

I'VE KNOWN ZOE

Written by

Ernestia Fraser

FADE IN:

INT. ZOE'S APARTMENT - DAY

CAMERA PANS a small, but comfortable New York apartment. A half-dressed fashion designer mannequin in one corner of the room and a stack of magazines called "The ZEEN" in another --

A HEAP of clothes surrounds a small, vintage luggage case on the bed. Someone is packing for a short trip --

CLOSE ON an invitation, black and turquoise - "You're invited to Janice and Matthew's Wedding." CAMERA PANS the bureau, which cluttered with a few books, make-up utensils and a few family photos of a beautiful girl and an older female relative --

ZOE FAULKNER, 28, beautiful, demure yet strikingly mysterious (same girl in the picture) stands in front of the mirror pinning up her long black hair. She is an independent fashion artist with a touch of grung. She wears a silver hoop nose ring.

A blue boxed present sits besides her makeup case. CLOSE ON her hand grabbing it.

EXT. NEW YORK - SAME - MURRAY HILL

CODY SANDUSKY, 30, shaggy hairstyle unlocks his beige 2014 Honda Sudan and gets in. He's cute and sweet, but awkwardly shy. CAMERA ON a black clothing bag and a guitar CASE on the back seat.

INT. BEIGE HONDA - SAME

Cody straps on his seat belt and checks his mirrors. A KNOCK on the window. It's his neighbor EDDY CAJOLEE, 76 with a thick mustache. Eddy's still dressed in his pajamas.

EXT./INT. BEIGE HONDA - SAME

Cody clumsily turns down the window.

CODY
Hi, Mr. Cajolee.

EDDY
Call me Eddy for God's sakes.

CODY

Sorry.

EDDY

Listen, do you mind if I take your copies of the Times while you're gone?

CODY

Oh, that's no problem...
(awkwardly)
Eddy.

Eddy nods his head over at his WIFE (72) and CAT, Maggie, who wears a name tag. His wife is also dressed in her night clothes.

EDDY

Good. Maggie has been having a lot of accidents recently and we just want to put down some extra padding.

Cody glances over at Eddy's wife.

CODY

Not a problem. Hope Maggie gets good use out of it.

EDDY

Oh, she will --

Eddy backs away from the car --

Cody pulls the car out of the parallel parking spot while Zoe, unbeknownst to him, exits a nearby brownstone apartment building across the street.

INT. RECEPTION HALL - LATE AFTERNOON

A large room with decorated round tables. A black/white and turquoise wedding theme. Very classy with paper mache balloons and flowers. It's a wedding rehearsal.

A few TECHIES set up sound equipment on a stage. Zoe, holding the small blue present, walks over to front of the room where JANICE WATERS, 28, blonde bride-to-be talks with the sound equipment GUY. She's gorgeous, but a bit plastic.

JANICE

We want speakers on both sides and then the rear.

(MORE)

JANICE (CONT'D)
We're having a live band for one part of it and then a Deejay for the last part.

A HAND TAPS on Janice's shoulders. It's Zoe.

ZOE
(smiling)
Hey.

Janice turns around and lets out a scream, giving Zoe a major hug.

JANICE
Oh my God, Zoe. Where have you been?

ZOE
(presenting the gift)
Here, I guess.

JANICE
Is that for me?

Zoe hands her the small box.

ZOE
Yeah. I hope you like it.

Janice takes the gift.

JANICE
Can I open it?

ZOE
Sure.

Janice unwraps the box and pulls out a torn page from a magazine -- it's a picture of a beautiful gray dress --

ZOE (CONT'D)
I'm still making it.

JANICE
For me?

ZOE
Yeah, I'll have it done soon.

JANICE
Thank you. I love it, I'm sure.

Janice gives her a long, tight hug.

LATER

The room is still a bit empty though a few persons are sitting in their assigned seats. Zoe among them.

Cody takes his seat next to Zoe.

CODY (O.S.)

Hey.

Zoe turns to face Cody.

ZOE

Hey.

Cody watches as Zoe begins to tap on the table.

CODY

I don't really function at these things either.

Zoe takes a moment and smiles.

ZOE

I can't function much at anything. It's a defect.

The two exchange a smile.

CODY

So how do you know the engaged couple?

ZOE

Columbia. I was actually Janice's roommate for a year. We use to fight over hot water privileges.

CODY

Yeah? Cool... Well, Matthew and I worked at the same law firm some years back. I quit after two years of it. Just wasn't made out of the legal armor and steel... not like him anyway.

ZOE

Some of us are made out of softer things, I guess.

CODY

Yeah.

SOUND of someone CLEARING THEIR THROAT in the mic.

CAMERA ON MATTHEW PEARCE, 30, handsome, tall and preppy, holds up his glass of water while on the mic addressing the small GROUP. Matthew examines the classy NEWCOMERS - an obvious upper middle class group of people - who finally take their assigned seats.

MATTHEW

I know you all are wondering about the glass. It's not what you think. It's just water... mixed with all kinds defiled liquids...

Janice finally joins Zoe at the table and two BRIDESMAIDS and two GROOMSMEN also sit with them.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

...and with this glass, I want to toast to first my fiance who is the love of life. She's the reason I get up in morning and the reason I've agreed to a nine to five. Janice, you're my sun by day and my moon by night. Thank you for understanding my place here in the world and thank you for loving me in spite of it.

Matthew's eyes fall on Zoe for the first time. He's at a lost for words. She gives a slight smile as he looks away.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

And I uh want to thank everyone else for supporting us in our story of love.

EXT. RECEPTION HALL - SAME

Zoe stands alone outside with another glass of wine. She looks up at the beautiful night. Without saying a word, SOMEONE stands next to her on the stairs. It's Matthew.

MATTHEW

I wasn't sure you would make it.

ZOE

I wasn't sure myself.

MATTHEW

Could you believe all of this? I mean... things and how they turned out...

ZOE
 Congratulations. You deserve all of
 it. I mean it.
 (a beat)
 Anyway, I'll leave you to it.

There's some 'history' between the two.

MATTHEW
 Okay.

Matthew deeply exhales as Zoe walks away.

BAR AREA

Matthew and Cody stand near the counter chatting while Janice takes Zoe over to the bridesmaids, the pearl wearing type. Janice introduces Zoe, who does her best to smile and get on--

Cody doesn't appear to be as self-assured as Matthew. The two stand by the bar area. Matthew picks up a mixed drink off the counter.

CODY
 I'm just wondering what I'm doing
 here. I mean, as your best man.

MATTHEW
 Come on, Cody. Why would you even
 say that?

Mathew drinks from his cup.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)
 I swear I have no one else. It was
 either you or my cat, Snickers and
 he didn't look good in a tux. But
 you do my friend.

CODY
 Seriously?

MATTHEW
 How about tonight, you have the fun
 that I'm no longer allowed to have?

Cody takes a look around, spotting Zoe.

CODY
 What are you suggesting?

MATTHEW
 Not a good old Bible study if
 that's what you're thinking.
 (MORE)

MATTHEW (CONT'D)
(finishing his drink)
Cody, come on. Remember the firm
days when we would go out and
party, except I did all the
partying and you didn't do shit.

CODY
Okay. Yeah?

MATHHEW
(grimacing)
I'm now giving you an opportunity
to do shit.

TECHNO HOUSE MUSIC PLAYING.

EXT. NEW YORK MANSION - EVENING

An overbearing English-styled New York mansion situated on
large estate.

INT. NEW YORK MANSION - EVENING - LIVING ROOM

Cody walks in beholding Janice, Matthew, Zoe and about five
other FRIENDS sitting around the living room, deep in
discussion.

INT. NEW YORK MANSION - SAME - LIBRARY

Zoe grabs a wine glass from the tray of a PASSING WAITER and
begins to scan the book collection.

Cody approaches her while also holding a glass of something.

CODY
Hi.

She turns to greet him.

ZOE
Hi.

CODY
Apparently, the only thing to drink
is an alcoholic beverage. I got the
one I was most familiar with.

Zoe takes a second glance at Cody, incredulous to his slight
prudery.

ZOE
Which is?

CODY
Uhm, scotch.

ZOE
Hmmm. Probably the strongest drink
in here. Don't you think?

CODY
(feeling stupid)
Oh.

Zoe smiles, soon holding out her hand.

ZOE
I'm Zoe.

CODY
Cody. My name is Cody.

ZOE
Yeah, we sat next to each other.
You and Matthew must be pretty
close.

CODY
Yeah, you can say that. We spent
two years together studying for the
bar.

ZOE
So you're a lawyer?

CODY
No, actually, I just helped him
study. I'm a financial consultant
who does a lot of accounting on the
side.

ZOE
Cool.

CODY
And what do you do?

ZOE
I write for an urban magazine.

CODY
Oh, yeah? Well, maybe I've heard of
it.

ZOE
 You might have. It's called THE
 ZEEN.

Cody tries to think about where he's heard the name, but he
 shakes his head.

CODY
 No, sorry, I've never --

ZOE
 Of course not.

Matthew enters the room.

MATTHEW
 Come on guys. Let's go. We're
 playing the drinking game.

Cody whispers something to Zoe.

CODY
 I thought he said he really wasn't
 going to drink.

Zoe's a little put off by Cody.

ZOE
 (ref: Cody's scotch)
 Are you going to finish that or do
 you want me to?

INT. NEW YORK MANSION - NIGHT - LIVING ROOM

It's a game of "Never Have I Ever." There's a whole table
 full of loaded shot glasses. Cody stands to one side while
 Zoe proceeds on the other. She nears a CUTE MALE GUEST.
 Although she's not interested, the guest gives her a slight
 smile --

A curly-haired Bridesmaid, ANNA, 27, raises her shot glass.

ANNA
 Never have I ever flashed my boobs
 to a group of cops.

MATTHEW
 Wow. This is great.

Matthew, Anna and another BLOND GIRL drink to that.

JANICE

Matt, you know you've never flashed
a cop your boob.

MATTHEW

I know, but I would have loved to
get away with that one.
(putting his glass down)
What?

Another guy reaches for a shot glass and raises it:

GUY

Never have I ever had a threesome.

Zoe and Cody both look at their cup, taking a moment. In one corner, TOM MALLORAY (30, tall, dark-hair) and CARRIE "RED" TODD (27, red-head) are takers: shot.

EXT. LAKE - NIGHT

It's a beautiful SHINY lake. The stars are out above, but below is a dark, isolated area. The estate lights illuminate the backdrop.

CODY (O.S.)

Hey.

Zoe turns around and it's Cody, who squints a little. He might be slightly dizzy from the scotch.

ZOE

Are you stalking me?

CODY

No... I just, uhm... I don't do too
well with larger groups. I guess.

ZOE

Okay.

CODY

I didn't see you drinking in there.

ZOE

Well, I don't like "getting wasted"
around people I know all too well.

CODY

You prefer to be anonymous?

Zoe doesn't make it easy for him. Cody's awkward and he knows it.