

PROLOGUE

I am a *comedienne*. I am beautiful, tall, and thin. I never lie. I live a life of leisure: it is noon on a weekday, and I just woke up. I am reclining on a divan, wearing a satin peignoir, sipping coffee brewed from beans excreted by a rare South American marsupial. My mother accuses me of 'putting on airs' but she doesn't get that I am a performer, and that is what we do best. Since I am a stand-up comic, I am naturally a sarcastic smart-ass. Truly, I am a party in a can.

I am in my twenties. Late twenties. Oh hell, I'm twenty-nine. I'm 'in a relationship', a serious one - not serious as in 'no fun allowed' but serious as in 'living together', or 'shacked up' as my mother would say. BF and I don't have children (thank God), but I do have a fur-baby: an adorable pampered pooch named Muffy. Am I famous? That depends on one's definition of 'fame'. Many, many people have seen me on stage, and I am frequently recognized in ATM line-ups. But as far as the wider general public, that is, people who sit at home eating nachos and watching game shows - well, according to them, no, I am not famous because I'm not a *celebrity*. To be a celebrity quite a LOT of people need to know who you are, and that is very difficult to do when you only perform to dozens of people at a time. And now I am having an epiphany. Or perhaps it's an allergic reaction. A sip of coffee, and the thought clarifies itself through the fog of a minor hangover. I need to give myself a goal of some kind, with a deadline. Say, one year. In one year's time . . . by my next birthday. . .

I must achieve a *measurable* degree of success in my career or . . . I will quit showbiz altogether. Wow. That's big. That's scary.

Where did this sudden motivation come from? Does it have anything to do with the fact that next April second, I will be turning thirty? Ridiculous. Thirty is just a number. It is meaningless. It is . . .yes. It does bother me. Everyone knows, if you are not successful by the time you are thirty, well, then just forget it, throw in the towel - at least as far as show business is concerned. With law and medicine, that might not be the case.

I pick up Muffy, plop her on my lap, and scratch behind her ears. I need to decide: what is a measure of success anyway? Winning an Oscar? That is a little obvious, and for me, far-fetched, since I don't live in Hollywood, and I've never acted in a movie before. I need something else, something solid to prove to the world - and to myself - that I've made it.

I put Muffy on the carpet and step into the shower. Lather, ponder. Whatever the proof may be, however I get there, it doesn't matter. I've got one goal: to become fabulously successful in one year. Or die trying. I'm already fabulous.

How hard could it be?

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