

The Cusp

written by

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EPISODE ONE: PHOTOSHOOT

INT. PAT AND CHRIS' APARTMENT - PAT'S BEDROOM

Pat and Chris strike poses in front the the mirror taking selfies.

CHRIS
Let me just try ...

Chris pushes Pat out of the frame and takes a selfie. He assesses his work.

CHRIS (CONT'D)
(muttering)
Much better.

PAT
Chris!

CHRIS
I'm sorry, Pat, but our face shapes
aren't exactly compatible.

Pat sits on her bed and pouts. Chris keeps taking selfies.

PAT
That's not my fault! My dumb
dentist made me stop wearing my
facial shape wear.

CHRIS
Weren't your teeth like fully
turning sideways?

PAT
Yes, but my heart shaped face was
really coming in! Come on dude, we
have no good pictures together.
What if you died tomorrow and then
at your funeral there are no
pictures of us?

CHRIS
Oh God.

Chris looks at his reflection, horrified.

CHRIS (CONT'D)
There would only be pictures of my
family and I.

PAT

Everyone would be sad at your funeral not cause you died, but cause it'd look like you had no best friend.

CHRIS

Well stop sitting there! Come get in this selfie!

PAT

A mirror selfie? We have four years of ugo pics to make up for. This is not gonna cut it. We need a photoshoot.

CHRIS

(gasps)

I have the perfect photographer. You're gonna die.

PAT

... In case one of us actually dies maybe we should get some selfies. For insurance.

Pat joins Chris at the mirror for selfies. Pat re-positions Chris.

PAT (CONT'D)

Here. Move your foot inwards and then back. Boom. Ass.

CHRIS

Thank you!

Pat and Chris take selfies.

INT. CAMPUS BUILDING - MORNING

Chris waits around for Pat in a very extra outfit. Chris notices something through the window.

CHRIS

Is that? What is she ...

From a distance, Pat waves at Chris in an equally extra outfit and holds a basketball.

PAT

(mouthing)

Check this out!

Pat dribbles and does ball handling tricks poorly.

CHRIS

There she goes. Oh, she's not bad.
Oh no, she's pretty bad. Travel.
That's a travel. I don't think that
move's allowed. Oop, done? She's
done.

Pat gives Chris a thumbs up and runs inside.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

Why did that happen?

PAT

Found it on someone's lawn. I
thought it'd be cool for our
photoshoot.

CHRIS

Please, not for all of them.

PAT

Just some for my LinkedIn. Who'd
you get to be our photographer?
It's not you is it? Chris! We can't
pull off a selfie book.

CHRIS

No, my aunt is visiting and I told
her I'd give my cousin Bryce a tour
of school if she takes pics of us.

PAT

(excitedly)

Bryce? Are you serious? I've never
been photographed before nevermind
by a professional influencer!

Pat giddily jumps around.

CHRIS

Be cool. I just texted her Mom -
Bryce won't give me her number for
security reasons - she should be...
oh look! Bryce! Hey Bryce!

Chris and Pat wave frantically through the window. BRYCE,
(14) stylish with cool makeup, approaches. Chris hugs Bryce
but she does not reciprocate. Bryce is suspicious of the
pair's weird enthusiasm.

BRYCE

Hey, guys.

CHRIS
How'd you find us so easily?

BRYCE
Well I got to the building and then
just followed the screaming.

PAT
So smart.

CHRIS
Bryce, this is my best friend, Pat.

PAT
AAHHH! Hi! I follow you on
Instagram.

BRYCE
Cool.

PAT
So you noticed?

Chris changes the subject.

CHRIS
Anyway, what's your artistic
process? What about us has inspired
you to take on this project?

BRYCE
My Mom made me.

PAT
(to Chris)
I didn't know she did poetry too.

CHRIS
(whining)
Bryce! Seriously, we need your
guidance.

BRYCE
(concedes)
Alright! Well why do you guys want
a photoshoot anyway?

CHRIS
Pat and I are ugly but for some
reason in pictures together we look
even worse.

PAT

Our entire friendship is basically nonexistent because we have no viable photographic evidence to post on our Instagrams.

BRYCE

So, we retrace your friendship. Document the important moments you didn't capture.

CHRIS

Perfect idea! Lead the way, cuz!

Chris motions for Bryce to go ahead.

BRYCE

How would I know where the most important moments of your friendship happened?

CHRIS

Oh, right.

BRYCE

I've never been to this school. Where could I bring us?

CHRIS

Yep. I get it. After me.

Pat and Chris scurry ahead. Bryce trails behind them.

EXT. QUAD - TREE - DAY

Chris and Pat struggle to climb a tree. Bryce SNAPS photos.

CHRIS

I got a concussion under this tree.

PAT

Someone hit him with a frisbee. I think it was a targeted attack.

Bryce is taken aback. Shocked.

BRYCE

Against gay people?

PAT

No! The non-athletic.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE CLASSROOM - DAY

Pat and Chris sit on a bench holding hands.

PAT

This is where we met. We took Intro to Grammar together.

CHRIS

Well, the first time we took it.

BRYCE

You guys failed?

PAT

Just me. I made Chris take it again cause I have a tendency to provoke fights within group projects. He's my mediator.

BRYCE

English grammar? The language you speak.

PAT

Um, you can just call it grammar. The English is a little repetitive, sweetheart.

BRYCE

(to Chris)

Does she know what grammar means?

Chris makes a face at Bryce begging her to play along. Chris rubs Pat's back.

CHRIS

Shhhh. Just take the picture. Here we go.

Chris and Pat pose.

EXT. LOCAL BAR - SIDEWALK - DAY

Pat and Chris rough house.

PAT

(teasing)

Chris got transported to the hospital from here.

BRYCE

Did you drink too much?

The rough housing abruptly stops.

CHRIS
No, stabbed.

PAT
And I found out from Michelle!

BRYCE
(to Chris)
Were you okay?

PAT
I mean, my feelings were hurt, but
I got over it.

Pat and Chris reenact the incident and Bryce SNAPS photos.

CHRIS
Ow, Pat! You hit my actual wound.

PAT
Sorry! I was trying to make it
authentic.

EXT. CAMPUS QUAD - AFTERNOON

Pat and Chris walk ahead and Bryce follows, exhausted. Bryce motions to her phone.

BRYCE
Guys, I think I got what we need.

CHRIS
Oh, okay. Hey, at least you got a
tour of campus out of today! Think
you'll be a Wolverine?

PAT
Rawr! Grr? I just realized I don't
know what a wolverine is.

BRYCE
I'm not going to college.

PAT
What? You have to.

Bryce crosses her arms.

BRYCE
Why?

CHRIS

Cause we had to! You know, for ... jobs.

PAT

(nudges Chris)

Nice one.

BRYCE

Why would I put myself into crippling debt for an education that obviously includes more nonsense than learning. Besides, I have a job.

Bryce tosses her hair.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

I'm an influencer.

PAT

Did you really not see my follow? I followed then unfollowed you like five times.

CHRIS

What are we supposed to do then, Bryce? You could've told us sooner!

BRYCE

Um, I was eight when you started college.

Bryce softens, takes out a fifty dollar bill, and hands it to Chris.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

Just, go buy yourselves a treat. I'll salvage what I can from the photos.

Bryce pats Chris' arm and leaves. Pat and Chris are dumbfounded. Chris fans his face.

CHRIS

Panicking. Oh, God I'm panicking.

PAT

Why did we spend all day doing an Instagram photoshoot? We should've been working on our art. Asking professors for ... help? They do that right?

CHRIS

Panic!

Chris sits on the ground, pulls his legs to his chest, and rocks a bit.

PAT

Ugh! Don't stress, Chris. It'll work out for us.

Pat sits next to Chris.

CHRIS

Please stop reading me your horoscopes.

PAT

Say what you will, but my horoscope did predict I'd find my soulmate early in life.

CHRIS

You met someone? Without me?

PAT

It is you, dipshit! Listen, you may be dumb, in debt, without a career path or really any job leads -

CHRIS

The point, Pat!

PAT

The point is, you've got me, Chris.

Chris takes a deep breathe.

CHRIS

Kudos, Pat.

Pat boops Chris' nose.

PAT

I read an article that said childhood lasts until you're twenty six now.

CHRIS

Huh. I knew I wasn't ready to be an adult.

Pat helps Chris get up and they walk away. Pat puts her arm around Chris.

PAT

Right? So validating science is finally catching up.

CHRIS

... Wanna go take a nap?

PAT

Chris. That is the best idea you've ever had.

EPISODE TWO: BIRTHDAY

INT. SOPHIE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

PAT and CHRIS are alone as a party RAGES in the next room.
Pat holds a bottle of wine and Chris searches cabinets.

CHRIS

No snacks! What does she even do
all day?

PAT

No offense to Sophie, but who has
their twenty-first birthday at a
house? Go to a bar!

CHRIS

No offense to Sophie, but I'd rate
this lil get together a fat ze-

SOPHIE, gorgeous and confident, walks into the kitchen.

PAT

(loudly)

Hey, birthday girl!

CHRIS

Really cool party.

Sophie opens a beer and leans against the counter. So cool.

SOPHIE

Thanks!

PAT

(clears throat)

So, twenty-one? That better be your
first drink young lady!

Sophie opens her beer and takes a sip.

SOPHIE

I'm not twenty-one.

CHRIS

You're twenty-two? Oof.

PAT

Hey! I'm almost twenty-three.

CHRIS
(to Pat)
I've already given you my
condolences.

SOPHIE
Oh no, I'm twenty! Well, I will be
at midnight.

CHRIS
(panicked)
You're nineteen?
(to Pat)
I know a nineteen-year-old?

PAT
How are you a Senior?

SOPHIE
I skipped some grades in school. My
teachers used to call me gifted. So
embarrassing.

Sophie sips her beer again.

PAT
(calculating)
So you're ... two years younger
than me?

SOPHIE
Closer to three, I think.

As Pat speaks Chris chugs some gulps from the wine bottle.

PAT
Okay, math! My mind is more
creative so numbers don't really
work for me. I see in colors and
shapes. Total right-brainer.

CHRIS
And I'm smart.

SOPHIE
What?

CHRIS
I'm really smart. I have a three
point seven GPA.

PAT
Basically same.

CHRIS PAT (CONT'D)
You told me it was a 2- Hush!

PAT (CONT'D)
I meant in my right-brain oriented
classes. Math doesn't count.

SOPHIE
That's great!

CHRIS
What's yours?

SOPHIE
Well, it's not a competition.

PAT
(gleeful)
Oh, no! Poor Sophie are you
embarrassed of yours?

CHRIS
I've heard gifted children tend to
burn out. Their brains just shrivel
up from the pressure ... Tragic.

SOPHIE
I didn't shrivel.

PAT
Babe, don't worry.

CHRIS
People peak in all different stages
of life.

PAT
Really nothing to be sad about.

CHRIS
Well, maybe a little sad.

SOPHIE
I have a four point oh!

Pat and Chris stand in a daze. Sophie's voice is muted trying to get their attention. Sophie SNAPS them out of their trance.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)
(concerned)
Are you guys okay?

Pat steals the wine bottle and takes a gulp.

CHRIS

Good for you. It's just, I value my personal life. I can't spend all my time studying.

JOSHUA, Sophie's gorgeous boyfriend, enters the room and hugs Sophie around the waist. He kisses the side of her forehead.

JOSHUA

There's my birthday girl!

SOPHIE

Hey, babe.

Joshua seems to notice Pat and Chris for the first time.

JOSHUA

Hey, guys. What's up?

PAT

I was just about to tell Sophie how my professional life is like really popping off. I'm constantly like networking and interviewing and ...

JOSHUA

Oh, did Sophie tell you guys about her book deal?

Sophie senses Pat and Chris' downward spiral and treats the situation like they're a ticking time bomb.

CHRIS

Book deal? They don't give book deals to nineteen year olds.

SOPHIE

(apologetic)

Well, Puffin Publishing follows my blog and they read my article about prejudice toward the pretty.

PAT

'My Brain is Up Here'?

SOPHIE

You're a fan?

PAT

Mmm. 'Fan' is a strong word. I'd say mild peruser. Once a week tops.

Sophie can't help but get excited about her prospect.

SOPHIE

Well, the publishers want me to write a book on my struggles with external beauty.

JOSHUA

Isn't my girl so talented?

CHRIS

Are you sure the publishers didn't just want some Instagram captions?

SOPHIE

They said a whole book!

PAT

You know what, Sophie? You suck.

SOPHIE

Excuse me?

CHRIS

Give me that.

Chris snatches the beer from Sophie's hands.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

This is for adults.

JOSHUA

(shocked)

It's her birthday, assholes.

PAT

Yeah. We know. Know what else? This birthday party?

CHRIS

Lame! And your blog?

PAT

Annoying! Oh, your boyfriend?

CHRIS

Hot.

PAT

So hot! You guys look amazing together!

Pat and Chris storm away but are swept back into the room by a crowd carrying a birthday cake. The crowd cheers as Pat and Chris get trapped in a corner.

CROWD
Happy Birthday Sophie!

JOSHUA
Make a wish, babe!

SOPHIE
You guys! I have more love here
than I could ever wish for. Does
anyone else have a hope or dream I
can help with?

A partygoer whispers in Sophie's ear. Sophie nods and blows
out the candles.

PAT
Ugh. Pathetic.

CHRIS
Dude, I heard that girls brother is
like actually sick.

PAT
Oh. Well I hope he gets better
soon.

Sophie cuts her cake. Cake is passed out and a plate reaches
Pat and Chris. Pat takes a bite.

PAT (CONT'D)
Damn it.

Pat gives Chris the fork and he takes a bite.

CHRIS
Uck! That's delectable.

Chris passes the fork back and Pat takes another bite.

END OF EPISODE.

EPISODE THREE: VIRAL

INT. PAT AND CHRIS' LIVING ROOM - DAY

Pat and Chris sit on their couch staring at their phones.
They scroll through their social media.

CHRIS
Hahahahahahaha!

PAT
(muttering)
Hehehehe. That's good.

CHRIS
Oh nooooo. Oh no. Gross!

PAT
HA! Dude.

Pat taps Chris' arm and he violently jumps.

CHRIS
When did you get here?

PAT
I've been sitting here for an hour.
Look at this Tik Tok.

CLOSE ON: video of a tween doing a dance on TIK TOK.

CHRIS
Cute.

PAT
It has five hundred thousand views.

CHRIS
That piece of shit? These dumb
babies will watch anything.

PAT
We should make one! What a great
transition into the YouTuber realm.

CHRIS
(sighs)
Twitter's character limit has been
limiting my artistic expression
lately. Tik Tok could be big for
us.

Pat jumps up and celebrates.

PAT
Ahhh we're doing it!
(chanting)
Tik Tok! Tik Tok!

Chris gets up and joins in.

PAT/CHRIS (CONT'D)
Tik Tok! Tik Tok! Tik Tok!

CUT TO:

INT. PAT AND CHRIS' LIVING ROOM - LATER

Furniture is moved out of the way. Pat and Chris are covered in sweat.

PAT
How many times do I have to tell
you? It's not this -

Pat performs a dance move.

PAT (CONT'D)
- It's this!

Pat performs a barely different dance move.

CHRIS
I think I'm licensed to some
creative freedom!

PAT
Oh, you know better than the
tweens? That's rich. Again!

They begin the dance but Pat grabs Chris almost immediately.

PAT (CONT'D)
Stop. Stop. The vibe was off.

CHRIS
Off? Where'd it go, Pat? Huh? I
think I know.

Chris gets in Pat's face.

CHRIS (CONT'D)
(menacing, quiet)
It went straight over your head
because you don't have a little
thing called style.
(MORE)

CHRIS (CONT'D)
That's what turns the vibe on, Pat.
That's what the people love.

Pat backs off and comes back slowly.

PAT
(tearfully)
I know I'm hard on you. But Tik Tok
is a privilege, man. If this dance
is not perfect those Gen Z kids
will eat us up. It's almost as if
you want to be a millennial. You
wanna be dead soon?

CHRIS
(sighs)
No.

PAT
I choose to be Gen Z, but I want my
best friend there with me. Okay?

Chris wipes away a tear and nods. Pat and Chris clasp hands.

CHRIS
Five, six, seven, eight ...

Pat and Chris do the dance again and it's perfect. They
celebrate.

PAT/CHRIS (CONT'D)
YES!

Pat posts the video as Chris jumps around.

CHRIS (CONT'D)
How long until we get sponsored do
you think?

PAT
It's only our first one. So ... a
week?

They tire out and stop jumping around.

CHRIS
Now what?

CUT TO: Pat and Chris asleep on the couch.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. DREAM - DANCE FLOOR

Pat finds herself in a dream Just-Dance like setting. She hears the Tik Tok song from afar. Pat looks around confused.

A chatboard appears to the bottom right of Pat.

GROUPCHAT

Dance. What are you waiting for?
Dance for us!

Pat starts the dance trepidatiously.

GROUPCHAT (CONT'D)

Faster!

Pat gains confidence.

GROUPCHAT (CONT'D)

Not that fast! There you go!

GROUPCHAT (CONT'D)

Woah you're really killing it now!
Keep it up!

Pat goes all out and she thinks she's killing it. She's in a golden glow. The comments start pouring in quickly

GROUPCHAT (CONT'D)

Fyp. I'm obsessed with you. Yass
girl. Plz reply Pat. CEO of
dancing. Meryl streep who? Dancing
queen! Hi Pat! Fyp. Follow meeee.

DISSOLVE OUT:

INT. PAT AND CHRIS' LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Pat wakes from her nightmare. She checks her phone to a bunch of Tik Tok notifications.

PAT

Chris! Chris!

Chris wakes up.

PAT (CONT'D)

We're viral, buddy!

Pat opens the app. Her smile disappears.

PAT (CONT'D)

Oh no. Oh no no no no.

CHRIS
Let me see!

Chris steals the phone. Pat puts her head in her lap.

CHRIS (CONT'D)
Fifty thousand views! And climbing!

PAT
Read the comments.

CHRIS
'Old people suck'. Ouch. This one
is just a clown emoji. That means
we're funny, right? 'Get off Tik
Tok, Boomers' Alright.

PAT
Delete?

CHRIS
This never happened.

They fuss over the phone deleting their work. They sit in
silence for a moment.

CHRIS (CONT'D)
Are the tweens still using tumblr?

END OF EPISODE