FADE IN:

EXT. CITY SKYLINE - DAY

From an AERIAL VIEW we see the outline of a city. Any city will do. Mirrored high rises. Sprawling apartment complexes. A lot of people live here...whoever they are.

As we move closer we discover that this is not a real city at all, but a scale model of one. Everything is in miniature -- the buildings, parks, and freeways.

GLIDING over this tabletop metropolis, we find that none of the buildings have roofs, allowing us to peak inside.

VARIOUS CLOSE ANGLES

We FLOAT through miniature coffee shops, offices, and bedrooms, where toy figures are arranged in tableau of everyday life.

A man dines alone. A woman walks her dog. Two kiss on the street. One waits for a bus.

Over this we HEAR Marianne Faithful's smoky-voiced cover of the standard "When We're Alone"

Just picture a penthouse Way up in the sky, With hinges on chimney you and For stars to go by, A sweet slice of heaven For just
I, When we're alone.

From all of society We'll stay aloof, And live in propriety There on the roof, Two heavenly hermits We'll be in true, alone.

As the song ends we find a miniature girl who lies on a bed.

CUT TO:

INT. LORNA'S APARTMENT BEDROOM - DAY

A cramped one-room studio. Asleep on a futon is a slender girl of nineteen -- LORNA. Her blood red toenails give the place its only color. An alarm clock rings it's twelve noon. Lorna uses her foot to turn it off.

LORNA
Terri. Why did you let me sleep so late?

Lorna looks over to an empty pull-out sofa, its only occupant a skinny kitten.

LORNA (CONT'D) (cont'd)
Terri?
(to the cat)
She must already be at work, huh?
The cat meows -- very non-committal.

CUT TO:

INT. LORNA'S KITCHEN - DAY

Still in her T-shirt and panties, Lorna opens a can of cat food as the kitten looks on.

LORNA
She probably forgot what day it is, right Arthur? Some
she turned out to be. Not like you. You remember what
is, don't you?

(off the cat's blank stare)
I'm not giving you any food until you tell me.

Arthur the cat responds with a pitiful meow. Lorna
sets down the food.

LORNA (CONT'D) (cont'd)
That's right. I knew you'd remember.

CUT TO
OMITTED

EXT. STREET - DAY

Lorna, dressed casually, walks to the bus stop.

Reading the
crossword puzzle in the paper, she doesn't see the curb
spilling her purse.

Embarrassed, she gathers her things, then takes a seat
a Latino Woman. Lorna smiles and resumes work on the

Stumped by a clue, she turns to the Woman.

LORNA
Hmm. Simon and Garfunkel hit. Eight letters. Any

The Woman shrugs and looks off.

Suddenly, Lorna's phone rings. She reaches into her
it's not there. Then, she spots it...in the street.

But the
moment she goes to get it, a truck roars past and

smashes it
to smithereens.
LORNA (CONT'D) (cont'd)

Oh my god.

But as she scoops up the pieces in her hand a smile creeps across her face.

LORNA (CONT'D) (cont'd)

No, this is right. This is exactly right.

CUT TO

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

A few notches up from a greasy spoon. Lorna sits at the counter, stirring her coffee. A WAITRESS approaches.

LORNA

Excuse me, whatever happened to that sign, the one that used to hang next to the pies?

The Waitress looks over her shoulder.

WAITRESS

What sign?

LORNA

The one that said, "Today is the first day of the rest of your life."

WAITRESS

That thing? We got rid of it.

LORNA

Oh.

WAITRESS

Have you decided?

Before Lorna can speak, we hear--

WOMAN

She'll have the steak and egg special.
Lorna turns as TERRI, her roommate, joins her at the counter. A little older than Lorna, Terri is cute but a little dangerous.

TERRI
Look at her, she needs protein. Lots of protein.

LORNA
(to the Waitress)
White toast. Dry.
The Waitress leaves.

LORNA
Working early today, huh?

TERRI
No, I had something important to do...
Terri opens her bag and pulls out a small, gift-wrapped box.

TERRI
...Miss nineteen.

LORNA
I knew you'd remember.
Terri gives Lorna a kiss on the lips.

TERRI
Of course I remembered. Go on, open it.

LORNA
No, no. I wasn't born until ten minutes before midnight. And that's when I'll open it.

TERRI
You better like it. I don't want to tell what I had to do to pay for it.

LORNA
Ooh. It must be good.

TERRI
So what's the plan, Stan? Something special today?

Other than splurging on toast.

LORNA
Yes. There is something.

TERRI
Good. Count me in.

LORNA
No. Something big. Something I've been thinking about for a long time.

Terri sighs -- she knows exactly where this is going.

LORNA
I can't do this forever, Terri. Look...

Lorna points to the corner of her eye.

LORNA
Crow's feet! I'm nineteen! Crow's feet! I know I keep talking about it, but this time I'm going to do it. In fact, I did it.

This is my last day.

TERRI
Okay...

LORNA
I called them. I told them I was out.

TERRI
You did not.

LORNA
Uh-huh. I have one more appointment. Then, I'm... free.

TERRI
Give me your cell phone. I'm calling them back right now.

Lorna smiles and pours the shattered remnants of her phone on the counter.

LORNA
A bus ran over it. Isn't that perfect? It's a perfect sign.

Terri pops a cigarette in her mouth as the Waitress delivers the toast.

WAITRESS
(to Terri)
Can't do that here, Miss.

TERRI
I know, I know. I'm not going to light the damn thing.
(beat)
Fuck me.

LORNA
Look, I'm good for next month's rent.
This takes Terri by surprise.

TERRI
What, you're leaving too?

LORNA
Maybe. Get out of town for a while. I really feel good about this.
(beat)
I appreciate everything you've done for me this year, Terri.

TERRI
I wish you'd talked to me first.

LORNA
I didn't because...I knew you'd try to talk me out of it.

TERRI
That's because I'm looking out for you. It's because there is so much opportunity here.
(beat)
And it's because I'm your friend.

Lorna fiddles with her toast.

**LORNA**

I know.

(beat)

Listen, I'm late.

Lorna leaves some change on the counter, picks up her gift and gives Terri a hug.

**LORNA**

Thanks.

**TERRI**

Well...Happy Birthday.

As Lorna goes, the Waitress reappears.

**WAITRESS**

Your friend comin' back?

**TERRI**

Hard to say.

**CUT TO**

**INT. TODD'S APARTMENT - DAY**

Someone is flipping through a stack of wedding photos. Festive shots of various couples. At the altar. Cutting the cake. Posing with relatives.

**CUT TO**

We're in --

A living room, Lorna sits on the couch browsing the wedding photos. She has a quizzical look, as if the photos were of some incomprehensible alien culture. The apartment is cluttered but not dirty. The decor suggests an occupant of modest means and bohemian
The occupant is TODD, who ENTERS counting a wad of money. Late twenties. Unshaven. By turns, cocky and nervous.

He sets the money in front of Lorna.

TODD
Seventy-five, right? For the half-hour.

LORNA
Not including tip.

She smiles. Todd paces uneasily.

TODD
And, typically, the size of the tip is...

LORNA
Depends on how generous you feel.

TODD
Of course.

LORNA
Is...this your first appointment?

TODD
No. I've done this before.

Lorna thinks otherwise. She pats the seat next to her.

LORNA
Come over here, you're making me nervous.

He plops down next to her.

LORNA
So, how much extra do you feel like spending?

TODD
I don't know. Another fifty dollars?

LORNA
Uh-huh.

She thumbs through the wedding photos.

LORNA
So, this is what you do. Weddings.
TODD
It pays the rent.

LORNA
These are good. You're really a good photographer.

TODD
Well, somebody thinks so. I get a lot of work.

LORNA
And you can only spend another fifty on me?
Todd walked right into that one.

LORNA (CONT'D) (cont'd)
Maybe you'll feel more generous once you get to know me.

Lorna smiles. Her face has an open, unguarded beauty.

TODD
You have a great smile, do you know that?

LORNA
Yeah, I've heard.

TODD
And I like your name. Lorna. Like the cookie.

LORNA
Gee, I've never hear that one before.
She laughs at him. But it's not unkind.

LORNA (CONT'D) (cont'd)
I have a friend who makes photos. She's had some stuff in magazines. Really dirty stuff, though. Worse than dirty. Sick, you probably wouldn't like it.

TODD
Hey, I'm not afraid of sick images. In fact, it's what I aspire to do, create pictures that are edgy, that really assault you.

Lorna considers this.
LORNA

Why?

TODD

Well...I don't know. Shake people out of their...complacency.
Your friend would understand. What's her work like?

LORNA

She photographs people pissing on each other.

TODD

Uh-huh.

LORNA

Yeah...disgusting.

TODD

Maybe that's the point.

LORNA

But who would want to look at that? I mean, bathrooms have doors for a reason.

TODD

What do you like?

LORNA

I like things that make me happy. Like this.
Lorna holds up a photo of a beautiful, smiling bride.

LORNA

I bet she's going to have a very happy life.
She lingers over the photo.

LORNA

I don't think I'm the marrying kind, though.

TODD

Me, neither. Marriage, it's so...medieval. Sometimes when I'm doing a wedding I look at the bride and groom and think, "What a couple of lemmings."

LORNA

I'm not sure people can be true, that's all.

TODD
Right. That, too.

Lorna puts down the photos.

**LORNA**

Well... Now that we've gotten to know each better, maybe we should get started.

**CUT TO**

**INT. TODD'S BATHROOM - DAY**

Alone, Lorna prepares. She tears open a condom wrapper, stares into the mirror and runs her lines.

**LORNA**

Oh, you really have a big cock... My, you really have a big cock... God, what a big cock you have.

**CUT TO**

**INT. TODD'S BEDROOM - DAY**

Lorna and Todd are having sex. She's on top, her movements slow and hypnotic. Occasionally, Lorna offers a moan, some are more convincing than others.

**NOTE:** Throughout the scene, our ANGLES generally exclude Todd from view. We may HEAR him, but our focus is on --

**LORNA**

As she goes about her work, Lorna wears a vaguely puzzled expressions. In fact, puzzles are on her mind.

**LORNA**

Forty-two across... Simon & Garfunkel hit... eight letters... begins with 'I'... I... I'm A Loser... Did they sing that?... Susie used to play Mom's Simon & Garfunkel records all the time... I scratched one once and she pulled my hair... I haven't spoken to her for
almost a year...Her little kid must be walking by

I should give Susie a call...Nah, fuck that! She's
capable of calling me...I mean, I'm listed...I'm...I am
it!...I Am A Rock, that's the answer...I am a--

Suddenly, Lorna remembers the job at hand.

LORNA

(flatly)

God, you really have a big cock.

Like Pavlov's proverbial dog, Todd MOANS and the whole
thing is quickly over.

Lorna gives Todd a look -- it's an astonishing
impersonation of tenderness.

LORNA

Wow. That was something.

TODD

Yeah...was it?

LORNA

Let me tell you...that was something.

TODD

Really.

LORNA

Cut the modesty. You really know what you're doing.

CUT TO

INT. TODD'S KITCHEN - DAY

Lorna, dressed, is dialing the kitchen phone. From the
window she can see a school playground across the way.
recess. Girls in uniforms perform a jump rope cadence.

LORNA

(onto phone)
Hey, it's Lorna...I'm clocking out for the last
time...No, I'm
not done for the day, I'm done...Wait, I don't think
you heard
me...Well, just give it to one of the other girls.
Give it to
Terri...I don't care if he's an important client, I
told you
I'm...Well, you'll just have to cancel it, won't
care what it pays, it's not my fuckin'--
you?...I don't

She turns to find Todd in the doorway, listening.

LORNA
(into phone)
Hold on...
(to Todd)
What?

TODD
Nothing. Are you alright?

LORNA
I'm fine. The cab fare will be another twenty.

TODD
You never said anything about cab fare.

LORNA
Of course I did. Are you calling me a liar?

TODD
No. I swear, you didn't say a word about it.

Lorna slowly brings the phone to her ear.

LORNA
(into phone)
Alright. Where is it?

CUT TO

INT. TODD'S CAR - MOVING - DAY

Todd is at the wheel of his vintage Buick. Lorna sits
on the
passenger side. She looks off, distracted. On the seat between them is the gift from Terri, still unopened.

**TODD**
You haven't told me where we're going yet.

**LORNA**
Make a right at the light. He does.

**TODD**
Can I ask you a question? (without a beat)
No, forget it...it's stupid.

**LORNA**
Go on, ask.

**TODD**
Well, after we...after we did it, you didn't really mean what you said, did you? About me being so good. Lorna looks at him like he's the biggest fool in the world. This is not lost on him.

**TODD**
(back-peddling) I'm only asking because I'm fascinated by this whole scene you're in. So, don't worry about sparing my feelings or anything. I'm just curious.

**LORNA**
Pull over.

**TODD**
What?

**LORNA**
Pull over here. He does. Up the block is a high-rise, luxury hotel. Limos and
cabs line the driveway. Uniformed doormen guard the entrance.

**LORNA**
You see that hotel? In one of those rooms, there's a man waiting...he's waiting for me. I don't know what his name is or what he looks like. He may have bad skin. He may be really ugly. But no matter how he looks, or how bad he smells, or whether he makes weird wheezing sounds when he comes, I tell him the same thing...the same thing I told you.

**TODD**
Right...Well, that's what I thought. I mean, a guy would have to be pretty lame to think that... Todd knows better than to even finish.

**LORNA**
To think what?

**TODD**
Nothing.

Quite out of the blue, she leans over and kisses him on the cheek.

**LORNA**
It's Todd, right.

**TODD**
Yeah.

**LORNA**
Well, Todd, you're alright.

(beat)

And that I don't say that to everyone.

She opens the door, starts out--

**TODD**
If I wanted to see you again--
LORNA
No. You can't. You can't see me again.

(beat)

But thanks for asking.

OMITTED

INT. TODD'S CAR - DAY

Lorna closes the door and starts for the hotel. Todd drives past, watching her recede in the rear-view mirror.

The moment she disappears, Todd looks down and sees the gift box from Terri -- Lorna left it on the seat.

Without missing a beat, Todd slams on the brakes, jumps out and races back to where he left her. Looking everywhere--

TODD
Lorna! Lorna!

But Lorna is gone.

CUT TO

OMITTED

CUT TO

INT. PHOTOGRAPHY STUDIO - DAY

A business that specializes in sentimental portraits -- weddings, graduations, anniversaries...even beloved pets.

A photo shoot in progress. Todd and his colleague PHIL are doing an engagement portrait.

The couple -- very straight and suburban -- are just of and Phil's earshot.

PHIL
(to the couple)

Beautiful, just beautiful.
(to Todd)
You used a rubber, I hope.

    TODD

Of course.

    PHIL

And how much did this afternoon delight set you back?

    TODD

Oh. About a buck and a quarter.

    (to the couple)

We just need to reload.

    PHIL

As they do--

    PHIL

Since when do you have a hundred and twenty-five dollars to throw away?

    TODD

I'm sure you spend just as much on porn rentals.

    PHIL

There's no comparison. Here, I'll do the math for you.

Phil pulls a calculator out of his camera bag.

    PHIL (CONT'D) (cont'd)

    (punching in numbers)

A video rents for $2.65. That's a two-day rental. You can get off at least a couple times before it's divided by $2.65 equals approximately 47. 47 X 2 = 94. I can get off ninety-four times for the same amount you paid off once. Now tell me who gets the better deal.

    TODD

You're right. I can't argue with that.

    PHIL

Anyway, I stopped watching porno.
TODD
You did? Why?

PHIL
They kinda depress me.

(beat)
When I want to get off now, you know what I use?

TODD
What?
Phil taps his forehead.

PHIL
My imagination.

(to the couple)
Okay, folks. It's magic time.

LATER.
The couple is gone. Phil and Todd wrap some equipment.

Phil (cont'd)
What I don't understand is, aren't you getting enough action from that Sarah?

TODD
What's Sarah got to do with it?

PHIL
You're seeing her, aren't you?

TODD
Sarah...that's a whole different situation.

PHIL
But you're doing it with her, right?

TODD
I like Sarah a lot. And I don't want to blow it by pushing too hard.

Phil stares.

PHIL
You mean, you haven't...

**TODD**

Technically? No.

**PHIL**

She won't put out?

**TODD**

No, no, no. You don't get it. You can't equate the
I did with Lorna--

**PHIL**

Lorna?

**TODD**

That's her name. Lorna. I mean, that's the name she
gave me. What I did with her...that was like going to some
exotic place. For a visit. Haven't you ever wondered what that
person is like? What that world is like? I was
research. The lower depths...

(beat)

You think I'm full of shit, don't you?

**PHIL**

I didn't say anything.

**CUT TO:**

**OMITTED**

**CUT TO**

**EXT. MOVIE THEATER - NIGHT**

A revival house in a college neighborhood. The ticket
seller hangs a "Sold Out" sign in the box office window, just
and SARAH come running down the sidewalk.

**SARAH**

Shit! Sold out!

Sarah, at twenty-five, is cute, brainy, articulate, and
insecure.

They lean against the wall and catch their breath.

**SARAH**

I am so sorry.

**TODD**

That's alright. I hear it's really overrated. And long.

**SARAH**

I could just kill him! This is not the first time he's done this, either.

**TODD**

Done what?

**SARAH**

Cooked up some phony emergency, right as I'm getting on the elevator.

**TODD**

He's your boss. Being an asshole is part of the job description.

**SARAH**

We're talking about the most self-centered man I have ever met. God forbid I should have a life, right?

(beat)

But I'm not going to let him do it.

**TODD**

Do what?

**SARAH**

Ruin my evening. Our evening.

(without a beat)

You know, he also thinks he's God's gift to women. I'm surprised he hasn't been sued by now...Okay, okay. Stop me. He takes her by the shoulders.
TODD
Sarah. Take a breath.

SARAH
Okay. I'm taking a breath.
And she does.

TODD
Now, take another one.

SARAH
I like you. Have I told you that?

TODD
Not today.

SARAH
You know what I want to do? I want to go shopping.

TODD
Shopping? For what?

SARAH
For a house.

TODD
(completely thrown)
Just what I was thinking.

CUT TO

INT. TODD'S CAR - MOVING - NIGHT

Todd drives Sarah through a neighborhood full of beautifully-maintained
old homes. She is a kid in a candy store--

SARAH
Look at the detail on that one. Wow. Every one of
these is a gem. Makes the stuff I work on look pretty shabby by
comparison.

She shifts to get a better look. In doing so, her foot
hits an object on the floor.

SARAH
What's this?

She lifts up Lorna's birthday gift -- still unwrapped. Todd reacts -- he forgot to get rid of it -- and Sarah reacts to Todd.

SARAH

Obviously, not for me.

TODD

Something...somebody left in front the studio. I just picked it up.

Sarah nods -- she seems to buy it -- and promptly opens the box.

TODD

What are you doing?

SARAH

Maybe we can find out whose it is.

Inside is a silver bracelet, and a hand-written note.

SARAH

(reading)

"Lorna. Remember, I'm in your corner. Love, Terri."

Pretty cool bracelet. You just found this.

TODD

Stupid of me...I should've left it.

SARAH

Lorna. That's a name you don't hear very much. Lorna. Like the cookie.

(off Todd's look)

What? You've never had a Lorna Doone?

TODD

No.

SARAH
Terri and Lorna. Sisters, maybe? Lovers, more like it. Or...witches.
And this bracelet is some sort of talisman.

**TODD**
You have a perverse mind.

(beat)
...which I like, by the way.

**SARAH**
Or...perhaps Terri killed Lorna, and this "gift" provides her with an alibi.

**TODD**
Maybe you should put it back.

**SARAH**
What, aren't you a little curious?

Todd pulls over and stops.

**TODD**
Sarah...I don't know how to put this. This is our fourth night out, and I feel a lot of pressure...for this to work.

**SARAH**
I want it to work, too.

(off his look)
Oh. Is this about sex?

**TODD**
Don't you think we're being a little...methodical about the whole thing? Maybe we should just...

**SARAH**
What? Get it over with?

**TODD**
Not exactly.

**SARAH**
Don't you think it's better to be sure of each other first? To have a little bit of trust?
Sarah absently fingers the bracelet that's not hers.

TODD
You can trust me.

SARAH
I know, I know.
(beat)
But you're not sleeping with anyone else, right?

TODD
Of course not.

SARAH
It's not such a strange thing to ask. Sometimes relationships...overlap.
I just need to feel--

TODD
I told you. I'm not.
Beat.

SARAH
You haven't asked me if I'm seeing anyone.

TODD
Is that bad?

SARAH
It's silly, I know, but it makes me feel like you couldn't imagine anyone being interested in me.

TODD
What? You should be flattered I don't ask. I respect you enough to assume you'd tell me if you're involved with someone.

Sarah considers this.

SARAH
Hmm. Ask me, anyway.

TODD
Are you serious?
(off her look)
Alright. Are you seeing anyone?

SARAH

Absolutely not.

Todd takes the bracelet, puts it on the dash, then leans to kiss Sarah.

SARAH

I do want to make love tonight.

TODD

I'm just worried that all this talk is going to kill the spontaneity--

She presses her finger to his lips--

SARAH

I think spontaneity is overrated.

CUT TO

INT. SARAH'S APARTMENT BEDROOM - NIGHT

Todd and Sarah are making out in her bedroom. To expedite matters, they're also trying to undress. It's not very practical. Todd can't quite kick off his shoes. Sarah can't quite get her blouse unbuttoned.

Finally--

SARAH

Todd, the light.

He switches it off. They sit side by side and undress down to their underwear. They look at each other.

SARAH

Wait. Don't say anything.

TODD

Okay.

Beat.
SARAH
What were you going to say?

TODD
I wasn't going to say anything.

SARAH
Oh.

TODD
You look beautiful--

SARAH
No, don't say that. Let's get under the covers.

They climb into bed and move into each other's arms.

SARAH
Let's go slowly.

They kiss, caress, shedding their inhibitions. Then--

SARAH
Oh. Oww!

TODD
What happened?

SARAH
Dammit...my foot. I've got one of those...what's the word?

TODD
A bunion

SARAH
Not a bunion. A spasm.

TODD
Oh, a foot spasm. Here let me--

He throws back the covers and massages her foot.

SARAH
Oww! No, stop! It hurts! I hate this!

TODD
What can we do?

SARAH
Nothing, it's fine, it's fine. Lemme just walk it off.
She gets out of bed and hobbles into--

**INT. SARAH'S HALLWAY - NIGHT**

Dressed in bra and panties, Sarah hops up and down the hall, desperate to relieve her pain. Todd appears in the doorway and watches her mad little dance.

His thoughts--

**TODD**

She has a better-looking body than I imagined...Breasts are definitely bigger than I thought. You can just never tell with breasts, can you?...I don't know what to make of this foot problem...Maybe she gets a spasm every time she has sex...I've heard of people with problems like that...People who can't have sex without laughing, or burping...Oh, God, what if she's one of them...

Sarah looks up from her hopping.

**SARAH**

I am so embarrassed. Trust me, this doesn't happen all the time.

**TODD**

The thought never crossed my mind.

**CUT TO**

**INT. SARAH'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Sarah and Todd, back under the covers, making love. Todd is on top, moving slowly. Sarah bites her lip and closes her eyes.

Todd looks at her and wonders --
She won't look at me. Why won't she look at me? I'll bet she's preoccupied with her foot. She's praying she won't get another spasm, another foot freak-out...She's being awfully quiet, too...Why is she so quiet? Maybe she needs to concentrate...Some women need to concentrate...I read that in a magazine at the grocery store...That blonde check-out girl who works there is really cute...I love the way she says, "Paper or plastic?"...Todd lets out an excited gasp. Sarah opens her eyes with alarm.

Todd! Shhh...

Todd stops. Everything stops.

What's the matter?

These walls, they're paper-thin. This building is so poorly built. Everyone can hear you.

Todd rolls off of her.

Is that why you're so quiet?

Yes, the walls are...What are you saying?

It's hard for me to tell if you're enjoying this.

Of course, I am. I'm sorry if I'm not vocal enough for you.

That's not what I...Sarah, I just want to make sure I'm doing
something right here.

SARAH
There's no right or wrong way to do this.

TODD
I know. I just want to make sure I'm...you know, in the ballpark.

Sarah stares at him.

SARAH
Todd, I don't expect you to do everything right the first time...Sorry, that didn't come out the way I meant it...

They roll away from each other and stare at the ceiling. We hear a distant siren -- a fire engine, maybe. Somewhere there's a five-alarm fire blazing. Not here.

TODD
You didn't like it.

SARAH
No, I didn't say that. I was just...Let's be still for a while. Alright?

FADE OUT:
FADE IN:

INT. SARAH'S BEDROOM - LATER - NIGHT

Sarah and Todd haven't moved. It's not clear how much time has elapsed.

SARAH
Everyone expects fireworks the first time you do it. But that's just a myth.

TODD
A myth. You're right.

SARAH
Let's not be too hard on ourselves.
I agree.

Our expectations were a little high, that's all.

Todd nods his agreement.

And at the end of the day, sex is only one part of the picture.

True. What do you mean?

I know this couple. They had nothing in common but good sex. They went at it like a pair of rabbits. And guess how long it lasted? A month. They were hot for each other...but there was nothing else.

Right.

(beat)

There's got to be something else.

And they stare at the ceiling.

INT. SARAH'S BEDROOM - STILL LATER - NIGHT

They still haven't moved, but unbeknownst to Sarah, Todd has fallen asleep.

She looks at him. She caresses his face. Then, her hand slides down under the sheets. She tries to arouse him, but while she stops. He's very much asleep.

Sarah lies back. She slides her hand between her legs and begins
to touch herself.
Quietly.

FADE OUT:
FADE IN:

EXT. STREET - DAY

Early morning. The air is cool and crisp as Sarah, wearing sweats and a T-shirt, jogs through the neighborhood. She turns down a side street, heading for--

EXT. SARAH'S GRANDPARENTS HOUSE - DAY

A nondescript house with a faded American flag hanging off the front porch. Sarah climbs the steps where an elderly man -- her GRANDFATHER, sits with the morning paper in his lap, unread.

Sarah gives him a kiss.

SARAH
Morning, Pappy. How's she doing today?

GRANDFATHER
Don't pay her any mind, Sarah. The things she says, they get stranger by the day.

Sarah pays him no mind and heads into the house.

CUT TO

EXT. BACK PORCH - DAY

Sarah and her GRANDMOTHER sit on the back porch, which offers a splendid view of...other people's back porches. Sarah's Grandmother has a sense of mischief that's quite at odds with her deteriorating frame.
The two drink coffee.

**GRANDMOTHER**

They keep telling me I'm doing fine, that I'm even improving. Why do they have to lie? At my age? What are they trying to protect me from?

**SARAH**

Maybe they know something you don't.

**GRANDMOTHER**

Like hell.

She pulls out a pack of American Spirit cigarettes and lights one. Sarah reacts.

**SARAH**

Nan.

**GRANDMOTHER**

What? One in the morning with coffee. One at night with cocktails. Where was I?

(beat)

Oh, yes. My story is coming to an end, Sarah--

**SARAH**

Oh, please.

**GRANDMOTHER**

Your story, that's the one I want to hear.

**SARAH**

I wish I had a story to tell.

**GRANDMOTHER**

Hmm. The last time there was talk of an admirer.

**SARAH**

All you want is dirt, Nan. Admit it.

**GRANDMOTHER**

The world is made of dirt, Sarah. So, please, dish. No detail is too small.
SARAH
I...I'm sleeping with two different men.

GRANDMOTHER
Hmm. Continue.

SARAH
One of them is a good man. He's good for me.

GRANDMOTHER
Like vitamins.

SARAH
Sort of. The other one, he can be a complete ass. A total jerk.

GRANDMOTHER
In other words...he excites you.

SARAH
He does. And I hate it. I hate him. And, on top of that, I can't have him.

GRANDMOTHER
Can you see your Pappy?

Sarah looks back over her shoulder. She catches a glimpse of her Grandfather. He's still on the front porch.

SARAH
He hasn't moved.

GRANDMOTHER
Good. Keep an eye on him.

SARAH
Why?

GRANDMOTHER
Because I'm going to tell you something he shouldn't hear. Something no one knows. Once, I had two lovers. One was your grandfather. He had prospects, then. He had a car and we drove everywhere and people would look at us and say, "Now, there goes a couple." He never pushed me. He told me he respected my
And I liked that.

They hear a loud creak.

**SARAH**

Don't worry. He's not moving.

**GRANDMOTHER**

The other man -- he was a boy, really -- he had no prospects. And he had no car. And he had no respect...for anything. He certainly had no respect for my virginity. And I liked that, too.

She takes a long, luxurious drag.

**GRANDMOTHER**

But I had to make a choice. I chose your grandfather. The day before the wedding, I went to let the other boy down. Met him by a river where we used to swim. Well, one thing led to another, and when I returned home that night, I'd left my virginity back in the tall grass by that river.

Sarah sits on the edge of her chair.

**GRANDMOTHER**

But I did bring something back. A bite mark. That sonuvabitch left on my neck, the size of a peach pit.

**SARAH**

Did Pappy see it?

**GRANDMOTHER**

He did and he didn't. On the wedding night -- in this house -- I managed to squeak by. It was dark. We were shy. He took me in his arms and said, "I'm glad you waited for me." In other words, I lost my virginity twice in the same week. They both laugh.

**SARAH**

No small feat.
GRANDMOTHER
It's an accomplishment. But the next morning, your
Pappy saw it. He demanded an explanation. And, Sarah, do you
I got out of that pickle?

SARAH
You lied.

GRANDMOTHER
Damn right. I said, "What, you don't remember giving
me this?" He said, "No." And I said, "Well, you were so fired up
last night, it's a wonder you can remember anything."
(beat)
And the beast was tamed.
Sarah considers the story.

SARAH
And you've never been tempted to...

GRANDMOTHER
What? Come clean with your Pappy? Why should I tell
him? He had nothing to do with it.

SARAH
Right.

GRANDMOTHER
It's mine. Not his.

SARAH
I wonder what became of that boy.

GRANDMOTHER
Never saw him again. I don't regret a thing, if that's
what you're wondering.

SARAH
I was, in fact.

GRANDMOTHER
Look what I have. I have you.
And you know what else? I have the tall grass by that river. And those clouds. From where I was laying the clouds looked really beautiful that day.

CUT TO

INT. THE MODEL CITY/OFFICE - DAY

The same model we saw at the start of our story. We glide toward a miniature suburban development. Row upon row of houses, each no different than the next. Over this --

SARAH
I don't believe it. You're actually asking my opinion. You really want to know what I think?

We TILT UP to reveal that we're in--

The well-appointed office of the well-heeled JOSH, an architect in his early 40s. Josh studies the model like a boy with a train set. Sarah stands beside him.

JOSH
To tell you the truth, no. I just wanted to hear your voice. You've barely said "boo" to me all morning.

SARAH
(shrugs)

Boo.

JOSH
Alright, what do you think of it?

SARAH
You'd have to pay me to live in that neighborhood.

(off his look)
Hey, what do I know? I'm just the assistant.

JOSH
What are they going to think? That's all that matters.

SARAH
To paraphrase you, this is going to give them a major hard-on. Not the women, of course.

JOSH
You haven't met these women.

Sarah laughs, catches herself and stops.

CUT TO

INT. OFFICE CORRIDOR - DAY

Sarah and Josh move down a hall toward the elevators. Josh is in micro-management mode --

JOSH
The champagne order?

SARAH
Done. Dom Perignon. Fifteen cases.

JOSH
Invitations?

SARAH
A messenger is meeting us at the site with the proofs.

JOSH
Good.

He reaches behind her and pats her butt.

SARAH
Stop it.

JOSH
I can't.

SARAH
Have you never heard of the phrase "impulse control"?

They reach the elevators.
JOSH
I love it when you're full of contempt.
She just glares.

SARAH
People are starting to notice, Josh. I work very hard
to act completely indifferent toward you. The least you could
do is to keep your hands to yourself.

JOSH
I've got a better idea.

SARAH
What?

JOSH
Why don't I distribute a memo, informing everyone that
you and I are not sleeping together?

SARAH
Josh, just for the sake of variety, could you take me
seriously for a moment?

JOSH
Alright, alright. I have another idea.

SARAH
Please, don't...

JOSH
Let's just end it.
Beat.

SARAH
Yes. I think we should.
Josh didn't expect this. The elevator arrives. He
steps aboard and holds the door for her.

JOSH
Coming?

SARAH
I'm going to take the stairs.
Josh shrugs and lets the doors close.

A beat. Sarah considers the stairs, then hits the down button again.

**CUT TO**

**EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - DAY**

Sarah and Todd eat lunch on a bench in a busy promenade. Deli sandwiches in wax paper rest on their laps.

**SARAH**

I can't put my finger on it... I just don't feel it's happening with us.

**TODD**

You don't want it work out, that's what you're saying.

**SARAH**

I do. I mean, I did. It's no one's fault. It's chemistry.

Beat.

**TODD**

You want your pickle?

**SARAH**

Do you want your pickle?!

**TODD**

You know what the problem is? The first night we went out, we should've just fucked. Right away. Without thinking. Two dumb bunnies. Without any history, any baggage. A pair of blank slates. Fucking. It could've been perfectly meaningless. You want chemistry? The less you think, the better the chemistry. Less talk, more action.

**SARAH**

I'm sorry. It's just not happening for me.
TODD
The least you can do is give me your goddam pickle.
They look away from each other. Todd eats in silence.
The pickle sits between them.

CUT TO

EXT. SUBURBAN DEVELOPMENT - DAY

Josh's model come to life. A fallow stretch of land lined with unfinished houses, some more skeletal than others.
At one site we find two parked cars. A gold Lincoln Navigator and an old BMW convertible.

CUT TO

INT. HOUSE - DAY

A house-in-progress. The walls are in place, but little else. Stray two-by-fours, saw horses, electrical cable. And...no roof.
In an upstairs room -- what will soon be the master bedroom, Josh confers with a construction supervisor. Nearby, Sarah talks on her cell phone.

SARAH
(into phone)
I don't care if it costs the same, if it's not Dom Perignon tell them we don't want it, alright?...Good. Anybody else call?
Nobody, huh...Okay.
As she hangs up the construction supervisor exits. Sarah and Josh are alone.

SARAH
Guess I'll be heading back...
JOSH

Wait.

(beat)

About the other day...Are you having any second thoughts?

SARAH

(shrugs)

No. None.

JOSH

You're angry I called it quits, aren't you? You can admit it.

SARAH

No. In fact, I want to thank you.

JOSH

For what?

SARAH

For sparing me from the most unhealthy relationship I've ever had in my life. For that, I thank you.

Josh raises his hands in surrender.

JOSH

Touché.

SARAH

Are you having seconds thoughts?

JOSH

No. I say, let's make a clean break. Let's just walk away from it.

Sarah smiles. She extends her hand.

JOSH

What are you doing?

SARAH

Let's seal the deal. Shake.

It's a little awkward, but they do.
JOSH
Alright. Now that we've put that behind us, there's one problem left.

SARAH
What?

JOSH
Where do we put the bed?

Josh gestures to the empty room. Sarah smiles -- it's a familiar game.

SARAH
Oh, the bed. Let's put it against this wall. Away from the morning sun.

JOSH
Wrong. It's got to go here. So you can see the hallway.

They head out.

As Josh and Sarah leave the house, they "decorate" several rooms.

INT. ANOTHER BEDROOM -- DAY

SARAH
Not enough height for bunk beds.

JOSH
Why do you assume there will be two children?

SARAH
There has to be. They need to keep each other company.

INT. THE KITCHEN -- DAY

SARAH
Definitely not enough space for two people to cook.

JOSH
I prefer to eat out.

INT. THE LIVING ROOM -- DAY

They size up the space, enjoying their play. Sara walks around imaginary furniture.

SARAH
Oh, no. I wouldn't put the ottoman there.

JOSH
Where would you put it?

SARAH
It needs to go over...

She waves her hand, accidentally brushing against Josh's chest. She lets her hand linger...

SARAH
Hmmm.

JOSH
What?

...and linger. They both know what's happening.

SARAH
We have another problem.

JOSH
And that would be...?

SARAH
What do we do with the elephant in the room?

JOSH
You're very clever.

She rubs his chest.

SARAH
We shouldn't be rude to an elephant.

She lets her hand drop to his crotch.

SARAH
They can get very annoyed...if you ignore them.
She pulls Josh to her and kisses him. Josh fairly attacks her, his hands all over her body. After a few lustful beats, he lifts her and she wraps her legs around him.

**SARAH**

Josh. The door.

**Sarah**

It's an absurd request -- the room is completely exposed, but Josh carries her to the front door and kicks it closed. --as the door slams, obscuring our view.

**ON JOSH AND SARAH**

With Sarah's back against the door, Josh enters her.

**CLOSE ON SARAH**

She looks up. With no roof above them, she has a brilliant view of...the clouds. They float past as she thinks--

**SARAH (V.O.) (cont'd)**

...Let's not put a roof on this house today...let's leave the walls unfinished...it's okay not to know where the sofa goes...The colors? We can choose them another day...I like it the way it is... undone... undecided...a work in progress...

She moans -- there's nothing quiet about her at all. Fade out.

**FADE IN:**

**INT. THE LIVING ROOM - LATER - DAY**

Josh and Sarah have finished. He tucks in his shirt. She puts on a shoe.

**Josh**

I have to tell you, that was the best "break-up" sex I've ever...
had.
Sarah considers this. Nods.

SARAH
It was, wasn't it?

(beat)
Closure is important.

jOSH
Now you can move on. You can meet someone who...
sarah
What? Someone who's not a prick like you.
Josh reacts -- slightly offended.
joSH
No. Someone who's...free.
sarah
Oh. Right.

(beat)
As if that would have made any difference in this...what is this thing called again? A relationship?
She's fishing -- she hates herself for it.
sarah (cont'd)
It wouldn't have made any difference, right?
joSH
I'm surprised you have to ask.
sarah
I'm not asking.
He'll answer, anyway.
joSH
If my hands weren't tied...it might have made all the difference.

Beat.

sarah

I said I wasn't asking. And that's the worst answer you could've given.

cUT TO

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

Josh and Sarah get into their respective cars -- her BMW, his Navigator.

Josh looks at himself in the rear-view mirror. He reacts--

Josh

What the hell is this?

Sarah looks over.

Josh (cont'd)

You bit me on the neck! I've got a goddam hickey!

Sure enough, there is a bright red mark on his neck.

Sarah comes over. She reacts with shock, embarrassment, then...laughter.

Josh (cont'd)

What's so goddam funny? You did this on purpose, didn't you?

Sarah
I did not. I was just...I didn't mean to...I was caught up in the moment.

And she laughs again.

jOSH

What the hell are we going to do about this?

sARAH

Josh, you are a big boy. You can take care of this on your own.

Josh glares at her, starts his engine, and leaves her in the dust.

CUT TO:

INT. TODD'S APARTMENT - DAY

Todd is on the kitchen phone. Lorna's bracelet sits on the counter.

TODD

(into phone)

No, no, no. You don't understand. I don't want an appointment, I just need to get in touch with her...She left a package here by mistake, a gift...No, I'd rather give it to her myself...Lorna, but I assume none of you use your real names...What? But she was working last week?...And you don't have a forwarding number?...Look, it's really important that I get this back to her, so--

The line goes dead.

TODD

Dammit.
He dials again. Then, a knock at the door. Todd reacts -- he's not expecting anyone.

He opens the door and finds--

SARAH
Still dressed in the clothes she wore earlier. She holds a small paper bag.

TODD
Sarah...

SARAH
I brought you something.

She hands him the bag. He looks inside.

TODD
Pickles. Huh.

(beat)

What's in your hair?

She touches her hair.

SARAH
Oh. Sawdust. Lots of sawdust at the job site.

(beat)

Can I come in?

Todd puts the bag of pickles on the kitchen counter.

He sees Lorna's bracelet... and slides it into a trash can.

CUT TO

INT. PHARMACY - NIGHT

Josh, still sporting his hickey, approaches the humorless teenage GIRL behind the counter.

GIRL
Need some help?

JOSH
Yes, I have a problem. I need some...something to
cover up a... Hell, just take a look.

Josh shows the Girl his hickey.

GIRL
Yeah. You're fucked.

JOSH
I can do without the attitude, thank-you.

GIRL
Try concealer. Aisle three.

JOSH
(impatient)
But what do I do with it?

GIRL
Just put it on. And call your lawyer.

She smiles.

CUT TO

EXT. JOSH'S HOUSE - NIGHT

In the driveway of his fashionable home are two parked
cars. Josh's Mercedes S430 and his wife's Lexus RX300.

In the Mercedes, Josh finishes applying the concealer
to his neck. He checks himself in the mirror -- the hickey is
gone.

His hands, however, have concealer all over them.

CUT TO

INT. JOSH'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

Josh washes his hands in the master bathroom. He
double-checks his neck in the mirror. From the adjoining bedroom, we hear
-- but do not see -- his wife GWEN.
GWEN

Unbelievable.

JOSH

What?

GWEN

I'm reading a stupid article in a stupid magazine.

JOSH

If it's stupid, why read it?

(ignores this)

GWEN

The whole issue is devoted to famous couples who are breaking up. Listen to this...Remember the blonde doctor on that show you hate?

JOSH

Yeah. She's a bore.

GWEN

She's breaking up with her husband of twenty years. Said a friend, "Her show's in syndication, she's thin, she's rich and she wants to play." Josh dries his hands.

JOSH

Some poor tree gave its life so we could know that.

GWEN

It's comforting, reading about these broken marriages. Josh opens the door into the--

INT. JOSH'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Gwen sits under the covers with her magazine. In her late 30s, she is a refined, patrician beauty. As Josh undresses for bed--

JOSH

Why?
GWEN
It's not enough for our marriage to succeed. Everyone must fail.

JOSH
Is this going to be one of those nights?

GWEN
What?

JOSH
One of those nights we talk.

GWEN
No. There's no need to talk, because there's no problem.

He gets into bed next to her.

JOSH
I've been under a lot of stress.

GWEN
You don't have to apologize. There's nothing wrong with the slump we're going through. In fact, it's a good thing.

JOSH
How's that?

He turns off the side light. We can't see them -- the room is completely dark.

GWEN
Too much passion can ruin a marriage. Look at Eric and Sylvia. At the beginning, you couldn't pry them apart. They were joined at the genitals. And, then...total burn-out. A marriage cannot sustain that kind of intensity. It's good for people to grow bored with each other. That way, they can meet and fall in love again.

She snuggles up to him, strokes his back.

GWEN
In case you hadn't noticed...I'm trying to seduce you.

JOSH
I can feel that.

GWEN
You're welcome to reciprocate.
Josh turns on the light and sits up.

JOSH
I can't.

GWEN
It's alright.

JOSH
To seduce...to be seduced, there needs to be an element of surprise. I know all your moves. You know mine. How can there be any surprise?

Gwen sits up, throws back the sheet.

GWEN
Rub my feet.
He does.

GWEN
I think we should have an affair.

JOSH
What?

GWEN
With each other.

JOSH
That makes no sense.

GWEN
You pick me up at a bar...

JOSH
And, what? Pretend I don't know you?

GWEN
(ignores him)
Or we could meet at a hotel. I'll register under my maiden name. Just like THE GRADUATE.

JOSH

THE GRADUATE is about a married woman having an affair with a college boy.

GWEN

When I met you, you were a college boy.

JOSH

Gwen, THE GRADUATE is a story about a very unhappy woman who has an affair out of wedlock. As I recall, it turns out rather badly for her.

GWEN

Alright. Bad example.

(rethe foot rub)

You can stop.

JOSH

Actors pretend. That's what they do. I'm not an actor. And I love you the way you are.

GWEN

I love you, too.

And he turns out the light again.

JOSH

Pretending to be strangers is not going to solve the problem.

Beat.

GWEN

Who said there was a problem?

CUT TO

INT. OFFICE BUILDING - NIGHT
A cocktail party at Josh's firm. Josh is the center of attention, greeting investors, fielding compliments. Gwen stands beside him, drinking champagne -- Dom Perignon, after all.

**JOSH'S POV**

Through the crowd he spots Sarah, entering with her date -- Todd.

**GWEN**

Your lovely assistant is here.

(reTodd)

You didn't tell me she had a new boyfriend.

**JOSH**

I don't ask her about her personal life.

Sarah and Todd arrive.

**SARAH**

Hey, you two. Todd, this is my boss Josh, and his wife Gwen.

Todd and Josh shake hands.

**TODD**

Sarah's told me a lot about you.

Josh is not sure how to take that.

**GWEN**

Sarah, you look great. You've been keeping my boy on his best behavior?

**SARAH**

It's a dirty job, but somebody's got to do it.

**GWEN**

I know he asks to go above and beyond the call of duty.

**SARAH**

He can be tough.

**JOSH**

But fair.
GWEN
Josh, I'm trying to thank Sarah for all the extra attention she gives you.

SARAH
You're welcome.

GWEN
We should really have you over for dinner, Sarah. It's been too long. You can bring...

TODD
Todd.

GWEN
Sorry. I'm hopeless when it comes to names.

JOSH
Especially after two glasses of champagne.

GWEN
Hey, I'm still working on the first, thank you.

(to Todd)
So, are you two living together?

TODD
Living together? No.

Sarah and Todd both laugh.

SARAH
We've only known each other a few weeks.

Josh reacts -- he knew nothing of this.

GWEN
You two seem to fit. It only took me a few days to know with Josh. In fact, I knew after the first date.

SARAH
You knew what?

GWEN
That he was the one for me.

(to Sarah)
She loves to embarrass me.

**SARAH**

(to Gwen)

Don't stop. I want to hear about this first date.

**GWEN**

Well, it was the cheapest date I've ever been on.

**JOSH**

I was broke.

**GWEN**

Do you know the Chinese place on Third? That little hole-in-the-wall?

**TODD**

I know it. Used to be a cool dive. Now it's ultra-hip and overpriced.

This news gives Gwen pause.

**GWEN**

Really? I think our first dinner cost a grand total of ten dollars.

**JOSH**

Gwen loves to dissect our first date.

**GWEN**

It was a momentous night. Babe, we should really go back there.

Josh gestures to the bar.

**JOSH**

Gwen, why don't you continue your stroll down memory lane while I drink? Todd, you up for it?

**TODD**

Sure.

They move away toward--
INT. OFFICE BUILDING - THE BAR - NIGHT

As Josh and Todd sidle up--

JOSH
(to bartender)
Gin. Straight up. Olives.
(Todd)
What are you having?

TODD
I'm fine, thanks.

JOSH
So...Sarah's an attractive girl.

TODD
Very.

JOSH
You two serious?

TODD
(shrugs)
Hard to say.

JOSH
She wants to play the field, right?

TODD
No, that's not it.

JOSH
I see. You want to fuck around.

Todd reacts.

JOSH
C'mon, we're guys. I know the drill.

Todd considers his audience, then decides to open up--

TODD
We dated a few times, and to be honest, I was on the fence about Sarah. I liked her, but I didn't think we were in a good groove.
Then, a couple weeks ago, her grandmother died. Things changed.

JOSH

I didn't know.

(beat)

She didn't say a thing about it.

TODD

It wasn't unexpected, but Sarah took it really hard.

So where did that leave me? I was ambivalent about things, then my ambivalence had to take a back seat. I had to be there for her. Completely. And, ready or not, our relationship became...a real relationship.

Josh simply listens.

TODD

You know, I wasn't ready to be that involved with anybody. I don't know...Death has a funny way of making you get outside yourself.

Josh looks past Todd--

JOSH'S POV

Gwen is still chatting with Sarah. Gwen makes eye contact with Josh and sends him a warm smile.

CUT TO

INT. JOSH'S CAR - MOVING - NIGHT

Josh and Gwen drive home in silence. Gwen notices something out the window.

GWEN

You missed the on-ramp.

JOSH

I know.
GWEN
Why?

JOSH
Somewhere we need to go first.

CUT TO

EXT. CHINESE RESTAURANT - NIGHT

The Mercedes pulls up to the "Happiness Chinese Restaurant."
Josh and Gwen get out and take in the sight--

GWEN
We don't have to do this tonight.

JOSH
Yes, we do.

She peers in the window.

GWEN
We can't go in here. Everything's different.

He opens the door for her.

JOSH
That's okay. We're different, too.

CUT TO

INT. CHINESE RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Josh and Gwen are in a booth--

GWEN
Sarah's a very interesting girl. Did you know she's training for the marathon?

JOSH
I don't want to talk about Sarah.

GWEN
What do you want to talk about, then?

    JOSH
I want to talk about me...

A beat.

    JOSH
...and what a fool I've been.

Gwen is not prepared for this.

    JOSH
I thought if we came here tonight we could...start again.

    GWEN
(flustered)
But I thought you were over this place. And, look...There's nothing left. Not one remnant of our first date...anywhere.

Josh sees a plate of fortune cookies on the next table -- somebody left without eating them.

    JOSH
(brightens)
The fortune cookies haven't changed.

He brings over the plate.

    GWEN
You're supposed to wait--

    JOSH
I can't wait. I have to know.

He opens the first.

    JOSH
(reading)
"You are on the verge of success"...in bed.

Gwen laughs, opens one herself.

    GWEN
(reading)
"You will have a change of plans"...in bed.
Josh reacts, opens a third.

JOSH
(reading)
"You are very creative"...in bed.

GWEN
Hmm. That's what I've heard.

JOSH
The last cookie. Go ahead.

GWEN
No. You open it.
He slowly cracks in open.

JOSH
It's blank.
(checks both sides)
I got a blank.

GWEN
Blank...in bed. That's disappointing.

JOSH
No, it's perfect. Blank...no problems, no history, nothing...in bed.
He takes her hand.

CUT TO

EXT. CHINESE RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Josh and Gwen approach their car. It's late. Behind them, the restaurant is closing.

JOSH
By the way, I didn't get your name.

GWEN
What?
(off his smile)
Oh, my name.

She glances across the street. A shop window sign reads, "Bail Bonds."

GWEN
My name is Gail. Gail Bonds.

JOSH
Well, Gail, I'm not usually this forward on a first date, may I take you to my car and ravish you?

GWEN
Hmm. On one condition.

What's that?

GWEN
That you tell me your name.

JOSH
Oh, I thought everyone knew my name. I'm Bill Gates. Billionaire.

She laughs.

INT. JOSH'S CAR -- NIGHT

They get into the back seat and begin to kiss.

GWEN
Is it true what they say, Bill, about billionaires? That all the wealth is just a way to compensate...for size?

JOSH
People are jealous.

GWEN
I can imagine. It must be so lonely at the top.

He reaches between her knees.
GWEN
What are you doing?

JOSH
What do you think I'm doing?

(beat)
The fortune cookie said you're on the verge of success...in bed.

GWEN
We're not in a bed.

JOSH
You shouldn't read fortune cookies too literally.

Josh swings Gwen onto his lap. They go at each other like...a couple of college kids.

CLOSE ON JOSH
As he makes love to his wife, he thinks--

JOSH
...Can anyone see us?...Is anyone looking?...Why should it bother you? You're alone...with your wife...That's the way it's supposed to be...You know every inch of her...every smell...every sigh...every freckle...the shape of her ass...the mole under her nipple...the really really someone you don't know...

He puts his mind to it--

FADE OUT:
FADE IN:

INT. GWEN'S HOUSE - DAY

Gwen and her mother JOANNE are in the living room looking at
samples of fabric. At sixty, Joanne is robust and shrewd.

GWEN
Color. That's the problem with this room, it needs color. Think of...the vibrant colors of Haiti.

JOANNE
Personally, Haiti does nothing for me. When your father and I were there -- this was before you were born, I almost died from a piece of lettuce, and I wouldn't want anything to remind me of that trip.

(beat)
Anyway, quit changing the subject.

Gwen puts down the swatches.

GWEN
Alright. I didn't say anything.

JOANNE
Because you're not sure?

GWEN
No, I'm sure. I'm sure he's sleeping with her.

(beat)
And I may have to kill him.

JOANNE
Hmm.

GWEN
What? You think I should just forget about it?

JOANNE
Yes, I do.

GWEN
Mother, don't you think honesty is essential in a marriage?

JOANNE
It depends. It can be quite detrimental.

Gwen begins to pace in exasperation.

**JOANNE**

Alright. Confront him. You know where it will get you. Your whole marriage will unravel, and you'll have nothing. All the things you take for granted -- month-long vacations in St. Lucia -- they'll disappear. You'll be a divorced woman in her late 30s. Lonely.

**GWEN**

Why did I invite you over? You make me feel like shit.

**JOANNE**

That's my job.

The phone rings.

**GWEN**

The machine can get it.

**JOANNE**

I don't monitor calls. It makes me feel like I'm hiding in my own home.

BEEP. From the answering machine--

**VOICE**

Gwen, this is David Warren. Hopefully, a welcome voice from your past. My show's on hiatus and I'm in town for the weekend. I'd love to catch up. Are you free for coffee...or something?

**JOANNE**

Pick up the phone.

Gwen just stares at the machine.

**VOICE**

I have no idea what you're up to...I hope life is well. I heard through a friend of a friend of a friend
you're still married. Congratulations. If you want, give me a call. I'm crashing at my sister's. The number is -- on-- the number is 235-4511. Hope to hear from you.

CLICK.

GWEN

Wow.

JOANNE

How long has it been?

GWEN

College.

JOANNE

Have you ever seen his show? It's absolutely dreadful. I never miss it.

GWEN

If Josh isn't home, I'll watch it.

JOANNE

Hmm. It's Kismet, then.

GWEN

What?

JOANNE

A brief liaison with an old flame. The perfect way to deal with your anger.

GWEN

You're insane. You're an insane mother.

JOANNE

It'll be good for your self-esteem.

GWEN

Did it occur to you that maybe he just wants to have coffee?

Joanne crosses to the answering machine. Rewinds the tape. Hits play.

DAVID'S VOICE
...on hiatus and I'm in town for the weekend. Are you free for coffee...or something?

She hits stop.

**JOANNE**

"Coffee...or something." He's flirting, admit it.

**GWEN**

He's stammering. He's nervous. He's calling out of the blue!

Joanne gathers her purse.

**JOANNE**

You're wrong. I'm right, and I'm going. But take a tip from someone who's been there. Opportunity is knocking, have a chance to level the playing field.

(beat)

You have a chance to do something good for your marriage.

Joanne exits.

**CUT TO**

**INT. GWEN'S BATHROOM - DAY**

Morning. Gwen, fresh from the shower, studies her face in the mirror as Josh -- unseen, in the bedroom -- dresses for work.

**JOSH**

You're right. We could use some more color in the living room.

(beat)

Gwen?
GWEN
Yes?

JOSH
I said you're right.

GWEN
About what?

JOSH
About more color in the living room.

GWEN
Oh. I'm glad you think so.
She leans closer to inspect a new wrinkle.

CUT TO

INT. HOTEL LOBBY – DAY

An upscale hotel. Gwen, in a sheer blouse and a slim leather skirt, fills out the registration card at the front desk. The Desk Clerk looks up from his computer.

DESK CLERK
And how many nights will you be staying with us?

GWEN
One.

DESK CLERK
We do have a two-night minimum.

GWEN
Then...two.
She hands him the card.

DESK CLERK
I'd like to pay in cash.

GWEN
That won't be a problem. We just need a credit card imprint for your incidentals...
Gwen reacts. The Desk Clerk puts her at ease.
DESK CLERK
...which we tear up when you check out.

Gwen smiles.

DESK CLERK
Will you be needing more than one key?

GWEN
Two, please.

CUT TO

INT. HOTEL RESTAURANT - DAY

Gwen and DAVID lunch in the hotel's elegant dining room. David is quite the draw, turning heads across the room. And, no wonder. He has real magnetism.

DAVID WARREN
I'm still reeling. It was the most humbling experience of my life. Getting raked over the coals by a bunch of sixteen-year-old drama students! At my own alma mater!

GWEN
I'm surprised they weren't all over you.

DAVID WARREN
They were, with knives drawn.

GWEN
What did they say?

DAVID WARREN
Basically, why am I working on a piece of shit like MALIBU NIGHTS when I should be doing Shakespeare or Chekhov? (beat)

It was brutal.

A WAITER delivers a bottle of champagne to David.

WAITER
Compliments from the table in the corner.
The Waiter gestures. David and Gwen turn. In the corner three middle-aged women are smiling. David mouths a gracious "thank you" their way.

GWEN
See? Those women are happy you're not doing Shakespeare.

Beat.

DAVID WARREN
Gwen. You look great. You haven't changed a bit.

GWEN
I don't think I'm MALIBU NIGHTS material.

DAVID WARREN
Those women! Walking boob jobs. They're appalling.

GWEN
You look like you enjoy kissing them.

DAVID WARREN
It's very simple. I close my eyes and imagine I'm kissing someone else.

GWEN
Hmm. Someone else in particular?

DAVID WARREN
Yes.

GWEN
If she's as tan as you, I don't want to hear about it.

David reaches for his wallet.

DAVID WARREN
Here, take a look...

He hands her a photo. In it, we see David standing with a distinguished man in his mid-40s. With them is a smiling boy, about eleven.

Gwen is nonplussed.

DAVID WARREN
What's wrong with this picture, huh?

She smiles.

GWEN
Well...Let's start with the man, upper left.

DAVID WARREN
Andy. My partner. And the best thing that's ever happened to me.

GWEN
Okay. And the boy?

DAVID WARREN
Eric. He's Andy's son from a marriage that -- needless to say -- didn't work. Andy came out when Eric was just five. Great kid.

GWEN
And when did you...?

DAVID WARREN
Come out? About fifteen years ago.

(off Gwen's look)
Is this too much information?

GWEN
No. But fifteen years ago...That was right after--

DAVID WARREN
You and me.

GWEN
Was I the last woman?

David nods.

GWEN
Was I that bad?

David laughs.

DAVID WARREN
No, you were fantastic. I was completely confused.

Gwen quickly gulps down some champagne.
DAVID WARREN
What's the matter?

GWEN
Nothing. I'm very happy for you. And, I have to confess, I'm relieved.

DAVID WARREN
Why?
Beat.

GWEN
Oh -- what the hell -- we're friends, right?

DAVID WARREN
I'm listening.

GWEN
I had this ridiculous idea that you wanted to get together to have a...

DAVID WARREN
Oh.

GWEN
You know...for old time's sake.

DAVID WARREN
Uh-huh.

GWEN
And, frankly, I wasn't looking forward to turning you down. Which I would have, of course. Had you...asked. Which you're not, because you're...you're...

DAVID WARREN
Married.

GWEN
Right.

DAVID WARREN
Happily.

GWEN
Right.
She slides her empty glass toward him.

GWEN
Would you pour me a little more, David?

CUT TO

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - DAY

Gwen leans against the front desk. Tipsy. The Desk Clerk approaches.

DESK CLERK
Can I help you, ma'am?

Gwen looks lost.

DESK CLERK
Are you okay?

GWEN
I'd like to check out.

DESK CLERK
Was there a problem?

GWEN
Yes. I was stood up...by the past.

Beat.

DESK CLERK
I'm sorry. We won't charge you for the room.

GWEN
No, you don't understand.

DESK CLERK
Yes. I do.

(beat)

More than you might think.

Gwen stares at him.

DESK CLERK
Shall I close out the account?
GWEN
No. I need the room after all.

(beat)

Will you show me the way there?

The Desk Clerk looks at her with no apparent interest.

DESK CLERK
You're in luck. I was just about to take my break.

CUT TO

INT. ELEVATOR - DAY

The Desk Clerk and Gwen ride in the elevator. Silently. There is no discernible connection between them.

CUT TO

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY - DAY

The Desk Clerk leads Gwen to the room. It couldn't look more business-like.

CUT TO

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

They enter. He locks the door. She surveys the room.

DESK CLERK
Something from the mini-bar?

GWEN
No.

DESK CLERK
How's the air conditioning?

GWEN
Fine.

DESK CLERK
Shall I pull down the covers?
GWEN

I suppose.

DESK CLERK

Do you want to know my name?

GWEN

No.

He takes her in his arms.

DESK CLERK

You're shaking.

GWEN

I'll be fine.

(beat)

This could get you in trouble. You could lose your job, right?

DESK CLERK

I don't care.

GWEN

You don't even know me.

DESK CLERK

You're right.

GWEN

We have nothing in common.

Beat.

DESK CLERK

That's where you're wrong.

He begins to unbutton her blouse. Without touching. Without affection. After a beat, she begins to unbutton his shirt.

CUT TO

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY - DAY
A little later. A maid vacuums the carpet as the Desk Clerk emerges, followed by Gwen. They cross to the elevator, as business-like as before.

**DESK CLERK**

(to the Maid)

Buenas tardes, señora.

**CUT TO**

**INT. ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS**

Gwen and the Desk Clerk board the elevator. He presses "L" for lobby. She presses "P" for parking.

**GWEN**

Thank you for taking care of the room.

**DESK CLERK**

Your welcome.

And they ride in silence.

In Gwen's mind--

**GWEN**

...And now the score is tied...Oh my God, what will I tell my mother? I did it with a desk clerk. Hardly the affair to remember...Of course, she will disapprove. "Is English even his first language? This is your idea of a liaison? Your idea of leveling the playing field? You don't even know the boy's name--"

Gwen touches the Desk Clerk's arm.

**GWEN**

What's your name?

**DESK CLERK**

David.

**GWEN**

What? You're kidding me.
Gwen laughs -- she can't help it.

**DAVID**

No. What's so funny?

**GWEN**

Nothing, it's just--

She laughs even harder. The elevator door opens.

David gets out and looks at her oddly.

**GWEN**

Sorry, I just...I didn't think you'd be named David.

**INT. HOTEL LOBBY - DAY**

The door closes on Gwen, leaving David in the lobby. A bit befuddled.

**INT. HOTEL FRONT DESK - DAY**

David resumes his post. **DESK CLERK #2** works beside him. He leans to David--

**DESK CLERK #2**

There's a woman waiting to see you. She's been here for half an hour.

He points to a lobby chair, where we find **ROSALIE** -- 22, spunky, mercurial. In short...trouble.

She and David made eye contact. She springs up and advances toward him.

**DAVID**

Why are you here?

**ROSALIE**

You weren't going to return my calls.

**DAVID**
Don't you have more important things to do? Picking flowers, honeymoon reservations...

ROSALE

Is there somewhere we can talk?

The desk phone rings. David picks it up.

DAVID

(into phone)

Front desk, David speaking...No, sir. Tap water is very drinkable in this city...Of course, sir. We'll send up some bottled water right away.

He hangs up.

ROSALE

Is there somewhere we can talk?

DAVID

What's wrong with here?

ROSALE

Privately.

DAVID

But here, I won't be tempted to raise my voice or do something rash. That's the first lesson of hotel management. Never lose your cool, no matter how annoying the guest is. Not to go into hotel management. I don't have ambitions in that direction. Or any direction, if I recall you correctly.

The desk phone rings again. Exasperated, David grabs it.

DAVID

(into phone)

Front desk, David speaking...Yes, ma'am, the restaurant has a smoking section...Well, I didn't make the policy...If
of the consolation, the smokers are seated in a little corner patio, and they feel very bad about themselves.

He hangs up. And gives Rosalie a very deliberate look.

DAVID
Rosie, you'd better leave. Before I get myself fired.

She starts to protest. Thinks better of it, and exits.

CUT TO

INT. EMPLOYEE BREAK ROOM - DAY

David hangs his uniform shirt in his locker. He gathers his personal things. A jacket, a knapsack, and...a violin case.

The HOTEL MANAGER approaches.

HOTEL MANAGER
Yo, fiddler on the roof.

David reacts -- this is the last person he wants to deal with.

HOTEL MANAGER
(regards the violin)

Wish I could play an instrument. Chicks really dig that stuff. Tried the guitar in high school. What can I say? No discipline.

DAVID
Discipline. Always a struggle.

HOTEL MANAGER
I hear you. For instance, it takes a certain discipline to know that when you're working at the hotel, when you're on the clock...

(shrugs)
...you shouldn't fuck the guests.

David was not expecting this.

HOTEL MANAGER (cont'd)

You want to bring your girlfriend here on your day off? That's a different story. I'll even give you the corporate rate on a room.

(beat)

Just don't do it while you're on the clock. You hear me?

DAVID

It won't happen again.

HOTEL MANAGER

Good.

David marches away.

CUT TO

INT. MUSIC CONSERVATORY - DAY

In a sun-lit practice room, a string quartet rehearses. Four men -- David included, perform an energetic movement from a Beethoven quartet.

NOTE: Throughout the film, we've heard this string quartet as underscore. Now...we meet the soundtrack.

David plays with emotion and a physicality we haven't seen in him -- truly, this is where he lives.

CUT TO

INT. CONSERVATORY HALLWAY - DAY

After the rehearsal. Violin at his side, David trudges through
the exit. Music emanates from every room. He turns a

corner, runs smack into--

ROSLIE.

She's been waiting.

DAVID

Jesus!

She simply picks up where they left off--

ROSLIE

I want you to be there on Sunday.

DAVID

No.

ROSLIE

You told me we'd always be friends.

DAVID

I lied.

ROSLIE

You're an important part of my life, David. There's so

much history between us. I don't want to trash it simply

because--

DAVID

Because what? Because you're getting married?

Beat.

DAVID

Rosie, I want you to be happy. I do. And someday,

we'll be friends. Someday, we'll all go out to dinner. The

four of us.

ROSLIE

The four of us?

DAVID

Sure. Me, you, Jerry, and whatever pale imitation of

you I can dig up to be my date.

ROSLIE
Stop it.

But he's on a roll--

DAVID

And the check will come and Jerry will pick up the tab

and I'll protest, but not too much. Then, you'll give me a kiss

on the cheek, and some dim memory will stir in me, but not for

too long. And we'll say, "It was great to see you." And it will

to see you...

(beat)

...then. But, until then....good-bye.

David exits, leaving Rosalie alone in the cacophonous hall.

CUT TO

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

A clean, modern apartment that Rosalie shares with

JERRY -- late 20s, upstanding, sturdy good looks.

Rosalie and Jerry sit in the living room, meeting with

their WEDDING PLANNER -- a highly efficient woman in her mid-

50s.

WEDDING PLANNER

We've got a few more things to cover. The photos.

There's a courtyard behind the church. It's a popular

backdrop. Our photographer says the light is gorgeous. We need

twenty minutes before the ceremony for singles.

(beat)

Oh. Jerry, your father's press secretary insists on
someone from the papers. I told him you want to keep
private as possible, but...What could I do?

JERRY
I know. It is an election year.

WEDDING PLANNER
Exactly what he said.

ROSA莉
It's okay.

WEDDING PLANNER
Right. The guest list. We have a few more no-show's.
She consults a list.

WEDDING PLANNER
Mr. and Mrs. Bennett send their regrets. Also, Ms.
Rothman will
no be attending.

ROSA莉
Oh. David Freeman. He's not coming.
Jerry reacts.

JERRY
He's not?

ROSA莉
No. He's not.

JERRY
After all that shit you put me through, now he's not
even coming.

The Wedding Planner smiles politely.

WEDDING PLANNER
So, if there are any last-minute--

JERRY
(ignores her)
I guess that means you've been talking with him.

ROSA莉
Yes, I talked to him. And I...
(to Wedding Planner)
Would you excuse us for a minute?

WEDDING PLANNER
Take your time.

Rosalie gets up and leads Jerry into--

INT. APARTMENT KITCHEN -- DAY

Once they are out of earshot--

ROSALE I talked to David. And...I uninvited him.

JERRY What?

ROSALE I told him it wasn't right. I told him he shouldn't be at our wedding.

JERRY When did you decide this?

ROSALE I don't know...I just realized I don't want our wedding to be about where I've been. I want it to be about where you and I are going.

JERRY What did he say?

ROSALE Jerry...

JERRY I want to know.

ROSALE He was disappointed--

JERRY Of course he was. He's still in love with you.

ROSALE
But he understands. I drew the line, honey.

JERRY

Thank-you.

ROSALE

I did it for us.

Rosalie gives him a kiss.

CUT TO

INT. DAVID'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Amidst a clutter of unpaid bills, take-out cartons, and laundry,
not for picking up.

DAVID (into phone)

What do you want, Rose?

ROSALE

Were you sleeping?

DAVID

Yes. I was.

ROSALE

Liar. You're practicing. I can hear you.

He moves to the window.

DAVID'S POV

Rosalie -- on her cell -- waves to him from the sidewalk, three stories below.

ROSALE

It's so sad. Why do you always play sad songs?

DAVID

I don't write 'em, Rose.
Is our conversation over now?

    ROSALIE

Please let me in.

    DAVID

No.

She laughs mischievously.

    ROSALIE

You don't trust me?

    DAVID

No.

(beat)

Stay there. I'll be right...Wait a minute. This is insane.

I'm not coming down. Go home, Rose. I mean it.

    ROSALIE

I'm going to wait here for one minute. Sixty seconds.

    DAVID

You do that.

    ROSALIE

Then, I'm gone. You won't see me again.

She hangs up. He hangs up.

    DAVID'S POV

Rosalie sits on the front steps. Stubborn.

    DAVID

(to himself)

Be my guest. Sit there all night.

David turns from the window. He accidentally knocks his metronome to the floor, setting it off. Click...click...click...

David shuts it off, goes to the door.

His hand on the knob--

    DAVID
If I go down those stairs...it will only lead to one
place...right back here...the two of us...a short, brilliant
moment...one more to add to the gallery...then, empty-handed again, with
nothing to show for it but an emotional hangover...I'm not
going to open this door... Discipline... Like the man said, don't
guests...

CUT TO

EXT. DAVID'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Rosalie is on the front steps. She smiles as she hears the door open -- it's David.
He joins her.

DAVID
I've got nothing to say to you.

ROSALIE
Fine. I'll talk...
A beat.

ROSALIE
The reason I won't just leave you alone is not because I'm "confused."
My feelings are perfectly clear. I know you find it incomprehensible
that I can love Jerry and love you. And that one love has nothing
to do with the other. But it's true.

DAVID
Rose...

ROSALIE
What?

DAVID
This is bullshit. I can't spell it out any more plainly. It's impossible!

ROSALIE
Why?

DAVID

Because I can't be this close to you...and not want to touch you.

ROSALIE

That's it?

DAVID

That's...it.

And he does touch her. He puts his hand on her leg.

DAVID

And if I can't do that, I don't want to be your friend. Not now. Not ever.

ROSALIE

Don't be so mean.

David flashes an angry look. Then, he pulls Rosalie close to him.

DAVID

The bottom line is...If I'm with you, I have to touch you, to kiss you. That doesn't work for friends, does it? She doesn't answer -- she lets him stroke her leg.

DAVID

When I'm not with you -- this is more than you need to know...If I touch myself, I can only think about one person. You. No one else. Just you.

(beat)

Friends...that's bullshit.

ROSALIE

What do we do?

DAVID

What do you mean "we"? This is your problem.

(beat)
My only problem is how to get you out of my mind. How to erase you...Delete every bit of you...
(presses an imaginary key)
Into the ether...

ROSALIE
Stop...

She kisses him. He engulfs her in his arms.

DAVID
You have to say good-bye.

ROSALIE
I don't know how...

CUT TO

INT. DAVID'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

David and Rosalie have sex on the single bed in his spartan room. She's on top of him -- they face each other.
The lovemaking is both fierce and tender -- longing and leaving, rolled into one.
As Rosalie grows more aroused, she begins to cry. Tears quietly stream down her cheeks.
David reacts--

DAVID
Should we stop?
Rosalie is too choked up to answer -- she shakes her head "no."
And they continue -- tears and sex.

CUT TO

INT. DAVID'S BEDROOM - LATER - NIGHT
David sits in bed alone, while Rosalie showers in the adjoining bathroom.

**ROSALIE**

David, will you hand me my shampoo? It's in my purse.

David opens Rosalie's purse and finds a travel-size bottle of shampoo.

He just shakes his head.

**CUT TO**

**INT. ROSALIE'S CAR - MOVING - NIGHT**

Rosalie drives home. Checks herself in the mirror -- her hair is still damp. She rolls down the window to "blow dry" it.

She turns on the radio, finds a rock-and-roll station. Noisy, mindless, perfect.

In her mind--

**ROSALIE**

Hail Mary, full of Grace, blessed be the fruit of thy womb Jesus...Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death, Amen...Hail Mary, full of Grace, blessed fruit of...

**CUT TO**

**INT. ROSALIE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT**

After midnight. Rosalie slips inside the door. No sign of Jerry. She removes her shoes and tiptoes into--

**INT. ROSALIE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**
The television is on -- the sound is muted. An infomercial is playing. Jerry is sleeping.

**ON ROSALIE**

She nudges him. He doesn't stir. Rosalie sits at the foot of the bed. She grabs the remote and "un-mutes" the sound.

**INT. ROSALIE'S BEDROOM - ON TV - NIGHT**

A physical fitness EXPERT is talking.

**EXPERT**

...And the change is not just physical. You'll be amazed how quickly your whole outlook will--

**INT. ROSALIE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

She flicks off the TV. Rosalie undresses and climbs into bed. She starts to kiss Jerry.

Slowly, he wakes.

**JERRY**

Hey...

**ROSALIE**

Hey...

**JERRY**

What time is it?

**ROSALIE**

Late.

He looks at the time.

**JERRY**

It is late. What happened?

**ROSALIE**

Oh. The girls. Wedding talk. We could've gone on all night.
She rubs his chest.

**ROSALE**

Jerry...

**JERRY**

What?

**ROSALE**

We need to make love now.

**JERRY**

Okay...why now?

**ROSALE**

I can't explain it. We just need to make love now.

He nods. He kisses her neck, her breasts. Suddenly she stops him, taking his face in her hands.

**JERRY**

What's the matter?

**ROSALE**

I just need to fix this moment in my mind.

A long beat. She studies his face.

**ROSALE**

I love you. Totally. Completely. I don't want to spend another minute of my life without you.

(off his reaction)

You don't have to say anything.

She climbs on top of him.

**JERRY**

You're forgetting something.

**ROSALE**

No, I'm not.

He laughs uncomfortably.

**JERRY**

Don't you think...
ROSALIE
No, I don't. Let's not use it tonight.

(beat)

I'm ready.

A beat.

JERRY
If you're ready, so am I.

She straddles him, rocking back and forth. With grim determination.

ROSALIE
Jerry?

JERRY
What?

ROSALIE
Talk to me...

FADE OUT:
FADE IN:
OMITTED

INT. PHOTOGRAPHY STUDIO - DAY

Jerry and Rosalie -- dressed informally -- pose for a publicity photo.

The photographer is Todd.

Each click of his camera brings a blinding FLASH.

todd

Very good...you both look great...perfect shot for the paper.

rOSALIE
(to Jerry, sotto voce)

I didn't mean to put pressure on you.
jeRRY
Babe, you're making too much out of this.
(beat)
It's not like I didn't enjoy making love.

FLASH!

rOSALIE
I know.
(beat)
But I also know you would've enjoyed it more if I hadn't...

jeRRY
Raised the stakes?

roSALIE
I wasn't going to put it that way.
(beat)
But it's true.

jeRRY
Maybe it is. But, please don't read too much into it.

FLASH...FLASH!

rOSALIE
I won't. I promise.

CUT TO:

INT. CHURCH - NIGHT

High ceiling. Stained glass windows. Dark mahogany pews.

At the altar, Jerry and Rosalie confer with their PRIEST -- late 60s, doctrinaire. They're rehearsing.
A lot of young couples prefer "husband and wife" to the traditional "man and wife." Personally, I don't feel the phrase "man and wife" gives the woman a diminutive status. But I leave it in your hands. Do you have a--

Husband and wife. Definitely.

Jerry simply nods.

Good.

(to Jerry)

After the blessing, I'll instruct you to kiss the bride. Keep it simple. No slobbering.

That could be tough. For him.

The Priest feigns amusement.

Remember, this is God's house. And there will be prominent people here as well. Not to mention the press. So, let's keep things on the up-and-up.

Right.

Jerry accompanies his FATHER -- late 50s, on a cigar-buying expedition. Tobacco enthusiasts relax in leather chairs. Wafts of smoke hang in the air -- expensive smoke.

Jerry's Father finds a brand he likes.
FATHER
Here we are. Bahia Gold. Two hundred a box.

JERRY
You don't have to do this, Dad.

FATHER
If I can't come to the bachelor party, I want to be there in spirit.

(beat)
The boys will like these. Classic.

JERRY
Thank-you.

FATHER
I remember my bachelor night. Frankly, I wish I didn't. Not a night I'm particularly proud of...I'll leave it at that.

JERRY
Why are you sharing this?

FATHER
Reminiscing. That's all.

JERRY
Or warning me.

FATHER
Nonsense. I know you. You won't make an ass out of yourself.

(beat)
Oh...A little something from your mother and me. He reaches into his pocket, hands Jerry a key.

JERRY
What's this?

FATHER
It's a key.
There's a new housing development, just west of here. giving the developer a lot of breaks, and...now he's one in return. I'm almost embarrassed to say how cost me.

JERRY

I can't accept this.

FATHER

Yes, you can.

(beat)

C'mon. Make your old man happy.

Jerry says nothing.

FATHER

Uh-huh. I get it. This is Rosalie's domain. She a say in where you two settle down. But don't worry, be forcing her hand. Know why? Because she's going to it.

Jerry just nods.

FATHER

Let's ring these babies up.

CUT TO

INT. TOWNHOUSE - NIGHT

Bachelor party in progress. In the living room, a smoke Cuban-rolled cigars, drink shots of Tequila, and a Stripper perform.

The least boisterous of the group is Jerry, who watches with a drunken glow.
The party's host, Jerry's BEST FRIEND, enters and summons Jerry into--

INT. TOWNHOUSE FOYER -- NIGHT

The Best Friend aims Jerry toward the stairs.

    BEST FRIEND
Alright, my man. You ready?

    JERRY
Do I have a choice?

    BEST FRIEND
No.

    JERRY
Then, I'm ready.

    BEST FRIEND
The guys pitched in for this...

He pats Jerry on the back.

    BEST FRIEND
So go up there and get our money's worth.

Jerry starts up--

CUT TO

INT. TOWNHOUSE HALLWAY - NIGHT

Jerry approaches the bedroom door with a fateful air.

He touches the door knob.

In his mind--

    JERRY
Why am I stopping?...There's a hot girl waiting on the other side of the door...Why worry? Everyone cuts you slack kind of thing...This is supposed to happen...It's a time-honored ritual...Losing your tooth, losing your
losing the championship...If I walk through this door, I losing? Nothing...My father was here, and his father and his father's father was here, hand on the
do...What am I waiting for...
He pushes it open.

CUT TO

INT. TOWNHOUSE BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jerry enters. The room is dark, except for a shaft of
moonlight that silhouettes a girl on the bed.
Her foot dangles off the side, the toenails painted
blood red.

Jerry turns on a lamp to meet --

LORNA

Sitting on the bed in a tank-top and a short skirt. As
fetching as ever.

LORNA

You must be the groom.

Jerry laughs.

LORNA

The guys were right. You're a looker.

JERRY

Did they also tell you I don't usually do this kind of
thing.

She pulls off the tank-top, revealing a black
brasiere.

LORNA

All the better. I like challenges.

She crosses to face him.

LORNA

Getting married tomorrow, huh?
JERRY
Yes, I am.

LORNA
Love, honor, and obey. That's the drill, isn't it?

JERRY
Yes. Tomorrow, I take the vows.

Without much ceremony, she starts massaging his crotch.

LORNA
Tomorrow...So, technically, this doesn't count.

JERRY
How's that?

LORNA
You can't break a vow you haven't taken, can you?

JERRY
You sound like my lawyer.

Lorna kneels down before him. She unzips his pants.

LORNA
I've done my share of lawyers. They spend most of the hour negotiating the tip.

(beat)

That's a joke.

JERRY
I got it.

She pulls down his pants, looks up at him.

LORNA
Something bothering you?

JERRY
I don't know if I should be doing this.

She starts to stroke him.

LORNA
Want my philosophy? If we don't make mistakes now and then, how are we ever going to learn from them?
JERRY
Now you sound like my priest.

LORNA
I've done a few of them, too.

Priests?

LORNA
Lousy tippers. They spend most of the hour feeling bad about what they're doing. But they do it anyway. Then, they shortchange you on the tip. One of them absolved me once, before he left. That's something, I guess.

JERRY
Who are the best tippers?

LORNA
The guys who can least afford it. Guys with families.

JERRY
And the worst?

LORNA
Hands-down. Politicians.

Jerry reacts.

JERRY
Politicians?

LORNA
Sure. Both parties. I don't discriminate. Besides, a penis doesn't know from politics. A penis is the most politically incorrect part of the body. It has a simple agenda. (rehis erection) He knows what he wants.

And she proceeds to give him a blow-job. Jerry guides her with his hands. He tries to relax. He tries...

But he can't. He yanks her away from him.
JERRY
Stop it. I can't do it.

LORNA
Don't worry about it.

JERRY
I can't...I'm sorry.

Lorna instinctively puts a little distance between herself and Jerry.

LORNA
Hey, it's no sweat. I get paid either way.

JERRY
No, you don't understand. I can't fucking go through with it!

(off Lorna's non-reaction)

I can't get married!

All at once, his face fills with rage. Jerry swings his fist into the wall, punching a hole in it.

JERRY
Jesus!

Adrenaline pumping, he doesn't even notice the blood on his hand.

ON LORNA
She shakes her head -- she's completely nonplussed.

LORNA
That was smart. Now, you're bleeding. Here...

She takes him by the arm into--

INT. TOWNHOUSE BATHROOM -- NIGHT

She runs cold water over his hand -- it's really banged up.

Then, she wraps a towel around it.
LORNA
Better?

JERRY
Yeah...

LORNA
Do you love her?

JERRY
I don't know.

LORNA
C'mon. Let's sit down.

They return to--

INT. TOWNHOUSE BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Lorna and Jerry sit on the floor, their backs resting against the bed.

Now the mood is intimate.

JERRY
She wants to have a baby. That's the way it's supposed to be, right?

LORNA
I wouldn't know.

JERRY
My parents approve of her. Her parents approve of me. Everybody approves...

LORNA
What's wrong with a little approval?

Jerry gives her a hard look.

JERRY
That's my whole life. My whole goddam carrot-and-stick-life. Ever since I can remember, I've been chasing after this person or that person's approval. Playing one role, then
industrious
Handshakes
his knees
bachelor,

Then another! The good student. The good son. The boy. Good grades. High ambitions. Pats on the back. from people who matter! The good boyfriend, getting on and proposing to the good girlfriend. The dutiful receiving the traditional blow-job from a...
Jerry stops himself.

LORNA
(lets him off the hook)
Professional.

JERRY
I've lost count of all the roles, there's so many of them.

(beat)
I have no idea who I'm playing now.

LORNA
Huh.
A beat.

LORNA
I don't see what the big deal is. I play roles all the time.

JERRY
And you want to do that your entire life? You can't...you...

(beat)
I don't even know your name.

LORNA
Lorna. And I'll do whatever the hell I want.

JERRY
Well, I can't live somebody else's version of my life anymore. Do you understand?
LORNA
Sure. I do.

She gets up and crosses to the window. Lifts it up.

LORNA
Here's your chance.

JERRY
What?

LORNA
It's not too far a drop to the lawn. You have gas in your car?

Then, go. It's the first day of the rest of your life...Go.

I promise you, this opportunity will not come around twice.

(beat)

Go.

Jerry stands. He looks out the window--

HIS POV
The suburbs at night. Cozy, warm-lit.

JERRY
I'm going to do it.

He smiles at Lorna. Then, he climbs out the window.

LORNA'S POV
She watches him hit the ground, hobble across the lawn, and get into his car. And he's gone.

INT. TOWNHOUSE BEDROOM -- NIGHT

LORNA
See? Easy.

She sits on the bed, takes in the room. It seems ordinary and strange, all at once.

Lorna spots the bloody towel -- Jerry left it on the floor.
She folds it neatly, concealing the blood.

CUT TO
OMITTED

INT. COFFEE SHOP - NIGHT

Later. The wee hours. The only person at the counter is Lorna. She pours cream in her coffee, watches it swirl.

Clouds.

Something else catches her eye.

LORNA'S POV

Behind the counter lies a crumpled newspaper.

LORNA
(to Waitress)
Mind if I have that?

WAITRESS
It's yesterday's. Morning paper should be here any minute.

LORNA
I just want the crossword puzzle.

The Waitress puts the paper in front of her. It falls open to the Metro section, where Lorna sees a photo of Jerry and Rosalie -- the one Todd shot.

The accompanying headline "Deputy Mayor's Son to Wed"

LORNA
Oh my...

The Waitress cranes her neck to see.

WAITRESS
There's a catch, alright.

CUT TO
INT. LORNA’S APARTMENT - DAY

Morning. Terri -- still under the covers -- studies the torn clipping from the paper. Lorna brushes her teeth.

TERRI
Hello...It's the oldest condition known to man. Cold feet.

LORNA
You're wrong. I'm telling you he's two states away by now.

(beat)
He made a clean break. I know it.
Terri shakes her head.

TERRI
If you're wrong, you're paying for drinks tonight.

CUT TO

EXT. STREET - DAY

Lorna and Terri walk briskly down the sidewalk. They round a corner to see--

EXT. CATHEDRAL -- DAY

A magnificent Catholic church. A white limousine -- decorated with streamers -- sits in front, surrounded by expensive cars.

TERRI
Well, what do you know...
Lorna can't believe it -- she almost feels betrayed.

TERRI
Told you we should've dressed up.
C'mon...we're going inside.

What for? Wait...

But Lorna is bounding toward the cathedral.

INT. CATHEDRAL VESTIBULE - DAY

Lorna and Terri enter. The vestibule looks empty. Suddenly, they are startled by a FLASH. They turn to find a photographer checking a bulb -- it's Todd.

Lorna, we shouldn't be here.

Hearing her name Todd looks up. Then, he gathers his gear and starts inside. But Lorna intercepts him.

Excuse me, could you tell me who's getting married in...

(beat)

Hey, I know you. The wedding guy.

I'm sorry. Have we met?

Yeah. You don't remember me?

You must be thinking of somebody else.

Lorna reacts. Stops herself.

Right. I must be thinking of someone else. Sorry.
TODD
Excuse me...
And he disappears into the church.

TERRI
What was that all about?

LORNA
Nothing.

TERRI
Nothing, my ass.

LORNA
Alright, alright. I slipped.

TERRI
Slipped? You broke the cardinal rule of the trade.
(pedantic)
Never acknowledge a client in public.

LORNA
What is this? Hooking For Dummies? C'mon...
Lorna grabs Terri by the wrist and slips into--

INT. CATHEDERAL -- DAY

They take a seat in the last pew.

LORNA'S POV
The front pews are packed, all eyes focussed on the
at the altar. Jerry and Rosalie face the priest, who
the ring.

PRIEST
The wedding ring is a powerful symbol. It is a circle,
no beginning and no end. It is also the circle that
your love for each other--

TERRI
I'll bet that dress is Vera Wang.
LORNA

Shhh...

Jerry and Rosalie turn to face each other.

PRIEST

Do you, Rosalie, take this man, to have and to hold, in sickness and in health, till death do you part?

ROSALIE

I do.

PRIEST

And do you, Jerry, take this woman, to have and to hold, in sickness and in health, till death do you part?

A beat.

Lorna studies Jerry's face for any sign, any hint of his real feelings.

JERRY

I do.

PRIEST

Then, by the power invested in me by Christ, Our Lord, I now pronounce you husband and wife.

(to Jerry)

You may kiss the bride.

They kiss. Lorna leans forward. She's moved, despite herself.

Terri looks over.

TERRI

You're crying, I can't believe it.

LORNA

No, I'm not.

(beat)

Weddings make me cry.
The congregation applauds. Jerry shakes hands with the man -- his Father. He gives his son an approving pat back.

Suddenly, a SECURITY GUARD appears in Lorna's face.

SECURITY GUARD
Ladies, this event is strictly for invited guests.

TERRI
We're with the groom's party.

SECURITY GUARD
Ma'am...Let's not do this. You're not with the groom.

Terri points to Lorna.

TERRI
She had his cock in her mouth last night. Doesn't that count?

Lorna bursts out laughing. Laughing through her tears.

The Guard is not amused.

CUT TO

EXT. CATHEDERAL - DAY

Lorna and Terri race down the church steps, giggling like school girls.

EXT. STREET - DAY

They turn a corner, lean against a wall. Catching her breath, Terri lights a cigarette.

LORNA
I don't know why he came back.

(beat)

It wasn't love.
TERRI
Guess you'll never know for sure.

They start down the sidewalk--

TERRI
Remember the guy I told you about -- the writer?

LORNA
Yeah. He said he wanted to immortalize you. What a line.

TERRI
He's been steady work. Every Tuesday for the past month. Well, get this. Yesterday, he called and asked me out.

LORNA
On a date?

TERRI
Yeah. A date.

LORNA
A non-paying date.

TERRI
No money will be exchanged. You want to hear the weird part?

I said yes.

LORNA
You're right. That is weird.

TERRI
You gotta keep an open mind, Lorna.

(beat)

You never know with people.

They wait at the crosswalk. Lorna idly glances at the window of a brownstone apartment.

WHAT LORNA SEES
A Man finishing a cigarette. He catches Lorna looking his way. A Woman comes up behind the Man and casually embraces him.
The Man gives Lorna a last look before pulling the curtains closed.

The light has changed. Terri starts walking.

**TERRI**
C'mon, what are you waiting for?

**ON LORNA**
She lingers at the curb for a moment, pondering her next move.

**FADE OUT:**
**THE END**