

Nonetheless, she carefully decides to pick them up. Huh, she can see pretty clearly through them.

Suddenly, a scratchy VOICE behind her:

VOICE (O.S.)  
(vaguely Yiddish accent)  
Those are rather nice, aren't they?

Tessa jumps up, startled, almost knocking the mannequin head off the shelf-top. She clutches at her heart.

In front of her is a very, very OLD MAN with snow-white hair and bloodshot eyes. He's wearing a black Victorian frock coat, looking like Martin Van Buren ate a bad clam.

OLD MAN  
(barely a whisper of a  
voice)  
You like the Miltzen? They're  
among the oldest in the shop.

TESSA  
There's something about them...

OLD MAN  
They're not for sale.

TESSA  
But they're so beautiful!

OLD MAN  
No, Sol refuses you. They're  
dangerous, young *shiksa*. You seem  
like more of a... *mall* girl.

TESSA  
That's rude, Sol.

Sol, the old man, looks her over, as if to judge her character. He pushes his Teddy Roosevelt glasses up the bridge of his bulbous nose and squints; then he shakes his head.

He snatches the pair of Miltzen glasses from Tessa's hands.

SOL  
(to the Miltzen)  
Do you choose her? No, you will  
not join her.

He places the glasses back on the mannequin head.

SOL (CONT'D)  
Miltzen is too wicked for you. It  
will harm.

He walks over to the door and opens it, gesturing for Tessa to leave, before slowly retreating into the back of the shop.

Standing in the doorway, Tessa looks back at the shop.

The old man's gone. She looks around, then DASHES up to the Miltzen glasses and SNATCHES them from the shelf-top.

She runs out of the store.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BAKULA LABORATORY - THE NEXT MORNING

INSERT - LEGAL PAD

full of equations and formulas scribbled all over.

We PULL BACK to reveal Tessa furiously writing a mile a minute. She finishes filling up the pad and throws it on her desk to a pile of completed legal pads.

*She's wearing her new glasses.*

Ted casually walks over and picks up one of her pads.

TED  
(skimming)  
Good God, I can't make heads or  
tales of this. How'd you come up  
with these numbers?

TESSA  
(excited)  
They just seemed to fly out of my  
head! I don't even need to think,  
they just pop in there.

TED  
That's amazing. You might be a  
savant.

He takes out a wrapped sandwich and offers it to her.

TED (CONT'D)  
Tuna?

TESSA

Nah. I think I'm gonna stay in,  
try to put everything down before  
it disappears.

TED

Suit yourself. Nice glasses, by  
the way.

Ted strolls off and Tessa turns straight back to her legal pads, notebooks, and her computer. She adjusts her glasses and furiously works.

CUT TO:

INT. ALDAMUROIS'S OFFICE - LATER

*THUD!!!*

Tessa drops reams of paper and half a dozen notebooks onto Dr. Aldamurois's desk.

ALDAMUROIS

What's the meaning of this?

TESSA

I've done it.

ALDAMUROIS

Project E115?

TESSA

My work is flawless. Run these numbers. We'll be able to extract the final decay products. We can measure spontaneous fission activities now!

Aldamurois eyes her, unconvinced. He's always had little faith in Tessa.

INT. BAKULA LABORATORY

The entire team of scientists gather around a computer inside the chemistry lab, eagerly hoping for progress.

Aldamurois is carefully punching in all of Tessa's equations into the computer. She's looking over his shoulder, making sure he hasn't made any typos.

ALDAMUROIS

This better not be a prank.