

Good Ship

BLACK

Music commences from the Shirley Temple song "On the Good Ship Lollipop".

FADE IN:

Shirley Temple struts down the aisle of a passenger train, singing "Good Ship" in the 1934 movie 'Bright Eyes'.

CUT TO:

INT. SMALL HOTEL GYM - NIGHT

MCKENZIE SUTTGARTNER(28) blond, attractive, tough, is drenched in sweat as she runs in place on a humming TREADMILL.

The Shirley Temple movie plays overhead on a lonely LED TV MONITOR.

The tiny one-room gym, encased in glass in an abandoned corner of the hotel, is - with the exception of McKenzie - completely empty.

She absent-mindedly stares up at the monitor as she jogs in place, breathing rhythmically.

She speaks to us with a deliberate, plodding, street-wise cadence.

MCKENZIE (VO)

Hotel gyms are some of the loneliest places on the planet. Business travelers are usually too exhausted to workout, musicians typically confine their workouts to their hotel rooms, and vacationers are staunchly committed to avoiding workouts all together... which leaves me: a woman working in television.

CUT ON SOUND: THE HEAVY MECHANICAL CLICK OF STADIUM LIGHTS TURNING ON

INT. INDOOR FOOTBALL STADIUM - DAY

Overhead, looking down on the darkened field, we see the LIGHTS turn on in different sections of the stadium with each dense, mechanical click.

Several FOOTBALL PLAYERS in sleeveless NEON COLORED LYCRA SHIRTS and black shorts of the same material, warm up and stretch on the field.

COACHES, SCOUTS, and GIRLFRIENDS stand around idly observing the players.

A TELEVISION CAMERA captures MCKENZIE, standing in a BUSINESS SUIT, reading silently from a PIECE OF PAPER as a PRODUCTION ASSISTANT gathers SLACK from McKenzie's MICROPHONE CORD.

A young FEMALE MAKE-UP ARTIST touches up McKenzie's face and hair.

The football players can be seen warming up in the background.

The FIELD PRODUCER is heard off-screen.

FIELD PRODUCER (OS)
How we lookin' on sound? Okay,
Susan, she looks good...

The make-up artist gives a few more dabs with her make-up brush and then walks off.

MCKENZIE (VO)
My name is McKenzie Suttgartner.
I've been a football fan my whole
life. I can tell you the starting
Offensive Line of every San
Francisco 49ers team going all the
way back to Montana's rookie season
when he had Ron Singleton, Jon
Ayers, Fred Quillan, Randy Cross,
and Keith Fahnhorst.

As she names these guys we cut between each of their TEAM MUG SHOTS.

MCKENZIE (VO)
I can break down the distinction
between the pistol offense and the
shot gun spread-option. I can
coherently discuss the gradual
decline of the West Coast Offense
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MCKENZIE (VO) (cont'd)
in the 21st century. I'm thoroughly convinced that I know more about the game than any Stat Geek and Bar Fly in America. But there's only one piece of advice I'd give any woman looking to have a career in TV sports journalism: acting school.

The song 'Cold As Ice' by Foreigner kicks-up.

OPENING CREDIT SEQUENCE:

MONTAGE:

Intercutting shots of McKenzie talking into the camera or interviewing players and coaches in several venues: football practices, games, post game interviews, standing in a crowd of reporters who surround a player answering questions.

CUT TO:

CONTINUING CREDIT SEQUENCE:

INT. AIRPORT TERMINAL - DAY

MCKENZIE walks through a crowded airport terminal dragging a CARRY-ON BAG behind her.

CUT TO:

Continuing Credit Sequence:

INT. AIRPORT BAR - DAY

MCKENZIE sits alone at the airport bar while nursing a BOTTLE OF BEER.

CUT TO:

Continuing Credit Sequence:

EXT. NEW YORK CITY STREET - DAY

MCKENZIE walks down the street amid countless other faces.

CUT TO:

Continuing Credit Sequence:

INT. INDOOR FOOTBALL STADIUM - DAY

The PLAYERS in the neon Lycra tops and black shorts engage in physical tests and drills.

MUSIC FADES.

END OF CREDIT SEQUENCE.

CUT TO:

INT. INDOOR FOOTBALL STADIUM - HALLWAY - DAY

Several LARGE FOOTBALL PLAYERS with their shirts off, stand in line waiting to take front and side profile SNAP-SHOTS.

They move on, one by one, to another line where their wing span is measured by a SPORTS TRAINER.

In another line, players step up to a SCALE where their weight is displayed in RED ELECTRONIC DIGITS overhead.

MCKENZIE (VO)

The NFL Scouting Combine: The
looking glass - a week long weigh
station to every young boy's
wildest dreams.

CUT TO:

INT. NETWORK OFFICES - WAITING AREA - DAY

Several ATTRACTIVE WOMEN, mostly blond, all dressed in business attire, sit in the waiting area each holding an 8x10 headshot.

(CONTINUED)

MCKENZIE (VO)

The league itself has been going uninterrupted since June 24th, 1922. But these Combine events, as we recognize them today, began in 1982 in Tampa, Florida. They quickly evolved into a systematic, highly organized matrix for finally testing whether or not a player is fitted to live out his dreams.

INT. NETWORK OFFICES - PRESSMAN'S OFFICE - DAY

FRANK PRESSMAN(50) - tailored suit, manicured fingers, heavy set - sits behind his desk and watches MCKENZIE, who sits across from him.

He speaks with a paternal calmness.

PRESSMAN

How ya doin', McKenzie.

MCKENZIE

I'm... terrific.

PRESSMAN

Yeah?

MCKENZIE

Definitely. Things are pretty darn good. Not a whole lot to complain about.

PRESSMAN

You seem so serious all the time.

MCKENZIE (SARDONIC)

That's just how my face looks. My features have always been pretty grave. I guess I take after my dad that way. Inside I'm a happy little unicorn... just dancin' around.

Pressman smirks.

PRESSMAN

Good. Well... as you know, Karin Winters is moving on. She'd like to explore new avenues in her career. So we're going to be evaluating candidates, including yourself, to determine who'll ultimately replace Karin in-studio with the guys.

(CONTINUED)

McKenzie tries hard to remain expressionless.

PRESSMAN

Now, we think all of you are immanently capable of doing the job and posses all of the skillsets needed to thrive in the position. So, I can tell you right now, it's not gunna be an easy decision. But whomever we choose, just know anyone of you guys could have done the job just as well.

MCKENZIE

Okay.

PRESSMAN

Would you like to ask me anything?

MCKENZIE

Um... yeah. I guess I'm sort of wondering- if we're all qualified, how will you choose?

PRESSMAN

Well... like I said, it won't be an easy decision. Anything else?

MCKENZIE

Not that it makes any difference but - there's been talk -

PRESSMAN

Talk?

MCKENZIE

Tweets, texts... You know, inter-office email suggesting that Alison Kreiger is being considered?

PRESSMAN

We are looking at outside candidates as well, yes.

MCKENZIE

Not that it makes any difference.

INT. NETWORK OFFICES - WAITING AREA - MOMENTS LATER

MCKENZIE walks out of Pressman's office.

She briefly eyes the women sitting in the waiting-chairs.

She walks over to the COFFEE POT and pours herself a cup.

She raises the cup to her mouth and hesitates.

She abruptly VOMITS all over the counter and floor.

Gasps are heard as everyone watches McKenzie spew out onto the floor.

She looks around, obviously embarrassed.

INT. DRUG STORE - NIGHT

As we look straight down a vacant aisle in the brightly lit Drug Store - an overhanging sign which reads: FEMININE PRODUCTS - we observe McKenzie who comes around the corner into the aisle.

She bends down and picks up a PREGNANCY TEST BOX.

MCKENZIE
99% accuracy.

She picks up another brand.

INSERT: The brand is called First Responder.

MCKENZIE
First responder? Makes it sound
like a terrorist attack.

McKenzie holds the box for a moment and considers it.

SMASH CUT:

INT. DRUG STORE - CHECK OUT - MOMENTS LATER

INSERT: MCKENZIE slaps the box of "FIRST RESPONDER" onto the check-out counter.

INT. MCKENZIE'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - NIGHT

MCKENZIE stands in front of her sink, tearing open the FIRST RESPONDER PACKAGE.

She studies the features of the applicator.

She walks over to the toilet and takes a seat.

She waits, staring up at the ceiling.

We hear the distinct sound of liquid streaming into the toilet.

JUMP CUT:

McKenzie stands over the sink, studying the applicator plus/minus symbol.

It displays a plus sign.

MCKENZIE

This is not happening.

JUMP CUT:

McKenzie is on her knees, her head inside the CABINET under the sink.

Sounds of shifting cleaning products can be heard as McKenzie pokes around under the sink.

A HOUSE CAT curiously crawls at her heels.

MCKENZIE (VO)

I read somewhere on Yelp that the morning after pill is effective up to seven days after conception.

On her knees, McKenzie opens a water damaged box of MORNING AFTER PILLS.

MCKENZIE (VO)

If you're already forming opinions about me, first of all: Screw you. Some of us aren't as spotless as you apparently take yourself to be. Secondly: I don't sleep around. I had sexual intercourse two days ago after going three whole months without any sort of human contact

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MCKENZIE (VO) (cont'd)
with a person of the opposite sex -
worth mentioning. So, a week ago,
when my cat Penelope was having
another one of her screaming fits
because she was in ridiculous heat,
I finally broke down and got her
fixed. And after a three month long
drought - not to be crude about it
- but, quite frankly, I got myself
fixed in a different sort of way.

McKenzie pops the pill and drinks it down.

MCKENZIE (VO)
Getting pregnant as a first year TV
reporter is like a rookie running
back with fumbling issues. Adrian
Peterson coughing the ball up every
now and then is light years away
from a fourth string running back
fumbling in a preseason game before
he even makes the 53 man roster.

Her CELL PHONE, sitting on the bathroom sink, VIBRATES and
buzzes.

McKenzie picks up the phone.

MCKENZIE (EXASPERATED)
Hello.

Pause.

MCKENZIE
Can you-- I'm sorry, I can't do
this right now. Forgive me.

She hangs up.

INT. INDOOR FOOTBALL STADIUM - DAY

The FOOTBALL PLAYERS, in LYCRA, run around performing tests
and drills.

McKenzie, wearing a plastic FIELD PASS around her neck,
stands on the sideline, staring into space with her arms
folded.

MCKENZIE (VO)
My dad has something called Acute
Myelogenous Lymphoma. After he was
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MCKENZIE (VO) (cont'd)
diagnosed, he was forced to retire
from a dazzling career as a
professor of Greek mythology in
Berkeley, California. He'd written
over fifty books on the subject in
thirty-six years of tenure. Publish
or Perish.

Someone calls her name off screen.

She looks to see who it is.

The voice belongs to BRIAN (late 20s), a tall relatively
good-looking guy in BLUE BUTTON-UP, KHAKI SLACKS and FIELD
PASS.

BRIAN

Hey.

McKenzie is visibly not happy to see him.

MCKENZIE

Oh hey.

BRIAN

I guess you never got my texts.

She keeps her arms folded the whole time while speaking to
him, her eyes always forward, observing the players.

MCKENZIE

You texted me?

BRIAN

Yeah, like a lot.

MCKENZIE

Apparently, smart phones aren't
very smart. I'm probably due for an
upgrade.

BRIAN

Yeah. So what do you think of the
draft class?

MCKENZIE

Not much to think about.

BRIAN

Uh... I'm sure the players would
beg to differ.

(CONTINUED)

MCKENZIE

All I'm saying is there's very few skilled players this year. Maybe some talented Offensive linemen but that's about it.

BRIAN

Printers is good.

MCKENZIE

He's good compared to the rest of his draft-class. You hold him up against guys already in the league and he doesn't look so good, does he?

BRIAN

He's a rookie. He hasn't even taken a snap yet. Give him a chance.

MCKENZIE

I'm sorry but in today's NFL, if you wanna call yourself a first rounder, you're basically saying you should be immediately thought of as one of the top ten quarterbacks in the world - not just in your draft-class but in the entire league. Look at Russell Wilson, Andrew Luck, R.G. THREE.

BRIAN

Tom Brady.

MCKENZIE

What about him?

BRIAN

He wasn't considered a top ten guy when he first got in.

MCKENZIE

Well, if you draft sub par guys based on the off-chance they might turn out to be Tom Brady, I'll give you about 10 weeks before you're fired as GM.

Pause.

MCKENZIE

That's why Alison Kreiger's a slam dunk.

(CONTINUED)

Beat.

BRIAN

Who's Alison Kreiger?

MCKENZIE

What do you do again?

BRIAN

I'm uh... I'm personal assistant to Mitch Bokamper's personal assistant. You know the GM for--

MCKENZIE

I know who Mitch is... Mitch Bokamper has an assistant, and you're the assistant to the assistant.

BRIAN

Yeah.

MCKENZIE

So when Mitch tells your boss to do something, he turns around and tells you to do it.

BRIAN

I guess so, yeah.

MCKENZIE

Looks like your boss has got it made. He's living on the island.

BRIAN

Living on the island.

MCKENZIE

Something my dad used to say. It's sort of when you find a job that pays a lot of money for you to do absolutely zilch. Meanwhile the rest of the world sees you as a douche.

BRIAN

Hm. Seems like a pretty small price to pay. Just sayin' You never told me who what's-her-name is. Alison.

MCKENZIE

I thought you were a football fan.

(CONTINUED)

BRIAN

I am.

MCKENZIE

Any true fan should be able to identify the women who cover the league - by name. If you know who Jimmy Graham is, you should know who Pam Oliver is. If you can tell me who LaSean McCoy is, you should already know who Erin Andrews is. If you can identify Von Miller, you should be able to do the same with Melissa Stark. Or Lindsay Rhodes, or Bonnie Bernstein... Lisa Salters? Michelle Tofoya? Linda Cohn? Suzy Kolber? Michelle Beadle?

Pause.

BRIAN

I knew who you were.

MCKENZIE

Did you?

Pause.

She walks off.

BRIAN

Aw, come on.

CUT TO:

BRIAN'S ONLINE DATING PROFILE.

Pictures of Brian with pro football PLAYERS and EXECUTIVES.

- Skiing.

- Acting like he's resting his arm on the Eiffel Tower.

MCKENZIE (VO)

Full disclosure: I met this tool on an on an Online Dating site. The great thing about online dating is you can essentially create a guy from scratch and he'll actually exist somewhere in your area: Theoretically.

As she says this:

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