

HAMSTERMACHINE

BLACKOUT

PHONE RINGS- FIRST CHUCH SCHUMER PICK UP CALL-

LEADS TO HOLD MUSIC

LIGHTS GO ON, HOLD MUSIC CONTINUES- TURN DOWN SLIGHTLY QUIETER

CHEY: So then what.

SOLOWAY: And she's like, I can't have this. I'm an activist artist assistant and freelance blogger. I can't do this. And then he's like, yeah. You're a hamster. A triple hamster.

CHEY: Not a hamster but a triple hamster. Like, in the literal sense? Like in the Hairstylist Actress Model Secretary Teller Escort Receptionist H-A-M-S-T-E-R HAMSTER hamster?

SOLOWAY: Triple that.

CHEY: That's so wrong.

SOLOWAY: I mean... it's kind of true.

CHEY: Do you think she's a triple hamster?

SOLOWAY: God no, she has an MRS degree.

CHEY: Okay. So her head is basically a cage with a wheel in it.

SOLOWAY: Yeah! And as she's spinning on the wheel of reason trying to make sense of why she "feels" she can't do it he calls her a *triple* hamster.

SOLOWAY(*in 'Sick Sad World' voice*): She's a 23 yr old freelance intern from East New York having to make the most difficult decision of life. Unable to admit she doesn't want it, she rationalizes with proof that she can't have it.

SOLOWAY: Well, she doesn't have a choice. She has to decide.

The ring back tone cuts to an on-hold recording of Chuck Schumer's voice (first fing), followed by music.

CHEY: Wait...what side is he on again?

SOLOWAY: Ours. Allegedly.

CHEY: Shouldn't we be calling the other side?

SOLOWAY: They're not as understanding. I really get off on having a voice.

CHEY: When is the snatch-cult going to get over this obsession with speech? I'm more than just my mouth.

SOLOWAY: This makes me feel like I'm being seen. How's my phone voice?

CHEY uses her pointer finger to indicate the motion of a spinning wheel, as if to say "out with it already!"

SOLOWAY: Hi-

CHEY: More relatable!

SOLOWAY: Hi my name is Soloway-

CHEY: Softer! Sweeter!

SOLOWAY: Hi, my name is Soloway and I'd like to express how deeply alarmed I am-

CHEY: Be reasonable!

SOLOWAY: Hi, my name is Soloway. I'm not *alarmed* but *confused* and entirely *terror-stricken*-

CHEY: No, no, now you sound like a hysteric. Again.

SOLOWAY: I'm neither *confused* nor *entirely terror-stricken*, but I am deeply concerned about my ability to make choices.

CHEY: Great, that's great. Enough histrionics to communicate that you might be at risk, pared with the earnest self-possession of someone who files their tax return.

SOLOWAY: Story of my life. If I sound like I want it too much no one will believe me.

CHEY: You have to not want it at all. That's when you're really asking for it.

Chuck Schumer "thanks for continuing to hold"

CHEY: Who picks up again?

SOLOWAY: His Staff. They aren't allowed to hang up until we do.

CHEY: Right. They represent us.

SOLOWAY: Nah, we're just a statistic. We represent them.

CHEY: Tea?

Chey and Soloway sip tea.

CHEY: You need to be satisfied in a world that will never live up to your passions.

SOLOWAY: I'm a western woman. I'm hungry.

CHEY: Want me to feed you some lines? *(Shreds paper)*

CHEY: You need to be grateful when you're up, graceful when you're down, and then regulate that like a market.

SOLOWAY: You mean grateful when someone finally manages to get me down?

CHEY: Submission is something to be earned. *(Shreds paper)* You don't jsut bend over and take it.

SOLOWAY: Well, you could.

CHEY: You would.

CHEY *(READING FROM PAPER)*: Do you deserve commitment?

SOLOWAY *(REPEATS LINE)*: Do you deserve commitment?

CHEY: More like, "Do you deserve commitment."

Chuck Schumer "thanks for continuing to hold"

SOLOWAY (*NORMAL AGAIN*): You don't really know someone until you see how they handle a slow internet connection and you don't really know who you are until you realize the love of your life is a pick-up artist.

CHEY (*EMPATHIZING*): It's frustrating to play someone else's game.

SOLOWAY (*PLEADING VOICE*): We've been on hold a very long time. Wait a minuite. *I* do everything. *I* do everything right. I follow the three-day rule and I make the five calls! At this rate I'll be waiting until I hit the wall.

CHEY: I can see that. I can really see that. And you look great. You haven't hit the wall.

SOLOWAY: I can't ride this wave anymore.

CHEY: Oh, don't worry. I think you'll age... young.

SOLOWAY: But you're consoling me the wrong way.

CHEY: I'm just trying to negotiate your feelings.

SOLOWAY: Your empathy is statecraft! You just think you can break the wall. You alienate people for pleasure and entertainment! You have no sense of another person's boundaries! You show up late! You don't care about this society! You just want to instrumentalize it...(*gestures towards audience*)

CHEY: You're the one with the boundary issue. I don't manipulate people, I manipulate what people mean. I know how to keep frame and how to reshift the perspective. We gotta stop losing ourselves in the frame. We're up against it. So empathize. Check your privilege, bitch.

SOLOWAY (*matter of fact*): I am delightful and ambiguous.

CHEY: Literally effortless.

SOLOWAY: No I make it look effortless! I put a lot of work into making this look...(*brink of anger*) natural.

CHEY: You have a victim frame.

SOLOWAY: Have you ever been a victim of sexual assault, domestic abuse, or violence against women?

CHEY: Would it make you feel better if I had?

SOLOWAY: Not everybody has the same frame!

CHEY: I don't treat my frame like a cage. Personally.

SOLOWAY: Men don't need rights with a woman like you around.

CHEY: It's not that there's a scarcity of rights to go around! They just aren't real! Just like having high standards doesn't make you more valuable, having more rights doesn't make you more powerful.

SOLOWAY: Don't think you have any rights.

CHEY: Well, as a second-class citizen I tend to think I'm above them.

SOLOWAY: Try being poor and underprivileged.

CHEY (WALKING TOWARDS AUDIENCE WITH PHONE): Try being someone else's property. It'll relax you. You put a lot of energy into trying to control yourself when you could really just economize your situation and outsource the job.

SOLOWAY: Don't cross that line, Chey. Don't break the strike. Remember it's your day off.

CHEY: I'm not a housepet.

SOLOWAY: You're a political animal.

CHEY (HANDS PHONE BACK TO SOLOWAY): I'm a rational animal.

SOLOWAY (TAKES PHONE BACK): You must like being manipulated.

CHEY: Everyone likes to be manipulated.

The women pause to sip tea and stare contemplatively at the audience. After a moment SOLOWAY begins to speak in a comforting voice.

SOLOWAY (*PUTS PHONE ON TABLE*): It's important to remember that the voice will come. (*SPINS PHONE*) And when it does, you're going to have to make some choices.

CHEY (*STARES AT PHONE*): We will never get through.

SOLOWAY: We're still on hold. (*PAUSE*) It's international womens day.

WHEN CHEY SAYS PANCAKE, SOLOWAY GRABS PHONE AND CHAIR, BEGINS STALKING HER AROUND TABLE.

CHEY: But yesterday was pancake day

SOLOWAY: The future is female.

CHEY: (*screams*) But that means it's a void!

SOLOWAY: Don't do that. (*PRESENTS CHAIR TO AUDIENCE*) I have your Ylang Ylang oil.

CHEY APPROACHES CHAIR, SOLOWAY POINTEDLY SITS DOWN AND CROSSES HER LEGS.

SOLOWAY: (*explaining*) Your problem is with the hamsters.

CHEY: The rationalization hamsters. Yes... it's true... I've had them for a while. I can't live like this. The spinning keeps me up at night.

SOLOWAY: I have them too.

Chuck Schumer "thanks for continuing to hold"

SOLOWAY SIMBA PHONE SCENE - HOLDS PHONE UP PROUDLY - CHEY ROLLS HER EYES AND UNDRAMATICALLY THROWS CONFETTI.

CHEY: I'm not going to wait around for a captain. Why should I be lobbying for first mate when I'm the fucking ship.

CHEY (*HOLDING CONFETTI THREATENINGLY*): Sometimes I have sexual fantasies about breeding the third generation but I'm worried I lack the necessary conservatism required not to produce (*THROWS CONFETTI*) fascists.

SOLOWAY(HOLDS PHONE UP): They next generation will probably be less educated.(PHONE DOWN)

CHEY: Maybe it isn't about breeding a more educated generation, but creating a happier generation.

SOLOWAY(CRADLES PHONE): Maybe Chuck will fail me before my ovaries do and it won't have to be my fault.

CHEY(STANDS UP): Victim frame! You have a choice. Actually, you have three choices.

SOLOWAY: I don't want freedom of choice! That's not freedom! That's crippling self doubt!

CHEY: Look, it's not your responsibility to tell Chuck Schumer how to solve the problem, just tell him you have one.

SOLOWAY: I'm not the solution, I'm the problem.

CHEY: Let me hear your phone voice again.

SOLOWAY (*scrolls phone*): I'm working on leading with emotions. (*phone voice*) "I feel like I haven't been given a voice."

CHEY: That's not a feeling.

SOLOWAY(*tries again*): I feel like I'm not being heard.

CHEY: That's still not a feeling.

SOLOWAY(HANDS CHEY PHONE): You put some feeling into it, then.

CHEY: 'forcing of empathy'
must stop—for, we argue, 'how is man to be
made to master life when all that happens masters her?'

SOLOWAY: Such things occur.
What sort of measures you would recommend
To help good people to a happy end.

Patriotic hold music- louder.

CHEY (POINTING PHONE AT SOLOWAY): The trick is to do this not by questioning but more by observing without being observed observing.

SOLOWAY: Sometimes it's not about choice. (GRABS PHONE, CHEY AND SOLOWAY STRUGGLE, SOLOWAY LETS GO) It's about choosing sides. (SOLOWAY SIPS TEA) Democracy's a bitch.

CHEY: I just want to live the way I think.

SOLOWAY: Like a hamster.

Patriotic music is sharply cut off by Final Pick up call- RINGS

CHEY: But what kind of animal thinks the way it lives?

Voice of Chuck Schumer's female staffer picks up.

STAFFER: Hello, you've reached the office of Scott Schumer.

CHEY and SOLOWAY look at eachother, unsure what to do.

BLACK OUT

STAFFER: Hello?

END