

Rear Ending

By

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Cast of Characters

: Imogen, 20s or 30s
: Dayanara, 30s or 40s

Scene

The side of the highway.

Time

Daybreak.

In darkness we hear the slamming of a car door followed by the hard fast sound of high heels stabbing into pavement. Lights up on two women standing face to face on the side of the road. To the right we see the smashed front end of a lime green Volkswagon Beetle.

IMOGEN

What a beautiful suit! Nice to meet you, my name is Imogen! It means "maiden of light" - and in some circles "mother's likeness" but I really look nothing like my mother, so let's leave her out of this, shall we?

She extends her hand. It is not received.

DAYANARA

You just rear-ended me.

IMOGEN

Yes.

DAYANARA

So complimenting my wardrobe and telling me about your mother is not an appropriate opening to this conversation.

IMOGEN

Oh.

Beat.

"Oops?"

Quick beat.

DAYANARA

Excellent. Here's what's going to happen, Indigo.

IMOGEN

Imogen.

DAYANARA

Whatever. You are going to reach into the glove compartment of that lime green abomination of a vehicle you have there and produce your insurance information.

IMOGEN

Yeah, guess who's driving around uninsured?

She points both of her thumbs to her chest.

This guy. I figured we could just hug it out and go grab a chai.

She opens her arms for a hug.

Dayanara reaches for her cell phone.

DAYANARA

I'm calling the police.

Imogen caresses her car.

IMOGEN

Kermit? Mommy's about to be arrested, so I need you to be very brave, ok?

DAYANARA

Who are you talking to?

IMOGEN

Kermit.

Dayanara tries to look in the Volkswagon's tinted windows.

DAYANARA

You left your child unattended in the car?

IMOGEN

No. I left her unattended at home.

Beat.

Kidding. No children. No husband. No human companionship of any kind. How bout you? Married?

DAYANARA

Yes. I mean no. Not-

IMOGEN

Thought so. You radiate the confidence of a divorced woman. It's impressive.

DAYANARA

Don't call me that.

IMOGEN

Impressive?

DAYANARA

Divorced. Please, let's just exchange business cards and get this over with.

IMOGEN

I don't have a business card.

DAYANARA

Of course you don't. You drive a citrus fruit on wheels.

IMOGEN

His name is Kermit and he can hear you!

DAYANARA

Are you sure?? Because "Mommy" just smashed his face into a Mercedes' ass!!!

Imogen caresses the car again.

IMOGEN

Shhhh... Don't listen to the mean lady, angel.

DAYANARA

OK, I don't have time for this. The mean lady is going to take some photos of Kermit's license plate now and get the hell out of here. Here.

She hands Imogen her business card and starts taking photos of the car with her cell phone.

IMOGEN

Your name is Dayanara?

DAYANARA

No. I just put it on my card and made a thousand copies.

IMOGEN

Such a glamorous name. Just gorgeous!

DAYANARA

Thank you.

IMOGEN

What does it mean?

DAYANARA

What does what mean?

IMOGEN

Your name. The origin. I have a thing for origins.

Quick beat.

DAYANARA

"Slayer of husbands."

IMOGEN

Slayer of husbands?????!!

DAYANARA

You heard me.

IMOGEN

What a horrible thing to name your child! Your parents must hate you! I think you should go by Dinah instead.

DAYANARA

Why in god's name should I "go" by Dinah?

IMOGEN

It's nicer. Makes me think of Dinah Shore with her pretty voice and golden curls.

DAYANARA

Makes me think of The Rape of Dinah in Genesis 34 of the Hebrew Bible.

IMOGEN

Ooh. Religious?

DAYANARA

No. Used to be.

IMOGEN

Me too. Now I only believe in acupuncture.

DAYANARA

Terrific. This has been fun. Write down all your information please.

She hands her a pen and piece of paper. Imogen starts to write, then stops.

IMOGEN

On second thought, don't go by Dinah. That's a real whore name. (she sings) "Someone's in the kitchen with Dinah, Someone's in the kitchen I know-oh-oh-oh."

DAYANARA

Why are you singing? You should be writing.

IMOGEN

Hear me out. "Dinah won't you blow, Dinah won't you blow, Dinah won't you blow your hoooooorn!" Riddle me this. Whose "horn" is she blowing and why does she always blow it in the kitchen, huh? Whore. I think about that every time I sing "I've been working on the railroad."

DAYANARA

How often do you sing "I've been working on the railroad?"

IMOGEN

I dunno, two, three times a day? You?

DAYANARA

I don't.

IMOGEN

No wonder you're so sad.

DAYANARA

Who said I was sad? Write, write!

IMOGEN

(while she writes)

By the way, I'm not anti-sex or anything. I just don't think we should get paid for it like Dinah obviously does. I love sex. I love it a lot. Haven't had it with an actual person in quite some time. Fun fact: I was deflowered in Kermit's backseat in the late 90s. Tight squeeze. What was your first time like?

DAYANARA

This is ridiculous, could we please stick to the issue at hand?!!

IMOGEN

Sure!

Imogen continues writing then stops again.

You look like someone who likes sex. I bet you're really good at it too. Are you? Are you good at sex?

DAYANARA

(fed up)

Yes, Imogen I am. I am excellent at sex!

IMOGEN

I knew it! I could tell by the way you pump gas.

DAYANARA

Excuse me?

Quick beat.

IMOGEN

I've been following you since the Mobil station.

Beat.

DAYANARA

That was over two hours ago.

IMOGEN

(cheery)

I know, right!

DAYANARA

Why the hell were you following me?

IMOGEN

Just curious. So where are you heading? Someplace fun?

DAYANARA

I'm-- None of your business.

IMOGEN

Lots of boxes in your car. You moving?

DAYANARA

You done?

Dayanara grabs the paper from her hand and starts to walk away.

IMOGEN

I'M SO FUCKING LONELY I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH MYSELF!!!

Dayanara stops.

(softly)

Seriously. I'm so lonely I've named my breasts just so I can feel like I have friends.

Beat.

Peter's on the left, Louise is on the right. Say hi guys.

Imogen does a sad shoulder shimmy. Dayanara is speechless.

Beat.

I'm sorry I hit you. In hindsight that was a bad decision.

DAYANARA

You hit me on purpose?

IMOGEN

I was dying for some company! And it seemed like you could use some too.

Beat.

IMOGEN

I saw you crying at the gas pump.

DAYANARA

No. No you didn't. The fumes. Make me - tear up.

IMOGEN

Now we both know that isn't true. Gas fumes are fantastic. I never miss the chance to breathe them in for a brief high when I'm feeling low, and anyone who tells you they don't do the same is lying. So what happened?

Beat.

Did you slay your husband?

DAYANARA

No. But I probably should have.

Beat.

Dayanara looks like she might cry. Perhaps she does.

IMOGEN

Here. Lean up against Kermit. He's very supportive.

The women lean up against the car.

DAYANARA

Let's just say he had a "Dinah."

IMOGEN

See?! I told you! Whore name! Whore name!

DAYANARA

No. Her name wasn't actually Dinah, but-

IMOGEN

He was working on her railroad?

DAYANARA

All the live long day.

IMOGEN

Mother-fuckin-doo-dah.

DAYANARA

Yeah, I'd rather not continue with the wordplay.

IMOGEN

Oh, ok! I can stop.

Quick beat.
Tissue?

Dayanara takes the tissue and dries her eyes.

DAYANARA
Thanks.

Beat.
I should go.

IMOGEN
If you ever want to talk some more, you have my number now, so...

DAYANARA
That might be nice actually. Because... I too know what it's like to name your own breasts.

IMOGEN
You do?

DAYANARA
Meet Paul and Simone.

Imogen shimmies her shoulders with excitement.

IMOGEN
Hi guys!!!

DAYANARA
Um.

Dayanara awkwardly shimmies back.
Hi.

Beat.

Imogen suddenly zooms extremely close to Dayanara, practically nose to nose.

IMOGEN
(intensely serious)
You're a beautiful woman, Dayanara. Whoever gets to ride your railroad next is an extremely blessed person.

Dayanara is looking at her with horror.
Just incredibly... blessed.

DAYANARA
Um.

Imogen bubbles out a little laugh and a shoulder shimmy.

Beat.

Well, Imogen. And - Peter, was it? And... gosh I'm sorry, I'm forgetting her name.

IMOGEN

Louise.

DAYANARA

Right, Louise. And, of course Kermit.

Beat.

It was a pleasure meeting you... all.

Dayanara sprints to her car. We hear the door slam and tires screech as she speeds away. Imogen smiles at the business card then places both hands on her own breasts and closes her eyes.

IMOGEN

This was a good day, friends. A very good day.

Lights out.

End of Play.