

GLOW

by

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INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

RUTH WILDER, 30s, wearing a gorgeous black and white geometric power suit, stands at the head of a large conference table. She looks strong, sexy and in charge. Behind her: Giant glass windows that look out onto downtown Los Angeles. She addresses the unseen group.

RUTH

In this world there are good guys and bad guys. And we are the good guys. You see that name on my door? That's my father's name, sonofabitch. But this isn't about him. This is about justice. This is about holding on to what is ours. This is about my firm, and my name.

Ruth pounds the table. She holds the moment, in full control of the room.

RUTH (CONT'D)

And I will not be bullied into submission.

REVEAL MALLORY, the casting director, (50s) a blousy woman in leopard print stilettos, and an ASSISTANT working an ENORMOUS camcorder. Ruth breaks character.

RUTH (CONT'D)

Can I just say-- Thank you so much for bringing me in. There aren't parts like this for women right now. It's great. Really powerful.

Ruth smiles broadly.

MALLORY

You were reading the man's part.

RUTH

I was? Oh. God. I'm sorry. I figured Mel was short for Melanie. And then the other part was-- Okay.

MALLORY

Would you like to start again?

RUTH

Yes. I would.

Ruth stands there. The Casting director's assistant reads off camera with little expression. We stay on Ruth.

CASTING ASSISTANT (O.C.)

This is about my firm and my name and I will not be bullied into submission.

A beat. Then.

RUTH

Sorry to interrupt. Your wife is on line 2.

A pause. And that's it.

CASTING DIRECTOR

Okay. Thank you Ruth.

RUTH

Thank you so much.

Ruth takes the long walk down the conference room past the Casting Director. She pulls open the very heavy door. It's hard to get out of there.

INT. WAITING ROOM - DAY

Ruth walks out into the waiting room. It's full of beautiful actresses, all dressed in business suits, all reading the sides. Ruth takes this in as she walks by.

INT. LADIES ROOM - DAY

Ruth stands in a stall. Alone. After a moment we hear the door open and the click, click, click of high heels running into a stall next to Ruth. Ruth checks out the shoes. Leopard print stilettos. The door clicks closed and the woman begins to pee. After a beat.

RUTH

Hey Mallory.

The peeing stops abruptly.

RUTH (CONT'D)

It's Ruth Wilder. I was hoping to get some feedback on my audition.

MALLORY

Have you been hiding in here for two hours?

RUTH

Yes.

Ruth exits the stall. Waits by the sink. Mallory finishes peeing and then opens the stall door. Already irritated.

MALLORY

You know that I wait until the end of a casting session to pee. Out of respect to the actors. If you want feedback, call your agent.

RUTH

I don't have an agent. Turns out if you don't work for two years people stop caring about you. I do have an answering machine.

MALLORY

Still. This is extremely unprofessional.

RUTH

You call me in a lot and you never cast me. If there's something I need to change I want to change it.

MALLORY

(deep breath. Then.)

Every director says "Get me someone I don't know. Someone I haven't seen. I want a girl who's *real*." I bring you in so they can see that they don't actually want the thing they think they want.

Ruth takes this in.

MALLORY (CONT'D)

What I think? If it was 1940, you'd work. But it's 1985. Everyone wants Jane Fonda or Jamie Lee Curtis.

RUTH

Okay. Well. Do you have any advice? Besides going back in time.

Mallory takes a beat. Looks at her.

MALLORY

Maybe you need to broaden your scope. I cast some experimental projects on the side. If you're open to that kind of a thing.

RUTH

What kind of thing?

CASTING DIRECTOR

Would you consider doing erotica?

A beat.

RUTH

...Porn?

Ruth stares at her. Mallory takes her makeup bag out of her purse, starts reapplying her lipstick.

MALLORY

Obviously, I'm not suggesting you go have sex on camera unless that's something you're interested in.

Ruth watches Mallory in the mirror. Then.

RUTH

What I'm interested in are real parts. Not secretaries telling powerful men their wives are on line 2.

Mallory stops and turns to her.

MALLORY

You read the man's part on purpose, didn't you.

RUTH

It's the better part.

Mallory leaves. Off Ruth's face, we PRE-LAP the disco beat of Sylvester's "You Make Me Feel (Mighty Real)"--

INT. DANCE STUDIO - MORNING

... and PAN THROUGH row after row of colorful spandex leotards and leggings, accented with leg warmers and sweatbands. Near-perfect toned bodies move in bouncy Jazzercise unison. Good legs and bad hair. Yup. It's 1985. The JAZZERCISE INSTRUCTOR, 40s, abs of steel with a Dorothy Hamill bob and a voice that could cut glass, calls out encouragingly.

JAZZERCISE INSTRUCTOR

Time to tighten and tone those muscles. Feel it. Find it. Do it. Want it. And to the right. Hip. Hip. Hip. And to the left. Get loose ladies. Get loose.

We move through the lines of hip-circling women toward the back of the room. Ruth runs into the class late. Her best friend DEBBIE, 30, a postpartum disaster is standing up at the front of the class, out of shape but clearly beautiful. Ruth moves up to the front next to Debbie.

DEBBIE

You missed half the class.

RUTH

Sorry. Sorry.

JAZZERCISE INSTRUCTOR

Bigger. And bigger. And Looser. And Looser.

RUTH

I thought we were here to tighten.

DEBBIE

I recently pushed a baby out of my vagina
it's all pretty god damned loose.

Ruth smiles and takes her hips in big, loose circles, staring intently into the mirror in front of her. Debbie's right boob starts to lactate. Ruth notices.

RUTH

Debbie.

Debbie looks down. Her other boob starts to lactate. Ruth and Debbie both keep jazzercising.

DEBBIE

Oh my god. Make it stop.

Ruth pulls her off-the-shoulder sweatshirt over her head and tosses it to her friend, leaving herself shirtless, in a Jogbra only. All without missing a beat. Debbie mouths "thank you" to Ruth.

INT. GYM LOCKER ROOM - DAY

Ruth and Debbie stand in their bras, getting dressed. Half-naked women are getting in and out of workout gear. One incredibly fit TAN WOMAN is walking around the locker room completely naked.

RUTH

I actually would do porn. If it had a good story. Like, porn Shakespeare. I would do that.

She turns to a locker and starts humping it.

RUTH (CONT'D)

"My lord, I have remembrances of yours
that I have longed long to re-deliver."

Debbie laughs. Then gets serious.

DEBBIE

You wouldn't really do porn, would you?

RUTH

Things have changed since you disappeared.

DEBBIE

Uh, I didn't disappear. I had a baby. Which you could too! Then we can both have babies.

RUTH

Yes. That's a great idea. Which of the guys that I randomly sleep with do you think would make a good father. Alcoholic from the Farmers Market. Depressed Stand Up.

DEBBIE

Maybe you should try wanting something else. Seriously. Once I decided I was done acting and that I really wanted to get married and have a baby it was like, boom! Mark. Boom! Pregnant with Randy.

RUTH

When I win an Oscar then I can have a baby.

DEBBIE

Don't you have to be in a movie to win an Oscar?

Incredibly fit TAN WOMAN approaches. Still naked.

TAN WOMAN

(to Debbie)

I'm sorry, were you on Falcon Crest?

DEBBIE

I was.

TAN WOMAN

You were so good. Sorry. I never do this. But when you fell down that elevator shaft, I cried. And I don't cry.

DEBBIE

Aw, thank you that's so nice.

TAN WOMAN walks away, not even noticing Ruth. Debbie grabs her bag. Ruth immediately grabs it from her.

RUTH

Please don't go. I'm not gonna see you for another eight months and I'm gonna get even more depressed.

DEBBIE

Sorry, I can't leave Randy with my mom for more than 2 hours.

Ruth throws Debbie her bag.

RUTH

I hate Randy. If you didn't have those boobs he wouldn't give a shit about you.

INT. RUTH'S APARTMENT - LATER

Ruth walks into her sad apartment. There's not much to come home to. A TV. Photos from an Omaha production of "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat." A poster of Katharine Hepburn. A dead plant. The light on her answering machine blinks. She presses play and lies down on the floor. Face down, totally prone.

VOICE ON MACHINE

Ruth. It's Mallory. There's an audition. I'm not running it. It's in Watts. And they're looking for unconventional women, and I thought of you, whatever the hell that means. It's not porn. If you ambush me in the bathroom again, we're through. Good luck!

Off Ruth, things are looking up.

INT. RUTH'S CAR - DAY

Ruth drives her powder blue '82 Camry through Watts. The Thomas Guide open on her lap. These streets aren't looking familiar. Or safe. She rolls past a CAR ON FIRE. She locks the doors and cranks up the radio...

INT. RUTH'S CAR / EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

Ruth parks outside what appears to be an abandoned warehouse. A sign reads: "GIRLS>>> This way." Ruth teases her hair in the sun visor mirror. Gets out, walks towards the entrance, then breaks into an awkward shuffly run.

INT. WATTS BOXING GYM - MOMENTS LATER

Ruth pulls open the heavy door. Her POV: a ratty training gym. Weight bags. Old fraying mats. Broken lockers.

In the center: an elevated BOXING RING with spittoons in the corners. If this was Smell-O-Vision, you'd catch a whiff of blood, sweat and Vaseline.

A desperate group of about fifty women sit in the bleachers. Ie, the Bad News Bears of 80's out-of-work actresses. All shapes, sizes and ages. Ruth looks around, she doesn't recognize anyone. She sits down next to FIJI, (late 30s) a 300 pound Samoan woman with a friendly face.

RUTH

Have they started the audition yet?

FIJI

I don't know. I've never been to one of these before.

RUTH

Are you... SAG?

FIJI

(laughing)

You know what. I don't know what I am.

Ruth looks at Fiji, confused. A beat.

RUTH

Well. It's not porn. Just so you know.

Ruth looks around. A bunch of these girls don't really look like actresses.

Just then the doors swing open and a tall imposing woman, 40s, wearing a fox stole, fishnets and a leather bodice, strides in. Meet MATILDA THE HUN. Unlike the other women, she arrives completely in character. Matilda walks up the bleachers and looks at Ruth.

MATILDA

Guten tag darling. Hold the fox.

She tosses Ruth her fox as she fixes her fishnets. Then she takes it back and finds a seat. Ruth is transfixed. ARTHIE PREMKUMAR, 20s, an Indian girl in scrubs, rummages through her large purse. She looks over at Ruth.

ARTHIE

Do you have a scrunchie?

Ruth reaches in her bag and offers her a rubber band.

ARTHIE (CONT'D)

If I put that in my hair I will never find it again. But thanks.

RUTH

Are you on St. Elsewhere?

ARTHIE

I wish, I love that show. I'm a resident at Cedars.

Ruth looks at her, what the fuck is going on. Then, SAM SYLVIA (40s) emerges and walks over to the girls. He's cocky-charming, disheveled, and clearly coked up. A Hollywood Director who hasn't seen much of Hollywood lately.

SAM

(rubs his eyes)

Okay. I said I'd do anything and here we fucking are. Okay.

The women all look at him. Then he pulls it together.

SAM (CONT'D)

Hello ladies. My name is Sam Sylvia. Welcome to GLOW. And welcome to Watts. What a shithole. Today we'll just be doing first looks and first cuts. So if you can line up and have your headshots out.

RUTH

Are there sides?

ARTHIE

I didn't get sides.

SAM

Hey. Here's how it's gonna go. You're all gonna stop talking and smile at me. Hand me your headshot. And then I'll tell you who I want to see again.

CHERRY JONES, 40, black, Afro-sporting bad-ass, pipes up.

CHERRY

How bout you tell us what the fuck we're all doing here.

Sam squints and looks out into the bleachers.

SAM

Hey Cherry.

CHERRY

Hey, baby. This another one of your shitty sex vampire movies?

SAM

It's not a movie. It's GLOW.

RUTH

Sorry, what's GLOW?

SAM

Gorgeous Ladies of Wrestling.

A beat.

SAM (CONT'D)

It's a women's wrestling television show. Lady wrestling. Like what the big guys do. But girls. Girl on girl.

Ruth looks at him, aghast. Cherry looks up with new focus. Everyone seems to be listening now.

ARTHIE

(excited)

So like, Hulk Hogan?

SAM

If one of you turns out to be Hulk Hogan, then I've hit the fucking jackpot.

A lot of the women raise their hands.

SAM (CONT'D)

Okay. Here's what's happening. Yes, this is a wrestling show. Yes, you will have to actually wrestle. Meaning: Bodyslams. Tit grabs. Crotchbombs. Hair pulls. Pile drives. That move where one person spins another person in the air, I don't know what that is called yet. If this is going to be a problem for any of you, I suggest you leave now.

A beat. Then HALF the women stand up and walk out. Ruth stands up. Then she sits back down.

SAM (CONT'D)

Congratulations ladies. You've made it through the first round of cuts. Painless right?

This makes Ruth smile.

SAM (CONT'D)

For those remaining, I need everyone to sign a waiver in case of serious injury and or death.

(MORE)

SAM (CONT'D)

Tomorrow we'll do a six hour boot camp followed by callbacks.

(then)

Good luck.

Off Ruth, no long smiling, unsure.

INT. WATTS BOXING GYM - DAY

Sam sits at a long table collecting headshots and waivers. We see the long line and quick interactions.

Fiji walks up. Hands him a picture.

FIJI

That's a picture of me and my boyfriend. I don't have any pictures of just me.

Sam looks at the picture.

SAM

Your eyes are closed.

FIJI

I don't take a lot of pictures.

She smiles and exits.

SAM

Great. See you tomorrow. Goddammit.

Cherry walks up, drops off her headshot. Sam smiles.

CHERRY

Who is trusting you with a TV show.

SAM

I'm doing somebody a favor.

CHERRY

Why don't you just save me some time and make me an offer.

SAM

You've gotta audition, Cherry. Just like everyone else.

CHERRY

Same old asshole. You still married?

SAM

You still in that threesome?

CHERRY

Monogamy doesn't work for me, baby. You know that.

ARTHIE drops her headshot on the table, enthusiastically.

ARTHIE

No, I haven't acted professionally per se but I came very close to cab driver number 1 and terrorist number 2.

JAILBAIT, a clearly underage girl, drops her photo on the table and slinks off mumbling something.

SAM

Hold on Jailbait. Come back here.

Jailbait walks back. Sam holds up the small photo.

SAM (CONT'D)

What is this, a class photo? Did you take this at a mall?

JAILBAIT

No.

SAM

How old are you?

JAILBAIT

(unconvincing)

Nineteen.

He looks at her face. She's really cute. He'll make an exception.

SAM

Alright. We'll see.

Jailbait slips off. Sam looks at Ruth. And then looks at her headshot and resume.

SAM (CONT'D)

Ruth Wilder. Now. This looks like you.

RUTH

Yeah. It's a headshot.

Sam holds it and looks at it. He blinks his eyes a few times. Sniffs.

SAM

Is this picture out of focus.

RUTH

Uh. No. It's in focus.

Sam moves the picture and looks at Ruth.

SAM

I've been up for 36 hours. Maybe that's it.

He flips over the headshot and looks at her resume.

SAM (CONT'D)

Strindberg? Who the fuck is that? I'm kidding. I know who that is. So what are you, a real actor.

RUTH

Yeah. I've done some theater in Omaha, and I did a film a few years ago with Warren Beatty. Non speaking. Speaking of speaking. How much real acting will there be on this show?

SAM

Real acting as opposed to...?

RUTH

Hair pulling.

SAM

You mean wrestling.

RUTH

Yeah.

SAM

You don't like wrestling.

RUTH

I don't really know wrestling.

SAM

But you don't think it's acting.

RUTH

It isn't, right? Isn't it like, a sport? With costumes.

Sam stares at her intently. Then.

SAM

Do people think you're pretty?

RUTH

Uh--- Does it... What?

SAM

Because one minute I think fuck yeah she's pretty and the next minute I'm not sure. You've got one of those faces that changes the more you look at it.

RUTH

What the hell does that mean.

SAM

It means I don't know about you. And I'm high. Ruth. Ruth. Not a great name.

He takes her headshot and tosses it in the pile.

SAM (CONT'D)

Come back tomorrow. Wear something you can move in.

INT. MACY'S MAKEUP COUNTER - DAY

Ruth stands at a Clinique counter wearing a white lab coat and a mint green button down shirt. She looks like a sad doctor. She leans on the glass counter. Lonely. Bored. Stuck. People walk by her, not looking, not stopping.

INT. RUTH'S CAR - EVENING

Ruth drives. Her car is making a really terrible sound. She pulls up to a stop light. A HOT GUY next to her waves at her. She smiles and tries to roll down her manual window, but it's stuck. Light changes. Bye bye hot guy.

INT. ALBERTSONS - NIGHT

Ruth walks the supermarket aisles alone at night. It's eerie and depressing, wide empty aisles lit by fluorescent light. Ruth's cart contains three items: milk, cinnamon toast crunch and a box of wine. The only other shopper is an old lonely woman, ie the ghost of Christmas future. At the last minute, Ruth removes the milk from her cart and heads to check-out.

INT. RUTH'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Ruth watches TV while eating a huge bowl of dry cereal. A Noxema commercial comes on and Ruth knows it by heart.

RUTH/CAROL ALT

Are you washing your face or drying your skin? Using soap can leave your face dried out, with wrinkles. But Noxzema skin cream cleans without drying.

Ruth throws a piece of cereal at Carol Alt.

RUTH

Fuck you. I should have gotten that part.

She looks at the array of workout clothing she has for tomorrow's audition. As she stares intently at the clothes, she looks up and jumps. A hand is opening her window from the outside.

RUTH (CONT'D)

HELLO. HELLO. I'M CALLING THE POLICE.

The window pops open. A mysterious man (MARRIED GUY) in a shiny grey suit climbs in, a la Vinnie in Doogie Howser or DJ in Heathers.

RUTH (CONT'D)

Oh my god, what are you doing. Why are you climbing in my window.

MARRIED GUY

You said you didn't want anyone to find out about us. So I parked 4 blocks away. And then I thought I'd climb in the window so no one would see me and--

RUTH

No, climb out. Go.

MARRIED GUY

I'm not athletic--

RUTH

I know!

MARRIED GUY

I hadn't thought about you in months. I haven't called. But then today--

RUTH

Stop. Today is just a day. You're married. You have a family.

MARRIED GUY

Ruth. You can't just pull the plug on this. You and me. This is real.

RUTH

No it's not. And I need to focus on my career.

MARRIED GUY

Why? Did you get a part?

RUTH

No. Why'd you have to ask that?

MARRIED GUY

Sorry, sorry, I just, I can't stop thinking about you. You're so real.

RUTH

Of course I'm real, I don't understand why everyone keeps saying that to me like it's information. I'm a person. You're a person. Everyone's a person.

MARRIED GUY

I think you're the one.

RUTH

Then you're bad at math. There are a million of me out there. I'm nothing special.

Ruth looks at him. Conflicted. Married guy senses an opportunity.

MARRIED GUY

Ruth. Do you really want me to go?

CUT TO:

INT. RUTH'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ruth and Married Guy are having sex. She's on top of him.

MARRIED GUY

Oh my god. Ruth. You're amazing. You're amazing. You're so real.

She closes her eyes, trying to block out his voice.

INT. WATTS GYM - DAY

Start on Ruth and PAN DOWN a chorus line of the 40 remaining girls leaning on the ropes in leotards, sweatbands, leg warmers, track suits, numbers pinned to their tops. Matilda has pinned her number to her fishnets to protect her leather bodice. Sam addresses them from the center of the ring.

SAM (O.C.)

Over the next two days I will be casting a squad of twelve women to play wrestlers on TV. Based on one: Can you follow basic directions. And two: Do I like your face. Or, do I not like your face.

ANGLE ON a few faces that don't exactly look TV ready.

TIME CUT: The girls begin stretching. Ruth looks around, sussing out the competition. There's a pair of super-model-looking double-mint TWINS. Cherry.

SAM (O.C.) (CONT'D)

If I call your number and say "thank you," that means you're cut. Dry your tears and leave the ring quietly.

ANGLE ON: REGGIE, 20s, built like an athlete, wearing a softball jersey. She winces at the word 'tears.'

SAM (CONT'D)

Finally. This hulking specimen is Salty. If you don't want to leave here with a broken spine, I'd listen to him very carefully.

Reveal SALTY, 50s, black, huge, taciturn, a former pro wrestler turned coach.

SALTY

Alright. First up, forward rolls. Like when you were in pre-school. Keep your chin tucked.

SAM

You heard the big man.

INT. WATTS GYM - DAY

The girls stand in a long line snaking to the ring, watching as each girl does a forward roll. Ruth turns to Matilda, behind her.

RUTH

Are you sure you can roll in that?

MATILDA

Oh, honey. I've wrestled a bear in this outfit.

RUTH

You wrestled a bear.

MATILDA

Bears, midgets, sex slaves.

Ruth turns away from Matilda, trying to get in on the conversation in front of her instead. HANNAH, 20s, a frizzy-haired Jew from the Valley snaps her gum.

HANNAH

I thought this was an audition for a kids show. That's my sweet spot.

ARTHIE

It is a kid's show. I mean, it's a family show. My Nonna watches WWF Superstars every week. She's 85 and she doesn't speak any English.

CHERRY

My kids wouldn't watch this shit.

RUTH

Oh wow. You have kids?

CHERRY

Why, you wanna babysit?

RUTH

I'm already working two jobs. Plus, if I get this...

Cherry rolls her eyes: as if. Then, they hear:

SAM (O.S.)

Number twelve! You remind me of my ex-wife. Thank you very much.

ANGLE ON: Number 12, leaving the ring, dejected.

RUTH

He's already cutting people? I thought this was the warm-up.

Ruth watches as Cherry gets in the ring and does a perfect forward roll. Ruth is next. She rolls. She stands up and flashes a big smile over at Sam. Who, turns out, wasn't even watching.

INT. WATTS GYM - LATER

The girls now run the ropes. (Ie, sprinting from one side of the ring to the other, throwing your body into the ropes and bouncing off.)

SAM

Numbers Eight and Twenty-Seven. Don't look so surprised. Thank you!

Two more girls pass Ruth as they head out of the ring.

INT. WATTS GYM - LATER

Reggie runs smack into a girl, who hits the mat hard.

SAM

Floor girl. Can't see your number. Bye.

INT. WATTS GYM - LATER

The room is now broken into pairs. Ruth stands across from Fiji.

RUTH

Hawaii, right?

FIJI

Fiji.

RUTH

Right. 'Cause you're from...

FIJI

Samoa.

RUTH

That's confusing.

Salty addresses the group.

SALTY

This throw is called a hair mare. The attacker should grab hold of the victim's hair. Then sort of pull her head down and forward, flipping her onto her back.

Ruth looks around. There are still a good 25 girls there.

RUTH

So what's our backstory.

FIJI

Our what?

RUTH

What's motivating this? Why are fighting? What's pushing you to come after me and grab me by the hair and throw me to the ground. It has to be something.

FIJI

He told us to.

RUTH

I think we need to stand out somehow. There are still twenty-five girls, which means anyone could still be cut. So we need to go above and beyond.

(then)

Trust me. I'm an actor, I know what I'm doing.

FIJI

(nervous)

Okay.

Off Ruth, smiling.

ANGLE ON: Cherry and Jailbait as partners nearby. Jailbait reaches for Cherry's hair.

CHERRY

I don't think so. You're not fucking up my hair.

Cherry grabs Jailbait by the hair and throws her onto her back. It's kinda fun.

JAILBAIT

My turn now?

CHERRY

No. Let's do that again.

INT. WATTS GYM

Cherry grabs Jailbait by the hair and throws her on the mat. Boom.

Matilda grabs Reggie by the hair and throws her on the mat. Boom.

Arthie grabs Hannah by her Jew Fro and throws her on the mat. Boom.

Fiji tries to grab Ruth by the hair but Ruth moves away from her.

RUTH

Please. I beg you. Have mercy. I'm not your enemy.

FIJI

You stole.

RUTH
Bread. For my family.

SAM
What the fuck is this?

SALTY
Just do the move.

RUTH
We are, we're trying to motivate this
with a backstory.
(feeding Fiji her line)
There is a law...

FIJI
There is a law. You broke it. And now.
You will pay the ultimate price.

Fiji runs to Ruth. Grabs her by the hair. They fake
struggle and Fiji flips Ruth onto the ground. It's not
that good.

SAM
Number 22 and 30. Thank you.

Ruth gets up. She's number 30. Fiji is 22.

RUTH
What? Why?

SAM
I told you to follow directions, and you
didn't. So you're both cut.

RUTH
There's no scenes to read, no character
work. So, yes, we improvised.

SAM
Since I'm feeling generous. Sophie's
Choice. Why should it be you and not her.
Go go go. Tear each other limb from limb.

Ruth looks at Fiji. Sympathetic. But not enough.

RUTH
I'm a real actor, I would do anything to
get this job and I'm a lot younger.

Sam's unimpressed. He looks to Fiji.

SAM
And you?

Fiji takes a moment, then:

FIJI

I won the Bronze medal for shotput in the '84 Olympics.

Ruth's eyes widen. Holy shit.

SAM

I'll keep the Olympian.

(to Ruth)

You're out.

RUTH

Because I tried something different?

SAM

Maybe. Or cause I don't like your face. Or your ass. Or I like them too much. I dunno. I don't really have to explain myself. That's the beauty of being the director.

Off Ruth. Realizing he has a point, scarily. She's powerless. Ruth exits the ring.

EXT. MCDONALD'S PARKING LOT - DAY

Ruth walks through a McDonald's parking lot in Watts eating an Apple Pie. Depressed. She sees a group of 11 year-old KIDS walking toward her. The 11 year-olds stop.

11-YEAR-OLD GIRL

What the fuck are you looking at you ugly bitch?

RUTH

Not now okay. I just got cut from my eight hundredth audition. And now I've got two pies and I'm going to eat them. I like your braids.

11-YEAR-OLD BOY

You gonna scalp us?

RUTH

Yeah. That's what I'm all about. Give me your hair.

10 YEAR OLD GIRL

Gimme that pie.

RUTH

No. I just bought this.

9 YEAR OLD GIRL

That's my pie now.

RUTH

No. It's my pie. I had the shitty day.
Me. My pie. Go get your own pie. Okay?

A standoff. Then. The little kids swarm Ruth. They start hitting and kicking her. At first she's freaked out and doesn't defend herself because they're basically still in grade school. Then she changes her mind. She's had enough, sick of being the world's punching bag. She fights back and shoves the 11 year old boy back.

11-YEAR-OLD-BOY

Ow!

RUTH

Don't underestimate me.

The 9 year old girl grabs her purse off her arm and the kids take off. Ruth runs after them.

RUTH (CONT'D)

My keys! I don't care about the purse
just give me my keys. I need my keys.

Ruth runs after them a little more but they're gone. Then she turns and looks at her Camry.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

Debbie pulls up like a bat out of hell. In a station wagon. Ruth runs to her car.

INT. DEBBIE'S CAR - DAY

Debbie is freaked out. Ruth gets in the car. Randy is asleep in the carseat in the back. They drive off.

RUTH

I'm sorry. Thank you. I'm sorry.

DEBBIE

Shhh. Please. Please. Don't wake him up.
What are you doing here? This is NOT a
good neighborhood.

RUTH

I had a callback.

DEBBIE

Did you get it?

RUTH

No. But I got mugged by a bunch of fifth graders. I'm so glad you were home. I don't know who I would have called.

DEBBIE

Just don't tell Mark I brought the baby here. He gets really freaked out when I leave Pasadena.

(beat)

Do you want to come over. Have dinner with us.

RUTH

No. I've got acting class tonight. Can you just drop me there?

Debbie looks at Ruth. She can't believe it.

DEBBIE

Jesus, Ruth. When are you going to you know, call it a day. Do you want to die alone in a McDonald's parking lot? Maybe it's time to give up. Do something else.

RUTH

Why are you yelling at me?

DEBBIE

I'm not yelling at you!

RUTH

It sounds like you're yelling at me.

DEBBIE

I'm tired of watching you suffer.

Ruth sits there, stung. Her eyes fixate on something.
ANGLE ON: Debbie's key-chain has a photo of her and her husband Mark. The Married Man who climbed in Ruth's window. Debbie notices Ruth noticing the photo.

DEBBIE (CONT'D)

I love that picture. We both had food poisoning but you can't tell.

Ruth stares at the photo.

RUTH

You guys look so happy.

(beat)

I'm such a fucking mess.

INT. SAMUEL FRENCH BOOKSTORE - LATER

We move across a rainbow of slender book-spines, hundreds of plays. We pan over the shelves to a circle of folding chairs - a scene study class. An assortment of actors sit, watching intently as Ruth reads a scene with another MUCH YOUNGER, MUCH SMALLER ACTOR. She's holding the script but she doesn't need it. She's really good. The camera moves in and stays close on Ruth. She's so good you get lost in her performance.

RUTH

Oh Brick. I get so lonely. Living with someone you love can be lonelier than living entirely alone when the one you love doesn't love you. You can't even stand drinking out of the same glass can you? ... No! No, I wouldn't. Why can't you lose your good looks Brick? Most drinking men lose theirs. Why can't you. I think you've even gotten better looking since you weren't on the bottle. You were such a wonderful love. ... You were so exciting to be in love with. Mostly I guess because you were ... If I thought you'd never never made love to me again, why I'd find me the longest sharpest knife I could and I'd stick it straight into my heart. I'd do that. Oh Brick how long does this have to go on, this punishment? Haven't I served my term? Can't I apply for a pardon? ... Is it any wonder. You know what I feel like? I feel all the time like--

Ruth looks up and her breath catches as she sees something. Tears spring into her eyes. Then we see it. Her TEACHER (50s) is sitting in his chair, sound asleep. Ruth looks around. She's back in the depressing scene study class. Ruth walks up, stands right in front of him.

RUTH (CONT'D)

LIKE A CAT ON A HOT TIN ROOF
MOTHERFUCKER. WHY THE FUCK ARE YOU
SLEEPING? I PAID FOR THIS SCENE STUDY
CLASS. THIS IS THE ONLY PLACE I GET TO DO
WHAT I WANT TO DO. THERE ISN'T ANYWHERE
ELSE I CAN GO.

The teacher looks up at her. Apologetic.

TEACHER

I'm so sorry Ruth. My kids were both sick
last night. I was up til 4.
(MORE)

TEACHER (CONT'D)

And then I was on set doing extra work,
my call was 5 a.m. I'm tired. I'm sorry.
You're a wonderful actor.

The class applauds anemically. Ruth is at the end of her rope. This is too fucking depressing. She's gotta fight.

INT. RUTH'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Research montage! A video of the 1984 WWF Heavyweight Championship plays on TV. PAN to Ruth sitting on the floor, eating Twizzlers, cutting out images from various pro wrestling magazines she just bought.

GORILLA MONSOON (V.O.)

"From Venice Beach, California. Weighing
303 pounds. The incredible... Hulk Hogan!
(THE CROWD GOES NUTS)

INT. RUTH'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

Ruth tries on make-up. Glittery eye shadow and black lipstick.

GORILLA MONSOON (V.O.)

... And his opponent, from Tehran, Iran
(THE CROWD BOOS)... Weighing 258
pounds... The World Wrestling Federation
Heavyweight Champion... The Iron Sheik!"

INT. RUTH'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ruth goes through her closet, looking for costume ideas. We hear the sound of a tape fast-forwarding. Then:

HULK HOGAN (V.O.)

Train! Say your prayers! Eat your
vitamins!

INT. RUTH'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

Ruth paints cat whiskers on her cheeks. She makes a fierce cat face. Growls.

HULK HOGAN (V.O.)

Be true to yourself! True to your
country!

INT. RUTH'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Ruth studies a match between Ric Flair and Kerry Von Erich on the TV. She takes thorough notes on a legal pad.

HULK HOGAN (V.O.)
Be a real American! Hoo!

INT. RUTH'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ruth has emptied her closet. Clothes and shoes are strewn everywhere. She's exhausted. Frustrated. She plops down on the bed. The sound of a VHS rewinding. Then:

HULK HOGAN (V.O.)
... Be true to yourself! True to your
country! Be a real American! Hoo!

She lies there. Defeated.

RUTH
Hoo.

INT. WATTS GYM - DAY

Sam leans on the ropes. Girls mill about waiting for final callbacks to begin.

SAM
Five minutes, people.

Then, the doors BURST open and Ruth struts in, clad in neon spandex, high boots, teased hair, glitter eye shadow and silver lightening bolts painted on her face. Somehow, it all comes together. She looks fabulous. The disco beat of Sylvester's "You Make Me Feel (Mighty Real)" kicks back in.

CAMERA FOLLOWS Ruth past the dozen or so girls, all slack-jawed and shell-shocked. Cherry looks up at her.

CHERRY
Damn, girl.

Ruth smiles. Keeps walking. Maybe we're in SLOW-MO. CAMERA FOLLOWS Ruth as she struts past Jailbait. Matilda. Fiji smiles, proud. Salty exits the men's room-- stops dead in his tracks. Ruth passes him, throws her bag into the bleachers and heads towards the ring. She reaches Sam who is sitting on the bleachers. He looks hungover.

RUTH
You're wrong about me.

She climbs into the ring. Everyone is staring at her. She has their attention. She didn't think this far ahead. So, she improvises. It's Tennessee Williams meets Hulk Hogan.

RUTH (CONT'D)

... How long does this have to go on, this punishment? Haven't I served my term? Can't I apply for a pardon?

ANGLE ON the girls. At a loss.

RUTH (CONT'D)

You know what I feel like? I feel all the time like a Cat on a Hot Tin Roof. Who has come to... save all of you. From evil. So... Train! Say your prayers! Eat your vitamins and, um, um--

Ruth is drowning. She's saved by... a voice.

WOMAN'S VOICE (V.O.)

YOU FUCKING BITCH.

Ruth and everyone else turns to see... Debbie, fuming, wild-eyed, holding Randy.

DEBBIE

You fucking cunt. I should fucking kill you.

HANNAH

Wasn't she on Falcon Crest?

Debbie hands the baby to Matilda the Hun and guns for Ruth.

RUTH

Debbie? What is--

DEBBIE

Don't play dumb. Homewrecker. Husband FUCKER.

The girls are shocked. It's like an episode of Geraldo. Debbie climbs into the ring. Sam leans in, intrigued.

RUTH

Hold on. Wait.

DEBBIE

Did you sleep with Mark.

RUTH

Please don't make me answer that question.

DEBBIE

Well you're the one making me ask that questions so what the fuck is that. What kind of friend--

RUTH

Don't-- I don't love him.

DEBBIE

Oh my god of course you don't love him. I love him. That's who loves him. You don't love anyone.

RUTH

I know! That's the problem.

DEBBIE

So you slept with my husband.

RUTH

I fucked up, you think I don't know that?

DEBBIE

What happened to your face. You look like a disco clown.

RUTH

I'm... in character. I'm auditioning for a television show.

DEBBIE

Aw. I hope you get it.

Then Debbie grabs Ruth's hair, hard. Sam starts to move down the bleachers. Ruth yells.

SAM

Hey! What's going on?

RUTH

THAT HURTS.

DEBBIE

How long? How long were you two-- While I was pregnant??

RUTH

No-- Oh my god no. It was once a long time ago. That's it. And last night. Twice, that's it.

DEBBIE

What?

RUTH

I know! I told you! I fucked up!

DEBBIE

I don't know. I don't know what I'm supposed to do.

Debbie starts to cry, and pulls Ruth's hair harder.

RUTH

It just happened.

DEBBIE

Haven't you learned anything from that sad sad scene study class. Things don't happen. People make choices. They want things and they go for them.

Ruth wriggles away, leaving Debbie with a clump of hair. Ruth yells in pain. Debbie keeps advancing. Everyone gravitates to the ring, getting closer to the action. Sam watches all the women watching the match. Ruth is now legitimately scared.

RUTH

Can we go somewhere and talk?

DEBBIE

I don't want to talk. I want to kick your ass. And then I never want to see you again.

Debbie swats at Ruth, but Ruth dodges her.

RUTH

I'm not going to fight you.

MATILDA

Fight her. Do it!

Debbie swats at Ruth again. And again. And again. The third time, Ruth hits back, catching Debbie by surprise. It's ON. They're both clawing at each other, trying to grab hold of something. It's a messy, dirty, ugly fight. Ruth knocks her elbow into Debbie's face, her nose starts to bleed.

ANGLE ON Fiji and Cherry at the ropes.

FIJI

Is this real?

CHERRY

Who the fuck cares?

MATILDA

(to Randy)

Look at your mother. She is gorgeous.

We REVERSE to see Debbie running FULL STEAM at Ruth. They bounce into the ropes then fall to the ground. It's a MAD SCRAMBLE, but Debbie gets the upper hand and PINS Ruth.

ANGLE ON Sam, now standing up on the bleachers, rapt, his imagination running wild. As if this fight just unlocked for him what GLOW could be. Will be. When we REVERSE again, we see what he sees:

INT. FANTASY BOXING GYM - FUTURE

Ruth and Debbie are still grappling, but the house around them is now PACKED. Hundreds of fans CHEER from their seats. Ruth now wears a red, white and blue sequined romper with stars and high red boots. Debbie wears a Farmer's Daughter outfit--with a pink halter and short jean shorts. All the other women are in costume now. Ten pounds of GLITTER bedeck their teased hairdos. The shitty boxing ring has been replaced by a shiny new one with HOT PINK ropes.

Ladies and Gentlemen, meet GLOW. Gorgeous Ladies of Wrestling. The TV show that Ruth, Sam and the girls will dream up together and turn into a national sensation, replete with over-the-top characters and five hundred pounds of glitter. The camera catches a glimmer of the neon pink GLOW MARQUIS behind Ruth pulling a reverse on Debbie, pinning her as we--

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. WATTS GYM - SAME TIME

Ruth is still on top of Debbie, but we're back in dirty old Watts. There's no pink ropes. No audience. No marquis. Just two angry bitches hashing out some real life drama.

SALTY

One. Two--

As a smile creeps across Ruth's face--

BLACK OUT.

End of pilot.