"Meet The Expats"

ABROAD Episode One

8/29/15

COLD OPEN

1 EXT. BUSTLING STREETS (PARIS) - DAY 1

1

JUDD, 30s, an optimistic, goofy American, wanders the streets of Paris dragging a load of luggage behind him.

JUDD (V.O.)

I've always wanted to try something new. You know, travel, take a risk and see where it leads me.

Judd asks several PASSERSBY for help with directions. They shake their heads or ignore him.

2 JUDD TALKING HEAD

2

In front of an apartment building.

JUDD

Paris was always a dream of mine. So, when the opportunity arose, I had to grab it by the pigtails.

3 <u>EXT. STREET CORNER - MOMENTS LATER - D1</u>

3

There are no cars. Judd waits for the light to change. Several FRENCH PEOPLE shove him aside to walk across.

4 EXT. CAFE L'ETRANGER - D1

4

NICOLE, "NICO," 26, spunky but sweet, hyper intelligent, hangs framed art in a café.

NTCO

Paris is an architecturally stunning city, full of beauty. So, I had to come here for my art.

B-roll: Nico's very dark, very disturbing art on the walls.

NICO (CONT'D)

The café has been great outlet for my creative work. It's also helped me meet a lot of other artists, writers, intellects mostly.

WIDEN on B-roll: Nico explains her art to a PRETTY GIRL. They giggle together.

5	INT. MARGO'S FLAT - D1	5
	MARGO, 25, a pretty, clever brunette, cooks in the open kitchen of a homey apartment.	
6	MARGO TALKING HEAD	6
	On her couch.	
	MARGO I think at some point everyone imagines going abroad and living in a gorgeous apartment with a European lover	
7	INT. MARGO'S FLAT - CONTINUOUS - D1	7
	Margo burns her finger on the pan.	
	MARGO (V.O.) You know, the sort of thing you see in the movies.	
	CAMILLE, 28, casually flawless, exits a bedroom with PAUL, 27, handsome and charming. They look as though they've been having sex for days. Paul tucks in his shirt, while Camille steals a slice of bacon from Margo's plate.	
8	MARGO TALKING HEAD	8
	MARGO But it doesn't always work out that way.	
9	EXT. SIDEWALK - D1	9
	Judd smiles at the beauty of the city while checking the numbers on the buildings.	
10	JUDD TALKING HEAD	10
	JUDD It's funny, not too long ago I was in Michigan, married to a beautiful woman, living in a beautiful house, going to my day to day job	
11	EXT. SIDEWALK - CONTINUOUS - D1	11
	He passes a HOMELESS MAN sitting on the corner.	

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JUDD (V.O.)

...And now I'm here.

(beat)

It's crazy how quickly things can change.

Judd stops and pulls out a DOLLAR BILL. As he drops it into the homeless man's cup, a KID runs behind Judd and STEALS SOMETHING out of his bag.

JUDD (V.O.)

One minute you have everything, and the next, you have... Paris.

The homeless man stares at the bill, blows his nose with it, then hands it back. Judd motions for the man to keep it, and awkwardly waves goodbye. As he walks away, he steps in a pile of DOG SHIT.

12 <u>JUDD TALKING HEAD</u>

12

JUDD

The city of amour.

END COLD OPEN

SMASH TO TITLE CARD: "ABROAD"

13 EXT. STREETS (PARIS) - ESTABLISHING

13

The city is bustling.

14 JUDD TALKING HEAD

14

Judd is outside his new apartment building. He grins at the camera.

SUPER: "JUDD"

JUDD

Should we check out the new digs?

(turns to door)

Allons-y!

(back to camera)

I took French in high school.

He takes a piece of paper out of his pocket and punches in the building code. A high-pitched RING sounds off. He pulls at the door, but it doesn't budge.

JUDD (CONT'D)

How do you do this... is it push...

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14

He pushes the door and it opens slightly, but it's extremely heavy.

JUDD (CONT'D)

(pushing)

Here we go... it's going ...

He puts the weight of his whole body on the door, breathing hard.

JUDD (CONT'D)

(between breaths)

Wow, this is heavy for a population of tiny people.

The door slides forward very slowly. Judd chuckles and continues to push.

15 INT. STAIRWELL/JUDD'S APARTMENT - D1

15

Judd pulls his luggage up the final steps of a seven-story climb. He's borderline hyperventilating.

The CAMERAMAN (never seen) also seems to be gasping for air, causing the CAMERA to WIGGLE.

JUDD

(to cameraman)

Are you okay?

(gasping)

Maybe leave that out.

JUMP CUT TO:

Judd looks much better.

JUDD (CONT'D)

Bienvenue chez moi!

He turns the key in the door and pushes. The door doesn't budge. He tries harder, trying not to seem weak.

JUDD (CONT'D)

Seems to be stuck--

The door suddenly SLAMS open.

Judd looks in -- the apartment is a tiny shithole. Judd is frozen in his former smile.

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16 INT. CHAMBRE DE BONNE - D1

16

Judd's luggage fills up most of the room. He stands in the little space between the bed and kitchenette.

JUDD

It's actually very practical. For
example, when I'm cooking pasta, the
pot will never boil over because I'll
always be able to see it.
 (beat)
Blessing in disquise.

JUMP CUT TO:

Judd unpacks his things. He hangs three shirts on a rack. The rack breaks off.

JUDD (CONT'D)

(to camera)

Vintage.

17 EXT. CAFE L'ETRANGER - ESTABLISHING - D1

17

Customers park their bikes outside the cafe.

18 NICO TALKING HEAD

18

Outside the cafe.

NICO

I moved from Belgium about five years ago.

SUPER: "NICO"

NICO (CONT'D)

We're famous for a lot of things... chocolate, waffles, beer. Serial killers, but all the Belgians I know are really nice.

WATER suddenly POURS onto Nico's head. CAMERA PANS UP to an empty balcony above, dripping with water.

NICO (CONT'D)

(Dutch)

Fuck! I'm coming for you, Jeanette, you senile asshole!

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JEANETTE (O.S.)

(French)

Shut up, you slut!

NICO

(French)

I know where your grandchildren go to school!

CUT TO:

19 INT. CAFÉ - MOMENTS LATER

19

Nico smiles at the camera, hair wet and disheveled.

NICO

So, this is where the magic happens. Usually we're really packed.

ANGLE ON: The empty interior.

Nico catches the eye of SOMEONE OFF SCREEN.

ANGLE ON: GUILLAUME, 28, serious and rugged, smoking outside. Nico waves excitedly.

NICO (CONT'D)

That's my roommate!

(calls him over)

Guillaume!

Guillaume shakes his head "no."

NICO (CONT'D)

Guillaume is an amazing writer, really well known. And Bisou is his emotional care animal.

ANGLE ON: Bisou wearing a pink collar.

NICO (CONT'D)

(whispers)

Bisou was his ex-girlfriend's, and she left her with Guillaume when they broke up.

CAMERA PANS to Guillaume who is suddenly next to Nico.

GUILLAUME

We didn't break up. I had her exorcised from my soul.

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NICO

It was messy.

20 INT. MARGO'S FLAT - LIVING ROOM - D1

20

Margo sits on her couch.

MARGO

I moved to Paris from Hollywood about two years ago to finish my studies in literature, and afterward, I decided I wanted to work in film.

SUPER: "MARGO"

MARGO (CONT'D)

So, I don't know if I would call myself a screenwriter, but that's pretty much what I do.

(beat)

Yeah, I probably could've stayed in Hollywood.

CAMILLE (O.S.)

Margo!

ANGLE ON: An annoyed Camille entering the room.

CAMILLE (CONT'D)

(re: cameras)

Ah oui d'accord, donc en fait ils sont là tout le temps.

MARGO

Everybody, meet Camille! My lovely roommate.

CAMILLE

(to camera)

Ouais, alors moi je suis pas une "expat", hein. Moi je suis Française, merci bien.

Margo smiles at the camera, "Isn't she sweet?"

CAMILLE (CONT'D)

Paul needs to use the... uh... psh pshh.

Camille mimes ironing while making steam sounds.

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20 CONTINUED:

MARGO

What are you, rapping?

CAMILLE

Non mais sérieux, le truc, là, pour la planche à repasser. Putain, il faut de la patience avec toi, Margo.

MARGO

Okay, relax. I'll be done in twenty minutes, and then he can use it.

CAMILLE

Il a un entretien.

MARGO

I'm literally in the middle of an interview.

CAMILLE

Ah ben c'est bon alors, tu peux finir plus tard.

CLOSE ON: Margo's disbelief.

CUT TO:

21 PAUL TALKING HEAD

21

On the couch. He is incredibly charming and has a British accent.

PAUL

(introducing)

Paul. Australian.

(beat)

I've been here about two years now -wow, the time just flies by. But I've
been very lucky. I've been working--

Camille and Margo argue in the b.g.

MARGO

Just buy one at Ikea, you friggin' love that place! Or I can rip it off the wall and screw it on your face for Paul's convenience!

CAMILLE

Non mais ça t'arrive de penser aux autres, espèce de troglodyte ? Paul a un VRAI travail, lui. Et tu sais très bien que j'aime pas Ikea, tu retires ça de suite! ABROAD "Meet The Expats" Episode One

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21

21 CONTINUED:

PAUL

(raising voice)

Having my own place would be nice, but I prefer to stay with Camille -- the apartment is much closer to her job and within her price range.

Camille suddenly appears next to Paul. She nibbles at his ear.

CAMILLE

Mais oui, mon coeur.

CAMERA PANS to Margo walking back to her bedroom, rubbing her temples.

22 MARGO TALKING HEAD

22

MARGO

Yeah, I miss home all the [bleep] time.

23 INT. STAIRWELL - D1

23

Nico and Guillaume exit the elevator.

NICO

We've been here for about a year.

Guillaume ignores the camera and opens the door of the apartment.

24 INT. NICO'S APARTMENT - D1

24

A gorgeous apartment styled in leather, bookshelves, and artistic PHOTOGRAPHS of NUDE WOMEN.

NICO

We decorated together.

Guillaume releases Bisou into the apartment.

GUILLAUME

(whispers)

Reviens-moi, mon amour.

CAMERA FOLLOWS Nico to a MACABRE PAINTING on display.

NICO

This is a self-portrait. I painted it when I was with my ex.

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24 CONTINUED:

She looks at the painting fondly.

NICO (CONT'D)

So many good memories.

(then)

Oh, and we have a great view.

The CAMERA FOLLOWS Nico to the window and LOOKS OUT at an amazing rooftop view of Paris.

NICO (CONT'D)

You can see everything from here.

The CAMERA PANS LEFT to a building across the way. A NAKED MAN can be seen doing squats next to his window. His private parts are CENSORED.

NICO (CONT'D)

That's naked Brian.

GUILLAUME

Ce salopard a tout compris.

25 NICO TALKING HEAD

25

In the living room.

NICO

I don't know if I could ever move. Guillaume and I get along so well, I live right next to my best friend, my cafe is nearby...

(then)

Plus, my parents own the building, so I sort of get a family discount. (beat)

I think we have the perfect situation.

She glances at Guillaume who's smoking on the couch.

26 GUILLAUME TALKING HEAD

26

GUILLAUME

J'aurais bien habité avec ma soeur, mais on s'aime trop. (beat)

On s'entre-tuerait.

27 INT. HALLWAY/CHAMBRE DE BONNE - D1

27

Judd peeks out of his door.

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27

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JUDD

--Okay, you wait and I'll act surprised.

He closes the door and opens it again casually.

JUDD (CONT'D)

Oh, hey! Come on in!

CAMERA MOVES into the room.

JUDD (CONT'D)

So, here we have the kitchen...

(beat)

The bathroom...

CAMERA STOPS on the bathroom, roughly the width of a person. It MOVES DOWN to a LARGE BATH MAT.

JUDD (CONT'D)

Decorated a bit. Fancified.

(then)

The salon cum bed room...

CAMERA PANS around the tiny room. There's not much to see.

JUDD (CONT'D)

And come look at the view.

ANGLE ON: Out the window, a view of other apartments.

JUDD (CONT'D)

Oh, I almost forgot.

He takes a small folded piece of paper out of his wallet. He unfolds it <u>twenty</u> times -- It's a large poster of Beyoncé. He pins it to a cork board above the bed.

JUDD (CONT'D)

Reminds me to always be strong, and flexible, and to never let white supremacy bring me down.

28 INT. CAVE/BASEMENT - APARTMENT BUILDING - MOMENTS LATER - D28

Judd walks down the apartment building's dark and dirty underground hallway.

JUDD

Apparently, I have my own cave. Which is pronounced "cahve" here.

(beat)

(MORE)

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28 CONTINUED:

JUDD (CONT'D)

I'm a little scared of cahves, so it's nice to have company.

He opens a broken, wooden door and looks into the darkness. The basement room is empty with the exception of a few broken kitchen parts.

JUDD (CONT'D)

Nice. Some spare parts. Maybe I can make it my "mahn cahve." Could be super manly.

There's a slight movement in the corner.

JUDD (CONT'D)

What's that?

A RAT suddenly runs out from a corner.

JUDD (CONT'D)

What-- Holy! NO! Don't look back! GOD NOOO!!!

Judd pushes past the CAMERA and runs back upstairs.

29 INT. MARGO'S OFFICE - D1

29

Margo vigorously works on her laptop, bites her pen in thought, and sticks post-its to the wall.

MARGO (V.O.)

I generally write about cultural differences in dating, careers, and lifestyle, but with a Sci-fi twist.

30 MARGO TALKING HEAD

30

MARGO

It's hard moving to a new country... When I think about the fact that I came here with no money, no friends, no idea what I was doing with my life...

B-roll: Margo thoughtfully walks down the street and accidentally walks over an AIR VENT. Her skirt flies up over her head. She CURSES (censored).

MARGO (CONT'D)

I think -- only a nut-job who's hit rock bottom would do something like that.

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STEAM slowly seeps INTO FRAME across Margo's face.

MARGO (CONT'D)

But I've really made a life for myself here. And honestly, if I hadn't moved here, I don't know where I would be.

WIDEN TO REVEAL: Margo's so-called "office" is actually crammed in the corner of her bedroom. Paul irons handkerchiefs on the pull-out ironing board next to her desk.

MARGO (CONT'D)

Yeah, Hollywood.

A cloud of steam expels from the iron with a PSHHH.

CREDITS ROLL

30

TAG

31 INT. LOBBY - APARTMENT BUILDING - D1 (FLASHBACK)

31

Judd stares at the THREE BUTTONS next to the door, trying to figure out which button does what. He clicks one, nothing happens. He clicks another, the lights GO OFF.

JUDD (O.S.)

Let me use my phone's flashlight.
(beat)

Where's my phone?!

JUMP CUT TO:

32 INT. LOBBY - MOMENTS LATER

32

A LIGHT SHINES from O.S. onto the buttons. Judd examines and clicks one -- a WOMAN SCREAMS from upstairs. Judd freezes. The cameraman SHUTS the light OFF.

END OF SHOW