREMY
Milords, miladies.
(to Cali)
Anger really brings out your inner
fencer.

DARIUS
Anger?

Swannoc gestures with her thumb at Robert and Anna, feeding
each other at a nearby table. Darius nods, winces.

JEREMY
She struck me down in the first
round. Stripped me even of my
dignity.

CALI
At least you still had your clothes
on.

Gwommie flicks a glance between Cali and Jeremy. Is something
going on? Jeremy shakes his head quickly. Don't mention it.

CALI (CONT'D)
(to Jeremy)
Are you upset to be out of the
tournament?

JEREMY

Fencing's unpredictable. One of the things I like about it.

Laurel brings a plate of meatloaf, carrots and salad to Jeremy, and a piece of pie that fell apart on the plate.

LAUREL

Would you watch my pie? You'll get slices soon, so don't eat this one. I think it has character.

CALI

Okay.

LAUREL

Thanks. If you happen to talk to it, don't mention that it's --
(drops her voice)
-- broken. I don't want it to feel self-conscious.

Darius, Gwommie and Swannoc nod: it makes perfect sense. Cali catches Jeremy's eye. They share a private moment of humor.

JEREMY

So, advancing to the next round of the tournament this afternoon. That must be better than serving Slurpees to sugar-crazed kids.

Cali's gaze drifts to Robert and Anna, feeding each other.

CALI

It's a toss up.

Cali gets up and leaves the table, her lunch untouched.

EXT. DANCING AREA - DAY

MUSICIANS play a 15th century Italian dance as DANCERS step. Laurel dances with Jeremy as he watches two Re-enactors vie for Cali's attention. Cali's flattered but distracted as she watches Robert and Anna, in their own little world.

Jeremy steps on Laurel's toe. She squeals, jumps back.

LAUREL

I thought a saltarello was step-step-hop, not step-step-hop.

JEREMY

My fault. Sorry.

They wait for the next measure and resume dancing.

JEREMY (CONT'D)

Cali seems to be recovering.

LAUREL

Yeah. Now is the doppio the step where your back foot never passes the front foot or is that the piva?

Cali trips and laughs. She knows almost none of the steps.

JEREMY

Umm. Sorry. The piva.

LAUREL

Did I give you too big a piece of pie at lunch?

JEREMY

It was very generous of you to cut me an extra big slice.

Cali sees Robert and Anna, perfectly in step. She frowns.

LAUREL

Not so generous if it gives you a sugar coma. I don't think I could carry you to the medic's tent, and trust me, he doesn't like walking across a field with his med kit.

JEREMY

If I start to feel drowsy, I'll let you know. So was Cali single a long time before you two joined the S.C.A.? Or does she not wait a long time before dating someone new?

Mabel and Morag lean toward each other to gossip.

MABEL

Underdog's quite the dancer.

MORAG

Underdog's a terrible nickname.

MABEL

But kinda accurate.

Morag's lack of reply signals her silent agreement.

The music stops. The Dancers stop. Jeremy and Laurel dance.

JEREMY

Did you hear when the music
stopped?

The Musicians pack up their instruments.

LAUREL

Yeah, but I like dancing. Can we
practice caprioles?

Laurel leaps into the air, waves her legs alternately back
and forth without bending her knees. She lands awkwardly.

LAUREL (CONT'D)

Ow.

JEREMY

Remember to bend your knees just
before you land or else you'll be
the one who needs the medic.

Laurel performs another capriole.

JEREMY (CONT'D)

Try to keep your ankles straight.

LAUREL

Show me?

JEREMY

But there's no one else dancing.

LAUREL

Please?

Jeremy complies. Laurel applauds him. Gossipy Re-enactors
notice Jeremy and Laurel are the only two still dancing.
Morag and Mabel are camped out near them.

MABEL

(to Morag)

Four Procardia says Underdog kisses
Sunshine by the end of the weekend.

MORAG

(to Mabel)

Deal. Underdog's got the hots for
Moonbeam.

JEREMY

In case she asks, I've been telling
people that Cali broke up with
Robert, not the other way 'round.

Laurel practices another capriole. She's getting better.

LAUREL
You're lying.

JEREMY
I'm creatively representing the
facts. Like what we do in the
S.C.A. Higher!

Laurel heaves herself into the air and slices her legs fast.

JEREMY (CONT'D)
Good! I'm sure Cali would've broken
up with Robert if he'd given her
the chance, as a gentleman should.

Laurel laughs.

LAUREL
You're a gentleman. You would have
given a girl the chance, right?

Jeremy looks at Cali. Laurel dances and doesn't notice.

JEREMY
I'd never give her a reason to.

Laurel smiles as if Jeremy's words were for her.

EXT. FENCING FIELD - DAY

Cali and Andy tap blades respectfully, nod at the Referee and
put on their masks. Laurel, their only spectator, cheers.

LAUREL
Go Cali! And -- uh -- Andy, you go
too, just not as much.

INT. COURTYARD WITH HALF-CONSTRUCTED ITALIAN FOUNTAIN - DAY -
FANTASY SEQUENCE

Cali and Andy, in fencing costumes sans masks, stand in the
empty pool. CONTRACTORS with plumber's butt snake tubing
through the marble statues at the center of the fountain.

The UBER RICH mill around, stroking their fur coats, walking
tiny dogs with bejeweled collars and taking bets on Cali and
Andy as if they were at a polo match talking about horses.

Andy scans the area.

ANDY

It's not enough that I have to interact with these guys at work, now they're invading my private life, too?

Andy launches an attack. Cali blocks it. Two Contractors carry a statue to the center of the fountain. Cali jumps over the statue as she retreats. Andy somersaults over it.

ANDY (CONT'D)

You know this isn't right.

CALI

Yeah, yeah. So I haven't seen your statue. It's my fantasy.

ANDY

The S.C.A. is already a fantasy. You can't have a fake fantasy inside a real fantasy.

CALI

Sure you can. Haven't you ever had sex with a pretty girl from a bar while at the same time wishing you could be having a threesome with another cool girl from the bar?

ANDY

No girl should know guys that well.

Cali attacks Andy with a hit to the head. He blocks, counters with a hit to the side. Cali blocks it. Andy's surprisingly aggressive. He chases Cali and forces her to run backwards around the rim of the fountain, past three RICH SNOBS.

TALL RICH SNOB

I have so much money, it barely fits under my king-size mattress.

SHORT RICH SNOB

I have so much money I had to get a mattress custom-made.

MID-SIZE RICH SNOB

I have so much money I sleep on it instead of a mattress.

CALI

(to Andy)

I've never seen you fence this aggressively before.

ANDY

This environment inspires me.

Cali reaches for the raised arm of a naked male statue. She swings herself up as Andy runs past. Cali lands a light tip hit to his off-hand arm.

CALI

Can't be any more inspiring than
Robert and Anna's P.D.A.

Andy thrusts at Cali between two statues. She twists away.

TALL RICH SNOB

Five million on the girl.

SHORT RICH SNOB

Done. Anthony's going to win.

ANDY

It's Andy!

Cali and Andy cut and thrust but both hit nothing but air. Suddenly, water spouts from fishes' mouths, Neptune's trident and -- just a trickle -- out of the naked man statue's penis.

TALL RICH SNOB

Outrageous!

MID-SIZE RICH SNOB

For shame!

SHORT RICH SNOB

Anthony!

ANDY

It's Andy! Cali, please.

Cali giggles as she modifies her fantasy. No more watery pee.

The pool Cali and Andy fence in fills with water. They step onto the wide circular rim. Andy chases Cali toward two Contractors bending over a drain on the pool floor. She jumps to avoid them, lands at the crook of Neptune's trident.

The trident comes alive in Cali's hand. She turns it on Andy.

ANDY (CONT'D)

Ref!

CALI

The rules don't forbid tridents.

Andy grabs a tube. Water spouts out of it. He advances.

CALI (CONT'D)

We can go back to swords.

Cali drops the trident and grabs her sword, but Andy's no longer interested. He swishes the water in a high arc. Cali skitters underneath, helter-skelter, to avoid getting wet.

As Andy moves with the hose, it develops a kink. A bulge of water builds up behind Andy. Cali tosses her sword. The tip lands in the bulge. It drenches Andy as Cali leaps into the air, avoiding even a single drop.

Andy blinks through blurry eyes and taps Cali's arm. Yes!

ANDY

There's one thing you got wrong. My
condo's not filled with old money.
They're all hipsters.

The Uber Rich are replaced with HIPSTERS, including PROUD HIPSTER, EVEN PROUDER HIPSTER and ULTIMATE HIPSTER. They all wear flannel shirts, tennis shoes and oversize black glasses. The dogs' collars are now plain, but the dogs wear glasses.

Each Hipster has at least two accessories: animal lunch boxes, fair trade coffee from indie shops, fixed-gear bicycles, Polaroid cameras, ukuleles or uncommon instruments, sketch books, Jack Kerouac novels, foreign magazines, etc.

All statues have hipster glasses. The male statue pees again -
- straight into a statue of a coffee cup.

Cali looks around with satisfaction. Andy nearly hits her on the leg. She cartwheels away at the last possible second. Off the rim, Cali lands with an earth-shuddering thud on the marble courtyard floor amid patches of fake grass and plants.

Andy joins her on the ground. They step and weave and attack and block around Hipsters who try to pretend they're bored.

PROUD HIPSTER

I loved Monumental Rock Arts before
they became mainstream.

EVEN PROUDER HIPSTER

I supported Haiti before the
earthquake.

ULTIMATE HIPSTER

We should start a garden.

PROUD HIPSTER

An organic garden.

EVEN PROUDER HIPSTER
 We should use only seeds from
 locally-available produce.

PROUD HIPSTER
 Maybe we could start it with
 clippings from the farmers' market.

EVEN PROUDER HIPSTER
 I'll research fertilizers.

PROUD HIPSTER
 The best fertilizers.

As Cali chases Andy, he calls out to the Hipsters:

ANDY
 If you want the best fertilizer,
 you should use your own poop!

CALI
 You could store it in your lunch
 boxes.

Andy laughs. Cali seizes her chance: a hit to Andy's heart.

EXT. FENCING FIELD - DAY

The Referee admires Cali's perfect shot. Andy looks up from
 the tip of Cali's blade in the center of his chest.

REFEREE
 Winner by fatal hit: Calida.

ANDY
 Nice shot.

The Referee raises Cali's hand. Laurel hug-ambushes Cali.

LAUREL
 That was awesome! Did my cheering
 make a difference?

Cali smiles, lies through her teeth.

CALI
 Couldn't've done it without you.

Laurel beams.

EXT. ARCHERY AREA - DAY

Laurel and Jeremy draw their bows, staring at their targets: Jeremy's is quite far; Laurel's is much closer.

JEREMY

Your birthday's in the fall, isn't it?

LAUREL

I'll be eighteen on October twenty-four.

Laurel and Jeremy loose their arrows. Both miss. Laurel's arrow falls pathetically short of its target.

JEREMY

There's a dance event weekend coming up. The Summer Fling. It's put on by the Low Country, so it's a little far, but we could carpool if you're interested.

Laurel and Jeremy grab another arrow from their quivers.

LAUREL

Yes! Oh. I don't know if either of my parents could chaperone.

Laurel and Jeremy line up their shots.

JEREMY

Maybe Cali could come. Pull your bow string back more so your arrow flies farther.

LAUREL

Like this?

Laurel pulls the bow string microscopically farther back.

JEREMY

A little more.

LAUREL

I need stronger arms. Or a weaker bow. I think Cali will be done with the S.C.A. at the end of this week.

Jeremy and Laurel loose their arrows. Jeremy's hits the edge of the target. Laurel's lands two inches ahead of her first arrow but still ridiculously far from her quite-close target.

LAUREL (CONT'D)
Woohoo! Closer!

JEREMY
I bet you could convince Cali. It's
hard to say no to you.

INT. CALI AND LAUREL'S TENT - NIGHT

Laurel snuggles into her sleeping bag. Cali tries to snooze.

LAUREL
So what do you think of Jeremy?

CALI
He's nice.

LAUREL
I think he likes me. He invited me
to another S.C.A. event -- a dance
one. And he wants to know when I
turn eighteen.

CALI
Mm.

LAUREL
You're not impressed.

CALI
I don't really know him.

LAUREL
We've seen him at every event and
weekly practice session for three
months. How can you not know him?

CALI
You can't really know someone when
you meet pretending to be someone
else.

LAUREL
That's not true.

CALI
The S.C.A. exists so people can
live their fantasies.

LAUREL
I'm still me.

CALI

You're Berthildis. Daughter of a slave who strips for money.

LAUREL

Dances. I told the herald I could earn just as much money with my clothes on.

CALI

That's definitely a fantasy.

LAUREL

You're still you.

CALI

Every party's got a pooper.

LAUREL

I think Jeremy's a good guy.

CALI

You think everyone's good.

LAUREL

Not Robert. Or Anna.

CALI

Don't give your heart away -- or any other part of you -- until you're certain it'll work out. Not Laurel certain. Suspicious stubborn Cali certain. Please. For me.

LAUREL

If you're that worried, why don't you vet Jeremy for me? If you decide he's up to no good, I'll stay away from him.

CALI

I don't know, Laurel. I don't want you to be angry if I don't think as highly of him as you do.

LAUREL

No hard feelings. I promise. Have I ever broken a promise?

CALI

Never. Okay.

LAUREL

Thanks, Cali. You're the best
sister I could've asked for.

Laurel goes to sleep. Cali lies awake.

INT. MEAL TENT - DAY

Amid other Diners, Cali plunks down opposite Jeremy.

CALI

So, Jeremy -- if that's even your
real name.

JEREMY

Of course it's my real name.

CALI

Do you have a girlfriend?

JEREMY

No.

CALI

But you've had them in the past?

JEREMY

One, yes. But I could've had others
if I'd wanted.

Jeremy realizes it was his chance. He wishes he was suave.

CALI

Right. The bush lady. Why'd you two
break up? Did you break her heart?

JEREMY

She broke up with me. Not because
there's anything wrong with me. She
transferred to another college. I
would've done the long-distance
thing -- I'm the faithful type --
(realizes he's babbling)
So. What about you? Any great loves
before you joined the S.C.A.?

CALI

I'm asking the questions. What do
you like about the S.C.A.? The
chance to be someone you're not?

JEREMY

That's part of it.

This is clearly the wrong answer for Cali.

JEREMY (CONT'D)

No! I like to bow at maidens and offer them my hand for a dance. When I opened a door for a girl at uni, she said I was anti-feminist.

Laurel arrives with two identical soup bowls.

LAUREL

(to Jeremy)

Veloute with truffles and porcini slivers in a delicate sauce a la creme.

Laurel pronounces this with a French accent.

LAUREL (CONT'D)

(to Cali)

Cream of mushroom.

Laurel sees Robert and Anna sit by Gwommie, Darius, Swannoc.

LAUREL (CONT'D)

Uh oh.

CALI

What?

Cali turns and sees.

LAUREL

They're at my table. Want me to tell them to sit somewhere else?

CALI

It's fine.

LAUREL

Are you sure?

Cali nods.

LAUREL (CONT'D)

I won't tell them what flavor the soup is.

Laurel leaves, having decided on an acceptable punishment. Cali watches her go then confides to Jeremy:

CALI

She was always this pest I had to protect on the playground. And now she's protecting me.

JEREMY

She learned from the best.

ANNA'S HUSBAND, six-foot-six, shows up in his clown costume. One side of his face is made up to be sad, the other happy.

JEREMY (CONT'D)

Oh my God.

Cali turns and sees.

CALI

Who's that?

JEREMY

Anna's husband.

CALI

I thought he was in Africa with Clowns Without Borders.

Anna's Husband looks around the meal tent. He sees Anna with Robert. Robert sees him first. Anna's Husband reaches into his duffel bag. Robert ducks, expecting the worst.

Mabel and Morag can't believe their eyes.

MABEL

No.

MORAG

Way.

Anna's Husband pulls out an accordion. He sings, alternating between happy and sad clown make-up.

ANNA'S HUSBAND

We met on the street when you tickled my big feet and I thought I tickled your funny bone. You came to all of my shows, I listened to all of your woes. I thought we'd found a happiness to call our own.

Silence in the meal tent. All eyes are on the unfolding song.

ANNA'S HUSBAND (CONT'D)

We loved pistachio ice cream and we shared our dreams.

(MORE)

ANNA'S HUSBAND (CONT'D)

I thought you understood what
mattered to me. We said our vows,
the pastor reminded us how we were
to 'forever be faithful to thee.'

He adopts a somber tone and looks face-on: happy and sad.

Mabel leans over to Morag, both keep watching the action.

MABEL

Two Zantacs says Bubbles sticks
with Valentino.

MORAG

I'm liking the look of Soupy Sales.
You're on.

Morag and Mabel shake hands, eyes still on the action.

ANNA'S HUSBAND

So there was you and there was us,
but there's also a clutch of kids
in need of smiles. So I followed my
heart and played a happy clown
part, because I thought we'd
survive the miles.

At "happy clown part" he squeezes his clown nose. It honks.

JEREMY

(to Cali)

Aren't you glad you're not hiding
in your tent right now?

Cali nods but can't take her eyes off the scene.

ANNA'S HUSBAND

And then I received your email, and
I thought what kind of female rips
out a man's heart through his heel.
And what kind of guy --
(turns on Robert)
thinks a marriage should be untied?
Do you have any idea how that
feels?

ROBERT

That doesn't rhyme. Untied and guy.
Feels and heel. It should be --

ANNA'S HUSBAND

I composed it on the plane. The other passengers thought I was insane, but it's worth it because this is love.

Laurel stands behind Cali and Jeremy.

LAUREL

That's so romantic!

ANNA'S HUSBAND

Then you horn in on my girl, which makes me want to hurl, so now you're gonna get more than a shove.

Anna's Husband drops the accordion. It wheezes to the ground. He pulls back a great, meaty fist. Robert runs. In his big, floppy clown shoes, Anna's Husband gives chase.

MABEL

(to Morag)

One Prevacid says Soupy falls on Valentino.

MORAG

(to Mabel)

Done.

Anna's Husband chases Robert until Robert hides behind Anna.

MABEL

Aw.

Mabel hands Morag a Prevacid. Anna's Husband grabs Robert.

LAUREL

Is he worth going to jail?

Anna's Husband looks at Laurel. So does everyone else there.

LAUREL (CONT'D)

Cuz Robert's a weenie who'd press charges. For what it's worth, I loved your song.

Anna's Husband drops Robert, who tries to look dignified.

ANNA'S HUSBAND

(to Anna)

Did you love it?

There's a collective holding of breath. Anna shakes her head.

ANNA'S HUSBAND (CONT'D)
 What can he give you that I can't?

ANNA
 He's going to win the fencing
 tournament and make me a duchess.

Morag gives pills to Mabel.

ANNA'S HUSBAND
 Sad clown it is. Good day everyone.

LAUREL
 (to Cali and Jeremy)
 He's not going to fight harder?

JEREMY
 Some girls aren't worth fighting
 for.

CALI
 Some guys too.

Anna's Husband tips his wig at the Diners, who resume eating.
 Laurel watches his retreat, then glares at Anna and Robert.

LAUREL
 What's lower than scum?

JEREMY
 Scum is a layer on top of a liquid.
 Sediment settles beneath a liquid.

LAUREL
 (calling to Anna and
 Robert)
 You're sediment!

The accordion wheezes. Everyone looks -- Anna's Husband came
 back for it. He leaves again, back hunched in embarrassment.

LAUREL (CONT'D)
 (to Cali)
 I could spit in their pie, unless
 you can think of a worse
 punishment.

CALI
 I'm going to win Robert's silver
 dagger.

EXT. FENCING FIELD - NIGHT

Torches in the corners. Cali holds a lantern with her off-hand as she practices her steps and attacks. Unseen by Cali, Morag observes the scene. Jeremy arrives.

JEREMY

Hey Cali.

Cali swirls, her sword only an inch from Jeremy's throat. When she sees who it is, she lowers her blade.

CALI

Jeremy! Don't sneak up on girls with swords.

JEREMY

Even if I bring medieval s'mores?

CALI

They made s'mores?

Cali inspects the treats in Jeremy's hands.

JEREMY

They had gingerbread and cream and strawberries and the concept of roasting food on a stick over an open fire... if that's not authentic enough for you --

Jeremy grins as Cali scarfs one down.

CALI

Hot, hot, hot, but so good!

She grabs the other one from Jeremy's hand.

JEREMY

Wait. That's --

CALI

Still hot, still hot!
(swallow)
Sorry. You were saying?

JEREMY

That's mine.

Cali claps her hand over her mouth.

CALI

Oh no!

JEREMY

Just messing with you. I ate at
least a dozen at the camp fire.

Cali shoves Jeremy.

CALI

That's for making me feel bad.

She shoves him again.

CALI (CONT'D)

And that's for only bringing me
two.

Mabel joins Morag.

MABEL

(to Morag)

They have got to put the washrooms
closer to the action. What'd I
miss?

MORAG

Moonbeam nearly decapitated
Underdog. He seemed to like it.

MABEL

No!

MORAG

There's a kiss on Moonbeam's
horizon.

MABEL

I'm not losing another bet.

Cali raises her sword toward Jeremy.

CALI

I know it's late, but I can't be
the only fencer practicing for the
tournament.

JEREMY

They practice on their own. But I
know everyone's hiding places.

CALI

Do you think I can win this?

JEREMY

I know you can win this.

CALI

Not without a coach. Especially one who can help me spy on my competition.

JEREMY

You eliminated me in the first round. You should give me lessons.

CALI

You gave me one lesson and I started winning. Robert had been coaching me for three months and I'd never won a match.

JEREMY

All right, but if you go out with all of your coaches, you should know I don't kiss on the first date.

CALI

Aw - is it because you're not very good at it?

JEREMY

I'm very good!

CALI

How do you know? It's not like you can kiss yourself.

JEREMY

Are you a good kisser?

Cali hears Robert and Anna laughing in the distance (OS).

CALI

Not good enough.

JEREMY

We'll start first thing tomorrow morning. Right now, there are s'mores to eat.

CALI

Will you bring me some?

JEREMY

Nope. You're in training.

MONTAGE

EXT. FENCING FIELD - DAY

Jeremy gives Cali pointers as she fences imaginary opponents. Mabel spies on Cali and Jeremy, unseen by them.

EXT. AREA BEHIND TENTS - DAY

Cali and Jeremy spy on a TALL FENCER. Jeremy points, talks.

EXT. FENCING FIELD - DAY

Cali fences Jeremy. Jeremy touches Cali's leg to reposition her lunge. Hiding in tall grass just off the field, Mabel slingshots a rock at Jeremy's leg. Ouch! He looks around, sees no one, turns back to Cali, but the moment's gone.

EXT. FENCING FIELD - DAY

The Referee raises Cali's hand - victory! - near Tall Fencer.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

Cali and Jeremy spy on a FEMALE FENCER. Cali parries with her hand as Jeremy attacks with his finger. Mabel sneaks around cars, touches them, tries to open doors. Cali and Jeremy get closer. Mabel sets off a car alarm. Cali and Jeremy jump. The Female Fencer sees them spying. Victory for Mabel!

INT. MEAL TENT - DAY

Seated, Cali and Jeremy fence with their butter knives.

EXT. FENCING FIELD - DAY

The Referee lifts Cali's hand - winner! - near Female Fencer.

EXT. FIELD NEAR STREAM - DAY

Heads together beneath a tree, Cali and Jeremy spy on a SHORT FENCER. Hidden nearby, Mabel makes a loud bird call and slingshots a pile of rocks into the tree above them, shaking the leaves. Cali and Jeremy scabble away. Mabel grins.

EXT. EDGE OF TREES NEAR CLEARING - DAY

On their bellies to avoid detection, Cali and Jeremy spy on Robert and Anna fencing. They're superb. Cali underplays it.

CALI
They're pretty good.

JEREMY
Robert's been S.C.A. fencing since he was twelve. Anna was captain of her college fencing team.

CALI
How do I beat them?

JEREMY
What did you do to win against Andy and me?

Cali takes a moment, deciding whether to tell the truth.

CALI
Fantasize.

JEREMY
You fantasized about me?

CALI
We were on a boat --

JEREMY
Better than a beach at sunset, I guess.

CALI
-- fencing.

JEREMY
Now I'd prefer the beach at sunset. I think you can beat Anna. Beneath her 'come-save-me' crap veneer, she wants to win. But if she wins, Robert doesn't. If Robert becomes a duke, she gets to be his duchess.

Cali curls her lip in disgust.

CALI
And Robert?

JEREMY
With Robert, it'll come down to blade work.

Jeremy and Cali begin belly-crawling away from the clearing.

JEREMY (CONT'D)

I've never fenced on the boat. It might be fun. We could act out your fantasy next weekend.

CALI

Fantasies are private.

JEREMY

They don't have to be with people you trust.

CALI

I shouldn't've said anything.

Cali's firm tone silences any retort from Jeremy.

EXT. WOODED AREA - DAY

Laurel gathers kindling as she talks on her cell phone.

LAUREL

(to phone)

Hey Mom, guess what!

INT. CRUISE SHIP BEDROOM - DAY

Mom and Dad wear arctic camo and paint their faces to match.

MOM

(to phone)

Hi Laurel!

Dad waves a brochure: ANTARCTIC SHAG BIRD WATCHING. Mom nods.

INTERCUT BETWEEN WOODED AREA AND CRUISE SHIP BEDROOM

LAUREL

I'm not Lau--

MOM

Yesterday, there was a penguin in one of the lifeboats! The crew was testing the pulleys when a penguin swam in. He waddled around on board before plunging back into the sea. Your dad got photos.

Dad finishes his camo makeup and holds the phone to Mom's ear so she can smear her cheeks white, grey and pale blue.

MOM (CONT'D)

I'd love to chat more, but your dad
and I are off on a shag tour.

Mom hangs up the phone. Laurel reflects on Mom's statement.

EXT. FENCING FIELD - DAY

Cali and Anna salute each other and the Referee with swords.
Laurel, Jeremy, Robert, Mabel, Morag and Re-enactors watch.

REFEREE

The first semi-final match of the
Silver Dagger tournament: Calida
Gates and Anna Van Der Moussen.

ANNA

Actually, I'm back to Hu.

JEREMY

(like "anywho")
Anna Hu?

MABEL

(to Morag)
I would've rushed into marriage to
change that name too.

Morag nods agreement.

Anna's mask goes on and her infantile act comes off. She
whips her sword like a ninja. Cali gulps and closes her eyes.

EXT. JAPANESE GARDEN - DAY - FANTASY SEQUENCE

A koi fish swishes in a bubbling pond. Bonsai trees cluster
around a pagoda. Cali and Anna appear. Anna looks around.

ANNA

I'm Chinese not Japanese.

The koi fish are replaced by pandas crunching on bamboo.

CALI

Can we fence now?

Cali and Anna run at each other. Swords clash. No hits.

CALI (CONT'D)

I hate your girly little giggle.

ANNA

Wait 'til you hear my victory
laugh.

Anna chases Cali down a winding stone path. They fence.

CALI

I hate your super-shiny hair and
your stupid hair bow.

ANNA

You're spending a lot of energy on
me. I'm flattered.

Cali chases Anna across perfectly-raked sand. They fence.

CALI

I hate your flashy cubic zirconia
ring. By the way, it's O.O.P.

Anna backflips onto one corner of the pagoda roof.

ANNA

You're envious.

Cali scissor-kicks in the air to the pagoda's opposite edge.

CALI

I can buy my own costume jewelry,
thanks.

They thrust and block. Anna has the upper hand.

ANNA

But can you get two men to fight
for you? No. The one guy who sort
of wanted you actually wanted me.

CALI

What's your secret?

Anna jumps in crane pose off the roof. Cali somersaults off.

ANNA

Egg yolks mixed with conditioner.
They make my hair shiny.

Cali and Anna fence around a panda, using it as a shield. The
panda crunches on bamboo, oblivious to its new purpose.

ANNA (CONT'D)

This whole Zen garden's pretty and
all, but it's super-racist.

CALI

It's a fantasy. If you're upset,
take it up with my sub-conscious.

Anna lands a non-fatal hit to Cali's wrist. Cali's surprised.

ANNA

Surprised you, huh?

CALI

You're quite the enigma. What kind
of girl leaves a guy who's trying
to make the world a happier place?

ANNA

I live in an empty apartment with
no one to cuddle at night.

CALI

Get a dog.

ANNA

I'm allergic.

Cali and Anna fence at the base of a waterfall next to a
stack of rocks with carved words: SERENITY. TRANQUILITY. ANNA
SUCKS. Anna pauses to read these inspirational messages.

CALI (O.S.)

Then get a snake. A boa constrictor
would cuddle you real nice.

Anna looks around. Where's Cali? A tense moment of fear.

Cali bursts through the waterfall, blade first. Anna's sword
reacts with a hit on Cali's ankle. Cali slashes Anna's side.

EXT. FENCING FIELD - DAY

Cali has her sword against Anna's ribs while Anna's blade is
against Cali's boot. The Referee looks worried.

CALI AND ANNA

Gotcha!

Anna giggles, her infantile persona back in place.

ROBERT

(to Referee)

Anna's second hit landed before
Cali's did.

JEREMY
 (to Referee)
 S.C.A. fencing mimics medieval
 duels. A punctured lung is more
 lethal than a few skin slashes.

The Referee considers Jeremy's point. Jeremy presses on.

JEREMY (CONT'D)
 If they'd been dueling for real,
 Anna would die first.

ROBERT
 They're girls. There is no "real"
 for female medieval dueling.

Mabel and Morag glare at Robert. The hatred is on.

REFEREE
 Winner: Calida.

ROBERT
 That's unfair. They should have a
 rematch.

REFEREE
 The judge's ruling is binding. I'll
 see you tomorrow to referee your
 match.

Robert backs down. The Referee leaves.

ROBERT
 (to Jeremy)
 Of course he'd favor you.

Robert consoles Anna with a hug and too-long kiss.

CALI
 (to Jeremy)
 Why would Robert think the ref
 favors you?

JEREMY
 He was my chaperone when I joined
 the SCA at seventeen.

CALI
 Are you related?

JEREMY
 No.

CALI
You never mentioned a chaperone
didn't have to be family. I could
have gone home.

Cali walks away.

EXT. CALI AND LAUREL'S TENT - DAY

Cali exits, in a medieval dress again. Laurel lies in wait.

LAUREL
So can I date him?

Cali gasps in surprise.

CALI
Hi -- Berthildis.

LAUREL
Hi. Are you satisfied Jeremy's a
good guy?

CALI
He withheld crucial information.

LAUREL
About what?

CALI
Someone else could've chaperoned
you when I wanted to leave.

LAUREL
What would you have done? Gone home
to an empty house, eaten your
weight in ice cream and fantasized
a hundred ways to dismember Robert?

CALI
No. Maybe.

LAUREL
Here, at least, we're together.

Laurel offers Cali the sweetest sisterly smile. Cali melts.

CALI
Would dating Jeremy make you happy?

LAUREL
Yeah.

CALI

Then you have my blessing. He's a great guy.

INT. MEAL TENT - DAY

Cali, Jeremy, Swannoc, Darius and Gwommie watch Laurel and Servers emerge from the kitchen. The Dinner Herald stands.

DINNER HERALD

First course: nettle pudding.

Laurel serves bowls of pudding to Cali, Jeremy and friends.

LAUREL

I hope you still have extra snacks.

Cali inspects her pudding.

CALI

Nettles like the garden weed?

Jeremy tastes.

JEREMY

Yup. With top notes of dandelion leaves.

Cali, Jeremy, Swannoc, Gwommie and Darius push bowls away.

DINNER HERALD

Second course: brymlent baked in its own coffin.

In tandem, they all stand up.

EXT. CAMPFIRE NEAR TENTS - NIGHT

Cali, Jeremy, Darius, Swannoc and Gwommie roast hot dogs, marshmallows and grilled cheese sandwiches. Cali licks melted cheese from her fingers.

CALI

I love medieval cooking.

Jeremy's cell phone rings from a hidden pocket in his shirt. He takes it out, checks who's calling. He pulls a face.

JEREMY

Not again.

Jeremy stands, walks away from the campfire, answers.

JEREMY (CONT'D)

Hi.

(listens)

There must be someone else who can
rescue you.

Cali stands, approaches as Jeremy listens to a reply.

JEREMY (CONT'D)

(to phone)

That's far. I'll come tomorrow.
You'll be fine for a night.

Mabel and Morag walk past clutching their stomachs.

MABEL

(to Morag)

I'll trade you as many Coumadins as
you want if you'll give me even one
Compazine.

MORAG

I was going to say the same to you.

JEREMY

(to phone)

Okay, okay. I'm on my way.

Jeremy ends the call, lowers the phone.

CALI

Sailing emergency?

JEREMY

Worse. I have to bail my parents
out of jail.

On this, Mabel and Morag set down their chairs to listen.

CALI

You don't look worried.

JEREMY

It's kind of a regular occurrence.
They have this bucket list. I asked
them if they could please give it a
rest during S.C.A. events, but no.

CALI

What's their bucket list?

JEREMY

Having al fresco sex in every lake
in the state.

Cali struggles not to laugh.

CALI
Apple doesn't fall far from the
tree, I guess.

JEREMY
What?

CALI
Didn't you say your first time was
outside?

JEREMY
Hmf.

Jeremy tries to sound dignified. He fails.

JEREMY (CONT'D)
Why do parents have to have
personal lives?

CALI
Parents are weird. Mine say they
got that way raising me and Laurel.
I think it was mostly Laurel.

Jeremy tucks his phone away, medieval once again.

JEREMY
I'm going to miss your final match
with Robert tomorrow morning.

CALI
You can't bail them out and get
back here in time?

JEREMY
Wish I could.

CALI
I can't beat Robert without you.

Cali and Jeremy don't see Laurel approach from behind them.

JEREMY
You're a pro.

CALI
Even pros have coaches.

JEREMY
Robert will be thinking about
becoming a duke.
(MORE)

JEREMY (CONT'D)

If you stay in the moment, you'll find opportunities to hit him. And this is for luck.

Jeremy kisses her. It's over before Cali can react and before they notice Laurel, who melts back in the dark. Jeremy exits.

Mabel grumbles and gives Morag pills. Morag sees Laurel, gestures "not now" to Mabel, who doesn't understand.

MABEL

Hey, I'm happy to keep 'em.

Mabel sees Laurel too.

MABEL (CONT'D)

(re pills)

Do you think we should offer them to her?

INT. CALI AND LAUREL'S TENT - NIGHT

Cali stares at her cell phone. She's written a text to Mom.

INSERT: the message: Can't find Laurel.

Cali's finger hovers above the SEND button. She hears a noise outside. Laurel enters the tent. Cali's flooded with relief.

CALI

Laurel! Where were you? I was about to start a search party.

LAUREL

I took a walk. And it's Berthildis.

CALI

It's after ten.

LAUREL

You said my curfew's midnight.

CALI

You should've told me where you were going. There are wild animals in the forest.

LAUREL

I learned to speak chipmunk on the internet.

CALI

I roasted you a hot dog in the shape of a spider. It's probably cold, but do you want it now?

LAUREL

I ate already. Have a fun evening?

CALI

I got to know Gwommie and Darius better. Did you know they're both math majors and have been friends since they were kids?

LAUREL

They met when they were three-point-one-four years old.

CALI

So they use that joke on everyone. They're sweet though, and they like you. Have you thought about either one of them as more than a friend?

LAUREL

I told you who I liked.

CALI

Boys are like bejewelled medieval dresses. You can like more than one.

LAUREL

When I see a dress I like, I tell people "That's a nice dress. It would suit my shoes."

Cali tries to puzzle out this response.

CALI

Do you want to borrow a dress? You can. They're just hand-me-downs. I thought you liked designing yours.

LAUREL

I don't want a dress if someone I love wants it.

Cali's still in the dark.

CALI

Did you have a fight with Swannoc about a dress? I saw you eyeing that blue one she has.

LAUREL

It was a gift from her boyfriend.

CALI

She has a boyfriend?

LAUREL

Some theatre guy. But no, I didn't fight with Swannoc.

CALI

So back to my previous question -- are you hungry for a piece of either Gwommie or Darius' cod?

LAUREL

I've had a long day.

Laurel shrugs out of her dress, pulls a sweatshirt over her slip. She crawls into her sleeping bag.

CALI

Is Jeremy the only guy you're interested in? There's no one else?

LAUREL

Why do you ask?

CALI

No reason.

Laurel's silence is deafening.

CALI (CONT'D)

Laurel?

LAUREL

Good night Cali.

EXT. FENCING FIELD - DAY

Anna is Robert's one-woman pep squad. The Referee, King, Queen and Re-enactors are ready for action. Cali and Robert salute the royalty, the ref and each other. Robert salutes Anna with a flourish. Cali looks for Laurel or Jeremy. Nope.

Mabel and Morag sit their chairs. The King approaches Mabel.

KING

Hey Mom. I've barely seen you. Have you enjoyed the weekend?

MABEL

It's better than a handful of
Ativans.

EXT. ISOLATED TROPICAL BEACH - DAY - FANTASY SEQUENCE

Cali faces Robert, masks gone, swords very much present.

CALI

(to herself)
Stay in the moment.

EXT. FENCING FIELD - DAY

Cali and Robert circle each other, neither ready to attack.
Only Cali and Robert can hear each other, not the spectators.

ROBERT

You've done well.

CALI

I'm not done yet.

ROBERT

The silver dagger's mine.

CALI

Then earn it.

Robert attacks. It's intense. With every thrust or lunge, he exhales a "HA!" Cali twists, jumps back, bends like she's doing a limbo. She blocks his hit with a resounding clang.

CALI (CONT'D)

When you were coaching me, I never won a match. But a few lessons with Jeremy, and I'm coming out on top. How are you going to feel when you lose your dukedom?

Robert continues attacking. Cali's full-on defence.

ROBERT

I've won the silver dagger two years in a row. I deserve to be a duke.

CALI

What you deserve is --

INT. SEWER - DAY - FANTASY SEQUENCE

Dank. Dark. Murky waters flow around Cali and Robert.

CALI
(to herself)
Dammit.

EXT. FENCING FIELD - DAY

We're back. Robert gains ground. He and Cali fence as equals: attack and block. Anna whoops it up in all her girlish glee.

CALI
I can't believe you chose Medieval
Hello Kitty over me.

Cali's in full attack mode. Robert can only defend himself.

ROBERT
You're angry. I get it. I'm sorry.
But I didn't cheat or lie to you.

CALI
You knew it was my first time. I
deserved more than someone who was
biding his time.

ROBERT
Anna was married! I didn't think
there was any chance with her.

CALI
Aren't you worried she'll do to you
what she did to her husband?

Robert pauses. Cali hits him on the arm. Robert refocuses.

ROBERT
She won't.

CALI
Even when you lose and can't make
her a duchess?

ROBERT
I'm not going to lose. But I'll
tell you one thing. If I win, it'll
make me happy. But if I lose --

CALI
When you lose --

ROBERT
-- will that make you happy?

Cali hesitates. Robert taps Cali on the arm. Cali commits.

CALI
Yes.

Cali hits Robert on the head. Her sword clangs with victory. Robert's dumbfounded. Anna's dumbfounded. The Queen's happy. The Referee grabs Cali's sword arm and raises it high.

REFEREE
Winner of the Wandover Field Silver
Dagger Tournament: Calida Gates.

QUEEN
Girl power!

The Queen whispers to the King. The King isn't thrilled with what the Queen says, but she's very persuasive. Mabel and Morag wander over. They chime in, side with the Queen. Outnumbered, the King throws up his hands. Finally:

KING
We expected to offer the title of
duke to today's winner. My fair
queen has suggested that the first
female winner deserves that honor.
I present you Duchess Calida.

The King drapes a magnificent robe on Cali. Robert's floored.

EVENT HERALD
Huzzah!

KING, QUEEN, RE-ENACTORS
Huzzah! Huzzah!

The King shakes Cali's hand. The Queen hugs Cali. Swannoc, Darius and Gwommie approach Cali as the Re-enactors disburse.

DARIUS
Congratulations.

GWOMMIE
I never really liked Robert.

SWANNOC
Have you seen Berthildis? I
would've thought she'd be here.

GWOMMIE
Maybe she's practicing archery?

Swannoc, Darius and Gwommie leave. Cali sees Robert and Anna.

ANNA
 (to Robert)
 I know a way to make you feel like
 a king.

Robert and Anna leave. Cali's left alone, the farthest thing from happy. She fishes her cell out of her bag, makes a call.

INT. CRUISE SHIP BEDROOM - DAY

Mom's dressed as Mrs. Claus. Dad ties on a big pillow belly.

MOM
 (to phone)
 Hi honey. How are you holding up?

Dad puts on the red pants and jacket.

INTERCUT CELL PHONE CONVERSATION

CALI
 Okay. They made me a duchess.

Dad puts on a white beard and Santa hat.

MOM
 (to phone)
 Trading sex for titles. Very
 medieval.

Mom picks up a whip with bells. She playfully hits Dad.

CALI
 (sarcastic)
 Thanks Mom. What's that jingling?

Dad tries to tie his boots over his pillow belly. He can't.

MOM
 We're going to visit a reindeer
 settlement. Here's your father.

Mom gives Dad the phone. She drops down, ties his boots.

CALI
 Reindeer? Did you switch poles?

DAD
 Norwegians brought them here a
 hundred years ago. We wanted to
 bring them some ho --

(As in "ho, ho, ho")

Mom playfully whips Dad again. He's surprised, drops the phone. The phone call ends abruptly. Now Cali's surprised.

EXT. DANCING AREA - DAY

Laurel, Swannoc, Darius, Gwommie and Re-enactors dance around a Maypole to music playing from a cell phone attached to speakers. Cali, still in her duchess robe, strides to Laurel. Laurel stops, curtseys to Cali. The others curtsey or bow.

LAUREL

Your Grace.

SWANNOC, DARIUS, GWOMMIE

Your Grace.

CALI

(to Laurel)

I stayed for you, and you couldn't even watch me in the final?

LAUREL

You kissed Jeremy.

Gossip ripples through the Re-enactors like a wave.

CALI

He kissed me.

LAUREL

How did you feel after the kiss?

CALI

It doesn't matter.

LAUREL

The plight of the bumblebee doesn't matter. Unstable Middle Eastern dictators with nuclear weapons don't matter. Film studios making nothing but comic book sequels doesn't matter. This matters.

CALI

Maybe we can agree to disagree.

Laurel grabs the Maypole, levels it at Cali.

LAUREL

Raise your weapon, sister!

Laurel charges at Cali, who raises her sword.

MABEL

Five Lisinpril on Moonbeam.

MORAG

I'm not betting on this.

EXT. CASTLE WALL - DAY - FANTASY SEQUENCE

Cali faces a wall of stone surrounded by a moat. The colorful streamers atop Laurel's Maypole flutter above the wall. A drawbridge creeks down and a primitive cannon rolls onto it.

CALI

Laurel?

LAUREL

Okay.

CALI

Okay what?

But the word wasn't to Cali. Swannoc, Gwommie, Darius and twenty SCA Re-enactors burst across the drawbridge. They shoot primitive firearms (one shot before a reload). Cali scrambles to hide behind the cannon. They're nearly upon her.

SCA RE-ENACTOR

How dare you hurt Laurel!

CALI

It's Berthildis.

Cali uses the cannon as a shield, weaving around it as she avoids firearm shots and slices everything in reach. She bends as two firearm shots whiz past -- one from the right, one from the left -- and each hit the opposing Re-enactor. They fall into the moat with a splash.

CALI (CONT'D)

I didn't do anything intentionally.

Cali slices SCA Re-enactor's torso with her gleaming sharp sword. She cuts off the arm of another Re-enactor reloading his firearm. Cali ducks to avoid another firearm shot, falls in the moat. Sopping, she hauls herself out of the water.

CALI (CONT'D)

Laurel --

Laurel peers over the castle wall. The Maypole flutters.

LAUREL
It's Berthildis!

A Re-enactor climbs onto the cannon to attack. Cali flicks her head and water from her wet hair splashes into the Re-enactor's eyes. The Re-enactor doesn't see Cali's sword decapitate him. He falls off the cannon.

CALI
I'm sorry Jeremy kissed me.

The Re-enactors pause, look to Laurel. Is that okay?

LAUREL
Not good enough.

Swannoc, Darius and Gwommie reload their firearms. Another Re-enactor runs at Cali holding his firearm like a bat. Cali throws her sword in the air, grabs the firearm. They tussle until the sword falls, cleaves the Re-enactor in two. Cali grabs her sword, holds the firearm as a baton and turns --

Swannoc, Darius and Gwommie have firearms trained on Cali.

CALI
(calling)
I'll tell Jeremy he'd be happier
with you.

Swannoc, Darius and Gwommie disappear. Cali's instantly dry. She walks past the cannon up the drawbridge. She peers around the castle walls, but Laurel and the Maypole are absent.

LAUREL (O.S.)
Don't say that.

Cali turns around. Laurel points the Maypole like a lance straight at Cali's stomach. Cali drops her sword and firearm.

CALI
It's true. You make people happy.
Though maybe not right this second.

LAUREL
Remember at that fair when the
clown made me a unicorn out of
balloons?

Laurel gestures around her waist, with a tail in back and a mane and harness in front. She "clip-clops" with her tongue.

LAUREL (CONT'D)

I thought it was cool, but you talked me out of wearing it to my grade nine orientation.

Cali nods, clueless as to where this is going.

LAUREL (CONT'D)

When I couldn't decide between taking Ancient Phoenician or American Sign Language at school, who did I ask to help me choose?

(signs in ASL)

I chose you.

(speaks)

When I thought I'd caught malaria from that scary-looking mosquito at the beach, whose opinion did I trust that I was okay?

CALI

You seemed convinced by the third doctor.

LAUREL

It was you. You said you're the big sister and you get to die first. I'm safe while you're still alive.

CALI

Then you might not want to point that lance at me. Just saying.

Laurel thrusts the lance at Cali. She jumps back.

LAUREL

I trust you more than anyone in the world.

Laurel thrusts again. Cali jumps back a little more.

LAUREL (CONT'D)

I think of you as my soulmate.

Laurel thrusts a third time. Cali jumps back again, but now she's up against the castle wall. There's nowhere to go.

LAUREL (CONT'D)

But you still shut me out.

Cali's worried this is the end, but Laurel drops the Maypole.

LAUREL (CONT'D)

You construct these elaborate fantasies in your mind instead of connecting with real people.

That hits Cali harder than the lance. She takes a moment.

CALI

My first memory is Great-Aunt Bethany saying 'why can't you be more like your sister?' You're my best friend but someti --

LAUREL

I'm your best friend? See, you'd think I would've known that.

CALI

I've always been private. Like you've always been weird.

Laurel takes that as a compliment.

LAUREL

Why didn't you tell me you like Jeremy?

CALI

I don't.

LAUREL

I saw that kiss.

CALI

It was nothing.

LAUREL

There you go again. Shutting me out.

The truth is hard for Cali, knowing it will hurt Laurel.

CALI

I didn't realize I liked him until he kissed me. And I only got close to vet him for you.

LAUREL

Huh. I love irony.

Laurel smiles, sunshine once more. She pats Cali's arm.

CALI

How can you always stay upbeat?

LAUREL

I remind myself that no matter how bad things get, I can count on my sister. And that's better than some sheer fantasy.

CALI

It is.

EXT. DANCING AREA - DAY

Cali and Laurel reappear, the only two around.

LAUREL

I've been thinking. Jeremy doesn't even have an S.C.A name. He's not weird enough for me. But we do have some unfinished business.

Laurel inspects the sky.

LAUREL (CONT'D)

Looks like a storm's brewing. And Jeremy's coming back tonight?

CALI

After midnight, I think.

LAUREL

I'll need an extension on my curfew.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Cali walks, deep in thought.

EXT. WOODS BY SKINNY DIPPING POND - DAY

Mabel and Morag watch Robert and Anna (we only hear them -- splashing, laughing, smooching). Morag uses her binoculars.

MORAG

Am I imagining it or is Valentino's smile more crooked today?

MABEL

I do not have ants crawling up my ass to look at Valentino's smile.

Mabel reaches a hand for the binoculars. Morag keeps looking.

MABEL (CONT'D)
You're hogging the binoculars.

MORAG
They're mine.

MABEL
I share my camera.

Mabel raises the camera in Robert and Anna's direction.

MORAG
Here.

Morag gives Mabel the binoculars. Mabel lowers the camera.

MORAG (CONT'D)
Do you hear that?

Approaching feet (OS). Mabel and Morag stand up slowly. Cali trips on Mabel and falls onto Morag. The binoculars break.

NOTE: The following conversation is in hushed voices.

MABEL
The binoculars.

CALI
I'm fine, thanks.

Mabel raises the camera and tries to click. It doesn't work.

MABEL
The camera.

CALI
I'm sorry.

MORAG
My son will replace them.
(to Mabel)
He's always saying he needs
birthday gift ideas.

MABEL
(to Morag)
That's so sweet.

MORAG
What does your son get you?

MABEL
(gestures around her)
Passes to weird camping events.

MORAG

Oh right.

CALI

(at normal volume)

If you're both okay, I'll keep walking. You're not lost, are you?

MABEL

Shh. They'll hear you.

CALI

Who?

Robert and Anna laugh (OS). Cali notices the equipment.

CALI (CONT'D)

I see.

MABEL

You spied on them too!

CALI

For fencing.

MABEL

I'd fence if I didn't have arthritis.

Robert and Anna frolic in the water (OS). Cali frowns.

MORAG

We know you miss him. But at least you have Sunshine.

Cali looks up at the cloudy sky. What? Never mind.

CALI

I miss who I thought he was.

MABEL

You're not who you seemed to be at first either.

CALI

Thank you?

MORAG

Life is richer if you surprise yourself. Do something you never thought you'd do.

Cali glances in Robert and Anna's direction. A twinkle sparkles in her eye. She roars, rips branches. Watch out!

ANNA (O.S.)
A panther!

ROBERT (O.S.)
That's not a panther call.

Anna isn't waiting to find out. Robert runs after her (OS).

CALI
(to Morag and Mabel)
Any other suggestions?

MABEL
Take photos of yourself. Naked.

Morag nods agreement. Cali reflects on it, waves, leaves.

MABEL (CONT'D)
(to Morag)
I like her.

EXT. ROBERT'S TENT - NIGHT

Cali holds Robert's retainer. She hears kissing noises and Anna's giggle coming from inside the tent (OS). She starts to put down the retainer outside the tent flap then steels herself. She coughs. No change. She coughs again.

ROBERT
I'm busy.

CALI
Give me one minute.

Robert unzips the tent, sticks his head out.

ROBERT
What are you doing?

CALI
Surprising myself. Here.

Robert reaches to take his retainer, but Cali holds tight.

CALI (CONT'D)
Do you know me?

A rustle in the tent (OS). Robert's word comes out as a yelp:

ROBERT
Sure.

CALI
I mean really know me.

ROBERT
Can we talk about this tomorrow?

CALI
Fine.

Cali turns to leave, still holding the retainer.

ROBERT
Give me that.

CALI
Answer me.

ROBERT
No.

Cali thinks he's rejecting her. She turns. He clarifies:

ROBERT (CONT'D)
No, I didn't feel I knew you.

CALI
Is that why --

Cali gestures to Anna inside the tent, then reconsiders.

CALI (CONT'D)
Don't answer that.

ANNA (O.S.)
(to Robert)
Tell her about their nicknames.

ROBERT
Shh.

CALI
Nicknames?

Anna pokes her head out. She and Robert are cheek-to-cheek.

ANNA
When you and Laurel first joined
the S.C.A., we called you "the
lock" and Laurel "the key".

ROBERT
It wasn't in a mean way.

Cali gives Robert his retainer.

CALI
Sorry I took your title.

ROBERT
I got more than I expected here.

When Robert and Anna nuzzle cheeks, Cali's okay with it.

EXT. HILLCREST - NIGHT

Thunder and lightning but no rain. Laurel, in a heavy cloak with a hood, holds a lantern. She watches the parking lot. From their lawn chairs, Morag and Mabel watch Laurel.

MORAG
I'm cold.

MABEL
Take a Pentoxil.

MORAG
It's not poor circulation. Let's go.

MABEL
It's a stormy night. We have an agitated young woman and a romantic young man. It's like a real life Wuthering Heights.

MORAG
That's not period. I think this is more like The Canterbury Tales.

MABEL
Sunshine is hardly the Wife of Bath.

MORAG
Moonbeam could be a female Beowolf.

MABEL
Beowolf's not part of the Canterbury Tales.

MORAG
I was only -- Look! It's Underdog.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Headlights. A car enters, parks. Jeremy gets out of his car.

EXT. HILLCREST - NIGHT

Jeremy walks. Lightning illuminates Laurel's ominous face.

LAUREL

Jeremy.

JEREMY

Berthildis? Is Cali okay?

LAUREL

Her Grace is fine.

JEREMY

So she won the tournament and a title. Was it epic?

Laurel raises the lantern. She's never been more grave.

LAUREL

Don't use me.

JEREMY

Uh, okay, I'll ask someone else.

Laurel advances, waving the lantern in his face.

LAUREL

When you said "join the S.C.A. It's the best!" and "you're a great dancer. You'll love Wandover Field Week", I thought it was for me. But you wanted to spend time with Cali.

JEREMY

The S.C.A. is the best, and you are a great dancer.

Laurel gets even closer. The lanterns casts an eerie glow.

LAUREL

Answer the question.

JEREMY

You didn't ask a question.

LAUREL

If Cali and I were about to be devoured by army ants, and you could only rescue one of us, who would it be?

JEREMY

If you met army ants, I'm sure you could convince them to make you their queen.

LAUREL

Don't compliment me when I'm scolding you.

Laurel rattles the lantern. Jeremy prepares for the worst.

LAUREL (CONT'D)

You made me think you wanted me.

JEREMY

Is that why --

Jeremy gestures to the situation.

JEREMY (CONT'D)

Laurel, I'm sorry. I think you're terrific. You're like the little sister I always wanted. You're fun and bubbly and really cool --

LAUREL

I'm not cool, Jeremy.

JEREMY

I think you're cool. I'm sorry if it felt like I led you on. I'd be mad if someone did that to me.

Laurel hugs Jeremy. Jeremy nervously watches the lantern almost spill. Laurel releases her hold, rights the lantern.

LAUREL

I forgive you.

JEREMY

Thanks. What does -- uh -- Cali think of all this?

LAUREL

Hard to say. If it was up to me --

Laurel waves the lantern in Jeremy's face. He pulls back.

LAUREL (CONT'D)

-- there's no one I'd rather have dating my sister. Welcome to the family.

Laurel hugs Jeremy again. Jeremy watches the lantern again.

LAUREL (CONT'D)
 But if you hurt her, know that I
 can rally an army fast.

JEREMY
 Of ants?

Laurel smiles enigmatically.

LAUREL
 My chaperone's waiting up for me.

INT. JEREMY'S TENT - NIGHT

In the dark, Jeremy crawls into his sleeping bag.

JEREMY
 Ow!

Jeremy rolls, sees his sword. He uses his cell phone as a
 flashlight. There's a note on the handle. He reads it, exits.

EXT. FENCING FIELD - NIGHT

Mabel and Morag walk and carry their lawn chairs. They see
 Cali holding a lantern. They sit. Jeremy approaches Cali.

JEREMY
 Your Grace.

Jeremy bows.

CALI
 Not you too.

JEREMY
 I thought you were chaperoning.

CALI
 Swannoc's making sure Laurel stays
 out of trouble. Speaking of
 trouble, how are your parents?

JEREMY
 I'm never speaking to them again. I
 gotta say, your note was weird.
 (reads)
 'Beneath a sickle moon, on the
 field of death, a maiden mourns.'

CALI

I asked Laurel to write 'meet me on the field.'

JEREMY

Why didn't you write it?

CALI

I have bad handwriting. Epicly bad. Bards could write songs about it.

JEREMY

Hard to imagine there's something about you that isn't perfect.

CALI

I stole Robert's retainer.

JEREMY

Good for you.

CALI

And then returned it.

JEREMY

Maybe you're not so perfect.

Cali laughs.

CALI

I want you to know me. As much as Laurel. And more. If you want.

JEREMY

I like the sound of that.

CALI

Where should we start?

JEREMY

What do you want to do with your life?

CALI

I want to open a health club for people with disabilities. They often don't get the accommodations they need in standard facilities.

JEREMY

Wow. That's awesome.

CALI

Next question.

JEREMY

How soft are your lips?

CALI

You already know that.

JEREMY

That was one trial. A scientist
needs a double-blind test to prove
something's true.

CALI

Well if it's for science.

A kiss. Cali closes, opens her eyes. She's in the same place.

JEREMY

Where did you go?

CALI

There's no where else I'd rather
be.

Behind Jeremy, fantasy fireworks form a romantic silhouette.

JEREMY

Was that thunder? We should get
inside.

CALI

I think the storm's passed.

Cali kisses Jeremy. Mabel and Morag swoon.

MABEL

(to Morag)

We're going to have to change
Underdog's nickname.

Mabel and Morag ad-lib nicknames ("Sweet Lips", etc) until we

FADE OUT.