

Solita

A screenplay by

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Friday, June 24, 2005

INT. A YOUNG GIRL'S BEDROOM - DAY

Young SOLITA sleeps somewhere inside a mound of blankets, hidden. The room is decorated in typical fashion for a girl of about 12: bright colors, pop CDs, stuffed animals.

Her MOTHER enters, a warm, soft-featured older woman, and begins to wake her.

MOTHER

Wake up, Solita. C'mon.

Solita stirs and moans.

SOLITA

Mmm. I don't want to get up.

MOTHER

Oh, c'mon, It's time for school.

SOLITA

I don't want to go to school either.

MOTHER

Well you have to.

SOLITA

Why?

MOTHER

Because I can't teach you math, that's why.

SOLITA

I'm not any good at math anyway.

MOTHER

You'll get better.

SOLITA

No I won't.

MOTHER

Yes you will. By the end of today you'll be able to multiply fractions till that big fat math teacher of yours falls right out of his chair.

Solita giggles.

MOTHER

Then in high school they'll put
you in that special class where
they make you cut up frogs.

SOLITA

(Laughing)

Eeeew!

MOTHER

And then you'll go to college
and get a diploma so you can
build space ships and cure
cancer and do all those other
big things.

SOLITA

Why me?

MOTHER

Because you're special.

SOLITA

I don't want to be special.

She begins to tickle her through the blankets. Solita
laughs furiously.

MOTHER

(Through Teeth)

Well I'll just have to make you
be special if you won't be
special when your mother says.

Her mother stops, and lifts away a corner of the blanket to
reveal Solita's face. She is an extremely beautiful girl.

Mother kisses her on the nose, then pats the blankets.

MOTHER

Get up.

INT. SOLITA'S ROOM - DAY

Subtitle: 5 years later.

A harsh alarm noise wakes the now 17 year old Solita. She
sits up in bed, clutching her head in agony.

She gradually gathers herself, and silences the shrieking
alarm. Then she leaves the room.

INT. SOLITA'S MOTHER'S ROOM - DAY

Solita's mother lays on the bed near the nightstand. She is red and puffy from crying. Tissues are scattered about. There is a photo, her wedding photo, on the night stand.

Solita creeps in behind her. Her mother does not stir.

Solita pauses, then suddenly her mother speaks.

MOTHER

He used to pick out the
marshmallows.

A beat.

SOLITA

I'm sorry.

MOTHER

(Smiling)

The doctor wanted you to have
your fiber, and I tried to make
you eat the whole bowl, but
he'd come home from working all
night, and pick out all the
marshmallows for you.

Solita is bewildered.

SOLITA

Yeah. . . the kids'll be eating
breakfast soon.

MOTHER

Only the marshmallows. . . I
told him what the doctor said.
You really needed your fiber.

SOLITA

Somebody's going to have to get
their serial for them.

MOTHER

Where else was she supposed to
get it from? I had a job too, I
worked all day, and I cooked,
and now I had to re-plan a meal
because she had candy for
breakfast? Bastard!

SOLITA

Tim still puts his shoes on
backwards.

MOTHER

Hmm?

SOLITA

He needs someone to get him off
to school.

MOTHER

Mmh. Yeah.

A beat.

SOLITA

Well, I'm gonna go and. . .

MOTHER

Your father was a good man.

SOLITA

. . . yeah.

Solita watches her a moment, then turns and heads back out
of the room, closing the door behind her.

INT. THE LIVING ROOM - DAY

A young boy (Tim, 7) and girl (Gloria, 5), sit on the floor
in their pajamas, watching TV. The room is dirty, video
tapes and other fodder lay on the floor. In the adjoining
kitchen area, toys are scattered on the table between the
dishes from last night's dinner. Bills have piled up on the
counter.

Solita enters the room.

SOLITA

You guys need to get dressed.

The children get up.

GLORIA

Can I have oatmeal for
breakfast?

SOLITA

(beat)

Sure

GLORIA

Yaay!

SOLITA

Shh!

Solita thumbs the stack of bills a bit, then begins to tidy up where she can.

INT. THE KITCHEN - DAY

Solita stirs a pot of oatmeal, while the kids play in the background. Tim runs past doing an airplane impersonation and bumps her.

SOLITA

Hey, watch it.

Gloria comes up to her with a dress on a hangar.

GLORIA

Can I wear this today?

SOLITA

Sure. Do you need help getting it on?

GLORIA

Ok.

Gloria finishes pouring the oatmeal into a bowl, then kneels to help Gloria out of her pajamas. Tim jumps on her from behind.

SOLITA

Ow! C'mon, get off.

Tim jumps off and runs away, bumping a chair as he goes.

SOLITA

Hey, careful!

She finishes putting the dress on.

SOLITA

You're oatmeal's almost ready.
Bring your milk to the table.

Gloria carefully takes the glass from the counter, and shuffles slowly toward the table.

SOLITA

Tom. Come here.

Tom comes around the corner. He stops at the oatmeal.

TOM

Ooh, oatmeal.

SOLITA
You said you didn't want any.

TOM
Aww, I want oatmeal.

He starts jumping up and down, whining.

SOLITA
Well if you'd asked for oatmeal
I could have.

There is a crash. Solita turns. Gloria is standing over a puddle of milk and broken glass.

Solita stares at the milk. Gloria stares at her. A beat goes by in utter silence.

Gloria bursts into deep sobs.

SOLITA
Oh, its ok. Ohh.

She goes over and picks her up.

SOLITA
Oh, its ok. Don't cry. It's ok.
I'll clean it up, its fine. Its
gonna be alright.

Solita bounces Gloria gently, as Tim sits by, awkward.

EXT. THE HOUSE - DAY

Solita walks out of the house. Followed by the two siblings.

SOLITA
Now if I don't make it home
tonight, what do you do?

TIM
Get some chips from the pantry.

SOLITA
Right. And how long do you wait
before that?

TIM
Seven-thirty

SOLITA
Good. If you're still hungry
later I'll get you something
when I get back.

A large yellow school bus pulls up.

SOLITA
Get going, you two.

She leans down and kisses each of them. As they board the bus, they wave.

The bus leaves, and Solita turns and walks down the street.

INT. SCHOOL HALL - DAY

Solita walks into the building, and heads down the hall, until she is stopped by a Boy (Trevor, 17), who grabs her around the waste.

TREVOR
Well hello there.

SOLITA
Ooh, hey.

TREVOR
And where are you off to this morning?

SOLITA
What's it to you?

TREVOR
I don't know. But I do know
where you'll be tonight.

SOLITA
Oh yeah?

TREVOR
Yeah. You will be at Frank's party.

SOLITA
Why, what's there?

TREVOR
Me, of course.

She turns around.

SOLITA
You'll have to promise more
than that.

TREVOR
Hey! That's not very nice.

SOLITA
I'm not a very nice person.

TREVOR
Fine, I promise. . .

He pulls her closer, and rocks her back and forth.

SOLITA
. . .yeah. . .

TREVOR
If you come. . .

SOLITA
. . .yeah. . .

TREVOR
That you will get fucking
hammered.

SOLITA
Hmm. Maybe.

TREVOR
That's better.

A second boy (ROB, 17) comes up behind her.

ROB
Solita.

She turns.

SOLITA
Hey, Rob.

ROB
You come over here.

He grabs her by the hand and starts to pull her away. She moves towards him then jerks to a stop. Trevor has not let go of her other hand.

BOY
(to Solita)
And who said I was finished
with you?

SOLITA
Maybe I'm finished with you.

Rob pulls her further. She is now in a T position with her arms out. Trevor still does not yield.

TREVOR
That wasn't very nice.

SOLITA
Fine.

She throws her head back dramatically.

SOLITA
Crucify me.

ROB
Ooh, I get to put the nail in!

SOLITA
Ah!

She gives him a shocked smile, and tries to swing at him playfully, fruitless, since Trevor does not release her hand. Both boys laugh.

A third boy (Frank, 17) comes up.

FRANK
Hey, hey, hey. You shouldn't
fight over girls it isn't nice.

He walks directly in front of her, puts his hands around her waste, and pulls her into him. She frees her arms, and snaps them around him.

SOLITA
Am I invited to the party?

FRANK
Of course, you're the guest of
honor.

SOLITA
Really.

FRANK
Yeah. We're gonna set you on
the counter next to the keg, so
guys can come and take as much
as they can handle.

All males laugh.

SOLITA

Bastard.

FRANK

Oh don't call people names.

SOLITA

Why not?

She shoves him. During the conversation, Trevor has knelt behind Frank. He stumbles over him and lands flat on his back.

All laugh, including Frank, after he has coughed and groaned a bit. He gets to his feet, and begins tickling Solita.

FRANK

(through teeth)

You little bitch. I'll teach
you to mess with me.

INT. A CLASSROOM - DAY

Solita takes a seat next to CONNER near the back of the class. Conner does not seem perfectly comfortable.

CONNER

Hey.

SOLITA

Hey!

CONNER

How are you?

SOLITA

I'm good.

She nods.

SOLITA

You?

CONNER

Good.

A beat.

CONNER

Big plans for the weekend?

SOLITA
Yeah, I'm probably going to a party.

CONNER
Great.

SOLITA
What about you?

CONNER
I'm having coffee with a girl.

SOLITA
Ooh!

CONNER
Eh, its nothing.

SOLITA
Where you going?

CONNER
Tony's. At City Market.

SOLITA
Don't think I've heard of it.

CONNER
It's a nice place.

The TEACHER walks in.

TEACHER
Alright, get out your books.

Conner leans toward Solita.

CONNER
(quietly)
Maybe I'll bring you there
sometime.

SOLITA
I don't know.

Conner nods slightly and leans away as the lesson begins.

INT. SCHOOL HALL - DAY