

STIRRUPS

"Pilot"

written by
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FADE IN:

OVER BLACK - A phone rings. We hear shuffling of papers. A RECEPTIONIST speaks.

RECEPTIONIST

Dr. Goldstein will be right with you.
Have a seat.

The sound of horrible MUZAK can be heard.

SMASH CUT TO:

TITLE: "STIRRUPS" in text scrolls up from the bottom of the screen. The word separates in the middle between "STIR" and "RUPS" and opens up to the right and left of the screen.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE EXAM ROOM - DAY

CARRIE PARSONS, 39, lays on an exam table with her legs wide open in medical stirrups. Angle on DR. GOLDSTEIN, mid-30's, from Carrie's point of view. He inserts a speculum. She winces in pain.

CARRIE

(under her breath)
God is watching over us. He will let
us land safely. God is watching over
us. He will let us land safely.

DR. GOLDSTEIN

Excuse me?

CARRIE

What?
(realizing)
Oh, sorry. It's just something I say
to myself when I'm anxious. On a
plane, that is.
(she smiles awkwardly)
Nervous flyer. Thought it might help
me relax.

Dr. Goldstein ignores her. He's not the type for chit chat.

DR. GOLDSTEIN

Now, one more deep breath for me, I'm
just going to get a swab of your
cervix to check for any infections.

Just as Carrie inhales Dr. Goldstein's female ASSISTANT appears out of nowhere with an iPad. She lifts up Carrie's gown and puts the iPad up super close to Carrie's vagina.

CARRIE

Um...

DR. GOLDSTEIN

Oh this is Justine. She's taking some pictures for reference.

We hear the sound of the camera taking burst shots. It goes on a little too long.

CARRIE

Guess there really isn't a "good side" when it comes to my vagina, huh?

No one laughs. Carrie puts up the peace sign and poses for the camera even though it's not pointed at her face. Dr. Goldstein takes out the speculum.

DR. GOLDSTEIN

Okay, well the good news is I think you still only have a very mild case of vaginismus.

CARRIE

Really? How can that be? Every time I try to have sex it feels like someone is stabbing me with a knife. Even tampons hurt. That's considered mild?

DR. GOLDSTEIN

Some women can't even get a q-tip up there. Your pelvic muscles only feel slightly tight to me. Are you bathing before using your dilators?

CUT TO:

INT. CARRIE'S APARTMENT BATHROOM - A FEW DAYS EARLIER

Carrie lays back into the tub, puts sliced cucumbers on her eyelids and sighs in relief. A candle burns above her, the lights are dim, and relaxing music plays. She closes her eyes.

A beat.

Suddenly we hear the sound of a bed hitting against the wall. Then sex moans and groans. Carrie opens her eyes in annoyance.

CARRIE

Rub it in my face, why don't you!

She gets up and grabs a towel.

BACK TO:

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE EXAM ROOM - CONTINUOUS

CARRIE

Well, not every time.

DR. GOLDSTEIN

Okay. And how often are you using the dilators then?

CUT TO:

INT. CARRIE'S APARTMENT BATHROOM - A FEW DAYS EARLIER

Carrie now stands in a bathrobe in front of her bathroom mirror with her hair wrapped up in a towel. She gives one deep sigh of determination. She picks up a small plastic dilator from the edge of the sink with her left hand. She picks up a regular tampon with her right. The dilator is smaller.

CARRIE

(relieved)

Oh, I can do this.

She puts them back down on the sink.

CU on smallest dilator. We hear the sounds of a musical xylophone go up in octave as the camera pans along to the rest of the set of dilators - up to the biggest one.

Horrified, Carrie pushes them all to the side into the tub.

CARRIE (CONT'D)

No. Nope. No. No no no no. Not happening.

She backs away from the bathroom and shuts the door.

BACK TO:

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE EXAM ROOM - CONTINUOUS

CARRIE

Those things looked like a set of Russian Nesting Dolls.

(MORE)

CARRIE (CONT'D)

I'd rather not be the winner of that babushka game if you know what I mean. Besides, do the number of times really matter?

Dr. Goldstein gives her a sneer as he makes a note on his clipboard.

DR. GOLDSTEIN

Well, how long can you keep them in for? We talking seconds? Minutes?

CARRIE

Well, I think I could eventually do it for minutes.

DR. GOLDSTEIN

(annoyed)

Okay, Carrie. Remember you need to take an active role in your treatment plan. It's important to be consistent with dilator use while also enduring insertion for as long as possible. This will help stretch out the tissue in your vagina over time.

CARRIE

I know. It just hurts.

DR. GOLDSTEIN

Unfortunately, that's part of the process. Pain.

Dr. Goldstein checks his notes.

DR. GOLDSTEIN (CONT'D)

Now, how is PT going?

CUT TO:

INT. BEYOND BASICS PHYSICAL THERAPY - A WEEK EARLIER

SHERRY, a soft spoken and kind-looking woman in her 30s, sits beside Carrie, who is laying on a table with a gown around her waist.

SHERRY

And you said you weren't sexually abused in any way growing up?

CARRIE

Um, no? Not that I know of. I was a preemie. Does that matter?

(MORE)

CARRIE (CONT'D)

Whenever I have a health problem my mom always says it's because I was born two and half months early. Like maybe something didn't form right or something?

SHERRY

No, that shouldn't matter. But birth trauma is a real thing. I can recommend a great hypnotist if you'd like to explore that. I did it a few years ago and was able to remember my actual birth. I could even make out who was in the room at the time.

CARRIE

(unsure)
Oh. That's cool?

SHERRY

(whispering)
My deadbeat Dad sure wasn't there, I can tell ya that much.

Sherry realizes she's said too much and grabs onto her pendant necklace. She takes a breath and centers herself.

CU: Carrie is jolted up by the feeling of Sherry's hand going up her gown with no warning.

CARRIE

Oh, hello!

CUT TO:

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE EXAM ROOM - CONTINUOUS

CARRIE

You really want me to go have some hippie woman finger me for 30 minutes? At least buy me a drink first, am I right?

Carrie raises up her hand, anticipating a high five that never comes.

DR. GOLDSTEIN

Carrie, physical therapy is vital to helping treat this sexual dysfunction. If you're serious about curing this, you're going to have to get on board.

CARRIE

So, there's really nothing else I can do?

DR. GOLDSTEIN

Well, the last option is to do botox.

CARRIE

Geez, I mean I guess I am turning 40 this year...

She turns to the mirror and pulls at the wrinkles around her eyes.

DR. GOLDSTEIN

No, we'd inject botox along your vaginal walls to help ease the tension of your pelvic muscles. But that's at least...

Close up on Dr. Goldstein's mouth/mask.

DR. GOLDSTEIN (CONT'D)

(in slow motion)

A couple thousand dollars per session.

Back to medium shot of Dr.

DR. GOLDSTEIN (CONT'D)

And depending how often you need to do it...

CARRIE

Well PT ain't no cake walk either. They want \$250 per session. Once a week for how many months? I can't afford that.

DR. GOLDSTEIN

Unfortunately, that's the downside to this condition.

CARRIE

THAT'S THE DOWNSIDE??

DR. GOLDSTEIN

Most insurance companies don't cover sexual dysfunction so a majority of patients have to pay out of pocket. Speaking of, you're okay that my rate went up to \$500, right? Still extra for labs.

Carrie is stunned. She tries to reply but nothing comes out.

DR. GOLDSTEIN (CONT'D)
So make sure you're using those
dilators at least a few times a week.
Ideally every day. Maybe put on a TV
show you like. Distract yourself.
(beat)
You know what I just discovered...

DR. GOLDSTEIN (CONT'D)
Peaky Blinders.

CARRIE
Porn?

CARRIE (CONT'D)
(sarcastically)
Sexy.

DR. GOLDSTEIN
I want to see you two months from now
to see your progress. We can talk
about next steps then.

He forces an awkward smile. He begins to exit but turns
around.

DR. GOLDSTEIN (CONT'D)
Don't forget, I've treated over 17,000
women with pelvic pain so you're in
good hands.

CARRIE
Literally.

She laughs at her own joke.

CARRIE (CONT'D)
You know, because your hands were just
all up in me?

Dr. Goldstein doesn't get it.

CARRIE (CONT'D)
OK. See you next time, doc. I just
have to go sell a kidney on the black
market to-

Dr. Goldstein shuts the door.

CARRIE (CONT'D)
(now yelling)
Pay for my next appointment!

EXT. OUTSIDE CARLY'S APARTMENT BUILDING - HALF AN HOUR LATER

Carrie walks up to her door. She holds her phone up to Facetime with her mom, NANCE.

CARRIE

Hi Mom.

NANCE

Hi Carrie Cakes! How was the doctor?
What did he say?

CARRIE

Just the usual. You know, keep using
the dilators and going to PT.

NANCE

Did you tell him about being a
preemie?

Carrie rolls her eyes.

CARRIE

Yes, Mom.

NANCE

I'm telling you, I really think you
just have small everything because of
that. I mean, you used to sit on the
toilet for hours when you were a kid.
We'd have to bring you dinner! You
were this tiny little thing but the
poop that would come out of you were
enor-

CARRIE

Mom! Gross! I have to go therapy.
Goodbye!

She hangs up, completely grossed out. She shivers.

CARRIE (CONT'D)

TMI.

INT. CARRIE'S LIVING ROOM - A FEW MOMENTS LATER

Carrie sits at her desk aggressively eating popcorn. She opens up her computer, sighs and launches Zoom. Her therapist, BARBARA GROSSMAN, early 40s, lover of flowy clothes and wearing too many scarves, answers on the first ring.

BARBARA

Hi there Care. How ya doin?

CARRIE

Hey Dr. B. What's shakin?

BARBARA

Are we in a vagina or penis mood today?

Barbara toggles between a zoom background of a bunch of vaginas or a bunch of penises.

CARRIE

Definitely NOT vaginas. I just spent the last hour getting sexually assaulted by some lady in midtown. Oh and with my luck, my vagina has probably gone viral on some medical website somewhere.

BARBARA

(laughs)

So you made it to PT again. That's great. Tell me, how did it go? Any better than the first time?

CARRIE

I don't know Dr. B, trying to loosen up my pelvic floor thing just isn't my jam. How is my vagina supposed to be open to all these invasive procedures when I can't even let a doctor swab a q-tip up my nose for COVID testing?

CUT TO:

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE EXAM ROOM - DAY - A FEW HOURS EARLIER

Dr. Goldstein stands in front of Carrie. He attempts to put a q-tip up her nostril. Carrie slaps his hand away.

BACK TO:

INT. CARRIE'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

CARRIE

We finally got it on the third try but I was sitting on my hands at that point.

(realizing)

God, I used to do that as a kid too. Slap my doctors. When I had to get a strep test?

Carrie looks away and stares at something.

CARRIE (CONT'D)
Poor Dr. Lloyd.

A beat.

Carrie looks back at the screen. Barbara is nowhere to be seen.

CARRIE (CONT'D)
Barbara? Dr. B?

A new group of floating penises take over the screen. Barbara returns with yet another scarf. She wraps it around herself and shivers.

BARBARA
Sorry. Go ahead. You were saying?

CARRIE
I don't know. It's all just so much.

BARBARA
Let's just break it down. Remember, whenever penetration is attempted, your vaginal muscles tighten up on their own. You have no control over it. But that's where PT, dilators, and our work comes in. To help you reach your ultimate goal.
(baiting)
Which is...

CARRIE
To have sex.
(rolling her eye)
Well, pain-free sex, that is.

Carrie shoves a few peanut butter cups into her mouth from the candy bowl sitting on her desk.

BARBARA
And does the idea of penetrative sex still bring you a lot of anxiety?

CARRIE
Why do you say that?

She takes a moment and notices all the candy stuffed into her mouth.

CARRIE (CONT'D)
Well, I guess so? It's just that it never gets easier.

Carrie swallows the candy.

BARBARA
(intrigued)
Hmm...tell me more.

CARRIE
Just...everything. Telling someone new
that I have vaginismus. Explaining
what vaginismus is. Then actually
trying to have sex and pretending
everything is fine, great even? And
what idiot named it vaginismus anyway?
A man most likely. It sounds like I
have a dinosaur living down there.
Like-

Carrie makes a sad "rawr" claw with her hands.

CARRIE (CONT'D)
Attack of the vaginismus!

[INSERT OLD TIME VIDEO CLIP OF PEOPLE RUNNING FOR THEIR
LIVES]

CARRIE (CONT'D)
I mean, what if I can never have sex?
Then I'll never get married. And
forget about kids! Great, just another
thing for Nance to complain about -
never becoming a grandparent.

She looks around her desk and finds a half eaten bagel. She
grabs it and starts to nosh on it.

BARBARA
Let's not go there just yet. The
important thing is you finally have a
diagnosis and can work on feeling
better after all these years.

Carrie takes her hands off the bagel but keeps it in her
mouth.

CARRIE
I guess so.

BARBARA
Remember. Be kind to yourself. Why
don't you try using your smallest
dilator in the shower? Many of my
clients have said they're easier to
use while standing up. Just make it
one more step to your daily routine.
(MORE)

BARBARA (CONT'D)

Remember, treating any form of pelvic pain is a journey that takes a lot of patience and persistence.

Carrie's computer pings. She opens up a text from Nance on her computer that reads: "WHEN ARE YOU GONNA MAKE ME A GRANDMA!? Cooking my Weight Watcher soup for dinner! Carrot, soup, and "Poof" emoji. XOXO." Photos of her with babies are seen below. Carrie immediately closes the message.

BARBARA (CONT'D)

So what have you learned this week?

CARRIE

Besides the fact that my mother has had me signed me up for a baby registry since the early 2000s?

Carrie thinks for a second.

CARRIE (CONT'D)

That this is going to be a long, hard and painful road.

BARBARA

And how is your vagina feeling now?

CARRIE

Tired.

END OF SHOW